

Switched M 251

Chapter 251: Took a Small Step

"I say, Third Sister-in-law, are you making fun of me again? Even if my cooking skills aren't the best, how could the meat-filled buns not be delicious?"

"Mom, stop teasing Third Aunt. And don't say Third Aunt dislikes your cooking. Have you forgotten the last time you made meat buns, they even made your grandson throw up."

"You little rascal, whose side are you on? Was he really repulsed by the meal I made, or was it simply because he ate too much?"

"Alright, alright, your cooking is delicious, so delicious that it made the kid overeat..."

The man hurriedly begged for mercy, while Third Uncle and Third Aunt burst into laughter beside him, creating a lively scene.

Suddenly, the man turned his head and saw the woman on the opposite side. His eyes widened, and he stopped goofing around with his family. He shouted loudly, "Boss Lin is here, Mom, the Boss Lin who taught me how to make buns is here. I knew it; she would definitely come for the opening of the Bun Shop, Boss Lin promised me."

After speaking, Jia Yuanliang was about to run across the street, but then he remembered something and turned back to shout into the house, "Brother, Big Brother, Boss Lin is here..."

After shouting, he then rushed across the street.

Meanwhile, they also saw the woman on the other side, tall and slim, dressed simply in black pants and a white shirt, her hair tied up in a bun at the back of her head, which highlighted her slender, fair neck.

Her face was also delicate and beautiful, with skin as white as a peeled egg, a complexion rarely seen in their area, even more beautiful than movie stars on TV, exuding a unique aura.

In the common folks' words, the girl standing there looked like a leader, her presence making you overlook her age and her superior appearance.

"My goodness, how does Liangzi know such a person? Sister-in-law, aren't you going to say hello?"

Jia Yuanliang's mother shook her head, "I'd rather not, it makes me nervous."

"There's a time when you get nervous, too," laughed Third Aunt.

At this moment, Jia Yuanliang inside the house heard the noise outside and came out from the shop. He immediately saw the woman across the street.

A knowing smile appeared on his face as he walked over briskly.

"Big Sister, it really is you."

Lin Chuxia extended her hand and shook hands with Jia Yuanliang. "Brother Jia, please forgive me."

It was an apology for her previous intentional omission.

Jia Yuanliang didn't take it to heart at all. Lin Chuxia was so young, if she had told him outright that the Bun Shop was hers, he might not have even sent his brothers to Ancheng County.

Promoting her own shop for no reason, even if sincere, could easily be mistaken for a scam.

"Big Sister, no need to explain. Your coming today is a great honor for us brothers. Please, come inside, it's almost the auspicious hour."

Jia Yuanliang was very happy. When he went home, he told his elder brother about Lin Chuxia, and his elder brother guessed that Boss Lin was the person he had met before.

He was right.

"Big Brother, I told you Boss Lin is a trustworthy person. If she said she would attend the opening ceremony of the Bun Shop, she would definitely come."

Jia Yuanliang also showed a simple, honest smile. His brother was like a little fanboy of Lin Chuxia.

This morning he was listless. Now seeing Lin Chuxia, his whole spirit was different.

Jia Yuanliang personally took Lin Chuxia on a tour of his bun shop and shared his experiences renovating the shop.

While looking around, Lin Chuxia affirmed some aspects and even made some suggestions. Overall, the template was still modeled after their own bun shop, and in that sense, the general direction was correct.

Soon, the auspicious time was about to arrive. Jia Yuanliang had already set up firecrackers at the entrance of the bun shop and even erected a stage there.

Jia Yuanliang got on the stage and briefly spoke, "Thanks to all the folks who came today. Yuanliang Steamed Bun Shop is opening today. Our meat buns continue the secret recipe passed down through generations. Everyone, feel free to come and try."

Lin Chuxia watched Jia Yuanliang on the stage, noticing how clean and tidy he looked today, even his hair was neatly combed, and there was not even a hint of stubble on his chin. He really took her advice about focusing on image and food hygiene seriously.

As she was observing Jia Yuanliang, he suddenly shifted his speech towards her.

Jia Yuanliang invited her to say a few words on the stage.

Lin Chuxia came just for fun, after all, she had promised him and it was also a chance to visit Qin Yang.

Moreover, although Jia Yuanliang's bun shop uses their secret seasoning packages, there are officially no ties to Qin's Steamed Bun Shop or Xiangyang Food Company.

Lin Chuxia didn't really know what to say when asked to speak.

But seeing Jia Yuanliang's excited look, Lin Chuxia didn't want to hurt his feelings, so she went on stage and briefly spoke a few words.

After she finished speaking, Jia Yuanliang handed her the match.

"Boss Lin, you light the first firecracker."

Jia Yuanliang also chimed in, "Big sister, coming today to participate in Yuanliang Steamed Bun Shop's opening ceremony is a great honor for us brothers. You must light the first firecracker."

Lin Chuxia smiled slightly, "Initially, Brother Jia trusted me so much, that was also our fate. Yuanliang is the boss, today is his main stage, this first firecracker should be lit by the boss."

But Jia Yuanliang insisted, "Although I am the boss, without Boss Lin's guidance, my bun shop couldn't have gotten started. I'll need Boss Lin's help a lot in the future. In my heart, you are always my boss. This first firecracker should definitely be lit by Boss Lin."

Unable to refuse, Lin Chuxia directly suggested that the two of them light one firecracker each, on the left and right.

"That's a good idea, let's do it that way," Jia Yuanliang finalized.

Lin Chuxia was on the left, and Jia Yuanliang on the right, both simultaneously struck the match and lit the firecrackers.

The crackling sound of the firecrackers added to the lively atmosphere in front of the bun shop.

This was what Qin Han had advised Jia Yuanliang, to really boost the atmosphere on the opening day, the more lively, the better. This was also Qin Han's biggest impression from the opening day of Qin's Bun Shop.

Making the opening day impressive helps more people know that their bun shop has opened. Even if some people might not come right away, they would have left an impression in their minds.

When one day they think about eating out, they would think of the bun shop that left the strongest impression.

After Lin Chuxia and they finished lighting the firecrackers, they stepped back to the front of the bun shop, looking at the lively crowd and a jubilant Jia Yuanliang, she felt a wave of emotion.

After all, this counted as another bun shop she planted in the Northwest, even if it didn't carry the Qin's Bun Shop name, it also marked another market she had tapped into. She thought about expanding the bun shops to every corner of the country, and this was a small step forward.

Jia Yuanliang saw the crowd of onlookers growing, and he was full of confidence about the future of the bun shop.

Sister-in-law Song, hearing the commotion up front, pulled Jiang Hong through the crowd. Seeing a newly opened bun shop offering a 20% discount on opening day, she immediately suggested to Jiang Hong.

"Shall we buy a few meat buns to take home? Our man always complains about my cooking, and knowing that Mrs. Qin came yesterday, he nagged me for half a day."

Chapter 252: How Could She Be Here?

Jiang Hong had become closest with Sister-in-law Song during her time here, and chuckled upon hearing her, "Why did Mrs. Qin come to Mr. Bai to gossip about you?"

"You don't know about Mrs. Qin's cooking skills, truly on par with the State-Owned Restaurant. Last time she came over and gave me some pointers on cooking two dishes. She just stood there and moved her lips, and the dishes I made—I couldn't believe I cooked them myself! Since then, she's often nagged me, telling me to learn from Mrs. Qin. Normally, Mrs. Qin isn't around here, so where am I supposed to learn from? Yesterday Mrs. Qin came over, and my husband got all excited, nagging me until my ears almost developed calluses."

Jiang Hong was also surprised to see Lin Chuxia looking clean and tidy, like a wealthy young lady, not like someone who could cook and with unexpectedly good skills.

"I know, right. They say comparisons can kill and products can be thrown away. Someone looks great and also has great skills. But she's here to visit relatives, so I don't have the heart to keep her busy learning cooking skills. I'll just buy a few meat buns on the way home to satisfy their cravings, so they won't keep thinking about others' skills."

As they were talking, Sister-in-law Feng dragged Feng Jingjing along and squeezed in, pointing at the doorway in surprise, "Isn't that Mrs. Qin? What is she doing here?"

Sister-in-law Song and Jiang Hong were distracted by the firecrackers and the shop's entrance advertisements and hadn't noticed her, but then they realized it indeed was Lin Chuxia.

"Mrs. Qin seems quite familiar with those two men. She rarely comes here, right? How would she know people from around here? I've never heard that Mr. Qin has any relatives in this area," Sister-in-law Feng commented in one breath and then tugged at Sister-in-law Song next to her, "You and Mrs. Qin are familiar, do you know them?"

Although Sister-in-law Song and the others didn't know either, they didn't have the same curiosity as Sister-in-law Feng.

"Whether she has relatives or not, nobody would go around announcing it."

Sister-in-law Feng pouted and looked towards Lin Chuxia again.

Yesterday when she saw Lin Chuxia, she was wearing a red dress.

Such a dress, she had only seen on TV, the ones worn by people on television. Even the Department Store in the city didn't have that style?

A dress without sleeves, showing off her entire arms, tightly cinched at the waist, making her walk with a swaying bottom.

And her chest, held up so high, and the neckline revealing quite a bit.

Although dressed so securely, in the bathroom when taking off the clothes, Sister-in-law Feng saw those marks on her body with her own eyes.

Everyone knows how such marks are made, don't they?

Yet Lin Chuxia acted as if nothing was wrong, and undressed openly in front of others.

She remembered that Lin Chuxia had only arrived yesterday noon, with so many marks on her body, she wonders if Mr. Qin knew about it.

And now she had changed into another outfit, another style unseen around here.

Lin Chuxia and Mr. Qin lived apart, she wondered who she was dressing up for buying so many new clothes.

She really should let Mr. Qin come and see in person, his wife laughing and looking as cheerful as a flower with other men.

"Mom, I'm hungry."

The Bun Shop was officially opening, and the meat buns had just come out of the steamer; the aromatic meat scent wafted through the air, tempting everyone's cravings.

Feng Jingjing had been dragged out by her mom early this morning without breakfast, and now the smell of the meat buns made her stomach growl.

Sister-in-law Feng glanced at her daughter but ignored her.

Just then, Lin Chuxia also spotted Sister-in-law Song and Jiang Hong in the crowd.

The two of them walked over and greeted, Lin Chuxia noticed their big and small bags full of stuff, their haul was quite impressive.

She knew they came to buy some meat buns, so she invited them into the house.

"This dumpling shop is owned by my friend. Sisters, come in and try the taste, to support my friend and give some feedback. I'll treat you all."

The opening day of the bun shop was very important for its popularity.

Seeing that Lin Chuxia was familiar with the bun shop owner and hearing what she said, they were still a bit surprised.

Sister-in-law Song praised, "Your friend is really impressive. Okay, but no need for you to treat. It's rare for you to come to the Northwest, so I'll treat today."

While saying this, Sister-in-law Song pulled Jiang Hong inside.

Jiang Hong also said, "Let me treat, Sister-in-law Song has taken such good care of me during my time in the Northwest."

The three of them hadn't walked a few steps when Sister-in-law Feng, towing her child, squeezed through.

"Why don't you treat some other time? Didn't you hear Mrs. Qin say this is her friend's shop? When we eat at her friend's place, do we need to spend money? The bun shop just opened and needs popularity. So many of us supporting it is already a big help, we should be thanked instead, ah, there's an empty table over there."

Saying this, she pulled Feng Jingjing and headed straight to an empty table.

Sister-in-law Song initially did not plan to dine with Sister-in-law Feng, and now seeing her act so presumptuously, she almost blew her top and wanted to argue with her.

Lin Chuxia held her back and shook her head, "Let it go, just let her be."

"Did you hear what she said? And besides, who wanted to treat her to buns anyway? Earlier, when Jiang Hong and I were at the Department Store, she followed us relentlessly," now taking the chance to latch on to a little advantage.

However, Lin Chuxia didn't want to fuss over it. Today was Jia Yuanliang's bun shop opening, under no circumstances could she let Sister-in-law Song and Sister-in-law Feng start arguing here.

Moreover, they knew what kind of person Sister-in-law Feng was, to outsiders they appeared as together.

Just a few pork buns was not a big deal to resolve.

After Lin Chuxia's business prospered, she had seen more disgusting affairs. Living in this society, it's not possible to only encounter good people and good things. If something can be resolved with money, she never wastes energy on it.

This isn't being saintly or cowardly, but a different perspective.

From her point of view, money was the easiest thing to obtain. She used the lowest costs to save her time and effort.

Just like now, having Sister-in-law Feng and her daughter sit here could be settled with at most two dollars. If Sister-in-law Song argued with them, it would not only affect Jia Yuanliang's bun shop business but also her image in the Jia Family, a loss outweighing any gain.

Perhaps Sister-in-law Song also realized Lin Chuxia's concerns, and did not continue arguing with Sister-in-law Feng, instead she sat down at the table with Jiang Hong, albeit with a sour expression.

Two large plates of pork buns, plus two cold dishes and three bowls of porridge, they all ate satisfyingly and even had three buns left over.

Sister-in-law Song and Jiang Hong wanted to buy some buns to take away, and it didn't seem right to have Lin Chuxia treat again, so taking advantage of when Lin Chuxia wasn't paying attention, they secretly found the waiter, bought and packed it.

By the time the two came back, they saw Sister-in-law Feng stuffing the three leftover pork buns into her bag.

Caught red-handed, she grinned at them, "Kids get hungry fast. I'm taking these for her to eat on the road, since you all couldn't finish them anyway."

Chapter 253: Extremely Good-Looking

Sister-in-law Song and Jiang Hong didn't know what to say, aware that Lin Chuxia had other matters to attend to and couldn't go back with them, they quickly said hello and hurried away with their things.

They didn't want their younger sister-in-law to lose face in front of friends because of them.

Lin Chuxia did indeed have other matters. Just now, Jia Yuanliang had secretly told her some news: their mall had recently received a few scooters.

There weren't many, just a total of 8, and they were to be bought with coupons.

The coupons for all eight scooters had already reached individuals, but with a scooter priced at over 4,000, it was far from what ordinary people could afford.

However, flipping a scooter coupon could fetch three to five hundred, and some people were thinking about selling theirs.

Jia Yuanliang had often heard his younger brother mention Lin Chuxia and wondered if she would be interested, so he asked her.

Lin Chuxia agreed without hesitation.

It was a scooter after all, which not only in places like the Northwest but even in Ancheng County, was very hard to come by.

In an era where owning a regular bicycle was already an achievement, riding a scooter was something to be envied.

It would be a pity to miss such a good opportunity.

She wasn't particularly fond of two-wheeled scooters, but Qin Yang would definitely like it.

Now, she could be considered a genuine little rich lady, and a scooter costing several thousand wasn't much of a strain on her finances.

After the Bun Shop passed its busiest time, Jia Yuanliang took Lin Chuxia to his friend's home.

His friend was actually one of Jia Yuanliang's superiors, and something as precious as a scooter allocation wasn't something ordinary people could get their hands on.

A price had already been quoted, 400 yuan, equivalent to a common worker's annual salary and that was just for a scooter coupon.

Knowing that the scooter coupon hadn't been sold yet, Lin Chuxia didn't hesitate and immediately handed over 400 yuan to the other party.

With space in hand, she never deposited her money in the bank; it was much more convenient to use.

After getting the scooter coupon, she bid farewell to Jia Yuanliang.

The company's purchased transportation had already left, so she needed to take the public bus back.

The public bus had a fixed schedule, and seeing that it was still early, she made another trip to the grocery store.

When she got off the public bus near Qin Yang's workplace, the sun was already close to setting.

She stepped off the bus with her things and saw the man waiting by the roadside.

"What's made you so late? Did something happen?"

Qin Yang knew Lin Chuxia's purpose for going to the city; he thought that the opening of a Bun Shop wouldn't take long, and she would return soon. However, when the procurement vehicle came back and he didn't see Lin Chuxia, and heard from Sister-in-law Song that she had other matters, he was concerned.

His wife had only been to the Northwest a few times and other than knowing the Jia brothers, what else could she have to do?

Lin Chuxia handed him the stuff in her hands with a mysterious smile, "Let's go home first, and you'll find out in a bit."

She didn't know how to ride a scooter, to get it home she would need to bring Qin Yang along.

Seeing that she was in a good mood, Qin Yang finally relaxed and walked home with her, side by side.

"Have you not eaten yet? Tonight I got some food from the canteen, including your favorite stir-fried pork with vermicelli."

"Don't get me started, I had lunch early; I've been hungry for a while now."

Qin Yang adjusted the bag in his hand, "Hungry and didn't know what to eat on the way back, so I bought some bread and peach pastries, didn't I?"

She had bought quite a few snacks at the sundry store.

Lin Chuxia chuckled, "I wanted to come back and eat with you."

Qin Yang had many words stuck in his throat upon seeing her smile bloom like a flower and feeling her dependence and intimacy with him, unconsciously pursing his lips.

"Do you have time tomorrow?" Lin Chuxia was planning when to go buy a motorcycle.

"I have the day off tomorrow, not just tomorrow. The chief knows you've come and has given me two days off."

He hadn't taken much of his leave before, just wanting to save them to spend more time with his wife when she came.

Qin Yang glanced at Lin Chuxia again, the setting sun reddening half the sky, casting a rosy glow on her small face, which was strikingly beautiful.

"Let's go to the city together tomorrow then, I have a gift to give you," Lin Chuxia said joyfully.

Qin Yang didn't pay much attention to the gift she mentioned. Since they had been married, Lin Chuxia had given him many gifts. He only thought her eyes were as beautiful as the stars.

The couple chatted as they walked back home. When they were nearing the dormitory, they ran into Feng Dajun who had just gotten off work.

Feng Dajun greeted Qin Yang and nodded slightly to Lin Chuxia beside him, with restraint and politeness.

Lin Chuxia also nodded at him, her thoughts unwittingly drifting to Sister-in-law Feng.

The temperaments of these two people were really worlds apart.

Knowing Lin Chuxia was hungry, Qin Yang didn't linger upon meeting someone, greeting them and then continuing on their way.

Feng Dajun watched the couple's retreating figures and started heading home too, but didn't get far before he bumped into his wife.

Sister-in-law Feng craned her neck out long, "Did you just run into Mr. Qin and his wife?"

Feng Dajun grunted in response, and Sister-in-law Feng followed up by asking, "What did you talk about?"

"Just greeted each other, what else could we have talked about?"

Sister-in-law Feng quickened her pace to walk beside Feng Dajun and whispered, "I saw Mr. Qin with so many things in his hands, all must be things Mrs. Qin bought from the city, right? You don't know, this morning I went to the city with them. When it was time to come back, I and Sister-in-law Song and the others came back together, Mrs. Qin didn't come back with us. It seems she went to buy things."

Feng Dajun stopped walking and frowned at his gossip-hungry wife, "How many times have I told you, mind less of other people's business."

"I wasn't prying or asking, just telling you, I think yesterday she just came from her hometown with so many good things, and today she ran off to the city and bought so many things, what is she planning to do? Has the result of your rating early this year not come out yet?"

She had laid her words out that clearly, if her husband still didn't understand, he deserved to suffer and struggle all his life without ever becoming an official.

Feng Dajun looked around; he didn't want to discuss these matters with his wife in public and walked home without a word.

Her husband was truly ignoring her now, and Sister-in-law Feng felt uneasy.

She could live this comfortable life here, eating white flour for every meal, all thanks to her husband.

She wanted her husband to become a high-ranking official, the higher, the better, to raise her eyebrows with pride in front of those women, yet she was also afraid of offending her husband.

Upon entering the house, Sister-in-law Feng quickly took out a few meat buns from her bag.

"I brought back these meat buns from the city for you, have a taste quick, they are still a bit warm, oh so fragrant, I've never eaten such delicious meat buns in my whole life."

Feng Dajun glanced at the meat buns that had been squashed out of shape, and then back at his wife.

His wife wasn't usually this generous.

Sister-in-law Feng knew the meaning of Feng Dajun's gaze and explained with a smile, "Mrs. Qin treated everyone to meat buns, these few were left because nobody could finish them, so they let me bring them back."

Chapter 254: Qin Yang, How Are You So Amazing?

"When did you and Mrs. Qin get so close that she even invited you for meat buns?"

Just now she was still suspicious of others.

"It wasn't just me, Sister-in-law Song and Jiang Hong were invited too."

Feng Dajun didn't say anything more and handed the meat bun in his hand to his daughter beside him.

"Try not to run into the city for no reason, and mind less about other people's business. Also, about that professional title thing, it's not as complicated as you think."

As he spoke, he took out a small red book from his pocket, "The results are already out."

Sister-in-law Feng's eyes lit up, not caring that her daughter ate the meat bun meant for her husband, she grabbed the small red book to look through it.

Although she didn't recognize the characters on it, she knew the significance of this small red book. Her eyes full of anticipation, she asked, "Intermediate? What level are others? What level is Mr. Qin? Are you getting promoted again?"

Feng Dajun, seeing her like this, lost the desire to talk and left the house.

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After Qin Yang brought Lin Chuxia back to the dormitory and put the things aside, he urged her to eat first.

Though summer meals don't spoil in the cool, cold dishes after all are not as tasty.

The dormitory window was open, and the two placed their food on the table by the window.

A dish of stir-fried long beans, one with wood ear mushroom and pork, steamed buns as staple food, and a big pot of green bean soup from the cafeteria.

"Drink some green bean soup first to relieve the summer heat, then eat something."

Qin Yang was opening a can of beef sauce as he spoke to Lin Chuxia.

"What happened with the loss of seasoning packets at the food factory in the end?"

"Chen Chunhua was fired, and there's no concrete evidence on the matter, so it's left at that for now."

Lin Chuxia didn't elaborate on her plan; after all, things are unpredictable, and speaking too much might worry Qin Yang.

Qin Yang didn't ask further, just saying, "If there's anything, you can discuss it with me."

"Got it, let's eat quickly."

After they finished eating, Qin Yang directly took the bowls and chopsticks outside to wash. After coming back and drying his hands, he took out a small red book from his work jacket.

Lin Chuxia was organizing things, and seeing the small red book in front of her, she didn't react immediately and looked up at Qin Yang.

She saw him pursing his lips, a gleam shining in his eyes.

"What's this?"

Lin Chuxia asked as she reached out to take it.

The corners of Qin Yang's mouth lifted slightly, but he kept his tone deliberately calm, "It's my professional title evaluation."

Lin Chuxia quickly realized that Qin Yang's job could be evaluated for professional titles; the level of the title indicated one's ability and societal status.

She flipped open the certificate, and seeing Senior Engineer inside, Lin Chuxia's eyes curled with joy, "Qin Yang, how did you become so amazing? Are you already a Senior Engineer? How old are you even?"

Lin Chuxia always knew that Qin Yang was talented in his field, but she never expected him to be this extraordinary.

A Senior Engineer under 30 years old, in any era, stands out from the crowd.

Seeing Lin Chuxia so astonished, the smile at his lips grew a bit wider, "It's alright."

"What do you mean alright? Isn't it very, very good?"

Lin Chuxia looked around, a bit frustrated, "You should have told me earlier, such a big event is worth celebrating. What should we do now? Or shall we postpone it to tomorrow? Let's have a proper celebration tomorrow."

Qin Yang took her hand, "No need, it's already very good. Besides, didn't you say you were going to give me a gift?"

Just getting a professional title, Lin Chuxia opened so many stores, did so many things, and improved the lives of their entire family.

Compared to her, he still has much to learn.

Qin Yang felt his achievement was really not worth mentioning.

Seeing Lin Chuxia sincerely happy for him, his own determination only grew stronger.

"Right," Lin Chuxia's eyes lit up, "I'll give you a gift tomorrow, and then we can have a big meal to celebrate."

"Okay."

Qin Yang said okay, but he really felt that whatever Lin Chuxia arranged was fine, whatever she gave him was fine.

But when she took him to the mall and they stood in front of a motorcycle, he was still taken aback.

Especially when Lin Chuxia nonchalantly asked him if he liked it.

Like it? Of course, he liked it, there's probably not a single man who wouldn't like a motorcycle.

Actually, Lin Chuxia didn't even need to ask; his sparkling eyes already showed his delight.

There were only three motorcycles left on the spot, almost leaving no choice.

However, since they were rare commodities, the sales staff were extraordinarily enthusiastic, not waiting for inquiries before pulling Qin Yang over to introduce the features of the motorcycles.

Qin Yang was very interested, touching here, fiddling there, and it was rare to see his childlike side.

Once he was fairly familiar with the features, he pushed the motorcycle out to take it for a test ride.

Lin Chuxia directly paid for the motorcycle ticket and the 4880 yuan for the motorcycle.

Then she stood at the entrance waiting for Qin Yang.

After only a short wait, she saw Qin Yang riding the motorcycle back, his face vibrant with energy as he cut through the wind.

Suddenly, Lin Chuxia felt that it wasn't just about the 4880 yuan—if there were an extra zero added, the sight of his pleasing and handsome face made it worth it.

"Xiaxia!" she called out cheerfully.

"How is it?"

Qin Yang nodded with restraint, "Not bad."

Lin Chuxia hopped onto the back seat, her hands on his waist, "Let's go, to the State-Owned Restaurant to celebrate."

Qin Yang was slightly stunned for a moment. Are we leaving just like this? Although he hadn't asked how much the motorcycle cost earlier, he knew it wouldn't be cheap.

He knew his wife made more money than him, but... was it really this easy for her?

Seeing him in a daze, Lin Chuxia patted his shoulder, "Don't like it anymore?"

Qin Yang turned back foolishly, and Lin Chuxia gave him a slight smile, "Let's go. Since you like the gift I chose, my preparation wasn't in vain. Aren't you going to take me for a ride?"

"Hey, alright."

Qin Yang quickly recovered, realizing he would probably never catch up to his wife in terms of money, so he could only try to be good to her in other ways.

Qin Yang took Lin Chuxia for a ride around the city, in an age where aside from walking, cycling was the norm, the motorcycle was indeed a head-turner.

There was no need to deliberately create a sensation—the roaring sound of the motorcycle alone drew countless gazes.

Lin Chuxia suddenly felt like she was in an attention-grabbing package.

When they were near the State-Owned Restaurant, she quickly put a stop to Qin Yang's impulse to continue for another round.

Better to have a meal first.

They had agreed to celebrate, so lunch was quite lavish.

At that time, the State-Owned Restaurant, facing the impact of privately owned ventures, was no longer limited to specific supplies.

Besides the dishes provided daily, one could order anything they wanted.

The two ordered the local specialty dish, braised lamb, a heaping small pot of it, and also got two vegetable dishes and two bowls of noodles.

The braised lamb was tender and fell off the bone, rich and delicious. Qin Yang saw Lin Chuxia enjoying it and kept giving her slices until she protested she had enough, then he helped her to other dishes.

His earnest and careful attentiveness was almost too much for Lin Chuxia to bear.

She also gave him a piece of lamb, teasing, "Why are you so considerate today?"

Chapter 255: This Man, Really Not Ashamed at All

Qin Yang looked up at him, his eyes brimming with a smiling expression, "You felt it? How is it? I can do even better."

Lin Chuxia couldn't help but burst into laughter at his serious demeanor, "Just because I gave you a motorcycle?"

"Um, you've given me so many gifts, and it seems like there's nothing much I can give you in return, nothing I do is even one-tenth of what you've done for me, Xiaxia, will you despise me in the future?"

Lin Chuxia really couldn't hold back this time, nearly spraying out the noodles in her mouth.

Finally swallowing them down, she bent over the table, laughing uncontrollably.

Qin Yang's handsome face was serious and earnest, he truly harbored these thoughts.

His wife was beautiful and capable, and she even had money.

He had heard that after the market reform, some wealthy businessmen in the south had secretaries, commonly referred to as "Little Secretaries."

Male bosses had female secretaries, female bosses had male secretaries.

Living apart, he wondered if his wife would despise him for not being able to be by her side at all times? Or perhaps grow tired of his face, not liking him anymore?

Although he felt that his wife really liked him now, what about later?

Distance could make the heart grow fonder, but distance and time could also dilute everything.

Lin Chuxia laughed for a while, nearly crying, and upon seeing Qin Yang earnestly asking her this question, she tried to make her demeanor serious as well.

"We are husband and wife, I enjoy the protection you bring me, you enjoy the fruits of my labor, isn't that what should be expected? Why would I despise you, Qin Yang, marrying you was the best decision of my life."

Seeing that his expression finally eased a bit, Lin Chuxia picked up a piece of meat for him, "Don't think too much, eat up, as a husband, you're already more than good enough."

"I can always strive to do better," Qin Yang smiled back, finally starting to eat with relish.

After dinner, Qin Yang once again got on his motorcycle.

This time Lin Chuxia didn't need to take the initiative, he turned around with a spirited look, "Xiaxia, come on, I'll take you somewhere."

Lin Chuxia raised her eyebrows in interest; she had been to the Northwest several times before in winter but hadn't really had the chance to go around with him.

After getting on the back of the motorcycle, Qin Yang drove her directly to the outskirts.

There were no famous landmarks here, and the natural scenery had not been overly developed by people. Qin Yang just took Lin Chuxia along the dirt paths between the mountains.

Passing by, the surroundings were all mountains and fields, with farmers at work and elderly folks herding.

It wasn't until they passed over a small hill and the view suddenly opened up that Qin Yang finally stopped.

Lin Chuxia looked over his shoulder, frozen in place.

In the distance, a winding road coiled like a dragon among the mountains.

It crossed through deep forests, climbed over steep peaks, connecting several large mountains, extending into the far distance.

"This is your project."

Even though it was a question, Lin Chuxia used a certain tone.

"Um," Qin Yang pulled her to sit on a large stone beside him.

"We've been working here for nearly five years. I was stationed here right after graduating from college. I've watched it being built piece by piece, and now it's almost complete."

"You guys are amazing," Lin Chuxia sincerely admired.

The construction of mountain highways has always been a crystallization of human wisdom and courage.

Turning a perilous path into a thoroughfare, they've always been doing things that seem ordinary yet are very great.

"When I first got here, the conditions were very difficult. The workers had only the most primitive tools. Back then, I didn't even know what I could do for them. It seemed like what I learned in school was completely irrelevant to the environment here, and I even doubted whether my knowledge could contribute to the construction of our great nation's landscape as I had envisioned in school. Later on, it was Old Bai who gradually brought me out of my shell and helped me to apply my knowledge."

"It's the case of the pupil surpassing the teacher," Lin Chuxia added.

Qin Yang smiled, "They are all excellent too, every designer and every worker in the department is outstanding."

"In my eyes, Comrade Qin Yang is the most outstanding."

Lin Chuxia was not exaggerating. Although her love life was not smooth in her previous life, she had modest achievements during the booming development of the motherland and had tasted the dividends of national development, as well as enjoyed various conveniences brought about by the country's rapid progress.

She was clearly aware of how great our country is, and among those who created these achievements, besides the scientific researchers, were the construction workers like them who fought on the front lines.

They turned many impossibilities into possibilities, and transformed impassable routes into thoroughfares.

Every time she witnessed such heroic feats, Lin Chuxia would be deeply moved.

In this life, having such a person by her side, how could she not be wholeheartedly devoted to him.

Even when they had just gotten married, she had thought that even if Qin Yang was a workaholic, to support his career, she would give her all to support and genuinely care for him.

Not for the man himself, but for his dedication to the nation's construction work.

Even if they were very close, Qin Yang's cheeks would turn slightly red from her praise.

"Is there really nothing bad about me in your eyes?"

Sometimes he truly felt that his wife adored him blindly. Clearly she was the more impressive one, yet she would always look at him with those sparkling eyes full of admiration.

Which made him feel a bit...

Qin Yang glanced at the deserted surroundings, leaned closer, and gently kissed her lips.

"Uh!"

Lin Chuxia's eyes widened incredulously, darting around in disbelief.

When had this man become so bold?

...

When the two were riding the motorcycle back to the department, they happened to catch their colleagues leaving work, each of them carrying their meal bowls to the canteen.

The cool motorcycle with its roaring sound immediately drew the sideways glances of many people.

Zhang Dawei saw it was Qin Yang riding the motorcycle, and without even bothering to get his meal, he rushed over with his meal bowl in hand.

"Mr. Qin, where did you get this motorcycle? It's new, too, and looks so cool."

Qin Yang stopped, and Lin Chuxia got off the bike, standing aside, watching Zhang Dawei gleefully touch the motorcycle with shining eyes.

"Mr. Qin, you didn't buy this motorcycle new, did you?"

Zhang Dawei had heard that motorcycles were available in the south, but given their location, getting a motorcycle to ride was simply too difficult.

But then again, even if motorcycles were available in stores, given his family's circumstances, his dad wouldn't take out savings to buy a motorcycle just for fun.

With his own salary, who knows how long it would take to afford one.

Though he didn't have one himself, it was satisfying enough to look at someone else's.

Qin Yang nodded at him calmly, "Bought it today, it's a gift from my wife."

There was a hint of pride in his voice.

Lin Chuxia silently glanced at him, her lips curbing a smile.

This man, really had no shame at all.

You should know that to some extent, men of this era still had a bit of machismo in their bones.

In their eyes, using a woman's money and possessions was a highly disgraceful act.

Or to say, a household where the woman was more capable than the man, would make them feel ashamed to raise their heads.

Chapter 256: Being a Judge and a Participant

Just like Li Guangyuan in his past life, although he knew nothing and was less skilled, he would still pretend to be more than he was when outside.

He would take over everything she did and then haughtily tell her that he was her husband, that he should bear the burdens for her, and that she doesn't need to show herself, just enjoy a peaceful life at home.

But when it really came down to business, he would shrink back like a turtle, pushing her to handle things.

In the end, it was all about having his cake and eating it too.

Lin Chuxia shook off those annoying people and looked at Qin Yang with a bright smile.

Now two acquaintances come over to look at his motorcycle, and Qin Yang unabashedly acknowledged that the motorcycle was bought by his wife.

Lin Chuxia knew she couldn't leave for a while since the cafeteria was serving food. She greeted Qin Yang and went to buy their meals first.

Qin Yang didn't want her to go. Seeing his colleagues envious of his motorcycle, he was even happier than when he received his professional title certificate. He gestured with his eyes for her to wait a bit longer; this was their moment to shine.

Lin Chuxia found him childish and gave him a look, insisting on going back.

Several men surrounded their motorcycle, and the couple exchanged glances nearby.

Not far off, Xu Sijin watched this scene, her fists clenched at her side.

Xiao Liu, a new colleague who came with her to get food, was full of gossip, "Sister Xu, is that Mrs. Qin? She's so beautiful. You know, when I first met Mr. Qin, I thought that such an outstanding man must need a woman of his caliber, ideally as beautiful as Sister Xu. It really is like every pot has its lid; Mr. Qin is handsome and capable, and his wife is beautiful as well."

Xu Sijin's nails were almost digging into her flesh, but her face remained indifferent, "A country girl from the countryside, what's so great about just having a pretty face?"

"Ah? Mrs. Qin is from the countryside?" Xiao Liu looked toward the distant woman in surprise, "She doesn't look like it."

She had seen rural women before; regardless of age, their skin was dark and rough from working outdoors all year round.

Due to constant bending over while working, they usually walked with hunched backs.

There were other rural women among the staff family members, but Mrs. Qin looked nothing like them.

The distant woman, wearing a blue floral dress, had skin as white as a peeled egg, standing there gracefully.

Be it her skin or her demeanor, she was nothing like the rural women Xu Sijin had seen.

Of course, Xu Sijin knew what surprised Xiao Liu, and her tone became even more disdainful, "How much does Qin Yang earn a month, and they don't want kids. Supporting one woman is more than manageable."

Initially, Liu Xiaohua and her mother had no relation to him, yet he sent them 20 yuan every month.

Now he had even bought a motorcycle worth several thousand yuan.

With money in hand, what facade couldn't he put up?

That woman was just good at spending money to doll herself up.

Xiao Liu nodded, indeed agreeing with the logic.

With undeniable envy, "Qin's family members are really fortunate. Even a rural woman can marry a man like Qin Yang," she too wanted to find a good man in the future.

At that moment, someone passed by them, still excitedly talking about the motorcycle.

"I heard that the city sent over 8 motorcycles this time, and before the motorcycles even arrived, all the tickets were handed out to prominent figures."

"Are you joking? Such a prized possession would of course go to those prominent figures. Could you afford one? Do you think we have the capability of Mr. Qin? We are only suited for bicycles."

"Do you really think the motorcycle was bought by Mr. Qin? Forget Mr. Qin, how much does our department head earn a month? I heard each motorcycle costs about 5,000 yuan; calculate how many years it would take without eating or drinking to save that amount."

"So where did this motorcycle come from? It surely can't be that Mr. Qin stole it?"

"I heard it was a gift from Qin's family to Mr. Qin."

"No way? What's so special about Mrs. Qin? Giving a gift worth thousands of yuan as a motorbike?"

The person shook their head, "I don't know about that, but I do know that we don't have that motorbike voucher in our unit."

...

As several people walked further and further away, the discussion also gradually faded.

Xiao Liu was dumbfounded, with his mouth gaping wide enough to fit an egg.

"That motorbike was bought by Qin's family for him? Qin's family is so rich? Wasn't she said to be a country girl?"

Turning his head, he saw Xu Sijin's face looking fiercely grim, which scared him into immediately shutting his mouth.

Xu Sijin exerted great effort to keep her face from contorting, coldly dropping a sentence, "I'm not going to the cafeteria today, you go by yourself."

She didn't wait for Xiao Liu's reaction and walked home with a grim face.

Along the way, she intermittently heard a few people discussing Qin Yang's motorbike.

A motorbike alone isn't enough to be the talk of the town, but what if it was a woman who bought it for a man?

Xu Sijin kept sneering nonstop, never imagining that the cold-hearted man would go to such lengths to save face for that woman.

A country woman, casually buying a motorbike for a man, isn't she afraid of making her colleagues laugh their heads off?

Depending on Qin Yang for food and drink, dressing herself up so prettily, isn't each of these sucking the blood out of Qin Yang?

"Why did you come back today?"

Mr. Xu and Mrs. Xu were just about to eat when they saw their daughter come in.

Since divorcing her husband, their daughter rarely came home.

"Have you eaten? You came back just in time, I have something to tell you."

Xu Sijin put the empty rice pot aside and picked up a set of cutlery for the table.

Mr. Xu frowned dissatisfiedly at Xu Sijin's attitude, while Mrs. Xu quickly gave him a meaningful look.

Her daughter had a hard life, and as her mother, she was well aware of it.

Mr. Xu suppressed his dissatisfaction and said sternly, "Dress up nicely this weekend, I have arranged for someone for you to meet."

Xu Sijin's hand paused while picking up food, her tone was harsh, "I won't meet them."

What kind of person can she meet? Her parents merely find her bothersome and want to marry her off again.

The dissatisfaction in Mr. Xu burst out like fireworks, "You say won't meet? What kind of attitude is this?"

"I've said before, please stay out of my business in the future."

As Xu Sijin spoke, Mr. Xu's hand slammed his chopsticks down on the table with a snap, "I won't bother with you now, just get out of here."

Mrs. Xu hurriedly intervened to mediate between the father and daughter.

"Sijin, your parents mean well. You can't live like this forever. A woman's prime years are only so many. If you don't look now, where will you find a good man later?"

Xu Sijin scoffed, "The man you are finding for me now, is he a good man? Don't forget, Sha Jianqi was the good husband you found for me. Initially, you praised him to high heavens. And what was the result? Within a year, he hooked up with another woman, a village woman who already had a child, making me lose all face at work. Is this what you call a good man?"

Chapter 257 She Was Schemed Against by That Little Wretch

Speaking of Xu Sijin's ex-husband Sha Jianqi, Mrs. Xu looked peculiar, "Xiao Sha was originally not bad. At such a young age, he became the Vice Chairman of the Union. If it were not for this mishap, his future would have been limitless. It's baffling how he got involved with that kind of woman."

She still couldn't understand. Her son-in-law didn't seem like a foolish person, with a bright future ahead, how could he do such a thing?

Moreover, with her own daughter as a comparison, how could he have taken a liking to a woman who was a widow with a child?

Thinking of the previous rumors, she quickly snapped back to reality. Regardless, that matter has already passed.

"It's a failing of Xiao Sha's parents, not guarding him properly, but didn't your father take your side in the end? I heard after he was fired from his job, no company wanted to employ him. He just stays at home drinking all day, he's practically ruined. Betraying my daughter, he deserves such an end."

And not just staying at home drinking all day?

Xu Sijin knew more.

That man, after being fired and divorcing her, actually started living with that woman.

A widow with a child—had he really chosen to live with her?

The memory of that day resurfaced in her mind.

Originally, she had brought her best friend to catch Qin Yang cheating.

The man she couldn't have, she wouldn't let others have him intact.

Even if they were married, she wanted to disgust them thoroughly.

As expected, as soon as she and her friend arrived at the rental house, they heard sounds of passionate lovemaking inside.

That woman sounded like a cat in heat, loud and unrestrained, completely disregarding it was broad daylight in a street-facing rental house.

Was it because the woman had been a widow for too long, starved for too long, or was it because the man was exceptionally virile?

Thinking of the latter possibility, Xu Sijin was overwhelmed by emotion, feeling that woman was getting too good of a deal.

But when she saw the passersby, who heard the sounds and couldn't help but show disdain and disgust, she felt secret elation.

She wished she could drag Lin Chuxia over to witness the scene herself.

Just as the noises inside escalated one after another, Xu Sijin pushed open the door.

The bare naked figures, seeing them made Xu Sijin's blood boil, that high and mighty man was pulled down from his pedestal, from then on he was just a man of clay.

Back then, he looked down on her, but now, tainted as he was, how good could he really be?

But when she saw clearly the man who turned his head at the noise, her blood ran cold.

Xu Sijin thought she was mistaken—how could that face have turned into her husband, Sha Jianqi?

Then, a colleague beside her exclaimed, "Vice Chairman Sha," letting Xu Sijin know this was not her illusion.

She never expected that her husband would betray her.

And at that moment, Sha Jianqi, completely oblivious, his eyes seemingly saw them but looked unfocused as he lowered his head to continue what he was doing.

As if he was controlled by something.

Xu Sijin thought about the drug she gave that woman, feeling a chill over her body.

She had been manipulated by that wretched woman.

But everything was too late, the commotion had alarmed even more people, forcing her to make a decision.

She couldn't let this issue implicate her, she could only take the wrong as right.

But thinking about it now, Sha Jianqi living with that woman was enough to prove the man's lousy nature.

And more importantly, his capabilities.

A Vice Chairman of the Union who couldn't even handle a simple task well, and dragged himself down too.

He indeed deserved such an end.

"Sijin, Sijin?"

Mrs. Xu's voice brought her back to her thoughts, her face filled with anticipation, "What do you think of Xiao He?"

"What do you mean what do I think?"

Which Xiao He? Xu Sijin didn't know any Xiao He at all.

"It's the Xiao He I just mentioned to you, don't look down on Xiao He having a child, it's just a daughter, when she grows up she can get married off, and once you and Xiao He are married, you can bear him a son, Xiao He wouldn't care about that girl then? Xiao He has a stable job, he's even a director, marrying him, you're guaranteed to have good days..."

Xu Sijin: "..."

Although she had divorced Sha Jianqi, she had never had children.

Was her mom actually setting her up with a divorced man who already had a child? Was she expecting her to become a stepmother?

Is this something a real mother would do?

Coldly putting down her chopsticks, Xu Sijin stood up, "I said I'm not getting married, and I'm certainly not going to be anyone's stepmother."

"You won't marry? Do you want me and your mother to support you for the rest of your life?" Mr. Xu glared and shouted.

"So you and mom think I'm a burden, so you find such a man for me, trying to throw me out? To be someone else's stepmother, I'd rather stay single."

Seeing the father and daughter about to argue again, Mrs. Xu quickly intervened, "How could we harm you? Xiao He is genuinely a good person, don't just see that he has a child, if he wanted to, he could find a prime unmarried girl, with his conditions you're still not satisfied, what more do you want?"

What more do you want?

What she wanted had always been one person.

.....

Chuxia eventually went back to the dorm first, took her meal box, and headed to the cafeteria to get food.

Despite only having come to the Northwest a few times, Master Chen in the cafeteria and Chuxia were already well acquainted.

Today's dinner in the cafeteria was stir-fried sour string beans and steamed buns, and Chuxia also asked Master Chen to help stir-fry some meat dish.

After it was ready, she carried the dinner back, and Qin Yang had just returned to the dorm, parking his motorcycle at the dorm entrance and wiping it with a cloth.

They had traveled quite a bit today, and the motorcycle was covered with a layer of dirt.

"Back so soon, I thought it'd be later."

His colleagues, a bunch of engineering guys, many had handled vehicles, genuinely liked cars.

"Worried you'd be waiting anxiously, I came back, besides, what's the use just looking, and they dare not ride, they are cowards."

Although Qin Yang said this, Chuxia knew that if anyone really wanted to ride his motorcycle, he would be heartbroken.

It's because vehicles are precious nowadays, a tiny bump could cost a month or two's salary, even if allowed, no one dares to ride.

If it were like future times with more vehicles, faced with thick-skinned people, Qin Yang would probably put up a sign on his motorcycle: Wife and Vehicle, not for loan.

"Let's wash hands and eat first."

Chuxia set the table and discussed with him.

"When you have time, please invite your colleagues over, last time you were injured, everyone was really worried, I should make some gesture since I'm here."

Qin Yang nodded, "Still go to the cafeteria?"

They could only arrange for something lively there since they lived in a dorm.

Chuxia had no objections, she would just give Master Chen a heads-up when the time came.

Master Chen was easy to talk to, especially when money makes things smoother.

The two made plans, waiting for Qin Yang to invite his colleagues.

But who knew, the plan changed the next day.

His colleagues had already tasted Chuxia's cooking, and since Qin Yang took the initiative to invite them, they naturally did not want to miss the chance.

Despite difficulties, they could completely overcome them.

Chapter 258: Dog Eat Dog

"After discussing, they decided to go to Bai Xiaoming's house where Sister-in-law Song and Jiang Hong could help Lin Chuxia out.

Lin Chuxia had no objections, and set a time with Sister-in-law Song and Jiang Hong to head out early in the morning to buy groceries.

Their place was desolate, with the nearest village more than 10 miles away, so they had to go to the city to shop.

All three had bicycles, so they simply rode their bikes out.

They chatted and laughed along the way, and although the road was rough, it wasn't lonely.

Upon reaching the city, they headed straight for the supply and marketing cooperative.

Meat was a must; these days, people were short on oils and fats, and both men and women loved eating meat, so Lin Chuxia bought plenty of pork and mutton, and even added a fish when she saw one.

As for vegetables, they bought whatever was in season and also picked up some pears and apples.

Then came various canned goods.

Though considered nutritionally poor in later eras, with prolonged consumption being harmful to one's health, canned goods at that time were really good stuff.

They filled up three large baskets.

The baskets they carried were personally woven by Jiang Hong.

After coming here, Jiang Hong found many packing straps from construction site machinery, some of which people collected to sell as scrap, while others were simply thrown away.

With nothing much to do, she picked some up to weave baskets.

And indeed, the baskets she wove were durable and heavy, and the patterns matched quite nicely (as shown in the picture).

Each person tied a basket to the back of their bicycle, and they were ready to head back home.

They hadn't walked far when a woman screamed and dashed out from a nearby alley, closely followed by a scruffy-bearded man cursing and swearing.

The woman was quick, but she couldn't escape the man's claws.

He grabbed her hair and violently pulled her to the ground.

Before she could scream, a slap as big as a fan struck her face.

Fresh blood flowed from the corner of her mouth.

Even so, the man didn't stop; he kept slapping her one after the other.

The woman couldn't escape and could only hold her head and keep screaming.

The commotion quickly attracted many passersby, and some well-meaning people stepped forward to try and break it up.

The man, reeking of alcohol and slurring his words, waved those people away.

"I'm beating my own wife, what's it to you meddling in my affairs?"

"Even if she's your wife, you can't just hit people like that. Look at what you've done to her! She married you, not to be beaten by you."

Not knowing which comment hit the man's sore spot, he hit her even harder.

The woman begged for mercy under his blows, her screams growing louder and louder.

"You ask her what her intentions were by marrying me? I'll tell you, she married me just to be beaten. This woman is despicable; that's how you should treat such despicable people."

"Speak up, tell everyone, why did you marry me? You slut, you deserve a beating."

"Speak quickly, do you enjoy being hit by me? Do you really think you've fooled me and that I've gone blind? Calling you out for flirting with other men, now you look down on me, it's too late, thinking about ditching me? No way."

...

It's said that even an upright official finds it hard to settle domestic disputes. Although I feel sorry for the woman, hearing the man curse makes it hard to interfere further.

Even those who were sympathetic to the woman earlier stepped back into the crowd when they saw the man's fierce expression.

Lin Chuxia slightly frowned when she saw a man hitting a woman, with a four or five-year-old boy alongside.

The boy's face was filled with fear and timidity. As he looked at the woman, tears swirled in his eyes, clearly her child.

Lin Chuxia has always had a compassionate heart towards children; regardless of what happens between adults, children are innocent.

Children raised in a domestic violence environment tend to have psychological issues to some extent.

She was about to stop her bike and step forward when Sister-in-law Song grabbed her arm.

Looking up in confusion, Sister-in-law Song shook her head at her, glanced at the man and woman in the distance, and bypassed the crowd by pushing her bicycle directly.

Lin Chuxia knew Sister-in-law Song's character; there must be a reason she chooses to stand by and even stops her from intervening.

She rarely comes to the Northwest, while Sister-in-law Song has always lived here, there must be reasons she is unaware of.

Without further hesitation, she followed Sister-in-law Song with her bicycle, Jiang Hong silently trailing behind them.

They walked a good distance away, nearly out of earshot of the quarreling couple, before Sister-in-law Song spoke.

"It's not that I'm heartless. I know that man; he used to work at our company's union and was the vice chairman. He was fired later due to issues with his conduct."

"Was he Xu Sijin's ex-husband?" Lin Chuxia asked.

Sister-in-law Song was somewhat surprised, "You know about that?"

She was just thinking about how to tell Lin Chuxia that the man was Xu Sijin's ex-husband, the former vice chairman Sha Jianqi.

And that woman had initially brought her child to find Qin Yang, stirring up all kinds of rumors.

Then somehow she got involved with Vice Chairman Sha, and was caught in bed by Xu Sijin.

Lin Chuxia nodded lightly, "Qin Yang mentioned it in a letter. That he once helped a mother and son who came looking for him, asking him to take responsibility."

Since Lin Chuxia knew already, Sister-in-law Song felt relieved and sighed.

"What can I say, Mr. Qin kindly saved their lives, but in the end, they turned on him, and there was even talk at the union asking Mr. Qin to adopt the child as his foster son. What kind of solution is that? If you ask me, it's Sha's own doing. Since he was kind-hearted, he might as well have taken in the mother and son."

"They did take them in," knowing the identities of the two, Lin Chuxia ceased to feel any sympathy.

As for that child, although she saw him briefly and couldn't judge his character, she had heard some things from her past life.

Lin Jiayi, in her eagerness to please Qin Yang, had devotedly cared for the child he brought back, ensuring he never suffered.

Yet that child showed no gratitude for Lin Jiayi's kindness; when his biological mother showed up, he even schemed with her to frame Lin Jiayi for abusing him.

In her past life, Lin Jiayi lived with Qin Yang's parents, and given their character, they would never allow Lin Jiayi to mistreat the child.

It was most likely that the child was lying.

Hearing Lin Chuxia's words, Sister-in-law Song also scoffed, "Indeed, they took them in. Vice Chairman Sha and Manager Xu were out to gain but ended up losing more. And that woman, she's formidable. When things didn't work out with Mr. Qin, she clung to Vice Chairman Sha quickly, not expecting his wife, who has a strong background, won't tolerate her, a grain of sand, disrupting their marriage. In the end, it escalated, not only did Vice Chairman Sha lose his position but also his job, which ironically resolved everything for the couple."

Sister-in-law Song looked around and continued, "I heard after Vice Chairman Sha lost his job, he became a wastrel, spending his days smoking and drinking, supported by the woman working odd jobs. Whenever he wasn't pleased, he'd strike out, blaming her for seducing him. If you ask me, it's really a case of a dog biting a dog."

Chapter 259: Every Penny He Earns Must Be Spent on His Wife

Dog bit dog?

After Lin Chuxia arrived in the Northwest, she asked Qin Yang about this matter because in her previous life, Qin Yang indeed raised a child. Since this child had appeared, she could not afford to take it lightly.

In the end, she learned that it was Qin Yang who personally facilitated the affair between that woman and Sha Jianqi.

As for Xu Sijin, without her husband, the vice-chairman of the labor union, Sha Jianqi, she went from the highly sought-after and esteemed wife of the vice-chairman to a divorced woman. She paid her price.

The three of them got home early, Sister-in-law Song and Jiang Hong helped Lin Chuxia as assistants in the kitchen, with Lin Chuxia as the head chef.

Knowing that they were going to have a meal cooked by Aunt Lin, the two brothers Bai Liang and Bai Tian didn't go out to play, drooling over the aroma of the food while waiting for the big meal.

The dinner was naturally very lively, with everyone praising Lin Chuxia's culinary skills incessantly. Zhang Dawei and Li Wei were more interested in discussing Qin Yang's motorcycle.

Qin Yang casually chatted with everyone, occasionally glancing at his wife beside him, beaming with pride.

After staying in the Northwest for four or five days, it was time for Lin Chuxia to return.

Before she left, Qin Yang handed over his wages and bonuses from the past few months to her.

Although his salary was a mere drop in the bucket compared to what his wife earned, it was a show of his attitude.

He insisted on spending every penny he earned on his wife.

Additionally, there was already a lead on that matter. This time, he would seize the opportunity, not for anything else, but to be a little closer to his wife.

After Lin Chuxia returned from the Northwest, the first thing she did was solve a case with Yuan Bao, who became a meritorious dog.

The criminal gang from last time left no trace of the stolen goods, but with Yuan Bao's help and perseverance, they finally found the criminal evidence.

Sun Hao's wife, Chen Ping, almost suffered greatly at the hands of these people. Knowing the verdicts of the criminals, Sun Hao finally let out a breath of relief.

Compared to others, Sun Hao was more grateful to Lin Chuxia and Yuan Bao. Hence, knowing Lin Chuxia had returned, he was the first to visit with the station's comfort and rewards.

As soon as Sun Hao entered Qin Family's gate, Yuan Bao heard the noise.

It had been mostly with Sun Hao at the police station recently and was already well-acquainted.

Yuan Bao wagged its tail, running back and forth, barking twice at Lin Chuxia as if introducing its old partner.

Sun Hao patted its head, smiling and greeting Lin Chuxia.

"This time we really owe it to Yuan Bao, if it weren't for him, we wouldn't have been able to close this case so quickly, and those criminals wouldn't have been caught so soon. Honestly, I have never seen a dog as smart as Yuan Bao, not just me—the chief also wants to discuss with you, to see if we can get Yuan Bao into the police force."

The last sentence was said jokingly, and Lin Chuxia knew it was their way to probe.

"Sun is being too polite, Yuan Bao is just an ordinary dog, nowhere near a professional police dog, this time we can only say it was lucky."

Sun Hao nodded, he had already anticipated this response.

Not dwelling on it, he presented the station's reward for Yuan Bao and also said to Lin Chuxia, "We owe you one for last time. The station has already applied for this year's Courageous Act Award and reward on your behalf, and this time I mainly brought Yuan Bao's reward."

Individual rewards were beyond their police station's authority, and although Yuan Bao had made a significant contribution, there had been no precedent, so the reward could only come from their station.

While speaking, Sun Hao took out a dog leash marked with the title of hero.

He got this idea after seeing the leashes used for police dogs.

Holding the leash, he proudly shook it for Yuan Bao, "Yuan Bao, look at your reward, do you like it?"

He could imagine how impressive Yuan Bao would look wearing that leash.

However, upon seeing the leash, Yuan Bao incredulously stepped back twice, widening its dog eyes to look at the leash and then at Sun Hao.

After confirming that the leash was a gift for it, it abandoned its previously subservient attitude towards Sun Hao, half-crouched on its front legs and bent its back legs, baring its teeth and making a "hehe" sound.

Sun Hao, having spent some time with Yuan Bao, knew exactly what this behavior meant.

He blurted out in panic, "Mr. Lin, what's wrong with Yuan Bao? Has it detected something again?"

Lin Chuxia looked skyward, speechless. Detected something again?

She had never leashed Yuan Bao from a young age, and now that Yuan Bao had accomplished such a great feat, the other party actually gave it a leash. How could it not be annoyed?

Pointing to the item in Sun Hao's hand, she asked, "Officer Sun, are you sure this is a reward, and not revenge despite kindness?"

Sun Hao had yet to realize the seriousness of the problem and explained, "This is a symbol of honor. There's also our police station's stamp at the bottom. How could it be revenge despite kindness? In the whole Quan'an County, there is only one of these..."

He didn't get a chance to finish his words, as Yuan Bao had already launched an attack.

Sun Hao knew how smart Yuan Bao was, and he was even more aware of Yuan Bao's strength; he had personally witnessed Yuan Bao topple a tall and strong suspect carrying stolen goods, rendering him completely defenseless.

Without a second thought, he turned and ran.

Yuan Bao leaped forward and grabbed his clothes with its mouth, not letting go no matter how much he struggled, while also emitting a low growl of anger.

Sun Hao stumbled, turning back and calling out anxiously.

"Yuan Bao, Yuan Bao, let go, this is a police uniform, you can't bite it."

"Yuan Bao, I'm Officer Sun, take a good look at me, we're long-time partners."

"Yuan Bao, I'm here to bring you a reward, you can't be heartless and turn on me just because you see your owner."

"Yuan Bao, I was wrong, I admit it, now let go of my mouth..."

No matter what Officer Sun said, Yuan Bao just clung to the hem of his clothes and wouldn't let go.

Left with no choice, Sun Hao looked to Lin Chuxia for help.

"Mr. Lin, what do I do about this?"

Lin Chuxia spread her hands, "Officer Sun, just imagine, if you had made a great contribution, and the police station rewarded you with a pair of handcuffs, how would you feel? Honestly, if I were Yuan Bao, I'd be upset with you too."

Sun Hao slapped his forehead; he had only been thinking about giving Yuan Bao something practical to use.

He indeed thought the leashes worn by police dogs looked imposing.

He had really made a wrong turn.

"Yuan Bao, I was wrong. I won't give you this reward. I'll take it away right now, just let go and I'll leave immediately, alright?"

Sun Hao continued to plead with Yuan Bao.

But Yuan Bao was not in the mood to listen to anything at that moment, baring its teeth at him.

In the end, it was Lin Chuxia who patted its head, and Yuan Bao reluctantly let go.

Though it let go, it didn't give Sun Hao a single glance, turned around, and went back to its kennel.

The dog laid down with its front paws crossed over its head.

Sun Hao knew he had offended Yuan Bao; it was his wife's lifesaving dog and had helped him a great deal. He really had returned kindness with ingratitude.

Sun Hao explained to Lin Chuxia with a wry smile, "I really didn't think it through that much."

Lin Chuxia shrugged, indicating she was powerless to help.

Chapter 260: Second Sister, I Passed the Exam

During the time Lin Chuxia went to the Northwest, both the bun shop and the food factory were in good order.

The industries in Ancheng County had stabilized, and Lin Chuxia was concerned about the bun shop in the city.

It had been half a month since Jia Liang had been bustling about, and he probably didn't know she was back yet. Lin Chuxia planned to visit in person when she had time.

While she was pondering this, Little Zhuangzhuang's crisp voice called out "little auntie" from outside, getting closer to her door.

"Here I am, what's up, Zhuangzhuang?"

Zhuangzhuang pushed the door open and peeked his little head in, his eyes wide, "Little auntie, there's someone outside, says he's your younger brother."

Jiadong?

How did he come to the Qin Family?

Lin Chuxia got up and tousled Zhuangzhuang's little head, "Let's go out and have a look."

Zhuangzhuang responded obediently and followed behind Lin Chuxia, curiously asking, "What should I call little auntie's younger brother?"

"You should call him uncle," Lin Chuxia said with a smile looking back.

Just a few steps out the door, she saw Lin Jiadong talking to Mrs. Qin in the outer courtyard.

Usually, the silly lad seemed a bit awkward now, not sure what he was saying to Mrs. Qin, who was smiling joyfully, while Lin Jiadong bowed his head shyly like a young lady.

Lin Chuxia grew more puzzled.

Given the Lin Family's nature, Lin Jiadong seeking her out probably meant her mother wanted to see her.

But it didn't seem like it right now.

Lin Jiadong had already seen Lin Chuxia and immediately beamed a big smile, yelling from afar, "Second sister!"

He glanced at Mrs. Qin, said something, and then ran over with his long legs.

"Second sister, I got in! Look at my admission notice, I got into Ancheng First High School."

Ancheng First High School, the key high school in Ancheng County, and also the only high school.

At that time, the quality of teachers varied, and the influence of student families also played a part; most of those who got into Ancheng First High School were non-agricultural children from the city.

Their rural kids, let alone getting into Ancheng First High School, completing middle school was already quite an accomplishment.

So this admission notice from Ancheng First High to Lin Jiadong really meant something significant.

Lin Chuxia took the admission notice, her face also unable to hide her joy, "Not bad, well done."

Her simple brother was indeed a good student; in her previous life, he had performed very well and got into Ancheng First High too but eventually dropped out of school.

"Did mom say anything after you got the admission notice?"

Lin Jiadong's smile faded a bit, "Mom seemed quite disappointed. She wanted me to drop out and work for you a while ago, but I disagreed. Probably she was hoping I wouldn't get into the high school, so I could comfortably work for you. She also said the family can't afford my high school tuition. When I told her you would support my education, she stopped arguing."

Finishing, he looked uneasily toward Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia patted his shoulder, "Don't worry, your second sister won't go back on her word. Come find me on registration day, I will take you for enrolment. I'll arrange for you to board, it's convenient for studying at the school and keeps you from going home often."

Better not get involved in the atmosphere of the Lin Family home.

Her intent to support Lin Jiadong's education meant not letting him be involved with them any longer.

Lin Jiadong nodded firmly, "Okay, second sister, I'll listen to you. Don't worry, I'll study hard and not let you down. I will strive to get into university just like brother-in-law."

"Second sister believes in you, as long as you want to study, I will support you."

Lin Jiadong grinned broadly, looking simple and honest.

Then, as if he remembered something, he sulked and complained, "Mom is so biased. She said there's no money for my schooling, but actually, my grades are good, and the tuition isn't that much. On the contrary, my older sister, she recently came back home asking for money, and mom gave her more than 100. Can you believe it? She's married already but every time she comes home, she makes a scene and it's all about asking mom for money."

Lin Chuxia didn't bother with that mother and daughter. Apart from this brother, she didn't care about the others in the Lin Family at all.

"You free today? Let's go, sis will take you shopping for new clothes, consider it a gift for your academic advancement."

Although little brother is quite pampered at home, under the current circumstances, it's already good if his clothes don't have patches.

The clothes on Lin Jiadong's back, although not torn, had become too small. Boys in middle school are growing quickly; the pants revealed a section of his ankle, and the tank top was short.

Hearing about the academic advancement gift, Lin Jiadong's face bloomed with joy, and his eyes shone with clear light.

The two headed straight to the Department Store. Lin Jiadong seldom came to the county town and had rarely ever entered the Department Store before.

Looking at the dazzling array of goods and the neatly dressed salespeople, he was a bit shy.

Lin Chuxia took him directly to where they sold ready-to-wear clothes, not bothering to ask for his opinion, and picked out a set of tank top and shorts.

"Go try them on there, see if they fit."

Lin Jiadong, like an obedient puppy, took the clothes and went to try them on.

Once he came out in new clothes, he looked like a different person.

Now over 1.7 meters tall, Lin Chuxia had picked out a size larger; the young man indeed looked good in slightly oversized clothes.

"Looks good, no need to change. Just wear this new outfit and let's go."

Lin Chuxia paid directly.

When they reached the shoe section, she also picked out a new pair of sandals for him.

Lin Jiadong looked down. On his feet were velvet shoes with canvas soles, with the big toe already poking out.

Holding the new sandals, he grinned and said, "Sis, you're really good to me."

When they left the Department Store, it was almost noon. Lin Chuxia took Lin Jiadong to the Bun Shop near the train station.

The Bun Shop was bustling with people, with a queue outside the door, and inside many customers were seated.

Lin Chuxia looked around, only to see a few young waitstaff bustling about, and Granny Sun selling buns, but Sun Lanlan was nowhere to be seen.

She asked Lin Jiadong to wait for her while she personally went to get some food.

Granny Sun had seen Lin Chuxia coming from the moment she arrived but was too busy to attend to her just then.

When Lin Chuxia approached, Granny Sun greeted her while simultaneously picking out buns for her plate.

"Granny, where's Lanlan?"

Sun Lanlan hardly ever took time off since starting work, and now that she was married to Su Wensong and lived nearby, she had never taken a leave.

If she wasn't at the Bun Shop at this time, there must have been something serious.

Granny Sun didn't even raise her eyelids but there was a smile playing at the corners of her mouth, "She should be in the backyard now. She hasn't been feeling well the past two days. I told her to take a couple days off, but she insists on being tough..."

"Lanlan is sick?"

Lin Chuxia was startled and turned around to go see Sun Lanlan.

Granny Sun laughed, "It's not really sickness; I reckon by the looks of it she's likely pregnant."

Lin Chuxia turned sharply, "So soon?"

"From my experience, she looks like it. But she should go to the health clinic to know for sure."

"I'll go have a look."

Lin Chuxia handed a plate of meat buns to Lin Jiadong, asking him to eat slowly, and then headed to the backyard.

There in the yard, Sun Lanlan sat listlessly under the grapevine, her face lacking its usual glow and with a bit of dark circles under her eyes.

Granny Su sat beside her, fanning her, her face full of concern.

Lin Chuxia first greeted Granny Su, then touched Sun Lanlan's forehead.

Thankfully, her temperature was normal.