

Switched Marriage: The Coddled Little Wife

Chapter 16: Chapter 16 Returning Home

Lin Jiayi gave him a mock reprimand with a smile, truly ashamed to be speaking of such things in front of so many people.

Yet she really relished the feeling, considering in her past life, when she married that cold man Qin Yang, he never uttered a single word of affection.

Li Guangyuan may have had a rough and sturdy appearance, but he was really gentle and considerate, paining for her after the exertion of their wedding night, letting her sleep in the following day without disturbing her for breakfast.

Which man could be capable of such an act?

No wonder in her past life, Lin Chuxia was raised to be so fresh and fair-skinned; she wouldn't have been worn down to a haggard wife if she had met such a man.

After welcoming the guests inside, Lin Jiadong glanced outside the courtyard, "Big sister and her husband have arrived, why haven't Second sister and her family come yet?"

"Your second sister has a long way to travel, she can't be compared to your big sister."

Lin Jiayi paused mid-step, smiling as she said, "It would be good if your second sister can make it for lunch," turning to address Mother Lin considerately, "Mom, let's eat when it's mealtime, we'll just save some food for Second sister, she probably won't be able to come early."

Mother Lin was puzzled by her words, "What's the matter?"

The others also looked over.

Lin Jiayi smoothed the hairs by her ear, starting nonchalantly, "Brother-in-law returned to his unit, Second sister doesn't know how to ride a bicycle, the journey from Qin Family Village to our home is so long, how could she just walk it? I think there's no need for her to come back while her husband is not around," just embarrassing herself.

Second Aunt Lin's eyes lit up instantly, she knew the Lin family's affairs would be full of drama to watch.

"Qin Yang left already? He should at least accompany his new wife back home before leaving, right? He didn't even properly acquaint himself with the family on the day of the wedding and just whisked the bride away, we're all still strangers here..."

"Get to know who? He's a key figure in his workplace, a very busy man. His coming back to marry at all is his filial duty to his mother, what does it have to do with our family?" Lin Jiayi openly rolled her eyes.

Remembering Qin Yang's icy, indifferent gaze, she itched to tear apart his facade. If he was so unwilling, why marry at all?

However, this time it was Lin Chuxia getting married, and she actually felt happy about it.

So it turns out that watching someone else's misfortune is such a joyful affair.

Second Aunt Lin disapproved and said, "Isn't that trapping our girl into a bad situation? Big sister, didn't the matchmaker clarify these things beforehand?"

Mother Lin really didn't know about this, with Qin Family's appealing conditions, girls were queuing up to marry in, why would she think too much about it?

Had she truly known all that, she wouldn't have asked someone to propose the marriage for her eldest daughter.

No wonder her eldest daughter was not willing, she must have heard something.

Good thing the marriage arrangement was changed.

Thinking this internally, she did not show it, "Don't listen to this girl's nonsense, it's not true. Qin Yang hurried back to his unit because he has work, which shows he's valued there," she finished, shooting Lin Jiayi a glare.

Talking about these things now was clearly inviting outsiders to laugh at their family.

She didn't care about how her second daughter's life would be, but she cared about her own reputation.

Lin Jiayi was unfazed; she had not even mentioned that Qin Yang had not shared a bed with Lin Chu.

He was inherently disdainful of country women; otherwise, why wouldn't he give her his salary? That alone caused their wedding night argument and refused to share a bed.

All excuses.

He simply looked down on them, only wanting to bring a caretaker for his parents into the house, to raise his bastard child outside.

That's right, even without evidence, Lin Jiayi always believed that the child Qin Yang brought home in her past life was his illegitimate offspring.

Otherwise, who would abandon their own children for someone else's?

Second Aunt Lin laughed in agreement, her eyes shining with gossip, unable to resist the urge to reach for some sunflower seeds.

Before she could grab the seeds, she saw two people walking in from the doorway, a tall man pushing a bicycle, standing straight and imposing.

"Oh my goodness, is that Chuxia with her man returning for a visit?"

Second Aunt Lin dropped the seeds and, with exaggerated motions, brushed off her clothes as she prepared to go out to greet them.

On the wedding day, she had intended to take pleasure in the Lin Family's misfortunes. This cousin-in-law of hers was always so sly, stingy, calculating, and loved to gossip. If it weren't for the fact that their houses were close by, she wouldn't even bother associating with her.

Later, seeing the Qin Family come with a tractor to fetch Lin Chuxia, she began to regret it.

She heard that Qin Yang held some weight in his workplace. With plenty of nephews and nieces, if he could arrange a job for one of them, wouldn't that mean a secure government job? Even working in another place would be good.

Moreover, hearing what Lin Jiadong's eldest daughter said just now, and seeing the person, who had been so certain they wouldn't come, arriving...

Second Aunt Lin was overjoyed and today seemed to be her lucky day.

"Sister-in-law, what are you waiting for? It's the new son-in-law's first visit, we should go meet him."

Mother Lin also snapped out of her daze, and without paying attention to her eldest daughter who still wore a look of disbelief, led everyone out to greet the visitors.

Lin Jiayi stared intensely at that upright figure, her eyes nearly shooting out flames: Why? How could he be accompanying Lin Chu back? Shouldn't he have left yesterday?

Li Guangyuan was about to call Lin Jiayi out with him when he saw her almost contorted expression and was taken aback, "Jiayi, shouldn't we also go out to welcome our sister and brother-in-law?"

"I am not going. Go yourself if you want," Lin Jiayi spoke in an unfriendly tone, then realizing who she was speaking to, she quickly forced a smile, "I didn't mean that, today is also the day for our return visit, and we are the eldest sister and brother-in-law, it doesn't make sense for us to go out and greet others."

Li Guangyuan had been uncertain as well which was why he asked Lin Jiayi. He looked at her then settled back down on his stool, giving her another glance.

Lin Jiayi couldn't be bothered with Li Guangyuan anymore, her gaze fixed on the two people entering the door.

When she saw Lin Chuxia's face turning pale, with a hint of blue under her eyes, her heart instantly felt liberated, and a smile appeared on her face.

Li Guangyuan grew even more nervous seeing her smile and then saw the tall man being ushered inside. He immediately got up and stood there stiffly.

Mother Lin went into the house and introduced both parties to each other. Since it was their first meeting after the wedding day and now they were proper relatives, future interaction was inevitable.

Uncle Lin's family was also there.

Qin Yang, with bright eyes and a modest attitude, greeted everyone.

Lin Chuxia gave Li Guangyuan, who looked very restrained in both appearance and demeanor, a slight nod and called him "brother-in-law" before shifting her gaze away.

She was afraid that if she looked any longer, she wouldn't be able to resist the urge to hit him.

After all, in her previous life, she had reached the point where she would hit him every time she saw him, until he started to inquire about her schedule before leaving the house to make sure he avoided her and thus avoid a beating.

Lin Jiayi, seeing this scene, could hardly contain her delight, her smile growing even more triumphant.

She supposed that Lin Chuxia never dreamed that her good husband from a previous life was now hers. Li Guangyuan's tenderness and care were all given to her, not only that, but whatever achievements Li Guangyuan might have in the future would have nothing to do with Lin Chuxia.

Oh, that's not right.

If one day Lin Chuxia fell on hard times and came begging to her, she might, considering their sisterly relationship, condescend to give her a little help.

Even if the Qin Family no longer wanted her, she could magnanimously let her come over to her place.

Although they had a maid for laundry and cooking, it wasn't impossible to spare a meal for her, let Lin Chuxia watch their loving and happy marriage every day, and only then would her own life truly be complete.

"It looks like elder sister is having a good time, smiling so happily," she thought, when suddenly she heard a voice by her ear.

Chapter 17: Chapter 17: I only felt a hard slap on the face

Lin Jiayi looked at Lin Chuxia, raised her hand to touch the corner of her lips, lost in thought.

Then she smiled again, "Seeing my younger sister marry such a good man, I am happy for her."

"Then I should thank big sister," Lin Chuxia said sincerely.

In the past few days of interacting with the Qin Family, she had seen their true character, which was far superior to the Li Family's, with their two-faced ways.

Even though it was her homecoming as the bride, Second Aunt Lin came over with her daughter-in-law to help, and they couldn't rely solely on them to cook.

While the men were in the room talking and drinking water with the new son-in-law, Second Aunt Lin chatted with Lin Chuxia while picking vegetables, asking about her situation in the Qin Family.

Mother Lin turned to listen as well.

Truth be told, when she saw Qin Yang today, she still felt that her eldest daughter was foolish.

"The in-laws are very nice, and Brother Qin and Eldest Son Qin's wife aren't troublesome people," Lin Chuxia answered genuinely.

"That's really lucky, Qin Yang is also quite spirited."

Second Aunt Lin's words were irritating to Lin Jiayi, "Alright, Chuxia, there are no outsiders here, you don't have to pretend. We can guess what the Qin Family is like even if you don't say it. Since Qin Yang started university, he wasn't home much, and

even though the in-laws are in charge, they've been overpowered by Eldest Son Qin and his wife. Can a newcomer like you get a good deal? Wait until Qin Yang goes back to his job in a few days, let's see if you can still smile then."

This was just pretending to be more than one actually is.

If life were really that good, would she look this haggard? It's hard to say how much she suffered at the hands of Old Lady Qin and Eldest Son Qin's wife.

Eldest Son Qin's wife is clever with her words — kind to others in public, earning a good reputation, but calculating privately.

With Qin Yang earning a salary, Brother Qin and his wife kept encouraging Old Lady Qin not to split the household, all because they were eyeing the younger brother's money.

If it wasn't for Old Lady Qin holding onto Qin Yang's salary, would they have argued about it on their wedding night?

In her past life, it wasn't until Qin Yang brought that child home that they split the household. Before that, she suffered a lot.

"Speaking of which, I have to mention Guang Yuan. Although he has two sisters, he's the only son of the Li Family, so in a few years when his sisters are married off, my husband and I will be the ones calling the shots inside and outside the house, with no sibling-in-law conflicts."

Second Aunt Lin smiled, "That's true, having just one brother does mean fewer complications."

Lin Chuxia's eyes twinkled slightly, and she smiled faintly, "Big sister has a point. I am actually quite envious of you. Once married, you can make your own decisions about everything. Unlike me, who not only has my in-laws above me but also Brother Qin and his wife. As the new bride, I can only be submissive."

She realized that in the previous life, Qin Yang returned to his work right after getting married and probably didn't split the family then either.

However, she did not want to elaborate. This was for the better, as a daughter without say in her in-laws' house held little value in her maternal home.

Seeing that she had admitted it, Lin Jiayi was satisfied, "When it comes to marriage, you have to marry someone who's by your side, who knows when you are cold or warm. No matter how capable Qin Yang is, he's in a different place. Can he really take you with him to work?"

To be separated and unable to meet for a year was no different from being a living widow.

Mother Lin was enlightened by these words, and upon reflection, the change in her eldest daughter's marital prospects seemed good.

"Guang Yuan is different; he's with me every day, always considering me in everything he does. Although farming is tiring, he said I won't have to work in the fields in the future, just stay at home and cook."

"You don't have to work in the fields? My goodness, would the Li Family agree to that?" exclaimed Second Aunt Lin.

"Why wouldn't they agree? Guang Yuan is competent. He can handle most of the farm work by himself. Besides, there's his mother and two sisters, and the Li Family doesn't have any land that belongs to me."

She doesn't even work in the fields at home, why should she in her husband's family?

Once Li Guangyuan starts his business, she'll be managing the money, and she'll have even less need to work in the fields then.

Second Aunt Lin said with envy, "Guang Yuan is really good to you. I'd be content if my Huahua could find a family like that."

Lin Chuxia bowed her head, tending to the fire, seeming to grow lonely from the conversation between the two.

Lin Jiayi's lips curled into a satisfied smile, just as she was about to add something, a tall figure entered the kitchen.

Qin Yang came straight to Lin Chuxia's side and handed her a cup of water. "Have some water first, I'll take care of the fire."

He said, and without caring about the gazes of those around him, he took the fire poker from her hand.

The words that Lin Jiayi was about to say got stuck in her throat, and her eyes widened in shock.

Is this the Qin Yang she knew?

Since when did he start serving tea and water for women? Not to mention helping with the fire.

Second Aunt Lin teased with a laugh, "Qin Yang is truly affectionate. My man hasn't helped me with the fire once in all these years we've been married."

After saying this, she cast a glance, intentionally or unintentionally, at Lin Jiayi.

Mother Lin also said, "There are so many people here, Qin Yang, go back and talk in the room, we don't need your help."

Lin Chuxia didn't expect Qin Yang to come help either. Under his persistent gaze, she quickly drank the water from the cup and handed it back to him, "Go join Dad and Uncle in the conversation. We don't need you here."

Fearing he wouldn't leave, she stood up and pushed him out of the kitchen, which made Second Aunt Lin and her sister-in-law Yang Jing laugh heartily.

Even after Qin Yang had entered the main room, Lin Jiayi's face was still full of disbelief.

Looking at the mocking glances of Second Aunt Lin and her sister-in-law, and seeing Li Guangyuan, who appeared as stable as Mount Tai while sitting on a chair through the glass, she felt as if she'd been harshly slapped on the face.

A wave of anger surged in her chest, "Lin Chuxia, have you no shame, cavorting with a man in front of others? Do you think this will show how much Qin Yang values you? If he really valued you, why wouldn't he even give you your wages?"

Mother Lin, who had been pondering about Qin Yang coming over, heard Lin Jiayi's remark and asked, "What's the matter? Qin Yang didn't give you your salary?"

Lin Chuxia added a few sticks to the stove, "Mom, the Qin Family are farmers after all. For our marriage, they already gave a dowry of 300 yuan, and I heard our family still owes debts from the famine," she said, neither confirming nor denying whether she was given anything.

Mother Lin, however, believed Lin Jiayi's words; after all, a dowry of 300 yuan was tangible, and it was not easy for any family to come up with such a sum at once.

She felt a bit disappointed, hoping that with Qin Yang's salary, their second daughter would be able to help the family in the future.

This second daughter really was of no use at all.

With no outsiders present, the entire family sat down for the meal.

Lin Family's two sons-in-law were naturally the center of attention; Qin Yang was seated with the elders by Uncle Lin, while Li Guangyuan sat next to Qin Yang.

During the meal, Qin Yang spoke eloquently with Mr. Lin and Uncle Lin, showing impeccable manners. In contrast, Li Guangyuan seemed much more restrained, just drinking when asked to drink and eating when asked to eat, the rest of the time he would just listen dumbly, unable to get a word in edgewise.

Lin Jiayi wanted him to show off a bit more, but he seemed deaf to the several times she called him.

Lin Chuxia secretly smirked to herself; Li Guangyuan was too honest. In the early days of their business, he was the same, doing whatever he was told to do, only focused on the work, while she was the one running around dealing with clients.

It was only later, when their business grew, and those clients had to rely on them, that he emerged from all the flattery and compliments.

Chapter 18: Chapter 18 Suddenly Want to Touch Her

After finishing their meal and resting a bit, Qin Yang and Lin Chuxia were about to leave.

Qin Yang had to catch an early train the next morning, and Lin Chuxia wanted to help him pack some of his belongings.

Hearing that Qin Yang was leaving tomorrow comforted Lin Jiayi somewhat.

When everyone left, she pulled Mother Lin to their original room.

This time, she didn't just come back for a visit; she needed capital to do business. She thought she had two hundred yuan and the Li Family could contribute a little, enough to start the business. However, she didn't expect that a marriage would only bring eighty yuan as a dowry, leaving the Li Family emptied out.

But then again, thinking about the famine debts at the Qin Family's side, Lin Jiayi didn't feel much anymore.

As soon as she heard more money was needed, Mother Lin frowned, "You've already taken two hundred, where would I get more money?"

"Mom, why do you still keep things from me like this? Didn't the Qin Family give three hundred yuan as a dowry? I'm not asking for all of it, just give me another two hundred."

"Two hundred," upon hearing this, Mother Lin's voice escalated, "What do you need so much money for? We still need to save that money for your younger brother's future marriage."

Lin Jiayi hugged Mother Lin's arm and acted spoiled, "I'm doing legitimate business, we want to do business but the capital is still short. Just give me another two hundred, once we make money from the business, let alone the capital, I can even provide for my younger brother's dowry. Mom, please help me, you wouldn't bear to see Guangyuan's potential in business go to waste, right?"

Mother Lin had heard more than once from Lin Jiayi that Li Guangyuan had a knack for business, though she didn't know where she heard it from, but her daughter always had grand ideas, choosing the Li Family over the Qin Family Village's advantages must also have seen Li Guangyuan's capabilities.

"Alright then, it's agreed. When your younger brother gets married, regardless of how much the dowry costs, you need to help."

"Don't worry, Mom, I keep my word. He's my younger brother; if I don't help him, who would?"

Once their business grows, not to mention a matter of a hundred and eighty yuan for dowry, even building a house and acquiring land for the younger brother wouldn't be a problem.

It would also let the villagers see how successful Lin Jiayi is.

Not like how stingy Lin Chuxia is, living in a villa, driving a car, but disregarding her own family's plight.

Comforted by these words, Mother Lin went to get the money.

At noon, the men had quite a bit to drink, Li Guangyuan was taken by Lin Jiadong to his room to sleep, and Mr. Lin was also snoring on the heated brick bed.

Mother Lin moved the cabinet at the head of the bed, lifted the bed mat, and when she removed the clay block, she couldn't help but shout, "Where's the money, my money?"

Lin Jiayi too hurriedly climbed onto the bed, grabbed the small cloth bag from Mother Lin's hand and turned it inside out, finding nothing.

"Mom, are you sure you put the money here?"

"I put it here, all of it here, I personally placed it the day before your wedding," Mother Lin frantically searched.

Lin Jiayi narrowed her eyes, "Could it be that dead girl Chuxia stole the money?"

"That's impossible," Mother Lin said without hesitation, "The second one, that coward, dare to steal money? Even if I throw the money in front of her, she would obediently pick it up and give it to me. Even with three times the courage, she wouldn't dare."

It wasn't just Mother Lin being confident; she knew best what the second daughter's temper was like; this household didn't have a spot for her to flare up, she'd rather starve than eat without permission.

Not to mention that this hiding spot was unknown to the second daughter.

"I think it must be your younger brother, that little wretched fellow, really needs a beating every three days, even daring to steal your mother's money."

While speaking, Mother Lin climbed off the bed, and Lin Jiayi ominously added, "Mom, you're not unwilling to lend me money and pretending that it's lost, are you?"

"You're talking nonsense," Mother Lin, already heartbroken over the lost money, put aside everything else, "If I was stingy with money, would I give you two hundred yuan as dowry while the Li Family only gave eighty yuan as a bride price? If you talk like that, I think your conscience has been eaten by dogs."

Lin Jiayi saw her mother was really anxious, so she quickly changed her tone, "Mom, I was just saying, no need to get so worked up. Let's quickly go and ask my little brother."

...

Lin Chuxia was unaware of the chaos in the Lin Family.

Qin Yang was going to buy train tickets, so Chuxia asked him to drop her off in front of the supply and marketing co-op.

After he left, Lin Chuxia went straight into the supply and marketing co-op, to the grocery counter and pointed at the candies inside, "Comrade, please weigh three pounds of fruit candies and two pounds of milk candies for me."

Seeing that beef was available nearby, she also bought one pound of beef and two pounds of yellow bean paste. She bought some snacks as well, and by the time Qin Yang came back from purchasing the train tickets, she was already waiting at the entrance of the co-op with two big mesh bags.

This was even more exaggerated than the items they had brought with them.

"What is this..."

An idea crossed his mind, but Qin Yang was not sure.

Lin Chuxia directly tied the mesh bags to the bicycle handle, "Take these back to your unit. I bought two kinds of candies, five pounds in total, you can distribute them to your colleagues. The snacks are for eating on the way. Tomorrow, I will steam some meat buns for you to take, eating only sweet things is too greasy. Oh right, if it's not enough, we can buy more."

A softness flashed through her cool eyes, making her chest flutter.

Qin Yang took the items, listening to her who was even more naggy than his mother, suddenly wanted to touch her.

His hand lifted up, hovering briefly over her head, he mustered the courage to press down, but just then Lin Chuxia looked up in confusion, "What's wrong? Not enough?"

Qin Yang quickly withdrew his hand behind his back as she looked up, standing rigidly, he shook his head, "Enough, more than enough."

After saying that, he anxiously glanced around, his fingers unconsciously fidgeting behind his back.

"That's good, let's go then," Lin Chuxia saw that the mesh bags were tightly tied and she held the heavier one in her arms.

Qin Yang came back to his senses, "Don't you need to buy anything?"

He thought she must need some daily necessities, since she had just gotten married.

Indeed Lin Chuxia needed a few things, but it wasn't urgent, "No, let's head back early so you can spend more time with mom and dad."

Seeing him still dazed in place, she urged with her eyes, "Let's go."

"Ah, yes," Qin Yang pushed the bicycle and was about to pedal forward, but it didn't move. He then saw Lin Chuxia dragging the back seat, her face full of speechlessness.

"I'm holding so many heavy things, I can't jump on. You stabilize the bicycle, I'll get on first."

Did he really think she could catch up and jump with all these items, with his long legs pedaling the bicycle?

This person was too slow!

Lin Chuxia didn't know how to describe Qin Yang anymore. At the Lin Family, she saw him talking intelligently with her father and uncle, but he seemed so silly in little things.

Could this be what they call being intelligently naive?

After Qin Yang steadied the bicycle with his long legs, Lin Chuxia sat down. Feeling that holding the big mesh bag was still unsafe, she directly clutched Qin Yang's clothes.

Aside from the main roads in town which were tar-paved, other places were either brick or dirt roads, especially the rough dirt section approaching Qin Family Village, it was very bumpy, she didn't want to be thrown off.

Qin Yang felt a tug on his shirt at the back, and his entire spine tightened...

Chapter 19: Chapter 19 Unbearably Hot

"Are you seated, all set?"

"Yeah, let's go."

Under the summer's-end July sky, the roads were flanked by lush, shaded trees, yet Qin Yang felt unbearably hot, sweat dripping from his forehead down to his chin...

Finally home, Qin Yang took a cool bath with a bucket of water, only to find Lin Chuxia already busy in the kitchen when he came out.

Little Zhuangzhuang sat on the doorstep, holding snacks just bought from the supply and marketing cooperative, munching away and sniffing.

"Little Auntie, is that beef sauce for Little Uncle to take away? It smells so good."

While simmering the beef sauce on a low flame, Lin Chuxia smiled back at him, "A portion is for your little uncle to take with him; he can pair it with meals at the unit. The rest is for us to eat."

"But my mom said that since we've divided the household, we can't eat food made by little auntie anymore."

"Would Zhuangzhuang share something tasty with little auntie if you had it?"

His little head nodded vigorously, "I would share with little auntie."

"See, that's right. If Zhuangzhuang thinks of sharing delicious things with little auntie, little auntie also thinks of sharing delicious things with Zhuangzhuang. We call that mutual kindness."

"But I don't have anything nice right now," the treats in his hand were also given by little auntie.

"You're still young, Zhuangzhuang. When you grow up and become capable, naturally you'll have lots of tasty treats, and then sharing them with little auntie will be just the same."

The little guy's eyes brightened, his tone determined, "I'll remember, when I grow up and make money, I'll buy goodies for grandpa, grandma, dad, mom, and little uncle and auntie..."

Upon seeing Qin Yang approaching, he repeated what he'd just said, as if seeking a witness.

Qin Yang ruffled his little head and stepped inside. The scent of the meat sauce was even more tempting now. Not just Zhuangzhuang, even he couldn't help but take a few extra whiffs.

"There's no need to go to all this fuss."

He had seen those items earlier: three pounds of fruit candy and two pounds of milk candy, along with three types of snacks, plus a tin of malted milk essence – she said it was all for him. What would he, a grown man, do with malted milk essence?

But his heart felt warm, aside from his mother, someone was caring about him for the first time, even more meticulously.

No wonder all his acquaintances were constantly talking about wanting to find wives.

Lin Chuxia packed up the sauce, ending up with five jars.

"It wasn't much trouble, these meat sauces won't last forever, they need to be eaten fairly quickly. You can share some with your colleagues since you have plenty."

In the workplace, social exchanges are quite important.

These weren't expensive items, and for their kind of work environment, they were just right.

She didn't know how Qin Yang handled interpersonal relationships at the unit and wasn't planning to interfere. She just wanted to be as thorough as possible.

Lin Chuxia divided the remaining meat sauce into three parts, setting aside a small portion for their evening meal and asking Qin Yang to take the other two portions to his parents-in-law and his elder brother's family.

Brother Qin and his wife just returned from the fields and were surprised that Lin Chuxia would still bring them food. Zhang Guilan, in particular, felt embarrassed remembering

how she didn't show a good face to her sister-in-law a few days ago, yet her sister-in-law hadn't taken it to heart.

"Well, sister-in-law, it's time to pick the tomatoes in the fields tomorrow. Have big brother take you to the market, then you'll know how to sell them."

Lin Chuxia nodded cheerfully, "Alright, that'll trouble Brother Qin then."

Mrs. Qin first asked about Lin Chuxia's trip back home, then pulled her aside and said, "Don't just think about giving it all to him; he's a big lad and won't lack food or drink." Although she said this, her face couldn't hide her joy.

"I heard their work environment over there is tough, often with shortages in supplies, and even if there are supplies, one can get sick of the communal meals. It's good to take some meat sauce to add some flavor. In a bit, I'll fry up some chili oil for him; I noticed Qin Yang really likes spicy food."

Qin Yang, who had just entered, overheard this and immediately grinned, showing off his white teeth, "That's great," as he loved spicy food.

"You, you just don't know how to pamper your wife. Is she having an easy time busying herself around?" Mrs. Qin chided him from afar, and Qin Yang, feeling a bit embarrassed, scratched the back of his head and looked at Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia didn't feel anything special; she used to work in catering and was used to doing things herself.

Dinner was just for the two of them. There were leftover steamed buns at home, so after boiling the porridge, she simply heated the buns on a sieve.

The beauty of being farmers; there was never a lack of vegetables to eat.

Lin Chuxia made a tomato and egg stir-fry, a cold mixed bean dish, and added her freshly fried chili oil, which greatly enhanced the flavor. With some beef sauce, it was simple yet perfect with rice.

Qin Yang wasn't new to Lin Chuxia's cooking, yet he was still amazed by it.

"This chili oil smells amazing, and the beef sauce is delicious too, Lin Chuxia, your culinary skills are truly unmatched."

He alternated between a bite of steamed bun and a scoop of sauce, followed by a couple bites of the cold mixed vegetables, particularly picking places with chili, enjoying the meal thoroughly.

Lin Chuxia knew the beef sauce and chili oil tasted great; this was a recipe she had integrated from various sources and refined in her past life. Just the chili oil alone had attracted many customers to her restaurant, and later, when a food factory was established, their chili oil and beef sauce became products sold both domestically and internationally.

But seeing how Qin Yang was enjoying his meal, she felt the emotional value was off the charts and thought she didn't make enough.

After dinner, Qin Yang was the first to take the dishes to the well to wash, and Lin Chuxia packed the cooled beef sauce and chili oil into a cloth bag.

Their train was at 7:50 tomorrow morning, and although Ancheng County had a train station, it was still some distance from Qin Family Village, so they still had to get up early.

Qin Yang went to Mr. and Mrs. Qin's room to spend more time talking to his parents since he was leaving.

Lin Chuxia took the opportunity to draw water for a bath, and since they had separated from the larger family, they no longer needed to wash in their own room.

She hadn't used her special space recently because living together with Qin Yang, he might notice something. She didn't plan to share her secret with anyone.

When Qin Yang came back, Lin Chuxia was already dozing off. The man climbed onto the bed and directly pulled the quilt over to sneak in.

Just as Lin Chuxia thought he might want one last hurrah for the night, a strong arm stretched across her waist, pulling her closer to him.

Sensing her tension, he whispered by her ear, "Sleep, I won't touch you tonight."

Lin Chuxia rolled her eyes internally, praising him for his conscience.

But after hearing his words, she indeed slept more soundly, falling asleep almost immediately after he finished talking.

Qin Yang, however, wasn't in a hurry to sleep. By the moonlight shining through the window, he watched the person with closed eyes, and only after hearing her steady breathing did he raise his hand to gently touch her brows and eyes.

The woman uncomfortably wrinkled her nose, which frightened him into lying still immediately.

After waiting a while without any response and her breathing becoming steady again, Qin Yang slowly turned back to continue watching her.

After an unknown amount of time, his thin lips pursed, then he slowly leaned in and kissed her forehead, finally closing his eyes contentedly.

Chapter 20: Chapter 20 She Is Willing to Protect This Man

Lin Chuxia knew nothing about these things and had slept until the sky was faintly bright.

She fumbled for Qin Yang's watch beside her pillow, took a glance, and saw it was not yet five o'clock—just the right time to get up.

She had chopped the meat and mixed it with seasonings the night before. In the morning, she only needed to add some green onions and ginger, and the dough was already risen.

Lin Chuxia skillfully wrapped the buns, and as she got moving, Qin Yang also woke up and got out of bed to help her light the fire.

"Lin Chuxia..." he called out.

"Huh?" Lin Chuxia was busy with her tasks and didn't raise her head.

Qin Yang pursed his lips and continued, "If it's too much to work in the fields, don't force yourself. My salary is enough to support you."

"Oh."

"My dad's health isn't good; please take extra care of him for me."

"Okay."

"If you encounter anything you can't handle by yourself, you can go to my older brother and sister-in-law. The sister-in-law may sometimes be sharp-tongued, but she is actually quite nice, and since my brother and I have had a good relationship since we were kids, he won't refuse you. Don't be embarrassed."

"I know."

After a brief silence, Lin Chuxia had finished wrapping the buns and was placing them into the pot one by one and then went to tidy up the chopping board.

The man's voice rose again, "I gave all the money to mom when I came back, but in about ten days, it'll be payday again. It takes about five days for a letter to reach home from my side. You'll have to manage for the next half month."

Lin Chuxia finally looked at him, "What's so hard about that? Didn't sister-in-law say just yesterday? We can sell tomatoes today, and once the tomatoes are sold, we'll have money."

Besides, when he gave the money to his mother, she actually considered it as a betrothal gift for their family.

Another moment of quietude ensued, with only the crackling sounds of the fire in the stove heard in the room.

"That..." Qin Yang raised his head, only to see Lin Chuxia smiling at him, and for a moment didn't know what to say.

He averted his eyes slightly and coughed lightly, "Don't you have anything you want to say to me?"

Lin Chuxia thought for a moment, and it seemed she really didn't, but seeing his expectant eyes, clear and bright, she still fulfilled her wifely duty and admonished him, "The house is well looked after, so you don't have to worry. Just do your job well there, get along with your colleagues, and most importantly, be safe at all times, remembering that someone at home is waiting for you." She wasn't blind to the concern Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin had for their son.

Qin Yang's eyes shone brighter, and he spoke with gravity, "I will be careful."

The buns were ready, and Lin Chuxia and Qin Yang had breakfast together. Then she packed the remaining buns into a cloth bag, and it was about time to leave.

When Qin Yang came back, he had only carried a small cloth bag, but when he returned, besides the bag he carried over, he also had a large one, filled with food.

He tied the bag to one side of the bicycle and said goodbye to the already awake Qin family before taking Lin Chuxia to catch the train.

Though early, the train station was bustling with people.

Ancheng County's geographical location was good, being considered a large county city, with the train station being a major stop as several trains docked daily.

This was still the early 1980s, and Lin Chuxia knew that in a few more years, Ancheng County would be upgraded to a city, and by then, there would be even more trains stopping at this station.

Qin Yang glanced at the time; the train was due to arrive soon.

Lin Chuxia handed him the small bag she had been holding, "Have they started checking tickets yet? You better hurry over."

In this era, taking a train was akin to a disaster. When the train arrived, everyone surged aboard, and if one was late, their seat could very well be taken by someone else.

But Qin Yang was not in a rush. He pulled out two tickets from his pocket to show her, "I bought a platform ticket."

Lin Chuxia found that sometimes Qin Yang could be somewhat childish. Like now, with the train stopping for only about five minutes, he still bought a platform ticket insisting she see him off.

It was totally unlike the cold and indifferent man Lin Jiayi described him to be.

Since he had bought the ticket, naturally, Lin Chuxia had no reason not to go with him. They checked their tickets together and entered the platform. The train arrived just as they found a place to stand.

Lin Chuxia had seen his ticket and craned her neck to help him locate his carriage, while Qin Yang's eyes stayed on her.

"What are you looking at me for? The train is here, your carriage is over that way. Go, quick."

Lin Chuxia pulled his arm to rush him onto the train but was instead firmly grasped by the man.

"Lin Chuxia..." he looked at her, "I may not be able to return before the end of the year. I know this is unfair to you, but this is my job. All I can say is I'll try my best to fulfill my responsibilities as a husband..."

"You don't need to explain, I already know. I'll be waiting for you at home."

Lin Chuxia interrupted him with a smile, her eyes sparkling brilliantly.

In later times, the country's infrastructure would become incredibly powerful, whether through mountains, gobbets, deserts, or even across seas...

Having seen the prosperity of later times made Lin Chuxia feel even more respect and admiration for these people.

They devoted their youth and sweat to the nation's construction, overcoming difficulties unimaginable to ordinary people.

She couldn't do those things, but she could give this man peace of mind; she was willing to guard this man.

She straightened his collar for him, "You don't need to say any more, I know. I will write to you."

The anxiety in Qin Yang's eyes finally dissipated, "Good, I will also write to you."

"Alright, you'd better go now."

Then Qin Yang, carrying his luggage, hurried toward the train.

The crowd continued to jostle onto the train. A lady juggling a child and luggage was being pushed this way and that, and Qin Yang went over, took the child in his arms, and didn't return the child to the lady until he boarded the train.

An elderly grandma's bag had been pushed to the other side, and she was yelling while tugging on it; Qin Yang helped her carry the bag over to the side of her seat...

"Whoo—"

The train sounded its horn and slowly began to move. Lin Chuxia could no longer see the man's figure and withdrew her gaze, following the crowd out of the platform.

"Lin Chuxia—"

She turned abruptly and saw a head poking out of a window, waving energetically at her, eyes dark and clear.

Lin Chuxia smiled, raised her hand, and waved back on tiptoes...

.....

After leaving the train station, Lin Chuxia didn't rush home and wandered around the area instead.

The country had introduced new policies on individual economy, but many issues were still unrefined.

Especially since there had been many years of a system of central planning and control, individual economic activities were still very cautious, fearing any sudden policy changes.

This also explained why there weren't many individual entrepreneurs near the train station—the only state-owned restaurant close to the train station was booming with business.

In her previous life, she and Li Guangyuan started by selling vegetables. They would buy vegetables from the rural areas in the morning and sell them in the city's night market at night, truly one of the toughest and most toilsome jobs.

Later, with savings, she went into catering.

In this life, she wanted to take fewer detours, and the geographical location of the Qin family was much better than that of the Li family, which she couldn't waste.

With a plan in mind, Lin Chuxia eventually headed home.