

You Don't Know Me *(Prologue)*

Most of the main characters in my stories have been men with a protective nature who meet up with a woman somewhere along the line who needs to be rescued. This becomes the basis of their relationship. What if I try to write a story about a strong woman who doesn't need a man. She has a close man friend who is timid and shy? He secretly loves her. He stays in the background until the one day when she really needs him.

This story is inspired by a song sung by Ray Charles. “You don't know me”
Here are a part of the lyrics:

You give your hand to me, and then, you say hello
And I can hardly speak
My heart is beating so
And anyone can tell
You think you know me well
But you don't know me,

You give your hand to me
And then you say goodbye
I watch you walk away beside the lucky guy
Oh, you'll never ever know, the one who loved you so
No, you don't know me

Linjin was raised in an orphanage in a small village in China not far from Beijing. Her name means “Person with great inner and outer beauty”. She had been born with a serious heart condition and her mother didn't have the money to pay for treatment. Because of her weakened condition, she was often picked on. If it hadn't been for Chang, she might not have survived. He protected and defended her. He witnessed the day she was chosen for adoption and was both happy and sad. Once she got tall enough to gaze out of the second story window, she would spend hours watching the compound gate dreaming of a day when her mother would walk through and take her home. Providence must have been shining on her, but it wasn't her mother who saved her. A gentle caring man took her in. He found some specialists that fixed her heart condition. He owned and ran a food stall in the local street across from a prosperous restaurant. He specialized in spicy shrimp and his business was thriving. The locals loved his recipe. Linjin was unaware that her father, (she thought of him as that) knew her mother in the past. Liwei (pronounced Lee Way) kept this secret from her. She was soon

old enough to assist him. She shopped for fresh vegetables and seafood for the food stall. All the sellers knew her and always gave her the best of their lot. She took orders, cleaned tables, and washed the dishes. She always called him Dad. Years went by and she was now a young woman.

Once Chang was old enough to leave the orphanage, he was industrious and prosperous in his own right. He had traveled abroad and learned finance. He returned to the village and got hired at one of the top firms near the village. He often ate at the food stall, and due to their former relationship, it was presupposed that he and Linjin would marry one day. They felt that they were truly soulmates.

Linjin had made friends with a guy who she thought was a waiter at the restaurant across from their food stall. The truth be told, he owned the restaurant. His father had made a fortune, but that stress and effort had lead him to an early grave. Chen had inherited it all. Besides the restaurant, he also owned several high end hotels and a sports gym. He spent many hours there training his combat skills. Linjin was utterly stunning as far as woman's looks were concerned. She was aware of her beauty as there were plenty of mirrors around for her not to notice. She did not use that as a tool to get what she wanted. Her charm was not movie star obvious like Marilyn Monroe or Grace Kelly. It was more like Sally Fields or Meg Ryan. Cute with a warming personality that was extremely attractive.

You be the judge!



She was very independent based on her former experience in the orphanage. She needed no man to prove her worth. She also possessed a kind heart. Chen cherished his time talking to Linjin. She considered him just a friend

although he was totally enamored by her. He kept his feelings for her hidden and bottled up.

Linjin's father sent her abroad for an education. She was returning home looking forward to seeing Chang again thinking that it was time for them to get married. ~~Unknownst to her~~, (I thought I was never going to use that word again), she was unaware that Chang had been busy climbing the corporate ladder with the help of the CEO's stepdaughter whom he had taken as his new girlfriend. Linjin was still in his heart, but greed had driven him. He needed to tell Linjin that they must break up.

You Don't Know Me
(Chapter 1)

Chang met her as she arrived at the airport. He told her that he had something important to tell her. She imagined that the time had come for him to propose. He took her to a fancy restaurant and not wanting to drag this out, he told her he wanted to break up. He just said that he wanted to expand his experience and did not give her any other explanation. Linjin at first just sat there stunned. Then without eating or saying anything, she got up and walked out of the restaurant and called a cab to return back home.

Linjin was deeply hurt by this change of events, but also perplexed. Why the sudden change of heart? There must be something going on that she was not aware of. She had been discussing this with Chen. You are a friend that I trust and feel I can talk to. Secretly he was happy in one respect, but also felt sorry for Linjin in another. He also didn't like the term friend. He was thinking how could change his status from friend to boyfriend? At the moment, he was too shy to even suggest this. The most likely answer is that there is another woman involved. I was thinking the same thing. I don't know how I can investigate this. He works for the big finance company in Beijing. Why don't you apply for a job there? You also studied finance while abroad. I don't think I have a chance of being hired there. I have no experience. Maybe I can help with that. How? I have lots of contacts in the financial world. Linjin was thinking, there is more to Chen than meets the eye. She thought he was only a busboy and waiter.

He heads back toward his restaurant. A moment later he hears a van come to a screeching halt near the food stand. As he turns around, he sees a couple of dudes grab Linjin and drag her into the van. He starts to run to help but the van takes off. He quickly hails a nearby taxi and tells them to pursue. The van weaves back and forth through the traffic and ends up in an industrial part of the city. Chen arrives just in time to see them drag her into a warehouse. What in the heck is going on? He needs to look at the situation without being discovered. There is a glass window on the second floor. He shimmies up a drain pipe and enters lucky that it was unlocked. From his vantage point in the loft, he sees that they have tied Linjin to a chair and are interrogating her. You are Linsu. Where is our money? You think you can just walk around not being noticed. I don't know what you are talking about. Who is this Linsu. Don't think we are stupid. You are obvious Linsu. I think you have the wrong person. One of the dudes slaps her across the face. Maybe you will be more willing to tell us without your clothes on. As he starts to unbutton her blouse. Chen has seen enough. He bounds down the stairway and flies across the room. He first hits the dude who slapped her, then he disables the other two. He never thought his kung fu training would come in handy until now. Not wanting any further part of him, the gang hobbles away. He unties Linjin and asks if she is alright. She stands up and embraces him. How is it that you are here? I saw what happened back at the food stall and I hailed a taxi and followed. We need to go to the police station and report this.

In a remote and shady part of Thailand, Linsu is in a ring fighting another kick boxer. Even though he is a male, he is no match for her. She has taken some hits, but eventually she knocks him out with a spinning round kick. This is how she make her money. It is also one of the reasons she had to flee Beijing. She was supposed to take a dive in one of the underground fights that the low life's gamble on. Instead, her competitive spirit took over and she upended her challenger. The gang leader had put a sizable bet on her losing. Kwang always accompanied her to these battles. He was a wannabe boyfriend, but Linsu always made it clear that she wasn't interested. He was smart enough to know they were in danger. He quickly whisked her away and that is why they found themselves in another city.

She took her winnings from the latest fight and went to visit her mother Xian. (Pronounced She Ann). She was in a care facility for woman with mental problems. Xian's mental condition was a result of her guilt over leaving her other daughter at an orphanage. Linsu was not aware that her mother had another daughter. In fact, Linjin was really her twin sister. That is why the gang kidnapped Linjin and demanded she repay the money their boss had lost. Her mother often called out Linjin's name in her sleep. Linsu just thought it was another symptom of her declining metal health.

Liwei had spent years trying to find Xian. It was during that search that he discovered she had sent Linjin to an orphanage. That is why he adopted her. Back at the food stall, Chen and Linjin pondered on why she had been kidnapped. Nothing came to mind. Chen, you mentioned that you might be able to help me get a job at Fortune Finance Corporation. That is where Chang was now working. I personally know the CEO and he owes me a favor. Linjin is now even more curious about Chen's background.

Linjin was in the elevator riding up to the receptionist desk to the executive floor. The elevator was somewhat crowded and a man was standing there next to an attractive girl. She started to complain that he is too close and she asks him to get out of the elevator. Linjin calls out, no problem, I can wait for the next one as she steps out on the next open door floor leaving more space. She waits for the next elevator and continues her ascent.

She is directed to an office conference room and is herded in with a dozen or more applicants. They all sit down and are given some tea or hot water while they wait. The girl who complained about the man next to her was across from her. Her arrogance was apparent. She said to the rest of the group, I hope you don't get your hopes up. I am probably the most qualified person for this opening. You can save yourself some time if you just leave now.

The door opens and the man who she complained about walked through. You should have seen her face as it turned crimson red. As it turned out, he was the CEO and the one conducting the interviews. He listened to all give their names and high points on their resumes. After that, he thanked them for

attending. Our HR department will let you know who has passed. As they were filing out, he called out Linjin's name. Miss, can you please stay. Miss arrogance took notice and her disapproval was evident.

After all had left the room he said, please report to the HR department you are hired. She was in shock. Why would you hire me over all those others? I like a person who is cordial and I did read your resume. Even though you don't have experience, I believe you will do well here. With that he got up and left.

Chang was in a heated discussion with his new girlfriend. How can you let my former girlfriend work here? It wasn't me who hired her, it was my dad. Apparently, she knows a friend who is a good client of my father and he recommended her to him. Other than that, I don't know why he hired her. Don't worry, let her stay here for the time being and I will find some reason to get rid of her. Two days later, Linjin was escorted to her own desk. Next to her was a coworker named Linda. Not a typical Chinese name, but she had been schooled in the US and she preferred to be called by that name. For the purpose of this story I will call her Invisible Linda.

Author's note:

All my stories so far involve woman characters who are beautiful and stunning, if not truly ravishing. This must be a flaw in my own character. Only thinking the attractive ones are worth a story line. I will try to correct that flaw in this story. Invisible Linda was a plain stocky woman. Not fat mind you, but didn't have a flattering figure. What she lacked in looks, she more than made up for in personality.

Most people have at one time or another checked out the dating sites. You have to read between the lines. "Full bodied woman" means fat. "Good personality" means unattractive.

You are lucky if you were born handsome or beautiful. You don't get credit for that. You had nothing to do with it. God or your parents genes had everything to do with it so don't be arrogant about your looks.

What prompted me to think of this? I remember Dustin Hoffman telling about when he played the part of Mrs. Doubtfire. He used to walk down the street dressed in his movie attire and noticed that no one ever took a second look at him. He was too plain and unattractive. Virtually invisible. Finding the inner beauty of a person is like finding a gold mine.

To continue:

Besides his stepdaughter, the CEO also had a son whom he hoped some day would take over his position. Unfortunately, his son Jake was a jet setter and was only interested in having fun. Of course that was not his given Chinese name, but he had traveled abroad and thought this had a more international ring to it. His father had called him back and wanted him to take a position in the company. The daughter was virtually running the company already, but as typical of Chinese parents, they always favored the son. He had been working there for a couple months and had not shown any ambition.

His half sister Olin called him into a meeting. I know that you aren't interested in working in this company. I have a solution for you. There is an important project that is overdue and has slim chance of coming in under budget. I can give that to you and when it fails, father will realize that you don't have the talent to run the company. Jake thought about this and didn't like the implication. Did he really want to look like a failure in his father's eyes? I will assign Linda as your secretary. She has been here for a while and knows the ropes. OK, I will take it.

Linda had a crush on Jake. She figured her chances of hooking up with him were slim and none. Her chances were about to improve.

Here is a photo of Linda

Hopefully, Invisible Linda will shine like gold in my story.



You Don't Know Me
(Chapter 2)

One day shortly after Linjin started working, she met Chang in the hallway. He assumed she had somehow got the job there in hopes that they could be reconciled and he told her so. Don't flatter yourself. I didn't spend two years getting my master's degree to waste it selling fish. I don't know how you managed to get yourself hired. Don't get too comfortable, new hires don't last too long. You are a new hire too. What skirt have you tied your career to that you got promoted over such a short time? He went silent. I'm not here for you. Even though it was her intention to find the woman who had stole her boyfriend, she found that she liked the challenge. I have moved on. A stab of jealousy hit him. He wondered what she meant by that.

Later in discussions with Olin, Chang suggested she assign Linjin to the same project as her half brother. Why not kill two birds with one stone. Let them both fail and you can fire her. That was how Linjin began working next to Linda.

Olin had named Jake project leader at the next board meeting. He met with Linda and Linjin to discuss how to proceed. The project was indeed in serious trouble. Multiple problems existed. Linda was indeed smart and knew her way around. Together they came up with solutions for most of them with the exception of one big one. They needed more budget. Our idea is a good one. We have to have a venue to present our package to investors. I will ask my sister for more funds. Her answer was no. The company didn't have the money to funnel into a doomed project. The venues around Beijing were expensive. Linda tried to book one that fit their budget, but found that all the venues were already booked. She commented that this was very unusual.

Linjin still talked to Chen in the evening when they shared her father's spicy shrimp. She told him about their current problem. Maybe I can help. What can you do? A new hotel just opened up and after the opening ceremony, there is an empty showroom. How does a restaurant worker have such

connections? It is true that you see me working at the restaurant, but I am more than just a worker. I actually own the restaurant and I also own the after mentioned hotel. Why are you still working if you are that wealthy? This was the first restaurant that my father opened. I could have sold it a dozen times to investors, but it is kind of a nostalgia thing for me. I grew up on this street just like you. I want to preserve the area just like it is.

Linjin told Jake and Linda about this break. They kept it a secret until the last minute. Meanwhile, Linda had sent out invitations to lots of big investors.

It was Chang who suggested that Olin book up all the available venues figuring that would put an end to Jake's project. The presentation went off without a hitch and many investors were onboard.

At the next board meeting, CEO Sheng announced the success of the project and praised his son. Olin and Jake faked their applause. Not only did their plan fail, but Olin had spent lots of wasted money on booking the venues and she would have to cover the cost somehow.

During these weeks working together, Linda and Linjin became good friends. Linda told Linjin about her crush on Jake. How can I get him to notice me? I imagine that with your looks, you have no problem attracting men. That may be true, but it can also be a curse. Attracting the right kind of man is still an issue. You know that Chang and I were destined to be married. All of a sudden he tells me we should break up. Look at all the time I wasted.

Jake wanted to celebrate their success. He arranged for a night out at a fancy restaurant for the next Friday. A couple days away. Linjin asked him to invite Chen. She said it was his idea to use his hotel to stage the presentation. He agreed to that.

Linda asked Linjin for some advice. She did have some ideas. During her time in Paris, she learned much about fashion. She told Linda that she needed a makeover. First we have to go shopping. Your choice of clothing leaves something to be desired. It is too plain. Your hairstyle is too common.

I think you have great features, you just need to accentuate them. If you are present at the dinner it wouldn't matter how nice I looked, Jake would still be looking at you. Don't worry, I have a plan. Linjin told Chen about the upcoming celebration dinner. She also mentioned that Linda wanted to impress Jake. How about you pretend to be my boyfriend? That will give Linda a chance to shine in Jake's eyes knowing that I was already taken. Chen had no problem with that plan. It would be an easy role for him to play.

So Linjin accompanied Linda on a shopping spree and a trip to the salon. Jake had only seen her in her work attire. I told Jake that we would meet him at the restaurant. When we arrived, Jake had already been seated. I walked in with my arm around Chen leaving no question about our status. Jake took that in and then you could see the surprised look in his eyes as he viewed the new Linda. The evening went smoothly and we all enjoyed ourselves on the gourmet food and wine. I was not sure if Jake was swayed by the new Linda, but she definitely made an impression. Chen played the boyfriend role to the tee. A little switch turned on in Linjin's mind. She surprised herself on how easy it was to play Chen's girlfriend.

At the next board meeting, Sheng gave Jake another project. He needed to travel to Thailand to meet some other business people. He decided to take Linjin and Linda with him. Linjin told Chen about the new project. Thailand is a very dangerous place. I have a lot of contacts there and maybe I can smooth things over for you all. He really didn't want Linjin to be out of his sight and was perhaps jealous thinking that she would spend too much time with Jake. He knew of Jake's past reputation with the ladies and was afraid he would take advantage of Linjin. Linjin agreed it would be a good idea for him to join them.

Chang needed to have Olin ascend to the position of CEO after her stepfather retires. With the recent success of Jake, he was worried that his plans would not be realized. Chang secretly hired some goons to accost Jake in Thailand. His instructions were to cripple Jake, but don't harm Linjin. The bandits had their own agenda.

You Don't Know Me (Chapter 3)

Chen sets them up in a nice hotel with a nice discount. He knows many people in the hotel business.

Jake suggests they go out for dinner their first night in Thailand and sample the local cuisine. Everyone thinks this is a great idea. Thailand has some of the best seafood at amazingly low prices. Here is an example:



Jake is a big kick boxing fan and he says they should go watch one that he heard was going to be exciting. Not everyone was thrilled with this idea, but for now, he was the boss.

Thailand's version of kick boxing is called Muay Thai.

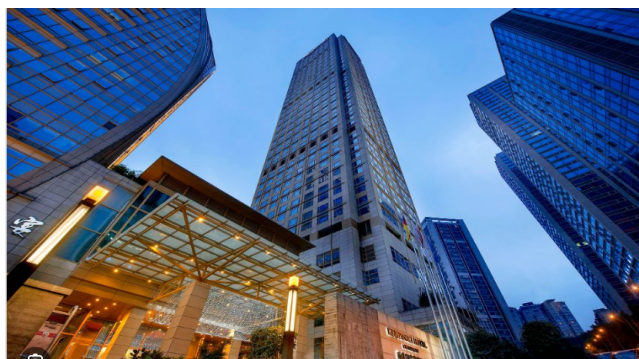


Perhaps it was fate or destiny, but that night Linsu was up on the roster for a fight. When it was her turn to compete, both Chen and Jake say to Linjin, that girl looks just like you. No way. Look at her hair style and strong physic. I don't look anything like that. They all had seats close to the ring. As the bout proceeded, Linsu happened to get a glance at the patrons. She almost got knocked out when she momentarily spotted Linjin. She recovered and continued to her eventual victory.

All four were discussing the similarity between the two woman as they filed out of the arena. Linsu had hurriedly dressed in the locker room and quickly made her way to the outside doors. She arrived in time to see a van pull up and witness several armed gang members corral the four into the van. Kwang had pulled up in his three wheeled motorcycle cart called a tuk tuk that was common in Thailand to pick Linsu up. She immediately told him to follow the van.



Author's note: My wife and I rode in one of these when I wanted to visit the McDonald's in Chongqing. The restaurant was only 3 miles away from where we were staying in the 5 star Kempinski hotel. It took us 45 minutes of life endangering traffic to get there.





To continue:

What is going on? Not sure, but I need to find out. Why not call the police? There is no time, just keep driving or you will lose them. They followed until they could go no further without being seen. Kwang pulls over into some brush hidden from view. Kwang says, I am going to call the police. Go ahead, I will try to see what is going on as she leaves the vehicle and starts walking toward the building she saw them all enter. The area is too remote to have a cell tower so calling the police was out. Kwang decided he couldn't leave Linsu alone so he stayed.

Linsu slips into an unlocked side door. She guesses these gang members don't expect anyone to break in. The midsection is set up with what looked like cages. She suspects this gang is engaged in human trafficking. She hides behind some wooden pallets and hears the leader saying he is going to go back toward town and make a call. In his dealings with Chang, he found out that Jake was the son of a wealthy businessman. The measly money Chang had offered is nothing compared to what he thinks he can get for ransom of the son. He takes five of his gang with him and leaves three to guard. Jake and Chen are in one cage and Linjin and Linda in another. It looked like Chen had been beaten. He probably put up a struggle and was rewarded with bruises for his effort. The boss tells the guards not to harm anyone as they leave.

The gang leader made his call to Jake's dad. I have your son and three others hostage. I am demanding 400,000 yuan for their unharmed release. (About \$50K in US dollars). Sheng had no option other than to agree.

Meanwhile back at the building, the three guards were sitting around a table

drinking and smoking. The biggest guy gets up and heads toward the woman's cage. His buddy says the boss told us not to harm anyone. That is true, but he never said anything about having a little fun. No doubt lust was on his mind. The guy looked like he was pretty heavyset and resembled the Michelin tire character. Linsu knew that she must act fast. As he approached the cage, he took out his key ring. Linsu hit him as hard as she could with a flying kick. She just bounced off of him. Now she was thinking he was more like the Pillsbury Doughman. His two buddies saw her attack and just laughed. Realizing that her chance to defeat him was slim, she changed tactics. She administered a sweeping round kick aimed at his kneecap. She heard a crunch then a scream. He went down on his other knee as he dropped the key ring. Not waiting for the other two to come to his rescue, she grabbed the key-ring and threw it toward Chen's cage. It fell through the bars and he immediately tried to unlock the door. As he fumbled trying to find the right key, the other two guards had reached Linsu. As good as she was, she was outnumbered. Instead of confronting them, she avoided them. They were overweight and slow. The big guy was yelling at them, but was out of commission himself. Chen finally got the door opened and between him, Linsu, and Jake took down the other two. Chen ran to Linjin and embraced her. Her return embrace was just as strong. This is the second time Chen has come to her aid. She doesn't need a third one to realize how safe she feels with Chen. No acknowledgment was needed to understand that they were now a couple .

His fate turned out better than the song.

I never knew the art of making love
Though, my heart aches with love for you
Afraid and shy, I let my chance go by
A chance that you might love me too

You don't know the one
who dreams of you each night
And longs to kiss your lips
And longs to hold you tight
To you, I'm just a friend
That's all I've ever been
No, you don't know me

Chen had achieved his goal. Now she knew him.

Author's note:

Am I getting too sappy and corny in my old age? I need to go back to guns, bullets, and knives.

Jake responded in a similar fashion with Linda. Linda was surprised, but felt the sincerity of his embrace. Linsu said, let's get out of here. There will be plenty of time for romance later. They ran from the building toward where Kwang had dropped her off. Thank god he was still there. They all piled into the tuk tuk and took off. As they headed away from the building a black SUV was coming the other way. The rest of the gang was returning. Kwang swerved around them and saw it make a U-turn in his rear view mirror. With five people in the tuk tuk, it wasn't as swift as usual. The SUV was gaining on them. As it got closer, someone stuck a gun out of the window and started shooting at them. Kwang knew this could not continue. They would all end up dead. Off to the left was a slope with a wooded area. He made a sharp left turn. Hang on he said, almost too late as Linda barely stayed inside of the cab. He headed down the slope and the SUV followed. Kwang went through a narrow space between two trees. The SUV was right on their tail and too late saw the trees. Kwang saw it get stuck between the trees. He continued down the slope and ended up on the same road headed back toward the city. Once back there, Jake called his father to let him know they had escaped. No money had been transferred. Sheng had told the bandits that he needed a couple of hours to scrape up that much money.

Once in a safe location, Linjin and Linsu compared notes. Besides their common looks, they both had the same birthday. It didn't take a genius to know that they were twin sisters. You must be the Linjin that my mother always talks about in her sleep. Linjin told of her early life in the orphanage and her adoption by Liwei. Linsu told of the difficult life her and her mother had endured. Linjin wanted to see her birth mother.

Xian occasionally has some moments of lucidity. When she sees Linjin she tells the following story:

She and Linjin's adopted father had planned on getting married. Her family

objected to his low class. Instead, they pushed her to marry CEO Sheng. One night, after too much wine, she got herself pregnant. With such a shameful event, she had no choice but to leave Beijing. That is how she ended up in Thailand.

Linjin was shocked to learn that CEO Sheng was her real father. Linsu was shocked to learn that she had a rich father. When they all returned to Beijing, they told Sheng the whole story. Rather than thinking this was some kind of scam, he welcomed the addition of his newly found daughters. Olin and Jei, Sheng's wife were not so pleased, but accepted the reality of the situation. Sheng insisted they live with him in his large luxurious home. Sheng arraigned for Xian to be brought back to Beijing and moved into a nice care facility. Linjin rejected the offer to live in his home. She said that Liwei was her “real” father even though not blood related. Sheng understood her feelings. Linsu was more than happy to move in. She even requested that Kwang be allowed to live there too. Sheng was not about to deny her such a simple request.

Chang was beside himself. (I really don't know what that means, but I have heard it said like that before.) Not only did his plan fail, but he was out a considerable amount of money that he had paid the bandits.

On top of that, the girl he really loves has a rich father. Who would have thought the daughter of the spicy shrimp king would get so lucky.

Looks like Chang had tied his career to the wrong skirt as Linjin had implied. It was time to change gears.

You Don't Know Me *(Chapter 4)*

Linjin is back at her fathers food stall. Chang shows up and sits down at a table. Liwei sees him and says, long time no see. Where have you been? Liwei is in the dark about the breakup, the kidnapping, and Linjin's new status. I've been busy at work, not much time to socialize these day. Linjin goes over to him and says, what are you doing here? I missed your dad's

spicy shrimp and I missed you too. I have been thinking, I've made a big mistake. You are the only one in my heart and I was hoping we could talk. I would like to get back together with you. We spent much time in our youth growing up together and I should have married you a long time ago.

What about Olin? Chang looked pale. Do you think I am unaware of who you had hooked up with? After all, Olin is my new step sister. Are you going to drop her like a rock just like you did me? I realized she was not right for me. What a coincidence that you came to this realization right after you found out my real dad is your boss. I just think that we are the ones really suited for each other. About that time, Chen comes over. Chang, meet my new boyfriend. What? You want to hook up with this busboy? This busboy is a lot richer than you will ever be and even more so than your boss. He also has integrity. Look Linjin, I really need to talk to you in private as he puts his hand on her arm to tries to drag her away. Chen grabs his arm and twists it behind his back. Keep your hands off of my girlfriend you two timing scumbag. He forcefully escorts Chang off of the premises.

Chen had been meeting with Linsu and Kwang. He had begun an investigation into who had arraigned their abduction. Kwang and Linsu were intimately knowledgeable of the Thailand's police force since they both had been arrested multiple time for minor violations. The police had been successful in bringing in some of the gang members that had participated in their abduction. The Thai police have their ways of abstracting information from criminals. They soon learned that Chang was suspected of being behind the whole thing, but there wasn't sufficient evidence to convict him. Chen advanced this information to Linjin.

Linjin returned to work the next day. She got a request to go to Olin's office. Once inside, Olin instructed her secretary to close the door. I just want you to know that just because you found out that my dad is your dad, that doesn't give you any additional advantage as far as our firm is concerned. Olin, I don't plan to use your dad to gain any advantage. As far as I am concerned, I am still a new employee on probation and I have to show my worth. Olin relaxed her attitude and asked why she declined to live with the family. My family has always only been Liwei. I don't see any reason to change that.

Since we are having this talk, I want to warn you about Chang. What does my boyfriend have to do with any of this? You may not be aware, but there is a high probability that he was behind our recent troubles in Thailand. Do you have evidence of that? Not yet, but I just want to give you a heads up. You also may not be aware that he propositioned me to be his girlfriend again. The blood drained from her face. I find that hard to believe. I am telling you face to face. This is not some rumor started by the staff. He approached me yesterday at our family food stall.

Sheng called a staff meeting for the next day. Everybody filed in expecting some kind of announcement. He didn't beat around the bush. I called this meeting to announce that I am designating my son Jake to follow me as CEO. Almost everyone applauded, including Olin. Chang was the only one holding back. Now we will hear from Jake. I want to thank all you for this honor, but I will have to decline. Silence followed. During the time I spent here, I had a couple lucky successes based mainly on my two assistants. But the true person who has been at the helm of this ship for many years is my sister Olin. I nominate her instead of me. Sheng was surprised, but not disappointed. Jake continued, if it OK with this board, I would like to assume the position of assistant to the CEO. I still have much to learn before I can assume any top responsibility. I believe my sister will help me learn and improve. This time everyone applauded, including Chang.

Later that evening, Chang was in a festive mood. He thought his ship had finally come in. Olin confronted him about his attempt to reunite with Linjin and also his role in harming her brother Jake. Chang tried to deny it all, but Olin was not stupid. She could tell Chang was lying about everything. She also did not have proof, but this was not a courtroom.

Two days later, Chang was fired. Olin had framed him claiming he had allocated funds behind her back to acquire those many venues that were never used. Also, she claimed he stole funds on things that can not be accounted for. He did do this. That was where he got the money he paid to the abductors.

Chang was despondent. He was at the end of his rope. Not having the

fortitude to accept all these setbacks he tried another desperate move. He waited until Olin was leaving the office. As she got in her car, Chang jumped in the back seat and put a knife to her throat. He ordered her to drive to an abandoned warehouse. Jake had been leaving the company at about the same time and saw his sister taken prisoner. He called the police and also followed her car. He called Linjin and told her what was going on. The Swat team had Chang cornered in an underground parking garage. Jake and Linjin arrived at the scene. Chang was suicidal and was threatening Olin's life. Linjin told the Sargent in charge that Chang was a good friend of hers. Let me talk to him. He is my former boyfriend and she is my step sister. I can't let you go in there, it is too dangerous. I know that he will not hurt me and I don't want either of them to die. Let me give it a try. He reluctantly agreed.

She approached and Chang saw her. What are you doing here? I don't want you to die. You need to think this through. So far, you haven't killed anyone. You will have to go to jail for your former crimes, but I believe your sentence will not be too long. You still have your whole life ahead, don't throw it away. Come on, put down the knife, let Olin go and walk with me out of here. I promise you will be safe holding my hand. He did as she asked. The tense situation was defused. They handcuffed him and took him away.

Both couples got married at the same time in what they call a double ring ceremony.

The End

You Don't Know Me
(Epilogue)

Danger: reading this may give you a headache

I did steal a lot of my plot from not one, but two Chinese soap operas that I had watched with my wife.

Here is the complicated scenario that I tried to follow. It was way too complicated for me to try to duplicate.

Here is a character description list of who is who.

Linjin – Adopted daughter of Liwei and real daughter of Sheng

Sheng – CEO of Fortune Finance Company

Jake – Son of Jei and Zhang, thought to be Sheng's son

Chen – Owner of restaurant and wannabe boyfriend of Linjin

Chang – Boyfriend of Linjin and later Olin

Zhang – Original husband of Jei

Olin – Daughter of Zhang and Jei

Jei – Wife of Zhang and later Sheng

Xian – Mother of twin sisters Linjin and Linsu

Kwang – wannabe boyfriend of Linsu

Author's note:

I was trying to be authentic. All these names are real Chinese names. If I ever write another story based in China, I am going to use pseudo names like Bob, Charlie, Jim, Lisa, and Karen.

The real soap verses my version:

There were two characters left out of my story. Zhang was Olin's and Jake's real father. Sheng (the CEO) and he used to be business partners, but separated and became competitors. Liwei and Sheng both vied for the hand of Xian. Xian was really in love with Liwei, but her family did not approve because he was poor. They forced her to accept Sheng. One night Sheng and Xian consumed too much alcohol and she ended up pregnant. Not accepted in any high class family, she fled to Thailand and delivered the twins Linjin and Linsu. She did send Linjin to an orphanage because of her medical condition and her lack of ability to pay medical costs. After Xian disappeared, Sheng ended up marrying Jei (pronounced Jay) his current wife. She had been married to Zhang and they already had a daughter Olin. Sheng framed Zhang on fraud charges and he ended up in prison for 20 years.

After Zhang went to prison, Sheng married Jei not realizing she was already pregnant with Jake. He just accepted that Jake was his real son. Jei told Olin that her father had died. Later she found out that was not true and she met him.

Chen was a real character and was enamored with Linjin. The other character that I left out was his annoying sister who had just returned from four years study in Shanghai and claimed to be Jake's fiancée. She continued to be a nuisance half way through the soap until Linjin saved her life while captured by the bandits. Chen did own the restaurant he worked at and several hotels. They never got together though because Linjin hooked up with Jake. Chen was the friend depicted in the song, "You Don't Know Me". I changed the story line so that Chen ended up with Linjin.

Invisible Linda was purely my invention. Jake finally recognized Linda's true worth and they eventually married and lived a happy life. In my version, Jake was the real son of Sheng and therefore Linjin was off limits to him.

The original abduction of Linjin was real as was the abduction in Thailand. Both Jake and Chen were skilled in kung fu combat and saved Linjin the first time. Linsu did rescue all of them the second time. Xian died when the bandits took revenge on Linsu. Kwang was Linsu's friend, but she wanted Chen instead. She never got together with either.

If you have a headache trying to follow, you can stop reading. I have one just trying to remember.

So let me try to clear this up.

Olin and Jake were Zhang and Jei's daughter and son.

Linsu and Linjin were the daughters of Sheng and Xian. This was proven by blood tests.

In the beginning, Jake and Linjin hooked up, but broke up later when they thought they were half brother and sister. At the end of the drama, Jei figured out who was who. Jake took another blood test and found out that he was not blood related to Linjin and in the final episode they married.

Chang's treachery was exposed and Olin dumped him. Desperate, he took Olin hostage and demanded a ransom. He was cornered by the police and Linjin talked him out of killing Olin and himself. He ended up in prison. Maybe now you can see why I didn't follow the whole script.

This is as much as I can remember. Each soap opera had 50 plus episodes so forgive me if I left something out.

Trying to fit my story in and around the stolen plots was harder than if I had created the whole thing from scratch.

The Real End