

Super Soldier in the City

Chapter 16 - 16 Cipher

After midnight, it would be a new week. Tomorrow, Li Yifei wanted to see if he could reach the popularity charts, and the criteria for that included everyone's favorites, clicks, votes, and tips. He had been writing for over seven years and never actively asked for tips before, as they were given by readers at their discretion. He felt embarrassed to ask, but this time, he had to be a bit thick-skinned since tips also counted towards popularity. So, he nervously said, "After midnight, give me some tips."

If he made it to the popularity charts, he promised at least four updates a day, and if his rank improved, then five updates, valid every week!

Seeing Xu Zhenguo smiling brightly, it was clear that he and his wife had planned their earlier argument; one played the role of the bad guy, and the other the good guy.

Xu Shanshan had seen through this a long time ago, and now she giggled, while Xu Yingying felt a bit helpless. She also knew her parents' tactics, but if she didn't agree, this topic would drag on endlessly. So, she decided to agree first. After the New Year, she could say that she broke up with Li Yifei, and since there wouldn't be a fiancé, she would be able to muddle through another year.

During the New Year, everyone gathered together and needed some fun. Xu Shanshan proposed playing Mahjong, as it was the best opportunity for the youngest sister in the family to win money from everyone.

Around the Mahjong table sat Xu Zhenguo, his wife, Xu Shanshan, and Li Yifei, while Xu Yingying didn't play. Every year, she would grit her teeth and play a bit, but this year, with Li Yifei around, she felt completely free. After watching a few rounds, she went to another room to open her laptop and do some work; she was truly a workaholic, already thinking about plans for the coming year.

Everyone was having such a good time that nobody bothered Xu Yingying.

After playing a few rounds, Li Yifei suddenly felt a sharp pain in his thigh. He turned to look at Xu Shanshan, who was sitting next to him, and saw her winking at him.

Before Li Yifei could figure out what was going on, he felt warmth on his thigh. It turned out Xu Shanshan's left hand was on his leg.

This startled Li Yifei. What was the sister-in-law thinking, secretly touching his leg like that? It was too risqué, and not to mention, he was only her fake brother-in-law. Even a real brother-in-law wouldn't be able to resist such a temptation.

But things got even more intense when Xu Shanshan's fingers began to draw circles on his thigh, making the temptation even stronger.

If it were just the two of them, that would be one thing, but they were in front of Xu Shanshan's parents. It seemed she was being a bit too bold.

"Six Bamboo!" Xu Shanshan shouted loudly as she played a tile with her right hand, while her fingers pinched Li Yifei's thigh again.

"Why so loud? Do you have a good hand?" Xu Shanshan's mother mockingly scolded her daughter.

"Ha ha, no big hand, but you have to play with style to get good tiles." Then she started drawing circles on Li Yifei's leg again.

Li Yifei finally understood Xu Shanshan's intention; she wanted to cheat by signaling him to play certain tiles, not seducing him. This left Li Yifei feeling both amused and helpless, but he couldn't deny her request. Feeling her signal for Two Characters, he threw it out.

"Steal!" Xu Shanshan shouted immediately, and under the table, her hand patted Li Yifei's leg twice in appreciation.

With Li Yifei's cooperation, it was impossible for Xu Shanshan not to win. She scored several big wins in a row, raking in over a thousand yuan.

However, for Li Yifei, having a beautiful woman's hand on his thigh, drawing circles now and then, how could a normal, physically robust man endure it?

"Hey, Little Li, how come whenever Shanshan needs a tile, you happen to play it?" Xu Zhenguo asked suspiciously as he shuffled the tiles.

"Right, whatever Shanshan needs, Yifei just plays it. You must be cheating." Xu Shanshan's mother suddenly caught on.

"No way, I just met my brother-in-law this morning. How could I scheme with him? Don't blame your loss on not accepting it." Xu Shanshan, of course, would never admit it no matter what.

"That won't do, we need to change places. There's definitely something going on between you two."

"Fine, let's switch. I'll still win." Xu Shanshan had no choice but to stand up since her parents were already suspicious. If they didn't switch, it would indeed be exposed.

Once seated again, Xu Shanshan's mother teased, "Yifei, don't mind this child, nothing excites her like bullying someone she can. Now you don't have to be embarrassed."

Li Yifei chuckled and said, "Shanshan didn't bully me."

"Alright, play again. Shanshan, now you don't have your brother-in-law helping you. Let's see how you win."

"Humph, I'll still win." Xu Shanshan wasn't fazed when caught; she showed no embarrassment or nervousness while cheeky with her parents.

After a few rounds, Xu Shanshan couldn't win anymore without Li Yifei's help. Angered, she pouted her lips, feeling dissatisfied and unwilling.

Li Yifei found it quite amusing; Xu Shanshan sometimes had a bit of a childish temperament, unlike her more mature sister.

Regardless of winning or losing, Li Yifei never had such a homely feeling before. He felt very grateful to Xu Yingying for hiring him to pretend to be her boyfriend. It ensured he wouldn't spend the New Year alone and bored.

While they were engrossed in their game, someone stepped on Li Yifei's foot, but he didn't mind at first, thinking his legs were stretched too long. He quickly drew them back.

But then he saw Xu Shanshan across the table winking at him again, and he realized that the footstep was intentional. This girl, unable to use her hands, now resorted to tricks with her feet.

This reminded Li Yifei of the wonderful feeling when he held Xu Shanshan's little foot in the mall, so he couldn't help but stretch his foot forward.

Almost immediately, Xu Shanshan's foot was on his. He could even feel she wasn't wearing socks, her soft sole pressing down on his foot with a bit of

warmth, and it was more stimulating. He wondered when Xu Shanshan had taken off her socks.

"No more tricks, now," Xu Zhenguo reminded warmly when he noticed Xu Shanshan behaving restlessly.

Xu Shanshan snorted, straightened up, and said, "What tricks can I play? My brother-in-law and I are sitting face to face."

"Then why are you fidgeting?"

"My back itches, so I'm just scratching it."

"You child, you're so old and still not behaving properly."

"But we're at home, right? Should we still stick to formalities at home?"

Li Yifei, observing Xu Shanshan's posture, deduced that if he didn't stretch his leg forward, Xu Shanshan wouldn't be able to reach his foot by sitting upright. Since the sister-in-law had made her request, he couldn't refuse her, could he? Hence, he stretched his leg a bit forward.

Xu Yingying's foot landed atop Li Yifei's right away. She didn't show much expression, but she was evidently quite satisfied with Li Yifei's cooperation.

The Mahjong table was a regular square table with a cloth underneath the tiles. The cloth was long enough to drape over the laps, so even if the two of them had some leg movements, as long as they weren't too big, the people beside them wouldn't see.

Most importantly, Xu Shanshan's parents couldn't have imagined that the brother-in-law and sister-in-law were actually using their feet to communicate under the table.

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Chapter 17 - 17 I Will Expose It

Chapter Seventeen: I Will Expose You

But, after all, with a patron around and Xu Shanshan's luck seemingly improving, she indeed started winning more often.

The Xu Zhenguo Couple didn't notice anything amiss with Xu Shanshan this time, even if the tiles Li Yifei played allowed Xu Shanshan to make a move, it seemed normal.

After playing for more than three hours, Xu Shanshan had won over two thousand yuan, looking incredibly pleased with herself. Unfortunately, more than half of the winnings were from Li Yifei, who kept feeding her tiles. His own game was a mess, having won not even three rounds. No wonder he lost.

Li Yifei himself didn't have much money; if Xu Yingying hadn't given him three thousand yuan in advance, he would've been broke by now. Having lost over a thousand and after buying Xu Shanshan a set of clothes, he didn't have much left.

"We'll play again tonight; I need to go chop the filling now," said Xu Shanshan's mother as she got up from the table. It was a custom to eat dumplings on New Year's Eve, and she disliked buying ready-made frozen dumplings, so everything had to be prepared from scratch.

At that moment, Xu Shanshan, quite satisfied, stuffed the money into her pocket and happily ran off.

Li Yifei's foot was finally free. During this time, his foot had really taken advantage of her, and now it was time to relax.

He went into Xu Yingying's bedroom, closed the door behind him, and Xu Yingying removed her laptop from her laps, asking, "Lost quite a bit, huh?"

"Yes, I'm not good at this."

"Here." Xu Yingying took out a stack of cash from under her pillow and handed it to Li Yifei.

"What's this for?" Li Yifei asked, puzzled, looking at Xu Yingying.

"All the money lost is on me. You play with mom and dad to make them happy," Xu Yingying said with a light smile. She didn't like playing mahjong, but she wanted to please her parents. Now that Li Yifei was keeping her parents company, she was quite content.

"Then, I won't be polite about it; otherwise, if we play again later, I won't have the money to lose."

"Hmm, you've done well," Xu Yingying praised him again.

"Brother-in-law, brother-in-law," Xu Shanshan's voice came calling.

"Quick, put the money away," Xu Yingying urged Li Yifei in a hurry.

Li Yifei swiftly put away the money, just as Xu Shanshan burst into the room. Seeing one of them sitting on the bed and the other standing, she laughed, "Didn't interrupt anything good, did I?"

"What good thing? What do you want?"

"Brother-in-law, come help me with something," Xu Shanshan said, blinking her eyes.

"Sure!" Li Yifei agreed cheerfully and followed Xu Shanshan to her room.

With a flick of her wrist, Xu Shanshan closed the door and locked it. Then she gave Li Yifei a thumbs-up. "Brother-in-law, you're so cool."

Having played a whole game with Xu Shanshan, Li Yifei was quite casual with her and laughed, "You're telling me? My foot is almost bruised from your stepping."

"Hehe, come on, let's split the loot," Xu Shanshan hopped onto her bed, crossed her legs, and took out all the money.

Xu Shanshan's room was filled with little trinkets on the headboard and windows—unlike Xu Yingying's simpler room. With a sizable stuffed toy on the bed, she seemed to have retained some childlike traits, a significant difference from her sister, though they were close in age.

Casually sitting on the edge of the bed, Li Yifei said with a grin, "No need."

"What do you mean 'no need'? You don't have money, and besides, you were deliberately letting me win. You could hardly make a winning hand yourself, of course, we'll split the loot. Oh right, you just came from my sister's room—did she reimburse you?"

"You really guessed it," Li Yifei smiled.

"Hehe, then I won't share with you, consider it my win over my sister," Xu Shanshan said, unapologetically pocketing the money again.

Xu Shanshan looked at Li Yifei with surprise and then smirked, "Tell me, brother-in-law, are you really my sister's boyfriend?"

Li Yifei asked with a smile, "Do you think I'm an imposter?"

"Yes, you are an imposter," Xu Shanshan replied confidently.

"Why?" Li Yifei sat down.

"Do I even need to say why? My sister, so proud, how could she find a boyfriend so easily? And with her character, if she did find a boyfriend, he would have to be better than her. I don't believe your kind of story. A security guard with her, intersecting paths, I don't buy it for a second."

"Love is often blind."

"Pfft, I believe love is blind, but it takes two people genuinely in love for one to sense the endearment. Look at you two together. Apart from putting on an act, there's not a trace of affection in my sister's eyes when she looks at you. When you look at her, there's no sense of tenderness either. So, you're definitely posing."

"Then do you think, with your sister's personality, she would let an impostor like me sleep in the same room as her?"

"This..." Xu Shanshan immediately stumbled over her words.

"Hehe, you're half right. Although my relationship with your sister hasn't reached the point of a death-do-us-part kind of love, we really are together and both of us are trying

hard to adapt to each other. Give us some time, and you should see all the things you're looking to find," Li Yifei said.

"Really?" Disbelief was evident in Xu Shanshan's eyes.

"You can see for yourself," Li Yifei said, a proud smile on his face before leaving Xu Shanshan's room.

Xu Shanshan waved her fist, self-assuredly saying, "Hmph, I will definitely expose you both. Big sis, you think you can fool me? No chance."

Chapter 18 - 18: Showing Off Skills

After leaving Xu Shanshan's room, Li Yifei went straight to the kitchen, rolled up his sleeves, and said, "Auntie, let me do the chopping."

Xu Yingying's mother immediately responded with a smile, "No need, no need. You go play."

"I've just played for half the day. I'm all stiff from sitting; it's a good time to move about." Li Yifei took the kitchen knife without further ado, his wrist flicked, and he began to chop the filling.

At this moment, Xu Yingying's mother watched Li Yifei with even greater fondness. In the eyes of the older generation, having money and ability was certainly important, but Xu Yingying was now the head of a company. Having a daughter who could earn money was enough. A man like Li Yifei, who could cook so well and take care of the home, was what they valued even more.

"Auntie, you should take a rest. You've also worked hard all year, and you deserve a break. Tonight, leave everything to me." Li Yifei went on as Xu Yingying's mother still stood behind him, turning around with a radiant smile.

"Alright, for so many years, it's always been me bustling about, while the three of them lazed around. Today, it's my turn to relax."

"From now on, Auntie, you can relax every New Year when I'm here."

"Good child, Yingying really has a sharp eye in finding you."

Xu Yingying's mother returned to the living room and said to her husband, who was pruning the family's bonsai, "Old man, I'm growing fonder and fonder of Little Li. Our Yingying's life will be blessed with him by her side."

Xu Zhenguo chuckled and said, "Yes, even you, the old mother-in-law, have been liberated. How can it not be good?"

"Eh, Mom, weren't you chopping the filling?" asked Xu Shanshan as she ran out and saw her mother sitting on the sofa, cracking melon seeds and watching TV, and immediately called out in surprise.

"Your brother-in-law snatched the job from me, so I just retired."

Xu Shanshan immediately exclaimed dramatically, "Wow, you're treating my brother-in-law like a laborer?"

Xu Shanshan's mother glared at her and said, "What nonsense are you talking about, child?"

Xu Shanshan stuck out her tongue, then giggled and ran to the kitchen, where she stopped at the doorway. Her eyes widened as she watched Li Yifei now holding a kitchen knife in each hand, the knives moving swiftly up and down, making rapid noises. All the while, he continuously flipped the filling without slowing down or making a single sound of contact between the knives.

After watching for a good half a minute, Xu Shanshan stuttered, "Brother-in-law... are you performing some kind of juggling act here?"

Li Yifei didn't stop his hands and looked toward Xu Shanshan with a smile, "What kind of juggling?"

"This... it's just too fast, isn't it?" Xu Shanshan pointed at Li Yifei.

Li Yifei's knives danced in his hands, scooping up the already chopped filling into a bowl nearby, leaving not a single trace of minced meat on the cutting board.

Xu Shanshan rushed over to hug Li Yifei's arm, exclaiming excitedly, "Wow, brother-in-law, are you chopping filling or performing? This is the first time I've seen someone turn such a tedious task into something so pleasing. Brother-in-law, you're really cool."

Li Yifei slapped his two knives down on the cutting board and laughed heartily, saying, "This is the first time I've been called handsome for chopping filling."

"It's really handsome, this is practically an art; those commoners definitely can't see it, only I can appreciate it."

Li Yifei couldn't help but smile and said, "Are you praising me, or are you praising yourself?"

"Both, both, we're kindred spirits, giggle." Xu Shanshan laughed cheerily.

With the beautiful Xu Shanshan watching by his side, Li Yifei felt an urge to show off. He made the cleaver dance even more impressively, causing Xu Shanshan to scream and shout in amazement.

"What are you yelling for?" Xu Yingying came out from the bedroom at this moment, frowning as she entered the kitchen. But as soon as she saw Li Yifei's dancing cleaver, she was startled and quickly pulled Xu Shanshan away, scolding Li Yifei, "What are you doing, chopping filling or performing tricks? What if you accidentally hurt someone?"

The same phrase "performing tricks", but coming from the mouths of sisters Xu Yingying and Xu Shanshan, had completely different meanings. Xu Shanshan's words were filled with admiration and praise, whereas Xu Yingying's were critical.

Xu Shanshan, very dissatisfied with her sister pulling her away, leaned forward and said, "Stop causing a fuss here; you're disturbing my view of brother-in-law chopping the filling."

Xu Yingying immediately put on her older sister's air, glared, and said, "What's there to watch about chopping filling? You've grown so big and I've never seen you in the kitchen, so what are you mixing in here for now?"

By this time, Li Yifei had finished chopping the filling and had also put it into the filling bowl. He said, "Alright, it's done. Shanshan, you and your sister should go out, or else your sister might take it out on me later."

Xu Shanshan, still not having had her fill of watching, immediately directed her dissatisfaction at her sister, pouting and saying, "Brother-in-law, I really don't understand how you can tolerate my sister, she's such a killjoy."

Xu Yingying immediately got annoyed and snapped, "What did you say?"

Xu Shanshan unyieldingly responded, "I said you're a killjoy. Something that's clearly fun, in your eyes, becomes dangerous. Being with you is just boring, utterly boring!"

Seeing the sisters about to quarrel again, Li Yifei hastily tried to smooth things over and pulled Xu Yingying, saying, "Yingying, don't be angry, I shouldn't have shown off. If anyone's to blame, it's me, not Shanshan."

Xu Shanshan immediately pouted, saying, "See that? That's how magnanimous my brother-in-law is."

Xu Yingying then remembered Li Yifei's identity and her expression softened, but she still glared at her sister and said, "He can be thoughtless, and you join in the chaos. What if you get hurt by mistake? I'm doing this for your own good."

Xu Shanshan was ungrateful, snorted, and said, "Spare me your 'for your own good' routine. You always like to impose your will on me, why? I am me, you are you; what you like doesn't mean I like it, and what you don't like doesn't mean I don't."

"You..." Xu Yingying's chest heaved, clearly quite angry.

"It's the New Year, let's all speak nicely. You're the older sister, give in to your younger sister a bit." Li Yifei pulled Xu Yingying again.

Xu Yingying huffed and turned to walk out. Xu Shanshan stuck her tongue out at Xu Yingying's back, then turned to Li Yifei with a mischievous smile and asked, "Brother-in-law, aren't you going to continue?"

Li Yifei shrugged his shoulders and said, "The filling is all chopped up; now we just have to wait for the dumplings to be wrapped."

Xu Shanshan pouted unhappily and said, "It's all my sister's fault, she ruined my fun."

Chapter 19: Chapter 19 Fireworks Scare

Xu Shanshan and Xu Yingying's bickering was already a common occurrence. As soon as they were apart, everything became fine. After they finished making dumplings, the five of them sat around to watch the Spring Festival Gala.

Li Yifei hadn't watched the Spring Festival Gala in years. The programs fascinated him, and together with everyone chatting while eating and drinking, the homely atmosphere completely enchanted him.

Over the years, he had been on mission after mission. During his downtime, he trained hard to improve his abilities, to avoid losing his life during a mission. So to speak, not just the Spring Festival Gala but watching TV was quite a luxury for him.

Compared to those times, his life now was relaxed and pleasant. Although this girlfriend was fake, and the sister-in-law was fake, they were both beauties. Being with them, chatting and watching TV, in itself was a blissful thing.

Time flew by fast, and in the blink of an eye, it was past ten o'clock. During this time, Li Yifei had also made dumplings with Xu Yingying's parents, while this pair of twin sisters hadn't lent a hand at all.

Outside, the sound of firecrackers began to crackle and was getting more intense. The TV inside was loud, yet it was not very clear. Xu Yingying frowned, while Xu Shanshan ran to the window, watching outside and excitedly cheering.

Although these two sisters were twins, their personalities were quite different. If not for their appearance, people would definitely think Xu Yingying was older than Xu

Shanshan by several years, as Xu Yingying exhibited a maturity not typical for her age, while Xu Shanshan displayed more innocence.

"Brother-in-law, let's go downstairs to set off fireworks," Xu Shanshan shouted directly at Li Yifei without calling anyone else.

Li Yifei readily agreed. He and Xu Shanshan changed clothes and went to the door together.

"Be careful and stay safe," Xu Yingying, who had also come to the door, advised them uneasily.

Xu Shanshan nonchalantly said, "No one used to accompany me. Now that brother-in-law is here, what are you worried about?"

"I'm worried about him, who is as crazy as you," Xu Yingying said, as Xu Shanshan tugged Li Yifei and ran out of the house. This left Xu Yingying helplessly shaking her head. Bringing Li Yifei, this fake boyfriend home, seemed like she got Xu Shanshan a playmate instead. She barely spent time with Li Yifei. Nonetheless, her sister spent more time with Li Yifei.

The two of them took the elevator straight to the underground parking lot, grabbed fireworks from the car, then headed to the community courtyard. The property's management was quite good with strict oversight, so random fireworks were not allowed. Only in the small central square were they permitted.

Li Yifei carried two large boxes of fireworks while Xu Shanshan held other smaller items, excitedly heading to the small square. A sizable crowd had gathered around, and men in the center were setting off fireworks and firecrackers, while children around played with little sparklers and such, creating a festive atmosphere.

Xu Shanshan wasn't in a hurry to light the big fireworks. She asked Li Yifei to set them aside, then started lighting the smaller items, gleefully laughing. She was a carefree girl with a smile brighter than the fireworks.

Being with Xu Shanshan, Li Yifei completely relaxed. He even felt as if he had returned to those carefree days years ago, childishly competing with Xu Shanshan to set off small sparklers.

The fireworks in the square were set off in batches, and soon it was Li Yifei and their turn. They placed the big fireworks in the square's center, lit them, and ran away quickly with Xu Shanshan, heads up watching the colorful fireworks bloom in the sky.

A dark shadow plummeted from the sky at high speed, trailing a faint glow. Everyone in the square only focused on the fireworks bursting above, oblivious to the shadow descending from the sky.

The shadow was heading directly for Li Yifei and Xu Shanshan. Nobody else saw it, but Li Yifei noticed immediately. Moreover, he recognized it as a firework shell that hadn't exploded in the sky, now falling. From the sparks still sputtering, it seemed likely to explode any moment.

"Move!" Li Yifei yelled, but the people around were oblivious to the impending danger from above, unable to react in time.

Li Yifei panicked. A firework shell exploding in the air looked beautiful, but its explosive power was considerable. If it exploded near people, it could even threaten lives.

Without any hesitation, he forcefully pushed a few people aside, then leapt and tackled Xu Shanshan to the ground.

For others, he could only do what little he could. But for Xu Shanshan, he had to absolutely ensure her safety. This was a judgment a special forces soldier must make first.

"Hey, why did you push me?"

"What's wrong with you!"

"Wow!"

Those pushed aside by Li Yifei complained and a child cried from falling, but those sounds were overwhelmed by an ear-splitting explosion. The firework shell had exploded on the ground. Luckily, the people there had been pushed away by Li Yifei.

Xu Shanshan, initially shocked by being tackled by Li Yifei, didn't know what he was doing. Though she could at least tell Li Yifei wasn't taking advantage of her here.

Hearing the explosion nearly deafened her ears, yet she quickly understood Li Yifei had protected her.

After the explosion, everyone hurried over in a panic. No one was hurt, just a little dazed. This left everyone feeling very fortunate. However, those who were pushed down by Li Yifei realized they had been saved. Nonetheless, they couldn't find Li Yifei.

Li Yifei had already pulled Xu Shanshan back into the building. Although they didn't take the elevator, they stood in the hallway on the first floor. Xu Shanshan looked at Li Yifei with gratitude, "Brother-in-law, thank you for saving me earlier."

Li Yifei grinned, "No need to thank me. We're family."

Xu Shanshan beamed, "Yeah, no need to be polite. But, brother-in-law, you were amazing. If it weren't for you, I'd really be out of luck today, maybe even lose my life."

Plus, those people around, you saved them too. Why did you rush to take me away? You saved them! Shouldn't you let them thank you?"

"Thanks and more thanks, such a hassle. By the way, let's not mention what happened downstairs when we go back, otherwise they'll worry, and your sister will definitely scold us."

Xu Shanshan nodded eagerly, "Exactly, she'd definitely say, 'I told you setting off fireworks is dangerous; now see what happened.'" Xu Shanshan mimicked Xu Yingying's manner of speaking. Since their voices were similar, her imitation was spot-on.

Li Yifei laughed, "For sure."

"I don't want her to say that. But... you saved people so heroically; shouldn't you let sis know? She'd be nicer to you then, right?" Xu Shanshan squinted at Li Yifei but laughed before he answered, "But you're not real, so you don't care what she thinks, right?"

Li Yifei chuckled, "Actually, what's most important between two people is the feeling, not heroic deeds. Those can distract from truly seeing someone. Being with your sister, I don't want those things to affect us."

"Really?" Xu Shanshan's eyes were full of disbelief. She leaned closer, "Brother-in-law, I feel like you're someone with a story, and it's fascinating. You just don't want my sister affected by it, right?"

Li Yifei was a bit taken aback. Xu Shanshan indeed had keen observation. She inferred so much from his few words. No wonder she noticed he and Xu Yingying weren't typical. Making this sister-in-law believe was indeed a challenging task.

Chapter 20: Chapter 20 Discovered

Though I didn't make the list, I'm still posting the fourth update—after all, so many readers have supported me, it's worth adding another Chapter tomorrow!

"Brother-in-law, can you tell me some of your old stories?" Xu Shanshan clutched at Li Yifei's sleeve, gently shaking it twice, her face full of anticipation.

Li Yifei flashed a toothy smile and said, "You're wishing for too much there, I'm just an ordinary guy, and I don't seem to have any memories that are worth remembering."

Xu Shanshan stared into Li Yifei's eyes, shook her head firmly, and said, "I don't believe that."

Li Yifei shrugged his shoulders and replied, "You don't believe me, there's nothing I can do about it, but when I have time, I'll tell you about my past, and you can see if there is anything you'd like to hear. Just don't be too disappointed then."

"I won't be disappointed, definitely not!" Xu Shanshan called out joyfully.

Li Yifei said with a smile, "But shouldn't we be going upstairs now? Uncle and Aunt are waiting for us to go up and eat dumplings."

Although Xu Shanshan was somewhat reluctant, today clearly wasn't the right time for stories, so she went upstairs with Li Yifei.

Eating dumplings and gnawing on pork knuckles, Xu Shanshan's parents were very traditional, and every New Year's Eve they would have such a meal.

Looking at the steaming hot dumplings and the well-sauced pork knuckles, Li Yifei's memories suddenly traveled back to seven years ago—it was a New Year's Eve dinner just like this one, his parents gave him the biggest pork knuckle and watched him with smiling faces as he devoured it.

His leg got kicked, and he heard Xu Yingying say discontentedly, "What are you thinking about? Mom is talking to you, and you're not saying a word."

Li Yifei quickly apologized to Xu Yingying's mother, "Auntie, I'm so sorry, I was just thinking about some things from the past, and before I knew it, it's been quite a few years since I've had a New Year's Eve dinner like this."

Xu Yingying's mother immediately said, "Don't think about the past anymore, forget any unhappy thoughts. Today is New Year's, so just think about happy things. From now on, come to our house for New Year's every year."

Li Yifei nodded, nodding vigorously, and then he picked up a big pork knuckle and bit a large chunk off of it, which caused Xu Yingying to frown—she felt Li Yifei really wasn't paying enough attention to his image.

However, Xu Yingying's parents squinted their eyes at this time, looking extremely happy. The more Li Yifei was like this, the more real he felt to them; they actually didn't like those boys who were always so reserved in front of them.

With the midnight chimes, Xu Shanshan sprang up and said, "Dad, happy New Year, Mom, happy New Year, Sister, happy New Year, Brother-in-law, happy New Year." The girl rattled off her greetings like popping beans, bowing to each of the four in turn.

The Xu Zhenguo Couple immediately each took out a red envelope and handed them to Xu Shanshan, and Xu Yingying also gave Xu Shanshan a red envelope, giving her

sister a look and said, "It's only at this time of the year that you really think of me as your sister."

Xu Shanshan giggled and said, "Not really, when you give me benefits, I always think of you as my sister." Then she reached out her hand towards Li Yifei.

Xu Yingying had already prepared Li Yifei's red envelope in advance, and at this point, Li Yifei handed over the red envelope to Xu Shanshan.

Xu Shanshan happily pocketed the red envelope and ran into the room to count her money.

Xu Yingying and Li Yifei also stood up at this point, respectfully wishing the Xu Zhenguo Couple a Happy New Year. Xu Yingying's greetings were considerably formal, while Li Yifei had no psychological barriers. Putting aside everything else, just being able to spend such a peaceful New Year here, Li Yifei felt he truly owed the Xu Zhenguo Couple a proper New Year's greeting.

"Yifei, this is for you," the Xu Zhenguo Couple said as they each handed Li Yifei a red envelope.

"Thank you, Uncle, thank you, Auntie," Li Yifei replied cheerfully, taking the envelopes. He felt a warm glow inside him. It wasn't about the size of the red envelopes, but the atmosphere they came with. Especially for someone like Li Yifei, who had lost both parents, receiving these red envelopes was a significant comfort.

After finishing the New Year's greetings, Xu Yingying called Li Yifei back to the bedroom and threw him a pair of socks and a new shirt, saying, "Get changed."

"Change clothes even if we're going to sleep?" Li Yifei was a bit confused.

Xu Yingying said, "This is called 'stepping on the tiny men'. Put on the new shirt too, then go out and walk around. It symbolizes a fresh start for the New Year. Go out and let my parents have a look. It's a tradition in our family."

Li Yifei immediately cheerfully changed into the socks but hesitated when he looked at the shirt. He whispered, "Should I change into it now?"

Xu Yingying gave Li Yifei a sharp glare and said, "Turn around to change, and don't look back."

Li Yifei chuckled and replied, "I might not be able to restrain myself, then."

"You dare?" A fierce gleam flashed in Xu Yingying's eyes, and the authority of a CEO burst forth.

Li Yifei gave a sheepish smile and said, "I wouldn't dare, after all, you're the boss." He then turned around and began to undress.

Xu Yingying hadn't expected Li Yifei to undress so readily. She quickly turned around as well. Her parents were waiting outside, and it would seem odd if she and Li Yifei did not go out together. Therefore, they both had to change in the room. However, she didn't quite trust Li Yifei; she believed he wouldn't dare do anything inappropriate to her, but as for sneaking a peek at her, he certainly had the nerve to do that.

Climbing onto the bed, Xu Yingying pulled the covers over her and began to change underneath. Because she wasn't facing away from Li Yifei, she ended up seeing him change. She hadn't intended to peek, but she couldn't help stealing a few glances. This made Xu Yingying's heart flutter, embarrassed by her own impulses. Yet she couldn't deny that Li Yifei's back was quite impressive, with broad shoulders and a narrow waist—perfectly described as 'gorilla arms and wasp waist'. Moreover, the muscles on his back became more pronounced with every movement of his arms.

"I really didn't expect it; the guy is pretty strong," she thought, "but...he must have been up to no good before. Just look at all those scars on his back, too many to count."

"I'm going to take off my pants now," Li Yifei suddenly blurted out.

Xu Yingying jumped at the remark and quickly turned her head away, saying, "Then you do your thing." Her heart, however, thumped wildly at the thought that he might know she had been peeking. How embarrassing that would be! But she consoled herself with the thought that he was just giving a normal heads-up.

Despite reassuring herself, Xu Yingying still felt like she had been caught doing something bad by Li Yifei. So, she tucked her head under the covers as she changed to avoid any chance of Li Yifei catching her in the act.

After changing clothes, both were in form-fitting shirts, and Li Yifei suddenly felt his blood pump faster. Xu Yingying's figure was perfectly showcased—every curve and contour accentuated by the fitted clothing.

Xu Yingying saw Li Yifei's face darken as he watched her, and he promptly, startled, broke into a grin, saying, "You saw me without my clothes; surely, you won't get mad if I look at you twice, will you?"

"Ah!" Xu Yingying's face flushed red with embarrassment, realizing her fears had come true—Li Yifei had noticed her peeping.