

## Folly 42

### Chapter 42: Warm Days

"Shuang, go to the fields and fetch your grandpa and your second uncle. Tell them your second uncle's wife has stolen the family's silver, let them inform the village chief that our Old Mu Family no longer wants this daughter-in-law."

Old Mrs. Mu shot a fierce glare at Mrs. Lin, then turned to Mu Shuangshuang with a look of triumph.

Mu Shuangshuang secretly rolled her eyes at this in her heart. This old lady was truly something else. The money and silver on the ground amounted to no more than five hundred coins, about half a tael of silver, likely used to buy a few small items.

Despite this, Old Mrs. Mu prefers those few items over this daughter-in-law.

No matter how bad Mrs. Lin is, she has birthed children for the Old Mu Family and taken care of Mu Dazhong for over ten years, holy moly, today Mu Shuangshuang has truly met the ultimate oddball.

When Mrs. Lin heard Old Mrs. Mu's words, her face turned white with fear.

Women in ancient times valued reputation greatly. If Lin Xiaozao were to be cast aside like this, she might never be able to hold her head high anywhere for the rest of her life. After weighing the situation repeatedly, Mrs. Lin decided to swallow her grievances silently.

Mrs. Lin gritted her teeth and spoke to Old Mrs. Mu, "Mother, this five hundred coins is actually from when my brother sold fish from the pond last time, and the silver he earned was meant to nourish his wife.

Since giving birth to Gou Dan, my health hasn't improved, and I haven't brought the Old Mu Family a big fat grandson for years. I was momentarily foolish and didn't bring the money and silver to you. Dispose of me as you wish, just please don't let Daddy Gou Dan abandon me..."

Once Mrs. Lin claimed the silver as hers, it was no longer money meant for the children, making her taking the silver seem justified.

Old Mrs. Mu nodded in satisfaction, "Since you say this is from Gou Dan's uncle, then it rightfully belongs to our Old Mu Family.

Later, count all the coins on the ground clearly and bring them to my room. I won't punish you, but if you dare to hide silver again in the future, beware I'll make you go home and eat your own words."

Having won the benefit without bending to pick up the silver, Old Mrs. Mu was the cheekiest Mu Shuangshuang had seen. Watching Old Mrs. Mu leave, Mu Shuangshuang quickly slipped out of Mrs. Lin's room.

Old Mrs. Mu closely followed her, humming a little tune only she understood, like a rooster who won a fight, heading to her room.

Mu Shuangshuang shivered with disgust, but she grew increasingly certain about one thing: anything that could be measured in money should never be seen by Old Mrs. Mu, or nothing would remain.

Before entering her own room, Mu Shuangshuang carefully looked around to ensure no one was following before she went inside.

"Sister, the little bunny is asleep." Little Zhi pointed at the little grey rabbit on the kang. Just as Little Zhi said, the rabbit was indeed asleep, lying on the kang with its eyes tightly shut.

"Little Zhi, come over here!"

Mu Shuangshuang waved at Little Zhi, who immediately climbed down from the kang. She briefly recounted what happened in Mrs. Lin's room and then spoke to Little Zhi, "Little Zhi, since we're raising the little bunny, we have to take good care of it and definitely can't let grandma see it."

"Don't worry, sister, Little Zhi knows what's up and won't let anyone enter the room."

Even though the families of the Old Mu Family lived in different houses, they had no privacy. Someone like Old Mrs. Mu could enter anyone's house without hindrance.

This isn't what worried Mu Shuangshuang at the moment; starting tomorrow, at worst she could ask Yu Si Niang to lock the room, but there was one person who couldn't be kept in the dark, and that was Mu Xiaohan. As a member of the third branch, if Mu Xiaohan couldn't keep the secret, then all of Mu Shuangshuang's efforts would be futile.

"Little Zhi, go secretly fetch Xiaohan without alerting anyone, especially Gou Dan."

Mu Xiaohan held animosity toward her; unless ignored, days ago, Mu Shuangshuang realized this method was ineffective. She couldn't ensure Mu Xiaohan would obey her, but she must prevent the third branch from betraying family secrets, revealing everything.

In the courtyard, Mu Xiaohan looked cold, especially after hearing Little Zhi say Mu Shuangshuang wanted him. His mood worsened.

"Little Zhi, didn't I tell you not to talk to that annoying girl? Why didn't you listen? Or do you want to be annoying like her, to be looked down upon?"

"Sister is not annoying, Brother Xiaohan is mean, Little Zhi won't play with you anymore."

Upon hearing Mu Xiaohan speaking ill of Mu Shuangshuang, Little Zhi forgot the task Mu Shuangshuang had assigned, repeatedly hitting Mu Xiaohan's elbow with anger visible in his dark eyes.

Mu Shuangshuang waited for a long time but didn't see Mu Xiaohan enter, only for Yu Si Niang returning from work later.

She left in the morning and only came back when the sun set; Yu Si Niang worked hard every day. Mu Shuangshuang quickly took Yu Si Niang's hand and had her rest on the kang.

"Mother, you've worked hard, have a cup of water first."

Yu Si Niang looked fondly at her daughter, who had suddenly come to her senses after hitting her head. She never imagined that one day, after working all day, she could sit in the house and have someone pass her a cup of water.

Except for Little Zhi being too young and Xiaohan constantly following Mrs. Lin's child, even when bullied badly, he would rather not look at this home, just the big daughter who wouldn't even lift her head. She felt like a mouse meeting a cat.

Luckily, Bodhisattva blessed her, everything was fine, and Yu Si Niang could finally sip warm tea.

"Shuangshuang, lately Wealth Master Zhang's family has been making birthday wine; many people go daily. Mother hasn't had time to care for you and your siblings. What do you want to eat? I'll bring it from the town when I return."

"Does mother have secret savings?" For some reason, Mu Shuangshuang wanted to tease Yu Si Niang to see her attitude toward hiding money.

Yu Si Niang's body stiffened; she didn't know how to respond momentarily.

"Haha, Shuangshuang is joking with mother. I know you wouldn't dare hide money; our grandma is as cunning as a weasel; mother must be afraid."

Upon hearing Mu Shuangshuang's metaphor, Yu Si Niang laughed heartily and then earnestly said to Mu Shuangshuang.

"Shuangshuang, don't say such things in the future. If grandma hears, she'll hit you."

Mu Shuangshuang noticed Yu Si Niang's wording; the reason for not saying this was out of fear Old Mrs. Mu would strike her, not because of the so-called patriarchal system. It seemed Yu Si Niang's view on traditional family hierarchies was much shallower than Mu Dashan's.

Perhaps this could be a breakthrough for the third branch to split off in the future.

"Mother, Shuangshuang wants to ask you something." Mu Shuangshuang looked pitifully at Yu Si Niang, stretching out her small hands to massage Yu Si Niang's shoulders.

"Tell me, what's the matter?" Yu Si Niang looked dotingly at her daughter, not daring to blink, suddenly noticing her daughter's hair was shorter than before.

"Shuangshuang, who bullied you? Why is your hair shorter?" Yu Si Niang urgently stood from the kang, inspecting Mu Shuangshuang's hands for injuries.

"Mother, I'm fine. I just never went to the town before and want to take a look. Would you agree to let Shuangshuang go?"