

Switched M 331

Chapter 331: Service Fee

The furniture had arrived, so Lin Chuxia's luggage could finally be arranged.

Clothes were put into the wardrobe, daily necessities one by one were placed on the table, as well as teacups, a kettle, various cosmetics, small ornaments...

After Qin Yang had finished organizing the kitchen, he entered the room and saw the busy figure. In an instant, he felt that the courtyard, which seemed cold and clear just two days ago, had become lively and warm.

Someone called out Lin Chuxia's name from outside, and it was clear it was Jiang Hong.

"I'll go outside and take a look."

Lin Chuxia put down what she was doing and went out to welcome them.

Through the glass, Qin Yang saw her talking to the woman outside. He then lowered his head to look at the items she had been arranging.

Several exquisite cups, a pair of lucky dolls, and two fluffy little animals.

Just these simple few items instantly made the whole house feel cozy.

A faint smile curled up at the corner of his mouth; he had been living alone for so many years, only now realizing the difference with or without a wife.

With a wife around, even the entire house smelled fragrant.

Outside, Lin Chuxia accepted the items passed over by Jiang Hong, thanking her continuously, "I had almost forgotten in all the busyness."

"I heard the discussions, a family moved a truckload of furniture in and guessed it was you. You're probably not able to cook at this time, and it just so happens that the buns at my place just finished steaming. Don't mind if my cooking isn't to your taste."

"How could I? They smell delicious, and you can hear my stomach grumbling. I'm just setting things up in there, I'll finish up soon."

Jiang Hong waved her off, "Let's leave it at that for today. Li Wei is still waiting for me to have dinner with him. Some other time I'll come and visit your new home."

At this, Lin Chuxia remembered something and leaned in closer, "When you first arrived, did you throw a party? I've heard that some residential compounds have a custom of warming the house, do we have it here?"

"I've inquired about that too; it's up to personal preference. Like us, with Li Wei's position being neither high nor low, there are fewer who host meals. In theory, with Mr. Qin's position, it would be suitable to invite everyone to sit together. You should discuss this with Mr. Qin. I've heard there are quite a few people who got transferred this time and everyone has been busy moving and settling in, so I haven't heard of anyone hosting a meal yet."

Lin Chuxia now had an idea, "Alright, I got it. If I really do host a party, you have to come and help me."

"Is that even a question? Of course, I'll come."

For Mr. Qin to include them in his invitation was an honor for them.

"That's settled then, just don't let Li Wei say I'm bullying you as a pregnant woman."

"If he dares to say so, I definitely won't let him off."

After a few more laughs, Jiang Hong left.

Lin Chuxia came inside and placed the plate on the table, "Jiang Hong brought over some buns, she said they were stuffed with Chinese cabbage, and I'm actually quite hungry."

Qin Yang glanced at his watch; indeed, it was getting late, "Shall we go out to eat?"

"Why go out? It's perfectly nice here, and I quite like eating this."

Saying so, Lin Chuxia took a bite of the bun, "Mmm, Chinese cabbage with egg filling, and there's vermicelli inside, too. Try it, it's quite tasty."

She handed the bun to Qin Yang's mouth, and he took a bite from her hand.

"How is it? Tasty, right?"

"It's good," seeing her eat so appetizingly, Qin Yang was indeed hungry and didn't insist on going out, "I'll make us a couple bowls of soup in the kitchen."

While Lin Chuxia ate her bun, she followed him into the kitchen, watching him work.

Not to mention, when they were in the Northwest, the two ate together in the cafeteria, and at his home, there was no need for these men to cook. Lin Chuxia truly did not know that Qin Yang could cook so well.

And not to mention his tall, striking figure with beautifully lined and powerful arms rolling up the sleeves of his white shirt, plus his impeccable handsome face; he really was a feast for the eyes doing just about anything.

"What are you looking at, feeling anxious?"

Feeling her gaze, Qin Yang turned his head to ask.

"Checking out how handsome my husband is. Qin Yang, when did you learn to cook?"

Hearing those words, Qin Yang did not catch the implicit meaning at first, and then he couldn't help but his ear tips turned red.

Bowing his head as he beat the eggs, he casually replied, "Never studied it specifically, just imagined and did it, so it doesn't taste as good as yours."

Imagined and did it?

Lin Chuxia never expected this answer; it must be the superpower of a top student.

When the egg drop soup was ready, Lin Chuxia couldn't wait to taste it and generously praised, "It tastes really good, truly self-taught."

Qin Yang knew there was some exaggeration in it and passed her a bun with a chuckle.

The two of them enjoyed their buns with the egg drop soup, eating face to face delightfully.

"Do you know the address of your eldest sister? Now that we've moved to the city, should we visit her when we have time? Who's in your sister's family?"

Qin Yang thought for a moment, "Brother-in-law's family all live in the city, and my sister's in-laws all live together. We'll settle down first, then after a while we can go see them together."

"Mm, okay, think about this matter, and our two families should get together more often."

Qin Yang had no objections; the eldest sister really liked her sister-in-law.

After finishing their meal and resting for a while, Lin Chuxia planned to go to the mall again to look at the appliances, as Qin Yang had a rare day off.

But Qin Yang insisted on pulling her to try if the mattress was comfortable, and with that try, the two of them rolled together again.

And really, despite being a foam pad, it was much more comfortable than a hard board bed.

Finally, it was no longer hard in the front and hard in the back.

After fooling around, they looked at the clock and it was almost four o'clock. Even if Lin Chuxia was shameless, she had to criticize that their life was too decadent.

Qin Yang had a satisfied look, his long fingers buttoning up his shirt, showing his refined and elegant side, and you couldn't see any trace of that wildness from just a moment ago.

Sometimes Lin Chuxia would ask herself, what was the biggest gain of living her life all over again?

Neither the Bun Shop nor the food factory made her feel much excitement, only this man in front of her, like a good book stumbled upon by chance, was indeed growing on her the more she read.

She thought he was just simply handsome, but his capabilities were sigh-worthy.

When you feel proud of the achievements that man has made, he can also give you meticulous care.

Capable of mingling in high society, cooking in the kitchen, and performing well in bed.

Such a rare and perfect man, Lin Chuxia could not ignore even if she wanted to.

"Qin Yang, what gift do you want?"

Having just fastened the last button, he heard the little woman lounging on the bed, with bare arms and hair half falling, lazily asking him.

He paused his movements, "What do you mean?"

It wasn't that he was overthinking it, Lin Chuxia's posture and tone reminded him of those southern female bosses his colleagues used to talk about.

Lin Chuxia was so shrewd; she saw right through his thoughts, with a slight smile, she gently patted her thigh, "Service fee, dear sister is very satisfied..."

"Lin—Chu—xia..."

Qin Yang pounced over, biting her lip, grinding his teeth, and asking, "How much are you planning to give? Do you want me to satisfy you some more?"

Chapter 332: Watching the Excitement

Lin Chuxia just wanted to tease him and certainly didn't want to roll around again.

She quickly begged for mercy, "I'm satisfied, very satisfied, no need to be any more satisfied, hahaha... Qin Yang, don't move around, I'm just teasing you, I'm talking about birthday gifts... What birthday gift do you want..."

Qin Yang then remembered that his birthday was indeed approaching.

He took the opportunity to pull her up and help her get dressed, "Anything is fine, I'll like whatever you give me."

"Then I'll give you a camera, since you should be able to use it for work."

However, Qin Yang was looking at her delicate features and what he really wanted was to capture this beautiful scene, so he nodded and agreed, "Good."

There wasn't much time left in the afternoon, so the two went straight to the Department Store.

In the Department Store, there was only one Panasonic color television, costing 2,300 yuan.

Although Lin Chuxia scorned the old-fashioned CRT TVs, she still bought one.

She noticed Qin Yang was quite interested in it, and besides, he would probably like to watch the daily news broadcast.

Compared to the color TV, Lin Chuxia preferred tape recorders; in the late '80s and '90s, it was the era of scrimping and saving, with many classic old songs enduring over time.

A double-cassette deck with four speakers, plus picking out a few cassettes of her own liking, would be nice for leisure time.

After selecting the items, they hired a handcart at the entrance to haul them back.

The Department Store wasn't far from their residential compound, and they had come out on bicycles in the afternoon.

After loading the goods, Qin Yang decided to walk with the handcart driver, while Lin Chuxia went to the bicycle parking area to fetch their bicycles.

Though there weren't many bicycles there at the moment and parking spaces were easy to find, if you didn't want to find your bicycle gone after shopping, it was safer to store it away.

Five cents for one bicycle; the parking attendant (male or female) would draw a circle with a rope and assign a small paper tag to each bike.

The tag was marked with a number, and the attendant would write the same number on the bicycle seat or mudguard with white chalk when handing over the tag.

After parking the bicycle and receiving the paper tag, you could leave.

When it was time to retrieve the bicycle, you'd find the bike that matched the number on your tag, pay the fee, return the paper tag, and you could leave.

Although there were significant drawbacks to this system, it greatly reduced the chances of bicycle theft.

However, looking at the job the parking attendant was doing, ordinary people couldn't handle it; it was those with some connections who could draw lines and mark their territory outside the store.

Lin Chuxia was walking towards the parking area while taking out the paper tag when suddenly someone rushed past, bumping into her elbow, and the tag she just took out fell to the ground.

Lin Chuxia slightly frowned, thinking she had encountered a pickpocket. She reached for her wallet and saw the person had already bypassed her and was chasing after a woman holding a child in the distance.

The wallet was still there, Lin Chuxia breathed a sigh of relief, just as she was about to bend down to pick up the tag, another person ran past in front of her.

Their huge foot stepped right on top of the paper tag, leaving behind a big footprint and a tag covered with dust.

Lin Chuxia: "..."

Even the most patient people have their limits, and I couldn't help but pick up the paddle to confront the other party.

I just saw the two people who had just run over arguing with another woman holding a child.

The woman who had run over, Lin Chuxia, looked familiar; she was Tang Lili from the Department Store.

When she first came to the Department Store to buy clothes, she was given a hard time by her.

Now she was grabbing the other woman's sleeve, her voice sharp as she interrogated, "Can't you understand what I'm saying? Yang Rui doesn't like you anymore, clinging to him is useless, I advise you to be smart about it. Dragging this out is bad for everyone."

The woman holding the child just coldly glanced at Tang Lili clutching her sleeve, her voice indifferent, "Who are you? What gives you the right to say my husband doesn't like me?"

"You don't need to worry about who I am, you just need to know that Yang Rui doesn't like you anymore. You should hurry up and get the divorce papers settled with Yang Rui. I see that although you've had a child, you're not that old, you could still find someone else. Even if you can't find someone like Yang Rui, finding a man to support you shouldn't be a problem."

The woman holding the child dodged Tang Lili's hand, "My affairs are none of your business," and turned to leave.

"Wang Tianxue," Tang Lili called out her name, "you really won't cry until you see the coffin. Are you pretending to be dumb or are you really clueless? Let me tell you the truth, Yang Rui and I have been together for a while now, he doesn't love you anymore, he loves me. What's the point of holding onto him like this?"

Wang Tianxue remained indifferent, responding lightly, "I have nothing to say to you, let Yang Rui talk to me."

"Yang Rui is just trying to save your face, don't you get it? He's not telling you directly because he's thinking of the child. Do you really have to make things so awkward? Can't you save a little face for yourself? Wang Tianxue, I really haven't seen a woman as shameless as you, everybody else doesn't like you, and you still shamelessly cling to him. Are you only after the skills Yang Rui has? For his salary, do you not have any shame? You are like a whor..."

"Shut up!"

Yang Rui, who had just arrived, cut Tang Lili off with a cold voice, then turned to look at Wang Tianxue.

"Tianxue, don't listen to her nonsense, none of it is true."

"Yang Rui, what are you talking about?" Tang Lili looked at Yang Rui incredulously, "Didn't you promise me that you would divorce her and marry me after she gave birth? Are you going back on your word?"

Yang Rui now wished he could just shut Tang Lili up.

He had been bewitched at the time. His wife was pregnant, and he felt emotionally and physically empty, which led to the affair with Tang Lili.

The promises he made were also because many had said that Wang Tianxue was expected to have a girl.

Now his career was flourishing, his power was growing, and his capital was increasing; naturally, he wanted a son to carry on the family business, since a daughter would eventually belong to another family.

He had struggled his whole life, not to dress someone else for their wedding but to bring honor and glory to the Yang Family.

With the family planning policy being so strict, having a second child would mean the end of his career. Desiring a son meant he had to divorce and remarry.

That's why he said such confused words to Tang Lili in a moment of folly.

But he hadn't expected that Wang Tianxue would surprise him with a son this time.

Now that his wife had delivered him a son, of course, he didn't want a divorce anymore.

He had been trying to cut ties with Tang Lili for some time. He hadn't expected this woman to come prepared, even calling Wang Tianxue to the Department Store in his name today.

Yang Rui looked coldly at Tang Lili, "What going back on my word? When did I ever say such a thing?"

"You're actually denying it?" Tang Lili was dissatisfied with Yang Rui's attitude, "Then do you dare to say you haven't touched me, haven't done what men and women do? Let me tell you, not only does everyone in All Department Store know about our relationship, but even the people around me. I know very well where you have marks on your body. If you dare deny our relationship, I'll accuse you of hooliganism. Yang Rui, don't even think about taking advantage of me and then kicking me aside."

"What are you rambling on about?" Yang Rui kept signaling to Tang Lili with his eyes while looking at Wang Tianxue, "Tianxue, don't listen to this crazy woman's nonsense, she's not quite right in the head, everyone in our Department Store knows that..."

Chapter 333: Wang Tianxue

"Yang Rui..."

Tang Lili glared at him viciously.

Wang Tianxue just looked indifferently at the two of them and gently patted the child in her arms.

Her voice was calm and cool, "The child is tired, I need to take him back to sleep."

"Tianxue!"

"Yang Rui..."

Yang Rui wanted to follow, but Tang Lili grabbed him.

Seeing Wang Tianxue walking away, Yang Rui angrily shook off Tang Lili's hand.

"Are you satisfied now? What good does it do you to make a mess of things?"

"What benefit do I get? I'm just making you fulfill your promise. You said, after she gives birth you'll divorce, now how long have you dragged this on? Yang Rui, I've said it; don't think you can cast me aside, I have nothing to lose, my reputation is already ruined, at worst, it'll be a fight to the death, I'll go to Manager Wang for an explanation, and if it really comes to it, I'll accuse you of harassment."

Seeing she was serious, Yang Rui softened his tone, "Lili, look at you, how many times have I told you, why can't you be patient? The child is still young and can't be without his mother. When he is a bit older, I will naturally divorce her."

"Don't try to fool me with those words. Initially, you said after she gives birth you will divorce her," Tang Lili no longer believed his lies.

Yang Rui was patient, "Wasn't it because we thought she would have a daughter? Who knew she would give birth to a son; he is the Wang Family's offspring..."

"Brother Wang, if you divorce her, I'll give birth to a son for you, okay?"

Tang Lili clearly understood Yang Rui was reluctant to let go of the child and perhaps because of the child, couldn't bear to part with the child's mother either.

Yang Rui was agitated, "Of course I want you to bear me a son too, but I can't neglect that son either. Just be good and give me some more time, I will definitely handle it..."

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Lin Chuxia watched from a distance as the despicable couple continued to scheme and compromise against each other, losing interest to watch further, she turned to follow the woman holding the child.

It was also when Tang Lili called out Wang Tianxue's name, that Lin Chuxia saw the face of the woman holding the child.

It was a face much younger than she remembered.

In her last life, Lin Chu had switched from the food business to the clothing business, relying entirely on that person.

At that time, she had been struggling in the business world for five or six years, almost hitting a ceiling.

She didn't want to continue growing the business, but the greedy mother and son of the Li Family always wanted to drain her of the last bit of use.

Moreover, due to an accident that left her injured and infertile for many years, all her previous businesses were in Li Guangyuan's hands.

That mother and son had even conceived the idea of kicking her out completely.

Lin Chuxia, although weak and taking the wrong path from the start in her past life, didn't want to make the same mistake again.

To seize back the power from Li Guangyuan's hands, she had to have sufficient leverage.

She began to seek new business channels. The Li Family mother and son saw her doing this and wavered, holding back, hoping to gain more benefits from her.

It was also at that time that she met Wang Tianxue.

Back then, Wang Tianxue had already been divorced, fighting desperately in the business world to earn money and win back custody of her child.

Capital is very important in the clothing business. Back then, Wang Tianxue had the connections but not the capital, so she could only get by with minor deals. On the other hand, Lin Chuxia had the capital but lacked the connections. Thus, the two struck a partnership with ease.

But she was also an unfortunate woman.

In the third year of their partnership, both the funds in their hands and the company's capital reached the criteria required to fight for custody. However, the other party used various excuses such as Wang Tianxue's unstable job to obstruct her, and the case eventually went to court.

During the court mediation period, in order not to let Wang Tianxue gain custody, the scumbag's mother planned to secretly take the child back to their hometown to hide him. Regrettably, she carelessly lost the child on the train.

When Wang Tianxue learned of this news, she nearly lost her mind. She instantly handed over all business affairs to Lin Chuxia and embarked on the search for her child.

But at that time, communication wasn't widely available, nor were there many surveillance devices. Searching for a child across the vast land was like looking for a needle in a haystack.

Wang Tianxue searched desperately for over 20 years. Ultimately, she did not find the child, and a year before Lin Chuxia's car accident, she passed away due to depression, departing even earlier than her.

"Wang Tianxue!"

Lin Chuxia softly called out, as she noticed the slight trembling of the woman's shoulders, almost able to imagine her restraint and perseverance.

Wang Tianxue stopped in her tracks, slowly turned around, and saw a stranger. She frowned slightly, "Who are you?"

Wary and distant.

From a distance, Lin Chuxia watched the woman holding the child, as strong and independent as she remembered, undiminished by her husband's infidelity.

If it weren't for her slightly red eyes, perhaps at this moment no one would know how much she loved her husband and her family.

But her pride would not forgive betrayal. "One act of unfaithfulness, an end for a lifetime," was a phrase she often mentioned to her later on.

This applied to her family as well as to her work.

But at this moment, she might not have realized that what she was giving up was not just the relationship and the family. The child in her arms would also be taken from her.

Lin Chuxia's gaze fell on the child in her arms again.

The little boy had a bald head, which made him look even chubbier, with a pair of black, curious eyes observing the world.

Perhaps he was hungry, as he revealed a small arm like a section of lotus root and gnawed on his fingers with drool.

Whether it was the clothes or the child, everything was neat and clean. Just looking at them, one could almost smell the fragrance of milk. It was evident how well the child's mother took care of him.

In her last life, even without their business cooperation, she had always stayed in touch with Wang Tianxue, hoping she would reunite with her son soon, and even joked about becoming the child's godmother if he was found.

In this life, she would not let them be separated again.

Seeing Lin Chuxia silent, just looking at the child, Wang Tianxue became more vigilant, "What are you trying to do?"

Lin Chuxia came back to her senses and showed a soothing smile, "Don't misunderstand, I just got really angry when I saw that woman and the scumbag treating you like that. If you need help, I can help you."

Lin Chuxia knew that speaking up so impulsively like this might seem strange.

But she couldn't care less. If she guessed correctly, even if that scoundrel couple did not push every step of the way, given Wang Tianxue's temperament, the marriage would end soon.

Wang Tianxue did not have a stable job and a steady source of income. Once divorced, just like in her previous life, she would lose custody of the child.

Once the man got custody of the child, it would be even harder to fight back.

As expected, Wang Tianxue's attitude towards her showed no change, she asked warily, "Why would you want to help me?"

Lin Chuxia became indignant, "I was betrayed by a scumbag too, so when I heard your argument with that woman just now, I felt sympathy for you and really wanted to help you."

As she spoke, she silently apologized twice in her heart. In this life, she had only met Qin Yang, and Qin Yang was not the least bit of a scumbag.

Chapter 334: Knowing When to Stop

Wang Tianxue indifferently withdrew her gaze, turned around forlornly, "I'm sorry, I don't need your sympathy."

Lin Chuxia anticipated this outcome and wasn't disheartened. She called out to Wang Tianxue's retreating figure, "I really don't mean any harm, Wang Tianxue. If you need any help, you can find me at Qin's Buns Shop on Construction Road."

Wang Tianxue paused her steps momentarily but didn't turn back and continued walking forward.

Lin Chuxia watched her until she disappeared into the distance, knowing that she might not trust her now. But when the time comes for the custody of the child, and if she truly has nowhere else to turn, Wang Tianxue would seek her out.

Upon returning to the bicycle parking spot, the shameless couple was nowhere to be seen.

Lin Chuxia exchanged her ticket to retrieve her bicycle and didn't rush home, instead heading straight for the market.

The market in the city boasted a variety that surpassed their county's, even selling seafood.

Lin Chuxia bought a fish, some vegetables, and meat before finally returning home.

Qin Yang had arrived home early and had somehow procured a long bamboo pole, now digging a hole in the yard.

Li Wei was with him.

Seeing Lin Chuxia return, before Qin Yang could say anything, Li Wei joked, "Sister-in-law, you're back. In the short while you were gone, Mr. Qin nearly turned into a 'wife-watching rock,' unable to focus on his work, glancing at the gate eight times per minute."

Qin Yang didn't deny it and looked at her intently.

Lin Chuxia, holding up the vegetables and fish, said, "I went to the market and stayed a bit longer. Sorry for making you worry. I should have told you beforehand."

Qin Yang then slightly lifted the corners of his mouth, "Okay."

Li Wei hissed and took a step back, looking at Qin Yang as if he were a monster, "Mr. Qin, are we still doing this work? Or should I step aside?"

He had never seen Qin Yang like this before. Even though nothing was said, the atmosphere between the two felt a bit cheesy.

Qin Yang glared at Li Wei irritably and then continued to dig the hole.

Li Wei chuckled and knew when to stop pressing the joke.

Lin Chuxia knew they were installing a TV antenna and called out to Li Wei, "Call over Sister-in-law Jiang Hong later, we'll have dinner at my place tonight; I've bought a fish."

There was no way Li Wei would be formal with Qin Yang and the others, he loudly agreed, "Sure thing, believe it or not, just yesterday she was yearning for fish."

"Then we'll make a fish soup. You guys get busy; I'm going to cook."

Lin Chuxia propped her bicycle up and entered the kitchen carrying the groceries.

All the necessary kitchenware had already been obtained, and using the gas stove was more convenient than the coal stove or wood stove at home.

The main dish would be rice.

Lin Chuxia first set the rice to steam, then started preparing the meat.

She had bought a good amount of meat, suitable for red braising.

As she was washing the meat, a pair of large hands took over, "The water's cold; let me do it."

"That was quick, huh?"

Lin Chuxia looked outside and saw Li Wei spinning around the telephone pole, stretching his neck and peering through the glass into the house.

After some time, probably struggling, he stretched his neck out even further and yelled, "Mr. Qin! Mr. Qin! Come take a look, why can I only see snowflakes on the screen..."

Qin Yang ignored him, finished washing the meat, and placed it on the chopping board, "How big should I cut it?"

Lin Chuxia, suppressing her laughter, "Aren't you going to check on him? It must be hard for him to adjust it alone, right?"

Catching Qin Yang's gaze, she gestured with her hands, "This size, for the red-braised pork."

"Okay," Qin Yang responded, "Engineer Hu from next door found us the telephone pole. I offered to pay him, but he wouldn't take it."

Such a big bamboo pole is not something you can find anywhere on the street. When Sister-in-law Fu moved in yesterday, she took the initiative to strike up a conversation, and it was clear that both Engineer Hu and Sister-in-law Fu were keen to form a good relationship with them.

"I bought a good amount of meat, I'll send them some braised pork when it's ready so they can have a taste too."

Qin Yang had just been reassigned here, regardless of the motives behind the others' friendliness, the current situation should be developing in a good direction.

Qin Yang nodded, with no objections.

Li Wei's voice came from outside again, "Hey, Mr. Qin, you gotta admit, this color TV really does look different."

Upon seeing that the television was set up, Lin Chuxia told him to hurry and call Jiang Hong over to avoid them starting to make dinner too.

"Alright, I'll go right away."

Li Wei left with a grin on his face.

Qin Yang had finished chopping the meat, but he was no good at cooking; he could only watch Lin Chuxia prepare the food.

"I remember back in the Northwest, you had the best relationship with Sister-in-law Song."

Lin Chuxia replied as she busied herself, "Whether I get along well with someone depends on you, doesn't it? But Sister-in-law Song has a broad-minded temperament and is enthusiastic, she is indeed easy to get along with. By the way, wasn't Mr. Bai reassigned too?"

She had been here for two days but hadn't yet inquired about Qin Yang's work.

"He was, to his hometown. That project there ended, and quite a few people were reassigned; some stayed with the original unit but went down South."

Lin Chuxia suddenly remembered that in her previous life, Qin Yang seemed to have spent many years in the South.

Back then, Lin Jiayi was at home taking care of their child, and Qin Yang's visits were even less frequent. She had often run back to her parents' home to complain.

But in this life, he hadn't gone along with the reassignment to the South. Instead, he had returned to the city...

Lin Chuxia slightly curled her lips, knowing he did it for her.

Qin Yang, seeing Lin Chuxia's sudden good mood, was somewhat puzzled, "You're happy that Mr. Bai and others weren't reassigned with me?"

Lin Chuxia: "..."

She gave him a look, "What nonsense are you talking about? I just remembered some other things. By the way, aside from you and Li Wei, did anyone else from your group get transferred here?"

"No, just us. Li Wei was reassigned because his wife is pregnant, and she might not have been able to handle the climate down South."

It's true, having two people reassigned to the same place was already fortunate.

Lin Chuxia put the meat into the pot to stew and went to pick some vegetables, while Qin Yang had already finished preparing the fish.

There was movement outside, Li Wei and Jiang Hong entered the yard one after the other, Li Wei even carrying a bottle of liquor.

Jiang Hong headed straight to the kitchen, greeted Lin Chuxia with a smile, "Just stepping into the yard and I can already smell the aroma, I'm in for a treat today."

Seeing Qin Yang helping Lin Chuxia chop vegetables in the kitchen, she was a bit surprised.

The kitchen was too small and with so many people, it was hard to move around, and it wasn't nice to leave guests in the room by themselves, so Lin Chuxia sent Qin Yang out.

After everyone left, Jiang Hong spoke in a low voice, "Mr. Qin can cook?"

Not just Jiang Hong, even Lin Chuxia only found out these past two days. Nowadays, a man who can cook is indeed a rare species, and Lin Chuxia was quite proud of it.

"He can cook a little."

"You're so lucky, right? Li Wei can't cook at all. His noodles are either too salty or too bland, and last time he even managed to make a mushy mess – such a dummy."

"None of these men are dummies, it's just that everyone has their strengths. I really do admire them."

Jiang Hong was just making a comment, her eyes and heart wouldn't really fault her own man.

Married to a working man from the countryside, many village sisters envied her.

She chuckled to herself and said, "You're right about that."

Chapter 335: Mind Your Own Business

Cooking for two people made the process much faster; the meat was stewed, fish soup was made, and finally two green vegetables were stir-fried.

Lin Chuxia asked Qin Yang to set the table, while she took a bowl of braised pork to the neighbors.

After knocking on the door, it was quickly opened by a girl in her teens, not very tall and bearing a resemblance to Sister-in-law Fu.

"Who are you looking for?"

Before Lin Chuxia could reply, Sister-in-law Fu came out from inside the house.

"Yaping, this is Qin's family who just moved in next door. You can call her auntie or aunty," after she finished speaking, Sister-in-law Fu invited Lin Chuxia to sit inside.

"I won't sit down," Lin Chuxia replied politely, handing the meat to Sister-in-law Fu, "Thanks for looking after us these days since we've just moved in. We just started cooking today, and I stewed some meat. My cooking isn't great, so please don't mind it."

"Oh wow, look at this meat! If you hadn't said you made it yourself, I would have thought you bought it from the State-Owned Restaurant. It smells delicious."

Sister-in-law Fu smiled and took the bowl, "Come sit inside for a bit; I'll get you a bowl."

"I should get back home; we're waiting to have dinner. I'll come over for a chat when I have time."

With just a wall separating them, Sister-in-law Fu already knew the situation next door and didn't insist on keeping Lin Chuxia any longer, quickly clearing a bowl and repeatedly reminding her to come over and sit awhile when she had time.

Upon returning home, the dinner was already laid out.

Qin Yang and Li Wei were drinking, while Lin Chuxia and Jiang Hong went straight to eating.

After the two finished eating, Jiang Hong, not minding the men who were drinking, pulled Lin Chuxia to have a look around their new home.

The furniture and appliances were in place, but there were still many parts of the house that hadn't been tidied.

It just so happened that Qin Yang had time off, so they took care of the large items first and planned to slowly sort out the smaller ones.

Since Jiang Hong was there, Lin Chuxia consulted her, "You arrived here earlier than me. Do you know where to find a tailor? I want to make two sets of bed sheets and duvet covers, and also some new curtains."

Their curtains were leftovers from the previous occupants, light blue with blue bamboo designs (as shown in the picture).

Not only were the patterns outdated, but they also didn't block out the light.

Last night, when Qin Yang playfully pulled her to the window, she was almost scared out of her wits, always feeling a lack of security.

Upon hearing this, Jiang Hong let out a sigh.

"If you don't mind, I can make them for you. I have nothing much to do at home anyway, and I have a sewing machine."

"That's great," Lin Chuxia obviously didn't mind, "Are you free tomorrow? I'll go buy some fabric."

"Yes, I'm so bored staying at home all day; it'd be great to go out for a walk with you."

Meanwhile, in the neighboring Hu Family's home.

The family gathered around the dinner table.

Hu Xingwei, Hu Qing'an's youngest son, saw the braised pork on the table and immediately started to wail with excitement.

"Mom, why do we have meat today? Is this from the State-Owned Restaurant? What's the occasion today?"

Hu Qing'an also turned his attention to his wife.

Fu Changying placed the steamed buns on the table and said to Hu Qing'an, "The Qin's family next door just sent these over. I heard quite a commotion in their yard; it seems like that new colleague from your unit, Li Wei, is helping Mr. Qin adjust the TV and they even invited him to stay for dinner."

Hu Qing'an nodded, picked up his chopsticks and began to eat, "Li Wei and Qin Yang were transferred from the same unit. They were part of the same group in their old unit, so they naturally have a closer relationship."

Fu Changying sounded a bit worried, "They're both in your department, right? Mr. Qin's position is about on par with yours, and now both of them have been transferred to your department..."

Before his wife could finish, Hu Qing'an interrupted her discontentedly, "Why bring this up? No matter where we are, we work to earn a living, and according to your logic since I've been at the unit for over a decade and I know many people, shouldn't I have an even greater advantage? Work is based on merit, not on forming cliques and counting heads."

Fu Changying smiled faintly, "I didn't mean it that way. I just feel that the leadership values Mr. Qin a lot. It's good for colleagues in the same department to interact with each other. You could even give him a pole for a TV antenna, to help adjust the TV, isn't that just lending a hand?"

Hu Qing'an glanced at her indifferently, "Giving him a pole, that's because we had one and he needed it; it was just a small favor. But giving him something and then also helping him adjust the TV, that's going a bit too far."

He glanced at the braised pork in front of him, insinuating something, "Things are fine as they are now, reciprocation is good enough. Don't make things more complicated than they are. You've lived in this compound with me for so many years, you should know better by now."

"I'm just worried because they say the new Mr. Qin is young and accomplished, and the leaders care about him a lot. You're at a certain age already, and he's already at the same level as you upon arrival—that's what worries me."

"There's nothing to worry about. Just do your own job well. If you and Qin's family maintain a good neighborhood relationship, that's perfect."

Fu Changying nodded and brought the topic back to Qin Yang's family, her enthusiasm renewed.

"I don't know what their background is, but I heard they're from the county below. They don't look it, though. That dress she was wearing, I've seen it at the Department Store. It wasn't cheap. I wouldn't dare spend that much. And today, they've been busy all day—from furniture in the morning to appliances in the afternoon—everything brought home by the truckload. How much money must that be?"

"Mom, when I came home from school this afternoon, I saw the big new TV next door. It's a color TV, a Japanese Toshiba, an imported TV," Hu Xingwei said with excitement.

Hu Yaping gave him a disparaging look, "What's so good about an imported TV? If you ask me, I wouldn't take Japanese stuff even if it was free."

Hu Qing'an didn't want his family discussing others and cut off the conversation, "Eat your meal properly and don't worry about other people's business."

Hu Xingwei picked up the last piece of meat from his bowl and negotiated with his mother, "Can I go watch TV at Mr. Qin's after I finish my homework?"

"Don't we have a TV at home? Why go to someone else's place to watch?"

"Our TV is black and white, I want to see a color one. You see, Sun Wukong looks so good in color in the foreign movies. I want to see what a color 'Journey to the West' looks like."

Fu Changying glanced at her husband, but seeing no reaction from him, she then said to her son, "They've just moved in, we're not familiar with them. It's not appropriate for you to go watch TV at their house."

...

Qin Yang had taken a day off just because of Lin Chuxia's arrival and had to go back to work the next day.

Early in the morning, before 7 o'clock, Lin Chuxia woke up to find the bed next to her empty and heard some noise from the courtyard.

She pulled back the curtains and saw a man doing push-ups in the yard. Lin Chuxia raised an eyebrow.

No wonder he could maintain a good physique despite sitting in the office all day.

Suddenly feeling inspired, she changed into her sports gear and tied her hair up into a bun while heading to the yard.

Seeing her like this, Qin Yang smiled slightly, "Together?"

"Sure."

She began with some warm-ups, stretching her limbs.

Just as Qin Yang thought she was only stretching her limbs for some light exercise, he saw the little lady grab his mat, place her hands on it, and start doing push-ups.

Qin Yang: "..."

His invitation to join him was just to exercise together, not necessarily to do that.

Chapter 336: A Rich Spiritual World

As far as he knew, there were very few women who could do push-ups.

It was not until Lin Chuxia finished a set with standard movements that Qin Yang spoke up in surprise.

"How come you're doing this too? I thought you girls didn't like it."

"I'm okay with it. I think it saves time and is convenient."

As Lin Chuxia stood up and stretched her limbs, she rolled her eyes discreetly.

Disliked it?

Such a great full-body exercise that's time-efficient and simple, directly working out all muscles, who wouldn't like it?

But liking it is one thing, whether one can do it or not is another.

Qin Yang nodded in agreement, "Indeed very convenient. When I was in the Northwest, I would occasionally go running. But ever since we came here, I've always felt that running..."

He laughed a bit without continuing.

Lin Chuxia understood.

The residential compound housed a mixed crowd, and running out like that would certainly make one stick out like a sore thumb.

"I heard your unit has a sports field, where you can play basketball and table tennis, and also badminton, right?"

Qin Yang's eyes lit up, "Do you play? If not, I can teach you."

"I'm okay with badminton, not so good at table tennis," Lin Chuxia pointed with her chin towards the mat, "It's your turn. How many sets are you doing?"

"30 in a set, planning to do 5 sets. I can do a few extra with you if you'd like."

As he spoke, he began to exercise. His form was straight and steady, going up and down; 30 reps were just a bit over a minute's work.

Lin Chuxia marveled, his physical fitness was indeed great.

Although she could do it, 15 reps were already her limit. But today's exercises felt somewhat effortless. Could this be the so-called synergy of men and women working together without getting tired?

After they finished exercising, the two of them went to wash up.

Qin Yang had made some millet porridge in the morning and boiled some eggs, which were now ready. Along with fluffy, hot steamed buns and pickles, it was a delicious and nutritious meal.

"What are your plans for today?"

Qin Yang placed the peeled egg in her bowl.

"Going to buy fabric with Jiang Hong."

Upon hearing this, Qin Yang glanced at the curtains and chuckled softly.

The little wife had complained about the curtains several times since moving in two days ago. But changing them would be good, they should be able to be a bit more unrestrained.

If Lin Chuxia knew what Qin Yang was thinking, she would definitely regret this decision.

The two of them didn't go to the Department Store; instead, they were taken by Jiang Hong to a fabric store.

"Although this place doesn't have as many patterns as the Department Store, the styles here are quite trendy, and most importantly, it's cheaper. Take a look and see if there's anything you like. If not, we can still go to the Department Store."

Lin Chuxia also found the fabrics in the store quite attractive, mostly pure cotton, with many dacrons as well. But there were no actual curtain fabrics; all were cut in bolts and then pieced together by oneself.

Pure cotton wasn't easy to wash, and light-colored dacron was like their old curtains, not blackout. In the end, Lin Chuxia chose a piece of fabric with a water-blue base and white water ripple pattern.

She had taken measurements that morning and reported her figures. Not just Jiang Hong, but even the fabric seller was momentarily stunned.

Although the market had opened up and fabrics were readily available, it was still unusual to buy so much dacron at once.

"You're not going to make curtains with this fabric, are you?" Jiang Hong swallowed her saliva.

Lin Chuxia nodded, "Yes, isn't it pretty?"

"Pretty, really pretty."

She thought Lin Chuxia would use the fabric to make a shirt.

The seller became even more enthusiastic toward Lin Chuxia.

After having the fabric cut, Lin Chuxia spotted another piece of pink and white checkered cotton fabric, which would make a pretty bedding set. It would feel comfortable to use such warm colors when the weather got colder.

However, considering Qin Yang's cool personality, she chose a blue-gray cotton fabric for another bedding set.

Jiang Hong also took a liking to a piece of floral fabric, intending to make a small quilt for the baby in her womb.

The fabric seller knew that Lin Chuxia was buying so much fabric to make sheets and duvet covers, and she offered to make them right there.

Lin Chuxia had previously agreed with Jiang Hong, initially planning to pay Jiang Hong a processing fee. However, the fabric seller said that since Lin Chuxia was buying a lot and the curtains, sheets, and duvet covers were simple, she could do it for free to encourage future patronage. She was a businesswoman who knew how to run her business.

With free labor available, naturally, it was an opportunity not be wasted.

Lin Chuxia asked to have the curtains made first, preferably within these two days since she needed them urgently.

The fabric seller smiled and said, "That's easy, come and pick them up this afternoon, I'll get the curtains done first."

"Okay, I'll come and pick them up this afternoon."

It was almost noon with this hustle, and Qin Yang had said he would come home for lunch.

Those with families rarely ate at the company canteen; at most, if they were too lazy to cook, they would take food back home to eat.

Jiang Hong had prepared the dough in the morning and needed to go back to steam buns, so Lin Chuxia didn't delay any further, and they hurried to the market.

While passing an alley entrance, Lin Chuxia caught a glimpse of a figure and subconsciously stopped.

Jiang Hong looked back, "Chuxia, hurry up, there won't be good vegetables left if we're late."

"Oh, I'm coming."

Lin Chuxia looked away and caught up with Jiang Hong.

The market only had morning and evening sessions, and indeed, not much was left at this time. However, it was cheaper, and Jiang Hong was very happy with her purchases.

Lin Chuxia bought only cucumbers and mung bean sprouts. She had soybean paste at home and also bought a piece of pork belly, planning to make Zhajiangmian (noodles with soybean paste).

Jiang Hong looked at her enviously, "Mr. Qin is really fortunate to have married you."

Lin Chuxia was skilled at cooking, and any dish she made tasted unique.

"Brother Li is lucky too, your cooking isn't bad either," Lin Chuxia sincerely complimented.

The buns that Jiang Hong had brought over a few days ago were delicious.

It was a culinary skill she had developed over a past lifetime of study, and Jiang Hong's abilities were already very good.

"Huh, stop flattering me."

Despite saying that, Jiang Hong was secretly pleased.

Even if she couldn't match Lin Chuxia's skill, her own husband, Li Wei, didn't disparage her.

Several times she felt her cooking was not as good as Lin Chuxia's and felt bad about it, Li Wei consoled her and said he liked her cooking just the way it was.

The two women parted ways at the residential compound, with Lin Chuxia remembering where Jiang Hong's place was and agreeing to visit sometime. Then she continued home alone.

It was time for school to let out and for work shifts to end—a lot of people were on the road. But Lin Chuxia, being new, didn't know anyone and there was no need to force integration. She simply nodded and smiled at familiar faces as she passed.

Right at her doorstep, a young boy on a bike came over, grinning and greeting her, "Are you Mr. Qin's family?"

The boy was about thirteen or fourteen, with lively and expressive features.

"Yes, I am," Lin Chuxia always had an extra bit of kindness and tolerance for children.

The young boy's smile broadened as he pointed next door, "Auntie, hello, I'm Hu Qing'an's son, Hu Xingwei; I live next door."

"Oh, hello Xingwei."

After the greeting, Hu Xingwei contentedly pushed his bike into his compound.

Lin Chuxia chuckled, feeling that the neighbors were not bad so far.

Observing the children often gave insight into the parents' character. Those who raised warm and sensible children were likely to possess good values themselves.

Lin Chuxia entered her compound and could still hear the loud voice of Hu Xingwei speaking with Sister-in-law Fu next door, along with Sister-in-law Fu's laughing scolding.

No doubt, children these days were quite fortunate; even without prosperous living conditions, their spiritual world was rich.

Zhuangzhuang, being a child of his age, spent his days chasing chickens and dogs, or playing war games with his friends in trees.

As kids grow up, they have even more pastimes. Even at Hu Xingwei's age, they didn't have to stress about competing academically every day, causing the whole family to be in an upheaval.

Of course, getting into university was great, but if not, there was the job succession system. Even if someone had poor academic scores and couldn't succeed the work of engineers like Engineer Hu, they could still find a similar position within the company.

After all, children born in this era could see the end right from the beginning.

Unlike later on, even if they studied fiercely, competing as if fueled by chicken blood, using up all the family's energy and financial resources, they still wouldn't know what kind of future lay ahead.

Chapter 337: Respect from a Distance

After getting home, Qin Yang hadn't returned yet, so Lin Chuxia went straight into the kitchen to prepare lunch.

The noodles had to be hand-pulled, they say soft dough for dumplings and tough dough for the soup, but Lin Chuxia particularly liked eating noodles made with soft dough.

But this required cooking skills.

After kneading the dough, she began preparing the fried sauce.

Pork belly cut into small dices, soybean paste and cooking wine mixed to the right thickness, and spring onions chopped into fine pieces.

Just as everything was ready, Qin Yang returned from outside.

Probably hearing the noise in the kitchen, he first took a peek inside.

Lin Chuxia was heating oil, and without turning her head, she said, "We're having fried sauce noodles for lunch."

A warm presence pressed up against her back, a ticklish kiss landed on her cheek, and it seemed like there was a man's murmur by her ear, "Wife, you've worked hard."

Lin Chuxia couldn't help but turn her head, only to see the man sticking close behind her, one hand wrapped around her waist, and the other still holding a file bag, his attractive peach-blossom eyes full of tenderness.

Lin Chuxia: "..."

She really hadn't expected to be struck by such stunning beauty every day.

The fragrant diced meat sauce, the thinly shredded cucumber, the blanched soybean sprouts, paired with the chewy noodles, truly never got tired of eating it.

After lunch, Qin Yang rested for a bit before heading to the office, and Lin Chuxia started tidying up the study.

The thing Qin Yang brought back from the Northwest were his books, the most numerous of all.

Several large boxes, not yet placed on the bookshelf.

While she was busy, there was a noise from outside. Lin Chuxia thought it was Jiang Hong coming over to visit again, but when she went out, she saw Sister-in-law Feng and her daughter Feng Jingjing.

She knew that a few of Qin Yang's colleagues from the Northwest had been transferred over, but she hadn't expected other acquaintances besides Li Wei and his spouse.

However, Lin Chuxia really wanted to keep Sister-in-law Feng at arm's length.

Sister-in-law Feng didn't feel the same way, greeting Lin Chuxia with her usual warmth.

"I heard yesterday that Mr. Qin's family had arrived, and true enough, who would've thought we would have such a fate. It's such good luck for our Da Jun to be transferred with Mr. Qin, even us mother and daughter get to bask in the reflected glory."

Here we go again.

Lin Chuxia couldn't be bothered to respond to her talk, and cut straight to the point, "Sister-in-law, is there something you need?"

"Not really, just heard you've arrived, brought the kid to have a look. Tsk-tsk, it's been several months since we last met in the Northwest, now tell me, how can you always look so fresh? Nothing like us who toil in the soil, born to endure hardship, even with good days, can't achieve the fair skin of city folks."

Hehe, she had no way to respond to this.

Sister-in-law Feng dragged Feng Jingjing around, taking in the sights, "Why didn't Mr. Qin get you a flat to live in? Doesn't he know the unit still has flats? If you ask me, living in a flat is more prestigious, standing on it you can see far into the distance."

Sister-in-law Feng didn't wait for Lin Chuxia to reply and, pointing to the residential building in the distance, continued, "Our Da Jun is really lucky this time to move into an apartment right after he arrived. We all live over there now, on the third floor, unit five. Mrs. Qin, come over for a visit when you have time. I say, you should let Mr. Qin talk to his superiors about getting you a different apartment. With all that new furniture and the color TV your family has, you deserve to live in an apartment."

Lin Chuxia: "..."

She knew that her actions yesterday were not low-key, but they hadn't spread throughout the entire complex, had they?

"Sister-in-law, you see, I just moved in and there's still so much to tidy up. I can't host you now, but we can chat another time."

Lin Chuxia didn't want to listen to her, and knowing Sister-in-law Feng, who would feign ignorance if you beat around the bush, she gave her a direct dismissal.

Sister-in-law Feng was stunned for a moment and chuckled, "Look at me, I came at such a bad time. Do you need any help? Don't be shy with me. After all, our Da Jun and your Mr. Qin are from the same place, we're practically old friends. Out here, we have to look out for one another, right?"

"It's all manageable chores; I'll take care of it myself."

With that, Sister-in-law Feng knew she couldn't say much more. She told Lin Chuxia to make sure to visit her place when she could and then walked out with Feng Jingjing.

As soon as they stepped out the door, Sister-in-law Feng's face soured, and she pinched her daughter.

"Useless thing, do you see? Wherever we go, people like us are looked down upon."

"Why did I give birth to such a useless thing like you? You don't have a trace of sense. Didn't you say you wanted to watch TV? The Qin family has a color TV. Why did you become mute the moment you got there? If you said you wanted to watch their color TV, would she have refused to let you inside?"

Feng Jingjing, holding her arm, spoke in aggrieved tones, "Mom, it was you who said you'd take me to watch TV."

"You keep saying that," Sister-in-law Feng pinched her again, "Why would I bother if it weren't to give you a glimpse of the world? Do you really think you're better than others just because you moved into an apartment, expecting to be invited in to watch it? Didn't you notice? She still looks down on you. If you don't lower your tail and be humble, sooner or later you'll face the consequences."

Feng Jingjing hugged her arm, tears swirling in her eyes, but she dared not let them fall.

Seeing no one around, Sister-in-law Feng suddenly sighed, "How great it would have been if you were a son. If you were a son, your father would have been able to hold his head high. With his great job and capabilities, if he had a son, someone would carry on his legacy. How did it turn out that I birthed someone as useless as you..."

"Is this Da Jun's wife?"

Suddenly a voice startled Sister-in-law Feng. Seeing Sis Jiang in the distance, Sister-in-law Feng immediately donned a smile.

"Yes, it's me. Are you heading out, sister?"

"I'm off to buy some groceries. Where are you and your daughter off to for a stroll?"

"We're just walking around. We've just moved here, and I wanted the child to get to know the place."

"That's a good idea. Your daughter's not that young anymore, right? Why haven't you sorted her school transfer yet? Other things can wait, but you really should hurry up with your child's education. It's something you can't delay."

"Tch, sister, you make it sound so easy. She's just a girl, what's there to delay? The fact that she can live here with everyone is a blessing earned over eight lifetimes. She's not even worthy of sitting in a classroom with others, no need for such fantasies."

Sis Jiang frowned slightly but still kindly advised, "Da Jun's wife, that's not the right attitude. Valuing boys over girls is an old way of thinking. The country now promotes family planning, treating boys and girls equally. Haven't you seen the slogans? Both boys and girls are treasures."

"Yes, yes, yes," Sister-in-law Feng agreed with a smile, until Sis Jiang walked away. Then, her smile faded.

Looking down at Feng Jingjing beside her, her disdain unmasked, "What treasure for both boys and girls—easy for her to say without feeling the pinch. Can a financial loss like you compare to a son? Pah..."

She looked up once more at the residential building, "If you were a son, with your father's capabilities, you and I wouldn't need to grovel or face others' disparagement. It's all because of you, this curse, that your father and I can't hold our heads high. I'm warning you, when we get back, behave yourself. Tell your father what he needs to know, and keep quiet about what he doesn't need to know. Or else, I'll tear your mouth apart and send you back to our hometown."

Feng Jingjing flinched and said with her head down, "Mom, I'll obey. I won't tell Dad anything. Please don't send me back to the hometown."

Chapter 338: She Loves Him

Chuxia finished tidying up the bookshelf and saw that it was about time, so she went to the drapery store to pick up the curtains.

The seamstress's skill was indeed impressive; not only had she finished the edges of the curtains, but she had also used the leftover fabric to make two layers of ruffles.

The extra touch of the watery blue curtain fabric added a bit of warmth and playfulness.

"They look so nice. Oh, by the way, can you make clothes here? I'll provide the design, and you can help me make it according to that."

The seamstress nodded with a smile, "Sure, as long as you can provide the design, I can make it. If you can't provide a design, just show me any piece of clothing from the market and I can make you something very similar."

That's fantastic.

"Then I'll draw up a design when I get home and bring it to you in a couple of days when I come for the duvet cover. Could you make a couple of outfits for me?"

Although the fashion from the south had already started to make its way to the northern markets, after the aesthetic sensibilities of the future, Chuxia still wasn't quite satisfied with the current fashion.

If she could have clothes made to her own preferences, that would be wonderful.

As for designing, she had some experience from her last life in the clothing business. She couldn't compare to professional designers, but drawing a couple of pieces for herself wasn't a problem.

Chuxia picked up the curtains and just as she arrived at the entrance of the residential area, she saw Qin Yang getting off work and heading home.

He guessed what she was carrying by the look of it, and with a slightly deeper look in his eyes, he said, "They were made so quickly?"

"Yes, the seamstress helped me with them. They turned out quite nice. You'll see when we get home."

Qin Yang nodded, "I'll help you put them up."

When they got to their front door, they ran into Sister-in-law Fu, who was returning from the market.

Seeing the two of them, Sister-in-law Fu greeted them enthusiastically, "Are you two out and about together?"

"No, we just bumped into each other at the entrance. Sister-in-law Fu, are you just getting back?"

"I bought some groceries," Sister-in-law Fu lifted her basket slightly, feeling a bit embarrassed. "Lin, how do you make your braised pork? It really tastes amazing. My son tried your braised pork yesterday and has been nagging me to make it for him. I just can't make it taste like yours. When you have time, could you teach me?"

"Sure, Sister-in-law. It's actually quite simple. I'll write down the seasonings and steps for you later, and if you follow them, it should turn out about the same."

"That would be fantastic, I thank you in advance."

Sister-in-law Fu waved her hands, a little embarrassed, "Hurry back. I shouldn't keep you. Let's catch up when we have time."

"Okay, we'll head back first."

Qin Yang had already opened the front door of their home and was waiting for her to enter.

No wonder Sister-in-law Fu felt a bit embarrassed.

With his face that always looked like a block of ice, others might think he was displeased.

But upon closer inspection, one could see that the man's eyes were filled with tenderness when he looked at Lin Chuxia.

Back in the Northwest, he had imagined this scene countless times.

He knew his wife was popular and well-liked and had always hoped she could be by his side, watching her manage their life together and interact with people related to him. That way, he felt his wife truly became a part of his life.

It was still not dark yet, so the two of them weren't in a hurry to cook. They planned to take advantage of the daylight to change the curtains.

Qin Yang stood on a stool while Lin Chuxia assisted him.

"Sister-in-law Fu's family is quite warm and friendly. I even ran into her son at noon today. He looks to be twelve or thirteen, a very cheerful young lad. I haven't seen Engineer Hu yet, though."

This is the residential compound of Qin Yang's unit, so naturally, her interactions revolve mainly around Qin Yang.

On her first day here, Qin Yang introduced her to Sister-in-law Fu, letting her know this family was worth connecting with.

Qin Yang also briefly described his working relationship with Engineer Hu to her, saying it was a simple colleague relationship without any conflicts of interest.

"By the way, has Feng Dajun from your previous unit also been transferred here? Today, Sister-in-law Feng came over."

Qin Yang frowned slightly; he knew that Lin Chuxia didn't really like Sister-in-law Feng.

"We weren't on the same project before, and we're not together after the transfer. What does she want with you?"

Lin Chuxia could tell Qin Yang's attitude and didn't hide her disdain, "Nothing much, just to say hello. It's just her personality; I really don't understand why she always belittles herself, making others feel awkward."

Qin Yang thought for a moment and added a few more words.

"Feng Dajun is five years older than me, has worked in this field for over a decade, has decent abilities, and sufficient experience. The transfer is well-deserved for him. As for his wife, I have heard a bit from Sister-in-law Song before. Feng Dajun was recommended as a worker-peasant-soldier college student, and perhaps because of this, Sister-in-law Feng always feels he's inferior to others, even beneath them. Plus, Sister-in-law Feng seems to care a lot about her rural background, which probably leads to her feeling inferior."

Lin Chuxia curled her lips; that wasn't inferiority, she practically didn't consider herself a person at all.

"Speaking of rural backgrounds, how many in this entire compound are not from rural areas? Even if they're not now, just look up the family tree two generations. Why dwell on it? It's beyond my comprehension."

Lin Chuxia knew about the work relationship between Feng Dajun and her husband, which gave her a clue on how to deal with her relationship with Sister-in-law Feng in the future.

She then remembered something about Qin Jianjun. Before she could speak, her vision darkened as the man jumped down from the chair.

"You...mhmm..."

Her remaining words were blocked, and all there was the man's low murmur, "Trying out the new curtains to see if they're secure."

Lin Chuxia: "..."

She was puzzled, wondering why, when she mentioned changing the curtains, this man had such an ambiguous smile.

As God is her witness, that wasn't her intent at all.

Of course, it was also because she was worried that the old curtains didn't offer good enough coverage and security.

But she hadn't thought it would make him even bolder.

Despite her internal contempt, looking into his passionate and infatuated eyes, her body honestly accepted him.

The appetites for food and sex are human nature.

Lin Chuxia had long seen through her own heart; in her previous life, she only knew about making money and never thought about love or affection. She was also clear that her feelings for Li Guangyuan were not love.

In this life, having met Qin Yang, under his meticulous care time and again, Lin Chuxia slowly realized that she did love him.

And Qin Yang was far from the cold-hearted man she had heard of in her previous life. He was not only warm but very passionate, so much so that it was overwhelming...

Dinner was made by Qin Yang, and it took Lin Chuxia a good while to recover in bed before getting up, secretly scolding the man for becoming more and more presumptuous.

Seeing her up, Qin Yang smiled, "Do you need me to wake you up to exercise together tomorrow morning?"

Lin Chuxia glared at him irritably; don't think she didn't know he was criticizing her lack of stamina.

Even the best stamina wouldn't stand a chance against his wild ways.

Not wanting to discuss this shameless topic, Lin Chuxia picked up the conversation she hadn't had the chance to finish earlier.

"Jianjun mentioned to me before that he wants to study law, which I think is a great idea. When running a business, we inevitably come into contact with various matters, and being ignorant of the law won't do. I told him that if he's going to study, he should take it seriously. I'll help him find a school here, so he can come over to study."

Chapter 339: Talking About Significant Others After the negotiation on compensation with Huang Dashun's chicken farm and the incident at the Old Food Factory, Qin Jianjun got a bit motivated and set his mind on legal studies.

The pursuit of education is always a big deal. Since he wants to study, we should go along with his enthusiasm and shouldn't hold him back.

Qin Yang thought this was a good thing too, "Do you need my help?"

"No need, I have a plan. I'll go have a look first, and ask for help if I run into any issues."

Nowadays, the country pays great attention to continuing education. Many universities have started night schools to allow young people from the society to study independently. What they teach is substantial, and the diplomas have their value.

The next day, Lin Chuxia and Qin Yang exercised together, ate breakfast together, and set out together.

The two of them had completely adapted to this kind of life, living their little days without interfering in each other's work.

Lin Chuxia first went to the Bun Shop. If possible, she plans to open a second bun shop in the city at the beginning of next year.

The reason for postponing it until next year was partly that her life with Qin Yang had not yet stabilized, and many things were still waiting to be handled.

Besides, rapid business development always brings various small problems. Haste makes waste.

By now, her pace of development was already fast. Whether it's a business or a person, both need time to mature.

It's almost November now, and in two months it will be the Spring Festival. There's no need to rush.

When Lin Chuxia arrived at the Bun Shop, she didn't see Jia Liang but saw Aunt Jia sitting inside the shop.

She had only seen Aunt Jia once on the opening day, a transparent old lady.

Now sitting in the bun shop, her expression while looking at the handsome young men and beautiful women was indescribable.

Seeing Lin Chuxia come in, she felt a bit guilty.

Lin Chuxia didn't mind and greeted her with a smile.

Aunt Jia quickly stood up to explain, "Boss Lin, I came to speak to Liangzi about something today. I usually don't come here to make trouble for him."

"Look at what you're saying, Auntie. Even if it wasn't for anything, it's fine to come and have a look since Jia Liang is working here. It doesn't affect anything."

Hearing her say this, Aunt Jia relaxed and whispered to Lin Chuxia while sitting down, "Boss Lin, I won't lie to you. When I first came to the city, I didn't know anyone and didn't dare to come over and bother Liangzi. I stayed in that tiny courtyard like a matchbox for a long time and nearly suffocated. If I knew you didn't mind my coming, I would have come over sooner."

"Now that you know, you can come over more often in the future."

It's good for business to attract a crowd. She doesn't mind more visitors.

Old Mrs. Jia talked more and more, feeling that Lin Chuxia was kind and beautiful, especially since she even allowed her to call her Lin. This made Old Mrs. Jia feel even closer.

It wasn't until Jia Liang came out from the kitchen and saw that his mother was still in the shop, he pretended to be stern, "Mom, why are you still here? I've told you, I'm working, don't interfere with my job. You see, my boss is here, if she docks my pay later, don't blame me for not working properly."

If Jia Liang and Old Mrs. Jia had said this ten minutes earlier, she might have believed him. But now, she didn't.

"Don't scare me with the boss, I know Lin is good, not like what you've described. I still want to talk with Lin."

Old Mrs. Jia was just at a loss with her son. She turned to Lin Chuxia and said, "Lin, please tell me, I've matchmaking for him and found him a partner. Why is it so hard for him to spare some time for a meeting? He always pushes it back, and in the end, he's unwilling. At his age, does he still consider himself a hot commodity?"

Lin Chuxia glanced at Jia Liang. So this was what Old Mrs. Jia had come here for.

She remembered Jia Liang was already in his early thirties. No wonder Old Mrs. Jia had chased him down here.

Upon hearing this, Jia Liang was not happy, "Mom, I never agreed to that. What do you mean by pushing back day after day?"

It made him sound like a very irresponsible person.

"You see it too, I'm busy with work now and have no desire to find a partner."

"Busy, busy, busy; always too busy to speak of. Lin manages several bun shops and even a food factory, yet still has time to live a life with Xiao Qin. I heard the manager from your previous bun shop's wife is even expecting their second child. How come you are too busy to even think of marriage? I think you're just making excuses."

Old Mrs. Jia finished speaking and then asked Lin Chuxia to support her decision.

"Lin, don't you think I'm right?"

Lin Chuxia nodded, "Jia Liang, Auntie is not wrong. Our shop has already been on the right track, and you don't need to be so tense all the time. Work is important, but you can't neglect the major events in life. We work to improve our quality of life; work should serve life, not the other way around. Take some time to meet the person Auntie has mentioned. Maybe fate will be just around the corner."

Old Mrs. Jia immediately beamed with a smile, "See, Lin really knows how to speak, worthy of someone who runs a big business."

With Lin Chuxia speaking, Jia Liang naturally gave her face.

It was just about taking time for a meeting. If things went well, they'd continue; if not, let it be.

He also knew his mother had gone through a lot for him.

"Fine, you go ahead and arrange it with the other side when I can take some time to meet."

Getting a definite answer, Old Mrs. Jia immediately cheered up and didn't stay at the Bun Shop anymore, "I'll go talk to the matchmaker right now."

The old lady was happy as a flower, her movements becoming more agile.

Jia Liang smiled helplessly, "That's how my mom is; I hope you don't take it wrong."

"Aunt Jia seems nice, and you too. Settle down early and give her peace of mind."

"Okay, I'll consider it."

Previously, in his line of work, indeed no one wanted to marry him, and he hadn't considered it either.

Now that life was getting better day by day, settling down wasn't a bad thing.

Getting married and giving his mother a grandchild was also his wish.

After discussing Jia Liang's matter, Lin Chuxia learned more about the situation at the Bun Shop since its opening.

There was a customer feedback book at the entrance of the Bun Shop, filled with various opinions from customers.

Lin Chuxia browsed through it, and the response was quite positive.

Jia Liang also showed her the accounts since the opening. This month's performance had visibly improved compared to the first month, with a steady increase in daily income.

With the current daily income, it had already caught up with the total of the two Bun Shops in Ancheng County.

"Not bad. With this development, our Bun Shop can also make a name for itself in the city."

"No need to wait for later. Our Qin's Steamed Bun has already gained some popularity. There are often people coming from other cities to buy buns."

Jia Liang cared a lot about the Bun Shop, knowing what to pay attention to, and also understanding Lin Chuxia's ambitions.

"I feel like opening another branch in the city right now is also feasible."

"Let's keep it this way for now. You make sure this Bun Shop runs well. I'll consider the branch after the new year. Haste makes waste; it's better to progress step by step."

Lin Chuxia already had her plans and wouldn't easily change them.

However, for opening a branch, the reputation of this Bun Shop was extremely important.

Chapter 340: Promoted or Demoted

After leaving the Bun Shop to contact the school, Lin Chuxia saw that familiar figure on the street again.

This time she did not hesitate and pedaled her bicycle to catch up.

"Big sister, is it really you?"

She had only met Qin Juan twice before and thought the figure looked familiar, but she didn't expect it to be her big sister, Qin Juan.

Qin Juan was surprised to encounter Lin Chuxia here and greeted her with a smile, "Xi Xia, what are you doing here?"

"Qin Yang has been transferred to work in the city, so I moved over to live with him."

Upon hearing that Qin Yang had transferred back, Qin Juan was also very pleased, "When did that happen?"

"Just these days, I've just arrived in the city a few days ago, the home isn't quite in order yet. We were thinking of tidying up before visiting big sister together with Qin Yang, but it looks like we bumped into each other first."

Lin Chuxia looked around, "Big sister, where are you headed? Isn't Ningning with you?"

There was an instant of discomfort on Qin Juan's face, but she masked it well and replied with a smile, "I'm heading to the market to buy some groceries. Ningning is at home playing with her grandma. You are busy having just moved here, there's no hurry to visit me, I'm doing fine. On the contrary, since you've just moved, I should pay a visit when I find the time."

"Sure, you're welcome anytime. My older sister-in-law was saying that we've been inadequate as the maternal family. Since big sister moved to the city, we haven't even visited once. Now that Qin Yang and I are here, we should visit each other more."

Qin Juan felt a warmth in her heart looking at her enthusiastic sister-in-law and chatted with her for a while. Only after watching Lin Chuxia leave did a sense of bitterness well up inside her.

Seeing that it was getting late, she quickened her pace.

As soon as she entered the doorway, she saw Ningning sitting by the water pipe in the courtyard, washing a basin full of clothes.

Qin Juan rushed over and pulled up her thin and frail daughter.

"Why are you washing clothes here? You're too young for this; how could you manage?"

Ningning's little hands were icy cold, and her clothes were quite wet. Seeing her mother, she plaintively explained, "Grandma told me to wash them. She said that as a girl, I should learn to wash clothes and cook."

Qin Juan felt a blockage in her heart as she looked at the clothes in the basin; all except for her mother-in-law's were her father-in-law's.

In the past, before she had a job, the in-laws complained that she did not earn money and was a freeloader at home, so it didn't matter much that all the laundry and cooking fell to her.

But now, after taking their advice to work and earn money, they actually passed the chores on to her daughter. How old was Ningning?

She quickly dried her daughter's hands with a towel and touched her little face, "Go play on the side, mom will wash these clothes."

"Okay," Ningning complied and went off to play.

Qin Juan went inside and saw that her husband had already come back from work and was watching TV in the house.

Her father-in-law was playing chess by himself, and there was no sign of her mother-in-law, who she knew must have gone to play mahjong and not yet returned.

Zhang Wenbin saw Qin Juan and spoke discontentedly, "Why did you come back so late? The whole family is waiting for you to cook."

Qin Juan felt frustrated and responded in a flat voice, "I finish work late. If you all are in a hurry to eat, you can start cooking yourselves."

"You want me to cook?" Zhang Wenbin pointed incredulously at himself, "Qin Juan, what do you mean by that? I took a wife and I should cook myself?"

"If you don't want to do it, you could ask mom to."

When she married into the family, Mrs. Zhang was just over fifty. At that time, the Zhang Family wasn't well off, and Mrs. Zhang did all the household chores.

But once the Zhang Family's situation improved, Mrs. Zhang started to put on airs.

She neither cooked nor did laundry, claiming she had suffered enough her whole life and it was time for her to enjoy herself.

Mrs. Zhang wanted to enjoy her leisure and also wanted Qin Juan to earn money. If it hadn't been for her instructing Ningning to do the laundry, Qin Juan felt she could have endured it.

Zhang Wenbin frowned, "Mom is already so old, and you still want her to cook? Don't you think you're being unreasonable? Is that something you should say as a daughter-in-law?"

Qin Juan knew there was no point in arguing with Zhang Wenbin about this and abruptly changed the topic.

"Qin Yang has been transferred to the city, and his little sister moved here with him to live together. They plan to find time to visit us."

She did not want her younger brother and sister-in-law to see her messy life. Over the years, Qin Juan had grown accustomed to sharing only the good news, not the bad.

She was worried that if her mother knew she wasn't living well, she would feel guilty and blame herself.

Upon hearing this, Zhang Wenbin looked over, "Qin Yang had a good position in the Northwest, why would he transfer here? Is this a promotion or a demotion?"

"I don't know, I met his little sister on the road today and we only exchanged a few words."

"You saw the person and you couldn't even ask properly? You're truly useless," Zhang Wenbin complained disdainfully, looking as if one more glance at her would be bothersome.

But I couldn't help calculating, "Logically, the job here is more stable than in the Northwest,

which is much better, but how come it's so coincidental that he got transferred to our city?

I think it's mostly for that sister-in-law of yours. If that's the case, a promotion is unlikely;

it's more possible to be a lateral move or even a demotion."

At that point, Zhang Wenbin thought of the figure he had seen during the Spring Festival and then glanced at his gaunt wife, his tone tinged with emotion.

"I really didn't see that your second brother is such a romantic. Previously, he was unwilling to marry,

focusing solely on his career. Now, he's willing to take a demotion just to be reunited with his wife.

But then again, anyone would be uneasy leaving such a beautiful wife at home alone.

With your sister-in-law's looks, who knows what might happen when the man is not around,

and it's fortunate they've been married for a year with no child yet, or else it might not even be certain if the Qin Family's bloodline is legitimate..."

Qin Juan suddenly raised her voice, "Zhang Wenbin, don't go too far."

Even though she had only interacted with her sister-in-law a few times, Qin Juan trusted her character.

Zhang Wenbin, as their brother-in-law, was going too far by needlessly slinging mud at her sister-in-law.

Zhang Wenbin hummed indifferently, "I was just saying, why are you so anxious? I'm just thinking of your brother, alright, alright, alright,

stop looking so lifeless. You won't let anyone say a word about your family, not even half a word. Go and cook, I'm starving."

Qin Juan knew what kind of person he was and couldn't be bothered to talk to him any further, so she went to the kitchen to cook.

Right after the meal was ready, the mother-in-law came back.

Qin Juan even suspected that her mother-in-law timed her return deliberately.

Seeing the clothes in the washbasin in the yard, her face darkened.

"It's been half a day and these little chores aren't completed yet?"

Little Ningning knew she hadn't finished the chores assigned by her grandmother and was already timid by nature.

Once Mrs. Zhang spoke up, she quickly hid behind Qin Juan.

Qin Juan spoke up, "Ningning is so young, how can she wash these clothes? Let me do it."

Mrs. Zhang's intention was to avoid washing the clothes herself, so when Qin Juan offered, she accepted without complaint.

But she still grumbled, "She's already 6 years old, how is that little? You can't always spoil her like this.

Since she's a girl, she must learn to wash clothes and cook, so she can find a good family to marry into and not be bullied by her in-laws.

I'm doing this for her own good."

Qin Juan said nothing.

After all, despite doing all the household chores daily, she still got bullied by her in-laws.

After dinner, Qin Juan thought it over and discussed it with Zhang Wenbin.

"Ningning is already 7 years old, counting the Chinese way. Zhuangzhuang from my eldest brother's house has already started elementary school this year,

and Ningning is even half a year older than him. I'm thinking of speaking with the school and see if Ningning can also start school."

Going to school would at least spare her from her grandmother-in-law's disapproval and demands.

Zhang Wenbin looked impatient, "What's with your thoughts, coming up with one thing after the other?"

How long has school already started? And now you're thinking of sending her to school? Besides, can she even compare to your eldest brother's son, Zhuangzhuang?

He's a boy, strong since he was little, and look at your daughter, what's her merit?

She can hardly speak a complete sentence, always shying behind you, what have you raised her into? Do you think she can even go to school like that?"

"If she doesn't go to school, is she supposed to stay home washing and cooking for you instead?"

Now you know she's young after all. At such a young age, how can she be expected to wash clothes?"

Qin Juan couldn't hold back any longer.

It was bad enough that the mother-in-law asked her daughter to do these chores, but Zhang Wenbin, Ningning's father,

simply ignored the situation and tacitly accepted his mother's approach. Is this how a father should behave?

She had thought that having a job would improve her and Ningning's circumstances,

but unexpectedly, even with a job and a salary, things stayed the same.

"Your mom is just over 50, is a 50-plus year-old adult really comparable to a little child over 5 years old?"

"So you mean to say my mom should stay home washing and cooking to serve you? Do you even deserve that?"

Zhang Wenbin looked at her coldly, "Or do you think now that your brother has come to the city, you have someone to back you up?"

Qin Juan, you better stay honest and don't try any tricks with me. The whole family provides for you,

has supported you for so many years, and now you think you're something special just because you're earning a bit of money?

The money you earn, I wouldn't even bother to look at."

Zhang Wenbin turned over, pulled the quilt over his head, and was ready to sleep.

"Don't let your brother and them visit recently, we have no time to entertain them here."

Qin Juan: "..."

...

Lin Chuxia ran around outside all day and finally settled the school matters.

As soon as she got home, Sister-in-law Feng came over to visit again.

Honestly, her attitude last time was pretty clear, and she thought Sister-in-law Feng would have gotten the message.

Yet it seemed that Sister-in-law Feng was completely unaffected, entering the yard with her daughter as if nothing was wrong,

and finding a place to sit before starting to chat with Lin Chuxia about family matters.

Last time she had touted living in a high-rise as being so much better, making it sound as if living in a high-rise made one superior to living in a courtyard home.

This time, however, she didn't stop praising how wonderful it was to live in a courtyard house.