

Mei Xiang's Promise

Characters:

Mei Xiang	10, country girl
Mei Xiang's Mother	over 30, countrywoman
Mei Xiang's Father	over 30, countryman
Actress	25, professional actress
Story teller	a folk opera artist
Actor	30, professional actor
Director	over 40
Boy	12, country lad
Girl	10, Meixiang's play mate
Granny	over 60, countrywoman selling popsicles
Cameraman	over 20
Dresser	over 20

[An early summer day. hot. windless.]

00:01:30:00 I. Outside a village. Daytime.

1. [Green mountains stretch out with an ancient village on the far end of a slope. Out from the speakers come local drama episodes.]

00:01:45:24 II. In Meixiang's small courtyard. Daytime.

2. [A hen rests on the floor very contentedly. Beside her, a rooster is flapping his wings.]

3. [Three chickens are picking rice grains dropping from a little hand. Mei-xiang is feeding them. She makes a cocoo sound while doing this, just like talking to them. Sunlight falls on her through the grapevines.]

4. [After feeding the chickens, Meixiang continues doing her homework on the stone table. Suddenly, the sound of a bucket falling on the ground comes from outside. Meixiang's mother starts talking as if she's annoyed.]

Mother: What are you doing? What are you doing?.....

[Meixiang raises her head and looks into the room with surprise.

5、 [It is quite dark in the cave-house. Mei Xiang's father runs out to the

gate with a basket of eggs in hand.

Father: (faltering) Sell them...

Mother: ...These are all we have...

[While scolding him, mother runs over with a little broom

Mother: and you still want to sell them?

[In the background, Meixiang watches them with pain in her eyes

6、 [Father runs out of the door and Mother runs after him, snatching the basket

back and beating him with the little broom.

Mother: ...If you ever do this again...!

7、 [Father rushes out of the courtyard, hiding his head in arms. Mother follows

closely. Meixiang is distressed.

Mother: Why can't you stop gambling?!

00:02:23:00 8、 [Mother returns to the courtyard with basket, scolding

Voice over: Mom and Dad are fighting again. This is part of my daily life. Many times I had wanted to stop them but I never dared. How I wish Dad would stop gambling and we could live a better life!

[Seeing her walking into the room, Meixiang sits down and picks up her

homework, undoubtedly saddened.

[Just then, in comes the loud talking and hasty footsteps of the villagers.

00:02:41:20 9、 [In the ancient lane outside the courtyard, a group of villagers hustle by.

Voice over: This is the first TV crew that ever comes to our village. How can I miss that?

10、 [In the yard, two girls run in and call out to Meixiang who is doing homework.

[the two girls run away. Barely finishing their words. Meixiang stands up and

calls out to her mother the room
Meixiang: Mum, I'm going to watch the TV crew!
Mother: (voice over) Come back early!
Meixiang: OK!

[Meixiang runs out

11、 [Meixiang runs out of the gate and closes it gently.

12、 [In the ancient lane. Meixiang runs.

00:03:08:07 III. In the village. In front of the clinic by the ancient temple. The crew is shooting.

13、 An actor is performing.

14、 Villagers are watching the shooting.

In front of the Kwan-in Temple. Daytime.

00:03:11:22 15、 [What they are watching attentively is an actress who is having makeup put on.

Meixiang runs up and squeezes into the crowd, sweating heavily.
She stares at
the actress with curiosity.

00:03:20:10 16、 The actress is putting on a make-up. Meixiang is watching her.

Voice over: How beautiful is the actress from the city! I really like her!

17、 Meixiang walks up to take a closer look.

00:03:26:23 18、 [The actress sees Meixiang in a side glance and begins talking to her.

Actress: Do I look good in this?

19、 [Meixiang gives her a shy smile and nods and wipes her sweat off.

00:03:30:09 20 [Actress gestures Meixiang to come closer.

Actress: (gestures to her) Come here! Try some on. Let this lady put some makeup on you.

[Kids push her forward mischievously and Meixiang fights back.
Kids run away.

00:03:47:14 21 [Meixiang is obviously reluctant to leave, so she strolls back to the actress.

Actress gives her a curious and thorough look.

Actress: What's your name?

22、 [Meixiang answers coyly.

Meixiang: Meixiang.

23、 [Actress and the dresser. Meixiang stands in the background.

Actress: Meixiang? What a nice name!

24、 [Actress notices the sweat on Meixiang's forehead.

Actress: Look how sweaty you are! Take this and get some ice-blocks.

[Actress gives Meixiang a five-yuan note.

25、 [Meixiang looks at the money and turns to the actress.

Meixiang: No. I can't take it.

26、 [Actress seems to see through her and speak instead,

Actress: Could you bring me one too so we can both have them?

27、 [Meixiang nods happily. She is more than ready to do something for the pretty

lady. She takes the money.

Meixiang: I'll be right back!

[Meixiang runs away quickly

IV. In the village. In lane I. Daytime.

00:04:07:00 28、 [In the long narrow lane, Meixiang runs up to the camera excitedly, money tightly clenched in hand.

29 [Meixiang runs close along the lane and is attracted by the performance.

She slows down

V. In the village. In front of the clinic. Daytime.

00:04:11:16 30 [In the open space in front of the clinic, a storyteller is using bamboo clappers.

It is so interesting that a big crowd has gathered. The cameraman and the record-

-ing technician are working to one side. It is the filming site of the “New Rural” public welfare advertisement.

31 [panoramic, villagers are watching the shooting.

00:04:14:06 32 [Meixiang squeezes into the crowd. (Meixiang squeezes through the crowd and watches with excitement.)

33 [The actor goes on with his performance.

34、 [Meixiang and kids listen with great interest.

35、 [Villagers and kids listen with great interest.

36、 [[husbands and wives show equal interest.

37 [The actor’s performance ends.

38、 [Meixiang and kids applaud warmly.

00:04:27:23 39、 [The crowd also claps and the storyteller bows to the crowd. The director is

explaining everyone’s assignment.

Voice over: This TV crew is here doing a welfare ad. They are still looking for a girl actress.

What? Me for the role? No! No! How dare I?

40 [a group of kids surrounding the site.

41 [Director says, pointing to the kids around. His eyes suddenly fall on Meixiang in the crowd. Director pulls Meixiang out of the crowd and talks to her very gently.

42 [All eyes are directed to Meixiang. Meixiang pulls back.

00:04:48:08 43 [Meixiang struggles to break away.

Voice over: If I take the role, the director will give me five yuan! This is not a small amount for me, but I just cannot brave myself.

44、 [A man cries. A guffaw from the crowd.
Villager: The girl's too shy to act!

45、 [In front of the clinic. Meixiang pushes through the crowd and runs away, quite discomposed. Director watches her back.

00:06:10:09 46、 [In the laughter, Meixiang runs close with clenched fist and looks back nervously.

She runs up to an arch and stops, gasping. She hides cautiously in the arch and looks back. She makes sure there is no one following her and runs away.

VI. On the stone bridge.

00:05:12:16 47、 [There is a tricycle with a chiller selling ice-blocks on the bridge. Meixiang

runs on to the bridge and stops in front of the chiller.
Meixiang: (panting) Granny, I want an ice-block!

48、 [The granny gives her a very amiable look and asks gently.
Granny: How many do you want?

49、 [Meixiang quickly takes out two fingers, but slowly takes back one.

Meixiang: Two!... (with a sweet smile) Only one!

[Meixiang suddenly finds her money gone. She nervously searches in her pockets.

Meixiang: Where's my money?

00:05:33:19 50、 [Meixiang looks around on the ground.

Voice over: Where is the money? Where are you?

[Meixiang looks at Granny and runs back after realising something.

VII. In the village. Lane II.

51、 [Meixiang searches the road for money. A tractor passes by. Meixiang moves aside

and runs away.

Voice over:Come out please!Where are you? Not here!.....

VIII. In front of the clinic.

52、 [In front of the clinic, the crowd is dismissed. An old man passes by with his

cows. Meixiang runs up and looks for the money on the ground. She finds nothing.

She runs away again after thinking.

Voice over:Where are you?

IX. Ancient lane beside Kwan-in Temple

53、 [Meixiang quickly walks close, head bent, searching for money. She runs to the

Kwan-in Temple as her last hope.

X. In front of the Kwan-in Temple

00:06:12:15 54、 [Meixiang runs close and slows down consciously. She casts a look in the direction

of the van. It is still there, but there is nobody nearby. She makes sure, braves

herself up and walks close.

think? Voice over: What if the lady knows about this? What would she

Gosh, she's not here! Come out please!

55、 [Meixiang looks around for the five-yuan note. Still, she sees nothing. She runs towards the van.

00:06:32:00 56、 [Meixiang stoops down and looks under the van. Nothing there. Just then, a pair of feet walks near.

Boy: (Voice over) Meixiang, what are you looking for?

57、 [In front of the van, a boy asks Meixiang with a very concerned look. He is having an ice-block. Meixiang stands up.

Meixiang: I'm looking for my money!

[Meixiang walks to the other side of the van. The boy follows her.

Meixiang: The TV lady's money.

[Meixiang suddenly notices the ice-block in the boy's hand and gives him a strange look.

Meixiang: Where did you get the ice-block?

Boy: You want some? Here, take a bite! (He hands over the ice-block.)

58、 [Meixiang does not respond to his invitation and focuses on her questioning.

Meixiang: Where did you get the money?

59、 [The boy holds the ice-block in his mouth.

Boy: My mother just sold the hen. You lost the TV lady's money?

00:06:58:00 60、 [On the opposite side of the Kwan-in Temple is an ancient opera stage and a parked

van. Meixiang stands still. The boy pushes her away and leaves.

Voice over: **What should I do then?**

XI. On the slope. Houses are built tightly clustering together.

XII. Old lane outside Meixiang's courtyard.

61、 [Meixiang walks close with a laden heart, stops, and looks back in the direction of

the shooting site. She walks quickly back home.

Voice over: ……**Hide myself? No, no! How can I do that?**

00:07:10:14 XII. In the courtyard.

62、 [Mother is pumping water from the well. Meixiang walks into the yard, head drooping.

Meixiang: (in a low voice) Mum!

63、 [Mother takes up the basin and asks Meixiang to do her homework.

Mother: Go do your homework!

64、 [Mother walks over with the basin. Meixiang watches her back with a heavy mind.

65、 [On the stone table lays the unfinished exercise book. Meixiang walks to the table,

sits down, lost in thought. The calls of the hens catch her attention. She looks

where the sound comes from

00:07:28:01 Voice over: **Sell the hen? …**

Music No.1 starts, full of tension

66 [A hen is picking on the ground.

67 [Meixiang tries to catch the hen.

68 [The hen dodges her in fear.

69 [Meixiang tries to catch the hen.

Music No.1 ends.

70、 [Meixiang does not give up. Mother calls out from inside the room.

Mother: Meixiang! Don't scare the hen! She hasn't laid her eggs yet!

[Meixiang stops.

00:07:44:15 71、 [Meixiang is thinking.

Voice over: What else can I do? What else can I do...

00:08:01:16 **XIII. The Coolness Pavilion.**

72、 [The open ground beside the Coolness Pavilion, the shooting site of “Gambling Destroys

a Family”. Actors and actresses are dressed like peasants. The director is blocking

them. Director is watching from the side. Villagers surround the site.

[The actor and the actress fight over the basket. The actress beats the actor with a

small broom.

Director: Good! Just like this! (To staff) Have you found a girl?

Cameraman: (voice over) Not yet!

[In the background, Meixiang timidly walks to the director and stands behind him. She

tugs at his sleeves. The director turns back. Meixiang looks at him and timidly utters the line the director told her.

[Director immediately understands why. He shows Meixiang an approving smile.

00:08:26:08 73、 [Actress surprised and taking Meixiang in her arms.

Voice over: Oops! The lady is also here! What if she asks me about... Anyway, I should first try to do well in the performance. Anyway, It’s the money I’m desperate for, not anything else!

74、 [In the crowd, words pass around on Meixiang’s action among her playmates.

75、 [A group of villagers looks at Meixiang

76 [Director explains her role to Meixiang.

77、 [The shooting site. The log keeper claps the board. The Director gives his order.

78、 [the actor and the actress fight over the basket and enter the camera range.

00:08:47:00 79、 [Meixiang is lost in thought.

Voice over: **How can it be true? It's just what I've gone through in my courtyard!**

80、 [the actress and the actor are still fighting. The actress beats the actor with the broom. The actor dodges.

81 [Watching this scene, Meixiang is obviously moved, but she just stands there, motionless

82、 [The actor cannot bear the beating any more and he cries out to Meixiang.

(the actor anxiously asks Meixiang to enter the scene)
Actor: Come on, Meixiang! What are you waiting for? She will beat me to death if you don't say it!

83、 [Kids laugh.

84、 [Villagers laugh.

85、 [The actress walks up to Meixiang and holds her in arms.

Actress: Meixiang, don't be nervous. Let's do it again, OK?

[Meixiang nods. The actress pats her on her shoulder. Director's voice over.

Director: Let's do it again! Ready? Action!

86、 [the actor and the actress fight over the basket and enter the camera range.

Actress: (vigilantly) What are you doing? What are you doing?

Actor: (falteringly) I... I am going to sell the eggs...

87、 [Meixiang's complicated expression.

Actress: (voice over) You've sold almost everything!

88、 [Actress and actor keep fighting.

Actress: These eggs are the only thing left for Meixiang's tuition!

You shameless

thief!

[the actress beats the actor.

89、 [Meixiang's tears well up. The same scene that happened in her courtyard goes through

her mind.

90 [Flash back: Mother beats father

00:09:23:00 91、 [Meixiang cannot hold herself any more and cries out in pain.

Meixiang: Dad, Mum, stop it! stop it!

92、 [the actor and the actress are stunned by Meixiang and look at her in surprise.

93、 [the crowd is silenced. All are stunned by Meixiang's performance.

94、 [Director stares at the picture on the monitor and waits.

Director: Good! Wonderful!

[Director applauds and everybody applauds.

95、 [kids applaud.

96、 [country women praise Meixiang: Welldone!meixiang!

97、 [the actress hugs Meixiang in excitement.

00:09:46:00 **XV. Old lane beside the Coolness Pavilion.**

98、 [the grey tiles on the roof. Camera moves down to the lane. Meixiang runs close

excited with the five-yuan note she earned clenched in her hand.

XVI. Winding lane in the village.

99、 [high angle shot: Meixiang's small and pink figure running over.

XVII. Old lane on a slope.

100、 [the sheep herd passes. Meixiang runs up the slope.

00:10:08:05 **XVIII. On the stone bridge.**

101、 [the ice-block tricycle. Meixiang runs close excitedly and stops in front of the

box. She speaks out loud, holding the money high.

Meixiang: Granny, I want an ice-block!

102 [Granny opens the chiller, takes out an ice-block and hands it over to Meixiang.

103、 [Meixiang happily takes the ice-block and change.

104、 [On the stone bridge. Meixiang runs away like the wind. The old granny is worried

at the sight and calls out.

00:10:17:04 **XXI. Winding lane in the village.**

105、 [high angle shot: Meixiang runs back along the original route, holding the

ice-block high.

00:10:17:14 **Voice over: I make it! I get the money!**

106、 [Meixiang runs all smiling, thinking of the soon-to-be-accomplished mission.

XXII. Old lane beside the Coolness Pavilion.

107、 [Meixiang runs through the lane very fast, ice-block in hand.

00:10:22:20 **XXIII. Coolness Pavilion**

108、 [Meixiang runs to the open ground happily but to her great surprise, there is no

one there.

00:10:27:00 **Voice over: Uh? Where are they?**

[Meixiang decides to find the actress where the van was originally parked. She turns around and runs away.

00:10:32:00 **XXIV. Old lane beside Kwan-in Temple.**

109、 [Meixiang runs close anxiously.

Music No.2 starts, quick tempo

00:10:34:16 **XXV. In front of Kwan-in Temple.**

110、 [Meixiang runs close. She is struck still. The ground is empty.

Music No.2 ends

111 [Meixiang looks very puzzled.

00:10:37:05 **Voice over: The van is not here! Has she left?**

[The van is gone. Meixiang looks around and runs away.

00:10:42:20 **XXVI. Road to the village.**

112、 [The van drives closer and passes by. Meixiang runs down from top of the slope

and stops.

113、 [The van drives farther away.

114、 [Meixiang draws back her eyes. She decides to take a shortcut. She turns and

runs away in another direction.

00:10:57:18 **XXVII. Country road outside the village.**

115、 [On the road, the van drives close.

116、 [Meixiang runs up the slope with effort, holding the ice-block in her hand.

117、 [The van drives over the camera very fast and drives away.

00:11:07:11 118、 [Meixiang runs after the van through the fields.

00:11:11:01 119、 [winding country road. The van drives on.

120、 [Meixiang runs down the slope.

121、 [the van drives from under the irrigation pipe and down the slope.

Meixiang runs

down a hillside and onto the road, ice-block in hand.

122、 [the wheels turn fast.

123、 [Meixiang's fast running feet.

00:11:32:19 124、 [On the road, the van drives and Meixiang runs after it.

125、 [Meixiang is almost exhausted, but she does not give up.

126、 [the van makes a turn and drives out of sight. Meixiang tries in vain and she

slows down.

127、 [Meixiang stops in great disappointment. She bends down, panting heavily.

Suddenly she hears a horn and looks up in surprise.

00:11:50:11 128、 [The van backs up.

129、 [Meixiang does not understand what is happening.

00:11:59:14 130、 [The van stops and the actress steps out of the door. She looks puzzled.

Music No.3 starts

131、 [Meixiang smiles. She holds up the ice-block to the actress, not noticing the ice-block has completely melted.

132、 [The actress realizes what's on and walks towards Meixiang with heart-felt warmth.

00:12:12:11 133、 [On the road, Meixiang draws up her last energy and runs to the actress.

Actress finally understands why and runs to Meixiang excitedly. They both hug.

00:12:38:22 [**Music No.3 ends**, black out, credits.

Cast

Meixiang Lian Zehui

Actress Guan Linna

Mother Gao Xiangrui

Father Zhang Huiting

Director Liu Wenhua

Story teller Zhou Wei

Actor Wang Jianhong

Granny Zhang Jingmei

Boy Jia Nan

Presenter Yu Peixia

Screenplay Chen Jiadou
Mu Zi

Director Wang Dafei

Cameraman Zhang Jing

Recordist Zhai Nan

Art designer lv jin ming

Technician Li Hui

Makeup Artist	Zhang Chi
Log keeper	Guan Yuanfang
Music Editor	Niu Guiji
Assistant Recorder	Zheng Zhong
Assistant Cameraman	Wang Xiao
Assistant Director	Zhang Xiaojian
Post-production	Wang Wei
	Wu Xiaona
English narrator	Gao ruohan
Assistant Producer	He Qing
Production Assistant	Tao Handong
Producer	Li Lei
Controller	Wang Ying

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00:13:00:00 [music and credits end.