

Chapter 991: Another Break In

Throughout the whole journey, she had her back hunched and was silent. It was only when the villagers decided to go on breaks that she could put down the eggs she was carrying to move her aching shoulders.

She continued her journey until she reached the foot of the hill where she sold the eggs to a restaurant. When the employees of the restaurant were paying her, she noticed a woman staring intently at her.

She was very uncomfortable due to the woman's stare. It is only 100 yuan, what's with the reaction?

She purposely asked the head chef about the time when cars or buses would leave this place and where to go when no one was around.

The head chef mentioned that it was better to leave the place when the weather becomes warmer for the roads would be cleared by then. As for why Changsheng and the rest could leave, it was because they left on foot. They could do so, but not Yan Huan as she was not familiar with this place.

She also asked about the frequency of the bus, but the head chef was unsure since the climate here changed quickly. It was almost spring, yet the change in the weather was rather extreme. It was snowing a few days ago, but the temperature seemed to drop even lower today.

All she could do was wait. Nonetheless, according to her calculations, she could leave by next month. As long as she had money with her, she could go anywhere.

Yes, the head chef said. One could travel anywhere as long as there is money. However, things were different for Yan Huan. She is not able to travel anywhere as she pleases as she did not even own an identity card. She was an immigrant and she could not prove her identity.

She was Yan Huan but then she was not Yan Huan as well. Even she herself could not explain what she was now.

She held the hundred yuan tightly in her hands, thinking whether she should buy some food home. She decided not to after much thought because there were still some left. Now, there was only Changsheng's mother and her in that house, hence they have to be thrifty. They would eat what was harvested everyday, and that was sufficient. Even so, she dared not eat too much as she feared that Changsheng's mother might call her a pig for eating too much and not providing for the household.

Everyone in the village began to head home once they were done with their grocery shopping. However, Yan Huan kept on feeling as if that middle aged lady was staring at her.

What did that kind of look look like?

Probe, curiosity, no, not those.

It looks like she is spying.

Spying? Why would they spy on her? She did not do anything wrong. She merely sat by the steps looking at the passersby as time went on.

Although she was carrying items on her back as she made her way downhill, it was relatively easier. However, going uphill was tiring and Yan Huan had to wipe the sweat off her forehead repeatedly. Regardless of going uphill or downhill, she would always be covered in sweat. When they finally reached the mountain top where the village was located, she was drenched in sweat. It was a relief that Yan Huan had built up a strong body. She was always sick in the past when she was under Lu Yi's care. But now that she was exposed to such an environment, she rarely felt sick, except for the beginning when she was seriously ill. Nevertheless, she was very healthy and happy now.

Her skin was tanner and her body was much more firm.

As she reached her hand into her pockets, she proceeded to head to Changsheng's house. Yes, that's right, it was Changsheng and his mother's house, not her house.

She pushed past the door and the old door creaked loudly, indicating the old age of the house. She didn't know who lived here in the past. It could've been Changsheng's father or even his grandparents. Nonetheless, all these people are no longer here, leaving only this ancient and shabby home.

Yan Huan walked in. There was something surprising about Changsheng's mother's house today. It was unlocked. She decided to change into a new set of clothes as her clothes were damp, yet she realised she had nothing to wear. Nevertheless, it didn't matter, the weather would turn warm in a few days and she would be able to go home. Only after she leaves would she be able to think about her next step. It was impossible for her to buy anything for herself now. Otherwise, Changsheng's mother would take it as the foundation of her marrying Changsheng.

However, as she walked further into her own house, she heard voices from within.

Is it a burglar?

Her eyes squinted together as they looked around uncontrollably, as if looking for something. If it was a normal burglar, she would not be concerned at all. Although her leg was injured, her kungfu could keep her from harm. Therefore, even if she encountered several burglars at once, she was confident that she could take them down.

As she was about to take hold of the shovel, she heard a woman's voice coming from inside.

A woman, Yan Huan loosened her grip on the shovel and stood aside. She didn't do this because it was a woman's voice coming from within, but because it was a rather familiar voice.

It was someone from the village. She heard this voice countless times.

Moments later, another woman's voice appeared. Yan Huan instantly knew who was in her house.

Indeed, people who steal will never stop stealing. The corners of her lips tugged lazily. Her predictions were right. Some people will become more greedy once they've gotten what they desire, and it drives them to want more.

Jin Gen's mother has been searching long and hard in the area. She was feeling rather excited as she planned to pocket some money for herself once she found the money since there was no time for

counting. Therefore, if Changsheng's mother did not get the exact amount, she would not put the blame on her.

Despite the small area, they could not find a single cent ever since they stepped foot into the house.

"Changsheng's mother, are you sure this is the right spot? Is there anywhere else we haven't looked?"

Jin Gen's mother continued asking Changsheng's mother, "Give it a good thought, Changsheng's aunt used to live in this house that you and Changsheng's father built. You must know everything about this house. Are there any rathole or wall cracks? Maybe the money is hidden in those places."

"This..." Changsheng's mother was feeling rather annoyed as well. She could easily find 500 yuan under a pillow last time. Yet, it was much more difficult this time as she could not find any money anywhere.

"Changsheng's mother, think carefully, she must have hid the money somewhere? The money is hard earned money and belongs to the Changsheng's family, so that makes it your money too. Changsheng was fooled thus all the money was given to her. You are responsible to guard this money safely because this is for you to build a big house and for your son to marry a daughter-in-law in the future. You cannot let this money go into the hands of someone unfamiliar."

Chapter 992: Can Chicken Eggs Turn into Golden Eggs

"500 bucks?" said Jin Gen's mother who was distressed just thinking about it, "How long will it take to earn the money back? She's someone who has nothing. How can she have so much money all at once? It must be Changsheng who gave her. Otherwise, how can there be 500 bucks when she can't even show her face and is crippled? Is this not from your Changsheng? Is it not yours?"

The more Jin Gen's mother got into it, the more furious Changsheng's mother was.

Changsheng's mother was so angry that she kicked the cabinet. As a result, the cabinet shook a little, and almost hurt her leg.

They then overturned boxes and did a thorough search for a long time. They even found the loose brick in the side of the heated brick bed. When they felt the brick loosen, Jin Gen's mother was still excited in her mind, thinking that they finally found it. But when the two people eventually pulled off the brick, there was nothing inside the brick.

The face of Changsheng's mother turned ashen from anger when she realized that they did not find it. She was reminded of the words said by Jin Gen's mother and suddenly found 500 dollars under the pillow easily. It was also a brand-new red crisp note, which was Changsheng's hard-earned money. Changsheng had worked hard to earn the money. But when that vixen came, Changsheng gave her all the money, not to his mother. No, she was not a vixen. She was simply a sow spirit who was ugly-looking and crippled. She was the ugliest woman in the village. No one was as ugly as she was. But she did not know what means she had used to make her son so willing to give so much money to her.

She just recovered 500 dollars which was hidden by the woman. Who knew if there were thousands of dollars, or even tens of thousands of dollars?

"There's a crack in the wall," Jin Gen's mother shouted all of a sudden.

Changsheng's mother hurried over and the two people peered inside the crack in the wall. Then they put their hands inside. The two of them grabbed and pulled until they were about to tear their skin. When they finally were able to feel inside after much difficulty, there was nothing inside except dust.

"Why is there nothing inside?" Jin Gen's mother was still somewhat unconvinced and said, "We have looked in every place we can search, even the impossible areas. How can there be no money? Do you think it is here?"

Jin Gen's mother patted the board on the heated brick bed as she said, "I just don't buy that there is no other money. If it were me, I would not put all the money in one place."

Changsheng's mother gnashed her teeth and stared hard at the heated brick bed which Changsheng had built this year. It must be stuffed here. Could it be possible that when Changsheng fixed up the heated brick bed at the time, he had already thought of giving the money to this woman?

But she was his mother. He did not give the money to his mother as a show of filial piety to her. Instead, he gave it all to the vixen.

The more she thought, the angrier she became. The angrier she was, the more mindless she became. She became senseless and not using her intelligence because she did not have much intelligence quotient to begin with. Otherwise, how could she not think carefully about it? How could it be possible that Changsheng had so much money? All the money he had on him was saved by Changsheng's mother. He was only able to make some money all year-round. Could it be possible that they did not keep track in their mind?

If there were really tens of thousands of dollars, how was it that they still lived in such a mud house? In the village, one could build a house for up to 10000 dollars.

She rushed out in anger and her face was so black like the lid of a pot. Upon seeing Yan Huan standing outside standing, her face became gloomy and then she glowered at Yan Huan.

Yan Huan slightly pulled at her own almost colorless lips. She stood calmly and did not even change her stance.

Changsheng's mother gave a snort. Within a short time, she already took a hoe from somewhere and then went in. Soon after, Yan Huan heard the sounds of banging inside.

When Changsheng's mother came out again, her entire person was covered in dust. But her face also became contorted and was ugly to look at. The muscles in her face also seemed to be taut. She was no longer the kind old lady before, nor was she Changsheng's mother who took pity on Yan Huan.

She extended her hand to Yan Huan.

"Where's the money?"

Yan Huan put her hand into her pocket. She felt around for a while before pulling out a rolled-up 100 dollar bill, which she placed in front of Changsheng's mother.

Changsheng's mother immediately grabbed it. But when she unfurled it and saw how little it was, she almost all screamed out, "Only 100 plus dollars? What about the few 1000 dollar bills? How about tens of thousands?"

“A basket of eggs can only fetch so much,” Yan Huan said evenly, “Auntie, didn’t you already ask the village’s Sister Chen to look at it? The other party paid me for the amount sold in front of her face. You can ask her. Was I ever short on the money? Or did I even spend a single cent?”

Changsheng’s mother’s face stiffened and was momentarily embarrassed at being exposed.

Indeed, she did ask the Chen family’s woman to help watch her, for fear that Yan Huan would secretly take the money from the sale. Who knew how many eggs were sold before? Perhaps, they were sold for 300 dollars at a time and she only gave her 100 dollars or so to deceive her, this poor old lady.

Suddenly, she was reminded of those tens of thousands of dollars. She instantly felt pain in her heart. That was money, all her money.

“Where’s the money my son gave you?” Changsheng’s mother tightly clutched the 100 dollars in her hand and demanded, “You tell me. Where’s the money my son gave you?”

Yan Huan suddenly felt sad, because Changsheng’s mother’s face was contorted with greed for the money. She was no longer a kind old person.

Man would do anything in his means to become rich.

And such an understanding made her a little sad.

“Auntie, how much money do you think Changsheng can earn from working the land in a year?” she directly asked Changsheng’s mother.

“Half a kilo of eggs used to sell for three to five dollars in the past. He only went out once a month to sell. Auntie, what much do you think he could sell for? Or does Auntie think that those were not chicken eggs but golden eggs?”

“He did not even go down the mountain during the winter. Did Auntie think that the wind will blow the money over here?”

“Where did the 500 dollars come from?” challenged Changsheng’s mother because her shame soon turned into anger from her words. Because those words, every single sentence deeply stabbed in her heart and caused her pain. She also had a guilty conscience.

“I sold the jewelry I had with me. That’s how I got it,” Yan Huan spoke the truth, but the other person might not necessarily believe her.

“Pah! Bullsh*t if you have any jewelry on you. You still want to lie to me?” She directly spat on Yan Huan’s face and yelled, “You get out of my house immediately. Don’t let me see you again.”

That gooey feeling on her face disgusted Yan Huan a little. She wiped off the blob of spit with her fingers. Suddenly, she covered her mouth and crouched on one side to throw up. Because she did not eat anything in the morning, so all she vomited out was bile and acid.

And when Jin Gen’s mother came out, she also looked ashen with fury because she could not find the money. She lifted her nose and snorted at Yan Huan.

Chapter 993: She Got Chased Out

Satisfied, she swaggered out of the house, thinking: You are so haughty aren't you? Hitting my son and everything? Now that my son is accomplished and you are abandoned by Changsheng's mother, I would like to see how you are going to make a living!

Yan Huan straightened up and fetched some water to clean herself. She walked into her room—no, it wasn't hers anymore—that was filled with dust. The bed had been smashed, and the floor was scattered with the contents of her wardrobe. Even the wooden plank on the bed had been smashed through, exposing the compartment within. There was charcoal soot everywhere, and the few pieces of clothing she owned were covered in footprints. She didn't even have a single clean piece of clothing left.

Yan Huan picked up her clothes, dusted them, and returned them to the relatively clean wardrobe. She spaced out for a while, inhaling the dust in the room.

In the end, she left the clothes behind, because they either belonged to Changsheng's mother or were knitted by her.

When she walked out, Changsheng's mother was at the doorsteps, staring at her and eyeing her from head to toe.

"Those are OUR shoes. Take them off. I would rather give them to the dogs than you, you filthy thief."

"What did I tell you?" goaded Jin Gen's mother. "I knew she was up to no good the moment I saw her, yet you just HAD to help her. Who knows how much money she had stolen from you in total? She's a thief through and through."

A crowd had formed, pointing and whispering, just like when she just entered the village.

Yan Huan dipped her head and took off her shoes. A layer of ice matted the ground, and the chill travelled up from her feet and numbed her body. She paused, then walked on. The crowd dispersed to let her pass.

Yan Huan headed out of the village, toward the ramshackle hut she used to stay in. She judged she could spend the night there and go down the mountain the next day. Things might be harsher at the bottom of the mountain, but she wouldn't have to worry about starving to death at the very least.

She pushed the door open. Wind rushed into the room from every direction. The wooden window was rickety after a winter of disuse, and the the wind had torn through the plastic window films bought by Changsheng. The room smelled like dust. Back when she stayed there, she always kept the place clean, removing every last speck of dust from the floors and walls with a piece of rag. She couldn't allow herself to live in a pigsty under any circumstances.

She was a human, not a pig or a dog.

She found a spot and sat down. It was too cold outside, and soon she found herself curling up. The worn-out padded-jacket smelled awful, and left her hand covered in dust whenever she touched it. Her socks had holes in them, and her feet were frozen numb.

The wind was picking up, and the temperature had dropped to below 0 degrees.

“Sister Xiao Yan, Sister Xiao Yan,”

Yan Huan, curled up in a ball, dared not fall asleep, afraid that she would die from the cold if she did. Did she just hear someone calling her? She smiled helplessly. Was she hallucinating?

“Sister Xiao Yan...” called the voice again. It wasn’t a hallucination. Someone was actually there. “Are you inside there, Sister Xiao Yan?”

“Liu Fang...” said Yan Huan. The words came out as a croak, as though her throat was filled with sand.

“I’m in here, Liu Fang,” she managed to say at last. Her voice was no louder than a whisper, swallowed by the howling of the wind.

Suddenly, a ray of light shone into the room. It came from a torchlight.

“Oh my! So you were really here!” exclaimed Liu Fang, running to her with a torchlight in hand. She hunkered down. “I was afraid I couldn’t find you, but here you are! I just knew you had to be here.”

“There’s nowhere else for me to go,” said Yan Huan, cuddling her legs closer. Under such weather conditions, she did not dare to wander around, and this was the only place that would shelter her.

“Come,” urged Liu Fang, standing up. She grabbed Yan Huan’s hand. It was icy cold, like a large block of ice. “Come to my place. Mom and Dad have agreed to let you stay.”

“Aren’t you afraid that I might be a thief?” Yan Huan smiled wistfully. She was a thief before, and even more so now.

“Bah!” said Liu Fang, rolling her eyes. Did Yan Huan take her for an idiot? “Mom and Dad said we village folks don’t earn much, and Changsheng is a filial son who would give everything to his mother. In the past few years, he could not have earned more than two thousand dollars in total, so how could he have given you five hundred or even more? Mom also said that Jin Gen’s mother had corrupted Changsheng’s mother. My brother works in the town, and he said that making money is hard work. How could a job as good as the one Jin Gen described exist? A boss buying his workers houses and cars? Bah! They are all lies. But the villagers chose to believe that low-down Jin Gen and not my father. How could they be so foolish? A good-for-nothing like him would never help the villagers hunt for jobs.”

“But enough about that. Come with me. Mom said you will surely freeze to death if you spend the night out here. Changsheng’s mother is a mean person to take away your clothes AND your shoes.”

“Come, this way,” said Liu Fang, pulling Yan Huan to her feet and guiding her to the house. Yan Huan was as cold as ice; even Liu Fang was shivering, not to mention her, who had been here for hours.

When they arrived, Liu Fang knocked on the door.

“I’m home, Mom!”

A hardened village woman opened the door.

“How did it go? Did you find her?” asked Madam Liu eagerly.

“Yup. I found her in that run-down hut,” said Liu Fang, entering the room with Yan Huan in tow.

“Good, good,” said Madam Liu, relieved, until she saw Yan Huan’s pitiable state. That made her feel terrible. Oh, how her heart would ache if it had been her own daughter!

Chapter 994: Taking Her In Kindly

Everyone was born and raised by their parents. She is a mother too. How can she humiliate someone else’s child like this? Isn’t she afraid of being hit by karma?

“Quick. Come in, come in.”

Madam Liu immediately invited Yan Huan in. She stared at Yan Huan’s feet. “Fang, bring a pair of your shoes to Sister Xiao Yan. Both of you should be wearing the same size.”

“Coming.” Liu Fang promptly left to bring the shoes. Before long, she reappeared with a pair of new shoes in her hands. She placed them on the floor and grinned as she looked at Yan Huan.

“Sister Xiao Yan, my elder brother bought me this pair of new shoes. I have barely worn it for a few times. I hear that it’s popular in town. It keeps your feet warm. Try it.”

Yan Huan stared at the sneaker, afraid to touch it. The shoes were new and extremely clean, to the extent that even the bottom of the sole was unspotted.

“Just put it on. It’s alright. I will ask my brother to buy me another pair.” Liu Fang put on a genuine smile, revealing her two cute canines. She was never a scheming girl, but merely an uncomplicated girl next door.

“Thanks.” Yan Huan was touched. Her nose tingled and was slightly snotty and as she tried to swallow back her tears. She put on the shoes and her feet felt warm. Although the pair of shoes were a little too big for her feet, they still fit.

Madam Liu boiled some water before she ordered Liu Fang to bring her clothes for Yan Huan to change. Initially, Yan Huan refused to accept the clothes. However, she put on the clothes at last. She would probably accept it if her clothes were not tattered. Unfortunately, she looked like a beggar right now and she was likely to be ejected from the shops even if she intended to purchase something.

People were often judgemental.

Madam Liu reheated the food for Yan Huan. The Liu family was more well off compared to Changsheng’s family. Their newly constructed house was a result of Liu Fang’s brother, Liu Hao’s hard work. He earned the money after he started to work in a hotel a few years ago. After going through all the hardships, they could finally have a taste of the fruits of their labour.

The money they spent on building the house was all earned by Liu Hao. According to Liu Hao, it was not easy to work in a town as the people there were usually scheming and calculative. He also said that, the naive and innocent villagers would be treated as though they had been sold to slavery. At that time, some of the stubborn youngsters in the village insisted on following Jin Gen to work in the town. Liu Hao’s father was so worried that he even went down the mountain to make a phone call to his son.

Liu Hao said that looking for a job in the town was not easy. There was no such thing as a free lunch. Therefore, he advised them to be more vigilant. If anyone wanted a job, the hotel he was working at was

looking for extra pairs of hands. However, they would not be offered more than a few hundred dollars. Besides, it was tough living in the town.

On the other hand, Jin Gen told them that the job offered 3000 dollars per month and would increase to 5000 dollars after a year. If they performed well, the boss would even buy them cars and houses, and they would even get a bonus from the company.

It was an offer that no one would pass up.

However, they seemed to forget that nothing came for free. It was unlikely for one to get such a perfect offer, and it was nearly impossible for them to earn cars and houses without having to work for it.

Any sensible man would never believe it. However, the people of the village were ignorant. They envied and coveted Jin Gen's ostentatiousness and lifestyle, so much so that a few of them insisted on following Jin Gen to the town in spite of Senior Liu's advice. Until now, there was no news about them. Meanwhile, Jin Gen's mother told everyone that they were earning money alongside Jin Gen. She claimed that, in a few years time, they would be living in big houses in the city and would not return to the village.

Yan Huan had not interacted much with the villagers. Therefore, she has only found out today that some of them were actually rational. They knew that things were not as simple as they seemed to be. Those who were convinced had definitely been fooled, whereas the rest, who had been skeptical, might have narrowly escaped from a mischance.

Yan Huan and Liu Fang shared a sheet at night. The Liu family was rather well off. The blanket was new; the furniture, despite the fact that it seemed old, was still in one piece. It is obvious that they were better off than most of the families in the village. They did not have to worry much about their expenses even though they had spent a great amount in building the house. They were still able to eat good food like buns. On the other hand, Changsheng's family only managed to have food made from corn flour. Although the food satiated their hunger, overconsumption would lead to indigestion.

"Sister Xiao Yan, why do you treat Changsheng's mother so well even though she maligned you?"

Liu Fang could not figure it out. She placed her hands behind her head and said, "Who said you live in their house for free? Where do they think the firewood comes from? It is you who collects them. You always help the others to cut their hair because you can get dozens of eggs each time, yet those eggs would be sold by Changsheng in the end. Besides, you are the one who cleans the house and cooks for them, still, they inculpate you and force you to leave. I've told you that Changsheng's house isn't a suitable place to live in and asked you to come over to my place; why didn't you listen to me? Now, still, they cast you out."

"They..." Yan Huan lifted her lips as a sense of bitterness spread from her lips to her heart.

"Changsheng saved my life, so I owe it to them. Changsheng's mother took me in, I am indebted to them for that too."

Yes, she owes them, so she pays it back.

Although she planned to leave, she never thought of taking all the money with her. Besides, she would help to build the roads and set up the electricity in this village after she returned home.

She has planned everything, but she never expected she would leave Changsheng's house that way.

"Are you leaving?" Madam Liu was shocked. "Where do you want to go? Don't worry, rest assured we'll provide you with shelter and food if you stay here."

"Aunt Liu, I miss my home."

Yan Huan lowered her head and looked at her fingers. Her injured finger was slowly getting better. She would probably recover by the time she returned.

She could not live or stay at Liu Fang's house for long. She understood that if she continued to stay at Liu Fang's place, it might leave Liu Fang and her family in bewilderment. Jin Gen's mother was a shrew, while Changsheng's mother would definitely spread the rumors of her being a thief who stole Changsheng's money.

She could have stayed in the town, but she was afraid that there was no one around to take care of Changsheng's mother. Hence she wanted to organize her life before she left, but it seemed unnecessary now.

Chapter 995: She's Married

"Huh?" said Madam Liu. "You have a family?"

"Yes," nodded Yan Huan. "I do. They live in the Sea City."

"Sea City?" repeated Madam Liu, eyes widening. "You live in the Sea City too? That's a long way from here." Liu Hao had worked somewhere near the Sea City, before travelling to the Sea City. When Mr. Liu asked him how far it was from his initial workplace, he said it was very far. If that was the case, imagine how far it would be from their village!

"It's pretty far indeed," nodded Yan Huan. "I ended up here by accident, and I was stuck because it's too dangerous to descend the mountain during winter. So I stayed and waited for the weather to get better. A few days back, I learned from some people that it was safe for me to make the descent now."

"In that case, why did you come back?" asked Madam Liu, confused. Why would she come back if she could live comfortably at the bottom of the mountain?

"I wanted to make sure that Changsheng's mother is living comfortably before I leave," admitted Yan Huan.

"Oh, poor child..." sighed Madam Liu. "What a foolish woman, to be chasing away such a good wife."

Wife? Yan Huan wanted to laugh, but she couldn't. Nothing seemed likely to make her laugh again.

"But, Aunty Liu, I have never said anything about marrying Changsheng."

"But that's what his mother has been telling everyone!"

Madam Liu had heard it from Changsheng's mother with her own ears, and Yan Huan's long-term residence at the Changsheng house seemed to have proved her words.

"I'm already married, Aunty Liu," said Yan Huan, looking up into Madam Liu's eyes. Her eyes were pretty and crystal-clear. A year of hardship had not tainted her bright eyes in the slightest bit.

"Ah!" gasped Madam Liu. "You are married? Is that true?"

"Yes," smiled Yan Huan, recalling the warm memories. "I have a husband and three children waiting for me at home, so I have to go."

Yan Huan's story made Madam Liu further realize how much of an ingrate Changsheng's mother was. The poor child had stayed because she was worried about leaving the old woman alone, and because she felt the need to repay them, even when she could have gone home a long time ago. And what did Changsheng's mother think? She got it into her head that Yan Huan was devoted to Changsheng! As it turned out, Yan Huan was already married!

"Let me think..." said Madam Liu, rising and walking off. Soon, she returned with a small tin case, which she set on her lap.

She opened the case, took out an identification card, and placed it before Yan Huan.

"Take a look at this," she said, pointing to the ID.

Yan Huan scooped it up and looked. The ID belonged to a woman named Liu Hua.

The woman in the colored picture looked a little dull and unintelligent.

"This is my eldest daughter," said Madam Liu, eyes reddening. "She wasn't born intelligent, and we always kept her at home since no one wanted to marry her. So we thought we just had to take care of her until she turns into an old maid, and when we die, Liu Hao and Liu Fang can take over our duties. But one day Xiao Hua fell sick and before we knew it... she was gone, before we could even celebrate the New Year together. We haven't reported her death until now, so this ID should still be usable."

"I don't think people will investigate too much if you tell them you suffered a disfiguration. These days, you need an ID to do everything. Without one, you wouldn't be able to get anywhere."

Yan Huan gripped the ID tightly. She could see that Madam Liu still loved and missed her daughter sorely, despite her looks or mental disabilities. A mother's child would always be her child. She made her, raised her, and was prepared to provide for her for the rest of her life. And the next second she was gone. Yan Huan knew and understood the pain of a parent who has to see their child die before them.

When Lu Yi got into an accident, Ye Shuyun behaved as though she had lost her soul. When Yan Huan herself became a mother, her heart wrenched so hard she could have died whenever Xunxun fell sick.

For that reason, she was truly grateful towards Madam Liu, who was willing to lend her an identity to go home with, even if it meant tearing her own unhealed wounds open.

At night, Liu Fang came to Yan Huan and placed a bundle before her.

"Here, Sister Xiao Yan. Mom has prepared this for you. It would help you on your way home."

Yan Huan unwrapped the bundle and found several pieces of clothing that looked very new, some of which were completely unused. Apart from that, there was 500 dollars. Yan Huan bit her lips, her fingers shaking.

Farm folks were self-sufficient and didn't have many opportunities to earn money, and 500 dollars was enough to last an ordinary farmer family for an entire year. Even though Liu Fang's family was considered better off in the village, they were still poor people at the end of the day. 500 dollars was probably the most they could give her, and she would never forget this debt of gratitude for the rest of her life.

On the morning of the following day, she slung the bundle onto her shoulders and prepared to leave. Inside the bundle, apart from the stuff Liu Fang had handed her earlier, there were a few flatbread pancakes, which Madam Liu had stayed up the entire night to make. She had put a lot of oil into the pancakes to make them more filling. In the cold weather, the pancakes wouldn't go bad in a long time. Other than that, there was a small jar of pickled vegetables to go with the pancakes.

"Be careful out there," said Liu Fang, who really didn't want Yan Huan to go. When Yan Huan's gone, she would have no one to chat with anymore.

"I will," said Yan Huan, pulling the bandage on her face down a little. The hideous scars showed, but they weren't that hard to look at once Liu Fang got used to them. In fact, she was beginning to find her very pretty.

"I have left something for you in the mountains across the village entrance. It's in the hollow of a tree with one rock on each side. Remember to go look for it."

"Okay," said Liu Fang. "Don't worry," she beamed, "I will find it. I know the area there well, and I know exactly which trees have hollows in them!"

She slapped her chest confidently to prove her point. If Yan Huan hid something in the mountains, there's no way she couldn't find it!

Chapter 996: Finally Going Home

Yan Huan smiled; she did not say much. Yes, it was certainly a good idea to hide things there. Had she not mentioned it, no one would ever think of searching for things inside the tree hole; the villagers were too busy for that. Besides, they were afraid that the wind and sun would spoil their things.

Yan Huan pulled her clothes tightly around her and walked away step by step. Once Liu Fang's silhouette disappeared from her sight, she proceeded to the mountain behind the village. She looked for the tree with the tree hole and took out the black plastic bag from the hole. She took 4500 dollars from it, placing the bag back into the hole, which contained the remaining 3000 dollars along with the 500 dollars given by the Liu family. She left the mountain while it was early. She had gone downhill more than once, even though she was not as experienced as the villagers, she could still find the way down.

After all, there was only one way down the hill. She just needed to follow the trail.

When she was hungry, she would eat the biscuits given by the Liu family. When she felt thirsty, she drank the water she brought. She finally reached the foot of the mountain after walking for two hours. She asked for directions while walking down the road and finally found the vehicle. It was a three-wheeled car normally used for farming—it was the only vehicle that could pass through the roads where the big vehicles could not.

Still, they needed to wait for enough people to fill up the car before they could depart.

At this moment, Yan Huan sat by the roadside. She was holding a biscuit, eating it bit by bit. The cold wind kept blowing through her collar, but it was not as chilly as before. Incidentally, she saw that some green grass had grown beneath the tree not far away. Although they were still young and weak, yet they still grew stubbornly, forming a lush green oasis.

On the mountain, Liu Fang was holding a bunch of things and running back home breathlessly without talking to anyone.

“Mum, mum, hurry! Come and have a look.”

“What’s the matter?” Madam Liu came out of the kitchen hastily, wondering what had happened to Liu Fang.

“Mum, look,” Liu Fang placed the package onto the table and opened up. It contained piles of red banknotes, which she estimated to be roughly around three to four thousand dollars worth.

Madam Liu was so shocked that she could not say a word.

“Fang, where did all this money come from? Why is there so much money?”

“Mum, the money belongs to sister Xiao Yan. She asked me to take something from the tree hole in the mountain after she left, saying it is for me. I do as she said and this is what I found,” she patted her chest. She too was shocked beyond words. She had never seen this much money in her entire life, all in 100-dollar banknotes. She could buy a lot of things with the money.

“Hurry, put the money away before anyone sees it.”

Madam Liu quickly picked up the money, placing it at the bottom of her trunk and locked it away. She could finally heave a sigh of relief after doing so.

It seemed like Miss Xiao Yan had kept a lot of secrets. How did she manage to get ahold of so much money out of the blue? She must have pulled a clever trick. No wonder Changsheng’s mother and Jin Gen’s mother couldn’t find the money, she’d kept it for herself. Otherwise, she would not even get a cent for herself. If that were the case, how could she go home?

At present, she did not feel lucky for gaining an extra few thousand dollars. Instead, she worried about Yan Huan. Why did she leave so much money for us? She is alone out there, it will be tough for her to sustain herself without money. They only took her in for one night, yet she repaid them with such great graces.

If Changsheng’s mother had not been so troublesome, Yan Huan probably would not have left her out when she left.

Hence, as decent people, one should treat others with kindness.

As for now, Yan Huan was sitting in the three-wheeled car, which was crowded with people carrying bags and baggage. Based on the conversations she overheard, Yan Huan found that all these people were planning to work in town. Yan Huan did not know the way to the train station, but she should be fine following them because they too were planning to take the train later on. From there, she knew the way home.

She lowered her head and covered herself with the cotton-padded jacket. The three-wheeled car was moving fast against the wind. When the wind blew on her, she could still feel the biting wind, even with the jacket on, which left her numb with cold. She touched her face with her numb hand and could not feel any warmth on it.

In the afternoon, the car stopped and let them down. They had reached the county, which was obviously more advanced and rich compared to the small village and the area around the foot of the mountain. At the very least, the county was modern and completed with necessities. Unlike the village, which was terribly undeveloped, inside and out. Over there, it was as if people were living in the sixties, when they were still using candles for light.

Yan Huan carried her bag and followed the others without anyone noticing her. It seemed like there were several teams headed out to work in town. Each of them assumed that she belonged to the other teams, and none of them thought anything was amiss. Perhaps it was because she was dressed like them—old-fashioned, like someone who came out of the village, searching for a job in town.

A few people boarded the bus. It was not clear where the bus was heading to, but it left after stopping for a few minutes. The place seemed to be a transit point for them, they would depart for their destination in just a blink of an eye.

Along the way, more and more buses appeared. Fortunately, Yan Huan was still able to follow the others, since they bought their tickets individually. If not, she didn't know how long she needed to travel on the winding road. They traveled continuously and did not stop even at night. When Yan Huan felt hungry, she ate the biscuits she brought; when she felt thirsty, she drank the water in her bottle. She found the others were doing the same too. In fact, there was not much time for them to stop and have a meal. Maybe they were rushing for the time that they never stopped taking buses. Besides, they drank as little water as possible along the journey to minimise the number of bathroom trips.

They arrived at the train station early the next morning.

When Yan Huan saw the train station, she couldn't help but frown.

Chapter 997: The Road Home

They were in Dingxi. She knew Dingxi was a small county in Yu City, but it was her first time here. There was probably no train to Sea City from here, so she would have to go to Yu City first.

She fished out her ID and joined the queue. When it was her turn, she passed her ID to the conductor. Her face was still wrapped in bandages, but the conductor didn't make her take it off. She looked

around and realized there were many others dressed like her. Some were wearing masks. She figured the checks weren't that strict because of the cold weather.

Besides, it wasn't unusual for someone to look different from their ID photo. She was very skinny, and her protruding cheekbones did look somewhat similar to Liu Hua. Saying that they looked alike was a stretch, but they both looked like skeletons at a quick glance.

She consulted the train ticket. From the boarding time, she figured it would be noon soon. Hugging her bag, she found a seat and sat down. She took out a flatbread pancake from her bag and began eating. Then, she walked to the water dispenser in the train station and filled a cup of hot water for herself. Finally, something hot after an entire day of drinking cold water.

Who would have thought that the ragged woman, with a large bundle on her back, in this tiny train station was the best actress, Yan Huan? Not even Yan Huan herself. She was even more pitiful and unfortunate than Qinghua.

There were many people like her in the train station. It was a small station, but there were many people heading to other cities for work. They sat or stood in their own corners, using their woven bags as pillows, much unlike city dwellers who play with their phones at every chance they get.

Yan Huan herself used to be one of those people. Now that she thought about it, wasn't communicating face-to-face better? People use phones to close the distance between one another, but that only causes their hearts to drift further apart.

Most of these passengers, coming from small villages, didn't own any handphones. Yan Huan didn't have one either. She didn't have many belongings, apart from the shirt she was wearing and a small bag. She cuddled the bag closer. There was four thousand bucks at the bottom compartment of the bag. She had left 4000 bucks for the Liu Family—500 that was given to her, along with 3500 bucks of her own—as a token of gratitude.

As for Changsheng's mother... well, she could fend for herself, Yan Huan supposed. Jin Gen's mother was doing fine without her son, no? Besides, it wasn't as if anything had happened to Changsheng. Perhaps she was overthinking. Maybe Jin Gen really had some way of helping Changsheng strike it rich and marry a city girl.

She lifted the bandage up and ran her fingers across her face gently. The scar went from the corner of one eye to the center of her face, an uneven line that split her face in two.

Ugly, isn't it, she thought in bitter self-amusement. She wondered if anyone could recognize her.

Suddenly, she felt afraid, afraid to leave, afraid to go home.

She waited for about three hours before the train finally arrived. She stood up and dug out the ticket. The name on the ticket was Liu Hua, not Yan Huan.

She stood up, scooped up her bag and hugged it in her arms before joining the crowd milling towards the ticket office. None of the officers looked at her face or ticket. They made a quick snip on her ticket and waved her through.

Her ticket didn't include a seat, so she placed her bag on the floor and took out a bag that had all her food—flatbread pancakes and water—in it. She then sat down on the floor.

It was a bumpy ride. She hugged the bag tightly, peering at the unclear receding scenery.

It would take two hours to reach Yu City, from where she could take a direct train to Sea City. The trip would take 48-49 hours—two days and two nights—in total. She wanted to buy a sleeper ticket, but that would cost her around 500 bucks, which wasn't a small amount since she only had less than 5000 bucks.

She could sacrifice comfort for a regular ticket or a standing ticket, but she would nonetheless prefer a sleeper ticket. It wasn't that she couldn't endure hardships, but that she wanted to treat herself better now that she was going back to the Sea City. She wanted to make her complexion look better, too. With how ugly she was, "gaunt" would be an understatement if she spent two days and two nights on the train without proper rest.

The train pounded along bumpily. She was drowsy but dared not to sleep, so she made herself stay awake for two entire hours. By the time she got up, she felt as though her waist was about to snap.

She followed some people off the train and bought a ticket at the train station.

She was lucky; Yu City turned out to be the first station, so getting a sleeper ticket wasn't hard at all. When the ticketer asked her if she wanted a regular or a sleeper ticket, she replied sleeper ticket without thinking, and was a little surprised when she actually got it.

It was over 500 bucks—expensive.

Even 500 bucks was expensive to her now. She had never been this poor in two lives, especially her current one, where she had been living large.

But now, even 500 bucks was expensive to her.

Only a housewife knew the importance of household necessities, and only a poor person knows how hard it is to earn money.

A life of decadence had corrupted her and made her out of touch with reality. Now that she thought about it, Little Bean's monthly upkeep could last an average family for a few months.

I have to be more thrifty in the future, she reflected. Could this be karma for her extravagance?

It was noon, and her train was leaving at nine, so she left the station to wander around.

It wasn't that cold outside. She stroked her tummy and realized she was a little hungry, so she stopped by a small restaurant and ordered a bowl of noodles. Nowadays, one filling meal was enough to last her for a day. She still had to head to the stores to load up on supplies. It wasn't her first time taking a train, so she knew what she needed for the ride.

Chapter 998: It's Good To Have A Mother

She carried her bowl of noodles to a seat where she could face the wall, and hid herself in a secluded corner. That way, no one would ever notice her ugly face. It was not that she was ashamed of her

hideous face. She was just afraid that her appearance might disgust the others and cause them to lose their appetite.

She finished the bowl of noodles to the very last drop of soup. This was probably the first meal that she had eaten to her heart's content after all these days. Despite feeling rather stuffed, she was satisfied.

After finishing her meal, she went to a mini mart and bought herself two packets of instant noodles. The food, including the biscuits in her bag, should be enough to last for the coming two days.

She returned to the train station and found herself a seat. She quietly waited for the time to pass and was anticipating the train's arrival.

Yu City was considered a big city with people coming and going. At times, the station would be so packed it seemed like it would burst at the seams. Although it was not a newly built train station, the facilities were considerably good with sufficient new seats. The people at the station were from different places, speaking dialects of different regions, but the majority of them spoke the common language.

When the night fell, the train arrived punctually. She carried her luggage and boarded the train. Inside, she found her bunk. It was a lower bunk, which made it easier for her to move about.

Soon, her surroundings were filled with people. Those who knew each other were chatting among themselves whereas the rest were on their phones.

Occasionally, Yan Huan overheard some of the conversations before she quickly got distracted by another dialogue. She wanted to shut her ears to everything, but the atmosphere on the train was constantly noisy and unsettling. There were people moving around all the time, even during the nights.

Actually, Yan Huan could have treated herself better. After deducting the price for the ticket, she still had about 4000 yuan to spare. It should be enough for her expenses along the way.

However, she was really afraid that unexpected incidents might befall her. Hence, she began to save up and pinch every penny she could. Instead of buying the food on the train that cost 10 yuan per pack, she ate the biscuits in her bag. Those biscuits were no longer fresh, yet they were still fluffy rather than turning rock hard over the days.

She remained curled up and slept in her bunk for most of the time as she seldom talked. Only hunger would drive her awake to grab some biscuits. She barely interacted with anyone on the train and spoke nothing ever since she boarded the train. She was always alone. She liked to lean against the window and cast her eyes over the bleak view outside. Time slipped by as the sun set and rose again; she did not seem to bother at all.

The journey to Sea City was a lengthy 48 hours. Thankfully, Yan Huan managed to purchase a sleeper car ticket, otherwise she would not know how she would survive the long journey. Time continued ticking away and soon the high-rise buildings came into sight at the stops en route. The air of prosperity began to unfurl. The nearer they approached Sea City, the nearer they were to the economic centre of the country.

Sea City was indeed a hustling and bustling prosperous city..

Nonetheless, Sea City was indeed an ideal city to live in. Besides being known as the transportation hub, this bustling city was endowed with a collection of unique landscape. Apart from its 30% urban greenery along with modern technology, there were also entertainment companies mushrooming all over the city.

Here, a girl who had nothing to her name might have a shot at meteoric rise to fame.

An ordinary boy had a chance to transform into a superstar actor.

This was a prosperous city. This was a dog-eat-dog city, where everyone was battling for survival of the fittest.

By the time Yan Huan opened her eyes, the train had already stopped. Yu City was the starting point while Sea City was the final destination. Inside the train, she started to hear the din and clamor of the world outside. Even the air was filled with the distinctive scent of the sea.

She was born and bred here. This was also the place where she had spent her two lives.

Hence, she had an ineffable feeling toward Sea City.

Regardless of where she was, Sea City was what she missed the most, for this was her hometown where she was born and raised. It was the resting place of her late mother. In fact all her loved ones were here, with her husband, her children and her friends. Everything that she had was here.

Yan Huan waited for everyone to disembark the train before carrying her luggage. Taking her bag in one hand, she covered her face with the other.

She finally got off the train, but her legs felt weak the moment they touched the ground. As she stumbled along to the side, the young man next to her instinctively dodged. He seemed to be afraid of touching her. Or to be more precise, he was afraid of her touching him.

Nevertheless, there were still some kind souls who reached out and held her.

“Child, are you okay?” asked an elderly lady.

She had a compassionate smile and looked to be in her late fifties. She was probably here to visit her relatives as well, given how many bags she was carrying.

“I’m fine, thank you.” With gratitude from the bottom of her heart, Yan Huan put on a smile. However, it just took her awhile to realize that it made no difference whether she was smiling or not, since she had hidden her face.

Yan Huan intended to leave at first, but she made her way back upon seeing the amount of bags the lady was carrying. Lifting the largest bag up, she heaved it onto her shoulder.

“Aunt, let me help you.”

“It’s okay! Just let me carry it. This is too heavy for you.”

Hurriedly, the lady tried to take her bag back. She was aware of how heavy the bag was. How could she possibly trouble a young lady to carry it for her?

"It's not a big deal. I can do it." Yan Huan then slightly lowered her shoulder in order for the big bag to rest firmly on it. Since she did not carry much luggage herself, she could afford to carry an extra one. Moreover, she had been doing heavy chores in the village over the past year for very little in return but considerable strength and of course, the calluses and injuries.

She helped the lady carry her bags out of the station. The heavy luggage resting on her shoulder nearly broke her waist. Her footsteps were heavy, giving out loud thumps as she walked.

She felt like laughing.

Her current condition was just the same as those refugees.

Meanwhile, the lady told Yan Huan about the stories of her family. She said that she came to Sea City to look for her son. Her son was permanently residing in Sea City, and he seldom went home. Missing her son terribly, the old mother took the trouble to come all the way from the mountains, bringing a heap of local specialties along with her. Though they were not worth much, they certainly had a taste of home.

Chapter 999: Loathe

As the saying goes, a mother worries as a son journeys. No matter how old a person gets, they would always be a child to their mother.

"You are so good to your son, Aunty," said Yan Huan with a tinge of envy. If her mother was still alive, she wouldn't have been bullied so badly. Didn't the Su Family bully her because she didn't have parents?

Wasn't that why Su Muran's mother treated her like an animal, and why Su Muran's father threw her into the river?

"Ho..." chuckled the old woman. "Of course! Children are debtors from your previous life, so I ought to treat him well. I'm sure your mother is the same."

Yan Huan smiled and said nothing, but her eyes were filled with sadness accumulated for two lifetimes. Her mother wasn't around anymore. She remembered her name and looks, but kept no photographs of her at her request. Perhaps her mother didn't want the photographs to bring back sad memories.

At the entrance of the train station, she hailed a cab for the old woman and helped pack her luggage into the trunk. She would be fine from there, since she knew where her son lived.

Yan Huan hugged her bag tighter. She had reached Sea City, but found herself at a loss as to where to go.

She looked down at her ragged clothes and tattered belongings. Not many taxi drivers would be willing to take her, she judged.

She could find her way around the airport with her eyes closed, since she had been there more times than she could remember. She walked along the road, hoping to find a mall where she could buy some appropriate clothes.

She searched for some time, but couldn't find anything suitable. The clothes were too vibrant for her.

The salespersons eyed her warily as she walked into their stores, as though she was some sort of refugee. They were probably worried she would dirty their floors after not buying anything.

Yan Huan dipped her head in shame. She tugged her clothes gently, bit down on her pale lips, then turned around and left. She decided to find a hotel instead.

She was afraid of stepping into the hotel, of how people would look at her, of getting chased out.

In the past year, she had lost her pride and dignity, but she still couldn't stand the withering looks from others.

She took out her ID and handed it to the concierge, who eyed her up and down and asked for 500 RMB as deposit.

Yan Huan rifled through her bag and found the pouch, from which she took out 5 100-buck notes and handed it over. The concierge took her money and reluctantly tossed her a room key.

Yan Huan found her room, opened the door, and went in. It was clean at least. There was a large bed in the room. She put her luggage down but didn't sit on the bed. When she walked in, the gazes on her were like laser beams that revealed the germs on her.

She knew they loathed her because she was dirty. They had only let her in because they couldn't turn down a customer. By the time she leaves, they would probably throw out most of the things in the room and disinfect it thoroughly. Perhaps that would cost even more than what she paid.

Yan Huan began laying her stuff out. When she was tired, she sat on the floor and took out her wallet. She hadn't spent any money other than buying the train ticket.

She was in dire need of money. She wasn't Liu Hua now, not Yan Huan, and Liu Hua couldn't just swagger into a bank and withdraw Yan Huan's money.

She didn't know anyone around here, and she didn't have her phone or ID.

She looked up and gazed out of the window absently until the sky turned dark. In the night, a million lights would illuminate the city, a view Sea City was known for. She hadn't seen it in a long time, and she had forgotten what it looked like. For a moment, she didn't want to go to crowded places.

She wondered if she was afraid of other people, or her own shadow.

She picked up her bag and walked out. The staff and other guests looked at her disdainfully, thinking: Someone like you should be in a motel.

In Yan Huan's heart, she thought: This place is actually dirt cheap, and I don't think I can find an inhabitable place at a lower price.

There was a street nearby, with many street markets catered to university students at night. They sold everything, and usually at a cheap price. She could probably get everything she needed there.

First, she bought a face mask and put it on discreetly. Only then did she feel the weird gazes disappearing. She wasn't an alien, so she was afraid of being seen as one.

At a street market, no one cared about her attire or cleanliness.

She bought herself a set of inner clothes and a set of outer clothes, which amounted to less than 100 RMB in total. The clothes she picked were seasonal and plain.

She didn't bother buying anything else, since she didn't need them.

When she returned to the hotel, only a few guests were loitering in the lounge. The concierge was swatting at a fly in boredom.

Yan Huan looked down and returned to her room. She washed her clothes and hung them on the balcony, wondering how long it would take to dry.

It shouldn't be that long, since the hotel had its heating turned on, which is usually the case before March.

She bit her lips until they began to hurt, before heading to the bathroom. She still had her face mask on. This was the first time she saw herself in a long time.

She felt scared and nervous. She was scared that she had become ugly, so ugly that even she couldn't recognize herself. She wasn't strong enough to convince herself to accept her new looks and tell herself it didn't matter.

Her good looks was her mother's last gift; she didn't want to lose it.

Chapter 1000: She Finally Looked Like A Proper Human

She wanted to take off her mask, but her fingers were quivering nonstop for some reason. She made a few more attempts, but her fingers kept trembling, she could not even remove the mask on her face.

She put her hands down dispirited. However, after a moment, she raised her fingers once more and removed the mask that covered her face.

Behind the mask was still Yan Huan's face, the only difference was a long burnt scar on her left cheek.

It wasn't too bad. She suddenly burst out in laughter with tears in her eyes. Truthfully, it was much better than she imagined. She thought she would never be able to face anyone with this face anymore, but it was not as bad as it first seemed.

Perhaps she was blessed with good genes. Only a few scars remained on her body despite suffering many injuries throughout her two lifetimes. She raised her hands once again and examined her fingers. The scars from the frostbites were still visible, but they should disappear once the weather turned warm. Moreover her hands had suffered many wounds before. The whipping she took from Old Master Lu back then was so severe her bones could almost be seen. The doctors were afraid that she would be permanently scarred. Luo Lin was constantly worried then about the endorsements she would lose if her hands were damaged.

As it turned out, not too many scars were left on her fingers. She had recovered well.

When she was in that small village, she had sneaked a peek at her face. Her condition at the time was really serious, almost looking disfigured. However as time passed, she had recovered slightly, so she felt that she might be able to face the public. Obviously she could not compete with the fair and spotless faces of others, but at least she would not be scaring people off with her face.

Because there was just one red scar that remained. Although it was still visible, it was no longer hideous.

She turned on the tap and stood beneath the hot water. When the hot water trickled down her face, she felt an indescribable sensation. It felt as if, along with the dirt and dust on her body, the hot water was rinsing away all the hardships she endured in the past year.

All of it seemed to be washed away completely.

She had returned to Sea City, she was finally home.

However she suddenly crouched down and covered her face as she burst out weeping. The sound of the water drowned her weeps completely. Over and over she sobbed like an injured beast.

She was licking her sore wounds.

There was no one here to dote on her, to love her. No one was here to care for her.

When night came, she laid in the soft blanket. She was finally able to sleep properly for the first time in a long while. She could finally throw out those clothes she had been wearing tomorrow, and she will have new clothes. She could finally live like a proper person.

She stayed in the small hotel for two days. On the second day, she almost did not leave her room, even if she had to eat, she would just eat the pancakes she had stashed in her bag. Although the pancakes had been there for a while, it was not too tough; still edible. Furthermore those pancakes could last a long time in this weather, probably for another ten days or perhaps half a month.

Most of the villagers on the hill survived on the pancakes the same way.

While waiting for her clothes to dry, she was settling her thoughts too. Most of the time, she was just staring outside blankly. She was also breathing in the familiar scent of Sea City.

The television was broadcasting the latest news.

Su Muran had filmed a new movie yet again. She seemed to have recovered well, her face was rosy and she seemed to have gained some weight. It would appear that her health had gotten better. Lu Qin and Sun Yuhan too had new films.

Lu Qin had once again won the best leading actor by relying on another woman that was not Yan Huan. Yan Huan felt disgusted when she saw images of him kissing his award.

She propped up her face on the table and squinted her eyes a little, as if she was trying to stuff down all the spiteful hatred she felt. When she fluttered her eyelashes slightly, all the negative emotions were once again swept away.

Lu Qin had grown quickly, yet Su Muran was still marching on the spot. As for Sun Yuhan, she was still the same with zero acting skills.

Without Yan Huan, they were still living their lives to the fullest. Even the anger of losing her husband and the shame of being cheated on had been tolerated by Little Miss Su.

That was right, she had to anyway. Yan Huan had forgotten that the Su family was not like before, and neither was the Ye family.

The Su family was responsible for Yan Huan's fate in two lifetimes.

The Ye family had burned the bridge after crossing it.

She knew, she fully understood that a child without a mother was like a weed, just like her. Others had felt free to bully her and hurt her. Su Muran had a mother, who would do whatever she could to protect her, even if it meant killing another mother's children.

Sun Yuhan had a mother too, but her mother was not around anymore. She had left Sun Yuhan with the Ye family. The Ye family had invested all their connections in her and they transformed a talentless, ugly girl into an A-grade actress.

She always felt ridiculous when she recalled all that had happened.

It was ridiculous that she had saved these bunch of ingrates. If she knew better, she would have left the Ye family alone. But, if she had to choose again, perhaps her final choice would still be to save the Ye family.

No rhyme or reason. God knows why.

She put on her mask again. From her mirror reflection, she looked tragically skinny. However, the beauty standards these days were quite weird. No one would say anything if you got skinnier, some might even think you would look better if you got skinnier. Yet, if you were to gain a little weight, you would be judged differently. Even if you were just shopping for clothes, others would point and judge you.

She put her belongings into the luggage, although she did not have much, just a few pieces of her old clothings. She did not leave anything in the hotel, she even took her garbage with her.

She walked up to the front desk and handed over her identification card.

"I'd like a refund on my deposit."

She had paid 500 dollars, but she had only stayed for two days. It was a hundred for each day, so the hotel had to return 300 dollars.

With these 300 dollars she could find a below-average room to stay at for up to a month. She did not have extra cash on her at the moment, so she would not have enough to stay at a hotel every day.

At first the front desk receptionist could not recognize Yan Huan, probably because of Yan Huan's present image. It was hard to describe: she was wearing a frayed, old cotton-padded shirt so dark it was as if it had not been washed for years. She carried a snakeskin bag. The shoes on her feet were already out of fashion—no one would wear those anymore. Even her pants looked like they had been sewn and mended over and over again—no one in their right mind would wear that nowadays. But here they were, in the front desk of this hotel.