

Fat Wife 971

Chapter 971 - 971 We Want an Explanation

971 We Want an Explanation

“Don’t bullshit! What VIP route! These are all your excuses! You’re definitely getting in through the back door! You’re the one giving her preferential treatment! Don’t you dare to admit it!” the man shouted as he pointed at Xia Fang.

Thank you readers!

The people standing around were all supportive of what the man said. They wanted the hospital and Xia Fang to give them a reasonable explanation. They did not care if it was other people who were affected, but if they were the ones at a disadvantage, they would demand for an explanation even if they had to risk their lives.

Xia He stood at the side and decided that she had enough. She came forward and said to the man, “Do you even know what a VIP route is?”

“Why won’t I know! It’s something for you people to get in through the back door! You think you can fool us by coming up with a term that we can’t understand. Do you take us for fools! Everyone, don’t you think so!” the man said confidently.

More and more people started to gather behind him, including many pregnant women who did not know what was going on. In the event that everyone started pushing one another and it led to a stampede, the consequences could be dire.

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“That’s right!”

“You’re right! We definitely want an explanation!”

Everyone shouted out their opinions and the entire lobby became noisy again. Xia He angrily took a flower pot from the side, held it high and smashed it down hard. The loud sound made the crowd quiet down.

“Don’t use ignorance as your bargaining chip. We actually pay double the amount of money that you pay. As long as you can afford it, no one will stop you from using the VIP route. Now, we’ll give you this opportunity. If you pay up, your wife can also use the VIP route now. Will you fork out the cash?” Xia He said calmly.

Everyone turned to stare at the man. They were all curious about what the man would do. This man was from the countryside and he had eight brothers, him being the eldest. Even after he got married with much difficulty, his finances were still being dragged down by his brothers at home. He still had to give his parents all the money he earned so that they could provide for his younger brothers first. Under such circumstances, he was already barely able to scrape together some money to bring his wife to the hospital

The man flew into a rage out of humiliation and glared at Xia He as he shouted, “So what if you have money? What’s so great about that? Do you think you can look down on us commoners just because you have money! Do you think you have more rights than us just because you have money! Who knows if your money comes from dishonest sources! Honest people like us look down on dirty money!”

Xia He laughed mockingly and just stared at the man quietly without saying anything. The man became angrier and angrier. He rushed towards Xia He and grabbed her collar as he shouted, “What are you laughing at! Am I that funny! Am I a joke to you!”

“That’s right, I’m laughing at you. I’m laughing at you for being so useless and unable to provide your wife with a better life. That’s why you’re venting your anger on us. Your pregnant wife is standing in the queue, but what are you doing? You’re going around looking for trouble. It’s not as if the VIP route only exists today. There has always been a big sign at the door. Don’t you see it? Don’t blame us because you can’t afford the service,” Xia He said.

The man still said stubbornly, “Who knows how to read those words... Don’t change the topic!”

“Does the fact that you’re illiterate give you a reason to blame others for being educated? Do you think the hospital is a charity organization? It’s the hospital staff’s job to save the dying and help the injured, but are they all immortals who don’t need money? Are the meager medical fees that you pay enough to maintain and repair the hospital’s equipment? Where does the hospital get the money to pay the

doctors? Don't they all need to support their families? If there are no VIP route users like us who pay high medical fees in exchange for a shorter wait, the hospital would need to close down," Xia He said.

The man did not know how to answer. He had never thought about such things. His own family was about to fall apart and he was having a tough time, so he was not in the mood to care about others. Whether the hospital made a profit or not had nothing to do with him. He could barely even afford the medical fees now.

However, he agreed with one thing that Xia He said. He felt that the hospital should treat all patients unconditionally. The hospital must provide the services that it was being paid for.

"You... you're using distorted arguments! Anyway, it's all your fault! You should not jump the queue! You should queue up with everyone else!" the man braced himself and said insistently.

Chapter 972 - 972 Military Family

972 Military Family

Seeing that the man was so stubborn, Xia He did not want to say anything else and decided to wait for the police to arrive. Xia He forcefully shook off the man's hand on her collar, dusted herself off and stood beside Xia Fang.

Thank you readers!

Qiao Mei had already completed the second checkup. She could not understand the test results, so she needed to get Xia Fang to go in and talk to the doctor in person.

She slowly opened the door and everyone's eyes were immediately drawn to her. Xia He immediately went forward and grabbed Qiao Mei's wheelchair, wanting to bring her away from the location. This place was really too dangerous.

Qiao Mei held Xia He's hand to make her stop. She looked calmly at the man in front of her and said, "If you don't have enough money, I can pay for your wife's checkup."

"What... what do you mean?" The man looked at Qiao Mei hesitantly.

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How could there be such a good thing in this world? Could it be that the woman in front of him was a fool? Otherwise, who would go around spending money on strangers? Or did these women want to use money to shut him up and stop him from spreading rumors?

Just as the man was thinking about all these, Qiao Mei said something that made him furious. "After all... not all men can afford to spend money on their wives. I can understand that and I'm willing to help her. As a woman, my heart aches for her that she hasn't married well. Just take this as my good deed of the day."

Xia Fang was already used to Qiao Mei's sharp tongue which was always coupled with a kind smile on her face. Qiao Mei had already taken some money out from her pocket to give it to the man. Xia He stood behind Qiao Mei and held back her laughter. With just one sentence, this young girl had completely defeated the other party. Qiao Mei was still the best at winning an argument!

"My wife doesn't need your hypocritical assistance! You're just worried that this matter will be exposed, so you want to use money to shut me up! Let me tell you, there's no way! I don't even know where you get your money! You're pregnant at such a young age. Don't tell me you're some rich man's mistress!" The man looked at Qiao Mei with a disdainful smile.

When the people around them heard such scandalous talk, they all gathered around and listened intently, not wanting to miss out on any exciting gossip.

Qiao Mei's expression darkened. It did not matter to her if others said that she was hypocritical or a show off. However, she would not allow anyone to say anything bad about Xia Zhe or mock the Xia family. This was her bottom line.

"You have to be responsible for what you say. If you're telling lies, you'll have to pay a huge price," Qiao Mei said sternly.

The man thought that Qiao Mei was just trying to scare him and said nonchalantly, "So what if I say it? What can you do to me? How can someone who's a mistress be so bossy! Where does your confidence come from?"

“My aunt and I are both family members of soldiers. My elder sister is a soldier herself. Are you sure that everything you said is true?” Qiao Mei asked.

During this era, if one quarreled with someone from an ordinary family, at most everyone had to go to mediation. However, if one had a conflict with a soldier or a soldier’s family member, it was not something that could be resolved with a simple apology. One would have to bear legal responsibility.

At the same time, soldiers were being scrutinized by the public at all times. The behavior of a soldier’s family members would also be taken as a reflection upon the entire family.

“Who’s going to believe that! I can also say that my father is a soldier! Our family is full of soldiers. Do you believe me?” the man said disdainfully.

He did not think that he would be so unlucky to have created trouble for a soldier’s family member. This was simply like a bolt from the blue. If Qiao Mei and the rest really used a legit VIP route and did not get in through the back door, then everything he said would be lies and there would be people coming after him.

If the issue was serious enough, they would even put up posters about his wrongdoings and he would have to repent aloud in front of all the neighbors until the victim was satisfied. Otherwise, he would be fined or even jailed.

“We’re really military wives. You can call the police and check on it. They have records of all the family members of all the soldiers,” Qiao Mei said.

Chapter 973 - 973 Owe a Feast

973 Owe a Feast

The people around him were afraid of being implicated and disappeared in the blink of an eye. Qiao Mei did not intend to lodge a report against this man. Perhaps there would be people in the crowd who would do it for her in order to uphold “justice”.

Thank you readers!

“Aunt, the doctor is waiting for you inside to discuss the results. You can go ahead. Elder sister and I will wait for you at the next checkup spot,” Qiao Mei said.

After what happened, Xia Fang still felt a sense of lingering fear. She had witnessed how the man wanted to go forward and harm Qiao Mei. If Qiao Mei did not have any bodyguards by her side, the whole situation might have turned disastrous. She had thought that the hospital was a very safe place. Nothing major had ever happened in all her years working here.

It seemed that danger lurked around every corner.

Xia He could tell that Xia Fang was feeling worried. She looked at Xia Fang and said, “Aunt, don’t worry. I’ll bring Qiao Mei to the next checkup spot. Nothing will go wrong.”

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“You must check carefully and see if there are any suspicious people nearby. Maybe we should get another two more bodyguards. There’s no harm for us to wait a while. It won’t take them too long to come over,” Xia Fang said worriedly.

Qiao Mei quickly rejected Xia Fang’s idea. It was already eye-catching enough to have two bodyguards following her around. If they increased the number of bodyguards, she did not know what others would say about her. It would be bad if she caused unnecessary trouble for Xia Zhe.

Now that she had no way of contacting Xia Zhe, she did not want to cause any trouble for him or take any risk.

“Don’t worry, Aunt. That man has already caused such a big scene today. No one else will dare to do anything to me,” Qiao Mei said.

Xia Fang reluctantly believed what Qiao Mei said. After instructing Xia He on many things to take note of, she went into the room to look at the results while Xia He brought Qiao Mei to the next checkup spot.

“Sigh...” Xia He sighed quietly with a serious expression on her face. She suddenly felt so powerless because she was unable to protect Qiao Mei.

“What’s wrong? Why are you sighing?” Qiao Mei turned around and asked.

Xia He felt a little remorseful. Ever since Qiao Mei and Li Gui moved to the capital, there had been an endless stream of threats to their safety. They continued to face danger even under the protection of so many people. Were all these incidents just accidental or was someone deliberately setting them up?

She was not smart enough to deal with such things. All the family’s issues were always handled by Xia Wen, but she also did not dare to call Xia Wen recently. His life was also in a mess. Tan Jing would phone Xia Wen at Xu Lan’s house every day to ask him when he was going home. It made Xu Lan very frustrated during this period of time. Whenever she heard the phone ringing, she would almost lose her temper.

“I’m fine. I’m just thinking about how eldest brother is doing. I haven’t spoken to him in a long time,” Xia He said sadly.

It was only at this moment that Xia He realized how well Xia Wen had protected her. In the past, she suffered in silence when the Kong family treated her badly. Xia Wen would take the initiative to call her up to chat with her and counsel her. She had always been the little girl who hid behind her eldest brother and this fact had never changed even after so many years.

Qiao Mei had not seen Xu Lan for a long time. She decided to go back to Xu Lan’s place to stay for the night after the checkup. At the same time, she could also pass them the pagers she had bought for them. If it was convenient for Xia Fang, she also wanted Xia Fang to stay over at Xu Lan’s place to brief Xu Lan about the results of today’s checkup. That would let Xu Lan feel at ease as well.

“Eldest brother knows how to handle his own issues. Don’t worry about him. If he can’t handle it, he will call us,” Qiao Mei said.

She only needed to speak to He Ning and she would be able to buy more than 80 courtyard houses like what she owned. Xia Wen’s current problem could be easily solved. However, this was not what Xia

Wen wanted. In addition, Qiao Mei did not want to poke her nose into other people's business, in case it made everyone look bad in the end.

By the time she finished with the checkup, it was almost nighttime. After a long day, Qiao Mei could finally have a hot meal. However, it was not at the big restaurant that Qiao Mei was hankering for, but at the hospital cafeteria.

"That's letting you off too easily. You must remember that you owe me a feast!" Qiao Mei pouted and said grumpily.

Chapter 974 - 974 You Seem More Like the Elder Sister

974 You Seem More Like the Elder Sister

Xia He smiled and said, "Sure, sure, sure. I'll buy you whatever food you want. Let's eat something to fill our stomachs first. We'll go back to Mother's place later and we can have whatever we want."

Thank you readers!

"That's more like it!" After saying that, Qiao Mei turned to look at Xia Fang and asked, "Aunt, can I go and visit my neighbors later?"

Xia Fang nodded and said, "Yes you can. I went to check on them yesterday. Sun Juan is recovering well and will probably be discharged earlier than expected. However, Zhou Shuang's condition is not so optimistic. She has too many health problems and she needs to get all her issues treated. Otherwise, it will be detrimental to her health."

"I'll talk to them about this," Qiao Mei said.

They had a quick bite and then Qiao Mei and Xia He went upstairs to visit Sun Juan and Zhou Shuang. Xia Fang went to her office to organize the materials she needed for her work and also to make arrangements for the surgery she was doing tomorrow. Qiao Mei asked the chauffeur to go home to pick up the things she wanted to bring to Xu Lan's place. She had already packed the pagers into a bag, but she had not found a chance to go back.

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It was rare that Zhou Shuang was still awake. When Qiao Mei entered the ward in a wheelchair, the women were all shocked and thought that something had happened to her.

“Qiao Mei! What happened to you! Are you alright!” Sun Juan widened her eyes and looked at Qiao Mei.

Feng Hong also went forward to look at Qiao Mei and asked nervously, “Qiao Mei, where does it hurt? Tell us where the discomfort is and let’s go for a checkup now since you’re already in the hospital. I’ll go and help you do the registration now.”

Xia He quickly stopped Feng Hong. Qiao Mei smacked her own legs and said, “I’m fine. My aunt brought me here for a checkup and insisted that I sit in a wheelchair because she’s concerned that I’ll get too tired. I’m totally fine, so don’t worry.”

Everyone felt relieved after hearing what Qiao Mei said. If something should happen to Qiao Mei as well, they would really be out of their wits. The police had been coming to the hospital frequently. Among the three women, Sun Juan was the only one who could take charge of the situation. The other two women were more weak-minded.

However, even though Sun Juan could deal with small issues well, this was the first time she had encountered such a big issue. She did not really know how to handle it.

“Sister Zhou, how do you feel now? Are you feeling better?” Qiao Mei asked.

Zhou Shuang still looked unwell and her lips were a little pale. It would take time for her to recuperate. The good thing was that she was now able to stay awake for longer periods of time compared to before, and the dizziness and nausea was slowly subsiding.

“I’m feeling much better. Thank you for coming to visit me.” She forced a smile on her face. At this moment, even the slightest movement made her feel uncomfortable.

“I’ll get someone to send over some tonics tomorrow. You must eat them. Sister Sun too. I hear from the doctor that you’re recovering very well, but don’t run around and disregard your own health. You also have to lie in bed and rest well,” Qiao Mei reminded the two women.

Sun Juan patted Qiao Mei’s head dotingly. She was really very fond of Qiao Mei who was about the same age as her daughter. If her daughter was still alive, she would probably be like Qiao Mei.

“You’re still so young, yet you’re still educating us mothers. I think you seem more like our elder sister,” Sun Juan said with a smile.

The people in the room laughed loudly. Sometimes, Xia He also felt that Qiao Mei was more mature and reliable than her. Qiao Mei did not behave like an 18-year-old girl, but more like a 38-year-old woman.

Just as everyone was chatting and laughing, there was a knock on the door of the ward and two men in police uniforms walked in.

“Are you Zhou Shuang and Sun Juan? I’m from the police station. My name is Zou Ming and this is my colleague. You can just call him Fatty,” said Zou Ming with a smile.

“Hello, Officer Zou. Are you here today because the police have found new clues?” Sun Juan asked nervously.

Zou Ming sighed and told them about everything Su Yang had said in prison. He also informed them that Old Madam Fan was currently being locked up in the detention center. The only way they could have a breakthrough now was if Sun Juan had other incriminating evidence that could directly lead to Su Yang’s conviction.

Chapter 975 - 975 Very Professional

975 Very Professional

The only thing they could confirm was that Su Yang had gotten into a fight, but there was no obvious evidence regarding anything else. It was difficult for them to proceed further. The most important thing now was to find the whereabouts of that bed, but this matter was not so easy to do.

Thank you readers!

“Our suggestion is... for both parties to settle. We want to know if there’s any possibility of mediation.” Zou Ming found it difficult to inform them of the police station head’s proposed solution. He did not really want the women to have to settle with a scumbag like Su Yang, but his superior was putting pressure on him and he had no choice. It was such a dilemma.

Qiao Mei could tell how Zou Ming felt. It was a delicate situation at the moment. His superior did not want any open cases in their hands at this moment as it would affect the evaluation of their performance for the year. This issue was not as important to the employees since the only difference to them was whether they received a bonus of 10 dollars or 20 dollars.

However, it was different for the leaders. The year end evaluation exercise would determine whether they could get promoted or not. The opportunity for them to achieve meteoric success was all in the hands of these commoners.

“Settle? How?” Sun Juan asked with a frown.

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Zou Ming did not know what to say. They could not obtain any relevant information about the case from Su Yang and Old Madam Fan. The two of them only provided misleading information and lies and when they became agitated, they would even attack the police officers. They were really difficult to deal with.

“Officer Zou, if you’re still unsure, then you can go back and think about it. We don’t have anything to say for now. All the people involved are our neighbors and we will definitely bump into one another at some point in time. All we want is for everyone to get along well,” Qiao Mei said with a smile.

“May I know who you are?” This was Zou Ming’s first time meeting Qiao Mei. Previously, he had posted to another police station to work on another case and he had only returned to this station recently. He was not there when the police station was handling Qiao Mei’s case.

“My name is Qiao Mei. These three ladies are my neighbors and they look out for me all the time. They’re like my elder sisters,” Qiao Mei said.

Sun Juan said affirmatively and excitedly, "Yes! This is my younger sister! You can also discuss the issues with her!"

"Alright, then I would like to know your opinion on whether there's any possibility of a settlement," Zou Ming asked softly.

Sun Juan and Zhou Shuang looked towards Qiao Mei at the same time. They were willing to let Qiao Mei decide on the way to handle this matter. If they could not handle it well themselves, it would only allow Old Madam Fan and her family to continue to bully them. They preferred to take a chance with Qiao Mei's decision. At worst, it would end up as if they had handled it themselves.

"A settlement is also not impossible. It will depend on Su Yang's sincerity. We should get compensation for medical expenses, nutrition fees, loss of income, emotional damages, among other things. Nothing less than that. Also, all the money and items that Su Yang snatched and stole must be returned. In addition, he needs to give us another 10% of the total amount as compensation for each person. If they agree to these conditions, then we can settle. We won't accept an IOU. We want the compensation in cash," Qiao Mei said in a gentle manner.

Zou Ming looked at Qiao Mei in shock. These professional terms and the amount of compensation she mentioned did not sound like something a young girl of her age could say.

"Alright. I understand what you mean," Zou Ming said.

"That's not all. Zhou Shuang has two children at home. At the crime scene, her child was the first one to get hurt. This is a very traumatic experience for a child. The younger child might forget about it as he grows up, but the older son won't. Therefore, I hope that Su Yang provides a solution for this matter as well," Qiao Mei said earnestly to Zou Ming.

Zou Ming stared at Qiao Mei in silence. He had heard about what happened to the children when he took statements from the neighbors. Feng Hong was looking after them at her house now, and the two children suffered from varying degrees of trauma. He had also heard that Su Yang often bullied Zhou Shuang's older son, so it was not unreasonable for Qiao Mei to make such a request.

"Am I asking for too much? Why aren't you saying anything, Officer Zou?" Qiao Mei asked.

“No, I just feel that you’re too professional. Even us police officers feel a little ashamed of being inferior to you,” Zou Ming said embarrassedly. Fatty only kept staring at Qiao Mei from the moment he entered the ward.

“You’re too humble. I haven’t really done anything. Since you’re clear about our request, then you can go back first. We can keep in touch when there’s any progress. My two elder sisters are not feeling well and need to rest,” Qiao Mei said as she stared at Zou Ming.

Chapter 976 - 976 More Than You Think

976 More Than You Think

Qiao Mei was giving the police their marching orders. It would not do them any good to continue to discuss this matter. They did not know how much pressure Su Yang could handle, nor did they know how much money Old Madam Fan could fork out.

Thank you readers!

They must be prepared for the worst. If they could not get him convicted, then at least they could move to a new place with the compensation monies.

Instead of continuously getting entangled with Old Madam Fan’s family, it might be better for the women to start over somewhere else. Sun Juan and Feng Hong lived closer to Qiao Mei’s place and they were all separated by a street from Old Madam Fan’s house. They could actually take measures to avoid running into people from her family.

Zhou Shuang’s house was a rented place, so it did not matter if she lived somewhere else. Qiao Mei had so many houses that she had not rented out yet, so she could always rent one of the houses to Zhou Shuang. This way, they could all live very near Qiao Mei. In fact, if she wanted to build up her business and open a big shop in the future, she would have to nurture people that she could trust.

People could only become close friends if they were willing to open up to one another. They would only become closer and treat one another like family members only after experiencing many things together.

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After the police officers left, the three women heaved a sigh of relief. Feng Hong gave Qiao Mei a thumbs up and said, "Qiao Mei, you're really amazing! You managed to convince Officer Zou with just a few words. I'm so scared that I'm sweating!"

"That's right! You're really bold to talk to Officer Zou in this manner. The last time he came to look for me, I even stammered when I spoke. Qiao Mei, based on what you said just now, how much money do you think we can get?" Sun Juan asked curiously.

Qiao Mei did not know how much they could get and she had only listed down the basic terms. Sun Juan would probably get less, perhaps 600 dollars at most. As for Zhou Shuang, it would depend on the kind of treatment that the children needed. The compensation for the children should work out to about 1,000 dollars. These amounts were all negotiable. It was all dependent on how much Old Madam Fan could give.

Old Madam Fan's house could be sold for about 2,000 dollars, so it all depended on her decision.

If Old Madam Fan did not want Su Yang to go to jail and lose his job, she would definitely do everything she could to get him out. If he was found guilty, he would be sentenced to at least five years in prison. Coupled with the incidents that happened to Qiao Mei's family previously, Su Yang would likely get a heavy sentence.

"It would definitely be more than you can imagine. Have a good rest. I have other things to do. I'll come and visit you another day," Qiao Mei said with a smile.

Everyone looked at the departing figures of Qiao Mei and Xia He with a sense of warmth as they thought about how kind these girls were to be willing to help them. They did not know how to repay Qiao Mei for her kindness. They decided to treat her even better in the future.

The group set off in two cars with Xia Fang taking one car by herself. There were bodyguards in each car and the entire journey was very safe.

Xia He did not speak during the entire journey. When she reached Xu Lan's house, she was still in a daze and deep in thought. She suddenly realized that she was not capable enough to deal with many things.

She had focused all her attention on dancing, but she also had not achieved what she wanted in this field.

Her life was also a mess and she also did not know how to help solve the problems at home. Even Qiao Mei, who was younger than her, could handle so many issues perfectly. When the Xia family was in danger, Qiao Mei could handle the issues calmly and solve the problems. Her abilities were on par with Xia Wen.

Xia Wen had also told Xia He before that Qiao Mei was far more capable than him. If Qiao Mei was born and raised in the Xia family, she would definitely become even more outstanding than Xia Mao.

In the past, Xia He relied on Xia Wen. Now, she was relying on Qiao Mei. She could not continue to live her life like this.

“Elder sister, what’s wrong?” Qiao Mei asked softly.

Xia He smiled bitterly and shook her head as she said, “I just don’t know what I should do in the future. I’m just a little lost at the moment. I’ll be alright after I figure it out. I’m fine.”

“Everyone will feel lost at times. Don’t be afraid and just walk forward boldly. Everyone’s life is different,” Qiao Mei said with a smile.

However, she had gained a lot during the entire process. When she looked back at it, she did not feel sad at all. Everyone had their own areas of expertise and could not be good at everything, so it was not a big deal in the end.

Chapter 977 Walking Brown Bear

"Do you get lost and afraid too?" Xia He looked at Qiao Mei in surprise. She had always thought that Qiao Mei was fearless.

"What kind of look are you giving me? Why don't I get afraid? I'm also human! I'm very afraid now. I don't know if I can be a good mother. When I first married Xia Zhe, I didn't know if I could be a good

wife. I'm also very afraid that giving birth might be a very dangerous thing. There are so many things that I'm afraid of," Qiao Mei said honestly.

"Don't be afraid. I'll always be by your side. Although my younger brother is very busy with work, please don't blame him as that's the nature of his job. I'll always be here. Don't worry!" Xia He said as she looked at Qiao Mei earnestly.

Qiao Mei laughed loudly at Xia He's expression. She reached out to pinch Xia He's cheeks and said, "You're so eloquent when you try to advise me, so why can't you figure it out for yourself? How strange."

"Shoo, shoo! I'm your elder sister! How can you talk to me like that! How rude!" Xia He said happily.

Seeing that Xia He had relaxed, Qiao Mei felt relieved. By the time they reached Xu Lan's place, it was already dark. From afar, she could see a figure which looked like a brown bear standing anxiously at the entrance of the neighborhood and looking around.

"Look... is that Mother?" Xia He leaned against the window and asked suspiciously.

Qiao Mei was not sure as well. She could not tell who it was. The person's entire body was covered by a mink coat, making her look like a bear walking in the snow. If not for the fact that the figure was standing upright, they might have thought that it was not a human.

It was only when they got closer that they could confirm that it was indeed Xu Lan. Xu Lan's face was all red from the cold, but she did not seem to care. Her eyes were filled with anticipation.

"Oh my goodness! It's really Mother!" Xia He exclaimed.

Xia He quickly got out of the car to pull Xu Lan in. Qiao Mei reached out to hold Xu Lan's hand to warm her up but Xu Lan quickly put her hands into her lap to prevent Qiao Mei from touching them.

"No! No! Don't touch me. My body is very cold now. You might catch a cold," Xu Lan said with a smile.

Xia He had never seen Xu Lan like this. In the past, Xu Lan would try her best not to go out during winter. She was very scared of the cold. Her years of dancing had caused her to have many injuries on her body. When the weather was cold or when it was windy or rainy, Xu Lan would feel uncomfortable all over.

This was an issue that many dancers faced. Xia He also had some minor issues, but not as serious as what Xu Lan had to go through.

"Mother, why didn't you wait for us at home? Why did you come out instead? How long have you been waiting?" Qiao Mei said with some heartache.

"Not very long, I just came out! Your second aunt-in-law made many of your favorite dishes at home. Let's hurry home and have dinner!" Xu Lan said happily.

The family walked into the house while chatting noisily. Xia Wen was reading the newspaper in the living room.

Xia Wen chuckled and said to Qiao Mei, "It's only been a few days but you really look better now. How are the results of the checkup?"

"There's nothing wrong with me, but eldest brother, you sure look a lot more haggard. Is it because you have too much work to do at the end of the year? Do you need me to share your burden?" Qiao Mei asked tentatively.

Xia Wen squinted his eyes and said, "The little girl has become even more quick-witted. Let's eat first or the food will get cold. Second Aunt-in-law has repeated this sentence many times. She probably felt like driving the car to go and pick you up."

Qiao Mei really liked how it felt to talk to Xia Wen. She need not say much for him to understand what she meant. Since Xia Wen did not accept her offer to help, it meant that he still had everything under his control.

After dinner, while Xu Lan and Liu Fen asked Xia Fang for the details of Qiao Mei's checkup, Qiao Mei took the chance to ask Xia Wen to go to the backyard to have a chat.

The backyard had been converted into a glass house by now. It was actually Xia He who suggested it, given that Xu Lan wanted Qiao Mei to stay with her after giving birth. In order to make it easier for Qiao Mei to have a place to take a walk, she asked the workers to make the backyard into an enclosed space so that Qiao Mei would not feel cooped up at home when the weather was less than ideal.

"Why are you being so mysterious?" Xia Wen asked.

Qiao Mei took out a pager from her pocket and threw it to Xia Wen. "This is a gift for you. Everyone has one. Don't look down on my gift."

Chapter 978 Explaining The Interior Design

Xia Wen knew that Qiao Mei was rich and that she had enough money for her and her children to spend for the rest of their lives, so he did not reject the gift. It was just that with his current status and position, it would be too ostentatious for him to bring this pager to work. It would easily attract suspicion and criticism from others.

"It's not the new year or any festive season yet you've spent so much money. When I saw the pager that Xia He had on her waist today, I was wondering what happened. I thought she had made money recently, but now I see the real reason is you," Xia Wen said with a smile.

"It'll be much more convenient for everyone to keep in touch if we all bring it with us. Everyone in the family has one, so you have to accept it," Qiao Mei said.

Xia Wen held the pager in his hand and decided to use it only after he was promoted. It was going to be the end of the year soon and there were many things that he had to deal with. He had not even gone to check out the repair works at Li Gui's house personally and had only asked his assistant to keep an eye on it.

Qiao Mei's gift made him feel a little guilty. Once he had time, he must make a trip down personally to take a look at the progress. He could not deal with it so carelessly.

"How's Auntie feeling recently? Does she still have to go out to sell goods every day?" Xia Wen asked with concern.

Qiao Mei always felt awkward when this topic came up in their conversation. It was too weird for a government official in charge of economic development to ask her about her family's business, especially since they were doing it illegally.

If Zhao Fei was the one talking to Xia Wen, he would probably pee his pants in fear.

"She's in good health and I haven't allowed her to go out recently. It's getting too cold and I'm worried that she'll get sick," Qiao Mei said.

"That's good. Health is more important than anything else. Have you given some thought to what Aunt said? The idea about you staying in the VIP ward for a while. You'll be giving birth in another month, right?" Xia Wen asked Qiao Mei worriedly.

When Xia Fang spoke to Xu Lan, Xia Wen had heard snippets of their conversation. Since Qiao Mei was pregnant with twins, she could go into premature labor at any time. They were all very worried about Qiao Mei's health and would feel much more at ease with professionals taking care of her.

"I still prefer to rest at home. There are so many people at my house, so don't worry," Qiao Mei said.

Seeing Qiao Mei's firm attitude, Xia Wen did not say anything else. He decided to ask Xia Mao to send more security guards to keep watch near Qiao Mei's house. If anything happened, they would be able to protect Qiao Mei immediately.

After a simple chat, everyone felt a little tired. Xia Wen also told Xu Lan that he intended to go home tomorrow and would not disrupt their lives any further. He wanted to return to his own place so that they would not worry too much about him.

When it was almost time to rest, Xu Lan excitedly brought Qiao Mei to her newly renovated room. The materials used here were all of the best quality and also had low levels of formaldehyde so that it was not detrimental to health. The renovation works were done by the most famous craftsmen in the capital and Xu Lan had personally supervised the entire renovation process. After opening all the windows and ventilating the room for so many days, it was now habitable.

"Mei Mei, look. This is the crib that I custom-made for the two children. The bed is extendable so that the children can keep using it as they grow up. There's also a nanny's room next to yours. I heard from Xia He that you don't want us to be too tired so you intend to hire someone to take care of the children. I've already tidied up that room."

"And here! I've changed your mattress to a Simmons mattress. Actually, I wanted to buy an ancient bed like what you have now, but it's really not easy to move such a big bed into this house. It's also too big for this house, so I think this bed is good enough. Sleep on it tonight and see if it's comfortable. If it's not to your liking, I'll buy a new one."

"I've changed the windows to the floor-to-ceiling type. Xia He tells me that you like to look out at the scenery, but the location of our house is actually not very good. Fortunately, we can see the neighbor's garden. A few days ago, I gave them some money to spruce up their garden. It'll be spring after you give birth. When you open the window then, you'll be able to see a courtyard full of flowers!"

"And here... That's also..."

Qiao Mei stood on the spot and watched Xu Lan explain in detail the different parts of the room and the ideas behind the design. She put in a lot of effort into every aspect. Even if it was just a screw in the room, Xu Lan would consider carefully whether there were any safety risks until the children reached two years old.

It appeared that Xu Lan was really nice to her and the children. She had really thought of everything.

Chapter 979 Notice Something Amiss

Xu Lan and Li Gui were two completely different types of mothers. Each had her own good points and Qiao Mei was very happy to have two mothers who loved her so much.

"What's wrong, Mei Mei? Why aren't you saying anything? Is there something that you don't like? Tell me. While there's still time, I can get the workers to redo it," Xu Lan said nervously.

Qiao Mei walked to Xu Lan and hugged her gently. "Mother, you've already done a very good job. This room is perfect and I like it very much. I'm just a little shocked. Thank you, Mother."

Xu Lan patted Qiao Mei's head in relief. She had long treated Qiao Mei like her own daughter and would only dote on her even more in the future.

"Mother, I also have a gift for you. Bring the pager around with you every day. It'll be easier to contact you when you are out," Qiao Mei said.

"Oh my, I can't accept this gift! I'm so old already and I don't need it. You can keep it for yourself!" Xu Lan declined.

Qiao Mei ignored Xu Lan's attempts to reject the gift and simply unwrapped the pager and handed it to Xu Lan. In this way, Xu Lan could not insist upon her getting a refund after the packaging was opened. She had used the same method on Li Gui and it was also effective on Xu Lan now. However, Xu Lan was still a little resistant.

"You can use it yourself, Mei Mei. Or you can give it to your younger siblings or your grandfather. We have a phone at home, so I don't need this," Xu Lan said.

"I don't even know when I'm going to give birth. What if you're at work or running an errand outside and we can't contact you? Don't you want to see the babies as soon as possible?" Qiao Mei asked Xu Lan with a sad expression.

Qiao Mei had a firm grasp of Xu Lan's desires. Xu Lan's initial rejection quickly turned to wanting to know how to use the pager. When Xu Lan was almost done learning, it was time for them to go to bed.

"It's getting late. Go to sleep. I'll make your favorite pumpkin cake tomorrow morning! I've learned many recipes from your second aunt-in-law. I'll cook for you personally tomorrow morning! You can't look down on my cooking!" Xu Lan said happily.

Qiao Mei's first reaction was not to feel happy. Instead, she felt a little sorry for Xu Lan. For the first half of her life, Xu Lan had lived a luxurious life and only needed to focus on her career. After she married Xia Mao, she did not need to work too hard and there was also Wu Min to help take care of the children. It was because of Qiao Mei that Xu Lan had to do chores and cook.

"Alright, then I'll wait for Mother to cook something delicious for me," Qiao Mei said with a sweet smile.

After Xu Lan left, Qiao Mei slowly lay down on the new bed. The bed was much bigger than the previous one and it was definitely big enough for both Xia Zhe and her. Even when the two children grew up, it was still big enough for a family of four to lie on it.

However, Qiao Mei still missed Xia Zhe's old single bed. It had Xia Zhe's warmth and smell on it. Even though it was very small, it made her feel very much at ease. However, this newly renovated bedroom did not hold any memories of Xia Zhe at all. She felt a sense of emptiness while lying on the bed.

She wondered when Xia Zhe would be back...

Qiao Mei fell asleep while thinking about Xia Zhe. When Xia Wen left the next morning, Qiao Mei was still asleep.

"Mother, I'm going home. Help me tell Qiao Mei and Xia He that I've left. I won't go and say goodbye to them," Xia Wen said as he put on his shoes at the door.

After hesitating for a while, Xu Lan said worriedly, "Talk to Tan Jing nicely when you get back. Don't lose your temper."

Xia Wen was tying his shoelaces and his hands paused for a moment. He did not expect Xu Lan to have noticed something amiss. The injury on his abdomen was only a superficial one. He had gone to the hospital for a checkup and confirmed that there was no issue. Perhaps his posture looked a little odd when he carried stuff and that was how Xu Lan noticed it.

"Alright, I know," Xia Wen said in a muffled voice.

Xu Lan sighed deeply. She had taken care of Xia Wen on her own for a period of time when he was young. This child always kept everything to himself and would never say anything. No matter how difficult the situation was, he would try his best to solve it on his own and not make things difficult for his family. After he grew up, he was the one who handled the Xia family's dealings with other families and he talked even less to them.

Chapter 980 Where Does This Princess Come From

Xu Lan had heard about the conflict between Tan Jing and Xia Wen and knew that it must be about the issue of the house. Xu Lan had never taken this issue seriously, but when she saw Xia Wen coming back with an injury, she could no longer ignore it.

"There are two houses registered under your grandfather's name, near where our relatives live in the countryside. You can consider letting them live there," Xu Lan said.

Xia Wen was about to reject the idea when he looked up and saw Xu Lan's serious and concerned expression. He swallowed his words of rejection.

Xu Lan was trying her best to get close to him.

"Alright, I'll go back and ask her," Xia Wen said with a gentle smile.

Even when Xia Wen reached the door, Xu Lan was still nagging behind him. She asked him to be careful when he went out, to sit in the back when he was in the car, not to work too hard, and so on. Her last sentence was a reminder to him to come home more often.

It was not until Xia Wen got into the car and it disappeared from Xu Lan's sight that she retracted her worried gaze and went back to cook delicious food for Qiao Mei.

She had always cared for these children, but she had been so focused on her career for the first half of her life that she did not know how to take care of them. After the experience she went through with Qiao Mei, she finally understood how scary it was to lose someone. She wanted to work hard at being a good mother and try her best to make it up to her children.

Qiao Mei only woke up around noon. Xu Lan and Liu Fen did not go upstairs to wake her up. Xia He told them about Qiao Mei's hardships and experiences during this period of time. They had both been pregnant before and understood how uncomfortable Qiao Mei must be feeling, especially Liu Fen, who almost died when giving birth to her last child.

"Why don't we persuade Qiao Mei again? We've never had twins before. Our past experiences are not applicable to Qiao Mei. It's safest for her to go to Xia Fang's place," Liu Fen said worriedly.

"If we can't convince her to do that, then she can come and stay here. We can get a private doctor to stay here and take care of Qiao Mei," Xu Lan said sternly.

As Xia He watched the two elders echoing each other, she could not help but laugh out loud.

Xu Lan frowned and said, "How rude! What are you laughing at!"

"It's useless for you to be so worried. Qiao Mei won't listen to you. I've tried to persuade her for a long time but she won't listen to a word I say. Instead of asking her to stay in the hospital, it might be a more viable solution to get a few more helpers to take care of Qiao Mei at home," Xia He said.

Liu Fen rolled her eyes at Xia He. Since Xia He had never given birth before, she naturally did not know how dangerous it was. It was like having a close shave with death! There were many women who died while giving birth. It was such a heavy price to pay.

Given that they had the ability to take all the necessary precautions, they should do whatever was necessary to minimize the risks. This was especially important in Qiao Mei's case, as she was in a different situation from other people and faced greater risk.

Just as they were having an intense discussion, Qiao Mei slowly walked down the stairs. Everyone turned to look at her. Liu Fen quickly went to the kitchen to bring out the warm food. Xu Lan hurried to Qiao Mei's side and helped her down the stairs, worried that she would fall down.

The current Qiao Mei was the entire Xia family's treasure and the apple of their eyes. No matter how well they took care of her, they still felt that it was not enough.

Xia He teased, "People who don't know better would think that a princess married into our family. Mother, will you also take care of me like this when I'm pregnant?"

Xu Lan glared at Xia He and said, "Aren't you ashamed to say such things? If you're so free, then go and find a nice man to marry! If you're not married, how can you have children! If you find a man you can rely on for the rest of your life, I'll take care of you like this when you're pregnant!"

Xia He pursed her lips and sat on the sofa to watch television. She did not want to get married. She had only enjoyed freedom for such a short while and did not want to get married and then had to serve her in-laws. The mention of marriage gave her a headache.

The issue with Kong Lu was a well-learned lesson. She did not have the confidence to be able to manage a marriage well and she did not have the energy to get along with another man. It was better for her to live her own life well.

Qiao Mei even said that if Xia He could not fulfill her dream, Qiao Mei would go into business with her! If that happened, she would be a rich woman who could have whatever she wanted. Being happy was the most important thing!