

## **Cast of Characters**

### **1. Chuang Laoshi**

Chuang Laoshi, 55 years old. He once owned land in the village, but lost it to landlord by defaulting on small debt. Chuang then went begging with his wife for many years, beginning with the famine, and then returned after the war. He then bought half an acre, and later received two and a half more in the Settling Accounts Movement. He owns no draft animals. Lives with wife in small mud house he had before the war.

### **2. Zhen Xiaoqi**

Zhen Xiaoqi, male, early 50s. Owns 30 acres of land, 5 of which were expropriated from peasants who were in Zhen's debt. One of those debtors was Chuang Laoshi. Also owns ten sections of housing, 20 pigs, 20 sheep, and a small pond for six ducks and ducklings. Family of six: wife, second wife, son, daughter, daughter-in-law. Rents 20 acres of land to poor and middle peasants. Hires seasonal labor to work the remaining 10 acres. Once hired Sheng Farong. Former member of the Guomindang party. Invests in a local distillery.

### **3. Wang Poming**

Owns seven acres of land, six sections of housing. Also engaged in commerce selling cloth. He has a family of five (mother, wife, son, daughter-in-law). He hired some seasonal labor to help with harvest. Wang Poming was caught years earlier having affair with neighbor's wife. He now refuses to let his wife go to Woman's Association meetings. Recently broke his elbow in a village fight.

### **4. Yu Taohui**

Yu Taohui, younger brother of Yu Xianliang, 29 years old. After parents had to sell land in the famine of 1942, he began to sell opium. He is known for beating his wife, but is liked by many of the men in the village because of his easygoing manner, good companionship, and occasional efforts to help someone buy something on the black market during the War. Received two acres of land and a donkey from the Settling Accounts Movement.

### **5. Shi Aiqian**

Shi Aiqian, male, late 30s. Inherited 20 acres of land, 10 sections of housing, and many silver dollars after the sudden death of his father, who was the former village head. Recently married a 16-year-old wife. Owns two draft animals, necessary farm tools, three sheep. Works on part of the land with the aid of three seasonal laborers, while the rest of land is rented to poor peasants. Hires Old Lady Liu as a cook. Known to sell surplus grain for exorbitant prices in years of bad harvests. Hordes money and buries it in the ground. Is a highly devout Buddhist, who manages the village temple society. Fought the Japanese in the war.

### **6. Sun Dayun**

Sun Dayun, male, around 30 years old. He owns half an acre of land. Unmarried bachelor, can't afford to marry, but may be having affair with a landlord's daughter. He planted two acres of the landlord's land as if it were his own.

### **7. Yu Qiaosheng**

Yu Qiaosheng, single female, age 45. Her husband lost his land to a landlord over a small debt that he hadn't paid. The landlord took everything, including his tools. After this, her husband left her to move to the city. She

received one acre of land in the Settling Accounts Movement. Openly suspicious about communism. Generally thought to have been “destroyed” by losing her family’s land and her husband.

### **8. Old Lady Liu**

Old Lady Liu. Her older husband is a former blacksmith who no longer works. She makes a living hiring herself out as cook, using her wages to send son through high school at the county seat. Before Liberation, she was peddling food for a living. Received one and a half acres in Settling Accounts Movement and half a donkey, and also has two sections of housing.

### **9. Huang Xiangrong**

Huang Xiangrong, around 40 years old. There are six in her family: mother, herself, husband, son, daughter-in-law, grandson. They already sold off a granddaughter. Her husband’s grandparents were rich peasants, but grandfather smoked away the land in opium. Yet she still has relatives who are wealthy, and she hid their wealth for them before the Settling Accounts Movement, so got nothing of those “fruits.” Now has three acres, no draft animals.

### **10. Shi Jiao’er**

Woman, 27 years old. The daughter of Shi Maoxi, who owned one acre of land, but lost it in famine years, and then died. Jiao’er’s mother sent her out at young age to be servant. She worked as a servant in the closest big city until after the war. She then returned home to the village with a daughter to support. Her mother has just died.

### **11. Shi Caoyu.**

Woman, around 35 years old. A widow with two young sons. Owns six acres of land. Active in the Woman’s Association. Her husband was killed fighting the Japanese. She hires two men to work the land. She is in love with Sheng Farong—they are possibly having an affair.

### **12. Sheng Farong**

Male, 35, indentured to landlord family in village as young boy, worked for them for seven years to pay off family debt, then began work for another of the landlord families, had to sell off his house in the famine years, wife died of hunger, owned no land until Settling Accounts Movement, now owns three acres and two sections of a house, has father and mother and one son, owns no draft animals.

### **13. Qi Qiaosheng**

Qi Qiaosheng, male, around 35–40 years old. He owned four acres of land before Liberation, and supported six people. His father died in 1942. Family is now mother, son. He is possibly estranged from his wife and daughter.

### **14. Fan Yulan**

Fan Yulan. Owns five acres of land, hires seasonal labor for planting and harvest. Family of four: wife, son, and daughter-in-law. A religious Catholic, who helped the priest escape. That priest had collaborated with Japanese. Unclear whether Fan himself collaborated with the Japanese.