

## The 80s 771

### Chapter 771 Jealousy

Cheng Su, upon Luh Kai's recommendation, picked out a refrigerator and treated him to lunch before heading home.

The refrigerator made its way through the courtyard, and everyone had their eyes on it, their eyes turning red with envy.

These days, buying a refrigerator costs quite a bit of money, but it seemed like Cheng Su's family never had to worry about money. Whatever they wanted to buy, they bought, without ever worrying about the cost.

How much money had she actually made?

The workers moving the refrigerator were making quite a bit of noise, drawing Chunhua out to see what was happening. Seeing the refrigerator, she also couldn't help but express her admiration.

"If I have more meat at home than I can use, can I store it in your fridge?" Chunhua, eying the brand-new refrigerator with envy, asked Cheng Su with a smile.

Cheng Su was busy arranging things inside the refrigerator and felt a twinge in her heart upon hearing this. She said, "Raw meat is fine, but cooked meat is not. Cooked meat easily smells, and I really don't like the idea of storing meat and vegetables in the fridge because it's hard to eliminate the odor. That's why I always buy just enough groceries for one meal, and leftovers from one meal don't taste good either!"

Without waiting for Chunhua to reply, she continued, "But you should also try to buy just enough for one meal. Even if you were to store it here, I can't be at home all day. I have to go to work, and Old Qi is in the army. Nobody's home to fetch things for you, right?"

Chunhua felt a hint of rejection in her words, and her face involuntarily flushed with embarrassment. She awkwardly said, "That's true, I was just speaking off the cuff. I couldn't just bring it over and store it like that!" Inside, she felt somewhat uncomfortable.

Cheng Su smiled slightly.

She knew she might be coming off as unsympathetic, but there were times when a refusal was necessary. For instance, with storing vegetables and such – once there's a precedent, every time their family had extra food, would they bring it over for her to freeze? And if she allowed it, the fridge only had so much space; managing food for two families would be complicated aside from the health concerns. On the other hand, if she refused, she would likely be accused of being cold-hearted.

With that in mind, it seemed better to refuse from the start and avoid future awkwardness!

Feeling disheartened, Chunhua returned home and hugged Yuer, glancing at her own humble dwelling and then comparing it to Cheng Su's. The stark difference between having money and not was immediately obvious!

Their home always looked pristine, everything in place, the windows shining clean, exuding warmth.

As for her own place – it was a mess, dirty, and just looking at it made one uncomfortable.

Having money was indeed wonderful!

Chunhua patted her daughter's back and sighed. Old Liang's allowance was only a few tens of yuan, not even a hundred yuan. Now with Yuer born, their expenses had increased, and they hardly had any savings.

Chunhua wondered if she should look for a job. Or perhaps, she thought, she should ask Cheng Su for a position in her shop?

Having made up her mind, she shared her thoughts with Liang Shurong when he returned home.

"If you go to work, what about the baby?" Liang Shurong frowned and hesitated before saying, "The allowance has increased by twenty yuan this year, so we have a little more income. Maybe you shouldn't go to work? Just take on some handicrafts to do at home?"

"Doing handicrafts is exhausting and pays so little. Stringing thousands of beads only to earn a few measly coins," Chunhua said, feeling deflated.

"But if you go to work, there will be no one to look after our daughter." Their daughter was only a few months old!

"I was thinking of weaning her and sending her back to our hometown to be with your mother," Chunhua said.

Liang Shurong immediately felt a pang of distress and said, "She's not even half a year old, and you want to send her away so young? I can't bear it, and I wouldn't feel at ease!"

"What else can we do then? I'm sick of living in poverty!" Chunhua snapped.

Liang Shurong went silent at once and pursed his lips.

#### Chapter 772: It's Good to Be Rich

Chunhua's sudden outburst of temper made the little Yuer in her arms start crying, and Liang Shurong's heart ached terribly. He immediately wanted to take her into his arms.

"Look at you, just talk, why throw a fit?" Liang Shurong said with a frown.

Chunhua lifted her clothes and directly stuffed her breast into Yuer's mouth, effectively silencing the girl.

"I'm just frustrated, okay? Look at our home, what does it even resemble? Go and see how Sister-in-law Qi's family lives, we can't even compare," Chunhua said with a dark expression.

Liang Shurong lowered his head and said, "That's because I'm not capable enough!"

Seeing this, Chunhua felt a mix of emotions—Old Liang lacked ambition, but he was so incredibly attentive to her and didn't say a word even when they had a daughter, treating the girl like a treasure.

Seeing his nice-guy demeanor, Chunhua said, "I'm not blaming you. There's only so much from the allowance; I understand how you have to stretch it. Sister-in-law Qi's family, if they relied only on Commander Qi's allowance, would definitely not have it so good either. It's all Cheng Su I know."

"Yuer's mom, with Commander Qi's family running a business, never mind our family, which house in the whole courtyard can compare to theirs? That sort of comparison, it's impossible," Liang Shurong couldn't help saying.

"I'm not trying to compete with them; I just want life to be a bit easier. Just your allowance isn't enough for the household, and now there's one more mouth to feed. If something comes up back in our hometown and we have no money, what then? I absolutely have to go work," Chunhua added.

"I know that, but Yuer is too young. She's still nursing and to wean her now and send her back to the countryside—I just can't bear it," Liang Shurong grimaced as he looked at his daughter's plump cheeks.

"What can we do if we can't bear it? We'll have to let go eventually," Chunhua said through clenched teeth. "How about this, we send her back for three years, and when she's over three, we bring her back to attend kindergarten here, what do you think?"

Liang Shurong was still reluctant and muttered, "Then when you go back to work later on, it'll be the same." Seeing Chunhua's expression darken again, he quickly added, "If you think it's okay, then I'll talk to Mom about it!"

At that, Chunhua's expression softened.

The next day, Chunhua took her daughter to visit Qiumei's place. She first played with Dan Dan and then started chatting with Li Qiumei.

She looked around their home and said, "Your place is nice too; you have everything you need, unlike our home, which is so poor."

Qiumei felt a pang of concern and tentatively asked, "What's the matter? Did Sister-in-law Qi's new refrigerator upset you?"

"Upset? I wouldn't go that far. I just think it must be nice to have money, to buy whatever you want. Without money, we can only dream, right?" Chunhua looked at her.

Not sure of Chunhua's intentions, Qiumei said, "Naturally, having money is good, but we all live within our means. You can't wish for more than you have."

Chunhua smirked and asked, "Your sister Qiulan, working in Sister-in-law Qi's restaurant, she must be making a fair bit, right?"

Qiumei became guarded and vaguely replied, "I don't know how much she makes. It's just a salary of a few tens of yuan a month. She's a young girl and spends her own money on accessories—I don't interfere with that!"

"Really? I heard that a lot of things at your home were bought by your sister?"

Qiumei's eyebrows furrowed, and she felt somewhat displeased, replying, "If she wants to show filial piety and buy things, that's her choice. If not, I wouldn't say anything about it!"

Knowing she might have gone too far, Chunhua coughed and said, "I didn't mean anything by it. I was just wondering, what do you think about me working at Sister-in-law Qi's shop too? I heard that your Qiulan is now a manager. How much does she make a month?"

### Chapter 773: The Debt of Gratitude Is Hard to Repay

So, it was a reconnaissance mission for salary information. Qiumei finally understood Chunhua's purpose.

"How much could it be? Just over twenty yuan, I guess. I'm not very clear on it," Qiumei said vaguely and then changed the subject, "You're going to work, who will take care of the child?"

"Send him back to his grandmother for help," Chunhua asked again, "What about Qiulan, are they still hiring?"

Qiumei hugged her son and said, "Honestly, I'm not very clear. If you really want to do it, you might as well ask Cheng Su. She's the boss. Doesn't she know better than I do?"

Chunhua lowered her head and said, "I'm just asking around first."

Qiumei fell silent. Her sister had repeatedly warned her not to meddle too much in Cheng Su's household affairs or boast about how things were at the restaurant, to avoid making things difficult for Cheng Su.

So, she simply played dumb.

Seeing she could not get any information here, Chunhua sat for a while and then left.

Cheng Su soon heard about Chunhua's intentions from Qiulan, and her brow furrowed slightly.

"My sister didn't say much, just told her to ask you," Qiulan explained quickly upon noticing Cheng Su's displeased expression, clarifying for her sister.

"It's fine. Let's wait until she brings it up with me," Cheng Su said with a smile, "You go back to work!"

Qiulan went back to her tasks, and Cheng Su pondered the matter.

To be honest, hearing about Chunhua's intentions from Qiulan did unsettle her. If you want to do something, why not ask me directly? Why take such a roundabout way to inquire about someone else's salary? What's the point?

If Chunhua really does bring it up with me, what should I do?

Cheng Su looked around. The restaurant had plenty of staff at the moment, and the current waitresses were all young girls. Chunhua would not fit in; it wouldn't be right to make her wash dishes.

However, the factory did need operators and salespeople, but if a salesperson didn't land any orders in three months or performed poorly, they would be eliminated too.

Having made up her mind, Cheng Su stopped thinking about the issue and turned to practice English dialogues with Liang Dan.

It was already May, and she had to take the retake exam at the beginning of the following month. This month was critical to consolidate her knowledge.

So she and Liang Dan helped each other by testing their language dialogues.

Additionally, she sought advice from Ying Xiaoya using mock exam papers, determined to pass the university entrance exam on the first attempt.

With a pile of materials in hand, she returned home, where Chunhua came over, making convoluted small talk before finally steering the conversation towards her purpose.

Cheng Suxin had already thought of a response in advance and shared her previous thoughts with her.

"As an assembly line worker, it's hard work, standing all day, inspecting and packaging jam. As for the salesperson, you'll be running around outside all day, even in the sweltering heat, and if you don't make any sales in three months, you'll be out," Cheng Su said.

Chunhua frowned and asked with a flushed face, "Isn't there a position like Qiulan's?"

Cheng Su almost laughed, saying, "You know how long Qiulan has been with me. It took her nearly a year to rise to her current position. Without knowing anything, how can you do her job? It all requires accumulated experience."

Chunhua's face turned as red as an apple, and she felt extremely uncomfortable.

Cheng Su pretended not to notice and said, "If you're not afraid of hard work, I can arrange a position for you in the factory, but it would only be as an assembly line worker or a salesperson. Think about it!"

This was her way of repaying Chunhua for her past kindness.

The saying is indeed true: debts of gratitude are the hardest to repay. No wonder people say that if a problem can be solved with money, do not owe a favor—it makes perfect sense.

Look, now that she's come to ask, should I respond or not?

#### Chapter 774: What a Coincidence

Cheng Su didn't delve too deeply into Chunhua's thoughts. After all, she had already laid out the options, and there were only those two paths. How to choose was Chunhua's own business.

Whether it was due to feeling overwhelmed or some other reason, Chunhua hadn't approached Cheng Su to discuss the matter, and Cheng Su didn't take the initiative to bring it up either, so the matter was left at a standstill.

As early summer arrived, life seemed to suddenly become peaceful.

In preparation for the June exams, Cheng Su had put all her other plans on hold, focusing solely on passing the university entrance exam in one try to achieve her dream.

Thus, she informed the managers of each business that she likely wouldn't be visiting for a while and if any major issues arose, they should just call her.

Everyone knew Cheng Su was preparing for university and that it was a critical time, so naturally, no one said anything. They swiftly agreed to let her study in peace. Even Qi Taiguo himself didn't dare to bother Cheng Su too much, for fear of disrupting her thoughts.

While Cheng Su was at home, completely absorbed in her books and materials, Ning Ge paid her a visit.

He had some business that required him to leave for a while, and he didn't have a fixed return date. For any major company decisions, she could just make them without consulting him.

Accustomed to Ning Ge's occasional disappearances, Cheng Su said, "You could have just called, why make a special trip over here to say this?"

Ning Ge touched his nose and said, "Isn't it because I don't want you to say I lack responsibility?"

Cheng Su rolled her eyes and said, "Whether I say it or not, wouldn't you do the same thing anyway? So tell me, what are you up to this time?"

"Nowhere special, just have some things to take care of," Ning Ge replied, looking reluctant to elaborate.

"All secretive, makes me wonder what you're up to," Cheng Su huffed, eyeing him with suspicion, "You're not off to do something shady, are you?"

A jolt went through Ning Ge's heart. "What nonsense are you spouting? Do I seem like that kind of person?"

Cheng Su didn't speak, merely gazed at him with a half-smile.

Seeing the thoughts she was barely holding back from voicing, Ning Ge exclaimed, "I am a good guy, doing brave and heroic deeds!"

Cheng Su burst out laughing and said, "Brave and heroic? I bet you run faster than anyone when there's real danger!"

Ning Ge's face darkened.

"Alright, enough said. Want to have dinner here tonight? I'll go buy groceries!" Cheng Su stopped teasing him.

Although Ning Ge liked the idea, he didn't have the time and said, "Not tonight, maybe next time. I've bought a train ticket for five o'clock; I have to leave right away!"

"So you're just presenting a fait accompli? Buying the ticket before you come to tell me you are leaving?" Cheng Su jumped up angrily.

Seeing her reaction, Ning Ge felt a delightful satisfaction inside and said, "I did it on purpose!"

"Ning Ge!"

Ning Ge laughed a few times, checked the time on his wristwatch, and said, "No more talking, I'm off."

Cheng Su glared as he walked out the door.

It was quite the coincidence that just as Ning Ge left, Taiguo walked in right after him. Sitting down, he immediately told Cheng Su that he had a mission the day after tomorrow.

Cheng Su, taken aback, blurted out, "One of you says you have to leave for some business, and the other has a mission, and just like that, it all happens to coincide?"

Taiguo didn't understand what she meant and looked at her questioningly.

Cheng Su recounted Ning Ge's visit and concluded by saying, "What do you think, isn't it a coincidence?"

"It's just a bit of a coincidence. My mission has nothing to do with his trip; it's all just random timing. They're unrelated paths, nothing significant," Taiguo said with a chuckle.

Chapter 775: Support You Like They Support Me

In the evening, Cheng Su discussed trivial household matters with Qi Taiguo.

The conversation started with the Elder Sister and her husband. Recently, the Elder Sister had mentioned to her that Zhang Jisheng was constantly complaining about how tough the renovation work was and they were always arguing.

Cheng Su said, "They say it's best for outsiders not to meddle in a couple's affairs, so I didn't say much."

Qi Taiguo frowned and said, "You did the right thing. It's their marital issue, and we shouldn't interfere. By the way, how is your Uncle doing?"

Cheng Su replied, "Uncle hadn't said much; I think he's settled down too. Actually, if he does well, he can really go solo in this business in the future. But..."

"What?"

"Uncle mentioned that the Elder Sister's husband talked back to Dazhi twice!" Cheng Su cautiously said.

Upon hearing this, Qi Taiguo's expression changed immediately. He sat up on the bed, his lips pursed, and a faint anger began to bubble up.

"Don't be annoyed, and don't interfere, to spare the Elder Sister any embarrassment!" Cheng Su immediately said.

"He just doesn't know how to appreciate opportunities!" Qi Taiguo gritted his teeth.

The job of Zhang Jisheng was something Cheng Su had found for him; though it was tough, the pay was fair, without a penny missing. If one were really committed, there was a chance to set up one's own renovation team in the future, but Zhang Jisheng?

Seeing him like this, Cheng Su quickly changed the subject and asked about Qi Taiguo's recent mission—what kind of task it was, where he was going, and whether it would be dangerous.

"Susu, the military has its secrets, and this mission is no different; I can't discuss the details with you," Qi Taiguo looked at Cheng Su. "However, this mission isn't too significant; just a few heads of state are coming to a neighboring province for an important conference, and we need to deploy troops for defense, that's all."

Cheng Su, not fully understanding, asked, "Is it to protect those people?"

Qi Taiguo hesitated for a moment and said, "You could say that."

"But isn't that what special forces do?"

Qi Taiguo pinched her nose and said, "Each branch of the military has special forces units; we might have them here as well. Enough questions now. Rest assured, the mission won't take too long. This conference is just ten days, and then I'll be home."

Cheng Su gave an "oh" and after a while said, "No matter the difficulty of the task, don't take it lightly. Be more vigilant."

"Are you that afraid I'll be in danger?" Qi Taiguo raised an eyebrow and asked her.

"Afraid? Of course, I'm afraid—you're my man. But fear won't help; it's your duty, and you can't just skip it because you're scared. That wouldn't be very soldier-like, would it? Whatever you want to do, I will support you, just like you support me. I just hope you'll be extra careful about dangers and safety! You know you're not alone."

Qi Taiguo's gaze deepened. He took her hand and held it, promising, "Okay! I'll be careful. In the past, when I was alone, I didn't think too much. Now that I have a family and you, I definitely can't be as reckless as before!"

Cheng Su brightened her smile, "Then I'll wait for your return."

She calculated the time, and then said, "When you get back, it will be just around the time of my examination!"

"I will personally take you to the exam hall when the time comes," Qi Taiguo immediately said.

"Great! And since you're away, I can focus entirely on my revision!"

Qi Taiguo immediately instructed, "Don't just eat anything for the sake of it; have your meals on time, and rest when you should. It's important to balance work and rest!"

His tone was strict, but Cheng Su felt a sweet warmth in her heart and playfully scolded, "I know, you fusspot."

Qi Taiguo flipped over and pinned her down: "Dare call me a nag? I'll have to punish you properly for that!"

Cheng Su let out a tickled laugh, but soon, the sounds from her mouth turned into soft moans and breathy gasps.

#### Chapter 776: Deficiencies in Fast Food Restaurants

On the day Qi Taiguo went on his assignment, Cheng Su did not see him off because she had to go to the school to retrieve her examination admission ticket.

By the time she returned home after exchanging pleasantries with Principal Gong, he had already left, having only left behind a long note with several things he reminded her of. Cheng Su pursed her lips in a smile, and diligently stuck the note on the refrigerator door where it was easy to see every day.

After tidying up the house, Cheng Su brewed herself a cup of coffee and opened the materials she had brought back from school.

She had also chatted with her classmates who were preparing for the exam, and she knew that the college entrance exam that year was different from what she knew in her previous life.

Not to say it was easier, after all, producing a college graduate that year was still quite an impressive feat, and because she had never experienced it before, Cheng Su did not dare to take it lightly.

Having enjoyed a few quiet days at home, Cheng Su received a call from Elder Sister, who cried and said she needed to take leave and return home.

"Elder Sister, stop crying first, what happened?" Cheng Su asked.

Qi Fenglian paused for a moment and took a sniffle before crying out that Grandpa had called from their hometown, saying that Grandma had taken Xiao Bao to the fields, and due to the rain, they didn't manage to take shelter in time and both got soaked, which led to them catching a cold and getting feverish.

As an adult, Grandma's constitution was somewhat stronger, and her fever subsided quickly though she hadn't fully recovered yet. However, Xiao Bao was less than a year old, with weaker immunity, so his high fever persisted.

The two elderly were already advanced in age, and Yunyun was only a teenager. With Grandma sick, relying solely on Grandpa to care for them was challenging, and fearing some emergency they called for Qi Fenglian to return.

Upon hearing this, Cheng Su said, "If that's the case, then you should hurry back, a persistent high fever is a serious issue."

What children feared most was a high fever, which, if it continued, could easily lead to brain damage and the child becoming mentally incapacitated in the future.

"But what about the fast food restaurant?" Qi Fenglian, upon getting permission, mentioned the fast food restaurant.

Cheng Su replied, "It's okay, you go back first. I can cover for you at the fast food restaurant for a few days."

"Aren't you busy with your exams and reviews?"

"I can review at the fast food restaurant as well, don't worry. You go back first. I will ask Xiaoying to fill in for a while and I'll be over soon." Cheng Su glanced at the small clock, ten o'clock. She could still make it in time for the lunch crowd.

After hanging up the phone, Cheng Su quickly changed her clothes and rushed off to the fast food restaurant at the train station.

The area around the train station was crowded, and although the restaurant opened at eleven, people started coming in for food even before that.

Seeing Cheng Su arrive, Xiaoying stepped aside from the cashier counter to let her take over.

The fast food restaurant had been open for several months and, operating on the principle of small profits but quick turnover and offering decent food, the business looked promising. By twelve o'clock, the number of diners kept increasing.

Cheng Su, while handling the cash and tickets, quickly noticed the shortcomings of the fast food restaurant.

Xiaoying and the others, busy serving and preparing food, left used dishes on the tables when the crowds grew, and the dishwasher aunty initially managed to collect and wash them. But as they piled up, the kitchen began to lag, and uncleared tables became an issue.

If Xiaoying and the rest could spare a moment, they would clean up. If not, the tables would be left as they were, and Cheng Su had to collect the dishes to help the aunty with washing.

This back and forth left her hands too full to manage.

After the lunch rush, Cheng Su asked Xiaoying and the others if it was always this chaotic? Xiaoying nodded and said, "It's like this every time. It's manageable now with three of us, but even busier when someone takes a day off."

Cheng Su frowned, this wasn't good. Some people had lower standards and left a mess after meals. Xiaoying and others cleaning up and then serving food was simply unsanitary.

Plus, with a situation like this where Qi Fenglian takes leave and she had to step in, they were clearly short-handed. It wasn't feasible to go on without rest indefinitely. It seemed necessary to hire another person.

#### Chapter 777: Recruitment

Cheng Su has always been a person of action. Taking advantage of the rest period, she wrote a hiring notice and posted it at the entrance of their store.

To Xiaoying and the others' surprise, they were suddenly hiring people. There hadn't been any hint of it before.

Cheng Su noticed the thoughts of the two girls and said, "Now that business is booming, we need more hands. That's something we need to address. One person on meal preparation, another cleaning tables, and so on. We can't have someone cleaning tables and then preparing meals—that's unhygienic. Hiring more people will ensure that even when you girls take breaks, we won't be overwhelmed."

Xiaoying, being quick-witted, asked with a roll of her eyes, "President Cheng, after we hire someone, who will prepare the meals and who will clean the tables?"

She thought about the main store, where the division of labor was very clear. Now that Cheng Su was hiring, did it mean they would introduce a hierarchy?

With only one person in charge of the store, could it be possible that someone else would be promoted?

"That I still need to plan carefully. As long as you work hard and show results, there will certainly be opportunities for your promotion in the future!" Cheng Su saw right through Xiaoying's intentions.

Xiaoying's eyes twinkled as she said, "President Cheng, our store is only so big, with just a few people. Is it possible to get promoted here?"

"There may not be opportunities here, but that doesn't mean there aren't any in other stores. The main store is also planning to expand, and we will definitely need more staff in the future. If you truly perform well, of course, there will be chances for promotion!" Cheng Su encouraged. "So, you must work hard."

Xiaoying immediately replied, "I definitely will!"

Cheng Su hummed in agreement, "Go upstairs and rest."

Besides being used as a storage space, the attic also had a designated area for rest, where they could take a short nap after lunch service, before starting to prepare the fast food for the evening at four in the afternoon.

"What about you, President Cheng?" Xiaoying asked somewhat sheepishly.

Cheng Su lifted the study materials in her hand and said, "I won't be sleeping. I need to review these documents."

Xiaoying looked at her with great respect.

President Cheng had already made her business so successful, yet she continued to study for university entrance exams. She had heard that Qulan from the main store was also studying like her. Should she too work hard and study?

After the lunch service, the store became quiet. Some went home and some rested while Cheng Su herself flipped through her materials page by page.

The entrance of the store occasionally saw passersby.

Cheng Su felt someone peeking at the entrance and looked up only to see a woman, about twenty-five or twenty-six years old with tanned skin, standing there with a large bag on her back and holding the hand of a five or six-year-old girl.

Cheng Su hesitated for a moment before approaching with a gentle smile, "Hello, are you looking for a meal? Our service isn't open yet."

The woman seemed startled and stammered, "No, it's not that."

A question appeared in Cheng Su's eyes as she sized up the two.

The woman wore a somewhat dirty Dacron garment with a pair of dingy trousers and her hair tied back in a long braid hanging down her back. Although her skin was dark, she had large eyes. However, there was a bit of bruising on her temples; hard to tell if it was from a bump or something else.

Looking at the little girl at the woman's feet, she had large, sparkling eyes, and her hair was yellow and fine. Seeing Cheng Su looking over, the girl immediately hid fearfully behind the woman's legs.

Having had the experience of taking care of children during an earthquake, Cheng Su was particularly tender-hearted towards children, and her smile became even warmer.

"You are..."

"This owner? I was wondering if you're hiring?" the woman asked, pointing at the hiring notice posted at the entrance.

Cheng Su was taken aback. Was she looking for a job?

#### Chapter 778: Orphans and Widows

Cheng Su hadn't expected that her job posting would draw inquiries in less than half a day, but upon reflection, it made sense since her shop was located near the train station where foot traffic was at its densest. Moreover, there were plenty of travelers seeking work, who, if they were paying attention, would naturally spot it.

As she sized up the two people once again, Cheng Su was about to speak when the woman said, "I can do anything."

Cheng Su pursed her lips and said, "Why don't you come in and sit down first?"

The woman nodded eagerly, took her daughter's hand, and followed Cheng Su inside.

"Would you like some water?" Cheng Su, noticing their lips were somewhat chapped, casually offered.

"If it's possible, then thank you," the woman replied after swallowing.

Cheng Su glanced at the large insulated container in the dining area, poured two cups of water, and placed them in front of them.

The woman immediately took the cup and drank it up, as did the little girl; clearly, both were desperately thirsty.

"Did you just arrive in Qing City? Just got off the train?" Cheng Su started to inquire.

"No, we came here yesterday. I've been going around looking for a job ever since, but to no avail," the woman replied.

"What's your name?"

"My name is Shi Ling, this is my girl, Xiaohua. We both come from Ning County in the Shu region," Shi Ling said.

Ning County, wasn't that the place that had just experienced an earthquake?

Cheng Su paused, then said, "There was an earthquake over there, you..."

Shi Ling lowered her head and said, "Yes, in the earthquake, our home was destroyed, and... my man died. I had no choice but to come out to work."

Cheng Su's heart tightened as she said, "The government will provide relief, and afterward, reconstruction will allow you to return home and start over."

"No..." Shi Ling reacted strongly, shaking her head, "I don't want to go back there, it's a nightmare for us. We don't want to go back."

Cheng Su fell silent, seeing how closely the little girl clung to Shi Ling, appearing timid, and couldn't help feeling a twinge of softness in her heart.

"So there's no one else in your family?" Cheng Su asked.

Shi Ling shook her head and, embracing her daughter, said, "It's just the two of us now, there is nobody else."

Cheng Su sighed inwardly.

"I can do anything, wash dishes, sweep floors, all of it," Shi Ling emphasized once more.

"I am indeed hiring, but as you know, this is a restaurant, and we serve during two meal times a day. You also have a child with no one to watch her. What will you do with your child while you're working?" Cheng Su asked, her eyes filled with pity as she looked at Xiaohua.

Shi Ling's expression changed as she said, "My Xiaohua is very well-behaved. She just needs a stool to sit on, and she won't run around." After a pause, she added, "Xiaohua is also very sensible; she usually helps me with washing vegetables and cooking. She won't get in the way of my work. If possible, she could even help with peeling garlic."

Xiaohua blinked at Cheng Su and said, "Auntie, I'll be good."

"Boss, I've been looking for the past two days. Others, upon hearing I have a daughter, are unwilling to hire me, but I'm really out of options. I, I'm out of money," Shi Ling suddenly knelt down in front of Cheng Su, pleading, "If you're willing to hire me, you don't have to pay me right away. Just providing us with food and a place to stay would be enough."

Cheng Su was taken aback and quickly stepped aside, then reached out to help her: "Hey, hey, sister, please get up."

"I'm begging you," Shi Ling started crying, "We really have nowhere else to go."

Her crying set Xiaohua off too, and the noise disturbed the people resting upstairs.

#### Chapter 779: The Heart of Compassion

Xiaoying and the others came down, curiously looking at the two crying mother and daughter, and asked Cheng Su what had happened.

Cheng Su was quite helpless, as this was the first time she had encountered such a request, and she was also shocked. She had never expected that someone would kneel for a meal.

"Sister, please stand up and let's talk. We can discuss this calmly. Look, with people coming and going, they will all think that I've done something to you!" Cheng Su rubbed her forehead.

Shi Ling got up, uneasily, wiped her tears with her sleeve, and said, "President, President Cheng? I really need this job." She had just heard the young lady call Cheng Su President Cheng, and was sure that this was the boss.

Cheng Su glanced at Shi Xiaohua, whose little face had been dusty and now, washed by tears, looked even dirtier. She couldn't help but feel a surge of compassion and said to Xiaoying and the others, "Go get Old Lu and the rest to cook up two bowls of noodles, and take Xiaohua to wash her face."

Xiaoying responded immediately and beckoned the little girl to come over.

Xiaohua hesitated, looked at her mother, and only went with them after seeing her nod.

Cheng Su thought for a moment and then said, "Sister, I sympathize with your situation, but this place is busy, it's inconvenient with a child around, and the crowd is mixed. What if Xiaohua inadvertently runs out and gets snatched by someone? What would we do then?"

Shi Ling's face changed: "That won't happen, my girl won't run around."

"I'm just saying, in case."

Shi Ling looked pleading.

"Additionally, in the catering business, we need to undergo health checks and have a health certificate." Cheng Su then said.

"I am very healthy."

"But you still need to pass a doctor's examination," Cheng Su said, lips pursed.

Shi Ling lowered her head in despair and murmured, "Is there really no way out? Is there nowhere left for us, mother and daughter, to go?"

Cheng Su watched, and her heart softened a bit.

"How about this, go get a health check, and if you pass, you can help out here. We don't provide accommodation, but there's a place in the attic to rest; you can stay there temporarily. If you can manage the work, when you have the money, you can rent a place to live." Cheng Su said.

Shi Ling looked up in surprise: "Does this mean you're agreeing to hire me?"

"Let's start with a few days of trial work," Cheng Su said.

"Good, good, trial work, I don't need a salary, just food will do!" Shi Ling immediately said, "Let's start today."

"There's no rush, look at how dirty you are, you need to clean up, right? I'll find you a place to stay at a nearby hotel, rest there, and after that, go for a health check tomorrow, and we'll see, okay?"

Shi Ling nodded vigorously, and after a moment of joy, she said, "But I have no money."

"If I'm letting you stay, I won't leave you to worry. I'll cover it for you first!" Cheng Su said with a smile.

Hearing this, Shi Ling was so grateful she almost knelt again: "Thank you, thank you, you're really a good person! I assure you, I'll pay you back in the future."

Cheng Su quickly stopped her, shaking her head with a smile.

She wasn't some kind-hearted soul; she was just momentarily moved by compassion. A rational boss normally wouldn't hire someone who brings a child to work because it's a liability. Providing a meal is simple, but if an accident occurs, that's a serious matter.

Cheng Su's consent was also because they were survivors from a disaster area. She had seen firsthand the tragedy there, which had softened her heart.

If anything, let's just say it was for the sake of the lost child, to accumulate virtue and goodness. If she could lend a helping hand to this widow and orphan, then so be it.

#### Chapter 780: Eldest Brother-in-law Comes to Show Off

After Shi Ling and her daughter had eaten their noodles, Cheng Su found them a small hotel nearby to stay in. She instructed Shi Ling to come to the restaurant the next day, then she left.

It was past five o'clock, and the dinner rush had started. It hadn't yet reached the peak time when the restaurant would be the busiest, but things were already relatively hectic.

Cheng Su sat behind the cash register, deftly selling tickets and collecting money. Everything was in perfect order.

"Come on in, what would you like to eat? Just tell the waitress what you want. You can order everything on the menu, it's all good. This is our family's restaurant..."

A voice drew Cheng Su's attention, and she looked up to meet a pair of eyes staring straight at her.

It was her brother-in-law, Zhang Jisheng.

Zhang Jisheng had only gotten halfway through his words when he saw Cheng Su, and abruptly changed his sentence to, "It's our younger brother's wife's restaurant."

Damn it, why was Cheng Su here? Where was Fengping?

For some reason, whenever Zhang Jisheng saw Cheng Su, he felt uneasy, perhaps because of her assertiveness when their son was born, and how decisively she acted, just like his younger brother-in-law.

No, it wasn't a comparison; the two were of the same disposition, both so formidable.

So now, upon seeing her, Zhang Jisheng felt nervous. His heart beat like a drum.

"Elder brother-in-law, have you finished work?" Cheng Su stood up, smiled, and asked, her gaze shifting to the three men beside him.

They were covered in dust, and their faces were not clean, likely workers from a renovation team.

"Yes, yes, I've brought a few workmates here to eat." Zhang Jisheng stammered in explanation and then looked around: "Where... where is your elder sister?"

"We got a call from your hometown saying Xiao Bao got caught in the rain and has a high fever that won't subside. Elder Sister hurried back. Didn't she tell you?" Cheng Su looked at him as she spoke.

Zhang Jisheng's face turned pale: "What, the fever won't go down?" and he began to panic: "I didn't know, your elder sister didn't tell me, I haven't been home yet!"

Cheng Su frowned, guessing that Elder Sister must have been in such a rush to get back that she hadn't mentioned it, or perhaps she left a note at home.

"Taiguo daughter-in-law, can I use the phone?" Zhang Jisheng asked anxiously, pointing at the phone.

Cheng Su nodded, moved the phone onto the counter, and then said to the men: "Are you Dazhi's renovation team workmates? Just order whatever you'd like, it's on me. Xiaoying, make sure to give them plenty!"

"Okay!"

Zhang Jisheng couldn't care less about his workmates at this point. Hearing Cheng Su's words, he felt a flash of heat on his face.

He had just wanted to bring some workmates over to show off, but who knew Cheng Su would be here.

And the call Zhang Jisheng made was only to a neighbor's house, yet no one answered, which made him break out in a sweat.

His son was his life. Nothing could happen to him!

Seeing this, Cheng Su said, "Elder Sister left this morning; she should have arrived by now. Elder brother-in-law, don't worry; if there's no answer now, calling again tonight will be the same."

Zhang Jisheng could only put down the phone and ask, "What did your elder sister say?"

Cheng Su relayed Elder Sister's words again, and Zhang Jisheng's face darkened as he pursed his lips.

At home, without a responsible adult, emergencies like this were dreadful.

Would things be better if he hadn't gone out to work and someone had stayed at home?

Zhang Jisheng's face was dark and uncertain, and Cheng Su glanced at him, her brow furrowing then smoothing. She called out to Xiaoying, "Xiaoying, take down the job recruitment sign from the door and put it away!"

"Alright."

Zhang Jisheng was startled. Job recruitment? Why did they suddenly need to recruit workers?