

## Regaining 161

### Chapter 161: Is He That Old?

The journey was rough and bumpy, taking four hours, and Cheng Hao had thrown up everything in his stomach, leaving him utterly disoriented.

This damned place, why are the roads so terrible!

From yesterday to today, Cheng Hao had only eaten the instant noodles in his bag. Fortunately, he had bought quite a few before leaving; otherwise, he might not even have afforded instant noodles.

As soon as he got off the bus, Cheng Hao didn't care about anything else and just sat down on a roadside stone, waiting until he had finished throwing up, which finally made him feel a lot better.

Compared to Ningbei, Gaoliang County was indeed an extremely backward county town—the tallest building was only six stories high!

Where does Brother Cheng live again?

Cheng Hao rotated his eyeballs, looked around the backward county town, and thought that when he saw Pei Yicheng, he definitely needed to properly acknowledge his hardships.

There was a restaurant by the road, the smell of food wafting through the air. Cheng Hao pinched the twenty yuan in his pocket. The bus fare today cost ten yuan, leaving him with twenty yuan that he had hesitated to spend in South City, fearing what would happen if he couldn't find Brother Cheng!

Now that he had almost reached Gaoliang County, Cheng Hao thought he should treat himself to a good meal. He ordered a portion of braised pork, a portion of stir-fried chili with eggplant, and ate three full bowls of rice, finishing all the dishes. His empty stomach was finally satisfied.

To have a place to stay at night, Cheng Hao started asking around. Fortunately, he had Pei Yicheng's address. As he inquired and walked, just when he was too tired to walk any further, he saw a young man and woman. The man looked sunny and handsome, while the woman, although in the most ordinary clothes, had a face full of youth and beautiful eyes that sparkled.

Cheng Hao immediately ran up to them.

"What are you doing?"

Xu Nian'an, looking at Cheng Hao who suddenly rushed up, quickly pulled Xu Nianhua behind him, watching Cheng Hao warily. Cheng Hao's clothes were neat, but his exhaustion was unmistakable—yet, his eyes were too bright when looking at his younger sister.

"Don't misunderstand; I just want to ask about this place." Cheng Hao glanced at Xu Nianhua, who Xu Nian'an was blocking, and thought to himself that even in this backward county, there was such a charming girl.

"Where?"

Hearing it was just a question about directions, Xu Nian'an secretly breathed a sigh of relief. He took the paper, glanced at the address, and the more he looked, the more familiar it seemed—wasn't this Pei Yicheng's home?

Xu Nian'an scrutinized Cheng Hao again, this time more carefully. The man had a decent appearance, but was a bit unkempt, his beard having grown quite long.

"Do you know where this is?" Cheng Hao asked with a face full of hope.

"Why are you going there?" Xu Nian'an asked instead of answering. "Are these people your relatives?"

"Sort of."

As Cheng Hao replied, he suddenly asked Xu Nian'an, "Do you know Brother Cheng?"

Brother Cheng?

Xu Nian'an was sure now—the scruffy man in front of him was indeed looking for Pei Yicheng. However...

Xu Nian'an asked, "Are you younger than Brother Cheng?"

After being corrected by Ji Ying a few times, Xu Nian'an had started calling him Brother Cheng along with Ling Dong.

He examined Cheng Hao again, who seemed older than Pei Yicheng.

Cheng Hao: "..."

He was only twenty-two years old, a year younger than Brother Cheng. Did he really look that old?

Cheng Hao touched his chin, feeling a face full of stubble. Thinking of the hardships of the past few days, he immediately forgot about the concern over his age and said, "Can you take me to find Brother Cheng?"

"Sure."

Since it was someone Pei Yicheng knew, Xu Nian'an naturally wouldn't refuse.

Along the way, Xu Nian'an found out that his name was Cheng Hao and that he had grown up with Pei Yicheng from childhood.

Chapter 162: Stunned

"Cheng-ge!"

When Cheng Hao saw Pei Yicheng, he ran up excitedly, squatted down, and hugged him, feeling an overwhelming urge to cry.

First, it had been a long time since they had seen each other.

Second, Cheng Hao had felt aggrieved the whole way and had almost been stranded in South City.

"Haozi?"

Pei Yicheng, too, was shocked for quite a while when he saw Cheng Hao, especially when Cheng Hao hugged his arm excitedly. He silently withdrew his hand, took out a handkerchief, and wiped his shirt, particularly the damp spot, which was conspicuously moist.

Cheng Hao finally became aware of Pei Yicheng's aversion, and he felt even more wronged. He had traveled such a long distance to find Cheng-ge, only to be disliked by him.

"Cheng-ge, you have no idea, I almost didn't get to see you." Cheng Hao recounted the events he experienced on the road.

He had thought Pei Yicheng would console him with a few words, but who knew...

"Dress more plainly next time you go out." Pei Yicheng looked over Cheng Hao's clothes. Although his watch was pawned, he knew Cheng Hao's nature; if he wore that watch for half a year, it meant he really liked it.

He usually ate well, dressed well, wore a watch, and carried a bag—wasn't that just like a fat sheep in the eyes of others?

What he was most grateful for was that his backpack contained books and papers, and thankfully, since the watch was always on his wrist, it was unstealable. Otherwise, he feared that he might not have been able to keep these things.

Cheng Hao: "..."

Cheng-ge, won't you console me?

Cheng Hao looked eagerly at Pei Yicheng.

"Nian'an, it's good that you're here; I have something for you." Pei Yicheng said, indicating Cheng Hao to bring out the things.

Cheng Hao looked at Pei Yicheng, baffled, not understanding what it was.

"Books." Pei Yicheng reminded him.

"Oh."

Cheng Hao opened his backpack, which contained clothes, books, and papers. He took out the items and belatedly realized that the things Cheng-ge wanted were actually for them?

"Cheng-ge, this is... for us?" Xu Nian'an brightened when he saw the self-study series for physics, chemistry, and mathematics, just like the ones the schoolmates had. Those were so treasured that no one was allowed even a glance, fearing that if others improved their scores, they wouldn't get into college.

"Of course, one book for you and one for Nianhua. And these papers, you can practice more, they're all from previous exams." Pei Yicheng's gaze fell on Xu Nianhua's face, that bright and charming face with sparkling eyes shining with light.

"Cheng-ge, thank you." Xu Nianhua took the papers, her heart surging with excitement. She had been thinking about buying some practice papers from Xinhua Bookstore to work on more exercises, so that come the real college entrance exams, she could achieve good results.

The gifts from Pei Yicheng were like sending charcoal in snowy weather!

"Don't mention it." Pei Yicheng's lips turned up in a small smile. He thought the gifts had not been sent in vain.

Cheng Hao, on the other hand, was completely stunned!

The Cheng-ge who always kept his distance from women had actually shown such a pleasant and amiable side, even smiling.

Cheng Hao subconsciously took another look at Xu Nianhua, the girl he initially thought was sprightly. She really did have a sprightly appearance, with a face that seemed pinchable like water, and her features were especially beautiful, especially those bright, expressive eyes.

Could it be...

In an instant, Cheng Hao felt miserable. He had thought it rare to find such a sprightly girl and even wondered if there might be any developments later on. Now, he didn't need to think about anything anymore.

Chapter 163: Is Sister Cheng about to appear?

At that moment, Cheng Hao felt a rush of joy. Since Brother Cheng had injured his leg, he had been downcast, lifeless, almost like a marionette; it was painful to watch.

Now things were looking up; Brother Cheng had someone he liked, and he should be happy for him.

He had quite a few romantic prospects, at least eight if not ten.

Cheng Hao surreptitiously signaled to Pei Yicheng with his eyes, but Pei Yicheng stayed focused, as if he saw nothing. He said, "Tonight, I'll host dinner and introduce my friend to everyone."

"Brother Cheng, you gave us books and papers, it was your friend who delivered them, we can't let you pay for the meal," Xu Nian'an instinctively refused.

Xu Nianhua said, "We'll cover the meal today, my second brother and I."

"How about I buy the groceries and you cook?" Pei Yicheng suggested. "It's Haozi's first time visiting, he came all this way to see me, I should contribute too."

"Ling Dong, go and buy some groceries," Pei Yicheng immediately instructed Ling Dong to go shopping.

Xu Nianhua thought he made a fair point and didn't refuse. He figured there was no rush to show gratitude; after all, there would be plenty of time in the future.

That night, Xu Nianhua's cooking skills conquered Cheng Hao's stomach.

Cheng Hao had two passions: beautiful women and food!

"Delicious!"

Cheng Hao praised it, thinking to himself that Brother Cheng's woman was something else. Not only was she pretty, but also a prospective college student, and her cooking was even better than that of a professional chef.

Night fell.

Cheng Hao went home with Pei Yicheng, his curiosity burning irrepressibly. Fearlessly, he asked, "Brother Cheng, will we be seeing Sister-in-law Cheng soon?"

Pei Yicheng gave him a glance.

Cheng Hao's eyes immediately lit up. It was one thing to speculate silently, but getting Pei Yicheng's acknowledgement left him in a daze.

He had thought Brother Cheng's icy demeanor might lead him to bachelorhood for life, yet who knew that Brother Cheng had quietly found someone?

"She's still in school," Pei Yicheng reminded him. Although she was already nineteen, she was still a student, and besides...

His gaze dropped to his leg. If only his leg could heal and he could stand up again, he would never let her slip away in this lifetime.

"Brother Cheng, your leg..." Cheng Hao hesitated, unsure how to broach the subject.

Pei Yicheng said, "During the National Day holidays, I'm going to seek treatment for my leg from an old traditional Chinese medicine practitioner in South City."

"I'll go with you," Cheng Hao offered without hesitation.

Pei Yicheng nodded, then asked, "Are you still working at the printing factory?"

"Yeah, where else would I be?" Cheng Hao didn't want to be at the printing factory at all; there were no beautiful girls there.

Pei Yicheng said nothing. The next morning, during breakfast, he brought out a bottle of fish chili sauce.

The fragrant fish chili sauce made Cheng Hao, a lover of spicy food, salivate at the smell. Without Pei Yicheng having to say anything, he immediately tried the chili sauce. Not only was it deliciously spicy, it had the aroma of fish as well.

He tasted a piece of fish that was crispy and delicious.

His eyes sparkled; as he added more chili sauce to his noodles, he asked, "Brother Cheng, where did you get this tasty stuff? I have to buy some to take home. Just a few bites when I'm not feeling hungry, and I'm sure I could down three bowls of rice."

"I made it."

Pei Yicheng's response made Cheng Hao, who was wolfing down his noodles, suddenly widen his eyes in disbelief and stare at him.

Chapter 164: A Bottle for Twenty Cents

"Yicheng, you made this?" Cheng Hao's tone rose significantly.

To say that Ling Dong made it, he would believe that, but Yicheng...

Yicheng can do anything, but maybe let's not count the kitchen.

In the past, Yicheng almost blew up the kitchen.

"It was made at my factory," Pei Yicheng added leisurely.

Only then did Cheng Hao feel that made sense. He buried his head back in his noodle bowl. After finishing a bite, he looked up and asked, "Yicheng, did I just mishear?"

Since when did Yicheng own a factory?

"I started a chili sauce factory."

The news shocked Cheng Hao even more than before. This didn't seem like Yicheng's style at all. Wasn't Yicheng the one who hated people whose eyes were only on money?

"Cough."

Pei Yicheng cleared his throat and said, "I, along with the Xu Family, the Xu Nian'an you met yesterday, started a chili sauce factory—you're eating the sauce from it right now."

So it was with the Xu Family.

Cheng Hao suddenly felt that Yicheng had changed from before; he had heard yesterday that Yicheng had started dealing in medicinal herbs.

"Yicheng, I... I still have some money." Cheng Hao guessed, wondering if Yicheng was short on cash.

Giving him a sidelong glance, Pei Yicheng said, "Keep your money for your future wife. Want to earn money with me instead?"

"Yes." Cheng Hao replied without hesitation, having long thought that Yicheng, with his smart mind, could make a lot of money if he was willing to put his mind to business.

Unfortunately, because of Uncle Pei, Yicheng had a bit of an aversion to doing business.

"This trip to South City, your task is to sell out all the chili sauce in the warehouse." Pei Yicheng was worried about Ling Dong being overwhelmed alone, and now that Cheng Hao was here, he naturally didn't hesitate to push the business onto him.

"Ah..." Cheng Hao frowned. Him, a grown man, selling chili sauce?

"What, don't feel like selling?" Pei Yicheng raised an eyebrow, reminding, "I'll give you twenty cents per bottle."

"Yicheng, are you joking?" Cheng Hao lost interest upon hearing about the twenty cents.

Unperturbed, Pei Yicheng continued, "Twenty cents a bottle isn't much, but what if you sell a thousand bottles, ten thousand bottles?"

Cheng Hao quickly did the math in his mind. A thousand bottles would be two hundred yuan, ten thousand bottles would be two thousand!!!

A thousand bottles, if it's as delicious as the sauce he was eating now, would be easy to sell. That means, if he could sell a thousand bottles within a month, he could earn two hundred.

My goodness, he only made sixty a month at the printing factory!

With such delicious chili sauce, Cheng Hao naturally didn't think it would be hard to sell.

"Yicheng, I was wrong. I'm with you!" Cheng Hao immediately admitted his mistake, looking at Pei Yicheng apologetically and saying, "Thank you, Yicheng, for giving me such a lucrative opportunity."

Cheng Hao's sycophantic demeanor made Pei Yicheng look disdainful as he said, "Shameless."

Cheng Hao: "..."

"Yicheng, why did you suddenly decide to do business?" Cheng Hao was struck to the core, so he started to ask about it. Since Yicheng didn't mind the turnout, he naturally could inquire about it.

"Money is a good thing; you need money to do what you want to do," Pei Yicheng said quietly. He used to dislike people who were obsessed with money, but after staying at his grandfather's house for so long, he understood deeply that money was truly necessary.

Especially in his grandfather's clinic, Pei Yicheng had seen how, when it came to medical treatment, money really was life-saving money!

Chapter 165: Regardless of Sale

"Yicheng, you, you've really changed from before." Cheng Hao was so excited that he couldn't speak clearly anymore; compared to the past, Yicheng had indeed changed a lot.

"People always change," replied Pei Yicheng.

Pei Yicheng looked down, always remembering the several times at his grandfather's place, where he encountered patients who were looked down upon because they couldn't afford to treat their illness. The despair in their eyes changed many of his thoughts.

That's why he had pulled Ling Dong into the business of selling medicinal herbs.

"True." Cheng Hao nodded in agreement, and anxiously asked, "Yicheng, when can we go to the factory?"

He couldn't wait to start making money.

"We'll go after eating noodles," replied Pei Yicheng.

Pei Yicheng thought this matter still needed to be discussed with the Xu family.

Cheng Hao hadn't looked carefully when he was at the factory yesterday, but upon checking it out today, calling it a factory was an understatement; it was more like a large residential house divided into numerous rooms. In the finished goods warehouse, rows of bottles labeled with chili sauce lay, and just by looking at them, Cheng Hao felt as if money was waving at him.

"Yicheng, how do we sell these chili sauces?" Cheng Hao inquired, noting that the two stacks of chili sauce looked distinctly different.

"The regular chili sauce sells for four yuan per bottle, and the fish chili sauce sells for eight yuan per bottle," said Pei Yicheng, remembering when Nianhua had set the prices, everyone thought Nianhua had set them too high.

He had always thought that Xu Nianhua was not only smart but also had a knack for business.

Just adding fish made a difference; their fish chili sauce contained two-thirds fish and one-third chili paste; the fish content was especially generous.

Charging double the price seemed only fair to him, especially since fish was considered a meat dish.

"Yicheng, is selling regular and fish chili sauce all for the same price?" asked Cheng Hao again.

The two different prices clearly made the regular chili sauce seem easier to sell.

Pei Yicheng was silent.

"Yicheng, I'd sell it for the same price," Cheng Hao said quickly, fearing Pei Yicheng might get angry, and began to explain.

Pei Yicheng took a deep breath and said, "Haozi, we've grown up together since we were kids, don't you know my character?"

"Yicheng, don't be mad, I was just asking." The more Cheng Hao spoke, the more guilty he felt. Yicheng had always protected him since they were children. Previously, Cheng Hao had damaged someone's motorcycle and owed seven to eight thousand yuan. It was Yicheng who had taken him to sell several batches of radios to earn it back.

Selling radios was something he wanted to keep doing, but it was particularly hard work, and once there had been an accident with Yicheng's leg, he stopped.

Yicheng had not taken a single cent of the money they had earned.

With Yicheng looking out for him, how could he possibly wrong him?

"Yicheng, I really didn't mean anything else," said Cheng Hao.

Cheng Hao explained and explained, fearful that Yicheng might get angry.

Pei Yicheng was aware that Cheng Hao was naturally curious and liked to ask about everything, and said, "I run the factory jointly with the Xu family, and we'll need to discuss this matter together before making any decisions."

Cheng Hao nodded vigorously.

That evening,

after dinner, Xu Nianhua and Xu Nian'an rushed to the factory during the hour they had, thinking of helping out however they could.

Pei Yicheng brought up letting Cheng Hao sell the chili sauce, along with the matter of commission.

Xu Nianhua and Xu Nian'an siblings exchanged looks, and Nian'an said, "Yicheng, I think it's a great idea, moreover, we only handle production, not sales!"

"You decide what's best," Nian'an added.

Pei Yicheng had never questioned how they made their chili sauce or discussed it further, and now, when it came to how much commission should be given for sales, they need not say more.

After all, Cheng Hao helping to sell the chili sauce and receiving a commission for it was only natural.

Chapter 166: Pocket Money is Mine

However, why did he feel like yesterday's Cheng Hao and today's were so different?

After shaving, he looked as if he was a year older than him, all cleaned up, he could pass for a friend of Pei Yicheng.

"Ordinary chili sauce is four yuan a bottle, and fish chili sauce is eight yuan a bottle. Selling a bottle of the ordinary one nets us twenty cents, and selling a bottle of fish chili sauce nets us thirty cents," Pei Yicheng laid out their thoughts directly.

Cheng Hao's eyes sparkled. If he could sell a thousand bottles in a month, then he could earn more than two hundred yuan!

There were still a few days before National Day, and Cheng Hao also came to the factory to help, thinking it would be good to make a little more chili sauce.

Busy days are easy to get through. Xu Qinghe finished making Zou Yaru's wardrobe. The bright colors instantly pleased her, and it even had a hidden dressing mirror that could be used when opened. She loved it!

Zou Yaru was full of praise and also introduced new work to Xu Qinghe. It was for a friend of hers who had just finished building a new house. After seeing her wardrobe, they instantly wanted to get another made for their own home.

Xu Qinghe, of course, was full of thanks. Not only was he earning more than usual, but he now also had new work to do.

The day before National Day, the new bottles ordered by Ling Dong arrived – a full truckload of two thousand bottles. At the same time, they loaded the chili sauce they had made onto the truck to be taken to South City together.

The first batch of two thousand bottles had all been completed, and this was the result of everyone working together with concerted effort.

Mainly, chopping the peppers took a lot of time.

A thousand and five hundred bottles of chili sauce and five hundred bottles of fish chili sauce followed the truck on its way to South City.

"Can we really sell all of these?" Ji Ying was full of trepidation.

Zhou He comforted her, "Mom, the chili sauce we made is delicious, especially the fish chili sauce. It's really tasty. I think we'll definitely be able to sell them."

"Right, Mom, Xiaohe is right. The chili sauce is indeed delicious," Xu Nianji praised. Selling bean sprouts allowed him to earn money every day. Within just a month, he had paid off the money he borrowed for his wedding, and he was quite content.

He even looked forward to the day they would build a new house with his younger sister and Nian'an.

"We will definitely sell them all!"

Xu Nianji said expectantly.

Xu Nian'an and Xu Nianhua, the siblings, didn't have the time to think about these things, as they were about to prepare for their first monthly exam after school started.

"Xiaohe, how's your memory of the texts and formulas? You haven't forgotten any, have you?"

Xu Nian'an asked Xu Nianhua over and over, worried that she might carelessly forget them again.

"I can't forget what I've memorized, but there are still parts I haven't..." Xu Nianhua shrugged her shoulders. If she hadn't finished memorizing something, she definitely wouldn't remember it.

"Xiaohe, what's wrong with you?" Xu Nian'an muttered, but seeing Xu Nianhua's wide-eyed gaze, he quickly changed his tune, "I misspoke. You're definitely going to score high."

"Then how well do you remember the foreign language words?" Xu Nianhua countered.

Xu Nian'an: "..."

Xiaohe, can you not hit where it hurts?

If he could score a passing grade, that would be quite an achievement.

"Second Brother, I have so much to memorize, and you just have some words. You haven't even finished memorizing those, have you?" Xu Nianhua's words made Xu Nian'an feel even more stung.

Xiaohe, are those just a few foreign words?

That's clearly a whole book.

"Second Brother, you need to work harder. If you don't score seventy this time, your pocket money goes to me," Xu Nianhua leaned in and whispered in his ear.

Chapter 167: Purchase Price

Xu Nian'an: "..."

Xu Nian'an wanted to ask, what do you need all that allowance for, but then, the bell rang, the teacher came in, and the test papers were already handed out. Even if he had wanted to speak, he couldn't.

After two days of exams, he had finally finished testing in all subjects and Xu Nian'an breathed a sigh of relief.

"Second brother, have you got your allowance ready?" Xu Nianhua looked at Xu Nian'an with a beaming smile.

Xu Nian'an pursed his lips and said, "Little sister, I used to score sixty, but these days, I have improved quite a bit."

Seventy, that should be achievable, right?

That's what Xu Nian'an was thinking to himself.

"What do you need my allowance for? What have you got your eye on?" Xu Nian'an stared intensely at Xu Nianhua and asked.

"Hmm, I won't tell you." Xu Nianhua looked at him with a radiant smile.

Xu Nian'an thought, I might as well give this month's allowance to my little sister, since there's nothing I need to buy.

\*

South City.

Pei Yicheng and his team had brought their goods into the city, and Pei Yicheng had arranged with the bottle factory to keep the goods for two days.

"Brother Cheng, can we sell everything within two days?" Originally, Cheng Hao thought selling a thousand bottles within a month and slowly selling the rest would be the plan, but it seemed like Brother Cheng intended to sell them within just a few days?

"After making the chili sauce, of course we should sell it as soon as possible so that others can enjoy it longer," Pei Yicheng thought back to the night before they set off, when Xu Nianhua had specifically come to speak to him.

That day, Cheng Hao was chatting with them in the house.

Pei Yicheng was sitting in the yard enjoying the cool air, Xu Nianhua came out of the kitchen, grabbed a stool, and sat next to him, saying, "I wish you a smooth trip tomorrow. Who knows, by the time you return from South City, you might be able to stand up on your own legs."

"Thank you. I hope that's the case", Pei Yicheng replied, somewhat surprised. Under the moonlight, her eyes appeared even brighter.

"Tomorrow, once you get to South City, how do you plan to sell the chili sauce?"

Xu Nianhua's voice was crisp yet gentle.

"Haozi previously worked at a printing factory, but he's really good at talking," Pei Yicheng explained indirectly that he wasn't just favoring his friend. He said, "I haven't thought of a sales strategy yet, do you have any ideas?"

Xu Nianhua wasn't sure whether Pei Yicheng genuinely had no ideas or if he was just seeking her opinion, but she sincerely hoped that they could sell all two thousand bottles of chili sauce.

And moreover, to sell them in the shortest time possible.

Xu Nianhua shared her ideas, suggesting they could place the sauce in small shops, stores selling local specialties, or even large department stores.

"If we rent a storefront and then sell the chili sauce, just the rent alone would make it not worthwhile."

Xu Nianhua's idea was met with Pei Yicheng's approval, as he had thought the same.

"What else?" Pei Yicheng valued Xu Nianhua's thoughts greatly; though she was just a high school student, sometimes her insights and ideas were impressive.

"Another option is to give a commission to those small shops or specialty stores," Xu Nianhua explained. In fact, Cheng Hao would essentially act like a salesperson, distributing the chili sauce to various small shops. For instance, one shop might take a dozen bottles, another a few dozen, and with so many stores in South City, selling a few thousand bottles wouldn't be too difficult.

"It's basically like, we are the manufacturers and they stock our products."

Xu Nianhua explained clearly and Pei Yicheng understood well, though the wholesale price still needed careful consideration.

#### Chapter 168: She Seems Angry

Finally, Xu Nianhua and Pei Yicheng had agreed on the cost price, the lowest being three yuan fifty, and for the fish chili sauce, at least seven yuan.

It was difficult to sell fish chili sauce, so it was only right to give a higher commission.

Moreover, the cost of this batch of fish sauce was extremely low.

The most important point, Xu Nianhua reminded, "Yicheng, the selling price must be set firmly, it cannot be sold haphazardly, otherwise, it will be difficult to sell in the future."

"Okay," Pei Yicheng took her advice to heart and asked, "I heard you had your monthly exams, how did it go? You must have done quite well?"

"Um..."

When Xu Nianhua mentioned the monthly exam, she couldn't help but touch her nose. She had no problems with foreign languages, but, well, as for literature...

There were several fill-in-the-blank questions about classical poetry and prose that she couldn't answer.

She had almost memorized the formulas for mathematics, physics, and chemistry, but just memorizing formulas wasn't enough; she needed to know how to apply them. The simpler ones were okay, but she got a bit confused with the slightly more complex ones.

"There's still one year left, doing more papers and practice questions will definitely improve your scores," Pei Yicheng reassured her, then asked, "South City is much more bustling than Gaoliang County, and there are many things there. Do you have anything you want to buy?"

"Nothing."

Whenever Xu Nianhua thought of South City, she inevitably thought of the Gu Family, which deeply annoyed her. She stood up and said, "My older brother and I still need to go to school."

Pei Yicheng was left watching her retreating figure, his brows furrowed in thought, wondering if he had said anything wrong.

Why did he feel that she was angry?

"Yicheng, what were you and Sister-in-law discussing just now?" Cheng Hao had just seen Xu Nianhua going to talk to Pei Yicheng and had been pestering Xu Nian'an with questions, hoping to let them chat for a while.

But who knew, after not talking for long, Xu Nianhua came in and then left with Xu Nian'an not long after.

Unable to curb his curiosity, Cheng Hao wanted to find out more.

Pei Yicheng glanced at him and said nothing.

Undeterred, Cheng Hao continued to ask, "I saw Sister-in-law's complexion wasn't very good just now. You didn't make her angry, did you? Girls need to be coaxed. You need to smile, not keep a straight face. That could scare people off. What exactly did you say to Sister-in-law?"

Pei Yicheng remained silent.

Cheng Hao went on, "Yicheng, look at me, I've had so many girlfriends, I must have more experience than you, right?"

"I didn't say anything special, just asked if there was anything she wanted from South City since there are many things there," Pei Yicheng replied, only to see Cheng Hao's disbelieving look.

Pei Yicheng's face immediately darkened.

"Yicheng, was it your tone?" Cheng Hao guessed that might be the only issue.

Pei Yicheng: "..."

He thought their conversation had been going quite well, how could there be anything wrong with his tone?

\*

South City.

After telling Cheng Hao the bottom price, Pei Yicheng let him take the chili sauce and start making the rounds.

"Yicheng, what if I can't find you?" Cheng Hao looked at Pei Yicheng with puppy eyes, carrying the chili sauce from one store to another?

This prospect made Cheng Hao feel a bit hesitant.

"Ling Dong, you switch with Hao," Pei Yicheng said directly.

Ling Dong joyfully said, "Yicheng, that's great, an easy six hundred yuan."

"Yicheng, I'll go, I will go," Cheng Hao remembered the herbalist's location, then took the chili sauce and headed for the department store.

"Ling Dong," Pei Yicheng just started speaking when Ling Dong seemed to know what he was about to say, "Yicheng, I've already made quite a bit selling herbal materials, I've saved enough for a dowry, I'm not greedy."

#### Chapter 169: Make You Proud

"Second Brother, do you think Pei Yicheng's leg can be healed?" Xu Nianhua's monthly exam results weren't out yet, and taking advantage of the holiday, the siblings planned to go to the factory early to work.

"It should, maybe, be possible?"

Xu Nian'an wasn't too sure. Having spent a lot of time together, he knew Pei Yicheng's leg had been injured for over half a year, almost a year now since last year, and it still hadn't healed, even though Doctor Du himself was a doctor and hadn't been able to cure it.

It must be that Pei Yicheng's leg was not easy to treat.

Previously, Doctor Du had explained what was wrong with Pei Yicheng's leg, but they didn't study medicine and didn't understand many of the professional terms, so they only knew that treating his leg was troublesome.

Perhaps there was a glimmer of hope with the famous traditional doctor they were going to see this time?

"I heard he injured his leg while saving someone. I hope his leg can recover," Xu Nianhua said sentimentally. Such an outstanding person as Pei Yicheng might never be able to stand again, which was truly regrettable.

"Fortune favors the brave; he will get better."

Xu Nian'an suddenly looked at Xu Nianhua and asked, "Little sister, what's the deal with Chen Hu? Why has he been coming to see you every day lately? Asking about homework?"

"Yes."

Xu Nianhua replied without hesitation, saying, "Didn't you see it yourself?"

Xu Nian'an: "..."

It was precisely because he had seen it that he was worried. When Chen Hu looked at his little sister, that gaze was clearly... the way a man looks at a woman.

"You should stay away from him in the future," Xu Nian'an said with pursed lips, disliking Chen Hu.

"Second Brother, he's just asking about homework."

Xu Nianhua couldn't help but roll her eyes. Although the foreign language scores weren't out yet, during the few times they had tested in English, Xu Nianhua's scores had also been far ahead, being the first in the school to break eighty points.

So, many people came to ask Xu Nianhua how she studied foreign languages.

Xu Nianhua used to do training, teaching people such things; she was best at that and was also happy to help others.

"There are plenty of people with good grades," Xu Nian'an was about to say, "Why doesn't he ask me?" But as soon as he spoke, he shut his mouth.

Foreign languages, his little sister's foreign language, that was number one.

"Let's hurry up, get more dried chili peppers. By the time this batch sells out, we might not have enough," Xu Nianhua confidently said, certain the chili sauce would make money.

Therefore, her only worry was not having enough workers or enough chili peppers.

"Right, we also need to buy more dried chili peppers. There aren't many left now."

As soon as Xu Nianhua brought up the factory matters, Xu Nian'an stopped talking about Chen Hu and instead worried about whether the chili sauce from South City could be sold!

In the food factory, Ji Ying, Zhou He, and Wu Meili were washing glass bottles. There were many bottles, and they had to be careful not to break them, careful not to drop them, and they needed to find a place to air-dry the bottles. Only then could the chili sauce be put into them without any moisture, which would spoil the sauce.

In the yard, it was all clean bottles drying in the sun.

"Why are you here?" Ji Ying said when she saw them, "You should hurry back and do your homework. You don't need to concern yourselves with things here."

"No way."

Xu Nian'an said, "We specifically took advantage of the holiday to come help. Mom, don't worry. Not doing homework for two days won't affect our scores much. We'll definitely get into the university next year and make you proud, bringing home two college students!"

Chapter 170: Are there partial subjects?

Before, our family was poor, and my grandparents didn't want us to continue studying. Moreover, he wanted his younger sister to attend university—it didn't matter if he did or didn't go.

He was aware of the family's situation and also knew the difficulties his parents faced.

Last year, Xu Zhihao didn't get into university and found a formal job at the supply and marketing cooperative.

He married a girl from the city and spent quite a bit of money. His grandparents only planned to support two college students, him and his younger sister, so only one of them could go.

Xu Nian'an was naturally lackadaisical. Anything he could score, he counted as such. Even for questions he knew how to do, he couldn't be bothered to answer them. He just thought about giving the opportunity to his younger sister.

But now it was different, the family's financial situation had improved. Selling mung bean jelly had earned them quite a bit, and now they had started a chili sauce factory. There was surely no need to worry about tuition fees in the future, and the family didn't need them to worry either. Xu Nian'an naturally changed his mind and wanted to study hard, get into university, make more money, and honor his parents.

"Good, if both of you really get into a university, then I'd set up more than a dozen tables." Ji Ying, thinking of them going to university next year, felt extraordinarily hopeful.

The eldest son had married, and the second and youngest were also promising. As parents, they too felt reassured.

"That would be wasting too much money," Xu Nian'an said subconsciously.

Though people would also give them gifts of money, more than a dozen tables!

Previously, when his elder brother got married, they only set up six tables, which was considered a grand feast, inviting only both families' relatives and good neighbors.

"What do you mean 'wasting'? This is called being happy. If your dad knew, he would definitely agree," Ji Ying thought gleefully. Qinghe's greatest wish was simply to hope their two children could get into university and be successful.

Xu Nianhua tugged secretly at Xu Nian'an's sleeve and said, "Second brother, if you really get into university, we should definitely celebrate appropriately."

"That's true, after all, how many university students have come out of our village?" Xu Nian'an thought that, although setting up more than a dozen tables seemed wasteful, it would make everyone happy.

Xu Nianhua and her siblings helped out in the factory for two days before returning to school for their classes.

The results of their first monthly exam came out.

With a score of eighty-nine in foreign language, Xu Nianhua achieved the highest mark for that subject.

Chinese, eighty—not bad, barely acceptable.

Mathematics, physics, and chemistry, just passing, but politics... it was a sight too pitiful to endure.

It directly dragged down her average score.

Xu Nian'an, on the other hand, had made a lot of progress. He scored seventy-one in foreign language, a significant jump from the scores around sixty he used to get.

"Little sister, you..." Xu Nian'an looked at her scores, thinking that later on, he not only needed to drill her hard on text recitations but also had to help her catch up in politics. She had never scored so low before.

For Chinese, her reading comprehension was done quite well, and the composition she wrote was extremely good. But for the fill-in-the-blank questions or those about reciting ancient poems and articles, she knew them if she had memorized them, but for the ones she hadn't memorized...

"Nianhua, when did you start to struggle so much with certain subjects?" Mrs. Lin looked at Xu Nianhua; her Chinese scores were always high.

And with politics, even if she only just managed to pass, it shouldn't have been this bad.

Mrs. Lin was a very responsible teacher, familiar with every student's situation. Seeing how politics had pulled down Xu Nianhua's grades, and that she didn't score well in areas of Chinese she should have, Mrs. Lin worried there may be something going on in her family.

Xu Nianhua hung her head and said, "Teacher, I will do better in the future."

"Keep it up, your Chinese is still very good. It's just these memorized classical poems and texts..." When Mrs. Lin brought this up, Xu Nianhua bowed her head even lower.

"I..." Xu Nianhua stammered, at a loss for words.