

Chapter 981: The Telephone Was Really Broken

All she knew now, was that she was somewhere in South City, which was very far away from the Sea City. Even if she took a flight home, it would take her seven to eight hours. Furthermore, there were no direct flights from here to Sea City, and she would need to take a connecting flight. If she traveled by train, it would be about 40 hours, or approximately two days and two nights. She had no idea how long it would take to drive there, but it would probably take a few days' time. Perhaps, it might even take her ten days or half a month, but she only had about 70 yuan with her, which was far from enough for the journey home.

Half a month later, as there were quite a number of people who came to have their hair done, she managed to collect another basketful of eggs. Additionally, the chickens at Changsheng's house had more and better food to eat recently, so they would lay about five or six eggs daily. As these accumulated over the past two weeks, they finally collected a basket of a few hundred eggs.

However, the weather seemed to have become colder. Perhaps, the wintry coldness of late spring had arrived. Therefore, the weather for the past few days was quite cold and frosty. Even though the temperature was not extremely freezing, the lashing gale was like sharp invisible knives. As it slashed endlessly at the skin, the searing pain was simply unbearable.

Yan Huan covered her face with a piece of cloth, leaving only her eyes uncovered. The wind was blowing so fiercely that she could barely keep her eyes open. She raised her hand, trying to block the piercing wind from blowing at her eyes. However, her fingers became stiff and frozen from the numbing cold.

After walking for a while, she did not feel too cold anymore, perhaps due to the physical exercise. However, the blowing winter gust was still bone-chillingly cold.

Yan Huan and Changsheng immediately made their way to the restaurant. Coincidentally, the chef noticed them when they walked in.

"You guys are just in time." The chef smiled as he continued to say, "I was just talking about the two of you, and when you would bring more eggs over. Everyone told us that your eggs are delicious, and have a smoother texture than the other eggs. So, I was waiting for your eggs to arrive."

"In that case, do you still need the eggs? We still have more eggs in our village." Changsheng was an honest person. He thought of helping the other villagers to sell their eggs if he sold all of his.

"Of course. we do. However many eggs you have, we'll take them." The chef smilingly took the basket of eggs from them and said, "As long as you can guarantee that the other eggs are as fresh as your free-range chicken eggs, we will buy all of them."

"They're the same, they're all exactly the same," Changsheng hurriedly nodded as he explained, "The hens are all reared by the villagers themselves. The eggs were laid in the past two weeks, so they are still very fresh."

"In that case, ask them to bring the eggs here." The chef had asked someone to weigh the basket of eggs. They paid five yuan for one kilogram of free-range chicken eggs, which was extremely cheap. Nowadays, even ordinary eggs would cost three yuan and a half, while free-range eggs would at least be

priced at one and a half yuan. However, Yan Huan knew that in reality, these free-range chicken eggs were worth around seven to eight yuans. However, the villagers were not educated enough to realize it, and assumed that their eggs were merely normal chicken eggs. Actually, their eggs were pollution-free, but they did not know a proper place to sell their eggs, so they kept selling it cheaply.

Even though the price that the restaurant paid was not that high, it was definitely much better than selling the eggs on the streets. From now on, as long as they had eggs, they could bring them here directly to sell them. Hence, they did not need to waste time sitting on the streets to sell the eggs.

Changsheng managed to quickly gather the other villagers. Although all of them were dressed in old rags, they appeared trustworthy and honest. When anyone saw their nervously hopeful expressions, they surely could not detest them.

“I’m going out for a bit, I’ll be back after a while.”

Yan Huan told Changsheng casually. She made a mental calculation, calculating the time it would take to weigh the eggs and count the money. In the end, she realized that she would have enough time to return there.

“Be careful.” Changsheng wanted to go with her, but Yan Huan would not allow him to. All he could do was advise her, but he was deathly worried in his heart.

“Don’t worry, I know the way.” Yan Huan slightly nodded at Changsheng and covered her face again, before turning around and leaving the restaurant. When she arrived at the shop where she made the calls, she walked in after hesitating for a moment. This time, a lady was minding the shop instead of the previous shopkeeper.

As she picked up the receiver, she felt a bout of nervousness and her hand was drenched with sweat, making it hard for her to keep her grip on the phone. Her fingers trembled violently, as she carefully dialed the numbers. She checked them carefully as they appeared on the screen to confirm that it was correct. It’s this number, it’s put in correctly.

However, when the same cold robotic voice came out of the receiver, she felt that her heart was stabbed with a pang of bitterness as tears uncontrollably fell from her eyes,

“Hi, the number that you have dialed is not in service.”

She put down the receiver and did not try to call any other numbers. She knew that even if she attempted, it would be a waste of time, as all the numbers would not be in service and would not be connected. As she turned around to leave, her footsteps sounded unusually heavy.

Never mind. She tried to comfort herself. Haven’t I decided that I’m going to drive home? Telephones and numbers can be changed, but you can’t relocate a home so easily.

She suddenly thought of Qing Hua from the book ‘Uncle to Qing Hua.’ In order to return home, the girl had to collect trash and even sleep on the streets. At least, her current situation was better than Qing Hua’s. She knew where her home was, she had not lost her memories, and she did not need to pick up trash.

Rubbing her chest, she remembered that she noticed a shop that sold jewelry. She wondered if they would let her pawn her ring and necklace. Her necklace was not worth much, but the ring was very valuable. When Lu Yi first bought her the ring, it was worth more than 500,000 yuan. It was an authentic South African diamond, but she was not sure how much it would sell for. She thought that as long as she could sell it for around

Just moments after she had left, two men walked into the shop. One of them was the shop owner, who nearly injured Yan Huan's fingers with the telephone cord last time.

The man pointed at the telephone and said, "Look at that, my telephone was just installed but I could not even earn 10 cents. Every number that is dialed is not in service, how can this be?"

The man lifted the receiver and checked it for some time, before saying, "The problem is the receiver. Even though it shows that the number is pressed, it actually isn't. That's why all the numbers dialed are actually missing a number. Since all of them are missing one number, they would not be in service, right?"

Yan Huan had been standing outside the jewelry shop for a while now.

Perhaps, only this shop seemed more luxurious there. At least, it had transparent glass doors and the light shining from inside was also very bright. At a glance, this place seemed like a glittering palace compared to the other places in that area.

Chapter 982: Sold the Ring

She went inside. But the shop assistant inside went on doing what she was supposed to do, and no one paid any attention to her. She lowered her head to look at the clothes she was wearing. She realized and also understood.

Looking like this, she really did not like she had the money to come here and buy jewelry. It could be seen with one look. She looked like she came from the mountains and did not even have a set of decent clothes. How could she have money to buy jewelry?

"We are not looking to hire here," said a woman in a black suit, walking over. She was considered to be polite, for she did not throw Yan Huan out because of the way she dressed.

"Do you accept jewelry here in your shop?" Yan Huan asked as she looked up. Her voice was a little hoarse. It was not known if it was because she had just cried, or that it was so cold that even her voice was hoarse from being frozen.

Her face was tightly wrapped and only exposed her pair of exceptionally beautiful eyes to outside. They looked clear and also had a flawless touch that others rarely had.

"Do you have some?" asked the female shop assistant who was not surprised when she heard this. They often had people coming here to sell old gold, as well as gold bracelets, gold necklaces and so on. They even brought gold coins to sell.

Yan Huan held out her hand and there was a strand of necklace in the palm of her hand. The necklace had a ring looped through it. It was a diamond ring.

The store mostly sold gold jewelry which rarely had diamonds.

But real diamonds or fake diamonds could be seen at a glance. They were substantially different whether it was in terms of the workmanship or quality.

The shop assistant took the ring and necklace from Yan Huan's hand, and then took a look at Yan Huan. Next, she took them to test.

The necklace and ring were made of platinum. The diamond on it was a genuine South African diamond. The total price was worth more than 550,000. Although the diamond was small, the cut had a lot of facets on it. It was designed and produced by a well-known designer.

Within a short while, the shop assistant came back again. "These are real. How much do you want to sell them for?" she asked Yan Huan. If she knew her stuff, she would know that the total price of the ring was at least not less than 200,000, not to mention that it came with a platinum necklace. Yan Huan did not need much. She only wanted 20,000 dollars.

"I want....." she licked the corners of her dry and cracked lips and said, "I want 20000. When this ring was bought, it was half a million and the diamond is South African diamond. The ring band is pure platinum. I don't want the necklace, so I can give it to you together with the ring."

She initially wanted to state the origin of the ring, which designer had designed it, and what kind of workmanship was used. But she eventually thought there was no need to say these. She was now basically treating the ring like it was trash. So, there was no use saying all that. It was not possible for her to sell it at five or six hundred thousand. It might not even be possible at 100000.

"20000?" That female shop assistant thought about it, and then discussed it with the store people. Then, she returned with the answer, "You may not sell at 20,000. If you really want to sell, 8000 dollars and not a cent more."

8000? Yan Huan took her own things. 8000 dollars were too little, really too little. She also wanted to leave some for Changsheng and his family. After all, they had took care of her for such a long time. If she could, she also wanted to build up Changsheng's family house. With the little that was left for herself, it was enough for her expenses on the road to go home. As she touched her face, she also wanted to treat her face as well as her leg. She did not want to go see her family with such a face and leg. She could not do it.

But 8000 dollars were too little.

She clenched the ring and necklace in her hand and limped toward outside. But when she walked to the door, she turned back around again, and then extended her fingers. That ring rested properly in the heart of her hand and the necklace still had her body warmth. She currently only had 70 dollars. If she did not have 100 dollars, perhaps she could not even leave this place. Even if she could sell them for tens of thousands more, she could not leave here. In that case, how could she go home? How was she to leave South City. How could she buy a bus ticket?

As a result, she bit her teeth and sold them.

The shop assistant took the ring and necklace from Yan Huan's hand. While at this time, Yan Huan felt like a hand was constricting her heart, causing her stabbing pain. She sucked in her breath and forced

herself to endure it. She did not let a single tear fall. She could not cry, yes, she must not cry. She also did not want to cry.

She took over a thick stack of money and stuffed it inside her cotton coat. Then she limped away from here.

When she reached the entrance of that restaurant, the villagers' eggs had not been completely weighed yet. The money was calculated every half a kilo. Some of the villagers did not even know how to add up the bill. They spent a long time calculating the bill before they finally handed the eggs to the other party.

Thankfully, the people in the back kitchen were amiable and patient. Otherwise, they would definitely be a little impatient by now.

Yan Huan touched the inside of her cotton clothes and felt the thick stack of money. She could really go home.

The people, who came out this time, were incredibly happy, because they earned at least three times the money than in the past. The extra eggs were also sold for more than tens of dollars. Everyone was invigorated and pleased. They even felt that the current cold weather also began to warm up.

They even talked as they walked along, saying in the future, no matter how many their families' eggs were, they also did not have to sell them anymore and could just directly send them over to the other party. They wanted the eggs to be fresher the better. It was a pity that the village did not have a good road. Otherwise, the village had so many chickens and could also gather so many eggs, they could even send them over every day. Then the goods would really be fresh. Straight from the chickens' butt, how much fresher could it get? However, there was no other way since they did not know what the road would be repaired. With the current road, if they were to encounter bad weather such as rain or other, they would not be able to enter and leave for a few days.

Wait until after the road was repaired, their village would also have electricity at that time. Those who were willing to spend, could buy a television set. Then they could just sit at home and know everything.

Everyone was contemplating and thinking of better days ahead. They had only sold some eggs and made some money, but they all felt that they had something to strive for in their days. In fact, what they wanted was remarkably simple and also truly little.

As long as their families could live a safe life as well as food to eat and drink, they were fine.

Changsheng handed the money to his mother and also said these things. Changsheng's mother was also happy inside as she listened. It meant that they did not have to worry about selling the eggs from their house in the future.

"Yes, we don't have to worry about selling," said Changsheng cheerfully, "as long as they are eggs from our village, the restaurant will take them all, as many as there are. Not just from our family, the same goes for even the other houses in the village."

Chapter 983: Jin Gen Has Returned

"Then, I will have to save more eggs." Changsheng's mother was counting. There are around ten chickens at their house and they laid about five to six eggs per day. After 10 days, there would be 50

eggs. Moreover, including at least another 50 which Yan Huan earned throughout this month, they will have more than 200 eggs per month. Although they won't earn much in a month, just about 200 yuan, but after one year, it will become 2,000 yuan. When that time comes, they can finally build a house since in their village, building a house just requires a few thousand yuan.

Also, they have more land this year since Changsheng had developed so many wastelands. If the harvest is good, the vegetables and other things they plant in their house can be sold. Either way, their house will be built by the end of this year.

Then, her son can also get a wife.

Changsheng's mother was thinking about these in her heart. She also wanted to discuss this matter with Xiao Yan, so that she could be assured and decide on an auspicious day.

However, things do not always go as planned.

Maybe you can never plan out your life. There is always a difference between what you think and what actually happens. Sometimes the difference is small; sometimes it would be tremendous.

Yan Huan hugged her pillow and took out the 8,000 yuan inside. While she was selling eggs with Changsheng recently, she inquired the way to get to the nearest station from here, how long will it take, and where to change trains. She roughly knew the route, but when she was going to leave, it snowed. The snow was not lighter than the snow during winter. It almost covered the whole mountain. When pieces of white snowflakes fell on people, it might not be cold but in Yan Huan's heart, she could not help but feel a little depressed.

Why did it snow again? Once it snows, she would not know how long she would have to wait until she can return home.

The road outside made it difficult to walk. For such snow to melt, it might take another half a month.

She placed the pillow properly and covered the pillow with her quilt. She was not worried about the money because Changsheng and his mother never entered her room and would not simply take her things, so the money was safe here.

A total of 8,000 yuan. She wanted to leave 5,000 for Changsheng's mother. The remaining 3,000 should be enough for her travel and living expenses to return to Sea City.

However, when she was going to go out to collect firewood, she noticed that something seemed to happen in the village. Everyone was gathered together in discussion.

"What's going on? Did something happen in the village?"

Yan Huan asked Changsheng's mother.

"Nothing." Changsheng's mother did not say much, "It's just that Jin Gen has returned. He was well-dressed. I heard that he made a fortune."

Yan Huan frowned. Why did that person return? He even made a fortune. Speaking of making a fortune, Yan Huan did not really believe that Jin Gen, who pilfered, could make a fortune. To be frank, he was just a small bludger who did nothing. He idled around all day and was ignorant. He couldn't do labor

work nor was he literate. Even if he was given a good chance, he may not be able to make anything out of it, unless he had picked up money from the ground or won the lottery out of luck.

Yan Huan did not believe these. Who knew if he did some illegal things somewhere? Only this way was the fastest way to earn money, which is why anyone can do it.

The fact that Jin Gen was gone had nothing to do with her. When he returned, it had nothing to do with her too. Even if he became a millionaire, it still had nothing to do with her at all.

Yan Huan also did not take these things to heart. Of course, it was not until the next day when she saw Jin Gen who had made a fortune like what Changsheng's mother said. Jin Gen was wearing a black suit and a pair of leather shoes that were well polished. He even wore a flaunty pink tie. Seeing him dressed like this in such snowy weather, she wondered if he would freeze to death.

Indeed, his present appearance is better than the villagers' and he looks like the townspeople. However, no matter how nice his clothes are or how good looking his face is, they cannot hide the filthiness in his bones.

Even if he wore an imperial robe, he still would not look like an emperor. That was used to describe people like Jin Gen.

Jin Gen skimmed over Yan Huan and the corners of his mouth opened. Now, his gaze now was full of contempt.

"I was wondering who it was, ugly woman?"

Jin Gen humphed and continued wearing his suit around the village to show off. He was completely unafraid of freezing himself to death.

Everyone in the village was talking. Jin Gen had not been gone for long, yet he managed to make a fortune, or at least they assumed based on his dressing. Nonetheless, he looked very stylish. They also heard that the money Jin Gen brought back this time was in stacks and filled up an unknown amount of boxes. Jin Gen's mother started to get very ecstatic and proud as well as she began to look down on many things.

Yan Huan placed the firewood she collected outside the house and washed her hands. Then, she walked into the kitchen and took some hot water for herself with a bowl. After that, she went out with the bowl and drank it while walking. However, after taking a few steps, she heard a sharp and ear-piercing voice which sounded like Jin Gen's mother.

She took the bowl of water and walked to the small bamboo stool in the courtyard. Then she sat down and drank the water mouthful by mouthful. At the same time, she also listened to what Jin Gen's mother was talking about and what she wanted to do.

"Sister-in-law, look. This is such a great opportunity, how can you let go? If he goes out, he can earn a few thousands in a month..." Jin Gen's mother's voice was cadenced. She must have said it with expressions and gestures.

"See for yourself, my Jin Gen had already earned so much in about a month. Your Changsheng is a smart one and more hardworking than my Jin Gen. He should be able to earn more. Besides, they only collect

1,000 yuan for the trip there. Once he reaches, he can earn three or four thousand per month. After one year, it will be thirty or forty thousand already. In the future, if he earns more outside and buys a house and car, then he can take you there to enjoy life. Next time, you can also live like the old ladies in the city. When Changsheng has a child, he or she will also be a proper townspeople and can eat and drink well. Then, they get into a good university and don't even need to be stuck in this poor village forever, doing labor work. Right, sister-in-law? Tell me, isn't this right?"

Chapter 984: Not Listening To Her Advice

Seeing Jin Gen's mother uttered a torrent of words in one breath. Yan Huan realized that she had never noticed Jin Gen's mother's eloquence before. She lifted her bowl and brought it to her mouth. Meanwhile, Jin Gen's mother's voice was still ringing in her ears. She sounded like a pimp who was trying to convince the customers, telling her how perfect the outside world was. In Yan Huan's opinion, although the outside world had its own hustle and bustle, the mountain was quiet and tranquil. Besides, she never thought that she had a better life in the city than in the mountains. She once lived in the city as well. Look what happened to her. Yan Huan, despite being the best actress, ended up being pushed into the Sea River and was brought here by the water.

It was a complex and cruel world out there. On the other hand, the villagers would spend their whole lives here. How can they possibly face the ruthless world when they can't even complete their ledger as they sell their eggs?

Besides, who can say for sure that the villagers will continue living in poverty? Soon, they will be freed from poverty. Soon, this place will be developed. The village will transform into a big city with electricity, televisions and phones. The children can go to school easily without having to cross the mountain roads.

She refused to believe in this unrealistic idea as Jin Gen and his mother's words were usually groundless.

However, it was evident that Changsheng's mother was convinced. After all, Changsheng's mother's ultimate dream was for her unborn grandchild to attend a good school and university. In fact, all the other villagers shared the same wish as well.

The villagers were tired and afraid of staying poor. No one ever returned to the village once they were offered an opportunity to leave this place. Hence, because of Jin Gen's mother's unproven remarks, the young men in the village, and Changsheng's mother, were all moved by the proposal.

Yan Huan rose to her feet and brought her bowl into the kitchen. She kept it nicely after washing it. When she came out of the kitchen, Jin Gen's mother had already left. Meanwhile, Changsheng's mother was lost in thoughts. No one knew what was on her mind.

"Aunt, why did she visit?"

Yan Huan brought Changsheng's mother to a chair before she sat down beside Changsheng's mother.

At this moment, Changsheng's mother desperately needed someone else's opinion. Therefore, Yan Huan believed that Changsheng's mother would definitely tell her the reason behind Jin Gen's mother's visit.

As expected, Changsheng's mother grabbed Yan Huan's hand.

“Xiao Yan, you knew that Jin Gen has just returned, right?”

“Yes.” Yan Huan nodded. “I saw him.” It was hard for her to not notice him. He wore the same suit everyday, which seemed as if it had not been washed for days. On top of that, he was always wearing the same appalling pink necktie as he walked around the village, flaunting his outfit regardless of the weather. Even when it was windy or snowing, he had no intention to remove his suit, although his face was ghastly pale and his nose was runny due to the cold weather.

From Yan Huan’s perspective, he had clearly lost his mind.

“Jin Gen has really made a fortune this time.” Jin Gen’s mother’s words were still lingering in the mind of Changsheng’s mother. She was definitely tempted to try it out.

“Jin Gen’s mother said that Jin Gen came back in the hope of earning money alongside the villagers. He has chosen Changsheng, saying that he is a diligent and strong man and should be working on a farm. I reckon that Changsheng is rather adept in farming. Jin Gen’s mother said that it’s an agricultural development zone where they grow all sorts of vegetables of superior quality. Anyone who knows farming can give it a try. They also offer a salary of more than 3,000 dollars per month. If he does well and the boss appreciates him, he may even obtain a house for free. In that case, we can move to the place and don’t have to live in this poor valley anymore.”

Changsheng’s mother got increasingly excited as she spoke, as though her imagination could materialize within the next second.

She was smiling, anticipating a better life.

Yan Huan, on the other hand, was not smiling. Instead, her expression grew sombre.

“Aunt, do you know about the pie in the sky?” Yan Huan asked Changsheng’s mother.

Changsheng’s mother was confused by Yan Huan’s question. “He’ll be earning money with his own hands. It’s a very good opportunity for him. Besides, he is going to earn the money by himself instead of getting free money. Why is this a pie in the sky?”

Yan Huan knew Changsheng’s mother’s intention. She had had her heart set on the purportedly happy life that was mentioned by Jin Gen’s mother. Nevertheless, one needed to stay alive to live a happy life. Who knows where Jin Gen will assign Changsheng to work as a labor? She never believed that something would just fall into her lap, such an opportunity was too good to be true. Perhaps there really is such a good offer where they can earn up to a few thousand dollars in a month and gain a house by working on the farm. But, it will hardly happen to this small village.

All in all, the only person who she mistrusted the most was none other than Jin Gen.

Yan Huan believed that Changsheng’s mother knew Jin Gen’s personality and behavior better than her. She never judged the villagers by their cover as she was not a member in the village. There were good and bad people here, but they were never the worst, unlike Jin Gen, whom Yan Huan found as the most unreliable man in the village.

The words that came out of his mouth were never true. None of the words he said were trustworthy.

Instead of believing Jin Gen and his mother, she would choose to believe that pigs might fly.

“Why? You don’t think it’s a good idea?” Changsheng’s mother asked Yan Huan. “If he works there for a few years, we may be able to live a better life.”

“Aunt, life in the village is actually not that bad...” Yan Huan said with a smile on her face. As her words settled, she realized Changsheng’s mother’s expression had turned sullen. She was rather upset as this was her first time seeing Changsheng’s mother pulling a face. Does she think that I’m blabbering? Am I being too frank? Does Changsheng’s mother think that I’m trying to hinder her son’s road to ultimate wealth?

Glowering, Changsheng’s mother immediately got to her feet and left the scene. Yan Huan quickly followed.

“Aunt, I think...”

Before she uttered another word, Changsheng’s mother replied by slamming the door in her face.

“Aunt...” Yan Huan continued to knock on the door, but Changsheng’s mother ignored her and kept the door shut.

Yan Huan heaved a sigh. Changsheng’s mother must have thought that Yan Huan was stopping her son from making a fortune and expecting him to continue living in poverty in the village. However, she merely felt that they should not believe Jin Gen as what he said was unreliable.

It seemed that Changsheng’s mother hated her for what she said.

The small village was serene and quiet as usual. The sun rose and set at the same time everyday. However, things had changed recently as most of the youths in the village were longing to leave the village as they wanted to set foot on the wonderful world out there that was full of various opportunities.

Little did they know that, although the city was indeed full of vigor and money, there were also lies and dangers beyond their imagination.

Chapter 985: Can You Not Go

Everyday, Jin Gen wore his suit around the village. Jin Gen’s mother was going around telling people how much her son earned and that they wanted to build a house. Even someone wanted to marry Jin Gen, who was good for nothing, just because Jin Gen was generous. It was said that all his clothes were full of money. One pile after another of red 100 yuans. No one in the village had ever seen so much money. For them, a hundred yuan was a lot of money. Moreover, there were a few piles of red 100 yuans. How could people not be jealous?

Jin Gen said he wanted to bring them out to work, and maybe a year or so later they would be richer than him. A lot of people agreed and were waiting to go out to make a fortune. To them, the Jin Gen now was no longer Jin Gen but a piece of gold. Anyone who followed him would get some benefits.

Yan Huan walked to Changsheng. Now, there was no trace of jesting on her face. She could not even make a joke about this.

“Changsheng, do you want to go to the place Jin Gen mentioned?” Yan Huan could not convince Changsheng’s mother, so she could only go to Changsheng.

“Yes.” Changsheng smiled, his eyes were also sparkling, “I also wanted to go out once and earn more money. This way I can build a house, otherwise, I don’t know when we can change this adobe house to a new house. Then...” He was embarrassed to continue.

Actually, he wanted to say that when the house is built, he can marry her. At that time, when they are quite wealthy, he can treat her better. Otherwise, he cannot earn much in a year, so how can he mention about marrying her?

In Changsheng’s eyes, the disfigured Yan Huan was prettier than any women in the village. She had a pair of beautiful eyes. Every time he saw her eyes, Changsheng felt that his heart would start to accelerate. It was an indescribable feeling. Anyway, in his eyes, Yan Huan kept becoming prettier and more pleasing to him.

Of course, he wanted to work hard for their future, even if it’s tough, as long as he can earn money, he’s fine.

Yan Huan sat down. She naturally did not know about Changsheng’s thoughts.

“Changsheng, let me tell you a story.” She pointed at the place beside her, gesturing for Changsheng to sit.

Changsheng hurriedly sat there and placed both of his hands on his lap, just like an obedient child. Changsheng’s mother would not listen to whatever Yan Huan said now, but Yan Huan hoped that Changsheng could.

“I know a village, just like yours.” Yan Huan hugged her arms tightly. Her voice was pleasant to hear. At least that’s what it sounded like in Changsheng’s ears.

“There was a girl called Qing Hua. She had a father and a mother. It was safe in the village. Simple too. The villagers did not have much thoughts. They all worked from dawn to dusk, just like this village...”

“Until later, a girl from the village who went out to work came back. She was well dressed. She also told them they could go out to earn money. Then they could eat well, dress well and earn a lot of money.”

Yan Huan continued and supported her face with her leg. This was the story of the Uncle and the Flower. It was fictional but isn’t it the same as what Changsheng is facing now?

She did not mention much about the beginning of the story. She only told him the part where Qing Hua was tricked by her friend to go outside. The outside world was not as wonderful as they imagined. It was not even good at all.

Besides, they had to be alert about backstabbers too.

“Are you saying that Jin Gen will sell us off?”

Changsheng was not stupid. He understood immediately what Yan Huan was trying to convey.

“We should always be alert, when did he ever tell the truth??” Yan Huan questioned Changsheng. She was not part of the village but Changsheng was. Everyone knew what kind of person Jin Gen was.

"I don't think so." Changsheng had never thought about these, "Although Jin Gen wasn't that good of a man but he is still a villager here. He won't dare to sell us off. Moreover, I'm not the only one going. Now, there's about five or six people who want to go. We are all men, why should they sell us?"

"Can you not go?" Yan Huan felt defeated. Why are Changsheng and his mother so difficult to persuade?

"Do you not want me to go?"

Changsheng opened his mouth and smiled widely. His eyes were sparkling.

Yan Huan felt that his words sounded weird. She suddenly realized something and wanted to explain but then Changsheng was called away by his mother.

Changsheng stood up and was preparing to leave.

"Changsheng..." Yan Huan called out his name from behind him, "Can you give it more thought and not go out with Jin Gen?"

"Okay." Changsheng turned around and smiled toward Yan Huan, "I will think about it. Since you said not to go, then I won't. I will continue farming and sell eggs at home. I can still live like this, right?"

Yan Huan finally breathed out a sigh of relief. It's good if he doesn't go. When she went back to her room, she found a paper and pen. Then, she wrote Lu Yi's phone number on it, thinking that if something really happens, then Changsheng can go to him. However, she suddenly remembered that Lu Yi seemed to have changed his number.

Forget it, just write it down first. Then, she wrote a few more phone numbers, including Yi Ling's and Lei Qingyi's. If Changsheng really wants to go, then maybe these phone numbers can help him.

This note was placed under the table. This should not be necessary. Changsheng had already said that he won't go.

After a few days, sure enough, Changsheng's mother stopped talking about Changsheng going out with Jin Gen. Jin Gen also stopped wearing his suit around the village. Everything seemed to have gone back to the past, and this was still that simple and plain village.

However, one day, Yan Huan felt something was wrong because she did not see Changsheng. Changsheng did not come to have breakfast this morning. He might have gone to the fields, so he could not make it. Sometimes, he was like this; he wouldn't eat if he didn't want to.

However, in the evening, she still did not see Changsheng. Yan Huan kept some food for him. Maybe he was really too busy and would return soon to eat. She did not think too much, because Changsheng's mother was not worried at all. Since the mother was not worried about the son, then there shouldn't be a problem. Otherwise, Changsheng's mother could never sit still and even eat two bowls of rice in a meal.

At night, Yan Huan felt that something was very wrong because Changsheng still did not return for dinner.

Chapter 986: Your Mother-In-Law

“Aunty, where is Changsheng? Why didn’t he come home to eat?” Yan Huan picked at a grain of rice with her chopsticks, losing her appetite. Did she waste her breath talking to a wall? Did Changsheng still go out to work with Jin Gen?

Changsheng’s mother put her bowl down and stopped eating as well. “My Changsheng has gone out to earn money.”

The chopsticks in Yan Huan’s hand fell onto the table, making Changsheng’s mother unhappy with Yan Huan’s reaction. “What is it? My Changsheng wants to earn money, why do you have this expression on your face? He’s going so that he can give you a better life anyway.”

Give her a better life? Yan Huan felt a little conflicted with these words. This had nothing to do with her. In the end, she still had to go home. Besides, she did not need Changsheng to feed her. She had the ability to work and did not need to depend on him to live. The only thing she did not understand was why Changsheng’s mother had totally changed her attitude toward her. In the past, she was famous in the village for being an extremely kind person. She would help anyone in need and she did not have a bad temper. Otherwise, she would not have given her shelter to prevent her from starving or freezing to death.

However, why would Changsheng’s mother end up like this now?

She did not know, nor did she understand.

After Changsheng’s mother finished eating, she threw her bowl down and walked out. Yan Huan rolled her sleeves up wordlessly, putting the bowls into the water and started washing them.

It was already very dark by the time she had finished washing the bowls. The lights in the room of Changsheng’s mother were off. The time was probably around seven o’clock. Here, the days were dark and cold by seven o’clock.

Normally at this time, Changsheng’s mother would be in her room, sewing and mending clothes or she would be lying down and resting. She was not around these few days, which was unusual.

Yan Huan did not know where she had gone. Even if she had asked, Changsheng’s mother would not tell her anyway.

Ever since she advised Changsheng’s mother not to allow Changsheng to go out and work, Changsheng’s mother had started to dislike her.

A dragon has its forbidden lamella, and perhaps it is the same for humans. The forbidden lamella of Changsheng’s mother was probably Changsheng.

Yan Huan walked into her room and opened a drawer. She took out a slip of paper and shredded it, throwing the pieces onto the ground. That slip of paper was useless now. She never thought that Changsheng would leave without saying a word, even though he had promised her. He did not even bring along the things that she had prepared for him.

She had thought that ultimately, if Changsheng still wanted to go, she would give him the contact numbers of the people that she knew, in case if anything happened to him, he would have someone to

turn to. She had sold off her ring as well, obtaining 8000 yuan, and she would have given him a few thousand yuan too.

The world outside was far more complex than they could ever imagine. The hearts of humans were getting colder, they were neither relatives nor friends. The people who could help were far too few, and without any money, there was nothing a person could do. She did not know how much money Changsheng's mother gave him, but based on her understanding of Changsheng's character, she felt that he would not take any money from home. After all, his mother was still at home. He would not feel comfortable leaving if there was no money left at home.

That night, she kept tossing and turning, unable to fall asleep. Changsheng's mother had come back long ago but she just returned to her room without greeting her.

Meanwhile, she was slowly getting used to the cold and sarcastic comments from Changsheng's mother. To Changsheng's mother, she was just a person who took advantage of them but never repaid their deeds regardless of how well she did, how diligent she was, or how attentively she served. Nevertheless, she did not complain about any hardship she went through or fought back when she was reprimanded.

Yan Huan finished cutting the hair of a little girl. The hair was shoulder-length with some bangs, revealing a youthful look. It was every girl's favorite hairstyle lately.

"Sister Xiao Yan, this hairstyle is really nice." The little girl was very satisfied with her hairstyle, looking left and right in the mirror for quite some time. The more she looked, the more satisfied she was.

She gave five eggs to Yan Huan. "This is the fee for my haircut. The eggs were laid just a few days ago. I have saved them for five days."

"Thank you." Yan Huan kept the five eggs properly and picked up a broom to sweep away the hair on the ground. Her face was covered by a cloth so that only her eyes were visible and she had never shown her face to anyone. Although everyone knew that her face was disfigured, they had been seeing her like this for so long that they had already forgotten about the half of her face that was disfigured.

"Oh, by the way, Sister Xiao Yan, I have something to ask you." The little girl pulled Yan Huan to a corner. She then ran to the doorway to check if anyone was there. When she was sure there was no one around, she walked toward Yan Huan and whispered in her ear

"Sister Xiao Yan, has your mother-in-law been treating you badly recently?"

"My mother-in-law?" Yan Huan furrowed her brow, unable to process that question. Wasn't her mother-in-law, Ye Shuyun? Ye Shuyun had always been in Sea City, and ever since the day she entered the Ye family, Ye Shuyun had always treated her like a biological daughter, never treating her badly.

"Your mother-in-law." The little girl pointed inside. "Changsheng's mother, your mother-in-law?"

"Changsheng's mother?" Yan Huan felt quite awkward. "Don't talk nonsense. There's nothing between Changsheng and I." Although Changsheng and Yan Huan stayed in the same house, they seldom talked to each other at all. She and Changsheng only minded their own business.

Changsheng was not her husband and she was not Changsheng's wife.

Of course, Changsheng's mother was definitely not her mother-in-law.

“But everyone is saying the same thing.” The little girl did not believe Yan Huan’s words. After all, in this world, there was no smoke without fire. If there really was nothing, would everyone say the same thing? Moreover, Xiao Yan stayed in Changsheng’s house, was it not just a matter of time before she addressed Changsheng’s mother as her mother-in-law?

Forget it. Let them carry on what they wish to say. Yan Huan did not want to explain further. No matter how much she explained, they would probably still think that she felt guilty. It did not matter as long as she herself understood that it was impossible for anything to happen between Changsheng and her.

She was married, having a husband and children already.

“Sister Xiao Yan, you haven’t answered my question.” The little girl tugged on Yan Huan’s sleeve. “Has your mother-in-law been treating you badly recently?”

Yan Huan still wanted to explain that she was not her mother-in-law, but she gave up after mulling over it. Let them imagine and say whatever they want. I don’t see the point of explaining myself too much.

“She must have been treating you badly, right?” The little girl looked certain. Where did she hear about this rumor?

Chapter 987: People Change

Yan Huan smiled. “Maybe she is in a bad mood.”

“Her mood is not just bad, it is terrible.” The young lady tucked her neck back. “You do not know this, but your mother-in-law always hangs out with Jin Gen’s mother.”

Yan Huan paused for a moment. The smile gradually faded from her face.

“What does she talk about with Jin Gen’s mother?”

“It can’t be anything good.” The young lady realised that she was revealing too much as well. She yanked the ends of her hair. Now, she did not dare continue yapping, but Yan Huan could obviously tell that something was fishy. The young lady’s words meant more than what was on the surface, just that she did not want to continue speaking, no, she might not dare continue speaking too.

“Ah, I do not know. They always meet up and chat loudly. They are just as noisy as my hen when she is about to lay eggs. They just never stop.” The young lady tugged onto her hair once again. “Elder sister Xiao Yan, let me excuse myself first. My mother is waiting for me to get home for dinner.” Without waiting for a response, the young lady ran away.

As for the words that she left hanging, it was up to Yan Huan to play the guessing game.

Yan Huan would remember this incident, but she would not spend time investigating it. As she always said, she had nothing to do with Changsheng. No matter how picky Changsheng’s mother was, at the end of the day, it would be toward her future daughter-in-law, and not her.

However, Changsheng’s mother’s attitude toward her was getting worse day by day. Not only did she have to complete all the house chores and run all the errands, but she also had no room for error. If anything was the slightest bit below her expectations, or if she was slow to complete her tasks, she would hear unpleasant words and foul sentences.

Yan Huan was not bothered by it as she did not do anything wrong. She was fine as long as she was at peace with herself.

“Elder sister Xiao Yan...” When she was about to depart from home to collect firewood, she heard someone calling her. She turned around and saw a 16 year old lady hiding behind a big tree. She was waving at Yan Huan frantically. The lady had a preppy hairstyle, in fact, it was the exact hairstyle that was in trend that season. That hairstyle was definitely done by Yan Huan, and to be more specific, it was done by Yan Huan yesterday, and Yan Huan only styled one young lady’s hair yesterday.

“It is you, Liu Fang. What brings you here?”

Liu Fang flipped her hair then tucked a loose strand behind her ear. Actually, she was used to tying her hair up, but as Yan Huan said, the people in the city usually leave their hair down because it looked captivating.

It was indeed beautiful. She felt good about herself, in fact, she felt especially beautiful. Even her neighbour, elder brother Da Chun from the village complimented her about her hair. Hence, she persisted to leave her hair down even though she did not feel at ease, all because of beauty.

Liu Fang immediately grabbed Yan Huan by the arm and dragged her away.

Where are we going? Yan Huan’s upper arm started to hurt from the force, but Liu Fang insisted on dragging her along without offering her a choice.

“I am bringing you somewhere. You will know when you arrive.” Liu Fang’s pace increased. She got so fast that Yan Huan almost could not keep up. Her stamina had decreased quite a bit compared to back then.

Also, young lady, can you try to understand a middle aged woman who is also a special needs person?

She was limping on one leg, so how could she keep up with a normal person? Moreover an energetic young lady.

She could not deny that she was old, like really old, compared to this teen who was only 16 years old. She was already 28 years old. Even if she put her old arms and legs aside, she was still a lame person.

“Shh...” Liu Fang placed her finger by her lips to signal Yan Huan to stay quiet.

Yan Huan nodded to show that she got the hint.

Finally, Liu Fang brought Yan Huan to a hidden corner by the edge of the wall. There was a gigantic rock just enough to conceal two people. Right at that moment, they heard people talking nearby.

Yan Huan glanced toward the sound and saw Changsheng’s mother and Jin Gen’s mother. They were blabbering away about who knows what.

She was not used to eavesdropping. When she wanted to stand up and leave, Liu Fang quickly gripped her arm and pointed forward to them. She then tried to mouth a few words to Yan Huan.

We cannot leave.

Yan Huan could only squeeze her body back into the small space. It was true that they could not leave. If she had the guts to walk out of there, she would definitely drown in Jin Gen's mother's nagging. Changsheng's mother would kick her out of the household as well.

If she could not leave, then she had to just bear it.

Through the peephole, she saw Jin Gen's mother laughing at something. Her high-pitched laughter was disturbing, it looked like she was up to no good. Even the young lady Liu Fang pursed her lips. She obviously felt indifferent toward the whole situation.

"Your Changsheng was born energetic and hardworking. After this year, he will start bringing you pots of gold. From what I see, you can let him marry a woman from the city, a civilised and beautiful girl. I wonder what are the credentials of the girl living in your house? In my point of view, she is just an omen of bad luck. Ever since she came to our village, the snow has gotten heavier and heavier. I nearly lost my Jin Gen..."

When they reached this part of the story, Jin Gen's mother started wiping her tears. "It is fine. He has gone through hell but survived. My Jin Gen is a tough cookie, he was not affected too much by that woman. However, if it was someone else, then I cannot be so sure. You really have to be careful." As she was saying that, she held Changsheng's mother's hands in hers. "You should not be friendly to her. When she becomes a daughter-in-law, she also has to face the temperament of her mother-in-law. If you do not control her now, she will take advantage of you. Tell me, how are you going to be a grandmother? You should never let your daughter-in-law take advantage of you. We spent our blood, sweat and tears to raise our sons, we cannot just let him be with an inadequate wife."

"It is like that." Changsheng's mother started to feel uncomfortable. "I see that my Changsheng is head over heels for her. If she says no, Changsheng would actually follow her orders. If it were not for my determination to persuade him, the people of the village would still be suffering by farming for a living. Nobody would know when the old houses could possibly be completed. By then, everyone in the village would be living in high rise buildings, but us, we would still be stuck in that mud house. If I really have to live like that, I would be beyond ashamed."

"Exactly my point." Jin Gen's mother pat Chengsheng's mother on the shoulder. "Just be grumpy and nitpicky, or else she would think that you are easy to mess with. In the future, if she really marries your Changsheng, how could she not take advantage of you as a mother-in-law?"

"Sigh..." Changsheng's mother let out a long sigh of disappointment. "My Changsheng is stubborn, and he has already found his target. He is not like your Jin Gen. I am sure he will bring home a beautiful and smart city girl in the future."

Chapter 988: The Money Had Been Stolen

"Of course." Jin Gen's mother was so proud upon mentioning her son. "With my dear Jin Gen's appearance, character and ability, none of the women in this area are worthy of him. I think only the actresses are worthy of him."

Yan Huan who squatted down beside the rock was speechless. Yes, actress, she was an actress. However, she must be blind to take a fancy to Jin Gen. To be honest, Jin Gen, with that behavior of his, was not worthy to even carry her shoes. She was afraid that he might even dirty her shoes.

Finally, the two women left. Yan Huan stood up, tidying the wrinkles on her clothes, and sighed. Humans are truly strange.

Perhaps anything could change in the blink of an eye. She wondered if she could say that if a human's heart turned bad, then it was bad; if they were disgusted with something, then they were disgusted; if they disliked someone, then they really disliked them. No matter how much they once liked a person, they could also detest that person very much now.

"How is Jin Gen's mother not ashamed at all?" Liu Fang patted her face. "Even I feel ashamed for her. What character and appearance does Jin Gen have? He is an old bachelor, more than thirty years old, and still, nobody likes him. Did he think that just by putting on a uniform he could become a top dog? I would rather marry a pig than marry him."

Yan Huan declined to comment on that. After all, bragging was not illegal. Let Jin Gen's mother brag as much as she wanted to. She had nothing else to do besides bragging anyway.

"Sister Xiao Yan, you'd better be careful." Liu Fang was quite worried about Yan Huan. "That Jin Gen aunty did not share anything good with your mother-in-law. I think that mother-in-law of yours would not treat you nicely."

"She's not my mother-in-law." Yan Huan's fingers rubbed the corners of her sleeves from time to time. "It is impossible for me to marry her son."

Liu Fang just kept quiet and smiled, thinking that Yan Huan was just saying this in a moment of anger.

When Yan Huan reached home, she noticed that Changsheng's mother was sitting in the courtyard, fixing her gaze on Yan Huan's silhouette. At that moment, she could sense that she was in a bad mood, a terribly bad mood.

"Where have you gone? Why didn't you finish the household chores?"

"I went to give someone a haircut." Yan Huan was still holding the five eggs in her hand. Changsheng's mother squinted and grunted. "You good-for-nothing, what else do you know besides cutting hair?"

"I also know how to collect firewood." Yan Huan lowered her head, looking like a fool. The more Changsheng's mother looked at her, the more disgusted she was with her. She recalled the words of Jin Gen's mother, perhaps Changsheng would be a city resident after he had earned some money. He would be far away from this poor rural village, and he could even fetch her to the city to live in comfort. If Changsheng married an ugly and dumb woman like Yan Huan, she would be too ashamed. Previously, it was fine as they were in the village. Her appearance could be ignored because she was kind. However, it was different now. Her son would become a city resident in the future, so they could no longer tolerate an ugly woman in their house anymore.

Therefore, Yan Huan had become quite an eyesore to her now.

Yan Huan kept her head low the whole time, pretending to turn the other cheek. It was not that she did not want to argue, it was just that there was no meaning to it. If she favored Changsheng, perhaps she would care for the opinions of Changsheng's mother. But the problem was, she really did not like Changsheng.

Upon listening to Yan Huan's idiotic answer, and looking at her crippled leg and the scars on her face, Changsheng's mother became infuriated.

"Why aren't you cooking? Are you planning to starve me to death?"

Yan Huan heaved a sigh of relief gently. She did not want to argue with an old woman. She turned around and walked into the kitchen, putting the five eggs in the basket. After all, the livelihood of Changsheng's family depended on those eggs. Initially, they had a few acres of land and some uncultivated land that Changsheng had painstakingly cleared. They were planning to farm but in the end, the seedlings that they had planted were damaged.

Yan Huan could cut hair, but she did not know how to farm because she had never done it before. It was impossible for her to know everything.

She served the dishes. Perhaps Changsheng's mother missed her son, so she felt unwell everywhere. She disliked everyone and gave Yan Huan a hard time. She complained that the dish was too salty, then grumbled that the dish was tasteless and all of a sudden there was sand in her rice, saying that Yan Huan intentionally let her eat that so that she would die.

Yan Huan tolerated all of these. What else could she do except compromise? Was she supposed to shout and argue with Changsheng's mother? She could not learn the shrew-like quarreling of the people in this village, nor could she speak such words.

It was said that one should act like the locals. Yes, she did that. She followed the customs of this village, but it did not mean that she had to learn the way they cursed at each other as well.

After the meal, Yan Huan washed the bowls too. Changsheng's mother had probably gone out to meet Jin Gen's mother. Their sons had both left for work to earn money, so now they had common topics that fuelled their endless conversations. However, a person takes their color from their surroundings. If Changsheng's mother kept getting along with Jin Gen's mother, perhaps Changsheng's mother would turn out to be like Jin Gen's mother in the future – harsh, selfish and opinionated.

Yan Huan walked into her room and took out the money that she had stashed in the pillow. She felt that it was not safe to put such a thick stack of money here. If it was in the past, she had nothing to be afraid of. It was impossible for Changsheng's mother to enter her room and touch her money, but now...

She gave it some thought before taking the money out and separating them into a few stacks. She hid the money in the cabinet and also in the corner of the wall. She stuffed wherever she could with some money. After she had hidden all of the money, she put on some old clothes and went out to collect firewood.

When she returned, she saw Changsheng's mother squinting. No matter how she looked at her, there was a cold smile on the corners of her curved lips. She had always found it easy to get along with Changsheng's mother in the past, but that was not the case anymore.

Yan Huan did not know whether every widow would turn out like this, making their son their everything. They would even see their sons' wives as enemies who would snatch their sons away from them.

However, she had a feeling there was more to the smile on the face of Changsheng's mother at this moment. What's wrong? Is it something that I'm not aware of? She put the firewood down, a bad feeling growing in her chest.

Her money...

She returned to her room immediately and came to a realization of the real situation. Her brain was in a buzz. Her room had turned upside down. The very pieces of clothing she had were scattered around the room. Sure enough, someone had searched her room.

She picked up the pillow that was thrown onto the ground and patted away the soil on it.

Then, she inserted her hand into the pillowcase. She could not feel the money that she had put inside. She could not believe it, hence she put her hand in again to check. In the end, she turned the pillow inside out but still, there was no money. Now, she knew that the money inside had been stolen.

Chapter 989: Someone Rummaged Through My Stuff Again

There was not much money in the pillow. It was only 500 yuan. She squatted down again, laid her head sideways to peek under the heatable brick bed and retrieved a brick. The brick did not have much space in it. She placed the brick back in place and it was no different from a brick wall. The amount of money in it remained the same. She placed the money back into it, turned behind and leaned her face against the wall. There was a small crack on it which made the money visible to her. The money was not lost. Next, the cabinet. She extended her hands out, and exerted strength to lift the cabinet. Beneath the cabinet was some money hidden, which was still there. She only lost the money in her pillow, which was 500 yuan. It was not that bad. She was giving it more thought at the moment and became more cautious. Otherwise, she might not have been able to safeguard these money. She did not expect the thief who stole the money to return them to her again.

As for the thief who stole her money, she did not have to think any further. There would be no other person other than Changsheng's mother.

Changsheng's mother never entered her house, no, that was in the past. After Changsheng left, she became a different person. She could empathize with Changsheng's mother's feelings. She was a widow who raised her son alone. Without her son by her side, she must be feeling lonely. She needed someone to rely on or to vent her feelings at, but empathy aside, she could never forgive Changsheng's mother for stealing her money.

That was the money she earned from selling her ring. It was the money she prepared to use to go home. She even said she wanted to use this money to visit a hospital to seek treatment for her leg. However, now that Changsheng's mother had stolen a large proportion of her money, if she did not hide her money, all of her money would be stolen by Changsheng's mother without an ounce of guilt, leaving no leeway for her.

She nibbled on her lips as if she wanted to hurt herself. When there is a first time, there would be a second time. Changsheng's mother had found her money once, and maybe she would come for her money again the second or even the third time. Hence, this money should not be hidden here, not even a single penny, or else, one day, all her travel expenses needed for her journey back home would be stolen by Changsheng's mother. This was not her home, but Changsheng and his mother's home, where

they lived for decades. There were no good hiding spots. Now that Changsheng's mother found some money, she might be delighted and not search thoroughly. Once she recovers from her excitement, she would search for her money again.

If Yan Huan could think of it, then naturally, Changsheng's mother could think of this too.

She removed all her money again and hid her money in three different places: above the fireplace, in a plastic paper, and wrapped inside an old rug hidden in her clothes. The cotton clothes she tailored were extremely thick and loose, so even if she stuffed things inside, no one would be able to see through it. When she left the room, she noticed that Changsheng's mother's room was locked. She pursed her lips.

Usually, no one in this house would lock their room. It was obvious that the woman was guilty of something, wasn't it? She could enter other peoples' rooms but she was afraid of others looking through hers. She had stolen others' stuff, so sure enough, she would be afraid. It was just that this time, the more she tried to hide, the more she revealed... Was she trying to deceive others or herself?

She reached out and touched the cloth on her chest. Then, she dipped her head down and walked out of the room. The wind outside was getting warmer, but no matter how warm it was, it was still the weather of a cold spring. She had no idea when she would be able to leave, but that day might come soon.

She exhaled a warm breath into her hands. Her fingers were not as swollen as before, the swelling was subsiding slowly, but there were some traces of bruises that were still visible. This began to look more like her hands in the past, but as she rubbed her palms together, she could still feel the callousness in them. It was as if both her hands never had smooth skin.

It was not frostbite, but it could be scratched from twigs, an abrasion, an old injury in the process of recovery, or a new injury. There was also the possibility that it was because of the cold temperature in the winter, hence sometimes she could feel numbness along with the pain.

She walked to the back. This time, she was not here to pick firewood, but to find a suitable hiding spot. As she walked to a big tree which required many hands to lift the bottom of the tree, she located a big hole. There was sufficient space for her hand to stretch in. The hole was deep and dry. She took out what she was hiding, hid it in the tree hole, grabbed some dried leaves and stuffed it in the hole along with some sticks. The tree hole was now completely sealed.

After hiding the money, she continued to pick firewood. She was in the deepest part of the woods, which many villagers do not frequent often. Hence, hiding her money here was the safest, at least as compared to hiding them in Changsheng's house.

After picking a substantial amount of firewood, she decided to head back home. Once she reached home, she noticed that Changsheng's mother's room was still locked. She placed the firewood down and returned to her own house, preparing to change into her clothes before making a meal.

However, the stuff in her room was rummaged through again. Compared to the previous incident, this time even the position of the cabinet was shifted.

Yan Huan never knew that although Changsheng's mother was so old to the point that she could not carry a pail of water usually, she was still able to lift such a heavy table up. Indeed, her strength was not inferior to that of a youth.

She took off the cotton-padded coat she was wearing and changed to new clothes before moving the table back to its original position. She was sure Changsheng's mother did not loot any goods because there was no money in her room. Even if she flipped thoroughly, she would never be able to find a single penny.

Changsheng's mother was not back yet when she left the room. She had no clue where his mother went. Nonetheless, now that Yan Huan gave it a second thought, she could have only gone to one place, which was to find Jin Gen's, who was also Changsheng's colleague, mother.

"Anyone home? I'm here for a haircut." Someone shouted for her outside.

"Coming." Yan Huan exhaled softly, her red lips were lifted into a smile which carried mild satire. Of course, it could mostly be helplessness or just a normal sigh.

After cutting the customer's hair, she placed the five eggs she earned in the kitchen. The basket containing eggs was half filled. Changsheng had left for almost a month. In just a month, she had earned this many eggs. In the past, it was Changsheng's responsibility to sell the eggs. If they were not sold, they would never be able to finish eating the eggs. Furthermore, as they were on a farm, eggs were used to trade for money. No one would enjoy eating eggs daily. This was not enjoyment, this was plain foolishness.

Chapter 990: Leaving The Mountain To Sell Eggs

Changsheng's mother returned right on time for her meal. Without uttering a word to Yan Huan, she went to the kitchen to get herself a plate of food. While continuing to ignore Yan Huan, she began to eat by herself. With every bite, Changsheng's mother had a snide remark. "This doesn't taste good at all. The food is disgusting. Ugh, this isn't fit for human consumption, this should be left to the pigs!". In between her complaints, she sarcastically mocked Yan Huan for even thinking of associating with her.

Hearing every word, Yan Huan smiled meekly. Despite the tirade, not a single word of retort left her mouth.

Changsheng's mother can say whatever she pleases. After all, 'sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me'. And Changsheng's mother would never dare lay a hand on Yan Huan.

"What a fool. Why did our Changsheng save you? I put a roof over your head. I gave you food to eat. Aren't we being generous enough? Yet you still want to steal from us!"

Yan Huan lowered her head and poked at the rice in her bowl with her chopsticks. She was not going to rebut, nor was she going to explain herself.

She would never bring herself to throw veiled accusations or make scenes like the villagers.

After she was done eating, Changsheng's mother slammed her bowl down and left the dinner table. She then headed to the doors, making sure to lock them before leaving the house.

Yan Huan collected her bowl and headed into the kitchen. After she washed it, her gaze fell onto the basket of eggs. These eggs have to be sold soon, otherwise they might turn rotten. There was no way she could sell these eggs to the hotels, they had been left out for too long. Honesty was crucial when dealing with hotels. Fortunately, the weather had been cold enough that there was frozen ice on the ground in the mornings, so it was unlikely that the eggs would be spoiled. However, it was hard to say how much longer the eggs could be kept. Not only might the insides of the egg rot, a furry fuzz might even grow on the egg shells!

"Aunt," Yan Huan did not want to speak to Changsheng's mother, but she did have to do something about the eggs.

"What do you want?" Changsheng's mother asked snappily. Her tone was harsh, as if she was warning Yan Huan in revulsion— do not waste my time.

Yan Huan pursed her red lips as she tried to suppress the fury brimming in her heart.

"I'd like to sell those eggs over there. They've been left out for a long time."

"You want to sell eggs?" Changsheng's mother looked Yan Huan up and down as if she was asking for the moon. "Are you thinking of hogging the money from selling the eggs? Are you planning to cheat the villagers of their hard earned money?"

"That's not what I want." Yan Huan had never thought of gaining any profits from the eggs. It was true that she was the one who clinched the deal with the hotel, but she had never received any bribes or kickbacks from it. Changsheng was there with her every time they went to sell the eggs. The money earned was used to buy necessities such as oil and salt, while the remaining was handed over to Changsheng's mother. Ever since Yan Huan came to Changsheng's household, she had only received 20 dollars from Changsheng's mother. Even that was used to buy rice for the household. Other than that, she had not spent half a penny from Changsheng's family.

"Yeah right!" Changsheng's mother spat directly on the floor. Yan Huan felt that she probably would have liked to spit on Yan Huan instead.

"Here comes a b*tch out of nowhere! All she wants is Changsheng's money. How dare she regard herself as one of us..." Changsheng's mother swore angrily, her words were exactly what Jin Gen's mother had said.

At that moment, Changsheng's mother was just another copy of Jin Gen's mother. As the saying goes, he that lies down with dogs must rise up in fleas. This was a true example of the saying.

However, despite all the swearing and angry curses of Changsheng's mother, the basket of eggs still had to be sold.

Just as dawn broke the next morning, a loud rattle assaulted Yan Huan's door.

"Get up, get up now! Are you going to sleep until you die? Get up and go sell the eggs." After a few more angry mutterings, loud poundings on the door could be heard again.

Yan Huan sat up, took her clothes and put them on silently. It was still dark outside. Even if she woke up earlier, it would be impossible for Yan Huan to go downhill now. The road downhill was treacherous. The

villagers could only go down large groups. No one dared venture down alone. At least if they moved in droves, the villagers could help one another if anything were to happen,.

Of course, no one would wish for an accident to happen. It was just more comforting for the villagers to have the safety of traveling in a group.

Yan Huan was done putting on her clothes. It was freezing cold outside, it made Yan Huan feel as if winter had returned. In fact spring was just around the corner. Isn't spring a season for flowers to bloom and for life to be rejuvenated? Since when has spring here become so frigid that cotton-padded jackets were still needed and the beds had to remain heated? It was so cold that snow would still fall occasionally.

Yan Huan put the basket with eggs on her back. But she felt like her back was about to break when she straightened herself. She was in unbearable pain as the weight of the basket strained her shoulder. However, Changsheng's mother simply stood aside and pouted with no intention of helping Yan Huan.

Yan Huan never expected any help from the others. Ever since Changsheng left, she was the one who did all the chores without a single word or whine. She endured the hardship without further action or thought.

Yan Huan was like a little donkey: there were endless tasks to be done, with a whip always flogging her. She would endure scolding after scolding, and there was nothing she could do about it so long as she was still living in that house. Just as Changsheng's mother had said. She had to do her part and fulfill her responsibilities to live and eat under this roof. No one on this earth had the duty to help her for nothing.

Yan Huan carried the basket of eggs and walked ahead. There were quite a lot of people waiting at the crest when she arrived there. They were waiting for daylight before heading downhill. Yan Huan found that there were not many young people this time, most of them were women or elders. A few of them were children of seven to eight years old. Not many young people remain in the village now. Those born on the mountains never returned after they left. Only the old, the sick and the very young were left here.

It was getting crowded. When day finally broke, they began their journey. Yan Huan was carrying too much—the basket weighed at least 25 kilograms. She could not help but wipe the sweat off her forehead. Her load felt heavier and heavier, and the sweat on her head flowed more and more. Her back was almost entirely soaked and it was getting really uncomfortable. She was not Changsheng; she was not as strong as him. She was not a man; she did not have a man's endurance. All she had was tenacity and tolerance; she had to hold on to these until she got to the bottom of the hill, until all the eggs had been sold.