

Regaining 351

Chapter 351: Accompanying Grandpa to Relieve Boredom

"The surgery was successful."

When the attending physician emerged from the operating room and said those words, everyone's suspended hearts were finally put to rest.

"That's wonderful."

Ji Ying, who hadn't slept well in days, instantly felt relieved upon hearing the news.

"Doctor, I can't thank you enough." Ji Shan, too, had been restless at work for the past couple of days, worried that something might go wrong with the surgery.

"Exactly, doctor, thank you, our whole family is grateful to you."

Ji Feng said gratefully.

"It's what we're supposed to do." Dr. Li advised them briefly about what to pay attention to after the surgery and then left.

"Alright, those who need to go to work should go, those who need to go home should rest. Yingzi, I'll stay with Dad tonight," Ji Feng said, volunteering himself. The day before yesterday, it had been Ji Shan at the hospital, and yesterday Ji Ying had stayed. Today, Ji Feng took the initiative.

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"Yingzi, if Dad is okay, I'll head back tomorrow," Xu Qinghe had originally planned to stay just for a day, but now that Ji Xinghua was in trouble, as a son-in-law, Xu Qinghe naturally couldn't leave.

The surgery was very successful, and he would visit Dad tomorrow before rushing back, as he had already delayed many things.

"You and Nian'an should both go back," Ji Ying said. "Your factory needs attention, and Nian'an has barely had the chance to study medicine with Dr. Du. With such a rare opportunity, he shouldn't let Dr. Du's kindness go to waste."

"And Nianhua, go home and rest, another few days and you'll be starting school too."

Ji Ying looked over fondly at her son and daughter, thinking that come September, they would both be off to school, and thereafter, their chances to gather would be even less frequent.

"Mom, you should go back, the Chili Sauce Factory needs you. My sister-in-law is pregnant, you being there could also help look after her. I'm no use back there; staying here or there is the same for me," Xu Nianhua volunteered, taking the burden upon herself. "I'm about to start school, so let me stay with Grandpa to serve him. Mom, please give me this chance."

"But..." Ji Ying frowned in disagreement, interjecting, "Nianhua, taking care of your grandfather is my responsibility, I shouldn't make you do it."

"Mom, what's all this about responsibility? Isn't he also my Grandpa?" Xu Nianhua said cheerfully, "It's been a long time since I saw Grandpa too. Besides, if I am inconvenienced, Shuyuan, Ji Shuhong, or Ji Shuming can take turns. That would be enough."

"Plus, with the second uncle and the youngest uncle around, we certainly can't ignore Grandpa in the hospital, right?"

Xu Nianhua analyzed clearly, "So, me being here is just to keep Grandpa company and cheer him up."

She looked eagerly at Xu Qinghe, hoping her father would help make her case.

"If Nianhua wants to stay, then let her stay. With her two uncles here, it won't be too hard for her," Xu Qinghe, unwilling to refuse Xu Nianhua, said, "This is Nianhua's first trip back to South City, so I'll ask Shuyuan to show her around. I also have some money."

Xu Qinghe pulled out fifty dollars and handed it to Xu Nianhua, saying, "Eat whatever you want, maybe buy a new skirt too."

Fifty dollars was a considerable sum.

"Thank you, Dad."

Xu Nianhua's eyes immediately sparkled with joy, her smile bright and eyes twinkling like they held starlight.

"Alright then, Nianhua, you stay here and spend some time with your Grandpa, but don't bother your uncles too much," Ji Ying cautioned.

Xu Nianhua nodded vigorously, "Mom, don't worry, I absolutely won't trouble them."

Chapter 352: Experience the Hardship of Earning Money

Ji Feng and Ji Shan were both very enthusiastic about asking them to stay for a few more days, but Ji Ying and Xu Qinghe, being occupied with work, had to decline. They also mentioned that Xu Nianhua wanted to stay here to take care of Ji Xinghua. The two uncles thumped their chests and promised to take good care of their niece.

"Nianhua, remember not to cause trouble for your uncles and grandfather," Ji Ying reminded repeatedly.

Xu Nianhua blinked speechlessly; Ji Ying had reminded her several times from yesterday to this morning, and her ears had almost developed calluses from the constant reminders.

"Mom, I'm not a child anymore."

Xu Nianhua felt as if she were still a few years old. Did she have a face that made people worry?

"Okay, okay, you are an adult," Ji Ying agreed, belatedly realizing that Nianhua was already 20 years old this year. Wasn't she indeed an adult?

When she was twenty, she was already married.

Tsk, tsk, tsk.

Her daughter still needed to attend university; there was no rush to get married.

In the hospital room.

After the surgery, Ji Xinghua had regained consciousness. Lying on the hospital bed, he looked more frail, but compared to how painful it had been yesterday, he appeared much better today.

"Yingzi."

Seeing Ji Ying, Ji Xinghua reached out his hand to her.

"Dad."

Ji Ying held Ji Xinghua's hand and asked with concern, "Are you feeling any discomfort? How do you feel? Are you hungry?"

A stream of questions came out, and Ji Xinghua smiled, saying, "I am okay."

Ji Xinghua's voice was still somewhat weak.

On the side, Ji Feng hurriedly added, "I gave Dad some porridge this morning. The doctor said that after a whole night, he could eat."

Ji Feng was very cautious about this matter.

"You've been working hard, second brother," Ji Ying said, noticing the redness in Ji Feng's eyes. "Taking care of Dad is my duty; there's nothing hard or not hard about it. But what about you guys, having been out for a few days? How are things at home?"

"I asked Qinghe to take Nian'an home first, and I'll return the day after,"

This was the decision Ji Ying and Xu Qinghe had made together.

Ji Xinghua's surgery had just finished; she needed to monitor his condition. If he stabilized, she could go back with peace of mind.

"You all go back today," said Ji Xinghua as soon as he heard it. He spoke slowly, but his enunciation was very clear. He was reluctant to part with his daughter, but she and her family surely had things to do at home.

If it weren't for his daughter, Ji Xinghua knew that this surgery wouldn't have been possible.

"Mom, just listen to Grandpa," Xu Nianhua, who was the most available, said she would stay and accompany her grandfather. Sitting in front of the bed, she raised her sweet smile. "Grandpa, I'll accompany you, just don't think I'm noisy or incapable."

"Not at all."

Ji Xinghua's eyes brightened, delighted to have his granddaughter stay with him.

In the end, Ji Ying left with Xu Qinghe and Xu Nian'an. The unwillingness to part between father and daughter before leaving made Xu Nianhua quietly wipe away her tears.

Ji Shan took Ji Ying and Xu Qinghe to catch a coach. Ji Shuyuan, who had nothing to do after delivering goods, stayed with Xu Nianhua to watch over Ji Xinghua.

"Shuyuan, have you been moving goods recently?"

While her grandfather was sleeping, Xu Nianhua quietly chatted with Ji Shuyuan in the corridor outside the hospital room.

"Mhm," Ji Shuyuan nodded, and then explained, "Taking advantage of the holidays, I wanted to experience the hardship of earning money. It's quite good."

Chapter 353: Future Season Barrister

"Shuyuan, I believe that in the future, you will definitely be a great lawyer," Xu Nianhua said looking at Ji Shuyuan's often stern face, which looked older than his actual age and was not easily approachable, yet he was very loyal and righteous.

Not to mention anything else, just take the matter of our grandfather, among his many grandchildren, it was only Ji Shuyuan who truly ran around attending to grandfather's needs.

Even when he was still a student, he could borrow money to treat our grandfather's illness—this kind of courage is not found in everyone.

There was also the time Ji Shuyuan wanted to help her; he was not at all afraid of the Gu Family's influence, truly treating her as a beloved sister.

Xu Nianhua's eyes softened further as she confidently said, "The future Attorney Ji will surely make a name for himself."

"Pfft~"

Ji Shuyuan, who always maintained a stern expression, couldn't help but laugh upon hearing this. He said, "Nianhua, you think too highly of me!"

He was only a freshman now, although he was about to be a sophomore soon, but by the time he graduated, went to a law firm, and then became a qualified lawyer, there were too many uncertainties.

As for being a great lawyer and making a name for himself, Ji Shuyuan had never dared to entertain such thoughts; he just hoped to be a qualified lawyer.

Lawyers, nowadays, were a rare breed, and the future prospects were even more unpredictable. He remembered once, a classmate had dragged him to observe a court session, and when he saw the lawyer, he had only one thought: he wanted to study law and stand up for justice for everyone.

"Shuyuan, don't sell yourself short, I truly believe you can do it," Xu Nianhua said earnestly, stowing away her smile. Her eyes were filled with a believing light, which gave Ji Shuyuan strength.

Many years later, when the now-famous lawyer Ji Shuyuan recalled this moment, he still felt very warm and touched.

Perhaps, if it hadn't been for Xu Nianhua's belief and encouragement, he might not have become a great lawyer.

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"Mom, don't worry, grandpa is recovering very well. The doctor said he can be discharged tomorrow," Xu Nianhua specially called Ji Ying to report that everything was safe.

Only after grandpa returned home did Xu Nianhua go back to the hospital to stay with Ji Xinghua again.

These past few days, Xu Nianhua had been staying in the hospital during the day, chatting with grandpa and sometimes reading the newspaper to him, and the days flew by quickly.

Suddenly, it was the day for Ji Xinghua to be discharged from the hospital. After his discharge, Xu Nianhua planned to take a walk around the streets.

She was a bit resistant at first when she arrived, but after a few days of busyness, Xu Nianhua felt nothing of it; she hadn't done anything wrong and shouldn't avoid South City forever just because she disliked the Gu Family people.

Her home was in Gaoliang County, and even if she went to Ningbei later, she would need to go through South City.

"Nianhua, how about I accompany you for a walk?" Ji Shuyuan offered.

Xu Nianhua declined, "Shuyuan, you should hurry back to your work, don't be delayed. I'm a grown person, I won't get lost."

However, as Xu Nianhua walked onto the bustling streets, obviously more lively than those in the county, she quickly realized that she was lost.

All the roads looked pretty much the same.

She followed the roads, looking at many things, but ended up buying nothing. Eventually, after browsing a bookstore and picking up a few books, she couldn't find her way back, regretting why she hadn't let Ji Shuyuan come with her.

After being bewildered for a while, Xu Nianhua started asking people for directions. Though she didn't recognize the roads, she at least knew where her uncle's house was.

Chapter 354: What Matters

"Nianhua."

Pei Yining had just bought some food and was on her way back to the hotel when she spotted Xu Nianhua asking for directions on the roadside. She quickly shouted, waving at her, and trotted up to her with a look of disbelief, "Nianhua, are you lost?"

Pei Yining stared at Xu Nianhua, feeling as if her eyes were playing tricks on her, creating illusions.

She always thought Xu Nianhua was capable of anything. She was good at studying, strong in foreign languages, cooked delicious food, could even grow her own bean sprouts, make mung bean jelly—Pei Yining had come to believe Xu Nianhua was invincible.

But now, she was lost.

"Ahem."

Xu Nianhua looked a bit embarrassedly at Pei Yining and said, "Maybe because it's my first time going out."

Her voice was somewhat weak. She had thought she wouldn't wander far, just stroll nearby, and wouldn't get lost. Besides, she had felt her little uncle's house should be easy to find.

However, she had overestimated her sense of direction.

"Hahaha~"

Pei Yining told herself she shouldn't laugh, but she couldn't help it. She glanced at the address and said, "You don't have to ask others, I'll take you there."

Xu Nianhua didn't speak, just looked skeptically at her. This was her first time coming here, too, right?

"Coincidentally, I was just on this street yesterday." Pei Yining had been wandering around quite a bit these days.

"Oh yes, something came up these past few days. I was supposed to meet up with you, but..." Xu Nianhua looked somewhat apologetically at Pei Yining.

Pei Yining waved it off, "No worries, it's a good thing you didn't come these past two days, otherwise it would've been an outright war."

"What happened?" Xu Nianhua looked at her curiously.

Pei Yining briefly explained the events of the past few days. When she started talking about Cheng Hao and Zou Yaru breaking up, Xu Nianhua was so shocked she interrupted, "That can't be right. They were so lovey-dovey, how could they break up just like that?"

On her way here, Cheng Hao had spoken about Zou Yaru with such sweetness!

And it had only been a few days?

Breaking up felt like some kind of fantasy to her.

"Nianhua, you're out of the loop," Pei Yining said as she explained how Gu Junhe mistook someone else for Pei Yicheng, cursed him out, and the decisive way Zou Yaru broke up with him, also mentioning Zou Yaru's recent engagement news.

Xu Nianhua: "..."

So feelings can change just like that, and marrying someone else on a whim?

It all sounded so much like playing house.

"What's the name of Zou Yaru's fiancé again?" Xu Nianhua suddenly asked.

Pei Yining tilted her head while thinking, then finally said, "Gu Junhe. Thinks he's so handsome, so wealthy, and even dared to insult my brother!"

As soon as she mentioned Gu Junhe, she seemed wishing she could gnash her teeth in anger.

"Good for you," Xu Nianhua said to Pei Yining, giving her a thumbs up. "You're so protective of your brother, he must be really touched, right?"

"My brother has always protected me since we were little, so I've got to protect him too." Pei Yining said with pride. Although their relationship hadn't been as close as before since their mother left and due to Aunt Wan's influence, she still remembered that in middle school, when a boy bullied her, her brother didn't say a word and beat the bully down, then declared that whoever mess with her would end up like that boy on the ground.

In the end, nobody dared bully her.

She would always remember that scene, her brother's face was both cold and fierce, yet she found it incredibly warm.

"What happened after that?" Xu Nianhua continued to ask.

When she heard that Cheng Hao was willing to humble himself before his family and borrow two-hundred thousand yuan for Zou Yaru, she truly felt sorry for Cheng Hao. All the love he gave was squandered by Zou Yaru.

Chapter 355: She Seems to Be Sick

"After that, Cheng Hao's dad came." With just one sentence from Pei Yining, Xu Nianhua felt her heart involuntarily lift.

As a father, he would still hope his child could find happiness.

He hadn't even entered the door when he was asked to borrow two hundred thousand for that girl. Cheng Dad's first reaction was to wonder if his son had been bewitched.

Cheng Dad put down the phone and came straight away, arriving dusty and travel-worn. When he saw Cheng Hao, he was drunk and completely unconscious.

"Cheng Hao, you weren't beaten, were you?"

Even though Xu Nianhua wasn't there, she could feel the atmosphere; it definitely wasn't good.

Not getting the two hundred thousand and then breaking up right away, such a girl couldn't leave a good impression in Cheng Dad's eyes.

As Pei Yining vividly described the situation, Cheng Dad gave Cheng Hao a severe beating, then had someone take Cheng Hao back to Ningbei.

"Your brother wasn't... scolded, was he?" Xu Nianhua suddenly asked.

If she remembered correctly, Cheng Hao had come to find Pei Yicheng.

"Nianhua, you really do care about my brother." Pei Yining smiled gratefully, showing her teeth as she said, "Uncle Cheng wouldn't dare to scold my brother."

Uncle Cheng adored Pei Yicheng as though he were his own son, and with Cheng Hao's temperament, Uncle Cheng also understood. How could he possibly scold her brother over this?

If Uncle Cheng was to blame anyone, it would be his own disappointing son.

"So that's it for this matter?" Xu Nianhua asked again.

Cheng Hao's family looked quite decent. Could Cheng Dad really watch idly as his son was mistreated?

"Definitely not just like that." Pei Yining said with nerves twitching, "You don't know, when Uncle Cheng took Cheng Hao back to Ningbei, he told him that if he can't make something of himself, he shouldn't return to South City."

"That's quite good, once Cheng Hao stands at a certain height, people like Zou Yaru will be just a passing cloud to him." Xu Nianhua nodded in agreement.

In the future, when they meet again, Zou Yaru will definitely regret it.

If it's the Gu Junhe she knows, Zou Yaru will regret even more that she didn't choose to commit everything to Cheng Hao, who was willing to give her his all.

"Who's delivering for the Chili Factory?"

Xu Nianhua suddenly remembered.

Pei Yining shook her head, pursing her lips as she said, "The first two days, I was too busy taking care of the two drunkards. Thankfully, Uncle Cheng arrived, or else I would have been suffocated by alcohol."

"Let's go, ask my brother," Pei Yining said, pulling Xu Nianhua upstairs.

As soon as they entered the room, even though it had been cleaned, a faint smell of alcohol lingered. Pei Yicheng was sitting at a desk by the window, immersed in reading documents.

"Brother, guess who I brought?"

Pei Yining proudly pushed Xu Nianhua in front of Pei Yicheng as if she was presenting a treasure.

As they were about to reach him, Pei Yining deliberately exerted force with her hand.

"Ouch." Pei Yining let out a sharp scream.

Xu Nianhua felt a force from behind, pushing her forward.

A handsome face grew larger in front of her eyes, and she found herself plunging towards Pei Yicheng.

Her forehead collided with his shoulder, the pain nearly bringing tears to her eyes.

"Nianhua, I'm sorry, I didn't do it on purpose," Pei Yining quickly collapsed to the side while explaining. Half-prostrated on the floor, she watched the two of them together, finding the scene pleasing to the eye no matter how she looked at it.

"Are you okay?"

Pei Yicheng steadied her waist with his hand, looking down at her forehead which had obviously reddened, and instinctively started to rub it for her.

The slightly rough hand, neither too light nor too heavy, caressed her forehead, carrying his unique scent. Xu Nianhua felt as if she were coming down with something, her heart beating rapidly at intervals.

Chapter 356: Don't Be Too Greedy as a Person

It's a pity I didn't bring a camera.

Pei Yining inwardly regretted. If she had brought a camera, she could have captured this beautiful moment.

"I'm fine now."

Xu Nianhua instinctively pushed Pei Yicheng away and stood up again. She felt her face heating up and her heartbeat quickening. Could she be getting a fever?

As Xu Nianhua thought this, she turned her gaze to the side and upon seeing Pei Yining on the ground, she reached out and said, "Yining, are you okay?"

"I'm so sorry, Nianhua, I almost caused you to fall. I just didn't watch my step," Pei Yining said with an apologetic face, her gaze somewhat evasive, fearing that Xu Nianhua would discover her intentional act.

"It's okay; you didn't do it on purpose. Just be more careful next time," Xu Nianhua said, taking her hand.

"Mhm, mhm." Pei Yining nodded repeatedly, making an excuse, "I'll go get some fruit to eat."

With that, Pei Yining turned and left.

Xu Nianhua didn't think Pei Yining did it on purpose; she just felt that Pei Yining wanted to entertain the guests.

Mom was the same; she would always bring out anything good in the house to treat the guests.

"Nianhua, you came at the right time. Xiaohao has returned to Ningbei, and I would like to discuss with you about the choice of a delivery person," Pei Yicheng got straight to the point, not giving Xu Nianhua a chance to shy away.

"Won't Xiaohao come back in the future?" Xu Nianhua thought of Cheng Hao, and felt it was a pity for him.

"He will be in charge of things in Ningbei from now on," Pei Yicheng shared his plans.

Cheng Hao, in Ningbei, would manage the branch of Liunian. Once the hand cream is made in September, with Hao in the north and him in the south, they would strive to make the hand cream loved by everyone at the fastest speed.

"That's a great idea." Xu Nianhua agreed, and if it weren't for her lack of money, she would have wanted to get involved too!

Hand cream, perfume, they will surely be bestsellers in the future.

One must not be greedy.

Xu Nianhua silently recited this to herself, seriously starting to think about the choice of the delivery person. She thought for a long time but could not come up with any ideas.

"Ling Dong?" The only person Xu Nianhua knew who was familiar with South City and could drive, other than Ling Dong, there was no one else.

"Ling Dong can deliver for a while, but he definitely won't be able to do it long-term," Pei Yicheng said this, noticing that Xu Nianhua couldn't think of anyone else, he said directly: "Nianhua, what do you think about your elder brother selling bean sprouts?"

"It hasn't been particularly good lately." Xu Nianhua thought carefully and replied, "Selling bean sprouts isn't a hereditary skill; it relies on selling cheap and in volume. You can make a few dozen bucks a month, which is better than working in an outside factory, better than staying at home."

"Then how about your brother delivering goods to the county and buying chili peppers?" Pei Yicheng asked again?

Xu Nianhua slowly savored the question. She didn't rush to answer but thought carefully whether it would be feasible for her elder brother to take on the delivery job.

Cheng Hao used to deliver goods to various counties, South City, and nearby cities often, the kind that would be away from the county for days.

"I know, you're worried about your sister-in-law who is about to give birth and whether your brother can handle it. But besides your brother, we will definitely need to hire more people. Initially, your brother's main task will be running to several cities, back and forth. I've estimated about five days for a full round; he'll be able to return home every five days."

"This is just for the beginning. Later on, I want to ask your brother to look for sales channels specifically. Eventually, he will be able to spend even more time at home," Pei Yicheng described the future of the Chili Sauce Factory.

The Chili Sauce Factory will surely grow larger over time, and the need for manpower will increase. Sometimes, it's necessary to rely on one's own people.

Chapter 357: Alumni Ah

"I need to discuss it with my eldest brother and sister-in-law." Xu Nianhua was very moved, believing that his eldest brother's future would surely be boundlessly bright. As shareholders of the Chili Sauce Factory, if Xu Nianji could truly secure the sales channel, it would undoubtedly be excellent.

In the future, there will also be opportunities for my brother to further his education. Once the Chili Sauce Factory becomes a larger enterprise, there will be even more he can do.

"Of course, I'm just discussing the preliminary ideas with you," Pei Yicheng's voice was very pleasant, steady and trustworthy, "Don't worry about learning to drive, Ling Dong is here, and besides, Ling Dong will also teach your brother. He's smart and will pick it up quickly."

"Let me thank you on behalf of my brother for considering him so thoughtfully," Xu Nianhua said sincerely. Pei Yicheng had helped them a lot.

"If it weren't for your massage technique, my leg wouldn't have healed. I should be the one thanking you," Pei Yicheng said, his hand resting on his leg. Before his injury, many people flocked to him trying to ingratiate themselves.

But since the injury, Pei Yicheng felt that he had seen the true colors of people's feelings. Other than his grandfather and Cheng Hao, his relatives, only the Xu Family never showed any disdain towards his injured leg.

He still vividly remembered the words Xu Nianhua said on the day Xu Nianji got married.

"His leg can't stand because of an accident, but that doesn't negate his excellence. He's still in the herbal medicine business, a thousand and ten thousand times more outstanding than those who spend their days gossiping."

"In fact, those who mock him for not being able to stand are the truly disabled, morally and psychologically."

He can clearly recall Xu Nianhua's expression that day, forcefully defending him. Her frame was petite, but at that moment, in his heart, she seemed so towering.

She was beautiful that day, not just on the outside, but her soul too was radiant, dazzlingly so.

"You should thank Dr. Hu," Xu Nianhua hastily interjected. She simply stumbled upon a massage technique; it was Dr. Hu's medical skills that were the key.

Pei Yicheng lifted his lips in a slight smile and said nothing more.

"By the way, why hasn't Yining returned yet?"

Xu Nianhua felt somewhat awkward sitting there. After finishing the serious conversation, she didn't know what else to say. That's when she remembered Pei Yining, who had gone to get some fruit. She and Pei Yicheng had been talking for a while now; why hadn't Yining come back yet?

The night.

Pei Yicheng saw Xu Nianhua home. The moonlight was as clear as day, mingled with the sounds of passersby and Pei Yicheng's occasional reminders to watch the path.

A breeze wafted through, and Xu Nianhua appreciated the atmosphere. She glanced at him and said, "Yicheng, I noticed a lot of university textbooks in your house. Are you self-studying?"

Xu Nianhua remembered that Pei Yining had mentioned that Pei Yicheng had taken leave from school due to his leg injury.

"Yes," Pei Yicheng replied. "I've self-studied all the sophomore courses already. When the school term starts, I just need to take a test, and then I can go straight into my junior year."

Xu Nianhua looked at him in astonishment and gave him a thumbs up. Despite his leg injury, he had managed to self-study and finish all of his second-year courses. It wasn't about whether he could learn the material; the sheer perseverance alone set him apart from ordinary people.

Seeing the admiration in her eyes, Pei Yicheng's gaze softened even more, and he said, "I'm also a student at Beining University."

Alumni, huh!

Chapter 358: You Are Really a Good Person

"Impressive!"

Xu Nianhua felt that apart from praise, there was nothing else to say. She was about to ask him what major he was studying when suddenly, a few men sprang out beside them and went straight for Pei Yicheng.

"Be careful."

Pei Yicheng pushed Xu Nianhua behind him and stepped forward to block the men.

The incident happened in an instant. Xu Nianhua hadn't even comprehended what was happening; pushed aside by Pei Yicheng, she was still dazed. When she opened her eyes, she saw Pei Yicheng fighting with those men.

Several burly men surrounded Pei Yicheng. Xu Nianhua was frightened and immediately started shouting for help, as they were on a very quiet street and her cries for help were particularly distinct.

Suddenly, someone tried to lay a hand on Xu Nianhua.

Pei Yicheng, who had just been fighting those men, positioned himself in front of her like a hero from a TV show.

This scene was etched into Xu Nianhua's heart.

It wasn't until Pei Yicheng had knocked those men down that Xu Nianhua came back to her senses.

"How are you?" Pei Yicheng asked caringly, making sure she wasn't hurt before saying, "I scared you."

"It's okay, how about you?" Xu Nianhua belatedly expressed her concern for him, and seeing the men beaten down, she praised, "You're very impressive."

"I'm fine."

Pei Yicheng protected Xu Nianhua by his side and said to those men, "Go back and tell Gu Junhe, if he wants to play, I'm up for it to the end."

The men scrambled away.

Gu Junhe.

If there were doubts before, the way things unfolded made Xu Nianhua believe that it was unlikely there were many rich people with the same name who acted like this.

Gu Junhe, if Cheng Hao was a flirt, Gu Junhe was a flirt and a philanderer. Moreover, while Cheng Hao was just quick to change girlfriends but never mistreated any of them,

Gu Junhe was different. He would use all means to get any woman he fancied, and in the end, he reaped what he sowed because of the women's vengeance, supposedly even involving his wife.

She didn't know if it was the same as in her past life, that Gu Junhe's wife was Zou Yaru, but Gu Junhe acted ruthlessly and had an extremely narrow-minded personality. Anyone who crossed him would face his severe retaliation.

When she had returned to her family's home, Gu Junhe had already been in trouble, and everyone in the family was tight-lipped about him and his wife. She only knew that Gu Junhe had done many despicable things, just digging up one or two could land him in jail.

But how should she bring this up and tell Pei Yicheng?

She had never met Gu Junhe; how could she possibly know all this?

Xu Nianhua was troubled.

"Nianhua, rest assured, this won't happen again. Had I known, I would have asked Ling Dong to drive you," Pei Yicheng said, regretting not having walked her home in a car.

She was so wonderful; she shouldn't have to witness such dirty incidents, tarnishing her eyes.

"Brother Cheng, you really are a good person," Xu Nianhua said with a grin, "Thank you for protecting me. But what about Gu Junhe, might he not give up and seek revenge on you?"

"The military will block with soldiers, and the waters will cover with soil," Pei Yicheng didn't want to dwell on it and said, "You better go home. Your grandfather must be worried."

"Be careful on your way back."

Xu Nianhua waved to Pei Yicheng, repeatedly urging him to stick to the main roads and avoid alleyways.

"Don't worry."

Pei Yicheng's gaze softened further as he said, "Or, would you want to sleep over with Yining?"

They were walking back together.

Xu Nianhua quickly shook her head. It might have been fine if Yining had come, but if her grandfather's family found out she had walked home with a man, her parents would definitely hear about it, and they might just break her legs.

Chapter 359: This is unacceptable

Pei Yicheng watched her enter the house before turning around to leave, his eyes shifting from softness to cold harshness instantly.

After returning to the hotel, he went straight to Ling Dong, planning to thoroughly investigate Gu Junhe. If Xu Nianhua hadn't been there, he might have been more magnanimous and not minded, considering it a practice run.

But, specifically because Xu Nianhua was present when he acted, no one could blame him for giving Gu a taste of his own medicine.

That very night, Pei Yicheng met with Ling Dong, wanting to have someone inquire about Gu Junhe's affairs.

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"Nianhua, you're finally back."

Ji Shan kept looking outside, and when he saw Xu Nianhua return, he finally breathed a sigh of relief and said, "I was really worried you wouldn't find your way back."

"Little uncle, I'm sorry, I met a friend and had dinner with them before I came back." Xu Nianhua apologized. Although she had mentioned she might not return for dinner, now it was eight o'clock, and it had just gotten dark since it was summer.

"No problem, I was worried you couldn't find your way in the city, but it's good you're back." Ji Shan felt relieved knowing she was safe, and said, "Your grandfather was waiting for you right after he finished his dinner."

"I'll go see Grandpa."

Xu Nianhua hurried inside, where her grandfather was sitting on a chair.

"Grandpa, sorry, I met a friend," Xu Nianhua explained.

"It's good to have friends, come see Grandpa more often in the future," Ji Xinghua observed his granddaughter, feeling proud of how excellent she seemed and said, "Your aunt has made up your bed already, you should take a bath and go to sleep early."

"No, I'll stay and chat with Grandpa instead."

Xu Nianhua liked listening to Ji Xinghua's stories about the old days. The harder those times were, the more precious the present days seemed.

She stayed with her grandfather until she became tired, then Xu Nianhua took a bath and went to sleep, staying in Ji Shuyuan's room. Ji Shuyuan, not sure whether he was busy or what, had been constantly at Ji Shuming's house lately, squeezing into a room with Ji Shuming's seven-year-old son.

The unfamiliar room, the unfamiliar bed, the unfamiliar scent, even though Xu Nianhua had slept there a few nights, she still felt uneasy.

She closed her eyes, and the scene from last night, with Pei Yicheng's tall figure standing in front of her, made her feel particularly secure, her heart racing even now as she thought about it.

Xu Nianhua, oh Xu Nianhua, he's just a twenty-four-year-old young man, you really shouldn't be having these wild thoughts; it's inappropriate.

At the river's head of Yunyang in the night, I bid my guest farewell among the autumn's maple leaves and reeds. The host dismounts while the guest stays aboard, raising our cups intending to drink, yet without musical accompaniment...

Slowly immersing her mind into the ancient poetry calmed the restless heart in her chest. Gradually settling, she drifted into a fitful sleep.

...

"Wasn't my brother spectacular playing the hero last night, wasn't it especially moving?" Pei Yining, knowing what had happened the previous evening, couldn't hide the blazing gossip in her eyes.

It wasn't for nothing that she had tried so hard to matchmake yesterday.

"Your brother was amazing, I'm really thankful to him," Xu Nianhua replied, then added, "His future wife will be lucky, definitely feeling very secure."

Pei Yining: "..."

That wasn't what she meant.

Meanwhile, Pei Yicheng and Ling Dong had inquired a lot but didn't find anything significant about Gu Junhe. Realizing that they were short of reliable people, he fell silent for a long while before saying, "Ling Dong, this is what we'll do; take some money, cultivate more of our own people, so next time we face an issue, we won't be so passive."

Chapter 360: Nianhua's friend looks quite rich

"Nianhua, let's go to the lake tomorrow. I heard there's a Huaming Lake in South City, and it's particularly beautiful," Pei Yining suggested eagerly, wishing she could go to the lake right away.

"Sure," Xu Nianhua replied, her grandfather was in good condition, so she could afford to be away for half a day.

"Then come find me tomorrow morning," Xu Nianhua thought, planning an early start and to return home before noon would be nice.

"Agreed."

After arranging with Xu Nianhua, Pei Yining joyfully went to pick out clothes; she wanted to look good for the lake outing and take lots of beautiful photos.

"Brother, you're really great!" Pei Yining said with a happy face as Pei Yicheng handed her some money, just enough to buy beautiful clothes, but perhaps it was a bit much.

"Nianhua's grandfather just got discharged from the hospital, buy some nutritional supplements to bring over, and don't make people think you're rude," Pei Yicheng paused, then added, "If it's not enough, come to me."

"Bro, I think you're pretty clever," Pei Yining said as she quickly ran off before Pei Yicheng could scold her.

With money in hand, Pei Yining bought whatever caught her eye.

Nutritional supplements? Pei Yining was quite good at picking those.

The next day, when Pei Yining arrived, she brought a bunch of gifts.

Seeing all those items, Deng Juan's eyes lit up. If the things Ji Ying had brought over last time were valuable, the items Pei Yining brought were worth even more.

So many snacks, she had only seen them because they were too expensive to buy.

"Are you Nianhua's aunt? I heard her grandfather just got discharged from the hospital, so I specially bought some nutritional supplements to help him recuperate," Pei Yining said politely and very pleasingly.

"Yes, yes, yes, are you Nianhua's friend from South City?" Deng Juan sized up Pei Yining, who was wearing a light yellow dress that made her fair skin look even more radiant, her beautiful doll-like face seeming as if it belonged in a magazine.

Standing in front of her, Deng Juan felt an unconscious surge of inferiority, unsure of where to place her hands and feet.

"Nianhua went for a walk with her grandfather; she'll be back soon," Deng Juan explained, inviting Pei Yining to sit. She went on to wipe the dust off a chair and said, "Sorry, the house is a bit messy."

"It's okay, when will Nianhua and the others be back?" Just as Pei Yining asked, Deng Juan looked outside and saw Xu Nianhua assisting Ji Xinghua, walking back home in the distance.

"Nianhua, your friend is looking for you,"

Deng Juan called out loud.

Pei Yining stood up joyfully, stepped outside, and saw them approaching. She greeted sweetly, "Hello, Grandfather."

Xu Nianhua introduced, "Grandfather, this is the friend I told you about, Pei Yining."

"Hello," Ji Xinghua looked at Pei Yining, pleased that Nianhua's friend seemed nice, with a clear and honest look, indeed a good kid. He said, "I'm going back to my room to rest, and you two go out and enjoy yourselves."

"Alright, Grandfather, take it slow,"

Xu Nianhua assisted Ji Xinghua back to a chair in the room, and under Ji Xinghua's urging, she and Pei Yining then went out to enjoy the day.

Ji Xinghua said, "Feel free to have fun a bit longer, just make sure to come back for lunch; let your aunt cook something delicious for you."

Deng Juan quickly added, "Yes, Nianhua, have lots of fun."

Her face was smiling, thinking to herself that Nianhua's friend seemed quite wealthy and generous.