

Stealing Your Heart Chapter 309

Zong Jinghao's smile had melted off his face, as it was soon replaced by his usual chilly expression.

Meanwhile, Cheng Yuxiu emerged from the kitchen carrying a plate of cooked dumplings, only to see him glaring at her from the dining room.

She grimaced inwardly and forced a smile onto her face. "The dumplings are ready. Do you want some?"

Zong Jinghao glanced at the dumplings on the plate and noticed that all of them were the beautifully shaped ones, which further annoyed him. He ignored Yuxiu completely and pulled out a chair to sit down with his daughter on his lap.

Cheng Yuxiu stood by awkwardly, unsure of what to do next.

The two kids were so engrossed in making the dumplings and they did not even notice Cheng Yuxiu standing there with the cooked dumplings.

Lin Xinyan was about to sample one when Zong Qifeng walked over and sat down by the head of the table. "Give it to me."

Cheng Yuxiu obeyed him, with her gaze downcast.

"I'll get the vinegar!" Lin Xichen announced, sliding off his seat and rushing into the kitchen.

Zong Qifeng watched as he disappeared into the kitchen with a gentle smile on his face. His own son had distanced himself from him and Cheng Yuxiu ever since their marriage, yet his little grandson turned out to be a caring soul.

Lin Xichen grinned upon returning with a bottle of vinegar. "Remember to give me lots of red packet money, Grandpa!"

Usually, Lin Xinyan and Zhuang Zijin would be the ones giving him red packets every Chinese New Year, and he loved the thrill of receiving them.

After all, New Year's was just another occasion for celebration and fun.

Zong Qifeng chuckled. "Sure, boy."

Lin Ruixi began to grow jealous. "I want one too!"

"Of course! I won't forget about you, Ruixi!" Zong Qifeng cooed, stroking her head lovingly. "Come here. Grandpa will feed you some dumplings. Let's see if they're yummy or not!"

Lin Ruixi clambered onto Zong Qifeng's lap immediately at the mention of food. Zong Qifeng picked up a dumpling with his chopsticks and blew on it before setting it onto her plate. "Blow on it first before you eat it, or it's going to burn your throat."

The little girl giggled in his embrace.

Lin Xichen managed to get a small bowl of vinegar and other condiments with the help of the kitchen maids before hurrying back to the dining room.

Zong Jinghao sat alone, completely detached from the happy scene before him.

Feeling left out, he stood up to leave, only for Lin Xinyan to call out to him.

"Can you help me?" she asked, hoping to strengthen their familial bonds.

"I don't know how to," he answered.

“I’ll teach you,” she offered, smiling.

Zong Jinghao glanced scornfully at the dumplings that she had made. *You’ll teach me? How?*

Sensing his disdain, Lin Xinyan tossed a glance at Cheng Yuxiu and suggested, “Mom’s pretty good at this. Why don’t you ask her?”

Cheng Yuxiu tensed up, her heart rate speeding up as she waited for a response.

What if he agrees to it?

She looked down in anticipation.

However, he simply looked away and muttered flippantly, “Not interested.”

Cheng Yuxiu felt as though her heart had fallen into a bottomless pit. *Looks like he’s still not ready to accept me into the family...*

Zong Qifeng’s eyes were on the kids, but his words seemed to be directed at Zong Jinghao. “Do you like Grandma?”

“Of course!” they chirped in unison.

Zong Qifeng stroked Lin Ruixi’s head lovingly. “Yeah... You won’t even have time to regret it when you lose them.”

Ruixi stared at him and blinked in confusion. “A grandpa gave us gifts the last time we came to visit Grandma...”

Zong Jinghao looked up with a start. *When was the last time they came?*

Huh...looks like they have been doing something behind my back!

Lin Xinyan glanced at her daughter but chose not to say anything. After all, Lin Ruixi was not as mature as her brother, and there was no point trying to explain things to someone as sensitive as Zong Jinghao.

Cheng Yuxiu however, began to panic. She nudged Lin Xinyan and uttered, "Hey, you should take a break. The food will be ready soon."

Lin Xinyan understood what she meant and turned to Zong Jinghao. "Let's finish this."

Cheng Yuxiu sighed. *I might have been the one who had ruined the mood here...*

Lin Ruixi munched on the dumplings, completely unaware of the tension in the air. "I want the vinegar!"

"You're so greedy!" Zong Qifeng exclaimed, tickling her nose. He picked up a dumpling with his chopsticks and dipped it in the vinegar. "Here, I've done it for you."

Lin Ruixi giggled and took a bite out of the dumpling.

Zong Jinghao exited the dining room and retreated into another room in silence.

Cheng Yuxiu took the plate of dumplings in Lin Xinyan's hand and urged her, "You should go and check on him."

Lin Xinyan pursed her lips together. "He's ill in the mind. He won't recover without the right intervention."

Truthfully, she knew Zong Jinghao pretty well. If she had been Zong Jinghao and if her father had married another woman within a month of her mother's death, she would have rebelled as well.

“I’ll go check on him,” she announced, tugging the apron off her body and walking upstairs.

Cheng Yuxiu had cleaned out the upstairs room for Lin Xinyan’s family to stay in while she and Zong Qifeng stayed downstairs.

When Lin Xinyan entered the room Zong Jinghao was in, she saw him standing by the wide-open window, as the cold wind blew.

She walked over to him and shut the windows. “Aren’t you cold?”

“My heart is cold,” Zong Jinghao replied without moving an inch. *I’m disappointed because my wife isn’t on the same page as me!*

Lin Xinyan paused for a moment. “You’re mad at me?”

“Why would I be mad at you?” he retorted.

“You’re mad that I’m close to her, and that I tried to rope you into helping her out?” Lin Xinyan asked without holding back.

Zong Jinghao stared at her in silence. *Doesn’t she know what’s going on between us?*

Why is she being so blunt?

Lin Xinyan hugged him and rested her head against his chest. “I know that you have your reservations, but can’t we let bygones be bygones?”

Zong Jinghao did not hug her in return. *I can’t just let it go...*

I really can’t...

He had been told that Wen Xian had injured her leg while trying to protect him from a car accident. When he was five, he had knocked over a pot of hot soup by accident, and Wen Xian had burnt herself trying to push him away from the spill. The scar that it had left behind had never healed properly.

He could never forget those injuries.

He feared that Wen Xian would come back to haunt him if he made friends with Yuxiu.

“I can’t do it,” he refused flatly.

Lin Xinyan frowned. “So you’re not going to address the problem?”

“So what?”

I won't accept Yuxiu into the family no matter what!

Lin Xinyan opened her mouth to protest but was interrupted by a knock on the door.