

RTAMM 1751

Chapter 1751: Too Busy

Qiao Nan transformed back into that softhearted and weak-willed person she had been in the past before her car accident. Her voice was as warm and polite as it had been before, but there was a tinge of aggressiveness in her words.

In the face of a younger daughter like that, Qiao Dongliang was at a complete loss. However, he had no choice but to answer Qiao Nan. “No, I don’t think so.” Qiao Dongliang could not deny this. After being in-laws with the Chen family for more than a decade, would he not know how prideful the Chen family was? Even if it was him, he would never have been able to accept his wife cheating on him, let alone Chen Jun, who had such a high status.

Chen Jun would never agree to it, and the Chen family would never soften their hearts toward Zijin.

She had been caught right in the act with that man. Would they still give his elder daughter a second chance? That was totally impossible!

Qiao Nan twitched her lips. “Dad, I think you and I are the only rational ones in our family. I don’t want to talk about how Mom treats Zijin, but I can rest easy now that you’ve said that. I can’t be blamed for Qiao Zijin’s divorce from Chen Jun. At the very most, if news spreads, then everyone can be a judge and they can tell us whether I should be blamed for Qiao Zijin’s divorce, or whether it’s truly her own fault. We’ll see if I’m the shameless one, or whether she deserves it. Dad, I’m hungry. Please bring more porridge for me tomorrow.”

Now, she could only lie on the bed and think about the new life she wanted for herself. The first step to cutting all ties with the Qiao family so that she would no longer be controlled by them was to recover and get well.

“Ah, all right. I’ll bring more for you tomorrow.” There was something in Qiao Nan’s tone that made Qiao Dongliang feel as though there was something off about Qiao Nan’s words. Her assessment of Qiao Zijin was especially harsh. Ever since Qiao Nan woke up, he had not heard his younger daughter address his elder daughter as ‘elder sister’. She had simply addressed her by her name. “Nan Nan, are you angry at Zijin? The two of you are biological...”

“Dad, it’s only natural to get sleepy after filling your stomach. I want to rest. If you have anything else to say, let’s talk about it another time.” Qiao Nan was genuinely sleepy. Of course, neither did she want to listen to Qiao Dongliang lecture her about how ‘sisters were once in a lifetime’.

After being cut off by Qiao Nan, Qiao Dongliang naturally had no way of continuing. Qiao Dongliang quickly stood up and covered Qiao Nan with a thin blanket. "It's cold in the hospital. Don't catch a cold. Don't kick the blanket away. If you're sleepy, have a good rest. That way, you'll recover faster."

"Thanks, Dad." Yes. In her current situation, she could only sleep. But the moment she could get up and walk around, that would be the beginning of her new life.

Qiao Nan had already done her own calculations but had not shown any sign of injustice in front of Qiao Dongliang. A dream was a dream, and reality was reality. If she could be hospitalized because of Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi the first time, it was entirely possible that a second time could happen. Thankfully, she had not died this time and had even had a beautiful dream. The next time, she might just be sent into the crematorium and be burned to ash!

Fortunately, the nurse in charge of taking care of Qiao Nan was really a good person and had told Qiao Nan all about what had taken place in the three days that Qiao Nan had been in a coma.

After her car accident, Qiao Nan had been sent into the operation theatre for an emergency operation. At that time, Ding Jiayi had wanted to take the hundred thousand yuan for Qiao Zijin. Ding Jiayi felt that Qiao Nan had been knocked down by someone else. Thus, it was only right for that driver to bear all of Qiao Nan's medical expenses.

Not only would that driver have to pay for Qiao Nan's medical expenses, but he would also have to compensate Qiao Nan for whatever she would lose mentally and physically.

In short, that driver should not even think about shirking any responsibilities.

There was no doubt that Ding Jiayi wanted to extort a huge sum of money from that driver. Of course, that had nothing to do with Qiao Nan who was still lying in the operating theatre. She would only go to such lengths for her daughter, Qiao Zijin. The driver had never intended to shirk any responsibility either. As long as Qiao Nan could be saved, he would personally discuss with her the terms of compensation. He would agree to whatever demands she made as long as they were not too excessive. After all, he had been the one who had knocked her down.

In the three days that Qiao Nan had been comatose, there had been no one accompanying her because Ding Jiayi had been too 'busy'.

Before Qiao Nan's accident, Ding Jiayi spent most of her day by Qiao Zijin's side, feeling sorry that Qiao Zijin had gotten divorced and gotten such a grave disease at such a young age. She would even sob alongside Qiao Zijin. After Qiao Nan's accident, Qiao Zijin expressed that she no longer needed someone to stay by her side. Instead, she instructed Ding Jiayi to settle the more 'important' matters. It was fine with her.

All of a sudden, both his daughters had been hospitalized, and both their conditions did not look optimistic. Qiao Dongliang was genuinely busy. Since Ding Jiayi was busy arguing with the driver over their compensation, the responsibility of running around and taking care of their daughters fell squarely on Qiao Dongliang's shoulders.

"Nurse, can you give me that person's mobile number? I want to speak to him personally."

"Of course!" Not only did the nurse give the driver's number to Qiao Nan, but she even handed her phone over. Nowadays, everyone used smartphones. Only Qiao Nan alone still used an old-fashioned phone because it was simply cheaper. The phone that had been with Qiao Nan for the past five years had been smashed in the car accident.

Only upon contacting the driver did Qiao Nan find out that the driver was willing to compensate her for the hundred thousand yuan she had spent on her surgery. Moreover, the driver was even willing to give her an extra hundred thousand yuan of compensation.

In other words, the driver was willing to fork out two hundred thousand yuan to take responsibility for this accident.

But Ding Jiayi had disagreed and had even asked for the sky by demanding a compensation of five hundred thousand yuan! Ding Jiayi explained that her daughter, Qiao Nan, was truly a money-making machine. Apart from her full-time job, Qiao Nan also held two part-time jobs. Such a serious car accident could result in Qiao Nan not being able to work as per normal for at least a year or two!

Given Qiao Nan's abilities, she could earn up to twenty to thirty thousand yuan in a month. In just a year, she would earn three hundred and sixty thousand yuan. And that was just counting her basic salary! If you added her hospitalization bills and all the tonics and medications she would require after being discharged, that would amount to at least a hundred and forty thousand yuan. Together, that would make up five hundred thousand yuan. She would not give in on this matter.

Because of this, the driver had been infuriated. His attitude had already been good enough. Neither had he said that two hundred thousand yuan was the most that he was willing to give. There was

always room for discussion. But Ding Jiayi had been too vicious by immediately demanding five hundred thousand yuan! What did she mean by working two to three part-time jobs and earning twenty to thirty thousand yuan in a month?

Based on those calculations, that young lady whom he knocked down would have to work for at least twenty hours every day! Was she human? Even oxen did not work as hard as this girl did!

He did not completely believe the other party's words. Such an intense work schedule would be alright only once in a while.

Chapter 1752: Wait a Minute

But if this young lady had worked in this manner for one to two months, or even for years, he would really have to investigate whether that young lady had been hospitalized because of the accident or whether she had been hospitalized due to exhaustion.

In the face of Ding Jiayi's harassment and absurd reasoning, the driver could only feel that he was down on luck. If not for the lack of money, he would have chosen to simply spend five hundred thousand yuan to end this once and for all. In that way, he would never need to meet the Qiao family ever again. Unfortunately, he had not been able to do so, and the matter was thus unresolved.

Upon receiving Qiao Nan's call, he was actually quite surprised. Even though he had already been troubled by Ding Jiayi's unreasonable demands for the past three days and his life was now in a mess, he was still rather rational when speaking to Qiao Nan. "Oh, it's you, Miss Qiao. I'm really sorry about what happened that day. You've suffered so much because of me. I was about to send my car for repair that day."

But who would have expected that to happen on the way to the car workshop? The driver could only blame his rotten luck. If he had known that such an accident would happen, he would never have driven past the hospital just to beat a few traffic lights.

"What happened that day was an accident. You're to be blamed, but so am I." Qiao Nan did not pin all blame on the other party. It was because she had gotten into an argument with Ding Jiayi that day and had gotten into a fight on the road, with Ding Jiayi even pulling her hair. Otherwise, given her usual cautious and prudent character, she would definitely have avoided it. "As for the issue of compensation, I would like to ask a favor of you."

Upon hearing the word 'compensation', the other party's face immediately darkened. This was entirely Ding Jiayi's fault. But Qiao Nan was the party involved, so he was still willing to listen to

Qiao Nan patiently. “Miss Qiao, you can be straightforward with your words. But I’ll say it again. I’ll do my best and do whatever I can. I’m sorry, but I won’t accept anything too excessive and demanding.”

Money did not grow on trees. He thought that he was already paying for his actions, but the problem was that someone was trying to treat him as a sacrificial lamb. How could she dare to ask for five hundred thousand? No one had even died!

“I know that my mom has been harassing and bothering you about the issue of the compensation. I have to apologize to you for that. You can do whatever you like to placate my mom or simply not open the door for her. I’m the party involved. Even if we were to have a settlement, I’ll have to be the one going down to the police station to authorize it. Five hundred thousand yuan is quite a lot indeed. How about you prepare three hundred thousand? But remember that you must hand the money to me directly, and not to anyone else in my family. Once I’ve gotten the money, I’ll go to the police station to sign the settlement with you immediately. What do you think?”

It was not as though she had died. Even though she was already reaching her forties, she would work hard to earn money if she really wanted it. If Ding Jiayi wanted to make a fortune, she should just put her hopes on Qiao Zijin. As for her...

“Yes, sure.” The other party was stunned. He had never expected that Qiao Nan would be so decisive. He had no choice. Ding Jiayi had been too domineering and had repeatedly told him that she had the final say and that her younger daughter would definitely listen to her. If she said they would have a settlement, then they would have a settlement. If she refused, her younger daughter would never go against her.

Seeing Ding Jiayi’s fierce appearance, the driver completely believed her words. With such a stern and fierce mother, there was no way a child would dare to disobey her.

But the woman who had been knocked down was so bold as to secretly contact him. She even reduced the compensation amount from five hundred thousand to three hundred thousand. Moreover, she requested that the money be handed over to her personally. Only then would the matter be resolved.

He could not care less about what the Qiao family’s situation was like. Now that this matter could be resolved and Qiao Nan was not too demanding in terms of the compensation, it was a good thing for him. “Miss Qiao, it’s great that you’re so understanding. Let’s do as you said. Are you feeling alright in the hospital? Rest well and we’ll get everything done once you’ve been discharged.”

Even if the driver had managed to guess that there was a conflict amongst the Qiao family, he simply acted as though he knew nothing about it at all. His responsibility and guilt were toward the party concerned, Qiao Nan, not Ding Jiayi. With Qiao Nan's permission, the driver immediately started avoiding Ding Jiayi. Once Qiao Nan had recovered and could personally settle this matter, he would get in contact with Qiao Nan then.

Because the driver hid away, Ding Jiayi was unable to find him and continue quarreling. As such, Ding Jiayi was getting more riled up lately. "People nowadays really have no conscience. He knocked down someone who was alive and well, causing her to almost lose her life! It turns out that human life isn't worth much, after all. I only asked for five hundred thousand, not even a million yuan! But he's gone into hiding! Unless he wants to be imprisoned, I'll see where he can hide and how long he can continue hiding!"

With such a huge sum of money, there would still be half of it left even after using it for Zijin's kidney transplant. With the money, they would no longer have to worry about leading good lives even though Zijin had gotten a divorce.

Greed flashed past Qiao Zijin's eyes. Five hundred thousand yuan was not a lot, but it was still a rather significant sum of money. Even though she had been married to Chen Jun for so many years, the Chen family had never given her so much money. She had never expected Qiao Nan to be rather useful in this aspect. She had simply allowed herself to be knocked down and this would bring about five hundred thousand yuan! "Mom, Qiao Nan got into an accident and she's still lying on a hospital bed. So what will happen to her kidney?"

Qiao Zijin got anxious thinking about her illness.

For every day that the transplant was delayed, her risk of succumbing to her illness only increased. Unfortunately, it just so happened that kidneys were not an abundant resource. Donors had to be willing volunteers. A good eighty to ninety percent of donors were people who were already dead. Qiao Zijin would only get to undergo a kidney transplant if someone was a willing organ donor.

Qiao Nan had been extremely lucky and had not been killed in the car accident. Indeed, one had to have a string of bad luck before the tides turned. If Qiao Nan had been killed in the accident, the compensation would not just be a measly five hundred thousand yuan. It could possibly have gone up to a million yuan! Then, she would not only have a kidney. After her surgery, she might even have a million yuan in her bank account!

With a million yuan, she would have no problems getting a divorce from Chen Jun. She was confident that she would be able to get remarried to another man. At that time, she would have money and a house, and perhaps, she might even be able to find herself a handsome young man.

Anyway, no matter how good the Chen family's conditions were, Chen Jun had only always given her a paltry allowance every month after their marriage. Every time he handed the money over, Chen Jun never failed to show his disdain for her. Spending someone else's money would not be more comfortable than spending one's own money.

Unfortunately, all these were nothing but fantasies. The reality was that Qiao Nan was still alive. And it was also true that the kidney was still in Qiao Nan's body. Why had Qiao Nan not died? What a pity!

"What do you mean? There's nothing we can do but wait." Ding Jiayi sighed. "Qiao Nan's not dead. Since she's still alive, I can't make decisions for her about her kidney. She'll have to agree to it. She just woke up the day before yesterday, so her body's still frail and weak. I asked the doctor in private, and the doctor said that there's no way Qiao Nan can undergo surgery to donate her kidney to you."

Chapter 1753: Additional Nourishment

"If Qiao Nan's willing, your surgery can still proceed once Qiao Nan recovers."

"Doesn't that mean I still have to wait for a long time? Qiao Nan will probably need another few more months to recover after this car accident, so she'll only be able to donate her kidney in a few months' time?" She hated that she had no choice but to be hospitalized. Looking at herself in the mirror, her face was only getting worse by the day. Her skin had turned yellow and pale, and she felt that she had become so ugly that she could not bear to look at herself in the mirror.

Thinking about the debauchery and luxury in her life previously, and thinking then again about how the smell of perfume had been replaced by formaldehyde, Qiao Zijin's mood fell to rock-bottom. She questioned once again why Qiao Nan had been knocked down but had not died!

To her, Qiao Nan would only be the slightest bit useful in this sense in her entire lifetime. But it turned out that Qiao Nan was so useless and could not even be put to good use. She could not understand the point of people like Qiao Nan staying alive. She was already an old woman of almost forty. She was neither married nor with a child. She did not have money or a house. To Qiao Nan, life was a pain.

Her wish for Qiao Nan's death was for Qiao Nan's own good. Death would relieve Qiao Nan of such a hard life. She would burn more paper money for Qiao Nan and hire someone to conduct funeral rites for Qiao Nan so that Qiao Nan would be able to be reincarnated to have a fresh start and lead a better life. This would be a mutually beneficial situation. She would benefit, Qiao Nan would benefit, and everyone would benefit. So why was Qiao Nan still alive and not dead?!

"I guess three months at the very least." Ding Jiayi answered hesitatingly. It was said that one had to rest for a hundred days after injuring their bones and tendons. This time, Qiao Nan had sustained multiple fractures from the car accident.

Thinking about what the doctor had told her frustrated Ding Jiayi greatly. "We don't really understand all those medical terms. When Qiao Nan was hit by the car, her bones were the ones that were affected. Her kidney was not injured at all. In that case, why can't she undergo surgery to donate her kidney to you?"

They already had the sum of money from the compensation in addition to Qiao Nan's kidney that would be voluntarily donated. Curing Zijin's illness no longer required them to fork out two hundred thousand, as was the case in the past. With money and a kidney, all they were lacking now was time. Sigh. Zijin was suffering so much. Why did she have to suffer so much at such a young age?

"Another three months?" Qiao Zijin's eyebrows were knitted together. "Can't you discuss it with the doctor and try to push the surgery forward?"

"No matter how early he manages to push it to, Qiao Nan has to fully recover. I don't think the doctor will be willing to give in on this matter."

Qiao Zijin ground her teeth. It was really too hard to endure the pain and suffering of living with an illness. The thought of having to wait another three more months before getting a kidney transplant filled Qiao Zijin's heart with unease. Who could guarantee that she would still be alive in three months for a recovered Qiao Nan to donate her kidney to her?

Moreover, she knew that with Qiao Nan alive now, her mom would not have any say in Qiao Nan donating her kidney. What would happen if Qiao Nan refused to donate her kidney to her?

"Mom, how about this? Why don't you spend more time with Qiao Nan these few days? Qiao Nan needs someone beside her to take care of her now that she's gotten into a car accident. Besides, we still need her approval for the kidney donation. Ask Dad to make some nice and nutritious food to

nourish Qiao Nan. This will be good for both Qiao Nan and me. Mom, do you understand what I'm saying?"

Ding Jiayi stared wide-eyed at her. "You can't be alone. You don't have to care about that wretched girl. I understand what you mean. I was the one who gave birth to her. Without me, she wouldn't even be alive. She'll have no choice but to listen to me if I ask her to donate her kidney to you. Just look at her. She's never once gone against me since she was young. There's no need to waste your energy worrying about this. Don't worry. One of her kidneys will definitely be yours. As for the other thing that you said, it should be feasible. I'll get your dad to make more delicious food to nourish that wretched girl. As long as she recovers well, you might not even have to wait for another three months."

People who were sick already had bad temperaments to begin with.

She had only instructed Ding Jiayi to take care of Qiao Nan for the sake of that kidney in Qiao Nan's body, so Ding Jiayi's words were especially pleasing to Qiao Zijin's ears. "Mom, I listen to whatever you say. I'll do whatever you ask me to."

"What a good girl." Ding Jiayi caressed Qiao Zijin's head and helped Qiao Zijin lie down to rest. Following that, she made another call to Qiao Dongliang, asking him to nourish Qiao Nan's body so that she would be able to recover. She had placed all of the family's money in the drawer. Ding Jiayi clearly told Qiao Dongliang to purchase whatever was good for Qiao Nan's body and whatever would help Qiao Nan recover earlier. He did not have to worry about the prices at all.

Her heart ached for that money?

Ding Jiayi knew that she would have at least a few hundred thousand yuan that would be deposited into her bank account once this matter was settled. All these things to nourish Qiao Nan only cost a few thousand yuan. Besides, she had her sights set on one of Qiao Nan's kidneys. No matter how one looked at it, Ding Jiayi was the one who was gaining the most out of this deal. It was all worth it. She was not at a disadvantage at all.

As for Qiao Nan, she had no choice but to let Qiao Nan take advantage of her. After all, she had given birth to Qiao Nan.

"Nan Nan, smell this. Doesn't this turtle soup smell nice? This is a good turtle! It's a wild one that's especially nourishing. I didn't buy those that grew up eating turtle feed. Wild ones are better. One turtle alone cost me two to three hundred yuan! I made some soup for you. Be sure to drink more of it." Qiao Dongliang was elated over having made something good for Qiao Nan.

He had always felt guilty toward his younger daughter, Qiao Nan. Unfortunately, Ding Jiayi had the final say in their family. They were both his daughters. Since Qiao Nan was sensible and was willing to make sacrifices for their family, and since his elder daughter always encountered different problems from time to time, Qiao Dongliang had no choice but to help Qiao Zijin get her life together first.

It was rare for Ding Jiayi to let loose and allow him to treat Qiao Nan kindly. As such, Qiao Dongliang was overjoyed. He finally had this rare opportunity to make it up to his younger daughter. “Nan Nan, your mom specially instructed me to buy this wild turtle for you to nourish your body. Your sister is still sick in bed and can’t come to visit you, but you must know that she cares about you as well. You know how stubborn your mom is. She listens to only one person in our entire family, and that is your elder sister. We’re all a family. Even when the bone is broken, there’ll still be blood. Blood is always thicker than water. Let bygones be bygones. Look at how we’ve come together in such a critical moment. This is truly a family!”

Qiao Nan had been drinking her turtle soup with a clear conscience. Upon hearing Qiao Dongliang’s lecture, Qiao Nan finished her soup and asked, “Dad, do you know what happened before the car accident that day?”

Qiao Nan’s casual words caused Qiao Dongliang, who had just been thinking about having peace in the family and being able to live harmoniously together, stiffen.

Qiao Nan wiped her mouth before continuing. “Oh, based on your reaction, I guess Mom must have told you about it. Dad, your turtle soup is really delicious. Is there any more? I would like another bowl of it.”

Chapter 1754: Not Picky

No matter what kind of tricks Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin were playing, she would join them. All her sacrifices for the Qiao family and the money that she gave to her parents out of filial piety was enough to pay for an entire pond’s worth of turtles, let alone one wild turtle.

“Nan Nan, I didn’t mean to discuss this so early. I wanted to wait for you to get better to discuss the matter. But since you brought it up today, I have no choice but to talk about it. Nan Nan, you must know that you and Zijin are the closest kin you both have in this world. Zijin was unlucky that something like that happened to her. You have to help her!”

When he had first heard that they would have to take one of his younger daughter’s kidneys for his elder daughter, Qiao Dongliang had disagreed. The problem was that Ding Jiayi had flown into a

rage and questioned Qiao Dongliang for disagreeing. Qiao Nan had two kidneys. They only wanted one. It was not as though Qiao Nan would die from it.

But it was different with Qiao Zijin. Qiao Zijin had gotten uremia. Each day's delay would only increase Qiao Zijin's risk of dying. Without Qiao Nan's kidney, Qiao Zijin would definitely die!

Was there anything more important than a life?

Hearing Ding Jiayi's reasoning, Qiao Dongliang thought about it and agreed. It was only natural for Qiao Nan to feel aggrieved. If a moment of suffering could save his closest relative's life, he would definitely do it if he was the one in that position. "Actually, Zijin is our daughter. Nan Nan is still young and has a long way ahead of her. Why don't both of us get ourselves tested? If it's possible, we can donate our kidneys to Zijin instead. How's that?"

"No!"

"No way!"

Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin unanimously rejected his suggestion. Ding Jiayi's reasoning was simple. Qiao Dongliang was still working and was the breadwinner of the family. For a man, losing a kidney was a huge matter.

What would happen to their family if Qiao Dongliang's health were to be affected after he lost a kidney?

Qiao Zijin's reasoning was even simpler. She did not even care for Ding Jiayi's kidney, even though Ding Jiayi was a full-time housewife. She disdained Ding Jiayi's kidney for being old and useless. So how could she possibly want a kidney from Qiao Dongliang, who had been striving so hard for the Qiao family all these years? There was no way it would be better than Qiao Nan's. Qiao Nan was even two years younger than Qiao Zijin herself!

Having a kidney that was younger than her original one created the illusion for Qiao Zijin that she would be the same age as Qiao Nan and be two years younger as long as she had Qiao Nan's kidney.

“Dad, you already work so hard. I’m sure it’s taken a toll on your body. What will you do if you donate a kidney to me? If that’s the case, I’d rather die than undergo a kidney transplant.” Qiao Zijin’s eyes brimmed with tears, and her words sounded genuine and sincere.

Anyway, Qiao Zijin had already practiced these same words on Ding Jiayi earlier. Now that Qiao Zijin was saying them for the second time, it was nothing more than a walk in the park.

“That’s right.” Ding Jiayi nodded frantically, somehow feeling as though Qiao Zijin’s words sounded familiar. “Zijin is just feeling sorry for you as her father. Don’t let Zijin down. This may sound harsh, but you treat Qiao Nan so well. Do you think Qiao Nan has no conscience at all and would rather you donate your kidney to Zijin than make such a sacrifice? If that’s the case, it means she doesn’t even feel sorry for you, her dad. In that case, why are you even trying to give so much to her?”

In short, the final result was that the kidney had to be donated by Qiao Nan. Neither Ding Jiayi’s nor Qiao Dongliang’s would do.

Qiao Dongliang was only one person against Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin together. Under the persuasion of the mother-and-daughter pair, Qiao Dongliang eventually gave in and agreed to this matter.

Donating a kidney should not have any impact on Qiao Nan’s life, and neither would it threaten Qiao Nan’s life. But Qiao Zijin needed this kidney to save her life!

Weighing the costs and benefits, Qiao Dongliang quickly made a decision.

He knew that Qiao Nan had run out of the hospital unhappily and had been knocked down by a car because she had heard about Ding Jiayi’s and Qiao Zijin’s plan. But in the face of his elder daughter’s imminent death, there was no way Qiao Dongliang could judge the matter fairly. It was only natural for him to be biased in this matter.

However, doing was another thing. Qiao Dongliang told Qiao Nan about it in her face, but he was not Ding Jiayi and was not as bold or thick-skinned as Ding Jiayi was to say: “Yes, I do have such a plan. I want you to donate a kidney to Qiao Zijin so that she can be saved. The only contribution you’re making toward our family now is donating your organs. When Qiao Zijin needs them, you’ll have to give them to Qiao Zijin without expecting anything in return so that Qiao Zijin will be able to live a long life.”

“Dad, your culinary skills are improving. They’re almost better than Mom’s.” Seeing how Qiao Dongliang’s face had become so flushed that it resembled a pig’s liver and that guilt was written all over his face, Qiao Nan smirked in her heart.

This was different from what had happened in her dream. In her dream, her dad had done some practical things and had tried his best to correct his heart that leaned toward Qiao Zijin. That had given her the opportunity to live a normal life.

But in this life, her dad was only good to her in his words. His heart was not for her, let alone his actions. If Ding Jiayi had not allowed him to do so, her dad would never have the guts to take all that money that belonged to Qiao Nan in the first place to buy some wild turtle to nourish her body.

Qiao Nan knew exactly why Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin were being so generous to her all of a sudden.

They were trying to get her kidney in exchange for a few good meals. There were truly no better or shrewder businesspeople than Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin in this world.

Qiao Dongliang felt as though his face was on fire and could not even raise his head up in front of Qiao Nan. “Good. It’s good that you like it. I’ll make some more for you tomorrow. Nan Nan, do you have anything in particular that you want to eat? I’ll make it for you.”

His younger daughter might have been smiling and her tone might have sounded cheery, but her deep and dark gaze sent a chill down Qiao Dongliang’s spine. There was something amiss. Could it be that this car accident had not only injured his younger daughter physically? Why did he feel as though his younger daughter had suffered a blow to the head?

Nan Nan seemed to have completely transformed into a different person.

“No, Dad. I’m not picky. I’ll eat whatever you cook. I believe that you’ll take good care of me while I’m in the hospital.” If he did not take good care of her so that she could recover and be discharged, where would Qiao Zijin get a kidney for her kidney transplant from?

Did they really take her for a fool? Did they think that she had no idea what this turtle soup was for?

“Are you all right, Nan Nan? If you have anything on your mind and feel aggrieved, shall I stay with you for a chat? I’ll listen to whatever you have to say.” Qiao Dongliang felt exceptionally uneasy and wanted to stay behind to have a heart-to-heart chat with Qiao Nan to counsel her.

Chapter 1755: Still All Right

They were all a family. There was no need to get angry over this matter. Blood was thicker than water, after all. No matter what happened, their family would still be their closest kin. No one had wanted such a horrible thing to happen to Zijin. If it was not a matter of life and death, he would never have agreed to his elder daughter taking a kidney from his younger daughter.

It was all right for family members to have conflicts among themselves or even throw tantrums at one another. But at such a critical moment, the Qiao family had to stand together and not leave anyone in the lurch. Nan Nan had to donate her kidney to save Zijin.

But he could not expect Nan Nan to donate a kidney with nothing in return, so he had thought it through and discussed it with Zijin. Once Qiao Nan saved Zijin’s life, Zijin would have to get Nan Nan a sum of money. At her age, Nan Nan was still unmarried. Neither did she have a boyfriend. At the very least, she should have some money to buy herself a house. She could not possibly squeeze with others in a rented apartment for the rest of her life.

Qiao Nan chuckled and behaved normally. She had no sign of getting upset at all. “Dad, why would I feel aggrieved? Should I feel aggrieved? Are you saying that someone in our family has wronged me? Dad, if I’ve really been wronged, do you think I should continue feeling aggrieved? Or should I do something about it and get rid of it?”

Did he want to instill some values in her? Oh, sorry. She had just finished two bowls of turtle soup and had no extra space to hold all that poisonous chicken soup.

Aggrieved? Did she really have to say it out loud? Would anyone with eyes and a heart not know about it?

If he really wanted to treat her well, her dad should have taken practical action by now. She would not even have had to say a thing. Perhaps her dad’s turtle soup had been too salty that she was feeling slightly thirsty now. Because her mouth was dry, she was unwilling to say anything more.

Qiao Nan’s questions left Qiao Dongliang speechless. Her tone had not been sharp, nor had her voice been very loud. Neither had her questions been harsh. His younger daughter’s expression was

still cheery and bright, but hearing her questions made Qiao Dongliang feel as though someone had slapped him hundreds of times that his face was swollen and his mouth could not even be opened to speak.

“You... Aren’t you sleepy? Have a good rest. I’ll visit you again tomorrow. If you think of anything that you want to eat, remember to tell me. You can always borrow a phone from the nurse to reach me. If you don’t have any cravings, I’ll see to it tomorrow.”

Qiao Dongliang could not understand how Qiao Nan seemed to have transformed into a completely different person after being knocked down by that car. The Qiao Nan of the past used to be cowardly and timid, but she yearned for family affection. Qiao Dongliang had no idea how longing affection felt like, but he knew that Qiao Nan looked at him and Ding Jiayi with a different gaze as that when she looked at others.

Ever since Qiao Nan woke up from her coma, he had never seen that same gaze in his younger daughter’s eyes again.

Qiao Dongliang had once been frustrated at how his younger daughter was too obedient to Ding Jiayi and would do whatever Ding Jiayi instructed her to. She was such a good young lady but was still unmarried even though she was about to turn forty. She had even given up all of her income for the family, only for it to end up in Qiao Zijin’s pockets.

When his younger daughter had not been able to stand up for herself, Qiao Dongliang had been upset. Now, his younger daughter had finally toughened up and had undoubtedly become more opinionated. Her words now were like invisible weapons, piercing through his heart.

Now that his younger daughter had suddenly undergone such a drastic change, Qiao Dongliang was upset too. He felt that his younger daughter was not as obedient as before and no longer respected him as much as before. She no longer seemed like a good child.

“All right, Dad. See you tomorrow.” Qiao Nan had seen Qiao Dongliang’s dodging and complicated gaze and expression, but he was cautious not to let that show. She bid Qiao Dongliang goodbye politely and kindly as though she was an obedient child.

Only when Qiao Dongliang shut the room door and got out of Qiao Nan’s sight did he finally let out a sigh of relief and relax his stiffened back. “That won’t do. I have to consult Nan Nan’s doctor and ask him to get Nan Nan’s brain checked. Was her head really not injured at all in the accident?”

Compared to his daughter now, Qiao Dongliang still preferred that daughter he had in the past. That daughter in the past had a mild temper and could not speak up for herself. He could not deny that it was exactly because she was mild-tempered and did whatever others instructed her to that there had been peace in their family, and they had been able to avoid many conflicts.

If Qiao Nan had been any stronger and had known to defend her own interests, the Qiao family would have been in chaos long ago. They would never have enjoyed such peaceful lives. The peace in the Qiao family could be attributed to Qiao Nan's repeated concessions and sacrifices.

Qiao Dongliang heaved a huge sigh of relief, and Qiao Nan's gaze returned to their normal state of calmness. The corners of Qiao Nan's lips curled up into a sarcastic smile.

This was not her dream world, so everything was different. She was unsure if Ding Jiayi had taught Qiao Zijin in the same manner as she had in her dream, but the reality was that Qiao Zijin still shared a close relationship with Ding Jiayi. But her dad, Qiao Dongliang, was not being taken seriously and was even being ordered around.

Qiao Dongliang probably only had one daughter in his heart, and that was Qiao Zijin. She had returned from her world of fantasy to reality. Based on what she had sacrificed for the family in the past, as well as this accident, she had paid all her debts to the Qiao family. She had almost given her life too!

Qiao Nan stretched lazily and yawned. She no longer had anything to do with the Qiao family. To her, the most important thing she had to do was to recover. Only then would she be able to make detailed plans for her future.

After having this conversation, Qiao Dongliang visited Qiao Nan daily with three meals each day, sending Qiao Nan delicious food to nourish her body. As for that topic that had been talked about the first time, neither Qiao Dongliang nor Qiao Nan bothered to bring it up again and had a tacit understanding to simply treat it as though they had never mentioned it before.

Especially Qiao Dongliang, who had been greatly affected by that conversation. Every time Qiao Nan finished eating, Qiao Dongliang would always find an excuse to take his leave. Just that single heart-to-heart talk had nearly frightened Qiao Dongliang out of his wits. As such, Qiao Dongliang had given up on getting through to Qiao Nan and decided to simply take care of Qiao Nan's meals.

In the past, Qiao Nan had suffered too badly and her body had been too skinny. Having been nourished by Qiao Dongliang's meals for two months, Qiao Nan not only recovered well but had also put on some weight. She no longer drew pity because of her frail frame.

The nurse in the hospital was exceptionally nice. “Actually, if we were to leave your mom and sister out of the equation, your dad treats you pretty well.”

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Chapter 1756: Good That He Changed For the Better

“It’s good that he changed for the better in the end. It’s all thanks to your father taking such good care of you that the doctor said that you’ve recovered more quickly than usual.” All these meals over the course of two months probably added up to two to three thousand yuan.

Thankfully, there was still someone with a conscience in their family.

The nurse did not mention how there had not been a single person from the Qiao family who had come to visit Qiao Nan in the few days following her accident, even when she had been in a critical state. That included Qiao Dongliang, whose performance had suddenly changed for the better afterward. She was afraid that Qiao Nan would be in a bad mood upon learning about her family’s behavior. It was better to chat about things that brightened one’s mood.

But the nurse had not expected that Qiao Nan would do something out of the ordinary and smiled along. “My elder sister said that my parents are old and their kidneys are unsuitable. If she were to wait for a kidney donor, she would have to rely on other people’s willingness to donate. She’s afraid that she won’t be able to wait for such a long time. That’s why they’re taking such good care of me now. If I don’t recover quickly, how would they be able to take a kidney from me to save their precious daughter?”

“...” The nurse stared wide-eyed at Qiao Nan. “Miss Qiao, a-aren’t you overthinking it?” They probably would not go so far, right?” Taking care of Miss Qiao for the sake of a kidney transplant for the elder Miss Qiao in the other ward?

This...

Qiao Nan laughed but did not say a word.

If the nurse had not mistaken that there was still a good person in the Qiao family, she would not have said such a thing. Although she was almost forty, Qiao Nan wanted to be willful just this once. When she was younger, she had never been willful. In her dream, she had Brother Zhai taking care of her, so there had been no need for her to be willful. But now that she was at this heartbreaking age of thirty-nine, Qiao Nan wanted to be willful and kick up a fuss!

Onlookers knew all about the Qiao family's dirty laundry. Since they already knew approximately ninety percent of what was going on in the Qiao family, she had no qualms about letting them in on what was really going on. There were still good people in the Qiao family? Hehehe. That had to be the funniest joke she had heard in her entire life.

The nurse hurried out of Qiao Nan's ward and happened to bump into Qiao Dongliang, who was enquiring about Qiao Nan's recovery status with the doctor.

Seeing the thermal flask in Qiao Dongliang's hands, the nurse walked over and listened in on the conversation. When the doctor told him that Qiao Nan was recovering better than usual patients, Qiao Dongliang was overjoyed. The nurse frowned and tested the waters. "Doctor, Miss Qiao said that she hasn't been feeling quite right in some other areas and wants to do a full-body checkup. Do you think that's possible?"

"She's not feeling well? Where's the discomfort? Is her kidney all right?" Qiao Dongliang was extraordinarily anxious because he was clear that any discomfort in Qiao Nan's body would have a direct impact on whether Qiao Zijin's kidney transplant could be conducted as soon as possible.

The nurse's heart dropped. No, Miss Qiao had not been overthinking it. The Qiao family did indeed have such a plan.

Earlier on, she had heard that it was exactly because of the Qiao family's plan for Miss Qiao to donate her kidney to the elder Miss Qiao that she had gotten into an argument with her mother and run out of the hospital. That was how she had gotten into an accident. She had initially thought that someone had simply made up this story. But now, it seemed like it was probably the truth.

In such a case, if Miss Qiao was willing to donate her kidney, it would be out of her love for her sister. But if she was unwilling to do so, that was her prerogative too. Even if Miss Qiao were to donate her kidney, the elder Miss Qiao might not survive either. What if she recovered from uremia but her body rejected the donated organ? Besides, it was not entirely risk-free for Miss Qiao to donate her kidney. There would be impacts on her future life.

In short, it was up to Miss Qiao to decide whether to donate her kidney or not. Even if everyone got along well as a family, even biological sisters would have to consider it carefully before deciding on something as serious as donating a kidney, let alone the Qiao family who were clearly not on good terms with each other.

The whole family, apart from Miss Qiao, seemed like a normal family of three. But Miss Qiao seemed like a free gift that came along with a mobile phone plan. She was practically worthless in their eyes.

“Miss Qiao’s feeling discomfort in other areas? Then, we’ll definitely need to do a comprehensive check on her,” the doctor said responsibly. “I’ll get more details from Miss Qiao later when I go on my rounds.”

“All right, doctor.” The nurse was not at all worried that her lie would be exposed. Ever since Qiao Nan got into an accident, she had been mostly confined to her bed. Since she had little chance of getting down from her bed, it was only natural to feel discomfort. Even a healthy person had times when he would feel discomfort, much less a patient lying in bed.

“I won’t disturb you any further, doctor. I’ll go check on my younger daughter.” Qiao Dongliang was uneasy and especially worried that any abnormalities in Qiao Nan’s health would affect Qiao Zijin’s kidney transplant. Two months had passed, and while Qiao Nan had gotten better with time, Qiao Zijin had only become frailer and weaker by the day.

It was as though the weight that Qiao Nan had put on had fallen off Qiao Zijin’s body. Qiao Nan had become nourished and healthy, while Qiao Zijin, who had always been chubbier than Qiao Nan, had finally accomplished her lifelong goal of losing weight and had lost over five kilograms!

In the face of such a situation, Qiao Dongliang was in a frenzy. He was dying for Qiao Nan to jump up from her bed right then and there so that she could undergo a kidney transplant to save Qiao Zijin. Even though their family now had the means to let Qiao Zijin undergo this surgery, Qiao Dongliang was afraid that Qiao Zijin might run out of time and would pass away before a legal source of kidney appeared.

In that way, Qiao Nan had become the most crucial playing piece to Qiao Zijin’s survival. “Nan Nan, I heard from the nurse that you’re feeling unwell? Does it hurt? Why didn’t you tell me about it earlier?”

Even a blind man could feel the worry in Qiao Dongliang’s eyes. Besides, Qiao Nan was not blind. In fact, her eyes were sharper than ever. An idea flashed through her mind and she guessed what had

happened. “You have it hard enough now that you have to run around for me. I didn’t want to let you worry about me. Don’t worry. My hospitalization bills are being taken care of. I definitely won’t hide it from the doctor if I’m feeling unwell. I’ll be sure to get the doctor to check everything thoroughly before I get discharged. I’ll be fine, Dad.”

Upon receiving a confirmation from Qiao Nan, Qiao Dongliang’s face soured in an instant. He cared about Nan Nan’s health, but he cared more about whether Zijin would be able to survive without Nan Nan’s kidney. “Nan Nan, if you really want me to worry less and rest assured, you must take care of yourself. Don’t let anything happen to your body. Do you understand?”

He could only hope that there was nothing majorly wrong with Nan Nan. After all, he himself had not been hospitalized, but he also felt discomfort from time to time. Such occurrences were only natural. As long as Nan Nan was fine, it would not be long before Zijin could undergo her kidney transplant.

“All right. I understand.”

Chapter 1757: Easy to Deal With

Neither did Qiao Nan bother to rebuke him. Instead, she graciously agreed. Since Qiao Dongliang had made delectable dishes for her, Qiao Nan gobbled them all down very willingly.

Seeing Qiao Nan eating heartily, Qiao Dongliang let out his first smile of the day. “Being able to eat is a blessing. I’m really happy to see you have such a good appetite. I’ll bring more for you tomorrow. Nan Nan, don’t scare yourself. I think you’re in quite good health. Even if you’re feeling any discomfort, it won’t be much of a problem.”

He had never seen anyone who was truly unwell being able to eat like Nan Nan.

“Okay.” Qiao Nan twitched the corners of her lips but remained silent. As usual, she simply listened to whatever Qiao Dongliang had to say.

After Qiao Dongliang finished packing his things, his mood sank. “Rest well now that you’ve finished eating. Try to recover as soon as possible. I might not be able to send dinner over personally because I have to work, but I’ll get someone else to bring dinner for you.”

“Thanks, Dad.”

“There’s no need to thank me. I’m your dad. Taking care of you is my duty. Have some rest. I’ll visit you again tomorrow.” Knowing that he would be able to keep both his daughters by his side and that Qiao Zijin would no longer be in danger, Qiao Dongliang left in a jolly mood.

The moment the door closed, Qiao Nan laughed. Her laugh was a much happier and cheery one as compared to Qiao Dongliang’s. Immediately, Qiao Nan climbed out of her bed, stripped off her hospital gown, and changed into her usual clothes. Then, she picked up her bag and headed downstairs.

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In these two months, Qiao Nan had been particularly thankful for Ding Jiayi and Qiao Dongliang’s indifference and nonchalance toward her. Qiao Nan had indeed sustained many fractures in this accident, but thankfully, she had not injured her legs. And now, even her arm that she had injured was no longer much of a problem.

In the past two months, Qiao Nan had actively cooperated with the doctors to undergo rehabilitation. Without her determination and persistence, there was no way Qiao Nan would have recovered faster than ordinary patients if she had relied solely on Qiao Dongliang’s soups for nourishment.

As such, neither Qiao Dongliang nor Ding Jiayi had any idea that Qiao Nan could get down from her bed on her own. Although her movements were slower than ordinary people’s, and it was rather inconvenient for her to move around, the fact was that Qiao Nan was no longer a bed-ridden patient who had to rely on others to eat, drink, pee, and poop.

“Hello, Miss Qiao. It’s nice to meet you. I’m really very sorry about what happened.” The driver’s face was filled with guilt upon meeting Qiao Nan. He had knocked her down, so he should have visited Qiao Nan much earlier. It was just that... The thought of Ding Jiayi made the driver’s head hurt. It could be said that Miss Qiao’s mother was the most difficult and annoying person he had ever encountered in his life.

“No, I understand the situation. You being here today is already proof that you feel sorry toward me and that you feel bad that I’m having it harder than you are. Let’s hurry and get the discharge procedures done so that I can go with you to the police station to sign the settlement. That way, both of us can avoid any trouble in the future.” Qiao Nan cut right to the chase.

After all, she and Qiao Zijin were staying in the same hospital. Her dad had just left, so she did not have to worry about her dad suddenly coming back. But Ding Jiayi was different. In order to take good care of Qiao Zijin, besides staying by Qiao Zijin's side, Ding Jiayi had to satisfy all of Qiao Zijin's other demands.

Qiao Nan had heard from the nurse that Qiao Zijin had never stopped with her antics even though she had been hospitalized. Since she could not go out to shop, Qiao Zijin would often get bored and ask Ding Jiayi to buy some fashion magazines for her. Otherwise, she would have her cravings. At those times, Ding Jiayi would go around to run errands for Qiao Zijin without any complaints.

As such, in order to avoid meeting Ding Jiayi and causing an unnecessary ruckus, Qiao Nan had no intention of staying in the hospital for any longer than was necessary. All she wanted was to leave as soon as possible. Only by taking advantage of the Qiao family being ignorant and her quick actions would she be able to gain what was rightfully hers and resolve this matter successfully.

“Actually, I got all the discharge procedures done before you came.” He had already prepared the three months' worth of Miss Qiao's hospitalization bills. No matter how hefty the sum was, he had no choice but to part with it. But he had not expected that Miss Qiao wanted to get discharged early even though she could have stayed in the hospital for a longer period of time.

Upon confirming that Qiao Nan and Ding Jiayi were truly worlds apart, the driver was exceptionally grateful. It was true that he wanted to take responsibility for what he had done, but he did not want to become a sacrificial lamb just because of his upright morals.

After roughly understanding what Qiao Nan meant, the driver got on board and helped Qiao Nan with her discharge procedures without hesitation. That way, the duo could leave immediately.

“All right, then I won't waste any more time. Let's go to the police station.” Qiao Nan nodded in satisfaction. There was no reason for Qiao Nan to not be happy now that she had managed to spend even less time in the hospital.

Thus, Qiao Nan and the driver walked side-by-side and left.

Ding Jiayi, who had gone out to buy a magazine for Qiao Zijin, caught sight of the back view of the two of them leaving the hospital. Ding Jiayi frowned and her lips were tightly pursed together. She stared at the couple for a long time. “Hey, why does that woman look like that wretched girl? But

that woman looks chubbier than that stupid bunch of bones. I guess some people just have doppelgangers.”

Qiao Nan was almost forty and had no close male friends, let alone a partner. What she had just seen was clearly a husband fetching his wife who had just been discharged, so there was no way that woman could have been Qiao Nan.

Ding Jiayi shook her head and thought nothing more of it. Remembering that her beloved daughter was still waiting for her magazine to kill time, Ding Jiayi hastened her steps and rushed to the newsstand.

Qiao Nan, who had been sitting in the car, looked around out of boredom and happened to see Ding Jiayi rushing toward the newsstand. This scene only made Qiao Nan’s lips curl up into a sneer. She said nothing about it and did not tell the man beside her that the woman whom he was most afraid of had just passed by.

Thankfully, all of the car’s windows were one-way mirrors such that passengers in the car would be able to see the people outside, but the people outside would not be able to look into the car. Otherwise, knowing Ding Jiayi’s temper, she would definitely have rushed up and grabbed the driver’s collar, demanding five hundred thousand yuan compensation from him.

If he refused, he should not even think of leaving!

Qiao Nan very kindly decided not to remind the man sitting beside her about such an unpleasant possibility. The duo rushed down to the police station as quickly as possible and settled the matter. As for Qiao Nan’s hospitalization bills, Qiao Nan had forked out a hundred thousand yuan. The driver had paid for any outstanding amount above that initial hundred thousand yuan.

Qiao Nan did not really care how much more the driver had forked out because he had handed a cash card with a stored value of three hundred thousand yuan over to her and had given her the pin number. “If you have any problems in the future, feel free to contact me.” Even though Qiao Nan had been discharged, the other party was afraid that there would be side-effects from the accident.

Qiao Nan was affable and easy to deal with. Thus, the other party’s attitude was similarly good.

Chapter 1758: Heard Through the Grapevine

Now that he had finally resolved this matter, the driver heaved a huge sigh of relief. For each day that this matter dragged on, not only had the driver lost sleep, but he had also been unable to enjoy his meals properly.

“Thank you.” Qiao Nan took the card and parted ways with the other party. After leaving, Qiao Nan did her due diligence and checked that there was indeed money in the card. What surprised Qiao Nan was that the card did not contain three hundred thousand but three hundred and twenty thousand yuan! The other party had given her twenty thousand yuan more than what had been agreed!

Thinking about how she was indeed short of money, Qiao Nan roughly guessed what the other party’s intention was. After sending a thank-you note to the other party, Qiao Nan deleted the other party’s number from her phone. She had no intention of contacting this unlucky man ever again.

Now that she had money on hand, she was not anxious at all.

The moment she returned to her rented apartment, which was the size of a bird’s nest, Qiao Nan quickly packed up her luggage. She had Ding Jiayi and Zijin’s years of exploitation to thank. To be honest, other than a few pieces of clothing, she had nothing else to pack.

Since the house was rented, there were many things in the apartment that belonged to the landlord and had nothing to do with Qiao Nan.

Once she finished packing her belongings, she explained to the landlord that she would no longer be leasing the apartment and wanted to return the place. As such, she requested the landlord to conduct a check on his apartment. If everything was in place, she would return her deposit and she would move away immediately.

Qiao Nan had lived in this apartment for ten whole years. The landlord was old acquaintances with Qiao Nan by now and knew how Qiao Nan was as a person. After glancing through the apartment and taking the keys from Qiao Nan, the landlord graciously handed over Qiao Nan’s deposit. Before Qiao Nan left, she cautiously asked, “Are you moving back to stay with your parents?”

If that was really the case, that little girl of the Qiao family might as well continue staying here.

“No, I’m moving on. But I haven’t really thought through about where I’ll be moving to. I’ll be staying in a motel for a few days for now.” Move back to the Qiao family’s house? To be the Qiao family’s maid who would not only be unpaid but would also have to fork out her money?

“That’s good news. Really good. Hurry and take your leave.” The landlord knew all too clearly about Qiao Nan’s situation. She had given Qiao Nan advice in the past, but Qiao Nan refused to heed her advice and had always devoted her whole life to the Qiao family. The landlord wondered what Qiao Nan had experienced that she had suddenly come to such a realization. As a bystander, seeing this change in Qiao Nan meant that the anger that she had been holding in could finally be released. With her pent-up anger released, she was in a much better mood.

“But you’re really good-tempered. With a family like that, if it had been someone else in your place, they would have... Forget it. Let’s not talk about it. Remember to lead your life well in the future. People nowadays always say that nothing can compare to money, not even your relationship with your parents. Lead a good life, okay?” The landlord could not say anything else but stuffed some money into Qiao Nan’s hand, on top of the deposit that she had already returned.

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With parents like that, the landlord knew that Qiao Nan did not have much money. Otherwise, she would never have stayed in this bird’s nest of an apartment for ten whole years! Why had she done so? Because it was cheap!

After waking up from her dream, even though the autumn heat had passed, Qiao Nan felt as cold as the brutal winter winds. It was as though there was no warmth at all, and the freezing cold was penetrating into her bones.

But with the care of people like her nurses and landlord, Qiao Nan could muster up a reluctant smile. “Thank you.” Because she had nothing to her name, she did not know what she could do other than saying thank you.

The landlord sighed. “It’s not easy for you either. Remember to lead a good life and treat yourself well after you move away. Try your best to stay away from the Qiao family. Although it is true that we shouldn’t be heartless, you shouldn’t be bullied like that either. You have to be more open-minded. Family may not always be reliable.”

If it was possible, the landlord wanted more so to tell Qiao Nan that she could not possibly intend to stay single for the rest of her life.

Because Qiao Nan had suffered so much in the past forty years, even more so should she find a man who would treat her well and take good care of her. Two heads were better than one, after all. If she had someone by her side, Qiao Nan's life would not be as tough as it had been.

Having read between the lines, Qiao Nan laughed bitterly. Finding a partner for marriage was not that easy. Having had such a realistic dream, finding another man to get married to would not be as easy as it sounded.

Thinking about her husband in her dream, Zhai Sheng, Qiao Nan's heart ached badly. In reality, she had never had any contact with Zhai Sheng. The Zhai family did not like to be exposed by the media, and as such, Qiao Nan had never seen any news regarding Zhai Sheng.

That was why she could not understand why she had gotten together with Zhai Sheng, who had such a high status, and had even had three children together.

Did her dreams reflect her thoughts in the day?

Was it because she had been too oppressed by Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin that she had dreamed of that Chief Zhai, who had once been closer to her, to pull her out of this sea of misery?

No matter what it was, a dream was only a dream. It was not real. It was indeed time for her to wake up from that dream. If possible, she would strive hard to embrace her next phase in life. She was only forty years old and could still live a long life. If she did not find a way to better her life, what would she do for the next few decades?"

"Let's go." The landlord sent Qiao Nan off.

Qiao Nan knew that even though she had cut off contact with the Qiao family, there was no use in moving. After ending her lease, the next thing Qiao Nan did was to resign from her job.

If it had not been for Qiao Nan's good performance and good work ethics in the past, the factory would have fired her based on her two months' absence while she was in the hospital. Upon hearing the news that Qiao Nan was resigning, Qiao Nan's superior specially requested for the accounting department to pay Qiao Nan an additional two months' worth of salary. In total, Qiao Nan was given three months' worth of salary before leaving.

“When you were in the hospital for the past two months, we were quite busy here in the factory. We accepted quite a few new transactions, so we couldn’t afford to take time off. But we did send our representatives to visit you at the hospital. We’re all very happy that you’ve been discharged. What are your plans now that you’ve resigned? Are you planning on staying home to recuperate?”

Her superior thought it was strange. Could it be that the Qiao family had finally found their conscience and was letting Qiao Nan quit her job to rest and recuperate at home since she had not entirely recovered after her accident?

The busier things got at the factory, the greater the work intensity. Qiao Nan’s superior had always known that Qiao Nan had always been taking on part-time work as well, but he did not care what his employees did after work hours as long as they did not make use of their working hours or lose their efficiency.

Qiao Nan’s supervisor had not only heard about her family situation but had also witnessed it with his own eyes!

Chapter 1759: Angry

There had been several instances where Qiao Nan’s birth mother had barged into the factory, demanding to check for herself how much Qiao Nan earned in a month.

At times, when it came to the day when the factory gave out their wages, Qiao Nan’s mom would immediately appear at the factory and wipe Qiao Nan’s salary clean.

That was why Qiao Nan’s superior did not care about Qiao Nan’s private life. Qiao Nan did not live with the Qiao family and had to pay for her own expenses. But every month, her mom would take away her entire month’s worth of salary without fail. If Qiao Nan did not take on part-time work, she would probably starve to death.

Because he knew that the Qiao family pestered Qiao Nan like blood-sucking devils, Qiao Nan’s superior was full of doubts when Qiao Nan approached him to tender her resignation.

It was true that the work intensity at the factory was slightly higher than usual, but the pay was good and their wages rose a little every year. Now that society had progressed and developed, the living standards had also been raised. They would not be able to survive without a raise in their salaries.

Initially, he had thought that the Qiao family would force Qiao Nan to work in the factory up until her death because of her high salary.

“No, I’m thinking of moving away and changing my lifestyle. I’m sorry for the trouble I caused in the past, but I guess there might be more trouble brewing. When that time comes, just leave them alone. Anyway, I won’t be around, so they won’t be able to do anything.”

“Oh!” Her superior was taken aback and asked cautiously, “Have you finally come to a realization?” Even as a bystander, he could not bear to see how the Qiao family treated Qiao Nan. Qiao Nan’s temper was too good for her own good. In fact, Qiao Nan probably did not have a temper at all. For her whole life, she had always been listening to the Qiao family and had never had her own personal space.

“Yes, I’ve already died once. I’ve come to my senses.” Qiao Nan did not elaborate on that, but Qiao Nan had taken note of what her superior had said earlier. “I don’t have any impression of anyone from the factory coming to visit me in the past two months.”

“...” Her superior bit on his lip. “They were not careful and ran into your mom...”

As for what had happened afterward, her superior did not want to talk about it. He knew that it would just be a waste of his breath talking about it. Qiao Nan had no reaction to being bullied by her mom, so it went without saying Qiao Nan would not be able to do anything now that the employees of the factory had been scolded and insulted by her mom.

Qiao Nan had gotten into a car accident, after all, and had sustained injuries serious enough to warrant hospitalization. Everyone knew that Qiao Nan led a hard life. As such, everyone had chipped in and pooled together a sum of money to express their concern for Qiao Nan after such a tragedy had happened to her.

The representative had not been able to meet Qiao Nan but bumped into Ding Jiayi instead. Ding Jiayi kept Qiao Nan’s monthly salary, and as such, she had a faint impression of Qiao Nan’s colleagues at the factory.

The moment she saw the other party, Ding Jiayi guessed the situation and quickly said, “Are you here to see Qiao Nan? I’m sorry that you had to make your way down. Qiao Nan sustained quite severe injuries in this accident and is still recuperating in her ward. The doctor won’t let any outsiders in. When Qiao Nan recovers and returns to the factory, I’ll be sure to get her to thank you all for your concern. Oh, you guys are too kind. You shouldn’t have bothered bringing so many things to visit. Come, hand all these things over to me.”

Ding Jiayi had sharp eyes and could tell straightaway that the fruit basket was worth several hundred yuan. Amongst them were several expensive and nutritious fruits that Ding Jiayi had never been willing to splurge on. This was just as well. She could wash them and let Qiao Zijin have them!

The valuable fruit basket caught Ding Jiayi’s eyes indeed, but none more so than the envelope in the fruit basket. It was so thick. It could not possibly contain fruits. No matter how she looked at it, the envelope had to contain cash.

Looking at its thickness, Ding Jiayi guessed that it should contain at least ten thousand yuan. Ding Jiayi had not expected that Qiao Nan’s colleagues from the factory would be so generous as to send so much money over to Qiao Nan now that she was hospitalized.

With ten thousand yuan, she would be able to make Zijin’s stay in the hospital even more comfortable. Didn’t Zijin want some magazines? She would go to the newsstand and ask for similar titles and buy them all for Zijin.

After making up her mind, Ding Jiayi did not even care about the other party’s astonishment and grabbed the fruit basket over from the other party with great force. “Thank you. You can leave.”

Knowing the kind of person Ding Jiayi was, the colleague refused to let go.

Ding Jiayi was no match for that young man. Upset, Ding Jiayi spat out unpleasant words. “Hey, I think you’re really strange. Isn’t this for our Qiao Nan? Aren’t you giving it to my daughter? Why aren’t you handing it over? This isn’t yours! It’s probably something that your colleagues came together to give to my younger daughter, isn’t it? Are you trying to claim this fruit basket for yourself because it’s valuable and even has a huge sum of money in it?”

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The colleague flushed red with anger and barely stopped himself from rebuking her.

This was like the pot calling the kettle black!

Because they knew that Qiao Nan led a hard life under her mom's control, they were afraid that Qiao Nan would have no money to buy supplements for herself now that she was hospitalized. That was why they had pooled together some funds for Qiao Nan. If the money were to fall into Ding Jiayi's hands, Qiao Nan would not get a single cent of it. No way was he going to let go. He wanted to personally hand it over to Qiao Nan.

But he had never expected that Ding Jiayi would be just as thick-skinned toward other people as she was toward Qiao Nan. She was completely shameless!

As a grown-up man, he was being accused by Ding Jiayi in public of wanting to steal a patient's money. Especially given Ding Jiayi's relationship to Qiao Nan, a normal bystander would simply assume that a biological mother would never hurt her own daughter. In that way, it was definitely the colleague, who had come to send the money over, that was at fault.

In the face of such public criticism, the colleague felt that he had never been so embarrassed in his entire life. He had done nothing, yet he had to become the scapegoat and take the blame!

In the end, that male colleague could not stand it any longer and his face turned purple. He let go of the basket and it landed right in Ding Jiayi's hands. Following that, the male colleague immediately ran out of the hospital. If he were ever to fall sick in the future, he would never visit this hospital. It was way too embarrassing.

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The male colleague then told his boss about this incident. He had no other choice. After all, he owed his boss an explanation since the money had not been handed over to Qiao Nan. What if Qiao Nan returned to work knowing nothing about that ten thousand yuan? If their boss were to ask her about it and there was a discrepancy, everyone would misunderstand that he had been greedy and stolen Qiao Nan's ten thousand yuan.

If that really happened, he would feel so wronged.

Knowing that his good intentions had been trampled upon by Ding Jiayi and that Ding Jiayi had even humiliated his own employee, their superior was infuriated. Who on earth had no temper?

Chapter 1760: Keeping Their Mouths Shut

But what could he do? This was his employee's own family matters. If Qiao Nan could not stand up for herself and lift her head up, there was nothing they could do no matter how unhappy they were.

Her boss had mentioned the issue of ten thousand yuan firstly to express the importance the company placed on loyal employees like Qiao Nan. If the company did not show any sign of concern when a loyal employee got into an accident and was hospitalized, would that not disappoint all employees? Secondly, her boss meant to give Qiao Nan a heads-up so that she would at least have an idea of the existence of this ten thousand yuan. He hated to see Qiao Nan being so foolish, not knowing anything, and even being controlled by Ding Jiayi.

To put it harshly, the ten thousand yuan was also a favor.

Ding Jiayi had taken the money in the end. If the favor needed to be returned in the future, Qiao Nan would be the one who had to do so. She would not be able to shirk her responsibility at that time. Her boss did not wish for such a good employee to be mistaken for having poor character and morals just because of her 'amazing' mother, Ding Jiayi.

Qiao Nan took a deep breath as her face flushed red. "I'm so sorry. Who went to visit me the other day? I'll apologize to him personally."

In the face of money, she could care less about her relationship with her daughter, much less a colleague of a daughter whom she did not favor in the first place. For the sake of money, her mom could say the most unpleasant things and do the most ridiculous and ugly things. Even though she had not been present that day, Qiao Nan could completely imagine how badly her colleague must have been treated.

"Forget it. It's his rest day today, but I can relay your message to him. It's not your fault either." Her boss sighed helplessly. "I understand your plans. You won't be our factory's employee in the future, but I still hope that your life will get better. Qiao Nan, you should really love yourself a little more."

Everyone who knew Qiao Nan told her the same thing over and over again: to treat herself better and to love herself more.

Sometimes, parents were not the most reliable. If she did not love herself, there would be no one else in this world who would love her.

Tears welled up in Qiao Nan's eyes and she sniffled. "I will, for sure! I will definitely love myself more in the future." Or perhaps, she would even love herself the most!

"Go on." Qiao Nan's boss saw that Qiao Nan had indeed changed from the past and had even taken his advice. If Qiao Nan could really keep to her word and love herself even more in the future, he would definitely be happy for Qiao Nan. "Go on. Remember to live a good life. You're always welcome to visit us whenever you're free."

"I will. Goodbye." Qiao Nan gave a deep bow to express her gratitude for her leader. Only after that did she take the three months' worth of salary and leave. Even though her closest kin had been so coldhearted toward her that she felt as though all the blood in her body had been frozen, just like it had been in her dream, outsiders who had no relation to her were constantly giving her warmth, telling her that winter was not the only season in the year and that brutal cold was not the only temperature that existed.

Qiao Nan ran around visiting all her contacts that she had made before her accident to bid farewell to them and to settle her work. When all was finally done, it was already eight o'clock in the evening.

Qiao Nan had already ended her lease for her rented apartment, and Qiao Nan was not the least bit willing to take a step into the Qiao family's courtyard. Thus, Qiao Nan found a decently clean and inexpensive motel to spend the night.

Early the next morning, Qiao Nan packed up her light luggage but could not help but feel slightly lost and helpless. There was no need to hesitate about leaving the Qiao family and moving away to start a new life afresh.

Leaving the Qiao family was a must. But where should she go to start her new life?

After giving it some thought, Qiao Nan made a decision inwardly. Taking her identity card and household registration with her, she would leave Ping Cheng, a city that had plagued her with a whole myriad of problems, to another city that would allow her to have some peace: Qingshui town.

Sitting in the car and looking at Ping Cheng that was growing ever smaller in the distance, Qiao Nan smiled in relief. She had finally left her old life behind. Perhaps, she was really not suited for life in Ping Cheng. In both her dream world and reality, she had not led a good life in Ping Cheng. It was only when she left Ping Cheng that she had finally been able to get relief.

Now that she had finally left Ping Cheng, Qiao Nan felt as though a huge stone had been lifted off her chest. But with her departure, chaos ensued in a certain corner of Ping Cheng.

In front of Qiao Nan, Qiao Dongliang felt guilty for having his eyes on Qiao Nan's kidney. He had not been able to be as brazen and shameless as Ding Jiayi, who thought that Qiao Nan's sacrifices were justified. Qiao Dongliang felt guilty and sorry toward Qiao Nan and could not face her. As such, he tried to avoid any contact with Qiao Nan as much as possible.

The better Qiao Nan's health was, the more obvious Qiao Dongliang's behavior got. Qiao Dongliang had always sent breakfast over to Qiao Nan personally but had always asked the nurse to pass it to Qiao Nan. He himself would leave straightaway after handing the meal over to the nurse. That afternoon, he had personally seen Qiao Nan finish her meal. He had only stayed because he had wanted to chat with Qiao Nan's doctor about her progress and how well she was recovering.

As for dinner, Qiao Dongliang had gotten used to asking other people to send Qiao Nan's meal to the hospital for the nurse to hand it over to Qiao Nan.

Thankfully, Qiao Dongliang had done this out of guilt. That had given Qiao Nan the chance to settle her past and leave everything behind. The moment Qiao Dongliang left after lunchtime, Qiao Nan quickly finished her discharge procedures and left the hospital as well.

Quite a few nurses in the hospital knew about Qiao Nan's departure. Perhaps it was also because of Qiao Nan's good fortune. Qiao Nan had once told that nurse, who had been extremely concerned about her, that the Qiao family had their sights set on her own kidney for Qiao Zijin's sake.

When the person that Qiao Dongliang had entrusted the tasks of delivering Qiao Nan's dinner arrived, the nurse on duty almost let slip that Qiao Nan had already been discharged and wanted to question why they were still sending lunch boxes over.

Right at that moment, the kind nurse, who had been taking care of Qiao Nan all along, stopped her colleague just in time. She accepted the lunch box as usual and said that she would pass it to Qiao Nan later. With that, the other party left feeling assured.

"Why didn't you let me tell him?" The colleague asked out of confusion after the other party left.

The kind nurse laughed. “Anyway, he’s already sent the lunch box over. He looked like he’s rushing off for his night shift. If you had told him that Miss Qiao had been discharged, wouldn’t he have to bring this lunch box to his workplace? How inconvenient would that be! At the very most, we can hand this lunch box over to the Qiao family tomorrow when they come. It isn’t very nice to always bother others, after all.”