

RTAMM 1391

Chapter 1391 Might Part Ways Eventually

Qiao Nan lowered her eyes. "That is a good date. Since she is getting married, as her relative, I will still give her the necessary wedding gift. But she will never get more than necessary." Although Qiao Nan would give her a monetary gift, it would not be a large amount.

When she got married, Qiao Zijin did not give her a single cent.

Therefore, Qiao Nan had decided that the monetary gift that she gave Qiao Zijin would only be slightly more than the usual. It was just so that it would look good on both of them, but she would not give any more than that. Qiao Nan did not care if Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin would be satisfied with the amount or not.

Instead of wasting her time on Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, Qiao Nan would rather spend time to think about how she should deal with Deng Wenchang after she went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs tomorrow.

Qiao Nan had been thinking whether she should find a chance to spot Deng Wenchang's mistake and send him out of the ministry. Up until today, Peng Yu still had not given up on arranging for Deng Wenchang to have a permanent spot in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She wondered what he had in mind.

Since Peng Yu highly valued Deng Wenchang, even if he might be using the diversion tactic, Qiao Nan would fight Deng Wenchang until the end. "By the way, Brother Zhai, did you see Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing before you came back this time? Don't tell me that they had returned to Ping Cheng?" She had graduated from college, while they had realized their dreams earlier than her, joining the army as soldiers.

All these years, Qiao Nan had frequent contact with Shi Peng and his wife, but she had never visited the Shi family's residence. She had never once spoken to the legendary Old Master Shi.

Feng Cheng used to be very close to the Feng family. She would listen to them regardless of what they told her. They also told her that Shi Qing should listen to her and behave herself and do things that would please her.

When Shi Peng and his wife first moved to the capital, Feng Cheng was still used to listening to the Feng family.

Shi Qing was in PLA National Defence University. What she did not know could not hurt her. However, Shi Peng could not stay nonchalant. As he had more contact with the Feng family, he was thankful that despite having such a parental family, his wife did not go down the wrong road.

Since Feng Cheng was a girl, the Feng family did not educate her to behave in the same manner as them. They only told her to listen to whatever they said, instilling in her the idea that the Feng family always had her best interests at heart. Thankfully, they did not teach her the wrong ways. Otherwise, Shi Peng feared that their marriage might not last.

Whenever he thought of the possibility that they might end up in a divorce, Shi Peng could not help but break out in cold sweat for Feng Cheng.

He used to think that with Qi Minlan around, the Shi family was a dangerous spot, and Feng Cheng, who was pure and simple, could not survive there. But in fact, the Feng family was in a similar situation as the Shi family. During the times when he was in Ping Cheng, his wife would stay with the Feng family. Now that he thought about it, it was very risky. It was tantamount to walking on a tight-rope.

After he realized the risk, he would have made an effort to widen the distance between Feng Cheng and the Feng family. Initially, Feng Cheng was unhappy. After listening to her family, she had the notion that Shi Peng felt arrogant as he was transferred to the capital based on his own effort and thus looked down on her family, thinking that they were of no help to him.

Shi Peng stopped Feng Cheng from being close to the Feng family because he shunned the Feng family as they were poor and he feared that they would bask in his glory.

Shi Peng felt wronged and unjustified.

Chapter 1392 Offer Advice

All these years, it was the Feng family who was up to tricks and ploys. His daughter could see through their true colors and distanced herself from the Feng family, maintaining a polite relationship with them. Qing Qing had already done that, but the Feng family did not do any reflection, and worst still, Feng Cheng had never once thought about this issue at all.

Shi Peng and Feng Cheng had a closer relationship during the times they were in Ping Cheng. It was as if they were back to the times when they were dating. But their relationship turned sour when they moved to the capital and they had different opinions of the Feng family.

Shi Peng hoped that Feng Cheng would calm down and ignore the fact that the Feng family was her parental family and see through their true colors as well as the Feng family's hidden intentions toward Shi Peng and his family. If Feng Cheng did not trust her husband, she should trust her daughter, Shi Qing.

Qing Qing was a good and well-behaved girl, but she was not close with the Feng family. Since Feng Cheng was the mother, why could she not see the reality? Her daughter could see through their true colors, while Feng Cheng was deceived by them. It was absurd.

Shi Peng could not understand women. Although they had been married for more than twenty years, it was only during the times when they dated and the period where they lived together in Ping Cheng did they have a closer relationship. Once they started quarreling, Shi Peng did not know what to do with Feng Cheng.

To Shi Peng, Qiao Nan was more than a niece. Shi Peng was used to treating Qiao Nan like a tree hole where he could confide and share his worries. He would seek Qiao Nan's advice blatantly at the Zhai family's residence, sharing his concerns with her.

Shi Peng and Shi Qing already had the habit of confiding in Qiao Nan back in Ping Cheng. Qiao Nan had already gotten used to it. After she moved to the capital, she was not the least surprised when Shi Peng came looking for her. In fact, she had already guessed that he would seek her advice.

Qiao Nan still remembered the Feng family's behavior four years ago.

Since Shi Peng, the son-in-law, could be of great help to the Feng family, they would not let go of such a good chance. It was alright that Shi Peng was not close to the Feng family. The Feng family could get what they wanted through their daughter, Feng Cheng. Unless Shi Peng divorced Feng Cheng, Shi Peng had to listen to Feng Cheng.

After Shi Peng came looking for Qiao Nan, she offered him some advice. Firstly, she told him to put in extra effort at work and make sure that Feng Cheng could see that he was exhausted at work. Secondly, when Feng Cheng felt that she was being neglected, Shi Peng should take one week's leave and go on a holiday with her. Thirdly, during the holiday, Shi Peng must make it known to Feng Cheng that he had worked very hard to make the trip happen for the two of them. Fourthly, he must let her know that after he was transferred to the capital, despite having many issues at work, the Feng family had never helped him in politics or business.

If Feng Cheng rebutted him, given Shi Peng's intelligence, he should know how to use her words to apply to the Feng family.

It was inappropriate for the Feng family to help Shi Peng, and it was the same for Shi Peng as well.

If the Feng family 's excuse was that they wanted Shi Peng to toughen himself and attain a strong foothold in the capital, then Shi Peng could tell Feng Cheng that he was considering the interests of the Feng family as well.

Qiao Nan did not know much about the political situation in the capital, but Shi Peng knew better than her. Shi Peng could come up with several political reasons why he could not be close to the Feng family or help them.

It was easy to tell one what was right, but when dealing with Feng Cheng, one had to use heartfelt words to move her first.

All women would love it when her husband treated her well and loved her.

Come to think of it, Shi Peng and Feng Cheng had been married for ages, but they had not gone on a holiday by themselves. Feng Cheng would be glad to go on a trip with her husband. After knowing all that Shi Peng had gone through to make the trip possible, Feng Cheng would definitely be moved by him.

Moreover, Feng Cheng loved Shi Peng and her daughter.

Last but not least, Qiao Nan told Shi Peng to give Shi Qing a phone call and update her about the current situation. To Feng Cheng, apart from the Feng family who was her parental family, Shi Peng and Shi Qing were the two dearest people to her.

Feng Cheng had been living with the Feng family for a long time and she had a close relationship with them. This was why the Feng family was able to influence her.

Similarly, as long as Shi Peng and Shi Qing were willing to work on strengthening their relationship with Feng Cheng, it would not be easy for the Feng family to PK Shi Peng and Shi Qing and for Feng Cheng to listen to the Feng family.

Qiao Nan did not know about politics. Shi Peng would have a better insight than her.

However, after dealing with Qiao Zijin all these years, Qiao Nan was experienced with how to deal with siblings who fought among themselves as well as the mind games and schemes within the family. If she were to give a lesson, it would take days to impart all the knowledge to Shi Peng.

Luckily, for certain cases, once one grasped the fundamental point, all the rest would follow. After chatting with Qiao Nan, Shi Peng thought hard about it, and he felt enlightened and was invigorated. He used the tactics that he used in his work on Feng Cheng.

Shi Peng used to treat Feng Cheng as his wife and he had never thought of using the tactics that he deployed at work on her. After heeding Qiao Nan's advice, and being annoyed by the disgusting behavior of the Feng family, Shi Peng had no choice but to use the tactics on his wife.

After being cornered by her husband and her daughter, Feng Cheng had no choice but to surrender.

The Feng family had been living in the capital for ages. They should have a deeper influence than the Shi family. Like what her husband had said, under such circumstances, it was very good of the Shi family not to seek help from the Feng family. They did not become a hindrance to the Feng family or create trouble for them. If so, would it not be too much of the Feng family to seek help from Shi Peng?

A married daughter was like water spilled. Qing Qing was her only daughter.

If the Feng family did well, she was not certain if it would have a positive impact on Qing Qing. But her husband had said that if the Shi family did well, it would definitely do Qing Qing good.

After brainwashing Feng Cheng, Shi Peng's family of three distanced themselves from the Feng family. Compared to the relationship they had when Qiao Nan first came to the capital for her studies, they were not as close to them now.

Shi Qing and Zhu Baoguo performed very well in the army, particularly Shi Qing. There were more men than women in the army. Under such situations, Shi Qing, who was outstanding and competent, stood out among the rest. Since she had major meritorious performance in the army in her previous assignment and she made minor contributions in three other assignments, she would no longer be a normal soldier in the next half of the year. She would be getting a promotion.

Given Qiao Nan's strong friendship with Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing, although she had just graduated, she would not be considered as a leader without a following. She had very competent

partners and companions. However, apart from people who were close to Qiao Nan, outsiders like Deng Wenchang were clueless.

Chapter 1393 The Arrival of Xiao Bao

“No. They had yet to return to Ping Cheng. But I have no idea where they are now.” It was rare that Zhai Sheng did not sound displeased at the mention of Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing. “I provided them with an opportunity. I suppose they will make use of this opportunity to achieve something big.”

“...” Therefore, the two stubborn children were out on a mission again. “Why do I have the impression that the number of times that they went on missions in the past four years is higher than the normal soldiers?” It was impossible that the army lacked soldiers and had to send the students on missions.

“On the contrary, they are young and hence more deceiving.” Shi Qing and Zhu Baoguo were still novices when they first carried out missions. Although Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing looked as if they were still in school, the fearsome enemies might not turn soft-hearted toward them.

But at the very least, they would not be as wary of Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing.

Qiao Nan knitted her brows as she leaned against Zhai Sheng. “Brother Zhai, take it easy. Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing have grown up. They can choose and take charge of their lives. I feel that what they are doing is too dangerous.” Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing were still young. Qiao Nan could look at it objectively when Zhai Sheng and Zhai Hua went on missions. But she could not do so with Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing.

If they were not soldiers, Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing would have an easier time during the four years in college.

Compared to the adults who still lived with and depended on their parents, Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing had become independent at a very young age.

Zhai Sheng tucked Qiao Nan’s hair to the back of her ear. “I know what I am doing. They have been working very hard. If they were not novices and needed my help, they would have fought for every chance to go on missions. Right now, all they lack is the opportunity. Even if I don’t take the initiative to help them, they will come asking me for help.”

Since this would happen eventually, Zhai Sheng did not mind that he took the initiative so that they would owe him a debt of gratitude.

The reason being, Zhai Sheng was a jealous man. He still remembered on the day he married Qiao Nan, Zhu Baoguo tried very hard to tire him out so that he would be drained and could not spend the wedding night with Qiao Nan.

Although Zhu Baoguo was his love rival, he had not even made his move but was defeated by him. As for Shi Qing, she was a woman. But if she fought with him for his wife, she would be a more dangerous opponent than men.

When other men pestered Nan Nan, she could reject them without the slightest hesitation, not giving them the slightest chance. But if it was Shi Qing, Nan Nan would agree to all her requests. Take for instance, on Zhai Hua's wedding eve when Zhai Hua insisted on sleeping with Nan Nan. Zhai Sheng, who was married for three years, had to sleep by himself for the first time since his marriage.

Zhai Sheng came to a conclusion from what happened with Zhai Hua. He was not worried about love rivals. Instead, he was worried about other women around Qiao Nan. They would pester his wife, refusing to let her go. Zhai Sheng could do nothing about them.

Since he knew Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing well, Zhai Sheng was all the more willing to help them take on more difficult missions. Other people agonized over not having any opportunities, while Zhai Sheng gave them an array of missions to choose from.

They were different from Wei De. He did not wish to take a risk or work hard. He only wanted to join Zhai Sheng in his missions to gain military credit when the missions were successful, and he would then be able to get promoted.

Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing belonged to the same group of people as Qiao Nan. They were hands-on and preferred actions over words.

Zhai Sheng gave the two newbies an opportunity, and they proved their worth through their outstanding performance. Since that was the case, the higher-ups would turn a blind eye to Zhai Sheng's cheap tricks.

After all, everyone knew that Zhu Baoguo's father was Chief Zhu. Besides, although Shi Qing was a woman, Shi Peng was her father. He might be working in the government now, but he used to be brave and good at fighting several years ago. He had made huge contributions to the army.

If not for his poor health, Shi Peng would have been given an important role in the army now.

Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing had fathers who had great accomplishments in the army. No one had any doubts about their abilities. Instead, they felt that it was perfectly normal for them to perform well.

“Mama.” San Bao was unhappy that her father and mother sat very close to each other. Her father even reached out his hands to hug her mother. San Bao left her playmates and walked to stand between Qiao Nan and Zhai Sheng. She tiptoed and climbed up the seat, squeezing in between her parents. It was not enough to sit between them. She held her mother’s hand with one hand and her father’s hand with another hand.

San Bao finally felt satisfied. She kicked her legs and relaxed. Although no one accompanied her to play, she felt the happiest at this moment.

“Jiji?” Tian Yu held the toys in his hands and stood up, feeling perplexed. He looked toward San Bao. “Play?” The four of them were having fun playing together. What was wrong with the sister? Why did she run off? In that case, he wanted to be with his uncle and auntie as well. He wanted to be in his auntie’s embrace and for her to hug him.

“What are you talking about? I am your elder sister.” San Bao was unhappy. “Mama, I have told Xiao Bao several times, but why can’t he learn to address me as his sister?” If Qiao Nan did not teach her to be polite and to take care of Tian Yu, the younger brother, she would have scolded him for being stupid.

She remembered that when she, Da Bao, and Er Bao were younger, they were quite smart. They were able to speak coherently when they were at Xiao Bao’s age. “Mama, I feel that I did not give my younger brother a good pet name.”

San Bao was the one who came up with “Xiao Bao” as Tian Yu’s pet name.

San Bao was aware that Da Bao, Er Bao, and San Bao were their pet names. After Tian Yu was born, as the elder sister, San Bao felt that she had to do something for him.

In the end, San Bao decided that she wanted to come up with a pet name for Tian Yu. She wanted to be a qualified elder sister.

There were Da Bao, Er Bao, and San Bao in the family. They lacked a Xiao Bao in the family.

The pet name was quite suitable. In the fourth generation of the Zhai family, apart from Tian Yu, it was unlikely that there would be another newcomer. Therefore, it was accurate to say that he was Xiao Bao[1]. To the Tian family, Tian Yu was their only grandson, and they treasured him. Since he was still very young, they agreed to use 'Xiao Bao' as his pet name.

Back then, San Bao had all sorts of reasons why it was suitable to have 'Xiao Bao' as Tian Yu's pet name. But right now, she felt that it did not match him at all.

Chapter 1394 I Am the Big Sister

She, Da Bao, and Er Bao were very smart when they were very young. As part of the 'Bao' family, Tian Yu's performance had not been up to standard. No, she was having regrets now. She no longer wanted her younger brother, and she did not want to be the elder sister anymore.

With Xiao Bao, the younger brother around, there would be one more person to fight for her mother's attention with her. It was so annoying.

Qiao Nan was very patient with her child. "San Bao, you can't say that of Xiao Bao. Xiao Bao might not be as fast as the rest of you in learning to talk, but he has more strength in his legs than all of you when you were at the same age. The three of you were not able to walk as steadily as Xiao Bao."

Not only was she trying to coax San Bao, but she was telling the truth as well.

Tian Yu might be slower in learning to talk, but he started learning to walk at an early age. He could take a few steps with people's help when he was eight months old. By the time he was ten months old, Tian Yu did not need anyone to help him and he could take a few unsteady steps by himself. He could run around when he was not yet one year old.

If he knew more words, he would be able to bring the money to run errands for the parents like those older children.

Tian Yu had stronger legs than the Zhai family's triplets. When the triplets were more than one year old, they could only take unsteady steps. They seemed like newly-born small ducklings who could only take unsteady steps. The adults would be in a cold sweat of anxiety as they watched them take small steps. They were worried that they would fall back on their buttocks and refused to stand back up again.

San Bao raised her eyebrows. “How could that be? When I was running around, Xiao Bao was still feeding on the milk. Haven’t I been walking more steadily than Xiao Bao? Why don’t I remember any of this?” San Bao tried very hard to recollect. Her face turned red, but she still could not remember her unglamorous past.

How was it possible that Xiao Bao had stronger legs than her? Was her mother joking with her?

Qiao Nan pinched her daughter’s pouted lips. “If you don’t believe me, you can ask your grandma and master grandpa, and all the adults that you trust.” Qiao Nan was confident of what she told her daughter. All the witnesses around her could prove that she was telling the truth.

Her mother insisted that she was telling the truth, and her grandma and auntie only sat by the side with a smile on their faces, not rebutting her mother. San Bao knew that it was likely that her mother was telling the truth.

But she was angered. She insisted that she had no recollection of what happened back then. Since she had no memory of what happened, she refused to admit that she was slower in walking properly by herself. She was the big sister, it was normal for her to do better than Xiao Bao.

She was older than Xiao Bao. If she was slower than him, it would be very embarrassing.

San Bao was stubborn. But after that day, she had a better attitude toward Xiao Bao. Although he was younger and could not keep up with the triplets, San Bao was patient with him and would wait for him to join them to play.

Qiao Nan had finally graduated from college. Zhai Sheng specially took a few days off to stay at home. His intention was to celebrate Qiao Nan’s graduation for her and to go on a graduation trip with her.

Zhai Sheng knew everything that Qiao Nan taught Shi Peng.

He and Qiao Nan had a better relationship than Shi Peng and his wife. But Zhai Sheng felt that because they had a good relationship, all the more they should pay attention to the details. This was so that their relationship would get better and they could be a married couple forever.

Since Zhai Sheng put in so much effort and made so many plans, Qiao Nan could not say no. She had to agree to his suggestion.

However, there was a vast difference in whether the couple had children or not.

The triplets were older now and they knew how to express their wishes. Once they learned that their parents were going on a trip, they stated right away that they wanted to go along with them. With them around, their mother would not get bored with their father. Compared to their father, they were better at making their mother laugh.

Of course, Da Bao was the only one who felt that he was better than his father at making his mother laugh.

Da Bao still took issue with what Miao Jing once told him. She said that his father was the only one who could make his mother happy.

Therefore, the couple trip ended up as a family trip with the five of them. Initially, Miao Jing also wanted to join them. She was no longer young. Although she used to travel a lot in the past, all of them were work trips. She never got to go on a holiday.

She might have been to a lot of places, but she had never shopped around, had good food, or gone sightseeing.

Now that she finally had a chance to go on a holiday at her age, she could travel with her son and daughter-in-law. While her son and daughter-in-law had fun, she could help take care of the three children so that the children would not disturb the couple. She would play an important role if she joined the trip.

As soon as Miao Jing made known of her intention to go on a trip with her son and daughter-in-law, Zhai Yaohui stopped her immediately. "Why would you join in the fun? There are already three third wheels. If you go along, I suppose Zhai Sheng will be in tears." If his wife and his grandchildren went on a trip together, that would leave him by himself with the old master.

Zhai Yaohui and Old Master Zhai got along well. But people from their generation were reserved and reticent. They had been father and son for so many years, but they had never spent time with each other without other people around.

Zhai Yaohui could not imagine what would happen if they spent time alone. He did not care what was on Miao Jing's mind and insisted that she had to stay by his side, stopping her from making a meaningless attempt to join in the fun.

After holding the family meeting, it was confirmed that Miao Jing would not join them, but the triplets managed to stick with their parents and set off for their first trip in their life.

It was a short seven-day trip. Qiao Nan did not dare to travel overseas. She only planned to travel within the country.

The trip must have two principal themes.

Firstly, sightseeing among the hills.

Secondly, touring the rivers and valleys.

Coincidentally, the place that Qiao Nan chose fulfilled these two themes.

When they were climbing the hills, other families brought their children with them. They were younger than the triplets and they would cry and make a fuss after a short walk, wanting their parents to carry them. Many parents even carried heavy baby prams with them to climb the hills. Qiao Nan learned a lot from the trip.

Qiao Nan was glad that the triplets were already old enough when Zhai Sheng suggested going on a trip. They could climb the mountains by themselves, enjoying the hike. They seldom complained or asked their parents to carry them.

When there was a comparison, one's feelings would be hurt. After hurting the feelings of all present, Qiao Nan was in a lighter mood when she brought the triplets on the trip, having a brighter smile on her face.

Chapter 1395 Qiao Nan Was Well-Liked

Zhai Sheng and his three children were mesmerized by the lovely smile on Qiao Nan's face. She looked so pretty with that smile.

Qiao Nan returned home after having fun in those seven days. She felt as if she was barely alive after the trip. She rested for half a day before she regained her energy and senses. "Mom, Brother

Zhai has returned to the camp and I will be going to work tomorrow. I guess I will have to trouble you to take care of the triplets until September.”

The three children were cheeky and mischievous. Qiao Nan could not help but be concerned. “Mom, shall we hire another helper in the family? Otherwise, I am afraid that you will be exhausted from taking care of the triplets. If Xiao Bao comes over to our house to play, you will have to take care of four children by yourself.”

Miao Jing revealed a proud smile at the thought that there were so many children at her house. “Don’t worry. I will have a way. Actually, we have quite a lot of manpower at home. The old master is free, and the auntie and I will be around. If Xiao Bao is here, Zhai Hua’s mother-in-law will be here as well.”

If Hua Hua brought her child to her parental family, the Tian family would not tag along.

But if Hua Hua was not around and Xiao Bao came over to his maternal grandma’s house, Hua Hua’s mother-in-law would definitely tag along. She would not bear for her precious grandson to leave her side for too long.

If Hua Hua’s mother-in-law was here, the nanny that the Tian family hired would follow her as well. Furthermore, Old Zhai would spend a longer time at home these days. There would be a total of six adults to take care of four children. They should be able to manage. “Since everyone knows each other, if we walk around in the district, the neighbors would help us out as well. It is quite safe in the quad in the military zone.”

If suspicious characters entered the quad in the military zone, they would be detained and not allowed to leave. Therefore, it was impossible that the children would be brought out of the quad in the military zone by suspicious characters.

As long as they did not wander outside, Miao Jing was confident that she would be able to keep the three children safe. At most, she would tire herself to keep the mischievous triplets in check.

“Mom, it has been hard on you.” Actually, they had the money to hire another helper. Qiao Nan received a bonus from the Tian Corporation yearly. Although she was not considered as a big boss, she was still a small boss who had a significant amount of income. Now that she had money with her, she no longer felt uneasy.

Qiao Nan was emboldened as she had some money with her. There was no need for her to spend Zhai Sheng's money whenever she needed to buy anything. She could use her own money and buy presents for the people in the Zhai family. The feeling was great!

After settling everything at home, Qiao Nan went to work feeling energetic and invigorated.

When Qiao Nan entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs today, she was no longer an intern but a permanent employee at the ministry. As soon as Qiao Nan arrived at the ministry, the people in the ministry greeted her happily. "Xiao Qiao, you are here."

"Xiao Qiao, you are quite early today."

"Xiao Qiao, my wife prepared breakfast for me today. She prepared a lot for me. Do you want to have some?"

Qiao Nan spent more than one year doing her internship in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. During that period of time, she was very popular with her colleagues. She had better interpersonal relationships than Deng Wenchang did.

Deng Wenchang put on airs as he felt that he was better than everyone since he went on overseas study. During the early years of nation-building, all the departments had a lower standard of entry requirements. To him, the older colleagues in the department were not qualified to join the ministry.

Most importantly, Deng Wenchang felt that he was younger than all of them and was the new blood in the ministry. He would become the future tower of strength in the ministry. The older colleagues should know what was good for them and mentor and help him. They should impart their knowledge to him and share their working experience with him so that they could ensure a smooth succession and enable workforce rejuvenation in the ministry.

It was a fact that the older colleagues were not as energetic as the younger colleagues.

Before Qiao Nan joined the ministry, although the other colleagues were displeased that Deng Wenchang put on airs, they had to admit that though cold-hearted, Deng Wenchang's way of thinking reflected the reality. It was true that Deng Wenchang came back from overseas study and used to study at a famous college.

But ever since Qiao Nan joined the ministry, everything had changed.

In terms of age, Qiao Nan was younger than Deng Wenchang.

It was true that Deng Wenchang came back from overseas study and returned to the country in glory, while Qiao Nan was only a student in a local renowned university. However, Qiao Nan was more competent than Deng Wenchang. It did not matter that he was educated overseas. If his actual performance was not as good, it was useless to have other grander achievements.

Apart from being more capable than Deng Wenchang, Qiao Nan was friendly and polite. She would greet every older colleague politely with a smile. Everyone welcomed a courteous young lady like her.

Other than having a good attitude, Qiao Nan was very hardworking. She would never skive when she was given an assignment. She would finish her work as soon as possible while maintaining its quality. She was efficient and effective! When she did not have any assignments, she would help out in whatever way that she could. If needed, she would help other colleagues do research, make copies of the documents, or bring tea for them. Qiao Nan never shunned the minor tasks and she did not find it embarrassing to help out with them, and neither would she feel that she was being looked down upon.

On the contrary, when everyone was busy with work, a cup of tea or a serving of piping hot fast food that contained vegetables and meat dishes would be useful in drawing people to one's side.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not ask that the newcomers have a huge impact on the department. Instead, they valued the newcomers who were able to help out in whatever ways that they could. It did not matter if they helped out with important tasks or minor tasks. What was important was that every small task was properly taken care of. In this way, everyone would then be able to focus and do their best in the important tasks.

Compared to Deng Wenchang, Qiao Nan was down-to-earth, willing to help out, and had a good temper. She was unlike the youngsters nowadays who were arrogant, had a nasty temper, and could not take any hardships or reprimands. They wanted to be treated like the emperor even in the workplace.

After working with Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang for more than a year, everyone had a clear understanding of what type of person the two newcomers were. Everyone preferred well-behaved and sensible people. Therefore, Qiao Nan became the most well-liked and most well-taken care of newcomer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The older male colleagues would treat Qiao Nan as their niece. They were polite to her and would share good food and new fancy items with her.

After all, when Qiao Nan did her internship, Qiao Nan was like their most capable and well-rounded secretary in the department. She would work out the details and logistics for them to lighten their workload.

Chapter 1396 Unconvinced

Everyone loved and doted on such a hardworking lady.

He Yi was the happiest among all to witness such a harmonious scene. “My little junior, you are far more popular than me in the ministry. Each new generation excels the previous indeed.”

He Yi earned the respect of colleagues in the department due to his competence and his position as the minister. As for Qiao Nan, it was due to her charisma and down-to-earth and hardworking personality that made her so well-liked by all of them.

Qiao Nan raised her eyebrows at He Yi’s joke. “Senior, you flattered me. Everyone takes extra care of me as I am the youngest. It is different in your case. You earned their respect due to your competence. We will need you to guide us to do the country proud.” The Ministry of Foreign Affairs played a significant role in the country and to the people.

Qiao Nan always bore in mind that she carried a heavy burden on her shoulders. Since she was in this position, she had to try her best to complete her tasks to the best of her ability.

He Yi smiled with satisfaction and did not make further comments. He ignored Deng Wenchang who looked sinister and walked to his office in light footsteps. If a newcomer was well-liked by the other colleagues, the newcomer had to be mindful not to show off one’s accomplishments and capabilities in front of the older colleagues. It was better to be humble so as to gain people’s affection.

There was no need for him to remind his little junior and she knew what to do. She did not put on airs just because she was the daughter-in-law of the Zhai family.

After working with Qiao Nan, He Yi grew to understand what made his master changed his mind to come back to the capital. His master was already advanced in years. He had stepped down from the front line and even refused to stay in the capital. However, he took in Qiao Nan as his disciple and was willing to return to the capital to pave the path and make all necessary arrangements for his disciple.

The young lady was well-liked and she was his little junior. He Yi would stand to gain from his relationship with her.

Qiao Nan felt like a duck to water in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In comparison, Deng Wenchang appeared to be miserable and desolate.

Deng Wenchang's anger and displeasure seemed like a volcano that was close to eruption. The lava was scorching hot and boiling. "Hehehe..." Deng Wenchang sneered at how nice the older colleagues were treating Qiao Nan. However, he could no longer say that Qiao Nan was sucking up to them. It was obvious that they were sucking up to Qiao Nan instead. "You are indeed capable!"

Before Deng Wenchang joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he dreamed that he would be given special treatment when he was there. He was young and promising. He returned from overseas study and was capable. He should be given important tasks after joining the ministry. He Yi would take him in as his disciple and he would groom him to be his successor.

Deng Wenchang envisioned that he would be given the special treatment that Qiao Nan enjoyed now.

But right now, although he was young and promising, he was being given the cold shoulder, while Qiao Nan, who was a normal local college graduate, was being taken care of and well-liked by her colleagues. Deng Wenchang was so enraged that he was almost driven to his grave.

Could it be that the entire ministry was blind in the eyes and the heart to highly value Qiao Nan instead of him? He agreed that Qiao Nan had performed exceptionally well in several assignments. But those were merely written work. In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one still had to engage in verbal banter with the foreign diplomats.

Chapter 1397 Don't Blow One's Own Trumpe

Qiao Nan had never been involved in any major or strategic situations. Would she be nervous? Could she handle it?

She had better not turned pale and trembled in fright, shaming her country and people. She was a woman after all. He Yi could not possibly hope that Qiao Nan would be able to take charge of the situations. He could not possibly think of grooming her to become a competent female diplomat.

Don't be kidding!

No matter what kind of special treatment Qiao Nan was given, Deng Wenchang kept silent and did not say a word. He was waiting for a chance to give her a fatal blow. By then, everyone would be in awe at his capabilities. It was useless to be able to produce good reports. As part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one had to be presentable and deal with foreign diplomats!

He wondered whether all those people would continue to suck up to Qiao Nan like today and neglect him who had the real abilities by then.

Peng Yu told him that he would have an opportunity to shine very soon. Deng Wenchang clenched his fists in excitement, pursing his lips into a thin line. He lowered his eyes so that no one would notice the glitter of anticipation and sparkle of light in his eyes.

Peng Yu was right. He could not be furious or be thrown into confusion. He had to work hard so that he would amaze the world with a single brilliant feat.

At the thought of this, Deng Wenchang calmed himself down. He ignored the harmonious atmosphere surrounding Qiao Nan. He took a deep breath, controlling his expression when he looked at Qiao Nan. She might be smiling brightly now, but what was important was who would be able to have the last laugh.

Qiao Nan could never dream of being the minister of foreign affairs.

Deng Wenchang would compete with Qiao Nan secretly. Although he found Qiao Nan to be an eyesore and was displeased that the older colleagues treated Qiao Nan so much better than him, he would not complain about it. Deng Wenchang learned to hide his feelings.

It was only when Qiao Nan was around would there be a dark look in his eyes.

Qiao Nan had been converted to a permanent employee. Since Deng Wenchang did not make any huge mistakes in the past two years—with the Deng family's and the Peng family's help—Deng Wenchang became an official employee as well.

Now that everyone was at the same starting point, Deng Wenchang felt confident of himself. When he was given a chance, he would definitely outshine Qiao Nan.

Sometimes, if one thought very hard about something, it would happen eventually.

Not long after Qiao Nan joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as an official employee, Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang were given the first important assignment since their official employment. They had to receive ambassadors from the United Kingdom.

Qiao Nan's and Deng Wenchang's responsibilities were to fulfill their duties and make the guests feel at home. The two of them must not cause the guests to have any misconception of China due to their own personal conflicts.

China was known as a state of etiquette and ceremonies. China would not make it difficult for the ambassadors on its own territory, causing tension between countries.

This was not a simple exchange. Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang had to pick their words carefully. They must not embarrass themselves in front of the foreign guests, which would result in them underestimating China.

“Are you confident?” He Yi passed the information on the visiting ambassadors to Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang in advance so that they could look through and memorize them by heart. The two of them had been officially employed by the ministry. He Yi had to give Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang some serious work to do.

It was the rule for every department to enable workforce rejuvenation.

If Deng Wenchang performed as well as Qiao Nan, He Yi was ready to welcome another young diplomat to his department. In the future, the world would be in the hands of the younger generation. This was the same for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

There was a sparkle of light in Deng Wenchang's eyes. “Minister, since you assign such an important task to me—I mean, us, you can rest assured that we will not disappoint you. Right, Qiao Nan?” Deng Wenchang was hoping that He Yi could give the assignment to him alone. But he could not do anything about it as He Yi had a better relationship with Qiao Nan.

Now that Deng Wenchang knew who Qiao Nan's husband was, he no longer suspected that Qiao Nan and He Yi had an illicit relationship.

Qiao Nan was the daughter-in-law of the Zhai family. Unless he was like the cat that had nine lives, no matter how daring He Yi was, he would not dare to mess with her and ruin his future and career.

It was illegal to come between a military marriage. Moreover, the Zhai family had a political background. If He Yi did that, he would be committing a crime upon crime.

Although Deng Wenchang no longer suspected that Qiao Nan and He Yi had indecent dealings, he felt that He Yi was cozying up to the powerful Zhai family by being nice to Qiao Nan. All that said, Qiao Nan was lucky to get married to Chief Zhai's son.

Otherwise, given Qiao Nan's family background, she could never dream of being at the same starting line as him in this life. Since the day Qiao Nan was born into her humble family, it had been destined that she would lag behind. It was a blessing to be a woman. If one had the looks, one could get married to a good husband and stand to benefit from the power and influence of one's in-laws.

Fortunately, Qiao Nan did not know what was on Deng Wenchang's mind. Otherwise, she would have cursed him.

Deng Wenchang felt that she depended on her in-laws to be able to join the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If that was the case, what about Deng Wenchang? If not for the Deng family and Peng Yu who wanted to pull the Deng family to his side, with his own abilities, he would not be able to join the ministry fair and square.

This was the pot calling the kettle black.

Deng Wenchang was being strict with others and lenient towards himself.

"This..." Qiao Nan, who could not tell what was on other people's minds, did not pay attention to Deng Wenchang, who was a spoiled brat. She could not help but be surprised when she saw the photos in the information. "I..."

"What are you exclaiming about?" Deng Wenchang smirked at Qiao Nan. "What is that expression of yours? You look as if you know the person at one glance. Didn't you do your research or read the information? The foreign guests are a couple. The husband is newly appointed. Are you trying to tell me that you know them?"

Deng Wenchang was not trying to make wild guesses. But Qiao Nan's expression was too obvious.

Chapter 1398 What Kind of Attitude Was That?

It was obvious that Qiao Nan looked as if she knew them. Unless Deng Wenchang was blind or stupid, he could not pretend that he did not see the expression on Qiao Nan's face. Moreover, Deng Wenchang had been targeting Qiao Nan all the while.

It was rare that he discovered that Qiao Nan was bluffing. Deng Wenchang would definitely jump in to expose her lies. If not, he would be letting himself down.

"I..." She did know the people in the photo. Otherwise, she would not be taken aback.

"Hehehe..." Deng Wenchang sneered. "Qiao Nan, that is such an outdated way of striking up a conversation. Could it be that you want to say that you saw them in your dreams? Furthermore, they have yet to reach China. Do you really intend to use this kind of method to strike up a conversation? At the very least, you should wait until they have reached. It is still too early to try to please them."

Indeed, she was only good at sucking up to other people. Apart from that, she was a fool without any use.

Everyone in the ministry knew that Qiao Nan did not go for overseas study and she had not ventured out of the country before. If that was the case, how could she be so thick-skinned to say that she knew the ambassador who was coming to the country?

She bragged without thinking. She might look smart, but she was just a fool.

Qiao Nan had not been to other countries and she did not go on overseas study. Since she said that she knew the foreign couple, the only possibility was her seeing them in her dream.

Deng Wenchang was very harsh toward Qiao Nan. Although she was wrong in the first place, He Yi felt that as a man, Deng Wenchang should not argue a point to death. It was ungentlemanly of him to do that. "Xiao Deng, Xiao Qiao didn't make any outrageous comments. You should not be so agitated. We all know that you returned from overseas study. In modernizing the country and learning from other countries, we believe in keeping what is good and discarding the rest. As the country that is known as a state of etiquette and ceremonies, we have good practices. But I feel that Chinese men should learn from foreigners to be gentlemanly."

Deng Wenchang curled the corners of his lips. "From the first day that I joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I am very clear that I will have to receive men and even heroines like Qiao Nan in the future. However, nothing is more important than the country's interests. In my opinion, gender doesn't matter. Only nationality matters."

Since he did not care if the guest was male or female, all the more he would not care about being a gentleman.

Even if he was to behave like a gentleman, he would not be so foolish to be a gentleman to women like Qiao Nan.

Deng Wenchang sounded burly and rude. It was as if he was about to get into a quarrel with He Yi. As the source of the problem, Qiao Nan stopped He Yi. “Deng Wenchang, since you seem to be highly principled, I hope that at the very least, you could be scrupulous in separating public from private interests. Don’t mix emotions with work. I merely said a few ‘I’ after taking a glance at the photo. I have yet to complete my sentences. Deng Wenchang, how do you know what I am going to say?”

Many people heard and saw what had happened between them. As long as she did not complete her sentence, no matter what she was really thinking, she could deny Deng Wenchang’s accusation.

“Deng Wenchang, I feel that you have misunderstood me. I didn’t say that I know them. I am just surprised that the photo was taken very well, and I find them to be familiar. That’s all. Deng Wenchang, aren’t you being too sensitive?”

Seeing that Deng Wenchang was so agitated, Qiao Nan could not be bothered to tell him that she knew the couple in the photo.

She did not say anything yet and Deng Wenchang could not wait to drag her out to criticize and denounce her publicly for her errors. If she made further comments, he might lash out at her ancestors and all the teachers who used to teach her in the past.

“That’s right. Deng Wenchang, you are being too sensitive.”

“Xiao Qiao only said a few ‘I’, but you are so agitated.”

“Deng Wenchang, it is good that the youngsters have a mind of their own. Didn’t you say that after joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, you only look at the bigger picture and will not take issues with minor matters? If that’s the case, all of us hope that you will stand united with us and fight for the best interests of the country. Isn’t it better this way?” He Yi reminded Deng Wenchang earnestly.

Deng Wenchang was being too aggressive. Everyone could tell from the surprised look on Qiao Nan's face that she was about to say that she knew them. But Deng Wenchang was too agitated. He interrupted Qiao Nan several times such that she could not complete her sentence.

In that case, Qiao Nan could take advantage of the situation and deny his accusations.

Deng Wenchang smiled grimly. "Fine, I merely made a few comments and all of you rebutted me. I can never win against all of you. You can say whatever you please. After all, Qiao Nan is the only woman in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and she needs your care and concern, right?" He would not treat women differently. He would not lie through one's teeth.

"This is merely an internal discussion. We are all one family. It doesn't matter that there is some slight misunderstanding. Qiao Nan, when the guests are here, I hope that you can be quick as before and not to fumble the ball at the critical time. That will implicate all of us. It is getting late. Minister He, is there anything else? If not, can I knock off now?"

Deng Wenchang did not wish to stay a minute longer at the ministry. Deng Wenchang was jealous and envious of the way the older colleagues treated Qiao Nan. They seemed to treat her as if she was a gem.

Since he could not get along with them, he would rather stay away from them. Even if one broke his bones, he would not go against his conscience like the older colleagues to flatter Qiao Nan. Since it was time to knock off from work, he would rather go back home to do the research by himself instead of wallowing in the mire with them, telling lies against his conscience.

Deng Wenchang made a mountain out of a molehill from what happened just now. Everyone who knew it would find it to be a joke. However, as the party concerned, Deng Wenchang was oblivious to it. Now that he was given the opportunity, he would make use of it to outperform Qiao Nan.

The couple listed in the information was Deng Wenchang's chance to get a new lease on life. He chose to go home and try all means and ways to find out more information about the couple instead of staying in the department and listening to the older colleagues as they flattered Qiao Nan.

He did not care to get He Yi's approval. Since He Yi did not say anything and it was indeed the time to knock off from work, Deng Wenchang took his briefcase and the information on the foreign guests, turned his head, and was the first in the department to knock off from work.

"What kind of attitude is that!"

Chapter 1399 Extreme Arrogance Will Cause One's Suffering

The seniors in the department were almost driven mad by the new recruit, Deng Wenchang.

“Minister, it’s a good thing that the youngsters have their own thinking, but Deng Wenchang is not just arrogant. He is rebellious! If we let him stay in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I am worried that something will happen sooner or later. Someone like him will affect our team spirit adversely.”

He Yi was not angry and could still smile. “There is no hurry in this matter. Besides being a little hot-tempered, he didn’t make any major mistakes. We can wait a while more for some matters. Given Deng Wenchang’s temperament, I don’t think we will need to wait too long.”

He Yi was quite subtle with his words, but anyone who brought their brains to work understood him.

Deng Wenchang had two huge backers behind him: the Deng family and the Peng family. If they were to kick him out with the excuse that he could not get along with his colleagues and would affect the team unity, someone would harp on this issue and make a mountain out of a molehill of it. It would smear the ministry’s reputation too.

If the situation were to turn severe and other departments intervened in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it would be considered a real crisis to the seniors of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs then.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was such a united and friendly department. How could there possibly be a situation of ostracizing their colleague? Despite Deng Wenchang’s bad temper and poor relationship with everyone, as elders and seniors, they also had to adopt a forgiving attitude and guide Deng Wenchang more.

If they could not teach Deng Wenchang in the end and it was not suitable for Deng Wenchang to remain in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the very least, they had ‘worked hard’ before and had done their utmost to help him. Was that not a better outcome?

He Yi was a sly old fox who had been working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for so many years. If he did not have any capability, he would have been ousted long ago.

No matter how old and muddleheaded He Yi was, this veteran would not lose his footing just because of a newbie like Deng Wenchang.

Even if they had to make Deng Wenchang leave, the problem would not be with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but with Deng Wenchang himself. Regardless of whoever wished to make use of Deng Wenchang to plot against the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it still depended on whether He Yi was willing to give the other party a chance to do so.

“Haha, that’s true.” Everyone had been colleagues for so many years. More or less, they understood what He Yi meant. When they heard He Yi’s words, everyone understood in their hearts that Deng Wenchang would run into bad luck sooner or later.

He was just a newbie and yet he treated the seniors with such arrogance. He would eventually suffer. In addition, he even dared to show his displeasure in front of their top superior. Deng Wenchang did not wish to continue staying in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs anymore. If not, what other reasons could it be?

It was true that a youngster knows no fear. He stretched out his neck and collided onto the blade of the knife on his own accord.

He Yi did not elaborate further. He told Qiao Nan briefly. “Qiao Nan, this is a good chance. You have to work hard. It is okay for that set of information to be taken away. I have one here too. After you bring it home, you have to find ways to understand it more.”

Qiao Nan nodded hard. “Minister He, rest assured. I will definitely do so.” She had the means to find out some information. Most importantly, Qiao Nan knew that she actually did not need to work so hard this time. She did not need to utilize any means at all.

However, Qiao Nan could not explain to He Yi too much at this moment. Obviously, if she were to tell He Yi that she personally knew the ambassador whom they were receiving this time, He Yi would not believe her.

Looking at the information that He Yi gave her, Qiao Nan returned home happily.

As soon as Qiao Nan arrived home, she threw the information on the table and was not bothered over it. After all, this set of information had the same content as the earlier one. Deng Wenchang had taken away the previous one, but Qiao Nan had read almost all of it and had memorized them.

In the absence of new information, there was no need for Qiao Nan to make things difficult for herself by memorizing the same things again.

“Mom, not working?” In a sweet voice, San Bao curiously asked her mother, who was keeping her company. She leaned her chubby body over to Qiao Nan. Of course, it was best that her mother could have more time to play with her.

However, the triplets were already used to the fact that their mother would not always be able to stay by their side and play with them all the time even if she was home. Mom was very, very, busy and had to write many, many, words.

In front of Qiao Nan, the triplets’ temper was still considered good. As long as they could see their mother when they lifted their heads, they would not kick up a fuss or insist that their mother stay by their side. Of course, it would be best if they could get a pleasant surprise like today.

“That’s right. Mom finished work early today. I can thus play with the three of you. Have you thought about the story that you want Mom to read to you tonight?” How could bedtime stories be missing in the children’s childhood?

As such, Qiao Nan and Zhai Sheng’s bookshelves were filled with many useful books that the three children loved to read. It was uncertain whether the triplets had inherited Qiao Nan’s high intelligence. They were just three years old and could already recognize some simple words such as heaven, earth, and human.

They could also count numbers such as one, two, three, and four consecutively all the way until twenty or thirty.

“Really!” Before San Bao could speak, the eyes of cheeky Er Bao shone brightly, looking as good as stars. He walked over to Qiao Nan. “Tell story. Three. Okay? Da Bao, me, San Bao. Each chooses one.” Er Bao stretched out his three stubby little fingers and counted at the same time.

Qiao Nan grabbed Er Bao’s hands and kissed the back of it. “Okay, three stories. Each of you picks one. However, if all of you fall asleep before Mom finishes the story, you can’t blame Mom, and you can’t say that I owe you the stories.”

The triplet’s IQ was not low. Even their EQ was so high that Qiao Nan could not take it.

The three children seldom watched television. Hence, she was not sure where the three of them heard from, but the little ones would say that one had to pay back what they owed.

Once, the smart and cheeky Er Bao used this method to lead Qiao Nan around the nose and almost made Qiao Nan owe the triplets two bedtime stories a day. Er Bao said that interests had to be paid. One story would become two, and two become three. Each additional day of owing would increase the number of stories by one.

This was the first time that Qiao Nan subdued the three 'rebellious' children using her status as a mother. Since that time, Qiao Nan had been more 'careful' when she was with them, deeply fearful that they would lead her by the nose again. If someone were to know this, Qiao Nan would feel so embarrassed.

Could it be that the baby brain effect was true? That one pregnancy could result in cognitive impairment for three years? Now, she could not even beat her own three-year-old kids?

When he heard his mother said that, Er Bao pouted unhappily. "Mom is too naughty. We are still young. Y-you have to give in to us." Since that time, his mother had been extremely careful and did not give him any chance.

Chapter 1400 Competing on Patience

In order to kidnap his mother, Er Bao had been wracking his brains every day to drill into Qiao Nan's spare time.

Holding Er Bao in her arms, Qiao Nan planted a few hard kisses on his face. "It's not that Mom is naughty. It's because the three of you are too clever. All of you are so clever. If Mom performs badly, it will be very embarrassing. Mom is an adult. I also want some face."

Er Bao furrowed his brows. In the end, he sighed helplessly. "Alright, I will endure for the sake of Mom's face."

Er Bao's behavior like a little adult was so cute that Qiao Nan was totally KO-ed by him. In the end, she had no choice but to transform all her love for her son into countless kisses.

"Mom, I want too!" At the sight of this, San Bao turned into a green-eyed monster. She pounced on Qiao Nan and requested for kisses.

Although Da Bao did not say anything, he also walked over to Qiao Nan quietly and turned his little face to Qiao Nan, his intention obvious. Such beautiful and adorable children were hers. Looking at how smart they were, Qiao Nan could not help kissing them. Furthermore, she was kissing the wife

and husbands of 'other people'. Qiao Nan kissed more enthusiastically than ever! She would stand to gain no matter what!

"How is it?" Different from the happy atmosphere at the Zhai family, the atmosphere at the Deng family seemed graver and stiffer. Deng Wenchang had been cooping in his father's study room. The father-son pair was staring bitterly at the phone in the study room as if they were nursing a huge hatred. Almost every time the phone rang, the father-son pair would be very emotional. As soon as the phone call ended, Deng Wenchang could not wait to ask for the outcome from his father. "Is there any action at the Zhai family's end? Did Qiao Nan call or contact anyone?"

"Not at the moment." Father Deng put the phone down. His palms were feeling wet and covered in sweat. He first wiped his own hands to prevent his son from discovering it before patting Deng Wenchang's shoulder. "Wenchang, don't be so nervous. Our people are already watching the Zhai family like a hawk. We may not be able to get first-hand information but the speed at which you receive them won't be less than Qiao Nan's. As long as you are well-prepared, what are you afraid of?"

Deng Wenchang was not as confident as he made himself out to be. He felt that given his capability, he was bound to succeed if he was against only Qiao Nan. However, the Zhai family was a huge problem. The Zhai family had Zhai Yaohui, this old chief, and Old Master Zhai was not someone to be trifled with. If the Zhai family were to take action and use their connections, Deng Wenchang felt that he could not compete with the Zhai family.

"This is too infuriating!" Deng Wenchang was so angry that he slammed the table. "Qiao Nan is so shameless. She took advantage of the fact that she is a woman and used such distasteful means all the time. Because of these reasons, I didn't perform as well as her. Dad, this is so unjustified!" If everyone had the same starting point and foundation, Qiao Nan could forget about surpassing him in this life.

However, if Qiao Nan were to tap on the Zhai family's connections, gather more information on the ambassador, and even secretly contacted him to build the relationship, Deng Wenchang felt that even if he was a piece of gold, he would not be able to withstand being drowned by the yellow sand flying all over the sky in this muddled world.

Father Deng thought alike too. "The outcome is the same whether we are angry or not. We can't change it. Who told Deng family's foundation to be weaker than that of the Zhai family? Even the Peng family is not assured of winning when competing with the Zhai family. If the Zhai family uses their power to suppress us, the more you should fight harder. You must not lose to Qiao Nan."

“Sigh, women are not as gracious as men in handling matters. They will do many petty things. The ludicrous thing is that the Zhai family doesn’t even persuade Qiao Nan otherwise. Qiao Nan and you are colleagues and both of you are in the same department. Of course, you should share the resources. It will be really good if everyone performs well. What’s with the secrecy? I really don’t know how the Zhai family manages to become who they are today. They don’t feel anything for collective honor at all. It’s too selfish.”

If the Zhai family had not been too selfish and Qiao Nan too petty, would his son be anxious to this extent?

“Wenchang, rest assured. Unless they receive the information just seconds before the departure, no matter how much homework Qiao Nan had done, I promise that you will get the same information as Qiao Nan. This time, the Peng family’s attitude in collaborating with us is not bad. Otherwise, we wouldn’t even have any chance.”

Deng Wenchang helplessly gave a long sigh. “We can only do this. I hope that I can be a step quicker than Qiao Nan.” Perhaps the Zhai family would really find stuff that they could not.

It was the Zhai family who was too petty first. Hence, they could not blame the Deng family for using such disgraceful means to win them.

If Qiao Nan was open and honest enough to share the information that she had on hand, did he need to make things difficult for himself and spend so much energy on such shameful deeds?

Facing such an individual with no love for colleague and no regard for fair competition, Deng Wenchang felt so aggrieved. If he had a chance next time, he definitely would not become colleagues with women. They were so narrow-minded, not gracious at all, and extremely petty.

After the father-son pair had discussed and consoled each other, their moods were more stable.

For the sake of waiting for the information, besides taking his meal, Father Deng even missed the news on the state-owned television channel. He kept Deng Wenchang company in the study room and waited for the phone call. As for what was reported in the news, he asked his wife to update him before going to bed at night.

Regrettably, the phone at home still did not ring even after Father Deng’s wife updated him about the television news.

The next day at work, Deng Wenchang, plagued by fears of missing the call and had not slept well for the entire night before, walked into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with panda eyes.

“Hahaha...” At this moment, the people in the department had more issues with him. He was the first to get off work yesterday. They would not mention it since it happened yesterday. However, today, Deng Wenchang arrived last at work. What was this youngster thinking? Why didn't he simply go to heaven?

Compared to others who were placing attention on Deng Wenchang, Qiao Nan, who was oblivious to such trivial externalities, focused only on completing the tasks at hand properly. After one morning, when Qiao Nan returned to her seat after lunch, she was shocked to discover Deng Wenchang glaring at her like a ghost with a pair of sinister and gloomy eyes, as well as a ghastly face. “Is there any matter?”

Deng Wenchang snorted with disdain. “Do you think that I will plead with you? You only know how to use some despicable tricks. You hope that I will plead with you? Dream on. I definitely won't lose to you this time.” His father said that there was no movement at the Zhai family since yesterday night. It had been more than ten hours.

His father almost suspected that the Zhai family and Qiao Nan had long guessed their plan. Therefore, they deliberately guarded against them and would not send any information of practicality and meaning to the Zhai family's residence and Qiao Nan until the last minute.

Anyway, regardless of Qiao Nan's disgusting ideas, he would not be lured into her trap or give her a chance to jeer at him. It was just a waiting game. He did not believe that his patience would be worse than Qiao Nan's. He would see whose endurance level was higher.