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Chapter 83: Peer Teaching

Cheng Su gave Qi Taiguo a sense of vanity, and he felt he gained face. It just so happened that Platoon Leader Lu's Egg was hosting a celebration for his hundred days upstairs, and Qi Taiguo took Cheng Su with him to attend.

At home, they hosted the banquet. But in this yard where space was limited, everyone managed to make do and eat at home.

Cheng Su had received notice from Li Qiumei early on and hurried home after the noon market ended to join Qiulan in helping to prepare the meal.

The meal was thoroughly enjoyable for both guests and hosts, and Qi Taiguo was even more satisfied with Cheng Su's performance on the spot. She was generous and proper, drank boldly, and faced the teasing of comrades without a hint of pettiness, which earned her his newfound respect.

After eating, Qi Taiguo escorted a well-connected Commander Zhou down the stairs, and the two stood in the courtyard to air out the alcohol.

Commander Zhou took out a pack of cigarettes from his pocket, offered one to him, stuck another in his own mouth, lit them both, and exhaled a ring of smoke.

"Taiguo, when you first arrived, you were just a green boy, and in the blink of an eye, more than ten years have passed. You've climbed up quickly, almost catching up to me," Old Zhou leaned against the wall and said to Qi Taiguo.

Qi Taiguo took a puff and said, "Commander Zhou, aren't you just ribbing me? There's so much I still have to learn from you."

"At my age, I'm just coasting along. I guess I'm going to stay at this level," Commander Zhou said, exhaling deeply.

"Look at you talk," Qi Taiguo laughed. "Aren't you on the list for promotion to deputy battalion commander? In a few days, when the orders come down, I'll probably have to address you as Battalion Commander Zhou."

Commander Zhou's face brightened a bit after hearing this, "Besides me, Old Xu and Tong Jun are on the list too."

Upon mentioning Tong Jun, Qi Taiguo's expression subtly changed.

In terms of promotion, Old Zhou had the seniority and military achievements to be the most deserving, but Tong Jun had a powerful father-in-law, a general. When it came to connections, Old Zhou definitely couldn't compete.

"Don't lose heart. I believe the organization's decision will be wise," Qi Taiguo patted his shoulder.

"Well, if I don't get promoted this time, no big deal, I'll just retire. After all these years in the military, at my age, just a few more years to go, and my son will be able to get married. It'll be a good time to rest," Commander Zhou consoled himself.

Even though they spoke lightly, both men knew that if they didn't get promoted, they would feel extremely unwilling inside. After so many years in the military, who wouldn't want to climb higher?

For a while, both men were silent.

"Enough about me. Let's talk about you, young man," Commander Zhou broke the silence. "You're married now and already at this rank. As long as your military achievements keep piling up, you're sure to climb higher. You're young; you've got plenty of good times ahead!"

Qi Taiguo humbly smiled.

"There's a saying: 'A harmonious home leads to prosperity, and a wise wife brings fewer misfortunes.' I think your Xiao Cheng is quite capable. You've got to live your own lives, weigh things together. It will allow you to focus on your career without any worries. Just don't mess up," Commander Zhou said.

"Her? She's got a fiery temper. There'll be plenty of days to work that out!" Qi Taiguo said, somewhat self-deprecatingly.

"A woman who can cook well is also quite an asset. I hear she's opened a restaurant?" Commander Zhou chuckled.

Qi Taiguo replied, "Yes, right near the elementary school. She's really enterprising."

"It's good to make money. After all, our allowances are a bit low. If she can earn her own keep, future days will surely be better. Besides, you don't have children yet, so it's better for her to work than to stay in the compound gossiping with the other wives, isn't it?" Commander Zhou was very supportive of women working outside the home.

"That's true!" Qi Taiguo laughed, his mind filled with the image of Cheng Su busily working.