

RTAMM 1041

Chapter 1041 Finally 'Enlightened'

She must be blind to treat something precious as garbage.

Chen Jun was envious of the fact that Qiao Nan had such important networks. Even if he could not marry her, he would want to be on close terms with her and treat her like a younger sister so that he and the Chen family could be successful.

Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin tried all means and ways to get what they wanted, but what they needed to do was, in fact, to mend the relationship with Qiao Nan. If Qiao Nan was willing to help them, they could get whatever they wanted easily.

The mother and daughter were too foolish!

Chen Jun could not help but massage his temples. He was drained of all energy when he recalled the stupid deeds that they were up to.

Wei De, Ding Jiayi, and Qiao Zijin were fools.

He could not understand why those helpless fools had such good opportunities, while he, who worked hard all these years, had nothing in the end. It was too unfair.

"I won't break up. I will never break up." Qiao Zijin, who was given a scare by Chen Jun, dared not lose her temper. She grabbed Chen Jun with one arm and acted coquettishly. "Didn't you say that I am spoiled by my mom? At times, I cannot help but lose my temper. I am serious about being with you. Please don't shun me. I will change. Please don't bring up breaking up with me again."

Since Qiao Zijin admitted her mistake, Chen Jun no longer took issue with her. "Alright, but there is a limit to my patience. Apart from my feelings for you, I am with you because of the Chen family. If you are serious about being with me, you must understand one simple truth. If the Chen family is doing well, you will have good days ahead. Therefore, you must do things that are beneficial to the Chen family. On the contrary, you must not do anything that is detrimental to the Chen family. You must avoid it at all costs."

"I understand."

“Really?”

“Yes!” Qiao Zijin nodded and plastered a smile on her face. “You want me to mend the relationship with Qiao Nan. I understand what you mean. From this moment on, I will tell myself that I am on close terms with Qiao Nan, that I love my sister. In the future, even if she shows her displeasure to me, I will maintain a smile no matter what.”

Unless she was very sure of it, she would never target Qiao Nan again. “I will treat her like a princess and wait on her. One would never be angry at someone who is nice to them. If I don’t scheme against her but suck up to her, even if she is not as close to me, at the very least, she would not treat me like an enemy like what she used to do in the past.”

She would act shamelessly and suck up to Qiao Nan.

Back then, Qiao Zijin always felt that she would definitely be more successful than Qiao Nan. When she was younger, she was troubled with how she was going to make sure that Qiao Nan did not take advantage of her like a parasite.

Now that the day had come, and their situations were reversed, Qiao Zijin was so upset that she felt like vomiting blood. She was too young back then. She had been overthinking...

“Zijin, I know that I have made the correct judgment.” Chen Jun cradled Qiao Zijin’s face in his hands tenderly. “True enough, you are the woman who is qualified to stand by my side and walk the path with me.”

Chen Jun was most afraid of Qiao Zijin, having been spoiled rotten by Ding Jiayi, seeing herself as a princess. In that case, she would not be able to understand the hard facts that Qiao Nan had outshone her in all aspects and would insist on being haughty and looking down on Qiao Nan instead.

If Qiao Zijin was really like Ding Jiayi, Chen Jun would not hesitate to break up with Qiao Zijin.

Chen Jun mentioned breaking up because he knew that Qiao Zijin would not bear to part with him.

He knew that Ding Jiayi was the biggest troublemaker in the Qiao family. Whoever wanted to make use of the Qiao family to be close to the Zhai family only needed to do some investigations and they would find out the situation in the Qiao family.

Because of Ding Jiayi, Qiao Zijin was like a scorching brazier. Not everyone was capable of handling her.

“Chen Jun, you can rest assured. I will definitely change.” Qiao Zijin clenched her fist, looking totally different from before.

If the former Qiao Zijin was as proud as the swan, Qiao Zijin was now like an ugly duckling. She had seen her true self in the reflection of the pond and knew that she was just an ordinary girl.

“My dad forbids me from entering the house. What am I going to do next?” Since she was not allowed entry, how was she going to be close with Qiao Nan?

“Don’t be anxious.” Chen Jun smiled. “As long as you have sorted out your thoughts and are willing to work hard, your dad is not a problem. Sometimes, other people may not be able to know the real situation. They would only have a superficial understanding of what’s going on.”

It would be best if Qiao Nan was willing to accept Qiao Zijin.

However, Chen Jun knew that telling Qiao Nan to accept Qiao Zijin without any misgivings was akin to telling Zhai Hua to reconcile with Wei De. It was impossible.

If one would not accept the other party or reconcile without any misgivings, then what they could do was to make it seem to others that they were on close terms and were one family. Chen Jun could use this false impression to his advantage.

“Do you understand what I mean?”

“Yes.” Qiao Zijin nodded. “When Qiao Nan and other people are around, I will definitely side with her and ‘protect’ her so that Qiao Nan will not be bullied by others. Qiao Nan is reserved and introverted. As her sister, I must protect her from being bullied or misunderstood.”

In other words, Qiao Zijin only needed to act as if she was being nice to Qiao Nan. There was no need for Qiao Nan to accept her.

Chen Jun was glad that Zijin understood his words. “Zijin, you are indeed smart. You can tell what I mean right away. Let’s go! We didn’t get to see your dad, but let’s meet my parents. I shall introduce their future daughter-in-law to them.”

“Really?!” Qiao Zijin was overjoyed. This was the first time that Chen Jun introduced her to her future father-in-law and mother-in-law. “Should I go back to have a change of clothes and buy some gifts for uncle and auntie?”

“No need.” Chen Jun answered with a smile. “You only need to be present and it will be fine.” Furthermore, no matter what she bought, she was spending the Chen family’s money. Nothing comes for free. Qiao Zijin was smart to make the suggestion.

“So let’s go now?” Qiao Zijin was thrilled now that there was no need to buy anything. It seemed that Chen Jun was really in love with her. “How about we give them some fruits? At the very least, we are being polite and I will not be embarrassed by arriving empty-handed.”

“Sure, we will do as you said.” Chen Jun did not object to her suggestion. He accompanied Qiao Zijin to choose a fruit basket. He bought whatever that Qiao Zijin picked.

Chapter 1042 Conflicts Arose

Qiao Nan got up late today. She heard vaguely that someone seemed to have visited them in the morning, but her father did not allow them in.

By the time she got up and was wide awake, she overheard the conversation between a neighbor and her father and was startled. “Did Chen Jun bring Qiao Zijin to visit his parents?”

Chen Jun seemed to be in a hurry. Qiao Zijin was still in her school. Could it be that they had been intimate and she was pregnant?

In the previous life, Qiao Nan was introduced to Chen Jun’s parents not long after they had just started dating. However, Chen Jun’s parents were not very pleased with Qiao Zijin. They waited until they were certain that Qiao Zijin had Chen Jun’s child and it was a boy before they allowed her into their house.

“That’s right.” Qiao Dongliang was in a terrible mood.

His elder daughter would do things that he disliked.

He objected to Zijin’s relationship with the complicated Chen Jun. He forbade Chen Jun from entering the house and returned everything that he brought with him.

However, the next minute, his elder daughter bought a basket full of fruits and visited the Chen family.

Qiao Dongliang was in a bad mood after learning this from the neighbor. He was in no mood to prepare for the Lunar New Year. “Your sister is too much...”

“Dad, my sister is as stubborn as Mom. She would not listen to you. She will date whoever that she likes. Since you already know this, why did you let it affect you? Sister will not care that you are upset. She has Mom with her. Mom will defend her. You must not worry yourself over their affairs.”

Ding Jiayi had no way to protect Qiao Zijin. They were no match for the Chen family. Qiao Nan kept this thought to herself.

Qiao Nan could not help it that her father was upset over Qiao Zijin’s affairs. She would not advise him from not doing that. It was useless.

Qiao Dongliang sighed. He sent them away in the morning and was harsh to them. Now that they had left, he felt anxious and worried. He could not help but feel vexed. Was he sick?

“Yes, with your mom around, nothing will happen to your sister. If anything happens, it is beyond our control as well!” Qiao Dongliang slammed the table in anger.

It was because of Nan Nan’s relationship with Zhai Sheng that Qiao Zijin was emboldened enough to be with Chen Jun.

Chen Jun was savvy while the elder daughter was foolish. Qiao Dongliang waved his hand as if he was chasing away the flies. He wanted to stop thinking of Qiao Zijin and Chen Jun. “No one will know whether this is a blessing or a curse. Your sister will have to deal with it in the future.”

Right now, the elder daughter did not listen to him. In the future, he would not be able to take her in anymore.

“Alright, Dad. Don’t say such spiteful words. If something happens to my sister, will you be able to leave her alone? I made my stand long ago. You are her dad, so you care for her. But I don’t. I will not stop you from disciplining her, but I will definitely not help her.”

Qiao Nan knew very well that Chen Jun would play up to those in power. She was merely reminding Qiao Dongliang about it.

If anything went wrong in the future, Qiao Dongliang might be willing to help Qiao Zijin and Chen Jun at all costs, but she would not help Qiao Dongliang, and neither would she stop Qiao Dongliang from sacrificing himself to help Qiao Zijin.

In order not to let this get ugly, she had to make herself clear beforehand.

No one could understand Qiao Nan’s feelings of pain and desperation in the previous life. She was close to forty years old but she was still single. She was busy with work every day. She earned so much money, but she had to eat instant noodles every day and lived in a small rented house. She watched helplessly as Qiao Zijin snatched her boyfriend and took her hard-earned money to buy apartment suites as dowry and lived a glamorous and luxurious life.

Once bitten, twice shy.

In the previous life, Qiao Dongliang and Ding Jiayi took extra care of Qiao Zijin. However, it was at the expense of Qiao Nan that they could lavish Qiao Zijin with money and house and for Qiao Zijin to lead a pampered life.

Qiao Nan was fearful!

“What makes you say that?” Qiao Dongliang felt upset at the worry and concern in Qiao Nan’s tone. He felt bitter and aggrieved.

He had already said that he would not do such things.

It was clear that the elder daughter and Chen Jun wanted to make use of Nan Nan to be close to the Zhai family.

Nan Nan seemed as if she wanted to be rid of a troublesome relative like Chen Jun. She wanted him to stay out of her way.

Qiao Dongliang had no idea of the miserable life that Qiao Nan had been through or the hardships and sufferings that she went through before she was given another chance at life. He could not understand her worry and fear. He felt that after being with Zhai Sheng, Qiao Nan seemed to have a change of status and turned cold-hearted.

They were one family. Since Nan Nan had the ability, why could she not help Zijin if she was in serious trouble?

Qiao Dongliang and Qiao Nan turned silent. There was an awkward silence between the two of them. Gone was the joy of seeing each other after such a long time. They felt awkward and uncomfortable with each other's presence.

Qiao Nan rubbed her face, feeling helpless and disheartened. "Let's not talk about this. The Lunar New Year is coming. Dad, have you thought of what dishes to prepare?"

If she knew this would happen, she should have kept those thoughts to herself. If she did not say anything, the atmosphere would not be so stiff.

Perhaps because she had kept all her grievances to herself in the previous life that she could no longer keep those thoughts to herself and had to tell her father.

Qiao Nan changed the topic to give each other a way out. Qiao Dongliang chose not to continue with the awkward topic as well. "I have yet to decide. Do you have any dishes that you want to have?"

"Yes..." With a smile on her face, Qiao Nan said all those dishes that she would like in a cheery tone.

The father and daughter purposely avoided talking about Qiao Zijin in the days that followed. Luckily, after visiting them on that day, Qiao Zijin and Chen Jun had not been to their house again.

Even if the atmosphere was no longer as good as before, as long as no one brought up the conflicts that they had, and Qiao Nan and Qiao Dongliang worked hard to maintain a harmonious relationship, they could still get along well with each other.

They were the only ones who knew what they were thinking of.

Qiao Nan used to feel that once Qiao Dongliang had a divorce and she was in college, Qiao Dongliang would be lonely staying at home by himself.

If possible, she hoped that she could delay her marriage with Zhai Sheng so that she could spend more time with Qiao Dongliang.

After conflicts arose between them, Qiao Nan began to think differently.

She had the best interests for her father and was worried that he would be lonely. However, she was not the only person that her father was worried about.

Moreover, her father would shortchange her for another person's sake. While she was willing to delay her marriage to Zhai Sheng as she cared for her father, he would not do the same for her.

Chapter 1043 Capricious Love

She knew that her father had high self-esteem. Therefore, she seldom received any help from the Zhai family regarding her education at college. She would rather work to earn her living expenses instead of adding another burden to her father's load. She did not want her father to feel that it was the Zhai family who provided for her.

As time passed, her father did not seem to be able to appreciate her hard work and efforts.

Had she committed the same mistake that she made in the previous life? Did she do too much but did not make her feelings and thoughts known to her father?

It was time for the father and daughter to retire to their own room to rest. Qiao Nan switched off the lights in her room, sitting on the bed. She hugged her knees, lost in her thoughts.

Her father had reverted to his old ways, and so did she.

In this family, she seemed to be the only person who was able to keep caring for others. Other people might care for her, but it would not be long before they turned to care for Qiao Zijin.

Ring! Ring! Ring!

Qiao Nan's cell phone rang. She rubbed her eyes and answered the call. "Hello."

"Nan Nan, are you unhappy?" Zhai Sheng was excited to speak with Qiao Nan, but he turned gloomy the next instant. "Did your mom create trouble for you again?"

Qiao Nan took a deep breath. "Brother Zhai, don't forget that apart from my mom, there is still my dad."

"Uncle Qiao? Has Qiao Zijin been to your house recently?" Zhai Sheng understood what had happened immediately.

Qiao Nan sniffed. "Perhaps everyone feels that now that we are engaged, after this Lunar New Year and come February, we will get married and collect the marriage certificate. From then onward, I am the daughter-in-law of the chief while my husband is the regiment commander, and he will be promoted in the future. A blessed life is waiting for me. I will have endless glory and wealth. Like what is shown on television, I will be the young mistress of the house."

Everyone felt that she would have good days ahead of her and that she could enjoy life.

Therefore, in comparison, those who were not as fortunate were more pitiful and deserved their concern.

She was still in school but her future was paved for her. There was nothing to worry about. Her father could put all his attention on Qiao Zijin.

Qiao Zijin was disobedient and she refused to listen to him. She was so daring to be dating Chen Jun.

As compared to her whom Qiao Dongliang had nothing to worry about, Qiao Zijin was worrisome. He was troubled over her that he could not eat well and sleep well.

“Brother Zhai, I think I have failed as a person.” In the previous life, Qiao Zijin led a good life while she was miserable. However, her father did not care about her or tell her mother off for taking money from her to give to Qiao Zijin.

Did that mean that it was not because she was doing well, and Qiao Zijin was not and hence her father turned to care for Qiao Zijin? In actual fact, like her mother, her father felt that Qiao Zijin needed their care, love, and concern.

Qiao Nan’s voice was slightly hoarse and she seemed to be keeping her emotions in check. She felt downcast and depressed. It pained Zhai Sheng to know that Qiao Nan was upset. He was angry at Qiao Dongliang. “Nan Nan, this is not a question of whether you are a failure or not. You can look at it as an affinity between people. Other people may not cherish you, but I cherish you the most. Nan Nan, you have always been able to sort out your thoughts and not to be upset by your situation, or to be affected by them. You must not subject yourself to narrow confines.”

Zhai Sheng understood why Qiao Nan insisted that they married at a later time.

At the very least, Qiao Dongliang had divorced Ding Jiayi and Qiao Nan was able to live in peace with him for some time. Furthermore, Qiao Dongliang was his father-in-law. No matter for whatever reasons, Zhai Sheng would try his best to accede to Qiao Nan’s request.

But right now, Zhai Sheng regretted his decision.

Other people might not cherish Nan Nan, but he did.

The three people in the Qiao family, including his muddleheaded father-in-law, were blind to not cherish Qiao Nan.

They might not like Nan Nan, but the Zhai family and Old Master Zhai loved her.

If he knew that Qiao Dongliang would turn out to be such a disappointment, he would throw caution to the wind and bring Nan Nan to stay at the Zhai family’s residence. The Zhai family would cherish and love her. How dare Qiao Dongliang changed his attitude toward Nan Nan time and again and hurt her feelings.

“Brother Zhai, can I ask a favor from you?” Qiao Nan felt much better at Zhai Sheng’s words, but her eyes started to turn teary.

“What is it?”

“Can we have one child in the future?”

“Why?”

“I-I am afraid of pain...”

“Okay.” Zhai Sheng felt as if his flesh was cut off from his body. The reason why Nan Nan wanted to have one child was not that she was afraid of pain. It was because she was worried that she would be biased and muddleheaded if she had more than one child. In that case, the other child would be hurt. “Nan Nan, have you forgotten that according to the national family planning policy, we could only have one child.”

Qiao Nan wiped her tears. “It seems so. Twins do not seem to run in our family.”

“Me too.” Zhai Sheng understood what Qiao Nan meant. Usually, twins and triplets would run in the family. “Nan Nan, don’t think too much. Have fun this Lunar New Year. Everything will be fine come February next year.”

Zhai Sheng was very busy with work. Lunar New Year was coming, but he was still at the camp. He could not go back to Ping Cheng.

Zhai Sheng knew that Qiao Nan must have returned to her home in Ping Cheng. He gave her a call when he finally had some free time.

To his surprise, amidst the joyous occasion, such things happened in the Qiao family and Qiao Nan was upset because of it.

If Qiao Dongliang was not his father-in-law, he would feel like bashing him.

In short, if Qiao Dongliang really felt that Nan Nan would lead a good life once she married him, while Qiao Zijin's future was full of uncertainties and she needed his concern, Qiao Dongliang could shower Qiao Zijin with more attention and love.

Even if Qiao Dongliang reconciled with Ding Jiayi, Nan Nan and he would not stop him. At most, they would not be in close touch with him.

It was better not to have a parent family like the Qiao family!

Zhai Sheng was really furious this time.

Qiao Dongliang had been fooled and hurt by Qiao Zijin several times, yet once onshore, one prays no more. He claimed that he would not be bothered with Qiao Zijin anymore, but now, he felt that Qiao Zijin was unfortunate and she was more pitiful than Qiao Nan and she needed someone to take care of her.

This was too much.

To people who were resolute and decisive like Zhai Sheng, he could not understand why Qiao Dongliang would be so indecisive and capricious.

Zhai Sheng could not understand Qiao Dongliang, but he was clear about one thing. He knew why Qiao Dongliang chose to leave the army even when he loved the army and had bright prospects in the army.

Chapter 1044 Affinity Could Not Be Forced

Given Qiao Dongliang's character, if he stayed in the army, his good prospects would be ruined by him.

A soldier should not have such behavior.

Zhai Sheng knew vaguely that the Qiao family felt that it was because of Qiao Nan that Qiao Dongliang had to leave the army and gave up his chance of promotion.

But in Zhai Sheng's opinion, it was good that Qiao Dongliang left the army because of Qiao Nan.

Otherwise, given Qiao Dongliang's situation, if he stayed in the army, sooner or later, he would commit a grave mistake.

Qiao Dongliang might commit mistakes and make a blunder, but what was serious was that he might implicate his comrades.

Previously, Zhai Hua committed a grave mistake and her brother was injured because of her.

"I won't think too much anymore." Qiao Nan was in a better mood after talking to Zhai Sheng. She had vented her frustrations and unhappiness. "I have finally understood what kind of person my dad is. He will change from time to time. I did not realize that he wants to play the role of a loving father."

Her father's main objective was for both of his daughters to do well.

Of course, Qiao Zijin was his main focus.

Her father would stand by her side and help her when she was down. Now that she led a better life, even if Qiao Zijin was doing fairly well, he still wanted to help her so that she could lead a good life.

She was not willing to accept that her father kept changing his attitude toward Qiao Zijin.

After being through all the sufferings in the previous life, Qiao Nan had turned to be cold and indifferent in this life. She had accepted the fact that she did not have any affinity with her mother.

Since she did not have an affinity with her father as well, there was no need for the two of them to suffer.

"It's nine o'clock now. You should go to sleep. I will try to go home on Lunar New Year's eve." Zhai Sheng was relieved that Qiao Nan had sorted out her thoughts. But at the same time, he was saddened that Qiao Nan had to go through so much at her young age.

After the Lunar New Year, Nan Nan was only twenty-one years old. Since a young age, her parents never showered her with love. How could she possibly sort out her thoughts easily?

Her parents were too disappointing. Nan Nan had no other choice but to give up on them.

Zhai Sheng sneered after ending the call. Since Qiao Dongliang was courting disaster, there was no need for him to do anything else.

Since Qiao Nan did not say anything, Qiao Dongliang did not think about their recent conflict anymore.

But the next day, the atmosphere between the father and daughter seemed odd. Although they seemed to be harmonious and happy, both of them knew that they were merely trying hard to maintain the peace in the family.

If they were truly happy being in each other's company, they should not feel awkward and stiff.

After discussing with Qiao Nan regarding what ingredients to buy, Qiao Dongliang headed out to buy them. However, his smile disappeared as soon as he stepped out of the house. "The kids have grown up and they have a bad temper."

Nan Nan also knew that Chen Jun was a bad person. Zijin was bound to suffer if she dated Chen Jun.

Although Qiao Dongliang showed his displeasure to Qiao Zijin and said that he would wash his hands off her, he was, in fact, very worried about her.

The reason why he ignored her was that Qiao Zijin refused to listen to him.

If Qiao Zijin was willing to listen to him, break up with Chen Jun, and have another boyfriend, Qiao Dongliang would welcome them into the house. He was willing to accept his future son-in-law and his gifts.

They were one family. Now that Qiao Zijin was with Chen Jun, if she ended up in serious trouble, she had no one but her family to help her.

They could not possibly watch by the side as Qiao Zijin was being bullied.

Once bitten, twice shy. Qiao Nan had no choice but to protect herself. However, Qiao Dongliang was unhappy that Qiao Nan refused to help her sister.

He used to think that Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi had gone way overboard in the past, and that was why the family was torn apart. He always believed that Qiao Nan was a soft-hearted child.

If Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin were desperate for help, Qiao Nan would definitely help them.

But Qiao Dongliang was displeased that Qiao Nan had said it beforehand that she would not help them if such circumstances arose.

Ding Jiayi was Qiao Nan's mother and Qiao Zijin was her sister. If they really needed help, even if one did not have the means, one must think of ways to help them. Moreover, if Qiao Nan had the ability, all the more she should help them. This was expected of a normal human being.

Nothing had happened yet, but Nan Nan behaved as if she could not wait to draw a line between them and extricate herself. She behaved as if she had no conscience.

Qiao Dongliang, who went out to buy the ingredients, was perplexed. Why would Qiao Nan become so cold and indifferent, not giving a care to family ties without an apparent reason?

She was too cold-blooded.

Nothing had happened, yet Nan Nan was quick to distance herself from them. If something happened, would she care?

Qiao Dongliang felt upset. He did not feel like buying the ingredients for the Lunar New Year.

After Qiao Nan married Zhai Sheng, given the Zhai family's love toward Qiao Nan, Qiao Dongliang had no need to worry for Qiao Nan.

If the elder daughter married and was bullied by her in-laws, given the Zhai family's influence, it only needed a word from Nan Nan and Zijin would be leading a better life.

However, if Nan Nan really did not bother to help, what would happen to Zijin?

It seemed that he had to find a chance to speak with Nan Nan.

He did not ask for much. Nan Nan could ignore all the other ridiculous requests that Zijin made.

If Zijin was unlucky and she married someone who was not good to her and she was bullied, he hoped that Nan Nan would seek justice for Zijin so that her in-laws would know that Zijin's family was not to be trifled with.

He had only this simple request of Qiao Nan.

Qiao Dongliang felt that he did not ask for too much and he did not request that Qiao Nan helped Qiao Zijin. However, he did not know that in the previous life, Qiao Nan made a lot of sacrifices for Qiao Zijin. When Qiao Zijin was sick, she even schemed to get Qiao Nan's kidney!

Qiao Nan knew what was on Qiao Dongliang's mind and that it was impossible for him to put himself in her shoes.

She did not intend to tell anyone that she had been through rebirth, especially Qiao Dongliang. She did not want his sympathy.

Qiao Dongliang could do whatever he wanted. She would not interfere.

It was the day before Lunar New Year's eve. Zhai Hua made a call to ask Qiao Nan out early in the morning. "Lunar New Year is coming. Let's come out to buy some clothes." Actually, it was Zhai Sheng who made the call personally, ordering her to ask Qiao Nan out.

Since she was cooped up at home recently, she could take this chance to take a walk outside as well.

Chapter 1045 Untitled

“Sure.” Qiao Nan did not feel like staying at home. She was either reading a book or staring at Qiao Dongliang awkwardly.

They might not have gone into details, but some words, once said, would change everything and there would be no way to return to its original state.

Qiao Dongliang could not understand why Qiao Nan was so heartless, while Qiao Nan could not accept Qiao Dongliang’s idea of being helpful to one’s family.

After all, Qiao Dongliang and Ding Jiayi would require her to help Qiao Zijin, but they did not ask the same of Qiao Zijin.

“Nan Nan, are you coming back tonight?” Qiao Dongliang knew that she was going shopping with Zhai Hua.

“I won’t be back. Mom wants me to spend the night at the Zhai family’s residence.”

“Is it suitable?” She had yet to marry Zhai Sheng. It was too frivolous to stay overnight at the Zhai family’s residence.

Qiao Nan maintained her composure. “Brother Zhai will only be back earliest by Lunar New Year’s eve. My father-in-law and mother-in-law are supposed to go to the capital to watch the Lunar New Year special program, but they declined the invitation this year.” Both Qiao Nan and her father knew the reason behind it.

After the Lunar New Year, they would be preparing for Qiao Nan’s and Zhai Sheng’s marriage. There would be a lot of preparations to do.

“Alright.” Qiao Dongliang relaxed slightly when he knew that Zhai Sheng was not at home. He finally agreed for Qiao Nan to stay over at the Zhai family’s residence.

Qiao Nan was without any expression when she got onto Zhai Hua’s car.

Zhai Hua arched her eyebrows. “What’s up? Who riled you early in the morning?”

“I just feel that if one is not capable, one should not have two children. Isn’t this a burden to oneself and implicating others?” This was the first time that Qiao Nan stopped behaving like a well-natured child and made such harsh and bitter comments.

Zhai Hua sucked in her breath. “I suppose you are not directing your words at me? Could it be that your dad bullied you because of Qiao Zijin?”

She had to admit that in comparison to Qiao Nan, her parents were not as biased and she had a good life.

“More or less.” Qiao Nan leaned against the seat.

She had been engaged to Brother Zhai for half a year. Her father kept reminding her to have self-respect and to protect herself, not to accept too many gifts from the Zhai family. One must be independent and self-reliant. One must not trouble people with tasks that one was capable of doing.

Therefore, in the past six months, she never took anything that the Zhai family gave her. Even if she might be hard on cash, unless she earned it by herself, she would cut down on her expenses.

Her father wanted her to have self-respect. If Ding Jiayi did not agitate her that day, she would not be intimate with Brother Zhai before their wedding.

After what happened that day, Qiao Nan was very worried about it after she returned to school. She was afraid that she would be pregnant and would not be able to answer to her father.

Thankfully, she had her menses. Hence, she was able to set her heart at rest.

That day, it was Qiao Dongliang who told Zhai Sheng to fetch her. She was agitated by Ding Jiayi, so she had some drinks and ended up being intimate with Brother Zhai. Qiao Nan felt upset that she was the only one who was on tenterhooks.

“You kept telling me to let go and you behave as if you are mature and sensible. But when faced with your family’s matter, you are at a loss as well. You are able to be objective regarding your mom, but you are too soft-hearted with your dad. Your dad’s temperament is different from yours. I am curious. Who do you take after?”

Zhai Hua sized up Qiao Nan. She was amazing.

Qiao Nan was very decisive. This was particularly so when dealing with her relationship with Wei De, as well as when Qiao Nan moved out of the Qiao family's residence. She had to praise her for being swift and resolute.

Qiao Nan was able to handle all these situations very well. However, Qiao Dongliang was her weakness.

“One will yearn to have something that one does not have. You should be able to understand this logic.” Qiao Nan turned to look at Zhai Hua.

Zhai Hua felt that she lacked her parents' love and the feeling of being cherished and loved. That was why she fell in love with Wei De.

In the previous life, her mother did not love her, and her father was very quiet at home.

In this life, she had given up hope on having her mother's love. She realized that she could still salvage her relationship with her father. That was why she worked hard to earn his love.

She was able to give up on her mother and give all her love to her father. However, her father could not do the same.

Her father had two daughters. He hoped that the two daughters could lead a good life. He had never thought of giving up on either of them.

In normal circumstances, it was perfectly fine. However, Qiao Nan could not accept that her father loved both his daughters.

If her father was biased toward Zijin—even if he was not extremely biased—she would rather not have her father's love. She would rather he give all his love to Qiao Zijin alone.

“You are right.” Zhai Hua laughed at herself. It was indeed the case. “Human beings ask for it. Isn't it good if we cherish whatever we have? Why must we chase after something that does not belong to us and land ourselves in such a miserable state?”

Wei De was not the only man who wooed her.

Wei De had nothing to his name, but she liked him because he made her feel as if she was cherished. She was a fool.

“Don’t count me in. I have stopped doing that. It’s fine that he doesn’t like me. I have someone who loves me.” Brother Zhai was the man with whom she would spend the rest of her life. “Qiao Zijin is dating Chen Jun, and my dad is worried that Qiao Zijin will not be Chen Jun’s match. Actually, I don’t mind that he reconciles with my mom. Two heads are better than one. Since he is so worried for Qiao Zijin, he and my mom may be able to take better care of Qiao Zijin.”

She had Brother Zhai. She did not need anyone to take care of her.

Her father could focus all his attention on Qiao Zijin. In that case, he would not look at her as if she was the bad guy who separated his family.

“Okay!” Zhai Hua nodded. She and Qiao Nan did not need the kind of love that had to be shared with someone else. “You are as resolute and vicious as me. Even if the other party has given us most of his love, we don’t need it if it is shared with someone else.”

Qiao Nan smiled. “That’s right.” Even though Zhai Hua was talking about love and she was talking about family ties, the same logic applied. “Let’s go. Aren’t we going to shop for clothes? Let’s hurry. By the way, you should know that I don’t have a single cent with me.”

She had used all her money on her school fees.

Furthermore, she would read up on many books outside of the school syllabus. Some of the books could not be found in the library and she had to order them online.

Sometimes, Qiao Nan would spend all the money that she had in order to buy a book. She would then have to cut down on her expenses.

Chapter 1046 Ambitious Plan to Have a Child

Qiao Nan decided that she would change her way of living. “I contacted my master before I went out this morning. I want to continue to work as a translator and earn extra money. I will also ask my master to help me with the books that I want to buy in the future.”

Qiao Nan sorted out her thoughts after what had happened yesterday. She was no longer hopeful that Qiao Dongliang would change. She decided to rid herself of the shackles that she had given herself and do as she had planned.

“That’s good. It is not easy to find someone sincere in helping you.” Zhai Hua drove the car while patting Qiao Nan, who sat on the passenger seat. “Perhaps you owe it to Qiao Zijin for sorting out your thoughts. In the past, you were too stubborn because of your dad and I could tell that it was very tiring on you.”

Since she was engaged to Zhai Sheng, they were one family.

There was no need to be so calculative among family members.

Besides, Qiao Nan was a college student and she did not have any job. She had no means of earning money. Qiao Nan should not stand on ceremony with the money that her elders gave her. She should go ahead and use them, spending on whatever she needed. It was wrong of her to reject their kind intentions.

It was too tiring!

“One has to go through sufferings to be able to sort out one’s thoughts.” Qiao Nan had no qualms about saying that. “Have you brought enough money today?” Since she had sorted out her thoughts, Zhai Hua must be prepared to spend a bomb today.

Zhai Hua was amused. “My goodness. My family may not be very rich, but we can still support you. Besides, I made a small fortune recently. You can buy whatever you want.”

Zhai Hua’s childhood friends helped Wei De along in his business and made a small fortune from it.

Wei De’s company declared bankruptcy and he was left with nothing but an empty shell. But it was not the same for Zhai Hua.

Zhai Hua was finally rid of Wei De. Back then, Zhai Hua was the one who came up with the capital for Wei De to start his company.

Zhai Hua's childhood friends were true friends indeed. They helped Zhai Hua teach Wei De a lesson and returned all the money that they made through Wei De to Zhai Hua.

The amount of money that Zhai Hua had was much more than the amount that she gave Wei De in the first place.

Zhai Hua did not refuse the money. She treated this as a successful investment. She would take it that she had earned the extra money.

In the past, Zhai Hua would reject the offer when her childhood friends invited her to join them in their businesses.

Right now, Zhai Hua felt that it was a good idea for women to earn some money. Anyway, she was just dabbling in it and her childhood friends would guide her along. It would not be a big problem.

Zhai Hua learned two things from Wei De's incident. Firstly, she had authority. Secondly, she had money.

She had the two most important things that Wei De and most of the people in the world coveted. Therefore, she must grab hold of them.

Men were unreliable. She would rely on herself!

"I will pay for whatever that you want today. But Qiao Nan, should you not repay the favor?" Zhai Hua played with her hair that had been cut short.

There was a sparkle in Qiao Nan's eyes. "How do you want me to return the favor?"

"Phew..." Zhai Hua let out a breath. She looked serious. "I am not young anymore. I will be turning thirty soon. My mom said that there is a golden period for having children. Besides, I am sick and I suffered from a lot of injuries. I suppose my golden period of having children will be shorter than the average woman. Don't laugh at me. I am not being timid. I am not afraid of looking for another

man despite the bad experience with Wei De. I am too picky. Otherwise, I would not have met Wei De.”

Because of what happened with Wei De, Zhai Hua was worried that she would be choosier in the future.

When she was not being very choosy, Wei De was the only man that she liked. She did not find other men pleasing to the eye.

If she was even choosier in the future, Zhai Hua was worried that when she reached forty or fifty years old, she might still be single. What should she do then?

She might finally find someone she liked, but she would be too old to have children.

“Do you... want a child?”

“Yes.” To avoid that situation, Zhai Hua felt that it would be better for her to have a child first. “I have thought about it. I really like children. My parents will be more assured if I have a child.”

Her parents could be assured if she had a child that belonged to herself. It was the best of both worlds.

“So?” Qiao Nan turned quiet. She had thought about this in her previous life.

She was close to forty years old when she died.

Qiao Nan’s eyes turned red at the thought of her age.

She had the same idea as Sister Zhai Hua. Unfortunately, she did not do anything about it. She did not have the money to do it. There was no way for her to have her own child.

“You should know that I don’t have many ideas and I always stay in the camp. I don’t know much about this. I would like you to help me come up with a way. It is alright to be without a man, but I don’t want to be without a child.” Zhai Hua seemed to be weary.

Qiao Nan pursed her lips. "Sister Zhai Hua, I am not in a hurry to buy clothes. You can drive the car to a quiet place, like somewhere near the park. We can have a good chat about this."

"Sure." Zhai Hua was determined to do that. Since Qiao Nan did not disapprove of her idea, she stopped the car near a park. "I am all ears."

"The first method is to find someone to have a fake marriage. After you have a child, you can file for divorce. This is the safest way." The child will be recognized under the law. "Of course, you have to choose the man carefully. After all, it is your child. Although you are merely marrying him to have a child, you must check thoroughly. There may be genetic issues. And your ultimate goal is the child, not the man. You have to make sure that after having the child, he won't pester you and will agree to a divorce."

"It seems that this is a good method. But it will not be easy to execute." Zhai Hua felt that it would not be easy to find a man who was willing to donate his sperms, was healthy, and would agree to part ways with her.

If the man met all the conditions, he must be an outstanding man and he would have high self-esteem.

If the man would come and go as long as he was paid a sum of money, Zhai Hua felt that he must not have good genes. She did not want to take the risk with her future child.

"The second method is to wait for your turn at the sperm bank. However, they would only accept certain kinds of cases. In general, one has to have fertility problems to be able to qualify for it. If one is chosen and manages to be pregnant and gives birth to a child, they still have to deal with the legitimacy issue of the child."

"I feel that this problem could be easily solved and I don't need to have a fake marriage!" Initially, Zhai Hua had a headache over this issue, but a thought crossed her mind. She had set her designs on Qiao Nan. "Do you think it will work if I arrange for the child to become Zhai Sheng and your child? Since the child belongs to me, there is no problem for the child to take the surname of Zhai."

Chapter 1047 Splurging Like A Baller

"What a fool." Qiao Nan rolled her eyes. "Don't you know of the policy in our country? If the child is mine and Brother Zhai, and we have our own child, I will not be able to give birth to the child. If the two children are born at the same time, we can claim that they are twins."

“How about adoption?” She could not stop her brother from having a child. Zhai Hua was thinking hard of ways such that it would work for everyone. “The child will be Zhai Sheng and your child. By the time the child is registered under your household, I can adopt the child.”

Once she adopted the child, Qiao Nan would then be allowed to have children with Zhai Sheng.

“Are you sure that by then, you are suitable to adopt a child?” Qiao Nan was not from the law faculty. She was not familiar with the related laws.

Anyway, in the previous life, when she gave up the idea of having her own child and decided to adopt someone else’s child, she discovered that it was not that easy to adopt a child. As soon as she realized that she did not meet the requirements, she closed the website and did not read the details.

“I don’t remember very well, but according to the adoption law, it seems to say that the adopted family must provide the child with a complete family.” In other words, if Zhai Hua was without a man, she did not fulfill the requirement to adopt a child.

Zhai Hua pulled her hair in frustration. “Is there a third method?”

She only wanted to have a child. Why was it such a difficult task? Why was it that if she did not have a boyfriend, none of the methods worked for her?

“The third method is more expensive, and you have to read up on this technology. This is only hearsay, and I don’t know the details. You should have heard about test tube baby. The technology is called in vitro fertilization. It means that an egg is combined with a sperm outside the body, in vitro. Then, it is implanted in the woman’s uterus. If the surrogate pregnancy is successful, then the baby will be given birth after ten months of pregnancy.”

“Hmm...” Zhai Hua was clueless about the technical aspects of this technology.

Qiao Nan sounded very serious and convincing as she was explaining to her. Zhai Hua felt incredible and at the same time, she took Qiao Nan’s words for real. “What happens next?” Until now, she had heard about in vitro fertilization, test tube baby, and surrogate mother. But all these did not seem relevant to her situation.

“The reason why a woman can have a baby is that the ovaries can produce eggs. After a certain period, the ovarian function cannot be maintained. Right now, you are still young and can ovulate

normally. You can go to a specialized department for them to take out the healthy eggs in your body and to freeze and store them for later use. In that case, you can take your time to look for the man that you like. By then, even if you are too old to have a child, you can get the man to provide the sperms and arrange for a surrogate mother. The doctor can perform the in vitro fertilization and it might work.”

Qiao Nan had provided many solutions to her problem. “But you have to know that among the three methods, this last method would cost a lot of money.”

Zhai Hua was dumbstruck. “Nan Nan, how do you know all these complicated technologies and details?!”

Before having a conversation with Qiao Nan, she had never heard of these methods. “Regarding the third method that you mentioned, does our country have this technology?”

“Our country does not, but you can check out other countries.” Qiao Nan pressed her lips tightly, pain evident in her eyes.

She knew all these because she was driven to nuts by her mother in the previous life. She had no other choice but to use all means and methods to find out the related information on how she could have a child of her own.

These three methods had something in common—it required a lot of money!

Qiao Nan did not have money. If she really had the child, the child would not have legal citizenship in the country.

In the end, Qiao Nan had no other choice but to give up on her plan.

“The fourth method is to go overseas. The child is not legally accepted in China. Therefore, you can go overseas to apply for a United States permanent resident card. You can try your luck at the foreign sperm bank. However, your surname is Zhai and you are a soldier. I don’t think the Zhai family will allow its descendants to be a non-Chinese citizen of Chinese ancestry.”

Once they applied for the United States permanent resident card, the child’s nationality would no longer be China.

Given the temper of the Zhai family, Qiao Nan felt that this method would not be feasible.

“The fifth method is to find a man. You have yet to reach thirty years old. You are still in your prime. You still have ten years to try your luck at having a child. Why don’t you put a hold on your career progression? You can set aside your job at the army and focus all your energy on blind dating. You should try hard to find a man that you like with whom you can spend the rest of your life. Once you find a suitable man, you will have your child eventually.”

The first three methods were based on the research that Qiao Nan did in her previous life. The remaining two methods were meant to encourage Zhai Hua.

No matter what, Zhai Hua had yet to reach thirty years old. She was still in her prime. Unlike her, she was already close to forty years old in the previous life. Even if she came up with five methods of having a child, none of the methods worked for her.

Although Qiao Nan was very clear in her explanation, Zhai Hua was getting all confused. “I-I will consider it carefully. Do I need to read up on this?”

“Of course.”

“Alright. I will do some reading.” Qiao Nan had provided her with five methods. There had to be one that worked for her!

Zhai Hua gritted her teeth. Even though all the five methods seemed complicated, she had to decide on one and worked on it.

Seeing that Zhai Hua seemed very determined, although Qiao Nan said that she would make Zhai Hua pay for all her spending today, she did not buy any clothes. She only chose a camel-colored coat today.

On the contrary, Zhai Hua seemed to be dealt with some heavy blows. Whenever she saw any clothes that were suitable for Qiao Nan, she would ask the salespersons for Qiao Nan’s size and for her to try it on.

Seeing that Qiao Nan looked nice on it, Zhai Hua would pay for them without another word. It was as if she was spending money to buy clothes for her daughter.

What made Qiao Nan speechless was that the clothes that Zhai Hua wanted her to try on were all pastel and sweet colors.

Qiao Nan was pretty-looking and she had a pleasing and comforting aura. She looked as if she was sixteen or seventeen years old in those clothes.

Zhai Hua had yet to recover from her break up with Wei De. Some people even mistook Zhai Hua and Qiao Nan for mother and daughter.

“Sister Zhai Hua, that is enough!” Qiao Nan felt like crying at all the bags of clothes that were placed on the floor. The number of clothes that she bought in the two lifetimes was not as many as the clothes that she bought today.

Chapter 1048 Act Quickly, Mercilessly, Accurately!

Did Sister Zhai Hua intend to use all her savings to buy clothes for her?

“It is not enough. You will not grow any taller. If the clothes are of high quality, you can wear them for many years. You may not be willing to spend this money, but some people are trying hard to spend it.” Zhai Hua sneered.

Qiao Nan pursed her lips. Sister Zhai Hua must be talking about Wei De. Wei De was thinking of making use of Sister Zhai Hua to make lots of money and save up all the money for Wei Wei.

“If I don’t spend it on my family, don’t tell me that I have to save it for outsiders? I am not that foolish!”

“Sister Zhai Hua, since you are determined to spend as much as you wish, why don’t you buy some clothes for your parents and the old master? They will be ecstatic to receive gifts from you.” They would be even more thrilled to know that the money was taken from Wei De.

If Zhai Hua spent money on her family, she would not feel the pinch that she had wasted her efforts on Wei De. The Zhai family would be all the more happy to know that.

“You are right. Let’s buy something for all of them.” Zhai Hua waved her arms. She was determined to spend as much money as she liked.

In the end, it took them a lot of effort to bring all the clothes onto the car. “Alright, this is a rewarding shopping trip. Let’s go back.”

Zhai Hua was especially thrilled when staring at the back seat which was filled with shopping bags. It was no wonder that women liked to go shopping. The feeling was great.

“Let’s go home for the Lunar New Year.” Qiao Nan slumped on the passenger seat, feeling exhausted.

The two of them finally reached home. The helper saw that they carried many shopping bags with them and rushed out to help them.

Zhai Hua was not stingy. The helper had been working at the Zhai family’s residence for many years and she was a hardworking and responsible worker. She also bought a sweater for her. “Happy Lunar New Year, auntie.”

“Oh, thank you.” The auntie blushed. She never expected that among all the clothes that they bought, there would be one that was for her. She was so happy that she was at a loss for words.

“Happy Lunar New Year, old master.” Zhai Hua greeted the old master and passed him a few shopping bags. They contained a full set of clothes, from the inner wear to the outer wear.

The old master was stunned by the shopping bags. Was Lunar New Year coming or was it the Christmas Day that foreigners used to celebrate?

“Happy Lunar New Year, Dad.”

“Happy Lunar New Year, Mom.”

“Zhai Sheng, well, you can keep his for him. Everyone, have a happy Lunar New Year. Me too!” All the dresses in her wardrobe were given to her by Wei De, but she had returned everything to Wei De.

Today, Zhai Hua spent her own money to buy clothes for herself and it was rare that she bought a few winter dresses for herself.

From now onward, if she wore a dress, it had nothing to do with Wei De.

The Zhai family was stunned at receiving new clothes from Zhai Hua. Miao Jing opened the shopping bags to take a look. "Has hell frozen over?"

Zhai Hua did give them gifts in the past, but she would give them bullets or tank models. Her gifts seemed more suitable for children to play with.

It was news that she gave them proper presents today!

"The clothes are pretty nice. This pair of shoes looks good as well." Miao Jing was quite satisfied with her presents. "Did you pick them by yourself?" Miao Jing had a look of disbelief on her face. Her daughter did not know what kind of clothes and shoes to buy.

Zhai Hua was unhappy. "I paid for them!"

The person who paid for it was the boss!

"It is no use if you have the money but do not have the taste." Miao Jing made a dig at her daughter. "Given all those presents that you gave me in the past, even if you are willing to spend money to buy me clothes, I will not dare to wear them."

She was not a soldier or a tough lady. It was pointless for her to dress up in that way.

"Good, very good." Old Master Zhai sided with Zhai Hua. "I am very happy. I am already at this age, and my granddaughter is being filial to me." It was good to smile and joke with the family.

Hua Hua had finally recovered from her break up.

Qiao Nan, who was too tired, slumped in her chair, embarrassed. "Sister Zhai Hua, you have bought so many clothes for me. There is no way for me to bring them home."

“What is the...” Zhai Hua wanted to say that she could keep them in Zhai Sheng’s room. They would be married next year, so there was no need to bring the clothes back home only to bring them here again.

Qiao Nan rushed in to say, “Since you bought the clothes, I will bring them to your room. I will also sleep in your room tonight.”

“If you sleep in my room, where do I sleep then?” Zhai Hua arched her eyebrows. She was taking what used to belong to her.

Qiao Nan yawned. “There are so many rooms. You can stay in whichever room that you like.” Qiao Nan felt more at ease at the Zhai family’s residence than at her house.

“Hahaha. Both of you are girls. You can share a room. It will not be a problem.” Miao Jing welcomed the idea that Qiao Nan shared the room with her daughter.

It was really important to have the right daughter-in-law. She would bring luck to their family and she could advise her daughter.

After finding out the kind of person that Wei De was, Miao Jing would have nightmares from time to time. She dreamed that if Qiao Nan was not around, Zhai Hua would refuse to listen to them and insist on being with Wei De.

In the end, they had to give in and agreed to their marriage. Zhai Hua would become Wei Wei’s stepmother and everything that she worked hard for would be given to Wei Wei.

What was most terrifying was that there was a woman in her dream and Wei Wei greeted her as his mother.

Wei De carried Wei Wei in his arms and the woman stood by their side. Zhai Hua stood by herself opposite the three of them. The dream was so terrifying that Miao Jing jolted up from the nightmare.

Wei De kept saying that he was true to Zhai Hua, and that he did not love the wife that he held the wedding banquet with. But he had to be responsible for her.

However, no one could guarantee that Wei De's words could be trusted.

If Wei De intended to marry Zhai Hua while maintaining his marriage with his wife in the countryside, to have the best of both worlds, what could Hua Hua do about it? Hua Hua worked hard to earn the money. How could she allow the woman in the countryside to enjoy the fruits of her labor?

At the thought of her recent nightmare, Miao Jing had nothing but hatred for them. It was similar to her hatred for Qi Minlan in the past.

Fortunately, those were just nightmares.

Her son was very perceptive and he was engaged to Nan Nan, who was perfect in all aspects. It was indeed their luck to have Nan Nan as their daughter-in-law.

Miao Jing felt that the best decision that Zhai Sheng had made in this life was to insist on being with Qiao Nan, and he became her boyfriend even when she was still very young.

Miao Jing was perceptive of the things that were happening around her.

She knew that a few years ago, the son from the Zhu family was on very good terms with Qiao Nan.

All of them were still very young. Nan Nan was pretty-looking, had a good temper, and did well in her studies. She believed that the son from the Zhu family was interested in Nan Nan.

One had to act quickly, mercilessly, and accurately, like her son, in matters of the heart. If one was too slow, one would have to live in regrets for the rest of their life!

Chapter 1049 I Don't Care Anymore

Thinking of this, Miao Jing felt pleased and energized as if she had drunk some tonics. "Today, Nan Nan will sleep in Hua Hua's room. The two young ladies can have more time to chat and discuss life. Isn't that good?"

Miao Jing could finally set her mind at ease now that Zhai Hua was willing to leave Wei De. But she had another problem to worry about.

Her daughter was no longer young. Since Wei De was not suitable for her, they had to break up right away. But she had to find another boyfriend as soon as possible.

She wanted both her son and daughter to be married and start a family.

“Alright,” Zhai Hua replied. The other rooms were not as comfortable as her room. Besides, she also wanted to discuss with Qiao Nan regarding the issue of having children.

The Zhai family was chatting happily when the auntie was needed outside the house. By the time she returned, there was a strange look on her face. She kept looking at Qiao Nan as if she had something to say.

“Auntie, what’s wrong?” Qiao Nan did not make things difficult for the auntie. She waited until the auntie returned to the kitchen before she came up with an excuse, saying that she was thirsty, and went to the kitchen to pour a cup of tea for herself. Now that they were alone by themselves, she took the chance to ask the auntie what was wrong.

There was evident concern in the auntie’s eyes. “Nan Nan, I don’t know if I should tell you or not. I feel that you will be upset if you find out about it. But at the same time, I am worried that if you are kept in the dark, you will be deceived by others.”

“What happened? Is it that serious?”

“One of the neighbors in the quad told me that two hours ago, your mom and your sister carried a lot of bags with them and went out.” Today was the day before Lunar New Year’s eve. Most people would spend their time with their families.

Besides, everyone in the quad knew that the Qiao family did not have many relatives.

Qiao Dongliang and the two daughters were the only ones left in the Qiao family. Moreover, Ding Jiayi had severed all ties with the Ding family.

Where could Ding Jiayi be going with so many bags on a special day like the day before the Lunar New Year’s eve?

She would most probably be looking for Qiao Dongliang.

The couple had a divorce and they did not part happily. Why would they be in contact with each other now? Were they thinking of reconciling with each other?

Otherwise, why did they not have another partner despite having divorced many years ago?

The auntie would side with Qiao Nan no matter what. She felt that as long as Ding Jiayi was around, Qiao Nan would not have good days ahead of her.

Thankfully, Qiao Nan was about to be married to Zhai Sheng and she would be part of the Zhai family.

Perhaps Ding Jiayi had yet to reconcile with Qiao Dongliang and Qiao Nan would have already married Zhai Sheng.

Ding Jiayi might be harsh to Qiao Nan, but after Qiao Nan left the family, she could not possibly go to the Zhai family's residence to bully her.

“Two hours?” Qiao Nan lowered her eyes and curled the corners of her lips. “Auntie, you don't have to worry about me. But I have to thank you for telling me about this piece of news. If they want to get back together, so be it. Back then, my dad felt that he could not live the rest of his life with my mom, so he filed for a divorce. Perhaps he now feels that he will have a better life being with my mom. I did not stop him from getting a divorce. If he wants to marry, I will not object either.”

Two hours...

If her father did not accept Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, they did not even need two hours to travel to and fro the Qiao family's residence in the small quad. At most, they would only need one and a half hours.

In that case, although her father did not agree to go back to have dinner with them on the first day of the Lunar New Year, he allowed Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin to have dinner with him on the day before the Lunar New Year's eve.

Qiao Nan could not help but feel disgusted.

She was relieved that back then, she had not thought of taking advantage of Ping Cheng High School. She intended to return the house to the school after she had some money. That was why she never told her father that the house actually belonged to her.

Otherwise, some people might become ill-disciplined and out of control when they were at the house.

“It’s good that you have sorted out your thoughts. You are about to get married. Times have changed, but some old sayings are still very true. A daughter married is like water spilled. In the future, you have your in-laws, the chief, madam, and the entire family on your side.”

The auntie patted Qiao Nan’s hands. Some people did not know to cherish her or realize her value. However, there were people who treasured Qiao Nan and recognized her value. They would do anything to protect and safeguard her.

She should not be bothered with these people!

“Auntie, I will leave the kitchen first.” Qiao Nan brought a teapot of freshly brewed tea out to the living room. She remembered that she came up with this excuse to go to the kitchen.

Even though the auntie and Qiao Nan kept a low profile, the Zhai family was sharp and perceptive. Their behavior did not go unnoticed.

There were only a few members in the Qiao family.

There were only a few people that would be able to irritate and upset Qiao Nan.

The elders in the Zhai family kept their silence, but Zhai Hua could not contain her sharp tongue. “Did you leave any valuables at home?”

Perhaps after spending a night at the Zhai family’s residence, the valuables would be gone by the time Qiao Nan went back home.

“No.” Qiao Nan poured tea for everyone. “I have deposited all the money that I earned while working and studying to my bank account. It’s easier for the school to deduct the tuition fees. As for the card, I did not bring it with me. I have left it at my master’s house.”

Valuables?

Although the house belonged to her, she was not used to keeping any valuables at the place where she seldom stayed in.

Zhai Hua had not been to the Lin family’s residence in the capital.

Therefore, she was not aware that Lin Yuankang’s house was not a place that anyone could enter.

In Lin Yuankang’s house, there was a safe deposit box hidden behind one of the drawings that were hung on the wall in the room that Qiao Nan stayed in. Lin Yuankang told Qiao Nan the password so that she could keep her valuables inside the safe.

After opening the safe deposit box, Qiao Nan realized that Lin Yuankang had left many valuables in the safe.

Initially, Qiao Nan thought that she would not have the chance to use the safe deposit box. However...

After Qiao Nan went to the capital for her college studies, Qiao Dongliang handed all the important documents like her identity card and household register of family members for Qiao Nan to safeguard.

As time passed by, Qiao Nan began to use the safe deposit box to keep her valuables.

Qiao Nan would be staying in the capital for four years. She would have to keep her valuables in the safe deposit box.

When she was in Ping Cheng, she would not keep her valuables at the house that Ping Cheng High School gave her. She would pass all the valuables to Zhai Sheng for him to bring it back to the Zhai family’s residence.

“I heard from Zhai Sheng that the house that you and your dad are living in belongs to you. Where is the title deed?” Zhai Hua felt that it was better to be on the safe side.

Ding Jiayi took the money from Qiao Nan’s scholarship four to five years ago and spent it on the other daughter.

Chapter 1050 Shun Her Biological Daughter

She had not seen Ding Jiayi for four to five years. Ding Jiayi’s power must have increased and she might do things that were multiple times worse than before. Ding Jiayi should be the kind of person that did not have a limit in her behavior.

“Nan Nan, that house belongs to you?” This was the first time that Miao Jing heard about this.

“Yes, earlier on, the owners of the house came back. They were willing to give me the house at no cost. Their children seem to be planning to return to Ping Cheng to collaborate with Ping Cheng High School. I am not sure about the specific arrangements. Brother Zhai said that they will never shortchange themselves. After the ownership was transferred, I passed the deed title of that house to Brother Zhai. Hence, it should be with the Zhai family.”

Even if her mother were to spend the Lunar New Year in that house and turned it upside down, she would not be able to find anything.

“It seems that they took some actions this year. The good thing is that this is just the beginning. They may be too much, but most likely, they won’t do that yet. My dad’s temper is not that soft and my mom won’t be so foolish.” Of course, if there were increasing conflicts after some time, her mother might dare to do such things.

“The title deed is at my house!” Zhai Hua spoke as she was stunned by this news. “Zhai Sheng’s actions are so quick.” Qiao Nan had not been officially married but her house had entered the Zhai family first.

Not to mention Zhai Hua, even Old Master Zhai and Zhai Yaohui were surprised by this situation.

Old Master Zhai’s face twisted a little. “It seems that he has been harboring ‘intentions’ for a long time.”

When the young lady was still a junior high school student, he had already helped link her up with such a prominent master like Lin Yuankang. Following that, the title deed of the house that she was staying at had become his.

Old Master Zhai did not believe that Zhai Sheng did not do anything about the matter regarding that house.

Of course, Old Master Zhai believed that, at most, Zhai Sheng only acted as a catalyst. He wouldn't resort to shameful means such as force, deception, coercion, or bribery.

However, this proved that his grandson's feelings toward the young lady started a long time ago.

"Once he fixes on a target, he is vicious and accurate in taking action. This is truly the style of a soldier." It was seldom that Zhai Yaohui expressed his approval instead of trampling on his son at this moment.

This was such a fine lady. Of course, the earlier one took action, the better.

Otherwise, how could the Zhai family have meat now while the Zhu family only had soup to drink?

Under Qiao Nan's influence, Zhu Baoguo had been led to the right path and his strayed mindset had been corrected. Zhai Yaohui could understand why Zhu Chengqi wished to acknowledge Qiao Nan as his goddaughter.

Zhu Chengqi had secretly spoken about this matter to Zhai Yaohui.

It was also because of Qiao Nan that the relationship between the Zhai family and the Zhu family became very good. Zhu Chengqi and Zhai Yaohui had formed a secret alliance.

Zhu Chengqi openly and honestly told Zhai Yaohui that his son had feelings toward Qiao Nan but Zhu Chengqi only saw Qiao Nan as his daughter.

Once Qiao Nan was married to Zhai Sheng, in his eyes, Zhai Sheng would be his son-in-law.

Everyone would become in-laws. Naturally, he had to interact more closely with the Zhai family.

He was going to have an additional formidable ally such as the Zhu family. There was no reason for Zhai Yaohui to decline or feel unhappy about this.

Besides the Zhu family, the Lee family had also been on good terms with the Zhai family recently.

Zhai Yaohui did not just stay at home all day and do nothing. He had been taking care of these relationships. Hence, he was well aware that the Zhai family's power had been strengthening gradually. Amidst all these, the greatest credit went to Qiao Nan, this future daughter-in-law.

As for Lin Yuankang, he had not expressed anything until now.

However, this did not bother Zhai Yaohui at all.

Although Lin Yuankang did not express his stance to the Zhai family, his care for Qiao Nan was not any less.

Lin Yuankang had been nurturing his little disciple wholeheartedly. This was a great thing for the Zhai family and would also benefit them eventually.

With this, Zhai Yaohui had already categorized Lin Yuankang as one of his people.

The few truly powerful figures in Ping Cheng had been secretly twisted into a rope because of Qiao Nan. The people in the capital did not know much about this situation but Zhai Yaohui was aware in his heart.

As he drank the tea prepared by Qiao Nan, he felt so happy and at ease.

It was true. Where could he find such a good daughter-in-law?!

Zhai Yaohui had not spoken about it before, but his thoughts were similar to his wife, Miao Jing: Their son was very capable. The best thing that he had done was to find the right wife.

“Hahaha.” Hearing Zhai Yaohui’s praise for Zhai Sheng, Zhai Hua sneered continuously. “This is a May-December romance, yet everyone is so smug about it. Where is your shame?” They felt proud instead of shameful about it. Where were the values, morals, and characters? Where were the boundaries?

Zhai Yaohui put down his cup of tea and looked at Zhai Yaohui indifferently. “You can do the same too.”

If Hua Hua could find someone similar to Qiao Nan—no, half as good as Qiao Nan, regardless of the other party’s age and situation, he would accept him as long as he was true to Hua Hua.

“Sister Zhai Hua, do you have a tendency toward May-December romance?” Qiao Nan blinked her eyes. So, Sister Zhai Hua also wanted to find someone younger than her?

Zhai Hua tugged the corners of her lips weakly. “I have not met anyone suitable currently. If I like him, I am not particular about his age!”

After meeting a scum like Wei De, Zhai Hua discovered that her tolerance level and resilience had improved tremendously.

The rest of the things did not matter. Most importantly, she would have to like the person first.

“Old master, dinner is ready,” the auntie wiped her hands and said softly.

“Ready?” Old Master Zhai took a glance at the clock. “It’s already seven old o’clock. The sky is getting darker. No wonder I am feeling hungry. Let’s quickly have our meal.”

Once Old Master Zhai gave the orders, everyone from the Zhai family proceeded to the dining table.

It was the day before the Lunar New Year’s eve. There were a few more dishes on the dining table in the Zhai family today. There were also the auntie’s specialty dishes.

Miao Jing was piling Qiao Nan’s bowl with dishes enthusiastically. “Nan Nan, you have to go to school and take exams in normal times. Eat more and well. Never shortchange yourself. Don’t be

polite with us. If there is anything you want to eat, you have to tell auntie and ask her to make it for you.”

“Thank you, Mom.” Looking at the bowl that was piled with a mountain of dishes, Qiao Nan smiled. The burden in her heart disappeared and she started eating happily.

After eating and drinking to their hearts’ contents, the family sat together to watch television and chat. About nine o’clock, one by one, everyone returned to their rooms.

The clothes that Zhai Hua bought for Qiao Nan today were new and could not be worn yet.

Fortunately, Qiao Nan still had Miao Miao, this mother-in-law. After knowing Qiao Nan’s size, during the six months Qiao Nan was studying in college in the capital, Miao Jing had helped Qiao Nan organize and decorate the latter’s wardrobe according to her preferences.