My Wife is an Aloof Beauty, Chapter 24

Edward was a man of wealth and status. He was supposed to meet Leo Ouyang at Mochan Restaurant at 7, but he arrived at 7:15. He never felt the need to arrive early, and no one ever challenged him over his penchant for tardiness.

The waiter ushered Edward to the room booked by Leo Ouyang and knocked on the door.

A deep voice came from within. *"Come in."* Edward entered the room, and his eyes were drawn to Leo Ouyang's smile.

"Boss Mu! Nice to meet you." Leo said. *"Please...come in."* Leo stood up as Edward approached. His behavior confused Edward. Why did his father-in-law call him *"Boss Mu?"* Why so formal?

Edward decided to play along, also adopting a formal tone. *"Mr. Ouyang. It's been too long. Sorry, I'm late."*

"It's alright. I know you are very busy. I'm so glad you could find the time to be here." Leo's voice was unctuous, his smile too big by half. Edward regarded his father-in-law. Leo's daughter, Daisy, was truly a beautiful woman, and Edward could see where she got her looks.

"Nothing is more important than our relationship, sir, " Edward replied. He could be tactful too, though his suspicion was raised. Something was definitely not right.

"Edward! Glad to see you." a sweet voice rang out. Edward looked around for the source of the voice. He found it: a pretty woman, sitting at a table.

"Mr. Ouyang, who is she?" She seemed familiar, and she knew who he was. But who was she? Edward was at a loss.

"Oh, This is my daughter. Edward, meet Mary." Leo's hands moved, indicating who was who. *"Mary...Edward. She just returned from abroad but she can't wait to see you. That's why I arranged this little soirée."* Leo Ouyang said with a smile. That smile again. The I-want-something-from-you smile.

Edward was more than a little confused. And suspicious. There's more to this meeting than just a social occasion, he thought. And why didn't the old man invite Daisy? Surely Mary would like to see her sister.

"Oh. Please forgive me. I didn't know that she was your daughter." Remembering his manners, he looked at Mary and said, *"Nice to meet you."* Although questions were written on his face, he still remained polite.

"Boss Mu, that's very kind of you. Let's have dinner." Leo waited for his daughter to sit, and then took a chair. Leo Ouyang was a shrewd man. He worked many years in commercial circles, and was quite successful. 'He wants something.' Edward thought. 'But what?'

"Edward, sit here please." Mary indicated the chair next to her.

Edward sat and said, *"Thank you."* He still thought formality might be wise. He smiled and said, *"Far be it for me to refuse a beautiful woman."*

"You're welcome." Mary blushed a little. Mary was infatuated with Edward, and had been since they first met. But Edward's grandfather insisted that only Leo Ouyang's flesh and blood daughter could marry Edward. Mary was his stepdaughter, and therefore not eligible. So he got Daisy. But Mary had heard that Edward wasn't in love with Daisy at all, so she returned from abroad. She was going to get as close to him as possib

le. 'Daisy, you lost!' she thought. 'He's mine.' And a sweetly mischievous smile crept across her face.

She knew Daisy wouldn't take this lying down. 'We'll see, Daisy.' she thought to herself. 'We'll see...'

Edward quietly took in his surroundings.

"Boss Mu. I know your business is thriving. I am hoping you could teach Mary some business skills in your spare time." Leo said humbly. 'Daisy would be incensed if she heard this.' Edward thought. Daisy's father loved his stepdaughter more than his own kin. He would do everything for Mary, including debasing himself.

"Mr. Ouyang, don't be humble. You're a successful businessman. I'm only a journeyman. There's a lot I could learn from you." Edward politely replied. It was crazy. Leo didn't come for business, but for his stepdaughter instead of his biological daughter.

"Boss Mu, I'm getting old. I can't keep up with young people anymore. You're still young, and might be able to talk to Mary more easily."

"Well, sir, how about a toast first?" Edward said. Leo Ouyang smiled brightly.

"Cheers, Edward!" Mary was getting annoyed. 'Doesn't he like me?' she thought. 'I am neither underdressed nor overdressed today. Why is he paying so much attention to Dad?'

Her reverie was broken by Edward's perfect pitch. *"Ms. Ouyang...Cheers."* Edward clinked his glass with hers and drank the wine with a gorgeous smile.

Mary seemed older than Daisy, more mature. She must be Daisy's elder sister. She made such strenuous efforts to get close to Edward, but why? Jealousy. She was jealous of Daisy. She wanted to replace her sister as Edward's wife.

Although people tagged him as a playboy, Edward would not stray. He was a man of principle. He knew it was not appropriate to be with his wife's sister. Edward grew up abroad, and knew nothing about Daisy's family. He didn't know Mary was not Leo Ouyang's biological daughter, nor how his wife had suffered growing up.

Mary was spellbound by the handsome man sitting next to her. She wanted him, so much. So much! But Edward showed little interest.

"Edward, Can I work at your company? I'm not real business-savvy, but Dad wants me to manage his company. I hope I can learn from you." said Mary in a timid whisper. She looked at Edward and imagined kissing his sexy lips.

Edward noticed her blazing expression but he ignored it. His mouth became firm, his visage stern.

"Miss Ouyang, I'm sorry. I can't even come close to your profits. Not only that, we're in different industries. I don't think I can do this." Edward said. His finger tapped the table. His finger kept tapping the table. This movement indicated that he had grown impatient.

"You'll find I'm an eager student." Mary Ouyang insisted. Six years ago, he slipped through her fingers. She wouldn't let this happen again. 'This is my one chance to get close to him.' she thought.

"Well, in that case, how can I say no? Welcome to my company." Edward's words were careful, measured. 'But, ' he complained silently, 'this won't be easy. This woman doesn't even know herself.'