

## Chapter 61: Porridge

“Hey, which family is cooking such a delicious meal so early in the morning?”

Taoyuan Village was a farming village. Many villagers got up to go to the fields to work before dawn.

March and April were seeding seasons. In about half a month, the seedlings had to be transplanted. Therefore, the fields had to have an adequate water source so the transplant process could go smoothly. This meant that there were already many farmers in the field to dig up the ditches. At the same time, they mowed the weeds and added fertilizers.

“We’re working with compost, but we can still smell the fragrance of cooking. It’s amazing,” Xiao Bangzai’s wife, Liu Liuxie commented. The combination of both smells was hard to describe.

“Could this really be the smell of cooking?” Lan Yuxie, who worked another plot of land, asked in puzzlement, “Perhaps it’s the smell of flowers.” No normal cooking could have a fragrance that traveled so far.

“No, this is the smell of cooking,” Zhang Jiaoying said, “I believe it is porridge.”

Adults and children who passed by the Xiao Family had to stop and sniff. They thought to themselves, ‘What is second uncle’s family making that smells so good?’

“It does smell like porridge, but is porridge usually so fragrant? Isn’t porridge supposed to be tasteless? It’s why I hate eating porridge.”

“I can smell egg pancakes too. It smells amazing as well.”

The kid swallowed his saliva. “What is this smell? I want to eat it!”

“Xiao Bun, haven’t you had breakfast already?” The ten-year-old child beside him said with disdain.

“You’re already so round. If you continue to indulge, you’ll turn into a pig!” Xiao Bun’s real name was Xiao Jing. However, everyone called him Xiao Bun because he was fat and fair.

“Xiao Charcoal, you’re the pig!” Xiao Jing retorted angrily, “A black pig!”

Xiao Charcoal’s real name was Xiao Liming, but since he had skin darker than average, everyone called him Xiao Charcoal.

Xiao Liming was about to fire back when another kid called out, “Little Loach is here.” Little Loach was Xiao Xiaohui. The adults called him Little Loach because he liked to play with water and mud. The other children learned from the adults. When the other kids saw Xiao Xiaohui, their eyes lit up with excitement.

“Little Loach!” The kids called Xiao Xiaohui and ran to surround him. “Little Loach, are you going to your second aunt’s place for breakfast?”

“Little Loach, do you know what your second aunt has made that smells so good?”

“Little Loach...”

Xiao Xiaohui puffed out his chest and raised his head as he said arrogantly, "Why should I tell any of you if I'm going to my second aunt's place? Even if I am, I'm not going to bring any of you. Look at you, you're like hungry ghosts. So embarrassing!" Xiao Xiaohui said as he knocked on the Xiao Family's courtyard door.

The Xiao Family, who was enjoying their meal with delight, had no idea their breakfast had caused a stir outside.

"Mom, what did you add to this porridge? It's so delicious! The egg pancakes are amazing too!" Xiao Lingye asked as he ate.

Mother Xiao frowned, "I prepared them like usual. But you're right. The taste of the porridge is unusually fresh." She took a sip.

At that moment, there was a knock on the door.

Mother Xiao said in puzzlement, "Who is here so early in the morning? Ye 'Er, go open the door." Xiao Lingye obliged. When he opened the door, he was baffled and confused. Why were there so many people standing outside?

Other than the group of children, there were also a few adults poking their heads around.

Xiao Lingye asked the adults, "Uncles, aunts, how can I help you?"

"It's nothing." A villager asked, "Ye 'Er, what did your mother cook? The fragrance has traveled miles away. We're salivating because of it."

Xiao Lingye then realized the people were there because of the fragrance of their breakfast.

However, he still felt this was too exaggerated. The breakfast his mother cooked was fragrant but people shouldn't surround his house.

Xiao Lingye was about to say something when Xiao Xiaohui piped up anxiously, "Brother Ye, do you still have any extra breakfast? I haven't had my breakfast yet!"

'It looks like these brats want to have a free meal here. This is funny.'

Xiao Lingye chuckled and said, "My mom only made enough for the family. There isn't any extra."

Xiao Xiaohui ignored him and ran in. He shouted, "Second aunt, what did you make for breakfast? It smells so good!"

The moment Xiao Xiaohui ran in, the other three kids followed him in.

## **Chapter 62: Perfect Water Ratio**

As curious as the adults were, they couldn't be as thick-skinned as the children. After all, Xiao Lingye already said that Mother Xiao only made enough for their family.

When Mother Xiao heard Xiao Xiaohui, she said, "Come in and eat then. We have some left." Mother Xiao got up to get four more sets of cutlery. Thankfully, she had made extra.

The food was delicious, but it would still go to waste if they couldn't finish it. The Xiao Family was already full. Mother Xiao decided to give the remaining porridge and pancakes to the kids.

Xiao Lingye immediately protested. "Mom, I have to go to school today. I plan to bring these pancakes with me."

Mother Xiao glanced at him. "Don't be so stingy. I'll make more for you!"

Her children were going to town later. Yu 'Er was going to the market, Ye 'Er to school. The town was quite far from Taoyuan Village, so they had to leave early. There was not enough time to cook more porridge but frying some egg pancakes was doable.

Xiao Lingye nodded and grinned, saying, "Thank you, Mom!"

Xiao Xiaohui's eyes lit up when he heard Mother Xiao would make more egg pancakes. He said with anticipation, "Second aunt, do you mind making extra? I-I have to herd the cows later. I can have them as snacks when I'm hungry." The other children also looked at Mother Xiao with anticipation.

Looking at the small children, Mother Xiao laughed and said, "Okay. Just wait here for me."

"Yay!" The little children cheered.

Xiao Lingyu finished her porridge and pancakes in silence. She was deep in thought. 'This won't do. It's just breakfast, and it has already attracted so many people. If this continues, people will get suspicious.' Xiao Lingyu thought about it and decided to dilute the water barrel's water. She had to lower its effectiveness.

For her family, Xiao Lingyu decided to have them drink the water directly from individual glasses. If Mother Xiao didn't cook with the spring water, it wouldn't attract the villagers' attention.

Mother Xiao went to fry some pancakes. The four kids were satisfied. Even after they were full, they asked to take some away with them. This made Mother Xiao and the others laugh endlessly. Since the children liked the food so much, Mother Xiao prepared more for them.

Xiao Lingye saw this and announced that he wanted to bring the porridge and egg pancakes to school.

Mother Xiao was speechless. "You can bring the egg pancakes, but forget about the porridge! How do you expect me to pack them?"

In the end, Xiao Lingye and Xiao Lingyu were given a few pancakes before their trip.

While Mother Xiao was busy with the children, Xiao Lingyu grabbed a bowl of porridge and sneaked into the kitchen. She poured the porridge into the water barrel. Then she scooped the water from the barrel into two buckets. After the buckets were full, Xiao Lingyu speared a pole through their handles. Then, she picked up the buckets by balancing the pole on her shoulder. She headed to the backyard.

When Mother Xiao saw her daughter carry the water buckets out of the kitchen, she asked, "Yu 'Er, where are you going with the water?"

Xiao Lingyu answered, "Mom, I accidentally poured the porridge into the water barrel. I didn't want the whole barrel of water to go to waste, so I decided to use them to water the vegetables in the backyard."

Mother Xiao didn't suspect anything. She stood up and said, "Girl, the water buckets are very heavy. You sure you can carry it? Come, let me do it!"

Xiao Lingyu shook her head, "Mom, I can do this. I used to help you around the house before, don't you remember?"

Mother Xiao said, "But that was in the past. You haven't done heavy chores since you moved to the city. You shouldn't injure yourself. Let mom do it."

Xiao Lingyu shook her head again. "Mom, I'm fine. Eventually, I'll have to do this since I've decided to stay and farm."

Mother Xiao relented and silently turned around.

Xiao Lingyu continued her journey with the two buckets of water. She put down the buckets when she arrived at the backyard. She looked around, and with a thought, the two water buckets were gone.

Xiao Lingyu didn't use the water to water the vegetables, or they'd end up with another batch of giant harvest.

Xiao Lingyu moved to study the few vegetables that she had watered in her experiment yesterday. As she predicted, the denser the spring water, the bigger the vegetable would grow.

There were a few vegetables that had grown quite large, but they were not as exaggerated as the day before.

Even the vegetables watered with the least diluted spring water were only one-third of yesterday's size. For this batch, the ratio of spring water to normal water was 1: 10.

Based on her observation, the vegetables yesterday hadn't fully grown before her family harvested time. Given time, they would grow bigger.

The batch with 1:50 spring water and normal water was one-sixth yesterday's size.

The perfect ratio was 200 percent normal water and 1 percent spring water. This batch earned a harvest that was about half a size larger than normal vegetables. They looked cute.

Xiao Lingyu to use this ratio in the future. The produce grew well, and they didn't grow to conspicuous sizes.

Xiao Lingyu finished her observation and moved to pick a few large vegetables.

"Sis, we're departing soon!" Xiao Lingye shouted from inside the house just as Xiao Lingyu was done. She replied, "Okay, I'm coming!"

She placed the vegetables inside the water buckets and carried them back into the house.

### **Chapter 63: The Reason**

Mother Xiao immediately saw the giant vegetables inside the buckets. They were smaller than the ones from yesterday, but they were still much larger than average.

Mother Xiao grabbed the buckets from her daughter. She washed the vegetables. She said in puzzlement. "What's going on? These are smaller than yesterday's batch, but they shouldn't be this large either. Could some Immortal really have visited our backyard?"

Xiao Lingyu smiled, "Mom, are you serious? There is no such thing as Immortal Gods or magical water. It's just that a friend of mine from the Agricultural Department has given me a new kind of fertilizer. They can help cleanse impurities and promote the growth of plants. However, this new formula hasn't been released on the market yet. Essentially, it's a secret formula. My friend gave me some to try them out."

Mother Xiao sighed in relief. She added, "Girl, then why didn't you tell us earlier? I was ready to believe Ye 'Er and his talk of Immortals."

Xiao Lingyu chuckled. "If only there are Immortals. Then, we'd see what they look like. Alas," Xiao Lingyu said in regret. "There are no Immortals in this world. It's all scientific. So, Mom, don't be surprised if you see any changes in the vegetables in the future."

Mother Xiao nodded. "Okay."

Xiao Lingyu added in a whisper, "Mom, my friend gave me the formula in confidence. So you can't tell anyone else other than dad and little brother!"

Mother Xiao promised sincerely, "Understood." Mother Xiao then continued to wash the vegetables.

After Mother Xiao left, Xiao Lingyu patted her chest and sighed in relief. She came up with this excuse yesterday night. She had asked her family to loan her the plot in the backyard. If she kept coming out with strange and new plants, people would become suspicious.

Even though Mother and Father Xiao hadn't said anything, that didn't mean they didn't suspect anything. Therefore, Xiao Lingyu decided it was best for her to come up with an excuse for her family as soon as possible.

"Sis, what are you doing?" At that moment, Xiao Lingye walked over carrying his school bag. He saw Xiao Lingyu's hand on her chest, and he was confused.

Xiao Lingyu glared at him. "Nothing. I was just waiting for you!"

Xiao Lingye was suspicious. He looked at her empty hands, and he asked, "Sis, aren't you going to bring anything with you?"

"I'm going to town to buy things, not to sell things. Other than money, what else should I bring?" Xiao Lingyu challenged. "Mom gave us some pancakes, and you're already carrying them, aren't you?"

Xiao Lingye seemed satisfied by the explanation. He nodded. "Okay, let's go then!"

Mother Xiao, who was in the kitchen, shouted, "Be careful on the road!"

"Yes, mom!" The siblings said in unison. They headed to the village entrance and boarded the car to the town.

On the way, the villagers greeted Xiao Lingyu and her brother.

Xiao Lingyu and Xiao Lingye were minor celebrities due to two reasons.

One, Xiao Lingyu and Xiao Lingye were the best students from Taoyuan Village. Xiao Lingyu was the best scorer in the county a few years ago. Xiao Lingye was also poised to join a good university. The villagers respected scholars.

Two, Xiao Lingyu worked in the big city. She had the poise and temperament that made her stand out from the common village girl.

The villagers were jealous of Mother and Father Xiao for having such a wonderful pair of children. They must have accumulated good karma in their previous life.

A few older villagers asked Xiao Lingyu with a smile, “Yu ‘Er, are you going to town?”

Xiao Lingyu smiled and nodded. “Yes, third granduncle!”

Xiao Lingyu’s third granduncle’s real name was Xiao Decai. He was one of the village elders. Xiao Lingyu’s father had to refer to him as third uncle.

Third granduncle asked, “What are you doing in town?”

“I’m going to buy some seeds,” Xiao Lingyu replied.

“Buy seeds?” Third granduncle asked in confusion, “You should have asked your father or mother to go in your place. Do you know what kind of seed to buy?”

Xiao Lingyu chuckled, “Third granduncle, to be honest, I haven’t been to the fair for a long time, so I’m really going on a stroll.”

Along the way, the villagers of Taoyuan Village chatted with the siblings. The villagers who had young kids wanted to know the secret of studying from the siblings.

A woman in her forties said, “Lingyu, Lingye, you are promising kids. You did well in your studies. Lingyu, you even got into a good university and work in the city. You’ve made your parents so proud.”

In the past decade, Xiao Lingyu was the only university student from Taoyuan Village. Plus, she was accepted into a prestigious university because she was the top scorer in their county. This news had shocked everyone around the county. The whole Xing An town and Xing Yin County were surprised.

The incident back then was still fresh on many villagers’ minds...

#### **Chapter 64: That Year**

When Xiao Lingyu was admitted to the famous university in S Province as the top scholar in the county, even the country television station came to interview Mother and Father Xiao.

The local government and big companies also sent over gifts and money as presents. It made the other villagers very jealous.

However, Mother and Father Xiao rejected all the interviews and gifts. Father Xiao told the camera, “Thank you to all the officials for their kindness.

“My daughter is entering the university to start a new page of her life. Her road ahead is still very long. No one knows what will happen in the future, so it’s too early to celebrate. Therefore, I can’t accept the money. If I do, my kids will think I’m only making them study for money. I want to teach my daughter that studying is not for money but to better her life. She has to learn to be responsible.”

The villagers thought Father Xiao was being stupid and arrogant.

The money was a drop in the ocean for the local government and company. However, it was a huge sum for any local farming family. How could Father Xiao reject it?

Xiao Lingyu would have to pay university tuition in the future. How was the Xiao Family supposed to scrape together the money for her? They were just asking for trouble.

In reality, the reason Father and Mother Xiao rejected the presents was because they didn’t want Xiao Lingyu to be indebted to these local government bodies and companies. There was no free lunch in this world. Once Xiao Lingyu accepted the money, she would be indebted to these people. They didn’t want Xiao Lingyu to have to live her life with this burden. Therefore, no matter how hard it was, they would depend on themselves to send their daughter to university.

It was indeed difficult for the Xiao Family to support Xiao Lingyu’s university tuition. This was especially true in the first year when the tuition fees were the highest. Even if the Xiao Family sold everything they had, they didn’t have enough money. Therefore, they had to borrow money from relatives and friends.

They were ridiculed and mocked by some. If Father and Mother Xiao weren’t so prideful and accepted the money given to them, they wouldn’t need to go around begging people for money. Some even said, “We definitely don’t have several ten thousand to borrow. Life is not easy for us too. We have to look after the elders, and the kids have to study. We don’t have spare money. But we can lend you 10 or 20 RMB. In the future, when Yu ‘Er finds success, remember to repay this favor!”

Father Xiao’s face darkened, and he turned to leave. People wanted Yu ‘Er to repay the favors despite loaning just a pittance. Father Xiao was not that dumb. He decided to cut off ties with such relatives.

Father Xiao was an honest man, but he was clear-minded. He knew what was right and what was wrong.

He jotted down the names of the people who had helped them. He had all of his siblings remember their names. He would repay their favors in the future.

Xiao Lingyu and Xiao Lingye were influenced by Father Xiao since they were young.

After the first year, Xiao Lingyu started to work part-time while studying. She worked as a tutor, cleaner, and so on. She never asked her family for money again.

After Xiao Lingyu graduated, she joined a large company. Her starting salary was two thousand, and when she left, it was around six thousand. Xiao Lingyu sent most of her money home. She put away some for living expenses and saved the rest.

Over the past two years, the Xiao Family used the money Xiao Lingyu sent back to pay the debt. They cleared the debt, and their lives improved. Last season, Father Xiao even used five thousand to buy a plow machine. It expanded his business. He charged 80 RMB for one Mu. He could plow around twenty to thirty Mu a day. In other words, he could earn one to two thousand a day. Many villagers envied him.

Last year, Father Xiao had already paid back the investment in the plow machine. This year, the Xiao Family was enjoying a pure profit. During high season, he could earn around five to six thousand.

This time, the Xiao Family didn't need to go around begging to send Xiao Lingye to university. This was all thanks to Xiao Lingyu, who managed to enter university and get a job in the big city.

Therefore, the people of Taoyuan Village paid attention to their children's studies. They hoped that their children could be like Xiao Lingyu. That way, they would have a good life like the Xiao Family.

Xiao Lingye was also a good student. He had good results. Many villagers would bring their children over to him to have tuition. The adults would ask advice from Mother and Father Xiao.

This caused quite a bit of trouble for the Xiao Family, especially Xiao Lingye, who had to sit for his university entrance exam this year. He needed to study, but every time, there would be people who came to disturb him.

To give Xiao Lingye some peace and quiet, Father and Mother Xiao refused people from crowding their houses. Most villagers were offended.

Unfortunately, only a small handful understood Mother and Father's difficulties. They understood that Xiao Lingye had to study too. Furthermore, their children's results didn't improve after being taught by Xiao Lingye. Did this mean that Xiao Lingye didn't teach their children seriously? No one would be thick-faced enough to say something like that. The more likely answer was their children didn't like to study. Xiao Lingye could only do so much.

They didn't hog Xiao Lingye's time. They didn't demand Xiao Lingye to sacrifice his own study time to give their children tuition. Who would be so selfless? If Xiao Lingye was their son, they wouldn't allow that too, so they understood Father and Mother Xiao's difficulties.

However, most villagers were stubborn and selfish.

Sometimes, when someone appeared at the Xiao Family door with their child, Mother Xiao would go and reject them directly. "My Ye 'Er is studying, and he has no time to tutor your child."

Some of them turned hostile and chided Mother Xiao for being stingy. Mother Xiao fired back, "This is not the first or even the second time my Ye 'Er has tutored your son. Is my Ye 'Er your son's private tutor? Private tutoring is charged by the hour. If you want a tutor, fine, then we'll charge you 5 RMB per hour. It's much cheaper than finding a private tutor in town. So what do you say?"

Most parents were frightened off. Most of them couldn't even earn ten RMB a day.

When the villagers heard that Mother Xiao was charging people to have private tutor sessions with Xiao Lingye, other than a few families who were willing to pay, the rest kept their distance.

They started to talk behind Mother and Father Xiao's back. They were described as stingy misers. Father and Mother Xiao ignored them.

## **Chapter 65: Embarrassing Stories**



Mother and Father Xiao ignored all the gossips.

The villagers who wanted to see them get angered and allowed the children back into Xiao Lingye's tutoring classes didn't get what they wanted. Eventually, the villagers got tired and stopped talking about it.

However, that didn't affect the villagers' impression of Xiao Lingyu. She was an obedient, sensible, and kind child. Other than the time she stubbornly dated Chen Ran when they were underage and caused a ripple through the village, the villagers wished she was their daughter.

Since they were traveling with Xiao Lingyu and Xiao Lingye, the villagers naturally hunted them down for learning skills.

A woman asked, "Lingyu, when are you going back to the city?"

Xiao Lingyu said indifferently, "Auntie Liu, it's hard to say." Then, she stopped talking.

Auntie Liu was their relative. She was Xiao Lingyu's grandfather's youngest daughter-in-law. She was one of the relatives who mocked Father Xiao back when Father Xiao went to her home to borrow university funds for Xiao Lingyu. Since then, the Xiao Family had been indifferent to her.

Liu Changjiao did not seem to notice to cold shoulder, and she continued shamelessly, "Lingyu, I heard that people in the big cities are all rich, and everyone knows how to enjoy themselves. But people like us don't have such fate. We can only hope that our children will work hard and bring us older generations out of the countryside."

She glanced at Xiao Lingyu when she said that. When Xiao Lingyu didn't reply, Liu Changjiao's expression turned ugly. However, she pressed on, "Lingyu, you are our village's first university graduate. You are Taoyuan Village's most promising student. Can't you help us? Tutor our children so that they can enter university and go to big cities to earn big money."

Xiao Lingyu plastered on a fake smile, "Auntie Liu, you think too highly of me. As long as the children work hard, they have a chance to get into university, and work in big cities." Xiao Lingyu muttered internally, 'But definitely not your two lazy sons.'

Liu Changjiao was very unhappy that Xiao Lingyu had deflected her request. However, she didn't show it on her face. She smiled and said, "Lingyu, you're right. As long as the children are willing to work hard, they will definitely be able to enter a good university." She smiled and looked at the people around her. When she saw people nod in agreement, she went in for the kill. "But Lingyu, not every child is as smart as you and your brother. They can't improve no matter how hard they study. Take, for example, my little fatty, no matter how hard the teacher works with him, his result doesn't improve. Lingyu, you and your brother must have some kind of secret to having such good results. Why don't you share it with auntie?"

The others were disdainful at Liu Changjiao's interrogation, but they pricked up their ears to listen. They also wanted to know if Xiao Lingyu and Xiao Lingye had some studying secrets. If they had, they should share it with the villagers.

Xiao Lingyu smiled, "Auntie Liu, you flatter me. There is no secret to studying. You only need to work hard. Auntie Liu, you might not know this, but I was burning the midnight oil every night to study during my three years of high school."

As soon as Xiao Lingyu said that, her third granduncle concurred, "That's right. I remember how studious Yu 'Er was. She carried a book with her everywhere. She was reading even during meal times. She often studied until dawn." The third granduncle sighed, "If such a hardworking child didn't get into a good university, it would make no sense!"

Third granduncle's words faceslapped Liu Changjiao. Liu Changjiao's 13 and 14-year-old sons were naughty children. They hid at home when they heard they had to go to school. How could children like that even sit down to study and wish to enter university?

Third granduncle's words led everyone down memory lane.

"Haha, speaking of, I remember seeing Lingyu walking with a book one day. She wasn't paying attention and walked right into a ditch." A kind aunt said with a laugh. "She was all dirty, but she didn't mind it. Instead, she was more worried about her book. She was so nervous about dirtying it, and she started to cry."

"Haha, I had one that is even funnier. One time, I went to borrow a sickle from Qiuying. At that time, Qiuying was doing laundry, and she didn't have any detergent left, so she called for Lingyu to grab some for her. Guess what happened. The girl came out holding a mirror and a book. She couldn't differentiate a mirror from a box of detergent!"

"Haha, that is funny."

"This one time..." For some reason, the whole bus started to bring up embarrassing stories about Xiao Lingyu.

Xiao Lingye was dumbfounded. He turned to his sister and asked, "Sis, did these things really happen?"

The embarrassed Xiao Lingyu glared at him and said unhappily, "Of course not!" Xiao Lingye didn't believe her. Otherwise, how did the aunties and uncles manage to paint such vivid pictures?

While the villagers shared Xiao Lingyu's studying tales, they noticed the stories showed how hardworking Xiao Lingyu was. Perhaps there was really no learning secret. The Xiao siblings merely studied hard.

Some of the elders decided to go home and urge their children to spend more time studying. In the future, there would be more university graduates from Taoyuan Village. They didn't go to universities as prestigious as the one Xiao Lingyu, and Xiao Lingye attended, but they were universities nonetheless. But that was for the future.

Along the way, the villagers chatted, and soon, they arrived at Xing An Town.

Xiao Lingye planned to accompany his sister before he went to school. Xiao Lingyu planned to buy two new shirts for Xiao Lingye. The weather in spring was neither hot nor cold, so they had to prepare for the changing weather.

Xing An town was the biggest town in the entire county. It had a population of more than 40,000.

There was a flood of people and cars. It was very lively.

Xing An Town would be refurbished six years later, but now, the roads were filled with potholes and mud.

It was fine on sunny days, but the town would turn into a mud ring on rainy days. One had to be careful, or one would fall and turn black instantly. One also had to be careful of passing vehicles and splattering mud.

Despite that, the farmers from the countryside still visited Xing An Town quite often.

This was because Xing An Town was the hub of commerce. People could get what they want and sell their products.. There were many farming products on sale like vegetables, soybeans, peppers, and so on.

### **Chapter 66: Buying Seeds**

After Xiao Lingyu and Xiao Lingye got off the bus, they separated from the villagers of Taoyuan Village and visited a few clothing stores at Xing An Town.

When Xiao Lingyu saw the clothes on offer, she frowned. The clothes were expensive, and their quality was poor. They might as well come from the roadside stall. However, Xiao Lingyu understood that perhaps the clothes did come from the same stock as the roadside stalls. The clothes looked better and thus pricier hanging inside shops.

Xiao Lingyu frequented a few shops, and nothing caught her attention. Xiao Lingyu decided to bring Xiao Lingye to Xing Yin county town to make the purchases. Xiao Lingye was unwilling. He said, "Sis, the clothes at the county town will be so expensive. We'll just pick the ones sold at the roadside stalls. There's no need to go to the county town to buy them."

Xiao Lingye studied in the county town, so he knew everything there was expensive. Even the smallest piece of clothing could easily exceed 100 RMB.

Xiao Lingyu disagreed. "Why should we waste time on the roadside stall's merchandise? You should know their quality. Yes, they are cheap, but they will be torn with a simple pull. You like to play basketball. Have you wondered what would happen if your clothes shred when you are on the field? Won't you be embarrassed?"

Xiao Lingye's face turned red. Actually, that had happened before. He immediately took off his shirt when he noticed the tearing sound. The others assumed he was hot and didn't ask much. Thankfully, it was not his shorts that tore open.

Xiao Lingye relented. He obediently followed his sister on the bus to bring them to the county town.

It would take around 20 minutes to go from Taoyuan Village to Xing An Town, and it would take another 30 minutes to go from Xing An Town to Xing Yin County City by bus. The last bus of the day ran at 6.30 pm. Therefore, they didn't worry about missing the bus.

When they arrived, Xiao Lingyu dragged Xiao Lingye to a boutique. She looked around and bought Xiao Lingye two sets of clothes. When Xiao Lingye tried out the new clothes, Xiao Lingyu rested her chin on one hand as she studied her brother. She nodded in satisfaction. "Not bad. My little brother looks even more handsome. You'll definitely be able to charm many girls."

This was a shirt with red and white stripes. Xiao Lingye was already fair and handsome. The new clothes made him look even more dashing.

Xiao Lingye was embarrassed by his sister. He called out helplessly, "Sis!" The moment he did, two girls outside the boutique looked over, "Hey, isn't that Mr. Xiao?"

The other girl stuck her head out, and she nodded, "You're right."

"Let's go say hi to him!"

Xiao Lingye was handsome and clever. He was loved by many at school. He was adored and pursued by many girls. Xiao Lingye rejected all of them, using his study as an excuse.

"Mr. Xiao!"

"Mr. Xiao!"

Xiao Lingye, who was about to change his clothes, heard the two girls. His hand paused. Then, he smiled warmly at the two girls. "Miss Zeng, Miss Lai!"

"This is such a coincidence!" The two girls saw Xiao Lingye in his new clothes and their eyes lit up. They exclaimed, "You look so handsome!"

Xiao Lingye found the two girls to be cute and funny. She asked with a smile, "Are you Ye 'Er's classmates?"

The two girls were startled. They turned and were puzzled when they saw the young woman in glasses.

Miss Zeng nodded. "Yes, and you are..."

'She came to buy clothes with Xiao Lingye. Could she be Xiao Lingye's girlfriend?' Miss Zeng felt quite sour because she liked Xiao Lingye.

Xiao Lingye explained, "Oh, right. I'm Xiao Lingye's big sister. Have you girls eaten anything? How about I treat you?"

"Big Sister?!" The two girls were shocked again. They immediately felt apologetic for their rudeness. "We're so sorry!"

Xiao Lingye shook her head. "It's alright. Ye 'Er, grab the stuff. I'll treat you and your two friends!"

Xiao Lingye didn't want to share a meal with these two girls, but since Xiao Lingye had made the offer, there was nothing he could do. He picked up the new clothes and followed his sister silently.

Xiao Lingye studied at County One High School in the past, so she was very familiar with the county town. The county town had developed over the years but not to the point where she couldn't recognize it anymore.

When Xiao Lingye was in high school, she was very frugal. She didn't often go out to eat. She took care of her meals in the canteen. The food in the canteen was cheap. A full course meal only cost 30 cents. However, a meal at a restaurant outside could easily cost 10 RMB. She couldn't bear to waste.

However, after her rebirth, Xiao Lingyu understood the importance of enjoying fun when she had the time!

The two girls sat down in a restaurant situated inside an alley. They looked around curiously and asked, "Sister Xiao, how did you know there's a restaurant here? We don't even know this place."

Xiao Lingye explained, "My sister studied here for three years. She knows all nooks and crannies of this county town."

The two female students were immediately curious. "Sister Xiao, you studied at the county town? Which high school?"

Xing Yin County had five high schools. County One was the best, followed by County Two, so on and so forth.

"County One High School." Xiao Lingye was especially proud. "Back then, my sister was the top scholar in liberal arts." His sister was his role model.

The two girls had stars in their eyes. "Wow, Sister Xiao is so awesome!" They only wished to get into second-rate universities. They wouldn't dare dream of being the top-scorer.

"You girls are awesome too!" Xiao Lingyu said with a smile, "The university entrance exam is coming up soon. Remember to do your best!"

The two girls' faces fell when they heard university entrance exam. They sighed, "We don't need to worry if we're as clever as Mr. Xiao."

Xiao Lingyu did not say anything. She listened to the two girls talk about how nervous they were about the exam, how their families were forcing them to study, and so on. Xiao Lingyu was a good listener. She gave some advice here and there.

After lunch, Xiao Lingye carried his new clothes and departed for school with his two classmates.

Xiao Lingyu decided to go to the seed station. When she arrived, a staff member was lying on the desk playing with her cell phone.

When she heard someone enter, she only raised her eyes slightly before turning back to her phone.

### **Chapter 67: Seed Station Argument**

Xiao Lingyu picked out some seeds, and she asked, "How much is the total?" She glanced towards the counter. The staff glanced at the stuff on the table before turning back to her phone. "201 RMB."

Xiao Lingyu was ready to pay when she saw a small pack of black seeds in the cabinet corner. She pointed at them and asked, "What kind of seeds are those?"

The staff was impatient. She turned around and grumbled, "Strawberry seeds."

Xiao Lingyu was surprised. "Strawberry seeds?" She thought about it, grabbed the strawberry seeds, and asked again, "How much is it now?"

When the staff saw the strawberry seeds on the counter, she turned disdainful. She said mockingly, "What? Do you plan to grow strawberries? Are you dumb? Why don't you look around you? Do you think strawberries can grow here? Many big agricultural farms have tried to grow strawberries here, and they failed. Why do you think you can succeed?"

Xiao Lingyu's face darkened. "I'm here to purchase seeds, not to explain myself. It's none of your business what I do with the seeds. Now, clear my purchase!"

The staff pouted and scoffed, "Fine. That will be 1201 RMB!"

"What?" Xiao Lingyu was shocked. "These strawberry seeds cost one thousand? They're that expensive?"

"Of course!" The staff said, "They come from Liao Ning province. They are the best variety, so of course, they are expensive." She revealed a contemptuous look and said coldly, "If you can't afford them, then don't buy them!" The staff was earning a fixed salary. She had no commission. She didn't need to help sell the seeds.

Xiao Lingyu's eyes stared sharply at the staff. She countered, "I'm here to buy seeds, not to be ridiculed. Does your manager know about your attitude?"

The staff was insulted. She said angrily, "Leave then. We are not selling any product to a poor wretch like you!"

Xiao Lingyu tried to suppress her anger. "Lady, please understand that this is a seed station. It is government property. Our government sets up these stations to help promote agriculture! It is not your private shop. You can't stop selling me stuff simply because you feel like it!"

The staff shouted back. "Actually, my family owns this station. So I mean it when I say I am not going to sell you anything!" Technically, the station was managed by the staff's brother-in-law.

"You..." Xiao Lingyu was furious that she'd encounter such a shrew. "I'll file a complaint against you!"

"Xiao Lingyu, is that you?" Xiao Lingyu, who was about to storm out, heard someone call her name.

The staff cheered when she saw the new arrivals. "Brother-in-law!" Then she ran to hug her brother-in-law's arm. She said coquettishly, "Brother-in-law, someone is bullying me. You have to take revenge for me!"

The middle-aged man was short and fat. He had a beer belly and a bald head. He was Mo Deli, the manager of this seed store. Standing next to him was a handsome man. This was the person who called Xiao Lingyu earlier.

Normally, when Mo Deli heard someone had bullied his sister-in-law, he would help her get revenge without a second thought. However, when Mo Deli realized the man beside him knew the woman who bullied his sister-in-law, he knew he had to be careful.

Mo Deli ignored his sister-in-law and asked the man beside him with a smile. "Director Jiang, do you know this lady?"

The man was Jiang Tao, the chief director of Xing Yin County Police Station.

Jiang Tao nodded.

Xiao Lingyu saw Jiang Tao and greeted him with a smile, "Director Jiang!"

Jiang Tao stepped forward, and he smiled. "It is really you." Then, he glanced at the counter and asked, "Miss Xiao is here to buy seeds?"

Xiao Lingyu nodded. "That's right. Director Jiang, please call me Lingyu. It feels weird for you to call me Miss Xiao."

Jiang Tao smiled and nodded. "Okay. Lingyu, what happened?"

Before Xiao Lingyu could say anything, Kang Xiaoxue, the staff member cut in, "This poor wretch can't afford our seeds, and she humiliated me because of it!"

Well, that was interesting.

Kang Xiaoxue was the one who humiliated Xiao Lingyu, but the story got twisted. Kang Xiaoxue was charmed by Jiang Tao's good looks. When she saw how close the man was to Xiao Lingyu, she was jealous. She needed to do something to destroy Xiao Lingyu's image.

When Kang Xiaoxue saw the gloomy expression on Jiang Tao's face, she cheered internally. She believed she had succeeded. She quickly added, "The wretch wanted to buy so many seeds, and they are not cheap. She complained and demanded that I lower the price. I said our prices are fixed. Then, she called me greedy and wanted to complain to my brother-in-law about me. You guys came then."

Jiang Tao's expression became uglier and uglier.

Kang Xiaoxue thought Jiang Tao was getting angry with Xiao Lingyu, so she was extremely happy.

However, on the surface, she pouted and choked. She shook Mo Deli's arm and cried, "Brother-in-law, you have to help me! You have to teach this wretch..." a lesson.

"Shut up!" Mo Deli shouted sternly. He was not as brainless as Kang Xiaoxue. He could see that Jiang Tao was not angry at Xiao Lingyu but at Kang Xiaoxue.

If Jiang Tao was unhappy with Kang Xiaoxue, Mo Deli would be affected too. Mo Deli couldn't afford to offend Jiang Tao since Jiang Tao could decide his career path. Mo Deli's goal was to be the director of the Agriculture Bureau. He had been coveting that post for a long time.

Mo Deli had to pull a lot of strings to get Jiang Tao over to the seed station. He invited Jiang Tao over for tea, but his main purpose was to introduce Jiang Tao to his sister-in-law.

Kang Xiaoxue was young and beautiful. Jiang Tao was not married yet. If Jiang Tao married her, it would help Mo Deli's political career.

However, when they arrived, Kang Xiaoxue had already made a bad first impression by shouting and taunting their patron. To make things worse, the patron appeared to be Jiang Tao's friend. Mo Deli wanted to seal up Kang Xiaoxue's big mouth. However, that was not the time.

Mo Deli walked over to Xiao Lingyu and smiled. "Miss Xiao, I'm so sorry. Xiaoxue is young and has offended Miss Xiao. I apologize to you."

Kang Xiaoxue was stunned.

She widened her eyes and said in disbelief, "Brother-in-law, what are you... Why are you apologizing to her?"

Afraid that she would say something stupid again, Mo Deli immediately shouted at her, "Shut up!"

Kang Xiaoxue was hurt because her brother-in-law had never been so strict with her.

Mo Deli had no time to care about Kang Xiaoxue. He fawned on Xiao Lingyu. "I hope Miss Xiao will forgive her! And let bygones be bygones."

### **Chapter 68: Fawning!**

Mo Deli was sickly sweet with his attitude.

Before Xiao Lingyu could say anything, Jiang Tao asked, "Lingyu, what exactly is going on?"

Xiao Lingyu wasn't one to talk bad about people. However, the woman had pushed her luck by slandering Xiao Lingyu's name. Xiao Lingyu had done nothing wrong. She said, "I wanted to get a bag of strawberry seeds. The girl said she wanted 1000 for them. I was shocked and said they were too expensive. Then, she called me a poor wretch and tried to chase me out. It was then that I said I would lodge a complaint against her. That was when you arrived."

Jiang Tao turned to Kang Xiaoxue. "Is she telling the truth?" Even though Jiang Tao was not familiar with Xiao Lingyu, the latter was courageous and quick-witted enough to help the police take down a human trafficking ring. That proved Xiao Lingyu's character. She was not someone who would frame others.

Therefore, Jiang Tao believed in Xiao Lingyu.

When the stern Jiang Tao turned to Kang Xiaoxue, the latter's face paled, but she was determined not to admit anything. She retorted, "That's not true. Sh-She is framing me!" She pointed angrily at Xiao Lingyu.

Jiang Tao asked, "Oh? Tell me, how did Lingyu frame you?"

Kang Xiaoxue stubbornly continued, "I... I didn't say that she was poor, and I didn't chase her out either. She was the one who said the things here are too expensive, so she wanted to leave. She wanted to lodge a complaint against me for that!"

Both Jiang Tao and Mo Deli's faces were dark. Kang Xiaoxue continued, "I told you. It's she who is framing me..." Mo Deli cut her off harshly, "Shut up!"

To be fair, Mo Deli and Jiang Tao had heard the dispute between Xiao Lingyu and Kang Xiaoxue clearly. Mo Deli had no idea his sister-in-law would be so stupid to talk such nonsense when a powerful character was around. Looking at Kang Xiaoxue's pitiful and aggrieved appearance and comparing it to Xiao Lingyu's calm and collected nature, people who didn't know better would think Xiao Lingyu was the bully.



Kang Xiaoxue cried harder after being scolded. She wept. "Brother-in-law, I'm not lying. Why are you scolding me?"

"We heard everything before we came in! How can you say you're not lying?" Jiang Tao didn't wait for Mo Deli to speak. He said sternly, "You're really a horrible person."

Kang Xiaoxue's face turned red and white from shame and anger. She didn't expect the men to hear everything. She was afraid since her lie was exposed. Even though she didn't know Jiang Tao, she knew he was someone important from the way her brother-in-law fawn over him. She said weakly, "I... I..."

Mo Deli cursed internally, 'What a troublemaker!' Then, he went forward to mediate the issue, "Director Jiang, don't be angry. My sister-in-law is still young. Please forgive her inexperience."

Jiang Tao asked directly, "Young? May I know how old is she?"

Mo Deli's expression froze. "She looks more than twenty years old to me," Before Mo Li answered, Jiang Tao continued, "If a person of her age can still be forgiven for being young and foolish, when can we hold her responsible for her actions?"

Mo Deli's expression stiffened. He lowered his head, bent his waist, and said with an apologetic smile, "Director Jiang, don't be angry. I'll get Xiaoxue to apologize to this Miss Xiao right now!"

Then, he looked at Kang Xiaoxue and shouted sternly, "Come here and apologize to Miss Xiao!"

Kang Xiaoxue's tears flowed harder. She looked wronged and innocent. However, she had to yield to her brother-in-law. She shuffled forward. Her eyes burned jealously at Xiao Lingyu like they were spitting fire. She sputtered, "I'm sorry! I..." Before she even finished, Kang Xiaoxue ran away crying. She left behind an embarrassed and furious Mo Deli.

Mo Deli coughed awkwardly and said, "Miss Xiao, Xiaoxue was spoiled rotten by her big sister. But she is not a malicious person. Since she has already apologized, why don't you forgive her?"

'You bitch, you should be thankful that my Xiaoxue has apologized to you. If not for Director Jiang, I'd chase you out with my fists!' Of course, he didn't say that aloud.

Xiao Lingyu sighed. "Manager, I'll accept her apology. I don't care whether she's malicious or not, but." Xiao Lingyu turned to the counter, "Can I trouble the manager to settle the bill for me? It's getting late, and I need to rush home."

Xiao Lingyu was not going to take issue with a stranger.

Mo Deli was stunned, but he quickly nodded, "Of course!" He checked the seeds and frowned when he saw the strawberry seeds. "Miss Xiao, do you still want the strawberry seeds?"

Xiao Lingyu nodded. "Yes."

Mo Deli reminded, "Miss Xiao, you might not know this, but Xing Yin County's geography is not suitable for growing strawberries. People have tried in the past. The strawberries were either small or unpalatable." He was telling Xiao Lingyu not to waste her time.

Xiao Lingyu smiled, "It's alright. I still want to give it a try." She thought internally, 'After all, I have the farming space.'

Mo Deli shrugged since Xiao Lingyu didn't take his advice.

He said, "How about this? I'll give you the strawberry seeds for free. I'll sell you the rest of the seeds at the original cost price. They are 50 RMB in total!"

Mo Deli was the seed station manager, but the station belonged to the Agriculture Bureau. There was a record of everything sold. However, to give Director Jiang face, Mo Deli was willing to pay a few hundred RMB out of his own pocket.

Xiao Lingyu was surprised by the low price. She looked at Jiang Tao beside her, and she understood why. Mo Deli was doing Jiang Tao a favor through her. However, Xiao Lingyu had no relations with Jiang Tao. They were just acquaintances. She could not take advantage of him like that. Plus, she also didn't want Jiang Tao to owe Mo Deli because of her.

Xiao Lingyu said seriously, "Manager, that is too cheap! Earlier, the miss told me the seeds cost around 1200. Manager, please sell me the seeds at their normal price. You don't have to give me any discount."

Xiao Lingyu turned to Jiang Tao and shot a gaze at him.

### **Chapter 69: The Calf is crying?**

Jiang Tao caught the hint immediately. He nodded and said, "Station Manager Mo, you need to sell them according to the allotted price! After all, this seed station belongs to the government." This was a reminder for Mo Deli to be fair and do not use public goods in exchange for favors.

Mo Deli was annoyed by this. He cursed Xiao Lingyu. 'What a fool. I was trying to be nice, and you don't know how to appreciate it.'

He was dissatisfied with Xiao Lingyu because Xiao Lingyu stood in his way. This was a good opportunity for Mo Deli to endear himself to Jiang Tao, but Xiao Lingyu had put a stop to that. However, since Mo Deli was not clear about the nature of the relationship between Xiao Lingyu and Jiang Tao, he did not voice his unhappiness.

His expression froze after he heard Jiang Tao. He quickly smiled and said, "Director Jiang, you're scaring me. I was only doing my job." Then, Mo Deli turned to Xiao Lingyu, "Miss Xiao, the strawberry seeds are expensive, but they have gone unsold for a long time already. By the end of this month, the station will return the seeds. In the future, we'll not be stocking any strawberry seeds. So if you can cultivate a way to farm strawberries, it will help expand the agriculture projects in Xing Yin County!"

Xiao Lingyu said nothing, and it made Mo Deli feel awkward. He coughed twice and continued, "How about this, Miss Xiao? I'll sell the strawberry seeds to you at their original stock price. They cost 300 RMB!"

1200 and 300, the difference was huge. However, based on Xiao Lingyu's prediction, the woman earlier had purposely charged her extra so that she could fill her own pockets with the extra money.

Kang Xiaoxue must have done that many times before. Xiao Lingyu felt indignant for her other victims. She was embezzling public funds.

Xiao Lingyu smiled. "Station Manager Mo, you are still being too kind to me. Miss Kang told me the strawberry seeds sold for 1000 RMB earlier."

"1000 RMB?" Mo Deli was stunned. He scolded Kang Xiaoxue in his mind. The girl was too dumb. When she wanted to steal from the naive farmers, she shouldn't make the price difference that huge!

Mo Deli smiled apologetically. "Miss Xiao probably misheard. Maybe she said the whole array of seeds cost 1000 RMB instead of the strawberry seeds."

Xiao Lingyu's half-smiling face caused Mo Deli to freeze. He quickly turned away. He knew the more he explained, the more he'd expose himself. Therefore, he decided to quickly wrap this transaction up. "Miss Xiao, the total will be 300 RMB. Thank you."

This time, Xiao Lingyu didn't say anything but took out the money to give Mo Deli. The transaction was open and fair. No one owed anyone any favors.

Mo Deli packed the seeds. After Xiao Lingyu took them, she told Jiang Tao, "Director Jiang, I'll not take any more of your time. I'll leave first."

For some reason, Jiang Tao found himself asking, "Lingyu, where are you going after this? How about I drive you?" Jiang Tao pointed at a black car parked opposite.

Mo Deli was dumbfounded. He looked at Xiao Lingyu with confusion. The girl was clean and fair, but she was not pretty. She was not even half as pretty as Kang Xiaoxue. The girl's big glasses covered more than half of her face. Her clothes were very ordinary too.

However, this seemingly normal girl had charmed the famous young police chief of Xing Yin County.

The thing that surprised Mo Deli further was the girl rejected Director Jiang. How... was that possible?

Mo Deli couldn't believe it.

Xiao Lingyu shook her head and said, "Thank you, Director Jiang, but I'm fine. I'll just take the bus home."

If Jiang Tao sent Xiao Lingyu home, who knew what kind of trouble it'd cause back at Taoyuan Village.

Jiang Tao was surprised by Xiao Lingyu's direct rejection. However, he was a gentleman. He didn't push it. He only nodded. "Okay then. Be careful on the road!"

"Thank you, Director Jiang!" Xiao Lingyu turned and walked away.

Jiang Tao didn't say anything as Xiao Lingyu walked away, but he did narrow his eyes.

Mo Deli walked forward and asked cautiously, "Director Jiang, shall we go in for tea?"

Jiang Tao's expression darkened. He said, "There's no need. I'm needed back at the bureau." After he took two steps, Jiang Tao turned around to say, "Oh, by the way, I might have to look into your sister-in-law's complaints and work history." In other words, Jiang Tao would also do a check on Mo Deli.

Mo Deli blanched. He staggered back. He screamed internally, and his mind was blank. When he tried to explain, Jiang Tao had already left.

Mo Deli was livid. He gritted his teeth and growled, “Kang Xiaoxue!” He left to find his sister-in-law.

The next day, Mo Deli would be reported for public fund embezzlement and taking bribes. Kang Xiaoxue was arrested for being his accomplice.

However, Xiao Lingyu wouldn’t know about all that. Even if she knew, she wouldn’t care.

...

Xiao Lingyu took the bus back to Xing An Town. She didn’t stay for long. She carried her bag and headed to the bus station.

When she passed by an intersection, he saw a group of people gathered together as if they were trying to catch something.

Xiao Lingyu continued to walk forward because she didn’t want to meddle.

Suddenly, a cow’s mooing could be heard. Then, someone screamed, “Catch it, don’t let it run away.”

Without warning, the group of people ran towards Xiao Lingyu. When they reached Xiao Lingyu, they were stunned.

The calf that had escaped stopped in front of a girl. Besides mooing, it rubbed its head against her calf. The people were afraid that the calf might accidentally injure the girl.

A strong middle-aged man ran over to pull on the calf’s rein. “You’re coming back with us!”

The calf fought tooth and nail with the man. It raised its head to look at Xiao Lingyu with moist eyes. There were tears in its eyes,

‘The... The calf is crying?’ Xiao Lingyu was shocked. ‘Why is it crying? Is it asking me for help? What on Earth is going on?’

Xiao Lingyu didn’t have the time to think because the calf was being slowly pulled away by the crowd.

“Wait!”

## **Chapter 70: Buy It**

The crowd stopped and looked at Xiao Lingyu in confusion.

Wang Dashan, the man leading the calf, asked, “Miss, what’s the matter?”

Xiao Lingyu smiled and asked, “Uncle, I’m just curious about what is going on.” The calf was crying and asking Xiao Lingyu for help. She couldn’t ignore that even though she was puzzled how a calf could even do all that in the first place.

Wang Dashan was a good-tempered person. He said, “I have a cow at home. She is this calf’s mother. I’m going to take her to the slaughterhouse today. The calf has been causing trouble since this morning. It was ramming against the pen and eventually got out. I was afraid that it might injure others so I had the villagers come to help me catch it.”

Xiao Lingyu was shocked. No wonder the calf was crying. Its mother was about to get slaughtered.

Xiao Lingyu asked politely, "Uncle, may I know why are you getting the cow slaughtered?" Normally, a cow wouldn't be slaughtered because they would provide milk and be labor force for the family. "Especially when it's near plowing season."

Wang Dashan sighed lightly, his expression somewhat helpless. He explained, "The cow is dying. She doesn't eat or drink. Even the veterinarian can't do anything. We have no choice but to sell it to the slaughterhouse before..." The cow would be less fresh if it were sold after she died, so she would fetch a lesser price. Wang Dashan didn't want to do this but he had no choice. He couldn't keep a cow that couldn't provide for his family. Such was the plight of a rural farmer.

Xiao Lingyu noticed that when Wang Dashan mentioned the cow, his eyes filled with sorrow. The man really cared for the cow.

Xiao Lingyu couldn't help but ask, "Uncle, how much are you selling the cow for?"

Wang Dashan was confused, but he still answered honestly, "1200 RMB!" A cow in her prime could go for 3000.

"I'll give you 1500 for the cow!" Xiao Lingyu said.

The others looked at Xiao Lingyu like she was crazy. Why would she buy a cow that was about to die? Even if she led it to the slaughterhouse, she wouldn't get a price better than 1200.

Wang Dashan was baffled. He asked, "Miss, may I ask why do you want to buy my cow? Are you going to raise or slaughter it?"

"I'm not slaughtering the cow!" Xiao Lingyu admitted. "However, Uncle, I hope you can agree to another request of mine."

"What is it?" Wang Dashan said.

"Can you sell me the calf as well? Name a price!" Xiao Lingyu pointed at the calf and said very sincerely.

"Of course!" Wang Dashan was joyful. After all, he had raised the cow for more than a decade. He was attached to her. He was happy that she didn't have to die.

"But the cow is dying. Miss, it'll be a big loss for you." Wang Dashan reminded. He was a very good man. He didn't have the heart to scam a young girl.

Xiao Lingyu said, "Uncle, don't worry. I have a way to keep the old cow alive."

Uncle Wang's eyes brightened. He nodded. "Miss, really? Okay then! I won't ask for 1500. I'll sell you the cow for 1000 and the calf for 500." The calf could be sold for 700 on the market. "So 1500 in total."

At that moment, a young man piped up, "Dad, the old cow has already been sent to the slaughterhouse." The young man's name was Wang Yunfu.

Wang Dashan paled. He immediately instructed Wang Yunfu, "Go to the slaughterhouse now. Stop them from slaughtering the cow!"

Wang Yunfu immediately ran to the slaughterhouse. Fortunately, the slaughterhouse was not far. It only took ten minutes to cover the distance.

Wang Dashan told Xiao Lingyu, "I'm sorry, Miss. I had no idea my family moved so fast. Please wait here for a moment."

Xiao Lingyu shook her head and smiled, "It's okay, Uncle."

While they waited, Xiao Lingyu chatted with Wang Dashan. She got to know Uncle Wang's family.

Wang Dashan came from Wang Family Village. They had a richer life than the people of Taoyuan Village. Apart from a few poor families, almost every family had cattle. A few of them even had a cattle farm. The Wang Family Village was also nicknamed the Cow Village because of this.

While Xiao Lingyu and Wang Dashan chatted, a panting Wang Yunfu returned, leading the old cow. Following them was a middle-aged man, who probably came from the slaughterhouse.

The calf being held by Wang Dashan immediately became agitated. It kept spinning around, trying to break free from its reins to get to its mother.

Wang Dashan let it go.

It ran to the old yellow cow's side and rubbed against its calf. The old cow caressed the calf's head as if to comfort it. Then, it licked the calf's face as if wiping away its tears.

Wang Yunfu wiped the sweat off his face. "Dad, luckily I'm a fast runner or the cow would have been killed already." When Wang Yunfu arrived at the slaughterhouse, the people there already had the old cow on the machine. They were ready to electrocute her to death.

Wang Dashan shivered to hear his son. He sighed. "Good thing you arrived in time." Wang Yunfu looked at the man behind them. "Dad, we should return the money to Uncle Liu!"

Wang Dashan nodded. "You're right."

Wang Dashan took out 1200 from his trouser pocket and handed it to the man. "Datou, sorry for troubling you!"

Liu Datou lost a bit of money from not slaughtering the cow, but since the man didn't want to sell, he didn't force it. However, he shook his head and ask, "Brother Wang, the cow is dying. Why did you suddenly decide not to sell it?"

Wang Dashan pointed at Xiao Lingyu and said, "This young lady said she has a way to extend the old cow's life, so I sold the cow to her."

Liu Datou looked at Xiao Lingyu and narrowed his eyes. He was puzzled. "Oh? A way to extend a cow's life? I've been in the slaughtering business for two decades already, and I haven't heard of anything like that. Miss, which village are you from?"

Xiao Lingyu said, "I'm from Taoyuan Village."

"Her surname is Xiao." Wang Dashan explained, "Taoyuan Village is where the top-scorer of our county came from a few years ago."

Xiao Lingyu smiled and didn't say anything. She didn't reveal she was that person. She took out 1500 and handed it to Wang Dashan. "Uncle Wang, this is 1500. Do count them!"

Wang Dashan took the money and counted. Then, he nodded. "That's correct." He looked at the yellow cow and the calf. He added, "Now, they are yours."

However, another problem arose.

Wang Yunfu looked around and asked, "Taoyuan Village is quite far from here. How are you going to get back there with two cattle?"

Taoyuan Village was about ten miles away. It was rather difficult for a girl to drive the cows back on her own. In the end, it was Liu Datou from the slaughterhouse who drove Xiao Lingyu back to Taoyuan Village with his truck. The truck was the slaughterhouse's property. They used to transport meat and livestock.

"Hmm, isn't that Lingyu? Why is she in Liu Datou's truck?" Someone saw them on the way and he was confused.

"That is indeed Liu Datou!"

"Why would Lingyu come back with him?"

"I don't know, but there are two cattle in the truck. Perhaps Lingyu bought them? But that's so silly."

Liu Datou drove the truck all the way to Xiao Lingyu's house. A group of children followed the truck.

Mother Xiao and Father Xiao immediately walked out when they heard the truck. They saw Xiao Lingyu jump out of the car.

Mother Xiao immediately asked, "Girl, weren't you supposed to go to town and get some seeds? Why did you come back so late? Did you know how worried your father and I were?"

It was almost seven o'clock.

Then, Mother Xiao saw Liu Dahou descend from the driver's seat. She was confused. "Liu Datou?"

Liu Datou looked at Mother Xiao and smiled. "Yes, it's me, big sister!"