

Switched M 41

Chapter 41: This isn't just asking for money, it's practically asking for her life.

Before she could speak, Sister Liu, the melon seed seller, couldn't hold back.

"You, how can you falsely accuse someone like that? I saw with my own eyes that Lin finished packing up early yesterday, and you sold quite a few buns."

"Just because I sold quite a few doesn't prove they bought them from me. Why don't you bring out some evidence then?" Granny Sun said with a face full of smugness.

With Lin Chuxia around, her buns just couldn't sell at all.

She had planned to quit after selling these, but she couldn't stand to see Lin Chuxia's business doing well, watching others make money filled her with jealousy and envy.

If she could disrupt someone else's business, even if she closed her stall and stopped selling, she would feel happy inside.

"Looking for evidence, are you?" Lin Chuxia raised her hand to stop Sister Liu, who wanted to speak again, and turned to Granny Sun.

"Yes, show me the evidence if you dare," Granny Sun declared defiantly.

"Fine, then I will show everyone the evidence and prove my innocence. Let me make it clear, if the evidence is conclusive, you will not only have to compensate these two people for their medical expenses, but also for my reputation damage."

When the topic of compensation came up, Granny Sun's gaze flickered, but there was no turning back now, she finally gritted her teeth, "Fine."

She didn't believe that baseless accusations could produce any evidence.

Lin Chuxia stepped forward and first asked the two customers when they had bought the buns.

The couple who came first had stopped by yesterday afternoon during a light rain when Lin Chuxia had already packed up.

The other one who bought earlier, lured by the cheaper price, got the extra bun for one yuan from Granny Sun.

"After all, cheap goods aren't good quality." The old lady spat again.

"You say you bought them at that time? Who saw it? If nobody saw it, isn't it just saying whatever you want whenever you want?" Granny Sun was adamantly refusing to admit anything now.

Lin Chuxia nodded, "Alright, then I will find a second piece of evidence."

She crouched down and picked up the buns from the ground.

Granny Sun immediately knew what she was going to do and spoke first, "Don't say these buns look like the ones I sell. I could say they look like yours too. This can't count as evidence; doesn't everyone make buns the same way?"

She hadn't just randomly taken over Lin Chuxia's spot for selling buns.

That day she had gone to see her son and passed by Lin Chuxia's bustling bun stall, thinking she could also start a small business.

Her buns had always been praised, and she was confident they would sell.

In order to compete for Lin Chuxia's market, she had someone help her buy a few buns to study, even making sure they were exactly the same size as Lin Chuxia's.

Lin Chuxia looked at her with a meaningful smile, "I can prove these aren't my buns."

Lin Chuxia opened the waxed paper wrapping and let everyone present first look at the buns inside before saying, "I don't know if those who bought my buns noticed, but my buns always have the same number of pleats - 16. These buns may be the same size as mine, but the number and size of the pleats vary."

Having said this, she then opened her own steamer to let people at the scene see.

"It's true, each bun in the steamer has the same number of pleats."

"That's right, even though they're the same size, this girl's buns look much better."

"I noticed this point a long time ago; I even mentioned it, depending on the person, the buns, too, match the beauty - 16 pleats per bun take a lot of skill."

"Miss, you don't need to prove anything more. We believe you. First, give me 10 buns, I'm catching a train in a while."

"Give me 20, I just came back from a business trip and haven't brought anything for the kids, I'll buy a few big meat buns to stuff those two rascals' mouths."

"Give me 5."

"Give me 8..."

The scene turned chaotic for a moment as everyone crowded forward to buy buns from Lin Chuxia.

Some meddlesome folks didn't stop there; they urged Granny Sun to compensate.

"Now you have nothing to say, right? If someone gets sick from eating, one should compensate, just pay up."

"Not only should she pay the medical expenses, but also compensate for the girl's damaged reputation. This person is simply terrible, selling bad buns after losing her conscience and even falsely accuses the girl."

"That's right, let's all stop buying her buns from now on."

The two customers who suffered upset stomachs also timely produced their medical bills, "This is our medical fee, plus today's lost wages. We're not asking for much, 20 will do."

Another old lady also said, "I want 20 as well."

Granny Sun almost cursed, she hadn't made 10 yuan from selling buns for so many days, yet these two were asking for 40 yuan.

This isn't asking for money; it's practically asking for her life.

During the chaos, someone called the nearby duty officer, "Make way, make way, the officer has arrived."

Dressed in uniform, Sun Hao also spoke up, "Let's all make way. The train station is crowded, don't block the way here, affecting others' travel. If you have any issues, talk to me."

"Officer, you've come at the right time. Her buns are problematic, she denies wrongdoing and falsely accuses this girl, such a person should be arrested and re-educated properly."

Sun Hao nodded, steadied himself as he walked into the crowd. Just as he was about to lecture, as soon as he saw the surrounded person, he nearly stumbled.

"Mom, why is it you?"

The moment Granny Sun saw her son, she clutched a greasy bun wrapper and smeared it over her face, fearing recognition by her son, but he recognized her anyway.

Reluctantly dropping the oily paper, she gave a sheepish smile, "I was just bored and came here to stroll around."

She tried to brush it off, but the others wouldn't let it go, continuously complaining to Granny Sun.

So what if it's the police? Especially because it's the police, they should stand up for the people.

In this era, people are indeed afraid of the police, but in their eyes, the police also hold an upright and grand image.

Sun Hao had heard about the situation on his way, but he didn't expect it to be his mother.

Putting aside personal grievances, he hastily helped to sort things out, apologized on behalf of his mother, and compensated.

Some even approached Lin Chuxia, "Girl, the bun seller's son, who is indeed a police officer, has arrived. You should ask them for compensation for the damage to your reputation since he should be impartial in law enforcement."

Upon hearing this, Lin Chuxia looked over and met Sun Hao's gaze.

"Mr. Lin?"

"Officer Sun, why is it you?"

She looked between Sun Hao and Granny Sun, and couldn't help but hold her forehead.

The world really is quite small.

She had heard before from Granny Sun that her son was a police officer, and it wasn't a lie.

Sun Hao also knew what his mother had done. After Lin Chuxia finished her tasks, he sincerely apologized.

"My mother shouldn't have lied or falsely accused you, affecting your business. I will compensate for the loss of reputation, although I've given all my money to those two people. Let me know how much you need, and I will bring it tomorrow."

Granny Sun watched her son empty out his pockets, her heart bleeding.

Her son's monthly wage was just over 40 yuan, and now, after a month of hard work from dawn to dusk, not only was it all for nothing, but he also had to compensate Lin Chuxia.

Worried that Lin Chuxia might demand an unreasonably high amount, she muttered quietly on the side, "My words didn't really affect her; look, her business is doing well."

Chapter 42 The Smile Gradually Solidifies

Sun Hao's expression turned stern as he spoke, "Mom, just because their business is doing well thanks to their own ability doesn't provide you with a reason to frame them. You're not a child. When you were selling those spoiled buns, you should have thought about the consequences. Not only did you not admit it when confronted, but you also framed Mr. Lin. You need to compensate for both the medical expenses and the defamation damages."

Granny Sun is usually fierce in front of others, but she is quite afraid of her son.

Feeling aggrieved by her son's scolding outside, she said, "Those buns were only left for two days; they weren't that spoiled. Moreover, I didn't only sell the leftover buns, I mixed them with freshly steamed ones..."

"Mom, are you still trying to justify it?"

Granny Sun pursed her lips, no longer daring to speak further.

Chuxia realized upon hearing this why Granny Sun was so bold and the couple also felt guilty; it turned out this was the situation.

However, Chuxia didn't plan to take the defamation compensation.

"Officer Sun helped me subdue the thugs before, so let's forget about the defamation compensation."

"That won't do. Each matter should be addressed separately; protecting the safety of the people's lives and property is our duty. My mom's mistakes should be punished," especially since when he arrived, Lin Chuxia had already subdued the robbers. "Since Mr. Lin won't mention it, let's settle it according to my monthly salary; how does that sound?"

"There's no need for so much," Granny Sun was anxious; she had only spoken out of turn, how did it end up involving her son's one month's salary?

Sun Hao ignored his mother, his gaze sincerely meeting Lin Chuxia's.

Chuxia thought for a moment, "Here's a deal, I noticed that the buns Granny packed are quite skillful. I've been thinking about opening a bun shop. If Granny is willing to pack buns in my shop, we can forget about the defamation fee, and I'll also pay her a salary. What do you think?"

She thought of this idea after seeing the buns that Granny Sun had made.

Packing buns seems simple, but to make them look good requires skill. Indeed, Granny Sun's buns are rather well-made.

With just her and Su Wensong at the Bun Shop, they clearly need more hands; another person to pack buns would be just right.

Granny Sun didn't expect this turn of events to bring such good fortune; no need to compensate for damages and even receiving a salary?

"How much do you plan to pay for the salary?"

Sun Hao glanced at his mother again, and Granny Sun immediately shut her mouth.

"Thirty per month, and there might be a chance for a raise later."

"Okay, I'll go."

She couldn't continue with her bun stall; these past few days she had worked hard from dawn to dusk, not only did she not earn money, but she also ended up losing more than thirty.

A job with a steady salary and no losses, of course, she would like that.

Thirty yuan in salary is about the same as working in a factory.

Besides, at her age, no factory would hire her anyway.

Seeing his mother's joyous expression, Sun Hao helplessly thanked Lin Chuxia, "For the first month, you don't have to pay her. Let her work for free for one month as compensation for your losses."

Granny Sun's smile gradually stiffened.

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Upon returning home, Chuxia found Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin sitting under the big tree in the yard, cooling off.

Seeing her return, they both came over to help her with her things.

"Why are you a bit late today? Have you eaten? I'll go make you something to eat."

Chuxia replied with a smile, "Mom, did you forget what business I'm in? If I'm hungry, I can eat buns."

Mrs. Qin sighed, "Eating buns all day can get tiring. I'll make you a bowl of hot noodles and poach an egg in it."

After finishing speaking, she didn't wait for Lin Chuxia to refuse and turned to start cooking.

Mr. Qin also added, "Your mom's right, no matter how tasty buns are, you can't just eat buns. Let your mom know in advance what you want for dinner, she's free at home anyway."

"I know, Dad."

Lin Chuxia wanted to express her thanks, but felt that a mere 'thank you' was too insufficient.

In her previous life, whether at her parents' home or in-laws' home, she never experienced the affection of elders, and even considered such an attitude from elders as normal.

She didn't expect the Qin Family to give her a different feeling.

She could feel the love from Mrs. Qin, the concern from Mr. Qin; it could be said that the elderly couple of the Qin Family compensated for the affection she never received from elders in two lifetimes.

"Dad, how has your body been lately? Has the old ailment acted up again?"

Recently, whenever she had the chance, she added some spiritual spring water to the water tank used by Mr. and Mrs. Qin. She didn't know if the water had any effect on ailments, but if it didn't, once the Bun Shop stabilized, she planned to take Mr. Qin to the provincial hospital for a check-up.

When this was mentioned, Mr. Qin became spirited, "Much better, it hasn't acted up recently. I always said my illness was caused by worrying about Yangyang's marriage issues. Look, as soon as you came, my illness got better."

Lin Chuxia's eyes also brightened, "That's good to hear. I've heard that no matter the illness, it fears a good mood. Your improved mood naturally leads to better health."

Mr. Qin nodded, "Exactly!"

"Never mind your dad, ever since Yangyang and you got married, I've felt more energetic than before," Mrs. Qin said, bringing out a bowl of noodles to invite Lin Chuxia over to eat.

Lin Chuxia moved the last stack of steaming baskets from the cart, washed her hands, and sat down.

"Try it and see if it's too salty."

Lin Chuxia tasted a bite of the noodles, "Delicious."

Mrs. Qin smiled, her eyebrows disappearing into her cheeks, sitting across from her watching her eat.

Big Brother and Sister-in-law hadn't come back yet, Zhuangzhuang had gone to bed early. Only the three of them were in the yard.

As Lin Chuxia ate the noodles, she discussed with the elderly couple about opening the Bun Shop.

This afternoon, Su Wensong almost finished buying the cooking equipment, and tables and chairs were ordered. After finishing selling buns, she went to check the progress; in two more days, the shop would be ready for business, which was also why she came home late today.

"The day after tomorrow is an auspicious day, I'm thinking of opening then. Mom and Dad, you both should come and have a look."

Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin didn't expect their daughter-in-law to be so capable. It had only been a short period, and the bun stand turned into a Bun Shop.

"Do you have enough money? Look at you, since you're opening a shop, why even give me money! Wait, I haven't spent the money you gave me, I'll get it for you."

See, that's what truly loving someone looks like, always considering your needs first.

Qin Yang had sent over his salary, and Lin Chuxia gave Mrs. Qin 30, keeping 10 for living expenses and an additional 20.

Lin Chuxia stopped Mrs. Qin, "Mom, no need, the Bun Shop is almost ready, I have enough money. If I really need money, I'll tell you."

"If so, if you ever find yourself short of cash let me know. Even if I don't have it, our Qin Family still has some influence in Qin Family Village, your parents can surely pull together a few hundred."

"Okay, I got it, Mom."

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The day the Bun Shop opened was bright and sunny, Lin Chuxia got up early.

It wasn't her first store, but it was her first in this lifetime. She went through her wardrobe and found nothing satisfactory.

She had been busy accumulating capital recently. Except for trips to the vegetable and meat markets, she hadn't shopped at malls.

She did not want to just make do today; eventually, she went into the space villa and chose a white shirt paired with black trousers, understated yet appropriate.

Chapter 43 Bun Shop Opens

When Lin Chuxia arrived at the Su's, Su Wensong had already cleaned up the yard, with the cart holding ingredients parked but not yet unloaded.

Seeing her arrival, Granny Su asked if she'd eaten breakfast and went on to make her some sugar water.

Lin Chuxia smiled as she took the water, "Granny, don't fuss over me, I'll be coming every day from now on."

Granny Su knew today was the grand opening of the Bun Shop and, pointing to a covered plaque, said, "What do you think of this? That naughty boy brought it back yesterday and insisted that my writing isn't as good as it used to be. It's true I haven't written in a long time."

A couple of days earlier, they had discussed the name of the bun shop; Su Wensong volunteered to make the plaque himself, and Lin Chuxia trusted him fully, so she left the task entirely to him.

Lin Chuxia lifted the cloth, and below were five golden characters, "Qin's Buns Shop". The first two smaller characters were vertically placed; the words 'Buns Shop' spread across the entirety of the plaque, but the most important part was the calligraphy...

She looked in astonishment at Su Wensong beside her, who smiled simply, saying, "My granny's surname is Lou," having not expected Lin Chuxia to recognize the writing.

Without her past life's experiences, Lin Chuxia wouldn't recognize the characters and would merely think they flowed beautifully with artistic grace.

But with memories from her past life, she clearly remembered an auction where an ancestral masterpiece by a female artist surnamed Lou, named Lu Huazhuo, pen name Yu Qiong, was sold.

It was revealed that, because of her name, her work was nearly destroyed once, and the elderly woman never picked up the brush again, making her paintings and calligraphy extremely precious. Back then, her calligraphy fetched sixty million from a collector.

It turned out Granny Su was indeed that talented and ethereal woman.

"Granny, your writing is absolutely beautiful, don't listen to Brother Su. With your calligraphy, our Bun Shop is sure to be successful."

"It's good enough if Lin doesn't mind," Granny Su laughed happily.

"Of course, I don't mind," getting a Bun Shop sign named by Lou Huazhuo personally, Lin Chuxia couldn't even imagine whether the storefront or the plaque would be more valuable in the future.

"What's there to mind? Boss Lin, don't mind me," Granny Sun walked in from outside, joining the conversation with a chuckle, "Am I too late?"

"Not at all, we aren't selling breakfast today, there's still time."

Since yesterday, Granny Sun had started working, cleaning the kitchenware, tables, and chairs tirelessly.

And she was indeed skillful at it.

Changing her role and perspective, her previous pettiness and scheming were nowhere felt; instead, she seemed straightforward and generous, carrying a rustic charm.

"That's good; I'll go pick some vegetables," Granny Sun didn't hold back.

She couldn't sit still, which is why she was selling buns at her age.

Now with a proper job, although working without pay for the first month, the thought of earning a monthly salary thereafter was motivating.

Su Wensong and Lin Chuxia also began to get busy, unloading the cart, Su Wensong chopping the meat, Lin Chuxia and Granny Sun preparing the vegetarian stuffing.

Soon, Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin arrived.

After serving the buns stuffed with thin-skinned and large fillings to Lord Stove, the fire was lit.

The first batch of buns were steamed and ready by ten fifty.

Su Wensong installed the plaque, still draped with a red cloth, and hung firecrackers in front of the shop.

These preparations drew the curiosity of passersby.

At ten fifty-eight, the auspicious moment arrived, the firecrackers were lit, and amidst their crackling sounds, Lin Chuxia pulled off the red cloth covering the plaque.

Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin were illiterate, and when they heard people mentioning Qin's Bun Shop nearby, they couldn't express how they felt.

Su Wensong and Granny Sun also clapped their hands, looking at the woman in a white shirt and black trousers in front of the shop, feeling full of excitement and hope.

Lin Chuxia didn't have much of an opening speech. She had already made a name for herself around the train station, and as soon as people knew it was her bun shop, they immediately started buying.

To give back to both new and old customers, for the first three days of opening, buy five get one free.

At the same time, the bun shop also introduced assorted cold dishes, along with millet porridge, corn porridge, and eight-treasure porridge, available to dine in at the shop anytime.

For those who didn't like porridge, there was also free tea available in the shop, with exceptionally attentive service.

Granny Sun and Su Wensong also put on white over-sleeves, white chef hats, and tied on white aprons.

One selling buns at the window, the other busying inside the shop.

Wherever Lin Chuxia saw was understaffed, she went over to help.

At this moment, three people entered the shop from outside.

Li Jian pointed at the sign outside, "Qin's Bun Shop, Boss Lin, you've got quite the setup here. I wish you prosperity in your business."

Lin Chuxia hurriedly welcomed him, "Brother Li, you're putting me on the spot here. Please come inside, what would you like to have? Today's on me, thank you so much for coming to support us."

Li Jian waved his hand, "No need, today I just came to try your buns. You've been selling them for so long, how many have I actually tried?"

Lin Chuxia followed with a laugh, "If Brother Li puts it that way, I definitely should treat you all. Please wait a moment, I'll get you some food. We have side dishes in the store, I remember Brother Li and Brother Wang can drink a little, shall we get a bottle of er guo tou?"

Among those accompanying Li Jian was Wang Cheng, who had sold her the handcart.

Wang Cheng loved to drink, something Lin Chuxia had noticed when she bought the handcart from him.

Sure enough, as soon as he heard there was alcohol, Wang Cheng became much more amiable.

Lin Chuxia quickly prepared a dish of each side dish, grabbed a bottle of er guo tou, and three cups.

While setting up the table, she casually started a conversation, "This is my first time meeting this gentleman, may I ask how to address you?"

Li Jian took the wine bottle, poured drinks for a few people while responding to Lin Chuxia, "This is Director Hu, who's in charge of wholesale and retail at our vegetable station. You think I had the power to give you discounted prices on vegetables? It's all thanks to Director Hu."

"Well, I didn't realize I was in the presence of a great man. This humble shop today is simple, one day I must properly treat Director Hu."

Director Hu nodded slightly, "Boss Lin, you're too polite. Your Bun Shop already buys a significant amount of vegetables daily, giving you a discount on the vegetables is only right, as I'm just following the rules."

Even though that was said, Lin Chuxia was well aware, the small amount of vegetables her Bun Shop bought wasn't comparable to the larger sales stores.

She also understood that Li Jian bringing them over was an intentional gesture to help her make connections.

Just as they finished their pleasantries, familiar faces arrived at the shop—Sister Liu who sold sunflower seeds at the train station and Brother Chen who sold fruits.

Usually, these two never ate out, either going home to eat or having family bring them food. Their presence in the Bun Shop today was definitely to support her.

In addition to the shop's discounts, Lin Chuxia also gave them a dish of cold appetizers.

From the opening of the Bun Shop at 11 AM, they kept busy until 2 PM before it finally started to slow down.

The buns were steamed as sold, and even so, the food prepared in the morning ran out quickly, indicating they might finish the business day by evening.

Seeing the good business, Su Wensong thought about restocking the ingredients again, but Lin Chuxia stopped him.

Chapter 44: Hopes That Li Guangyuan Could Trust Her

"Our first day of business went quite well already. Let's call it a day for today. Tomorrow when we buy ingredients, let's increase everything a little bit, not too much. I'll make a list for you soon."

Selling well naturally leads to increasing the quantity, but they are short-staffed right now and need to consider the physical capacity of their workers.

Moreover, scarcity marketing is also a marketing tactic.

While they were discussing, Sun Hao came over with two colleagues.

Granny Sun saw her son coming and looked disgusted, "Why are you only coming now? You didn't see how bustling our bun shop was today. The room was full and there was even a line at the door."

She has been selling buns for so long, envying others selling buns, and today, for the first time, she enjoyed the frantic and money-flowing sensation.

And she really liked that feeling.

It's just that her family didn't see it.

Sun Hao ignored his mother and apologized to Lin Chuxia.

He had initially planned to bring his colleagues to support the bun shop today, but he was held up at the station and only finished up just now.

Lin Chuxia didn't mind such details; his coming was an honor for her.

Knowing the three hadn't eaten, she quickly invited them to sit down. There were no cold dishes left, so she personally mixed two and stir-fried two hot dishes, and also made three portions of egg soup.

The main courses were meat buns and vegetable buns.

Granny Sun helped her on the side. Seeing her son being treated importantly made her happy, and her son had face in front of his colleagues.

"Lin, you don't know, Sun Hao's dad was a soldier before, then got a job after retiring. I, on the other hand, am just an old farmer. I used to earn some work points in the production team, but now that land has been allotted, I cannot work anymore. We moved to the city, and I'd wait for money from others to make a living, always feeling inferior. At home, I dared not even breathe out loud. Now I also earn a salary, and I can buy whatever I want in the future."

"Don't look at Sun Hao coming late today, he was really concerned about this. He asked me several times yesterday."

"Granny, as you say, I'm just basking in your glory. Otherwise, with the meal arrangements at work, Officer Sun wouldn't have had to come all this way to eat here," Lin Chuxia said with a smile.

Granny Sun felt reassured by these words, glanced around, and lowered her voice, "Sun Hao and his team are responsible for our area. If anyone causes trouble in the store in the future, I'll have Sun Hao back you up."

"That would be wonderful."

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While Lin Chuxia's new store had a bustling opening, at the same time, ten kilometers away at Xiaoqingshan's Li Family, chaos reigned.

Lin Jiayi, carrying a bucket of pig feed, nearly slipped as she stepped over the threshold.

With a splash, the bucket of pig food was thrown out, scattering all over her.

Just then, she saw the doorway was full of water, as Li Dongmei, with wet hair, splashed another bucket of water right where she was standing.

"Li Dongmei, couldn't you throw your hair-washing water a bit further?"

"Sister-in-law, I always splash my hair-washing water here, it's not my fault you don't watch where you're walking. Why blame me?"

"You..."

Lin Jiayi was about to say something more when Mrs. Li came out from the house, seeing the pig feed scattered all over the courtyard, and she clutched her thighs in distress.

"Ouch, to heavens, isn't this ruining food? Barely had a few meals, and you've already lost all sense of direction, look at you, sleeping till the sun heats your butt, not farming nor cooking, even scattering pig feed when feeding the pigs, what sin did the Li Family commit to deserve a daughter-in-law like you?"

Knowing Old Mrs. Li deliberately inverted right and wrong, Lin Jiayi still felt infuriated by her words.

Apart from the first day of their marriage when Li Guangyuan pitied her and didn't let her rise early, she has been the one cooking every day since.

She's never worked the fields, she never did even back at her parent's home; Li Guangyuan knew this and hence, never asked her to do fieldwork.

It wasn't even her fault that the pig feed was spilled.

"If it weren't for Li Dongmei carelessly splashing water everywhere, I wouldn't have nearly slipped; I even sprained my ankle and yet said nothing."

Li Dongmei stood beside Old Mrs. Li, looking aggrieved as she softly spoke, "Mom, it's my fault, if I hadn't been washing my hair, sister-in-law wouldn't have fallen."

Li Hongmei also chimed in from the other side, "Mom, don't blame my sister; it's my fault. Sister-in-law just asked me to feed the pigs, and I got distracted talking to you, which upset her and caused the spill."

With the two echoing each other, Old Mrs. Li looked almost ready to devour someone.

"You two needn't say more; I'm not senile yet. What's wrong with Dongmei splashing water? It's not like it's mid-winter with ice all over the courtyard, how could she slip?"

"Guangyuan's wife, if you really think of yourself as a lady of leisure, you should see if you were meant for such a life. Let me tell you today, marrying into the Li Family means a life destined for fieldwork, and don't you be discontent; no one in this family will pamper you."

"A month into the marriage and still no sign of any good news, even the chickens at home have laid a basket of eggs."

"Sleeping till the sun heats your butt, not caring even when the men of the house head to the fields, I don't know how the Lin Family raises their daughters, lazy, slick, greedy, no good trait missing, no wonder they want to swap kinships, seeing the Li Family as easy to bully?"

"I'm telling you, don't think that just because Guangyuan supports you, you can act lawlessly. You're not the one calling the shots here, I'm not dead yet."

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Standing covered in pig feed, Lin Jiayi got berated by Old Mrs. Li, while Li Hongmei and Li Dongmei stood by as onlookers.

Unable to bear it any longer, she kicked the bucket of pig feed.

"Thud..."

The bucket flew out, and rolled several meters across the ground.

Lin Jiayi didn't spare it a glance, glaring at the individuals in front of her, about to argue her case when she saw the unusual expressions on their faces.

Old Mrs. Li appeared frail, being supported by her daughters, Li Hongmei and Li Dongmei looking pitiful, simultaneously fearful yet wanting to look at her.

Suddenly turning around, she saw Li Guangyuan standing at the doorway, hoe in hand, gazing down at the bucket of pig feed.

Just as Old Mrs. Li seemed to notice her son, she trembled as she spoke, "Guangyuan ah, you're finally back, if not your mom would have been beaten to death by now."

"I didn't," Lin Jiayi subconsciously retorted, "Guangyuan, it's not like that at all."

Li Dongmei spoke in a low voice, "Big brother, it's not sister-in-law's fault, it was my fault, I upset her and mom was just defending me..."

Turning to Old Mrs. Li again, "Mom, don't say it, it's my fault for splashing water in the courtyard, it's fair if sister-in-law hits me a couple of times, isn't it said that an elder sister-in-law is like a mother? Just go back inside and pretend you didn't see, I don't mind being hit, just don't be upset."

Old Mrs. Li, as if struck in the heart, clutched her chest wailing, "What sin did I commit..."

Lin Jiayi stood helplessly, gazing eagerly at Li Guangyuan.

Old Mrs. Li was prone to such tricks, switching narratives behind closed doors; Lin Jiayi had long given up on reasoning with her and only hoped Li Guangyuan would believe her.

Chapter 45: The Troublemaker

Li Guangyuan bent over to place the pig feed bucket properly, then asked Li Hongmei to help his mother into the house, before he approached Lin Jiayi.

Lin Jiayi had a face full of grievances, her eyes red as she looked at him, "Guang Yuan, they are all lying, it's not like that at all."

Li Guangyuan patted her shoulder, "Go back to your room and change clothes," then he entered Old Mrs. Li's room under her expectant gaze.

Lin Jiayi clenched her fists; he didn't say whom he believed, but he still cared about her after all.

As Li Guangyuan entered Mrs. Li's room, Old Mrs. Li, still concerned about her younger daughter, immediately began to wipe tears.

Li Hongmei and Li Dongmei, seeing Old Mrs. Li act like this, also started to wipe away tears. Li Guangyuan said, "You two, go out first."

Li Hongmei and Li Dongmei looked at each other, rose, and left the room.

Li Guangyuan sat across from Old Mrs. Li and sighed, "Mom, you can't be too biased towards Hongmei and Dongmei. If they keep getting spoiled like this, they will become lawless."

Old Mrs. Li suddenly dropped her hand from covering her eyes, her eyes wide open, without a single tear in them.

"Listen to what you are saying. They are your biological sisters, born from the same womb as you. Just a few days after that woman entered our family, you started to look down on your sisters? Are you going

to look down on your old mother too in a few days? Alright, alright, I get it now. It's really 'marrying a wife forgets a mother'. In a moment, I'll tell Hongmei and Dongmei that from now on we must act humble and treat your wife like the Empress Dowager, we can't let her feel wronged or angry. Even if we're slapped across the face, and a manure bucket is put over our head, we must still smile and bear it."

After saying this, she began to cry loudly, slapping her thigh, "I must have done something wrong in my past lives, being widowed at such a young age, eating coarse meals, and raising you three siblings on my own. Just when I married you off and thought I could enjoy some blessings, this disdain from others started. It's as if living one more day is too long..."

The tears were genuinely flowing this time.

Seeing his mother really crying, Li Guangyuan hastily consoled her, "That's not what I meant, I'm not taking sides, how could I let her bully you, I was wrong, please don't be angry..."

Old Mrs. Li Senior, with tearful eyes, said, "Guang Yuan, I only have one son like you, and everything I do is for your sake. I got you a wife to find you a helper. Look around the village, which other new bride doesn't work in the fields for so long after getting married? I am heartbroken for you, the family even went into debt to get her, I can't bear to see you working from dawn till dusk, still suffering in famine. My heart is torn apart like it's being scratched and bitten."

"Mom, please stop, I know all this."

"You know yet you still spoil her like this? Just take today's incident, spilling pig feed while feeding pigs, that's all grain. No one said anything yet, but you first blame your younger sister. Is that how a sister-in-law should act? She's just looking at us unfavorably. And that previous matter, in order to save money for your marriage, how long has it been since your sisters bought fabric? Seeing her wearing one new dress after another, can your sister not be jealous? If it wasn't to save dowry to buy fabrics for her clothes, would I have made your sisters suffer? Now when I think about it, I feel...it's all my incapability, making you live a poor life..."

Seeing his mother distressed, Li Guangyuan felt pity, and remembering something, he took out a roll of money from his pocket and placed it in Old Mrs. Li's hands.

Old Mrs. Li's face still tear-streaked, shakily counted the money, a total of 50 yuan, and looked up at him, "Where did this money come from?"

Li Guangyuan pursed his lips, "Jiayi gave me all her dowry money, take these 50 yuan to pay off the debts and buy some fabric for the younger sister."

Hearing the dowry money was in her son's hands, Old Mrs. Li broke into a smile.

"That's right, now that you're married, you are family. You and your wife should work together towards a good life, so when I pass away and see your father, I can account for it, worthy of the Li family."

Li Guangyuan nodded his head, watching Old Mrs. Li happily counting her money before leaving the room.

On the other side, Lin Jiayi changed her clothes after returning to her room, still sulking.

Li Guangyuan's mom was unreasonable, and his two sisters were troublemakers at home.

All day long, they wouldn't help her with anything, just bully her with their mom.

Li Hongmei was 19 this year and Li Dongmei was a year younger at 18; both could be considered ready for marriage.

Lin Jiayi remembered that in her past life, Li Guangyuan's sisters were not married until they were quite old.

By that time, the Li family's business had picked up, and both sisters found partners with good conditions, all from the city with guaranteed grain supplies.

A mocking smirk crossed her eyes, they bullied her and still expected to marry into high-status families by stepping on her? She was not as easy to manipulate as Lin Chuxia.

This life, she would get the two of them married off early, not letting them catch any of her light.

This was the fate of offending Lin Jiayi.

While thinking, Li Guangyuan came back. Lin Jiayi glanced at him and then turned her back to him.

"Back to pick a fight with me? Let me tell you Li Guangyuan, what did you tell me at the beginning? You said you would treat me well for a lifetime. It's only been a few days since we got married, and you are already ganging up with them to bully me. Am I the only outsider in this house? Maybe I should just go back to my parents' home instead."

She began to pack her clothes.

Li Guangyuan hurriedly hugged her, "Look at you, I haven't even said anything, and you feel aggrieved already. How could I possibly join them to bully you?"

"Why am I not aggrieved? You don't see how your sisters bully me. It was them who splashed water and made me slip, yet they blamed it on me. Your mom even brought up the past about the switched marriage proposal, as if I couldn't get married without your Li family. Li Guangyuan, go and inquire, originally my engagement was with the Qin family. My sister didn't like your Li family and wanted to marry into the Qin family instead, and I, as her older sister, switched with her. I shouldn't have switched with her. I should have broken off your family's engagement, and I could have found someone better. Go ahead and remain a bachelor."

Lin Jiayi said this, and Li Guangyuan believed her. Not to mention the Qin family's background, having seen Qin Yang in person, he admitted he couldn't compare at all.

Only a fool would reject such a man and marry someone like himself.

If it wasn't for Lin Jiayi accommodating her sister and not despising him, he might really still be a bachelor now.

"Yes, yes, yes, it's all my fault, I'm wrong. My mom is getting old and occasionally gets confused. Please don't take it to heart. After all, she is still my mom. My dad passed away early, and it was not easy for her to raise the three of us alone. Please just bear with it for my sake, I remember all your kindness," Li Guangyuan spoke and then kissed her on the cheek.

Lin Jiayi was still in his arms, rolling her eyes at him, "Remembering in your heart is enough?"

Li Guangyuan, feeling tickled by her gaze, leaned closer and whispered in her ear, "Not just remembering in my heart, but here as well."