

Fat Wife 201

Chapter 201: The End of the Farce

Xia Zhe was going to return to the tent when he heard Zheng Yuan saying that she wanted him to have a taste of losing Qiao Mei. He stopped in his tracks.

Losing? Losing who? Was she referring to Qiao Mei?

Xia Zhe's mind was buzzing with what Zheng Yuan said. Tonight, he had almost lost the person he loved deeply as well as their beloved baby. These were the things that Xia Zhe was most unwilling to have to face.

Xia Zhe suddenly turned around and rushed to Zheng Yuan. His rationality prevented him from doing anything to Zheng Yuan but he clenched his fists and looked at Zheng Yuan coldly. "I hope there won't be a next time. Zheng Yuan. If anything happens to Qiao Mei, you will die too. Your entire family will be buried together with my wife. You'd better think carefully."

After saying that, Xia Zhe turned around and left. As he walked off, he said, "Zhuang Hua, take her away. I'll contact the superiors tomorrow."

Zhuang Hua had no choice but to obey the order. After all, apart from being his good friend, Xia Zhe was also his superior. Soldiers must obey military orders. Furthermore, Zheng Yuan really needed to go back and have a good rest.

"Let's go, Yuan Yuan. Let's go back." Zhuang Hua squatted down and looked at the dejected Zheng Yuan.

After Xia Zhe left, Zheng Yuan regretted what she had said and tears streamed down her face uncontrollably. Zheng Yuan looked at Zhuang Hua helplessly and pointed at the tent in front of her with a trembling finger.

"Zhuang Hua, does that mean he will never look at me again?" Zheng Yuan's eyes were filled with anticipation, as if she would immediately believe Zhuang Hua if he said that Xia Zhe would not mind what happened tonight.

Zhuang Hua could not bear to hurt her, but he could not say anything that was against his conscience. Zhuang Hua just fixed his eyes on Zheng Yuan quietly for a while and did not say anything else.

“Zhuang Hua! Say something! Tell me if he will still look at me and we can still be the same as before! Zhuang Hua! Tell me! Zhuang Hua!!!” Zheng Yuan grabbed Zhuang Hua’s shoulder tightly, hoping to see the answer she wanted in his eyes, but it was clearly just a false hope.

After Zheng Yuan got her answer, she loosened her grip in a helpless manner and dropped back down on the ground. Tears flowed down her good-looking face and she wept silently. She was already starting to regret it. She just wanted Xia Zhe not to fall in love with anyone else. Even if Xia Zhe would never marry in his life, she was willing to wait for him.

However, fate had played a trick on her. Now, Xia Zhe would no longer look at her. He treated her like an enemy and even wanted to punish her. This was not what she had intended to achieve.

“Yuan Yuan, get up. Let’s go. The ground is cold, let’s go back.” Zhuang Hua reached out to help Zheng Yuan up.

Zheng Yuan shook off Zhuang Hua’s hand and looked at him coldly. She could no longer feel her legs after sitting on the ground for a long time and the cold had seeped to her bones. She managed to stand up on her own with difficulty and then looked at the people around her.

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Zheng Yuan slowly extended her hands and patted the dust off her body. She straightened her back and raised her head before saying to Zhuang Hua, “You should report what happened today truthfully. Tomorrow, I’ll send a report to the superiors myself. There’s no need for Commander Xia to do it. Please pass the message to him on my behalf.”

After saying that, she limped towards her tent with some difficulty. The soldiers in the vicinity did not know what to think of the current Deputy Commander Zheng. Was she pitiful? She was not. She deserved to be punished for her wrongdoings.

Everyone seemed to feel a sense of pity for her. Her career path was progressing smoothly, but she was blinded by love and did something wrong. In the end, she would be punished accordingly. Perhaps she would never have a military career again, or perhaps she would be demoted and transferred back to her original unit. What happened after this would depend on how the superiors dealt with it.

Zhuang Hua frowned as he watched Zheng Yuan leave. Zheng Yuan was still as arrogant as before and still chose to protect her dignity in the end. No one could tell what kind of punishment was awaiting her.

“Alright, stop looking! Don’t you have to do rescue work tomorrow! Go back, all of you!” Zhuang Hua shouted sternly.

The soldiers in the vicinity quickly rushed to return to their respective teams and did not dare to bother about this matter anymore. Qiao Mei could hear everything from inside the tent and she understood the cause of the whole incident. When she saw Xia Zhe entering, she did not say anything and just looked at him quietly.

Xia Zhe’s heart went out to Qiao Mei when he saw her sitting dutifully on the bed in the tent. He felt that he had not protected Qiao Mei and their child well.

Chapter 202: Like A Little Bun

Qiao Mei looked at Xia Zhe quietly and smiled as she gestured for him to go over to her side. Xia Zhe was in low spirits and he hung his head as he stood by the bed and looked at Qiao Mei.

“Come and sit down, why are you standing when you’re already off duty and not training your soldiers.” Qiao Mei smiled playfully and patted the edge of the bed, asking Xia Zhe to sit down.

Xia Zhe nodded and sat down gently next to Qiao Mei. He looked at her thoroughly and reached out to touch her face. His tightly furrowed brows showed no signs of relaxing.

Qiao Mei put her finger at the middle of Xia Zhe’s forehead and said, “Why are you so nervous? It’s not like I’m dead.”

When Xia Zhe heard this, he quickly glared at Qiao Mei and said, "Pfft, touch wood! What nonsense are you saying!"

"Pfft, touch wood. I won't say it anymore. Look at how nervous you are," Qiao Mei said as she giggled.

Xia Zhe could not even smile at all. His mind was still filled with scenes of what happened to Qiao Mei just now. The situation was so dangerous and terrifying and he had almost lost her.

Xia Zhe lowered his head and remained silent. He held Qiao Mei's hand tightly and stroked it repeatedly, not knowing what to say.

He felt that as a man, he had not protected his wife and child well. Moreover, it had happened in the army camp, surrounded by his soldiers and without any enemies around. What if something like that happened on the battlefield or elsewhere!

If something like this could happen even with him around, what if an accident happened to her when she was not with him?

?Xia Zhe had mixed feelings and did not know what to say.

Qiao Mei could tell what he was thinking and gave Xia Zhe a kick as she said, "Hey! Commander Xia! What are you worried about! I'm right in front of you. What are you still worried about?"

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He was more than happy to see Qiao Mei doing something so improper. Qiao Mei was still the same Qiao Mei. She was not scared by the whole incident and was still so childlike and cheerfully forthright.

At the thought of this, Xia Zhe curled his lips and slowly articulated his thoughts. "I just feel that I'm useless for letting you go through such a thing in the army camp. How can I face you and your grandfather? If your grandfather finds out, he will regret letting you marry me."

Qiao Mei became unhappy immediately after she heard this. She pointed at Xia Zhe and roared, "Xia Zhe! Now you regret marrying me!"

Xia Zhe looked at the furious girl in front of him in confusion. “When did I say that I regret marrying you?”

“You did say it! Asshole! You don’t want me anymore! Only you would know whether you regret it! You want to run off after getting me pregnant! You have no conscience!” Qiao Mei swung her little fist and gently punched Xia Zhe’s shoulder.

At first, Xia Zhe was so nervous that he did not know what to do. He carefully observed Qiao Mei’s expression and realized that she did not seem angry at all. She puffed up her cheeks as she rattled off and looked like a little bun. It was obvious that she was just throwing a little tantrum and was not really angry.

Xia Zhe pulled Qiao Mei into his arms and rested his head on the top of Qiao Mei’s head. He slowly stroked Qiao Mei’s back and said dotingly, “Have you messed around enough, my little ancestor?”

Seeing that her plan had been exposed, Qiao Mei no longer had any intention of fooling around with him. She lay quietly in Xia Zhe’s arms and wrapped her arms around his waist.

“Hmph, who’s messing with you.” Qiao Mei muttered.

Xia Zhe stroked Qiao Mei’s head and said, “I don’t regret marrying you. I think the best decision I ever made was to marry you. I originally wanted you to become a military spouse, but now that something like this has happened to you right under my nose, I just feel that I’m very useless to be unable to protect you.”

Qiao Mei broke free from Xia Zhe, crossed her legs and sat upright on the bed. She looked at Xia Zhe solemnly and said, “You’re the most useful person. My husband is the most amazing person! The baby and I both think that you’re the best and you did protect the baby and me. Why do you say that you’re useless?”

Xia Zhe looked at Qiao Mei’s serious expression when she said that he was amazing and his ears turned red. He said awkwardly, “It’s not like what you said. I could have prevented this from happening.”

Chapter 203: Talking About the Past

“No one can say for sure that something won’t happen. Besides, didn’t you protect me well? Otherwise, how am I always safe and sound?” Qiao Mei said as she looked at Xia Zhe.

“I just want you and the baby to have a more stable life and to suffer less. You even secretly came to look for me. If Grandpa finds out, I think he will definitely break my legs.” Xia Zhe had goosebumps as he imagined Qiao Qiang picking up a rod.

Qiao Mei looked at Xia Zhe and smiled. She said teasingly, “I was the one who took advantage of you back then. It’s too late for you to regret it now!”

Xia Zhe thought of that night again. Qiao Mei looked so beautiful and charming now, and her delicate voice reminded him of how they were entangled together that night. Xia Zhe’s ears turned even redder, but Qiao Mei was unable to do anything strenuous now, so he could only wait it out.

As she looked at Xia Zhe, who currently resembled the color of cooked shrimp, Qiao Mei lay on the bed and laughed heartily. Xia Zhe reached out in exasperation and gently scratched Qiao Mei’s ticklish spots. Qiao Mei laughed until her tears flowed out.

“Hahahahahahahahaha!”

“Who asked you to mess around?”

The laughter in the tent stopped after a while. Xia Zhe did not dare to play around with Qiao Mei too vigorously. Although back at the camp, he had written a letter to his aunt to ask her about the things to take note of during pregnancy, he remained worried as Qiao Mei had not gone through a proper check-up.

“Do you feel any discomfort in your belly?” Xia Zhe asked as he looked at Qiao Mei’s stomach.

Qiao Mei thought about it seriously. There did not seem to be any pain or soreness. Other pregnant women would be experiencing sore backs and constant morning sickness at this stage of the pregnancy,

but she did not feel any pain at all. Even on such a hot summer day, she did not feel any discomfort. She ate well, everything tasted nice to her and she did not have any symptoms like morning sickness.

Qiao Mei shook her head.

Xia Zhe was still worried, but there was no hospital in the vicinity where she could go to do a checkup now. He could only wait until they returned to the capital for his aunt to take a look at her.

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“What’s your relationship with that female soldier just now?” Qiao Mei looked at Xia Zhe curiously.

Qiao Mei knew Xia Zhe’s stand on the issue, but she was really curious as to why Zheng Yuan would have such strong feelings for Xia Zhe. She asked him the question solely out of curiosity.

Xia Zhe broke out in cold sweat when he heard that. He thought that Qiao Mei was going to pursue the issue and immediately stood up to look at her as he said, “There’s really nothing between us.”

Qiao Mei laughed out loudly when she saw Xia Zhe standing at attention as if he was going to do a verbal report to his superior. She tugged at the corner of Xia Zhe’s shirt and asked him to sit down.

“What’re you doing, I’m just curious about how you two met,” Qiao Mei said as she looked into Xia Zhe’s eyes.

After confirming that Qiao Mei really did not mind, Xia Zhe began to talk about how Zheng Yuan and he got to know each other.

“Her name is Zheng Yuan and she’s the deputy battalion commander. We grew up in the same military compound when we were young. Zhuang Hua and Zhang Yong as well. We all played together when we were young,” Xia Zhe said.

“Eh? What about Zhao Wu?” Qiao Mei stared at Xia Zhe curiously.

Xia Zhe frowned again. He did not like to hear Qiao Mei mention the names of other men. He quietly suppressed the jealousy in his heart and said, “We got to know Zhao Wu after he joined the army. He did not grow up with us.”

Qiao Mei nodded in acknowledgment.

“At that time, I got along really well with Zhuang Hua. Zhang Yong was more introverted. At that time, he particularly liked to read and almost went into scientific research, but his father did not agree with that choice and so he joined the army. Zheng Yuan and Zhuang Hua had a good relationship and we were all quite close with one another.” Xia Zhe only gave a simple introduction and did not say anything else.

Qiao Mei sat up anxiously and asked Xia Zhe, “And then? Get to the point!”

Xia Zhe shook his head resignedly. He did not manage to throw her off the scent, so there was nothing he could do except tell her everything.

“Zheng Yuan was one of the few girls in the military compound. At that time, there were many boys in the compound, so girls were especially pampered. Everyone doted on her, so she felt that everything belonged to her. However, she also worked hard and she reached her current position on her own merit,” Xia Zhe said impartially.

Chapter 204: Arranged Marriage Between Children

Qiao Mei kept quiet and looked on expressionlessly.

“Later on, it so happened that her father became my mentor. Her father watched me grow up as well and he was quite close with my father, so he spoke to my father about an engagement...” Xia Zhe’s voice became softer and softer as he spoke.

Qiao Mei pricked up her ears when she heard the key word—engagement.

“The two of you were engaged? Then aren’t I...” Qiao Mei thought that she was the one who had messed up Xia Zhe’s marriage plans and was caught off guard for a moment.

Xia Zhe reached out helplessly and flicked her head as he said, “What’s in that little head of yours, I’m not finished yet.”

Qiao Mei rubbed her head without saying anything.

“No, we were not engaged because my grandfather and your grandfather have already agreed to an arranged marriage between their grandchildren, you and I. There can’t be another engagement. My father wanted to agree to her father, but my grandfather rejected it, and that was the end of it,” Xia Zhe said earnestly.

Qiao Mei indeed remembered from the memories of the original owner of the body that her grandfather had mentioned an arranged marriage when she was young, but she had always thought that it was not real. Back then, she thought that it was a lie to prevent Qiao Zhuang’s family from marrying her off to a fool in the neighboring village.

“What happened after that?” Qiao Mei asked.

“After that, I got busy with training and had no contact with her at all. Later on, when I got promoted, I met her again by chance at work. There was nothing else,” Xia Zhe told her everything that he could think of.

His answer satisfied Qiao Mei’s curiosity and she now understood why Zheng Yuan was so obsessed with Xia Zhe. It turned out that they were almost engaged to each other. There was nothing she could do about this thing called fate.

However, Qiao Mei did not know that Zheng Yuan was not Xia Zhe’s only admirer. A bigger surprise was waiting for her in the capital.

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“Then are you really going to file a complaint?” Qiao Mei looked at Xia Zhe with uncertainty.

“Complaint? What complaint? I will be submitting a report,” Xia Zhe said helplessly to Qiao Mei.

“In our village, it’s called filing a complaint. She didn’t really hurt my child. If you’re really angry about it, you can talk to her parents in private. If you report it to the higher-ups, will she get a beating?” Qiao Mei asked Xia Zhe worriedly.

It was not that Qiao Mei was magnanimous and did not take what happened to heart, but after hearing what Zhuang Hua said earlier, Qiao Mei felt that it would be more appropriate to handle this matter in private. The few of them all knew one another and it would not be good to make things too awkward between them.

“Let things run its course. I will just report the truth without anything else. Don’t think about this matter anymore. It’s already so late. Hurry up and go to bed.” Xia Zhe got up and prepared to go to the table to work on the report through the night.

Qiao Mei hurriedly grabbed Xia Zhe’s sleeve and asked, “It’s the middle of the night and you ask me to go to bed when you’re not? Where are you going!”

“I have to write the report. I have to send it out tomorrow,” Xia Zhe said.

“No! You have to come to bed with me! Ouch...” Qiao Mei pretended to hold her stomach and moan.

Xia Zhe hurriedly looked at Qiao Mei and asked, “Mei Mei, what’s wrong! Do you have a stomachache! Are you alright!”

“Yes... I just... my chest feels so stuffy... Can you accompany me...” Qiao Mei lay on the bed and pouted.

Xia Zhe looked at Qiao Mei, who was lying on the bed and holding her stomach but saying that her chest felt stuffy. He did not know if he should point out her ill logic or to just let her be. He shook his head resignedly.

“You, you. Go to sleep. I’ll come to bed as well. I’ll think about the report tomorrow,” Xia Zhe looked at Qiao Mei and said.

“Yep! Then come quickly!” Qiao Mei said happily and lay on her side.

The tent cot was so small that it could fit two people only if both of them lay on their sides. After Xia Zhe packed his clothes, he lay down behind Qiao Mei and gently hugged her from behind.

“Don’t worry, I’ll protect you well,” Xia Zhe said softly.

“Yes, I know. Go to sleep.” Qiao Mei nodded happily and soon fell asleep.

Xia Zhe gently stroked Qiao Mei’s arm on the bed and gradually fell asleep as he listened to her breathing.

In another tent, Zheng Yuan limped to the bed and checked on her leg injuries. She found many bruises, but they were all minor injuries. In the past, she had sustained a leg injury during training and was left with a lingering effect from it. Given that she had sat on the ground for so long earlier, her leg would probably hurt for the next few days.

Chapter 205: Preparing for Transfer

Zheng Yuan briefly checked for any other wounds on her body and then sat there quietly, looking in the direction of the tent door. She still maintained hope that Xia Zhe would come looking for her.

Not long after, there were footsteps outside the door and someone knocked lightly on Zheng Yuan’s door.

“Who is it?” Zheng Yuan asked happily, her eyes filled with anticipation. She hoped that the person who answered her was the person she wanted to see.

“Yuan Yuan, it’s me, Zhuang Hua, I brought you some food and also medicine for your bruises. I’ll leave them at the door. Remember to apply the medicine and rest early if there’s nothing else. I’m going off now.” After Zhuang Hua finished speaking, he gently placed the things at the entrance of the tent and left. As he walked away, he looked back a few times worriedly.

Zheng Yuan lowered her head in disappointment and did not say anything. She made her way slowly to the door and opened it to see some red fruits and a bottle of potion on the ground.

Zhuang Hua saw these fruits when he went out for the rescue mission earlier and specially plucked them for Zheng Yuan. Looking at the red fruits and then at Zhuang Hua’s departing figure in the distance, Zheng Yuan understood the mistake she had made and tears flowed down her face again.

After picking up the things and re-entering the tent, Zheng Yuan sat at the table and wrote a report through the night. In the report to her superiors, she listed down everything that had happened today and also provided details on the handover of her work. She had decided to ask for a transfer and leave the troops to go somewhere else.

She had worked out her issues and completely let go of this matter. She wanted to be herself again and not that Zheng Yuan who liked Xia Zhe so much that she lost her mind.

After packing her things, she asked someone to send the report out at dawn. Meanwhile, Zheng Yuan handed over her remaining work to her subordinates. It did not take long for Zhuang Hua to hear about this.

Zhuang Hua found Zheng Yuan and said, “Have you considered carefully about the transfer?”

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“Yes, I think I should leave this place,” Zheng Yuan said to Zhuang Hua as she looked at the sky.

Zhuang Hua did not speak. He had been silently protecting Zheng Yuan all along. Basically, Zhuang Hua would appear wherever Zheng Yuan went. It had been like this for so many years.

"I'm determined to do this. Don't try to dissuade me. You stay here and don't follow me." Zheng Yuan looked at Zhuang Hua tenderly.

Zhuang Hua was a little surprised at first, then he gave a relaxed smile.

"So you know," Zhuang Hua said happily.

The thoughts that he had kept hidden for so many years could finally be out in the open.

Zheng Yuan nodded and said, "I figured it out last night. I've been chasing after Xia Zhe for so many years and trying my best to keep up with him. I thought I loved him, but all I did was to lose myself."

Zheng Yuan stood in front of Zhuang Hua and said solemnly, "I even let down the people who cherish me, so I want to transfer out of here and go somewhere else to look for the old me."

Zhuang Hua was relieved to see Zheng Yuan with her current mindset. The confident and haughty Zheng Yuan he had always liked had returned.

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"Remember to come back and visit us during the holidays. We'll eat together in our big courtyard then," Zhuang Hua said.

"Alright, it's a deal." Zheng Yuan smiled happily and continued, "I've already sent a report to the superiors this morning. I also wrote a letter to my father. He already knows the stupid things I've done so I'll probably be transferred out soon. Just keep this matter to yourself."

Zhuang Hua nodded. He still could not accept the news of Zheng Yuan's transfer because he did not know when they would be able to meet again. However, he also wanted to support Zheng Yuan in her search for her old self.

"Your father will punish you, won't he?" Zhuang Hua asked worriedly.

Zheng Yuan's father was famous for being strict when they were growing up in the military compound. At that time, all the children were afraid of him, even Xia Zhe. This time round, Zheng Yuan would definitely be severely punished.

"Who cares? This is how it should be if I have done something wrong. I've already thought it through. There's no benefit in hiding it from him. I'm his biological daughter, what can he do to me?" Zheng Yuan said with a chuckle.

Zhuang Hua also laughed. He still had vivid memories of the things that happened when they were young, but they have all grown up in the blink of an eye.

"Then take care of yourself and I'll bring you out for dimsum when you come back." Zhuang Hua looked at Zheng Yuan tenderly.

"Alright, it's a deal," Zheng Yuan said with a smile.

Chapter 206: The Occurrence of Something Improbable

Out of habit from being in the army all year round, Xia Zhe woke up at dawn. For a moment, he was not used to having someone sleeping next to him, even if she had fair skin and a pretty face that looked like a cute little bun. Her small mouth opened and closed slightly with every breath, and her long eyelashes would occasionally flutter.

Xia Zhe tightened his hug on Qiao Mei and rested his chin on her head, enjoying the beautiful morning.

After a while, Qiao Mei muttered something in her sleep and slowly stretched out while flipping over. Xia Zhe did not even dare to breathe loudly, afraid that he would wake the person who looked to be dreaming.

He quietly put on his clothes and prepared to go out to make arrangements for the day's mission. Before he left, he took another look at Qiao Mei who was still in bed, unable to hide the smile on his face.

Xia Zhe thought to himself, “What a wonderful life.”

He gently pushed open the tent door to go and look for Zhuang Hua, but did not expect to find Zhuang Hua chatting with Zheng Yuan. He did not go forward to disturb them and just waited quietly in the distance.

Zhao Wu tiptoed from behind and prepared to launch a sneak attack on Xia Zhe. Just as he was about to reach out, Xia Zhe grabbed him and threw him to the ground with a smooth shoulder throw.

“Ouch! What the hell! Xia Zhe, you’re playing rough for real!” Zhao Wu lay on the ground and gritted his teeth.

Zhang Yong, who was following behind, saw Zhao Wu lying on the ground and guessed that it was Xia Zhe who did it. He could not help but laugh loudly.

“Hahahahahaha, you deserve it!” Zhang Yong said.

Xia Zhe looked at these two uncontrollable jokers and shook his head helplessly.

“Can you still get up? Why didn’t you move after falling down? You’re behaving like a scammer,” Xia Zhe said as he pointed at Zhao Wu.

“Ouch! Ow, ouch! I can’t make it! I’m going to die! Xia Zhe hit me!” Zhao Wu became more and more animated as he spoke. He lay on the ground and groaned loudly, looking like he was really in pain.

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“Oh my, look at that. Don’t tell me your bones are broken? Then we must get you treated quickly. Should I get Sister Cheng from the medical team to take a look at you?” Zhuang Hua bade Zheng Yuan farewell and ran over to look at Zhao Wu teasingly when he heard Zhao Wu’s voice.

“Tsk, I’m fine!” Zhao Wu got up from the ground embarrassingly with a red face.

Sister Cheng?

“What Sister Cheng?” Xia Zhe looked at Zhang Yong in confusion, thinking that Zhang Yong knew what was going on.

However, Zhang Yong was so surprised that he could not close his mouth. He flapped his hands and said, “What? I really don’t know!”

Zhao Wu lowered his head and did not dare to say anything else, afraid that he would trip on his words if he spoke further. These buddies of his were smart people and would probably make him confess in two or three sentences. He was determined not to say anything.

Zhuang Hua laughed and said, “It’s Sister Cheng Fang from the medical team. She’s probably around three years older than us. She’s kind and beautiful... Hey, hey, hey, don’t stop me from talking!”

Before Zhuang Hua could finish speaking, Zhao Wu anxiously reached out and covered his mouth.

When Xia Zhe heard the name Cheng Fang, he thought that he seemed to have an impression of her. There were not many female soldiers to begin with, and most of them were from the logistics department. Most of them reported to Zheng Yuan.

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Cheng Fang was not really that old, but she would be considered an old maid in the countryside. Qiao Mei was already married at her age but there were still some people who said that she got married late. Therefore, Cheng Fang would be considered to be past marriageable age.

The Cheng family was actually a family of doctors who had been practicing for generations. Cheng Fang’s grandfather, father and mother all worked in the main hospital in the capital and they were all very outstanding doctors. The family also seemed to be related to one of Xia Zhe’s aunts, who was also colleagues with them in the same hospital.

“Three years older? That’s just right. As the saying goes, a wife who’s three years older than the husband ensures a richer life! Hahahahahaha!” Zhang Yong clapped his hands and cheered.

“Don’t talk nonsense! There’s nothing going on between us!” Zhao Wu hurriedly stopped Zhang Yong from talking.

Xia Zhe understood what was going on. It appeared that Zhao Wu had taken a fancy to the girl, but the feeling was not reciprocated.

“What exactly is wrong with you?” Xia Zhe finally asked.

“Well... it’s just that... she and I...” Zhao Wu kept stammering as his ears turned red and he scratched his head in embarrassment.

“Stop wasting time and tell me quickly,” Xia Zhe said.

“It’s just that some time ago, my arm got scratched during a rescue mission. It was just a flesh wound, so I went to the infirmary to bandage it. That was where I met comrade Cheng. When I got too busy, she took the effort to remember me and look for me to help change my dressing. That’s all there is,” Zhao Wu said bashfully.

Chapter 207: Heart-To-Heart Talk Between Buddies

Judging from Zhao Wu’s expression and behavior, he had most likely taken a fancy to the girl. Since they were good buddies, they all tried to think of a solution for Zhao Wu.

“Then how do you feel about it?” Zhang Yong asked.

“I... I’m not thinking much. I just want to just maintain it as it is and see if she has any interest,” Zhao Wu said as he gave the three of them a serious look.

“If you need anything, just say it. Her elders and my aunt are colleagues.” Xia Zhe usually kept quiet, but when he spoke, he would go straight to the point.

Zhuang Hua patted Zhao Wu’s shoulder and said, “I’m so impressed. Your brother Xia Zhe has already settled her parents for you. Since you’re not exactly strangers, it all depends on how you grasp the opportunity!”

Zhao Wu nodded clumsily. Actually, he had no other intentions. He just felt that this girl was kind-hearted and treated him quite well, and was also concerned about him when he was injured. He thought that he could think about the future later.

“Let’s get down to business. The superiors told us to pack up and return to our original military unit in three days. I will be taking a break after that. Do you have any issues with that?” Xia Zhe asked.

Zhuang Hua, Zhang Yong and Zhao Wu all knew that Xia Zhe had yet to take his wedding leave. This was an important matter and should not be delayed.

“Don’t worry and just go off. We definitely won’t let anything happen to the troops. Let’s assist with one last rescue search in the next few days and then we can leave,” Zhuang Hua said as he looked at Xia Zhe.

“My team may need to leave later as there are many things that we have to hand over. When the time comes, Zhang Yong and his team can leave first,” Zhao Wu said to Xia Zhe.

“Alright, let’s proceed this way then. Zhang Yong, do you have any problems on your end?” Xia Zhe looked at Zhang Yong seriously and asked him.

“No problem, but is it really alright for me to leave first?” Zhang Yong looked at Xia Zhe worriedly.

Currently, the professional rescue team has already taken over the search and rescue mission. Their troops had only come over to help with the rescue because they were close by at the time of the disaster. By now, it was time for them to go back and continue with their own training. However, there were still a lot of things to be done here and the victims had not received help yet. Although it was not their main job, they were still concerned about the victims.

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“It’s alright, there will be more people coming over in the next few days. We just need to follow the arrangements. We should leave our food here for the disaster victims and just take what we need for our journey,” Xia Zhe said.

“Alright, I’ll go and arrange it now.” Zhang Yong left after saying that.

Zhao Wu followed closely behind, leaving Xia Zhe and Zhuang Hua looking at each other.

Xia Zhe stared at Zhuang Hua, not knowing how to start. Zhuang Hua already knew what Xia Zhe wanted to say.

“Let’s go to my tent. It’s hot outside,” Zhuang Hua said, pointing in the direction of his tent.

“Sure.” Xia Zhe nodded.

The two of them walked side by side, each with his own thoughts. However, after being together for so many years, they had basic tacit understanding and knew what each other wanted. It did not take long for them to reach the tent.

Xia Zhe did not stand on ceremony. He sat on Zhuang Hua’s bed and looked at him.

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“You’re so stubborn.” Zhuang Hua looked at Xia Zhe resignedly.

Xia Zhe only lowered his head and did not say anything. Although he had no romantic feelings for Zheng Yuan, they had grown up together after all. Xia Zhe was the youngest child in his family and he had always wanted a younger sister. However, he only had a domineering older sister. The Xia family and the Zheng family were neighbors and he had treated Zheng Yuan as a younger sister since they were children.

Zhuang Hua sighed and said, "Zheng Yuan wrote a report herself and even wrote a personal letter to Uncle Zheng. She told him everything and also submitted the report and asked for a transfer."

"Yes." Xia Zhe did not know what to say. He had also written a report, but it was only about the disaster and the arrangements of the troops. There was no mention of Zheng Yuan.

Qiao Mei had told him not to report the matter to his superiors last night, so he had wanted to wait until he returned to the capital and meet Uncle Zheng to tell him about it. However, Zheng Yuan's actions were more resolute than his.

"Don't get angry. We've all been together for so many years and you know what kind of person Yuan Yuan is. She's just... impulsive." Zhuang Hua did not know how to explain the nature of this matter.

"I originally intended to report to the superiors, but Qiao Mei did not want me to do it. She said that she could understand Zheng Yuan." Xia Zhe would always smile gently when he mentioned Qiao Mei. Zhuang Hua also knew that his buddy really liked Qiao Mei.

"Then what about you?" Xia Zhe looked at Zhuang Hua.

"What do you mean what about me?" Zhuang Hua was prepared to play dumb and let the question slide.

Chapter 208: Warm and Happy

Seeing that Zhuang Hua still wanted to hide things from him, Xia Zhe reached out to flip the pillow on the bed. Zhuang Hua hurriedly rushed over to stop him and said, "I'll talk, I'll talk!"

Xia Zhe did not expose his buddy's secret but waited for Zhuang Hua to speak.

Zhuang Hua did not know where to start. It was actually not a secret, he just never mentioned it to Xia Zhe. In addition, Zhuang Hua was curious about how Xia Zhe knew that he had hidden Zheng Yuan's photo under his pillow.

“I’ll continue to stay here in the troops and I don’t plan to leave.” Zhuang Hua did not say much and just talked about work.

“You’re not going with her this time?” Xia Zhe asked.

“I had intended to, but she told me to stay here and not follow her.” Zhuang Hua scratched his head, indicating that there was nothing he could do about Zheng Yuan’s decision.

Xia Zhe also knew what Zhuang Hua wanted to do, but Zhuang Hua was the only son in his family. Zheng Yuan’s transfer this time should be a demotion, so if Zhuang Hua went with her, it would be difficult for him to do well in the future.

“It’s almost the holidays and we’ll all be in the same courtyard and see one another. Have you thought about it?” Xia Zhe asked Zhuang Hua.

Zhuang Hua nodded and said, “Yes, let’s leave it at that. It would be good for everyone to calm down separately. I also want to think about what I should do and whether I should insist on it. You also know that my parents have been urging me to get married. I had originally managed to stop them from talking about it, but now that you went off and got married secretly, my parents are starting to urge me to get married again.”

Xia Zhe smiled in embarrassment and said, “Why? Did my marriage bring you trouble?”

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“After the news about your marriage, Zhang Yong and I already can’t count the number of phone calls from our families on just one hand. Fortunately, the news of your wife’s pregnancy hasn’t spread to the capital yet. If it did, Zhang Yong and I would have to answer calls every day urging us to get married!” Zhuang Hua had a headache just thinking about the phone calls from home.

Xia Zhe smiled and did not say anything. To him, it would be best if all his buddies found good partners as well.

It was late in the morning when Qiao Mei slowly opened her eyes. She touched the side of the bed next to her and realized that Xia Zhe was not around. She hurriedly got up and looked around. The sunlight shone into the tent through the crack in the door.

Looking at the time of the day, Xia Zhe had probably gone to work long ago. Qiao Mei stood up and did some stretches, preparing to go to the cookhouse to take a look. After collecting the water yesterday, they were probably still thinking about what to cook today.

As she walked slowly along the path, many soldiers greeted her and addressed her as Mrs. Xia, making her feel overjoyed.

“So this is how it feels to be called Mrs. Xia, hehe.” Qiao Mei skipped her way to the cookhouse.

As soon as she reached the door, she saw the junior soldier shouting inside, “Squad leader! Sister Qiao Mei is here!”

When everyone heard that it was Qiao Mei, they put down what they were doing and went up to greet her.

“Sister-in-law is here!”

“Sister-in-law, come quickly! We’re having meat today!”

“Sister-in-law, go sit in the front. This place is so smoky and oily!”

Everyone spoke at the same time and Qiao Mei did not know who to answer first. The squad leader asked everyone to quiet down and asked, “Comrade Qiao Mei, why are you here?”

“Don’t call me comrade Qiao Mei. Just call me Qiao Mei. I’m here to see if there’s anything I can do to help,” Qiao Mei said as she picked up the apron.

“Hey, hey, hey! Don’t move. How can we let you work hard when you helped us so much yesterday. Everyone can’t thank you enough!” The squad leader laughed and snatched the apron from Qiao Mei’s hand.

“That’s right, that’s right!”

“How can we let sister Qiao Mei work!”

Qiao Mei was too embarrassed to reject their kindness so she smiled and said, “Then I’ll just sit there and wait to eat delicious food!”

“Yes, sister Qiao Mei. Just wait for the food!” After saying that, the junior soldier quickly went back to do his tasks diligently.

Everyone returned to their respective posts. Qiao Mei sat under the shade of a tree and looked at the hustle and bustle, feeling very happy. This kind of life was not too bad. It was completely different from before and everyone was very enthusiastic.

Not long after, the fragrance of food wafted out. Although Qiao Mei did not help with the cooking, she secretly gave the vegetables a little bit of energy so that the food would be as fragrant as her cooking even though it was made by others. The food would be so delicious that people would find it unforgettable after eating it.

At noon, when everyone was done with their work and came back to the camp, they all ran to the cookhouse to get food. They were so worried that there would be no food left if they were late, so they all rushed to line up.

Chapter 209: Pickled Radishes

Qiao Mei smiled as she sat under the shade of the tree and watched the soldiers scrambling to get their food. The junior soldier from the cookhouse ran to Qiao Mei as he panted.

“Sister-in-law, come try this. The food that’s made by the cookhouse today is very fragrant!” Beads of sweat rolled down the junior soldier’s face.

Qiao Mei looked at the junior soldier in front of her. The clothes on his back were drenched in sweat. He had very tanned skin, and a simple and honest smile. The mess tin in his hand was very clean and filled with all kinds of dishes, especially meat. In the army, meat was especially scarce and yet they were willing to give it to her to eat.

Qiao Mei quickly shook her head and said, “You guys gave me too much. Quickly bring it back for everyone else to eat.”

The junior soldier looked at Qiao Mei very seriously and said, “Sister-in-law! Don’t worry and just eat it! There’s still a lot left in the pots. I’ll leave it here for you. I need to go back, there’s still lots of work!”

The junior soldier hurriedly placed the mess tin on a stool at the side and ran back, afraid that Qiao Mei would stop him if he was even a second slower.

Qiao Mei shook her head helplessly and smiled as she looked in the direction that the junior soldier had left in, and then at the mess tin beside her. She could feel everyone’s care and love for her contained in it.

Qiao Mei happily returned to the tent with the mess tin and waited for Xia Zhe to come back to share it with her. Otherwise, she would definitely not be able to finish it herself and it would be wasteful.

After Xia Zhe and Zhuang Hua finished talking and made arrangements for the evacuation, he returned to his tent. He thought that Qiao Mei must be very bored staying in the tent alone.

Unexpectedly, before he even entered the tent, he could hear Qiao Mei singing in the tent. He could not tell what she was doing, but she sounded very happy.

Xia Zhe opened the tent door and saw that Qiao Mei was looking at a metal mess tin filled with meat and singing a song he could not recognize.

“Hey! You’re back! Hurry up, come and eat!” Qiao Mei’s eyes lit up when she saw Xia Zhe.

Xia Zhe took off his jacket and sat beside Qiao Mei. “What made you so happy?”

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“Oh, let me tell you, I originally wanted to go to the cookhouse to take a look and help out. In the end, they didn’t let me help and instead gave me lunch with a lot of meat!” Qiao Mei indicated with her small hands to show how much meat there was.

Qiao Mei’s cute gesture left Xia Zhe in a good mood as well. He reached out to pat her head and asked, “Then why aren’t you eating? You just sit here looking at it.”

At the mention of this, Qiao Mei pouted and said, “All because I’m waiting for you...”

Xia Zhe thought his heart would melt. Although Qiao Mei was mostly a forthright person when she interacted with other people, she behaved like a little girl in front of Xia Zhe and he was just full of tender affection for her.

“Yes, yes, yes. It’s my fault. I’ll come back earlier next time. Hurry up and eat.” Xia Zhe handed the chopsticks to Qiao Mei.

Qiao Mei picked up a piece of meat and placed it by Xia Zhe’s mouth. “Try it quickly!”

Xia Zhe smiled and opened his mouth to eat it. He muttered, “You eat it. This is quite delicious.”

Hearing from Xia Zhe that it was tasty, Qiao Mei did not stand on ceremony and started eating. She suddenly thought of something else and ran to her bag to take out a glass jar filled with pickled radishes.

“Aye, I can’t remember who said that my pickled radishes don’t taste nice. Isn’t that right, Commander Xia?” Qiao Mei said enigmatically.

Xia Zhe also recalled what happened that day. At that time, he did not recognize Qiao Mei and just made a casual remark. He did not expect this little girl to bear a grudge.

“No way. It’s definitely not me,” Xia Zhe looked at Qiao Mei and answered tentatively.

Qiao Mei opened the jar and took out a piece of pickle. She waved it in front of Xia Zhe a few times before eating it, leaving Xia Zhe sitting on the spot with a helpless expression. He wondered how to deal with a troublemaker like Qiao Mei.

“My little ancestor, please spare me. I didn’t know it was you back then,” Xia Zhe said as he held Qiao Mei’s hand.

As the saying went, heroes could not resist the charms of beautiful women. For Qiao Mei though, the beautiful woman could not resist the charm of the hero.

Looking at Xia Zhe’s handsome face, coupled with his deep voice, she was unable to remain angry anymore. Besides, she was just joking and did not really want to ask Xia Zhe for an explanation.

Chapter 210: Preparing to Go to the Capital

“Alright, I won’t tease you anymore. You should eat some too,” Qiao Mei said awkwardly.

“By the way, the superiors said that they want us to evacuate within the next three days. I will take a break after we return to our original military unit. Is there anywhere that you want to go?” Xia Zhe asked.

Qiao Mei wanted to go and travel around, but she had been away from home for a long time. She had to hurry to the capital to visit Xia Zhe’s family and then send a letter to her grandfather. Otherwise, her grandfather would be anxious if he did not hear from her for so long.

“Let’s go to the capital,” Qiao Mei said without looking up.

Xia Zhe originally wanted to go traveling with Qiao Mei, thinking that she had probably never been out on a long trip before. He did not expect Qiao Mei to want to go to the capital to meet his family.

“Really? Do you want to go to my house?” Xia Zhe asked happily.

“Yes, I already think it’s a little rude to go only now. Do you think your parents won’t like me?” Thinking of this, Qiao Mei became worried.

“No, my parents are easy to talk to. It’s not likely that they won’t like you,” Xia Zhe said gently.

Xia Zhe’s father, Xia Mao, was famous for having a good temper, but Xia Zhe’s mother, Xu Lan, was not so easy to get along with. She was quite a critical person and she liked to be fashionable. She would probably look down on Qiao Mei, who came from the countryside.

Previously, Xu Lan had wanted Xia Zhe to be with the daughter of the Zhou family, who was also from a military family and had a good family background, all of which would benefit the Xia family. The daughter of the Zhou family was also a good-looking girl, so Xu Lan did not expect Xia Zhe to secretly get married, what more to a girl from the countryside.

At that time, Xu Lan was still busy discussing Xia Zhe’s marriage in the capital. In the end, she received news of Xia Zhe’s marriage and that the couple even had a child on the way. She almost choked on her breath when she heard that, and she still hated this matter even now.

After Qiao Mei finished eating, she started to clean up. She thought that she might want to do some shopping along the way and see if she could get more clothes.

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“So where are we going this time?” Qiao Mei asked without turning her head.

“Mei Mei, you can’t go with me this time,” Xia Zhe said awkwardly.

I can't go?

Qiao Mei looked back at Xia Zhe in confusion. Then, she remembered what her grandfather had told her before.

"Oh! You can't tell me because of the military rules!" Qiao Mei said in realization.

"Yes, you're still not a military spouse now, so you can't come with me yet," Xia Zhe explained.

Qiao Mei could not help but feel a little lost and said with disappointment, "Then I should go home?"

"No need. Let's do this, I'll send a letter to my aunt now so that you can go to her house to stay for a few days first. I'll come and look for you after I've settled my work at the military unit," Xia Zhe said.

His original military unit was located near the capital and he could go back very quickly. His aunt was also a warm-hearted person, so Qiao Mei should be fine, given that she was so likable.

Initially he just wanted to fulfill the basic responsibility of being a husband. After all, their first encounter was a little ridiculous. However, it was a totally different situation now. He also knew Qiao Mei so much better.

He had fallen deeply in love with Qiao Mei. Although she had crooked handwriting, she was actually very smart. Although she had some shortcomings when they first met, she was very beautiful now. She had actually lost so much weight for him and even traveled thousands of miles to look for him and even saved his life.

Now, he did not want to leave Qiao Mei's side for even a second. He only wanted to stay by her side.

Before the earthquake, the results of the earlier competition in the army had already been released. He had won first place as he wanted. This time, when he returned to the military unit, although he mainly needed to settle the matter of the evaluation, he also wanted to settle the matter of Qiao Mei being a military spouse as soon as possible. He did not want to be separated from Qiao Mei for too long.

“Your aunt’s place... What kind of person is your aunt and what should I buy for her?” Qiao Mei asked.

“My aunt is very easy to get along with. You can just go there. There’s no need to bring anything,” Xia Zhe said with a smile.

She thought it was fortunate that she was going to his aunt’s house and not directly to his house to look for his parents on her own. Just imagining such a scene made her feel awkward, as it would be like a daughter-in-law from the countryside bringing her child to seek refuge.

Qiao Mei tilted her head and thought about what to wear to his aunt’s house and what kind of person his aunt would be like.

Looking at Qiao Mei, who was lost in her thoughts, Xia Zhe could not help but go forward to hug her.

“Don’t worry, I’ll go and look for you very soon,” Xia Zhe said.