

Reborn as a Landlord

Chapter 15: Chapter 8 Sleepless Night_1

Everyone at the table stopped using their chopsticks and looked at Lady Zhou and Lian Manman. Before Lian Manman could reply, Lady Zhou had already turned to berate Lady Zhang.

"Look at the daughter you've raised. Possessed by a gluttonous ghost? Eating fine flour and meat all day, does she think she's some precious young lady from a noble family? Look if she has that fate!" Lady Zhou cursed through clenched teeth.

Hey, it's just a piece of meat. Is it worth it? Her words made it sound like she committed murder or arson.

Lady Zhang's face turned red. Lady Zhou's words made her feel extremely ashamed, and at the same time, deeply wronged. She was aware of Lady Zhou's temperament; she always gave her children a thousand warnings. Her children also behaved very well, earning her pride, and they had never been scolded by Lady Zhou for eating anything.

But today, Lian Manman reached out for the meat, something she would never dare to do normally.

She knew that at this moment, if she slapped Lian Manman twice and scolded her, Lady Zhou might cool down. But how could her heart and hands allow her to do that? She was a mother, and Lian Manman had almost lost her life.

"Mother, Manman hasn't eaten for three days, almost..." Lady Zhang said with a red face, trying to plead for Lian Manman, hoping Lady Zhou would forgive her.

"She didn't die, did she? Look, she can still eat meat," Lady Zhou snapped viciously.

"Mother, Manman is your own granddaughter..." Lady Zhang began, but then she couldn't continue.

"Which one isn't my own granddaughter? I haven't even had a bite of that meat, have you no shame!" Lady Zhou continued to scold them.

Lian Zhizhi and Xiao Qi's faces also turned red, and Lady Zhao and Lian Yeye were so frightened they huddled together. Lady Gu, Lian Huahua, and others looked at Lian Manman with disdain and schadenfreude, except Lady He, who seemed amused, chuckling as she watched.

It was just a piece of meat, and she hadn't even put it in her mouth yet. To be humiliated and cursed like this, are these people really relatives and elders? Luckily, the soul inside her small body was a few years older and not so fragile. If it had been a real ten-year-old child, they could have been left with a psychological shadow from that point on.

Lian Manman's original intention was to put the meat in her mouth and deliberately eat it with relish to provoke Lady Zhou, but looking at the expressions of Lady Zhang, Lian Zhizhi, and Xiao Qi around her, she was forced to change her mind.

"Grandmother, don't be angry, I wanted to pick up this meat for you to eat," Lian Manman said as she put the meat she had intended for Xiao Qi into Lady Zhou's bowl.

Lady Zhou was taken aback; she hadn't expected Lian Manman to do this. Lian Huahua also flashed a look of surprise, not expecting this simple girl to be so quick-witted.

Lady Zhang smiled from the bottom of her heart.

"Mother, although Manman hit her head, she knows better how to be filial to you now," Lady Zhang said.

"Don't think I can't see through your little schemes." Lady Zhou took the piece of meat out of her bowl and threw it onto the table, "Do I need her to pick up meat for me to eat?"

Lian Manman felt as if a herd of grass-mud horses were stampeding past her face. Lady Zhou was just... she couldn't find the right words to describe it. At the same time, she sighed; no wonder everyone's chopsticks were kept far away from that piece of meat. She should have been more observant.

Was it really that she was not observant enough? Lian Manman thought to herself with a bitter smile, knowing it wasn't that she had failed to notice the unusual atmosphere, but rather that she hadn't been able to resist the temptation.

Lady Zhou was so unreasonable, and Lady Zhang was both embarrassed and sad.

Lian Manman blinked, wondering what to do with Lady Zhou being so irrational.

"Grandmother, please...hit me." Lian Manman put down her bowl and chopsticks, covered her face, and started to cry loudly, "Grandmother, please don't throw the meat away. Aunt Xiuxiu has had enough, but Yeye, Yaya, and Xiao Qi haven't even had a bite. Grandmother, hit me, it doesn't matter if you kill me, just please give Xiao Qi the meat you don't want."

At Old Master Lian's table, everyone stopped and looked their way.

Lian Manman tried to recall what a ten-year-old child should act like and purposely cried until she was out of breath, not stopping to complain about how Old Lady Lian would rather throw the meat away than give it to the children.

Old Lady Lian was almost knocked over backward by anger. She had always kept a tight rein on the girls in the household, especially Lady Zhang's daughters, who were always obedient. When scolded, they would only cry softly, never daring to act like this.

"You, you, look at you..." Lady Zhou pointed at Lady Zhang, accusing her.

"Stop the noise, eat. If there's meat, let the children have it." Old Master Lian said from the kang bed, "Don't start with your biased ways again."

Lian Manman's tearful plea left her unable to stand her ground. Now that Old Master had spoken, Lady Zhou, her chest heaving, could only swallow her anger.

"You want to eat meat? Here, eat all of it," Lady Zhou said resentfully as she picked up the rest of the meat from the bowl and put it all into Lian Manman's bowl.

Pfft, that's so childish.

"Grandmother loves me the most." Lian Manman's tears came quickly and went just as quickly.

Lady Zhang's face changed color, and she turned her head to look at Lian Manman.

"Manman..." Lady Zhang's voice held fear and pleading, "Quick, give the meat back to your grandma."

Lian Manman was indifferent. Even if she gave it back, she worried it would probably be thrown away by Lady Zhou.

"Yeye, Yaya, Sister, and Xiao Qi." Lian Manman divided the meat in the bowl among the children, giving her own portion to Xiao Qi as well.

"This is the meat Grandma gave us, let's all thank Grandma together," Lian Manman said to the children.

"Thank you, Grandma." The children, seeing the meat in their bowls, said in unison, truly grateful.

Lady Zhou's face turned as black as the bottom of a pot.

Lian Manman pretended not to see and simply bowed her head to eat her rice.

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The family quickly finished their dinner. Lady Zhang, with Lian Zhizhi, began to clear the bowls and chopsticks, with Lady Zhao and Lian Yeye also lending a hand. Lady Zhou, having eaten only a few bites, began to complain of chest discomfort, lying on the kang bed and groaning continuously. The sons and daughters-in-law all came forward to ask what was wrong, but Lady Zhou didn't specify, only lamenting her chest discomfort and claiming she was about to die.

"Dad, shall I ask a doctor to come and see Mom?" Lian Shouxin suggested.

"Fourth Brother, Mom is like this because she's been angered by your Manman," Lian Xiuxiu pointed out.

Lian Shouxin looked back at Zhang Shi, who sighed. Everyone was in the same room, and Lian Shouxin knew what had happened. To say that Manman was at fault, she had only erred in reaching out with her chopsticks. But then she thoughtfully made amends, and with everyone's laughter, the incident should have been over. Speaking of which, Lady Zhou's favoritism wasn't new. Lian Shouxin looked at his thin eldest daughter, then at his second daughter, who still had her head wrapped in a bandage, and felt a mix of emotions.

Lady Zhou's chest pain was an ailment that struck several times a year, and everyone knew how to treat it. The best remedy was to punish Lian Manman. However, neither Lian Shouxin nor Lady Zhang, who both kept a tight rein on their children, would ever consider hitting or scolding them.

"Manman, come and apologize to your grandma," Lian Shouxin called Lian Manman.

What, apologize? Lian Manman blinked in surprise.

"Fourth Brother, you make it sound so simple. Look how upset our mom is, a verbal apology is enough?" Lian Xiuxiu said, dissatisfied.

"Manman, come and kowtow to your grandma," Lian Shouxin instructed.

"Manman's head..." Lady Zhang couldn't help but interject, though she dared only say this much before falling silent.

Lian Manman, reminded by Lady Zhang's words, remembered her own head injury. She knew how to play the sympathy card, and at ten years old, it was only natural for her to do so.

"I'll kowtow to Grandma," Lian Manman said, yet before she could kneel, she held her head and leaned against Lady Zhang, weakly saying, "Mom, my head hurts, it hurts so much."

Lady Zhang, not knowing if Lian Manman was pretending, panicked, her forehead breaking out in sweat.

"Manman, what's wrong, don't frighten me, oh heavens..." Lady Zhang started to cry, a real cry. Her daughter, recently retrieved, gone again would mean jabbing a knife into a fresh wound, an even more painful experience.

Lian Zhizhi, Wu Lang, and Xiao Qi gathered around too, and seeing Lian Manman with closed eyes motionless, they all began to cry.

"Take the girl back, and send for the doctor," Old Master Lian instructed Lian Shouxin, then turned to scold lying Old Lady Lian, "Get up quickly, at your grand age, you should be ashamed of making such a fuss."

"I will go kowtow to Mom in a moment." Lian Shouxin and Lady Zhang hurriedly carried Lian Manman to the West Wing Room.

Back in the West Wing Room, after being placed on the kang, Lady Zhang climbed up to hold her, asking how she was.

Lian Manman, seeing the anxious faces of her parents and three siblings, felt somewhat remorseful.

"I feel a bit better," Lian Manman said, "It's dark outside, the roads are not good, don't go find the doctor."

Exhausted by the day's events and still weak, Lian Manman said these words, then drifted out of consciousness. As she dozed off, she caught the scent of herbal medicine and heard Lian Shouxin and Lady Zhang's voices.

"Imperial Doctor Wang, we are so lucky you're in the village."