

Weak B 591

Chapter 591: Deeply Emotional, Magnanimous

Wang Chunhua lowered her voice and said something into Li Daniu's ear.

"We're just idling around, everyone's here to join in the fun."

Li Daniu laughed dismissively and then said with an acidic tone, "Li Bao's son-in-law really seems like a catch, fair and handsome, just one glance and you know he's educated. Plus, he drives a car to our village, I bet his status is definitely not ordinary."

"However good he is, it's none of our business!"

Wang Chunhua sighed and said, "Did you see those three kids? Each one looks like a little fairy child, and they seem very close to Li Bao, their stepmother."

"You just can't compare people. Our village isn't without stepmothers, nor daughters who've married off to other villages to become stepmothers, but who has the luck of Li Bao?"

The man may have been married before and has three kids, but with his stature, even if he had two more kids, I reckon a lot of girls would still want to marry him."

Li Daniu wondered which connection the Team Leader had used to find such a good man for Li Bao, and before she realized, she had blurted it out loud.

"Indeed, I wonder through whom the Team Leader found such a good son-in-law for Li Bao."

Upon hearing this, Wang Chunhua echoed the sentiment.

The group of educated women standing together were also filled with jealousy and envy toward Kang Li.

"I originally thought the delicate doll from the Team Leader's house would suffer, but she married a man who's not only handsome but also has an incredible demeanor."

"With such a man willing to remarry, I'd be willing to marry him and become the stepmother of the three children."

"Kang Libao seems even prettier than before she got married, have you noticed?"

"Her demeanor has changed."

"Indeed, her demeanor is completely different. The old Kang Libao seemed delicate, naive, and a bit simple, but the current Kang Libao seems very elegant and graceful."

"With a husband like that to influence her, it would be strange if Kang Libao's demeanor hadn't changed."

"Those three kids look so adorable, Kang Libao is truly blessed!"

"What do you mean by that?"

"Without having to give birth, she gets to have three wonderful kids, don't you think that's a form of happiness? Besides, the three kids seem very close to Kang Libao."

While the villagers and the educated women were engaged in a lively discussion outside, Kang Yichen and Kang Yihong walked out each carrying about ten pounds of mixed candy.

The brothers distributed candy to everyone they saw, with Kang Yichen saying, "These are for our uncle and auntie's wedding, they sent us out to pass them out as wedding sweets!"

Everyone, looking at the lovely candies in their hands, spoke words of celebration.

"Gosh! There's a rabbit on this candy, it wouldn't be the Great White Rabbit milk candy sold at the supply and marketing cooperative, would it?"

Li Daniu exclaimed in surprise.

Wang Chunhua: "It is Great White Rabbit milk candy, I've seen it at the counter in the supply and marketing cooperative."

Cui the Loudspeaker squeezed the soft candy in her hand, mumbling, "Is this soft thing really candy?"

"If Doll Chen is giving it out, it's got to be good. If you don't want it, just give it to me."

Wang Chunhua reached out her hand towards Cui the Loudspeaker.

"Go on, that's mine, you have your own, don't think about taking mine."

Cui the Loudspeaker hurriedly stuffed the candy in her pocket, "Li Bao and her husband really know how to treat people, it's almost two years since their wedding and they're still thinking of giving us wedding candy."

Wang Chunhua: "That's because Li Bao is affectionate and generous."

Li Daniu: "The few candies I have here include not only soft candy and Great White Rabbit, but also peanut candy and orange-flavored fruit candy."

Chapter 592: Laying Out the Banquet

Cui the Loudspeaker: "Doll Chen and Kiddo Hong are holding candy bags that must weigh at least ten pounds each, right?"

Wang Chunhua: "About that."

"It must have cost a pretty penny." With a creamy White Rabbit candy tucked in her mouth, sweetening her very heart, Li Daniu smacked her lips and said, "Tasty, this White Rabbit candy is really good; my mouth is full of milk flavor."

Those female educated youths looked at the candies in their hands, their eyes brimming with envy and jealousy, one of them said, "These are all high-end candies, I've only had them when I visited my aunt's house during the New Year."

"I've never had them, but I've seen them at the department store counter. I asked my mom to buy some, but she thought they were too expensive and only bought the cheaper fruit-flavored candies."

"Let's go, it's time to head back to the Educated Youth Spot, or else our meal might be eaten by others."

"Right, right, let's hurry back, let those who don't like watching the fun envy the candies in our hands."

Before long, those female educated youths gradually walked away.

And the villagers and children who had received the candies also dispersed and returned to their own homes.

Nearly twenty pounds of candies, Kang Yichen and Kang Yihong gave them all away.

Some people, hearing that the Team Leader's House was distributing wedding candies outside the courtyard, hurried over only to find that all had already been given out, inexorably beating their chests and stomping their feet in frustration at not having come earlier.

Grandpa Kang, Grandma Kang, the couples of Big Uncle Kang and Third Uncle Kang, along with their sons, daughters-in-law, and grandchildren, all arrived at Captain Kang's house in succession.

Seeing the crowded house full of the Kang family, Luo Yanqing, even though he had heard from Kang Li about the large number of people in Old Kang's home (just counting from Grandpa Kang down, the family was quite large), was still astonished.

This was truly a case of the bountiful male over female members in the family!

Well, according to what his little wife said, within the last three generations of Old Kang's family, except for his little wife, there were only boys.

As he followed Captain Kang, his father-in-law, to recognize each family member, Luo Yanqing couldn't help but inwardly sigh: If one's memory wasn't good, he might only remember a few people after such a round of introductions.

Because of the confidentiality of his job, when Big Uncle Kang and Third Uncle Kang asked Luo Yanqing questions, and there were things Luo Yanqing had difficulty in disclosing, Captain Kang would step in to tactfully cover for him.

The large family chatted together for over half an hour; Captain Kang told Grandpa Kang, Grandma Kang, Big Uncle Kang, and Third Uncle Kang, "Dad, Mom, Big brother, Third brother, Yanqing and Li Bao had told me before they even came back that when we get here, we need to properly set up a few tables — just for our big family and relatives to gather together. As for the villagers, having distributed so much candy today, we won't invite them. What do you think..."

Grandpa Kang asked, "Which day is it set for?"

Captain Kang: "The day after tomorrow. We need to prepare the ingredients tomorrow."

Grandpa Kang: "How many tables?"

Captain Kang: "Prepare for eight tables, set six."

Grandpa Kang frowned: "That's too many. Two tables would be enough; the younger generation can skip the table, and besides, everyone is busy working, they might not all come."

Captain Kang: "Dad, two tables might not be enough. Li Bao and Yanqing have been married for almost two years now, and this is their first time back. The relatives will definitely come."

At this point, Luo Yanqing said, "Grandpa, let's do it the way my dad said. Li Bao, my dad, and I discussed this beforehand. No matter how many relatives come, everyone in our family should join the table."

Knowing that they were to host a feast at the Yue family, he brought enough money and coupons to cover this visit.

"It will cost a fair amount of money."

Grandpa Kang still didn't nod his head.

Luo Yanqing: "Grandpa, I owe Li Bao a wedding; consider this feast as the family helping us make up for it."

Chapter 593: Kang Li Takes Luo Yanqing to Recognize the Door

Hearing his son-in-law Luo Yanqing go so far as to say this, Grandpa Kang didn't say much else.

He knew that this was his son-in-law giving the Old Kang's Home some added prestige!

Once the matter was settled, Grandpa Kang, Grandma Kang, Big Uncle Kang, and the others didn't stay much longer, since they all had to go back to work in the afternoon.

After Grandpa Kang and his party left, Kang Li took out the gifts she had prepared for her grandparents and for Big Uncle and Third Uncle, divided them into three portions, and showed them to her mother: "Mom, do you think this is appropriate? I prepared a set of clothes for each of my grandparents, plus two jars of malt extract and two bottles of national liquor..."

"It's very good!"

Although Grandpa Kang and Grandma Kang lived with Big Uncle Kang's family, Kang Li still prepared separate gifts for her grandparents, which, in Cai Xiufen's view, was beyond reproach.

"Then Luo Yanqing and I, along with Ruirui and the others, will go sit with Big Uncle and Third Uncle for a while."

"Go ahead, but don't stay too long. Your elder sister-in-law Kang and Third sister-in-law Kang have already started cooking."

With Cai Xiufen's command, Elder sister-in-law Kang not only slaughtered two chickens but also cut a large piece of the recently made cured meat to stir-fry, and she also prepared about a dozen eggs just in case.

As for vegetables, there were plenty in the backyard garden.

Kang Li smiled and responded, "Okay," then turned to Luo Yanqing, "Let's go. I'll take you to Big Uncle and Third Uncle's home to get acquainted." Upon hearing this, Luo Yanqing nodded his head. He then looked towards Captain Kang and Big Brother Kang, Third Brother Kang: "Dad, Big Brother, Third Brother, then Xiao Li and I will head to Big Uncle and Third Uncle's home."

"Go ahead."

Captain Kang nodded.

"Can you handle the things? If not, let Third Brother and I give you a hand." Big Brother Kang said to Kang Li as he and Third Brother Kang stood up alongside their brother-in-law Luo Yanqing, looking at him. Kang Li shook her head: "No need, Luo Yanqing and I can manage."

The gifts for Big Uncle Kang's House and Third Uncle Kang's House were the same: two bottles of national liquor, two packs of cigarettes, one jar of malt extract, a two-pound mixed bag of candy, and two cans of fruit preserves.

The candy was undoubtedly prepared for the grandchildren of both houses.

Of course, the gifts Kang Li prepared for Grandpa Kang and Grandma Kang were more generous than those for her uncles, and additionally, she planned to give both elderly folks three hundred yuan as pocket money.

"Mommy, Mommy, where are you and Daddy going?"

Milk Bun Ming Han and his siblings, along with their cousins, were playing at the courtyard entrance. Seeing their mom and dad carrying large and small packages out of the yard, they immediately walked up with their little short legs, tilted their heads back, and asked.

"We're going to your Great Grandpa's and Third Grandpa's houses," Kang Li said with a loving smile in her eyes, softly asking, "Do you want to come along?"

Milk Bun Ming Han answered loudly, "Yes!" He then called out to his elder brother Min Rui and younger sister Vivi, "Brother, sister, we're going to see Great Grandpa!"

"Cousin, Doudou and I will lead the way!"

Kang Yiyu glanced at Kang Yihang, and the young brothers quickly came up to Kang Li.

"I'll lead the way for cousin and uncle."

"And me, and me, I can also lead the way for cousin and uncle!"

...

Kang Yichen and his brothers suddenly surrounded Kang Li, Luo Yanqing, and Min Rui in the middle. The older ones, such as Kang Yichen and Kang Yihong, even took the large and small packages from Kang Li and Luo Yanqing's hands to carry.

"Cousin, uncle, let's go!"

With a broad grin, Kang Yichen showed his shining teeth and called out to Kang Li and her husband to head off.

Those not carrying anything walked in pairs, holding the hands of the three children Min Rui on either side.

And so, a not-so-small procession made its way toward Big Uncle Kang's House.

Chapter 594: Raising an Ungrateful Son

Speaking of which, Big Uncle Kang and Third Uncle Kang's families lived relatively close to each other, with just three households separating them, while Captain Kang's house was slightly further away from the living quarters of his two brothers. However, far is relative when everyone lives in the same village. How far can it really be?!

"Kang Li, come over to your aunt's house when you have time!"

Mrs. Xu stood at the entrance of her own courtyard. Upon seeing Kang Li and her party passing by, Mrs. Xu's eyes whirled, and she hurriedly shouted to Kang Li.

Upon hearing this, Kang Li, out of politeness, shifted her gaze toward the other party and smiled in response, "Sure." This was purely a casual reply since Kang Li and Xu Chunxia were no longer friends, and the Xu family's preference for sons over daughters completely turned Kang Li off.

For this reason, Kang Li naturally would not visit the Xu family's house.

"Eat, eat, eat! All you lot know how to do is eat! Look at Kang Li, and then look at yourselves. Besides eating, what else are you good for?"

After Kang Li and her group had walked away, Mrs. Xu turned around and walked into the courtyard. The instant she stepped into the main room, she couldn't help but lash out at her children.

Well, to be precise, she was ranting and raving at her daughters Xu Chunxia, Xu Chunmei, and Xu Chunxiang.

"Mom, can you keep it down? You've frightened your grandson."

Encountering his wife's glaring eyes and seeing his son, held in his wife's arms, start crying out loud from his own mother's shouting, Xu Chunlai couldn't help but feel irritated at Mrs. Xu.

His tone was obviously not very pleasant.

"It's my fault, my fault. I shouldn't have spoken so loudly," Mrs. Xu said, her face breaking into a smile as if she had changed her tune. She then walked up to her eldest daughter-in-law, Wang Xinger, and reached out, "Come here, my good little one. Let grandma hold you."

To her surprise, Wang Xinger got up without so much as a glance at Mrs. Xu, and carried her son straight back to the room she shared with Xu Chunlai.

After being snubbed by her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Xu's hands hovered in mid-air, and her expression kept changing.

"Do you even regard me as your mother, my eldest?"

Burning with anger from her daughter-in-law's attitude, Mrs. Xu didn't hold back and fired at her eldest son, "I gave birth to you, raised you, and you just stand there watching your wife make faces at your own mother? Tell me, do you have any conscience?"

Xu Chunlai frowned impatiently, "Mom, if you're upset outside, don't take it out on the family, okay? If you hadn't startled my son just now, would my wife have given you a cold shoulder?"

This was her biological son, the son she had doted on from childhood... Mrs. Xu stared at Xu Chunlai, her face growing uglier. She didn't know what bad luck she had encountered—within just a short time, first snubbed by her daughter-in-law, then impatiently talked back to by her own son. Could someone tell her, where is justice?

Gasping for air in anger, Mrs. Xu pointed at her son, "Xu Chunlai, are you trying to be an ingrate?"

"One moment you say I'm heartless, the next you accuse me of being an ingrate. Mom, can you talk sense?"

Xu Chunlai slammed his empty rice bowl on the table in front of him, stood up and said, "For the past two years, every time Kang Li sends things back home, you flare up at the slightest news of it.

This time, not only did Kang Li bring a lot of things back for her family, but she also arrived at their doorstep in a car with her husband. Without thinking too hard, I know you're even more upset inside.

But what's the point of being upset? Who's fault is it that the children you bore aren't as good-looking as Kang Li, or as capable as Kang Li, or married to a capable man?"

With irritation, Xu Chunlai glared disdainfully at Xu Chunxia:

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"Mom, just look at this, this is the loser you gave birth to, shameless, willing to tumble into the bushes with Zhou Weimin! Now that I think about it, her relationship with Li Bao must have been fake. Otherwise, how could she force Li Bao to break off their engagement, knowing full well that Zhou Weimin was no good, and after getting together with Educated Youth Su, she still had to meddle and stick her foot in? Mom, whose face do you think she's slapping? Did Li Bao treat her poorly?

If he really treated her poorly, would Li Bao play with her, share the tasty food from home with her, or would the Team Leader always assign work to favor her?

They say I'm heartless, that I'm an ingrate. I think this loser you gave birth to is the real heartless one, the insatiable ingrate! Otherwise, given her relationship with Li Bao, wouldn't he still look after her somehow?"

Xu Chunxia's head was almost buried in her rice bowl!

Loser?

In the eyes of her parents and brothers, she, her older sister, and her two younger sisters were all losers. What was she doing with such a family?

Mrs. Xu was left speechless by Xu Chunlai's words; she felt that her eldest son was right, that it was indeed the loser she gave birth to who didn't know how to behave, bringing disgrace upon their family and the Team Leader's House, causing her to be repeatedly humiliated by Cui the Loudspeaker, Wang Chunhua, and Li Daniu.

With these thoughts, Mrs. Xu couldn't hold back any longer and lunged at Xu Chunxia, eager to vent the frustration in her heart.

"Mom, what are you doing?"

Xu Chunmei just happened to look up and saw Mrs. Xu pouncing on Third Sister Xu Chunxia, and couldn't help but shout out loud.

But by the time Xu Chunxia reacted, her mother had already grabbed her hair, and two slaps had landed on her face in quick succession.

"Stop hitting Third Sister, Mom, what you're doing is illegal!" Xu Chunmei tried to pry Mrs. Xu's hand from Third Sister Chunxia's hair, only to get slapped by Mrs. Xu in the process.

At this moment, Xu Chunlai pulled Xu Chunmei aside: "If your Third Sister did something wrong, Mom hitting her is what she deserves. If you don't want to get hit by Mom too, you'd better not come any closer!"

"Second Brother! Third Sister is not a loser, and neither am I or Sixth Sister. We're human beings just like you and Fifth Brother!"

Xu Chunmei hated her parents and the only two brothers in this family. Just because their parents favored males over females, just because Second Brother and Fifth Brother had a bit more flesh on them than her, the eldest sister, Third Sister, and Sixth Sister,

they were treated as maidservants and losers... Ever since childhood, the four sisters had done no shortage of work, yet they ate the least in the family, and also had to endure beatings and scolding. Were girls destined to suffer from the moment they were born? Or should girls never have been born at all?

No! It wasn't like that!

She had heard Sister Li Bao say that girls and boys are both the apple of their parents' eye, equal, with no distinction between noble and lowly, and all could go to school to study. When they grew up, just like boys, they could work in factories, earn money, and support the family.

But in their home, none of her sisters had been sent to school by their parents, who said all of them were losers — they ate from the family's provisions, relied on the family to grow up, only to marry into other households later. They said it was the parents' kindness that they didn't starve to death, given that they couldn't be raised properly.

With such an attitude from their parents, Second Brother and Fifth Brother had never regarded the four sisters as kin connected by blood. They treated them like maidservants from the old society, ordering them around as they pleased, beating them and scolding them whenever they felt like it. To be honest, she detested them!

Both of them were as stupid as pigs!

Xu Chunlai, her Second Brother, had repeated the first grade of elementary school three times,

Chapter 596: Counterattack

Finally, unable to understand and not wanting to be laughed at by classmates, he dropped out and ran back home, clamoring never to go to school again.

Mrs. Xu's heart ached for her son, so she let Xu Chunlai hang around at home and in the village.

All this she learned from Third Sister.

Later, when Lao Wu came of age to attend school, Mrs. Xu sent him to school as well, but Xu Chunwang's mind wasn't much stronger than Xu Chunlai's. He barely managed to complete elementary school after eight years.

Then, following suit, he started idling about like Xu Chunlai, and the family relied solely on their parents and the sisters' earnings from working for a living.

Feeling aggrieved, Xu Chunmei glared at Xu Chunlai. To her surprise, it seemed her words infuriated him, and he slapped her across the face on impulse.

Father Xu finished his meal, placed his bowl on the table in front of him, and sat on the stool, watching indifferently as Mrs. Xu tore and scratched at Chunxia, and as Chunlai greeted Chunmei's face with a slap.

"Dad! Dad, make Mom stop hitting Third Sister! Wuuu..." Xu Chunxiang was the youngest, and she cried out in fear, begging Father Xu to intervene with Mrs. Xu. However, Father Xu acted as if he heard nothing, showing no intention of speaking up.

The little girl then turned to Xu Chunlai, crying and asking, "Second Brother, why did you hit Fourth Sister?"

Xu Chunlai: "She deserved it!"

As for Xu Chunwang, after finishing his meal, he wiped his mouth and stood aside to enjoy the excitement.

"You dare scratch your mother, Chunxia, I see you're asking for death!"

Her hair pulled painfully and her cheeks swollen, Chunxia couldn't bear it any longer, she finally stopped tolerating it. She freed her own hair and swiftly dodged Mrs. Xu's scratching claws, even going so far as to give Mrs. Xu a fierce scratch on the neck!

"Ouch! Old man, are you dead? Didn't you see your good-for-nothing daughter push me down!" Mrs. Xu, suddenly pushed to the ground by Chunxia, couldn't help but yell at Father Xu to help her, so she could properly deal with the disobedient Chunxia.

Father Xu, frowning, said, "Enough now, you've hit her and you've scolded her, calm down!"

"Fourth Sister, Sixth Sister, let's go!"

Ignoring their parents' expressions, Chunxia grabbed her younger sister Xu Chunxiang with one hand and her still-stunned Third Sister Xu Chunmei, who had been slapped by Chunlai, with the other; the three sisters ran out of the house.

"Misfortune! Why has Gao Daozi suffered so much, to give birth to a few good-for-nothings like these..." Mrs. Xu sat on the ground cross-legged, not a tear in her eyes, slapping her thighs and wailing.

Xu Chunlai: "Mom, if you scare my son again, don't blame me and Xingxing's mom for going to the Yue family to live as a 'married-in son-in-law'!" Her parents originally intended to keep Xingxing at home for a uxorilocal arrangement, but he sweet-talked them into agreeing to marry their daughter into the old Xu family.

If his father-in-law knew Xingxing was not being treated well in his house, he might just take his daughter and grandson back to the Wang family.

Not wanting to be a bachelor, naturally, Xu Chunlai had to follow his wife's lead, especially since they had a son between them.

"You wouldn't dare!"

Mrs. Xu stopped her wailing, glared at her eldest son: "If you dare to go to the Wang family to become a married-in son-in-law, your mother will bash her head in right in front of you, and then let's see how you live with yourself!"

"It's not like I told you to seek death, so what do I have to worry about? Besides, this family still has Lao Wu, you and Dad needn't worry about not having a son to support you in old age!"

With those words, Xu Chunlai lifted his leg to return to his room with his wife Wang Xinger, but after a couple of steps, he turned his head back and continued to speak to Mrs. Xu: "I'm not just trying to scare you, if you don't change that temper of yours,

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"I would seriously consider going with Xingxing and her mother to my father-in-law's place to stay."

"What nonsense are you spouting?!"

Father Xu asserted his authority, "Have you no respect, speaking to your mother like that? I'm laying it out right now, if you dare become a live-in son-in-law, I will break your legs!"

Forgetting his parents after getting a wife, did he really think his father had no temper?

Father Xu's face darkened as he stared directly at his eldest son.

"I... I was just speaking off the cuff. Dad, you didn't have to get so angry!" Xu Chunlai shrank his neck in fear, averted his gaze, and hurried back to the room he shared with his wife.

At that moment, Xu Chunwang stretched his back and said, "Dad, Mom, Third Sister and the others just ran off like that. What are your plans now?"

"If they have the nerve, they shouldn't come back."

Father Xu's face turned as black as the bottom of a pot as he spoke, turning his gaze to Mrs. Xu: "Chunxia is the same age as Li Bao. Li Bao has been married nearly two years now. You don't seriously think we want Chunxia to end up stuck with us, do you?"

Mrs. Xu rose and sat back down on the stool, "When did I ever say that?"

"You didn't, but why go after her face? She was never that good-looking to begin with, and she's dark-skinned. Now you've made her face even less presentable after hitting her. What family would want to marry a daughter like that?"

Father Xu was deeply worried. His third daughter was twenty already and didn't even have a prospect for marriage. If they delayed any longer, she'd remain on their hands. Or were they going to let her end up with those old bachelors in their forties who still hadn't found wives?

"Isn't Li Bao back now? Considering her close relationship with our thankless girl, as long as she swallows her pride and asks Li Bao for help, she might also be able to marry off to North City. Like Li Bao, she might return one day driving a car, making her parents proud."

Hearing Mrs. Xu's words, Father Xu paused for a moment before asking, "Do you think it's possible?"

"Li Bao has a soft heart." Her eyes full of intrigue, Mrs. Xu said, "Who knows, our thankless girl got a few slaps from me today; it might actually help her get Li Bao's assistance."

Xu Chunwang's eyes shone: "Mom, if Third Sister could really marry off to North City like Kang Libao and find a son-in-law like Kang Li's husband, I would definitely hold her in high regard!"

He had heard that ever since Kang Libao got married, not only did her family often receive packages sent from North City, but Kang Guoan and Kang Yiyang, uncle and nephew, had also found jobs there and were now eating public grain.

If such good fortune were to fall on him, he would absolutely keep his word and respect Xu Chunxia, that thankless girl.

"That girl is full of schemes, pretending to be friends with Li Bao since childhood, but in reality always taking advantage of her and treating Li Bao like a fool..."

Father Xu cut off Mrs. Xu before she could finish, "Hold your tongue. If outsiders hear this, the very thing you're planning will never happen!"

"I'm talking about it here in our own home, with just you, me, and Chunwang."

Mrs. Xu pouted, undeterred by what Father Xu had said.

Father Xu responded sternly, "Walls have ears."

"I'll go find Third Sister and then, share Mom's thoughts with Third Sister, and let her think it over, to see how she can convince Kang Li to help her."

The thought of going to North City and being able to work there set Xu Chunwang's heart ablaze with eagerness. He couldn't wait a moment longer to find Xu Chunxia and tell her about Mrs. Xu's plans.

What Xu Chunwang, Father Xu, and Mrs. Xu didn't realize was that Xu Chunxia and her sisters, who had run away from home, had coincidentally encountered Kang Li and her group being seen off by Big Uncle Kang's family at their courtyard gate. In that moment, Xu Chunxia was utterly devastated,

Chapter 598: Harboring Ulterior Motives

Kang Li felt like an ugly duckling in front of Kang Li, especially when she saw Luo Yanqing, she almost wanted to find a crack in the ground to crawl into, to avoid being seen in her disheveled state by a man like Luo Yanqing, who she thought she would never meet in her lifetime.

In an abandoned thatched hut at the end of the village.

"Third Sister..."

The three sisters sat in a row, with Xu Chunxia sitting in the middle, holding her knees. To her left was Xu Chunmei, and to her right was Xu Chunxiang, who was now speaking. She looked at Xu Chunxia for a while and said, "Third Sister, are you thinking about seeing Sister Li Bao just now?"

Earlier that day, two cars had driven into the village one after the other and parked in front of the Team Leader's House. The sisters had all wanted to go and see, but their mother glared and scolded them, forcing them to go home and cook lunch, so they missed the chance to see Sister Li Bao immediately.

Unexpectedly, they had run into her just now.

To be honest, it wasn't strange for Third Sister to be thinking more at this time. It was herself... seeing Sister Li Bao's current dress and seeing Sister Li Bao's husband made her even more envious than when Sister Li Bao was unmarried.

"... do you think she saw me?"

After pressing her lips tightly for a long moment, Xu Chunxia asked her younger sister, Xu Chunmei.

"She definitely saw you, as we passed right in front of Sister Li Bao just then. Not only did Sister Li Bao see us, but Kang Yichen and the others saw us too," Xu Chunmei replied, seemingly struck by a thought before adding, "Third Sister... you don't think you made a fool of yourself in front of Sister Li Bao, do you?"

Xu Chunxia did not answer, which was as good as an admission.

"But we've already embarrassed ourselves, what can we do now? Third Sister... do you want to hear my suggestion?"

Xu Chunmei had the sharpest brain among the siblings, and the moment she saw Kang Li, she had an idea, which, coincidentally, aligned with Mrs. Xu's plans.

"What suggestion? Your last suggestion made me lose my reputation, what good suggestion can you have now?"

Xu Chunxia's cheeks were swollen like risen buns, making her eyes appear smaller in her face. She stared at Xu Chunmei, her resentment clear in her eyes.

"Third Sister, that previous incident was due to your own lack of preparation. If someone hadn't caught us following behind, it would have worked out. You can't blame me for that." She wouldn't have offered advice if she wasn't trying to be helpful, would she?

Xu Chunmei felt indignation, but still, she decided to share her idea with Xu Chunxia, her Third Sister. She couldn't stand to see her sisters treated like livestock and sold by their own parents.

After pursing her lips, she said, "Sister Li Bao has been in North City for nearly two years, she must have made a lot of acquaintances. Third Sister, you should talk to Sister Li Bao, better yet, tell her about your situation at home, plead with her, and ask her to help you find someone in North City,

no matter whether the man is marrying for the first time or the second, as long as he has a job and a place to live, and he is a decent person, you should marry him. That way, you can escape our parents and avoid being exploited for the rest of your life. Once you're settled in North City, me and Sixth Sister will come to join you!"

"She won't help me."

Xu Chunxia was tempted, but she knew very well that, given her current relationship with Kang Li and what she had done before, it was very likely that Kang Li would ignore her.

"How will you know if you don't try, Third Sister? If you don't make an effort for yourself, are you really going to wait until you're an old maid, being nonchalantly married off by our parents to some old bachelor or an idiot?"

Everyone has their own motives, and Xu Chunmei didn't deny that her suggestion for Third Sister Xu Chunxia was influenced by her own desires.

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"Li Bao is no longer my friend, she knows that my past interactions with her weren't sincere. Moreover, there was also that advice you gave me before, the thing I did as you suggested—I suspect Li Bao might already know about it from her family," Xu Chunxia said.

Regret?

Xu Chunxia didn't deny it. In her view, people should fend for themselves, but her misfortune was simply bad luck in not ending up with Zhou Weimin, leaving Su Qing, the one from the city, to benefit.

She also recognized her own situation now.

Her reputation ruined, there was no hope of finding a suitable husband in the surrounding villages, and this year she had already turned twenty. If she couldn't find a husband soon, she might truly become an old maid.

Moreover, her parents didn't treat her as a person. They saw her as a loss, and it wasn't certain that she wouldn't end up in a good family—she might genuinely be sold off like livestock.

“Sister Li Bao is kind-hearted. Third Sister, go apologize and beg Sister Li Bao again. It’s not certain matters will turn out well, but at least there’s a chance!” Xu Chunmei advised.

Xu Chunxiang helped to persuade Third Sister Xu Chunxia, alongside her Fourth Sister Xu Chunmei.

“I...” Every time she thought of Kang Li’s current situation, and the face of Luo Yanqing, Xu Chunxia truly lacked the courage to face Kang Li.

She didn’t want to be the ugly duckling, looked at differently by others.

On the other hand, after leaving Big Uncle Kang’s house, the group accompanying Kang Li had visibly grown stronger—after all, the grandchildren from both Big Uncle Kang and Third Uncle Kang’s families loved Kang Li just as much as those from Captain Kang’s family.

They loved their cousin, Li Bao!

After sitting at Third Uncle Kang’s house for about seven or eight minutes, Kang Li declined the invitation to stay for a meal and “led” her group back the way they had come to her own home.

Needless to say, the group had grown slightly larger again.

However, when Kang Li and her immediate family along with her closest nephews reached their home, the grandchildren from both Big Uncle Kang and Third Uncle Kang's families didn't stay long. They unanimously said they would go home to eat and then come back to play.

"Got quite a few nephews, huh?"

Before entering the courtyard, Kang Li's eyes sparkled with mirth as she looked at the person walking beside her and asked softly with a laugh.

"Mmh."

Luo Yanqing nodded.

Not just a few, there were eleven blood nephews alone. If the unborn child in Third sister-in-law Kang's womb was counted, that made twelve.

Adding up both Big Uncle Kang and Third Uncle Kang's grandnephews, although Luo Yanqing hadn't counted carefully, there were easily twenty-seven or twenty-eight.

Kang Li asked again with a smile, "Isn't it quite a sight?"

Luo Yanqing: "Mmh."

Once inside the main house, Min Rui and three others were taken to play by Kang Yichen and a bunch of cousins, while Luo Yanqing, seeing Big Brother Kang and Third Brother Kang chatting with Captain Kang, naturally walked over: "Dad, Big Brother, Third Brother."

Captain Kang: "Sit," inviting Luo Yanqing to sit nearby on a bamboo-backed chair, then added, "Dinner is almost ready."

"Let me check."

This was Big Brother Kang's voice, and he was about to get up as he spoke.

"Big Brother, sit. I'll go,"

With a smile tugging at her lips, Kang Li walked towards the kitchen.

"Elder sister-in-law Kang, Third sister-in-law Kang,"

In the kitchen, Elder sister-in-law Kang was making the fire and Third sister-in-law Kang was cooking. Hearing Kang Li's voice, both looked up towards the kitchen door simultaneously. Elder sister-in-law Kang said, "We're having rice for lunch. Just a couple more dishes and we'll be ready to serve."

Third sister-in-law Kang, "Your room has always been cleaned,

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"Dad said you'd be coming home soon," she said. "Elder sister-in-law Kang has been cleaning up your room every day, wiping the tables, and sweeping the bed platform..."

"I know my sisters-in-law are the best to me." Saying this, Kang Li stepped forward and took the wok spatula from Third sister-in-law Kang's hand. "Third sister-in-law, you're showing now; you should be more careful. I'll cook, and you take a break."

"It's nothing."

Third sister-in-law Kang shook her head. She stood at the kitchen door, making way for Kang Li, and said, "In the village, women who are pregnant mostly work in the fields until the day before they give birth. Some even have their babies right there in the fields." However, she was lucky; she had married into a family and met a mother-in-law who was sensible and did not wear down her daughters-in-law.

Indeed, compared to most of the daughters-in-law in the village, her mother-in-law took good care of them once they were pregnant.

She never cared whether they were carrying a boy or a girl. During the pregnancy, they got an egg every day; in the month before delivery, she wouldn't let them work in the fields, only allowing them to do some light housework to keep active, which facilitated a smooth delivery.

"Whatever others do, we don't care. Now that I'm here to lend a hand, even if Third sister-in-law doesn't lie down, she should at least sit on a chair and rest, to avoid standing too long and getting leg cramps or swollen feet."

Hearing Kang Li say this, Third sister-in-law Kang smiled, "Alright, I'll go sit in the chair."

"And mom?"

The old lady wasn't in the main hall or the kitchen. Where could she be?

Elder sister-in-law Kang said, "Auntie Zhou and her daughter-in-law's mother from Zhou Family had a row for some reason. Someone saw them fighting and ran to our house to get our mom to mediate."

As for the Zhou Family, people from the Old Kang's Home had little regard for them nowadays. If Kang Li hadn't just asked about her mother's whereabouts, Elder sister-in-law Kang certainly wouldn't have mentioned the Zhou Family in front of Kang Li.

To avoid annoying Kang Li.

Kang Li just said "oh," indicating she understood, then added with a smile, "Let me tell Elder sister-in-law and Third sister-in-law about Yangyang's affairs in North City."

"I was planning to ask you after dinner, but since you've brought it up, go on then!"

Elder sister-in-law Kang wasn't distant with Kang Li at all; she added some firewood to the stove, looked at Kang Li with eager eyes filled with smiles.

Third sister-in-law Kang joked, "Look how anxious Elder sister-in-law is, Kang Li. You'd better hurry up and speak. Otherwise, I bet Elder sister-in-law is wishing she could sprout wings right now and fly over to see Yangyang herself." She hung a bamboo basket outside the kitchen door, her voice tinged with distinct mirth.

"Alright, I'll speak."

Kang Li served the fried dishes into two plates, then set the plates on the table. Afterward, she poured some more cooking oil into the frying pan, and said, "Not long ago, Yangyang finished shooting another film, and also, our Yangyang is quite popular with the girls, but unfortunately..."

Elder sister-in-law Kang eagerly urged, "Come on, Kang Li, don't keep us in suspense!"

"Yes, Kang Li, Elder sister-in-law and I are both waiting to hear more."

Third sister-in-law Kang's face was full of smiles as she helped urge Kang Li along.

"Unfortunately, our Yangyang isn't interested in those girls at all."

Finishing her previously interrupted sentence, Kang Li paused momentarily before continuing, "However, what Elder sister-in-law can be assured of is that a catch like our Yangyang really won't need to worry about finding a partner in the future."

Elder sister-in-law Kang didn't respond but frowned and said, "The little rascal is not getting any younger. If girls are showing interest, why doesn't he try dating seriously?"

"What do the girls who like Yangyang do?"