

I Want a Lifetime with You

Chapter 218

“What about your parents?” Ning Xin peered up at Fu Chengyan, who remained silent. Instead, he looked unconcerned, as if he couldn’t care less.

Ning Xin understood his stance against telling his parents, so she didn’t prod him for answers. “You gave us a slapdash call without mentioning your marriage on the phone. Your uncle and I didn’t bring anything for your wife and this is the first time we meet...”

“Aunt Ning, my name is Shi Nuan. You can call me Nuan.” Shi Nuan flashed a warm smile.

“Oh, alright, Nuan.” Ning Xin was pleased by Shi Nuan’s decency, especially her unpretentious demeanor toward them. Ning Xin could tell that Shi Nuan cared a lot about Fu Chengyan with her gaze constantly fixated on him. “Yan, it’s inappropriate for us to show up empty-handed since this our first meet-up with Shi Nuan.”

“Never mind, Aunt Ning.” Shi Nuan couldn’t care less about those unnecessary formalities, “Actually, Yan has always wanted to introduce me to his uncle and aunt, but I rejected it previously because I felt it was not the right timing. I hope you won’t mind.”

“Nuan is right. We’re a family, so there’s no need to adhere to formalities like meetup gifts. Aunt Ning, you must be tired of standing, have a seat.” Fu Chengyan helped Ning Xin to the couch. Fu Heng had remained silent the whole time as he observed Fu Chengyan and Shi Nuan with a shrewd gaze. Then, his eyes explored the surrounding of the Wutong Residence before nodding in satisfaction.

“Uncle, Aunt Ning, have some tea!”

Shi Nuan appeared from the kitchen with the tea she brewed, “I’m not sure what tea you normally enjoy so I prepared uncle’s tea according to Yan’s preference. As for Aunt Ning, since you’re not feeling well, I made you some mild honeysuckle tea. Aunt Ning, have a taste.”

“You’re too kind,” Ning Xin said before taking a sip. Then, she placed her teacup down and patted Shi Nuan’s hand gently, “You’re a beautiful and pure-hearted lady.”

“Aunt, you’re flattering me.” Shi Nuan was glad to receive such a high compliment from Ning Xin.

“Did you decorate the Wutong Residence by yourself?” Fu Heng glanced at Shi Nuan and then at the surroundings.

Fu Heng and Ning Xin rarely visited the Wutong Residence. They had only stepped foot a few times when Fu Chengyan first bought it a few years ago. It was mostly the same cold, modern interior design that was tell-tale of Fu Chengyan’s personal style. Although there was not much of a change, Fu Heng could sense a homely atmosphere in the Wutong residence.

Shi Nuan paused for a while, “Uncle, you noticed it?” A sheepish expression appeared on Shi Nuan’s face, “Actually, I only contributed to a small part of the decoration since Yan’s previous interior design was immaculate. But I found the white curtains too blinding so I substituted them with darker shades of white. It’s embroidered with a trace of traditional Chinese paintings, which Yan is fond of.”

Fu Heng nodded, “It seems like you know him pretty well.”

“Actually I don’t know him well enough. It has not a long time since we met each other, which keep the marriage on the down-low. Uncle, I hope you won’t blame me and Yan for that!”

Fu Heng chuckled, "Although marriage is between the two of you, it involves the engagement of two families. Ning and I have no right to blame you, but you should at least inform your families, to do otherwise would be dishonorable."

"Uncle, you're right. Yan and I are inconsiderate in this matter." Shi Nuan owned up at once, "So this time we invited you and aunt to set right our mistakes." Shi Nuan paused and then continued, "My relationship with my family is complicated, so I'm unwilling to let them know about our marriage because that will only bring Yan trouble. However, my granddad and grandpa are aware of it, and they are pleased with Yan."

"Oh?" Fu Heng raised his brow and looked at Fu Chengyan. Fu Chengyan nodded in response to Shi Nuan's words, pleased by her eloquence. "Yes, uncle."

"If that's so, then I have nothing more to say." Fu Heng nodded, "Chengyan, I know you're a prudent adult. I won't question your decisions because you must have your own reason for not telling us beforehand. But your parents and your granddad..."

"I will tell them when it's time, but not now. I hope you would keep it from them," Fu Chengyan said as his face grew serious.

It's rare to see Fu Chengyan taking a matter so seriously. Fu Heng nodded after a moment of silence, "It's not my business to interfere, but you should at least notify your father."

Fu Heng glanced at Shi Nuan, looking hesitant. Eventually, he sighed and said, "Your parents are indeed tough nuts to crack, especially with Song Jingyu standing in the way. What are you going to do with them?"

Fu Heng took another glance at Shi Nuan and found that Shi Nuan was unruffled by his words. He guessed Shi Nuan must have been aware of Song Jingyu's existence, "You guys are grown-ups now. You have your own opinions and you can deal with your own issues, so I'll leave it up to you, but don't forget Song

Jingyu is from your mother's side of the family and the Song family is protective toward her."

"It's no big deal, I can take care of it." Fu Chengyan paused for a while and continued, "Uncle, aunt, you can stay here for two days since you've come over. The air here is fresher and it is secluded, so there's less disturbance."

Fu Heng curled his lips, "You smarty pants!" He got off the couch, "Come with me, you and I are going to have a talk."

Fu Chengyan followed Fu Heng to the study on the second floor while Shi Nuan accompanied Ning Xin. The two women chatted away in the living room.

Ning Xin was feeling suffocated from being cooped up in the Fu clan mansion, so she was delighted to meet Shi Nuan. She enthusiastically chatted with Shi Nuan and asked about Shi Nuan's family from time to time. She got a vague picture of the complexity of Shi Nuan's family relationship and understood their choice of getting married in secret.

"I watched Yan grow up and I can guarantee that he's a good kid. Nuan, you're a nice lady, and I'm happy that you and Yan found each other!" Ning Xin patted Shi Nuan's hand, "But you can't keep your marriage in the dark forever. You should find an opportunity to tell them."

"Aunt Ning, you're right. It's just that Yan and I think it's not the perfect timing to tell them now." Shi Nuan paused, "We don't mean to avoid it forever; we'll tell them sooner or later."

"That's great." Ning Xin nodded, "You're perceptive despite your young age."

"Aunt Ning, you're flattering me."

"Just now you mentioned that you're working at Shengyuan?" Ning Xin asked as a thought crossed her mind. "Then Song Jingyu..."

“Aunt Ning, don’t worry. Yan and I maintain a strictly professional relationship in the office. He is my superior, and I’m his subordinate – nothing more than that. In fact, I’m in the project management department, so I don’t get to meet him often. I’m mindful of separating work from personal life.” Shi Nuan left no doubt on this matter, “Aunt Ning, Yan actually invited you over because there’s someone he wants you to meet.”

“To meet someone? Isn’t that you?” Ning Xin was slightly confused and furrowed her brows, “Then who is it?”

“I’m not sure either, but Yan said it’s someone important to you.” Shi Nuan took a glance upstairs as she spoke, “Yan hopes to keep it from uncle, so...”

Ning Xin slightly frowned, “You want me to put Heng off?”

Shi Nuan nodded, “But of course, if aunt is unwilling to meet this person, we can definitely call it off. Yan said it’s entirely up to you.”

Ning Xin smiled as she shook her head, “I raised Yan since he was a child and I know him pretty well. Since you guys invited me, I might as well meet that person.”

Ning Xin took out her handphone and gave Fu Heng a call, “Fu Heng, I’m craving for the Osmanthus cake from Bingji. Can you go get them for me?”

“Now?” Fu Heng slightly frowned, “Ok, I’ll go get them soon.”

Fu Heng ended the call and turned to meet Fu Chengyan’s gaze, “Since you’ve chosen to get married, you should settle down from now on. She seems to be a nice lady. You better treat her nicely.”

“I will.” Fu Chengyan curved his lips into a gentle smile. “She’s my wife and I’ll take care of her for the rest of my life.”

Fu Heng was satisfied with his response, “It appears that we’re on the same page.” Then, he alluded, “But her face... She looks like...”

Fu Chengyan’s brows creased, “She’s Nuan, not anyone else. Uncle, I do know who I’m in love with.”

“There’s no need for me to worry, then.” Fu Heng patted Fu Chengyan on the shoulder, “You guys help look after your aunt whilst I’m off to buy her some Osmanthus cake.”

“Osmanthus cake? Aunt Ning still has a special liking for it after all these years, huh?” Fu Chengyan jested.

Fu Heng smiled helplessly with a sense of indulgence, “I guess it’s a good thing to have a penchant for something.”

As soon as Fu Heng was gone, Ning Xin turned toward Fu Chengyan with a stern face, “I know you never do things without a reason.”

“Aunt Ning, don’t worry, it’s no other than Pei Jingxiu. Do you still remember him?” Fu Chengyan fetched Ning Xin a cashmere blanket, placed it atop her lap, and patted her consolingly on the shoulder. “The adopted son of the Ning family.”

“Xiu?” Ning Xin fell into a long silence before speaking again, “I thought Xiu is studying abroad? I rarely saw him since I got married and came to Jiang City.” Ning Xin had only a vague memory of Pei Jingxiu, and it took her by surprise to hear about him, “Has Xiu come to Jiang City?”

“Yes, Aunt Ning.” Fu Chengyan nodded, “Pei Jingxiu wants to meet you, so...”

“Then let’s meet. I still remember the day I first saw him – he was still a little squirt. I think he must be about your age now!” Ning Xin chuckled, “I can’t recall clearly.”

“He’s three years older than me.” Fu Chengyan took Ning Xin’s hand. “He will be arriving soon. Aunt Ning, I suppose you already know why I decided to keep it from uncle. Uncle and the Ning family...”

“I understand.” Ning Xin patted Fu Chengyan’s hand, “It’s very thoughtful of you. Let me meet Xiu first and we’ll tell your uncle later.”

The doorbell rang, interrupting their conversation. Shi Nuan smiled and got off the couch, “I suppose it’s Pei Jingxiu. I’ll get the door.”

Shi Nuan unlatched the door and found Pei Jingxiu with a beige coat in his hand. A young girl was standing beside him. It was hard to estimate the girl’s age as she was baby-faced, which added to her youthfulness.

Dressed in a pink dress, she looked like a delicate doll. The girl was none other than Ning Xi.