

## Weak B 631

### Chapter 631 Hypocrisy

Mrs. Zhou's expression was somewhat odd, "You saw her?"

"Mm-hm," Zhou Weimin nodded, he said, "Those three children were playing at the courtyard entrance with Yichen and his brothers. I saw them on my way back, riding my bike."

To prevent her son from overthinking, Mrs. Zhou didn't continue the conversation. She filled a basin with water and placed it on the steps under the eaves, "Hungry? Hurry up and wash your hands. Your sister-in-law will be lifting the lid off the pot soon."

Zhou Weimin's lips twitched slightly; he hummed affirmatively, washed his hands, and sat on the bamboo chair nearby, lost in thought as he gazed at the evening glow in the sky.

He's back... Li Bao's back!

A dull pain throbbed in his chest.

And the corners of his eyes began to sting involuntarily.

Zhou Weimin knew that the moment Kang Li left Aoli Village two years ago, he... he already regretted... regretted having been too hasty in calling off the engagement, so much so that when Kang Li left, there was no reason to keep his childhood sweetheart by his side.

He couldn't understand. He had known Kang Li since childhood, and their relationship was so good that all the village youths were envious. Moreover, it was he who had asked his mother to propose marriage to the Kang Family and had set the engagement between them.

But then... just when they were about to register for marriage and have the wedding, he... he betrayed Li Bao for a moment of vanity, betrayed his childhood sweetheart, betrayed his fiancée of an arranged marriage, and started a relationship with Su Qing, an educated youth from the city.

"What are you spacing out for? Dinner's ready."

Mrs. Zhou's voice suddenly rose, pulling Zhou Weimin back from his reverie.

"Oh."

Zhou Weimin responded and got up to take a bowl of sweet potato and corn porridge, then returned to sit on the same bamboo chair.

"You think a bowl of that will fill you up?"

Seeing her son only take a bowl of porridge and not sitting down to eat the dishes and steamed buns, Mrs. Zhou frowned involuntarily.

Zhou Weimin: "We'll see later." In reality, he had no appetite at all right now.

Mrs. Zhou: "Are you thinking about Li Bao?"

"No."

Zhou Weimin denied.

"You came out of my belly; how could I not know what you're thinking?"

Mrs. Zhou put down her chopsticks on the dining table and, disregarding the presence of other family members, especially Su Qing, the younger daughter-in-law sitting nearby, scowled and said:

"Li Bao is not destined for you. Now you've married and have a son, and Li Bao also has her own man. Don't let your mind get muddled and go saying nonsense in front of Li Bao."

She could clearly see that her son had been regretting since Kang Li went to North City, but what was the use of regret? It was their Zhou Family who proposed the dissolution of the engagement; it was they who betrayed their commitment,

And it was this fool of a son who was blinded by Su Qing, the vixen, resulting in the end of the marriage arrangement with the Kang Family. Now, two years after the engagement was broken off, if her foolish son showed up in front of Li Bao to pester her, wouldn't their family be drowned by the villagers' spit?

"What nonsense are you talking about, Mother?"

Ignoring the expression on Su Qing's face, Zhou Weimin impatiently said to Mrs. Zhou, "How shameless would I have to be to go saying nonsense in front of Li Bao? It was I who wronged Li Bao. As long as Li Bao doesn't hate me, I'm content. Why would I go and trouble her by appearing in front of her after two years?"

He spoke these words, but what Zhou Weimin truly felt inside was quite the opposite.

He wanted to see Kang Li, wanted to apologize to her in person, wanted to ask if she had been doing well these past two years in North City...

"You haven't let go of Li Bao in your heart for these two years." Mrs. Zhou pursed her lips and said, "When you were about to break off the engagement with Li Bao, I clearly told you to think it over, to avoid future regrets. You..."

Zhou Weimin interrupted, "Mother, can you please not bring up the past?"

Chapter 632: I Want to

"Do you think I want to bring it up? When have you been in a good mood in the past two years? Before you broke off the engagement with Li Bao, you'd always go back to the village on vacations, but after Li

Bao left, it was good if you went home once a month! If it hadn't been for the vixen's tricks, you and Li Bao would be a couple now."

Including Su Qing, who Mrs. Zhou referred to as "vixen," everyone else at the dinner table kept their heads down and ate without uttering a word.

"Mother, can't you speak kindly?" Calling her 'vixen' every time you open your mouth, whose face are you slapping?

Yes, Su Qing's face did not look good.

But what about him? Could his face look any better?

Zhou Weimin felt that his mother was truly getting muddled with age, otherwise, how could she call Su Qing a vixen in front of the whole family, embarrassing him, her own son?

Speaking of which, Mrs. Zhou seemed to forget one thing—two years ago, had she not been charmed by Su Qing's tactics, thinking Su Qing was a good match, believing her favorite youngest son was fetching a bride from the city, it would be a feather in their cap, and she ended up assisting Su Qing.

Most likely, Mrs. Zhou forgot, or perhaps she deliberately didn't take responsibility, not wanting Zhou Weimin to blame her and drive a wedge between her and her son, thus calling Su Qing a "vixen" repeatedly and attributing the broken engagement with the Kang Family to her.

Doing so would give Zhou Weimin a vent to release his frustrations.

Mrs. Zhou wasn't blind, and she could see at that moment that her beloved youngest son was clearly upset since Kang Li returned to the village.

"I wish I could?"

Mrs. Zhou glared at Su Qing and scornfully said, "Do you know what happened at our house before? Your mother-in-law all the way from North City suddenly showed up at our house. Acting as if she brought no gifts, she walked through the gate and immediately asked if your wife was faking illness to scam money from the family,

regardless of the onlookers outside our gate, she slapped your wife then and there, calling her black-hearted, heartless, a thankless wretch! I'm just amazed, your mother-in-law, regardless of being a worker from a big city..."

Even if her maternal family had faults, they were towards herself as their daughter. Hearing Mrs. Zhou recount faults in front of the entire family, Su Qing put down her utensils and staring coldly at Mrs. Zhou said,

"Mother, why must you drag my mom into it when you're talking about your son? Yes, my mom did slap me, but that was because I did something wrong. My mom hitting me and scolding me is warranted, and I don't find anything wrong with that, needing you, Mother, to drag my mom into this and talk irresponsibly?"

When her daughter-in-law snapped back, Mrs. Zhou immediately became furious, raising her hand as if she was about to slap Su Qing, but Su Qing's gaze was very cold, "You dare? If you dare touch even a finger on me, I'll report you to the Women's Federation in town!"

"You..."

Mrs. Zhou gritted her teeth.

"I need money because I'm sick, and you don't give a dime. I've even been coughing up blood, and you just pretend not to see it, having no choice, I can only write letters and call home, asking my parents to send me some money... because my illness is not cheap, I asked my parents for money a few times. My mom, not knowing who tipped her off,

came all the way to see me. Yes, my mom didn't bring gifts, but she gave her grandson money and took me to the city's major hospital for a full body check-up. And you, Mother? What have you done about my illness?

You just watched as I lay sick, unable to gather strength and listened to my coughing as if I'm coughing out my lungs, not giving a single penny, constantly yelling and forcing me to go to work,

Chapter 633: This Depends on My Loved One's Intentions

"Completely indifferent to whether I live or die, since your family looks down on me so much, I might as well divorce Zhou Weimin and avoid being tormented to death in this house!"

"Who are you trying to scare? Reporting me to the Women's Federation again and bringing up divorce, do you think I've lived all these years for nothing? Do you think that after leaving you, my son, Zhou Weimin, won't be able to marry another woman or what?"

Pah! If it weren't for you, my Zhou Weimin and Li Bao would be a match made in heaven. It's all because of you, this vixen, causing my Zhou Weimin's marriage prospects to disappear, causing him not to even have a smile these past two years!"

Su Qing laughed in anger: "Was it me who asked Zhou Weimin to break off the engagement? He himself wanted to be with me and marry me, and that's why he broke off the engagement at the Team Leader's House. Now you want to push the blame onto me? See if I agree."

"If you hadn't seduced my Zhou Weimin, could he have broken off the engagement with Li Bao?"

Mrs. Zhou's spittle flew everywhere.

Su Qing sneered: "Can a single hand clap? Now that you regret it, what was he, Zhou Weimin, doing earlier?"

"Mom, if you don't want to be a laughingstock, better hold your tongue." Zhou Weimin didn't even eat, he just put his bowl on the step beside him, stood up, and walked out of the house.

It was gradually getting dark, and Zhou Weimin didn't know where he wanted to go. He just wanted to take a walk and didn't want to stay home any longer to listen to his old mother and Su Qing argue.

Kang Li and Luo Yanqing, bringing Min Rui and a few young nephews, were walking in the village lane after dinner. Unintentionally, the group reached the small creek at the foot of the mountain and unexpectedly encountered Zhou Weimin.

"Li Bao..."

The moment he saw Kang Li, Zhou Weimin's emotions were undoubtedly agitated; he involuntarily called out to her.

However, to her, he was just a stranger.

Kang Li appeared indifferent, her gaze meeting his briefly as if looking at a stranger, before she shifted her eyes away and continued chatting and laughing with Luo Yanqing.

"Li Bao, are you pretending not to see me?"

Zhou Weimin approached, as if Luo Yanqing didn't exist to him, his eyes fixed on Kang Li, filled with obsession, regret, and pain.

This was Li Bao, his childhood sweetheart, his former fiancée whom he had lost... Now she was even more beautiful than two years ago, and her exceptional poise made him regret his past decisions even more.

"Go away, bad man! My little aunt doesn't recognize you!"

Kang Yiyu and Kang Yihang stepped forward to push Zhou Weimin away.

Kang Yiheng, Kang Yifei, Kang Yilin, and Kang Yifan, four of them, stood in front of their little aunt, Kang Li, glaring at Zhou Weimin.

"Didn't you hear what my brothers said? My little aunt doesn't recognize you. Why are you pretending again?"

That was Kang Yilin speaking.

He was the second son from the third family, ten years old this year.

"I just want to speak a few words to your aunt." Zhou Weimin looked at Kang Yilin: "Yilin, Uncle Zhou won't hurt your aunt. Can you and your brothers wait on the side for a while?"

Kang Yilin: "Why should we go aside? You're nobody to us, and besides, my uncle is right here. Are you blind? Didn't you see my uncle standing next to her?"

At that moment, Zhou Weimin finally noticed Luo Yanqing standing next to Kang Li, and finally shifted his gaze towards him.

When he clearly saw Luo Yanqing's face, Zhou Weimin froze momentarily but quickly regained his composure: "Hello, may I speak privately with Li Bao for a moment?"

Luo Yanqing: "That depends on what my beloved has to say."

#### Chapter 634: No Need

As Zhou Weimin was sizing up Luo Yanqing, Luo Yanqing's grandfather was sizing up Zhou Weimin.

Without much thought, he guessed who the person opposite him was.

"Li Bao..."

Zhou Weimin's gaze returned to Kang Li, his eyes carrying a trace of pleading.

"What does Comrade Zhou want to say to me? Also, I hope not to hear you refer to me as 'Li Bao' again," Kang Li's expression remained indifferent, her beautiful, fox-like eyes showing no sign of emotional fluctuation.

"Li Bao, do you have to be like this? We grew up together. If we can't be husband and wife, can't we at least be friends?" Zhou Weimin's eyes were full of hurt. "Not to mention I've always called you Li Bao, isn't it the same with everyone else in our village?"

Kang Li: "What you're saying isn't wrong, but I no longer want to hear you call me Li Bao, it's not appropriate, don't you think, Comrade Zhou? Moreover, my lover is standing right here, I don't want him to misunderstand."

Zhou Weimin: "Li Bao, it was my fault we broke off the engagement, I want to apologize to you..."

Before he could continue, Kang Li cut him off, "There's no need. Actually, I should thank you. Thank you for breaking off the engagement; otherwise, how could I have met such an outstanding man? Thank you, Comrade Zhou Weimin!"

Luo Yanqing, suddenly inspired, added support to his wife: "Thank you, Comrade Zhou, for making it possible for me to marry such a wonderful wife like Xiao Li."

As if he hadn't heard Luo Yanqing, Zhou Weimin didn't even look at him. He said to Kang Li: "Li Bao, even if you don't accept my apology, I still need to say I'm sorry."

"Back then, I was out of my mind when I went to your house to call off the engagement. I betrayed our feelings. Li Bao, I am sorry!"

He bowed deeply to Kang Li.

Kang Li did not avoid it; after all, if someone insists on bowing like this, she might as well let him.

Moreover, a scoundrel like him definitely owes an apology to "Kang Li"; even if he bowed three times, it wouldn't be too much.

Zhou Weimin, unaware of what Kang Li was thinking, asked, "Have you been well in North City these past two years?"

"Do I need to answer you?"

Kang Li raised an eyebrow, her voice indifferent: "Anyone with eyes can see. Besides, with such an outstanding lover, and all my children being polite and sensible, I lack nothing. I spend my days planting flowers, reading books — my life is quite comfortable and pleasurable."

"Li Bao, you say that on purpose, right? You've actually been blaming me, even hating me for breaking off our engagement, haven't you?"

"Is your brain malfunctioning? Blaming you, hating you? And for these past two years?"

Kang Li's eyes were mocking; she curled her lips, smiling without smiling: "Do you look as handsome as my lover? Are you as capable as him? Is your income as high as his? With you being like this, how could you compare to my lover? Why would I spare any thought for you, Comrade Zhou?"

"Besides, there's only hatred where there was love, and I neither like nor love you. Why would I waste my time harboring grudges or hatred against you?"

"Li Bao, you're lying! You're just afraid your husband will get jealous and be angry with you, aren't you? We've been playing together since we were kids, we were classmates at school. If you didn't like me, didn't love me, would you have agreed to get engaged?"

"And after I called off the engagement, to spite me, you married your husband, a man who had already been married once?"

Zhou Weimin's emotions gradually intensified as he struggled to accept what Kang Li had said, unable to believe that his childhood sweetheart, his former fiancée, had never liked him, had never loved him.

Chapter 635: Is That So?

"Forget it, think whatever you want."

Kang Li was too lazy to continue talking nonsense with Zhou Weimin. She said to Luo Yanqing, "Let's go back, I'm tired." Then she called on the kids to leave.

"I'll carry you."

Luo Yanqing said, squatting down in front of Kang Li.

"Are you really planning to carry me back?"

Kang Li asked with a laugh.

Luo Yanqing: "Truer than pearls."

Kang Li chuckled: "You're even picking up my way of talking." She lay on the man's back and said, "Seeing how earnest you are about wanting to carry me, I guess I'll indulge you."

"It's my honor."

Luo Yanqing's crisp yet gentle magnetic voice clearly carried a smile.

"Uncle, my mom really likes my dad, loves my dad a lot! My dad also really likes my mom, loves my mom a lot!" Milk Bun Ming Han looked up at Zhou Weimin and said in his childish voice.

Xiao Ming Wei: "Uncle, my second brother isn't lying to you, my dad is really good to my mom!" Saying this in her baby voice, Xiao Ming Wei waved her little hand at Zhou Weimin: "Goodbye, uncle!"

"Let's go, Vivi sister."

Kang Yiyu called Xiao Ming Wei.

"Coming!"

Taking her small steps, Xiao Ming Wei went to Kang Yiyu's side, following her big brother Min Rui, second brother Ming Han, and cousins, as they walked with their parents towards the village.

Luo Yanqing carried Kang Li on his back while talking, feeling not the least bit uncomfortable.

Meanwhile, Zhou Weimin stood in the same spot, looking at Luo Yanqing and his group, at the figure lying on Luo Yanqing's back, the ache in his eyes almost spilling out, and he felt as though he was suffocating.

Was he making a fool of himself? Before they broke off the engagement, everyone in the village knew they were a couple, that they liked each other. But... but today, just now, what he heard was... she didn't like him, nor did she love him; naturally, she wouldn't bear any resentment or hatred towards him...

Is that really the case?

Li Bao!

Zhou Weimin didn't believe it, he didn't believe what Kang Li said, but what he saw... was again telling him, she hadn't lied to him...

No matter what the past was like, as far as the present goes, she looked at him as if he were a stranger, with not a hint of fondness in her eyes, let alone love.

Taking a step forward, Zhou Weimin walked towards the village, his demeanor somewhat dazed, as if walking outside this world, his whole being exuded loneliness and desolation.

The sky had almost totally darkened, but the moonlight was particularly bright, like streetlights illuminating, so that Luo Yanqing's group and Zhou Weimin, who followed not far behind, didn't have to worry about tripping and falling.

After all, the rural dirt roads are uneven with many pitfalls, and a misstep leading to a twisted ankle is very possible.

"Fourth Sister, do you think that's Sister Li Bao?"

At the entrance of the Xu family courtyard, Xu Chunxiang and Xu Chunmei were sitting together, cooling off, listening to the neighborhood chatter around them, when Xu Chunxiang casually saw Luo Yanqing's group and pointed to the person lying on Luo Yanqing's back, quietly asking her fourth sister.

"Who else could it be if not Sister Li Bao?"

Xu Chunmei thought her sixth sister was a bit silly. She said, "Even if you didn't recognize Sister Li Bao, didn't you see that's Sister Li Bao's husband? And with Kang Yilin and so many others following behind, you couldn't have missed them all, right?"

"I..."

Xu Chunxiang giggled and responded, "I saw them, but didn't think too much about it."

"You dummy. If it's not Sister Li Bao being carried by her husband, then who could it be?" Glancing at her sister, Xu Chunmei shook her head in slight exasperation: "You really should think more, and not be as simple-minded as a block of wood all the time."

Xu Chunxiang: "I'm not simple-minded."

Chapter 636: Who Are You Calling Crazy?

"If I'm not stupid, are you saying you are?"

Xu Chunxiang rolled her eyes.

"Neither Fourth Sister nor I are stupid."

Xu Chunxiang smiled.

In their family of four sisters, the eldest sister was timid and not much of a talker; she spent all her days working hard. Third Sister was more calculating and didn't like her younger sister much. Only Fourth Sister would take care of her, play with her, and talk with her. Therefore, among her three older sisters, she liked Fourth Sister the best.

Xu Chunxia came out of the courtyard and overheard the conversation between Xu Chunxiang and Xu Chunmei. Her gaze involuntarily drifted toward the departing group of people.

Seeing Kang Li leaning on Luo Yanqing's back, her eyes immediately filled with jealousy and resentment.

Not helping her... He clearly had the capacity but chose not to, waiting to see her sold by her own parents, to ridicule her downfall, to witness how miserable her life would be, right?

Xu Chunxia felt a deep hatred, hating Kang Li for his cold-bloodedness and cruelty, hating that he allowed her to be humiliated by her parents at home!

"Third Sister..."

Sensing someone behind her, Xu Chunmei turned around and saw Xu Chunxia staring resentfully at the departing Luo Yanqing and the others. In that moment, Xu Chunmei felt a complex mix of emotions and didn't know what to say.

"Something wrong?"

Xu Chunxia snapped back to reality and directed her gaze to Xu Chunmei.

"Nothing."

Xu Chunmei shook her head.

"Third Sister," Xu Chunxiang called out to Xu Chunxia and then tugged at Xu Chunmei's clothes, whispering, "Fourth Sister, look, isn't that Brother Weimin?"

Following Xu Chunxiang's gaze, Xu Chunmei hummed in acknowledgment.

"Third Sister, why is Brother Weimin following behind Sister Li Bao and the others? And he seems a bit off."

"In the middle of the night, you sure see clearly."

"But there's a moon!"

"Alright, if you've had enough cool air, go back to your room to rest. Don't talk about those irrelevant things anymore..." Xu Chunmei tried to prevent Chunxiang from continuing to discuss Zhou Weimin, lest Third Sister Xu Chunxia become displeased and take out her anger on Chunxiang.

However, as she was thinking this, Xu Chunxia suddenly turned her face darkly and lashed out at Xu Chunxiang, "Is he your brother at all?"

"What's wrong, Third Sister?"

Xu Chunxiang was confused.

"He's just an outsider. Calling him 'Brother' so affectionately, do you want to marry him or something?" Xu Chunxia blurted out without restraint, "He already has a wife, and how old are you..."

Before Xu Chunxia could finish, tears flooded down Xu Chunxiang's face. She stood up, stamping her foot and glaring at Xu Chunxia, "What nonsense are you spouting, Third Sister?"

"Did I say something wrong?"

Xu Chunxia, as if blind to the tears on Xu Chunxiang's face, scoffed coldly, "If you didn't fancy Zhou Weimin, would you be calling him Brother Weimin all the time?"

"Third Sister, I think you are out of your mind!" Xu Chunmei picked up the small stool she and Chunxiang were sitting on, angrily addressing Xu Chunxia, "Knowing full well how young Chunxiang is, why are you spouting nonsense in front of her? Honestly, just because you're unhappy, why take it out on Chunxiang?"

Turning her gaze to Chunxiang, Xu Chunmei's voice softened, "Don't cry. Come home with Fourth Sister. Let's ignore this madwoman."

"Who are you calling a madwoman?"

Xu Chunxia followed Xu Chunmei and Chunxiang into the courtyard. Reaching out, she grabbed Xu Chunmei's arm and demanded, exasperated, "Xu Chunmei, who are you calling a madwoman? Tell me, who is the madwoman?"

"Don't you have any idea?"

Xu Chunmei tried to pry Xu Chunxia's hand off, but instead, Xu Chunxia slapped her across the face with her other hand.

"Xu Chunxia, are you looking for a fight? Don't think I'm afraid of you!" Xu Chunmei's eyes blazed with fire,

## Chapter 637: Malice

She hated that she couldn't fight back, but she didn't want outsiders to hear the noise and gather at her gate to watch the commotion, so she had to forcefully suppress her anger.

"Arguing, arguing, arguing, what the hell are you arguing for? Every day, filling your belly, not knowing how to do more chores around the house, to earn more work points, just being arrogant at home. What bad karma have I suffered to have given birth to a few money-losers like you who torment me, not letting me have a single peaceful day," she exclaimed.

Mrs. Xu's loud voice came from the main room, followed by Wang Xinger's malicious words: "Chunxia is not getting any younger. In my opinion, we should hurry and find a husband for her, lest she gets older and becomes an old maid.

Right, didn't my aunt come over to our place yesterday and mention that her brother-in-law's unit leader is looking for a bride for his son? They plan to offer five hundred yuan as a dowry,"

and provide a temporary job, as well as set the girl up from head to toe with two outfits; once she enters their home, she won't have to do any heavy work, just take good care of his son and cook and tidy up the house for the family."

"Five hundred yuan for a dowry? Xingxing, are you sure this is true?"

Mrs. Xu's voice was clearly filled with surprise.

"How could I lie about this? I can't possibly make up the five hundred yuan myself if it's missing, can I? Besides, I don't have any money on me," Wang Xinger said. "If mom is satisfied with this marriage arrangement, I'll go to town tomorrow to answer my aunt."

Mrs. Xu: "Town? What do the man's family do?"

Wang Xinger: "The man's family lives in town, in the same residential complex as my uncle's family. The man's father is the head of the grain station, and his mother works at the health clinic; she is a doctor. They also have a younger sister who is currently in junior high school — a total of four family members."

"With such good conditions, is the man..."

As soon as Mrs. Xu spoke those words, even though she didn't finish, Wang Xinger understood her implication and said, "He suffered from polio when he was young, which led to disabilities in both legs, but he has a handsome face..."

Before Wang Xinger could finish, Xu Chunxia burst into the main room, "Wang Xinger, what the hell are you thinking!" She rushed right up to Wang Xinger, grabbed her hair, and started fighting as if her life depended on it.

"Stirring up my mom, trying to sell me off so you can pocket the money, Wang Xinger, since you don't want me to have a way out, then you don't get to live either!"

"You wretched girl, what are you doing? Let go right now! What's wrong with the marriage your sister-in-law mentioned? I agree with it. Tomorrow I'll have your sister-in-law respond to them, and you'll marry whether you want to or not!"

Mrs. Xu stepped forward to pull Xu Chunxia away, not forgetting to speak to Xu Chunxiang: "What are you standing there for? Go call your dad and your big brother to come back, tell them I need them."

"I'm not going."

Xu Chunxiang stood still, unmoving.

Unexpectedly, Father Xu walked into the courtyard and hearing the noise in the main room, frowned and shouted, "What's all this racket about?"

"Father! Father, you're back?!"

Mrs. Xu shouted, "Come quickly and pull this wretched girl away, look at what she's done to your eldest daughter-in-law!"

"I want a divorce! I can't stay in this house any longer, I... what did I do to deserve this? All I wanted was to bring a good marriage proposal into the family, why do I have to be treated so poorly by my sister-in-law?" After Father Xu pulled Xu Chunxia away, Wang Xinger collapsed to the ground, her legs giving out, and began to wail loudly.

Her hair was disheveled, and her face and neck bore visible blood marks.

Of course, Xu Chunxia wasn't much better off,

## Chapter 638 He's Not Worthy of You

At that moment, she looked like a complete and utter madwoman, her pigtailed in disarray, the clear marks of fingernails on her face, her clothes crumpled and wrinkled, her eyes bloodshot, staring intently at Wang Xing'er as if she wanted to devour her.

"Slap!" A crisp sound.

This was Father Xu slapping Xu Chunxia.

"Instead of enjoying good days, you just like to make trouble at home for no reason. What are you really trying to do?" Father Xu's face was stern as he coldly looked at Xu Chunxia, "You've hit your mother, you've hit your sister-in-law, are you also thinking about hitting your old man one day?"

Xu Chunmei and Xu Chunxiang stood at the entrance of the main room, the two sisters felt that their father's slap was not only on Xu Chunxia's, their Third Sister's face, but also on their own faces.

Their lips were tightly pursed, staring straight at Father Xu, their thoughts unknown.

Wang Xing'er stopped crying. She stood up and threw down the words, "If you don't get Xu Chunxia married off soon, I will divorce Xu Chunlai!"

"Don't worry, Xing'er, your aunt agreed to the marriage proposal. Go back tomorrow and give them an answer, see when the groom's side will come to fetch the bride."

Five hundred yuan as a betrothal gift was not a small sum, not just in the countryside, but even in the city, and there was also the offer of a temporary job.

Looking back, if the marriage really went through, their family would suddenly have five hundred yuan. At the same time, their eldest wouldn't need to go work in the fields anymore. In other words, he would be half-fed by the state.

If one day he turned into a regular worker, then their family would truly have someone fully supported by the state.

"I will not agree if it kills me, whoever agrees can marry him!"

Xu Chunxia screamed through her tears, and without waiting for Father Xu or Mrs. Xu to react, she turned and ran out of the main room.

"What exactly is going on?"

Father Xu asked Mrs. Xu.

Upon hearing this, Mrs. Xu told Father Xu about the marriage proposal that Wang Xing'er had mentioned.

After a while, Father Xu spoke, "I agree. Let the eldest daughter-in-law ask about it tomorrow, see when they can settle the marriage... the sooner, the better, to avoid unforeseen complications."

Mrs. Xu, "Old Xu, are you worried that Chunxia, that wretched girl, will stir up some trouble?"

"Hmm."

Father Xu nodded.

...

Sounds of insects occasionally came through the window. Kang Li glanced at the three sleeping children lined up and said to Luo Yanqing, "Let's go to sleep, it's getting late."

"Okay."

Luo Yanqing neatly folded the newspaper in his hand, leaned over to put it on the side table, and then, he pulled the lamp cord, and the light in the room instantly dimmed.

"That man was your former fiancé."

Lying beside Kang Li, Luo Yanqing suddenly spoke.

"..." Kang Li smiled, "You already knew, didn't you? Are you jealous?"

"No." Luo Yanqing didn't hesitate, "He's not worthy of you."

Kang Li chuckled softly, "Then who is worthy of me?"

Luo Yanqing, "Isn't he lying right next to you?"

"Oh... you mean you?" Lying on her back, Kang Li now turned over and prodded Luo Yanqing's arm on her side, "Turn around."

As they lay face to face, Luo Yanqing pinched Kang Li's cute nose and said with a deeply affectionate and magnetic voice, "Asking when you already know the answer."

"Yes, yes, I'm asking when I already know." Kang Li said with a laugh, holding onto his long, jade-like hand, "Rest assured, I don't have the slightest feeling for Comrade Zhou now, to be precise, I've had nothing to do with him since our families called off the engagement."

"I'm not worried."

Luo Yanqing looked affectionately into her eyes and said:

Chapter 639: You did great!

"I trust you, and I trust my own heart."

"Those are words I love to hear."

Kang Li smiled, her eyes curving, "Zhou Weimin is two years older than me. He started school late and ended up in the same grade from first grade... Agreeing to his family's marriage proposal was also because Zhou Weimin and his family didn't care about my health condition. Plus, since we're from the same village and everyone knows each other,

my parents thought it better that I marry within Aoli Village rather than somewhere else. That way they could take care of me up close. Since my parents suggested it, and I didn't dislike Zhou Weimin, I nodded in agreement to the marriage between the two families. But people change, and three years after the engagement, the Zhou family proposed calling it off. Naturally, I didn't cling shamelessly to the other party."

"You did well! When it's time to cut ties, do it and avoid the chaos; if you don't, you will face more difficulties."

"Thanks for the compliment!"

"However, it seems Comrade Zhou might be regretting it."

"What he regrets is none of my business."

"Exactly, Comrade Zhou's regrets are his own concern, and they have nothing to do with my wife."

Kang Li rested in Luo Yanqing's arms as she said, "There's something I'm not sure I've mentioned to you before..."

"What is it?"

Luo Yanqing was a bit curious.

Kang Li: "Zhou Weimin's wife and Comrade Wen's wife are sisters."

Luo Yanqing: "You've never mentioned that."

"They resemble each other quite a bit, about forty to fifty percent. It was only when I went to North City and saw Comrade Wen's wife that I felt she looked familiar. I was reminded of Educated Youth Su, who was sent down to our village. Later, I overheard the sisters-in-law in our courtyard talking about how Comrade Wen's wife's sister had been sent down to the Northwest..."

"That Educated Youth Su seems to not have a very good character."

"A fly does not land on an egg without cracks."

"You're right."

"Do you remember the woman who stopped me that evening?"

"Hmm."

"Her name is Xu Chunxia, and she used to be a good friend of mine. Honestly, I was sincere in my friendship with her, but Xu Chunxia had ulterior motives and was targeting Zhou Weimin behind my back. I really dislike such people."

"If you don't like her, just avoid her."

"Water flows downhill, people strive upwards; there's nothing wrong with wanting a better life, but if someone uses dishonorable means to achieve their goals, it becomes despicable and shameless!"

"Exactly."

"Yet Xu Chunxia seems to think I owe her something. Although I've already cut off our friendship, she still begged me to take her out of the village, bring her to North City, and help her find a partner.

To this, I'm speechless. Let alone that getting out these days requires a letter of introduction, and even eating out needs food coupons, just considering my current relationship with her, where does she get the nerve to plead with me?

Does she think I am some kind of saint who will believe everything she says, overflow with sympathy, and fulfill all her wishes?"

At this point, Kang Li scoffed, "But unfortunately, I am neither a saint nor her parent. I have no jurisdiction over her matters, nor do I have the inclination to bother."

Just as Kang Li finished speaking, the courtyard gate started banging "bang bang bang."

Luo Yanqing: "Someone is knocking at the courtyard gate."

Kang Li: "I heard it."

Soon, footsteps were heard inside the hall.

Kang Li: "Dad went to check."

At the courtyard gate.

"Is that you? It's nearly nine o'clock, why aren't you asleep at home? What brings you here this late?" Captain Kang opened the gate and seeing Xu Chunxia standing at the doorway, he couldn't help but frown and ask.

"Uncle Kang, I'm looking for Li Bao."

Chapter 640: You're looking for Li Bao just for this matter?

Xu Chunxia ran out of her home and sat in a dilapidated thatched hut at the end of the village for nearly an hour, feeling the oppressiveness of the silence around her. Frightened, she left the hut and walked toward the busier parts of the village road before stopping to listen to people gossiping.

As those gossiping gradually went for home, she found herself with nowhere to go and thought of Kang Li.

Thus, she found herself outside Captain Kang's front gate.

"If you need something, come back tomorrow and talk to Li Bao; she's already gone to sleep," someone said.

With less than ten minutes until nine, most of the villagers were already resting. What was going on with this third daughter of the Xu family that she had to rush to his house to find his precious daughter at this hour?

"I... I'm afraid to go back home, Uncle Kang. My parents are listening to my sister-in-law and want to marry me off to a cripple—not marry, sell me to a cripple..."

Xu Chunxia's voice choked: "I ran away from home. My mother and my sister-in-law beat me; my father too. If I go back, they definitely won't make it easy for me."

"Let's go, I'll take you back," Captain Kang replied.

Locking the gate, Captain Kang called for Xu Chunxia to follow him: "Concerning what you mentioned, I will have a serious talk with your parents."

"Uncle Kang, I want to leave our village... please let me see Li Bao. I know she's heading back to North City in a couple of days. Let her take me with her, please?"

"Is that why you're looking for Li Bao?"

Captain Kang's expression turned grim: "Living in the city costs money, let alone in a big city like North City. How did you even think of asking Li Bao to take you? Does my Li Bao have that capability? Besides, don't you know what you have done before?"

"Uncle Kang, I really have no other way, that's why I thought of asking Li Bao for help. I'm fit and able; if Li Bao takes me to North City, I'll find a way to work and support myself."

"City businesses hire very specifically, one slot per person, and even if they are hiring, they prioritize the city's unemployed youth over others."

Look at the urban youth who were sent down to the countryside; if there were enough jobs in the cities, surely they would have taken up positions in factories or contributed in other ways to the nation without having to come all this way to our rural village. Come on, let's go to your house."

Xu Chunxia knelt down: "Uncle Kang, I'm begging you, let Li Bao take me with her. Have Li Bao find me a mate in North City..."

"Get up!"

Captain Kang interrupted Xu Chunxia sternly, his gaze cold: "Don't put Li Bao in a difficult position with your requests. Now, you either go back to your own home or wander outside, but I'm not going to entertain your nonsense!"

Asking his Li Bao to find her a match in North City, what did they think Li Bao was?

Under Captain Kang's intimidating presence, Xu Chunxia had no choice but to stand up, tears streaming down her face: "Is Team Leader really going to watch my parents sell me off?"

"I said I would talk to your parents. Besides, there's the police station and the Women's Federation. If your parents really go too far, just go and report them to the police or the Women's Federation; ask the state to uphold justice for you!" Captain Kang said as he walked toward the Xu family's direction.

Unexpectedly, Xu Chunxia suddenly pushed open the gate that Captain Kang had closed, rushed into the courtyard, and called out to Kang Li: "Li Bao! Li Bao! I'm begging you, please help me. My mother listens to my sister-in-law, and for five hundred yuan, they want to sell me to a cripple... Li Bao, I'm kneeling down and begging you!"

Shameless and kneeling in the middle of the courtyard, Xu Chunxia cried out like a ghost, pleading for Li Bao's help.