

## The Blessed - Chapter 6

### 6. Yuehua Ditch, Ling Village (1)

Translator: Guy Gone Bad

Ling Village was surrounded by mountains on three sides and backed by Yuehua Mountain. There was a tributary Lingjiang River and an inland sea tributary on the left and right sides respectively. Endowed with such a geographic environment, Lingjia Village should be very rich, but the place and the nearby villages were very poor. The reason was simple. Yuehua Mountain was surrounded by clouds and fog all the year round. Villagers who went hunting had little chance of returning so they chose to dig potherb at the foot of the mountain and set traps to catch some small animals.

Villages near the rivers and seas had always been very rich, but Ling Village was different. It was not only near the tributary of the Lingjiang river but also close to the inland sea tributary. To the north of the village, the fields in the Lingjiang River basin were fertile and had good harvest every year. But to the south, the inland sea basin was barren. Every year, tidal seawater poured into the land, and large areas of fields were turned into semi-saline land. Someone tried to cultivate the wasteland for grain growing. Unfortunately, no seed could survive. Therefore, even if the land in the north of the village was fertile, it could not bring rich life to all villagers.

In recent years, the imperial court had been waging wars, and taxes on the common people had increased year by year, making life more difficult. However, by contrast, the life of Ling Jingxuan's grandpa and his family was not so bad.

His grandpa Ling Qiyun was the eldest in the family and the only xiucai (an entry-level licentiate who had passed the college exam. Xiucai enjoyed officially sanctioned social privileges such as exemption from statute labour, access into local government facilities and limited immunity against corporal punishments.) in the village. He had a younger brother Ling Qicai, who was the Li Zheng in Ling village, equivalent to a modern village head. In ancient times, those who passed the imperial examination at the county level or above were exempt from taxes, so the life of the Ling family was not too bad.

Ling Qiyun was Ling Jingxuan's immediate grandfather. He passed the exam in his twenties, making him far-famed in the village. However, the later years of grueling study hadn't pushed him to go any further. It was not until he was nearly forty that Ling Qiyun gave up imperial examination and opened a home school in the village to make some money and subsidize his family.

Ling Qiyun had three sons and one daughter. The eldest brother, Ling Chengwen, the second, Ling Chenglong, the third, Ling Chenghu, and the youngest girl, Ling Chenghua. When he was young, Ling Qiyun entrusted his dream of passing imperial examinations on his sons. However, none of the three brothers were gifted in the study,

and even inferior to his own achievement. The Ling family had both farmers and a scholar, so all of them could read although not as literate as the old man of the family.

Under the guidance of two little buns, Ling Jingxuan, who carried a heavy wooden barrel to the river bank, was trying to figure out the information in his mind. It turned out that Ling Jingxuan was the second child Ling Chenglong's eldest son. He was clever since he was young and joined the imperial examinations at the county level at the age of 13. So the boy was favored by his grandpa. But one day five years ago, as a man, he got impregnated, which indirectly revealed the secrets his parents had hidden for over a decade. In fact, he was born different who owned both women's and men's genitals. In modern times, people would call him intersexuality, but in ancient times, he was regarded as a monster and would be burned alive if founded by other people. Ling Chenglong and his wife did not have the heart to let their son suffer so they hid the truth.

Later things could be imagined. The old man flew into a rage and threatened to sink Ling Jingxuan into the pond, which shocked the whole family at that time. Under the unanimous opinion of the patriarch and several elders, he decided to put big-bellied Ling Jingxuan into a pig cage and sink him into the inland sea tributary. Maybe Ling Jingxuan was lucky or the two little buns should not die. Just as the villagers angrily tied Ling Jingxuan up, Ling Qiyun came back from the county office, bringing back news unacceptable to everyone: The new county magistrate Hu banned villagers to use illegal punishment and disregard for human life. In the end, under the discussion of those elders, they decided to expel Ling Jingxuan from Ling Qiyun's family and send him to the Yuehua mountain far away from the village. As to whether he could survive all depended on his own luck.

After that, Ling Jingxuan appeared mentally disturbed and unconscious. His mother, Madam Wang took out her dowry and many years of private savings and asked her brother to help buy three mu of wasteland under Yuehua Mountain. Then they helped to build a thatched house and grow some food for the remaining two mu of wasteland. If it hadn't been his mother, Ling Jingxuan and his sons would have died long ago.

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“Oh...”

Ling Jingxuan couldn't help but heave a sigh on thinking of that. The life of the original owner of this body was too melodramatic, but he did not have any sympathy for him, not because he lacked empathy, but... Ling Jingxuan thought, with his mother's money and property given to him, plus his parents' many years of help, he could basically get by. But he had been doing nothing since being driven out of the house, chanting 'I am not a monster', immersing in self-pity, and caring nothing about himself or his two sons. Even though he inherited the original owner's memory, he didn't know what the man was thinking in the past five years. As for the man who enlarged his belly, he vaguely felt a

strong body with hot body temperature and heavy breathing but was not clear about his appearance. In Ling Jingxuan's view, he really couldn't sympathize with such a person.

"Daddy, we are home."