

## Switched M 71

Chapter 71 Pretending to Be Rich by Swelling One's Face

Li Guangyuan smiled, "That serious?" But in his heart, he felt differently.

Lin Jiayi didn't explain further. Even if Qin Yang didn't find another woman outside and bring a son back for her to raise, what was the difference?

Right now, she was just hoping that Lin Chuxia would come back to her mother's house today too. As much as she envied Lin Chuxia in her past life, she wanted Lin Chuxia to envy her that much in this life.

As they were talking, the pleasant sound of a bicycle bell came from ahead, and they saw Li Ergou riding a brand-new bicycle, turning onto the path from the side road.

He greeted them enthusiastically, "Guang Yuan bro, sister-in-law, are you heading out?"

Li Guangyuan laughed in response, while Lin Jiayi's eyes fell on the brand-new bicycle.

"You bought this new bike?"

"Yeah," Li Ergou said with a smile, "My mom found me a wife, and the other party insisted on having a new bicycle as a bridal gift. Thanks to Guang Yuan buying our family's bike, otherwise we really wouldn't have had enough money to buy a new one."

"Why mention all this, we are brothers after all," Li Guangyuan smiled honestly.

Lin Jiayi's eyes nearly popped out. So this was Li Guangyuan spending her dowry money to play the good guy?

Once the person had left, Lin Jiayi pinched Li Guangyuan hard, "Is that your reason for buying Li Ergou's family's bike?"

Li Guangyuan sucked in a breath from the pain, "Wife, what are you saying? I bought the bike mainly for doing business. Li Ergou's family happened to be selling a bike, so I bought it. Don't worry, I will definitely put your affairs first. Helping Li Ergou was just a favor along the way."

"You better understand," Lin Jiayi snorted coldly.

Li Guangyuan gave a few embarrassed laughs, a glint in his eyes.

Xiaoqingshan Village is right next to Daqing Mountain Village. The two of them went to the supply and sales cooperative to buy gifts, and in no time, they arrived at the Lin Family.

Upon seeing her eldest daughter return, Mother Lin's face lit up with a smile. She called her son to make tea and pour water, ushering the two into the house.

Lin Jiayi glanced around the room and asked, "Has the second sister not come back yet?"

Mother Lin replied indifferently, "Who knows if she'll come back? Your brother-in-law is not at home, why would she come back alone?"

"Regardless of whether her husband is home or not, she should come to see mom and dad. Mom and dad raised her and found her such a good family. The second sister is sensible, she will surely come to see you."

Mother Lin pushed a washed pear into her daughter's hand, "If she were half as sensible as you, I would be satisfied. You don't know, Lanlan has found a job in the city, earning a salary now. I should never have let the second daughter marry off so early, if only she could find a job too, it would have helped the household."

Sun Lanlan and Lin Chuxia were about the same age; really, nothing is more frustrating than comparing people.

Lin Jiayi lived in the neighboring village and had also heard that Sun Lanlan and her third brother found jobs in the city.

Although her thoughts were similar to her mother's, nothing could be done about it now.

However, compared to working a job and contributing income to the family, she would rather Lin Chuxia marry Qin Yang and live a widow's life.

"Second daughter doesn't have that kind of ability, even if she stayed at home, she wouldn't be able to find a job like Sun Lanlan. Mom, just don't count on her. Speaking of Guang Yuan, his business is picking up now, with earnings every day. Once I have money, I'll make sure mom lives a comfortable life."

Upon hearing this, Mother Lin's face beamed with pride, "I knew my love for you wasn't in vain."

Around noon, a figure entered the courtyard; it was Lin Chuxia.

"When did the second sister learn to ride a bike?"

Her gaze fell on the bicycle, noting that it was even older than theirs, and she instantly felt a sense of equilibrium.

Seeing the net bag on Lin Chuxia's handlebars, she lifted the corners of her lips in a sneer, "We're all family here, no need to put on airs. With your household's means, it must not have been easy to scrape together even this much, right? Especially with Qin Yang not at home, even if you don't come back for Mid-Autumn Festival, mom won't quarrel with you for anything."

In her past life, the family income was all controlled by the old lady; even if she was in charge of her own expenses, she still had to ask the old lady for money.

Lin Chuxia looked at her dispassionately: "From the sound of it, big sister is living quite comfortably?"

Lin Jiayi had been waiting for her to ask this question, holding her head high with pride, "It's decent. When it comes to marriage, the most important thing is how much the man cares for you. Take our Guang Yuan, he listens to everything I say, and we have full control over our money. Getting what we want is just a matter of saying the word."

Then, she laughed at Lin Chuxia, "If you ever run into trouble, just tell me, and your brother-in-law and I will definitely help you."

She deliberately emphasized the words "brother-in-law" heavily; with Li Guangyuan's current success, she had already tasted the flavor of victory.

Lin Chuxia handed the net bag over to Lin Jiadong, as if she hadn't caught the insinuation in her words, simply saying, "I wouldn't need big sister and brother-in-law to worry about me. Little brother is grown up, big sister should really help out at home more, to not let mom's efforts in arranging your good marriage go to waste."

She didn't say "found" but intentionally said "arranged," which immediately soured Lin Jiayi's mood, "Arranged? I was always going to marry Guang Yuan."

Seeing the two bring up this topic again, Mother Lin spoke with a cold face, "Enough, let's all go inside. Guang Yuan, you should head back early, don't keep your folks waiting."

Lin Chuxia arrived precisely at mealtime; she couldn't cut ties with her family, nor did she want to waste too much time at home.

At the dinner table, Mother Lin mentioned Sun Lanlan getting a job, and Lin Chuxia tuned it out, just focusing on her meal.

But when Lin Jiayi spoke of Li Guangyuan's business selling vegetables, Lin Chuxia was mildly surprised.

"We might be just a small-scale vegetable business, but don't underestimate it. We earn a good few bucks each day, which is much better than just farming," said Lin Jiayi with pride, glancing at Lin Chuxia, "I know you don't have much say in the Qin Family, and Qin Yang's salary doesn't end up in your hands. But don't worry, once your brother-in-law and I expand our business, we'll find something for you to do. We'll give you a leg up and won't let you suffer too much. Just don't complain about the work when the time comes."

Lin Chuxia saw the malice in her eyes and could guess what she was thinking.

She merely wanted to drag her down into the dirt.

Chuxia chuckled lightly, "I appreciate the thought, big sister, but I'm doing quite well in the Qin Family. There's no need for you to be concerned."

She hadn't expected Li Guangyuan to end up on this path in this life as well; it seems that earning power was indeed more tangible than any other.

Of course, she knew Lin Jiayi's financial support was inseparable from leading Guang Yuan down this path.

Li Guangyuan was not someone easily persuaded.

Outwardly honest and simple, but inwardly meticulous, stubborn, and calculated.

From childhood to adulthood, he was constantly engaged in a battle of wits with his mother and sisters, hardly ever speaking a sincere word.

After the meal, Mother Lin busied herself with packing things up for Lin Jiayi.

"These pears might look small, but they're sweet. I got them from Uncle Sun's family. Xiaoqingshan Village doesn't have any fruit trees, take these back for a taste."

Lin Jiayi looked at the small pears with some disdain, "Aren't there any bigger ones?"

"Bigger ones would cost money! If I hadn't asked, they wouldn't have been willing to give any of these away."

Lin Jiayi then turned to Lin Chuxia, her mouth curling into a smile, "Aren't you going to pack some for your second sister?"

The large bag was obviously all packed for herself.

## Chapter 72: Feigned Affection

Mother Lin's hand paused for a moment as she glanced at Lin Chuxia before turning back to her selective sorting. "The Qin Family is well-off; they won't miss a little bit. I won't send things with her; this way, she won't have trouble carrying it all by herself over the long journey."

Lin Jiayi spoke with a trace of pity, "That's true. Speaking of which, Chuxia's days at the Qin Family haven't been as good as we thought. You're still wearing old clothes. Hasn't Qin Yang sent you any money for new clothes?"

As she said this, she even tugged at the hem of her own clothes, the implication clear as day.

"Speaking of it, since Qin Yang is not at home, I as the elder sister should take care of you. But as you see, Guang Yuan has just started his business, and all the money is tied up in that. I really want to help, but my hands are tied."

Mother Lin packed the bag and swept her gaze over her two daughters, "Why talk about all this? Everyone has their own fate; just focus on living your own life well. Who has time to worry about everyone else?"

Lin Jiayi, however, said, "Mom, Chuxia is still my sister after all. I do wish for her to have a good life. When I arranged her marriage to Qin Yang, wasn't it for her to have better days?"

Lin Chuxia was finished with her meal and had intended to leave, but Lin Jiayi insisted on dragging her into conversation.

Hearing her insincere words, Chuxia couldn't help but laugh.

Her elder sister truly hadn't gained any more sense, not even after being given a second chance to relive life.

"Big sister, if you really want to take care of me, it's easy," said Lin Chuxia all of a sudden.

"What?" Lin Jiayi instinctively lifted her head.

Lin Chuxia glanced at Li Guangyuan, who was speaking with Mr. Lin, "Mom was worried about me having trouble carrying things back by myself, right? Why not have your husband give me a ride?"

The few people weren't far apart, and Li Guangyuan, upon hearing this, readily agreed, "Sure, I'll take Chuxia back first, then come back..."

"No," Lin Jiayi sharply interrupted before Li Guangyuan could finish, "Lin Chuxia, have you no shame? To actually suggest getting a ride from your brother-in-law."

Lin Chuxia looked at her innocently, and Li Guangyuan also frowned slightly, "Jiayi, what's the harm in that?"

"I said no, and that's final. Lin Chuxia, if you want to leave, then go now. Nobody in this household is stopping you. Don't create any drama."

She would never allow Lin Chuxia and Li Guangyuan to be alone together.

Li Guangyuan truly didn't understand Lin Jiayi's overreaction and wanted to apologize to Lin Chuxia. Mother Lin interrupted, "Enough, if you're leaving then go quickly. You come back just to cause trouble; this household owes you nothing. Stay away if there's nothing important."

"I know," Chuxia indeed didn't care to return to this house.

Pushing her bicycle, she had just reached the gate when a person hurried in.

Aunt Sun came in carrying a basket of pears and seeing Lin Chuxia, she spoke up loudly, "Are you leaving? I'm glad I caught you in time. I heard you were visiting your parents, so I had your uncle pick a basket of pears for you to take back."

"Aunt Sun, there's no need," those pears in the basket were large and top-quality that could be sold for a good price.

"You child, just take them if I'm giving them to you, no need to be so polite with your aunt," said Aunt Sun without a second thought. She took the net bag that was hanging on the back of the bicycle seat and started filling it with pears. She filled it to the brim and, seeing that it might not hold up, directed Lin Jiadong, "Jiadong, get your sister some string to tie it up, wouldn't taste as good if they fall and get bruised."

"Okay," Lin Jiadong quickly found some string and secured the pears for Lin Chuxia.

Throughout this, nobody regarded the displeased expressions on Mother Lin and Lin Jiayi's faces.

After Aunt Sun left, Lin Jiayi snorted coldly, "Aunt Sun treats you really well, one might think she's your mother by the way she acts."

"Are you saying that mom is not as good to me as an outsider?" Chuxia looked to Mother Lin, "Mom, Jiayi didn't mean it, please don't take it to heart. I'm leaving now, no need to see me out."

Jiayi was stunned, "Mom, that's not what I meant."

Mother Lin was fuming and didn't know who to be angry with. Watching Chuxia take away such a big bag of pears made her even more upset.

She turned to her son and shouted, "When I told you to find a rope, you just found one? How many ropes do we have at home for her to take? She comes back once and hauls stuff to her in-laws, your eldest sister took so much pastries and wine, and I only gave her some pears to take back, what did she take?"

Jiadong scratched his head, puzzled, "Second sister took pastries and wine too. I saw it, she didn't take less than the eldest sister."



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Chuxia went straight back to the Bun Shop, where it was just starting to quiet down. Su Wensong was there too, working with Sun Bingnan to check the remaining stock of ingredients in the shop and recording what needed to be prepared for tomorrow.

Granny Sun and Ma Yingzi were making buns, as the shop would have another rush when the train arrives in the afternoon.

Chuxia placed the pears she brought back on the table and invited everyone to eat.

Everyone stopped their work to join the bustle, except for Lanlan, who was slumped over the counter, listless.

This was unlike Lanlan's character.

Chuxia gave Sun Bingnan a look, asking what was wrong with her.

Sun Bingnan had a clueless expression as if he just realized his sister was acting strange.

Seeing that he was of no help, Chuxia personally took a pear and asked Lanlan.

Lanlan took the pear and responded lifelessly that it was nothing.

"You don't look like it's nothing. Is it that time of the month? If you're not feeling well, go home and rest," Chuxia wasn't harsh with her sisters, as girls have those few days every month.

"Really, it's nothing, I just want to be alone for a while."

Then Granny Sun, holding two freshly washed pears, handed one, a larger one, to Chuxia, her face beaming with joy.

Chuxia had noticed earlier that Granny Sun was particularly happy today, her face almost blooming with smiles.

"Granny, have you encountered something delightful? You look so happy that even the wrinkles on your face have multiplied."

Granny Sun was plump, an uncommon sight these days. Because she was overweight, she had fewer wrinkles compared to others her age.

Granny Sun touched the corners of her eyes, unusually not arguing with Chuxia.

"You guessed right, indeed there's some good news. It's quite unfortunate today, Boss Lin, that you were not in the shop, otherwise I would have insisted you help me with your good counsel."

Chuxia got interested, "What happened?"

"It's my son, Sun Hao, whom you know. He came to the shop to eat today, and he didn't come alone but brought a female colleague. This lad is already in his twenties and hasn't found a partner, I was starting to think he didn't care about finding a wife. Today he brings his female colleague to eat and secretly asks me what I think. It's the first time I've seen my boy like this, tsk tsk tsk... It's really something."

Chuxia glanced at Lanlan and understood why she was feeling down.

She couldn't help but ask, "Is Sun Hao dating a girlfriend? Granny, what do you think about her?"

"Isn't that so? This boy was so secretive, I only found out after asking that they've been dating for a few months, and he brought her to me because he wants me to start arranging the marriage. She seems okay to me, not as pretty as Boss Lin, but more than enough for my son. They are both in the police force, and you know how people say nowadays, it's important to have common interests. The only question is how well they will get along in the long run."

Chapter 73: Mid-Autumn

Granny Sun laughed until her eyebrows disappeared, "You don't know what that kid told me, saying that's the girl he likes, whether I like her or not, I must respect his choice. They aren't even married yet and he's already schooling me."

Turns out they've been dating for several months. Lin Chuxia secretly sighed, it seemed her best friend was doomed to be disappointed.

It's also a good thing she didn't impulsively bring it up with Granny Sun.

She smiled and said, "Since Sun Hao thinks she's good, she must be alright. Now people value free love. Granny, you don't have to worry too much."

"You're right about that. I'll go back and discuss with his dad when the parents from both sides can meet and set this thing straight. Sun Hao is not getting any younger either; him getting married would take a load off my mind."

"Then, I'd like to congratulate Granny in advance."

After Granny Sun left, Sun Lanlan gave Lin Chuxia a resentful glance.

Lin Chuxia patted her shoulder, "Lean on my shoulder for a bit. If it really doesn't work out, shall we head back to our courtyard and find a quiet place to cry?"

Sun Lanlan slapped her hand away irritably, "Cut it out, I just feel a bit out of luck. It's not easy to find someone I like, and turns out he's already taken, but I'm not about to wail about it."

"That's a relief," Lin Chuxia consoled, "There is plenty of fish in the sea. Don't worry, as sisters, we'll look for a smart, capable, and handsome guy for you."

Sun Lanlan couldn't help but laugh, "Then I'm counting on you."

"No problem," Lin Chuxia handed her the pear, "Have a pear, this is from Aunt Sun."

"Now that you mention it, it looked familiar. You know, despite having fruit trees at home, I've never eaten a pear this good in my life. I got lucky thanks to you today."

The bigger pears are all sold for money, they just eat the ones with wormholes or pecked by birds.

"Aunt Sun gave me pears, and that's also because of your face."

"Don't overestimate me, I don't have that much influence."

With a change of topic, Sun Lanlan felt much better too.

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On Mid-Autumn Festival, the Bun Shop closed early, not only giving everyone a half-day holiday but also providing cooked food as a holiday benefit.

Each employee at the Bun Shop was thrilled.

These days, celebrating a festival just meant weighing some raw meat. Only those who could afford it would buy cooked food.

They each received at least two pounds. Taking that home was way better than a two-dollar bonus.

Especially Granny Sun, her spine straightened carrying two pounds of cooked food.

Lin Chuxia also picked up a bagful of cooked food and then personally went to pick up Old Master He.

Old Master He said he didn't want to trouble her, but he had already changed into a new set of clothes.

Lin Chuxia didn't expose him and helped him onto the cart.

Though the Qin Family had split, they still celebrated holidays together. With Qin Yang not at home, it'd be too lonely for Lin Chuxia to celebrate alone.

Brother Qin and his wife also came back from the fields early today. When Lin Chuxia and Old Master He arrived, the family was getting ready for the reunion dinner.

The family knew in advance that Lin Chuxia would bring her mentor home to celebrate together, so they warmly greeted him when he arrived.

Little Zhuangzhuang, with his curious wide-eyed look, crowded in front and chattered non-stop, "What is Auntie's master to Auntie? Who is my master? What do I call Auntie's master? Do I call him 'Auntie's Master' or 'Master Auntie'?"

Mr. Qin, stroking his grandson's head, smiled and said, "You don't have a master. Your Auntie's master is her elder. You should call your Auntie's master 'Grandpa,' Grandpa He."

Little Zhuangzhuang understood and nodded seriously, then tilted his little head up and shouted to Old Master He, "Hello, Grandpa He."

Seeing the Qin Family's enthusiastic welcome, Old Master He was slightly at a loss, but more than that, he was touched.

He fished a red envelope out of his pocket and handed it to Little Zhuangzhuang, "Good child, this is Grandpa's gift for meeting you, take it."

Little Zhuangzhuang glanced at Zhang Guilan and didn't dare to accept it until Lin Chuxia spoke up, "Take it, it's from Grandpa He."

Then the little guy took the red envelope and earnestly expressed his thanks.

After getting acquainted with the Qin Family, Old Master He and Mr. Qin sat down in the living room for a casual chat, while Lin Chuxia went to the kitchen to help Mrs. Qin and her sister-in-law prepare the reunion dinner.

In no time, a table full of sumptuous dishes was ready, and Qin Han had even specially fetched some wine.

Old Master He could drink a little, and though Mr. Qin's health didn't allow him to drink, he was still longing for wine.

Qin Han grabbed a glass and offered to drink with Old Master He, while Mr. Qin watched eagerly and negotiated with his eldest son, "It's Brother He's first visit to our house, I should drink a little with Brother He to make sure he enjoys his time."

Qin Han saw through Mr. Qin's intentions instantly, "I'll accompany Uncle He with a few extra glasses, don't worry, I'll make sure Uncle He enjoys his drink."

Lin Chuxia also didn't dare to let Mr. Qin drink alcohol, so she picked up a wine glass and said, "I'll join Brother Qin in drinking with my master, and you just enjoy the food."

Mr. Qin twisted his fingers and smacked his lips, clearly craving the wine.

Seeing this, Old Master He spoke up, "Pour half a glass for your dad to satisfy his craving."

Qin Han, worried that Old Master He might not be aware of his father's condition, briefly explained.

Old Master He waved his hand nonchalantly, "Half a glass won't do any harm, trust me."

Lin Chuxia gave Qin Han a meaningful look and filled half a glass of wine for Mr. Qin.

She wasn't sure about her master's medical skill, but from Granny Su's words, it was clear that her master was once a renowned doctor.

Since the master had given his word, half a glass of wine for father-in-law would surely be fine.

Mr. Qin was very happy to finally have his long-craved wine, and there was joy and harmony around the dinner table, with both guests and hosts having a great time.

After the meal, Lin Chuxia and Zhang Guilan cleaned up the table, and then Old Master He began to inquire about Mr. Qin's illness.

He hadn't intended to practice medicine anymore, but the Qin Family's warm welcome and the sense of familial warmth they provided made Old Master He want to do something for them.

He wasn't good at other things, but he was well-versed in medicine.

Mr. Qin had also learned from Lin Chuxia that Old Master He was a senior in traditional Chinese medicine, and did not conceal his condition when discussing.

"In my youth, I was left with an ailment that has been on and off ever since. But lately, my second son's wife got me some medicine from the hospital, and it has been very effective. I feel much lighter, and my old problems have lessened."

Old Master He nodded his head, seeing that Mr. Qin's complexion didn't look like that of someone with a serious illness, but to be cautious, he still checked his pulse.

When he felt the pulse, however, he couldn't help but frown.

After checking both hands, his frown deepened.

Judging by Mr. Qin's pulse, he wasn't destined for a long life, and his later years were likely to be plagued with sickness.

And yet, it seemed like he had been taken care of, likely by a traditional Chinese doctor. But when you look around, not just in Ancheng County, but across the entire Shanhe Province, the capable old Chinese medicine practitioners could be counted on one hand.

"Did you say that you've been taking the medicine prepared by Chuxia recently? Could I see the medicine you've been taking?"

There was nothing to hide, so Mr. Qin asked Mrs. Qin to bring the medicine.

After Lin Chuxia had finished cleaning up and returned to the room, she saw Old He studying Mr. Qin's medicine and couldn't help but feel a twitch in her eyelid.

#### Chapter 74: Give Him a Surprise

"Master, is there a problem with my dad's medicine? This was all prescribed by the best doctors at the county hospital. My dad said it's been quite effective and he hasn't had a recurrence of his chronic illness lately."

Old Sir He lifted his head to look at her.

Lin Chuxia blinked guiltily, as she was thinking of how to gloss over the issue, Old Sir He rewrapped the medicine package, "The medicine is good, keep taking it. You could also use some Chinese medicine for conditioning. If you're interested in that, I can write you a prescription later."

Lin Chuxia let out a sigh of relief and smiled, "That's great. If you could write a prescription, I'll get the medicine according to it later."

Old Sir He looked at her intently, "No hurry, you can come to my place to get the prescription tomorrow."

For some reason, Lin Chuxia felt that there was more to his words.

After dinner and a chat, it was getting late. Mrs. Qin asked Qin Han to take Old Master He back home.



The family watched Old Master He leave, and Lin Chuxia gazed at the moon above, seemingly in a trance. It seemed like a long time since she had seen such a beautiful moon.

Mrs. Qin, thinking she was preoccupied, sighed, "It would be nice if Yangyang was home," on such a Mid-Autumn Festival when families reunite, yet the two of them were still apart.

Lin Chuxia came back to her senses and smiled at Mrs. Qin, "Qin Yang has a special job, and he is very responsible, so he can't come back easily. Don't worry, we write to each other often. I'm thinking of visiting him for his birthday at the end of this month."

Upon hearing this, Mrs. Qin's face brightened with joy, "You're going to see Yangyang? That's good, it's the same whether he comes back or you go there. I haven't celebrated Yangyang's birthday for many years. It's the first year of your marriage, if you could celebrate his birthday with him, he'd definitely be happy."

Can a mother not know her own son?

She claims she doesn't need a daughter-in-law, but after finally getting one, his reluctant gaze when leaving home said it all. God knows what he's been thinking for these past months at work.

"Mom, keep this a secret, let's not tell Qin Yang. I'll surprise him when the time comes."

Mrs. Qin clapped her hands and laughed, "Okay, I won't tell him," how could she possibly spoil it when her daughter-in-law holds her son so dear.

Although it was Mid-Autumn Festival today, Mrs. Qin had a knot in her heart the whole day, which now had finally been untied.

Urging Lin Chuxia to go back to sleep, she happily went to her room to speak with her husband.

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A few days after Mid-Autumn Festival, a meat grinder was delivered from the machinery factory.

This machine was manufactured according to the blueprints provided by Lin Chuxia, yet with some differences.

"Our director said to let you try it first to see if there's anything lacking, and we'll make improvements based on your feedback," the young master who delivered the machine told Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia inspected the structure of the machine; her blueprints had been very basic, and there were indeed many improvements to the machine.

"Third Brother, get some fresh meat. Brother Su, power up the machine."

Su Wensong, Sun Bingnan, and Pang Yongli gathered around when the machine was being moved in.

Currently, the stuffing for the cooked food and buns in the shop depended on these three men. Hearing that it was an electric meat grinder, all three of them were filled with anticipation.

At Lin Chuxia's command, Sun Bingnan loudly acknowledged and went to the back kitchen to fetch a large piece of pork belly with a mix of fat and lean meat.

Su Wensong placed the machine near the power outlet and plugged it in.

The pork belly was skinned and cut into smaller pieces, then after powering on the machine, directly fed into the funnel.

As the motor spun, the minced meat came out from the bottom of the machine.

"This is great, this really is fantastic."

Sun Bingnan's joy was evident in his expression. He had grown tired of chopping meat recently.

Not only was the work tiring and monotonous, but with a meat grinder, he would be relieved, and the shop's operations would greatly reduce.

Lin Chuxia picked up a piece of the minced meat with chopsticks for inspection and then stood up straight to address the young master, "The machine is fine; we'll keep this one. Please tell Director Xu to rush the remaining two as fast as possible."

"Sure, I will relay the message to Director Xu."

With the meat grinder, the work in the shop became much easier.

After the Mid-Autumn Festival, their cooked food business had already made a name for itself. Many people were committed to buying from Qin's Cooked Food, even if it meant cycling several kilometers. The demand for varieties of cooked food was increasing, so Lin Chuxia decided to add soy-sauce beef and smoked chicken to the offerings.

The soy-sauce beef raw material was easy to source; the meat market under the meat union not only provided pork but also beef and lamb.

However, since the smoked chicken required whole chickens, Lin Chuxia decided to visit a chicken farm near Ancheng County.

This task was assigned to Sun Bingnan.

Sun Bingnan was familiar with Ancheng County, and he was also sharp-witted. Allowing him to negotiate this matter was also a test Lin Chuxia set for him.

Her requirements were clear: a stable long-term partnership with guaranteed quality and quantity of whole chickens, and importantly, they had to provide processed white-cut chickens.

Most of the whole chickens sold in the city were live chickens. If they had to process them themselves, that would be too laborious and occupy too much manpower.

Sun Bingnan took this matter seriously. Having been in charge of procurement for the Bun Shop for a long time, other shop operations were always handled by Lin Chuxia and Su Wensong.

Now, it was finally his turn to be involved, and he wanted to show his capabilities to Lin Chuxia.

In less than three days, he had visited several chicken farms around Ancheng County and ultimately fixed on one with a medium-sized individual operation.

At this time, individual businesses were competing with state enterprises for a living. To get ahead, they needed to tackle the details and undertake tasks that others looked down upon.

With that in mind, this farm was quite in line with Lin Chuxia's requirements.

Lin Chuxia went to check it out personally and was rather satisfied. After negotiations, both parties signed a contract.

When Lin Chuxia brought out the contract, the other party hesitated for a moment, since at that time contracts were not commonly used as a form of agreement, and signing a contract felt like signing away one's livelihood.

Lin Chuxia's contract was very explicit, not only binding the chicken farm to provide qualified products on time but also binding her to not refuse the products provided by the chicken farm without good reason.

Once she explained this, the chicken farm owner had an epiphany.

They were providing white-cut chickens, not live chickens. If the other party went back on the deal due to poor business, dead chickens cannot be brought back to life.

Then it dawned on him that the contract was very necessary.

"Boss Lin has really thought things through. Rest assured, we'll abide by the requirements of the contract and will not delay your business."

"It's because I trust Boss Shi that we can reach this cooperation," Lin Chuxia replied.

Once a contract is signed, she can trust anyone. If the other party breaches the contract, they will compensate according to the terms. What does trust or distrust matter then?

After signing the contract, Lin Chuxia asked Sun Bingnan to return to the Bun Shop, and she herself went to the machinery factory.

#### Chapter 75: Technology Changes Life

The three meat grinders agreed upon have been completed, the other two are ready for her to pick up.

Lin Chuxia went straight to Xu Changping's office, and Xu Changping was also waiting for her.

Upon her arrival, he pointed to the two machines on the ground for her to inspect.

"During the production process, some details were improved. Can you tell the difference from the previous one? These two have greater horsepower and almost don't require cutting for whole pieces of meat."

Lin Chuxia squatted down to take a look, indeed they were impressive.

Turning her head, she asked him, "How many models has the machinery factory produced?"

Xu Changping laughed softly, a glint of admiration and somewhat helplessness in his eyes, "This is what it's like talking to a smart person, can't even take a little advantage."

He personally poured a cup of water for Lin Chuxia, "So far, we have produced three models. The one previously given to you was the most basic, these two are upgraded and enhanced versions, and there is another model in between, able to meet different needs."

Lin Chuxia took the water and smiled, "Director Xu, if you were in the market, you would definitely make a mark."

"There's no way out, market economy, everyone has to cater to the market, including our state-owned enterprises. I've seen a lot on business trips and learned a lot, especially those people in the south, really clever. I guess this is also applying what I've learned."

If this were in the past, such machines would only have one model, for the convenience of the workers.

As for the needs of the users, that was secondary.

The principle back then was to use whatever was available, now it's about producing whatever others are using, which really fits the saying, serving the people.

Xu Changping glanced at Lin Chuxia again, acknowledging that this girl really had a smart mind with unique perspectives.

"The blueprint you provided to the machinery factory was exchanged for only three meat grinders, making us the ones who benefited. Should you need anything in the future, just speak up. As long as it's possible on our side, we will definitely do our best."

Xu Changping seriously made a promise.

It's not that he actually felt he owed Lin Chuxia anything, exchanging a blueprint for three meat grinders was a mutually agreed deal, but now giving a small favor could win him a person.

A small bun shop owner like Xu Changping surely wouldn't care much, but Lin Chuxia as a person was someone he couldn't ignore.

Lin Chuxia was naturally willing to accept this favor and quickly expressed her gratitude.

When she pulled the two meat grinders back to the bun shop, not only Sun Bingnan, but also Su Wensong and Pang Yongli all had smiles on their faces.

The previous meat grinder was already being used at the bun shop, and the meat needed for stuffing sausages in the small courtyard was also prepared here and then taken there.

Their workload was greatly reduced, and they had much more time.

"It's got to be electric," Su Wensong remarked.

"Of course, technology changes life!" said Lin Chuxia.

The method for making braised chicken wasn't much different from cooked meats, and Su Wensong was quick to grasp it, guiding through it a couple of times until he could handle it alone.

The first pot of braised chicken came out, and Lin Chuxia took one intending to deliver it to Old Sir He.

She rarely stayed to work at the bun shop these days and hadn't seen her master for several days.

However, as soon as she saw Old Sir He, she regretted it.

She had thought that the incident with Mr. Qin and the medicine at the Qin Family had long passed, but it turned out that Old Sir He had still been dwelling on it.

At that moment, just the two of them at home, Old Sir He questioned her again.

Lin Chuxia opened the still-hot braised chicken, tore off a chicken leg, hoping to stop Old Sir He's questioning.

"Master, try this. This is the first chicken from our shop's first pot of braised chicken. I hurried to bring it to you as soon as it was cooked. Am I filial?" Let her filial piety count for something and drop the subject.

Old Sir He was clearly not swayed by this gesture, took a bite from the chicken leg, and just looked at her, waiting for her reply.

Lin Chuxia gave up and blurted out, "Master, didn't you see everything? It was just some medicine prescribed by the hospital."

"Which hospital?" Old Sir He huffed, "I'd really like to see which hospital prescribes vitamin pills that supposedly cure all diseases."

That day, he had not exposed her, feeling that as a junior, whatever her intentions, it was meant kindly towards her elders.

But his curiosity remained strong; if not for those medicines, who exactly was treating Mr. Qin's health?

His technique seemed like that of traditional Chinese medicine but also not quite.

Hearing Old Sir He even identify the medication, Lin Chuxia unreasonably retorted, "Master, aren't you a practitioner of Chinese medicine?" How could he be so sure those were just vitamin pills?

"Does being a practitioner of Chinese medicine make it easy to fool?"

He was indeed a practitioner of Chinese medicine, but not so oblivious as to not recognize vitamin pills, and sometimes he even prescribed western medicine during diagnosis.

"Alright, alright, hard to fool you, but those medicines really were prescribed by a hospital. My father-in-law has been taking them consistently, maybe it's Grandpa recently being in a good mood that's making him feel better. You might not know, but initially, Qin Yang... that is, my husband, their youngest son,



wasn't planning to get married. Because of this, both his grandparents had heartaches. You're an old physician, you should know, emotions greatly impact one's health."

"I'm not sure whether this old physician knows," he said, seeing that she clearly understood quite well.

Knowing he couldn't get anything more from her, Old Sir He didn't probe further.

Ultimately, the kid meant well for the two elders, he'd let her speak when she was ready.

If she genuinely didn't want to talk about it, there was no point in him pressing further.

Pointing to a box at the end of the bed, he said, "Go open that box, and bring the smaller box inside here."

"There's treasure, Master?" Lin Chuxia changed to a playful and smiling face, climbing up to open the box.

She took the small box inside, as Old Sir He instructed.

Old Sir He personally opened the box, "Since you like to delve into these things, take this book back and read it. I know that even though you've taken me as your master, this is not your passion. But, girl no matter when, having a skill is always an extra protection for yourself. I do not ask you to spend too much effort or to master it extensively, just learn the basics; they could save your life in a crucial time, and you won't be fooled by vitamin pills anymore."

Lin Chuxia saw the medical book Old Sir He pulled out and felt somewhat moved, upon hearing his latter words, she was speechless. Would vitamin pills now become her dark history?

"Master, I will definitely read it well."

The medical book was a bit old, its pages in vertical layout with traditional characters. Having survived such times and still being preserved so well indicated how important this book was to Old Sir He.

"I will transcribe it and then return it to you. Rest assured, I won't damage it."

Lin Chuxia held the medical book in both hands, her expression solemn.

Old Sir He waved his hand, "No need, I'm giving it to you. I should leave something for you since you call me Master. Take also the scrap paper in this box, looking at it hurts my eyes."

Chapter 76: The moon wanes when at full, water overflows when too full.

Upon opening the box, Lin Chuxia immediately noticed its contents—a small stack of at least a dozen handwritten prescriptions.

"Master..." Lin Chuxia didn't know what to say. These items could be considered what Old Sir He cared about the most, and now they were all to be given to her.

Old Sir He frowned, "Lose that look; I'm not dead yet. These things aren't worth much. They're just taking up space at home. Take them with you. If you feel like it, you can take a look. If not, just use them to start a fire when cooking meat. Just hurry up and take them away."

Lin Chuxia chuckled, put the medical books back in the box, and lifted the entire thing, "Then I might really use them to start a fire, Master, you better not feel heartbroken."

"Go on, get out of here. You're starting to be a pain to look at," Old Master He shooed her away.

"Alright then, I'm really going. Don't regret it later, Master. Rest assured, after I stew the meat, I'll bring some over for you to taste. Let's see if the meat cooked with medical books as kindling tastes the same as before."

Lin Chuxia said this as she ran out. As she passed through the doorway, a shoe flew out after her.

Laughter echoed in the courtyard; Old Sir He couldn't help but laugh too as he watched from behind the glass.

Lin Chuxia carried the box back to the office in her small courtyard. She took out the medical books and flipped through them; she couldn't recognize many of the traditional characters, so she simply put them aside.

She then took out the stack of prescriptions and noticed that the papers used were clearly of varying ages.

The lower stack of papers, whether it was the paper itself or the handwriting, clearly had some age to them. The few on top were clean, with clear calligraphy, obviously newly written, and a hint of amusement flickered in her eyes.

Looking at the contents on the papers, the top portion listed the prescriptions, indicating the names and quantities of the herbs used, while the bottom half described the applicable symptoms.

Most were common medicines used in everyday life, with only a few being remedies for treating complicated and miscellaneous diseases.

However, Lin Chuxia carefully noticed that even those common drugs were somewhat different from what she knew.

In her previous life, she had worn herself out and was frail, frequently falling ill and often seeking help from traditional Chinese medicine practitioners.

Being a patient for such a long time, she had become somewhat of an expert. There were a few prescriptions she had used in her previous life, and she clearly remembered that some of the medications were slightly different.

She had never doubted Old Sir He's medical skills. Anyone who could earn praise from Granny Su—Old Sir He's skills were certainly not something an ordinary doctor could compete with.

It's just that these prescriptions had not become known in her previous life. Perhaps with Old Sir He's passing, they also disappeared from history.

Lin Chuxia put the prescriptions and the medical books back in the small box and directly placed the box into the spatial storage.

Perhaps in this life, she would have one more important thing to do.

...

Business at the store was proceeding in an organized manner, and Qin Yang's birthday was approaching. When she found the time, she made a trip to the city.

She planned to open her next Bun Shop in Ancity County, and since Ancheng County was only so big, no matter how delicious her buns were, the market share for two bun shops would be nearly the same.

She had to leave some room for the many small business owners to make a living.

In her previous life, Lin Chuxia had spent her entire life in business and knew the principle of leaving a line when dealing with people and leaving some leeway in actions.

To overflow when full, to spill when brimming with water.

This was also the reason why she wasn't angry when Granny Sun took her spot at the stall.

She didn't have the courage of Bai Juyi to return the remaining wealth to the people, but leaving a portion of the market to her fellow countrymen was still feasible.

She also needed to make a purchase trip to the city.

Ancheng County was indeed a bit small, and there were many things she didn't find appealing.

Once she came back and opened the new branch, there would be New Year's Day, Spring Festival, and various holidays following. According to her usual practice, she needed to plan for the gift-giving aspect of the holidays.

Although her store's scale couldn't compare to the company she owned in her previous life, details determined success or failure. She still needed to foster the necessary interpersonal relationships and carry out the required social exchanges.

Like Li Jian, Wang Cheng, Xu Changping and those people, she had managed to establish some connections. To maintain these relationships, she would need to put in some extra effort.

She had plenty of great stuff in her space, but because it was too good, she rarely found an occasion to use it.

Now, however, this invisible suitcase of a space had its uses.

After arranging the work at the shop, she boarded the bus headed for the city.

The autumn coolness had set in, but buses, these densely packed modes of transport, still reeked of a sour stench. Lin Chuxia arrived early and found a window seat, opened the window for some fresh air, which made her feel much more comfortable.

More people gradually got on.

There are few buses from Ancheng County to the city, just one trip per day, going in the morning and returning in the afternoon.

The bus quickly filled up with people, with many standing in the aisle.

Many passengers were holding large and small bags, and some even carried a pair of live chickens.

The two chickens had their feet and wings tied up, and upon boarding the bus, they began to struggle and squawk incessantly due to the crowdedness.

A young man holding the two chickens looked incredibly embarrassed as he stood in the aisle, hugging the chickens and continuously apologizing to the people next to him.

At this point, everyone on the bus had their fair share of various items, and no one found it strange.

Next to Lin Chuxia sat an old lady around 50, who upon boarding, placed her large bag between the two of them.

Lin Chuxia was slim and did not argue with the older woman, even shifting to the side a bit.

But the old lady, pushing her luck, began to squeeze inwards with the motion of the moving bus.

Unable to tolerate it any longer, Lin Chuxia had no choice but to remind her, "Granny, you can put your bag on the floor."

The old lady gave her a sidelong glance, "My bag contains important stuff. If it gets lost on the floor, will you compensate me?"

"But having it here is affecting others."

"If you're afraid of being squished, just stand. The seats on this bus aren't owned by your family. I'll put my things wherever I like," she retorted, and muttered under her breath, "Young and already so entitled just because you have a seat."

Seeing the old lady's defiant face, Lin Chuxia knew that further talk would be a waste of breath and simply turned her face towards the window.

The bus was on the main road now, and it wouldn't take an hour to reach the city along this road.

At that moment, the old lady next to her spoke up again, "Hey, close the window. What kind of weather is this to have the window open? It's freezing people to death."

Only then did Lin Chuxia notice that the old lady was only wearing a thin coat.

It was already late October, and Lin Chuxia had a sweater under her coat, so she didn't feel cold even with the breeze.

She imitated the old lady's manner and glanced up and down at her, "The bus's windows aren't owned by your family either. If you want to be in charge, come earlier next time and sit by the window yourself."

The old lady glared at her angrily, "It's not you who's freezing," she grumbled, and shrank her neck a bit more as a gust of wind blew by.

Lin Chuxia straightened up the collar of her coat, self-righteously saying, "I'm cold too. But with such a strong smell in the bus, I have to sacrifice my comfort unlike some who think that the whole bus belongs to them as soon as they board, even trying to squeeze into other people's seats."

Someone snickered.

Right, you place your things on someone else's seat, claim that it's not their seat, so the window isn't yours either. Since they're seated by the window, naturally, they'd open it if they wish or close it if they prefer.

The granny's face showed unease, "I've moved my bag, so close the window."

Lin Chuxia did not even look at her, "No need to tell me that. It's not for my sake; I'm doing it so that everyone in the bus can breathe fresh air."

The old lady, having been put in her place and seeing the others around looking on as if watching a show, glowered at Lin Chuxia before tightly wrapping her arms around herself.

The bus moved on, and a few more passengers boarded.

## Chapter 77: Acquaintance

"Move in, everyone move in."

The man shouted as he squeezed into the bus, causing the people he pushed to quietly complain, as he didn't look like a good person.

Not only was he muscular and bald, but he also had a scar on his face.

Lin Chuxia only glanced at him briefly before turning her attention back to the scenery outside the window.

The corn in the fields had been harvested, and now they were busy planting winter wheat.

Her older brother and sister-in-law had been busy tidying up the vegetable garden, planning to plant wheat there too. They had greeted her this morning, telling her not to rush with her farm work, as they would plant the wheat in a few days.

Ever since her family split up, she didn't have to worry about the farm work at all. Usually, Mr. Qin helped her manage it, and when it came to major tasks such as planting and harvesting, Qin Han had it all arranged early.

In her past life, she was completely preoccupied with managing her family's affairs, but in this life, being with the Qin Family, she didn't have to worry about anything, which she was still not quite used to.

By chance, she turned her head and saw that in the crowded bus, a large hand was stealthily reaching towards a teenager's pocket.

The teenager was unaware, carefully holding two chickens by his side.



Lin Chuxia followed the hand, seeing that the man was not tall and somewhat dark and thin. When he got on, everyone's attention was on the big man, not realizing there was another familiar face.

It was the same man who had tried to steal her purse before.

It seemed that his previous attempt had failed, and he was only detained for a month or so for education before he was out again.

Just as Lin Chuxia was about to speak out, she saw one of the chickens the teenager was holding start to poop, and splat, a pile of it landed right on the man's hand.

The man, who initially had an expressionless face as if nothing was wrong, suddenly stiffened, slowly lowered his head to look at his hand.

Whether it was because the chicken had caught a cold, it released a splatter of watery poop all over the man's hand, flowing down his fingers.

"Damn..."

A roar echoed through the bus, startling everyone on board except the driver to look towards the man.

Seeing the chicken poop on his hand, some people felt disgusted, while others looked sympathetically at the teenager.

"You're courting death, bringing a chicken onto the bus without sewing its butt shut, and it shits all over my hand..."

Only then did the teenager realize he had caused trouble. His already pale little face turned even whiter, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I have some paper to wipe it off..."

In his panic, he fumbled in his pocket for paper, but the man grabbed his shoulder, "You think paper can clean this? You should be thankful I'm not making you lick it clean."

With his hand covered in chicken poop, he reached for the teenager's clothes.

The teenager, realizing the man's intention, looked horrified but dared not move.

The people around, although disgusted by the man's behavior, just coldly observed the situation.

At that moment, a pale, delicate hand reached out and grabbed the man's wrist.

The hand looked frail and boneless, yet it stopped the man from moving further.

"Who the hell is meddling—" Before he could finish saying "meddling," the man saw a face that was almost smiling.

He choked on his words, nearly suffocating.

"This comrade, after all, a chicken is just an animal, and you're quite grown up, why lower yourself to argue with an animal and trouble a child?"

Lin Chuxia spoke in an unhurried voice, clear and pleasant, as if reasoning with him, but to the man, it only felt like a slap to his face, his stomach, his whole body aching.

"Yes, yes, you're right. I shouldn't have argued with a child, or even with the chicken."

He gently slapped the chicken on the head.

"You poop around without even knowing to apologize, next time I'll stew and eat you, but I'll let you go this time."

After saying that, he cautiously looked at Lin Chuxia, "You saw, it pooped on my hand and I hit it, are we even now?"

Lin Chuxia glanced at the teenager, "What about how you scared the child?"

The man immediately looked at the boy, "I'm sorry, it's all because of my hot temper. I apologize to you."

The boy had already been frightened by the sudden scene and shook his head blankly, "It's... it's okay."

The man then looked towards Lin Chuxia. Lin Chuxia then let go of his wrist, her gaze threatening, "Stay by the door, and don't let me see you again."

The man of course knew what she was referring to, nodding repeatedly, "Alright, alright, I'll stay by the door."

While walking, he rubbed the wrist that had been grabbed.

He wondered what this woman had eaten to grow up; she looked thin and weak yet had so much strength. Just a moment ago when they were struggling, he almost got his wrist broken by her.

Lin Chuxia glanced outside the window, most of the journey was already covered, and her seat was taken by a lady the moment she stood up.

At this moment, she didn't know what the lady was thinking, looking at her with a face of appeasement, and even reopened the window she had just closed.

"My girl, why don't you sit here? The lady saw you had nowhere to stand when you went out, I just wanted to give you space, didn't mean to take your place."

"You can sit there."

This kind of public bus wasn't comfortable to sit in, she was already tired from sitting for so long.

Seeing the original seat of the lady next to her was still empty, she nodded towards the boy, "Sit here."

The boy hurriedly waved his hands, "I... I don't need to sit."

"If I tell you to sit, just sit. It'll keep these two chickens more behaved, and they won't end up dirtying someone else."

The boy's face turned red with embarrassment, and he sat down timidly.

Upon reaching the city, Lin Chuxia got off the bus right in front of the Department Store, planning to browse around in the Department Store, when a clear voice called from behind.

"Sister!"

Turning around, she saw the boy also got off the bus, holding two chickens, standing properly two meters away, looking cautious but his eyes were bright.

Lin Chuxia smiled slightly, "What is it?"

The boy also smiled, taking a step forward.

"I didn't properly thank you just now, Sister. I really owe a lot to you today, otherwise, I wouldn't know what to do. It's my first time traveling this far. My elder sister got married here, and now she's pregnant. My mom wanted to send her a couple of chickens but didn't have the time, I thought I could handle it but..."

He scratched the back of his head, his face showing a bashful look, and revealing a bit of the boyishness of a big boy.

"You did well, but when you are out alone, you still need to be careful about safety, and also, make sure to keep your money safe, there are a lot of pickpockets around," Lin Chuxia reminded him again.

The boy's expression changed, and he hurriedly checked his pockets where his money still was.

He realized why that man was always squeezing close to him, if it wasn't for him squeezing him, the chickens wouldn't have defecated on his hand. Thinking back, that must have been a thief trying to steal from him.

Then, Sister letting him sit on her spot was also to keep thieves from stealing from him again.

At that moment, he felt even more grateful towards Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia didn't say much else, "Go to your sister's place early, don't dally on the way."

After saying that, she turned and walked towards the Department Store.

"Sister!"

The boy called out to her again, turning around only to see a rosy-cheeked, white-toothed boy with an embarrassed smile, "I'm already eighteen, I'll be attending university next year, I'm not a child."

On the bus, being called a child was one thing, but being told not to dally around?

Wang Tianyu looked at the sister in front of him, who really wasn't much older than him.

Lin Chuxia nodded, "Got it."

Seeing Lin Chuxia walking away again, Wang Tianyu suddenly felt annoyed.

After all that, he had forgotten to tell Sister his name.

## Chapter 78: Looking Down on Someone with Dog's Eyes

Lin Chuxia didn't take what the young man said to heart.

Having lived a lifetime, even though she was only twenty years old, seeing teenagers still felt a bit like looking at children.

The Department Store in the city was indeed much larger than the one in the county, not only with more items but also with a clearly higher grade.

The first floor was for cosmetics and sundry goods, and shoes and hats were sold above the second floor.

Especially in the clothing section, with all kinds of ready-made garments, thin and thick, in stylish designs that obviously came from the south.

Lin Chuxia had dabbled in clothing in her previous life and still had an eye for fashion.

She instantly liked a men's dark grey woolen coat on display, dapper on the model, and figured that it would suit Qin Yang even better than the mannequin.

Just as she wanted to feel the fabric, a salesgirl nearby, tugging her braided hair, piped up.

"Hey hey hey, look but don't touch. If you smudge it, you couldn't afford the damages."

Lin Chuxia didn't expect to encounter such a snobbish attendant in the city. Even her outfit today was not bad, all new clothes she bought last time, albeit a little out of style. Why didn't she even have the right to touch?

"How can I buy without feeling the fabric to check the quality?"

The salesgirl looked her up and down, sneering at the corners of her mouth, "Do you need to feel this fabric? Anyone with eyes can tell it's good material—100% pure wool. Have you heard of it? It's new from the south. Forget it, explaining to you would be pointless. Just this one costs 120 yuan, half a year's salary for some, and you're thinking of buying? Don't speak nonsense and sprain your tongue."

Lin Chuxia didn't know where she gave off the impression that she couldn't afford it. Their Bun Shop, including cooked food, had sales in the hundreds every day, and nearly a hundred in profit. During the Mid-Autumn Festival, it even exceeded that amount.

120 yuan would be just about a day or two's profit for the Bun Shop, so why make it sound like a tall tale.

Not wanting to waste words on this, she reached out to grab the coat for a better look.

The salesgirl immediately panicked as she took action, "Hey, what are you doing? If I say don't touch, why are you still reaching for it? Have you no shame?"

Lin Chuxia's complexion sank, "Are you a sales assistant here?"

"What a stupid question, if I'm not, then are you?"

"Since you're a sales assistant here, you're supposed to serve the customers. Not only do you not assist me, but you're also stopping me from looking at the merchandise. What kind of reasoning is this? And your choice of words, I'm really surprised by the quality of City Department Store's sales staff?"

The sales assistants nearby gathered around upon hearing the commotion, one saying, "You too, if you can't afford it, just don't touch it. We're just looking out for you."

"That's right. Where did this bumpkin come from? Do you think you can just touch the clothes in the Department Store as you please?"

With her colleagues' backup, Tang Lili grew more confident, "Exactly, what's wrong with my attitude? Someone like you deserves this treatment."

She eyed Lin Chuxia's delicate face with malice.

Where did this bumpkin spring from, thinking her good looks could strut in front of her? Clearly, she hadn't the sense to ask who she was dealing with.

Such fine clothes deserve more than just a few glances, let alone being boldly claimed for purchase, as if their worth is less than her own.

Lin Chuxia calmly scanned the three people and stated directly, "Where's your manager? Get your manager here. I want to ask if the City Department Store's business is meant for ordinary folks like us."

"Enough already, who are you trying to scare? Do you think we'll be afraid if you call the manager over?" Tang Lili said, unconcerned as she looked at her fingernails.

"That's right, the manager will still need to determine who's right and who's wrong," another person chimed in, glancing at Tang Lili.

Hearing the mention of calling for the manager, another sales assistant's expression tightened, just about to say something when they noticed two men approaching from afar and their expression suddenly changed.

"What's going on?"

Upon hearing the voice, Lin Chuxia saw two men, one following the other. The man in front appeared to be in his 40s, slightly overweight, with a neatly styled comb-over, clearly a managerial figure.

The other man, shorter and thinner, with a shrewd, calculating face, was the one who had spoken.

"Manager Zhao, Director Yang," the two approaching sales assistants respectfully greeted.



However, the previous sales assistant didn't say a word.

Upon hearing this address, Lin Chuxia immediately understood, "Are the two of you in charge of the store? Good timing. I was just trying to look at this coat when your sales assistant not only stopped me but was also rude. I wanted to see if this is the level of service your store provides."

Manager Zhao frowned slightly upon hearing this, "Is what this comrade says true? What are you three doing gathered here?"

The two newer sales assistants instantly became flustered, "We just heard arguing over here and came to check."

"Yes, we just came to see what was happening."

Manager Zhao then turned his gaze toward Tang Lili, who appeared defiant.

"This cashmere coat is new stock from yesterday. Director Yang instructed us to be extra careful with it, saying that if it gets dirty, it can't be cleaned. She just came up and wanted to touch it—who knows if her hands were clean. I tried to warn her nicely, but now she's the one with the reason."

Lin Chuxia: "Is 'warning nicely' your way of saying not to touch and that touching it means losing face?"

"I already told you not to touch it, but you insisted."

Tang Lili's shrill voice argued back, when, unbeknownst to her, Director Yang approached her and pulled at her.

Only then did Tang Lili shut up unwillingly.

By now, Manager Zhao had also figured out the situation. It was simply a case of the customer's plain clothes leading the sales assistant to assume she couldn't afford the coat and thus stopping her.

Such incidents had happened before when the clothes were kept behind counters, with salespeople refusing to even show items to customers who didn't look serious about buying.

But that was then, and this is now. The market has opened up, and they are not the only Department Store.

With the new mall built next door competing with the Department Store, if it wasn't for the savvy Yang Rui under his supervision, bringing in fashionable clothes, they would have already lost business to the neighboring mall.

While he was constantly trying to increase revenue, his staff were busy driving customers away?

His expression darkened, "I've repeatedly stressed the importance of improving service quality. Is this the improvement you have achieved? How many times have I said that the customer is God, and our goal is to satisfy their needs? Yet here, a customer simply wants to look at a product, and you obstruct and resist. Do you still want your jobs?"

"I..."

Tang Lili tried to say something, but Yang Rui pulled her aside, "Hurry up and apologize to the customer."

Before Tang Lili could apologize, Manager Zhao smiled at Lin Chuxia first, "My apologies, comrade. It was our oversight that affected your shopping experience. Are you interested in this woolen coat?"

Lin Chuxia nodded, giving Manager Zhao an additional look.

Chapter 79: If It Were in the Business World...

In the last life, during the 1990s, numerous state-owned enterprises closed down, yet the City Department Store's business prospered as if nothing had happened. Many private clothing markets could not outperform it. Originally, it was thought that the Department Store had deep foundations, but it turned out they had such a leader.

The woolen coat was indeed nice, 100% cashmere fabric, soft and comfortable to the touch, with a straight and proper cut.

"Please write up the bill for me."

Lin Chuxia then looked toward another lady's woolen coat nearby, likely from the same batch of goods, in burgundy.

Pointed at it, "This one as well, together."

Manager Zhao's eyes lit up as he gestured to the sales clerk

to come over and write up the bill.

Beside them, Tang Lili's eyes were almost popping out.

These two woolen coats were the best clothes that had come in this time, and also the best in the entire Department Store. Especially that lady's woolen coat, she had set her eyes on it the moment it arrived.

And the two woolen coats cost just over two hundred yuan; ordinary workers, saving meticulously for a year, wouldn't be able to save that much money. And this woman is saying she wants them just like that, as if it's nothing?

Seeing that Lin Chuxia had finished writing up the bill but wasn't in a hurry to pay, and was looking at other clothes, she couldn't help but speak out, "Manager Zhao, do you think we should have her pay for the two coats first? Otherwise, if after all this billing, she doesn't have the money, it will have been a waste of effort for nothing."

Lin Chuxia stopped in her tracks and looked toward Manager Zhao, her face calm, "Is it necessary?"

Manager Zhao didn't even glance at Tang Lili, "No need, take your time choosing. This sales clerk is here to serve you specifically. Whenever you're ready, you can pay all at once."

Lin Chuxia revealed a smile, "As expected from a leader with a broad vision, thank you, Manager Zhao."

Someone was serving her specifically, so Lin Chuxia picked out three cashmere sweaters, two for men and one for women, a women's trench coat, and several pairs of pants.

Seeing the shirts, one white, one black, one grey, she got one of each. Qin Yang, with his detached and cold nature, would suit these cool tones.

Altogether, the total had already exceeded 400 yuan. At this point, not just Tang Lili, even Yang Rui beside her was clicking his tongue in astonishment.

Manager Zhao was even less in a hurry to leave.

The woman in front of him was indeed beautiful, but beauty can't be used as currency. Of course, there was one possibility that could be an exception. But judging by the woman's attire and her demeanor, she didn't seem to be that type of person.

There was a sense of ease and confidence in her eyes. A woman like that, if put on the business field...

Manager Zhao snapped back to reality and laughed quietly to himself.

The woman in front of him was at most just over twenty years old. Why would he think that she could do business? It must be because of the recent competition with the store across the way that was driving him crazy.

In the end, Lin Chuxia also bought a few yards of fabric. She didn't know Mr. Qin's and Mrs. Qin's clothing sizes, so this fabric was for them, which they could tailor into coats as winter was approaching, or even cotton-padded clothes.

Passing through the children's clothing section, she saw cute little military uniforms with matching tiny caps, and immediately thought of the plump Zhuangzhuang, without hesitation she asked to have them billed.

When it came to paying, the sales clerk, with a stack of invoices and an abacus, was trembling slightly as he calculated, and the final total was 467 yuan and 30 cents.

Lin Chuxia, after hearing the total, took out a stack of money from her bag and began to count.

That was the inconvenience of this era; the largest denomination was just ten yuan, so counting over four hundred required some time.

She counted out 470 yuan and handed it to the sales clerk, who gulped and was just about to take it when Manager Zhao stepped over.

"You can charge this comrade 460. Additionally, this is my business card. The next time you come to the Department Store for shopping, use my card when you check out for a discount."

Lin Chuxia took the business card from Manager Zhao and looked at it, her almond eyes narrowing slightly as she looked at him. "Is Manager Zhao trying to use his authority for personal gain?"

Manager Zhao's face immediately darkened, and Yang Rui, standing beside him, helped explain, "This is an exclusive discount policy of the Department Store. It's not just for you; any major customer who shops at our Department Store will receive Manager Zhao's business card. With this card, they can enjoy the discounts provided by the building."

Lin Chuxia let out an "Oh" and smiled, "It appears I misunderstood. However, Manager Zhao's approach is indeed prone to causing misunderstandings. Wouldn't it be better to create a special card exclusive to the City Department Store to replace the personal business card? This way, it can also serve as a promotion to attract and retain major and potential customers of the Department Store, right?"

Lin Chuxia ended the conversation there and, with her arms full of large and small bags, she turned and left the department store.

A glint of light flashed in Manager Zhao's eyes as he heard this.

Tang Lili looked puzzled and scoffed disdainfully, "Putting on airs. Who knows whose old man's bed she crawled into. Showing off so ostentatiously... mmph..."

Her words were cut off as Yang Rui covered her mouth.

Meeting Manager Zhao's gaze, he offered a sheepish smile, "She's talking nonsense, just nonsense."

Manager Zhao gave the two of them a heavy look, then his gaze settled on Tang Lili and the other two sales assistants.

"You three will not receive your bonuses this month, and Tang Lili will have an additional ten yuan deducted from her salary. If this happens again, pack your things and get out. I'm not running a charity for spoiled princesses here."

Hearing that her bonus was gone and ten yuan would be deducted from her salary, Tang Lili stomped her feet in frustration, but there was nothing she could say with Yang Rui's hand over her mouth.

After Manager Zhao left, Yang Rui pulled Tang Lili into his office.

The other two sales assistants watched the pulling and tugging, then thought of their lost bonuses, their faces turning sour.

"I told you, she has a backer, we don't. We can't afford to back Tang Lili up next time."

If they hadn't known about her affair with Director Yang and wanted to do her a favor, they wouldn't have carelessly lost their bonuses.

On the other side, upon entering the office, Tang Lili immediately started cursing. Yang Rui quickly coaxed her, "My dear little lady, could you please keep your voice down? Do you really think I, Yang Rui, can do whatever I want in the Department Store?"

"Who would have thought today would be so unlucky to run into Manager Zhao? Didn't you say Manager Zhao wouldn't interfere with us?" Tang Lili was visibly indignant.

She only earned thirty-six yuan a month, and losing ten yuan meant she wouldn't make ends meet.

"Just because he doesn't interfere doesn't mean you can slack off at work."

"It was clearly that woman's fault..."

Thinking of that wool coat made Tang Lili's heart bleed, and she moved forward to hug Yang Rui's arm and act coquettishly, "I want a wool coat too. You promised to buy me one."

The soft touch made Yang Rui's heart soften, and he turned to see her pouting lips, leaning down to give her a kiss, "Don't worry, next time I go down south to stock up, I'll get you one, even better than that one."

Now Tang Lili was delighted, and she hugged the man's neck tightly, "You promised, you'll buy it for me next time. Don't use that pregnant wife of yours as an excuse again."

"Don't worry, baby, when have I ever lied to you."

"And once she's given birth, you'll divorce her and marry me."

"I know, I know..."

The man embraced the woman and pressed her directly onto the office desk...

Lin Chuxia left the Department Store, looking for a secluded spot to transfer her purchases into her space.

She had just entered a quiet, narrow alley when she heard the sound of disordered footsteps coming from behind.

## Chapter 80: A Great Humiliation

Quickly, two men trapped her in the middle of the alley, one in front and one behind.

The man in front had a sturdy build, his bald head gleaming under the sunlight.

The man behind had semi-long hair, sporting a ruffian look.

They were the same individuals she had encountered on the public bus.

The bald man sized up Lin Chuxia, focusing especially on the item she was carrying in her hand, revealing a smile, "Didn't expect to catch a big fish. Hand over the stuff and the money on you, otherwise don't blame us for not being polite."

Lin Chuxia glanced over the two men with a calm expression, and puzzlingly asked, "How come I remember there should be another one of you guys? Where is he?"

That man who had gotten chicken dung on his hand was clearly with them, but now he was nowhere to be seen.

"We don't need all three of us to deal with you. Sweetheart, make it sound nicer and leave the stuff and money behind. Maybe Brother can let you off, otherwise don't blame us brothers for being rough. It'd be a pity to damage that pretty face of yours," Bald stepped forward.

"If you don't want to lose your possessions, serve us well instead. Not only will Brother not want your stuff and money, but he'll also give you some cash to spend," the man behind leered as he spoke.

Lin Chuxia glanced at the ground beside her, found a clean spot, and set down the bag in her hand, gently massaging her wrist.



"Did that companion of yours say he knows me?"

Bald licked the corner of his mouth, "So what if he knows you? Let me tell you, this place is ruled by Lord Liang. Even if you know him, if you don't make Lord Liang happy, don't even think about farting."

He then switched to a smiling face, "How about we change the location and you get to know Lord Liang better?"

Lin Chuxia's lips curled slightly, "No need to change places, this spot is just fine, quiet."

The ruffian's eyes immediately lit up, turning to Bald in front, "Brother Liang, never expected this chick to be so flavorful. This place is indeed thrilling. Brother Liang you go first, shall I go over there and keep watch for you?"

Bald didn't expect Lin Chuxia to be so compliant, assuming that a woman unfamiliar with the area would be frightened by them.

Smacking his lips, he laughed while approaching and sizing up the woman in front of him.

Her modest clothing couldn't conceal her graceful figure, her small face even more delicate and water-like, her almond eyes seemingly expressive. He pondered what it might taste like to proceed.

"Beautiful girl, rest assured, your Brother Liang knows best how to be gentle, won't let you suffer..."

As he walked up, his large hand reached out towards her small face, but before he could touch her, his wrist was caught by a pale, delicate hand. Suddenly, the world spun, and after a "thud," he felt a severe pain in his back.

Before he could react, he saw the blue sky, white clouds and a brilliantly radiant face in front of him.

The sequence of events happened too quickly, with Bald lying on the ground, stunned for more than half a minute. The ruffian, hearing the noise and turning his head, had just thought to tease Brother Liang to be gentle, when he saw Brother Liang lying on the ground.

Isn't something off here?

It looked like Brother Liang, who seemed tough, actually enjoyed being underneath?

Before he could understand, Bald angrily jumped up, "You fucking dare to mess with grandpa..." Before he could finish his sentence, his hand pointing at Lin Chuxia was caught again, and another big throw landed him back on the ground.

If he hadn't understood how he ended up on the ground before, this time he definitely felt it firsthand.

Being thrown to the ground twice in a row by a woman completely enraged Bald, who got up recklessly to teach Lin Chuxia a lesson.

On the other side, the ruffian realized it wasn't that Brother Liang enjoyed being under, it was that he was being played by a woman.

Unexpectedly, though the woman looked thin and weak, she was quite decisive in action.

That fist, though small as a bun, deformed Brother Liang's face when it hit, seeming to even knock something loose.

Upon a closer look, it was actually a tooth.

Distracted for a moment, a foot kicked him in the chest, sending him stumbling back several steps, painfully gasping for air.

Lin Chuxia had used a sanda technique from her previous life, and with the nourishment from her body's Spiritual Spring, her strength was substantial, easily crushing the two men single-handedly.

In no time, the two arrogant men were beaten to the ground, clutching their stomachs and groaning in pain.

Lin Chuxia stood up, dusted her hands off, and mimicked their earlier tone, "Hand over all the money you have. If I'm pleased, I might just spare you."

The humiliation, it was utterly disgraceful.

Bald had been around for so long, how could he tolerate such a loss?

He roared and rushed up.

"So, you choose to face the penalty since you refuse the toast?" Lin Chuxia narrowed her eyes and raised her foot, "Bang—"

Bald flew up only to fall back down, "Damn woman..."

"Bang!"

Lin Chuxia followed up with punch after punch landing on his stomach.

"Instead of being decent humans, you choose to be scum, robbing right under your granny's nose."

"Playing games with you? Sure, granny will have a great time with you. Happy or not?"

"Lord Liang, who are you charging at?"

Bald's face twisted in pain, his robust frame curling up—"Granny..."

The punk nearby shivered in fear, shrinking towards the wall trying to make himself less noticeable.

"Clatter," a slight noise as the punk accidentally touched Lin Chuxia's bag.

Lin Chuxia stopped her actions, turned her head to glance at the bag, and then fixed her gaze on the man, "Trying to take my things?"

"No, definitely not," the punk quickly straightened the stuff and stepped back.

Lin Chuxia lifted her foot to walk over; thinking it was his turn to be beaten, the punk completely broke down and screamed, "Houzi, are you just going to watch your brother get beaten? If you don't come out now, your brother is finished."

Lin Chuxia paused her steps, only to see a figure emerge from the mouth of the alley; it was the man who had chicken poop on his hand from the bus.

So he was here after all, just playing lookout at the mouth of the alley?

Lin Chuxia watched him as he took step by step towards her.

This guy seemed cowardly, yet he valued brotherhood enough to share hardships in such a situation?

Then she would oblige him.

But before Lin Chuxia could make a move, the man slid on his knees to the front of Lin Chuxia.

"Comrade, my two brothers were blind and have offended you. I apologize on their behalf. Today, we really didn't do anything bad. We just tried to steal that kid's wallet on the bus, and you caught us red-handed. Right now, we haven't even had food, and we genuinely have no money on us, but rest assured, once we have money, we will surely honor you."

Lin Chuxia scoffed coldly, "When you have money? With ill-gotten gains?"

"No, no, no," the man's head shook like a rattle-drum, ensuring if he said yes now, he would be the next to be beaten.

"From now on, we will rectify and return to the right path, never engaging in petty theft again. I beg you, heroic lady, to give us a chance to reform."