

## **A Snake 25**

Chapter 25: Stinky woman, playing dumb with me

"You'll know once you've visited Granny Wu," my mom seemed reluctant to talk more about it.

I lowered my gaze, nodded, and said, "I'll go see Granny Wu tomorrow."

Based on the address on the paper, Granny Wu's village was quite a distance from our home.

It was nearing evening now, and if I set out,

it would be dark halfway there.

At that moment, someone knocked on our rickety wooden door from the outside.

The incident with the pale-faced old lady knocking on our door last night had given me a psychological scar.

The sound of knocking sent shivers down my spine.

My mom's face turned stern as she asked coldly, "Who is it? Who's outside?"

The succession of events had made her somewhat jumpy.

"Aunt Lin, it's me, Xiao He, are you at home?" The voice of He Youfei came from outside.

He Youfei was our next-door neighbor, and we had attended the same elementary school.

He graduated from a technical school and seemed to work at a factory in town.

My mom's surname was Lin, and people around my age in the neighborhood called her Aunt Lin.

My mom's tone was not very pleasant, "If there's something, just say it."

"Isn't it almost Qingming Festival? My mom made some green rice balls and told me to bring some over for you and Su Wan to enjoy for the festival," He Youfei said amiably, not minding the cold reception.

Compared to the little ruffian he was in elementary school, had He Youfei actually improved his ways?

Only then did I recall that Qingming Festival was in three days. I was about to speak,

but my mom stopped me with a look. Her expression was very serious, "We appreciate the gesture, Su Wan and I, but you can take the green rice balls back, we've made some ourselves."

Hearing the tone and attitude of my mom, I understood.

My mom was gentle by nature, only showing cold brows to those who borrowed the cheongsam.

He Youfei showing up with green rice balls was fake; surely, he was coveting our family's cheongsam.

"Aunt Lin, why the formality between us? We've been good neighbors for over a decade," He Youfei's voice had a hint of embarrassment.

My mom pursed her lips and said nothing more.

He Youfei at the door waited for a while before speaking again, "My mom's calling me back for dinner. I'll leave the green rice balls at the door, and you and Su Wan can come out and get them later."

I tiptoed over and peered through the broken hole in the wooden door.

Outside, it was the golden hour of sunset, and the glow was casting a fiery red over everything.

A few youths with chicken coop hairstyles stood menacingly in front of my house, baseball bats in hand.

There was a red plastic bag lying on the ground in front of our door.

He Youfei paced back and forth, appearing particularly agitated.

He pulled out a cigarette, and another youth with coiffed hair eagerly lit it for him.

I turned back anxiously to glance at my mom.

This He Youfei was a two-faced schemer, deliberately intimidating us.

To target my mom and me, two vulnerable women, he even brought four or five guys.

Seeing my distressed expression, my mom also took a peek through the hole.

Her face went pale, "Why are there so many of them?"

"Should we call the police?"

"Let's wait and see, maybe they'll leave after a while."

"How come these mother and daughter suddenly got wise, refusing to take the bait," He Youfei, wearing leather boots, kicked the wooden door, his eyes filled with irritation.

The blonde youth beside him noticed the hole in the door and said, "Brother Fei, there's a hole in the door! Maybe they saw us and that's why they dare not open it?"

"Damn it, stupid woman, playing dumb with me!" He Youfei's face suddenly twisted with malice, his kick to the door was so powerful that it shook, "Do they know I'm here to borrow the cheongsam and are deliberately not opening the door?"