

Switched M 751

Chapter 751: Betraying One's Master and Ancestors

Lin Chuxia tilted her head and looked at him, "If you say it like that, I'll get proud. How about this..."

She turned to the side with a serious look, and Old Sir He also looked over seriously.

Lin Chuxia spoke mysteriously, "Since you think you're not as good as me in everything, how about you call me Master, and in the future, if I find ways to get rich, I'll take you along..."

"Pfft..."

Su Wensong couldn't help but burst out laughing.

Old Sir He's eyes widened in surprise, and he raised his hand as if to hit her, "You little brat, how dare you talk to your master like that? If I don't teach you a lesson today, then I'm not your master..."

Lin Chuxia shrank back into the front passenger seat, and although Old Sir He tried to hit her, she was just out of reach, laughing so hard she was trembling like a flower.

This interruption finally eased the tense atmosphere in the car.

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Back home, Zhuang Jingshu asked her how things were going in An City.

Lin Chuxia told Zhuang Jingshu about Old Sir He and his children.

To be honest, someone with Zhuang Jingshu's background could empathize with Old Sir He, as they had experienced similar situations in the past.

However, when it came to the behavior of Old Sir He's children, Zhuang Jingshu couldn't agree.

Back then, their family faced even greater difficulties, yet none of them abandoned or betrayed each other; they only worked together to overcome the crisis.

As for Lin Chuxia, who ended up with the Lin Family, it was an act of desperation at the time.

They didn't expect it would be more than a decade, and those years were also filled with suffering for her.

Even Lin Chuxia's father, before he died, kept worrying about her, apologizing and telling her to find her way back home if she ever got the chance, no matter what.

How could they be like Old Sir He's two daughters, who were so heartless as to abandon their father and even lead others in slogans against him?

It was like stabbing their parents in the heart.

When she heard about He Caixia's consequences, even someone as composed as Zhuang Jingshu couldn't help but say, "She deserved a lesson."

As the two of them were talking, Qin Yang came home from work.

Lin Chuxia got up to cook.

The summer heat had only begun to cool by evening.

Once the meal was ready, the family set up a small table in the courtyard to eat.

After dinner, they sat in the courtyard enjoying the cool breeze, and it was during this time that Lin Chuxia brought up her thoughts.

This idea had been brewing in her mind, waiting for the right moment.

Recently, especially since Old Sir He returned, she realized she couldn't wait any longer.

"You want to build a pharmaceutical factory?" Qin Yang looked a bit serious, "Leaving aside the approval problems, you're a disciple of the Master, but you've never actually studied medicine with him. How can you suddenly want to start a pharmaceutical factory? And as I understand it, building one is not as simple as opening a bun shop or a clothing factory; it's a long cycle and will involve many challenges."

Lin Chuxia was well aware that building a pharmaceutical factory required not only sufficient funds but also professional personnel, legal procedures, and qualifications, among other things.

And what she wanted wasn't just any ordinary pharmaceutical factory.

"I've thought it through; I plan to establish a factory specializing in producing traditional Chinese medicine," she looked at the two of them earnestly, "Shortly after I became his apprentice, my Master gave me some of his treasured formulas. He never intended to continue treating people, and when he gave me those formulas, he even seemed dismissive. But I knew he just didn't want to owe me."

Old Sir He had nothing at the time, and her goodwill touched him. But not wanting to take advantage of her kindness, he accepted her as his student and gave her his treasured formulas.

Those were the results of a lifetime of work; how could he possibly look down on them, especially since he preserved them so well during those times?

"No matter the circumstances, my Master always had passion and dedication to his work. I can't let those formulas go to waste. Besides building a pharmaceutical factory, I also want to create a base suitable for cultivating medicinal herbs. I know it will be tough, but no matter how difficult it is, I want to see it through. I want to do something meaningful."

Lin Chuxia even thought about how, before the pharmaceutical factory was up and running, most of Xiyang Group's profits would have to be entirely invested in this project.

And this level of investment could very well continue for the next few years.

However, Lin Chuxia had no regrets.

Once the pharmaceutical factory was established, and her formulas were put into production, it all made sense.

In fact, you could say this was the most meaningful thing she had done in this new life.

As soon as she finished speaking, Zhuang Jingshu smiled and said, "I support you, Xiaxia. Mom supports you. This endeavor is very meaningful. Whether it's financially or in terms of manpower and resources, Mom will support you any way she can. Our country's traditional Chinese medicine, a cultural gem passed down from our ancestors for thousands of years, and your Master's life's work, shouldn't be buried."

No one appreciated Old Sir He's medical skills more than Zhuang Jingshu.

Her life was saved by Old Sir He.

Back then, when she was abroad receiving medical treatment, she was almost sentenced to death; that drove her to return home to fulfill her final wishes at any cost.

If it weren't for Old Sir He, she wouldn't have survived, nor reconnected with her daughter.

She had faith in Old Sir He and even more in the traditional Chinese medicine of her country.

Qin Yang was only concerned that this would be difficult to accomplish, but seeing Lin Chuxia's determination, he quickly voiced his support, "Alright, whatever you do, I'll support you."

His wife had always been his pride.

Lin Chuxia responded with a gentle smile.

It's great to have such supportive family, both her mother and her husband.

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Lin Chuxia was never one to procrastinate. Once she made up her mind, her first step was to negotiate with Old Sir He.

She sought to learn from Old Sir He the best regions in the country for cultivating medicinal herbs, which herbs were most suitable for artificial cultivation, the ones with the most extensive uses, and the herb types most scarce in the country...

When Old Sir He first heard she wanted to build a pharmaceutical factory and interplant a medicinal herb base, he thought this young disciple of his was joking again.

Her ventures—clothing factories, shopping malls, food factories—were cash cows, the most lucrative industries of the day.

Without doing anything else, she could easily enjoy a luxurious life with the profits from these ventures, enough money to last for generations, with no need to trouble herself with laborious herbal medicine endeavors.

Compared to those, cultivating herbs even seemed like a thankless task.

But seeing her earnest dedication, Old Sir He's heart was stirred with mixed emotions.

Knowing she was doing it for him, he felt touched and more committed to imparting all his knowledge.

In fact, despite having taken Lin Chuxia as a disciple for years, he hadn't taught her as much as he had taught Qin Jianjun.

Now, finally, he had the chance to fulfill his duty as a master.

Chapter 752: Clear-Headed... Foolishness

During the past half-year or so since he left, Old Sir He has traveled to many places and gained a significant understanding of the current state of traditional Chinese herbal medicine in our country.

It is precisely because of this that Old Sir He returned with such a heavy heart.

Now, his little apprentice wants to cultivate Chinese herbs on a large scale. It's the perfect opportunity for him to pass on all he has seen and learned over the years, along with his lifetime of experience, to his little apprentice.

He's just worried that he might not explain things thoroughly enough.

For a while, Lin Chuxia ran over to Old Sir He's place daily, and the master and apprentice thoroughly analyzed the current situation of traditional Chinese herbal medicine in our country.

Soon it was the end of July, and that day, Lin Chuxia hadn't even stepped out the door when Lin Jiadong's voice was heard from outside the courtyard.

His voice carried a hint of excitement, and even Yuan Bao wagged his tail joyfully when he saw him.

Upon seeing his demeanor, Lin Chuxia could already guess a bit in her heart.

She stepped out with a smile and greeted him, "Jiadong, come in quickly. You came so early; did you ride a bicycle here?"

Seeing the bicycle beside him truly surprised Lin Chuxia.

This silly boy, from Ancheng County to Yan City, is over a hundred miles.

Lin Jiadong wiped the sweat off his forehead, smiling foolishly.

"Second sister, I couldn't sleep as soon as it dawned today. I found out from the county that the bus to Yan City departs at 8:30, so I just decided to ride my bicycle here."

Lin Chuxia was at a loss for words again.

Just after the summer solstice, the days break early; it was bright before 4 AM.

From Daqing Mountain Village to Ancheng County by bicycle takes at most half an hour, and there are no buses after 4 AM.

"Such a long distance, weren't you afraid you'd get lost on your way?" Lin Chuxia teased him.

There was no navigation at that time; everything depended on one's eyes and mouth to ask around.

Lin Jiadong was unfazed, "No way, I've been here several times for competitions before. I followed the main road, it's easy to recognize."

The siblings were talking when Zhuang Jingshu came out carrying the child.

Qi Qi, lively by nature, couldn't be contained inside the house, especially since someone had come from outside.

The little girl was eager to see who was outside.

Seeing the smile on Zhuang Jingshu's face freeze, Lin Jiadong glanced at Lin Chuxia awkwardly.

To be honest, Lin Jiadong had never met Zhuang Jingshu before.

Previously, it was said that their eldest sister wasn't part of their family, and the eldest sister's birth mother had come looking for her.

Mr. and Mother Lin deliberately avoided Lin Jiadong, almost not letting him come home.

However, upon meeting, Lin Jiadong already guessed the other's identity.

Lin Chuxia maintained her smile, pulling Lin Jiadong over for introductions.

"Mom, this is my brother, Jiadong. Jiadong, this is my mother. You..."

She was still thinking about how Jiadong should address her when he spoke first.

He bowed deeply to Zhuang Jingshu, "Auntie, thank you for giving me my second sister. I know my second sister treats me very well. I will study hard, and in the future, I'll treat my second sister well..."

What he said was a bit disjointed and stammered.

By the end, his face was completely red.

Zhuang Jingshu looked on with a complex expression. Knowing that the Lin Family had mistreated her daughter and posed as her daughter, she held great resentment towards them.

However, she had also heard that her daughter got along well with this youngest son of the Lin Family.

Looking at the boy in front of her at this moment, he didn't share much resemblance to the Lin Family.

The Lin Family's eyes were always calculating, while this boy's eyes showed unease and clarity... and foolishness.

Oh well, during the period Mother Lin and Lin Jiayi conspired to deceive her, this boy never showed up. There's no need to blame him for the Lin Family's mistakes.

Moreover, she heard from her daughter that it was this boy who informed her about Lin Jiayi impersonating her to acknowledge her mother.

She smiled gently, "It's hot outside, come inside and get a drink of water from your sister."

Lin Jiadong was stunned for a moment and nodded firmly, "Okay."

But he wasn't eager to drink water. Instead, he carefully took out an envelope from his military-green satchel and solemnly handed it to Lin Chuxia with both hands.

"Second sister, I've been accepted. This is the admission letter."

Lin Chuxia raised her eyebrows; it was just as she expected, but she still showed joy on her face, "Oh, an admission letter from Capital University, not bad! Second sister knew you had it in you."

Lin Jiadong was flattered and shy, speaking softly, "Actually, it was a guaranteed spot, they notified me a while ago. But without the admission letter, I always felt uneasy. When I got the letter yesterday, I wanted to come and show you right away."

Then he looked cautiously at Lin Chuxia, "Second sister, you're not disappointed that I didn't take the college entrance exam, are you? I actually really wanted to take it. It took a lot to make it to senior year, and I didn't get to take the exam. I feel quite regretful, but the principal and the class teacher didn't want me to take it..."

Lin Chuxia made a pause gesture, "Stop right there. That's a bit 'Versailles' of you. What's there to regret about not taking the entrance exam? And I wouldn't be disappointed. My brother is amazing, getting into Capital University through competitions. That's what many dream of! How can you call it a regret?"

Lin Jiadong laughed sheepishly again.

He had cycled since early morning, over a hundred miles, and still hadn't had breakfast.

Lin Chuxia told him to rest in the room while she cooked something for him.

They had already had breakfast, and Qin Yang had gone to work.

It was already late. Thinking of how Jiadong must be hungry after his journey, she decided to make something quick and easy.

She heated up the pan, fried eggs, and made soup. She cooked some ready-made noodles, sliced some sauced beef they had at home, and finally sprinkled a handful of fresh green onions on top.

A large bowl of noodles was brought to the table, and Lin Jiadong's eyes lit up, "Second sister, I haven't had your cooking in ages; I've been craving it!"

"Alright, stop chattering and eat up,"

Lin Chuxia handed him a pair of chopsticks.

Lin Jiadong took the chopsticks and, without saying a word, started slurping the noodles.

His eating manner was just like someone who was famished.

The adults merely found it amusing, but little Qi Qi was almost drooling.

The little one had just had breakfast with everyone else, so she shouldn't be hungry. But watching Lin Jiadong eat made her anxious.

She squirmed and wriggled, pointing at Lin Jiadong's bowl of noodles, continuously shouting, "Eat, eat, eat..."

Fortunately, Lin Chuxia knew her daughter's ways, and there was still a bit more in the pot.

She served it in her daughter's special small bowl and gave her a little spoon.

Qi Qi was finally satisfied, sitting across from this unfamiliar uncle.

He took a bite, and she took a bite.

Delicious.

Once Lin Jiadong finished eating, Lin Chuxia sat and chatted with him.

As Jiadong was about to head to university, he was filled with anticipation for his college life and already had some plans.

However, these were only one-sided ideas, and part of his visit to the city today was not just to share the good news; he also wanted to hear his second sister's opinions.

Chapter 753: Proud of You

"When I go to university, I definitely want to study hard, though I'm not sure which major will allow me to support my second sister after graduation. I have no plan for my future; I just want to follow my second sister," to repay her.

The last few words he didn't say aloud because he knew if he did, his second sister would definitely scold him.

His second sister supported him through school without ever expecting repayment, but Lin Jiadong knew that without her, he probably wouldn't have been able to attend high school.

Back then, his second sister opened a bun shop in the county, and his parents, seeing her business making money and getting jealous, were determined to send him to her side so they could get a share.

No matter how much he explained the importance of education to his parents, they believed money in hand was the most important thing and never thought about his future.

If he didn't listen to his parents, they wouldn't even consider paying his tuition, let alone letting him attend university.

From then on, Lin Jiadong set the goal of studying hard and, after graduation, helping his second sister with her work.

He now knows that there is a university graduate named Wang Tianyu by his second sister's side, who came to work as her assistant after graduation.

Lin Chuxia disagreed as she spoke, "How can you not have a plan for your future? Our country is in a phase of rapid development, with all industries flourishing. You shouldn't limit your sights to just around me. There are many useful people by my side, but the country needs more elite talents. Jiadong, I hope you have your own goals, your own life, and live meaningfully. You don't have to rush to answer me. Think it over when you return home. No matter what decision you make, your second sister will be proud of you."

To make yourself your second sister's pride, become a useful person to the country, and live your life meaningfully.

Each word felt like a small hammer striking Lin Jiadong's heart.

Before coming to the city, he was just happy to be admitted to his ideal university and hoped to help his second sister with her work in the future.

But his second sister hoped for him to live a meaningful life, become a useful person to the country, and be her pride.

Lin Jiadong silently pondered these words, knowing that, as his second sister said, there are many useful people by her side.

His second sister's businesses are vast, and even if he didn't attend high school or university, he could still find appropriate work to help her. But that's not the reason why his second sister supported his studies...

After a while, Lin Jiadong lifted his head, looking at Lin Chuxia with determined eyes, "Second sister, I understand now. I will think it over carefully."

Lin Chuxia smiled with relief, "Good."

As the siblings were talking, Yuan Bao barked a couple of times in the yard, and Hu Xingwei peeked around the gate.

Lin Chuxia invited him in to talk, but he looked past her to Lin Jiadong instead.

"Aunt Lin, I just saw your brother arrived. I'm so bored at home during summer vacation. Can your brother come play with me? I have chess, military chess, and even checkers if all else fails..."

Lin Chuxia looked towards Lin Jiadong behind her, seeking his opinion.

Seeing Lin Jiadong might refuse, Hu Xingwei stepped forward two more steps, "Brother Jiadong, just play with me for a short while. I'll teach you if you don't know how."

That eager look was so close to pulling him along.

Lin Jiadong said to Lin Chuxia, "I'll play with him for a while, and then I'll come back."

Lin Chuxia nodded, "Go ahead, I'll buy groceries. We'll have braised ribs for lunch. Come back soon for lunch."

Hu Xingwei rejoiced and dragged Lin Jiadong to his house.

"Brother Jiadong, you don't know how stifling these days have been for me. My parents always have me studying at home. Can you believe it's vacation and I still can't rest properly? I'm just in my sophomore year, and my mom always nags me about the university entrance exam—my ears are almost calloused from it. But don't worry; my parents aren't home right now, only my sister is."

After speaking, he even winked at Lin Jiadong.

Lin Jiadong was bewildered.

Truthfully, he wasn't familiar with Hu Xingwei, having only exchanged greetings a few times at his second sister's place.

But he had interacted with Hu Xingwei's older sister a few times. She was a very aloof yet upright girl.

While thinking this, he followed Hu Xingwei through the gate into the yard, and saw the girl standing there.

Hu Xingwei spoke with a smile, "Sis, I brought him here for you."

Lin Jiadong was even more confused. Wasn't he invited over for chess?

The girl in front spoke, "Hello, Lin Jiadong, long time no see."

Her voice remained as cool as ever but carried a hint of familiarity.

Lin Jiadong couldn't help but smile, "Long time no see, Hu Yaping!"

Hu Xingwei giddily added, "Sis, I just asked him, Brother Jiadong is also going to the capital for university."

Hearing this "also," Lin Jiadong looked toward Hu Yaping, "You're going to university in the capital too? Which school are you going to?"

"Capital University."

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The timing for the Southern inspection trip was finally set.

Lin Chuxia could now leave home almost without worries.

Little Qi Qi was a year old now, had long been weaned, and besides drinking milk, could eat quite a bit of food every day.

In terms of food and drink, Lin Chuxia didn't need to worry. The little one had been raised single-handedly by Zhuang Jingshu and wasn't especially dependent on Lin Chuxia emotionally.

"At most a month, at least 20 days. Regardless of the outcome, I will return. During this time, Mom, you'll have to bear some extra burden."

Zhuang Jingshu was indifferent, "What's there to be burdened about? Qi Qi is so well-behaved, I wish she could stay with me every day. When you leave, just don't worry about the child. By the way, let Zhuang Yang go with you. Though he's not very familiar with the domestic scene, he's reliable in work and has some skills. Having him by your side will ensure your safety."

Qin Yang also looked over.

When Lin Chuxia went out on business, his primary concern was her safety.

If it weren't for his work obligations, Qin Yang would have wished to accompany Lin Chuxia on this trip.

Lin Chuxia, however, had her own plans.

"Brother's hands are full with work lately; it's just an initial inspection over there, so there's no need to trouble him. I plan to take Gu Peng with me; he has some skills, too. Mom, you don't need to worry."

Zhuang Jingshu had met Gu Peng twice and had a rather good impression of him.

Qin Yang, however, slightly furrowed his brows, "Are you only taking Gu Peng?"

Lin Chuxia nodded, "The two of us will suffice. There are people there supporting us."

Old Master He was very attentive, knowing what Lin Chuxia intended to do, although he didn't speak much of it.

Besides teaching her all the necessary knowledge, he also connected her with his old friends.

With this connection, things are expected to go more smoothly.

Zhuang Jingshu laughed and said, "Old Master He truly thinks things through. I heard he spent some time there in the past six months, establishing connections. With this, whether it's building a plantation or setting up a pharmaceutical factory, we won't be fumbling around blindly."

Chapter 754: Never Let Down Your Guard Against Others

Having said that, Qin Yang didn't speak further.

It was only later in the evening, when Lin Chuxia entered the room after washing up, she noticed Qin Yang's face was pale, his thin lips tightly pressed together.

Seeing him like this, Lin Chuxia knew he had something on his mind.

She lifted the blanket and got on the bed, glanced sideways at him, and asked, "What's wrong? Still worried about my business trip?"

Over the years, Lin Chuxia had only traveled far once, and that was to Rong City to stock up for the fashion mall.

But something happened on that trip.

Initially, Lin Chuxia didn't tell Qin Yang, fearing it would make him worry.

But somehow, he heard about it from someone else, and they had a falling out over it for several days.

Thinking about this, Lin Chuxia hugged his arm and playfully said, "Don't worry, I will take care of myself when I'm away, for you and Qi Qi's sake, I won't let anything happen to me. Besides, this time is really different from last time. I'm just going to take a look, and my mentor has already contacted someone familiar. What else are you worried about?"

Looking at her rare weak demeanor, the words in Qin Yang's heart were hard to put out.

Speaking would make him seem childish, but not speaking, he had a hundred, a thousand worries.

"That Gu Peng, I always feel he's not quite suitable to accompany you. If you don't want Zhuang Yang to go with you, let Wang Tianyu accompany you instead."

In all these years of marriage, Qin Yang had never opposed Lin Chuxia's decisions, especially regarding her work.

This was a first.

Lin Chuxia looked up and saw his unusually serious expression, taken aback slightly.

Thinking of something, she smiled, "Are you that concerned about me bringing Gu Peng?"

Seeing him purse his lips again, Lin Chuxia leaned in with a smile to kiss him.

"Do you know how cute you look when you're jealous? Look at our Minister Qin, gets jealous like a little wife. With such a lovable husband, how could I even glance at another man?"

She cuddled Qin Yang's arm coquettishly, "Honey, don't worry, Gu Peng isn't what you think. He's very dedicated and responsible at work. I've thought carefully before taking him along. Mom's business is shifting to domestic markets, and both my brother and Luo Sen are swamped. I can't just call them to travel with me now, can I? Tianyu's work is scheduled too, and he's been responsible for Ancheng County recently. Changing plans last minute would just create work hassle."

Concerning Gu Peng, she was always rational. Lin Chuxia felt that Qin Yang was biased against Gu Peng, simply because he didn't know him well enough.

"Alright honey, even if you don't trust Gu Peng, don't you trust me? Don't forget, I also have combat skills. Is it because I don't use them often that you've forgotten I can protect myself? Besides, it's just a survey over there. What could happen? If you're jealous because of Gu Peng, there's really no need. With such a handsome and considerate husband, how would I find interest in anyone else?"

"But I always feel there's something odd about Gu Peng's feelings towards you."

Especially the way Gu Peng looked at Lin Chuxia, it was always vague and ambiguous.

"He's just like that, always grumpy, plus, I know he's an avowed bachelor. He's not interested in little girls, let alone a married woman like me."

The more nonchalantly she spoke, the more uncomfortable Qin Yang felt.

"Are you perhaps too trusting of him? How long have you known him? How much can you know about him, sweetheart? It's always good to keep some guard up."

"Alright, alright, I got it, don't worry, I'll be cautious around him."

Lin Chuxia didn't want to dwell on Gu Peng any longer; she believed time would prove everything.

As she hugged his arm, she leaned in, and a warm kiss landed on his eyes.

"I'll be leaving tomorrow, don't make me worry. With you like this, I feel like I'm not going for work, but eloping with another man..."

"But you..."

Before he could finish, her soft lips sealed his, "Just trust me..."

Qin Yang wanted to say, I've always trusted you, it's that man I don't trust.

But Lin Chuxia didn't give him a chance to speak.

Tonight, she was especially passionate and proactive.

Thinking of her business trip, which would take at least a month, Qin Yang swallowed all the words back down.

He hoped all his worries would be unnecessary.

As for any man daring to covet his wife, if he had the guts, he could just try his luck.

He trusted Lin Chuxia, and he trusted himself even more.

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In the heat of summer, Lin Chuxia didn't bring much luggage, and Qin Yang personally took her to the train station.

By the time they got there, Gu Peng was already waiting at the train station entrance.

Gu Peng had even less baggage, carrying only a canvas bag.

When he saw Lin Chuxia and Qin Yang approaching, he reached out to take the suitcase from Qin Yang's hand.

Lin Chuxia glanced at her watch; it was almost time.

They had already said their goodbyes in the car, so Lin Chuxia quickly grasped Qin Yang's hand, "Well, we're off then. Don't worry, I'll call you."

Qin Yang nodded, handing over the suitcase to Gu Peng, couldn't help but caution.

"Watch out for pickpockets on the train, be careful, and take care of Mr. Lin while you're away."

Gu Peng took the suitcase, his tone slightly nonchalant, "Don't worry, she's more important than my life."

Qin Yang frowned abruptly. On the surface, this line seemed fine, but it grated on him.

Looking at the man in front of him, with dark eyes deep and a flash of humor passing, he carried the suitcase quickly to catch up with Lin Chuxia.

Qin Yang watched their departing backs, his deep eyes roiling with emotion.

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The place Lin Chuxia was going required a three-day-two-night train ride, and they had booked sleeper tickets.

Traveling on this type of green train in summer was painful, even in a sleeper car.

Train cars of this era lacked air conditioning, the train felt like a small pigeon cage, with a breeze only coming through windows.

Entering the train station, Gu Peng let Lin Chuxia follow behind him.

Gu Peng was tall and robust, blocking Lin Chuxia like a mountain ahead, preventing anyone from jostling her even in the crowded train station.

Once on the train, the two headed straight for their seats.

Finding their spots, Gu Peng pointed to a side berth, "Mr. Lin, you take the upper, I'll take the lower."

The upper berth, though high, offered more privacy, which Lin Chuxia always preferred when she traveled.

She had specifically asked Gu Peng during the ticket booking.

"Just call me by my name outside," Lin Chuxia opened her luggage, pulled out a clean sheet, intending to make the bed afresh.

The upper berth being quite high, as Lin Chuxia was about to take off her shoes to climb up, Gu Peng took the sheet from her hand, made the bed for her and casually tossed his bag onto the middle berth.

Chapter 755: Always a Mystery

The two of them were busy, while the people across them also arrived.

First, there was a family of three, a young couple bringing along a four or five-year-old girl.

The man took the lower bunk, leaving the woman and the little girl to the middle bunk.

After a while, another middle-aged man came over.

Once everything was settled, the train slowly started to move.

It was still early, and Lin Chuxia didn't want to rest in her bunk yet, so she sat on the lower bunk chatting with Gu Peng.

To be honest, apart from work, there were rarely opportunities for them to chat.

When they first met, Gu Peng seemed very aloof and didn't smile easily, making Lin Chuxia feel uncomfortable and hesitant to get close to him. This was a good opportunity.

Lin Chuxia chatted with him casually, primarily wanting to know how he got out a year early.

This matter had always been a mystery to Lin Chuxia. Even though her rebirth caused many butterfly effects, none seemed to have anything to do with Gu Peng, as they had never interacted before.

Gu Peng answered honestly, saying that he had been inside long enough and was determined to get out by behaving well.

As for whether his sentence could be reduced, he wasn't sure himself.

The two of them talked until noon, and Gu Peng came back with some food.

After lunch, Lin Chuxia wanted to sleep on the upper bunk for a while, but then realized the middle bunk was still unoccupied.

Seeing her confusion, Gu Peng explained directly, "I bought three sleeper tickets, so you can sleep on whichever bunk you like."

Lin Chuxia understood, "You're really thoughtful."

It's not like she wanted to occupy two bunks; it was just inconvenient to have a stranger between them or above them.

A train ticket only costs a few dozen bucks. If it weren't for the worry of not being allowed, she'd want to buy out the whole compartment.

Lin Chuxia lay on the upper bunk, preparing to nap for a while. Although the carriage was noisy, she needed to sleep on such a long journey.

At this moment, the man in the opposite upper bunk returned.

The man, in his forties, was dark and fat, making the space feel even more cramped.

The most unbearable thing was the strong smell of sweat coming from him.

Not only that, but after lying down, the man faced Lin Chuxia directly, openly staring at her, making her very uncomfortable.

Lin Chuxia turned her back to him, facing inward.

But it felt like his gaze was still on her, like a thorn in her back, making her uneasy.

Lin Chuxia sat up, tidied her bedding, and moved to the middle bunk.

Gu Peng was on the lower bunk, entertaining himself with a deck of cards. Seeing Lin Chuxia come down, he asked, "What's wrong?"

"Nothing much, just thought the middle one is more convenient."

Gu Peng looked at her face, glanced around, and finally fixed his gaze on the upper bunk opposite.

The man had closed his eyes, seeming to sleep.

Gu Peng withdrew his gaze and helped Lin Chuxia make the bed.

Opposite the middle bunk was the woman with the child. The child was asleep, and the woman lay outside her.

Lin Chuxia felt more comfortable, lying down, listening to the chatter and the clattering of the train. She dozed off for a bit.

The middle bunk had the added benefit of being closer to the window, feeling the breeze coming in.

Lin Chuxia wasn't in a hurry to get up, lying there watching the scenery outside the train window.

But soon, she had that feeling again. Lifting her head, she indeed met the man's gaze.

Although it was the middle and upper bunk, and the two faced each other, the man only needed to lean a bit to see her.

Their eyes met, and the man even smiled at Lin Chuxia.

That smile revealed teeth yellowed from smoking, making his face look even more sleazy.

Lin Chuxia frowned slightly.

That wasn't the end of it; the man straightforwardly asked, "Young lady, where are you headed?"

Chitchat on trains is common, given the long journey and the lack of time-passing tools in this era.

But Lin Chuxia wasn't interested in responding to his advances.

Usually, if there's no reply, the conversation ends, as no one knows anyone.

But the man seemed oblivious, "Meeting here is fate, young lady, you seem like a good-tempered person, let's chat to pass the time."

This time, Gu Peng interrupted before Lin Chuxia could respond, casting a cold glance at the man, "Who has fate with you?"

The man was stunned for a moment but began to tease, "How is it not fate? There's a saying, a thousand years of cultivation brings a boat's crossing, and ten thousand years, a shared pillow. Although we're on a train, it's the same. Shows at least a thousand years of fate."

He looked at Lin Chuxia again, "Brother, you're lucky to have such a beautiful wife. You must be newlyweds, right?"

From his experience, flattery like this usually starts a conversation.

The two in front seemed unusual, wearing clothes that didn't look cheap and using things very delicately.

Lin Chuxia frowned even deeper. But there was no need to explain to a stranger, so she grabbed a book to read.

Gu Peng showed even less interest in humoring him, "What relationship we have is none of your business. Shut your foul mouth, or I'll deal with you."

After two rebuffs and seeing Gu Peng's dark expression, the man finally dared not continue.

But he still muttered quietly, disgruntled, "Just chatting, talk if you want, no need to be like this..."

Facing Gu Peng's cold gaze, he said nothing more.

Quickly, he spoke to the man in the lower opposite bunk, "Watch my luggage, I'm going for a piss."

With that, he hurried out of the compartment.

In less than fifteen minutes, the man returned looking relieved.

This time, he didn't dare to chat with Lin Chuxia and Gu Peng, instead speaking to the man on his lower bunk.

Just about where he came from, where he's headed, what he's doing.

The man on his lower bunk seemed honest, answering straightforwardly without elaborating.

Probably feeling a conversation with such a man was dull, the middle-aged man climbed back up.

He even took off his shoes before getting into the top bunk.

The already narrow space was instantly filled with a pungent odor.

The little girl opposite had woken up, immediately covering her nose, "It stinks."

The little girl's mother smiled apologetically at the middle-aged man.

The middle-aged man waved it off, "Ah, it's nothing, just sweaty feet."

The smell made Lin Chuxia's head hurt, and she felt unlucky.

Taking a train, she dreaded being next to someone like this.

In public places, with just a ticket to ride, not much can be said.

But the smell was overpowering, and she couldn't sit still, wanting to walk around a bit.

Chapter 756: Domineering

Gu Peng directly grabbed the arm of the man who was about to climb onto the upper bunk. The man looked back in surprise, and Gu Peng said directly, "Brother, put on your shoes, pick up your luggage, and find somewhere else."

The middle-aged man didn't understand his words, "What do you mean by that?"

"Literal meaning, I don't want you to stay here anymore. You can stay anywhere else, just leave here quickly."

"Hey," the middle-aged man was not having it, "How can you talk like that? I bought this bunk, and you say I can't stay here, so I can't? Just because you have money, it doesn't mean you can bully people like this, right? You think less of us poor people, don't you?"

As soon as he spoke, he stirred up class resentment, and his loud voice drew in the surrounding people's attention.

Gu Peng didn't explain, just directly pulled out some money from his pocket, counted out 8 banknotes, and slammed them in front of him.

"This money is for you. You can take it to the conductor and replace it with a ticket for another spot."

The middle-aged man looked at the money and immediately shut his mouth.

Despite criticizing the rich, who doesn't like money in this world?

Just now, when he was chatting with the man on the lower bunk, Lin Chuxia heard that the place he was going wasn't too far away, and the sleeper ticket he bought cost him 48 yuan, which he bought grudgingly.

Gu Peng gave him 80 yuan in one go.

The train had already traveled so far; even if he replaced the ticket, it wouldn't cost 48 yuan, and he would have over 30 left.

If he switched to a hard seat or didn't replace the ticket at all, the 80 yuan would all be his.

Such a deal anyone would understand.

The man looked at the money, eyes gleaming, but felt embarrassed to just take the money like that.

After hesitating for quite a while, he finally picked up the money and luggage, "Knowing your little couple likes to keep clean, I'll take it as a good deed, yielding to you."

"Ehh..."

The crowd burst into laughter, some even covering their noses, as the smell on the man was really strong.

Seeing the man leave so embarrassingly, after hearing his strong words earlier, they thought there'd be a big commotion.

Now, there was nothing more to see, and those who came for the spectacle dispersed.

Lin Chuxia looked at Gu Peng with amusement, "You're really domineering."

Just like in the past life.

Gu Peng looked at her and, for once, didn't act like a stick in the mud, "If you're uncomfortable, you need to find a solution. There's still two days and nights left; how long do you plan to endure? In the future, if you're shy about speaking up, just tell me."

Lin Chuxia looked at him, slightly stunned.

She thought that his domineering nature of always protecting her was the result of their growing friendship over time from being together day and night.

It turned out he always protected her like this.

As if it was a dominance and gentlemanliness born with him.

Seeing her not speak for a long time, Gu Peng looked over.

"What's up? Moved already?"

Lin Chuxia smiled a bit, "A little. I only gave you an assistant's salary, and I'm thinking whether I should give you a bodyguard's salary too."

Gu Peng thoughtfully nodded, "That would work too, but it should definitely be higher than Wang Tianyu's salary."

Lin Chuxia laughed even more cheerfully, "Why do you always compare with him? Both of you are equally important by my side. He doesn't do less than you; right now in An City, he manages almost everything there."

"He's just doing what an assistant should do. So many things just pass through his hands, and in the end, you handle it. Put me in the same position, and I'd do better than him. At least you wouldn't have to worry so much."

Lin Chuxia thought that made sense too, considering Gu Peng's bossy nature, Wang Tianyu had just graduated and entered society, lacking experience, and tended to ask for her opinion when handling matters.

"So, can my salary be higher than his?"

Gu Peng persistently asked.

Lin Chuxia didn't understand his obsession with this issue, as if he didn't care about the salary amount but just whether it could be higher than Wang Tianyu's.

Lin Chuxia recalled when she first brought Gu Peng into the company, Wang Tianyu also seemed to care a lot about Gu Peng.

Helplessly shaking her head, she always viewed Wang Tianyu as a kid, but Gu Peng was an adult and several years older than him, yet still acted like this.

A higher salary than Wang Tianyu's was impossible. After all, Gu Peng joined later. To raise his salary above Wang Tianyu's after just a few months wouldn't make sense.

"I'll send you a special bonus in a red envelope at the end of each month, as a reward for your excellent work."

No need to go through the finance department.

Gu Peng gave a slight smile, "That works."

This was the first time in this life Lin Chuxia saw Gu Peng smile.

From the time they met, this guy seemed guarded around her.

Even more so around others.

His face always cold, his work meticulous, and his face serious as ever.

Seeing him smile now, suddenly she saw the sight from her past life of Gu Peng always following her, with a bit of playboy charm.

"You really should smile more often; you look quite good when you smile."

Gu Peng looked at her, "Alright, as long as you give me more privileges, I'll smile for you."

Lin Chuxia: "..."

If she didn't know Gu Peng's nature, Lin Chuxia would think she was being flirted with.

For some reason, maybe it was Gu Peng's overbearing manner in chasing off the middle-aged man that intimidated the young couple across the aisle.

The journey following that was peaceful.

Even the four or five-year-old child didn't make a fuss.

Lin Chuxia either read or slept at her seat, and when she was really bored, she'd play a couple of card games with Gu Peng.

Having Gu Peng, this assistant, was truly considerate.

Despite the limited conditions on the train, Gu Peng managed to get her tasty meals, hardly letting her suffer in terms of food and drink.

Even when the train's water supply was tight, they never lacked drinking water.

Old Sir He introduced this place to her, located in the central-western part of a certain province, with a suitable climate for growing herbal medicines like Angelica, White Peony, and Fuling.

Angelica is a common Chinese medicinal herb known for enriching and invigorating blood, regulating menstruation, relieving pain, and lubricating the intestines.

White Peony is also a common blood-enriching herb known for nourishing blood, regulating menstruation, calming liver yang, softening the liver, and relieving pain.

Fuling is a common diuretic herb known for promoting urination, removing moisture, strengthening the spleen, and calming the mind.

Old Sir He is skilled in body conditioning, and the prescriptions he gave her were mostly for regulation.

Don't underestimate the regulatory effects of these medications; traditional Chinese medicine mainly achieves therapeutic effects through regulating the body's qi, blood, yin-yang, and organ functions.

The reason Old Sir He chose this place is that he knew some farmers here had already started planting herbal medicines.

With this foundation, it would be much easier for Lin Chuxia to establish a herbal medicine planting base.

The train wobbled on, finally arriving at the station.

x Chapter 757: Qingyan Village

Getting off the train and walking towards the station exit, they quickly saw a young man holding up a sign, here to pick them up.

Lin Chuxia proactively approached and greeted him, "Thank you for your effort, I am Lin Chuxia."

The other person was visibly surprised to see Lin Chuxia, then enthusiastically extended his hand, "I am Yu Fusheng's grandson, Yu Fei. We've been looking forward to your arrival. The car is outside."

Yu Fusheng is an old friend of Old Master He, who once said that Yu Fusheng has a grandson regarded as the fifth generation successor of their Yu family.

Lin Chuxia didn't expect Mr. Yu to have his grandson personally come to receive her.

Upon exiting the train station, Lin Chuxia noticed that the living standards here were noticeably lower compared to An City and Yan City.

She actually realized this a few years ago when she visited Qin Yang in the Northwest.

Speaking of An City, although it opened up later, due to its proximity to the capital, it has geographical advantages in economic and agricultural development, improving people's living standards rapidly.

In remote areas far from the capital, not to mention reaching the standards of a millionaire, some places are still struggling on the subsistence line.

From the attire of the people and the transportation on the road alone, one can feel the poverty of the region they've come to.

The vehicle receiving them was a tractor. While Yu Fei helped load their luggage onto the car, he explained.

"The place we're going to is called Qingyan Town, Qingyan Town has a Qingyan Village where many farmers plant herbs. Several surrounding villages also cultivate herbs, and upon hearing about our visit for investigation, the village chief of Qingyan Village sent this vehicle specially, but we should still seek your opinion: do you want to rest here for a night or head directly to Qingyan Village?"

Mr. Yu's home is not here; Yu Fei came here on the special request of Old Master He to assist Lin Chuxia and her team.

However, as the Yu family comes to Qingyan Town every year to purchase herbs, they are quite familiar with this place.

Lin Chuxia asked Yu Fei where to stay, and Yu Fei smiled and said, "This lodging place may not be to Mr. Lin's liking, but it's at the large vehicle store in Qingyan Town."

Qingyan Town is somewhat famous for planting Chinese herbs. Every year during the harvest season, many herb vendors come to Qingyan Town to purchase Chinese herbs.

Hence, there is a large vehicle store in Qingyan Town.

However, the accommodations are quite rudimentary.

Lin Chuxia directly said, "What's there not to get used to? Let's head to Qingyan Town."

The second half of the sentence was directed at Gu Peng.

Yu Fei specially came to guide them, the sooner the matter is done, the better.

If they go to Qingyan Town today, they can visit Qingyan Village early tomorrow morning.

Gu Peng had no objection to Lin Chuxia's arrangement, climbed onto the tractor first, then extended his hand to Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia placed her hand on his, borrowing his strength to climb onto the tractor.

Yu Fei patted Niu Dali, who was driving, "Master Niu, the people are received, we can go now."

Niu Dali, around thirty years old, clearly suited for farm work, his skin tanned darkly, and when he smiled, it revealed a set of large white teeth.

He responded honestly, smiled at Lin Chuxia and the others, and then took the crank, inserted it into the front of the tractor, and shook it vigorously a few times.

"Da-da-da-da-da" the tractor started up, emitting a burst of black smoke from the chimney.

This diesel smell, Lin Chuxia hadn't smelled for a while.

On the vehicle, Yu Fei introduced to Lin Chuxia and the others that Qingyan Town is more than 30 li from the station.

The entire town is almost in mountainous areas, many regions cultivate herbs, and Qingyan Village is the most renowned.

Throughout the village, aside from personal grain fields, almost all are medicinal fields.

Lin Chuxia listened to Yu Fei's introduction while observing the scenery along the way.

Though this area was somewhat impoverished, the scenery before her was quite nice, with clear mountains and waters, albeit the road was a bit bumpy.

Lin Chuxia moved slightly, reminiscing about riding a tractor during her wedding, with blankets beneath her to add comfort.

Just as she was thinking, a bundle poked at her waist.

She turned and saw Gu Peng seriously stuffing his canvas bag under her bum, "It's more comfortable sitting with this cushion."

Lin Chuxia couldn't help but laugh, "Your bag is full of clothes; I'll crease them all sitting on them throughout the journey."

Seeing her unwilling, Gu Peng directly pulled her arm, lifting her a bit, stuffing the canvas bag under her bottom.

"Creases are just creases; things aren't as important as people."

Since it was already stuffed, Lin Chuxia couldn't pull it back out, she smiled and thanked him.

Yu Fei teasingly said, "The assistant of Senior Sister is thoughtful indeed; I should have brought you a cushion when you came."

For these rough fellows, sitting on a tractor was just sitting on the vehicle's edge; when tired, they would stand up, hardly needing a cushion, so it naturally didn't occur to them.

The tractor traveled more than ten li, reaching the area of Qinglong Town.

Yu Fei pointed to the distant hills, "Senior Sister, you see over there, and over there, as well as here, are medicinal fields; these plots are peonies, and that distant patch is angelica."

On the distant mountains, patches of greenery were visible.

"Many villagers here plant medicinal herbs, but in small quantities, with varied quality. Consequently, the buying price by herb vendors isn't high. The lower the price, the less willing villagers are to plant more, fearing they can't sell them; unlike grain, this can't be consumed personally."

Lin Chuxia nodded; she had already understood this situation.

This isn't an issue.

As long as the villagers have the experience of planting medicinal herbs, she could later recruit tech personnel for training, leveraging Xiyang's purchasing capacity to alleviate villagers' planting concerns.

The tractor directly took them to the large vehicle store in Qingyan Town where Yu Fei was staying.

The large vehicle store was a courtyard adjacent to the street, rooms divided into individual spaces.

The rooms in the main building had single beds, accommodating 4 to 6 people per room.

The three connecting side rooms had large communal beds.

Of course, the prices varied too.

During this herb purchasing low season, not many were lodging.

Yu Fei currently had a room to himself.

Gu Peng requested two rooms from the storekeeper.

Then selected one seemingly more pleasant for Lin Chuxia to stay.

The room was very basic, with just some plank beds, not even a table.

Fortunately, Lin Chuxia was the only one in the entire room, she placed her luggage on a bed and spread her bedsheet to make the bed.

The storekeeper's wife sent hot water to the room, and Gu Peng fetched a bucket of cold water for her.

"There's no place for bathing here; you might want to simply wash inside the room while I'll keep an eye on the door."

He spoke naturally, leaving Lin Chuxia momentarily stunned.

If it were their relationship in the previous life, she wouldn't be surprised by this statement; yet, they've merely been acquainted for at most three months now.

This wasn't her first time feeling this way, she often experienced this feeling while on the train.

Chapter 758: Very Attentive

"What's wrong?"

Seeing Lin Chuxia staring at him in a daze, Gu Peng asked.

"Nothing, just thinking you're really attentive."

Gu Peng nodded, "When you're out and about, it's necessary. As an assistant, I naturally need to handle everything for the boss."

"Looks like my red packet won't be wasted."

Lin Chuxia joked, closed the door, and went back inside to wash up.

Gu Peng looked at the door, hearing the sound of water coming from inside, then turned his gaze and walked a few steps to the side.

At that moment, Yu Fei came over, "I asked Niu Dali to go back to the village and tell the village chief. Tomorrow morning we'll head over. There are a few households in the village that grow herbs well, and the village chief will take you to see them then."

He looked at the surrounding mountains and sighed, "If you really set up a herbal planting base here, the locals are going to have good days ahead."

Even before Lin Chuxia arrived, his grandfather had asked him to accompany her, and he had already learned some things about Lin Chuxia.

He knew Lin Chuxia was a doer.

Gu Peng didn't respond to his topic, instead asking about dinner.

Over the past few days on the train, although he tried to make their meals agreeable, it had still been makeshift.

Tonight's main task was to have a good meal and a good night's sleep.

"The shop has meals, cooked by the landlady, it's simple but it'll fill you up."

Gu Peng thought and asked, "Is there any restaurant nearby?"

Yu Fei laughed, "This is just a small town, it's not very big, where would there be a restaurant? If you want something good to eat, I'll ask the landlady to make something for you with a bit of money."

"Two meat dishes, one vegetable, a soup, and a fish," Gu Peng said, taking out 50 yuan from his pocket and handing it over.

Yu Fei looked at the money and laughed, "No wonder you work for a big boss, alright, wait here."

Generous with the money.

This place is poor and remote, wanting to eat fish and meat isn't easy.

But money can really make things happen.

Lin Chuxia finished her bath and also washed the clothes she'd worn over the past few days on the train.

By the time she was done, Gu Peng also came out of the room with wet hair.

The landlady had already prepared the meal.

Looking at the dishes on the table, there was even a fish, which pleasantly surprised Lin Chuxia.

The main staple was rice.

The landlady's cooking skills were average, but she still ate a big bowl of rice.

The rest of the food was completely polished off by Yu Fei and Gu Peng.

After days on the road, they were already tired, so after eating and washing up, they all went back to their rooms to rest.

Early the next morning, just after a few people finished breakfast, Niu Dali came rattling over on a tractor.

On the tractor was an elderly man.

Yu Fei introduced to the two, "That's the village chief of Qingyan Village, his surname is Ma. Ma is a big family name in Qingyan Village."

Village Chief Ma warmly greeted Lin Chuxia and the others, his deeply wrinkled face smiling so broadly that his eyes were hardly visible.

"Finally, you're here. Must have been a hard journey?"

Lin Chuxia smiled and extended her hand to shake with the old man, "Not too bad, thank you, Village Chief Ma."

"It's nothing, it's nothing."

After a bit of small talk, Lin Chuxia and Gu Peng packed up and got on the tractor.

This time the journey wasn't far, it took about half an hour to reach a small village scattered on the mountainside.

On the way, Village Chief Ma introduced the situation of Qingyan Village to the two. Adding to the information they got from Yu Fei earlier, Lin Chuxia was almost fully informed about the village.

The village chief wanted Lin Chuxia and the others to visit the village committee office, but Lin Chuxia didn't want to waste time.

The plan for the next few days was to look around Qingyan Village and see the herbal planting situations of the villagers, as well as the local customs and practices.

So they asked Village Chief Ma to take them to see some villagers who grew herbs.

Of course, Village Chief Ma agreed and had Niu Dali drive the tractor to a villager's farm.

It was the busy farming season, and the villagers were all working in the fields.

Niu Dali's tractor was said to be the only one in the entire village.

The rattling sound of the tractor on the road caught the attention of villagers working not far away, who straightened up to look. On seeing Village Chief Ma on the tractor, they greeted him.

Village Chief Ma warmly waved back and introduced to Lin Chuxia and the others, "Don't let our poverty fool you, the people here are very honest, true farmers, they work very solidly."

Lin Chuxia didn't doubt these words, just like the villagers in Qin Family Village, they had the inherent virtue of hard work.

"Look, we're almost there. This is the land of Zhao Juncai from our village. His family grows the best and most herbs in the village. Look at that large spread of Angelica."

As he spoke, they arrived and got off the vehicle.

Village Chief Ma went to greet the people in the field while Lin Chuxia stood by the edge of the medicinal field, observing the Angelica being grown.

Angelica has the power to regulate and replenish the blood, long regarded as the number one medicine in gynecology, known as the holy medicine of the blood, even revered as the king of medicine.

Due to its significant effects, many traditional Chinese medicine prescriptions cannot do without Angelica, hence the saying "nine out of ten prescriptions contain Angelica."

This herb prefers cool climates and often grows in cold and humid mountainous areas.

The growth conditions here were indeed very suitable for Angelica, and the present medicinal field looked pretty good too.

After a while, the village chief brought over a young man.

The man was dark-skinned, much like Niu Dali, clearly accustomed to working in the fields.

He was not very tall, and his sunken cheeks made his cheekbones more prominent.

Niu Dali had mentioned earlier that the man was a few years older than him, around thirty-four or thirty-five.

Yet the man's hair was already graying, making him look at least ten years older.

Furthermore, Village Chief Ma seemed to be in his sixties, but according to Niu Dali, he was only fifty.

This region is poor with a low standard of living, some people are still struggling to make ends meet, making it easy for them to age quickly.

Village Chief Ma first spoke with a smile, "Juncai, these are the herbal traders sent by the authorities. We have hope for growing herbs now, Mr. Lin will help us grow herbs, and also help us sell them, hurry up and tell Mr. Lin about how we grow these herbs."

Zhao Juncai scrutinized Lin Chuxia, then looked at Gu Peng behind her.

Finally, his gaze fell on their shoes.

Lin Chuxia was wearing flat leather shoes, while Gu Peng had military boots on.

Seeing him staring at them in silence, Village Chief Ma nudged him, "Juncai, speak up."

Then he smiled and explained to Lin Chuxia, "People from small places are usually shy, but don't be fooled, Juncai is excellent at farming. Everyone in the village follows him in planting herbs. If there's something they don't understand, Juncai will help them, he's very enthusiastic."

After saying this, he nudged Zhao Juncai again.

Only then did Zhao Juncai coldly say to Lin Chuxia and Gu Peng, "If you want to see the herbs, come with me."

He said this and then took the lead, walking deeper into the medicinal field.

Chapter 759: Capitalists, Villains

Lin Chuxia followed a few steps inside.

Village Chief Ma kept babbling on the side; Zhao Juncai didn't want to speak, so Village Chief Ma helped by introducing things for him.

When Lin Chuxia asked questions, Zhao Juncai was reluctant to reply, so Village Chief Ma stepped in to answer for him.

After a brief understanding since Lin Chuxia wasn't there to learn about herbal cultivation, she said to Village Chief Ma, "Let's go have a look at other households."

With Zhao Juncai acting this way, Village Chief Ma felt a bit embarrassed, so upon hearing Lin Chuxia's suggestion, he promptly agreed.

There were herbal fields nearby, and Village Chief Ma led them to a few other households.

By the second or third household, Lin Chuxia gradually sensed something was off.

If Zhao Juncai's aloofness was due to his personality, the owners of the next two houses were equally indifferent, with one even unwilling to let them enter the herbal fields, showing clear vigilance.

When they reached the fourth household, a small boy from that family saw them, bent down to pick up a clod of dirt, and hurled it at them.

"Damn you, capitalists, bad people..."

The woman of the house hurriedly pulled the boy into her embrace, her eyes filled with panic and defensiveness.

Village Chief Ma, clueless about the situation, still tried to explain.

Lin Chuxia checked the time; it was almost noon.

"Let's head back first."

Village Chief Ma hadn't anticipated such a reaction from the villagers, and he kept saying nice things to Lin Chuxia.

Lin Chuxia said directly, "Before I came, Yu told me that the villagers were very willing for Xiyang to establish a herbal plantation base here. I didn't expect this situation. Now that the land is in individual hands, to form a scale of cultivation, it requires everyone's united effort. If the villagers have any unspeakable difficulties, I understand. This matter we can discuss later."

Discussing later basically meant not considering Qingyan Village now.

After all, Village Chief Ma had been the chief for many years. How could he not hear the underlying message?

Moreover, the town leadership knew Lin Chuxia was there to inspect the village and instructed them to host her well, seeing it as a golden opportunity.

They even listed nationwide promoted vegetable greenhouses in recent years, using Qin Family Village as an example to tell them.

Village Chief Ma, of course, knew the significance of this to Qingyan Village. If done well, they'd be the next Qin Family Village.

"Where are these unspeakable difficulties? The villagers couldn't be happier for you to come and develop production. They're more than eager to welcome you."

Village Chief Ma immediately explained, afraid of letting the God of Wealth slip away.

Lin Chuxia smiled slightly, "I didn't feel the villagers' welcome, Village Chief Ma. You don't need to force this matter. Currently, the land is in individual hands, meaning people have the right to choose Xiyang, and they also have the right to refuse Xiyang. Besides, we are just conducting an inspection."

"Mr. Lin," Village Chief Ma said excitedly, holding Lin Chuxia's hand, "please give us another chance. There is definitely a misunderstanding. Don't rush; let's return to the village to have lunch first. I've already prepared meals at home. Afterward, I'll have Niu Dali show you around. Although Qingyan Village is poor, it does have beautiful mountains and waters. I'll go talk with the villagers and clear up the misunderstanding."

Village Chief Ma was truly anxious. He didn't know where the problem lay. Yesterday, during the village-wide meeting, everyone seemed quite pleased, so why had their faces changed today?

He felt worried inside, which showed even more on his face, sweating anxiously.

Gu Peng, with a stern face, withdrew Lin Chuxia's hand, causing more sweat on Ma's face, looking helplessly at Yu Fei.

Yu Fei pondered and then stepped forward, "Since Village Chief Ma said so, Mr. Lin should return to the village for a meal. I'll accompany Mr. Lin to look around then."

He didn't address her as Lin Chuxia, instead leaving the decision up to her.

Lin Chuxia didn't want to go back just like that, especially since besides Qingyan Village, there were many herbal fields nearby. She indeed wanted to tour around, so she agreed.

After lunch, Lin Chuxia, Gu Peng, and Yu Fei left Qingyan Village.

Village Chief Ma must have privately instructed Niu Dali to take them around Qingyan Village, but Lin Chuxia didn't plan to stay there longer.

The villagers were clearly guarded against them; there was no need for them to linger. They only needed to wait for a resolution from Village Chief Ma.

That evening they returned to the lodge.

The next day, they didn't even use Niu Dali; instead, they had the lodge owner help hire a tractor and took off again.

After three or four days of touring, Lin Chuxia was getting a good understanding of the mountainous region.

This area indeed was very suitable for the growth of Chinese herbs. Although Qingyan Village had more planted areas than other regions, proper development wouldn't mind these factors.

That day when they returned, they saw Village Chief Ma waiting at the lodge entrance.

In fact, Village Chief Ma came the next day; it was just that they had already gone out, which they heard from the landlady when they returned.

Seeing Lin Chuxia, Village Chief Ma quickly approached, repeatedly apologizing, blaming himself for not clarifying matters with the villagers beforehand, which led to misunderstandings.

"Rest assured, I've now explained everything to the villagers. They know Mr. Lin is here to help everyone prosper, and they're all looking forward to Mr. Lin visiting our village again."

Since Village Chief Ma said so, Lin Chuxia and the others naturally wouldn't put on airs and followed him onto Niu Dali's tractor.

This time, Village Chief Ma took them to the herbal field of the village accountant's family.

The accountant's family had been waiting in the field early, warmly welcoming Lin Chuxia and the others upon arrival.

The accountant's field also grew angelica, but compared to Zhao Juncai's, the area and the growth of the seedlings were much smaller.

The accountant knew that Village Chief Ma had taken them to see Zhao Juncai's field earlier, and somewhat embarrassed, he explained, "My family's food was not enough before, and it's only in the past two years that I started growing herbs with everyone. In this area, I'm still an elementary student, far behind Zhao Juncai and others. Mr. Lin, your arrival gives me hope, and in the future, we'll follow Mr. Lin to thrive and prosper."

Just look at his words, typical of a village cadre.

Lin Chuxia didn't respond to him but talked about the herbs.

The accountant didn't hold back, explaining each step, from sowing seeds to plowing, in great detail.

Lin Chuxia listened intently.

Before coming, she had consulted Old Sir He about the basic habits and cultivation of herbs and had read some scientific planting books, knowing that these farmers used traditional methods, leaving considerable room for improvement.

As they chatted, a commotion was heard from afar.

They saw a group of villagers carrying hoes and shovels coming down the mountain.

Their aggressive demeanor didn't look like they were there to learn planting techniques.

Chapter 760: Stirring Up Trouble

Gu Peng was the first to stand up, shielding Lin Chuxia.

Yu Fei also looked puzzled.

Lin Chuxia smiled at Village Chief Ma, "Village Chief Ma, didn't you say everything has been explained clearly? I'm not sure what misunderstanding the villagers have towards me, but I think you should know why we're here. If the villagers have objections and don't welcome us, just say so directly. There's no need for this kind of show."

Yu Fei nervously tugged on Lin Chuxia, "You can still smile," these villagers are clearly here to fight.

Village Chief Ma's expression changed dramatically as he exchanged a glance with the accountant, and the two of them quickly went forward to meet them.

The village chief had a stern face, "What are you doing? Put those things down immediately."

The accountant also urged, "Folks, didn't we explain everything yesterday? Mr. Lin is here to help us grow medicinal herbs and get rich, what are you doing?"

The leading villager sneered, holding a shovel, "Helping us get rich, you say. Don't think we don't know. This is just a capitalist eyeing our Qingyan Village, wanting to seize our land for themselves. We're not falling for it."

Someone immediately backed him up, "Yeah, we're not falling for it."

"We finally have our own land, and you shamelessly side with these capitalists. We won't fall for your tricks."

"I can't believe we trusted the village chief, only to find out you're this kind of person."

.....

Everyone was chattering, making Village Chief Ma anxious, "What kind of person am I? Who have you been listening to?"

"Never mind who we listened to. Village chief, just tell everyone the truth. If she's really going to build some medicinal herb base in our Qingyan Village, do we all have to grow herbs for her?"

This was something even Village Chief Ma didn't know how to answer.

If the medicinal herb planting base is built, it seems like there's some truth to what they're saying.

In the future, the village no longer has to worry about finding buyers for their herbs, just grow them for Xiyang.

Isn't this a good thing?

"What's wrong with growing herbs for Xiyang? If everyone works together, we can all get rich. The leaders in the town are very supportive of this. Don't make trouble."

Apparently, the villagers didn't think this was a good thing.

"We're not causing trouble; we're protecting our land."

"Yeah, what local leaders? You're just colluding officials bullying common folk. Don't think we don't know. You say one thing on the surface but actually, you've long been bought by these capitalists."

"Nonsense, who did you hear this from? What capitalist? Mr. Lin is here to build a medicinal plant base, to build a pharmaceutical factory," Ma Village Chief was really getting angry.

He said all that needed to be said, and that day the villagers clearly had no objections, so why now...

"They're building a factory, aren't they? Isn't that what a capitalist is? She just wants to take our land for herself, making us grow herbs for her forever. This is the new society; we absolutely will not compromise with capitalists."

"Right, we'll never compromise with capitalists. We will guard our land."

"Folks, let's drive these capitalists out of Qingyan Village, make sure they never dare eye our land again, let's turn the tables, overthrow the capitalists..."

Someone shouted from the crowd, and the villagers immediately became excited, raising hoes and shovels as they charged forward.

The village chief and the accountant rushed forward to stop them, but how could just the two of them block so many villagers?

As the villagers were about to rush up, Gu Peng grabbed Lin Chuxia's hand, turned around, and started walking in another direction.

Lin Chuxia also knew it was impossible to reason with these agitated villagers now — discretion is the better part of valor.

Before leaving, she called out to Yu Fei.

Yu Fei was already scared by the commotion. He had come to Qingyan Village several times before to collect herbs, and the villagers seemed quite honest back then; how had they become like a mob now?

Without saying a word, he followed Lin Chuxia and the others as they ran.

Fortunately, the villagers' main goal was to drive Lin Chuxia and the others away, and seeing them leave in such a hurry, they only chased for a short distance.

On the other hand, Village Chief Ma and the accountant chased them all the way to the tractor, apologizing while asking Niu Dali to drive the tractor to take them back to the town.

Sitting on the tractor, Lin Chuxia suddenly started laughing.

Yu Fei was puzzled, "Lin, how can you still laugh? They say barren mountains and turbulent waters produce bad people, and that was really frightening. If we'd been any slower, those villagers would have surely hit me on the head with a shovel."

Lin Chuxia laughed enough and said, "I was just thinking, the person behind this is really quite capable. Even though these are Qingyan Village's own villagers, they don't believe Village Chief Ma's words and are actually opposing him."

It just proves that these villagers are really ignorant.

After all these years of reform and opening up, they can still label me as a capitalist.

Yu Fei thought for a moment and also realized that there must be someone behind this, but after so many interruptions, he wondered if Village Chief Ma could resolve it.

"Lin, what are you planning to do next? Wait for Village Chief Ma to explain it all to the villagers?"

Lin Chuxia shook her head, "No need to wait; we've already wasted too much time in Qingyan Village."

Medicinal herbs can be planted anywhere; there's no need to focus only on Qingyan Village.

Niu Dali was driving the tractor in front. Despite the loud noise, he had intermittently heard their conversation.

After hesitating, he spoke up, "Actually, I know what's going on."

Yu Fei was curious, "What's going on?"

"It's all about Ma Laosan," he glanced back at a few of them, and looking at the road, he explained, "Ma Laosan is the village chief's cousin. He initially competed with the village chief and lost by a few votes, but he's also quite influential in the village. He was the one who initiated the village's herb planting, and he connected with outsiders to sell the herbs. Although he doesn't plant herbs now, he's made plenty of money from it, and their house is the most magnificent in the village. When he heard you guys were coming, Ma Laosan made such remarks. I heard he even talked to the villagers a few days ago, and although I'm not sure what was said, it feels like he has something to do with it."

Lin Chuxia raised an eyebrow; Niu Dali seemed quite naive, but it turns out he's quite perceptive.

"He talked to the villagers but didn't approach you?"

Niu Dali shook his head, "We don't plant herbs at home, and the village chief takes good care of our family. Even if there's anything, they wouldn't come to us."

Regardless of his words, if even Niu Dali could sense it, Lin Chuxia thought that if Village Chief Ma really hadn't realized, it could only mean his authority in the village was lacking.