

# Stealing Your Heart Chapter 971

Having been here for a few days, her understanding of Tawan's personality grew. Despite coming off as aloof, he was an idealist. His dream was to seek the perfect significant other and lead a blissful marriage, much like the one his parents have.

Before meeting someone he loves dearly, he wouldn't settle for just anyone.

Not only that, but he was also a good-natured man. Even though he wouldn't say anything about it, his innate kindness was very much evident through concrete actions.

When he wasn't donning his uniform, he gave off a chivalrous impression.

At that moment, as he was nervously struggling to find the right words to say, he looked utterly adorable.

"I overheard your conversation with Sorn earlier when I walked in." Tawan finally uttered after a long moment of silence.

Upon hearing his words, Zong Yanxi was confounded. She surveyed his face with a baffled expression. *What was he trying to say?*

"Do you love your ex-husband deeply? To the point that you're unable to forget him?" Tawan asked.

It sounded like an innocent question, but it seemed like Tawan was trying to test the waters.

Zong Yanxi was quiet for a brief moment, still trying to comprehend why he was curious about that. It must be because of her response to Sorn's words.

"Nope. I don't love him." Her tone was firm. Any love she once had for him all went up in smoke when he brought up divorce. "The only reason why I told Sorn that he was still in my heart was because I didn't want her pushing the both of us together."

Tawan could hardly contain his happiness when Zong Yanxi said she didn't love her ex-husband anymore. But it was short-lived, as the second half of her explanation left him despondent. "Does her nudging us together bother you?" Tawan probed.

"No, that's not it," Zong Yanxi hurriedly said. She was well aware that Tawan was a kind-hearted man.

He was pure at heart, with practically zilch experience in the dating scene. On the other hand, she was a divorcee. In the aspect of relationships, they were like chalk and cheese.

In her conversation with Sorn, she mentioned that they weren't suitable for each other, simply because her status as a divorcee was not appropriate for Tawan.

It would make her feel as though she marred the purity that Tawan had.

Virtuous and soft-hearted girls with a clean dating history, like Tawan, were way more fitting for him.

These were qualities she felt were absent from her.

All the more she wouldn't dare think of tainting the virtuous Tawan.

"I was more afraid of affecting you. A scandal with someone whose marriage has concluded would be such a nuisance to you. I, on the other hand, would be the party who gains," she said with a tiny smile.

Tawan chuckled, with a gleam apparent in his eyes.

"Tell me, Mr. Tawan, what kind of girls do you like?" Zong Yanxi questioned.

He gazed at her lovingly as he replied, "Innocent and sweet ladies who love to smile."

She then probed further. "Are good looks a requirement?"

Tawan shook his head.

"I'll be sure to introduce a girl to you if I meet someone suitable," Zong Yanxi said with a grin.

She was genuinely concerned. It was such a waste that Tawan had never been in a serious relationship, given that he was already twenty-nine years old. At the prime of his life, he should at least make good memories with a wonderful person. That way, he would have events to reminisce about in the future, together with his partner.

Tawan was at a loss for words.

He initially thought Zong Yanxi was interested in him, but he did not expect her to be more concerned with introducing a prospective partner to him.

"I'm not fond of arranged relationships," he declared.

Zong Yanxi resisted the urge to raise an eyebrow. *Wow. He's naive. Did he really believe in leaving it all to fate? Well, it figures. These were people devoted to their religious faith.*

She then proceeded to respond, "There's this saying from my hometown: fate is bound to bring people together."

"What does that mean?"

"Well, it just means that if you're destined to meet someone, it will happen regardless of the distance and against all odds. If you're not fated with someone, they could be right next to you and you won't even notice them."

"Does that count in our instance?" Tawan peered at her intently as he posed the question.

*Could this mean... He's interested in me?* This seemingly ridiculous question popped up in Zong Yanxi's mind.

The second the thought appeared, it vanished. She must've been so narcissistic to the point she was being delusional.

Her puzzled expression momentarily revealed her inner turmoil, but she swiftly concealed it with a smile. "No, that doesn't count."

As she finished her sentence, she abruptly stood up. "I'm feeling tired, I think I'll go and rest."

From her actions, it seemed more like she was subconsciously trying to escape from the situation.

"Alright," Tawan replied.

Zong Yanxi proceeded to take big strides to walk back to her room. With the nagging feeling that Tawan was watching her, she quickened her pace.

When she finally entered her room, she slammed the door shut and violently shook her head, as though it would rid her of her warped ideas.

*Tawan could have anyone he wants. Why in the world would I, a divorced woman, catch his eye?*

Zong gave herself a few light-handed slaps to snap out of it.

*It must be because I haven't been getting good rest in this foreign environment. That's why I've been hallucinating.* She pondered as she strolled to her bed.

*I'm no longer a young lady. It's so embarrassing to have such thoughts!*

After lying down for a while, she actually fell asleep.

Tawan sat alone in the living room, his gaze riveted on Zong Yanxi's room.

The way she acted earlier was as if she was desperate to avoid his scrutiny.

*Was she afraid?*

"Daddy!" Sorn exclaimed as she ran over holding several sweetsops in hand.

Tawan's thoughts were interrupted by his daughter's arrival. He turned to look at her with a wide grin plastered across his face.

"Try it, it tastes really good!" Sorn said.

Sally hurriedly stopped her from handing the fruits to Tawan. "I'll wash and slice them before serving it to Sir."

Sorn glanced at the sweetsops in her hand. *Perhaps it would be more delicious after it's being prepared properly.* She then carefully placed the fruits into a rattan basket and gave Sally instructions. "Don't mix up these and the other ones in the basket."

"Don't worry, I got it. These are obviously larger than the other ones in the basket. I won't make a mistake."

Sorn beamed as she climbed into the arms of Tawan. "I specially plucked them for you, Daddy. You've got to try it later and tell me whether it's sweet or not."

Tawan shoved her hands and remarked, "Your hands are so dirty!"

Sorn giggled and said, "I forgot to wash them!"

Tawan then picked her up and brought her to wash her hands.

Zong Yanxi, who was fast asleep, was having a nightmare.

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She dreamt that she was tossed into a blazing fire while being tied up from head to toe. That rendered her utterly helpless as she was immobilized.

She used all her might to scream but no sound came out.

To say she was petrified was an understatement.

After she finished washing her hands, Sorn asked Tawan about Zong Yanxi.

Tawan said she was sleeping.

"I'll go have a look."

"Don't," Tawan insisted. "You'll wake her up."

"I'm just going to have a look. I won't make any noise, don't worry. Or you could come with me," Sorn replied as she dragged her father along.

Sensing Tawan's apprehension, Sorn added, "She's already asleep. She won't know!"

Without waiting for his reaction, she nudged him along the direction of Zong Yanxi's room.

Tawan could not argue against her and just went along with her.

As she gently opened the door, Sorn gestured for Tawan to be quiet.

They gently tip-toed over to Zong Yanxi's bedside. She was curled up into a ball and sleeping in what looked like an extremely uncomfortable position. Sweat could be seen dripping down her face profusely.

Her face looked like she was in immense agony.

A look of concern furrowed Sorn's brows. *Was she hot? It isn't hot in here though. Why is she perspiring so much?*

Zong Yanxi, still struggling in her nightmare, faintly saw a shadow through the light emanating from the fire. It was difficult to make out the person's profile. All she could see was that he had a lanky build.

Using all the strength she could muster to get a firm grip on the person, she yelled as loudly as she could. "Save me! Please! Help me!"

Sorn stared blankly at her and turned to ask her father. "What is she saying?"

Tawan then registered that Zong Yanxi may be having a nightmare. Gently tapping her shoulders, he called out, "Ms. Zong."

"Save me..."

All Zong Yanxi could see was the person nearing. His facial features were gradually becoming clearer. All she had to do was reach out and grab him...

Then her eyes flew open. Still panting, she finally woke up from her nightmare.

The first thing that she saw was Tawan's chiseled visage studying her face earnestly, a look of concern etched on his face.

That definitely woke her up.

"You had a nightmare?" Tawan asked, with concern noticeable in his tone.

Zong Yanxi started to sit up, before realizing her hand was still tightly wrapped around his wrist. She hurriedly released her grasp before apologizing profusely.

"It's fine." Tawan fished out a handkerchief from his pocket and handed it to her. "Here you go, use it to wipe your sweat."

As Zong Yanxi held the handkerchief in her hand, she mulled over the nightmare she just woke up from. It had been a long time since she's had such an intense dream.

The events in that unpleasant dream felt so genuine to the point it made her feel like she could still feel the burns left by the inferno.

Noticing that she was still stationary, Tawan reached out in an attempt to wipe the sweat on her forehead. The moment his finger came into contact with her forehead, Zong Yanxi recoiled in shock.

Taking in her reaction, Tawan's hand froze in mid-air.

At that moment, their eyes met. Both of them were still recovering from that electrifying moment they just had.

The atmosphere was tense.

Upon realizing that his actions were rather abrupt, Tawan immediately pulled his hand back. "I'm sorry, I didn't mean to offend you."

"It's fine," Zong Yanxi stated as she did her best to avoid eye contact. She wiped her sweat in a flustered manner in an attempt to conceal the commotion she felt on the inside. What the commotion was about, she too had no clue.

"I plucked some fruits. Sally went to rinse them. Come and join us!" Sorn declared.

Zong Yanxi instantaneously turned to look at her, all the while deliberately avoiding eye contact with Tawan. "Sure."

Sorn beamed with pleasure and said, "We'll wait for you outside."

As soon as she finished her sentence, she took off, leaving Tawan and Zong Yanxi all alone in the room.

Silence ensued.

A wave of an inexplicable feeling came over the both of them.

Without having to vocalize their thoughts, it was as though they knew what to say.

Yet, it seemed like they were intentionally evading the situation.



"I..."

"You..."

Simultaneously, the two of them spoke, then paused, then spoke again.

"You go first..."

"You go first..."

Once again, they spoke at the same time.

Zong Yanxi took the liberty of breaking the ice first. She chuckled dryly, "Sorn is just too adorable."

It was evident she was just trying to force a conversation.

Even though his expression was grim, Tawan lightly nodded.

All of a sudden, Zong Yanxi's phone started to ring. "I'll go and get that."

Tawan motioned for her to go ahead and promptly left the room.

The call was from Gu Xian.

"You're no longer in B City?" he began.

"Yes," Zong Yanxi replied.

"No wonder I couldn't locate you."

"When did you return?" she asked.

"I just got back. I'm here to tender my resignation."

Sensing the melancholy in his voice, she probed further. "Why?"

"My mom found out I was looking for him. She has since prohibited me from coming back."

"Then..."

"Save it, please. She's resolute about never mentioning this again. I don't want to upset her."

Zong Yanxi was not the kind to pressure Gu Xian into such things.

"Alright. If I get the chance, I'll come and visit," Zong Yanxi mumbled.

"Alright."

They chatted for a while more before wrapping up the conversation.

Zong Yanxi had this nagging feeling that Gu Xian's mom and Guan Jing probably had a dispute of some sort. Otherwise, why was she so against Gu Xian looking for his own father?

Since Gu Xian already made up his mind about it, there was no point in trying to reverse his decision. *Just leave it up to fate, I guess. Besides, Guan Jing has a family of his own. Keeping him in the dark was not a bad idea.*

After composing herself, she put on her shoes and stepped out of the room.

Sally was done preparing the fruits. Sorn was about to give Tawan a piece when she saw Zong Yanxi walking over. "Come quick! I want you to try the fruits that I plucked." Sorn called out in excitement.

Zong Yanxi could not help but smile. "Are they sweet?"

"That goes without saying!" Sorn responded.

Zong Yanxi plopped herself down on the sofa and reached out to accept a piece from Sorn.

The flesh of the fruit was sweet and juicy.

"Wow, the fruits that are hand-picked by you truly taste sweeter than the store-bought ones!" she exclaimed after a taste.

Her comment made Sorn so happy she was grinning from ear to ear.

A child with such an infectious enthusiasm was bound to make those around her happy. Everyone could be seen smiling at her innocence.

Staring at a grinning Zong Yanxi from the side, a smile too surfaced on Tawan's face. He reached out to tuck her hair behind her ear.

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Zong Yanxi flinched and moved away from him, a little taken aback by the sudden intimacy.

Tawan, on the other hand, was unfazed by it. "Your hair is messy."

She raised her hand to tuck the loose strands of hair behind her ear. "Thanks."

Sorn glanced at the two of them and grinned, taking another bite from the sweetsop fruit in front of her. She noticed the beautifully-wrapped box on the table and asked, "Daddy, what's inside that box?"

"Clothes," Tawan replied.

"Who is it for?" Sorn asked.

When Tawan told her that it was for Zong Yanxi, Sorn grabbed Zong Yanxi's arm and told her to open it.

Zong Yanxi squirmed in her seat. "I'll rather not."

"You should at least try it! What if you don't like it?" Sorn insisted. "Give it a try!"

Zong Yanxi sighed and opened the box to reveal a black gown nestled inside.

She could not tell what brand it was from, but it was obvious that the material used to make the gown was one of a kind. As she moved it around, the hidden patterns on the pitch black fabric shimmered under the light.

"Put it on!" Sorn cheered, reaching out to stroke the fabric. "It's so silky!"

Zong Yanxi flicked her forehead lightly. "Keep quiet, kid!"

"Huh?" Sorn asked, blinking in confusion.

"You're a noisy little girl!" Zong Yanxi chided, pretending to be angry.

Sorn fell silent.

Before Zong Yanxi knew it, Sorn had clambered into Tawan's lap with a hurt look on her face. "Daddy! She's not cute at all!"

Zong Yanxi was speechless.

Tawan glanced at her, and she lowered her gaze to the gown in the box to avoid making eye contact.

"Put it on. We're going out at six-thirty," Tawan said. "You can ask Sally to help you out."

He turned to Sally and said, "Can you take the gown to the room for Ms. Zong, please?"

Sally walked over and took the gown from Zong Yanxi. "I'll take my leave first, Ms. Zong."

She refused to even look at Tawan even though he had been the one giving the order.

Tawan pursed his lips. *I think I know why she's acting like this...*

He sighed.

"Daddy, why are you sighing?" Sorn asked, looking up into his eyes.

Tawan picked her up instead of answering her question. "Let's go and feed the fishes, shall we?"

"Alright!" Sorn chirped.

The fishes were kept in a water-filled rectangular hole in the ground, where they swam around happily amongst the seaweed and rocks.

Sorn took the fish food and threw them into the pond by the handful, while Tawan stared at the window of Zong Yanxi's room.

Meanwhile, inside the room...

Zong Yanxi slipped into the gown easily, awed by how fitting it was.

The seams of the gown traced the outline of her body perfectly, bringing out her natural curviness.

Sally stood by and studied her from head to toe. "It looks great on you," she said in Thai.

Zong Yanxi smiled. "Thanks for the help, Sally. You may leave now."

"But..."

"It's fine. I'll manage on my own."

Sally nodded. "Alright then."

She walked out of the room quietly.

Zong Yanxi sat before the dressing table and put on some simple makeup to match her gown.

*I shouldn't turn up bare-faced and embarrass Tawan...*

Meanwhile, Sally walked over to the pond in the courtyard and told Tawan, "Ms. Zong said that she's fine on her own."

Tawan nodded before looking up at her suddenly. "Can you come with me, Sally?"

"Yes, Sir," Sally said.

Tawan led Sally to the storage room upstairs where the family treasures were kept. Centuries worth of gold, diamonds and property contracts piled high on the floor, while the jewelry were kept in boxes hidden from view.

Tawan opened the closest box to them and took out a red velvet box. "Give this to Ms. Zong," he said, handing the box to Sally.

Sally looked up at him. "Wasn't this Ma'am's favorite accessory set?"

Sally's mother had been Tawan's mother's favorite maid, and she had since retired from her job. When Sally was a kid, she visited the mansion regularly, and her impression of Tawan's mother was excellent.

All the maids that chose to stay held the family in high regard.

Sally had seen Tawan's mother with the accessories on more than one occasion, and her own mother had described to her just how much Tawan's mother loved that particular accessory set.

Tawan did not bother to explain any further. "Give it to her," he repeated.

Sally nodded. "Sure."

*I'm sure he has his own objectives...*

After Sally left, Tawan walked out and closed the door behind him. The traditional lock on the door had since been replaced with the most cutting-edge anti-theft technology out there that required facial recognition, fingerprint recognition and a Morse code password to disengage.

As for the accessories, they have indeed been his mother's favorite. In fact, it symbolized her high status in the Thitipoom family.

Tawan's grandmother had passed on the accessory set to his mother, and she had taken great care of it since. In fact, she only wore the accessory set during important events.

Unfortunately, she passed away at a young age. On her deathbed, she had told Tawan to only give the accessory set to the woman he loved.

He had been following the rules the whole time, despite having feelings for Zong Yanxi. Now that she had gotten a divorce, he felt that he had a chance.

Back in the room, Zong Yanxi was almost done enhancing her already-gorgeous features with her makeup when Sally knocked on her door.

"Come in," she said, and Sally walked in with the velvet box in tow.

"What's that?" Zong Yanxi asked.

Sally opened the box to reveal a beautifully-crafted set of sapphire accessories.

The accessories included in the set were a necklace, a bracelet, a pair of ear studs, a ring, a brooch and a hairpin.

Every gem was of top-tier quality, and their deep blue color was consistent throughout.

It was already rare to find a sliver of raw sapphire crystals of such high quality, much less find enough to produce a whole set of accessories.

The giant sapphire gem on the necklace was around the same size as the pink diamond she had, though the sapphire on the necklace was surrounded by several others, unlike her lone pink diamond.

Zong Yanxi had been through a lot, but she still felt that the accessory set was overkill. Her own necklace would do the job just fine.

Sally put the box on the table and picked up the necklace carefully. *I'm sure Tawan wants to see her wearing this accessory set...*



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Before Zong Yanxi could open her mouth to protest, the necklace was already shimmering on her neck.

"It's beautiful," Sally said with a smile.

Zong Yanxi looked into the mirror and admired the sapphire necklace on her neck. The dark fabric of her gown made it stand out even more against her skin.

"Wow!" Sorn exclaimed, running into the room. "See? I wasn't lying when I said that Daddy has a whole room full of jewelry for you!"

Tawan had brought her there once, and she had been shocked by the sheer amount of precious goods stored there.

Zong Yanxi sighed. *When can she ever learn to stop associating me with Tawan?*

"Why are you here? Weren't you feeding the fish?" Sally asked.

That reminded Sorn of her objective. "It's almost time! Daddy's waiting for you!"

"I can help you put on the rest of the accessories," Sally offered.

Seeing that Zong Yanxi was hesitant to do so, Sorn smiled and said, "Just wear it. You look great in it!"

Zong Yanxi glanced at Sorn's reflection in the mirror and relented. After all, she would be by Tawan's side during the event, and doing away with the accessories might not be a good idea.

After she was done, she stood up and walked out of the door with Sorn and Sally following her closely.

Tawan was in a fresh set of clothes too, but instead of a suit, he was clad in the uniform of the military. His blank expression could make anyone cower in fear.

He did not speak a word when he saw her, but it only enhanced his attractiveness.

He had been talking to the chauffeur at the entrance when Sorn walked over and yelled, "Daddy!"

He whipped around and gasped when he saw Zong Yanxi standing just a few meters away from him.

She sashayed over with the air of an aristocrat's daughter. "Apologies for the wait."

Tawan gazed at her silky black hair that spilled onto her milky white shoulders, captivated by her sparkling eyes that seemed to speak a thousand words just by looking at them.

She reminded him of a blooming peony, beautiful yet not too flashy. Her slender legs teased him from beneath her black gown as she walked.

Tawan cleared his throat and clenched his fists lightly behind his back. "The car is ready. Shall we go?"

Zong Yanxi walked over and Tawan opened the car door for her like a gentleman. He waited patiently for Zong Yanxi to get on the car before walking over to the other side to take his seat.

Sorn waved at them from the entrance as they drove out of the mansion, and Zong Yanxi did the same.

Soon, they were on the road.

The car pulled out of the courtyard and cruised along the road. Suddenly, Zong Yanxi caught sight of Jiang Youqian walking out from the house ahead of them, which happened to be her parents' house.

*What is he doing here?*

"Stop the car!" Zong Yanxi blurted. *What if Jiang Mohan's here as well?*

The chauffeur stopped the car, and Tawan followed her line of sight to see a man standing ahead of them.

His heart skipped a beat. *Is that...her ex-husband?*

He turned to face Zong Yanxi. "Do you know him?" he asked tentatively.

"I do, but we're just acquaintances," Zong Yanxi said. "Let's go."

The chauffeur drove off immediately, but it was too late. Jiang Youqian had already noticed Zong Yanxi sitting inside the car.

His eyes widened as he yelled, "Yanxi!"

He tried to chase after the car, but to no avail.

"Yanxi!"

Zong Yanxi grimaced, but she did not tell the chauffeur to stop the car.

*I'm pretty sure he's here for Jiang Mohan.*

*There's no other reason why he would be here.*

She could feel the cold sweat on her palms as memories of Jiang Mohan surfaced in her mind.

Tawan noticed her anxiety and frowned. "Is he...your ex-husband?"

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Zong Yanxi was jolted out of her trance by his voice, and it only further convinced him that the man yelling at her had been her ex-husband.

*Why is she still so troubled over him?*

Zong Yanxi cleared her mind and grinned. "Apologies. What were you saying?"

"Nothing," Tawan answered.

"Oh," Zong Yanxi said, thinking back to how desperate Jiang Youqian had looked.

She had lost all hope in Jiang Mohan, and she wanted to cut him out of her life completely. Jiang Youqian's appearance made her worry for her parents' safety.

She pinched her brows together and took a deep breath to calm herself down.

Jiang Youqian's appearance ruined the atmosphere in the car completely, and they spent the rest of the trip in silence.

Even the beautiful scenery outside the windows did nothing to alleviate the tension in the air.

After a while, the car pulled into the courtyard of a lavish palace.

Buddhist elements were imbued in every aspect of the architecture, and its grandness resembled Tawan's mansion greatly. It was obvious that the palace had stood strong against the test of time.

After the car slowed to a halt, the chauffeur alighted first and opened the door on Tawan's side.

Tawan alighted and walked over to Zong Yanxi's side to help her out of the car.

She looked up at Tawan when she emerged from the car. "Where is this place?"

"The Grand Palace."

The Grand Palace was the official residence of Thailand's royal family.

The King was hosting a birthday party for his daughter that day, but everyone knew that his true intention was to search for a suitable son-in-law.

One third of the young men invited to the party that day had caught the King's attention in one way or another, and Tawan was one of them.

The other person was Pongsom Tubthong, who held a high-ranking position in the military, just like Tawan.

In Thailand, the King was regarded as the president of the country, the head of the military, as well as the religious leader. The King had the authority to enact laws through the parliament, conduct administrative duties through the cabinet and maintain order through the court.

In fact, the members of parliament were directly appointed by the King, and the King's signature is required for a newly-elected Prime Minister to assume office. The Prime Minister was required to get down on his knees should he meet the King or any member of the royal family.

From a practical point of view, being the head of the military would bestow one with the highest control over the country. Although the King held the highest position in the military according to the Constitution, the higher-ups in the military held on to the most power.

The current King was well-respected by the military, though Thailand's history was not free from military coups and attempts to overthrow the monarchy.

In order to keep the military under his control, the King treated the military like his family members, which had worked well so far.

“Tawan!” Amp exclaimed as she rushed over, looking dazzling in her fiery red gown and makeup. Her smile froze the moment she saw Zong Yanxi emerging from the car. “Why did you take *her* along?” she questioned.

Tawan simply ignored her and extended one hand to Zong Yanxi, who accepted it gratefully.

They exchanged glances before Tawan helped Zong Yanxi out from the car.

Amp’s eyes were going to fall out from staring at them in disbelief. “Tawan! I’ll kill myself if you don’t stop doing that!”

“Whatever. Suit yourself,” Tawan huffed.

“You...you jerk!” Amp screamed, stomping her foot angrily.

“Amp!” a voice called from behind. Pongsom walked over and grabbed his sister’s arm before she could do anything rash. “What the hell are you doing?”

As he spoke, he studied Zong Yanxi from head to toe. He understood why his sister would be so jealous of her, since her crush on Tawan was an open secret among their family members. Unfortunately for Amp, Tawan had no feelings for her whatsoever.

Tawan was a gentleman, but also a stubborn one. No one would ever be able to force him into doing things he did not enjoy.

As a result, Amp’s family tried to get her to give up on Tawan and find herself another man to marry, but she adamantly refused to do so.

“Who would this fine lady be?” Pongsom asked Tawan with a smile.

“Meet Ms. Zong Yanxi, a good friend of mine,” Tawan answered. “This is Pongsom Tubthong and his younger sister Amp Tubthong from the noble Tubthong family.”

Amp and Pongsom’s father was a marquis just like Tawan. While Tawan’s father had already passed away, Pongsom’s father was still alive and well, and therefore Pongsom had yet to inherit his father’s title as marquis.

Even so, he held a high position in the military, and the King held him in high regard.

However, Tawan was simply miles ahead of him. Not only did he hold a high position in the military, but he also had a marvelous reputation and the title of marquis, despite his solitude.

After all, his ancestors have long been revered by the people of Thailand.

Zong Yanxi nodded and grinned in silence.

She had yet to master the Thai language, and Tawan had introduced Pongsom and Amp to her in Mandarin.

She decided to speak as little as possible to prevent herself from getting misunderstood.

Amp had yet to find out about the meaning of the accessories Zong Yanxi had been wearing, but Pongsom knew about it. He sighed inwardly and asked, "She seems to be much more than just a friend..."

Tawan simply smiled, and Pongsom took it as a confirmation of their relationship status.

Zong Yanxi had no idea what they were bantering about, so she stood by in silence.

"It's going to start soon. Shall we go in?" Tawan asked, gesturing to the door.

Amp glared at Zong Yanxi, and Pongsom tugged at her arm urgently. "Don't do anything stupid," he warned.

"But..."

"Now's not the time!" Pongsom chided.

Amp feared her brother's wrath, and she had no choice but to shut up and follow her brother into the palace.

"Let's go," Tawan whispered.

"Alright," Zong Yanxi said.

She held on to Tawan's arm as they passed through two layers of security and entered the palace grounds.

"Just hold on to me, and you'll be fine," Tawan told her.

He was actually pretty reluctant to bring Zong Yanxi over, since she might get overwhelmed. However, the alternative was to be forced to marry the princess, which was the last thing he wanted.

He had no choice but to bring Zong Yanxi in the end.

However, Zong Yanxi did not seem to realize his true intentions. *He might just be in need of a female companion!* she had thought.

All the guests that day were the youths from the noble families, and the older ones chose not to come to give the spotlight to the potential suitors.

Every guest, be it man or woman, dressed extravagantly for the occasion. Most of the female guests wore shiny silk dresses lined with lace, which made them look more cute than sexy.

Zong Yanxi was the only woman of East Asian descent amongst all the guests, and she carried herself with the air of a noblewoman. As she walked, her long, pale legs played a game of hide-and-seek with everyone's eyes beneath her black gown, making her even more attractive than she already was.

The fact that she stood next to Tawan for the whole event made her the center of attention wherever she went.