

Switched M 671

Chapter 671: A Hint of Foolishness

After a good night's sleep, just after breakfast the next day, a bicycle bell rang outside the yard.

Yuan Bao ran to the door alertly and barked twice. Lin Chuxia had already guessed who it was.

She called Yuan Bao back and shouted directly to the door, "Tianyu, come on in, Yuan Bao doesn't bite."

"So it's called Yuan Bao, huh? The name must have been given by you, Sister Chuxia. It sounds spirited."

Not just spirited, but also auspicious.

Lin Chuxia woke up late today. She had just finished washing up and was about to eat breakfast.

She asked Wang Tianyu if he had eaten breakfast. Knowing he had, she let him sit in the room for a while and wait for her.

Wang Tianyu liked dogs. Seeing that Yuan Bao had no hostility toward him under Lin Chuxia's guidance, he wanted to play with Yuan Bao in the yard.

Just as he was playing, he suddenly felt a gaze upon him.

He looked up and met a pair of deep eyes.

Qin Yang was observing the extra man in the yard. Though he looked young, he was still in his twenties.

His skin was fair, his hair neatly parted, and his eyes were bright and clear with a hint of... foolishness.

Playing with a dog with such enthusiasm, what could it be if not foolishness?

Wang Tianyu met the man's deep gaze, and his smile narrowed a bit.

Seeing the man holding a child, he guessed the man's identity and nodded at him, "Hello."

Qin Yang nodded slightly in response, and then took the child to the kitchen.

Lin Chuxia was eating, with Zhuang Jingshu beside her, chatting casually.

Yesterday, Lin Chuxia had mentioned the assistant matter to her. Zhuang Jingshu took a good look at the young man when she saw Wang Tianyu, and now she was discussing him with Lin Chuxia.

Being an assistant seems insignificant, yet it requires mastering all corporate matters and absolute obedience to the person in power.

This choice must be made with utmost caution, as any self-interest or disloyalty from the assistant can be fatal to the company.

If Lin Chuxia wants to use such a person, she must handle him well.

She must decide which powers can be given away and which must be kept firmly under her control.

Zhuang Jingshu naturally trusts her daughter's abilities, and even if her daughter makes a wrong judgment, she, as a mother, can back her up.

She came here mainly to have a casual conversation with her.

Upon hearing that Lin Chuxia had helped Wang Tianyu before, and that the young man had always been grateful to her, Zhuang Jingshu was even more satisfied with this choice.

People who understand gratitude usually have good character.

"Although the young man is a bit young, he seems steady enough. Youth has its advantages; it's energetic, and he's a university graduate, so his learning ability should be strong. If you spend some time with him, the results shouldn't disappoint."

Lin Chuxia took a sip of soup and smiled, "Mom, is your judgment reliable? I want to trust it."

Zhuang Jingshu smiled, "Although it's not 100% accurate, I've met enough people over the years, so my judgment is okay."

"Alright, I'll follow Mom's advice."

As Lin Chuxia finished speaking, she saw Qin Yang coming in with the child, his expression indifferent.

Zhuang Jingshu saw her son-in-law approaching, stood up, took Qi Qi from him, and left with the child.

Qin Yang sat directly opposite Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia initially didn't mind, continued eating a few bites, and only when she didn't hear him speak did she lift her head, "Do you have something to say?"

Qin Yang glanced outside, "What's going on?"

"Oh, I forgot to tell you, this is Sister Tianxue's younger brother, Wang Tianyu, who's just graduated from university and will be my assistant in the future."

As expected, she found a pretty boy.

Qin Yang's expression darkened again.

He had heard his mother-in-law's words about youth, energy, and enthusiasm when he entered.

He didn't understand why an assistant needed to be energetic and enthusiastic.

"What can such a young lad help you with? Lacking experience makes one unreliable. I think you should find a woman of similar age to help you. Women have thoughtful minds and can remind you of things."

"I used to think so too. But these days, finding a woman with similar education and strong ability is indeed not easy. To be honest, I once considered training Liu Na, but she married Houzi and is now pregnant. Once the baby is born, without any elders on Houzi's side, she'll likely not be able to work anymore, let alone help me."

In the workplace, women naturally start at a disadvantage.

It's not that women's abilities are inferior to men's. Just giving birth takes up most of a woman's energy.

Although there's repeated advocacy for women to hold up half the sky, those advocating this haven't considered it from a woman's perspective.

On the surface, women holding up half the sky enjoy the same rights as men.

But in reality?

Just wanting women to hold up half the sky, with equal efforts as men.

But what do they truly get?

The deeply ingrained idea that men rule outside, women inside, persists for thousands of years. Men achieve things outside, but at home, they're the masters.

In these times, men like Qin Yang who can enter the kitchen are rare.

Women hold up their half, but why not think of ways to eliminate men's machismo?

Lin Chuxia, as a woman, choosing men for some positions in the workplace, isn't looking down on women; she's emotionally sympathetic to them.

She finished her last sip of soup and pushed the bowls and chopsticks towards Qin Yang.

"Wash the dishes, it's about time. I want to handle the mall's matter today. Jianjun has mentioned it twice already, so I'll leave first."

After waking up, the first thing she did was nurse the child, whom Zhuang Jingshu had now soothed to sleep.

Lin Chuxia went inside, greeted Zhuang Jingshu, and took her bag, heading out with Wang Tianyu.

Qin Yang watched the two figures going out the door, pursed his lips, and then picked up the dishes to wash.

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From the initial preparation and construction of the clothing factory, Jia Liang and Wang Tianxue have been overseeing it together.

After the clothing factory was completed, due to Qin Juan's pregnancy, Lin Chuxia brought Jia Liang back to Qin's Restaurant.

Now, all of Qin's Restaurant's two stores are managed by Jia Liang, with store managers appointed within for more refined management.

Xiyang Clothing Factory is entirely managed by Wang Tianxue, while the mall is overseen by Qin Jianjun.

This young man has completed his studies, and years of honing have made him increasingly steady.

Lin Chuxia spent a few more days taking Wang Tianyu through the clothing mall and Qin's Restaurant, handling accumulated tasks one by one, and before they knew it, it was Qi Qi's one hundred days.

Little Qi Qi is now white and chubby, rosy and plump, like a beautiful glutinous rice dumpling.

Moreover, she has a particularly good temperament; as long as she's fed and hydrated, she rarely gets upset or cries.

She's also a little girl who loves to smile.

Chapter 672: Human, Not Grass or Wood

Seeing Dad and Mom come home, she would wave her little arms and smile while babbling.

As long as she was teased a little, she would giggle non-stop.

Zhuang Jingshu had handed over all her affairs to Zhuang Yang during this period, devoting all her energy to the child.

At first, Lin Chuxia felt uneasy, thinking that they were taking up all of Zhuang Jingshu's time, wanting her to have a bit of time for herself as well.

However, Zhuang Jingshu told her that only in the past few months did she truly feel grounded in the world, living a life full of warmth.

She told Lin Chuxia not to feel guilty about these things; on the contrary, she was grateful to Lin Chuxia and her daughter for giving her such an opportunity.

When she said these words, there was a genuine and happy smile on her face, and Lin Chuxia knew she wasn't just comforting her.

Zhuang Yang also mentioned that the chairman's smiles these days have been more frequent than in the entire past year.

In the past, Zhuang Yang never realized the chairman could be such a gentle and cheerful woman.

He said that in the business world, the chairman kept all her gentleness and smiles hidden, charging forward like a sword drawn from its sheath.

She had merely stored away her gentleness and smiles temporarily, only to reveal them again when meeting those who were worth it.

You are those worthy people.

Upon hearing this, Lin Chuxia was touched.

People are not made of stone; how could she not feel it after spending these days together?

On Qi Qi's hundredth day, the family had a good, lively celebration.

Old Sir He even gave Qi Qi a big red envelope and took the opportunity to check Zhuang Jingshu's pulse.

As soon as Old Sir He placed his fingers on her pulse, he raised his eyebrows slightly and cast an inconspicuous look at Lin Chuxia.

Zhuang Yang was most concerned about the chairman's health and was paying close attention to Old Sir He's expression after he offered to check her pulse.

Noticing the subtle changes in his face, he asked with concern, "Old Sir, how is the chairman's health? Do you need to prescribe some medicine to help her recover?"

Zhuang Jingshu wasn't overly worried, as she was well aware of her own body.

Ever since her reunion with Lin Chuxia, she felt as if a knot in her heart had been untied, and she felt lighter.

During the time staying at the family residence and watching her granddaughter grow each day, she felt not just happy but physically stronger, too.

Previously, she always felt her remaining days were numbered; now, she believes she can live a few more decades.

Old Sir He withdrew his hand, his face enigmatic. "No need. Your chairman's illness is mostly due to years of exhaustion and emotional knots. Now that she doesn't have to work so hard and is in a good mood, even without medicine, her body will recover day by day. This is quite good."

He looked at Lin Chuxia again as he said the last sentence.

Lin Chuxia awkwardly touched her earlobe.

Her little secrets might be hidden from others, but not from her master, though he never intended to expose them.

The reason Old Sir He wanted to check Zhuang Jingshu's pulse was because he was about to go away for a few days.

Previously, Lin Chuxia had been worried, but now she had come to terms with it.

It's good for the master to have his own life and circle.

After Qi Qi's hundredth-day celebration, Old Sir He packed his bags and headed to the northeast, reportedly to meet an old friend he had recently reconnected with. Lin Chuxia personally saw him off to the train.

When she returned after seeing Old Sir He off, just as she parked the car outside her house, Hu Yaping from next door came out.

"Aunt Lin!"

Hu Yaping was not as lively as Hu Xingwei and only exchanged polite greetings upon meeting.

But today, her demeanor clearly indicated she was waiting for her.

Sure enough, after greeting Lin Chuxia, Hu Yaping handed over a rattle-drum.

"This is from Lin Jiadong for me to pass to you."

Lin Chuxia showed a look of surprise and glanced around, "Jiadong, where is he?"

"He's not here. This rattle-drum was handed to me when we participated in a math competition in the capital together. He asked me to give it to you when the results came out. Today, the results of the math competition came out. Lin Jiadong got the second place in this national math competition."

With her busy schedule recently, Lin Chuxia had forgotten about Lin Jiadong's math competition.

"Did you not have pre-training for this math competition?"

Last year, while participating in the national competition, the province provided the selected outstanding students with a week's pre-training.

Back then, Lin Jiadong had stayed at her place for the training.

This year, there wasn't a single word about it.

"We did have training, also for a week. Aunt Lin, didn't you know?"

Hu Yaping glanced at Lin Chuxia's courtyard, finally pressing her lips together.

That comment was probably redundant now.

She heard from her mom that Aunt Lin had been fostered in the Lin Family as a child, and now her biological mother, a very wealthy woman, had found her.

Lin Jiadong even had to ask her to pass on a small gift for the child, and during the math competition training, how could he stay at Aunt Lin's place?

Lin Chuxia indeed didn't know.

Ever since his visit to speak about Zhuang Jingshu's matter, it had been a long time since she heard from Lin Jiadong.

Due to being heavily pregnant, she had asked Sun Lanlan to take care of Lin Jiadong's pocket money and all school expenses.

Lin Chuxia thanked Hu Yaping once more before entering the courtyard.

After thinking it over, she called Sun Lanlan.

When Sun Lanlan received Lin Chuxia's call, she playfully scolded her a bit at first.

Since Lin Chuxia had given birth, they had only been in contact over the phone.

After it was revealed that Lin Chuxia was not part of the Lin Family, Sun Lanlan had been wanting to visit her. However, the bun shop's business along with the children kept her too busy.

Fortunately, they conveniently kept in touch by phone.

Upon her inquiry about Lin Jiadong, Sun Lanlan explained the situation.

After Lin Chuxia's belly started getting bigger, she had entrusted Sun Lanlan with sending Lin Jiadong's living expenses each month.

Then one day, Lin Jiadong refused to accept any more funds.

At first, he made the excuse of having enough money. Sun Lanlan was aware that Lin Chuxia provided quite a bit each month, so she didn't think much of it. She thought the kid had become sensible and was saving money for his sister.

But after two months of not asking for money, Sun Lanlan noticed something was wrong.

It was around this time that her third brother, Sun Bingnan, visited the bun shop and mentioned the Lin Family matter, making her realize that Lin Jiadong probably knew Lin Chuxia wasn't his biological sister, which was why he stopped taking her money.

In Sun Lanlan's view, Lin Jiadong was the only one in the Lin Family with a bit of conscience.

She also knew that Lin Chuxia had always treated Lin Jiadong differently from the start, and when this issue arose, Lin Chuxia hadn't called to cut off his living expenses.

Moreover, with Lin Chuxia in her postpartum confinement, Sun Lanlan didn't want to bother her with such matters, so she decided on her own to call Lin Jiadong out.

Chapter 673: Puppy Love

She didn't beat around the bush and straightforwardly told Lin Jiadong about this matter.

Only then did she realize that the silly boy felt guilty towards Lin Chuxia and didn't want to use her money anymore.

Even if the family didn't pay his tuition and he had to drop out, he didn't want to owe Lin Chuxia further.

Sun Lanlan scolded Lin Jiadong on the spot.

"Dropping out? Look at what you're wearing and eating at school, aren't all of them carefully prepared by your second sister? She works hard to support your education, and with the college entrance exams next year, you're shouting about dropping out now, wasting her efforts halfway. If you truly feel sorry for her, you should accept the money, study hard, get into college, and repay her. You know her capabilities now; you must excel in school to pay back her sacrifices. If you drop out, what will you do? Go back to the village and farm? How much farming would it take to repay your second sister's efforts?"

After saying this, Sun Lanlan laughed, "Xiaxia, you know what, my scolding woke up your silly brother. He cried while accepting the living expenses and repeatedly promised to study hard, get into college, and repay you well."

Lin Chuxia could already imagine the scene.

Her silly brother, not very shrewd, but straightforward.

Knowing Lin Jiadong's mental block was resolved, Lin Chuxia wasn't too worried and planned to visit Ancheng County when time allowed. Besides, it would be a chance to show Wang Tianyu around the properties in An City.

However, before she could schedule a time, Sun Lanlan called again.

Her voice carried urgency, "Xiaxia, something's happened. The school just called saying Lin Jiadong is involved in an early romance, and the girl's parents found out. They are causing a ruckus at the school, demanding an explanation, and insisting Jiadong be expelled."

Lin Jiadong knew the family was already in chaos, and notifying his parents would likely lead to his expulsion.

Understanding that his second sister was busy with the baby, far from Ancheng County and Yan City, he hesitated to disturb her.

Eventually, he chose to call Sun Lanlan for help.

He couldn't bear to lose his chance to study.

If he did, he could never repay his second sister.

But Sun Lanlan was clueless about Lin Jiadong's situation and had no experience handling such matters. She panicked upon receiving the call.

In desperation, she called Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia frowned slightly upon hearing the news.

In the past, Lin Jiadong had unexpectedly dropped out, seemingly due to early romance issues.

Thus, since Lin Jiadong started school, she frequently reminded him to adhere to the school's rules.

Lin Jiadong wasn't a disobedient child, and given the circumstances, he was unlikely to engage in early romance.

She recalled the previous incident where Lin Jiadong was falsely accused of stealing, and her eyes darkened.

"Don't worry, I'll handle it personally. How did the school notify you? Tell me everything in detail..."

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Lin Chuxia hung up the phone and went straight to pick up Jia Liang from the restaurant.

Jia Liang had helped with the previous incident and had experience in handling such situations.

When Lin Chuxia and Jia Liang arrived at the school, the principal's office was already crowded.

Jia Liang, who had previous contact with the high school leaders, whispered in her ear, "The principal behind the desk is the leader, named Liu, and next to him is the vice-principal in charge of discipline and daily student affairs, named Sun. The other two are a director and Lin Jiadong's homeroom teacher."

Lin Chuxia nodded and glanced at the other people present.

Besides the four teachers and Lin Jiadong, there were three others.

A middle-aged couple and a teenage girl, presumably the family involved.

Her gaze lingered on the girl briefly; if she remembered correctly, she had seen her once before.

Previously, when she visited the school to find Lin Jiadong, she saw this girl approaching him and saying something.

At that time, their demeanor looked anything but like that of lovers; Jiadong seemed to view her more as an enemy.

Upon realizing a family member had arrived, Lin Jiadong initially thought it was Sun Lanlan. But when he saw Lin Chuxia enter, his eyes turned red, and he choked out, "Second sister."

After calling out, he hung his head in shame.

He hadn't seen his second sister in a long time and felt unworthy of her support for his studies.

Yet, Sister Lanlan told him that if he felt sorry for his second sister, he must study hard, as there would be plenty of opportunities to repay her in the future.

That was indeed his intention.

He wanted to excel in his studies, learn skills at university, and repay his second sister by working tirelessly for her, even if it were to give back what the Lin Family owed her.

But he hadn't expected something like this to happen.

The family had insisted he be expelled from school, even though he had done nothing.

The accusations against him regarding Tian Qiaofeng were baseless, yet he found it impossible to clear his name.

Lin Chuxia first approached Lin Jiadong, gently patted his shoulder, and smiled, "It's okay, I'm here. Your second sister will handle everything."

Lin Jiadong's tears flowed immediately. He wiped them away, his voice choked, "Second sister, I really didn't do anything. I have no relationship with her; they're framing me..."

"I know, I believe you."

These few words made Lin Jiadong's tears flow even more uncontrollably.

Since hearing the rumors about his alleged early romance, he had been dazed.

He never imagined that things he hadn't done could be unfairly pinned on him, especially with Tian Qiaofeng's actions, rendering him defenseless.

Even his usually kind homeroom teacher and the disappointed look in the principal's eyes were wavering.

Only his second sister steadfastly believed in him.

After Lin Chuxia finished speaking, a middle-aged woman raised her voice, saying, "Who are you? Where are the adults in your family? Such a scandal, and no adult comes to give us an explanation? Why send a young girl?"

Lin Chuxia ignored the woman and greeted the teachers first, "Principal Liu, Principal Sun, I'm Lin Jiadong's second sister. You can discuss anything directly with me; I can make decisions on his behalf."

Principal Liu glanced at Principal Sun, indicating for him to mediate.

Although Principal Sun hadn't interacted with Lin Chuxia before, he recognized Jia Liang behind her.

Not only him, but all the leaders and teachers present knew Jia Liang.

Last year, around the same time, after Lin Jiadong's math competition success, some rumors spread within the school.

Of course, these rumors hadn't reached their ears until Jia Liang visited, and they realized there were such malicious rumors among students.

Chapter 674: I Believe You

As one of the top students, Lin Jiadong not only brought honor to the school but was also the most promising student to be recommended to Capital University from Ancheng First High School in recent years. The school leadership valued him greatly.

The rumors were quickly cleared up, giving Lin Jiadong a clean slate.

Back then, the class teacher privately asked Lin Jiadong about Jia Liang's identity, saying he was a friend of her second sister.

The people present were all astute; from the way the two stood upon entering the office, it was clear they were not friends but a superior and subordinate.

Especially Principal Liu, who was transferred from another bureau rather than being promoted through the education system.

Therefore, he had some understanding of Ancheng County's development.

From the moment Lin Chuxia walked in, he recognized this lady and secretly breathed a sigh of relief.

Lin Jiadong achieved exceptional results in this math competition and was certain to receive the recommendation.

This was the pride of Ancheng First High School.

Naturally, the teachers wanted to protect him.

But now the other party was relentless, even threatening to report to the police if this escalated, the child's future...

In their hearts, they believed in Lin Jiadong's character but were troubled by the lack of evidence.

Lin Chuxia's words "I believe you" were not only comforting to Lin Jiadong but also gave the teachers present reassurance.

Principal Sun, following Principal Liu's instruction, stood out and addressed Lin Chuxia, "Mr. Lin, I believe you understand the situation. Yesterday, someone reported that Lin Jiadong was involved in a premature romantic relationship. You should know that Ancheng First High School strictly prohibits student romantic relationships, and if found, serious cases may result in expulsion. We approached the parties involved, and Lin Jiadong does not admit to this..."

Before Principal Sun could finish, the middle-aged woman on the side shrieked, "He doesn't dare to admit it. Who would own up to their mistakes? Does the matter end just because he denies it? What about my daughter's reputation? My daughter said it was he who shamelessly pursued her with endless begging. My daughter has always been an obedient child since she was young, the most timid. If it wasn't for him coaxing and deceiving her, how would she have done such a disgraceful thing?"

After speaking, she looked at Lin Chuxia, "Aren't you able to make decisions for him? You must give me an explanation for this, or it won't be over."

Lin Chuxia looked at her indifferently, "What explanation do you want?"

"What explanation? For an unscrupulous student like this rascal, the school must expel him and also apologize to my daughter. This is your school's mismanagement, allowing such a person to harm my daughter. You must give my daughter an explanation. As for what kind, it depends on your sincerity. Otherwise, I'll report this to the police and charge this rascal with a crime, making him go to jail."

"Our sincerity?" Lin Chuxia sneered, "How about this: the school expels Lin Jiadong and compensates your daughter with his recommendation quota?"

Her words caused the expressions of the people present to change.

Lin Jiadong was anxious but remembered his second sister's stance and forcibly held back, only showing grievance and red eyes.

Principal Liu and Principal Sun frowned slightly.

The happiest were the middle-aged couple and their daughter.

The smile on their faces was almost uncontrollable, yet they held their heads high with arrogance, "You have a conscience, but what does the school say about this?"

They also knew that whether the recommendation quota could be given to their daughter depended on the school.

Just before the school leaders could speak, Lin Chuxia suddenly laughed.

"Why are you laughing?"

"I laugh because some people have pipe dreams," Lin Chuxia reined in her smile, and her face turned cold.

The woman then realized something, "Are you playing me?"

Lin Chuxia looked directly at her, "You played everyone present; why shouldn't I play you back?"

"You little bitch..."

Before she could finish cursing, Jia Liang stepped forward to stand in front of the woman.

His bald head and facial features had a ferocious look, and even though he had mellowed out a lot after running a restaurant with Lin Chuxia these past two years, when he turned cold, he still carried a certain aura.

The woman instantly stopped cursing, even took a timid step back, and watched him cautiously.

Lin Chuxia looked towards Principal Sun, "I just arrived, and I'm not clear on the specifics, so could Principal Sun kindly explain to me; you mentioned there's been a report that Lin Jiadong and the female student are dating prematurely—is there any evidence?"

Principal Sun glanced at Lin Chuxia, thinking this woman isn't taking any losses, and is very clever.

The previous words were playing with the woman, also spoken for them.

When saying compensating the recommendation quota to the other party, they saw the family's expression clearly.

What does it indicate?

Lin Jiadong was likely framed, targeting his recommendation quota.

Even developed aversion towards the girl in front.

However, as a teacher, naturally he wouldn't show it.

"The only evidence is an anonymous letter, nothing more. Typically, these matters are conducted secretly behind teachers' backs, so there isn't anything substantive."

"Since the teacher hasn't seen it, what about the students? They aren't likely to hide it from all their classmates, are they? What about love letters? I've heard that boys and girls this age who date often write love letters."

Principal Sun shook his head, "None."

Lin Chuxia smiled, "Since there's nothing, how can they ruin my brother's future just based on their words? Isn't the school being too rash?"

"How can there be no love letters?" The middle-aged woman responded, simultaneously tossing a few sheets of homework paper on the table.

"This is my daughter's reply to that rascal; if this incident hadn't happened, I wouldn't even know. This girl intended to destroy it altogether, but I snatched them up; such disgraceful letters, I didn't want to show, but I didn't expect you were all rotten people, dare to do but not admit. There's nothing I'm hiding now; today, we're here for justice for my daughter."

Lin Chuxia only gave a cursory glance at the handwriting, "What can these letters explain? They only show your daughter has high hormones and isn't focused on studying. Seeing these, you should manage your daughter better to prevent her from doing what you call disgraceful things, rather than dragging innocent people into it."

The middle-aged woman didn't understand what high hormones meant, but Tian Qiaofeng understood.

Is this woman calling her promiscuous?

She had already heard from someone that Lin Jiadong had a wealthy second sister and a brother-in-law who was an official.

They thought Lin Jiadong's second sister was wealthy because of her brother-in-law.

If so, the second sister was even less likely to care about family matters.

Lin Jiadong's old home was in a village, and his family didn't seem to care much about him.

Who knew he really called his second sister, and this woman spoke so rudely.

Upon seeing Lin Chuxia, Tian Qiaofeng felt ashamed.

Chapter 675: Witnesses

Tian Qiaofeng had never seen such a glamorous woman before, not only beautiful but also exuding an air of sophistication.

It was as if she were superior, and they could only look up to her.

She began to understand the meaning behind those words.

She shook her head, tears welling up in her eyes, "I'm sorry, please stop arguing. Even if this is all my fault, isn't that enough? It has nothing to do with anyone else, just stop talking about it."

"How could it have nothing to do with him? Can you dare say that you didn't write this letter to him? His name is clearly on it. Don't think that by burning the letters he gave you, we wouldn't find out anything. If he hadn't written to you, who were you talking to, a ghost?"

The middle-aged woman insisted stubbornly.

Tian Qiaofeng was just there, shedding tears.

Lin Chuxia understood now, why in her past life such petty tricks had been enough to make her naive little brother drop out of school.

This scheme was not complicated, but it was aimed precisely at her naive little brother.

Lin Jiadong had always been slow to react to such matters. He never even noticed the tension between her and Lin Jiayi, let alone any targeted schemes against him.

In his eyes, there were only black and white.

Sure enough, Lin Jiadong's face turned beet red as he explained to Lin Chuxia and everyone present, "I never wrote her any letters. The letters she wrote to me, I returned to her without even reading."

Lin Chuxia thought to herself, indeed, such a naive kid.

The middle-aged woman, as if she had verified something, became excited and pointed at Lin Jiadong while addressing the principals, "You hear that? He still claims it has nothing to do with my daughter, but he just admitted it..."

"What did he admit?" Lin Chuxia interjected before Lin Jiadong could incessantly explain.

"Ma'am, didn't you hear? My brother said that he rejected all the letters your daughter wrote to him. Is this the reason you're blaming my brother? This is utterly ridiculous. Since I walked in, you've been demanding we take responsibility, yet you can't produce any strong evidence proving any relationship between me and your daughter. What's this? Should I understand that you are scheming against my brother's scholarship because he's outstanding? In that case, it's not you who should report to the police, it's me. I'd like to see what crime you call maliciously using vile tactics to encroach on someone else's interests."

Lin Chuxia's words finally caused a slight guilty glimmer in the woman's eyes, but it was quickly covered up.

She started to cry loudly, "Oh my poor daughter, is there any justice in this world? This boy has committed indecent acts, and you're condoning it? Is this how you educate people? If you don't give me an explanation, I'm going to smash my head against the wall here today."

"What is this? When you can't reason, you resort to making a scene and acting shamelessly? Ma'am, there's no need to act as if it's life or death. The situation is clear; you didn't discipline your own daughter, so go home and manage her properly. It's not the school's fault, and it certainly isn't my brother's. As for the indecent acts you accuse him of, I repeat, evidence is everything. Without evidence, be careful as I might accuse you of slander."

With Lin Chuxia's final word, her dark eyes glared at her.

The middle-aged woman's final cry was almost caught in her throat.

She glanced at the few teachers, and Principal Sun also spoke up, "The school's position on this matter is the same. We have our regulations, and we will not tolerate any student, but we certainly will not wrongly accuse anyone. What Lin Jiadong's parent said is right, everything must be based on evidence. Since the issue was reported yesterday, you have insisted that Lin Jiadong seduced your daughter, but in truth, all the evidence suggests that the problem lies with your daughter."

Principal Sun expressed it subtly, as Tian Qiaofeng is also a female student, he spared her some dignity.

The middle-aged woman was left speechless, and at this moment, the middle-aged man who had been standing behind them moved.

Without a word, he stepped forward and slapped Tian Qiaofeng hard, "You disgraceful thing, exploited by others and still crying, bringing shame to me. From now on, don't tell people you're my daughter, I can't afford that embarrassment."

After speaking, he didn't look at anyone else's faces in the room and left the office.

Tian Qiaofeng cried even harder, covering her face, while Lin Chuxia glanced at Lin Jiadong's expression, which wasn't looking good either.

Just then, Tian Qiaofeng's hateful gaze turned to Lin Jiadong, "Are you really this heartless? My dad doesn't want me anymore, and you're forcing me to die. Lin Jiadong, the vows you made to me, were they all for nothing? Or do you really want me to die?"

Lin Jiadong's face turned even paler.

At this moment, a pair of warm little hands held his hand. Following up from the fingertips, he saw his second sister's gentle eyes.

Lin Jiadong's gaze gradually became firm as he unwaveringly faced Tian Qiaofeng, "I won't admit to something I didn't do. My second sister is right, evidence is everything. I'm not forcing you to die, and even if you died because of this, it would be your own problem. I haven't done anything, and my conscience is clear."

"A clear conscience, you want evidence?"

Tian Qiaofeng looked at the principals, "What about a witness? Since he won't admit it, he must have destroyed all physical evidence, but I have a witness."

The middle-aged woman also regained her spirit, "We have a witness."

"Fine, let's hear from your so-called witness what the relationship is between my brother and your daughter."

Lin Chuxia wasn't fazed, and at the same time, she squeezed Lin Jiadong's hand, "Second sister believes in you."

With a witness in hand, things would be much easier.

By now, the school leadership was also having a headache.

They didn't want Lin Jiadong to get involved in such turmoil. In other words, even if Lin Jiadong had indeed been reckless and did such things, they would turn a blind eye.

After all, Lin Jiadong was the pride of Ancheng First High School, a guaranteed spot at Capital University wasn't something just anyone could have.

For years, Ancheng First High School hadn't produced a student admitted to Capital University.

But at this moment, Tian Qiaofeng's family was relentless, insisting on accusing Lin Jiadong of having a premature relationship with their daughter, demanding the school take action, leaving the school in a difficult position.

The witness arrived quickly, and when Lin Chuxia saw the witness enter the office, she wasn't surprised at all, but her naive brother Lin Jiadong had a shocked expression on his face.

"Li Youmin, you..."

His mouth moved, as if he didn't know what to say or found the words difficult to utter.

Li Youmin and Lin Jiadong exchanged a glance, then quickly averted his eyes, standing nervously in the distance.

With the witness present, Principal Sun didn't waste any time, directly asking, "Student Li Youmin, it's been reported that students Lin Jiadong and Tian Qiaofeng were having an early relationship. Do you know about this?"

Li Youmin nodded and replied properly, "I know, I heard there are reports of them two having an early relationship, and the students have been discussing it for the past few days."

Chapter 676: Unable to Defend Myself

"So what do you think about this matter? You and Lin Jiadong are classmates and roommates. Do you think Lin Jiadong would violate school regulations and engage in early romance with Tian Qiaofeng?"

Li Youmin pressed his lips together, remaining silent for a long time.

Tian Qiaofeng's mother became anxious, "Speak up, in front of the principal and teachers, tell the truth. Even if it tarnishes our daughter's reputation, we must seek justice."

Tian Qiaofeng silently shed tears beside her.

After his initial shock, Lin Jiadong, with a cold face, stared at him, wondering what he was thinking.

After a brief silence, as if making a decision, Li Youmin glanced at Lin Jiadong before speaking.

"Jiadong and I are roommates and the best of friends. Actually, I knew about this beforehand, and I even advised him at the time, but he didn't listen to me."

Lin Jiadong frowned, "When did you ever advise me?"

Li Youmin was helpless, "Jiadong, although we are good buddies, Tian Qiaofeng is a classmate. What you're doing is unfair, and I can't just watch you keep going down the wrong path. This is obviously your fault. Just apologize to the teachers. Your academic performance is excellent; don't let this ruin your future."

Lin Jiadong, angry yet amused, said, "I never realized your ability to distort facts was this great."

Mr. Zhang also frowned, "Let's talk about the evidence. Li Youmin, Tian Xiaofeng just said he has evidence and you are their witness. Can you explain how you know about their relationship? Did you see or hear it, or is there another reason?"

"Since Lin Jiadong is so stubborn, I have no choice but to tell the truth."

He glanced at Lin Jiadong and continued, "I'm not making this up. I once personally saw Lin Jiadong and Zhang Qiaofeng meeting in the small woods behind the school, and it was then that I reminded Lin Jiadong of the school's regulations, hoping he'd come to his senses. But he didn't listen, and even started resenting me. I didn't bring it up again afterwards, not expecting that the truth would come out like this. I think I'm not the only one at school who has seen them meet."

Lin Jiadong clenched his fists, his eyes glaring angrily at Li Youmin. Just as he was about to argue, a small hand gently clasped his fist, and upon looking up, he met his second sister's gentle gaze.

She shook her head gently and soothingly patted the back of his hand.

Then she looked up at Li Youmin, "You're Li Youmin, right? I remember seeing you before. I think you also participated in last year's city math competition training. At that time, you and my brother were both excellent students selected by Ancheng First High School."

Li Youmin, not understanding why Lin Chuxia mentioned this, nodded in agreement.

"I remember my brother specially introduced you, saying that you two got along well, and just now you said as you came in that you're the best buddies in the same class and dorm as my brother..."

Lin Jiadong turned his head to his second sister, wanting to say that he and Li Youmin were not the best of friends.

Their relationship used to be good, but after going to the capital for the national math competition last year, things became subtle between them.

He was straightforward, but not foolish. When the teacher's watch was lost, even classmates from other schools knew to help him find the truth, and Li You clearly knew the new watch his second sister bought for him, yet still directed the suspicion towards him.

At that time, he couldn't defend himself.

He held back from explaining upon seeing his second sister's eyes, swallowing back his words.

Li Youmin nodded, "My relationship with Jiadong is indeed good; all our classmates can attest to it."

Lin Chuxia understood, "Since this issue concerns Lin Jiadong's future, as his best friend, do you not consider this at all? Do you know that standing as a witness blocks Lin Jiadong's future?"

"I... I also said before that I advised him, but he didn't listen. Even though I see him as my best friend, I can't just watch him make mistakes..."

"Really?"

Lin Chuxia looked at him, her dark eyes swirling with inexplicable emotions.

Li Yongmin averted his eyes, lacking the courage to meet her gaze.

Tian Qiaofeng's mother sharply spoke, "What do you mean by that? Just because you're wealthy doesn't mean you're invincible. This child has already proven your brother seduced my daughter. Are you trying to deny it? Do you really think having some dirty money lets you cover the sky with one hand?"

At this point, a commotion was heard outside the door, and a teacher-like person knocked and entered.

"Principal Liu, Mr. Zhang, some officers are here, saying someone reported, and they're already at the door."

People in the room changed expressions, seeing the two officers outside through the glass.

"Who reported it?" Principal Liu looked grim.

Though it violated school rules, it wasn't a serious matter.

Nowadays, the country promotes free love, and mutual affection among high school boys and girls is understandable.

The school set the regulations to prevent students from dedicating energy elsewhere, impacting studies.

Even in unreasonable cases like today, by understanding the causes and coordinating, they could have resolved the issue quietly.

But involving the police changes things.

Firstly, it affects the school's reputation, and secondly, should a promising student like Lin Jiadong ruin his future over such a matter?

Li Youmin spoke calmly, "I reported it."

He glanced at Lin Chuxia.

Lin Jiadong's second sister is capable. Why did those rumors suddenly cease last time?

He asked Lin Jiadong later, and found out he went to his second sister.

Though he didn't admit it, once he came back from his second sister, everything calmed down.

Moreover, according to his observation, the man who brought Lin Jiadong back was his second sister's companion.

He'd never forget that man's face, and after dropping Lin Jiadong off, that man went to the principal's office.

If the police weren't involved, she would likely resolve it again, leaving them with nothing.

The previous guilt turned into confidence with the police's arrival.

"Sorry, Principal, I didn't say this beforehand due to other reasons. I know Lin Jiadong's sister's identity is uncommon. I didn't want to see such an obvious matter become powerless for us ordinary people due to money and power's manipulation. We must stand up for justice, unafraid of power."

Chapter 677: Calling the Police

What a fight for justice, unafraid of authority.

Lin Chuxia said directly, "It's perfect timing for the police to come. This matter is so complex; everyone trusts the police's ability. Just wondering what the crime for false accusation will be when the truth is revealed."

The look on Tian Qiaofeng's mother's face changed slightly.

But Li Youmin and Tian Qiaofeng remained indifferent.

The ones looking the worst were undoubtedly several school leaders.

The police officers quickly entered the office.

After asking about the reason, their eyes fell on Lin Jiadong.

Lin Jiadong was trembling slightly with anger.

With Tian Qiaofeng's confession as the victim and Li Youmin as the witness, he was left speechless.

In the end, he could only hang his head in silence.

"Look, all of you, look. He was still being stubborn just now, but now he admits it as soon as the police come?"

Tian Qiaofeng's mother shouted.

"I told you this is not a good thing, seducing my daughter, ruining her reputation. Your school must give me an explanation, or I'll report him to the police for molesting my daughter..."

At this point, the school could no longer help Lin Jiadong.

Mr. Zhang looked at Lin Chuxia, "If Lin Jiadong has nothing to say, whether this matter violated the school policy or not, Lin Jiadong should apologize to Tian Qiaofeng and her parents. Maybe your parents can privately compensate, as this was an emotional issue between two kids. It can't be entirely blamed on one person, both must write a reflection, and on Monday at the school assembly, they must reflect in front of the entire school staff and students..."

Reflecting in front of the entire school was already the harshest punishment from the school. But finally, Mr. Zhang did not mention expelling the student or Lin Jiadong's scholarship quota.

Which showed the school still wanted to support Lin Jiadong.

However, some people were not satisfied with this solution.

Li Youmin spoke up, "Teacher, the school policy states that early dating will result in expulsion. Doesn't the school policy count?"

Mr. Zhang's face immediately turned cold, "Li Youmin, the school policy states that serious consequences of early dating will result in expulsion. If you don't remember it, copy it 10 times back at home."

"Oh my goodness, there's no place to reason," Tian Qiaofeng's mother yelled, "Police, have a look. Luckily you're here, or my daughter would have been bullied to death by them. Clearly, it's that little punk seducing my daughter, and now they want her to write a reflection with him. Is there any king's law in this world? I want to report them, I'll report them now. This little punk seduces my daughter, molests my daughter. We have witnesses here, quickly arrest him..."

Since someone reported, the police couldn't ignore it. Since they're involved, they needed to bring the involved parties back to the station.

At that moment, Lin Chuxia also stood up.

"Police officers, we also report, these two fabricated facts and falsely accused to frame my brother, which constitutes slander. I hope the police can clear my brother's name."

"Who slandered who? I want your brother to clear my daughter's name," Tian Qiaofeng's mother jumped and shouted, "Police officers, don't listen to her nonsense, obviously they started the wrongdoing first, don't be fooled by her. We have witnesses, what does she have?"

Lin Chuxia looked at everyone and raised her hand slightly; Jia Liang promptly placed a stack of items in her hand.

Her lips parted lightly, "We have physical evidence."

Seeing the stack in her hands, Tian Qiaofeng and Li Youmin's faces turned pale.

Li Youmin's legs weakened, and he fell to the ground.

Those were photos; the protagonist on the top one was clear, it was him and Tian Qiaofeng.

The two were embracing and kissing, with the background being the school's small forest.

How could she have such things?

With such a thick stack, what could be underneath?

Tian Qiaofeng's mother saw the photo's subjects, eyes widened unbelievably.

She seized the photos and flipped them one by one.

Tian Qiaofeng snapped back and tried to snatch the photos.

In their scuffle, the photos fell to the ground with a crash.

Each photo's protagonists were the same two people, Tian Qiaofeng and Li Youmin.

Two people walking side by side, or embracing, or sitting together, intimate enough to see their relationship at a glance.

"Smack," Tian Qiaofeng's mother slapped her daughter's face.

"You disgraceful thing, no wonder you thought of this ploy to get me to act so you could get someone's scholarship quota. You were already messing around with a man, no need for acting. Great, disgraced the family, mar their faces. Do you want to send your parents to the station? What sin did I commit in my past life to have a shameless child like you..."

Tian Qiaofeng covered her face, gritting her teeth, looking at Li Youmin opposite, who was speechless as a wooden chicken...

.....

Coming out of the station, Lin Jiadong let out a long sigh of relief, full of grievances.

"Second sister, I thought I was really going to be expelled. Although I didn't do those things, yet they... Second sister..."

Lin Chuxia patted his shoulder, "So you must always be discerning, the world is not just black and white. Even upright people can't escape malicious slander. What you need to do is maintain a righteous heart, but also be wary of petty people."

Lin Jiadong nodded heavily, his second sister taught him another lesson today.

"Second sister, since you had those evidences, why not bring them out sooner? Scared me to death."

Before Lin Chuxia could speak, Jia Liang said, "Bring them out early, and let the school help you turn big issues into small ones? Li Youmin and Tian Qiaofeng clearly aren't good people; they were calculating your scholarship quota. If we don't solve them, who knows what tricks they'll plan next."

The last rumor issue was solved, but to attend the math competition in the capital, only two people were selected. Who else could it be?

No evidence for the last matter, but with evidence this time and not stopping them, all efforts during this time would be wasted.

Lin Jiadong also understood.

Today's issue showed the school intended to protect him yet couldn't withstand the Tian family's provocations.

But if roles were reversed, they didn't have the Tian family's ability to pester, and Li Youmin had good grades; the school might have kept him.

Police involvement changed things; regardless of the police's outcome, this matter impacted the school, which must provide an explanation to all staff and students.

Furthermore, it was Li Youmin who called the police; the school would not let things slide.

Chapter 678: Why Should I?

A few people were chatting as they walked towards the jeep.

Just then, a hurried sound of footsteps came from behind.

"Jiadong, Jiadong, wait..."

Lin Jiadong's expression, which had been gentle and smiling, suddenly turned cold when he saw Li Youmin catching up.

With a mournful look, Li Youmin grabbed Lin Jiadong's hand, "Jiadong, Jiadong... I'm sorry, I really didn't mean it. Can you forgive me? We've been in the same class and dorm since we entered school. For the sake of our two years together, can you forgive me?"

Lin Jiadong silently withdrew his hand and spoke calmly, "It's not about whether I forgive you now. Just now, the police have already determined the mistakes you made. Even if you didn't break the law, criticism and education are inevitable. I hope you accept the police's criticism and education properly, and don't make such mistakes again."

To constitute defamation, one must fabricate and spread false facts.

Throughout the whole incident, the Tian Qiaofeng family's role was predominant, while Li Youmin's false testimony only made him an accomplice.

Additionally, defamation must reach a level of severity to constitute a crime.

This usually means that the defamation has caused significant damage to the victim's reputation and character, or has resulted in a substantial social impact.

In this case, with the school publicly clarifying, Lin Jiadong would have his reputation restored, so it's not considered severe.

At the police station earlier, the officers already announced the handling results.

Tian Qiaofeng and her daughter received an administrative penalty of three days' detention, while Li Youmin was subjected to criticism and education.

However, the actions of these two individuals have caused a significant impact on the school and brought it to the police station.

No matter the police station's handling outcome, the school will expel them.

The second sister also said that this is the result they wanted.

With less than a year to college entrance exams, the second sister won't allow anyone or anything to affect his studies.

Potential threats like Li Youmin must be dealt with.

Li Youmin was on the verge of tears, "Jiadong, I really know I was wrong. Please help me, please help me. I'll even kneel for you. I can't be expelled from school. You know my family's not as well-off as yours. My parents have worked hard to put me through school, hoping I'd make something of myself someday. My family is poor, and all our money is for my education. If my parents find out I've been expelled, they'll kill me."

Lin Jiadong looked at him coldly, "What use is it telling me all this? The results were given by the police station, and the expulsion is the school's decision."

"It'll help, it definitely will. Jiadong, if you just tell the police and the school that you've forgiven me, I'm sure the school will give you this face. This isn't really a big deal, and you weren't affected, right? It was a moment of confusion on my part, Jiadong, please, help me..."

Lin Jiadong sneered, "Not affected? Li Youmin, do you really think I'm that naive? If my second sister hadn't produced that evidence, I might have been the one expelled already, right? You really think I don't know what you've done? From last year's math competition, you've been plotting this, haven't you?"

Li Youmin froze for a moment, guilt flickering in his eyes, but still insisted, "No, I never meant to harm you. I've always seen you as a friend. It was Tian Qiaofeng. Her grades aren't good. She's afraid I'd go to college and she wouldn't, and our relationship would end, so she came up with this plan. She wanted to sabotage your recommendation. I really never thought..."

"It doesn't matter if you thought about it or not. The two of you are peas in a pod. This ends here. I won't kick you when you're down, but I won't help you either. Goodbye!"

As the jeep started, with the second sister waiting inside, Lin Jiadong stopped arguing with Li Youmin and got in the car.

Watching his graceful departure, Li Youmin's eyes widened with rage.

Especially as he casually got into the jeep, just like when they first went to the city for exams; his beautiful and wealthy second sister showed up at the school in the jeep, making a big impression.

He couldn't help but shout, "Lin Jiadong, you've been waiting for this moment, haven't you? I knew it. You've always looked down on us, even though you're from the countryside too, yet you always have to be above others, Lin Jiadong, why?"

Jia Liang stuck his head out of the car window and sneered, "Because you weren't lucky enough to choose your birthright, you weren't lucky enough to choose it and didn't have a kind heart, because you're small-minded and short-sighted. Kid, today is just a minor setback for you. Be thankful, because if you continue with this mindset and vision, you'll have endless troubles in your future life."

He had also heard that this kid's grades were decent. If he could attend the city's math competition, he must be a top student at school.

Instead of concentrating on studying, he diverted to such unscrupulous methods, wasting his future potential.

Lin Chuxia thought the same, but she wasn't concerned with those irrelevant to her.

It was almost noon, so she had Jia Liang drive straight to the Bun Shop.

They planned to eat before taking Lin Jiadong back to school.

Zhang Guilan saw the jeep and came out to greet them.

"Why are you here today?"

Seeing Lin Jiadong behind Jia Liang and Lin Chuxia, she guessed part of it.

"There's something at school, so Jia Liang and I came to check."

Lin Chuxia walked into the house while asking about the situation at home.

Upon knowing everything was fine at home, she felt relieved.

Zhang Guilan also asked about Qi Qi and Qin Juan.

At this time, it was lunch hour, and there were quite a few guests in the main hall. The rooms upstairs were all occupied too.

Lin Chuxia and Zhang Guilan chatted in the main hall.

Zhang Guilan hadn't seen Lin Chuxia for a long time and had a lot to say.

The situation at home and the shop didn't need much saying; anyone could tell everything was fine.

The matters at the food factory were regularly reported to her by Su Wensong, and Zhang Guilan shared some gossip.

During this year's autumn harvest, a big event happened in Qin Family Village—its vegetable greenhouses were designated as a provincial key project, making the whole village a provincial exemplary model.

Among the several families with successful greenhouses were Qin Liang's brother and Qin Han.

Additionally, several technicians from the Agricultural Bureau who previously guided the Qin Family Village greenhouses were recognized and praised.

Later, the province plans to promote these greenhouses aggressively, not only having technicians come to their village for on-the-spot learning, but also requiring Qin Liang, Qin Han, and those forestry bureau technicians to be on-site instructors.

This wasn't a free consultation.

For Qin Liang and Qin Han, being native villagers, it was merely financial compensation for their outings.

Chapter 679: A Grand Move

The technicians are different; they are government workers who originally relied on their skills for a living and were the most ordinary and hopeless in the unit.

This time, their future development space is going to be different.

"I heard your big brother say that the province is eyeing these few technicians and they might be transferred there."

Lin Chuxia wasn't surprised when she heard this.

Since they want to promote greenhouse technology across the province, it's understandable for the province to transfer some experienced technicians.

Speaking of this, Zhang Guilan lowered her tone, "Do you remember Liu Yahong? The female technician who first came with Technician Hu and the others."

Of course Lin Chuxia remembered.

When she helped Qin Family Village build the vegetable greenhouses, she invited Technician He from the Agricultural Research Institute.

After the county agricultural bureau found out, they sent three technicians, claiming to assist Technician He, but in fact, once the Qin Family Village greenhouses were built, it was a win-win situation for these technicians.

Besides, the opportunity to learn from technicians from the capital's Agricultural Science and Technology Institute was rare.

At that time, the County Agricultural Bureau sent three technicians, including a female technician named Liu Yahong.

Liu Yahong wasn't skilled and couldn't endure hardships. She wanted to curry favor with Technician He and even had a quarrel with Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia didn't put up with her and directly had the agricultural bureau replace her.

Zhang Guilan continued, "I heard from your big brother that Liu Yahong is quite something, she's Director Liu's niece from the agricultural bureau. They sent her to our Qin Family Village to give her a bit of gold plating."

Speaking of this, Zhang Guilan felt proud, "Don't be fooled, when our Qin Family Village was building greenhouses, it was full of challenges, but the leaders' eyes were bright. Otherwise, how could such good things fall into the laps of one's family? Liu Yahong didn't know what was good for her and thought too highly of herself. Now, look what happened, the three technicians who went to our Qin Family Village all have made it, with opportunities to go to the province, yet Liu Yahong is just envious, regretting it to her core. She even tried to recommend herself to the provincial leaders, claiming she had worked as a technician in Qin Family Village. Once the provincial leaders heard this, they immediately asked the good greenhouse growers in our Qin Family Village. You know our Qin Family Village, they protect their own fiercely. Everyone knew the issue with you and Liu Yahong back then, they didn't spare her any face, directly revealing the past incident. Now don't even mention going to the province, she embarrassed herself even at the agricultural bureau..."

Lin Chuxia sipped her tea, listening to Zhang Guilan's gossiping.

Once there was an empty table, a few people sat in the main hall, ordered some buns, some cold dishes, and three bowls of egg drop soup.

After lunch, Lin Chuxia personally sent Lin Jiadong back to school.

Mr. Zhang specially met with a few people, and the school sincerely apologized for this matter.

They also expressed a firm stance on dealing with Li Youmin and Tian Chunhua's classmates.

Lin Chuxia was satisfied with the school's attitude.

Of course, he understood that Lin Jiadong always brought glory to the school, and because he did well, the school was willing to support him.

On the way back to the city, the car passed by the old Ancheng Vegetable Station, which had changed its appearance.

The original vegetable station had been leveled, surrounded by tall barriers, with a building rising in the middle.

Jia Liang couldn't help but sigh, "I've seen the construction here for a while, thought they were just renovating the old vegetable station, didn't expect a building to spring up. Judging by this, this building isn't short. It might just become the tallest building in Ancheng County."

The tallest building in Ancheng County was the Department Store built a few years ago, only three stories high.

The building in front of them had already reached three stories and showed no signs of topping out.

Lin Chuxia knew that the vegetable station was initially purchased by Lin Jiayi for her mother, but after the truth came out, the station couldn't possibly remain in Lin Jiayi's hands.

Lin Jiayi didn't have such large resources either.

It seemed her mother was planning to establish a venture in Ancheng County.

She didn't think much of it; Ancheng was her hometown, her business occupied a major part of Ancheng County, and if her mother wanted to develop here, she would naturally welcome it with open arms.

When Lin Chuxia returned to the residential compound, Qin Yang had just gotten off work.

Seeing the Jeep return, Qin Yang waited at the gate for her to get out.

"How did it go? Easy to resolve?"

Lin Chuxia handed the vegetables and fruits Zhang Guilan had brought back temporarily to Qin Yang, saying, "It's already handled, not a big deal."

After all, it was just a matter between a few kids; indeed, it wasn't a big deal.

Qin Yang nodded, feeling relieved. He carried the items with one hand and opened the gate with the other as the two of them entered the yard.

Zhuang Jingshu was in the yard sunbathing with Qi Qi. Seeing mom and dad come back, Qi Qi waved her tiny arms, unsure whether to go to dad or mom first, anxiously crying out.

In the end, she chose mom for the sake of her food.

Lin Chuxia held her, feeding her while asking about how the day went.

Zhuang Jingshu naturally replied that everything was fine.

She was a woman with stable emotions, very gentle, liked children, and was patient, so indeed there was nothing to worry about.

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On the other hand, Jia Liang returned directly to Qin's Restaurant.

While he was away for the day, the restaurant was left in the care of Qin Juan.

Qin Juan was pregnant, and lately, she had been experiencing severe reactions.

Upon reaching the restaurant, he saw Qin Juan standing in the main hall, talking to the reception.

There wasn't much expression on her pretty face, and only then did he breathe a sigh of relief.

Qin Juan also saw him return and after saying a few more words to the receptionist, turned to him, "You're back."

"Yeah, how are you? Didn't tire you out, did it? It's getting late, you go ahead home, I'll stay here and keep an eye on things."

Qin Juan dismissed his concerns, "You know, usually when I'm just sitting around, I always feel uncomfortable here and there, but staying busy all day I didn't feel as exhausted, I even ate half a bowl extra for lunch and didn't feel nauseous. Seems like I'm meant to be busy."

"Don't say such things," Jia Liang didn't like hearing it, "You're not meant to be busy, you're meant to enjoy life. Today you had to mind the store, and see, your body didn't feel too bad, even the little one is being nice to you, if it's not a life of leisure, what is it? Even the little one knows to be considerate of you."

Qin Juan was coaxed into smiles, "Yes, a life of leisure, you two make sure I enjoy it. I'll just wait by the side, and we'll go home together when you get off work."

"Okay, then we'll have dinner together later."

Jia Liang looked at Qin Juan, and there was no longer any savageness on her slightly plump face; even her usually sharp eyes were filled with tenderness.

Qin Juan felt embarrassed by his gaze and glared at him fiercely.

Jia Liang did not restrain himself; instead, he laughed foolishly.

Chapter 680: Gratitude

Qin Juan knew this person's character. The more she paid attention to him now, the less proper he became, without considering where they were.

After all, they were the managers of the store, and Jia Liang was in charge of two stores, yet not at all steady.

She simply turned her head to look elsewhere.

Jia Liang's gaze finally fell on her belly, and he went to work with a smile.

That evening, the two of them went home together.

Old Mrs. Jia hadn't gone to bed yet. Hearing the noise outside, she knew her son and daughter-in-law were back.

She slipped on her shoes, came out of the room, and saw the two of them, her gaze falling directly on Qin Juan.

"Why are you home so late today? Tired, huh? Did you feel uncomfortable today? What did you have for dinner? Want me to make you something else to eat?"

Qin Juan stepped forward and supported her old lady's arm, "Mom, I'm doing well, you don't need to worry about me. I've been feeling much better these days."

"Oh dear, no matter how much better you feel, how much better can it be? I'm also a woman and I've been through that time. Pregnancy is naturally a tiring thing for a woman, and you can never be as brisk as when alone."

After finishing, Old Mrs. Jia glared at her son, "And you, didn't Mr. Lin tell you to watch over these two stores? Still, you let Juanzi come back so late. Spending a whole day at the store is exhausting. I think you should talk to Mr. Lin; why not just let Juanzi stop working? We're not bound to live a lavish life; the current state is already better than many families. There's never enough money to earn; people are what's important. Juanzi is Mr. Lin's older sister-in-law. If we ask, Mr. Lin will definitely let her off."

Jia Liang glanced at Qin Juan.

In fact, what Old Mrs. Jia said was exactly what he wanted to say.

When he found out that Qin Juan was pregnant, Jia Liang discussed this matter with her, but she refused.

Qin Juan's reason for refusal was simple.

In her previous marriage, she was also persuaded by her mother-in-law and husband to rest at home after getting pregnant.

Saying it was to rest at home, all the work at Zhang Family fell on her, and her job was given to Zhang Wenbin's sister.

She certainly knew Old Mrs. Jia and Jia Liang were not like that, but she also wanted to realize her self-worth.

She really liked her job at Qin's Restaurant and wanted to do something for the sister-in-law who saved her from the pit.

After knowing Qin Juan's thoughts, Jia Liang didn't push much, only noted that her reactions were bigger these days and wondered if she might change her mind.

No matter what decision his wife made, he would support her.

Qin Juan smiled gently and reassured Old Mrs. Jia, "Mom, I've truly felt much better these days and am already accustomed to this life. If you really let me idle around, I might get sick from inactivity. But it will be hard on mom later; when the baby is born, you'll have to help look after them."

Old Mrs. Jia immediately smiled, her face wrinkling, "What hardship would there be? I've been looking forward to this day for over ten years now. Just rest assured and leave the child to me. I've got plenty of experience taking care of kids now; look how well Xiao Long has grown under my care."

"Yes, mom is the most meticulous caregiver. The child is blessed to have a grandmother like you."

Qin Juan said from the heart, for Old Mrs. Jia was exceptionally good to both Xiao Long and Ningning.

From the start of her pregnancy, Old Mrs. Jia had been filled with anticipation for this child.

Though Qin Juan often compared the Jia Family mother and son to the previous Zhang Family,

it was instinctive due to her personal experiences.

It was precisely because of the comparison with Zhang Family that she was grateful to heaven for not treating her harshly, thankful for meeting such a mother-in-law and husband.

Qin Juan had eaten well at the restaurant and didn't have a habit of eating late-night snacks.

Old Mrs. Jia boiled some water on the stove for them to wash and soak their feet.

Running back and forth all day at the restaurant, their feet were the most fatigued.

While Qin Jun and Jia Liang soaked their feet, Old Mrs. Jia chattered from the side.

"I was just thinking about taking a trip back to the old home since there's nothing going on around here, and tidy it up before the weather turns cold. Didn't we say we'd spend the New Year back home? If we stay at the old home for a few days, it will be convenient for Juanzi to visit her family."

This year, after the autumn harvest, Xiao Long was sent to the nursery, leaving Old Mrs. Jia with plenty of free time.

She originally thought since Qin Juan was pregnant, she'd simply take care of her.

Yet there wasn't much Qin Juan needed from her.

As she spoke, an unavoidable trace of sadness crept in.

"People often say fallen leaves return to their roots; the older I get, the more I think of the past. Though times were rough back then, that little courtyard was where we mother and son leaned on each other for over thirty years. We had no choice but to sell the courtyard initially, leaving my heart with a large void, feeling like I had no roots. But to my surprise, after going round and round, the courtyard came back, and I can still live in it thanks to Juanzi."

Jia Liang directly said, "Mom, don't think too much. I'll have people clean up the courtyard and install heating. When we return for the New Year, it'll be warm and cozy."

The courtyard indeed had its years, and after being uninhabited for over two years, it needed a thorough cleanup.

Old Mrs. Jia immediately laughed upon hearing this, "That sounds lovely."

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This winter came earlier than previous ones.

Just into November, the leaves on the trees hadn't completely fallen, yet the temperature suddenly dropped.

During the day, it was still drizzling, but by nightfall, it turned to ice.

Waking up the next morning, the land was covered in white, with a thick layer.

The pomegranate tree branches in the yard were bent out of shape by the accumulated snow.

The branches of the big tree at the entrance were broken.

Qin Yang got up early, first checking the boiler in the boiler room.

With the temperature drop two days ago, Qin Yang had already turned on the heating.

Lin Chuxia feared the cold, and now with the addition of Qi Qi, Qin Yang couldn't bear to let the mother and daughter suffer in the cold.

Worried it might be too early to buy coal, last winter he deliberately bought an extra ton, stored in a corner of the yard, conveniently ready for use now.

He stoked the boiler and cleaned the snow in the yard, then hurried to work after breakfast.

The snow at the office also required clearing, and there were many trees in the office yard that needed quick attention.

Before leaving, Qin Yang reminded Lin Chuxia that the bad weather meant she shouldn't go out.

Lin Chuxia agreed but didn't take it to heart.

Though it snowed heavily overnight, today had cleared up, with the sun rising early.

She heard from the weather forecast last night that the temperature wasn't too low, so presumably, the snow would melt away soon.

Zhuang Jingshu held the child while standing by the window, watching the snow water dripping from the eaves.

"They say a bountiful year follows a heavy snow, but such a snow might bring trouble to the people."

"Who doesn't say so? I took a walk outside just now, and quite a few trees in our residential compound were broken. This is the city; thinking of timing, winter cabbage might not be harvested yet in the fields, and if tonight gets too cold, freezing might ruin the cabbage cores, making it a hassle to eat them this year. Besides, radishes and sweet potatoes might also be in hurried harvest by the farmers these days."