

RTAMM 1521

Chapter 1521: Came Knocking on Her Door

Everyone was little. Why was it that Baby Zhu and Xiao Bao could stay at Auntie Qiao's house but he couldn't and had to be forcibly kidnapped back home by his father?

That wasn't fair!

In the face of his son's cries, Gao Yan heartlessly suppressed them.

What a joke. He had already seen his son stick to Qiao Nan for the entire day. His son didn't even bother to call him dad. If he continued to let his son stay in the Zhai family, it wasn't certain who this son would belong to in the future. He couldn't possibly lose his son at the same time his wife's heart was 'stolen', right?

Fang Fang was suddenly happy after understanding clearly Gao Yan's misgivings and looking at her son's pitiful and wronged look. What Gao Yan was worried about seemed to have come true. It was a pity that Gao Yan, this silly father, still hadn't realized this yet. He still wholeheartedly thought that his son's heart belonged to him and he could firmly guard it.

Should she remind him?

After thinking for a while, Fang Fang felt that a white lie was necessary at times. As such, she didn't remind him.

"I heard San Bao mention that Xu Shengnan came over to find you today. After that, you didn't seem too happy?" Zhai Sheng came back at night. As Zhai Sheng progressed step by step, he eventually succeeded Zhai Yaohui and became the next Chief Zhai. Zhai Sheng naturally had more time at home as compared to when they first got married.

“San Bao is a bad child. Is she specially telling on me?” Qiao Nan casually splashed some water on her face, applied a layer of cream, and turned to look at Zhai Sheng. “She’s about to become your little spy. Tell me honestly. How many benefits have you given to San Bao such that she would agree to watch over me?”

Zhai Sheng still did what he did when they were newly-weds. He walked to Qiao Nan and carried her to the bed with a princess hug. He kissed Qiao Nan’s red lips. “If San Bao finds out that you’re saying this of her, she would be very upset. She wasn’t helping me watch over you and betraying you. She was concerned about you and afraid that something’s troubling you. She can’t be of help since she’s little, so she asked me, the great and capable father, to help.”

At the same time Zhai Sheng helped clarify the misunderstanding about San Bao, he didn’t forget to be narcissistic.

Being cared for by her husband and daughter at the same time, how would Qiao Nan be unhappy? “Senior Xu’s man is dishonest. He must have another woman outside.”

“...” Zhai Sheng frowned. He despised men who were irresponsible to their family. “Do you want to help?”

“Let’s see. If Senior Xu needs my help, I would definitely help. If she doesn’t, I don’t want to chip in either. We are all leading our own lives. What happens in the end depends on Senior Xu’s own decision.” It was just that there was little common ground for understanding between persons of differing principles. She could give up Chen Jun back then. Now, if Senior Xu chose to forgive in the end, she wouldn’t blame her. She would only feel that they had some differences in mindset and their relationship might not be as good as before if they continued to interact.

Qiao Nan saw a lot of examples where the wife chose to forgive the husband for having an affair. Very often, these wives didn’t manage to make their husbands change their minds because of their magnanimity.

Men who had tasted cheating seemed to be addicted. Eighty percent of them would have an affair again. After that, the couple would naturally fall into infinite pain and end up in a divorce after one party couldn’t tolerate any longer.

Such a process was too entangled and long. Qiao Nan knew that she didn’t have the patience to accompany Xu Shengnan to walk through such a difficult divorce. She couldn’t do it.

When she split up with Chen Jun, she had spent only three minutes. If she had spent so little time on herself, how would she spend so much time and effort on someone else? She was also someone with a family. Her triplets were going to junior high school this year as well.

“If you have an answer in your heart, don’t think about it anymore. If you really can’t sleep, let’s do something that can be beneficial to our husband-wife relationship?” Zhai Sheng was asking this, but his hands, which were unbuttoning the buttons on Qiao Nan’s pajamas, weren’t prepared to give Qiao Nan a chance to refuse.

“...” Qiao Nan secretly rolled her eyes. She didn’t understand how Zhai Sheng could change the topic to this. Should she compliment her man that he was really capable?

Qiao Nan and Zhai Sheng spent a fiery and passionate night. For everyone else, they had similarly rested well, except for a few.

The children considered the May 17 long holidays to be days where they could indulge in fun and happiness.

Even if the triplets were about to go to junior high school, Qiao Nan felt that there wasn’t a need for them to be in a hurry for these seven days. When it was time for them to relax, they should relax. As such, even though Qiao Nan wasn’t free to accompany them, Zhai Sheng, who was coincidentally free and at home, brought the triplets out to play for three days.

It was also within these three days that Qiao Nan bumped into Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, who came knocking on her door.

Qiao Nan drove to the entrance of the quad and saw Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, who were stopped outside the door. Qiao Nan’s face darkened. She honked the horn and captured Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin’s attention.

Ding Jiayi, who was kicking up a fuss and didn’t find her behavior to be rude and disgraceful, scolded when she heard the horn. “Even if you’re part of a cadre, you aren’t any better compared to us, ordinary citizens. We talk about equality now and should look at everyone through the same lenses. Isn’t it just a car? In Ping Cheng, my son-in-law has a car as well!”

Ding Jiayi couldn’t afford a small car. However, the Zhou family had one. Ding Jiayi had even sat in Zhou Zheng’s car a couple of times before.

“Mother.” Qiao Zijin’s face darkened. “At this time, why are you mentioning that person?” Zhou Zheng’s car was worth only a few dollars. How was it like the cars which could drive in and out of here freely? One could afford a house in their hometown of Ping Cheng with any one of these cars.

As a married woman who didn’t have much dowry, Qiao Zijin’s eyes shone when she thought of the house. She heard that Qiao Nan was rich. She didn’t want much. She only wanted Qiao Nan to give her a house. Ping Cheng was fine, but the best was in the capital!

“So be it.” Ding Jiayi snorted. At this time, she despised Zhou Zheng a little. Zhou Zheng wasn’t her only son-in-law. Between her two sons-in-law, not only was Zhou Zheng the worst, but he also paled too much in comparison to Zhai Sheng. Seeing the quad of the Zhai family and thinking about Zhou Zheng again, Ding Jiayi started to despise him.

Based on the Zhou family’s condition, they actually dared to hit Zijin. They were too gutsy.

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Honk! Honk!

“What are you honking for! Haven’t we already made way?” Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, who had already walked to the side, saw that the car behind didn’t make a move. Instead, the driver was honking at them and seemed to be very angry.

Chapter 1522: Two-Faced

Ding Jiayi replied impatiently, “Don’t think that I’m good to bully just because I haven’t entered yet. Let me tell you. My younger daughter lives here. My son-in-law is the chief. My in-law was the old chief of the army. If you dare to offend me, I’ll make sure you’ll end up in a sorry state.”

At the entrance of this quad, once Ding Jiayi thought of the Zhai family, she would be full of courage and confidence. She wasn’t afraid of the rest of the people in there at all.

Ding Jiayi knew that the people who lived here were ordinary cadres. Unless there were people who were willing to become the country’s leaders, they basically were no match for her son-in-law. One had to look at the master before hitting a dog. Furthermore, she was Zhai Sheng’s mother-in-law.

Qiao Zijin tugged at Ding Jiayi's shirt and said softly, "Mom, it seems to be Qiao Nan."

"What? That wretched—no, it is Qiao Nan?" Ding Jiayi held back her words in time. Qiao Nan had married well and she was now successful. She didn't dare to call her a wretched girl anymore. Ding Jiayi hurriedly looked over. Huh, it was really Qiao Nan. "Nan Nan, it's you. Have you returned from work? Let's talk at home?"

Qiao Nan opened the car door. "Get in."

"Ah, okay." Ding Jiayi's eyes shone and got into the car happily. See? She had said long ago that she had given birth to Qiao Nan and she was her daughter in this lifetime. Regardless of how she treated Qiao Nan in the past, Qiao Nan had to provide for her. Furthermore, there wasn't any overnight hatred between mother-and-daughter. The past had already passed.

Qiao Nan had never visited her for so many years. She didn't even mind that she only gave her a small amount of living expenses. It was rare to have a magnanimous mother like her. Qiao Nan had to count her blessings.

Qiao Zijin was surprised as well. She thought that based on Qiao Nan's behavior for the past few years, it was definitely impossible for her to bother with her and her mother, and the two of them had to work extremely hard to get into Qiao Nan's car and make her relent.

Ding Jiayi sat in the passenger's seat. Qiao Zijin naturally sat in the backseat.

"Fasten your seat belt."

"Ah?" Ding Jiayi didn't understand and blinked her eyes.

Qiao Nan pulled at the seat belt in front of her chest. "Fasten your seat belt."

Ding Jiayi said in dissatisfaction, "How do I fasten this? I don't know how to. Let's forget it. We're about to reach home anyway. Why do I have to fasten this? It looks uncomfortable." When she was in Zhou Zheng's car, Ding Jiayi didn't have a chance to sit in the passenger's seat. She naturally didn't come into contact with a seat belt.

Looking at the strap in front of her chest, Ding Jiayi naturally felt that once this belt was fastened, it would definitely feel uncomfortable.

Qiao Nan took a deep breath. She unfastened her seat belt first, stood up, helped Ding Jiayi put on her seat belt, then returned to her position. After this was done, Qiao Nan backed up, turned the car around, and drove out of the quad.

“Hey, hey, hey, aren’t you heading home? Where are you driving the car to? Where do you want to bring me to?” Ding Jiayi became anxious. This obviously wasn’t the way to the quad. Qiao Nan shouldn’t want to take her and Zijin out to the wilderness and abandon them there, right?

Qiao Zijin’s face changed as well. She couldn’t help but position her hand on the car door. “Qiao Nan, don’t do anything foolish. Think of your identity now. Furthermore, this is the capital. If something happens to me and Mom, you won’t be able to hold on to the minister’s position for long. The Zhou family knows that we came to the capital this time. If I don’t contact the Zhou family tonight, do you believe that they will call the police immediately? You can’t run away.”

Qiao Nan saw Qiao Zijin’s pale face from the rearview mirror and laughed coldly. “Oh, you share such a good relationship with the Zhou family, huh? I really couldn’t tell. Did Zhou Zheng decide to forgive you for making a cuckold out of him? Did the Zhou family decide not to take this matter to heart? I really didn’t expect Zhou Zheng to tolerate this. Your parents-in-law aren’t ordinary people as well. They are alright with you making a cuckold out of their son? Are they all ‘Ninja Turtles’?”

“...”

“Don’t worry. I won’t do anything illegal to the both of you and get myself into trouble. I’m not that stupid.” Both of you weren’t as valuable as me!

Qiao Nan stopped the car in front of a tea house.

Seeing that the place Qiao Nan parked her car was extremely lively and crowded, Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin felt safer. However, the mother-and-daughter pair still followed Qiao Nan closely. They were afraid that if it got too crowded and they didn’t take notice, Qiao Nan would have left them behind there.

“I want a room.”

“Okay, please follow me.” The waiter brought the three of them to a room. “Do you need any tea and snacks?”

Qiao Nan picked up the menu, casually pointed to a pot of tea and some set snacks, and got the waiter to prepare them. “Okay, say whatever you want now. Why did you come to the capital for no apparent reason? It shouldn’t be for travel, right? Also, Qiao Zijin, if you can’t continue your life now, don’t burden others. Just get a divorce. It’s cleaner that way.”

Brother Zhai had said before that among the Zhou family, Mother Zhou was the most aware of current affairs and wouldn’t do anything muddleheaded. As such, even though Father Zhou and Zhou Zheng might be more foolish, both of them listened to her words. At least, there wasn’t a big mess in the Zhou family before Qiao Zijin married over.

As to whether Mother Zhou could manage Qiao Zijin or not, that was another matter.

It was proven that Zhai Sheng had a very accurate eye for people. After all, Qiao Nan had led a peaceful life for many years—at least until today, where she met Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, these two ‘familiar faces’ again.

“Divorce? What divorce? Who said anything about a divorce? Will Zhou Zheng bear to leave me?” Qiao Zijin felt guilty and wasn’t willing to admit that she and Zhou Zheng were getting a divorce. “Don’t listen to hearsay. There’s nothing. Zhou Zheng and I are well.”

“If you and Zhou Zheng shared such a good relationship, would Zhou Zheng have caught you finding another man outside? Why do you think I would mention the divorce? I’m not sure if you want to get a divorce or not. What I know is that the Zhou family doesn’t want Zhou Zheng to continue spending his life with you.” She didn’t stop the Zhou family from getting a divorce. “Do you understand? It’s the Zhou family who wants Zhou Zheng to get a divorce with you.”

Upon mentioning Zhou Zheng, Ding Jiayi rubbed her lips tightly and didn’t dare to say anything.

“What are you doing? Don’t forget that I’m your sister. If not for me, would Zhou Zheng be your brother-in-law? Aren’t you helping the wrong person?” Qiao Zijin felt irritated at the mention of divorce. She initially did have some thoughts on this. However, she was now a little unwilling to get a divorce.

Chapter 1523: You Have to Provide For Me Too

She always felt that Qiao Nan would definitely mock her if she were to get a divorce. “I-I haven’t decided if I’ll get a divorce.”

“Whether you’ve decided is between you and the Zhou family. I don’t care.” Qiao Nan no longer mentioned Qiao Zijin and turned to look at Ding Jiayi. “How about you?”

“What do you mean by you or me? Who am I to you for you to address me like that? Where have your manners gone? You are a university graduate. Did your teacher teach you that?” Ding Jiayi’s expression changed and she was upset. From the time they met, Qiao Nan had never even addressed her as ‘mom’. What did she mean? Was she disowning her?

Dream on!

Qiao Nan laughed coldly. “Excuse me. My teacher taught me quite well, but unfortunately, parents are ultimately the first teachers in their children’s lives and also the most important ones. My mother gave birth to me but never taught me well, so please excuse me.” Qiao Nan was unconfident of being so impolite to anybody else but Ding Jiayi alone.

Was this all not because of Ding Jiayi? “If you have something to say, say it. Otherwise, I’m leaving.”

“Don’t leave!” Ding Jiayi quickly stopped Qiao Nan. “I have something to say. Of course I have something to say. Otherwise, do you think I’m so free to come all the way to the capital to find you? You’ve had your father here in the capital for quite a few years, haven’t you? Your dad had you, but I was the one who carried you for ten months. I had it much harder than him. Now that you’ve made it in life and could provide for your father, don’t you think you should provide for your mom too?”

“So the thousand yuan that I give you every month doesn’t count?” Qiao Nan laughed out of anger. Since Qiao Nan was young, Ding Jiayi had always been a housewife. Because of the country’s compulsory nine-year education, she had studied for nine years without spending much money. At most, she only had to pay for her textbooks. Even with that, her mother had secretly sold all her books.

When she entered high school, the two of them started to live separately. From then on, she had not eaten a single grain of rice cooked by Ding Jiayi.

Her parents had not fulfilled their responsibilities as parents. It was good enough that she was willing to support them, yet she dared to say that the money she spent on Ding Jiayi was way more than what Ding Jiayi had ever spent on her.

“It’s only a thousand yuan. What can I even do with that?” Ding Jiayi commented insincerely. In a small city like Ping Cheng, Ding Jiayi could actually lead a comfortable life with a thousand yuan and did not need to go out to work. “Now that you’re an important official, your future is bright and you don’t lack anything. Why can’t you think about your biological mother and let me have a good life like you?”

“Oh, is the world coming to an end? Haven’t you always said that the only one of your two children who can let you enjoy life is Qiao Zijin? If you want a good life, wait for your eldest daughter to be filial to you. She’s already in her thirties. You’ve been waiting for quite a long time. She should be able to let you live a good life soon. I’m not going to get involved.”

Qiao Nan’s words were words of anger that she had suppressed for two whole lifetimes.

She really did not understand. It was Ding Jiayi herself who said that only Qiao Zijin was a smart and obedient child who had an unbridled future. So between her and Qiao Zijin, only Qiao Zijin would be filial to Ding Jiayi and let her lead a good life.

If that was the case, why had Ding Jiayi never taken a single cent from Qiao Zijin? Instead, she had always been asking Qiao Nan for money to take care of Qiao Zijin! While Qiao Zijin was still studying, Ding Jiayi had to provide for her. After Qiao Zijin got married and had children, Ding Jiayi was still providing for her through her salary.

It had been two lifetimes. Every time this time came around, Qiao Nan was curious as to whether Ding Jiayi really felt that there was nothing wrong with the way she lived and the words she had just spoken.

Ding Jiayi smiled. She had indeed said that before, and not just once. Rather, before she separated from Old Qiao, she had said this for several years in front of her two children. “It’s all in the past. Why do you still take it to heart? What? Do you want to settle these old debts?”

“No, I don’t intend on doing that.” Qiao Nan calmed down quickly. With her arms around her chest, she looked at Ding Jiayi with an attitude of rejection. “I’m just reminding you that it’s good to have your own opinions, but when you’re too idealistic and have such requests, I think you should change your target and ask someone else. It’s best if you ask the daughter whom you think so highly of. I can’t stand it. You looked down on me, and I almost couldn’t study because of you. You gave

birth to me, but after high school, we didn't even meet. I have nothing to do with you. At most, I'll just give you the most minimal support. As for all those high hopes and expectations, it's best you leave it to your beloved daughter to fulfill them."

The living expenses that she gave Ding Jiayi every month was slightly more than what an average worker earned monthly. She dared say that based on Ding Jiayi's attitude toward her since she was young and the hostility between the two of them, she was already the best daughter that she could be. As for anything more, she was sorry that she could not and would never agree to them.

Ding Jiayi restrained her anger, took a deep breath, and smiled forcefully. There was no other choice. The money was Qiao Nan's. If she did not coax Qiao Nan a little, even if Qiao Nan's pockets were overflowing with money, she would not get a dime. "Qiao Nan, don't get upset. Wasn't that all in the past? You're a student from Peking University. Your sister graduated from a third-class university. How can she be better off than you? Your mom can't count on your elder sister to provide for her retirement. I can only count on you. I was foolish in the past. Please don't take issue with that."

Qiao Nan raised her hand and declared bankruptcy patiently. "All right. Just spit it out. I will do it if I should. If I shouldn't, don't even dream of it."

"I want to stay here in the capital too. You have to provide for me." Ding Jiayi chattered, finally explaining her intentions.

They were both the parents of this stupid girl, but why was it that Old Qiao could stay in the capital while she could only live in Ping Cheng? She lived in Ping Cheng in a house that was hers, so she did not have to pay for rent. The rent for Old Qiao's house in the capital was surely paid for by Qiao Nan. Old Qiao did not have so much money to do so.

The thought of Qiao Dongliang spending more than her on his rent every month upset Ding Jiayi. If Qiao Dongliang could spend that much money, why couldn't she? She could only spend more than Qiao Dongliang, not any less. After all, she had carried Qiao Nan for ten months in her tummy.

To give birth to this daughter, she had worked so much harder than Qiao Dongliang. But why was it that Qiao Dongliang was being treated better than she was?

"Fine." Qiao Nan bit the corner of her lip. She had expected this day to come. Ding Jiayi would never give up a good opportunity. Compared to the past life, Ding Jiayi's temper had already improved, seeing that she had been able to endure it for so long before coming up from Ping Cheng. But even so, she was still as annoying.

Chapter 1524: Don't Play Anymore

“I'll rent the house for you and continue giving you a thousand yuan for your living expenses every month.”

“That's impossible. Things are so much more expensive in the capital as compared to Ping Cheng! A thousand isn't enough. I want two thousand.”

“Only a thousand.” Qiao Nan shook her head. “In Ping Cheng, a thousand yuan can give you a luxurious lifestyle that is better than the average working class. You're clearer about that than I am. A thousand may not be as much in the capital as Ping Cheng, but for retirement, at least you won't go hungry. If you don't buy off-season and expensive vegetables, you can still eat nutritiously. As for clothing, I'll pay for new clothes every season.”

Ding Jiayi only needed to take care of her meals with one thousand yuan.

With Ding Jiayi's stingy nature, she would probably still be able to squeeze out some money to save in the bank.

“My advice to you is to lower your expectations. If you get on my nerves, we might just cut all ties. I have to remind you of this. I'm not your only child. If you really want two thousand, that's all right. Only I have to provide for you? How about Qiao Zijin? We're both your daughters, so it's only right that your living expenses should be footed by the both of us.”

When Qiao Nan was asked to provide for their retirement, she had never refused. And she did not even ask Qiao Zijin to chip in.

There was no reason for Qiao Nan to be providing for her retirement alone, while Qiao Zijin did not. After all, they were both Ding Jiayi's children. If Ding Jiayi dared to say that she would ask for two thousand yuan from Qiao Zijin, in addition to the two thousand yuan from Qiao Nan, she would definitely be scolded to the grave.

Even in the capital, the average worker's salary had not been high before 2010.

If Ding Jiayi alone could receive a living allowance of four thousand yuan, then other children would never survive. Exceptional old people like Ding Jiayi were not all that uncommon. If

biological parents were like that, then how about step-parents? In that case, everyone would learn from Ding Jiayi and open their mouths as wide as a lion.

If that were really to happen, society would be in a mess.

The only thing that Ding Jiayi had against Qiao Nan was that she had given birth to Qiao Nan. And for that, Qiao Nan had obligations toward her. She knew that she held the upper hand since it was part of societal expectations. Qiao Nan had no other choice.

But if public opinions were to support Qiao Nan and turn against Ding Jiayi, then Ding Jiayi would not be able to continue playing this game. Then, she would not only lose her status but also be ridiculed by the public.

After hearing Qiao Nan's words, Ding Jiayi knew that a thousand yuan was Qiao Nan's limit. If she asked for any more, Qiao Nan would drag Qiao Zijin into this and divide her requested allowance by half. Then, the money that she got from Qiao Nan would be a thousand yuan less.

Although Ding Jiayi had often said that Qiao Zijin would be successful in the future, ever since Qiao Zijin graduated and found a job, she had never given Ding Jiayi a single cent. At most, she would buy some vegetables home. Ding Jiayi knew that it was almost impossible for her elder daughter to be 'filial' to her.

So when it came to her living allowance, Ding Jiayi did not even include Qiao Zijin in her plan.

"This is for normal living expenses. If you agree, then I'll continue giving you a thousand every month and go ahead with the plan we talked about earlier. If you don't, then whatever amount you want, I'll split it in half with Qiao Zijin. If you expect too much, that's all right too. I'll just not give you anything. You can do whatever you want as long as you have confidence that you won't be the one getting into trouble instead of me."

She was in a sensitive position, and the person she married was rather special. Even if it was just to preserve the reputation of her husband's family, Qiao Nan had no choice but to give Ding Jiayi a thousand yuan a month.

Chapter 1525: I Can't Afford To Provide For You

Even if Ding Jiayi continued throwing her tantrum, Qiao Nan would still be able to discuss the matter calmly with a clear conscience.

“Okay, I agree!” Ding Jiayi was ungrateful, but she knew her limits. She was clear of the kind of decision that would be the most favorable for herself. She did not even dream of getting a single cent from Qiao Zijin, much less a living allowance of up to a few hundred yuan or even a thousand yuan.

With such a comparison, Ding Jiayi had no choice but to settle for the thousand yuan from Qiao Nan every month.

“It’s good that we’re in agreement. Next, we have to discuss what will happen if your or Dad’s health deteriorates. You’ve agreed to follow my plan in ordinary times. As for anything else, I don’t care what requests you make to Qiao Zijin. But if you or Dad falls sick, I’ll split the costs equally with Qiao Zijin. This is non-negotiable.”

Since they were young, Qiao Zijin had had it better than her. Of course, Qiao Zijin could not just enjoy all these benefits until their parents passed away. She was going to have to pay them back too. There’s no such thing as a free lunch!

“This...” Ding Jiayi wanted to agree, but she knew that it would be costly if she were to be hospitalized. Qiao Nan had a decent job but relied mainly on her husband’s family. Ding Jiayi knew that Qiao Nan enjoyed many benefits, but as to whether her salary was high, Ding Jiayi was not too sure. Qiao Nan had given birth to three children, of which two were boys.

Now, her most expensive expense was providing for the elderly and children. But raising children could not be considered to be a waste of money, unlike providing for the elderly. Other things aside, in recent years, Ding Jiayi had seen how much the Zhou family spent on sending Qiao Zijin’s daughter to this enrichment class and that music lesson. The amount spent was heart-wrenching.

It was expensive to raise just one child, much less the triplets of the Zhai family!

Because Qiao Nan had to provide for two elderly people in addition to her three children, she would not even have anything left to save. If she fell sick, she did not want to die just because she could not afford treatment.

It was not wise to place such a burden entirely on Qiao Nan alone. If this crushed Qiao Nan, she would have to rely solely on Qiao Zijin. If that time came, it would be hard for her to survive, much less live a comfortable life.

She thought about how she might even have to re-enter the workforce to support herself in her old age if she were to lose Qiao Nan. As such, Ding Jiayi was agreeable to Qiao Nan's suggestion. "Deal. We'll go ahead with what you said. In the future, if Old Qiao or I get sick, you'll split the expenses equally with Zijin."

"Mom!" Qiao Zijin was upset. "Qiao Nan is more than capable of taking care of it alone. Why do you have to pull me in?" If she had any spare cash, should she not be allowed to spend it on some more clothes or a handbag for herself?

"Of course I have to pull you into this. Are you not my daughter? Did I not raise you? Didn't your dad and I pay for all your expenses before you got married? Are you not planning on providing for me after I raised you for so many years?" Ding Jiayi was annoyed. She did not pin her hopes on her elder daughter to provide for her to live the high life, but if she were to fall ill, was her elder daughter really not going to help her out financially and just watch on by the sidelines and shed some tears?

For Qiao Zijin, she had suffered so much. She and her husband had actually given up their outstanding younger daughter just for her elder daughter. Ding Jiayi, who had always seen Qiao Zijin through rose-tinted glasses, finally held a slight grudge against Qiao Zijin.

In the end, if it was not for her elder daughter, her perfect family would not have landed in such a mess. She clearly had two daughters, but now, it seemed as though she had lost one of them, and the other was lost herself.

As for all the things she had done in recent years, Ding Jiayi did not think about them. She felt that she had spent so much money and effort on Qiao Zijin. But if Qiao Zijin had just put in a bit more effort, she would not have needed to lower her pride and come begging Qiao Nan for mercy.

Wasn't this all because Qiao Zijin had not made any effort in her life?

She had not been good enough, and her sacrifices all these years had been for naught. In the end, when she fell sick, Qiao Zijin was unwilling to pay for her medical bills. This time, Ding Jiayi would be crazy to agree to Qiao Zijin's unreasonable demands.

After all, a leopard never changes its spots. Selfish people will never be able to hide their true selves.

“It’s not that I don’t want to provide for you, but don’t you know the situation I’m in?” In the capital, she still had to rely on her mother’s connections to survive. She could not afford to ruffle Ding Jiayi’s feathers now. “I’m afraid I’m not that capable. After marrying Zhou Zheng, I stopped working.” After running away from the Zhou family, she had not returned for two months. In that time, she had spent almost all of her personal savings that she had worked hard to save.

To use her money to cover half the cost of the two elderly people’s hospitalization bills?

What a joke! She could hardly provide for herself!

“So what do you want me to say about you?” Ding Jiayi wanted to knock Qiao Zijin’s forehead with an iron bar. This was how Qiao Nan was treated in the past. “The Zhou family is not that bad. You had a good job, but you suddenly quit. The Zhou family didn’t even say anything about it and gave you an allowance every month. Where will you find such a good family? Since you don’t work, it’s as though your in-laws are paying your salary for nothing!”

When she first got married to Old Qiao, Old Qiao had no choice but to hand over his entire salary to her. Old Qiao did not have the ability to give her a separate allowance. Whether it was then or now, it was difficult to find in-laws like the Zhou family.

But even with such good in-laws, Qiao Zijin made such a great fuss that the Zhou family no longer wanted her as part of their family. Hearing Qiao Nan talk about how the Zhou family planned on getting Zhou Zheng to divorce Qiao Zijin made Ding Jiayi panic. But Qiao Zijin herself was extraordinarily calm, so much so that Ding Jiayi could not even bother being anxious on her behalf.

If Ding Jiayi were in her place and such good in-laws, she would never think of finding a lover outside and would dedicate herself to being the best daughter-in-law. Even with Old Qiao’s meager income, she had never gone astray in their marriage.

But Zijin was ungrateful, discontent, and committed such acts.

Since Qiao Zijin returned to the Qiao family and Ding Jiayi found out what Qiao Zijin had done, Ding Jiayi had been too embarrassed to leave the house to chat with others about their children. Her greatest fear was that her neighbors would ask why Qiao Zijin was staying at her parents’ house for such a long time and did not seem to have any intention of returning to her in-laws’ house. If Qiao Zijin was not returning, was the Zhou family not going to pick her up? Did Qiao Zijin not need to raise her daughter?

Ding Jiayi knew that she alone would never be able to answer all these questions.

Chapter 1526: Not Having a Guilty Conscience

It was also because of this matter that Ding Jiayi started to have a huge opinion on Qiao Zijin now. It was either they didn't mention this matter, or if they did, Ding Jiayi would get anxious with Qiao Zijin and scold her a vixen for not living her life well.

“Okay, don't say these words in front of me. You don't have other questions, right? If not, I'll rent a hotel room for you first. You'll stay there for a night. I'll find a house for you tomorrow and you can move in. As for you, Qiao Zijin, I've said my words clearly just now. I need to provide for her, not you. You have to take care of yourself. Regardless of how big a fuss you kick, it will be useless. There's no reason for a younger sister to provide for an older sister. Oh, right, I forgot to tell you. I'll give you one thousand yuan every month. I won't care how you spend it or who you spend it on. However, if you don't have enough, don't bother asking me for more. Even if you do, I won't give it to you.”

Qiao Nan was indeed afraid of how foolish Ding Jiayi would be if she spent time together with Qiao Zijin. Qiao Zijin especially knew how to coax Ding Jiayi.

Not willing to condone this mother-daughter pair anymore, Qiao Nan gave Ding Jiayi a heads-up. If Ding Jiayi dared to squander all the money on Qiao Zijin, she wouldn't give her any additional money.

Children were meant to support their parents. The problem was some parents loved to spend lavishly and on things that were not within their means. It was impossible for children to sell their flesh and blood just to satisfy their parents' excessive consumption.

On this point, Qiao Nan had always held on to a viewpoint. She could let Ding Jiayi enjoy all the good food, drinks, and clothes. However, that was all. If Ding Jiayi wanted to live an extravagant life where she could spend lavishly, then apologies. Unless Qiao Zijin could provide it, she would never be able to achieve this.

“Okay, let's go.” After saying her words, Qiao Nan paid for the tea and snacks and led Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin to rent a hotel room.

Ding Jiayi looked at the snacks on the table reluctantly. Money was spent on these. They didn't eat much and it was simply a waste. Ding Jiayi couldn't hold back and grabbed some of them in her hands.

Qiao Zijin wanted to do so as well. However, when she was in Ping Cheng, she had consumed at such places before as well. She wasn't willing to do the same as Ding Jiayi and held back. However, when she saw the bill, she was speechless. This was indeed the capital. The price of a sip of tea here was twice or thrice that of Ping Cheng.

However, Qiao Nan had hardly touched the expensive tea and snacks. Under such circumstances, Qiao Nan was still willing to pay and just leave without eating anything. What did this show? This showed that Qiao Nan's conditions had really improved and she was leading a much better life than her.

If it were Qiao Nan from ten years before, how would she let these go to waste?

Could it be that a diplomat in the central government earned a high salary? Indeed, being supported by the government was good. The Zhou family didn't even lead such an easy life like Qiao Nan, let alone her.

Qiao Zijin found it a pity that she couldn't bask in the glory of Qiao Nan's success. Even her mother stood at the peak of human relations. However, the Qiao Nan today was really too smart. Her words had shut all their paths out.

She understood that aside from providing their mother with food and clothes, Qiao Nan wouldn't make up for anything else and let her lead the life of a rich man's wife. There was a limit to the amount of money she would provide, and her mother wouldn't have any excess cash. How was she going to find a way to coax the money out of her mother so that it became hers?

Only then did Qiao Zijin develop the thought of wanting Qiao Nan to buy a house for her.

Who knew that they hadn't met for a few years and Qiao Nan had become stingier than before, leaving Qiao Zijin little room to express her thoughts? She had no choice but to fall into an extremely passive state.

Qiao Zijin sighed. Qiao Nan was better-looking and had a smarter brain. Why was it that she was luckier than her as well and managed to marry such a formidable husband like Zhai Sheng? If one calculated it, Qiao Nan had occupied all the favorable climatic, geographical, and human conditions.

This world was really unfair. She had waited for over ten years for Qiao Nan's luck to be down. Instead, she saw Qiao Nan living a better life day by day. Qiao Nan had already reached the stage where her neck would be sore if she looked up at her.

How good it would be if she was Qiao Nan or if these good things happened to her. If Zhou Zheng was as outstanding as Zhai Sheng, would she resort to being charmed by other men outside? The man outside was much better than Zhou Zheng, and she felt happier only when she was with him.

Nobody knew what Qiao Zijin was thinking about.

After Qiao Zijin recovered herself, Qiao Nan had already sent her and Ding Jiayi to the entrance of the hotel. Qiao Nan booked a twin bedroom for them. "I'll pick you up tomorrow at twelve. Remember what I said. Don't say I didn't tell you this beforehand. It has been over ten years. You should understand how firm my attitude is, right?"

"I know, I know! I really don't know if I'm your mother, or you're my mother. How fierce." Ding Jiayi was angry, but she knew she had to rely on Qiao Nan for a living. She completely didn't dare to yell at and scold Qiao Nan like before.

If Ding Jiayi really infuriated Qiao Nan, Ding Jiayi knew that the unlucky one in the end would be her. By then, Qiao Nan would ignore her, and Qiao Zijin wouldn't be willing to provide for her.

Miao Jing had been waiting for Qiao Nan. Seeing that she finally return home, she asked strangely, "Why are you back so late today? Did something happen?"

"My mother brought Qiao Zijin over."

"..." Miao Jing's face changed. "I know this, but I didn't let them in." Bad things were bound to happen if they came knocking on the door. If not for their family's relationship with the Zhou family, Qiao Zijin wouldn't have been qualified to marry over to the Zhou family.

Who would have thought that Qiao Zijin was so shameless and didn't count her blessings after marrying into the Zhou family? She even had an affair. Miao Jing was relieved not only once that although Qiao Nan and Qiao Zijin were born to the same mother, Qiao Nan was nothing like Ding Jiayi or Qiao Zijin.

Otherwise, whoever had a daughter-in-law like Qiao Zijin would really cry to their death.

It was more or less related to their family that the Zhou family would have Qiao Zijin as a daughter-in-law. As such, Miao Jing and Zhai Sheng said to give the Zhou family some benefits as a form of compensation.

The Zhou family had given face and didn't spread the word of Qiao Zijin doing such a shameless thing. However, Qiao Zijin was unwilling to relent and even stayed at the Qiao family's house for two months.

Chapter 1527: Who Was Pettier?

Qiao Zijin looked as if she would never return to the Zhou family if they didn't send someone over to bow down and admit their mistake.

In short, this wasn't something a person should do!

"It's fine." Qiao Nan had guessed that if the Zhai family hadn't said anything, the people at the door wouldn't dare to block Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin off after hearing that they were the in-laws of the Zhai family, as if they were not afraid of the consequences.

"Then, what happened?" Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin were not the kind of people who were willing to give up. It was more or less related to these two women that Nan Nan was back home late today.

Qiao Nan changed her shoes, washed her hands, brought the dishes to the table, and shouted for Zhai Yaohui to have the meal together. "It's fine. I booked a room for them. The main reason why my mother came to the capital is the same as my father, which is for me to provide them a living. I'll provide her a place to live in. The rest would be like back when I was in Ping Cheng. I would give her living expenses of a thousand yuan each month. Qiao Zijin has nothing to do with me. I don't have to provide for her. I've already explained the situation to my mother and she should know what to do, so I'll let her be."

It was alright since she had already fulfilled all her obligations.

Coincidentally, Zhai Yaohui heard these words and nodded in acknowledgment. "Based on our family's situation now, what Nan Nan did was right. Parents always have their good reasons. Based on the fact that she gave birth to Nan Nan alone, Nan Nan is bound to be at a loss." Nan Nan needed to let Ding Jiayi understand her situation so that her behavior would become restrained and she wouldn't act as if it was lawless.

It was already considered easy to talk to for parents like Ding Jiayi who wanted to eat, drink, and live well. Zhai Yaohui had seen a number of examples whereby overly demanding requests were made. Based on Zhai Yaohui's definition, Ding Jiayi was just considered a little evil person.

If she was a real evil person, no matter how good Qiao Nan was, Zhai Yaohui wouldn't have dared to let Qiao Nan be their daughter-in-law.

Miao Jing was a little dissatisfied but she couldn't undo Qiao Nan's decision. Zhai Yaohui was agreeable with what Qiao Nan did as well. "It's two votes against my vote. What else can I say? How good it is to be a parent like Ding Jiayi. No wonder she insisted on giving birth to a second child back then even when Qiao Dongliang was at risk of losing his position in the army."

In a certain sense, Ding Jiayi had given birth to a great second child, Nan Nan.

Based on the current situation, with regards to providing for Ding Jiayi, aside from counting on Nan Nan, there wasn't a second possibility. If Qiao Zijin could cause less trouble to Ding Jiayi so that she could enjoy her later years, it would be considered that she didn't let Ding Jiayi down.

Like mother, like daughter. Nan Nan had to pay off her debt as Ding Jiayi's daughter. Ding Jiayi had to pay off her debt as Qiao Zijin's mother!

Every bite and every sip was preordained. God wasn't foolish as it had arranged for Qiao Zijin, who was a big trouble, to be Ding Jiayi's precious eldest daughter.

"Okay, let's eat." Zhai Yaohui was quite satisfied as to how Qiao Nan handled this. Although this matter was handled well, Zhai Yaohui knew that regardless of how well she had handled it, Qiao Nan would have been exhausted to face Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, who had unique identities.

His son and grandchildren weren't at home and they wouldn't be able to ease out Qiao Nan's anxiety. As the father-in-law, he wasn't in a position to say anything. As for Miao Miao... Zhai Yaohui smiled. If Miao Miao could trouble Qiao Nan less, that would be considered not bad as well.

As such, they had to finish this meal quickly so that Qiao Nan could return to her room early and rest. After recuperating, she could cope with Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi better tomorrow.

“Why are you up so early?” Qiao Zijin slept pretty well in the hotel room. When she woke up, she saw that Ding Jiayi was already dressed well and sitting by the bed for a while. “What time is it now? Have you ordered some food? I’m hungry.”

Ding Jiayi rolled her eyes at Qiao Zijin. “If you’re hungry, go and order some food yourself. Also, don’t forget to pay for it afterward.” She took a look just now. Any casual item ordered would be expensive. Breakfast in the hotel could cost the same as a whole day’s meal in Ping Cheng.

Ding Jiayi knew that if she really ordered breakfast, she couldn’t just order her share. Qiao Zijin couldn’t go hungry. It was just that Ding Jiayi couldn’t bear to pay for a person’s breakfast. If she were to pay for two people’s share, wasn’t that digging into Ding Jiayi’s flesh?

“If you’re really hungry, let’s do this. I boiled some water. You can drink more water to fill your stomach. Qiao Nan will pick us up in the afternoon and might even treat us to lunch. You can eat to your fill then. If we don’t have this meal, I’ll go to the market to buy some ingredients and make some food for us.” No matter what, it would be more worth it than ordering something in the hotel.

“Mom, aren’t you a little too stingy?” Qiao Zijin was dissatisfied. “Don’t think I don’t know that every time Qiao Nan gives you 1,000 yuan monthly, you would spend at most 200 or 300 yuan in Ping Cheng. It has been a few years, so you should have saved 40,000 to 50,000 yuan, no? You can’t even bear to spend on breakfast. That’s too stingy. I’m your biological daughter. Do you want me to starve to death?”

Ding Jiayi gritted her teeth. She didn’t expect her eldest daughter to know so clearly how much she had saved when Qiao Nan didn’t even know. “Do you still remember that I’m your mother? You’re already married and over thirty years old now. You’re a mother as well. Qiao Nan knows how to give me living allowance every month. Why don’t you give me a little as well? At this point in time, shouldn’t it be you buying food for me? You still want me to fork out the money?”

Qiao Zijin slept especially well. Ding Jiayi wasn’t used to sleeping in a foreign environment. Since she couldn’t fall asleep despite lying on the bed, she kept thinking about whether Qiao Nan was serious about what she said to herself during the day. What was she going to do to lead a better life?

Thinking of the past few years, aside from giving her living allowance, Qiao Nan didn’t keep in contact with her at all. It was as if they were unrelated. She had no choice but to believe that what Qiao Nan said was true.

Even if she had over 40,000 yuan of savings in her hands, Ding Jiayi didn't feel at ease. This sum of money was equivalent to her coffin money. Unless it was a last resort, she would definitely not touch the money in this account.

Ding Jiayi couldn't even bear to spend the money on herself, so how could she be willing to spend it on Qiao Zijin?

"Stingy. I've called you mom for over thirty years, yet you can't even bear to buy me breakfast. Mom, are you still my mother?" Qiao Zijin was unhappy.

"I've provided for you for over thirty years. I don't see you giving back to me either. I'm also thinking if I'm raising a daughter or an ancestor!"

"..." Qiao Zijin took a deep breath.

Chapter 1528: A Slap

Her mother wasn't as easy to coax as before. "Mom, don't be angry. I wanted breakfast not because I was hungry. I was just worried you're hungry. At your age, you should be enjoying life. Of course, you shouldn't go hungry. If you fall ill, I'll feel heartache. Furthermore, how expensive could a breakfast cost? Even if it was expensive, would it be more expensive than your health? If my conditions were as good as Qiao Nan's, I would have considered these a long time ago. I'd guarantee that there's a good breakfast in front of you every time you woke up. You have to know that your health is more important to me than anything else."

"What is money? If you spend it, you can always earn it back. Mom, if your health's gone, it's really gone. Mom, you have been hungry until now. Does your stomach feel uncomfortable?" Qiao Zijin sat next to Ding Jiayi and leaned on her body as if spineless.

When Qiao Zijin was young, Ding Jiayi thought that her daughter was pouting when she did this. However, she was a mother now as well. When Qiao Zijin did this again, Ding Jiayi felt weird. Furthermore, when Qiao Zijin did this when she was young, it wasn't like that.

Ding Jiayi felt uncomfortable and sat to the side. "Sit properly. Why are you going all limp on me as if spineless? Why? Did the bones in your body end up in my stomach when I gave birth to you back then? Also, you weren't like this when you were young. Where did you learn such things from? Why are you acting like the vixens on TV?"

How would Ding Jiayi have thought that Qiao Zijin had self-learned these and used them on men all along? It was rare that Qiao Zijin wanted to seriously coax Ding Jiayi today. Otherwise, Ding Jiayi wouldn't have seen this side of Qiao Zijin.

It was just that when Qiao Zijin did this, she seemed to have forgotten something. Not only was this person before her a female, but she was also her biological mother. She wasn't the type of easy-going man she had come into contact with before.

When a similar method was used on different subjects, it was obvious that the effect would be very different.

As long as Qiao Zijin revealed this soft and charming side to her, even Zhou Zheng would be willing to give Qiao Zijin a little more living allowance when they were in Ping Cheng. It was needless to say for other men.

However, Qiao Zijin had used this method on her own biological mother today. Not only did Ding Jiayi feel that she wasn't coaxed, but she even felt uncomfortable all over as if a hundred ants were crawling and biting her body. As such, Qiao Zijin couldn't get a breakfast out of Ding Jiayi, let alone some money.

"Qiao Nan, you're finally here. You don't know how hungry Mom has been. Before taking a look at the house, bring me and Mom for a meal." Once Qiao Nan appeared in the afternoon, Qiao Zijin entered the car first and asked for a meal without another word.

Qiao Nan didn't have any reaction to Qiao Zijin's words. She only looked at Ding Jiayi.

Ding Jiayi's face flushed red. She said softly, "Yes, we have been waiting for you. We haven't eaten yet and are hungry now." Ding Jiayi found it a little unbearable that they didn't have a good breakfast. Now that it was time for lunch, Ding Jiayi was extremely hungry.

"Eat!" Qiao Nan laughed coldly and handed over the rice box in her hands to Ding Jiayi. "That was right as well. With me around, you would be so stingy that you wouldn't bear to spend on a meal. Forget it that you couldn't bear to eat, but since when couldn't you bear to spend on your precious eldest daughter as well? I didn't expect this at all."

In the past, Ding Jiayi would rather not eat than to let Qiao Zijin starve.

She heard that the stomach of Qiao Zijin, who was sitting in the backseat, was indeed growling. Qiao Nan was surprised. Even if Ding Jiayi was unwilling to, Qiao Zijin would have used all ways to fill her stomach. It was precisely because of that that Qiao Nan only prepared a lunch box for Ding Jiayi.

She couldn't be bothered to bring Ding Jiayi to eat at another place. A meal wouldn't be cheap as well. Qiao Nan wasn't very willing to spend on Ding Jiayi. Furthermore, she was going to help Ding Jiayi rent a house today. That was another huge sum of money.

Ding Jiayi didn't answer Qiao Nan. She knew that if it were in the past, she would really have done that. However, she only wanted to fill her stomach first now.

The scent of the lunch box was very strong.

Once Ding Jiayi opened the lunch box, she started to eat at an alarming speed. In the blink of an eye, half of the white rice was already in Ding Jiayi's stomach. Qiao Nan casually handed over an unopened bottle of mineral water in the car to Ding Jiayi. She didn't want Ding Jiayi to choke on her food while eating in her car. She would have to send her to the hospital then.

A full box of rice went down her stomach. Ding Jiayi gave a comfortable burp and looked satisfied. "It feels good to be full." After drinking a few sips of water, Ding Jiayi felt that such a life was pretty good.

"Me. What about me?" Qiao Zijin was anxious. She was still hungry.

"Yours? I didn't prepare it." Qiao Nan turned the steering wheel and into the community. "Okay, we've reached. Get down."

"Okay." Ding Jiayi, who had finished eating, had no opinion on Qiao Nan's arrangement. Looking at the towering building, Ding Jiayi was thrilled. "You rented a house for me here. I'll stay here in the future, right?"

"Yes." With the key in her hands, Qiao Nan walked in front and pressed for the lift. She got Ding Jiayi to remember the unit number well. "Remember where you live in the future. Don't forget how to come back home after heading out."

In a place like the capital, it was already generous of Qiao Nan to provide a bedroom and a living room for Ding Jiayi alone, as this was equivalent to a small suite where an average family of three could live in. She had done what she could. Qiao Nan would definitely not let anyone have something to attack her with over such a small matter.

“Don’t worry. I’m not senile. I will definitely remember it.” In Ping Cheng, Ding Jiayi had never seen such a house before. There were even elevators. Ding Jiayi was happy. “I’m guessing that among the people in the northern quad, only I have the blessing to live in such a good house. Is this the one? Let’s take a look quickly!”

Qiao Nan opened the door. Ding Jiayi entered. Initially, she was still smiling. Then, she frowned. “This looks not bad. However, isn’t it a little too small? It’s only half of our house at the very most.” It looked like a bird’s nest.

Qiao Nan sat down and looked at Ding Jiayi. “If the Qiao family’s house is rented out, the monthly rental is only a hundred yuan, right?”

“...” It was less than a hundred.

“The rent here is five times that in Ping Cheng.” Qiao Nan reached out a palm as if wanting to slap Ding Jiayi to her death.

Chapter 1529: Learning by Example

The expensive rent was already half a month of Ding Jiayi’s living allowance. “Don’t compare Ping Cheng with the capital. I’ve said before that with the same 1,000 yuan living allowance, the quality of life you had in Ping Cheng couldn’t be compared to the capital at all.”

“Five, five times?” Ding Jiayi was completely speechless. She had only worked a few years in her life when she just got a divorce with Qiao Dongliang and needed to provide for Qiao Zijin’s education. After that, she returned to her home and led a casual life, especially since the year Qiao Nan started to provide her living allowance.

Ding Jiayi, who had little work experience, knew that if she didn’t have Qiao Nan as a daughter, she wouldn’t have been able to afford such a house in the capital even if she worked herself. The monthly rent was more than five hundred yuan. When she had worked in the past, she only earned at most two to three hundred yuan a month.

In other words, she couldn't even afford the monthly rent with her salary, let alone food and drinks.

"It's good that you're clear. If there are no other questions, I'll give you this month's living allowance now in your face. I don't have to care about you anymore, right?" Qiao Nan placed a thousand yuan in cash on the table, handing it to Ding Jiayi. After doing this, Qiao Nan prepared to leave.

Qiao Nan had completely neglected Qiao Zijin, who was sizing up the house. It was as if she didn't see her at all.

After sizing up the house, Qiao Zijin looked at the money on the table and her eyes shone. "Mom..." Qiao Zijin wanted to say that she was a bit cash-strapped recently and if she could lend her the one thousand yuan first. She would return it later.

It was a pity there was no relationship to talk about in front of money. Ding Jiayi was a step faster than Qiao Zijin and kept the money. "Okay. I have received this month's living allowance. I won't ask you for more."

In Ping Cheng, she could save most of her money in a month. It was afraid that she wouldn't be able to save so much from the one thousand yuan after being in the capital.

Ding Jiayi didn't let Qiao Zijin touch the money she had saved in the past. This one thousand yuan was more important to Ding Jiayi now, and it was even less likely that she would let Qiao Zijin touch it. "All is good. You can head back. You're so busy at work. I don't want to disturb you. However, can I ask where your father is staying at? Is he in this community as well? Actually..."

Even if she got a divorce with Old Qiao, they were still husband and wife initially. They could talk about patching back later. Rather than letting Qiao Nan rent two houses, why didn't she live with Old Qiao so that Qiao Nan could still save the rent of a house? If she stayed with Old Qiao, Qiao Nan should be able to provide them with a bigger house instead, right?

She was used to staying in bigger spaces. Ding Jiayi felt a little suffocated for having to stay in such a small place suddenly.

"Dad doesn't know you are here. This is his number. If you can't wait, you can contact him first." Other than this, she didn't meddle in any of his other affairs.

“Okay.” Ding Jiayi grabbed Qiao Dongliang’s number in her hands once again and didn’t let Qiao Zijin take a look. She was worried that if Qiao Zijin wasn’t able to get any money from her, she would use this number to contact Qiao Dongliang and try all kinds of methods to coax Qiao Dongliang to hand over his money to her.

It wasn’t only the money in her hands. Even the money in Old Qiao’s hands shouldn’t be given to Zijin anymore.

Qiao Zijin was already in her thirties, but she had never received a dime of Qiao Zijin’s filial piety. Instead, when Qiao Zijin stayed with her for the past two months, she had paid for all her expenses. In these two months, Qiao Zijin didn’t even have the thought to provide some form of living allowance to her. The more Qiao Zijin was like this, the more Ding Jiayi became concerned about money.

She had to have her meals. It was nothing to spare some food for Qiao Zijin. After all, she had given birth to her. However, Ding Jiayi wasn’t that generous to give her own money to Qiao Zijin.

Otherwise, based on Qiao Zijin’s character, Qiao Zijin would have long coaxed the money out of Ding Jiayi to buy a house.

Not only did Ding Jiayi keep a tight rein on her money, but she also did the same to Qiao Dongliang’s money. She understood that in their family of four, only Qiao Zijin’s heart was the coldest and hardest. If something happened in the future and she needed money, Qiao Nan would fork out half the amount, Qiao Zijin wouldn’t be willing to take any out, and Qiao Dongliang would definitely not look on if he knew her situation.

To put it bluntly, Ding Jiayi wasn’t afraid that Qiao Dongliang would be coaxed by Qiao Zijin to give her money. She was worried that if she needed it, Qiao Dongliang’s money would have been used up by Qiao Zijin and he couldn’t give any to her.

In Ding Jiayi’s eyes, Qiao Dongliang’s money was no different from hers. Thus, she had to take care of both aspects and not give Qiao Zijin any opportunity to take advantage of them.

Qiao Zijin was angered by how Ding Jiayi was guarding against her like she was against a thief. Didn’t they say that older people were more confused? Why did she feel that her mother was getting smarter?

When she was young, it was pretty easy to coax her mother. In recent years, aside from eating and drinking at her mother's place, she didn't receive a single cent from her before. How stingy. She really didn't understand. Her mother didn't earn this money. Qiao Nan had given it to her. She was taking advantage of Qiao Nan. On what basis that only her mother could take advantage of her but she couldn't?!

"Okay, I'm leaving. When we came over, I've already pointed to you the direction of the market. I'll let you decide what to do next." Qiao Nan didn't even look at Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi as they competed. She picked up her bag and left.

Qiao Zijin stomped her feet and chased after Qiao Nan. "Nan Nan, I would like to discuss something with you. I left in a hurry this time around and I'm about to finish spending all my money. Can I borrow some from you? I don't need too much. Just a few thousands will do. I'll have money when I'm back and I'll return it to you. Is that okay?"

"No." Qiao Nan rejected. "Number one, you don't have a job. Number two, Zhou Zheng is about to get a divorce with you. Once you divorce, you will only get a small living allowance from Zhou Zheng. You're borrowing money from me? How are you going to return it to me? You're not borrowing money here. You're demanding it. Don't treat yourself as a high-class beggar. Also, don't think people's money, especially my money, come easily."

After rejecting Qiao Zijin mercilessly, Qiao Nan left satisfied. She returned to the ministry and continued the work on her hands.

Li Dawei looked at the clock in the office. "Minister Qiao took a longer lunch break today. It's half an hour later than usual." As the minister, was it good to take the lead in being late and leaving early? Could they learn by example in the future?

Chapter 1530: Deng Wenchang, Are You Willing to Accept This?

Upon hearing Li Dawei's words, Deng Wenchang looked up and sneered. "Some people shouldn't think so much. It's best to understand where he or she stands. Making things difficult for her? Why don't you think who would be easier to make things difficult for? Don't force her to that. Otherwise, if something really happens, don't cry."

Li Dawei was more serious than Xu Xinming. After he was willing to work harder, He Yi agreed to give Li Dawei another chance. After Qiao Nan got promoted, she didn't find Li Dawei trouble. However, this didn't mean that Qiao Nan didn't have ways to find trouble for Li Dawei.

If Li Dawei couldn't understand this, he would be reunited with Xu Xinming and be close colleagues with him sooner or later. It was just that no one knew if their working relationship this time would be as good as when it was five or six years ago.

Li Dawei's face changed. "Deng Wenchang, don't you find yourself strange? Besides, are you willing to let this person suppress you?" Didn't they say that Deng Wenchang was the first to eye the minister's position? The old minister had some friendship with the Deng family, but Qiao Nan had appeared out of nowhere and snatched that position away. He didn't believe that Deng Wenchang wasn't angry at all.

But Deng Wenchang didn't help him when he was trying to make things difficult for Qiao Nan. Why was he siding Qiao Nan with his words?

"What's there to be unwilling about?" Deng Wenchang laughed with ridicule. "Li Dawei, do you think that it's better for Qiao Nan or yourself to be the minister? Between the two of you, who do you think I will submit to?" He knew what Li Dawei was up to. Li Dawei wanted to get rid of Qiao Nan and then take the position of the minister himself.

In the face of Li Dawei's naive thoughts, Deng Wenchang couldn't help but laugh. "I feel that it's better for Qiao Nan to sit in that position rather than someone else. Regardless, Qiao Nan is capable and has a formidable parent-in-law family. If something happens to the ministry, her parents-in-law can help solve the problem. You? What do you have for me to recognize you?"

Don't tell him that Li Dawei was only capable of resisting. As long as Li Dawei sent Qiao Nan on a mission and let her play a complete role there, any problem that the ministry faced could be resolved.

When Li Dawei's face changed, Deng Wenchang laughed absurdly. "Did you really think that way? Did you see yourself as an ancient emperor? Such things only happen in movies. As the leader of a department, how can you not have sufficient capabilities to convince others? If you only want to resist, you have to see if the other party is willing to listen to you. Fool." The position of a minister wasn't omnipotent. He or she couldn't order the masses around and choose to execute someone if he or she wasn't compliant.

Did he really think that it was so easy to be a minister of foreign affairs? Would words do?

Deng Wenchang had to say that Li Dawei's mindset was really stupid. If such a person really became the minister, the country's face would be thrown. Once he thought of that 'beautiful' image, Deng Wenchang closed his eyes so that he could feel slightly more comfortable.

After being ridiculed by Deng Wenchang, Li Dawei felt both angry and embarrassed. He lowered his head and didn't say anything else to Deng Wenchang. He was worried that if he continued chatting with Deng Wenchang, he would be so angry that he burst a blood vessel. He didn't believe that he, Li Dawei, couldn't do something that Qiao Nan, a woman, could do.

It was Deng Wenchang's problem that he admitted defeat. He would never be willing to be suppressed by a woman.

Impossible? The more something was impossible, the more he wanted to try. When he succeeded in pulling Qiao Nan off this position and pulling himself up, he wanted to see if Deng Wenchang dared to say these words like he did today to agitate him.

To put it bluntly, Deng Wenchang would suck up to whoever was the minister. He really didn't have any backbone at all. If he had known that Deng Wenchang was such a person, he wouldn't have formed an alliance with Deng Wenchang and lowered his identity and style in vain.

Qiao Nan didn't know that her being late for half an hour as she was settling Ding Jiayi down had caused a small farce to happen between Deng Wenchang and Li Dawei.

Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin had come to the capital. Qiao Nan wasn't sure when Qiao Zijin would be leaving, or if she would be leaving, but at least, she told her father about Ding Jiayi. "Dad, this was what happened. Mom is here. She also asked me about you. I gave her your cell phone number. What happens after that, you can decide on your own." She wasn't going to stop him.

Qiao Dongliang's temples throbbed. "Did they cause you trouble again? Haven't you been giving your mother a thousand yuan of living allowance every month? Based on her character, she should have saved quite a bit over the years, right? Why did she have to come over to the capital if her life's good? Did she cause you trouble?!"

His biggest mistake in this lifetime wasn't marrying Ding Jiayi. It was after marrying Ding Jiayi, he didn't realize what kind of person she was. Not to mention that Ding Jiayi had raised his two daughters up as such, but the older she got, the more foolish she became and the more trouble she caused.

If he had known about Ding Jiayi's character when he was young, even if he didn't hit women, he would have used means to keep Ding Jiayi in check. Now that he was old, he didn't have the bad temper he had when he was younger. Otherwise, Ding Jiayi would only have to suffer.

"She wanted to stay in the capital, so I rented a house for her. The rest is the same as when she was in Ping Cheng. She hasn't caused me trouble yet. I'm letting you know about this as I hope you'll have an idea about the situation."

"Okay. As long as she doesn't cause you any trouble, the rest isn't important." Especially the broken relationship he had with Ding Jiayi. They had already gotten a divorce. What more was there to talk about? "Nan Nan, if anything happens, remember to let me know. I'll help you." Even if they were already divorced, if Ding Jiayi went too overboard, he would have to help Nan Nan.

Ding Jiayi was Nan Nan's mother. He was still Nan Nan's father!

With him around, Ding Jiayi didn't need to think about bullying Nan Nan alone, like she used to.

"Okay." Qiao Nan didn't expect Qiao Dongliang to help her. However, she thought that it was good that he had the heart to.

"Oh, right, the house you helped your mother find is your own?" Qiao Dongliang knew that after Elder Lin was gone, Qiao Nan obtained quite a number of things. These included many properties Elder Lin left behind for her. Qiao Dongliang didn't ask how many valuable things Qiao Nan had in her hands, but he could imagine that this amount of wealth was something that he couldn't earn even half of it in his ten lifetimes.

His daughter was rich. Qiao Dongliang was naturally happy for Qiao Nan. He could be truly at ease only if Qiao Nan led a good life.