

Weak B 121

Chapter 121: Rushing Towards Each Other? “If you’re feeling unwell, go see a doctor and don’t worry about how much it costs.”

When Luo Yanqing said this, Kang Li’s clear fox-like eyes filled with amusement. “I don’t need to take medicine,” she said bluntly, as she saw no need to regularly contribute money to the hospital.

Luo Yanqing said, “...You handle all the household affairs.”

He had little concept of money, and at the research institute, he generally didn’t need to spend anything. He himself didn’t smoke or drink. Apart from the occasional need to chip in when a colleague got married or had a child’s full-month celebration, he really had no need to spend money.

Kang Li’s lips curved into a smile; she knew what he meant: she was free to make decisions regarding the household’s finances and other sundries as she saw fit.

She felt delighted, not because she held the financial reins, but because she was glad about his trust in her. She felt that with “trust” as a foundation, she could perhaps look forward to their future marital life with a bit more anticipation.

...

Dinner was jujube millet porridge paired with flower rolls, vinegar shredded potatoes, and stir-fried zucchini.

As the sun set, the family of five finished dinner. Just like after lunch, before Kang Li could stand up to clear the dishes, Luo Yanqing had already taken the initiative to do it.

Kang Li didn't just sit idle; she cleaned the dining table, rearranged it along with the stools, and then took the three kids for a walk in the courtyard to aid digestion...

"There aren't many people coming over to watch TV tonight."

"Were there a lot before?"

"Mhm."

"Don't you like it?"

"It's not that; I just prefer calm."

After two episodes of the TV series were done, Luo Yanqing didn't ask the neighbor boy, Xue Chong, to help but moved the television and its table back to the living room himself. At that moment, he seemed to understand something upon hearing what Kang Li said.

——Send the television back to our hometown.

She probably wanted some peace, which made him think...

It seemed the thing he had done that afternoon was somewhat presumptuous.

Luo Yanqing thought thus, a trace of discomfort momentarily crossing his handsome face, but as the living room was dimly lit, and since Kang Li had stepped toward the children's bedroom, she didn't notice his change of expression.

About ten minutes later, Kang Li came out of Xiao Ming Rui's bedroom, not finding the man in the living room, nor in the study. As sporadic water sounds came from the courtyard, she paused, and then walked out of the living room.

There he was, washing clothes in the courtyard.

Stopping in her tracks, Kang Li watched quietly under the bright moonlight without making a sound, just standing there observing.

The night breeze was cool, with occasional voices from the neighboring houses.

"Dad, can't we watch it a little longer?"

“Yueyue, it’s late, if you don’t go to bed now...”

“I was talking to my dad. What does it have to do with you?”

“Wen Yue, is that how you talk to your mom?”

“I want to watch TV, I want to watch TV!”

“If you keep shouting like this, be careful I’ll have someone make a cabinet tomorrow and lock the TV inside so you won’t be able to watch it ever again!”

“I hate you. You’re not my dad!”

The sounds of the little girl’s running feet and her crying were exceptionally clear in the quiet night.

“Siyuan, Yueyue is still young. It’s nothing if she talks back a bit.”

“She’s been spoiled by her mom. If I don’t discipline her now, sooner or later she might not even respect you anymore.”

Kang Li listened to the voices from Wen Family Courtyard next door, yet her emotions remained steady.

“You should go to sleep.”

Luo Yanqing inadvertently saw Kang Li standing at the living room door; he paused for a moment and then said softly.

“It’s cooler in the courtyard.”

Kang Li looked at him, a gentle smile appearing on her face.

Under the moonlight, his face seemed a bit veiled, yet it couldn’t hide his graceful form.

Her heart raced “thump, thump” faster as he glanced at her casually.

Chapter 122 Luo Yanqing, Let’s Fall in Love! This feeling was unfamiliar to Kang Li. Before coming to this world, considering Kang Li’s family background and status, she had honestly seen an array of various, exceedingly outstanding men. Yet, none of them ever quickened her heart rate.

In other words, those exceptional gentlemen never stirred her emotions.

The wicker rocking chair was placed in the yard, and Kang Li leaned back in it, unaware as sleepiness crept up on her.

After washing clothes, Luo Yanqing came over and saw Kang Li lying on her side in the wicker rocking chair, sleeping soundly like a cocooned silkworm.

Her skin was fair, her eyebrows and eyes delicate, and her lips slightly pursed. This quiet little girl somehow felt incredibly adorable to him.

Kang Li slept in a daze, suddenly feeling someone pushing her. She slowly opened her eyes, well, just a slit. Under the moonlight, she seemed to see an especially clear, handsome face that bewitched the mind.

One second.

Two seconds.

She saw no sign of reacting.

“Kang Li.”

The man’s voice was deep and crisp, very pleasant. Was he calling her?

Kang Li blinked, “Youâ...” She wanted to ask: Who are you?

Luo Yanqing said, “Go back to sleep.”

Unexpectedly, Kang Li didn’t make a sound; she just kept staring at the man standing in front of her.

“Are you awake?”

Luo Yanqing waved his hand in front of his little wife.

“No.”

Kang Li mumbled, turned around, and planned to change positions to continue sleeping, all the while muttering to herself, “Must be dreaming, I don’t know that person.”

“I am Luo Yanqing.”

Luo Yanqing frowned slightly, quite helpless.

Kang Li: “啊!”

Luo Yanqing?

Who is that?

Suddenly, Kang Li became lucid, she sat upright, “Did I fall asleep?” She felt quite embarrassed.

Luo Yanqing nodded, “Hmm.”

Kang Li stood up, “Is the courtyard door locked properly?”

Luo Yanqing nodded.

“Then let’s go back to the room to rest.”

Kang Li said as she began to walk away, but after taking two steps, she seemed to remember something and stopped.

As Luo Yanqing walked up beside her, she only heard her ask, "Are you sleeping in the guest room or the master bedroom?"

Luo Yanqing: "â" He originally intended to say "guest room," but ended up remaining silent.

"I'm fine with either."

Kang Li continued walking forward, saying as she walked, "Whether you want to sleep in the guest room or the master, I have no objections, I truly mean it."

Luo Yanqing still did not respond.

The two reached the living room, Kang Li stopped again, turned to face the man, and said seriously with her bright, fox-like eyes, "Luo Yanqing, let's start dating!"

Luo Yanqing: "â" Dating?" What was she thinking? They were already married; did they need to date now?

"Yes. Are you unwilling?"

With a hint of disappointment in her fox-like eyes, Kang Li said, "Before you, I had been engaged. He was from my village and had been my classmate from elementary to high school. Three years ago, he had his family propose relentlessly.

Unexpectedly, three years later, that bastard started a relationship with a female educated youth who had come to our village, declaring that he wanted to break off our engagement no matter what.

I was quite angry about this. Not because he wanted to break off the engagement, but because he still had an engagement with me while being involved with that female educated youth.

Luo Yanqing, I am telling you this to ensure you don't hear about my past from others in our village later on and subsequently form any opinions about me. Secondly... this is also my way of showing respect to you."

Chapter 123 Uncomfortable Luo Yanqing: "I... am very busy with work." He didn't have time for frivolous affairs, otherwise, the organization wouldn't have to make decisions for him, resolving his marriage issues time and again.

Kang Li: "You do your thing, and we'll just go with the flow. I'm not the clingy type."

Luo Yanqing: "Let's do that then."

Kang Li: "Is that a yes?"

Luo Yanqing gave a low "hmm" in response.

"Let's go to bed."

Kang Li said with a smile.

As she turned around, Luo Yanqing started to say, "About my previous marriage..." But before he could finish, Kang Li waved her hand: "I don't care about your past, and there's no need to tell me more. Besides, agreeing to marry you clearly means I have some understanding of your situation."

It was just a past marriage with three little ones, wasn't it!

If it wasn't for that, she wouldn't be standing in front of him today.

Luo Yanqing's mouth twitched slightly, but he ended up saying nothing more.

He followed Kang Li into the master bedroom.

Actually... he knew that if he were to sleep in the guest room, not to mention how Director Song would scold him later, it would be disrespectful to his newlywed wife.

"There are pajamas and everyday clothes I've prepared for you in the wardrobe."

Kang Li said softly, pointing to the wardrobe.

Luo Yanqing: "Thank you." Before doing laundry, Luo Yanqing had taken a shower in the bathroom and was now wearing his original pajamas, so he hadn't thought about changing into a new set, but the thanks were absolutely necessary.

After dinner and taking the three little ones for a walk in the yard to aid digestion, Kang Li didn't only take a shower herself but also cleaned the three kids until they were spick-and-span. She was now wearing a plain, cotton, knee-length comfortable dress.

Well, to be more precise, a nightgown.

However, it could be worn outside on a regular basis, but in Kang Li's life before coming to this world, she had lived meticulously from a young age and would definitely not wear a nightgown outside.

"Should I turn off the light?"

The crisp yet indifferent male voice suddenly floated into her ears, undeniably pulling Kang Li back from her wandering thoughts. She replied, "Turn it off, if you want to sleep later, I can turn the desk lamp on for you."

There were two small bedside tables on either side of the bed, one with a lamp and a red novel on it, and the other with only a small alarm clock.

The red novel was “Song of Youth,” purchased by Kang Li through the System on the Mall, right before sleep.

Luo Yanqing: “No need.” Before turning off the light, Luo Yanqing casually glanced at the bed.

One and a half meters wide, with a cool mat laid out, two pillows arranged on it, and under each pillow, a neatly folded thin towel blanket placed, with some distance between the two pillows.

Having seen all this, Luo Yanqing finally felt the unease in his heart dissipate completely.

Yes, when Luo Yanqing followed Kang Li into the master bedroom, to tell the truth, he was quite uncomfortable.

Although the two were husband and wife protected by law... but they had only met for the first time today. For him to just lie in bed with a woman he hardly knew, he had some psychological barriers.

Even if she was his lawful wife, in his view, it would be difficult to lie down together casually for some time.

However, he was grateful the bed was wide enough, grateful they were neither of them fat, grateful the two pillows weren’t placed too close together, and grateful for the two thin towel blankets.

Otherwise, he would likely turn around to sleep in the study — even if it meant getting scolded by the Director later!

“Goodnight, Luo Yanqing.”

As Luo Yanqing turned off the light, Kang Li lay down on the bed and casually pulled over the thin towel blanket to cover her midsection, to prevent catching a cold at night.

Chapter 124: Luo Yanqing: Has His Little Wife Become a Bit Rebellious? The bright moonlight filtered through the pale blue curtains and into the room, casting a gentle glow on Kang Li’s ethereally beautiful face, as if she hadn’t noticed it.

Her clear, pure fox-like eyes, which were so vibrant during the day, were now closed, her long and curled lashes casting a silhouette like butterfly wings beneath her eyelids.

“Goodnight,” Luo Yanqing said as he lay down in his spot, and after a long while, he gave a faint response.

The night was silent, the breeze blowing in from the outside, cool and soothing.

Not knowing how much time had passed, Kang Li heard light and even breathing sounds by her ear, her long lashes trembling slightly as her previously closed fox-like eyes slowly opened.

Asleep already?

That's what she thought as she turned to look at the man beside her, realizing that he had almost fallen asleep at the edge of the bed.

A clear boundary!

The distance between him and her could not be more distinctly described than as a clear boundary.

Amused, Kang Li found the man innocent to the point of being adorable, the thought crossing her mind for perhaps the umpteenth time that day.

Her lips curved into a slight smile, and soon, overcome by drowsiness, Kang Li closed her fox-like eyes again and drifted into sleep. The person she thought was asleep, however, slowly opened his phoenix eyes after she was sound asleep.

Similarly, he turned to look at her, his gaze lingering on her fair, beautiful profile for a moment before an enigmatic emotion flashed through his dark eyes...

The next morning, Kang Li opened her eyes at six o'clock as usual.

Before coming to this world, she would get up at this time, wash up, go downstairs for breakfast, and then change into her work clothes to drive to the company for work.

But now, she would wake up on time, freshen up, do a little exercise in the courtyard, then prepare breakfast for herself, Xiao Ming Rui, and the three of them, as well as tidy up the house and clean the courtyard.

Rubbing her temples, she sat up slowly, looking at the spot next to her. Not seeing the man there, she remembered someone whispering in her ear before she was fully awake, "I'll prepare breakfast. You sleep a bit more."

Gathering her thoughts, Kang Li blinked her fox-like eyes and decided to crawl back into bed, intending to go back to sleep.

Simply because she knew that it was Luo Yanqing who had spoken to her.

Regrettably, due to her routine, she found herself unable to sleep even though she wanted badly to doze off again.

And with hunger starting to gnaw at her stomach, Kang Li eventually got up.

After changing her clothes, she left the bedroom and went to wash up.

On the stove porridge was simmering, and Luo Yanqing was exercising in the courtyard. Upon seeing Kang Li, his punching motion momentarily paused and he asked, "You're up?"

Kang Li: “Hmm.” After washing up, Kang Li did a few simple exercises nearby, twisting her waist and kicking her legs, completely unconcerned that such behavior might draw strange looks from the man.

...

“Mommy, is what you said really true?”

Xiao Ming Wei’s big eyes, resembling black grapes, shone with surprise and a hint of disbelief. Looking up at Kang Li, she adorably asked for confirmation.

“Of course it’s true.”

Smiling, Kang Li replied, “Mommy has already talked it over with your daddy. From today on, daddy will follow the schedule I set for you to study and play with you.”

What she had said to the man the day before wasn’t just a passing remark; she had meant it.

Speaking of which, Kang Li turned her fox-like eyes towards the man who happened to walk into the living room: “Daddy, isn’t that right?”

Having just finished tidying up the kitchen, Luo Yanqing almost lost his balance upon hearing this.

Once he steadied himself, he nodded and murmured an affirmation.

Daddy?

How could she call him that?

In that moment, Luo Yanqing felt both awkward and uncomfortable, and he secretly pondered: Kang Li, his little wife, could she be a bit too unconventional?

“Daddy, Vivi will be very, very good!”

Chapter 125: Milk Bun Ming Han Stands Up for Mom After getting confirmation from Mom and further confirmation from Dad, Xiao Ming Wei was very happy, clapping her little hands with glee almost like a seal applauding.

Xiao Ming Han: “Daddy, Hanhan likes Daddy!” Taking small steps towards Dad, Xiao Ming Han looked up at him with adoration.

Luo Yanqing: “Hmm.”

Xiao Ming Han didn’t feel slighted by such a response at all; on the contrary, he was especially delighted that Dad responded to him.

That meant Dad liked him too!

Turning his gaze to Kang Li, Luo Yanqing's lips parted slightly, "I am here." His eyes were indifferent, and frankly, if it were an ordinary person interacting with him, they would probably find it boring and stifling.

However, Kang Li didn't feel that way at all. On the contrary, she appreciated men who had depth and were less talkative. Furthermore, in her opinion, such men were typically cold on the outside but warm on the inside, and once you got to know them well, you would find they were quite cheeky.

Or describing him as "abstinent" might be even more apt and fitting.

And Luo Yanqing of such a disposition was a perfect match for what Kang Li envisioned in her other half.

"I'll go write something."

Pointing towards the master bedroom, Kang Li said this and walked away.

Starting from the second day Captain Kang and Big Brother Kang returned to their hometown, Kang Li had already sent two articles to a newspaper. In other words, in just half a month, she had received a payment from this newspaper.

As for the second article she sent out, if nothing went wrong, she should receive the remittance notice soon.

Although the payment she received last time was merely eight yuan, it was only her testing the waters. Besides, eight yuan was sincerely not a small amount.

After all, the salary of an average worker these days was also just 20-30 yuan per month.

The monthly income of farmers was even less, about six yuan or so.

From this, it is evident that Kang Li earned eight yuan for a single article, which she managed to create in less than two hours, was definitely something many people envied.

Approaching 11:30, Kang Li came out from her study to find that the living room was without the “one big, three small” figures, knowing it was playtime for them, she glanced towards Luo Yanqing’s study. Just then, Xiao Ming Han’s indignant milky voice came from the courtyard.

“Mom! Mom! I hate Aunt Tao, she’s mean!”

Kang Li called the child over and then sat with the little one on the hardwood sofa, asking, “Why do you say that?” As for the Aunt Tao mentioned by Xiao Ming Han, having lived in the courtyard for half a month, Kang Li naturally knew who she was.

“Aunt Tao said Mom is a vixen.” Xiao Ming Han spoke with righteous indignation, “She’s like a fierce, sharp-beaked rooster, not a good person. She told Sister Yueyue’s mom that Mom is a vixen. I hate her, and I don’t want to see her ever again!”

Kang Li laughed, “How did you find out about this?”

Xiao Ming Han: “I was squatting not far away playing when Aunt Tao was badmouthing Mom, and I overheard it.” Still indignant, the little one added, “Mom, Aunt Tao is so mean, when I grow up a little more, I’ll definitely avenge Mom!”

Listening to the child’s bold words, Kang Li couldn’t help but chuckle, “Before we talk about avenging Mom, look closely – does Mom look like a vixen?”

“What does a vixen look like? Hanhan hasn’t seen one, doesn’t know, but Hanhan knows Mom is definitely not a vixen, because Mom is a good mom, and Hanhan loves Mom!”

Xiao Ming Han’s adorable manner almost made Kang Li melt; her fox-like eyes curving, she smiled and said, “Mom loves our Hanhan too, but Hanhan must promise Mom not to call Aunt Tao a bad person anymore.”

Chapter 126: It’s Just Jealousy “Why is that?”

Xiao Ming Han didn’t understand.

Kang Li: “Aunt Tao said that Mom being called a Vixen is actually a compliment about how pretty she is.”

Xiao Ming Han blinked his eyes, “Really?”

Kang Li pretended to look hurt and then started to faux cry, “Wuu wuu... I’m so sad, it turns out Hanhan doesn’t think Mom is pretty, what should I do? I’m so upset...”

“Don’t cry, don’t cry. Hanhan’s mom is Little Fairy, super pretty!”

Gently patting Kang Li’s hand, Little Warm Man Ming Han said in his milky voice, “I will listen to mom and not call Aunt Tao a bad person anymore. Mom, can you please stop crying?”

“Am I really a Little Fairy? Hanhan baby isn’t tricking me, right?”

Kang Li was covering her eyes with her hands, but now she peeked through her fingers at Xiao Ming Han, who stood in front of her, straightening his little body and said earnestly, “Hanhan wouldn’t lie to Mom, Mom is super pretty, the prettiest Little Fairy!”

“Alright, I believe that my Hanhan baby isn’t tricking mom.”

Embracing the little one, Kang Li beamed with joy, patted the youngster’s head, then put away her smile and said seriously, “Hanhan must remember, never speak ill of adults outside, otherwise, people will think that Mom hasn’t taught Hanhan well.”

Xiao Ming Han puffed up his cheeks, “But... but what if an adult like Aunt Tao speaks ill of Mom? Mom, although you said that the ‘Vixen’ Aunt Tao mentioned was to compliment you, Hanhan saw clearly, oh, Aunt Tao looked like this when she said it.”

Imitating Tao Ping’s demeanor, Xiao Ming Han pursed his lips.

Seeing this, Kang Li couldn’t help but laugh aloud, “Alright alright, you and your clever tricks. Now, you just need to remember what mom said, don’t speak ill of elders outside, remember that! As for the reason, it’s simple, Mom doesn’t want to hear others say that Mom’s Hanhan is a bad kid.”

Xiao Ming Han was slow to respond.

Kang Li raised an eyebrow, “Hanhan?”

“Alright, I remembered.”

Xiao Ming Han responded with a tense face.

Kang Li: “I feel like you’re brushing off Mom.”

Upon hearing this, Xiao Ming Han instantly straightened up again, patting his little chest, "I promise Mom that I won't say Aunt Tao is a bad person, a mean pointy-mouthed big rooster anymore!"

Kang Li suppressed a laugh, looked away from the child, and thought to herself: How is this child so clever?! He's so hard to handle.

But also too adorable not to cherish!

Thinking this, Kang Li kissed Milk Bun Ming Han on the cheek with a "smack."

Unexpectedly, the little one blushed and snuggled into her arms, "Mom, Hanhan is a big kid now, you can't just kiss me randomly."

Kang Li looked at the adorable little fellow in her arms and said softly with a smile, "Two and a half years old, still my baby. Even when you grow up, in Mom's eyes, you'll always be my little child."

Looking at him with eyes full of affection, Kang Li rubbed the little one's head and added, "Mom's Hanhan is the best. You got so upset for mom today; mom is deeply touched. If somebody says something about mom again, don't listen to it; just let them talk. After all, Mom is fine, and a few words from them mean nothing."

Tao Ping, the wife of Researcher Zhang, had been at the courtyard for just over half a month, and Kang Li couldn't recall ever offending her, yet this person inexplicably targeted her and hadn't spared her from gossip.

After pondering for a moment, the corners of Kang Li's mouth twitched into a barely noticeable cold smirk. It must be jealousy!

Chapter 127 Is This Still Him? It was either Researcher Zhang who was jealous of her husband, Professor Luo, and often spoke ill of Professor Luo at home, which caused his wife, Loo Ping, Teacher Loo, to vent her anger on her; or it was that Ms. Loo who was jealous of her beauty and jealous she had married her husband, Professor Luo, a man endowed with both talent and good looks!

Kang Li was unaware that her current guess was actually close to the truth, and one could even say, it was the truth.

"Mom, I'll listen to you and won't talk bad about adults again, but can we let Dad get revenge, to take revenge for you?"

Xiao Ming Han suddenly looked up with this suggestion.

"Hasn't mom already said? No matter what others say about mom, mom will be fine."

Kang Li tapped the child's nose, "As for having your dad take revenge for mom, that's not only a waste of resources, but also unnecessary. What's more, your dad is busy with important matters; how can he waste his time on such trivial issues? Right?"

"This..."

Xiao Ming Han did not finish his sentence but ultimately nodded obediently. He somewhat understood what his mom was saying, but he knew for sure that everything his mom said was right.

And he, just needed to listen to his mom.

Facing such an understanding child, Kang Li's heart was actually filled with mixed feelings and discomfort. The child was not even three years old, yet because he was born without a mother and had not received proper care from his father, he became sensitive and overthinking, such a small Bun could read people's expressions and discern malice from kindness in their words...

The more she thought about it, the more heartbroken she felt. Kang Li pressed her forehead against the child's and rubbed it, whispering softly, "Actually, Hanhan can sometimes be a little naughty. With dad and mom here, our Hanhan doesn't need to be too sensible."

At this point, Kang Li suddenly remembered Xiao Ming Rui and Xiao Ming Wei, and she asked Milk Bun Ming Han, "Why didn't your brother and Vivi come back with you?"

Xiao Ming Han replied, "Sister wanted to go play at Sister Lulu's house, and brother went along with her."

Luo Yanqing was sitting in the study reading a book when he unexpectedly overheard the conversation between Kang Li and Xiao Ming Han.

His gaze left the study and settled on the slightly ajar study door, his lips pressed tightly together, his indifferent expression gradually deepened.

Vixen?

He certainly didn't think Researcher Zhang's spouse was complimenting his wife.

Especially after spending yesterday with the person in the living room, he could see that... Kang Li, his wife, was not one to cause troubles, and her demeanor was gentle without losing forthrightness, acting openly and directly.

Such a person, naturally, would not be one to make enemies carelessly.

So why would Researcher Zhang's spouse malign his wife with words? Luo Yanqing pondered without understanding, but he decided not to easily dismiss this matter.

The reason?

If he hadn't heard it, then so be it, but since he did hear it, he naturally couldn't ignore it.

Otherwise, when he returned to the research institute and resumed work, there's no telling how she might be bullied.

His thoughts wandered to this, and Luo Yanqing suddenly froze.

He... why was he worried she might be bullied? Why was he thinking about intervening in such idle gossip between women?

Was this still him?

Luo Yanqing felt somewhat bewildered for a moment.

However, around five o'clock in the afternoon, Luo Yanqing still arranged to meet Researcher Zhang at the state-owned restaurant near the compound.

Today was Saturday, and Zhang Sheng's research team, after being busy for nearly two months without any progress in their project, decided to give the members a two-day break, so everyone could relax. Once they returned to work, perhaps they would have new discoveries.

Chapter 128 Luo Yanqing Stands Up for His Wife Zhang Sheng wasn't particularly happy about getting two days off to go home; he wanted to achieve something, to have the group members, the leaders of the institute, and people from other project teams admire him.

As he was nearing forty, he was unwilling to continue in mediocrity and did not want to retire as a mere junior researcher.

Thus, even though he was reluctant, when the team leader gave everyone a holiday, Zhang Sheng had to go home to rest as ordered.

What he hadn't expected was that just as he stepped through his front door and had barely settled in, Luo Yanqing invited him to take a walk.

Luo Yanqing, who had recently emerged as a promising new talent in the scientific research field, was highly valued by the leaders of the institute.

Zhang Sheng had thought about trying to transfer to the project team under Luo Yanqing, yet since he started working, he had already been in more than two research teams and hadn't achieved any notable results in any of them.

If he continued switching teams, his reputation would inevitably suffer.

In fact, when he was scheming to move to the second project team, people at the institute were already speaking ill of him behind his back, and although he pretended not to hear it, it made him extremely uncomfortable.

Today, Luo Yanqing had taken the initiative to invite him for a walk; could it be that he wanted to invite him to join his team for the upcoming new projects?

If so, that would be great!

With a mix of three parts anticipation, three parts joy, and four parts uncertainty, Zhang Sheng walked with Luo Yanqing toward the state-run restaurant.

Along the way, Luo Yanqing didn't say a word, while Zhang Sheng occasionally brought up institute matters, to which Luo only listened quietly, responding at most with a grunt of acknowledgment.

Three dishes were ordered along with two servings of white rice and a more refined bottle of white wine, all paid for with Luo Yanqing's money and coupons.

Despite his reserved and seemingly unsociable demeanor, Luo Yanqing was, in reality, very clear about social nuances.

"Little Luo, do you have something to tell me?"

Suppressing all his conjectures, Zhang Sheng looked at the wine and dishes on the table without reaching for the chopsticks but voiced the question in his mind.

At this moment, Zhang Sheng felt that his previous thoughts were likely overthinking it; frankly, he had a vague feeling that Luo Yanqing's invitation to have this meal at the state-run restaurant was definitely not about asking him to join his new project team.

After all, such matters could be settled in just a few words; why need to come to this state-run restaurant to discuss it?

Furthermore, if he truly wanted to invite him to join the new project team, why hadn't he mentioned even a single word during their walk?

Luo Yanqing, of course, didn't know what Zhang Sheng was thinking and wouldn't probe; he opened the bottle of wine, poured a little for both himself and Zhang Sheng, and then, with a clear, low voice tinged with a faint air of indifference, finally spoke, "Comrade Loo said my wife is a 'Vixen.' Kindly let her know that I am aware of it."

Upon hearing this, Zhang Sheng was initially stunned, then felt both awkward and uncomfortable: "This..." He knew that his wife, Loo Ping, had most likely mentioned the new young wife of the man before him as a "Vixen" in her gossip, thus maligning her.

But how did Luo Yanqing learn about these women's petty conflicts?

Could it be... could it be that his newly-wed wife had told him?

Luo Yanqing said, "Have a drink." Looking at the wine glass in front of Zhang Sheng, he made a gesture of invitation.

"Thank you! Due to health reasons, I shouldn't drink."

This statement was half-true and half-false; it wasn't that he couldn't drink, but that he easily got drunk.

Based on this, Zhang Sheng seldom drank with others.

Luo Yanqing, hearing this, didn't say anything further.

Neither of them touched the chopsticks and just sat quietly. After a while, Zhang Sheng stood up: "I still have some work to handle, so I won't be able to dine with you today. I hope you understand."

Chapter 129: Cutting Off the Obsession Zhang Sheng simply couldn't continue sitting there; he felt too ashamed to face Luo Yanqing and wanted to vanish from his sight as quickly as possible.

Luo Yanqing: "Hmm." His expression remained indifferent. After Zhang Sheng left, he casually capped the liquor bottle and sat for a while longer, then called the waiter to pack up.

When he got home, the moment Zhang Sheng saw his wife Loo Ping, regardless of their children being present, he sternly said, "Follow me to the study."

"What's wrong?"

Loo Ping was puzzled.

Zhang Sheng didn't answer.

Once the two of them had entered the study one after the other, Loo Ping frowned deeply: "You and that Luo Yanqing were fine when you went out. How come you look so embarrassed now, as if you've been dipped in ink?"

Zhang Sheng paced back and forth in the study with his hands on his hips. Then he stopped in front of his wife Loo Ping and demanded with dissatisfaction, "Why on earth are you bothering Luo Yanqing's wife?"

"..." Loo Ping felt utterly baffled: "When did I bother that vixen? And who told you I've been bothering that vixen?"

Zhang Sheng glared angrily: "Still saying you haven't bothered her?! If you haven't, then what's all this about a vixen from your mouth?"

Loo Ping: "I..."

Zhang Sheng: "Don't forget, you're a people's teacher!"

Loo Ping: "Can't you speak properly?"

Zhang Sheng scoffed, "Speak properly? How do you expect me to speak properly with you? Luo Yanqing called me out from my home to say just one sentence to me. Do you know how embarrassed I felt when I heard it?"

"What did he say to you?" As soon as she asked, Loo Ping seemed to realize something, her face showing astonishment: "It couldn't be that Luo Yanqing came looking for you to stand up for his wife, accusing me of calling his new bride a vixen? But how would he know about that?"

Zhang Sheng said irritably, "You ask me, but whom should I ask?"

"I don't think I said anything wrong. You didn't see..."

Loo Ping didn't think she was at fault, but her voice gradually softened: "The vixen remark was something I mentioned casually to Xiao Su from across the street at Comrade Wen's house during lunch today. It was just the two of us, there shouldn't have been a third person to know."

Zhang Sheng didn't respond to that but asked instead, "Did she provoke you?"

Loo Ping: "No, she didn't."

"If she hasn't provoked you, why are you speaking so carelessly in front of Wen Siyuan's wife?" Zhang Sheng questioned.

"Can't I dislike how she looks? She's enchantingly beautiful, and not even a few days after moving into the compound, she's buying washing machines, TVs, sewing machines, bicycles, radios... Such arrogance just infuriates me!"

"Aren't you stretching the truth a bit? Loo Ping, no matter how she looks or what she bought after entering Luo Yanqing's house, it has nothing to do with us. Besides, your job is to educate; aren't you worried that if someone heard what you said, it would spread to your school?"

“I...”

Zhang Sheng sighed deeply at this point, his face expressing bitterness: “I’ve been looking for an opportunity... hoping to join Luo Yanqing’s research group. But you, you just had to run your mouth and now you’ve completely dashed my hopes.”

“Is it really that serious?” Loo Ping was at a loss for what to do for a moment. After thinking, she said, “Why don’t... Why don’t I find a time to apologize to Kang Li at the Luo Family?”

Zhang Sheng was silent for a long while, then shook his head: “Forget it.”

“But didn’t you want to...” Before Loo Ping could finish, Zhang Sheng interrupted her: “I know what you’re trying to say, but all I can do is just think about it. If I really propose to change research groups to the leadership, I’m afraid it would be difficult to stay at the institute any longer.”

Chapter 130: The Language of Flowers, Longing On the other side, Kang Li was about to enter the kitchen to make dinner when she saw Yanqing coming in from outside the courtyard door and couldn’t help but smile, “Back already?!”

Yanqing just grunted and said, “This is food from the state-run restaurant; it’s still warm.”

“Give it to me; I’ll go dish it out. You call Ruirui to wash their hands, we’ll start eating in a bit.” As she spoke, Kang Li paused and asked, “Have you eaten yet?”

Yanqing shook his head.

Kang Li said, "Then let's eat together." If Kang Li had known that Yanqing had gone out half an hour ago to stand up for her, her heart would probably have been touched.

However, Yanqing definitely wouldn't mention it, and, considering what Loo Ping and Zhang Sheng had said, he probably wouldn't be visiting the Luo Family's home again.

...

Before going to sleep that night, Kang Li lay on her back in bed and casually asked Luo Yanqing, "I forgot to ask you, our courtyard has been refurbished by me; you don't have any objections, do you?"

Like the night before, Luo Yanqing tried as much as possible to distance himself from Kang Li, lying close to the edge of the bed.

"It's quite good."

That was the truth.

Yanqing genuinely thought the newly renovated courtyard and the faucets installed in the kitchen and bathroom were quite good; he even found Kang Li's layout of the courtyard especially clever.

“I’m telling you, next spring, our courtyard will be particularly beautiful. Oh, do you like roses? I quite like them. The floral language of roses represents the longing for love, and different colors of roses have their own unique meanings!

Did you know? Red roses signify passionate love, suitable for giving to a significant other; pink roses signify vows of love, ideal for someone you have a crush on;

while white roses symbolize pure love, perfect for a first love or a love from your youth. I’m thinking about planting some climbing roses by our courtyard wall, and dividing the yard into different areas with other flowers...”

Kang Li slowly spoke, and without realizing it, she changed the subject: “It’s been a while since I left home; I wonder if my parents are doing well. When Ruirui has his winter vacation, I’ll take them back to my hometown...”

While saying this, Kang Li’s heart actually longed for her relatives in another world, knowing that while her parents had her brother Kang Yi for company, despite their father’s unreliable nature towards his children, Kang Li still missed her family deeply.

Because she loved them!

Yanqing quietly listened to Kang Li talk about the roses, about Kang Li’s family in Aoli Village... and he didn’t know how much time had passed when the pleasant voice that flowed into his ears, like a stream over smooth stones, gradually stopped, followed by the sound of light, even breathing beside him.

Asleep?

Turning over to face Kang Li's side, Yanqing's typically indifferent black eyes tinged with a very faint unusual emotion—she was indeed asleep.

...

Several days passed in the blink of an eye.

Aoli Village.

"Old man, what did you say?" To make sure she hadn't heard wrong, Cai Xiufen couldn't help but confirm with Captain Kang, "Did Li Bao send us something?"

Captain Kang said, "Comrade Li came to the village to deliver a letter informing me; how could this be false? Oh, Comrade Li also said that what was sent to us should be a television set."

"What do you mean should be?"

You old man, can't you speak clearly? Either it is or it isn't; why must your answers be so ambiguous? Is she supposed to guess a riddle or what? Cai Xiufen glared at Captain Kang annoyed.

“Look here, is it that I don’t want to clarify?! It’s Comrade Li who said that from the outer packaging, it definitely looks like a television set box, but whether it’s actually a television inside, Comrade Li didn’t guarantee it to me.”