

## Switched M 61

### Chapter 61 Comparing People, the Envy Kills

Lin Chuxia had arranged everyone's salary the previous night, and she deliberately bought red paper to make red envelopes.

The first salary distribution at the Bun Shop needed to have some ceremonial feel.

After the dinner rush was over and things slowed down, Lin Chuxia called everyone together.

It was already decided today would be payday, and Su Wensong stayed in the shop as well.

Of all the people there, he was the happiest. He had personally decorated the Bun Shop, and everything inside was bought by him, piece by piece.

He witnessed the Bun Shop open and get on the right track, and there were plans for expansion in the future.

Watching Lin Chuxia, who was surrounded in the middle, this little woman really made people trust her, and Su Wensong couldn't help but sigh at the decision made initially.

Aside from Su Wensong, Sun Lanlan and Sun Bingnan were also very excited. Having joined the Bun Shop just over a week ago, they hadn't expected to get a salary already, but Lin Chuxia had said that from now on, salaries would be distributed on this day each month and they would settle as many days as they had worked.

Receiving a salary after less than 10 days of work, they hadn't dared even to think about it.

Lin Chuxia took out paper and a pen from her backpack, made sure everyone was present, and then looked towards Granny Sun, who was absent-mindedly wiping tables not far away.

A smile flickered in her eyes, she deliberately raised her voice and called out, "Granny Sun, we are distributing the wages, won't you come over and take a look?"

Granny Sun paused at those words, somewhat embarrassed, she answered, "I'd rather not look," her movements quickened, as if she was really focused on wiping the table.

Earlier, she had falsely accused Lin Chuxia, and her son had decided on her behalf, with the entire first month's salary going to compensate her.

Thinking back on her actions, she felt too ashamed to mention the salary.

Lin Chuxia, seemingly unaware of Granny Sun's internal struggle, gestured to her, "It's alright, come and have a look. Even if you can't get this month's wage, there's still next month, right? Experience the atmosphere of receiving a salary in advance."

With that, Granny Sun felt a bit less embarrassed. Thinking that Lin Chuxia didn't even hold a grudge, and that she had indeed worked earnestly for a month, losing one month's salary didn't seem so embarrassing.

Putting down the cleaning rag, she walked over, "Then may I just take a look?"

"Come on, come on," Sun Lanlan went over and pulled Granny Sun as well.

Really, everyone there was experiencing receiving a salary for the first time in their lives. Besides smiling, everyone was excited.

The first one, of course, was Su Wensong.

Lin Chuxia took out a thick red envelope from her bag, and in front of everyone, she pulled out a stack of money and explained to Su Wensong, "This 50 yuan is your salary, this 60 yuan is one year's rent."

Previously, due to renovation and buying items, they were tight on cash, and she had planned to pay just one month's rent initially, but Su Wensong insisted she pay him when she had enough money.

Now that the shop's finances were good, Lin Chuxia decided to pay the whole year's rent, also allowing Granny Su to have a financially comfortable year earlier.

She put the money back into the red envelope and handed it over, "Count it."

However, Su Wensong hesitated, "Didn't we agree on 35? I didn't take any leave this month, that should make 37."

Lin Chuxia smiled, "The remainder is a bonus. Brother Su, your work merits it. Plus, for the cooked food section going forward, I will rely on you, Brother Su. From next month, your salary will increase to 50 yuan per month."

Lin Chuxia then announced, looking towards the others, "I've always said, working with me, Lin Chuxia, as long as you are earnest and diligent, your abilities will be recognized. Brother Su's abilities are known to us all; he deserves his raise. Everyone else is the same, anyone outstanding in their duties will receive bonuses."

With just those few words, everyone's expression grew solemn, especially Sun Bingnan.

Speaking of a man at work, which one doesn't have ambitions?

These days, he had taken over some of Su Wensong's tasks at the Bun Shop. While initially faltering and being a bit clumsy, he knew this job wasn't simply about meeting the boss' expectations to succeed. Seeing Lin Chuxia assign the cooked food section directly to Su Wensong, he understood Su Wensong's position in Lin Chuxia's eyes.

He had joined late, missing the first opportunities, but he believed that as long as he followed Lin Chuxia, there would be plenty of chances in the future.

As long as he worked diligently, he too could become a Su Wensong in Lin Chuxia's eyes.

Next were the salaries for Sun Lanlan and Sun Bingnan, divided by the days as initially agreed, each receiving 8 yuan.

Not a lot of money, yet it was the first salary in their lives, which meant something different.

After distributing everything, Granny Sun felt that same pinch of embarrassment, rubbing her hands as she was about to get back to work, she heard Lin Chuxia speak.

"Our Bun Shop managed such good performance in its first month largely thanks to each and every staff member, especially Granny Sun's culinary skills. This 10 yuan is your bonus, Granny Sun."

Granny Sun looked up, surprised, "I...I have a share too?"

"Of course you have your share. The salary was given to me as compensation, I won't deny that, but the bonus is still yours. Let's keep these matters separate. Your dumplings are excellent, and the Bun Shop will definitely need your culinary skills in the future."

She gave Granny Sun a thumbs up.

Sun Lanlan added with a smile, "The dumplings Granny Sun makes are indeed beautiful. I've been learning for a week now, and I think I do it quite well, but compared to Granny Sun's, mine are still somewhat inferior. Granny Sun's dumplings are like peonies, mine at most like phoenix flowers."

Granny Sun also laughed, "Yours are pretty good as well, at least not like crabgrass."

Sun Lanlan pouted, "Granny, I don't feel like this is a compliment."

Laughter filled the Bun Shop for a while, Granny Sun holding the red envelope, her eyes turning red as she laughed.

As a rural woman who married a man who earned a salary, no matter how much she worked over the years, she always felt inferior in her family.

Now, she could earn a wage, and most importantly, she had gained everyone's recognition at the Bun Shop; she never felt this elated in her entire life.

The Bun Shop prospered, and orderly renovations were underway around the small courtyard. Qin Yang received two letters from his hometown.

Li Wei, with one arm around Qin Yang's shoulder and holding a letter in his other hand, looked at him with envy.

"You're impressive, mate. Before, you'd barely receive two letters in a year, but now that you've got married, suddenly you're getting them two at a time. Really proves that saying, newlywed joy is like honey stirred into life's daily grind. Gosh, it makes us old couples seem hardly able to keep up."

The last time he saw Qin Yang's wife send him some tasty treats, he wrote three letters, pleading for his wife to write something back.

He knew his wife lacked the skills for beef sauce or chili sauce, but at least she could write more frequently, otherwise, seeing his buddy show off daily was really making him jealous.

Who knew that after eagerly waiting for a letter from his wife, she just received two letters, a real case of comparing oneself to others, enough to make one feel sour.

## Chapter 62: He Doesn't Trust Those Cheating Men

Qin Yang looked at one of the two letters, his eyes tender, and gave a sound of acknowledgment, seemingly agreeing with what Li Wei had said.

Li Wei drew in a breath of cool air and thought, no, he couldn't stay with this guy any longer. He turned his head and saw Zhang Dawei, who was about to get lunch, and raised the letter in his hand.

"Da Wei, are you getting lunch? Man, I got so caught up with this letter I almost missed lunchtime. You go ahead and save me a spot; I'll grab my food container. Can you believe my wife, that spendthrift woman, is always writing letters, letter after letter, all clingy, what is there to talk about all day long..."

The bewildered Zhang Dawei who was called out scratched his head, not understanding even after the other man walked away.

Just as he was about to move on, he saw Qin Yang coming over, "Mr. Qin, since when do we need to save spots to eat in the cafeteria?"

Not many people dine in the cafeteria anyway—most get their meals to go.

Qin Yang nodded earnestly, lifting the letter in his hand, "Yes, I got two letters from home; I don't even know what's written in them. Hold a spot for me in the cafeteria for a bit; I'll go put the letters away first."

Zhang Dawei: "..."

He couldn't shake the feeling of being full without even going to the cafeteria.

Qin Yang returned to the office without hurrying to the cafeteria, sitting behind his desk and looking at the two envelopes.

The postmarks bore different dates.

Their side of town was quite far from the main town, so it wasn't easy for the mail carrier to come around, and it was common for mail to accumulate.

He recognized the handwriting on the envelopes. The one with the earlier postmark was his elder brother's handwriting, probably a letter from their parents, and the other was Lin Chuxia's handwriting—it was also her first time taking the initiative to write to him.

A smile formed on his lips as he set aside his elder brother's letter, opting to open Lin Chuxia's first.

He read the contents of the letter twice, and with each reading, the curve at the corners of his mouth deepened.

He didn't expect she had actually opened a bun shop, and business seemed to be good. That was nice; it would save her from vending in the wind, sun, and rain.

Qin Yang thought of her fair skin and cute little face, which surely couldn't withstand being in the sun.

Feeling his face warm up a bit, he took a sip of cold water from the cup beside him and continued reading the letter.

She had also met an interesting old man and took him as her master. She said her master was his as well, and that in the future, she intended to be filial to him and hoped he would understand.

Qin Yang chuckled silently. If she said so, then his was hers too, naturally understanding and just like her, ready to respect and honor the master as an elder.

In the end, Qin Yang spread the letter out on his desk, his dark eyes filled with shimmering fragments of light.

He glanced at the calendar on his desk; they had been apart for a whole two months.

He hadn't thought she would do so much in two months, living life so vibrantly.

He missed her; he wanted to see her little shop, her master, and her busy daily routine with his own eyes.

Picking up the other envelope, Qin Yang opened it leisurely.

His elder brother's handwriting was as awful as ever, looking like dog scratches after reading his wife's letter.

Heh, and it was supposed to be on behalf of their parents. Qin Yang almost lost his patience; if not for over two decades of brotherly affection, he would have tossed this pile of dog-scratched handwriting straight into the trash can.

What's with all this about the buns made by his sister-in-law being delicious, and how capable she was, and the booming business of the bun shop?

Wasn't that stating the obvious? How could the buns made by his wife not be delicious? And if they were delicious, wouldn't business flourish?

Of course, with good business, she'd need to hire help... wait a second...

Qin Yang sat up, reading the subsequent content carefully, word by word.

The bun shop had actually hired a man as help, a young fellow who had returned to the city from the countryside, and the elder brother referred to him assuredly as a pretty boy.

Qin Yang unconsciously raised his hand to touch his face, realizing what he was doing, his expression darkened instantly.

He quickly flipped out a piece of stationery and poised to write back.

He had just written the character "Lin" before pausing again.

During the brief three days of contact when they got married, Qin Yang knew his wife was a woman with strong opinions. From setting up a stall to running a Bun Shop, even a man might not possess her courage and capability.

She had done so much back in her hometown, and he, her husband, had only learned about it from her letters, without having lifted a finger to help her.



What should he write back at this moment? To ask why she hired male employees? That would clearly show a lack of trust in her.

Qin Yang asked himself sincerely; he did trust Lin Chuxia's character, but it was just that his wife was too outstanding, and he did not trust those roguish men.

Holding the fountain pen, he remained motionless for a long time, his gaze finally landing on the calendar.

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Having finished his work, Bai Xiaoming realized it was way past mealtime; he didn't go home but took his food container straight to the cafeteria.

There he saw Zhang Dawei sitting alone in the empty cafeteria, with his food container already empty in front of him. Puzzled, Bai inquired, "What are you doing sitting here meditating? Is your work done?"

Zhang Dawei looked at him as if he'd seen a savior, "Mr. Qin asked me to hold a spot for him in the cafeteria. Mr. Li has finished his meal and left, but Mr. Qin hasn't arrived yet. I was wondering if I should keep waiting for him. You're here just in time, Mr. Bai; you can hold a spot for Mr. Qin."

"Hold a spot?" Bai Xiaoming gestured around him, "Mr. Qin asked you to do that?"

Zhang Dawei nodded, "Yes, Mr. Qin asked me to."

Bai Xiaoming's response was immediate—a kick, "It seems like you're itching for trouble, making up excuses to skive off. Scram, get back to work."

Bai Xiaoming was patient, but he was no fool.

Zhang Dawei got inexplicably kicked and covered his bottom feeling wronged, "It was really Mr. Qin who asked me to hold it, go ask Mr. Qin if you don't believe me."

"Not leaving yet?"

Bai Xiaoming lifted his leg again, and Zhang Dawei ran off, but after a few steps, he remembered his food container and came back timidly to snatch it away.

Bai Xiaoming scoffed and turned to the cafeteria chef to see if there was any food left.

After the chef made him a stir-fry, Bai Xiaoming was approaching the office with his food container when he suddenly made a turn and headed to Qin Yang's office instead.

He knocked on the door twice and only entered after hearing a voice from inside.

Seeing him sitting at his desk with furrowed brows, as if pondering a difficult problem, he couldn't help but ask, "Have you eaten yet?"

"Not yet, I'll go in a bit."

Qin Yang finally put the cap on his fountain pen and gathered up the letter on the desk.

Bai Xiaoming then saw the letter and asked, "Something wrong at home?" It was the only explanation for such an expression.

"Nothing," Qin Yang stood up and took his food container, then looked at Bai Xiaoming, "How many days off can we get for Mid-Autumn Festival?"

Bai Xiaoming felt intrigued; for once, the workaholic was asking about holidays.

He held up a finger, "One day. Your sister-in-law said, come over to our place on that day and join the festivities along with Li Wei."

Qin Yang pursed his lips, choosing his words carefully, "Can I get an additional five days off?"

The trip was three days one way, six days round trip; he could go back to see her.

Bai Xiaoming leaned in close to him, "Is there a real issue?"

Seeing Qin Yang remain silent, he continued, "If there's truly a family matter, you can indeed ask for leave. I'll help you with the application. But after dealing with the matter, you must come back as soon as possible. You know, it gets cold early here, and by December, it might be difficult to carry on with the construction. Given the current progress of the project, we can't afford any setbacks..."

Chapter 63: Brother?

"I know," Qin Yang interrupted him and went to the cafeteria with his food tray.

Bai Xiaoming shook his head as he watched his retreating figure. Getting married really changes a man. If it were in the past, when would Mr. Qin inquire about taking leave for holidays?

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The autumn wind rustled the leaves, producing a whooshing sound.

The sunlight was bright, and the azure sky seemed freshly washed.

Yet, before Qin Yang's eyes, everything seemed shrouded in fog, unclear.

Suddenly, a pleasant voice came from ahead, the unique tone of a woman that brought comfort and made one feel at ease.

"Here are your buns, take care."

"Madam, buying buns again, five of them? Alright."

"Sir, you're early. How were yesterday's buns? Wanting so many again today, please wait."

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A smile inadvertently curved Qin Yang's lips; his Lin Chuxia always had such an infectious effect, her voice could always gently soothe one's emotions, no matter when.

Following the voice, the fog in front of him suddenly cleared, revealing Lin Chuxia busily working in front of a small Bun Shop.

Her smile was warm and friendly, skillfully handing buns and change to customers.

She always managed to exchange a few words with the customers.

Suddenly, her watery eyes glanced this way, her eyes crinkling with joy, "Qin Yang, you're back, are you hungry? Come try some buns."

Qin Yang grinned, showing his white teeth, and nodded vigorously, reaching out to take the bun.

The scene before him suddenly shifted, and the woman disappeared.

Qin Yang frantically searched around, finally hearing Lin Chuxia's voice outside a room.

He gently pushed open the door, and there was Lin Chuxia in a sharp suit, looking just like those female bosses from the south in the newspapers, her hair even styled in the popular big waves of the south.

It was undeniable, Lin Chuxia appeared strong and commanding in this look, and it was captivating.

Just as he was about to approach, another figure got there first, placing a cup of water diligently in front of Lin Chuxia, "Boss, here's your water with sugar added, please taste and see if it's sweet enough."

The person was exceptionally pretty, with skin even fairer than a woman's, delicate as a flower in the wind.

Before Lin Chuxia could lift the cup, another robust figure strode over, "Boss, these are cookies I bought on the way here, please try them to see if they're good, and this flower too, it suits you well, a gift for you."

Lin Chuxia took the flower and sniffed it, showing a satisfied smile, then looked at the cookies in his hand. As she reached to take them, the man held them higher and smiled suggestively, "Let me feed you."

Lin Chuxia smiled at him, parting her red lips slightly.

The man joyfully picked a cookie and brought it to her lips.

On the other side, the handsome man timely brought up a cup of tea, helping her drink.

Lin Chuxia spread her arms, each hand resting on one man's shoulder, smiling as she enjoyed the attention from both.

Qin Yang felt as though a huge hand was gripping his heart, the pain making it difficult to breathe.

"Lin, Chuxia..."

He struggled to say the name, each word felt like a cut to his heart.

Lin Chuxia finally noticed him, her eyes crescent-shaped with joy, "Qin Yang, you're back, come here, let me introduce you. These two are my capable assistants, from now on you guys will be brothers..."

Brother?

What brother?

Qin Yang wanted to ask, but he couldn't utter a sound no matter how hard he tried.

He only saw two men, one frail and handsome, the other tall and robust, looking at him with a meaningful smile.

"Big brother, you just focus on your work. From now on, the boss will be taken care of by the two of us brothers, rest assured."

"We spend every day with the boss, and we understand him much better than you do, don't worry, we won't let the boss be wronged, just go on with your work and live your life."

"We won't let the boss feel lonely, and definitely won't let the boss be a grass widow, since you chose your work, don't blame us brothers for taking advantage when you're away."

"Xiaxia is such a great woman, she deserves a man to protect her at all times. What can you protect from thousands of miles away? A man like you deserves to be eliminated..."

"Get lost..."

Qin Yang roared angrily and suddenly sat up from the bed.

His clothes were already soaked with sweat, and large sweat beads were dripping down his chin.

He looked around and gasped for air heavily.

He reached his hand to his chest, where there was still a lingering feeling of suffocation.

Closing his eyes, he could still envision the scene of Lin Chuxia being embraced from both sides.

Getting out of bed, he gulped down the cold water in the cup, and as Qin Yang stared out into the dark window, not knowing for how long, he turned on the desk lamp and spread out the writing paper again.

He felt that his wife's days seemed a bit too exciting, as her husband, he must care a little.

Yes, he just wanted to check on her, whether the shop was manageable, what kind of people were helping out, whether his brothers should help, people outside are malicious, she must be more cautious, not to be deceived.

Qin Yang frowned and wrote the letter seriously.

After a week of renovation, the courtyard had completely transformed. Lin Chuxia walked through several rooms satisfied and then watched the workers as they modified the drainage.

This was an important part, if the drainage was not fixed properly, it would be troublesome if it got clogged later.

Su Wensong also understood the significance of the project, and he had been closely monitoring it these days.

"Will it be done in about two more days?" Lin Chuxia asked.

"Once the drainage is fixed and the floor is tiled, the work will be done. The furniture will arrive this afternoon. Those two rooms only had their roofs repaired. If Sun Bingnan and his people want to move in, they can do so in the next couple of days, it won't be a problem."

"That's good, I'll go back today and tell them. You don't know, they've been looking forward to moving in," Sun Lanlan and Sun Bingnan were not outsiders, so Lin Chuxia mentioned them casually.

Su Wensong also smiled, feeling that their boss was a good person, considering everyone so thoughtfully, working with Lin Chuxia was his wisest decision.

"Since the project is about to be completed, talk with the boss at the meat shop, see how much meat and offal he can provide. Not only does the price need to be favorable, but the quality must also be guaranteed, especially the quality, don't be sloppy. Mid-Autumn Festival is coming soon, let's strive to get the cooked food ready before the festival to boost the sales."

These days, people's living conditions were generally not strong, but people were still willing to spend money during festivals, aside from Spring Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival was also a major festival everyone valued.

"Alright, I'll go this afternoon."

Su Wensong agreed and looked at Lin Chuxia hesitantly.

Lin Chuxia glanced sideways, "Is there something else?"

"It is a bit, if we are going to do cooked food, do we need to hire one or two more staff?"

Lin Chuxia put the paint on the windowsill aside, clapped her hands, "Do you have someone suitable?"

Preparing cooked food was labor-intensive, Lin Chuxia indeed planned to hire a couple more people.

#### Chapter 64: What Needs to be Used Must Be Said

Su Wensong felt a bit embarrassed, "When I was sent to the countryside, I had a friend who is also from An City. He later married a local girl there, and when it was time to return to the city, he really wanted to bring his countryside wife back. This delayed him for several months. You know, during the mass return of the educated youth to the cities, those who came back early could get a job arranged for them. Those who came back late could only stay at home, waiting. My friend tried to find other jobs, but it's hard to find one these days. Now the couple at home is so poor they can hardly make ends meet."



After saying this, he hurriedly explained, fearing Lin Chuxia would be put in a difficult position, "Boss, you can rest assured, my friend is even better at work than I am. Back before he got married, he was the one who did the cooking at the youth point. His wife is also very capable..."

"Alright, bring him to me for a look tomorrow," Lin Chuxia nodded straight away.

Su Wensong didn't expect her to agree so quickly. Lin Chuxia smiled, "We are indeed short-staffed here, so feel free to bring anyone suitable over. I trust your judgment."

A man who'd rather delay his return to the city than leave his countryside wife behind—just for that sense of responsibility, Lin Chuxia was willing to hire him.

Besides, birds of a feather flock together. Anyone who's good friends with Su Wensong probably wouldn't be too bad.

"Ah, alright," Su Wensong breathed a sigh of relief, revealing a smile.

Lin Chuxia returned to the Bun Shop, where Sun Lanlan and Granny Sun were preparing the buns for the afternoon sale.

The two were chatting and laughing while wrapping buns, with Sun Lanlan occasionally comparing her buns to Granny Sun's.

Upon seeing Lin Chuxia come back, she waved her over to check out the buns she had made.

Thanks to her relentless efforts, Sun Lanlan's buns were finally almost as good as Granny Sun's. Also, because Lin Chuxia had a strict requirement that each bun must have 16 pleats, they really looked like blossoms.

"Not bad, you can be considered a qualified bun maker now," said Lin Chuxia.

"It's all thanks to Granny Sun's great teaching," after Sun Lanlan finished speaking to Lin Chuxia, she turned to Granny Sun and said, "Granny Sun, you've promised. Whatever dessert you like, I'll buy it for you tomorrow. Please don't decline it, consider it a token of gratitude for learning the craft."

Granny Sun felt it wasn't right to accept anything from her; after all, they were working for the shop, and she hadn't taught much.

Sun Lanlan was persistent, "If you don't tell me, I'll just buy whatever tomorrow, let's settle it this way."

After saying this, she switched topics again, chatting with Granny Sun about other things.

Lin Chuxia poured herself a glass of water and drank, observing the two's never-ending conversation. Sun Lanlan was deliberately trying to please, much more enthusiastic than before, and Lin Chuxia thought back to the banquet where she became an official apprentice.

Once the buns were steaming in the pot, and Sun Lanlan was free, Lin Chuxia called her over.

"Tell me, what are you up to, being so enthusiastic with Granny Sun? What are you plotting?"

Sun Lanlan first glanced in the direction of the kitchen to make sure they were seated far enough that no one else could hear their conversation, then lowered her head to pour some water for herself to drink, "I don't know what you're talking about."

"Really don't know? Are you planning to first win over your future mother-in-law before going after her son?" There was no need to beat around the bush about their relationship.

Sun Lanlan's face turned red with denial, "What nonsense are you talking about?"

"Is it really nonsense?" Lin Chuxia asked with a smile.

Honestly speaking, Sun Hao is handsome, and from that incident where Granny Sun falsely accused her, one could see he's a good person with a proper outlook on life. It was normal for Sun Lanlan to like Sun Hao, and if the two really ended up together, Lin Chuxia would be happy for them.

"If I'm spouting nonsense, then let's leave it. I was even going to say if you're serious, I could help you find out more."

"Ah~"

Sun Lanlan glanced at Lin Chuxia with annoyance, and Lin Chuxia couldn't help but laugh out loud.

"Then I'll ask Granny Sun later."

"Better not," after some thought, Sun Lanlan said, "Let's wait until after the Mid-Autumn Festival."

She had just started working at the shop and couldn't do anything well, even her wage was only half a month's worth.

After the Mid-Autumn Festival, if she did well and got a full month's wage, she would have more confidence in herself.

Lin Chuxia saw that she had made up her mind and didn't force the issue.

"Alright, whenever you need my help, just say the word, I'll go all out for the happiness of my sister."

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The person Su Wensong introduced was brought to the shop the next day.

The man's name was Pang Yongli, two years older than Su Wensong, and looked more weather-beaten, not even thirty yet but appearing like forty.

Lin Chuxia remembered Su Wensong mentioning that due to family reasons, he was sent to a remote area when going to the countryside.

The area was very poor, and the educated youth had to work in the fields with the local farmers every day. Their meals were meager, and the labor was exhausting.

The woman's name was Ma Yingzi, slender and dark-skinned. She looked somewhat restrained around Lin Chuxia but had bright eyes.

Lin Chuxia asked them some personal questions, learned that they both had a four-year-old son, and informed them about the wage structure—an internship for one month at a wage of 25, and upon passing, official employment with a wage of 30.

It was evident that both were very satisfied with this wage offer.

Pang Yongli seemed to be quite easygoing, possessing the simple honesty of a countryman, "Boss Lin, you can rest assured, Yingzi and I will work hard. We will not dishonor the shop or let Wensong lose face."

He was introduced by Su Wensong; if he didn't do well, it would also affect his brother.

Lin Chuxia nodded, "That's good. Although the work at this Bun Shop may seem simple, I have rather high standards. If we want to maintain long-term business, not only must the product quality keep up, but the service must also be up to par. You and your wife do not need to rush into it, just follow and observe for a couple of days. Take it slow and aim to do things right."

A new hire must be briefed, especially the ones introduced by insiders.

Especially with such related hires, harsh words need to be spoken upfront.

The two introduced by Su Wensong were different from the Sun siblings. The Sun siblings had been her friends since childhood, and she could speak directly to them; even if tempers flared, it wouldn't ruin the relationship.

Lin Chuxia didn't know Pang Yongli and his wife well; she couldn't let them harbor the illusion that being connected hires meant they could slack off. That in the end would not only affect the business of the Bun Shop but also the relationship between Su Wensong and Pang Yongli.

A well-intentioned act turning sour and leaving a bad reputation would be the worst outcome.

Indeed, the expression on both Pang Yongli and Ma Yingzi became more solemn.

Lin Chuxia called over Granny Sun and Sun Bingnan, assigning each of them a newcomer to look after for the next few days, guiding them in their work, and encouraging them to observe and learn more.

Seeing that Lin Chuxia didn't assign Pang Yongli to work with him, Su Wensong was a bit surprised, but he didn't say much and instead brought up another matter.

"I went to the vegetable depot today, and Director Li asked me to pass on a message for you to see him when you have the time."

"Did he say what it was about?" Lin Chuxia asked.

"That, he did not. However, I heard from people at the vegetable depot that they've been making some big moves recently. They sent a truckload of produce to the city, opening up new sales options, and they are now planning to expand deliveries to the province."

Lin Chuxia was aware of this; in fact, it was she who had given Li Jian the idea.

Now that Li Jian was looking for her, it certainly wasn't about that.

"Alright, I got it."

Lin Chuxia tidied up a bit, said goodbye to Sun Lanlan and the others, and left the Bun Shop.

#### Chapter 65: Showing no Respect for Elders

Lin Chuxia went to a grocery store, bought a few pounds of snacks, some canned goods, and some malt extract. Seeing the apples for sale on the counter, and noticing they were quite big, she picked and bought a few bags.

Reaching a secluded spot, she first stowed some of her purchases in her storage space, then carried a bag of snacks and a bag of apples to a small courtyard not far from the Bun Shop.

The gate of the courtyard was not locked, so Lin Chuxia pushed the door open and entered, shouting as she walked in, "Master, master... Old man..."

"Yelling and yelling... Are you calling souls?" Old Sir He stuck his head out of the window, giving her an annoyed glance.

Lin Chuxia smiled at him through the window, "I haven't seen you at the Bun Shop for days, I thought maybe you've found a new spring in life, so I had to call out more, just in case you bumped into something you shouldn't have."

"You disrespectful..."

Old Sir He threw a pillow out the window which Lin Chuxia caught steadily with one hand. Seeing Old Sir He still rummaging for more things to throw, she quickly intervened.

"Hold it, master, I can't catch anymore if you keep throwing things. Look, my hands are full of delicious treats I bought for you."

Old Sir He looked at the bag she raised, ultimately abandoned the idea of hitting her, and snorted before turning his head.

Lin Chuxia, holding the goods in one hand and the pillow in the other, entered the house.

Despite Old Sir He usually wearing ragged clothes, his house was neatly arranged.

Probably a habit developed from handling herbs in his younger years, everything had its place, all organized, even though his clothes and belongings were quite worn out, some seemingly used for many years.

After acknowledging him as her master, the first thing Lin Chuxia did was buy him new clothes, shoes, and even changed the bedding to new ones.

Setting the goods on the kang bed, Lin Chuxia looked at the old man's complexion and exclaimed, "It seems you're not sick, so why haven't you been going out?"

Since their mentor-apprentice relationship was established, Old Sir He had stopped idly sitting at the train station and almost visited the shop daily or chatted with Granny Su.

But he hadn't been seen for the past couple of days.

Old Sir He took an apple from the bag, wiped it carelessly, and started eating, "Disappointed I'm not sick? Well, you'll be thoroughly disappointed. Forgot what I do for a living? It's not easy to get me bedridden."

"Look at you, master, I'm just showing concern, why act like a grumpy child? Since there's nothing physically wrong, it must be something troubling your mind. Talk to your apprentice, let me see if I can help you out, hmm?"

Lin Chuxia tilted her head at him until Old Sir He couldn't hold it any longer.

"Alright, I'm not sick anywhere, I just wanted some peace at home. Seeing you just annoys me, and now you've even come to bother me at home. Anything else? If not, leave quickly—I was halfway through a nap, and you've completely disturbed it."

Lin Chuxia didn't pry into the old man's private matters, seeing he looked well she was relieved.

"Then continue with your nap, I'll leave, is that alright? Oh, right master, just to let you know, once these days of peace are over, you have to come and join the lively Mid-Autumn Festival at my place, no staying alone at home."

Seeing Old Sir He about to refuse, Lin Chuxia quickly made a gesture, "Stop, no rejecting, or it will affect our mentor-apprentice relationship. It's settled then, I'm off."

Old Sir He watched her walking out the door, the smile on his face slowly faded.

He pulled a photo from under the mattress. It was a photo of a young, handsome, tender face smiling.

Today was his son's birthday, this year he would have been thirty. Over a decade ago, there was a tragedy at home, and his son was taken away on his eighteenth birthday. Since then, they had never had a reunion on Mid-Autumn Festival.

After the policy improvement, he thought they would reunite soon, but years passed and there was still no news from his son.

Old Sir He's gaze fell on the snacks and fruits beside him, a tear dropped from his cloudy eyes.

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Lin Chuxia left Old Sir He's place, took out a bag of apples from her space, and went directly to the vegetable station.

Upon arriving at Li Jian's office, she knocked on the door and entered upon hearing someone inside invite her in, only to see Li Jian and two other people in the office.

The three were discussing something. Li Jian looked up at Lin Chuxia, pointed to a chair next to him for her to sit down, and then continued the conversation with the other two.



Lin Chuxia placed the apples aside and sat waiting for him. Luckily, their conversation ended soon and the other two left hurriedly after receiving some instructions.

"Looks like Brother Li has been quite busy recently," Lin Chuxia overheard a bit, which seemed to be about expanding markets outside the area.

Li Jian poured her a glass of water, "Being busy is good, it gives life a purpose. You know, Station Chief Yang entrusted the last project to me; this is a chance for me to prove myself. If I don't do well, I can forget about advancing further."

Lin Chuxia took the water with a smile, "With Brother Li's capabilities, there shouldn't be any problems."

"You're the only one who thinks highly of me."

Li Jian smiled genuinely; this girl was his lucky star, his benefactor.

Recently, his busy efforts weren't in vain, as the city's market has mostly stabilized. At the meeting yesterday, Station Chief Yang highlighted this issue as a current priority for their station, giving him, a newcomer, an opportunity to stand out.

After the meeting, he received quite a few encouraging words; frankly, he could only dream of such moments two months ago.

"Did Brother Li need me for something?" Lin Chuxia asked proactively.

Li Jian snapped back to reality, "Oh, there is something. Wang Cheng was looking for you, let's go and see, it's something good."

Upon hearing Wang Cheng's name, Lin Chuxia had a hunch and quickly got up, "Then we better hurry."

Wang Cheng also managed the vegetable transportation section. Seeing Lin Chuxia, he pointed at a flatbed trolley beside him, "You wanted another flatbed trolley, right? The station just got two new four-wheeled tractors, so these trolleys need to be dealt with. I thought of you and picked out a good one."

Lin Chuxia showed timely surprise, "That's really great, I'm in need indeed, thanks for thinking of me, Brother Wang."

"That's right," Wang Cheng had little authority in the station, these old trolleys could be sold to anyone, but selling them to Lin Chuxia felt gratifying.

She was straightforward, empathetic, and who wouldn't want to deal with such a person?

Li Jian interjected, "Look at you being stingy, pick two more, it's not like she isn't paying."

Lin Chuxia, surprised, asked Wang Cheng, "Brother Wang, can I take two more?"

Wang Cheng hadn't expected her to ask for that much; she had previously bought one, and adding another would make two.

These days, it was impressive for a family to own two bicycles; who needs so many flatbed trolleys? Got more money than sense?

Nevertheless, he didn't hesitate, "Sure, all these need to be disposed of, but if you pick again, you won't get ones as good as this."

Lin Chuxia didn't mind, "I know, Brother Wang picked the best one for me carefully, just pick any two decent ones for the others, I'll fix them up myself when I get back. You know, our family are vegetable farmers, having flatbed trolleys really makes selling vegetables much easier."