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Chapter 152 The Illiterate Nouveau Riche

Cheng Su's little restaurant was thriving, and it didn't really need any advertising. After all, the location wasn't far from the military compound, so there were always people passing by who might drop in, and some did. And with Li Qiulan working there, a casual word from Li Qiumei was all it took for the whole compound to know that Cheng Su was making a lot of money.

No matter the era, when you're doing well, there will always be those who can't stand it, those who will be envious. The talk turns mean, with accusations of pandering and insincere flattery, and then comes the disdain for private entrepreneurs not being presentable.

"Even if you earn more money, you're still reeking of copper, uneducated, a vulgar upstart," they said.

In the Southwest Ladder's kitchen, such gossip was stirring, and it was Hualing who spoke these words.

"If you ask me, it still doesn't compare to Dahe's wife, who properly goes to the factory to work. At least she's recognized as a worker, and that carries a better reputation. When she retires, she'll comfortably collect her pension and live the good life," Hualing said while washing the vegetables to Guiying.

Guiying responded lightly, "Look at what you're saying. Working in a factory is still working. How can that be better than being your own boss? Besides, the factory wages aren't like those at the hospital, only around twenty or thirty yuan, and they deduct your pay if you're late. I heard from Li Qiumei that Sister-in-law Qi is paying Qiulan sister twenty yuan. That's just for the probation period. Once she's official, it'll be thirty yuan, plus there's a year-end bonus. If I hadn't already gotten a job, I'd be tempted to be a server there myself!"

"Twenty yuan a month?" Hualing paused slightly, "Just to be a server?"

As a nurse, she made only thirty-four yuan a month and had to pay for her meals in the canteen, too. Could it really be that a server earned such a high salary?

"That's what I heard," Chunhua nodded, "And food is included. What isn't there to eat in that restaurant? It's only been a few days, and I can see that Qiulan sister's face has gotten rounder."

Detecting the envy in her words, Hualing curled her lips and said, "You didn't go to work in the factory, you can go too."

Being a server, what's so good about that? It's just pouring tea and handing out water, humbling yourself, and from their talk, it sounds like they think it's something to brag about.

"I do want to go, but look at this," Chunhua pointed to her belly, three months pregnant already.

Hualing rolled her eyes, "You can't even see the belly yet, can't you still work?"

These days, who isn't working whilst showing a bulging belly? Only she thinks she's so precious. Her husband, Liang Shurong, isn't even a squad leader, how much could his allowance be?

"I've been married for years and only just got pregnant. Old Liang is so anxious, he doesn't let me work. Otherwise, I would've gone already. Now with the reform and open-up policy, life is getting better, but

things are also getting more expensive. Old Liang's allowance isn't much, and we're really tightening our belts," Chunhua said, somewhat disheartened, yet enviously looking at her, "Not like you, with Platoon Leader Chen's high allowance, and you have a salary from working at the hospital. If you take a red envelope too, that's even better. Didn't Chen buy you a fan recently?"

Proudly, Hualing lifted her chin, "That's right, a respectable job and a caring husband make for a comfortable life."

"If you ask me, the most comfortable life is Sister-in-law Qi's. She runs her own business, earns more money, buys whatever she wants, and she and Commander Qi are so affectionate," Guiying chimed in.

Hualing's proud face fell, "An uneducated upstart reeking of copper, what's there to admire?"