

## RTAMM 1451

### Chapter 1451: A Brilliant Little One

“Is that really the case?” Qiao Nan caressed Da Bao’s little face. She realized that this action was not only popular with the triplets when they were younger during milk feeding times but also when they were older. The triplets would always reveal a smitten expression whenever she touched their little faces or heads.

“Yes, Mom. It’s really the case.” Da Bao could not help rubbing his face in Qiao Nan’s warm and cozy palm. He silently said in his heart ‘I have the best mother in the world’.

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“That’s good then.” At this moment, Qiao Nan was not worried about Da Bao anymore. “Er Bao, San Bao, I hope that the situation today won’t happen again. The two of you should learn from Da Bao. Look at how mature and steady he is. It will be great if the three of you can moderate your characters.”

When they were at home, Er Bao and San Bao would still be fussy. Da Bao had already achieved the stage of behaving the same way both in public and private. He was so quiet that Qiao Nan’s heart ached for him.

It was true that the dragon had nine sons but all of them were different.

San Bao blushed and tugged at her little dress. “Mom, I am a demure little girl. I am very obedient. I won’t argue with Er Bao again next time.” Having said that, the little girl snuggled into Qiao Nan’s arms shyly, conquering the space in her mother’s arms.

Qiao Nan smoothed San Bao’s little ponytail. “Since you said that, Mom will believe you then. As a demure little girl, how can you quarrel with your brother? Isn’t it just the top place? It’s not that important. I’ve taught you all before. Scores are not important. What knowledge you have learned and how much of it you have mastered is the most important.”

Next, without waiting for Qiao Nan to speak further, Er Bao immediately raised his hands and promised. “Mom, don’t be angry. I was just joking with San Bao. I just find it very fun to watch San Bao flare up. Things like exams, I have done all that I could and was careful and detailed when I wrote the answers. How many marks I get in the end is actually not a big deal.”

To other children, studying was a mission. However, to Er Bao, studying was no different from playing. He was completely relaxed about it.

However, each time his grandmother talked about his parents’ schooling days, she would mention how well they did in their studies and that they always came out on top. At that time, Er Bao did think of becoming as outstanding as his parents. Later on, when San Bao expressed this intention first, Er Bao teased San Bao and said he wanted to do the same.

The more he teased, the more serious he became, which caused such an embarrassing situation today.

“Little bad egg!” San Bao lifted her face from Qiao Nan’s arms and made funny faces at Er Bao. “Mom, look. Er Bao always bullies me. He still calls himself my elder brother. Mom, in the future, can I be the elder sister and Er Bao the younger brother?”

Uh...

The corners of Qiao Nan’s mouth twitched. “San Bao, this is a little too difficult. Mom can’t do that.” Unless she stuffed Er Bao and San Bao back into her womb and swapped their times of birth, San Bao would never have the chance to be Er Bao’s elder sister in this lifetime. “But it’s okay. San Bao still has Xiao Bao, this younger brother. Have you forgotten? You were the one who came up with Xiao Bao’s name.”

Upon hearing his name, Xiao Bao perked up. Lying on Qiao Nan’s thigh, he inched nearer to San Bao. “Sister, it’s okay. You still have me, Xiao Bao.” He was also Sister San Bao’s younger brother. He did not want other people to fight with him for his elder brothers and sister.

After receiving this reply, San Bao had some regrets. She really wanted to be Er Bao’s elder sister. Before Xiao Bao was born, San Bao was the youngest one in the family. When she was two years old, there was once whereby she kicked up a ruckus and said that she wanted to be the eldest and not the youngest one.

Fortunately, when San Bao could differentiate who was older, Zhai Hua became pregnant. In addition, four months into her pregnancy, her tummy was showing and one could feel the fetus movement.

After San Bao touched her auntie's tummy and felt the little baby inside, she knew that she would be able to fulfill her wish of being an elder sister after the baby was born. As such, San Bao stopped insisting Qiao Nan to stuff her and Er Bao back into the womb and swap the sequence of the births.

Er Bao retorted with a funny face. She wished to be his elder sister? In the next lifetime!

After coaxing the four children, including Xiao Bao, Qiao Nan gave Tian Dong a call to ask him to fetch Xiao Bao home. When the triplets commenced primary school studies tomorrow, Xiao Bao had to return to school too.

When Xiao Bao was leaving, he looked back every three steps that he took. Red eyes, tears swirling in his eyes and pouting lips—it was as if Tian Dong was not his biological father but some human trafficker, kidnapping him away. Tian Dong was so angry that he had the urge to give his son a few punches.

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Was this his biological child? Which child would look as if he had been separated from his loved ones by life and death when he was going home with his father? This strong-headed child!

After getting into the car, Tian Dong wanted to have a chat with Xiao Bao about 'life'. Unexpectedly, as soon as Xiao Bao got into the car, his eyes were not red anymore and his tears gone. The only thing was that he was still pouting. "Not kicking a fuss anymore?" He still thought that he had to give him a good round of persuasion, 'cede' his authority, and bow down before he could appease this little ancestor of his family.

Since Xiao Bao suddenly contained all of his emotions, the numerous drafts in Tian Dong's mind could not be put to good use then.

Xiao Bao snorted and sneered. "Will you let me continue to stay at maternal grandma's house if I kick up a ruckus? Or let me go to primary school together with cousins?"

"I can't."

“Hmmp!” Since that was the case, why would he continue kicking up a ruckus? Wouldn’t that be a waste of his energy? The purpose of his tears was to make his auntie’s heart ache for him, in exchange for a few more kisses. It was such a waste to use them on a block of wood like his father.

The child was young but very brilliant. When the child knew that crying would resolve the problem and satisfy his desire, crying would become his weapon. On the contrary, if the child knew that no one would bother about him no matter how miserably and loudly his cries were, which would expend his energy and lead to exhaustion, he would give up on the tactic of crying then.

This phenomenon was perfectly portrayed by Xiao Bao in this case.

After figuring out Xiao Bao’s thoughts, Tian Dong suddenly felt like kowtowing to his son. “Xiao Bao, next time when you take over my company, Dad really doesn’t need to worry that you will be conned, harmed by others, or let grandpa and Dad’s life efforts go down the drain. If you don’t con others until they go bankrupt or suffer huge losses, that’s already considered good.”

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Xiao Bao snorted arrogantly and lifted his chin. He did not wish to speak to his stupid father.

After the four children went to school, Qiao Nan felt more relaxed now than the summer vacation. After sending the children to school, she rushed to her workplace. The timing was just nice.

At the sight of Qiao Nan rushing into the office, He Yi smiled. “The three children are starting primary school today, right?”

“Indeed. That’s why I woke up extremely early today. I slept for one hour less.”

Chapter 1452: It Was Worrying That the Children Were Sensible As Well

When the children woke up early and excited, the person who suffered directly was none other than Qiao Nan, the biological mother. She had no choice. When the children were awake, regardless of how sleepy Qiao Nan was, she had to follow suit and wake up as well.

He Yi had a look of understanding on his face. Four years had passed and He Yi's son had gotten married. More importantly, He Yi's daughter-in-law was pregnant. A few months later, He Yi could become a grandpa. Perhaps it was because that his family was going to have a newborn soon, but whenever He Yi mentioned the Zhai family's triplets now, his liking for them was well expressed not only in words but also on his face.

Furthermore, He Yi was a newbie in raising grandchildren while Qiao Nan was a veteran.

In order to welcome the birth of his grandson, He Yi was like a good student, asking Qiao Nan a lot of questions. He even took notes. He Yi had already filled up the pages of the palm-sized notebook.

Knowing that Qiao Nan's family operated the number one mother-and-infant chain store in China, He Yi asked what things were the most suitable for his grandson. He also asked Qiao Nan if she had any good recommendations.

Ever since the poisoned milk powder incident, Qiao Nan had a discussion with Tian Dong. The mother-and-infant market was so big and there were so many products. Was it possible for them to invest more heavily in milk powder? She'd rather the company earn less money, or even not earn money at all, and produce the best and most nutritious milk powder for all the families in China.

Good things were good, after all. A single use could produce quality comparison results. After some time, everyone could feel that the quality of the Baby Love milk powder from the mother-and-infant store under the Tian Corporation was especially good. A lot of kids had a higher level of acceptance for the milk powder produced by them when weaning.

Aside from weaning, Baby Love milk powder catered to different nutritional needs required by children of different ages. This allowed babies at every growing stage to get the full nutrition required and turn out healthy.

If the milk powder was good, the children would naturally turn out well after drinking it.

Over time, Baby Love milk powder became famous and also the most popular milk powder in the Chinese market. In addition to the advertisements they had created previously as part of their publicity efforts, everyone understood that Baby Love milk powder was of high quality and their profit margins were little just so that tens of thousands of families' children's health in China was ensured.

All their efforts were not in vain. Even today, although Baby Love milk powder didn't seem to have brought the company much monetary gain, the presence of this top-notch milk powder influenced their other products, thus producing a positive result. As such, the money Baby Love earned didn't decrease at all.

It was not clear to others that in a short period of four years, Baby Love, the subsidiary company under Tian Corporation, had a booming business and a great reputation. Its performance in the headquarters was higher each year, exceeding those from the other well-established subsidiary companies. As Qiao Nan's senior, He Yi knew that Qiao Nan had made great contributions.

Since he had a good teacher beside him, a mother who had raised three children, He Yi didn't waste any time and asked Qiao Nan directly for advice.

After understanding He Yi's needs, Qiao Nan was also generous. "When the child is born, I'll give him a hundred-day gift bag. The contents of this bag are quite complete. Use them for the child first. If you find them suitable, we can talk about the rest."

As such, before the little grandson from He Yi's family was born, he had already received Qiao Nan's gift.

It was a give-and-take situation. Qiao Nan and He Yi had interacted for the longest. Among all the seniors, Qiao Nan naturally got along best with this senior.

Upon hearing that the triplets were so excited about going to the primary school that they couldn't fall asleep, He Yi smiled. "Could it be that this was the same for your Da Bao? The last time I saw Da Bao, he had a stern look on his face. I thought that he had seen his father." Upon mentioning Da Bao, He Yi's tone was full of appreciation.

When elders looked at juniors, they naturally wished the latter to be livelier and happier. However, if the elder had different expectations of this junior, then he or she would naturally wish the junior to be more than that.

Qiao Nan laughed bitterly. "Don't talk about that. I'd rather Da Bao wake me up as he was too excited. Da Bao's the same as me. He woke up purely because Er Bao and San Bao were too noisy." The old master had brought Da Bao up for a long period of time. After he had done so, her father-in-law would pull Da Bao to the study room for a 'heart-to-heart talk' from time to time.

Forget it that Zhai Sheng would be serious in speech and manner toward Da Bao when he was at home. When he pulled the three children together for training and sports, he had much higher expectations for Da Bao as compared to Er Bao and San Bao.

Ever since the three children reached the age of five, Zhai Sheng would get them into the army when he didn't have any mission. It was unknown where Zhai Sheng got three sets of children's camouflage clothes and he made them wear them during summer.

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Perhaps it was because the triplets were the children of the Zhai family that they had the natural perseverance to be soldiers. After the delicate San Bao entered the army, she always complained that it was tough when she talked to Qiao Nan over the phone. Thereafter, she insisted that Qiao Nan not to take her away from the army. She wanted to stay with Da Bao and Er Bao and believed that she could overcome these difficulties by herself.

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Since San Bao had already said so, how could Qiao Nan bring San Bao back just because she felt heartache for her? If she did so, she wasn't loving her but harming her instead.

Because of this, ever since the children were five years old, Qiao Nan was never worried that they would be bullied by other children in school. When the children came to San Bao, they would only be bullied by her, let alone if they went to Da Bao or Er Bao. Every time she sent them to school, Qiao Nan would tell them that they must not take the initiative to bully other children in school.

Of course, if they were being bullied, Qiao Nan wouldn't let them be foolishly beaten when they had the ability to protect themselves.

Because of this, Qiao Nan was invited to the kindergarten thrice when they were still in kindergarten.

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Having grown under such an environment, Da Bao's behavior wasn't that of a usual seven-year-old. He was matured early, and that made Qiao Nan feel sour in her heart. However, the three generations of men in the Zhai family felt that it was a must to cultivate Da Bao in such a manner. Only then would it be good for Da Bao.

Seeing that Da Bao was still enjoying himself and didn't have any resentment at all, Qiao Nan felt heartache but could only tolerate and not say anything to that.

As such, in response to He Yi's question, it was basically impossible for Da Bao to display behaviors of having a short temper or being unable to sleep due to excitement.

### Chapter 1453: A Newbie That Caused People a Headache

He Yi rolled his eyes at Qiao Nan. "Da Bao's such a great kid. Why are you complaining? Others don't have someone like him even if they want to. You should be content." It was estimated that he would only have one grandchild in the future. Regardless if it was a grandson or granddaughter, as long as he or she was half as sensible as Da Bao, he wouldn't have to worry about the He family's future.

Qiao Nan laughed bitterly. Was she complaining about Da Bao? She was obviously feeling heartache for Da Bao, who was taught to grow prematurely by the elders in the family. Da Bao wasn't as playful and mischievous as Er Bao and San Bao.

Qiao Nan and He Yi had a harmonious relationship. People in the office were long used to this. Their relationship with Qiao Nan, a junior, was pretty good as well.

Four years had passed. Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang were no longer considered newbies in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Last year, the ministry accepted two more people. In terms of hierarchy, these two were considered newbies. However, among these 'newbies', the youngest one was already one year older than Qiao Nan.

In the department, Qiao Nan was their senior. However, in terms of age, Qiao Nan had to call them her elders.

The scene that the old people were already used to didn't mean that the young people would be accepting of it. Deng Wenchang belonged to the type that could not accept such a scene. Perhaps



similarly afflicted people pitied each other. The two newbies didn't have a bad relationship with Qiao Nan, but they had a better relationship with Deng Wenchang.

"Take a look at my document and see if there are any issues." Xu Xinming handed over the document he had organized to Deng Wenchang, wanting him to help see if there were any issues. After Deng Wenchang said that everything was good, he would hand the document over to the minister.

Deng Wenchang's pen paused and he looked at Xu Xinming. "Is this document urgent?"

"It's... still alright," Xu Xinming replied in embarrassment. If he completed it earlier, he could hand it over earlier and try to impress the minister. If he handed it over later, there wouldn't be any major issues. However, what if the minister misunderstood that he was incapable or lazy?

After getting his answer, Deng Wenchang pushed his spectacles. "If it's not urgent, put it aside first. When I'm done with the things on my hand, I'll help you take a look again. Of course, if it's really urgent, you can hand the document directly over to the minister. The minister takes care of newbies well. After all, there is one obvious example in the department. Everyone can see that. The minister is biased toward newbies. What is there for you to worry about?"

Deng Wenchang was quite unwilling to help these 'newbies' suck up. Regardless if it was Xu Xinming or Li Dawei, both of them paled in comparison to him and Qiao Nan back then.

Qiao Nan had always maintained a record of zero errors. Even if Deng Wenchang had some mistakes, they were minor. However, Xu Xinming and Li Dawei made more mistakes than Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang back then. It was precisely because of this that He Yi didn't dare to pass anything too important to Xu Xinming and Li Dawei.

Sensing He Yi's attitude toward them, Xu Xinming and Li Dawei wanted to stay in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs more. They even hoped to be promoted in the future. As such, He Yi's impression of them became more crucial.

After a poor performance once, Xu Xinming and Li Dawei let go of the arrogance in their hearts and ignored the fact that Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang were younger than them. They had entered the ministry first and were considered to be veterans. It was normal for Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang to perform better than them since they had more years of experience.

If he was allowed to stay in the ministry for a few years, he promised that four years later, his performance would definitely not be worse than Qiao Nan's and Deng Wenchang's today.

It was common for newbies to ask their seniors wherever they were. As such, Xu Xinming and Li Dawei didn't feel any psychological pressure or burden when they asked Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang for help.

Once or twice, Deng Wenchang felt that these two newbies were similar to himself. They looked down on Qiao Nan a little and felt that she wasn't suited to stay in the ministry. As such, he had helped them. To give directions to Xu Xinming and Li Dawei as a senior, Deng Wenchang felt pretty good in his heart as well.

After Xu Xinming and Li Dawei joined them, Deng Wenchang, who had been suppressed by Qiao Nan all along, had such a thought for the first time: Indeed, it wasn't that his performance was poor. It was that Qiao Nan was too perverted.

The reality proved that the first-day performance of these two newbies, who were older than him, was far worse than his five or six years ago.

One should know that after he joined the ministry for a year, he had begun to deal with these issues independently. There wasn't a need for him to consult the elders in the department. He handed the documents over to the ministry with great confidence. Out of ten times, he had committed at most one or two minor mistakes. They weren't big issues.

Looking at Xu Xinming and Li Dawei in front of him again, Deng Wenchang's eyes flashed with annoyance. "Xu Xinming, do you still remember the comments I made previously? As the saying goes, the more you read, the more you learn. This is still quite practical." If you know that you're not as capable or don't have as much knowledge, which resulted in a lacking performance, then work harder and try to catch up!

To make up for the lack of professional knowledge, one should ask their elder to impart more experience to them.

If one knew that they were incapable, they should work even harder. In the current society, age did not equate to ability. Seeing that Xu Xinming and Li Dawei weren't as capable but weren't hardworking either, Deng Wenchang couldn't help but feel irritated.

Xu Xinming and Li Dawei's appearance could only make Deng Wenchang happy for a short while as he became an outstanding person among the newbies. However, after interacting more with Xu Xinming and Li Dawei, his initial sense of superiority gradually faded. When he saw Xu Xinming again today, Deng Wenchang actually developed the mindset that instead of having colleagues like Xu Xinming and Li Dawei, he'd rather work with Qiao Nan.

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After having such a mindset, Deng Wenchang's relationship with the newbies was naturally not as good as before. Furthermore, He Yi valued the relationship he had with Qiao Nan, so even if Xu Xinming and Li Dawei didn't like Qiao Nan in private and stood by Deng Wenchang's side, their attitude toward Qiao Nan in public was still pretty friendly.

Although Deng Wenchang wasn't someone who was offended by unreasonable things, it was obvious that Xu Xinming and Li Dawei were trying their best to please both parties. He wasn't used to this and was more unwilling to help Xu Xinming. "What's your decision? Are you going to hand it over to the minister now, or let me take a look first after I'm free?"

After all, Xu Xinming was a newbie and wasn't thick-skinned. After sensing that Deng Wenchang's words and attitude weren't good, he blushed angrily and took the document back. "Since you're so busy, how would I disturb you? I'll hand this over to the minister directly for him to take a look."

#### Chapter 1454: Outstanding Among the Rest

As he said this, Xu Xinming specially took a look at the name of the book in Deng Wenchang's hands.

Reading a book?

He was reading a book at his workplace and saying that he was busy?

The relationships Deng Wenchang and Qiao Nan relied on to enter the ministry were stronger than those of his and Li Dawei. He actually dared to be absent-minded in such a grand manner and even told him he was busy? For real!

Xu Xinming felt that it was unfair and took back his document. He handed it over to He Yi in his office. After He Yi took a look, he revealed a pained expression, as if experiencing a headache. “Xiao Xu, you have to know that this is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It’s a very important department to the country and people. Thus, we have a huge burden on our shoulders and we have a lot of responsibilities. I need capable talents here. It shouldn’t be a case where the student hands up his homework to the teacher and the teacher has to amend the mistakes for the student.”

He Yi used a pen to draw a line on it. “I just read the first page and you’ve already made such a huge mistake. You even got the political style of this country wrong. Take this back and see for yourself. Also, Xiao Xu, perhaps you should reconsider if this ministry really suits you.”

He Yi didn’t understand. Since he was capable, why didn’t he choose a department which he liked and could excel in? He just had to join his Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Xu Xinming’s face flushed red upon He Yi’s lecturing. After apologizing, he took the document back and redid it.

Looking at Xu Xinming’s back view, He Yi shook his head in anger. “Young people nowadays are all impetuous. They lack the stubbornness and perseverance in learning.” It was alright to not know. Who didn’t start knowing from not knowing? As long as one was willing to work hard, everything wouldn’t be a problem.

It was alright to be stupid. However, if one wasn’t hardworking enough, then that was a big problem.

He Yi couldn’t hold back and called the person who got Xu Xinming into the department. “This is the situation now. Are you sure you want him to continue staying here? To tell you the truth, I don’t think he would develop himself well in my department. You’d better rearrange his future career prospect.”

The other party hesitated for a while. “There’s no rush. He really wants to enter the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Don’t worry. I will consider this matter well and give you an answer soon.”

The other party was obviously not willing to take this lying down. He had spent a lot of effort to bring Xu Xinming into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Until now, Xu Xinming didn’t have any extraordinary performance. Instead, he received a call with He Yi’s criticism.

“Okay.” He Yi didn’t think that the other party would simply dismiss the thought of letting Xu Xinming stay in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs just because of his call. Smart people understood the importance of this department. It wasn’t the first time that a situation similar to Xu Xinming’s and Li Dawei’s had happened. Didn’t Qiao Nan and Deng Wenchang have a little of that experience as well?

“However, I have to tell you this again. There’s a lot of work to be done in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Xu Xinming isn’t capable in this area but I’m sure there’s something for him to do in this huge unit. Don’t argue with me then.”

At this point, it showed that He Yi had sent Xu Xinming to sit on the cold bench and it was quite impossible for him to make a comeback. He Yi believed that Xu Xinming would definitely perform well in the tasks of pouring tea, ordering lunch boxes, and running errands.

The other party didn’t want Xu Xinming to leave and carried some hope. He Yi wasn’t a toothless tiger who had no way to take Xu Xinming out. If Xu Xinming couldn’t perform well, he would be kicked to a corner. If Li Dawei behaved the same way, He Yi wouldn’t go soft on him either.

He had to let the newbies understand that he was the minister in the ministry, not some English lecturer or professor in a university. Unless one was below the university level, under normal circumstances, a teacher would not stare at one’s homework every day, take a red pen out, and mark out everything clearly on it. That’s ridiculous!

Thinking of the two newbies in the department, He Yi couldn’t help but start to carefully consider who would be the more appropriate out of the two to do menial tasks. After all, after receiving their due salary from the country, there should be other things for Xu Xinming and Li Dawei to do if they couldn’t be in his department.

He had to find out what these two were good at and make the best use out of them. After all, he had to match their monthly salary with their contributions.

Xu Xinming and Li Dawei didn’t know that not only did He Yi not want to give them a chance to develop themselves, but he was also considering what position to arrange for them so that they could showcase their passion and shine. Did they really think they could slack off, spend each day leisurely, and get their salary comfortably at the end of each month? How was there such a good thing in this world?

Xu Xinming and Li Dawei had to be worthy of all the taxpayers’ money in China, right?

“Ahchoo!”

“Ahchoo.”

Xu Xinming and Li Dawei, whom He Yi was muttering about, couldn't help but sneeze, startling the people in the office. “Did they catch a cold by any chance?” If that was the case, they had to pay attention so that they could avoid getting infected.

“No.” Xu Xinming shook his head. “My nose was just itchy for a while. Perhaps the air conditioner was too strong?” The air conditioner in the department was centralized. Once it was switched on fully, the temperature would drop rapidly. However, no one in the office wore short-sleeved shirts or shorts. They were all wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants.

Li Dawei stood up and walked toward Qiao Nan. “Qiao Nan, take a look at this. Am I right to write it in this manner?” Li Dawei was older than Qiao Nan, but Qiao Nan entered the ministry earlier than Li Dawei. As such, both of them addressed each other directly by their names.

Compared to Deng Wenchang, whose attitude changed according to his mood, Qiao Nan was more objective. She would help point out some problems. However, Qiao Nan was unwilling to help others at the moment. “Li Dawei, if I didn't remember wrongly, you made a grammatical mistake here. You have already asked me this a week ago. It's the same grammatical mistake. It's just that the scenario has changed. You're wrong again?”

Not only did Deng Wenchang not like these two newbies, but Qiao Nan didn't feel good about Xu Xinming and Li Dawei either. Qiao Nan used to be curious about Deng Wenchang's performance. Was that all an international student was capable of?

Or was it that Deng Wenchang was considered a scum among the people educated overseas?

Qiao Nan understood that Deng Wenchang was already considered not bad only after knowing Xu Xinming and Li Dawei.

Chapter 1455: Banding Together to Defeat a Newbie

As for her performance, it would not be out of place to describe it as extraordinarily unique.

As she read quite a lot, she almost had no free time at all. In addition, she had a wide circle of friends. If she needed to find any book—even if exceptionally rare ones—there would always be someone who would help her find it. In some ways, she already had some advantage by reading more and remembering more.

Besides, with the foundation from her previous life, she was already on a different level compared to the others. While she was in junior high school, her classmates were still learning simple sentences. As long as Qiao Nan was willing, she could easily pass the level four and level six tests for English. In the few years that followed, Qiao Nan had never been negligent about English just because she had an additional lifetime of experience.

Coincidentally, after she acknowledged Yuan Kang as a master, Qiao Nan's knowledge had become so profound that domestic college students and even foreign college students of the same age could not match up.

In this way, even though Qiao Nan, Deng Wenchang, and all the others differed greatly in their ages, Qiao Nan was not lacking in any knowledge when compared to Deng Wenchang just because she had been born a few years later.

She knew she was extraordinarily unique. And after having known Deng Wenchang for more than five years, having officially been colleagues for four, Qiao Nan could tell that Deng Wenchang was extremely petty. While observing and narrow-mindedly comparing between the opportunities and treatments given to the two of them, Deng Wenchang was constantly improving himself at the same time.

Unlike Xu Xinming and Li Dawei who performed poorly when they had just entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She had treated these two as complete newbies who had just arrived and could not adapt to this new environment. Slowly, the situation might change.

But who would have known that in almost an entire year, Xu Xinming and Li Dawei did not make any progress. Every time Xu Xinming encountered a problem, he would go to Deng Wenchang for help. It was as though Li Dawei was collaborating with Xu Xinming. Every time Li Dawei encountered a problem, the person he would go to was always Qiao Nan. Other than Qiao Nan, there was no one else whom he would go to.

“Really? Is that so?” Upon hearing Qiao Nan's words, Li Dawei flushed with embarrassment. “I don't seem to have any impression of that.”

Although Qiao Nan's voice was not loud, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was rather quiet most of the time. As such, no matter how soft Qiao Nan's voice was, it was always very noticeable in the office. "How about this? I'll check it through again myself. I'm so sorry to trouble you again."

With lightning speed, Li Dawei took back all the information that he had just handed over to Qiao Nan. After returning to his seat, he took out his pen and made corrections with a pretended air of importance. The sight of this was enough to render someone speechless.

"..." Qiao Nan was the most dumbfounded. If she ever had the chance, she had to ask her senior about his thoughts. Why did he have to leave these two in such unsuitable positions?

Today's incident was not even the first time it had happened. Li Dawei would commit the same mistakes that he had committed before after some time. He would even present them to Qiao Nan for approval, without any knowledge of his mistakes.

This was really too careless. Truly meticulous people who are eager to learn would prepare a notebook and jot their mistakes down. Once they have time, they would then read through the notebook to refresh their memory and consolidate their knowledge. As a matter of fact, that was already a foolish way of working hard.

People who are truly intelligent would never search for the answers and memorize them by rote only after the problem appears. People who are truly intelligent will take the initiative to find the problem and fully understand it even before the problem appears.

Xu Xinming and Li Dawei could not do the latter, but they were nowhere near close to even the edge of the former.

Even if Qiao Nan's temper was good and she did not take issue with how Xu Xinming and Li Dawei would occasionally look at her with contempt and disdain, Qiao Nan had never been soft with her admonishments in situations like this. She would never be gentler with her words or let them off easily just because Li Dawei was a 'newbie' or because men were afraid to be embarrassed.

The word 'uncivilized' was really apt in describing people like Li Dawei.



Was it because Xu Xinming and Li Dawei felt that Deng Wenchang and Qiao Nan were the youngest ‘seniors’ in the department other than them? Or was it because they thought that it would be easier to communicate with Deng Wenchang and Qiao Nan since they were of the same age?

Even if such a situation occurred today, if anything happened the next day, Xu Xinming would still go to Deng Wenchang, and Li Dawei to Qiao Nan to ask for ‘advice’.

The thought of such a situation made Qiao Nan’s gaze darken.

A year’s kindness was more than enough. A senior would normally guide a junior for at most one or two months. No one would do it for a whole year or two! If Li Dawei was not willing to stop this, she would have to find a way to prevent Li Dawei from coming to bother her in the future.

“How’s it going? Have you thought of a solution?” Deng Wenchang’s voice rang out close to Qiao Nan. Lifting up her head, Qiao Nan was taken aback by Deng Wenchang’s closeness to her. “Why are you here? And what solution?”

Ever since she changed her seating arrangement, she was no longer seated next to Deng Wenchang. Deng Wenchang knew that Qiao Nan had specifically arranged it as such so as to distance herself from him. The arrogant Deng Wenchang was still unwilling for Qiao Nan to be seated too close to him. In these four years, Deng Wenchang had always made it a point to arrogantly walk around Qiao Nan’s seat instead of directly walking past by her seat.

It had already been four years, and this was the first time did Deng Wenchang not only not make a detour around Qiao Nan’s desk, but he even took the initiative to talk to Qiao Nan!

“What else could it be?” Deng Wenchang frowned. “It’s fine. You don’t have to pretend in front of me. Or do you feel that it’s inconvenient to speak here? We can find somewhere to chat after work. I’m annoyed.” Those people who relied on connections to enter the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were not scary. It was the existence of people like Xu Xinming and Li Dawei that was really destructive.

“I don’t understand. What kind of place is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs? Do you mean any kind of Tom, Dick, and Harry can enter our department to pass their time? There are so many talents in China. Since we have positions, shouldn’t we leave them for those with ability? We’re really not prioritizing national interests by giving our positions to people like that.”

If he could, Deng Wenchang really wanted to ask He Yi personally how these two fools managed to enter the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Deng Wenchang did not even use vicious names to name these two fools. It could be seen that Deng Wenchang's patience towards Xu Xinming and Li Dawei had already run dry.

Based on how Deng Wenchang clenched his jaw and gritted his teeth when mentioning the names of those two, Qiao Nan was sure that Deng Wenchang was prepared to be more merciless than her. Her only request was that Xu Xinming and Li Dawei be out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Chapter 1456: With Comparison Comes Hurt

One should not disturb her work, let alone do something that would encumber the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and ruin the country's dignity and interests.

The difference was that Deng Wenchang seemed to be determined to chase these two people out from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"They are not completely useless. But I do admit that they might not be suitable for their positions. I don't have any good solutions. My only solution is to ignore them. In the future, no matter what Li Dawei asks me, I'll ignore him and say that I don't know anything." Qiao Nan shrugged, expressing that she was not as ruthless as Deng Wenchang.

To think that Deng Wenchang had initially thought that she was just a pretty face that had pulled on some strings to enter the department and that he would not need much effort to kick her out of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"The benevolence of women." Deng Wenchang eyed Qiao Nan contemptuously before taking his leave happily. Deng Wenchang could take Qiao Nan's words for what they were. If Qiao Nan was really determined, along with help from the Zhai family, he would never have been able to survive so long in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs so peacefully.

If Qiao Nan was not going to do it, then he would have to personally take care of Xu Xinming and Li Dawei. He did not believe that He Yi did not have anything to say about newbies like that. He was only afraid that He Yi would be willing to press on to see the success of these two people.

What Deng Wenchang wanted to do was beyond Qiao Nan's control. What Qiao Nan could control was her perseverance to the end. Ever since Qiao Nan said that to Deng Wenchang, Qiao Nan strengthened her resolve. As long as Li Dawei came asking Qiao Nan for information, she would refuse to respond. She either replied that she was too busy and had no time for him, or simply coldly rejected him by saying that she did not know either.

With such words and such an attitude, she had made it painfully obvious.

Li Dawei was also one who cared about his dignity. He had not expected Qiao Nan to suddenly become so cold toward him after a whole year. Moreover, it was the kind of coldness where there was not even a sliver of warmth. She completely refused him. Li Dawei's face darkened and he could not help but scold Qiao Nan in his heart. What was there to be proud of?

No matter how amazing or powerful Qiao Nan was, she was still nothing but a woman. She would never be the head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

He would wait for Minister He Yi to step down from his position. And then, when the new minister took over, he would forge a good relationship with the new minister. When that time came, he would show Qiao Nan what he was worth!

If he was not a newbie, Li Dawei would not even be willing to take on such tasks. He would be more than willing to throw them into the hands of Qiao Nan in the name of giving a newbie more opportunities to practice. If anything went wrong, Qiao Nan would take the blame. But if she did well, that was all because he had taught her well. Without his guidance, how would Qiao Nan be able to perform so well?

It was such a pity that Li Dawei entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a few years after Qiao Nan.

Li Dawei could only dream of such a wonderful work-life from time to time. In reality, even if he had never addressed Qiao Nan, neither had he put up a haughty or arrogant attitude in front of Qiao Nan. Otherwise, Qiao Nan would not even have to do anything. With so many seniors in the department, just one word from each senior would harass Li Dawei so much that he would not dare to go to work for a few days.

Qiao Nan's reply was that she did not know. But when Xu Xinming went to ask Deng Wenchang for help, Deng Wenchang was much more impatient. "Why do you always have problems? Did you not learn properly while you were in school? Or did your teachers and professors not teach you well? If that's the case, I have two suggestions for you. If the problem is you, then please go back and learn. Don't be like a primary school student who simply goes to the teacher for help when you encounter

a problem. You don't even want to solve it by yourself. Of course, if the problem lies with your teacher, then shall I recommend some reliable and more knowledgeable teachers to you?"

Deng Wenchang was already thirty years old but was still childless. However, when faced with Xu Xinming, he felt as though he was taking care of his son.

If he were to have any children in the future, and if they were going to be anything like Xu Xinming, Deng Wenchang would rather be childless for the rest of his life. He would much rather be like those westerners who worked their whole lives and not have children. Anyway, there were too many people in China. The state restricted childbirth and advocated the idea of giving birth to only one child.

Even if it was just responding actively to the national policy, it would be better not to have this child if possible—or as late as possible.

Otherwise, if he had a child like Xu Xinming, Deng Wenchang would probably want to kill himself.

In any case, with Deng Wenchang and Qiao Nan putting up their fronts and attitudes, Xu Xinming and Li Dawei no longer had the cheek to turn to these two 'elders' for help just as when they were newbies in the past.

Seeing this situation, many seniors in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sniggered. This should have been the way since a long time ago. If it were them, they would have long ignored these lazy youngsters. There was a difference between newbies as well. Even if Deng Wenchang thought highly about himself, other than Qiao Nan whom he could not match up to, he was miles ahead of Xu Xinming and Li Dawei!

Under such circumstances, people in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs really had no need to pay any attention to Xu Xinming or Li Dawei. With tempers like those two, there was only one word to describe them wanting to be a part of the family: impossible.

But there was no way to teach this. Qiao Nan had to stand up on her own. As such, when Qiao Nan finally strengthened her resolve, there was not a single person in the office who felt that Qiao Nan was being a hard-hearted senior. Rather, they felt that Qiao Nan had been too kindhearted to have put up with her juniors up until today.

Unlike Deng Wenchang, who had been frustrated for a long time. If Qiao Nan had not continued to put up with her juniors, Deng Wenchang would have started ignoring Xu Xinming long ago.

As a newbie in the same batch, Deng Wenchang had waited for a long time, expecting Qiao Nan to say something about the situation so that he would not seem mean and harsh to the newbies.

Once Deng Wenchang and Qiao Nan hardened their attitudes, Xu Xinming and Li Dawei had no other choice. The duo could only come together to think of a solution. After all, it would be impossible for either of them to stay in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, much less progress in their careers if they performed poorly.

“Hello, I’m the mother of Zhai Yi, Zhai Xin, and Zhai Yu. I’ll be a little late today. Can you please ask Teacher Yu to look after my three children for half an hour? I will rush down to the school and pick up my children within an hour after school ends.” As she had a lot on her plate, it was inevitable that she would be bound up with work.

At such a time, everyone in the department was usually busy at the same time and no one could leave first.

Even though He Yi knew that Qiao Nan needed to pick her children up and offered to take over part of Qiao Nan’s work to allow her to leave earlier, Qiao Nan herself refused!

#### Chapter 1457: Striving for a Good Performance

Of course, if her work efficiency was high enough and she could complete the task in advance, nobody would talk bad about her if she made a move first.

No matter how fast Qiao Nan rushed, she could only make herself half an hour late.

Worried that the children couldn’t wait and would head home themselves first, Qiao Nan sent a short message to the children’s headmaster, Teacher Yu, when she went to the washroom. Thankfully, the three children were in the same class. Otherwise, Qiao Nan would have to send out similar messages thrice.

Within half a minute, the children’s headmaster agreed to it. Only then did Qiao Nan feel more at ease. She left the washroom in a rush.

Everyone in the office took Qiao Nan’s speed seriously. When Qiao Nan finished organizing the information on her hands and wanted to key them into her computer, the crisp sound of typing with the keyboard could be heard. In the quiet office, this sounded even stranger and more attractive.

Xu Xinming and Li Dawei looked at each other. This was the first time they saw Qiao Nan using a computer. They didn't know that Qiao Nan could type so quickly and she pretty much didn't need to look at the keyboard. From her typing speed and frequency, it was obvious that an average clerk couldn't be compared to Qiao Nan.

They turned back and thought about how they always stumbled in their typing and couldn't type much content in an hour. Xu Xinming's and Li Dawei's faces tightened. It was rare for them to be stunned at Qiao Nan's all-rounded ability.

After finishing her work, Qiao Nan hurriedly picked up her bag and was ready to leave to pick up the children.

However, Li Dawei blocked Qiao Nan's way when she just stood up and walked a few steps. Qiao Nan's facial expression immediately turned ugly. "I'm sorry. Please get out of the way. My children are already out of school, so I have to hurry and pick them up." When the 27-year-old Qiao Nan was in the unit, not only could she generously mention that she was already a married woman, but she could also bring up the fact that she had children.

Li Dawei blushed and looked at this girl who was younger than her. Her face was like a blooming flower, and she looked younger than a female university student.

Li Dawei wasn't young anymore. Although he was unmarried, he never stopped having girlfriends. The first time he entered the ministry, he was surprised by Qiao Nan's looks. He felt lucky that not only was there a female in the department, but more importantly, this female was so pretty.

Who knew that once Li Dawei had such a mindset, the seniors in the unit quickly reminded him that Qiao Nan was already married with children. At that point in time, Li Dawei felt that his face had been stepped on. That was the first day he entered the ministry and he had already made such an embarrassing mistake.

Undoubtedly, the seniors in the unit spoke to him in such a manner because they noticed something was amiss by the way Li Dawei looked at Qiao Nan.

It could be said that Li Dawei had made a big joke the moment he entered the ministry. Even if no one should know about this, he would, at the very most, just look at Qiao Nan a while longer if he felt his heart wavering. He had never pursued Qiao Nan and didn't confess to her before. After

sorting out his thoughts, Li Dawei chose to completely forget the incident that happened on his first day of work.

Who knew that Qiao Nan would suddenly reply in such a manner? Even if Qiao Nan didn't mean it, Li Dawei felt uncomfortable in his heart that Qiao Nan mentioned she was going to the school to pick up her children. He felt that Qiao Nan was being sarcastic to him. "Qiao Nan, everyone is still busy working. It's not too good if you leave first, right? Our department is a very united place. Since you do it fast, why don't you help everyone out?"

Most importantly, Li Dawei had too many things on his hands and couldn't complete them.

Even if he was willing to work overtime today, he couldn't complete the task. As soon as he was at work tomorrow, he would have to continue doing the work from the day before. Li Dawei didn't want to do such hard work. Anyway, Qiao Nan had already completed hers. Nothing was wrong if she helped everyone shoulder a little bit of work so that everyone could complete the task as soon as possible.

By doing so, Qiao Nan would help improve their ministry's unity.

Qiao Nan rubbed her lips tightly and said, "Li Dawei, some things need to be made clear. It hasn't been a year since you joined the ministry. As such, you might not be clear about the matters in the ministry. I feel that if you don't know the situation, you shouldn't voice out. I have interned at the ministry for half a year now, and I have worked for more than four years. It's not the first time that we have encountered a workload like today. In the past, a similar situation like today had never happened before. Why is it that we must make exceptions now that you're here?"

So many people in the ministry didn't ask her for help before. How did Li Dawei become so thick-skinned to have said that they should help one another out so that the whole department could become more united?

Sure, she could help. However, who was going to help her pick up the triplets?

"Okay, you don't have to tell me anything. Let me make this clear. Before your arrival, our ministry had never encountered such a mess before. Everyone has their own workload. We should be maintaining the work attitude of each performing its own functions. We can only improve the ministry's operations if we complete our own tasks. I'll give you a suggestion. If you really want to strengthen the ministry's unity, as long as you do something well, I believe our ministry will become more united."

Knowing that Li Dawei wasn't someone who gave up easily, Qiao Nan interrupted Li Dawei and didn't give him a chance to speak. Since she gave him face and he didn't want it, Qiao Nan felt that there wasn't a need to give Li Dawei any face anymore. "You and Xu Xinming have already joined the ministry for a period of time. Back when Deng Wenchang and I joined the ministry, we practically didn't have the same kind of performance as the both of you. I feel that if you could improve your personal capabilities and not cause others trouble, I believe that without your other efforts, our department would definitely not be disunited."

At this point in time, Qiao Nan's patience for Li Dawei broke.

She didn't understand. Li Dawei obviously knew what his shortcomings were. Why didn't he try to improve himself but engage in such cheap tricks every day instead? Did water enter his brain? Did he really think that the ministry purely relied on brains to get things done and emotional intelligence to improve relationships with others?

"Do you understand?" After Qiao Nan said these, Li Dawei didn't reply for a long time. "Seeing at how moved you look, needless to say, you have must have understood it and are feeling ashamed. No matter what, it's never too late to make amendments. Change your shortcomings in the future and try not to cause trouble to other colleagues."

Chapter 1458: Stabbing Back

"Firstly, you have to complete your task with 100% quality. Don't worry. We will continue to look at you like the same way before. We would definitely not look at you with tinted glasses or distrust purely because of your poor work performance before."

After saying this last sentence, Qiao Nan stepped forward and brushed past Li Dawei. She rushed out faster than before.

Qiao Nan was late for another five minutes because of Li Dawei. If she continued to delay Teacher Yu from knocking off work, she would feel embarrassed. Also, Qiao Nan was worried that the triplets were anxious while waiting.

When she thought of how the triplets were waiting for her in school, Qiao Nan, who was walking quickly, hated Li Dawei even more. It looked like she was too 'gentle' to Li Dawei just now. She should have used simpler and ruder words to make Li Dawei feel ashamed. If the triplets threw temper later because she was late, she would definitely deal with Li Dawei the next time she saw him!



Once Qiao Nan left the office building, a car directly stopped in front of her. Qiao Nan, who was already furious, glared at it. She nearly wanted to kick this car that was in her way and leave a footmark. However, upon thinking that the car was made from iron and that the footmark could be wiped off easily, Qiao Nan held it back.

The more anxious she was, the more things were crowded together. Qiao Nan told herself not to be angry and anxious and that the triplets were still in school waiting for her.

Before Qiao Nan could walk around the car, the car windows were winded down. A cute and familiar face was revealed and she shouted sweetly, “Mom! We are here with Dad to pick you up from work!”

For the triplets, today was really a huge surprise.

Their father was a big hero outside and the triplets only saw him a few times each year. Seeing that he suddenly returned, the triplets were so happy that they screamed with joy in school. They pulled their classmates and introduced to them, saying, “This is my dad.” Their classmates were only short of replying, “Why are you so happy? It’s as if we don’t have fathers and you’re the only ones who have one.”

After that, they heard their dad saying that he was going to bring them along to pick their mom up and became even happier. Although they were so grown up now, they had never picked their mom up before. It was always their mom who drove to pick the triplets up and head home.

Once they reached the office building where their mom worked, before their dad could give her a call for her to head downstairs, they already saw their mom walking out from the door and standing in front of their dad’s car. This must be the legendary ‘great minds think alike’!

“San Bao, the three of you and dad came to pick me up from work?” Qiao Nan was stunned and didn’t understand what her youngest daughter meant. After Qiao Nan blinked and recovered, she looked toward the driver’s seat. Indeed, she saw a cold and eye-catching face. “Brother Zhai, when did you return?”

Zhai Sheng got down from the car and helped Qiao Nan open the passenger door so that she can sit in. “Just today.” When Zhai Sheng reached home, the triplets were about to end their lessons. He was afraid to miss the children, thus he didn’t leave the house. However, after realizing that the four

of them hadn't reached home when they should have, Zhai Sheng drove over to the school where the triplets were studying first.

This was the first time Zhai Sheng went to the triplets' school after they started attending primary school.

After confirming that Zhai Sheng was really the triplets' father, Teacher Yu agreed to let him pick them up. Through Teacher Yu, Zhai Sheng knew that Qiao Nan knocked off work late today. As such, he brought the triplets along to pick Qiao Nan up from work. It was really rare for the family of five to have a day like today.

After Zhai Sheng pulled open the car door, Qiao Nan naturally sat in the passenger's seat. "Specially came back to celebrate the triplets' birthday?" Qiao Nan smiled. The triplets had been going to school for a month and it was National Day soon. This meant that the triplets' birthday was coming soon as well. It was said that after becoming a soldier, he would care about the nation but not the family. However, Qiao Nan felt that Zhai Sheng did a great job.

For example, Zhai Sheng really spent very little time at home in a year. However, he would try to spend his vacation days on days that were of special significance to his family. The day the triplets were born was naturally the most memorable. As such, wherever possible, Zhai Sheng would try to take a few days off at the end of September.

Even if Qiao Nan was already used to Zhai Sheng's practice, there were always sudden situations in Zhai Sheng's army. Qiao Nan didn't want to get the children's hopes up as they would be more disappointed in the end. As such, she didn't mention this scenario. As time passed and Qiao Nan was busy with work, she only remembered that it was the end of September when she saw Zhai Sheng return. There was at least a 70% possibility that Zhai Sheng returned home because of that.

"Yes." Of course, it was also to see his wife. "A lot of work today?" He heard from his mother that Nan Nan was late for quite a bit today.

"It's nothing. There's just a heavy workload. What I have a headache over is that there are two troublesome newbies who joined the ministry. I could suddenly understand how disgusted Deng Wenchang felt in his heart over my appearance when I joined the ministry later than him back then." The arrival of a newbie meant that there was going to be a lot of trouble.

Initially, Deng Wenchang treated her like a bimbo and was disgusted. After that, he was naturally disgusted because her ability was above his.

“Poor working ability?” Zhai Sheng understood how Qiao Nan was feeling. Regardless of where it was, there would inevitably be one or two of such scenarios. Whenever Zhai Sheng encountered such a thing, he would just throw the person to the corner without saying a word.

After training, if the person’s ability wasn’t bad, Zhai Sheng was willing to give him a chance to perform. If the situation was the same as before, and that person kept complaining about the tough training, then it was even easier for Zhai Sheng. After kicking this person to a corner, Zhai Sheng would no longer bother about him and treated him as if he didn’t exist.

What was different was that Zhai Sheng had great power and could make such arrangements. He could first allow them to train their capabilities before deciding if he should give them a chance. If they weren’t capable, then no chances would be given!

However, Qiao Nan couldn’t do so. She was just an ordinary employee. Even if Xu Xinming and Li Dawei were not pleasing to the eye, aside from her being able to kick Li Dawei back when he came looking for trouble, there was nothing more Qiao Nan could do.

“It’s nothing to have a poor working ability. The attitudes of these two newbies are very extreme. They know that they have poor capabilities but are unwilling to work hard to improve themselves. They are just like primary school children, treating their task like an assessment and keep asking around for comments. I’m not afraid of children being stupid. I’m afraid that after teaching them, they wouldn’t be hardworking.”

#### Chapter 1459: Saying Strange Words

“I have already explained a point to him once. After the matter’s done, he didn’t revise and digest the information. When he encountered the same problem, he still got it wrong and even came to find me. Damn it!”

In front of the three children, Qiao Nan had already tried her best not to use swear words. However, she was really angered by Li Dawei. She had not encountered such a situation before with her triplets at home, let alone an adult like Li Dawei. Her children were still studying in primary school. As long as she explained a problem and the children expressed their understanding, they wouldn’t make a mistake again when encountering a similar problem.

Qiao Nan felt that Li Dawei was hopeless because he didn’t digest the information he was taught. “I feel that this person is probably lazy. He will do his work once, and let others pick out his mistakes afterward. That’s easy and simple. I find it strange then. I’m doing double work but am I being paid double?”

“What’s his name?” Aside from Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi, Zhai Sheng rarely heard Qiao Nan’s tone being so bad when mentioning a person. Zhai Sheng’s eyes shone. The person Nan Nan was talking about was really a ‘genius’.

Qiao Nan turned her face and looked at Zhai Sheng. “What do you want to do?”

“Nothing.” Zhai Sheng smiled. “He’s from your department, not my army. No matter what I think, I won’t be able to do anything to him.” Of course, unless this person had relatives who were his men. Zhai Sheng would occasionally take it out on others as well.

Qiao Nan snorted, expressing that he didn’t believe Zhai Sheng’s words. However, Qiao Nan didn’t hide Li Dawei’s name and said it out loud.

“Li Dawei.” Sigh. Once Qiao Nan said this name, Zhai Sheng immediately realized that the world was huge but things were always so coincidental. “It looks like people from the Li family like to go this route.” One of them went to the army while the other went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Did the people from the Li family think that every department in China was part of their backyard? Wherever there was a good place, they would just stuff their children there. They wouldn’t even take a look to see if their children had the strength and ability in the first place. If not for giving the Li family face, would the person surnamed Li in the army last for so long?

Qiao Nan rolled her eyes. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs wasn’t the only place the Li family was eyeing. They wanted to have some influence in Zhai Sheng’s army as well. Qiao Nan drank a sip of water and quickly changed the topic with Zhai Sheng because the three children were still in the backseat.

If it were other children, Qiao Nan wouldn’t be too worried. However, once they grew up, Qiao Nan had to worry about a lot more. Her children were too smart, especially Da Bao. Not only did he understand a lot of words, but he even knew how to analyze and remember things.

Qiao Nan had to start from herself and try her best not to put too much burden and pressure on Da Bao.

From the rearview mirror, she saw Da Bao pulling a long face and listening carefully to what they were saying. Qiao Nan felt disheartened and smiled. “Da Bao, did you forget what you promised me earlier?”

Da Bao blinked. “You two have said so yourselves. Er Bao and San Bao had listened as well. Without earmuffs, I can’t cover my ears.” It was purely because he was ‘forced’ to listen to everything today. His mom couldn’t put the blame on him. He had kept his agreement with her and tried his best not to consider these matters.

Er Bao and San Bao were implicated by Da Bao before they could understand what their mother’s words meant. Er Bao widened his eyes at Da Bao, with an expression that spelled ‘I really didn’t expect you to be such a person’. Even San Bao looked like she suffered a huge attack. “Da Bao, you have become bad!”

“Cough.” Da Bao cleared his throat and pretended to look away calmly, focusing on the scenery outside the car. However, his blushing ears revealed that Da Bao wasn’t used to doing such things and he was feeling shy.

It was rare for the Zhai family to be reunited. The Zhai family enjoyed their dinner well. Among them, Old Master Zhai was the most obvious in showing this. He even got Miao Jing to bring out the best wine in the house. He took a small sip. “When I was young, I loved drinking wine. It’s a pity that your mother was strict and didn’t allow me to drink as she felt that it would be harmful to my body. I continued to drink a lot in my lifetime. When I fought in wars, I suffered a lot of injuries. At that point in time, your mother kept crying and asked why I didn’t cherish myself. If something happened to me, what would she and Yaohui do?”

“Dad?” Miao Jing’s heart moved and she raised her eyebrows. She felt that it was strange for Old Master Zhai to be saying these words. “Aren’t you doing well?”

Zhai Yaohui became silent. He naturally had a deeper impression of his mother than anyone else but was still second to Old Master Zhai. After Miao Jing married him and gave birth to Zhai Hua and Zhai Sheng, he lost his mother not too long later.

When his mother was gone, Zhai Yaohui knew that his father didn’t want to continue living. He wanted to die together with his wife. However, his father couldn’t do so. He was still young and didn’t have a high rank in the army. If something happened to Old Master Zhai then as well, then the Zhai family would have collapsed by now.

The Zhai family's perseverance didn't fall but instead became stronger and stronger. This was all thanks to Old Master Zhai, who hung in there when he was young.

Everyone else thought that Old Master Zhai, who had been seriously ill before, managed to pull through for the sake of everyone in the family and that he couldn't bear to leave his two grandsons. Only Zhai Yaohui knew that Old Master Zhai could hang in there until today because before his mother left, she pulled Old Master Zhai's hand and said, "Old Zhai, my body hasn't been good since I was young, thus I only managed to give birth to a son, Yaohui. However, our Yaohui can win against all the other children in other families. Old Zhai, it could be said that I didn't disappoint your family."

"I'll leave earlier. I have already guessed this in my heart. Old Zhai, you have to promise me. We only have this one son and it took great pains for us to have grandchildren. You have to help me keep an eye on them more. When you're old, it's a huge blessing to have five generations in the family. Old Zhai, if our family works hard enough, can you take a look at the four generations on my behalf?"

Zhai Sheng's grandma's health was really not good. She had been ill ever since she was in her mother's womb. When Zhai Sheng's grandma was still young, a lot of people in the same village felt that she had the life of a servant. Nobody would dare to marry a girl like her. Within a couple of days of marriage, the bride could be gone and it would simply be too unlucky.

However, nobody expected that the most good-looking and capable man in the village, Old Master Zhai, would fancy her, a girl who was despised by everyone.

#### Chapter 1460: Intensifying

Knowing that this lady was weak, could not work after marriage, and had to recuperate, a bunch of people advised Old Master Zhai to marry anyone but this sick woman. Then, that person could at least take care of the family.

But it was as though Old Master Zhai had fallen under a spell. He insisted on marrying this lady.

Three years after the two married, she was still not pregnant. As such, there were rumors that this lady had already been plagued with illness the moment she was born. It seemed like not only would her lifespan be short, but she was also barren.

Right at this time, the Second World War broke out. There was chaos within the country and people's lives were particularly hard.

It was said that Old Master Zhai made a decision to become a soldier based on one incident. Japan had invaded China and had committed countless atrocities. In particular, the 'Three Alls' policy generated hate from the Chinese. In Old Master Zhai's village, there was a good harvest every year. And thus, it was only natural that it caught their attention.

Old Master Zhai heard that the Japanese insulted Chinese women upon seeing them and his eyes burned with fury. Upon confirming the information that a small Japanese band of soldiers with guns was coming to his village to rob the villagers, Old Master Zhai made up his mind. He banded together with the villagers and wiped out all the Japanese troops at once.

After burying these Japanese troops, Old Master Zhai took the Japanese guns and bullets for himself and organized a village militia to protect the village.

When an officer of the Red Army heard of this, he spotted some innate talent in Old Master Zhai and wanted to put such a talent to good use. Old Master Zhai's family was rather well-to-do in the village. When he was younger, Old Master Zhai even studied in the town's private school. Thus, he was literate and civilized.

If it was not for his excellent family background, Old Master Zhai would not be so popular amongst the village girls.

Then again, because Old Master Zhai was literate, his experiences were different from the ordinary folks'. He knew that he had to protect his country if he wanted to protect his family. Even if he was able to protect his family alongside the villagers, he knew that as long as China did not win over Japan and chased the Japanese out of the country, such an incident was bound to happen again and again.

If he wanted to protect his family, he would first have to protect the nation.

And so, Old Master Zhai made a decision that shocked the whole village. He decided to join the army.

Upon hearing such an answer, everyone was dumbfounded. The lady whom Old Master Zhai had married was not in good health and neither was she delicate. But Old Master Zhai liked her.

Everyone in the village knew that Old Master Zhai treated his wife like a gem. This lady had probably accumulated luck over a few lifetimes to meet such a good man like Old Master Zhai.

But the problem was that once Old Master Zhai joined the army, there would be no one to take care of this frail and weak lady. Was Old Master Zhai really willing to leave his wife without anyone to take care of her? Was he not afraid that without his care, she would not be able to take it and would pass on just like that?

Of course, Old Master Zhai was not such an unreliable person. Before leaving, he made arrangements for Grandma Zhai's life. Grandma Zhai was extremely supportive of Old Master Zhai's career and told Old Master Zhai that she had survived and lived well for eighteen years before marrying him.

There was no reason that she would not be able to take care of herself and starve herself to death only three years after marrying him. She would much rather rely on herself. She promised to take good care of herself and await the return of Old Master Zhai.

After the couple agreed on it, Old Master Zhai took with him only one set of clothes and two pairs of shoes that his wife had made for him and joined the army. Coincidentally, the night before he left, the woman who had become known in the village as the precious hen who could not lay eggs became pregnant.

Fortunately, the timing could be matched. Grandma Zhai did not like to go out, and neither did she have any goings with other men. With Old Master Zhai in the army, the villagers were also willing to help take care of Grandma Zhai. All the village elders and men knew that the baby in Grandma Zhai's stomach had to be Old Master Zhai's.

Ten months later, a baby was born.

The moment Zhai Yaohui opened his eyes, there was not a single person in the village who questioned whom the father of this child might be. Just based on Zhai Yaohui's face, which looked like it had been formed from the same mold as Old Master Zhai, alone, there would be no one who would believe that the two were not father and son.

Grandma Zhai had survived through such arduous times. And even without her husband at her side, she brought up a strong baby all the same. Gradually, the villagers changed their attitudes toward Grandma Zhai. Although her body was a little weak, she could still have children, raise children, and take care of the family. She was really not a bad woman.



In the days that Old Master Zhai was not by their side, everyone thought that Grandma Zhai and Zhai Yaohui were living comfortably. Only Zhai Yaohui knew just how hard it was for his mother to raise him. If it was not for him, his mother would not be in such poor health. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, she did not enjoy many years of happiness before she passed on. Thankfully, she did have the chance to see her grandchildren.

The early death of Grandma Zhai could be said to be an old sore of Old Master Zhai and Zhai Yaohui that couldn't be touched.

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Even after so many years, Old Master Zhai still could not forget Grandma Zhai. But he rarely spoke about Grandma Zhai in front of his whole family. As such, it was no wonder Miao Jing was so taken aback when he had suddenly mentioned it today.

“Dad, eat more vegetables.” Miao Jing had a little impression of her mother-in-law. When she had just married into the family, her mother-in-law was already ill in bed and they saw each other at most twice a day. Every time she went to look after her mother-in-law, the smell of medicine was stinging. Of course, it was not that Miao Jing was unwilling to take care of her sick mother-in-law. But as long as it concerned Grandma Zhai, Old Master Zhai did not like others to interfere and preferred to do it himself.

Old Master Zhai had said that because of the war, he had only had a mere three years of time that he was able to properly spend with her after marriage. Now that their daughter-in-law had married into the family and the country was at peace, he could finally stay by Grandma Zhai's side.

When Zhai Sheng was born and weaned, Grandma Zhai could no longer take it and passed on in the next spring.

While Old Master Zhai fought in the war, he had accumulated countless injuries and performed well. He had become a soldier early and made great achievements. With that, the people in charge acquiesced in Old Master Zhai's retirement and even gave Zhai Yaohui more opportunities to make up for Old Master Zhai's early retirement.

As Zhai Yaohui set his sights on climbing the ladder, Old Master Zhai had still not completely recovered from the pain of losing his wife. Miao Jing quietly took up the responsibility of caring for the family. She not only had to take care of her elders and her children, but when she went out, she

also had to endure Qi Minlan's ridicule and mockery. It could be said that the two to three years following Grandma Zhai's death were the hardest in Miao Jing's life.

When Zhai Yaohui defeated Shi Peng, Zhu Chengqi became the youngest middle-aged chief through his own efforts, skills, and outstanding performance, thus intensifying Qi Minlan's mockery of Miao Jing.