

## Fat Wife 501

### Chapter 501 Strange Cactus

"It's good to go back. There are too many people watching you in the capital now. Life will be more peaceful back there," Xia He said.

In the past two days, there were a lot of rumors going around. There had been a big hooaha within the He family, but she did not know how they managed it in the end. However, she did not care about these things. The He family's previous influential power was gone and they would not come looking for trouble in the coming days.

"Elder sister, after I leave, you have to take good care of the flowers and plants at home. I planted a lot of flowers and vegetables in my backyard. In case I don't come back for a long time, they will definitely die," Qiao Mei said.

Actually, as long as Qiao Mei gave each plant some energy before she left, they would be able to grow very well. However, it would be difficult to explain this situation if it was discovered.

She did not just have ordinary flowers and vegetables in the courtyard, but most of them were rare flowers and plants that needed to be taken care of and nurtured carefully. If people knew that she had been away from the capital for a few months and that the courtyard house was filled with mutated flowers and plants, they would probably get targeted.

The old master had been researching for three to four years but he did not manage to find a single mutated plant. How could it be that the plants mutated after soaking up some sunlight at her place?

"Did you see the cactus at grandfather's house?" Xia He said proudly.

Qiao Mei had some impression of that plant because it looked like two cactuses had fused together. It looked as if the cactuses were hugging each other tightly and was very special.

"I remember. I thought that it was quite interesting. I even asked Xia Zhe why two cactuses were planted together, but he said that he didn't know either," Qiao Mei said with a smile.

“It was mine. I took care of it in the past but it split open. Grandfather really could not stand it anymore and asked the helper to take care of it. It took a lot of work for it to be saved. Actually, it was only one cactus in the beginning,” Xia He said embarrassedly.

Was it actually only one? And she could even take care of the cactus until it split open!

This was even scarier than He Ning growing flowers. It appeared that it was better not to let Xia He take care of all the plants at home. What if she came back to see that all the plants had split open.

By then, she would probably be so anxious that her head would split open too.

“Then... then I’d better leave the plants to elder brother and elder sister-in-law... I think elder brother should know how to take care of these things,” Qiao Mei said, with a lot less confidence.

“Elder brother should be able to do it. Elder brother is more meticulous than me, so he should be able to take good care of them,” Xia He said.

The only problem Qiao Mei had now was to tell Xu Lan and the rest about her intention to go home. She did not know if Xu Lan would let her leave. Ever since she heard the news that Qiao Mei had lost the babies, she had brought chicken soup every day.

She gave Qiao Mei first dibs on all the good things in the family, and cared for Qiao Mei more than she cared for her own children. She had never taken such good care of anyone before.

She heard from Second Aunt-in-law that Xu Lan cried every day while hugging the tiny clothes she had made for the babies, and that she was tearful every day. She no longer looked as good as before, as if she had suddenly aged a few years.

Qiao Mei could not bear to continue lying to them, but Xia Zhe said that it was not time to tell the truth yet. The matter with the He family had not been settled yet and the news that the babies were still around could not be spread around.

“Mei Mei! Lie down quickly! Mother and Second Aunt-in-law are here! Lie back down quickly!” Xia He had just reached the door on her way out to get some hot water when she saw Xu Lan and Liu Fen around the corner, followed by Xia Zhe.

Qiao Mei scrambled under the blanket and lay down quietly.

As soon as Xu Lan entered the house, she brought out the porridge and chicken soup that she had made. The fragrance almost made Qiao Mei want to sit up and taste it carefully. With one sniff, she knew that the food must have been stewed over a small fire for a long time.

“Is Mei Mei feeling better? Did Xiao Fang say anything today? Has she already gotten up today?” Xu Lan asked worriedly.

Xia He smiled and said, “Mother, you ask the same questions when you come by every day. Qiao Mei is already feeling better. Aunt says that she has been traumatized, so she still feels a little down every day.

“She looks better and she seems to have more color in her cheeks compared to yesterday,” Xu Lan said in relief.

They had come in so quickly today that Qiao Mei did not have time to apply powder on her face. Otherwise, she would still look as pale as a few days ago.

“Mother, you’re here...” Qiao Mei slowly opened her eyes and wanted to sit up and talk to them.

Xia Zhe hurriedly went forward to support Qiao Mei and adjusted her pillow so that she could lean on it comfortably.

“Mei Mei, how do you feel? I stewed this with the best and freshest ingredients. Try it and see if it tastes good.” Xu Lan carefully brought the chicken soup to Qiao Mei, afraid that she would spill and waste any bit of it.

Chapter 502 Announcing Her Decision to Return to the Village

Qiao Mei carefully took the bowl and drank the chicken soup slowly. The chicken meat was so soft that it disintegrated with one touch. The soup was sweet and delicious.

“Thank you, mother. This soup is very delicious...” Qiao Mei said weakly.

“It’s fine. If you like it, I’ll stew it for you again tomorrow. You’ll get better quicker if you drink more,” Xu Lan said with relief.

Qiao Mei could not bear to see Xu Lan so concerned about her health. If she were to leave now, it would hurt Xu Lan’s feelings. However, if she did not leave now, the matter of the babies would be exposed and all the plans would be ruined.

She looked up at Xia Zhe, her big bright eyes filled with a pleading look. She could not bring herself to say that she wanted to return to the village. Xu Lan was really too nice to her now.

Xia Zhe understood what she meant and said patiently to Xu Lan, “Mother, I plan to bring Qiao Mei back to the village.”

“Back to the village! Why so sudden!” Xu Lan looked at Xia Zhe in shock and then turned to look at Qiao Mei.

It was all her fault for being so nasty to Qiao Mei in the past. Now, no matter how much she tried to make up for it, it was useless. The babies were gone and Qiao Mei’s health was affected. It was useless to regret anything.

“Is it because I haven’t done well enough? Tell me what you don’t like about me and I’ll definitely change. If you go back to the village, who will take care of you? Isn’t your grandfather sick too?” Xu Lan said.

“My grandfather is in good health now and my mother is also in the village. She can take care of me. It’s not that you’re not doing well, it’s that I miss home,” Qiao Mei said with a smile.

"I don't have many vacation days left. I want to go back and spend some time with her grandfather, and she can also go back to relax and recuperate," Xia Zhe added.

Foshan Village was quite a wondrous place. Since it had an abundance of ginseng, the vegetables and fruits grown there must be nutritious too. It was not a bad thing to go back to the village to recuperate, but it was just that Xu Lan could not be by Qiao Mei's side to take care of her.

"...Then when are you leaving?" Xu Lan asked dejectedly.

"Probably the day after tomorrow. I'll pack my things tomorrow and go buy some local specialties. We'll take the bus back the day after tomorrow. Aunt says that there is no issue with Qiao Mei taking the bus in her current condition," Xia Zhe said.

"Then I'll go home and pack some stuff for you to bring along." Xu Lan poured the rest of the soup into a bowl and went back with Liu Fang, taking the lunch box with her.

Qiao Mei could not bear to see Xu Lan like this. She was starting to like Xu Lan more and more now, but going home was equally important.

Forget it, let's not think about the matters in the capital. I should think about how to give my grandfather a surprise! My grandfather will definitely be especially happy when I go back this time, especially when he sees that Xia Zhe has also come along. By then, he will probably only have eyes for Xia Zhe and not me.

"The two of you don't need to buy too much stuff tomorrow. I think our mother will definitely buy a lot of things. What if you can't bring all of it back," Xia He said.

"If we can't bring it back, then we'll give it to elder sister! Elder sister can help me share the burden," Qiao Mei said.

"I'm not going to eat such stuff. Just feed yourself well. I'll take care of other things. Don't worry and just go back," Xia He said as she patted her chest.

Qiao Mei suddenly thought of something and grabbed Xia Zhe's hand excitedly to make him sit on the bed. She asked, "Tell me quickly! What has happened outside recently!"

Her big round eyes stared at Xia Zhe like sparkling gems. They twinkled and looked so cute and spirited, making Xia Zhe unable to resist going forward to kiss her eyes.

"Ahem, there's still someone here," Xia He said as she held back her laughter.

Xia Zhe could not hold back even in broad daylight. It seemed that Qiao Mei was really Xia Zhe's Achilles' heel. Even though Eldest Aunt had taken so much time to train him on his patience threshold, he forgot everything whenever he saw Qiao Mei.

Xia Zhe coughed awkwardly and said, "Ahem... The He family has been on bad terms recently and many issues have erupted. We only know that Shen Na has been saved and is alive, but Shen Na's father hasn't come forward to resolve this matter yet. We don't know what his attitude is. The Ma family has now thrown Ma San out and given up on him."

"What do you mean? To let the Shen and He families deal with him?" Qiao Mei found it unbelievable.

The Ma family had four sons and Ma San was the third son in the family. Ma San was the most inconspicuous and also the most useless son in the Ma family. The family had never cared whether he was dead or alive.

Chapter 503 Packing Up

"Then are Ma San's brothers called Ma Yi, Ma Er and Ma Si!" Qiao Mei asked curiously.

Xia He laughed out loudly at the side. Qiao Mei's way of thinking was quite novel. She had never found it strange before.

"Of course not. When Ma San was born, a fortune teller said that he was an inauspicious person, so the Ma family did not like him. In addition, he is ignorant, incompetent and likes to party, gamble and solicit prostitutes, so he is naturally not valued in the family," Xia Zhe explained.

It was no wonder that after Ma San made such a big fuss when he married the daughter of the Shen family. In the past, everyone looked down on him. Therefore, when he became the son-in-law of the Shen family and was on good terms with the He family, he wanted to flaunt the fact that no one else had such luck.

“Then later? What happened after that?” Qiao Mei asked.

Xia Zhe also did not know much about what happened after that. Xia Wen was the one who told him all these things. Right now, he was only focused on how to take better care of Qiao Mei and did not want to care about anything else.

“You can ask elder brother about the matters regarding the He family later. What do you want to buy for grandfather?” Xia Zhe asked with a smile.

Her grandfather did not really lack anything and had everything he needed at home. She thought that she should buy something for her younger siblings. There was nothing much in that nearby county city and even books were really hard to come by.

Children must be brought up with education, she did not want them to grow up and live in that mountain village for the rest of their lives.

“I think I want to buy some books for my younger siblings so that they can learn more. I also want to buy some books myself,” Qiao Mei said.

“It’s good to bring books. I’ll ask elder brother about that later. That’s his area of expertise.” Xia Zhe also wanted to buy some toys for the younger siblings, but he did not know what type they liked. He decided to buy whatever was the newest on the market when he went to the mall later.

“If you continue to shop like this, you should rent a car. I don’t think the two of you can bring everything back yourselves,” Xia He said helplessly.

Books alone were already very heavy. Coupled with the rest of the stuff that they wanted to buy and the things that Xu Lan would ask them to bring, Xia Zhe would not be able to carry so many things no matter how fit he was.

“That’s true. Go buy a small wagon used for transporting goods tomorrow. Get a lighter one so that we can bring it onboard the train,” Qiao Mei said.

Xia Zhe never expected there would come such a day when he had to use a small wagon to carry things when he went visiting. It was rare for him to be back, so buying more things would make it easier for Qiao Mei. Otherwise, she would have to go out on her own.

“Alright. I’ll come and pick you up when I’m done tomorrow,” Xia Zhe said.

Actually, Xia Fang had already told Xia Zhe that Qiao Mei could be discharged from the hospital today. However, once she returned home, she would definitely have to face Xu Lan’s care and Second Aunt-in-law’s fussing. Staying in the hospital would allow her to have some peace and quiet.

The next day, Xu Lan went to prepare the ingredients early in the morning and bought a lot of things for Qiao Mei to bring with her. She even went to check with Xia Fang earnestly about how Qiao Mei should nurse her health, and even asked an elder who knew how to make medicinal cuisine to give her a few prescriptions.

Xu Lan busied herself and only managed to get everything done at night. By then, Xia Zhe had also returned home with Qiao Mei.

As soon as Qiao Mei entered, she saw packages stacked up into a small mountain-like pile, a heap of sealed medicinal herbs and some rare ingredients on the dining table.

“Mother... what are all these?” Qiao Mei asked.

Xu Lan walked over and introduced everything to Qiao Mei one by one. Every package was indispensable!

“Mei Mei, look at the blue package here. It contains toys that I ask someone to get for me. I have also prepared some stuff for your grandfather. When he has nothing to do, he can take a look at them. I asked Uncle Zhou for recommendations.”



“This box is filled with the books that you asked your elder brother to get. These were all used by him when he was young. When he told me that you can use them, I went to dig them out for you.”

“By the way, this pink package contains all the food I brought for you, like biscuits, bread and other things. I went to ask my friends and they told me that the train ride will be tiring and that it will take you two days to get there. I’m worried that you won’t be used to the food on the train, so these snacks will come in handy if you get hungry.”

“Xia Zhe was the one who went to buy that black bag. I don’t know what’s inside either. Also, I haven’t packed the things on the table for you yet. Today, I made a trip to look for the chefs who know how to make medicinal cuisine and they gave me a few prescriptions. You can just make the dishes yourself according to the instructions.”

As Xu Lan packed up, she talked non-stop about the use and classification of these things. Qiao Mei and Xia He were both stunned. They had expected there to be many things, but they did not expect her to have prepared so much.

Chapter 504 Like Moving House

“Mother prepared all these herself...” Xia He looked at the scene in front of her in shock.

Even when she got married back then, it was not so grand. Qiao Mei had only fallen ill, but all these things were worth more than her dowry back then.

“I was also shocked when I came back with the things this afternoon, but I didn’t stop my mother when I saw how happy she was. Anyway, I bought a wagon. Let’s just bring all these things back,” Xia Zhe whispered.

“When it’s time to load them, I don’t think you’ll say that. I don’t think we can bring everything back,” Qiao Mei muttered hesitantly.

Xu Lan searched through the pile of medicinal herbs for a long time before she finally found a book. She quickly handed it to Xia Zhe and said, “Xia Zhe, you have to keep this book well. Your aunt wrote this for you and the prescriptions are also here. You must keep it well!”

Xia Zhe opened it and saw densely packed words on the pages, with many things to take note of. It was obvious that Xia Fang had written down the answers to Xu Lan's questions one by one.

This was because the contents were so detailed that it included the temperature of the water to note when Qiao Mei took a bath and the effect it would have on her body if it was too cold.

"I understand," Xia Zhe said.

Xu Lan still felt that something was missing. She then went upstairs to see if there was anything else that she could give to Qiao Mei.

"Second Aunt-in-law... is this how my mother behaved the entire day today?" Xia He asked curiously.

Liu Fang was so tired that she had collapsed on the sofa and did not want to speak anymore. Of course, Xu Lan did not buy all these things alone. She also had to put in a lot of effort.

"Not just today. Ever since Qiao Mei fell sick, your mother seems to have become a different person. The person who never went into the kitchen in the past can now cook a lot of dishes," Liu Fang said.

After Qiao Mei lost her children this time, Xu Lan finally realized that she had some emotional issues and that she cared too little about her children at home.

Actually, she also had many regrets in her heart, but there was no point in dwelling on them. The only thing she could do now was to treat Qiao Mei well and ask Qiao Mei not to mind the fact that she had been unhappy with Qiao Mei for the past month.

"Xiao Zhe, your mother feels that she owes you the most among everyone in this family. After all, your mother took care of your elder brother and elder sister herself. When you were born, your mother was not in good health anymore. You were first brought up by your elder brother and later handed over to your aunt to take care of. Actually, what your mother is doing now can be considered compensation for you. Don't hate her," Liu Fen said sadly.

“Second Aunt-in-law, I’ve never blamed her. If you have time, please advise her not to think about these things. Qiao Mei has me to take care of her,” Xia Zhe said as he looked upstairs.

Not long after, Xia Wen and Tan Jing also came back to send Qiao Mei off. Xia Wen was holding a notebook in his hand.

“Oh my goodness, is our family moving house?” Xia Wen had the same reaction as Xia He the moment he entered.

“Elder brother, mother prepared all these for Qiao Mei! It’s scary, right!” Xia He said laughingly.

“Tsk, tsk, tsk. There are so many things. As expected, the youngest in the family is so loved,” Xia Wen said jokingly.

Of course, he did not care about these things. They were a family and were happy for whoever was doing well. Moreover, he was the one who brought up Xia Zhe and he was happy that Xia Zhe was living a good life.

However, Tan Jing did not think the same way.

Ever since she married into the Xia family, Xu Lan had not given her anything decent, let alone such food. They only exchanged a few pleasantries when she first entered the family and she did not usually get to see Xu Lan after that.

It was worse during the festive seasons. When her family had something going on and needed help, Xu Lan did not even look at her in the face. When Xu Lan went out and was asked about her elder daughter-in-law, her face was always filled with disdain.

Between the two of them who married into the family, how could a girl from the city like her be inferior to a country girl from the countryside!

This girl got pregnant as soon as she married into the family, and it was even twins! She was given all the food and drinks at home first, her husband loved her, elder sister and the other relatives all liked her, and even her own husband thought that Qiao Mei was not bad!

It was not as if she did not know that Xia Wen liked children. Xia Wen was overjoyed to know that Xia Zhe was going to have two kids and even secretly went around to look at items for infants. How could she not be jealous!

When she first heard that Qiao Mei had a miscarriage, she was happy for a moment. Finally, there would be someone as miserable as her. No one could be lucky all the time. However, when she returned home and saw the rare sight of Xia Wen drinking, she felt very upset.

Chapter 505 Incompatible

She was clearly Xia Wen's wife! Why was Xia Wen so sad at this moment! Xia Zhe should be the one feeling sad! What did it have to do with their family!

She was so jealous of Qiao Mei, jealous that she had gotten everything she should not have! They were both the Xia family's daughters-in-law, so why was there such a big difference in treatment!

"The things that mother prepared for sister-in-law... are quite grand." Tan Jing smiled awkwardly.

Xia He had always been guileless and did not understand the deeper meaning behind what others said. She even thought that Tan Jing was joking.

"Our mother must have secretly been swapped out with someone else in the middle of the night! Look at all these things! I didn't even have this much when I got married!" Xia He said with a pout.

Xia Wen knocked Xia He's head lightly with the notebook in his hand and said, "How rude! That's our mother! You can't joke around like this, do you hear me!"

Xia He stuck out her tongue playfully and made a face as she said, "Elder brother is behaving like a teacher again! I'm not your student! Can't I just make a joke! So petty!"

Xia Wen was so annoyed that he raised his notebook and wanted to go forward to beat Xia He up. The two siblings chased each other and ran around the house. Xia Zhe hugged Qiao Mei tightly in his arms, worried that they would accidentally bump into her.

“Well done, Xia He! You can even make fun of your elder brother! Has it been too long since I last taught you a lesson! Stop right there!”

“I just won’t! If you have the ability, then catch up with me! You couldn’t catch up with me when you were young! You still can’t catch up after you grow up!”

The way the two of them played reminded Liu Fen of when they were young. She sighed and said, “I remember the last time they ran like this was more than 10 years ago. In the blink of an eye, they both have their own families, but they’re still so naughty. You’ve all grown up and your Second Aunt-in-law is old now.”

Liu Fen sat on the sofa disconsolately and watched them play noisily. Qiao Mei sat beside Liu Fen and said, “Second Aunt-in-law is not old! Even if Second Aunt-in-law brings me out shopping now, people will think that you’re my elder sister! Look at how well your skin is maintained!”

“You! You only know how to make me happy! Xiao Zhe, look at your wife! She’s talking nonsense!” Liu Fen said with a laugh.

“I’m telling the truth! It’s Second Aunt-in-law who doesn’t believe me! If you don’t believe me, when I come back in the future, let’s go shopping and see if anyone calls you my elder sister.” Qiao Mei hugged Liu Fen’s arm and giggled.

Liu Fen quickly slapped Qiao Mei’s hand away and said, “Then I’ll be an old monster! Who can be so old and yet look as young as a teenage girl! Don’t go out and say such things. If word gets out, people will laugh at me! They’ll say that I’m old and indecent!”

Everyone was laughing and making a lot of noise. Tan Jing was the only one standing and looking out of place, as if she was not with her family.

Xia Zhe only had eyes for Qiao Mei and did not notice the way Tan Jing looked at him.

Tan Jing did not understand why, even though the two men were brothers, Xia Zhe could be so concerned about Qiao Mei but Xia Wen only cared about the big picture?

“Alright, alright. As an elder brother and elder sister, it’s not right for the two of you to make trouble in front of your younger brother and sisters-in-law!” Liu Fen said.

The two people chasing each other stopped immediately. Xia He looked fine and collected, but it was different for Xia Wen. After running a few rounds, he had started to pant heavily.

“Elder brother, you must have stopped training after leaving the army. You’re already tired after just a few rounds,” Xia He said as she drank water.

“You little girl! It’s already been a few years since I retired! As if I don’t age!” Xia Wen looked at Xia He resignedly.

Qiao Mei grinned as she watched the siblings bicker. She had never experienced such a scene before. In her other life, her family was not on good terms and her parents always quarreled. In this life, she did not have any siblings either. Her father passed away early and her mother remarried. She had never experienced such warm moments before.

“Elder brother, what’s that in your hand?” Qiao Mei asked curiously.

“Oh, if you don’t ask, it almost slips my mind! This is the notebook I used to take notes when I was in school. I only found this one booklet at home and I don’t know where the rest are. It might be in the box that mother packed. I’m thinking you might ask me for it today, so I’d better quickly send it over.” Xia Wen handed the notebook to Qiao Mei.

Qiao Mei quickly opened it and read the first two pages carefully. This was knowledge that she needed. This notebook had really come at the right time!

Chapter 506 Pigeon Blood Ruby

“Elder brother, you don’t have to do that. You even specially sent these notebooks over,” Qiao Mei said with a smile.

“I don’t know when you’ll be back. I’m just worried that you have to wait too long if I mail it, so I’d just bring it over to you now since I don’t have anything else on,” Xia Wen said.

Tan Jing stared intently at Xia Wen. She knew very well that Xia Wen was lying.

Xia Wen had spent the entire day at home today searching for this notebook. Moreover, he had also rejected two important meetings at school just to deliver this notebook.

“Elder brother, I have another favor to ask of you. I’ll have to trouble you to take care of the plants in my courtyard house,” Qiao Mei said.

It was not a big deal to take care of flowers and grass. It was not difficult to take two days off a week to go and take a look, so Xia Wen agreed readily.

Everyone chatted downstairs for a long time before Xu Lan came down with an exquisite wooden box in her hand. No one had seen this thing before.

“Mei Mei, you should wear this.” Xu Lan stuffed the wooden box into Qiao Mei’s hand.

Qiao Mei opened the wooden box slowly and saw a ruby necklace inside. The color of the ruby was gorgeous and dazzling. This was a pure pigeon blood ruby. There were not many high quality rubies on the market, let alone such a big one.

“This... sister-in-law, isn’t this your dowry from back then?” Liu Fen said in surprise.

“Yes, this is a treasure passed down in my family. I’m already the fourth generation to have it. I’m giving this to Qiao Mei now. I hope you can treasure it well,” Xu Lan said with a smile.

Qiao Mei closed the wooden box and returned it to Xu Lan. She was too embarrassed to take such a valuable thing. Moreover, she had been lying to Xu Lan all this time and she already felt guilty. She did not feel good about taking Xu Lan's dowry.

"I can't accept this. It's really too valuable. Mother, it's better if you keep it with you. What if I lose it later?" Qiao Mei said nervously.

There were still thieves in the village now and there were even bandits previously. During these days, no family dared to store valuable things at home. Back then, Xia Zhe had already made other people jealous when he gave her a betrothal gift of 2,000 dollars. It was better to leave such valuable things in the capital.

The jewelry and calligraphy paintings from the courtyard house also had to be kept at home, as well as the money she had now. She wanted to see if she could put them all in the bank, perhaps by renting a safe there.

"This is for you. Take it. If you don't, I'll get angry," Xu Lan said, pretending to be unhappy.

Qiao Mei had no choice but to accept the gemstone. This was the first time she had seen such a good quality gemstone and she wondered whether the gemstone or jade would contain more energy.

"Thank you, mother. Then I'll take this," Qiao Mei said with a smile.

"Alright, everyone, come over for dinner. It's not easy to have everyone back. Come and have a good meal," Liu Fen said.

The womenfolk were about to go into the kitchen to bring out the dishes when Xu Lan hurriedly stopped Qiao Mei and asked her to sit beside her.

"Mei Mei, don't go. Just let your sister and sister-in-law go. You're weak now and can't work too hard," Xu Lan said with a frown.



Tan Jing nodded obediently and did as Xu Lan said. She had been living like this ever since she married into the Xia family.

Xia He could also tell that Tan Jing was feeling unhappy, but she did not say anything. It was all Xu Lan's arrangements.

At the dining table, Xu Lan also just kept putting food into Qiao Mei's bowl so that she could eat more to nourish herself. When Xu Lan spoke, her attitude was exactly the same as Liu Fen, as if she had turned into a completely different person.

"Mother, you should eat too. You're so focused on putting food into Qiao Mei's bowl that you haven't even eaten anything," Xia He said.

"I'm fine. I'm not in a hurry. It's good that Mei Mei eats more. I'm not hungry." Xu Lan's focus was all on Qiao Mei now and she did not listen to anything that anyone said.

Tan Jing sat silently at the side and ate the food in her bowl. Suddenly, someone put another piece of fish in her bowl. She looked up and saw Xia Wen smiling tenderly at her.

So Xia Wen knew that she was unhappy. This piece of fish was very big and there was not a single fish bone in it. There was also no fish skin on the surface. Xia Wen still remembered her preferences and he still loved her.

"Eat it, I'll get more for you," Xia Wen said.

Chapter 507 Getting on the Train to Go Back to the Village

After dinner, everyone went back to their own homes. The next day, Qiao Mei and Xia Zhe arrived at the train station in the morning. Xu Lan and the rest also came to send them off.

"Mei Mei, you must take good care of yourself. Don't scrimp on food. Just buy whatever you want. Don't scrimp, understand?" Xu Lan said with some heartache.

"I know. I definitely won't treat myself badly. Mother, don't worry," Qiao Mei said as she held Xu Lan's hand.

Xu Lan could not help but cover her face and cry. She really could not accept the fact that after she lost her grandchildren, Qiao Mei was going to leave too.

If only she could turn back time! She definitely would not treat Qiao Mei badly.

Qiao Mei felt bad to see Xu Lan in such pain. Their parents were getting old and she was worried that Xu Lan would still cry every day after she left. If that continued, her health would suffer.

"Mother, don't worry. I'll take good care of myself. You have to take good care of yourself too," Qiao Mei said.

Xu Lan nodded. She had a lot to say, but as she watched the train enter the station, there was only a myriad of reluctance in her heart. She silently watched them get on the train.

Qiao Mei and Xia Zhe were lucky enough to get seats by the window. Qiao Mei sat at the window and looked for Xu Lan. The thin figure was also looking for them by peering through the windows one by one.

Qiao Mei rolled down the carriage window and waved her hand forcefully. "Please go back! Mother!"

"Alright! You must be well! If... if you have time, give me a call!" Xu Lan said in a choked voice.

Qiao Mei nodded vigorously as the train started to move slowly. After the train attendant closed all the windows, Qiao Mei continued to look out of the window worriedly.

"What's wrong?" Xia Zhe asked.

"I just feel that what I'm doing is too much. I still feel uncomfortable seeing mother like that," Qiao Mei said with a frown.

“We can’t tell her the truth for the time being. Elder brother is already handling the matters related to the He family. Let’s talk to her after we’re done with all these matters. Mother won’t blame you. When you bring two plump babies home, mother will definitely forget about this incident,” Xia Zhe said with a smile.

The He family could be said to be facing troubles both inside and outside their family at the moment. Xia Wen had said that He Ning gave Qian’e 100,000 dollars to settle the issue and that Ma San would first be handed over to the Shen family to be dealt with. He also heard that Old Master Shen was so angry that he broke Ma San’s leg. In return for what happened to He Mei’s face, He Guo also gave Ma San a fierce whipping.

Now, they were all waiting to see how He Ning would deal with Ma San in the end. Otherwise, Qian’e would not give up on her end.

“The He family would know about our departure tomorrow. By then, it will be too late even if they want to cause trouble. Qian’e is still pestering them,” Xia Zhe said.

“Why are you always talking about Qian’e? Don’t tell me you’re...” Qiao Mei pouted and said unhappily.

For some reason, she just did not like it when Xia Zhe mentioned other women.

Only then did Xia Zhe realize that Qiao Mei was jealous. He quickly pulled her into his arms and coaxed her, “What are you thinking about? You’re my wife now, so of course I think about you. What else can I think about?”

Qiao Mei pushed Xia Zhe away out of embarrassment and looked around in a panic.

“Behave yourself! We’re in public! I know you think of me. Stop talking...” Qiao Mei said while blushing.

When a mother with her son in the opposite seat saw Qiao Mei’s blissful expression, she smiled and said, “Young sister, you’re really lucky to have a husband who dotes on you so much. Young man, you have to treat her well. If your wife is happy, she will definitely bring good fortune to her husband!”

“Yes, yes, yes. I’ll definitely treat her well,” Xia Zhe said.

“Auntie, you look like a blessed person too!” Qiao Mei said with a smile.

“Oh my, this child has such a sweet tongue! Then I’ll have to count on your blessings!”

Along the way, with the snacks that Xu Lan provided and Xia Zhe accompanying her, she felt much happier than during the journey when she first arrived in the capital. It also felt as if time passed faster.

She wondered if her grandfather missed her, if her younger siblings had grown taller, and if her mother had a hard time at home. She also wondered if those people from the Liu family in the city had gone to find trouble with her mother.

Over the phone, Uncle Zhao only talked about the good things and did not mention anything else.

The more Qiao Mei thought about it, the more afraid she became. She slapped her own head and stopped thinking so much. If she continued to think about it, someone in the village would probably lose their lives!

She decided to have a good night’s sleep now. When she reached the village the next day, she would know everything.

Chapter 508 The Days Without Her

As soon as she got down from the train, Qiao Mei felt very comfortable. Even the air here felt different from the air in the capital. This was the smell of her hometown. It was so nice to be home.

“Should we go home first or go to the county city first?” Xia Zhe asked as he dragged the wagon full of luggage.

The people coming and going around them were either carrying big bags or had numerous family members with them. Xia Zhe was wearing a military uniform and carrying so many things with him. He also had a beautiful young girl standing next him, therefore attracting curious glances from passers-by.

Qiao Mei had realized that many women stared at Xia Zhe in the train carriage. Now that there were even more people around after disembarking, it was better to hurry back.

“Let’s go back quickly. If we go back now, we’ll still be able to have dinner with grandfather. If it’s any later, he’ll have gone up the mountain for a walk,” Qiao Mei said.

The two of them made haste and rushed back. On the way, they even met the old man from the village convenience store. He had driven a three-wheeled vehicle to come out to buy goods so he was able to send Qiao Mei and Xia Zhe back to the village.

“Old mister, how’s your business recently!” Qiao Mei asked.

“Sigh, it’s no different from usual. Everyone just comes to buy some daily necessities,” the old man said.

Other than Qiao Zhuang’s family, everyone else had made enough money during the time when they sold bean sprouts. How could no one be buying anything?

“I thought everyone earned some money this year! Why didn’t they go to your place to buy more good stuff!” Qiao Mei said.

The old man smiled and shook his head as he said, “Qiao Mei, you don’t know this, but even if we all earn money, everyone will save it up and won’t bear to spend the money at all. Which family doesn’t have a few children who will grow up and get married? Families with boys are even more careful with money. They will have to save it for their boys to get married!”

If one really wanted to earn money, it was definitely not possible for one to do it alone. Otherwise, others would be jealous of one’s family and play dirty tricks behind one’s back. It would only be harmonious when everyone could make money together.

“Old mister, I remember that your family has two sons!” Qiao Mei said.

“That’s right. Now that my first son is married, I’m not so worried anymore. My second son is still waiting to get married!” the old man said with a smile.

“Old mister, how’s my grandfather recently?” Qiao Mei asked.

At this moment, the old man did not say much and Qiao Mei had a vague feeling that something was wrong. Could it be that something had happened to her grandfather?

“Old mister, tell me quickly!” Qiao Mei said anxiously.

“Sigh... just the same things that happened in the past. When you were not at home, Qiao Zhuang’s family went to your house to take things. As your grandfather was alone at home, he could not fight them off, so he just let them take whatever they wanted. Sometimes, the situation is better if your mother is at home. Your younger siblings are all really young and can’t stop Qiao Zhuang and the rest,” the old man said angrily.

One time, he happened to pass by Qiao Mei’s house and saw Qiao Zhuang’s eldest daughter-in-law, Liu Ying, and third daughter-in-law, Jiang Ye, throwing a tantrum at the door, insisting that they wanted to take a pig from Qiao Mei’s house.

At that time, both Qiao Qiang and Li Gui were at home, so they did not manage to succeed and only managed to scold everyone. Otherwise, if they had succeeded, they would have taken all the poultry to their house.

“Qiao Mei, you’re pregnant so don’t go and look for them. Don’t suffer any losses. Your husband is also here, so I’ll say a bit more. Let’s not fight head-on with scoundrels. After all, your status is special. They’re all commoners. It would not be good if things get out of hand,” the old man advised them earnestly.

Xia Zhe definitely could not come forward to handle such a matter. If Qiao Zhuang and the rest acted shamelessly and insisted that Xia Zhe had injured their arms or legs, it would become a matter of a

soldier bullying commoners. This would be seen as a serious matter. If word got out, Xia Zhe could forget about his career progression in the army.

“Old mister is right. I’ll definitely consider it carefully. Thank you, old mister,” Qiao Mei said.

Xia Zhe still wanted to say something in rebuttal when Qiao Mei stopped him and whispered, “Let’s talk at home.”

In no time at all, they arrived at the entrance of the village. Qiao Mei patted the old man’s shoulder and said, “Old mister, you can let me off here. We’ve reached your convenience store. My house is just a few steps away.”

“That won’t do! It doesn’t matter since it’s just a few steps. You have so many things, I’ll help send them to your house. Don’t stand on ceremony with me!” The old man smiled and waved his hand.

The people here were all very simple and honest. They still remembered how well Qiao Mei treated them, so they would do their best to help her whenever she needed help.

“Thank you then, old mister!” Qiao Mei smiled sweetly.

Chapter 509 Acting

Xia Zhe watched Qiao Mei’s every move. It seemed that Qiao Mei had only used a small part of her talent in the capital. This village was her true “small world”.

Everyone was fond of her and liked to help her. They would think about her whenever there was anything good and they would also help her family with the plowing. Her family members were mainly very young or very old, so they would help out whenever they could.

“Why are you looking at me?” Qiao Mei turned around and saw Xia Zhe staring straight at her with a smile.

“I just like to look at you,” Xia Zhe said.

Before Qiao Mei could say anything, they arrived at the door of her house. Xia Zhe got down from the vehicle and carried Qiao Mei down before removing everything from the vehicle one by one.

“Old mister, come in and have a seat! I’ll make you something delicious to eat!” Qiao Mei said warmly.

The old man quickly waved his hands and returned to the vehicle. “No, no. My wife is still waiting for me to go home for dinner. Remember to greet your grandfather on my behalf!”

“Alright! Old mister, be careful!” Qiao Mei said as she waved.

The old man chuckled as he drove away from Qiao Mei’s house. Qiao Qiang put on a shirt and slowly came out of the house. The moment he saw Qiao Mei, he thought that he was seeing things because of his old age.

He rubbed his eyes carefully and looked again. Qiao Mei was really back home!

“Mei Mei! Is it Mei Mei!” Qiao Qiang shouted as he hurriedly walked up to Qiao Mei.

When Qiao Mei saw Qiao Qiang, tears welled up in her eyes for some reason. She went forward agitatedly to hug Qiao Qiang and said, “Grandfather, I’m back!”

“Good! It’s good that you’re back. So good that you’re back.” Qiao Qiang stroked Qiao Mei’s head with trembling hands.

Qiao Qiang also saw Xia Zhe behind Qiao Mei and recalled that when they first met, he got him drunk together with Qiao Mei. It had taken him a lot of effort to carry the young man into the back room...

“Xia Zhe is back too,” Qiao Qiang said.

Xia Zhe stood up straight and saluted respectfully. He said loudly, “Yes! I’m back!”



“Goodness, this child. I’m an old man now and not a soldier anymore. Why are you giving me a military salute? Hurry up and enter the house,” Qiao Qiang said with a smile.

Xia Jun had previously instructed Xia Zhe to treat Qiao Qiang like his regiment commander. Although the old man was no longer a soldier, his glorious deeds were worthy of respect from everyone, especially the Xia family. Throughout all their generations, they must not forget that Qiao Qiang was their savior.

Qiao Mei took a glance at their private plot of land in the courtyard from the corner of her eye. Although it looked to have been cleaned up, she could still tell that it had been trampled on.

“Grandfather, did Qiao Zhuang’s family come here?” Qiao Mei asked.

“No such thing. Would they dare to come knocking on our door? I’ll break their legs!” Qiao Qiang said as he seemed to put up a front.

Qiao Mei went to the cabinet and took out the small box containing the ginseng and lingzhi. There seemed to be a few pieces less, but there was still too much left after two months’ worth of consumption.

“Did you also not eat these regularly?” Qiao Mei asked with a little bit of anger.

At this moment, Qiao Qiang lowered his head like a child who had made a mistake and said softly, “I’m not sick, so I don’t need to eat these things. I’ll eat them when I don’t feel well.”

Qiao Mei closed the box and threw it back on the cabinet forcefully. She also understood how the older generation thought, but if her grandfather did not take good care of his health, his illness would become more and more serious. She had to put on an “act”.

She wanted to make Qiao Qiang willing to soak the herbs in water and drink it every week so that she could feel more at ease.

Xia Zhe hurriedly went forward to hold on to Qiao Mei. She had only just been drenched not long ago and was still tired from the long journey for the past two days. She got so angry the moment she returned home. Given that she was pregnant, he could not let her mess around like this.

“Don’t be angry. Come and sit down.” Xia Zhe helped Qiao Mei to take a seat on the brick bed.

Tears started streaming down Qiao Mei’s face, scaring Qiao Qiang so much that he did not know what to do. He said in a panic, “I’ll eat it, I’ll definitely eat it. Mei Mei, don’t be angry and don’t cry. It’s not good for the baby.”

“Grandfather, you still know that it’s not good for the baby! Then why don’t you take care of your own health! Do you even eat three proper meals a day! Why haven’t you taken good care of yourself when I’m not at home,” Qiao Mei said as she wept.

Xia Zhe already could not tell if Qiao Mei was really angry or just scaring the elderly man. He quietly wiped her tears with a tissue.

Chapter 510 Pieces of Candy

“Grandfather will definitely listen to Mei Mei and take good care of myself in the future. Mei Mei, don’t cry anymore.” Qiao Qiang took out two pieces of candy from the drawer and showed them to Qiao Mei.

This was Qiao Mei’s favorite candy when she was young. Every time Qiao Mei got angry, he would use this candy to coax her.

“Then it’s a deal. From now on, grandfather will take good care of your health. You still have to look after your great-grandson! He also wants to ask great-grandfather for candy,” Qiao Mei said proudly.

At the mention of Qiao Mei’s baby, Qiao Qiang was overjoyed and said happily, “Yes, yes, yes. I’ll listen to you. Either a boy or a girl is fine! It’s fine!”

Qiao Mei joyfully took the candy from Qiao Qiang’s hand and stuffed one piece into her mouth, giving the other piece to Xia Zhe.

“Grandfather, there’s another piece of good news for you,” Qiao Mei said as she chewed on the candy.

“What is it?” Qiao Qiang asked.

“You’re going to have two great-grandchildren! I’m having twins!” Qiao Mei said.

Twins! He had been in the village for most of his life and had never heard of anyone giving birth to twins. This was such a super joyous occasion and he must put up lanterns and decorations to celebrate it.

“Really? Who told you this news?” Qiao Qiang was overjoyed when he heard the news and the creases on his face became even deeper.

“It’s Xia Zhe’s aunt. She’s a doctor at a big hospital in the capital. It’s definitely true, but grandfather, don’t make it public. I’m just telling you this so that you can be happy too. We’ll tell people about it only after the babies are born,” Qiao Mei said.

“Do you think the twins will look exactly the same, as if they’re carved from the same mold? I’ve met a pair of twins in the army before. Other than their parents, no one can tell who’s who,” Qiao Qiang said as he looked at Qiao Mei’s stomach.

Xia Zhe was actually also very curious about whether they would look very similar. He had never thought about this matter before and was simply just happy about it.

“If they look the same, then it’s better for them to look more like Qiao Mei. She’s beautiful, it will be terrible if they look like me,” Xia Zhe said with a smile.

“It doesn’t matter which of you they look like as long as they’re healthy! Just sit here, I’ll go cook for you! Mei Mei needs more nourishment.” After saying that, Qiao Qiang went to the water vat in the courtyard to get a fish.

The four children had requested for this water vat as they did not have any playmates. There were no pregnant cats or dogs in the village at the moment. Otherwise, he would be able to get a pet animal for the children.

Therefore, he had a big water vat made and put it in the courtyard for the children to raise fish. The fishes they caught during the day also need not die immediately and they could still keep the fishes alive at home for three to four days. In such a way, they would be able to have a supply of fresh fish all the time.

“Ah! Let go of me! I already say I don’t have money!” Suddenly, there were sounds of an argument outside. Qiao Mei listened carefully and knew that it was Li Gui’s voice.

“Oh no! This is my mother’s voice!” Qiao Mei immediately rushed out of the door and Xia Zhe followed her.

Qiao Qiang took the hoe and wanted to go over to help. During this period of time when Qiao Mei was not at home, it was always Qiao Qiang who went over to help chase away those scoundrels from the Zhang family. He was already so old and with his status and position in the village, the Zhang family did not dare to bully him and would leave after a few words.

“Grandfather, we’ll go. You can rest at home,” Xia Zhe said as he stopped Qiao Qiang.

Qiao Qiang held Xia Zhe’s arm and said, “Protect Qiao Mei well. Don’t let her get hurt!”

“Grandfather, don’t worry.” After saying that, Xia Zhe took big strides and chased up with Qiao Mei.

She was not sure if it was a coincidence this time or if it was always so many people from the Zhang family coming to ask for money. Zhang Qian, Zhang Cong and Old Madam Zhang were all here.

At this moment, Zhang Qian was dragging Li Gui by the hair on the ground with one hand and pointing at the children in the courtyard with his other hand, asking them to go get the money quickly.

“Let go of my mother!” Qiao Mei shouted loudly.

The moment Zhang Cong saw Qiao Mei, his eyes lit up. He had not seen her for a few months and her figure had become more and more voluptuous. Ever since he married Sun Yan, he had found her

annoying no matter which way he looked at her. Before Sun Yan got pregnant, he had thought that she was quite beautiful.

After Sun Yan got pregnant, she ate a lot more than before and started to lose her figure. These two women were both pregnant, but Qiao Mei just looked so much better.

Xia Zhe also noticed Zhang Cong's gaze and glared at him fiercely.