

The 80s 1281

Chapter 1281: The Respectful Little Uncle

Their room was presumably always cleaned, so it was quite tidy. After putting away their luggage and sitting for a while, they headed to the main room.

Mother Qi was sorting through the things she brought back. Seeing Cheng Su, she awkwardly stopped and said, "Why did you buy so much stuff again!"

"Little Uncle got into university, and since we're hosting guests, we have to buy something to entertain them. It's like getting top marks in ancient times!" Cheng Su said with a smile.

Father Qi was pleased and said, "You're right, but there's no need to buy so much. Your mother-in-law and I have already bought quite a bit. Since we're hosting, let's make it grand with cigarettes and wine so everyone can share in the joy and catch some good vibes."

"That's only right. What I bought is just snacks, some celebratory candies." Cheng Su said with a smile, "Little Uncle has also made a small achievement this time, so I bought him a set of clothes and shoes. After all, he's going to university. It's good to go to university looking decent."

Mother Qi felt a bit comforted and thought this was how it should be.

Father Qi didn't say she was wasting money, only that, "Later, Jianguo must give you a few bows and offer you two cups of tea."

Cheng Su laughed and declined.

"It's necessary. You're his elder sister-in-law, and an elder sister-in-law is like a mother. You bought him such nice clothes, so you deserve his tea and bows." Qi Fenglian chimed in with a smile.

Just when Cheng Su was about to say something, Mother Qi said, "It's not like he's getting married or anything; why bow?"

This showed her displeasure, and she especially disliked Qi Fenglian's remark that an elder sister-in-law is like a mother. What nonsense, how can a sister-in-law be compared to her, the mother?

Cheng Su sensed the displeasure but said nothing, only smiled quietly.

Qi Fenglian also noticed their mother's jealousy and unhappiness, so she laughed and said, "Right, right, it doesn't matter if he bows now or not. When he gets married, if they want a big red envelope from the sister-in-law, they'll really have to kneel and bow properly!"

The older sister's words smoothed things over nicely, and Mother Qi's expression relaxed immediately.

"Big Sister, I could hear your laughter from afar. What are you talking about?" Qi Jianguo walked in from outside and greeted Cheng Su respectfully.

Because of his father's advice, Qi Jianguo knew his sister-in-law had exceptional ability since she got into university, so he often called Cheng Su to ask about study matters, and Cheng Su offered him plenty of advice.

So seeing Cheng Su now, he felt more grateful and respectful.

That's how people are; you must communicate and talk to truly understand someone.

Through such communication, Qi Jianguo began to feel that his sister-in-law wasn't as his mother said, without a shred of worth. Many of her insights were more thoughtful than most people's.

"We were saying your sister-in-law bought you new clothes to celebrate your little achievement of getting into university." Qi Fenglian said with a smile, "Better thank your sister-in-law!"

Qi Jianguo felt a bit shy and awkward, then thanked Cheng Su again.

Cheng Su took a big package from the items she brought back and handed it over, "Jianguo, congratulations. This is a university gift from your big brother and me."

Qi Jianguo quickly took it, "Thank you, sister-in-law, thank you, big brother."

"Go try it on and see if it fits. Let us see the style of our university student." Qi Fenglian urged again.

Feeling even shyer, Qi Jianguo went to change only after Cheng Su said it could be altered if it didn't fit.

And in the room, Qi Fengping, hearing the lively chatter outside, puffed her cheeks, sulking in anger.

Chapter 1282: My Sister-in-Law Is Awesome

Both of the twins took the college entrance exam, the brother got into university, but she didn't. The family was so happy they wanted to throw a celebration banquet for him, even the big brother and sister-in-law showed him affection.

But as for herself, a disappointment, failing the exam was just failing the exam, and they wouldn't even mention anything about redoing it, quickly pushing her to go out and work. She's just unfortunate. If she were a boy, they'd probably make her retake the exam.

But if she doesn't study, so be it. After working for two years, she planned to marry Brother Zhou. Yet, Brother Zhou has been gone so long and there's still no news from him?

Could it be that he's forgotten about her, even though they had...

Qi Fengping listened to the laughter and praises outside, feeling increasingly irritable, she opened the door and yelled, "Can you keep it down a bit? Can't a person get some sleep!"

Saying this, she slammed the door shut.

"This brat, did she eat gunpowder or something!" Mother Qi's voice came through, and Qi Fengping angrily pulled the quilt over her head.

So annoying!

Cheng Su really couldn't admire this sister-in-law's temper, she shook her head, looked at Qi Jianguo, and asked, "How many people from your class got into university? Is it just you going to Guangcheng?"

"Only three got in, and I'm the only one going to Guangcheng." Qi Jianguo replied.

Out of a class of dozens, only three managed to get in. Indeed, getting into college is like a thousand troops crossing a single-log bridge—tough!

But now conditions have opened up, and many people are eager to take the college entrance exams. In the future, there will be more and more university students.

Thankfully, Qi Jianguo made it this year. A few more years will pass, and by the 1990s, jobs will be better with higher salaries than now, and life will be easier.

"Have you decided when to go to Guangcheng?" Cheng Su asked.

"I'm thinking of heading over around the 24th or 25th, it's unfamiliar there, so it's good to go early and adapt." Qi Jianguo said.

"Jianguo, are you going by yourself? Guangcheng isn't like Flower County, it's said to be quite large. You can ask your sister-in-law, she's been there." Qi Fenglian interjected.

Qi Jianguo felt a bit embarrassed and said, "I was thinking of asking Sister-in-law too."

Cheng Su pondered for a moment and said, "Guangcheng is very big, and it's quite chaotic now. If you're going by yourself, I'm afraid it might not be safe. How about this, let me know when you're going to report, and I'll see if I can find time to take you there."

Qi Jianguo and the others were delighted. Cheng Su was well-traveled, having her accompany him would be the best!

"But can you find the time? Isn't business quite busy?" Father Qi asked.

"No matter how busy, taking a day or two to send him over won't delay too much," Mother Qi interrupted.

Qi Jianguo then said, "Sister-in-law, if you can't find the time, I can also go by myself!"

"We'll see about it then. Guangcheng is so large, if you go by yourself, you might get lost unless the school picks you up." Cheng Su said with a smile.

The key point is, Guangcheng is relatively chaotic right now.

"But even if I can't take you, I have a few friends over there who can pick you up when you arrive, so you don't have to worry about it!" Cheng Su quickly added.

Qi Jianguo was a bit surprised, thinking that his sister-in-law was really something, even having friends in such a big city as Guangcheng. He expressed admiration, "Sister-in-law, you're amazing, knowing so many people!"

Cheng Su, seeing the admiration on her brother-in-law's face, couldn't help but laugh.

Mother Qi started to have doubts in her mind, thinking, if she has friends in Guangcheng, and heard her talking about taking loans to buy land before, could it be that she actually did?

Chapter 1283: Insatiable Greed

I discussed with my brother-in-law about this university registration matter and then talked about the feast. Tomorrow is the special day, so we need to buy groceries early. Some dishes need to be prepared tonight, like appetizers, pickled cucumbers, and pickled radishes, among others. Some pastries should also be made tonight.

Making all this, of course, won't be done by just our family. After dinner, our close neighbors will come over to help.

As for slaughtering the chickens and ducks, it's around two or three o'clock now, and around four or five, there will be daughters-in-law coming to help.

"We have invited Uncle Zhu from the east side to be the head chef. He helps with everyone's weddings and funerals and cooks really well. We should give him a good pack of cigarettes and also a red envelope," Father Qi said.

"For these things, you and Dad just make the decisions. I don't really know much," Cheng Su said with a smile.

Mother Qi glanced at her and said: "Jianguo is after all our Qi family's first college student and from the village too. We can't just casually deal with this banquet. We can't lack anything like chicken, duck, fish, and shrimp. A lot of money will be spent on this feast!"

Cheng Su slightly lowered her eyelids. How could she not understand the meaning behind her mother-in-law's words? This was a roundabout way of asking her for money!

As long as they didn't bother her with other matters, Cheng Su was pretty generous with money. She said, "Just tell me how much is needed, and I'll be fine with it!"

Mother Qi immediately beamed and was about to speak when Father Qi glared at her and said, "You don't need to give. The family has money. You've already bought clothes for Jianguo. You don't need to contribute to the feast expenses. We are doing quite well these years, and we can handle the expense of this banquet." Saying this, he gave another warning glare at Mother Qi.

Cheng Su felt relieved; it wasn't that she was unwilling, but her father-in-law's words were quite comforting. She smiled and said, "We'll give what needs to be given, Dad. Just let us know if it's not enough!"

"Mm." Father Qi smiled cheerfully.

After talking for a while, Cheng Su went back to her room to take an afternoon nap. After all, she was a bit tired from the long journey.

Father Qi, however, was pulled aside by Mother Qi for a lecture.

"Why are you pretending to be so generous? What if she, as a sister-in-law, spends a bit of money to host two tables for her brother-in-law? You're just being generous, saving her money. Her business draws so much money; why are you saving for her?" Mother Qi was very dissatisfied.

In her view, Cheng Su was doing big business and had money in her pocket. It was no big deal for her to contribute to hosting the banquet for the family, but the old man insisted on saying they would cover the costs. What was he trying to be a big head about?

"That is your son, not your daughter-in-law's son. Why should she host a banquet for Jianguo? You may feel shameless, but I can't bear the shame," Father Qi retorted. "And let me tell you, you better not bring up the money issue with her again to avoid embarrassment. What's the big deal about being a sister-in-law? She even bought him such a decent set of clothes. Name any other sister-in-law who would do that? You're just so greedy that you can't have enough, like a snake swallowing an elephant, wishing you could take away her car."

Mother Qi was so choked that she could barely speak, bitterly saying, "How am I being greedy? Since she married into the Qi family, she's part of the family. What's the big deal about spending a little money?"

Father Qi sneered, glancing at her sideways, "What, so now she's not considered an outsider? You're saying she's family? Don't you feel ashamed? I'm embarrassed for you!"

"You, you..." Mother Qi was terribly embarrassed, snorting, "Fine, I won't argue with you. But tell me, she just mentioned having friends in Guangcheng. Do you think she really took a loan to buy some land?"

"I don't know!" Father Qi shrugged off her hand: "Young people have their world. I don't care! I advise you not to meddle either, lest you do a thankless job!"

With that, he walked out, leaving Mother Qi so angry she almost jumped up and down.

Chapter 1284: Flattery and Discontent

Cheng Su had been lying down for more than two hours when she heard laughter and chatter outside. She glanced at the time on her wrist; it was already four thirty. She guessed the village women had come over to the Qi family to help.

"Granny Qi, hasn't your eldest son's wife come back yet? Jianguo got into university; as his brother and sister-in-law, they ought to come back to celebrate, right?"

"He's stuck with the troops in Taiguo; he's out on a mission. But his wife did come back!" Mother Qi replied.

"Why haven't we seen her?"

Upon hearing this, Cheng Su knew something was amiss. She quickly got out of bed to get dressed, and sure enough, she heard Mother Qi's dissatisfied voice: "She's still lounging inside."

She almost didn't say I was being lazy!

After tidying herself up, Cheng Su walked out of the room. Indeed, the Qi family's courtyard was bustling with activity; pots and pans were everywhere. Someone was holding a knife, someone else was grabbing a chicken, getting ready to cut its neck.

When they suddenly saw Cheng Su come out, they hesitated for a moment.

"Oh, it's the wife from Taiguo. She's back," someone called out first.

Cheng Su smiled and said, "I just got here this afternoon. It was a long ride, so I rested a bit. Thank you all for taking the time to come to our home and help!"

Upon hearing this, they all laughed and replied, "No need to thank us. Who doesn't lend a hand when there's a celebration in town?"

They'd heard that the Qi family's eldest daughter-in-law also got into university and was running a business. She certainly had seen the world and knew how to speak well.

"Mom, I'll wash my face quickly, then come help," Cheng Su said to Mother Qi, not wanting to put on airs.

"Hurry up, hurry up," Mother Qi replied, a bit grumpily.

Cheng Su quickly returned to the room, grabbed a towel, and headed to the bathroom to freshen up.

As soon as she left, everyone started complimenting Mother Qi.

"Granny Qi, you're really blessed. Both of your sons are successful. The eldest is an officer, and the youngest got into university. Nobody's as lucky as you."

Mother Qi was quite proud and said, "Both of our kids are always obedient."

"The wife from Taiguo seems good too. See, she runs a business, so her style is different. Her dressing is nicer than us village folks, and she's eloquent," someone complimented Cheng Su, adding, "Wasn't your daughter-in-law also a university student? Wow, if Jianguo marries a university student as well, won't there be several university graduates in the family?"

Mother Qi was somewhat dismissive of Cheng Su, focusing only on her younger son, saying, "Finding a match should be equal in terms of family background. In the future, Jianguo's wife will certainly be at least someone educated."

Yet privately, she calculated that now that Cheng Su was successful, Jianguo's future wife's background couldn't be worse, and she'd definitely have to be a university graduate. Otherwise, if she couldn't match Cheng Su and couldn't hold her head up, that'd be embarrassing.

"But when's your daughter-in-law going to give you a big, chubby grandson? They've been married for a few years, right?"

Mother Qi's smile suddenly stiffened.

Honestly, what dissatisfied her most about Cheng Su was that she still hadn't laid an egg, so to speak. This was the biggest burden on her mind and the thing she resented most.

Now, someone brought up this sore topic, and her face couldn't help but darken as she secretly blamed Cheng Su.

All because of Cheng Su, this wonderful day was turning embarrassing. Humph.

Realizing Mother Qi's expression wasn't good, the person felt they said something wrong and was about to change the subject when they saw Cheng Su coming out and loudly called, "Wife from Taiguo, come here and help me hold down the chicken's wings so I can slit its throat and let it bleed!"

Cheng Su smiled and agreed, walking over and suddenly catching the disapproving look from her mother-in-law. She thought, now what?

Chapter 1285: Kindness Taken for Malice

After helping kill chickens and ducks for a while, Cheng Su received several probing questions, all curious about what kind of business she was doing and how much money she was making.

Cheng Su understood the concept of not flaunting wealth and only mentioned that business was difficult to do, she didn't earn much, just managed to get by, which, of course, the others didn't believe, but since Cheng Su wasn't saying more, they couldn't do anything about it.

Talking about business led to questions about whether she was hiring, and if it would be possible for the young boys and girls at home to work for her.

This was even easier for Cheng Su to handle, as she said, "Although Qing City is bigger and more prosperous than Flower County, the truly bustling place is somewhere like Guangcheng Special District.

I've been to Guangcheng and seen it; everyone from all over the country is heading there to strike it rich. So rather than working a minor job for me, it's better to go to Guangcheng, where there are more development opportunities."

The person felt a bit awkward and said, "How can that be the same? At least there's a familiar face to look after them!"

"You're right about that, but if someone is going for work, isn't it all about the money? Naturally, they should go where they can earn more!" Cheng Su laughed.

The person didn't say anything further.

"Thai daughter-in-law, stop that and help with cooking. Let your aunts have a meal at home tonight," Mother Qi shouted from the kitchen.

Cheng Su responded, brushed the chicken feathers off her hands, and went over, feeling grateful to her mother-in-law. If she hadn't called her away, she would still have to deal with those aunts herself.

As she walked away, two or three people gathered around the previous speaker, whispering, "See? You just made a fool of yourself. I think this Thai daughter-in-law is pretty formidable!"

The aunt who had been speaking with Cheng Su pursed her lips and said, "She's shrewd and not easy to fool."

"Stop talking about it."

Following Mother Qi's instructions, Cheng Su rinsed the rice, cooked, and chopped vegetables. Before long, she saw her sister-in-law, Qi Fengping, being pushed in by Mother Qi.

"Everyone's busy, and you just lie around in the house pretending to be dead, what does that look like? You're lazy enough to want to fly, hurry and help your sister-in-law!" Mother Qi scolded.

"Isn't Qi Jianguo also in the house? Why don't you call him? You always play favorites," Qi Fengping grumbled.

Mother Qi sneered, "Then you, ungrateful girl, take the college entrance exam and show me. Make your mother proud, and then I won't need you to work, and you can become a pampered miss!"

Qi Fengping huffed, "You just look down on me!" and sat down grumpily, stuffing wood into the stove.

Mother Qi cursed her a couple of times and left.

Cheng Su was slicing a bunch of pickled vegetables, intending to stir-fry them with intestines and a few chilies to make a delicious dish.

In the kitchen, it was just Cheng Su and Qi Fengping. Looking at Qi Fengping's round face and plump waist, Cheng Su subtly knitted her brow and casually asked, "Fengping, now that you've not been admitted, what are your plans for the future?"

Qi Fengping rolled her eyes at her, "What plans? I'm not Qi Jianguo, I'll just let nature take its course!"

That sounded quite hopeless.

Cheng Su said flatly, "Why not plan? You're already eighteen; working, getting married, and raising a family are all your responsibilities. You should at least have some sort of plan!"

Upon hearing about marriage and children, Qi Fengping paused, and a blush spread across her face, likely accentuated by the firelight.

"Is there anyone special at school?" Cheng Su saw her shy and bashful demeanor and knew that Xiao Yun wasn't wrong—her sister-in-law had definitely started dating.

Qi Fengping snapped back to reality and snapped, "None of your business!"

Cheng Su was quite upset; she had been genuinely trying to talk and discuss things with her, but her goodwill was being taken for granted.

"Fine, I really can't do anything about it. My sister-in-law can just take care of herself!" she sneered, burying herself in cooking again.

Qi Fengping wanted to retort but saw Cheng Su's cold face and kept silent, thinking, what's so special about her anyway!

Chapter 1286: Deliberately Causing Trouble

As evening approached, Qi Taiguo couldn't help but call home again. It was Jianguo who picked up, and upon hearing that Cheng Su was back, Qi Taiguo breathed a sigh of relief and asked about Qi Jianguo.

"...It's a shame you can't come home, the house is quite lively." Jianguo said with a smile.

Qi Taiguo sighed internally, yes, it's a real shame, but given his current state, it's best not to go back and worry them.

Jianguo chatted with him for a while, then sensibly went to get Cheng Su to come to the phone.

Listening to the indistinct voices through the receiver, Qi Taiguo couldn't help but smile, almost able to see the bustling scene.

Before long, he heard a quick patter of footsteps, his smile growing even larger.

"Hello, Qi Taiguo?" As expected, it was Cheng Su with a breathless voice.

Qi Taiguo chuckled softly, "It's just a phone call, why did you rush?"

Cheng Su dragged over a chair and sat down, saying, "I was worried you'd be anxious? How come you're calling back, is your assignment completed?"

"Yes, it's done!" Qi Taiguo replied.

"Have you returned to Qing City? I only came back home today, and I still need to help Xiao Yun with school transfer matters, might take a few days before I return!" Cheng Su said.

Qi Taiguo was about to say he was in the Capital, but changed his words after hearing this, "No worries, you can come back after you finish, I have things to do here too."

"I knew it, you never get a break." Cheng Su pouted, asking, "Was the mission smooth? Did you get hurt?"

"Smooth enough, can't go into details over the phone, I'll tell you properly when you get back, anyways I did achieve something big." Qi Taiguo said with a smile, deciding not to mention his injuries, she'd just worry pointlessly when she can't do anything, better to heal and report back properly.

Cheng Su was indeed delighted, "I knew my husband was the best! I'll reward you when we get home!"

Qi Taiguo chuckled, teasing her on purpose, "How will you reward me?"

"Whatever you say, that's how I'll reward." Cheng Su laughed broadly.

"Alright, I'll take you up on that!" Qi Taiguo happily asked, "Is everyone at home well? Sounds lively."

"Very lively, let me tell you..." Cheng Su lowered her voice, sharing gossip she had heard.

Qi Taiguo could immediately picture her covering her mouth, sneakily sharing secrets, making him grin widely, his heart melting, and he cooperatively responded with surprises like "Oh, really?"

Sometimes listening to her talk about mundane affairs was a joy, felt like true, lively life, full of fun.

Cheng Su, caught up in the excitement, didn't notice Mother Qi had been glaring at her for a while.

Seeing more than twenty minutes had passed, Mother Qi coughed heavily, "Does the phone bill cost nothing?"

"Uh, I'll stop now, I'll tell you more when I'm home!" Cheng Su sheepishly said, "Mom, do you want to talk to Taiguo? If not, I'll hang up. The call is quite costly!"

Mother Qi was about to reach out, of course she wanted to talk to her eldest son, but barely extended her hand when Cheng Su hung up the call.

Mother Qi's hand froze in mid-air, staring woodenly at Cheng Su, was she doing this on purpose? Purposefully stopping her from having a private chat with Taiguo.

Cheng Su looked at her innocently, "Mom, what's wrong?"

"Go wash the dishes!" Mother Qi snapped irritably.

Cheng Su acknowledged with a smile, she had done it intentionally, calls were expensive after all.

Chapter 1287: Absurd Gossip

After receiving a call from Qi Taiguo, Cheng Suxin felt quite happy. The fact that he could call meant he was safe, and the task was successfully completed, so she was naturally in a good mood and didn't mind her mother-in-law's demanding ways.

As she reached the kitchen door, she stopped in her tracks. There were two aunts inside talking.

"One passed the exam, the other didn't. They're both twins, but it seems like boys have better brains."

Hearing this, Cheng Su knew they were talking about her brother-in-law and sister-in-law. Just as she was about to walk in, she heard another aunt say: "Isn't that right? But the girl going to high school is an achievement too. Only the Qi family can afford it. For families like ours, how could we manage?"

"Oh, now that the Qi family has married a money magnet, they could afford not just one or two college students, but hundreds! It's just a matter of whether they're lucky enough to pass," the first voice said.

"That's true, but do you think Fengping is getting too fat? She's growing like yeast. How much good food is the Qi family feeding her?"

"Exactly! From behind, her waist looks like she's a few months pregnant. If we didn't know she was still in school, we might think she's expecting!"

Cheng Su was startled and instinctively looked at Qi Fengping squatting by the door, bowl in hand, gnawing on a chicken leg, her gaze on Fengping's stomach.

Cheng Su shook her head, afraid to think further, and shouted loudly: "Mom, where should I put this bowl?"

The conversation in the kitchen came to an abrupt stop.

Only then did Cheng Su walk in, smiling broadly as if she hadn't heard their gossip at all.

Later in the evening, the aunts and daughters-in-law helped make some pastries. While gossiping about various families, time flew by, and before they knew it, it was past ten o'clock.

Once everything was done and everyone else left, Qi Fengping couldn't hold it in any longer and confronted Cheng Su: "Sister-in-law, what did I do to annoy you? You kept staring at me all night like I'd committed some unforgivable crime!"

Everyone's eyes fell on Cheng Su.

Cheng Su asked, "Did I?"

"You won't admit it, but several times when I looked over, you averted your eyes as if I wouldn't notice!" Qi Fengping said angrily.

"It was just a coincidence, what would I be staring at you for!" Cheng Su felt a bit guilty.

In fact, after hearing the ridiculous gossip in the kitchen, she had a wild thought in her mind, fearing that Qi Fengping might have actually done something disgraceful and gotten pregnant.

This... shouldn't be, right?

Cheng Su repeatedly reassured herself but couldn't help glancing at Qi Fengping, wanting to see for herself, just short of wanting to look inside her stomach.

"Who knows what you're up to? You stared at me the entire evening." Qi Fengping glared at her.

Cheng Su smiled awkwardly: "I'm looking at you because you're pretty!"

Though she meant it as a compliment, Qi Fengping felt it was a jab at her weight. Already feeling upset about everyone praising Qi Jianguo for being smart while she, the twin, failed the entrance exams, the contrast left her feeling quite aggrieved. Now hearing what she thought was Cheng Su's sarcastic remark, she burst into tears and ran back to her room: "Everyone's bullying me!"

Bang!

The dust on the wall shook off.

Cheng Su was completely baffled. What did she even say?

Mother Qi glared at her and said sarcastically, "This stubborn girl is getting more temperamental by the day. If she doesn't like something, she'll just blow up. Who owes her anything? People scolding you are doing it for your own good!"

"Alright, this attitude needs to be checked. She's a grown girl now. If she acts like this when she goes to work, who will put up with her?" Father Qi said with a dark expression.

Cheng Su said, "Dad, Mom, I'll go wash up and sleep first!"

It's best not to get involved in the sister-in-law's matters!

Chapter 1288: Burn Incense for Blessings of a Big, Healthy Boy

On the actual day of the Qi family's invitation, Cheng Su got up early from bed, washed, and dressed quickly, then started helping around the house to avoid her mother-in-law indirectly complaining about her laziness.

After breakfast, people began to arrive to help. The banquet was held at noon, so there was a lot of work to be done.

Uncle Zhu, who was in charge of cooking, had already arrived. After receiving a cigarette from Father Qi, he put on an apron and swiftly began washing, cutting, chopping, and frying, busying himself with the preparations.

Early in the morning, the entire Qi family was bustling with people coming and going, making it lively, busy, and noisy.

Today, Mother Qi was dressed in a festive red outfit and went early to offer her respects to the deities. As the eldest daughter-in-law, Cheng Su was also brought along by her side to learn how to offer her respects, albeit unwillingly, but being the eldest daughter-in-law, she had to do it!

Cheng Su listened as Mother Qi offered words of respect to the ancestors and deities, murmuring phrases of thanks for the ancestors' and Bodhisattva's blessings, celebrating Jianguo's admission to university and such.

After finishing up with Qi Jianguo's affairs, she moved on to the elder son's, praying for the ancestors' and Bodhisattva's blessings. Concerned that it involved her husband, Cheng Su dared not be disrespectful and worshipped reverently.

"Offer incense to the ancestors for their blessing so that you can soon have a chubby little boy!" Mother Qi handed Cheng Su a stick of incense.

Cheng Su's mind buzzed; this was the topic she dreaded most when brought up by her mother-in-law.

However, she and Qi Taiguo had been trying for months with no sign of success. Perhaps it was time to pray, so she obediently took the incense, mimicking Mother Qi's worship manner, and uttered her heartfelt wishes.

Mother Qi watched from the side, very satisfied.

She was pleased with Cheng Su's sincerity toward the ancestors, believing it could lead to good fortune in the future. Her compliance and obedience were pleasing to the eyes.

"Alright, go and help outside." After Cheng Su offered the incense, Mother Qi released her.

Cheng Su felt as if she had been pardoned and walked out.

The chimney in the kitchen began to emit smoke, and faint aromas wafted through the air; cooking had commenced.

Cheng Su didn't enter the kitchen but instead helped arrange tables and set up dishes and utensils in the courtyard and main room, preparing to host guests attending the banquet.

Father Qi was in high spirits today, smiling to everyone he met. If it was a male guest, he offered cigarettes; if a female guest smoked, he would hand out two as well, hoping to spread festive cheer.

Qi Jianguo, the main character of the event, wore a new outfit—jeans and a white shirt—and looked very spirited. Wearing glasses, he appeared particularly genteel, occasionally smiling at guests with an air of confidence.

"Congratulations, relatives."

Cheng Su heard the voice, turned around, and saw her own parents carrying cigarettes, alcohol, and a bag of fruits. She quickly went to welcome them.

"Dad, Mom, you're here too." Cheng Su took the gifts and said with a smile.

"Hey, you've come back. Your younger brother-in-law is celebrating a big achievement today; of course, we had to come to congratulate!" Father Cheng said smilingly.

"Please come in, relatives." Father Qi was equally delighted to see Father Cheng and his family. Together with his son, he went to welcome them.

Qi Jianguo greeted them.

After placing the gifts down, Cheng Su busied herself serving tea and water. Mother Cheng said, "We're all family, no need for formalities. You go outside and help; I'll join in a bit."

Cheng Su exchanged a few more words before heading outside to organize; there were many guests, she couldn't slack off just because her parents were here.

Firecrackers sounded at the door, indicating more guests had arrived. Cheng Su hurried to greet them, pausing in surprise, but soon smiled: "Auntie, you've come too, please come inside!"

The visitor, supported by a girl, leaning on a walking stick—it was none other than Auntie and her daughter Weiqiu.