

I Want a Lifetime with You

Chapter 219

Shi Nuan was startled, but she quickly recovered. “Pei Jingxiu!”

Pei Jingxiu returned Shi Nuan’s greeting with a slight nod, “Sister-in-law, where’s Yan?”

“Yan’s inside and Aunt Ning has arrived as well.” Shi Nuan smiled and nodded politely in the girl’s direction, “Pei Jingxiu, this is...?”

“Xi, you can call her sister-in-law.”

“Sister-in-law.” Ning Xi had a honeyed voice — it was likeable, which was a stark opposite from the cold voice from yesterday night.

Shi Nuan smiled as she nodded, “Hi, I’m Shi Nuan. Please come in!”

Shi Nuan led Pei Jingxiu and Ning Xi into the house and had them change into home slippers, “Pei Jingxiu, Xi, come on in!”

Shi Nuan guided them to the living room and then entered the kitchen to prepare some tea. Pei Jingxiu squinted and saw Ning Xin, who was sitting on the couch. Her figure seemed to overlap with his memory of her. “Aunt.”

The man’s voice penetrated the room with a hint of respect. Ning Xin was at a loss as she studied the man in front of her.

The man had a lean figure and a charming face which somewhat reminded her of the child from her memory. The child who was stubborn as a mule had now turned into a tender gentleman.

“Are you Xiu?” Ning Xin beckoned him over with a wave of the hand, “Come, let aunt have a look at you. It’s been years since I last saw you and you’re all grown up now.”

“Aunt, I’m Xiu!” Pei Jingxiu approached Ning Xin and knelt by her side while he gripped her hand, “It’s been a long time, how’s your health recently?”

“I’m fine! Same old, same old. I’m no better than I was, but at least it can’t get any worse, and I’m contented.” Ning Xin let out a sigh as she observed Pei Jingxiu closely and remarked, “I never thought we would see each other again. How many years have passed since we last met? I couldn’t believe it when Yan told me that you’re back. Xiu, how have you been doing abroad all these years?”

“I’m good, thanks, aunt.” Pei Jingxiu respected Ning Xin greatly and let Ning Xin grasp his hand, “Aunt, how have you been for the past few years?”

“All is well.” Ning Xin smiled, “I never thought I could see you again, did you laboriously come to Jiang City?”

Pei Jingxiu nodded. Ning Xin furrowed her brows, “Why didn’t you go back to Sheen City? And this is...?” Ning Xin glanced over Pei Jingxiu’s shoulder and noticed the young girl. The girl looked familiar to Ning Xin, but she couldn’t put her finger on her identity, “Xiu, is this your girlfriend?”

Pei Jingxiu chuckled and shook his head, “Aunt, have a closer look.” Pei Jingxiu stood to his feet as he spoke, “Xi, come closer, let aunt take a look at you.”

Ning Xi slightly frowned with traces of impatience on her babyface. She seemed discouraged, but eventually gave in and shuffled toward Ning Xin. Ning Xin’s eyes grew wide in astonishment as she pointed Ning Xi, “You... you...”

“Xi, greet her,” Pei Jingxiu urged in a cold tone.

Ning Xi clenched her fists, “Aunt.”

“Xiu, is she Xi?” Ning Xin was still in disbelief, “She’s Xi?”

“Yes, aunt!” Pei Jingxiu’s answer confirmed Ning Xin’s suspicions. Ning Xin’s face grew pale and she asked dubiously after a long silence, “How are you so sure that she’s Xi?” After all, Ning Xi was only about four or five years old when she went missing. No one could prove that this girl was truly Ning Xi.

For all these years, the Ning family had tried to search for Ning Xi, but their efforts were to no avail. Ning Xin was thunderstruck that this girl had suddenly appeared before her, claiming to be Ning Xi.

“I know it’s hard to believe it because I couldn’t believe it either when I first saw her. At that time, I even thought that it was incredible that two people could look so alike,” Pei Jingxiu said and asked Ning Xi to show her arm, “I have not brought Ning Xi back to the Ning family yet, but I decided to let aunt meet Xi first. You carried Xi when she was young, and she has a birthmark on her arm. I’m not sure if you still remember it.”

“Yes, I remember it,” Ning Xin nodded; the birthmark was very obvious and impossible to overlook.

Pei Jingxiu rolled up Ning Xi’s sleeves and revealed her slender upper arm. It was full of wounds and bruises, which had gradually turned into cicatrizes over time. Ning Xin was horrified by the sight but she confirmed Ning Xi’s identity once she saw the heart-shaped birthmark on her arm. “Yes, Xi has the exact birthmark on her arm, though it was much smaller when she was little. Are you really Xi?”

“I don’t know.” Ning Xi shook her head and turned toward Pei Jingxiu, “My name is Nine. Brother said I’m from the Ning family when he found me.”

Ning Xi's attitude was cold and aloof, which didn't complement her babyface, but this made Ning Xin even more certain that the girl in front of her was indeed Ning Xi who went missing years ago. "Xiu, how did you find Xi? It's been years..."

"I found her by coincidence," Pei Jingxiu said. At the same time, Shi Nuan came out of the kitchen with two cups of tea, "Please have a seat." She looked at Fu Chengyan, "Yan, I want to have a walk, can you come with me?"

Fu Chengyan narrowed his eyes and nodded. "Alright." He got up and spoke to Ning Xin, "Aunt, I'll leave you to talk with Pei Jingxiu. May and I are going for a walk."

After Fu Chengyan and Shi Nuan left, Ning Xin gestured for Ning Xi to sit next to her, "Relax, I won't bite."

"I'm not nervous!" Ning Xi smiled, "I'm just not used to it."

"All these years, we have been searching within the country, but we never thought of expanding the scope of search overseas. I was abroad for the past few years and saw Xi by coincidence. I learned that she was adopted by a Chinese-American couple, and had been living abroad all this while, which was why we couldn't trace Xi's whereabouts."

Pei Jingxiu handed an adoption certificate over to Ning Xin. "I didn't want to mess this up, so I conducted a thorough investigation. Xi was abducted at a young age, so she doesn't recall the incident. She had been tossed around a few times before she was eventually adopted by this Chinese American couple from an orphanage."

Ning Xin unfolded the adoption certificate with her trembling hands and was shocked as she skimmed its content. She took Ning Xi's arm and tears rolled down her cheek as she took in the scars at a glance, "Oh, poor child, they..."

“I’m okay.” Ning Xi felt uncomfortable and avoided Ning Xin’s touch. “I got these when I was little and I don’t really remember it. My life was great when I was in the United States and my foster parents are nice to me.”

“Really?”

“Yes!” Ning Xi nodded, “Actually, I might not have come back if brother never found me.” Ning Xi remained silent for a while, “I don’t plan to stay for long. I just want to meet my biological parents, and I’ll leave after that. I won’t disrupt their life.”

“That’s nonsense. You’re part of the Ning family. Since Xiu found you, there’s no doubt that you’ll return to the Ning family. But why did you guys come to me?” Ning Xin was dubious, “Xiu, you know I have grievances with the Ning family when I married your uncle. Since then, I’ve had little to no contact with them.”

“Aunt, I understand what you mean. I was just hoping that Xi and aunt can do an avuncular DNA test. As you can see, even though Xi and her biological mother are very much alike, and she has a birthmark on her arm, these will prove nothing without a DNA test. The current situation of the Ning family is rather complicated, so it’s better not to involve,” Pei Jingxiu explained his intentions.

Ning Xin nodded with understanding, “You want me to do an avuncular DNA test with Xi since I’m her aunt. If we really have blood ties, there’s a high possibility that our blood types will match. If the result turns out negative, you won’t bring her back to the Ning family?”

Ning Xin once again nodded in agreement, “You’re very thoughtful, and I understand what you mean. I have no objection to it. But if Xi is really from the Ning family, she would eventually need to return to the Ning family, no matter how complicated the situation becomes.”

“You took the words right out of my mouth.” Pei Jingxiu smiled, “Even though I’m not a biological child of the Ning family, I grew up in the Ning family, and it’s time for me to do something to repay them.”

“Thanks for all that you’ve done.” Ning Xin smiled and held Ning Xi’s hand. “You look exactly like your mother, but...” Ning Xin was hesitant and she swallowed back her words, “So, when are we going to take the blood test?”

“There’s no hurry since I’ll be staying in Jiang City for some time due to my business arrangements. Aunt, you’re still in poor health, so we’ll do it when you feel better.”

“You’re not leaving anytime soon?” Ning Xin was delighted, “That’s great. I will stay at Yan’s for the time being. You should visit often since you’re a friend of Yan. Also, it’s been years since we last saw each other. Yan’s wife, Nuan, is a nice lady, and I think Xi will definitely get along with her.”

“Alright, aunt.” Ning Xi withdrew her hand and sat primly; she was still not used to the closeness.

Ning Xin felt dejected when she saw Ning Xi acting timorous.

Ning Xi must have suffered a lot from being away from home for such a long time.

At this moment, the door swung open and Fu Heng entered with the Osmanthus cake in his hand. He furrowed his brows and his eyes glinted with hostility as he locked his gaze on Pei Jingxiu. Fu Heng’s fury sprang to life when he noticed Ning Xin’s low spirits.

“Who are you guys?”

Fu Heng walked toward Pei Jingxiu. He loomed over the man who was much younger than him.

The young man held his ground and never lost his composure despite Fu Heng’s intimidation.

Both Fu Heng and Pei Jingxiu traded glances. Finally, Pei Jingxiu curled his lips and got to his feet, “Hi, uncle. I’m Pei Jingxiu.”

“Pei Jingxiu?” Fu Heng turned toward Ning Xin, “You said you wanted to eat Osmanthus cake, but it’s just your excuse to send me away to meet someone from the Ning family, isn’t it?”

“Heng, it’s not what you think. This has nothing to do with the Ning family.” Ning Xin immediately clarified, “Xiu had left the Ning family a few years ago and he came to visit me this time.”