

Chapter 9 - The Rage of a Common Person

The gate closed behind him. Li Qingshan looked around as if he had not noticed the tense atmosphere in the courtyard. Instead, he made his way over to caretaker Liu's table. It was located right before the hall, located under the largest elm tree in the centre of the courtyard. It was the main table, and everyone who sat at that table had status in the village.

To caretaker Liu's left and right were village head Li and the witch. They were the three people with the most authority in the village. There were also some elders of the village seated there too, with the only young people being village head Li's two sons, Li Hu and Li Bao. They were both broad-shouldered and stalwart. They glared at Li Qingshan.

Caretaker Liu's gaze shifted away slightly. After just a dozen or so days, Li Qingshan seemed to have become a different person. Caretaker Liu was unable to pinpoint exactly where Li Qingshan was different, but he was simply different from before. He just had an additional aura about him.

Village head Li remained dignified but his gaze was hostile, while the witch was filled with undisguised hatred.

Normal villagers would no longer be able to remain within the village if they had offended any single one of them, let alone all three at the same time. Their only choice would be to lower their heads and apologise. However, Li Qingshan would never lower his head.

There were many rules to a feast within the village, stressing everything from seating arrangement to sitting posture. Li Qingshan saw how the other tables were full and only this table had some room, so he sat there boldly. He said, "Why aren't you eating? Have you all been waiting for me?"

No one answered him. Li Hu and Li Bao squeezed over from the left and the right, each grabbing one of Li Qingshan's shoulders and pressing down on it.

Although Li Qingshan was young and had a tall stature just like the two of them, he was skinny, nowhere near as wide as the two of them. If it were in the past, just one of them could have easily dealt with him. Even now, Li Qingshan would only be able to handle one of them at a time, with two being potentially too difficult.

Li Qingshan frowned and grabbed their wrists. He tore them off his shoulders while using the Ox Demon Forges its Hide. Like a huge water buffalo stretching its muscles and bones, he moved left and right.

Li Hu and Li Bao only felt an intense pain from their wrists before they collided with Li Qingshan. They immediately lost their balance and fell off the bench.

The two of them were furious from the humiliation. They did not even care about the dust on them as they leaped to their feet.

Originally, caretaker Liu wanted to say some general pleasantries and probe Li Qingshan's thoughts. He wanted to see if Li Qingshan planned on submitting to them or not. He never expected Li Hu and Li Bao to be so rash. He could not afford to scold them either. He was just about to smash the cup in his hand and have the workers get him.

Clang! A knife had been stabbed into the table, and everyone's movements halted as well. Under the sunlight that filtered through the leaves, the blade of the knife flickered with a hazy light.

Li Hu and Li Bao immediately became afraid of approaching him. They were both sons of the village head, and they were pampered because of that. They could use their personal strength to harass the meek, but it was not worthwhile for them to risk their lives.

Li Qingshan gripped the knife with one hand as he rested a foot on the bench, leaning forward and looking at caretaker Liu as he chuckled. "Caretaker Liu, that's not how you receive a guest. Even if there are any grievances of life and death that must be settled, it's not like it can't be settled after being fed. Don't waste this table full of food." When he reached there, he actually stopped feeling nervous.

Before caretaker Liu could respond, the workers at the tables in the surroundings all agreed with him. To them, eating was obviously the most important matter! If they began fighting, who knows how many dishes and bottles of alcohol would go to waste. They did not believe the stingy caretaker Liu would prepare another table of food and wine for them.

"Yeah, yeah. Caretaker Liu, we haven't even eaten breakfast yet! We've been utterly starving since a long time ago. Where would we get the energy to fight?"

"I didn't even get to eat last night. If I don't eat some now, I won't be able to last any longer." As a worker added as he gulped forcefully.

The tense atmosphere immediately became rather strange. Even Li Qingshan had no idea how to react. He started to wonder why he had been afraid of these people.

Caretaker Liu became bright red. He had set up this feast for two reasons. First, to stun Li Qingshan, and secondly, to give some benefits to the workers just in case they would not exert themselves.

He was determined to replicate what the stories had detailed, planting five hundred armed men and signalling them to take down Li Qingshan at the smash of a cup. However, he forgot that the people at his command were not disposable guards or soldiers, but farmers down to the very core.

Li Qingshan looked at caretaker Liu with a happy smile. "What a coincidence! I happened to have not eaten anything last night either, so I'll just be candid now." He grabbed a roast chicken and began eating.

Ever since he began practising the Ox Demon's Fist of Great Strength, his appetite had become astonishing. He only used around a dozen or so days to finish off a water deer that weighed over fifty kilograms. The black ox had not even managed to catch something new in time.

The roast chicken disappeared into his mouth in the blink of an eye. With him at the lead, the workers could not care anymore. They all lifted their chopsticks and buried their faces in the food. For a moment, the only sound left in the courtyard was the sound of eating.

Village head Li was both furious and afraid. He trembled all over as he shot a glance at caretaker Liu. Aren't you supposed to be very clever? Hurry up and come up with something.

Was there anything that caretaker Liu could come up with? He only shot a glance back. If I get the workers to act right now, they would hate to put down what is in their mouths right now. If Li Qingshan

charged over and attacks me first with his knife, what am I supposed to do? Your sons look pretty tough most of the time, so why'd they become so soft now?

On that table, they only had caretaker Liu and a group of old people, so they could probably all be knocked over by a single kick from Li Qingshan. They felt like they had suddenly become stranded on a lone island, forced to face this vicious person alone. They were all trembling in fear.

With the rage of a common person, blood splashes five steps away¹.

Li Qingshan behaved like there was no one around him. He enjoyed the jug of alcohol all by himself. The village alcohol was weak in the first place, so there was basically no taste to it. As a result, he called out, "Bring me a big bowl!"

However, no one answered him. Li Qingshan produced a displeased 'hmm?' and caretaker Liu quickly ordered someone to bring a big bowl. Li Qingshan filled it up and downed the whole thing in one stroke, "Satisfying!"

When the workers saw how he drank so brazenly, they admired his courage, so there were actually quite a few cheers for him.

Li Qingshan had eaten quite a lot of oily and greasy food in the past few days, so now that he downed this scorching booze, he felt extremely satisfied. He did not stop, drinking three bowls in succession.

When the third bowl of alcohol flowed down his throat, the courtyard had already been filled by loud cheers, causing quite the ruckus. It was as if caretaker Liu was not the one who had invited them, and they had instead come to cheer Li Qingshan on.

Li Qingshan let out a drunken burp and clasped his hands at everyone. "Everyone has eaten and drunk well, so don't forget about caretaker Liu's kindness. Any grievances can be settled after eating. Even if you end up on the path to the netherworld, you can't be a starving ghost."

Afterwards, his gaze turned into a glare, and he looked at the people on the main table. "Why aren't you eating?" With the rush of drunkenness, his killing intent was roused as well. If people kept looking to make things difficult for him, he would no longer have any peace in the Crouching Ox village. He might even fall for a plot concocted by them sometime. As a result, he might as well kill a few of them now, seize some of their belongings, and travel far away. There was probably no one in the village who would be bold enough to stop him.

Originally, Li Qingshan was only risking his own life to come to this banquet. There was even some bravado to this, yet he ended up calling caretaker Liu's bluff and bravado. He had temporarily reversed the situation in his favour, altering his intentions drastically in the process. He could not help but think of what uncle Lei Feng had said, "Difficulties are like a spring. They are strong when you are weak." He also thought of what the founding ancestor Mao had said, "Imperialism is all but a paper tiger." Yep, landowners were all but a paper tiger.

While caretaker Liu was rather bad at scheming, he was good at reading people. As soon as he saw Li Qingshan's expression, he knew that the young man was ready to kill. He could no longer maintain his act of shrewdness and sweat began to cover his forehead.

A few of the village elders were utterly terrified. They did not want to be glutted ghosts either! They explained to Li Qingshan in a hurry that regarding the family separation, all they did was show up as a formality. They had no idea about the inside story. Some of them stood up trembling, wanting to bid farewell and leave.

Li Qingshan shouted out coldly, "Stop, all of you! You have all witnessed what happened a few days before, so don't leave in such a hurry. If you've eaten enough, you better stay here and serve as a witness. If you insist on leaving, that means you have something to hide, so you better not blame a certain person for showing no mercy."

1. It means that when an ordinary person loses their temper, they will fight or kill regardless of the consequences. The part to stress here is regardless of the consequences, which means that while a horrible judgement would await this ordinary person, those who provoke him will probably be killed anyway.