

Fat Wife 241

Chapter 241: Collecting Calligraphy and Paintings

He Mei felt so embarrassed by Qi Ling that she regretted coming out today. In a fit of anger, she shook off Qi Ling's hand and walked out of the shop.

Qi Ling shouted from behind, "Wait for me, Sister Xiao Mei."

Qi Ling quickly followed behind. When she reached the door, she did not forget to turn around and say to Qiao Mei, "You'd better be sensible enough to send this set of jewelry over!"

Qiao Mei smiled without saying anything.

The shopkeeper found Qiao Mei to be very interesting. Even he did not dare to offend the He family, yet this young lady could still smile after doing it.

"Young lady, aren't you afraid that they'll cause trouble?" the shopkeeper asked.

"There's nothing to be afraid of. I bought it with real money. What's there to be afraid of?" Qiao Mei said with a smile.

The shopkeeper also felt that what Qiao Mei said made sense. No matter how unreasonable these people were, they would not openly snatch things.

"I think it's fate that brought you here. If there's anything else you want, I'll give it to you." The shopkeeper stood up and looked at Qiao Mei.

Since he offered, Qiao Mei did not stand on ceremony. She looked around but did not see any calligraphy and paintings.

"Why don't you have any calligraphy and paintings here?" Qiao Mei asked.

The shopkeeper smiled helplessly. This smart little girl had realized it after all.

He loved calligraphy and paintings the most in his life, and he liked all of them regardless of the artists. He would buy them for his own collection and did not sell them.

Now that this little girl was eyeing them, he had to take them out as promised.

“Tell me what kind you want. Let’s be clear, I only agree to give you one,” said the shopkeeper.

“I want an ancient landscape painting,” Qiao Mei said.

The shopkeeper walked around the shelf behind the counter and called Qiao Mei over.

It turned out that there was another room behind this shelf. It was a place for the shopkeeper to rest and he kept many calligraphy and paintings there.

Qiao Mei looked through the calligraphy and paintings hanging on the wall one by one. In the end, she chose an inconspicuous landscape painting.

“I want this one!” Qiao Mei said as she looked at the shopkeeper.

That painting was really quite old and could be traced back to a hundred years ago. It was not perfectly preserved, but at least 80% of it was still in good condition.

The shopkeeper had no choice but to take it down and slowly roll it up. He repeatedly reminded Qiao Mei how to maintain the painting.

“You have to treat it well. Don’t ruin it!” the shopkeeper said.

“I’ll definitely treasure it and pass it down. Don’t worry,” Qiao Mei said.

After packing up the things she had bought, she prepared to make her way home. The shopkeeper did not give the painting to her because it was not valuable, but because Qiao Mei had paid the high price he had casually quoted for the jewelry.

The things that one could buy with more than 2,000 dollars included more than 10 bicycles, or 15 to 16 radios, or a refrigerator, or an oversized black-and-white television.

Qiao Mei knew that it was expensive to spend 2,000 dollars on a set of jewelry, but no one knew the value of antiques now. In the future, the value of these things could double or even increase more than tenfold.

Some things could even be priceless!

Qiao Mei originally intended to give the set of jewelry to Aunt, but the longer she wore the bangle, the more she liked it. She did not feel warm when she wore it.

It was like a natural air conditioner, so it was now something that she could not give anyone or sell off.

For her to give it to He Mei?

No way!

On the way home, Qiao Mei ran into someone selling flower pots by the roadside. She casually picked out four flower pots that she thought looked good. She thought that these flower pots were being sold at a reasonable price of four dollars each.

She did not feel tired even though she was carrying so many things and even felt quite refreshed. After that, she made her way home happily.

At the same time, He Mei also reached home. She threw her bag on the sofa and asked gloomily, "Dad, have you checked on the matter with Qiao Mei?"

"Yes, I've checked. We've already gotten some clues," He Guo said.

By now, it was the third brother of the He family who was the one handling all the business matters. Now that he was older, he did not manage the family business much and just waited for the dividends every year.

He Mei sat on the sofa unhappily. She was angry at the thought of what had just happened and could not wait for her plan to be implemented immediately.

Chapter 242: Results of the Investigation

After a while, the phone rang. Before He Guo could get up, He Mei rushed to the phone and picked it up.

"Hello, this is the He residence," He Mei said calmly.

She must still maintain her sense of decorum.

Unexpectedly, it was a call from one of the investigators.

"Miss, we have checked and she did not have any intimate contact with any man in the village," the investigator said.

He Mei was shocked and asked suspiciously, "Are you sure you screened all of them? Is there really no one who has an ambiguous relationship with her?"

"We have certainly checked every household. There are really no men in the village who had any relationship with her," the investigator said firmly.

“How is that possible? Then how did she get the child? Look into it again!” He Mei snarled.

He did not dare to refute her because she was the daughter of the He family after all. However, he had really searched the entire village and there was really no one who had any ambiguous relationship with Qiao Mei.

After He Mei saw Qiao Mei today, she became even more convinced of her own suspicions. Based on her work experience at the hospital, when she saw Qiao Mei’s stomach and figure, she was sure that Qiao Mei was definitely more than three months pregnant.

He Guo watched as He Mei kept making things difficult for the investigator. He got up and grabbed the phone to find out more about the situation himself.

“Alright, continue with the investigation and see if there’s anyone in the neighboring villages who knows her.” Then He Guo hung up.

“Dad! Why did you hang up without asking more questions!” He Mei shouted at He Guo angrily.

He Guo looked at his daughter coldly without saying anything. His gaze made He Mei lose her imposing manner quickly.

“Dad, shouldn’t we probe more?” He Mei no longer had the arrogant stance from before. Although she was willful and impudent by nature, she was still a child of the He family and had to maintain her decorum at all times.

“They’re professional investigators who do everything flawlessly. I’ve been using them for many years. Are you doubtful of their capabilities?” He Guo questioned.

“No... I dare not. It’s just that I’m still worried.” He Mei sat down beside He Guo tentatively.

“They said that they have asked everyone in the village individually. Qiao Mei doesn’t even leave the house and doesn’t have any chance to interact with men at all. They are unable to find out anything more,” He Guo said.

“But! But it’s possible that there’s a man who made secret visits!” He Mei said.

It was not that He Guo had not thought about the possibility, but given Qiao Qiang’s character, he would not allow such a thing to happen at home. Besides, if no one had noticed anything during the day, it was even more impossible for things to happen at night as Qiao Qiang would be at home.

“That’s impossible. Anyway, let them continue with their investigations.” With that, He Guo went to the dining table to have his meal.

He Mei followed He Guo cautiously. Although she behaved like a glamorous and spoiled young lady outside, she could not behave freely when she returned home.

Qiao Mei did not go home immediately. It was not the time that Xia Fang got off work yet. If she went back now, she would definitely be caught by those brats. She did not want them to see her.

Qiao Mei went into a random restaurant near the house and had a leisurely meal. After that, she took a walk through many alleys and bought a lot of pickled vegetables and cold dishes before going to the small park opposite the house to sit in the shade.

Qiao Mei only dared to return home after Xia Fang got off from work.

Before entering the courtyard, Qiao Mei hid all the food she bought in the flower pots. At a glance, she looked like she was only carrying ordinary flower pots.

After she packed everything neatly, she prepared to enter the courtyard nonchalantly. The moment she entered the courtyard, she saw five children sitting on both sides of the corridor like five little door guardians.

They looked at Qiao Mei with resentment in their eyes, as if they were asking her why she had only just returned.

They had met many people like her before, so this sister was definitely not a good person!

“Elder sister, what did you buy?” a child of about six years old asked.

Qiao Mei sighed. The age of these children ranged from being in their teens to the youngest being four or five years old. They were so scheming. It seemed that her own younger siblings were really sensible kids. When she could go back to see them, she would definitely buy them a lot of fun stuff and delicious food.

She must praise them and then tell them about the naughty children she had met so that they would be more vigilant and not get bullied by other people.

Chapter 243: Intentional Injury

Qiao Mei gently knocked on the things in her bag. “Hear the sound, these are flower pots.”

“You must have good food with you! I can smell it!” the plump eldest child said bluntly as he pointed at Qiao Mei.

This kid was rude and quite overbearing. It seemed that the younger brothers were so skinny because this eldest child must have eaten everything.

“I ate at a restaurant before I came back,” Qiao Mei said.

She had spent too much time in the restaurant today and there was probably some lingering food smell on her. She did not expect this child to have such a good sense of smell.

The children looked at one another, not knowing what to do. The second brother stood up and looked at Qiao Mei pitifully. “Elder sister, can you give us something to eat?”

“I don’t have anything to eat. You guys can go look for food elsewhere.” Qiao Mei continued walking straight towards the corridor.

When she brushed past them, the plump eldest child slammed forcefully into his second brother. As the eldest kid was furthest away from her, and the second brother was the closest, he could only make his second brother bump into her.

If they managed to bump into Qiao Mei, they would be able to get their revenge for having to wait for her all day. If they did not manage to bump into her, they would say that she was the one who pushed them and then ask her for monetary compensation.

Qiao Mei reacted by turning sideways, causing the mahogany box in her right hand to face them instead of the chinaware in her left hand.

This caused the second brother to take a very hard knock. He held onto his arm and yelled loudly, then he started crying.

His loud yelling caused the younger brothers to become startled and they started crying as well. At this moment, the plump eldest child pointed at Qiao Mei and shouted, "You bad woman, you bullied my younger brothers!"

These children cried, shouted and cursed among themselves. The courtyard instantly became very noisy. Qiao Mei, who was standing closest to them, felt as if she was going deaf as her ears were already ringing.

The noise gave her a headache.

At this moment, the door on the first floor opened instantly and a woman rushed out to hug her second son and asked with concern, "My son, what happened to you?"

Upon closer inspection, she found that the second brother's arm was swollen and red.

The woman pointed at Qiao Mei and cursed at her, "Damn it! How can you hit him so hard! He's still a child! How can you hit him! You're pregnant yourself and going to be a mother! How can you be like this! The child you birthed won't have a butthole! Your child will definitely can't speak and will be a mute!"

She said the most unpleasant things and angered Qiao Mei with her last few statements .

What she hated the most now was hearing others curse her children. She could not accept anything bad from anyone's mouth.

Xia Fang, who was upstairs, also heard the commotion and hurriedly went downstairs to see if it was Qiao Mei returning.

The people around also went downstairs if they could make it. Those who could not go downstairs opened the windows and listened. They definitely would not want to miss out on the drama.

The Sun family's children were causing trouble again. This time, their target was Xia Fang's family. This was going to be a good show..

The moment Xia Fang came down, she checked if Qiao Mei was injured. Then, she reached out to take the things from Qiao Mei's hand. Qiao Mei only gave Xia Fang the bag with the chinaware but not the one with the mahogany box. After all, ordinary women would not have the strength to carry this thing.

When the woman saw Xia Fang, she started to rant loudly, "Xia Fang, come and take a look! Look at what your niece-in-law has done!"

The woman raised her second son's hand for Xia Fang to see. She wept as she said, "Look at how ruthless she is. She beat the child up like this! How can she hit a child!"

"I didn't hit him. Look at the amount of things I'm carrying. As soon as I came back, your children surrounded me and asked me if I had anything to eat. I said that I had already eaten before I came back. This bag contains chinaware, so when your eldest son pushed your second son towards me, I dodged and he bumped into the things I'm holding," Qiao Mei said.

Qiao Mei did not say all these for this woman to hear. She wanted the people around her to know what had happened.

Xia Fang also understood what had happened. It seemed that the family from the first floor had their door open and was just waiting for Qiao Mei to return.

If the kids managed to get food from her, they would bring it home to eat together with their family. If the kids could not manage to get any food, this woman would then come out to “seek justice” for her injured child.

It was such a calculative scheme. This woman taught the children nothing but these crooked ways!

Chapter 244: Asking for Compensation

“You’re making things up! My eldest son pushed my second son! Why! Do you even make sense!” the woman shouted at Qiao Mei.

“Tsk, your children have done so many such things.”

“That’s right. They even refused to leave my house previously.”

“And my house as well.”

The people around them started talking about who had suffered the same things.

“Get lost! What does it have to do with you! My children didn’t do such things!” The woman roared at the surrounding neighbors.

These children did not go in a group to one house to ask for food. They would split up and one kid would go to one house so that their targets would feel bad to reject them. However, a few families would not let the children get their way and would kick them out of the house. These families would have then suffered from the children’s revenge antics.

“What do you mean it has nothing to do with me! Last week, they even broke the new flower pot I just bought!”

“And the eggs I bought yesterday morning were smashed by your children the moment I entered the courtyard!”

“So is my milk! It’s all spilled because of them!”

“Your eldest son has done a lot of things! He even threw the vegetables I bought onto the ground and trampled them!”

Everyone chimed in and complained about what these children from the Sun family had done. However, these children were still young. Even if they were caught, they would only be reprimanded and sent home to be disciplined.

It was actually Old Madam Sun’s idea for them to go to someone else’s house to freeload. Sending them home to be disciplined would only make them worse.

The eldest son of the Sun family was a person who bore grudges and he also had food aggression issues. For anyone who snatched his things, he would definitely not let them have an easy time. He felt that people who did not give him anything were all his enemies and he would think of ways to take revenge on them.

“You have no evidence! What right do you have to say that!” the woman said with her head lowered.

In any case, she refused to admit anything. These were all incidents from long ago and no one would be able to produce any evidence. As long as she did not admit it, then it was not something her children had done.

“With your character, what good can your children do!”

“What the hell! How dare you still have the cheek to come out if this is how you bring up your children!”

“She’s just a shameless person. Back then, she did all kinds of things to marry into the Sun family!”

Qiao Mei and Xia Fang watched from the side as the neighbors quarreled with this woman. They found out many interesting things through the information being thrown out during the arguments.

“Busybodies! Just mind your own business!” the woman shouted.

These people arguing with her were the ones who did not allow her children to go to their house, so she felt that there was no need to be polite to them or ask for their support. This way, she could also show the other neighbors the consequences of not helping her family feed her children.

Who would dare to not feed the children!

If you do not feed them, they will cause trouble for you. Let’s see who wins!

The only reason why so many people gave these children food was to avoid unnecessary trouble. After all, it would be troublesome to have to deal with such a shrew. Not only would it waste a lot of time, but it would also bring about other problems.

“Hurry up and bring my child to the hospital!” The woman said as she pointed at Qiao Mei.

After talking for a long time, she finally remembered Qiao Mei.

“There’s no hurry. Let me take a look.” An old-sounding voice came from the back of the crowd.

Everyone made way for the person who spoke and they realized that it was the highly respected old master who lived in the compound.

“In the hospital, the orthopedic doctors are all my students. Let me see if this child is alright,” the old master walked to the front and said to the woman.

The woman thought that her second son must be suffering from a broken bone, given the redness and swelling. She stepped aside confidently to let the old master treat her second son.

The old master gently raised the second son's arm to take a look and then checked the injured area.

"It's no big deal. The swelling will go down after a few days of rest," the old master said.

When the woman heard this, she said in disbelief, "No, I'm still worried. We have to go to the hospital to get an X-ray done!"

Qiao Mei smiled. This woman did not even want to believe the old doctor and still insisted on going to the hospital.

"Then come and look for me at the hospital tomorrow. The orthopedics doctors are not around today," the old master said with a grin.

This old master looked like a friendly person.

"Hmph, then pay me for the medical expenses, nutrition fees, food expenses and compensation for the mental damage! Give me the money!" the woman reached out her hand and said to Qiao Mei.

Chapter 245: Pretending to Be In Pain

Qiao Mei looked at the unreasonable woman and did not want to waste her breath.

The old master's expression changed for the worse when he heard what the woman said. He said quietly, "The people living in this compound are all hospital employees and their family members. It doesn't cost anything for anyone here to get an X-ray."

Qiao Mei took her things and prepared to go upstairs. She thought that since this was an unsolvable issue, she might as well leave now.

The woman went forward to grab Qiao Mei and said, "You can't leave! You haven't paid me yet!"

Qiao Mei quickly came up with a plan. She put down the box in her hand and held her stomach as she slowly sat on the ground and groaned in pain.

This scene gave Xia Fang a huge fright. She went up to the woman and pushed her away before she held onto Qiao Mei and asked nervously, "Oh, Mei Mei. What's wrong, Mei Mei? Tell me where it hurts."

Qiao Mei leaned on Xia Fang's shoulder and muttered softly, "It's an act."

Xia Fang immediately understood Qiao Mei's intention. She started crying and said to the woman, "You deserve death! If anything happens to my Mei Mei, I won't let you off!"

Qiao Mei leaned against Xia Fang and did not move at all, looking as though she had fainted. This frightened the woman so much that she did not dare to move and quickly denied that it had anything to do with her.

Taking advantage of the chaos, she dragged her children back home, afraid that she would get the blame if there was anything wrong with Qiao Mei.

No matter what, Qiao Mei was pregnant. The woman knew that the loss of a baby would be akin to her taking a life. Compared to the injury on her child's arm, she would be in much bigger trouble if Qiao Mei lost her baby.

When Qiao Mei saw that the Sun family had left, she quietly opened her eyes and said weakly to everyone, "Everyone... please go back... I just suddenly felt pain... I'm fine..."

Seeing how pitiful Qiao Mei looked, everyone wanted to render help.

"Sister Xia Fang, you're a doctor. Can you see if she's alright?"

"Hurry up and go to the hospital!"

Xia Fang waved her hand and said to everyone, "She's fine. It's just that she had just been out in the sun all day because she wanted to avoid those children and didn't dare to come home."

As she spoke, she even choked up. "But then again, it was so sunny today and this child had been out in the sun all day. Now she even got bumped into..."

The neighbors gathered around all felt angry on Qiao Mei's behalf. Qiao Mei was a nice girl who had even baked cakes for them. She was so beautiful and kind-hearted. Furthermore, Xia Zhe was the most outstanding child from this compound. He had been upright since he was young, so the woman he had married must be a good person.

"Everyone, you can go back. Mei Mei and I will sit here for a while and then we'll head back. Don't worry," Xia Fang said gently.

Hearing what Xia Fang said, everyone knew that they would only just block the air circulation if they continued to stay around, so they listened to her and left. Before the old master left, he took a look at Qiao Mei.

The old master smiled and muttered to himself, "This girl is really smart."

Once everyone left, Qiao Mei stopped pretending. She stood up and patted the dirt off her body, picked up the two bags, and went home with Xia Fang.

As soon as she entered, Qiao Mei happily told Xia Fang about what had happened today. As she rattled on, she suddenly realized that Xia Fang was sitting on the sofa without saying a word.

Qiao Mei looked at Xia Fang timidly and only then realized that she seemed to have something wrong earlier.

She tiptoed over and sat beside Xia Fang, hugging Xia Fang's arm and refusing to let go. She said sweetly, "Aunt, Aunt, don't be angry. I know I was wrong!"

“What did you do wrong? You’re so clever, how can you be wrong?” Xia Fang said angrily without looking at Qiao Mei.

“I know I shouldn’t have pretended to be unwell. Aunt must have been frightened.” Qiao Mei looked at Xia Fang in embarrassment.

When Xia Fang heard this, she stood up angrily and pointed at Qiao Mei. “Mei Mei! You scared me to death! What if something goes wrong! Do you know how dangerous it is for women to give birth! The child is not the main issue, but what if something happens to you!”

Xia Fang’s heart really ached for Qiao Mei. If something bad really happened and she lost the child, she could always try again. However, if anything happened to her, then there was no second chance. Even though she had been pretending to be unwell, it had really given Xia Fang a huge fright.

Chapter 246: A Gift for Aunt

Qiao Mei did not dare to speak and there was nothing that Xia Fang could do about her. She sighed and patted Qiao Mei’s head. “Let’s not have a next time, okay?”

“Yes, I know. There definitely won’t be a next time!” Qiao Mei quickly nodded.

Seeing that Qiao Mei was truly aware of her mistake, Xia Fang no longer kept a straight face and smiled faintly.

“Aunt, I bought a lot of nice things today. This is for you.” Qiao Mei took out the exquisite box from her bag and placed it in front of Xia Fang.

Xia Fang looked at the box curiously, wondering what was inside.

“Open it and take a look, Aunt,” Qiao Mei said excitedly.

Xia Fang carefully opened the box and saw a set of delicate jewelry inside. It came as a big surprise to her.

“Ah!” Xia Fang exclaimed in amazement.

She gently touched the jewelry. Each piece was a treasure that was meticulously crafted and she fondled them lovingly.

After admiring it, it suddenly struck her that a set of jewelry like this was worth a lot of money. She wondered how Qiao Mei had that much money.

“Mei Mei, thank you for the gift, but it is way too expensive. Where did you get so much money?” Xia Fang asked.

“Back in the village, I ran a business growing bean sprouts and supplying it to the supply and marketing cooperative. Our village has now become a key supplier of bean sprouts, so I’ve made some money,” Qiao Mei said.

Xia Fang looked at Qiao Mei with some admiration. Not only did this child know how to sew and make clothes, but she was also a good cook and knew how to do business.. It seemed like there was nothing she could not do.

However, even if Qiao Mei had made money in the village, she should not have bought such expensive jewelry.

“This is too valuable. I don’t think I can accept it.” Xia Fang closed the box reluctantly. No matter how much she liked it, she could not accept such an expensive gift.

“It’s alright, Aunt. I’m very grateful to you for taking such good care of me. Besides, you’ve also taken care of Xia Zhe for so many years and you’re the reason why he grew up to be such a good pillar of society. So please just accept it!” Qiao Mei said as she placed the box in Xia Fang’s hand.

Xia Fang looked at Qiao Mei and then at the box in her hand. She sighed and said with some consolation, "It seems that I've reached a time in my life when I can enjoy life. Back then, I wanted a daughter, but I only got a son. It's so good to have a daughter."

Qiao Mei smiled and said, "That's alright, you have me now. Now that I've married into the family, you can enjoy life."

Xia Fang nodded and said, "Yes, having you is like having a daughter. I'll go and put this set of jewelry away. Once your baby is born and if it's a daughter, I'll get her a better set."

"Sure!" Qiao Mei said with a smile.

It is not just a daughter, but a boy and a girl. It is a pair of twins!

Qiao Mei hummed a song as she walked to the kitchen to start cooking. Ever since Xia Fang tasted Qiao Mei's cooking, she felt that her own cooking tasted like wax. Qiao Mei's cooking was so much better.

Xia Fang had just put away the box when she heard someone knocking on the door.

"Who is it?" Xia Fang quickly went to open the door.

She opened the door and saw her cousin, Liu Yang, who was also the director of the hospital where she worked.

"Why are you here?" Xia Fang looked at Liu Yang with disdain.

"I heard that something happened at your house, so I came to take a look," Liu Yang said.

"Come on in. As if anything can happen at my house. It's all due to others kicking up a fuss. You know it's not like us to cause any trouble," Xia Fang said sulkily.

Qiao Mei stood at the kitchen door and looked at the stranger, not knowing how to greet him.

When Liu Yang saw Qiao Mei, he smiled and said, "This must be Xia Zhe's wife. She's really good-looking. No wonder Xia Zhe got married so quickly."

Qiao Mei looked at the man who spoke frivolously and casually. She did not know who he was, but he seemed to be very familiar with Xia Fang.

"Ah, this is my cousin, so you can call him your uncle."

Qiao Mei smiled sweetly and said, "Hello, Uncle."

"Aye, aye, aye! Good, good. Our Xia Zhe has really married a good wife." Liu Yang reached into his pockets to see if he could find something to give to Qiao Mei. After searching for a long time, he could not find anything and looked at her awkwardly.

"I didn't bring any gifts today as I came back from the hospital in a hurry. When I heard that something had happened at your house, I quickly rushed over," Liu Yang explained embarrassedly.

Chapter 247: Planning to Buy a House

"Mei Mei, wait for me while I go home for a bit. I live in this compound too, so I'll be back soon." After saying that, Liu Yang rushed home.

"Hey! Uncle! There's no need!" Qiao Mei stuck her head out of the kitchen and said.

Before Qiao Mei could finish speaking, Liu Yang left for his house and Xia Fang did not stop him.

Usually, it would be extremely difficult to get anything from Liu Yang. He was willing to give Qiao Mei a gift only because of how she was related to Xia Zhe. Within this compound, Liu Yang was famous for being stingy.

“It’s fine, Mei Mei. Just make a couple more dishes for him. Don’t mind it,” Xia Fang said.

Qiao Mei nodded and returned to the kitchen to continue cooking. She made a few more nice dishes so that she could show off her culinary skills to Liu Yang.

When Liu Yang got home, he started rummaging through the house to see if there were any suitable gifts for a girl. He went through all his things but there was nothing except for liquor.

There was nothing he could do but to bring two bottles of good liquor to Xia Fang’s house.

As soon as he entered, Xia Fang saw the two bottles and liquor and said, “Hey, why do you always bring liquor around? Are you an alcoholic?”

“It’s not for you, what’s your problem!” Liu Yang said.

Xia Fang and Liu Yang often bickered with each other, but they would also always side with each other. They were both stubborn but soft-hearted.

“Mei Mei, these two bottles are good medicinal liquor. You can bring them to your grandfather, they’re good as tonics.” Liu Yang put down the bottles and shouted towards the kitchen.

After knowing that Xia Zhe got married, the first thing he did was to check on Qiao Mei’s family background. When he knew that her grandfather was Qiao Qiang, he was sure that this would be an appropriate gift.

When Qiao Qiang was younger, he loved to drink and was the best drinker in the army. However, after the army banned drinking, everyone forgot about it.

“He’s an old man now! You still want to encourage him to drink!” Xia Fang said as she glared at Liu Yang.

Liu Yang could only rub his head and give her a silly smile. He really had nothing else to give.

As Qiao Mei fried the vegetables, she said, "Thank you, Uncle! My grandfather really loves to drink! I was still worried that I don't have any good liquor that I can use to steep the wild ginseng at home for my grandfather."

The moment he heard about wild ginseng, Liu Yang immediately perked up.

"Wild ginseng! On the mountain near your house?" Liu Yang asked.

"Yes, there are a lot on the mountain behind my house!" Qiao Mei said.

Hearing this, Liu Yang's eyes lit up and he asked excitedly, "Then how many do you have at home! How old are they!"

"My grandfather often explores around the mountains. There are 10-year and 20-year ones, and there's even one that's 100 years old," Qiao Mei said.

"What!!!" Liu Yang looked towards the kitchen in surprise. He quickly walked into the kitchen and looked at Qiao Mei. "100 years old?"

Qiao Mei nodded and said, "Really, it's a 100-year-old wild ginseng."

Even Xia Fang was shocked. She also walked over and looked at Qiao Mei curiously.

The price of a 100-year-old wild ginseng could not even be estimated. It was something that could only be chanced upon by luck and was a rare treasure.

"My grandfather asked me to bring it along on this trip. He told me to see if we can find a buyer for it in the capital. Then I'll be able to buy a house in the capital. When the time comes, I'll join Xia Zhe in the capital, and my grandfather will also come here to live," Qiao Mei said.

She was only using Qiao Qiang as an excuse. In fact, she was the one who wanted to buy a house. She thought that if she bought one now, its value would become much higher in the future.

Besides, she also wanted to study in the capital. If she bought a house now, it would be more convenient for her in the future. She did not think it was right for her to go to the Xia family residence and live with Xia Zhe's parents.

She definitely intended to be a military spouse, but she could request not to follow the army everywhere. After all, she still wanted to have her own life and would not give up on herself for Xia Zhe.

She still wanted to live her own life. Otherwise, she would have wasted her rebirth.

This time round, she must live her life well.

"There's no need to buy a house. When you become a military spouse, you'll be allocated one. Moreover, Xia Zhe's grandmother left behind an old house in the capital for Xia Zhe," Xia Fang said.

Xia Zhe's grandmother was also from a prominent and wealthy family in the capital. When she got married, her dowry included an old house. Before she passed away, she made it very clear that she wanted to give the house to Xia Zhe and that no one else should even have an eye on it.

Chapter 248: Seeing the Real Face

"Can you tell me the location, and is there another house next to it? I would still like to buy a house for my grandfather. He did say that he doesn't want to live with me and wants to live alone as it is more quiet that way," Qiao Mei said.

Qiao Mei still felt that she had to buy it with her own money. This way, when her grandfather came to live with her, he would also feel more at ease and no one would gossip behind his back.

Xia Fang regretted what she said the moment she finished speaking. After all, many of her relatives were eyeing that house. If Qiao Qiang moved in, her bigmouth sister-in-law and niece-in-law would definitely have a lot to say about it.

Luckily, Qiao Mei had a good heart. She did not want to take advantage of others and was not greedy.

If not for Xia Fang stopping them from staying in the house, her sister-in-law and niece-in-law would definitely have already moved in. They even said that since Xia Zhe did not stay in the house anyway, there was no harm for them to stay there.

It was easy to allow them to move in, but it would be difficult to get them to move out in the future.

Xia Fang hired people to take care of the house and made sure it was cleaned properly and regularly. If not for Xia Fang, the house would have long fallen into her sister-in-law's hands.

"Mei Mei, if you want to go to the old house, I can bring you there tomorrow," Xia Fang said.

Now that Qiao Mei could be considered the mistress of the house, it would be good for her to go over and take a look so that those people would all know about it and stop having ideas about the house.

"Hey! Let's not talk about other things! Mei Mei, did you bring that ginseng?" Liu Yang's eyes were shining as he spoke.

Liu Yang did not say a word while they were having a long discussion about the house. It turned out that he was fixated on the 100-year-old wild ginseng.

"Yes, I have it with me," Qiao Mei said.

"Then... then can I take a look?" Liu Yang asked with a hint of embarrassment.

After all, this kind of thing was priceless. It would be a huge loss if it got damaged. The age was one thing, but its condition was particularly important as well. If the condition was affected in any way, no matter how old the wild ginseng was, it would be worth a lot less.

"Of course." Qiao Mei went to the room to get her backpack and took out the metal box hidden at the bottom.

It was not a nice-looking box. The only thing at home that could fit the ginsengs was this metal box.

Qiao Mei slowly opened the metal box. There were four ginsengs inside.

There was a 100-year-old wild ginseng and three 30-year-old wild ginsengs.

She was going to give one each of the younger ginsengs to Xia Zhe's grandfather and father, and to keep the remaining one aside. This was so that she could use it to save lives if necessary or it could also be exchanged for her travel fees if anything should happen.

Now that she realized that Xia Fang was also very good to her, she was considering keeping the one for Xia Fang.

Liu Yang was so excited when he looked into the metal box that he did not know where to put his hands. He carefully wiped his hands on his clothes, but then he felt that his clothes were not clean enough, so he went to the bathroom to wash his hands thoroughly.

He followed hospital standards and washed his hands as if he was going into surgery.

"Uncle, there's no need to be so nervous!" Qiao Mei yelled towards Liu Yang in the bathroom.

"This is a big matter! I can't be careless about this! Wait for me!" Liu Yang shouted back.

He continued washing his hands carefully in the bathroom, even cleaning under his nails. He took a long time before he came out.

"Can I bring it up to take a look?" Liu Yang said embarrassedly.

"Sure," Qiao Mei said as she placed the metal box on the table.

Liu Yang took out the 100-year-old wild ginseng from the metal box carefully and slowly unwrapped its packaging. He leaned over and smelled it.

He had been lucky enough to see a 100-year-old ginseng before, but that one did not smell as strong as this one. It was obvious that this was a high-grade ginseng.

Each of the roots had grown out beautifully. If not for the fact that it was really too precious, he really wanted to have a taste of this 100-year-old ginseng.

He did not dare to covet the 100-year-old one, but there were still the other three smaller ones.

After returning the 100-year-old ginseng to its place, he looked at the three small wild ginsengs.

“Can you sell me one of these three! Just name your price! I’m willing to pay any amount of money!” Liu Yang looked at Qiao Mei agitatedly.

“That won’t do! These are for Xia Zhe’s grandfather and father,” Qiao Mei said.

“Then there’s still one left! Sell it to me!” Liu Yang said.

Looks like there’s still hope! There’s still one left!

“No I can’t. This one is for Aunt,” Qiao Mei said as she shook her head.

Chapter 249: I Am Your Real Uncle

Liu Yang could barely believe it. Even Xia Fang, who was watching them from the side, was caught by surprise.

“Ah!” Liu Yang looked at Xia Fang enviously.

This made Xia Fang very happy. She looked at Liu Yang smugly and said, "Hmph, I can let you taste one of the roots from my ginseng."

Even though wild ginseng was rare and priceless, no matter its age, Xia Fang was very confident that she could repay this nice gesture from Qiao Mei.

"Aye, alright, alright, alright." Liu Yang hurriedly went to pick out the best ginseng among the three.

Then he studied it for a long time to find the root that would belong to him.

He looked so comical that Xia Fang and Qiao Mei laughed non-stop beside him, but neither of them could interrupt him from choosing seriously. He studied it for almost 10 minutes.

"Liu Yang, you only get a ginseng root. Do you have to take so long to choose?" Xia Fang said as she looked at Liu Yang impatiently.

That ginseng belonged to her after all. She had not even taken a look, but Liu Yang was already picking out the ginseng root he wanted.

"Haha, I have to choose carefully since it's such good ginseng," Liu Yang said.

He then pointed to a medium length root on one side and said, "I want this one. Remember to give it to me when the time comes."

Xia Fang looked at Liu Yang curiously and said, "Oh my, this doesn't seem like your style. Why didn't you choose the longest one?"

Although Liu Yang was a stingy person, he was still good to people who were close to him. However, he would never waste a chance to take advantage of someone or something. That was why she thought that he would take the chance to choose the longest one.

“What do you know! This is the biggest one.” Liu Yang stared at the ginseng in his hand happily.

He had already taken advantage of her in a way that she did not understand.

Liu Yang was a Western doctor, but his teacher had a background in Chinese medicine and the knowledge rubbed off on him as well. Now, he would study Chinese medicine every month to pick up new knowledge.

He would not be able to take a pulse and diagnose a patient, but he was able to recognize medicinal herbs and distinguish between good and bad ones.

As he held the 30-year-old wild ginseng in his hand, he was so happy that he could not stop smiling.

Xia Fang rolled her eyes at Liu Yang’s silly look and said, “Useless thing, hurry up and come to dinner!”

Qiao Mei had already placed all the dishes on the table while Liu Yang was still looking at the ginseng. She had made a total of eight dishes and they all smelt really good. He had been so focused on the ginseng that he did not see the table full of dishes.

“Oh wow, there are so many nice dishes. This Xia Zhe’s wife has got some skills,” Liu Yang said.

He patiently wrapped up the wild ginseng in his hand and put it aside before sitting at the dining table eagerly.

“There are so many dishes. Are you welcoming me?” Liu Yang said with a smile.

“You still expect us to welcome you. Qiao Mei has made extra dishes for you.” Xia Fang scooped some rice for Liu Yang with some annoyance.

Liu Yang hurriedly stood up and went to the kitchen to help out. After everything was neatly arranged, they started eating.

The Xia family had a house rule that everyone had to be present at mealtime before they could eat. It was meant to signify unity and happiness for everyone in the family. They would keep waiting for a family member who was not present unless they were given advance notice that the person was not joining.

“Mei Mei, I’m your uncle, right?” Liu Yang said as he raised his wine glass.

“Yes, you’re my uncle.” Qiao Mei looked at Liu Yang in confusion.

“Although I’m your first cousin once removed, your aunt and I grew up together and can be said to be the closest. So I’m like your real uncle!” Liu Yang said.

When Qiao Mei saw that Liu Yang was happily high from drinking too much, she echoed, “Yes! My real uncle!”

“Aye! That’s right! So, if you have any good ginseng next time, remember your uncle. Any price is fine, but don’t make it too expensive. Your uncle can’t afford it, hahaha.” After saying that, Liu Yang drank another glass of liquor.

“No problem! Leave it to me!” Qiao Mei said with a smile.

When Xia Fang saw Liu Yang like this, she knew that he had drunk too much and all he could think of was ginseng. It was rare to encounter such good ginseng, so it was understandable that he felt so happy and drank more than usual.

However, the ginseng belonged to her!

Yet Liu Yang was so happy, like he was the one who received the ginseng as a gift.

He was already so happy with just a ginseng root. Xia Fang shook her head helplessly and secretly pointed at Liu Yang behind his back, mouthing to Qiao Mei that he had drunk too much.

Chapter 250: Getting Drunk

Qiao Mei smiled and nodded. She liked the current warm and happy atmosphere very much.

She had already intended to come to the capital to find a way to sell ginseng. This way, she could buy a few houses to keep for their future value or buy some antiques. She could also make some money while she went to school later.

If she went to the medicinal store or found private buyers, she was worried that people would report her to the authorities and she would get interrogated. She might even get cheated out of her money.

It might be better to just give it to the Xia family. People in the family could be trusted.

“Then what do you plan to do with your 100-year-old ginseng?” Xia Fang asked.

Qiao Mei thought for a moment and said, “I haven’t decided yet. My intention is to exchange it for a house.”

“In that case, I have an idea,” Xia Fang said with a smile.

It would take too long to sell the 100-year-old ginseng for money first and then buy a house. Even without going into a detailed appraisal of its worth, very few people would be able to afford it.

However, it would be easier to exchange it for a house by way of a mutual agreement. After all, it was rare to see ginseng which was 100 years old. A house was only as valuable as its price but this ginseng could save lives.

“When the time comes, we’ll just ask around with the neighbors and see which family is willing to do an exchange,” Xia Fang said.

Liu Yang suddenly waved his hand and said, "It's such a loss to exchange it for a house. It would be better to sell it for cash. You may still have money left after buying a house. If you exchange for a house, don't you need to renovate the interior?"

What Liu Yang said also made sense, but if this 100-year-old ginseng was put up for sale now, it could probably be sold for more than 100,000 dollars. No one would be able to fork out that amount of money. Exchanging it for a house with a courtyard in the capital would not be a loss-making deal.

"It's alright, Uncle. The house is more important. Some people are not interested in money, but they might be willing to exchange it with me for this ginseng!" Qiao Mei said with a smile.

Xia Fang liked Qiao Mei more and more. This child was a smart girl and could get exactly what she meant.

"That's true. Mei Mei is so smart and thoughtful. Sigh, Uncle didn't think about that." After saying that, Liu Yang took another sip of liquor.

"You're definitely not as smart as my Mei Mei," Xia Fang said.

"I'm already old and getting useless. Of course I'm not as smart as Mei Mei," Liu Yang said.

Qiao Mei looked at Xia Fang and Liu Yang bickering with each other and it made her recall how she would quarrel with her grandfather over trivial matters at home.

"Are we going to look at houses tomorrow?" Qiao Mei asked.

"Sure, I have nothing to do anyway. Let's go and have a look tomorrow," Xia Fang said gently.

Liu Yang gently knocked on the table and said, "Mei Mei, you have to remember that I'm your real uncle! You must remember! If you have any problems in the future, don't just look for your aunt. Come look for me, I can help you with anything!"

“What a brag. What else can you do besides treating illnesses?” Xia Fang said.

“I can do a lot of things! Tsk, you just don’t know,” Liu Yang said tipsily.

“Sure! I’ll look for my real uncle when the time comes,” Qiao Mei said to Liu Yang with a grin.

When Liu Yang heard this, he was overjoyed. He clapped his hands and said, “That’s right, that’s right. When your grandfather comes to the capital, I must have a drink with him. I’ll give all the good liquor in my house to your grandfather!”

“Uncle, I’m not sure you’ll be willing to part with them.” Qiao Mei looked at Liu Yang in disbelief.

“Of course I’m willing! I have to!” Liu Yang said.

They laughed heartily throughout their conversation. After sending Liu Yang off after dinner, Qiao Mei took a good look at the new items she bought today.

After Qiao Mei hung the landscape painting in Xia Fang’s study, the entire room had a different feel all of a sudden. It had looked cold and empty with the original setup where there were only bookshelves and a desk.

With the calligraphy painting hung up, the room suddenly had a much more scholarly feel.

The other things left were the jade bangle on her wrist and the other bangle in the box. She heard that Xia Zhe had an older sister, so she would wait and see if his sister liked it.

These things only cost a few hundred dollars. She wanted far more than that and these things were not worth mentioning at all in the grander scheme of things. Since Aunt was so good to her, there was nothing that she could not bear to part with. It was fine to even give them all to Aunt.