

## Switched M 741

Chapter 741: Even With a Second Life, She Still Can't Measure Up

Old Mrs. Li sat cross-legged on the kang, shaking her head indifferently.

"How would I know where she is? But Dongmei went over, so presumably the two sisters will still send letters back home in the future. You don't need to worry too much. Hongmei can manage well on her own outside, and now that Dongmei joined her, there's nothing to worry about. Both Hongmei and Dongmei have poor judgment, picking unreliable men. Now that they're earning money themselves, they ought to keep their eyes open when choosing men in the future."

After talking about her daughters, Old Mrs. Li looked disdainfully at Li Guangyuan.

"You're no good either, letting a woman control you. Our good home is shattered by that little slut, even my little grandson got lost. Such a woman should've never entered our home. It was her who wanted the divorce back then, and now she wants to come back into the Li Family. It's not that easy. If you listen to me, you'll kick that woman out. Every time I see her, I think of Genbao. If she doesn't bring back my Genbao, she'll never enter our family's door again."

"I'll find you a good match later, let's find a pure maiden to spite that little slut. Then you can have kids with another woman, see if she dares to ignore you. Let her regret it..."

Old Mrs. Li spoke as she wiped away tears.

Li Guangyuan seeing this knew she longed for her grandson again. Her feelings for him were mediocre, but her love for her grandson was genuine.

Thinking of his son frustrated him too, he uttered a sentence and went back to his room.

Today he didn't want to return to the county, he planned to sleep at home for the night, and go back tomorrow morning.

On the other side, after Li Guangyuan left, the Zhang Family continued their persistent pestering. Lin Jiayi had to use every gentle and firm tactic to eventually send them away.

Once the Zhang Family was gone, she sat in front of the vegetable stall, lost in thought.

Lin Jiayi recalled the past life when she had dealings with the Zhang Family, although primarily with Zhang Wenbin.

In that lifetime, Qin Juan didn't divorce and lived with Zhang Wenbin throughout her life.

Their family moved to Yan City early on, Zhang Wenbin was highly valued by his superiors and was promoted to a section chief at a young age.

Though it was just a small section chief, his department held some real authority.

Every time the couple returned to the Qin Family, it was apparent that Zhang Wenbin carried a strong sense of superiority, and the Qin Family treated this son-in-law favorably.

In contrast, whenever Qin Juan stood beside Zhang Wenbin, she seemed out of place, even at her own parents' place, she seemed nonexistent.

Only during meals would Qin Juan be pulled aside by Mrs. Qin for chats.

Most people gathered around Zhang Wenbin.

At that time, Lin Jiayi even felt some envy for Qin Juan. Despite both coming from the countryside and marrying city men, Zhang Wenbin climbed the ranks and made Qin Juan a respected official's wife.

Though Qin Yang wasn't a true city dweller, he had a college job placement and his household registration was changed from agriculture to non-agriculture, practically making him a half-city person.

Furthermore, he too gained a promotion eventually, yet as an official's wife, she was nearly invisible, less so than common couples.

Later, their daughter Zhang Ningning inadvertently revealed during a visit with the Qin Family, that Zhang Wenbin had a tendency for domestic violence, frequently beating Qin Juan.

At the time, Qin Yang was away, and the couple Qin Han stormed the Zhang Family.

Considering the impact on his workplace, Zhang Wenbin appeased them, and Qin Juan stayed because of their daughter without mentioning divorce.

In that previous life, until she died, the couple remained together.

But in this life, Qin Juan divorced Zhang Wenbin early, and the Qin brothers even caused Zhang Wenbin to lose his job and led him to jail.

All changes originated from Lin Chuxia.

Nearby, people were talking again about today's opening ceremony of Xiyang Group Building.

How ironic, living another life, everything still falls short.

Now, she no longer hoped for Li Guangyuan to become the admired President Li like before, just wished to get through the days peacefully.

To live daily life well with Li Guangyuan, like ordinary couples.

But it seemed impossible.

"Sister-in-law, sister-in-law?"

A man's voice pulled Lin Jiayi's thoughts back, a man next to her stall reminded her, "There's almost no one left, it's time to pack up. Brother Li isn't here today, can you manage alone?"

As soon as he finished his sentence, the woman beside him pinched his arm hard, causing him to let out a cry.

Lin Jiayi pretended not to see their little actions, nodded, and said, "I can manage myself."

Today, selling vegetables by herself, she felt unsettled and didn't attract customers well, business was worse than usual, leaving many vegetables unsold.

She packed the vegetables in containers and bags, then loaded them onto the cart.

As vendors around packed up and left one by one, she finally tidied up her stall.

Fortunately, they rented a room in the county, no need to pedal the cart back to Xiaoqingshan Village.

Lin Jiayi pedaled the cart home, the road was already quiet.

The street lights were dim, occasionally someone would pass quickly on a bicycle.

Passing a building, Lin Jiayi slowed down.

Looked up at the four large characters on the building's roof.

Even at night, the words Xiyang Group were clearly visible.

Imposing and majestic.

Lin Jiayi didn't know how long she stared before she finally looked away, continuing to pedal the cart forward.

Their rented place wasn't in the county center, near the center, rent was too high.

Once leaving the main street, the street lights disappeared.

They walked this road every night, Lin Jiayi was quite accustomed to it.

But just then a burst of rapid footsteps emerged from behind, before she could react, her sling bag was yanked away forcefully.

Lin Jiayi was pulled off the cart, falling to the ground, her money bag taken too.

She lay half on the ground, stunned by the fall, and after recovering she yelled, "Robbery, catch the thief..."

Yet in the dead of night, no matter how piercing her voice was, no one came to help, only watched as the thief faded away into the darkness...

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"Guangyuan, this is the money we earned today, count it, it's a full twenty dollars. I told you this can work, if we just go about it steadily, why should we worry about having good days?"

"Guangyuan, I did some calculations today, the money we saved is enough to rent a shop. It's about to get cold soon, I want to rent a place to open a bun shop. I'll make buns in the kitchen, you can greet customers in front, at the end of the day, we should earn a few dollars, no need to endure wind and sun by the roadside. What do you think?"

Chapter 742: What If Lin Chuxia Really Were His Wife

"Guangyuan, our shop is too small. There are so many people lining up every day. I want to open another store. By then, you take care of one, and I'll take care of the other. We can hire a few more

employees and earn double the money in a day. By next spring, we can renovate the house, and then we can build a large blue brick and tile house. Let's see who in Xiaoqingshan Village will look down on you then."

"Guangyuan, the paperwork for the food company has been completed. In the future, even if the county magistrate sees you, they'll have to call you Director Li..."

"Guangyuan..."

"Guangyuan..."

"Lin Chuxia..."

.....

"Huff..."

In the dark, a figure suddenly sat up, gasping for air.

Li Guangyuan looked around blankly and realized it was his familiar room.

His head felt like it was going to explode with pain.

He raised his hand to press his forehead, and it seemed in his ears there were still calls echoing, while in front of his eyes, scenes from the dream flashed by like a carousel.

In the dream, he also started by selling vegetables, from setting up a stall to sell vegetables, then opened a shop and became a boss.

He as a boss attracted business, his wife was in the kitchen, making various dishes for customers, and their business was excellent, the common people loved coming to their shop to eat.

In the dream, although their shop was not as luxuriously decorated as Qin's Buns Shop, a plain and simple shop was very popular with everyone, and the business was no worse than Qin's Buns Shop.

Later, they also opened branches, and afterward, they even opened a food factory.

Since then, anyone who saw him would call him Director Li, later they even established a food company, and he became Manager Li.

He saw how he went from a poor kid step by step to become a glamorous manager.

And all of this was inseparable from a person, that woman calling him Guangyuan.

In the dream, he clearly knew that was his wife.

He married a good wife, with the wisdom and cleverness of his wife, their days got better and better.

And the name of his wife was...Lin Chuxia.

Li Guangyuan murmured these three words, making his head hurt even more.

He had a similar dream before, but that time the dream wasn't very clear, he was called President Li, chased by people, only feeling that it was really just a dream, a dream he had because he was crazy about wanting to do business and get rich.

But this time the dream was incredibly real, such ridiculous things, he actually felt they were real?

If Lin Chuxia was truly his wife...

Li Guangyuan thought of the Xiyang Group launch ceremony he saw during the day.

He didn't think it was because he saw too much during the day that he would have such a strange dream.

He felt more that everything in the dream seemed to have actually happened, like it was something from a past life.

If his wife really was Lin Chuxia, then everything in the dream was reality.

Li Guangyuan could no longer sleep, lying in bed, eyes staring at the ceiling, recalling every detail of the dream.

Just like that, wide-eyed, from dusk to dawn.

Old Mrs. Li, being old, slept less and got up as soon as it was dawn.

Seeing there's still no movement from Li Guangyuan, she called him from outside.

This was Old Mrs. Li's habit, once she got up, she would make her son and daughter-in-law get up too.

The younger generation couldn't still be sleeping while the elders were already awake.

Of course, for her daughters, Li Hongmei and Li Dongmei, Old Mrs. Li never had this rule.

Over the years, Li Guangyuan was already used to it, pulling on his clothes, putting them on as he walked out of the room.

Old Mrs. Li immediately complained dissatisfied when she saw him, "What time is it and you're still not up? You need to get up early to go to the wholesale market for vegetables to set up a stall, the sun's already shining on your butt when you get up, all the good vegetables are picked by others..."



"Mom, back then, why did the Lin Family want to exchange marriages?"

Li Guangyuan suddenly interrupted Old Mrs. Li's words.

Old Mrs. Li was focused on complaining and didn't hear clearly what he said for a moment.

Li Guangyuan looked at Old Mrs. Li and seriously repeated, "When the Lin Family and our family met, it was agreed to be Lin Chuxia, why was it suddenly changed to Lin Jiayi?"

Mentioning this matter, Old Mrs. Li showed a face full of resentment.

"Why else? Wasn't it that youngest daughter of the Lin Family being shallow-minded, looking down on the Li Family, and eager to climb to higher branches? No idea what it was about the Qin Family's man that made her go for it so eagerly. I think she's someone without restraint, just because our family is good-natured that we agreed when they proposed the exchange. We shouldn't have agreed back then, should've canceled this marriage altogether, really responding to the saying, 'cheap things don't bring good results'. Even give 80 bucks for the betrothal gift for your current wife seems too much..."

Li Guangyuan frowned, "Do you think Jiayi's the kind of person who can be manipulated easily? Not to mention it was the Qin Family, I've seen my counterweight, with such a dignified appearance, a college graduate with a formal job. The Qin Family's conditions are way better than ours, do you think with Jiayi's character, she'd willingly switch marriage partners and marry me just because her younger sister despises the poor and desires wealth?"

The Lin Family did tell the Li Family about the reason for changing the marriage back then.

Old Mrs. Li only heard the original 300 bucks betrothal gift turned into 80 bucks and didn't care which daughter it was, so she agreed.

For so many years, she didn't think about this matter again.

Now that her son mentioned it, thinking about the attitude Lin Jiayi had after marrying over, Old Mrs. Li slapped her thigh.

"Oh, right, I've been saying how come the Lin Family was so generous back then, the 300 bucks betrothal gift didn't reduce a bit until they switched daughters. There must be some hidden agenda in here. Our good daughter-in-law was swapped out and turned into a lazy one. Who knows if Lin Jiayi had done something shameful before marriage that the Qin Family found out about, which is why they refused her, just because our Li Family is easy to bully with only an orphan mother and son. No, we must have a good talk with the Lin Family about this..."

Li Guangyuan didn't want to talk to the Lin Family about it. So many years had passed, he had divorced Lin Jiayi, what else was there to say?

Just that after having that dream, his questions grew more and more.

And he was increasingly unconvinced.

He too, like Old Mrs. Li, thought maybe there was some change in the Qin Family that made them look down on Lin Jiayi, and that's when the Lin Family thought of exchanging the marriage.

Considering Lin Jiayi's dignity, they pushed all the mistakes onto Lin Chuxia, giving them that explanation.

But then thinking about it, it didn't seem right. Based on what he knew about Lin Jiayi, if the Qin Family indeed didn't want her, Lin Jiayi would rather cancel the engagement than let such a good match go to Lin Chuxia, letting her overshadow herself after marriage.

The first few years of marriage when he went to the Lin Family, he noticed the Lin Family treated their eldest daughter and second daughter completely differently.

#### Chapter 743: Suspicious

Originally, he thought that his eldest daughter was wronged in marriage matters, and that his father-in-law and mother-in-law were good to his wife as a form of compensation.

Now knowing the truth, Lin Chuxia was not the Lin Family's biological daughter, which explained his in-laws' attitude towards their two daughters.

This also made the marriage exchange issue even more inexplicable.

They would favor their biological daughter even in minor matters, so how could they possibly have Lin Chuxia marry Qin Yang, who had good prospects, and let Lin Jiayi marry him?

Even if Lin Chuxia threatened them with death, the Lin parents would never agree to exchange marriages.

Having failed to find any reasonable explanation, Li Guangyuan felt even more that something was amiss.

Old Mrs. Li was also increasingly annoyed, repeatedly warning Li Guangyuan not to remarry Lin Jiayi.

"That woman is truly vicious. Our family has faced so many misfortunes because of her. If it weren't for her, how would your eldest sister marry that Ma fellow, and your second sister marry the Zhang fellow? She's the jinx that caused harm to our Li Family, even losing our Genbao. If it weren't for the marriage exchange, you would have married Lin Chuxia, and our family would have been doing well by now."

The proximity of Daqing Mountain Village and Xiaoqingshan Village meant that even if she hadn't been to the city, unaware of the Xiyang Group, she would know about Lin Chuxia from Daqing Mountain Village, who led the villagers to prosperity.

To be able to help a village prosper, how wealthy must she be?

Not to mention she has a wealthy adoptive mother.

If Li Guangyuan had married Lin Chuxia at that time, all that money would have belonged to the Li Family.

Old Mrs. Li's words struck a painful chord, prompting Li Guangyuan to pick up his clothes and head out.

Home alone, Old Mrs. Li finally saw someone and hadn't finished venting before asking where he was going.

He simply replied, "Going to town to sell vegetables."

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Li Guangyuan rode his bicycle out of Xiaoqingshan Village but did not return to his home in the county nor head to his vegetable stall.

The stall is at the night market; it only opens in the afternoon, and in the mornings, he goes to the Qin Family Village Vegetable Market to wholesale some vegetables.

Usually, he stocks the stall based on what's missing.

But today, he couldn't wait to go home and ask Lin Jiayi what vegetables were needed and went straight to Qin Family Village.

Even though he knew that woman was no longer in Qin Family Village, arriving there gave him a sense of peace.

Li Guangyuan sat on the side of the wholesale market, watching the people come and go.

It was also later that he learned that Lin Chuxia advocated for the establishment of this wholesale market to facilitate the sale of Qin Family Village's greenhouse vegetables.

Moreover, the greenhouses in Qin Family Village were established under Lin Chuxia's invitation to the Agricultural Research Institute's technicians from the capital to instruct the villagers.

In Qin Family Village, Lin Chuxia is not merely considered the Qin Family's daughter-in-law but is recognized as their leader.

Every villager in Qin Family Village speaks of Lin Chuxia with nothing but praise.

Throughout Qin Family Village and even the vegetable market there, no one dares to speak ill of Lin Chuxia.

He took out a cigarette and smoked quietly, unconsciously accumulating one stub after another at his feet.

Until the sun turned quite scorching, Li Guangyuan extinguished the cigarette in his hand and was about to leave when he noticed a man not far away arguing with someone.

He recognized that man as Qin Yang's cousin, one of the few in Qin Family Village who had conflicts with Qin Yang's house.

Last time, he was selling vegetables and got into a dispute with the buyer at the wholesale market, even trying to use Lin Chuxia's name for leverage, but was exposed by fellow villagers, with even his nephew not siding with him.

To mess things up to this level, it shows how unsuccessful one is.

Li Guangyuan directly walked towards him.

Qin Wen was arguing with a vegetable buyer because most of his vegetables had been picked out.

Suddenly, someone patted him on the shoulder.

It was a man smiling peacefully, offering advice, "We're all doing business here, let's discuss things calmly; harmony leads to prosperity."

Qin Wen didn't recognize the man and unhappily said, "Who are you? If this were happening to you, you'd take it calmly? I worked hard to grow these vegetables, finally bringing them to market to sell, and he picks out most of them. Is this how business is done? Picking out this one's bent, that one's short, aren't everyone's beans like this?"

Li Guangyuan glanced at the basket of beans in front of him.

With such quality, not to mention the vegetable traders sending produce to the capital, even the street vendors would choose and haggle; refusing to let them pick would mean selling cheaply, as they're unpresentable.

Moreover, inspecting his display basket, it was clear he put the best at the top while the rest were short and small.

When Qin Wen said that, the buyer also showed displeasure.

"We agreed earlier to pick out the unqualified ones, look at your basket, how it differs from top to bottom. I understand it's tough for farmers to grow these, and it's reasonable to display the best ones to attract business, but the difference between top and bottom is too stark. At this price, if I don't pick, I'll end up losing money, you find it hard to sell while we find it hard to earn some."

"Don't give me that talk, why can others do it but not me? Stick to what you said; these picks won't work."

"If that's the case, I can't buy these; I'll put them back, you can sell them to whoever you want, and if you can make someone buy without picking, suit yourself, but I can't do it."

After saying so, the buyer began to pack the vegetables to return them, which Qin Wen wouldn't allow.

He grabbed his hand trying to pack the vegetables, "What do you mean? You pick my vegetables and now say you don't want them? Do you think the vegetable market is your own place, taking them if you want and abandoning them if you don't? Let me tell you, it's not that easy."

Seeing the two were about to fight, someone had already called the market manager.

Sun Guodong saw it was Qin Wen and felt a headache right away, "Da Wen, what are you doing again? Every time you sell vegetables, you create some trouble, don't you? If the vegetables can sell, sell them, if not, take them away."

"Hey, I'm telling you, Sun Guodong, if you want to suck up to Lin Chuxia's stinking feet, that's not how you do it. This is the Qin Family Village market, not only Lin Chuxia's place, besides, today I'm right, he fiddled around for a while and then says he doesn't want it."

The buyer saw the sleeve badge on Sun Guodong's arm and quickly spoke up, "Comrade, look at his vegetables, how the top differs from the bottom. When buying, he didn't let me turn them over, telling me they were the same top to bottom. I knew they wouldn't be exactly the same, but his difference is too much. If it weren't for such a big difference, I wouldn't have said this."

Those coming to the Qin Family Village Vegetable Market are regular vegetable buyers and sellers.

Displaying vegetables nicely, with the outer appearance better than the actual quality inside, is common behavior, known by everyone.

But having better ones on the top and bad ones on the bottom is a bit much.

#### Chapter 744: Distant Relatives and Connections

Sun Guodong looked at that basket of vegetables and frowned, but putting them back clearly wasn't an option.

Typically, someone like Sun Guodong would mediate, perhaps suggest a two-cent compromise or something, and the vegetables would be sold.

But Qin Wen's words were just too harsh, and he didn't feel like intervening.

Not only did he not intervene, he even sided with the buyer.

How could Qin Wen accept that? It seemed like an argument was about to break out, when Li Guangyuan stepped forward.

"Alright, alright, everyone calm down, I'll take the vegetables."

Someone taking this hot potato was a relief to the buyer from before.

Those who come to the wholesale market to buy vegetables are usually long-haul drivers from out of town, and they understand these sellers are local folk from the nearby villages, so they don't want to provoke any local bullies while doing business.

Qin Wen suspiciously looked at Li Guangyuan, "Are you sure you want all of it, for the same price?"

Actually, he knew better than anyone the exact quality of his vegetables.

He just wanted to make as much as he could, even if it's just one more cent.

Li Guangyuan nodded, "Sell it to me at that price, but I don't have a basket, you'll have to give me a bag."

"Alright, I'll give you one."

Fertilizer bags are something that farming households never run short of, so giving one away is no big deal.

Seeing that the matter was resolved here, and there was no more commotion to watch, everyone dispersed.

Qin Wen found Li Guangyuan a bag, and Li Guangyuan took the bag and started filling it with string beans.



His method was quite rough, tossing in the good and the bad together, which made Qin Wen feel a little guilty.

After all, he knew best what his string beans were like, and he was counting on conniving someone into buying them.

If the other side argued a bit with him, he'd feel more at ease.

Without saying a word and accepting everything at a good price made him look like a bully.

"Are you planning to eat these vegetables you bought?"

"No, I'm going to sell them at the night market," Li Guangyuan replied as he continued packing the vegetables.

Once the vegetables were weighed and Li Guangyuan handed over the money, Qin Wen couldn't help but ask, "Can you make a profit selling these vegetables at the night market?"

Li Guangyuan smiled at him, "Sell them cheap, although this bag of string beans might not make a profit, it also won't lose much."

"Then why are you buying them," Qin Wen had the money in hand and spoke more freely.

"I saw you arguing with that person for ages, and with these vegetables, they can't sell them long-distance. If the argument continued, the other party wouldn't have bought them. If the market management got involved, even though you're from the same village, I've come to this wholesale market often enough to know they only handle matters without favoritism, in the end, you probably wouldn't benefit."

Qin Wen knew what Li Guangyuan said was true, so when he saw Sun Guodong, he deliberately spoke harsh words.

But even knowing this outcome, Li Guangyuan still helped him out...

He sized up Li Guangyuan again, "So you have a pretty kind heart then, what's the deal, you learning from Lei Feng to do good deeds?"

"Not to that extent, I'm not that noble yet."

Li Guangyuan looked at him calmly, taking out a cigarette to offer him one.

"To be honest, our two families are kind of connected, my wife is Lin Chuxia's sister, Qin Yang is my brother-in-law."

When Qin Wen heard that the other party was the husband of Lin Chuxia's sister, his smile faded a bit.

He struck a match, lighting one for the other and then himself, took a puff, and spoke casually.

"I wouldn't dare acknowledge such kinship, now that Lin Chuxia is capable, even my second aunt's entire family looks down on us poor relatives, how could we dare to be on par with Qin Yang and the others?"

Li Guangyuan knew Qin Wen would disparage that family, a hint of sneer flashed in his eyes, but he didn't show it, and he let out a long sigh.

"Isn't that the truth, speaking of my brotherhood with Qin Yang, that was all in the past, back then Lin Chuxia and my wife were both part of the Lin Family, always thought they were sisters, who knew her biological mother would show up later, only to find out Lin Chuxia wasn't one of us, now it's not just us as a couple, even my mother-in-law's family hardly interacts with Lin Chuxia."

Qin Wen sneered, "Just a sparrow that landed on a branch, nothing but a nouveau riche, even her real mother is a capitalist, let's see what would happen if we go back twenty years."

When Qin Wen got to this point, he suddenly turned to look at Li Guangyuan, sizing him up a few times.

"Are you saying you're Lin Chuxia's brother-in-law?"

Li Guangyuan acted as if he didn't understand why he was asking this, awkwardly smiling, "That was before, now she doesn't even acknowledge her sister, so she definitely won't recognize me as her brother-in-law."

Qin Wen suddenly laughed.

Li Guangyuan looked puzzled, and with a naive tone, he asked, "Why are you laughing? What I said is true. Didn't you just say it yourself, they're successful now and different from us, Lin Chuxia not only became successful, she's also been taken back by her biological mom, so where do I have the right to call myself her brother-in-law?"

Qin Wen laughed even harder.

Li Guangyuan feigned annoyance, "You, I saw we get along and tried to befriend you, why are you laughing at me?"

Qin Wen waved his hand with a smile, "I'm not laughing at you, I'm just laughing at the world."

Seeing Li Guangyuan's puzzlement, Qin Wen went on to ask, "Since you married Lin Chuxia's sister, what was the deal with the sister swap? You were sort of involved, right? I just want to ask, why didn't you marry Lin Chuxia and went for her sister? I heard that the Lin Family initially promised Lin Chuxia's sister to my fourth brother, if there was no sister swap, Lin Chuxia would've been your wife, and all the wealth and glory would've been yours."

Li Guangyuan still wore that simpleton's look, even a bit embarrassed.

"I wasn't that lucky. I knew back then that they were offering me Lin Chuxia, and with the Qin Family's great conditions, my in-laws surely wanted to marry off their real daughter. When the date was set, the Lin Family's eldest daughter did something wrong, and the Qin Family backed out, that's why the in-laws arranged the switch. Our Li Family was poor, and they were willing to marry their daughter to me, I was grateful, how could I afford to be choosy."

Qin Wen paused his smoking, "Who told you that Lin Family's eldest daughter did something wrong, the Qin Family backed out, and that's why the Lin Family arranged the swap?"

Li Guangyuan looked confused, "Isn't that so? Wasn't it the Qin Family that backed out? Then why did the Lin Family arrange the swap?"

"How would I know? But I can assure you, it wasn't my fourth brother's family that backed out. When the Lin Family suddenly swapped sisters and asked for an additional 200 yuan in bridal gifts, my second aunt came to our place to borrow money. I know better than anyone about this."

He's always been watching Qin Yang, how could he not care about Qin Yang's marriage?

Even though the second aunt's family kept the swap low-key, he got to know all about it from his mother.

#### Chapter 745: What Did You Say to That Person?

Qin Wen patted Li Guangyuan on the shoulder, "This is fate, isn't it? As you said, your family is poor, and my fourth brother's family is well-off. Anyone would let their biological daughter marry my fourth brother. Who knows what your in-laws were thinking, marrying the adopted daughter into the family with good conditions and giving their biological daughter to you, a poor guy. Maybe in the end, they realized their conscience and wanted to be kinder to the adopted daughter."

After saying that, he chuckled mockingly.

Li Guangyuan listened quietly, but clenched his fists tightly.

Qin Wen caught a glimpse of his reaction and smirked, "I have to say my fourth brother is truly lucky. He didn't even plan to get married; it was my second aunt who arranged it for him. Before the wedding, he hadn't even met the bride, and what happened? He ended up picking up a beautiful and capable wife for free, with a capable mother-in-law to boot. Just the other day, I saw him return to the village in a Santana, isn't it enviable?"

Li Guangyuan couldn't listen anymore, stood up and said he had something to do. He carried the bag of green beans onto the bicycle's rear rack and walked away, pushing the bike.

Qin Wen watched him until his figure disappeared, and suddenly a voice came from behind him.

"What did you say to that man?"

He turned around to see Ma Suyun standing behind him, unnoticed until now.

"Nothing much, just talking. Why are you here? Is the meal ready?"

Ma Suyun didn't answer his question, only said, "Even if you don't tell me, I heard it. You were talking about Lin Chuxia. Da Wen, don't go against Lin Chuxia anymore. My miscarriage wasn't related to her, I fell myself, and the doctor said my body wasn't well enough to keep the child anyway..."

Talking about the child, Qin Wen couldn't suppress his anger.

"Enough, you can't even manage yourself and now you're blaming me? Is it my fault?"

He only spoke some truths, and now he's seen as opposing Lin Chuxia?

Moreover, the couple Lin Chuxia and Qin Yang always have been difficult with him. Were it not for them, would he have lost his job?

They're allowed to give him a hard time, but he's not allowed to speak a few idle words about them.

"Don't bring up the child again. Even if the miscarriage has nothing to do with them, I'm irreconcilable with them. Don't forget who put us in this current situation, or did Lin Chuxia give you some small favors to buy you over?"

Ma Suyun shook her head, "No, Lin Chuxia didn't buy me. I've just come to my senses and hope you do too. We've been wrong too many times already. Is it so hard to admit someone else's excellence? I admit I'm not as good as Lin Chuxia, not as good as a finger of hers. No matter how stubborn you are, Qin Yang's status now is... and you are..."

"Slap—"

The crisp sound of a slap interrupted Ma Suyun's words.

Qin Wen's face twisted, he spoke harshly, "What status do I have? What status? Can't stand me now, huh? Who was the one clinging to me back then? If it weren't for you always hanging around and seducing me, would I have married a rural woman like you? Marrying you was my downfall, and now you look down on me. Seems like you've grown wings, think you can perch up with Lin Chuxia and dare to lecture me. If I don't straighten you out, you won't know your place..."

He said as he approached and grabbed Ma Suyun by the collar, raising his hand high.

The market was filled with buyers and sellers, including many old neighbors from Qin Family Village.

Seeing him drag Ma Suyun around like a chicken, and seeing how thin she was, everyone came forward to intervene regardless of familiarity.

The more people tried to stop him, the more Qin Wen felt Ma Suyun was doing it on purpose.

She must have intentionally come to the market to provoke him, making it impossible for him to teach her a lesson.

These people too, why interfere when he's disciplining his own wife? Meddling in other people's business, even in this.

"Da Wen, stop it."

Qin Liang strode over and grabbed Qin Wen's wrist, twisting it so he released his grip.

"What are you doing? Can't you talk things out calmly? Running to the market to make a scene—what does it prove, hitting your own wife?"

Qin Liang was over ten years older than Qin Wen, and Qin Wen was somewhat afraid of his older brother.

Under Qin Liang's stern gaze, he glared fiercely at Ma Suyun before turning and walking out of the crowd.

Qin Liang looked at Ma Suyun, feeling awkward as her brother-in-law, he simply said, "Go home first and talk things out. If Qin Wen keeps acting up, tell me, and I'll deal with him."

.....

Li Guangyuan carried the bag of green beans straight back to the place he rented.

All the way, Qin Wen's words echoed in his mind.

He knew his in-laws' temperament better than anyone. When Lin Chuxia's biological mother came looking for her, and they saw she had money, they even let their biological daughter stand in and pretend to be someone else. How could such a marriage with such disparity let their biological daughter marry into the Li Family?

Conscience found? When it comes to money, when have his in-laws ever had a conscience?

If it's not anything, then where exactly is the problem?

As he entered the courtyard, Lin Jiayi was in the yard doing laundry.

Lin Jiayi saw Li Guangyuan return, feeling a bit unhappy herself.

"Why are you back only now? You left us yesterday, do you know how difficult the Zhang Family is to deal with? And last night, when I came back..."

"Why did you marry me in the first place?" Li Guangyuan interrupted Lin Jiayi.

Lin Jiayi was startled, quickly thinking about his expression, "Why ask that again now? Did Li Dongmei say something to you? Or did your mother say something? Don't listen to them, they just don't want us to live a good life..."

"Why did you marry me in the first place?" Li Guangyuan asked again, clearly impatient by now.

Lin Jiayi couldn't help but step back.

Since losing the child, Li Guangyuan's mood swings had become more unpredictable.

Knowing she wanted to remarry him, Lin Jiayi had suffered much with him.

She forced a smile, "Why are you saying that, why else? I wanted to marry you, so I did."

"But the matchmaker initially introduced the prospective bride as Lin Chuxia, so why did it change to you?"

Before Lin Jiayi could use her familiar arguments, Li Guangyuan spoke first, "Don't give me that line about your sister disliking poverty and preferring wealth. We've been married for so many years, I know what you're like. Compared to Lin Chuxia, you're the one who favors wealth over poverty. She's an adopted daughter and wasn't spoiled at your place. Why did your mom let her marry Qin Yang and you marry me?"

Lin Jiayi was left chilled by his gaze, her heart pounding, and she couldn't help but tear up.



## Chapter 746: Habits

"Why are you so fixated on this matter? I... I don't even know why my mom insisted on me marrying you. It's been so many years. Maybe she was afraid I'd be mistreated at the Qin Family. Your family's situation wasn't good, so my mom gave me more dowry so I'd feel secure marrying into your family and not be pushed around by your mother..."

As she spoke, she grew more confident, and eventually became quite self-righteous.

"My mom had thought it through back then. Think about it, what was your family's situation back then? I didn't look down on your family; I even brought more than 200 yuan as dowry. Without my dowry, you'd still be farming, unable to even do business selling vegetables. I thought we could live well together and improve our life. Who knew your two sisters were bottomless pits, and you listened to your mother in everything? If not for this, our life would have improved long ago. If your mom and sisters hadn't been so excessive, would I have divorced you? Without the divorce, we wouldn't have lost Genbao..."

Li Guangyuan looked at her tearful face and asked flatly, "Why did you want me to sell vegetables from a stall?"

He clearly remembered that they started selling vegetables from a stall in his dream too. Was it all just a coincidence, or had Lin Jiayi also had such a dream?

Lin Jiayi wiped her tears and accused, "Since you were farming, what else could you sell but vegetables? We thought about selling buns and cooked food, but what happened? Your sister played tricks, sold spoiled food, and people got sick. In the end, only the vegetable business didn't lose money, and now you're questioning me?"

What she said reminded Li Guangyuan.

After all, it was their own lack of capability, and the two sisters were indeed immature.

"Alright, stop crying. I haven't eaten yet. Go get me something to eat."

Li Guangyuan felt he might be overthinking it. Perhaps he had been hearing too much about Xiyang these days, which led to the dream.

Lin Jiayi was relieved to see Li Guangyuan stop pressing the issue.

She continued the half-finished story from before, "You didn't come back last night. I closed the stall alone and went home but ran into a thief who stole the money pouch."

"The money pouch was stolen? Was all the money taken too?" Li Guangyuan asked anxiously. "Didn't you chase after him?"

"He pushed me down, and besides, how could I, a woman, chase him? And what could I do even if I caught up?"

"Useless," Li Guangyuan cursed, turning to leave.

Lin Jiayi quickly followed, "Where are you going?"

"I'm going to report it to the police."

It was several dozen yuan, how could it just be lost?

.....

With Zhuang Jingshu back to look after the child, Lin Chuxia could focus more on the company's affairs.

They also had an office location in Yan City, in a standalone two-story office building.

Zhuang Jingshu decided to develop domestically, so she had Zhuang Yang purchase this property.

It served as Walson's temporary office location in the country, where Zhuang Yang usually worked.

The building was quite large, and one floor was allocated to Lin Chuxia.

As Lin Chuxia entered the building, a pretty receptionist greeted her, "Hello, Mr. Lin!"

She nodded and asked, "Has Assistant Gu arrived?"

"Not yet."

"Alright, let him come to my office once he's here."

After giving these instructions, Lin Chuxia returned to her office.

She had been busy with the Xiyang Group's listing ceremony lately, and hadn't yet found time to review the financial reports from each branch for the last quarter.

The main concern was the Xiyang Food Company, where the canned fruit production line had already started. Although she knew Su Wensong would handle things well on that end, she felt uneasy not personally understanding the situation.

While looking over the reports, the office door knocked a few times and Gu Peng walked in.

Lin Chuxia glanced at him indifferently, "Didn't sleep well last night?" Huge dark circles.

Gu Peng stood there looking at her.

After a moment, Lin Chuxia didn't hear a response and looked over again.

She then realized that her earlier remark might have sounded too familiar.

Seeing Gu Peng's face always made her unconsciously adopt her past life's attitude.

But at the moment, the two of them clearly still had a regular subordinate relationship.

Luckily, Gu Peng only hesitated for a moment before replying, "It's too hot."

Lin Chuxia nodded; it had indeed been stuffy the past couple of days, as if a heavy rain was brewing.

Her home had air conditioning, so she didn't worry about the electricity bill and turned it on early for sleep.

Without an air conditioner or even a fan, summer nights like this were truly hard to endure.

She thought a bit and swallowed the suggestion for him to buy a fan before turning to work matters.

"When you have time, go to Daqing Mountain Village and discuss with Village Chief Sun. Xiyang will invest in building a road for the village. The rainy season is approaching, and if the transportation of our yellow peach crop is delayed because of the road, the loss would be unacceptable."

The fruit canning line at the Xiyang Food Factory was already in use, producing a large number of cans daily for market distribution.

It was peak season for yellow peaches, and the supply of raw materials must be uninterrupted.

Whether the peach trees planted by Sun Bingnan or those planted by other villagers at Daqing Mountain Village, having managed them diligently for so many years, this year they must reap the benefits.

"Okay, is there a standard for the road construction?"

Gu Peng sat at a nearby desk, taking out his notebook accordingly.

Lin Chuxia looked at his movements and suddenly felt a little dazed.

"Where did you learn that habit? You only mentioned having studied before. What schooling did you attend?"

Gu Peng closed his notebook again and looked at her calmly with dark eyes.

"Is there anything about my work that Mr. Lin is dissatisfied with?"

"Not really."

Lin Chuxia just remembered Gu Peng had only studied for a few years.

In her past life, he worked as an assistant by her side. Although he managed to handle tasks well after instructions, things weren't as smooth as in this life.

She had gotten used to past life's Gu Peng, accustomed to Wang Tianyu's ability to learn. With Gu Peng getting a handle on things so quickly, she naturally assumed Gu Peng was a quick learner.

But some habits are hard to change.

In the past life, because he wasn't in school for long, he hardly ever used a pen after dropping out. When working with her, he relied entirely on his memory, which was indeed quite sharp.

But even the best memory falls short of written notes. When tasks piled up, Lin Chuxia would remind him to use paper and pen.

It was only after frequent reminders and an increasing workload that Gu Peng developed the habit of taking notes.

In this life, there's been no frequent reminders; she hadn't even reminded him once.

Gu Peng noticed Lin Chuxia staring at him without speaking, thinking she was waiting for him to answer, so he replied, "I attended four or five years of school when I was young and learned to recognize some characters. In prison, aside from working, we also studied. The government taught us many things."

#### Chapter 747: The Old Man's House Was Robbed

Gu Peng raised the notebook and pen in his hand again, "This is not a habit, it's something Wang Tianyu told me, he said every instruction Mr. Lin gives is very important, and asked me to remember them clearly. Mr. Lin, is there something wrong with doing this?"

So it was Wang Tianyu who told him.

Lin Chuxia secretly breathed a sigh of relief, not even sure why she felt relieved.

"No, this habit is good, keep it up."

After saying that, she continued discussing work matters.

"You first check if it's easy to get asphalt; if there are no issues with the asphalt, handle the asphalt road repairs personally. Uncle Sun's connections may not be as extensive as ours. If asphalt is hard to procure, brick roads or cement roads will do. There's only one standard: speed. Ensure completion before the rainy season as much as possible."

"Okay, I'll handle it right away."

Gu Peng jotted down his notes simply, stood up, and left the office.

Just as he walked out, the phone in Lin Chuxia's office rang.

Picking up the phone, she heard Su Wensong's voice. After listening to his message, she stood up abruptly, "Alright, I'll head back to An City immediately."

After hanging up, she called Qin Yang to inform him before grabbing her bag and heading out.

Gu Peng had just started the jeep, not yet having left.

Lin Chuxia opened the passenger door and got in. "I'm going with you back to An City to handle some matters. Let's first go to my mentor's place and pick him up."

After picking up Old Master He, the three of them headed to Ancheng County. On the way, Lin Chuxia explained the situation to the old master.

Old Master He had been staying in Yan City for the past two years, with the house in An City being looked after by Su Wensong.

A few days ago, while passing by, Su Wensong noticed that the lock on the door seemed tampered with.

Upon entering the courtyard, he discovered that the old master's home had been robbed.

Generally, thieves break in to ransack and take valuable items.

But this theft was thorough: tables and cabinets were gone, though the rest of the belongings were strewn everywhere.

When Lin Chuxia first met Old Master He, his house was practically empty, with no decent furniture, save for a broken bed cabinet and tables with missing legs.

Later, Lin Chuxia apprenticed under Old Master He, jokingly promising to help him in his old age, but she didn't skimp on this commitment.

She furnished his room with new furniture and household items, even making new bedding.

When moving to Yan City, everything here was newly furnished, only his clothes and valuables being taken along.

Originally, it was thought that the old master might visit from time to time during festivals, but unexpectedly, it caught the attention of thieves.

The furniture was almost brand new, and it had cost Lin Chuxia a considerable sum when she bought it, with Su Wensong assisting in the purchase.

Thus, Su Wensong immediately went to the police station to report the crime.

The exact timing of the theft was unclear, but moving such large items would surely create some commotion.

The police investigated for several days and finally found a major suspect: a particular family.

But the other party claimed to be Old Master He's daughter, insisting it was only natural for a daughter to take her father's belongings.

The police informed Su Wensong, who was unsure how to proceed upon hearing that it was Old Master He's daughter who took the items. He then informed Lin Chuxia.

Arriving at the Ancheng County police station, Su Wensong was already there, accompanied by a familiar face, Sun Hao.

Sun Hao had been promoted to the head of the police station's security team last year. Seeing Lin Chuxia, he greeted her with a smile, "Mr. Lin, long time no see."

"Captain Sun, it's been a while indeed. Is Granny Sun well? I heard Lanlan mention her not long ago, seems like it's been quite some time since we last met."



Last year, after Sun Hao had a child, Granny Sun resigned from the bun shop to stay home and take care of her grandchild.

"Everyone's doing great, though she still occasionally reminisces about her days at the bun shop, always saying that once the child grows up, she'll return to work there."

"That's wonderful; the bun shop is always welcome to have her back."

After chatting for a bit, Sun Hao led them to the interrogation room.

He Caixia was currently held in the interrogation room.

"The investigation has confirmed that He Caixia sold the items. When asked where the money went, she only said it was spent, adopting an indifferent attitude, claiming repeatedly that everything belonged to her family, and questioning our authority to interfere."

Sun Hao explained as they walked.

He had learned from Su Wensong about the relationship between He Caixia and Old Master He.

Though they were indeed father and daughter by blood, they'd verbally severed ties years ago.

Thus, Sun Hao didn't release her directly but chose to let Old Master He decide how to proceed.

As they reached the interrogation room door, He Caixia's bold voice could be heard inside.

"That's my own home, and those are our possessions. Selling our own things is not a crime, is it? I want to speak with your leader. Arresting someone without cause, is there no King's Law left?"

"He Caixia, adjust your attitude. You say that's your own home, but our investigation shows that you severed ties with Old Master He twenty years ago, and haven't been in contact since."

"Who is spreading that nonsense? That's complete nonsense."

"Watch your language; this isn't a place for you to behave unreasonably. With that attitude, don't blame us if we're less accommodating."

He Caixia finally toned down a bit, "Who said I haven't been in contact with my dad? Just a few years ago, I often brought my daughter to visit him. It's just that my dad likes peace and quiet, so I visited less later on. Besides, now that he's moved, I wouldn't return to that courtyard to visit anyway. Those people just can't stand to see me doing well and are slandering me. Regardless, I'm still my dad's biological daughter. Severing ties is old news. Who takes those things seriously now? We had no choice back then. Now that my dad isn't in An City, those things are just sitting idle. How can you call this a crime?"

"Whether it's a crime or not, you'll need to discuss it with the involved party," Sun Hao said, opening the door and entering. "He Caixia, even if he's your biological father, selling another's property without permission constitutes a crime. We're just enforcing the law. Moreover, according to our investigation, the items weren't originally your father's. The involved party is here now. If you think you can persuade them to drop the charges, an out-of-court settlement isn't impossible."

He Caixia quickly turned her head, "What do you mean? Why aren't my dad's belongings considered his?"

Upon seeing Lin Chuxia behind Sun Hao, it all clicked for her.

She knew the kind of life the old master lived before, but things improved significantly after he accepted Lin Chuxia as his apprentice.

However, she wasn't about to admit it. "Just because you say it isn't, doesn't make it so. If it's not my dad's, why was it at his house? Even if someone else bought it, once gifted to my dad, it becomes his."

Chapter 748: Official Business

This time, Sun Hao didn't need to say a word; the officer nearby remarked, "He Caixia, behave yourself; this isn't the place for your nonsense. If you continue like this, everything will be handled according to the law. You should know, being allowed to meet the involved party and speak face-to-face is already leniency by the law."

Lin Chuxia looked at He Caixia with a defiant expression and directly asked the officer, "I did some calculations just now. The missing furniture and household items, including that television, amount to about two thousand yuan. If receipts are needed, I can provide them. Comrade, how long is the theft of this amount punishable for?"

"According to our country's law, theft over 200 yuan falls under a significant amount, punished by up to three years of imprisonment, detention, or control, plus a fine. With her amount, she could be inside for two to three years."

Hearing that she might actually serve time, He Caixia was unsettled.

"You can't do this; those are my dad's things," she said, glancing at Lin Chuxia's slightly mocking gaze, then hurriedly corrected herself, "This isn't for her to decide alone. I need to see my dad. He surely won't let me go to jail."

"He Caixia, Master won't see you. Last time he already warned you. Since he cut ties as father and daughter, he meant it to be clean. He also said he wouldn't acknowledge you as his daughter anymore. It was you who broke Old Sir He's heart originally. When he was alone and miserable, you ignored him, and now, after secretly selling his stuff, you want him to plead for you? Can you have a bit of a conscience and not be so shameless?"

She stood upright and turned to Sun Hao, "There's nothing more to say. Let's handle this officially. I'll cooperate with whatever process you need."

Before coming here, she had already made things clear to Master. If he still cherished the father-daughter relationship, this matter would pass. If he didn't want any further contact with his two daughters, Lin Chuxia would handle it.

Old Master He chose the latter, but he wanted to come along to see.

Actually, when the two daughters approached Old Master He last time, Lin Chuxia had already seen through them; they had long broken his heart.

But those two had too much nerve, and Old Master He couldn't bring himself to cut ties.

Back then, when Old Master He decided to leave An City for Yan City, aside from her pregnancy, he also wanted to stay away from those two daughters.

"No," He Caixia shouted, "Lin Chuxia, Mr. Lin, I was wrong. I can't go to jail. I had no choice. You know, my husband got laid off, and my daughter can't afford her school fees. I had no choice but to think of my dad's house. He doesn't live there now, and it's just sitting empty. I only sold a few pieces of furniture..."

"So you're saying you even considered selling the house?" Lin Chuxia was almost amused with anger. "He Caixia, I've seen heartless people, but none as heartless as you."

He Caixia, seeing her reaction, got anxious too, "Lin Chuxia, you call me heartless, how much better are you? You're not even related to my dad, yet you want to be responsible for him till his end, isn't it because you have your eyes on his house? In the end, you're no better than me. My dad just got old and confused, and you tricked him. Someday, you'll face retribution for this."

"Your dad's house? He Caixia, do you even hear yourself? If his house is so valuable to you, why didn't you take care of him when he returned back then, but instead let an outsider like me take advantage?"

He Caixia was speechless, but the thought of prison made her cry and plead.

"I was wrong, Mr. Lin. Please don't hold it against me, considering my dad's face, give me a break. After all, I'm his real daughter. If you send me to jail, my dad would be heartbroken too."

But Lin Chuxia didn't want to waste her breath on her anymore and left the interrogation room with Sun Hao.

Sun Hao was also deeply scornful of He Caixia's behavior.

In fact, what Lin Chuxia didn't mention was that when Old Master He moved to Yan City, he had already given her the property here.

Of course, Lin Chuxia didn't want it. To her, acknowledging Old Master He as her master and taking care of him until the end was her duty as his disciple.

But Old Master He felt he hadn't passed on any skills to Lin Chuxia or stood up for her. Since Lin Chuxia bought him a place in Yan City, he thought, why not give her his limited property, so her support for him seemed more justified.

Moreover, he thought, everything he had would eventually belong to Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia couldn't argue with Old Master He and agreed.

And to Lin Chuxia, it didn't matter whose name the property was under; she wouldn't be greedy for what little he had and preferred to give Old Master He some peace of mind.

Therefore, in handling this theft case, Lin Chuxia had the most say.

The two of them chatted as they walked outside until a voice called from afar, "Chuxia."

The voice was strange yet familiar, and there she saw Li Guangyuan sitting opposite an officer not far away.

Lin Chuxia gave him a serene nod, acknowledging his greeting, then continued her exit with Sun Hao.

"Chuxia, wait..."

Lin Chuxia furrowed her brow slightly.

She remembered that Li Guangyuan used to call her sister-in-law, and even though it was now known she and Lin Jiayi weren't biological sisters, he should call her by her full name, Lin Chuxia, not so intimately just Chuxia.

Sun Hao saw Li Guangyuan coming after them at the door, knowing they might have things to say, he bid Lin Chuxia farewell and left.

Lin Chuxia didn't want to have anything to do with Li Guangyuan; she didn't want anything to do with this man in her lifetime.

But then Li Guangyuan rushed a few steps forward to block her, asking with concern, "What brings you to the police station? Did something happen? If there's anything, you can talk to me. After all, we were family for so many years."

Lin Chuxia directly refused, "There's nothing to say to you. Didn't you already divorce Lin Jiayi? Even if you hadn't, I would still have nothing to say to either of you."

Li Guangyuan didn't mind her coldness, "I know there were misunderstandings between you and your sister before. Your sister realized her mistakes long ago. Though we're divorced now, we're still together, selling vegetables at the night market. Chuxia, your sister said the idea to sell vegetables at the night market was from you, thinking I was suited for it. Is that true?"

He stared at Lin Chuxia without blinking.

He remembered in his dreams, their poverty was so crushing they could barely afford to eat.

When they got married, the Lin Family demanded a dowry of 300 yuan from the Li Family, worsening the Li Family's hardship.

It was Lin Chuxia who suggested going to the county to sell vegetables for money.

Chapter 749: Stray Dog

Lin Chuxia's frown deepened, "Just call me Lin Chuxia. We aren't that familiar with each other, and there's no way I'd give Lin Jiayi any advice. I have things to do, so I'm leaving first."

After saying this, she bypassed Li Guangyuan and headed straight for the jeep.

Li Guangyuan still wanted to stop her, but a tall figure stepped in front of him.

When he looked up, he met a pair of gloomy eyes.

"Who are you? I'm a relative of Lin Chuxia, and I haven't finished talking with her."

"Someone like you, a pest, even deserves to talk to her? What kind of relative are you to her? Can't you see she's very impatient dealing with you?"

"You..."

Li Guangyuan was caught off guard by how harshly this person spoke.

Weren't they supposed to say these wealthy people care a lot about appearances?

Someone like this around Lin Chuxia doesn't worry her about her reputation?

He wanted to argue with the man, but upon meeting those cold eyes, he instinctively closed his mouth.

This man's gaze was too cold; after years of running a stall at the night market, he had honed the skill of reading people's expressions.

The man in front of him was not someone to provoke—if he pushed too far, he might indeed get beaten up.

Though reluctant to back down, his pride wouldn't let him admit defeat, "I have nothing to say to you. You're just a dog at Lin Chuxia's side. What's there to be proud of?"

Gu Peng suddenly laughed, but the laughter didn't reach his eyes, "No matter what, I might be a dog at Lin Chuxia's side, but no matter how much you wag your tail and beg, she won't spare you a glance. Do you know what that is called?"

He enunciated three words, "Stray dog!"

"You..."

Facing Gu Peng's provocative look, Li Guangyuan gritted his teeth and finally held back his anger.

From afar, a young police officer asked him, "Comrade, do you still want to report this? You said your money was stolen, so you need to provide specific clues so we can help you retrieve your money bag quickly."

"Coming, coming," Li Guangyuan responded, glared fiercely at Gu Peng, and turned to run back.

Gu Peng watched his retreating figure and let out a cold snort, "Hah, stray dog..."

By now, Lin Chuxia had already returned to the car.

Old Master He had been sitting in the back seat, staring blankly in the direction of the police station.

When Lin Chuxia opened the car door and got in, Old Master He finally withdrew his gaze.

"Weren't we supposed to leave them alone? Are you disappointed I didn't bring them out?"

Old Master He shook his head, "No, I was worried you were delayed in there too long. I know what my two daughters are like—they're very good at making irrational arguments."



Lin Chuxia chuckled, "Indeed, they are, but no matter how irrational they are, they can't defy the law. The officers won't indulge them."

Seeing Old Master He's visibly low spirits, she simply nodded and fell silent.

Lin Chuxia continued, "She moved everything she could from the house, furniture and television, and sold it all. The officers visited her house, and there was nothing left, probably sold everything off. Those items together were worth around two thousand or more. She's charged with theft, so prison time is certain. But I've spoken with Sun Hao—if she can pay the compensation, let's reduce the sentence, and maybe after a year or so, she'll be out."

Old Master He nodded again, "Giving her a lesson is good too. Thank you."

He knew Lin Chuxia did it for him.

"Actually, earlier in life, I was very fond of my two daughters, back when the family was doing okay. In families like ours, traditions were very important, and boys were highly valued. When the eldest gave birth to a girl, my parents weren't pleased. When the second was born a girl, the elders had a lot of dissatisfaction, and they didn't like the two girls. I knew it wasn't the children's fault, so I thought since their grandparents didn't care for them, as their father, I should make it up to them. In terms of food, drink, play, and use, as long as I could afford it, I did my best to satisfy them.

Later, their mother couldn't get pregnant for a long time; my father diagnosed that she was injured giving birth to the second girl and might not be able to conceive again. My mother was anxious and arranged for me to take a concubine, and the following year she bore a son. Even then, I never neglected the three of them."

During the war years, the house wasn't peaceful, but I never let those two children suffer any harm. I never neglected them..."

Lin Chuxia could imagine it. In her eyes, Old Master He was compassionate and meticulous.

Traveling at such an age, he still remembered to buy a doll for Qi Qi.

One could imagine how considerate he was towards his own daughters.

Old Master He took a deep breath, "I know their mother blames me, and the two girls were influenced by her. No matter how well I treated them, they felt it wasn't as good as what the concubine and son got, so that when the invaders came and the family suffered, my little son's mother, the woman I later married, was pushed out by their mother and tragically killed. I wasn't home that day, and by the time I knew, it was too late. If it weren't for my son's grandmother protecting him, he might not have survived..."

Lin Chuxia's pupils contracted; he only knew He Caiyun and He Caixia had broken Old Master He's heart, but he hadn't expected so much more.

Old Master He stared out the window, still murmuring.

"Even after making such a grievous mistake, thinking the two girls were still young, I didn't drive her out of the He Family's door. In times of war, human life was as cheap as grass, and life was hard enough. Driving her out would have been driving her to her death. But she didn't enjoy much because a few years later, during a natural disaster, the family had nothing to eat, and she fell ill and just passed away."

Old Master He glanced at Lin Chuxia, "Afterward, you probably know the story. I was..., and the two daughters were grown. The eldest was married, and the second one had a match made. Not wanting to drag themselves down, they severed ties with me. To show her determination, the second daughter led the crowd in chanting slogans..."

In the end, Old Master He could finally no longer speak, trembling with emotion.

Lin Chuxia raised her hand to gently clasp his wrinkled large hand.

"Master, you're a good father. You brought them into this world, raised them to adulthood—this is the greatest kindness of all. You don't owe them anything."

On the contrary, He Caihong and He Caixia were ungrateful, always demanding without considering their father. Upon seeing their father in distress, they quickly cut all ties and even added insult to injury.

But when they saw the potential for benefit, they shamelessly clawed their way back.

Such children are worse than beasts.

"Children are a burden," Old Master He sighed, "Girl, honestly, along the way just now, I've had two little voices in my head arguing. One says I shouldn't care anymore. I've already done more than enough. The other reminds me that I'm their father; I brought them into this world. A child's misbehavior is the father's fault. Even while you've been in there, I've been thinking a lot."

Chapter 750: Lesson Learned

"After thinking so much, have you come to any conclusions? Are you satisfied with how I've handled it? If not, I'll go back and tell them to withdraw the report and let He Caixia go."

Old Master He glared at her, "You know full well I didn't mean it that way. The way you handled it is just fine, it taught her a lesson..."

Though he didn't finish, Lin Chuxia understood.

That was also why she handled it that way.

If it had been handled by the book and He Caixia was locked up for a couple of years, most likely that would have been a hurdle Old Master He couldn't overcome in his heart.

.....

Old Master He rarely came back, and after leaving the police station, he went home.

The house was emptied, and the things were all turned over.

Already knowing in the police station that Lin Chuxia had shown leniency, even the slight guilt he felt was now completely gone.

How could this be his own daughter? If she had even the slightest sense of father-daughter bond, she wouldn't have ransacked the house like a robber.

Gu Peng, after leaving the police station, went to Daqing Mountain Village to discuss road repairs with Village Chief Sun.

Su Wensong was with them, and without a word, Lin Chuxia and Su Wensong started tidying up.

After the house was set in order, it was almost noon.

Having not returned to Ancheng County for a long time, Old Master He went to the Bun Shop near the train station for lunch.

Seeing Old Master He and Lin Chuxia arrive, Sun Lanlan was happier than anyone and went to inform Granny Su.

Granny Su was in the yard soothing her little great-grandson.

Su Wensong and Sun Lanlan's son, Su Yian, was already over two years old.

The little guy was chubby and strong like a young bull, running around the yard restlessly.

At this moment, he was holding a small shovel, digging soil in Granny Su's flower pot.

As soon as Sun Lanlan entered the yard, she saw her son was digging at her grandmother's peony, which she had grown for many years, and Grandma not only didn't stop him but watched him with a loving smile.

Granny spoils this little rascal, but she doesn't. She stepped forward and lifted him by the scruff of his neck.

"You little rascal, are you trying to defy the heavens? Peonies are most afraid of root damage. If you dare dig randomly again, watch out for your bottom."

Granny Su waved her hand with a smile, "It's okay, how much strength could he have? Loosening the soil is just fine."

Before Sun Lanlan could speak, a teasing voice came.

"Oh my, I've seen everything today. When did you, Lady Su Senior, ever say such lies with your eyes open? The soil in the pot is almost all gone, and you call this loosening the soil. It's really something new."

Granny Su was surprised to see it was Old Master He but she was still sharp-tongued.

"I just like letting my little great-grandson dig, so what? No matter how pretty the flowers, they can't compare to making my grandson happy, are you jealous, old thing?"

"Me, jealous of you?" Old Master He grunted, "A mischievous brat, what is there to be jealous of? You haven't seen my little apprentice granddaughter, she looks like a snow doll, really pretty and sweet, calls me grandpa, can't tell you how precious she is."

"Yes, your little apprentice granddaughter is the best," Granny Su knew Old Master He was talking about Lin Chuxia's daughter, "For us, as long as we see our children and grandchildren's days getting better and better, we are happy. Now, seeing the children grow up without worrying about food or clothing, I sometimes feel like living to such an age is a bonus."

Old Master He deeply resonated with these words from Granny Su, "Who wouldn't agree? Ten years ago, I never expected we'd see days like these."

"Is it just you who couldn't imagine? If you ask me, people should cherish the now. I heard you haven't been in Yan City for the past half a year. We're getting old, don't trouble the children and make them worry."

"Yeah, no more trouble," Old Master He said, his cloudy eyes dimming even more, "Just now when I came over, I saw some grains at Mr. Shi's house..."

His voice grew lower and lower.

Lin Chuxia heard this and looked over too.

She also saw the grains at Grandpa Shi's house entrance.

It was a local custom that after a person passed away, the pillow they used in life was burned at the entrance.

According to their ancestors' beliefs, a pillow was one of the most important belongings to a person, and many people got used to sleeping with the same pillow. Switching to another could take a lot of time to adjust.

And a pillow, being one of the objects closest to a person.

Ancient people believed that life's essence harbored a spirit; once deceased, if they still longed for life, they might leave that longing on the pillow.

Burning the pillow at the entrance severed the deceased's attachment to the mortal world, allowing them to quickly enter reincarnation, and also notified others of the death in the family.

Granny Su nodded, "Yes, it was Old Stone, happened last week. He hasn't been well for the past couple of years. The doctor had long advised him to drink less, but he had a penchant for sneaking out to drink. I heard his daughter came and he drank a few more out of happiness, then didn't wake up after sleeping that night."

She then warned Old Master He, "You need to take care too, we're not as young as we used to be, can't be too indulgent."

Old Master He's mood seemed heavy, "I know, I know, I'm not going to be like Old Stone, doing everything without limitations. Seeing life getting better, I want to live a few more years to enjoy it."

"That's the right way to think. When I think of the past, we've come through so much. We should cherish the good times now."

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After lunch at the Su Family, Su Wensong personally sent Old Master He and Lin Chuxia back to the city.

Passing by Grandpa Shi's house once again, Old Master He stared at the trampled grain at the entrance for a long time.

Lin Chuxia knew that Old Master He and Grandpa Shi had a close friendship.

After she became his apprentice, Old Master He stopped going to the train station, but he often went to Qin's Buns Shop by the station to eat and have a drink. He had frequent exchanges with Grandpa Shi, a regular at the Bun Shop.

It was only after moving to the city in recent years that he had no chance to meet.

Today, Old Master He had initially planned to visit his old acquaintances, but instead found himself separated by life and death.

Lin Chuxia kept trying to start a conversation to shift Old Master He's focus.

Eventually, Old Master He noticed her intent, "Alright, girl, you don't need to comfort me anymore, I'm fine. I suddenly feel that in this life, whether long or short, in the moment of passing, who knows what the point of it all was."

He even looked at Lin Chuxia approvingly, "You're doing great, leading Qin Family Village folks to grow greenhouse vegetables, so many people can eat fresh greens in winter, helping Daqing Mountain Village folks plant yellow peaches, getting these people prosperous, and those factories you opened, providing so many people with livelihoods. Master can't compare to you..."