

Weak B 681

Chapter 681: Mockery

After getting ashore and putting on his shoes, he picked up two fish, each roughly about two pounds, that he had thrown into the bushes and placed them in the bamboo basket. Then he headed toward the village along the small river.

Meng Family.

"Who are you scowling for?"

Wang Guilan sat at the back door of the main hall, enjoying the breeze to cool off. Hearing her youngest son calling for his second brother, she looked towards the front door involuntarily and saw her second son walking through the main hall, looking as if someone owed him a fortune, which made her temper flare up.

"I'm not."

Meng Xingsheng retorted immediately.

"You know very well whether you did or not!"

Wang Guilan's expression was very unpleasant, "Spending your days not working properly, always asking for leaves and running outside. You come back with a dead man's face after disappearing for two or three days. Are you cursing your mother to death?"

"I told you I'm not!"

Meng Xingsheng's temper rose as well: "I told you before the New Year, I am determined to marry Shuicao, but you, my mother, cannot even provide a dowry to secure the engagement. Shouldn't I find a way to make money myself?"

Wang Guilan: "According to what you said, are you taking leaves just to find ways to make money? Then tell me, what great plan do you have? Speak up!"

"I..."

Meng Xingsheng, bitter as if he had eaten bitter melon, squatted against the wall, and after tugging at his hair, stammered, "You are my mother, can't you... ask Big Brother of the Luo Family for some money to provide a dowry?"

"So that's your plan!"

Wang Guilan gasped in anger, "Haven't I told you? Even though he is my own child, I've ignored him for years. How could I have the face to ask him for money? Moreover... it's not that if I ask, he will give, don't you understand?"

"But he is your son, as long as you sit in his house and refuse to leave, I don't believe he wouldn't give you the money!"

Meng Xingsheng, in his desperation to marry Cui Shuicao, really didn't care if he might infuriate his mother to death.

"Where did you get the guts to say such things?"

Wang Guilan stared intensely at Meng Xingsheng: "Is it that vixen from the Cui Family who gave you this idea, asking you to persuade me to disgrace myself in North City?"

"Mother, Shuicao is your daughter-in-law to be, you shouldn't speak of her that way!"

Meng Xingsheng's eyes reddened, clearly defending his beloved without considering his mother's feelings.

At this moment, Meng Xingping walked in from outside the main hall, placed the bamboo basket on the ground, and scoffed, "All this fuss over a flirtatious woman."

"What did you say?"

Meng Xingsheng got up, wishing he could tear his Third brother, Meng Xingping, apart: "Third brother, do you dare to repeat what you just said?"

"Not just once, I can say it smoothly ten or eight times."

Meng Xingping looked coldly at Meng Xingsheng: "Flirtatious! It's only you who treasures such a woman like a gem and even forces our mother to ask Big Brother of the Luo Family for money. Meng Xingsheng, you really have some nerve!"

"I'll beat you to death!"

Meng Xingsheng clenched his fists and lunged to strike Meng Xingping in the face.

However, he was easily dodged by Meng Xingping, who even countered with a punch.

Wang Guilan watched but did not intervene.

"Mother, won't you persuade Second brother and Third brother?"

As Meng Xingping and Meng Xingsheng fought, Meng Xingguo, the eldest brother, hesitated momentarily before finally turning to their mother and speaking softly.

"How can I persuade? Second brother wants to get married; do you have any money to offer?"

Wang Guilan gave her eldest son an irritated look.

"Mother, what money can I have?"

Chapter 682: Arrogant at Home

"I've been working every day, and come the end of the year when the team distributes money, it's always you, mother, who takes it,"

Meng Xingwang said, suddenly pausing as his wife Niu Weizhen pinched the soft flesh on his waist. He then addressed Wang Guilan again, "Right, mother, Nannan has been crying nonstop at night these past few days,

both her mother and I are worried. We want to take her to the town's health clinic for the doctor to have a look. Could you.... could you give me five yuan..."

"Does a mere girl need to go to the hospital?"

Wang Guilan glared at her eldest son and said, "There's no money for you. If you really want to take that girl to the doctor, find a way to get the money yourself."

Niu Weizhen: "Mother, Nannan is your granddaughter!"

"So what? You think I care?"

Wang Guilan rolled her eyes.

She didn't even care about her son, let alone a granddaughter, what a joke!

Niu Weizhen: "Mother, does this mean you refuse to give the money?"

Wang Guilan: "No."

Niu Weizhen: "Then let's separate the family."

Wang Guilan: "You're dreaming!"

Separate the family?

What a beautiful thought!

In this household, only the eldest had taken a wife, which resulted in the family incurring debt. Now, the wives of the second, third, and fourth sons were nowhere to be seen, while Lao Wu and Sixth Child were still growing. If she were to split the house and let the eldest branch out, would the rest of the burdens fall solely on her shoulders?

"Third brother, from today onwards, we are no longer brothers!"

Meng Xingsheng's nose was bruised and his face swollen from Meng Xingping's beating. Exhausted, Meng Xingping let go of Meng Xingsheng only to hear him utter these harsh words.

After staring at his second brother for a while, Meng Xingping said, "Remember, you're the one who said that."

"Yes, I'm the one saying it!"

Meng Xingsheng sat on the ground, looking at Meng Xingping as if he were an enemy.

"Fine, as you wish. From today, I, Meng Xingping, am no longer your brother, and you are no longer my second brother," Meng Xingping paused briefly before continuing, "Out of respect for our past brotherhood, I have one piece of advice for you: Cui Shuicao is not a good woman. She's just stringing you along,

and she's been involved with both Educated Youth Tang and Ma Donglai behind your back. If you're content to be toyed with by a fickle woman and act the fool, then go ahead and follow this path to the end!"

"Third brother, what did you say? That wench from the Cui family has taken up with Educated Youth Tang? And she also has an affair with Team Leader's House's Donglai?"

Wang Guilan's face turned grim as she sought confirmation from Meng Xingping.

"I've seen her with my own eyes, washing clothes for Educated Youth Tang by the riverbank, and even carefully folding the dried clothes to hand over personally to Tang; and about her involvement with Ma Donglai, I witnessed that myself. They've both been to the small woods," Meng Xingping affirmed.

Upon hearing what Meng Xingping said, without waiting for any reaction from Meng Xingsheng, Wang Guilan abruptly stood up and stormed out of the main room.

Coming back to his senses, Meng Xingsheng hurriedly got to his feet and called after Wang Guilan, "Mother, where are you going?"

"You spineless wretch, what's it to you where your mother is going?!"

She hadn't even brought a bride home yet and already had a cuckold's hat on her head; how did she give birth to such a worthless thing?

Grinding his teeth, Meng Xingsheng glared at Meng Xingping, "If you ruin things with Shuicao because of your meddling, I'll make sure you pay!" He spat out each word before running after his mother.

Fourth Brother Meng Xingguo asked Meng Xingping, "Third brother, you didn't lie to our mother, did you?"

"Why would I lie to mother?"

Meng Xingping, now looking as if nothing had happened, sat down on a nearby stool and said to his three younger brothers, "Before meeting the Luo Family's eldest brother, I had the same thoughts as the second, hoping to take advantage of the Luo Family's eldest.

Chapter 683: Considered a Sensible Person

But when Luo Family's eldest brother really stood in front of me, I felt like I was an ant under his feet, easily crushed to death. And Luo Family's eldest brother's wife was quite beautiful, just like a fairy descended from the heavens,

but she was fierce too, fiercer than any shrew in our village, wielding a stick in her hand and showing no mercy when she beat people. I'm sharing all these not with any other intention,

but just to tell you, Luo Family's eldest brother owes us nothing. If he is willing to help us, all is well, but if he isn't interested and we have the audacity to ask for help unabashedly, we might just have our hands broken by him!

In a word, Luo Family's eldest brother is not from the same world as us!"

"How can he not be from the same world? Aren't we all living in this world?"

Fourth Brother Meng Xingguo didn't understand.

Not to mention his younger brothers, Lao Wu and Sixth Child.

All three were utterly confused.

"To put it simply, Luo Family's eldest brother is like a cloud in the sky, while we are like the mud on the ground. Can clouds and mud be the same?"

Meng Xingping made an analogy.

Meng Xingguo: "I see, but... but he has the same mother as us."

"So what if we have the same mother? Our father is different, and besides, our mother abandoned this son when he was young and took all the family wealth with her,

later using that wealth to support our family, not contacting her abandoned son for twenty-one or twenty-two years. If you were in his shoes, could you feel affection for that mother?"

Meng Xingping turned his gaze to his fourth brother, Meng Xingguo.

"I... I don't know."

After pursing his lips and staying silent for a while, Meng Xingguo shook his head.

"You do know; you just don't want to accept that Luo Family's eldest brother doesn't care about us."

Meng Xingping shook his head and said, "Anyway, if I were Luo Family's eldest brother, I would do the same, not minding those half-brothers with different fathers. As for how to treat the mother who abandoned me,

my approach would still be the same as Luo Family's eldest brother; when the time comes, just follow that regulation and provide for the elderly, that's it."

Meng Xingguo: "Can't he really help our family?"

"It's better to rely on yourself than on others."

Those were Meng Xingping's true thoughts. He was no longer in a hurry to get married; he had understood and realized that money earned by his own hands felt more reliable.

He would work hard to earn work points, save money to start his own family. Perhaps one day policies would change, and there might be good opportunities for him to earn even more money!

So, getting married and such were not a matter of urgency.

Wang Guilan was back, strutting into the house with the arrogance of a victorious rooster.

Behind her, Meng Xingsheng seemed like he had lost his soul, and as soon as he entered the house, he went straight to his bed and lay down.

"What's wrong with my second brother?"

Meng Xingguo asked Wang Guilan.

"He broke up with that tramp from the Cui Family. From now on, if any of you see that wretch approaching your second brother, just spit right at her and watch her not have the face to continue seducing your second brother!"

Wang Guilan said with a cold laugh: "Shameless and brazen, carrying on affairs with three men in secret. Now that I've exposed her, let's see which family will marry her!"

"Mom..."

Meng Xingsheng felt humiliated. Upon hearing his mother bring up Shuicao's issue in front of his brothers, his frustration surged to the point where even the corners of his mouth trembled.

He got off the bed and stood at the doorway, clenching his fists and called out to Wang Guilan.

"What? That tramp dares to do those things and you won't let your mother say a word about it?!"

Furiously glaring at Meng Xingsheng, Wang Guilan was disappointed: "Don't think I don't know you still want to speak for that tramp. Second brother, if you keep being this foolish, I'll pretend I never gave birth to you!"

Chapter 684: To Sever the Relationship

"Shuicao said she didn't have it."

Being stared at fiercely by his mother, Meng Xingsheng involuntarily shuddered.

"She says she doesn't have it, and that's supposed to be the end of it? If she truly wasn't stringing along three men, why did she turn pale after just a few words from me? It clearly shows that I struck a nerve, and why else would her parents slap her if they thought I was slandering her?"

Wang Guilan spat on the ground, "Only a coward like you would be played by that bitch and yet treasure her like some precious gem."

"You know what Uncle Cui's temper is like, mother. Would he have laid a hand on Shuicao if he hadn't heard your words?"

A coward? Even if he was called a coward, what could he do? As long as he could marry Shuicao, he didn't care about being labeled a coward!

Meng Xingsheng indeed hadn't given up on the issue of Cui Shuicao being involved with three men.

In his eyes, even if Cui Shuicao was a bit temperamental, she was kind-hearted and hardworking, and not ill-intentioned.

As for today's incident, it was all Third Brother's fault. He had run his mouth when he got home, causing his mother to go create a scene at the Cui Family's place.

Now he didn't know how Shuicao was doing, if she hated him, or if she still wanted to have anything to do with him.

"Do you realize that you are betraying your own family?"

Wang Guilan approached Meng Xingsheng with a grim face, and slapped him, "You appear to be no fool, so how is your head filled with such mush? Now you better explain to me, what's so good about that wench from the Cui Family that has you so bewitched, as if you've lost your mind?"

"Mother, Shuicao is kind-hearted and hardworking."

Meng Xingsheng ignored the pain on his face, met Wang Guilan's gaze, and said with a firm voice, "She's the only one willing to be with me."

On hearing this, Wang Guilan spit on the ground again, "Kind-hearted and hardworking? Where do you see her being kind-hearted, and how is she hardworking? If she really wanted to be with you, would her parents have demanded two hundred yuan as a bride price?"

Meng Xingsheng opened his mouth but, for a moment, didn't know what to say.

Indeed, how did he know Shuicao was kind-hearted and hardworking?

"Always dressed to the nines, swaying her hips when she walks. Is that how a decent girl behaves? When she's working in the fields, hasn't she always been one to work for just half an hour before heading home to rest?" Wang Guilan poked Meng Xingsheng's chest, "Well, say something, have you gone mute?"

"But I just like Shuicao!"

Meng Xingsheng suddenly shouted out, his eyes reddening as he said, "I want to marry her, and in this lifetime, I will marry only her into this home!"

"To bring that wench into this home, you'll have to wait until I'm dead. Otherwise, you can forget about it!"

Wang Guilan left no room for negotiation for Meng Xingsheng.

"If that's the case, mother, you might as well pretend you never had this son!"

Determination filled Meng Xingsheng's eyes.

"Get out, get out, get out! Get out of here now!"

Wang Guilan pointed towards the main door, yelling at Meng Xingsheng, "Why are you still standing here? I'm telling you, this house won't miss one less person. Wherever you think is better, go there, out of sight, out of mind for me!"

"Mother... you might regret this!"

Meng Xingsheng wiped his face, packed a few clothes, and left the house without looking back.

"Second brother!"

Seeing things escalate to this extent, whether genuinely concerned or pretending, Meng Xinwang ran out of the main room, caught Meng Xingsheng's left arm in the yard, "Are you really willing to forsake our family? Are you truly willing to sever your relationship with our mother for a woman like Cui Shuicao?"

"Big brother... Shuicao is really good, and I won't allow anyone to speak ill of her!"

Chapter 685: Becoming a Live-in Son-in-law

Prying Meng Xingwang's hands off, Meng Xingsheng resolutely left.

However, once he stepped out of the courtyard gate, he suddenly became confused, not knowing where to go or what to do.

The main hall.

"Mom, are we really letting Second Brother leave home just like that?"

Once back in the main hall, Meng Xingwang asked his mother.

"He's a good-for-nothing. He won't get far."

Wang Guilan didn't believe that Meng Xingsheng had the guts to never return home.

"Third Brother, you say something!"

Meng Xingwang looked to his younger brother, Meng Xingping.

"What do you want me to say, Big Brother?"

Meng Xingping looked indifferently at Meng Xingwang: "Meng Xingsheng won't listen to reason; he insists on marrying a flirtatious woman into our house. And the Cui Family demanded a dowry of two hundred yuan just like that. Are you going to fork out that money, or do I have it on me?"

"Mom! Mom... Second Brother stood at the courtyard entrance for a while, and now he seems to be heading towards the mountain."

Suddenly, Meng Xingguo ran into the main hall. After watching Meng Xingsheng leave the courtyard, he had hid and observed for a while. Seeing his Second Brother start walking towards the back mountain, he rushed in to inform his mother.

Behind their home, the back mountain was filled with lush forests, where, as the old folks in the village said, wild boars were often spotted.

Wang Guilan: "Leave him be!"

Meng Xingguo, with a worried expression: "But... what if Second Brother runs into a wild boar?"

"Then that's his fate!"

Although she said this, Wang Guilan still showed a trace of concern. With a stern face, she remained silent for a good while before telling Meng Xingwang and Meng Xingping, "Bring that worrywart back home for me. If he dares not to come with you, knock him unconscious for me and drag him back, even if you have to."

No matter how foolish a son was, he was still flesh and blood of her own. She might not be fond of him, but that didn't mean she was willing to watch that worrywart go into the mountains to become a meal for wild boars.

However, just as Wang Guilan's heart softened, she never expected that after sending Meng Xingwang and Meng Xingping out to bring Meng Xingsheng back home, they returned in less than a quarter of an hour, both extremely agitated.

"Where is he?"

Not seeing Meng Xingsheng, Wang Guilan couldn't help but ask.

Meng Xingguo looked outside the main hall door, equally puzzled: "Yeah, Big Brother, Third Brother, why didn't we see Second Brother come back with you?" Sixth Child, who was still young, along with Lao Wu, had a look of confusion on their faces as they watched Meng Xingwang and the others.

"Second Brother didn't go to the mountain; he's at Shuicao's place. When Third Brother and I called him to come home, Second Brother said he was going to be a live-in son-in-law for the Cui Family!"

Meng Xingwang replied to Wang Guilan with a flushed face, truly infuriated. For the sake of a woman, to disregard the face of his brothers and shamelessly become a live-in son-in-law, what was going through his mind—did he get kicked by a donkey?

"Those two old gits of the Cui Family actually let Second Brother enter their home?"

Wang Guilan clenched her teeth in anger.

Meng Xingwang: "Second Brother is insisting on staying at their place."

Wang Guilan: "Fourth Brother, go and call the Team Leader and the Secretary to our house. Today I'm really going to cut ties with that worrywart. From now on, we'll act as if he never existed in our family."

Hurry up and call the Team Leader and the Secretary here to witness it. And call over that heartless thing and Shuicao's parents as well. We'll have it out face to face and speak clearly, making a written record as proof!"

"Mom, are you really going to do this?"

Meng Xingguo stood still, not moving.

"That heartless thing doesn't want our family anymore and doesn't acknowledge me as his mother. Why should I keep him in our family register?"

Hurry up. Today we will sever all relations clearly, and then Big Brother and Third Brother will take the family register to the town."

Chapter 686: Guaranteed Profit

"Get that thing's name off our household registration book."

No one knew what the heck Shuicao's parents were thinking when they actually accepted Meng Xingsheng as their live-in son-in-law, even though they had a son.

Well, to be more precise, it was Shuicao's mother who kept Meng Xingsheng at home and urged him to sign a severance document with his biological mother Wang Guilan and his brothers, witnessed by the Team Leader and the secretary.

At the same time, his ties with Shuicao were officially acknowledged as he became the Cui Family's live-in son-in-law.

The night outside the window was quiet, at the Cui Family's.

"What on earth were you thinking?"

Mr. Cui was an honest man who didn't understand why Mrs. Cui agreed to have Meng Xingsheng as their live-in son-in-law.

"What can I think? Shuicao is the eldest and a strong worker. The other three, all together, aren't worth one like her. Plus, your health has been failing these past couple of years. If Caocao really married out, tell me, who could we rely on to look after Jiabao in the future?"

Mrs. Cui had given birth to four daughters and one son. From her conversation with Mr. Cui, it wasn't difficult to discern that Shuicao was the eldest daughter. Among the four sisters, Shuicao was the prettiest and best at sweet-talking, pleasing their parents. And being the first child born to Mr. and Mrs. Cui, she was second only to her younger brother Cui Jiabao in receiving parental favor.

As such, Shuicao never really had to do any hard labor from the time she was young, as her mother and father doted on their eldest daughter and worked the other three daughters like oxen and horses.

As for Cui Jiabao, being the youngest in the family, not even eight years old, he was treated like a little tyrant at home, spoiled rotten by both Mr. Cui, Mrs. Cui, and Shuicao.

If it had not been for Wang Guilan making a scene at the Cui Family that day, in other words, if Shuicao's reputation had not been ruined by Wang Guilan, perhaps Mrs. Cui would have gone with Shuicao's wishes and married her off to Educated Youth Tang or Ma Donglai, the youngest son of the Team Leader's House.

In any case, if Shuicao could marry into a good family, Mrs. Cui was all for it, as it would help ensure support for their younger son Jiabao in the future.

But the unexpected happened with Wang Guilan.

Consequently, Mrs. Cui's thoughts changed, and Meng Xingsheng turned out to be a godsend, or to be more precise, a pillow that fell into her lap.

Big and strong, plus a bit of a simpleton, completely at the mercy of her daughter.

If he really became their live-in son-in-law, wouldn't that mean they could order him around as they pleased? As for whether their daughter would share a room with Meng Xingsheng or bear his children, Mrs. Cui didn't care in the slightest.

Moreover, Mrs. Cui hadn't forgotten that Wang Guilan had a son who was doing big things. Okay, this was something Meng Xingsheng had told Shuicao, who in turn had told Mrs. Cui.

Given this, Mrs. Cui felt that taking in Meng Xingsheng as a live-in son-in-law was a surefire profit!

"But we have a son, and we live in the same village as the Meng Family. Tomorrow, the whole village will probably be talking behind our backs," Mr. Cui said with a sigh. "Just give it to me straight, has Caocao... has Caocao been playing the field?"

"So what if she has? My girl is pretty and well-behaved; shouldn't she be picky when finding a match? Had it not been for that shrew Wang Guilan coming to our house to make a fuss today, Caocao might have actually been able to marry Educated Youth Tang and later follow him back to the city to become a wealthy city lady!

At the very least, Caocao could have married that boy Donglai and entered the Team Leader's House as a daughter-in-law! But all because of Wang Guilan's commotion, Caocao's reputation is now completely ruined,

Meaning finding a good marital match is out of the question, and that fool Xingsheng just happened to present himself at our doorstep, willing to be our live-in son-in-law,

Chapter 687: 687: Oblivious to Stupidity

"Be responsible for Caocao? I'm not stupid, why would I push her away?"

Mrs. Cui, full of pride, said, "Listen to me, you don't have to worry about Caocao. Besides, today, with the Team Leader and secretary as witnesses, Shuicao and Xingsheng are officially a couple,"

"Tomorrow, they will go to the town to register their marriage certificate. Let the villagers gossip all they want; it won't cost us an ounce of flesh."

Mr. Cui turned over on the kang, his brows deeply furrowed, "Our family's reputation is ruined now!"

"Can reputation be eaten as food?"

Mrs. Cui was unconcerned, "This is what I think, after Shuicao and Xingsheng get their certificate, when we find the time, we'll send them to North City."

"What for?"

Mr. Cui paused, then asked, "You're not thinking... you're not planning on relying on Xingsheng's half-brother?"

Mrs. Cui replied, "What do you mean 'planning'? Xingsheng and his half-brother were borne by the same mother; if his brother is living well, it's only reasonable he helps his own younger brother."

"Things aren't as simple as you say."

Mr. Cui disagreed with his wife's methods, saying, "If Xingsheng's older half-brother genuinely cares for him, after recognising his kin, wouldn't he come to the Meng family to visit? Wouldn't he help pull Xingsheng and his brothers up?"

"I don't care about all that; I only know that Xingsheng's half-brother has abilities and must help our family get by," she claimed.

Meng Laoer is now their family's son-in-law, which means he is one of their own, and if his half-brother in North City is doing well, they can't be blamed for trying to establish a connection with him.

Don't want to help pull them up?

They'll cling on and see what the other party can do about it!

Mr. Cui asked, "Will Xingsheng do as you say?"

Mrs. Cui replied, "With Caocao there, what's there to worry about?"

Hearing this, Mr. Cui fell silent for a long while before changing the subject, "Big brother... how has big brother been making money these past few years?"

"Haven't I told you not to ask? Why can't you remember that?"

Mrs. Cui said impatiently, "Didn't you think about it? If you had a way to make money, would you tell everyone about it?"

Mr. Cui said, "I was just curious how big brother makes money so quickly."

"Curiosity gets you nowhere."

As Mrs. Cui spoke, she paused for a moment before continuing, "Big brother never tells me about his business, even if I wanted to tell you, I wouldn't have anything to say."

In fact, did Mrs. Cui really not know?

The answer was undeniably no.

But this was a secret; within this household, only she and her daughter Caocao knew. They had once been taken to the city by their brother to help out, and from that single trip, she and her daughter had received a full five hundred yuan.

Five hundred yuan!

In their countryside, that was no small sum.

Furthermore, every time her brother visited, he would slip her tens of yuan.

If she went around telling everyone how her brother made money, wouldn't that be like biting the hand that feeds her? Moreover, even if she couldn't recognize big characters, she knew her brother's activities weren't to be discussed.

Not even a single word or phrase should be revealed!

In another room.

"Don't think that just because my mother agreed to you being our son-in-law that you are my man, and don't think that just because we'll get our marriage certificate tomorrow, you can share a bed with me."

Cui Shuicao huddled on the kang, her back facing Meng Xingsheng, keeping as much distance as possible to prevent him from touching her.

"Don't worry, without your consent, I... I won't touch you,"

Meng Xingsheng didn't know how he felt. One would say... one would think he should be happy to become husband and wife with the person he liked, lying on the same kang,

Chapter 688: Forever Together

He should have been extremely happy... yet, he couldn't feel happy at all.

Especially when he thought that tomorrow his household registration would be changed to the Cui Family's book, severing all ties with the Meng Family for good, he felt deeply discomfited.

"It's best not to touch that topic!"

Cui Shuicao bit her lip, her eyes full of resentment, "Are you happy that your mother ruined my reputation, giving you the chance to be with me without spending a penny?"

"I never thought that."

Meng Xingsheng said, "I know very well what kind of person you are."

Unexpectedly, Cui Shuicao sneered as if in retaliation, "Then you'll be disappointed. I indeed had a thing with Educated Youth Tang, and I did have a secret relationship with Ma Donglai. Don't blame me, the only one to blame is yourself for not bringing two hundred yuan to my family to propose marriage.

"Now look, your family has ruined my reputation, forcing me to end up with you. Meng Xingsheng, you've wronged me, do you know that? You owe me for life, and if you dare disobey me in the future, I'll die just to show you!"

With things having reached this point, she could be Meng Xingsheng's wife in name only, but she would never allow Meng Xingsheng to wrong her.

Meng Xingsheng closed his eyes, it was hard to discern his emotions, and he did not respond to Cui Shuicao verbally.

"When you turn around, take me to North City. I want to see how hard it is to get the prey you've set your eyes on."

As if he hadn't heard Cui Shuicao's words, Meng Xingsheng kept his mouth tightly shut, remaining silent.

North City.

"Grandma, is Mom coming back soon?"

"She should be back soon."

"I think about Mom every day, the kind where I miss her very much. Grandma, do you think Mom misses Vivi?"

"Of course, she does."

It had been over half a month since Kang Li flew abroad to participate in a competition. Both Cai Xiufen, the old mother, and Min Rui, the three siblings, missed Kang Li dearly.

Indeed, having just come back from a hobby class today, Xiao Ming Wei couldn't sit still nor stand still, circling around Cai Xiufen and cooingly expressing her longing for her mother.

Milk Bun Ming Han suddenly asked, "Grandma, when can we see Mom on TV?"

Cai Xiufen replied, "I'm afraid we'll have to wait for your mom to come back before we can see her on TV." She had heard from her beloved daughter that unless the international events are broadcast domestically, they are not visible.

"Ah!" Milk Bun Ming Han sighed like a little adult, "It's so boring without Mom at home!"

Upon hearing this, Cai Xiufen couldn't help but laugh, "You're just a little kid, yet you know boredom?"

"I'm very smart!"

Milk Bun Ming Han lifted her chin, "Grandma, you shouldn't underestimate me."

With arms crossed, Milk Bun Ming Han said, "When Mom is at home, she can teach me to play the erhu, tell us stories, teach us to sing; I feel so happy every day. But now that Mom is not at home, besides missing her every day, I just don't have the energy for anything!"

Cai Xiufen playfully asked, "Do you like your mom that much?"

Milk Bun Ming Han replied, "I like Mom the most, most, most! Mom is the best mom in the world, and I want to be with Mom forever!"

Xiao Ming Wei added, "Me too." She turned her head towards her brother Min Rui, "Big brother, do you want to be with Mom forever too?"

Min Rui nodded.

"Then you don't want to be with Grandma forever?"

Cai Xiufen asked with a smile.

"Grandma is Mom's mom; of course, our whole family should always be together!"

Milk Bun Ming Han giggled, the childish babble from her mouth sounding endlessly joyful.

"Did you eat a jar of honey?"

Chapter 689 Reporting a Grievance

Cai Xiufen smiled with a face full of affection.

"Not at all, grandma, you can smell me if you don't believe me!"

Milk Bun Ming Han opened her mouth wide cutely, her bright, big eyes curving into crescents.

Seeing the little one laughing so happily and playfully, Cai Xiufen's eyes brimmed with indulgence, "Since you didn't eat that much honey, then can you tell grandma why your mouth is so sweet?"

Milk Bun Ming Han: "Because I'm telling the big truth!"

Cai Xiufen laughed out loud, "How do you manage to be so dear to grandma!" She hugged the little one tightly, showering her with affection.

Being kissed and having her head stroked by grandma, Milk Bun giggled non-stop with joy.

"Doesn't grandma cherish Vivi?"

Xiao Ming Wei felt a little aggrieved.

"Cherish, of course, I cherish! Grandma cherishes all three of you little sweethearts!"

Cai Xiufen let go of Milk Bun Ming Han and then hugged Xiao Ming Wei for a good while. After putting the little girl on the sofa next to her, she beckoned Min Rui to come over. Then, she showered the big grandson with affection too, while he blushed and clearly felt shy.

"Grandma, some kids in the courtyard badmouthed mom, saying she left me, big brother, and second brother and won't come back. I got really angry when I heard it,

but I listened to mom and didn't fight with them. I just told them that mom didn't abandon Vivi, big brother, and second brother and that Vivi's mom will be back soon!"

Xiao Ming Wei clenched her little fists, her eyes rounded with anger as she complained in a milky voice.

"You don't need to care about what others say. When your mom comes back, they'll know that Vivi wasn't lying and that they were talking nonsense."

Was Cai Xiufen annoyed? The answer was definitely yes.

After all, she knew exactly what her daughter was up to, but she couldn't just deal with those few children in the courtyard because of some idle talk, though her annoyance was genuine.

The reason?

What could little children know?

Most likely, it was those adults at home who couldn't stand to see others do well and loved to gossip, rambling nonsense that the children overheard. Unfortunately, those children repeated it while playing with others outside.

In the end, it wasn't the fault of the naive children; the problem lay with their parents.

Milk Bun Ming Han: "They were just talking nonsense anyway, I couldn't be bothered with them!"

Sitting on the sofa, Milk Bun Ming Han appeared mature beyond her years, her eyes filled with disdain.

"Little in size, but big in mischief!"

Cai Xiufen pinched Milk Bun Ming Han's nose and said with a laugh, "That's right, you don't need to mind them."

Min Rui said with a tense face, "My mom said that we shouldn't act impulsively when faced with issues or else, I definitely would have taught them a lesson!"

"Alright, grandma knows that all of you are good children and that you're protecting your mom. When she finds out, she'll definitely be very happy."

Her daughter had indeed raised these three little cubs well—look how tightly they guarded her!

Cai Xiufen's smile was gentle as she looked at the three siblings, feeling extraordinarily happy for her precious daughter.

...

Abroad.

On the field, Kang Li easily won her fourth gold medal. Alright, that was with her only participating in four events; otherwise, the number of gold medals would have been more than just four.

Perhaps because Kang Li won the medals too easily, some coaches and athletes from other countries raised objections.

The result was that the organizers responded that Kang Li cooperated fully with a physical examination. According to the data collected, not only was there no evidence of cheating, but her constitution appeared to be somewhat naturally weak.

Chapter 690: You Can Do It Too

As for the performance on the track, it could only show that Kang Li had very good on-the-spot explosive power.

"Great work!"

After stepping down from the podium, Director Loh, beaming, came forward and handed Kang Li her water bottle, "Have some water."

"Thank you."

Kang Li took the water bottle, drank a sip, and asked, "When are we returning home?"

Director Loh said, "We'll rest for two days before we head back." Though he said it was to rest for two days, it was actually to give everyone some time to stroll around nearby and to adjust their post-competition feelings.

Another reason was to see if anyone needed to buy anything.

That noon, teammate Han Xia asked Kang Li, "Want to go look around? It would be a pity to attend an international competition abroad and not buy something to take back home."

"It seems like Director Loh's two days of rest are very humane." With a twinkle in her pretty fox eyes, Kang Li changed her clothes, picked up her bag and said, "Let's go, I also want to buy some things for my family."

The previous noon all the events had finished, and even if Han Xia hadn't suggested going shopping, Kang Li had wanted to go out for a walk anyway.

Han Xia said, "We can't go too far."

Kang Li replied, "Director Loh did mention that, I remember it well."

Han Xia asked, "What do you plan to buy?"

Kang Li answered, "Let's see first."

Han Xia said, "Me too."

The two of them walked and chatted, and by the time almost two and a half hours had passed, both Kang Li and Han Xia's hands were full of large and small bags.

"We've had quite a haul today."

On the way back to where they were staying, Han Xia said with a laugh.

"Yes, judging by what we're carrying in our hands, we did indeed make a good haul."

Kang Li responded with a smile, only to hear Han Xia say again, "You were so awesome today! No, not just today, but ever since we've known you, you've been incredible."

Kang Li laughed and did not reply.

Han Xia went on, "During every one of your competitions, if our team members didn't have their own events, they would all watch you dominate on the track, and you never let us down. How can you be so amazing?"

Kang Li said, "Everyone is amazing."

Han Xia insisted, "Yes, yes, everyone is amazing, but you are the most incredible. Winning gold medals seems too easy for you, and today when we were shopping, those foreign salespeople were quite dismissive towards us. But as soon as you spoke up, along with the sudden change in your demeanor, you had such a commanding presence!"

"You can do it too."

Remembering how those foreign salespeople looked down on them in the department store, Kang Li felt displeased, but she was never one to bottle up her feelings. Based on that, she naturally "politely" counterattacked.

If she was in the right, she had nothing to fear.

Moreover, the customer is king, and as long as the department store didn't want to tarnish its reputation, apologizing to her and her teammates was inevitable.

In fact, to avoid making a big issue of it, the store manager not only took the initiative to apologize but also reprimanded and fined the rude salespeople. Only then did she not pursue the matter further.

"By the way, Kang Li, Mr. Lao En, the manager of that department store, wanted to refund us the money we spent buying things, why didn't you accept it?" Han Xia referred to Mr. Lao En, the manager of the department store.

Kang Li said, "If we chose to accept that, it wouldn't just be us losing face, but also dishonoring our country."

On hearing this, Han Xia was first taken aback, then her expression turned ugly, "Do you mean to say that Mr. Lao En, by offering compensation on the surface, was actually giving us charity? Like shooping away a beggar, right?"

"I don't know if that was his intention, but we certainly couldn't accept it.