



# Chapter 00

## **Mian Xiang Told Me: This Person wasn't The One**

"How was it, Soul? Did the client approve the blueprint?"

"Yeah, Lady Wan said yes."

"Wait, for real!?"

"Why would I waste my time lying about work-related things? They already confirmed that they will hire our firm to build her new house. She asked her secretary to be in contact with me for further details."

"Seriously, how did you do it? No matter how fuzzy and demanding these clients are, they all agree to hire us after you propose the blueprint to them, Soul."

"I know right? Soul, you must have a Salika Linthong<sup>1</sup> amulet with Metta Mahaniyom<sup>2</sup>."

Tantiya looked at the juniors in her team who kept praising and exaggerating her work. They were probably glad that Lady Wan, the company's important client, decided to choose their company and not tear up their contract.

The Lady was even willing to pay the fee because she wasn't happy with the previous architect, Chok, who was also Soul's senior. And Chok, at the same time, practically begged her to take over this project because he couldn't take how demanding this client was anymore.

"You're just exaggerating, Oyl, Mim. I just showed the clients what they wanted in the blueprint I drafted. There's no need for an amulet."

The lovely woman said truthfully. Her working method consisted of her expertise and hands-on experience that she learned from working for many years. She learned these things from doing her work and adapting from her mistakes in the past as well as attending to her client's needs to satisfy them with her work.

Besides, she wasn't the occult architect type who needed to purchase an amulet to increase her negotiating charms to convince people to be persuaded by anything she said. She just gave the clients her professional opinions; she was so straightforward in her explanation that her colleagues often thought of her as a blunt person.

But after working with her for a while, they realized that she was just very determined about her work, just like Oyl, her newly graduated junior, who worked as a coordinator, and Mim, a junior interior designer who worked with her for many years that they got along quite nicely at work.

"Oyl, I'll leave Lady Wan's project for you to coordinate and take care of the rest, okay? I have to talk with the contractor of the Sathorn project in the afternoon."

"Roger that, Soul. I'll take care of the rest."

"Mim, you can start working on the project; I'll talk to Tar tomorrow."

The skilled architect said, assigning her juniors with casual ease before hurriedly grabbing her favorite shoulder bag that was large enough to put important documents in. Tantiya had just arrived at the company not long before, but she had to meet with some clients outside or go to the work sites that she was responsible for. She rarely got to sit in the office all day.

"Hello, Mr. Somboon's secretary? Yes, I'm speaking.."

Tantiya pressed to accept the call to talk with one of her clients, who had his secretary contact her about the revision of the most recent blueprint that she

sent to him to approve. Then she asked for a meeting with them in the evening. Her schedule was pretty hectic, and she didn't have fixed working hours.

Tantiya's family at home often complained about this, as they didn't want her to go too hard on herself. She did tell them that she would take it easy years ago, but now, she could only text her mom, telling her not to wait until too late in the evening.

**"I'll go home late tonight, Mom. Don't wait up for dinner, okay?"**

There it was, her daily routine on one of those hectic days she had!

*Today was Wednesday...*

*The bad luck color was pink!*

*The lucky colors were black, orange, and brown.*

The color black helped with charisma and favor with authorities; orange helped with work-related things, and if one wanted success in both career and wealth, then the color brown was needed to attract fortune.

So on Renita's lovely Wednesday morning, she started her day wearing a black leather, slim-fit blouse with a complimenting skirt, radiant orange sneakers to attract sponsorship, and a pair of brown underwear to attract wealth from top to toe, exactly by the book.

"Xinxin,"

"Yes, mama?"

"Are you heading out to work? Won't you have breakfast first, sweetie?"

"I'm running late, mama. I'll join you for dinner at home today."

"Then at least grab some fruit first; I already peeled and put them in the box for you."

"See you later, mama."

Renita kissed her mother on the cheek for blessings as usual before she went to work every day. Despite how much she believed in horoscopes and fate, the highest and holiest thing to respect more than any gods or amulets was the one who cared for you the most at home.

"Xinxin, tie your shoes first; you will stumble like that."

"When did the lace unravel? Ah! Oh no!"

"What happened, dear?"

**"I accidentally stepped out of the house with my right foot today....** It said that I will succeed in my work if I step with my left foot first."

Because she forgot to follow the Key to Success in Your Fate...

It seemed like her work today with a client might not go as smoothly as she thought?

"Good afternoon, Lady Wan."

"Feng Shui<sup>3</sup> Master Xinxin, it's an honor for me to have you examine my house's Feng Shui."

"I guarantee, Lady Wan, if you follow my suggestions, this house will make its residents richer, happier, more prosperous, and glorious."

Renita greeted Lady Wan, her newest client, and pupil, who was a close friend of Ms. Jitsamorn, Renita's first major customer, back when she was not widely known in the field. Ms. Jitsamorn was the owner of a large drinking water factory. After she went to examine the second factory's Feng Shui in Chonburi province, the factory's sales went through the roof. Ms. Jitsamorn believed in Feng Shui and the art of location ever since, she invited Renita to inspect and correct the Feng Shui at her house and spread the word about Feng Shui Master Xinxin so that many of her higher-up friends lined up for her service ever since.

"House address number 859/5."

"What about it, Feng Shui master?"

"Your home address number is a blessing number, ma'am. Number 5 is happiness, and 8 is stability in wealth, complemented by the number 9 which means prosperity. According to beliefs, this house will further enhance your wealth."

The beautiful girl said smoothly; the first thing she considered was the art of numbers, which numbers were good or bad. If it consisted of the number 4, despite seeming to be a good number, Chinese people deemed that the number 4 was pronounced similarly to the word 'si,' meaning 'death' in Chinese.

"Excuse me, ma'am, who designed the fountain to be on this side?"

"That would be the architect who is responsible for the design."

"The Feng Shui text said that the right side is the side of the fire element, and the left side is the water element. Both sides need to be balanced. In a proper design, there should be water flowing in front of a house. But the fountain should be on the left side, ma'am, so that this house would be peaceful for its residents. If it is located more on the right side, water will meet fire, and it won't be balanced; it won't be like yin-yang. You should fix it, ma'am."

**"You heard what Feng Shui Master Xinxin said; arrange it according to her words."**

"But ma'am, the fountain is already built. If you wish to adjust it, we have to demolish it and rebuild the whole fountain."

"Then do it, demolish everything that is bad."

"But you already fulfilled the number of times you can revise the blueprint that we agreed on in the contract. And Miss Tantiya has already arranged everything since you approved her blueprint a month ago."



"Just arrange it according to what she said. I can pay the fee; I'll do what the Feng Shui master says."

"The number of lamps and light bulbs inside the house can't be an odd number. From what I see from the front door to the living room, the lights are all odd numbers, either one, three, or five. This is not right for a residence's Feng Shui."

Renita noticed the number of lamps and decorative lights inside the house as she carried a Feng Shui compass and a weighty text with her as she explored Lady Wan's spacious mansion. There were several suggestions she gave to the house owner to adjust according to Feng Shui. But it seemed like her most recent suggestion concerning the love life made Lady Wan the most restless.

"What should I do, Feng Shui master?"

"It might look modern and lovely, but it's not appropriate according to Feng Shui's principles. You can adjust it by designing the lights to be pairs or even numbers, ma'am. Or else, it will be an odd number, leaving the resident to remain single without a pair."

"You heard that, do as Feng Shui Master Xinxin said even if you have to rebuild the whole house."

"What did you say, Mim?"

"While you were out, Lady Wan called our company and gave us an earful. She demanded you meet her at her house immediately, Soul. Or else she will terminate the contract with the company."

"What happened? I had a meeting with her last month. She agreed to sign the contract without any issue, and we already started the construction, so why does she have a problem now, all of a sudden?"

"I'm not sure about the reason either. But from what I heard from her secretary, it seems to have something to do with her house's Feng Shui."

## **"Her house's Feng Shui!?"**

Tantiya listened to her junior's explanation with disbelief mixed with exasperation. Normally, aside from the detailed issues that came from the client's demands, there were some common issues and disagreements between professionals like interior designers and landscape architects. But they could all come to an agreement through logical discussion.

However, for Tantiya, the people and professions that were toughest to handle were these Feng Shui masters. No matter where these masters came from, they tended to say things with their wildest imagination that apparently mattered more than reality and practicality.

In her recent client's project, for example, she nearly had a migraine from revising the whole project and explaining things until she won an argument with the Feng Shui master. They had been arguing about building a swimming pool inside the house to enhance Chi energy.

She pointed out logical principles and practicality to her client, highlighting that the house structure would have issues in the long run. Not to mention the water and electrical systems, which might result in a short circuit or leakage inside the house. So that famous Feng Shui master's dream project had to come to an end because of her wake-up call.

**Still, Lady Wan managed to find a new Feng Shui master to argue with her!**

"Hurry and go to the client's house. Soul, you go with Oyl, alright?"

"Sure, Mim, I'll drive, Soul."

"Don't let Soul lash out at the client, Oyl."

"I'll try."

"Soul, I'm asking you, please don't make the boss give us an earful again. I really don't want to hear it."



The pretty girl gave Mim a noncommittal nod since she didn't think she could give her junior her word that she wouldn't end up in a fight with another Feng Shui master. By now, the whole Feng Shui master community must have already been so done with her, the infamous sharp-tongued architect. It had been five years since she started working; she guessed it could be said that those Feng Shui masters were her arch-nemesis.

It wasn't like she didn't want to be civil with them, but if conversing with logic wasn't an option, then a verbal spar would be the answer.

"Soul, at least do it for me, alright? Don't get into trouble today."

"I'm not the kind of person who picks a fight first, you know?"

"Didn't you just throw a fit at Mr. Vikrom's Feng Shui master last month? My job description suddenly changed from assistant to a sport referee because I had to stop you two from fighting."

"Well, do you think it's practical to design a spiral staircase to look like a dragon holding a crystal in its mouth? They want to make the stairs super shiny but refuse to install anti-slip measures. The stairs would probably be so dizzying to look at that it would cause the residents to fall down and hurt themselves."

If they were to design a house solely based on the resident's preferences while disregarding logic and safety that came from the house's solid and stable foundation, then Mr. Vikrom would probably have an accident in his home before he could thrive like a majestic dragon.

"Miss Soul, Lady Wan is waiting for you, this way please."

"Miss Pilin, is Lady Wan's Feng Shui master still here?"

"Yes, Miss. Feng Shui Master Xinxin is here. The Lady wants her to talk with you first."

"Xinxin, you said? A woman?"

The pretty girl repeated the Feng Shui master's name, whom she had never heard of before, or maybe she did, but they just never met face-to-face. But never mind this person's name; it wouldn't be as important as the project they would be discussing a few minutes later.

If this Feng Shui master started to suggest anything logically impossible for Lady Wan, naturally, Tantiya would have to stop them from revising the blueprint that she had put her best effort into. She would try to prevent it at all costs.

"Soul, remember, if you start to get angry, just repeat the word 'bonus' in your head."

"Stop it, or the first person I'll be scolding is you, Oyl."

The talented architect followed Pilin, Lady Wan's secretary, into the house. Her juniors followed behind at some distance, ready to stop the great battle that might take place. This was normal for them; Oyl would silently stay behind, keeping her distance while looking out for Tantiya.

"Oh, you're here. Please have a seat, Miss Soul. I was just waiting for you."

"Good afternoon, Lady Wan." — — — — —

"Good afternoon to you too. Here, let me introduce you to Master Xinxin. She is the Feng Shui master who will be overseeing this house for me. Master Xinxin, this is Miss Soul, the architect who designed my house."

**"Miss Architect, hi."**

Renita greeted the newcomer smoothly after Lady Wan introduced them. She smiled for the sake of manners before shifting her focus back to her valued customer, paying the architect responsible for the project no mind. Miss Soul wasn't the first architect she had met on the job because sometimes, clients would send her to talk to the engineer, architect, interior designer, or even the contractor as their representative so they could be assured that the house would turn out to be perfect according to both the Feng Shui and other parties.

**The Feng Shui Master Xinxin was different from the others.**

Tantiya frowned, confused at this rather surprising situation. Lady Wan's current Feng Shui master looked surprisingly young compared to the other Feng Shui masters she had met. Those masters were pretty old, but this person seemed young, maybe even younger than Tantiya.

The Feng Shui master also dressed practically, in contrast with the myth that Feng Shui masters would wear traditional Chinese clothes or a dragon embroidery outfit to attract wealth or wear lucky charms and accessories all over their arms.

"You see, Miss Soul, the reason why I asked for you to meet with me today is because I want to adjust the blueprint to fit the Feng Shui's rules."

"But Lady Wan, you already approved the latest blueprint. And by the contract, you cannot make any more changes."

"The contract states that there will be an extra fee for any additional changes, which I am more than willing to pay no matter what. But if you refuse to revise it for me, Miss Soul, I might not feel comfortable living in this house after it is finished. I don't want to stay single and die alone all because this house has bad Feng Shui."

"But Lady Wan, things like that don't just depend on the house's Feng Shui."

"Actually, it depends directly on it. A house is the first door that will open opportunities for its residents."

"I don't recall talking to you, Miss Feng Shui master."

"Oh, I'm aware. But your understanding of this matter needs to be corrected, so I have to interrupt."

"Which part of the house do you want to change, Lady Wan? I won't charge you if it's just a few spots."

The skilled architect turned her attention back to the company's major client. She didn't want to pick a fight or argue with the Feng Shui master sitting opposite her, who rudely interrupted her conversation with the house owner earlier.

"Fantastic, I knew I could talk to you and you would understand, Miss Soul. I want to move the fountain, the one at the front of the house. If it can't be moved, then you can just demolish it and build a bigger one to attract the flow of wealth. Change the number of light bulbs and lamps in the house to an even number. Adjust the front door's location so that it doesn't align with the door inside the house. And I want you to make the stairs wider so it can have plenty of space. Hmm, what else did you say, Feng Shui Master Xinxin? Could you please tell Miss Soul for me what I missed?"

"The rooms that need to be adjusted are the kitchen, all of the bedrooms, and the toilets in order to fit the Feng Shui principles, Lady Wan."

If she's going to do it so casually as if she were talking about building a doll's house...

Why didn't she just change her career from a Feng Shui master to an architect so she could design the entire house herself? Damn it with this troublesome Feng Shui master!

"So, from my brief explanation, is there anything else you're having a problem understanding, Miss Architect?"

The skilled Feng Shui master inquired. Lady Wan had asked her to take the architect to see which elements in which places needed to be changed around the house. At first, Pilin, Lady Wan's secretary, and the architect's team acted like they would follow the two of them, but they did not, and it ended up with Xinxin walking alone with the person responsible for the house's design so they could discuss the adjustment.

"Which part? I'll explain it to you again."

**"I have a problem with everything you just said!"**

Renita snapped her head back to look the architect in the eye. She stared past the spectacles and looked deep into her eyes, trying to determine whether the woman was just joking or actually had a problem with her. It seemed like it would be the latter case.

"I don't understand why a Feng Shui master would want to revise the blueprint. There's nothing wrong with the old one. Some changes that you explained to me cannot be adjusted because of practicality. You make my job even harder, and you delay the time to complete and deliver this project for the people involved."

"But isn't it an architect's job to design a house based on the resident's preferences?"

"It is my job, and you're causing my work a problem."

"I didn't do anything, Miss. I just advise what's best for Lady Wan from what I studied from the books and texts."

"Are you really not aware that you're the reason for this problem?"

"I'm just doing my job, like you, Miss Architect."

"But what you want to adjust is not doable."

"And what you designed is bad for the house's Feng Shui. This house won't be peaceful for the residents, their love life will have obstacles, and they will have financial problems."

Tantiya returned Renita's gaze, staring into the Feng Shui master's doe eyes. Renita was even more stubborn and better at bickering than Tantiya originally thought. It was never easy, arguing with any Feng Shui master to find a solution—especially with this Feng Shui Master Xinxin, who was so absorbed in her belief.

"Oh, for God's sake, we won't be making any progress today if we can't agree."

"So we compromise then? Adjust what you can on the blueprint, and I'll try to find an alternative option to enhance the Feng Shui with anything you can't change, maybe some auspicious trees or lucky charms inside the house."

"Hey! I still stand by what I said—I won't change anything. There's nothing wrong with the layout I designed."

The beautiful Feng Shui master took in the architect's face, seeing how difficult and inconsiderate she was being towards what Lady Wan, the owner of this house, wanted. Renita understood that not everyone believed in or followed the principles of Feng Shui. But if they did and became more prosperous, richer, and their house became peaceful and filled with joy, it was more than a good start in life.

Renita stared at the woman's face, who marched over, stopping her with a challenging face-to-face gesture when the architect saw that she intended to end the conversation and return to the house's owner. Renita studied the architect's Mian Xiang<sup>4</sup>, contemplating what she saw and forming a rough idea of this person's characteristics.

"Your eyebrows are uneven. According to the Mian Xiang texts, you are an impatient person. Large, round eyes without redness in your sclera mean that despite your impatience, you're not ill-tempered."

"Hang on, who asked for your opinion, you damn Feng Shui master!"

"Your wide forehead indicates prosperity, your nose is prominent but not too pointed, so you're an unyielding person with a strong will. But your upper lip is thicker than the lower lip, which means that you are blunt and honest with your feelings, although..."

"What?"

"I thought you said you didn't want to know?"

"You already said this much, so just finish what you have to say."

"Do you still want to know even if it's bad?"

"Just spill it out."

"See? You really are impatient. Overall, your life is good, but your love life is quite unfortunate."

"Anyone can make things up like this. Be it Feng Shui masters or fortune tellers, they are all just making things up—those con artists."

"Why do you keep saying rude things, Miss Architect?"

**"Oh well, who would want to date someone this mean, am I right?"**

She really shouldn't have stepped out of the house with her right foot...

1. **Salika Linthong** - Thai amulet believed to help with charms and negotiation.

2. **Metta Mahaniyom** - Thai amulet believed to bring charms and popularity to its owner.

3. **Feng Shui** - An ancient Chinese art of arranging environments in places to achieve balance and harmonizing individuals with their surrounding environment.

4. **Mian Xiang** - An ancient Chinese form of face reading used to evaluate the key aspects of a person's life.



# Chapter 1

## Renita Who Came with the Color Green

After that, the junior interior designer's prayer wasn't answered. Because after their skilled architect got back to the company, the boss called the whole team into his office to scold them for making Lady Wan call to give the company an earful. She complained that Soul, their company's No. 1 architect, refused to carry on with her project and told Lady Wan that if she wished to adjust the blueprint according to the Feng Shui master's suggestions, she should find another company to continue the project.

**Of course, for the boss, the client was God.**

But for the employees who had to deal with the clients—despite how they acted, how demanding, fussy, and self-centered they were—all the employees could do was smile and reply, *"Yes, sir. Yes, ma'am."* Internally, they could only swear, cursing the 3 and the F words that definitely weren't short for *"best friend."* Oh, the things they had to keep inside.

"What should we do, Soul? The boss refused to let you off Lady Wan's project."

"He told us to calm down and just do as the client said. How could he say that it was just minor changes? From what I heard from that damn Feng Shui master running her mouth, the only thing minor about the changes is what's left of the original design. We'll have to demolish the building framework and design a new draft all over again."

Tantiya complained, feeling irritated after leaving the boss's office along with Mim and Oyl. She was given a direct order to carry on with Lady Wan's project.

The situation was one big predicament, especially when the boss brought up her years of successful projects. He told her that he didn't want her to lose her years of good performance credibility and that she never had issues before. She was at a loss for words after listening to him, so she walked out of his office, crestfallen as she accepted her fate.

"Let's give it our best shot, Soul. Go back to square one if that's what it takes. Think of it as a one-time misfortune."

"I'm in too, Soul, Mim. I don't want the boss to get mad at us and cut off our end-of-year bonus."

"What was Lady Wan thinking? She has a Lady title, and how old is that Feng Shui master anyway? Why did Lady Wan believe every single word she said? She clearly doesn't think before she speaks."

"That's just how superstitious people are, Soul. Some really believe in supernatural stuff and Feng Shui. We've had these types of clients before, but I think Lady Wan is probably the most superstitious one."

"I think if that damn Feng Shui master tells Lady Wan to sleep doing somersaults to attract good luck, the Lady will probably do it every night."

"Soul, she's a Lady, not Batwoman!"

The skilled architect messed up her hair from sheer stress. Her originally neat hairstyle was now disheveled and frizzy like a lion's mane. And this lion was currently in a very bad mood from all the stuff that happened today, especially that Feng Shui Master Xinxin, whom she never wanted to meet ever again. Because if she had to see her again, Tantiya didn't think she could hold back like she did today.

"Oh, by the way, I almost forgot. Before we left, that hot Feng Shui master gave us her business card."

"Don't call that troublesome Feng Shui master hot, it annoys me."

"Hey, but she really is hot and pretty, Soul."

"Soul, aren't you used to this? Oyl calls every woman on earth hot."

"I never said you are, Mim, 'cause you're always nagging me."

"Stop bickering and just give me the business card."

Tantiya stopped the fight between her two juniors who were fine at first. But then they changed from both trying to calm her down so that she could continue working for Lady Wan to bickering with each other about something mundane.

### **Feng Shui Master Xinxin Renita Rungruenamporn.**

The pretty woman picked up the business card with two fingers. She stared at the troublesome Feng Shui master's name and contact information, who said things that pissed her off from the very first day.

Tantiya stood up, pondering whether she should keep the business card rather than throw it away—at least until Lady Wan's project was completed and she successfully delivered the work. By then, she wouldn't hesitate to crumble the card and dump it in the trash.

*That Feng Shui master's Mian Xiang wasn't exactly likable either!*

"Rough day at work, honey?"

"You could tell, Mama?"

"Well, you seem more tired than usual and you're eating dinner a lot more. You even asked for a second plate, Xin."

"I used lots of energy today, Mama, so I'm more exhausted."

Renita answered with a tired smile while still munching on the food her mother made. After she came back from Lady Wan's house and found a heartwarming meal waiting for her, the exhaustion from a long day eased away at once.

"Had a fussy client today?"

"No, not the client this time. It was the architect, Mama."

"When you work with someone, even though you belong to a different line of work, you still have to help each other and work it out together, and try to discuss it peacefully. People these days always use their temper. Xin, you have to be calm and don't get carried away with your emotions."

"It's true, Mama. That architect is so hot-headed. Maybe it was because I stepped out of the door with my right foot; that's why it didn't go well at work."

The beautiful girl mused. Lady Wan must have changed the architect in charge of her project after this. That hot-headed architect, whose name she did not remember, refused to continue the project and tried to get at her after she told the architect that she was rude, based on her Mian Xiang and from how the architect behaved.

But it was a good thing that Lady Wan found a new firm to carry the project from the design to the building process. Maybe the new architect would be easier to talk to and they could discuss and work things out together, unlike someone who was so full of herself that she refused to change or revise anything for anyone.

*People like this were difficult to work with, no matter how calm she tried to be.*

"But the client told me that she will change the company in charge of the project, so I probably won't have to see them again."

"Soul, can I come in?"

"Come in, Mom." Tantiya said as she rested her eyes and stretched to ease the tension of her sore body.

After she got home and locked herself up at her drafting table since evening, she concentrated on revising Lady Wan's troublesome project and trying to form a 3D model on a computer to evaluate the possibility of designing a house based on that Feng Shui nonsense that the Feng Shui master went on about.

In reality, it wasn't possible to build a house based solely on the owner's preferences.

"It's late. Are you still working?"

"I'll probably have to stay up all night, Mom. There's still a lot of revising that needs to be done."

"I brought you some snacks. At least don't work on a hungry stomach."

"Thanks, Mom."

"Take care of yourself, okay? You know I'm worried about you, right?"

"I've got this, Mom. Your daughter is stronger and tougher than you think."

"Remember when your dad was alive? Do you remember that he was as stubborn as you, Soul?"

"Yeah, Mom."

"Don't push yourself too hard, alright? We only have each other now."

"I promise I'll take care of myself, and of you too, Mom."

The skilled architect stood up to embrace her mother and promised her that she wouldn't push herself too hard, that it would affect her health or make her Mom lose her forever prematurely like Dad.

She remembered her childhood. She would see Dad working hard as an engineer.

Tantiya's dad was her role model. He made her want to grow up and be a talented architect too. Her father gave it all to his work because he wanted to make a good living for his family. It made him neglect his health. He dozed off and fell asleep while he was driving.

**It was ten years ago that Tantiya and her mother lost him for good...**

Tantiya snapped out of her memory of the past. Her mother left her room and let her resume her work after she promised to rest and take care of her health. She turned her attention back to the house blueprint that she had only revised less than fifty percent.

So she picked up and stared at the business card she got from Oyl that belonged to that annoying Feng Shui master who was the source of her problems. But Tantiya didn't plan to give her a call this late at night; that would be rude, like what that woman did when she criticized her Mian Xiang.

**Renita Rungruenamporn.**

She typed the Feng Shui master's name into the search box of a search engine. The results showed a Facebook page that offered Feng Shui inspection services for houses, company buildings, and other locations.

What caught Tantiya's interest was not that the page had ten thousand likes, which meant she was quite well-known and popular, but it was the other search results that seemed related.

*Vitaya Rungruenamporn, the business mogul...*

"That Feng Shui master has the same last name as the billionaire mogul family."

The skilled architect murmured, curious when she discovered that the Feng Shui master shared a family name with a wealthy business mogul who owned an automotive parts manufacturing factory.

Tantiya clicked on an online news article to kill time and found that the Rungruenamporn family donated one hundred million baht to charity at the end of last year. However, the Feng Shui master's familiar face was not in the family photo.

"Is it just a coincidence that she has the same last name as a rich family, or did she take it to scam other people?"

Tantiya frowned, feeling curious about it before shaking her head to get rid of that nonsense that wasted her time. She closed all the search website tabs, deciding she didn't care about it anymore. Renita's background wasn't a concern of hers. Knowing who that irritating Feng Shui master was related to or what family she was from wouldn't make this troublesome work go smoothly anyway.

"You, Feng Shui master, are nothing but trouble!" — — —

Today was Thursday.

Black was a bad luck color.

Yellowish white, green, and blue were lucky colors.

That was why Renita dressed stylishly with all the lucky colors from top to toe. Her outfit was simple but well-coordinated with a "less-is-more" style: a blue jean dress, a pair of white flats, a lemon-colored shoulder bag, and green underwear to gain support from her superiors.



And most importantly, she could not make the same mistake again!

"Xinxin, why are you walking like that? Did you hurt your leg?"

"No, Mama."

"Then why are you walking strangely, dear?"

"For good luck, Mama. I don't think stepping with my left foot once is enough to make my job go smoothly today."

That was why she stepped out of her front door with her left foot after putting her shoes on, then dragged her right foot along and started walking with her left foot again, dragging her right foot behind. She crept along like that from the front door to the fences.

Her mother walked with her to send her off to work, worry evident in her voice. But after she got the answer, her mother probably didn't know what to do with her daughter.

"Hello? Good morning, Lady Wan."

[Master Xinxin, sorry for bothering you so early in the morning.]

See! Her left foot already brought her a large fortune. Because of her left foot, Lady Wan gave her a call in the early morning. Believe it or not, it was just as the left foot book said.

"Not at all."

[Here's the thing, Master Xinxin, I'll get to the point. It's about the architect who's in charge of the project.]

"Oh, you already got a new architect to replace the previous one for this project?"

[Not that, I still couldn't find a new architect.]

"Oh, I thought you called to inform me about good news."

[It is good news, Miss Feng Shui master. I'm telling you that even though I can't find a new architect, Miss Soul's boss gave me his word that Miss Soul will continue this project. And he told Miss Soul to redesign everything as I want, and it won't contradict the Feng Shui principles. Isn't that good news?]

"Master Xinxin? Are you still there?"

Did this mean that she had to meet that architect with an unfriendly mien again? Even stepping out of the house with a left foot wouldn't help her with this.

"Good afternoon, Miss Architect."

"Finally, someone decided to arrive today. You could've come tomorrow."

"Oh, I can? Then I'll go back now, let's meet again when I'm free."

**"Damn you, Feng Shui master! Do you think I have so much free time on my hands?"**

Tantiya brawled; it wasn't a joke at all after she saw that the girl who just arrived seemed ready to leave. She had to stop her from leaving. The Feng Shui master made her wait for almost an hour because she was late, and now this troublesome girl wanted to act irresponsibly like this.

"You're not the only one who is busy, you know? Truth be told, my schedule isn't exactly open for another appointment either." Renita said every word loud and clear, not backing down.

If the architect's time was important, so was hers. She was a Feng Shui master with a busy schedule; it wasn't like she had nothing to do all day. Besides, the one who was rude here was Miss Tantiya, the very architect who came back to lead Lady Wan's project and asked for this meeting.

So the one who had been bothered here was Renita, not the one who arranged the time to meet!

"Have a seat. This won't take long."

"If it won't take long, then I prefer to stand, thanks."

"That's not okay!"

"It's okay with me."

"Hey! You're blocking the way."

Eventually, the beautiful girl agreed to sit on the available seat opposite the hot-headed architect. She found that it would be rude to stand and argue in the middle of the café, disturbing other customers as well.

Renita just genuinely wanted to know what the other woman intended to do, or what she was thinking. Why did the architect take back her words and continue to work on Lady Wan's house project?

"Just say what you have to say."

"Did Lady Wan tell you that I'll be working on this project again?"

"Yes, she told me this morning."

"Yeah, that was it."

"Are you in need of money or something?"

"Excuse me?"

"Well, yesterday, at Lady Wan's house, you were arrogant and insisted that you wouldn't do this project anymore. So why did you change your mind?"

"The reason for that is none of your concern."

"Then I want to know why you asked to meet up with me."

If they continued like this, the architect would probably say something rude to her again. Renita decided to get to the point while thinking of a way to cut the conversation short after they were done.

She didn't want to make her mama wait long for them to have dinner together. Usually, she would be home by now after returning from the client's house. That is, if she hadn't been called to this place by the architect in charge of Lady Wan's house.

"I've revised the house as Lady Wan requested."

"All of it?"

"Yes, every spot that was an issue."

"Miss Architect, did you revise every spot in the blueprint within one day?"

"No, less than a day. I started revising it last night and finished it in the afternoon. That's why I called you to meet up for the final discussion."

The skilled architect bragged to Renita, the troublesome Feng Shui master, that she was way better than the other woman thought. That woman just parroted every word from the Feng Shui manual while Tantiya, on the other hand, studied hard for five years in university and spent six years working on the job. So she definitely had more skills than someone who was just good at convincing people.

"Let this be known that this will be the final revision."

"Isn't it a good thing that it turned out well, Miss Architect?"

"It will turn out well when you don't go and give Lady Wan new ideas to change things up again."

Renita stared at the woman sitting opposite her, who turned the laptop to show her the blueprint. She could make sense of some of it, while other parts were hard to understand. But overall, she could understand most of it.

And she could tell that Lady Wan's blueprint had changed into a completely different house.

Especially the fountain in front of the house that was massive, it was pretty clear what the architect's intention was.

**The design of this blueprint was definitely exaggerated on purpose!**

"Tell me where else I have to revise. Which part of it isn't aligned with that Feng Shui nonsense before I email the blueprint to Lady Wan's secretary."

"The fountain in front is too big."

"What's wrong with you? Yesterday, you told me it was too small."

"I did, but you're mocking me with this. Who on earth would design a fountain this large? It's practically a waterfall; you can't even see the front of the house."

Tantiya glared at the annoying Feng Shui master who criticized her design as if she wanted to taunt her. The blueprint was already good, but Renita still found some small details for her to change.

Tantiya was so pissed that she dragged her chair from across to sit beside Renita, who was startled when she saw the architect come to sit next to her. It wasn't like Tantiya would harass her just so the Feng Shui master could tell Lady Wan about it, which wouldn't be good.

"Stop, stop, this size is fine."

"What about the rest?"

"How many lights did you put in the living room?"

"Twenty."

**"Twenty lights!? From the previous three lights?"**

"Yep. You and Lady Wan told me that the lights need to be an even number. Well, twenty is an even number. You should know that unless you were bad at math."

"Did you really study architecture? Are you trying to burn Lady Wan alive? It's a living oven. That house would catch on fire with that amount of light."

"Should I make it ten lights?"

"No, just four is enough."

The skilled architect glanced at Renita, who was getting moody with the design. She hid a smug smile after seeing that the other woman seemed to be having a headache and kept sighing at the disastrous version of her blueprint. This would make that Feng Shui master understand the trouble she had gone through. Even though she already finished the real version of her blueprint for Lady Wan, this one was purely for Renita's reaction.

"And what is this? What's that spiral staircase? I just asked you to widen the steps yesterday."

"Oh, I changed it into a slide, so Lady Wan can go down the slide for some thrilling entertainment in the house. And she can climb the rope on her way up. It's good exercise for her too."

**"Miss Architect, do you even have a license!?"**

If Lady Wan hadn't told her that Tantiya worked for a large company with good credibility and reputation, she would think that the woman was a fraud. It would explain why the woman could design something so disturbing that it wouldn't be a surprise if the house collapsed before it finished. And no Feng Shui or location could save this house.

"Why not? Lady Wan won't like it?"

"You're an architect yourself. Do you like this house?"

"I think it's kinda surrealistic."

Renita stared at the architect's face, who answered her with a straight face, and looked into her eyes. She took a closer inspection of the woman who sat next to her on the same side.

Despite the architect's smug voice that seemed amused by that mess of a blueprint, Tantiya's eyes behind those glasses looked sullen, like she didn't have enough sleep, unlike yesterday. The architect must have used up her energy to adjust Lady Wan's house blueprint. It made her feel kind of sorry for the architect.

"Miss Architect."

"What?"

"You didn't get much sleep last night?"

"And whose fault is that?"

"Want another cup of coffee?"

"Are you buying me one because you feel guilty for causing trouble?"

"Nope, just gonna order one for you. Why would I buy you a coffee? In this economy? Just buy one yourself if you want it. I have to spare any money I would even if it's just a few baht."

Tantiya looked taken aback by Renita's response, who was the cause of her issues, before stopping the woman from getting up to order another coffee. Even though her glass of coffee was already empty before the Feng Shui master arrived.

"Here's the real blueprint, just take a look at it so we can go our separate ways."

**"Wait, and what's the thing before? A faux blueprint?"**

"I designed it to relieve some stress."



The talented Feng Shui master glanced at the person who gave such an unexpected answer. Then she turned her head back to focus on the latest changes in Lady Wan's house blueprint.

Renita also wanted to leave this cafe and go back to eat dinner that her mother made. Even though she would be home later than usual, she still didn't want to eat anywhere else.

"Everything's fine."

"Does that mean that, from now on, you won't go and say things in Lady Wan's ear to change the design, right?"

"If it's good, then I'll say that it's good. That's it."

"Then I'll send it to Miss Pilin?"

"Wait! Don't send it yet."

"What is it this time?"

"Miss Architect, you're such bad luck."

"What? Oh, you damn Feng Shui master!"

"Don't get mad just yet, jeez. What I meant is, what makes you decide to get out of the house, dressing all in black like this?"

Renita looked at Tantiya's outfit, which was not different from yesterday. She recalled Tantiya wearing a white shirt, black sneakers, jeans, and a jean jacket. At least she had something black on her to increase her charm and attract seniors' support.

But today, black was a bad luck color. And the fact that Miss Architect dressed in all black from her t-shirt, jeans, to her sneakers, it won't take a fortune teller to predict the client's feedback.

"Why can't I dress in black? Didn't you dress in black yesterday?"

"Black enhanced good luck yesterday, but it drags luck down today."

"Sorry, but I don't believe in this nonsense."

"But can you not jinx it if you don't believe in it?"

"I don't believe in every single word you say."

"Do you have anything yellowish-white on you? Anything blue or green? See? Even your bag is black."

"Oi, what are you doing, you Feng Shui master!"

Tantiya turned to dodge when she saw the other woman bent closer to inspect her like a weirdo. Who on earth would find a lucky color on another person's body, who was not even close to her? What a weirdo this troublesome Feng Shui master was.

"What about the inside?"

"Inside of what?"

"Your underwear, is it any of the colors I said?"

**"Hey! What are you, a pervert?"**

"No, I just don't want to meet you for the third time."

The pretty woman stared curiously at the object being placed in front of her. She didn't understand why Renita took out a bright green inhaler from her bag and placed it in front of her.

"Green attracts benevolence from the seniors and higher authority. Now, Lady Wan will love your blueprint. Take it, it's a new bottle, it hasn't even been opened yet."

"Why are you giving me a herbal inhaler?"

"So you could stop acting like you have a headache every time you see me."

"And if Lady Wan doesn't approve my design, how will you take responsibility then?"

"Why would I take responsibility? That's your job, not mine."

"Together!"

**"Or you can revise your work while inhaling that inhaler tonight, fine by me!"**

*Translator:*

*Okay, this novel is right up my street.*

*I might end up prioritizing it again and forget to update the other novels I've left unfinished.*

*I apologise in advance hahaha*

## Chapter 2

### **They Could Never Not be Together**

"Hello, Miss Pilin."

Tantiya answered the call that she had been waiting for. It had been around fifteen minutes since she decided to send the latest revision of the blueprint to Lady Wan through her secretary to approve the final design. Miss Pilin called back to inform her of the results.

[I'm calling to inform you that Lady Wan is very pleased with this design. She kept praising you.]

"Does that mean I can proceed to the next step?"

[Yes, Miss Soul, you may proceed. The Lady has no objection.]

"Thank you very much."

The skilled architect thanked the other end of the phone for helping with the coordination. Miss Pilin hung up the phone after she delivered the important message. Meanwhile, Tantiya was still seated at the same coffee shop, letting her emotions sink in.

That troublesome Feng Shui master left around half an hour ago, leaving a vivid green herbal inhaler bottle behind as a token. Tantiya picked up the inhaler that was as troublesome as its owner and stared at it.

The woman tossed the inhaler into her backpack nonchalantly before putting her notebook and the sketches into a file folder after her work was

done. Tantiya intended to get home and get enough sleep to make up for the fact that she had not slept for more than twenty-four hours.

"Too bad, I won't need it."

The same went for Renita's business card that Oyl, her junior coordinator, gave her. Tantiya crumpled the troublesome Feng Shui master's business card and threw it into the garbage in front of the coffee shop without much thought, now that the card was no longer useful since they wouldn't come across each other any longer.

Similarly, the skilled architect didn't hesitate to block the number that she called today, asking for them to meet up, so that the girl could no longer contact her.

"So long, you little Feng Shui master!"

"I thought you already ate out today; that's why you called me not to prepare dinner."

"I want to bring some yummy food home so I can eat with you, Mama."

"Would you be able to eat all of this? You bought so much, it'll be a waste of money, hon."

"Today is a special meal, Mama. Let's say it's a celebration that my work went well, without any issue."

"That difficult job you complained about yesterday?"

"Yeah, and because I stepped out of the house with my left foot today, the work got approved finally."

Renita boasted to her mama, bragging about her skills and luck. Though, there were some things that were beyond her expectations, and some that

did not go as planned today. Still, her meeting with Miss Architect did not go as badly or as heated as yesterday.

It was good that today she and Miss Tantiya had reached a mutual agreement about Lady Wan's new house. So there would be no further need for her and Miss Architect to see each other after this.

Because she just remembered something that she hadn't told the other woman yet, it was that the architect's Mian Xiang, other than being impatient and blunt, seemed to be quite annoying to top. And she purposefully annoyed her with a straight face as well.

Renita could barely stand her; this one Lady Wan's job was more than enough for them. So, from now on, she hoped that they would not have to run into each other accidentally or work together ever again.

"I'm so happy for you. My Xinxin is the best."

"I got it from you, Mama."

"Oh, I'm not that good. You probably got the brain and talent from your father's side."

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"Can you not talk about him, Mama? I think I probably got it from Grandpa."

The beautiful girl eased the tension when her words seemed to make their conversation awkward and left her mother uncomfortable. She deliberately changed the subject and called her mother to have dinner together. She chose to let go of things that she didn't want to acknowledge and talk about...

**Because ever since she could remember, Mama was the only person in her life...**

Renita laid down against the wide bed, exhausted and anxious. She acted cheerfully without any worry in front of her mother. But when she was alone, the topic of their previous conversation always got under her skin.

### **The topic about the man whom she didn't want to call Papa...**

Mr. Vitaya, the wealthy mogul who had billion-worth assets, was well respected in his social circles. He was known as an altruist who liked to help and give back to society. But that man never cared to spend time and look after her and her mama; the only thing he gave them was this small house they lived in...

And the last name Rungruenamporn that has been attached to her since the day she was born...

She asked her mama to change her last name since she was of legal age, claiming that she wanted to use Mama and Grandpa's last name more.

But it seemed that this was the only thing Mama would never let her have her way. Therefore, this outcast last name often made her get many odd questions from other people.

They would ask how she was related to the wealthy family? Which side of the family did she belong to that she got to share their family name? Some even approached her because they hoped to get the privileges that came with knowing someone in the family. But after she told them that she didn't know and wasn't related to the mogul Vitaya and his family, many of them simply stopped approaching her.

Renita hardly cared about keeping appearances or faking her family background. These days, she simply worked hard to save up for her dream of building a new house for her mama. A house that would be built entirely from her hard labor, not anyone else's money. She refused any financial help from the mogul right after she graduated and started working. She could take care of her own mama just fine.

"Mama, shouldn't have mentioned him and ruined the meal."



The beautiful girl slowly closed her eyes after her good day ended badly. She thought that if she slept for a while and woke up the next morning, brightness would replace the dullness of this evening, just like every other day.

But before she even fell asleep, the phone rang and caught her attention. When she saw the important person's name on the screen, Renita hurriedly answered Lady Wan's middle-of-the-night call.

"Lady Wan, good evening."

[Feng Shui Master Xinxin, I must apologize for calling you at this hour. But I'm so worried that if I wait until tomorrow morning, I won't be able to sleep.]

"Is something troubling you, Lady Wan?"

[It's about Miss Soul's design. At first, I was very happy with it. But as I thought about it carefully, I wanted to make some adjustments to the facade in front of the house and the garden next to the new fountain. So, I wanted to consult with Master Xinxin first.]

What was it that made Lady Wan change her mind for the millionth time?

**It must be because of you, Miss Architect. You attract misfortunes!**

"But the design of your house is now in accordance with the Feng Shui. If you change it again, it might change the house's Feng Shui from good to bad. Your luck may vanish, Lady Wan."

[Do you really think so, Feng Shui Master Xinxin?]

"Yes, as a Feng Shui master, I ought to recommend the best Feng Shui for you, Lady Wan."

[But can I change just the fountain? I want to change it from a dragon to a swan. So it can be as graceful as me. Please check the Feng Shui and tell Miss Soul for me. I'm troubling you just this much.]

"Wait a minute, why haven't you called the architect about this yourself? You are the one who hired her..."

[I'm afraid that we wouldn't understand each other. She would understand more if you talk to her. So please do that for me?]

"But..."

[As for the cost of the Feng Shui re-examination, I will pay the full price. You can talk to my secretary about the details.]

"Of course, ma'am. I'll take care of it."

Her work passion was naturally driven by numbers and figures, and Lady Wan was a loaded client. She paid handsomely, quickly, and had an unlimited budget. She could make the house turn into whatever the owner of the house wanted, including even if the owner wanted to turn her place into a mansion, let alone calling Miss Architect to inform her about the client's new demands.

*"Come on, Xin, if we have to meet again, then just endure it. Remember that it's for work."*

Renita gave herself a pep talk before scrolling through the list of recent incoming and outgoing calls on her phone and stared at the number she hadn't saved as a contact but remembered well that it was the number of an ill-tempered architect like Tantiya.

The beautiful woman glanced at the clock next to her bed. It was past 10 pm. She decided to call her anyway because she didn't want the other woman to nag her later if she had to make adjustments to the blueprint again because she informed them too late.

"What is this? She blocked my number?"

She didn't want to jump to conclusions, so Renita tried calling the same number a few times, but the call was sent to some strange signals, which

were not the usual sound that indicated the other end was currently in another call or that they had turned off their device.

**"Oh, so you want to do it like this? Fine. You block me; I can block you too!"**

"I'm going to talk this over with Lady Wan."

"You can't, Soul. If I let you see the client like this, you'd be picking a fight with a client."

Tantiya watched her two juniors on the team, who had tried so hard to cool her down. The thing was, after she closed Lady War's project yesterday and passed it on to other teams to proceed with their jobs, her bright new morning didn't last long.

She was informed of bad news in the afternoon—she had to start from scratch for the millionth time, modifying the design according to the Lady's preferences as she wished.

She might as well present her with that surrealistic dream house design at this point.

"Now I know why Chok was overjoyed when you accepted the job, Soul," Mim remarked.

"Right, Mim? He got off easy somehow," Oyl added.

"I won't change it anymore," Tantiya declared. "I told her this was the last time. Just tell the boss to find someone else to oversee this project."

"If you don't take it, no one else in our company will,"

"You know what, Soul, calm down and try asking the Feng Shui master for advice first. She might be able to reason with Lady Wan," Mim suggested.

"Yeah, that's true. You have her contact info, right?" Oyl asked.

The skilled architect took out her phone after Mim and Oyl convinced her to try contacting the troublesome Feng Shui master. She then confessed to the two nonchalantly, "I've blocked her number since yesterday."

"What? You cut all ties with her after the work was finished?" Oyl exclaimed.

"Well, I thought the job was done. Who would have thought that Lady Wan would change her mind again?"

"Then unblock her and call her fast before the boss comes back to the company and gets another complaint call from Lady Wan," Mim advised.

"My calls won't go through; it keeps ringing like this. Maybe the line is busy?" Tantiya suggested as she turned on the speakerphone so Mim and Oyl could hear the signal coming from the other end of the line.

Then, the junior interior designer explained the situation to her so she could understand the reality. "It means you are blocked too."

"Mim, are you saying that the Feng Shui master blocked my number?" Tantiya asked, stunned.

"Yup, seems that way, Soul," Mim confirmed.

**That Feng Shui master Renita was more vicious than she thought!**

"Hello, Feng Shui Master Xinxin," Mim greeted.

[Miss Monpaltra, right? You contacted me via the page's chat room yesterday.]

"Yes, Master Xinxin, you can call me Mim,"

[Alright, Miss Mim, you want to ask about home Feng Shui, right? You can give me more details in addition to what you mentioned in the chat yesterday. It would be more convenient to talk face-to-face like this when discussing something.]

"Actually, I contacted you on behalf of my senior. It happened that a senior at my workplace wanted to consult with you but didn't know how to contact you, so I reached out for her,"

[But if she wants to hire me for a Feng Shui inspection, your senior could have contacted me through the page, no?]

"She had already tried that. But it seems like you blocked her number, Master Xinxin,"

"Ah, here she comes. This is Soul. I think you two must have met before," Mim said, introducing her senior.

Of course we have...

The hot-headed architect was the only one with a Mian Xiang this annoying!

"If I had known from the beginning that Miss Monpattrra is a junior interior designer in your company, I wouldn't have wasted my time talking to her for sure," Xinxin said, her tone cold.

"Then why did you block my number? If I could contact you, we wouldn't have to meet face-to-face," Soul retorted.

"Why don't you ask yourself first, Miss Architect? You were the one who blocked my number first."

"You knew?"

"Of course, I'm not stupid. You blocked me, so I blocked you back."

Renita stared back at the architect, who was more dressed up than yesterday, with the same jean jacket as before. But the cream-colored shirt and dark blue jeans were not as bad of a luck as the all-black attire she wore the other day.

On a Saturday, green was the bad luck color. Good thing she didn't wear that.

"Have you heard from Pilin yet? Lady Wan wanted to change the design again," Tantiya inquired.

"And what about it? That's your job, not mine. My Feng Shui work is done. The rest of the work is on you, Miss Architect," Renita said indifferently.

"How does it not concern you? Lady Wan said that I should change it according to your advice," Tantiya said, trying to keep her irritation in check.

"You made this up,"

"How?"

"You drank the coffee I paid for, so you have to help me,"

"Please, the coffee was ninety baht. I'll give you a hundred, and you can keep the change so we can go our separate ways,"

"Miss Renita, what do you want in exchange for helping with the house design?" Tantiya asked, clearly exhausted from the endless adjustments. She didn't want to waste any more time on just this one project that would delay her other projects' schedules. If relying on this Feng Shui master was the only way to end the chaos in her life and work, so be it.

"Miss Renita?" Tantiya called again. "Isn't that your name?"

"Yes, but you never called me by my name,"

"I'm saying it now,"

"Sounds better than when you called me 'that Feng Shui master,'"

"My name is Tantiya,"

"I know. Why are you telling me again?"

"In case you want to call me by my name instead of 'Miss Architect,' which you usually use,"

"Nah, I'm used to it. I will call you Miss Architect,"

Renita thought that there was no need for them to meet again. Their past three encounters were already more than she had anticipated. So, Tantiya's name was not something important or necessary for her to remember. Besides, she was already used to calling her by her job title; changing it now would be a hassle.

"Whatever, let's get straight to the point. What do you want in exchange for having a look at the design that has to be revised?" Tantiya asked, cutting to the chase.

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"Money,"

"How much are we talking?"

"Twenty thousand baht,"

"That's too much. Are you ripping me off?"

"Is it? I'm charging you the same price as I did with Lady Wan,"

"But you already got money from Lady Wan. Why are you trying to rip so much off me? That's a win-win for you,"

"Well, you asked me what I want," Renita countered.

Time was valuable for Master Xinxin. Who would give out free advice when they had to study and practice different arts of Feng Shui? The last time she helped the architect for free was already considered a generosity. She had to earn a living somehow, too.

"Two thousand baht, that's the final offer,"

"Oh my, that's some thick skin you have when you haggle like this,"

"That's all I can afford. I can't pay any higher,"

"So when do you want to meet up? My schedule is so packed this week, I can't fit another appointment,"

"We have to do it today, then. I have a lot of work to do. I don't want Lady Wan's project to delay everything else," Tantiya urged.

"Today?" Renita muttered, thinking about the woman's offer.

She knew that Tantiya was impatient by nature. Even though they've only met a few times, she could sense it since their first meeting. Just as she was making up her mind, a text from her mom came in, reminding her of something that made her decision easier. — — — — —

"Fine, but I want to add a free dinner into the deal," Renita said.

"It's settled then," Tantiya agreed immediately, as if she didn't need to give it a thought.

She refused to give the troublesome Feng Shui master a chance to change her mind or play hard to get again. It was difficult enough for Mim to make an appointment with her today, not to mention the fact that the Feng Shui master tried to leave as soon as she saw her face. It was true that, as a starter, their line of work did not get along.

**But she didn't expect that the two of them would conflict this much...**



"Come in,"

"Are you trying to lure me in, Miss Architect?"

"Do I look like I have time for nonsense?" Tantiya responded with annoyance.

She stared at Renita, who was following her cautiously. The girl was curious about the place she had just visited for the first time. But because she had thought it through that this place would be the most convenient for them to discuss work over dinner, according to the agreement that Renita had demanded, it wasn't like she did anything against the terms of the previous deal.

"Whose house is this?" Renita asked.

"Mine."

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**"Then why are we here at your house? You really did lure me in to do something to me!"**

"Where did you get that from? Who would want to do something to you?"

Well, if by "*something*" she meant wanting to strangle her and snatch her hair because of how annoying she was, then she might be right. Because this troublesome Feng Shui master was very annoying and so good at causing problems.

That hair of hers, which she often tied into a bun, looked like one of those amulet kid dolls with a head bun. Every time they met, the girl always did her hair like that, as if she only knew one way to style it. Sometimes, Tantiya felt the urge to snatch it because the girl had been annoying since they first met.

"Sit here and wait. I'll go bring my laptop downstairs."

"You won't even offer your guest a glass of cold water before you leave?"

"You're so demanding."

"Then I'm leaving."

"Fine. You want a glass of water or juice?"

"Whatever is fine. I'm not picky."

Renita sat down on the sofa and glanced at the architect, who secretly side-eyed her, but it couldn't escape Renita's sharp eyes. Shortly after, Tantiya returned with a drink and a cupcake that she hadn't asked for and placed it in front of her. Then she headed up to the second floor of the house and left her alone.

**Renita:** Sorry mama. Got urgent work. I'll be home very late today.

The beautiful girl typed a reply after her mama asked what time she would return home today. The older woman was hoping she would be home to have dinner with the man she always tried to avoid. Even though that person only visited them a few times a year, every single time he did, the mogul Vitaya never got to meet her.

It was the reason why she accepted Miss Architect's offer without giving it much thought. Even if working with the woman gave her headaches, it was better than going back to face her problem at home. She didn't want to put herself in a situation where she felt uncomfortable.

"Good evening."

"Oh? Who do we have here?"

"Um... Miss Architect brought me here, Auntie," Renita responded awkwardly when the person who came into her sight wasn't Miss Architect, the one who brought her home and told her to wait here, but an auntie who

looked older than her mother. She assumed that it might be the architect's mother.

"Oh, Soul brought you to visit our place?"

"Yes, ma'am, I came with her, but I'm not just visiting, I'm..."

**"You're Soul's girlfriend, aren't you?"**

"Excuse me?"

"You look lovely, dear."

**Me and Miss Architect are not dating!**

It wouldn't be possible, auntie. Even though she wanted to thank the lady for saying she was lovely, Renita thought she better hurry and correct the woman's misunderstanding before she got the wrong idea.

"Mom! When did you get back?"

"How cheeky, Soul. You brought your girlfriend here to surprise me, didn't you?"

"What? No, Mom..."

"No, auntie. Miss Architect and I aren't together; that's never going to happen. It's a misunderstanding. I'm just a Feng Shui master, I came here to discuss some work with her."

Tantiya stared at Renita, who hastily explained to her mother. The girl was talking so fast, practically rapping. The girl tended to be talkative and she talked fast, but now that she was mistaken for being Tantiya's girlfriend, Renita was probably so flustered that she had to rush in and correct the misunderstanding.

Of course, she didn't want her mother to get the wrong, creepy idea either. She couldn't even imagine her and the troublesome Feng Shui master being on good terms for a long period of time, let alone being girlfriends.

"You can drop me off here," Renita said.

"Is this your house?"

"Not really, my house is a little bit further in that alley. I have to walk a bit to get home. But I don't want my family to see that I didn't take a taxi back."

"Okay, I'll drop you off here. And here is your two thousand baht payment."

Renita stared at the two one-thousand baht bills that Miss Architect took out of her wallet and handed to her before she got out of the car. And from what she could assess, the woman's wallet wasn't that heavy. It wasn't loaded like Lady Wan and her other clients who were Miss Jitsamorn's friends. She really didn't have the heart to take full advantage of Miss Architect as she intended.

"You can keep the money."

"What? It's what we agreed on."

"Giving me a ride home isn't part of the deal too."

"Well, I don't want my mom to complain when I get back."

"Your mother seems kind. Unlike you."

"I'm sorry?"

"I will take Auntie's home-cooked dinner and the taxi fare I saved as payment."

"Suit yourself. Don't ask for more later."

Tantiya put the banknotes back in her wallet when Renita refused the money. She wouldn't bother pushing it because she didn't want to waste her money either. If the other woman said so, then they owed nothing to each other.

"Good luck with Lady Wan's job. And if you want things to go smoothly, you should learn to believe in the lucky colors of the day, Miss Architect."

"I told you, that stuff is just nonsense."

"If you don't believe it, suit yourself. I'd better go. Oh, I hope we don't meet ever again."

**Just three times, and she was already sick of Miss Architect's face.**



**Hey dont forget to vote. ✿**

## Chapter 3

### Miss Architect was a Lioness

"Mama, what are you doing in front of the house this late at night?"

"I was worried, you never come home this late, Xinxin."

"Sorry, mama. I had a long meeting with a client."

She might have to pretend that Miss Architect was her client, but Renita didn't think that she was lying to her mom, not exactly. Tantiya wasn't a client of her Feng Shui service, but she was part of Lady Wan's project, so they had to discuss the project together. And Renita was looking forward to not meeting her for the fourth time.

**Please let this headache between her and Miss Architect end here!**

"How did you get back? I didn't see a taxi in front of our house."

"I saw there were a lot of cars in our alley, so I got off around the corner."

"Are you hungry, dear? Let me heat up the food for you."

"I already had dinner, mama. Let's go inside."

Renita cut the conversation short and changed the subject from dinner because she didn't want her mother to ask where she had dinner. If her mother found out that Miss Architect's mother made her dinner and she

complimented the old woman's cooking, her mother would definitely get mad at her.

"Mama, whose car is this?"

The beautiful girl stopped when she noticed a car parked next to the front door, blocking the way. It was a white, Japanese car with a red license plate—clearly a shiny new car, fresh out of a showroom. If it belonged to her neighbor, it would be kind of rude of them to park in front of her house because they knew her house didn't have a car parked anyway.

"Your Pa said he bought it specifically for you."

"Then you can return the car to the mogul, mama. I don't want it."

"Xinxin—"

"I already told you, other than the last name you asked me to use, I don't need or want anything from that man."

"But your papa is worried about you, dear. You have to meet up with your clients in other provinces; it would be safer if you can drive by yourself."

"Mama, I'm an adult, I can take care of myself, I can take care of you."

Even though she tried to avoid meeting the man face to face, the mogul Vitaya still found a way to make her uncomfortable by giving her an expensive gift. To be honest, she wasn't happy about him pretending to care like this at all. If he was only going to give her expensive things but not love, how could he call himself a father?

"I'm doing everything I can, I'm working as hard as I can, but I won't accept anything from him."

And one day, she would find a way to give back the family name that she never wanted...

"I'll be in my room."

"Wait, Soul, hold on a minute."

"Yes, Mom?"

"You drove little Xinxin home, right?"

"Yeah, I drove her home as you told me to."

Tantiya answered truthfully, even though she didn't drop her at her house; she did drop her off right in front of her house's alley. Everything ended well, all things considered. At least Renita wasn't as greedy and selfish as she thought. Still, it would be best if they never crossed paths again, given their antagonizing occupations and how they didn't get along at all.

"Little Xinxin is lovely, she's quite talkative. You should invite her back for my home-cooked meal again."

"Why would I invite her again though? I told you, Mom, we aren't close. I brought her here today because of work only."

"Then you should invite her to check our house's Feng Shui. Xinxin is a talented Feng Shui master, and she is young."

"Mom, if you're thinking about that, stop. I'm not ready to let anyone into my life, and I don't want anyone to barge into my life either."

The skilled architect told her mother, loud and clear. She could tell what her mom's intention was from the way she was speaking. Actually, she kind of wanted to apologize to Renita about how her mom was acting so obvious towards her because of her misunderstanding. And when her mom found out the truth that she and the Feng Shui master weren't an item, that they were just people forced to work together, her mom still tried to get them together during dinner.



Renita was probably as uncomfortable as she was, but she chose to say nothing because the other girl didn't bring it up while she drove her back. So she didn't think there was a need to explain anything since they wouldn't see each other again anyway.

"Soul, how long are you going to shut yourself off like this? One heartbreak, and it made you scared of being in love, just like that?"

**"I'm not scared of love, Mom. I just think that I don't want a relationship right now. I don't have time for anyone, given the nature of my job."**

She was trying her best to be considerate of her mom's feelings, or else she would tell her the truth that someone like that Feng Shui master, Renita, wasn't her type at all.

Their first impressions weren't good either, and neither were their second and third impressions. Even if they did somehow run into each other again, even though she prayed they wouldn't, it probably wouldn't be memorable in a good way—more like a way that involved headaches and chaos maybe.

**Because that troublesome Feng Shui master always ruined her work!**

"But you will be thirty next year, Soul. How can I not worry when all you do is work? You don't have time to live your life at all."

"You can worry when I'm forty and still single by then."

"But I like this one. I think little Xinxin is good for you."

"Mom, I told you I don't like her."

"Next time I meet her, I better ask if she's single or not. Who knows, maybe my daughter has a chance with her."

Her mom didn't listen to her long explanation, did she? That must be why she was still so fixated on that thought. The skilled architect decided to give up; her mother doted on Renita since they met eyes.

Did that Feng Shui master have some amulet or something that made older people just adore her?

**That time it was Lady Wan, and now it was her own mother!**

The lovely woman walked into her private space to hide from her mom's voice, who still kept trying to get her to date that troublesome Feng Shui master. Even now that they didn't have to see each other again, Renita's name still managed to haunt her through her Mom.

That was why she cut the conversation and headed upstairs to her room. Tantiya walked to her work desk and opened the lower drawer, picking up a framed photograph that she kept so well to take a look.

It was a photograph of two high school students who used to be best friends, and something more than that. One of them was her when she was eighteen, and the other girl, who was smiling so sweetly next to her, was her **first love...**

Even though her first love ended when they broke up, Tantiya thought she was the luckiest person in the world because her family accepted who she was. Her father and mother weren't disappointed or barred her when she brought her first love home, telling them that they were dating.

Neither of her parents scolded or rebuked her for dating a girl; they adored her girlfriend like she was another daughter of theirs.

Everything at that time seemed to go well—they should have been happy. But everything changed when the two of them had to go to different universities because they couldn't get into the same one. She had her dreams, and so did her girlfriend. But at that time, Tantiya didn't think that distance would be a problem in their relationship.

Until it was their sophomore year, her father died in a car accident. It was a rough time for her to get through, yet the person she called her first love

never showed up beside her. She just let her shatter into pieces all by herself.

She found out later that the reason why her girlfriend had changed was because she had been with someone else for a while now. When she was caught and Tantiya confronted her about it, she broke up with her so easily, like all that they had been through didn't mean anything.

### **Her first love gave her a lesson...**

Since then, love wasn't something she focused on; she didn't want it. She was single for ten years. She worked hard on her studies during her college years, and when she graduated, she worked hard at her job. She had so many things to take care of, and she never paid attention to whoever her mom introduced to her.

Eventually, her mother gave up on trying to find her a significant other to take care of her. The subject was never brought up for years since the last time her mom tried to introduce her to her friend's daughter two years ago.

Suddenly, today, Renita became the first person in years that made her mom feel hopeful again.

Out of everyone before, that Feng Shui master was the most unlikely choice of them all!

"I despise you from the moment you told me I had bad luck in love."

Even though what she said was not far from the truth...

"Thanks a lot, Xinxin. Love you, girl."

"Oh, please, no need to be dramatic, Lada."

Renita burst out laughing when Lada, her best friend from high school, pulled her into a tight hug. She accepted her friend's invitation to examine the Feng Shui of her friend's new logistics company that would be opening a few days later. She didn't charge her friend for her service because she wanted it to be a congratulatory gift for Lada's new company.

"How can I not love you, though? You're the busy Feng Shui Master Xinxin, yet you still squeezed me into your already packed schedule to check my office's Feng Shui. Girl, you didn't even charge me for it."

"Oh, should I reconsider and charge you an expensive fee? I hate making my friend feel uncomfortable."

"No chance, no taking it back, Xin. I'm just a startup kid, alright!"

"Don't forget me when you're rich."

"Who could forget you? Xin, you've been good to me since high school. You're my dear friend."

"Can't I just be your friend? Saying 'old friend' makes me feel ancient."

The skilled Feng Shui master smiled when she saw Lada nod in agreement. They went out to eat together, with Lada insisting on buying her a meal to thank her for refusing payment. Judging by the restaurant Lada picked, she clearly wasn't taking advantage of her friend.

"Whoa, you're treating me to omakase?"

"Yeah, I'm pampering Feng Shui Master Xinxin."

"This meal is probably more expensive than my Feng Shui advice fee."

The beautiful girl shook her head at her best friend, who shrugged, smugly proud of her pampering. Then, an incoming call from an unknown number caught her attention. Renita hesitated before answering, vaguely recalling that it wasn't Miss Architect's number, who had ended their acquaintance a

few days ago. Miss Pilin had already transferred the rest of the payment from Lady Wan to her yesterday, so that job was finished.

"Hello?"

[Is this little Xinxin's number?]

"Hi, who is this again?"

[I'm Tye, Soul's mother.]

"Oh! I remember now. You're Miss Architect's mom."

Renita exclaimed as she recalled why the voice was familiar. So, this was Miss Architect's mom, whom Renita had met a few days ago and had dinner with. But did she have something important to tell her? Was that why she called?

[I'm so happy you remember me, little Xinxin, dear.]

"Oh, is something the matter, Auntie? Or did you want to ask about Feng Shui, as we talked about the other day?"

[Drop the 'Auntie,' dear. I told you to call me 'mom,' little Xinxin.]

"I'd rather call you 'Auntie.' 'Mom' doesn't feel right to me."

[Is that so? Then suit yourself, dear. I found your number on your social media profile, so I called to invite you over for dinner at our place, dear.]

"Auntie, you want to invite me to dinner at your house?"

[Yes, love. I went to the market this morning and bought too many ingredients. That's why I want to invite you over, little Xinxin—you told me you liked my cooking the other day.]

"Ah, I already have plans for this evening. I'm so sorry, Auntie."

[Oh, that's a shame. Next time, then. I'll invite you again, dear, so we can have dinner together whenever you're free.]

"Thank you, Auntie."

[Then I'll hang up, okay? I don't want to take too much of little Xinxin's time.]

The beautiful girl stared at the phone after the call ended, still baffled. Why would Miss Architect's mom invite her over for dinner? The old lady seemed to like her quite a bit since they last met, but Renita had clearly told her that she and Miss Architect weren't a couple...

"Who was that, Xin? Why do you look so serious?"

"It was the architect's mother. She invited me to dinner at her place."

"What? You have to work with architects now? Were you two close or something? How come the architect's mom called you for dinner?"

"No idea, Lada. Still confused."

"Are you sure? Let's say I'm about eighty percent sure. From what you told me and the way her mother is acting, there's a high chance, you know?"

Lada shared her thoughts after hearing about everything that had happened and how Renita and the architect had been on bad terms since they met. If her friend and the architect despised each other so much, there was no reason for the architect's mother to invite her for dinner. It seemed like she wanted to get to know her.

"If it's like you said, then I have to disappoint Miss Architect's mom."

"What? You're not going to give her a chance, Xinxin? You're single, anyway."

"If I had to date her, I'd rather date a dog."

Renita looked horrified at the thought, without even letting her imagination run wild. If what Lada said was true, and Miss Architect's mother adored her and wanted her to get closer to her daughter, then Renita did the right thing by rejecting the offer. She wouldn't accept the invitation or visit that house again.

**Because Xin didn't adore her daughter at all, ma'am!**

"And that architect is a woman too."

"It's not about gender, Lada. I just really don't like her."

"If her mom is trying this hard to get you two together, maybe the architect has brought girls to her house before?"

"Like a lady's tiger?"

*T: A ladies' tiger is a term in Thai, referring to a playboy.*

"Isn't that word used for men?"

"A lioness, then."

"Come again?"

"Well, she ruffles her hair when she's stressed, so she looks kind of like a lion?"

When she yelled with that ill temper of hers, she looked even more like a lion. No matter how many times they met, Miss Architect never seemed to be in a good mood, not even once.

"You say you don't like her, but you sure paid attention to her, though, Xin."

"No way, Lada. I've learned my lesson from mama."

"But there is a choice, Xinxin. You can choose what kind of love you want."

"Then I choose not to love at all. I won't love anyone for the rest of my life."

Because she didn't want to hand her heart on a silver platter to anyone.

And she didn't want to regret something foolish and unnecessary in life like that.

"Good morning, Mr. Mongkol."

"Good morning, please have a seat, Feng Shui Master Xinxin. I've arranged a joint meeting with another team, and they informed me they will arrive soon."

Renita gave her new client a soft smile and took a sip from the glass of water that Mr. Mongkol's secretary gave her. It was a habit of hers to arrive at meetings early to avoid being late due to the chaotic city commute. For someone who didn't own a car, she had to get to work extra early to avoid traffic. The brand new car someone had bought for her was still parked outside her house, unmoving, and blocking her way until this morning.

"Mr. Mongkol, sir, the architect team has arrived."

"Tell them to come in so they can discuss the project with the Feng Shui master together."

The skilled Feng Shui master straightened her shoulders to keep her composure when she heard that the architectural team responsible for designing Mr. Mongkol's new building had arrived. She didn't turn to look at them; it would be rude. She thought the owner of the building would introduce them when they entered the meeting room.



Tantiya stopped walking when she saw a familiar figure sitting a few steps away. Even though she was looking at her back, the unique hairstyle and slender, shorter figure reminded her of someone—a certain someone who had been out of her life for almost a week.

"Miss Architect!?"

"You, Feng Shui master!?"

"Oh? You two already know each other? It seems like my project will go smoothly since you two should work well together."

**What was the use of finishing Lady Wan's project on good terms?**

When they had to start from square one with Mr. Mongkol's project.

"What? Why are you glaring at me?"

"There are thousands of architects in this country. Why on earth are you the one responsible for Mr. Mongkol's project, Miss Architect?"

"What about you, huh? It's not like you're the only famous Feng Shui master in this country, so why did Mr. Mongkol have to hire you?"

"How should I know?"

"See? Neither do I!"

Renita sighed, trying to suppress her anger, not letting Miss Architect—whom she seemed to keep running into—get on her nerves.

Their fourth encounter in one week took place at the site that would become Mr. Mongkol's new office. He was a well-known businessman who believed in superstition as much as in the logic of building structure and stability. That was why he chose the number one architect from a famous company to be involved in this project.

"If you don't want to work with me, you could just back off from this project."

"Why should I be the one backing off? Mr. Mongkol hired me to examine Feng Shui since he had to choose his company's location. You're the one who came later, Miss Architect. So you should be the one to back off."

"No way, I'm not giving up a good project because of some nonsense like this."

"Oh well, at least you seem to have improved, Miss Architect."

"What are you talking about?"

"What day is today?"

"It's Thursday."

**"Miss Architect, you're practically covered in lucky colors. Especially that green shirt. Gosh, it's so green, it seems like you don't need to rely on my inhaler now."**

The beautiful girl took in the woman's appearance while the other woman feigned ignorance. But every time they met, Miss Tantiya would always dress in her favorite colors like black and white. However, she went out of her way to wear a green shirt—well, Renita did tell her not to underestimate lucky colors.

"It's just a coincidence."

"Really, what a coincidence."

"Miss Soul, Miss Xinxin, is everything alright?"

It seemed that the person who intervened and stopped the architect and the Feng Shui master's bickering was Miss Keaw, Mongkol's secretary, who came to check on them.

They had already walked around to examine the place together, so their work for the day was done. However, the reason they hadn't left yet was because they hadn't finished arguing.

"Yes, everything is fine. I'll present the first draft to you within the next two weeks, Miss Keaw."

"And I've already told her all the details. It's entirely up to Miss Architect now."

After the secretary received their answers, she excused herself to continue her work, leaving Renita and Miss Architect standing in their own privacy as before. But it wasn't as if the two of them wanted to argue in the middle of the afternoon sun outdoors anymore. It would be a total waste of sweat and energy. Renita wanted to get back to rest as soon as possible, but the car pickup app didn't work, and she couldn't seem to get a ride.

"It's hard to find a taxi around here since this is a suburban area. It'll be difficult to travel around without a car."

"I'll get one eventually, if I keep looking."

"Want me to give you a ride? We already met by chance; I could drop you off."

"Are you really Miss Architect?"

"Why?"

"You seem kinder than usual. I thought you were someone else there."

"Who said I'm gonna give you a free ride? I plan to charge you about two thousand baht for dropping you off."

"Is that a payback?"

Renita asked the woman, who let out a satisfied laugh when she realized that Renita didn't have many options. The location of Mr. Mongkol's new building was quite far. The last time she came here, Mr. Mongkol and his secretary gave her a ride back.

But it seemed that it would be hard to find a ride right now. Should she start learning how to drive and buy a car so she could travel somewhere far more

easily?

"Nope, this is equal payment. If I wanted payback, I'd charge you more than two thousand."

"Then you can kindly be on your way now."

"Just get in the car. I don't want to argue with you. Don't you feel hot?"

"Of course, I do. I'm practically fried as I stand here."

"You can get the air conditioning in the car, that's free of charge."

"I'm not gonna pay you even if it's not!"

Whatever, if she couldn't escape from this woman, then she should just confront her on the spot. If they had to see each other, then so be it; it couldn't be helped. She had a living to make and her mother to take care of.

"You know, your mom called me last week."

"Wait, what? Why didn't she tell me?"

"Why so frantic? You seem shocked now that you know your mom called me, Miss Architect."

"Because I don't want her to bother you or anything."

"It wasn't a bother. Your mom just invited me over for dinner at your house. I declined, obviously. But it seems like your mother still thinks that you and I are dating."

Renita sneaked a glance at the woman, who seemed to struggle to keep her cool—unlike the hot-headed architect she had come to know—when Renita brought up the reason why the woman's mother called her.

If they hadn't encountered each other due to Mr. Mongkol's project, Renita would've forgotten about this and wouldn't have told Tantiya about it to

break the silence in the car, where she had the chance to be its passenger for the second time.

"Miss Architect, are you okay?"

"I'm really sorry for my mom. I'll have a talk with her so she won't bother you like this."

"Hey! I didn't tell you this so you would fight with your mother. I'm just letting you know."

"But what my mom did is wrong. I actually wanted to tell you that day that you shouldn't be bothered by what she misunderstood or that she tried to get you to date me. You must've felt uncomfortable being stuck in that situation, and my mom tried to pair you up with a woman."

"Come on, it wasn't uncomfortable. And I'm not one of those homophobes, you know?"

Tantiya looked at the woman beside her in the eyes when the car stopped due to the red traffic light. Renita answered so naturally and sincerely. At first, she thought she would've been put in an awkward position, but the girl was acting so cheerfully as if their conversation topic was something ordinary.

"What do you think about homosexuals?"

"It's their business, their love lives, not mine."

"It doesn't disgust you?"

"The disgusting ones are those who discriminate against other people's love. At least the world is more open now, and more people accept it. But if you ask me, I think you should do whatever makes you happy. We only live once, right?"

"I had a girlfriend once. So my mom tends to get the wrong idea when she meets the people around me. My mom used to treat Mim the same way she treated you. That's why I have to make it clear to her."

**"Miss Architect, I can tell from piecing things together, even if you don't tell me, that you are a lioness."**

"What's a lioness?"

"It's you, Miss Architect."

What on earth did this troublesome Feng Shui master mean by this "lioness" thing?



## Chapter 4

### Mom's Dearest | Mama's Favorite

"You can drop me off here, Miss Architect."

"Is someone in your house scary? Is that why you don't want them to see who gave you a ride?"

"I just don't want to explain anything. I don't want to have any trouble."

"I see, your husband is the possessive type." — — — — —

"My husband!? What's wrong with you? Do I look like someone old enough to start a family? I just don't want Mama to see you, Miss Architect. I don't want to answer how we met."

Renita made a fuss after she was taken aback by what Miss Architect said. She didn't know how the other woman thought that someone in her early twenties like her would have a husband and a family. She wouldn't be so staggered if the other woman had said that she had a partner or something like that. She would be twenty-five this year, and she never thought about starting a family at this age.

"Why are you laughing? Nothing is funny."

"Oh, nothing. Hurry up, get out of the car."

"Ah, you just want to know if I'm single, don't you?"

"You think too highly of yourself."

**"I'm not! My mama tells me I'm cute every day."**

Tantiya wrinkled her nose at the troublesome Feng Shui master's confidence in her cuteness that she kept bragging about. Tantiya tried to see with her eyes and glasses, yet she failed to see anything cute about Renita; the only thing she saw was a hectic mess.

"And I'm not going to tell you whether or not I'm single. I don't trust lionesses." Renita added.

"What lioness? You really are not going to tell me what that means?"

"You want to know?"

"I do."

"Then I won't tell you. I want to leave you confused like this."

**"Damn you, Feng Shui master!"**

The skilled architect stared at Renita, who kept her company during the drive home. She was making funny faces at her, so much for the famous, respectable Feng Shui master.

The woman even used this chance to quickly get out of the car, not letting her ask what she wanted to know. But because the Feng Shui master was in a hurry, she left Tantiya with another problem even when she had already left.

"Is she really good at checking Feng Shui? She can't even check if she drops her wallet in my car or not."



"Renita!"

"Why are you following me? I told you, you can leave."

"So you don't want this back? I can take it as payment for the ride then."

"That's my wallet! How did you steal it?"

"If I stole it, why would I hand it back to you, you Feng Shui master!"

The beautiful girl quickly approached Miss Architect, who had followed her into her house's lane. Fortunately, it was still about three houses away from her house. Renita wanted to settle this as soon as possible so she could tell the other woman to leave.

"Give it back."

"Where's my thank you? I got out of my car and walked here to give it back to you, and you're just going to take it?"

"Thanks."

"Can you be more sincere than that?"

"Sure, you want sincerity?"

"Yeah, you can try. I'm looking forward to it."

"Give me back my damn wallet!"

A second "thank you" didn't come out of the Feng Shui master's pretty mouth when Renita showed her sincerity with what she did best: jumping at Tantiya and trying to snatch the wallet out of her hand, which was raised above her head.

It made her lose her balance from tiptoeing, and she was lucky that the mean architect caught her, or else she would have fallen miserably on the ground, making a scene for herself.

"Isn't that Ping's little girl?"

"Halya! They're teasing and cuddling in broad daylight?"

She hadn't even stepped out of her house with her right foot today, but meeting Miss Architect was all it took for something bad to happen.

That must be why the old granny next door got the wrong idea and broadcast it for the whole neighborhood to see the intimate scene between her and Miss Architect that was purely accidental.

"No, Granny, it's not what you think! I wasn't—"

Her mama walked out of the house to see what it was about and saw the whole thing with her own two eyes.

"Mama, hear me out first. I and Miss Architect..."

"Let's talk inside. You too, Miss."

Tantiya nodded politely to the older woman. Honestly, she still didn't know what was happening right now. Why did that old lady have to make a scene about it? It wasn't like she was involved or had a good relationship with Renita. They were just distant acquaintances, and they both even disliked each other.

"You got me in trouble, Miss Architect."

"You are the one who started it, and you got me involved in this."

"Oh, for heaven's sake."

The talented architect glanced at Renita, who looked very distressed, before she tramped inside the house, following the elder. She preferred to immediately follow her inside rather than stand there face-to-face with the granny next door, who looked way more terrifying than Renita's family who asked her to have a talk inside.

"What's your name?"

"I'm Tantiya, ma'am. But you can call me Soul."

"Mama, can't we let her leave first? This is a family matter; I can explain it to you myself."

"I'm not asking you right now, Xinxin. I need to talk with Miss Soul first."

Renita was going to protest, but she was stopped by the stern look her mom gave her. Normally, her mama was very kind, so kind that she got scolded by her only a few times throughout her life. But when her mom got serious, she had to listen to her because she knew that when someone as kind as her mama got serious, she would be extra stern too.

"Miss Soul, who are you to Xinxin?"

"Renita and I...well, I suppose it can be said that we are colleagues, ma'am. I'm an architect who got to work alongside her."

"You are an architect?"

"Yes, ma'am, I'm an architect."

"Xinxin, is she the same architect you told me about?"

"Mama!"

The beautiful woman tried to give her mother a signal by shaking her head frantically. She didn't want her mama to say something about how she used to whine and complain about how demanding and picky the hot-headed architect was.

At least her mama didn't say anything else; she probably knew how much she could say without letting her words affect her daughter's image.

"I'm not sure what she told you, ma'am. But if it's about how we didn't get along, then that would be me."

"Oh, you are Miss Architect! And here **I thought you were Xinxin's girlfriend.**"

Now it was Renita's turn to be flabbergasted. What made her mother think that she and Miss Architect were a couple like Auntie Tye did? Did she look like a daughter who seemed so desperately single?

That was why her mama wanted her to have a stable relationship. But if it came a time when she could no longer escape from love, the day she didn't have other choices other than to love someone, she'd rather choose anyone but Miss Architect!

"What you saw outside there was an accident, Mama. I tripped, and she caught me from falling. But Granny Lee saw it and misunderstood the situation."

"Then it seems I got the wrong idea. My apologies, Miss Soul, you too, sweetie."

"It's fine, ma'am. If everything is settled, then I should better take my leave. I don't want to take up your time."

"You drove Xinxin home, Miss Soul. At least you should stay for dinner first."

"But..."

Tantiya glanced at Renita beside the elder woman, who shook her head rapidly as a signal that her neck should be stiff with how hard she shook it. She looked like she didn't want her to stay over for dinner. But Tantiya wasn't going to let the Feng Shui master off like this. The girl had dinner at her house last time, so she should pay her back as a thank you that she refused to say willingly.

"Thank you, ma'am. Then I'll be in your care."

"Why are you having dinner at my house? Your mother's food is already good."

"Who doesn't like free food?"

"If you're done eating, you should leave."

"I didn't try to kick you out when you were my guest."

"But as the host, I will. And stop chit-chatting with my mama."

"What? You don't want me to be close to your mama?"

Renita didn't say anything. She just let the air between them go quiet again. Her mama told her to walk Miss Architect to her car around the corner of the alley. She wanted to refuse because she was too lazy to walk her back. But she did as she was told because she didn't want to displease her mother, who seemed to enjoy talking to Miss Architect so much; she seemed to take a liking to her when they just met for the first time. Even though it was like this too when Lada came, she was irritated to see that her mama was getting along with her way too fast.

"I take your silence as a yes. Seriously, how old are you? You're getting jealous like a child."

"And how old are you, Miss Architect?"

"I asked you first."

"Answer me first, then. I'll tell you if you tell me."

"I'll be twenty-nine this year."

"You're so old."

"What!"

"I'm twenty-five."

"But you look like you're in your thirties though, ouch!"

"You're so mean, I told you if you keep this up, no girl would like you."

"What a rascal, no one would like a girl like you either. I see why your mama wants you to have a significant other. So that means you're single, right?"

"Just leave, you talk too much."

Tantiya laughed amusingly when she saw the younger woman seemed at a loss for words. She just learned that Renita was four years younger than her. That was why the girl acted tough and shoved her to get out of her lane faster.

"I'll head back now."

"Then go."

"See you."

"Who said I want to?"

"I'm just jinxing it. We always see each other every time you say you don't want to see me again. So I try saying see you again this time, so we won't meet."

"Then see you, Miss Architect."

"Soul, how's it going with little Xinxin?"

The skilled architect put her pencil down on the desk after being interrupted by her mother's question. She turned her head to answer, not wanting her mom to get the wrong idea about Renita again.

Even though the Feng Shui master's mama got the wrong idea about her too, it seemed like the elder woman understood and accepted it soon enough, unlike her mother who still clung to hope even after a week had passed.

**"Zero percent, Mom. Maybe even below zero."**

"What? Why? You told me the other day that you had dinner at her place and you already met her family."

"And that was all, Mom. Nothing else happened. I don't have a reason to meet with her."

"Then why don't you make up an excuse to meet? You can think of anything."

"Why would I do that? I told you a dozen times, Mom, I didn't like her."

"But I like little Xinxin."

"If you like her that much, you should get her yourself."

"Are you asking me to, dear? If you don't know how to flirt, I can help you get little Xinxin. It's for my daughter's sake."

**That damn Feng Shui master must have cast some spell or done something to her mother when they met, for sure.**

"Why are you hesitating, Soul?"

"Oyl! Why are you so loud? You startled me."

"I talk normally. It's you who has something on your mind. You keep picking up and putting down your phone for a while now."

"Did Lady Wan have some issues with the project again?"

"Don't jinx it, Mim. Stop saying Lady Wan's name from now on."

Lately, her work on Lady Wan's project had been going well; everything was going smoothly with nothing else to adjust. It was for the best.

Last week, she was busy with the design for Mr. Mongkol's new office in the suburban area. After she went to see the location last week, she put her all into the new project, but there were some details she struggled with. It would be better if she had some advice from the same person she worked with when she was on Lady Wan's project.

"'Bunhead amulet doll'—do we have a client under this name?"

"No, it's nothing."

The skilled architect hid her phone's screen with her hand after one of her juniors, Mim, caught the name she had saved in her contact list. She was still contemplating whether or not she should call Renita and ask about the work she struggled with and get some advice.

Or should she just ignore it and do as she intended, which was not seeing her again? But she accidentally pressed the call button as she was contemplating and quickly ended the call.

**"She's so rude; she was the one who called, but she ended it to make me call her back?"**

Renita stared at the incoming call from the contact she had already saved in her phone, even though they didn't need to see each other anymore.



Her mama didn't ask about Miss Architect or bring up the misunderstanding. She assumed her mother had already explained it to the granny next door because the old lady had stopped giving her strange looks.

"Miss Architect, why are you calling me then hanging up?"

[I pressed the wrong button.]

"Hey, you're wasting my time, okay? And I have to pay to call you back."

[Are you free? I'll pay two thousand baht for your time.]

"Excuse me?"

[I already finished designing Mr. Mongkol's project, more than half of it. But there are some parts I still can't get right because of Feng Shui. Some of it can't be changed either, so I want you to adjust it, and I want your advice too.]

"I'm free, I guess. I just finished meeting with my last client today."

[So where do you want to meet up?]

"I'm around Pathum Thani province."

[Wait, what? What are you doing there?]

"I just told you, I came to check Feng Shui at my client's house."

[So what now?]

"Come pick me up, won't you? I can't get a ride back yet. I'll help you with Mr. Mongkol's project, free of charge, so you can keep that two thousand baht."

"Good afternoon, Miss Architect. What a coincidence."

"Right. Coincidence."

"Well, I didn't think you would actually drive all the way here."

"You said you can't get a ride back."

"To be honest, I haven't tried calling a taxi yet. But it's nice to save the travel fee, right?"

Renita grinned brightly, pleased to save a few hundred baht for the ride back today. She even got Miss Architect, her nemesis, to pick her up from her client's house, which she had sent the location for earlier. And she only had to take a look and help her out with Mr. Mongkol's project. It was totally a great deal for her.

"Get in the car. What are you waiting for?"

"Wait for you to open the ceremony for me to get in, maybe."

The skilled architect shook her head at the troublesome Feng Shui master's antics, who got on her nerves from the first moment they met this week. Maybe Renita didn't have many friends, so she didn't have anyone to talk to, which must be why she never shut up.

"So where do we work?" Renita asked.

"My place."

"Your place again? Are you trying to seduce me or something?"

"We could go to your place. I was just missing your mama."

"Not a chance. Leave my mama alone."

"That's what I thought; that's why I suggested my house."

"Did Auntie Tye cook some good food?"

"She prepared a full-course meal the moment I told her you were coming."

"Lucky me."

The beautiful girl said cheerily before she picked up her phone to text her mother that she had work in the evening and would be home late.

She told her mama not to wait up for dinner and that she didn't have to cook for her. At first, her mama seemed suspicious about it and asked her so many questions that she had to tell her that she had to discuss some work with Miss Architect. When her mama knew, she sent her a smiling sticker and stopped asking entirely.

Don't tell me mama also gets the same idea as Auntie Tye?

**No way; she and Miss Architect didn't like each other!**

"Come in, I'm not gonna seduce you." — — — — —

"You don't seem trustworthy, Miss Architect."

"My mom is right downstairs."

"I give a good fight, alright?"

Tantiya scratched her head at the troublesome Feng Shui master's quirkiness and high maintenance. It took her long enough before she was willing to step inside Tantiya's room, where they could have more privacy as they discussed work.

When she entered, Renita seemed so paranoid and kept scanning around the room. She even held up two fists to threaten her and act tough.

"I allowed you in here because I don't want you to feel uncomfortable with my mom."

"Oh right, Auntie Tye kept staring at me last time."

"Please don't mind her. She is always like this."

"With every woman you brought home?"

"Excuse me?"

"Well, you said your mother tried to pair you up with Miss Mim too."

"Yeah, she likes to do that. It makes me feel bad for the ones who get involved."

"You too, Miss Architect."

"Hm?"

"Don't mind what my mama said, okay?"

"Ah, I won't."

Even though she and Renita were completely different and their occupations were polar opposites, one thing they had in common was probably the fact that their mothers tried their hardest to get them together despite it being completely impossible, no matter how she looked at it.

"You sit here, I'll open my computer."

"Your room is quite neat, Miss Architect."

"And is it by Feng Shui principles?"

"Which one do you want to know?"

"Tell me all of them."

"Normally, I don't do this for free, you know?"

"If you're going to make me pay, then I don't want to know."

"Your work desk shouldn't face your bed; it makes you lack new ideas and inspirations. According to the book, your desk should face another direction. If you can face it towards the window to obtain good energy, that would be great. It will make you get promoted more easily."

The skilled Feng Shui master told her about the direction her work desk was facing, which was towards the bed. The owner of the room listened to her with an unreadable expression, so Renita couldn't tell if the woman believed her or not. But from the fact that the woman didn't rebuke her, Renita guessed she didn't.

"But my desk has faced this way for years."

"I'm just giving you advice; take it or leave it."

"And what's next?"

"You have three lights in your bedroom."

"You're telling me that I won't find someone and that I have bad luck in love?"

"That's what the book said."

She didn't just make that up or say nonsense. If one wished to have good luck in love, then their lights should be in even numbers, like how Lady Wan was very particular about this and changed all the lights in her house to be an even number in every spot. She was even willing to rebuild the whole fountain to let a successful love life flow in.

"Then how many lights are there in your bedroom?"

"Four, and none of them shine on me while I sleep, a hundred percent by the principles of Feng Shui. **And do you have a good love life?"**

"...."

"See? You're a Feng Shui master, yet you don't have a partner. How am I going to believe in this stuff?"

"Heh! But even an even number of lights won't help you, Miss Architect. Because you say mean things."

"I take that as a compliment."

"It wasn't a compliment."

"Stop, stop, let's just take a look at Mr. Mongkol's project."

"You started it first."

"Fine, and I will stop it first. I want to get to work."

Renita narrowed her eyes at the woman who gestured for her to go talk in front of the computer's screen. Miss Architect behaved strangely today; she was willing to step down from an argument with her so easily. Still, Renita wouldn't trust her wholeheartedly. She was still wondering what that architect was up to because the Miss Architect she had in mind was hot-headed, ill-tempered, and didn't hold back her tongue at all.

"Try having a small plant on your desk, like a Golden Pothos or any auspicious plants will do."

"Why?"

"It will make you calmer and help you find new ideas."

"I'll have that in mind."

"If it's difficult to add another light in your room, try getting a lamp and putting it on your desk."

"What good would that do?"

**"It will bring you good luck in love."**

Tantiya turned to make eye contact with the younger woman, who was still looking around her private space. The girl kept giving her suggestions, barely keeping up with which areas needed to change to align with the Feng Shui principles.

To be honest, she didn't believe her, but if it was about her love life, she secretly wished to have good luck in this for once.

"Can you guarantee that?"

"Yeah, I swear on my reputation as Feng Shui Master Xinxin."

**Well, it wouldn't hurt to try believing her for once...**



## Chapter 5

### Love Came Running to You Like a Race

"Hi, Auntie Ping."

"Come in, Soul, I'll get you a glass of water."

"Just let Miss Architect leave, Mama. She has work to do."

"Then wait here first, Soul. I'll get you some of the chive dumplings I made today. It's Xinxin's favorite. You can have some so you can share with your family."

"Thank you, Auntie."

Tantiya accepted Auntie Ping's kindness. Renita, the daughter, glared at her, clearly displeased.

The girl had already made a fuss when she refused to park at the corner of the lane and drove in to park in front of the house. And when the troublesome Feng Shui master told her not to get out of the car, she turned off the engine just to spite her and came down to say hi to Auntie Ping, who came to greet her daughter after she heard the car arrive.

"You are so greedy when it comes to food. My mama was just being polite."

"And I can't? You also love free stuff."

"Here, thank you for driving her home, Soul."



"It's alright, Auntie. I'll head back now."

"Just hurry and leave."

"Xinxin, don't say that to her, dear. She was so kind as to drive you home."

The skilled architect watched as the girl headed back inside before her mother, who refused to talk to her as nicely as she was told. Tantiya smiled at the elderly woman who shook her head at her daughter's behavior. She bid her farewell with respect.

"Goodbye, Auntie Ping."

"Drive safe, dear."

**The chive dumplings today were very good. It was worth her gas driving there...**

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"You're amazing, Soul. Our client approved the designs and practically showered you with praise. They love it so much they didn't ask to adjust anything."

"I was stunned when you answered the client's question about Feng Shui so smoothly. Since when did you learn that, Soul?"

"She probably learned her lessons from Lady Wan's project. Since she was going to be nagged about Feng Shui, she decided to design it to align with Feng Shui from the start to avoid the issue."

"And here I thought Soul got some useful tips from that pretty Feng Shui Master Xinxin."

If this were a normal circumstance, she would have immediately told Oyl, her junior, off so he wouldn't misunderstand anything.

But Tantiya thought that she couldn't tell that the success in the design of Mr. Mongkol's new office didn't have anything to do with Renita because it did.

The girl did help with the project and gave her some advice for free. So she supposed she could say that the troublesome Feng Shui master played a part in making this project successful.

"I did consult with Renita, actually."

"For real? Since when did you get so close to Feng Shui Master Xinxin, Soul?"

"Yeah, Oyl told me that the first day you met, you and Miss Feng Shui Master nearly fought at Lady Wan's house."

"Oyl was exaggerating. I'm not the type to use violence to solve my problems, you know?"

"I didn't believe everything he said, alright? If Oyl said something, it's better to tone it down at least half of it. But the day I arranged a meeting with the Feng Shui master for you, I didn't get the impression that Miss Renita liked you very much either. She nearly left when she saw your face, Soul."

"We just don't get along because we have different opinions at work. It's not a personal thing, and it's not like I hate her guts or something."

Tantiya answered curtly without letting her juniors ask more questions or wonder about anything more. She walked out of the meeting room area and stared at her screen that displayed a certain someone's name whose alias many had wondered and failed to know.

**"Do I need to call and thank her?"**

The woman muttered, her unblemished face looking hesitant. She couldn't decide if she should call Renita to thank her for her advice days ago, which had contributed to making her design complete and making Mr. Mongkol pleased with her design, or if she should just let it slide. She didn't know if it would be weird to call and thank the girl without having other business between them.

"I'm just gonna let this slide. It's not like we would meet again by chance after we are done with Mr. Mongkol's project."

"What do you want to eat, Mama? Chinese Hot Pot, Thai food, or Chinese?"

"You pick one, Xin."

"You're supposed to pick, Mama. I wanted to bring you here so we could eat out together today."

"Then I choose Hot Pot."

Renita nodded and beamed before she took her mother's hand and walked to the Chinese Hot Pot restaurant in the mall close to their house.

There were people waiting in line in front of the restaurant during the weekend, but the line wasn't long. But before they could arrive at the destination, they accidentally met someone they recognized.

The elder woman had already spotted Renita.

"Auntie Tye, hi."

"Little Xinxin, you come to the mall as well?"

"Yeah, I brought my mother here so we could eat something and buy some stuff later. Mama, this is Auntie Tye, Miss Architect's mother. Auntie, this is

Mama Ping, my mother."

"How do you do, Miss Tye?"

"How do you do, Miss Ping? It's an honor to meet little Xinxin's mother. Now I know where little Xinxin gets her cuteness from."

"Have you eaten lunch yet, Auntie?"

"Not yet, dear. I just arrived. I was thinking about finding something to eat too."

"Does Hot Pot sound good to you, Auntie? You cooked dinner for me twice already. Let me buy you a meal this time."

"Please, the pleasure is ours, Miss Tye."

The beautiful girl offered while her mother invited the elder woman to have lunch together. Therefore, they added more seats for their lunch table from two to three. Everything went smoothly because there was no sign of Miss Architect around. It was fortunate that she only ran into Auntie Tye today.

**Surprise, she did not only run into Auntie Tye!** — — —

"How on earth did you get here?"

"Mom asked me to pick her up. I finished my meeting with the client, so I dropped by."

"Then you'll have to wait for another two hours because Auntie Tye just took my mama to a spa, some relaxing aromatherapy. They've already gone into the massage parlor together."

"Your mama and my mom? How did that happen?" Tantiya asked, puzzled as she just ran into Renita in front of a Thai massage parlor inside a mall.

Earlier this morning, her mom asked her to drop her off at the department store to buy something, and she told her that she would pick her up after she finished talking with her client about some adjustments in their shophouse's

design. After she was done, her mother told her to pick her up at this place, but when she arrived, she hadn't seen her mom at all.

"Me and my mama came here to grab something to eat, and we met your mom. She hadn't eaten lunch yet, so I invited her to get Hot Pot together. After we were done, we went shopping together. Mama and your mom seem to get along well; they immediately hit it off. I'm still catching up with that."

"That's just how my mom is. She makes new friends easily, especially the ones her age."

"Unlike you, right, Miss Architect?"

"What about me?"

"You don't get along with people."

"Just with one troublesome Feng Shui master."

Renita turned to glare at the woman who casually dragged her name into this after they met by coincidence again this week. Maybe it was Auntie Tye's doing; she wasn't sure. But since she had to wait for her mama for a while, just like how Tantiya had to wait for her mom, she supposed she and the older woman had to find something to do to kill time in these boring two hours.

"Are you gonna wait for Auntie in front of the shop?"

"Yeah, I guess I have to."

"Then I'll go shopping, okay? I don't wanna hang around; the massage balm smell is very strong here."

"I'll come with you."

"What? You can wait here, Miss Architect. It's not like you and I are stuck together."

"Changed my mind. It's two hours; I'd better take a walk than sit still here the whole time."

The pretty girl watched Miss Lioness, who followed her before she even got to sit down in front of the shop. Miss Architect walked beside her, and no one said a word. Honestly, this silence was a bit awkward for her too.

"If you have something you want to see, you can go."

"I don't know; I can't think of anything I have to buy."

"I'm just walking around too. I don't know what to buy."

"Let's just walk around then."

"Oh yeah, how was Mr. Mongkol's project? You didn't contact me after that day."

"All done. Mr. Mongkol was pleased with the new office's design. We're in the next process."

"And my payment?"

"Hm?"

Tantiya looked into Renita's pretty eyes that were staring at her. The girl held out her hand, waiting for the payment she did not specify the amount of money or what she wanted as payment. But the Feng Shui master did not collect her two thousand baht payment for her consultation that day either.

"Don't act like you don't know, Miss Architect. Give me my payment."

"You didn't accept it that day; why are you asking for it now?"

"It was my plan all along. Now I charge you, compound interest included."

"You're so rigid with this. How much do you want?"

"Buy me a dessert."

"What dessert?"

"That one. It looks so good. I want honey toast and ice cream, and pancakes too... Come on, Miss Architect. Let's go wait in line. This shop is crowded, so it should be good, right?"

"These are less than two thousand baht, right?"

"You're being dramatic. Who would order two thousand baht worth of dessert? I'd get diabetes."

"But everything you ordered is already sweet."

"Come on, just eat them. Don't complain so much. It's me who brought you these."

"Who brought who? I paid for them."

"Yeah, with the money that I didn't accept as payment. So it's like I'm the one buying you these desserts, Miss Architect."

The skilled architect listened to her self-serving conclusion and decided not to argue. The Feng Shui master was too self-assured to argue with. Therefore, the payment turned into many plates of desserts from a famous dessert shop where they spent almost twenty minutes waiting in line to get a table and enjoy their desserts.

"Miss Architect."

"Yes?"

"I know what you have to buy."

"Swallow your food first, then talk."

"But I don't want to forget about it."

"And what do I have to buy? Even I can't think of it, so how would you know? Are you a Feng Shui master or a fortune teller?"

"Did you buy a new lamp for your work desk?"

"Not yet. I completely forgot about it."

"See? You lack enthusiasm. Do you think love is just going to run straight to you or something?"

Really, her Mian Xiang showed that she had bad luck in love and wasn't eager to fix it. There was no way she would meet a new love like this, which is why Miss Architect needed her help. Renita was helping her only because she didn't want her to say that her Feng Shui textbook was a fraud.

"And one single lamp can make love run into me?"

"Yes, maybe it will run like a race. Who knows?"

"That's full of crap."

"It isn't. I can guarantee it. I'll drag you into buying a new lamp if you still don't believe me."

"Alright, let's test it, shall we?"

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"Where did you two go, dear? I walked out and didn't see anyone."

"I took Miss Architect to buy something important, mama."

Renita eagerly answered her mother, while the architect followed behind her, carrying a sizable paper bag that contained a heart-shaped desk lamp inside. The lamp didn't need to be in any specific shape, but because she wanted to have a good love life, Renita picked the heart-shaped one for her.

"Ping and I just finished with our massage spa. It was very relaxing. You and little Xinxin should try, Soul. This shop has good service and it's very calm."



"Are you going back now, Mom?"

"Do you have work to do at home, Soul?"

"No."

"Great! Ping invited you and me to have dinner at her house today. So you can drive Ping and little Xinxin home too."

Tantiya glanced at Renita, who looked equally confused and puzzled. Since when did her mom and the girl's mama arrange for them to have dinner together at one of their houses?

From their faces, they probably didn't have the answer, so they could only follow what the elder women wanted.

"What are you doing?"

"Cooking."

"Oh, you aren't watering the trees?"

"Miss Architect, if you already see what I'm doing, why do you ask?"

"Just want to see if you will answer it willingly or not."

"I will answer you as I want."

Renita answered as she feigned ignorance just to get on the other woman's nerves before turning to water plants in the pots with care.

Miss Architect was the uninvited spectator who watched her closely and explored the little garden in front of her house, which was filled with beautiful plants and flowers that Renita's mother grew.

"Did you grow all of these?"

"Just some of them. Mama likes to plant them herself."

"This one is pretty. What is it called?"

"A plant."

"Whatever, I'll stop asking."

"It's Crown of Thorns. According to the Feng Shui text, it's believed to bring good luck if you plant it in front of your house."

The beautiful girl glanced at the woman beside her, who paid attention to the meaning of each plant with interest. Then Miss Architect pointed at a plant that was placed next to the corner of the previous one.

"That's Dracaena. If you plant it on the Northeastern side of the house, it will be auspicious for the household members. For those who are very superstitious about Feng Shui, they will plant Dracaena on a Tuesday and only women are allowed to plant it."

"What about this?"

"That's Golden Pothos. Don't tell me you don't even know Golden Pothos?"

"I do. I just wanted to ask if this is the one that you told me to put in a vase and place on my work desk."

"Yes, and did you do as I suggested?"

"Not yet."

Tantiya shook her head as she admitted truthfully that she hadn't done what the Feng Shui master Renita suggested—changing the direction of her desk, adding a lamp in the room, finding a Golden Pothos, and putting it on her desk. It was like Renita was talking to a brick wall.

"Unbelievable."

"Well, I'm busy. Where can I find the time to plant something?"

"That's just an excuse. My schedule is always full, but I still managed to plant these Golden Pothos."

"Why are you telling me this? Want me to praise you or what?"

"Nah, I don't want your empty compliment. Here, take this one."

"You're giving this to me?"

"Golden Pothos is the easiest one to grow in water. You just need to change the water every month, once or twice. If you can't even do this and let it wither, then you're hopeless, Miss Architect."

The skilled architect accepted the bottle of water that Renita modified into a pot for the Golden Pothos and handed it to her. She instructed her on how to take care of a plant, which was one of the easiest to take care of, and prevent it from withering.

"Find a nice vase for it. Okay? I worked hard planting these Golden Pothos and I gave one to you, so you have to take good care of it."

"Okay, okay. I'm not gonna let it wither."

*'I did everything she told me to, but nothing changed.'*

Tantiya crossed her arms as she stared at her work desk, which she had pushed earlier to make it face a new direction.

After returning from Renita's house, she was reminded of how the Feng Shui master fussed about the importance of Feng Shui in her bedroom. The skilled architect tried changing her room, adding the new Golden Pothos in a vase, and putting it on her desk. However, the greenery didn't inspire any new ideas.

"Did that Feng Shui master trick me?"

As she was examining the changes and was deep in thought, the skilled architect turned and saw a bag with the lamp she bought that was still in its box. She took it out, placed it on the table, plugged it in, and turned the light on.

Now the number of lights in her bedroom was four—an exact even number. So where was this love that was supposed to come running in like a race?

"Lady Wan?"

There was no love running to her, and now troubles appeared to be chasing her after she had changed her room's Feng Shui to welcome good fortune. Tantiya hesitated and felt a little nervous when she heard her phone ring and saw that the incoming call was from her important client, Lady Wan.

"Lady Wan, hello."

[Miss Soul, I'm so sorry for calling you this late.]

"It's fine, ma'am. You can tell me if you need anything."

[Well, here's the thing. I really like your house design, and it just occurred to me that I have land that I bought around Prachuap province. I haven't done anything with it for years.]

"Lady Wan, you own land property in Prachuap?"

[Yes. I wanted to build my private vacation home there and I wanted you to be responsible for the design. At first, I told my secretary to contact your boss, Miss Soul, but your boss said that you already have a busy schedule, so he would assign someone named Pat to be in charge of the project.]

"Pat is my senior at the company who has good achievements, so you are in good hands, Lady Wan. You will be pleased with the project."

It was a relief that they had the company's top player like Pat available for Lady Wan's project because Lady Wan's previous project, the one that made

her meet Renita, had already terrified her and traumatized her team for good.

If Mim and Oyl found out that Lady Wan wanted their team to accept this job, they would probably run away, crying and screaming.

[So you are not going to accept this work, Miss Soul?]

"My apologies, Lady Wan. My schedule is very packed right now. I don't think I can add another project. But I can assure you that every architect in JR company is skilled and talented. You are guaranteed to have high-quality work no matter who you choose."

[I understand, but it's really a shame. I want you to work on this project because you work so well with Feng Shui Master Xinxin.]

"Lady Wan, you're saying that you want Renita to oversee this project?"

[Yes. I tried calling Feng Shui Master Xinxin before I called you, but she didn't pick up. I think I'll call her again after this to inform her that she will have to work with an architect named Pat.]

"....."

[They probably have to stay in Prachuap for days for this project since they have to survey the land and its surroundings. But I understand that your schedule is full so it would be impossible for you to go to the countryside for many days. I'll have Pilin notify your boss that I will have Mr Pat taking care of my project.]

"Wait, Lady Wan, I changed my mind."

[Pardon?]

"I'll take your vacation house design project in Prachuap."

[Oh, didn't you say your schedule is too packed?]

"On second thought, I can squeeze in another one, I'll make room on my schedule for you."

[Thank you so much, Miss Soul. Let me call Feng Shui Master Xinxin to tell her about this.]

"Take your time, Lady Wan. You can let Miss Pilin contact me to tell me what time you are free to meet."

The skilled architect said before Lady Wan hurriedly ended the call. She probably was trying to call

Feng Shui Master Xinxin, whose schedule was as busy as hers due to the new project. Tantiya admitted that at first, she didn't want to handle a picky, demanding, and self-centered client like Lady Wan.

But then she heard that they had to work in another province. She knew what her senior was like and she had heard of his reputation, P' Pat was a player, he flirted with everyone and anyone, and he had flings everywhere. Auntie Ping would probably be worried sick about her daughter if that man had to work somewhere remote and private like that with Renita.

There was no way that Feng Shui master could keep up with that man's game!

**"Wait, so where can I squeeze Lady Wan's project into my schedule?"**

"Hello, Lady Wan, I'm sorry I didn't pick up your call earlier."

Renita apologized to her valued client, she was changing the water in her Golden Pothos pot on the work desk and she didn't come back in time to pick up the call. And when she tried to call back, the line was busy or maybe Lady Wan was on another important call, so she waited for her to call back again.

[Feng Shui Master Xinxin, I have good news to tell you.]

"What good news, ma'am?"

[A new project that I wanted to hire you to check the Feng Shui there.]

"Lady Wan, you are planning to build a new house?"

[Yes, I will build a new vacation house in Prachuap, that's why I wanted you to examine the Feng Shui and the location for me. As for the expense, as usual, you can name me the price, Master Xinxin.]

"That'd be my pleasure, and when do you want me to go see the location, ma'am?"

[How about next week? I'm a little impatient, you see. And besides, Miss Soul already accepted the job so I'm very happy to have the two of you working on my vacation home project together.]

"Miss Architect agreed to do this project, you said?"

[Yes, she already agreed. Are you comfortable working with her, Feng Shui Master Xinxin? Or do you want me to change the architect in charge of this project? I do like Miss Soul's work but I can change it for you if you are not comfortable to work with her. Naturally, I'd side with you above anyone, Master Xinxin.]

Even though they probably would fight each other, they started to get used to it and knew how to work with one another from Lady Wan's project and from Mr Mongkol's project. So they probably wouldn't fight as badly as the first project they did together this time.

"It's fine, Lady Wan. I can work with Miss Architect."

[Miss Soul just said the same thing. At first, she seemed like she wasn't going to accept the job but when she knew that I would hire you to oversee this project, she immediately changed her mind.]

"Really?"

[Of course, I think Feng Shui Master Xinxin and Miss Soul are perfect for each other.]

"What do you mean, Lady Wan?"

[You work together so well, I like it.]

That was a relief, at first, she thought Lady Wan was trying to pair them up like what her mama and Auntie Tye did. It wasn't like she and Miss Lioness wanted to be seen as an OTP, really.

**The only couple they could be was a couple of rivals!**





## Chapter 6

### **Prachuap is the Right Place, Perfectly at the Right Time**

"Be careful, Xinxin."

"Yes, Mama. I'll be home as soon as I finish work, no stopping anywhere."

"Soul, you two work together, look after her for Auntie, okay?"

"Of course, Auntie. I'll keep an eye on her."

"I'm just going to Prachuap for a few days, Ma. I'm not going to fight; I don't need Miss Architect to look after me. I can survive on my own, you know."

If the luggage she was carrying for her trip to Prachuap wasn't so heavy, Renita would have raised her arms to show how strong she was and that she could really survive fieldwork in the countryside. She had traveled to check the Feng Shui at her clients' estates outside Bangkok many times, even without the older woman.

But this time seemed to be the most chaotic journey before she even started traveling. Her mother and Aunt Tye talked to each other on the phone and arranged everything on their own. They planned to take her and Miss Architect to Prachuap, which was why this lioness stood in front of her house in the morning to pick her up and travel with her.

"Want me to help you carry your bag?"

"No, I may be smaller than you, but I'm stronger than you think, Miss Architect."

"Let's go now. Goodbye, Aunt Ping."

"I'll call when I get to the hotel, Mama."

"Okay, honey. I hope you both have a safe trip, okay?"

Tantiya immediately walked to open the trunk of her 5-door car to store their travel luggage. She stepped aside to let Renita put her luggage inside, then she walked to the driver's seat and motioned for the troublesome Feng Shui master to sit in the passenger seat beside her.

"Sit in front."

"Why? There's no one sitting in the back."

"I let you come with me, I'm not driving for you like a personal driver."

The beautiful woman glared at the other woman before she turned to smile and wave at her mother. Then she climbed in to sit on the passenger side. She didn't want her mother to worry that she and the lioness would fight throughout the trip, though she guessed maybe they had been doing that the whole trip.

"Miss Architect, where are the other team members you said would go with you?"

"Mim is leaving in Oyl's car; they will meet us there."

"Ah, Mim and Oyl, I've met them."

The skilled architect did not reply to the small conversation that Renita started to break the silence. She wouldn't tell the truth that her juniors, Mim and Oyl, did ask if they could come with her to Prachuap because they didn't want to waste gas and drive the car themselves. So Tantiya had to be a good senior by paying for their gas; she didn't want her mother to complain that she didn't pay attention to her friend's daughter.

And yes, now Renita has become the new **"friend's daughter"** for her mother because her mother seems to be very close to Aunt Ping.

Besides, she didn't want Mim and Oyl to meet Renita or spend several hours in the car together. She didn't want her juniors to say something unpleasant or chatter loudly throughout the journey, which would make her head spin as a driver. So she decided that they should travel separately.

"Miss Architect."

"What? Geez, you talk a lot."

"I'm just trying to start a conversation. I don't want you to feel sleepy when driving long distances."

"So?"

"Why did you decide to take on Lady Wan's project?"

"Because Lady Wan paid generously."

"Oh, I see, so you only care about money."

"Of course, I have work to do. What else do I care about if not money?"

"Me, maybe?"

Tantiya was a little surprised by the unexpected words that came out of the talkative Renita. How confident was this woman to think that she was the reason Tantiya decided to take the job?

Even if it was her, she wasn't the main reason, okay?

"I thought you accepted the project because you wanted to work with me so you could argue with me until your throat was dry."

"Don't push yourself too hard, I would accept the project even if it wasn't you."

"Same for me, there's no way I'm going to refuse Lady Wan's offer. No matter who the architect is."

"Because of money, not me?"

"That's the world of capitalism for you."

"Then you have to help me pay for gas."

"Don't be stingy, Miss Architect. I'll tell Aunt Tye."

Renita grinned as a winner since she had a card up her sleeve—it was someone important who could make the grumpy architect angry.

Moreover, now Tye is very familiar with her mother and has become her mother's new friend. What's more, Tye really adores her. So if Miss Architect was bullying or being mean to her, she could definitely tell her mother and Aunt Tye.

"Miss Architect..."

"Stop trying to talk to me and just sleep. I'll wake you up when we get there."

"You really don't want me to make you sleepy?"

"I'm going to start stressing because you won't stop talking."

"Then I'll take a short nap. I woke up very early."

"Just sleep."

"Can you increase the temperature of the air conditioner? It's hot in here."

"Are you happy now? What more do you want?"

"Can't think of anything at the moment; I'll tell you when I think about it."

Renita then lowered her seat slightly to take a nap. The skilled architect looked sideways at the troublesome and talkative Feng Shui master, who was still irritating her, before Renita hurriedly closed her eyes to escape the annoyance of the architect, who loved to let go of the wheel to mess up the bunhead talisman so that she could stop provoking her.

It took them about four hours to arrive at their destination in Prachuap Khiri Khan province. Renita, her troublesome friend, had been in dreamland not long after the first hour of their journey. See, she was worried that Tantiya would be sleepy, but she was the one who was sleepy and fell asleep.

Still, Tantiya realized that she could focus more on the road when the other party stopped fighting with her. And now it was time for her to wake up this troublemaker, who was a Feng Shui expert once again, because Lady Wan asked them to meet at the resort restaurant she had booked for them. She saw the latest message from Oyl and Mim saying that the two had arrived and had checked into their room.

"Get up."

"You came here to work, not to change your sleeping location."

It seemed that no matter how she tried to call the sleepyhead Feng Shui master to wake up, it didn't work at all. Renita refused to open her eyes from sleep. The woman had said that she wanted to take a short nap, but how could she sleep so soundly? A skilled architect would have to nudge her on the shoulder and shake her lightly to wake her up.

"Renita, wake up. Oi, Feng Shui master!"

"I'm awake, okay? Why are you screaming so loud? Like there's a fire."

"Ew, you drooled all over my car seat."

"How would I know? I was sleeping."

"You are so disgusting."

"Take this!"

"That's disgusting. Why did you wipe your saliva on my clothes?"

"Because you are too noisy."

Tantiya gaped at how unfazed the troublesome Feng Shui master's actions were. She had just discovered her bad habit that could be made fun of, but she didn't expect Renita to come back at her like this. It left her stunned, not knowing how to react.

"Soul, why are you late? I thought you had arrived a while ago."

The skilled architect didn't reply. She looked disappointed as she walked over to sit on an empty chair at the restaurant table. Renita followed behind her and greeted her juniors cheerfully and kindly.

"Hi, Mim. Hi, Oyl."

"Hello, Xinxin."

"We meet again, beautiful Miss Feng Shui Master Xinxin."

"How can she be beautiful? She's so disgusting."

"Oh, stop, Miss Architect. Just eat if you're hungry, no need to mock other people."

Renita used a fork to pick up a piece of fried shrimp cake in front of her and put it into the mouth of the lioness, who was about to snap at her out of anger. The other woman ended up chewing the food because it would be rude to spit it out on the table in front of other people.

But it seemed like the heated situation that continued inside the car between her and the older woman looked cute and enjoyable in Lady Wan's eyes. She was the one who paid for everyone's lunch today.

"Oh, Feng Shui Master Xinxin is feeding Soul? Ah, you two are so close. This reminds me of when I was your age. Oh, how I wish I had cute little moments like this."

"Lady Wan, it's not what you think, I didn't feed her..."

"Come on, eat. I'll take you to see the land in the afternoon." Lady Wan said it with a knowing smile, making it clear that she did not believe their explanations.

But Mim and Oyl should be able to testify for her that she had just put food in Miss Architect's mouth because she was mocking her. She didn't feed her as affectionately as Lady Wan thought.

To think people thought she was acting lovey-dovey with Miss Architect was damaging to her reputation, okay? And that's something so far from the truth that just thinking about it gave her goosebumps!

"Here it is, my little land by the beach."

The woman was talking about her small plot of land and wanted to build a small holiday home. But when they came to survey, they saw that the actual area next to the beach was almost one hectare. It was far from small, as

Lady Wan had said. It could be considered a mansion by the sea, a luxurious holiday home.

"Is the Feng Shui here good, Master Xinxin? Is it suitable for building a rest house?"

"The land is beautiful, Lady Wan," Master Xinxin replied. "The front is right next to the beach, and there is always a fresh breeze. But Feng Shui principles say that it is not good to build a house too close to the sea."

"Should I buy new land?"

"There is a solution according to Feng Shui principles. It all depends on how the architect designs the house. If they design it too close to the beach, the house will receive constant wind, making the occupants feel unwell because of the sea air. So, the architect must build the house in a place that is not too close to the sea and not too far, so the wind can't get into the house."

"You heard that, Miss Soul? This is very important; please do as Master Feng Shui Xinxin suggests."

"Yes, Lady Wan, I will remember that." 

Tantiya noted important details about the Feng Shui of this vacation home so that she could save time in changing the design just because it did not conform to the Feng Shui principles that the homeowner wanted. Otherwise, Lady Wan would ask her to redesign the entire blueprint like last time.

"Luckily, there is a mountain behind this area," Master Xinxin continued. "It will help reduce the speed of the wind blowing into this area. And the house should not face west; that is a bad direction for a house by the sea. Because the sun sets on the sea, the house will be hot and receive sunlight from day to night. The occupants will feel that this house is too hot and uncomfortable to live in."

"Miss Soul, this is important. Don't forget, okay?"



"No problem, Lady Wan. I will design it according to what Master Renita said."

"You're very good at this, Miss Soul. That's why I want you to design my house. You're really fit to be a top architect; you're truly great."

"Oh, and there's one more thing I need to tell you because I don't want Miss Architect to design something that's wrong with Feng Shui principles."

"An even number of lights, stairs, front garden, or the direction of the door?"

"Not all of them, just the pillars."

"Pillars?"

"I want you to build a nice holiday home for Lady Wan without using a single pillar."

She wants me to build a house without a pile foundation to support the weight? Does that damn Feng Shui master want me to build a magic castle in the sky or something?

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"Renita."

"What is it?"

"You're causing trouble again. You did that on purpose, right? Suggested that to Lady Wan. A house without a pile foundation will not be able to support the load in the long term. Even though the soil in this area is hard and can carry the load, without a strong foundation, the house will collapse in the long run."

"Ah, what a shame, Miss Architect. Lady Wan did say that she would do as I say."

"You did this on purpose. Do you want to repay me?"

"Oh, no way, I'm not a vengeful person."

Oh, that damn Feng Shui master is such a vengeful person. Otherwise, she wouldn't be laughing so happily at this moment. She even hid an amused smile as she whispered in Lady Wan's ear to make her believe everything she said. Even though she doesn't know much about the art of Feng Shui, Tantiya is sure that Renita did this to annoy her.

"Otherwise, why would you ruin my work?"

"Well, you're annoying me."

"Shall I tell Aunt Ping about this?"

"Come on, do it. I'll tell Aunt Tye too."

"About what? I didn't do anything?"

"I'll tell her that you said I wasn't beautiful and you called me evil."

"It's all true, you just refuse to admit it."

"Heh! Then get ready to build a house in the air, Miss Architect."

The skilled architect sighed; she didn't know how to handle such a childish thing—a child that Renita doesn't want to let go of.

It looks like a troublesome Feng Shui master is really annoyed because she called her evil and said she wasn't beautiful. The woman scowled and walked away from Lady Wan's place while she was talking to her team, so Tantiya had to follow her to clear up their arguments.

"I'll go back now, okay? If you don't want to explore this place alone, come with me."

"Please, Miss Architect. I...aarrkhh."

"What's gotten into you?"

"Snake! A snake bit me!"

Tantiya looked at the woman who suddenly jumped at her, confused, before she glanced down at the object that caused this bunhead talisman doll to lose her cool. It wasn't a poisonous animal as the woman thought; it was just an old nylon rope left in an abandoned area where no one took care of the land.

"Oh, it's a grass snake."

"Is that a green poisonous snake? Quick, take me to the hospital."

"No need."

"Why not? What if I die?"

The talented architect laughed when she heard the panic and fear in the young woman's voice. Renita was acting very tough, but all it took was an old piece of string to make her panic.

The woman continued to hug her waist, refusing to let go. Tantiya wanted her to see what she saw so that the woman would no longer feel afraid.

"You won't die because it's not a snake."

"Don't trick me; I'm scared."

"No, turn around, it's a rope."

Renita slowly turned around, narrowing her eyes to see the thing that embarrassed her so much that she wanted the ground to open up and swallow her instead. She saw a long, old, green rope rolled on the ground like a snake, which made Miss Architect laugh so hard at her that she wanted to hide.

Moreover, only then did she realize that she was embracing the architect as her refuge. She hurriedly moved away and pulled her arm back to her side, acting as if nothing had happened.

"But that doesn't mean there aren't snakes around here. It's better to get out of here; the grass is tall and quiet. You shouldn't be here in the first place."

"You were the one who kept following me; that's why I had to keep walking until I got here."

"Hey, are you blaming me too this time?"

"Yes! You have to guide me out of here."

"Are you that scared? You're pale."

"Don't make fun of me!"

"No, I'm just asking because I mean well."

"How can you mean well? You keep laughing even though I'm afraid of the snake."

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"Come on, this way; I'll take you back."

The beautiful woman hesitated slightly when she offered. But because Miss Architect sounded so sincere without the slightest hint of teasing or playing around with her, and she kindly extended her hand without being told, even though she wasn't sure, at that moment, she had to admit that this lioness was her only refuge.

That's why she decided to put her hand in hers and hold it like a child clinging to an adult. She let the other woman take her out of there. She didn't look at the woman or at the ground but decided to look at their hands. It felt damp and nervous to the touch, but she also felt strangely warm.

"Very energetic in the morning," the beautiful woman said while smiling at the enthusiasm of the young woman walking along the beach in the morning.

From where she was sitting, she saw Renita walking past her from afar. She seemed to be doing light exercise and hadn't noticed Tantiya sketching on the sofa in front of the inn.

And since the woman was within her sights and it seemed like she would be here for a while, Tantiya turned the page of her notebook to the next blank page and picked up a wooden pencil to sketch the woman, who had no idea that she was the subject of her sketch, just like Tantiya who didn't know why she wanted to draw that troublesome Feng Shui master.

A view of the bunhead amulet doll by the sea in the morning...

"Oh, you are drawing Miss Xinxin," Mim remarked.

"Mim! How long have you been here?"

"I just came, but I saw you were concentrating on sketching, so I didn't want to make you lose focus. But when I approached you, I saw you weren't working; you were just drawing Miss Xinxin."

"This isn't a Feng Shui expert. I'm just scribbling because I haven't come up with an idea yet."

"I mean, the picture only shows the back of the person, but that hairstyle is definitely Miss Xinxin... Do you like her, Soul?"

"Nonsense, Mim. Me and that damn Feng Shui expert? Please, it would be more believable if you said we hated each other," Tantiya said firmly, leaving no room for an answer.

She quickly closed her sketchbook and gathered all her things because she wouldn't be able to focus on her work in the morning like this. What her junior interior designer said was unreasonable and very far from reality.

"Do you guys really hate each other?"

"You saw it yourself yesterday; we always fight as hard as we can."

"Isn't it normal for people from different fields of work to have different opinions? That doesn't mean they have to fight outside of work. Work is work, separate from personal life."

"Stop trying to keep us together, Mim. Don't be like my mother."

"Aunt Tye is also trying to unite you and Miss Xinxin too?"

"Yeah, my mom, Mim, and the Feng Shui expert's mom too. It seems like the world wants me to date her. I don't know what makes them think that's possible."

"Miss Xinxin's mom and Aunt Tye probably saw the same chemistry that I saw."

"You need to forget it. If you don't stop, I will tell Oyl that he should date you."

"No way. There are still many men better than Oyl in this world."

"The same goes for me and that Feng Shui master. I wouldn't be interested in her even if she was the only woman left in the world."

Even though the first love of her teenage years had long passed and she could barely remember the happy memories and feelings of that time, Tantiya could vaguely recall that her memories of that time were nothing like the story of herself and Renita.

No matter how she looked at them from the present to the future, she couldn't see anything. It was too dark for that to be possible. She couldn't even imagine herself liking that troublesome Feng Shui master, could she?

"Soul, you came too late. Oyl almost ate it all by himself."

"The boss called me earlier. Damn, Oyl, you didn't hold back for free food."

"This is the advantage of working with Lady Wan."

"No sign of the Feng Shui master yet?"

The skilled architect asked her two juniors who were already in the dining room to have dinner after they left with Lady Wan.

Today, Lady Wan took the four of them to see a model house belonging to a good friend while telling them the details of the items she wanted.

Yesterday they arrived and inspected the land, and tomorrow they will take care of some documents before traveling back to Bangkok in the afternoon.

Meanwhile, Renita was lucky because she was hired by Lady Wan's friend to check the Feng Shui at her house, making the Feng Shui expert's troublesome trip to Prachuap the most worthwhile trip of all. \_\_\_\_\_

"She's already here, but she said she'd take some photos."

"Wait here, I will find that beautiful Feng Shui expert for you."

"No need, I'll go alone."

Tantiya stopped Oyl and got up before he could struggle, rising from her seat next to Mim. The young junior couldn't get up from her seat when she had already left their table. She tried to walk in the direction she thought she might see Renita, but she forgot to ask Mim which way the younger woman was going.

However, Renita often says that leaving the house with the left foot is better because there is a saying, "**bad right, good left**," so she decided to go left.

She walked along the beach for about a hundred meters but didn't see the person she was looking for around there. She also didn't see anyone with the talisman doll's iconic head bun walking towards her. Tantiya began to consider walking back to the restaurant because she seemed to have chosen the wrong direction.

But then, without realizing it, she stopped when she saw a woman standing by the beach alone, her long hair blowing in the wind as the wind caressed her body, showing smooth skin on her shoulders and back in a bright yellow spaghetti-strap dress.

Perfectly suited to the sea sunset, the view was so beautiful that she didn't want to look away. If the woman hadn't turned around and seen her frozen in place...

"Miss Architect." Renita smiled softly when she saw a familiar face standing not far behind her.

She turned around, and their eyes accidentally met at that very moment. She assumed that Tantiya must have come to take her back to the restaurant. She told Mim that she wanted to go for a walk, but she was too engrossed in the beach at sunset, and with the sight of the sun disappearing over the horizon, she lost track of time.

"You came to pick me up?"

"Yes."

"Then let's go. Mim and Oyl are probably waiting."

"You don't do your hair?"

"Odango buns don't match this dress. I chose this cute dress so I could take photos by the sea. I think if I let my hair down, it would match this dress."



"So true."

Tantiya said softly, agreeing with the young woman's idea for the first time. But her voice was too low to be heard by Renita, who was standing far away. The woman didn't just leave it at that as she quickly approached her, closing the distance between their faces as she glared at her.

"What did you say, Miss Architect?"

"Nothing."

"Liar, I saw you mumbling. Were you saying that I'm not beautiful? Or were you taunting me that I'm dirty..."

**"You're beautiful."**

"....."

"Let's go, the food might run out if we're late."

What was the connection between her calling her beautiful and the food running out?

And why did Miss Architect suddenly change the topic so quickly that she couldn't keep up?

She even walked back without waiting for her. But why was she so confused after being called beautiful... by the Lioness?

## Chapter 7

**In the lamp, light glowed in the heart.  
Uncertainty flowed.**

"How far did you go to get Miss Xinxin, Soul?"

"Why, Mim? Did Oyl eat everything on the table?"

"Not yet, I stopped him. I told him to wait for you guys to come back first."

Renita paid attention to the conversation. The evil architect didn't wait for her to walk back together, even though she went to pick her up. When the woman saw her following closely, she immediately sped up. So she could only let the lioness walk back to the restaurant first while walking slowly behind her.

"Since we're all here, let's eat. I'm so hungry I could eat a horse."

"Do you want to sit inside or outside?"

"Inside, but I'd rather not sit near you, Miss Architect."

"I don't want to sit next to you either."

"Then let's change seats, Soul. I can sit next to the beautiful Feng Shui Master Xinxin."

"No need, stay where you are, Oyl." Tantiya looked at Oyl, who had stood up again.

This time her junior consciously withdrew to avoid making a fuss. Then Tantiya walked over to sit next to Renita, but the woman moved her seat away as if she was still annoyed with her. She was indeed dressed beautifully today, but she was still grumpy.

"Nice."

"Thank you very much, you are very kind, Oyl."

The beautiful woman dressed up today, making her look very cute. She smiled at Miss Architect's junior team member to thank him, as he seemed to be good at looking after others and was kind. She didn't give him any special treatment because Mim was also taken care of by him.

Meanwhile, the person next to her was sitting quietly and eating in silence, which started to make her feel uncomfortable.

"This steamed sea bass with lemon sauce is amazing. Have you tried it, Miss Xinxin?"

The skilled Feng Shui master accepted the small bowl of the dish that Oyl gave her after she said it was so amazing that it deserved a thumbs up. She tried the steamed sea bass with lemon sauce, and it was delicious. But before she could swallow the food, she choked and accidentally spat it violently onto the table when she almost swallowed the bone.

"Here, drink some water."

Renita accepted the glass of water that Miss Architect first offered her. She took a sip until she choked less and wiped her mouth with the napkin offered by the woman beside her.

"That was close, that bone almost strangled me."

"I'm sorry, I forgot to check the bones before giving you the bowl."

"It's okay, Oyl. I was the one who wasn't careful."

"Take this one." Tantiya handed her another bowl.

"What?"

"I've removed the bones. And be slow, don't just put it all in your mouth."

"But Miss Architect, I didn't..."

Tantiya glanced at the young woman who slapped her arm because of the accusation she wanted to refute. The woman didn't even thank her for removing the bones from the sea bass in the small bowl Oyl had given her. Tantiya hadn't eaten anything because she was busy picking bones.

"Soul, you really take good care of Miss Xinxin."

"Her mother asked me, Mim. Auntie probably knows that you can't take care of yourself."

"Oh yes, Mama did ask you to take good care of me."

"Yeah, I already promised her, so I can't take it back."

"Can you peel the shrimp for me too?"

"Why should I? You have hands, you can peel them just fine."

"The crab too. Hurry, I want to eat it."

"I think you misunderstood something. I'm not your maid."

"Miss Architect, if you don't take good care of me, I will tell Mama you broke your promise."

The lioness glared at her as if she wanted to growl at her for responding to her like this. But well, she was the one who said that her mother asked the woman to take care of her because she couldn't take care of herself. Renita might have two free hands, but she intended to laze around and let Miss

Architect look after her throughout the meal so she could enjoy the delicious food.

**But really, apart from designing houses, Miss Architect is also good at finding bones and peeling shrimp and crabs—what a woman!**

"I'm so full."

"As it should be, you devoured everything."

"Wicked!"

Tantiya shrugged at the younger woman without being bothered by the other woman. The two of them walked back to their respective homes but did not join Mim and Oyl's trip to the night market before returning to Bangkok.

She refused the invitation because she wanted to finish some of her unfinished work and she wanted to use her head quietly alone.

The Feng Shui master refused because she said she used up her energy while she was checking the Feng Shui at Lady Wan's friend's residence; she was too tired to go out at night. — — — — —

"So why don't you go with Mim and Oyl?"

"I want to work."

"It's late; time to rest."

"My work doesn't have a fixed schedule. I'm most productive at night, and I get inspired with new designs at that time."

"And you won't get enough sleep at night. The dark circles under your eyes will appear in the morning."

Renita mocked the workaholic architect, who tended to stay up late, and her eyes would have very large dark circles like someone who didn't sleep well. She had seen it like that when she had to redesign the blueprints of Lady Wan's house to conform to Feng Shui principles.

"That's my business."

"No, that concerns me too."

"What does it have to do with you?"

"You have to drive back to Bangkok tomorrow. If you don't get enough sleep and fall asleep while driving, I'll be in trouble too."

"Don't worry, I know my own body's limits very well."

"You're as stubborn as your father, aren't you? Aunt Tye told me."

"Hey?"

"I don't want to disturb or try to interfere in your personal life, Miss Architect. But Aunt Tye complained to my mother because you worked too hard, that day when we had lunch together. Auntie was very worried about your health, but she didn't know what to do because you were stubborn and not listening to your mother when it comes to work."

The woman said it in a serious tone, and Tantiya could feel the genuine concern in her voice, so she didn't say something to embarrass her or cut into her anger. She didn't like Renita talking about her father or personal things in her family, but she knew that the woman said it with good intentions.

"Okay, I understand what you mean."

"But you'll continue to be stubborn, won't you? Tell me if I'm wrong."

"My mother told you about this. What exactly did she think you could do?"

"I can help watch over you, Miss Architect. Just like how Mama asked me to look after you, Aunt Tye asked me to look after you too."

"My mother probably didn't think that the person she asked to look after her daughter needed to be looked after throughout the journey. How can you look after me?"

"We can take care of each other, so we can call it balance. I can take care of you, you know?"

"How? You can't stop me from working by telling me to rest."

"If I can't talk sense into you, then I'll have to use physical means."

The skilled architect raised her eyebrows as her eyes met the beautiful eyes of the Feng Shui master. The woman seemed so confident in her methods. Tantiya didn't know what physical means she was talking about.

**"I can knock you out by hitting the back of your head."**

"You want me to rest or die, seriously?"

Tantiya laughed out loud thinking of a way that only Renita could think of. Really, how did that bunhead talisman doll think about it? And how could she be so sure that she could attack her physically?

"Don't laugh, Miss Architect. And don't leave either."

"No, you're just walking too slow."

"Wait for me, it's dark in here. Wait!"

Renita pouted while looking at the older woman who tended to leave her behind as she walked. She grumbled behind her while trying to keep up with her steps.

Even so, she didn't need to rush because the architect slowed down her pace and waited for her so they could return to their respective rooms together. When she caught up with her, Renita wanted to tease her by running ahead of her in return.

She was so caught up in her desire to win that she didn't notice any sticks on the shore. She almost fell into the sand if the lioness hadn't caught her wrist and pulled her closer, so Renita just staggered closer to her before regaining her balance.

"Now who's taking care of who exactly?"

"Just let me go. I was just a little careless."

"I won't."

"Let go!"

"I'll let go when we arrive."

She wanted to argue and act out more, but she didn't want to embarrass herself and stumble again. If the architect refused to help her this time and chose to laugh at her, she would get some scratches as a memento from Prachuap for her mother.

"Don't pull my wrist."

"Hm?"

"If you want to lead me, just hold my hand."

The beautiful woman stopped, she turned around and met her questioning gaze. She yanked her wrist out of Miss Architect's grasp, who was dragging her and leading her down the street at the same time. Renita reached out and held her hand, while Tantiya's hand remained open, not holding her hand as she did.

Now, things had changed—she was the one leading Miss Architect's hand while Architect followed behind her. But she didn't mind because their



rooms were close together, so she could immediately let go of the old woman's sweaty hands.

However, her hand, which was too warm, was a little damp because Miss Architect put their hands together and let her guide her hand as before.

*Why does it feel like the distance from the beach to the house tonight... seems further away than usual?*

"Miss Architect, can you open the door?"

"What?"

Tantiya opened her door to talk to Renita, an uninvited guest who came to visit her so late. After she brought the Feng Shui master back to her lodging, she excused herself and returned to her own lodging next to the woman.

But less than two hours after they returned to their respective rooms, the bunhead fetish doll visited her with her usual head bun and pajamas. The woman actually came to interrupt her while she was thinking about some job ideas.

"Are you still working?"

"Yes."

"Don't sleep before midnight, okay? If eight hours of sleep seems too difficult for you, at least try to get six hours of sleep. Understand?"

Renita gave her an ultimatum after she found out the lioness would work until she didn't get enough sleep. If she did that, their journey home would be dangerous if she let a sleep-deprived and overworked person be the one

to take them home. And she couldn't drive either, so they couldn't take turns driving.

"Who is this mother, to give me orders like this? My mother?"

"Not your mother—the person Aunt Tye sent to deal with you."

"You'd better go back to your room, so I can finish my work without wasting time talking to you."

"Can I come inside?"

"Why do you want to come in?"

"Just in case I can advise you with your work. So you can go to bed early."

The talented architect stepped aside to let in the troublesome little visitor who had offered her help. Renita might just be bragging and might not be very helpful, but Tantiya couldn't go against the opinion that sometimes the designs could be better. Most clients choose to trust Feng Shui and her other preferences, even if it goes against her expertise.

"If you obey my mother's words like this, you can't put me to sleep, you know."

"Don't think I can't. You won't be ready if I actually do."

"If you want to sit here, you have to be quiet. Don't bother me, if I need your advice, I'll ask for it."

"Okay, I'll sit here."

The beautiful woman sat on the sofa, she faced the back of the sofa and rested her chin on the back pillow. From here, she could see Miss Architect clearly before her. But the lioness sat so tense and still without moving an inch, she sighed and turned to glare at her. Renita was confused about what she did to make the lioness angry again.

"Don't look at me."

"What? I didn't even make a sound."

"Don't talk and don't look at me."

"What do you want me to do, Miss Architect? Close my eyes like this?"

"Just go back to your room."

"No, I'll sit here, I can close my eyes and not talk, it's easy."

Tantiya sighed again at the troublesome Feng Shui expert's stubbornness. Even in a place as far away as Prachuap and even when they were staying in separate lodgings, Renita still managed to cause problems in the privacy of her room.

Now, the woman pretended to sit still and closed her eyes, not making a sound in the corner of the sofa. She calculated how long the bunhead charm doll could play pretend like that, but Tantiya had to think again because Renita seemed to have fallen asleep.

No wonder she could remain silent, she even had drool dripping down the corners of her lips. This Feng Shui master was probably the only woman who could be this ugly.

The skilled architect took a look at the now no longer naughty young woman before she took out a sketchbook and wooden pencil to draw a picture of someone sleeping.

This morning, she had the opportunity to sketch the woman by the sea from behind, now the woman's sleeping face was sketched with the determination to capture the details of her face.

She didn't know how long she kept drawing it like this until she was almost done sketching it. The sleeping woman suddenly woke up after she had had enough sleep.

**"What are you doing, Miss Architect?"**

"You got up!?"

Tantiya tore the page she was drawing on because she was caught off guard and hid the paper behind her. Her suspicious actions and attitude did not go unnoticed by the bunhead amulet doll.

The woman, who didn't think that she had just become the object of someone's picture, got up and approached her, trying to snatch the picture that Tantiya was hiding behind.

"What are you hiding?"

"There isn't anything."

"Let me see, if there's nothing then why do you have to hide it?"

"It's okay, just go back to your room."

"Hmph, give it to me. Don't run, you must have done something to make fun of me while I was sleeping. I don't believe you, Miss Architect..."

"Hey! Don't jump up and strangle me!"

The woman jumped at her with all her weight. Who can support that burden? It is true that Tantiya helped the Feng Shui master from losing her balance when the neighbor's grandmother misunderstood them.

This time they were lucky because they were alone so no one misunderstood them because they were in a position that was more likely to be misunderstood than before.

All because Renita jumped at her and then locked her head from behind. The woman pulled her with full force, making her stagger and fall onto the bed. Tantiya also lost her balance and fell on top of the bunhead amulet doll. Luckily, she was able to stop herself from collapsing on Renita on the bed.

"You pervert!"

"It's not what you think!"

Renita was the first to come to her senses, quickly pushing the old woman away from their proximity. She no longer cared about what the lioness was hiding. What shocked and caught her off guard was that she almost became the woman's prey if she couldn't find a way out.

**"You're actually trying to harass me."**

**"What? You were the one who pulled me into bed!"**

"I'll tell Mama, I'll also tell Aunt Tye that you tried to sleep with me!"

"Go out, Miss Architect."

"This is my room, so who should get out of here? Besides, what would your Mom and My Mom think? You're the one who comes to my room in the middle of the night and you suddenly talk nonsense that I abused you. Don't you think that sounds strange?"

"I don't care, you're in the wrong here!"

Tantiya covered her eyes as she could no longer follow the Feng Shui master's troublesome emotions. That woman was the one who barged into her room and caused all this commotion herself, and she had the nerve to blame her?

Renita walked back to her room, leaving her scratching her head, watching the woman, feeling very confused and disturbed.

"Soul, did you quarrel with Miss Xinxin? Why are you sitting on different sides?"

"I personally don't have any hatred towards her, Mim. But I think she has a problem with me. So I think sitting here is a better choice."

"You were fine yesterday, I saw you two acting affectionately. Why did you fight not long after that?"

"Which part is intimate? We literally fight every time we talk."

"If you like her, you should have a good talk with her, Soul. Many people like Miss Xinxin, she is sweet and beautiful. Everyone can easily be attracted to her. Even Oyl wants to ask her out."

"I told you, Mim. I don't like her."

"Whatever, Soul. But you better not wait long, besides Oyl, Miss Xinxin meets a lot of people, so you have a lot of competition. See that? I haven't even had time to finish my sentence."

Tantiya glanced in the direction her junior was pointing, she saw a foreigner approaching Renita who was walking around taking some pictures around the cafe area.

This morning when they were about to leave the resort to head to their destination, the Feng Shui master asked Oyl if she could go with her instead of going with Tantiya like on their trip here.

Of course, Oyl was very happy about it and she didn't reject it. She was sure that Renita would ask her junior to come on the trip home with her and leave her to drive to Bangkok alone if they still hadn't discussed the misunderstanding situation last night.

"Mim, help Oyl check the documents, I'll be back."

"Of course, take your time, Soul."

The skilled architect shook her head at Mim, who agreed to go but still wanted to pair them up like her mother. Sometimes she wondered why everyone around her seemed to adore Renita so much. Or maybe she's the only one who isn't sure and is following everyone else's advice?

She just thinks that if she really likes someone, she wants to like her because she is sure of her own feelings for that person, not because other

people say they are suitable for each other and should date. She doesn't know whether her failed relationship with her first love played a role in making her shut down or not. But at least she's not afraid of love now...

"Oh, Miss Architect, you're just in time."

"Hm?"

"I have to go now, sorry, my friend is coming to pick me up." Renita said to the man who had approached her earlier.

She had been trying to find a way to escape from the situation she had tried to stop many times, but the man who approached her to get acquainted didn't seem to back down easily.

Fortunately, this lioness appeared in time, so Renita could borrow her to escape.

"That's a relief, he probably won't follow me now."

"That man bothered you?"

"Yeah, he asked for my number and when I rejected him, he asked for another contact. He wouldn't listen no matter how many times I told him to leave."

"You can call me if something like this happens again, I can come and help you."

"It's okay, I can handle it."

"I know you're good, but he almost took you there."

"That's none of your business, right? You can go back to work, we can part ways here. I'll take some photos."

"I'll go with you."

"How is your work going?"

"I've told Mim and Oyl to handle it."

Renita stopped when she saw the lioness whom she had been avoiding since morning. She even asked to go with Oyl because she didn't want to come with her after the embarrassing incident. She kind of knew that it was her fault too, but the incident had already happened and they couldn't undo it, so she didn't want to say anything that would cause another misunderstanding.

"I want to go alone."

"You cannot."

"Why not? That is my right to privacy, you cannot violate it, Miss Architect."

"What if that man follows you? What will you do? I promised Aunt Ping before we came here that I would take care of you."

"Hmph, whatever, do whatever you want."

"I want to talk to you about what happened yesterday. You were in the wrong, that's why you're acting strangely and keep avoiding me, right?"

Tantiya watched the young woman walk ahead of her toward the beautiful view in front of her. The woman stopped in front of the balcony and wooden fence near the fountain. This time Renita didn't refuse to talk by making a fuss or being impatient like last night, a sign she was letting her talk about it.

"I would never do anything inappropriate to you."

"And how can I take your word for it, Miss Architect?"



**"Is it because you know that I like women? Is that why you act like you're disgusted by me and don't trust me when I'm around you?"**

"No, it's not like that. Miss Architect, I'm not disgusted by your sexuality. It's just that, how should I say it, I was just shocked last night."

"This is very important to me. I don't know what you think of me and I don't know whether the lioness you always refer to me as is a good thing or not. But what I can tell you is that I won't do that kind of thing with someone I don't like or with someone who has no feelings for me. These things can only happen by mutual consent."

"Okay, I understand now. I don't have any problems or questions about what happened."

"If not, will you stop being afraid of me or paranoid about me?"

"I told you, I'm not afraid and I'm not paranoid. I'm not disgusted by the fact that you also like girls."

"Thank you."

"It's nothing, you don't need to thank me for that."

"I have to do it, not everyone can accept me as I am."

Her sexuality may not sound like a big deal, but not everyone in this society accepts it without feeling uncomfortable. Tantiya considers herself lucky because her family accepts her as she is and accepts that her first love, whom she had been dating, was a woman.

She has good co-workers like Mim and Oyl who never make fun of her sexuality. And she was lucky to meet Renita, even though they were rivals who always fought first when it came to work, the Feng Shui master never felt disgusted by her identity and did not distance herself when she first learned about it.

"Oh yeah, I still have one question about last night."

"What's that?"

"I'm really curious about what you were hiding."

"Seriously? You still haven't gotten over it?"

"If you want to talk about it, you might as well come clean about everything."

"Just see for yourself."

"That's me! Did you draw me while I was sleeping?"

The beautiful woman widened her eyes, not expecting and at the same time excited to see a portrait of herself in the hands of the architect who seemed quite good at drawing. Even though it was prettier than the picture, the woman managed to convey it well.

"You really didn't need to hide it, you could have just shown it to me."

"I couldn't come up with any new ideas for work, so I was scribbling this to pass the time. But you suddenly woke up and screamed, I was shocked too, you know?"

"Can I have it?"

"Sure, if you want to keep it."

"Of course, I have to keep it. The picture is good but not as beautiful as the real thing."

"I tried my best. This is all I can do."

"What? Why did you just give up this time?"

"I'm not giving up, I'm just accepting reality."

"About what?"

**"That you are prettier than the picture."**

You... you...

**Impossible! I will not fall prey to this lioness!**



## Chapter 8

### THE FIRST PERSON THAT CAME TO MY MIND

"I brought this for you, Aunt Ping."

"Thank you, darling. You took care of Auntie's daughter, and you even brought souvenirs for Auntie."

"Then I'll give this to Aunt Tye too."

Renita took out some pineapple-filled biscuits that she had brought from Prachuap and handed them to her. She had seen Miss Architect trying to win her mother's heart with pineapples and thought it was just for Aunt Tye, since the woman said it was her mother's favorite. She didn't expect that the woman would buy it for her mother as well. But she wasn't going to let her get all the credit.

"I'll tell my mom that you brought it for her."

"Soul, do you want to have dinner together before going home?"

"Next time, Aunt Ping. I already told Mother that I would have dinner at home today."

"Okay, come any time, darling."

"I will go now."

"Mama, I'll take Miss Architect out, okay?"

Tantiya looked at the younger woman, who turned to tell Aunt Ping and followed her from the living room to where her car was parked next to the fence near the front door. She didn't need to park at the intersection anymore to flag down a Feng Shui expert or act stealthily because Aunt Ping, the real owner of the house, had already welcomed her.

"You don't need to see me off; you should rest."

"Thank you for giving me a ride, both on the way to Prachuap and on the way back."

"How about you pay for the gas?"

"You really are... How do we split the gas bill? Send me your bank account, I'll transfer the money to you."

"It's okay, you don't have to pay for it."

"Then you should go."

"Go in first."

"Get in your car, Miss Architect. I can get in myself."

"Okay, see you then."

The skilled architect was the first to retreat because if this continued, neither her nor the bunhead talisman doll would be able to go anywhere, let alone return to their homes.

"We don't need to meet again, right?"

"I'll contact you once I'm done with the blueprints of Lady Wan's vacation home."

"I'm going to turn off my phone!"

"I can call Aunt Ping; my mother has her number."

"If you want to call me, just call me. Don't bring my mother into this problem."

"No one's going to steal your Mama, jeez."

"You talk too much, Miss Architect. Just go home."

"Yeah, yeah, I'm leaving now."

**"Don't forget to get six hours of sleep, okay?"**

Tantiya smiled gently at the bunhead amulet doll, although Renita didn't see it because she immediately ran to her house after she finished speaking. She didn't even wait for her, who was standing there, to respond or continue their conversation. Still, Tantiya could feel her worry from her words even though the woman didn't show it explicitly. She was glad they both talked about it.

Since they talked about their misunderstanding at the café, the troublesome Feng Shui master understood it and didn't try to avoid it like she did in the morning. Renita was even willing to return to Bangkok with her according to the original plan. Even though she slept all the way home, only silence accompanied them. It was a comfortable kind of silence, not a silence that made one feel like they were traveling alone.

**Life had never been quiet since they knew each other...**

"Xinxin, how was the trip? Did you have fun, darling?"

"Good, Mama. But this was a work trip, so I rarely went out."

"Did Soul take good care of you, dear? I asked her to take care of you."

"I've grown up, Mama. Miss Architect has made fun of me because of how you still see me as a little girl."

"Well, Mama is worried about you. You had to go somewhere far away, so Mama wanted someone to look after you."

"What did Mama and Aunt Tye talk about while I was away? It looks like Mama wants me and Miss Architect to date."

"Are you full? Let Mama peel the pineapple that Soul gave you to eat after dinner."

Look!? Mama Ping didn't answer the question; she just smiled and avoided the conversation. So, while she and the lioness were away, Mama and Aunt Tye must have been discussing something together.

In fact, she wanted to tell her mother the truth that she and Miss Architect had made no progress at all outside of work, including telling the woman that she had no problem with her sexuality and that she was also not afraid to approach her after finding out that Tantiya used to have a girlfriend.

But that doesn't mean she's started dating or has feelings for Miss Architect, because there was no way she would let herself become the lioness' prey...

"Very tired..."

Renita lay on her big bed, feeling tired even though she wasn't the one who drove to Prachuap. But the three-day journey had quite drained her energy. Miss Architect, who had to work and drive, would definitely faint as soon as she got home because it used up all her energy.

When she thought about the lioness, a memory reminded her of their conversation at the café before they traveled back to Bangkok. Renita got up from her bed to get a piece of paper that she kept in her bag. She opened the sketch drawn by Miss Architect. She studied it carefully before slipping it between the pages of one of the notebooks on her desk.

"Who added me via Line? Wait, it's Miss Mim."

The beautiful woman walked back to bed and took out her cellphone to click on the notification she had just received from Mim, the skilled interior designer who had come on the trip with her and had become her new friend.

Before they left the café, Miss Mim was the one who offered to be the photographer and took many photos for her. She was also the one who suggested that she and the lioness take a photo together.

At first, she forgot that the photos were on Miss Mim's cellphone until the woman added her as a friend on Line and sent her some photos. The photo album contained nearly ten pictures.

The last one was the first photo of her and Miss Architect took together. They looked so awkward they even refused to stand close together like normal people would when they took a photo. In the photo, she grinned at the camera while the architect smiled softly as she looked at her.

"Oh my God, I almost forgot about this."

But then she began to feel anxious and confused again when she remembered the unexpected compliment she received from the woman who called her beautiful. She knew the architect was smiling while looking at her because she was beautiful, right?... — — — — —

"Everything is intimate; nothing is fake."

Tantiya jumped out of bed to sit upright in panic when she received a text message from her junior via a chat application, accompanied by a photo of herself and the Feng Shui master. She didn't even know when the photo was taken; she didn't remember when Mim counted down as a sign, and the girl just told her that she was done taking the photo without her realizing it at all.



**Soul:** Why did you shoot me while I was off guard? I was not ready.

**Mim:** That's natural, Soul. Good, somewhat realistic.

**Soul:** Don't post it anywhere, okay?

**Mim:** Too late. I already sent it to Xinxin before I sent you the message.

The skilled architect covered her temples, feeling tired after seeing her junior send belly-laugh stickers and ignoring all the red angry-face stickers she sent. This meant that Renita had received the same photo from Mim.

So she had no reason to ask the bunhead fetish doll what was happening in the photo, because she was actually looking at the woman at that time. The atmosphere was a bit embarrassing after she accidentally told Renita that she was more beautiful in person than in pictures. She tried to fix it by saying that.

The bunhead fetish doll looked youthful when she styled her hair up. When she let her hair down, she looked like a different woman; it was a new look that suited her age. But the more she continued to explain, the less it made sense. At that time, Renita just looked at her quietly. She didn't know what the woman was thinking because she didn't say a word. —

*"If I didn't know you, at first glance, I would think you were cute."*

Tantiya muttered while enlarging the picture of the troublesome Feng Shui master's face.

Honestly, if she didn't know what her personality was like, she never would have assumed that she would be such a troublemaker. She wouldn't have thought that Renita was an expert at fighting; the woman knew how to respond with such quick wit.

Tantiya looked up to see her reflection in the dressing table mirror. Only then did she realize how big her smile was when she saw the girl's photo. She immediately stopped grinning and tried to control her expression.

**"Why am I smiling? This doesn't make sense!"**

"Happy Monday? What's gotten into her?"

Renita looked at the picture of sunflowers that Tantiya sent via the chat application. She thought her eyes were playing tricks on her.

At first, she thought it was from Aunt Tye, who tended to text her more often. It was a collection of greeting images containing every day of the week, each different, like the kind parents like to send to each other. Her mother sometimes asked her to save these photos so she could send them to her friends.

But how old is Miss Architect to send something so old like this?

"Did you send it to the wrong chat?"

[No, my mother asked me to send it.]

"Why doesn't Auntie send it herself?"

[The phone is broken.]

Once she knew the reason, it was easy to understand what was going on. Normally, she and Miss Architect's chat room was practically abandoned. Apart from work-related matters, they rarely spoke and only called a few times.

On the other hand, she chatted with Aunt Tye every day. So the older woman was probably worried that she couldn't chat with her as usual today, which was why she asked Miss Architect to send her a message.

**Tye:** What colors are bad for Monday?

**Xixi:** Curious Aunt Tye? Don't wear red.

**Tye:** And what should I wear to make my work run smoothly today?

**Xixi:** Wear the green one.

Renita looked at the sticker the older woman had sent her. It was a happy lion sticker attached with a "thank you" text.

She found it so funny that she had to laugh. She didn't expect Miss Architect to have such a cheeky sticker—did she really accept that she was a lioness?

"She's been impudent since morning,"

The Feng Shui master cut the conversation short by not responding to the text and stopped paying attention to it. She would be late if she wasted any more time. She hurriedly took out a green hair tie to attract success, the same color as Monday's career success color, and tied it to her hair with a quick movement. However, this morning she hesitated a little before returning the accessory to its place.

**"Maybe I should let my hair down today."** — — — —

"Xinxin, why did you come down late today?"

"Mama, I won't have breakfast today. I have an appointment with a client around the Old City area. I want to avoid traffic jams."

"Geez, if you didn't tell me that you're meeting a client, I would think you have a date."

"It's not like that, Mama. This is really a client."

"Well, my daughter looks very beautiful today, darling."

Renita smiled shyly after her mother praised her because today she let her hair down instead of tying it. She also wore a mint green collared chiffon dress with a pair of flats and a complementing cream-colored shoulder bag. She looked cute and different from her usual smart casual look.

"I got everything Mama."

"Have a nice day at work, darling. Don't come home late, okay?"

"I'll be back before you knows it. I love you, Mama."

Her pink lips pressed sweetly against her mother's cheeks before she took the bag of sandwiches that her mother had prepared for her to eat on the road. She walked toward the taxi she had called a moment ago to get to the destination where her client had an appointment with her.

"Soul, I think you're quite superstitious these days."

"What do you mean, Oyl?"

"Well, lately you always wear lucky colors. Usually, your style is monochrome black and white or jeans. But lately, your clothes have been very colorful. See? You even wore an olive green shirt today."

"Oyl, Mim, do you two believe in lucky colors too?" Tantiya asked her juniors.

She had only returned to the company in the afternoon because she had a meeting with a client at the construction site. When Oyl commented on her outfit, she also noticed that Mim and Oyl were wearing green as if it was a dress code.

"I don't really believe it, Soul. But I printed out a lucky color chart and stuck it on my cupboard so I don't choose the wrong color."

"I got a lucky color chart from Mim. And let me tell you, this chart of Mim's is legit. Wait, where did Soul get this lucky color trick? You don't look like someone who believes in these things."

"Quick, prepare the documents now. It's almost time for our appointment with the client."

The skilled architect ended the conversation. She did not reveal to them where she got the lucky color trick. Even so, she had to admit that that troublesome Feng Shui expert was quite knowledgeable and accurate about this astrology. The woman remembers all the lucky colors every day of the week; she doesn't even need time to recall them.

**Xixi:** Miss Architect, are you free?

Tantiya took out her cell phone and read a message from someone she had just thought about. She replied to Renita honestly.

**Soul:** Waiting for clients at the company.

---

**Xixi:** Okay.

**Soul:** Is there something you want to tell me?

**Xixi:** No, it's okay.

The bunhead talisman doll had never sent her a message first, nor had she ever asked her anything like this. When the woman found out that she had work to finish, she didn't seem to want to bother her and ended the conversation like that.

But out of curiosity, she decided to call her.

"Hello, is everything okay?... What! Wait, I'm leaving now."

"Something happened, Soul?"

"Mim, tell the client I'm very sorry and cancel today's appointment for me. I might not be back on time."

"Wait, Soul, the client says they're almost there."

"What's wrong? Soul has never canceled a client, right, Mim?" Monpatra shook his head in response to his junior.

She didn't know what kind of emergency made the skilled architect rush out of the office and choose to cancel an appointment with an important client. But if she had to guess, maybe there was something serious going on at the senior's house, or maybe there was a worrying emergency with Aunt Tye.

"Are you okay? Did something happen?"

"I'm fine. Maybe I just felt uncomfortable and thought too much. I've troubled you, Miss Architect."

Renita said with relief. She told her about what happened while she was at work today when the architect called her after she messaged the woman. She had an appointment in the Thonburi area where she had to check the Feng Shui of her client's house. It was the secretary of a young businessman who contacted her and arranged this meeting. Everything was going well. She told him about some things that needed to be fixed to improve Feng Shui.

But the problems started when she began working—the guy became half-flirtatious, half-serious, and the worst was how he tried to ask her to have dinner with him. She wasn't sure if he was like that or if he was trying to be friendly, but it made her feel uncomfortable and threatened. She explicitly said no and made it clear she didn't find him cute, but he tried to use her Feng Shui work as an excuse.

She thought of someone when she was in this uncomfortable situation despite not understanding the reason. Even so, Renita gave the woman a chance and contacted her. After she told the lioness what happened, Tantiya took less than twenty minutes to arrive at her client's house and got her out of the place as soon as she finished her work.

"You didn't think too much about it. That guy is acting suspicious."

"Yeah, I thought so too. That's why I didn't want him to take me. When he picked me up, his secretary was with us, but his secretary came back first, so it was just the two of us left. I'm not comfortable with that."

"It's a good thing you called me first. You can call me anytime if you need something. Okay?"

"How is your work going?"

"I postponed the appointment."

"I'm causing you trouble."

"Don't bother thinking it. I'm always delaying my clients. We all have urgent matters from time to time, don't we?" Tantiya said casually.

It wasn't a big deal for her to cancel the client's appointment and leave the company. She might get scolded a bit by her boss after this. But when she considered what was more important in this situation, she thought she did the right thing by picking up Renita. It was better than leaving her with a predatory client. Who knew what that guy would do?

"Is that okay, Miss Architect?"

"Yeah, I'll be fine. What about you?"

"I'm okay, too."

"Then that's good."

The beautiful woman glanced at the architect, who smiled gently at her. She must be relieved that nothing bad had happened. It made her smile after the uncomfortable situation she had just been in. At least this lioness was reliable. She could trust her. Because she never felt uncomfortable when she was with her.

"You want to drain my wallet dry, right?"

"You were the one who told me to choose a restaurant. You said you would treat me to dinner as thanks."

"Why did you choose such a luxurious place?"

"Free food."

Renita pouted and clicked her tongue at the older woman, who gave her an amused smile. She was stuck when she told Miss Architect that she wanted to buy her dinner as a thank you for driving all the way to the Thonburi area.

But she didn't expect that she would choose a seafood restaurant by the *Chao Phraya River* like this. The restaurant has a romantic atmosphere at night and is full of couples having dinner together. She and Miss Architect might also be misunderstood since they were both wearing green today.

"Don't order too much."

"I drove a long way. You said you'd pay for the meal, so it should be a full meal, right?"

She might seem like she wanted to try her patience and provoke her by ordering many dishes, but Miss Architect only ordered one dish and told her to order two others. Three dishes seemed suitable for two people to eat



together. Even though many things looked good on the menu, they probably wouldn't be able to finish them if they ordered too much.

"How did you know about this place?"

"No, this is my first time here."

"You're lying, you probably brought so many women here."

"Are you one of them? Are you a woman?"

"Hey! Of course."

"Then you are the first woman I brought here with me."

The woman who asked the question out of curiosity didn't expect to find herself this confused. Renita tucked her hair behind her ear shyly and tried to act normal, not wanting to focus on trivial things like this.

"Did you tell Aunt Ping that you're going out to dinner today?"

"Yes, I did."

Her mother didn't complain at all; she even teased her by saying that now she knew why her daughter was all dressed up this morning. Renita tried to explain that it had nothing to do with Miss Architect because she didn't plan to meet her. She didn't even know they would meet under these circumstances, let alone go to dinner together like this.

However, from the SMS her mother sent, it was clear that she didn't trust her own daughter. Mama and Aunt Tye were probably talking on the phone about how she and Miss Architect had dinner together. They were likely trying to get her and this lioness to date again.

"I'll pick the fish bones for you."

"We're back from Prachuap, I can do it myself."

"And why is that?"

"My mother asked you to look after me while we were on our way. We're back now."

"I did this myself, no one told me to do it."

Choosing the fish bones wasn't a difficult task. Besides, the fried sea bass with fish sauce they ordered probably had the same issues as the steamed sea bass with lemon sauce at Prachuap. If a younger woman wasn't careful and swallowed a bone, it might scratch her throat, which would be a problem.

"You must be very good at flirting with women."

"Hmmm?"

"That thing you did, being considerate and taking care of me, seemed like you were trying to tease me. You probably did it out of habit."

"Whatever you think."

"You don't even argue with me, is it because you have nothing to argue about?"

---

"If you say that, are you suggesting that I tease you?"

"No, I just... think you're doing it out of habit, that's why you're doing this to me. Why? You want to tease me, Miss Architect?"

**"It's not out of habit; I've never done this for anyone."**

If she had never done this for anyone, how could she be so subtle and... natural at this? She seemed so used to being considerate and taking care of others, the way Miss Architect enjoyed taking care of others.

On the other hand, Renita was not used to this treatment at all. She didn't know why the woman was being nice to her, even though the two of them had been fighting since they first met.

"I'm single."

"Ew, what is this? Are you trying to convince me to date you or something?"

"No, that's not what I meant. I'm just saying that I'm single and I don't mind if you sometimes use my name to get out of uncomfortable situations like that. Or you could call me like you did today. Maybe it would be easier if you told other people that you already have a boyfriend."

"You want me to say that you're my boyfriend? No way."

"Well, that's not true, so there's no need to think too much about it. You act like you really, really want to be with me."

"That doesn't make sense! I can't imagine myself dating you. Don't even speak of love, how could we possibly like each other? We fight tooth and nail every time we meet, right?"

"Whatever, if you have a better idea, use it. But you have to be careful, you can't just trust anyone these days."

"Yeah, I know. I'll use it in case of emergency, okay?"

Renita nodded even though she had no intention of using Miss Architect as her fake girlfriend.

If there was an emergency where she needed to name someone, this lioness would be the first person to come to mind, of course. She tried to think of a good idea where she could use this architect's name without owing anything. If Miss Architect allowed her to use her name, she should let the woman use her name too.

"You too, Miss Architect. If you get caught in a situation, I allow you to use my name as an excuse."

"You want me to use your name as an excuse?"

"Yeah, like if your date meets one of the people you've dated, and they ask you to choose, you can tell them you can't choose between them and say my name."

"That's not necessary."

She never encountered anything like that in her daily life because she never dated anyone. The only person who kept breaking into her life these days was the person who she allowed to use her name.

"Why not? You wouldn't know for sure that you would always be safe, right?"

"Because I'm sure I will never experience a situation like that in my life."

"What makes you so sure?"

**"Because you're the only one in my life right now."**



## Chapter 9

### I can do it with a Fluttering Heart

"How did it go? Did Xinxin say yes?"

"She said she couldn't this week, Mom."

"Oh, what a shame. Mom really thought that Xinxin and Ping would be having dinner at our house this week. Mom was really looking forward to showing off her cooking skills. I even thought about the menu."

"She's probably busy."

Her mother had asked her to invite Renita and Aunt Ping to come and have dinner at her house this Sunday. But Renita said she couldn't; she wasn't sure whether the woman was really busy with work or just trying to avoid it. Since she picked Renita up at her client's house that day, they had no more reason to meet.

It wasn't that she didn't want to meet her, but if the woman kept saying no, Tantiya wouldn't want to beg her. She had tried to use Lady Wan's blueprint as an excuse to meet the day before, but the busy Feng Shui master said she couldn't meet to see the blueprint and postponed their meeting.

This Sunday morning, she had free time to have breakfast with her mother. There was no need to rush, unlike weekdays, but Renita still refused her mother's invitation.

"I think so. Did you fight with her?"

"No, nothing seemed wrong when we met on Monday." Tantiya replied swiftly without pause.

The last time they met, the younger woman didn't act strangely at all. Even when she took Renita home and went into the house to drink a glass of water and chat for a while with Aunt Ping, the Feng Shui master walked her to her car and said goodbye as usual when they parted ways.

"If you didn't fight, that's good. I'm just worried that my daughter might have done something to upset her."

Did she do something to upset the bunhead talisman doll? Or maybe it was something she said while eating?

They talked about many things, but there was a time when the woman fell silent and continued eating in silence. Did she say something that made her uncomfortable or upset, causing her to not want to see her again?

---

"Xinxin, darling, do you have work today? Tye sent me a message, saying she was looking forward to it."

"Yeah, I already have plans. We'll have dinner at Aunt Tye's place next time, okay?"

"Okay, but I doesn't usually see you working on Sundays."

"Look... I have an appointment with Lada, Mama. It's about her office Feng Shui."

"Then you have to hurry. Don't make your friends wait long."

"I'm leaving, Mama. I'll try not to come home late today, okay?"

Renita said goodbye to her mother with a kiss on her cheek before leaving in the afternoon. She used the excuse of not wanting to accept Aunt Tye's invitation when she asked Miss Architect to invite her to dinner. And she didn't want her mother to invite Aunt Tye and Miss Architect to dinner this Sunday either.

Since the incident on Monday, when she met the lioness, Renita wanted to hide and think about something first. She didn't want to see the woman when she was still confused and didn't know what to do with herself at the moment.

That's why she turned down Tantiya's offer to show her the blueprints of Lady Wan's roughly designed holiday home and declined Aunt Tye's invitation to dinner on Sunday. She called Lada that afternoon, and was happy that her best friend was free to meet her even though it was an impromptu hangout. But she had a lot of things she wanted to tell Lada and ask for her advice.

"Isn't Sunday family day? Why do you want to meet?"

"I want your advice. I don't know who else I can ask for help other than you, Lada."

"So, what's wrong? You can tell me."

"It's about me and Miss Architect."

"Don't tell me you two are dating!?"

"No, Lada, why are you screaming? I'm not dating Miss Architect."

"Well, you said it was about you and her, so what else could I think of, Xinxin? It seems like maybe since the last time you brought it up."

The beautiful woman sneered at her friend, who seemed to have a wild imagination, and looked at her meaningfully with teasing eyes. She quickly explained the situation and what had happened so far between her and Miss

Lioness so that Lada would understand the real situation. She didn't want her to misunderstand or try to lump them together like Mama and Aunt Tye.

"That's what's happened so far."

"Umm, so what do you want to know from what you've told me?"

"Lada, do you think Miss Architect likes me like that? I asked her, but she said she wasn't teasing me. But I don't know; it feels strange. It seems like she's really teasing me."

"Ah, is my little Xinxin finally having a moment of puppy love?"

"Hey! I'm serious, Lada!" Renita swatted her hand away when her best friend acted like her other mother and pinched her cheek playfully.

She wanted to meet Lada today because she wanted to ask for advice about what had been bothering her for a week, maybe even since she came back from Prachuap. But after they had dinner together under the moonlight, it increasingly confused and disturbed her.

"To be honest, Xinxin, I can't answer Miss Architect's question. I can't tell whether she's teasing you or not."

"But you were in a relationship, right?"

"Yes, I'm currently single, but I've been in a relationship. The person who asked me out wasn't the same as your architect. They were two different people in different circumstances."

"She's not 'my architect.'"

"That's all you got from everything I said?"

"Lada! I won't ask for your help again if you keep teasing me."

"You have to pay attention to things like this. But at least I can make assumptions about some things."



"And what are your assumptions about this?"

"I don't know if she likes you or is trying to tease you. But from what you've told me, I'm pretty sure she cares about you and you mean a lot to her. Otherwise, she wouldn't have left her job to come to you when you needed her, right, Xinxin?"

She thought so too. Miss Architect canceled her appointment with the client to help her out of a seemingly unsafe situation. It could be just a friendly gesture from a fellow co-worker, but it also looked like special treatment. And as worried as the architect was when she saw her, it made her feel safe when she saw her face.

"And besides, you have to ask yourself, Xinxin, why didn't you think of calling me at that time? Why did you call Miss Architect?"

"....."

**"Because she is the most important person to you right now, right?"**

---

"Are you going on a meditation retreat with Aunt Tye?"

"I want to, but I'm still thinking about it, darling. Tye goes there every year and asked me to join her. But this is a meditation retreat at a temple in Saraburi province. According to the schedule, she has to be there for a week. You will be alone at home during that time."

"If you thinks about rejecting Aunt Tye because you're worried about me, don't, Mama. I'll be fine, so you can go with Aunt Tye. I won't stop you, and I'll rejoice in your reward for both of you too. If I have free time next year, maybe I'll join you."

"I'm still worried. Let me ask Soul to look after you. She won't go with Tye, so she—"

"Mama, no! I mean... Miss Architect doesn't need to look after me. I can look after myself. I'll make sure I lock the door. It's only a week; I'll be fine." Renita hurriedly refused loudly and clearly.

Her words became jumbled, and all her panicked behavior was probably visible in her mother's eyes. She could only pray that her mother wouldn't become suspicious and wonder why she was acting like this when she heard the lioness' name. This was all Lada's fault for not giving her the advice she wanted and asking questions that made her mind even more restless.

No, she didn't consider Miss Architect as someone most important to her, more than Lada, who was her best friend, and she didn't like her. She told herself that she would never fall prey to that lioness. And she wouldn't be herself... if her mother decided to send Miss Architect to look after her now.

---

*"It's become an abandoned chat room again."*

The beautiful woman stared at the chat room that had been completely devoid of conversation since Sunday morning when Miss Architect told her that Aunt Tye invited her to dinner and she declined the offer.

Later on Monday afternoon, her mom and Aunt Tye traveled to a meditation retreat at a temple in Saraburi province. They would return next week.

Their house had been very quiet for the past two days because she had been alone in it. She told her mother that she was mature but boring because she had to eat alone after work.

She even imagined that Miss Architect must be in the same situation as her because Auntie had also gone to Saraburi. She wondered if the architect was as lonely as she was or if she would work so hard that she would forget to rest. Without Aunt Tye watching over her, she could stay up late easily.

*"I'm not going to text her first when I can't even give myself an answer."*

If the lioness was really lonely, then she should message her first, right? She shouldn't let the conversation end with the sticker she sent to cut it short. The woman didn't bother to try and continue the conversation. If she acted like she was too proud to send a message, then Renita had no problem leaving the chat room like this.

Renita put her phone screen on an empty spot next to her and stopped paying attention to it completely. She let her thoughts run wild as she thought about everything until she fell asleep, just like how she slept the first night she was alone.

Tonight was like the previous night; she fell asleep without realizing it and woke up when she heard the alarm in the morning.

But this time, there was an incoming call that caught her attention. She excitedly grabbed her cell phone before her face turned disappointed when she saw that the incoming call in the middle of the night was not the one she thought—it was from Lady Wan.

"Good evening, Lady Wan."

[Feng Shui Master Xinxin, forgive me for calling you so late again.]

"It's okay, Lady Wan. You can call me anytime."

[There is one thing I need to ask you, Master Feng Shui Xinxin. I see you're quite close to Soul, so I wanted to know how the project is going now. It's been a week, but I haven't seen the rough design of the house. My secretary called her many times, but she just said she would call soon and still hasn't sent it to me. I tried calling her, but she didn't pick up.]

Did Miss Architect refuse to take Lady Wan's call about delaying the house design because she postponed their meeting indefinitely and didn't help her with the house's Feng Shui? She had told Renita that she would help, but she kept rejecting her due to personal issues, which created a chain reaction effect on the job.

"Of course, Lady Wan. I'll take a look and let you know."

[Amazing. I'm a bit impatient. Thank you very much, Master Feng Shui Xinxin, for taking care of this matter.]

The skilled Feng Shui master looked at her phone seriously after her important client ended the call happily when she told her that she would look into the matter and contact the architect.

But honestly, she was still worried because she didn't know what to do to get information about the progress of the project for Lady Wan. What would she say to Miss Architect when she saw her for the first time this week?

---

She decided to take a taxi and stop by Miss Architect's house on Wednesday afternoon after Lady Wan contacted her the evening before, asking her to check on the project. She met Mim at the fence near Aunt Tye's house, who had just come out of Tantiya's house.

"Mim?"

"Hey, Miss Xinxin, are you here for Soul?"

"Yeah, what are you doing here?"

"I'm taking care of this sick person. Soul isn't feeling well."

"Is she okay?"

“She was overworked, didn’t get enough sleep, and had a fever. Luckily, she didn’t have to be hospitalized. The doctor ordered her to take pills and get lots of sleep.”

Renita glanced into the house.

“So, what did Soul tell you? Is that why you came to visit?”

“No, I came because I wanted to talk to her about work. I just found out that she was sick.”

“Soul told me not to tell anyone. She kept saying she was fine. She didn’t even let me tell Aunt Tye because she didn’t want Auntie to rush back from her meditation retreat because she was worried.”

“And are you going back now?”

“Yeah, there’s still a lot of work to do. Soul’s been working too hard lately. Ever since she took on Lady Wan’s vacation home project, her schedule has been really tight. And there was the Prachuap trip, so when she came back, there was a pile of work waiting for her.”

“Well, she’s a workaholic, and she loves money. If she’s busy, why doesn’t she give the project to someone else?”

“Otherwise, Pat will be the one overseeing Lady Wan’s project. And Oyl told me, it’s more than that. You won’t be able to do your job smoothly. Soul probably took this project because she was worried about you.”

If what the interior designer said was true, Renita didn’t understand why Miss Architect needed to worry about her when the two of them meant nothing to each other.

**Worry about yourself first, Lioness!**

“Are you still here, Mim?”

“Mim came back earlier.”

“How did you get here?”

“You don’t look like you want to have visitors.”

“No, I was just surprised to see you at my house.”

Tantiya said tiredly, looking surprised and happy when Renita appeared and was doing something in her kitchen. She made sure she wasn’t hallucinating about this woman because of the fever that was weakening her body.

“I was planning to talk to you about Lady Wan’s project, but I met Mim in front of your house and she told me that you were sick.”

“The doctor said it was nothing serious.”

“Fainting at the company isn’t a serious thing?”

“At least I’m lucky I didn’t hit my head, right?”

“Are you serious? Do you want me to call Auntie now?”

“Don’t tell my mother. She is practicing the precepts at the temple. I don’t want to worry her.”

“If Aunt Tye finds out you’re sick, she’ll probably come back from Saraburi today.”

“That’s why I said don’t tell her.”

Renita shook her head at Miss Architect. The woman was several years older than her but still acted like this. The woman was so sick that she knew from the start who should take care of her. She promised Mim that she would look after Miss Architect so that Mim could go back to work without having to worry about her seniors.

She was heating porridge for a sick patient when the woman got up and walked down from the second floor. She then served the bowl and received a blank stare in return.

“Eat the porridge so you can take your pills. Mim bought it for you, and I’ve reheated it.”

“Thank you. It’s fine if you go back. I’ll take care of it myself.”

“Will you be okay on your own, Miss Architect?”

“Yeah, I’ll be fine...”

The skilled architect froze when the bunhead talisman doll’s palm pressed against her forehead without giving her any warning. The young woman pondered as if she was taking her temperature. Then Renita touched her forehead to compare the temperature.

“You’re hot. If I leave you alone, you’ll probably pass out and hit the floor.”

“I’ll be better after taking some aspirin.”

“When was the last time you got six hours of sleep?”

"...."

“Come on, answer me, Miss Architect.”

“I don’t remember. Ouch! Why did you hit me?”

“This is why you’re sick. You’re not resting.”

“I have urgent work. I can’t finish it on time.”

She wouldn’t let this happen for such a lame reason. Miss Architect probably argued with her because she wasn’t Aunt Tye, not her mother. But no matter what, she would force Miss Architect to rest today and make sure she didn’t wake up in the night to work until the sun rose again.

“If you have to push yourself this hard, you might as well hand over Lady Wan’s project to that architect named Pat.”

“No.”

“I want to work together with Mr. Pat too. At least I don’t have to constantly argue with him like you do.”

“I’m not going to hand this project over to someone. I took it, I have to watch it until it’s finished. I’m not going to let you work with Pat.”

“Hey, you’re not the only architect in the world.”

**“But you are the only Feng Shui master I want to work with.”**

Oh.. Miss Architect was nice; she spoke bluntly as if she didn’t think much about it.

But her words made Renita lose her cool and feel confused, making her think too much about the hidden meaning behind her words and what she wanted from her. But she wouldn’t be outdone by this lioness. Her heart might be beating fast, but she could still handle it.

---

“Are you sure you want to stay over tonight?”

“If you feel uncomfortable, I can sleep downstairs.”

“No, no, you can sleep in my room. I’ll sleep in my mother’s room.”

Because the house didn’t have a guest room, the spare room was used as a storage room to keep her father’s collection as a keepsake. Renita insisted on staying tonight, so Tantiya offered her own room and planned to sleep in her mother’s room.



“You don’t need to clean your room. I’m only staying here temporarily out of necessity.”

“Thank you.”

“What is it for this time?”

“For worrying about me and not leaving me alone.”

“I’m not worried about you, Miss Architect. I’m just helping Auntie by looking after you. Like how you promised Mama to look after me on that Prachuap trip, you kept your promise, so I’m just returning the favor.”

“I still want to say thank you, no matter why you do it.”

“Get plenty of sleep if you want to get better. Talking like this won’t make you better no matter how many aspirin you take.”

Renita watched Miss Architect, who was still in her bedroom. The owner of the room trusted her, but she wouldn’t touch or check Miss Architect’s personal belongings. She only borrowed a few essentials and some clothes to wear as pajamas for tonight.

Honestly, she didn’t have any other intentions besides that. She just wanted to help Aunt Tye because Auntie was nice to her, that’s all.

“I want to sleep.”

“Then why are you still standing here?”

“I slept a lot tonight, so I’m not sleepy now.”

“You should try lying down, tossing and turning a little, and you will be able to sleep.”

“Are you feeling sleepy?”

“Not yet.”

“Let me stay here for a while.”

“Just sit where you want; this is your room.”

Tantiya sat in a chair near the work desk when she saw that the younger woman wasn't scolding her. She looked around the room, feeling uncomfortable because she didn't know where to direct her gaze.

This might not be the first time Renita had entered her room and personal space, but staying together left a feeling of nervousness inside her, despite the fact that they weren't sleeping in the same bed. She was glad Renita didn't leave her alone when she was sick.

“When things get better, I'll talk to you about Lady Wan's project, okay? She called me last night asking me to check on your work progress.”

“I called Lady Wan today to apologize for the delay. When she found out I was sick, she told me to recover first and she could wait. She doesn't mind the extra time as long as the job is done well.”

“If she says she can wait, then you have to work at your own pace. No need to push yourself until your body hurts.”

“Yes, alright.”

“You also said this when I told you to sleep for six hours, but you still didn't do it, Miss Architect.”

“What time do you usually go to bed?” Soul asked.

“Usually, it's eleven o'clock at the latest. If I have to sleep late, I try not to sleep past midnight.”

“Then, before you sleep, could you send me a message?”

“What does my sleep schedule have to do with you, Miss Architect?”

**“I want to sleep at the same time as you.”**

"Huh?"

"I tend to lose track of time when I'm working. If I know you're going to sleep, I can tell myself to rest too."

She felt relieved by Miss Architect's explanation. It didn't sound very comforting when she said she wanted to sleep at the same time because those words could imply something completely different. It almost made Renita wary and ready to fight in case this lioness was planning to do something inappropriate.

"It seems you will obey me."

"Let's try it first before assuming anything about it."

"Then we should start tonight."

"Hm?"

"It's ten o'clock in the evening. You should sleep, Miss Architect."

Tantiya glanced at the clock beside the bed before meeting the eyes of the Feng Shui expert who firmly gave her an ultimatum. The moment she allowed herself to be ordered around, even though Renita wasn't her mother, Renita took the opportunity without wasting any time.

"You told me you went to bed at eleven."

"You're sick right now, so you should go to bed early. See? You try to negotiate right away. I'm not going to waste my time on this nonsense, okay?"

"Okay, okay, don't make a fuss. I'm going to sleep now."

"Who's making a fuss? I've never been grumpy. You're the one who's been so grumpy at me since we met."

"Sorry for making our meeting bad in your memory."

“It’s too late to feel sorry now, isn’t it? You’re like an angry lion.”

“I’ll be nice from now on.”

“I don’t believe you.”

That woman was a lioness; Renita couldn’t believe anything that came out of her mouth so easily. Lada told her to pay attention, and she followed her method until now, but she still didn’t know her intentions.

“I’m not going to say goodnight.”

“And I don’t want to hear it, Miss Architect?

“You ever heard the saying, if you fall asleep at the same time, you will meet each other in your dreams?”

"....."

**“See you soon.”**



# Chapter 10

## **Make yourself at home in my Heart**

"Thank you very much, Mrs. Yupa, for your understanding regarding the postponement of the meeting. See you next week, ma'am."

The skilled Feng Shui master said to the other side of the phone with relief. Initially, she had called a meeting to check the Feng Shui of her client's shop house in the Samut Prakan area.

However, Ms. Yupa, her client, agreed to postpone their meeting after she called her in the morning, explaining that she had an urgent matter causing the delay. She offered a ten percent discount on Feng Shui inspection services to make up for it, and Ms. Yupa agreed to the postponement.

"Why did you cancel your appointment?"

"Oh, hey, when are you coming down?"

"A moment ago, I heard you talking to your client."

"By the time I finished packing up my things, I might be late for the meeting, so I called her to postpone it."

"What problems do you have to deal with?"

"You, Miss Architect. You're the problem."

Renita looked at the architect who had come to stand behind her. It seemed that this lioness didn't understand why she was being called a problem.

"I ordered rice porridge for you. Eat it, so you can take your medicine."

"Porridge? I ate it yesterday."

"You are sick. You can't choose."

"I want to eat something spicy, like stir-fried basil."

"Wait until you get better, then you can eat whatever you want."

Even though some color had returned to Miss Architect's face after a restful night's sleep, she still needed continuous rest until she fully recovered. Once her condition improved, she could indulge in whatever food she wished. Renita was only focused on ensuring she got better.

"Don't you want to eat with me?"

"I ate before you came down."

"Why didn't you wake me up? We could have eaten together."

"Why would I want to eat with you? Eating separately is enough."

The beautiful woman simply shrugged her shoulders and ignored the disappointed expression on the lioness's face. She had woken up early this morning due to being unfamiliar with the place and not sleeping well.

While another woman might have invited her to meet in a dream, Renita had been trying to sleep since ten o'clock in the evening. Her heart had been too confused to rest well until the night was over. She didn't remember when she fell asleep, and since she often woke up before the alarm, she got up, showered, changed, and washed the borrowed clothes. She bought breakfast and delivered it to the house.

Having done so much work in the morning made her hungry, so she finished her porridge about half an hour before Miss Architect came down.

"Come sit with me."

"I told you, I've eaten."

"You just sit here. I don't want to eat alone."

Tantiya said what she wanted earnestly. Despite her annoyance at being treated like a patient, Renita didn't leave in irritation. She dragged a chair opposite her out and sat on it while crossing her arms and looking at her accusingly.

"You still haven't told me why you dropped your client."

"Why do you think I'm wasting my time here?"

"Is it because I'm sick?"

"Because you're a bother, Miss Architect."

"Thank you."

"Why do you keep thanking me? Hurry up and eat so you can take your pills."

"Okay, I'll eat it now. I promised you last night that I would behave."

"I do not believe you."

Renita muttered, unwilling to believe Miss Architect's words. She was cautious and paranoid about the lioness, not trusting her sweet talk. Miss Architect might pretend to be calm but could easily slip.

"I slept more than six hours last night, even more than eight hours."

"Good for you."

"How about we sleep together every day...mhmm."

"Stop talking, just eat. I'll go home now."

During Prachuap's trip, she had also shoved a piece of fried prawn cake into Miss Architect's mouth to silence her comments. This time, Renita chose to stuff fried dough into Miss Architect's mouth to prevent her from saying flirtatious things that made her lose her composure. She didn't believe the lioness's sweet words and was determined to stop her from talking.

"Hm? You have work today, right?"

"I have my own house, you know."

"But you told me that sick people shouldn't be alone."

"That's your problem."

"What if I pass out after you come back and hit my head? Don't you worry?"

Renita watched Miss Architect chewing on the fried dough she had put in her mouth, swallowing before acting innocently and seeking her attention. She didn't want to think too much about whether the woman was genuinely needing her or just asking for attention when she was tired.

"I'll only be back for a few hours. If you can't handle it, then there's nothing I can do to help."

"You'll be back again, right?"

"I have to get my things. I didn't bring anything yesterday."

"I'll take you."

"No, you stay here and rest. I'll be back at lunch. What do you want for lunch, besides stir-fried basil?"

"Everything is good for me."



"How do I know what you want if you don't give me specifics?"

"I can eat anything, as long as you join me for lunch."

**Just looking at Miss Architect's face made Renita lose her appetite!**

[So, you don't want me to visit, Soul?]

"Yeah, you and Oyl don't need to visit me. I'm fine now. Give me a day and I'll be able to go back to work tomorrow."

[You don't have to worry about getting into the company. The boss said that you can work from home for a while. Oyl and I went out for a meeting with a client in your place. And we're close. Oyl bought stir-fried basil at your favorite place. We were worried you wouldn't have anything to eat this afternoon.]

"You two should go back to the company. I want to rest. It will be chaotic if you are here."

[Isn't it because you already have someone looking after you? Is that why you don't want more people to come?]

"What?"

[Too late, Soul. I met Miss Xinxin at the restaurant around the corner from your house. She is talking to Oyl now.]

Why do they try to gather at her house on weekdays? They never seemed to worry and think about her so much in all the years they had known each other. Why are they suddenly acting like this?

"We're all eating together again, just like on the Prachuap trip."

Tantiya, the owner of the house, looked annoyed, while Mim and Oyl tried to start a conversation at the table so it wouldn't be too quiet. Renita returned to accompany her to lunch as promised. She even brought her the stir-fried basil she had been craving, though she ordered it not too spicy because she was still not well.

"I didn't know Mim and Oyl would stop by. If so, I'll go back to work."

"You can still leave now, Miss Xinxin. I'm free in the afternoon; I can take turns looking after Soul."

"You don't have anything to do, Oyl?"

"Yeah, I'm free, Soul."

"Find something to do at the company so you won't be free."

Her junior interior designer laughed at the awkward dinner. Oyl must be clueless to suggest something like that to Miss Feng Shui Master Xinxin. That's why she was scolded by their senior architect, who didn't seem friendly at all since they visited her with Miss Xinxin. Mim could guess the reason behind it.

"Miss Architect, I will go now, okay? Since you already have Oyl and Mim accompanying you."

"Don't you two have to go back to the company to complete the work I assigned you? The deadline is getting closer, isn't it?"

"Oh yeah, Soul. I completely forgot. Oyl, let's go, don't run away from work."

"Which work, Mim? Haven't we finished all the projects that are almost due? Only Lady Wan's project remains."

"We have, you're being forgetful, Oyl. Should I tell the boss to cut your salary?"

"I'll leave it to you, Mim."

"Don't worry, Soul. I'll take care of it. Let's go back to the company, Oyl. Miss Xinxin, please take care of Soul for us, okay?"

Tantiya motioned to her juniors to take the hint. Luckily, Mim was smart, so she could handle the situation without needing further explanation. Oyl, who was an assassin, would never understand what she wanted compared to Mim. She might annoyingly offer to stay here with her until the evening.

"Wow, those two suddenly left."

Renita watched the two guests hastily leave, especially Mim, who practically dragged Oyl away with her. Renita turned back to look at the innocent face of Miss Architect, who acted as if she had not done anything. She found herself in a house that had become private once again.

"Since you're free today, could you take a look at Lady Wan's project?"

"Miss Architect, your condition hasn't improved, and you're already thinking about work?"

"Nothing much. I'll do what I can; I won't force it."

"If you don't keep your promise, I will tell Aunt Tye."

Actually, I'm an adult; I'm not afraid of my mother scolding me, you know. But if it was the bunhead fetish doll who was scolding her—otherwise... Renita only needed to threaten to leave her alone, and she would give in.

"The kitchen door must be replaced. It must not be parallel to the back door of the house."

"But that's the direction of the wind flow, so the house isn't too stuffy."

"Feng Shui forbids any doors to be parallel to each other. Their wealth will leak out and their happiness will seep out. You can fix this by moving the doors so they are not directly parallel or changing the direction the doors swing, making them opposite each other. That will also help."

"Noted. I'll try to change it later."

"And for the second floor, I want you to add another window to let the breeze flow in, like welcoming good energy into the house."

"Add windows to improve ventilation."

Renita glanced at Miss Architect, who repeated her words and wrote down notes of her suggestions. The notes were not neatly written but were readable. Currently, the older woman was being cooperative with her on Lady Wan's project, paying attention to her and not trying to imitate her like when they worked together before—where Tantiya had never obeyed her.

"This is strange."

"Hm? What's strange about the design?"

"Not the design. Its you Miss Architect."

"What's strange about me?"

"You didn't argue with me today or refute my suggestions. Is it because you're sick? That's why you don't have the energy to argue with me. Your fever isn't as bad as yesterday, right? It's gone down."

Tantiya stuttered for a moment but not as badly as yesterday when Renita's gentle hand touched her forehead to check her body temperature. The woman told her that her fever had gone down and she was only slightly feverish and looked a little tired.

But this time, the distance was much closer than yesterday, making her even more choked up when her eyes met the beautiful eyes of the bunhead talisman doll staring back at her.

She became the one shaken by it. Her body felt weak, but her heart started beating stronger. The skilled architect broke their eye contact and looked away before she spoke softly.

"I told you I'd be nice."

"That's good. You should get sick more often."

"Why? Don't you want me to get better?"

**"Well, you act cuter when you're sick. You're spoiled too."**

"I can also do those things when I'm healed if you want."

She wanted to slap her mouth for saying that out loud and give this lioness a chance to say something flirtatious back. She didn't know what was going through her mind until she expressed her opinion that she thought Miss Architect was cute and said she was spoiled.

The other woman told her she would continue to be sweet towards her even after she recovered, said that with her soft voice that sounded so alluring and smiling, so gentle to her that it made her look away before she was too shaken by this.

"Get back to work; don't get off track."

"Ouch! Why do you like hitting me so much?"

Even though it didn't hurt much, a light blow to her forehead with the wooden pencil in the bunhead charm doll's hand did make her skin feel a

little itchy.

"You started it. You did it on purpose!"

"If it was someone else, I would reward you, you know."

"Then come here, hit me."

"No, I don't want to hurt you."

"You can do it."

Renita raised the pencil again and hit Tantiya's forehead lightly to make Tantiya hurt her in return. But actually, she did that just to cover up the turmoil in her heart. No matter how many times Renita hit her, Tantiya just stared at her silently. Why isn't this lioness roaring like usual?

"It's been two hours, as agreed. Turn off your computer, Miss Architect."

"Can you give me a little more time?"

"No, the patient needs to rest."

"Should I take a nap?"

"Yes, you should sleep quickly."

"What if I can't sleep tonight?"

"It's your business."

"When I'm sick, I don't really have a choice, right?"

"Miss Architect!"

Renita screamed loudly after being teased by the sick woman. She lunged at Tantiya, who was sitting on the bed, until they fell together on the bed with Renita on top. Renita immediately rushed to her feet because she was paranoid and hit Tantiya, who burst out laughing.

"Have dinner together tonight, okay?"

"Go to sleep quickly. I'll wake you up later."

Renita took a blanket and wrapped Tantiya's body from top to toe. Tantiya was wrapped like a mummy, then Renita ran away from Aunt Tye's room and entered Tantiya's room, which she had borrowed for the night. She didn't know why the woman gave her her own room. Renita might not be able to sleep tonight because she wasn't accustomed to the place and the smell of a mattress that was not her own.

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"Why did you order so much food?"

"Because I want to pay you back."

"If you want to thank me, pay in cash next time."

Tantiya looked at the little troublemaker who stretched out her hand to ask for money just like that. She shook her head to deny it because she wasn't so rich that she could just give her money. She could only buy her delicious food for dinner from a nearby restaurant. They had three dishes and ready-to-eat jasmine rice that didn't need cooking.

She wanted to repay Renita for taking care of her when she was sick and not leaving her alone when her mother was not at home. Besides, this would be the first meal they had eaten together in days, with many things happening during the meal.

"It's been more than a week, right?"

"What?"

"The last time we ate together was last Monday."

"Well, I have a job. Do you expect me to be free all the time?"

"Then let's eat together this Sunday."

"Did you forget? No one is home this week. Mama and Aunt Tye come back on Monday."

"I'm not talking about eating at home. Let's go out and eat together."

"You asked me to go with you, just the two of us?"

"Yes, would you like to?"

Renita narrowed her eyes at the woman suspiciously, but Miss Architect looked serious about this. She even looked into her eyes, waiting for an answer. She realized that it was the type of question that required an answer from her.

**"Are you asking me out, Miss Architect?"**

"If so, would you accept it?"

"....."

"Since you brought this up first, how about we talk about it... mmmm."

"Eat so you will get better."

This troublesome Feng Shui master seemed to be good at shutting her up. This time, she stuffed a large piece of fried pork into her mouth before she finished speaking, quickly changing the topic to something else.



Actually, Tantiya didn't plan to just give up; she intended to continue the conversation once she finished swallowing her food. But the bunhead talisman doll looked so flustered, her face was red, and she even refused to make eye contact. It reminded her of her behavior that day at the riverside restaurant. She understood why someone as talkative and argumentative as this young woman was always kept quiet about this. It was easier for the bunhead talisman doll to get confused than she thought...

The beautiful woman put her hand on her forehead. She couldn't sleep tonight. She didn't dare barge into her own room after she separated from Renita at seven o'clock at night, even though she could.

She failed to bring up the topic at the dinner table, and Renita remained silent and refused to make eye contact while eating. So Tantiya didn't want to pressure her; she was afraid that Renita would disappear longer than before if she did.

**"Why is starting over so difficult?"**

Tantiya sat up and hugged her knees when she couldn't resolve the things that had been bothering her lately. Was it because she hadn't loved anyone for a long time? It had been a decade since her first love disappointed her. Everyone thought she was afraid of love and fed up with it. She admitted that was true to a certain extent.

But recently, she learned that maybe she wasn't afraid of love and she was sure about that. She would welcome it if she could start over with someone who brought color and life to her heart again. Their complicated

relationship might have a long way to go from becoming love, perhaps not even anything close to romantic feelings.

Still, she and Renita had something special...

It was something special that couldn't be explained explicitly, but she couldn't deny that her feelings were getting more overwhelming with each passing day. She missed her in the short time when they didn't contact each other. She was happy that she worried and cared for her when she was weak, and she was happy that she was by her side, even though they weren't anything yet.

**"What feelings do I have for you?"**

Tantiya muttered absentmindedly.

Compared to her first love at that time, her first girlfriend was the one who first confessed her love to her. She accepted her feelings and officially gave a name to their relationship and love. But it was different with Renita.

She was still unsure and didn't feel like herself; she felt nervous and confused whenever she was around her. She thought that she was the one who should think this through and take the first step to make things clear because she had more experience in love.

The Feng Shui master stopped her every time she wanted to talk about this complicated matter; she would never admit her feelings first. Maybe she wouldn't confess at all if the other party didn't share the same feelings.

"You said you don't hate me. What am I to you now?"

Was the television showing a parade of romantic movies to reassure her or something? Lada's words a few days earlier still made Renita confused and overwhelmed. She couldn't forget her best friend's words when she told her that Miss Architect was the most important person to her. Her mind kept coming back to it all the time and she would think about someone she didn't want to think about—it was annoying...

"Get out now!" Renita was just annoyed, so she tried to chase away her absurd thoughts because she thought she was alone.

"I just went downstairs to get some water. I won't bother you."

Renita immediately turned towards the stairs and saw the lioness looking surprised on the last step. She was probably surprised because Renita suddenly exclaimed loudly. She didn't see or hear anything when she came down.

"You said you don't sleep after midnight. It's already past midnight."

"Why aren't you in your bed? It's late."

"I can't sleep."

"Me too. I went down to watch a movie to pass the time."

Tantiya didn't respond as she walked into the kitchen and poured herself two glasses of water. She returned, placed the glass for the younger woman on the table in front of the TV, and sat down on the same couch. She kept her distance because she didn't want to make Renita uncomfortable if she intruded on her private moment.

"Let me sit here for a while. I'll go upstairs and try to sleep again."

"I didn't say anything to you. This is still your house, you know."

"What are you watching?"

"Don't know. Late night shows only show romance, so I don't pay attention to it."

"You don't like romantic movies?"

"Yeah, it's too cringy. I don't like it. Do you?"

"I rarely watch films. It's been a long time since I've been to the cinema."

After her first love ended badly and she lost her father soon afterward, she didn't do anything entertaining or romantic that couples liked to do when they were dating. So, in reality, she hadn't been to the cinema in almost a decade.

"You used to go out with your girlfriend?"

"Yeah, but that was ten years ago. I barely remember it."

"Why have you been single for so long? It's been so many years; shouldn't you already have a new girlfriend? If you want it, you'll get it."

"Aunt Ping told me you've never dated anyone, right?"

"Hey! Don't make fun of me. I was asking about you."

"I'm not making fun of you. There's nothing wrong with never being in a relationship."

Even though it wasn't intentional, she was sure Miss Architect must be secretly laughing or looking down on her. She might be single now, but this lioness used to have a girlfriend, used to love someone.

Unlike her, who was so unfamiliar with it that she couldn't imagine it. Listening to Lada's love life didn't make her an expert on the matter.

"At least you know about love."

"But you can learn about love. No one is stopping you. Or is your mother very strict?"

"No, it's just that I don't like it because I don't know about love. I never did know what it's like to like someone like that."

"It's actually not that hard to notice if you don't shut yourself off."

"Realizing it? What's a clear sign that you like someone?"

"Just pay attention to your heart."

"My heart? Why? If you say that it feels like someone is sitting on it, I'm going to throw up because of how cringy that sounds."

**"When you have feelings for someone, your heart beats faster."**

**Boom Boom!**

**Boom Boom!**

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How did this lioness do it? How could she make my heart beat faster just by answering?

# Chapter 11

## Someone who came into your Life

*'It's okay, Mama will be back in two days.'*

The beautiful woman said to herself with determination. Something strange happened to her heart last night, and it was all because of her conversation with Miss Architect.

Their conversation about love, about the feeling when you like someone, confused her. Renita thought maybe she was too excited about something foreign to her.

In the past twenty-five years, other than the familial love she had towards her mother, she had never known romantic love before. She had never liked or had feelings for someone. She thought she wouldn't need that kind of love in her life, that it was a nonsensical thing, something so unreasonable that she promised herself not to get involved in it forever.

Her heart still trembled violently when she remembered what happened last night, and she was so distracted that even her client commented on it.

The lioness must be happy now that she could have this much influence on her. Renita ran out of Aunt Tye's house at dawn without saying goodbye, only sending a text message telling Tantiya that she would stay at her own place today because Miss Architect was probably better.

*'Now, I won't read her messages, and if she calls, I won't pick up at all.'*

She would avoid and not cross paths with Miss Architect until her mother returned. She shouldn't have given up and gone to look after her; she shouldn't have stayed with her in her house.

She gave up for the past two days because she thought about how Miss Architect would feel living alone. But she told herself that she had to stick to her guns and not care about Miss Architect from now on. Otherwise, she might get trapped and become prey.

*"Just give up!"*

The busy Feng Shui master, who had just returned to her house at night, stared at the phone in silence. The incoming call appeared to be disconnected after she refused to answer it. She didn't plan on calling back because she saw the name on the screen saying it was the lioness.

Renita thought she could dodge a bullet in this confusing and annoying situation. She didn't expect that she would be wrong this time.

*'Who rang the doorbell? Did Mama come home early?'*

The beautiful woman raised her eyebrows, curious. She beamed at the thought of the possibility that the person who rang the doorbell on Friday night might have been her mother, who had returned from Saraburi earlier than planned.

But as soon as she stepped out halfway, barely reaching the fence, she saw the lioness grinning at her, not looking trustworthy at all. Renita stopped in her tracks and stopped smiling.

"You're home."

"What are you doing at my house?"

"Have you eaten? I brought dinner for you. Let's eat together."

"Since when did you change your job to delivering food?"

"This service is free."

Tantiya watched as the younger woman glared at her accusingly. Even so, Renita finally opened the door for her to enter the house, even though it seemed like she didn't want to welcome her. She probably wouldn't refuse a take-out dinner from a nice restaurant that Tantiya bought for her and served her—the woman was practically drooling.

"Why didn't you call first? Did you think you could come here whenever you want?"

"I texted and called, but you didn't pick up."

"What if I'm not home? Then what will you do?"

"Maybe I'll call Aunt Ping and tell her that her daughter went out without permission."

"Hey! I never act like your stories."

The talented architect grinned when the troublesome Feng Shui master pointed her fist as a threat. Renita would beat her with all her might if she really did call Auntie and say that.

"Okay, okay, I won't do that. You also helped me hide my fever from my mother."

"If you didn't incite my mother to misunderstand, then I wouldn't have done that to Auntie."

"And what if I say nice things?"

"What good thing?"

"I will say good things about you to Aunt Ping."

Here she thought she could have a weekend alone to recover. Why did Miss Architect come and disturb her at her house?



Now that the woman's condition has improved, she continues to say things that are indecent and refuses to give her a break. Renita ended the conversation by walking away because she didn't have anything nearby that she could use to cover the old woman's mouth.

Sometimes, she wanted to cover Miss Architect's mouth so that she couldn't say such smooth words again.

"Don't you have your own house?"

"Yes."

"Then go. Are you planning to stay here late?" Renita crossed her arms and watched the woman who came to have dinner with her at her house and offered to wash the dishes in return for taking care of her when she was sick.

She had called her even when Miss Architect bought her dinner yesterday. Not that her help was a big deal that she would have to pay for the rest of her life. So why did this lioness continue to use it as an excuse and barge into her life like this?

"Yeah, I'll sleep here."

"Hey, don't make yourself at home."

Tantiya pretended to be asleep and was lying on the sofa in her living room downstairs when the bunhead charm doll rushed over and tried to stop her. Renita pulled her arm to wake her, not letting her fill the room.

"Miss Architect, why are you so stubborn!"

"I don't want you to be alone in your house. It might not be safe."

To be precise, she wouldn't be safe if she let this cunning lioness live with her in her house. She should have kept Tantiya bedridden with fever. She should not have worried about her and taken care of her until she recovered quickly. Now she had regained the energy to agitate her, destroy her thoughts, and annoy her to no end.

"I can stay alone. Mama will be back in two days."

"Let your mother come back first, then I'll calm down."

"I'm not sick. Why do you have to stay overnight? Are you so sick that you've lost your memory, Miss Architect? Are you crazy?"

"No."

"Then what's gotten into you?"

"I'm worried about you."

She didn't know whether this reason was enough for Renita or not. Still, Tantiya felt like telling her sincerely. She found herself thinking that if the Feng Shui master did not stay at her house for the next two days, she would be so worried that she would not be able to sleep.

She was worried about the woman who would have to be alone for days until Aunt Ping returned from her meditation retreat with her mother. The bunhead talisman doll might say that she is strong, but it would be better to stay together.

Renita didn't go running because she lost, okay? She ran to her room because she didn't want the lioness to hear her heartbeat increase because of her again.

"Good morning."

"You are still here?"

She reflected on what happened this morning, similar to what happened two days ago when she stayed over at Aunt Tye's house.

It's just that this morning, her and the old woman's roles had reversed. It wasn't her who was busying herself in the kitchen to prepare breakfast for the patient. The lioness had become the one who woke up early, fumbling around in her kitchen, and she was the one who had just gotten up and walked downstairs. She came down a bit later in case the other woman had left by then.

"It's Saturday."

"You know what a holiday is, Miss Architect? I thought you worked the whole week."

"Sometimes I have to rest. I don't want to pass out again."

"It's good that you care about your health. So Auntie doesn't have to worry about you."

**"The best love begins with love for yourself."**

"Why are you saying inspirational quotes so early in the morning?"

"I forgot you weren't in love."

"Yeah, love is terrible."

The talented architect burst into laughter when the beautiful woman made a face as if she hated any kind of romantic love and didn't like listening to any romantic stories. Indeed, Renita was even more against love than she was, having had a bad experience with her first love.

"Can you cook breakfast?"

"Yeah, just something simple so I don't starve to death."

"Why does it look so bad? You don't need to cook for me. I don't want to die prematurely."

"Don't judge a book by its cover. It might taste good even though it looks like that, you know?"

"The food?"

"No, me."

"Ew, go play with someone else somewhere else."

This lioness probably didn't taste good, and she would be so hard to chew that her teeth would hurt. What Renita meant was breakfast and nothing else.

"Sit down, I'll bring you food when I'm done."

"I told you I don't want to eat that."

"Try it, you'll like it."

This time, she wouldn't fall into her trap and ask, *'What would you prefer, the food or the cook?'* because there was no way the latter would be the answer.

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"Wait, I came to the right house, didn't I?"

"Who are you looking for?" Tantiya asked the stranger who was talking to herself near the fence where she was watering the plants for Aunt Ping.

She was there because the owner's daughter said that if she wanted to stay in her house, she had to work and ordered her to water the flowers. She looked up, and their eyes met.

"Is Xinxin here?"

"She's upstairs. Please wait inside."

The skilled architect opened the door for her after the woman told her that she had come to see Renita. The woman used a nickname that Tantiya never used, but that didn't mean she forgot the Feng Shui expert's nickname.

"Okay, and who are you? Why are you at Xin's house?"

"Lada! Why didn't you tell me you were coming by?" Renita's voice was heard from inside the house when Tantiya was hesitant about telling the woman her status.

Renita greeted the girl named Lada very intimately. Tantiya stepped aside and let the bunhead amulet doll come between her and the woman.

"I had a meeting with a client in the area. I stopped by after work so we could chat about your last update. I didn't know you could already guess."

"This is Lada, my best friend. And this is Miss Architect...no, this is Soul."

"Hello, Lada."

"This is your architect, Xin? She's hot."

"What?"

"You said you two weren't dating, why have you been living together since morning? It seems like you two are practically living together."

Can she kick Lada out of her house now? How could she say that out loud? Miss Architect might be surprised and misunderstand!

"You told me you and Miss Architect aren't dating, so why do you live together in the same house? And your mother isn't home either, oh wow."

"Calm down, Lada. Don't start imagining things. She might misunderstand now."

Renita slapped her best friend's arm after Lada kept teasing her just to provoke her. Her words in front of her house shocked her and the lioness.

She had to drag her best friend upstairs to her bedroom and lock the door to talk privately about things they needed to straighten out.

"You can't even sit still, can't deny it any longer, right?"

"We're really not dating."

"Why not? What are you waiting for?"

"I just... I'm not sure about my feelings for her."

"Listen, if you don't have feelings for her, you won't get close to her. Who wants to spend time with someone they don't like, right?"

What Lada said this time seemed to make sense. Because she felt comfortable when she was with Miss Architect. She actually felt safer and more at home. Like the day when the woman asked to stay overnight because she didn't want her to be alone in her house. Even though she slept downstairs and they were in different places, Renita slept soundly. She didn't feel lonely like the first days she had to be alone when her mom wasn't home.

"You like her, don't you?"

"I don't know."

"Damn, what should I do? My little Xinxin refuses to grow up."

"Stop whispering things in my ear, Lada. Last time you said Miss Architect was important to me, do you know that I can't look her in the eye? I'm too busy thinking about it because of you."

"Is it really my doing, or is it your heart? Don't blame me."

**"I'm going crazy right now, I don't understand why my heart is beating so fast for her, and it happened more than once. It happens so often, and every time it happens, I can barely contain myself. What should I do, Lada? I'm going to go crazy if this continues."**

"Then don't fight it. If it's destined to happen, it will happen. You told me that if love comes to you, you won't be able to avoid it even if you try."

"Am I in love with Miss Architect?"

"If you want to know, try to follow your heart. Don't fight it. Don't hide your feelings. And you will get the answer, whether you love her or not."

If she really falls in love with Miss Architect, she will fall prey...

No way, she won't let herself fall in love with her and be wronged!

"I've got the tickets."

"Okay."

Yesterday, she told herself that she would not allow herself to become prey. She was quite annoyed with herself because she followed her heart as Lada suggested. She agreed to eat out on Sunday evening with Miss Architect.

But when they arrived at the mall, the woman asked her if she wanted to watch a movie together when they passed a new movie advertisement. And she easily agreed to watch it with her.

Does following her heart as Lada suggests make it look too easy? It seemed like this lioness didn't need to try hard to get it at all. But if she doesn't do what she really wants and forces herself to do the opposite, she will never know how she really feels about Miss Architect.

"Two hours until the movie shows. Do you want to eat first?"

"Up to you."

"Do you really want to watch a movie with me?"

"Otherwise, I wouldn't have agreed to it."

"I don't know, you seem quiet today. You haven't spoken much since we arrived."

"I don't have anything to talk about. What do you want me to say? I already answered when you asked the question, so it's not like I'm ignoring you or anything."

Throwing fists non-stop did seem like a truly troublesome Feng Shui master now, since she wasn't so reserved and let her talk alone.

"Look where you are going, don't just look at your feet, or you will bump into someone else." Tantiya caught Renita's hand when she almost hit someone.

"Don't try it, Miss Architect."

"What are you talking about?"

"Trying to find a reason to hold my hand."

"Can I hold your hand if I ask?"

Even though this wasn't the first time Tantiya had caught her hand, she agreed to let it go before extending her hand again and asking for permission with a smile. Her soft voice made Renita's heart completely weak, which is why she gave her hand back easily. And they walked with their hands clasped together.

"What do you want to eat?"

"Everything is alright."



So if she can't get the right restaurant, she's going to be in trouble...

Tantiya frowned, thinking hard before choosing a Japanese restaurant that had a variety of menu options. They had to use the escalator downstairs to get to the restaurant, and she hadn't let go of Renita's soft hand.

The woman was still holding her hand as they went down the escalator as if it were a normal thing to do.

The Feng Shui Master had an adorable look on her face; she was dressed prettier than usual today, and she let her hair down, slightly curled at the ends, instead of tied up like her typical hairstyle. Even though some of her hair covered part of her face, Tantiya could see her blushing cheeks, indicating how embarrassed this woman really was.

"Why is it so busy today?"

"It looks like there's a product launch event on stage." Renita glanced at the center of attention on the stage located on the ground floor of the department store, which was being looked at by the person beside her.

She turned her attention away from the area and followed Miss Architect to the restaurant where they would be having dinner. But when she heard the MC announce the name of tonight's important guest, it made her freeze on the spot. **Vichaya Rungruenamporn...**

"I'm sorry, I was so annoying to you."

"It's okay. We can watch the movie another day."

"I'm just being stupid." Renita sighed tiredly.

The beautiful time that could be considered her and Miss Architect's first official date, where she could follow her heart, ended sadly because she met someone she didn't want to meet. Now, Renita was too upset to focus on her feelings, let alone her feelings for Miss Architect.

"If you want to talk about it, I'm here for you."

"Did you see the man at the product launch event?"

"The one with the same surname as you?"

"Do you remember my surname?"

"Who would forget? I remember everything about you."

"He's my half-brother. But he doesn't consider me his sister. The maestro also doesn't consider me and my mother as part of his family. I'm just an outsider."

Tantiya listened to the young woman's personal story when she was willing to open up and talk to her. She listened without commenting or asking anything; she just let the woman tell everything she wanted so that Renita would feel better.

"The only thing I get from a man who calls himself my father is his last name. I'm not rich like the rest of that family. I work hard to support my mother and myself. I don't want to depend on them or ask for their help. I'm upset when I see Vichaya today. I admit, I envy him, not because he is rich or has a life full of luxury. That man seems to be taken care of, and that's something I have never gotten from him since I can remember."

"But you've been looked after by Aunt Ping all this time, right?"

"Yes, Mama is both my mom and dad. That's why I really love her."

"You have grown into a kind and polite person. You're doing well. I'm sure Auntie would be proud to have such an adorable daughter like you."

Why did that innocent compliment with no ulterior motive catch her off guard again?

She was upset about something that didn't make sense, but it disappeared when she confided in someone about things she couldn't say to her mother. She knew how much her mother loved the maestro, so her mother would be upset if she found out how she felt about someone her mother considered family.

But Miss Architect listened to her, paid attention, and did not scold her, tell her what she thought was inappropriate or wrong. She comforted her, telling her she did well, and it made her heart race when she told her she was adorable.

"It's nice to get that off your chest, isn't it?"

"Yes, both my mind and my stomach feel relieved and empty."

"I thought you might feel that way; you haven't eaten anything since the afternoon."

"Oh yeah. I also made you missed lunch. You just recovered from your fever."

"I ordered takeaway dinner; the delivery person will be here soon."

"You ordered it to eat here?"

"It's like a picnic, right? A change of scenery, and we don't have to eat at a restaurant."

Eating in the garden is a change of scenery. And just as Miss Architect finished her sentence, a set meal consisting of Korean fried chicken and rice was delivered to them.

The woman arranged the food packages in the middle of the bench they sat on together. It was Miss Architect's idea to stop here before they went home because she could sense that Renita was feeling uneasy ever since she told her that she wanted to go home and canceled their movie plans.

"It looks really good."

"Please."

"Can I use my hands? Using plastic utensils is not easy like this."

"Go ahead, you can wash your hands later."

Tantiya allowed the younger woman to have dinner as she pleased. Renita took a piece of juicy wing and took a big bite. She must have been so hungry that she forgot to maintain her image, or perhaps she deliberately showed her true self without any shame.

"You must be tired of hearing me like this."

"No."

"Tell me about yourself, Miss Architect."

"What do you suddenly want to know?"

"Like how did you get your nickname? Did Auntie travel to Korea when she was pregnant with you?"

"No, the name Soul comes from the word soul or spirit. My father named me that because he wanted me to grow with strength and determination. He wanted me to believe in myself. My name, Tantiya, also means structured knowledge."

"And you sure grew up like that. Your father would be proud."

"And you? How did you get your name?"

"Xinxin is Chinese; it means confident. And Mom said 'Renita' means graceful."

"Your name suits you."

Was she talking about her nickname or a name she thought would suit her? But Renita didn't dare ask, even though she was very curious. That would give Miss Architect a chance to say cheesy things to her again. So she turned her attention back to the food, but the wind was currently very strong, irritating her as it blew her untied hair. And it was difficult for her to take the rubber bracelet on her wrist because her hands were covered in sauce when she was hungry.

"You want to tie your hair?"

"Yeah, let me wash my hands for a moment."

"Want me to help you?"

"Do you know how?"

"Don't worry, the results won't be bad."

Even though Renita didn't seem to believe her, she still held out her wrist so Tantiya could take the rubber bracelet. Tantiya stood up and walked behind her, gently tucking her long hair back as she spoke.

"All this time you probably thought you had to be strong, you had to take care of everything because you only had Aunt Ping who cared about you. So you had to solve every problem alone. But, please don't think that now."

"Why not? From the beginning it was just the two of us, just me and mom."

"Can you add me to it too?..."

"....."

**"I promise, I will take good care of you."**

# Chapter 12

## **Good deeds would bring Happiness to the Family**

"See you in dreams."

"I don't want to meet you in my dreams." Renita immediately responded without letting the cunning lion think that she had caught on to the architect's feelings.

She always struggled to hide her embarrassment, losing all her composure as if she no longer had an image to maintain since Miss Architect had come with her sweet words. Those words had a lot of power in her heart, suggesting she wanted to add herself to Renita's life and look after her.

"About what I said, you don't need to give me an answer straight away."

"What did you say? I can't remember anything."

"Should I say it again? So I can refresh your memory... mhm."

"Stop it, Miss Architect, don't say that!"

Tantiya watched the younger woman rush over and cover her mouth. That troublesome Feng Shui master was probably afraid she would bring back the topic she had deliberately interrupted earlier and change the subject as if nothing had happened.

It was as if every time she wanted to be serious about their relationship, Renita's timid nature always let her escape. But this time, she was determined to convey her sincere feelings without rushing Renita to give an answer. She wanted their relationship to develop naturally and well. But as time went by, she just wanted Renita to know that their relationship meant something to her.

"You'd better not bring that up again, otherwise, watch your back."

"Scary."

"This is not an empty threat; I will make you regret it."

"I will wait for your answer."

"Wait a decade then."

"I can wait. If you want me to wait, I will."

"Yuck! I won't talk to you anymore." Just because she withdrew first didn't mean she lost this battle.

But this time, Renita realized that she could no longer look into the lioness's fiery eyes or withstand her evil charm. She was so confused and embarrassed that she wanted to hide in a hole. She had to sit still for some time before she regained her composure and tried to act normal, trying to cover up the loud beating of her heart.

When they returned to her house, Miss Architect, who was supposed to be parting ways, insisted on staying at her house one more night, even though she had to sleep on the sofa until her mother returned home with Aunt Tye the next day.

When she was about to go upstairs, Miss Architect told her to meet her in her dream. Even though the woman did not specify what she meant by that, Renita already knew the meaning.

"Xinxin,"

"Don't call me that."

"Isn't that your nickname?"

"Don't call me that. You can call me Renita, Feng Shui expert, or whatever you like. I'm not used to you calling me by my nickname."

"You'll get used to it."

"What's wrong with you? Miss Architect, don't be so stubborn."

"From now on, I will call you Xinxin."

She knew if she tried to stop this woman, they would end up standing there arguing forever. Renita ran to the second floor without wasting any more time talking to her.

The name Xinxin that came out of the lioness's mouth made her heart flutter. It embarrassed her so much that she had to hide in her room, jumping into bed and burying her face in a soft pillow to cover up her screams and hide her embarrassment.

**"Damn. I'm so embarrassed I could die!"** — — — — —

If it weren't for the fact that there was someone below, she would really scream at the top of her lungs. When you have feelings for someone, your heart beats faster because of it.

And this happened to Tantiya, which tends to happen when she's around troublesome Feng Shui masters like Renita. Tantiya slumped on the sofa in a comfortable position. She brought her hand to her left chest, revealing a bright and happy smile. She looked excited as if her life had turned pink again, after being trapped in the loneliness of single life for about a decade.

**"I'm so happy. I haven't felt like this in a long time."**

She liked their current state—a relationship without labels, but they both knew it was more special than normal relationships. She liked the bunhead charm doll's timidity, thinking it was adorable and cute.



Even though that shyness made their relationship develop slower than it should have, she could wait and was willing to wait longer until Renita was convinced of her sincerity and gave her an answer in the future.

*"I look forward to that day."*

"She's finally gone. Otherwise, she'd continue to bother other people."

Renita breathed a sigh of relief after finding no sign of Miss Architect in her house on the first morning blanket neatly folded and pillows piled on top. She turned her gaze back to the dining table and was surprised to see something on it.

She made Renita breakfast. Because red is the color of bad luck on Mondays, she used mayonnaise instead of ketchup.

"She's not that serious about horoscopes."

The skilled Feng Shui master burst into laughter, amused after seeing the unappetizing breakfast made by Miss Architect. But when she tried it, she realized it was tastier than it looked.

However, today the older woman may have been intent on turning the tomato sauce on a plate of sausages into a smiley face painted with mayonnaise. She was probably afraid that Renita would think the color red brought bad luck.

She finished the breakfast prepared by Miss Architect. But before she had time to wash the dishes, a noise from the front of the house distracted her from the plates she was putting in the sink.

Renita beamed when she saw her mother had returned from the temple in Saraburi.

"Mama! Mama you're back!"

"Xinxin, haven't you gone to work yet?"

"I have an appointment with a client around noon. I really missed you, Mama."

Renita quickly kissed her mother's left and right cheeks before releasing her hug to help her mother carry her luggage into the house while answering her question.

"You didn't cry in bed because you missed Mama, right?"

"Mama, I'm not that lonely. I'm not crying."

She had been so lonely that she often sulked during the first two days her mother went to Saraburi. But after that, there were so many chaotic events involving Miss Architect that there was no time for her to feel lonely at all. There were only moments that made her heart feel uneasy when they spent time together while her mother and Aunt Tye were not at home.

"Mama, sit down first. I'll get you a glass of cold water."

"Why did you bring a blanket and pillow downstairs, darling? Did you sleep on the sofa?"

"Oh, no. I just forgot to bring it upstairs. Here, drink some water."

Renita responded to her mother hastily as if she had been caught red-handed, even though she had done nothing wrong while her mother was away. If her mother wants to blame someone, she should blame that architect who came to disrupt her daughter's life at home.

"Then just keep it, Xin. It's not neat to leave it here."

"Okay, Ma." She sighed, relieved to escape without her mother suspecting anything.

"Mom you're back? Did you bring me a little reward?"

"Rewards are something you need to earn yourself. There's only so much I can give you, Soul."

"Then I'll take it. Amen."

Tantiva raised her hand to receive the reward from her mother, who attended meditation retreats every year as if it was part of their routine after Tantiya's father passed away. Her mother went on a meditation retreat to dedicate her merits to his father, and this year, Aunt Ping also accompanied her.

"Come on, let's eat. I'm only been gone for a while. Did you missed eating?"

"No, I haven't missed any meals recently, and I sleep eight hours every day. You doesn't need to worry, mom."

"Are my ears playing tricks on me? You? Not stubborn anymore?"

"Yes, mom. I'm not stubborn anymore."

The talented architect answered with a bright smile as she walked over and sat in her usual chair, enjoying her mother's cooked that she hadn't had in a week. Meanwhile, her mother continued to look at her suspiciously, curious about her daughter's recent change in behavior.

"You look radiant. Did something good happen that you haven't told me?"

"You can ask me. It seems like you have a lot of questions."

"How are you with Xinxin?"

"Good."

"And what do you mean by 'good'?"

"It's good, it feels right. Not too much, not too little. We're getting to know each other."

She didn't want their relationship to be so thin that the boundaries were unclear, but she also didn't want to rush their development so much that it felt uncomfortable. That's why she used "good" to describe their relationship.

"Wait! Don't deceive your mother. You know how much I admire Xinxin."

**"Yeah, I know. I like her too, Mom."**

"Do you like her?"

"I seem to like Xinxin more than you right now."

"Is that true, Tye?"

"I won't joke about things like this with you, Ping. Soul herself said that she likes Xinxin. My next-door neighbor, Wi, said that she saw Xinxin staying at our house while you and I were at the temple."

"The neighbor's grandmother told me the same thing. That a few days ago, she saw Soul spending the night at our house. But Xinxin hasn't told me anything."

"Just leave it be, Ping. We shouldn't demand answers from the kids or tell them that we know. Just leave Xinxin be for now. I think the kids will come to us when they're sure of it."

"Sure, I'll keep an eye on her for now."

"See? Merit really brought us good things. Before the meditation retreat, Soul and Xinxin didn't seem interested in each other at all. But when we came back, their relationship seemed to have blossomed."

"I don't mind if Xinxin really likes Soul. I know your daughter is a good person."

"Your little Xinxin is like that too. I adored her from the first time I met her."

***Hatchim!***

"Are you okay? You have a cold but still want to eat ice cream."

"I don't have a cold. It feels like someone is gossiping about me."

Renita received a napkin from Miss Architect when she saw her sneezing. This woman who had stated that she wanted to take good care of her did not hesitate to score extra points and pamper her. But Renita would ignore it for now. She wouldn't give her more points easily. The decade wait she mentioned earlier was probably not a joke.

"You have enemies?"

"You're the enemy, Miss Architect."

"Then cross me off that list. I have no ill will towards you." \_\_\_\_\_

"I refuse to trust you completely."

Tantiya flashed a gentle smile at the woman, who narrowed her eyes in disbelief at her words, before scooping the ice cream into her mouth.

She had offered to pick up Renita, who was in the Sukhumvit area on Wednesday night. This was their first meeting in three days since her mother and Aunt Ping returned from Saraburi. Tantiya was the first person to contact her after work, and Renita let her pick her up on the condition that she wouldn't charge her for gas, because Tantiya said she wanted to discuss work.

In reality, work was not the main reason. But if it could be used as an excuse, she should use it a little to her advantage. It was better than waiting for their meeting on Sunday when Renita and Aunt Ping agreed to come

over to eat her mother's cooking. In that case, she would have to wait a few more days to meet this woman.

"So, what do you plan to do with Lady Wan's invitation?"

"Will you accept the invitation, Miss Architect?"

"I'll go if you go. If you don't, I won't go."

"But why? We're not attached at the hip."

"You can decide. I don't want to go alone. And I don't want you to go alone either."

Renita saw the invitation to attend some kind of gala evening hosted by Lady Wan to raise funds for medical equipment for hospitals that are short on supplies. Tantiya had an appointment with Lady Wan to present the blueprint for the holiday home today, so Lady Wan gave her two invitations and asked this lioness to give one to Renita because she thought they were close.

"Shall I go? Do you like events like this, Miss Architect?"

"I used to attend, but I'm not good at it."

"Then we should go. I'll attend the party."

"You did this on purpose, right?"

"Well, you said yourself that you wanted to go with me. If Lady Wan has a dance floor at the party, I'll make you show off some steps. I'll take some videos and show them to Mim and Oyl too."

"You really enjoy teasing me?"

"Yes, very. And it makes me the happiest too."

"Then I'll let you tease me."

"Why?"

"If it's for your happiness, I can take anything. I told you that I would be nice. And I would pamper you too, Xinxin."

The ice cream that the bunhead charm doll put into its mouth this time tasted very sweet...

"Mama's daughter is very beautiful today. Xinxin, my adorable little girl has grown into a fine young woman."

"Mama, you praised me so much that I'm embarrassed now." Renita felt embarrassed after receiving endless praise from her mother as she went down the stairs.

Today, she agreed to attend Lady Wan's gala evening together with Miss Architect, who offered to pick her up so they could attend the event together as they both received invitations from their valuable client, who could be said to be their VIP customer. But usually, her job as a Feng Shui expert doesn't require her to attend events like this or often dress up excessively.

"Ma, if you want to sleep, you can lock the door. I'll open it myself. Tonight's event will probably end quite late. I don't want you to stay up late



waiting for me."

"Okay, then I will ask Soul to look after you when she arrives."

"She doesn't need to do that to me. Besides, she already looks after me well."

Even though Ping didn't ask or remind her to do it, Miss Architect never ignored her; she always cared about her very much. Often, the lioness worried about small things that her mother didn't even ask her to do. She showed it through her actions and made Renita feel her sincerity towards her.

"That's good. Knowing that you'll be going out with Soul tonight put me at ease. Speaking of Soul, she's here."

"Good evening, Aunt Ping."

"Soul, how are you? Doesn't Auntie's daughter look beautiful today?"

"Mama, why do you ask something like that..."

"You look really beautiful today, Xinxin."

Unlucky! Even right in front of Ping, this Lioness had the courage to try to charm her in front of other people like this.

She knows she looks good when she dresses maturely. With her long hair curled into soft waves, and especially in a dark rose-colored off-shoulder short dress that resembles a ribbon as a gimmick in the torso area, she looked age-appropriate and not too sensual with a cute appearance.

"I'm glad Miss Soul and Miss Xinxin can attend my party."

"It's a great honor for Lady Wan to invite us to such a big event like this."

Renita smiled in response and mostly let Tantiya talk to the older woman. She mostly stood there smiling and nodding along with the conversation.

Apart from Lady Wan who invited them, she and Tantiya did not know many high-class or celebrity guests in the luxurious banquet hall tonight. So they both tried to stay together to avoid embarrassing themselves.

Also, today, the lioness's outfit managed to make her secretly admire the change.

Usually, Tantiya prefers casual and practical clothes because of her job, just like Renita. She had seen how Tantiya liked to wear shirts and jeans, or casual t-shirts on her days off.

But today, she wore a formal-looking white sleeveless high-rise jumpsuit to suit the occasion, paired with a matching handbag and belt. It made her look beautiful and elegant, and Renita had to glance at her every chance she got.

**Even so, she would not praise her—she wouldn't let her know how charming she was in Renita's eyes.**

"Make yourselves comfortable. Allow me to greet the other guests."

"Are you hungry yet?" Tantiya asked.

"A little."

"Then let's get something to eat."

Tantiya invited Renita into a luxurious cocktail corner separated into other zones, including food, dessert, and drinking areas with countless options, as expected of Lady Wan's status. But she wouldn't drink alcohol because she had to take Renita home and drive herself back safely.

"Hey, why did you stop, Miss Architect?"

"Do you want to go home now?"

Renita looked at Tantiya with a big question mark on her face. For some reason, the lioness who was leading her towards the cocktail food area suddenly stopped even though they were less than ten steps away from their destination.

"We just arrived not long ago. Are you thinking of leaving?"

"I don't want you to feel upset."

"And why should I be upset?"

"Your brother is also at this event. He's talking to Lady Wan over there."

"Yes, I saw him earlier."

"Hm? Have you seen Vichaya here?"

"His looks is very attractive; who wouldn't notice it?"

"Then why are we still here? Why don't we try leaving like last time?"

"I didn't do anything wrong. Why do I have to hide all the time? We can stay away from each other. If I hide now, I'll have to hide from him for the rest of my life. But Lady Wan is the one who invited me here today. I'm one of the gala's guests."

"Hm, that's the spirit!"

"After all, I'm not alone at this event... You told me that you would look after me, right, Miss Architect?"

Tantiya didn't know what made a timid person like Renita decide to stand firm this time. But she didn't plan to reject Renita's hand when it reached out to her, holding it as if she was relying on it. The architect tightened her grip and held Renita's soft hand with great care and tenderness.

"You're fine today."

"I don't need your praise to know that."

Tantiya noticed Renita, who seemed more cheerful and in a better mood than usual. At first, she was secretly worried that Renita would get upset, just like when their movie date went wrong last week after they accidentally ran into her stepbrother.

But today, even though they were at the same event, the talented Feng Shui master didn't think about running or hiding from the scene anymore. That's why Tantiya praised her for acting naturally. They even stayed at the event for a while before suggesting they leave.

"It's nice to see you feeling comfortable. I don't want to see you upset like last time."

"I got through it easily because you're taking care of me, Miss Architect."

"Because of me? You mean... you gave me the answer to the question I asked?"

Once again, she accidentally let something slip, and she could no longer close her mouth to catch the words or pretend not to know like last time. Because Tantiya's eyes looked into hers very seriously, as she waited for an answer.

The glasses-free eyes that she usually wore when working and driving because her eyesight wasn't that bad captivated her; she didn't dare to look away.

"Xinxin?"

"I don't know."

"What exactly?"

"Don't follow me, Miss Architect."

"Then why did you walk away? Don't run away like that. You're wearing high heels."

The talented architect looked at Renita with equal parts concern and helplessness when she suddenly turned around in a hurry and quickly walked away from her. As she followed her, the young woman went from brisk walking to running. This made the architect worried she would trip and fall on the uneven path in the garden outside the banquet hall that led to the parking lot at the back.

"Why are you so stubborn? What if you trip, fall, and hurt yourself?"

"I told you not to follow me...ah!"

This time, Tantiya was the hero as usual. She was the one who protected and cared for her in all aspects. With this, no matter how stubborn Renita's heart was, how could it not soften and melt towards this lioness, who was both charming and good at taking care of her? There was no way she could escape from the arms that held her.

"Are you hurt?" Tantiya asked with concern.

She began to carefully check whether Renita was injured or had sprained her ankle when she held her earlier. However, she seemed to feel at ease when she saw that Renita was still able to stand on her two feet. She then noticed something else that the woman in front of her probably hadn't noticed yet. And she planned to take good care of her as promised.

"Don't!"

"Why are you covering your mouth? Your lipstick is...."

"Miss Architect, don't kiss me."

"What?"

"I know what you mean. Miss Architect, you saw my mouth and came closer. But I'm not an easy woman. You can't take advantage of me, and don't even think about trying."

"I'm not ready to kiss yet."

Her heart almost failed to beat from how hard it was pounding due to their close distance. If this lioness mauled her prey that couldn't escape by stealing kisses, she could easily be snatched away if she didn't hurry and defend herself.

Renita raised her hand to cover her mouth, leaving the older woman confused before Tantiya smiled happily when she heard the explanation from the young woman.

"I wasn't trying to kiss you. I just came closer because I saw your lipstick was smudged."

"Liar."

"Really, I won't kiss you when you're not ready. I'll wait until you're willing to kiss me."

"Who allowed you to do that, Miss Architect?"

"I don't know. You're the one who keeps mentioning kissing. I'm confused too."

"Stop talking about this. And don't make fun of me."

"Are you scared? Or are you worried? Let's talk for real this time, okay?"

If they didn't have a heart-to-heart talk, she would feel like she was alone without a way out. And her heart must continue to beat irregularly like someone whose heart is unstable. It would be better to talk about it so that this lioness would stop looking at her like she was some very small prey.

"Miss Architect, if I let you take care of me, I don't know what lies ahead. I've never had a partner before."

"Everything will be the same as now. We'll just put a label on it. If 'girlfriend' is too much of a burden for you right now, can we just be on a casual date with each other, like the current situation? We can take our time to get to know each other better. And if you enjoy my company, we can start officially dating."

"Do we have to kiss in certain situations?"

"No need. If you're not comfortable with it, it won't happen."

"Don't trick me, okay?" — — — — —

"Okay, I promise you. I will not demand anything that makes you uncomfortable."

"And how long do we have to be like that before we are officially dating?"

"Sometimes it takes a day, a month, a year. It's up to the two people to agree."

"Can we stay like that for ten years?"

"Do you want to be in that situation for ten years?"

She wanted to laugh when the young woman nodded her head seriously. She found this Feng Shui master's idea adorable, but she was afraid that

Renita would be angry with her. So Tantiya held back her laughter because she didn't want this shy woman to yell at her.

If they were in that situation for ten years, would they talk about different things every day?

"Okay, as you wish. Apart from kissing, are there any other rules you would like to add?"

"Don't tell Mama and Aunt Tye that we are in a difficult situation. Don't start any strange movements and..."

"Please write it down if it's going to be this long."

"Don't even try, Miss Architect. I will definitely do it."

"It's okay. I'll try to do everything you ask."

"What about you, Miss Architect? Are there any rules you'd like to add?"

"There's just one thing."

"What's that?"

**"Once we agree on this, you can't take it back."**

"Who said you can hug me!"

"That's not in your rules."

Look at this! This lioness is the most cunning woman in the world.

Because she just said no kissing, she was instead pulled into a tight hug after being told not to take it back later. But the woman should know that there is no way she will take it back later.

Because this hug made her hear the sound of Miss Architect's heart—her heart was beating as fast as her own. This let her know that she wasn't the only one experiencing this irregular heartbeat alone.



Miss Architect really likes her...

*Now she knew that as she thought... she also liked the architect with all her heart.*



## Chapter 13

### **Built ten years ago, or ten years from now**

“My mother should be asleep by now. You can just walk me to the front of the house.”

“Can’t I walk you inside?”

“Don’t make a fuss.”

“Phi Soul is just a bit worried, Xinxin.”

"....."

"Im really worried."

Saying that she was worried once was more than enough. Why did Miss Architect have to repeatedly say it and let it take a toll on her seriously damaged heart? Or because she was an easily swayed, easy woman who accepted the deal to casually date Miss Lioness, that was why the woman upped her game since she didn’t want to take ten years getting to know each other. She knew Miss Lioness was sly and full of tricks!

“Why are you calling yourself Phi? Stop it, I don’t want to have an older sister like you.”

“I don’t want to be your sister either. I want to be something else.”

“Nonsense! I haven’t agreed on that yet.”

“I’ll get there in ten years.”

“But we’re not there yet. We’re still getting to know each other more. You would have to wait until you’re gray and old before we could be girlfriends, Miss Architect.”

Tantiya gave the younger woman an amused smile as the girl continued to argue with her without a sign of giving up. But Renita probably didn’t know that right now, her face was even more beautiful than usual from the fully glam makeup and the rosy flush that was more apparent than the pink blush applied to her soft cheeks.

“Okay, sweetheart. I can wait.”

“You can’t do that either. All of that.”

“Hmm?”

“No calling yourself Phi. Not that kind of talking. I’m not used to it. No more. No, just no.”

“Let’s meet halfway on this deal?”

“What deal? If you say these things, my mother and Auntie Tye will know that we’re a thing.”

“I will comply with your rules when we’re in front of other people. But I won’t when it’s just the two of us.”

“That’s cheating.”

“When it’s just us, I’ll call myself Phi. You should also call yourself by your name, Xinxin. Stop calling yourself I and stop calling me Miss Architect already.”

“Well, you’re an architect, Miss Architect. What should I call you then?”

“Just call me Soul, sweetheart.”

What on earth!? Who would call Miss Architect Soul? No way she would. She absolutely would not. The woman in front of her was just giving her an example but it made Renita feel that her face wasn't the only thing that felt hot.

She was so embarrassed that she felt her entire body heat up. Whatever, but she would stubbornly continue calling her Miss Architect until the end.

"I'm going in now. Hurry up and go home already, Miss Architect."

"If you don't call me Soul, I will stand here and wait until morning."

"Suit yourself."

"Dear Xinxin, little Xinxin, baby."

No way she would be listening to this. She covered her ears with both hands and mumbled alone, trying to block out the sound from her senses. Even though it didn't bother her, Miss Architect's lovely voice was very troubling to her heart. She wanted to run away and slam the door in the woman's face, who was teasing her right now. Was it the right decision to be with this wicked Lioness?

---

"My little Xinxin, darling, we are dating. Be kind to me, won't you?"

"Soul..."

**She gave up... She completely lost to Miss Lioness.**

"Get some rest, okay? I'll come pick you up tomorrow before noon."

"To where?"

"My mom and Auntie Ping agreed to go to Chatuchak together, remember?"

"Right, I almost forgot."

"You're too forgetful for your age."

“Ugh, don’t tease me, you’ll get my hair messy.”

The beautiful girl brushed the mischievous architect’s hand, which reached out to ruffle her hair teasingly, before gently placing it on her head and looked at her softly through her lashes. She had to force herself to meet those eyes, with the uneasy feeling that had not gone away from the moment she heard Miss Lioness’s heartbeat.

“I’ll head home now. Hurry up so you can get six hours of sleep. I will come to pick you up tomorrow morning, Xinxin.”

“You better not be so bullheaded. Don’t work until late, okay?”

“Yeah, I promise.”

“So... as someone who’s getting to know each other like that, how should we say goodbye?”

“Pardon?”

“You dummy!”

“What did I do wrong?”

Then her unanswered question was answered by the beautiful Feng Shui master’s embrace, who moved to hug her tightly, leaving her no time to regain composure and hug back.

“Don’t be late tomorrow. I’ll be waiting for you, okay, Soul?”

The beautiful woman moved away and ran into the house, embarrassed that she had initiated a touch and said the sweet words the older woman asked of her. Even though it was a nickname that her acquaintances used to call her for almost thirty years, the word “Soul” was so adorably sweet coming from Renita’s mouth, it almost made the architect lose her way home.

“Mama, Auntie Ping, you should sit here and get some rest at the restaurant. There are a lot of people today. We’ll go buy some plants for you.”

“That’s a good idea, doesn’t it, Ping? People our age have to take a break after walking a little too much. Let the kids shop around themselves.”

“That’s right. Xin, you can go with Soul, dear. You can come back to get me and Tye here later.”

“Don’t hurry and come back to your mama. No need to rush. Take your time looking around. I want to take some rest first.”

Mama Ping watched as her daughter nodded in response before she walked away from the coffee shop area, which had a small café corner with seats, with the talented architect that the old lady adored.

The old woman looked away and didn’t bother to follow them with her glance until they were out of sight, unlike Tye, who hurriedly turned around, calling out to her and gesturing her to look over at the crowds that were shopping on their holidays. Then she saw something that made Tye smile with delight.

“As soon as they left our sight, they’re holding hands all lovey-dovey.”

“So how long do we have to pretend we don’t know about it?”

“I think it won’t be long, Ping. The kids will probably come to us themselves.”

Seeing her Xinxin had a lovely, good-natured person taking care of her and seeing her daughter happy and cheerful, Ping was just as delighted as Tye was.

“Miss Architect,”

“It’s just the two of us now.”

“Soul.”

“You call me, dear little Xinxin?”

“Don’t tease me!”

Tantiya burst into laughter when Renita’s free hand reached out to smack her shoulder for the fact that she answered her too annoyingly in an overly teasing tone. But it was just that she liked their private moment. And she liked the word “Soul” that the bunhead amulet doll in her favorite hairstyle called her softly. She never used her full voice every time she complied to call her that.

“Fine, what’s the matter?”

“Apart from Crown of Thrones, does Auntie Tye want to grow anything else at home?”

“My mom is fine with anything you say is good. My mother would like any tree that could enhance Feng Shui’s luck even more.”

“Then you should buy another one.”

“Should we get roses? Is it okay to grow roses in the house?”

“You can grow it, but it must be planted in the east direction. And according to the belief, it must be planted on Wednesday morning as well, to increase the prosperity of the house and the residents’ family.”

“I’ll do it this Wednesday morning.”

“Does Auntie Tye like roses?”

“No, I’ll plant it for you.”

Only people who were down bad would go big like this. But Tantiya thought that she was probably one of those people right now. So she wanted to try growing roses for the beautiful Feng Shui master, putting in the effort in every step until the roses bloom along with their growing feelings.

“Liar.”

“No, I’m serious, growing your own flowers makes you seem more sincere than buying beautiful flowers from the florists, right?”

“It will have withered before that, Soul. You don’t even change the water of the Golden Pothos I gave you. If I didn’t see it and change the water, it would’ve all turned yellow and died.”

“It’s all my fault. From now on, I won’t forget to take care of all the tokens of your affection.”

“It wasn’t a token of my affection. A Golden Pothos is a Golden Pothos.”

“Then can you choose a plant for me, Xinxin? If I were to grow roses for you, you could grow the plant you choose for me.”

“Want me to choose for you?”

The beautiful girl looked at Miss Architect, who quickly nodded in response, eagerly waiting to hear her decision. She thought about what she wanted to plant for her date. If the other woman wanted to give her roses, hers had to be something more grand and spectacular.

“Oh, I know now.”

“What plant are you thinking of?”

“A mango tree.”

“It will take at least seven or eight years to bear fruit. Soul, you will be able to harvest when we are close to taking our relationship to the next step.”



So growing a mango tree and waiting for it to bear fruit would take less time than her situationship with Renita to become official in reality? What a tough and patient thing it was to prove this love

“Don’t look so sulky. I was kidding.”

“By the time the mango tree grows, I will already be old.”

“Didn’t you say you could wait? You said you could wait a decade, right? Did you trick me into agreeing to be with you?”

“I could if I really had to. But a little sooner would be great.”

“Nine years.”

“Maybe eight years?”

“Nope, nine years. I’m compromising a lot for you. Nine years will pass by in the blink of an eye.”

She had wanted to be her girlfriend ever since she felt the pounding of Miss Lioness’s heart. But Renita wanted to tease the other woman and take their time getting to know each other.

She wanted them to learn about each other and understand the feelings she had just discovered in her life. She wanted it to develop into affection and love. But whether it was dating, being girlfriends, or something more, there was no one else who occupied her thoughts and feelings. It was like her heart only had Soul.

“Miss Xinxin, it’s difficult to get a ride around here. Mind if I give you a ride to the bus station?”

“I’m alright. I don’t want to bother you.”

“It’s totally fine. I’m the one who is bothering you. You go out of your way to help me check the location’s Feng Shui. And my factory is secluded.”

It's true that the Phutthamonthon area was quite far from her home. But this distance was not too far for someone as caring and attentive as Miss Lioness. Because a few moments later, she contacted Renita and let her know she had already arrived to pick her up at the location she sent her.

"If you'll excuse me, Mr. Sira. My ride is here."

"Someone came to pick you up, Miss Xinxin?"

"Yes, my girlfriend is here."

She didn't exactly lie to her client; she just left out the word "to be" for now. Because if she said Miss Lioness was just someone she had a situationship with, it might not be clear enough for him. Besides, Miss Architect wouldn't scold her. When they weren't even in a situationship like they were now, Miss Architect had given her permission to use her name as an excuse anytime.

"Did you wait for long, Xinxin? I came as soon as I finished my work with the client."

"I just finished work as well. You came just in time, Soul."

"Why, baby? Is the client flirting with you again?"

"Yeah, it happens to gorgeous people."

"Now I'm upset."

"Are you really?"

She pretended to flick her imaginary hair back to show off like the narcissistic girl she was. Though today, she had tied her hair up in her usual style, so she didn't let her hair flow freely for her to actually flick it. But Miss Architect's pouting face made her ask in a rush since she was grinning when she saw her walk up to the car in her seat. She didn't know if Tantiya was really upset or just pretending to be to melt her heart.

"My girl keeps attracting flirts. How can I not be upset and stressed out?"

“What can I do about it? I didn’t give anyone a chance, you know.”

“There’s a way to stop me from being upset.”

“What is it?”

“Stop with the casual dating and officially be my girlfriend.”

“Tsk! I won’t be fooled. Don’t be sly, Soul.”

“Oh, did you catch on?”

Tantiya burst into laughter when her teasing was always caught on by the talented Feng Shui master. And now it had been almost two weeks since they agreed to get to know each other in their pre-dating stage. The countdown to the term “girlfriends” was therefore left with only ten years minus ten days. A quick math resulted in approximately 3,636 more days before they could move to girlfriend status.

“I have a partner for you today.” Soul said.

“You mean a present.”

“Partner is correct. You are my partner; this one is my present.”

“See? This is what I meant. You are really Miss Lioness, Soul.”

A lioness would always be sly and smooth at flirting with girls, just like how Miss Architect was. She still had her claws and tricks, and she was sly with the way she pointed at Renita, saying this was her partner and not the present, which turned out to be a single red rose in her hand right now.

“It’s a rose.”

“I know. It doesn’t look like a sunflower, does it?”

“So much for being romantic.”

“Let’s try it again. I won’t tease you this time.”

“This rose is for you.”

“Don’t tell me it’s the rose that you grew yourself? How can it bloom in just two weeks?”

“I shower it with the same care and attention I have for you, Xinxin. So the rose was able to accelerate its growth.”

“Ew, that’s so cringe, Soul. Just tell me the truth.”

“I bought it for you, Xinxin. Because the one I planted will probably take a long time to grow.”

“You should have just said so. You’re being so dramatic.”

Renita accepted the flower from Miss Architect, who probably thought of some flirtatious joke to use with her. It was a pity that she put Miss Lioness on pause because she didn’t like anything sweetly cringy and romantic.

She liked things to be straightforward and natural, like how they currently were. And she liked the red rose that she received with care.

---

“Soul.”

She didn’t notice that the woman sitting next to her was, in fact, not at all interested in watching the movie to make up for their movie date back then. Renita called out to the older woman in a quiet voice as she turned around. The woman regarded her with a gentle look that felt intimate, making her move closer to the woman without knowing.

If she moved only a few centimeters closer, the lines she set for them would definitely be crossed in just the two weeks they had been dating.

She said she wasn't ready for the kiss yet, but now her heart was contradicting the idea, like she was easy to get. And then there was a thought that if Miss Lioness were the one to actually lean in and kiss her right now, she would have closed her eyes and accepted it willingly.

"Am I sitting too close to you?"

"No."

"Then let me move a bit so you can sit comfortably." Tantiya was the one who moved away from the dangerous distance to her heart and straightened herself.

Soul tensed up and couldn't breathe normally due to the situation. She was worried that she would break her promise and look untrustworthy in the younger woman's eyes if she accidentally had her ways with things from the mood.

Would the girl realize how hard she was restraining herself? Did she know that she made her heart beat so fast that she couldn't even watch the movie?

"Do you like the movie?"

"It's even more exciting than I thought."

"I'm glad you like it. Let's watch movies together again."

"Sure, I'll tell you when something I want to watch is in the cinema."

Even though she only saw the first half of the movie and lost her attention from the middle of the movie until the credits rolled at the end, the lights that were turned on in the movie theater brought her back from her wandering thoughts.

It wasn't like she could tell Miss Lioness that she was distracted from the moment they almost kissed.

**A first kiss in a movie theater actually didn't sound so bad.**

“Do you like our date today?”

“Just watching a movie together counts as a date?”

“Yes, any time we spend together can be counted as a date.”

“Then I'll let you choose our next date, Soul.”

“Come to my house tomorrow.”

“Is this a date or a trap?”

“What do you think? I'm inviting you over tomorrow, and my mom won't be home either.”

“Definitely a trap!” Renita crossed her arms and pretended to be extremely suspicious.

However, the truth was that she was not bothered by Miss Architect's invitation at all. Her mother and Auntie Tye had planned to go to karaoke tomorrow with the friends they met at the meditation retreat last time. They formed a squad of elderly people. She was glad that Auntie Tye took her mother to socialize a bit, rather than shut herself at home in boredom.

“We might be dating, but if you try something, I'll fight back.”

“You think you could fight me? I'm a lioness.”

“You're still trying to make fun of me?”

“I'll get you!”

After they had been dating for a while, she noticed the name the lioness had saved her under in her phone contacts: Bunhead Amuleta Doll. She was upset and didn't talk to Tantiya for a while after seeing it. Miss Architect had to let her edit her contact name. So she changed it to 'Xinxin' followed by a yellow heart. The older woman asked her what she saved her contact

as. She couldn't hide it in time when Miss Lioness called her on the phone and saw it. Therefore, she had to give her a full explanation about the origins of the name. It made the woman laugh with delight until her stomach ached because Renita saw her as a player.

As for her phone, the architect's name was now saved as 'Soul' followed by every single color of heart emojis, which she didn't know why the woman felt the need to win over her single yellow heart emoji. Still, Tantiya told her not to change it, so she just let it stay like that.

"Well, I don't know what made you see me like that."

"You are sly. And good at flirting too."

"I'm good at flirting?"

"You don't know it? That means you are definitely flirting with every girl."

"Yeah, quite a few. A couple of them, actually."

"See?"

"There's the Feng Shui master, Renita, and there's also Xinxin."

Everyone Tantiya mentioned was her. If there was only her from the beginning, why did she have to beat around the bush, making her overthink just to end it so sneakily? Renita was definitely not flustered or swooned by this shallow trick and the sweet words from Miss Lioness. She would not give her favorable points as well.

"Go flirt somewhere else!"

"You like to bully me when you're embarrassed, you know?"

"Who's embarrassed? I'm not. Don't talk nonsense, Soul."

"Then don't avoid me. Want to do a staring contest with me?"

"Bring it on. I will definitely win."

Renita didn't have to compete to know she would lose. But this time, no matter how flush her face would be, she wouldn't give in easily and let Miss Lioness be so smug. Renita deliberately moved her face and body closer to the woman in front of her and stared at her intently without blinking.

She was so determined with the competition that she didn't realize she was the one moving too close to Tantiya. So close that Miss Architect had to turn away with a blushed face instead. And she noticed that the older woman secretly swallowed, at a loss for composure.

“Among all the rules you came up with, I think this one was the hardest. The one that said we can't kiss.”

*Yeah, how about we just cancel that one? Because it's difficult for me as well...*

---

Tantiya checked the place thoroughly. Today, she planned to surprise Renita by inviting her to have dinner at her house. And then there was another small surprise: she was planning to ask her to consider taking their relationship to the next stage, even though it had only been two weeks, not ten years yet. If the girl rejected, Tantiya would wait for another chance.

To be honest, it was her mother's idea. She suggested that, as the older person in the relationship, Tantiya should give a clear label to their relationship. Even though she didn't tell her mom that the two of them were in a situationship as she promised the younger woman, her mother saw through it and told her that Auntie Ping knew too.



They observed how the two of them were behaving, how Tantiya often picked the girl up at her place, and how they texted and called each other before bed every night. What they had was way more than their 'situationship' status.

She had her first love in the past. Tantiya admitted that many things at that time still couldn't compete with this moment.

A teenage puppy love and a serious, committed love as an adult, where she wanted to use both emotions and reason to give this love her best as much as she could give to her significant other. Even though Renita wasn't her first love, she wanted the girl to be her last.

"She's here? Good thing I prepared it ahead of time."

The talented architect sighed with relief because she finished almost half an hour before the meet-up time. Hearing the doorbell ringing made her both excited and enthusiastic.

Tantiya checked her appearance a bit before rushing in and out between the kitchen, the dining area, and inside the house where she arranged a surprise. Then, she headed out to her significant other with a pounding heart.

---

"Were you excited? Why are you here early?"

But it's not her Xinxin who appeared in front of her.

"You really still live in the same house, Soul. It's been ten years since we last saw each other."

"What are you doing here?"

"I missed you."

"I came back as promised, Soul."

## Chapter 14

### Should we give us a break?

“Auntie, can you park here for a second?”

“But we’re not at the destination yet.”

“I know, park on the side for a moment. I’ll pay you extra for the time.”

Renita informed the driver she had called to pick her up from her home to the architect’s house as planned. She was the one who said that she didn’t want the soul to drive back and forth. She told Miss Lioness not to worry about her because she always requested a female driver for safety when traveling alone since before they started dating and before she had a special someone picking her up whenever she had the chance.

But when it was less than thirty meters to the destination, she noticed Miss Architect walking out of the house, standing by the fence, and stopping to talk to someone.

The other person’s face was obscured from the car, but judging by their height, which was about the same as the woman’s, it couldn’t be Mim. The woman had a more athletic figure and was a bit taller than Tantiya. If it wasn’t the interior designer, who else would come to the lioness’s place on weekends? Her clients wouldn’t be rude enough to disturb her at home on her off-hours.

Now she was even more confident that the person was definitely not a client, from the moment the woman leaned in to embrace Miss Architect while she remained frozen in place.

When Miss Architect came to her senses, she moved away from the intimacy that was more than a bit appropriate. She probably didn't notice that she, her date, had seen everything with her own eyes. Everything, including when that woman walked past the taxi that was parked on the side of the road. Her face was clearly visible, and Renita saw how Miss Lioness's gaze followed the person's back with much remorse.

"Can we make a turn? Can you please send me back to the house where you picked me up, Auntie?"

"I can't. You have to call for a new ride. I'm already booked for the next customer."

"Then please drop me off a hundred meters past that house. I'll walk back by myself."

The beautiful woman spoke to the driver, distracted, as if she had a lot on her mind. Her enthusiasm seemed to decrease after seeing the uninvited guest. Renita took out two hundred banknotes and handed them to the driver, shaking her head to deny the change as a fee for taking up Auntie's time. She stepped out of the car and sighed tiredly, grounding herself from the confusion for a moment before letting out a natural-looking smile to hide her worries.

*It's probably nothing. It might just be a misunderstanding.'*

"Xinxin."

"Soul, what are you doing? You took a while to open the door."

"If you're curious, then come and see for yourself."

Tantiya revealed a wide smile that looked like she was pretending to be bright and cheerful because she didn't want to overthink the unexpected situation that had occurred a while before Renita's arrival.

Good thing her date didn't arrive ahead of time, or she would have had to be in an uneasy situation earlier. She was relieved she could successfully send the unexpected guest off, so they wouldn't cause problems or misunderstandings between Tantiya and her date.

"Wow, you really like preparing a partner?"

"Yeah"

"Soul?"

"Yes?"

"Where did your mind go? You didn't get my joke at all. Usually you would say, 'It's present, not partner.'"

"Are you surprised, Xinxin?"

"Yeah, coming to your house today is full of surprises." —

Renita responded in a calm voice because she could sense the tension in Miss Architect's body language and expressions. They had been in this situationship for a couple of weeks now, so it was natural that they knew each other better than before when they weren't anything to each other.

She could feel it from the first moment she saw Miss Lioness's expression—the older woman seemed troubled by something. It wasn't difficult to guess that it probably had something to do with the woman who made her feel uneasy and uncomfortable by accidentally witnessing an upsetting scene. But she wouldn't bring it up first because she wanted to wait for the woman who said she was important to her to tell her herself.

"I prepared everything myself. Do you like it, Xinxin?"

"Of course. I like it. You took the time to prepare it for me."

Flowers were carefully arranged in a vase in a corner. It made today seem more special than any other day she had come over to this house. There were many dishes arranged on the table; they all seemed to be special treats. Above all, hearing that Miss Architect prepared everything herself touched Renita. It showed how much she cared for her.

“What’s the occasion?”

“Hm?”

“I’m asking, what is the occasion that made you prepare this surprise for me?”

“I just want to treat you.”

“Is that all?”

“Hm, yeah. Come on, let’s eat. All of the dishes are your favorite.”

**A surprise on top of another surprise felt like this, huh...**



“Xinxin, how are you? Everything went well?”

“I’m really tired, Mama.”

“Was Soul so sweet to you that my daughter has already given in?”

Yes, Miss Architect was as sweet to her as she had been since the day they agreed on their situationship. But today, Renita felt some distance that suddenly appeared between them—a feeling she wasn't able to put into words but her heart absolutely felt that there must've been an issue, an issue Miss Lioness didn't think of telling her significant other about.

“Let me stay like this.”

They said that when you love, you would suffer, and both feelings came in pairs. But now she had not gotten to know love that well yet. She had already learned about suffering just by letting herself like someone. All these times that they'd known each other, since the beginning when they were rivals, arguing at every turn, there was never a meal they shared that made Renita as uneasy and anxious as the latest meal they had together.

“Are you dating Soul now?”

“Not yet. We're not official yet.”

“Oh, did you reject her?”

“I didn't, Mama.”

---

Renita shook her head, still not letting her mom pull away from her embrace. The two of them stayed in silence for a while longer until Renita felt better. She moved away from the hug and told her mom about what happened today. She left out some parts that could cause problems.

“I didn't reject her, but Soul hasn't asked me to be her girlfriend today.”

“What? Then why did Miss Tye tell me she would?”

“Maybe Auntie Tye misunderstood? But I think it's for the best. It might be too soon to go official.”

“But this morning, when I slipped it to you, you seemed ready, didn't you?”

“I've changed my mind, Mama.”

This morning, she was both embarrassed and happy, as if her heart was about to pound out of her chest when she overheard her mother's call with Auntie Tye, who mentioned that she and Miss Architect would head out somewhere so they could have some time in private.

When her mama hung up the phone and turned to see that she had heard everything, she spilled the tea that Auntie Tye had told her Soul intended to ask her to be her girlfriend today. Mama revealed that she already knew for a while that the two of them were becoming a thing.

How excited had she been? —Oh, she put in more effort in getting dressed. She wanted to look good on the memorable day. It would be great if a year or many years from now, this date today would be their anniversary. On the way from her own house to Miss Architect's place, her mind was distracted and absent. She spent time smiling to herself, rehearsing how she would say yes.

But all that excitement turned into the most ridiculous thought in the world. It was as if she was imagining things too far ahead of herself when, in actuality, there were no surprises except for a quiet and simple meal.

"Maybe I need more time to think about my relationship with Soul."

"You haven't asked her out yet? What's going on, Soul? I thought I'd come back to good news about you and little Xinxin."

"I'm sorry, Mom. When the time came, I couldn't get the words out."

"Soul, what is it that you hesitate about? You seemed really confident this morning."

"I don't want her to think that it's too fast, Mom. Xinxin has never dated anyone before. I don't want to make her uncomfortable or for her to think I'm pushing her."

"Well, things like this really depend on you and Xinxin. No matter how delighted me and Ping are or how much we want to entrust you two to care for each other, if both of you are not ready, then just let it be. It's not like I could ask Xinxin to get together with you. The one who has to take responsibility for things properly here is you."

"I know. I want a little more time to take care of things. And I won't make the same mistake as today again."

Tantiya looked at her mother, who was staring at her with disappointment. She didn't seem angry that her daughter was no good and couldn't pull off a proper surprise.

Her mother left to give her the privacy of being alone again. She knew that today, she had also disappointed her significant other, Renita, apart from her mother and Auntie Ping, by not being herself because she couldn't hide her worries well enough.

She was so distracted that she didn't pay much attention to their time together today as she should have. Because Tantiya knew that she was not ready to say those words at this time, she decided to waste this opportunity. She wanted to say it when she was most ready.

*"If I'm done sorting everything out, I'll hurry and ask you to be my girlfriend."*



"What's up, Miss No-Longer-Single? You have time for friends now?"

"We're not official yet, just getting to know each other more."

"Then why do you take so long to get to know each other? If you like her, go ahead and date her so you don't waste time."

"Maybe I'm lucky, Lada, that I didn't make hasty decisions."

"Did you guys have a fight?"

Renita shook her head, signaling that she didn't have a fight with Miss Architect because their relationship remained the same. As for the word "same" here, she didn't know whether their relationship could still progress or if it would be stuck in the same place, never able to move on again.

Since last weekend when she shared a meal with Tantiya at home and encountered surprise after surprise, there still wasn't any explanation from the older woman about the stranger whose name she didn't even know. But she could guess what kind of relationship the person had with her significant other.

"Then why do you look so grumpy? You seem to be in a bad mood."

"The other day, I saw Soul's ex-girlfriend at her house."

"Wait, how did you know Miss Architect's ex-girlfriend? You started seeing each other not long ago. And you told me that she broke up with her girlfriend a very long time ago, right?"

"I found out by chance."

"Really? What a precise chance."

"Okay, I admit that I want to know about the person I'm seeing's history. I found a photo in Soul's desk drawer one day. I was looking for something that Soul asked me to pick up, so I went to look for it. But then I found a picture of her and this woman. Even though her face has changed somewhat from when they were teens, I'm sure it's the same person."

"If so, then what? Or are you afraid that the old flame between Miss Architect and her ex-girlfriend would rekindle?"

"It's possible, isn't it, Lada? Between an unforgettable first love and a person she's just starting to see like me, it won't be hard for her to choose."

"Don't just assume a decision in her place. You are the one currently seeing her, which means you are her present love. Why should you be so afraid of someone from her past? If their past was that good, Miss Architect wouldn't have started over in the present."

That's right. A person who had never been in a relationship and had never been in love like her might be too sensitive about something like this. It might be as Lada, a person who had experience with love before, reminded her.

Instead of overthinking, worrying about it, and getting agitated alone, she could just have a heart-to-heart talk with Miss Lioness and get over it. Let the woman choose between her and the ex-girlfriend!

"Aunt Ping's little Xinxin also has a possessive side, huh?"

"What, I'm not possessive at all. I just feel uneasy."

"Or should I say it's jealousy? If your Miss Architect finds out, I guarantee that she wouldn't stop grinning. You should agree to be her girlfriend already if you are going to be this jealous. Don't be afraid or paranoid about that ex. Shouldn't you be more concerned with the present? That someone will snatch your architect away?"

"Don't add fuel to this, will you, Lada?!"

"You told me how your clients often flirt with you. You think Miss Architect never experienced something like that?"

**No, she absolutely would not allow anyone to flirt with Miss Lioness!**

"You can go back first, Oyl. I have an appointment later."

"Got it. I'll take the documents to Mim at the office and then I'll go home."

Today, they had an appointment with a client at a mall, so Tantiya and Oyl came out for work in the afternoon. They had just concluded that the clients were satisfied, so Tantiya allowed her junior to return to the office before her.

She had an important appointment after this that she needed to get over with. If she hadn't agreed to it, that person might have visited her house at any time.

"Yumi."

"Soul, I thought you wouldn't come to see me."

Her childhood first love greeted her cheerfully. Yumi moved closer to touch her arm, but Tantiya immediately moved her wrist away, as it wouldn't be appropriate. Their status as girlfriends had ended ten years ago. The past, which had faded with time, had no effect on the present where they all grew up on their own different paths they chose a long time ago.

"If you have something important to say, just say it. I don't have much time."

"Can we talk at your house? You didn't have to meet up somewhere else. I missed Mommy Tye. How is she? I really missed her cooking. I haven't found anyone who cooks better than her."

"She's fine, but it would be better if she didn't have to see you, Yumi."

"Is Mommy Tye still angry at me? You too, right?"

"No, it has been ten years. I already let go of the past."

"I'm moving to Bangkok now, you know."

"What about your girlfriend in Chiang Mai?"

"It's been years since we broke up. After breaking up, I didn't see anyone. So I figured there was no reason for me to stay there. It'd be better to find something to do here. So, I'm renting a condo right now."

"Is that all you want to say to me?"

"Why are so cold, Soul? We might have broken up, but don't act like you don't love me, okay? You said you would love me more than anyone. You said you wouldn't love anyone else."

"Things changed. I have someone important I care about, that I want to be committed to. I only have her."

Tantiya said firmly, thinking that this truth would make her ex give up on reviving the old flame now when it was clearly too late. It would be impossible because she had someone now who she wanted to take care of—a special person with a bun.

"Isn't it a little too cruel? You pick someone who looks like me as a replacement for me whom you never forget."

"What are you talking about?"

"I saw you and that girl at a mall. I didn't say hi because I wanted to observe you two. You know, when you are with her, you don't seem half as happy as you did when you were with me. You would know I'm not lying if you stop fooling yourself. You just date someone so you won't feel so lonely."

"I don't care if you like her now. Just let the girl who's not the one for you go and give me a chance to start over with you. I know now how much your love means to me. I will not hurt you again. I promise."

Because you can't compare someone you like with someone you love...

"What a pity. Mim shouldn't have rushed back first; she missed the tea."

Oyl shook his head lightly, his mood spoiled. He wanted to spill this tea he got with someone so badly. Lately, he had been suspicious of the skilled architect's behavior. He figured she must be seeing someone, but he couldn't guess who it was. Until today, he had the opportunity to accompany her for work, then he got the answer he had been wondering about for a long time.

His senior architect and a good-looking woman met up, holding hands as if they were more than friends. A person with good sight like him happened to see it, so he secretly took a photo for his senior interior designer, who said he was being ridiculous for trying to catch Soul's secret. With this, his senior could never deny the claim; she would have to confess that she has a pretty girlfriend.

"Oyl, there you are."

"Miss Xinxin, how did you get here?"

"Is Sou... is Miss Architect here? I want to see her."

“She’s not coming back to the office today.”

“Oh, is she out for work?”

Normally, Miss Lioness would always report to her wherever she went. Today, the older woman didn’t send her any text informing her that she would be seeing clients anywhere. So Renita was very confident she would see her at her office.

Yesterday, she talked to Lada and realized there was no need for her to overthink it on her own and hurt herself. So today, she decided to see Tantiya in the middle of the week, to talk and clear their misunderstandings.

The real Renita must be ready to face every problem, not being dramatic, overthinking, and getting depressed alone. It was like she believed that, if it would be over, even if it hurts, she would endure the pain. It would still be better than keeping it all in her head and hurting her own heart without knowing the truth.

**“Yeah, Soul has a date with a gorgeous woman.”**

“I’m sorry?”

“I know you won’t believe my words just like Mim. But this time I have pictures as proof.”

“She doesn’t look like the type, but it’s always the quiet ones, huh. Miss Lioness was quite cruel to her, wasn’t she...”

Growing up to the age of twenty-five where she was no longer a little child, Renita never thought that she would have to experience the feeling called heartbreak, with the first love that caused her this much pain. She wanted to be rational over emotions and spontaneous feelings to make decisions. Even so, she wanted to follow Lada’s advice that she should ask her date directly about the ex-girlfriend she ran into several days ago. Tantiya had so many opportunities but didn’t bring it up to her at all.

As someone who was seeing the architect, shouldn't she have the right to know why Miss Lioness's ex-girlfriend came back into her life even though she told her they broke up a decade ago? Or like today, if she didn't find out from Oyl, Miss Architect would probably not tell her that she met up with her ex-girlfriend, or that they held hands in a restaurant on a cute date.

At this point, she had nothing more to ask. She didn't want to listen to the explanation that would probably be full of excuses, and she didn't want to give that person a chance or bring herself to see her right now, so she decided to get on a bus aimlessly in front of Miss Architect's office. She brought herself to sit in a corner almost at the back. She buried her face in her own hands, hiding her own tears, trying to suppress her sobbing so as not to make the other passengers think of her as a weirdo who sulked on a commuter bus. But her tears wouldn't stop falling; even the wind blown at her face made her sob even harder.

She was just Miss Architect's situationship; how could she compete with someone she loved? She had already lost, lost before she even started the competition. She would lose in a way that even if Mama or Lada comforted her or took her side, even if Auntie Tye chose to root for her over Tantiya's ex-girlfriend, she would still lose because she wasn't the one in Miss Lioness's heart.

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If Miss Lioness really chose her, then she would have asked her out since the day she prepared that surprise. They would've been girlfriends by now, not being so distant from each other, full of misunderstandings. Miss Architect wouldn't have disappeared even though she promised to take care of her. It seemed that everything was a lie.

"Where are you getting off? This is almost the end of the route. The next stop is already the bus terminal."

Now, she was lost in an unknown place. And the heart that was drifting with her first love must return to the painful truth. The truth that Soul didn't love her at all...

[Have you found her, Soul?]

“I haven’t found her, Auntie. I tried driving everywhere that I think she could be. But I couldn’t find Xinxin.”

[I can’t reach Xinxin’s mobile too. I don’t have a good feeling about this.]

“Please calm down, Auntie Ping. I will find her.”

She received a call from Auntie Ping around 10 p.m. that Renita hadn’t come back home yet. Auntie Ping said that the younger woman never came home this late without informing her. She never turned off her phone and disappeared, making everyone worried and distraught like this.

The truth was that recently, Renita took longer to reply to her texts and would reply only before she went to bed. So Tantiya could only text her and wait for the girl to reply since she already saw it was marked as read. Then Auntie Ping called, making her so anxious that she had to drive out to find the missing person.

“Where are you? Answer the phone. Your mama and I are worried to death.”

Tantiya said in a frantic and anxious voice, alternating between trying to call the Feng Shui master’s number, who may have turned off her phone or her phone’s battery had run out, and driving back to see Auntie Ping at home again. Likewise, her mom took Auntie Ping out driving to look for Renita. A moment ago, she tried calling Lady Wan to ask for help. Lady



promised to help ask her friend who was a police officer a favor to find Renita if they were unable to find her soon.

“Wait, there’s a taxi parked in front of the house.”

Feeling stressed out, she hurriedly parked her car on the side of the road after she turned into the lane where Auntie Ping’s house was and saw a taxi parked in front of the fence. The girl, who everyone was looking for, slowly stepped down from the backseat of the taxi. Meanwhile, Tantiya rushed out of her car and immediately approached her.

“Xinxin! Where have you been? Me and everyone are really worried. Auntie Ping was so upset that you disappeared without calling her. And your phone was turned off.”

Renita chose to keep her head down from the person who anxiously reproached her the moment they met several days after the day that the surprise failed. She wanted to hide the tears that had just dried up, and she didn’t want Miss Architect to see her unsightly swollen eyes.

She didn’t want the older woman to know that she was the cause of the tears she shed. She didn’t want her to know that the moment she could stop crying, her eyes still watered the whole way in the taxi, to the point that she didn’t realize when her phone’s battery ran out. She completely forgot to tell her mama that she was lost so far away that it took her a long time to return to the house.

“Xinxin, are you listening to me? I’m talking to you.”

“Enough! I’m tired.”

“And I’m not? Aren’t Auntie Ping and my mom tired too? Everyone is tired because they have to look for you, Xinxin.”

“If you’re tired, then stop messing with me.”

“What are you talking about? I was worried, very worried about you. You’re a grown-up. Why do you think it’s okay to act irresponsibly like a

child? You caused a lot of trouble for others. Don't do this again just because you want some attention."

Even though she didn't want to scold someone who was very important to her, Tantiya had to be serious about what just happened; she had to let the girl know the consequences of her actions. She made Auntie Ping so distressed that she couldn't sit still. And she made her worried like crazy when she couldn't find her.

"Stop concerning yourself with me then. So you won't be tired."

"Don't mock me, Xinxin."

"I ruined your happy day today, didn't I?"

"Yes you did —today was terrible."

"Then we should end this, Soul. I don't want this relationship anymore."

Even though she was the one who brought it up because she didn't want to hear it from the older woman, even though she thought she could take it, she still ran into her house to hide from all this chaos after she said it.

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Her tears still kept streaming down... she was unable to hold in her weakness any longer.

# Chapter 15

## **The Distance between our Un-Situationship**

"Soul, you should go home for now."

"Auntie Ping, I have to clear things up with Xinxin first."

"Not now, dear. I know Xinxin well. Let her feel better first, then you can talk, alright?"

"But I'm worried about Xinxin."

"I will take care of her. Don't worry, dear."

The elder woman asked her to go home first and promised to take care of Renita after hearing the loud argument in front of her house. The scene earlier unfolded right in front of her mother and Auntie Ping's eyes, who followed her.

Though they didn't arrive in time to hear the whole conversation, they could immediately tell that the two of them were arguing from the tension. Tantiya wanted to follow the younger woman to explain everything and have a talk about what was on their minds, but she was stopped by Auntie Ping.

She had to comply with Auntie Ping's request, even though her heart was as restless and aching as Renita's. She noticed the younger woman's tears falling before the girl ran into the house, and she could hear how upset she was when she told her that she wanted to end their relationship.

Renita didn't want to continue their relationship anymore...

She felt a shock wave of numbness all over her face and body. It was as if her brain drifted off for a moment, the same as her heart that feared parting. So she stood there, stunned. She couldn't find her words; she lost her chance to tell Renita that she didn't agree with her decision.

"Let's go back home, Soul. Listen to Ping."

"I apologize, Auntie Ping, for making her cry. I was angry, so I scolded her harshly."

"It's okay, I know you meant well. But you should go back to rest first, Soul. I will talk to Xinxin myself."

The woman said goodbye and apologized to Renita's mother at the same time. Now that she had come to her senses again, Tantiya also admitted her fault for being ill-tempered and venting her emotions on the girl. —

Her flaw was that she was hot-headed, and she was worried sick about her significant other. She accidentally scolded Renita, even though she should have asked calmly with concern, asking her what happened and listening to her reasons first. But she made a mistake and ruined everything.

I'm so sorry, Xinxin...

"Xinxin, can you open the door for mama?"

"I want to be alone right now."

"I don't want you to be sad all alone. If you can't take it or have any problems, come give mama a hug. Xin, don't forget that you are not alone. You will always have me."

"Mama.. Sob! Sob!"

Renita walked and opened her bedroom door from where she had initially collapsed and sobbed, as she no longer intended to hide her sorrow.

At first, she didn't want her mama to see how weak she was, but when she heard her mama's voice, she wanted to be comforted. So she decided to get up and open the door, leaning closer to hug her mama, who hugged her back to comfort her without asking or pushing for an explanation as to what happened today. Instead, her mama chose to give her warmth and comfort.

This kind of love was the real unconditional love—mama's love for her was great and immense, not like the hollow love Miss Lioness had for her. A fool like her had never known what love was and got lost in fantasies, indulging in an imagination of the two of them on her own. In the end, she was just a prey who was left with heartache...

"They're so swollen. Are these eyes or lemons?"

The beautiful woman, who couldn't be her most beautiful self today, stared at her puffy eyes in the mirror and sighed wearily. In this condition, no matter how much makeup she puts on, it probably won't help cover up the traces of sorrow. That's why Renita let it go and came up with an excuse in case she was asked about them. A heartbreak wouldn't kill her.

She was weak for today. Tomorrow, she will be stronger and forget about her relationship with someone she didn't want to think about. If she still

couldn't do it tomorrow, then she might succeed the day after if she tried hard enough. She didn't want to be a bad thing that tainted the architect's life, and she didn't want to hurt herself anymore. So she decided to end their relationship from here on.

"Keep smiling, this too shall pass, Xin."

Even if she didn't feel like it, she had to force a smile to face reality. Renita gathered up her remaining positive energy and smiled gently at the mirror.

She stepped out of the bedroom to have breakfast before going out to meet her clients according to her schedule. No matter how heartbroken she was, she wouldn't let it affect her work.

"What do we have this morning, mama?"

"Will you be able to work today? If you can't, it might be a good idea to rest for a day."

"It's fine. I don't want to reschedule my clients." Renita responded smoothly and tried to act normal.

Last night, her mother only comforted her to stop crying, and she didn't ask a word. And today, her mama didn't bring up yesterday's matter, nor did she scold her for coming home late. So Renita let it slide, even though she felt a little hurt that the architect scolded her so furiously while her own mama had not even said a single word.

"Suit yourself, Xin. Oh, whose car is here at our house so early in the morning?"

"Mama, I don't want to see her."

"You don't want to see Soul, Xin?"

"Yes, please help me, mama. I'm not ready to meet her just yet."

Mama Ping nodded and did as her daughter requested, although she was a little skeptical. Renita was usually not a person who ran away from her problems, and she did not get angry easily.

Her daughter was optimistic and cheerful. The fact that she avoided talking about the skilled architect meant that there must be other problems between them apart from last night's quarrel, which she witnessed by chance.

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[Soal: Xinxin, should I pick you up this evening? Please answer me. I want to apologize for last night.]

[Soul: I was an idiot. I was very worried, so I scolded you without thinking. Forgive me, please.]

Tantiya picked up her phone and stared at the texts without a response from the girl with dismay. Since last night until this morning, the messages had not been marked as read.

When she hurriedly stopped by Renita and Auntie Ping's house early in the morning, she returned empty-handed. She was able to make it in time

before the skilled Feng Shui master left the house, but Auntie Ping said that Renita still wasn't ready to see or talk to her.

So she had to retreat and head to work first because she knew that even if she stubbornly waited in front of the house all day, the stubborn girl, who always stood her ground, would never show her face.

"Soul, I'm so sorry. It's all my fault. Please don't be mad at me. I'm an idiot."

"What's the matter, Mim? What are you apologizing to me for?"

"Apologizing isn't enough, Soul. Oyl caused you trouble. I smacked his head as soon as I heard it. Just an apology is not enough. He should be on his knees begging and apologizing to you."

"What exactly happened, Oyl? Hurry up and explain it." The skilled architect asked her junior coordinator, Oyl, who hurriedly apologized to her from the moment he walked into the office before he even sat down in his seat.

She still hadn't caught up with the situation, whether it was work or something big that made the junior apologize profusely and made Mim look upset, as if she was angry for her.

"Yesterday, I took a photo of you with a woman at the mall. I was going to show it to Mim as proof that you have a girlfriend. But when I returned, I didn't see Mim and ran into Miss Xinxin, who was stopping by to see you, so I..."

"Oyl! Tell me everything you said to Xinxin."

"Yesterday, Miss Xinxin came to see you, but you weren't here. So I was feeling cheeky and showed the picture of you and that woman to her, telling her you were on a date. I just found out from Mim that both of you is in mutual understanding and currently in situationship."

"What?"



"No wonder why Miss Xinxin didn't say a word yesterday. She just walked away and got on a bus."

"You can stay here as long as you want, Xin. Make yourself at home."

"Thanks, Lada, but I won't be bothering you for long."

"I will make you stay for a long time so that you don't have to meet the cruel architect again."

"Forget about her."

"Honestly, I'm disappointed. I was rooting for her real good. If I knew that she would break our little Xinxin's heart like this, I wouldn't have told you to let her in. I should've locked your heart away."

"Even if you locked me up, you wouldn't be able to stop me. My heart already let her in. That's why I'm hurt like this."

Matters of the heart couldn't be easily controlled—it wasn't as simple as forbidding it and being done with it. It wasn't something everyone could resist. Otherwise, she wouldn't have liked Miss Lioness so much to the point that she almost became her girlfriend.

If they had really become girlfriends and she later found out the truth—that Tantiya's old flame was still important to her or that she still couldn't forget her first love—it would've been a hundred times more painful than this.

"Do you love her?"

"I don't want to admit it, but I can't lie to myself. I love her."

And it was also because of love that she decided to end everything simply like this. She didn't want to be a substitute or a side piece in anyone's relationship. It was a situation she had been afraid of all her life.

Just like her, her mama was the mogul's mistress, who already had a lawful wife back at home. It had been her great fear, making her refuse to be involved in love or even take an interest in it. But in the end, love ran into her until she couldn't escape, as Lada had warned.

Still, if she loved Miss Architect but the woman loved someone else, she wouldn't have selfishly stayed in that relationship. She would choose to endure the pain just to end it.

She wouldn't stay to be one of the two options for her since the day Tantiya hesitated to choose her as the first choice. If she had ended it the day she witnessed the surprise upon surprise, maybe she wouldn't be this hurt.

"If you love her, then what should we do? Or do you want to try giving her another chance?" — — — — —

"No, I'm done with my first love. I would probably be able to stop it. If I could love her, then I could stop too."

"Come here and give me a hug."

"I don't want anything to do with love again in this lifetime."

"Xinxin didn't tell you anything, Auntie Ping?"

"No, she didn't tell me anything. She just came to ask permission from me to stay with a friend temporarily."

"I think she doesn't want to see me; that's why she did that. I did her so wrong, Auntie. I made her sad. I upset her without realizing it at all."

Mama Ping looked at the architect with sympathy. But as a mother, no matter how much she adored Tantiya, she had to respect her daughter's decision as much as possible. So she didn't push it and waited for Renita to feel comfortable enough to talk. But it turned out that the person who told her everything was the other girl in the situation.

"Please give her some time. If you say it was a misunderstanding, you have to wait for her to calm down first before finding a way to resolve the misunderstanding. Xinxin is a calm person. It's not often that I see her acting impulsive. But she will be firm in her decision when she needs to be, and it will be difficult to change her mind."

Then when she said they were over...

*Was there no way to change it and continue with their relationship?*

"Stay strong. Don't die just yet."

It wasn't just the golden pothos that withered. The architect's heart also withered like a tree without water.

Two weeks had passed since the incident, and she became someone who was good at talking to herself. She regularly reported everything that went on in her daily life and did everything as before, or maybe even more than when she was in a situationship with the pretty Feng Shui master.

She texted Renita every morning when she woke up; she texted her before bed every night; and she updated her on how she was taking care of her health, eating her meals on time, not overworking, and sleeping six hours every day without missing a beat. Letting the younger woman know that she was still as behaved as she was with Renita by her side and cared for her.

Like right now, when she took a picture of a pot of golden pothos on her work desk, which she deliberately framed with the heart-shaped lamp that the other woman took her to buy, she sent the update to her significant other, who had not even read or responded to the texts. But she knew that troublesome Feng Shui master had been reading through it from outside the chatbox.

**"Two weeks felt like two years. I miss you, Xinxin."**

Tantiya threw herself onto the wide bed after her picture received no response from the girl. It was like she, the tree, and the lamp were being ignored. She used to be in a situationship with the girl, now her status was someone who didn't exist for Renita.

It was fine that she had to face the consequences of her actions. Whether it was caused by her ignorance or without her intention, everything had already happened. Both how she scolded the younger woman when the girl disappeared because she was upset about her and her ex, and even the fact that Oyl still kept apologizing to her when he knew he was the cause of the problem in their relationship.

Or even the fact that she didn't surprise Renita by asking the girl to be her girlfriend on that well-arranged day because of her anxiousness and

hesitation that occupied her mind.

She found out later from her mom and Auntie Ping that Renita already knew that day that she would surprise her by asking the girl to be her girlfriend. That was why she asked again what occasion was for that made Tantiya prepare everything. But she carelessly threw away the opportunity she had in her hands because of her thoughtlessness. She regretted it now that she hardly had a chance to make amends.

When a kind person became stern, they would be so determined that there was no way to reach or see their face. Just like how she had been stopping by to see Auntie Ping for two weeks now. She went there every day without exception, but she always received the same answer, that Renita hadn't returned from her friend's condo yet and Auntie Ping herself didn't know when she would return home.

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"Would you believe me now if I tell you I love you? You haven't said anything because you can't deny me, right?"

"Are you done speaking yet?" Soul replied.

"What?"

"I asked if you're done yet. If you're done, it's my time to speak to you."

She listened to the words from the person she used to be, without interrupting her. Even though many things Yumi said didn't align with

reality. Because she wanted to know the intention of the person who walked back into her life after ten years out of the blue.

Yumi was someone who easily dumped her during the time she broke down and lost everything after she lost her father. The girl nonchalantly let go of her hand.

And now, when Yumi turned around and couldn't see anyone, she wanted to come back and hold onto the hand she once let go. She wanted to hold Tantiya's hand as her refuge and use the word "love" to convince her to soften up and give her a chance, acting like she was just one of the options that Yumi could return to or throw away at any time because she thought she would always be there for her to take for granted.

Tantiya thought that, if Yumi had come back to her a little sooner, before she met the person who messed up with her heart and added color to her dull life, Yumi might succeed in messing with her heart and swaying her back to her first love again.

She might have succeeded in getting another chance because Tantiya would think that the first love would never be forgotten, still buried inside her heart, no matter how hard she tried, waiting for the day to start over again.

But this time it was all too late.

As she just now understood the truth, a healthy love wasn't about devotion and giving it one-sidedly like what Yumi always told her—that her love must not expect anything in return. But now, she had loved herself and had been loved, and she was cared for. Someone had made her love herself again, made her see her value, and wanted to be good enough every day so she could love and care for the ones who mattered in her life.

"I'm not an option. I'm no longer a substitute or a backup plan."

"Soul! What do you mean? You love me more than anyone, don't you?"

"In the past, you made me misunderstand everything. So I forgot that the person I should love more than anyone is me."

"That's not true."

"There's a woman who told me to love myself. She was the one who cared for me, making me stop neglecting myself and making me want to be a better person every day for her. And she is the person who taught me what love really is, a love that is until the love I've known."

"You're just crazy over her. It's infatuation, not love, Soul."

"Yeah, infatuation isn't love. Just like when I once misunderstood that what we had was love. Yumi, you should stop. We can't start over. Not because I've stopped loving you, but because now, I understand what love is."

"Do you love the girl?"

"I love her."

She loved Renita, the woman who had never made her a second option... And she wanted to be the only person that Renita love.

---

"Miss Soul? Are you listening to what I'm saying?"

"I'm sorry, Lady Wan."

The skilled architect lowered her head and apologized to her important client, admitting her mistake.

During this time, she was quite distracted and sometimes lost focus on her work. But seeing a client like Lady Wan, who she only had memories of related to the troublesome Feng Shui master, her heart was even more troubled, and she couldn't stop thinking about the person she hadn't met in a

while. There was not even a chance to see or hear her voice, let alone explain the truth she wanted to share.

"What's the matter? I have never seen you like this, Miss Soul."

"It was my fault, Lady Wan."

"You've also changed. You're usually more hot-headed than this."

She wanted to change into a new, better person and didn't want to make the same mistake again, as she did when she accidentally lashed out at Renita, causing multiple misunderstandings. The more she thought about it, the more she felt guilty, realizing that the word 'sorry' she texted the girl every day was probably too little and incomparable to her wrongdoings.

"I must've seemed hot-headed in your eyes before, Lady Wan."

"Quite so, but you are good at your work, Miss Soul. I don't mind at all."

"Thank you for your understanding, Lady Wan."

"But you don't seem so energetic. Would it be too much to use the word 'lifeless,' I wonder?"

"Not at all."

"It's not like when you worked with Master Xinxin. When you were together, you two were so adorable that it made me blush. I wanted to have that when I was younger, but my husband passed away too soon. So I have to live alone for a long time."

"I designed the house according to Feng Shui principles. I guarantee that you will definitely meet your soulmate, Lady Wan."

"If my heart could truly be alive again, I will repay you greatly, Miss Soul."

"By the way, have you seen Xinxin lately?"



"Master Xinxin? We haven't been in contact at all since there aren't any new projects yet. Why do you ask about her?"

"I want to see her. But I don't know where I can find her."

She must have been really affected by the girl, that must be why she was here talking about things unrelated to today's work with Lady Wan, the company's VIP client. How lucky she was that Lady Wan didn't complain and seemed to be interested in the topic related to her relationship with Renita over the progress of the house plan she presented.

"If you really want to see her, I can help you."

"Really, Lady Wan?"

"But you have to tell me first. How are things between you and Master Xinxin? I'm not imagining things with how much I am rooting for you two, right?"

"You're rooting for us?"

"Yes, I ship you two. The two of you are my OTP."

The Lady gave an unlimited budget for demolishing a fountain or a house and building a new one. What about a broken ship? Well, if it couldn't be fixed, then just buy a bigger, better one. This time, Captain Lady Wan was all out!

[What do you say, Master Xinxin? Please accept my request to check the location's Feng Shui.]

"How many days do I have to be in Phuket, Lady Wan?"

[One or two days is enough. I'll have my secretary arrange the plane tickets for you. If you agree, then you can take off at any time that is convenient for you.]

"Lady Wan, may I ask who the architect in charge of this project is?" Renita asked carefully, feeling a bit hesitant.

It was as if her thoughts were conflicting with each other in her head. A part of her wanted to accept Lady Wan's job, where the pay was always worthwhile even if she had to travel to another province.

Another part of her, which took longer to contemplate and not accept the job right away, was concerned about the person she would have to work with. She was afraid that it would be the person she had been avoiding for a while until she felt better now at this point.

[It hasn't been specified yet. I'm asking you first. If you agree to take the job, I will ask Mr. Boss to find an architect for me.]

"I will accept this job, Lady Wan. But there is one condition."

[Whatever you want, Master Xinxin.]

"I am not comfortable working with Miss Tantiya. If you hire me, then please hire another architect for this job. If it is Miss Tantiya, I will have to refuse this job."

[No problem, Master Xinxin. I will not hire Miss Soul as my architect.]

"Thank you. If you promise, then I'll accept the job."

[My secretary will handle the remaining details. See you soon, Master Xinxin.]

The beautiful woman stared at the mobile phone screen that went off after Lady Wan hung up the phone. And it would probably be Miss Pallin who would coordinate with her later.

Lada looked away from her notebook and watched her curiously, probably because she heard the name of the person Renita didn't want to talk about and that Lada tried not to mention the two weeks she came to stay with her.

"I heard you are going to Phuket?"

"Yeah, I have work, so I'll take the opportunity to go on a trip as well."

"Good for you. Please stop being so workaholic and get some rest. You've been working hard like you're paying off your debt."

"It's the only way to keep me distracted."

"Ah, I want to go with you. But my company is quite busy. What a pity."

"Let's go to a beach when we're free, then."

"A trip to escape from the heat or from love?"

It had been two weeks, and the wounds from her first heartbreak had started to heal a lot from the first day. An invisible wound like this took time and distance to heal. So she went ahead and made it clear with Lady Wan because she didn't want to get hurt any further if she had to meet someone who she wanted nothing to do with in order to get over her entirely.

"I guess it's a trip to heal my heart."

"I have arrived at the airport, Lady Wan."

Renita contacted Lady Wan, who told her to reach out to the other party's secretary upon arrival at Phuket International Airport. But because she

couldn't reach Miss Pilin's number, she had to disturb Lady Wan, who she knew had arrived a day before and sent a secretary to pick her up at the destination.

[You've arrived, Master Xinxin?]

"Yes, but I haven't seen Miss Pilin at all. I kept calling, but she seemed to have her phone off, so I don't know where she is waiting right now."

[Good grief, I forgot to inform you that I'm not in Phuket with Miss Pilin this time. I'm here with another secretary.]

"Oh, then what is the name of your other secretary? What do they look like? So I can look for them."

The beautiful woman looked around. The airport areas were endless, and she didn't know where to focus because it was filled with unfamiliar faces, not like Miss Pilin, who she had met several times before this. She probably wouldn't be able to find Lady Wan's new secretary without further details.

[My new secretary knows Master Xinxin. Wait for a bit; my secretary will go find you.]

"You want me to wait here? But it's very crowded here; they might not find me."

Lady Wan suddenly hung up the phone even though the two of them had not finished talking. Before she could try calling back, a familiar voice from behind made her shiver even though she hadn't looked back yet. Renita froze, unable to keep her composure though she thought it could just be her delusion.

"Xinxin? Lady Wan sent me to pick you up."

*The number you've dialed cannot be reached at this time.*

Did she just get fooled by Lady Wan, or was this some kind of plan on top of another plan? Why did the Lady suddenly turn off her phone? But Renita didn't find it amusing at all because of Miss Lioness in front of her. It meant

that she had been completely betrayed by the architect and the client she trusted.

"Xinxin, where are you going? The car is parked this way."

"I'm going back. Lady Wan lied to me. I already told her that I don't want to work with you, Miss Architect."

"Lady Wan didn't. This time, I'm not here as an architect."

"What?"

"I came to Phuket as a temporary secretary to Lady Wan. The architect responsible for this job is Shock."

"What kind of joke is this? This isn't funny!"

How could an architect suddenly become Lady Wan's secretary? No reason or excuse could make sense. And since Lady Wan broke her word first, though the older woman was someone she respected, there was no need for her to maintain her manners. She would return from Phuket immediately without worrying about work.

"I'm not having fun. I'm here because I'm worried about you, Xinxin."

"Who asked you to be?"

"No one, I'm just worried about you. Just like how you didn't ask me to miss you...."

**"But I really missed you, my little Xinxin."**

# Chapter 16

## A Second Chance

"Why did you stop?"

"We're here."

Tantiya answered after Renita opened her mouth for the first time since she agreed to come along when Tantiya picked her up at the airport instead of returning to Bangkok immediately as planned. Tantiya knew that even if there were unexpected occurrences or even if Renita wanted to abandon the job, this Feng Shui Master would always take great responsibility for her work.

"Xinxin, you can get off first. I'll grab your luggage from the trunk."

"Don't bother. I can take care of my stuff." Renita replied harshly before getting out of the backseat.

Despite accepting to come along with Lady Wan's temporary secretary, she still couldn't see through the other woman's intentions. They had ended their relationship several weeks ago, so Renita would no longer sit beside Tantiya in the front seat. Instead, as a secretary, Tantiya should assist her as instructed by her boss.

"I want to look after you, Xinxin."

"Give me back my bag!"

"I'll give it back when we make it to the hotel room."

Renita let out a heavy sigh, unable to restrain her irritation after meeting the person she didn't want to have anything to do with. It shook her determination to resolve her feelings...

What was Lady Wan thinking when she planned for her and Miss Architect to meet? She had already intended for everything to end because she knew it was impossible between the two of them. There was no way to move forward with this relationship or to start over.

Moreover, Miss Lioness had chosen her first love. Why would she waste her time and desperately cling to someone she doesn't love in Phuket instead of spending her time with her lover?

"Stop getting on my nerves, or I'll complain to Lady Wan."

"I'm just doing my job; there's nothing wrong with it."

"Don't argue with me about that nonsense, will you."

"I'm just explaining, not arguing."

"But you're doing more than a secretary's job."

"I want to take care of you the best I can, even if it's beyond my duty. I did it from my heart, and no one can stop me, not even you or Lady Wan."

"What heart... You were never sincere with me to begin with." Renita didn't intend to complain about things that had already ended.

But seeing each other like this reminded her of the past and took her back into the slump. Tantiya's sweet words were like poison that could instantly kill her the moment she took it. So, the older woman had no right to call her mean for not believing in her words and actions.

**Let it end with her completely shattered first love.**

"I can explain everything that happened. Would you give me a chance, Xinxin?"

"A chance?"

"I want to explain about that woman."

"It's already too late; I don't want to listen."

"My little xinxin?"

"Nothing is going to change even if I know everything. The thing between us has ended since that day."

Miss Lioness's explanation included her decision that she chose her first love over her. Renita would suffer from the wound that she thought had healed after some time had passed. But the moment they met, she realized she had been fooling herself and had always remained in pain.

**Why couldn't ending feelings for someone be as easy as cutting paper?**

---

"Lada, I'm screwed. I didn't think that a client I trusted would trick me into meeting her. My head is blank right now, what should I do?"

Renita asked her best friend, who just called back in the evening, for advice. After sending several messages, Lada replied that she would call



back immediately when the meeting ended. Several hours had passed since she arrived at this pool villa room in the afternoon.

She locked herself in the room and didn't go out even though the view and atmosphere were attracting her to explore. She was afraid of facing Tantiya, who was staying in the same residence, and didn't want the trip to be even more awkward.

[Do you want to come back now? I can book a flight for tonight.]

"I really want to go back, Lada. But I need to inspect Lady Wan's estate tomorrow. I already accepted my pay. I would get sued for violating the contract if I return."

[So, you need to go inspect the land lot with Miss Architect?]

"Yeah, she keeps using her temporary secretary position as an excuse, and where I'm staying right now is a private pool villa. I haven't seen the other guests or even the staff yet."

[Aw! Did you get tricked? Be careful.]

"Don't joke, Lada, I'm really worried right now." — — —

[I'm not joking. You told me yourself that you already had feelings for her. Even though you guys have been apart for a while, feelings can't be easily severed. Plus, the situation is bringing you two together, alone. You can let her in, but not in a physical sense, or things will be even more difficult.]

"I won't let myself be her prey. Don't worry."

[If you're that confident, don't be afraid and hide, Xin. You did nothing wrong. The one who's at fault is that fickle Miss Architect. If you choose to hide, she'll think that you still have some feelings for her.]

"Then what should I do, Lada?"

[Just confront her, act normal, and repeat to yourself that you no longer have any feelings for her.]

"It won't be as easy as you say, Lada."

After listening to her best friend, who had relationship experience, Renita considered every piece of advice difficult. From pretending to act normal, confronting Tantiya, and repeating to herself that she no longer had any feelings for the Architect, she didn't even know if she could succeed in any of the steps.

**Boom....**

**Boomm...**

When her heart wasn't cooperating nor following her orders.

"How long are you going to follow me?"

"You see me?"

"Of course! You're huge. What makes you think that you can hide well?"

If changing her occupation from Architect to secretary or pretending to be a detective didn't work, Miss Architect should return to her old job. She shouldn't spend her time doing nonsense like following her from twenty steps behind around the private pool villa in the evening.

"I won't bother you, Xinxin. I'll just follow you from afar."

"And why are you following me?"

"Because I'm worried about you."

"Stop repeating those sickening words. It's so fake!"

Tantiya met her glaring eyes when she turned around, arms crossed sternly. There was no hint of the cheerful Xinxin here. Moreover, her words of concern, which used to make the shy girl flustered, only resulted in annoyance. It seemed like Renita didn't believe her words anymore.

"Can we just talk? Just for ten minutes."

"Even ten seconds is too much. I told you there's nothing to talk about."

"I'm just asking for ten minutes to resolve your misunderstanding. And if you're going to be angry after that for another ten years, I'll accept it because at least you'll hear the truth from me."

"You probably made up some lies before you came here. I won't let you fool me for the second time. I don't want to get hurt again."

"Listen, please, I beg you. Then you can judge whether it's true or not."

"If you're going to say something, just do it. Stand back and don't come any closer to me."

The beautiful girl pointed a finger and tilted her head, demanding Miss Lioness to move further back. Otherwise, the other woman would probably think that she could be easily persuaded and go back to the way they were before. If that was what she thought, Tantiya must have been daydreaming because Renita wouldn't let someone who hurt her heart back inside her heart.

"About that woman and me, the one you saw in Oyl's picture..."

"I've changed my mind. I'll only give you ten seconds to explain everything."

"Only ten seconds? How could that be enough to explain everything for you to understand?"

"That's your problem. Ten... Nine... Eight... Seven seconds left."

"Xinxin, this is a little much."

"Seven... Six... Five... Four... Three..."

Was Miss Lioness just going to stand there dumbfounded, speechless, like a coconut tree? Even when Renita already gave her an opportunity to speak. If she really wanted to say something, she could probably say it within those ten seconds. It seemed like Tantiya had no excuse to make, so she chose to keep her silence. Renita thought while pretending to be soft and counted the last three seconds slower.

Gosh! She wouldn't expect anything from this Lioness ever again.

"Two... O..."

**"I love you!"**

"Just a second is enough."

*You were the most gullible person on Earth, Xinxin.*

Instead of running away from the word 'LOVE' that might be Lioness's deceitful trap, Renita's legs walked her back to embrace the person who just confessed her love at the last moment.

Likewise, Tantiya's arms tightly wrapped around her waist, longing and searching for the warm touch no different from the younger woman. As if the two of them missed each other so much they could die.

That was why they kept embracing each other, not wanting to part from the intimacy that they would never get enough of. But in reality, they could not hug each other for eternity, so Renita reluctantly let go, while Tantiya still resisted and refused to release her embrace.

After coming back to her senses, Renita felt the embarrassment, so she raised her hands to push the older woman away. She didn't want to appear vulnerable and admit defeat to this same person.

"Soul, let me go. Do you want to hug me forever?"

"Yes!"

"Let go first so we can talk."

When her first attempt to push away Tantiya's arms went in vain, Renita resorted to Plan B, which was to beg softly in her sweet voice. Unlike the harsh tone she used to put up as a tough act that was not very believable and required a lot of energy. It was all because Renita already fell in love with her. Eventually, the Architect's embrace melted away just like her softened heart, as she shifted to standing face to face.

"What's wrong? Are you crying?"

"I'm so happy. My tears just came out on their own."

"You're a crybaby Lioness. You miss me this much?"

The past three weeks had been tormenting to what extent could be explained by the tears that were lingering at the corner of the Architect's eyes.

As for why Renita was not crying, it was probably because she had cried so much in the past that she had run out of tears. That decision to end their relationship deeply hurt her heart.

---

"I'm sorry, Xinxin, for everything that upset you. I know I did you wrong, and I want to make it right. If you could give me a chance... sob."

"Don't apologize anymore; I don't want to hear it."

Renita reached out to cover Tantiya's mouth just like she used to when she felt embarrassed. She always tried to stop the older woman's sweet words. But now, she chose to silence the woman because she didn't want to hear apologies from the one she loved anymore.

The Architect's countless apologies that had been sent to her in the past week, although she left them unread, each apology made her less mad by a percent every day, and her heart softened a bit day by day, even though they hadn't seen each other.

That couldn't be compared to how they were together right now. Renita thought she did her best to stop herself from following her desire to jump right into the other's embrace the moment they met at the airport. Half a day of acting tough was difficult just like how she failed to get over her own feelings. What is this called?

"Can you say you love me again? I want to hear that word more than an apology."

"I love you. I love you so much, Xinxin."

"Can you make it the loudest ever?"

**"I love you the most!"**

"Wow! You actually did it. How gullible."

"How about you, Xinxin, do you love me?"

"I love you the most, Soul." So much that she shouted her confession much louder than ever.

---

"So you knew beforehand that Soul would follow me to Phuket, Mama?"

[Soul asked my permission and promised to take care of you, dear.]

"So it was just me who didn't know a thing."

Renita pouted after everything was resolved, and she just found out that her mama knew that Miss Lioness intended to clear things up with her. Even though Tantiya secretly planned this trip, she would partially forgive her since the permission had been granted by her mother.

[Now that you guys have cleared up all misunderstanding, have fun. Mama wants to see you happy rather than sad.]

"Thank you, Mama. From now on, I will be much happier."

Because she realized what and where her happiness was. In the past, she had been deluding herself that she couldn't handle it, but Renita admitted that her decision to end their relationship had tormented her melancholic heart...

Finally, her happiness had returned, back by her side.

"You checked out my back with that look because my back looks sexy and huggable, isn't it?"

"What?! Don't be silly. You have eyes on your back?" Renita exclaimed as she doesn't know that Soul saw her staring at her.

---

"The mirror here reflects everything; I can see it all."

"I just want to see if your cooking is edible. Don't want to have a stomach ache later."

"Though I'm not as good at cooking as my mom, I can grill seafood. I'm also good at peeling shells."

"Stop bragging."

"Might not look good, but it's yummy for sure."

"Ew! Stop flattering yourself."

"I'm talking about the food, Xinxin, what are you thinking of?"

Tantiya glanced at the younger woman, who was acting innocent while taking the seafood she grilled to the table by the pool outside the house. She had no idea how to thank Lady Wan, who generously prepared everything...

Be it the private pool villa, the food, or the yacht excursion package for tomorrow. The captain was shipping so hard that she couldn't help but wonder if this was a trip to reconcile them together or a pre-honeymoon trip.

"Stop smiling so much. Aren't you hungry, Soul?"

"I'm so full of joy right now."

"So I can finish everything by myself."

"Yeah, you can finish it all."

"Eat now. Didn't you promise to take care of your own health?"

"Alright, I won't argue with you. You went out of your way to give me a chance."

"I didn't say that I'll give you a chance yet."

"Oh, but we already cleared our misunderstanding, right?"

The thing about Miss Lioness's ex-girlfriend Yumi had been clarified after Tantiya spent almost an hour explaining everything thoroughly to a curious person like her.

Even though there were no more lingering doubts or concerns about that woman, who Tantiya confirmed was only in the past and would have no influence on their present and future, or the word **LOVE** they said to each other even before clearing any misunderstanding, Renita was still not confident enough to return to their previous relationship status.

Despite how much she loved the older woman, she would play hard to get a bit to get back at Miss Lioness. So Tantiya would not dare to lose her



temper and scold her again. She would continue to play hard to get in order to teach Miss Lioness a lesson.

"It's true, I have no more doubts and I understand you now."

"So why can't we return to our previous status?"

"Because I'm not yet ready."

"But Xinxin, you said you love me, and I love you too."

"Love is love. It's different from being in a situationship."

Just like Auntie Ping said, Xinxin was determined and fierce like no other...

"Soul, don't be silly."

"What?"

"Go back to your room."

This time, Renita wouldn't fall for Miss Lioness's trick, just like she'd seen once when Tantiya begged to sleep on the sofa at her house while their mothers were away. She could see through her every move. So, this act right now was nothing difficult to see through. Now, the Lioness refused to return to her separate room inside this pool villa and instead slept on her bed comfortably with an innocent face.

"I'm so tired, I can't even walk."

"If you're tired, don't volunteer to cook next time."

"No way! I want to have a delicious seafood meal since we are at the seaside."

"Then don't complain, don't be sly, and don't sulk too."

"Can't I stay close to you, Xinxin? We've been apart for far too long. I don't want us to be apart tonight."

"Do not try to convince me, Soul. Your alluring words won't work on me."

Renita slowly sat on the wide bed and assessed the situation, wondering which trick this Lioness would come up with or if Tantiya would take the opportunity to make a move on her. Though they had made up, Renita was ready to defend herself. If the other party touched her even the slightest, she would pinch until the Lioness learned her lesson.

"Soul? Don't pretend to be asleep."

"What!? Are you really asleep? Ah! Soul, don't cheat."

As Renita said, a slight touch and she would make the sly lioness surrender completely. But after getting teased by the arms around her waist as they moved closer, Renita fell down on the soft bed, lying inside Tantiya's intimate embrace. Her hands that were supposed to push the other away became completely sluggish, just like her softened heart. Renita's hands were placed on Tantiya's waist as she hugged back.

"Can I stay like this, with you tonight?"

"Tssk! If you make a move further than that, Soul, you're dead!"

"I won't make a move."

"But you're using this opportunity to the fullest. You really are cunning, sly, Lioness—Soul."

"Why are you giving me such a long title?"

"Your wiliness goes beyond that. I could list them out longer than a paragraph."

"I promise not to make a move on you."

"You've said it. If you break your promise..."

"Until the day you are willing to take a leap."

**Nonsense!**

There was no way she would fully commit to that embarrassing stuff that just imagining it made her blush instantly. And what kind of a woman was this Lioness? To abandon the conversation and fall asleep without saying goodnight, leading her to this moment that made her heart tremble when they were in such an intimate embrace.

This would surely keep Renita awake till dawn. There was no way she would let Soul devour her.

---

"Did you prepare all this, Soul?"

"Nope! This has all been arranged by Lady Wan." Tantiya confessed truthfully.

Even though lying could possibly lead to Renita adding more points against her, she couldn't falsely claim what Lady Wan had meticulously prepared for them. A private yacht adorned with various fresh and vibrant flowers, emphasizing red, white, and pink tones in a love theme..

Because she had learned from the past mistake that nearly led their relationship to an end, she vowed not to hide anything from the younger woman or make assumptions on Renita's behalf.

Therefore, she spoke the truth straightforwardly without taking false credit.

"I knew it. You probably couldn't have arranged this all alone."

"I actually could. If you want, I could prepare everything myself next time."

"Don't, Soul. These things are wasteful. We're not as rich as Lady Wan."

"We?"

"Why?"

"I really like it when you say the word *we*."

"Stop with your sweet words, Soul."

"I forgot that you dislike anything romantic."

"It's not like I hate it, I'm just not used to it yet."

Once she truly understood what love was, she wasn't entirely against romantic gestures. Even though she still wasn't accustomed to surprises or how couples display their affection, she knew she was someone who could adapt to any situation and learn quickly. Soon, she might be more fond of romance, or perhaps she might turn into a romantic person at heart—who knows.

"Let's get used to it together."

"How so?"

"Everything between us—I want us to start anew from now on."

"Soul, are you saying you want to go back to where we were before we left Phuket?"

"No, I don't want to be in that status. I no longer want to just learn more about you."

"Why are you so easily discouraged when I play a little hard to get?"

"Why do you need to be angry? You want to get back together, don't you?"

"I don't know."

Tantiya burst out laughing at Renita's frustration, who had started this hard-to-get act but ended up yielding herself because she was afraid of Tantiya giving up their previous relationship. Actually, that was what Tantiya intended.

"Xinxin."

"Don't follow me. I don't want to talk to you, Soul."

"Listen to me first, then you can sulk all you want."

"I'm completely fine."

"If you're fine, then let's be a couple? Xinxin, would you be my girlfriend?"

"Proposing in the middle of the sea—where else can I run away?"

Because the Lioness surely knew her better than anyone else, Tantiya proposed to her on a yacht where someone timid like her couldn't run away and had to face reality since it was impossible to escape by jumping into the sea.

"Does that mean you agree?"

"Uh-huh, whatever."

"Why answer like you're not willing?"

**"Okay, I will be Soul's girlfriend."**

"Yes! I now have a girlfriend! I don't need to wait for another ten years until I turn forty."

"Soul, don't shout. The captain can hear us."

Renita quickly slapped her hand on the person who was shouting loudly as they were isolated before attempting to cover Tantiya's mouth. But Renita was pulled into the older person's loving embrace instead.

"We're girlfriends now, so can I kiss you?"

"Dunno, suit yourself."

The older woman stared at the beautiful woman, whose eyes were avoiding her gaze as she muttered her reply. Renita's shyness was no less than before even though they had just moved their relationship a step further.

Some things still need to be taken slowly to not overwork her lover's heart. Tantiya gently pressed her lips on her girlfriend's smooth forehead, the good energy MianXiang location of her beloved little bunhead amulet doll, to confirm the fact that...

**Soul and Xin were now a couple.**



## Chapter 17

"Thank you for letting me stay here for a while, Lada."

"You've finally made up with the architect. I knew you'd get back with her once you calmed down."

"Well, I've already fallen in love with her. Cutting off feelings isn't as easy as cutting paper."

Renita confessed everything to her best friend because she never held any secrets about Tantiya from Lada. Plus, Lada was her important consultant, offering countless advice to someone inexperienced in love like her.

Since she was still new to this thing called 'love,' there were many times when she easily got lost and distracted. It was all thanks to Lada, who stayed by her side in moments of weakness and always brought her back to her senses.

"People in love are so annoying. I've been single for quite some time now; maybe I need to find a lover soon, or else I won't be able to compete with you, Xin."

"You'll definitely find someone compatible, Lada. If you're interested in someone, tell me too. I'll give you advice."

"My sweet little Xinxin has become a woman. And since you have a girlfriend, you're now a certified love consultant."

"I can only advise on what I know."

The charming woman humbly answered her friend as Lada leaned in, wrapping her arms around Renita's shoulders teasingly. Lada took a peek at

her while she was packing her stuff to return home. After returning from Phuket with the good news of their new relationship status, the older woman had brought Renita back to Lada's condo to pack her things.

This gave Renita the perfect opportunity to make Lada the first person to know the good news while still keeping it a secret from her mother and Aunt Tye.

Something as important as this shouldn't be discussed over the phone but should be told in person to witness the elders' reactions—elders who had been cheering them on since the day they were at odds, unaware of the relationship that would eventually develop.

"I'm glad to see you found a good love, Xin."

"Yeah, I'm glad I found her too."

"But the architect is really something, making someone who disregarded love like you her girlfriend."

"After that misunderstanding, I have to make our relationship clear, Lada. Otherwise, someone else might try to be her present and steal her away."

"A pretend-mama's heart is so proud right now. My little Xinxin is such a badass."

Since she loved Tantiya so much, Renita couldn't think of any reason to drag out the 'getting to know each other' phase for the next ten years. This was why she agreed to the confession back in Phuket and wasn't afraid of being viewed as rushing into love. If someone accused her of being too soft for forgiving the misunderstanding or for accepting the confession after not knowing her for that long, she wouldn't care. There was no reason to make love so hard and complicated...



"Thank you so much for taking care of Xinxin these past weeks, Lada."

"From this moment onwards, I won't be taking care of her anymore. Soul, you'll have to take care of Xinxin yourself."

"Of course. I'll take the best care of your friend and definitely won't make her sad again."

"I'll take your word for it. If you break your promise, I'll hide Xinxin away so that you won't be able to find her."

"Lada, stop threatening Soul so much."

"What? It hasn't been long, and you're already taking your girlfriend's side over your best friend?"

Tantiya smiled at the relaxed and friendly atmosphere inside Lada's condominium. This was the first time she visited as Lada's guest to wait for Renita to finish packing her things so that Tantiya could take her home as her girlfriend.

Later, the room owner sent off Tantiya and the pretty Feng Shui master. She didn't forget to entrust her best friend to Tantiya's care after hearing the good news about their established relationship.

"Stop teasing us. I'll take my leave now."

"Feel free to visit whenever you're mad at her."

"If that's the case, I'm afraid Xinxin won't be visiting you again, Lada."

This time, Renita gave Soul's arm a small slap to stop her from bragging in front of her best friend. Otherwise, Lada would definitely tease her about how madly in love Soul was with her from now on, just as she was currently making her incredibly embarrassed with a cheeky smile.

"I'll head back to my room. Please take care of my friend, Soul. See you, Xin."

"You promised Lada all those things. Are you confident you'll be able to fulfill them, Soul?"

"Mmm, of course I'm confident."

"You're bragging again."

"I'm not bragging. I'm confident I'll be able to take care of you even better than I promised Lada."

The architect glanced at the younger woman, who seemed flustered as her soft cheeks blushed, poorly hiding her embarrassment. But she decided not to tease her further, avoiding a potential outburst, because Renita's awkward shyness was the most endearing thing in her eyes. — — —

"Are you ready yet, Xinxin?"

"Ready for what?"

"Ready to go tell your mama and mom about us."

"Even if we don't tell them, mama and Auntie Tye will know anyway, just like when we were still seeing each other. If that's the case, I'd rather tell them directly. I don't want to have any secrets from my family."

"Okay. Then I'll go tell Mim and Oyl when I get to the office tomorrow."

"They haven't even asked yet, and you're already announcing it to everyone, Soul?"

"Yup, I'm telling everyone that I have a girlfriend now."

"So exaggerated."

"It couldn't be helped, Xinxin. I'm extremely excited about my girlfriend."

The skilled Feng Shui master made a defeated face and gave in to the overly exaggerated architect. This meant that their relationship would be known to Lada, Auntie Tye, and her mama, who they were going to tell. Then Mim and Oyl would know from Soul tomorrow.

In fact, Tantiya told Renita that Oyl wanted to personally apologize to her for the trouble he had caused, but Renita didn't want to trouble him since she knew that he didn't intentionally want to ruin the relationship between her and the older woman.

And the most crucial person who knew before everyone else, even before Lada, without being told, was none other than Lady Wan, the ship captain who, according to the Architect, had orchestrated everything for them to meet and resolve their misunderstandings, using work as an excuse. Renita also learned from Tantiya that Lady Wan was really fond of their relationship and was ready to support them with all her power.

If they didn't have the accidental cupid like Lady Wan, who brought them together despite their mismatched lines of work, the love between them wouldn't have started, and their relationship wouldn't have flourished. Renita would have to find some time to go thank their main supporter...

"Finally, the two families will be joined as one. I'm delighted."

"We haven't reached that point yet, Auntie Tye. Soul and I just agreed to officially date."

"Even dating counts. Plus, you have to stop calling me Auntie Tye. If you've agreed to date my daughter, you'll have to call me Mom."

"Stop rushing her, Mom. She's so embarrassed already."

"You also have to stop calling me Auntie Ping, Soul. You'll have to call me Mama, like Xinxin does."

"Got it, Mama Ping."

How did Soul, Mother, and Auntie—no, Mom Tye—get along so harmoniously?

This dinner, where the four lives came together inside her mother's house, was so lively and full of happiness. It was a dinner where the Lioness, who had just returned from the Phuket trip with her, was present. And it wasn't a heart-healing trip, but a romantic trip to refill their hearts with love...

"Now that you're together, Mama wants to leave my daughter in your care, Soul."

"Mama, I have just started dating Soul for a day. Why are you leaving me in her hands? Our future still has a long way to go."

"But in my future, Xinxin will be there with me."

"What are you talking about?"

"I've thought ahead, far beyond dating. I've thought to the point where we agree to live our life together."

This was ridiculous! Who allowed this Lioness to think so far ahead? Not to mention how she was saying all of this in front of Mama and Mother Tye. She wasn't being considerate of how embarrassed she was making her, to the point of melting into the chair. Before that day, Soul would have to date her for ten years!

"What are you watching?"

"I was just checking whether you're keeping your word when I wasn't visiting this place."

It had been almost three weeks since they changed their status from getting to know more about each other to strangers, not to meet ever again. Renita

just wanted to check whether the Golden Pothos Soul bragged about in her chats was still in good condition—whether Soul had wonderfully taken care of the plant she gave, or just sent old pictures of it while it was slowly dying in reality.

"Is it still in good shape?"

"Yeah, green and vibrant. It means you have been admirably taking care of it."

"The Golden Pothos you gave me in place of your heart, how could I let it die?"

"Stop being so cheeky."

"If you want to check anything in my room, please do so freely. No need to hold back. Or you can also check my phone."

The beautiful woman shook her head and rejected the offer, which seemed to overly intrude on her lover's privacy. Even though they had been dating for a week since the day they returned from the Phuket trip, which Lady Wan had generously rewarded them with, she wouldn't want to be exceedingly suspicious to the point of being rude, which could ultimately lead to a conflict between them again.

"No need. I don't want to check anything else."

"Why not? I'm okay with everything for you to be comfortable."

"I'm already comfortable, Soul. I'll be honest, I'm no longer worried about anything since the moment we came to an understanding."

Soul released her embrace when she walked in and hugged her lover while observing the Golden Pothos on her workstation with a bright smile. She couldn't resist her cute and adorable girlfriend and had to walk up and snuggle with her. Renita was in her arms for a moment before turning around and locking eyes with the Lioness.

"The last time we misunderstood one another was partly because I was suspicious and not completely trusting you, Soul."

"No, no, it was because of me and the different things you've heard and seen. If it were me, I would have also misunderstood."

"I don't know why either, but after we became official, I'm no longer afraid of you secretly having someone else."

"I won't be having anyone else. Only Xinxin fills all four chambers of my heart."

"And do the four chambers of your heart follow the Feng Shui principles?"

"Does my heart also have Feng Shui?"

"Yes, and if it doesn't follow the Feng Shui principles, please allow me to rearrange it for you."

The architect burst into laughter along with her girlfriend, who always caught on to her jokes. It was as if their careers as an architect and a Feng Shui master seemed to clash to most. Even though they were now a couple, they still argued over work for different reasons. However, this was what made their relationship colorful. Despite their interior work-related arguments, they could still talk their personal matters out with reason.

"From which textbook are you taking this?"

"From the textbook I made up."

"Then I forbid you from rearranging anyone else's heart. I only allow you to try your skills on me alone."

"That's obviously certain, Soul."

"As for your heart, Xinxin, I've already designed and securely constructed the foundations. I'll be moving in forever without leaving, even if the owner chases me away."

"Wow, aren't you afraid of being sued for trespassing?"

"I'm not afraid. You were the person who opened the doors for me to walk into the place yourself."

Renita pouted and scrunched her nose playfully after being touched by the Lioness. The woman reached out to pinch her soft cheeks with affection before leaving her hand on the same spot.

Meanwhile, her gaze shifted from Renita's eyes, which they had been locking with, down to her lips. It was as if she was intensely holding herself back while she shifted her gaze back to where it previously was, acting like nothing happened....

In the end, nothing happened, as always...

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"Stop laughing, Lada. You're laughing at your friend's miseries."

"It's because I adore you. Anyways, I also feel sorry for the architect."

"The person you should be feeling sorry for is me."

The pretty woman complained with a pout after her relationship with Miss Lioness entered its second week. To be honest, everything had been great since they went official.

There was only a single thing that had been bothering her. It bothered her to the point where she needed to consult Lada for some advice. She definitely couldn't be talking about this to her mama—she would be too embarrassed to speak to her.

"What is it I have to be sorry for, Xin? You were the person who ordered her."

"What?"

"You told her not to kiss you, and now you're wondering why she isn't kissing you when you're dating. The architect must be extremely confused about what you actually want."

"Well, she asked me whether we could kiss after dating and I already answered that it's up to her."

After telling that to Soul, shouldn't the cheeky Lioness understand the situation and her desires? Soul should understand that most of the things Renita forbade her from doing while they were still casual do not apply after they became official.

Such as no kissing...

Who would stop her from doing it now that they were girlfriends?!

"Can you please stop laughing, Lada? The reason I came to you for advice is because I want to know when you and your partners had your first kiss."

"To be honest, Xin. I kissed him even before we started dating."

"For real?"

"Of course. We liked each other. If we wanted to kiss, we kissed. I can't think of any reasons not to. If we waited like you did, there wouldn't be any desire to kiss left. See? I told you, I pity Miss Architect."

"Judging from what you said, it isn't that she doesn't want to kiss you. More like she's afraid you wouldn't be okay with it since you previously requested her not to."

After listening to Lada's opinions and advice, Renita recalled the night they agreed to start their relationship last month, and the conversation she had with the Lioness regarding kissing. Soul had already told her that she



wouldn't kiss her unless she was ready and willing to. And how should she make Soul know that she was ready for it ages ago?

"Have fun in Chiang Mai, Mama. Don't worry about me."

"Of course, I'll be enjoying myself. I know Soul will take care of you here."

"I already told you, I'm not a little girl."

"But the last time I went to the retreat in Saraburi with Tye, you did allow her to sleep over at our house."

"You knew about that?"

Renita's eyes widened because she thought that her mother didn't know about the previous time the architect stayed over since she hadn't mentioned it. But who would have thought that she actually knew everything? Would Mama now think that she was a mischievous daughter who misbehaved behind her back when she wasn't home?

"I won't scold you or anything. You're all grown up; you should know these things without me needlessly telling you. Plus, both of you are always in Mama's and Miss Tye's sight, of course, I trust you."

"Let's go, Ping, everyone is already waiting."

Mother Tye's voice brought the mother and daughter out of their embarrassing conversation. Afterwards, her mother gathered with four other friends, ready for their five-day, four-night meditation retreat in Chiang Mai, with her and Miss Architect as the airport transfer.

"Have a safe trip, Mama, Mom Tye."

"While Ping and I aren't here, please take good care of Xin, Soul."

"Of course, Mom, no need to worry."

Tantiya watched her mom and Mama Ping as they walked away to gather with their friends. She later turned back towards her lovely girlfriend, who would be in her care for the next couple of days. They had agreed on staying over at Mama Ping's house for the first two nights and taking Renita back to Tantiya's house for the rest of the days.

"Let's go find something yummy to eat before returning home."

"You pick, Soul."

"You choose, Xinxin."

"No, no, I'll let you pick this time, or else it'll be me picking every time."

"Do you want that place on the Thonburi side? You said everything there was delicious."

"But that's very far, Soul."

"It's not that long if we travel by car."

"Up to you. Don't complain about being exhausted from driving."

"I won't be complaining. You know I always follow my girlfriend's needs, Xinxin."

Yes, Miss Lioness was an expert at following her girlfriend's desires, like how they were walking together while holding hands at the Don Mueng

airport. After sending their mothers off, they spent their romantic time together for a while before returning back home on a Sunday evening without rush.

"You don't actually have to come stay at my house, Soul."

"But we already agreed, and you said you were okay with it."

"But you have to carry your laptop over here to continue working. It'll be better if you stayed at your house to work."

"Then go over to my house with me, Xinxin."

"Nope, I can't. I need to meet single clients tomorrow early morning, and your house is in a completely different direction."

"I can arrive at my office late tomorrow; I can drop you off first, then go meet my client."

"Up to you, but don't blame me if your boss deducts your salary."

Renita crossed her arms, acting independent, as if she had nothing to do with the brilliant architect if her pay got deducted from showing up late for work or underperforming because she was too occupied with her girlfriend.

But, in fact, she knew that even though the lioness was madly in love, she wouldn't let her personal life disturb her work. Although she did hear that the architect went off track while they were apart, now she was back with her willpower at one hundred percent.

"If you need any help from me, do tell."

"Just sit and provide me with emotional support. That way, I'll be coming up with millions of ideas."

Tantiya looked away from the laptop screen she had set up on the table and moved to sit on the floor, leaning her back against the sofa comfortably. She then turned and gave a sweet smile to the beautiful Feng Shui master, who sat cross-legged on the sofa behind her, hugging a cushion and watching television.

Although each of them was spending their personal time separately, it was better than being lonely at home alone because now they were close to each other.

"Finally done with work. My body is aching so much."

"I told you to come sit properly on the sofa. You'll be aching if you sit on the floor."

"I'm not comfortable on the sofa."

The pretty girl stared at the lioness who stood up to stretch. After focusing on the work she had brought over to her house for the past hour, she sat down next to Renita on the sofa and rearranged the cushions at a corner. Renita was curious about what the other was doing and had to ask.

"Soul, what are you doing?"

"Getting ready to set up my place to sleep."

"You're sleeping on the sofa?"

"Yes, didn't you tell me to sleep here last time?"

"But that was when we weren't dating yet."

"Hm? What do you mean?"

"I was thinking of letting you go to sleep upstairs in the bedroom. But you can suit yourself if you want to sleep on the sofa."

"You're letting me sleep in the bedroom? If you need to go through all the trouble and move to Aunt Ping's room, then I'm fine sleeping on the sofa."

"No. I'm letting you sleep in my room. We'll sleep in the same room."

After hearing the charming Feng Shui master's words, Tantiya thought that she must have sounded so naive, asking questions as if she was a person who couldn't comprehend something this straightforward.

Renita sighed at how slow her girlfriend was to understand the assignment. If it was any slower, then Tantiya would've missed this important opportunity. Since they had returned from Phuket, they never had any other chance to share a room.

"Now I'm changing my mind. Soul's having too many problems; you'll be sleeping on the sofa."

"No, I'm sleeping with you tonight, Xinxin." — — — —

*Mama, you trusted Xin? But tonight I didn't feel like trusting myself...*

Renita sat hugging her tall bunny plushie, which she usually hugged instead of a side pillow, before glancing hesitantly around the room.

In the next few minutes, the person she had allowed into her room would finish showering and would be visiting her private space. No matter when they were still statusless, when they started seeing each other, or when they were now dating, she never allowed the lioness to sleep in the same room with her.

Even though the situation, atmosphere, and privacy might not be different compared to when they were in Phuket, Renita didn't understand why she was so concerned and agitated. All the imaginations about the lioness's posture and the concern of whether she would be hunted as the lioness's little prey tonight.

"Xinxin, can I please come in?"

"Yeah, you can come right in."

**Ba-dum...**

**Ba-dum...**

Just as the other party knocked on the door to signal for permission to enter the bedroom, why did Renita's heart tremble as if being asked to open the door to her heart? The owner of the room stood up to greet Tantiya until it seemed like the lioness could probably notice her apprehensive posture during this time.

"Are you worried? If you are uncomfortable, I can go down and sleep on the sofa."

"I'm not uncomfortable; it's only you who looks so. You don't want to sleep here, do you?"

"How can I not want to sleep with my girlfriend? I'd like to spend the rest of the night hugging you, Xinxin."

"Then come to sleep. It's already ten in the evening, it'll be too late if you wait."

"You want me to sleep on this side? And what is this pink creature?"

"This is my side pillow. It's there to mark the territory."

Tantiya stretched out her hand to pat the pink plushie before hugging it tightly and pressing her nose against the top of the bunny's head. Renita, who noticed, then cried out and whined before pulling the plushie back, unwilling to let the other tease it.

"Doesn't the plushie smell a bit off? Did someone spill their saliva on it while sleeping?"

"Soul, stop teasing me and give me back my plushie."

"Can I borrow it for the night?"

"No, it's mine!"

"But tonight you won't have to hug the plushie. You have me to hug all night. You won't need this thing to take up all the space." \_\_\_\_\_

"Soul, stop calling this plushie a thing."

The beautiful woman complained without giving up and didn't allow the lioness to single-handedly tease her, especially when she saw how Tantiya was trying to hide the plushie away behind her back.

Renita then dumped her entire body weight onto the lioness and wrapped her hands around Tantiya to take back her plushie. Yet, surprisingly, she wondered why the lioness didn't tease her back. After all, someone like Tantiya wasn't one to easily give in.

Just now, she realized how demeaning her posture must be, like a prey throwing herself onto the lioness's body and wrapping her arms around her neck. This led to Tantiya instinctively raising her hands to wrap Renita's waist in response.

"Um... Maybe you should get out of my lap? It might not be a good idea to continue staying like this."

The talented architect said while her face turned red, turning her head away from Renita's beautiful face and captivating eyes. The longer she stayed, she became increasingly defeated. It was almost impossible to search for her own voice to speak smoothly. The architect's heart was pounding so violently that it almost burst out of her chest again and again.

"Soul, turn back and look at me."

"Xinxin, I'm not joking."

"I'm not joking either."

The firm voice and the touch of her hand to move the architect's sight back on her took Tantiya's breath away. Just the intimate position they were in was already giving her a hard time, let alone the charming gaze that kept attracting her closer. She wanted to bite her tongue to hide her desire to touch the person in front.

And she must have been delusional from her own desires, imagining that the inviting rosy lips she could only stare at were leaning closer, so close that their warm breath was caressing each other, so close that there was not even a single millimeter left between them.

Tantiya froze, accepting the touch from her girlfriend, not conscious enough to kiss back. But she could sense the shyness of a first-timer and Renita's lack of experience that was provoking her to death.

Then the touch backed off in the blink of an eye.

"Didn't you say you weren't ready for a kiss? You're cheating."

"I've been ready for a long time, dummy."

"My bad, so you had to take the initiative."

"Yeah, it's your fault, Soul."



"Then I won't be holding back any longer."

When she was impatient, the lioness abandoned all her composure. She wouldn't be leaving the prey who had been teasing and challenging her away this time around. She moved in to give her a completely different touch from what Renita had started.

The lioness surely didn't know the difference between a passionate kiss and devouring a prey. But Renita was not going to give in any further.

*Mama... Sorry for misbehaving.*



## Chapter 18

### ***Social Page:***

*"Built in Love"*

*We offer consultations and advice on home-related matters by a top Feng Shui master. Learn what kind of house will bring prosperity, work success, great love, and advancement in life.*

*We also provide design services for houses, buildings, and other constructions. Interested clients can message us for inquiries, discussions, and initial price assessments. For more information, contact...*

"Soul?"

"Yes?"

"Look at this, Soul. Our followers have reached five thousand."

Renita turned the iPad screen for Tantiya to take a glance at the number of followers on their new online page, which was created in addition to her main Feng Shui page that had more than ten thousand followers. The idea came up several months ago after they started dating. Tantiya fully supported her idea and also assisted as a page admin, replying to clients' messages during her free time.

Now that the talented architect and the popular Feng Shui master were a couple, their jobs prospered alongside each other, enhancing their incomes while their love kept blooming day by day. So this was what they meant when they said good love brings great prosperity.

"That's amazing. We should celebrate."

"Yeah, let's finish work and have something yummy together."

"In fact, we don't need to wait until then for something yummy."

"If you're going to offer yourself. Stop it."

"I don't think I can be considered something delicious, but my girlfriend definitely tastes good."

The lioness leaned closer to her girlfriend and pressed her lips gently on the same spot. Their affectionate kisses had become a gesture they were both familiar with. Since they started dating almost half a year ago, kisses like this, after the embarrassment of the first time, had been shared countless times since they had been together.

After finding a fitting love that came at the right moment, Tantiya discovered her cute and sensitive side that she had never shown to anyone before, including her past lover. However, Renita, who she only showed this side to, said she had seen it before when she took care of her when she was sick.

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Still, her shyness, fondness, and clinginess couldn't be compared to the beautiful bunhead amulet doll who was ten times more affectionate. Renita openly expressed her intimacy, not only with Mama Ping but with her as well. Tantiya could confirm that, from the first day they started dating, there has never been a day when her heart didn't surrender and yield to Renita's love.

"You're being sly with me again, my cunning lioness."

"I'm just cheering up my girlfriend before going to work."

"Good thing that my lipstick doesn't smudge."

"Of course, I'm skilled."

"Is this something to be really proud of, Phi Soul?"

The beautiful girl replied after checking her appearance in a portable mirror once more to make sure everything was in place.

Otherwise, her first impression would be ruined if she arrived at the Feng Shui consultation meeting with a client and didn't look her best due to the mischievous lioness. It would damage the reputation of the famous Feng Shui master, Xinxin.

"I'll pick you up after my work's done in the afternoon. I'll be at the office for just half a day today."

"Of course you'll have to pick me up anyway. We have a joint project this afternoon."

"I wish we had more joint projects. I don't want to work with other Feng Shui masters."

"With a talented Feng Shui master as your girlfriend, what's there to worry about? Besides, you already know so much about Feng Shui nowadays that I think you could become a master yourself."

"No way, I won't steal your job, Xinxin. My current workload is already overwhelming."

"Alright, see you later. I'll text you when I'm almost done."

"Sure. Your temporary Grab driver will quickly pick you up."

"What? You wanna be one of those side hustle youngsters? Wait, but you're already thirty, so that's not young."

Renita burst out laughing as her teasing words hit the skilled architect hard. She then made amends by pinching the cheeks of the lioness, who no longer got easily angered. She pressed kisses on both of Tantiya's cheeks, more affectionately and firmly than when she kissed her mom every day before going to work.

"I love you, Soul."

"Love you too."

Tantiya waved back to her girlfriend who was saying goodbye to her while stepping off the car at her destination. It had become a routine that she would wake up earlier than usual, pick up Renita at Mama Ping's house, drop her off at her destination, and then head back to her own office.

Except on days she had urgent matters, important meetings, or when she had to visit work sites in other provinces, she would allow Renita to use public transportation. But if she had time, it was certain that she would take the best care of the younger one and give her lover the number one priority in her life.

"Should I just go to the office without erasing this?"

Though in reality, she wouldn't be able to do as she wished, as she would be teased from the first step she entered the office if there were Feng Shui master's possessive pinkish lipstick marks on both her cheeks. But even if she erased them, it wasn't that the juniors would stop teasing her endlessly about being head over heels for her girlfriend.

"Thank you so much, Soul, Xinxin. My wife and I are thrilled with our new home, which also aligns with Feng Shui principles." — ————

"We're glad you're satisfied with it, Mr. Sommhai."

"Absolutely. With such excellent work, I'll definitely spread the word."

"Thank you very much."

Tantiya expressed her gratitude to a client who hired her to design and build a single-story house at the back of their old home, which was part of the family's property. Mr. Sommhai's family, who strongly believed in Feng Shui, had Renita assist with the Feng Shui from the design to overseeing every construction process, resulting in a modern, well-liked home that fits perfectly in the shared space.

Today, Tantiya came to deliver the completed project along with the expert Feng Shui master, who conducted a final inspection of the home's Feng Shui free of charge as a token of appreciation. Similarly, she often offered small design advice on structural stability at no extra cost to Renita's Feng Shui clients. They supported each other's work like it was a family business.

"Xinxin?"

"Are you done talking with Mr. Sommhai, Soul?"

"Yes. What are you doing, hiding in the corner?"

"I really like the front garden. It looks so peaceful and is probably the homeowner's favorite spot."

"Alright, if you like it, we can design a garden like this for ourselves someday."

"My house doesn't have as much space as Mr. Sommhai's. We can only have a tiny garden."

"And my place is a townhouse."

"Right, if we planted many trees, it would be too messy, Soul."

Renita looked at the architect, who nodded in agreement with her. Their houses wouldn't accommodate a front garden or a small fountain to enhance prosperity and success due to space constraints, unlike Mr. Sommhai's spacious single-family home.

Truthfully, when visiting a client's home, she collected ideas about home designs and decorations to fulfill her dream of buying a house someday. She aimed to save enough money without relying on help from those who offered it, like the wealthy mogul. Eventually, she planned to buy a house and live happily with her mother. However, she might need to save more and choose a larger one, as she now had someone important added to her present and future plans.

She would diligently work hard and save up for their home...

"Have fun celebrating your anniversary, dear. It's okay if you come home a bit late; Mama won't mind."

"Thank you, Mama, but I probably won't stay out too late."

"It's hard to believe that it's already been six months since you started dating Soul."

"I know, right? Sometimes I find myself thinking back to the first time we met when I didn't like her at all, and we always had heated arguments. It feels unbelievable we ended up together," the beautiful woman reminisced about her first unimpressive encounters with the architect.

But now, six months into their relationship and almost seven or eight months since they first met, she couldn't help but smile at those ——— unforgettable moments.

"Hello, Mama Ping."

"Soul, you're just in time. Mama and Xin were just talking about you."

"Were you gossiping about me to your mom, Xinxin?"

"No, I was praising you, Soul."

"Why don't I sit down so you can finish praising me? You must have plenty more to say."

"See, Mom? Soul is so full of herself."

Tantiya laughed along with Mama Ping as Renita playfully complained. The three of them chatted a bit more before Tantiya took her girlfriend out to celebrate their six-month anniversary. Although most people celebrate their first year together, since she was Renita's first partner, she wanted to make this half-year mark special and memorable.

"Where are you taking me today?"

"That's a secret, Xinxin. I'm keeping it for now."

"Keeping secrets from me now?"

"It's a present."

"Alright, no more partner jokes."

"No more jokes. My mother already got her daughter-in-law."

"Nonsense, I'm not your family's daughter-in-law yet." The beautiful woman argued shyly.

Even after half a year of dating, she hadn't completely managed her shyness. Though she wasn't as flustered as she was in the early days of their relationship, Tantiya was still adept at making her blush and raising her voice whenever she got embarrassed.

"But we're dating."

"Someone can only become a daughter-in-law after getting married, not just by being girlfriends."

"Then how about you marry me?"

"Should we get married?"

"Proposing while driving—what a casual way to bring it up..."

Soul's simple proposal made Renita's heart race so much she felt like she might melt into the passenger seat.



"We're here. This is the place, Xinxin."

"Even after we started dating, you still think of tricking me?"

Renita teased, after Tantiya drove her to an area in the Pattanakarn district and parked in front of a fenced-off, empty plot of land. There were no signs indicating it was for sale, making it seem more like private property.

"If you knew I'd brought you somewhere isolated, why didn't you run away?"

"Because I trust you, Soul."

Tantiya smiled sweetly at her girlfriend, who didn't run away but instead walked over and held her arm for support as they surveyed the roughly 100-square-inch plot, ideal for building a single house with enough space for a garden in front.

"This is Mr. Sommhai's land."

"Did he intend to build another house? They just finished the previous one and are moving in soon."

"Nope. Initially, Mr. Sommhai bought this land to build a new house here in case they couldn't agree with their family about the old property. But since everything worked out, they don't need this plot anymore."

"Then why did you bring me here? Is Mr. Sommhai asking you to act as a broker to sell it?"

"No, I'm not taking up a side job as a broker. I just wanted you to see if you like this plot, Xinxin."

"With such a good location, it must be expensive, Soul."

"Mr. Sommhai said he would give us a special price if we're interested."

"But why would we buy an empty plot?"

"To build our home, Xinxin."

Renita's eyes widened in surprise. Did the architect plan to buy Mr. Sommhai's land to build their house? She had always dreamed of owning her own home and had shared this dream with Tantiya openly. But she had never imagined starting from scratch, from laying the first foundation. Her modest dream was just to save enough to buy a house.

"Xinxin, you told me you always wanted your own home, right?"

"Yes, I've always dreamed of having a house."

"Let me build it for you."

"For a special price? And will the architect charge for every little detail?"

"Nope, I'll design it for free."

"Really? No taking back, Soul."

"Under one condition."

"What condition?"

"You have to let me live here with you in this house, Xinxin."

"Yeah, of course I will."

The beautiful woman threw herself into Tantiya's arms, who was already waiting for this embrace. They held each other tightly, knowing this shared

dream would require time and dedication. But she was determined to work hard, save diligently, and support each other until their dream became a reality.

"What are you drawing? Are you drawing me again?"

"I don't need to hide if I want to draw my girlfriend."

"So, what are you sketching? Let me see."

"A house plan."

"But we haven't agreed to buy the land from Mr. Sommhai yet."

If the skilled architect wanted to start designing their house this early, she would be rushing it too much. Despite their interest in Mr. Sommhai's land, they needed to consider the price, budget, the investment needed to build the house, and the most feasible repayment plan if they needed a bank loan. There were still several steps to plan before proceeding.

"I'm just sketching out a design."

"You're joking. What is this? It looks like a child's drawing."

"I'm an architect."

"You'll definitely lose your job like this."

Renita picked up the drawing paper, which humorously depicted a house with a rectangle and a triangle on top, resembling a child's drawing. The sketch also included stick figures representing four people, without

specifying names, along with a tree and the sun—just like a coloring book for kids.

"Who's in our house?"

"This is Xinxin, this is me, and these are Mom and Mama Ping."

"Even though it's not built yet, our house looks really cozy."

"Is my design aligned with the Feng Shui principles?"

"The yin-yang is unbalanced. Fire on the right, on the left. The sun should be here."

"Feng Shui master can move the sun?"

"Of course, and I can even make it smile."

Tantiya reached out to hold her lover's hand, who was attentively adding to the drawing. Renita paused, looking up to meet her eyes, and they stared at each other for a while, as if conveying their inner feelings.

"So, will you marry me?"

"Isn't six months too soon, Soul?"

"If it's with you, Xinxin, I think it's even too slow."

"You're so impatient."

"Because that's what my Mian Xiang says."

"Don't blame your Mian Xiang."

"But if Mian Xiang really indicates life, I might need some surgery."

"You're already pretty; what more do you need?"

"Lip injections, to make my upper lip not bigger than my lower lip, so I won't be unlucky in love."

"No need for that. Do you consider yourself unlucky in love? Mian Xiang is just one part, and Feng Shui too. Everything also depends on ourselves. Those are just additions. When you feel at ease, your life prospers more." The beautiful woman traced her fingers to the lips of Miss Lioness who showed concern about the Mian Xiang she once heard from Renita.

So she had to explain for the older woman to understand that luck and fortune were not the only things in life; it was just additions that supported one's prosperity. One should properly apply it while making sure it didn't harm oneself or anyone else.

"So, I won't be unlucky in love anymore?"

"Not at all, because I love you so much, Soul."

"Then I'll scrap the surgery plan. Smaller lips would make it harder to kiss my girlfriend."

"Soul! You sly lioness."

The big-mouth lioness was probably concerned she wouldn't believe her... so she proved it with a kiss!

The wedding ceremony tonight was grand and magnificent, befitting the couple's status. In the luxurious hotel's banquet hall, numerous guests gathered to celebrate this love and the bride's farewell to singlehood. She walked arm-in-arm with her beloved toward the stage, amidst applause from the attendees.

"Let's invite the bride and groom to say a few words."

The Wan-Wat couple exchanged nods, signaling the other to go first. So, the bride took the microphone without hesitation, showing no shyness on stage or in front of the many guests.

"First of all, I must thank everyone for attending my wedding ceremony..."

The wedding of a beautiful fifty-year-old woman, who looked much younger thanks to her excellent self-care, and her handsome groom in his early thirties was nothing short of magnificent. Despite the almost twenty-year age gap, Lady Wan always said that age was just a number and not an obstacle when true love was found.

Lady Wan's love story began approximately half a year ago when she planned for Renita and Tantiya to reconcile in Phuket, where she met Mr. Wat, the owner of the villa.

Lady Wan immediately knew he was her soulmate, leading to many visits between them. Neither the architect nor Renita knew about this because Lady Wan kept her relationship a secret and surprised them with wedding invitations.

She was a dark horse, dropping her single status unexpectedly!

"Lady Wan has surpassed Soul and Xinxin. When will you two follow suit?"

"Just let her, Oyl. Soul and I are not in a hurry."

"Yeah, I leave it up to Xinxin. I won't marry anyone else anyway."

"The stage is full of love as well as at this table. Being single here makes me so lonely."

"Oyl is single too, Mim."

"Don't try to match us up, Soul. We know each other like the back of our hands. No way we would date each other."

Tantiya laughed along with her girlfriend, who was sitting beside her at the front table, as Lady Wan gave them, Mim, and Oyl invitations to her grand wedding tonight. As for them, they continued discussing their own marriage plans.

Recently, Tantiya and Renita decided to buy the land lot from Mr. Sommhai and started paying the installments together. They also designed their house according to their preferences, planning to complete it by the end of the year.

"Meeting my soulmate and finding love again, becoming Nong Wan for Wat, I have to thank two important people who helped make this happen."

Renita let out a smile filled with happiness as Lady Wan stared straight at the front table where she and Miss Architect were seated side by side. The Lady thanked them again, even though she had mentioned it countless times, just like how Renita and Tantiya were thankful to her for pushing them to clear their misunderstanding and eventually reconcile. The elder woman could be compared to the captain who fixed their ship until it was strong enough to sail on steadily.

"Please give an applause to my Talented Architect Soul and Feng Shui Master Xinxin. Without Master Xinxin's assistance on my house's Feng Shui, and Soul on designing the place to align with all principles, my love with Wat would never have happened, and our love would never be this sweet. Because you need the right direction for your house's Feng Shui, just like you need the right person as your lifetime partner."

Applause followed, and all eyes turned to the two people being thanked, making them the focus of the night. Renita felt shy but tried to smile

through it. The number of guests gathered at Lady Wan's wedding banquet was probably close to a thousand.

"Therefore, I won't be throwing the bouquet. I intend to give it to Soul and Feng Shui Master Xinxin."

Lady Wan stepped off the stage, guided sweetly by Mr. Wat. She walked over and handed Tantiya and Renita a bouquet of red roses.

"Please accept this, Soul and Feng Shui Master Xinxin."

"Thank you so much, Lady Wan."

The beautiful woman accepted the bouquet and looked down, not noticing Lady Wan signaling something to Miss Lioness. She realized it only when she looked up and saw an unexpected surprise from her lover.

"Soul!"

"I've asked you to marry me many times, but never officially. Today, I want to use this opportunity to propose to you for real this time."

"Why are you asking me right now? This is Lady Wan's wedding."

"It's alright. I'm excited and overjoyed for you guys. Wat, look at this. I want you to be this sweet with me too."

The most important person at this event, the bride of the night, blushed and leaned into her husband's chest, surrounded by the romantic atmosphere Miss Architect had secretly prepared.

Renita was clueless about when Tantiya bought the ring or planned such a serious proposal.

Miss Lioness wasn't going big or over the top by kneeling on one knee in front of Lady Wan's thousands of guests; she just surprised her with a ring box while her warm eyes stared at Renita pleadingly. How could she be mean and say no to marrying Soul?



"A good house must both have a solid structure and proper Feng Shui."

"Why are you talking about houses now?"

**"Just to compare it to our love. Even though we're different, we fit perfectly."**

The charming lioness cleverly compared their love, and Renita agreed on how they complemented each other perfectly. At this moment, their love was ready to be settled at the best possible time.

"Share your life with me, let's build a life together in our home."

If that meant marriage...

**"As long as you are with me, Soul, our home is already complete."**

Her words meant yes.

