

The 80s 831

Chapter 831: Fighting Side by Side

Upon hearing that the two bosses would participate personally, both Old Liu and Xiao Zhu showed expressions of guilt. They knew how much effort everyone had put into this competition, tirelessly refining the jam day and night, constantly overturning previous efforts just to achieve perfection for this day. Yet, unfortunately...

Had it not been for their greediness last night, such a thing wouldn't have happened. Both were deeply regretful.

"President Cheng, my stomach doesn't hurt anymore. Let me do it!" Xiao Zhu gritted his teeth and said.

"Look at your lips, all chapped. It's a sign of exhaustion. Where's your strength? You can't even pit a fruit. Going up there now will only make things worse and slow down the process!" Cheng Su said in a deep voice.

Xiao Zhu lowered his head with a face full of guilt, saying, "It's all my fault. If it weren't for..."

"Alright, this isn't the time to determine who's at fault. Besides, it might not be your fault. It's possible that you fell into someone else's trap!" Cheng Su didn't want them to blame themselves too much and said this to console them.

Fell into someone else's trap? Does that mean they were drugged?

Xiao Zhu's face changed slightly, his lips trembling. Could it really be like this?

"I also have experience with making jam. Now, let's review the formula proportions and the process." Cheng Su didn't have time to assign blame. At this point, investigating further would be meaningless. The immediate priority was to address the issue together. The competition was about to start. She had to confirm the procedures and then head into the fray herself.

Xiao Zhu and Old Liu immediately perked up and began discussing with Cheng Su the proportions they had already determined and the precautions to take...

The bell rang, and people entered one after another. Reporters, spectators, and judges took their seats behind their respective nameplates. Someone from the organizers took the microphone to deliver a speech for this competition.

Wan Fuyu, seated in Joy Soon Loy's reserved section, noticed the absence of Cheng Su in Joy Soon Loy's spot. He couldn't help but look around. Had they given up?

It wasn't until the organizers announced the entry of company representatives that Wan Fuyu saw Cheng Su and Ning Ge standing together, and he was taken aback.

Both bosses entering together—what happened?

He glanced back at Joy Soon Loy's section and saw their employees. The two technicians he had seen yesterday now looked unwell and ghastly. Did they fall sick suddenly?

Wan Fuyu was no fool. With a quick thought, he surmised that someone might have tampered with Joy Soon Loy, rendering the two technicians unable to compete.

Wan Fuyu felt a mix of happiness and disappointment. He had long wanted to compete with Joy Soon Loy; this was a rare opportunity, yet, ironically, something happened just at this moment.

However, with Cheng Su stepping up personally, could she handle it?

Wan Fuyu remembered that the Jam Company was founded by her own efforts, and she had personally made the pineapple jam back then. Now, it wasn't impossible for her to manage.

With this thought, he began to look forward to the competition.

Cheng Su—he wanted to see just how capable she really was!

The whistle blew, and the emcee announced the representatives' entry, signaling the start of the competition.

Cheng Su and Ning Ge wore pristine white work uniforms, with masks and gloves, covered from head to toe.

Ning Ge noticed Cheng Su was slightly nervous and deliberately put on a half-assed, rogue-like demeanor as he said, "This is our first time fighting side by side. How about we just play with them together?"

A smile tugged at Cheng Su's lips beneath her mask as she extended her hand, "Alright, let's play with them then!"

The two joyfully high-fived and entered the dedicated competition room, embarking on the first competition of their lives.

Chapter 832: Division of Labor and Cooperation

In the room dedicated to sauce-making, a crate of cherries was already placed. Cheng Su glanced swiftly; the equipment was mostly complete. Ice was set in a corner, and the sauce was being prepared over a gas flame.

Taking a deep breath, Cheng Su remained remarkably calm and instructed Ning Ge, "Go put the ice in a basin, add some water, and make an ice bath first. I'll sort the cherries."

She was worried there wouldn't be enough time to cool, so the ice bath needed to be prepared early.

Ning Ge complied, found a big basin, crushed the ice, and asked, "Should I crush it all?"

"No need, it's hot weather, and if it's too crushed, it'll melt easily. Let the water slowly cool it." Cheng Su took a clean basin, crouched in front of the crate of cherries, and sorted through them one by one, occasionally sniffing their fragrance.

Each focused on their task—Ning Ge quickly prepared the ice bath and then asked from behind her, "The ice bath is ready, what's next?"

"Prepare two basins of water to wash the cherries, and in the second basin, add some cornstarch and salt." Without turning around, Cheng Su continued her swift selection of cherries from the large crate.

Washing the cherries with cornstarch and salt can clean off impurities so that during cooking, there won't be too many foreign substances affecting the quality of the sauce.

To make four pounds of sauce, Cheng Su chose nearly six pounds of cherries. More is always better than less, in case of unexpected situations.

Once the cherries were sorted, she immediately took them for washing—rinsing them once, carefully scrubbing, then placing them into the second basin for further cleaning. Ning Ge, without needing her to instruct, soon filled a third basin of water.

"Go squeeze the lemon juice, just the juice, no pulp. Once squeezed, filter it through a muslin cloth." Cheng Su didn't look at Ning Ge, issuing instructions rapidly.

Ning Ge acknowledged, took a knife to peel the lemon, removing even the white rind to avoid bitterness.

On Cheng Su's side, she had already washed the cherries—each one shiny and enticing.

Just like with selecting the fruits earlier, she chose those that were not fully ripe, with high sweetness and low acidity, but not entirely sweet.

Changing gloves, she took a clean plate, washed a knife, and began pitting the cherries.

Ning Ge occasionally glanced over, finding the atmosphere stifling, and remarked, "This is my first time doing this, peeling skins. Ah, a gentleman like me actually in the kitchen!"

Cheng Su smiled, "That's good. You can accompany your wife in the kitchen in the future."

Ning Ge paused with the knife in hand, looked over, and joked, "I'm afraid I won't ever be in the kitchen with another woman again!"

"Don't speak so definitively; who knows what tomorrow holds!" Cheng Su said while her small knife moved swiftly, dexterously like a machine, slicing each cherry open into halves, removing the small pits.

Ning Ge didn't respond to her, thinking that once was enough to remember such an event.

"Are you done? Once you're finished with the juice, come help me pit the cherries." Cheng Su couldn't hear him and quickly called out.

"Almost there!" Ning Ge snapped back to reality, placed the lemon into the juicer, and juiced it, then filtered it with a muslin cloth to remove the pulp and foam, leaving only pale yellow lemon juice.

Having finished that, he went over to sit by Cheng Su, watched her actions, and quickly got the hang of it, taking some cherries to try it himself.

At first, his hands were a bit clumsy, but after a few, his grip on the knife steadied, and his actions became swift, even faster than Cheng Su's. Before long, the pitted cherry flesh on his side was piled into a small hill.

Chapter 833: Two Teams Eliminated

Cheng Su watched in surprise as Ning Ge's hands flew about, the small knife in his hand was as if it had come to life, practically dancing with flair.

"Not bad, the way you handle that knife," Cheng Su praised, "Anyone who didn't know better would think you use a knife all the time!"

Ning Ge was originally quite proud and was about to show off when he heard her latter comment, nearly cutting his own finger, and said: "I have a knack for it." In fact, back when they trained, they used knives quite a bit to prepare for all kinds of danger.

Cheng Su was about to speak when the sound system outside blared, the emcee's voice rang out: "Now time has passed the one-hour mark, let's have the judges go and see which stage each contestant has reached?"

Cheng Su then looked up at the clock in the room, indeed time had already passed.

She got a bit anxious, her actions became a bit chaotic.

Ning Ge saw this, reached over, and gave her hand a firm squeeze, saying, "Don't rush, we're just here for fun."

Cheng Su's eyes curved in a smile, and she continued to calmly process the fruit cores.

"Contestant 1 is already preparing to start boiling..."

"..."

Someone entered their room, saw the two still processing fruit cores, and paused for a moment. The emcee said: "Contestant 3, still handling fruit flesh." Then came over and asked Cheng Su, "Will you have enough time?"

Cheng Su, wearing a mask, mumbled a reply, "We're trying our best."

Someone stood not far away watching for a while before leading others out.

Meanwhile, the staff of Joy Soon Loy waiting in the competition area became nervous upon hearing they were still processing fruit cores.

"President Ning hasn't been involved in operations. His speed at handling fruit cores isn't even as fast as mine. If I'd known, I should have gone in with President Cheng," Mai Yanmei said anxiously, her eyes turning red.

Xiao Zhu and Old Liu pressed their lips tightly, filled with remorse and guilt.

Time ticked by, and when Cheng Su saw the fruit cores were almost done, she handed them to Ning Ge while she turned to clean the boiling apparatus.

For making sauce, the pot must be clean and oil-free, otherwise, it spoils the taste and easily goes bad.

"Done," Ning Ge called.

Cheng Su went over, picked it up, and after checking, used rock sugar and sprinkled a pinch of salt to marinate and set it aside. She said, "Check the ice basin, don't let all the ice melt."

If it melts too quickly, in such warm weather, the ice basin won't stay cold for long, causing trouble when it's time to cool things down.

Time flew by, nearly three hours or so, and another group of emcees and judges came to check, while others had already started boiling, Cheng Su and the team were still in the process.

Though Ning Ge said there was no rush, inside, he became anxious as well.

The entire competition arena was filled with a sweet, cloying fruity aroma that would make anyone drool.

And with the emcees and judges visiting frequently, the competition grew increasingly tense and fierce.

Cheng Su stared at the clock, seeing that the marinating time was adequate, she said, "Alright, start cooking the sauce!"

Suddenly, Cheng Su caught a whiff of burning, her face changed slightly, but quickly she relaxed, taking a deep breath to calm herself even more.

At that moment, the emcee announced that sauces from two companies had burned, contestants 6 and 8, and now, less than half the time was left. This meant even if those two companies tried to redo their sauces, it would be a rush against time and difficult to catch up.

This meant already two competitors had been eliminated.

So, cooking is crucial, as even a hint of burning can turn the sauce into waste.

Chapter 834: Out of the Pot, Jam Is Done

When making jam, the key is to have a clean, oil-free pot, but the most important thing is controlling the heat. A small pot of jam requires more precise heat control than a large one, and here we're using an open flame, so we must be meticulous. Otherwise, any burnt smell means the whole pot of jam is ruined.

Bang.

From next door came the sound of a pot hitting the ground amid exclamations and angry voices. The Emcee's voice quickly echoed, asking if contestant number two, who had spilled the jam, could start over.

Soon after, the burnt smell wafted in, leaving us to wonder whose jam got scorched.

Cheng Su thought to herself quietly, at least four contestants will be outperformed, and she needed to remain calm.

Don't rush, don't rush, absolutely don't rush.

Cheng Su took a deep breath, poured the softened and juice-soaked fruit into the pot, added a specific ratio of water and rock sugar, and then gradually turned the heat up to bring it to a boil.

This principle was derived from repeated experiments: adding fruit to a cold pot is preferable to adding it to a hot one, as the fruit doesn't stick to the pot upon heating, avoiding any burnt flavor.

Cheng Su stared at the jam in the pot, while Ning Ge watched from the side, understanding this critical moment. Ning Ge refrained from speaking carelessly, so as not to affect her judgment and senses.

"Wow, number three has started making jam too..." The Emcee's voice suddenly broke through.

Ning Ge immediately shot over a sharp gaze, causing the Emcee's voice to choke in his throat.

"Is there enough time?" A judge asked Cheng Su.

Her eyes never left the jam in the pot, and without lifting her head, she replied, "I don't know." After a pause, she looked up and smiled, "But it doesn't matter if there's not enough time, as long as I make delicious jam."

The person raised an eyebrow, giving her a deep look, then nodded with a smile.

Admiration flashed in Ning Ge's eyes.

At this moment, the jam in the pot started to foam. Cheng Su reached out, "Spoon."

Ning Ge handed over a wooden spoon, and Cheng Su took it, carefully skimming off the foam from the jam before switching the flame to medium.

Throughout the process, she was unhurried and composed, watching her make jam was like witnessing an artistic creation, unlike other contestants she'd seen who were nervous and panicked, disrupting themselves.

The Emcee glanced at the two judges and wanted to say something, but Ning Ge's gaze lightly floated over, and she quickly pressed her lips together, remaining silent.

Such a terrifying person, her gaze seemed murderous, the Emcee thought silently.

As this group left, Cheng Su remained oblivious, her eyes and heart focused solely on the pot of jam before her.

Luh Wei once said that when crafting culinary delights, one must devote themselves completely. Imagine the happiness and satisfaction people feel when they taste your handmade food, that's the true emotional impact brought by gourmet cuisine.

Cheng Su smiled softly, dialed down the heat slightly, unbothered by the time reports outside.

There's an hour and a half remaining.

Ning Ge felt a bit anxious.

Cheng Su watched the juices in the jam tighten, the jam growing thicker. She scooped a bit to see if it stayed on the spoon, nodded, and while stirring, said, "Lemon juice."

Ning Ge quickly handed it over, and Cheng Su took it, saying, "Go check the ice bath." She then slowly added the lemon juice, continuing to stir.

Ning Ge went to check the ice bath's cooling, glancing at the time, only an hour remained.

Cheng Su continuously monitored the tightening juices of the jam, the fruit had transformed into a soft, red jam. She used a small spoon to taste a bit, and the sensation on her tongue made her eyes light up.

"It's time to finish the jam."

Chapter 835: Who Will Prevail?

If making jam usually, you would pour it into a sterilized and dried glass jar while the jam is still hot, tighten the lid, turn it upside down, and once cooled, place it in the refrigerator.

But now, in the middle of a competition and without glass jars, for convenience in tasting, the jam is served in large glass bowls with just a spoon to scoop it out.

Cheng Su poured the jam into two deep and wide glass bowls, then placed the entire bowl in a basin of ice.

"Will we make it in time?" Ning Ge asked upon hearing that some participants had already finished making jam outside and realizing time was running out while they were just beginning the cooling process.

"Whether it's enough or not, our jam is already done and can be brought out anytime. The only concern is the taste," Cheng Su smiled, tested the temperature of the ice basin, and said, "However, I think it shouldn't affect much."

As he spoke, he picked up a spoon and gently dug a hole in one of the jams, stirring lightly to prevent too much movement from causing the jam to become watery.

In fact, the best cooling method is natural cooling after cooking. This way, the jam maintains its quality, avoiding over-stirring that turns the juice into water, thus affecting the taste. But now Cheng Su had no choice; to cool quickly, he could only flip the jam occasionally, but with very gentle movements.

Using two containers was also a precaution; if one bowl was spoiled, there was still another large bowl.

Time passed bit by bit, with sounds of other jams being completed occasionally coming from outside, but Cheng Su and the others remained silent.

Sitting in the competition seat, Wang Bo and others had pale faces, staring intently at the exit number three.

"It's all our fault, it's all our fault." Sweat kept streaming down from Xiao Zhu and Old Liu's foreheads, their ashen faces devoid of any blood.

Mai Yanmei tightly covered her mouth, nearly crying out.

"Just five minutes left, friends, comrades, can they complete this competition smoothly?" The emcee smiled as he looked toward the exit.

"Three minutes."

"Two minutes."

"One... oh. Number three is out, and so is number four..."

"They're out." Wang Bo and the others jumped up, punched the air, and looked intensely at Cheng Su and the others.

Similarly watching the two were Wan Fuyu not far away. He pursed his lips and focused on his company.

The truth will be revealed on the competition field; the victor will be determined here.

"Time's up." The emcee stopped the stopwatch and glanced at the spots where each jam should be placed, regrettably saying, "Unfortunately, some participating companies did not show up on time. According to the competition rules, we consider this as forfeiting the competition. Now, let's look back to the field, where the completed competitions include number 3 from Joy Soon Loy Company, number 5 from Good Taste Company, number 7 Friendly Foods, and number 10, number 4..."

Ning Ge glanced at number five, also covered with a thin gauze tray, unable to discern the contents or how they appeared.

"This emcee talks too much, can't they just reveal it quickly?" Ning Ge mumbled, captivated by the chatter.

Cheng Su chuckled and said, "It's all part of the necessary procedure. Later, after unveiling the prize, there's still the closing remarks, so why rush? And the longer she talks, the more advantageous it is for us, right?"

Ning Ge was momentarily stunned, then smiled and said, "You're right, I didn't think of that. Here they come."

Cheng Su and he looked over, seeing the judges stand up, and the emcee had already announced the start of the evaluation.

Chapter 836: Let's Have Some Fun

Arranged from right to left, Cheng Su and their number 3 were almost at the far left, but the judges started evaluating from the far right.

Six judges, each detailed in their assessments, whispered among themselves after tasting, jotting down scores on their notepads.

Cheng Su watched and suddenly felt inexplicably nervous, along with an indescribable excitement. This was her first time participating in a competition, presenting something she had made with her own hands.

When the judges reached Friendly's, Cheng Su stared intently at their expressions, seeing some judges' eyes light up while others frowned, making her nervous as well.

Cheng Su's gaze fell on the audience's view of Friendly's position. Wan Fuyu waved at her, and she smiled slightly before turning her attention back to the strongest rival, number five, Good Taste.

This was the biggest competitor!

Their sauce was smooth and glossy, exuding a luscious hue. Just looking at it was appetizing, and their technician was quite proud, sending a provocative smile her way.

Cheng Su withdrew her gaze, lowered her eyelids, thinking that although their sauce was good, the technician was too smug. Usually, such arrogance leads to mistakes.

Indeed, while many judges nodded subtly, the older, chubby judge, whose name she didn't know, frowned and soon put down the bowl.

When it was their turn, Cheng Su's heart lifted. Nearby, someone leaned closer; it was Ning Ge, who whispered, "Don't be nervous, we're just having fun."

Cheng Su let out a breath.

"Number three, please present your product." The Emcee came over and said with a smile.

Only then did Cheng Su carefully unveil the gauze, revealing the product they had made together.

On a gold-plated tray lay a white porcelain ice basin, containing a large bowl of fresh, dripping red jam. The glossy, rich texture of the jam, with two attached cherries with green leaves on top, contrasted sharply with the red. The barely visible chill from the ice created a frosty mist on the outside of the glass bowl holding the jam, making it quite pleasing to the eye.

Seeing the audience's eyes light up, Ning Ge felt proud, throwing a disdainful glance at the previous displays, none could match their presentation.

"Number three's jam is truly eye-catching; it's tempting me to taste it. Please, judges," the Emcee played along with the atmosphere.

On the table were new glass bowls and spoons. Each judge took one to try, whispering and sharing their impressions.

To say she wasn't nervous would be a lie. Cheng Su discreetly observed their expressions, and seeing no major negative reactions, she breathed a slight sigh of relief.

Watching them move to the last entry and then return to their seats, the Emcee announced the tallying of scores. In this intermission, each team could try each other's sauces.

Cheng Su had been waiting for this. She first tried their own, feeling pleased. The chilled jam had indeed worked, and despite their insufficient timing, it was perfectly chilled now, sweet but not cloying, refreshing, giving a satisfying feel.

She then tried the neighboring Good Taste's, which was also excellent, no wonder their technician was so proud.

Lastly, she tried Friendly's. Cheng Su tasted carefully again and again, thinking that Friendly really gave it their all; their sauce was even better than what they had made before.

"The results should be out soon," Ning Ge said, coming to her side, noticing the Emcee holding a card on stage.

Chapter 837: Complete Victory

Ning Ge guessed right, the scores had indeed been calculated. The emcee said some congratulatory words and then invited the relevant local leaders to speak and announce the competition results.

In the audience seats, over at Joy Soon Loy's side, Wang Bo and his team stood up nervously.

"Oh my god, this is torture, just announce it quickly!" Xiao Zhu was sweating profusely, wishing he could just grab the paper from the emcee and read it himself.

"Exactly, I wasn't even this nervous when my wife was giving birth to my child!" Old Liu rubbed his hands together incessantly.

Finally, after some speeches, the awards were announced.

"Third prize goes to Friendly Food Company!" announced a man in a suit.

Immediately after, the emcee congratulated them and invited Friendly's representatives to the stage to receive their award.

Winning the prize, Wan Fuyu felt pleased yet his expression subtly changed; getting third prize meant Joy Soon Loy might have performed even better.

He wasn't harboring any delusions that Joy Soon Loy would be at the bottom. Did this mean Friendly was destined to lose to Joy Soon Loy?

"Boss, it's time to go up?" His secretary gave Wan Fuyu a gentle nudge.

Wan Fuyu regained his composure, wiped the sweat from his forehead, and smiled as he went on stage to receive the bronze trophy, feeling conflicted.

"We definitely won't lose to Friendly!" Ning Ge quietly whispered to Cheng Su.

Cheng Su's hands clenched slightly, whispering, "Don't underestimate them."

Ning Ge puckered his lips in a mumble, "The outcome is already decided."

The other two companies weren't much competition; only that little No. 5 could stand a chance against their team.

"Second prize goes to Good Taste Company, also a local company. Congratulations to them." The emcee began clapping.

Wan Fuyu's expression turned even darker, he instinctively glanced at Cheng Su, who was standing there, a slight smile on her lips, seeming unperturbed.

Inside, Cheng Su's emotions were in turmoil; there wasn't any insider decision, and Good Taste had won second.

This meant Joy Soon Loy still had a one-third chance of winning.

Good Taste's representative went on stage to receive the award, followed by the announcement of first place.

This time, a higher-ranking official gave a lengthy speech before announcing first place.

"Please, please."

"Joy Soon Loy, Joy Soon Loy."

"This first place is definitely ours."

Wang Bo and the group were chanting excitedly.

"In this competition, we were fortunate to invite various peers, and every company has performed excellently. This is precisely the spirit of social constructionism. Now I announce, the winner of the inaugural competition is Qing City's Joy Soon Loy Company."

"Wow!"

"We won!"

Wang Bo and his team jumped up, shouting and cheering.

Cheng Su had a smile on her lips, tears in her eyes, suppressing her excitement as she pursed her lips.

"We won." Ning Ge nudged her hand.

"Mm!" Cheng Su said, "Let's go receive the award together."

"You go; I'll watch you from here!" Ning Ge thought for a moment and pushed her forward.

This was her personal honor, deserving the gaze of everyone's praise, while he was unsure of when he might withdraw, so he was content to just watch.

Cheng Su went on stage, taking the golden trophy handed over by the chubby judge, and smiled, "Thank you!"

"Well deserved." The chubby judge, who was the culinary master Mr. Cai, smiled and said to Cheng Su, "I admire your attitude towards cooking; very serious, devout, and dedicated. Only with such an attitude can one create extreme culinary art. I hope you continue to maintain it."

Just like Luh Wei's words, Cheng Su's tears fell as she nodded vigorously.

Chapter 838: Admitting Defeat

Cheng Su hid in the bathroom and had a good cry.

Just now, she received affirmation and a fair assessment, all thanks to her hard work. The weight of the medal equaled the amount of effort she put in.

After wiping her tears, Cheng Su washed her face, put on makeup again, and then went out to the networking event.

Usually, after such product competitions, a networking event is held to allow companies to interact and exchange industry experiences.

"President Cheng." Just out of the banquet hall, someone called Cheng Su. She turned around, and it was Wan Fuyu. He approached her, reaching out his hand, and said with a smile, "Congratulations!"

Cheng Su held out her hand and shook his with a smile, replying, "Thank you, and congratulations to you too, Boss Wan."

Wan Fuyu forced a smile and said, "Not at all, a third place, still one place away from first, not nearly as good as your Joy Soon Loy."

"I tasted your company's new sauce this time, and honestly, compared to previous sauces, I think your company's improvement has been more than a leap forward. With time, I believe you'll make even more progress. Did you change technicians?" Cheng Su asked with a smile.

"You caught us. Earlier this year, we hired two new technicians; they both studied abroad. Unfortunately, still not as good as you guys." Wan Fuyu said, "I just tried your Cherry Jam, and your company's product is indeed impressive, I truly concede defeat."

His words were heartfelt; losing is losing, and he accepted it. After tasting Joy Soon Loy's sauce, he was willing to admit defeat because the taste was indeed quite good.

During the competition, making extra sauce was for people to taste at the networking event, so it's not surprising that Wan Fuyu had tried it. Cheng Su said with a smile, "Thank you, it's the result of our company's many days of research."

Wan Fuyu sighed inwardly and asked, "Did your technicians encounter issues? You had to step in personally."

Cheng Su knew what he was asking, was slightly surprised to see doubt in his eyes, suggesting he wasn't the one sabotaging their company?

Cheng Su lowered her eyelids and said, "The two got stomachaches last night, no choice, so I had to step in. Luckily, we narrowly won without any danger."

"Are you sure it was just eating something bad?"

Cheng Su smiled slightly, "Boss Wan, the competition is over, isn't it? It's not important anymore!"

Wan Fuyu was stunned, then laughed heartily, "You're right." He added, "President Cheng, let's not mention past matters. In the future, I hope we'll have the chance to cooperate!"

"Absolutely!"

After bidding farewell to him, Cheng Su was pulled aside by Ning Ge, who said, "I know who tried to sabotage us."

"Oh?"

Ning Ge sneered, "Really not anyone but that perennial runner-up Good Taste. I heard it myself, that obnoxious technician got slapped by his boss, calling him useless, saying he lost despite having all advantages against a woman!"

"Is it really them?" Cheng Su was somewhat surprised.

Ning Ge nodded, feeling disgusted, "I heard it wasn't just us, another company also had the same problem, all at the same place for a late-night snack, chatted with some strangers. I asked Xiao Zhu and the others, they all said indeed it was because they were in the same line of work, just chatted a bit."

Cheng Su snorted coldly and said, "Those who do more evil will cause their own doom. I thought their sauce was good, but unfortunately, they used their thoughts in the wrong place. Never mind, now we've already won the competition. At this networking event, take Wang Bo and the others to conclude, I have to go back."

"Huh?" Ning Ge was stunned, she's going back first?

Chapter 839: Nauseating

If it were before, Cheng Su would definitely have stayed to attend this exchange meeting. After all, interacting with peers in the same industry is like absorbing different nutrients, it's always beneficial.

But compared to this exchange, she's more concerned about Qi Taiguo, who is about to depart for a three-month closed training session. She must go back and spend more time with him and see him off.

So, with Ning Ge around, Cheng Su left her team behind, and took the train back to Qing City by herself.

She just didn't expect Qi Taiguo to be waiting at the exit of the train station. Had he not called her, she wouldn't have seen him!

Cheng Su ran over and hugged him, excitedly asking, "How did you know I was coming back?"

"Ning Ge called me and told me you were on this train, so I came to pick you up!" Qi Taiguo said with a smile, taking her luggage bag. "So, how was it? Tiring? Should we head home first or have a meal outside before going back?"

"Oh, that guy is quite thoughtful." Cheng Su looked at the sky, it was almost dark, and said, "Let's just eat at the fast food place before heading back. What about you, have you eaten?"

"I'm waiting to eat with you, so let's get going!" Qi Taiguo patted the back seat of the bike.

Cheng Su jumped on, and Qi Taiguo pedaled off. Suddenly, his waist tightened, and when he looked down, her hands were already wrapped around him, prompting an affectionate smile.

The fast food place was just by the train station, and in no time, they locked up the bike and went inside. The place was busy, and their entrance drew many eyes.

"Hey, why are you two together? Cheng Su, weren't you going to a competition?" Qi Fenglian asked curiously upon seeing them together, as Xiaohua ran over from beside the cashier's desk.

"Aunt Su, you haven't been here in a while!" Xiaohua said, looking up.

"Aunt's been busy, isn't that why I'm here?" Cheng Su pinched her small cheek, then said to Qi Fenglian, "Sis, I just got back. Taiguo came to pick me up, and thinking it's a hassle to cook at home, we decided to eat here first before going back!"

"Oh, should I ask the kitchen to stir-fry a couple of dishes for you?"

"No need, just pack two orders. It's hot, and we can't eat much." Cheng Su quickly refused.

Shi Ling came out from the kitchen, holding a large bunch of fast food plates. Seeing Cheng Su, she broke into a smile, then froze momentarily at the man beside her.

"This is my man," Cheng Su said with a smile.

Shi Ling nodded awkwardly, thinking, as she'd heard, that the boss's man was a soldier, and sure enough, he looked very burly!

Qi Taiguo's eyes casually swept over her and then moved to a corner, his gaze suddenly sharp.

In that corner, wasn't that Zhang Jisheng with his back to them? Hiding there as if he didn't exist, was he?

Qi Fenglian followed his gaze and only then remembered her husband, gave him a pat on the back, and said, "Taiguo and his wife are here, why don't you get up and say hello?"

Cheng Su also noticed Zhang Jisheng and raised an eyebrow.

Zhang Jisheng cursed inwardly; how unlucky was he to bump into this walking disaster here, and now he couldn't hide.

He turned around, weakly raised a hand towards them like a chicken, and sullenly said, "Brother-in-law, sister-in-law, you came too."

Seeing his weakling demeanor made Cheng Su feel nauseous. Who would have thought that a man who looked so timid and cowardly would still go whoring?

Truly, you never know someone's true character from their looks, utterly disgusting.

Chapter 840: What's Going On Between You Two Brothers-in-Law?

Cheng Su was reluctant to interact with Zhang Jisheng; she found him dirty. She just nodded briefly and pulled Xiaohua aside to talk.

Zhang Jisheng's face turned a bit unpleasant at once.

But he didn't dare to lose his temper because Qi Taiguo was watching him, and he wasn't even sure if he had revealed that secret after drinking that day.

It was precisely because of this that he felt guilty. Under Qi Taiguo's stare, he lowered his head and kept swallowing.

Qi Fenglian watched from the side, feeling very puzzled. Why was the atmosphere between these two so strange? What had happened?

Qi Taiguo snorted, nodded indifferently, and said, "Brother-in-law, if you've finished eating, you should go back first!"

"Oh, then I'll leave first!" Zhang Jisheng was only too eager to go, barely caring if he was full or not, and left immediately.

He felt very uncomfortable being in the same room with Qi Taiguo.

Qi Fenglian felt even more puzzled. What was going on with these two?

With a mind full of questions, she went to collect money first, utterly perplexed, almost making two mistakes while collecting payments.

Could it be that they had a quarrel and fought when they drank last time?

Qi Taiguo sat down next to Cheng Su, and Cheng Su whispered, "You need to tone it down a bit. Be careful not to let big sister notice anything."

"I can't help but get angry when I see him," Qi Taiguo said with a tense face.

"Alright, let's eat." Cheng Su asked Xiaoying to bring them two servings of food.

The more Qi Fenglian thought about it, the more she felt something was wrong. Taking advantage of some free time, while Cheng Su was teaching Xiaohua to recognize words, she pulled Qi Taiguo aside to talk.

"Taiguo, what's going on with you and your brother-in-law? I found it strange last time you drank together. The house was a mess, and your brother-in-law was bruised. Did you both drink too much and start fighting?" Qi Fenglian asked.

Qi Taiguo frowned and said, "Big sister, it's been so long, how would I remember?"

"Then what's up with you guys? Your brother-in-law acts like a mouse seeing a cat when he sees you." Qi Fenglian stared at him. "Are you hiding something from me?"

Qi Taiguo pretended to be perplexed and said, "You know my brother-in-law's personality well, big sister. When does he not act like a mouse seeing a cat in front of me?"

Qi Fenglian looked at him suspiciously, thinking that what he said made some sense. Her husband was timid, especially in front of the younger brother. It was always like a mouse seeing a cat.

"You're both mysterious and perplexing." Qi Fenglian, unable to get anything out of him, turned and went back into the shop.

Qi Taiguo watched the back of his sister and opened his mouth, but he couldn't call out. He really couldn't say anything.

How could he tell her that her brother-in-law fooled around outside while she wasn't around?

With her personality, things would definitely blow up!

Qi Taiguo's expression turned gloomy.

On the way back, seeing his bad mood, Cheng Su deliberately tried to make him laugh. Qi Taiguo said, "You don't have to worry about me. I'm not angry with you anyway."

"I know." Cheng Su hugged him and said, "But you're about to leave for training, and we'll be apart for a few months soon. I don't want you to be upset because of these pointless people and matters."

"Sorry, I just didn't manage my emotions well for a moment." Qi Taiguo hurriedly said.

Cheng Su shook her head and said, "I understand. It's human nature. If you were still calm, I'd find it strange. Even I feel quite disgusted when I see him."

"That's nothing. Seeing big sister being kept in the dark makes my heart ache," Qi Taiguo said irritably.

Cheng Su pursed her lips and sighed, "Otherwise, what should we do? Should we expose everything?"

Qi Taiguo fell silent.