

## Regaining 541

### Chapter 541: Feeling Sour

This is completely different from the high and cold nobleman I first met!

When was the first time I saw Pei Yicheng?

Xu Nian'an recalled, but couldn't remember clearly; however, his impression of him was very cold and aloof, exuding an aristocratic air, just like the rich young masters described in the books he had read.

But now?

Xu Nian'an decisively averted his eyes; after all, Pei Yicheng was putting all his effort into wooing his little sister. If he dared to slight her in any way, he definitely wouldn't let him off.

Thinking this way, Xu Nian'an felt balanced in his heart. With his little sister being so outstanding, if Pei Yicheng didn't pay more attention to her, why should he let his sister be with him?

On the other side, Xu Nianhua and Pei Yicheng were seriously discussing the matter of transporting goods.

Liunian's car really did return to South City every few days, delivering Liunian's skincare products and perfumes, and on the way back, bringing chili sauce from South City.

The Good Mama brand chili sauce not only sold well in South City, but also did exceptionally well in Ningbei. Therefore, as soon as the year began, Ji Ying was busy recruiting people again.

Fortunately, the factory was spacious enough. After making some money, they converted all the other vacant spaces into the factory.

"Nianhua!"

When Pei Yining hurried back with a big camera, she directly plunged into Xu Nianhua's arms, hugged her tightly, and said, "When did you get here? Why didn't you tell me? If I had known, I wouldn't have gone out."

Upon seeing Xu Nianhua, Pei Yining had an endless stream of things to say.

"It's alright; it looks the same today. How was it, did you take a lot of beautiful pictures?" Xu Nianhua smiled as she looked at the camera that Yining couldn't part with and teased, "You never let go of your camera; won't your future husband get jealous of it?"

"Nianhua, what nonsense are you talking about?" Pei Yining blushed, after all, she was an unmarried girl and was quite shy about the topic. She diverted the conversation, "Nianhua, I heard that you and my brother are dating?"

"So in the future, you'll be my sister-in-law?" Pei Yining gazed at her eagerly, asking, "How did my brother win you over? How did you agree to him?"

Pei Yining's barrage of questions made Xu Nianhua pause, and she said, "Yining, we're just trying it out. It's too early to call me sister-in-law now, and it's hard to say if we can make it to the end."

"Sister-in-law, you'll definitely be my sister-in-law; there's no escape." Pei Yining said with a giggle, the flames of gossip shining in her eyes, asking, "How did my second brother confess to you?"

Xu Nianhua skillfully dodged the question, "I need to head to the store now. School is about to start, and I have to get the store up and running before that."

"Stingy."

Pei Yining kept muttering as she didn't get an answer. Suddenly, during her packing, she saw a small pink bottle and exclaimed in surprise, "Nianhua, what is this?"

Xu Nianhua turned around to see that bottle of First Love perfume and immediately thought of what Pei Yicheng had said that day.

"My brother made the perfume?" While talking, Pei Yining sniffed near the bottle and, seeing the words on it, felt a pang of jealousy.

Could her sister be someone they picked up somewhere?

"Right, I'm sure your brother also prepared one for you," Xu Nianhua took the perfume bottle, which was indeed quite special.

"My brother is really good to you." Pei Yining looked at the bottle of perfume reluctantly, thinking: Later, she would definitely have to ask her brother to give her one too.

Chapter 542: My Money is Not Enough

Xu Nianhua awkwardly changed the subject, and when she saw Pei Yicheng, she immediately whispered in his ear, "Yining saw the perfume."

The rest of her words were unsaid, but Xu Nianhua's meaning was abundantly clear.

"In a few days, I'll give it to her," Pei Yicheng quietly responded in her ear, "Your bottle is one of a kind."

His warm breath enveloped her, and Xu Nianhua stepped back, saying, "Yicheng, can you not stand so close to me, please?"

"Hmm?" His voice rose at the end, like a tiny feather, tickling her heart.

Xu Nianhua's heart quivered, and she thought: They say a beautiful woman brings trouble, but she felt Pei Yicheng was likewise trouble, a kind of 'blue calamity.'

Inside the store, which was almost ready, Xu Nian'an, when occasionally talking about the name, asked, "Little sister, what do you think is a good name?"

"Hmm," pondered Xu Nianhua uncertainly, "Nian'an Boutique?"

Xu Nian'an: "..."

Little sister, that's just lazy. That's not what you call naming.

"What's a boutique?" Pei Yining asked.

"You see, selling hair clips, scarves, and stuff like that, and in the future, we could sell some small and delicate items—that's what a boutique is," explained Xu Nianhua. In future generations, there would be boutiques everywhere.

"Nian'an Boutique? That's even worse than Anhua Boutique," Xu Nian'an curled his lips in disdain, uninterested in the name Xu Nianhua had come up with.

Xu Nianhua touched her nose sheepishly and said, "It seems not very catchy, let's think again."

"Then how about..."

Xu Nian'an wracked his brains, and suddenly, inspiration struck, he said, "Let's call it Beautiful Boutique."

"Pfft~"

"Xu Brother, can't you think of something nicer sounding?"

The name Xu Nian'an came up with was unanimously ridiculed by Xu Nianhua and Pei Yining.

"Then let's change one word, 'Beautiful Boutique,'" Xu Nian'an quickly amended.

In the end, the name 'Beautiful Boutique' was decided.

"Brother, we still need to hire two more people," Xu Nianhua was a bit worried; she and her brother lived far apart, otherwise, she could also help.

"Eh, it would be great if we knew someone suitable," she sighed.

Xu Nian'an sighed as well; he had been troubled by this issue these days.

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Days passed; In South City, Ji Shuyuan sold two batches of goods, his wallet bulging, not only recovering his capital but also earning a year's living expenses.

Ji Shuyuan grinned from ear to ear every day. However, as more goods poured in, living at home became inconvenient.

They originally lived in factory dormitories, and many people had already inquired about what he was carrying.

Ji Shuyuan entertained the thought of renting a house and planned to look for one today after selling his goods. Maybe his grandfather would agree to rent with him?

That day, Ji Shuyuan sold his goods as usual.

There were many customers, and one of the girls bought a bunch of items but realized upon checkout that she didn't have enough money.

"Boss, can you keep these items for me? I'll go back to the dorm to get the money and come back to buy them," she asked cautiously, afraid that the items she painstakingly chose would be snapped up by someone else in the meantime.

"Sure," Ji Shuyuan put the selected items in a bag and set them aside, reminding her to come back quickly.

"Thank you, boss."

She ran off quickly and when she ran back, Ji Shuyuan had already closed up shop. She desperately looked at the empty table and asked, "Boss, did you keep them for me?"

"Right here," Ji Shuyuan lifted the bag, and she was overjoyed, even letting her dialect slip out.

"Are you from Gaoliang County?" asked Ji Shuyuan.

Chapter 543: Fellow Villager

"Yeah." Zheng Jin nodded happily and then looked at Ji Shuyuan with sparkling eyes, asking in dialect, "Are you from Gaoliangyuan too?"

"I used to be."

Hearing her familiar dialect, Ji Shuyuan felt even more warmth.

"I only came here last year for university," Zheng Jin said cheerfully, glancing at the bag full of items she had just picked out. She handed over the exact amount of money.

Ji Shuyuan gave her a small discount of two yuan, saying, "We're from the same place, let's forget about those two yuan."

"Thank you." Zheng Jin had managed to buy the hair clips she wanted and the scarf she liked, and she was quite happy about it.

"Do you know Xu Nianhua then?" Ji Shuyuan thought since she had gotten into South City University last year, and Gaoliang County only had one high school, perhaps she knew Nianhua?

"Of course I know her. We were classmates and good friends. I even met her last year before New Year. She has become more beautiful. It's a pity she went to university in Ningbei; otherwise, we could have gone shopping together," Zheng Jin said non-stop once she started talking about Xu Nianhua.

In high school, the one true friend Zheng Jin acknowledged was Xu Nianhua.

"Oh, you know Nianhua too?" Zheng Jin asked, realizing a bit too late.

Maybe because they all knew the same person and were fellow townsfolk, Ji Shuyuan felt even closer to the girl before him. He said, "She's my aunt's daughter, my cousin."

"Really?" Zheng Jin asked instinctively, feeling that it was too much of a coincidence.

"Of course it's true. Why would I lie to you?" Ji Shuyuan cleared his throat, noticing that he had changed a lot since he started selling these items.

"Then why are you..." selling these things.

Zheng Jin started to speak but then quickly shut her mouth.

"I'm a student at South City University, in my second year," Ji Shuyuan explained, seeming to understand her unspoken words. He added, "Don't look down on these small items; they can earn quite a bit of money."

"Then, you should come sell at our Normal University next time. There are lots of girls at our school, and they would definitely like these things," Zheng Jin immediately replied, suspecting that Ji Shuyuan might be from a less affluent family. She pursed her lips and said, "How about this, next Saturday, come sell at our school gate, and I'll bring my classmates to buy from you."

"That's a deal then, I should be heading back now," Zheng Jin said, turning around and running off.

Ji Shuyuan watched her running figure, thinking that she was just like Nianhua, both beautiful and kind-hearted girls.

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This was at Ningbei, in front of the Medical University.

By the fourteenth day of the first lunar month, many students had gradually started returning to school, and Xu Nian'an's newly opened 'Beautiful Boutique' immediately caught everyone's attention.

The items were cheap, ranging from a few cents to a few dollars, and even up to ten dollars, but the shop was beautifully arranged. Entering it, one would be attracted by the wide range of items available.

Especially for girls, it was hard to take their eyes off. Anyone who entered the shop left with something.

Xu Nianhua was good at arithmetic; she stood at the specially reserved cashier counter without moving, constantly calculating prices and collecting money—this routine continued in a loop, and her smile almost stiffened on her face.

This situation persisted until the evening.

Taking advantage of a moment when the shop was empty, Xu Nianhua simply sat on the floor, saying, "Second brother, the three of us were spinning around all day today. If this continues when classes officially start, it'll surely wear us out."

"Also, in the past two days, we've only priced half the items. There's still half left unpriced," Xu Nianhua added, feeling a headache coming on, missing the future system of money collection

Chapter 544: He Has a Sister

"It's okay, actually it's only busy on Saturdays and Sundays, and when there's no class. Everyone's in class otherwise, so who has time to come here and browse?" Xu Nian'an reassured everyone, while adding, "Besides, once school starts, everyone will have homework. It won't be as fresh and busy as today. Everyone still needs to keep their money for food, right?"

"Brother Xu, you think too much. Your shop doesn't have enough products to worry about," Pei Yining said, eyeing the dazzling array of items. In her opinion, she wished she could take them all home.

Who knew how Xu Nian'an had such a good eye for picking out things? The stuff looked especially nice, delicate, and was not expensive.

"Your school has plenty of rich kids," Pei Yining remarked coolly, rolling her eyes inwardly, "Others hope for business so booming that they don't have a moment to rest, but you and your sister seem to hope it's not so busy? Are you opening this shop to make money, or not?"

"Brother, Yining is right. We can't hope for no customers; we must attract them." Xu Nianhua sat for a while before starting to write price tags again. This way, they could be directly stuck on the products or the small cabinets, allowing people to see the price at a glance without needing to ask back and forth, which also made calculating the price more convenient.

"But, whom should we recruit?" Xu Nian'an asked.

The store sold all sorts of small trinkets, and obviously, he couldn't be there 24 hours a day, so the burden on the person they recruited would be quite heavy.

"At your school, have you spotted anyone suitable?" Xu Nianhua asked.

Xu Nianhua added, "As long as they are careful, serious, and responsible, that's enough."

Xu Nian'an paused, then said, "There is one."

"His surname is Ban, called Ban Chuan, but his family isn't particularly well-off, though his character is definitely good. He lives in the same dormitory as me." Xu Nian'an mentioned Ban Chuan, endlessly praising him.

"But he also has to attend school. Does he have the time for this?" Xu Nianhua looked at him with a puzzled face.

"He has a younger sister, Ban Lin." Xu Nian'an cleared his throat and continued, "Once I happened upon her washing dishes in a restaurant in the dead of winter because she wasn't attending school. Her hands were frozen like that, yet she still saved things to give to Ban Chuan. I think she's quite suitable."

"You're not considering having both siblings work in the shop, are you?" Xu Nianhua blinked and looked at him.

"No, he needs to study, he's so busy pouring over his books every day that he wouldn't have time to help me sell items." Whenever Xu Nian'an mentioned this, he remembered how his dorm mates said he was obsessed with money, studying less than anyone else in the dorm.

"Well, if you're free tomorrow, let me meet her," Xu Nianhua said, and added, "One person isn't enough, we need to find at least one more."

Xu Nianhua said this while staring intently at Pei Yining.

"Why are you looking at me like that?" Pei Yining felt uneasy under her gaze, swallowing nervously before saying, "Nianhua, if you have something to say, just say it directly. Can you not stare at me like that?"

"We are strangers in this place; I don't know whom to recruit. What about you, do you have any suitable candidates in mind?" Xu Nianhua asked with concern.

Pei Yining shook her head repeatedly, "No, the people I know are all in school, too busy to mind a shop."

"I see." Xu Nianhua felt somewhat disappointed, but her eyes soon lit up again as she looked at Xu Nian'an and said, "Brother, then let's just hire directly. Who knows, we might just find someone."

Chapter 545: Forgot to Eat Dinner

"Right, I probably won't be able to come help tomorrow," Pei Yining said with a look of apology, "Tomorrow is the Lantern Festival, and I've already made plans with my classmates to go take photos for others."

"It's fine, the two of us can manage," Xu Nianhua didn't want to hold Pei Yining back from her own plans, confident that he and his sister could handle things.

"Nianhua, my brother will come pick you up from the factory later, so I'll head back first," Pei Yining said, quickly running off. She really went to a lot of trouble to give her brother and Nianhua some time alone together.

"Ah."

Xu Nianhua picked up the bag from the corner, which his second brother had specially picked out for Pei Yining, full of things she would find useful.

"Never mind, I'll bring them over later," Xu Nianhua said, returning to his business.

As the sky outside darkened further, the brother and sister were so engrossed in organizing their merchandise that they even forgot to eat dinner.

At the school gate, among a row of shops, only theirs was still lit up.

"Second brother, do you smell something delicious?" After tagging the last pair of earrings and placing them on the shelf, she caught the scent of dumplings, and her stomach began to growl.

"Little sister, did we forget to have dinner?" Xu Nian'an asked, his face blank as he lifted his head. Sorting the goods was a very tedious task, and with the decent sales they made that day, he also had to crunch some numbers.

In the hustle and bustle, Xu Nian'an had completely forgotten about dinner.

Pei Yicheng, who walked in with a plate of fried dumplings, frowned upon hearing they hadn't eaten dinner yet and shot Xu Nian'an a glaring look that seemed to question: How are you taking care of your sister?

Xu Nian'an guiltily touched his nose; he had simply been too busy and got muddled.

"Just in time, I brought some fried dumplings," Pei Yicheng said as he opened the package of piping hot dumplings, the aroma instantly filling the shop.

"Smells amazing."

Taking a deep breath, Xu Nianhua, whose stomach was growling with hunger, looked at him somewhat sheepishly and asked, "Have you eaten?"

"I brought them for you to have as a late-night snack. Eat them while they're warm," Pei Yicheng responded. Though he didn't say much else, the concern in his eyes was clear as day. He said, "You eat first; I'm going to buy something else."

While calling Xu Nian'an over to eat, Xu Nianhua didn't worry about what Pei Yicheng had gone out to buy, as the two siblings who'd missed dinner dug in.

Before long, Pei Yicheng returned, this time with two more bags. He said, "On the way here, there was a shop that hadn't closed yet—two bowls of egg noodles."

The fried dumplings he'd brought were meant as a snack and weren't enough to fill them up.

"Thanks, Yicheng," Xu Nianhua, who was only half full, was instantly cheered up by the sight of the bowl of egg noodles.

Xu Nian'an looked at Pei Yicheng, then at his happy little sister, and thought that Pei Yicheng was really considerate, always thinking about his little sister's needs.

"Yicheng..." Xu Nian'an began to say but then felt it wasn't right; once he and his little sister were married, he would have to call him 'brother,' so he corrected himself, "Yicheng, thank you."

"No problem," Pei Yicheng's eyes twinkled, his smile growing even warmer as he felt he had passed Xu Nian'an's test.

"Little sister, you should go back and rest with Yicheng soon too, it's cold. You don't need to come too early tomorrow; I'll be here watching the shop," Xu Nian'an softly instructed, knowing that relationships are built over time. As long as they didn't cross any lines, he felt they should spend more time together. After school starts, such opportunities to be together would be rare.

Chapter 546: I Can't Believe You Have Absolutely No Thoughts on This

"Nian'an, come stay with us too,"

No sooner had Pei Yicheng spoken than Xu Nian'an refused, "No way, with all this stock in the shop, how can it be left unattended?"

"Second Brother, there's a door," Xu Nianhua reminded him.

"Little sister, you go ahead, I'm a grown man, I can keep watch here without trouble," said Xu Nian'an indifferently, looking toward Pei Yicheng, "You take little sister home first, it's very cold. Make sure she gets some rest early."

"Okay," Pei Yicheng didn't refuse, and had stood up to put a scarf and gloves on Xu Nianhua, as if he feared she would catch a chill.

Xu Nian'an, still concerned, escorted Xu Nianhua to the car. Clutching Pei Yicheng, he whispered a warning, "Yicheng, although I agree with you two dating, you absolutely must not take advantage of my sister. You're just dating, you're not married yet."

"Am I that kind of person?" Pei Yicheng cleared his throat, his earlobes slightly reddening. Xu Nian'an's words made it seem as if he had done something to Nianhua.

"How are you not? I'm a man too," Xu Nian'an said with pursed lips, "Facing the girl you like, I don't believe you have no thoughts at all?"

Xu Nian'an scrutinized Pei Yicheng skeptically. Though he had never dated, he hadn't eaten pork but had seen pigs run.

Especially his eldest brother, right after he got married, seemed to wish he and his wife were conjoined twins; even before, at home, he had accidentally walked in on his brother kissing his sister-in-law several times.

In the dorm, sometimes his classmates would even talk about things more excessive. Not having dated didn't mean Xu Nian'an was ignorant about these matters.

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"Brother Cheng, why does your face look a bit red? Are you feeling unwell?" Xu Nianhua looked at Pei Yicheng with concern, reaching out to feel his forehead, then touching her own, muttering, "You don't seem to have a fever."

Pei Yicheng's face grew even redder; when her somewhat icy hand had touched his forehead earlier, his heart had felt as though it was about to leap out of his chest. Luckily, the road was empty at this time, with no people or cars in sight.

"I'm fine," Pei Yicheng answered quickly, focusing all his attention on driving, racing home. Pei Yicheng, using home as an excuse, made for his room as soon as they arrived, not lingering like he had for the past few days, seemingly wanting to chat until the conversation could go no further.

Could there be something wrong?

A thought flashed through Xu Nianhua's mind, but she didn't dwell on it, yawning as she washed her face and feet. After a tiring day, she longed to fall asleep as soon as her head hit the pillow.

In the room.

Leaning against the door, Pei Yicheng's mind kept revisiting Xu Nian'an's words,

"Facing the girl you like, I don't believe you have no thoughts at all?"

Pei Yicheng sighed helplessly. He was a normal man, how could he possibly have no thoughts? However, he had always restrained himself and never showed it.

Especially since they confirmed their relationship, Pei Yining had been very considerate and thoughtful in giving them plenty of private time. Every time he finished talking with Xu Nianhua under the flowers and the moonlight, he found it hard to calm his emotions for a long time afterward.

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The fifteenth day of the first lunar month, the Lantern Festival. The passing of the Lantern Festival also marks the end of the New Year's celebrations, a holiday highly valued by everyone.

The shop, unlike the previous day, wasn't as busy, giving Xu Nianhua and her brother a much-needed break.

"Little sister, I'm going to find Ban Chuan to see if his sister is willing to come," said Xu Nian'an, seeing the shop was not busy. Ban Chuan's family lived in a village nearby Ningbei.

"Second Brother, be careful," Xu Nianhua advised him and then continued to busy herself in the store.

Chapter 547: The Ban Siblings

Dajiao Village got its name from a mountain shaped like a giant foot.

It wasn't too far from Ningbei City District. After leaving the city district, one would only have to ride a bus for about an hour to get there. However, due to the poorly repaired roads, the journey was so bumpy that Xu Nian'an almost threw up his breakfast.

Xu Nian'an walked and asked for directions along the way until he finally arrived at Ban Chuan's home.

If he had not chatted with Ban Chuan before and knew the exact location—and had not asked the villagers along the way—he might never have found Ban Chuan's house. It was an old house at the foot of the mountain, surrounded by a picket fence, with a few chickens foraging in the yard.

"Ban Chuan? Ban Chuan, are you home?"

Xu Nian'an called out loudly.

"Who is it?" A girl with braided hair ran out from the house. She wore an old cotton-padded jacket that had been washed many times and her face was ruddy, with clear, bright eyes. Xu Nian'an felt a large stone settle in his heart.

He knew of Ban Chuan's character and wanted to help him. He thought that as long as Ban Chuan's sister wasn't the type to be arrogant or lazy, he would offer her a job.

Now that he saw her, Xu Nian'an thought, if you are not from the same family, you don't enter the same door.

He smiled and said, "You must be Ban Chuan's sister, Ban Lin, right? I'm his classmate, Xu Nian'an."

Xu Nian'an introduced himself enthusiastically.

"Hi, hello," Ban Lin stuttered back, feeling awkward as she gazed at Xu Nian'an, not knowing where to put her hands. Could all her brother's classmates possibly be this good-looking?

"Is your brother at home?" Xu Nian'an's smile grew warmer, seeing Ban Lin's stuttering manner, he couldn't help thinking that he didn't look too bad when he smiled either.

"He's over at Er Dan's house, just wait a minute."

Ban Lin spoke quickly and then ran off.

Xu Nian'an watched her retreating figure and couldn't help but think that Ban Chuan's sister was quite cute.

"Nian'an?"

It wasn't long before Ban Chuan ran back, panting, "Nian'an, how did you find my house? Come in and sit down."

Ban Chuan had been helping to repair Er Dan's chicken coop. When he heard Ban Lin's words, he thought he had misheard. But as he ran back to the house and saw Xu Nian'an, he was also quite surprised.

"This is some food my mother has prepared for you. It's a specialty of South City. I brought it for you to try."

Xu Nian'an handed over the smoked meat and sausages he had brought. He said, "I was originally going to bring them to the school and give them to you tomorrow. But since I came to your house today, I brought them along."

The smoked meat and sausages were Ji Ying's specialty. Every year, the ones she made were particularly delicious, and many women in the village went to her for advice.

"No, I can't accept this." Ban Chuan looked at the smoked meat and sausages and reflexively declined.

"Everyone in the dorm has some. What, you're not part of our dorm?" Xu Nian'an said sternly.

Upon hearing that everyone in the dorm had some, Ban Chuan stopped refusing. He enthusiastically poured water for Xu Nian'an. Meanwhile, Granny Ban, learning that Ban Chuan's classmate was visiting, eagerly set about preparing lunch.

"Nian'an, did you come here for something specific?" Ban Chuan racked his brain but couldn't figure out why Xu Nian'an would come to see him specifically.

"I did come for a reason." Xu Nian'an got straight to the point, "Last semester, I heard that your sister was washing dishes in a restaurant?"

Upon hearing this, Ban Chuan fell silent and said, "You know the situation with my family. The money for my university was all borrowed. My grandmother is old and in poor health, and since my sister did not get into high school, she found a job in Ningbei."

Last summer, Ban Chuan's parents passed away. When the university acceptance letter arrived, Ban Chuan almost tore it up. It was his sister Ban Lin and his grandmother who desperately protected the acceptance letter, insisting that he must go to university.

#### Chapter 548: I'm Not Going

"I know that the incident with Uncle Ban and Aunt Ban was an accident, and your sister understands as well. Once you graduate from college and start earning money, you'll be able to support your sister and your grandmother," Xu Nian'an comforted, feeling especially fortunate that his entire family was safe and sound, and that they had earned enough money for them to study without worries.

"I came today to ask you if there's something your sister could do on my side, something better than washing dishes at a restaurant." As soon as Xu Nian'an finished speaking, Ban Chuan's eyes lit up immediately.

Xu Nian'an continued, "I've opened a boutique at the school gate. I need to attend school and don't have time to look after it. I was wondering if your sister would be interested. It's just selling items and collecting money, really simple, and the salary is thirty yuan a month."

Xu Nian'an had thought that Ban Chuan would agree immediately, but surprisingly, Ban Chuan fell silent.

"It's near the school gate, so you can also check in on your sister often. She won't have to wash dishes at the restaurant and freeze her hands anymore," Xu Nian'an said, puzzled.

"I won't go."

This was the first time that Ban Grandma had hosted one of Ban Chuan's classmates, and she generously killed a chicken for the occasion. Ban Lin was intending to go to the backyard cellar to dig up some old ginger when she happened to hear Xu Nian'an's words.

"Why?" Xu Nian'an asked reflexively, "How much money do you make washing dishes at the restaurant in a month?"

If his memory served him right, it was twenty yuan.

Why wouldn't she take on a cleaner, easier job that paid more money?

"Thank you, Brother Xu," Ban Lin said, her stutter suddenly gone as she excitedly expressed gratitude to Xu Nian'an. She pressed her lips together and added, "I'm quite alright washing dishes at the restaurant. They provide food and lodging, which is quite good."

Besides the necessities she had to buy, she could save all of her remaining money.

But if she went to work for Xu Nian'an, where would she live? What would she eat?

"So, you're worried about that," Xu Nian'an realized what she was concerned about and thought of the attic, which he had originally intended to keep for himself, but now...

"There's an attic above the shop where you could stay, and for meals, you could go to the cafeteria with your brother," Xu Nian'an truly wanted to help Ban Lin. Working for him held future prospects, whereas she would always earn the same small salary at the restaurant.

Thinking this way, Xu Nian'an spoke again, "Eating at the cafeteria won't cost much per month, and when you add it up, you'll earn more than at the restaurant. Plus, if you do well at the shop, you could even get a raise."

"Xiaolin, I think it's better for you to work with Nian'an. It's closer and I can take care of you," Ban Chuan strongly advised, feeling that Xu Nian'an's shop was a better option than the restaurant, with no need to immerse hands in cold water and being closer to it.

"But eating at the cafeteria isn't cheap either," Ban Lin hesitated.

"Xiaolin, although the food isn't great, it only costs five yuan a month, which still lets you earn more than at the restaurant," Ban Chuan said just as he finished his sentence, Ban Lin immediately agreed, eager to earn an extra five yuan than before.

"Brother Xu, I'll definitely do my best in the future," Ban Lin said earnestly.

"Keep it up," Xu Nian'an encouraged, "Once you siblings start making money, you could even bring Grandma Ban to live in Ningbei. Then your family could reunite and you wouldn't need to be apart anymore."

Ban Chuan and Ban Lin's eyes sparkled at the thought. They had never dared to imagine that they could bring their grandmother to live in Ningbei. All they had thought about was earning enough money to provide her a good life.

#### Chapter 549: Recruitment Notice

At Beautiful Boutique, Xu Nianhua had finished all her tasks. Since she intended to hire two people, she posted a job advertisement at the entrance.

The job ad, in red paper with black characters, was particularly conspicuous. Holding her notebook, she was keeping the accounts and took the opportunity to write some more price tags in preparation for the next batch of goods. Just sticking them on would suffice. The store arrangement also needed some further adjustments for easier selling; on both sides, shelves were placed, and on these shelves, different boxes were lined up with varying prices inside each.

If time had not been so tight and Xu Nianhua and her siblings were not in a hurry to open the business, Xu Nianhua could have made the shop even prettier. Fortunately, she had chosen soft lighting that stayed on day and night, making the storefront look bright and tidy.

"Hello, are you hiring here?"

A female voice spoke up.

Xu Nianhua looked up and smiled, saying, "Yes, we are hiring. Are you looking for a job?"

"Yes," the woman replied, somewhat awkwardly standing at the doorway, observing the bright store, the clean floor, and the shelves with pretty hair clips and hanging scarves. She subconsciously hid her rough hands in her sleeves, feeling that she shouldn't have come in.

Before Xu Nianhua could speak, the woman turned and started to walk out.

"Wait a moment." Xu Nianhua had finally seen someone come to apply and naturally did not want to let her go, especially since the woman's attire, although old, was very clean and tidy, showing her to be honest and conscientious with a sincere look, indicating a dedication to her work.

"Don't go, we are indeed hiring," Xu Nianhua called out to the woman.

The woman stopped, looking at Xu Nianhua's strikingly beautiful face, and felt even more out of place. She said, "I, I might not be able to do it."

"How so? It's just selling items and handling payments, with carefulness and patience, you can do well," Xu Nianhua's smile grew even warmer as she talked with the woman and learned she was a single mother. Her husband had passed away early, and her in-laws had driven them out.

So, she brought her child to Ningbei to seek help from her sister, not wanting to burden her sister and brother-in-law's family, she rented a place nearby and planned to find some work.

"Your child is of school age, right?" Xu Nianhua asked.

Wei Hong nodded, saying, "Yes, she's seven this year, I'm planning to enroll her in the Yuhong class for the first half of the year."

"During holidays, you can bring your child with you as long as it doesn't affect your work," Xu Nianhua, through the conversation, felt Wei Hong was reliable, especially given their vulnerable situation, this job would hopefully make life a bit less tough for her and her daughter.

"Really?" Wei Hong's eyes lit up instantly. She had applied for many jobs, but people criticized her for bringing her child, and she didn't want to leave her daughter alone at home.

"Of course, it's true," Xu Nianhua smiled and nodded, saying, "However, usually, my brother is at school, and most of the time, it will be you and another employee in the store. Your daughter wouldn't run around, would she?"

"Not at all, my daughter Hua is very well-behaved, especially obedient, she definitely won't run around," Wei Hong, excited, hardly knew what to say. She immediately agreed to start work the next day. As she was about to leave, Xu Nianhua asked, "Sister Wei Hong, don't you want to ask how much it pays per month?"

"The lady won't treat me unfairly," Wei Hong smiled shyly.

Chapter 550: Did She Hear Wrong?

"Pfft."

Xu Nianhua couldn't help but laugh, "Thirty yuan a month, you can take two days off, but it has to be Saturdays and Sundays. From Monday to Friday, neither my second brother nor I are available. That's not a problem for you, right?"

Wei Hong stood there stupefied, feeling like her ears must have deceived her.

Thirty yuan a month, with two days off?

This deal sounded too good to be true. She must have heard it wrong.

"Sister Wei Hong, what's wrong?" Xu Nianhua looked at Wei Hong with puzzlement.

"Miss, how much did you say per month?" Wei Hong couldn't resist asking.

Xu Nianhua's eyes flickered as she said each word clearly, "Thirty yuan a month, and you can take two days off. But, try to rest on Saturdays and Sundays."

"That much?" Wei Hong said subconsciously.

"Sister Wei Hong, that's the rate at our store." Xu Nianhua looked toward the door and asked, "Sister Wei Hong, where's your daughter? Did you come alone?"

"No, my daughter is at the door." Wei Hong walked out happily. Now that she had a job, she could earn money to support her daughter.

Xu Nianhua followed and only then did she see that the little girl was squatting there counting ants. No wonder she hadn't noticed her.

"Miss, this is my daughter, surname Lu, named Lu Hua." Wei Hong introduced her as she gently touched the little girl's head and said, "Hua, say hello to Auntie."

"Auntie." Lu Hua stood timidly by Wei Hong's side, clinging closely to her.

"What a good girl."

Xu Nianhua went back into the store and got a hair clip with a little flower on it, pinned it into Lu Hua's hair, and said, "It looks very pretty."

"That's not necessary." Wei Hong instinctively wanted to refuse.

Xu Nianhua said, "Sister Wei Hong, it's just a hair clip. Consider it a gift for Hua as a way of meeting her. Sister Wei Hong, just call me Nianhua from now on. Don't keep calling me 'Miss', it sounds awkward."

"All right." Wei Hong readily changed her address and said, "Nianhua, then I'll come over early tomorrow morning."

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"Second Brother, you're back?"

Xu Nianhua had been busy all afternoon. When she saw Xu Nian'an, she was thrilled, and beside him were a man and a woman with large and small packages.

"Little sister, let me introduce you. This is Ban Chuan and his sister Ban Lin," Xu Nian'an introduced. "This is my sister Xu Nianhua, who is currently studying at Beining University."

"Hello."

Xu Nianhua took the initiative to help carry their things. But Ban Chuan, already holding the bags, didn't want to trouble her to carry anything and quickly stepped aside.

"Little sister."

Xu Nian'an quietly pulled Xu Nianhua aside and said, "I've arranged for Ban Lin to stay in the attic, and I'll stay at the school from now on."

Xu Nianhua looked at Xu Nian'an with confusion.

Xu Nian'an continued to explain, and Xu Nianhua nodded, "That's fine, Second Brother. As long as you agree, it's only if she, a young girl, dares to stay here."

"I take all the store's cash with me every day, and what's left are just small items. Besides, there are many people living in the shops next door; it is quite safe here." Xu Nian'an had lived here for a few

days. There were patrol officers at night. This place was right in front of the school gate and also had a guardhouse, so it was indeed very safe.

"By the way, I also hired someone today. Her name is Wei Hong. She'll be coming to work early tomorrow morning." After saying that, Xu Nianhua led Ban Lin to the attic. Xu Nian'an had lived here before, but since the school was starting tomorrow, she said, "My Second Brother has been busy recently and has been staying at the store. The attic is a bit small, but you can boil water, and there's a separate shower room. For the toilet, you'll have to use the public restroom."

"No problem at all, this is much better than where I lived before." Ban Lin looked around the attic, which was a simple place but tidy and clean, a lot better than the storeroom she used to live in at the restaurant.