

## Rise 18

### Chapter 18: Private Property

The items at the stall were all sold out. Zhu Shouyi tidied up the stall and instructed Zhu Pingchuan to wait with Zhu Ping'an while he went to the grocery store to sell the rabbit skins.

Since Zhu Shouyi was a regular at the grocery store, they wouldn't let him suffer any losses, so Zhu Ping'an didn't insist on going along.

After a while, Zhu Shouyi returned with a total of five rabbit skins, each worth twelve wen, totaling sixty wen.

Seeing his father put all the money into the basket, Zhu Ping'an's eyes lit up, and he happily said, "That's a lot of money! When we go home and give it to Mother, she will definitely be very happy."

"No, we can only keep twenty-four wen; the rest has to be given to Grandmother," Father Zhu explained, laughing as he ruffled Zhu Ping'an's hair.

Oh, he remembered now.

The Zhu family's rules stated that any income earned during the daytime, which should have been used for farming, had to be turned over entirely. As for any income earned privately at night or during other times when farming wasn't necessary, eighty percent also had to be submitted.

In ancient times, if a family had not divided its property, private ownership was not allowed, as society was still patriarchal.

Going up the mountain was done during the daytime farming hours, so all earnings from the mountain had to go to the communal account; as for the bamboo weaving, since most of it was done by his father at night, eighty percent of the income had to be submitted.

The money from selling the rabbit skins was also to be turned over entirely to Grandmother for the communal account. Besides the rabbit skins, the fifty wen earned from selling wild game also had to be submitted completely.

Of course, the money from his father's bamboo weaving also had to be submitted at eighty percent. This time, his father's bamboo weaving earned one hundred twenty wen, which meant that around one hundred wen had to be turned over.

In other words, all the earnings this time were from his father's hard work, but in total, about two hundred wen had to be submitted. If it weren't for the honeysuckle, his father would only end up with around twenty wen this time.

From what Zhu Ping'an knew, it seemed that his first uncle's family had never contributed a single penny to the household; instead, they often withdrew money from the family account. His uncle spent on books and ink and entertained friends. His third uncle's family did contribute, but it was very little. As for his fourth uncle's family, forget it—both his fourth uncle and fourth aunt were always trying to take advantage of the family account.

Despite contributing more, his grandparents often favored first his uncle and fourth uncle's family.

Whenever there was something at home, Grandmother often asked his father to pay, and Father readily handed over the money. For this reason, Chen had been angry with Father multiple times.

Filial piety is important, but one also needs to take care of the family. His older brother would be getting married in a few years, and they needed to save money for his brother to get a bride. His grandparents were constantly favoring his uncle's success in the imperial examinations, fearing that they wouldn't have much money to contribute. Moreover, in case there were any changes in the family situation, it was necessary to be prepared.

So, it was essential to give his father a wake-up call.

"Why do we have to give it to Grandmother?" Zhu Ping'an asked, tilting his head.

"Because we need to eat, and all our meals come from the household," Zhu Shouyi explained.

He pouted.

"The honeysuckle was promised to me by Grandmother, so I'm keeping that money, and the silver ingots were also given to me by someone else." Zhu Ping'an made a childish, mischievous face.

Zhu's father thought for a moment. Yes, indeed, when we came back from the mountains, the whole family made fun of Zhu'er for picking the flowers, and his mother did say the honeysuckle belonged to him.

"Alright, fine." Zhu Shouyi nodded.

"Father, when we used to sell bamboo crafts in town, how much could we sell at a time? How much did you give to Grandmother?" Zhu Ping'an, seeing his father agree, felt his father could still be saved, so he casually asked another question.

While tidying up the household items, Zhu Shouyi replied, "We used to sell about sixty or seventy wen each time, and I'd give around fifty wen to the family."

"Then, this time let's give Grandmother an extra ten wen from the bamboo crafts, and give her sixty wen." Zhu Ping'an acted like a dutiful, filial child.

In this way, apart from the money for the honeysuckle, they could keep 60 wen from this income.

"Huh?" Zhu Shouyi was stunned for a moment and then laughed, "That's not how it works, Zhu'er. This time, we sold more bamboo crafts."

"Yes, Zhu'er, you're still young and don't know how to calculate." Eldest brother Zhu Pingchuan chimed in.

This method didn't work, so Zhu Ping'an had to change his approach.

"Both First Aunt and Fourth Aunt have silver hairpins, and Mother has been envious for a long time, but she hasn't saved enough money." Zhu Ping'an's eyes seemed to project the image of his mother, Chen, envying his aunts, which was quite compelling.

Zhu Shouyi also thought of Chen back home, who had contributed so much to the family. It was indeed time to save some money to make his wife happy. Besides, this time they handed over more money than usual to the family by ten extra wen.

In the end, Zhu Shouyi nodded in agreement, carefully dividing the money into two portions. He set aside the amount for the family and wrapped up the other portion, including the money for the honeysuckle, carefully placing it in Zhu Ping'an's small backpack, covering it with the leftover grass the cow had eaten.

Before heading home from town, Zhu Shouyi picked up some cheap items from the market, such as oil, salt, soy sauce, vinegar, and tea, as well as other household goods.

Zhu Ping'an also bought two meat buns, wrapped them in paper, and carefully placed them at the bottom of his backpack, covering them up.

Zhu Shouyi, thinking his son was just being greedy, asked him about it.

Unexpectedly, Zhu Ping'an replied, "The meat buns we had this morning were delicious, and I want to take some home for Mother to try."

This made Zhu Shouyi's face flush slightly. His young son remembered to bring something for Chen, yet he himself hadn't thought of buying anything for her.

Fortunately, it was not too late to make amends. Because Zhu Shouyi didn't have much money left, he couldn't buy jewelry or other expensive items to please Chen. However, he could buy some fabric for her to make a couple of new outfits. Imagining how Chen would look wearing new clothes, Zhu Shouyi couldn't help but grin widely.

Not far from the stall was a fabric store, and Zhu Shouyi led his two sons inside. The store was much larger than the pharmacy, and as soon as they entered, they were dazzled by the colorful fabrics on display.

"Are you here to buy fabric, sir? Please come this way."

The store attendant was sharp and didn't direct Zhu Shouyi and his sons to the silk section. Instead, he led them to the more reasonably priced cotton section.

"This is authentic cotton fabric from Songhu, directly sourced from Songjiang Prefecture. It's exquisite, durable, and beautiful. Whether you're making clothes or bedding, it's highly sought after, and the price is very reasonable," the attendant said smoothly, with keen insight into Zhu Shouyi's thoughts, emphasizing how affordable it was.

Indeed, Songjiang Prefecture was known throughout the country for its textiles, thanks to Huang Daopo's legacy. It seemed that Songjiang cotton had even made its way to this mountain town of Khaosan.

"How much for this fabric?" Zhu Shouyi pointed at a bolt of peach blossom white cotton cloth.

"120 wen for a bolt," the attendant replied. "This bolt can make eight tops, or twelve skirts or pants. It's very cost-effective."

In the Ming Dynasty, a bolt of fabric was equal to four zhang, and one zhang was ten chi. One chi is roughly 0.31 meters in modern units, so a bolt of fabric was about twelve meters long.