

Switched M 571

Chapter 571: Standing for Principle, Not Family

"I didn't say anything. I'm just worried about leaving the pastries in this room. The rats here are big enough to make off with them. These were bought by Jianjun for his grandparents, and the child's filial piety shouldn't be wasted."

After saying this, she called Qin Jianjun to leave with her.

Qin Jianjun noticed the tense atmosphere between his mother and his aunt, which left him even more confused.

He knew his mother didn't think highly of his aunt because of previous incidents involving her and their fourth aunt, but he'd never seen them so openly at odds.

After all, his uncle is his father's own brother.

Is his mother really going to take the box of pastries away?

Is it appropriate to take away what he brought for his grandparents?

Seeing him look bewildered from one person to another, Mrs. Qin spoke up, "Jianjun, keep it with you. When I want to eat, I'll come to your room to get it. It'll be a chance to see my eldest grandson."

"Okay, sure, Grandma."

With Mrs. Qin's words, Qin Jianjun finally felt relieved.

Outside, Qin Jianjun saw Qian Chuncao directly returning to their room with the box of pastries, making his heart tighten again.

He quickly jogged forward, "Mom, I bought the same pastries for you and Dad as well. There are two more boxes, so even if Jianjun gets greedy, there'll be enough for you."

Qian Chuncao laughed angrily, "Do you think I took these pastries back just because I don't want your grandparents to eat them? Am I that petty in your eyes?"

"No... no."

"To tell you the truth, I'm not afraid of your grandparents eating them; I'm afraid these fine pastries will be eaten by unrelated people. Your old aunt has been causing trouble ever since she got pregnant. She's already had such a big argument with your second grandpa's family, even asking your grandma to get strawberries from them. As if our Qin Family depends on her womb for descendants. If I didn't bring these pastries to our room, they'd be taken by Ma Suyun in no time."

He guessed that perhaps his mother was worried about his aunt having some.

This was a five-jin box of pastries with plenty inside, and he thought it wouldn't matter if his grandparents gave his aunt a piece or two.

But hearing his mother's words, it seemed that's not entirely the case.

He worked in the city and seldom called home. Even when he did, no one told him these things.

"How could my old aunt be like this? Doesn't my old uncle do anything about it?"

Who constantly fixates on eating from the elders' portion?

As younger generations, shouldn't they be the ones showing filial piety to the elders?

"Deal with it? Many of these things are your uncle's ideas. You're grown now, and there's no need to hide things from you. Do you know how your uncle lost his job?"

Qin Jianjun nodded, "I know, Uncle spread false rumors about Aunt, and did things behind her back."

His uncle spread rumors, and Aunt caused him to lose his job.

He thought Uncle brought it upon himself, and it seemed their accounts were settled.

"Right, they always say others wronged them without looking at what they've done themselves. Why did your second aunt go to the city with her big belly before? It was your uncle causing trouble behind the scenes. Do you think your second uncle would give them strawberries?"

Qin Jianjun widened his eyes, "Has my uncle gone mad? Why would he do such a thing?"

That's a Qin family child they're talking about.

Thinking about how cute he found Little Yaoyao earlier, Uncle actually didn't want her to come into this world.

"How would I know? And your sister, if not for your old aunt stirring trouble, would she have gotten involved with Cai Jun? Your aunt never had good intentions from the start. I'm telling you this so you'll know that our family, whether it's your job or the greenhouses your dad and I manage, it's all thanks to the uncle and aunt from your second grandpa's family, especially your fourth aunt. Without her, we wouldn't be enjoying these good days. Even though there's some distance, you need to discern who's near and who's far. I stand by principle, not by closeness. You better keep your eyes wide open and don't do heartless things."

"Mom, I understand. I'll remember that."

Qin Jianjun really didn't know there was so much behind it.

Before, his mother always said it was an adult matter and that he shouldn't meddle. Even when things happened, she rarely told him, only reminding him to remember his fourth aunt's kindness and repay her well.

He knew his mother was afraid he'd take sides and offend people.

Looking at it now, his mother had already chosen her side without needing him to.

And naturally, he could tell right from wrong.

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On the other side, Ma Suyun saw the mother and son really taking the pastries back to their room, making her stomach hurt with anger.

"Dad, Mom, you both saw it, right? Is there anyone like my sister-in-law, guarding against me like she's guarding against a thief? Da Wen is the younger brother of the eldest brother, and the one in my belly is your own grandchild. What's the meaning of this from my sister-in-law? I think she's just unwilling to see us do well."

Mrs. Qin comforted her, "Your sister-in-law didn't mean that."

"How could that not be her meaning? Don't think I don't know. She just looks down on us. Don't forget when Da Wen worked at the Hardware Company, whenever the family needed something, wasn't Da Wen always helping to buy them? Without Da Wen getting them bicycle tickets, where would they get bicycles to ride? Now, seeing we're no longer useful, they push us aside and go to curry favor with Lin Chuxia's family. If they were truly brothers, wouldn't they remember it was Lin Chu who cost Da Wen his job? Now they watch Da Wen get bullied without saying a word. Guarding a few pastries from us, does she even see us as brothers?"

Mrs. Qin had heard these complaints from her third daughter-in-law multiple times. It was as if everyone owed them something.

But as to why the third son's job was lost and why the eldest couple was closer to the second family than they were to Qin Wen, their own brother, she might be old but she's not senile.

As for today's matter, it really wasn't the eldest daughter-in-law's fault.

The eldest daughter-in-law was doing it for the good of the old couple.

They're getting older, missing a bite shouldn't matter, but these were bought by Jianjun for them, so of course, the eldest daughter-in-law didn't want her son's filial piety to be wasted.

"I understand, I'll have a good talk with your sister-in-law. Don't worry, focus on the baby in your belly."

Ma Suyun huffed arrogantly, "Only you care about me. Do you know how hard it is for me to carry this child? This is your Qin Family's grandson and your last grandson. As long as you know, that's what matters."

Mrs. Qin nodded, "Yes, take good care of yourself. It's cold now, and soon it will be the New Year. Stay home, don't wander around too much. This pregnancy needs you to rest more."

Ma Suyun's face turned slightly awkward, "Mom, what do you mean? Do you also resent me coming around? I'm just worried about you and Dad."

"Your eldest brother and sister-in-law are with your Dad and me. You don't need to fret about anything, just take care of yourself."

Ma Suyun was truly livid now, and she couldn't stay any longer, leaving with a dark expression.

Today was the last market day before the New Year. When ordinary people prepare for the New Year, they either go to the grocery store in the county or to the market.

Chapter 572: Who Got Divorced?

In previous years, these few big markets before the festival were filled with buyers and sellers, so much so that the last two big markets would extend from half a day to a whole day.

Previously, Ma Suyun loved visiting the big markets, but she's pregnant this year and can't squeeze into crowded places.

Along the way, Ma Suyun saw villagers pushing bicycles and carrying large bags of goods, and she felt envious.

This envy made her want to chat more, ask what each family bought, and praise another family's fresh groceries.

Saying this made her feel disheartened.

This year, almost every household in Qin Family Village built vegetable greenhouses and clearly were more prosperous.

And those who worked at Xiyang Food Factory were lavish in purchasing New Year goods.

Let's not even mention large chunks of pork, they were buying racks of ribs like fans.

Thinking that her family hasn't bought anything yet, only a little fried food, which she got from her mother-in-law.

She's pregnant and inconvenient, and her husband Qin Wen didn't take care of any tasks.

Even though she suffers from severe pregnancy vomiting; it's strange—others couldn't stand the smell of fish and meat, yet she liked eating meat.

But she enjoyed eating, and her family simply couldn't provide for it.

Finally, hoping for the New Year to come, Qin Wen hadn't bought any meat till now. Today is the last big market, so come what may, today meat should be bought.

Thinking this, she sped up her pace, but only walked a few steps when she got drawn to some gossiping by two nearby people.

Hearing them mention someone, Ma Suyun even forgot about the meat-eating issue.

She couldn't resist joining the gossip eventually.

Until almost noon when people went home to cook, Ma Suyun felt she hadn't had enough.

Returning home, seeing Qin Wen was back, she didn't even check what he bought at the market, but plopped down at the edge of the kang, eyes wide open, her pitch higher.

"Did you know, Qin Juan from the second house got divorced?"

Qin Wen was lying on the kang with his hands cupping as he dozed off, hearing the noise and knowing Ma Suyun was back, he didn't open his eyes, but upon hearing that shout, he sat up quickly.

"What did you say? Who got divorced?"

"It's Qin Juan from your second uncle's house, the best-married one among her sisters, not only married someone from the city but also someone working in the government, later went to that city."

When Ma Suyun married Qin Wen, Qin Juan was already married and they had moved to Yan City.

Qin Juan rarely returned to her parents' home, so Ma Suyun barely met her and hardly spoke a few words.

But in her impression, Qin Juan was a highly fortunate woman.

A rural woman not only married a city person, but her husband was also in an official position.

Who in Qin Family Village doesn't talk about how fortunate Qin Juan is.

Qin Wen heard it clearly the first time, but he still couldn't believe it.

Now, being confirmed again, Qin Wen happily slapped his thigh.

"Great, truly great, didn't expect the second house to face retribution, like I said, not all good things should go to their second house. Qin Juan divorced this time, I wonder how those two brothers will manage, if Qin Juan has the face to stay in Qin Family Village."

Qin Wen happily grabbed Ma Suyun's arm, "How did you know? For how long? Is Qin Juan already back in the village?"

"They say the divorce happened a while ago, but it's been kept secret."

Qin Wen scoffed, "So disgraceful, how could it not be kept secret? But speaking of it, Qin Yang's couple just went to Yan City this year, right? How come Qin Juan had no issues for years, but divorced after they moved? Did you dig up what caused the divorce?"

"How could anyone find out, if they wish to hide, what could be hidden? In our family, only your eldest nephew is in Yan City, but he, like your sister-in-law, only recognizes money and is closer to those two brothers than to you, so trying to get anything from him is impossible."

Qin Wen long knew what his eldest nephew was like, now even unwilling to call him uncle, let alone be close.

He didn't pursue the reason further, only said, "Really didn't expect someone like Qin Juan could end up divorced."

As for Ma Suyun, not being familiar with Qin Juan, they being cousins, Qin Wen was indeed knowledgeable about his cousin.

She was good-tempered from young, never got into an argument with anyone.

But her personality was too soft, like dough, made one feel she was weak.

"I think the Zhang Family doesn't want her, she looks as if she suffers, doesn't look fortunate, the Zhang Family has such a good condition, but she only bore a daughter, even broke off the continuation for them, who could tolerate such a daughter-in-law."

Ma Suyun nodded in agreement.

They ordinary families all wish for sons to continue the family line, let alone the city officials.

"But speaking of it, your cousin really is capable, just divorced and already found a man."

Now Qin Wen was even more shocked.

If someone else did that, he'd accept it, but someone like Qin Juan splitting and immediately finding someone?

"Did the second uncle and aunt introduce him?"

Ma Suyun shook her head, "They say she found him herself."

Qin Wen refused to believe, "Misheard, Qin Juan to find a man herself?"

He'd rather believe that pigs climbed trees.

"That's what they all say, after divorcing, Qin Juan never returned, she works in Lin Chuxia's shop in Yan City, that man also works in Lin Chuxia's shop..." Ma Suyun shared all she knew.

Though she was quite sour.

Anyone close to Lin Chuxia could go work at her shop for wages.

"Both work in one shop?" Qin Wen seemed to understand something, chuckled, "Now I know why Zhang Family doesn't want Qin Juan."

"Why?"

Qin Wen glanced at Ma Suyun, his eyes carrying mockery, "Probably Qin Juan fooled around outside, letting Zhang Family catch the handle. Think about it, Qin Juan and Zhang Wenbin married for years, always peacefully, why did she divorce when Lin Chuxia and Qin Yang went to the city? Qin Juan wasn't working before, just cooking and taking care of the child at home, surely Lin Chuxia opened the shop, let Qin Juan work there, Qin Juan couldn't stand loneliness and fooled around with male employees in the store, the Zhang Family couldn't take it and divorced."

Even if Qin Juan wasn't that kind to fool around, so what? She's so pretty, any man flirting her, being found by the Zhang Family is the same.

Ma Suyun nodded, "Say this could be possible, the Zhang Family and Qin Juan divorcing even not want the daughter, suspecting Ningning isn't Zhang's, otherwise which family divorces and doesn't want the child? By the way, I specifically dug about what Qin Juan's partner is like, they say he's large and bald, doesn't look like a good person, I think what you said might be right, the Zhang Family knew she fooled around and thus doesn't want her."

Chapter 573: Knows How to Enjoy Life

"It really is like that?"

If it weren't for the feud with the Qin brothers, Qin Wen would have loved to go over to the second house right away and take a look.

Such excitement is rare in the second house.

"Some people seem to be virtuous wives and good mothers, but in reality, they are just wanton women."

This moment made Qin Wen even more resolute in his thoughts.

How else could one explain Qin Juan just being divorced yet immediately engaged to another man?

The guy doesn't even stand out.

His cousin is one of the prettiest in the village.

With the current conditions in the Qin's second house, even if she's remarried, with Mr. Lin backing her up, and a little more dowry added, what kind of person can't she find?

If it was really because of giving birth to a girl, the Zhang family didn't divorce Qin Juan when the child was born, and now that the Qin Family is so wealthy, if he were Zhang Wenbin, he wouldn't easily divorce Qin Juan either.

Unless he was cuckolded.

Ma Suyun, in a knowing manner, said, "To say Qin Juan found such a man outside, I can understand. That little Zhang Wenbin, skinny like a reed, how much strength could he have? I heard her new man might not look good, but he's strong, tall, and sturdy with a lot of strength. In this way, your cousin knows how to enjoy life."

"Are you envious?"

A man's cold voice came through, making Ma Suyun realize her words were wrong.

She hurriedly corrected herself, "What am I envious of? He's a remarried man, like worn-out shoes with a burden of baggage. What's there for me to envy? Once I have a son, the only ones envious will be them."

Qin Wen let out a cold snort and leaned back on the kang, "Go make food, I'm hungry."

Ma Suyun tied on an apron and asked casually, "What did you buy at the market today, how much meat did you buy?"

"It's all in the main hall, go see for yourself. Meat, meat, meat is all you think about, day in and day out. You never consider how much money you've spent on medicine, and how could there be any more money to buy you meat every day?"

Remembering the things she saw on the floor in the main hall earlier today, Ma Suyun felt a wave of jealousy rising in her heart.

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In rural areas, the most straightforward way to show respect to family and friends is by the extravagance of the meals served.

Jia Liang enjoyed a lavish lunch at the Qin's.

It's no exaggeration to say that even Qin's Restaurant's highest standard fare can't compare to the spread Qin Family prepared for him.

Mr. Qin even brought out a cherished bottle of fine liquor, and the brothers Qin Han and Qin Yang accompanied him for drinks in person.

This standard gave Jia Liang plenty of face and made him feel the Qin Family's importance placed on Qin Juan.

All the necessary topics were covered during dinner.

Both Jia Liang and Qin Juan are not young, and since they're satisfied with each other, they have no reasons for reservations.

As for developing feelings, first, the countryside remains relatively traditional and doesn't emphasize such things, second, Qin Juan and Jia Liang work at the same restaurant, so the feelings have already been nurtured.

So Mr. Qin took charge and directly set the wedding date.

It was set for the "Dragon Raising Its Head" day in February next year, right after the first month of the lunar year.

Jia Liang didn't expect things to go so smoothly; not only did the Qin Family accept him, but they also fixed the wedding date.

He was so happy he kept toasting Mr. Qin and Qin Han, his future brother-in-law.

As for his younger brother-in-law, Qin Yang, he didn't dare to neglect him either.

Yet, for some reason, he was never as casual in front of his younger brother-in-law as he was with his father-in-law and brother-in-law.

Still, Jia Liang didn't dwell on it much, figuring that as long as he treats Qin Juan well, he'll eventually show his sincerity to his brother-in-law.

After the feast, everyone drank quite a bit except for Qin Yang.

Yet, Jia Liang was well aware of his status and didn't drink too much, while Qin Han once again got quite drunk.

Zhang Guilan helped him back to his room, and Mr. Qin, feeling a bit dizzy himself, retired to his room after a short chat.

Qin Yang, not wanting to engage in pleasantries with Jia Liang, took his wife back to their room, knowing she had the habit of napping.

The room suddenly was left with only Qin Juan and Jia Liang.

With no outsiders around, Jia Liang unabashedly looked at Qin Juan, smiling foolishly, enough to make Qin Juan feel uneasy.

"Had too much?"

Jia Liang shook his head, reaching out to hold Qin Juan's hand, "No, on my first visit to your family, how could I get drunk? That would embarrass you. I'm just happy, Juanzi. I can finally marry you."

Qin Juan looked at her hand, which was held, thinking he wasn't drunk.

The man who always found time to come talk to her whenever possible didn't dare say a word when he was here today, now dared to hold her hand.

Hearing her silence, Jia Liang shook her arm gently, "Juanzi, are you happy with the date Dad set for us? I'm quite happy with it. In less than 40 days, you'll be my wife, 40 days; I have to think carefully. The house Houzi decorated for his wedding was nice, but the courtyard was rented. I don't want to live in someone else's courtyard, I have to buy a courtyard and have our own home—a real home. I'll renovate it after buying, I'm good at it—the bun shop in the city was renovated by me. I remember you said my renovations were good, so I'll get those people to do my new house, and get all new furniture too. Oh, and the bride price, the 'three rounds and a sound,' I'll get them all for you. Whatever others have, we'll have, and what others don't have, you're worth having too..."

Listening to his long-winded chatter, Qin Juan couldn't help but speak out, "I don't have so many ideas, just living a steady life together is fine. Buying both a house and furniture, where's all that money coming from?"

At this, Jia Liang chuckled, "I have it. I've been saving all the money I've made working these years. At the end of the year, after our restaurant's dividends, Mr. Lin gave me a big bonus. Even if the money's

not enough, I'll borrow to make it enough for you. I can only marry you once in my life; I won't let you suffer any grievances."

Hearing this, Qin Juan's eyes couldn't help turning red.

She still remembered the year she married Zhang Wenbin, there were unresolved issues in the Zhang Family, and the whole family was down and out. Forget having a proper bride price and even the new house was just Zhang Wenbin's usual room with the quilt he'd used for twenty years.

There was no feast for family and friends or a grand wedding.

She thought it was due to their circumstances not being suitable for publicity, but thinking now, someone who truly cares for you would never let you suffer grievances.

She also remembered her mother making two quilts as a dowry for her.

The night she got married, Zhang Wenbin took both quilts to his mother's room, saying his mother had suffered for years and had weakened from it, afraid of the cold.

The new quilts were warm, and as a son, he couldn't enjoy the warm new quilts while letting his parents freeze in another room.

He said they were young and would have opportunities to use new quilts in the future while his parents' days were getting shorter, and as younger generations, they should honor their elders.

From that year onward, during the ten years she was married into the Zhang Family, Qin Juan never used a new quilt.

Chapter 574: I Just Love How Unreasonable You Are

Even though later the issues with the Zhang Family were resolved, and Zhang Wenbin rearranged his work, making life better at home, he never mentioned changing her quilt to a new one.

Instead, Zhang Wenbin got himself a new quilt and naturally gave her his old one.

He even told her that two quilts are warmer than one.

Jia Liang looked at Qin Juan, whose eyes had reddened, and immediately panicked.

"What's wrong with you? Is there something you're not satisfied with? Don't cry, just tell me, as long as I can manage it, I'll do it all for you."

Qin Juan shook her head, "It's fine, I listen to you, I have a few hundred yuan on hand, and I'll give it all to you when the time comes."

"I don't want your money," Jia Liang said with a serious face, "How can I, a grown man, take money from a woman? Are you looking down on me? Keep your money for yourself, buy some new clothes, or keep it as your private funds. After we get married, your money is yours, and my money is yours too."

Qin Juan, seeing his serious expression, burst into laughter, "How could I be so unreasonable?"

"I just like you being unreasonable."

As they were talking, a chattering sound came from near the curtains.

Qin Juan quickly turned her head, forgetting to pull her hand back.

Then she saw two little heads pop out from behind the door curtain.

Ningning covered her mouth, laughing secretly, and said to Zhuangzhuang, who was as tall as her, "Didn't I say so? Uncle Liang likes holding my mom's hand best."

Zhuangzhuang nodded and held Ningning's hand.

"I also like holding Sister Ningning's hand, come on, let's go find Niuniu and Brother Jianye."

The two little kids complained and then, hand in hand and happily, ran away, leaving a blushing Qin Juan and a chuckling Jia Liang behind.

Jia Liang still had to go back to the city, so he hurried to catch the bus to the city from An City by evening.

With his departure, the Qin Family's Spring Festival officially began.

This year they had a new addition to the family, and there would be another one next year.

Qin Juan's good days were set, and Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin had been so happy these days they couldn't stop smiling, their faces full of joy.

During the New Year's Eve dinner, Qin Han announced another piece of good news.

After the New Year, he planned to plant all the family fields with plastic greenhouses for a big harvest.

By autumn next year, they hoped to rebuild the old house into a row of tiled houses.

Lin Chuxia wholeheartedly supported this idea, but about building tiled houses...

"Big Brother, since we're building, let's build a small villa. We will cover half of the cost."

Qin Han, hearing Lin Chuxia say they would fund it, quickly shook his head, "No need, no need, how could I let you pay," it was just his spur-of-the-moment idea.

According to his wife, he was getting a bit extravagant.

Those two strawberry greenhouses this year, after accounting by year-end, surprisingly sold for more than 3000 yuan.

There was still fruit in the greenhouse, and at current prices, selling for another 1000 yuan was totally feasible.

Adding the money earned from the farm supply store, that's why he wanted to build a house.

Lin Chuxia feigned a stern face, "Big Brother doesn't want me to pitch in, planning not to let me live in the new house?"

"How could that be, Sister-in-law, how could you think like this?"

Qin Han was suddenly anxious, almost swearing in earnest.

Lin Chuxia chuckled, "Since you don't think like that, count me in; with so many family members, living in a small villa would be more comfortable. When the time comes, we'll build two or three floors, parents can live on the first floor with their bad joints, and the rest of us and the kids will live there, and also the eldest sister and future brother-in-law, just building a row of tiled houses won't be enough room."

Saying it like this made Qin Han feel it made sense, and he agreed happily, "Okay, let's build a small villa, maybe we'll be the first in Qin Family Village to build a small villa."

"You shouldn't speak too soon," Zhang Guilan interjected, "This year, several in the village made money with vegetable greenhouses, and those working at the food factory, not to mention others, speaking of Jianjun's family, the elder brother and sister-in-law are determined to build a house for Jianjun to get married, might as well build a small villa."

Upon hearing this, Qin Han's face turned serious, "Did the elder brother and sister-in-law really say this?"

Zhang Guilan nodded, "You know, Jianjun is old enough to be seeing someone, this year, despite working outside, the matchmakers have almost worn out the doorstep. Their house is still the house from before the family split. How could they not build a new house to marry Jianjun?"

"So, should we build this house next year?" Anyway, he wanted to compete to be the first, he wanted to be the first family in Qin Family Village to build a small villa.

Mrs. Qin couldn't bear to look at her son's silly demeanor, "Your elder brother and sister-in-law want to build a house for Jianjun to get married, that's true, but you should also think, Jianjun has Jianye beneath him, where would they get enough money to build a small villa? Is it building one or two?"

In the village, there weren't many families where the two sons got along as harmoniously as his two sons did.

Just like a spoon inevitably hitting the edge of a pot, when living together for a long time, conflicts between brothers and between sisters-in-law are inevitable.

In the end, brothers can turn into enemies.

Any family with two sons would split early, if they could have two houses, they would never squeeze into one.

Qin Han felt this was indeed the case, and instantly breathed a sigh of relief.

Soon he saw from his wife's appearance, and understood everything, his wife was just deliberately teasing him.

This was the second Spring Festival Qin Juan and Ningning spent at home, and compared to last year, the atmosphere was more relaxed and comfortable.

It was also more harmonious and warm.

Thinking about next February when she would get married, she cherished her time at home even more.

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Soon it was the first day of the lunar New Year, after eating the dumplings, it was customary to go visiting for the New Year.

Mrs. Qin and Qin Juan both wanted Lin Chuxia to rest at home, but Lin Chuxia felt a bit embarrassed.

Her pregnancy was still in the early months, past the first trimester, and she had no symptoms during this pregnancy, it didn't feel right to not go for New Year visits.

Especially with the elders from the big and third family.

Previously, when Xiao Wu's wife and the eldest sister-in-law were pregnant, they hadn't made such an exception.

Most importantly, Lin Chuxia loved the lively festival atmosphere of this era's village.

She wanted to experience it thoroughly.

Finally, Qin Yang spoke up, "Let's just visit Big Uncle and Old Uncle's houses, staying home all the time is dreary, and with me by your side, there's no need to worry."

Lin Chuxia gave Qin Yang an appreciative look, her husband understood her after all.

Qin Han, Zhang Guilan, Qin Yang, and Lin Chuxia, the four of them got ready and set off with Little Zhuangzhuang.

Little Yaoyao naturally couldn't go out and stayed at home under the care of Mrs. Qin and Qin Juan.

The little one also especially liked playing with Sister Ningning.

After the two brothers left home, they first headed to Big Uncle's house, and on the road, they soon ran into Qin Wu and his wife, who were also on their way to Big Uncle's house.

Ever since Lin Chuxia gave him the green light that time and sent Qin Wu to a branch office in the south.

In the past six months, Qin Wu was rarely at home.

He found the work at the branch office not only broadened his horizons but was also a great training, and after discussing with his family, he applied with Su Wensong to be stationed at the branch office.

Chapter 575: Xiyang Primary School

Seeing Qin Wu again these days, he's clearly different.

There's a newfound steadiness in his manner and a bit of flair.

Qin Han, straightforward as always, slung an arm around Qin Wu's shoulders and teased him.

After speaking, he turned to the others, "Am I right or not? With Xiao Wu's current looks, if he says he's a government official, people would believe it."

"Big Brother, you're mistaken. Xiao Wu is now handling all sorts of matters at the Rong City branch office of Xiyang Food. He's naturally the branch manager. Are you saying a manager is not an official?" Lin Chuxia asked.

Qin Han laughed heartily, "Sister-in-law is right, a manager is an official; some managers are higher ranked than village chiefs or town mayors."

He's a simple-minded person and can't differentiate the levels of officialdom.

He believes that as someone like Su Wensong, when attending town meetings, even the town mayor has to greet him with a smile, which is quite prestigious.

Qin Wu replied with a smile, "So, that means Big Brother's rank isn't small either. You own the farm supply store, which would be a general manager level."

Once again, everyone burst into laughter.

During New Year, joking about inconsequential matters always uplifts the mood.

Lin Chuxia suddenly stopped and looked at the building beside her.

Especially at the four big characters above the gate: Xiyang Primary School.

Zhang Guilan explained with a smile, "This is the new primary school our village built this autumn. Previously, our village only went up to fourth grade, fifth and sixth graders had to go to the town's full primary school. But now that the village has money, the village chief expanded the school to include all grades from first to sixth. Our village's children don't need to leave the village at a young age anymore."

"I understand that; just wondering why it's not called Qinjia Village Primary School?"

In her memory, Xiyang Food Factory didn't contribute a dime to the school.

"Oh, I know about this. Although the school was built by the village, the village chief said without Lin Chuxia, there wouldn't be the Qin Family Village we have today, nor could we possibly have such a good primary school. Originally, the village chief wanted to name it Chuxia Primary School and even came to your home to discuss with your big brother. Your big brother knows your personality well and outright refused. That's why the village chief settled for Xiyang Primary School. Didn't your big brother tell you? I remember he said he'd call you at the time."

Qin Han heard the conversation between the two, looked at them confused, "Sister-in-law, did I not tell you?" then slapped his forehead, "Must've been those couple of days I was busy with the greenhouse, and it slipped my mind."

Lin Chuxia gave Qin Han a thumbs up, "Big Brother, you really understand me well. There's no need to consult with me on this matter."

Chuxia Primary School? Just thinking about it is mortifying.

Good thing Qin Han refused on her behalf.

Meanwhile, elsewhere.

Qin Wen watched the struggling steps of Ma Suyun and impatiently spoke.

"Look at yourself, if you're not feeling well, just rest at home. Why insist on coming out, if you stress out our son, I'm not done with you."

Ma Suyun clenched Qin Wen's sleeve with one hand while cautiously stepping forward, watching the road beneath her feet.

At the moment, she looked so frail that a gust of wind might topple her.

Upon hearing Qin Wen's words, she discontentedly retorted.

"Why am I following you here? Wasn't the plan to borrow some money from Big Brother so we can set up a greenhouse too? Yesterday during the family dinner, didn't you see how smug Qian Chuncao and Xu Yun were? Previously being overshadowed by Xu Yun was tolerable, but what's Qian Chuncao so pleased about? Isn't it just because their family made some money from the greenhouse this year? If your job weren't lost, she'd have no reason to boast in front of me."

Yesterday was New Year's Eve, as per usual, the three brothers of the eldest family would go to Mr. and Mrs. Qin's house for the reunion dinner.

Regarding the contributions, in previous years, the eldest family provided the most, while Qin Jiang and Qin Wen's families also contributed some.

However, this year they were financially tight.

"Did you hear what your big sister-in-law said yesterday? As if we just showed up to freeload at their expense. Even Dad and Mom didn't say anything; does she get to talk? If it weren't for Big Brother's sake, I'd have confronted her right there. Plus, Qin Jiang and his wife, knowingly took all that fish and meat while we're struggling to save money for the unborn child. Isn't this clearly embarrassing us? I can't stand Xu Yun's arrogant attitude as if she's better than everyone else. Once we build the vegetable greenhouse, I must even the score."

Yesterday's scene also left Qin Wen in a bad mood, "That's why I didn't approach Big Brother about this; even among siblings, I can't bear losing face like that. Make sure you strive hard and give me a son soon. Don't worry about the money, I want it even more than you."

"That's settled. When we get there, put forward the proposal to Big Brother, while there aren't others around yet, and with Dad and Mom's support, anything's easier."

"Alright, alright, are you okay? Or maybe you should head back home."

Since the beginning of the year, for unknown reasons, Ma Suyun had been experiencing stomach pains sporadically.

She couldn't eat much; she threw up more than she kept down. She seemed to have lost weight again over the past couple of days.

Ma Suyun shook her head, "It's fine; I can manage. It's New Year's; as the younger generation, I have to pay respects to Mom and Dad. After that, I won't visit others."

Qin Han nodded continuously, "After paying respects to Mom and Dad, just stay there. There's no need to go through this for others."

Ma Suyun agreed and gently rubbed her belly.

Paying respects to the elders is minor, but mostly, the two brothers from the Qin family's second household would come to pay respects today.

Qin Yang and Lin Chuxia have been married for quite a while, yet Lin Chuxia still hasn't conceived.

Imagining how Lin Chuxia would react knowing she's pregnant made Ma Suyun indescribably happy.

If she has the chance to watch her squirm, how could she possibly miss it?

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As Lin Chuxia's group arrived at Uncle Qin's house, Qian Chuncao greeted them warmly from afar.

Then, Qin Jianjun and Qin Jianshe also came out to welcome them.

Uncle Qin and Qin Liang live in the same courtyard, and although Qin Liang wasn't seen, they followed Qian Chuncao directly to Uncle Qin's room.

Sure enough, Qin Liang was inside Uncle Qin's room; surprisingly, so were Qin Wen and his wife.

Although Qin Han and Qin Yang avoided interacting with Qin Wen and his wife, not even exchanging a word, Mr. Qin and Mrs. Qin were Qin Wen's parents. While in their parents' room, they couldn't say anything.

Not that they could say anything, nor would they initiate any greeting, they simply acted as if Qin Wen and his wife were invisible.

Qin Han, Qin Yang greeted and gave New Year's wishes to Uncle Qin and his wife, spoke with Qin Liang; Zhang Guilan and Lin Chuxia certainly wouldn't bother with Qin Wen and his wife.

They just chatted with Auntie and Qian Chuncao's family.

Even though they ignored Qin Wen and Ma Suyun, the latter would not stay quiet.

Chapter 576: Born to Restrain Her

Ma Suyun suddenly retched loudly, causing the conversation in the room to pause briefly.

She seemed a bit embarrassed as she spoke, "Oh dear, you know being pregnant is not easy. This one of ours is another little troublemaker, never staying quiet all day. It's really wearing me out." She looked at Qin Wu's wife, "I say, Fifth Sister-in-law, were you like this when you were pregnant?"

Zhou Hongmei, having no serious issues with the couple Qin Wen, and being from the third household, answered simply when asked, "Mine was fairly good, but I did vomit quite a few days. Second Sister-in-law had really good complexion her entire pregnancy."

She intended to compliment Zhang Guilan, but didn't expect Ma Suyun's eyes to suddenly brighten.

"I just know this child is definitely a son. You see, the reaction is just like yours was. Truly, a mother and son are connected at heart. I had this feeling ever since I got pregnant. When my son is born, he'll surely be as clever and smart as your Xiao Hui."

Even though Ma Suyun was praising her son in every sentence, Zhou Hongmei couldn't even crack a smile.

Thankfully, there was another commotion outside; Qin Jiang and Xu Yun arrived with Jianye.

Once Jianye came, Zhuangzhuang was happy. The two kids pulled Jianjun and Construction to the yard to set off firecrackers.

Qin Jiang and his family lived far away, and Xu Yun rarely saw Lin Chuxia on regular days. After greeting everyone, she looked at Lin Chuxia.

"Long time no see, Sister-in-law. You look really good, seems like you've put on a bit of weight. It looks like the water and soil of Yan City suits you well."

Only the family knew about Lin Chuxia's pregnancy and Qian Chuncao as well.

Xu Yun's disposition was indifferent; she wasn't the type who loved gossip and had no idea about Lin Chuxia's pregnancy.

Coupled with Lin Chuxia wearing thick clothing, her slightly showing belly wasn't visible.

Ma Suyun had actually noticed Lin Chuxia's appearance long before.

Lin Chuxia always had fair skin and looked nice, yet Ma Suyun previously really didn't think much of Lin Chuxia.

She couldn't figure out why Qin Yang worked outside earning money, while Lin Chuxia just stayed at home to spend it, and still ran out to sell buns?

A woman who is pretty and whose husband isn't home, exposing herself publicly every day, isn't she ashamed?

But later on, Ma Suyun didn't have the qualifications to talk about her in these matters.

Her attire looked very expensive, well maintained with delicate skin, also wearing a red scarf which made her complexion even better.

To say she wasn't jealous was impossible.

But then again, what does it matter how well her days are going? Beneath the glossy surface, who knows what kind of thoughts are hidden?

A woman without a child, what is the point of earning all that money?

If Qin Yang changed his mind and had a child with another woman, all the money she worked so hard for would eventually be someone else's.

Thinking this way, Ma Suyun seemed to find her confidence back, pushing her little belly up a bit more.

She was feeling unwell early today but insisted on coming here, all for this moment.

Having been sisters-in-law with Ma Suyun for so many years, Qian Chuncao understood her well.

Seeing her like this, she knew what Ma Suyun was thinking.

Moving silently, she sat beside Lin Chuxia, picking up Xu Yun's conversation.

"I also see Sister-in-law becoming more beautiful. That little face is all pink, clearly well-nurtured. No wonder they say Sister-in-law is blessed, seems like the child isn't giving you trouble, right? How many months now?"

Ma Suyun abruptly raised her head towards this at the words.

Forgetting about their feud with Lin Chuxia, she blurted out, "Lin Chuxia is pregnant?"

Her voice was too abrupt and sharp, drawing the attention of the men chatting over there, not to mention the women sitting here.

Qian Chuncao slightly frowned, "Why are you speaking so loudly, Sister-in-law? I know you're happy to hear the news of Fourth Sister-in-law's pregnancy, but no matter how happy, you still need to take care of your body. It's not easy to carry this baby, and the fetal position is not stable. Sister-in-law has been through this; you need to get less involved, go out less, avoid crowds and stay relaxed to give birth to a hale and hearty baby. Otherwise, you'll end up thin as a monkey, how good could the baby be then?"

She felt angry every time she saw Qin Wen and his wife.

Who borrows money on the first day of the first month of the lunar new year?

Only Qin Wen would do such a thing.

He outright asked to borrow two thousand, while she's saving to build a new house for her eldest son to marry, where does she have that much to loan him?

Not lending made Qin Wen relentless, as if them not lending money ruined his happy days.

Didn't he ruin his own good days?

If the other brothers didn't arrive in time, these two would probably cry, make a scene, and threaten suicide before the old folks again.

Anyway, Qian Chuncao had long made up her mind; since this brother doesn't act properly, she'd rather not deal with him anymore.

The old man and old lady too; if they truly sided with the youngest son, urging them to loan the new house money, she'd directly send them over.

Isn't everyone favoring the youngest son? Then they can go there together.

So they won't have to witness their days going well, while getting anxious over the youngest son's ill fortunes.

Ma Suyun tightened her fists, more hurtful than Qian Chuncao's words was the fact that Lin Chuxia was pregnant too.

When did she get pregnant? How come she didn't hear even a whisper? Was it before her or after?

Looking at her, she had no signs of pregnancy, probably just got pregnant.

It's okay, as long as she delivers her son first, she's still ahead.

At this point, Zhou Hongmei and Xu Yun also turned towards Lin Chuxia, concerned about her pregnancy.

Lin Chuxia graciously responded to Qian Chuncao, "Almost 4 months now."

"Oh wow, almost 4 months, this must be starting to show, can't tell at all," Qian Chuncao laughed.

Zhou Hongmei also chimed in, "I was wondering why Sister-in-law's complexion looked different, turned out you're pregnant. The thick winter clothes really hide it."

"Then you shouldn't go visiting with us, after meeting the close family, head home and rest. With Qin Yang here, visiting or not is the same," Xu Yun whispered to her.

Lin Chuxia grinned and nodded, "That's how I planned it too."

Ma Suyun watched the sisters-in-law whispering, her expression growing uglier.

Nearly 4 months, doesn't that mean she's a month early?

Why is fate so unfair? Why is it so unjust to her?

Why did Lin Chuxia decide to get pregnant just as she did?

Her suspicion wasn't unfounded; Lin Chuxia indeed was born to cross her.

The more she thought, the worse she felt, even her little belly throbbed with pain.

Chapter 577: Unwilling to Accept

In the end, it was Mrs. Qin who noticed her abnormality. "What's wrong with you, Third Daughter-in-law? If you're not feeling well, just go home quickly. I've told you so many times, stay at home and rest properly. Don't come out unnecessarily. If you mess up your health, you're the one who suffers."

Qin Wen knew his wife the best. Earlier, while the brothers were chatting on the side, he had no idea what these women were talking about.

He clearly heard that loud scream from Ma Suyun earlier.

Lin Chuxia was also pregnant, so how could his wife be content? Let alone his wife, he was also quite discontented.

Originally, he thought they would be better than Qin Yang, but they were not.

Seeing Ma Suyun looking unwell, he worried it might really harm the baby.

Until the baby is born, it's uncertain who will win or lose.

If Ma Suyun loses the baby now, then it would be a total defeat for him.

He quickly stood up and went to Ma Suyun's side, lowered his voice and said, "What on earth are you thinking about? Pull yourself together. Let me tell you, if you can't keep the baby, we two are getting a divorce."

Ma Suyun snapped back to reality, but her stomach truly hurt too much.

"I need to go home. Can you ride Big Brother's bicycle to take me back?"

Qin Wen glanced around at the others and finally agreed.

Once Ma Suyun and Qin Wen left, the remaining brothers and sisters-in-law in the house also decided they'd stayed long enough and planned to visit another home.

After everyone left, Mrs. Qin let out a heavy sigh.

"You see the temper of Third Daughter-in-law? Won't she ever change it? This pregnancy wasn't easy to come by, and instead of taking good care, she's always comparing with this and that. If she's really not careful and loses the baby, how will the couple's life go on?"

That's why Mrs. Qin was so indulgent with her.

Just hoping to get through these ten months, and things would be fine once the baby is born.

But as it stands, let alone ten months, it's troubling day by day.

Mr. Qin tapped his pipe, "Each generation must find its own happiness. Everyone walks their own path. Third Daughter-in-law's not-so-good temper and competitiveness are just like Third Son."

Mrs. Qin sighed heavily again, "Then, what about Third Son borrowing money from First Son? Given how Third Son's family is now, the brothers should lend a hand, right? He said he also wants to plant a vegetable greenhouse. I thought after he plants it and earns some money, he could repay First Son. First Son's family made quite a bit with their greenhouses this year. They should be able to lend Third Son two thousand dollars."

Mr. Qin glanced at Mrs. Qin, "Two thousand dollars? In your entire life, have you ever seen two thousand dollars? I didn't know you became so bold in your old age."

"I haven't seen it, but I've heard that First Son grows watermelons in his greenhouse, and one can sell for a few dollars. Would you have believed years ago that a watermelon could sell for a few dollars? They've been growing in two greenhouses since spring, and First Son and his wife are capable. They should be able to make two thousand dollars, right? Besides, isn't there Jianjun? He's worked with his Fourth Aunt for years. He must have saved some money. He could lend it to his uncle first. Won't his uncle appreciate his kindness?"

"I bet they appreciate you instead," Mr. Qin sneered, "Jianjun's mother already said they plan to rebuild the house next year and prepare for Jianjun to get married. Jianjun's already 20, and he doesn't even have a fiancée yet. You aren't worried, but a mother surely is, especially since his sister Lihua already has children. How could Jianjun's mother not be eager for grandchildren?"

Mrs. Qin frowned with worry, "But we can't just ignore Third Son. He was such a proud kid, top of his class, and even got into the workforce. Didn't you say he had prospects? Now he's in trouble, and if his elders or brothers don't help him, who will? It's just this temporary hardship. Once Third Son's wife has the baby next year and he starts the greenhouse, won't their life get going? When things improve for him, won't he remember to help his big brother?"

Mr. Qin huffed heavily, "He sure is proud, maybe too proud. I can't handle this. Both are my sons and grandsons; they are all like flesh from my heart. You manage it if you want, but let me make it clear, if you make First Son lend money to Third Son, I don't know if Third Son will appreciate it, but you'll definitely offend First Son. I don't care if the daughters-in-law sulk at me, as I don't usually say much to them. You better think if you want to continue living like this. Don't ruin a good life for no reason."

After saying this, Mr. Qin left the house, hands behind his back, to play with the children outside.

Mrs. Qin sighed again in worry.

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Lin Chuxia and a few sisters-in-law went to visit Third Uncle's house together.

Both Third Uncle and Third Aunt were in robust health. With Qin Wu not home for the past half-year, the elderly couple also kept busy.

Third Aunt took care of their two kids at home, and Third Uncle originally wanted to build a vegetable greenhouse. But lacking manpower, Third Uncle instead planted all the fields with grain.

By the autumn harvest, not only did they submit all the family's quota of grain, but they also stored two storerooms full.

This generation had lived through poverty and starvation. Now with Qin Wu and his wife earning wages and having more than enough grain at home,

Looking at their granddaughter and grandson, Third Uncle and Aunt couldn't be more content with their lives.

Seeing their nephews arrived, Third Aunt offered peanuts, sunflower seeds, and grabbed some candies.

The lively and bustling atmosphere was nothing like at First Brother's house.

Lin Chuxia was captivated by Little Jianhui on the kang.

The little guy was now over nine months old and could crawl with ease compared to Little Yaoyao.

Upon seeing his mom enter, Little Jianhui started crawling towards Zhou Hongmei, using both his arms and legs.

As he crawled, he babbled, "Mama mama baba baba..." It was hard to tell if he was calling for mom or dad.

Lin Chuxia peeled an orange to play with him, and the little guy instantly forgot about his mom and dad, crawling towards Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia loved children and seemed to have an affinity with them.

The children in the family all liked her. Even the little ones like Little Yaoyao and Little Jianhui, who didn't understand much, couldn't help but grin when they saw her.

After paying respects to Third Uncle and Aunt for the New Year, the group headed to the Qin Family's second household, which made it convenient for Lin Chuxia to stay in once she returned home.

Though they only went around briefly, Mrs. Qin was still worried Lin Chuxia might tire and quickly told her to rest in her room.

Lin Chuxia wasn't too tired, just felt a bit sleepy from staying up late on New Year's Eve and waking early today.

With nothing much happening at home, she decided to go to her room and catch up on some sleep.

When she woke up, the Qin Family had already finished lunch, and Qin Han, Qin Yang, along with Zhang Guilan, had gone to visit other households again for New Year's greetings.

Mrs. Qin held the baby and cheerfully explained, "Yangyang saw you sleeping soundly, so he didn't wake you. The dumplings were freshly made at lunch, just boil them. You watch the baby, and I'll go cook dumplings for you."

Chapter 578: The Innate Flaws in Everyone's Nature

"Mom, no need, I can cook it myself."

Lin Chuxia declined Mrs. Qin's offer and went into the kitchen herself.

Just as the dumplings were done cooking, Lin Jiadong's voice came from outside.

Mr. Qin had already gone out to greet him, while Lin Chuxia set the dumplings aside and Lin Jiadong came inside.

He was carrying a few gifts, greeted everyone after entering, and then placed the items on the table.

Lin Family members rarely visited the Qin Family, having only met twice, including Lin Chuxia's brother.

Out of love for Lin Chuxia, Mr. and Mrs. Qin were very warm to her brother.

Lin Chuxia asked, "Why did you come today?"

Knowing that in front of Mr. and Mrs. Qin, Lin Jiadong might be hesitant to speak plainly, she added, "I haven't had dinner yet. Why don't you come to the kitchen with me? Have you eaten?"

Lin Jiadong quickly stood up and followed her, "I've eaten, second sister, I'll just keep you company."

Once in the kitchen, Lin Chuxia still handed him a set of chopsticks and a bowl, "Try my dumplings."

Without any outsiders present, Lin Jiadong relaxed more, chuckled, and took the utensils Lin Chuxia handed him.

Lin Chuxia poured him some vinegar.

Lin Jiadong picked up a dumpling and took a bite, "Chive and pork filling, delicious."

Lin Chuxia looked at the filled plate of dumplings and picked one to give to him.

With his mouth full, Lin Jiadong mumbled, "Second sister, you eat too. I truly ate at home."

Then he picked up the dumpling Lin Chuxia offered him and took another bite. Seeing the filling inside, his eyes widened, "Is this fish filling?"

Lin Chuxia nodded with a smile, "Mackerel filling, not bad, right?"

"Delicious, second sister, your dumplings have so many fillings, all tasty ones."

Feeling a bit embarrassed, Lin Jiadong saw Lin Chuxia hadn't started eating and picked one for her, "Second sister, you eat too."

He put the remaining half of the dumpling in his mouth, ate, and continued, "Second sister, you have no idea, this year's New Year at our house has been troublesome."

Lin Chuxia picked another dumpling for him, aware that her brother had come over on the first day of the lunar year with something on his mind, and listened as he continued.

"Big sister ran back home before New Year again, arguing over money, really unclear how her mother-in-law thinks. Heard that before New Year, her newly married sister-in-law came to borrow holiday money. Her husband's been looking for his younger sister all year and hasn't earned much. Heard there were only 50 yuan at their house, which should have been with big sister. Somehow, her husband lent the money to his sister, when big sister found out she had a fight with her husband and returned home. Her husband came to take her back for the New Year, she wouldn't go. Only after mom persuaded, she went back with him, but returned home on New Year's Eve, and is still there now."

He looked at Lin Chuxia, "Second sister, I'm not saying this with any other intent, just worried that if you go back home tomorrow, it will be chaotic with big sister there. Not saying big sister doesn't want to see you, just thought..."

Lin Jiadong struggled with words as he saw big sister's temper growing scarier, and second sister pregnant now; if anything provoked big sister...

But he didn't know how to express it properly.

He was so anxious that he scratched his ears.

Lin Chuxia smiled gently, "I know you're looking out for me; big sister doesn't want to see me, I'm aware. Previously, mom also said big sister's days are tough. Seeing me living well, she surely feels uncomfortable; mom asked me to visit less, I remember mom's words."

Even without Lin Jiadong's special visit, she wouldn't go back.

Lin Jiadong paused for a moment, "Second sister, do you feel mom and dad are biased?"

Lin Chuxia smiled faintly, "What mom and dad do is their business. We are their children. Whoever they favor is up to them. Even fingers are not of equal length. Not just parents, but nothing in this world is absolutely fair. I have no right to dictate how they treat me."

Having already accepted this in her past life, she wouldn't dwell on it in this one.

Lin Jiadong nodded, having said everything, he didn't stay longer.

Today, he had snuck out, worried mom and dad would seek him soon.

Once Lin Chuxia finished eating, she prepared to send him off.

"Wait a moment."

Lin Chuxia stopped him and went inside to fetch 100 yuan.

A total of 10 banknotes, she counted out 5 for him, "This is your New Year money from your second sister..."

"Second sister, I don't want it, I'm all grown up," Lin Jiadong quickly declined.

"Take it, you're still young and studying, repay me after college when you start working and earning," she said, handing him the remaining 50 yuan, "Give this to mom, tell her I won't be coming home for New Year."

"Alright."

"Take care on the road, keep your New Year money safe."

"I know, second sister, I keep the money you give me safe."

Lin Chuxia acknowledged his sensibility with a nod, urging him to hurry back.

Watching his distant figure, she took a deep breath.

This relationship with the Lin Family suits her well this lifetime.

yuan, though trivial to her, could ensure peace and honesty in that household.

In her past life, she tried to maintain peace with her family similarly but was continually taken advantage of due to her weak stance, treated as a source of funds.

In this life, she straightforwardly ended things with them, making them wary instead.

The fear within human nature, the tendency to prey on the weak, seems an ingrained flaw.

She returned to the room, saw the gifts Lin Jiadong brought, and smiled helplessly.

Clearly bought by her naive brother himself, probably clueless about what to bring for visiting relatives during holidays, just choosing what she likes to eat.

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As expected by Lin Chuxia, upon returning home, Mother Lin saw him bike back and questioned unhappily.

"On the first of the New Year, instead of visiting elders with your father, what kind of fooling around are you doing? Even if you don't visit anyone, you should be home keeping watch, you're grown now, how can you not understand this basic principle?"

Lin Jiadong parked his bike under the eaves, answering without looking up, "There's no place for me at home, besides I had a few questions, went to ask a classmate."

As soon as Lin Jiadong finished speaking, before Mother Lin could say anything, a sharp female voice came from inside the house...

Chapter 579: Chop Them Up

"Jiadong, what do you mean by that? You're just complaining that I'm getting in your way at my parents' house. Well, let me tell you, I'm staying here no matter what you think. This is my home too, so stop being so sarcastic here."

"Do you really think you're tough now? Don't think I don't know what you're up to with Chuxia. Just wait till tomorrow when Chuxia comes back. I want to ask her what kind of spell she cast on you to make you resent me all the time."

Jiadong didn't come inside, he shouted through the window, "Why are you dragging our sister into this? Is it me who can't stand you? It's you who can't stand me! You get upset at your in-laws and run back home to act crazy, and you don't let anyone complain about it?"

"Why am I upset at my in-laws? Isn't it because of you all being useless? Other families stand up for their daughters, but you just tell me to endure. If you were really my brother, you'd go to the Li Family and teach Li Guangyuan a lesson right now. Get back at him for hitting your sister. If you don't, then you're not my real brother."

Jiadong seemed provoked too, "Fine, you wait here, I'll go to the Li Family and get revenge for you right now."

As he said that, he headed into the kitchen and came out with a kitchen knife in hand.

Mother Lin's face changed instantly upon seeing this, and she quickly rushed to stop him, "Jiadong, what are you doing? Put the knife down!"

"Mom, don't stop me. How dare those Li Family bastards bully my sister? I'm going to slice them today. Again and again, they've gone too far, thinking our Lin Family is helpless."

"This is against the law," Mother Lin desperately held onto Jiadong's arm, "Do you know you'll end up in jail for killing? You're my only son! What would I do if you went to jail? You're doing so well in school. The teacher said you could definitely get into college. If you go to jail, you'll lose everything. Listen to mom, put the knife down..."

"I won't study anymore, even if I go to jail, I don't care. I can't let my eldest sister suffer. Mom, haven't you always taught me? To be close to my eldest sister, she's married nearby, we should support each other. I can't count on my other sister who's far away. My eldest sister married so close, yet she suffers and I can't stand up for her? What kind of a brother am I? If I kill Li Guangyuan, the Li Family will belong to my nephew, and my eldest sister won't be bullied by them. I don't mind going to jail. You love my eldest sister so much, she'll definitely be good to you in the future..."

"What nonsense are you talking?" Mother Lin panicked, turned to the house and shouted, "You troublemaker, are you trying to ruin your brother? Get out here quickly and talk some sense into your brother. I'm telling you, if your brother gets into trouble, I'll hold you responsible too."

Jiayi didn't expect Jiadong to be so impulsive today. She was just saying some random things, but seeing Jiadong's flushed face and bulging neck, he really seemed like he was going to confront Li Guangyuan.

She felt a bit guilty too.

She wasn't satisfied with Li Guangyuan lending money to Li Dongmei, but she hadn't been completely honest with her family.

This winter, there were off-season vegetables from the Qin Family Village's greenhouse. Li Guangyuan made over 100 yuan selling vegetables, and the 50 yuan given to Li Dongmei was not all they had.

But she was unhappy with Li Guangyuan's behavior, and she had even initiated violence first.

Li Guangyuan, knowing he was wrong and given her previous threats of divorce, didn't retaliate when she hit him, making her seem to have the upper hand.

She accidentally hit Li Guangyuan on the head, and feeling guilty, fled back home.

Just earlier, she said those words to provoke her brother, already feeling uneasy about her closeness with Chuxia.

She didn't expect her foolish brother to actually seek revenge on Li Guangyuan.

Jiayi knew if anything happened, her mother would never forgive her. Her brother was far more important, so she quickly came out of the house.

With a lot of persuasion, Mother Lin and Jiayi finally calmed Jiadong down.

Mother Lin dared not let Jiayi stay at home any longer; what if one day she wasn't around, and Jiayi incited her son to kill someone—there'd be no turning back.

"Jiayi, listen to mom, go back and live well with Guangyuan. Now that both your sisters-in-law are gone, only Old Mrs. Li is left. What are you worrying about? That old lady won't live much longer. Mom thinks your judgment was pretty good initially; Guangyuan knows how to live a good life. These past two years have been messed up by your two sisters-in-law..."

"Mom, you used to say my judgment was poor. I thought I had made a mistake too..."

"No, not at all," Mother Lin interrupted Jiayi before she could finish, "I think Guangyuan is a good person. He listens to his mother, which shows he's filial. He's good to his two sisters, which means he'll be good to you too. He knows how to work hard for money. I've calculated, if you didn't have those two sisters-in-law draining you, your lives would have improved already through Guangyuan's vegetable selling. Anyway, your eldest sister-in-law won't be found anymore. It's just your youngest sister-in-law who's married off, what are you afraid of? Just be cautious, this time you were careless."

Jiayi let out a bitter smile.

Her mom didn't understand what she meant at all.

She saw wrong, thinking that Li Guangyuan's accomplishments in her past life were earned entirely through his efforts.

But in reality?

They've been married for so many years now. According to the past trajectory, Li Guangyuan should have achieved something by now; at least he shouldn't still just be a vegetable seller.

However, even without Li Guangyuan, Lin Chuxia still achieved a great deal on her own.

He didn't want to admit it but had to acknowledge that everything Li Guangyuan achieved in their previous life depended entirely on Lin Chuxia.

Without Lin Chuxia, Li Guangyuan was just Li Guangyuan.

But with Lin Chuxia, Qin Yang was no longer the Qin Yang of their past life.

Under Mother Lin's persuasion, Jiayi finally left with her child.

After the eldest daughter left, Mother Lin still worried about her son and went to his room to knock on the door.

"Jiadong, you have to stop being so impulsive in the future. If you don't think for yourself, at least think of your parents. It's not easy raising you. Your sister, after marrying, is ultimately an outsider. Mom only has one son; if anything happens to you, how would mom and dad live?"

She was truly frightened earlier.

She had indeed encouraged her son to be close to his eldest sister, and said he, as the family's boy, should support her.

But those were just for show, to make the daughter remember the family's goodness and not forget them after marrying.

She never thought it would actually cost her son.

This time, Jiadong still hadn't calmed down, concernedly asking his mom, "Eldest sister just went back like that; what if brother-in-law and his mother trouble her again? No, I have to go over and look."

After saying this, he started to get up.

Mother Lin hugged his waist tightly, unwilling to let go.

Chapter 580: President Li!

"What could possibly happen on the first day of the New Year? That's your elder sister's family, and Li Guangyuan is her husband. No matter how he treats her, it's their business. Why do you have to meddle? As the saying goes, couples fight at the head of the bed and make up at the end. Your elder sister has already come back to stay a few days. By now, both of them should have cooled down. You don't have to worry about them. Just stay home and keep your mom company."

Lin Jiadong was finally convinced, "Alright then, your elder sister and brother-in-law should be back tomorrow on the second day of the New Year, right? If I see my brother-in-law treating my elder sister badly, there's no way I'll let it slide."

Mother Lin's heart, which had just settled, was lifted again, "You kid, you're not listening to your mom anymore, are you?"

She deliberately put on a stern face, "I'm telling you, from now on, you should focus on your studies. Don't get involved in your sister's family affairs. A married daughter is like water spilled away. The kind of family she married into is her fate. Your main focus should be to study hard and aim for university. Being a college student would bring glory to our Lin Family. Having a brother like you is your elder sister's good fortune. That's what you should be doing."

"I know, Mom. I'll listen to you. I won't bother with my elder sister's family matters anymore."

Upon hearing Lin Jiadong's assurance, Mother Lin finally breathed a sigh of relief.

She also resolved internally not to involve her son in the Li family's affairs anymore.

As important as daughters are, how can they compare to sons?

Thinking about this made her uneasy, deciding to send someone to pass a message to her eldest daughter not to return to her maternal home tomorrow.

Her eldest daughter used to be a bit sharp at home, but at least she was worry-free. Ever since she got married, she's become more and more of a concern.

At that moment, Lin Jiadong seemed to remember something and pulled a wad of cash from his pocket, handing it directly to Mother Lin.

"I just ran into Second Sister and her husband in the county. Second Sister asked me to give this to you."

Upon hearing that it was from Lin Chuxia, Mother Lin immediately took and counted it.

"Why is it only 50 yuan? Didn't you ask her for more? I've heard that the Qin Family is now doing business and growing greenhouse crops, making a lot of money. Isn't your brother-in-law an official

now? He doesn't come back all year, and this little money is all they give to show filial respect to their parents? It's like treating us like beggars."

"Even beggars would hesitate to give away this much money," Lin Jiadong murmured, "Second Sister said she originally wanted to come back and see you and Dad, but she was afraid of bumping into Elder Sister. If Elder Sister throws a tantrum, it would be difficult for you. She also told me to give you the money quietly so Elder Sister wouldn't know. Mom, don't think the money is too little. Elder Sister is also your daughter. She goes back to the family house all the time, but how much money has she ever given you? Besides, it's Second Sister who pays for my studies, just on tuition and book fees alone. You do the math. Last time when I went to take exams in the city and the capital, it was Second Sister who paid for it. All my clothes, food, and expenses at school have been covered by her. Li Youmin from my dorm went to the city with me. Among those city kids, nobody looks down on me."

Before, he focused entirely on studying and never cared about what he wore or used.

It was only this time when he went out with Li Youmin, listening to his constant chatter, that he realized how humble a kid from the countryside could feel facing city people.

He didn't think himself of strong will. He just knew that Second Sister gave him enough confidence.

She let him focus on studying without worrying about the disturbances of the environment.

Hearing this, Mother Lin's expression slightly changed.

Though she didn't know much about school matters, ever since he went to the county to study, her son never asked her for a penny. His clothes were better than those of other kids.

"She's your sister. Isn't that her responsibility?"

"Elder Sister is also my sister, and you're still my mother. I'm not a kid anymore. Look at who in the village has their sister supporting their brother?"

"Alright, alright, I can't argue with you."

Mother Lin knew that her son had been to the capital and seen the world. He wasn't the child who accepted everything she said anymore.

So, fifty yuan is fifty yuan. It's better than nothing.

The eldest daughter indeed frequently returns home. It's already good enough if she doesn't ask for money, let alone give any.

But no, how could that be the same?

Jiayi is her flesh and blood.

That little brat freeloaded on her for so many years; she should be filial.

.....

The Li Family had no close relatives in the village, and few neighbors were friendly with them.

On New Year's Eve, Lin Jiayi had a fight with Li Guangyuan and went back to her maternal family.

This New Year wasn't celebrated well, and Li Guangyuan was a bit resentful towards his mother.

Yet, due to years of suppression, deep down he feared his mother, not daring to rebel.

Li Guangyuan could only stew in his anger, spending the entire first day of New Year sleeping in his room without going out.

He slept for a long time, skipping lunch, just drifting in and out of dreams.

Whether it was from too much sleep or lingering anger, Li Guangyuan had a long dream.

In the dream, he was dressed finely and no longer selling vegetables.

He owned a store, bustling with customers every day, with cash boxes overflowing with colorful bills.

Each night, he would sit on his bed, counting money for quite a while.

He no longer lived in the village. His house was spacious and bright, furnished like those on TV, stylish and upscale.

There was a big color TV on the furniture, a large refrigerator beside it, and even a small car to drive when going out.

Each day, he'd sit in his warm room, listening to reports from his subordinates.

Or they'd hand him wads of cash.

His favorite activity was counting money, endlessly counting money.

He even covered his bed with bills to sleep on.

"President Li!"

A tender voice called him President Li.

Looking towards the sound, he saw a young, beautiful woman standing at the office door.

Although her features were unclear, he felt her tenderness and admiration.

"President Li!"

Another voice called him President Li, belonging to a mature, seductive woman who sat on the armrest of his sofa, intimately wrapping her arms around his shoulders.

Her ample chest pressed tightly against him, rubbing against his shoulder.

"President Li!"

Just as he was about to enjoy the moment with his eyes closed, another voice woke him.

A scantily clad woman with permed hair, penciled eyebrows, and bright red lips was squatting before him, washing and massaging his feet.

He recognized this scene. Old Li, who sold vegetables next to him, had mentioned this.

In the Southern, big bosses knew how to enjoy life, particularly at places called nightclubs.

Women in nightclubs provided all sorts of services to the bosses.

From dining to drinking, dancing to shoulder massages, foot baths, and more, as long as you had money, they'd do anything to ensure your comfort.

Such a beautiful woman, how could he let her merely wash his feet?

Li Guangyuan thought with great tenderness.

He pulled the woman up. The sofa was too small; since another woman sat beside him, Li Guangyuan had this woman sit on his lap.