

## Regaining 471

### Chapter 471: Four Tickets

"No need, my second brother will also come over today, and we've planned to visit Yining's home." Xu Nianhua explained.

"Oh~"

Fei Jiayi drew out her intonation, winking and making faces at Xu Nianhua, with an expression that seemed to say: So you're going to see your sweetheart!

"Yining and I are friends, and my second brother is also Master Pei's disciple, so our two families..." are quite close.

Xu Nianhua was earnestly explaining, yet seeing Fei Jiayi's face that simply wouldn't believe her, she suddenly felt that no matter what she said, Fei Jiayi wouldn't believe it.

"Lil sis,"

As soon as Xu Nian'an had holiday break, he packed his stuff early, planning to head to Pei Yicheng's place first. Pei Yicheng had already come in his car to help him move his things.

Once Xu Nian'an and Pei Yicheng had unloaded the stuff, they dashed toward Xu Nianhua's dormitory, thinking of helping Xu Nianhua carry things.

Yet before they even reached the dormitory, they saw Xu Nianhua and... Su Xi standing with her.

This was the second time Xu Nian'an had seen Su Xi. Compared to the previous time she was all dressed up, she seemed even more beautiful today from this closer distance.

Xu Nian'an's hands became somewhat fidgety; he didn't know where to put them. He thought, was the color of his jacket too dark for today?

It seemed like his hair hadn't been cut in a long time, since he wanted to go home early.

"Second brother," Xu Nianhua was surprised they had arrived so early. She smiled and introduced them. At first, Xu Nianhua didn't notice anything wrong, but after a while, she saw that her second brother seemed quite nervous?

Aside from Su Xi, all the others were familiar faces. Fei Jiayi, being her roommate, was someone they often dined with as well.

Could it be...

Xu Nianhua's gaze secretly fell upon Su Xi's face, then towards Xu Nian'an. She felt she had discovered something incredible.

It wasn't until they returned to the Pei family that Xu Nianhua hesitated to speak, and even Xu Nian'an realized something was off. Touching his own face, he asked, "Lil sis, is there something wrong with my face?"

"No," Xu Nianhua shook her head. With so many people around, it wasn't a good time to ask.

Pei Yining excitedly took out four train tickets.

"Did you buy the train tickets? But, why are there four?" Xu Nianhua glanced at the four tickets; they were all from Ningbei to South City.

Pei Yining's smile became even brighter as she laughed and said, "Guess."

"Could it be..."

The gazes of Xu Nian'an and Xu Nianhua fell on the faces of Pei Yicheng and Pei Yining; it wasn't hard to guess.

"Smart," Pei Yining complimented. "It's perfect for visiting Grandpa during the vacation. We'll have company on the way. I haven't eaten Aunt Ji's cooking for over half a year. When I go back, can Aunt Ji cook for me?"

"Of course, it's almost New Year's, right? Your dad's side..." Xu Nianhua looked towards the siblings.

"I will spend New Year's with Grandpa," Pei Yicheng directly expressed his intent. He had been busy with affairs in Ningbei these days, attempting to settle everything so that he could spend time with his grandfather, with... her, without any worries.

Pei Yicheng's gaze rested on Xu Nianhua's face, which after repeatedly nourishing her health in different ways these days, finally showed a touch of healthy rosy color.

"Me too," Pei Yining immediately raised her hand and said, "My dad and..." Aunt Wan and the others.

She didn't finish her sentence, but Pei Yining added, "I also haven't spent New Year's with Grandpa for many years. This year, I will celebrate New Year's in South City."

Chapter 472: How About Becoming My Second Sister-in-Law?

"Yining, we siblings can return home without getting lost," Xu Nianhua felt that Pei Yicheng and his sister were only offering to send them home because they wanted to accompany them.

"I spend every New Year's Eve with Grandfather."

Pei Yicheng's gaze lingered on Xu Nianhua's face, filled with boundless sympathy. He had lived in Gaoliang County for so many years, yet it wasn't until last summer that he had met her.

"I sometimes spend New Year's with Grandfather too. This year, I'll be keeping him company. Having a companion is just perfect." Pei Yining, while holding Xu Nianhua's hand, whispered into her ear, "Nianhua, don't you want to go back with us?"

"Of course not," Xu Nianhua immediately denied, worried that they were insisting on returning to South City just to accompany them. Since they had been planning to spend the New Year with Grandfather anyway, there was nothing more to discuss.

"The wheelchair you had has been donated, and this is a thank-you letter from the recipient." Pei Yicheng took a thank-you letter out of his pocket, which he had just received.

Xu Nian'an and his sister didn't know how to handle the donation, so Pei Yicheng took care of everything on their behalf.

"Let me see." Xu Nianhua took the letter and read it. The delicate characters written upon it made it evident that the author was a girl.

The girl's name was Lao Jia, who had lost both legs since childhood. Her family was impoverished, and her father used to carry her to school. She longed for a wheelchair. Now a primary school teacher, although she could not stand, she never gave up hope in life.

With the donation, Lao Jia expressed special gratitude in the letter, vowing to educate the children well so they could have a bright future.

"At least the wheelchair hasn't gone to waste," Xu Nianhua remarked thoughtfully, feeling sympathy for the girl who had been without legs since childhood.

Xu Nian'an finished reading the letter which, apart from explaining how she had lost her legs, was filled with thanks for them.

"Yes, the wheelchair has indeed fulfilled its purpose. I believe Lao Jia will certainly become a good teacher." Reflecting on her own past as a teacher, Xu Nianhua thought that she must do something more for them in the future.

They had to catch the train early the next morning, so they went to bed early.

"Big brother," Xu Nianhua suddenly called out to Xu Nian'an, who paused before asking, "Little sister, what's wrong?"

He looked at her hesitant expression and couldn't help but ask, "Is your leg okay?" looking instinctively at her legs.

"No, my leg is healed. I have something I want to ask you," Xu Nianhua's gaze was intense as she demanded, "Big brother, you must answer me truthfully."

"Okay," Xu Nian'an answered earnestly, ready to listen attentively.

Xu Nianhua hesitated before asking, "Big brother, what do you think of Su Xi?"

"Ah..."

Xu Nian'an had thought she would ask about something else. Why was she asking about Su Xi?

"Su Xi is the one we saw today, the one in the white down jacket," Xu Nianhua clarified pointedly.

"She's quite nice," Xu Nian'an lowered his eyes.

"How about having her as my sister-in-law?"

The unexpected suggestion startled Xu Nian'an.

"Little sister, you, I..." Xu Nian'an was so flustered he couldn't even finish his sentence.

"Big brother, you're twenty-one this year, it's normal to have someone you like," Xu Nianhua stated with a knowing and understanding air.

Xu Nian'an gave her a big eye roll and retorted, "Little sister, you better mind your own business. As for her, my feelings are just admiration, an appreciation of beauty."

#### Chapter 473: Eat While It's Hot

"Second brother, if you want to pursue her, I absolutely support you," Xu Nianhua said earnestly. Today was the second time he had seen Su Xi and the first time he had directly interacted with her, but the impression Su Xi left on him was still a very good one.

Fei Jiayi kept referring to her cousin, and if Su Xi was really not good, with Fei Jiayi's straightforward nature, they probably wouldn't get along.

"By the way, you have a rival," Xu Nianhua suddenly exclaimed. "Do you remember Wa Lei we met at the hot pot restaurant? He likes Su Xi. If you really want to pursue Su Xi, you'll have to use your sincerity to move her."

Xu Nian'an: "..."

When had he ever wanted to pursue Su Xi?

To him, his feelings for Su Xi were purely admiration for beauty. Standing in front of her, he felt inferior. What right did he, a man with nothing, have to harm that girl?

However?

Xu Nian'an looked at Xu Nianhua seriously. With the understanding she displayed, could it be that she and Yicheng...

"Little sister, are you hiding something from me?" Xu Nian'an abruptly asked.

Xu Nianhua was pondering how to help her second brother win his love when she was caught off guard by his question. She paused, her face full of confusion. "Second brother, what am I hiding from you?"

"What do you think?" Xu Nian'an looked as if he understood everything.

Xu Nianhua was even more bewildered.

Xu Nian'an reminded her, "Little sister, if you have someone you like, you can tell second brother."

Someone she liked?

In Xu Nianhua's mind flashed the image of the time she fell from the persimmon tree; she saw a pair of eyes, lonely but indifferent to everything. Then, Pei Yicheng's deep and affectionate gaze replaced it.

"No."

Xu Nianhua replied quickly.

"Really?" Xu Nian'an was somewhat incredulous.

"Of course it's true. Second brother, why would I lie to you?" Xu Nianhua's eyes were clear. Right now, she just wanted to achieve her small goals and wishes, without any thoughts of dating.

"If there is, little sister, you must tell second brother," Xu Nian'an reminded her again.

Xu Nianhua nodded affirmatively, then immediately countered, "If second brother has someone he likes, he also has to tell me."

Xu Nian'an: "..."

Hadn't she just guessed it herself? Yet she's asking?

...

That night, as soon as Xu Nianhua closed her eyes, she remembered the night she rejected Amos, and Pei Yicheng's unfinished words. His affectionate eyes, as if seared into her mind, kept resurfacing.

She tossed and turned, finally managing to fall asleep. When she woke up, it was already six o'clock in the morning.

Xu Nianhua let out a big yawn, still half asleep. Once awake, she couldn't stay in bed any longer. She got dressed and tidied up her luggage. She had just gone to the kitchen, intending to make breakfast for everyone to take on the road, but as soon as she entered the kitchen, she stopped in her tracks.

Warm sunlight poured through the window into the kitchen. Amid the rising steam, Pei Yicheng was stirring something with a spoon. The misty air seemed to add a filter over his face.

"You're up so early?" Pei Yicheng turned his head to see Xu Nianhua standing there in a daze. He ladled a bowl of brown sugar black rice porridge from a pot and said, "I made this porridge especially for you. Try it."

"When did you get up?" Xu Nianhua, smelling the aroma of the porridge, felt her stomach 'gurgle' with hunger.

Xu Nianhua's face turned red. Pei Yicheng's lips curled up slightly, pretending not to hear, as he handed her the bowl of porridge and said, "Eat it while it's hot."

#### Chapter 474: The Secret of the Supplement Soup

After a bowl of brown sugar black rice porridge, Xu Nianhua felt sweet and warm in her belly. She brought the bowl to the kitchen and asked, "Yicheng, have you eaten? What are you cooking in this pot?"

"Silkie chicken soup," Pei Yicheng's voice had barely fallen when he paused and said, "You lost a lot of blood this time, so you need to recover properly. The doctor said that Silkie chicken soup is very good, and I happened to stew one. You can have it on the train at noon as a meal."

Now, putting the stewed Silkie chicken soup in a thermos would be perfect for drinking at noon.

"Yicheng, you... got up so early just to make soup for me?" Xu Nianhua looked at him incredulously. The continuous aroma of the chicken soup from the pot puzzled her.

The fragrance felt familiar.

"I couldn't sleep, and we happened to have a Silkie chicken at home. It's not like we could wait until next year to eat it," Pei Yicheng didn't mention that he had specifically sought out this Silkie chicken to nourish Xu Nianhua's body.

"You could have let Aunt Jin keep it for later. You guys can still have it when you return for the Chinese New Year; the chicken is alive." Xu Nianhua reminded him. Smelling the familiar aroma of chicken soup, she thought about the tonics she had been having every day to replenish her qi and blood, and she felt a sense of familiarity.

"Yining and I are in good health," Pei Yicheng ladled out a small bowl of chicken soup for her to taste.

Xu Nianhua deliberately had a taste. The flavor was indeed very familiar.

As she tasted, she kept looking at Pei Yicheng, feeling that something was amiss.

"How is it, tasty?"

Pei Yicheng asked.

"Mm-hmm," Xu Nianhua nodded. She countered, "Those soups before, they weren't all made by you, were they?"

"Yes," Pei Yicheng didn't deny it. A faint smile was in his eyes as he asked, "Don't you think I'm amazing? Do you want to drink it again in the future?"

"Impressive."

Xu Nianhua gave him the affirmation he deserved, but she didn't respond to his latter question.

"If you like it, from now on, I'll make it for you. I'm pretty good at making soup," Pei Yicheng silently added in his heart: as long as she liked it, he was willing to make soup for her for a lifetime.

Perhaps his gaze was too intense, Xu Nianhua felt that if he kept looking at her this way, her heart might just leap out. She quickly changed the subject by asking, "Yicheng, I heard that your design for Xiyue has been approved? Does this mean that, in a few years, we will be able to see the Xiyue Hotel transformed from blueprint to reality?"

"Yes," Pei Yicheng nodded affirmatively. After next year's final review of the blueprint and construction, the Xiyue Hotel should be visible in about three years.

Xu Nianhua looked at him admiringly and said cheerfully, "Yicheng, I knew you could do it."

"Thanks for your confidence in me."

Pei Yicheng's lips curved slightly upwards. When he was submitting his tender, he too was uncertain. Pei Guozhong's project for the Xiyue Hotel was something he hadn't planned on getting involved with, but apart from this one bid, which he felt most inspired by, he wasn't as moved by any of the others at the time.

Besides, Pei Guozhong's open tender was focused on the blueprints, not on him as a person, right?

There were times when he felt insecure deep down, but Xu Nianhua's words last time had given Pei Yicheng extra confidence.

"That's because your drawings and designs are good," Xu Nianhua said as the topic shifted. With the discussion in the kitchen now on architecture and design, the atmosphere became less... overwhelming for her.

Talking about his expertise in architectural design, Pei Yicheng spoke eloquently with confidence and charm.

Xu Nianhua occasionally interjected with her insights. Having seen many future architectures, her comments provided Pei Yicheng with quite a bit of inspiration.

#### Chapter 475: Of Course, You Are Fortunate

When Pei Yining got out of bed, she saw them chatting happily and couldn't help but rub her eyes, afraid she was seeing things.

She lightened her footsteps, turned a corner, and headed to the living room to drink tea and bask in the sunlight, while also dragging the just-awakened Xu brother out to the courtyard to enjoy some sun and tea.

"Eh, the little sister hasn't woken up yet?"

After sipping a cup of tea, Xu Nian'an noticed that it was already seven o'clock.

Pei Yining glanced inside the house, thought about eating breakfast, and that they should be catching the train soon, then headed to the kitchen.

...

Even though the sleeper train was crowded, once he reached the sleeping carriage, he felt a sigh of relief.

Xu Nianhua and Pei Yining were both in the upper bunks, while Pei Yicheng and Xu Nian'an had a middle and a lower bunk, respectively. During the day, Xu Nianhua and Pei Yining could sit on the lower bunk to chat and watch the scenery passing by the window.

Shortly after boarding the train, Xu Nianhua dragged Pei Yining to the restroom.

"Nianhua, aren't you going to the restroom?" Pei Yining observed that the restroom was empty, yet Xu Nianhua did not go in.

"Yining, who actually made those soups?"

Xu Nianhua specifically asked this question because when she had previously asked Pei Yining, Pei Yining had insisted that she made them.

"That..." Pei Yining felt a bit guilty and said, "I made them."

"Liar!"

Xu Nianhua pouted and said, "Yining, stop lying to me. Your brother already said that he made them."

"Nianhua, whether it was me or my brother who made it, does it make a difference?" Pei Yining, knowing that she had been found out, bluntly retorted instead of answering.

Xu Nianhua: "..."

She thought carefully and seriously, and it seemed there was no difference.

"Is it that my soup tastes better, or is my brother's not delicious?" Pei Yining asked teasingly, holding her hand, "Whichever of us siblings made it, it's all the same heartfelt intention. It was tough on my brother, getting up at five every morning to make soup for you."

"My brother's cooking skills are not particularly gifted; whenever he had time, he would ask Aunt Jin how to make soup properly."

Pei Yining took the opportunity to boost her own brother's reputation.

"Your brother is very impressive, and the soup he made tastes really good." Xu Nianhua, thinking about the nourishing soups she drank those days, each day made with an early start at five, suddenly felt a warm feeling inside.

"Nianhua, don't you think my brother is great?" Pei Yining earnestly promoted him.

"Yes, whoever becomes your brother's wife will be very fortunate."

Xu Nianhua said this, then turned and went into the restroom.

Perhaps because she drank too much porridge in the morning, she genuinely needed to use the restroom.

"Nianhua." Pei Yining, watching the closed restroom door, blinked and thought to herself: Of course, it will be you who is fortunate in the future?

They boarded the train at ten in the morning, and wouldn't arrive in South City until early the next day.

The slow-moving train clattered on, and Xu Nianhua didn't mind at all; she sat on the upper bunk, continuing to read her book.

After watching the scenery for a while, Pei Yining found it boring and decided to lie back on her upper bunk to catch a bit more sleep; she had woken up at seven in the morning and was still sleepy.

At noon, when Xu Nianhua opened her black chicken soup, the whole carriage smelled it, and Pei Yining was woken up by the delicious aroma.

Xu Nianhua and Pei Yining shared the soup between them, although initially, she had intended it for four people. However, Pei Yicheng and Xu Nian'an each ordered boxed meals and had bought egg cakes specifically for the train ride, so they had already stuffed themselves full early on.

The black chicken soup was exquisitely flavorful. It wasn't the steaming-hot kind just off the stove, but it still carried a warmth that, in the cold weather, made sipping the hot chicken soup extremely comforting, warming straight to the core.

Chapter 476: Not Very Good, Right?

"Bro, the soup you stewed is really delicious."

Pei Yining, completely satisfied, rubbed her warm belly. A bowl of steaming chicken soup, along with the soft and tasty egg cakes, filled her stomach to the brim.

Xu Nianhua's hand, which was closing the thermal container, paused for a moment. Pei Yining's words suddenly made her think of what Pei Yicheng had said that morning.

"If you like it, I'll make it for you in the future. I'm pretty good at stewing soup."

Xu Nianhua recalled the way Pei Yicheng looked at that time, which gave her an illusion as if he couldn't wait to stew soup for her for the rest of her life.

In the afternoon, Xu Nianhua sat hugging a book. In the past, she relied on figuring things out by herself, but now, with a teacher's systematic instruction, many things that Xu Nianhua didn't quite understand before became much clearer, and she learned much more smoothly.

In her previous life, the methods she had figured out on her own were not bad, but now she felt that she could go even further.

No matter the time, Xu Nian'an and Pei Yicheng always left one person in the train carriage to guard Xu Nianhua and Pei Yining. Amidst the clattering sound of the train, Xu Nianhua slept until dawn. Thinking about seeing her family soon, she couldn't sleep as soon as it was light out.

South City train station.

Xu Nianji and Ling Dong, who had returned to South City ahead of time, were waiting outside the train station early on.

"Why isn't the train here yet?" Xu Nianji, craning his neck and looking out, didn't blink as he searched through the crowd every time a new group of people disembarked, hoping to see two familiar faces.

"The train arrives at seven, and it's only six-thirty now." Ling Dong ate a large bun, alternating bites of bun with sips of soy milk, dispelling the chill and filling his stomach.

"Oh, so there's still half an hour."

Xu Nianji went to sit beside Ling Dong and also began eating buns. He inquired, "Are Nian'an and Nianhua doing okay in Ningbei?"

Ling Dong took a big bite of his bun and paused. He thought about that time when Xu Nianhua was hit by a car and nearly lost her life. That certainly wasn't good, was it?

"Nian'an is smart, and with Grandpa Du's teaching, he's learning medicine. With that foundation, he should catch on quicker than most. I'm not worried," Xu Nianji said proudly, speaking of his siblings as if it was his personal achievement, happier than if he had made money himself. He continued, "But I'm worried about Nianhua. It's not that I don't trust her to study, it's just that my little sister is so pretty, there must be a lot of people after her."

"My little sister has been sensible, understanding, and obedient since she was young; she excels in her studies and never causes worry like other girls do."

Xu Nianji praised her without reservation.

Ling Dong nodded in agreement, saying, "Xu little sister is indeed very sensible and impressive."

As Ling Dong and Xu Nianji chatted, the time approached seven o'clock and Xu Nianji could no longer sit still. He stood at the exit, constantly vigilant so he wouldn't miss them.

People flowed in and out of the exit gate. When Xu Nianji saw the familiar figures, he immediately waved and shouted, "Little sister, over here, I'm here!"

Xu Nianji, tall and waving his hand high above the crowd, stood out prominently.

Xu Nianhua looked in the direction of the voice and sure enough, saw her elder brother's beaming face.

"Big brother."

Xu Nianhua and Pei Yining, hand in hand, made their way through the crowd to the outside. She asked excitedly, "Big brother, did you come to deliver goods just in time?"

"Yes, I delivered the goods yesterday. I heard from Ling Dong that you were coming back today, so I thought I'd go home with you." Xu Nianji took over the food Xu Nianhua was carrying and asked with concern, "How was everything in Ningbei?"

Chapter 477: Confession

"Okay, everything's fine," Xu Nianhua replied without hesitation.

Walking behind, Xu Nian'an's forehead twitched as he heard this; all the way home, he had been thinking about how to confess the situation so that his parents wouldn't worry so much.

An unavoidable scolding was inescapable.

After a simple breakfast, the group immediately got into Ling Dong's car. Xu Nian'an deliberately went to sit in Xu Nianji's car, thinking of giving his elder brother a heads-up in case their parents got angry; having a helper would be good, right?

"Big brother, your driving skills have really improved,"

Praising him, Xu Nian'an felt completely steady sitting in the car driven by his elder brother, without feeling any jolts at all.

"You could learn it too." It hadn't been easy for Xu Nianji to learn to drive, but now, having been delivering goods for so long, he was used to it. Throughout the journey, the brothers Xu Nianji and Xu Nian'an chatted.

Xu Nian'an also mentioned how he was selling hairpins and scarves at school.

Xu Nianji praised, "Nian'an, well done, making money while studying? But still, prioritize your studies, don't worry about the money for school; we have enough at home."

"I don't need to study 24 hours a day. I take out two hours to sell things, it doesn't affect my schooling," Xu Nian'an explained, before inquiring about the situation at home.

As he drove, Xu Nianji responded, his face beaming with happiness especially when he mentioned his own son.

Arriving safely at Gaoliang County, as soon as the car stopped, Xu Nian'an confessed, "Big brother, I've kept something from the family."

"You mean the incident with the school equipment, right? The one about a thousand yuan? Don't worry about it, the family isn't like before, we can afford that kind of money," Xu Nianji said, patting his shoulder. "Just focus on your studies, and become a doctor someday—how great would that be?"

"I didn't damage any school equipment." With his head hung low, not daring to look Xu Nianji in the eyes, Xu Nian'an blurted out in one breath, "I need a thousand yuan to buy a wheelchair and nutrition for our little sister. In December, when little sister and Yining went to see me at school, they had a car accident on their way back. Little sister was hit by someone."

"What?" Xu Nianji's eyes widened, staring at Xu Nian'an's guilty demeanor, wondering, how could he not tell him about something this serious?

She needs a wheelchair?

But when he saw little sister just recently, her legs were fine!

Xu Nianji had many things he wanted to say, but Xu Nian'an was very quick, not giving him the chance to ask, continuing, "After being taken to the hospital, little sister had seven stitches on her head and a broken leg. It took over a month to heal. Big brother, when we go home later, you really have to back me up; I didn't mean to keep it from you all."

Looking pitifully at Xu Nianji, he said, "Life in Ningbei has been tough. The doctors said she was out of critical danger, and I was also worried about mom and dad traveling so far—it would be too exhausting, so I didn't mention it."

"Nian'an, oh Nian'an, such a big thing, you can keep it from mom and dad, but why didn't you tell me?" Xu Nianji said, his chest heaving with anger. Thinking of Xu Nianhua needing a wheelchair and having been healing for over a month without his knowledge, he glared at him fiercely, "I understand you want to spare mom and dad, worried it would be too much for them, but as your big brother, I'm strong and young, why wouldn't you let me know so I could take care of little sister?"

"Well, it's just that my sister-in-law had just given birth to Zhuangzhuang, I ..." Xu Nian'an wore a guilty expression; Zhuangzhuang wasn't even a hundred days old then, how could he possibly inform his elder brother to travel to Ningbei?

Besides, if he had informed his elder brother, could he have kept it from their parents?

Chapter 478: Frequently What

"How's little sister doing now?" Xu Nianji jumped out of the car and instinctively looked for Xu Nianhua.

"Little sister is all better now, her head wound has healed, and her feet too. She can walk and jump around." Xu Nian'an cleared his throat, staring at the factory gate right in front of him, but he didn't quite dare to go in.

"Mom, I'm back!"

Xu Nianhua dashed into the factory and threw herself into Ji Ying's arms.

Ji Ying had just finished washing some glass bottles and was drying them when she saw her daughter. Her face lit up with surprise and joy. She knew her daughter and son would return today, but she didn't know when.

"Let me take a look at you, you've lost weight." Ji Ying scrutinized her daughter and fondly touched her face, saying, "I've slaughtered a chicken today to nourish you both."

Xu Nianhua: "..."

Could she not eat chicken?

Ever since she got injured, her second brother bought six chickens, and ducks and such, having her drink broth every day. She felt like she was being nourished into a ball.

She had clearly gained weight, how could she be thin?

"By the way, where's your second brother? Didn't your eldest brother go to the city yesterday? Did you guys meet?" Ji Ying looked back but couldn't see Xu Nian'an behind Xu Nianhua.

"We met. Eldest brother picked us up at the train station. Second brother rode back in eldest brother's car, and I came back in Yining's car because it was faster."

Xu Nianhua said this, her eyes scanning the food factory she hadn't seen in half a year. It seemed to have changed quite a bit.

"Is everything going well at the factory? How are the sales?" Xu Nianhua switched the topic and asked.

"Everything's fine. It's cold out, so you better go home and warm up by the fire. Your sister-in-law and Zhuangzhuang are at home." Ji Ying adjusted her clothes, worried she might catch a chill, and said, "Go now, I'll come home in a bit and cook something nice for you."

"I'm not cold. What are you doing? I'll help you." Xu Nianhua didn't leave and instead insisted on helping Ji Ying get the glass bottles out to dry, all the while sharing amusing stories from school.

Ji Ying laughed happily. The trivial tales from her daughter's school life were music to her ears, and she was especially happy when they talked about her roommates. "Next year, bring more cured sausages and bacon, and the crisp pork too. I believe your dorm mates will definitely love it."

"Oh, and there was your classmate you mentioned on the phone, the one who sent her family tea leaves. What was her name, Chang something?" Ji Ying struggled to remember the name.

"Chang Hui." Xu Nianhua reminded her.

Ji Ying nodded with certainty, "That's the one. The tea leaves she sent are a favorite of your dad's and your Uncle Yuchun too. Next year, buy more. If there's extra, we can give them away and also help her out."

Ji Ying had faced hardships before. If it weren't for the gradual improvement in their business and life from last year, how could Ji Ying enjoy such good days now?

Therefore, Ji Ying thought, if she could lend a hand to others, then she would. Buying a few more pounds of tea leaves to give away was very simple for them.

"Okay, I'll remember that. Next year when I go back, I'll ask Chang Hui to bring us a few more pounds." Xu Nianhua cheerfully agreed, holding Ji Ying's hand, and said, "Mom, you're really wonderful."

"We have to drink tea anyway, whose tea we buy doesn't matter, right?" Ji Ying was over the moon with her daughter snuggled up to her so affectionately. She said, "Everyone needs help at some point. Our family, without the kind-hearted people in the village, how could we have these good days now?"

Chapter 479: Like a Marshmallow

"Mom, I'm back," Xu Nian'an greeted Ji Ying and Xu Nianhua, who were chatting in the yard, with great joy.

Xu Nianji periodically sized up Xu Nianhua, which utterly perplexed her. Why was her eldest brother staring at her like that?

By the time they sat down for dinner at home, Xu Nianji pulled Xu Nianhua aside for a closer look, and noticing her ponytail, he asked, "Where on your head did you get stitches? Did it hurt a lot? How about your leg? Is it still hurting? It's all your second brother's fault for not taking good care of you and letting you get injured."

"Uh..."

Xu Nianhua subconsciously glanced at Xu Nian'an, who was looking down beside her.

Xu Nian'an said, "I told big brother everything."

"I'm fine," Xu Nianhua immediately reassured, though Xu Nianji wasn't convinced. He insisted on seeing her wounds, but Xu Nianhua hastily protested, "Big brother, it was such a hassle to tie my hair up, and I'm hungry. Let's go home. I haven't even seen Zhuangzhuang yet. I bought him lots of gifts. Let's hurry."

Xu Nianhua urged him to walk faster.

"Zhuangzhuang."

As soon as they reached the door, Xu Nianhua rushed back home; she joyously walked into the house, saying, "Zhuangzhuang, your auntie is here to see you."

Just as she entered, she saw her sister-in-law, Zhou He, come out of a room holding Zhuangzhuang. She said, "Nianhua, you're back."

"Zhuangzhuang, look, your auntie is back," Zhou He greeted Xu Nianhua with a smile, holding Zhuangzhuang.

"Wow, Zhuangzhuang has grown up so well, and his name suits him perfectly," Xu Nianhua observed, gazing at the chubby, fair face of Zhuangzhuang wrapped in a blue blanket. Just like his nickname, sturdy and robust, his round, bright eyes were clear and pure, without a blemish.

"Come inside, it's cold out," Zhou He stepped aside, urging them to come in quickly.

Inside the house, beside a chair, a pot with lively fire made the place warm and cozy. On the chair, Ji Ying had thoughtfully taken old cotton and old clothes to make several chair pads, soft and comfortable, which didn't feel cold at all, even in winter.

"Zhuangzhuang, look what your auntie brought for you," Xu Nianhua brought out her suitcase and unfolded a bunch of toys—colorful and cute, they immediately caught Zhuangzhuang's attention.

Zhuangzhuang clutched a yellow rubber duck, squeezing it hard to make it squeak, not wanting to let go.

"Nianhua, Zhuangzhuang is still small. You don't have to buy him so many toys next time," Zhou He remarked, looking at all the toys and assuming they must have not been cheap, even without knowing the exact amount.

Xu Nianhua disagreed, saying, "Sister-in-law, it's because he's small that he needs these toys. I even bought him some clothes."

As she spoke, Xu Nianhua took out a set of baby clothes, a bright red outfit, soft, comfortable, and warm, that looked festive and adorable. When buying them, she mentioned Zhuangzhuang's approximate age, and the shopkeeper recommended a size slightly larger, something he could wear now and still fit into later.

"Sister-in-law, look, can Zhuangzhuang wear this?" Xu Nianhua held the clothes up against Zhuangzhuang, and even without him wearing it, she liked it more and more.

Zhou He nodded, "Perfect for the New Year, and he can still wear it when it's cold next spring."

The style of the clothes was something she had never seen in the county; it resembled a red little tiger and looked exceptionally adorable.

"Zhuangzhuang, do you like the clothes your auntie bought for you?" Xu Nianhua touched Zhuangzhuang's little face, feeling its softness, just like cotton candy.

Chapter 480: I Need to Admit a Mistake "Nianhua, it must have cost you quite a lot." Zhou He looked at the items with gratitude, thinking about how she had heard about troublesome sisters-in-law before, but in her opinion, the sisters-in-law she got through marrying into the Xu Family were truly wonderful.

"Sister-in-law, I am Zhuangzhuang's very own aunt."

Xu Nianhua playfully teased Zhuangzhuang with a grin.

Xu Nian'an, who had also returned, rummaged through a pile of toys and clothes, along with some beautiful tiger-head shoes and hats, and pushed them in front of his elder brother, saying, "Big brother, these are for Zhuangzhuang."

Xu Nianji, holding this pile of items, sighed helplessly and said, "I'll thank uncle and aunt on behalf of Zhuangzhuang, but really, don't buy anymore next time. Zhuangzhuang has plenty of clothes, and he grows very fast."

"It didn't cost much." Xu Nian'an stared at the chubby and adorable Zhuangzhuang, who looked just like what he had imagined, resembling his big brother around the eyes.

"Nianhua, would you like to hold him?" Zhou He watched Xu Nianhua play with Zhuangzhuang and couldn't help but suggest.

Xu Nianhua paused and then shook her head, saying, "I can't, I don't know how."

"It's easy."

Zhou He, seeing her interest, held Zhuangzhuang and carefully placed him on her lap while instructing Xu Nianhua to support his head with her hand.

"Sister-in-law, I... I don't know how to hold him." Xu Nianhua followed Zhou He's actions, but Zhuangzhuang, though hefty, was relatively tiny, and she really feared not holding him properly.

"See, you're holding him just fine," Zhou He said with a smile.

Once Xu Nianhua steadied herself, she noticed Zhuangzhuang's beautiful big eyes staring at her, not crying or fussing, and she felt even happier and more fond of him.

That evening, Dad Xu Qinghe got the news and, after finishing his work, he rushed to the county for a reunion.

Xu Qinghe and Ji Ying, Xu Nianji and Zhou He with Zhuangzhuang as a family of three, along with siblings Xu Nian'an and Xu Nianhua, the family of seven sat tightly around the square table.

Since Xu Nian'an and his sister went to school, it had been a long time since they had all gathered together, and the table was full of dishes they both loved.

When a family reunites, it's always filled with happiness and joy.

After dinner, the family sat around the brazier together, and even just chatting made them feel happy.

"Dad, Mom, I need to admit a mistake," Xu Nian'an had discussed it with Xu Nianhua.

Xu Nianhua felt that since the incident was over, they might as well act as if it had never happened, to spare their parents the worry.

But Xu Nian'an disagreed. He felt that he hadn't protected his little sister properly. Besides, regarding his sister's Panda Blood, he thought that the whole family should get their blood types checked in case someone else was also a carrier of Panda Blood. That way, they would be prepared in case of any emergencies.

"You broke something, it's only right to pay for it," Xu Qinghe assumed it was about this incident.

Ji Ying concurred, "Your father is right. Now that we have some money, don't worry about that thousand yuan."

Ji Ying's reassurance only made Xu Nian'an feel more guilty.

Xu Nianhua surreptitiously signaled to Xu Nian'an, but he acted as if he hadn't seen it; he took out a bulging envelope from his pocket and placed it into Xu Qinghe's hands.

Xu Qinghe was startled, opened the envelope to see that it was indeed filled with money, and looking back and forth between Xu Nian'an and the envelope, he asked, "You didn't pay the school? Where did this money come from?"

"Dad, Mom, I didn't break any equipment at the school," Xu Nian'an said earnestly, having decided to confess, he calmly narrated the matter, fearing that his own agitation would only upset his parents more.