

Switched M 291

Chapter 291: Acting Shamelessly

Lin Chuxia remained indifferent to the surrounding gossip and spoke calmly, "Mom, you're wrong. My elder sister is fine. No one wants to drive her to death, let alone be responsible for two lives."

"You're trying to drive her to death now, aren't you?"

"What did I do?" Lin Chuxia couldn't help but retort, "Wasn't everything done by my sister and my brother-in-law from the beginning? They sold spoiled food to customers, refused to take responsibility after people fell ill, and then shifted the blame onto Xiyang Food Factory, misleading customers. Now they have been reported to the police station, and they have to compensate for medical expenses. Which of these things did I do?"

Su Wensong chimed in timely, "Madam, if we say we didn't call the police, then we didn't. However, if you continue to make a scene, the consequences might not be predictable. Li Guangyuan incited people to make trouble at the Xiyang Food Factory, which has already damaged the factory's reputation. He must be held accountable for his actions. We didn't call the police out of respect for Lin Chuxia. If you keep this up, as the Factory Director of Xiyang Food Factory, it is my responsibility to protect the factory's interests."

Mother Lin had a moment of blankness at the clearly threatening words.

Mr. Lin tugged at Mother Lin's clothes and asked in a low voice, "Did the Li Family say why the police took Guangyuan away?"

It appeared it really wasn't Xiyang Food Factory that filed the report.

Li Dongmei hurriedly came to report, and Mother Lin's first reaction was the village chief's remark about affecting the factory's reputation and customers, assuming it was the factory that reported to the police.

But what if it wasn't them?

"I don't care, your brother-in-law was taken away by the police. If you still consider me your mother, you should get him out. You are a member of the Lin Family after all. Your elder sister is pregnant; you have to take care of this."

Is this the reasoning of becoming unreasonable when arguments fail?

Lin Chuxia almost laughed at her mother's assertive tone.

It was indeed her mother's style.

"Mom, how would you like me to handle this?"

Seeing her daughter's softening tone, Mother Lin's eyes flickered, "Isn't it just a case of food poisoning? Compensate them for medical expenses and see if they still make a fuss. Why don't you get the money first?"

"Mom, how much money do you want me to take out?"

Mother Lin's heart leapt with joy, her expression remained neutral, "Start with two thousand yuan, if that's not enough, we'll talk."

After speaking, she didn't forget to grumble, "I asked you for money earlier and you hesitated. Wouldn't we have avoided this trouble if you'd acted sooner? Your elder sister isn't feeling well now, and if something happens to the child in her womb, let me tell you, I won't let this go..."

When Mother Lin righteously demanded Lin Chuxia handle her elder sister's affairs earlier, Su Wensong's face had already turned ashen with anger.

Now, hearing her imply that if something goes wrong with her grandchild, she would hold Mr. Lin accountable, he couldn't stand it anymore.

If she weren't Mr. Lin's mother, he truly couldn't help but want to take action.

No wonder his daughter-in-law always said Mr. Lin had a tough childhood at home. With such a biased mother, how could he have had a good life?

He turned to look at Lin Chuxia, yet her expression remained unchanged.

"Mom thinks two thousand yuan is too little? To think that's not enough and leave room for further discussion."

As she finished speaking, the way people looked at Mother Lin changed.

To think of demanding two thousand yuan just like that, let alone two hundred yuan is too much to ask for these days.

Truly a lion's mouth.

Lin Chuxia didn't wait for Mother Lin to respond, and continued, "When Mom demanded three hundred yuan from the Qin Family as a dowry, she said similar things. Does Mom think that raising a daughter just provides an opportunity to repeatedly drain the in-laws? I wonder if my future sister-in-law's family will think the same, or does Mom treat everyone equally? If it's an opportunity to profit, she'll take it. I heard that Mom doesn't even plan to let my little brother continue his education. If he's not studying, shouldn't he start thinking about marriage?"

"You're talking nonsense! When have I ever said such a thing?"

Daughters-in-law thinking of giving their own family money from their husband's family? Absolutely not.

"Why bring up these useless matters? Isn't our family facing troubles? If you don't want to give money, do you want to see your elder sister's family die?"

"Mom only sees my elder sister's difficulties, her life and death. Have you ever thought about the trouble it would cause me when those people come to cause trouble at the food factory?"

"Well, it didn't actually affect you, did it?"

Mother Lin glanced at Su Wensong when she said this and seeing his dark expression, she quickly shut up.

At this moment, people also realized that no matter what, Lin Chuxia is from the Qin family who has money. They cannot let her natal family take advantage of her like this.

Moreover, Factory Director Su already said, those people causing trouble previously affected the business of the food factory. This mother really doesn't consider her youngest daughter's days in the Qin Family at all, only thinking about how to drain her youngest daughter to help her oldest.

All those present were either parents or children themselves. Even if some parents are biased, they wouldn't be biased to this extent.

Lin Chuxia lowered her eyes, "I know I have no status in this family..."

Her voice sounded desolate, and the villagers from Qin Family Village felt incredibly sorry for her.

When had they seen this side of Lin Chuxia?

This was more than not having status; it's about the kind of life Lin Chuxia must have been leading given the number of siblings in her family. One wouldn't even need to use their brain to figure that out.

Stuck with such a family, she truly was out of luck.

Lin Chuxia raised her head, her gaze resolute, "But this time I can no longer indulge you all. The mistakes made by my elder sister and her husband, they should bear the responsibility themselves, or they will harm others again in the future. If Mom insists that I pay this money to help my elder sister, from now on, I won't take care of my little brother's tuition and living expenses, and I'll have nothing to do with my maternal family."

Mother Lin stood there stunned at first.

Perhaps she didn't expect her submissive second daughter to speak out like this, or perhaps she was judging the truthfulness of her words.

But, when facing Lin Chuxia's indifferent eyes, Mother Lin finally realized that her second daughter was no longer the puppet she used to be, where whatever she said goes.

Is she really supposed to pay this money to help her eldest daughter and get her son-in-law out?

But if she really did spend this money, what about her son?

Her second daughter is becoming more and more capable, and her son-in-law is not bad either. Maybe in the future, her son will still need to rely on his second sister and brother-in-law.

Before Mother Lin could weigh her options, Mr. Lin already opened his mouth, "What are you talking about? Aren't we parents just trying to do what's best for you all? Are you really thinking about completely cutting ties with the family?"

Mother Lin, deeply hurt, continued, "Fine, fine, I really raised you all for nothing. All that I do, for whom? I can't handle this anymore, I really can't deal with you all."

Mr. Lin then said, "I told you, the kids are grown up, let them handle their own matters. You insisted on intervening, now have you learned?"

While speaking, he signalled Sun Bingwen to drive the car.

Mother Lin, feeling disgraceful that they were leaving in such an obedient manner, cursed from the car, "Really, now your wings are hard, you don't listen to your mother anymore. In the future, if you suffer in your in-laws' house, don't expect to come to me crying."

Chapter 292: Must Teach Her a Lesson

"Huh," someone in the crowd jeered, "Who's asking you to cry for them? Not to mention the Qin Family, even the people of Qin Family Village are good to Sister Chuxia. Sister Chuxia wouldn't suffer if she left a maternal family like yours."

"That's right, the only ones she suffers from are her so-called relatives like you. If I were Sister Chuxia, I would cut ties with relatives like you."

"Can't you see? They don't want to sever ties with Chuxia; they still want to cling to her and suck her blood."

"I agree, how thick-faced can they be? The elder daughter does such ungrateful things, expecting the younger daughter to help pay for it. Their hearts lean entirely to one side, yet they act so righteous. Even as parents, there's no logic in that."

"Sister Chuxia, don't be sad. If they don't care for you, the people of Qin Family Village will. We are all your kin."

Lin Chuxia deliberately confronted the Lin Family at the entrance of Xiyang Food Factory, wanting everyone to see the Lin Family's true colors.

She was doing business outside and couldn't ignore her own reputation.

Easily cutting ties with her family would result in even more gossip, and the envious would even fabricate the nastiest rumors about you.

Even if she wanted to distance herself from her family, she needed to clear her own name.

She just didn't expect to end up with such an outcome.

Tears welled up in her eyes involuntarily, "Thank you, everyone, thank you so much."

She bowed deeply to the villagers present, and at that moment, she seemed to have found the meaning to live her life all over again.

When she got home, Qin Han, Qin Liang, Qin Wu, and even Qin Jiang were all there.

Upon seeing her return, Qin Han approached her immediately.

"Sister-in-law, how did it go? Is everything resolved?"

Mr. and Mrs. Qin also looked on worriedly.

Lin Chuxia smiled slightly, "It's resolved; they've all gone back."

Qin Han clenched his fist, "The family should have intervened, just to let them know that you have support."

If it was someone else, his brothers would have already gone out.

But those were Lin Chuxia's maternal family members, and since Lin Chuxia had spoken, they couldn't deal with it too forcefully.

Lin Chuxia appreciated their kindness, but involving the Qin Family would not be good for the Qin Family's reputation, regardless of the truth.

Even if she severed ties with the Lin Family, the outside world would easily distort the facts, turning the situation into one where the powerful bully the weak, looking down on poor relatives.

This was her matter with her maternal family, and her intervention would achieve the result she desired.

Once the other Qin Family members left, Mrs. Qin, with a worried face, pulled her aside, "Why don't we call Yangyang and have him come back for a while? Didn't they say his workplace gives him leave? We can take the leave now."

Her daughter-in-law's parents were utterly partial to one side, but they couldn't say much. Yangyang, as Chuxia's husband, would be easier to approach for some matters.

Even if he does nothing, having Yangyang at home would provide support to his wife.

Lin Chuxia gently patted her hand, "Mom, it's really okay now. Qin Yang is busy with work; let's not bother him with this."

Mrs. Qin was torn between looking out for her daughter-in-law and contemplating carefully for her son.

It was still best to ensure the eldest son and daughter-in-law look after things more closely.

Lin Chuxia knew that after she had spoken, Mr. Lin and Mother Lin left because their son weighed more heavily in their hearts compared to the elder daughter.

She had already promised to support Lin Jiadong in his education; at this time, Mr. Lin and Mother Lin would definitely not give up on their son's studies because of Lin Jiayi's issue.

She originally thought that after Lin Jiayi left their home, Mr. Lin and Mother Lin would find other ways to help her, at least borrowing some money to resolve Li Guangyuan's situation.

What she didn't expect was that not only did Mr. Lin and Mother Lin not help Lin Jiayi borrow money, but they also sent her back to Li Family in Xiaoqingshan Village for health reasons.

Lin Jiayi was so angry that the very next day, she secretly returned to the Lin Family home, and while Mr. Lin and Mother Lin were not around, she took all the money from the house.

Even so, it was far from enough to compensate those people's medical expenses and get Li Guangyuan out of the police station.

There were simply too many people involved.

Old Mrs. Li didn't plan on getting involved at first; knowing full well that her daughter had a share in the wrongdoing, she wanted to push the responsibility onto Lin Jiayi.

Would this have happened if she hadn't been busy with selling ready-to-eat food?

Yet as more time passed with her son being detained, and seeing no solution from Lin Jiayi, Old Mrs. Li finally took out her savings as the Lin Family was already arranging to sell their grains.

Even then, it wasn't enough, and in the end, they had no choice but to sell the family's only valuable bicycle.

Lin Chuxia heard about this three days later, as Su Wensong had people keeping an eye on the situation at the Li Family's.

Even though Xiyang Food Factory didn't report to the police, under Lin Chuxia's suggestion, Su Wensong still had someone perform a little trick.

They instigated those who had been wronged and couldn't get justice to use legal means to protect their rights.

If Lin Jiayi wanted to drag them down, she had to be taught a lesson.

Meanwhile, in Xiaoqingshan Village, Li Guangyuan had just returned from the police station, entering the house with a grim face, not uttering a word.

Thinking that he must have been wronged in the police station, Lin Jiayi hastily approached to fuss over him.

Li Guangyuan didn't even want to glance at her hypocritical demeanor.

Was he wronged inside? Just being taken to the police station was the greatest wrong against him.

Li Guangyuan never thought he would end up at a police station in his life; he, who always behaved properly and never did any wrong, actually had to step foot in a police station?

"Are you satisfied now? From now on, your husband is someone who's been in a police station, and your child will be the son of a criminal once born," he said.

Lin Jiayi was frightened by his cold words, and tears nearly came down.

"I had no idea things would turn out this way. It's all Li Hongmei's fault. If she hadn't taken so much meat and let the meat spoil day after day, would any of this have happened? She didn't pay a cent and caused such a mess, and she was the first to run away when trouble arose."

Once Li Hongmei was mentioned, Mrs. Li became unhappy.

"What are you saying? If it weren't for your sister from your maternal family dragging her feet and not handling the situation, would Guang Yuan have ended up at the police station? In my opinion, you are a bad omen, really should not have married you into our family, no wonder the Qin Family didn't want you."

Mrs. Li became more and more convinced that the switch was not as the matchmaker had claimed; it must have been because the Qin Family didn't think highly of Lin Jiayi that they exchanged her with Lin Chuxia, who was originally intended to be their bride.

After all, Lin Jiayi would not have married into their family if it wasn't for wanting to leave the decent Qin Household.

Lin Jiayi was so furious that her chest heaved up and down; nowadays, she hated the mention of the bride swap more than anything.

She didn't understand, how did the once prosperous Li Family become like this?

With Li Hongmei's character, how could she have married into the city in the former life? Who in the city would want her?

And Li Guangyuan, always acting like a shrinking turtle in the face of problems, leaving her, a woman, to stand up for everything.

When things went well, all was good and Li Guangyuan was capable.

But when things didn't go well, it was all her fault alone.

Chapter 293: Full of Ritual Feeling

The cooked food was processed and approved by him, and he even did the processing himself. How could it all end up being her fault?

Lin Jiayi could no longer hold back and let out her words.

But Li Guangyuan just looked at her coldly, even sneering, "I said it was good enough to just sell vegetables, but you had to pin the blame on me, afraid that I'd get too close to other women. You said selling cooked food would make big money, so of course, if there's a problem, it's your fault."

"Now look what happened, not only did we not make any money, but we also lost so much, even sold the bicycle, and can't even sell vegetables anymore. If it's not your fault, whose fault could it be?"

"You don't even know how to feed yourself, always thinking the grass is greener on the other side. Aren't you just jealous that your sister's family made a fortune? Have you ever considered whether you have that ability?"

Li Dongmei also chimed in on the side, "Yeah, sister-in-law, you even said that by selling our cooked food under the banner of Xiyang Food Factory, the business would be good. It's a good thing we didn't listen to you entirely; otherwise, my brother might still be locked up."

Li Dongmei has now completely changed her previous attitude.

She originally thought that selling cooked food would lead to establishing Li Ji's Cooked Food, and it would strengthen her position when looking for a husband's family.

But it turned out terribly wrong. She now has a brother who has been to prison, and the dowry money her mother saved for her has been lost in the business. Now, the person who hates Lin Jiayi the most in the family is none other than Li Dongmei.

"I say, Guang Yuan, you should just divorce her. Having such a daughter-in-law is a misfortune for the family; not divorcing her is just waiting for the day she brings down the house."

"That's right, big brother, I heard that there's a Sister-in-law Tian who used to sell vegetables with you. Though she has a child, she is a genuine urban resident, and mother also likes children. Marrying her would bring life to the household."

If her brother marries a city girl, would she still worry about not being able to marry someone from the city?

Old Mrs. Li's eyes also lit up upon hearing this. They say mother and daughter have a strong bond, and at this moment, not only do their intentions align, but their looks are in perfect agreement.

Lin Jiayi couldn't believe Old Mrs. Li and Li Dongmei would say such things, she was still carrying Li Guangyuan's son.

"You can't treat me like this; I'm carrying the Li Family's child. Aren't you afraid of people pointing at your spine?"

She looked towards Li Guangyuan only to see him indifferently looking down, as if he had no objection to this, which made her heart panic and immediately after, her stomach started to hurt.

Old Mrs. Li sneered, "Point at our spines? People will only point at us if we have a home-wrecker like you."

"Mom, you might be onto something. When big brother was going to the city to sell vegetables every day, and the sister-in-law was alone at home, she suddenly got pregnant. If it turns out that the child isn't my brother's, then I really couldn't live with such shame."

When Li Dongmei finished speaking, Lin Jiayi felt a buzz in her head.

Her biggest reliance was the child in her belly. Although she was somewhat disappointed in Li Guangyuan, she did not think it was at the point of divorce.

Not to mention being kicked out by the Li Family under such a pretext, what kind of life would she have then?

"Guang Yuan, you believe me, she's talking nonsense, the child in my belly is yours; you know that..."

Li Guangyuan hadn't been eating or sleeping well these past few days in the police station, and now that he was finally home, he just wanted to have a proper sleep.

Now, listening to his mother and sister's outlandish talk, he's even less inclined to get involved.

He turned and irritably wanted to go inside the house.

But his reaction seemed even more like a denial of Lin Jiayi's words.

Lin Jiayi panicked and suddenly felt a sharp pain in her belly and couldn't help but cry out, bending over and holding her stomach.

"My stomach... My stomach hurts so much..."

Li Dongmei was familiar with this scene and curled her lips into a sneer, "Enough, sister-in-law, stop with these little tricks. We are not as easily deceived as your mother..."

She was halfway through her sentence when suddenly it caught in her throat, and her eyes widened in disbelief.

Underneath Lin Jiayi, a lot of water and even some blood had trickled down to the floor.

Old Mrs. Li sensed that something was amiss. "Guang Yuan, go find a doctor."

Lin Jiayi, clutching her abdomen, was in great pain. "Go find my mom..."

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After several days of busyness, Lin Chuxia suddenly realized today was Monday.

The police station planned to present her with a certificate and award for her brave and righteous action today, and she heard that there would be county leaders and news reporters present.

Lin Chuxia didn't dare to delay and quickly changed into more formal clothes, then she rode her bicycle out the door.

Normally, no one would want to visit the police station, but today, Lin Chuxia felt differently.

Chen Ping was specifically waiting in the lobby, on duty and waiting for her.

Seeing her, he stood up and came to greet her.

"Mr. Chen, I'm not late, am I?" Lin Chuxia asked.

Chen Ping smiled and shook his head, "No," and then lowered his voice a bit, "Director Wang came early and is already in the office. The county magistrate hasn't arrived yet, but since it's scheduled for 9:30, he should be here soon."

Acts of bravery and righteousness must be reviewed by the functional department responsible for comprehensive social order management and reported to the corresponding level of people's government for confirmation and public announcement.

The target of Lin Chuxia's brave action was Mr. Chen of the Public Security Bureau, so the review of this item almost went through directly.

The case was quite significant, and once the county found out about it, they placed great importance on it as well.

Therefore, after confirming Lin Chuxia's bravest deed, the county magistrate decided to personally issue the certificate.

Chen Ping first took Lin Chuxia to Director Wang's office, where Director Wang had already been waiting. Seeing Lin Chuxia, he naturally offered another round of warm and polite greetings.

Chen Ping and Sun Hao were both capable officers in their department, having been at the forefront during the recent case, always involved in searching for clues, making the solving of the case much easier.

It was precisely for this reason that Chen Ping had found himself in danger.

Director Wang had started out as a young public security officer himself and felt a strong empathy for Chen Ping's predicament at the time, which is why he was especially grateful to Lin Chuxia.

Before long, someone reported that the county magistrate and his party had arrived.

Everyone gathered, and a conference hall was specially cleared out in the police station for Lin Chuxia's award presentation.

The ceremony was full of gravitas.

Photographers from the news agency continuously clicked their cameras, as Lin Chuxia took the certificate from the hands of the county magistrate, and posed for a photo with the county magistrate, the director, Chen Ping, and others.

Due to the special status of people like Chen Ping, this photo would not be published in the newspaper, but it could serve as a keepsake for Lin Chuxia.

After the award ceremony ended, the county magistrate kept Lin Chuxia behind to talk.

The fact that the county magistrate personally came here was not solely due to this incident, but also because of Lin Chuxia herself.

County Magistrate Bai had long heard that the brave individual was the general manager of Xiyang Company, and the expanding business of Xiyang Food Factory had piqued his interest in this private entrepreneur considerably.

Seeing her today, he was indeed quite surprised.

"Lin seems quite young, in her twenties this year?"

Bai Qifeng was in his early forties and looked at Lin Chuxia with the eyes of an elder looking at a younger one, full of appreciation.

Chapter 294: A Role Model for Youth Learning in the County

In Chuxia's previous life, Bai Qifeng had already been transferred when she became wealthy, but she also heard quite a bit about his deeds, a down-to-earth leading official.

During these years of rapid development due to reform and opening up, he greatly supported the growth of private enterprises, and promoted many individuals, increasing the county's fiscal revenue by a significant step and allowing Ancheng County to be the first to stand out among several neighboring administrative regions.

Chuxia smiled generously, "I'm 22 years old this year."

In their local custom, they speak of nominal age, and Chuxia was also aware that her age was indeed tender for her position, so she simply reported a nominal age.

Even so, County Magistrate Bai was surprised, repeatedly exclaiming how impressive it was.

"The national construction needs young people like you who are brave and resolute, old-fashioned thoughts will not do."

Director Wang also echoed on the side, "Indeed, Lin is not only smart, but also skilled and versatile."

"The leaders are too complimentary, I'm just doing what I should be doing. In every aspect, I am a newcomer, still with a lot to learn."

County Magistrate Bai was even more satisfied, "You are now the leader for our private enterprises. Xiyang Food's reputation has not only taken over the markets in Ancheng County but has also captured a lot from the surrounding markets. At such a young age to have achieved this, neither arrogant nor rash, and with a passionate and helpful heart, you are indeed a model for all the county's youth to learn from."

"County Magistrate Bai, you really flatter me."

Bai Qifeng waved his hand, "That's not true at all, I've heard about you more than once from your town mayor and Director Feng. Your Xiyang Food Factory not only provided hundreds of job opportunities for our county but you've also been involved in the chicken and pig farms in Qin Family Village. This year, Qin Family Village is set to be recognized as a model by the county, and you've played an indispensable role in this. Keep up the good work, and should you encounter any difficulties, bring it up with the county authorities; I have high hopes for you."

Chuxia hadn't expected to receive such recognition today; to have won the appreciation of Bai Qifeng would certainly add wings to a tiger in her future development.

She also promptly responded, "Thank you, County Magistrate Bai, for your recognition. I will certainly double my efforts and will not let down the expectations of the county leadership."

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Because it was published in the newspaper, the story of Chuxia's courageous and righteous act quickly spread throughout Ancheng County.

Before this, Chuxia had never mentioned the rescue.

When Sun Hao and Chen Ping visited her home, the Qin Family thought it was just because Sun Hao had a good relationship with Chuxia, and had borrowed Yuan Bao for a case.

To their surprise, in addition to Yuan Bao, Chuxia was even more formidable.

On the day the newspaper was printed, Qin Han spent his own money to buy a thick stack to put in Qin's Bun Shop for customers passing by to read.

They were free to take away if they wished, sharing in the glory.

Coincidentally, at the train station's bun shop, Sun Lanlan also bought a stack and placed them at the entrance of Qin's Bun Shop.

Every customer who bought steamed buns was given a free newspaper, which left Chuxia not knowing whether to laugh or cry.

It was not until she saw Old Sir He that Chuxia truly backed down.

Old Sir He also came directly to the bun shop after seeing the newspaper.

Upon seeing Chuxia there, he didn't say another word and went to take her pulse.

"Master, look I'm fine, really nothing wrong..."

Before Chuxia could finish, Old Sir He fixed her with his fierce gaze and she had no choice but to close her mouth and extend her arm.

Old Sir He half-closed his eyes as he took her pulse, his expression finally softening a bit.

"I told you I was fine. Do you believe me now? At that time, I just helped someone out, I really didn't do much."

Old Sir He didn't believe her words; were courageous acts just casual talk? Was the certificate just cabbage?

But by this point, it was useless to argue about it anymore.

He stared at her displeasedly, "Stop with the jokes and smiles with me. When you became my apprentice, you did say that you'd take care of me in my old age. This life of yours isn't just your own; you must take good care of yourself."

"I get it, I get it," Chuxia stepped closer to pound on his shoulders, "Master, don't worry. Next time something like this happens, I'll just stay far away and not play the hero."

Old Sir He glared at her again. Is that what he meant?

Seeing her smug little expression, he huffed, "If there's a next time, I'll just go straight to Qin Yang."

Chuxia's hands froze as she suddenly realized a serious problem.

The Qin Family and Lanlan may be worried after hearing about the incident, but they were mostly proud of her.

Old Sir He was concerned about her health and, after checking her pulse and finding nothing wrong, managed to calm her down.

But what if Qin Yang found out?

At first, even when Sun Hao and Chen Ping went to Qin Family, she didn't mention it at home for fear that Qin Yang would find out.

Now, there was no hiding it.

Old Sir He scoffed with a cold smile, "Look how little ambition you have."

Chuxia pounded on his shoulders again, her voice soft and sweet, "Master, if Qin Yang gets mad at me, you have to take my side. After all, I'm your apprentice."

"It depends on the situation."

Chuxia: "..."

Time flew, and suddenly it was September, the day Lin Jiadong was to report.

Chuxia had already agreed with Lin Jiadong that she would arrange for him to board at the school to facilitate his studies.

The reporting was in the afternoon the day before school started, and in the morning, Lin Jiadong had already brought his luggage to the Bun Shop to wait for Chuxia.

Zhang Guilan knew Chuxia was different with her brother. The young man was going to study at Ancheng First High School, and Zhang Guilan had said many encouraging words.

It wasn't until Chuxia arrived that she gave the siblings some space.

Chuxia glanced at his simple luggage, "Did you pack everything?"

Lin Jiadong was somewhat dazed, "I guess it should be enough."

He didn't know what he needed to prepare for staying at school; his mother had packed everything for him.

Chuxia squatted down to check his things and then stood up, patting her hands, "Let's go, I'll take you shopping for some things first."

Apart from the bedding, there was only an old towel; even a toothbrush, tooth mug, and washbasin were missing.

In those days, it wasn't uncommon for students, especially from poorer rural families. Being able to pay the tuition fees was hard enough; other living essentials were spared where possible. Washing one's face would happen directly under a tap, and people would drink directly from the same tap.

In the dead of winter, many would be bent over the tap, drinking cold water.

But Chuxia didn't want Lin Jiadong to live like that; since she had promised to support him, the least she could do was ensure he wasn't too strapped in terms of living conditions.

Lin Jiadong followed her with a smile, "Second Sister, what else do we need to buy? I think what I have is enough. With a mattress and a quilt, as long as I'm not freezing at night, it's fine."

Chuxia looked back at him; he was wearing clothes she bought for him.

The teenager's skin was a healthy wheat color, his smile clean, slightly simple and naïve.

"When you're staying at school, there will be at least 10 people in one room. It's not just about not freezing, personal hygiene is also something to be mindful of, like brushing teeth and washing feet. We are there to study, alright, but there's no need to be too extravagant in other areas. At least make do and follow what others do."

Lin Jiadong scratched his head and smiled again, "Got it, Second Sister."

Chapter 295: Listening to His Second Sister is Definitely Right

Chuxia Lin took him straight to the department store, thermos, washbasin, tooth mug, toothbrush, towel, scented soap, soap..., even buying change of clothes and socks.

Leaving the department store, Lin Jiadong had his hands full and realized how meager his own luggage roll was.

"Second Sister, you're the kindest to me. You don't know, our family has been quite chaotic lately."

Chuxia Lin looked back at him, Lin Jiadong, rarely feeling ashamed, "I know about mom and dad asking you for money. That day, when they came back, Big Sister found out they didn't get any money and had a big fight with them. Afterwards, she was sent back to her in-laws'."

Before, he didn't understand why Big Sister always stayed at her maternal home. After finding out, he felt indignant and tried to reason with Big Sister, but it was truly impossible to reason with her.

"Recently, Big Sister had a son, and upon hearing the news, mom started visiting her again. I heard Big Brother-in-law is going back to his old trade to sell vegetables. Because of their debts, they sold their bicycle and mom even lent ours to Big Brother-in-law. Now, I feel more and more that Big Sister is unreasonable and mom is also showing favoritism."

He finished speaking and sneaked a glance at Chuxia Lin.

He hadn't felt it before, it seemed the family had always been like that. Only after this incident did he realize that his mom seemed to have always favored Big Sister.

Chuxia Lin didn't expect Lin Jiayi to have given birth to a son so quickly. Guang Yuan in his previous life desperately wanted but never had a son.

No wonder they picked up the old trade so quickly.

Lin Jiayi wanted to marry Guang Yuan, and Guang Yuan wanted a son; in this life, both of them got their wishes.

"You don't need to worry about family matters. Let them deal with it. You just need to focus on studying well now. If you can't handle anything, just tell your Second Sister."

"Okay, I got it, Second Sister."

After having lunch together, Chuxia Lin took Lin Jiadong to register at Ancheng First High School.

Their generation hadn't caught up with the family planning policy; there was even a baby boom, so there might not be many who could attend high school.

Not like in future generations, where the entrance of high school was crowded, and even being a bit late for registration meant there were no spots left.

When Chuxia Lin and Lin Jiadong arrived, there were just a bit more people at the school gate than usual. Besides those with bedding rolls, some were just holding admission notices, few parents accompanied, mostly students asking around like headless flies looking for their destination.

Thankfully, the registration area was conspicuous.

Chuxia Lin handed over Lin Jiadong's admission notice to the staff, who checked the names, and she paid the tuition and the accommodation fees. The teacher at the registration gave them two slips.

One was for the dormitory, the other for the classroom.

"First go settle down in the dormitory, the cafeteria is behind the dormitory building. You need to go there to exchange for food tickets and meal tickets. Didn't you bring any food with you?"

Lin Jiadong shook his head subconsciously, not aware that he needed to bring food for school.

Chuxia Lin directly asked, "Teacher, can we just buy food tickets directly?"

"Yes, it's just a little more expensive. I see that you're from the rural areas; if your family has food supplies, bring some next time during the holidays. Wheat flour is fine, and if you don't have ready-made wheat flour, we also accept wheat, though the exchange rate is a little less."

These days, going to school isn't easy, especially for villagers to support a student; the phrase 'sell everything including the kitchen sink' isn't just said in passing, as many need to borrow money to pay for tuition.

The teacher already knew Lin Jiadong's home address when she registered and kindly reminded them.

Chuxia Lin quickly thanked her, "Thank you, teacher, we understand."

After leaving the registration spot, Lin Jiadong discussed with Chuxia Lin, "How about I go home and bring some of the flour dad exchanged yesterday?"

"Let's talk about it next time. First, let's buy food tickets, it's getting late, and teachers might roll call in the evening. Don't leave a bad first impression on the first day."

Lin Jiadong gave an affirmative hum, listening to his Second Sister was certainly right.

The dormitory was bigger than Chuxia Lin had imagined, with bunk beds combined into one long bed, and fourteen people per room.

Chuxia Lin and Lin Jiadong arrived early and chose an upper bunk by the wall.

That's the inconvenience of a shared long bunk, the movements of someone climbing up and down can easily disturb others.

Picking a spot by the wall could minimize disturbance from others as much as possible.

Before they finished settling in, a few other boys arrived at the dormitory.

All came alone, dressed simply, carrying minimal luggage, with some even having less than Lin Jiadong.

Indeed, most boarding students were from remote villages. Forget about city kids, even students from a 'village within the city' like Qin Family Village don't need to board.

Perhaps noticing a woman in the dormitory, the two boys looked curiously at them several times.

Lin Jiadong, knowing how to act, greeted them first as they would be classmates in the future.

The boy with particularly simple luggage immediately smiled and introduced himself, "I'm Li Youmin, from Qu Gou Village."

The other also said, "I'm Hou Xuehui, from Beizhao Village."

The youngsters chatted, and Chuxia Lin had already skillfully made the bed.

"Jiadong, let's go check out the cafeteria."

Lin Jiadong responded and just was about to leave when Li Youmin casually asked, "Your family member?"

Lin Jiadong grinned, somewhat proud, "My sister."

He turned and chased after Chuxia Lin, "Second Sister, wait for me."

Li Youmin watched them leave the dormitory and nudged Hou Xuehui next to him, "Lin Jiadong said he's from Daqing Mountain Village, but his sister doesn't look like she's from a village. She seems like a city person."

Hou Xuehui responded; he thought Lin Jiadong's sister seemed like a city person too, but what did that have to do with him?

Seeing Hou Xuehui had no interest in continuing the topic, Li Youmin changed the subject, "Besides us, do you know anyone else who got into Ancheng First High School?"

...

Chuxia Lin took Lin Jiadong to the cafeteria and bought 20 jin of food tickets and 10 yuan of meal tickets in one go.

Food tickets were for staple foods, counted in dry flour weight, and when getting the cooked food, it was also weighed in dry flour, with about one tael of flour equating to one tael and six of staple food.

Outside, a jin of food tickets would include a processing fee. When exchanging food tickets at the cafeteria, the processing fee would have been paid in advance, and students could directly exchange food tickets for staple food later.

Meal tickets were for vegetables; the cafeteria offerings were cheap, varying from three fen to ten fen, with 10 yuan enough to last him for a while.

After handing all these things to Lin Jiadong, it was as if all matters had been settled.

"Study hard, listen to the teachers, don't skimp on food, you're still growing. If you need anything, ask the teachers for leave and either come to the Bun Shop to find me or go home."

Chuxia Lin admonished him for a bit longer and Lin Jiadong sniffled, not knowing why, but he felt like crying.

His Second Sister was really too good to him.

Not to mention anything else, the money Second Sister spent on him was without a blink of an eye; if it was his mother, she would definitely have had a few remarks.

"Second Sister, I understand. I will definitely study hard, get into university and make you proud."

"Mhm, Second Sister believes in you."

Chuxia Lin waited for Lin Jiadong to return to the dorm before she headed out of school.

Chapter 296: Both Funny and Heartbreaking

Ancheng First High School, she had once dreamed that she could be admitted into Ancheng First High School, and then go on to university.

Even making this her own goal.

However, due to Lin Jiayi's poor academic performance and inability to continue studying, she persuaded her mother to let her drop out as well.

Her mother seemed to have never pinned any hopes on her, even when the teacher came to their home, acknowledged her achievements, and tried to persuade her verbally, her mother did not agree to let her continue schooling.

Lin Chuxia snapped out of her thoughts, ready to leave when she suddenly saw a notice board listing the university students that Ancheng First High School had produced after the reinstatement of the university entrance exam.

Qin Yang's name was at the top.

Lin Chuxia's lips slightly curved into a smile, pity she didn't have a camera, she really wanted to take a photo as a keepsake.

When she reached the Bun Shop, she saw Zhang Guilan selling cooked food at the window, who smiled and asked her, "Are you this happy just sending your brother to school?"

Lin Chuxia touched the corner of her lips, she hadn't noticed, still in a good mood since leaving the school.

But it wasn't because she sent her brother to school.

She was embarrassed to mention the real reason and simply changed the topic, "Where's Hongmei?"

Usually, it was Zhou Hongmei who sold the cooked food at the window.

Zhang Guilan glanced back at the kitchen, "She's in the back, she's got pregnant, these days she can't stand the smell of cooked food, so we switched."

"Pregnant? That really is good news."

At this time, the family planning policy wasn't strict, and since Qin Wu currently only had a daughter, according to the policy, rural households whose first child is a daughter can have a second child after the daughter reaches a certain age, taking into account the agricultural labor needs of rural areas.

Zhou Hongmei's circumstances fit the criteria, so having a second child was justified.

Lin Chuxia glanced at Zhang Guilan, "When will your sister-in-law have another one?"

She knew Qin Han and his wife had always wanted a second child.

Zhang Guilan didn't avoid the question, "We're not in a rush. Now that Hongmei is pregnant, if I were too, who would manage the bun shop? Maybe discuss it after their child is born."

In the village, children are typically left under the care of the grandparents shortly after birth and can start working right after the confinement period, so it wouldn't be a long delay.

However, Lin Chuxia didn't see it that way; in two years the family planning policy would be stricter, and since her elder brother's first child was a boy, having another one might not be so easy.

"Don't overthink it. If you ask me, it would be good for you and your sister-in-law to be pregnant together, then just hire a couple more people for the shop, and the two children would have company."

Zhang Guilan thought Lin Chuxia was just making casual conversation, but Lin Chuxia suddenly turned serious, "Sister-in-law, at most by next year, the family planning will get stricter. You and elder brother should hurry."

Zhang Guilan's smile faded, seeing Lin Chuxia's serious expression and remembering her connections with town leaders and even the county mayor, she might really have some insider information.

"Alright, got it."

When she got home, Little Zhuangzhuang came up to greet her, "Little auntie, look at my new school bag, Grandma made it for me."

Lin Chuxia remembered, tomorrow Zhuangzhuang was also going to the elementary school for registration.

After she had discussed Zhuangzhuang's schooling with Zhang Guilan, the latter had immediately visited Qin Jiang's wife the next day.

Xu Yun was a teacher in the village elementary school; even if a child was underage, it was merely a matter of notifying the principal.

The navy blue cloth bag, Lin Chuxia realized, was made from the fabric she bought for Mrs. Qin before New Year's, the old lady had made trousers with it but had been saving it ever since.

To use cherished new fabric for a child's school bag showed how much Mrs. Qin valued her grandson's education.

"It's very nice," Lin Chuxia complimented, responding to the little one's hopeful gaze, "Got notebooks? Little Aunt will take you to buy notebooks and a pencil case."

Little Zhuangzhuang's eyes brightened, and he nodded vigorously, "Ok."

Mrs. Qin emerged from the kitchen, seeing Lin Chuxia about to leave just after returning, and reminded, "There are no classes tomorrow anyway, just have your elder brother bring them for him."

The light in Little Zhuangzhuang's eyes began to dim, but Lin Chuxia replied, "It's fine, riding the bicycle isn't too far, I'll be back soon."

Qin Han and his wife come back every night after closing up, and leave early in the morning the next day. They are actually busier than she is.

The light in Zhuangzhuang's eyes brightened again.

Lin Chuxia pushed the bicycle forward, "Hop on."

It was a twenty-eight inch bicycle, with a horizontal bar at the front where Zhuangzhuang had already learned to sit by straddling his legs.

He stepped on one pedal, stepped on the frame with the other foot, and twisted his little buttocks to sit up.

"I'm ready, Auntie," he called back loudly.

"All set, let's go."

There was a small store in the village, but they only sold notebooks and pencils. Lin Chuxia took him directly to the department store in the city.

The tin pencil boxes were fifty cents each, with several different designs.

Plain pencil shafts were five cents, patterned ones were six cents, and those with faux leather were eight cents

There were also erasers, costing two, three, or five cents each.

All kinds, and Little Zhuangzhuang didn't have enough eyes to take them all in.

He was obviously excited.

"Which one do you like?" asked Lin Chuxia.

"Can I choose myself?"

Zhuangzhuang's little face turned red.

Excited.

Lin Chuxia nodded her head, and he turned his little head again, his forehead nearly touching the counter. He pointed at a pencil case, "I want the Sun Wukong pencil case. Any of the others would be fine."

It's said that Zhuangzhuang is taught well by Mrs. Qin; despite his young age, he knows his limits and is not greedy.

Lin Chuxia asked the clerk to fetch the pencil case he chose. She decided on the pencils, getting two of each, took two erasers, and five notebooks each of pinyin, squared, and character notebooks.

The little backpack was empty when they arrived, but bulging when they left.

Back home, Little Zhuangzhuang first showed Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin his new items: the pencil case, pencils, erasers, and notebooks, one by one.

Mrs. Qin smiled and approved, then asked Lin Chuxia to wash her hands and join them for dinner.

The elderly couple had been waiting for them.

After they ate, Qin Han and Zhang Guilan also came back. Little Zhuangzhuang, like a little firecracker, rushed out to show them his backpack.

Despite Lin Chuxia's previous reminder to Zhang Guilan about the importance of educating the child, people tend to be lenient.

In the eyes of Zhang Guilan and Qin Han, sending the child to school was fulfilling their duty.

Concerning books and such, if his mother could sort it out at home, there was nothing to worry about.

If really needed, they could just bind some pages at home as a temporary measure. Even children going to school without notebooks wasn't unheard of.

Now seeing the complete set Lin Chuxia had bought for him, they felt too careless.

They quickly thanked Lin Chuxia.

"Sister-in-law, you're too polite. We're all family, and besides, you and my brother are busy with the Bun Shop; you wouldn't have time for this."

Lin Chuxia didn't think much of it.

She really liked Zhuangzhuang. Having no children in her two lifetimes, she sometimes even treated Zhuangzhuang like her own child.

Indeed, the emotional value this child brought was high, making everything she did for him feel worthwhile.

Qin Han and Zhang Guilan had already had dinner at the Bun Shop, and it was getting late. They had to wake up early the next day, so everyone was getting ready to wash up and go back to their rooms to rest.

Chapter 297: So Happy I Could Fly

Little Zhuangzhuang was always excited. Mrs. Qin had bathed him, and wearing only his shorts, he ran to find Qin Han.

"Daddy, daddy, I'm going to school tomorrow, are you happy?"

Qin Han had just finished showering, and was carrying bathing water for Zhang Guilan, he casually replied, "Happy, I'm so happy I could take off flying."

"I'm so happy I could take off too, daddy, daddy, are you going to take me to school tomorrow?"

As soon as Qin Han entered the room, he saw Zhang Guilan just removing her coat, and his gaze deepened instantly.

With a sweep of his hand, he shooed the little nuisance behind him, "Go stay outside."

After he had poured water for his wife, he stepped out only to have his thighs embraced by a pair of small arms, "Daddy, daddy, are you going to school with me tomorrow?"

"Daddy has finished school, I don't need to go anymore."

"But daddy can take me to school. I have a new backpack, new notebooks, and a new pencil case. Daddy, daddy, don't you want to see them?"

Qin Han was annoyed beyond words; he had already seen them three times, "It's time to sleep, go sleep with your grandma."

Zhuangzhuang refused and hugged his leg again, "I want to sleep with daddy; daddy still has to take me to school tomorrow."

Qin Han rolled his eyes, who agreed to that.

Grabbing the boy's small arms, he headed for Mrs. Qin's room, "Go sleep with your grandma, let your grandpa take you to school tomorrow. If you ask me, a real man doesn't need to be escorted, stop being so whiny."

Today of all days, his wife finally relented on having a second child.

He had to take the time to work on making a baby, who had time to send this kid off.

Little Zhuangzhuang was tossed onto grandma's kang bed, his little face puffed up in anger.

But when he turned to see his new backpack and stationery, he was happy again and closed his eyes contentedly with them in his arms.

...

The next morning, after breakfast, Lin Chuxia was going to the food factory and took Zhuangzhuang to school along the way.

Today marked the start of the new semester, and the teachers were all there; Lin Chuxia handed Little Zhuangzhuang directly over to Xu Yun.

Just as she walked out of the school gate, she ran into the village chief who was headed to the pig farm.

Seeing Lin Chuxia, the village chief greeted her first, "Are you here at the school to find Qin Jiang's wife?"

"It's the first day of school, isn't it? I'm helping my older brother send his child," Lin Chuxia replied, "Uncle Qin, are you heading to the fields?"

The food factory and the pig farm were in different directions, and seeing that Lin Chuxia was about to leave after greeting him, the village chief hurriedly stopped her.

"I'm off to check on the pig farm. Lin, do you have some time right now? You haven't visited since the pig farm was built; why don't you come with me and take a look?"

Lin Chuxia wasn't interested in the pig farm; it was dirty and smelly, even though she had invested in it.

But since the village chief had extended an invitation, she naturally wouldn't snub him.

"Sure, uncle, let's go have a look together."

The pig farm currently housed nearly a hundred fattened pigs, ten sows, and one boar.

The village chief led Lin Chuxia to see the fattened pigs first; these piglets had already been castrated. Eight to ten in a pen, their fur gleamed and they were well-cared for.

"Our pigs are all fed grain and forage, directly fed with cornmeal and wheat bran, and the forage is all sweet potato vines and peanut vines," the village chief explained with a sigh.

"Reminds me, I've eaten this stuff during natural disasters. Back then, you couldn't even think about finding cornmeal. Our family had a small pile of sweet potato vines, and Aunt Qin and I ground it into flour with a roller, then steamed it with water to feed everyone. Later, as the sweet potato vine flour became scarce, steamed dumplings weren't enough, so we made porridge, and then we added tree bark and leaves—anything edible was mixed together. It no longer felt like we were living day to day; we just felt lucky to have survived another day. If someone had told me back then that we'd feed these to pigs, I might have felt murderous," he finished and then laughed to himself.

Lin Chuxia also laughed along with him, "Nowadays, life is getting better and better. Uncle has the determination, and under his leadership, our village will definitely continue to improve. I heard that last year there were families in the village with poor harvests, barely enough to eat. This year, after the wheat harvest, almost every family has had their fill of pure white flour at every meal."

"That's also thanks to your contribution. In our village with more than 300 households and over a thousand people, almost every family now has someone with a job earning a salary."

Besides the food factory, the chicken farm and pig farm employ villagers.

"Uncle, let's not keep on praising each other."

This remark made the village chief laugh heartily.

"Alright, let's go take a look over there."

On the other side, there were sows and breeding pigs.

Generally, pig farms don't have many demands for sows, as long as they have a decent shape and no bristles, they could be kept.

When they have their first litter, you can tell the quality of the pigs and whether they're suitable for breeding.

Some pigs are naturally aggressive and will kill their piglets when no one is watching, sometimes even eating them alive; those pigs cannot be kept.

Usually by the second litter, you can tell a pig's reproductive abilities. Those with poor fertility will also be swiftly culled.

Breeding boars, however, have much higher requirements: they need to be large, well-shaped, and grow quickly.

Especially the latter point.

Country-bred pigs take a long time to grow, both time and feed consuming.

This is also why, after the policy was relaxed, the country introduced quality breeds of pigs, gradually beginning domestic selective breeding to ensure the national supply of hog.

Knowing this, when they first built the pig farm, Lin Chuxia had reminded the village chief to buy a breeding pig himself.

However, upon reaching the breeding pig's pen, Lin Chuxia saw a small pig that was not very large.

Being raised alone in a pen made the piglet look even more runty.

And looking at its shape: the chubby body, the round head, even its nose was round.

Lin Chuxia frowned slightly, "Is this the breeding pig bought for us by the breeding station?"

For a moment, Lin Chuxia almost believed what the village chief had said before: by raising their own breeding pig, they were taking business away from the breeding station, which surely wouldn't sit well with them.

The village chief also looked worried, and that was the reason he had called Lin Chuxia here.

"It wasn't bought by the breeding station's help, but by Qin Wen."

"Qin Wen?"

Lin Chuxia couldn't fathom why that person would help buy a breeding pig for the pig farm, wasn't he always too proud?

The village chief nodded.

After the pig farm was built, Qin Wen took the initiative to find the village chief, saying he could get quality breeding pigs at a lower price.

The village chief figured that since Qin Wen was from Qin Family Village, it was better to use a local connection than to deal with the breeding station.

Plus, Qin Wen had always been working outside and certainly knew many people.

The village chief took his word for it and entrusted the task to him.

But when the pig was brought back, the village chief felt something was amiss. However, Qin Wen said the pig was young, and all piglets looked the same; it would be distinguishable once it grew bigger.

Now it's been almost two months, not only has the pig not grown as quickly as the others, but it also doesn't show any signs of being superior.

They had seen the breeding station's large breeding pigs, which are long, with long snouts, their ears drooping, each weighing at least three to four hundred pounds.

For this one in front of them to reach three to four hundred pounds, how long would it have to grow?

Chapter 298: Gathering Forces to Demand Justice

He couldn't just subjectively decide there was something wrong with the pig because it was growing slowly, so he called Lin Chuxia over to take a look together.

"How much did this pig cost?" Lin Chuxia asked.

The village chief gestured, "eighty yuan, Qin Wen said it originally cost a hundred yuan, but he gave us a twenty yuan discount because of his connections."

Lin Chuxia almost laughed in frustration.

Eighty yuan seemed quite a lot, a grown fattened pig sells for just about a hundred and eighty yuan.

But breeding pigs are inherently more expensive, what good breed could you get for eighty yuan?

"Uncle, when you have time, make a trip to the breeding station, and let them help us bring in a breeding pig. I met County Magistrate Bai recently, and he places great importance on our Qin Family Village's farming industry. Whether it's the breeding station or the livestock bureau, rest assured and just go, the government supports private enterprises, they won't make it difficult for you."

Lin Chuxia worried that Village Chief Qin might lose face, so she intentionally elaborated a bit more.

Village Chief Qin, hearing that their village had been recognized by the county chief, suddenly felt more confident.

"Alright, no need to wait any longer, I'll go right now."

Without Lin Chuxia explicitly saying so, Village Chief Qin knew there was something wrong with this pig.

Thinking about how Qin Wen had been frequently visiting their home lately, a scorn flashed in Village Chief Qin's eyes.

It's just because he's a Qin family member that he had given him this trust, not expecting that even within family members, characters could differ so drastically.

He was playing tricks on him.

Lin Chuxia did not bother with these matters anymore, but just coming from the pig farm, she couldn't go to the food factory anymore, and simply went straight home.

Mrs. Qin was surprised to see her back, as they were usually busy outside during the day.

"Something happened?"

"I just went to the pig farm, I feel like I smell, so came back to change clothes."

Mrs. Qin laughed, "Then go change quickly, it's almost noon, we are going to make dumplings at home, you should stay and have some."

"Mom, I want some with chives and pork."

"Okay, I'll ask your dad to cut some pork."

Mrs. Qin cheerfully went to find Mr. Qin, and Lin Chuxia also went back to her room.

She directly went into her space to take a bath and changed into clean clothes.

When she came out, Mrs. Qin was already in the yard picking chives.

Their backyard garden was full of vegetables, including chives, all grown naturally without pesticides, you could smell the fresh chive scent from far away.

Lin Chuxia joined Mrs. Qin in selecting the chives, discussing with her, "Dad mentioned that the side room is leaking. How about we build a few new rooms in the front courtyard and also add a shower room? It would be convenient for summer bathing."

Their front yard was an open yard where they kept two pigs.

Previously, when they were planting vegetables, tools and such were stored in the front yard; now that they don't farm anymore, those items were just piled up on one side.

The cleaned-up area in the front yard was quite spacious.

Qin Han and his spouse were busy with their store and could not attend to home, so Lin Chuxia made plans herself.

Mrs. Qin thought it was feasible but was worried that Lin Chuxia, a girl, might not be able to handle it.

Lin Chuxia had already figured it out, "There isn't much work in the fields now, I'll ask Brother Qin Liang to help for a few days, I will go talk to him and his wife."

This year Brother Qin hadn't planted anything too demanding in the fields, she would get a couple more people over later, and have the house built before the autumn harvest.

Actually, Lin Chuxia also wanted to reconstruct the house they were living in, but she needed to discuss this with Qin Yang and Qin Han.

Mrs. Qin nodded, "That's fine, your older brother and his wife are kind-hearted people. Last time, Lihua came over for nine days and saw that something went wrong in the factory. They told me in advance not to disturb you guys, both of them are sensible."

"Yes, all the brothers in the family are good people," Lin Chuxia agreed.

Whether it's Qin Han, Qin Yang, Qin Liang, Qin Jiang, or Qin Wu, they are all decent people.

Mr. Qin came back with the meat, and Mrs. Qin told him about the house.

Mr. Qin also agreed, "I can only help you to arrange things. The food factory building was huge, but building a few houses is nothing big."

Mrs. Qin glanced at him sidelong, "You really think you're capable."

Mr. Qin laughed heartily but didn't argue, and went into the house to chop the meat.

Once the minced meat was ready, the three of them gathered around the table to make dumplings.

They had not made many when there was a commotion outside.

Mrs. Qin smiled, "It must be Zhuangzhuang coming back, I wonder how his first day of school went."

Before the little guy Zhuangzhuang came in, a man's voice was heard, "Is the Fourth Sister-in-law at home?"

It was someone looking for Lin Chuxia.

Mrs. Qin had already recognized the voice and looked at Lin Chuxia, "What does Da Wen want from you?"

Qin Wen works at the county hardware company, and he usually stays busy and lives far away, rarely interacting with them.

Lin Chuxia guessed what it was about and put down the dumpling wrapper, "I'll go out and see."

In the yard, Qin Wen was still wearing a white shirt in the hot weather, with a pen clipped in his shirt pocket.

Glasses perched on his nose.

Among the Qin brothers, Qin Wen is the only one who wears glasses, but from Lin Chuxia's observations, his degree of myopia was not deep.

Seeing Lin Chuxia, Qin Wen opened his mouth first, "Did the Fourth Sister-in-law go to the pig farm today?"

"Yes, I went," Lin Chuxia replied indifferently.

"Did the Fourth Sister-in-law say that the breeding pigs I bought for the pig farm were not of a superior breed and that she had the village chief slaughter them to be raised as fat pigs?"

"Are you running to our house in the middle of the day to create trouble with me?"

Lin Chuxia expressed her dissatisfaction with his accusatory tone.

Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin, hearing the commotion, came out from the kitchen. They didn't know what was going on and could only watch from the side, at least they could help if something was really wrong.

Qin Wen sneered inwardly, was it even necessary to ask? Of course, he was here to confront her.

Nowadays, businesses are not doing well; in the hardware company, he is not the most capable nor the most experienced. He fears he might stand behind a counter for decades without advancement.

Even he himself does not know if he has decades more to stand at that counter.

Originally, he was one of the only two brothers who made something of themselves.

But now, each of them is either a store manager or a factory manager, all more prestigious and earning more than him.

When villagers talk about the Qin brothers, he can hardly be mentioned.

Now that he finally managed to get a breeding pig for the village and gained the village chief's approval, Lin Chuxia went and ruined his efforts, what kind of behavior was that?

Especially since the village chief actually listened to her.

He didn't understand what kind of spell this woman had cast on the village chief.

But facing the woman on the steps, his aura inexplicably dampened.

Annoyed and confused, he forced himself to speak, "I just want to ask, how did the Fourth Sister-in-law determine that the breeding pig I bought was not a superior breed? I know the Fourth Sister-in-law is skilled, I wholeheartedly admire the way you manage the Bun Shop and food factory, but to say that the Fourth Sister-in-law can discern the breed of a pig at one glance, deciding that the breeding pig I painstakingly got for the village is a mongrel, I can't accept that. Or maybe the Fourth Sister-in-law can tell her brother, does the Fourth Sister-in-law have some tricks, or some research on breeding pigs that allows you to see at a glance?"

Chapter 299: Isn't This Mistreating Someone?

"Da Wen!"

Upon Qin Wen's remarks, Mrs. Qin sharply reprimanded him.

Other statements could be overlooked, but the last sentence was a clear insult.

Although Lin Chuxia was married, she was still a woman and barely over 20.

She and her son lived separately, and she hadn't spent more than a month with him since getting married, barely different from a maiden.

Qin Wen saying she was knowledgeable about breeding pigs was plain mockery.

Who would have expertise in that?

Don't mention Lin Chuxia — even typical rural women, when the family sow is in heat, it's the men who rush to take it to the breeding station.

Although Mr. Qin didn't speak, his icy gaze clearly showed dissatisfaction towards Qin Wen.

Lin Chuxia's face also darkened, she scoffed coldly, "Does it matter whether you approve or not? Didn't the village chief tell you about my investment in the local pig farm? Is there a problem with me visiting my invested pig farm to check on things?"

Seeing Qin Wen's face suddenly stiffen, Lin Chuxia knew he wasn't aware of this.

"As for the rest, I invested in the pig farm and can manage it as I see fit without having to explain it to anyone."

Qin Wen's face flushed red, struggling to eke out a sentence after a long pause.

"You can't be so unreasonable. I am also trying to do something for our fellow villagers. Is this how you serve the best interests of Qin Family Village?"

"The elders and villagers of Qin Family Village need tangible benefits, not just your claim of serving them which alone doesn't do any good."

"This is you twisting the facts. Now I see it clearly, you and Qin Yang are the same, always unable to see others succeed. Always pointing your fingers, even suppressing your own brothers. I, Qin Wen, must be blind; had I known the pig farm had your investment, I wouldn't have gotten involved at all, good intentions taken for granted."

Qin Wen's words truly left Mr. and Mrs. Qin at a loss for words.

They even looked speechless towards Lin Chuxia, fearing the daughter-in-law might have misunderstood something.

Were it not inappropriate for them as elders to bicker with someone younger, they'd really want to retort.

Their restraint didn't mean Lin Chuxia held back.

Especially when he brought up Qin Yang, saying these things that she disliked.

"Sixth brother, I don't understand your logic. Unable to see others do better than us? Do you think you perform better at work than Qin Yang? Or perhaps your salary is higher? Or is your household more prosperous? What exactly about you should make me jealous and suppress you?"

Qin Wen, stung by the retort, was red-faced and speechless.

No longer able to face the situation, he turned to leave.

Lin Chuxia called after him again, "Didn't Sixth Brother say you brought excellent breeding pigs? I'll notify the village chief shortly; let's not slaughter the pigs for now. Just keep them, along with the ones bought from the breeding station. I want to see how your excellent pigs grow up—to avoid undermining your good intentions. Of course, if there's an issue with the breeding pigs, the farm will seek accountability. Not to mention the waste of time and feed, but the eighty yuan paid for the pig must also be reimbursed."

With his steps paused, Qin Wen then quickly strode away, his footsteps hurried.

He really didn't expect Lin Chuxia to invest in the village's pig farm. With so many properties already, isn't that enough for her?

During this time, he's been carefully curry favor, just hoping to gain the village chief's approval.

Qin Jiang can be the person in charge of the chicken farm, and he can be in charge of the pig farm. Even without the iron rice bowl of the Hardware Company, it wouldn't be too much.

That breeding pig was also a connection he made with great effort, so how come when it comes to her...

Qin Wen's steps suddenly halted.

If there really was something wrong with that pig...

Impossible, how could there be something wrong with it, he bought it for eighty yuan.

Just let her raise it, when it becomes a fully grown pig, let's see what she says.

Finally, he made it home, where Ma Suyun was waiting for him, and she hadn't even cooked dinner.

"How did it go? Did you talk to the fourth brother's wife? What does she mean by this? Does she want to control everything, even involving herself in our business just because the village chief is good to us?"

Qin Wen picked up a cup on the table and drank some cold water to suppress the anger in his heart.

He coldly said, "She owns half of the village's pig farm."

Ma Suyun continued to complain, "I knew she was no good, deliberately stirring up trouble between the brothers. If not for her, would we have fallen out with the eldest brother? Originally, Qin Jiang was in charge of the chicken farm in the village, and you would have taken over the pig farm. Nobody could say anything about you two brothers. She intentionally let the village chief suppress you and..."

She abruptly paused mid-sentence and turned to ask him.

Qin Wen really didn't want to repeat what he'd just said, and his tone was even less pleasant, "Lin Chuxia, she has a share in the pig farm in the village. Knowing that I helped buy the breeding pig, she asked the village chief to buy a new one, just to keep me out of it."

"How could she be so malicious?" Ma Suyun suddenly stood up, "What does she want? Can't she stand to see us doing well? Really, 'It's not a family if they don't enter the same door', she and Qin Yang are the same, always wanting to stand out and get noticed, can't bear to see others being capable. They're just jealous of you, intentionally suppressing you."

Qin Wen hadn't felt better until he mentioned Lin Chuxia's sarcasm.

In his life, he hated nothing more than being compared to Qin Yang. Despite his hard work, in other people's eyes, he was never as good as Qin Yang.

He thought that with Qin Yang working out of town, he would have escaped this curse, but today he ended up being scolded by Qin Yang's wife.

He glanced at Ma Suyun's stomach, "We've been married for such a long time, how come there's still no news?"

Ma Suyun was momentarily taken aback; they were talking about Qin Yang, how did the topic switch to her?

"Who can be sure? You know as well that we've seen the doctor at the hospital, and they said I'm fine. They told us to let nature take its course and not to stress about it. Besides, the farm work is so heavy and tiring, you leave it all to me, how would I have any energy left for pregnancy?"

"That should have happened by now. Qin Wu's wife goes to work every day, and she's already expecting their second. We only married two years after them, work has slowed down these days, you should come back early to cook. We should eat dinner early and try harder."

Being surpassed in other areas was bearable, but he couldn't lose to Qin Yang when it came to having children.

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After Qin Wen left, Mrs. Qin was still worried Lin Chuxia might be upset, "Don't take what Da Wen said to heart, those were just angry words. He's always been comparing himself with Yangyang, wanting to be better than him but always ending up not quite there. His resentment isn't all directed at you."

"Mom, don't worry, I'm fine. Even if he was targeting me, I'm not afraid. The facts are clear, what more can he do?"

Chapter 300: Qin Yang to be Transferred Back

In front of absolute strength, all underhanded tactics are futile.

Li Chuxia had long seen through Qin Wen's little schemes. When he came to her house to confront her, seeking to regain the face he'd lost in front of the village chief by stepping on her to advance his position, she personally shattered his beautiful dream.

If he hadn't come looking for trouble, perhaps out of consideration for the Qin Family, she might have given him some face. But now she realizes that some people just aren't worth the courtesy.

Little Zhuangzhuang bounced back from outside and, upon seeing everyone, shouted, "Grandpa, Grandma, Little Auntie, I got a red flower today!"

"Wow, Zhuangzhuang is so amazing, a red flower on the first day?" Li Chuxia said with a smile.

Little Zhuangzhuang nodded proudly, "The teacher asked who could count, and I counted the most. I can also do addition and subtraction. I knew it all even before the teacher taught us, and my classmates were so envious of me."

"Zhuangzhuang is really great."

Li Chuxia gave him a thumbs up.

"It's all because Little Auntie taught me."

He lowered his head, tugged at his shirt, and then shyly held up the red flower in his hand, "I want to give the red flower to Little Auntie."

Li Chuxia reached out and hugged him, "Thank you, Zhuangzhuang, Little Auntie is so happy."

Zhuangzhuang's face turned even redder.

The family went back inside to continue making dumplings, with a filling of pork and chive that was never enough no matter how much they ate.

Li Chuxia ended up eating until her belly was round.

"Mom's cooking is really good, I'm stuffed."

If someone else praised her cooking, Mrs. Qin might believe it, but coming from Li Chuxia, Mrs. Qin just smiled, "How can it compare with yours? Look at the men in our family, after having your cooking, they've all started to criticize mine."

"It's different, Mom's cooking has the taste of home."

This taste Li Chuxia only experienced once in her past life at Sun Lanlan's house, yet she remembered it for a lifetime.

Mrs. Qin took it as a compliment, feeling happy inside, "If you like it, Mom will make it for you often."

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In the afternoon, before Li Chuxia had gone to the food factory, someone came to look for her, saying she had a phone call.

All business dealings at the food factory were handled by Su Wensong. If someone was phoning for her, it was likely Qin Yang.

Once she reached the office at the food factory, the phone rang shortly after, and indeed, it was Qin Yang.

His voice was filled with restrained joy, "Xiaxia, I have good news for you. My transfer is confirmed; I'm moving to our city."

Li Chuxia's eyes lit up. Transferring to their city meant he would be very close to home.

Moreover, she had been planning to expand into the city market, so this meant they wouldn't have to live apart anymore.

"When is the transfer?"

"I still have some handover work to do here, but at the latest, I'll be able to transfer next month, and I should be able to spend the Mid-Autumn Festival at home."

Qin Yang replied succinctly, then paused for a moment, his tone seeming a bit tentative, "Xiaxia, I'll be working in the city. Can you come over?"

"Qin Yang, have I told you that I've also opened a Bun Shop in the city? I was planning on developing there anyway, just starting with the Bun Shop to test the waters. If you can transfer there, I can move my plans forward."

This was her way of agreeing, and Qin Yang's voice couldn't hide his joy, "Then once I'm settled in the city, you can come over."

"Okay."

Long-distance calls were not only expensive, but the reception on Qin Yang's end was also not very good.

After finishing their serious conversation, they exchanged a few caring words before hanging up the phone.

Su Wensong came back from outside and saw Lin Chuxia in a visibly good mood. He teased, "Mr. Lin is all smiles, is there some good news?"

"Indeed, there is good news. Qin Yang is being transferred back here."

"That really is good news. Congratulations to Mr. Lin, no more living apart from your husband."

Before he got married, he didn't think there was anything wrong with Lin Chuxia and her situation.

Now, enjoying the warm and gentle company of his wife every evening, he could empathize with Qin Yang's plight.

Lin Chuxia smiled in acknowledgment. Knowing that everything at the food factory was running smoothly, she didn't linger any longer. She had to share this good news with Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin.

Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin were still at home waiting; they guessed the call must have been from Qin Yang.

Knowing that they rarely called, typically writing letters instead, they were worried it might be some urgent matter.

Hearing that Qin Yang was being transferred and that he would be moved nearer home, Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin were delighted.

Especially Mrs. Qin, who pulled Lin Chuxia aside and spoke earnestly, "When Yangyang is transferred back, you should go with him to the city. After all, a big city is better than our small county town. I've heard the buildings in the city outnumber those here, and the streets are wider. Didn't you also say that the clothes in the city's malls are prettier?"

Lin Chuxia listened to her ramble with a smile. Mrs. Qin was so worried that she would once again refuse to reunite with Qin Yang for the sake of her career.

"Mom, I was also thinking of expanding into the city. It's perfect timing with Qin Yang's return. Even if he wasn't coming back, I would still be heading that way next year."

Upon hearing this, Mrs. Qin was completely reassured. "That's wonderful. Then you two won't have to be apart like this. Business is just fine as it is, as long as there's enough money. Once Yangyang is back, you should hurry up and have a child. I heard Wu's wife is already expecting her second. It's about time you had one too."

"Okay, mom, we'll consider it."

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The sunshine of early autumn was warm and gentle, the breeze mild, and the sky a tile blue adorned with clusters of white clouds, soft as marshmallows.

Today, in the Li Family of Xiaoqingshan Village, it was the celebration of Li Guangyuan's son's first full month of life.

In the village, getting a daughter-in-law and adding a member to the family were both occasions for joy. No matter how tight the finances, at least two tables must be set out for guests.

But Li Guangyuan was not just tight on money; he was burdened with debts unrecovered, and without money to hold a banquet, so he only bought a pound of meat to host Lin Jiayi's family.

Lin Jiayi sat on the kang, watching her son.

On the day because of an issue with cooked food, Li Guangyuan and Old Mrs. Li's family confronted her, which led to her premature labor. Fortunately, she gave birth to a son.

Despite Old Mrs. Li's claims that the child in Lin Jiayi's belly might not be Li Guangyuan's, as the child's father, Li Guangyuan knew very well.

Moreover, when the child was born, he was the spitting image of Li Guangyuan—what else was there to say?

Now that he had his own son, who would volunteer to raise a widow's son? Old Mrs. Li's words were all spoken in the heat of the moment.

A widow that brings ill-fate to her husband—she was still counting on Li Guangyuan to support her in her old age.

The cooked food incident seemed to be swept under the carpet. With the birth of the child, the family began to live a simple and honest life again.

Even Li Guangyuan started selling vegetables again to pay off his debts and provide for his child.

And Lin Jiayi, who finally had a son of her own, no longer had to raise children for others, which was definitely a boost to her pride.

When Lin Jiayi saw Mr. Lin and Mother Lin come inside, she looked behind them with expectation, yet did not see the person she was hoping to see.

Once everyone was inside, Lin Jiayi couldn't wait to ask, "Mom, why didn't the younger sister come?"

Mother Lin herself couldn't understand why her eldest daughter was always competing with her younger one.

Even though she didn't think highly of the younger daughter either, it was clear that the current situations were different, and the eldest daughter was no match for the younger.

Furthermore, after hearing the news, she completely gave up on the idea of competing with the younger daughter.