

## As Agreed 91

### Chapter 91: Nostalgia

After returning to the hospital room, Ye Xiaomeng slowly regained consciousness. She opened her eyes and blinked, trying to remember where she was and what had happened.

She hurriedly touched her belly with her hand, then gazed at the ceiling of the hospital room, silent. Tears involuntarily welled up and trickled down from the corners of her eyes.

Seeing that she was awake, Father Ye and Mother Ye excitedly called out, "Mengmeng, how are you feeling?"

Looking at her parents, who suddenly seemed to have aged ten years, Ye Xiaomeng's heart ached.

She called out to them, her voice hoarse.

"I'm fine, sorry for worrying you." Ye Xiaomeng touched her belly again, her expression dimming. She knew she had lost the baby.

The feeling of being separated from her own flesh and blood caused immense pain to Ye Xiaomeng. He hadn't even had a chance to take a good look at this world before turned into a pool of blood.

"Xiaomeng, don't think too much. You're still young, and everything will be alright in the future." Shu Pan watched her friend and tried to console her.

"Girl..." Ye Xiaomeng's voice choked.

"Xiaomeng, Cheng Yang and his parents are being held back by Uncle Ye outside. Do you want to see him?"

"I don't want to see him for now. Whether I see him or not, the outcome is the same." Xiaomeng stared blankly ahead, her gaze unfocused.

"Uncle and Auntie will be here with you. I'll go get them something to eat." Shu Pan said and walked away.

As she opened the door, Cheng Yang hurriedly approached and asked, "How's

Xiaomeng? I want to go in and see her."

Shu Pan blocked him and shook her head, saying, "She doesn't want to see you for now. Let her rest. Given what's happened, she needs time to calm down." After saying that, she walked away.

Just as she reached the entrance, two people came toward her. It was Gu Shaoting and Tong Fei.

Seeing their close interaction, it seemed that good news was on the way. Entertainment news often covered their affairs, and it was hard not to know about them.

Shu Pan thought it was quite a coincidence, so she quickly stepped aside to avoid them.

After coming out, she looked at the bright sunshine outside and couldn't help but sigh. Some people, no matter how hard one tried to forget them, always would reappear when one least expected it.

After buying the items, she returned to find Cheng Yang still at the door. Cheng's parents had already left.

She walked up to him and said, "Xiaomeng doesn't want to see you. You should go back. Staying here won't help."

Cheng Yang's face was haggard, his expression filled with pain.

After Shu Pan went inside, Cheng Yang's phone in his pocket started ringing. He glanced at it, then decisively hung up.

But the phone was persistent. It rang again shortly after he hung up. He pursed his lips, then numbly answered. On the other end was Ling Snow's coquettish voice.

"Cheng, why aren't you answering my calls? What happened?"

"If there's nothing urgent, I'll hang up now." Cheng Yang said coldly, devoid of his previous warmth.

"Cheng..." Ling Snow stomped her foot on the other end of the line, but the call was already ended.

Gu Shaoting accompanied Tong Fei for a follow-up check at the hospital. After being hit by a shelf last time, fortunately, everything had healed now and there were no major issues. He finally felt relieved.

As they left the hospital, Gu Shaoting didn't know if he was seeing things, but he caught a glimpse of a familiar figure. He wanted to approach and take a closer look, but the person had already left in a car.

Feeling somewhat melancholic, Gu Shaoting wondered what was going on with his thoughts lately.

Every day, He returned home and found the house empty and devoid of warmth.

After coming back, there was the same old Auntie serving the same routine dishes, lacking any creativity. He really missed the delicious and warm porridge that only Shu Pan seemed to be able to make..

Chapter 92: Meet Doctor Wen Again

Shu Pan left the hospital and got into her car, heading to a nearby shopping mall. She realized that her belly was getting bigger, and she didn't have many clothes that fit anymore. She decided to take this opportunity while in Bin City to buy some new clothes.

After all, Bin City had more options compared to Lotus Town, and she planned to return to Lotus Town once Xiaomeng recovered.

However, she didn't know when she would come back again.

This city used to hold deep affection for her, but now it was just associated with pain. All he needed was an excuse, and he could achieve his goal of divorce.

As she looked out of the car window at the scenery, her mood turned somewhat melancholic.

Upon arriving, she purposefully went to a Maternal & Child store.

After shopping, she returned to the place where Xiaomeng used to stay and put down the items. She planned to replace Uncle Ye and Auntie later so that they could come back and rest.

The next day was still sunny. Shu Pan arrived at the hospital early and realized that it had been a while since her prenatal checkup. Coincidentally, the hospital she was in now was the one where Dr. Wen Chi practiced.

She asked around and found out that Dr. Wen was on duty today. She registered for a checkup.

Since she arrived early, there weren't many people, and she was seen quite quickly.

As she entered, Dr. Wen Chi happened to look up at her. He seemed surprised and asked as he stood up, "Why did you come? Weren't you in Lotus Town? Did something happen?"

"Dr. Wen, I happened to be in Bin City, so I thought I'd come in for a prenatal checkup. Nothing's wrong." Shu Pan smiled gently.

"I just happen to have a business trip to study in Lotus Town. I was planning to visit you then." Wen Chi said.

He always felt something unusual around Shu Pan. Even though there were so many charming women around him, none of them caught his eye. Yet, he found himself interested in a divorced, pregnant woman. He couldn't help but wonder if his taste had become a bit unconventional.

"You're welcome anytime." Shu Pan handed the registration form to Dr. Wen Chi.

"You've lost a lot of weight. What's going on?" Dr. Wen Chi noticed she was thinner than the last time he saw her. Most women gain weight during the middle of pregnancy, but she had lost a lot.

"It's hot weather, and my appetite hasn't been great. But everything else is fine." Shu Pan's belly was quite pronounced now.

Dr. Wen Chi performed the checkup and found no issues, advising her to take care of herself and her diet.

After Shu Pan left, Dr. Wen Chi contemplated for a moment and decided to visit her when he had the chance.

On the day before her discharge, Ye Xiaomeng finally agreed to see Cheng Yang. She stared at him resolutely and said, "I've thought a lot these past few days. Last night, I came to a decision. I've loved you for 10 years. I thought we would have a good ending, but given the current situation, there's no need to continue. What I said at the wedding was true. From now on, let's treat each other as strangers."

"Xiaomeng, we've been together for so long. Please give me a chance

"Cheng Yang, it's too late. I gave you a chance, but now I can't love anymore, and I don't want to."

"Then let me love you from now on. Can I do that?" Cheng Yang held Xiaomeng's hand, pleading.

Ye Xiaomeng pulled her hand away, her eyes reddened, and she choked, “Let go of me. Let’s part ways like this. Now that there’s no child to bind us, I hope we can separate amicably.”

“Mengmeng, we will have children in the future. Please don’t let go of me. Let’s start over, okay?” Cheng Yang said anxiously.

“Cheng Yang, it’s truly too late. Take care of yourselves.” After saying that, Ye

Xiaomeng lay down on the bed, turned to the side, and tears soaked her pillow..

#### Chapter 93: Waiting for Childbirth

After confirming that Ye Xiaomeng had no further complications, she was discharged from the hospital. While her physical injuries were healing, the wounds in her heart would take much longer to mend.

Ye Xiaomeng returned to her hometown with her parents. Concerned that being there might trigger painful memories, her parents persuaded her to leave that place. Moreover, her work didn’t hold any sentimental value either.

As she looked at the place where she had spent ten years, all that remained were pain and regret. She left with a heavy heart.

Because she needed to rest for a while and post-miscarriage recovery also required postpartum confinement, she promised to visit Shu Pan after she gave birth. She even joked about being the child’s godmother. Shu Pan nodded tearfully.

Cheng Yang knew that Ye Xiaomeng was leaving and had been persistently trying to change her mind. Finally, he reluctantly agreed but also expressed his determination to win Xiaomeng’s heart back.

After watching Ye Xiaomeng and her family leave, Shu Pan was reluctant to part, but eventually she left Bin City and returned to Lotus Town. The events that transpired in Bin City felt like a dream to her now.

Time passed as swiftly as a white steed. It was now early autumn, and Shu Pan was already at home awaiting childbirth. Her due date was approaching, which made her parents and Auntie Lu extremely nervous.

Shu Pan now resembled a clumsy penguin with her large belly and swollen feet. Sometimes she would even self-deprecatingly compare her feet to pig trotters.

Being pregnant was a wonderful thing for a couple. They looked forward to the birth of the fruit of love together, but she could only rely on herself when she was pregnant. She had no lover to share her joy and no one to share her hardships.

Yet, Shu Pan merely smiled and didn't complain. She had made her own choices, and she had no regrets.

A few white clouds drifted across the sky on an early autumn day as the weather began to cool down.

Shu Pan had already prepared her bag for the delivery and was ready to go at any moment.

On this day, after finishing her meal and intending to take a walk, she suddenly realized that her water had broken. Nervously, she called her father and Auntie Lu. Since this was her first time giving birth, she was in a state of panic.

She tossed and turned on the hospital bed. The doctor informed her that she was only dilated two centimeters and advised her to conserve her energy for the delivery.

Observing the attentive care the husband in the adjacent bed was providing, Shu Pan couldn't help but envy them.

She was alone in this struggle.

Finally, when Shu Pan was almost in despair, she was wheeled into the delivery room. Shu Laide and Auntie Lu paced nervously outside.

Ignoring her appearance, Shu Pan screamed loudly, using it as a way to alleviate her pain.

“Push harder! Oh no, the baby’s position is a bit off.” Shu Pan immediately grew anxious upon hearing this and forgot about her pain. The doctor encouraged her to give it her all.

Finally, just before Shu Pan fell unconscious, she heard the doctor saying that it was a baby girl. She breathed a sigh of relief and was too exhausted to keep her eyes open, slipping into unconsciousness.

When she woke up, she was already in the delivery room, and her gaze wandered around the pink curtains. As she regained her senses, she saw her father and Auntie Lu looking intently at the little bundle in the small crib. They were both seriously studying her.

“Look at her eyes, they’re just like Panpan’s.” Shu Laide grew more fond of the baby girl the more he looked at her.

“No, look at her mouth.” The two of them argued.

In reality, it was hard to tell who a baby that small resembles. However, everyone seemed to reach a consensus to not mention the child’s father.

Shu Pan smiled gently, her face radiating contentment. She looked at the two and said, “Honestly, how can we tell at this age?”

“Panpan, she looks like you, a beauty in the making,” Auntie Lu said joyfully..

Chapter 94: Your Name Is Shu Joy



Shu Pan shook her head helplessly, thinking how they were bragging about this child.

“Panpan, why don’t you hold your daughter?”

Auntie Lu placed the baby in Shu Pan’s arms. Shu Pan looked at the tiny little person, all rosy and resembling a little monkey.

This was the little baby she had gone through hardships to bring into the world, so small yet so adorable.

“Baby, thank you for coming into my life, for being with Mom. Mom doesn’t expect you to achieve great things, as long as you grow up healthy.”

Shu Pan gently held the baby’s hand, feeling like it was never enough. She softly said, “Baby, from now on, your name is Shu Joy, Joy for short. Do you like your name? I hope you will always be happy and healthy, growing up under Mom’s surname.”

Ye Xiaomeng found out that Shu Pan had given birth to a daughter and rushed over immediately.

At first sight of Ye Xiaomeng, Shu Pan couldn’t recognize her for a moment. Ye Xiaomeng’s once long, shiny black hair was now cut into a stylish short hair, dyed a light golden color.

“Girl, can you recognize me? Do I look good?” Ye Xiaomeng teased, a bit self-absorbed.

Shu Pan noticed that Ye Xiaomeng seemed much brighter and happier than before, and she was genuinely pleased for her. Indeed, time was the best remedy.

“Yes, you look stunning, ” Shu Pan thought that the new hairstyle really suited Ye Xiaomeng.

“Changed my hairstyle, changed my mood,” explained Ye Xiaomeng with a smile.

Then she saw the little beauty, exclaimed, "Girl, your daughter is definitely going to be a beauty. Look at those delicate features."

While Ye Xiaomeng praised the baby, she couldn't help feeling a bit down, thinking about her own child, who should have been a bit older than this little girl if things hadn't turned out the way they did. It was a heartbreaking thought.

"Xiaomeng, what's wrong?" Shu Pan noticed Ye Xiaomeng lost in thought and called out to her.

Ye Xiaomeng snapped back to reality. She bent down and picked up Shu Pan's little princess, then said affectionately, "Sweetie, I'm your mom's best friend and your godmother. Remember me, okay?"

Watching this scene, Shu Pan felt warm inside. She sincerely hoped that Ye Xiaomeng could find happiness. Such a kind and lovely woman deserved to be treated well.

"Girl, I might go to S City for work," Ye Xiaomeng suddenly changed the topic.

"Why did you decide so hastily? You're not familiar with the place, how will you manage there? You've been in Cheng Yang's ivory tower for too long, a whole decade. Are you prepared to deal with the complexities of society and human relationships?" Shu Pan was genuinely concerned.

"Don't worry, I'm not a child anymore. I want to work outside, but I don't want to return to Bin City," Ye Xiaomeng replied, feeling prepared. Cheng Yang had been constantly visiting her hometown lately, and no matter what she said or did, he silently endured it. Ye Xiaomeng was getting increasingly annoyed by Cheng Yang's persistence, and she didn't feel any attraction to him anymore.

She realized that when she truly let go of someone, this was how it felt.

"Then please take care of yourself, especially when you're alone. It would be even better if you had a romantic encounter," Shu Pan jokingly said.

"Alright, I'll take your advice," Ye Xiaomeng nodded.

But in truth, she thought she might not be interested in romance for a while. Once bitten, twice shy. The wounds from her previous relationship ran too deep, and this time, she wanted to let fate take its course.

Ye Xiaomeng spent a few days in Lotus Town, continuing to amuse little Joy. Shu Pan watched her friend gradually emerge from the shadows, and she was very happy for her. Finally, Ye Xiaomeng left Lotus Town..

## Chapter 95: Poor Life

Spring had returned, and with it, the revival of all living things. Year by year, everything was changing.

Three years later, Bin City had become more bustling than ever, with people coming and going, bustling streets, and skyscrapers rising into the sky, creating a lively atmosphere.

Shu Pan stood by the roadside, waiting for the traffic lights to change, watching the lights shift from red to green and back again, lost in thought.

She hadn't expected to return to Bin City, especially so soon.

After the birth of Joy, every expense weighed heavily on Shu Pan, and at times, she questioned if she was being too selfish. Due to her own desires, she had concealed Joy's birth from Gu Shaoting, but her financial situation couldn't provide the child with a good life.

Joy had only been breastfed for half a year because Shu Pan couldn't keep up with the nutritional demands, resulting in a low milk supply. Even during her postpartum confinement, she didn't have the luxury of the nutritious meals that others enjoyed.

After weaning Joy, she could only afford to make rice soup for her, sometimes struggling to save enough money to buy a can of discounted milk powder, as long as it wasn't expired. Shu Pan wished she could

stretch every yuan. Sometimes, she wondered if Joy would have a more carefree life if she had stayed with Gu Shaoting.

However, such thoughts only arose in moments of despair because she knew that Joy was not a cherished child to Gu Shaoting. Joy's mother was her, and she couldn't forget that. She sighed and carried on, determined to endure.

Perhaps due to malnutrition, Joy appeared much smaller and thinner than children her age. This worried Shu Pan deeply. Fortunately, Joy was healthy and very well-behaved. Despite being only three years old, she was mature beyond her years and had a way of saying things that warmed Shu Pan's heart. Joy was the family's little bundle of joy, a source of happiness that made all the hardships worthwhile.

Thinking of her daughter, Shu Pan forgot all about her own difficulties.

When Joy turned two, Shu Pan left for Bin City to work. Her father's health was poor, making it impossible for him to work, and Auntie Lu was getting older and struggled to continue working. So, they stayed in Lotus Town to take care of Joy, while Shu Pan had to bear all the expenses herself.

Her current job was with a reputable company specializing in interior decoration. Having left this field for a few years, Shu Pan had to spend a lot of time relearning the ropes. She knew how crucial this job was for her and her daughter. Despite being demanding, the income was good compared to other opportunities.

As she gradually settled into her work, everything outside of it felt unfamiliar. She occasionally heard about Gu Shaoting and Tong Fei in entertainment news, but she simply shrugged it off. All of that had nothing to do with her.

Every time the media reported that they were getting closer to tying the knot, with pictures of them holding hands and going out, the parties involved never came out to clarify, so it was probably true.

Life continued this way for Shu Pan. For her, basic necessities like food and clothing took precedence, and she couldn't afford to indulge in romance or luxury anymore.

The traffic lights changed several times, and Shu Pan finally snapped out of her thoughts.

She was on her way to buy some delicious treats for Joy. Joy had grown a bit taller recently and needed new clothes. Shu Pan hadn't bought her any new clothes or treats in almost a year. Every time Joy saw other kids with new clothes, she looked at them with envy, and those expressions pierced Shu Pan's heart.

So this time, she decided to be generous and satisfy her daughter's wishes..

## Chapter 96: A Narrow Path for Enemies

Shu Pan seized the opportunity after work and hurried to the mall. Red discount banners were hanging everywhere inside the mall. Shu Pan headed for the store with the best deals and the highest discounts.

Since all the items were last year's leftovers and odd sizes, they were relatively cheap. Shu Pan didn't even dare to look at the newly arrived items, as her salary, after covering her normal expenses, left her with very little.

She carefully checked her wallet and, despite the pain, bought two dresses and a pair of shoes for Joy. The dresses were in odd sizes, and she guessed that they might make Joy look a little bigger when she wore them. However, children grow quickly, so having something a bit larger was a good idea.

After paying, Shu Pan planned to head back. The place she was renting was a bit far from the mall, but Shu Pan noticed it was still early, so, to save money, she decided to walk back.

She took the escalator down from the third floor to the second floor. On the second floor, there were high-end designer brands everywhere. As she stepped off the elevator, she hastened her pace, planning to head down to the first floor.

Just then, she saw Tong Fei and another woman heading in her direction. Shu Pan couldn't help but sigh. It really was a small world. She had just been thinking about how she hadn't run into Gu Shaoting and Tong Fei in over a year since coming to Bin City. But now, here they were.

It seemed that they were coming straight towards her. Shu Pan could have simply minded her own business and walked past them, but she thought about her current destitute appearance. She didn't know how Tong Fei might ridicule her. Sometimes, it was better to avoid unnecessary trouble.

Thinking this, Shu Pan quickly slipped into a nearby store. She watched as Tong Fei and her companion headed directly for the GV counter in front of the store, as if they had come specifically for this store.

GV was the most sought-after luxury brand by young people today, and their products were all priced above five figures.

Once inside the store, a salesperson quickly approached them. "Miss Tong, hello. Please have a seat, and we'll show you our latest arrivals right away." Obviously, Tong Fei was a VIP here, and the staff knew her well.

Shu Pan watched as they entered the store. Even though she was somewhat ignorant of these matters, she knew the approximate price range of this brand's products. She could imagine how expensive they were.

She observed Tong Fei pick up a handbag, which had an orange silk scarf tied to it, from the display cabinet. The woman accompanying Tong Fei exclaimed excitedly, "GV's limited edition is finally out. I heard there aren't many of them released, and it's a worldwide limited edition. It's so hard to get one!"

The way the woman was expressing herself was quite exaggerated, but Tong Fei just smiled gently and said to the salesperson, "Please wrap it up for me." She handed the bag she had just picked to the salesperson to be packaged.

Then, she took out a black card from her wallet and handed it directly to the salesperson. A bag that cost over 200,000 yuan, and she decided to buy it without any hesitation.

The woman accompanying Tong Fei was left stunned. She knew Tong Fei was wealthy, but to be so rich that she didn't even need to think about buying such an expensive item, that really opened her eyes.

Shu Pan was also shocked. She had forgotten to leave the store. She watched Tong Fei, dressed in a white shirt and black wide-leg pants, tall and slim, with an aura of celebrity elegance. When had she become a model-like figure? Even with just a slight smile, she exuded charm that ordinary people couldn't imitate.

Perhaps this was why she could work as a model! Even with just a slight smile, she was captivating, with an unattainable elegance.

Shu Pan looked back at herself, wearing a worn-out pair of jeans, a half-used T-shirt, a pair of white, washed-out sneakers, carrying a cheap handbag. She looked poor and out of place in this environment.

"Miss, may I help you with anything?" Suddenly, a salesperson in the store

asked her..

#### Chapter 97: Being Looked Down Upon

The salesperson looked Shu Pan up and down and said, furrowing their brow, "Miss, which item are you interested in? I can show it to you, but our products start at over ten thousand yuan." Their expression clearly conveyed a sense of disdain.

Under the scrutinizing gaze of the salesperson, Shu Pan felt somewhat embarrassed. However, she quickly reminded herself, why should she let someone look down on her? She hadn't stolen or done anything wrong. Having experienced the judgmental eyes of others, Shu Pan deeply understood that society often judged people by appearances.

With her modest clothing and appearance, anyone could tell that she couldn't afford the products here. Shu Pan looked apologetically at the salesperson and, somewhat timidly, said, "I'm just looking."

Then, under the clerk's puzzled gaze, she walked out of the store, as if she were being pursued by some fierce predator.

After leaving the mall, she finally slowed down her pace and gazed at the dark gray sky outside. Night had fallen, and the world was gradually growing darker. On the main road, rows of streetlights illuminated the night, dispelling the darkness. Cars zoomed down the road, making the night less lonely. Shu Pan faced the cool breeze, slowly walking back home.

No matter how tough or tiring it got, she would endure it. Since the day she divorced Gu Shaoting, she no longer had the right to say she was tired.

Her only goal now was to work hard and make money, to provide a better life for her family. Joy was her motivation. Because life was challenging, Shu Pan usually returned to Lotus Town only once a month. But now, she suddenly felt a strong desire to see her child. Knowing that tomorrow was the weekend and that she had bought clothes and shoes for Joy, she decided to go home and see her.

Shu Pan walked for about an hour before arriving home. When she got back, she felt physically and mentally exhausted. She lived in a small rented room, which was quite old and therefore inexpensive. The neighborhood's safety was relatively poor, but Shu Pan had no other choice.

After returning, she felt both hungry and tired, so she quickly made herself a bowl of egg noodles. She added two vegetables and an egg to it. She felt that this dinner was quite rich.

After finishing her meal, she lay down on her bed. As she looked outside, she thought about how she would see Joy tomorrow. She couldn't believe how excited this thought made her. She kept imagining her daughter's smiling face. When Joy was born, everyone said she looked like her, but now that she was growing up, her features were starting to resemble Gu Shaoting, especially her mouth and nose. It was like a mini version of him.

Now, neither her dad nor Auntie Lu would say that Joy looked like her anymore. Occasionally, when they saw Joy like this, they would wear complex expressions.

Once, Auntie Lu couldn't help but say, "If Gu Shaoting sees that Joy looks so much like him, would he want to recognize her? After all, she's his own flesh and blood."

Shu Pan was immediately frightened and urged Auntie Lu never to say such things again. Joy was her child alone, her flesh and blood.



Meanwhile, Tong Fei, after buying the GV handbag, immediately headed to a clothing store. During her shopping spree, she made a phone call to Gu Shaoting.

“Shaoting, are you still busy? Have you eaten? I’m shopping at the mall.” Her words clearly marked her as the epitome of the perfect Chinese girlfriend.

“Alright, I won’t bother you anymore. You go ahead and work. I’ll come see you tomorrow.”

After hanging up, Tong Fei was still immersed in the phone call that had just taken place..

#### Chapter 98: Sweetheart

“Oh my, that’s so sweet! You guys are practically throwing relationship hints around, and here I am, a single soul, feeling like a stray dog,” Tong Fei’s friend playfully remarked.

Tong Fei blushed and joked, “You’re asking for trouble.”

“You and Mr. Gu seem to be getting cozy. He’s the total package, handsome and loaded. He’s like the dream catch for countless women. You better seize this opportunity. Once it’s gone, there won’t be another chance like this,”

“I’d love to, you know? But, as you’re aware, I’m in the public eye. If I make a move that looks like I’m pushing for marriage and it hits the headlines, it’ll tarnish my image,” Tong Fei replied, her tone a mix of frustration and resignation.

She always felt that although Gu Shaoting seemed to accept their relationship, there was an underlying sense of detachment. Since she helped him out that one time, he had been different. He showered her with gifts and she briefly got carried away, thinking it was his way of showing affection.

After all, why would a man spend so lavishly on a woman if he didn't care for her? Yet, Tong Fei seemed to miss the other possibility. He might be trying to compensate for something.

Nonetheless, Tong Fei was convinced that Gu Shaoting loved her, and that reassured her.

"Anyway, it's just a matter of time. When the moment comes, Mr. Gu will propose with all the grandeur, like a scene from a movie," her friend analyzed. "Alright, let's not waste any more time. We've got more shopping to do."

"What are we waiting for then? Let's hit the stores."

Receiving the call, Gu Shaoting rubbed his temple, feeling somewhat stuck in a difficult situation.

Earlier, because of Tong Fei saving him, his attitude toward her had changed somewhat. Sometimes, he felt quite lonely, and having a companion seemed like a good idea.

That was why he had accepted this sort of relationship, but after spending some time together, he noticed that Tong Fei was becoming somewhat clingy, always wanting to control his plans.

Suddenly, he found himself thinking about Shu Pan, a name that occasionally popped into his mind. She had a completely different personality. She wasn't clingy at all and was quite independent. He found himself missing her.

Shu Pan got up early, preparing for the day. She caught the earliest bus back to Lotus Town.

As soon as she entered her home, a little bundle of joy rushed into her arms.

"Joy, be careful. Did you hurt yourself running into Mommy? Did I bump you?" Shu Pan asked, sounding worried.

"No, Mommy. I missed you so much. It feels like you've been away for ages. Don't you miss me?" Joy, small in stature but big in spirit, said playfully.

“Mommy missed you terribly. That’s why I hurried back, and guess what?

Mommy brought you something special!” Shu Pan’s heart ached hearing her daughter’s words.

“What did Mommy buy for Joy?” the little sweetheart asked in her adorable voice.

“Look, Mommy got you two dresses and a pair of shoes. Try them on quickly!” Shu Pan said, taking the items out of her bag.

“Mommy, did you spend a lot of money? We don’t have much. Mommy, you just need to spend more time with me. I already have other dresses,” Joy’s words brought tears to Shu Pan’s eyes.

Joy might be young, but she was thoughtful, a true sweetheart.

“Mommy earned some money, that’s why I bought these for you. Hurry and try them on. Let Mommy see my beautiful and adorable little princess, okay?” Shu Pan said with a tearful smile.

“Okay,” Joy replied, a bit shy but eager to put on her new clothes..

## Chapter 99: Worry

Shu Pan picked up the new dress and shoes, helping Joy put them on.

The little girl before her had shining eyes, pure and clear like a starry night. Her dark hair was tied up in a little ponytail, bobbing up and down like a swallow in flight. Below her small nose was a tiny mouth, with a slight upturn at the corners.

As she put on the new dress, Joy's excitement shone through. Her eyes curved like crescent moons, radiating the happiness that came so naturally to her.

Watching her daughter so content, Shu Pan felt a mix of relief and melancholy. She had once believed that simply bringing a child into the world was enough, but she had underestimated the importance of raising them.

"Mommy, do I look pretty?" Joy asked, pulling at the sides of her dress, a happy grin on her face.

"Yes, Joy, you look just like a little princess," Shu Pan replied, adjusting the slightly oversized dress on her slim frame.

Joy, basking in the compliment, said, "I want to show Grandpa and Grandma."

"What do you want to show Grandma?" Shu Pan knew that her arrival had already been discovered, but she wanted her mother and daughter to spend some quality time together.

"Grandma, look, Mommy bought me a new dress. Isn't it pretty?" Joy proudly displayed her new attire.

"Wow, it's gorgeous! Joy looks like a little angel," Lu Lifen chimed in, playing along with the act.

"I'll go show Grandpa then," Joy announced, fluttering into the house like a little butterfly.

Lu Lifen watched her leave, and then turned to Shu Pan. "Panpan, Joy is almost three years old now. She'll need to start kindergarten soon. We should be more thrifty with our spending, save some money to send her to kindergarten."

Shu Pan thought about it. In September, she should have saved up enough for the tuition. "Auntie Lu, I know, I've been planning for it. I intend to enroll her in kindergarten in Bin City this September."

"You've got a plan. That's wonderful. We mustn't delay her education," Lu Lifen said with a relieved smile.

“Hurry inside. I’ll prepare something for you to eat. You’ve gotten even thinner. A gust of wind could blow you away,” Lu Lifen expressed her concern.

At her age, Shu Pan should have been enjoying a loving husband and a happy family, not weighed down by all these responsibilities. Lu Lifen sighed, feeling helpless.

“Auntie Lu, don’t you know that dieting is in fashion nowadays? Many people dream of having a figure like mine,” Shu Pan teased, looking at Lu Lifen’s concerned expression.

“You’re the only one who would say that, you little scamp,” Lu Lifen laughed and headed into the kitchen.

“Auntie Lu, I’m craving your famous braised fish,” Shu Pan admitted, her mouth watering.

“Alright, your dad caught two fish yesterday, and they’re still in the bucket,” Lotus Town was never short of fish, and Shu Pan had missed it during her time in Bin City.

Lu Lifen said, happily preparing the meal for Shu Pan.

As Shu Pan thought about it, she realized that home was the warmest place. She suddenly remembered Auntie Lu’s suggestion earlier. She had already made up her mind. She would take Joy to kindergarten in Bin City later.

She didn’t need to worry about running into Gu Shaoting. It had been so long since their divorce, and they had no contact with each other. Even if they did meet, he wouldn’t suspect that Joy was his daughter..

Chapter 100: Marrying You Is A Great Blessing

During dinner, Joy sat beside Shu Pan, chattering away like a little sparrow.

“Mom, try the fish. It’s so delicious! Grandpa caught it from the pond. Look, eating this fish made me grow so tall!” Joy said, gesturing with her hand while speaking.

“Wow, really? You’ve grown so much taller! That’s amazing!” Shu Pan exaggeratedly agreed, and Joy giggled in response.

“Joy is such a good child. After dinner, you can go play with your dolls,” Lu Lifen patted Joy’s head.

Shu Pan knew that Auntie Lu probably had something to discuss, so she diverted Joy’s attention.

“Alright, Mom, eat quickly, and then you can play with me later,” Joy pleaded.

“Okay, I’ll play with you after I finish my meal,” Shu Pan promised.

As Joy moved away, Lu Lifen looked at Shu Pan with a serious expression and said, “Panpan, you’ve been divorced for almost four years now, and you’re approaching your thirties. You should start thinking about your own life. Tell me, how do you feel about Dr. Wen, who visited our house last time? Do you think he’s interested in you?”

“Auntie Lu, you’re overthinking it. Dr. Wen is just a friend. Besides, I have Joy to take care of, and we need to think about our next meal. I don’t think it’s necessary to pursue a relationship right now. Love is also a matter of fate,” Shu Pan replied sincerely.

“Ah, my dear, why do you make it so difficult for yourself? It’s all because of your father.” Shu Laide said, feeling genuinely remorseful. He had always believed that Shu Pan’s current situation was partly his fault, as Gu Shaoting had treated his daughter this way because of him.

“Dad, you’re talking nonsense again. It’s an issue between the two of us, and it’s not about anyone else,” Shu Pan hurriedly reassured him.

In recent years, her father's health had declined, and he often felt down because of this matter.

After spending two days in Lotus Town, Shu Pan returned to Bin City and received a call from Dr. Wen. Over the past few years, Dr. Wen had visited Lotus Town twice and had become familiar With Shu Pan's family.

"Shu Pan, where are you?" Dr. Wen's voice came through the phone.

"I just returned from Lotus Town. Is there something you need?" Shu Pan asked as she entered her house with her belongings.

"Why didn't you tell me you were going to Lotus Town? I could have driven you there. I haven't seen little Joy in a long time," Dr. Wen scolded.

"It was a last-minute decision. I'll let you know next time," Shu Pan replied dismissively. In truth, she wanted to maintain some distance from Dr. Wen. It was impossible, and she didn't want to hold him back.

"How about having dinner together tonight? We haven't seen each other in a long time. Are you free?" Dr. Wen asked Shu Pan.

"I just got back, and I'm a bit tired. If you don't mind, you can come to my place for dinner tonight. I happen to have brought back some fish that my dad caught," Shu Pan said, not wanting to disappoint him.

"That's great! I don't mind at all. I'm not picky. I'll eat anything," Dr. Wen happily exclaimed.

"Okay, then. Let me freshen up, and you can come over later."

"Sounds good. See you in a bit."

After hanging up the phone, Dr. Wen prepared to buy two boxes of chocolates to bring to Shu Pan. He had heard from hospital nurses that chocolates were the most romantic gift to give to a loved one.

When Dr. Wen arrived, Shu Pan had already prepared a meal with three dishes and a soup. The braised fish, in particular, looked incredibly appetizing.

Dr. Wen sat at the dining table and, without caring about his appearance, began to eat with his chopsticks. Shu Pan shook her head and smiled.

Finally, Dr. Wen looked up and said, "Shu Pan, anyone who marries you is incredibly lucky." As he spoke, he cast a sideways glance at Shu Pan with his eyes..