

RTAMM 1091

Chapter 1091 My Conscience Is Clear

“No matter what kind of treatment Qiao Nan receives, I don’t think I am in the wrong.”

Was Qiao Nan pitiful?

Of course not!

She had also endured all of Qiao Nan’s suffering before!

Qiao Nan had already grown up when she suffered from such treatment. However, she was only three years old! Three years old!

There was hatred in Qiao Zijin’s heart. This hatred had never subsided. On the contrary, it grew with each passing day.

Now, Qiao Nan was more outstanding, exemplary, and dazzling than her. Qiao Zijin’s hatred toward Qiao Nan became increasingly deeper.

She felt that Qiao Nan was provoking and causing her unhappiness despite having not paid back what she had owed!

In that case, she could not be blamed for not treating Qiao Nan as a sister. When Qiao Nan was of use to her, she would acknowledge that they were biological sisters. When Qiao Nan was not of any use to her, she would trample on Qiao Nan more viciously than anyone else.

She had a clear conscience!

“You...” Never did Qiao Dongliang expect that the conflict between his elder and younger daughters was created by Ding Jiayi. Moreover, there was such inside information as to why his elder daughter behaved willfully toward his younger one. “Alright, even if what you have said is true, is Nan Nan the one who did all those things and made you suffer during that time? Did Nan Nan instigate your mom to do that? You should know that your mom is the biased one. Your mom is

the one that caused all these. Nan Nan is still in your mom's womb. She did not even utter a word, let alone do anything. Zijin, you are angry, but the person that you should resent is your mom and not Nan Nan!"

Qiao Zijin felt that she was not in the wrong. However, to Qiao Dongliang, Qiao Zijin was very wrong, and ridiculously wrong.

When Qiao Nan was still in Ding Jiayi's womb, Qiao Nan could not participate in anything that Ding Jiayi did to Qiao Zijin. She was not even aware of it then.

However, in contrast, Qiao Zijin certainly had something to do with the sufferings that Qiao Nan had endured after the latter grew up.

At this point, Qiao Dongliang had a moment of realization of why Ding Jiayi was so biased against and did not dote on Qiao Nan.

In particular, there was no doubt that Qiao Zijin's earlier words proved only one point—Qiao Zijin wanted to take revenge on Qiao Nan.

She wanted to take revenge on Qiao Nan for all that she had suffered when she was three years old.

As such, Qiao Zijin was most probably the mastermind for all those distasteful behaviors that Ding Jiayi did to Qiao Nan.

"If you are angry, you can vent it on your mom. She is the one who didn't let you eat, made you quit school and earn money to support your younger brother financially. Your mom is the one who did everything. Nan Nan did not even utter a word. Zijin, I am extremely disappointed in you."

"No one can deny that Mom would not do that to me if Nan Nan did not exist." Qiao Zijin was very stubborn. She refused to take the view that Qiao Nan was the innocent party.

Qiao Dongliang was both angry and amused. "So as to speak, the people that you should blame are not Nan Nan but your mom and I. If I am not together with your mom, will your mom be pregnant with Nan Nan? Nan Nan did not come out of her own accord. She was created by your mom and me. If you consider that, you should be venting your anger on your mom and me."

Initially, Qiao Zijin was already a grown-up lady and she even had a boyfriend. The parents of both families had also met and were in marriage talks. Qiao Dongliang, this father, should not discuss such a censored topic with Qiao Zijin, this elder daughter.

The problem was that he had been infuriated by Qiao Zijin. He felt that Qiao Zijin's high-sounding and dignified reasons were ludicrous.

Looking at his stubborn elder daughter who refused to admit her wrong, Qiao Dongliang said listlessly, "After talking for so long, there is only one reason why you put all the blame on Nan Nan and refuse to mention your mom and me. You bully the weak and fear the strong. You know that you need to rely on your mom and me to grow up. You know that you have to depend on your mom and me in order to stick to, derive benefit, and gain power from Nan Nan. Without us, the sibling relationship between the two of you will exist in name only."

Regardless of how Zijin harmed Nan Nan, Zijin could always tap on Old Ding and him to continue to exploit and derive gains from Nan Nan, as long as they were still alive.

Otherwise, it would mean that after Nan Nan's life had turned good, she was unwilling to bother about her poor relatives. She could watch on as her biological parents die.

On the contrary, if both he and Old Ding were to disown Zijin, Nan Nan could decline Zijin when the latter wished to derive any benefit from her. If he and Old Ding did not put in any good words for Zijin, no one could reprimand Nan Nan for her doings.

Zijin wanted to make full use of the two words 'filial piety' to suppress Nan Nan from the highest point of morality.

She was fearless in dealing with Nan Nan when she had Old Ding and him as her backings.

To put it bluntly, Nan Nan was a tool that Zijin wanted to obtain in life, whereas he and Old Ding were pawns that could fulfill Zijin's wish of a good life.

Qiao Dongliang had the intent to help Qiao Zijin and let go of Qiao Nan. He wanted to spend more time and effort on the disappointing Qiao Zijin so that the latter could also lead a good life.

However, Qiao Dongliang hesitated and regretted after he found out that Qiao Zijin was truly such a cold and heartless person.

In the family of four, Qiao Zijin only paid attention to, cared about, and loved herself. The remaining three of her closest kin were just tools that she could make use of to achieve happiness.

He had given up on a filial and smart daughter for the sake of an individual who was selfish to the extreme. Qiao Dongliang was at a total loss now.

Qiao Zijin bit her lips. This was because Qiao Dongliang's words had hit the nail.

Ding Jiayi and Qiao Dongliang were the reason that Qiao Zijin could haunt Qiao Nan endlessly for life like a resentful ghost. Wasn't that so?

Of course, Qiao Zijin had to act like a goody-two-shoes in front of Qiao Dongliang and Ding Jiayi because of this reason.

Ding Jiayi was completely in Qiao Zijin's clutches. Qiao Dongliang was her only variable factor.

However, Qiao Zijin was overjoyed that her father was actually willing to have a change of heart at the end of last year. Besides doting on Qiao Nan, he was willing to turn back and take more care of her.

This change made Qiao Zijin ecstatic.

It was not because of other reasons. It was because if she were to make any request to Qiao Nan in the future, she could then tell Qiao Nan that she had been the only one taking care of their parents since Qiao Nan was always not at home.

Her parents' lives would only be good if her life was.

If Qiao Nan refused to help, it would not just impact her life but also that of their parents.

Having secured double bargaining chips, Qiao Zijin also wished to help the Chen family achieve greater heights in their career after she was married to Chen Jun. She was very determined to become the wife that the Chen Jun doted on.

Today, Qiao Dongliang had exposed everything. How could Qiao Zijin keep a straight face in front of an impending major disaster?

Qiao Zijin, who was filled with guilty-conscience, dared not even look at Qiao Dongliang in the eye.

No matter what Qiao Zijin did to Ding Jiayi, the latter would always stay by Qiao Zijin's side unconditionally. Hence, she was not afraid that Ding Jiayi would abandon her.

Qiao Dongliang was different. That was because Qiao Dongliang had already abandoned her once because of Qiao Nan.

Qiao Dongliang was enraged now. Qiao Zijin immediately turned honest and abiding in front of Qiao Dongliang.

Chapter 1092 Even the Biological Father Was Afraid

Qiao Dongliang took a deep breath. "Let's go home first." It would be so embarrassing if anyone were to overhear their conversation today.

Zijin had endured sufferings but she dared not seek justice from the main culprits. Instead, she only bullied Nan Nan. To put it bluntly, Zijin was just a timid and weak coward.

As Qiao Dongliang was already angered, Qiao Zijin could only restrain her temper. She dared not flare up like a princess or like she did in the past. She could only abidingly follow behind Qiao Dongliang's footsteps like a little daughter-in-law. The father-daughter pair then quietly returned to the small courtyard of the Qiao family.

At the sight of the father-daughter pair coming back looking sad and gloomy despite having gone out happily, Ding Jiayi exploded like firecrackers without anyone lighting her up. "Why do both of you have such expressions when you're back? Did that wretched girl scorn you or join forces with outsiders to bully you? How dare she! I will look for her to settle scores with her. Did she really think that she can be lawless and fearless after she is married to Zhai Sheng? She doesn't even respect her biological parents and sister anymore? I want to ask the Zhai family whether they really dare to take in such a wretched girl who refuses to acknowledge any of her kin!"

Ding Jiayi did not gain anything from Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan's marriage.

No matter how good this marriage was, it was not considered a good marriage to Ding Jiayi if she did not stand to gain anything from it.

Since this was a marriage that she did not consider good, what was the use of having such a marriage? She might as well wreck it.

Qiao Dongliang only remembered the bride price after Qiao Zijin reminded him. However, Ding Jiayi had already been targeting the bride price from the Zhai family to Qiao Nan.

The problem was that they had agreed before that Qiao Nan would be under Qiao Dongliang's custody after the divorce.

The husband and wife had not even revived their marriage. If Qiao Dongliang did not speak about this, Ding Jiayi was not qualified to use her status as Qiao Nan's mother to request for the bride price from the Zhai family.

After she found out that Qiao Zijin had thought about this and even persuaded Qiao Dongliang, Ding Jiayi was smug. She felt that Qiao Zijin, her elder daughter, truly resembled her.

When the father-daughter pair went to the house of the Zhu family, Ding Jiayi had already pinched her fingers to count the money and decide what she wanted to use it for upon receiving the bride price from the Zhai family.

When she saw the expressions on the father-daughter pair when they arrived home, Ding Jiayi was certain that not a single cent had fallen into their hands regardless of what the bride price was.

"Can you stop? Do you want me to flare up?!" He had just found out that the conflict between his elder daughter and the younger daughter was all due to Ding Jiayi. Qiao Dongliang was still burning with anger.

He had intended to persuade Qiao Zijin but Qiao Zijin had gone into a dead end for almost twenty years. Even if Qiao Dongliang wanted to pull Qiao Zijin out, he had to see if Qiao Zijin was willing to come out.

Obviously, Qiao Zijin would not listen to him at this moment.

Qiao Dongliang could not lose his temper at Qiao Zijin now. However, he did not feel the least burdened to vent it all on Ding Jiayi. “No wonder people in the olden times said that it is more important to marry a virtuous than a pretty wife. A husband with a virtuous wife will have less trouble. The greatest mistake that I have committed in my life is to marry you and let you become my children’s mother!”

He believed that if another woman was the mother of his two daughters, the relationship between his two daughters would certainly not escalate to the situation today.

Ding Jiayi’s old face turned red. She was not pleased. “Did the wretched girl scorn you? What did it have to do with me that she doesn’t treat you like her dad? I have already said before. That wretched girl is heartless. It is a waste of time to treat her so well. You refused to heed my words and even divorced me. Now, you are venting all your anger on me. Qiao Dongliang, do you still have a conscience?!”

Upon hearing these accusations from Ding Jiayi, Qiao Dongliang revealed an extremely icy and cold smile. “No conscience? Who is the one who doesn’t have a conscience?”

When he said that, the corners of Qiao Dongliang’s eyes were looking in Qiao Zijin’s direction.

Qiao Dongliang already knew how the knot in Qiao Zijin’s heart came about. He knew that Qiao Zijin did not shun Ding Jiayi and him or vent her anger on them at this point in time. However, it did not mean that she would not do so in the future.

Qiao Zijin was still acknowledging the husband and wife as she wanted to rely on them to exploit Qiao Nan continuously.

When their relationship with Nan Nan had completely broken down and Nan Nan would not give any chance to Qiao Zijin, it would be the time whereby husband and wife would lose their value.

At the thought of this, Qiao Dongliang laughed again. It was such a sad and bitter laugh.

When he and Ding Jiayi had outlived their usefulness, he was curious as to how the good daughter that Ding Jiayi spoke about would treat the two of them who had raised her.

At that time, he would know which of his two daughters was without any conscience.

When Qiao Dongliang replied to Qiao Zijin's question, he had made it clear that she should direct her resentment and hate at Ding Jiayi and him. At that time, Qiao Zijin did not respond.

Initially, Qiao Dongliang felt that Qiao Zijin had already climbed into the dead alley. She had only picked the weak ones to bully. That was the reason she had pushed all the blame on Qiao Nan.

However, Qiao Dongliang gradually came to his senses.

Although Qiao Zijin did not agree with him that he and Ding Jiayi were the main culprits, the problem was that Qiao Zijin did not deny it either.

Was it because the husband and wife were still of some use to Qiao Zijin now? Was that why Qiao Zijin had not settled the scores with them?

When they had lost their usefulness, it was also time for them to 'repay' Qiao Zijin for the sins that they had committed?

All these were just Qiao Dongliang's guess but he increasingly felt that there was such a possibility.

After having such a guess, Qiao Dongliang only felt fear and disappointment.

After so long, his elder daughter was not only foolish and selfish but also had such a dark side hidden in her heart.

He had raised his two daughters. He did not expect them to support him when he was old and after they were married. However, he certainly could not accept his daughter 'taking revenge' on himself.

"Old Qiao, what is wrong with you? Why are you looking at Zijin like that without an apparent reason, as if Zijin is a monster?" Ding Jiayi had been furious and venting her anger on Qiao Dongliang. After cursing and scolding him for so long, she then discovered that Qiao Dongliang was behaving a little differently from the usual.

She had said such ugly words and even mentioned Qiao Nan but Qiao Dongliang did not retort her at all. He was just standing on the same spot and allowing her to scold and vent her frustration. This was not Qiao Dongliang's usual style.

When she saw Qiao Dongliang in a daze, staring at Qiao Zijin, she was concerned. Qiao Dongliang was not looking at Qiao Zijin in a nice way. She could see some fear and shock in his eyes. Ding Jiayi was not pleased. "Old Qiao, what are you looking at? What are you thinking of?"

After Ding Jiayi called out to him, Qiao Dongliang regained his senses. His heart shivered for a while. "No, nothing."

It was fine that his daughter was a little foolish to have liked the wrong person and even insisted to marry him. This was something very common and not considered big news.

Chapter 1093 Am I That Scary?

Qiao Dongliang might be unhappy, but he would not do anything. Instead, he would stop caring for Qiao Nan and focus all his attention on helping Qiao Zijin until the day she found her happiness.

He did not ask her daughter to repay him with anything.

However, Qiao Dongliang suddenly felt that there was a possibility that when Qiao Zijin had the life that she wanted, she might rake up the past and settle old scores with him. Qiao Dongliang paled at the thought of it.

Qiao Zijin felt uneasy at Qiao Dongliang's expression. "Dad, did you catch a cold on the way back? One will easily catch a cold during the period when winter turns to spring after the Lunar New Year. Mom, can you look for the cold medicine at home and pass them to Dad?"

Qiao Zijin had no idea what was on Qiao Dongliang's mind. But Qiao Zijin felt a sense of crisis upon seeing his expression.

Qiao Zijin had a head for this. Whenever Qiao Dongliang treated her well, she would reach out for a yard after taking an inch.

When she sensed that something was amiss, she would give in immediately to reassure the other party.

“Yes, there is cold medicine at home. Old Qiao, take a seat. I will bring you medicine and water.” Ding Jiayi looked at Qiao Dongliang with concern in her eyes. She even touched his forehead with her hand to check his temperature.

Qiao Dongliang grabbed Ding Jiayi’s hand. “No need. I know very well whether I am sick or not. I have not caught a cold. It’s just that it’s windy and I don’t feel quite well. All medicine has toxicity to some degree. There is no need to take the medicine. It’s late. I will go back now. I still have to wake up early in the morning to send Nan Nan off. Both of you... should go to bed earlier too.”

Qiao Dongliang felt uneasy at the mention of the cold medicine.

To Qiao Dongliang, the mention of the cold medicine made him repulsed.

The change in Qiao Nan was brought about by the fever medicine. What got on Qiao Dongliang’s nerves the most was that a few days ago, Ding Jiayi went to the Zhai family’s residence, yelling for Qiao Nan to come out to meet her. Her voice turned hoarse because of her constant shouts. But she lied, saying that she was uncomfortable and might have caught a cold. Upon hearing that, Qiao Zijin stood far away from her with a cold look on her face. She feared that she would catch a cold from Ding Jiayi.

Qiao Dongliang could not understand how a medicinal pill that was used to treat illness turned into a test of one’s character at their house.

Could it be that the medicine they had at home was different from the medicine that other people had? Weren’t they supposed to be manufactured by the same company?

Qiao Dongliang could not figure it out and he had no wish to take the medicine.

Ding Jiayi stopped Qiao Dongliang, reluctant for him to leave. “You said that you need to wake up early in the morning to send that wretched girl off. Although the distance from the Qiao family’s residence to your place is not that far, it will take more than half an hour on the bicycle. It’s too tiring. Since you are unwell, you should spend the night here. This is not the first time that you do that. You can have half an hour more of sleep. Isn’t that better?”

After the divorce, Qiao Dongliang once had his meals and spent the night at the Qiao family's residence.

Although he did not share the room, the same bed, and the same blanket with Ding Jiayi, it was a huge improvement for Ding Jiayi.

Since they could stay under one roof, it would not be long before they got back together.

Ding Jiayi still preferred Qiao Dongliang over starting another relationship. The new partner that she had might have other agendas or intentions.

Therefore, in the three years after the divorce, even if other people kindly introduced men to Ding Jiayi, she would only have meals with them a couple of times and spend a few days with them before she rejected them.

Ding Jiayi was no longer a young lady and she had a grown-up daughter. After multiple rejections, other people no longer introduced suitable candidates to her.

Ding Jiayi, who felt lonely after her divorce, realized that among all the men that she had met, Qiao Dongliang was still the best.

Since she could not find someone better than Qiao Dongliang, Ding Jiayi would naturally direct all her attention to Qiao Dongliang.

Qiao Dongliang had goose bumps at the tender look in Ding Jiayi's eyes. He did not feel touched by her behavior. Instead, he was scared. "No need. There is really no need for that. Old Ding, you might have some misunderstanding. I was willing to have meals with you and to stay over for the night a few days ago not because I wanted to get back together with you. It's just that I don't want things to look bad on Nan Nan and Zijin, especially when they are getting married. It would be better for them, particularly Zijin, to have both parents around."

Qiao Dongliang was not worried about Qiao Nan.

Miao Jing treated Qiao Nan very well. Qiao Dongliang was her father, but he did not treat her as well. Moreover, Zhu Chengqi doted on Qiao Nan as well.

It was a different case for Qiao Zijin. Compared with the Qiao family, the Chen family had the upper hand and Chen Jun was more cunning than Qiao Zijin.

In Qiao Dongliang's opinion, if he was on good terms with Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, the Chen family would know that if anything happened, her family and her father would stand up for her.

He would not allow them to look down on Qiao Zijin or ill-treat her just because she only had her mother with her and there was no one else in her family.

This was what Qiao Dongliang would do for Qiao Zijin. He was not interested in anything else.

Getting back together?

If he had the slightest notion of getting back together with Ding Jiayi, instead of filing for divorce back then, he should have maintained the status quo—to live separately despite still being married.

Qiao Dongliang thought that Ding Jiayi would have the same views as him and would understand what was on his mind.

But looking at her pestering behavior today, Qiao Dongliang realized that he was wrong again.

He was wrong about Qiao Zijin and he thought too highly of Ding Jiayi.

This pair of mother and daughter would never be sensible and understanding!

With that, Qiao Dongliang could not be bothered that Ding Jiayi looked sullen. He pushed his model '28' bicycle and cycled unsteadily, fleeing from the house.

Now that Qiao Dongliang had made himself clear, Ding Jiayi could no longer deceive herself. "What is your dad up to? Didn't he quarrel with that wretched girl because of both of us?"

Otherwise, she would not shower affection on an uninterested party and have the wrong impression that Qiao Dongliang had the same intention of getting back together like her.

These past few days, Ding Jiayi had been thinking of what happened when she married Qiao Dongliang back then. Apart from a table of food, they did not go through any procedures and they did not have any proper wedding dress and suit.

If she was able to get back together with Qiao Dongliang, Qiao Nan, who was doing well, should be filial to them and arrange for a proper wedding ceremony for them. In this way, she could make up for not having a ceremony in the past.

Ding Jiayi would plan their wedding using Qiao Nan's and Zhai Sheng's wedding as a reference.

She had yet to weave her dreams of a grand wedding when Qiao Dongliang fled from the house, shattering her dreams of having a proper wedding to pieces. "Don't tell me that he does not have the same feelings as I do? Am I that scary that he could not cycle properly?"

Chapter 1094 This Was Not Important

"I have been married to him for more than twenty years. I have spent my prime years on him and I even gave birth to two daughters for him. Is he shunning me because I am old and haggard? Does he not want me anymore?"

After returning to Ping Cheng, Ding Jiayi was elated and thrilled to find out that Qiao Dongliang remained single and that he would reject anyone's offer upfront to introduce a partner to him.

She felt ashamed that she agreed to meet those possible candidates whom other people had introduced to her.

She thought that Qiao Dongliang remained single because of her. Ding Jiayi behaved like a besotted young lady. She was immersed in her romantic thoughts and dreams for days. She even smiled in her dreams about how it was like to get back together with Qiao Dongliang.

She had dinner with Qiao Dongliang on the day before the Lunar New Year's eve and she even stayed for the night. Although Qiao Dongliang maintained a polite distance from her, at the very least, she could spend the night with him under the same roof.

Ding Jiayi thought that Qiao Dongliang was reserved and that was why he did not reveal his feelings for her.

She could understand as they had been married for a long time.

What happened just now came as a harsh blow to Ding Jiayi. She almost cried out loud.

Qiao Zijin wet a towel for Ding Jiayi. "Wipe the tears and snot on your face." It would be embarrassing if other people were to witness this.

Ding Jiayi cried while she wiped her tears. "Zijin, your dad is without a conscience. I thought that he has the same sentiments as me. To my surprise... How can he do this to me!"

"Alright, stop crying." Qiao Zijin felt vexed. She could not stand it that her father sided with Qiao Nan and reprimanded her. She ended up blurting her innermost feelings.

Her father had seen through her. She wondered whether she could still make use of her father to go against Qiao Nan. "Mom, as you have said, you and Dad have spent more than twenty years together. To put it bluntly, as long as Dad does not date other women or marry someone else, what does it matter if he remarries you or not? Think about it. You are his only ex-wife, the only woman in his life. Isn't this good enough?"

Ding Jiayi, who was sobbing, paused momentarily at Qiao Zijin's words. "I-is that so?"

"Of course!" Qiao Zijin rolled her eyes. "Mom, Dad will never be rid of you in this life. He has no intention of starting another relationship as well. It really doesn't matter if the two of you get back together or not. What's important now is you should consider my interests. If I marry well, I will be able to take better care of you and you will be able to enjoy life."

Her parents were no longer young. Qiao Zijin could not understand why they were so childish and would still dream about dating and love. Didn't they find it embarrassing?

If Ding Jiayi was not her mother, Qiao Zijin would find her behavior to be unbearably embarrassing.

"Marry well? Don't you like Chen Jun and want to marry him? Don't tell me you don't want to marry him and you like someone else?" Ding Jiayi used the towel to wipe her face. She looked at Qiao Zijin with a confused look.

Qiao Zijin shook her head. “No.” She had not changed her mind. She still ‘liked’ Chen Jun and wanted to marry him.

“Then, everything is settled,” Ding Jiayi said matter-of-factly. “Your dad and I have met the Chen family. They seem nice and they took the initiative to visit us. They have given us due respect. It is a matter of time before you marry Chen Jun. What is the matter here?”

“How can everything be alright?” Qiao Zijin was upset. “Since I am going to marry Chen Jun, the Chen family and I will be in the same boat. If they do well, I will be able to do well and you will be able to lead a good life.”

Ding Jiayi, who had just cried her guts out over Qiao Dongliang’s attitude, was slow to react. “Is it that complicated? Are you hatching any plans related to that wretched girl? That wretched girl refuses to acknowledge her family. After the wedding banquet tomorrow, she will have the Zhai family as her backing. She could not be bothered with her poor family.”

In fact, Ding Jiayi wanted to bask in Qiao Nan’s glory as well. However, Qiao Nan was too smart and vicious. Once provoked, she would not hesitate to retaliate and that was why Qiao Zijin ended up with an ugly hairstyle.

Up until now, Ding Jiayi dared not reveal to Qiao Zijin that she created trouble for Qiao Nan and that was why Qiao Nan retaliated by sending someone to bash Qiao Zijin at school and cut her hair to uneven lengths.

After spending several years staying alone with Qiao Zijin at another house, Ding Jiayi had a better idea of the elder daughter’s temperament.

She was fearful that after learning the truth, Qiao Zijin would bear a grudge and would not be filial to her in the future.

Although Ding Jiayi always said that she trusted Qiao Zijin, she was still careful around her.

“You and Dad are still around. She has to acknowledge me as her sister. As long as I am still leading a difficult life, she has to help me if I approach her for assistance.” Qiao Zijin would not allow Qiao Nan to have an easy time.

Qiao Zijin was overconfident in herself. She neglected the fact that she was the one who was bullied by the Chen family. Even if Qiao Nan was willing to help her, it was up to Qiao Nan to decide what she would help her with.

She could give the Chen family a verbal warning not to bully Qiao Zijin.

But if the Chen family was not given proper punishment, Qiao Zijin would continue to suffer in the Chen family.

Ding Jiayi felt unsettled and worried even though Qiao Zijin was full of confidence. She could not help but have a headache. She felt that things would not be as simple. "It would be good if the wretched girl is willing to help."

Ding Jiayi was jealous at the mention of Qiao Nan, who was getting married tomorrow.

Ding Jiayi might look down on Qiao Nan, but she had to admit that she had chosen a good husband and a good family. Qiao Nan had done what she had dreamed of but dared not do.

She should have been basking in glory because of this marriage.

But everyone in the quad knew about her bad relationship with the wretched girl.

Everyone felt that Ding Jiayi was biased and had the wrong judgment. But she refused to admit it.

She was the mother while Qiao Nan was the daughter. Qiao Nan should listen to her words. Even if Qiao Nan refused to listen to her, she was still her elder and her mother. Qiao Nan could never sever ties with her.

However, the wretched girl did not have a conscience. She had not visited her for years and neither did she greet her as her mother. She should have been basking in glory, but instead, she was the big joke of the quad.

Ding Jiayi sighed unhappily. "Zijin, you must do well. I don't care that Qiao Nan marries well. I have placed all my hopes on you. If you marry well, you will be doing me proud. It will prove that I have made the right judgment."

The daughter that she had raised was just as good as Qiao Nan.

“Zijin, you must remember. The wretched girl has indeed married well.”

Chapter 1095 Make Use of the Chance to Benefit from I

“To put it bluntly, the Zhai family is an illustrious family. It is not that easy to be married into such a family. All that talk about equality is crap. By the time Zhai Sheng is tired of Qiao Nan, he will divorce her and kick her out of the Zhai family. By then, it will be our turn to shine.”

Ding Jiayi believed that the day would come. She also believed that it would come very soon.

“Mom, don’t worry. I understand. I have the same sentiments.” Qiao Zijin nodded. “Therefore, before Zhai Sheng divorces her and we are still in-laws, I will think of ways to benefit from their relationship.”

Qiao Nan did not know or care to know what Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin were thinking about.

To many people, this was a long night.

Qiao Dongliang, who barely had any sleep, looked at the clock that said it was four o’clock in the morning. He sat up from the bed, put on his clothes, and rode his bicycle to the Zhu family’s residence.

The Shi family drove the car to the Zhu family’s residence. They could tell that they were not the only ones on the road.

Feng Cheng was not in a hurry. She was not marrying off her daughter.

If not for Shi Qing, who was willing, and Shi Peng, who agreed with her, she would not allow her daughter to be Qiao Nan’s bridesmaid. Given Qiao Nan’s family background, she did not deserve Shi Qing as her bridesmaid.

However, in the Shi family, Feng Cheng was the minority. It was one against two. Even if they were democratic, her objection would still be invalid.

“Shi Peng, it’s so early in the morning. You don’t even allow me to have a good sleep. It’s just a meal. Do we have to be there at such an early time?” Feng Cheng felt sleepy, so she was easily rattled. She was reluctant to get into the car. She wanted to rest at home.

If she reached there before the stipulated time, it would be showing respect to Qiao Nan. Why should she do that?!

Shi Peng pulled a long face. “Today is the day Qiao Nan is getting married to Zhai Sheng. Everyone is in a good mood. Stop throwing tantrums and making everyone unhappy. You must not forget who you are. If you feel sleepy, fine, you can go back to sleep. You can come by yourself after you have rested well.”

Shi Peng knew the reason why his wife disliked Qiao Nan.

He did not think of changing Feng Cheng’s attitude. He knew that she was unhappy. He had even thought of giving her some money for her to go on a holiday to have some fun. Shi Peng would not care whether she went shopping or go on a trip with the money.

Although Shi Peng suggested her to take a break, Feng Cheng refused to listen to him.

After knowing that Shi Peng and Shi Qing were determined to attend Qiao Nan’s wedding, an unhappy Feng Cheng insisted that she wanted to tag along as well.

The Shi family would be giving a red packet to Qiao Nan. Since they had given her a large amount of money as her wedding gift, Feng Cheng had to attend the wedding.

Even if she did not have a big appetite, she could still have her meals at the wedding banquet.

Feng Cheng was not calculative. But at the thought that the bride was Qiao Nan, Feng Cheng refused to be taken advantage of by her.

Although Feng Cheng insisted on going, she was upset that Shi Peng insisted on going early in the morning. “As I have said, we are only there for a meal. We are not there to help out. Why do we

have to be so early? Shi Peng, don't you find your behavior unreasonable? It's fine that you are behaving oddly, but why do you allow Qing Qing to go along with you? Luckily, we have been married for years and I know you well. Otherwise, I would have suspected that Qiao Nan is the daughter that you have with another woman."

The Feng family had many grandchildren, but Shi Peng did not treat them as good as how he treated Qiao Nan.

Feng Cheng was upset that he treated an outsider better than the children of his relatives.

Shi Peng was already in a bad mood. His mood turned sour and his expression darkened at Feng Cheng's words. "You can get down the car. You can disregard Qing Qing's friendship with Qiao Nan, but I cannot disregard that Zhai Sheng is my disciple. If you don't want to have this meal, you can go back home. Let me tell you. It will not do the Feng family any good to provoke the Zhai family."

"I won't get down the car and I won't go back as well." Feng Cheng closed the door shut. "Fine, I will not throw any tantrums or make any comments. Will that do?"

Feng Cheng behaved herself after seeing that Shi Peng was angry with her.

One of them was her husband while the other was her daughter. It was not worth it to affect her relationship with them because of an outsider. She was not that stupid.

Feng Cheng sighed. Had she known this would happen, back when Shi Peng arranged for her to leave Mo Du to go back to her parental family, she should not have followed his arrangements to go to the capital just because she missed her parental family.

If she gave up everything and went to Ping Cheng to stay with Shi Peng and Qing Qing, all these would not have happened and they would not have been so close with Qiao Nan.

During the years that she was away, it was Qiao Nan who was with Shi Peng and Shi Qing.

Feng Cheng felt that it was her fault that Qiao Nan was able to take advantage of her absence to be close to her husband and her daughter.

She was Shi Peng's wife and Shi Qing's mother.

As long as she was willing, she would be able to regain their trust and affection.

By the time the family of three was back on good terms, she no longer needed to be mindful of Qiao Nan. When that day came, even if she asked Shi Peng to help Qiao Nan when she was in trouble, he might not be willing to help her.

Feng Cheng might be unhappy, but she was aware of her position in this relationship.

Shi Peng reined in his temper now that Feng Cheng behaved herself. He did not insist that she get down the car. "Remember your words. Consider it for the Feng family's sake. You must know what to say and what not to say on such an occasion. Everyone in the Zhai family, from the old master to the siblings, likes Qiao Nan very much. Don't look down on Qiao Nan in a pique of anger and offend the entire Zhai family. If you really do that, you will have to think about how you are going to explain to the Feng family by the time you go back to the capital."

Shi Peng did not ask too much of Feng Cheng. She only needed to stand by his side and refrained from making any comments.

If needed be, he would be in charge of mingling with others.

"Understood." Feng Cheng might have looked down on Qiao Nan, but the Zhai family was not to be trifled with.

Feng Cheng knew that her parental family wanted to be on good terms with the Zhai family.

Feng Cheng had to think of ways to be on friendly terms with the Zhai family for her parental family's sake. She would never offend the Zhai family.

It was because of the Zhai family that she allowed her daughter to be Qiao Nan's bridesmaid. If not, even if they got into a serious quarrel because of the issue of being Qiao Nan's bridesmaid, she would never allow her daughter to go with her wishes. Qiao Nan did not deserve it.

Feng Cheng calmed down. "The Zhai family has always been staying in the quad. Why is it that no one arranged for you to stay in the quad after you left the army?"

Chapter 1096 Self-Accomplished

One would enjoy the benefits of being in a favorable position.

Shi Peng had a good temperament and he was also Zhai Sheng's master.

If Shi Peng were to stay at a place nearer to the Zhai family, the relationship between the Shi family and the Zhai family would improve further.

Building on this premise, Feng Cheng could then make use of her identity as the wife of Shi Peng to build closer ties with the Zhai family. She could then put in some good words for her maternal family.

"I don't need that."

"Why not?" It was very much needed!

Shi Peng pursed his lips as he gave Feng Cheng a listless look. He let out a sigh of exasperation in his heart. The Feng family had educated Feng Cheng very successfully. Feng Cheng had the Feng family's interests at heart all the time.

Shi Peng was only glad about one thing. Although the interests of the Feng family were Feng Cheng's priority, Feng Cheng always remembered one principle: There must not be any conflict of interest between the Feng family and the Shi family.

If a conflict of interest between the maternal family and her own husband was present, Feng Cheng would definitely not intervene and take any side in such a situation. She would let her maternal family and Shi Peng fight it out with each other to determine the victor.

In situations whereby Shi Peng's interests were not impacted, Feng Cheng would place the interests of the Feng family as the priority.

“Where are we going now?” When the car entered the quad, Shi Peng turned his steering wheel and drove in the direction opposite to that of the house of the Zhai family. Feng Cheng raised her voice as she held onto the car door. “Did you drive in the wrong direction? Shouldn’t it be that way?”

“I didn’t drive in the wrong direction.” Shi Peng had already slowed down and was driving at the speed of an ant crawling. “I am going to the house of the Zhu family, not the Shi family. Our daughter is Qiao Nan’s bridesmaid. Hence, we are the guests of the bride today.”

Most importantly, Shi Peng did not tell Feng Cheng that he would be sending Qiao Nan to the groom’s place.

In order to do that, naturally, he had to drive his car to the house of the Zhu family instead of going to the house of the Zhai family directly.

Feng Cheng’s face turned stiff. However, she knew that she would not be able to stop Shi Peng. Hence, she cleverly kept mum.

When the car stopped in front of the main entrance of the Zhu family, Feng Cheng was stunned at the sight of the various big and small red lanterns hanging all over the house. In particular, the smiles on the faces of the Zhu family showed that they emanated happiness from within. “Why is the Zhu family so happy?”

It was not as if the Zhu family’s only grandson was marrying a wife today. What did this have to do with the Zhu family? Why were they in such a good mood?

“Did I tell you before that Chief Zhu wanted to acknowledge Qiao Nan as his goddaughter but Qiao Nan declined? Although they did not formally acknowledge fictive kinship, they are as close as father and daughter. Otherwise, Qiao Nan couldn’t possibly marry from the Zhu family. About ninety percent of Qiao Nan’s dowries were prepared by Chief Zhu.”

Shi Peng parked the car in place before he analyzed the situation for Feng Cheng.

He wanted to let Feng Cheng understand that it was not true that Qiao Nan would have nothing if she did not have the support of the Shi family.

Qiao Nan’s backing had never been the Shi family or Shi Peng. It was the famous Zhu Chengqi!

“So... so serious?” Feng Cheng was taken aback further.

Feng Cheng had heard from Shi Qing before that Zhu Chengqi wanted to acknowledge Qiao Nan as his goddaughter.

Unfortunately, Qiao Nan’s identity as Zhai Sheng’s fiancée was enough to blind Feng Cheng, making the latter believe that Qiao Nan received the attention of the prominent figures because of the Zhai family.

Other people were fawning on Qiao Nan on the account of the Zhai family. It did not have anything to do with Qiao Nan herself.

In families like one of her own, it was very common to acknowledge fictive kinship. Feng Cheng had seen many such cases.

The problem was that the Zhu family’s attitude made Feng Cheng realize that they valued Qiao Nan differently from what she had imagined in the past.

“It is that serious.” When he saw that his words could register in Feng Cheng’s mind, Shi Peng heaved a sigh of relief.

Shi Peng was not afraid of anything. He was only fearful that Feng Cheng would behave like Ding Jiayi. Besides being blind, Ding Jiayi’s ears were akin to ornaments and her brains simply went on an eternal strike. Her intelligence was also completely offline. That would be very troublesome then.

Feng Cheng pouted unhappily. “You said that about ninety percent of Qiao Nan’s dowries were arranged by the Zhu family. The remaining ten percent... Are you the one who contributed?”

Shi Peng walked into the house of the Zhu family. He wanted to find out how his daughter was doing. “I only contributed to half of the remaining ten percent. The Lee family made up the rest. Elder Lee likes Qiao Nan very much as well. She treats Qiao Nan like his granddaughter.”

Although the Qiao family did not spend a single cent for Qiao Nan's dowry, the arrangements were also elaborate. Moreover, the forces behind the arrangements were formidable figures in Ping Cheng who would cause a stir in Ping Cheng with their movements.

All of a sudden, Feng Cheng felt dizzy. "Is the Lee family so close with the Qiao family?" Weren't these two families as different as chalk and cheese?

"This is a long story. Let's cut it short. Qiao Nan's grandfather saved Elder Lee's life but the two families did not have any more interaction with each other later on due to some things that the Qiao family did. In the end, the two families are in contact again all thanks to Qiao Nan. The relationship was built by Qiao Nan's grandfather but Qiao Nan is the one who maintains it."

Without Qiao Nan, the relationship between the Lee family and the Qiao family would have ended a few years back.

At the thought that Ding Jiayi shamelessly made use of that little connection and made Elder Lee open a back door for Qiao Zijin to enter The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China, Shi Peng sneered.

It was wise to utilize connections as little as possible. Either one does not utilize it or employs limited resources when they are needed most.

Elder Lee did not have a good temper and was also a very forthright person. He also shunned people who got things through the back door. Despite knowing that, Ding Jiayi dared to request for his help. She was stupid beyond hopes.

Of course, Qiao Dongliang was also useless as he did not keep a watch on Ding Jiayi. He allowed her to destroy the few connections left of the Qiao family.

As the head of the family and husband of Ding Jiayi, Qiao Dongliang should know her character better than anyone else. He should think of ways to maintain the relationship between the Qiao family and the Lee family.

The parents were incompetent. Nevertheless, it was their good fortune to have such a good daughter like Qiao Nan.

Otherwise, Qiao Dongliang should be prepared for a scolding by his biological father when he met him in hell a hundred years later.

Feng Cheng felt even dizzier. “Interpersonal matters typically involve adults. Why is Qiao Nan involved?” She had not heard before that the relationship between the two families was maintained by a child.

The relationship was ruined in the hands of the parents but salvaged by the child. This was too funny.

“You were staying in the capital previously. Hence, it was not appropriate for me to tell you certain things. I was afraid that you wouldn’t listen to them if we spoke about this over the phone. Today, I just wanted to let you come over and see for yourself. It always feels more real to see something with your own eyes than to hear it.” It was rare that Feng Cheng could really listen to him. Shi Peng let out a sigh of relief again. “Take a good look yourself. Did Qiao Nan bask in the Zhai family’s glory and receive the liking of so many formidable figures or is she self-accomplished?”

Chapter 1097 Might Would Be Redoubled

“Feng Cheng, I don’t deny that Qing Qing comes from a better family background than Qiao Nan, but when it comes to capability, Qiao Nan is more worthy of Zhai Sheng than Qing Qing is.” Qiao Nan was capable not because of the support that she received from the other families. Instead, it was because of her own ability.

“Feng Cheng, let’s not talk about Qing Qing. Ask yourself. If you were Qiao Nan, would you be able to achieve what she has achieved? Qiao Nan’s relationship with the Zhu family, the Lee family, and Old Lin are not as what you imagined it to be.”

People who did not know might think that it was because of the Zhai family that Qiao Nan was acquainted with all the powerful families.

They must have thought that it was on account of the Zhai family that the big-shots were willing to give her face.

The truth was the exact opposite.

“We should be proud if Qing Qing is half as capable as Qiao Nan. However, the child has to pay a price for being mature for her age. In comparison, I would rather that Qing Qing is as carefree as she is now.”

Feng Cheng, who was in a daze, forgot to rebut Shi Peng and nodded automatically instead.

The truth was a harsh blow for Feng Cheng.

Shi Peng knew that Feng Cheng looked down on Qiao Nan, thinking that Qiao Nan relied on the Zhai family to be what she was today.

Feng Cheng must have been in a big shock to know that she had been wrong all along.

To Feng Cheng, her daughter was capable and outstanding. However, it was not to the extent that the elders from other families would treat her as their granddaughter. Old Master Shi groomed Qiu Chenxi, his maternal granddaughter, while Old Master Feng had two grandsons. They would never put Shi Qing as their priority.

It was impossible to get the affection of the elders at home, notwithstanding other elders who were not related to them.

Feng Cheng kept silent for a long while. “Is Qiao Nan really that capable?”

Did the Zhu family, the Lee family, and Old Lin do all that on account of Qiao Nan?

It did not make sense and seemed unbelievable.

“You should not ask me. Qiao Nan will be getting married today. The Zhu family, the Lee family, and Old Lin will definitely be there. You can see for yourself if what I said is true or not, lest you say that I influence your judgment.” Shi Peng had no wish to say any further, telling Feng Cheng to judge for herself.

Seeing is believing. What one hears may not be true.

Shi Peng and Shi Qing could put in a lot of good words for Qiao Nan, but the effect was not as great as Feng Cheng seeing the truth for herself.

It was impossible for the Zhu family to fake the joy and happiness that they felt.

Everyone in the Zhu family must have adopted the same attitude as the head of the family.

“Let me show you Qiao Nan’s dowry.” Shi Peng might not be the contact person for Qiao Nan’s wedding, but in fact, he was very much involved in the preparations right from the start. He was more involved than Qiao Dongliang, who was Qiao Nan’s father. Feng Cheng had no idea at all.

Qiao Dongliang might not know what was going on, but Shi Peng knew it at the tips of his fingers. “Everything over here is Qiao Nan’s dowries.”

“My goodness...” Feng Cheng sucked in her breath at the room that was filled with Qiao Nan’s dowries.

The Feng family and the Shi family were doing similarly well. They did not lack the money and had seen their fair share of expensive jewelry and clothes.

The problem was Qiao Nan could not be compared to the Shi family or the Feng family. The room that was packed with all sorts of dowries came as a visual shock to Feng Cheng.

At least to Feng Cheng, given the Qiao family’s financial situation, they would not be able to prepare one-tenth of the dowries that were in the room, let alone the amount of dowries that she saw now.

“How much did it cost to prepare the dowries?” The Zhu family could not have splurged their money. The grandson in the Zhu family was as old as Qing Qing. In another three to four years, he would be getting married.

“All I can say is that there may be a lot of dowries here and they seem to cost a lot, but all those that are truly valuable are not kept here.” Usually, it was the most ordinary and not to be easily seen dowries that were worth the most!

Those dowries that took up a lot of space were mainly to appease the ordinary people.

The Zhu family, the Lee family, and Old Lin were more liberal with their money than one could imagine.

Feng Cheng was stingy. She stopped Shi Peng from spending too much to prepare Qiao Nan's dowry. Shi Peng knew very well that among everyone who helped prepare Qiao Nan's dowry, he forked out the least money.

Feng Cheng could not help but gasp in shock. "Don't the Zhu family, the Lee family, and Old Lin need to keep aside some money for themselves? What did they prepare for Qiao Nan? How much are they worth?"

Although Feng Cheng came from a good family background, upon hearing Shi Peng's words, she could not help but be jealous of Qiao Nan.

Back when she married Shi Peng, the dowry that she had could not even be compared to Qiao Nan's dowry.

Feng Cheng wondered. After Shi Qing started dating and was preparing for her wedding, given the Shi family's and the Feng family's financial capabilities, would the dowry that they prepared for Shi Qing be more significant than Qiao Nan's dowry?

Feng Cheng did not have the answer to her question!

This answer was enough to give her a headache.

Feng Cheng looked upset. "It seems like Qiao Nan is not the only one who has good fortune. The Zhai family stands to gain from this marriage." Feng Cheng sounded grumpy.

If it was like what Shi Peng had said, the Zhu family, the Lee family, and Old Lin were very close to Qiao Nan. Once Qiao Nan became the daughter-in-law of the Zhai family, it would bring the Zhai family closer to the three families.

Even if this was not the case, whenever there were good opportunities in the future, these three families would definitely think of the Zhai family.

Even if the Zhai family went downhill or got into serious trouble, as long as the three families were willing to help them, the Zhai family would be able to overcome the crisis.

Moreover, the Zhai family was illustrious and influential.

Once Qiao Nan married Zhai Sheng, the Zhai family's influences and might would be redoubled!

Every family, notwithstanding the Zhai family, would wish to have such a capable daughter-in-law!

At the thought of her two unmarried nephews, Feng Cheng felt jealous and grumpy.

Zhai Sheng was not being shortchanged in this marriage. Instead, he had gained a lot.

She did not expect that Qiao Nan, who came from a humble background and had unbearable parents, would be so capable and charismatic!

To be honest, whoever married Qiao Nan would be akin to bringing a golden Buddha home, assuring his family of future success!

Shi Peng felt much at ease seeing that Feng Cheng seemed to have understood his words.

Apart from the three people from the Qiao family who were oblivious to her abilities, everyone who knew Qiao Nan could tell that she was a rare gem.

Chapter 1098 Finally Understood

In Shi Peng's opinion, those who thought highly of themselves and looked down on Qiao Nan, refusing to listen to any reason, were the most terrible people.

Others might not know the reason why the Qiu family ended up going downhill, but Shi Peng knew it very well.

Given Feng Cheng's temper, if she caused any trouble to the Feng family, Shi Peng would still be able to resolve it. But if she caused trouble for the Shi family, it would be a serious problem.

It was rare that Feng Cheng would listen to him. Therefore, Shi Peng improved his attitude toward Feng Cheng. He pulled Feng Cheng to his side and allowed Feng Cheng to hold his hand. “Now that you have figured out what is going on, you should know how you should treat Qiao Nan in the future. I once told you that Qiao Nan is a great help to Qing Qing. If you don’t believe it, you can learn more about their friendship after you let go of your prejudices toward Qiao Nan. I believe that Qiao Nan is more sincere to Qing Qing than your two nephews.”

Shi Peng was in poor health when he was still in the army.

He heeded Qiao Nan’s advice to retire from the army and joined the government sector. Although the work was just as challenging, under Qiao Nan’s influence and his daughter’s strict care, Shi Peng felt that he was leading a better lifestyle than before.

Right now, there was always someone around him to make sure that he had his meals on time and that he had sufficient rest. Even if he had not fully recovered, at least, he was still stronger than when he was in the army.

Back then, he was constantly sick and would be hospitalized time and again. He was a frequent visitor of the military hospital.

Once hospitalized, it would be several days later before he was allowed to return to the army. When he was back at the army, he would work overtime to finish his work that had been piling up during his hospital stay.

After he cleared his work through working overtime, he would end up at the hospital again. This had resulted in a vicious cycle.

Right now, Shi Peng was no longer trapped in the vicious cycle.

Qiao Nan had to take the credit for the improvement in his condition.

Feng Cheng hesitated but she was not as condescending and obstinate as before. “W-well, I will talk to Qing Qing about it when there’s a chance.”

Feng Cheng turned gloomy in the next instant. “Qing Qing is still angry with me. She refused to talk to me.”

“Who do you have to blame for that? Back when Qing Qing was not in a quarrel with you and she tried to engage in a conversation with you, did the two of you have a good chat? You should reflect on your attitude back then! Qing Qing has grown up and she has her own life and way of thinking. Would she not be angry when you wanted her to go according to your wishes just because you are her mom?” Shi Peng lectured Feng Cheng in a harsh tone. It was Feng Cheng who caused her relationship with Shi Qing to be strained. She could not blame Shi Qing, saying that she refused to listen to her.

Feng Cheng blushed. “But Qing Qing should not lose her temper at me for the sake of an outsider.”

The reason why she could not stand Qiao Nan and refused to listen to any praises regarding Qiao Nan was that her only daughter was on very good terms with Qiao Nan and she was not as close to her mother.

In short, Feng Cheng was jealous.

Shi Peng felt amused and angry at the same time. “Let’s not talk about you. I am her dad, but I am not as important to Shi Qing as Qiao Nan is. It is not that Qing Qing is not close to us. We are definitely her dearest. However, I believe if Qing Qing encounters anything, she will definitely tell Qiao Nan, but she may not tell us. Forget it. It is rare that you can maintain your calm and accept that Qiao Nan is a special girl. I will leave you to chat with Qing Qing. As you know more about their friendship, you will understand why Qing Qing is so close to Qiao Nan.”

Qiao Nan was charismatic and this appealed to the big shots as well as her peers.

Otherwise, his proud and overbearing disciple who had no care for women would not have fallen head over heels for Qiao Nan.

Everything happened for a reason, and Qiao Nan was not pretentious.

He absolutely believed that as long as Feng Cheng calmed down and observed Qiao Nan objectively, it would not be long before Feng Cheng accepted Qiao Nan wholeheartedly.

This time, Feng Cheng did not rebut Shi Peng. Instead, she considered his words seriously.

“Dad, Mom, you are here!” The couple had a long heartfelt talk. Shi Qing, who was in her bridesmaid dress, appeared in front of them. She was light in her steps, springing like a swallow. The hemline of her dress swayed as she moved. She looked stunning. “Dad, Mom, is my dress pretty? Qiao Nan chose it!”

Feng Cheng’s eyes were smiling. “Pretty! My Qing Qing is the most beautiful girl. You will look good in any dress... Of course, you look prettier in this dress.”

“?” Shi Qing widened her eyes in puzzlement. “Mom, do I look pretty in this dress?”

Feng Cheng could tell that her daughter was testing her and was full of disbelief. She felt embarrassed. “Hmm... The person who chose the dress has a good sense of judgment. It suits you very much.”

The second half of the sentence was indeed the truth.

Shi Qing was bubbly. Qiao Nan would not want her to wear those dresses that were too ladylike and demure.

Shi Qing could not believe it when Feng Cheng praised her dress for the second time. She shifted her gaze to Shi Peng as if asking, ‘Dad, what’s up? Did you make Mom take a special medicine when you left the house today?’

Feng Cheng noticed the funny look on her daughter’s face and tapped her lightly on her head, feeling amused and angry. “Are you unhappy that I did not stop you from mingling with Qiao Nan or that I did not create trouble for her? If not, I will revert to my previous self so that you will not misunderstand that I am not your real mother.”

Although Shi Qing still could not understand why her mother changed without an apparent reason, she was glad of the change. “Mom, please don’t do that. Take no offense to a child’s babble. Don’t take issue with what I said.”

It was rare that her mother could sort out her thoughts. She did not care how she did it, but she hoped her mother would stay the same and did not revert to her previous self. “Mom, Qiao Nan looks stunning in the phoenix coronet and robe of rank. True enough, the bride should be in a red

wedding dress. Chinese wedding costumes are beautiful. If I marry in the future, I won't wear a bridal gown. I want to wear the same costumes as Qiao Nan."

In the past, Shi Qing felt that since it was in the 21st century, one had to wear a bridal gown when getting married. The white bridal gown was stunning and romantic.

However, Shi Qing changed her mind today. When Qiao Nan put on the set of bright red phoenix coronet and robe of rank, she looked much more magnificent than the resplendent sunset in the sky.

She was beautiful and stunning.

"Dad, I have regrets now."

"What do you mean?" Shi Peng looked at his daughter, feeling baffled. "What are you talking about?"

"Qiao Nan is so beautiful." Shi Qing touched her chin cheekily. "Qiao Nan has good culinary skills, a good temperament, and a good temper. She is also smart and pretty."

Chapter 1099 You Could Not Win Against Zhai Sheng

"If I were a man, Brother Zhai would no longer be in the picture. Qiao Nan would then belong to our family!"

Shi Peng smiled at his daughter's words. "If that is the case, you should thank us that you are a girl. Otherwise, you would not be able to win against Zhai Sheng. You would be heartbroken and wasting your efforts."

Didn't she see that Zhu Baoguo had been kicked out of the game by Zhai Sheng before he could even have a go at it?

It was not that Shi Peng did not have confidence and looked down on his child. It was just that Zhai Sheng was such a formidable opponent. Ordinary men would not be able to defeat him.

Instead of suffering from heartbreak, it would be better to have a daughter. She did not need to compete against Zhai Sheng and she could keep a low profile, leading a simple life like what she was doing now.

Shi Qing curled the corners of her lips unhappily. “You’re right. Brother Zhai is too ruthless. He has claimed Qiao Nan as his own when she was still very young. He has cut off all possibilities for Qiao Nan to be in a relationship with other men. He is too shameless.”

In terms of being shameless, no woman or man could defeat Brother Zhai.

Qiao Nan was so outstanding, but Zhai Sheng used all means and ways to stop her from receiving any love letters from other men. He was too ruthless.

Given Qiao Nan’s intelligence, Shi Qing was baffled that Qiao Nan never once suspected that it was odd that she did not receive any love letters all these years.

However, today was their wedding ceremony. Shi Qing would not be so foolish as to ask such a stupid question of Qiao Nan on her big day.

Today, she was a bridesmaid. It was the day she could make things difficult for Brother Zhai.

If she brought up this topic to Qiao Nan, Brother Zhai would make sure she got it from him.

The Shi family of three was having a good time.

By the time Feng Cheng went looking for Qiao Nan, she was already dressed up in her wedding costumes. It was rare that she did not treat Qiao Nan with cold indifference. Instead, she handed her a red box graciously. “Congratulations.”

“Thank you.” Qiao Nan was very surprised, but she maintained her composure and accepted her gift. “Auntie Feng, you are being too polite. Shi Qing, you have to work harder and get a boyfriend as soon as possible. I look forward to the day when you get married.”

Qiao Nan was aware of the gifts that Shi Peng prepared for her.

The red box that Feng Cheng gave her was heavy. There seemed to be jewelry inside.

Therefore, Qiao Nan had stated clearly that when Shi Qing was getting married, she would not be stingy with the gifts.

Feng Cheng smiled and nodded. She did not speak further.

Feng Cheng did not need gifts from Qiao Nan, but she welcomed people who returned politeness for politeness.

Since Qiao Nan knew what to do and appreciated their kind intentions, Feng Cheng found her somewhat pleasing to the eye. In fact, if it was in the past, Feng Cheng would definitely mock Qiao Nan for bragging. How could she possibly afford to give them any valuables gifts? The Shi family would be on the losing end.

However, after Shi Peng's talk with her, Feng Cheng no longer felt that way.

"Mom, why don't you have some tea downstairs first?" Shi Qing was the bridesmaid and she knew that Feng Cheng did not really like Qiao Nan. She could sense that they were still uncomfortable with each other.

Before things took a turn for the worse, Shi Qing had to think of ways to separate them.

"Okay." Feng Cheng agreed.

She had disliked Qiao Nan since a long time ago. Even if she was willing to put aside her prejudices, she still felt awkward around her.

Feng Cheng knew that Qiao Nan was not a pushover either.

Feng Cheng was worried that if she stayed in the room with Qiao Nan for long, she might run out of patience and said harsh words to Qiao Nan.

Before she changed that habit of hers, it was better to have less contact with Qiao Nan.

Shi Qing came back to the room after sending Feng Cheng off. Qiao Nan could not help but express her surprise. “Has hell frozen over? Your mom’s behavior is shocking.” It was similar to watching a horror movie.

In the past, Feng Cheng looked down on her and was arrogant toward her. Even though she was still aloof today, her attitude was much better than before.

Qiao Nan had learned harsh lessons from suffering in the hands of Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin in the past. She could not help but be wary.

If someone who disliked her changed one’s attitude all of a sudden and treated her with politeness, the person must be up to something.

Shi Qing smiled as she opened the box that Feng Cheng gave Qiao Nan. “This must have cost a lot. This must be the full set of dowry jewelry.”

In the red velvet box were a gold necklace, a pair of gold earrings, a golden bangle, as well as a gold ring.

This box of jewelry would cost a lot.

“Has your family made a fortune? How can your dad be that rich?” Qiao Nan knew without a doubt that it was Shi Peng who bought this for her. Feng Cheng would never spend so much money on her. “He may have the money, but he should not splurge in such a way. Are you getting married or not? He should save some money to prepare a dowry for you.”

Qiao Nan was taken aback by what she saw. Shi Peng did not need to go to this extreme.

If someone found out about this and reported them to the authorities, she and the Zhai family would have to cooperate with the authorities regarding the investigations.

“I have no idea.” Shi Qing did not pay much attention to the box. She simply closed the box and continued. “I am not too sure how much money we have, but according to my dad, Old Master Shi is very smart and he knows of ways to make money. I might be a granddaughter, but Qiu Chenxi is merely a maternal granddaughter. Since my dad is the only son, grandpa has never shortchanged him. Judging from today’s situation, I suppose my dad has the say over all the money.”

Shi Qing was surprised by the discovery.

In the tumultuous times, the old master's method of making money was tantamount to courting death.

Everyone was fearful and tried to get rid of anything that would result in them being investigated and taken away. Instead, the old master was able to hide all the valuables and avoid being caught.

Shi Qing was full of admiration for her grandpa's bravery and courage.

Her grandpa risked his life and made remarkable contributions to the army. In the end, he even managed to keep all those valuables amid the tumultuous times.

Shi Qing used to hear about all those stories about her grandpa. However, this was the first time that her father was being so generous. It was only now that she knew that her grandpa had handed all the valuables to his son.

Qiao Nan could more or less understand what Shi Qing was talking about. "Do Qiu Chenxi and her mom know that Old Master Shi has so many prized possessions with him?" The pair of mother and daughter was after material gains. They would not let go of any chance to get their hands on such a huge amount of money.

Shi Qing shrugged as she shook her head. "No one can really know what is on my grandpa's mind. He is a very shrewd and cautious man. Both my dad and I have no idea how much my auntie knows. But in my opinion, a son is still different from a daughter. Grandpa is still biased toward his son. Furthermore, Qiu Chenxi is a girl as well, and she didn't manage to get married to Brother Zhai."

Chapter 1100 Ask for an Insul

"Since they are all females, my dad will have the upper hand."

Shi Qing did not expect that Old Master Shi would be so open-minded.

Nevertheless, Shi Qing felt much better in the current situation.

Her paternal grandparents were much better than her maternal grandparents.

Shi Qing knew very well that the Feng family placed all their hopes on her two uncles. Similarly, her paternal grandpa placed all hopes on her father. There was nothing wrong with it.

“It is better to keep a low profile. Qi Minlan and Qiu Chenxi are not kind souls. If they learn about this, your family of three will be in for a difficult time.” Qiao Nan had heard and seen a lot of cases where the family members turned against each other because of money.

Shi Qing helped Qiao Nan put the gift aside. “Today, you are the bride. Your job is to wait patiently for the time to be married to Brother Zhai. Don’t worry about other matters. Besides, my family is not foolish. We will not court trouble for ourselves. The most important thing is that I suppose grandpa will find ways to keep it from them.”

Since Old Master Shi favored the son over the daughter, he should have known what to say and what not to say. He would not be so muddleheaded. “By the way, a gentle reminder to you. I heard that my aunt is back with Qiu Chenxi. They are staying at the Qiu family’s residence.”

After Qiu Qin was arrested, most of the properties of the Qiu family had been confiscated. The only thing left was the house and it was given to Qi Minlan after the divorce.

Qi Minlan did not sell the house. Now that she was back with her daughter, they could stay at the house.

“How about the elderly couple in the Qiu family?”

“I have no idea. My aunt is their daughter-in-law. Since she has no idea, I can’t be bothered to know. Anyway, if anything crops up in the future, the elderly couple in the Qiu family will look for my aunt. But now that she has divorced my uncle, she does not have any legal obligations to take care of her former in-laws. At most, she will have a bad reputation for not taking care of them.”

Shi Qing had grown smarter and was no longer the foolish girl in the past. “The reason why I bring them up is that I feel that they must be back to attend your wedding. You should know Qiu Chenxi very well.”

Speaking of Qiu Chenxi, Shi Qing could not help but feel angry.

When she and Qiao Nan had just reached the capital for their college studies, Qiu Chenxi sowed discord, and the Feng family gave Qiao Nan the cold shoulder.

Actually, Shi Qing had already figured out that the Feng family was a problem as well. Back then, they allowed Qiu Chenxi to bully her, and now, they did not bother to check whether Qiu Chenxi was telling the truth or not.

After learning that Qiao Nan was engaged to Zhai Sheng, the Feng family decided to believe Qiu Chenxi's words.

Shi Qing had a headache at the thought of Qiu Chenxi and the Feng family. All of them were just as bad!

Qiao Nan patted Shi Qing's hands lightly to console her. "If Qiu Chenxi doesn't find it painful to watch the person that she has been dying to marry to take another girl who could not match up to her as his wife, I won't mind that she has a drink or finish one entire table of food."

Shi Qing's eyes lit up. "That's true. Hahaha! Come over here. The makeup artist is here. Stop moving around. You have to put on your makeup."

They were occupied with getting ready for the wedding while everyone in the Zhu family's residence was busy with the final preparations.

"As I have said, we are very busy right now, so we are unable to attend to guests now. Can you stop creating trouble for me?" Someone stopped Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin right at the entrance of the Zhu family's residence. "If you want to look for your dad, just go back home. If you want to give your sister a helping hand, go sit by the side and don't hinder us. This will be the greatest help to the bride."

She could forget about helping out as a bridesmaid.

"Can you pass a message to my sister? She is getting married. As her elder sister, I want to keep her company. She will be happy to hear that." Qiao Zijin refused to give up. She was all smiles and she

had to see Qiao Nan. “If my sister is busy and you can’t allow me to enter, can you get my dad here?”

She believed that she would be able to get past the Zhu family’s guards with the help of her father.

Qiao Zijin kept pestering the people from the Zhu family until they were witless. “Fine. Wait here while I get him here.”

Qiao Dongliang came walking toward them. One look and he could tell what was going on. “Zijin, today is Nan Nan’s wedding. Don’t create a din. Go to the Zhai family’s residence to watch the ceremony. The wedding banquet will not start any time soon.”

“Dad, I want to keep Nan Nan accompany. Nan Nan is getting married today. She will definitely feel uneasy and uncertain. She will feel better to have someone close to her by her side.” Once she entered the Zhu family’s residence, she must find out the amount of dowry that Qiao Nan was going to bring with her to the Zhai family.

She still could not believe that an illustrious family like the Zhai family would not give any bride price to Qiao Nan.

Perhaps the amount was astoundingly high and Qiao Nan decided to keep all the money to herself. Therefore, she kept it a secret from her parents.

How dared Qiao Nan keep all the money to herself! She was too selfish and greedy.

“No need. Nan Nan has Qing Qing with her. Alright, I have to help out now. The two of you should go back.” Qiao Dongliang did not have the right to allow them into the house. Even if he had the authority to do that, he would not do so.

He had made a mistake and hurt his younger daughter’s feelings. He couldn’t turn back time.

Since he knew that he was in the wrong, he would not commit the same mistake by allowing the elder daughter to wreak havoc at the younger daughter’s wedding. If so, he would be too ashamed of himself.

Qiao Dongliang turned and left afterward. He was in high spirits, and he certainly looked like someone who was marrying off his daughter.

“You should give up now. Leave now. There are a lot of visitors and cars today. Don’t blame us if anything happens.” After Qiao Dongliang left, the people from the Zhu family tried to get them to leave. “Didn’t you notice that all the people in the quad are watching you?”

They should preserve their dignity and leave.

Ding Jiayi, who hung her head, blushed. She walked forward to pull at Qiao Zijin.

Ding Jiayi had no wish to help out at Qiao Nan’s wedding. She had always felt that since she had raised Qiao Nan until she was an adult and now that Qiao Nan was getting married, it was Qiao Nan’s turn to take care of her.

It was Qiao Zijin who insisted that Ding Jiayi come with her to help out with the wedding. Ding Jiayi, who only wanted to sit around and enjoyed herself, was reluctant to go with Qiao Zijin.

All the neighbors cast mocking glances at them. Ding Jiayi felt uneasy.