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Chapter 186: Platoon Leader Chen's Concealment

Chen Shouwang was in a state of utter panic. Ever since he did not return home overnight, he had been on tenterhooks under his wife's watchful eye, forcing a smile and struggling to get by. When the family urgently demanded money, he had kept only thirty yuan after receiving his allowance, sending the rest back home. He had given Hualing twenty yuan, leaving himself with only ten yuan in his hand.

He was just hoping that the loan sharks wouldn't come knocking, but as the saying goes, what one fears most is bound to happen. They actually showed up at the military region.

Where could he find the money to pay back the one hundred yuan he had borrowed?

Finally managing to send the two thugs away, Chen Shouwang let out a sigh of relief, only to hear Qi Taiguo's voice.

His body tensed, he turned around, and squeezed out a smile, "You're here?"

"Yeah." Qi Taiguo took out a cigarette, offered him one, and Chen Shouwang saw that it was a Red Plum brand—much more expensive than his own Da Qianmen brand.

Chen Shouwang accepted his matchbox and lit a cigarette, his heart filled with bitterness.

This was the difference. The man was a company commander, even smoking better cigarettes than himself. And his wife seemed to be quite good at making money. Perhaps Qi Taiguo never had to worry about what cigarettes to smoke?

Unlike himself...

Chen Shouwang lowered his eyes slightly, took a drag of the cigarette, and exhaled a full plume of smoke.

"How have you been these past few days? You and Hualing made up, right?"

"Yeah, we have, all is good," Chen Shouwang said with a smile, but there was not a hint of ease in his eyes.

"That's good, marital spats end at bedtime—women just need a bit more coaxing," Qi Taiguo said, patting his shoulder.

If only Hualing was that easy to coax. Unfortunately, she was a proud daughter of a rich family!

But in front of Qi Taiguo, Chen Shouwang didn't want to spill his grievances and said, "Exactly. Hualing may be a bit temperamental, but she's not unreasonable. After all, she comes from an officer's family, not out of some rural backwater."

His words were pointed, and Qi Taiguo's eyes flashed.

As if feeling he had misspoken, Chen Shouwang added, "Ah, I'm not talking about Cheng Su, don't take it to heart, okay?"

Qi Taiguo replied, "Even if you were talking about her, it wouldn't be wrong. After all, who among us isn't from a village? When we first enlisted, the eager ones were from the villages. Look around the forces; how many are actually 'second generation red' with pure red lineage?"

Chen Shouwang responded with a bitter smile, "Indeed!"

"Old Chen, we all emerged from hardships. Although we haven't experienced life-and-death missions, we're still comrades, teammates, brothers. If you're facing any difficulties, don't keep them bottled up. Speak out, and your brothers will help you find a way!" Qi Taiguo stared at him intently.

Chen Shouwang's face shifted slightly, his voice a bit shrill, "I'm not in any trouble, what trouble could there be? This is not some poor old times!"

This sounded somewhat like a cover-up!

Qi Taiguo looked at him steadily for a moment, then stated bluntly, "Old Chen, remember, we are soldiers, educated by the Party. We must be accountable to our country and the people. We must not get entangled with criminals."

"What do you mean by that?" Chen Shouwang asked.

"Those two guys who came for you, what did they want? Do you even know such riffraff?" Qi Taiguo asked sternly.

Chen Shouwang's expression finally changed, but he quickly returned to normal, "Oh, those two. It's nothing. I saw them harassing a young girl on the bus previously and couldn't help but scold them. They just couldn't swallow the anger and came looking for a fight. As if they don't know where they are—they're just troublemakers!"

Obviously lying, Qi Taiguo said, "Old Chen, you're a soldier!"

"I know, I know. Oh look, it's time for training. I'll head over first!" Chen Shouwang waved his hand and quickly left.

Watching his retreating figure, Qi Taiguo's expression turned grim and dark, not looking good at all.