

## RTAMM 1611

### Chapter 1611: Feeling Aggrieved

Qiao Dongliang laughed self-deprecatingly. The capital was really a gold mine. Even though a niche was just a square box of less than a square meter of space, the prices were still horribly expensive. While he was still working, he would have had to spend an entire year's worth of salary just to purchase this small square meter of space. But even after spending such a huge sum of money, there was no guarantee that he would be able to get the space ready in time.

Qiao Dongliang did not wish for Qiao Zijin to have no resting place even after her death. He would have hated it if he had to carry Qiao Zijin's ashes and travel thousands of miles back to Ping Cheng just to find somewhere to lay Qiao Zijin to rest. "Your sister had envied the bustle of the capital her whole life. People say that you should return to your roots, but I know your sister would have wanted to stay in the capital. I have no choice but to ask you to waste this sum of money."

His elder daughter had passed away so suddenly, and in such a tragic way as well. The car that had knocked her down was even his younger daughter's. After suffering from this double blow at once, Qiao Dongliang had no energy or spirit to deal with the details of Qiao Zijin's funeral.

Qiao Nan had already guessed Qiao Dongliang's situation and thus decided to hire one of Zhai Sheng's retired comrades to help out with this matter. In matters that required asking for favors, she would first use her own. If that failed, she would then resort to using the Zhai family's name. With this double reassurance, it was smooth-flowing for that comrade to deal with matters—much easier than if Qiao Dongliang were to do everything himself.

Qiao Nan bit on her lip. "Dad, I don't mean to say anything against my conscience. But now that Qiao Zijin is gone, we should respect the dead. This money... I'll just treat it as accumulating karma. I hope that I'll never meet her again in my next life." Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi had not gotten along well as mother and daughter, and they were in no way happy. Her relationship with her sister was an even greater mess. It could be said that her relationship with her neighbor was even better than with her sister.

In their next lives, it would be best if these three women never met in any way or even had a shred of relationship. Even if they met on the streets, Qiao Nan hoped that Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi would walk on the other side of the street. The three would be like parallel lines that would never intersect.

Thinking about how she had already had two lives worth of relationships with these two women, Qiao Nan did not know whether to cry or laugh. Between the three of them, only she had such an experience. To that, she could not tell whether it was her blessing or Ding Jiayi's and Qiao Zijin's blessings.

“All right. You'll never meet in the future.” Qiao Dongliang patted Qiao Nan on the shoulder. If there really was a next life, he would rather be a bachelor his whole life than marry a woman like Ding Jiayi again. As long as he did not marry Ding Jiayi, even if he had children, it would not be Zijin or Nan Nan.

With a different mother, his child's childhood and even the child's whole life would definitely be much happier than the ones Zijin and Nan Nan had. He, too, would be much happier with a complete family.

As the father and daughter were chatting, a loud confusion of noise and cries came from outside.

Qiao Dongliang and Qiao Nan knew instinctively at the same time without needing to get out that the only person who would be making a din under such a situation could only be Ding Jiayi. No one else was capable of doing such a thing.

“Wait here. I'll go have a look. Thankfully, it's the last day today. She'll never get a chance to disturb Zijin anymore in her whole life.” Qiao Dongliang's face was as cold as frost.

Hearing Qiao Dongliang's words, Qiao Nan did not bother to persuade him otherwise. Instead, she started to burn paper money for Qiao Zijin as she looked at the photo of Qiao Zijin smiling on the altar.

Around ten minutes later, Qiao Dongliang returned with a sullen face and disheveled clothes. “All right. It'll be fine now. We're in the capital. It's not like Ping Cheng. Zijin's coffin will leave tomorrow, and she'll have somewhere to rest in the capital. I won't have to deal with her anymore in the future.” This was a relief for everyone.

Today was the first day after Qiao Zijin's death. Ding Jiayi had come dressed in white, with eyes that were as swollen as walnuts, to stay by Zijin's coffin. Unfortunately, Qiao Dongliang refused to let Ding Jiayi take even a step closer. “Zijin said that she doesn't want you at her funeral. Zijin doesn't even want you to pay your respects. Do you think she would want you to stay by her coffin as her mother? Zijin is already dead. Could you just let her off and let Zijin take this last journey

peacefully? Or do you mean that you want Zijin to continue hating you like how she did just before her death?”

After being scolded mercilessly by Qiao Dongliang, Ding Jiayi was even more heartbroken. In fact, Ding Jiayi had never forgotten the last call that she had had with Qiao Zijin before the incident. She had never let anyone know about the contents of this phone call, but she held it dear to her heart.

From that day on, Qiao Zijin declared that she hated her, that she did not want to see her, and that she was going to cut off ties with her mother.

Ding Jiayi felt aggrieved and anguished. She could not understand how Qiao Zijin could treat her in this manner even after she had devoted her whole life's efforts and love toward Qiao Zijin, even treating Qiao Nan as though she was a child picked up from the rubbish dump.

If Qiao Nan did not listen to her and was not filial to her, Ding Jiayi would scold Qiao Nan for being heartless. And so, Ding Jiayi was completely unable to accept that Qiao Zijin not only hated her but also refused to acknowledge her as her mother even after she had given up everything for her! Why? What rights did Qiao Zijin have to say that? Even Qiao Nan did not have the right to say that!

What put Ding Jiayi in more anguish and embarrassment was that Qiao Zijin refused to let Ding Jiayi come to her funeral. In the end, Qiao Dongliang really barred her, who was Qiao Zijin's mother, from entering! She was not even able to take one last look at Qiao Zijin.

The grief-stricken Ding Jiayi felt as though she had used up her whole lifetime of tears in these few days. Her face was never dry for a second these days. Her close relatives, from her parents to Qiao Dongliang and her two daughters—why did every single one of them hate her? She wished that she had never existed.

Could it really be that she was such a failure? Was she really that annoying?

No, no! That could not be the case! She did not believe it! Not a single bit!

It was the fault of all these people! Her parents favored boys over girls. Even though she was smarter than her younger brothers, her parents had never allowed her to attend school. Qiao Dongliang was no better. She married Qiao Dongliang when he had nothing and had accompanied him as he built his life. However, when she became old and haggard, Qiao Dongliang despised her and left her to live a better life with Qiao Nan!

She had devoted her whole life to Zijin, but Zijin had let her down. Firstly, her academic results were poor. They were thousands of miles behind Qiao Nan's, let alone surpassing hers. Then, after she finally married into a good family, Zijin had to mess around with a man outside, ruining her perfectly good family.

## Chapter 1612: Clashing

Qiao Nan was the worst. She was the one who gave birth to Qiao Nan and gave Qiao Nan life. What was wrong with asking Qiao Nan for such an arrangement as a mother? Qiao Nan just had to follow what she said. She was not asking Qiao Nan to die. The path that she had arranged for Qiao Nan was more or less normal, aside from the fact that she did not get to study as much. She had not forced Qiao Nan into a corner. Did Qiao Nan have to resist so aggressively and cause her to get a divorce with Qiao Dongliang?

That's right. It was the fault of all these people. Every single one of them let her down. She was the one who had been hurt the most. She had not wronged anyone. It was everyone else who had wronged her.

Qiao Dongliang and Qiao Nan knew nothing about Ding Jiayi's warped ideas. The father and daughter spent three days before finally settling all of Qiao Zijin's things.

Thinking about Qiao Zijin's daughter, Qiao Nan's tone deepened. "Qiao Zijin's daughter is called Zhou Ying, right? Whether it was Zhou Ying or anyone from the Zhou family, no one turned up this time."

Her dad had stopped Ding Jiayi and had refused her entry, but her dad had not forgotten to inform the Zhou family. The strange part was that everything had been settled, but in these three days, not a single person from the Zhou family appeared. Not even Qiao Zijin's biological daughter, Zhou Ying.

Qiao Nan thought that this was rather strange. It was as though something was not quite right.

She could understand Zhou Zheng not wanting to come. After all, it was already quite humane if a man who had been cheated on by his wife did not clap in glee when his wife was knocked down by a car. And so, not coming was understandable. However, even her daughter, Zhou Ying, did not appear to pay her last respects to Qiao Zijin. Wasn't this a little too much?

Actually, Qiao Dongliang had been thinking about this matter as well. “Should we give a call to the Zhou family and ask about their intentions? It’s true that Zijin did something bad to the Zhou family, but she did nothing wrong to her child, Ying Ying. Now that her mom is gone, the Zhou family doesn’t even want to let Ying Ying pay her last respects? No matter what, I think the Zhou family is being a little ridiculous.”

The thought of Qiao Zijin’s daughter not appearing at her funeral made Qiao Dongliang pity Qiao Zijin. “Nan Nan, just look at the Zhou family’s attitude. Do you think that Zijin did something wrong against Zhou Zheng because of something the Zhou family did to her? Maybe the Zhou family treated Zijin badly. Given Zijin’s bad temper, she could have gotten into a relationship with a man outside just to get revenge on the Zhou family and Zhou Zheng.”

When he first found out that Zhou Zheng had angrily divorced Qiao Zijin because of her affair, Qiao Dongliang was no less infuriated than Zhou Zheng. His face was so flushed with anger that it seemed as though he was the husband who had been cheated on.

But now that she was gone, Qiao Dongliang seemed to have changed his mind. Whatever he said needed to be filtered, and only then could anyone barely listen to what he was saying. “At that time, when I heard that Zijin had done such a thing, I was so angry that I could have been confused. I didn’t even stop to think about Zijin. I should have considered Zijin’s point of view and communicated calmly with her to find out why she had done such a thing. Why would she choose to ruin her life when she was living such a good life? Nan Nan, I think that something else must have caused Zijin’s affair.”

It was probably because he felt that Zijin had died at such a young age and had passed on before himself that Qiao Dongliang was heartbroken and had started to think about what Qiao Zijin had gone through while she was still alive.

Without any basis at all, and based only on his own conjectures, Qiao Dongliang came up with the ‘truth’ of the matter. “Nan Nan, we can’t let the Zhou family malign Zijin like that. Zijin can’t carry this with her even after her death. Maybe the Zhou family is even trying to smear Zijin’s name in front of Ying Ying, and that’s why Ying Ying didn’t appear. I have to get to the bottom of this matter. I have to find out how Zhou Zheng treated Zijin in the past few years and how the Zhou family drove Zijin into a corner so much so that she decided to have an affair...”

“Nan Nan, do you think it’s possible? That Zijin’s affair was actually made up? That they made this up so that Zhou Zheng could get a divorce from Zijin? Maybe Zijin had never done anything wrong toward Zhou Zheng! Maybe she was framed!”

As Qiao Dongliang went on, he became increasingly serious and indignant. How he wished he could drag Zhou Zheng in front of him and interrogate him right then and there and demand Zhou Zheng to prove Qiao Zijin's innocence.

It was probably a coincidence that Qiao Dongliang had just gotten these suspicions and Qiao Nan received a phone call before she could even say a thing.

The moment Qiao Nan's phone rang, Qiao Dongliang naturally stopped talking. Qiao Zijin's innocence was important, and he had to clear the matter and prove his elder daughter's innocence, but his younger daughter's official matters were equally important. He could not ask his younger daughter to give up her career just for the sake of his elder daughter.

"Oh, I see. That's really coincidental that they've clashed. But is there really a need to be in such a hurry? It hasn't even been a few months since Qiao Zijin got divorced from Zhou Zheng, right?" She had just heard that Zhou Zheng had gotten married to his ex-girlfriend. And it was just so coincidental that their wedding had been held over the past two days, clashing with Qiao Zijin's funeral. But what could Qiao Nan say?

No wonder not a single member of the Zhou family had appeared. It was already polite of them not to clap and rejoice in glee now that their ex-daughter-in-law was dead. She could not possibly expect the Zhou family to put aside their son's second marriage, forgo his wedding, and come all the way to the capital just to attend the funeral of such a shameless ex-daughter-in-law, right?

Zhou Ying was Qiao Zijin's daughter. Logically, even if everyone else in the Zhou family did not attend Qiao Zijin's funeral, Zhou Ying still had to do so. The one who had passed away was Zhou Ying's biological mother after all.

But Zhou Ying was too young, and it was inconvenient for the Zhou family to attend the funeral. Firstly, it was unlucky for their joyful occasion to clash with mourning. Secondly, the date of Zhou Zheng's wedding happened to be the date of Qiao Zijin's funeral. The invitations had already been sent out and there was no way for them to change the date of their wedding. As such, the Zhou family was really unable to find someone to accompany Zhou Ying to the capital.

Her biological mother had died, and Zhou Ying had to attend her funeral. But did that mean she could not attend her biological father's wedding? It was Qiao Zijin herself who had sent Zhou Ying back to the Zhou family. So what was wrong if Zhou Ying was closer to the Zhou family?

The Zhou family gave a hundred excuses as to why they would not be going, and neither would Zhou Ying.

On the other end of the phone call, the ends of Qiao Nan's lips curled up. She could not help but reply with a cheeky smile, "I see. Congratulations to you! I hope you enjoy your new marriage!"

If the person who had called today had been Mother Zhou, Mother Zhou would have been the one saying these words. And once Qiao Nan went home, she would immediately shoot at Zhai Sheng.

### Chapter 1613: Discredited

No matter how brilliant a woman was, she would still get muddled once she got old. The mourning period had not even passed, but the Zhou family was using such excuses to refuse to attend Qiao Zijin's funeral. That was seriously foolish, but utterly brilliant at the same time.

Zhou Zheng had gotten married at such a sensitive time. She did not feel as though she owed the Zhou family a favor because Qiao Zijin had cheated on Zhou Zheng. But could she really not hate Zhou Zheng for doing this at such a time? He was practically insulting them. She was practically already a saint for tolerating the Zhou family even though their relationship was thoroughly strained.

She fought relentlessly with Qiao Zijin and could never get along with her. But both of them shared the same surname. If her relationship with Qiao Zijin was really so strained, would she let Qiao Zijin marry into the Zhou family to lead a good life? Anyone with a brain would know that that would be impossible.

Qiao Nan had always felt that her disagreements with Qiao Zijin were the Qiao family's problems. There was no need to air their dirty laundry out in public. At the same time, she had never thought of letting outsiders know about their strained relationship as long as Qiao Zijin did not overstep her boundaries.

Qiao Nan was all too clear about her status. Even if she had not entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she was the Zhai family's daughter-in-law. As long as she revealed just a hint of her disharmony with Qiao Zijin, Qiao Zijin would probably have a hard time trying to lead her own life not just in Ping Cheng or the capital, but half of China!

Zhou Zheng never had any say in how she wanted to deal with Qiao Zijin.

Zhou Zheng had done a terrible job in not being angry toward Qiao Nan. His tone was especially difficult to listen to when he was trying to explain the situation to Qiao Nan. Zhou Zheng's ecstatic tone and attitude made it seem as though he was Qiao Nan's creditor. Because of what Qiao Zijin had done, Qiao Nan owed him a huge favor.

Such uncalled for confidence had to go!

All Mother Zhou's efforts before had all been ruined by Zhou Zheng's one call!

In short, Zhou Zheng's style and attitude had already reached Qiao Nan's bottom line. Even though bad things struck her one after another, and her relationship with Qiao Zijin had been so strained, she had always still been able to say that the dead should be respected in the end. But who would have expected that Zhou Zheng had an even more ruthless and vicious attitude than Qiao Nan? It was no wonder Qiao Nan was fuming.

If all her accumulated negative emotions were really to explode, it would not be a small matter.

After hanging up the call, Qiao Nan looked at Qiao Dongliang, who was angrier than she was. "How long has it been since Zijin got divorced from him? And he's getting married already? I knew it. I knew it wasn't Zijin's fault. It's definitely Zhou Zheng's fault. He's getting married so quickly. It must be that he already had an affair even before getting divorced from Zijin! Zijin was being falsely accused! Zhou Zheng must have wanted to be with his mistress, so he purposely set Zijin up and accused her of an affair to force her to get a divorce! Nan Nan, I won't blame you if you don't care about this matter. But I'm Zijin's father. I must get to the bottom of this. I must make Zhou Zheng and the Zhou family apologize to Zijin!"

Qiao Dongliang had just raised his suspicions when that bold Zhou Zheng made such a call that could be easily misunderstood. It was really no wonder that Qiao Dongliang was infuriated.

Qiao Nan pursed her lips. "Sometimes, it's better to do than just to say. Dad, believe me. Don't investigate this matter. If you try to investigate it, it'll only be shameful to our Qiao family. Don't you remember that the guy Qiao Zijin had found outside was Chen Jun? Zhou Zheng may have married his ex-girlfriend, but Qiao Zijin had also gotten into a relationship with her ex-lover and ex-boyfriend. The Chen family has much higher standing than the Zhou family in Ping Cheng. If Zhou Zheng really only meant to smear Qiao Zijin's name to force her to get a divorce so that he could marry his ex-girlfriend, do you think that Qiao Zijin's partner would be Chen Jun? Zhou Zheng isn't so daring."



“If he dared to do so, he should realize that once anything happened to him or the Zhou family, it would already be magnanimous of our Zhai family as long as we didn’t add salt to the injury or deliberately get revenge against them. When they got into any trouble, they shouldn’t expect our Zhai family to help him in any way. Besides, if the Zhai family didn’t render help, the Zhou family wouldn’t be able to deal with the Chen family alone. If this matter was really orchestrated, you wouldn’t even be the first to act on it. The Chen family would have long ago made a mess of the Zhou family.”

Wronged?

If this matter was truly false, Chen Jun would be the first to refuse, and he would even cause a ruckus in the Zhou family. For such a setup, one could not possibly pick just any person. At the very least, the Zhou family and Zhou Zheng could not afford to offend the Chen family.

Qiao Dongliang was especially unwilling to accept this fact. Now that Qiao Zijin was gone, even if it was too late, Qiao Dongliang still wanted to do something for Qiao Zijin as a father. It was just that Qiao Dongliang was not Ding Jiayi and was still rational.

Hearing Qiao Nan’s analysis, he knew that Qiao Nan was right. If the Zhou family did not understand the times and looked at the Zhai family’s reputation, Qiao Dongliang knew that there was no way Qiao Zijin could have married into the Zhou family on her own account.

Similarly, if Zhou Zheng was going to malign Qiao Zijin, the Zhou family would definitely have been prepared for the Zhai family to find out about it. If the affair was fake, they had even implicated Chen Jun. How could Chen Jun endure the Zhou family discrediting him in this manner?

One was the Zhai family, and the other, the Chen family. The Zhou family could not even afford to offend the Chen family. How could they even dare to test the limits of the Zhai family?

“So, what do you intend to do? I really... can’t accept that Zhou Zheng got married so quickly. No matter what, I won’t let this matter rest just like that.” Since Zhou Zheng dared to treat Zijin like that, he had to get revenge on Zhou Zheng.

Qiao Nan sighed. “Dad, if I don’t care about this, how do you intend to get revenge on the Zhou family?”

“...” Qiao Dongliang’s face flushed as he cradled his head in anger without speaking.

How would he get revenge? He had no power, no manpower, and no money. How would he get revenge? He had said that he was unhappy with Zhou Zheng’s attitude and wanted to get revenge. Unless he really went up to Zhou Zheng and gave him a good beating, there was nothing else he could do.

Zhou Zheng had gotten married so quickly and refused to allow Zhou Ying to attend Qiao Zijin’s funeral. It was just that Qiao Dongliang was unwilling to let Zhou Zheng get his way just like that. But Qiao Dongliang really lacked the ability to do anything that would teach Zhou Zheng a good lesson. The only thing he had left was his daughter, Qiao Nan.

Actually, Qiao Dongliang had been beating around the bush the whole time. What he had in mind was for Qiao Nan to teach Zhou Zheng a lesson.

Qiao Dongliang scratched his scalp and sent the helve after the hatchet. “Nan Nan, Zijin is already gone. Don’t be so stingy with a dead person. Didn’t you say that we should respect the dead?”

#### Chapter 1614: Caught Red-Handed

“Dad is useless and can’t do anything for Zijin. You’ve been sisters with Zijin for more than thirty years. Are you willing to let Zijin be bullied like this even after her death?”

“Hehehe...” Qiao Nan had not even had a chance to say anything before Da Bao, who had heard the conversation, laughed. Smiling grimly, Da Bao ran to Qiao Nan’s side and grabbed Qiao Nan’s hand tightly. Only by doing this was he able to control the burning fire within him and not say cruel words to the miserable old man, Qiao Dongliang, who had just lost a daughter.

Da Bao could not understand why kind people were so easily bullied. His mom was the victim and had been hurt countless times. Was his grandfather even humane? His mom had never said that Zhou Zheng would lead a nice and perfect life by doing so. Did his grandfather think that his mom had not been hurt enough? With all his calculations, he even spoke such words to his mom...

Why did his mother have to take on all the hurt? And why did his mother have to do everything? Was this what his mother deserved! Aargh!

“Why did you come, Da Bao?” Upon seeing Da Bao, Qiao Dongliang’s fatherly heart caused him to rein in his temper. After all, Qiao Dongliang sincerely loved the three triplets from the bottom of his heart. He had never felt so much toward even Qiao Zijin. Naturally, he would not bully Qiao Nan in front of the three children, even if he was Qiao Nan’s birth father.

1

“Our school’s sports festival.” Da Bao’s tone was extremely cold. After meeting his grandmother’s entire family, Da Bao realized that there were two sides to a person. Everyone in his maternal grandmother’s family was like that, even the grandfather who had always treated them well.

In the short span of just a few days, Da Bao clearly recognized that his mom was the only one who was being bullied by everyone else in that family of four. She was at the bottom of the food chain, the one who was always eaten by others. Da Bao could not help but think about how his mom had been bullied all those years ago in the Qiao family when she had not yet made a name for herself.

Ever since Da Bao had found out that his mom had not had an easy life in the Qiao family, Da Bao had constantly been trying to find a way to cajole Miao Jing into telling him about the details of Qiao Nan’s life in the Qiao family. Thankfully, Miao Jing was able to resist it and only said that it had not been easy indeed. But she had never once spilled the details.

But Da Bao had found another way. He had gotten it out of Xiao Bao.

1

Xiao Bao was the Tian family’s little emperor, and the elders of the Tian family adored him terribly. No matter how obedient Xiao Bao was, or how many people favored him, he would still inevitably have some small problems. Once, Xiao Bao tore his book. Zhai Hua learned about this matter and did not want Xiao Bao to cultivate this into a habit. Thus, she scolded him.

1

Xiao Bao said that he had finished reading the book and no longer wanted it, so his solution was to tear it.

Zhai Hua reprimanded Xiao Bao directly. “Don’t you love your aunt the most? Don’t you know that your aunt loves books the most? Now, you’re even tearing them apart? When your aunt was young

and wanted to study, she couldn't even keep her own textbooks. All the textbooks that she had finished using were sold by her mother. Your aunt was so desperate that she cried and spent a lot of money to purchase other people's second-hand books from the garbage station just to continue studying. You'd better learn from your aunt and take good care of your books. Stop tearing them. Do you understand?"

Indeed, using Qiao Nan as a role model was a successful way of disciplining Xiao Bao.

1

Xiao Bao got rid of this bad habit of tearing his books, and he even tearfully told Da Bao that they should not tear books apart either. Otherwise, his aunt would be mad.

1

Da Bao himself was someone who liked to study, so there was no doubt he knew that he had to keep all his old textbooks before graduating to the next stage. That was because all the knowledge in these old books would be useful when taking the graduation examination.

The three children no longer kept their elementary school textbooks, but once they entered junior high school, Qiao Nan tirelessly kept every single one of their junior high textbooks for the three children after they had finished using them in school, without throwing even one textbook away.

Thinking of Qiao Nan's mom selling the books that Qiao Nan had kept for herself, Da Bao was so furious that he could not even maintain that stony cold face that resembled his father's.

At the same time, what made Da Bao most resentful was the difference in Qiao Dongliang's behavior today. Qiao Dongliang was the head of the Qiao family. Why had he not cared when his own wife mistreated his daughter? Why had he allowed it to happen and just let Qiao Nan get bullied like that? Just thinking about this, Da Bao experienced what it meant by being so angry that it hurt the liver.

Hearing could never be as shocking as experiencing it for oneself. When Qiao Zijin died, his grandfather wanted to be a good father and wanted to get revenge for his elder daughter. But did that mean that he could just take advantage of his younger daughter without any limits? Whom did his mom owe?!

Then, he thought about how well Qiao Nan had treated Qiao Dongliang in the past few years. She had specially arranged for Qiao Dongliang to move from Ping Cheng to the capital, had arranged accommodation for him, given him a monthly living allowance, and had even brought the triplets to visit him regularly. If it was not for the sudden appearance of his ‘maternal grandmother’ and ‘elder aunt’, they would never have realized how their grandfather had mistreated their mom in the past. Yet, their mom was still treating their grandfather so well!

The division between right and wrong was clear in a child’s world. If it was not black, then it was white. They did not know that apart from black and white, there was also the existence of gray areas in the grown-up world.

Thus, Da Bao could not accept that Qiao Dongliang did not treat Qiao Nan well and even went overboard at times. In the face of such a father, why did Qiao Nan still do her best to support Qiao Dongliang? He thought about all those news articles he had seen whereby the elderly had devoted all their efforts to their children. But when their children finally made a name for themselves, not a single one of them cared about their parents and instead left their parents to die.

By contrast, Da Bao felt that his mother was too kind. It was exactly because she was too softhearted that she was being taken advantage of.

“Oh, sports festival.” Qiao Dongliang could feel that Da Bao’s gaze toward him had changed. With that, Qiao Dongliang felt so miserable that he did not even know what to do. “Da Bao, are you angry at grandpa?”

Da Bao chuckled. “Grandpa, we’re doing fine. Why did you suddenly ask that? Why don’t you tell me if you’ve done anything to make me angry?”

1

Er Bao’s and San Bao’s expressions were similarly bad. Because of Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi, the relationship between the three children and Qiao Dongliang had suddenly gotten a lot more complex. But because Qiao Nan was here, the children had still come.

Or in other words, Qiao Dongliang’s luck was not very good. It was only when he had finished dealing with Qiao Zijin’s funeral matters and enshrined Qiao Zijin’s photo in his home that he had mentioned Qiao Zijin to Qiao Nan for the first time, hinting that Qiao Nan should seek justice for Qiao Zijin, who had already passed away, and make life difficult for the Zhou family.

## Chapter 1615: What Are You Angry About?

What was awkward was that Qiao Dongliang had been caught red-handed at once by the triplets. Their grandpa was bullying their mom!

“Mom, I haven’t seen you for just a few days, but you’ve lost weight! You’re so skinny now that you’re practically just bones!” Er Bao walked toward Qiao Nan while smiling. His tone was much warmer, but he did not even bother to greet Qiao Dongliang. It was as if he had not seen his grandfather at all. “That won’t do. I’ll call grandma now and get grandma to buy an old hen to make some stew for you for nourishment. Mom, don’t worry. Dad is dead set for you. In his eyes, there are only two kinds of women in the world. The first kind is his only wife, who is also my mother. The second kind is any other woman apart from you. Don’t try to lose weight like those young ladies for the sake of beauty.”

2

His mom was not even fat to begin with. If she were to lose even more weight, there would be no fats left for her to lose!

“Learn from those young ladies?” Qiao Nan was amused by Er Bao’s words. She tugged gently on Er Bao’s ear. “That’s right. I’m already a mother of three. In a few days, I’ll be turning forty. I’m indeed not young anymore. Are you despising me for being old?”

Her three children were already in junior high school and would then go on to high school and university. Once her children established their own families, she would soon become a grandmother.

Er Bao deliberately feigned that he was in pain and cried out. “Mom! Mom! This is your own son’s ear! Be gentle! In my eyes and heart, you’re not old at all! You’re just like a flower that has just bloomed. Forever eighteen!” San Bao had grown old, but his mother had not.

1

“What an act!” San Bao’s face was full of disdain. “Mom, how could you give birth to a son like Er Bao? He’s such a tease. When I’m outside, I don’t even want to admit that Er Bao is older than me and that he came out before me. Wouldn’t it have been much better if you gave birth to me second

and let me be Er Bao? Then, it wouldn't even matter if he got out of line since he would be the youngest brother anyway.”

“Nonsense. Why is it my fault for giving birth to him in this way? It's his fault for growing up into what he is now.” Qiao Nan refused to take on the responsibility. “If you want someone to blame, you can only blame Er Bao himself. It's got nothing to do with me. Just think about it. Are your dad and I like that? Your dad and I have no genetic responsibility at all.” Er Bao had inherited this from his grandfather.

But so as to not ruin Zhai Yaohui's image as a mighty grandpa in front of the three children, Qiao Nan kept that last part to herself. Who would have known that Zhai Yaohui, who was typically more solemn than Zhai Sheng, would have such a side to him when he was younger?

1

Perhaps he was afraid that he would reminisce about his past when seeing Er Bao, but every time Er Bao acted like that, her father-in-law would either turn around or hide in a corner, refusing to give so much as a glance toward Er Bao. As such, before Er Bao went to junior high school, her father-in-law tried to minimize his interactions with the bold and daring Er Bao.

1

This almost made Er Bao misunderstand that his grandpa only liked Da Bao and San Bao and disliked him. Thankfully, every time Zhai Yaohui prepared gifts for the three children, Er Bao was never shortchanged. In fact, Er Bao often found that his grandpa's gift was exactly what he wanted.

1

Er Bao could not help but think that his grandpa cared very deeply about him to be able to know what he was thinking and to give him gifts that suited him so well! All right, he had misunderstood his grandpa. His grandpa not only favored Da Bao and San Bao, but his grandpa also liked him very much.

Bringing this up, San Bao felt a twinge of regret all over. “Ah, if only I was Er Bao. How nice would that be. Compared to Er Bao, I'm much more like an elder sister.” Er Bao was always going out of line. He was nowhere as reliable as Da Bao.

Caressing San Bao's head, Qiao Nan laughed but did not utter a word. While the three children were still in her stomach, she had no control over who was born first. Even if she had undergone a cesarean section, it would all depend on which baby the doctor brought out first.

The three children chatted so eagerly with Qiao Nan, and the mother and children were all in good moods. Just looking at this scene was enough to warm one's heart, except for one person's. Qiao Dongliang realized that apart from the first few sentences when Da Bao had been talking to him, Er Bao and San Bao had never once called him 'grandpa' up until now.

The way the three children gathered around Qiao Nan made Qiao Dongliang realize that the three children must have overheard the conversation between him and Qiao Nan. They must be angry that he was counting on Qiao Nan and even taking advantage of Qiao Nan to get justice for Qiao Zijin.

If he had any other choice, he would certainly do it himself and get justice for Zijin from the Zhou family. However, he was incapable of doing so. What he did have was a capable daughter. Other than getting Nan Nan to settle this matter, what other choice did he have?

Knowing that the triplets were angry at him, Qiao Dongliang felt that his life was miserable as a grown man. His relationship with his grandchildren had been fine to begin with, but he was truly worried that today's incident would cause the children to distance themselves from him.

When Old Lin was still alive, Qiao Dongliang envied the intimacy the three children shared with Old Lin. When Old Lin passed away, Qiao Dongliang had seen how heartbroken the children had been. He could not help but think that he would die with no regrets if the three children would be as heartbroken as they had once been when he passed away.

Later, Qiao Dongliang found an advantage of Old Lin being gone. Gradually, he had grown closer to the three children. Qiao Dongliang had always hoped that he could be like Old Lin, or perhaps, even surpass Old Lin's position in the children's hearts. But with today's uproar, Qiao Dongliang knew that his wish would never be realized.

Qiao Dongliang's expression became increasingly stiff. "You three are here. Who sent you here?" His house was rather far from the Zhai family's house. It would be too unsafe for the three children to have come here on their own.

After Qiao Zijin passed away in a car accident, every time Qiao Dongliang saw a car, it was as though he was seeing a monster. He was almost psychologically scarred. Other than Nan Nan, the whole family of four had all been pinned under cars before. As such, Qiao Dongliang had reminded Qiao Nan to be careful when driving so that she would not encounter the same thing that they had.



“Dad sent us here,” Da Bao replied coldly. He no longer liked his grandpa, but he could not ignore his grandpa. His mother had taught him to be polite. He could not act badly just because the other person was a villain. That would break his mother’s heart.

“Yes, I sent them here.” Because Zhai Sheng had to park his car, he arrived later than the triplets and had missed the conversation between the father and daughter. But the moment he entered the house, Zhai Sheng sensed that the atmosphere was a little strange. Zhai Sheng looked at Qiao Nan. His father-in-law had always adored the three children immensely, so why were the children upset at his father-in-law?

## Chapter 1616: Simply Leaving

He had thought that his father-in-law was the only adult in the world who would never be angry at the children and also whom the three children would never despise.

Qiao Nan caught Zhai Sheng’s gaze but did not provide Zhai Sheng with any information.

The moment he saw Qiao Nan’s reaction, Zhai Sheng understood that the person that his father-in-law had offended was not the three children. He had been bullying Qiao Nan again. Among the five people present, there was no one, including the three children and his son-in-law, Qiao Dongliang dared to provoke apart from his biological daughter, Qiao Nan.

Guessing that Qiao Dongliang was plotting something again, Zhai Sheng immediately changed his tone. “Dad, I’m here with the triplets to bring Qiao Nan home. Have the two of you finished chatting?”

But that was not the truth. Qiao Dongliang was devastated about Qiao Zijin’s death. Now that Qiao Zijin was dead, his relationship with Ding Jiayi was even more strained. Perhaps it was because he felt that Qiao Zijin did die under Qiao Nan’s wheel after all. Miao Jing was worried that Qiao Dongliang would be too heartbroken. Considering how he was already living such a lonely life, he might do something foolish.

It was exactly because Qiao Zijin could not sort out her thoughts that she had refused to let the doctors save her even after being pushed into the operation theatre. A daughter like this was bound to have a similar father. Miao Jing had to consider this thoroughly to avoid having to organize another funeral before the year came to an end.

Knowing that Qiao Nan had gone to visit Qiao Dongliang, Miao Jing directly ordered Zhai Sheng to bring the three children to visit Qiao Dongliang. It was way too troublesome and time-consuming to cook at home, so Miao Jing asked Zhai Sheng to bring Qiao Nan and the triplets out for a meal with Qiao Dongliang. With his daughter and grandchildren by his side, Qiao Dongliang's spirits would probably be lifted.

No matter how upset the three children were, they still had feelings toward their grandpa, Qiao Dongliang. Knowing that Qiao Dongliang's mood was down, the triplets naturally did not have any reason to refuse. They had initially wanted to give their grandfather a surprise. But who would have expected their grandfather to have given them an even greater 'surprise'!

Da Bao had already thought of saying that from the start, but before he could even say anything, his father had expressed what Da Bao had wanted to say before even figuring out the situation. Since his father felt the same way, Da Bao was naturally overjoyed and looked at his father in awe. Dad was dad after all. He had not even said anything, and his dad had guessed the situation through observation alone and had made such a decisive decision.

"Dad, grandpa and grandma are still waiting for us at home. Grandma and grandpa aren't in good health. It's not good to keep them waiting to have their meals. What if they get too hungry? I think we'd better hurry back. Grandpa, you should have a good meal tonight too. No matter what happens, your body is the most important. You must be in good health to carry on with other things."

Da Bao's mood had improved and his expression had warmed up significantly. Before leaving, he could even say such reassuring words to comfort Qiao Dongliang.

Now that he had heard Da Bao's concern, Qiao Dongliang, who had been uneasy at first, began to think that he had been overthinking the situation earlier. Da Bao had not been angry at him after all. Smiling, Qiao Dongliang said, "Don't worry. Grandpa understands. You three are still young. Grandpa wants to see you grow up, go to university, and become outstanding people like your parents. When you have children in the future, grandpa will help you look after them."

The three children had not grown up yet, but they were part of the Zhai family after all. He pulled a long face and felt uneasy, as though he was facing the three old chiefs at the same time. Thankfully, the three children were still young and did not hold grudges for long. Perhaps, they did not really understand the conversation between Nan Nan and him either.

In the future, he would have to be more careful when talking to Nan Nan. As the triplets grew older, they were sure to know more about the world. If the three children overheard the conversations between Qiao Nan and him, they were sure to get mad at their grandpa sooner or later.

If anything were to happen, he knew that the three children would be upset. He would find an opportunity to speak to Nan Nan when the three children were not around.

1

“Grandpa, we’re still young. Mom said that she won’t oppose to us getting into relationships early, but she will never allow our results to deteriorate just because of our relationships. We won’t dare to get into relationships so early, so it’ll take another ten more years before we get married and have children. Grandpa, we really can’t spend any more time with you. We have to hurry back to have dinner with grandma and grandpa. Grandpa, we’ll visit you again next time.”

1

Er Bao held Qiao Nan in one hand and tugged the latter toward the door.

Once Er Bao did that, Qiao Nan could only follow along with Er Bao in order not to fall.

San Bao smiled at Qiao Dongliang and obediently waved at Qiao Dongliang. “Bye, grandpa. We’ll come and visit you with Mom another time. Grandpa, eat more nutritious food and stay healthy!”

Saying a few more words did not require any money, and neither would it kill her. The way the three children spoke to their grandpa, no one would be able to tell that the three children were upset with their grandfather, Qiao Dongliang.

1

If Zhai Sheng had not known that his mother had tasked him with bringing Qiao Dongliang for a meal today, the three children would have successfully deceived him. The three children were not just angry at Qiao Dongliang, but they were infuriated.

“Dad, we’re leaving.” Zhai Sheng was supportive of what the three children were doing. There was no way Zhai Sheng was going to allow him to have a meal with his family after bullying his wife.

Zhai Sheng was elated. He was just his father-in-law. Even if he was his own birth father, Zhai Sheng was not going to let this matter go so easily. “Dad, take this money. You’ve lost some weight recently. Buy some good food for yourself to nourish your body.”

Before Zhai Sheng left, he took out a thousand yuan from his pocket, but he did not put it in Qiao Dongliang’s hands. Instead, he simply placed it on the table. He took out half of the money that he had planned on spending on the meal and asked Qiao Dongliang to take care of himself. To Qiao Dongliang, this was no small sum.

Anyway, both Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin loved money very much. Since Qiao Dongliang was their family, even if he did not like money as much as they did, he would not hate it either. This thousand yuan was sufficient for Qiao Dongliang to have quite a few good meals, and it would even make Qiao Dongliang happy. As such, Zhai Sheng had no qualms doing so. Any problem that could be settled with money was not a problem at all.

Qiao Dongliang would realize in the future that what he lacked was not money but the companionship of his loved ones. But when Qiao Dongliang finally realized that, he would never be able to find what he had lost.

Qiao Dongliang looked embarrassed and wanted to return the money to Zhai Sheng. “There’s no need for that. I don’t spend much money. What Nan Nan gives me is more than enough. You guys should take this money back. The three children are still young. They’re still in junior high school. When they enter high school and university, they’ll need to spend even more money. You guys had better save this money.”

Qiao Dongliang knew that he did not have much money and could not help with his daughter’s expenses. Even the money that he spent on buying gifts for his grandchildren was from his daughter. But he really did not spend much and had always been frugal with his money. Especially in front of his grandchildren, all the more did Qiao Dongliang feel that he could not receive the money.

## Chapter 1617: Coaxing Mom

Afraid that Qiao Nan and Zhai Sheng would not receive it, Qiao Dongliang took up the thousand yuan and stuffed it into Er Bao’s hands.

Er Bao gritted his teeth and smiled. This thousand yuan was not given for nothing. If they did not give this thousand yuan out today, what their family would lose in the future would be far more than just a thousand yuan. Without hesitation, Er Bao took the money from his hands and pressed it into Qiao Dongliang's pockets before taking Qiao Nan's hands and running off. "Grandpa, remember to buy more good and nutritious food for yourself!"

Now that Er Bao had started running, Zhai Sheng just picked up his pace slightly to keep up with him. There was no need for him to run since he had long legs. Da Bao and San Bao were triplets with Er Bao after all and had great chemistry among them. Once Er Bao turned around, Da Bao and San Bao followed along and ran with Er Bao, even running ahead of Zhai Sheng to let Zhai Sheng guard the rear.

Seeing that Zhai Sheng was guarding the rear, Qiao Dongliang did not dare to take the money from his pocket to place it in Zhai Sheng's hands. Qiao Dongliang was not so bold when facing such a son-in-law like Zhai Sheng.

After the family of five finally got downstairs to the underground parking lot, Er Bao took a deep breath. "Thankfully, we managed to get out. If we really had to stay on, I think I would have exploded."

1

"It's not just you. I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to maintain my image of a pure and innocent young lady anymore." San Bao patted her chest in relief. "In the past, I never understood why I had such a grandmother and elder aunt and how grandpa could be so different from the two of them. But now, I understand that a family will always be a family. Grandpa, grandma, and elder aunt are all a family. That is for sure."

1

It was not that grandpa was a good seed, and neither was it that he did not do anything bad. It was just that grandpa had hidden that side of him so well in front of them. It was only in front of their mom would he reveal his 'true nature'.

Da Bao looked as though he had just escaped from a disaster. "All right. It's good that we managed to escape. Let's not think about things like that in the future. I'm afraid we'll be sad thinking about it." Da Bao took a deep breath and looked at Qiao Nan. "Mom, you had it hard in the past. If Dad bullies you or mistreats you in the future, be sure to tell me. I'll definitely be on your side to help you."

1

It did not matter that he was still young and his physique, power, or capabilities could not compare with his father's. One day, he would grow up. Then, his father would be old. And when that time came, he would take revenge on his father for his mother and himself.

“Me too.” Er Bao puffed up his chest. “Dad, you heard us. We're the Zhai family. We're not used to being treated differently even if we're from different generations, so we're telling you this directly. In the future, the three of us will always be on Mom's side to help her. You can't let Mom feel wronged. Do you understand?”

1

Now, their dad treated their mom quite well, but who knew whether he would continue to treat her this way in a few years' time or ten to twenty years down the road? It would be better to give him a heads-up than to have an ugly fight between father and son if that day were really to come.

Zhai Sheng's face was cold and he feigned a smile toward Da Bao and Er Bao. He raised his hands and unhesitatingly hit Da Bao's and Er Bao's heads forcefully. Da Bao and Er Bao were in such great pain that their faces were scrunched up. San Bao, on the other hand, covered her mouth and stood laughing in a corner.

That was how she felt too. It was just that she had not had the chance to express her wishes. Thankfully, she had been slow in doing so. That saved her a beating.

Having disciplined his sons, Zhai Sheng opened the door for Qiao Nan to get in the car.

When the five of them were all in the car, Zhai Sheng finally burst out. “Your mother is my wife. I'll take care of my wife. There's no need for you to worry about her or meddle in her business. If you have spare time, you'd better just eat more and grow up quickly to find your own wife and marry her. When that time comes, I won't care about how you take care of your own wife.”

With him around, did he still need those two rascals to worry about Nan Nan? What a joke!

In short, if Da Bao and Er Bao had such an idea, they might as well find themselves their own wives to lead their own couple lives.

Da Bao and Er Bao harrumphed, their faces expressing their defiance.

Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui had already made preparations for only the two of them to have dinner together tonight. It was not only Miao Jing who was not used to it. Zhai Yaohui's behavior was also colder than usual. It was only when they heard from the auntie that Zhai Sheng's family of five had returned that the eyes of the elderly couple twinkled. Miao Jing stood up joyfully to welcome her precious grandchildren. "Why are you guys back? It's so early. Shouldn't you be in a restaurant having just ordered your dinner?"

Logically speaking, there was no way for the five of them to have returned only after having a meal with Qiao Dongliang.

"There was a small problem, so we came back. You and Dad haven't eaten, right?" Zhai Sheng did not elaborate any further. On the way back, Zhai Sheng had been meaning to ask about the matter, but he had held back after seeing that Qiao Nan's expression had just improved after leaving Qiao Dongliang's house. He was really curious about what his father-in-law, Qiao Dongliang, had done to provoke his wife, but there was no hurry. Even if he could not ask Qiao Nan herself, he could always ask the three children. Based on how the children were behaving earlier, Zhai Sheng was certain that they knew what was going on.

Zhai Sheng had not even understood the matter himself, so he could not give Miao Jing an answer.

With just one look, Miao Jing understood what her son meant. "That's right. Both your father and I haven't eaten. Since you were not around, we didn't have an appetite. Usually, you're in the military, the children are in school, but Nan Nan accompanies us. Today, even Nan Nan wasn't around. It felt as though the whole house was so empty. Auntie, hurry and get some more dishes ready. We must have some more meat and vegetables. Cook more!"

Now that there were suddenly five more mouths to feed, that little bit of food that had been prepared earlier was clearly insufficient.

Thinking about it, Miao Jing was afraid that the auntie would not be able to prepare everything in time, so she squeezed into the kitchen as well and got busy with cooking.

"I'll help out too." Qiao Nan rolled up her sleeves and entered the kitchen.

Ever since Miao Jing's culinary skills improved, Qiao Nan rarely stepped into the kitchen to help. But it was really because the auntie and Miao Jing alone were more than able to handle the preparations. Today's situation was an exception.

"Mom, I'll help you wash the vegetables." San Bao's eyes creased into crescents. Suddenly, all the women in the Zhai family were busy in the kitchen.

1

Er Bao could not help but praise San Bao. "Wow! You're doing well today, San Bao! You're using your eyes to work! Great job!"

1

## Chapter 1618: Old Man

Er Bao stuck out his thumb. Now that San Bao was in the kitchen with his mom, Da Bao and he would have the chance to tell his dad all about what had happened in his maternal grandfather's house earlier.

"Dad, come. Let's have a chat." It was probably because he had really been agitated. It was the first time that Er Bao did not have a great reaction in front of Zhai Sheng. "Let's have a chat about what happened at grandpa's house just now. If you choose not to stand up for Mom in this matter, Da Bao and I will do it ourselves."

1

Zhai Sheng sneered and flicked Er Bao on the forehead again. "Da Bao and you are still children. How will you do that? He's my father-in-law. It's not even convenient for me to do anything. More so for you two who call him grandpa! It'll be even more inappropriate for you two to do anything." Besides, Qiao Zijin had just passed away. It was possible that Qiao Dongliang was hit hard by Qiao Zijin's death and was not in the right state of mind. That could be the reason he had done something wrong.



His father-in-law, Qiao Dongliang, had not even been able to do many good deeds while his mind was still clear, less so now when his mind was filled with grief and confusion.

Da Bao was conscious of this first, so he let Er Bao speak first. "It's inconvenient for us. It's inconvenient for you too. Then, is it convenient for anyone? Are we going to ask our paternal grandpa to do it? Or are we just going to let my mom be bullied like that?" Da Bao could not let the matter go just like that.

Now that his elder aunt was dead and could no longer bully his mom, was someone else going to do it? Was his grandpa going to bully his mom? His mom did not owe these people a single thing!

"That's right. You might agree, but Da Bao and I definitely won't. Mom's life is already hard. That burden that is Mom's family isn't much. But to see them do such things to her, I really have to say something even if it isn't right for me to do so. That whole family is a burden to my mom. In the end, they even despise her for letting them have even better lives! What right do they have?" Er Bao was so furious that he slammed the table.

Zhai Sheng smacked the back of Er Bao's hand. This was the third time Zhai Sheng warned Er Bao to rein in his attitude. There would not be a next time. The next time, Er Bao would be punished. "What right? It was him and Ding Jiayi who gave birth to your mom. Without them, there wouldn't be your mom. Without your mom, there wouldn't be the three of you. Do you still not understand?"

It was frustrating, but they had to accept that fact.

Hearing Zhai Sheng's words, Da Bao's and Er Bao's faces darkened. After a while, Er Bao sullenly said, "Dad, thankfully, you and Mom are not like that. Mom is nothing like the people in her family." Otherwise, in just a few years' time, their lives would have been miserable.

This time, Zhai Sheng was pleased. "It's great that you know how good your mom and I are. When we get older in the future, the three of you have to be filial to us. And if you have your own families, take good care of them and don't cause trouble for us. If you have any problems, try to fix them yourselves. Don't come looking for your mom or me, especially not your mom. Most importantly, once you have children, don't ask your mom to take care of them. When she gave birth to the three of you, she was still in university. Just think about how difficult it was for her to take care of the three of you."

"She's already raised the three of you, so when you have children in the future, you should learn to take care of them yourselves. Do you understand?" He did not wish for a bunch of women trying to steal his wife away from him before having children. After having children, he did not wish for a

bunch of children to be fighting over his wife. He would hate to have to fight with a bunch of children for his own wife even when he was old and no longer mobile.

Zhai Sheng was already feeling a little depressed. Was he the one marrying his wife or was he trying to help these people find a wife?

When he was younger, Zhai Sheng was ambitious and there were just too many things he needed to do. With so many people constantly occupying his wife's time and energy, Zhai Sheng was already quite upset. But if Nan Nan's attention was still going to be on other people once he retired like his father, Zhai Sheng would definitely not accept that situation.

Nearing his old age, he and Nan Nan should get their own time after all.

As for these children, the further they went, the better.

“...”

“...”

Da Bao and Er Bao were momentarily silenced. So, their father's last sentence was the most important. Humph! What a petty man! His world revolved around his wife, and he was even fighting with his children for his wife's attention! Who would have expected that this majestic Chief Zhai, who was usually so suave and cold outside, was such a clingy old man at home!

1

By the time Miao Jing and Qiao Nan brought out the dishes, the men of the Zhai family had basically finished their competition. Just as Zhai Sheng went up to take the dishes from Qiao Nan, Er Bao squeezed ahead. But Da Bao managed to run ahead of the both of them and took the dishes over from Qiao Nan's hands. “Mom, you should've called us when you were done with the dishes. We couldn't help with the cooking, but we can always help set the table!”

1

“That's right!” Er Bao nodded. “There's still more inside, right? I'll get them out.” Both he and Da Bao still dared to fight over the plates in his mom's hands. As for those in his grandma's hands, he

would leave them for his grandpa. They had to leave some dignity for such a good grandpa after all. Otherwise, he would feel wronged on his grandpa's behalf.

"..." After being pushed aside by his sons who had formed an alliance, Zhai Sheng felt his temple throb. What should he do? These rascals were still not grown up and at the age to get married, but he already had the urge to kick them out of his house.

Zhai Yaohui thoughtfully took the dishes over from Miao Jing's hands. "Da Bao and Er Bao are right. Since you guys cooked, it's only right for us to serve it. The weather is cooler nowadays, but these freshly made dishes are still quite hot. Don't take any more of them out. Get some rest. We'll do it." Anyway, Da Bao and Er Bao were fighting over the dishes in his daughter-in-law's hands.

Seeing his son concede defeat, Zhai Yaohui rejoiced within his heart. Whether it was when he was younger or now, he had his fair share of conceding defeat to his son and daughter! Every dog had its day. Now, it was time for his grandsons to take revenge on his behalf!

The grandfather and grandsons were in it together. Zhai Sheng felt extremely helpless, but he could only pinch his own fingers. He had no choice now, but once the winter break came, he would send the three children back to the military. He would see how gleeful they could be then.

It was often said that one couldn't avoid something forever. What's going to come would come eventually.

Da Bao and Er Bao did not yet know that their loving behavior toward their mom had evoked immense jealousy in their birth father. He would not let anyone who tried to fight for Qiao Nan's attention go. Not even his own sons!

## Chapter 1619: Strange Old Zhai

After Zhai Sheng and Zhai Yaohui found out about what was going on, they returned to their rooms. Knowing how much Miao Jing cared about Qiao Nan, Zhai Yaohui did not wait for Miao Jing to ask him before telling her about the conversation between Qiao Dongliang and Qiao Nan. "So that's what happened. I guess it was the first time the three children saw Qiao Dongliang being so unreasonable and clingy toward Qiao Nan. They're so upset. Da Bao and Er Bao have been finding an opportunity to get revenge on Qiao Dongliang on Qiao Nan's behalf."

“That can’t do!” Miao Jing raised her voice before lowering it again. “Everyone in the quad knows about how good and obedient our three children are. It will be too unjustified for them to disrespect their elders and scold their grandfather just to get back at that muddleheaded old man, Qiao Dongliang. I can’t let the three children ruin their names for Qiao Dongliang’s sake.”

Could Qiao Dongliang compare with her three grandchildren’s futures? If they did not take revenge, the three children would continue to hold resentment within their hearts and would not be able to rest easy. If there was no other choice, she would teach Qiao Dongliang a lesson on the three children’s behalf.

She was peers with Qiao Dongliang after all. Now, Nan Nan was not only Qiao Dongliang’s daughter but was also the Zhai family’s daughter-in-law. They had to be clear of their priorities. Qiao Dongliang was not bullying his own daughter but the Zhai family’s daughter-in-law. Did Qiao Dongliang think that the whole Zhai family was dead and that he could just manipulate Nan Nan as he wished? “I’ve decided. It’s better for me to do this. I’ll get justice for Nan Nan. Just because Qiao Zijin is dead, Qiao Dongliang only remembers Qiao Zijin alone as his daughter. Is Nan Nan a child that he picked up?”

Seeing how Miao Jing jumped to conclusions without significant evidence, Zhai Yaohui felt the same way as his son: extraordinarily sour. Their children were often away from home, and the three children were in boarding school. Thus, it was their daughter-in-law, Qiao Nan, who spent the most time with the two elders at home.

Otherwise, Zhai Yaohui would really be upset with this daughter-in-law of his.

“Zhai Sheng knows how to deal with this matter. Besides, it won’t be appropriate for you to show up. It’ll be better for me to do it.” Zhai Yaohui rejected Miao Jing’s suggestion. If Miao Jing were to approach Qiao Dongliang about this matter, it would only make Qiao Dongliang feel embarrassed at the very most. But it would be different for him. As long as Qiao Dongliang remembered that he was once from the military, his words would be much more powerful. “I’ll find some time to have a chat with him. Nan Nan indeed has it tough. Thankfully, she met a good mother-in-law like you.”

In Zhai Yaohui’s eyes, Qiao Nan was quite lucky. The time she spent with Ding Jiayi and Qiao Dongliang was only a little more than ten years. The problem was that Qiao Nan had already been married into the Zhai family for over ten years. Miao Miao’s health was not the best, but there were no major problems, so it was possible for her to live for another two decades.

Qiao Nan had lived with a bad mother for more than ten years, but Qiao Nan would live with a good mother-in-law, Miao Miao, for more than thirty years. If one looked at it this way, meeting a good mother-in-law was not any worse than being her biological daughter.

Miao Jing proudly lifted up her chin. "Then, you should take a closer look. No one is luckier than me to have a good daughter-in-law like Nan Nan. Our two dreadful children, Zhai Sheng and Hua Hua, can't even match up to the time Nan Nan spends with me. As far as I'm concerned, Nan Nan is even closer to me than my own daughter is. And I saw that you weren't in a very good mood when Nan Nan wasn't home for dinner tonight. Admit it. You treat Nan Nan like your own daughter too!"

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Zhai Yaohui raised his eyebrows, quietly turned off the lights, and covered himself with the quilt. Then, he said sullenly, "You've said it yourself that Qiao Nan spends more time with the two of us and has even given birth to three intelligent and obedient grandchildren. So, she's also a hero in the Zhai family. What's wrong with me treating her well?"

It was only because Qiao Nan had made great contributions to the Zhai family that he treated Qiao Nan well as a daughter-in-law. It was not as incredible as Miao Miao had put it.

Miao Jing was over the moon. "Act. Just act." If he did not love Nan Nan from the bottom of his heart, why was Old Zhai even more anxious about Nan Nan than her own biological father was upon hearing that Nan Nan had encountered a problem and was being bullied?

Of course, she could not rule out that Qiao Dongliang's lack of reaction was because he was incapable. No matter how angry or worried he got, there was nothing that he could do for Nan Nan in the capital. The problem was his attitude. Qiao Dongliang's behavior showed that he did not care for Qiao Nan as much as her father-in-law did. That could not be right.

It had always been said that even an honest and upright official would have difficulty resolving a family dispute. Was Old Zhai the kind of person who was willing to meddle in other people's father-daughter relationships? Old Zhai had said that he would talk to Qiao Dongliang. Old Zhai must have thought it over carefully and felt that he, out of all people, would have the greatest impact on Qiao Dongliang and thus benefit Qiao Nan the most. Otherwise, there was no way Old Zhai could have readily agreed without hesitation the moment his son brought this matter up.

Even though Old Zhai had already had such a plan, he had waited for his son to beg him for help. Even then, he acted as though he was only agreeing to it reluctantly. What a trickster!

Feeling that Zhai Yaohui seemed to be ‘regressing’, acting even more childish than Old Master Zhai had, and needing his three grandchildren to coax him at times, Miao Jing felt helpless. Thankfully, Da Bao and San Bao always wondered if Er Bao reincarnated in the wrong body since he was not like Nan Nan or Zhai Sheng at all. That was because Da Bao and San Bao had yet to see through their grandpa’s true nature.

In her opinion, Er Bao’s personality was the spitting image of Old Zhai! That was what Old Master Zhai had said when he was still alive anyway. So that was it. Old Zhai was to be blamed for Er Bao’s personality.

After nagging at Zhai Yaohui, Miao Jing finally switched off her bedside lamp and lay down. Only then did Miao Jing cover herself with the quilt. Zhai Yaohui, whose back had been toward her, turned around and stretched out his arms to hug Miao Jing within his embrace. His outstretched hand smoothly pinched the corner of the quilt to prevent any openings for the cold wind to enter.

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It could be bitterly cold in the capital during November or December.

Sleeping in Zhai Yaohui’s embrace, Miao Jing could only smile. They were already a seasoned couple, but they still had to cuddle together while sleeping.

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Zhai Yaohui had taken the matter into his hands and said that he would handle it himself. To allow the three children to go to school with an ease of mind, he even gave them a definite answer. “Don’t worry. The next time you come home, I promise that I’ll have taken care of this matter. The goal is not punishment. It is more important to ensure that such a thing will never happen again in the future.”

With their grandpa’s reassurance, the triplets’ expressions brightened. But Da Bao thought about it more than Er Bao or San Bao. He was the eldest son in the family. In the future, he would only be able to protect his loved ones if he was stronger. When he became a powerful and influential man, he would never let anyone bully his mother like that. Not even his maternal grandpa.

Chapter 1620: Worlds Apart

Up until now, Da Bao still did not understand why his grandpa treated his mom this way even though he was being supported by her. He had heard that in over three decades that his elder aunt had been alive, she had never been filial to his grandpa. She had never given him any money to spend. It would be considered good if she just avoided doing things that would anger his grandpa.

Could it be that his grandpa and grandma liked naughty children and hated obedient children like his mom?

But that did not matter. Even if his grandparents did not adore his mom, he did. He would live longer than his grandpa. When his grandpa died, he would still be young. When that time came, he would protect his mom even more and love her even more.

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Zhai Yaohui was a person who was always true to his words.

Qiao Dongliang was still in distress about how he had not been able to get justice for his daughter against Zhou Zheng for having held his wedding during the period of Qiao Zijin's funeral. As such, Zhai Yaohui made his first visit to Qiao Dongliang's residence.

Upon seeing Zhai Yaohui, Qiao Dongliang was stunned and immediately greeted Zhai Yaohui with a deep bow. "Chief, why have you come?" Even though the two of them had been in-laws for more than a decade, Qiao Dongliang had never been able to adapt to such a role. In his eyes, Zhai Yaohui was not his in-law, and neither was he his younger daughter's father-in-law. Zhai Yaohui would always remain as his superior.

Zhai Yaohui was more sensitive about this than anyone else, so he had never changed his attitude toward Qiao Dongliang. Since Qiao Dongliang did not treat him as an in-law, there was no need for Zhai Yaohui to do so either. Anyway, it was not worth it. "Sit down. I've come to talk to you about something."

"Please sit down, chief. I'll get some tea for you." Qiao Dongliang's expression was not only stiff but also terribly frightened. If one did not know, they would really not be able to tell that these two men were in-laws. The way they interacted was as though Zhai Yaohui was a much more superior creditor who was there to ask for repayments. It was as if Qiao Dongliang had owed Zhai Yaohui a huge debt and was a bast\*rd who had to sell his children to repay his debts.

“You, too. Please take a seat.” Zhai Yaohui pushed the glass of water that Qiao Dongliang had given him to a side. “Looking at how you are, I don’t think you’ve had a good rest lately.”

Qiao Dongliang smiled bitterly. “Sending off my own child...” How could he have rested well? Besides, up until now, he had not been able to get justice for Zijin. He was a useless father. He had always been.

Zhai Yaohui’s eyes twinkled. “It’s not just for this reason alone. If it was just because of the Zhou family, then you can sleep well from tonight. At least in front of Zijin, you tried to be a good father. Compared to your other child, Zijin was much luckier. You can feel that you’ve done enough for her.”

Qiao Dongliang did not pay attention to Zhai Yaohui’s use of the phrase ‘other child’. He had placed all his attention on the Zhou family. “What’s with the Zhou family?” Despite having not agreed to help him earlier, had Nan Nan gotten justice for Zijin from Zhou Zheng after all?

“It’s not what’s happened to the Zhou family, but what’s happened to Zhou Zheng.” Zhai Yaohui corrected Qiao Dongliang.

Qiao Dongliang was indignant. “It had not even been that long since Zhou Zheng got divorced from Zijin before he got married again. And he even stopped Ying Ying from attending Zijin’s funeral, saying that it would be inauspicious for such an auspicious event to clash with a funeral. If they really thought that it was so inauspicious...” Zhou Zheng should not even have married another woman during such a time. It was not just Zhou Zheng’s responsibility but also Father and Mother Zhou’s. If they had been willing to stop Zhou Zheng, there was no way that Zhou Zheng could have carried on with his wedding.

Zhai Yaohui’s gaze turned cold. This was the first time he was speaking privately with Qiao Dongliang, and it would be the last. He finally understood why his three grandchildren had been so worried before going back to school. They were actually quite tender-hearted, especially toward their loved ones. But the mere mention of Qiao Dongliang had brought about the gritting of teeth after that day.

Now, Zhai Yaohui realized that his emotions were not dissimilar to the triplets’. He even told himself that this was the first time, but it would also be the last. If he were ever to talk one-on-one with someone like Qiao Dongliang again, any normal person would get so angry that he would experience symptoms of hypertension.



“I don’t know who your superior was when you were still in the military, but what I can say is that I would never have had subordinates like you under me. Without a clear investigation, you’re speaking with no evidence or basis, simply making things up from your imagination. Don’t you know about these things? Do you know about the Zhou family’s current situation? Do you understand the whole story? Just because you have lost a disobedient and unfilial daughter, Qiao Zijin, are you going to lump all those people you hate and the people who have wronged Zijin together?”

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Qiao Dongliang’s resentment toward Father and Mother Zhou meant that Qiao Dongliang actually blamed Qiao Nan in his heart. He blamed Qiao Nan for sending Qiao Zijin into the Zhou family, giving the Zhou family the opportunity to wrong Zijin. Qiao Dongliang was resentful against Qiao Nan for only targeting Zhou Zheng and for letting him off too easily.

What rights did he have to blame someone else for doing too little? Was he not wallowing around at home in misery because he was completely incapable?

Qiao Dongliang was indeed worlds apart from them. He was thankful that Qiao Nan had not grown up wayward even after growing up in such an environment. Quite on the contrary, she even had an upright character and was a good role model. Perhaps, all the good energy and essence of the entire Qiao family had gone to Qiao Nan alone.

Qiao Dongliang had left the military because of the birth of his second child, so he had failed to achieve his final goal of rising to the position of a battalion commander.

But the way Zhai Yaohui saw it, there was no way Qiao Dongliang could have been promoted to a battalion commander even without the birth of his second child. Qiao Dongliang might even have been kicked out of the military soon after Qiao Nan’s birth if he had stayed on.

Apart from in front of Qiao Nan, Qiao Dongliang was always short-tempered in front of everyone else. Qiao Dongliang pinched his own hand in embarrassment. “Don’t be angry, chief. That’s not what I meant. S-so, what happened to the Zhou family?” Zhou Zheng had remarried happily, and the Zhou family was probably rejoicing over Zhou Zheng’s remarriage. Could something else have happened?

Knowing that Qiao Dongliang did not believe it, Zhai Yaohui only stated the facts. “Zhou Zheng is like his father, but his mind is even more unclear than his father’s, nothing like his brilliant mother’s. Mother Zhou had disagreed to Zhou Zheng’s second marriage to his ex-girlfriend. Father

Zhou stood on Mother Zhou's side, but Zhou Zheng insisted on getting married anyway. The Zhou family didn't really try to stop him either, but neither did they fork out a single cent for Zhou Zheng's second wedding."

In other words, Mother and Father Zhou's attitudes toward Zhou Zheng's second marriage was like night and day when compared to Zhou Zheng's first marriage to Qiao Zijin, when they had spared no expense or effort.