

The 80s 1221

Chapter 1221: The Loo Family's Secret Business Is...

Smuggling black market goods!

Qi Taiguo means that the business the Loo Family does in secret is smuggling, and not just any smuggling, but... black market goods?

He really dares to think!

Ning Ge swallowed hard and sat down heavily, feeling a bit afraid to think about it.

If the Loo Family really dares to get involved in this, then their family's wealth kind of makes sense, after all, this is big business.

But Jiang Conghe, would he dare?

He's a reputable military officer, currently holding such a high rank, would he dare to do something illegal like this?

But thinking deeper, even if Jiang Conghe wouldn't dare, he only needs to turn a blind eye, open the doors of convenience, and then the Loo Family would have free rein!

"Did you say the Loo Family's trucks vary in weight?" Ning Ge thought of what Cheng Yaozu had said.

Cheng Yaozu also snapped out of his shock, if those goods contain such things, then it's naturally going to be heavy.

He was somewhat frightened, being just a legitimate businessman, stumbling upon such a big secret left him uncertain, feeling the urge to discuss it with the family head immediately.

"This is just my guess, there's no need to panic." Qi Taiguo took a deep breath and said, "I just thought of it in a moment, there's no hard evidence."

"No, as you say, it's really convenient for the Loo Family to do this business, and if discovered, they can claim they're transporting it for the authorities." Ning Ge said.

"But aren't these black market goods personally escorted by the authorities?" Cheng Yaozu argued.

"Exactly!" Qi Taiguo said, "So this can't be conclusive either."

He just had a sudden flash of inspiration, because it's highly profitable, and people often take risks for wealth, daring to walk the fine line.

"Shouldn't we still investigate it?" Ning Ge said with a stern face, looking over at Cheng Yaozu.

Cheng Yaozu quickly said, "I wouldn't dare to make such a decision on my own, it must be reported to the family head and the others."

Ning Ge didn't make it difficult for him, saying, "I'll personally investigate the Loo Family's transport team; you all keep watching, and if there's any irregularity, report it to me!"

Cheng Yaozu nodded, "I'll head back to Guangcheng by train right away!"

He couldn't sit still for even a moment, if this were true, and it happened within Guangcheng, then his brother should definitely be informed.

Ning Ge and the others didn't stop him, but Cheng Su felt it strange when Cheng Yaozu suddenly said he had to leave.

"Something came up at home, and I must hurry back!" Cheng Yaozu said, "When Jiaheng comes over to report in a few days, maybe I'll bring him. You should start planning for the investment!"

Seeing him in such a hurry, Cheng Su didn't stop him, only reminding him to be careful on the road.

"Please let Xiao Ya know for me too, I'll come to see her in a few days!" Cheng Yaozu reminded.

Cheng Su smiled and agreed.

After seeing Cheng Yaozu off, Cheng Su returned home and noticed that Qi Taiguo and Ning Ge had particularly grim expressions, prompting her to ask what had happened!

The matter concerning the Loo Family was kept from her by Qi Taiguo and Ning Ge; even with the suspicion, until it was confirmed, they wouldn't speak carelessly. Besides, she's just a woman, what good would it do her to know about such things?

Might as well let her live a peaceful life!

"Nothing, even if there is, it's good news." Ning Ge laughed and said, "I'm telling you, Chiang Qing has been admitted to a mental institution and confined there."

What?

Cheng Su's eyes widened in shock, really admitted to a mental institution?

Chapter 1222: Those Who Lose Their Moral Bottom Line Meet a Bad End

Cheng Su was utterly shocked. Hearing Qi Taiguo talk about this contingency was one thing, but actually hearing that she had really been locked up felt incredibly sudden and unreal.

"How did this happen?" She quickly sat down to ask about this matter. Being locked up in such a place, the thought alone was pretty terrifying.

Qi Taiguo also looked at Ning Ge, a bit curious himself. This kid's abilities were getting better and better; he felt he couldn't match them.

"Didn't do much, just..." Ning Ge started to explain in detail how he collaborated with Jiang Dafang, incited and provoked, and then managed to get Chiang Qing sent in there. Finally, he said, "Now that she's inside, it's finally a temporary relief!"

Cheng Suxin felt compassion in her heart, saying, "That Chiang Qing, she's truly pathetic, having such a father."

She sympathized with her because she had such a father who was worse than a tiger, who could be so ruthless for the sake of his future and benefits.

But sympathy was just sympathy; Cheng Su wouldn't feel sorry for Chiang Qing, not to that extent. After all, she was nearly insane, and sending her in was also a good thing; at least she wouldn't bring disaster to the world.

"But can she really be stabilized? Whether she's in the United States or not, it might be known eventually, right?" Cheng Su said, "If Lu Shufen and the Loo Family manage to get her out, then..."

"If she's out, then it'll just be a matter between their two families, nothing to do with us," Ning Ge said confidently with a smile, "She was sent in by Jiang Conghe's order, Jiang Dafang was just the one executing it. From beginning to end, we didn't intervene. The only thing we did was help find a good place and pave the way for him."

"So even if it's discovered that Chiang Qing is not in the United States, it would still just be their families tearing each other apart, a dog's bone fight!" Ning Ge continued, "Of course, to keep her in a little longer, I'll do my best to help him keep it hidden."

Qi Taiguo sneered, "If this matter is really exposed, their faces will be quite a sight!"

"Exactly, the crack is already open now; once they find out, it'll tear wider and wider!" Ning Ge was very pleased.

Qi Taiguo's eyes flashed a hint of happiness, looking at him, "This matter is all thanks to you, thank you."

"Without your idea, I wouldn't have thought of it; I was just the one executing it!" Ning Ge shook his head.

Cheng Su watched them praise each other, couldn't help but chuckle lightly, sighed, and said, "Jiang Conghe's ruthlessness has really broadened my horizons."

"For the sake of his own interests, resorting to measures without boundaries, such people ultimately won't have a good ending, just wait!" Ning Ge said.

He said what was on their minds; Qi Taiguo and the others understood.

"Chiang Qing might truly go completely mad!" Cheng Su said, "In such a place, if one doesn't go mad, staying in there day after day, they'll be driven mad by self-denial."

"Dying in there would truly be a release!" Ning Ge said.

Cheng Su's heart trembled, saying, "Ning Ge, this is enough, letting her fend for herself in there is enough, nothing else should be done. The reason humans are human is because of their hearts; if you kill someone, then... that's not human anymore!"

Her heart was always soft.

Ning Ge and Qi Taiguo exchanged a glance, then said, "Don't worry, I know what should and shouldn't be done."

Cheng Su breathed a sigh of relief.

She knew Chiang Qing wasn't worthy of sympathy, but she didn't want her people to be stained with blood, crossing the line of humanity.

Chapter 1223: Winds and Clouds Surging

Hearing that Chiang Qing was sent to a mental institution, unless there's an unexpected turn of events, she won't be causing trouble for a year or even longer. Cheng Su feels like she can sleep soundly and sweetly.

Qi Taiguo laughs, saying her joy is just like winning the lottery, but Cheng Su shakes her finger: "No, no, winning the lottery doesn't make me this happy. Now my personal safety is guaranteed, and my heart is joyful. Winning the lottery just means getting some money, which isn't as good as this!"

Though money is necessary, when you have money, you're always on guard against potential threats and disruptions, how can your heart be completely relaxed?

There's a saying, basically meaning you know she'll make a move on you, but you don't know when she'll do it, and that's what's most unsettling.

So now that Chiang Qing is locked up, nothing major for now, there's a period of ease ahead!

"Don't you think I'm ruthless?" Qi Taiguo asks, looking at her with a bit of tension in his heart.

Sending someone to such a place seems quite scary; he doesn't want her to fear him.

Cheng Su smiles slightly and says, "Being ruthless is right. Let me tell you, if you weren't ruthless with other women, I'd be scared. Especially with someone as mentally unstable as Chiang Qing, it's truly a fitting place for her. The mentally ill shouldn't be let out to harm others!"

Qi Taiguo pulls her close, kisses her, and says, "Thank goodness!"

Cheng Su pushes him away: "Alright, let's leave it at this. Life has to go on. Your two new recruits are coming soon, you better get prepared!"

Qi Taiguo suddenly feels a headache again.

Thinking of his previous plans, he asks: "By the way, what do you think, should I enroll in a school and get a diploma or something? Many officers seem to have all kinds of specialties and university degrees listed on their resumes!"

It's all for appearance, a way of self-enhancement, stacking up these credentials becomes a mark of honor.

"If you want to, you totally should! I told you before, we can progress together, the key is if you want to learn." Cheng Su fully supports him.

Qi Taiguo knows she would definitely support him, so he says, "Then I'll look into what courses to enroll in later!"

Cheng Su smiles and nods.

With this settled, Ning Ge is occupied with Qi Taiguo's conjecture, worried about the Loo Family, so she doesn't want to stay in Qing City. She greets Cheng Su and heads to Guangcheng, meanwhile instructing Bai Ying to secretly investigate the Loo Family's financial issues.

Now, the Loo Family's affair is a priority, because if Qi Taiguo's idea is true, it involves a major case concerning national interests.

As for Cheng Yaozu, back at the house in Guangcheng, he quickly finds Old Master Cheng and his elder brother to discuss Qi Taiguo's idea.

Old Master Cheng and Cheng Yaoguang's expressions change.

"Although there's no concrete evidence, ultimately Guangcheng is under your jurisdiction. If anything goes wrong, even if you're not the head of that area, you can't escape the blame of negligence." Old Master Cheng looks at Cheng Yaoguang and says, "It's one thing if this turns out wrong, that'd just mean some smuggling. But if we're unfortunately right, then it's a big trouble. We must be cautious, this can't be treated as a personal matter anymore."

Cheng Yaoguang, thoughtfully, replies: "Dad, I'll make arrangements immediately, using crime crackdowns as an excuse, we'll conduct a thorough investigation."

Old Master Cheng nods and asks Cheng Yaozu about other matters.

Suddenly, everyone gets into action, a storm brews.

Chapter 1224: Personally Baking Mooncakes

Matters of national importance are naturally handled by the men, while Cheng Su led a simple life for herself. She was either working overtime to draft the future vision plan for the Jam Company that Cheng Yaozu requested or was stationed at Joy Soon Loy Restaurant, observing the pastry department making mooncakes.

Seeing that the ingredients had arrived and noticing Chen Guorong and the others deeply engaged in their research, Cheng Su, who was a typical foodie, eagerly joined the mooncake-making team.

In Qing City, not many bosses of big restaurants would immerse themselves in culinary research like Cheng Su. Hence, her involvement left the pastry department feeling a bit flustered and anxious.

"It's alright, just consider me one of you. Let's make these pastries together," Cheng Su said with a smile.

Chen Guorong flattered her: "President Cheng is a gourmet; with your guidance, we'll surely achieve results with half the effort!"

"Indeed, indeed!" everyone chimed in.

Cheng Su chuckled and said, "I don't dare to call myself a gourmet. I've tasted quite a few pastries in Guangcheng, so I can probably offer a suggestion or two. You all are the real experts, it's your ideas and skilled hands we rely on!"

Everyone responded with another round of modesty.

Time was tight, so they stopped deferring to each other and the entire pastry department got busy, working together to knead the dough, fill the pastries, roll, and bake.

To make the mooncakes delicious, they had to be aromatic, soft, sweet but not greasy, so the craftsmanship was meticulous, and kneading the dough required precision.

The dough was soft enough, but when the mooncakes came out of the oven and were tasted, Cheng Su felt they were just missing a hint of fragrance.

Watching Cheng Su frown, Chen Guorong realized they had gotten it wrong again, though they all actually thought the taste was quite good.

Cheng Su paced back and forth, constantly thinking about Luh Wei.

If only Luh Wei were here. His mooncakes were exceedingly delicious, fragrant, soft, and not greasy.

The entire pastry department exchanged glances. They felt their mooncakes were better than those from other shops, but the boss seemed unsatisfied!

So what to do? They had already baked them twice; could they come up with something new?

"Why does it smell so good?"

"Haha, don't know, do you? Did you not catch the milky taste inside? It's because milk powder was added when kneading the dough, which makes it particularly aromatic. You can't just bake until fully dry, but brush it with egg wash midway, which makes it golden and tempting, with a fragrant egg smell..."

Luh Wei's words echoed in her mind.

Cheng Su halted her steps and said, "Do we have milk powder here?"

"Ah, yes, we do!"

Cheng Su said, "Bring it over!"

She rolled up her sleeves and got to work herself. Seeing that they had brought all the ingredients, she mixed the all-purpose flour with milk powder and sifted them together for use. Then, she took a large basin, poured in the syrup alkaline water and peanut oil, and stirred them evenly. She slowly sifted in the flour and milk powder, using a spatula for pastries to mix evenly. Gradually, the dough became moist and oily.

She divided the dough into small pieces, then put on disposable gloves again. Placing a dough piece in her palm, she flattened it, wrapped it around red bean paste, rolled it into a ball, and pressed it into a mold dusted with glutinous rice flour, setting it aside and repeating the process.

Her movements were gentle, with a smile at the corners of her mouth. Making these mooncakes seemed like creating some devout delicacy.

Everyone watched in a daze, not daring to make a sound, as if any noise would shatter this beauty.

After placing the prepared mooncakes into the oven, Cheng Su brushed them with an egg wash after seven or eight minutes, continued baking, took them out five minutes later to brush them once more, then baked for another fifteen minutes or so until they were golden brown and firm. They looked much better than the ones made earlier. Now with the added oil, wouldn't they be even more delightful?

Chapter 1225: The Prestige of a Wedding Is the Prestige of the Restaurant

Looking at the golden mooncakes, Cheng Su didn't taste them and said, "Let's wait a couple of days for the oil to settle before we try them. Anyway, trying them now won't make them taste better!"

Chen Guorong chuckled and agreed.

Cheng Su removed her apron and went out, while everyone looked at Chen Guorong.

Chen Guorong picked up a mooncake made by Cheng Su, sliced a small piece even though it was freshly baked, tasted it, and after a while, sighed, "Zheng Dazhong, go to the storeroom and check how much milk powder and eggs we have, inventory them and report back."

No need to wait a couple of days to try these mooncakes; he could tell right now that this batch of mooncakes tasted better than the ones they made earlier.

Indeed, being a boss, she was meticulous and diligent. No wonder Old Song always advised not to underestimate the young lady of the house; she indeed had real skills.

After hearing the boss's words, everyone cut a bit of the small mooncake to taste and then silently went about their work. Truly, it's incomparable!

Cheng Su didn't know that the pastry department had already tasted the mooncakes she made. When she reached the cashier's counter, she saw Luh Kai standing there talking to his cousin Li Dan.

"Xiao Dan mentioned you've been quite busy lately, how come you have time to drop by?" Cheng Su sat at the table with Luh Kai to chat.

"Isn't this about coming over to pay the deposit for the banquet?" Luh Kai laughed and said, "I heard you're here, wanted to have a word."

Cheng Su suddenly smiled and said, "Young Master Luh, are you joking? You're a shareholder in this restaurant. Do you still need to pay a deposit for a wedding banquet here?"

Luh Kai replied, "Being a shareholder is one thing, but the necessary procedures can't be skipped. The deposit must still be given."

"Others might not trust you, but can't we trust you?" Cheng Su laughed and said, "But even if you didn't come, we would have called for you."

"Why, is there something?" Luh Kai sat up a little straighter.

"It's not about anything else; just about how your wedding should be organized, we need to discuss it carefully," Cheng Su added. "Moreover, this is our restaurant's first wedding banquet. To attract future customers to hold banquets here, your wedding must be done beautifully and elegantly. After all, it represents our restaurant's image!"

"So, am I advertising the restaurant this time?" Luh Kai laughed and asked.

"Exactly, this time you'll be our model advert!" Cheng Su said, "Once this wedding is beautifully arranged, everyone will see our restaurant's faculty and style, and they'll come to book their banquets with us!"

Luh Kai joked, "Shouldn't I get a bit of a promotion fee, then?"

"Alright, your wedding expenses will be discounted by 20%!" Cheng Su said generously.

Luh Kai laughed heartily.

"Actually, I have no specific requests. I know nothing about this stuff. If you have any ideas, just say it and do it. I trust you with it!" Luh Kai looked at her with deep trust.

Cheng Su thought for a moment, asked Li Dan for paper and pen, and started detailing the wedding procedures with Luh Kai.

As for the arrangement of the venue, that was the restaurant's responsibility.

The Luh family wants to extend fifty tables; the evening wedding banquet will require booking the entire restaurant to suffice. Prestigious guests will naturally be arranged in private rooms, and the remaining first and second floors will be organized as well.

The emcee for the wedding and other details must be thoroughly arranged. This is not a small affair, and it's also a great opportunity for Joy Soon Loy Restaurant to make a name, so it must be done beautifully and elegantly, ensuring both guests and hosts enjoy thoroughly, that's essential.

Chapter 1226: No Worries About Sales

After two days, the batch of mooncakes Cheng Su made had absorbed the oil. She tried one, and although it still couldn't compare to those from the local Full Fragrance Tower, it was already very close.

"If you all think it's fine, let's do it this way!" Cheng Su said with a smile.

Chen Guorong nodded, "Then what about the pricing?"

"Calculate the cost for me later, and I'll decide," Cheng Su thought for a moment and said, "On the second day of August, isn't there a wedding banquet? Prepare to put one mooncake on each table, cut it into eight small pieces, and serve it as a pre-meal snack. This is a chance to promote our product."

Cheng Su had already thought about promoting and selling their Joy Soon Loy mooncakes. She also planned to offer an 8.5% discount for those who brought the invitation to purchase them. Of course, this had to be mentioned by the Emcee at the wedding banquet.

Chen Guorong was very impressed with this and privately told Old Song, "Our lady boss is incredible, there's nothing she can't think of."

Old Song laughed heartily, patted his shoulder, and said, "Work hard, delve into the product more. Our lady boss is not only capable but also generous. You're in charge of desserts; if you make pastries that are unique in Qing City, she definitely won't shortchange you!"

Chen Guorong's eyes brightened, and he nodded.

Cheng Su was unaware of the conversation between these two bosses, and even if she knew, it wouldn't matter, because what Old Song said was true. As long as people can perform, produce results, she wouldn't be stingy with any employee. The key is impressive results!

As for Luh Kai's wedding, Cheng Su attached great importance to it. She gathered the managers of each department to discuss the details, especially the on-site wedding decoration. This was the responsibility of the service floor and involved more extensive work. Therefore, the necessary preparations had to be made in advance, like colorful balloons and so on, and bought early.

Cheng Su's requirements have always been high, and everyone was used to it. They had only to comply with her demands.

"On the second day, make sure that at one o'clock all the scattered tables are cleared for the banquet setup, and those colorful banners and balloons, you also need to set them up early. Don't pile everything on the second day and risk being unable to keep up!" Cheng Su said.

Qiulan noted everything down one by one.

...

After the Joy Soon Loy mooncakes were made, Cheng Su had Song Xiaojang deliver some to the usual business partners of their restaurant. Since they made their own mooncakes, naturally they used their own and took the opportunity to promote them as well.

Of course, these were only sent to the businesses, regardless of the date, and were meant for promotion. Before the seventh month, people typically didn't gift others, so the sales weren't that great. Cheng Su wasn't in a hurry and advised Chen Guorong and the others not to rush; just do a good job, and surely there will be buyers.

Sure enough, after sending mooncakes to the businesses, orders started coming in gradually, especially from large units, which ordered in large quantities. Even Luh Kai's supply and marketing cooperative pre-ordered a batch when they learned about the mooncakes. And the decoration team led by Dazhi also placed an order for dozens of boxes to distribute as gifts and staff welfare, so the pastry department often carried the aroma of mooncakes.

Cheng Su also had some mooncakes sent over to the fast food restaurant for sale. It's close to the train station, where there is a lot of foot traffic. Some people, heading back to the countryside, would generously take a box of mooncakes as a gift, so there was naturally no worry about sales.

Therefore, there's hardly any need for advertising; the Joy Soon Loy mooncakes, fragrant and delicious, have already become widely known in the market.

Chapter 1227: Niece Coming to Stay

After the Ghost Festival in mid-July, Cheng Su noticed that there were more children in the compound. Many families had brought their children during the summer vacation, so the compound often had kids running around, making it very lively.

Qi Fenglian also went back to her hometown and brought Xiao Yun and Baobao back with her. She said it was a rare summer vacation, and since it was a busy farming season back home, they didn't have time to take care of the two younger ones, so she simply brought the kids over to have some fun and broaden their horizons. She also wanted to see if Xiao Yun could adapt here, as she was considering letting her attend school here.

Xiao Yun was twelve years old this year, and she was in the fifth grade of elementary school. In September, she was supposed to enter the sixth grade. The little girl had gone through her parents' divorce, which made her much more introverted, and there was a hint of timidity in her eyes when she looked at people.

Seeing Xiao Yun like this, Cheng Su felt very distressed. Children are the most innocent. After the divorce, because Qi Fenglian worked here, Xiao Yun couldn't live with her for long, and in just over half a year, she became introverted and timid. Isn't this because of her lack of a sense of security?

Therefore, Cheng Su also leaned towards letting Xiao Yun study here. At least she would be with Qi Fenglian, and having her mother around would always offer some warmth.

"How about living with your aunt over here, Xiao Yun? There are many children in the compound, and you can play with them," Cheng Su said with a smile.

Xiao Yun timidly looked at Qi Fenglian.

"Mom has to work, and there's no one to play with you or any place to play at the fast food place," Cheng Su added.

That's also true; the fast-food place was near the train station, and with so many people around, if someone couldn't keep a close eye and she got kidnapped, it would be a disaster. Besides, there wasn't much fun at the fast-food place, and it would be boring staying at home all day.

But here at Cheng Su's, there were many kids and companions for her to play with, which might even make her personality more cheerful.

"I also have to take care of my brother," Xiao Yun hesitated.

Qi Fenglian felt touched and said, "You don't have to take care of your brother now. I'll bring him to the store, and you can play at your uncle and aunt's place."

Upon hearing this, Xiao Yun nodded.

Cheng Su smiled and said, "Then in the afternoon, we will go shopping and buy some things to decorate your room."

Xiao Yun asked, "Will I have a room to myself?"

Back home, she shared a room with her younger aunt, but her aunt disliked it.

"Of course, aren't you afraid, Xiao Yun?" Cheng Su asked.

Xiao Yun shook her head, "I'm not scared!"

Cheng Su pointed to the room and said, "Then go and see what's missing, write it down, and we'll buy it in the afternoon!"

Xiao Yun saw Qi Fenglian nodding, and she happily went. Baobao, who was over two years old, saw his sister run and wriggled off Qi Fenglian, taking long strides to follow her in.

In no time, they were laughing and playing in the small room.

"It's a good thing I have you, otherwise I wouldn't know what to do!" Qi Fenglian sighed as she listened.

"This child is too introverted. She needs to play more with kids her age; otherwise, she'll be unsociable at this young age, and socializing will be difficult as she grows up," Cheng Su said.

She's twelve this year, and in a decade or so, she'll be a young woman in a very open society. Socializing will become important, and if someone is too introverted and unsociable, it's a disadvantage in socialization and life.

So, let her interact with other kids more now to see if she can become more outgoing.

"I don't hope for much; as long as she studies a bit more, finds a job, and marries into a good family in the future, I'll be at peace," Qi Fenglian said.

"It will happen!" Cheng Su comforted with a smile, changing the topic, "How are things at home?"

Chapter 1228: Shrew and Slacker

When it came to her hometown, Qi Fenglian felt a bit uneasy. In fact, her mother kept asking her if Cheng Su eventually lent the money or not. She was so annoyed and regretful that she decided not to mention anything casually to her mom in the future.

"Everything's the same as always. Mom and Dad are in good health. Jianguo and Fengping have taken the college entrance exams, so we'll see if they can get into university. It's busy farming season now, and everyone is helping out at home, but that lazy girl Fengping always avoids work," Qi Fenglian said with a faint smile.

Cheng Su laughed and said, "That's good!"

Qi Fenglian seemed hesitant, so Cheng Su asked, "Is there anything else?"

"About last time, the borrowing money thing, I'm sorry. I was just surprised and panicked, didn't think much, and told Mom. I've caused you so much trouble!" Qi Fenglian said awkwardly.

Cheng Su replied, "It's fine, it's all in the past!"

"Every time I've gone back, Mom always asks me if you lent the money or not. How would I know? I'm terrified of her questions!" Qi Fenglian said again, testing the waters.

Cheng Su lowered her gaze and didn't say whether she had lent the money or not, and said, "Just tell her you don't know."

"That's what I said, but I'm so tired of being asked!" Qi Fenglian laughed awkwardly.

Cheng Su didn't engage with that topic and said, "Whether I did or didn't lend the money, it is what it is. If I did, it's my business, and I'll repay it in the future." Then she changed the subject: "Let's not talk about that, tell me, has Zhang Jisheng stopped bothering you?"

Qi Fenglian's smile faded, and she looked a bit unhappy, "Of course not, he showed up just a few days ago!"

Cheng Su's eyes widened, "He still has the nerve to come? Didn't you mention his situation?"

"I did. You know what, right after our divorce, he went on a matchmaking date after New Year's. His mother arranged it," Qi Fenglian said mockingly. "It's funny he came over pretending to reconcile with me."

Cheng Su was a bit gossipy, asking, "What kind of person is she? She doesn't seem kind, quite fierce actually!"

"She remarried after divorcing her previous husband, bringing a daughter with her. The matchmaker praised her, saying she was virtuous, diligent, and good at bearing children. She even had a son with her former family. At first meeting, she seemed diligent, very friendly with the Zhang family, sweet-talking them, and stayed shortly after," Qi Fenglian said. Talking to her sister-in-law about this made her a bit embarrassed, but she didn't have many close friends, and Cheng Su knew her situation anyway, so there was no harm in talking.

"So once she settled in, her behavior changed?" Cheng Su asked.

Qi Fenglian nodded, "Zhang Jisheng himself said she was pretending, a phony with a bad temper, only there to deceive the Zhang family and him! He said he knows he's made a mistake, regrets it, and wants to live with me again!"

Cheng Su snorted, rolling her eyes dramatically, "He says things like that without feeling ashamed? I'm embarrassed just hearing it!"

"Does he have any face left? He's long past caring about face!" Qi Fenglian said sarcastically, "He still thinks I'm the same fool as before. But I'm not stupid. Just perfect, a shrew with a lazy man, they're made for each other. Let the Zhangs have their chaos!"

Cheng Su could hear the resentment in her voice and said, "Alright, it's good you see things clearly, no need to get involved in this mess. If he comes again, just kick him out!"

Qi Fenglian nodded, "I'll just raise my two kids, forget about men; they're all like this!"

Cheng Su sighed slightly, "You're still young. If a good man comes along, you can give it another try!"

Qi Fenglian chuckled bitterly, "Once bitten, twice shy, right? We'll see!"

Before Cheng Su could continue to persuade her, two kids came running out energetically, so she dropped the subject.

Chapter 1229: Find Another One

Cheng Su took Xiao Yun out shopping and bought a lot of little things to decorate the room, including sheets and quilts, as well as stuffed animals, and even several sets of clothes and shoes for her. Qi Fenglian couldn't stop her, her eyes full of gratitude.

After buying the things, they went back home and decorated, turning the small room into a series of pinks. It was small, but very cozy.

Once the room was set up, Cheng Su took Xiao Yun for a walk around the courtyard, intentionally bringing her to the group of children and letting her distribute the candies they bought to her new friends, so they would play with Xiao Yun in the future.

All the kids were about the same age, and seeing Cheng Su looking so kind and giving out candies, they naturally were friendly to Xiao Yun. It didn't take long before they introduced themselves and started playing together, jumping rope, tossing sandbags, and playing hide and seek. Xiao Yun was so excited, her smile became more frequent.

By evening, Qi Taiguo came back from the army and was very happy to see Xiao Yun and them. He picked up Baobao and tossed him into the air, catching him again, making the child giggle gleefully, but also scaring Cheng Su and the others a little.

"Be careful not to frighten the child," Cheng Su reproached.

"Look at him, does he look scared? I think he's very brave, this little rascal has a bright future!" Qi Taiguo laughed.

After playing with the kids for a while, Cheng Su went to cook, and Qi Taiguo started talking with Qi Fenglian, while the two little ones played in the room.

"Is everything okay at home?"

"Everything's fine!" Qi Fenglian said with a smile. "We just miss you all. Are you coming back for the Mid-Autumn Festival this year?"

Qi Taiguo replied, "I fear I'll have to stay for holiday duty this year, probably won't have time to go back. Let's see if Cheng Su goes back."

"If you're not going back, I'm guessing she won't want to go back either!" Qi Fenglian said. Then, glancing at the door, she lowered her voice and asked, "Mom keeps asking me if you guys have borrowed money from the bank!"

Qi Taiguo frowned slightly and said, "Don't worry about this. Just say you don't know. It's between Cheng Su and me; we have it under control!"

It's indeed between the two of them. They had a unified way of dismissing questions.

"There's not much going on here. Life is stable now, but as for you, big sister, you should think and plan for yourself!" Qi Taiguo couldn't help but say.

Qi Fenglian was taken aback.

Qi Taiguo felt a bit embarrassed but still said, "You're only thirty-two, and there's a long life ahead. Do you plan to live alone? If you meet someone good, you can give it a try."

Being a big man, talking to his big sister about these things was still a bit awkward, unlike Cheng Su who could say it so easily.

Qi Fenglian also felt a bit uncomfortable, blushed, and said, "If I find someone and it turns out to be another bad person, what's the point? If they're not good to the child, there's no need! Besides, if I find someone else, I'll have to have more children. How could I do that?"

"Now that the kids are young, you might not feel it, but when they grow up, they'll have their own world, get married, and have children. When the time comes, you'll feel lonely living alone. Finding a companion is also an option," Qi Taiguo said. "You don't have to rush. Just take your time and see. If you meet someone good, you can try it!"

"Got it. Why do you two always say the same thing?" Qi Fenglian said with a hint of annoyance.

Qi Taiguo replied, "That's because we're husband and wife."

Qi Fenglian shook her head, feeling a bit of envy. Their relationship was so good—having a harmonious family was the best thing. What woman doesn't envy that?

Comparing it to herself, finding someone else? Looking at the innocent smiles of the two children, Qi Fenglian sighed deeply. It's not that easy!

Chapter 1230: Aunt Is Dating

Qi Fenglian took Xiao Bao back to her rented place, while Xiao Yun stayed at Cheng Su's home. As expected, children from poor families mature early. With Qi Fenglian not around, Xiao Yun proved to be quite sensible, finding clothes and taking a bath on her own, and even washing her own clothes afterwards.

Cheng Su praised her several times, making the little girl blush with embarrassment.

When it was time to sleep, Cheng Su was worried that Xiao Yun might feel homesick or scared, so she stayed to chat with her for a while.

While lying in bed, Xiao Yun chatted intermittently with Cheng Su, suddenly and mysteriously saying, "Auntie, I have a secret to tell you!"

"Oh? What secret?" Cheng Su asked.

"My little aunt, she's dating someone!" Xiao Yun whispered.

Cheng Su was surprised. Little aunt? That must be Qi Fengping. She's dating?

Surprised at the cleverness of this young girl, Cheng Su tapped her forehead and jokingly asked, "Do you know what dating means?"

"It's holding hands and kissing," Xiao Yun replied.

Cheng Su felt a bit embarrassed and said, "Children shouldn't say such things. You can only date when you grow up."

Xiao Yun nodded.

"How did you find out your little aunt is dating?" Cheng Su asked.

As the saying goes, where there's smoke, there's fire. Xiao Yun wouldn't make this up out of nowhere, considering her age.

Qi Fengping is eighteen or nineteen, a young woman just discovering love, which is normal. But she's taking college entrance exams this year!

"I saw it," Xiao Yun said. "I saw my little aunt's diary!"

Cheng Su frowned and said, "Xiao Yun, diaries are very personal and belong to the individual. Without their consent, you mustn't casually read someone else's diary."

Xiao Yun was a bit scared and said, "I saw it accidentally. I won't dare do it again!"

"As long as Xiao Yun knows it's wrong. We need to respect others, so from now on, don't randomly read diaries." Cheng Su said.

Xiao Yun nodded quickly, feeling a bit regretful for bringing it up with her aunt.

"Alright, I don't mean to blame Xiao Yun. What did your little aunt write? How did you come to see it?" Cheng Su asked again.

"She left it on the table when I had to do my homework. I saw it when moving it aside, and she wrote things like, 'He kissed my lips,' and... there are some words I couldn't recognize!" Xiao Yun said. "People say that holding hands and kissing means dating, so my little aunt is dating, right, Auntie?"

Cheng Su admired her imagination and said, "Well, perhaps your little aunt is writing a story?"

Xiao Yun seemed a bit puzzled.

"These aren't things Xiao Yun should be concerned with. Xiao Yun just needs to study well and play with friends. Adult matters are not for children to worry about, okay?" Cheng Su asked with a smile.

"Okay!" Xiao Yun hesitated a moment, then said, "But some of my classmates say I'm a child nobody wants. I don't like playing with them!"

Zheng Su felt a pang in her heart and said, "How could that be? Xiao Yun has both a mom and a dad. It's not that nobody wants you; it's just that your parents don't love each other anymore and live apart. They both love you very much!"

Xiao Yun sighed.

"What is a little girl doing sighing!" Cheng Su found it amusing and said, "Get to sleep. Aren't you playing with friends tomorrow?"

Xiao Yun made a sound of acknowledgment; after a day of travel and play, she was tired and soon started snoring.

Only then did Cheng Su move the fan a bit away and close the door to return to her room.

"Is she asleep?" Qi Taiguo extended his hand to her.