

Fat Wife 551

Chapter 551 Pee His Pants

"Give you money? What for?" Qiao Mei asked.

"It's not too much to ask each of my four children to give me 100 dollars, right? You can't just cheat me of my children for nothing, right?" Zhang Qian said shamelessly.

Li Gui went forward, pointed at Zhang Qian and scolded, "Have you ever raised these children! Have you taken care of them when they were sick! Have you taught them well when they were in school! How dare you ask for money! Return my children to me!"

"Stupid woman! If you hadn't said anything, I would have forgotten about you! You were a widow when you married me back then and I spent so much on the betrothal money! You have to return that money to me! You have to return the 500 dollars and the television set that I gave you!"

Li Gui was so angry that her entire body was trembling. She had stayed with the Zhang family for more than 10 years and given birth to Zhang Qian's children. She went to work during the day and came back to serve her in-laws at night. Were all her years of hard work in vain!

"My mother has done so much for your Zhang family for so many years. Isn't that worth 500 dollars? There's no room for discussion on this matter. You sign this agreement and you don't have to be responsible for Zhang Miao's subsequent treatments. Otherwise, your family can just keep paying up! If you don't have the money, your mother and Zhang Cong can pay for you. I'll accept the money from any of you," Qiao Mei said.

Old Madam Zhang shouted at Zhang Qian, "Hurry up and agree! We don't have any money to give them! You were cheated by that woman and don't have a single cent left. Do you still plan to bring down the entire family!"

Sun Yan would be giving birth in a few months' time. By then, the medical and hospitalization fees would require them to take out all their savings. They did not have the spare money to care about the life and death of a young girl.

The most important thing now was the child that Sun Yan was carrying. The lives of the other four children had nothing to do with them!

"Dad! What's the use of those children! Your eldest grandson needs the money!" Zhang Cong said agitatedly.

Qiao Mei leaned back and looked at this family with interest. She felt that Qiao Zhuang's family in the village was already chaotic enough and everyone there was selfish. She did not expect there would be people who were even more selfish than them.

Zhang Qian had no choice but to accept the agreement and put his thumbprint on it.

"From this point on, they have nothing to do with you anymore. I hope you won't come to look for them again. I don't think you'll have a chance to come looking for them anyway," Qiao Mei said mockingly.

No chance to go looking for them? He had arms and legs so how could he not be able to go anywhere he wanted?

Only then did Zhang Qian realize that Qiao Mei had no intention of letting him off. She had only promised that he need not have to pay Zhang Miao's medical fees, but she did not mention anything about the issue with Zhang Chao and Zhang Qin.

"You're such a vicious woman! Let me out! Why can't I leave this place!" Zhang Qian roared at Qiao Mei.

"Human trafficking is a serious crime in itself. You even sold your two children. Even an immortal won't be able to save you. Now, you should pray that Zhang Chao is still alive and well. If anything happens to him, you can spend the rest of your life here." After saying that, Qiao Mei left with Li Gui.

Chen Hu arranged for people to half the amount of food and drinks given to the Zhang family members so that they would be taught a lesson and understood what karma was.

"Qiao Mei! I won't let you off! When I get out, I'll kill you!" Zhang Qian scolded.

Chen Hu stared at Zhang Qian murderously. His gaze was as fierce as an eagle staring at its prey from the sky, as if he wanted to skin Zhang Qian alive.

Zhang Qian fell to the floor in fear and kept retreating. He had only spouted those few words of nonsense in a moment of anger.

Chen Hu approached Zhang Qian's cell slowly. He opened the metal door and squatted down in front of Zhang Qian.

"If you dare to go and look for Qiao Mei and the rest again, or do anything to hurt them, then see if you can stay alive long enough to speak to me. I'll let you know what it means to wish for death," Chen Hu said.

Zhang Qian hurriedly nodded and said, "I understand... I understand..."

Chen Hu grabbed Zhang Qian's collar and pulled him forward, shouting, "Louder!"

"I understand! I won't dare to do it again!" Zhang Qian shouted.

From the corner of his eye, Chen Hu saw liquid slowly seeping out on the floor below Zhang Qian. He looked at Zhang Qian mockingly. He did not expect Zhang Qian to be so timid to pee his pants upon hearing those few words.

What a coward!

Chapter 552 Finding Zhang Chao

Qiao Mei and Li Gui were about to return to the hospital to take care of Zhang Miao when they saw uninvited guests at the door.

Liang Guo and Liang Lan sat quietly in the main hall with Zhang Chao, waiting for Qiao Mei to appear. They were definitely putting in a lot of effort to be able to see Qiao Qiang as soon as possible.

As soon as they arrived in the county city, they contacted Chen Hu. Chen Hu was too busy to see them, so he asked Xiao Liu to bring them to the guest house.

After making subtle enquiries, they found out what the team had been busy with recently. Liang Guo and Liang Lan had to use a lot of their connections to find this child.

They were the ones who intercepted and found the child on a small road. That road was only known to the people living around it and was very hidden. When people bought and sold items, they would transport them using this road.

At first, the couple was unwilling to hand over the child. It was so rare to be able to find such a good kid of the right age. Moreover, they had spent a lot of money to buy him, so they were not willing to give him up so easily.

Liang Guo and Liang Lan both worked in government services and there were no business people in their families. All these years, they only had their salaries and did not have any other form of income.

In the end, they used Chen Hu's name to scare the couple and gave them 5,000 dollars to redeem Zhang Chao.

"Why are you here?" Qiao Mei looked at them in puzzlement, and was even more confused about why they had Zhang Chao with them.

"We're just back here for a look and happened to bump into this child. 'I'm thinking he looks just like your younger brother, so I decided to save him,'" Liang Lan said with a smile.

There were so many loopholes in what she said. How did they happen to bump into the child? Chen Hu had been searching for so many days and had almost combed through the entire county city, but he still could not find Zhang Chao. How could it be so coincidental for them?

She was the only child that Qiao Yue and Li Gui had. Zhang Chao looked more like Zhang Qian and did not resemble Li Gui at all, so how could anyone think that he was her younger brother?

What a load of nonsense.

“So coincidental? You can tell who my younger brother is even though you have never met me when I was young. It’s a pity that you didn’t pursue a career in reading fortunes and feeling bones,” Qiao Mei said mockingly.

Liang Lan’s smile instantly froze. She was just trying to get by with a reasonable excuse, but she did not expect Qiao Mei’s sharp tongue and negative response.

However, then again, they had seen for themselves how capable Qiao Mei was in the capital. They were just asking for trouble, coming to her.

“Hahaha, that’s true. I think it’s too much of a coincidence too.” Liang Guo laughed awkwardly.

Even though the adults had been talking for so long, Zhang Chao just stared blankly ahead without moving, as if he had been possessed.

Qiao Mei walked forward and gently patted Zhang Chao on the head. Zhang Chao slowly turned his head to look at Qiao Mei and said slowly, “Elder sister... save...”

Liang Lan pretended to look heartbroken and said, “The child was already like this when we saved him. We’ve also asked a doctor to take a look and he said that this child has a serious psychological disorder that needs to be slowly resolved in the future. He might feel much better when he sees his family.”

Qiao Mei frowned as she looked at the Liang siblings. She was not sure if Zhang Chao’s current state was man-made. It was always possible that these two people were the ones who drugged Zhang Chao.

“Don’t tell me you’re the ones who kidnapped Zhang Chao?” Qiao Mei looked at them warily.

“The two of us look so alike. When people look at us, they know we can’t be husband and wife. Besides, we have our own children, so why would we need to buy children?” Liang Guo said.

Qiao Mei did not want to engage the Liang siblings further and lowered her head to look at the dazed Zhang Chao. He and Zhang Miao used to be the two most lively kids in the family. Now Zhang Miao was lying unconscious in the hospital and Zhang Chao was also in a daze.

“Zhang Chao, do you know who I am?” Qiao Mei asked as she pulled Zhang Chao over to her.

Zhang Chao looked at Qiao Mei in confusion and then at his surroundings. He whispered, “Elder sister.”

Qiao Mei breathed a sigh of relief. It was a good thing that he could recognize people. At least he would be able to tell the difference between good and bad people.

“What about her?” Qiao Mei asked as she pointed at Li Gui.

“Mom,” Zhang Chao said in a daze.

Li Gui squatted down agitatedly and hugged Zhang Chao. She sobbed and said, “My poor child! Mom let you down. It’s all my fault!”

Qiao Mei looked at the Liang siblings and asked, “How did you save Zhang Chao?”

“That family was afraid that we would go to the police and gave us the child in exchange for 5,000 dollars,” Liang Lan said.

Chapter 553 I Want You to Feed Me

Qiao Mei did not have that much money with her. She smiled and said, “I’ll give this money to Uncle Hu later. I think he should know where you are staying now. Then I won’t disturb you anymore.”

“No need, no need! We’re all family! It’s only right for us to help each other!” Liang Lan said quickly.

“Your surname is Liang and my surname is Qiao. This child’s surname will be Li, like my mother, in the future. None of us seems to have anything to do with the surname Liang, right?” Qiao Mei said.

This completely rendered the Liang siblings speechless.

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Back then, they were not the ones who wanted to change their surnames. It was their mother who instructed them to do so. They could not be blamed for this matter.

“Where are you going? Let me send you there,” Liang Guo said.

“There’s no need to trouble you. We know the way and I’ll pass you the money within the next two days. Goodbye.” Qiao Mei held Zhang Chao’s hand and left the armed forces department with Li Gui.

Chen Hu had just walked out after dealing with Zhang Qian’s matter and kept smelling himself all over. This was the first time he had seen such a timid person who peed all over the floor after hearing just a few threatening words!

The entire place was filled with the stench of urine. He did not know if the smell could be removed!

How unlucky!

Looking at Chen Hu’s strange posture, Liang Guo laughed and asked, “What are you doing?”

“Oh my, Brother Liang, Sister Liang, you’re here! Don’t remind me! I interrogated a criminal just now! He was so timid and made a mess of himself. I seem to have gotten the stench on myself. I’m really sorry about that,” Chen Hu said.

“Why are you being so polite to us? With your fierce looks, anyone who sees you will be afraid!” Liang Lan said.

“Come and have a seat in my office? By the way, Qiao Mei just left. Did you see her? I don’t know if you know her,” Chen Hu said.

Seeing her was worse than not seeing her!

This girl was so stubborn and refused to listen to anything. You would be lucky enough if she did not cause trouble for you!

“Yes, she left after we spoke for a while. She seemed to have other things on her mind,” Liang Guo said dejectedly.

Chen Hu waved his hand and said, “Let’s not talk about it. This child has a tough life. None of her younger siblings give her an easy life, but it’s all in the past now. I’ll bring you guys to see them when everything’s settled in their family.”

If Chen Hu brought them there, Qiao Qiang would likely not make things difficult for them and the situation would not get too ugly.

Although Qiao Qiang had always emphasized that he did not want Chen Hu to contact any Liang family members and that he would never go back to them for the rest of his life, how could there be overnight enmity between father and children?

Chen Hu thought that given Qiao Mei was already married, Qiao Qiang would not have anyone to take care of him. Since the Liang family members came bearing good intentions, he was willing to help them.

He had only heard a little about what happened back then. After so many years, it was probably time to let bygones be bygones.

“Sure, sure, sure. Then we won’t go up with you. The children are still in the guest house,” Liang Lan said.

“Then I’ll get Xiao Liu to send you there. I’ll contact you when I have the chance!” Chen Hu smiled as he sent the Liang siblings off, and hummed a tune as he went to the public bathhouse to take a bath.

As soon as Qiao Mei arrived at the hospital, she took Zhang Chao for a checkup. She suspected that someone had drugged Zhang Chao to slow down his reaction.

However, they did not discover any abnormalities after a round of examinations. The data on the test results were all healthy. The only abnormality was that he was a little malnourished. It appeared that the few children did not get much nutritious food recently.

“You’re back. I went to buy food. You and mom should come and eat,” Xia Zhe said as he held up the lunchboxes.

Qiao Mei sat on the caregiver bed and said sweetly to Xia Zhe, “I want you to feed me!”

Xia Zhe laughed and said, “Are you a child? You still need someone to feed you. If you don’t want to eat it, I’ll take it away. I’m not going to spoil you!”

Qiao Mei looked at Xia Zhe pitifully with her big bright eyes and said aggrievedly, “Big brother~ I’m hungry~”

Xia Zhe’s legs felt as if they were filled with lead and he suddenly could not walk at all.

Which man could stand his wife acting so coquettishly in front of him?

He finally understood why there were so many tales of men doing strange things to impress women. There was no man who did not like the feeling of having a beautiful woman by his side.

No man could resist the charms of a beautiful woman! For him, he was trapped in the hands of this “beauty” for the rest of his life.

“Sure, sure, sure. Sit down obediently and I’ll feed you, alright? But just this once! You won’t get this treatment in the future!” Xia Zhe pretended to be stern.

“There definitely won’t be a next time!” Qiao Mei said obediently.

As if!

Chapter 554 Seeing Improvements

After another two days, Zhang Miao's condition showed some improvements. The doctor suggested that she could go home to recuperate and they just needed to make sure that she took her medicine on time.

After returning home, she could not get agitated or do tiring work. She could only lie quietly in bed and eat light food. She would only be able to take tonics during the later stage of her recovery.

During this period of time, Zhang Wei and Qiao Qiang waited at home. They would call every day to ask about Zhang Miao and get updates about Zhang Chao and Zhang Qin.

Qiao Mei was more worried about Zhang Qin's mental health. Zhang Qin had always been more reserved and Qiao Mei was afraid that Zhang Qin was just pretending to be sensible now and kept all her feelings bottled up.

Ever since Zhang Qin saw Zhang Chao always sitting alone in a daze and not being smiley and cheerful like before, she would sit by the window with Zhang Chao every day and just kept talking to him.

Zhang Chao always had an indifferent expression on his face. Even his smile looked bitter.

"Zhang Qin, come with me," Qiao Mei said gently.

Zhang Qin left Zhang Chao behind reluctantly and followed Qiao Mei to the corridor.

Qiao Mei asked, "How do you feel? Do you feel uncomfortable or unhappy in any way? You can tell me."

Zhang Qin looked towards Zhang Chao and asked, "What's wrong with my second brother? Why doesn't he talk to me?"

"Maybe Zhang Chao is in a bad mood. The doctor says that he has been traumatized and needs to go home to recover slowly. He'll get better soon," Qiao Mei said awkwardly as she pursed her lips.

Actually, she did not know how long it would take Zhang Chao to recover. If he was still around Zhang Miao's age, he might be able to forget about what happened when he grew up.

However, Zhang Chao was already at the age when he could already remember many things. If he took things too hard, he would probably be like this for the rest of his life.

"Then will second brother still play with me like before? When will younger sister wake up?" Zhang Qin asked.

"Let's go home today. The doctor said that there's no need for Miao Miao to stay in the hospital now. She just needs to recuperate quietly and she might get better after we move to a familiar place. How about I bring you home to look for Zhang Wei today?" Qiao Mei coaxed Zhang Qin.

Zhang Qin jumped up excitedly and hurriedly went to pack her things. She ran to Zhang Chao happily and said, "Second brother, second brother! We're going home! Going home!"

Zhang Chao shuddered and hurriedly hid under the chair in fear. He covered his ears and eyes so that he could not see or hear anything.

"I'm not going back... I'm not going home... I don't want to go back to that house..." Zhang Chao muttered to himself.

Zhang Qin did not understand why he was still unhappy when they could already go home. She put down the things in her hand and sat on the floor to pull Zhang Chao out. She could not move him at all with the little bit of strength that she had.

Seeing this, Qiao Mei hurriedly ran over. She was already many months into her pregnancy and it was now difficult for her to bend down, let alone squat down.

"Qin Qin, tell your second brother that he's going back to elder sister's house to look for grandfather and eldest brother," Qiao Mei said.

Zhang Qin repeated Qiao Mei's words several times before Zhang Chao removed his hands from his ears in a daze and carefully climbed out from under the chair.

Qiao Mei pulled Zhang Qin up from the floor and then gently patted the dust off Zhang Chao.

She finally knew what the problem was.

"Will you come home with elder sister? We will never return to the county city again," Qiao Mei said.

Zhang Chao's eyes gradually lit up. He looked at Qiao Mei expectantly and asked, "Elder sister... Is what you said true?"

Qiao Mei nodded vigorously and said affirmatively, "That's right. From now on, we won't ever come to this place again. I promise you! Your brother-in-law will also protect you well!"

The corners of Zhang Chao's lips curled up slightly. This was the first time he smiled since he returned.

It looked like the doctor was right. The best treatment method was to return to a place where the children would feel safe and familiar.

After packing their luggage and borrowing a truck from Chen Hu, the group of them set off for the village.

In the midst of everything, they did not realize that there was a van following behind them.

The Liang siblings really could not wait any longer. They had other things to deal with in the capital and they received calls from different people every day, either urging them to go back or asking them for help.

If they stayed here any longer, their family's situation would probably go downhill very quickly if they still could not get Qiao Qiang's help.

Chapter 555 I Will Give You Anything

Their children could not stand living here either. Liang Guo's son was called Liang Zu, and Liang Lan's daughter was called Xiao Yu.

When the two children were just born, Qiao Qiang had helped to look after them. Later on, after Qiao Qiang left, they were brought up by their own parents. After so many years, they had long forgotten who Qiao Qiang was.

"The two of you must go to grandfather and cry loudly in front of him as soon as you enter the house, do you understand?" Liang Lan reminded them.

Liang Zu looked at Liang Lan disdainfully and said, "Aunt, why are we at such a godforsaken place? It's so hard to do anything here! It's even difficult to take a shower!"

"Mom, I don't want to continue living here! Not even for a day!" Xiao Yu said as she threw a tantrum.

Liang Lan really had no way of convincing these two little ancestors of their family. These two children had grown up with their grandmother and were taken care of by nannies. It would not be an exaggeration to say that they were very spoiled and pampered.

Now that the two children were grown up and had their own personalities, their parents found it even more difficult to discipline them anymore.

"Xiao Yu, listen to me. We're here to look for your grandfather this time round. Do you still remember your grandfather? His name is Qiao Qiang. When you enter the house, you have to address him properly. Do you understand?" Liang Lan said earnestly.

"I know... But what benefit do I get if I address him correctly?" Xiao Yu asked.

Benefit? They might not get any benefit at all!

These two children were not easy to deal with. If they let the cat out of the bag, all the plans would be ruined.

"The two of you must remember everything we said. As long as your grandfather comes back with us, you can have whatever you want," Liang Guo said sternly.

"Then if I want the latest electric toy car, can grandfather buy it for me too?" Liang Zu looked at Liang Guo suspiciously.

Given that his grandfather lived in such a remote village, how much money could he have? The latest electric toy car cost 56 dollars! Even his grandmother could not bear to buy it for him.

Would his grandfather be able to give it to him?

"Your grandfather has plenty of money. As long as you coax him and bring him home, you'll get anything you want," Liang Guo said.

"Then I want the most beautiful dress! And the most beautiful shoes!" Xiao Yu said excitedly.

"Yu Yu, you already have enough clothes and shoes. Don't buy anymore!" Liang Lan said sternly.

Xiao Yu turned away angrily and said, "You're all liars. Why can he get his wish but not me! You're just biased!"

Even at home, her grandmother liked Liang Zu more. Whenever there was anything good, grandmother would give it to him first before giving it to her. As for the really good stuff, her grandmother would give it all to him behind her back and not let her see them.

Liang Lan was also strict with her, but let Liang Zu do whatever he wanted.

"Buy! Uncle will buy it for you! As long as you listen to me! I'll give you whatever you want!" Liang Guo said affectionately.

"Yay! Long live uncle! I like uncle the most!" Xiao Yu said happily as she hugged Liang Guo.

Liang Lan looked at them resignedly. She wanted to discipline these children, but she was out of steam at the moment. She could only hold it off and think about it in the future.

The truck in front of them gradually came to a stop. They did not realize that they had already arrived at Qiao Qiang's house and they cautiously observed the movements in front of them

There was no one at home. Zhang Wei had an appointment for a follow-up checkup today. Zhao Liang came to pick Zhang Wei up to bring him to the clinic. Qiao Qiang could not help feeling worried and decided to follow them there.

Qiao Mei carried the things down but did not go back to her own home first. Instead, she went straight to Li Gui's house to get Zhang Miao's bed ready before going home to take out the new blanket that she received for her wedding.

"Xia Zhe! Help me bring this over there!" Qiao Mei shouted towards the outside.

Xia Zhe knew that some of these things were what he had bought for her previously, but he was not too concerned about it. Zhang Miao's health was more important now and he could always buy them again in the future.

"This is from your wedding! You haven't even used it many times, so how can you let Zhang Miao use it! Don't give her such a good blanket. Children aren't that delicate. Take it back!" Li Gui quickly stopped her. She still had many blankets at home. If she lay out a few more below Zhang Miao, the bed would not feel so hard anymore.

"This blanket is meant to be used. Miao Miao is still growing now. If her bones don't recover well now, then who knows what will happen in the future. I still have a few new blankets at home. We've already used this one before, so it's fine," Qiao Mei said.

Xia Zhe took the blanket and bedding into the house and carefully laid it out, making sure that there were no creases.

Chapter 556 Discovering A Small Surprise

Qiao Mei took all the useful things from her house to give to Zhang Miao. As long as it was something that was good for health, she moved it over.

"Mei Mei, that's enough! Don't bring anymore. Miao Miao doesn't need so many things! Keep these for yourself! You're pregnant!" Li Gui said.

"It's fine. Zhang Miao needs these things more. There are still many new things at home that I haven't used yet." Qiao Mei shouted into the house, "Xia Zhe, are you done tidying up! I want to carry Miao Miao in!"

Xia Zhe was sweating profusely from the heat. He walked out of the house with Zhang Miao's pillow in his hand and said, "This kind of soft pillow won't do. I'll go get the hard pillow at home. That will help Zhang Miao's bones to grow better."

Qiao Mei looked at Xia Zhe's departing figure and said with a smile, "See, I'm not the one who wants to bring everything over. Xia Zhe also hopes that Zhang Miao can get better soon."

Li Gui silently accepted these good intentions from Qiao Mei and Xia Zhe. Now that she had divorced Zhang Qian, nothing in her house would get taken away by the Zhang family again.

As long as she worked hard, she would be able to repay the money she owed Qiao Mei one day. Whenever she could have any good things, she would bring them all to Qiao Mei.

She would be a good mother and slowly make up for what she owed Qiao Mei all these years.

Zhang Chao pulled Zhang Qin to the courtyard to put away the dried wild vegetables and mushrooms that Zhang Wei had picked in the mountain.

"Let's go, mom. Let's carry Miao Miao in." Qiao Mei took the thin blanket and carried Zhang Miao into the house with Li Gui. After Zhang Miao was put down on the brick bed, she looked very much better than when she was in the hospital.

It had not been easy for Qiao Mei to fatten Zhang Miao up previously. Now, she was all skin and bones and looked like she could be blown apart by a gentle breeze.

"How magical. Home is much better than the hospital," Qiao Mei lamented.

"That's true. Perhaps Miao Miao also feels better now that she knows that she's home," Li Gui said.

Xia Zhe carried down all things from the truck and asked Xiaobei to head back. He had long noticed the van behind them and thought that the people inside were fellow villagers, but he did not expect these people to have come for them.

"Did you meet Liang Guo and Liang Lan?" Xia Zhe asked as he entered the house.

Qiao Mei looked at Xia Zhe in surprise and said, "How do you know that? If you haven't mentioned it, I would have forgotten about this matter. I still have to return them some money. At that time, I was so angry, then I was busy with Zhang Chao and then I forgot all about it."

"They're just outside. They have managed to make their way here," Xia Zhe said.

Qiao Mei looked out of the window and indeed saw a van. She did not expect them to have the cheek to come here.

It was so cold outside, so she would keep them there for now. Zhang Wei and Qiao Qiang would not be back for a while.

"I'm going home to make something delicious. Let's have dinner together tonight." After saying that, Qiao Mei left Li Gui's house with Xia Zhe.

Since Qiao Mei came back, she had been busy running around and had not had a good rest at home. She leaned back lazily on the brick bed and closed her eyes.

Qiao Qiang had burned some firewood before he left the house and it was warm on the brick bed now. If they had a kitten at home, it would definitely lie on the brick bed and refuse to leave.

Xia Zhe took off Qiao Mei's shoes and covered her with a blanket. Qiao Mei had not slept well for so many days because of the four children.

He wanted to let her rest well and decided to do the cooking.

Xia Zhe was shocked when he walked into the storeroom. All he could see were glass jars of all sizes. If he did not know any better, he would have thought that it was some kind of biochemical experiment laboratory!

These bottles and jars contained all the food that Qiao Mei preserved and marinated before she went to look for Xia Zhe. Previously, Xia Zhe had written to tell her that he liked to eat the pickled vegetables that she made. Chen Hu and the others also wanted a few jars as well.

Therefore, she had made a lot of each type. There was also a good portion of jam. The grape grew especially well in the courtyard and Qiao Mei harvested a lot to make jam, and she even canned some of it.

There was a time and date recorded on each jar so that it would be easier for Qiao Mei to take note or check if there were any that had expired or gone bad. She had developed all these new recipes on her own and did not know if the food would taste nice. She had wanted to give Xia Zhe a surprise, but did not expect him to discover them himself instead.

There were carrots, radishes, cucumbers, cabbages, cowpeas among others. There were also many rare ingredients and she even managed to preserve watermelons.

There were also a few pieces of cured meat and dried sausage hanging from the beam. Qiao Mei had smoked all these to make meat sauce for Xia Zhe at a later time.

These were all Qiao Mei's creative ideas and it clearly demonstrated the love she had for Xia Zhe.

Chapter 557 It Will Get Better

The Liang siblings waited anxiously in the car. It had been more than an hour and no one from the Qiao family had come out. Could it be that these people really intend to ignore them?

"Mom, let's go back. It's so cold here! I don't want to stay here anymore!" Xiao Yu said.

Liang Lan hugged Xiao Yu and tried to warm her up. They did not expect this mountain village to be so cold. They did not even feel this way in the county city.

It was already almost dark when Qiao Qiang and Zhang Wei returned with Zhao Liang in the vehicle. The three of them chatted and laughed happily and it sounded very lively.

"Hey! Uncle Qiao! There's smoke coming out of your chimney! Is someone back?" Zhao Liang asked.

Qiao Qiang slapped his thigh happily and said, "Isn't that so! Mei Mei must be back! Oh, that's so good!"

After saying that, he started to worry again. He was really looking forward to seeing Qiao Mei, but he was afraid that his mood would be affected when he saw her. He was afraid that Qiao Mei would tell him that Zhang Miao could not be saved, and that Zhang Chao and Zhang Qin could not be found.

He would not be able to stand hearing such bad news. Although these four children were not related to him by blood, he had feelings for them after taking care of them for so long.

When Zhang Wei saw Qiao Qiang's worried expression, he started to feel afraid as well.

"Look at the two of you. You're frowning even though your family members are back. Think happy thoughts. You'll reach home soon," Zhao Liang said.

The two of them forced themselves to feel better. As soon as they reached the door, Zhang Wei anxiously jumped out of the vehicle and went straight to his own home. He really wanted to find out more about his younger siblings.

"Hey! This kid! Slow down and don't fall!" Zhao Liang shouted worriedly.

As soon as he entered the house, he saw Zhang Qin drawing on the ground with Zhang Chao. Zhang Wei remained stunned at the door and could not believe what he was seeing. He rubbed his eyes vigorously.

It was true! Zhang Chao and Zhang Qin were back!

"Second brother! Third sister!" Zhang Wei shouted excitedly.

The two children hurriedly stopped what they were doing. Zhang Qin threw away the branch in her hand and rushed into Zhang Wei's arms excitedly while sobbing uncontrollably. Zhang Chao still stood there in a daze, not daring to go over.

"Eldest brother! Eldest brother, I miss you so much!" Zhang Qin cried.

Zhang Wei could not help but cry as well. He said happily, "I miss you too! It's good that you're back! It's good that you're back!"

At this moment, Zhang Wei also noticed Zhang Chao abnormal behavior. Why was his most lively second brother so quiet now? He held on to Zhang Qin as he walked up to Zhang Chao.

"What's wrong? Don't you recognize me?" Zhang Wei looked at Zhang Chao sadly.

Zhang Chao whispered, "Eldest brother... I remember eldest brother..."

Zhang Wei was filled with emotions. He did not know where to start or how to say how much he missed his younger siblings.

He pulled Zhang Chao into his arms and said, "I will never let anyone bully you again. I swear that from now on, I will protect you even if I have to die."

Li Gui stood under the eaves and witnessed everything. She did not expect that her most naughty child, whom Old Madam Zhang had raised badly, had now grown up into an upright person.

"Mom, how's my youngest sister..." Zhang Wei asked nervously.

"Miao Miao is fine. She just needs to rest well at home," Li Gui said.

Zhang Wei held the hands of both Zhang Chao and Zhang Qin and walked into the house with them. Zhang Miao was just lying quietly on the bed.

"Then do we know when she will wake up? When can she get up and talk to us?" Zhang Wei asked as he sat by the brick bed and held Zhang Miao's hand.

The doctor was not confident to make any promises about this matter and only asked that they bring Zhang Miao home to recuperate.

"As long as we work together and wait patiently for Miao Miao, I believe she will get better," Li Gui said.

Zhang Wei chased his younger siblings out to play. He pulled Li Gui aside and asked worriedly, "Mom, what's wrong with Zhang Chao? It seems that he doesn't like to talk anymore and his reaction is also much slower than before?"

Li Gui did not know how to explain it to him. She was also confused when she heard the doctors' explanation in the hospital. They used all the professional terms that she had never heard before and she could not understand them since she had never gone to school.

She remembered that the doctor had asked them not to force Zhang Chao to do things that he disliked as this would aggravate his condition. They should allow him to stay away from the memories that he did not want to remember. As time passed and he could accept what had happened, he would naturally feel better.

Chapter 558 Meeting Up

When the Liang family members in the van saw Qiao Qiang, they looked like starving wolves seeing meat after a long time.

Liang Lan hurriedly held back the two children and instructed them, "You have to behave well. Only then will grandfather come back with us. Do you understand?"

Liang Zu and Xiao Yu nodded impatiently. The two children opened the van door and ran out first. They stood in front of Qiao Qiang and hurriedly addressed him as "grandfather".

Qiao Qiang smiled kindly and said, "Which family are you from?"

Zhao Liang had never seen such grown children around here. He was very familiar with the number of people in every family in the village.

"Uncle Qiao is going to be the grandfather of all the children in the village! Why do all the children call you grandfather when they see you? I don't seem to get such treatment," Zhao Liang said.

"Grandfather, don't you recognize me? I'm Liang Zu," Liang Zu said as he looked at Qiao Qiang aggrievedly.

Liang Zu? That sounds familiar...

His surname is Liang. Can he be that damn family from the capital!

Qiao Qiang turned to look towards the van. Liang Guo and Liang Lan were standing beside the van with a lot of health products and fruits in their hands.

"You can go back. I don't want to see you," Qiao Qiang said with a sullen expression.

When Zhao Liang saw that the situation did not seem right, he quickly laughed and said, "I'm going home. My wife is still waiting for me to have dinner! Uncle Qiao, call me if you need anything!"

Qiao Qiang waved goodbye to Zhao Liang and turned around to go home. As soon as he entered the courtyard, he saw Xia Zhe washing the big vats from the storeroom. Those things were used to prepare

pickled vegetables. He had been so busy taking care of Zhang Wei recently that he had forgotten about this matter.

Liang Zu and Xiao Yu stood rooted to the spot, not knowing if they should follow. Liang Guo and Liang Lan shamelessly brought the children into the courtyard.

They firmly believed that as long as the two children were around, Qiao Qiang would not say anything harsh to them.

“Why are you still here! Didn’t I tell you never to come again!” Qiao Qiang said angrily.

“Father, I’m just worried about your health. The two children also clamored to see you,” Liang Lan said with a smile.

Xiao Yu was the first one to take action. She ran to Qiao Qiang and hugged him as she said, “Grandfather, don’t you like me anymore? In the past, grandfather used to like me the most! Grandfather, have you forgotten?”

Qiao Qiang sat on the stool and looked at Xiao Yu as he said, “It’s not that I don’t miss you. If you can’t bear to part with me, you can stay here. Liang Zu can stay here too. How about we all live together just like before?”

The two children instantly looked troubled. Staying at the guest house in the county city already made them miss home, but he actually wanted them to live in the countryside from now on!

He might as well just kill them!

“Um... Father, look, I brought you some tonics. See if you like them?” Liang Lan said as she walked forward.

Qiao Qiang knew that these two young children were being used by his unfilial children to put on an act so as to soften his heart.

If they really wanted him to go back, would they have ignored him for so many years? These two young children had already been led astray by them, and their behavior and attitude towards others were simply rude.

“You should take them back. I can’t afford to eat such good stuff with my cheap life. If I eat these, my lifespan will get shortened!” Qiao Qiang said.

Liang Lan quickly said, “How can that be! I still think such stuff is not worthy of father’s status.”

She was trying so hard to suck up to him. Back then, the person who said that Qiao Qiang had a cheap life was his wife Liang Hao, the woman who was the mother of Liang Guo and Liang Lan.

He did not want to take orders from the Liang family nor collude with them. In the end, Liang Hao divorced him out of exasperation and even took the children away.

Qiao Qiang turned to look at Liang Zu and asked, “Do you still have the longevity lock that grandfather gave you?”

Liang Zu hurriedly ran forward and said, “Yes I do. I look at it every day!”

“Then take it out and let me take a look. I can’t even remember what it looks like.” Qiao Qiang reached out his hand after saying that.

This made Liang Guo dumbfounded. In the past, the Liang family had a status that was similar to the current Xia family. After Liang Zu was born, there was an endless stream of people coming through their door and bearing gifts. Back then, they had indeed received a longevity lock, but he could not remember who gave it to them. He felt that such an ordinary item was not worthy enough to be given to Liang Zu, so he gave it to someone else offhandedly.

Chapter 559 Get Lost

“Father, that thing is too precious. I’ve kept it away. When we go back together, I’ll get Liang Zu to bring it to you,” Liang Guo said with a smile.

Qiao Qiang smiled without saying anything. He had never given them a longevity lock before. Back then, he had heard that Liang Guo's wife was pregnant with a girl, so he had gone to the city to buy a pair of silver bangles for the child. Unexpectedly, she gave birth to a boy so his wife had kept the gift away. By right, Liang Zu should not know anything about this.

Zhang Chao stood at the door and looked across from him. Zhang Wei leaned over curiously and looked in the same direction.

Is that not grandfather's house? What is there to see?

!!

"Younger brother, what are you looking at? Tell me," Zhang Wei said with a smile.

Zhang Chao pointed at Qiao Qiang's backyard and said, "Eldest brother... pig..."

Zhang Wei immediately understood what Zhang Chao meant. The two of them would feed the pigs and clean up the pigsty twice a week.

Qiao Mei had promised them that as long as they cleaned up the pigsty well, they would get a dime a week. If the piglets grew up and sold for a lot of money, they would get a share of the money as well.

"Come, let's go. I'll bring you to feed the pigs. Go back to the house and change into another pair of shoes. Elder sister bought this pair for you to wear to school. Don't get them dirty," Zhang Wei said.

Zhang Chao skipped into the house to put on the rubber boots he wore for chores. He had bought these boots with his own money!

The two of them carried the unwanted rotten vegetables from their house to Qiao Qiang's house. As soon as they entered, they saw four strangers who simply ignored them.

Xiao Yu hid to one side in disgust. When Liang Zu saw Zhang Wei and Zhang Chao, he also looked at them with disdain. In their eyes, what the boys were doing was the job of the family helper. Liang Hao had also told the two children that people who did this kind of work could be ordered around at will.

Qiao Qiang smiled and said, "The two of you can go and feed the pigs with them. Didn't you say that you want to be with me? Then you have to know how to do these tasks."

Under the forceful gazes of the Liang siblings, Xiao Yu and Liang Zu slowly walked towards the pigsty. As soon as they got close, the two children ran back because they could not stand the stench. Xiao Yu even felt so disgusted that she kept dry retching.

Liang Lan's heart went out to her.

"How delicate. I wonder how you people raised these two children," Qiao Qiang muttered.

One could not make an omelet without breaking some eggs!

Liang Lan said to Xiao Yu patiently, "Can you help grandfather take care of the piglets? The piglets are so cute. Go and take a look at them."

Xiao Yu said arrogantly, "This is work that servants do. I'm not doing it!"

"That's right, why must we do such work," Liang Zu whispered.

Xiao Yu should be 12 years old now, and Liang Zu already 13 years old. They were both older than the four children from the Zhang family.

They were all children, but the difference between them was huge. Qiao Qiang also knew that these were children brought up by Liang Hao. They behaved no differently from how she used to behave in those days.

“All of you can go back! We’ve already cut ties with one another, so there’s no need for these two children to call me grandfather. I don’t have grandchildren with such bad upbringing! Get lost and go back to the capital!” Qiao Qiang roared.

His voice was so loud that Xiao Yu burst into tears from fright. No one had ever dared to say such harsh words to her from when she was young.

Even when she did something wrong, Liang Hao never scolded her. She would say that it was someone else’s fault and that her granddaughter could do no wrong.

“I don’t like grandfather anymore! You’re not my grandfather! I want to go home! Booohoo~” Xiao Yu wailed loudly.

Liang Lan carried Xiao Yu helplessly and returned to the van. In a dejected manner, Liang Guo and Liang Zu also prepared to leave.

“Wait,” Qiao Qiang shouted.

Hope reignited in Liang Guo’s heart. Could it be that his father had thought things through?

Or perhaps his father could not bear to part with his eldest grandson and wanted to have a good talk with him, or that his father had already forgiven him.

“Take your things before you get lost.” Qiao Qiang took the gift box they had brought and threw it outside the door.

Liang Guo looked at Qiao Qiang intently and silently picked up the things from the ground before leaving the courtyard. He then left Foshan Village with Liang Lan and Xiao Yu.

Qiao Qiang stared at Xia Zhe, who had been watching the show from a corner of the courtyard, and asked with a smile, “Do you know who they are?”

Xia Zhe did not hide anything and told Qiao Qiang about how he had met them in the capital. Qiao Qiang was so angry that he kept trembling. He did not expect them to even have designs on Qiao Mei behind his back.

Chapter 560 Sharing Secrets

"Mei Mei didn't mention this incident to me and I'm also not willing to talk about what happened back then. Your grandfather knows what happened previously. If the Liang family asks your family for help or comes to you for help, you don't have to care about them. I've already cut ties with them long ago. Qiao Mei and I have nothing to do with the Liang family." Qiao Qiang's attitude was very firm.

"I understand. I'll listen to grandfather," Xia Zhe said.

Qiao Mei slowly stuck her head out from under the blanket and stretched. This was the most peaceful sleep she had had in the past few days.

As soon as she opened the door, she could smell the rich fragrance coming from the kitchen. The moment she opened the pot, a nice smell filled her nose. It was a full pot of stewed potatoes with beans and a lot of meat inside. In the other pot was chicken soup for the children and her grandfather. It also smelled very good.

She did not expect Xia Zhe's culinary skills to have become even better. In a few days, he would be able to surpass her!

"Grandfather, what are the two of you talking about?" Qiao Mei walked out with a smile.

Qiao Qiang said happily, "I'm sharing secrets with Xia Zhe. I'm not telling you."

Qiao Mei narrowed her eyes and looked at Xia Zhe. Xia Zhe silently shifted his gaze elsewhere. Compared to Qiao Mei being angry, he was more afraid of offending her grandfather. What if grandfather got angry and locked Qiao Mei up and disallowed him to come to their house?

"Why are you looking at Xia Zhe like that! You must treat him well! Don't throw a tantrum at him!" Qiao Qiang said.

Qiao Mei pouted in dissatisfaction. She was clearly his biological granddaughter, but why did it seem like Xia Zhe was the biological grandchild instead!

As expected! Not only was Xia Zhe a popular man, but he was deeply well-liked by men and women, both young and old.

"Mei Mei is especially good to me and has a good temper," Xia Zhe said gently.

Qiao Qiang waved his hand in disdain and said, "Forget it, forget it. I won't get involved in the matters of you young people. When the meal is ready, ask Li Gui and the children at home to come over for dinner. Let's make it lively."

"Grandfather, let's go over there to eat. I'm worried about leaving Zhang Miao home alone," Qiao Mei said.

Qiao Qiang nodded and took out the two largest basins in the house. He scooped the dishes into them and called out to the two children who were cleaning up the pigsty to go back for dinner.

At the dining table, everyone chatted and laughed. It was rare for all of them to gather together, so Zhang Chao even spoke up more and laughed with them from time to time.

After dinner, the children washed the dishes. Li Gui took some liquid food and slowly fed it to Zhang Miao.

Qiao Mei stood at the door of the courtyard and walked around to aid digestion. She could see Auntie Dong rushing towards her from afar with a basin in her arms.

"Auntie Dong, where are you going!" Qiao Mei shouted.

When Auntie Dong saw Qiao Mei, she quickened her pace and came up saying, "Mei Mei! I'm here to look for you! Can you tell me what's wrong with my family's bean sprouts? Are they sick? After we grew these bean sprouts, they said that the bean sprouts did not meet the standard and returned them to us. We're not earning as much money as before. Quickly help me take a look."

Qiao Mei was publicly acknowledged to be the best at growing bean sprouts in the village. There had been a strange phenomenon. For a few months in the past, under Qiao Mei's lead, everyone had done a good job and the quality of the bean sprouts always met the standard of the supply and marketing cooperative. Every family had earned a lot of money then.

Later on, everyone felt that they had already learned Qiao Mei's skills and tried to do it on their own. From then on, they did not manage to sell as much as before. It seemed that they still had not managed to pick up all of Qiao Mei's skills.

Otherwise, why was it that her bean sprouts grew well while theirs were not up to standard!

Qiao Mei looked at the bean sprouts in the basin and fell into deep thought. During this period of time, she had not been in the village and there was no one transmitting energy to these bean sprouts. Of course, the quality would not meet the standard.

It seemed that she had to get everyone to come over and learn it again. Only then could she hide the fact that she had superpower. Otherwise, it would make people jealous.

"Auntie, I can tell that there are many factors. There are techniques in growing bean sprouts. You can't use too much or too little beans. Temperature, humidity and the environment are all very important. Ask everyone to come over tomorrow, I'll run through the steps with all of you again," Qiao Mei said with a smile.

Auntie Dong was overjoyed and said happily, "I just know that you would know the reason, Mei Mei! I keep wondering why the bean sprouts don't grow well! You're still the expert!"

"I also brought back many books on plants and agriculture from the capital. People in the capital sell fruits and flowers. In this beautiful place like ours, the fruits we grow will definitely be better than theirs!" Qiao Mei said.