

## Switched M 471

Chapter 471: A Joyful Gathering for Hosts and Guests

Another round of thank yous, this meal was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

In the evening, when they returned to their lodgings, they began to pack their baggage.

The office on the other side is still a dilapidated warehouse, Lin Chuxia suggested Jia Liang to stay in a guesthouse, and to move over once the place is tidied up.

Jia Liang didn't mind, claiming that it's more comfortable to live there alone than in the messy guesthouse.

On their return journey, Liu Guoqiang suggested that Lin Chuxia and the other women could take the train back, and that he, Hou Xiaobao, and Master Xu could manage by themselves.

All three of them could drive, and Master Xu could take over when tired, and having three men was enough to safeguard the truck.

Wang Tianxue shook his head first, "I'll follow the truck. There's space at the back, I can sit there. I've followed trucks before, so I do have some experience."

Lin Chuxia didn't plan to take the train either. The truck was carrying goods worth more than 30,000 yuan. Honestly, even though she now owned factories and shops, from buying and renovating the properties to now, her money had dwindled to almost nothing.

Buying that warehouse yesterday had depleted her last reserves.

It seems that after her rebirth, except for the first few months, Lin Chuxia had never been this poor, and she was worried about losing the goods.

Both of them not taking the train, Liu Na wouldn't go alone either.

Thus, early in the morning, they checked out, taking their luggage to the truck.

Jia Liang had slept in the truck, and was already up, "Mr. Lin, I've checked everything, no issues."

"Good, thank you for your hard work here in Rong City these past days, use that money first, I'll send more later."

"Understood, Mr. Lin."

The flatbed truck they rented had two rows of seats in the cab, and could fit six people tightly.

But Lin Chuxia and the other women chose to sit in the truck bed instead.

Knowing they were transporting apparels, Aunt Fang had found a truck with a canopy, which created a little space at the back.

Although it was bumpier back there, it was comparably comfortable to the smell of gasoline in the cab.

In other words, neither place was comfortable.

It was better to make everyone else a bit freer, and more convenient for the men.

Lin Chuxia and Wang Tianxue sorted out the clothes in the back of the truck a bit, created some space, and sat more comfortably on top of the clothes.

It was peak summer, the air outside was dry and hot, and driving brought in occasional breezes, which was much more comfortable than six people cramped in the cab.

At that time, cars did not have air conditioning.

Their trip here by train took over thirty hours, and although driving themselves this time wasn't necessarily faster than the train, it was even slower in fact.

Setting aside the roughness of the highways, they also had no plans to drive through the night.

The first day went smoothly; they had started at a little past five in the morning, eating dry food along the way. The three drivers took turns driving until they reached a guesthouse in a small county safely by eight in the evening.

Along the way, Lin Chuxia and the others in the truck bed swayed and bounced around, chatted, played cards, and even took a nap, not feeling overly burdened by the journey.

The county town wasn't big, and had only this one guesthouse, a row of rooms, and a large courtyard, which was just right for parking the truck.

Lin Chuxia asked Monkey, "How's it going, tired after today?"

"Not really, I managed a nap after driving, didn't feel very tired."

With the three of them sitting in the back, it had left the back row of the cab empty.

The three men took turns driving; whoever was off duty rested in the back row, leaving two upfront to watch the road.

And the one in the back could curl up and catch some sleep on the back seat.

Liu Guoqiang came over, "There should always be someone with the truck at night, I'll sleep in it tonight, and we'll switch tomorrow night, Monkey."

Monkey had no objections.

Lin Chuxia then took another discreet look at Liu Guoqiang, indeed a military man, reliable in his actions.

The guesthouse had a yard and gate, originally she had not considered having someone sleep in the truck.

After all, the rooms were right there, making employees sleep in the truck seemed somewhat inconsiderate.

However, Liu Guoqiang's caution was also valid, after all, with a truck full of goods, it wasn't impossible for someone to steal something in the middle of the night.

She once again made up her mind about Liu Guoqiang, deciding to definitely keep him on board, even considering employing his fellow retired soldiers who couldn't find jobs.

Yes, giving priority to retired soldiers.

After resting for the night, they woke up early the next day.

After breakfast and packing another day's dry food, they got back on the road.

This time, the journey was less bearable for Lin Chuxia and the others.

Perhaps the roads back in Rong City were better developed and maintained, as they hadn't felt much jolting initially, having traveled mostly on small roads.

But not long into the second day, the truck began to sway and jolt intermittently.

They were sitting in the very back, where it jolted the most.

Soon, Liu Na turned pale and began to dry heave, nauseated by the ride.

They were neither near a village nor close to a store, and it wasn't even noon.

Even if they wanted to ask for a stop, they couldn't get the message to the front, but thankfully, the canvas at the back could be opened, and whenever Liu Na couldn't hold it in, she'd lean over the side of the truck and throw up.

"This won't do, we'll stop the car soon and you can sit in the front," Lin Chuxia passed her a military water bottle, looking at her pale face.

Liu Na wanted to say it wasn't necessary, but her body was struggling, so she just nodded, "Mr. Lin, am I causing trouble for everyone?"

"What are you talking about? No one wants to be sick, don't think too much, we'll probably stop soon, you just hang in there a little longer."

After a while, the truck stopped by the roadside.

It was a desolate area with rough roads.

Liu Guoqiang came down and approached Lin Chuxia, "We're about to enter the mountains, Master Xu suggests that we eat something here and rest a bit before we continue driving. Once we cross this stretch of mountain roads, we won't stop."

Lin Chuxia nodded, understanding his meaning. Poverty leads to mischief, and since Master Xu said so, the stretch of mountain roads ahead must be risky and it's best to get through it as quickly as possible.

Hou Xiaobao noticed Liu Na's condition and asked with concern, "What's wrong, feeling carsick?"

Liu Na nodded, a bit embarrassed, "The road just now was too bumpy."

Lin Chuxia took the opportunity to add, "When we start driving again, let her sit with you guys in the front."

"Sure, let her sit in the front, and I'll take your spot in the back since I was driving this morning."

Today, knowing they would be hitting mountain roads by afternoon, they had Hou Xiaobao drive first, taking the smoother stretch.

Among the three drivers, both Master Xu and Liu Guoqiang had experience driving in the mountains.

Although Hou Xiaobao was also considered a seasoned driver, he had never driven on mountain roads, so safety was a priority.

#### Chapter 472: Up Against Tough Opponents

Lin Chuxia refused, "That won't be necessary. Let Liu Na sit in the front with you guys, and you also stay up front. The road ahead isn't easy, everyone should be on alert."

Somehow, Lin Chuxia always had a bad premonition, feeling the upcoming stretch of the road wouldn't be smooth.

The group didn't dare to delay. After eating some dry food and taking care of necessities, they were ready to hit the road again.

At this moment, Master Xu pulled out two covers from the driver's cabin and concealed the license plates.

Nowadays, there were no surveillance cameras or traffic police to check obstructed plates.

Of course, they knew Master Xu did this not to avoid traffic police checks, but to prevent certain people from noticing their license plates and harboring malicious intentions.

In the eyes of those who block roads, vehicles from Rong City were like fat sheep.

For the next stretch, Liu Guoqiang took the lead. A driver with military experience obviously meant reliable skills, but the mountain roads were even more rugged and winding.

After several hours of the winding and bumpy ride, both Lin Chuxia and Wang Tianxue felt uncomfortable in the back.

Luckily, both could endure; they just closed their eyes and didn't speak.

Seeing the sun tilting westward, Lin Chuxia looked outside and saw mountains stretching continuously.

Without GPS in those times, and only a map in hand, it was unclear where exactly they were or when they would get out of the mountains.

At this moment, the vehicle stopped for a while, perhaps just over a minute, and then resumed moving.

Lin Chuxia knew this probably meant the drivers had switched.

After all, Master Xu was the experienced driver, better for safer nighttime driving.

Just as she thought this, the vehicle suddenly stopped, not slowly decelerating like before, but with a sharp brake.

Lin Chuxia's heart skipped a beat with her, a bad feeling arising.

Wang Tianxue also quickly opened her eyes.

At the same time, they heard someone outside speaking in barely fluent Mandarin, shouting, "Get out, everyone get out."

Wang Tianxue's face changed drastically as she looked towards Lin Chuxia.

The two exchanged a glance, neither speaking, listening intently to the noise outside.

They heard Master Xu's voice. His accent was noticeably different than when he spoke with them, seemingly mimicking the accent of those blocking the road, trying to negotiate with them.

Lin Chuxia gently lifted a corner of the canvas and saw four or five people surrounding the front left side of the truck. Master Xu and the others hadn't gotten out, merely sticking a wad of money out the window.

The other side didn't accept the money from Master Xu, pressing about what was in the vehicle. Master Xu kept speaking nicely, dodging their questions.

Lin Chuxia furrowed her brows slightly, realizing they had met real trouble today.

First of all, the attitude of these people didn't seem like a few dozen yuan would be enough to send them away.

She then moved to the other side, lifting the canvas curtain to peek, and saw another four or five men on the other side.

Including potentially more people in front of the vehicle, that would be over ten men.

It was no coincidence these many people appeared at the same time; Lin Chuxia's expression darkened, suspecting these people were after the cargo.

Sure enough, while Master Xu was still negotiating, someone from the front became impatient and ran to the back, climbing up to lift the canvas.

Seeing this situation, Hou Xiaobao could no longer stay seated and pushed the door open to get out of the vehicle.



"What are you doing? Trying to rob us in broad daylight? This is robbery, and you'll be going to jail."

The opponent, seeing Hou Xiaobao's not-so-tall and lean figure, sneered, "Going to jail? Come on then, try to arrest me. Let me tell you, if you're smart, unload half the goods in the car and you can leave safely. If not, you won't be taking anything with you."

"Brother Fei, stop wasting time talking to them. They're from Rong City, we've hit the jackpot today."

Someone had already torn off the cloth covering the license plate, threw it aside excitedly, and began to pull at the tarp.

Hou Xiaobao's eyes were wide with fury, knowing that Lin Chuxia and Wang Tianxue were sitting at the back of the van, fearing these men might harm them.

At this moment, Hou Xiaobao had completely forgotten the scene when he first met Lin Chuxia.

He strode forward and yanked one of them down.

The man was caught off balance and fell to the ground, instantly escalating the tension between the two sides.

"Alright, you dare to fight back, guys, get him!"

Liu Guoqiang also jumped down from the truck, and without a word, he knocked down someone who rushed at him.

The opponents, seeing his swift moves, signaled each other with their eyes and a few more charged at him.

Around four or five people were also surrounding Hou Xiaobao.

Two against twelve was a losing game no matter how one looked at it. Lin Chuxia abruptly stood up, clung to the side of the van, and prepared to jump down.

Wang Tianxue gasped in shock and held her back, "You can't go down there, you can't beat them. Where's Master Xu? If it won't work, we'll offer Master Xu more money to help us."

Master Xu had already made it clear earlier that he was just the driver, and if anything happened on the road, he wouldn't intervene, even prioritizing his and the truck's safety when facing danger.

So, up to now, Master Xu was still sitting in the cockpit, even looking for an opportunity to escape.

Of course, escaping was not so easy.

With a crashing sound, Lin Chuxia already heard the sound of the cockpit glass being smashed. Without further explanation, she simply said, "Don't worry, I know what I'm doing."

After that, she hesitated no longer and jumped down from the truck.

"There's another woman here..."

Someone shouted, but Lin Chuxia had already charged at them, and the opponent only managed to shout half a sentence before receiving a punch in the face.

"F\*ck..."

The man cursed loudly, thinking that since this woman looked quite pretty, he had initially wanted to tease her a bit, but now he had lost all interest in jesting, even brutally wanting her to beg for mercy through tears.

Lin Chuxia, agile and skilled, noticing Hou Xiaobao struggling, quickly dealt with the man before her and rushed over to help.

They were unarmed, while their opponents had clubs in hand. Seeing Hou Xiaobao take a couple of hard hits, Lin Chuxia stomped on the arm of the man she had downed.

The man, thinking this tigress had left him for someone else, had just lowered his guard when his arm was fiercely stamped on.

He screamed in pain and dropped the club.

He started to doubt his life, wondering how such a delicate woman could possess such strength.

The few moves he had exchanged with her felt like little hammers, and he even suspected his arm was broken from that last kick.

Lin Chuxia, not caring what he thought, picked up the club and threw it, shouting, "Houzi, catch this."

Now with a club in hand, Hou Xiaobao was not at as much of a disadvantage as before, but he was still struggling against several assailants.

With Lin Chuxia joining in, it gave him a moment to breathe, but before he could catch his breath, two more men rushed at him.

#### Chapter 473: Not the Least Bit Regretful

It's someone from the other side coming to support.

Liu Na, who sat in the vehicle, was almost crying anxiously; she kept imploring Master Xu whether they could go down and help the three people being assaulted below.

Just now, the glass of the driver's cab was shattered, leaving Master Xu with two shallow cuts on his body.

Hearing Liu Na's tearful pleading, he responded, "Are they after the goods or the people? The attackers just want the goods; they won't really harm anyone. If I go down, we might really lose this entire load of goods."

These road robbers were after money, otherwise, they wouldn't have appeared wielding only clubs.

If Master Xu found an opportunity to drive the truck away, the goods might remain; but once he stepped out, he would definitely not be a match for those attackers.

Crucially, with no one left in the truck, both the vehicle and goods could be stolen by the attackers at any moment.

Liu Na was a young girl who had never encountered such situations before, unlike Master Xu who had seen too much on his long-haul trips.

Hearing Master Xu say this, Liu Na also lost her own ideas.

Seeing those people pushing Mr. Lin to the side of the vehicle and several men assaulting a woman, Liu Na couldn't sit still any longer and pushed the door open to get out.

Master Xu frowned slightly, "Going down there will only add to the chaos..."

But Liu Na didn't care about that; she saw a man sneaking behind Mr. Lin, viciously raising a club to strike.

"Mr. Lin..."

Liu Na shouted loudly, rushing forward heedlessly.

Lin Chuxia felt the danger behind her but before she could turn around, a soft body threw itself over her, followed by a scream.

"Nana!"

She saw Liu Na's pale, pain-stricken face, and kicked the attacker away.

Just when everyone was struggling severely and Lin Chuxia was considering whether to give up part of the goods, the sound of a motorcycle approached from the distance.

The motorcycle quickly stopped in front of the truck.

Lin Chuxia caught a glimpse from the corner of her eye of the motorcycle rider dismounting and heading straight for the big truck.

Her heart skipped a beat.

Given the remote and rugged terrain, it couldn't possibly be reinforcements for them.

However, the next second, she saw the person directly taking on the robbers wielding clubs, and the individual's movements were swift, dealing with an attacker within minutes.

The situation quickly turned around; seeing the formidable newcomer, some robbers even started running away with their clubs.

Those who had been knocked down, some got up and scurried away using both hands and feet.

The final few found it not so easy to escape.

Lin Chuxia and Hou Xiaobao subdued one person each, Liu Guoqiang and the motorcycle rider together subdued three.

At that moment, Wang Tianxue, holding a rope, jumped down from the truck and handed the rope to Liu Guoqiang.

Liu Guoqiang skillfully tied up each person and then formally saluted the motorcycle rider.

The rider returned the salute with a standard military salute.

Lin Chuxia then noticed, although the person wasn't in military uniform, their aura was undeniably that of someone with a military background.

"Comrade, thank you so much for today. Without you, we really wouldn't have known what to do."

Lin Chuxia hurriedly expressed her gratitude to the individual.

"No worries, this is what we should do," the person glanced at the five tied-up individuals, "What do you plan to do with these people?"

This put Lin Chuxia in a difficult position.

They were strangers in this area and didn't even know where the nearest police station was.

Besides, they had a load of goods and were in a hurry to hit the road.

The other party noticed Lin Chuxia's predicament and promptly said, "Since it's inconvenient for you, let me handle it. I'm heading to the nearby police station for some work anyway."

Lin Chuxia glanced at Liu Guoqiang who nodded at her in agreement.

"That would be great. We'll leave these people in your and the police station's care. We really do need to hurry. These people were blocking the road and committing robberies, we hope the government will educate them properly."

"Of course, our society will never tolerate such wrongdoing."

Lin Chuxia left the rest to Liu Guoqiang to handle with that person and went to check on the others.

Liu Na was protecting her and she wasn't lightly affected; now Wang Tianxue was supporting her, and she was grimacing in pain.

Lin Chuxia lifted her shirt collar slightly to check inside, there was a large red area, which looked like it was about to turn purple soon.

"How is it, can you move your arms and back? Did it hurt your bones?"

Liu Na, in pain, still reassured Lin Chuxia, "It's nothing, Mr. Lin, I can keep going."

Saying this, she even lifted her arm slightly, seeming to show that the bones weren't hurt.

Lin Chuxia quietly breathed a sigh of relief, "Why are you so silly, don't you know that could have killed you?"

However, Liu Na just chuckled, "Mr. Lin, you have shown me a great kindness, a life-saving grace. My life is yours, even if it costs me my life, I wouldn't let anything happen to you."

In that moment, Liu Na had rushed out without thinking, but she didn't regret it.

She always remembered the kindness Lin Chuxia had shown her, not just regarding Feng Zhong, but also Lin Chuxia's guidance.

After such an incident, she even felt she was less worthy than others, yet Lin Chuxia, who knew the truth, never looked down on her, always encouraging her to be strong and self-respecting, and now taking her out to experience the world.

She always remembered the words Lin Chuxia said to her, be the strongest version of yourself, only by establishing yourself can you prevent others from disrespecting you.

It was because of such a goal that she was able to step out from the shadow of that relationship, feeling that she was still a person.

Such a boss, of course, warranted her protection with her life.

"Silly girl, none of us will have any troubles, our good days are still ahead."

Lin Chuxia then looked towards Wang Tianxue, "Sister Tianxue, are you alright?"

Although Wang Tianxue hadn't gotten out of the vehicle, Lin Chuxia knew that after she had, Wang Tianxue had stubbornly protected the canvas, blocking those people several times when they tried to get on the vehicle.

"I'm fine, are you and Houzi okay?"

Lin Chuxia really hadn't been hit, but Houzi had taken several blows.

But Houzi didn't take it seriously, grinning and stretching his limbs, "I'm fine too, haven't fought in a long time, it's good to loosen up the bones."

Lin Chuxia glanced at him disapprovingly, "If you want to loosen your bones, I can take care of that later."

Houzi's face changed instantly, "No need, Mr. Lin, I was just joking."

Master Xu had already cleaned up the broken glass, he got a couple of cuts on his arms and had treated them simply.



Liu Guoqiang had already finished negotiating with the comrade, "Mr. Lin, we can set off now. That comrade said if we go ten li forward, there's a town and we are almost out of the mountainous area."

"Great, let's set off then. Liu Na, you still sit in the back with me, I have medicine in my bag to apply to you."

"Okay," Liu Na walked to the rear of the vehicle, just about to lift her hand to climb in, but sucked in a breath of cold air from pain.

Lin Chuxia stepped forward, "I'll carry you up."

Before she could act, another figure had already scooped Liu Na up.

Chapter 474: Finally Back

Hou Xiaobao said at the same time, "My apologies, but this kind of heavy labor is better left to me."

Though Mr. Lin's strength is considerable, this task somehow still felt more fitting for us big guys.

Before Liu Na could react, she was lifted up, her little face turning beet red as she hastily used Hou Xiaobao's help to climb into the truck.

Hou Xiaobao was quite gentlemanly this time, after lifting her into the truck he stepped back and greeted Lin Chuxia, then headed to the front.

The truck started moving again, and Lin Chuxia, sitting at the back, waved at the tall figure next to the motorcycle by the roadside, who nodded back at him.

As the truck moved further away, after the last turn, the figure was no longer visible.

Lin Chuxia pulled down the canvas and took out a box of ointment from the bag in his space to apply medicine on Liu Na.

Her back was swollen, looking quite shocking.

"Next time there's a situation like this, don't just rush in recklessly. I'm skilled, I can avoid vital points. It's really dangerous for you."

Lin Chuxia couldn't help but admonish again.

Liu Na didn't argue this time, but in her heart, she thought that if such a situation arose again, she would still have to step up for Mr. Lin.

In less than twenty minutes, the truck entered a small town, probably the one that comrade had mentioned.

However, none of them planned on resting in this town.

Firstly, the town had no formal accommodations, and secondly, those highway robbers were clearly locals, with several still on the loose; there might be people from this town among them.

When they reached the town, Master Xu not only didn't stop the truck, but instead sped up, leaving the people at the back dizzy and disoriented.

Thankfully, after about an hour, they finally emerged from the mountains and found a larger town, probably a small county.

Master Xu drove the truck to the only public hostel in the county, and like the previous night, Liu Guoqiang slept in the truck, while the rest slept inside. After resting for a day, they hit the road early the next morning.

The following journey was smooth sailing, and by the evening of the fourth day, the truck finally arrived in Yan City.

The moment they saw their city, the air felt fresher to them.

When they arrived at the entrance of the mall, everyone couldn't wait to get off the truck.

During these days, Lin Chuxia had arranged for Qin Jianjun to recruit and train new staff at the mall. Hearing the noise outside, he put down his work and came out to greet them.

"Auntie Four, you're finally back."

Lin Chuxia nodded and his gaze fell on the man next to Qin Jianjun, "What are you doing here?"

Qin Yang furrowed his brows and looked her up and down, while Qin Jianjun said from the side, "Uncle Four guessed you guys would be back soon, so he comes here every day after work and waits for us to finish so we can leave together."

Qin Yang had already reached Lin Chuxia, raised his hand to smooth her hair in front of her forehead behind her ear, his brows still tightly knit, "Was the journey very tough? Did it go smoothly?"

Lin Chuxia caught his concerned gaze and realized that although they hadn't driven through the night, they had been arriving late at their lodgings every day.

Moreover, given the limited conditions on the road, they had only been able to wipe themselves down before bed, and her hair hadn't been washed for several days.

What was once a fashionable wavy hairstyle was now pinned behind her head, while the wisps of hair in front had lost all their charm.

After spending the whole day in the back of the truck, she probably looked like a beggar in Qin Yang's eyes.

Thinking this, Lin Chuxia stretched out her right hand pitifully, "It was very tough, I haven't eaten meat for several days, have pity on me and give me some meat to eat."

Wang Tianxue was just about to discuss with Lin Chuxia how to unload the goods when she happened to hear this remark and nearly stumbled and fell.

Is this the resolute and decisive woman she knew?

It was getting late, and everyone had indeed worked hard on this trip, so Lin Chuxia didn't insist on unloading the trucks right away. She arranged for Qin Jianjun and another employee to keep watch overnight while the rest went back to get a good night's rest.

Houzi invited Master Xu to stay at his place, but Master Xu declined and asked about a nearby guesthouse instead.

Lin Chuxia didn't press the issue; their relationship with Master Xu was strictly employment-based. Even when they were robbed on the road and everyone else was fighting desperately, Master Xu didn't lift a finger to help. Liu Na had objections to Master Xu's indifference, but Lin Chuxia calmly accepted it.

It was agreed before the trip that Master Xu's role was just to drive, earning a driver's wage, and they had no right to expect him to risk his life for their goods.

After all, he has a whole family depending on him.

"Let's go, I drove here."

Once Lin Chuxia had everything arranged, Qin Yang immediately took her hand and led her toward the parking spot.

Once in the car, Lin Chuxia hoisted her collar like a little dog, sniffing herself to see if there was any smell.

It wasn't noticeable before, but seeing the concern in Qin Yang's eyes, she realized how haggard they all were.

Especially Liu Guoqiang and Houzi, who had been taking turns keeping watch in the truck at night, hardly sleeping well. Liu Na got carsick, and all of them looked years older, their complexions rust-like.

If it weren't for the darkness in the car, Lin Chuxia would have wanted to use a small mirror to see how she looked.

Not to mention, she cared about her appearance in front of the person she loved.

Seeing her like that, Qin Yang chuckled inside, "Stop smelling, I won't dislike any scent on you."

"Ah? So, I really do smell? Then I'll take a bath and wash my hair when I get home."

"Not eating first?" Qin Yang turned back to look at her with a smile.

Don't mention it, his wife's current look was indeed rarely seen—strangely... cute.

"Shower first."

Lin Chuxia saw the teasing in Qin Yang's eyes, stretched out her hand, and twisted his head back, "Focus on driving, no looking at me."

Qin Yang chuckled softly, lifted his hand to hold her small one, and gently caressed it with his thumb.

His hand remained there as he drove.

After a half-month separation, and such anxious concern, Qin Yang truly missed his wife.

"Did things go smoothly this trip?"

"Pretty well..."

Lin Chuxia talked to Qin Yang about their experiences in Rongcheng, especially Aunt Fang's help.

"I was worried before that we'd have to make this trip every time we shipped goods, but I never expected Sister Tianxue to have such strong connections. I really chose the right business partner."

Lin Chuxia also mentioned that she had bought a piece of land in Rongcheng to serve as their office, then let out a pitiful sigh.

"Now I'm flat broke and in debt, husband, I'll need you to support me for the next two months."

Qin Yang glanced at her and without hesitation said, "I'll support you. I have a project that's about to be finished under my hands, and there should be a design fee. When it comes in, you can use all of it."

"Qin Yang, why are you so good?" Lin Chuxia sincerely exclaimed, "Do you know? On this trip, I truly felt the greatness of your work. Only if the country's infrastructure is well-developed can it drive the whole nation's economy. To open up routes from north to south, ensure smooth travel—easy to say, but putting it into practice is fraught with difficulties."

#### Chapter 475: Let Me Help You

The man's large hand gripped gently but firmly a couple of times, then he turned to look at the petite woman, "Don't worry, no matter how big the difficulty is, it will be overcome. I believe it won't be long before people's travel will improve. The country has already started designing highways, and with highways, travel time will be greatly reduced."

When they got home, Qin Yang first got some snacks for Lin Chuxia to tide her over, while he went to boil some water.

Lin Chuxia leaned against the kitchen door, munching on small biscuits while watching Qin Yang bustling around.

Once the water was boiled, Qin Yang took a basin and mixed some warm water, then carried it to the middle of the courtyard and motioned for Lin Chuxia to come over.

Lin Chuxia couldn't help but laugh at his setup, "I can do it myself."

"I'll help you."

Qin Yang set aside the biscuits she was holding, and brought over a small stool for her to sit on.

The warm water flowed over her scalp, and Lin Chuxia comfortably sighed, "Home is really the best."

Then she turned slightly to look at Qin Yang, "I really can do it myself."

His hands kept moving while he reminded her, "Close your eyes, I want to wash it for you."

He just wanted to look at her, touch her, help her with anything that needed to be done.

At that moment, a knock sounded from outside the courtyard gate, which was not fully closed, leaving a crack.

Yuan Bao, sitting aside, heard the noise and ran out with his tail wagging, clearly recognizing a familiar person.

Indeed, the next second, Sister-in-law Fu pushed the door open and immediately saw the couple in the courtyard.

"Oh, Lin's back? You two really are a loving couple, Xiao Qin is even helping you wash your hair."

At this moment, Lin Chuxia's hair was half-washed. She wanted Qin Yang to attend to the guest, but he showed no intention of moving, so she had no choice but to speak to Sister-in-law Fu with her head bowed.

"Sister, come in and sit, I'll be done here in a moment."

"No need to sit, we made dumplings tonight, knowing you weren't home these days, your elder brother asked me to bring some dumplings over for Xiao Qin so he wouldn't have to cook alone. It seems my dumplings are redundant now."

"They're not redundant, thank you Sister, I haven't had dinner since I came back," Lin Chuxia quickly said.

"That's great then, I'll leave them here."

Sister-in-law Fu, seeing the couple's affectionate manner, didn't want to disturb much further and placed the dumplings on a nearby stool, also instructing Yuan Bao not to steal any, before leaving with a smile.

Lin Chuxia's hair was also done, and she let Qin Yang help her dry it, giving him a glance, "You could have paid more attention with a visitor here."

Qin Yang justified himself boldly, "What's there to be concerned about? I'm just washing my wife's hair."

Although Lin Chuxia said that, her heart felt incredibly sweet. His assertiveness made her heart swell with an indescribable feeling.

She felt that she must have had a hard life in her past life, so this life she was compensated with such a considerate Qin Yang.

Obviously, she didn't need Qin Yang's help to take a bath. Meanwhile, Qin Yang took the chance to go to the unit's canteen.

He could manage eating alone, but now that his wife was home, and particularly wanting meat, he couldn't let her feel aggrieved.



When Lin Chuxia finished bathing and came out refreshed, Qin Yang had just returned with a food container.

"Braised pork, Mu Shu pork, and your favorite dry-fried green beans."

All were dishes he requested from the canteen.

Hearing the names of the dishes made Lin Chuxia drool.

She had really been craving good food these past few days.

The dumplings Sister-in-law Fu brought had chives and egg filling, and Lin Chuxia ate quite a few as well.

After finishing dinner and cleaning up, the couple sat in the courtyard, enjoying the cool evening and chatting.

Zhang Guilan had been staying with Qin Juan during this period, occasionally, the sisters would come over to see Qin Yang and cook him a meal.

Qin Han also came to the city a few times during this period, delivering vegetables and visiting Zhang Guilan.

Actually, everyone knows that visiting Zhang Guilan is the main purpose, and delivering vegetables is just by the way.

Lin Jiadong also came once.

"Knowing you weren't home, he sat for a while and left without having a meal," Qin Yang said with a hint of helplessness when mentioning his brother-in-law.

Is he some kind of fearsome creature? Why is his brother-in-law always so scared of him?

"Jiadong," this really took Lin Chuxia by surprise.

However, considering that Lin Jiadong has summer vacation during this time, he indeed has plenty of time to go out.

"I asked him to come again in a few days, or he might come back in two days."

Lin Chuxia nodded and lied back down on the lounge chair.

The two chatted back and forth, mostly about the recent events in Rong City with Lin Chuxia doing most of the talking, while Qin Yang occasionally asked questions. Gradually, the voice beside him silenced.

Turning his head, he saw the woman with her eyes closed, sleeping peacefully.

Qin Yang couldn't help but smile helplessly.

Just when he saw her yawning, he suggested going back to sleep inside, but she insisted on lying here to watch the stars.

Glancing up at the night sky, indeed, there were so many stars tonight.

He remembered back in the Northwest, he especially liked lying alone on the hillside watching the stars.

The night there was darker, the stars brighter, lying on the hill looking up at the vast sky was so boundless.

At such times, he always felt like a speck of dust, so insignificant.

He would seriously contemplate life, thinking about what he could leave behind in this world, to make his journey here worthwhile.

But now, having someone to watch the starry sky with, from a different perspective, he felt the starry sky was splendid, as dazzling as the person by his side, and seemingly found the meaning of life.

Qin Yang got up, carefully picked her up.

Lin Chuxia, drowsy, opened her eyes, saw the man holding her, and closed them again, naturally wrapping her arms around his neck, nuzzling into his chest.

Such trust and comfort.

.....

The next morning, Lin Chuxia drove directly to the mall in a jeep.

Everyone else had already arrived, and after a night's rest, they were all full of energy and looking human again.

Wang Tianxue was organizing the staff in the store to unload the truck, she was quite familiar with these procedures and handled them adeptly.

Hou Xiaobao was still helping around, Lin Chuxia called him over, "How are things on Xiyang's side? Can the goods be assembled completely?"

They were going back to Rong City this time and needed to take a batch of Xiyang's goods along, not returning empty.

"Contacted already, Xiyang has been working overtime, no problem at all."

Lin Chuxia nodded.

Prepared foods also have their off-peak and peak seasons, generally selling well during winter and holidays, but beef sauces and chili sauces are timeless.

Moreover, after the market investigation by Hou Xiaobao and his team, they found that their beef sauces and chili sauces should be more popular in the Rong City market.

"So, after unloading these goods, take Master Xu with you to Xiyang to load the goods, rest for a couple of days after loading, and then return. I'll ask Su Wensong to assign an extra person to follow your truck."

The journey still had its risks.

"Understood, Mr. Lin."

Lin Chuxia entered the mall and immediately saw Liu Na not far away, her brow slightly furrowing.

Chapter 476: Mr. Lin's Generosity

"Nana, come here."

Liu Na heard someone calling her and saw that it was Lin Chuxia, so she hurried over.

"Mr. Lin."

"What's going on? Didn't I tell you to rest at home?"

Liu Na's injury from that hit was not light; even though there were no broken bones, the swelling was extensive, and she wasn't fit to continue working.

Before Liu Na could make up any excuses, Lin Chuxia called Hou Xiaobao over, "You drive my car and take her home. Rest well at home these days, and come back on the opening day. If I see you running over here again, I'll dock your wages."

Liu Na couldn't help laughing and crying, "Mr. Lin, can't I just come over to look around and do nothing?"

Hou Xiaobao joined in the conversation with a smile, "What's there to say? If you don't listen to Mr. Lin and she gets mad, do you think you can still bargain? Better come with me quickly, don't worry Mr. Lin."

Liu Na still murmured quietly to Hou Xiaobao, "I really couldn't stand staying at home, just wanted to come out and have a look, I'm really fine."

"Don't talk to me about this, if you had listened to me this morning and just stayed put, none of this would have happened. You had to follow and move stuff around. You know Mr. Lin's temper; she's very protective of you guys. You're hurt and she sees you working, you're asking for a scolding."

"I really wasn't doing much..."

Watching the two of them walk away, Wang Tianxue snorted with laughter, "Look how scared you've made the young lady."

"It's necessary to scare her a little."

Lin Chuxia knew very well that Liu Na felt indebted for what happened before and the fact that she'd gladly risk her life for her was no empty promise.

She didn't want the life of a young woman in the prime of her years, with a whole wonderful life ahead of her.

All she wanted was to watch the girls blossom quietly like flowers.

Even with Wang Tianxue right there, seeing her capable demeanor filled her with satisfaction.

"How about it, can you get everything sorted out in three days?"

Their mall was set to open in three days. Initially, they had not planned for such a tight schedule, but plans fail to keep up with changes, and their stay in Rong City got delayed by two days, requiring twice as much stock.

Though it was a tight schedule, it was still worth it.

"It shouldn't be a problem," Wang Tianxue glanced over at Qin Jianjun, "The young man is very reliable in his work, truly someone Mr. Lin has personally trained. The people he's recruited are good, both in appearance and business capability so far."

Qin Jianjun, not far off, felt someone looking at him and saw it was Lin Chuxia; he scurried over, "Auntie Lin, need me for something?"

"President Wang was just praising the people you recruited; your training is also good," Lin Chuxia never skimped on praising her subordinates.

Qin Jianjun grinned, "I didn't do much, just followed the recruitment standards we had at Qin's Restaurant before."

Jia Liang knew Lin Chuxia's preferences. Back when Qin's was still the Bun Shop, they had recruited a group of handsome men and beautiful women. Later, when it became Qin's Restaurant and they needed to hire more people, the task of recruiting waitstaff was given to Qin Jianjun.

Now with the mall hiring again, Qin Jianjun found the task even easier.

Besides, whether it was the Bun Shop or the mall, Auntie Lin offered high salaries.

With such high salaries for hiring, he was sure to pick the best candidates.

"Alright, no more modesty. How do you feel about these days here? I'm thinking of keeping you at the mall. Any objections? Or do you think the pace back at the restaurant suits you better?"

Qin Jianjun still had to attend evening classes.

Qin Jianjun immediately stood up straight, "Auntie Lin, I prefer to work at the mall; I've already got the hang of things at the Bun Shop."

The rest of his words were in a much quieter voice, carrying a hint of coquettishness.

Lin Chuxia responded with a smile, "However, the responsibility here is greater. I'll start you off as a team leader."

"I promise not to let Aunt Si down."

"Alright, get back to work."

Wang Tianxue couldn't help but chuckle as she saw Qin Jianjun scurry off again.

"What kind of auntie are you? After all the help he's given, you only make him a team leader. I was thinking of giving him control over the entire sales management."

With the store having just opened, they didn't have many people on hand, and most of them were new employees whose capabilities were still unknown.

Having gone through the recruitment process, Wang Tianxue had seen Qin Jianjun's abilities first-hand. With a bit of guidance, she felt confident that he could handle the sales section without issue.

"Let's leave it at this for now," Lin Chuxia glanced at her, "You can promote him later. We can't elevate him too fast; young people can become arrogant easily if raised too high too quickly."

"Right, where's Liu Guoqiang?"

Wang Tianxue looked around, "I just saw him a moment ago, over there, moving goods."

"What are your plans for Liu Guoqiang? Does he plan to stick around for the long term?"

Previously, Wang Tianxue had mentioned that they found a driver.

"I'm planning to have him handle procurement and logistics. He's reliable and upright; you can fully trust him with these responsibilities."

"Mm, that sounds good. Have you discussed his salary with him?"

Wang Tianxue shook her head, "We have to wait for you, the financier, to make the final decision."

"Let's set his base salary at 80, and you can handle the rest. Also, this job isn't easy, so wrap a red packet of 60 yuan for him as a bonus, for good luck."

Jia Liang, Hou Xiaobao, and Liu Na shouldn't miss out on the red packets either—it was indeed hard and dangerous work.

"Mr. Lin is so generous," Wang Tianxue exclaimed with admiration.

Lin Chuxia gave her a sidelong glance, "When you have money, you'll do the same."

Wang Tianxue from her past life was generous and never mistreated her own people; she learned a lot from her.



As the merchandise was nearly unloaded, Lin Chuxia and Wang Tianxue began to arrange the goods placement.

Their store was not going to continue the traditional counter-based model of shopping malls; Lin Chuxia had already discussed with Wang Tianxue to implement the self-service model of future generations.

This included ensuring the fitting rooms and mirrors were fully equipped during renovations.

And the goods were divided into men's clothing, women's clothing, and high-end sections...

The three-floor store housed women's clothing and the storeroom on the first floor, men's clothing and hats on the second, and the office on the third.

The newly hired shop assistants, mostly young girls and a few boys, were present.

As the clothing was unpacked and arranged, exclamations could be heard from time to time, all from the girls expressing their delight.

"This is so pretty; I'll definitely buy one to wear once I earn some money."

"My mom would definitely love this; once our store opens, I'll have my mom bring her colleagues over to shop."

"Don't even mention it, my aunt knew I was going to work at the store, and she said she'd come to support us once it opens. I was worried that our store's styles wouldn't be good enough at the beginning, but now I can rest easy. My aunt will go crazy with joy when she sees these clothes; she loves buying beautiful dresses."

...

While directing the staff to sort out the clothing, Lin Chuxia turned her head and said, "Our store will have a 10% discount for the first three days after opening. Additionally, staff members will always enjoy

a 10% discount at our store when buying clothes, and we welcome your friends and family to come and shop."

"Wow, boss, you're so awesome."

Immediately after Lin Chuxia spoke, a cheer erupted from the crowd.

#### Chapter 477: If You Don't Like Someone, Don't Give Them Hope

The bustling atmosphere persisted until evening, with everyone even having their lunch from the steamed buns sent over by Qin's Buns Shop inside the mall.

Despite being busy all day, nobody complained of fatigue or hardship.

Especially the young girls, their eyes were shining.

Lin Chuxia could understand somewhat; to them, today's work probably felt like opening a mystery box.

When evening came and it was time to finish work, Lin Chuxia told the staff to leave, but she and Wang Tianxue stayed behind.

The grand opening was the day after tomorrow; they had to get the goods sorted out in these two days.

They had sorted some of them today, and next, they had to price the goods.

This was a task others couldn't do.

Qin Jianjun also didn't leave, assisting Lin Chuxia and Wang Tianxue.

Before long, Qin Yang came over as well.

Lin Chuxia was in a hurry at this moment, and one more person was just what was needed.

"Sister Tianxue, let's split into teams. You and Jianjun handle that side; give me the list below, and I will go to the other side with Qin Yang."

She took a list, grabbed Qin Yang, and dashed to the other side.

Wang Tianxue had seen Qin Yang before and knew they had a close relationship, but she hadn't realized just how clingy Qin Yang was. She couldn't help but think of Yang Rui.

How foolish she had been. When she was pregnant, Yang Rui often used work and overtime as an excuse, frequently coming home in the middle of the night.

Those who truly care about you will always find time to be with you no matter how busy they are.

Those who don't care, they're the ones who feel spending time on you is a waste and not worth it.

Qin Yang was somewhat amazed at the multitude of clothes in the store, "You guys have a lot of stock this time."

"Thanks to Sister Tianxue's aunt, half of these were obtained on credit, but once the mall opens the day after tomorrow, we can quickly repay the debt."

Lin Chuxia finished speaking and confidently flashed him a smile.

Qin Yang raised his hand to smooth her hair, "What can I help you with? I can't attend the mall's opening ceremony the day after tomorrow since it's not the weekend."

"It's fine if you can't come. Sister Tianxue will be hosting, and I'll just be supporting," although she invested a lot in the mall, she had no plans to manage it herself — if she did, she wouldn't have given Wang Tianxue a fifty percent share.

She had too many things to handle and couldn't be tied down by a mall.

Firstly, Wang Tianxue could devote herself completely, and secondly, she had experience in managing a mall.

Plus, with memories from her previous life, Lin Chuxia was clear on her abilities and fully trusted her.

"Take this label, stick it over there, I will write and you will stick."

Lin Chuxia handed a label to Qin Yang, directing him.

Qin Yang took it and stuck it where she pointed.

Not all the lights in the mall were turned on, just enough of them to light up their work area.

Only two windows were open to help with ventilation, but even so, the mall still smelled heavily of merchandise.

Among these scents, Qin Yang could distinctly smell the fragrance of the petite woman, watching her serious and focused expression, he was almost unable to take his eyes off her.

She always said his work was great, but Qin Yang saw in her the spirit of tenacity and indomitable will.

Each of these businesses she was engaged in related to people's livelihood, and which one wasn't important?

Outside, the sky had dimmed and the large doors of the mall opened again as Gao Lele came in with a bag of food.

"Mr. Lin, Sister Juan asked me to bring some food for you."

Lin Chuxia handed the freshly written label to Qin Yang and sighed, "Sister Juan really understands me. I am indeed hungry after being busy for so long."

Waving at Wang Tianxue, Qin Jianjun came over to have something to eat first.

"Is the store still busy right now?"

Lin Chuxia was eating while asking Gao Lele.

Jia Liang stayed in Rong City. Now, all affairs of Qin's Restaurant were being managed by Qin Juan.

Based on her understanding of her elder sister, if the store wasn't too busy, her sister would have personally come over to deliver food to them.

A trace of guilt flashed through Gao Lele's eyes, "It's okay, there are fewer people now."

She volunteered to help because she saw Qin Juan was going to deliver food to the people at the mall.

Lin Chuxia knew there were no issues at the store, so she didn't ask further and focused on eating.

The young men ate quickly, Qin Jianjun had a few buns and drank some water, wiped his mouth, and went back to work.

Gao Lele had been sitting by the side, looking around this way and that, and when she saw Qin Jianjun writing something over there, she followed.

Qin Jianjun thought it was Wang Tianxue who had come. He had already roughly reviewed the work. He was about to have Wang Tianxue look over the prices he had written down when he saw it was Gao Lele. So, he dropped his gaze and continued to look at the thing in his hand.

Gao Lele felt a prick in her heart at his reaction and took the initiative to speak, "Jianjun, are you going back to work at the Bun Shop later on?"

These days, Qin Jianjun had been transferred to the mall side. Although he still occasionally went to the Bun Shop, when work got busy, they would not even exchange a word before she saw him leave again.

Qin Jianjun already knew about Gao Lele's feelings. He remembered what his aunt had said.

If you don't like someone, you shouldn't give them hope.

He nodded, "I'll be working here from now on and won't go back to the Bun Shop."

Gao Lele bit her lip, "Then could you talk to the boss and let me work here at the mall as well?"

"I can't make that decision. You can talk to the store manager when she comes back."

Qin Jianjun's businesslike attitude finally made Gao Lele's eyes redden.

"Jianjun, I didn't go to the blind date my mother set up for me last weekend, I..."

"Lele, I see they've finished eating over there, and I have work to do, so I can't chat with you."

Qin Jianjun cut her off and went straight to find Wang Tianxue with the order list.

Gao Lele held back her tears, standing helplessly in place. Her small, lost appearance caught Lin Chuxia's eye, who clicked her tongue twice and spoke in a lower voice to the man beside her.

"The men of your Qin Family are really cold. This girl has given her all, only to be let down."

Qin Yang glanced over in the direction she was looking, handed her the water glass, "Being enthusiastic toward a woman you don't like is called being a philanderer and a rogue."

Lin Chuxia: "..."

Qin Yang's summary was indeed piercing.

...

The next evening, the goods were finally sorted out, and Houzi had restocked his goods as well.

Su Wensong originally planned to have someone from security follow them, as they were responsible for safety, but when Qin Wu heard about it, he took on the task ahead of others.

That kid also knew how to make excuses for himself. Rong City was a new market after all, and Hou Xiaobao was weak in market development. His presence there would be a good opportunity to make the most of that market.

This rationale couldn't really be refused by anyone, and so Su Wensong immediately arranged for Qin Wu and Hou Xiaobao to follow Master Xu's vehicle down south.

...

The day of the opening was blessed with good weather, and although it wasn't a weekend, their mall was situated right in the center of Yan City, adjacent to the Department Store and People's Mall.

Since the beginning of the mall's renovation, many people had been paying attention.

In the previous few days, advertisements had been released for a 10% discount on the opening day.

Therefore, on this day, quite a few people specifically came to join in on the excitement.

#### Chapter 478: What Status Could I Possibly Have?

The opening ceremony of the department store was grand, with firecrackers blasting at the entrance for a full fifteen minutes. At the climax of the atmosphere, Lin Chuxia and Wang Tianxue, one on each side, pulled down the cover hiding the store's sign.

The four golden characters on a black background of Huamei Mall revealed themselves with grandeur and boldness.

She had specially returned to An City and asked Granny Su for help in writing these characters.

With the official opening of the department store, the young attendants wore uniform suits, greeting every customer with enthusiastic and approachable smiles.

This was the standard of service for their store's employees: service comes first, customer supreme, sincerity reaches all hearts, opening even the firmest bonds.

Ensure that every customer receives satisfactory service, arriving in high spirits and leaving satisfied.

These standards and principles had been deeply ingrained into the employees' minds during the training sessions led by Qin Jianjun.

Lin Chuxia watched as customers entered the store out of curiosity and then were attracted by the dazzling array of goods. They eagerly picked up clothes they liked and held them up to themselves, with a queue already forming at the fitting rooms' doors, and she winked at Wang Tianxue.

Wang Tianxue did not expect the bustling scene of the first day of business to be even livelier than the Department Store during the Spring Festival and was also happily preoccupied.

Lin Chuxia, however, spotted a figure in the crowd that should not have been there.

"County Magistrate Bai, what brings you here?"



Lin Chuxia approached the man standing by a car in the distance to say hello.

The County Magistrate Bai chuckled, pointing in a direction not too far off, "I came to the city for a meeting, and heard Mr. Lin had opened a new mall here, so I came to join in the fun. Mr. Lin's business is really growing bigger and bigger."

"You flatter me, County Magistrate Bai. This is also done in partnership with friends," she said, glancing at Wang Tianxue.

County Magistrate Bai also glanced at Wang Tianxue following her gaze, then quickly drew his eyes back, "Indeed, the friends of the strong are also strong."

"You're making fun of me, County Magistrate Bai," Lin Chuxia said with a gesture of invitation, "I have an office upstairs. Would you like to have a cup of tea?"

At this moment, she didn't believe County Magistrate Bai came just to enjoy the bustle.

Sure enough, County Magistrate Bai opened his mouth with composure, "Nowadays, it's not easy to have a cup of tea offered by Mr. Lin."

"Not at all, County Magistrate Bai is welcome to come for tea anytime."

Lin Chuxia walked ahead, briefly instructed Liu Na at the cash register, and then led County Magistrate Bai up to the top floor office via a security passageway on the side.

The general manager's office belonged to Wang Tianxue while Lin Chuxia's office door did not have a prominent sign.

Following behind Lin Chuxia, County Magistrate Bai's gaze lingered on the sign outside the general manager's office for two seconds as they entered.

Lin Chuxia, unaware of the change in his demeanor, poured two cups of tea with a white porcelain gaiwan once inside, offering one to County Magistrate Bai.

County Magistrate Bai was appraising her office and commented, "It's a bit plain and not quite matching the stature of Mr. Lin."

Lin Chuxia offered a faint smile, "County Magistrate Bai always teases me. What kind of stature could I have?"

Not planning to use this office for the long term, it was indeed not much decorated.

"Try the tea; I brought some back from a recent visit to Rong City, thinking their Tieguanyin was quite good. County Magistrate Bai, please try it and see how it feels. I've brought you some tea as well and was planning to visit you one of these days."

"Oh, is that so? Then I must taste it with care."

County Magistrate Bai, while talking, took a sip from the cup and savored it for a moment.

"This taste is indeed different from the floral tea we usually drink. I've tried green tea before but couldn't detect much fragrance. They say it's good to drink green tea in summer, but I don't quite understand why. After all, I'm a simple man, but this Tieguanyin does taste rather distinctive."

The tea culture of this era was not as popular as it would be later on; people in their region mostly drank jasmine tea.

However, Lin Chuxia hadn't lied; apart from resupplying in Rong City, she also brought back many local specialties, now stored away, with the tea being part of them.

"Tieguanyin is a type of oolong tea, somewhere between green and black tea, a semi-fermented variety. I've heard that Tieguanyin has certain health benefits, can cool and reduce internal heat, counteract the effects of smoking and drinking..."

Lin Chuxia spoke while moving behind her desk and took out two handfuls of Tieguanyin from a cabinet, placing them on the desk.

"I was skeptical of so many health claims myself, but thought it couldn't hurt to buy some to try."

County Magistrate Bai sometimes found this young lady incredible, seemingly so young and yet already so... worldly wise.

But it was this very character of Lin Chuxia that made him trust her.

Thinking this, County Magistrate Bai pondered over his next words.

"Hearing Mr. Lin speak, I feel tempted to give it a try, but I didn't come today just to enjoy your tea," he said.

Lin Chuxia didn't interrupt, and listened quietly to what he had to say next.

County Magistrate Bai sighed, "I know, as Mr. Lin's business expands in the city, you may not hold much regard for the small county of Ancheng, but no matter what, Ancheng County is your root, and both the development of Xiyang and the vegetable greenhouses in Qin Family Village, we've taken notice. We know you're someone who cares about the hometown and the welfare of the people."

As the atmosphere built up to this point, it was time for Lin Chuxia to say a few words.

"County Magistrate Bai, please speak frankly. Although I am here, the hometown industry also relies on the support of the county leaders. If I can contribute to my hometown, it is an unquestionable duty."

County Magistrate Bai wore a slight smile when he heard what he wanted to, "It should be a trivial matter for Mr. Lin, but I have to raise it again. The matter with Ancheng Food Factory, I wonder if Mr. Lin has heard. The shareholding reform of Ancheng Food Factory has ended in failure, and after half a year, it is at the end of its rope. The Ancheng Food Factory currently employs one thousand two hundred workers, and I simply cannot bear to see all of these workers lose their jobs. If that happens, it will surely disturb the peace and unity of Ancheng County."

He looked up at Lin Chuxia, "So I've come to you with thick skin again, Lin."

Instead of addressing her as Mr. Lin, he called her Lin.

When they first met, County Magistrate Bai had addressed her with this same friendly term.

"After much thought, the only ones who can save Ancheng Food Factory are Xiyang and you. Think of this as helping maintain the stability and unity of the entire county of Ancheng; I need you to reach out and help."

"How can I help?" Lin Chuxia asked in return.

County Magistrate Bai was silent for a moment, "The details haven't been decided by the County Committee yet. We want to see your opinion first, maybe come up with a cooperative plan where both sides discuss and come up with effective methods. No matter the method, the workers' jobs must be preserved."

Lin Chuxia couldn't help but chuckle inwardly, never underestimate those political players.

At this point in time, they'd still speak in veiled terms.

With County Magistrate Bai seeking her out here, could she believe the county hadn't already considered their options?

They were merely testing her limits.

#### Chapter 479: Truly Disgusted

"County Magistrate Bai, as you can see, I've invested nearly all of my assets into this department store. If you want me to acquire Ancheng Food Factory, I am truly powerless to do so."

"But that's not the case, Lin, you're overthinking it."

County Magistrate Bai quickly explained as he saw her refusal was resolute.

"Ancheng Food Factory has been losing money year after year, we wouldn't be so unkind as to force this upon you. But this is no small matter, not just for you, Lin, but also for the County Committee. We need to take a long-term view. How about this—once you're done with these busy days, come back to the county and take a look at the current state of Ancheng Food Factory. Even if all you can do, Lin, is offer some advice, as long as it ensures the employees keep their jobs and the over a thousand workers have food on their table, you would have done a great service for Ancheng County."

Seeing Lin Chuxia still tried to decline, County Magistrate Bai suddenly sighed, "Lin, we've known each other for a long time, there's no need for secrets between us. My days in An City are numbered. The transfer orders should arrive soon. I believe that during my tenure in An City, I've worked diligently and can face the An City folks without guilt. But if there's one thing I truly can't let go, it's the welfare of the over a thousand workers at Ancheng Food Factory. I haven't managed to push through the reforms, and now to just leave without addressing the situation, I just feel..."

Seeing his pained and reluctant expression, Lin Chuxia finally relented.

"County Magistrate Bai, I'll be back in An City in a couple of days, and I'll come to find you then."

Despite all the scheming on the issue of the Ancheng Food Factory by County Magistrate Bai, it had to be admitted that he was a good county magistrate.

From her perspective, County Magistrate Bai was calculating against her, a small individual merchant, but from the perspective of the citizens of Ancheng County and the workers of Ancheng Food Factory, wasn't County Magistrate Bai also planning for their welfare?

As a county magistrate, he naturally had to seek welfare for all the citizens of the county, for the greater good.

Moreover, during the conflict between Xiyang and Ancheng Food Factory, County Magistrate Bai also firmly supported Xiyang.

It could be said that County Magistrate Bai indeed was a good magistrate, impartial and fair.

Lin Chuxia didn't want him to leave Ancheng County with regrets.

As her thoughts turned, County Magistrate Bai, hearing what he wanted to hear, heaved a sigh of relief, "Then I won't take up more of your time. I'll be waiting in An City."

Lin Chuxia saw County Magistrate Bai off to his car and casually placed two boxes of tea on the car seat.

Watching the car gradually drive away, Lin Chuxia couldn't help but feel that County Magistrate Bai's last smile was somehow foxy.

Well, I'll see when I get back. I hope County Magistrate Bai won't be too hard on me and will give me some benefits.

Lin Chuxia went back into the department store and after a walk around, didn't see Wang Tianxue.

Liu Na's counter already had a line, and Lin Chuxia helped her handle a few transactions. Once the crowd thinned a bit, she asked, "Where's Manager Wang?"

Liu Na also looked up confused, "She was just over there a moment ago."

While they were talking, a junior sales assistant ran over, panting, "Mr. Lin, you better go take a look. There's a man at the warehouse blocking Manager Wang, and they've started arguing."

Time rewound fifteen minutes earlier. Wang Tianxue, seeing the stock of dresses running low, went to the warehouse with a junior staff member to restock. Just as she opened the warehouse door, her hand was firmly clamped by a large hand.

She turned around to see Yang Rui's furiously enraged eyes, "Did you make your aunt cut off the department store's supplies?"

The junior sales assistant was startled to see the man and exclaimed in shock, "Manager Wang..."

Upon hearing this title, Yang Rui sneered, "Manager Wang? Wang Tianxue, I didn't expect you had such ability. Just a few days ago, you were working at the bun shop, and now you're a manager at a department store? What, just because you've had a child, you think you're in high demand? Or is someone just into that sort of thing..."

"Slap!"

Before Yang Rui could finish speaking, Wang Tianxue raised her hand and gave him a fierce slap.

"Yang Rui, just because you're vile don't assume everyone else is like you."

Yang Rui was already furious. He had been expecting the delivery for the south side of the department store to have arrived by now, but after waiting and waiting, when he finally called to confirm with them, he learned that they hadn't sent any goods at all.

This had never happened before in their long-term collaboration.

When he asked, the other side didn't say anything and just hung up the phone.

It took him a lot of effort to contact someone he used to get along with, and that person asked him if he and Wang Tianxue had divorced.

Once he found out that even his aunt had heard about their divorce, Yang Rui knew that Wang Tianxue must have had a hand in it.

He had been planning to go to Rong City and explain things to his aunt personally in the next few days, but he didn't expect Wang Tianxue to give him such a "surprise."

Wang Tianxue was working in a department store across from the Huamei Clothing Mall.

When he heard the news, he came straight over, wanting to ask her if she had stopped the department store's deliveries to land this job.

But to his surprise, not only was she working here, but she had also become a manager.

Need he ask? It certainly must be this woman's doing.

"I am vile, Wang Tianxue?" He chuckled. "When you say that, don't you look in the mirror? You cut off the department store's supply just to get back at me. What reason do you have to say I'm vile? You're just angry about our divorce, right? Yes, I've divorced you. I don't care for you, have you seen what you're like? Narrow-minded, stubborn as a mule, who could stand you? You'd better call your aunt right away and get the goods delivered to the department store as soon as possible, or don't blame me for being unpleasant."

At the end of his tirade, Yang Rui had become very impatient.

Wang Tianxue felt as if she was meeting this man for the first time. She discovered that a person could keep up such an act for so long, and so convincingly.

If it hadn't been for her witnessing Yang Rui's affair with Tang Lili with her own eyes, she would have always thought Yang Rui was a gentle, polite man who took care of everything comprehensively.

"Unpleasant? How do you want to be unpleasant? Have the manager fire me?"

Yang Rui's body stiffened slightly; of course, he had no way to make Wang Tianxue lose her job.

But his job was definitely at risk.

The Huamei Clothing Mall's opening today was a severe blow to the department store, compounded by the fact that their supplies had been delayed.



If they had enough stock, they could fight back; now, the department store had nothing, and the battle was lost without even fighting.

This morning, Manager Wang had already given him a piece of his mind; such a serious error in work had endangered his position as head of procurement.

Manager Wang even went as far as to say that if the supply issue wasn't resolved, he would replace the procurement department head.

Looking at Wang Tianxue's cold expression, Yang Rui suddenly laughed, "Wang Tianxue, you keep saying you don't care about our marriage, but deep down, you can't let it go, can you? You deliberately had your aunt cut off the department store's supplies, waiting for me to come and apologize to you, trying to use this as leverage to reconcile, right? If that's really the case..."

"Ugh—"

Wang Tianxue couldn't suppress a retch and spat directly onto Yang Rui's shoes.

Then, patting her chest, she said, "Sorry about that, I was just too disgusted."

#### Chapter 480: We Have to Sabotage Them

Seeing the spit on the shoe, Yang Rui's veins on his forehead throbbed twice.

Originally, he wanted to say that if Wang Tianxue really couldn't let go of their marriage, remarrying was not out of the question.

These days, he realized that he seemed quite unwilling to part with the children.

However, at this moment, seeing Wang Tianxue's attitude, Yang Rui's tone also changed, "Wang Tianxue, if you think that cutting off the Department Store's supply by using your aunt will make me remarry you, then you're mistaken. Do you really think without your aunt I can't get supplies? I'm not the head of procurement at the Department Store for nothing. Just you wait, you'll regret this."

"Let me correct you, she's my aunt. We are already divorced, so stop calling her 'aunt' so affectionately, no matter how affectionate you are, she won't supply you with goods."

Already prepared to turn around, Yang Rui paused, then gave Wang Tianxue a cold look.

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When Lin Chuxia arrived at the storeroom, Yang Rui was already gone.

"What happened? I heard Yang Rui came over?"

"Yes, he came looking for an argument, and I even slapped him."

Knowing her sister didn't suffer any loss, Lin Chuxia was relieved and asked with concern, "How is it, does your hand hurt?"

Wang Tianxue lifted her slightly reddened palm, "Actually, I used quite a bit of force. His face is so thick, it really does hurt."

After saying that, both of them laughed.

"The Department Store must be anxious by now. My aunt hasn't been supplying them, Yang Rui thought I was sabotaging him. I never realized he was so brainless, thinking that after what happened my aunt would let bygones be bygones. Wouldn't I report him? Of course, I had to sabotage."

Lin Chuxia really liked Wang Tianxue's character.

"Not only do we have to sabotage, but we also need to expand our Huamei Mall and swallow up the Department Store, making Yang Rui unemployed."

Wang Tianxue clenched her fist, "Yes, let's do that."

After saying that, they laughed again.

It was great, today's booming scene at the Huamei Clothing Mall not only gave Wang Tianxue hope but also allowed her to vent her spleen.

Yang Rui's arrival only made it easier for her to vent her anger.

She wasn't in a hurry, just slowly waiting to see Yang Rui and that woman's comeuppance.

On the other side, Yang Rui returned to the Department Store, and Tang Lili greeted him.

"How did it go? Was that woman working at the mall opposite?"

She also discovered by chance that after Wang Tianxue and Yang Rui divorced, Wang Tianxue not only didn't go back to her hometown but also started working at the mall across the street.

Why should Wang Tianxue take away her job yet still be able to work at such a place?

Sure enough, after speaking with Yang Rui, he went looking for her.

If it wasn't for considering her future job, she really wanted to follow and enjoy the sight of a loser.

Yang Rui's expression was still grim, and he responded coldly to the words.

"Did you give that woman a lesson, at least get her fired," Tang Lili spoke bitterly.

Her own job was gone, now she could only work as a temp in the mall, always feeling inferior.

She wanted Wang Tianxue to be unable to even work as a temp.

Yang Rui remained silent.

What could he say? That the woman was capable? Not to mention messing with her job, she was the boss?

"Get back to work, I have other matters to attend to."

Yang Rui left those words behind as he walked inside.

Tang Lili reluctantly followed him, "What else do you have to do? When are you going to talk to the manager about my job? I don't want to be a temp..."

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"Brother Bin, Brother Bin, slow down..."

The ambiguous voice fluctuated with the woman's low murmurs until a sudden cough from the yard abruptly halted it.

In the room, Li Dongmei held Zhang Wenbin tightly, her face flushed with embarrassment.

Zhang Wenbin continued unconcerned, burying his head in his work, seemingly disgruntled by the lack of vocal stimulation.

"Brother Bin... I think there's someone outside, your dad might be back..." Li Dongmei bit her lip, barely forming the words as she reminded.

Zhang Wenbin's actions suddenly quickened, just as she was about to mutter aloud, he collapsed heavily on top of her.

Li Dongmei secretly let out a sigh of relief, reaching out to tightly embrace him, speaking in a coquettish tone, "Brother Bin, when will you come to my house to propose? We can't keep going on like this, didn't you promise to propose to me soon?"

Zhang Wenbin glimpsed the situation at the Li Family, disdain flashing in his eyes.

"I did want to propose to your family, but I think your mom isn't ready to let you marry me. That look in her eyes last time, she almost wanted to skin me alive."

To think that he, a respectable city dweller who eats commodity grain needs to look at his mother-in-law's face to marry a rural woman? He considered himself quite the catch.

Without his prompting, wouldn't her daughter still end up in his bed?

Thinking this, Zhang Wenbin felt a surge of heat within him.

He was a normal man, after all, with normal desires.

It's been a few months since Li Wenhong left, and he hadn't had any indulgence.

Li Dongmei, this girl who threw herself at him, he used to look down on, but unexpectedly, the experience was quite good.

She was young, still a virgin...

Feeling Zhang Wenbin approach again, Li Dongmei hurriedly pushed him away, "Your mom will be back from playing cards soon, I should leave too. Brother Bin, if you care about me, go to my house and propose. I'm already yours, you promised you'd take responsibility, was all that just talk?"

Li Dongmei looked pitiable, her tears brimming in her eyes.

Zhang Wenbin felt frustrated, appeasing her with words, "Of course I'll take responsibility."

Li Dongmei's face brightened, "Then when will you go to my house to propose? And don't blame my mom, she's always loved me from childhood. It's not that she has something against you, she just can't bear to part with me. Knowing that I'm marrying a city man, she's overjoyed. She constantly brags about you to the neighbors, saying her new son-in-law is a courteous city man. She said that my wedding will definitely involve a loud display of fireworks, all my friends are so envious."

"Loud display of fireworks?"

Li Dongmei naively nodded, "Isn't it? I heard that in the city, weddings always involve a grand display of fireworks. Last year, Sun Lanlan from next door got married to a city man, and her groom provided a grand display and even a dowry of 600 yuan. Brother Bin, rest assured, my family isn't greedy for money. You just need to arrange the fireworks display; my mom said she'd also give a dowry of 200 yuan."

Zhang Wenbin swallowed back the words that reached his lips upon hearing about the dowry of 200 yuan, replying vaguely, "Got it, got it. Dongmei, you're really soft..."

Another profound conversation ensued, inevitably detaining them longer.

After hastily getting ready, Li Dongmei stepped out of the house and saw Mrs. Zhang in the yard.

She had returned from playing cards and had been sitting there for a while.

With such a commotion inside the house, she clearly knew what the two were up to, intentionally lifting her eyelids to watch her.