

## Switched M 511

### Chapter 511: Women Should Care for Themselves as Well as Their Families

Lin Chuxia had taken a good few days of rest at home, which was also a way of comforting Qin Yang.

Every day, she made him delicious meals and accompanied him for a walk in the evening to help digest the food.

Yuan Bao, the family's pet, had also been sticking close to her these past few days, making it feel like she had two big dogs clinging to her at home.

The pomegranate tree in the yard had fruit the size of small fists now, and one was already starting to turn red.

Quite a few of the flowers had wilted, and Qin Yang hadn't gotten around to dealing with them yet. But, as for the vegetables in the garden, since she wasn't home and Qin Yang rarely ate at home, he had given away plenty of the ripe produce to neighbors.

The bean plants had overgrown and weren't replanted, so the whole vegetable patch had been cleared out.

Lin Chuxia carefully collected the flower seeds and was busy at work when someone called her name at the door.

Jiang Hong walked in with her child in her arms. "I heard from them that you were back yesterday—I didn't believe it. Li Wei, that guy, never tells me anything. It was only after I asked that I found out you've actually returned."

Lin Chuxia smiled and moved a stool for her. "I've been back for two days, just tidying up at home. So many things need to be sorted after being away for such a long time."

"Aiya, why bother cleaning up? Mr. Qin is so efficient. Just look at your yard, aside from these flowers which he probably can't bear to touch, everything else is immaculately tidy."

Jiang Hong truly envied Lin Chuxia.

"If my Li Wei could be half as capable as Mr. Qin, I'd be content. After work, all he does is lie in bed and play with the child. He doesn't cook, and he's never even touched a broom."

Lin Chuxia played with the child; Jiang Hong's son was already half a year old, plump and robust, staring at her with his big, shiny black eyes and gnawing on his little fist.

"Let me hold him."

Lin Chuxia loved children immensely, reaching out to take the baby.

"Wow, he's quite heavy."

"He's a good eater. Now my breast milk isn't enough to satisfy him. Li Wei bought him formula, and my mother-in-law also cooks him millet porridge and sometimes makes him egg custard."

Jiang Hong smiled broadly as she talked about her son.

Lin Chuxia pinched his little face—soft and firm. "Is your mother-in-law still here? Sounds like she knows how to take care of children."

These days, it's rare for someone to cook millet porridge or egg custard for a child alone. At most, when they're a bit older, some might feed them steamed buns in vegetable soup.

"This is the Li family's eldest grandson, my mother-in-law really cares for him, so I don't have to worry much," she glanced at Lin Chuxia and hesitated a little before speaking, "Chuxia, I came to see you today because I wanted to ask you something..."

"Mm? Go ahead."

Jiang Hong swallowed uneasily before speaking cautiously, "Well, it's like this: my Stone is getting bigger, and at home, it's just my mother-in-law and me looking after him, which seems superfluous. I was thinking of finding something to do. Is your Bun Shop hiring?"

So that's what it was.

Lin Chuxia smiled slightly, "It's great that you have this idea, but the Bun Shop might not be convenient. How about becoming a sales clerk for selling clothes?"

The Bun Shop was on track and new hires were quickly filled as needed, but the business at Huamei Mall was continuously expanding and desperately needed more staff.

Jiang Hong's eyes lit up, "Can I do that?"

She had, of course, preferred to sell clothes but was too shy to bring it up.

"Why not? Jobs are done by people, and if you're willing to learn diligently, you can do it. Plus, the mall is close to home, and you won't have to get up early for work."

"Chuxia, you're so kind," Jiang Hong was moved to tears, "Having you as a friend, I'm incredibly lucky."

"Don't say that just yet. Have you discussed this with your husband, Li Wei? I don't want to cause any disagreements between you two."

After all, Jiang Hong's child is still young.

Jiang Hong waved it off nonchalantly, "Don't worry, I can handle him with just a couple of words. My mother-in-law has agreed to help me with the child. She thinks it's a waste for both of us to stay at home just to watch the kid. She had thought about going back to her hometown but couldn't bear to part with her grandson, so me going out to work is just perfect."

"Alright, you go back and make arrangements, and once you're set, I'll take you to the mall."

Jiang Hong was eager, "Can we do it tomorrow?"

"That works too," Lin Chuxia was well-rested and was indeed thinking of visiting the mall.

The next morning, after breakfast, Jiang Hong came to look for Lin Chuxia.

She had dressed up specially for the day, wearing a neat plaid shirt with black trousers, and a pair of black buckle shoes on her feet.

By the book, clean-cut.

Lin Chuxia smiled and nodded, "Hmm, not bad, the standard attire for a sales assistant."

Upon hearing that, Jiang Hong let out a sigh of relief and asked Lin Chuxia eagerly, "Really? I rummaged for a long time to find this. Don't laugh at me, but none of my old clothes fit anymore. This is the only outfit I can still wear out. Ever since I had Stone, I haven't bought any new clothes. I always thought I'd be nursing my child and wouldn't have the chance to wear new clothes. Only when I stepped out did I realize, it's been over a year since I last got new clothes."

Lin Chuxia took her hand and walked outside, "Once you start earning your own money, buy whatever you want. We women need to take care of our families, but must also take care of ourselves."

Jiang Hong nodded vigorously, "I'll take your advice."

When the two arrived at Huamei Mall, it wasn't open yet, but it was close to opening time.

The mall staff had already arrived and were having a meeting inside.

Huamei Mall's management approach was the result of discussions between Lin Chuxia and Wang Tianxue. Wang Tianxue really liked Lin Chuxia's suggestions and had added some of her own ideas.

Now, Huamei Mall had neither the rigid service of the old Department Store nor lacked traditional style, making it easy for customers to accept and feel at home.

Lin Chuxia took Jiang Hong to stand aside; Jiang Hong had never worked before and was unfamiliar with all this.

Standing to the side, her eyes gleamed with excitement and anticipation.

After Wang Tianxue finished the meeting, she came straight over, "What made you willing to come back?"

"I missed you," Lin Chuxia replied unenthusiastically.

Wang Tianxue was so annoyed she felt like pinching someone, but then her gaze fell on Jiang Hong, who was standing beside Lin Chuxia.

Seizing the moment, Lin Chuxia explained to her about Jiang Hong coming to work at Huamei Mall.

Without hesitation, Wang Tianxue called Liu Na over to help guide Jiang Hong.

Liu Na, who had seen Lin Chuxia earlier, greeted her with a smile, "Mr. Lin."

"Nana looks pretty," Lin Chuxia genuinely complimented.

The Liu Na before her was wearing her hair in a high ponytail, exuding youth and energy.

Dressed in the mall's uniform, she looked spirited and lively.

"Thank you, Mr. Lin."

Liu Na sweetly expressed her thanks and took Jiang Hong to the front.

Lin Chuxia and Wang Tianxue walked toward the upstairs office, "I see the merchandise in the mall is quite nice. Did your trip down south go smoothly?"

A while back, the mall was preparing the autumn collection, and Wang Tianxue had made another trip.

"It was okay, much smoother than the first time. Jianjun is really good at getting things done, he and Liu Na truly are my right and left arms. I owe much to these two this time. Houzi isn't bad either, he handles things smoothly. My cousin's mother especially likes him. During his time in the Rong City Office, she had nothing but praise for him."

Chapter 512: Some People Are About to Have Bad Luck

"That's good," Lin Chuxia knew what these people were like; they were all fine.

"How are things going with the Department Store and People's Mall? Our Huamei Mall has been open for over a month now, shouldn't they have reacted by now?"

Indeed, at the beginning, their mall, whether in terms of clothing styles or service quality, was novel and impressed customers, drawing in a lot of foot traffic. With so much time having passed, the other side should have figured out their countermeasures.

Manager Wang opened the office door and let Lin Chuxia in, pouring her water while snorting.

"People's Mall is still the same old. They had already shifted their focus to electrical appliance malls since they couldn't compete with the Department Store. Our mall doesn't really affect them much. However, the situation at the Department Store, sales haven't picked up, and I estimate that in some time, they might even encounter some trouble."

"What happened?" Lin Chuxia also became interested.

Manager Wang handed her the water, then began to speak enthusiastically.

"Ever since we went to Rong City, my aunt cut off the supplies to the Department Store. Recently, unable to bear the pressure, they sent Yang Rui to Rong City for stocks..."

Here, Manager Wang sneered. Yang Rui was too self-important and deserved his bad luck.

"Yang Rui had the audacity to approach my aunt thinking he could persuade her with benefits. Little did he expect that my aunt wouldn't buy any of it and kicked him out right there. At that time, my aunt was at her stall, and she and Yang Rui had a falling out, which was witnessed by many colleagues. My aunt, who already was popular, not only stopped selling to him, but her close business friends also refused to sell to Yang Rui. What's more shameful is that Yang Rui even brought his mistress along. There was a conflict between my aunt and Yang Rui, and the mistress actually had the nerve to stand up and defend Yang Rui, saying my aunt was being unreasonable..."

Lin Chuxia could already picture the scene.

It has to be said, Tang Lili was really a godsend for them.

"What happened after that?" Lin Chuxia was dying of curiosity.

If it was just my aunt's refusal to supply the Department Store, with such a huge market, Yang Rui could easily source from other stalls.

After all, the Department Store, with its many years of experience, could recover from a temporary dip in sales, as long as the supply was abundant, and it wouldn't necessarily lead to chaos.

Manager Wang laughed coldly, her laugh filled with satisfaction.

"What happened after that? I always thought Yang Rui was greedy and self-important but still underestimated him. Without my aunt's guidance in Rong City, he hired a guide himself to help with purchasing. Just those two days, we also went to Rong City, and we actually ran into him."

"Ran into him?"

This thought promised excitement.

Manager Wang nodded nonchalantly, "Yes, ran into him and even watched a farce unfold."

Turned out, without my aunt's guidance, Yang Rui caught the attention of some local toughs in the market. The guide he hired was a well-known troublemaker in the market.

The people he targeted, other guides didn't dare take up jobs from them, and Yang Rui, oblivious, directly approached this hooligan.

This guy had collaborations with several stalls, specializing in duping out-of-town suppliers, selling inferior products as high-quality ones and charging more.

Manager Wang watched as Yang Rui and that woman happily followed the guide, stocking up on flashy but supposedly trendy styles, which actually were not popular mainland products.

"Yang Rui has been purchasing for so many years, even though the stocks were always arranged by my aunt, if he had put in a bit of effort, he should have been able to discern what was fashionable. And as a salesperson, Tang Lili, who sold merchandise for so long, should also be able to discern the quality of goods. Plainly put, these two are like parasites to the Department Store, drawing hefty salaries, but not doing their jobs. The goods, to put it nicely, are products from Hong Kong and Taiwan, which we mainlanders are simply not interested in. Just wait and see," said Wang.

Lin Chuxia's eyes also carried a smile.

"That likely means not only the Department Store, but some people are about to be really unlucky."



This didn't require explanation; they both understood each other.

Wang Tianxue masked no disdain, "You should have seen the look Yang Rui gave me then, so smug. He thought he'd bring in trendy merchandise to outdo our mall and show my aunt what he could do. I'm really eager to see how he turns this around."

"Right, we should prepare some peanuts and melon seeds and watch together."

Lin Chuxia loved watching jerks get their comeuppance with her girlfriends.

Indeed, there's nothing more exhilarating than watching these creeps fall apart without her intervention.

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As October came around, just as Manager Wang predicted, the foot traffic at the Department Store across the street was dwindling and shifting to their Huamei Mall.

It wasn't just an issue of low sales anymore; they had a massive backlog of products.

These days, the Department Store had to close its doors for restructuring.

In the office, Manager Wang slammed a quotation sheet fiercely onto Yang Rui's face, his expression livid.

"The same styles, others get them at half our cost. Explain this to me, are we the Department Store such a big sucker?"

"And those clothing styles, did you even check them? What 'this year's new styles'? I saw those styles three years ago. Not to mention compared to the selection at Huamei Mall, even our local clothing factories wouldn't produce such outdated styles. Have your brains been eaten by dogs? Is this the stock you bring to our mall to sell, saying you would counter Huamei Mall?"

"At first, you asked me to give you one more chance, and now, I've given you that chance. Do you realize that with the situation as it is, our Department Store's employees are about to starve?"

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Now, Manager Wang deeply regretted listening to Yang Rui's nonsense, thinking that if he personally went to the south to source goods, their mall's supply issues would be resolved, even naively hoping for a spectacular turnaround.

As a result...

"I see these products have been sitting in the mall for so long without any attraction. You should just return them. As for the difference in cost for the clothes, I won't pursue it. But let Li head the purchasing department instead."

Yang Rui suddenly looked up, "Manager Wang, I realize my mistake, please give me another chance. I really didn't know about the purchasing price issues, it was all agreed upon as the lowest price, and these clothes, we also asked for the most fashionable styles..."

At this point, Yang Rui had already figured out what was going on.

"It was that guide, he deceived us. We also tried to find others, but who knows what Ms. Wang's aunt did, those guides refused to lead us. We found one with great difficulty, only to learn that this guy was in cahoots with the merchants to cheat us out-of-towners..."

Manager Wang looked at Yang Rui with pity, at this point, he still had the gall to bring up Wang Tianxue, actually blaming all the responsibility on her.

He truly had misjudged the person.

Chapter 513: For a Moment, He Let His Guard Down

"I don't care what the reason is, even if Wang Tianxue had a hand in it, the loss of the Department Store was caused by your personal issue. The only chance for you now is to recoup this loss. Pack up those unsold goods and send them back the way they came; the Department Store won't quibble over the lost freight costs."

Yang Rui opened his mouth with difficulty once again, "I...I can't reach that person anymore. When I contacted the vendor who wholesaled the goods to us, they said there's no reason to return the goods that were sold..."

Manager Wang slammed the desk, "What are you saying? Wasn't it agreed in the initial contract that the goods could be exchanged if there were sales problems..."

Before he could finish, Manager Wang had already realized, and he closed his eyes dejectedly.

The original contract was signed with Wang Tianxue's aunt by marriage, and this batch of goods they went to get from Rong City this time likely did not have such a contract signed.

Yang Rui also knew that he had caused a major blunder this time. In the past, it was Wang Tianxue and her aunt who managed everything. Over time, coupled with the aunt's good reputation, he somehow forgot about the importance of signing the contract completely.

Lin Chuxia thought for a few days and still decided to write a letter.

In her last life, although it wasn't her who saved that child, the family had always treated her as their child's lifesaver.

After several exchanges, Lin Chuxia also learned the family's address.

Writing a letter as a reminder, she thought of it as repaying the gratitude for the family's support back then.

Lin Chuxia dropped the letter directly into the mailbox on the street, praying in her heart that the child could avoid that disaster.

She only remembered it was in October of that year, but as to which day, she really couldn't recall.

She had just returned from the vegetable market that day when she heard a voice behind her, "Sis."

Lin Chuxia turned around in disbelief, only to see Lin Jiadong in the distance.

"Jiadong, it really is you! Why are you here? Aren't you supposed to have class today?"

Lin Jiadong was also excited to see Lin Chuxia. The last time he came to the city to find his sister, she just happened to be out, only his brother-in-law was at home.

Although his brother-in-law was also very nice to him, for some reason, whenever he saw his taciturn brother-in-law, Lin Jiadong felt under a lot of pressure.

Today, he had also mustered up his courage to come. He didn't expect to run into his second sister before he even reached her house.

"There's a math competition in the city tomorrow, so I came early. Second sis, how have you been living here?"

After asking this, Lin Jiadong felt he'd asked a stupid question.

Just looking at the way his second sister dressed, he knew she was doing very well. He had never seen such a beautiful second sister.

He smiled awkwardly, "Of course, second sis must be doing well; brother-in-law is also good to second sis."

Probably any day spent away from the Lin Family was a better day for his second sister.

Lin Chuxia saw the despondence in his eyes; this silly little brother seemed to have grown up.

She patted his shoulder, "Let's go back first. Have you had lunch yet? Tell second sis what you want for dinner tonight. You'll stay at second sis's place tonight, and tomorrow I'll take you to school."

"Okay, sure," Lin Jiadong was carefree, and upon Lin Chuxia's words, he agreed loudly.

"Second sis, I want to eat the dumplings you make, the ones with meat filling. Mom's aren't as tasty as yours, and the ones in the school canteen aren't good either..."

"Alright, then we'll make dumplings for dinner tonight."

Lin Chuxia had bought some vegetables, but not much meat, so the two of them returned to the market to buy meat.

"How long will the exam take tomorrow? If you have time after the exam, I'll take you to buy a couple of pieces of clothing."

She noticed that Jiadong was still wearing the clothes she had bought for him last year, which were a bit worn out from washing.

The cold season is upon us, buy him two thick pieces of clothing.

Lin Jiadong quickly shook his head, "No need, Second Sister, I have clothes to wear. A few days ago, I bought a coat with the pocket money you gave me. Thinking about the coming cold, I got a cotton-padded jacket. I bought it a bit large so I can wear it for a couple more years. It's been somewhat inconvenient to wear these past days, so I haven't worn it. I truly have clothes to wear. After the exams tomorrow, I should be going back with my teachers and classmates. Today, I took leave in advance to come here."

Lin Chuxia sends living expenses to Lin Jiadong every month. Since she promised to support his education, she certainly won't break her word.

Besides the tuition and book fees every term, she also sends twenty yuan for living expenses every month.

Twenty yuan a month was quite a lot in those days, even though wages for workers had gone up a bit over the years, and twenty yuan was about half a month's salary for an ordinary worker.

She wanted Lin Jiadong to not skimp on food or drink, and money was also needed for school supplies.

She didn't expect this lad to be able to save enough to buy clothes.

Without needing to look, Lin Chuxia knew that when he said it was big, it was not just slightly big.

These days when parents buy clothes for their children, they always go for larger sizes — new for three years, worn for another three, then patched and mended for yet another three.

Lin Jiadong was already in his second year of senior high school. Since last year, the boy hadn't grown much taller, still buying clothes too large...

Lin Chuxia didn't say much, just nodded her head.

This time she went back to the market and bought mutton. Jiadong liked to eat mutton, and she planned to make dumplings with pure mutton filling.

Sure enough, as soon as he saw her approaching the mutton stall, Lin Jiadong smiled foolishly.

After buying the meat, the siblings headed back to the family courtyard. Before they got home, they ran into a couple of children from the neighbors.

Hu Xingwei was as enthusiastic as ever, calling from a distance, "Aunt Lin."

His sister, Hu Yaping, only politely greeted Lin Chuxia when she came closer.

Lin Chuxia also greeted them, "Just finished school for the day?"

Hu Xingwei, the chatterbox, pointed at Hu Yaping and said, "No, we only had half a day of school today. I just went with my sister to buy school supplies. Aunt Lin, my sister is going to participate in a mathematics competition tomorrow. It's a national event. This time it's students from our City No.1 Middle School competing against top students from other towns and counties."

"Really? Your sister is truly impressive," Lin Chuxia said, glancing at her own brother as she spoke.

It seemed Jiadong was also participating in this competition.

A national event.

She knew her brother always did well in his studies, but she hadn't expected him to be able to participate in a national competition in his second year of senior high.

Yan City was the provincial capital, and the competition tomorrow was the provincial round.

Hu Xingwei still looked excited, "I also think my sister is amazing. I heard that if you really place well, you could even go to the capital to compete..."

"Xingwei."

Hu Yaping called out his name in dissatisfaction, and Hu Xingwei closed his mouth.

Then, turning back, he saw the boy next to Lin Chuxia and asked curiously, "Aunt Lin, is this a relative of yours?"

Lin Chuxia pulled Lin Jiadong over to introduce him, "This is my brother, Lin Jiadong."

Hu Xingwei looked at Lin Jiadong, his face flushing red.

According to seniority, Aunt Lin's brother should be called "Uncle" or "Uncle" by him, but the boy in front of him was only a few years older than himself.

After a moment, he extended his hand and said, "Hi."

Lin Jiadong came from the countryside. Before the reform and opening-up, there was an insurmountable gap between the countryside and the city.

Even as policies became more favorable over the years, the inherent impression still lingered, making Lin Jiadong feel somewhat inferior in front of city folks.

He also awkwardly greeted the other party.

#### Chapter 514: Remarkable People

Chuxia watched the two act awkwardly and guessed something, laughing and said, "Just call each other by your names, Jiadong, these are the children from my neighbor, Hu Xingwei and Hu Yaping."

With those words, Hu Xingwei and Lin Jiadong both quietly breathed a sigh of relief.

As they approached the front door of the home, Hu Xingwei said to Lin Jiadong, "When you have time, come over to my place to hang out. We live in that courtyard. Or I can come to find you. I like Aunt Lin's Yuan Bao. By the way, how long are you staying here?"

"I'm just staying at my second sister's place for one night; I have other things to do tomorrow."

"Is that so?" Hu Xingwei sounded distinctly disappointed. "Then is it okay if I come to find you to play in a bit?"

"Xingwei," Hu Yaping called out again as a reminder.



Hu Xingwei, with a smile, took his sister by the hand and headed home. Lin Jiadong could still hear them whispering, "Don't think I don't know you just want to go play with Yuan Bao. How many times have I told you, you can get rabies from a dog bite..."

"Sis, Yuan Bao is friendly with me, he would never bite..."

Chuxia didn't pay any more attention to the siblings, opened the courtyard gate, and invited Lin Jiadong inside.

Yuan Bao had already heard the noise outside and was wagging his tail, guarding the door.

As the gate opened, he lunged towards Chuxia.

Mid-leap, noticing there was a stranger beside her, he swerved and pounced towards Lin Jiadong.

"Second sister..."

The last time Lin Jiadong was here, Qin Yang was home and had directly led him inside.

He had seen this dog before, and perhaps because his brother-in-law had such a formidable presence, the dog was as timid with him as it was with his sister's husband and didn't dare to do anything to him.

Now seeing the dog lunging towards him, Lin Jiadong immediately ducked behind Chuxia.

"Yuan Bao, this is my brother," Chuxia coolly introduced him to Yuan Bao.

Lin Jiadong clung to her shoulder, reminding her by her ear, "Sis, it's a dog, it can't understand human speech."

But then they saw Yuan Bao go from aggressively jumping to gently sniffing, as if memorizing the scent, and finally wagged his tail friendly at Lin Jiadong.

Lin Jiadong's eyes widened: That was truly amazing.

"Sis, this dog of yours is too smart," he exclaimed while petting Yuan Bao.

Almost every household in the village had a dog, and the streets were full of dogs too. Lin Jiadong actually quite liked dogs himself.

"Just average, world's third,"

Chuxia said as she carried the groceries into the kitchen, leaving behind this comment.

Lin Jiadong was amused to laughter by it.

His second sister had always been a woman of few words since childhood, but he knew that she was smart and understood everything.

His parents favored his older sister, and it had always been that way since their childhood when they all lived at home, which he didn't think much of.

But ever since his oldest sister and second sister got married, he always felt there was something wrong with how things used to be.

His second sister was clearly so good, yet it seemed like his parents and oldest sister didn't like her.

Maybe that's just the fate of being the second child.

He had heard such a saying in the village, in a family with many children, the second child is the least favored.

His oldest sister was the first child of his parents, even though she was a girl, she was treasured. Being a boy himself, in a family that valued males over females, it meant that his second sister had it tough.

Lin Jiadong glanced at his busy second sister in the kitchen, thinking that when he makes something of himself in the future, he would definitely treat her well.

He would make up for all the years of neglect she faced from the family.

Qin Yang returned and was very enthusiastic to see his young brother-in-law.

With his in-laws being unreliable, he got along quite well with this young brother-in-law.

A wife's disliked person is also disliked by him.

Conversely, the person his wife likes, he is also willing to contact.

In the evening, he devoured the lamb-filled dumplings, one after another, wolfing them down.

The school meals are terrible, and his mom at home is not good at cooking, so it had been a long time since he had such delicious food.

Lin Chuxia deliberately wrapped more, but seeing his way of eating, she didn't dare to let him eat until he was full.

"Leave the rest for tomorrow morning, I'll fry them for you, you can't eat anymore. Lamb is hard to digest, and if you upset your stomach, it would be a pity to affect tomorrow's exam."

She is someone who's been through it and understands all too well the importance of such a national-level math competition.

He had already stood out from the county and entered the provincial competition; the next step is to advance to the capital.

Lin Jiadong was already full, just greedy for more.

Hearing his elder sister say so, he also put down his chopsticks, rubbed his belly with an embarrassed smile, "Sister makes the most delicious food."

Qin Yang was clearing the table and chimed in, "That's why I say marrying your sister is a fortune I've cultivated from a past life. You need to keep an eye out when you look for a partner too."

Find someone who can cook, so you won't always be running to his house to bother his wife.

For this big eater, his wife had wrapped dumplings all night long.

Lin Jiadong didn't pick up on the disdain in Qin Yang's words, and nodded seriously, full of admiration, "I'll listen to my brother-in-law, I also want to become an impressive person like him."

Qin Yang: "..."

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The next day, Lin Chuxia took Lin Jiadong to the test site at City No.1 Middle School and then went to the shopping mall.

Jiang Hong had been working at the mall for a while now and was now able to sell clothes on her own.

Seeing Lin Chuxia coming, she greeted her, "Chuxia, why did you come today?"

"Just checking on you. How's it going, are you adjusting well to the job at the mall? If it doesn't work out and you want to switch to the restaurant, I can arrange it."

If they weren't in such a public place, Jiang Hong really wanted to hug Lin Chuxia and kiss her fiercely.

"Chuxia, why are you so nice? Having you as a friend is a blessing I've cultivated from eight lifetimes. I'm doing very well here. Manager Wang and Supervisor Liu take good care of me, the other colleagues are also easy to get along with. I sold several pieces of clothing yesterday. Supervisor Liu said that if I can meet the sales target this month, I will get a commission for the extra."

"That's good to hear."

Lin Chuxia could tell that Jiang Hong's whole spirit seemed different now.

Jiang Hong said with pride, "Don't worry, I was arranged by you, I won't ever let you down."

As the two chatted, Wang Tianxue also came over.

Jiang Hong was still on duty and returned to her post.

Wang Tianxue wasn't so polite, "What brings you, such a busy person, here today?"

"My brother has come to the city. I'm getting him a few clothes."

"I knew it, you never come without a reason. Hey, you've never mentioned your brother before."

Lin Chuxia rarely talked about her family, but with Qin Jianjun in the mall, and Houzi and the others often talking about things in An City, they knew a bit about Lin Chuxia's family.

But those were all her in-laws.

Lin Chuxia didn't keep anything secret and briefly explained about the Lin Family.

She knew the kind of person Wang Tianxue was, and Wang Tianxue could empathize with Lin Chuxia's family situation.

She didn't have an older sister who was favored by parents, but her parents...

Thinking about their attitude after learning she insisted on divorce against their wishes, preferring not to have this daughter than to allow her return home and tarnish the family's reputation.

It was only her brother who would consider her feelings.

Chapter 515: Serves Him Right

"I'll go with you. It's just that it's getting cold, so I'll send a few clothes to my brother too."

Wang Tianyu and Lin Jiadong are about the same age and height, so it's convenient to pick clothes for them.

Wang Tianxue and Lin Chuxia have similar tastes, and in no time, they picked out several pieces.

Lin Chuxia directly packed them in a bag and tossed them on the car, planning to give them to Lin Jiadong after his exam.

Meanwhile, Wang Tianxue planned to mail them directly.

Although the post office wasn't close by, there was a little road behind the mall, and it would only take about ten minutes on foot.

The weather was quite nice today, so Lin Chuxia accompanied Wang Tianxue for a walk over.

The two chatted idly as they walked, and when they reached the depths of the alley, they suddenly heard some strange noises.

Especially the woman's voice, which seemed a bit familiar.

"Take it easy, what's the rush? You act like you haven't had any in years."

"Well, I haven't had any for years. Lili, I've missed you so much."

"Come off it, I don't believe you don't hook up with your wife at home. I heard she's quite pretty."

"Don't even mention her. Ever since the child was born, she hasn't let me touch her."

"Oh, so you're sneaking around because you can't get any at home? Then I'm not letting you touch me either."

"Oh, Lili, my dear, if you say that, I'll be heartbroken. My wife at home always has a stern face like someone owes her a lot of money. Even if she lets me touch her, it's a turn-off. Not like you... come here, let me give you a kiss..."

.....

Wang Tianxue and Lin Chuxia exchanged a glance.

On both sides of this alley, there were residential houses with a few side rooms against the wall, their doors facing the alley, and the side rooms also had windows.

Lin Chuxia knew that after the market opened, the housing market did too, and people would rent out side rooms to earn rent.

And the voice was coming from the side room next door.

This alley was already remote, and most people were at work at this time. The window of the side room was even left ajar, so the sounds inside were crystal clear.

Lin Chuxia was still wondering if it might be a common name, as the name Lili was quite ordinary.

Then she heard the voice continue from inside, "You sly devil, I can't be with you so ambiguously. What about the last thing you promised me?"

"No problem, let's take care of our business first, baby. I'm dying here. Don't worry, after we're done, we'll talk seriously."

"No, talk first. I don't want to stay in the storeroom. The work there is inhumane."

"I think the storeroom is quite good. Anyway, there's that Yang fellow helping you out. You can slack off, make money, and get cozy with both..."

"Don't bring up that Yang fellow. I get mad just thinking about him. Say it first, if you lie to me like he did, I won't let it go."

"Relax, why would I fool you? I'll move you to the front tomorrow. Come on, my dear. Aren't you afraid that Yang might come back suddenly if you bring me to your place?"

"He won't. He hasn't finished his work, and if he slacks off again, even Manager Wang won't tolerate him... take it slow..."

"Going slow, will that be enjoyable? Am I better, or is that Yang fellow better? Did you choose him initially because you thought he was better in bed?"

"I... I was tricked by them, of course, you're... better. I've given you my heart, what more do you want from me?"

"I want you to see my prowess again..."



Vulgar words and intimate sounds kept coming out.

Lin Chuxia and Wang Tianxue quickened their pace.

After walking quite a distance, Wang Tianxue spat angrily, "Serves him right."

Lin Chuxia also thought Yang Rui deserved it.

An unfaithful marriage where the husband cheated while his wife was pregnant, and then got cheated on in return—this ending truly brought things full circle.

"Yang Rui got demoted by Manager Wang. This time, he caused a significant loss for the Department Store, and they reclaimed his house. Word is, he and Tang Lili were both sent to the warehouse to move goods."

Clearly, Tang Lili was dissatisfied with her current job and was hooking up with someone else to change jobs.

A woman always thinking of trading her body for benefits—Wang Tianxue despised Tang Lili from the bottom of her heart.

But a Tang Lili like this being together with Yang Rui only made her feel vindicated.

.....

Lin Chuxia accompanied Wang Tianxue to send off the stuff, and seeing that it was about time, she headed to City No.1 Middle School.

She happened to see the students coming out of school.

Standing at the gate for a while, she spotted Lin Jiadong.

Lin Jiadong looked for his second sister's figure the moment he came out of the gate. Although he was told in the morning not to wait for him and that after the exam he'd return to An City with his teachers and classmates.

He still couldn't help but look around, and when he saw Lin Chuxia, his face immediately broke into a smile.

"Second sis!"

He said a word to his classmate beside him and jogged over.

Lin Chuxia asked how he did on the exam. Hearing him say it was alright, she knew he must have done well.

She turned around to take down the big bag of clothes from the car.

"You're really not coming to my place?"

"No, I have to return to school in the evening for self-study," Lin Jiadong said, taking the bag of clothes with a silly grin, "Second sis, I told you, no need to buy me clothes. You're really nice."

"Take them. It's getting cold, so take care of yourself. Health is as important as studying."

Lin Jiadong nodded vigorously, "I know. I'm off then, second sis."

He saw that his teacher was approaching as well.

Lin Chuxia nodded, "Be safe on the way."

There were two other boys and a girl who came to the city for the exam today. Lin Chuxia recognized one of the boys as Jiadong's roommate.

And it was that boy waving to Lin Jiadong.

Seeing Lin Jiadong join the group, Lin Chuxia didn't linger any longer and turned to get into her car.

On the other side, Lin Jiadong returned to the group and first greeted the teacher, "Teacher Tian."

Teacher Tian responded, "Is everyone here? Let's go then."

In those days, it was impossible for students to have a car pick them up when they went out together. They would take public buses or trains led by the teacher, and the tickets would be reimbursed by the school.

Teacher Tian led in the front, followed closely by several students.

Li Youmin looked back once more, but the jeep was already out of sight.

With a face full of envy, he asked Lin Jiadong, "Is that your real sister?"

From afar, he couldn't make out her face, but she seemed to be dressed very fashionably—completely different from the people in their village.

"Yeah," Lin Jiadong replied.

"So you went to the city yesterday to see your sister?" Li Youmin asked again.

"Yeah."

"So this morning your sister drove you here?"

"Yeah."

After asking for a while, Li Youmin was unhappy with just receiving three "yeahs" from Lin Jiadong.

"Why do you just keep saying yeah? You have such a rich sister. Why didn't you mention it to us, your brothers? And why didn't you ask your sister to drive us back? It'd be so cool to ride in a car."

After he said this, another boy also looked over.

Chapter 516: As If Falling into an Ice Cellar

Li Youmin and Lin Jiadong were not only in the same dormitory but also classmates from the same class.

The other two were from the same school but in different classes.

When Li Youmin spoke this way, even the slightly dull Lin Jiadong realized something and simply said, "My sister has to work, she doesn't have the time."

"True, your sister looks like she's working. I remember your family is also from the village, so how did she become a city person? Did she go to college? Or did she marry well? Your sister bought you so many new clothes, that must have cost a lot, right? And she's driving a jeep, is it that your brother-in-law's family has money? Could your brother-in-law be an official?"

Even if you went to college and got a job, not many people could afford a car.

Most likely she married an official.

Lin Jiadong was annoyed by the questions and quickened his pace to catch up with the teacher ahead, "Teacher Tian, during the exam, there was a problem I hadn't seen before, I'm not sure if I solved it correctly..."

Li Youmin still wanted to ask something, but seeing this, could only give up.

No matter, they were in the same dormitory anyway, there would be plenty of time to ask.

.....

Lin Chuxia didn't go home. Today, Qin Yang had an academic seminar, and it was said that the technicians were from the capital, so he needed to accompany them all day and wouldn't come home for lunch.

She didn't feel like going home alone to cook, so she went to Qin's Restaurant for lunch.

The restaurant's business was getting better, Qin Juan was so busy that she barely had a moment to say hello before running off again.

Lin Chuxia didn't mind, ordered two dishes herself, found a quiet corner to eat, and didn't stay long in the store.

When she drove the jeep home, a figure by the roadside chilled her to the bone.

She slammed the brake, almost unable to believe her eyes, staring intently at the figure.

It wasn't until the figure walked into an alley that her whole body was trembling.

Li Hongmei!

That person was Li Hongmei!!

Even though she hadn't seen Li Hongmei in a long time and the current Li Hongmei was completely different from the pampered woman she remembered, Lin Chuxia wouldn't mistake her.

How could she be here?

She remembered Jiadong saying that because of Lin Jiayi, Li Hongmei was introduced by Lin Family's distant relatives and got married a long time ago.

And the family Lin Jiayi "carefully" found for her was said not to be in good condition.

In such a family, Li Hongmei shouldn't be appearing here.

Lin Chuxia thought back to the previous life.

At that time, Li Hongmei hadn't married yet and dreamed of marrying someone from the city all day, only knowing how to dress herself up.

She heard that the clothes at the City Department Store were nice, stole money from home to buy new clothes there, only to have the money stolen and be targeted by traffickers.

It was on that very day she went into the river to save someone.

Lin Chuxia didn't know why Li Hongmei appeared here, or when she came here.

In this life, Li Hongmei got married early, and both her life and Li Guangyuan's took a different path, yet she still came to the city.

Thinking about that matter made her whole body tremble beyond control.

She wanted to visit the riverbank to take a look, shook with nerves enough to fail starting the car several times, finally slumping over the steering wheel.

As time ticked away, Lin Chuxia finally stopped shaking. This time, she no longer wanted to see the riverbank, selfishly choosing to go home.

Not to mention whether Li Hongmei's appearance here was a coincidence, she didn't have the ability to save that child.

In the past life, if it weren't for a kind-hearted person saving her and that child, she would have been a corpse in that river.

This life, she has the people she loves and many who care about her.

She clearly knew that if anything happened to her, Qin Yang would be devastated and those who love her would be deeply saddened.

She had already written a letter to remind them, perhaps because of that letter, that family would take good care of their child.

Lin Chuxia wiped her eyes, tears had blurred her vision. She didn't know how she got home, unaware even when it gradually grew dark outside.

Until a man's voice rang out, "Xiaxia, why don't you turn on the light?"

As the glaring light came on, Lin Chuxia instinctively raised her hand to block it.

The man's voice became more urgent, "Xiaxia, what's wrong? Are you feeling unwell?"

Lin Chuxia lifted her head blankly, "What?"

"You look unwell," Qin Yang raised his hand to feel her forehead, relieved to find no fever, "Where are you feeling uncomfortable? Wait, let me change my clothes and take you to the hospital."

Only then did Lin Chuxia notice that Qin Yang's clothes were wet.

She immediately snapped back to reality, grabbing Qin Yang's hand to look him over, "What happened to you? You'll catch a cold in this cold weather. I'm fine, no need to go to the hospital, but you, wait, I'll boil some water for you, take off those wet clothes and have a hot bath."

Without a word, Lin Chuxia ran out.

At home, there was hot water in the thermoses, she boiled another pot, then urged Qin Yang to take a bath.

Qin Yang was initially worried about his wife's health, but seeing her full of spirit, he powerless followed her instructions.

Lin Chuxia didn't idle either, going to the kitchen to make a bowl of ginger sugar water.

When Qin Yang finished his bath, she made him drink the ginger sugar water.

"Have you had dinner? If not, I'll cook noodles, warm noodles are warming too. Tell me, weren't you with the technicians from the capital? How did you end up in such a state?"

Qin Yang watched as his wife rushed around him, looking worried, her eyes and heart full of him, and lifted a hand to pinch her little face.

"Noodles will do, I want to eat your noodles."

Just now, when he came back, he thought his wife wasn't at home.

But when he entered the room and saw his wife sitting silently in the dark, his heart tightened fiercely.



Seeing her appearance when the lights came on made him inexplicably flustered.

Since they'd been together, perhaps he'd never seen her like this, as if the sky were falling.

At that moment, Qin Yang thought, no matter what, even if the sky fell, he would bear it for her, not letting her be so lost and dejected.

Fortunately, his wife was okay.

The two of them ate warm noodles together, with Qin Yang constantly paying attention to his wife's mood.

But the peace of mind he had gradually regained rose again once the lights went out.

Unusually, his wife took the initiative to snuggle up; she was so passionate at that moment.

Qin Yang loved her deeply, down to his bones. Because of the issue with having children, he didn't dare to make love to her frequently, fearing it might be a psychological burden for her.

Now that his wife was craving him, how could he not comply?

Qin Yang used all his skills to utterly satisfy his young wife, gaining immense joy in the process.

Until that final moment, he heard his wife softly whisper in his ear, "Give me a child..."

It was at that moment Qin Yang seemed to understand why Lin Chuxia was so out of sorts today.

He held her tightly, responding tenderly, "Okay, we will have a child..."

Chapter 517: Did We Already Cross Paths Before?

The next day, when Lin Chuxia woke up, Qin Yang was already out.

In the kitchen, he left breakfast warming for her with a note telling her to stay well at home, and that he'd return for lunch.

After washing up, Lin Chuxia went to the kitchen to eat and noticed the clothes hanging out in the yard. They must have been washed by Qin Yang early in the morning; it was what he wore yesterday.

Qin Yang had dressed very formally yesterday to accommodate guests from the capital.

Lin Chuxia had paired his white shirt with a black suit.

When he returned, his shirt and pants were wet inside, but the suit jacket was dry. That's why she didn't notice anything off with Qin Yang at first.

Yesterday she was only worried he might catch a cold and didn't really ask him how his clothes got wet.

She decided to ask about it at lunch.

After breakfast, Lin Chuxia tidied up the house, but her heart still felt empty.

She knew what was unsettling her. She tried to dispel the thoughts by keeping busy, but the feeling remained the same afterward.

In the end, Lin Chuxia grabbed her car keys and went directly to the small river.

Perhaps if she didn't see it with her own eyes, she wouldn't be able to get over it.

If she really encounters such a situation, she won't go in; she'll just call for help from the riverbank.

Thinking this way, as she reached the riverbank and watched the gentle flow, she felt a sense of calm wash over her.

Perhaps she was overthinking. She had already written to that family, reminding them long ago, so perhaps what happened in the past life wouldn't happen now.

Just then, voices came from behind her.

This river wasn't close to the highway, nor was the riverbank developed, so few people came here, making the voices distinctly audible in her ears.

"I don't know either. I just passed by and thought the view here was nice."

It sounded like someone answering a question.

Curious, Lin Chuxia turned her head and, recognizing the people, stood there in a daze.

The couple she remembered, still with that same kind look, now seemed a bit anxious.

The man who was questioned shook his head and left, while the couple looked around bewilderedly, finally setting their eyes on Lin Chuxia.

The woman walked over quickly, "Young lady, were you here yesterday? Did you see two children swimming here..."

Lin Chuxia watched her mouth open and close, unable to hear what she was saying.

She stammered, "Did... did the child really fall into the water? How... how is he..."

"Oh, thank heavens, my son was saved by a kind stranger. He's fine now. My husband and I just want to find the kind person to properly thank them, but they left immediately after saving our son yesterday. This makes us as parents feel uneasy. He saved my son, he saved our whole family's life..."

Lin Chuxia heard clearly this time; the child had indeed fallen into the water, and was also saved.

Remembering how in her past life, both she and the child were rescued by a kind stranger, Lin Chuxia staggered a step and smiled.

"You should indeed thank them properly. I'm sorry, I only passed by here today and don't know what happened yesterday."

She suddenly wanted to find that person, too.

In the past life, she had also tried to find the person who saved her, but to no avail.

If possible, she still wanted to find them and repay them.

Though in this life they didn't save her life, in the past life they not only saved her life but also let her gain undeserved fame for saving others and enjoying gratitude from the child's parents.

This was a debt she couldn't repay fully in either of her lives.

The couple, getting no answers from Lin Chuxia, went on to ask others, while Lin Chuxia let out a long breath of relief.

She glanced at the clouds in the sky, a thought suddenly crossing her mind, and her expression changed slightly. She quickly ran to her car and drove straight home.

She thought of Qin Yang's wet clothes. If it was really like she suspected...

Back home, Qin Yang had returned from work and was standing by the sink washing vegetables.

Hearing her come in, without turning his head, he spoke, "Didn't I tell you to take a couple of days to rest at home? Did you go to the mall or a restaurant?"

Lin Chuxia watched his solid shoulders and merely gave a faint "Mmm."

Qin Yang turned to ask her, "What's wrong? Do you want me to take the afternoon off to stay with you?"

He felt uneasy leaving his wife home alone as she seemed overly sentimental these days.

"Qin Yang, weren't you with the representatives from the capital yesterday? How did your clothes get wet?"

Lin Chuxia asked the question calmly, but if one looked closely, they'd see her eyes fixed tightly on Qin Yang, filled with uncalm emotions.

Qin Yang replied nonchalantly, "Oh, the leader asked me to take them to the station yesterday, and on the way back, I heard someone calling for help. A child fell into the water, so I helped get him out."

Seeing Lin Chuxia's serious expression, he added to reassure her, "The water wasn't deep. There weren't many people around. Kids these days are so mischievous, swimming when they shouldn't be. Luckily, I fished him out..."

Suddenly, Lin Chuxia stepped forward and tightly hugged him.

A bold suspicion formed in her heart: Was it Qin Yang who came to Yan City in her past life at this time? Was Qin Yang the one who saved her and the child? Did they already have some connection in their past life?

Feeling his wife's trembling body, Qin Yang knew he had scared her.

This was why he had avoided the topic yesterday.

He thought that standing here today, not looking as disheveled, she would find it easier to accept.

Yet, she was still scared.

He wrapped his arms around her and gently patted her back, "Don't worry, I'm a good swimmer. Not only a child, but even an adult, I could pull them up together. Rescuing someone requires technique. When someone struggles in the water, rushing to save them isn't wise. If caught by the person in distress, even rescuer's lives can be in danger. I'm aware of that. The child was small and exhausted from being in the water for so long. I was confident I wouldn't get into trouble."

With her head buried in his chest, Lin Chuxia replied nasally, "I know."

Seeing his wife revealing such a vulnerable side, Qin Yang tightened his hold, feeling the warmth spread across his chest, realizing his shirt had dampened.

He felt touched and sighed silently.

His wife cared too much for his safety. Despite his assurances, she worried for his well-being.

It seemed that in the future, he needed to be more cautious before going to rescue anyone.

If something were to happen to him, his wife, who cared so deeply, would be devastated.

Qin Yang couldn't bear the thought, feeling his heart ache at the notion.

Holding her tightly, he gently kissed the top of her head, "Don't worry, I'll be more careful, and I won't let you worry."

"Mhm, I know," Lin Chuxia looked up and gifted him with a smile, "Qin Yang, you're my hero."

#### Chapter 518: My Life Is Truly Complete

There were still tears at the corner of her eyes, and her nose was also red. Qin Yang's heart suddenly softened, and he pulled her back into his arms.

Lin Chuxia contentedly inhaled the scent emanating from him. It was perfect, she felt that her life was genuinely complete.

.....

Outside the door, Hu Xingwei glanced into the courtyard after school and quickly turned his head, blushing slightly.

"Mr. Qin and Aunt Lin really have a good relationship."

Cuddling and hugging out in the courtyard during broad daylight, not even bothering to close the door.

It was quite embarrassing to be seen by others.

Hu Yaping glanced again at the jeep parked at the doorstep, "Aunt Lin's brother came yesterday for the math competition as well, he's in the second year too?"

Hu Xingwei really wasn't sure, "Did you see him during the exam? I doubt it, he looks kind of goofy, doesn't seem that smart, isn't your math competition on a national scale? The participants this time were handpicked from all the schools in the province, right?"

Hu Yaping didn't answer her brother's question.

She believed she hadn't mistaken him yesterday. Even if she mistook the person, this vehicle was unmistakable.

Aunt Lin had driven this car to take her brother to No. 1 High School for the exam; many classmates saw it at the gate.

Her brother had called him goofy, but in her opinion, the goofiest one was her brother.

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### The Li Family in Xiaoqingshan Village

Early in the morning, Li Dongmei was retching by the well. Lin Jiayi saw her like this, a trace of amusement flashed in her eyes, but she still considerately asked, "Sister-in-law, what's wrong? Did you eat something bad?"

Li Dongmei herself didn't know what was happening, her appetite had been off for the past few days, and this morning she felt especially nauseous.

Hearing Lin Jiayi's question, she replied irritably, "Isn't it because of you? I think the problem is with the food you cooked last night. I told you already, with just a little meat, we could have stewed it all at once, but you insisted on dividing it into three portions. It must have gone bad from being left over. You're really not good at managing a household."

Lin Jiayi rolled her eyes.

She was not good at managing the household? No one in the family earned money, just relying on Li Guangyuan selling vegetables.

Finally, she had bought a pound of meat, and she wanted to stew it all at once?

Everyone knew if it was stewed all at once, Old Mrs. Li and this sister-in-law would enjoy it, leaving nothing for others. It was better to stew it in parts, so she could have a few more tastes of meat.



Old Mrs. Li heard the commotion and came out, catching Li Dongmei's words, and thought it plausible. She hastily asked Li Guangyuan to find a doctor.

Li Guangyuan, who was tying baskets onto the vegetable rack, had to drop his work when he heard this.

Lin Jiayi had long become numb to Li Guangyuan's attitude. She used to envy Lin Chuxia for marrying such a caring husband who listened to everything she said.

It turned out Li Guangyuan was indecisive, without ideas of his own, only able to listen to others.

Especially his mother.

Li Guangyuan hadn't been gone long before he returned, but following behind him wasn't a barefoot doctor, but Ma Dazhuang.

Old Mrs. Li was initially pleased to see who it was, glancing behind him, she asked, "Where's Hongmei? Is she behind you?"

Ma Dazhuang remained silent, staring downwards.

Old Mrs. Li noticed Ma Dazhuang was empty-handed, her expression sank, "My Hongmei was raised pampered, never suffered hardship, and is the most filial. She never returns to her maiden home empty-handed..."

Li Guangyuan went to her and gently pulled at her sleeve, interrupting her, "Mom, let's get back inside first."

Old Mrs. Li sensed that something was off, but dismissed it quickly.

She knew her daughter's character perfectly well; she wasn't one to suffer losses.

She turned and went inside.

Li Guangyuan then invited Ma Dazhuang, and Ma Dazhuang followed inside.

Lin Jiayi, her eyes gleaming with curiosity, led her child in as well.

Once inside, Ma Dazhuang said, "Is Hongmei home? Tell her to stop hiding. No matter how much she hides, I want a divorce. I've already obtained the approval from the village. If she keeps hiding, I'll go handle the procedures alone. I believe the government is reasonable; they will definitely grant me a divorce."

Upon these words, Old Mrs. Li was momentarily stunned before slamming the table with her palm, cursing aloud.

"You heartless Ma Dazhuang, I was just saying how the sun was rising in the west today. It's all because you're here to cause trouble, talking about divorce? Over what? What did my daughter do to you that you want a divorce? Today, you must make this clear to me, or you won't leave this house."

Ma Dazhuang seldom visited the Li Family but was well aware of Old Mrs. Li's nature.

"Don't you know what your daughter is like? You aren't aware of what she's been doing at the Ma family all these years?"

Old Mrs. Li was weirdly at a loss after hearing this but quickly regained her resolve as the thought of him wanting a divorce for her daughter arose.

"Of course, we know what our daughter is like. Though spoiled and a bit willful, she has a good heart, is good at cooking and farming, and is also beautiful. If not for Lin Chu's matchmaking back then, we would've married her to someone in the city."

"Then let her come out and get a divorce with me, let her marry someone in the city," Ma Dazhuang replied without emotion, standing there.

Li Guangyuan realized things were turning bad and quickly intervened, "Brother-in-law, what you said is just out of anger. I know my sister's temper isn't great, but every couple has their disputes. As the saying goes, 'Fight at the head of the bed and make up at the end of the bed.' I'll talk sense into her when I see her; if she's done something wrong, let's have her apologize to you, and this matter will be past, right?"

Li Dongmei had entered by this time as well, chiming in, "Yes, my sister surely didn't mean it. She's not young, and once you have children, it will be better."

She certainly didn't want her elder sister to get divorced. Having a divorced sister at home would make the Zhang Family look down on her even more.

And with her elder sister taking precedence, would her mother even bother with her marriage?

Ma Dazhuang looked at all of them and sneered, "Since we've been married, she's never worked in the fields, never cooked, and even at night she wouldn't let me touch her. Besides the first two nights of our marriage, she's never let me touch her again, how could there be a child?"

As soon as these words dropped, all the Li Family members' expressions changed.

In their understanding, marriage was about having children.

Wives were to bear children for their husbands, so if she didn't do household chores or let her husband sleep with her, it was utterly rebellious, defying ethics.

For a moment, even Old Mrs. Li felt short of breath.

"What you said is unpleasant to hear. Hongmei won't let you touch her probably because she doesn't feel well. My daughter never had a robust physique since childhood. As a husband, you should be more considerate, not rush to mention divorce. Today, Hongmei is in hiding probably because your words hurt her deeply. Let me make it very clear: if my daughter does anything rash because of this, we won't let your Ma family off the hook."

Chapter 519: I Really Can't Accept Her Anymore

Old Mrs. Li said this, but she wasn't worried at all.

Her daughter wouldn't think of harming herself.

"Alright, you should go back first. I'll have your brother-in-law look for her later. Once she's found, I'll have a good talk with her, and then let your brother-in-law take her over."

Old Mrs. Li narrowed her eyes, feigning compassion.

Ma Dazhuang said, "No need, if you dare to send her, I won't dare to take her."

Old Mrs. Li suddenly raised her head and glared viciously, "What do you mean? Our Li Family has already bowed down, you should know better. With your family's conditions and that mean stepmother of yours, what kind of wife do you think you'll marry? Don't think I don't know, your family says nice things, but you don't get a penny of it. Your stepmother favors your brother, and your father doesn't care about you, only using you like an animal. Now that our Hongmei isn't disgusted by you, if you really get divorced, let's see what kind of wife you can find."

Ma Dazhuang spoke indifferently, "Although I have a stepmother, she treats me well. I've never lacked food or drink all these years. As for the family pigs, they're raised by my stepmother and father with hard work. I just help feed them occasionally, they don't rely solely on me. When the pigs are sold, my dad gives me some pocket money. But because most of it is taken by my dad, Hongmei fought with me. I suggested we live separately and raise the pigs on our own, and my dad agreed, letting us take piglets from him as many as we needed, and when they grow up and sell, he wouldn't take the money. She wasn't happy with that, she wanted to take over the pigs at home. My dad disagreed, and she set the house on fire, nearly burning my brother who was sleeping inside. That's my own brother who called me brother when we were little, and even with Sister-in-law Hongmei, he was always respectful. How could she be so heartless? With a wife like that, I really don't dare to have her."

Lastly, Ma Dazhuang coldly said, "Since Hongmei isn't home, I'll ask the village chief for help with this matter. I'm not here to seek your opinion, just to inform you."

After saying that, he didn't give Old Mrs. Li another look and turned to leave.

Old Mrs. Li was still processing the fact that Li Hongmei set the house on fire and was furious. "That insolent girl, how could she be so daring? If someone had died, she would've gone to jail. Guangyuan, go

find your sister. She must be scared and is probably crying somewhere. If the Ma family doesn't care about righteousness, we won't care about morals either. This divorce is definite, my daughter won't have trouble finding someone better."

Li Guangyuan hesitated, while Old Mrs. Li became anxious, "Go quickly, bring your sister back soon."

"Ugh—"

Nearby, Li Dongmei started dry heaving.

Li Guangyuan hesitated, "Should I find a doctor for my second sister first or look for my eldest sister?"

Lin Jiayi watched the family drama unfold, feeling quite amused.

She laughed, "What doctor? I think she's pregnant. Mom, we have good news."

Old Mrs. Li's eyes narrowed as she glanced at Li Dongmei.

She hadn't thought much before, just assuming her daughter had an upset stomach.

But now, considering the situation with the Zhang family...

"What's going on? Did you sleep with that guy from the Zhang family?"

Remembering how her daughter looked when she came back sometimes, Old Mrs. Li threw a teacup.

"What did I teach you before? You're a respectable young lady, if you really gave yourself to him, how would he still treasure you?"

No wonder the promised trousseau hasn't materialized; it seems the Zhang family is playing their cards well.

Li Dongmei almost got hit by the teacup, her eyes reddening with fright, "Did you forget what you taught me? I only did what you said."

When she first found a city man, her mother hinted for her to secure him by any means.

Old Mrs. Li also recalled her earlier words, looking even more upset, "Who knew he was such a scoundrel, a divorced man pretending to be something he's not. Now you've been manipulated by them, how are you going to get the promised trousseau? If the village finds out, you'll be disgraced."

Li Dongmei retorted confidently, "Who caused my disgrace? Who disagreed earlier? When Wenbin came to propose, if you'd agreed to the match, we might have been married by now. I urge you to come up with something quickly. It's early in the pregnancy, we're still not showing. Once the belly grows, it'll be even more humiliating."

Old Mrs. Li was so angry she slapped her thigh, "What a mess, what a mess..."

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The weather was getting colder day by day.

In her past life, Lin Chuxia developed a chronic illness, particularly fearing the cold. Every winter, it felt like the chill penetrated her bones. Later on, when conditions improved, she avoided going out as much as possible during winter.

In this life, because she hadn't gone through that ordeal and was nourished by the spiritual spring water, her body was as strong as an ox. Yet the feeling engraved in her bones made her shiver when she saw the bleak northern wind.

The recent drop in temperatures and overcast skies made Lin Chuxia even less inclined to go out, lazily staying cozy at home.

A sound of a bicycle bell rang outside, and Yuan Bao barked alertly.

Seeing the figure moving outside, Lin Chuxia went out.

It was a staff member from the post office, who asked loudly upon seeing Lin Chuxia, "Is this Mr. Qin Yang's home? We're here to install a phone."

These days, her business was expanding, requiring phone communication not only with Qin Family Village but also with Xiyang Food Factory, Huamei Mall, and the southern office.

Qin Yang noticed her frequent trips to make calls were inconvenient, so he specially asked for a phone line at home.

"Yes, please come in."

Lin Chuxia called Yuan Bao aside and invited the staff in.

The paperwork was already done; today was just about laying the phone line.

The two staff members swiftly found the phone line interface, measured the distance, and started laying the phone line.

This action caused quite a stir.

Several familiar sister-in-laws curiously approached to greet Lin Chuxia.

"What's going on? Didn't your house already have electricity? Why are you pulling the wires again?"

"Oh dear, Sister-in-law Zhang, you don't understand. This isn't for lighting, it's for a phone line. Lin's family's getting a phone installed."

"Oh my, getting a phone installed must cost quite a bit, right? I heard your hometown isn't far, you wouldn't need to make many calls in a year, would you? Is it necessary to get a phone just for that?"

Only those familiar with Lin Chuxia had some idea of her matters. Even the next-door Sister-in-law Fu couldn't clearly say what Lin Chuxia was really up to; others only knew their family was relatively well-off.

As that sister-in-law spoke, another voice chimed in, "Installing a phone is nothing. Didn't you see they even have a car? What might seem like a lot of money to us is no big deal for them."

Lin Chuxia recognized the familiar voice and turned to see Sister-in-law Feng at the back of the crowd.

#### Chapter 520: Pure Malice

Sister-in-law Feng, meeting her gaze, didn't panic but instead asked with a chuckle, "Now that Mr. Qin's house has a telephone installed, it should be convenient for our neighbors to make calls in the future. Can we come to your place to make calls if we need to, Mr. Qin's family?"

As soon as she asked this, the others caught on too.

It's true, phone bills are expensive these days, and making a call isn't convenient; you have to queue up at the post office.

Now that there's a telephone in the residential compound, they wouldn't need to queue at the post office in the future, right?

Since they all live in the same compound and see each other all the time, would they charge neighbors for making calls?

Their family is so wealthy, even driving a car; they probably wouldn't care about a few phone bill charges.



Lin Chuxia could tell what these people were scheming just from their expressions, especially Sister-in-law Feng, who wore a smug face behind the crowd.

Lin Chuxia knew Sister-in-law Feng wasn't stupid; she was purely spiteful.

She couldn't stand seeing others doing well, not even her own daughter or husband.

In modern terms, someone like her has psychological issues and should see a therapist.

But back in those days, people wouldn't go to the hospital for a cold, let alone mental health issues.

Lin Chuxia smiled generously, "Sure, if you ladies ever have an urgent matter, feel free to come over and use our phone, save you the trip to the post office. Just pay the phone charge as the post office would charge, and I'll handle the bill later."

Sister-in-law Fu chimed in with a laugh, "That's going to be convenient, saving us a long trip and the queue. It's true, Lin is generous. None of you, having such good luck, offered it for everyone to use. Good intentions will surely be rewarded."

Lin Chuxia looked at Sister-in-law Fu with a smile, "I don't deserve such praise, sister-in-law. We're all neighbors, helping each other is only right, as long as no one thinks I'm charging for the phone use."

"The way you're talking, even if you have a phone at home, money doesn't grow on trees. You're already making it convenient for everyone by letting them use the phone; asking you to cover the charges is too much. Even thinking that way is unreasonable, having such audacity."

After Sister-in-law Fu finished speaking, a few women in the crowd looked awkward and laughed, "Exactly, exactly, if it's not an urgent matter, we shouldn't disturb you, Little Lin, let alone talk about the phone charges; of course, we'll pay."

Sister-in-law Feng looked even more dissatisfied.

But no one cared what she thought.

After this little episode, some of the women went back to their chores, while a few stayed to watch until someone reminded them that the company had brought coal, and the remaining women hurried back.

Lin Chuxia's home had heating, so there was no need to burn briquettes.

She planned to buy a couple of tons when there were coal blocks available.

Just as she thought this, someone came by to say that the coal blocks had arrived, so whoever needs them should go and buy more.

The phone hadn't been installed yet, so Lin Chuxia had to tell the master and went over to Sister-in-law Gong's house, knowing they also used radiators.

She arranged with Sister-in-law Gong to have the workers bring the coal blocks to her place after they were done.

Sister-in-law Gong hadn't gone out today, but buying coal was necessary.

After hearing Lin Chuxia, she said, "Sure, I'll bring the workers to your place later, you guys unload first."

"No need for that, just thinking the sooner the coal is unloaded, the sooner I can turn on the radiator, I get cold easily."

Lin Chuxia said embarrassedly.

Sister-in-law Gong understood and laughed, "I know, when it gets cold, it feels uncomfortable all over, but at your age, Lin, you shouldn't. Are you unwell? You don't look so good."

Lin Chuxia instinctively touched her face, "Really? Maybe I'm just lazy, it's cold, and I don't feel like moving, plus the phone installation and the coal unloading happening, it's a lot."

Running around had indeed left her feeling unsettled.

To be honest, she rarely felt this way anymore.

"You should rest when you get back, I'll bring the coal workers over later, it's convenient as you live up front, easily unloaded before coming to us. Let me tell you, a woman's body is delicate, you can't ignore it when you're young or you'll suffer when you're older."

Her health was poor, requiring unpredictable amounts of medicine throughout the year.

Not to mention the cost, plus the worry it caused her family.

Lin Chuxia nodded agreeably and thanked Sister-in-law Gong again.

The phone installation wasn't done yet, but Sister-in-law Gong brought the coal truck to her house.

However, Qin Yang arrived after getting the message.

Sister-in-law Gong saw Qin Yang and chuckled, "Little Qin knows how to care for people, but your home is indeed busy today, Lin couldn't handle it. Look at her little face, turned pale from exhaustion."

Qin Yang noticed Lin Chuxia's pale complexion and promptly told her to go inside and rest.

The phone was being installed in the study. Qin Yang coordinated with the technician and then helped unload the coal with the workers.

He then led the coal truck to Sister-in-law Gong's house.

After all this running around, the phone was finally installed, and it was already noon.

Qin Yang didn't go back to work. Upon reaching home, he lit up the heater.

These days, everyone calculated coal expenses; they'd delay lighting the stove to save, but not Qin Yang's family. They lit it whenever they had coal, never bothering with calculations.

After lighting the fire, Qin Yang said with concern, "Next time, just come to the office to call me for such things, I'll handle it."

Lin Chuxia might have felt unwell but it wasn't that serious.

After resting for a while, she felt better.

In any case, what was this compared to her Bun Shop or the mall?

Qin Yang always treated her like a fragile doll, banning her from this and that, afraid she'd be tired.

"I'm fine, probably just stir-crazy these days from staying home. You see me running to the mall or restaurants, I'm never like this, am I? There's a saying, the more you wait, the lazier you get, the more you eat, the greedier you become."

Qin Yang disagreed, "I'd rather you be lazier and greedier. What do you want for lunch? I'll cook."

Lin Chuxia thought for a moment, "Let's have hot pot, we still have the lamb rolls from last time in the fridge. Whatever ingredients we have, just prepare the dipping sauce."

Qin Yang had no objections and went to prepare in the kitchen. Lin Chuxia took a look into the study, "The phone is installed, when will it be connected? I want to call home and also have Su Wensong check on the master, it's time to get coal for him too."

The Qin Family wouldn't be a concern as Qin Han handled it all.

But Old Master He lived alone, and if Lin Chuxia didn't keep this in mind, he'd go all winter without buying coal or lighting the stove.

"The post office said the earliest would be the day after tomorrow. If it's urgent, you could use the office phone."

"No need, I'll wait."

With the ingredients ready, hotpot was easy to prepare, and after a warm meal, Lin Chuxia felt completely comfortable. With the heating on, the room was cozy, making Lin Chuxia feel drowsy.

But before she could fall asleep, there was a knock on the door outside...