

# RISE OF THE POOR

## Chapter 6: IQ Intelligence Overwhelming

The next morning, Chen Shi was radiant, displaying an unusual tenderness. When Zhu Ping'an came out, he saw Chen Shi tidying up his father's collar. As soon as she noticed her two sons coming out, she hurriedly put her hands down, her face tinged with a shy blush.

After all, this wasn't the 21st century, a time when one could unabashedly show affection, Zhu Ping'an reflected.

With the sun rising, they began their day's work and, as autumn harvest approached, the crops entered the grain-filling stage. Before the arrival of Uncle and his family, they needed to finish irrigating the fields; otherwise, it would be several days of busyness when relatives visited. After breakfast, Zhu Laoye led his father, Second Uncle, and Elder Brother to the fields to engage in the urgent irrigation work.

First Uncle, however, was busy preparing for his exams and never participated in farm work.

As for Second Uncle, well, Second Uncle had... let's just say he had a stiff neck from sleeping awkwardly last night...

Speaking of which, since Zhu Ping'an arrived, this was Second Uncle's third illness, and each time it coincided with farm work. The first was from catching a chill while sleeping at night, the second was from hitting his head when getting up at night (seriously, are you a pig?), and this time it was due to a stiff neck. These excuses were utterly ridiculous, and it was clear he was just slacking off, yet Grandmother believed him without question.

Grandmother was indeed very biased.

While the men worked, the women weren't idle either. Grandmother led the other women in the family to sew small pouches, make handkerchiefs, and weave cloth—basically, they kept busy.

Zhu Ping'an idly watched Zhu Pingjun riding a stick as if it were a horse, while Zhu Yu'er joyfully chased chickens. No matter how hard he tried to concentrate, he couldn't see the fortune above others' heads; perhaps there were conditions for that as well. Regardless, he wasn't in a hurry; he could explore slowly. He thought about sneaking out to ponder life and look for ways to make money. Unfortunately, he couldn't go into the mountains; otherwise,

he was sure he could find good things there, as the mountains were endless treasures.

Before Zhu Ping'an could slip out the door, Grandmother called him over with some errands, instructing him to run and buy five wén worth of thread for sewing.

Zhu Ping'an didn't want to do this errand; it was too mindless. Besides, Grandmother was incredibly meticulous; even if he bought something that was half a wén short, she would notice immediately. Not only would he be criticized for not getting any profit, but he would also be scolded for buying poorly.

Both Zhu Ping'an and Zhu Pingjun were reluctant to go, and Little Yu'er was too young to be sent.

So, Zhu Ping'an seriously told Zhu Pingjun, "You go; you have a horse, so you can get there quickly."

Zhu Pingjun was thrilled to hear this. He took the money and happily patted his backside, saying, "Giddy up!" and dashed away.

This was a case of intelligence overwhelming.

Zhu Ping'an silently watched Zhu Pingjun disappear through the door, feeling the loneliness of life—especially lonely was the fact that he couldn't express it.

Taking advantage of the fact that his mother and the others were busy in the house, he slipped out and wandered aimlessly around the village, planning to sneak over to the neighboring village, Shanghe Village, to see what their private school looked like.

Before he had taken a few steps, he saw Er Niu, who had been looking for him to play just days ago, being held down by his mother as she spanked him. As she spanked him, she lectured, "Now tell me, will you dare to steal your sister's things again!"

"Will you dare to steal your sister's things again?"

With each slap, she asked again.

Five or six-year-old Er Niu cried out loudly while being spanked, tears and snot streaming down his face as he swore, "I promise I'll never steal my sister's food again! If I do, I'm a dog's spawn!"

A dog's spawn? Zhu Ping'an nearly choked, stunned by Er Niu's audacity.

Then he saw Er Niu's mother swiftly lift him up, take off her shoe, and give him another round of spankings.

Xiahe Village, located by the riverbank, was named for its position downstream, while the village upstream was called Shanghe Village. The two villages shared this unnamed river, formed by mountain streams, with clear waters so transparent that the bottom could be seen. People called it Qingxi.

Zhu Ping'an hadn't walked far before he reached the river. A small boat was out fishing, and a few women gathered by the bank to wash clothes, using wooden sticks to beat the fabric against the river's smooth stones.

Getting closer to the riverbank, he could see small fish and shrimp frolicking among the water plants—something you couldn't find in modern times.

Across the river lay the vast mountains behind the village, lush and green, with the distant sounds of birds and animals, suggesting a land rich in resources.

Xiahe Village, nestled between mountains and water, boasted beautiful scenery. With a mountain in front and water behind, abundant trees on the hills, and plenty of fish and shrimp in the water, there was no reason for poverty to thrive here.

As Zhu Ping'an walked along the riverbank, he found himself at the fields, where the Zhu family was busy clearing ditches to irrigate the crops.

"Xiao Zhi, what are you doing here? Is everything okay at home?" His father, Zhu Shouyi, noticed him from afar and approached with long strides. He was shirtless with rolled-up trousers, muddy feet, and a shovel in hand.

Realizing he had unknowingly come to his own family's fields, Zhu Ping'an looked up at his worried father with his little chubby face and said, "Dad, everything's fine at home. I came to help!"

Zhu Shouyi relaxed upon hearing this. Looking at Zhu Ping'an's small arms and legs, he smiled, "What can you help with? Just stay over there and watch those few fish. When you go home, ask your mother to make you some soup."

Grandfather and the others came over, and his older brother Zhu Pingchuan handed him a bright yellow water melon, saying, "Brother, wash it and eat it; there are plenty by the river."

Grandfather appreciated Zhu Ping'an coming to watch the adults work, hoping that he would also become skilled in farming in the future. To Grandfather, the land was fundamental; even high-ranking officials needed land to feel secure.

Alright, no more running around then.

Not far away, the family was busy irrigating the fields. Zhu Ping'an lay on the grass beside a newly dug small puddle, guarding a few small grass carp while munching on the water melon.

The crisp and sweet flavor was delightful, leaving a lingering taste that made him wonder if he could sell these melon-sized water melons in town for a good price.

Thanks to the convenience of the river, by the end of the day, the family had already irrigated more than half of their fields. Tomorrow, with just half a day's work, they could finish it up.

That evening, they indeed had fish soup for dinner, which left Zhu Ping'an, who seldom had meat, with a full belly.

After the meal, Grandfather waved his hand and instructed, "Second son, you and Da Chuan don't have to irrigate the fields tomorrow. Go into the mountains and see if you can hunt some game. It would be good to have a few more meat dishes when your Uncle and his family arrive."

Since my father was the most versatile, the task of hunting in the mountains fell to him.