

Switched M 46

Chapter 46: Mr. Qin Can Smile, How Novel!

Sensing something, Lin Jiayi's face blushed with embarrassment, "Cut it out, I'm asking you about how the business is going? It's been so many days, when can we start doing business?"

Speaking of doing business, Li Guangyuan's enthusiasm cooled a bit, "Doing business isn't so easy. The corn in the fields needs fertilizing and I can't spare the time. How about this, you come to the fields with me these next few days, we'll start by fertilizing the corn, and once we're done with the work there, I'll go to the city to look around."

"You want me to join you working in the fields?" Lin Jiayi asked incredulously.

In her last life, she had never labored in the fields even when she was married to Qin Yang.

"Is this your mother's idea? Li Guangyuan, have you forgotten what you told me when we first got married? You said I would be treated the same in your family as I was in my parents' home, and I never did fieldwork there."

"No, no," Li Guangyuan embraced her again, "It's just that I'm in a rush to do business. If I can't finish the work in the fields, I won't have time to look for business opportunities. Besides, you see how upset you get with my two sisters around the house, so it's better if you come to the fields with me. Out of sight, out of mind; I'm doing this for your own good."

"Why can't you make Hongmei and Dongmei help you in the fields? They're grown adults, mooching off without doing any work at home all day."

"If they both leave, who will be left to take care of my mother? If you come with me to the fields, we'll be away from everyone, and once there, you can do as much or as little work as you want. I will let you be."

Lin Jiayi was finally swayed by these words, nodding her head, "Alright, but let's be clear, I'm not doing any heavy labor."

"No, no, even if you wanted to, I wouldn't bear to let you work hard," Li Guangyuan reassured, wrapping his arms around her as his hand slipped inside her clothing.

Lin Jiayi swiftly halted his movement with her hand, "There's one more thing. Your two sisters are not getting any younger; it's about time they look for a husband. I'll see if there are any suitable matches around and have a matchmaker introduce a few."

Li Guangyuan felt a bit awkward, "This matter... Mom hasn't said anything yet."

"That's just because she has just been busy with arranging your marriage. She is of age and you expect her to trouble herself with your sisters' marriages as well? You're the eldest brother and I'm the eldest sister-in-law; it's our responsibility to arrange your younger sisters' marriages. Don't worry, don't you trust my judgement? We may have our differences usually, but when it comes to marriages, I'll definitely find them good matches. If they marry well, it reflects well on us too, doesn't it?"

Li Guangyuan finally showed a smile, feeling he'd been small-minded.

When his wife mentioned marriage, he was indeed worried she might cause trouble over his sisters' marriages.

He was being too suspicious.

"My wife truly understands the greater good, I'll leave this matter to you and I'll talk to Mom about it."

Lin Jiayi released the hand that restrained his and kissed him voluntarily, "I knew it, in this family, you care for me the most."

A trace of triumph flashed in her eyes.

She intended to marry these two sisters-in-law off far away so when they prospered, they couldn't come to share the fortune.

Li Guangyuan, relishing in the tenderness of the woman, heaved a sigh of relief in his heart.

Having persuaded his wife to work in the fields, would this satisfy his mother?

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Amidst the vast Gobi desert, the setting sun cast a fervent glow across the land.

The sound of a bicycle bell echoed in the distance, and upon sighting the postman in green, the nearby people all crowded around.

Communication was inconvenient in their area, with the postman visiting only a few times a week on a rotational basis.

"For Mr. Qin, Mr. Zhao, there's mail and packages for you," someone who spotted the mail shouted to the figures in the distance.

Qin Yang put down the blueprint in his hands, glanced at his watch, and said to the people around him, "That's enough for today. We'll continue the rest tomorrow."

After giving instructions, he then walked towards the postman.

The others had already collected their own mail and packages, smiling and opening their letters as they walked away. Those who had not received anything were filled with envy.

Upon seeing Qin Yang, the postman retrieved a hefty package from the saddlebag, "Mr. Qin, someone from your family sent you some goodies. It's quite heavy."

Qin Yang's eyes flashed with tenderness when he saw the package, and he took out a pen to sign for it.

"There's also a letter for you."

Qin Yang thanked the sender, held the package in one hand, and the letter in the other, the corners of his lips lifting slightly when he noticed the delicate handwriting on the envelope.

"Mr. Qin, are you smiling?" Suddenly, a big head popped out diagonally, and Qin Yang, without a second thought, kicked out.

Zhang Dawei was kicked square in the butt and squatted down, provoking laughter from everyone else.

Bai Xiaoming pointed at him and said, "What did I tell you, you better not mess with Mr. Qin right now, but you just had to budge in."

Zhang Dawei got up, rubbing his butt, "I really did see Mr. Qin smile."

Mr. Qin smiling, what a novelty.

Li Wei, a colleague, said, "How could Mr. Qin not be happy? With both a package and a letter, newlyweds sure are different. It's nothing but lovey-dovey for them. Unlike my conscienceless wife, who clamors for me to write her three letters a month, and I'm lucky if she even replies to one, let alone send a package."

"That's enough. You guys who live far away at least have something to look forward to, unlike me, I see my wife as soon as I walk through the door every day. There's nowhere to hide if I want some peace."

After Bai Xiaoming spoke, several people turned their gaze toward him.

Bai Xiaoming looked innocent, "Why are you all staring at me like that, did I say something wrong?"

Li Wei spat twice into his palm, "Are you bullying us because we're either single or our wives aren't by our side, huh? Brothers, let's beat him up."

Zhang Dawei was the first to charge, yelling as he pounced.

Li Wei and Wu Zhenfa followed suit, jumping on Bai Xiaoming and giving him a good beating with punches and kicks.

Qin Yang, with a package in one hand and the letter in the other, couldn't free up his hands, but recalling Bai Xiaoming's words, he walked over and landed a kick on his butt.

After a sound thrashing, Bai Xiaoming pleaded for mercy and promised to treat everyone to drinks, then they let him off.

Getting up and rubbing his butt, "Who kicked me just now? That was a nasty hit, damn."

Ever since he got married, it had been years since anyone dared to hit his butt.

Zhang Dawei was the first to raise both hands, "Not me."

Li Wei and Wu Zhenfa also shook their heads, "I didn't."

Bai Xiaoming's gaze turned to Qin Yang, who also shook his head, "I didn't use my hands either," it was his foot.

"You guys..."

Bai Xiaoming didn't further pursue the matter, being the oldest among them, he wouldn't hold it against them.

On the way, Bai Xiaoming had someone send a message home for him, and the five men headed straight to the cafeteria.

For dinner, there were only two dishes in the cafeteria, so they got the master chef to stir up another two, and they ordered a bottle of baijiu, sitting together around the table.

The five of them worked in the same department, enjoying the closest relationships.

Qin Yang held the highest position, Bai Xiaoming was the oldest, Li Wei and Qin Yang joined the company the same year, and Zhang Dawei and Wu Zhenfa joined two years later.

"Xiao Wu, did your fiancée write you a letter too? I say just take the time to go home and get married already, saves you the constant yearning."

Everyone poured themselves a drink, and as the eldest among them, Bai Xiaoming began.

A bit embarrassed, Wu Zhenfa scratched his head, "My family's hoping to have the wedding before the New Year. I'm not sure if I'll be able to get the time off; I want to spend more days there."

Chapter 47: Is it Better to be Fat or Thin?

Wu Zhenfa, a southerner, is said to live deep in the mountains, where the journey is long and takes several days just to get home.

"How can we not ask him to come down? When the heavy snow falls in November or December, the construction progress will slow down, and then we'll have time."

After saying that, he looked at Qin Yang, "Mr. Qin, what are you staring blankly for? I see that package, did your sister-in-law send some delicious food again? Is it for the brothers to taste?"

Don't think he didn't know who kicked him; since someone dared to kick his butt, he had to let them bleed a bit.

Sure enough, as soon as Bai Xiaoming finished speaking, Zhang Dawei's eyes sparkled as he looked at him.

He had tasted the beef sauce made by Mr. Qin's wife, and it was simply superb.

Li Wei had also heard about Qin Yang's wife's beef sauce, which was well-made, especially since even the goofball Zhang Dawei had tasted it, but he hadn't.

Wu Zhenfa also joined in the teasing.

Qin Yang pursed his lips, negotiating, "Why don't we talk about the relationship issues, Da Wei still doesn't have a partner."

Zhang Dawei, "..."

If you're reluctant to give it, then don't, why hurt him?

Eventually, Qin Yang opened the package, and like before, besides beef sauce, there was spicy fried pepper. He simply let Zhang Dawei take two bowls, and poured out half a bottle of each for everyone to enjoy as a side dish.

Everyone who tasted the beef sauce couldn't stop praising it.

Li Wei exclaimed, "No need to ask, your sister-in-law must be virtuous and beautiful. As the saying goes, 'skilled hands, kind heart'; such good culinary skills show she has a kind soul, and a beautiful soul means a beautiful appearance. Mr. Qin, do you agree with me?"

Qin Yang raised his glass to him, took a sip without saying a word.

Zhang Dawei looked at Li Wei with admiration, "Mr. Li, you're so good at reading people. When will I be able to find a wife?"

Bai Xiaoming teased him, "So, you want a wife too? Want me to ask my wife to help you look around?"

"Yeah," laughed Zhang Dawei, showing his teeth, "That would be great. Before, neither Mr. Qin nor Mr. Wu nor I had partners, and we didn't mind. But now Mr. Qin has a wife, and Mr. Wu has a partner; I'm the only one alone. Soon I won't be able to join in your conversations."

Li Wei also laughed at him, "What can you not join in on?"

These guys weren't all highly educated. He and Bai Xiaoming were promoted from working-class backgrounds to attend university, while Zhang Dawei just finished high school and took over his father's job. Only Qin Yang and Wu Jianfa were genuine university students.

Zhang Dawei was straightforward and young. Plus, considering his father's connections, they looked after him.

But they still had to tease him.

Zhang Dawei didn't at all feel like he was being set up, speaking earnestly, "You know, that kind of... what you always talk about... like kissing a girl, going to bed with a girl, is it better if a woman is a bit chubby or skinny..."

"Poof—"

Now everyone at the table couldn't hold back their laughter.

"Da Wei, let me tell you, you shouldn't always listen to us about this. You're still green; you should ask Mr. Qin's opinion. Ask him how it feels to be in bed with a woman, whether it's better if she's chubby or skinny."

This time Zhang Dawei didn't listen to Li Wei, shaking his head like a rattle.

Last time he had just asked Mr. Qin what kissing felt like, and ended up patrolling the construction route, 10 kilometers, which made his legs thin.

Dare he ask Mr. Qin about bed matters? That would be suicidal.

No one expected Zhang Dawei to have a moment of clarity at the critical moment, changing the subject with some other risqué jokes.

Qin Yang ate the fried peppers, picked up his glass of alcohol, and took a sip; the two spicy flavors spread in his mouth as the image of a petite woman flashed through his mind.

Slim, yet with flesh right where it should be.

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The night wind rustled the leaves, creating a whispering sound that made this quiet night especially peaceful.

Under the dim yellow light, Qin Yang took out the letter from Lin Chuxia and read it over and over again, three times in one breath, before setting the paper down.

The light cast on his stern profile, reflecting a solitary and cold shadow on the wall. But looking closely at his eyes, a different emotion lingered.

She, unexpectedly, started doing business.

Is it because she thinks the money he earns isn't enough, or can't she get along with her family, that she went out to find something to do?

Recalling the days just after their marriage and his interactions with her family, Qin Yang felt that she was not that kind of person.

Again, he read the letter, no complaints at all, full of hope for life, and asking him not to worry about her and to concentrate on his work.

His little wife seemed different from what he had imagined.

Also different from the image of wives others had described.

He took out the paper and wrote down the name Lin Chuxia, then suddenly didn't know what to say next.

After hesitating for a while, he put down the pen, took a shower, and went to bed.

It must be because he drank today that his mind wasn't clear.

Half-asleep and half-awake, he only felt a pair of tender arms wrapping around his waist.

Qin Yang turned his head and saw the bright smiling little woman behind him, her almond eyes curving as she called him, "Qin Yang."

"Lin Chuxia?!"

Qin Yang felt he was dreaming, yet the dream felt too real, real enough that he could feel the softness of the woman's body.

He embraced her, looking down at her rosy red lips, his Adam's apple moved with difficulty, and his voice was slightly hoarse, "Why are you here?"

"I missed you, so I came," Lin Chuxia tilted her head, her tone playful, "Or do you mean you didn't miss me and didn't want me to come?"

She pouted as if she was upset, making her lips look even more red and pouty.

"No."

How could he not want her to come? He missed her so much, all the time, never knowing he could miss someone this much.

The woman was pleased and asked joyfully while looking up, "Then how do you miss me?"

How does he miss her?

Qin Yang thought this question was not suitable to answer; he slowly lowered his head, gazing into her sparkling eyes, and gently kissed her lips.

Soft, tender, with a scent unique to her, a bit fragrant, a bit sweet, really just like eating a peach...

He didn't know how much time passed, just when he felt like all his longing had finally found an outlet to burst forth, Qin Yang suddenly felt a chill below and abruptly opened his eyes...

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"Mr. Qin, doing laundry early in the morning?"

Li Wei came to the washroom to wash his face and saw Qin Yang washing clothes under the tap, casually greeted him.

"Yeah," Qin Yang responded, slightly shifting his position to block the other's view.

Just after blocking Li Wei's view, someone else entered the washroom.

Zhang Dawei yawned as he came in and saw the basin of clothes Qin Yang was washing, "Mr. Qin, washing sheets early in the morning, did you have a wild night?"

"Pfft—"

Li Wei sprayed out a mouthful of mouthwash loudly.

This Zhang Dalengzi.

Qin Yang's face was so dark it could not get any darker, "Blind your dog eyes, I am washing clothes."

"Oh, oh."

Zhang Dawei didn't know why Mr. Qin was angry again, clearly, he was washing sheets.

Men knew, washing sheets early in the morning, what else could it mean, everyone knows that, why get angry?

But knowing that the angry Mr. Qin was not to be messed with, he didn't want to walk another ten kilometers.

After Li Wei finished washing up, he sympathetically patted Zhang Dawei's shoulder, gave him a thumbs up while Qin Yang wasn't looking, then left the washroom with his basin.

Outside, suddenly there was a burst of laughter from Li Wei.

Qin Yang furiously threw the sheets back into the basin, "Damn it!"

Zhang Dawei, with a toothbrush in his mouth and mouth full of foam, shrank tremblingly into a corner.

Weak, helpless, pitiful...

Who could tell him what on earth was going on?

Chapter 48: Clinging On

After the Bun Shop opened, Lin Chuxia became even busier, but thankfully Su Wensong was in charge of procurement, so she no longer had to rush early in the morning to the vegetable market and butcher shop.

She left the handcart to Su Wensong and planned to learn to ride a second-hand bicycle.

All her money had gone into the shop, leaving her purse painfully thin. Moreover, even if she had money, she'd need a bicycle ticket, so she might as well take a shortcut and buy a second-hand one.

After learning about her idea, Granny Sun heartily guaranteed her son could get her a second-hand bicycle. The next day, he actually brought her a Phoenix brand bicycle that was almost new.

The price was attractive too, 40 yuan.

Lin Chuxia knew that Sun Hao had a special status and could sometimes provide conveniences. She hadn't expected such a big favor from him, so she immediately counted out the money and handed it to Granny Sun.

With the bicycle, commuting back and forth became much easier.

By the time she arrived at the courtyard, Su Wensong had already returned from shopping and was mincing meat in the yard, the two cleavers moving so fast they almost left afterimages.

Over the past while, Su Wensong had always been the one to chop the meat - it was a task requiring strength.

Lin Chuxia had tried the manual meat grinders of that era. A manual meat grinder could only grind a couple of ounces at a time, which was far from ideal.

After one use without depleting it, Su Wensong had disdainfully set it aside.

Granny Su sat on a small stool picking vegetables. Lin Chuxia parked the bike and greeted her with a smile, "Granny Su, you're up so early again. You really could have left these chores to us."

Granny Su's face was full of kindness as she continued to pick chives, chatting with her, "I enjoy doing these things. Lin, you don't understand, Granny loves the bustle. Watching you all busy every day, I feel as though life has become tastier, even more lively than during the New Year."

Lin Chuxia responded with a smile, "You've given me such cheap rent, and now you help me pick vegetables every day, am I not taking too much advantage?"

Granny Su laughed along, "How are you taking advantage of me? It's us who are taking advantage of you."

She glanced at her grandson, chopping the meat. With this job, her grandson visibly changed from before.

Previously, her grandson didn't talk much to her, but seeing him often silent and sometimes frowning inadvertently, she knew he was carrying concerns inside.

Now, though he was up at the crack of dawn and worked late, he always had a smile on his face, and the energy with which he worked was different.

Lin Chuxia and Granny Su chatted and laughed as they finished picking the vegetables, and Granny Sun arrived.

Once the meat was seasoned, Granny Sun started making buns, with several pots of porridge simmering on the stoves.

Before the first batch of buns was out of the pot, a queue had formed outside the shop. The new day had officially begun with bustling activity.

For breakfast, they mainly served meat buns, vegetable buns, porridge, and pickles.

After the morning rush, Lin Chuxia started preparing cold dishes for lunch.

These were usually seasonal vegetables, blanched with hot water, seasoned, and then mixed with her secret spicy chili oil, which was very popular.

While busy, Granny Sun poked her from behind. Lin Chuxia turned around puzzled, and Granny Sun nodded toward the doorway.

She saw an old man standing outside, hands behind his back, looking up at their Bun Shop's sign.

The old man was none other than the very gentleman who sat daily by the entrance of the train station, keeping watch.

Lin Chuxia wiped her hands and went to greet him, her mouth not sparing any feelings, "Why have you come here today? Just passing by?"

Old Sir He looked Lin Chuxia up and down as she came out of the shop, then huffed a cold snort and stepped inside.

It wasn't mealtime yet, and the shop was empty. Old Sir He found an empty spot to sit down.

Lin Chuxia deliberately teased him, "Sorry, our shop is not open at the moment. How about you come back during lunchtime?"

Old Sir He's beard twitched, and he could no longer hold back.

"Do you girls have no conscience? How many days has it been? Tell me, how many days has it been? I haven't had a single bun and I'm so hungry I've lost weight. And now you're telling me there's no food? What's steaming in your bamboo basket then? Air?"

Lin Chuxia couldn't contain her laughter, sitting opposite Old Sir He, resting her chin in her hands, and asked, "Old Sir He, who told you this bun shop is owned by me? If I don't set up a stall, you won't eat? How come I kindly give you a few buns and you latch on to me like this?"

"What do you mean latch on? You girl are up to no good—first giving meat buns, then vegetarian buns, and in the end, not even a shadow of the vegetarian buns is seen. What's your intention? I don't care, your Bun Shop isn't going anywhere. In the future, I will come to eat my buns..."

Before Old Sir He could finish, Granny Su entered from the back door, "You shameless old man, Lin's giving you buns out of kindness, why are you blaming her?"

After finishing, she said to Lin Chuxia, "Don't bother with him, this old thing is never up to any good."

Old Sir He's eyes dodged for a moment when he saw Granny Su, then stubbornly retorted, "How am I not up to any good? Clearly, this girl provoked me. You ask her if that's not the case."

Lin Chuxia raised her eyebrows; it seemed Granny Su and Old Sir He knew each other.

Seeing Old Sir He looking at her with eager eyes, there seemed to be a hint of pleading in his glance.

Lin Chuxia explained to Granny Su with a smile, "It felt like fate to see Old Sir He there every day, so I thought to let him help test out the taste of the buns."

Hearing this, Old Sir He proudly lifted his chin, as if to prove he wasn't lying.

Granny Su snorted coldly, "Little Lin is kind-hearted, seeing you all alone out there looking pitiful, and now you think too highly of yourself."

Old Sir He's face showed disdain, "If you don't think highly of yourself, why are you wandering around here? Who wrote the sign at the door? I, the old man, am also enlightened; to see in my lifetime..."

"Shut your mouth," Granny Su interrupted him, "You just want to eat buns, is that it? I'll tell you, Lin's a good kid. You can't just freeloard and take advantage of her, not on my watch."

Old Sir He's beard twitched, his face full of caution, "Then... what do you suggest?"

"Ha, look at that expression on you. Do you think you have boundless wealth, or that you are so desirable? Let's not talk about it, go wherever you need to go. Lin's shop doesn't cater to you, don't act like we're after something else."

"You... what's your rush? Lin hasn't kicked me out yet," Old Sir He quickly begged for mercy, "You tell me."

Granny Su glanced at Lin Chuxia, "Lin not kicking you out is because of Lin's kindness. She's not your junior; why should she let you eat buns for free? If you really want to eat meat buns every day, then take Lin as your apprentice. You don't need to pass on any trick, just give her a bit of your hidden treasures, and that will cover the cost of the buns."

Not only Old Sir He, but even Lin Chuxia was surprised by Granny Su's words.

Granny Su gave her a reassuring look; Lin Chuxia understood then that Granny Su knew Old Master He, and surely Old Sir He's identity was not simple.

Granny Su was helping her gain some advantages.

Chapter 49: Shall I Kowtow Twice for You?

Although she never expected any reward from old Sir He, seeing his expression so full of bitterness and unease, she couldn't help but find it amusing.

With a teasing tone, she said, "So, Old Sir He, you have treasures, huh? Then I'll have to stick to you. What should we do about the traditional gift for becoming an apprentice? Shall I kneel and kowtow to you first?"

"You... stay away from me," Old Sir He frowned and rubbed his arms.

Before, when he saw the girl laughing, it was always warm and friendly. But now, somehow, her smile seemed cold to him.

"How can I show my respect if I'm too far away? Why don't we follow Granny Su's suggestion? I'll acknowledge you as my master and you can see me as your junior. In the future, I can have meat buns every day, how about that?"

If she could bring a glimmer of hope into Old Sir He's heart, giving him the will to live on and wait for his son's triumphant return, Lin Chuxia was willing.

Finally, Old Sir He stood up, waving his hands dismissively, "I don't have an appetite today, don't feel like eating meat buns. Just the smell of meat makes me nauseous—I can't stand it, I need to leave... I'm leaving..."

Watching his hasty retreat, Granny Su snorted with laughter.

Lin Chuxia quickly picked a few meat buns from the steamer and chased after him.

If Old Sir He managed to find this place, he surely hadn't eaten. Seeing how skinny he was, it seemed he usually ate quite carelessly. How could she bear to let him leave hungry?

Seeing Granny Su's face, seemingly enjoying the show at the entrance of the Bun Shop, Old Sir He turned his head away proudly. "Take it away, I've lost my appetite today. Just the smell of meat disgusts me."

Smiling, Lin Chuxia stuffed the buns into his arms, "They're not meat, all vegetarian fillings."

And with that, she headed back to the Bun Shop.

Old Sir He watched her leave, his eyes twinkling with complexity. Raising his head, he met Granny Su's gaze, snorted, and walked home holding the buns. While walking, he took out a bun and took a bite, savoring the meaty flavor.

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Inside the Bun Shop, Granny Su had started telling Lin Chuxia about Old Sir He.

Old Sir He came from a family of traditional Chinese medicine, with ancestors who once served as imperial physicians for the emperor. Because of this...

Three daughters and a son, they all suffered as a result. Fortunately, the daughters were married and immediately cut off their ties with him. Luckily, it was only his youngest son, born in his later years, who couldn't avoid the situation.

His wife couldn't make it through that time either and passed away the following year.

It was a pity that he, with his medical skills, couldn't save his own wife and could only watch her die in agony.

Since then, Old Sir He never again treated anyone, nor was he willing to talk about his past as a physician.

Now that policies have improved, Old Sir He is just hoping for the day when his youngest son can safely return.

What remained was what Lin Chuxia saw, Old Sir He sitting at the entrance of the train station every day, keeping watch.

"Grandpa He's son will definitely come back safely," Lin Chuxia held Granny Su's hand.

Granny Su sighed, "Everyone's hoping for that, it's just that there's been no news for so long."

Lin Chuxia could not tell the elderly that Old Sir He's son was still alive. She would not reveal the secret of her rebirth to anyone; in her previous life, she had only heard rumors and never actually saw Old Sir He's son.

For now, all she could do was provide what little help she could, giving the old man the confidence to keep living and hoping for an earlier reunion.

In the evening when she returned home, Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin were both waiting for her. Mr. Qin spoke to her about the situation in the fields.

These past few days, the tomatoes were being uprooted, and it had been agreed that once the tomatoes were removed, nothing would be planted until it was time to directly sow the wheat.

Mr. Qin felt it was a pity to leave the land idle, "I'm thinking of planting a season of fennel. It grows quickly, taking only about 40 days from sowing to harvest, which would make good use of this period. Doesn't your bun shop also sell vegetarian buns? Planting fennel would be perfect. We could harvest early, starting from when they're just over a fork's length, and it can last for about 10 days. By the time the last cut is done, it won't be too tough."

"I know you're worried about your mom's and my health, but don't worry. Ever since I started taking the medicine you brought, I've felt much better. My chronic problems haven't flared up lately. Doing this work is easy peasy, and planting fennel is simple too—just scatter the seeds and water once in the middle, that should suffice. If we're lucky with the weather, we might not even need to water them."

Lin Chuxia had been giving the two elders spiritual spring water, worried that the effects of the water were too apparent and might raise suspicions, she went to the hospital to get some vitamins and placebos, telling the elders it was medication introduced to her by someone else, which Mr. Qin had been taking lately.

Hearing Mr. Qin talk about planting fennel, Lin Chuxia nodded, "Then let's do as Dad says."

She could see that Mr. Qin was not one to sit idle; having something to do and being physically active was good for him.

After discussing matters of the field, Lin Chuxia returned to her own room. She first took a bath in the spatial storage, changed into clean clothes, and then began to go over the accounts.

Every day, she would leave the money for the next day's purchases with Su Wensong and keep the rest of the money in her bag—in reality, she kept it in her spatial storage to bring back.

It was an era of loose change, and Lin Chuxia spent quite some time organizing it.

Adding the money left for Su Wensong, the day's turnover was over eighty yuan.

Since the shop opened, this had been the standard turnover. After deducting costs, there was roughly a fifty yuan profit.

Buns were the mainstay, followed by cold dishes.

Nowadays, vegetable prices were cheap, and the cost for a plate of cold dishes was only a few cents.

Most customers who came to eat at her shop were men, many who didn't want to go to the state-owned restaurant and preferred eating and chatting at her place. There were also friends catching up over drinks and food; sales of beverages and cold dishes were quite good.

After a while, when the weather cooled down, relying on cold dishes alone wouldn't do. Lin Chuxia was thinking, once the bun shop was on the right track, she would start selling cooked food as well.

Cooked food was also her strong suit.

And the profit from cooked food was substantial. If she added cooked dishes, the shop's daily profit could increase by at least twenty yuan.

It would surely mean, however, that the shop would be short-staffed.

Lin Chuxia was contemplating whether to place an ad for a service staff when an acquaintance showed up in the shop the next day.

Seeing Sun Lanlan, Lin Chuxia wanted to slap herself; she had been so busy that she completely forgot about her good friend.

Sun Lanlan looked around the shop, her face full of surprise, "A couple of days ago, my third brother went to the train station to see someone off and said he saw you selling buns at a bun shop. I didn't believe it, but turns out it's really you."

Lin Chuxia led her into the shop, found a quiet corner and poured her a cup of water, "Are you hungry? I'll grab a couple of buns for you to try."

Sun Lanlan quickly grabbed her, glanced around, and lowered her voice, "Maybe not, it wouldn't be good to get spotted by your boss. I'll just sit here and chat with you. Are you busy? Is it okay to talk?"

Lin Chuxia patted her shoulder, "No problem, I call the shots here. Just make yourself comfortable."

She then fetched a few buns. At this moment, Su Wensong approached, "Boss, the meat's all chopped up, we can start making the fillings."

Sun Lanlan beside them widened her eyes in shock, remaining speechless long after their conversation had finished.

"You... you're the boss?"

Chapter 50: The Name She Remembers Even When Burned to Ashes

The line from just a moment ago where she said the shop was her call, Sun Lanlan thought Lin Chuxia was just saying it to reassure her, but it turns out Lin Chuxia is the actual owner of the Bun Shop.

Now thinking about it, the Bun Shop is called Qin's Steamed Bun Shop, isn't Lin Chuxia's man's surname Qin?

"Chuxia, you've really done well for yourself, how can you be so capable?"

Sun Lanlan was so impressed she wanted to spin her sister in circles.

She had heard awhile back that Lin Chuxia's man had already gone to work out of town, and she was worried, feeling that the newly-wed sister-in-law at home alone seemed so pitiable.

She thought about visiting Qin Family Village but didn't want to trouble her sister, so when she heard that Lin Chuxia worked at the Bun Shop, she immediately came to see her.

Who would have thought her sister had become so successful, even becoming the boss.

"Right, I heard recently Lin Jiayi has been pushing Li Guangyuan to find some business to do, she isn't stimulated by watching you do business, is she?"

Daqing Mountain Village is adjacent to Xiaoqingshan Village, and with a keen ear for gossip, Sun Lanlan had heard a fair bit about Lin Jiayi.

Lin Chuxia thought to herself, Lin Jiayi wanting to do business wasn't from being provoked by her, but rather she was still dreaming of being a rich wife.

She wonders if Li Guangyuan could be persuaded by Lin Jiayi, and she was quite looking forward to it.

Shaking her head, "My family doesn't know I do business, and I'm not planning on letting them know."

Sun Lanlan, thinking of the Lin Family's attitude towards Lin Chuxia, also felt it's better not to let them know, "That's fine, I'll tell my third brother to keep his mouth shut tight."

"By the way, Chuxia, guess how Lin Jiayi has been getting along in the Li Family lately, I wonder if she regrets swapping the marriage arrangement with you."

Sun Lanlan came just to gossip with her sister; the sudden marriage swap that Lin Jiayi did with her sister had really disgusted her, so she had been indirectly inquiring about Lin Jiayi's situation, and oh boy, what she found out, not a single good word to say.

Lin Chuxia rarely reveals such a youthful spirit in front of her close friend, her eyes shining with the thrill of gossiping, "What's the situation? Tell me quickly."

Sun Lanlan shared the story of Lin Jiayi's younger sisters-in-law stealing her dowry, and also how she claimed she would never work the fields but ended up working beside Li Guangyuan obediently.

Lin Chuxia found it amusing. Li Guangyuan managed to earn a reputation as an honest and simple man, but he's just too nice, offending no one, and no one could afford to offend him.

In a crisis, don't expect him to stand up for you, he'll just try to smooth things over for both sides, often leaning towards his mother's side.

And those two sisters-in-law of hers are also no easy targets.

When the Li Family offered eight chi of fabric as a dowry, she found it suspicious.

The Li Family is not known for their generosity; eight chi of fabric is too much for one dress and not enough for two, but the two daughters of the Li Family are slim, just enough for two new dresses each.

She had warned Lin Jiayi back then, thinking she wasn't being kind, now let Lin Jiayi see the true face of the Li Family for herself.

Old Mrs. Li sides with her own, wishing she could milk her daughter-in-law dry, not stopping until the last drop of blood is squeezed out.

In her previous life, she had also arranged good marriages for her two sisters-in-law, sealing the mouths of all three, gaining leverage over the sisters-in-law with their marriages, which made her later life much more peaceful.

Otherwise, the two of them might cause some trouble.

"You said that you thought Li Guangyuan looked quite good before, although his family is a bit poor, the person is rather honest. But how come it turned out to be like this? It's good that you didn't marry him," Sun Lanlan finally sighed. "It seems that with Qin Yang not being at home, a lot of trouble has been avoided."

It seems that life's pretty good for the sisters.

Seeing Lin Chuxia's spirits drop as she spoke, worriedly she asked, "What's wrong? Did something happen?"

Sun Lanlan sighed, "It's nothing serious, just that a matchmaker proposed a potential suitor to me. My mother thinks the other party is also acceptable, but when I look at you all, I can't help feeling that a woman getting married is like being reborn. I have no idea what kind of fate I'll be reborn into, which makes me feel a bit uneasy."

Lin Chuxia's brows slightly furrowed, "Who did Aunt Sun mention to you? Where is he from, what does he do, what's his name?"

Seeing her so anxious, Sun Lanlan laughed first, "Don't worry, I just feel a bit uneasy. We all have to get married eventually. He's also a farmer, not too far from our village, from Men Village Camp. His name seems to be Liu Dahui. My mom says his family farms too, but the Liu Family is hardworking and richer than the average household. Liu Dahui is the youngest of four siblings; all his brothers and sisters are married. If I get married and move there, we'd split up and live independently, which seems pretty good."

When Lin Chuxia heard the name Liu Dahui, her mind buzzed.

He was the very man Sun Lanlan was married to in her previous life, a name she remembered even if turned to ashes.

In her previous life, her initial marriage was into the Li Family. Because of the three hundred yuan dowry, her mother-in-law bitterly resented her family, and even though the two villages were neighboring, she wasn't allowed to return home.

A year later, when Lin Chuxia heard about Sun Lanlan's wedding, Sun Lanlan was already about to be married.

She didn't expect this match to be arranged so early.

It was all because she had been too busy recently, and neglected this matter.

"What's so good about that," Lin Chuxia feigned anger as she spoke, "Didn't you want to find someone with an office job? Are you really content spending your whole life farming in the village?"

"I do want someone with an office job, but those with jobs have to be willing to marry me too. If we from the countryside get married into the city, what will we have to eat and drink?"

Lin Chuxia took her hand and held it tightly, "Lanlan, I was actually planning to find you even if you didn't come. Look at my bun shop; since it opened, there's been no shortage of customers but just a few people to help out. I want to find a couple of reliable people to help me. Would you be willing to come work with me?"

Hearing this, Sun Lanlan excitedly clasped Lin Chuxia's hand back, "Can I... really?"

"Of course, you can. You're quick-handed and clear-headed; you're overqualified for my little shop. Now that the market is open, even farmers can come to the city to work and earn wages. What does it matter if we have commodity grain or agricultural household registration? We're able-bodied and can support ourselves. Even when it comes to marriage prospects, if you're earning a salary every month, you won't be inferior to those city folks. Isn't that right? Look at me, am I any worse than Qin Yang, who has an office job?"

In the eyes of people at that time, household registration was a huge chasm between city dwellers and villagers. However, Lin Chuxia knew that with the market opening up, the gap between agricultural and non-agricultural households was getting smaller and that in twenty or thirty years, non-agricultural households would even envy agricultural ones.

She couldn't tell Sun Lanlan all this, but she could slowly change her way of thinking.

Sun Lanlan shook her head vigorously, of course not; her sister was a boss and managed several people.

"That's right. Go back and tell Aunt Sun that you've found a job in the city, and that the marriage can wait another couple of years."

Sun Lanlan was like she was dreaming, "Would my mom agree?"

"Why wouldn't she agree? If not, just say you're not happy. Doesn't your third brother still not have a suitor? Just shift the focus to him."

Far in Daqing Mountain Village, Sun Bingnan sneezed, suddenly feeling a bit cold.