

Chapter 111: Repeat Customer

The next morning, Grandma Song and Grandpa Song arrived at Xiao Lingyu's place. They were afraid that if they were late, Xiao Lingyu would rush out to sell the vegetables and forget to save the vegetables for them.

"Girl!" Grandma Song knocked on the door.

The sky was slightly bright. Xiao Lingyu was counting her inventory. She heard Grandma Song. Xiao Lingyu looked at the clock. It was not even 6 am yet. She was shocked that Grandpa and Grandma Song arrived so early.

Xiao Lingyu walked to open the door. She greeted, "Good morning, Grandma Song, Grandpa Song! Why are you so early?"

Grandma Song said, "I'm afraid that we might miss you if we came late!"

Grandpa Song was more straightforward. He said with a half-joking and half-serious smile, "Girl, your vegetables and fruits are too delicious. I've been thinking about them. I was afraid that you'd forget to save some for us, so we came early to snatch them first!"

Xiao Lingyu smiled, "Grandpa Song, I'll never forget to reserve your portion! It's cold outside, so please come in!"

As soon as Grandma Song and Grandpa Song entered the courtyard, they saw the warehouse filled with fresh vegetables. Grandma Song was surprised to find more variety.

Xiao Lingyu only had tomatoes, cabbages, spinach, eggplants, and chilies last time. This time, there were cucumbers, cole, garlic sprouts, and leeks.

"Girl, you have a bigger stock this time!" Grandma Song commented with a smile.

"That's right, Grandma Song!"

"Okay, give me some of each vegetable!" Grandma Song said.

"Wife, we need to get more!" Grandpa Song reminded her. Last time, Xiao Lingyu gave them two days' worth of ingredients, but their family had finished them in two meals. They had been waiting for Xiao Lingyu to come back to the county town. They waited for ten days, and Xiao Lingyu didn't appear. In the end, they had to call Xiao Lingyu and ask when she'd come back to sell her crops. Xiao Lingyu gave them a date and promised to call them when she arrived at the county town.

"Okay, okay!" Grandma Song corrected, "Then, give me thirty tomatoes, five cabbages, ten eggplants, and two catties of garlic sprouts..." Grandma Song gave a list. She ordered a lot. It would take at least five or six days to finish all these.

Xiao Lingyu laughed. "Grandma Song, you don't need to buy so many at once. I plan to stay here to sell my crops for the next three or four days. Even if I don't open my stall, I'll reserve the portion for you."

“Girl, are you serious? You’ll stay here to sell vegetables for the next few days?” Grandma Song’s eyes lit up. She said happily, “In that case, I won’t be buying so much for now. Give me 30 tomatoes, 1 cabbage...” That was for a day. The thirty tomatoes were because her family liked to eat them raw as fruit.

Xiao Lingyu packed the vegetables and fruits. She placed them in a small cart. “Grandma Song, it’s quite heavy. Why don’t I drop them at your home for you?”

Grandma Song waved her hand and pointed at the small cart behind her. “This small cart is light. We’ve used it to buy heavier things.”

Grandma Song looked at the crops, and she was deep in thought. She took out her phone and made a call. After the call connected, she said, “Grandma Li, the girl you’re looking for is here. How much do you want? I’ll have her reserve them for you so that you can come to get them later. Oh, you want to come over now? Okay. The girl is at my old house. Yes, she’s still here. Okay, I’ll tell her!”

After hanging up, Grandma Song told Xiao Lingyu. “That was Grandma Li. She bought your vegetables for her eldest grandson. Her grandson is facing the university entrance exam, so he’s under a lot of pressure. He can’t eat or sleep well. But after she bought your crops and cooked them for him, the child’s appetite and energy had improved! He is in such high spirits.”

Grandma Song paused. “Grandma Li was looking all around for you. She was extremely anxious because she couldn’t find you. She ran into me, and we chatted. Only then did she find out you’re my tenant. She asked me to tell her when you came to town. I just called her, and she said she’s coming over! Her house isn’t far away so she should be here soon. It won’t delay you for long.”

Xiao Lingyu smiled. “Grandma Song, it’s no delay. You’re all my valued customers. I need to thank you for coming to buy my stock.”

Xiao Lingyu had an impression of this Grandma Li. On her first day, only one old lady bought the crops from her. Her other customers were young and middle-aged women who had better living conditions. The elders were normally more frugal. Unless it were a special occasion like Grandma Li’s case, they wouldn’t spend on expensive stuff.

Grandma Song looked at the boxes of crops on the floor. She asked, “Girl, do you need help? Since the old man and I are here, we can help you. Look at these boxes. They should be quite heavy. We can use the cart to move them to the tricycle!”

Xiao Lingyu shook her head and said, “It’s fine, I can do that myself! Grandma and Grandpa Song, you should rest!”

The boxes were small. They weighed around 10 kg. They were not that heavy for an adult. Moreover, Xiao Lingyu could use her farming space to do the heavy lifting. It was because she had guests that she resorted to manual labor. Xiao Lingyu moved a box of eggplant, a box of cole, and a box of leeks onto the tricycle.

“Done!” Xiao Lingyu clapped her hands.

Grandma Song smiled. “Girl, you have such tender skin. You look like a rich young lady, but you’re quite the worker.”

Xiao Lingyu chuckled. "Grandma, you need to stop teasing me. I grew up in the countryside. I have to work hard. My skin is rough and hands calloused!" They were merely healed by the spring water.

Grandma Song joked, "Grandma saw your tender flesh and wanted to take a bite like the Big Bad Wolf!"

"Sister Song!" Someone called outside the door.

Grandma Song said, "Oh? Grandma Li is here so soon!"

Grandpa Song had already gone to get the door.

When Grandma Li saw Grandpa Song, she smiled, "Brother Song, you're here too!" Grandma Li's eyes immediately moved to the crops on the tricycle. Her eyes lit up. She saw Xiao Lingyu standing beside the tricycle and said excitedly, "Miss, it's you. It's really you."

Xiao Lingyu saw the little old lady and nodded, "Grandma Li, good morning!"

"This time, I have to buy more from you!" Grandma Li was ecstatic. "You have no idea how much my eldest grandson adored your vegetables. Ever since he had your food, he became more focused on his studies."

"Grandma Li, I will stay in the county town to sell the crops for the next few days. If you need it, I can reserve a certain amount for you just like I did Grandma Song!"

"Oh, you'll be here for the next few days?" Grandma Li thought Xiao Lingyu would disappear after one day like last time. Since Xiao Lingyu would stay longer this time, she didn't need to buy so much at once. "Okay, then I shall trouble you to reserve some for me." Then, she thought and said, "Miss, what time do you normally wake up to set up? I can come over early in the next few days. My house is close by, so I can walk over here."

"Okay then. If Grandma Li doesn't mind the trouble, you can come by early every day!" Xiao Lingyu said as she helped Grandma Li pick up the vegetables.

Grandma Li looked at the dishes on the tricycle and said, "Girl, give me a cabbage, half a catty of chili, half a catty..."

At this moment, Grandma Song said, "Grandma Li, these tomatoes are delicious. You should buy some." Last time, when Xiao Lingyu ran into Grandma Li, the tomatoes had already sold out. Therefore, Grandma Li didn't get to taste the tomatoes.

"Okay, give me ten tomatoes!" Grandma Li took Grandma Song's suggestion. "Give me another half a catty of garlic sprouts, one catty of leeks, and two eggplants!"

"Sure!" Xiao Lingyu immediately weighed the tomatoes for Grandma Li. Then, she gave Grandma Li two more tomatoes and two cucumbers, both of which could be eaten as fruit.

Grandma Li asked, "Girl, how much is the total?"

Xiao Lingyu said, "Grandma Li, the tomatoes are two RMB a piece, the cabbage is fifteen RMB a piece, the cucumber is two RMB a piece, the chili is twenty RMB per catty, the garlic sprouts are ten RMB a catty, and the leeks are ten RMB a catty."

“Grandma Li, you have taken ten tomatoes, two eggplants, half a katty of chili, half a katty of garlic sprout, and one katty of leeks. That’s a total of 54 RMB. I’ll take 50 RMB. I’ll also throw in five tomatoes and five cucumbers for you to try.”

“Girl, you shouldn’t do that!” Grandma Li refused. “You have already given me a discount. I shouldn’t take free things from you!”

“Grandma Li, you’re too kind.” Xiao Lingyu said, “I heard from Grandma Song that Grandma Li’s eldest grandson is taking the university entrance exam this year. Take these tomatoes and cucumbers. You can slice them up as fruits for your grandson.”

Xiao Lingyu added, “Grandma Li, where does your grandson attend his high school?”

“Number One High School!”

“This is such a coincidence. My younger brother is also a student there! He is in Grade 12 Class 1.”

“No way, my grandson is also in Grade 12 Class 1!”

“So they are classmates. Haha....”

Chapter 112: Repeat Customer

After Grandma Song and Grandma Li finished their purchases, they left.

Xiao Lingyu rode her tricycle happened to the market. As soon as she exited the alley and went up the slope, she heard a series of exclamations, “Big Sister! Mom, Big Sister is here!”

Xiao Lingyu turned to the voice. It was the little boy who was her first customer. He and his mother were standing not far away from the slope.

“Little friend, it’s you!” Xiao Lingyu greeted with a smile, “You’re going to school so early?”

It was only slightly past 6 am. What kindergarten opened so early?

Li Junxuan shook his head. “Big Sister, I’m not going to school yet. Mom and I were waiting specifically for you, right, Mom?”

Yang Yan, who was behind Li Jinxuan, smiled in embarrassment. “Miss, ever since my boy had your vegetables, he had been talking about them every day. He urged me to buy more from you, but we hadn’t seen you for days. I heard the news that you were coming today, so my boy came out early to wait for you. I’ve never seen my boy so eager about something before. Haha.”

Xiao Lingyu was surprised. She grabbed two tomatoes and gave them to the boy. “Here, these are for you for coming out to wait for Big Sister!”

Li Junxuan accepted the tomatoes and said, “Thank you, Big Sister!” Then, he put them into his mouth without even wiping the skin. This time, Yang Yan didn’t stop him.

Yang Yan glanced at the vegetables on the tricycle and commented, “You have more selection today.” She bought too little vegetables last time and regretted it for days. Therefore, she decided to buy more

this time not to repeat her mistake. After asking the prices, Yang Yan bought some of each. Yang Yan had a small family of three. Other than her son, they were not picky eaters.

Xiao Lingyu saw the large purchase Yang Yan wanted, and she said, "Actually, I'll be selling vegetables and fruits in the county town for the next three to four days. If you don't mind, you can come to my rental house to buy the stuff directly. You can reach my rental by turning left and then right at this alley. The house with the red iron door is where I stay when I'm in the county town."

Yang Yan thought about it and asked, "When will you be at your house? What time will it be suitable for me to go?"

Xiao Lingyu answered, "Every day about this time!"

"Okay!" Yang Yan said, "Then, I'll visit your place early in the morning to make my purchase in the future!" After knowing where Xiao Lingyu stayed, it would be more convenient for Yang Yan. She and her boy didn't need to wait out in the open anymore.

Yang Yan added, "Miss, are you planning to settle here?"

Xiao Lingyu shook her head. "Probably not so soon. I'll come when I have a harvest. I'll probably come to the county town once or twice every week."

"I see." Yang Yan nodded. "Miss, can you give me your phone number? Or I can leave you mine. Give me a call when you're in town to sell your crops, okay?"

Yang Yan's husband was an executive in a big company and had an annual salary of 300,000 to 400,000 RMB. Yang Yan was a working-class woman, and she earned around 8000 RMB per month. Her family could afford Xiao Lingyu's vegetables and fruits.

Moreover, Yang Yan's boy refused to have vegetables from other vendors after he had Xiao Lingyu's products. He became so picky. For her son, Yang Yan was willing to buy from Xiao Lingyu every day.

Xiao Lingyu had no problem with this. She nodded. "Okay, my number is 13..." Soon, her phone rang. Xiao Lingyu took out her phone to look.

Yang Yan smiled, "That is my phone number. Remember to call me when you come to the town with a harvest. My name is Yang Yan."

"No problem!" Xiao Lingyu saved Yang Yan's number. Since Xiao Lingyu was going to set up her business for the next few days, Yang Yan only bought the day's portion. She planned to return early the next morning.

Xiao Lingyu continued to ride forward after Yang Yan and her son left.

She was immediately recognized when she reached the tree where she and her mother stopped last time. "Miss!" Auntie Lin ran over. "Miss, it has been almost ten days since you were last here! I have been walking around looking for you! Did you move your tricycle to somewhere else?"

Xiao Lingyu greeted Auntie Lin. "Auntie, it's you." She smiled, "Auntie, I told you my crops are organic and flavorful. Now, do you believe me?"

Auntie Lin laughed, "I believe you now. Both my daughter and I can't forget the tastes of your vegetables. Even my daughter, who is such a picky eater, has high praise for them!"

Xiao Lingyu nodded. "Auntie, what do you plan to buy today?"

Auntie Lin looked at the cute vegetables and said, "Your tomatoes can be used in dishes or eaten raw. My daughter also likes them. Give me twenty tomatoes and then..."

Xiao Lingyu weighed and bagged the stuff. Xiao Lingyu added, "Auntie, I'll be here to sell my crops for the next three to four days." In other words, Auntie Lin didn't need to buy so much at once. She could come back tomorrow.

Auntie Lin chuckled. "Oh, in that case, I'll return tomorrow. Miss, will you come to this place tomorrow? Or you'll set up elsewhere?"

Xiao Lingyu replied, "I plan to sell at the market. I am only passing by this place!" Xiao Lingyu didn't give Auntie Lin the address of her rental. There were too many unknown people around. It would be troublesome if she were targeted.

"Okay, I understand." Auntie Lin was straightforward. "Help me bag these vegetables and fruits! I'll buy more to give my friends!"

Xiao Lingyu nodded. She handed Auntie Lin her bag. "Auntie, it's a total of 103 RMB. You're my repeat customer, so I'll give you a 3 RMB discount."

Auntie Lin paid. "I'll be back tomorrow morning." Auntie Lin decided to come early tomorrow or else everything might be sold.

Xiao Lingyu had a few more repeat customers. They didn't mind the price and started buying. "Miss, give me ten tomatoes and half a catty of this..."

"I want the tomatoes too. I only got to taste some last time. This time, I'll get more. I'll also need one cabbage, and..."

These repeat customers knew Xiao Lingyu's crops were worth the asking price.

In a short while, nearly a third of the vegetables in Xiao Lingyu's tricycle was gone. Like last time, tomatoes were the most popular. The tomatoes could be eaten raw, stir-fried, or even in salads.

The other fruit vendors glared at Xiao Lingyu with envy. If their stock sold equally well, they wouldn't need to wait so long under the hot sun.

One of the vendors sold pineapples, another sold tangerines, and the last sold all kinds of fruits. They gathered to whisper to one another, "Is the girl's fruits that delicious? Look at how expensive they are but how fast they sell!"

"That's right. Other than tomatoes, cucumbers, and eggplants, the other vegetables are sold for more than 10 RMB per catty."

"And on the market, tomatoes, cucumbers, and eggplants are considered expensive produce."

"Who knows how much she can earn after she had her whole tricycle of stock sold?"

“With her prices, she can get at least one or two thousand!”

“And that is in a day. That will be almost several ten thousand in a month! That’s enough to pay for a house’s downpayment.”

Back in this era, the housing price was still low. A house that was 120 square meters was only around 200 to 300,000 RMB.

“I wonder where she gets her stock.” If they knew, they would buy from her supplier too.

“Who knows. This is only the second time I’ve seen the girl around here.”

“I heard her stuff are all organic. Perhaps she grows them herself?”

“Maybe.”

As the three vendors discussed, Xiao Lingyu rode her tricycle and left. The moment she arrived at the market entrance, she was recognized by her repeat customers again.

“Miss, where have you been for the past few days? I’ve been looking so hard for you!”

“Miss, me too! Ever since my children had your vegetables and fruits, they refused to eat any other vendor’s products. It’s such a headache that I grew a few more white hair!”

“Miss, my pregnant wife threw a big tantrum because I couldn’t find your crops for her again. It caused an unusual tension between my wife and mother. After my mother found out how expensive the vegetables and fruits were, she complained that I never spent so much on her. Finally, you’re here. Now, I need to buy two portions. One for my wife and another for my mother so they would stop chewing my ears out!”

“After my great-grandfather had your vegetables, he became like a child, clamoring for your vegetables every day. When I told him you were not at the market, he insisted on coming to look for himself. He is old already, if something happened to him, I’d be scolded by the whole family!”

“Haha. The older one gets, the younger they act. My grandfather is also acting like this.”

“You’re right. Now my whole family is trying to coax my great-grandfather. Even my youngest four-year-old son tried to chip in by offering my great-grandfather candy. He was trying to bribe his great-grandfather so he’d stay safe at home. It’s too funny.”

“Haha...”

Laughter filled the space around Xiao Lingyu’s tricycle..

Chapter 113: The Mysterious Black Sedan

As Xiao Lingyu expected, she sold the three boxes of crops in a short amount of time. Granted, most of her customers were repeat customers. The vegetables and fruits were too tempting. Many of Xiao Lingyu’s repeat customers came to the market early to locate her for the past few days.

Their family had members who demanded to have Xiao Lingyu's crops. There were children and pregnant women. There were also old ladies and men acting like children.

After wandering around for many days, they finally found the young woman who sold vegetables. They decided to buy as much as they could. After all, who knew this young woman would come back again?

The middle-aged women and old ladies who set up stalls beside Xiao Lingyu were envious when they saw Xiao Lingyu's product disappear off the tricycle despite their exorbitant price.

"What kind of vegetables and fruits are they that they're so expensive?"

"I have no clue, but many people have been asking if there had been any expensive vegetables. I thought they were crazy."

"Haha. I heard that two shops in the market heard about this and raised their prices as a response. The customers went to their shops but then left in anger after seeing the stock on sale."

"Why is that?"

"They said the stuff on sale was not worth the high price!"

"People are weird these days. They don't want to buy cheap vegetables but instead need to find expensive ones. Plus, I've never heard of people caring about crop quality before. Isn't the most important thing is the crops' freshness?" A woman pointed at Xiao Lingyu's stock. "The girl's vegetables and fruits are pretty. They're shiny and watery. I wonder how they are grown. However, no matter how good-looking they are, it is no reason for them to cost so high!"

"I heard from the customers that her vegetables and fruits are extremely delicious. Both adults and children love them. Even children are fighting to eat her vegetables. That is rare!"

"Children are the toughest customer. If the children love her produce that much, then they must be very delicious."

A middle-aged woman paused beside Xiao Lingyu. She carried two baskets of vegetables. They looked quite fresh. The woman's eyes glinted as she asked with a smile, "Miss, did you grow these yourself? They look so good."

With a glance, Xiao Lingyu knew what the woman was after. "No." She replied.

"No?" The middle-aged woman's eyes brightened, and she pressed, "Then where did you get your stock? Is it from the vegetable farm up the bridge?" When the woman asked this question, all the nearby vendors perked their ears.

"No." Xiao Lingyu said again.

And... Xiao Lingyu didn't add any explanation. Who was this middle-aged woman to Xiao Lingyu? Why did she need to explain herself?

The other vendors looked disappointed when Xiao Lingyu didn't go into details.

The middle-aged woman didn't give up. Before she could ask anything else, Xiao Lingyu pointed out, "Auntie, can you move? You're blocking me."

Xiao Lingyu wanted to reverse her tricycle, but the woman was standing in her way. After the tricycle backed out, Xiao Lingyu didn't say anything else and rode away.

Xiao Lingyu returned to her rental and parked the tricycle in the warehouse. She went into the living room to boil a pot of water and rest. She took out her bag and shook out the money. Xiao Lingyu predicted she would have more customers today because of the reputation she got from her first sale. Therefore, she prepared a more considerable stock than last time.

She earned 1610 RMB! That was about 400 RMB more than last time.

Xiao Lingyu brought out another 30 tomatoes and 10 cucumbers from the farming space. She packed them and decided to drop them off with Xiao Lingye at his school.

Xiao Lingyu knew that Xiao Lingye's roommates went to Taoyuan Village for her tomatoes. Therefore, she decided to give them more this time.

Xiao Lingyu looked at the time. It was still early. It was not even 9 am. She decided to look around for a shop to rent.

Before Xiao Lingyu left City Z, she already had some savings. After she was framed, she got 50,000 RMB in compensation from Lin Xiangyu and 5,000,000 RMB from Zhao Huiqing.

Xiao Lingyu had donated the 5,000,000 RMB, but she kept the 50,000 RMB. Combined with her existing savings, she had around 100,000 RMB.

She had used around 50,000 RMB to set up her business and farm, so she still had around 50,000 RMB left.

Xiao Lingyu knew that the farm would require a lot of funds to run. 50,000 RMB was not enough. However, Xiao Lingyu believed she also needed to rent a shop to sell her produce.

She couldn't expose the existence of her farming space. However, once the vegetables at her new farm were harvested, she would need a place to sell them. A shop was instrumental to her future business.

With that in mind, Xiao Lingyu packed her money, took her phone, her bag, and left.

Xiao Lingyu visited the market. The place had a high traffic flow. There was no shop for rent. Xiao Lingyu moved closer to the city center.

Xiao Lingyu was very clear about her target audience. Her high-end produce would be marketed to the wealthy citizens who had money to spend.

If someone could read Xiao Lingyu's thoughts, they would laugh at her. A vegetable vendor wanted to rent a shop at the city center? It was crazy. The profit from the sales wouldn't be able to cover the shop rental.

However, Xiao Lingyu would prove them all wrong...

Xiao Lingyu visited New Street Road, Light Road, Construction Road, but she didn't find any empty shop to rent. After walking for a while, Xiao Lingyu was tired and decided to rest.

Once she sat down, a duo of motorcycle thieves snatched her bag. The team relied on a motorcycle. One rode the motorcycle while the passenger robbed their unsuspecting victim. The victim wouldn't be able to catch up to the speeding motorcycle.

Xiao Lingyu was stunned before shouting and running, "Help! Thieves!"

Xiao Lingyu did not realize how fast she was running. She was running faster than Olympic runners. The people around her were shocked. 'How can this young woman run so fast?'

A four or five-year-old child pointed at Xiao Lingyu and exclaimed, "Dad, that Big Sister runs so fast, it looks like she is flying. Does she know Qing Gong?"

The crowd was too shocked by Xiao Lingyu's running speed to realize she needed help capture the thieves.

Xiao Lingyu was anxious as the motorcycle sped away. The bag contained her bank card and the cash she had from her sale that day. The bag also had her phone and her IC.

She was so nervous that she kept on pumping her legs. She didn't realize her speed increased because of it. This shouldn't be impossible, but Xiao Lingyu was slowly catching up to the speeding motorcycle.

The two thieves sped into a deserted street, so, at this point, no one noticed Xiao Lingyu's superhuman speed other than the two thieves.

"The fuck, is that woman a superhero?" The thief riding in the passenger seat was shocked by Xiao Lingyu's speed. "She's still tailing us even though we've already sped so far away! She's slowly closing in on us. Blond hair, you sure you're stepping on the pedal? Or are we running out of fuel?"

The blond scolded, "Bullshit! I knew there's work today, so I've already refueled the motorcycle this morning!" They were a professional team. In the past, they had been caught because their motorcycle ran out of fuel. Thankfully, they knew to abandon their motorcycle, and they managed to escape jail time.

After that, they would make sure they had fuel in their motorcycle before they started work. It was no exception this time.

Zhao Xiaoliu at the back heard the blond and shouted, "Then, step on the gas! Why are we moving so slowly? Do you want to be caught?"

"Zhao Xiaoliu, are you mad?" The blond roared, "Can't you tell that we're already moving at the highest speed?" The wind howled past their ears. Zhao Xiaoliu was stunned when he heard his accomplice. He cursed, "Fuck, does that woman know Qing Gong? How can she keep up when we're on a motorcycle?"

"What did you say?" The blond thought Zhao Xiaoliu was kidding. He glanced at the rearview mirror, and there she was. The woman whom they robbed was still chasing after them...

Bang! The blond was distracted, and he didn't notice a rock on the road. Since he was speeding, the motorcycle flipped over, and the two thieves flew out.

"Ah!" It was a car accident! But there was no one around.

Xiao Lingyu was surprised by this turn of events too. She ran over a moment later.

The two men were lying on the ground. One of them hit his head and fainted. This was the blond.

The other lay weakly on the ground. He moaned weakly when he saw Xiao Lingyu walk over, "Please... call the ambulance!"

They were thieves, but they also needed help. Xiao Lingyu couldn't just stand there and watch them die. She picked up her bag, took out her phone, and called the ambulance as well as the police.

When Zhao Xiaoliu saw Xiao Lingyu call the ambulance for them, he was grateful. However, his face was in a scary grimace due to pain.

"Thank you!"

...

Xiao Lingyu did not notice that a low-key black sedan was watching her from another intersection.

Someone inside the sedan ordered. "Deal with this!"

"Yes!"

The accident and Xiao Lingyu's superhuman speed had been recorded on camera. She was one step too close to being exposed, but someone saved her.. However, Xiao Lingyu didn't know that.

Chapter 114: Busybody

"Tianhao, I've already taken care of it. I've asked someone to delete that video," Li Yuanhang said, but he was confused, "You're not normally a busybody. Why are you doing this?" Especially for a woman he had not met before.

Gong Tianhao was wearing a custom-made black suit, making him look slender and fit. It also made his face sharper and fiercer. His expression at that moment was puzzled. Gong Tianhao frowned. "Grandpa will be coming over soon. I don't want the place to fall into chaos due to these strange occurrences!"

'Yes, that's it!'

"Oh, is that so?" Li Yuanhang said suspiciously. "Indeed, we should do our best to help the elder recuperate here." However, Li Yuanhang's eyes glowed curiously. 'But what does that have to do with the young woman? Regardless, that woman is a crazy runner. She can catch up to a speeding motorcycle! If she were to represent our country at the Olympics, we'd win so many medals.'

However, that didn't explain why Gong Tianhao suddenly decided to help the young woman. Li Yuanhang wondered if Gong Tianhao had fallen for the girl, but he soon denied it. Young Master Gong could pick any woman he wanted. Why would he come to a small county to fall with a little country girl?

However, Li Yuanhang couldn't think of any other reason. 'This is too strange!'

Gong Tianhao and Li Yuanhang came to Xingyin County in person to investigate if it was a suitable place for Old Master Gong's convalesce. They just arrived today. The moment they exited the hotel, they saw

a young woman chase after a motorcycle. Li Yuanhang was surprised that the young woman could run so fast, but since they were here to do business, he planned to ignore her.

But then...

“Follow them!” A cold and sharp voice came from the back seat.

“Okay!” Li Yuanhang replied. Since his boss had spoken, he had to follow it. After the motorcycle tipped over and the cameras took down the girl’s superhuman speed, the man even told Li Yuanhang to handle the situation. Li Yuanhang was confused.

He studied the young woman. No matter how he looked, the woman looked ordinary. So what was the reason that made his boss, who was normally so indifferent, help this young lady?

Li Yuanhang couldn’t help but ask, “Tianhao, do you like that young woman?”

Gong Tianhao’s sharp eyes immediately swept over and said coldly, “Who would like that ugly freak?”

‘Ugly freak?’ Granted, the young woman wasn’t a model, but she wasn’t an ugly freak either. She could be considered a delicate beauty from the countryside.

“Alright, stop wasting time. We need to get to Taoyuan Village!”

Gong Tianhao didn’t have much time. If Taoyuan Village were suitable for his grandfather, he’d move Old Master Gong over immediately. This would prevent others from coming to disturb his grandfather again.

“Alright!”

...

Xiao Lingyu didn’t know about all these.

She was in a bad mood. Everything was going well until someone decided to rob her. The two robbers then got in a car accident. It was hard to tell if they were still alive or not.

After making the calls, Xiao Lingyu looked at the two men on the ground. She frowned and waited for the officials to come.

After about ten minutes, all the related parties arrived.

“Where is the patient?”

“Who called the police?”

After evidence was taken, Xiao Lingyu told them the truth.

“That’s how it happened.” Xiao Lingyu said, “They were probably driving too fast to notice the stone by the roadside. The motorcycle toppled over.” Once Xiao Lingyu said that an officer shouted, “Captain, there’s a stone about 6 cm here. It has been crushed.”

The captains from the police station and traffic police walked over. That confirmed Xiao Lingyu’s statement.

At that moment, the captain for the traffic police, Captain Bi, narrowed his eyes as if thinking of something. He looked at Xiao Lingyu and asked, "You followed them from Salvation West Road to this place?"

"Yes!" Xiao Lingyu answered.

Captain Bi commented, "Do you know how far the distance from Salvation West Road to this place is? It's about eight km."

Only then did Xiao Lingyu realize how strange the whole event was. 'How is that possible?'

"The motorcycle was speeding at around 80 km per hour. And you were running at its speed? How fast can you run? I doubt it's as fast as 80 km per hour." Captain Bi said with a serious expression. "Even our country's fastest athlete can only manage 10 meters per second or 18 km per hour." He suspected Xiao Lingyu was lying. After all, what she said was too hard to believe.

Xiao Lingyu frowned. She didn't know how to explain this either. She was confused. 'Was I running that fast?'

Captain Bi looked at Xiao Lingyu. He didn't think she was faking her confusion. "We have to investigate this further. I'll have to trouble you to come to the police station with us."

"Sure." Xiao Lingyu had no fear because she was telling the truth. But the reasoning behind the truth? She couldn't explain it either.

This incident started from a robbery. So if there was no hidden conspiracy behind this, the two robbers brought this on themselves. They didn't deserve pity.

At the station, Xiao Lingyu was assigned to rest at the lounge. The police and the traffic police went to check the surveillance video.

Xiao Lingyu started to run the moment her bag was snatched. She shouted, "Help, thieves!" Her speed picked up, which surprised the people around her.

However, when the footage turned to the cameras at Salvation North Road and Light South Road, the videos were all static. The videos were damaged and couldn't be seen.

"Have someone repair them now!" Captain Bi ordered.

"Yes, sir!" The young officer obliged. As the young officer reached the door, he ran into Jiang Tao.

"Chief Jiang!" Jiang Tao walked into the room and asked, "Captain Bi, what happened?"

Captain Bi said, "Chief, two thieves robbed a girl's bag on a motorcycle. This led to a chase and, unfortunately, a car accident. The two thieves are seriously injured. One of them hit his head and is in emergency rescue."

Jiang Tao asked, "That's unfortunate, but what's so suspicious about it?"

Captain Bi explained. "Chief, the problem is that the thieves were driving at 80 km per hour. They rode for about 8 km. However, the girl almost caught up to them by just running. Chief, do you think a person's running speed can catch up to a motorcycle?"

“Of course, that’s impossible!” Jiang Tao said, “So, you’re suspecting the girl is lying.”

Captain Bi nodded. “Yes, that’s why I came to check the surveillance footage!”

“Then, did you find anything?” Jiang Tao narrowed his eyes and asked seriously.

“The footage did show the two thieves stealing the girl’s bag. She gave chase.” Captain Bi rewound the footage for Jiang Tao to see. “She was running fast, but when she crossed into Salvation North Road and Light South Road, the surveillance went down. I had Xiao Wang check it. Chief, I...” Captain Bi was about to voice his suspicion when Jiang Tao gasped. “Isn’t that Xiao Lingyu?” Jiang Tao was surprised to see the girl in the footage.

“Yes, her name is Xiao Lingyu. Chief, do you know her?” Captain Bi was surprised too.

Jiang Tao nodded. “She’s the heroine who helped us take down Sister Hong’s human trafficking gang!”

Captain Bi was shocked. “She’s the one? She looks so delicate, but she is so clever and brave.”

“That’s the one!” Jiang Tao said, “She is an honest person. She can’t be behind the car accident. It’s impossible.” Then, Jiang Tao remembered something else. “This girl is indeed very physically fit. Back during that mission, she managed to save the boy from the hands of six human traffickers. She helped us rescue the children, and that gave us the opening to capture all the criminals. Where is Xiao Lingyu now?”

“She’s in the lounge.” Captain Bi said.

“Captain, Chief!” Xiao Wang returned. “I checked. The surveillance at Salvation North Road and Light South Road is broken. Even after it’s fixed, we can’t see the video from that period anymore.”

Captain Bi nodded. “okay.”

“However, the cameras in Chen Tong Alley where the accident happened are fine.”

Captain Bi and Jiang Tao watched the video.

It showed how the car accident happened. The blond driver looked at the rearview mirror and didn’t notice the rock on the ground. When the motorcycle flipped, Xiao Lingyu was more than 100 meters away from them. Xiao Lingyu couldn’t have sabotaged the motorcycle.

Captain Bi reluctantly believed Xiao Lingyu had indeed run with her own two feet to the site. Sadly, there was no evidence to support that.

Of course, since the footage at Chen Tong Alley proved that the motorcycle turned because of the driver’s carelessness, Captain Bi didn’t need to look into Xiao Lingyu anymore. She could be Superwoman for all he cared.

Captain Bi thought about it and called the Traffic Bureau to give his report..

Chapter 115: Girlfriend?

“Chief Jiang, thank you so much for today!” Xiao Lingyu thanked him sincerely as she walked out of the police station.

Jiang Tao shook his head, “You were the victim in the first place.” He explained, “Lingyu, please don’t blame Captain Bi. He was just being thorough!”

Xiao Lingyu laughed. “Chief Jiang, you said it yourself. Captain Bi was only doing his job, so why would I blame him?”

Jiang Tao looked at the time and said, “It’s almost mealtime. How about I treat you?”

“Sure.” Xiao Lingyu agreed. She chuckled, “It’s my honor to be treated by the chief of Xing Yin County Police Station.”

After the two left, the people at the station started to gossip.

“Did you see that smile? Our iceberg of a chief was actually smiling!”

“I didn’t think our Chief Jiang would be so cute with a smile.”

“By the way, what’s the relationship between that girl and Chief Jiang? They seem so close. And most importantly, Chief Jiang was smiling at her! Is there something going on?”

“Could she be Chief Jiang’s girlfriend?”

“Do you think an iceberg like Chief Jiang will have a girlfriend? Chief Jiang is like a walking air-cond. Her girlfriend will be freezing all the time!”

“What nonsense are you people talking about!” Captain Bi scolded when he walked in and heard the gossip. “That young woman is the heroine who helped us break down Sister Hong’s human trafficking gang!” Basically, he was telling the officers Xiao Lingyu was not their chief’s girlfriend... yet.

“Oh, so that’s her!” The few female police officers immediately exclaimed, “She rejected the reward money of 50,000 RMB! If it were me, I would have accepted it and bought a house. Then, I’d be able to move out and won’t need to hear my mother’s nagging anymore. Sometimes, I wish I’d die. But she’s my mother. As annoying as her nags are, I have to listen to her.”

Back in this era, buying real estate was not that common. Only men who were getting married would consider buying a house.

“She is smart, brave, and not greedy. That’s very rare. By the way, are we sure she’s not the chief’s girlfriend?” A young female officer asked doubtfully.

“I don’t think so.” Her senior answered, “But it does look like our Chief is interested in her!”

“What?” The other exclaimed, “Sister Jiang, how can you tell?”

“Didn’t you all notice Chief Jiang would only smile at her?” Sister Jiang winked mysteriously. “However, the girl doesn’t seem too interested in our Chief. She is very polite around him!”

If a girl was interested in a man, they would act more reserved. However, Xiao Lingyu was polite and open around Jiang Tao. Clearly, she treated him just like a friend.

Jiang Tao had no idea his subordinates were gossiping behind him. He brought Xiao Lingyu to a nearby restaurant. As they got down the car, Jiang Tao said, "This place looks ordinary, but they have incredibly good food."

"I can't wait then!" Xiao Lingyu smiled.

"Tao Zi, you're here!" The old couple who ran the restaurant greeted him when they saw Jiang Tao.

"Uncle Chen, Auntie Chen!" Jiang Tao said, "I brought my friend to have a meal here. Uncle Chen, you have to help me impress her with your cooking!"

"Haha, of course!" Uncle Chen laughed.

Auntie Chen looked at Xiao Lingyu and asked with a smile, "Tao Zi, is this your girlfriend? She's really beautiful!"

Jiang Tao, who was always so calm, felt his face heat up. He stole a glance at Xiao Lingyu and was about to answer when Xiao Lingyu said, "No, Auntie Chen. Chief Jiang and I are just normal friends."

Auntie Chen was surprised. "So, not your girlfriend?"

Jiang Tao shook his head. "No, but she is my friend who is a girl."

Auntie Chen was slightly disappointed. "Tao Zi, how I hope this beautiful lady is your girlfriend. In the past two years, this is the first time you brought a lady to my place."

Auntie Chen looked at the elegant Xiao Lingyu. She leaned in close to Jiang Tao. "Tao Zi, she might not be your girlfriend now, but what about in the future? You're not young anymore. You can't keep on delaying your marriage because of work. If you ask me, this young lady is perfect. You need to work hard to make her your girlfriend!"

Auntie Chen said and saw the blush rise for the first time on Jiang Tao's usually cold face. Auntie Chen turned to Xiao Lingyu. "Miss, Tao Zi is usually so engrossed in his work that he doesn't have the time to have a relationship. But Miss, Tao Zi is a good man. You'll be happy if you marry him."

Xiao Lingyu nodded and said, "Yes, Chief Jiang is indeed a good man. The girl to be his girlfriend or wife will be very happy. Chief Jiang, I envy that girl." In other words, she would not be that girl.

Jiang Tao didn't show it, but he was internally disappointed. Once Xiao Lingyu said that Auntie Chen stopped playing match-maker.

She ushered them to their seats. "Please sit down. Why are you standing?"

The two found a seat. Xiao Lingyu looked around. They were in the old city district, and the restaurant was relatively remote. She had no idea how Jiang Tao found this place. However, it was clear that he knew the perpetrators.

In five years, this part of the old city would receive a huge transformation. With the new projects coming up, the prices of real estate would soar. The government would pay a large amount of money to the existing tenants to move. Xiao Lingyu immediately hatched a plan. When she had money, she would buy some real estate here.

Jiang Tao handed the menu to Xiao Lingyu, "Lingyu, order whatever you like. Uncle Chen is a very good cook."

Xiao Lingyu smiled, "I'm not picky. I'll eat anything Uncle Chen cooks. I'm sure Uncle Chen will impress me with his culinary skills, right, Uncle Chen?"

Uncle Chen guffawed. "Miss, don't worry. I will make my favorite dishes for you to enjoy!"

"Thank you, Uncle Chen!" Xiao Lingyu smiled.

While they waited for the food, Jiang Tao asked, "Lingyu, what brings you to the county town today?"

"I'm here to sell vegetables!" Xiao Lingyu casually replied, "I'll be doing that for the next few days!"

"You're selling vegetables?!" Jiang Tao was surprised.

He had done a little research on Xiao Lingyu. She was a famous university student who had worked in a big city for two to three years. He assumed she would go back to the city and not be a vegetable and fruit vendor.

Young people, especially those as cultured as Xiao Lingyu wouldn't be selling vegetables because they would be embarrassed.

"Why? Are you surprised?" Xiao Lingyu asked. "You can succeed in any field. Who knows, I might make a name for myself selling vegetables and fruits."

"You're right." Jiang Tao smiled.

"Uncle Chen, I grow very good produce. How about I have Chief Jiang bring you some? They are all organic and free of pesticides."

"That would be wonderful!" Uncle Chen accepted. "It just so happens that I've run out of ingredients. Tao Zi, I'll have to trouble you then."

"This is nothing, Uncle Chen." Jiang Tao answered.

A moment later, the dishes were served.

There was boiled meat, a fried bak choy, and tofu braised fish.

"Try this. This meat is delicious. It's tender, smooth, and fragrant!" Jiang Tao picked a piece of boiled meat for Xiao Lingyu.

Xiao Lingyu said very politely, "Thank you, Chief Tao, but I can serve myself. You need to eat some too!" Xiao Lingyu tasted the meat, and her eyes lit up. "Uncle Chen, your cooking is amazing!" She gave Uncle Chen a thumbs up. "Uncle Chen, your cooking is better than a five-star chef. The meat is cooked so tenderly!"

Jiang Tao laughed, "Actually, Uncle Chen was the head chef at a five-star hotel. He opened this shop after he retired!"

"Oh?" Xiao Lingyu was surprised. "Uncle Chen, thank you for sharing your talents with the general public like us." After all, not everyone had the chance to taste the cooking of a five-star chef.

“Haha. Girl, you are such a sweet-talker. I like it!” Uncle Chen laughed heartily. “You should come more often if you like my cooking.” He glanced at the silent Jiang Tao and added, “Tell Jiang Tao to bring you.”

Xiao Lingyu chuckled, “Uncle Chen, do you mean I can’t come without Chief Jiang?”

Auntie Chen immediately scolded her husband jokingly, “Old man, see what you’ve done! You’ve made the girl misunderstood! Girl, you can come with anyone you like. We’ll be happy to serve you!”

“Okay, I’ll come back often in the future!” Xiao Lingyu added, “Uncle Chen, Auntie Chen, my name is Xiao Lingyu, so you can call me Lingyu!”

“Alright!”

Chapter 116: The Arrival of Gong Tianhao

“Lingyu, so you live here?” Jiang Tao followed Xiao Lingyu to the alley and looked at the single-story courtyard. “And this house is...”

“I rented this place.” Xiao Lingyu explained, “I rented this place to keep my stock. Grandma Song, the landlady, is a very nice person and offers me cheap rent. I love the environment here.”

However, Jiang Tao frowned. “But this place is remote. It’s better in the day, but it’s unsafe at night. Moreover, you have to get up early to set up your business. It’s so dangerous if you’re targeted.”

Xiao Lingyu was stunned before she burst out laughing. “There are rumors that Xing Yin County’s Police Chief is a cold and heartless person, but now, he’s acting like a worried mother. If others find out about this, their jaws will drop.”

Jiang Tao was stunned before he said self-deprecatingly, “I don’t even know I can act so motherly.”

Xiao Lingyu took out two bags of vegetables from the warehouse and handed them to Jiang Tao. “Chief Jiang, please give the bigger bag to Uncle Chen. The smaller one is for you!”

Jiang Tao wanted to decline. He didn’t want to take her stock. If he did, she’d have less income.

“Don’t be in such a hurry to decline.” Xiao Lingyu stopped him. “Chief Jiang, my crops are really delicious. You won’t resist coming back for more once you try them. My produce is not ordinary. You won’t get to taste them anytime soon if you miss this chance!” Xiao Lingyu was not boasting. She was merely telling the truth.

Jiang Tao relented. “Thank you then! Where are you going next? I’ll drive you!”

Xiao Lingyu shook her head. “Chief Jiang, I can’t take up more of your time. You must have many things to do. I’m just going to Number One High School to look for my little brother.”

“Number One High School? That’s on the way back to the station. I’ll drive you!” Jiang Tao said.

Xiao Lingyu thought about it and said, “Thank you so much, Chief Jiang!”

Jiang Tao frowned and then added, “Lingyu, we’re friends now. You can call me Brother Jiang or Brother Tao!”

“Okay!” Xiao Lingyu replied, “Brother Jiang, wait for me a moment!” She returned to the warehouse and came out carrying a bag filled with tomatoes and cucumbers.

When Jiang Tao and Xiao Lingyu arrived at the school gate, Jiang Tao received a call. Jiang Tao stopped the car to answer the call. “Tianhao! This is a rare surprise! What? You’re at Xing Yin County? You should have told me that earlier! Okay, we’ll talk when we meet later!”

Xiao Lingyu walked away to find Xiao Lingye. She waved at Jiang Tao, and he waved back.

Jiang Tao got back into his car and drove to the best hotel in Xing Yin County—Lakeside Hotel.

“Tianhao, what brings you to our little nape of the woods? This is not a place for a young master like yourself!” Jiang Tao teased his friend once he entered the room.

Gong Tianhao, dressed in a white robe, sat lazily on the sofa with a glass of red wine in his hand. He shook it twice and said coldly, “You’re the eldest young master of the Jiang Family. Since you’re here, why can’t I?”

Jiang Tao curled his lips. “Everyone says I’m hard to approach. That’s because they haven’t met you.”

Gong Tianhao didn’t answer. He took a sip of red wine and asked, “You’ve been here for three years already. When do you plan to go back? You said you’ll go back after completing your training here for three years.”

Jiang Tao did say that. The Jiang Family at the capital was already preparing for his return. Jiang Tao knew that but...

He said, “I still have something to do here. I won’t be going back temporarily!”

Gong Tianhao frowned slightly and said, “Did something happen? If I’m not mistaken, there’s nothing in this small town that should hold you back.”

“It’s not that.” Jiang Tao shook his head. “It’s some personal matters.” Jiang Tao thought of something, and his mouth twitched to reveal a slight smile.

‘Wait a minute...’ Gong Tianhao narrowed his eyes and pointed out sharply, “Personal matters? Have you found a girlfriend?”

Jiang Tao didn’t expect his friend to be so sharp. He admitted it. “I have indeed taken fancy to a girl. I am pursuing her!”

“Oh? A girl in this small town can grab your fancy?” Gong Tianhao’s face turned up with a playful grin.

“This is interesting. Which young lady is so lucky to have attracted the interest of Young Master Jiang?”

Jiang Tao smiled wryly. “Tianhao, stop teasing me. Sadly, the girl only thinks of me as her normal friend.”

“What?” Li Yuanhang, who was also in the room, was shocked. “Young Master Jiang, does she not know you’re the police chief? Plus, Young Master Jiang is handsome, young, and accomplished. Why would she turn you down?”

Gong Tianhao stared at Jiang Tao and had the same question.

"I don't know either!" Jiang Tao confessed to his two good friends. "I met her for the first time when we were trying to take down a human trafficking gang."

"Is she also a police officer?" Li Yuanhang gasped, "Or she's part of the human trafficking gang? Young Master Jiang fell in love with a human trafficker at first sight, but since you're separated by the line of the law, you have to bear the pain and can't get too close to her?!"

Jiang Tao didn't know what to say. He sighed, "Li Yuanhang, what are you talking about? She is not a human trafficker, okay? In fact, she is the Ming Family's great benefactor. If not for her, the Ming Family's young master might not have been found."

Once the Ming Family was mentioned, Gong Tianhao and Li Yuanhang turned serious.

Gong Tianhao focused his gaze. "You mean..."

Li Yuanhang added, "The girl you're interested in is the one who helped save the young master of the Ming Family?"

"Yes!" Jiang Tao nodded.

"Who is this woman?" Li Yuanhang was curious. "She is so sharp and courageous." The rescue of Young Master Ming was not made public. However, the other powerful families knew about it. It was how Li Yuanhang and Gong Tianhao knew that a young woman had saved the Ming Family's boy.

Jiang Tao said, "She is just an ordinary girl. She was once the top scorer in Xing Yin County. But, now she's a vegetable vendor." His lips curved when he said this.

"What? A vegetable vendor?" Li Yuanhang was stunned. "She's a country bumpkin?"

Jiang Tao was dissatisfied with the comment. He said sternly, "She's not a country bumpkin!" Then he added, "Or at least, she's not an ordinary country bumpkin!"

Li Yuanhang rolled his eyes and conceded, "Fine, she's not an ordinary country bumpkin!" Then, he added with interest. "Now, I want to see this girl in person. She can make the great Young Master Jiang, who normally avoids the opposite gender, falls for her at first sight!"

Young Master Jiang ignored him. He turned to Gong Tianhao. "Tianhao, why did you suddenly come here?"

Gong Tianhao said, "I need to find a place for my grandfather to recuperate."

"Have you found it?" Jiang Tao asked. He did know about the things within the Gong Family. Gong Tianhao wanted to clean out the trash from the family, but Old Master Gong was too soft-hearted. Therefore, Gong Tianhao had no choice but to leave them be for now.

"Yes, Taoyuan Village!" Gong Tianhao replied.

"What? Taoyuan Village?" Jiang Tao was a little surprised.

Li Yuanhang explained, "Yes, we have investigated many places. Taoyuan Village fits our bill the best. It's why we've come to take a look in person. Young Master Jiang, is there a problem?" After all, Jiang Tao

was the county's police chief. When Li Yuanhang heard his surprised gasp, he thought there was something wrong with Taoyuan Village.

Jiang Tao clarified. "No, Taoyuan Village is perfect for the old master to recover. The place has a wonderful natural feel to it. The villagers there are kind. Incidentally, Xiao Lingyu is also from Taoyuan Village."

Gong Tianhao raised his eyebrows, and the corner of his mouth rose slightly. "That's the girl you like?"

Jiang Tao nodded.

"That's great!" Li Yuanhang said happily, "Perhaps we can ask the girl to help look after Old Master Gong!"

Jiang Tao said, "That's not a bad idea. The girl is kind-hearted and gentle. I believe old master will like her too!"

At that moment, Jiang Tao had no idea how much Old Master Gong would like Xiao Lingyu. He liked her so much he wanted her to be his granddaughter-in-law. He became Jiang Tao's biggest obstacle in his pursuit of Xiao Lingyu.

Jiang Tao lived to regret this decision. Why did he agree to ask Xiao Lingyu to look after Old Master Gong? However, love couldn't be forced. Jiang Tao had to live with it.

"Are you here for that?" Jiang Tao asked.

"Yes." Gong Tianhao nodded. "But I'm also here to see you. We haven't seen each other for years already. I want to know how you're doing. It seems like you have a good life here."

Jiang Tao scratched the back of his head with embarrassment. "Let's stop this interrogation on me. What about you? Have you found someone that strikes your fancy?"

Gong Tianhao was instantly reminded of that fiery night. However, he also remembered how he was used by the same woman. He said faintly, "No."

Jiang Tao noticed the subtle changes to Gong Tianhao's expression. He raised his eyebrows and then looked at Li Yuanhang. Jiang Tao shot a gaze at Li Yuanhang that asked, 'Did something happen between Gong Tianhao and a woman?'

Li Yuanhang nodded.

Jiang Tao didn't ask for more details after that.

Chapter 117: What's Wrong with People?

After Xiao Lingyu dropped the tomatoes and cucumbers off with her brother, she returned to her rental home.

As she leaned on the bed to rest, she could not help but feel a sense of fear and uneasiness.

She should thank the video in the alley for clearing her name. She should also thank the heavens that the other cameras were broken. Otherwise, she would have a lot of explaining to do. She was thankful that most people didn't have cellphones yet, or else she would be internet famous already. It would bring her family a lot of trouble.

As Xiao Lingyu lay there, she remembered that the last time this happened was when she was helping the police with the human trafficking gang. She was way too fast for a normal human. She remembered the shocked and confused gaze of the officer who saw her.

She remembered how hesitant Jiang Tao was when they were together that morning. He must have been meaning to ask her about her superhuman speed.

Xiao Lingyu wanted to know too. She thought about it, and the only reason she could think of was the spring water. That had to be it.

Drinking and bathing in the spring helped cleanse her body. Her body achieved higher innate potential. It was light and lithe. It explained why she was running and moving so fast.

She had to be careful of this in the future. She escaped being noticed this time, but it didn't mean she'd be safe forever.

Xiao Lingyu knew as more strange things happened around her, people would get more suspicious. Therefore, she had to be more careful. If the farming space were exposed, at worst, she would hand over the jade pendant. However, if the government wanted to capture her for research, then it would be an irrevocable tragedy.

Xiao Lingyu breathed out heavily, swearing to be more cautious. Wrapped in concern, she slowly lowered into sleep.

Early the following day, Xiao Lingyu woke up to welcome the new day. She glanced at the time. It was 5.30 am. After some cleaning up, she materialized the crops from the farming space.

According to her estimation, Grandma Song and Grandma Li would be coming over soon.

Sure enough, Grandma Song and Grandma Li arrived a little after 6 am.

"Yu 'Er, Yu 'Er!" The two grandmothers stopped outside the gate and shouted for Xiao Lingyu. Xiao Lingyu opened the gate with a smile and greeted them, "Good morning, Grandma Song, Grandma Li!"

"Good morning!" The two grandmothers replied with a smile.

Xiao Lingyu asked with a smile, "What would you be getting today?"

Grandma Song praised, "All your produce is delicious. I only boiled them, but my kids and grandkids were fighting over them!"

"Yes. After my eldest grandson had your vegetables, he became more energetic!" Grandma Li concurred. The two grannies grabbed the stuff they needed, paid, and left. They didn't want to delay Xiao Lingyu. Just as the two grannies left, they ran into a young woman at the gate.

Yang Yan thought she was already very early, but someone was earlier than her.

“Grandmothers, you’re early! Are you here to buy vegetables too?” Yang Yan greeted them politely.

Grandma Song smiled, “Miss, are you also here to buy vegetables from Miss Xiao?”

“Yes, Grandma!” Yang Yan said with a smile, “My family loves her product so much.”

“Okay. You better go in then. We’ll be leaving!” Grandma Song nodded.

Yang Yan nodded in return. She walked through the gate and looked around, “Miss Xiao, this place is very nice, but it’s quite remote!”

Xiao Lingyu answered, “It’s because the rent here is cheap!”

Yang Yan didn’t believe that, but she didn’t press. She looked at the lovely vegetables and fruits on the tricycle. “They look perfect. I want to try all of them. This is too hard to choose. What to buy? What to buy?” Eventually, Yang Yan made her purchase, paid, and left.

After that, Xiao Lingyu rode her tricycle to the market. There was a group of people waiting at the same place as yesterday. As soon as they saw Xiao Lingyu, they immediately ran over.

“Miss, you’ve finally here! Do you know how early I got up to wait for you here? I was afraid that you’d be sold out when you arrived! If I didn’t go back with your vegetables or fruits, my son would have a fit!”

“It’s the same for me. My daughter-in-law just got pregnant. She can’t stomach anything. However, after I bought your vegetables yesterday, her appetite improved greatly. Yesterday night, she asked me to buy more from you. So here I am! Haha!”

“My husband told me the same thing!”

The customers surrounded Xiao Lingyu’s tricycle, sharing their experiences.

“Miss, how can your crops be so delicious?” The auntie with the pregnant daughter-in-law asked. Her daughter-in-law had just got pregnant, so she had to watch her diet. It was strange that her daughter-in-law couldn’t stomach anything but Xiao Lingyu’s crops. What was so special about them? And would they be harmful to the pregnancy?

Xiao Lingyu smiled, “Auntie, these vegetables and fruits are planted by a friend of mine from the Academy of Agricultural Sciences. He uses scientific methods to extract the essence from the highest quality varieties of crops. They are cultivated without any pesticide or pollution, and that’s why they taste so good.”

“Ah!” Everyone nodded with understanding. “They are cultivated using the most advanced scientific technology. No wonder they taste so pure.”

“Not only that, consuming these crops will be beneficial to the body and help lift the spirit!” Xiao Lingyu added.

“Now that you mention it, my father-in-law has been complaining about leg pain recently. It was unbearable. However, after having your vegetables yesterday, he felt much better. It stopped hurting so much. We saw him walking him the house with my mother-in-law this morning. We thought it was a miracle! So, it was your crops after all!”

Xiao Lingyu smiled but didn't answer. She understood the importance of being humble.

"Yes, I have been suffering from a stomach bug for years. I would have stomach cramps whenever it was cold. However, after I had your tomatoes, it felt like there was a warm pack on my stomach. I've never felt better!"

The customers shared their experiences. They realized that Xiao Lingyu's products could improve symptoms of slow illnesses. Everyone was intrigued. They wished they could buy everything on the tricycle and move them home.

Therefore, the customers bought more than they did yesterday. Some passers-by saw the group of people, and they stopped to look. When they saw the crowd fighting over vegetables, they were confused. When they heard people say the vegetables and fruits were delicious and beneficial to the body, they were suspicious. However, why would a vegetable vendor hire actors to praise their products? It made no sense.

Therefore, some were persuaded and joined the crowd to snatch the vegetables and fruits.

This was around 7 am, and many people had already woken up to go to the market. Xiao Lingyu parked at the street leading to the market. Seeing the crowd, many people stopped to check the commotion. As a result, the crowd grew even bigger.

Two-thirds of the vegetables were sold in less than an hour. Tomatoes were still the best-sellers. It was because they could be eaten raw. Children could bring them to school, adults could bring them to work, grandparents could enjoy them as fruits. Furthermore, the tomatoes were cheaper compared to the other products.

By the time Xiao Lingyu reached the market, she had no more tomatoes. There was already a group of people waiting for her. When they saw Xiao Lingyu's tricycle, they gasped, "Miss, you don't have tomatoes for sale today?"

Tomatoes had always enjoyed high popularity.

"They're sold out!" Xiao Lingyu said with a smile.

"Sold out?" Someone said in surprise, "Miss, did you set up somewhere else before coming here?"

Xiao Lingyu pointed down the road. "I stopped under the trees down this road."

"Oh, so that's where you were! Will you come back tomorrow?"

"Yes!"

"Wonderful!"

Soon, the tricycle was empty.

"Miss, you're sold out?" Some of the repeat customers groaned with disappointment when they arrived. "How can things get sold out so quickly? I already came earlier than yesterday!"

"I came earlier, and everything was already gone!"

“What can we do? My son won’t eat if he can’t pair them with Miss’ vegetables!” A young woman sighed sadly. Then, she saw an old gentleman walk past with a bag filled with vegetables. She immediately walked towards him and asked, “Sir, can you sell me some of your vegetables? My son won’t eat if he can’t have the vegetables!”

The elder hugged the bag close as if worried that it might be snatched away. “I’m sorry, but my family doesn’t have enough. I can’t sell them to you.” Then, the elder grabbed the bag and hurried away.

The young woman turned to a young man. “Brother, I will pay greatly for your vegetables. I need them, or my son won’t eat.”

The young man shook his head. “I’m sorry, but my wife is pregnant. She won’t eat without these vegetables too.”

The young woman was devastated. What was wrong with people these days? She wanted to give them money, but they didn’t want it.

She had no choice but to turn back to Xiao Lingyu. “Miss, do you have any leftovers? There’s really nothing left?”

Xiao Lingyu shook her head. “I’m sorry. Please come back early tomorrow.” Xiao Lingyu could conjure the vegetables out of thin air, but she couldn’t do it in public.

Eventually, the young woman gave up and left in despondency.

Chapter 118: First Contact Between Two Leads

Since Xiao Lingyu’s stock was sold out, she decided to leave. If she stayed longer, she might run into the UMALE officers.

After Xiao Lingyu left, the owner of one of the vegetable shops glared at her sinisterly.

...

Jiang Tao was working at the police station when he got a sudden call. “Uncle Chen,” Jiang Tao asked, “Is something wrong?”

Uncle Chen held the phone when Auntie Chen leaned over to ask, “Tao Zi, do you know if Lingyu’s crops have sold out? Is there more?”

Jiang Tao frowned. “I’m not sure.”

“You’re not sure too?” Uncle Chen sounded disappointed. Auntie Chen added, “Tao Zi, can you help us find out? Or Tao Zi, can you give us her number? We’ll call her to ask ourselves.”

Jiang Tao heard the anxiety in Uncle and Auntie Chen’s tone. He was suspicious. He asked, “Uncle Chen, is there anything wrong with Lingyu’s crops?”

Uncle Chen immediately explained, “No, of course not!” Then he paused, “If there is a problem, they are too delicious!”

“Huh?” Jiang Tao was confused. Since he went to meet Gong Tianhao, Jiang Tao hadn’t had the chance to cook Xiao Lingyu’s vegetables. They had been left in his fridge.

Uncle Chen smiled. “You definitely haven’t tasted her vegetables and fruits. How about this? Come to my place, and I’ll cook some for you. They’ll be so delicious, and it’s not because of my culinary skill!”

“Okay!” Jiang Tao was curious too. Uncle Chen was a five-star chef, so he was always picky about what he cooked with. There were not many ingredients that could get Uncle Chen’s praises. Therefore, Xiao Lingyu’s crops had to be very different.

...

Li Yuanhang drove a low-profile black car. Inside the car sat another man in a black suit, white shirt, and a grey tie. The car was driving out of Xing Yin County Town to head towards Taoyuan Village.

Li Yuanhang suddenly braked.

“What happened?” Gong Tianhao asked.

“We have rear-ended a tricycle!” Li Yuanhang said, “Tianhao, I’ll take a look.”

Xiao Lingyu had breakfast in the county town. After that, she rode the tricycle back to her rental. She forgot to check her oil tank, and the engine slowed down. Xiao Lingyu was easing the tricycle to the roadside when the vehicle shook. Xiao Lingyu was knocked forward, and her forehead hit the handle. It was bruised.

Xiao Lingyu felt like cursing. Yesterday, she was robbed. Then, her robbers got into a car accident. Until now, she had no idea if they survived or not. She didn’t ask since it was not her business. Today, her tricycle was rear-ended, and she was injured because of it.

In an instant, a wave of anger surged up in her heart.

She got down from the tricycle. When she saw Li Yuanhang walking over, she scolded, “Sir, what is the meaning of this? Do you know how to drive?”

When Li Yuanhang saw Xiao Lingyu as she turned around, he gasped, “It’s you?!”

“Huh?” Xiao Lingyu frowned. “Do you know me? Who are you?” She had not seen this man before. Then, she realized what was going on, “Don’t try to act chummily with me and think I’ll forgive you! You have rear-ended me. This is your fault!”

She glanced at the black car. She saw a vague silhouette of a man inside the car, but she didn’t take it to heart. She scoffed, “Do you think you’re above the law since you’re driving a limited edition Maybach?”

“Wait, you know this is a limited edition Maybach?” Li Yuanhang narrowed his eyes. His gaze swept over this woman and the tricycle behind her. No matter how he looked at it, she was just a country bumpkin. So how did a country bumpkin recognize a limited edition Maybach? Interesting!

“That doesn’t matter. The fact is you’re responsible for rear-ending my vehicle!” Xiao Lingyu claimed.

“Yuanhang, give her two thousand. We have to go. We’re in a hurry!” Gong Tianhao said from inside the car. ‘Clearly, this woman is looking for money.’

Xiao Lingyu originally didn't care about the person inside the car but when she heard the voice, her expression changed. She was incredulous. She would never forget this voice!

'It is that man! Xiao Tong's father! Why... is he here? Is it for Xiao Tong? No, Xiao Tong hasn't been born, so that can't be it.

'So, why is he here? But wait, what does that have to do with me?

'In his eyes, we only had a one-night-stand, and he probably doesn't even remember me.'

Xiao Lingyu's panicked heart slowed down. When Li Yuanhang shoved two thousand into her hands, Xiao Lingyu came back to her senses. She felt humiliated.

She said angrily, "What is the meaning of this? Do you think I need your money?"

Li Yuanhang frowned. "Isn't what you want? Or you think 2000 is not enough?" He then added with sarcasm, "Two thousand is more than enough to buy a new tricycle, much less repair one!" In other words, don't be too greedy! "Since you've taken the money, then move out of the way!" Li Yuanhang said directly. Then, he turned back to the car.

Xiao Lingyu was furious. She was humiliated. Xiao Lingyu moved to block the car. The black car started and then stopped.

Li Yuanhang got out again angrily. He demanded, "What do you want? Do you want more money? Fine, I'll give you another one thousand. Move out of the way!" For him, one thousand was no different from one cent. Li Yuanhang opened his wallet. Just as he was about to pull out the note, he heard the girl say, "An apology!"

"What?" Li Yuanhang thought he heard wrong.

"I don't want your money." Xiao Lingyu said firmly, "What I want is your apology!"

Li Yuanhang finally snapped back to reality. The girl didn't want their money, but she wanted their apology. However, Li Yuanhang didn't think it was his fault. He argued, "Miss, you were the one who slowed down suddenly. It was why we crashed into you. We're already giving you face by paying you money. Now, you want us to apologize? How ridiculous!"

Xiao Lingyu countered, "How is that my fault? Don't you know that vehicles should maintain a safe distance from each other when they're on the road? Shouldn't you understand that? If you don't, then I'll explain it to you. Vehicles should maintain a safe distance from each other so that there would be enough buffer space just in case of an emergency. Look at how close you were to me earlier! How did you even get your driver's license?"

Li Yuanhang's ears burned.

"You have nothing to say for yourself?" Xiao Lingyu pressed. "In that case, apologize! If you don't, I'll call the police and let them handle this!"

Li Yuanhang was angered by Xiao Lingyu's unreasonable attitude.

“I’m sorry!” Just as Li Yuanhang was hesitating on what to do, a cold voice came from inside the car. “Miss, since I’ve apologized, can we go now? Please make way!”

When Li Yuanhang heard Gong Tianhao’s apology, his eyes were full of surprise.

‘What did I just hear? Did Gong Tianhao apologize to a country bumpkin? The most powerful man in Beijing just apologized to a country girl? This is rarer than a blood moon!’

“Yuanhang, let’s go!”

Li Yuanhang walked back to the driver’s seat in a daze. He started the engine again.

“Wait a moment!” Xiao Lingyu stopped them again.

Li Yuanhang snapped out of his daze. He looked at Xiao Lingyu angrily and questioned her sternly, “We’ve paid you the money and apologized to you. What more do you want?”

Xiao Lingyu held the money and took out her bag. The repair fee would cost 20 RMB, so she pulled out 1980 RMB and walked to the car window. She threw the money into the car and said, “I don’t want your money!”

Xiao Lingyu tried to glance into the backseat. She was quite disappointed when she realized she could only see a perfectly curved jaw.

She wanted to know what Xiao Tong’s father looked like and did Xiao Tong look like him.

Xiao Lingyu turned and left with her tricycle.

Li Yuanhang was confused after Xiao Lingyu left. He caught Xiao Lingyu peeking at the backseat earlier. He also noticed her disappointed expression. ‘The girl knows Gong Tianhao? But how is that possible? Why would a simple country girl know Young Master Gong?’

Li Yuanhang turned to Gong Tianhao and asked, “Tianhao, do you know her?”

“No!” Gong Tianhao said coldly.

“But then, we ran into her two times already in a short amount of time. Isn’t fate interesting?” Li Yuanhang teased. “Tianhao, did you notice the way she secretly looked at you? Her initial anticipation turned into disappointment.”

“Drive!” Gong Tianhao ordered coolly.. He pretended not to hear Li Yuanhang.

Chapter 119: Disguised Blind Date?

Xiao Lingyu hid in a corner and watched the car drive away. Her heart was still pounding.

‘Why is this man here?’ She had not seen him before, but she was sure that was his voice. Even though she didn’t know his real identity, he must be incredibly powerful to stay in the presidential suite of a five-star hotel. Plus, when she used her identity, it had opened many doors. The people at the hotel had to give him face. Someone like that had to come from an extraordinary background.

She sneaked a peek at the man. She didn't get to see his face, but she did capture his exquisite and handsome side profile. She touched her belly and thought. 'Xiao Tong doesn't look like me. He probably takes after his father.'

Xiao Lingyu knew that she had to avoid this car and even the driver as hard as she could. Xiao Lingyu didn't know if the man had appeared in her previous life, but in this life, she didn't want to meet him.

Xiao Lingyu counted on her fingers. Xiao Tong was about to show himself soon. Xiao Tong, in her previous life, was very sensible, both before and after birth.

However, Xiao Lingyu didn't anticipate his arrival because he was evidence of her betrayal of Chen Ran. Therefore, in this life, she had to treat him well. She would not allow anyone to hurt him, not even his biological father. Of course, his biological father didn't know about Xiao Tong's existence. Xiao Lingyu had to make sure it stayed that way.

Xiao Lingyu slowly calmed down and pushed the tricycle to the gas station to fuel up. Xiao Lingyu checked the tricycle. The back-end needed a paint job, but beyond that, the vehicle didn't need any repair.

After the fuel tank was filled, Xiao Lingyu rode the tricycle back to her rental. As soon as she arrived, she received a call from Jiang Tao.

"Lingyu, do you still have any vegetables left?" Jiang Tao asked. Xiao Lingyu smiled. 'He must have cooked the stuff I gave him already.' She said, "I still have some left. How about I send them to the police station?"

Jiang Tao explained, "Actually, it was Uncle Chen who called to say he wanted to buy more of your products. He was the one who asked me to phone you."

Xiao Lingyu said, "I'll drop some off with Uncle Chen later!"

Jiang Tao offered, "I'll come and get them. I'll drive."

Xiao Lingyu chuckled. "Why are you so free as the police chief? It's alright. I can't take more of your time. I'll take a ride to Uncle Chen's place. I also need to chat with Uncle Chen to see if we can come to cooperation."

When Xiao Lingyu heard Jiang Tao mention Uncle Chen was once a five-star chef, she already had this idea. Her business was well recently, but she couldn't expect ordinary customers to purchase her vegetables every day. After all, her prices were high. Therefore, the best solution was to sell them to exclusive hotels and restaurants.

With Uncle Chen's connection, he should be able to introduce people from big hotels to Xiao Lingyu.

Jiang Tao caught Xiao Lingyu's intention. He said, "Okay, you should go over first. I'll go there after work."

"Alright!" Xiao Lingyu replied. Just as she hung up, she got a message. It was from Jiang Tao. It was Uncle Chen's phone number.

Xiao Lingyu was about to make the call when an unknown caller rang her. "Hello, who is it?" Xiao Lingyu inquired politely.

"Lingyu, it's me, Uncle Chen!" Uncle Chen laughed heartily, "Haha..."

Xiao Lingyu laughed too. "Uncle Chen, I was about to call you."

"Oh." Uncle Chen was slightly surprised. "Tao Zi has filled you in, then?"

"Yes." Xiao Lingyu said, "Uncle Chen, I'll send you the ingredients in a bit."

"Okay," Uncle Chen said loudly. "Lingyu, remember to bring me more!"

"Of course!" Xiao Lingyu replied.

Xiao Lingyu teleported into her farming space. Over the past few days, she had sown a few new seeds and added some new varieties of vegetables. There were beans, pumpkins, bitter melons, loofah, and so on.

Xiao Lingyu picked some of each and brought them out of the space.

...

On the other side, once Uncle Chen ended the call with Xiao Lingyu, he immediately made another call. The other party answered and greeted respectfully, "Master Chen."

Uncle Chen said, "Xiao Wang, I need you to come over to my place for dinner tonight."

"Of course, Master Chen!" Xiao Wang immediately replied.

After Xiao Wang hung up, a young man sitting opposite him asked, "Manager Wang, did Master Chen ask you to go over to his place for dinner?"

Manager Wang nodded, "President Gu, do you think..."

President Gu grabbed his coat and walked away. When he saw the dumbfounded Manager Wang, he snapped, "Let's go. What are you standing there for?"

Manager Wang asked in confusion, "President Gu, where are we..."

"We're going to Master Chen's place, of course!" President Gu answered.

...

When it was almost time to get off work, Jiang Tao called Gong Tianhao, "Tianhao, where are you? Oh, you're on the way to Taoyuan Village. I wanted to invite you to dinner, but never mind!" Jiang Tao drove to Uncle Chen's restaurant alone.

Manager Wang and President Gu were already there.

When Uncle Chen saw President Gu, he smiled, "Xiao Gu is here too."

Gu Ziyue told Uncle Chen respectfully, "Uncle Chen, when I heard you asked Manager Wang to come here for dinner, I shamelessly decided to tag along. You won't mind, right?"

“Haha, kid. Even if I mind, you will stick around.” Uncle Chen laughed. “I know you too well. When there’s good food, there’s no way to make you move.”

Gu Ziyue was not angry being teased. Instead, he smiled, “Master Chen, you called Manager Chen over not just for a simple dinner, right?”

Uncle Chen said, “You’re a smart kid. But you should learn the virtue of patience. You’ll know eventually.”

Gu Ziyue didn’t press. He and Manager Wang found an empty table and sat down.

Soon, they saw Uncle and Auntie Chen look out the window like they spotted something valuable. He followed their gaze and saw a girl get out of the taxi with two big bags of vegetables in her hands.

Gu Ziyue wondered. ‘Uncle Chen is not trying to set me up with someone, is it?’ The man forgot Uncle Chen originally invited Manager Wang, who was a married man.

Uncle and Auntie Chen immediately rushed to take the two big bags from Xiao Lingyu. They scolded light-heartedly. “Lingyu, these two bags are so heavy. You should have called us to go get them personally.”

Xiao Lingyu smiled, “Uncle Chen, I took the taxi, so they’re not that heavy.”

“Come in to sit and rest!” Auntie Chen welcomed Xiao Lingyu warmly. When she saw Gu Ziyue sitting far away, Auntie Chen said, “Xiao Gu, you should sit with Lingyu. Lingyu, you can sit here. Wait for a moment. Tao Zi will come after work.”

Xiao Lingyu nodded.

After Uncle Chen placed the bags in the kitchen, he came over to make the introductions, “Lingyu, this is the president of the Gu family hotel, Gu Ziyue. This is the hotel’s purchasing manager, Wang Zhimin! Xiao Gu, Xiao Wang, this is Xiao Lingyu.”

Xiao Lingyu greeted them very politely, “President Gu, Manager Wang!” She understood that Uncle Chen was trying to help her, so she didn’t want to disappoint him.

Gu Ziyue and Wang Zhimin were baffled.

Gu Ziyue glanced at Xiao Lingyu. He thought to himself. ‘Is Uncle Chen really trying to set me up with a woman? Is this a blind date?’

Wang Zhimin did not think too much about it. Based on what Uncle Chen said, the girl was acquainted with Chief Jiang Tao. He nodded at Xiao Lingyu and said, “Miss Xiao!”

Gu Ziyue also greeted Xiao Lingyu politely, “Miss Xiao!”

Uncle Chen asked, “Xiao Gu, I heard from Xiao Wang that your hotel is having some issues with food ingredients supply?”

Gu Ziyue was quite angry when he was reminded of this. “Master Chen, you have no idea how shameless Zhou Huaming from the Yi Family Hotel is! He has poached our chef, and now, they are stealing our supplier. The supplier at Green Source is also quite a bastard. They cut off our cooperation without any

notification. I woke up, and someone told me our supplier had decided to stop working with us. I would kill them if I could. This is too infuriating.”

Gu Ziyè’s eyes were red with anger. He continued to speak angrily, “Ever since Wei Xilin left with his two disciples and Green Source stopped cooperating with us, the Gu Family Hotel’s business is getting worse by the day.”

Then, he looked at Uncle Chen pleadingly. “Master Chen, can you help us? With your culinary skills, you’ll resuscitate the Gu Family Hotel’s business. Master Chen, will you help me? Don’t worry. I will not mistreat you.”

Wang Zhimin also looked at Uncle Chen, “Master Chen, you’re the only one who can help us now. This small shop,” He took in the remote eatery, “is a waste of your talent, Master Chen!”

Uncle Chen shook his head. “I prefer cooking at this small shop that I call my own.”

“Master Chen!” Gu Ziyè and Wang Zhimin looked at Uncle Chen with heartbroken and pleading eyes.

Uncle Chen smiled and said, “No rush. Xiao Wang, Xiao Gu, we can talk about this further after dinner!”

Gu Ziyè and Wang Zhimin’s eyes lit up with hope. They immediately nodded and said, “Okay!”

Chapter 120: Cooperation

“Wow, it smells so good!” Jiang Tao could smell the fragrance from afar. He asked, “Uncle Chen, what are you cooking? I can smell the fragrance of your cooking from a distance away.”

“Tao Zi, you’re finally here!” Uncle Chen smiled and said, “I didn’t cook anything special. I just made a few ordinary vegetarian dishes.”

“Then, this proves how good of a cook Uncle Chen really is!” Jiang Tao praised, “You said they are simple vegetarian dishes, but the fragrance travels for miles!”

“Haha. Tao Zi, you’re such a sweet-talker!” Uncle Chen laughed. “Come in and have a seat. Lingyu is already here.”

Jiang Tao walked in. When he saw Xiao Lingyu, he called out with a smile, “Lingyu!”

Gu Ziyè and Wang Zhimin, who were eating raw tomatoes, saw Jiang Tao walk in. They wanted to greet him, but their mouths fell open.

Director Jiang, who was famous for being cold and ruthless, was being so friendly to a girl. This was too strange.

Xiao Lingyu answered, “Brother Jiang!”

Jiang Tao looked at Gu Ziyè. “President Gu!”

Gu Ziyè suddenly choked, and he coughed violently. ‘Brother Jiang?’

When he calmed down, he greeted Jiang Tao. “Chief Jiang!”

“Now that everyone is here, we can start eating!” Uncle Chen said. Auntie Chen served the dishes.

...

“These dishes are so delicious!” Gu Ziyue’s chopsticks moved quickly. He was eating busily, but his eyes never stopped moving. “Wang Zhimin, how can you steal my braised eggplant? Give it back to me.” Gu Ziyue moved to grab the last piece of eggplant.

Wang Zhimin immediately put the eggplant into his mouth. He exclaimed, “I’ve never eaten such a delicious eggplant before. It’s soft, delicate, and fragrant.”

Gu Ziyue was rather angry with Wang Zhimin’s act of defiance. He wanted to scold him but joining the ongoing food war was more important.

Uncle Chen made a braised eggplant, dried lentil beans, tomato fried egg, mushroom and cole salad, cabbage stewed tofu, fried green pepper with garlic sprouts, and sliced cucumber. They were all ordinary home-cooked dishes.

However, these ordinary dishes were being fought over by the six people present. Soon, the eight plates were empty. Gu Ziyue even used the sauces to mix with his rice.

“That was so satisfying!” Gu Ziyue rubbed his bulging belly, “Master Chen, your culinary skill has achieved a whole new light! Even your vegetarian dishes are so delicious!”

Wang Zhimin concurred, “Master Chen, if you got on the television’s Master Chef, you’d bring back the trophy so easily. Why don’t you go on that competition, Master Chen?”

Uncle Chen laughed loudly, “Haha, I knew you’d say that. But you’re wrong this time. My cooking skill hasn’t changed. The biggest contributor this time is the ingredients. Didn’t you smell their fragrance when I was cooking earlier? You only need to place them in the pot, and the fragrance will come out immediately.”

Gu Ziyue and Wang Zhimin immediately caught Uncle Chen’s intention. They were excited as they asked, “Master Chen, where did you get the ingredients...”

Uncle Chen pointed at Xiao Lingyu and said, “Lingyu brought me these ingredients. You’ll have to ask her where she got them!”

Gu Ziyue looked at Xiao Lingyu with a serious and sincere expression. He asked, “Miss Xiao, where did you get these vegetables?”

Xiao Lingyu smiled and shook her head. “President Gu, I can’t tell you that.”

Gu Ziyue and Wang Zhimin lowered their heads with disappointment.

Xiao Lingyu added, “However, I do sell them. I can provide the Gu Family Hotel with all the ingredients you need!”

Gu Ziyue was so excited that he almost jumped up. He said, “Really? That’s great!”

Xiao Lingyu said, “However, I need to make something clear first. I get my stock from a friend, and they don’t have much to supply me. I can only sell a small portion to you for now.”

Gu Ziyue frowned. "How much can you spare us, Miss Xiao?"

"How much do you need?" Xiao Lingyu asked.

Wang Zhimin said, "We need at least 500 catties of vegetables every day!" For a big hotel, this was not a big number.

Xiao Lingyu lowered her head to think. Then, she said, "President Gu, I can supply with you a portion of that. However, I need to warn you that my prices are very expensive. In fact, some would say they are sky-high. For example, the tomatoes. They cost about 2 RMB per catty on the market, but my tomatoes cost 2 RMB each. But my tomatoes are larger, and they weigh around 4 taels each. Regardless, my tomatoes are almost twice as expensive as the ones on the market. For another example, we can take the cole. The market sells them for eighty cents but mine cost around 10 RMB."

"How can they be so expensive?" Wang Zhimin exclaimed in disbelief.

Xiao Lingyu said very seriously, "Because they are worth the price."

Gu Ziyue thought for a moment and asked, "Is there no discount for us to buy in bulk?"

Xiao Lingyu nodded, "Of course. I'll sell the tomatoes for 1.50 RMB each, and the other vegetables and fruits will go for 6.5 RMB per catty. President Gu, I'm only giving you this discount because of Uncle Chen."

Jiang Tao listened attentively and said nothing. However, he was surprised. 'How can Lingyu's vegetables be so expensive?'

Gu Ziyue put one hand on the table and frowned as he thought deeply.

Xiao Lingyu said again, "President Gu and Manager Wang, you've tasted the vegetables yourself. Uncle Chen's cooking skill is amazing, but the ingredients are fresh too. Do you really think they wouldn't bring in customers?"

Customers at big hotels wouldn't be short of money. It was rare for people to complain about prices at high-end hotels. As long as the food was delicious, the clients were willing to pay. This was the difference between an ordinary restaurant and a high-end hotel. Customers at ordinary restaurants wanted affordable food, while clients at high-end hotels wanted good service and exceptional experience. They were looking for different things.

While Gu Ziyue was thinking, Wang Zhimin cut in with some hesitation. "But they are still too expensive! Will the hotel turn a profit?"

Xiao Lingyu wanted to roll her eyes. 'Can't you people raise the price of your food?' However, Xiao Lingyu didn't say anything and waited for Gu Ziyue's decision. As the president and a foodie, he should be aware of the value her products could bring to his hotel.

Moments later, Gu Ziyue asked, "Miss Xiao, how much you can provide me now?"

Xiao Lingyu answered, "300 catties per day!"

“Okay, I’ll take your offer! Manager Wang will discuss with you the exact type of vegetables and their quantity!” Gu Ziyue then asked, “When can we sign the contract? And when will you deliver the products?”

Xiao Lingyu shook her head, “We won’t sign the contract for the time being! But, don’t worry, I’ll deliver you 300 catties of products daily. Instead, we’ll sign the contract in a month!”

Gu Ziyue was a little confused, “Why do we have to wait for a month?”

Xiao Lingyu said half-jokingly. “Of course, it’s for you to verify the quality of my products. I want to make sure they can really help with your hotel’s business!” The main reason was that Xiao Lingyu wanted to spread her name on the high-end market. This connection would help her greatly in the future.

Gu Ziyue nodded. “That’s wonderful!”

Wang Zhimin narrowed his eyes and did not say anything. It would be great if Xiao Lingyu’s vegetables could really boost the hotel’s business. But what if it couldn’t?

He was worried, but the president had made the decision, so he didn’t say anything.

“Do you have more products with you today? Can you give me 100 to 200 catties?” Gu Ziyue wanted to see the results among his clients already.

Xiao Lingyu said, “I sold around 300 catties this morning, and I have around 130 catties left. I’ll deliver them to your hotel later, okay?”

“It’s okay. We’ll go to take them now!” Gu Ziyue asked, “Miss Xiao, how about the payment?”

Xiao Lingyu said, “You can pay me monthly. In any case, I’m not afraid that you’d scam me. I have Director Jiang’s support, right?” Of course, Xiao Lingyu was only joking. But this was also a signal that she was not easily bullied.

Jiang Tao nodded very seriously and said, “That’s right!”

Gu Ziyue, “...” Do they really think I’m going to run away for the sake of a few vegetables and fruits?

Uncle Chen, “...” When did Tao Zi learn how to joke?

Gu Ziyue and Wang Zhimin followed Xiao Lingyu to her place. When they arrived, they were surprised.

Xiao Lingyu said, “Manager Wang, you can have people come here to get the stock in the future. But the roads are only accessible by tricycles!”

“Noted!” Wang Zhimin nodded.

After Gu Ziyue and Wang Zhimin got the vegetables, they couldn’t wait to return to the hotel.. They wanted to see the results as soon as possible.