

At a certain seven-star hotel.

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A large, magnificent ballroom had been meticulously set up for what seemed to be a very important and very high class event. The chandeliers that dangled from the ceiling provided little sparkles of light from one end of the room to the other, giving the room a feeling of being under a bright, starry night sky. Many round tables were dotted around the room, decorated tastefully with a red and gold motif, colours of which represented wealth, prosperity and good fortune.

This masquerade ball certainly was a display of wealth and prosperity, from the crystal champagne glasses and silver and gold cutlery to the stunning paintings and decorations on the walls. But that wasn't what caught one's eye! Inside the ballroom were groups of people, each wearing millions of dollars worth of clothing, jewelry and other accessories. The women's jewelry - their earrings, necklaces, bracelets, tiaras, rings - altogether shone brighter than the lights inside the room. Anyone who caught a glimpse inside the room immediately knew that this was a gathering of the most influential, rich and powerful people. And of course, this being a masquerade ball, each person, man and woman, wore a mask which covered a part of or all of their face, adding even more mystery to the already mysterious identities of the people inside.

Walking inside with her hand on Mr. Black Leather Jacket's arm, this was the scene that Abi was presented with and her eyes became as wide as saucers as her jaw dropped in awe. She had never seen so much extravagance in her life! The tables, the decorations, the people! Oh My God! No wonder Mr. Qin sent her the dress and jewelry and shoes. He definitely didn't want to be embarrassed by her at this important affair. She was also now extremely grateful that she had asked Kelly to help her dress up tonight, otherwise, she would have felt very out of place; not that she didn't already do so.

She knew that the rich threw parties all the time. Kelly had told her stories of the parties that she had had to attend and she imagined what they would be like in her mind but this... this exceeded her expectations to no end. She never could have imagined such a luxurious affair. She thought parties like this only existed in the fictional books she had read.

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She snapped out of her awestruck daze when Mr. Black Leather jacket guided her towards the champagne fountain. He took a glass and gave it to her before taking one for himself.

"Thank you," she said, taking a small sip.

"For the nerves," he replied as a smirk formed on his face.

She was about to look for a certain handsome creature when she felt a strong presence behind her. Her skin tingled and she immediately knew that she didn't need to look for him anymore. Large, smooth hands landed on her shoulders as he leaned in to whisper in her ear.

"May I have this dance?" His deep, sexy, masculine voice sent shivers down her spine and before she could react, Mr. Qin had already taken her drink and placed it back down on the table. He took her hand and guided her towards the dance floor, where a few other couples were also dancing.

He took one of her hands and smoothly placed it on his lower back and held the other one in his hand. He then slipped his arm behind her and pulled her close to him, leaving no gap between their bodies. Abi's brain had stopped functioning at this point and all she could do was follow his lead.

She was glad that her grandfather taught her how to dance back when she was a teenager but she never would have thought that she would have to use it on a night like this and with a person like him. She never thought that it would feel like this - exhilarating, intense, magical and so much more. She wondered if Cinderella felt this way when she danced with her prince for the very first time.

Her heart was beating so loudly but strangely, she didn't feel tense. She was dancing with him so smoothly, just following his lead and she knew she shouldn't be amazed but she was. He was just so good at this. The way he touched her, the way he led her, the timing of his every movement were all perfectly in time with the music. He was extremely graceful that even she could tell that his movements could only be formed from constant training from a young age. Not only that, she was sure that it could also be from the constant attendance with other noble people of similar backgrounds at events like this. He was noticeably graceful in his movements and adding to it a slight hint of arrogance that was probably drilled into him from birth, she could not think of anyone else who drew everyone's attention without trying, not even the most amazing and successful actors in the world could compare. He was simply magnificent.

Now that she was this close to him, Abi finally had the chance to study his face. His nose, his lips, his jaw and every contour of his face was just... perfect. There was no other word to describe it. Even though he was wearing a mask, she could still see his grayish eyes through them and they were simply spell-binding. She felt like if she ventured close enough, his eyes would pull her in like quicksand, where there was no escape, and she felt like that was what was happening to her right then.

"Penny for your thoughts?" the man finally spoke, startling her from her reverie.

Abi somehow quickly regained her composure as she responded, "I didn't expect that you would bring me to a party like this."

"Don't you like it?"

"I wouldn't say that, but... This is my first time attending a party like this so I feel a little overwhelmed," she confessed and he gave her a soft enchanting smile, flashing a set of perfect, ultra-white teeth. If only his eyes would smile as well.

"You find the party overwhelming, but not me?" He taunted, seemingly quite amused before his mood shifted yet again. "Tell me about yourself," he added, now serious.

"I am an only child and I'm currently living with my grandparents and my father."

"Are you a student?" Surprisingly, he didn't ask about her mother. Everyone else she said that to, would usually follow up with 'how about your mother?' but this man surprisingly didn't. This was perhaps a very good thing because until now, Abi was still unable to comfortably talk about her mother.

"No, I graduated last year."

"What course?"

"Music."

"What do you do now? Create music?"

"No. My family runs an orphanage so I am currently helping there for now. I assist the teachers, read stories to the kids and teach music lessons as well."

Abi didn't know why he wanted to know these trivial things about her and she couldn't fathom his interest at all, but he continued to stare at her with those penetrating eyes, as if her normal life's story was somehow interesting.

She knew it was far from interesting. She really didn't have anything worth telling him, now that she thought about it. Her life was utterly normal and peaceful, so peaceful that most people would think it was boring. She could not think of a single interesting thing to tell him because nothing interesting happened to her before he showed up in her life.

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So before the man could ask again, Abi was quick to beat him this time and asked him a question first. "Mr. Qin, what's your full name?"