

Chapter 171

“People have often heard the voice of a woman inside this castle. Sometimes, it is the sound of sexual moaning. Occasionally, it sounded like screaming from being brutally tortured. Other times, it sounded like sad weeping. Every so often, it sounded like creepy laughter from a female ghost.” The policeman said.

Leng Qiuzun’s assistant shivered, “Stop saying that, you’re making me scared now.”

“Did all these start happening before or after the teens went missing?” Bai Rong asked calmly.

“It should be around the same time. The group of teens had gone exploring inside after hearing about the rumors and they all ended up dead except one, but he had gone crazy.” The policeman sighed.

“How many of them went inside?” Bai Rong continued.

“There were three in total but two of them went missing. We’ve searched the entire place but found no traces of them.”

“Did you find any bloodstains on the floor?” Leng Qiuzun asked.

The policeman shook his head, “No, that’s why it became a haunted castle. No one dared go near it, let alone enter.”

“If it’s so dangerous, why hasn’t it been demolished?” Leng Qiuzun’s assistant asked.

“That castle is an intangible cultural heritage.” The policeman explained.

“How is that possible? I’ve seen the castle. It has a European design, so how could it have been classified as an intangible cultural heritage?” Assistant Leng was confused.

“There is a legend about this castle. Once upon a time, there was an emperor who hired an artist named Castiglione from another country. Castiglione was also an expert in architecture. There was a eunuch in the palace who was very rich. When he wanted to retire and leave the palace, he spent a lot of money on buying architectural drawings from Castiglione. The eunuch was from Pingyan and had built a castle in Pingyan after returning to his city. According to the legend, there are many treasures from the palace in this castle and many have gone in to find them, but no one was able to find anything.” The policeman explained.

“It’s been so many years now and the castle should’ve collapsed by now, right? So, why is this one still standing and in decent condition?” Assistant Leng asked doubtfully.

“The castle’s owner has repaired it many times. It’s strange how the government had taken over this castle as an intangible cultural heritage after the mysterious death of the owner and has kept it till this day.”

After the policeman finished talking, Assistant Leng seemed to have understood the situation as she turned to ask Leng Qiuzun in a terrified voice, "This castle wouldn't actually be haunted, would it?"

Leng Qiuzun smiled and said coldly, "You don't have to enter if you're scared."

He was looking at Bai Rong when he said that.

"Really? I can sit out on this one?" Assistant Leng asked as she was really scared of entering.

"Yes." Leng Qiuzun answered coldly.

"Then I won't be joining you guys!" Assistant Leng said with an awkward smile.

"You can sit out on this one too if you're afraid, Ms. Bai." Leng Qiuzun deliberately provoked her.

Bai Rong refused to let him look down on her. "I never said I was afraid."

Leng Qiuzun's cowardly assistant got off the car at a budget hotel along the way and the car drove up to the entrance of the castle.

The place was dark and there wasn't even a single streetlight in the area around the castle.

“Are there lights inside the castle?” Bai Rong asked the policeman.

“Yes, but the power supply had long since been cut off due to it not being inhabited for a long time. There seems to be a generator inside, though I’m not sure if it still works.” The policeman explained.

Bai Rong frowned at the thought of entering the castle in complete darkness and started to feel an uncontrollable sense of fear creeping up her spine.

Suddenly, Gu Mingchen came up behind her and hugged her waist as he whispered, “Don’t be afraid.”

Bai Rong looked up at him, but he had already let go of her and turned to look at Leng Qiuzun, “Have your men wait in the car. Come in after we start the generator.”

He brought his men inside right after saying that.

Leng Qiuzun stood in front of Bai Rong as he watched Gu Mingchen vanish into the darkness of the castle.

“Soldiers sure are swift and decisive in their actions.”

“That’s their responsibility.” Bai Rong added.

Leng Qiuzun turned to look at Bai Rong, “You admire soldiers a lot?”

“They are worth our admiration.” Bai Rong said honestly.

“Is it them, or him? You know Mr. Gu, don’t you?” Leng Qiuzun guessed.

Bai Rong felt that Leng Qiuzun was a smart person and lived up to his reputation for his observational skills and insight.

Bai Rong did not answer his question directly but replied, “Let’s see who finds the murderer first.”

The castle lit up with faint lighting as most of the light bulbs were from the 80s.

Leng Qiuzun brought the rest of his men in.

Right as Bai Rong set foot in the castle, they were greeted by a chilly breeze followed by a musty smell.

There was a horrible stench that accompanied the musty smell but they couldn’t quite put their finger on what it was.

“Everyone, pick a room to stay in,” Leng Qiuzun said and shifted his gaze towards Bai Rong with a provocative look in his eyes.

Bai Rong ignored him and looked around the main hall before asking Wang beside her, “Which room did the victim die in?”

“The room next to the stairs on the first floor.” Wang said.

Bai Rong looked towards the room and felt like she saw a figure floating inside.

She held her breath and kept her eyes focused on the door as she slowly approached it.

“Hey.” Leng Qiuzun called out suddenly, his voice sounding especially loud in the silence.

Bai Rong was startled and let out a scream.

Gu Mingchen came running from the room next to the stairs and asked Bai Rong in a worried voice, “Are you alright?”

Bai Rong regained her composure and glared at Leng Qiuzun angrily when she realized he was the one who made that sound earlier, “What the hell is your problem?! Why did you scare me like that?!”

“I thought you were very brave. Turns out you were just putting up a front. I want that room next to the stairs, don’t even think of taking it from me.” Leng Qiuzun said arrogantly.

Bai Rong ignored him and looked towards Gu Mingchen, “Did you manage to find anything in the room?”

Gu Mingchen shook his head, “There were no secret passages nor anything out of the ordinary. There was only a bed, a table, and walls on all three sides with no windows.”

“I want to go check some other rooms, can you come with me?” Bai Rong asked.

Gu Mingchen nodded as he saw how pale Bai Rong looked from the shock earlier and felt bad for her.

“You need someone to keep you company just to check a room? You’re such a coward! You might as well not come with us to begin with! But, then again, maybe you did have ulterior motives asking him to go with you.” Leng Qiuzun said sarcastically.

Bai Rong couldn’t understand why he kept picking on her.

Gu Mingchen stared at Leng Qiuzun before hugging Bai Rong by the waist. As he pulled her close, he said, “Actually, I have ulterior motives for going with her too.”

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Bai Rong was speechless as she looked at Gu Mingchen in disbelief.

She did not expect that Gu Mingchen would say such a thing as he sounded like he was saying it just to spite Leng Qiuzun. However, at the same time, it sounded flirtatious and gave her the impression that he liked her.

“Don’t you have a girlfriend, Mr. Gu? I don’t think it’s appropriate for you to say something like that.” Leng Qiuzun said.

“If you know that I have a girlfriend, then you should also know that it would be inappropriate to say that to Ms. Bai.” Gu Mingchen snapped back at him.

Leng Qiuzun was left speechless.

Bai Rong could tell that Gu Mingchen had deliberately said that to defend her.

Leng Qiuzun had a vicious tongue and she had been at a disadvantage during all of her arguments with him.

However, Gu Mingchen had easily shut him up with his witty comebacks. Even Bai Rong couldn’t help but give him a thumbs up in response.

“You’re no fun.” Leng Qiuzun turned around and went up to the second floor.

“Let’s go take a look in the kitchen.” Bai Rong said.

“Alright.” Gu Mingchen held her hand as he walked. It felt so warm that she wasn’t even scared anymore.

Although she knew this wasn’t right, she didn’t pull her hand back either as the two of them made their way into the kitchen.

The kitchen was huge and had a stove that could hold six woks on it.

It was obvious that the previous owner of this castle was extravagant and that many people had lived here.

Gu Mingchen lifted the cover of the wok slowly and saw that it was full of rust and cobwebs from the many years of disuse.

Bai Rong looked into the stove and saw lots of ashes that had clumped together and hardened over time.

Gu Mingchen took samples from all six stoves and placed them into six different plastic bags before labeling them with the numbers one to six respectively.

Bai Rong looked at him in confusion and he explained, "These ashes are from different years, so I'll have someone analyze these when we get back. That'll tell us their ages."

Bai Rong smiled, "They can tell the ages of the ashes? If so, are antique ashes worth any money?"

Gu Mingchen laughed as well, as he felt that Bai Rong was only cold on the outside but was actually warm on the inside.

"So you love money that much, eh? You could just ask me for it." Gu Mingchen said.

Bai Rong felt her heart racing and lowered her head in embarrassment.

He found her behavior cute and gave her a kiss on the lips.

Bai Rong backed away in response, "Others will see!"

Gu Mingchen wrapped an arm around her waist and looked into her eyes, "So what?"

As Bai Rong thought of Su Wanning, Song Xiyu and Gu Tianhang, she felt a throbbing pain where her pinky finger used to be.

"Don't be so domineering!" Bai Rong couldn't control her tone and sounded like she was complaining.

Gu Mingchen stared at her intensely and the two kept their gazes locked onto each other for a moment.

She tried to push him away but he wouldn't budge an inch.

It wasn't until they heard footsteps coming from the door that he let go of her.

Wang came running into the kitchen, "Ms. Bai, Mr. Leng is asking for you."

Bai Rong followed Wang into the first room next to the stairs, thinking that Leng Qiuzun had discovered something.

"Someone has stayed in this room before." Leng Qiuzun deduced.

Bai Rong scanned the room with her eyes and walked over to the window. It was shut, and vines crept all the way up the windows, blocking the view outside. Bai Rong asked, "How did you know that?"

Leng Qiuzun stared at Bai Rong and casually blurted out, "Intuition."

Bai Rong held herself back from rolling her eyes at him and walked out of the room.

As she stepped out the door and saw Gu Mingchen casually strolling up the stairs, she had an idea and called out to him, “Mr. Gu.”

“What did you call me?” Gu Mingchen was displeased at the way the woman addressed him.

Bai Rong felt uneasy as he didn’t know about their past, and she didn’t dare tell him about it either.

She had decided to just skip addressing him instead, “It’s possible that someone had really stayed here before, as there isn’t any dust on the floor. That shouldn’t be the case if it was really abandoned.”

“This is a remote location. There are no vehicles passing by, the house is sealed tight, and there’s also a layer of vines protecting it. So, naturally, there won’t be much dust coming in anyway. Your judgment is inaccurate.” Leng Qiuzun retorted as he came out of the room.

“But this castle has aged a lot, so there should be bits falling naturally from the ceiling. Look up.” Bai Rong pointed at the ceiling above the third floor.

The light was hanging straight down, and they couldn’t see it clearly because the ceiling was too high up and it was dark inside.

Bai Rong switched on her flashlight and pointed it at the ceiling, “Gu Mingchen, give me a hand.”

She had called him by name naturally without realizing, and he had a look of satisfaction on his face as he motioned at his subordinates.

They handed him a military-grade tactical flashlight from his backpack, which he pointed at the ceiling.

It was really bright and had a really long range, so the light reached all the way to the ceiling.

The ceiling seemed wooden and was triangular in shape without any paint.

Bai Rong frowned as she looked back and forth at the photographs of the castle and the castle itself.

She then pointed at the ceiling and asked Gu Mingchen, "What do you think this ceiling is made of?"

"Bricks, why?" Gu Mingchen was confused.

"That means there's wood beneath the bricks. If there was a leak in the bricks, the wood would become moldy, right? Look at the wood. Do you think that's wood? Or are they artificial?" Bai Rong looked suspiciously at the ceiling.

"Bricks usually have lime powder, cement, or asphalt underneath to prevent leaking." Gu Mingchen said as he took the photograph over from Bai Rong and examined it.

He frowned as he realized the problem after Bai Rong reminded him.

"Bai Rong, I had always suspected that this place has a basement of some sort. The three teenagers that broke in here should be kidnapped and held there, but one of them managed to escape while the other two went missing. Now, I think I know where that secret room is." Gu Mingchen said.

Bai Rong pointed at the ceiling, "The secret room wasn't beneath the building, but above the ceiling."

Gu Mingchen nodded, "The people that came investigating previously had all been deceived by their habitual way of thinking as well as their eyes. There should be some sort of passage that leads to the ceiling."

Leng Qiuzun took the photo from Gu Mingchen as he listened to their analysis and found it himself, "Knock on the ceiling in all the rooms on the second floor, and if you hear a hollow sound, break it open with your weapons."

"That wouldn't do much good. I think I know where the entrance is." Gu Mingchen said and led the way.

Leng Qiuzun narrowed his eyes angrily as he stared at Gu Mingchen.

Gu Mingchen walked all the way to the room at the end of the corridor, and his men handed him a ladder. He climbed up to the ceiling and lifted the tile on the corner.

Bai Rong was surprised, "How did you know where the entrance was?"

"Knowledge of architectural space. I made a comparison between the building's external appearance and internal construction, then combined it with reasonable logic on the structure of the building." Gu Mingchen said.

"Mr. Gu, are you in charge of construction in the military?" Leng Qiuzun asked sarcastically.

Gu Mingchen ignored him as he looked around the secret room and was shocked by what he saw.

“Bai Rong, don’t come up here.” Gu Mingchen said in a serious tone as he scanned the inside of the room.

Bai Rong was confused, “Why? What’s up there?”

“Stop asking so many questions. If he tells you not to go up there, you stay down here.” Leng Qiuzun pushed Bai Rong aside and climbed up the ladder.

Although he had a lot of experience in solving cases, even he was disturbed by the sight that greeted him above.

Wang followed them up the stairs, but quickly came back down and kept a hand against the wall to support himself as he retched.

Bai Rong wanted to go upstairs, but two of Gu Mingchen’s men blocked her path, “Chief said you mustn’t go up there.”

“I’m not afraid.” Bai Rong said and was about to push past them when Leng Qiuzun came down the ladder and called the station.

Gu Mingchen jumped down the ladder after him.

“What’s the situation up there?” Bai Rong asked.

“I took a quick look earlier. There should be about six bodies up there.” Gu Mingchen explained.

“Six? Shouldn’t there be only two? I’ll have a look.”

Gu Mingchen grabbed Bai Rong by the arm, “We’ve found the bodies, so we’ll identify them with DNA tests and see if we can tell their time of death. Let’s head back to the hotel and reorganize our information.”

“Are you worried that I can’t handle the sight of dead bodies? Don’t worry, I’ve dissected plenty of dead bodies while studying abroad, so I won’t be scared.”

“I seriously advise you not to go up there.” Leng Qiuzun warned her after getting off the phone.

“I want to go up there. I was a doctor; I’ve seen my fair share of blood and gore.” Bai Rong was hell-bent on having a look.

Gu Mingchen looked towards Bai Rong and could see that she was determined.

“I’ll go up with you.” Gu Mingchen took the flashlight over from his men and adjusted the shape of the light to illuminate the entire room as he placed it in the middle.

Bai Rong braced herself and climbed up the ladder.

There was a certain distance between the top of the ladder and the entrance to the room, so Gu Mingchen reached his hand out to her to help pull her up.

That reminded Bai Rong of how he had done the same thing back then when they first met.

But she wanted to do it herself this time, so she climbed up without taking his hand, much to his dismay.

Once up there, she saw a lot of glass tanks as she started scanning the room from the entrance.

The largest tank was as tall as a person and was filled with a yellowish-brown liquid as well as the naked bodies of a couple.

Bai Rong saw the face of the female and said, "Gu Mingchen, I think that's the girl from the footage."

Gu Mingchen had already recognized her face at first sight and was worried that Bai Rong would be afraid, so he wrapped an arm around her waist and said softly, "I'll stay right by your side."

But she wasn't afraid as she had seen plenty of dead bodies like those in the laboratory.

In fact, the ones she saw in America were a lot gorier than this.

However, she didn't remove his hand as she continued to examine the bodies in the tank, "The woman has injuries on her body, neck, and limbs. Her genitals have been injected with a foaming agent of some sort. She was tortured to death and placed into this tank. If we're lucky, we might still be able to find a male's DNA inside her. As for the man, there are signs of bruising and swelling on his face. His eyes are wide open and there is a bulge in his belly. He was thrown into the tank while he was still alive."

She then looked at the other two tanks next to it and saw that it contained dismembered body parts of a male and female respectively.

In the last tank, she saw the bodies of a woman and a newborn baby.

“The murderer was extremely cruel.” Bai Rong deduced.

“Let’s go back downstairs. There will be policemen here to take photographs and we can examine the details on the photos later.” Gu Mingchen suggested.

Bai Rong nodded, “Have you realized how clean this room looks?”

“This should be the first scene of the crime. People from the forensic science department will find more clues and evidence here later.”

“By the way, Gu Mingchen, I remember that the ceiling was triangular in shape, but this is flat. Do you think there could be another segment above us?” Bai Rong guessed.

“I was thinking the same thing. The police will arrive shortly, we’ll let them take care of it.” Gu Mingchen started climbing down the ladder.

Bai Rong carefully climbed down as well, but Gu Mingchen picked her up before she reached the bottom and put her down on the ground.

He had carried her in front of so many people, which made her heart race, but she quickly composed herself.

Leng Qiuzun saw how calm Bai Rong looked, “That doesn’t scare you? Are you even a woman?”

“Wasn’t she already scared when you frightened her on purpose earlier?” Gu Mingchen retorted.

“Why do you keep defending her?!” Leng Qiuzun was unhappy.

“Probably the same reason you keep picking a fight with her.” Gu Mingchen casually snapped back at him.

Leng Qiuzun was speechless once again. He glanced at the Patek Philippe watch on his wrist and said to Gu Mingchen, “It is now 2:20 a.m.. It will take about an hour for the people from the police station to arrive and there is important evidence here that needs to be guarded. Will it be my men or yours who will stay here?”

Gu Mingchen stared at Leng Qiuzun, “My men will do. Mr. Leng, you may go back and get some rest.”

“In that case, I’ll leave it to you. Bai Rong, let’s go.” Leng Qiuzun turned around and walked down the stairs.

Bai Rong looked at Gu Mingchen and nodded slightly before following behind Leng Qiuzun.

Gu Mingchen grabbed her arm from behind and whispered, “Once you reach the hotel, text me the hotel name and room number.”

Bai Rong kept quiet as she had a feeling that he would come looking for her in the wee hours of the morning.

“I’ll get going now.” She avoided his question.

She felt that their relationship would be exposed sooner or later if they kept on like this.

She didn't dare expose it as she was unsure if Gu Mingchen was only caring about her as she was useful for restoring his memories or if he had any other reasons. The woman was afraid of getting hurt the same way again.

Bai Rong walked out of the castle and got into the car with the other three.

Bai Rong and Leng Qiuzun sat in the backseat. Just as she was about to rest her eyes, Leng Qiuzun suddenly turned towards her and placed his hand next to her.

Bai Rong was startled and guarded her chest with one hand as she pushed at him, "What are you doing?!"

Leng Qiuzun narrowed his eyes, "You sure get a lot of guys falling for you, huh?"

Bai Rong blushed as she felt that he was probably talking about Gu Mingchen.

She didn't want anyone finding out about their relationship and Leng Qiuzun was a very sharp guy, "I've been married, divorced and had a child. I have no faith in love and am not looking for a relationship. Having guys falling for me would only spell trouble for me."

"Then mind your behavior and stop flirting around everywhere." Leng Qiuzun returned to his seat and frowned before turning back to Bai Rong, "You've really had a child before?"

"Yes." Bai Rong didn't deny it.

"So you're an old woman." Leng Qiuzun muttered to himself.

Bai Rong kept quiet.

After checking in at the hotel and taking a shower, she found Gu Mingchen sitting on the sofa in her room when she stepped out of the bathroom.

Bai Rong was speechless as she remembered that she didn't text him her hotel and room number.

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"Why are you here?" Bai Rong asked in confusion as she dried her hair with a towel.

Gu Mingchen stood up and took the towel over to help dry her hair for her, "Didn't I tell you to text me? Did you ignore what I said?"

Bai Rong could tell from his tone that he was unhappy.

She didn't text him because she wanted to get a good night's rest, but he had found her anyway.

It would probably be a bad idea to tell him that she didn't want to text him, so she lied, "I was going to text you after I showered, as there was a really bad smell on me."

Bai Rong then nodded at the bathroom, "Do you want to take a shower too?"

Gu Mingchen tossed the towel on the chair as he stared at her.

Bai Rong pursed her lips and stopped talking as she was afraid of saying something wrong.

“I’ll trust you for the time being.” Gu Mingchen walked towards the bathroom.

Bai Rong watched in surprise as she had only invited him for a shower out of courtesy, but he had actually taken up on her offer.

He wouldn’t actually spend the night in this room, would he?

If Leng Qiuzun found out about it, what she said in the car earlier would just make her a joke.

She walked over to the bathroom door and asked, “Are you staying in this hotel too? Is your luggage here?”

Gu Mingchen opened the bathroom door suddenly, and she jumped in shock.

“What’s wrong?”

“I’ll be spending the night here. My luggage is in the car and my men will have it sent over later. Anything else you want to ask?” Gu Mingchen said proudly.

“Isn’t it inappropriate for you to stay here? It’d be bad if people were to find out, you see. Besides, you’ve got a fiancée.” Bai Rong tried persuading him.

Gu Mingchen stared into her eyes, “I’ve been engaged to Su Wanning for more than three years. Do you really think I would marry her?”

Bai Rong was stunned for a moment as she looked at him, but he shut the door in her face before she could say anything.

Bai Rong stood at the door and looked down at the ground as she felt an uncomfortable bitterness in her heart.

She recalled how she had thought that Gu Mingchen really loved her and was ready to forgive him for the damage he caused her by raping her six years ago.

But when she heard him say that he loved Hailan after losing his memories, she felt that all her perseverance, persistence, hard work, and love were all crushed.

The one whom Gu Mingchen loved the most was Zhou Hailan, not her.

That pain was worse than the one Su Xuyan had caused her and it hurt so much that she had lost the courage to live.

Gu Mingchen was a mysterious person whose heart she could not enter even with her three years of study in psychology.

She didn’t want to repeat the process of feeling lonely in life and lonely in the face of death again.

She had loved him and would wish the best for him even if he didn’t love her back.

Bai Rong took her luggage out of the room and requested for another room at the front desk. This time, she made sure to lock the room door.

When Gu Mingchen came out of the shower and saw that she was gone, he called her, "Where are you?"

"I'm in the room across from yours. I'm going to sleep now. Good night, Chief." Bai Rong said coldly and hung up.

She then took a sleeping pill and fell asleep soon after.

She had been sleeping for quite a long time as it was already 9:30 a.m. when she woke up and saw a few missed calls on her phone.

There was one from Leng Qiuzun, one from Gu Mingchen and one from an unknown number.

After going through her morning routine in the shower, she grabbed her phone and walked over to the window.

She pulled the curtains open and enjoyed the beautiful view outside. The weather was great and the sunlight felt warm on her skin.

She called the unknown number, "Hello? Who is this? What is it?"

"Are you Bai Rong?" A woman's voice was heard and her tone sounded surprised and hostile.

"Who is this?" Bai Rong couldn't identify who the person was at first.

“Xiong Daini.” She said.

Bai Rong remembered who it was now. She was Su Xuyan’s mother.

“Is there something I can help you with, Aunt Xiong?” Bai Rong asked calmly.

“Who are you calling Aunt?!” Xiong Daini retorted angrily.

Bai Rong laughed, “How else should I address you then? Ms. Xiong?”

“Please address me as Madam.” Xiong Daini ordered.

Bai Rong nodded nonchalantly, “Alright, is there anything you need from me?”

“I called the Research Institute of Psychology earlier. I heard that you are currently in charge of my younger brother’s case and that you were also the one who solved An Qi’s case. Weren’t you a gynecologist? Since when did you become a psychology professor?” Xiong Daini asked curiously.

“Time can change many things, including your profession, environment and relationship with people. That doesn’t affect my ability to solve cases. There is a team handling your younger brother’s case and we should be getting an answer soon, so you don’t have to worry. If there’s nothing else, I have to head to work now.” Bai Rong said professionally.

“Have you met with Xuyan?” Xiong Daini asked.

“I don’t think it’s appropriate for me to see him with our current relationship status. What do you think, Madam?” Bai Rong asked.

“I hope you have some self-awareness. I don’t like you.” Xiong Daini was straightforward.

“Likewise.”

Xiong Daini went silent and Bai Rong hung up the phone. Getting a call like this early in the morning left a really bad taste in her mouth.

She put the phone back into her handbag and went down to the front desk at the lobby, “Is breakfast still being served now?”

“Yes, it’s being served on the second-floor restaurant till 10 a.m..” The staff at the front desk said with a smile.

“Thank you.” Bai Rong went into the restaurant on the second floor and saw Gu Mingchen there.

He gave her a cold stare when he saw her and she looked away as she went to get a plate.

She got herself some egg fried rice, two pieces of bacon, a slice of ham, and some coleslaw.

She noticed that Gu Mingchen was still staring at her and thought that he would probably be angry if she didn’t sit with him.

She strolled over to his table casually and greeted him, “Hello.”

He nodded at the seat in front of him and said, “Sit.”

Bai Rong placed her plate down on the table and replied, "I'll go get some milk and fruits."

"Okay." Gu Mingchen replied.

Bai Rong got some watermelon, cherry tomatoes and a glass of milk. Right after she sat down, Gu Mingchen asked, "Why didn't you answer the phone?"

"I was asleep, so I didn't hear it." Bai Rong explained as she ate her egg fried rice.

Gu Mingchen didn't say anything else and seemed to have finished his food, but he stayed with her at the table while she ate nervously.

"Oh my, aren't you two early." Leng Qiuzun's voice was heard.

Bai Rong had thought that she got up late, but Leng Qiuzun had woken up later.

Leng Qiuzun sat next to Gu Mingchen and looked at Bai Rong, "Why didn't you answer my call yesterday?"

"I fell asleep and didn't hear it." Bai Rong explained.

"You told me that you had a child yesterday. How old is the child now?" Leng Qiuzun pressed on.

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She had told Leng Qiuzun about her child in hopes of him not trying to hit on her any further, but she didn't expect him to bring it up in front of Gu Mingchen.

He seemed to have done it on purpose.

Gu Mingchen looked at her and she was at a loss for words.

Leng Qiuzun smiled, "You weren't lying to me, were you?"

Bai Rong munched on her watermelon as she stared at Leng Qiuzun and tried to think of an answer to stop him from prying about this without arousing suspicion from Gu Mingchen.

But she was too nervous and couldn't think of anything.

"Mr. Leng, are you that free?" Bai Rong avoided the question.

"I just want to know, that's all. You keep acting all ladylike with me but act like a teen girl with other guys. What's with that?" Leng Qiuzun asked.

"I felt that you liked me and didn't want to give you any false hopes, so I came up with something that you would find unacceptable." Bai Rong said.

“What?” Leng Qiuzun was shocked and quickly denied it, “Me? Like you? How could I possibly fall for someone as pretentious as you? You sure have an overactive imagination.”

“So it was a misunderstanding on my part then? Because you seem to have been picking a fight with me ever since we’ve met.” Bai Rong stared at him suspiciously.

“I picked a fight with you because I wasn’t used to you being around. If that counts as liking someone, then I would have a long list of people I liked.” Leng Qiuzun said sarcastically.

“Is that so?” Bai Rong deliberately put on a doubtful tone, “If I’m not used to someone, I would stay far away from them instead of making my presence known to them all the time. Besides, I don’t think there are many that you are used to, Mr. Leng.” Bai Rong raised an eyebrow and gave him a provocative smile.

“Don’t smile.” Gu Mingchen ordered suddenly.

Bai Rong was dumbfounded as she looked at him.

“Her smile is ugly, isn’t it? Ms. Bai, you shouldn’t try to imitate others blindly.” Leng Qiuzun said.

“You two enjoy your meal, I’m full.” Bai Rong grabbed her handbag as she stood up.

Gu Mingchen saw that she had barely eaten her food and looked at Leng Qiuzun.

Leng Qiuzun had been observing Gu Mingchen and asked, “You like her?”

“That’s none of your business. Have all of your men gather at your room at 10:30 a.m..” Gu Mingchen stood up.

“Why my room and not yours?” Leng Qiuzun stood up as well.

“In that case, have them gather at the hotel meeting room.” Gu Mingchen turned and left after saying that, leaving no chance for Leng Qiuzun to protest further.

Leng Qiuzun frowned as he was very displeased with Gu Mingchen’s bossy attitude.

He saw that Bai Rong had not eaten much of her food and was too lazy to get his own food, so he ate hers instead.

At 10:30 a.m., Bai Rong was the first to arrive at the meeting room after receiving the notice.

As she sat down on the chair, Gu Mingchen came in and placed a plastic bag in front of her.

She peered curiously into the bag and saw that he had bought her some bread and cake.

He didn’t say anything and just stared at her as he sat in front of her.

Even though no words were said, she could feel his message very clearly.

She was hungry indeed, so she took a bun out from the bag and wolfed it down.

Apart from bread, he had also bought her a bottle of yogurt.

Gu Mingchen was still as attentive as before.

Soon, everyone came into the meeting room with Leng Qiuzun being the last one.

He saw Bai Rong munching on the bread as he sat next to her and sneered, "You women sure are pretentious. There's a buffet breakfast being provided, yet you choose to eat bread instead?"

Bai Rong ignored him.

"We have gathered everyone here to analyze the information we have on the case together." Gu Mingchen's subordinate, Mr. Cheng, said.

"Forensics sent the information to you?" Leng Qiuzun was unhappy.

"Yes." Mr. Cheng replied.

Leng Qiuzun laughed, "You sure have quite some reach."

He was referring to Gu Mingchen and everyone there had heard him.

Bai Rong found it surprising that someone as annoying and rude as Leng Qiuzun had not been killed off by his adversaries yet.

"Keep going." Gu Mingchen ordered.

Mr. Cheng continued, "For the first body, the cause of death was determined to be strangulation by some form of metal wire. Because her genital was blocked by the foaming agent, we were able to recover the DNA of four deceased males, namely Xiong Jinping, Xiong Zhiqing, Xiong Changan, and Zhang Hai from her. She was gang-raped before her death."

“Who is Zhang Hai?” Leng Qiuzun interrupted.

“One of the missing teenagers. He was the first guy that was drowned in the glass tank.” Mr. Cheng explained.

Leng Qiuzun nodded to show that he understood. “Whose baby is that?”

“According to the DNA comparisons, the infant, who had died from a fall, belonged to Xiong Jinping. The woman in the same tank as the infant is the mother.” Mr. Cheng said.

“There was a secret compartment in the room. What did they find in there?” Leng Qiuzun pressed on.

“They found the ID and luggage of the three dead women as well as a diary that belonged to Wang Xiahe. Wang Xiahe was the woman in the first tank. The diary stated that the three women had come looking for jobs and were tricked by Xiong Jinping and subjected to this inhumane treatment.”

The female voices that the people heard from the outside were most likely from them. The other two males are the teenagers that went missing previously. According to their bone growth, they were most likely 18 years old during their death. Xiong Jinping, Xiong Zhiqing, and Xiong Changan are the murderers.”

“How many years have they been missing?” Leng Qiuzun asked.

“Twenty-five years.” Mr. Cheng replied.

“My goodness, could it be that the vengeful spirits of the dead are getting their revenge?” Assistant Leng guessed and went pale after thinking about it.

“If that was the case, these three would’ve been dead twenty-five years ago. They wouldn’t have lived till now.” Bai Rong said.

“The murderer was probably related to Wang Xiahe.” Leng Qiuzun said and looked at Bai Rong, “They’ve all logged onto a pornographic site and watched the same video. The woman in the video looked similar to Wang Xiahe.”

“Mr. Leng, have you seen the video?” Assistant Leng asked innocently.

Leng Qiuzun was speechless and Bai Rong was amused at how his assistant had put him in such a tough spot with an innocent question like that.

“I did it to solve the case.” Leng Qiuzun explained to Bai Rong, his face burning bright red.

“Sure.” Bai Rong replied sarcastically.

Leng Qiuzun was blushing even harder now and placed his hand on her chair, “Why would I lie to you? Besides, isn’t it common for men to watch these things? Don’t you watch them too?”

Bai Rong felt that he was getting too close to her and his question was too inappropriate, so she looked away.

Leng Qiuzun leaned closer towards Bai Rong as he took a deep breath, “You’ve probably watched them too, haven’t you? That’s why you aren’t shocked at all when I’m talking about it right now.”

Bai Rong kept quiet and Gu Mingchen couldn’t bear to watch their interaction any longer, “She watched it with me.”

Chapter 176

The woman was so embarrassed that she wished she could find a hole and bury herself in it.

She had tried her hardest to keep their relationship a secret as she was unable to handle the consequences if it was to be uncovered.

Assistant Leng was shocked, “Ms. Bai, were you with Mr. Gu on the train the whole time?”

Bai Rong kept her head low and didn’t say a word.

“Yes, she was with me.” Gu Mingchen answered on her behalf.

“Are you two dating?” Assistant Leng asked.

Gu Mingchen kept quiet and Bai Rong could no longer stand the pressure.

She explained, “No, we aren’t dating. My best friend works in his military base as a doctor. That’s how I got to know Mr. Gu.”

Gu Mingchen stared coldly at Bai Rong and pursed his lips to express his displeasure.

“Ah, so you aren’t dating! Let’s get back to discussing the case then.” Leng Qiuzun continued, “I had a look, and although it was unclear as to the time that the video was filmed, it was certainly not something possible with technology from twenty-five years ago.”

“That’s true. We’ve managed to identify this person via facial recognition technology. Her name is Wang Donger, currently thirty-five years old. She’s from Caihua Village of Wuli Township in Pingyan City. She had an elder sister, Wang Xiahe, who had left the village for work and had gone missing. They had lost their parents since young and shared a very strong bond with each other. They looked very alike. Wang Donger had even gotten plastic surgery to make herself look more like Wang Xiahe.” Mr. Cheng explained.

“So, Wang Donger is the murderer then. How did she kill those people?” Assistant Leng asked out of curiosity.

“The problem is, she was filming on set during their time of death and a lot of people can testify for her.” Mr. Cheng frowned as he said.

“Wang Donger must be the murderer. If she had an accomplice, she could create an alibi for herself. Let’s arrest her.” Leng Qiuzun said.

“I have another question. We weren’t able to find any communication trails between the deceased, right? But it seems they’ve been on close terms with each other since twenty-five years ago.” Assistant Leng said.

“Computers weren’t that common twenty-five years ago. People mainly used letters for communication. Maybe they used pen names in their letters. We’ve focused too much on the internet and mobile phones and forgot about letters, a more old-fashioned form of communication. These people all lived in A City, so they should still be in touch using a secretive method like this.” Bai Rong deduced.

Gu Mingchen instructed Mr. Cheng, "Head back to the military base and check if Xiong Changan and Xiong Zhiqing have been in contact through letters."

"Also, the three murderers from twenty-five years ago, Xiong Jinping, Xiong Zhiqing, and Xiong Changan, who are also currently the deceased, all share the same surname, Xiong. Is it possible that their surnames had something to do with them getting to know each other? We could try asking Xiong Jinping's sister, Xiong Daini." Bai Rong suggested.

"We can arrest Wang Donger now. Let's have a chat with her." Leng Qiuzun got up and walked towards the door.

As Bai Rong stood up after him, her phone rang.

She saw that Gu Mingchen was staring at her and answered without even checking who it was to relieve some of the feelings of guilt she had.

"Bai Rong, Daini says you've returned?" Song Xiyu's voice was heard from the phone.

Bai Rong was stunned for a moment and quickly walked out of the meeting room as she spoke, "Yes."

She walked towards the garden.

"Don't meet up with Mingchen, you know you can't afford to mess with him." Song Xiyu cut straight to the chase.

"I've already met him." Bai Rong said.

“He doesn’t remember you and whatever that has happened between you two. If you want both of you to live a nice life, then you should forget about him too.” Song Xiyu said.

Bai Rong could hear that she was warning her and recalled how they had hurt each other in the past.

“I have a friend named Liu Yan who is currently working as a doctor in the Special Forces military base. I need her safety guaranteed as I don’t know what I might do if anything happens to her. Can you guarantee her safety?” Bai Rong negotiated.

“Don’t worry, I can promise you that as long as you let go of Mingchen.” Song Xiyu promised.

“Give me some time.” Bai Rong said as she closed her eyes.

Her heart felt heavy from the burden and sadness of having to be separated from Gu Mingchen before they could even start over after reuniting again.

Perhaps this was fate, she thought as she opened her eyes.

She turned around and saw that Gu Mingchen was standing right behind her.

She jumped in shock as she wasn’t sure when he had arrived, how long he had been standing there for and what he had heard.

She lowered her head in guilt.

Gu Mingchen walked up to her and ordered her, “Raise your head.”

Bai Rong took a deep breath and looked up at him.

“You’ve been avoiding me intentionally since early morning today.” Gu Mingchen said.

She had been avoiding him because she didn’t want their relationship to be exposed as Song Xiyu would pressure her if it happened.

However, Song Xiyu had already contacted her even before it was exposed, so it showed how much she really cared about it.

“Chief, what do you think our current relationship is?” Bai Rong asked directly.

“You are the only woman I have ever had sex with. What do you think our relationship is?” Gu Mingchen said coldly.

“But you are engaged and your fiancée’s father is Su Zheng, the Deputy Commander of the CCDI. With his power and influence, what do you think he would do to me if he were to find out about us?” Bai Rong asked.

“As long as I’m around, I won’t let them hurt you.” Gu Mingchen promised.

Bai Rong felt her eyes tear up as she remembered how Gu Mingchen had also said the same thing to her and she had wanted to be with him no matter what.

However, all she got in return for her efforts and sacrifices were nothing but betrayal.

Zhou Hailan was the person whom he held dear deep in his heart, not her.

He would never know the pain and despair that she had felt during that time.

“You can say that to me after you’ve confirmed what your feelings are towards me. Otherwise, your actions and behaviors are no different from a douchebag.” Bai Rong said rudely as she walked past him.

Gu Mingchen grabbed her by the wrist and pursed his lips as he stared at her in silence.

Bai Rong felt he was probably speechless and smirked, “Don’t tell me you’ve fallen in love with me after sleeping with me for a few times?”

Chapter 177

Gu Mingchen narrowed his eyes as he saw that her eyes were filled with a clear, contemptuous, and self-deprecating hatred.

“Do you hate me?” Gu Mingchen deduced.

Bai Rong didn’t deny it.

“Perhaps my hatred was out of love. Whatever I can’t get keeps stirring my feelings up. The song Red Rose is quite a nice one.” Bai Rong said as she brushed his hand off and walked outside.

Gu Mingchen frowned in confusion as he watched her go, wondering why she was suddenly acting that way as she was fine on the train yesterday.

He felt uncomfortable at her cold, harsh and distant attitude, but there was something that he had to take care of.

Gu Mingchen called Su Wanning, who was surprised to see him call her as he never did. "Mingchen?"

"Su Wanning, it is unlikely that I will marry you, so carrying the identity of being my fiancée would only restrict your freedom." Gu Mingchen said directly.

Su Wanning got nervous, "What do you mean by that?"

"Just because I've turned a blind eye to the things that you've done doesn't mean I don't see them. If word got out that you've kept boy toys and even messed around with gigolos, it would be bad for the Su Family, especially since your father is the Deputy Commander as well as a candidate for the commander-in-chief." Gu Mingchen reminded her.

Su Wanning clenched her fists tightly, "You're threatening me?"

"I'm informing you that we've been engaged for three years and we would've gotten married if we were able to love each other. It would be best if you could propose to cancel the engagement. That's all, I've got to go now." Gu Mingchen was about to hang up.

"Gu Mingchen, do you know what you've done wrong?" Su Wanning said sternly.

“I will take responsibility for my actions.” Gu Mingchen said decisively.

“You’re always acting so self-righteous and headstrong. Do you think Zhou Hailan is the one you love? She isn’t! You love another woman!” Su Wanning shouted irrationally.

Gu Mingchen went silent and just continued to listen.

“You must be wondering who you love, right? Whenever I see you missing Zhou Hailan, I feel relieved knowing that there is another woman out there who was hurt worse than me. She had even nearly died for you! Seeing how stupid you look makes me feel so good!” Su Wanning said viciously.

Gu Mingchen frowned, “What exactly are you talking about? Be specific.”

“I won’t tell you. I’ll just have you continue to miss Zhou Hailan and hurt the woman you love the most. Do you know how miserable that woman must’ve been to kill herself for you? I think she will never forgive you, and neither will I.” Su Wanning hung up.

Gu Mingchen recalled the scars on Bai Rong’s wrist and quickly ran towards her room.

Bai Rong was packing her luggage when she heard knocking on the door. She opened the door after seeing that it was Gu Mingchen through the peephole.

He grabbed her hand and his eyes narrowed as he looked at the scars on her wrist.

He was now certain that she was the woman that Su Wanning said he loved.

A look of regret flashed by in Gu Mingchen’s eyes, “I’m sorry I forgot about you.”

Bai Rong was angry as she didn't like being handled forcefully like that and had wanted to brush his hand off when he grabbed her, but froze in place when she heard his apology.

Her heart was in turmoil as she felt a sudden surge of emotions after hearing the apology that she had longed for.

But it was useless now as the fact that he had forgotten her still remains.

Bai Rong composed herself, "Let go of me, you're hurting me."

Gu Mingchen loosened his grip a little without letting go as he stared intensely at her, "We didn't actually break up, did we? We just cut off all communications because I lost my memories, right?"

Bai Rong knew that there was no way of hiding it from him as he was very smart and sharp.

Besides, she was tired of playing this little game of hide-and-seek with him.

"Yes." Her reply was short and simple, yet straight to the point.

Gu Mingchen gripped her hand tighter as he connected all the dots, "So the reason my parents didn't want me to know about the past was that they were against us being together. They were the ones who kidnapped you and forced me to marry Su Wanning? Was your pinky finger also cut off by them?"

"Yes." Bai Rong said as she stared straight at him.

"But we didn't break up because of their objections, as we were still together investigating the Tangqian Village massacre. I was with you before I was involved in an accident?" Gu Mingchen asked.

He was bringing up all the cruel and painful memories one after another and she could recall the sounds of explosions when he went out on his mission.

To her, the Gu Mingchen whom she loved had died in the explosion.

Had it not been for his loss of memory, she wouldn't have known that Zhou Hailan was the one he held dear in his heart and that he was just taking responsibility for her.

Her tears fell uncontrollably as she hoped that she too had died in the explosion with him so that she wouldn't have to face the cruel reality afterward. At the very least, she wouldn't feel so lonely as she would've died carrying her faith in him.

Gu Mingchen felt his chest tighten as he saw her crying and wiped her tears with his fingers as he promised, "I will be responsible for you."

Responsibility?

Responsibility?!

Responsibility.

Bai Rong stopped crying and the look in her eyes slowly grew firm as she stared at Gu Mingchen.

She hated hearing the word 'responsibility'.

He had gotten close to her and won her heart over just to take responsibility.

She didn't want to receive only responsibility in return for her complete love for him.

"No need. Ever since I woke up from the hospital and decided to go overseas, I had decided not to love you ever again. The Bai Rong who loved you had died in her past naivety and stupidity. I have been reborn now. If you wish to be responsible for me, then let me go and stay far away from my life, Chief. Let's not see each other ever again." Bai Rong said coldly.

Gu Mingchen frowned in confusion, "Is this really the outcome that you want?"

"Yes, it is." Bai Rong said clearly, "We should keep moving forward and stop seeing each other as well as missing each other."

Gu Mingchen felt like his heart was stabbed by a sharp knife as he watched a smile gradually spread across her face. It hurt so badly that he was suffocated and unable to speak.

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As proud and arrogant as he might be, he let go of Bai Rong and disappeared from her sight quickly.

Bai Rong closed the door after he left.

The world was finally peaceful and she had gotten what she wished for.

However, she couldn't shake the inexplicable feeling of loss, sadness, and regret in her heart.

She didn't go for lunch as she didn't want to see Gu Mingchen, so she stayed in her room and had some instant noodles.

But the noodles were too hard and made her stomach uncomfortable, so she decided to go out and buy some fruits instead.

She opened the door and saw Leng Qiuzun standing outside. He was just about to knock on her door.

"What is it?" Bai Rong asked.

"They've arrested Wang Donger and brought her eyewitnesses in as well. One of them was her partner and the other was a photographer. I suspect that their confessions have been rehearsed ahead of time as they are all identical, claiming that they were filming at the time of the crime." Leng Qiuzun said solemnly.

"Where were they filming?" Bai Rong asked.

"I'll send it to your computer in a bit. We'll interrogate Wang Donger at the station later at 2 p.m.. Try and see if you can find any weaknesses that we can use to break through Wang Donger's psychological defenses."

"Have you watched it?" Bai Rong asked.

Leng Qiuzun blushed, "I have."

"Was it before or after editing?"

"After."

"Send a copy of the unedited version to my mailbox. I'm going out to buy some fruits now and will watch it when I get back. I'll head over to the station with you guys at 2 p.m. later." Bai Rong said.

"Alright. What fruits do you want? I'll have someone buy them for you." Leng Qiuzun said with a spark in his eyes.

"I saw some fruit stalls near the hotel. I'll just head over by myself." Bai Rong refused his offer.

Leng Qiuzun was feeling awkward now. "Then help me buy some apples, pears and mangosteens while you're at it. I love mangosteens."

Bai Rong was silent as she watched Leng Qiuzun leave after saying that.

She didn't want to argue with him as they wouldn't be working together for long since they were about to solve the case soon anyway.

She went to the fruit stall and bought some apples, pears, mangosteens, oranges and bananas, which cost ninety-six.

Right as she was digging through her wallet for the money, someone handed the cashier a hundred bucks.

Bai Rong looked up and was shocked to see Gu Mingchen, "You've come to buy fruits too?"

Gu Mingchen didn't even look at her as he said, "I had come to buy some fruits for you and ended up seeing you here. Have you had lunch?"

"I didn't want to as I didn't have any appetite." Bai Rong said.

Gu Mingchen took the fruits over and looked at Bai Rong.

He was so big and tall that he looked like a giant steel wall as he stood in front of her.

Bai Rong felt a little awkward, "Some of them are for Leng Qiuzun."

Gu Mingchen ignored her and walked towards the hotel entrance while Bai Rong followed behind him.

They went into the elevator in silence.

"Bai Rong." Gu Mingchen called out suddenly.

"Hm?" Bai Rong looked up at him, not knowing what he wanted to say.

"I want you to watch something with me." Gu Mingchen said.

"Are you referring to Wang Donger's film?" Bai Rong asked.

No, we won't find anything out of the edited version. I requested for the unedited version to focus on the bystanders." Gu Mingchen reminded the woman.

She didn't really feel like watching it with him after what had happened when they watched it together before.

"Leng Qiuzun has already sent me the unedited version." Bai Rong shifted her gaze down as she said that.

"Alright, then we'll watch it in your room." Gu Mingchen said.

Bai Rong went silent.

She had meant to refuse his request politely by saying that, but he had played along instead.

"I want to watch it alone." Bai Rong said directly.

Gu Mingchen looked unhappy as he stared at her and said in a commanding tone, "You have the right to make a request, but I reject it."

"I'm not one of your men. I don't need your approval."

"Rejected." Gu Mingchen increased the aggression in his tone.

Bai Rong frowned as she felt annoyed, "I think I've already made it very clear to you, Chief."

"What did you make clear?" Gu Mingchen asked.

Bai Rong looked at him who seemed to have forgotten everything she said earlier, "I don't love you anymore."

Ding!

The elevator door opened, and Gu Mingchen walked out.

Bai Rong ran along behind him, "If there is no need for it, I feel that our relationship does not allow us to continue seeing each other."

Gu Mingchen pursed his lips as he opened his room door and placed the fruits on the dining table inside.

Bai Rong stood at the doorstep and stared helplessly at the fruits from outside.

Gu Mingchen took off his necktie and undid the first button on his shirt as he frowned at her, "Are you afraid of coming in? Do you fear that I will eat you alive like some sort of monster?"

Bai Rong paused as she recalled how Gu Mingchen had said those exact same words to her before.

In fact, he was much scarier than any monster.

She walked past his room as she refused to enter but he ran outside and dragged her in by the arm anyway, slamming the door shut behind them.

Bai Rong pulled her arm free and walked towards the door but he was faster and placed an arm on the door, sandwiching her between him and the door.

“You just have to piss me off, huh?” Gu Mingchen said unhappily.

“You’re the one who’s pissing me off now!” Bai Rong retorted even more angrily.

“How am I pissing you off?” Gu Mingchen asked.

Bai Rong was losing her patience, “I want to leave but you won’t let me. I want to watch it by myself and you won’t let me either! How is that not pissing me off?!”

“Do you know why I did that?” Gu Mingchen retorted.

Bai Rong paused and stared into his eyes.

He wrapped an arm around her waist and pulled her body in close towards his.

Bai Rong felt her back stiffen up as she pushed at his shoulders, “You can easily get yourself any woman you want. It doesn’t have to be me. I don’t want to be your woman!”

“There are plenty of women out there, but there aren’t many that I like. I prefer to love before making love.” Gu Mingchen turned around and pushed Bai Rong onto his bed as he climbed on top of her.

“Did you love me when we first had sex?” Bai Rong was annoyed.

She felt like she would melt from his hot passion and hated losing her rationality to him like this.

Gu Mingchen stared at her and recalled how he had felt something special about her since he saw her on the plane three years ago.

He felt like she was the one he had always been looking for and that she was the only one he would want to have sex with.

“I think he has probably never forgotten about you. That’s why he kept making me dream of you.” Gu Mingchen said.

Bai Rong could tell that he was referring to the old Gu Mingchen whom she had once loved and her tears started flowing again.

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“You’ve forgotten everything and don’t know anything anymore. You think you haven’t forgotten, but that’s just your speculation.” Bai Rong frowned as she said in a sobbing voice.

Gu Mingchen stared at her teary face, unsure of what they had gone through before, why she had resented him so much, and she was so certain that he didn’t like her.

However, he was very sure of the pain he had felt when he saw her crying like that as well as when she said she wanted to give up on him.

Gu Mingchen lowered his head and kissed her tears as he said, "Then wait for me to find out again. Until I regain my memories, I won't let go of you."

"You're just wasting both our time like this." Bai Rong pushed at him.

Gu Mingchen grabbed her hand, "You don't have a boyfriend anyway, do you?"

Bai Rong knew that he was right, but she was afraid of getting herself back into the pain of loving him again.

A knocking was heard and Bai Rong looked defensively at the door.

"What is it?" Gu Mingchen asked.

"It's me, Wang. Mr. Leng wants you to come over for a bit. He says there's something he wants to discuss with you." Wang said.

"You'd better go now, or Leng Qiuzun will come over shortly." Bai Rong advised him.

Gu Mingchen let go of her as he got up and switched on his computer. He then looked at her as he said, "I'll be back soon, you can watch the video first."

"Alright." Bai Rong said, and watched as he left the room.

She felt that it was inappropriate for her to stay in his room, so she grabbed the fruits and walked towards her room.

Leng Qiuzun's room.

"The case is almost solved! Were you the one who requested for our superiors to have us stay out of it?" Leng Qiuzun questioned.

"This case involves too many parties, so the military has taken over it. Isn't it good that you get to rest earlier as well, Leng Qiuzun?" Gu Mingchen said coldly.

"Each profession has its own field of specializations. Don't you think you're going overboard, Mr. Gu? Is it okay to make light of human lives like that just because the murderer and deceased are from the military? I think you owe the families of the deceased an explanation." Leng Qiuzun said sternly.

Gu Mingchen smirked as he sat on the sofa, "And what explanation are you talking about, Mr. Leng?"

"I mean we should let their families know how the deceased were killed!" Leng Qiuzun said coldly.

"Let them know how they were killed? And then what? Have them seek out the murderers for revenge? The problem is, the murderers have also been killed, so who are the parents going to seek revenge from? Their children have been dead for twenty-five years and they are all very old now. They have either already gotten over the loss of their children or are hoping that they are still alive and well. Either way, letting them know the harsh reality of the situation will not do them any good." Gu Mingchen said calmly.

"So you plan to just cover up the truth?" Leng Qiuzun said in disapproval.

“Whatever happened has happened, so there is no covering up. We are only choosing a better way to express the truth. For example, we can compensate them with money or career advancements.”

“You just want to protect the reputation of the military! Don’t try and dress it up nicely like that! Mr. Gu, you’re nothing but a hypocritical and cunning bastard!” Leng Qiuzun said angrily.

“Those three had not even joined the military twenty-five years ago. They had not done anything bad after joining the military, so what’s wrong with me protecting the reputation of the military? Do you think it would be helpful towards maintaining order if the civilians start a rebellion out of distrust towards the military? On top of that, do you think it would be good for our country’s reputation as a whole if word about this incident were to be spread internationally? Although I may come off as a cunning bastard as a result of my less honorable methods of doing things, what is my sacrifice compared to the interests of our country? If there is nothing else, I need to get back to solving the case now, Mr. Leng.” Gu Mingchen stood up.

“Does Bai Rong know how tyrannical you are? Do you think she will approve of your methods?” Leng Qiuzun asked coldly.

“I don’t need anyone’s approval for what I do.” Gu Mingchen said arrogantly as he left the room and returned to his own, only to find that Bai Rong was no longer there.

He called Bai Rong, but she didn’t answer when she saw that it was him and set her phone on silent mode as she continued to watch the unedited video while munching on her apples in her room.

A beeping sound was heard and Gu Mingchen entered after opening the door.

Bai Rong was speechless as she was confused as to where he got a keycard to her room from.

“Why didn’t you answer the phone?” Gu Mingchen asked as he shut the door and walked towards her.

She couldn't say she didn't hear it as her phone was right next to her.

"I noticed an important detail in the video, so I didn't pick up." Bai Rong explained as she continued to munch on her apple.

"What important detail? Do tell." Gu Mingchen asked as he sat right next to her.

He had not mentioned anything about why she left his room and she was not about to bring it up either.

"Look, there are quite a lot of people appearing here. I suggest questioning each and every one of them. We'll be able to make a breakthrough as long as one of them slips up." Bai Rong suggested.

"Alright." Gu Mingchen responded without saying anything else, so Bai Rong could only continue watching the video.

She had seen such videos before as Liu Yan would often ask her to watch them with her.

One of them had left a deep impression on her, where the guy had brought the girl to orgasm four or five times in just five minutes.

Back then, she felt curious as the girl in that video had made it very obvious whenever she had an orgasm.

Now that she was watching the unedited version of the footage, she realized how it was all due to editing.

After the girl had her first orgasm, they would let her take a break before continuing but would remove the parts from the footage.

It all made sense now that she realized it was all fake.

However, as fake as it may be, she still blushed as she watched it, even more so with Gu Mingchen sitting next to her like that.

She could feel him staring at her, so she turned her head towards him and found that he was indeed staring at her for quite some time now.

“Why are you looking at me? Watch the video.” Gu Mingchen reminded her.

Bai Rong paused for a moment before she retorted, “How would you know I was looking at you if you weren’t staring at me?”

“I’ve already spotted the problem, but I don’t know if you have.” Gu Mingchen said.

“Then why didn’t you say so?” Bai Rong was confused.

“You’re the professional here, so I wanted to see how good you were.”

“My profession lies in psychology, not in watching videos.” Bai Rong shut her laptop, “Since you’ve already spotted the problem, then tell me what it is, Chief Gu.”

“See it for yourself. I didn’t sleep well last night, so I’ll rest for a bit. If you haven’t spotted it when we go to the station at 2 p.m., I’ll tell you then.” He said as he lay down on her bed and closed his eyes.

Chapter 180

Bai Rong was worried that it would seem inappropriate if someone were to see him sleeping in her room, "Go sleep in your room."

Gu Mingchen ignored her completely and kept his eyes closed as he continued to sleep in silence.

Bai Rong was about to continue analyzing the video when she heard Leng Qiuzun's voice coming from the door, "Open the door."

There was no way she could explain her way out of it if Leng Qiuzun were to see him in her room like this, "Gu Mingchen, wake up and hide somewhere."

He didn't respond and continued to sleep.

"Gu Mingchen!" Bai Rong started pushing him.

Gu Mingchen grabbed her hand and pulled her into him as he turned over and got on top of her, kissing her on her lips.

"Bai Rong, I know you're in there! Open up, there's something I need to talk to you about! Bai Rong!" Leng Qiuzun knocked hard on the door.

Bai Rong looked anxiously at the door, afraid that Leng Qiuzun would have the hotel staff open the door for him like how Gu Mingchen did earlier.

She looked at Gu Mingchen pleadingly, and he finally let go of her as he whispered, "Ignore him. You have already been acquired."

"Gu Mingchen, stop messing around! Leng Qiuzun is my team leader as well as my superior. You'll put me in a tough spot like this!"

"The military has taken over this case. I've already informed the State Council that I will be in charge of this case from now on." Gu Mingchen explained as he sat up straight.

"Does this mean that I'm off duty now?" Bai Rong sat up straight as well.

"You weren't part of the police force, to begin with, as they were the ones who approached the Research Institute of Psychology requesting for assistance. Similarly, the military can also seek assistance from the institute. So, Leng Qiuzun isn't your superior right now, I am." Gu Mingchen said patiently as he walked towards the door.

Bai Rong understood what he meant and quickly grabbed hold of him, "Don't open the door. Go hide and let me open it instead."

"Why do I have to hide? What are you afraid of, Bai Rong? Besides, I've already canceled my engagement with Su Wanning, so I'm single now." Gu Mingchen said as he looked at her.

Bai Rong stared blankly at him, "You've broken off your engagement with Su Wanning?"

"Three years ago, she was still just like a younger sister to me. I can't accept having a younger sister turn into my fiancée. Now, I don't even see her as a younger sister anymore." Gu Mingchen explained as he observed her facial expression.

"Has Su Zheng agreed to it?" Bai Rong stared at him in disbelief.

“He doesn’t have a say in this matter. Su Wanning had been frequenting some ladies’ clubs and had sex with more than five gigolos. His reputation would be destroyed if word gets out about this, and his chances at the election for commander-in-chief would be over. In fact, he wouldn’t even be able to keep his position as vice commander-in-chief. I had Su Wanning propose to cancel our engagement, so the Su Family wouldn’t have any objections.” Gu Mingchen said firmly.

“You’ve known all about Su Wanning?” Bai Rong was shocked as she had been trying to give him some hints about it, but it turned out that he knew it better than anyone else.

“Putting her affairs aside, I also know everything that’s been going on with you during the three years you were abroad.” Gu Mingchen said as he stared intensely at her.

Bai Rong felt like her emotions were in turmoil when she found out that he had been paying attention to her for the past three years.

However, as shocked as she might be, she still needed to deal with Leng Qiuzun outside her door.

“Will you please just hide? I don’t want anyone to start gossiping about me.” Bai Rong pleaded with him.

“Who would dare gossip about you?” Gu Mingchen asked arrogantly.

Bai Rong got angry, “Are you hiding or not?!”

He gave her a look and cleared his throat before walking into the bathroom in silence.

Bai Rong unknowingly let out a smile as she watched him enter.

When she opened the door, she heard Leng Qiuzun calling out to the hotel staff nearby, "Will you please open this door for me? My friend is inside and I've been calling out to her for a long time, but she hasn't responded. I'm worried something may have happened to her."

Bai Rong opened the door and stood in the doorway, "Mr. Leng, did you need something from me?"

"Why didn't you open the door? And why is your face so red?" Leng Qiuzun stared at her face suspiciously.

Bai Rong lowered her head as she said, "I was watching that video and I noticed something off. I'll let you know at the station later."

"No need, I'm here to tell you that we no longer have to follow up on this case as Mr. Gu will take over it completely."

"I know that, but you're the only one who doesn't have to follow up on it. I'm with the Research Institute of Psychology and am currently working with Mr. Gu." Bai Rong explained.

"Aren't you curious as to why the military is taking over?" Leng Qiuzun frowned as he hated how she was making light of the matter.

"Xiong Zhiqing and Xiong Changan are from the Special Forces military base. Although this had all taken place before they joined, things could get nasty due to public speculations and if people were to misuse that information. That is why the military will take over and keep a tight lid on everything."

"Don't you think that it's wrong to do so?" Leng Qiuzun said impatiently.

"I remember learning about this in politics class back in junior high. The honor of the country surpasses that of collective interests, while collective interests surpass personal interests. The national interests are higher than everything else and all actions that would put the national interests at risk are deemed

to be hostile. Therefore, it's correct for the military to do so. Oh, I almost forgot, you studied abroad didn't you, Mr. Leng?" Bai Rong smiled as she said the last sentence sarcastically.

"To me, the truth is more important than anything else." Leng Qiuzun said sternly.

"I understand you. Mr. Leng, you are a very individualistic person. However, we are all living in a collective society where anyone who is capable and can be put to good use will be deemed honorable. Those who are capable but are put to bad use will result in the opposite. You are a very capable person and I hope to have more opportunities to solve cases with you in the future." Bai Rong said.

When she was about to close the door, Leng Qiuzun put his hand on the door and stared at her. "When you said that you hope to have more opportunities to solve cases with me, did you really mean it, or were you just saying it out of courtesy?"

"I meant it. You are highly efficient in solving cases and collective interests surpass personal interests." Bai Rong smiled as she closed the door and turned around to see Gu Mingchen standing silently behind her.

Bai Rong jumped in shock as she realized how he would've been discovered if she had let Leng Qiuzun in earlier.

She smacked him on the shoulder in annoyance, but he caught her hand and pinned her aggressively against the door, "Bai Rong, have I not been able to satisfy you? Is that why you're flirting with other men?"

"Who's flirting with men?" Bai Rong kept her voice low as she was afraid that Leng Qiuzun was still outside and would hear them.

"You should have rejected Leng Qiuzun directly and said you don't wish to work with him ever again. That guy has ulterior motives towards you. If you're going to flirt, you should just flirt with me instead."

Bai Rong was speechless.