

Fat Wife 791

Chapter 791 Considering Repairing The Roads

Qiao Mei felt that this was very normal. This mountain did not belong to their family, so it was normal for someone to pick stuff from the mountain. Even if the ginseng was dug up, it was not a big thing.

"Grandfather, let's leave tomorrow night. I've already packed everything. You can take a look if there's anything else you want to bring along," Qiao Mei said.

Qiao Qiang did not even have much clothes, so he did not have much to pack. He had already packed everything on the day they agreed to move.

"Have you spoken to your mother?" Qiao Qiang asked.

Qiao Mei nodded. Everything was settled very nicely. As long as nothing went wrong with the handover of the seeds tomorrow, everything would definitely go smoothly!

However, things did not go as smoothly as Qiao Mei had imagined. Early in the morning, Wang Qin found out that the children in their family could not go to school. It was like a bolt from the blue.

"What did you say?! Zhao Liang! Why can't my child go to school?!" Wang Qin questioned as she looked at the joint petition.

Zhao Liang only came to inform Wang Qin, and the rest was really none of his business.

"This is the opinion of all the parents in the school, not me. If you have time to argue with me, you might as well go and ask those people who put their names down. Also, you've been on leave for almost half a month. If you don't come back to work soon, I'll go and ask the leader for a change in staff. I've done my best by delaying taking this action for half a month." Zhao Liang left after saying that.

This joint petition was not the original copy. It did not matter even if Wang Qin tore it up. He still had to hurry to Qiao Mei's place to collect his money! Several trucks had entered the village today, which was a big deal.

"Mei Mei, the mountain roads to your village are really too difficult to maneuver. It's not easy for us to drive in!" He Guang wiped the sweat on his forehead and said helplessly.

Their village was built on the mountain. Not only were the roads steep, but the distance between each house was also unevenly spaced. The trucks could travel on some roads easily, but some roads were difficult to get through.

This time, he had sent three trucks. They were supposed to reach Qiao Mei's house after 40 minutes, but they drove for a full hour and a half!

This was something that needed more planning in the future.

Qiao Mei looked at the countryside roads thoughtfully. This is a matter that could only be resolved if everyone contributed money. After they made more money in the future, they would naturally be able to repair the roads. At the moment, the mention of the issue of repairing the roads would probably make everyone feel conflicted. It would cost a lot of money for the repairs.

"Uncle, it's been hard on you. Come with me to the house to take a look." Qiao Mei brought them into the house to carry the goods. There were so many seeds that it would take the three drivers a long time to do the loading.

Qiao Mei was about to reach out to help when He Guang stopped her. He Guang was so scared that he broke out in a cold sweat. Each sack weighed 50 pounds. If Qiao Mei got hurt, he would be in serious trouble. At that time, Chen Hu would definitely skin him alive!

"Please spare me. These people were arranged by your Uncle Hu. If they go back and tell your Uncle Hu, see if I'll still be alive and standing in front of you next time. Take good care of the money. Here's 10,000 dollars, all in loose change. I did what you asked for." He Guang handed a large paper bag to Qiao Mei.

Qiao Mei looked at the money bag in a daze. It would probably be very troublesome when distributing the money later.

"Uncle, aren't you going to open up the bags to take a look? You don't look like you're here to acquire stock," Qiao Mei said with a smile.

Usually, when purchasers acquired stock, they would require each bag to be emptied to check the quantity, quality and whether it met the agreed standards. This was the custom of the supply and marketing cooperative when they collected bean sprouts. Not a single defective product was allowed. Everything had to be perfect.

He Guang waved his hand and said nonchalantly, "You've already given me all the seeds the previous round to do the trial. How can I not trust you? This is the money for the seeds you gave me. If there's any excess, take it as my gift to you."

He Guang took out another 1,000 dollars from his pocket and handed it to Qiao Mei. His food factory had always been looked down upon. Even if they handled the same imported products as others, they did not make as much money as the rest. Now that he was the sole distributor of Foshan Seeds, not only was the factory's business booming, but its reputation was also gradually improving. All of this was thanks to Qiao Mei.

Qiao Mei did not refuse and directly handed the 1,000 dollars to Li Gui. She thought that Qiao Mei did not have anywhere to keep the money and wanted her to help keep the money safe.

Chapter 792 Earning Big Money

"Qiao Mei, when should I collect the next batch?" He Guang asked.

Qiao Mei was stunned for a moment. These seeds were just ordinary seeds from the capital. All the benefits were stimulated by her energy. It would probably take half a year for the next batch to be ready. However, business was so booming that He Guang would definitely not be able to wait so long.

"Uncle, these seeds are a new variety. The unique thing about these seeds is that we can't use the seeds harvested this year to continue planting. We have to go back to buy them from the supplier. Even if everyone plants the remaining seeds they have this year, they will only be able to harvest next spring," Qiao Mei said.

These were all Qiao Mei's excuses. If He Guang had not mentioned it, Qiao Mei would not have thought about this at all. She had intended to sell more seeds when she distributed the money later.

In a while, she would hurry home and secretly infuse some energy into the seeds. Although these new seeds would not grow as fast as the previous batch, it could still be harvested in two to three months' time.

Qiao Mei used her unique ability to accelerate the growth whenever she planted crops. She no longer knew what the normal growth cycle of plants was like and could do a rough estimate.

The villagers arrived one after another and Qiao Mei also started to do the payout. A few of the villagers saw He Guang and even wanted to go forward to talk to him, asking him indirectly how much he paid for the seeds.

After all, the price was decided between him and Qiao Mei. Since Qiao Mei had not said anything, he did not find it appropriate for him to say anything. If he said something wrong, it would ruin Qiao Mei's reputation.

He Guang did not say anything. He just smiled and left the village with the trucks. Everyone lined up in an orderly manner to collect their money.

"Everyone, don't be anxious! Everyone has a share! I still have some seeds that you can use to plant next year, but the quality is not as good as this year's batch. The cycle is also longer than the current batch by a month, but the quality is definitely the same as this year's. If anyone wants to buy the seeds, go and collect money from my mother first before coming to me to buy the seeds!" Qiao Mei shouted loudly.

The villagers had all kept some seeds from the harvest this year for planting next year. They did not expect Qiao Mei to be selling new seeds.

"Mei Mei! We're all experienced farmers. Every family will leave some seeds for planting after harvesting. We really don't lack any..." Aunt Wang said embarrassedly.

They were all worried that Qiao Mei would be disappointed if they did not buy new seeds from her. After all, social norms advocated reciprocity. Qiao Mei always included them whenever there were any benefits, so it was not nice of them not to buy the seeds that Qiao Mei had specially set aside for them.

"The seeds you kept can't be planted and harvested. The person who sold me the seeds specially told me that only the seeds bought from him would grow at the same speed as this last batch. Even if we keep seeds from the harvest, these seeds won't work that well. If we continue to plant seeds from subsequent harvest, the seed quality of the second, third and later generations harvested will only get worse and worse and will not meet the standard," Qiao Mei said.

"It sounds so serious! We've never heard of such a thing!" Auntie Wang immediately panicked.

Everyone started to discuss among themselves. They had been farming their entire lives, but they had never heard of such a magical thing. They all knew that Qiao Mei would leave the village this winter and they had wanted to ask her to bring back some seeds for them from the capital, but they were too embarrassed to raise this issue. Since Qiao Mei still had seeds with her at the moment, they should buy as many as they could afford!

"Let me make it clear first! Based on the amount of seeds I have, each family can at most buy six pounds! The price is still 50 cents per pound! I won't sell more than that to each family even if you ask for it! I'm going by headcount! You can buy less, but you can't buy more!" Qiao Mei shouted out.

"Then how much per pound did we sell those seeds! Qiao Mei, tell us!" Auntie Dong asked with a chuckle.

"Everyone, make a guess!" Qiao Mei said.

Some people guessed 30 cents, some people guessed 50 cents, and some people said 20 cents. Everyone had different opinions and no one knew what the price that Qiao Mei had negotiated. The highest amount guessed was 50 cents.

"Mei Mei, just tell us the truth. We're so anxious!" Auntie Dong slapped her thigh anxiously.

As the "know-it-all" in the village, this was the first time she did not have any information about something. She was so restless.

"90 cents!" Qiao Mei said with a grin.

There was a collective gasp from the crowd. Each family could earn more than 400 dollars! This was something that they had never done before!

Chapter 793 Coming To Cause Trouble

"Mei Mei! You're really the God of Fortune of our village! Oh my goodness! I sold 750 pounds! I have 675 dollars! Is this true! Pinch me quick!" Auntie Dong got the people beside her to pinch her so hard that her arms turned red.

Everyone was so happy that they almost shouted out "Long live Qiao Mei". In the past, every family had to save up for many years to get an amount of 400 dollars. Some families might not even be able to save up so much money in their entire lives.

Qiao Mei had helped everyone to make so much money in one go. Everyone's faces were filled with smiles and hope. Every family could eat their fill. This had fulfilled Qiao Mei's initial wish.

"Everyone, don't be too happy yet! I have something to tell everyone. I'm going to the capital soon. I hope everyone can help me with my family's matters! Don't go around telling others about us earning money. If I'm not in the village and get investigated, I won't be able to come back. Don't show off your wealth. Everyone, you must be careful!" Qiao Mei said.

In this era, there were still many poor people around. If their village suddenly became rich, it would definitely attract the envy of other villages. It would not be good if they attracted trouble.

After discussing the important issues, everyone started to collect their money one after another. There were also many people who wanted to buy seeds. Everyone went to Qiao Mei's place to buy six pounds of seeds. After reaping the benefits, they definitely wanted to plant as many seeds as they could.

"Qiao Mei! Get out here!" Wang Qin shouted as she stood at the door of the courtyard.

Everyone was busy with their own things and no one paid Wang Qin any attention. No one had the time to care about this crazy woman now. Her husband was an arsonist and her son was almost a murderer. Her entire family members were all nasty people and they wanted to stay as far away from her as possible.

No one wanted to be associated with this family!

"Are you deaf! Didn't you hear me calling out to you!" Seeing that everyone was ignoring her, Wang Qin arrogantly walked up to Qiao Mei and shouted at her.

Qiao Mei raised her head slowly and said, "I'm not selling it to you."

"Who wants your lousy seeds! Do you think I care!" Wang Qin said disdainfully.

"If you don't want to buy, then leave quickly! Don't waste our time!" Auntie Dong pushed Wang Qin away impatiently.

Wang Qin's anger flared up and she behaved like a shrew and pushed Auntie Dong. Auntie Dong was not someone who could be bullied easily, so the two of them started fighting in the courtyard.

Of course Wang Qin was at a disadvantage. The men did not want to get involved in beating up the women. Auntie Wang and Auntie Zhou, who were on good terms with Qiao Mei, as well as a few other women who were on good terms with the rest of them, all surrounded Wang Qin and beat her up.

Her clothes were almost torn off and her hair was in a mess. No one wanted to look at her.

When Zhao Liang saw that they had gone overboard, he shouted, "Stop! If you have something to say, just say it! Don't fight!"

"She hit me first! Who do you think you are! When the village was in trouble, you just sat back and reaped the benefits! Now that we're having a better life, you want to stop us! Who do you think you are!" Auntie Dong shouted angrily.

In the past, everyone was afraid that if they offended Wang Qin, she would deduct their work points. This directly affected the issue of whether each family could eat their fill, so they had always been polite to her. Now that everyone could support their families by selling seeds, they were naturally not afraid of her anymore.

"I'm here to talk to Qiao Mei! Who do you think you are! Stop interrupting me with your lowly mouth!" Wang Qin pointed at Auntie Dong and scolded her.

Qiao Mei really could not stand it anymore. She got up and slapped Wang Qin so hard that Wang Qin saw stars and immediately fell to the ground.

She had not even gone to look for Wang Qin about what happened to Zhang Qin. Now that Wang Qin had come knocking on her door, she did not intend to be polite. Auntie Dong had been beaten up for trying to help her, so she had to stand up for Auntie Dong now.

"How dare you hit me!" Wang Qin looked at Qiao Mei in disbelief.

"Yes I dare to! I haven't even settled the score with you for your son hurting my younger sister, yet you still dare to come here and behave so atrociously today? Bring me my sister's medical expenses, nutrition fees, tuition fees and compensation for emotional damage. Otherwise, get lost and go as far away as you can go!" Qiao Mei said.

At the mention of money, Wang Qin chickened out. She only had about 10 dollars left and all the money the family had was used to pay off Qiao Gui's debts. Qiao Zhuang had even plundered some of it.

She had originally wanted to ask for an explanation on behalf of her son, but she did not expect to be insulted by Qiao Mei instead. The villagers were all on Qiao Mei's side now and no one would help her.

"Why should I give you money! My son can't go to school now! He can't go to school in the future! You have to give me an explanation!" Wang Qin shouted at the top of her lungs.

Chapter 795 Arriving In The Capital

When they first came to the countryside from the city, the children in the village all looked up to them. However, now that they were going to return to the city from the countryside, and heading towards the most prosperous city this time round, they were worried if they would be bullied and looked down upon.

Qiao Mei also noticed the children's abnormal behavior. She patted Zhang Wei's shoulder and said, "Zhang Wei, why are you unhappy now that we're almost there?"

"Elder sister... I'm scared... In the county city, there were already many people who bullied me and my younger brother. Do you think they will also look down on us? Can we not go to school..." Zhang Wei lowered his head, feeling dejected.

Zhang Qin and Zhang Miao had never experienced being bullied in school in the county city. They were only filled with anticipation about coming to the capital and did not think too much about it.

"When you went to the village school back then, do you still remember how elder sister taught you to interact with others?" Qiao Mei said patiently.

Zhang Wei thought for a moment and said, "We must do our best to get along well with others. If they're not friendly, give them some seeds to eat. But if they bully us, then we should fight back."

"That's right. If anyone bullies you, you can bully them back. We won't take the initiative to cause trouble, but we're not afraid of trouble either. Do you understand?" Qiao Mei said as she patted Zhang Wei's head.

Zhang Wei understood what she meant, but he was still afraid. In the village, the situation would never get too bad as all the uncles and aunties in the village liked him. However, it was different in the city. The children in the city school came from all over the country. If he caused any trouble, then he would need Qiao Mei to help him clean up the mess.

He had overheard a part of Li Gui's conversation with Qiao Mei in the past. Qiao Mei also had no relatives in the capital and could only rely on his brother-in-law, Xia Zhe. Therefore, if he got into any trouble, he would only cause trouble for Qiao Mei.

"What else are you afraid of? Tell me," Qiao Mei said gently.

"I'm afraid of causing trouble for elder sister. If that happens, brother-in-law won't like us anymore and will quarrel with elder sister. I'm worried," Zhang Wei told her all his real thoughts.

Qiao Mei then realized that he had overheard what the adults said. She sighed and said slowly, "The few of you are elder sister's treasures. No matter who says anything about you, I will protect you. The house you're going to live in doesn't belong to your brother-in-law either. It's mine. Don't be afraid of your

brother-in-law and his family. As long as we don't take the initiative to cause trouble, what are we afraid of?"

Qiao Mei added, "It's fine even if you get into trouble. You have an elder sister around. Don't tell me you'll leave me alone after you grow up? What if I cause trouble when I'm old? Will you still care about me?"

"Yes! I will definitely take care of elder sister!" Zhang Wei said firmly.

"So think about how important I am to you, and that is how important you all are to me. Do you understand? Don't worry and be bold. Don't be afraid. You're their older brother. If you're afraid, won't they be even more afraid?" Qiao Mei said.

Zhang Wei no longer felt lost. He decided to do as Qiao Mei said and be a good person. As long as he remained kind and did not do anything bad, he should not have many enemies.

The train stopped and everyone disembarked slowly with their luggage. Zhang Wei carried Zhang Miao on his back and walked slowly while Zhang Chao held on to Zhang Qin and followed behind them.

When they reached the train station exit, Qiao Mei saw Xia He and Xia Fang from afar. They were with someone else that she did not expect to see. Xu Lan had also come to pick her up.

Xia He quietly observed Xu Lan's expression. There did not seem to be any changes, so she knew that Xia Wen had already told Xu Lan the truth. Xu Lan was no longer sad and instead actively went about renovating the house.

"Why are you all here to pick me up? I'm still thinking of going back on my own," Qiao Mei said with a smile.

Xu Lan held Qiao Mei's hand enthusiastically with tears in her eyes and said excitedly, "What nonsense are you talking about! It's bad enough that you didn't tell me you're coming back! But you still want to go home by yourself! If not for your aunt bringing us to pick you up! We would still be in the dark!"

Li Gui originally thought that Xu Lan was the kind of mother-in-law who was difficult to get along with. Seeing how concerned Xu Lan was about Qiao Mei, Li Gui felt relieved.

"Uncle Qiao, it's been a long time. Do you still remember me?" Xu Lan said politely.

Qiao Qiang nodded. Xu Lan was indeed different from the person in his memories. Her temper had become much better and she was no longer as cold as before. A person who was about to become a grandmother was indeed different.

Chapter 796 - 796 Sneak Back Next Time

796 Sneak Back Next Time

"Yes, you're the same as before. You don't look any different from the first time I saw you," Qiao Qiang said politely.

Li Gui stood at the side and felt uneasy as she watched them exchange pleasantries. She did not know what to say or not to say. If she was too enthusiastic and Xu Lan did not like her, Xu Lan would have a bad impression of Qiao Mei. It was better to just stand at the side and watch.

Earlier at home, she even specially instructed the children not to say anything else when they met Qiao Mei's in-laws in the capital other than greeting them and answering questions politely.

Xu Lan and Li Gui exchanged a few words out of politeness. Xu Lan originally thought that relatives from the countryside would be like Tan Jing's family who had nothing to say apart from asking for money and trying to get into the Xia family's good books. She did not expect Li Gui to seem like an honest person.

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"What's wrong with this child? Why is there a splint on her leg?" Xu Lan looked at Zhang Qin, who was on Zhang Wei's back, in surprise.

This was the solution that Qiao Mei had thought of. Zhang Qin was not seriously injured and going to the county hospital to get a cast would delay her trip to the capital. In order to prevent her from getting

injured again on the train, Qiao Mei had used cloth strips and wooden planks to stabilize it. With Qiao Mei's ginseng juice, they did not have to worry much about Zhang Qin's injuries.

"She sprained her ankle. It's not very serious," Qiao Mei explained.

Nowadays, Xu Lan felt close to every child she met and she could not bear to see children getting hurt.

"Mother, let's quickly bring Qiao Mei and the rest home," Xia He reminded her.

Xu Lan hurriedly asked Xia Mao's guards to help with the luggage and escort them all the way to the car. Those who did not know better would think it was a leader coming here for an inspection.

"I can't inform you guys in advance when I come back next time. We're making such a big fuss. What if people say that this is an abuse of power by our family?" Qiao Mei whispered as she held Xia He's hand.

"Don't worry, this is all permissible. Their job is to protect the safety of our family. You're the most precious treasure in our family now, so of course we have to take care of you well. Don't worry," Xia He said as she patted Qiao Mei's hand.

Qiao Mei sighed. She still felt that she should sneak back in the future. Otherwise, she would not be able to take it if everyone made such a big fuss every time.

"Where's eldest brother?" Qiao Mei asked.

"Eldest brother and eldest sister-in-law are at home. Aunt informed mother that you're coming back and mother made a phone call to eldest brother. Early in the morning, she instructed eldest brother to go to the supply and marketing cooperative to buy the largest crabs and prawns and even asked second aunt-in-law and eldest sister-in-law to buy a lot of groceries. They're all just waiting for you to come back!" Xia He said.

Qiao Mei was so shocked that she could not speak. However, as she had brought Qiao Qiang with her this time round, it somehow seemed reasonable for the family to be making such a big fuss.

Li Gui and the children took one of the cars while the rest of them took the other car. The guard team were in two cars, one in front and one behind, to protect their safety at all times. Soon, they arrived at Xu Lan's house.

"Wow..." The four children looked at the house in front of them in shock as they thought it looked like a castle. It shocked them even though they had previously lived in the county city.

At that time, although five or six of them were squeezed together in a small house, they were considered to be doing quite well. However, as there were so many people, they all had to sleep on the floor. They did not expect to be able to stay in a castle in the capital!

"Why are the two boys carrying the girls? Is it because it's inconvenient? Or is it some sort of custom?" Xu Lan came to Li Gui's side and asked softly.

When Xu Lan went to perform in the south in the past, she had visited a village where the daughters of rich families did not touch the ground with their feet. They had people to help them with all their daily living, including traveling around. However, that was a long time ago and these customs had gradually disappeared.

"My third daughter, Zhang Qin, has an injured foot, and my fourth daughter, Zhang Miao, has injured her ribs. They both haven't recovered yet, so it's not convenient for them to walk on their own. I'm just worried that we'll waste everyone's time if they're too slow," Li Gui said embarrassedly.

Upon hearing that, Xu Lan asked the guards to get two wheelchairs for the children so that it would be more convenient for everyone.

The wheelchairs were delivered quickly. Xu Lan asked Xia He to handle this matter as she still had to take care of Qiao Qiang. The four children looked at the wheelchairs curiously. They had only seen bicycles and tricycles before, but this was the first time they had seen this kind of two-wheeled contraption.

Chapter 797 - 797 Wheelchair

797 Wheelchair

“Elder brother... what is this? A bicycle?” Zhang Qin stood and looked at the wheelchair as she asked curiously.

Zhang Wei scratched his head while looking puzzled. This was the first time he had seen such a thing. A mechanism with two wheels should be a bicycle, but how should one ride such a bicycle? It was really strange since there were no handlebars or pedals.

“This is...” Xia He was about to explain.

Zhang Chao suddenly said, “A wheelchair.”

Xia He looked at the young Zhang Chao in surprise. When she was at Zhang Chao’s age, she did not know anything at all. She definitely did not expect him to recognize a wheelchair. Wheelchairs were not very common nowadays and were only used by more well-to-do people.

“Younger brother, don’t talk nonsense...” Zhang Wei was so frightened that he quickly tugged at Zhang Chao. Before they came to the capital, Li Gui had asked him to take good care of his younger siblings and not cause trouble for Qiao Mei.

“He’s right. It’s a wheelchair.” After saying that, Xia He picked Zhang Miao up and carefully placed her on the wheelchair. She even showed them how to use it.

Zhang Wei finally relaxed his nervous expression. Xia He looked at the quiet Zhang Chao and asked, “How do you know it’s a wheelchair?”

Zhang Chao first looked at Zhang Wei and only dared to speak after Zhang Wei let him speak. He said, “Elder sister... brought back a lot of books previously... I read them by myself... If there are words I don’t know, I’d look them up in the dictionary... This thing looks exactly like the picture in the books...”

Xia He gave Zhang Chao a thumbs up and praised him. It seemed that Qiao Mei had educated these children very well. They were all very polite.

When she was still living with the Kong family, the children downstairs would play crazily in the courtyard every day. They did not greet her when they saw her and even played pranks and threw mud at her.

Everyone walked into the house noisily. Tan Jing and Xia Wen hurriedly came out to welcome them. Tan Jing, who was still gloating over Qiao Mei's misfortune, was stunned to the spot when she saw Qiao Mei's round belly. No matter how Xia Wen called out to her, she did not react.

Xia Wen had no choice but to pull her to the door and greeted everyone with a smile. He introduced Tan Jing to everyone, but she was in a daze and did not say anything. She did not even nod in response.

Qiao Qiang did not care about these minor details. He was more concerned about meeting his old friend, Xia Jun. However, Xia Jun had an important meeting in the army today. Even though he had already retired, he was still an outstanding soldier. The army still needed him to be an advisor for many issues.

"Hello, Grandpa Qiao. I'm Xia Wen. I don't know if you still have any impression of me. My father and grandfather are not at home today. They'll be back tomorrow and they'll meet up with you then. Let's just have a casual meal today. I hope you don't mind," Xia Wen said to Qiao Qiang apologetically.

Qiao Qiang patted Xia Wen's shoulder. The child who used to be as thin as a little chick had now grown up to be so handsome and charming. He looked really different now.

"You've changed quite a bit. You look much healthier than when you were young. Do you still get sick often nowadays?" Qiao Qiang asked.

"Grandpa Qiao, thanks for asking about me. I'm much better now and don't get sick so often," Xia Wen said.

Everyone entered the house in a grand manner. When they were all seated at the dining table, Tan Jing was still standing at the door in a daze, staring fixedly at Qiao Mei's stomach.

Xia Wen looked at her a few times but she did not notice anything. In the end, Xu Lan said unhappily, "Tan Jing, why aren't you coming over here yet?"

"I'm sorry!" Tan Jing quickly walked to the dining table and sat down.

After everyone was seated, Liu Fen brought out the last dish, which was steamed fish. They usually cooked braised fish at home. Knowing that Qiao Qiang was coming today, she specially made a dish that was lighter in flavor. She did not know if it suited Qiao Qiang's taste.

"All the dishes are here! Come, come, come! Let's eat!" Liu Fen said with a smile.

Everyone picked up their chopsticks together. After taking a few bites, they realized that Qiao Mei had only been eating rice and drinking chicken soup. She did not touch any of the other dishes.

"Mei Mei, try this. This is your favorite braised pork ribs. Your second aunt-in-law woke up early and went to the supply and marketing cooperative to queue up to buy the freshest ones!" Xu Lan picked up a piece of pork rib and put it in Qiao Mei's bowl.

Qiao Mei hesitated for a moment and said with an awkward expression, "Thank you, mother."

Chapter 798 - 798 Weird Tasting Dishes

798 Weird Tasting Dishes

Xia He realized that something was wrong with Qiao Mei's reaction and immediately picked up a piece of braised pork rib for herself. As soon as she bit on it, she spat it out. This was not something edible. There was too much vinegar in it.

"Why is it so sour... It's so sour that my teeth hurt!" Xia He said as she quickly drank a lot of water.

Liu Fen did not believe it and took a bite as well. Her reaction was exactly the same as Xia He's. She frowned and said, "Impossible! I clearly tasted it after I was done! There wasn't any problem then! How strange!"

Tan Jing lowered her head and ate silently. Xu Lan tasted the dishes one by one. There were a few dishes that still tasted fine, but the dishes that Qiao Mei liked all tasted weird.

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These dishes were either too salty, very sour or especially sweet. It was not as if she had never eaten Liu Fen's food before. This was definitely not her usual standard.

"I'm sorry, Uncle Qiao. This is too inhospitable of us. There are a few dishes that aren't done well. We'll remove them now." Xu Lan and Liu Fen took away the unpalatable dishes.

Qiao Mei was not usually picky about what she ate, but after she got pregnant, her taste buds became more nitpicky and sensitive to tastes. There was indeed nothing left on the table that she could eat, except for the bowl of chicken soup.

She could not eat anything that was numbing and spicy or sweet and sour. Nor could she eat cold seafood dishes. Xia Fang had told her before that these things were not good for the babies, so she could only bear with it for now.

"Xia Wen! Go to the state-owned restaurant to pack a few of your sister-in-law's favorite dishes!" Xu Lan said.

Qiao Mei quickly dismissed the suggestion. "Don't go. I'm almost done eating. Let's cook tomorrow. Don't worry about me. Please continue eating."

Qiao Qiang looked at everyone present and ate silently without saying anything. Xu Lan did not eat anything after that and felt as if a huge rock was pressing on her chest.

After dinner, everyone sat in the living room and chatted. It had been a long time since they last met and they missed each other a lot.

"Eldest brother! Do you remember I called to ask you about buying another house? Is there any news? I hope it's not too troublesome?" Qiao Mei asked.

“When did you call me? Didn’t you always call mother directly? I don’t remember receiving any calls from you,” Xia Wen said.

Qiao Mei was about to speak when she thought about what happened with the food today and immediately understood what was going on. She did not say anything else, but smiled as she patted her own head and said, “I must have remembered wrongly. Then I’ll have to trouble eldest brother to help me find another house. I want to buy one that’s close to my place.”

Xia Wen nodded and noted down Qiao Mei’s request. He knew that Qiao Mei had a good memory and buying a house was not a small matter. It was impossible for Qiao Mei to have remembered wrongly, so the problem must be on his end.

Xu Lan stared at Tan Jing for a long time without saying anything.

It was getting late and there was no room for so many people to sleep over in the house. Xia Wen arranged for a car to send Qiao Mei back to the courtyard house. When all of them reached the entrance of the courtyard house, the children were even more shocked.

Qiao Mei had only said that her house in the capital was big enough for all of them to live in, but they did not expect it to be so big. It was several times bigger than their house in the countryside!

“Elder sister! Is this our house!” Zhang Qin said in shock.

“That’s right, it’s our house. We’ll all stay in the front part today. You can all go in and take a look.” Qiao Mei patted the children and let them go in to choose their own rooms.

Xia Wen stood in the courtyard and called out to Qiao Mei. He felt that he had to explain what happened today.

“Qiao Mei, I’m sorry. It’s my fault for what happened today,” Xia Wen said sincerely.

Qiao Mei also knew what Xia Wen was referring to. She had originally thought that Tan Jing just had a dour personality, but she did not expect her to play such a small trick. It was really childish.

She did not have the energy to confront Tan Jing, nor did she want to embarrass everyone because of these things, so she did not argue with Tan Jing. If Xia Wen had not mentioned it, she would not have brought it up.

“It’s fine, eldest brother. We’re a family. There’s no need to apologize. I understand what you want to say. I also know that eldest brother treats Xia Zhe and I very well,” Qiao Mei said with a smile.

They were both smart people and there was no need to say anything else. Xia Wen did not want to disturb Qiao Mei further and left after giving her a few simple instructions and teaching her how to use the floor heater.

Chapter 799 - 799 Sowing Discord

799 Sowing Discord

Xu Lan was not as amiable as Qiao Mei. She and Liu Fen had been sisters-in-law for decades. Although Liu Fen had a sharp tongue, she was always on the Xia family’s side.

Everyone was bound together for good or ill.

Putting aside the fact that everyone was celebrating Qiao Mei’s homecoming today, the most important thing was that Qiao Mei’s grandfather, Qiao Qiang, was also here. He was the Xia family’s savior. If not for Qiao Qiang, the Xia family would not be where they were today.

Even if Qiao Qiang said that he wanted the moon in the sky, they had to do everything they could to satisfy his wish.

Qiao Mei was Qiao Qiang’s only precious granddaughter. What would Qiao Qiang think of the Xia family after he saw how she was being treated?

“Explain yourself while I’m still in a cordial mood now. Is it done by Xia Wen or you,” Xu Lan said as she looked at Tan Jing.

Tan Jing said fearfully, "Why is it me and Xia Wen? Second Aunt-in-law also participated in the cooking, and... and the helper at home! Or perhaps there's a problem with the ingredients..."

Seeing that Tan Jing remained incorrigible, Xu Lan smacked the table angrily and stood up. She pointed at Tan Jing and shouted, "Do you think I'm a fool! Is your second aunt-in-law that kind of person! Our helper has served the family for more than 30 years! If Xia Wen is such a senseless person, he's not worthy of handling the Xia family's matters! I'm giving you a way out so that you can tell the truth, yet you still have the cheek to quibble with me!"

Tan Jing was so frightened that she stood rooted to the ground and did not dare to make a sound. This was the first time she had seen Xu Lan so angry.

"Your second aunt-in-law bought everything from the supply and marketing cooperative early in the morning. All the best restaurants in the capital buy their ingredients from the same place, yet you dare to say that there's something wrong with the ingredients? Is there something wrong with your brain! There were outsiders around just now, so I was too embarrassed to criticize you! You're really going too far!" Xu Lan shouted with her hands on her hips.

Liu Fen's face darkened and she was unwilling to say anything else on Tan Jing's behalf. In the past, whenever there was a fight at home, she would try her best to stop it as long as she was around. She was always the peacemaker in this family. Now, when she looked at Tan Jing, she only felt disgusted.

"Tan Jing, did you do this?" Liu Fen said.

Seeing that she could not hide it anymore, Tan Jing nodded and admitted to it.

She was just jealous that Qiao Mei could still be so loved by the entire family even though she lost her babies. She was just jealous that even though Qiao Mei had the same kind of background as her, Qiao Mei seemed to have a more superior position in this family. She also hated the fact that Xia Wen cared so much about Qiao Mei.

Therefore, Tan Jing "added ingredients" into Qiao Mei's favorite dishes to make her suffer a little. She did not have any other intentions except to make Qiao Mei feel uncomfortable. She was simply happy to see Qiao Mei upset.

“Is there something wrong with your brain! Did I not tell you that Qiao Mei’s grandfather will be coming today! Don’t you know how important he is to our Xia family! Where do you want me to hide my face! How am I supposed to answer to father!” Xu Lan was so angry that she almost wanted to give Tan Jing two tight slaps.

The Xia family had a reputation in the capital and they had to be careful about what they did. If they were too extravagant or did something immoral, they would be reported. Therefore, they had to be careful with their every move.

If others knew that this was how the Xia family treated their savior, their reputation would be tarnished. No one would want to deal with the Xia family.

“Sister-in-law, don’t be too angry. Uncle Qiao didn’t say anything today so he’s probably not angry. Let’s make sure everything goes well tomorrow. Don’t make yourself sick from anger,” Liu Fen advised.

“You’re my eldest daughter-in-law and Qiao Mei is my younger daughter-in-law. I don’t ask you to be exceptional, but can you not cause trouble for me? How do you expect Xia Wen to face Xia Zhe in the future? Are you trying to destroy the kinship of our Xia family? Are you trying to sow discord between Xia Wen and Xia Zhe? Have you even thought about the consequences of what you’re doing!” Xu Lan said.

Tan Jing remained silent. It was not that she did not want to speak up, but she did not dare to say anything at all, afraid that saying another word would make Xu Lan even angrier.

“Do you think I don’t know that your relatives keep coming to look for you? My son has been wearing that same coat for four years. Shouldn’t you reflect upon yourself? Xia Zhe was even the one who bought that coat for him!” Xu Lan said as she slowly sat on the sofa.

Her health was not as good as before and she would get dizzy whenever she got angry. She really could not stand Tan Jing making her so angry.

Chapter 800 Having A Meeting Together

Xia Fang and Xia He sat at the side and did not speak. Xia Fang held Xia He's hand tightly, worried that Xia He would also get too angry and lash out at Tan Jing. She felt that Tan Jing was only muddle-headed for a moment and did not have any real intention of harming anyone.

"Speak up! Are you mute!" Xu Lan shouted at Tan Jing.

At this moment, Xia Mao returned home after his meeting and saw a group of people sitting at the sofa with Tan Jing being the only one standing opposite them. It looked like a court hearing in session.

"What's going on? Are all of you having a meeting together?" Xia Mao said jokingly.

Xu Lan's expression darkened and she did not want to say anything else. After all, this was a matter for the women and it would become too serious if Xia Mao interfered.

"It's nothing. Tan Jing, you can go back to your room. I'll ask Xia Wen to stay here tonight. Everyone should go and take a rest," Xu Lan said.

Other than Xia Fang, who had an important surgery in the hospital tomorrow and needed to go home to rest, everyone else stayed over at Xu Lan's place. Xu Lan asked Xia Mao to go into the study with her.

"Why are you so angry? You weren't even so angry when Xia He left the art troupe back then," Xia Mao asked.

"Do you know what Tan Jing did today! It's so infuriating! She actually added a lot of seasonings to Qiao Mei's favorite dishes. At that time, Uncle Qiao and Qiao Mei's mother and younger siblings were also around. If father finds out, Tan Jing will definitely be punished. I only just reprimanded her a little," Xu Lan complained in a low voice.

Xia Mao did not know much about family matters. At most, he would ask Qiao Mei about her health and whether she needed a bodyguard. He did not really take notice of anything else.

It would seem that their family was lacking towards Tan Jing. They did not become close even after she had married into the family for so many years. However, Tan Jing did not treat them very well either. If anything happened to the Xia family, Tan Jing would always stand by and do nothing.

Moreover, Tan Jing's family had gone to look for Xia Mao in private many times to ask him for help in finding jobs and to borrow money. He did not tell Xu Lan about this as he knew that she would get

agitated and kick up a fuss at home again. However, he had told Xia Wen about this so that Xia He was not caught unaware.

Just as Xia Mao was listening to Xu Lan's complaints, Xia Wen knocked on the study door.

"Father, Mother, can I come in?" Xia Wen asked.

"Come in," Xia Mao said.

As soon as Xia Wen entered, Xu Lan did not give him a kind face. Back then, she did not agree to Xia Wen marrying Tan Jing, but Xia Wen did not care and insisted on marrying her. Now, there was so much trouble.

"Father, Mother, I'm sorry. I apologize to you on behalf of Tan Jing." Xia Wen bowed deeply to the two of them.

Xu Lan sighed and said, "Get up, we don't need your apology. Can't you tell who Tan Jing is targeting today? Son, although Qiao Mei didn't help you much, when the Xia family was bullied by the He family, it was Qiao Mei who took out her money without any hesitation to save the Xia family. Her grandfather also saved your grandfather's life. This is a friendship that the Xia family will never be able to repay in our lives. Tell me, how can I face them after what Tan Jing did today?"

"I've already apologized to Qiao Mei. I'll definitely handle these things well and there won't be any more such incidents in the future. Father, Mother, don't worry," Xia Wen promised seriously.

Xu Lan did not want to pursue the matter. She stood up and said, "Alright, I'll go in and rest. You two can talk."

With that, she returned to her room.

Xia Wen sat down wearily on the stool and folded his hands in his lap. He had never felt so tired and for a moment, he did not know how to deal with it.

It was not just the things that Xu Lan said. That call which Tan Jing received not long ago was probably the one Qiao Mei made to ask him to look for a house for her. Tan Jing had also kept this matter a secret from him. Each and every one of these was an incident of them letting Qiao Mei down.

"Father, do you know anyone living near the courtyard house? Is there anyone who wants to sell their houses? Qiao Mei wants to buy one," Xia Wen said.

Xia Mao knew that Qiao Mei wanted to find a place for Li Gui and the family to stay. He had already found out more information about the situation in that area and written down a list of phone numbers for Xia Wen.

"There are a few vacant houses over there and you can bring Qiao Mei to take a look. Don't make any mistakes in this matter. If there's any issues, come and look for me. Don't let Tan Jing get involved in this matter. Try and talk to her." Xia Mao left the study without saying anything else, leaving Xia Wen alone to think.