

## The 80s 127

### Chapter 127: Ghosts in July

On the 15th day of the seventh month, during the Ferdinand Festival, also commonly known as the Ghost Festival, Cheng Su saw Chunhua and Guiying taking out paper money and offerings to burn outside early in the morning.

"Hey, sister-in-law, you're going out today? It's the Ghost Festival, aren't you going to worship the road spirits?" Guiying couldn't help asking Cheng Su when she saw her dressed as if she were about to leave the house.

"Ah, I don't observe these customs; you go ahead," Cheng Su replied with a forced smile.

As she walked downstairs and looked outside, she was alarmed to see some people burning paper offerings right in the courtyard.

"Oh my, Cheng Su, you're going out? Make sure to come back early today. The Ghost Gate opens wide at night; don't come home too late," someone reminded her.

Cheng Su mumbled a few indistinct words in response and hastily pushed her bike away.

She had never liked all this talk of gods and ghosts, but now that she herself had been reborn, she felt a certain reverence toward these matters, and she wasn't sure what sort of existence the heavenly gods and Buddhas held; it was probably best not to comment too much on it.

Riding her bike on the street, Cheng Su saw many others performing roadside rituals. The ash from the burnt paper scattered in the air, with some yellow and white pieces even clinging to her bike wheels, and those people, with hands pressed together and eyes closed, recited their prayers with an indescribable reverence.

Cheng Su looked away and pedaled her bike furiously, arriving at the restaurant, where Dazhi was already waiting for her.

It had to be said that although Dazhi was new to business, his previous experience following a renovation crew had taught him real skills. Together with his cousins, they had managed to renovate Cheng Su's restaurant in just five days.

The entrance had been expanded by half, and the yard had been tidied up nicely, fitting three or four small tables with enough seating for several guests.

Eating under the tree was an especially nice experience, and of the two rooms, one had been deliberately left empty by Cheng Su, intending to be used exclusively for jam production, so it had been tiled and looked very bright. The other room was arranged to hold the food cart and the cash register, with two tables about 1.2 meters long each, which could also seat customers on benches on both sides.

The kitchen had been specially arranged, with a stove set up in the courtyard, surrounded by thick cloth curtains, and with two large windows opened so the food could be directly handed out, which was very convenient.

Dazhi had also cleared away all the renovation debris, saving Cheng Su a lot of worries.

"You guys have worked hard these past few days!" Cheng Su handed over the remaining renovation money, saying, "You've all done very good work."

"We're still testing the waters. If you have any jobs in the future, sister, just call on us brothers. We'll definitely give you the best price and do the best work," Dazhi said, taking Cheng Su's money and, without even looking at it, stuffing it into his pocket with a smile.

Cheng Su smiled in response and bid farewell to Dazhi and his brother. She then began to arrange the rest of the items, deciding where to place everything and setting it all up meticulously. Due to the renovations, she had closed for a few days, and now she needed to reopen for business.

It wasn't until nightfall that Cheng Su finally managed to get the restaurant sorted out. Only then did she push her bike to head back home.

At night, there were even more people burning paper offerings, and Cheng Su felt a chill run down her spine, pedaling her bike as fast as she could.

Heading back from the smaller courtyard to the main one, near the military camp, she had to pass through a small grove of trees that were shrouded in darkness, illuminated only faintly by a distant light that allowed her to see some shadows.

Pop!

Cheng Su's bike jolted, and she nearly lost control and fell off. In a hurry, she braked and stopped, crouched down to see that the rear tire had blown out.

"Why such bad luck!" It was a new bike, and she hadn't ridden it for many days before getting a flat.

Just as she stood up, she suddenly heard a rustling sound, and a breeze passed behind her.

Cheng Su was about to turn around when she felt something grab her ankle. Terrified, she screamed out, "Ah! There's a ghost!"