

RTAMM 1831

Chapter 1831: Nearly Scared Away

Qiao Nan, who was in a daze after hearing Zhai Sheng's introduction, instinctively responded by calling them uncle and auntie. The problem was that this was a conversation meant for boyfriends and girlfriends. She did not share such a relationship with Zhai Sheng.

Now that she knew who Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing were, she had no right to address them as uncle and auntie. She had to use honorifics when addressing them, just like how ordinary people would address them.

"We'll be a family soon. There's no need to be so courteous and address us so distantly. Addressing us as uncle and auntie will do." Miao Jing had tried her best to restrain herself but had still failed miserably. And so she took large strides toward Qiao Nan and grabbed Qiao Nan's hands without giving her the chance to refuse.

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Yes, her hands were a little rough, but she could tell that Qiao Nan was a hardworking lady. A hardworking lady was good. With Qiao Nan around, neither she nor Old Zhai would need to worry about Zhai Sheng anymore. Qiao Nan would definitely take good care of Zhai Sheng.

What Miao Jing had been most concerned about was not just whether Qiao Nan would be able to take care of Zhai Sheng, but also whether Zhai Sheng would be willing for Qiao Nan to take care of him. But she had confirmed that Zhai Sheng would be willing for this. It was truly difficult to find someone whom Zhai Sheng was pleased with.

Based on this alone, Miao Jing had already rated Qiao Nan a high score of ninety in her heart.

"Ha, haha..." Qiao Nan was so frightened that she could not utter a word. They would be a family soon? She knew what each of those words meant, but now that they formed a sentence, it seemed that her brain failed to understand what the whole sentence meant. "You're too kind, madam."

“Call me Auntie Miao.” Miao Jing insisted. “Come, have a seat. You’ve come a long way. Tell auntie if you’re hungry. I’ll let Xiao Zhao prepare whatever you want to eat.”

Qiao Nan could only sit down with Miao Jing dragging her along, but she was sitting very uneasily. This was getting stranger. Earlier, she had been in the same position as Xiao Zhao and had been hired to take care of Zhai Sheng. She had been the one cooking. In such a short span of time, she had become a guest of the Zhai family and could enjoy Xiao Zhao’s service.

“Auntie, I’m not picky. I’ll eat whatever is served. I’m sorry for inconveniencing you. I didn’t want this to happen either. I didn’t expect that I would have to stay in the Zhai family’s old villa for a month because I couldn’t find any temporary accommodation now that it’s almost the new year. Auntie Miao, I hope you won’t find me a burden. Once my house is repaired in a month’s time, I’ll definitely return home. I’m sorry for troubling you. Of course, I’ll try my best not to add to your troubles.”

Qiao Nan was unsure if Miao Jing had misunderstood her relationship with Zhai Sheng. The way she spoke and her attitude toward her did not seem as though she viewed Qiao Nan as a friend who was bunking over for a month. It seemed more as though... But that was not the case between Zhai Sheng and her. There was nothing going on between the two of them.

Zhai Sheng was already divorced and was now single. If the elderly couple misunderstood the relationship between her and Zhai Sheng, causing a delay in Zhai Sheng’s remarriage, she would be in big trouble. “Brother Zhai is a really good person. Because we’re from the same hometown, he’s generously offered me a room after finding out that I’m in trouble. Brother Zhai’s such a good person. I believe that good people will be well-rewarded. Brother Zhai will surely find the right person and lead a blissful life in the future.”

Whether or not she had been misunderstood, Qiao Nan felt that it was best for her to clarify her stance. Even if Zhai Sheng were to have someone in mind, it would never be her! The elderly couple had better not make a mistake and anger Zhai Sheng’s true prospect, which might even lead to a breakup!

“Yes, you’re right. My son may not have much to say, but he’s a good and responsible man. I believe that whoever marries him will be very fortunate too. At that time, the two of them will lead their own blissful lives. Then, his dad and I will never have to worry about him anymore.” Miao Jing nodded vigorously and praised Zhai Sheng so much so that it seemed as though Zhai Sheng was an unsellable product that she could not wait for Qiao Nan to take away with her.

In that way, the moment Zhai Sheng left with Qiao Nan, the latter would be the one in charge of everything related to Zhai Sheng. Then, she and Zhai Yaohui would have fulfilled all their duties as parents.

Qiao Nan's head hurt. Could it be that she had not made it clear enough with her words? But she felt that she would offend someone if she were to be any more explicit. Why was Auntie Miao still behaving in this manner? Was there something wrong with the way she had phrased it? What else could it be? For the first time, Qiao Nan realized that she was not good with words.

Seeing that Qiao Nan was on the verge of tears because of Miao Jing, Zhai Sheng pulled Qiao Nan up. "We have quite a few rooms in this villa. Although you're only going to be here for a month, you can pick the room that you like best so that you'll feel comfortable. Come on, I'll go with you." If he allowed his mother to go on, Qiao Nan might really just be scared away.

"Huh? Oh." Qiao Nan did not think that it was necessary for her to choose a room for herself. She could stay in any room they picked out for her. But at this moment, Qiao Nan would much rather follow Zhai Sheng to pick out a room than stay behind and face Miao Jing's incessant questioning. It would be too awkward.

After Qiao Nan was dragged away by Zhai Sheng, Miao Jing excitedly hit Zhai Yaohui's elbow so much so that Zhai Yaohui grimaced in pain. "Did you see that? Did you see that? That rascal took the initiative to hold that lady's hand! Ha, I really didn't see it in him to take advantage of a girl just like that. Does he really think I'm blind? That lady has absolutely no feelings for Zhai Sheng. How could he be so shameless as to act like a hooligan and hold her hand?"

Qiao Nan's hands were a little rough but compared to her son's, they were still rather small and tender.

She had never expected that rascal, Zhai Sheng, to make a move, and when he did, he had been so shameless to take advantage of her, acting as if he was saving a damsel in distress!

Acting shameless was one thing. She would overlook it as long as he managed to marry her and give her a granddaughter or a grandson. She did not care about anything else.

Zhai Yaohui rubbed the area where Miao Jing had just hit him. "Zhai Sheng only did so because he was afraid that you would scare her away. Didn't you say that Qiao Nan doesn't have any romantic feelings for our son? I guess you can say that she's either righteous or cowardly."

Qiao Nan was aware of the gap between herself and the Zhai family, as well as Zhai Sheng. That was why she never thought that it was possible between her and Zhai Sheng. Qiao Nan simply pretended as though she had not heard anything and had not understood any of Miao Miao's words, or perhaps she had stubbornly insisted that she had misinterpreted Miao Miao's words.

Chapter 1832: Kidnapped

A woman who had no principles and threw herself blindly at Zhai Sheng was definitely unacceptable. But they could consider someone like Qiao Nan, who tried their best to shy away from Zhai Sheng. Besides, she had great potential.

“Old Zhai, what do you think? Do you think Qiao Nan is a good woman?”

“She's not bad.” To people like them, someone with self-awareness was naturally better than someone with none. Besides, Qiao Nan's attitude was something most people would have. It was not strange at all. “She knows her place and boundaries. That's much better than some others.” Zhai Sheng was almost forty-five. At that age, he could not afford to have a woman with a capricious nature. It was better to have a mature and calm woman by his side.

“So you're saying that Qiao Nan is suitable for Zhai Sheng and that we can consider her to be our daughter-in-law?” Apart from Qi Minlan and Qiu Chenxi as examples, Miao Jing trusted Zhai Yaohui's judgment of people.

Zhai Yaohui took a sip of water. “She's already entered our old villa. With Zhai Sheng's skills, I'm sure she won't be able to run away. Since she won't be able to run away, let's not be so hasty in making our decision. Anyway, don't we still have a whole month to observe her?” Zhai Yaohui was already certain that Qiao Nan would only be staying in the Zhai family's old villa temporarily for a month. But in a month's time, she would be able to live in her own house with no shame at all.

Zhai Yaohui had not said much, but after years of marriage, Miao Jing could still understand Zhai Yaohui's true feelings in his words.

Miao Jing was elated by Zhai Yaohui's attitude. They had indeed found the right daughter-in-law this time! Within this month, she would do her best to help her son change her mind so that he would rid himself of that identity of a bachelor as soon as possible.

The couple was having a heated discussion, but Qiao Nan was still feeling guilty over the whole situation. After being dragged out by Zhai Sheng, Qiao Nan could not hold back anymore, and she asked Zhai Sheng in a low voice, “Bro Zhai, has auntie misunderstood something?” At this time, she had not brought Zhai Yaohui into the picture. After all, Miao Jing had been the only one expressing her thoughts earlier. “If auntie has any misunderstandings, how should I explain it to her?”

She could not put it in a mean way, and neither could she afford to offend or agitate Auntie Miao. She was truly in a tight spot. Besides, she was unsure of what Zhai Sheng wanted.

“Yes, she has.” Zhai Sheng did not deny it. It would be foolish not to deny it at this point in time. “You know about my situation as well. I got married late in life and got divorced less than three years after getting married. I’ve stayed single ever since then. Apart from me, my parents have another daughter named Zhai Hua. She’s older than me and is married with a daughter. Since I’m the only one who’s unmarried, it’s inevitable that my parents pay more attention to me. It’s hard for them not to misunderstand when anything happens. Even if it has nothing to do with that, they will try their best to come up with something. I’m sorry about what happened just now. Thank you for being so patient and not throwing a tantrum even after my mom bothered you for such a long time.”

“Of course not!” Qiao Nan waved him away. “I can completely understand Auntie Miao’s feelings.”

“Do you feel bothered by my mom? If you do, I’ll tell her not to disturb you in the future.” Zhai Sheng’s eyes glistened. His mom had already taken the initiative. As long as he could achieve his goals, he believed that his mom would not mind him saying such a thing. In fact, she would be more than pleased.

“No, that won’t be necessary.” She was here as a guest. It was not the Zhai family bothering her but the other way round. How could Qiao Nan possibly admit that Miao Jing’s actions were indeed bothering her? Always the good person, Qiao Nan could only say that she was perfectly fine with the current situation. “Bro Zhai, please don’t say that. If you do, I’ll feel bad for staying here for a whole month. I’m the one who’s inconveniencing you. Actually, regarding Auntie Miao... I’ll just treat it as though I was chatting with her. It’ll be fine. But Bro Zhai, it won’t be so good for Auntie Miao if we don’t clarify this misunderstanding. Will it affect you?”

Auntie Miao had only misunderstood her relationship with Zhai Sheng because she was worried about Zhai Sheng still being single. She could totally understand how Miao Jing would mistake her for Zhai Sheng’s girlfriend now that she had suddenly appeared by Zhai Sheng’s side, even though she was already an old lady in her forties.

A misunderstanding was still a misunderstanding, after all. They had to clarify the situation.

What if Auntie Miao treated this misunderstanding as the truth and stopped pressing Zhai Sheng to go on blind dates with other ladies? She could not possibly deny Zhai Sheng of the chance of getting remarried because of such a small misunderstanding!

Qiao Nan suppressed the slight joy in her heart that has arisen from this thought. She could not possibly deprive Zhai Sheng of the right to pursue his own happiness just because of her dream. She had to deal with this fairly and justly.

It had been painful for Qiao Nan to say it, and Zhai Sheng had been upset hearing it. He knew that Qiao Nan did not have any romantic feelings for him as of yet. But what did she mean by that tone and those words urging him to get married to someone other than her? It was all right if she did not like him, but did she have to hate him and try to push him away?

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When had he done anything to anger Qiao Nan so much so that she could not wait to get rid of him?

“Why don’t you take a look at your room?” Beginnings were always the hardest step. He had not reached that stage with Qiao Nan, after all. As such, Zhai Sheng had no choice but to swallow all his grudges and dissatisfactions for the time being. Zhai Sheng pushed the door open for Qiao Nan to enter the room. He who was the closest had the greatest advantage. Since she was already staying in his house, how could he, as a soldier, let his prey escape from his grasp?

Up until now, his prey had let her guard down and he had allowed for that to happen.

“Oh, that’s fine. I’m all right with staying anywhere.” Qiao Nan had never had the intention of picking a room to stay in anyway. Leaving with Zhai Sheng had been nothing more than an excuse. Qiao Nan had already thought through it. She would simply pick whichever room she saw first.

It was just that Qiao Nan had once again been frightened by Miao Jing’s hospitality. She had not realized that they had walked past several rooms earlier. Now that Zhai Sheng pointed a room out for her, Qiao Nan simply agreed to it without hesitation.

“Then, I’ll leave you to unpack. We should be able to have our meal in half an hour.” In a gentlemanly fashion, Zhai Sheng stopped outside Qiao Nan’s room, giving Qiao Nan some space.

“All right.” Qiao Nan nodded, suddenly realizing that she had not used her brain and seemed to have lost all sense of rationality upon stepping into the Zhai family’s old villa this time. “I-I know my way around. I can head over on my own later.”

Chapter 1833: Coaxing

The moment she finished her sentence, Qiao Nan had the urge to slap herself. She had spoken as though she were truly a guest of the Zhai family and was waiting for Xiao Zhao to serve her.

“All right, then you can make your way over later.” Zhai Sheng did not force Qiao Nan too much. His mom alone was more than enough for Qiao Nan to handle. He was in no hurry to make a move. Anyway, he had already achieved all his goals of the day.

The moment Zhai Sheng left, Qiao Nan immediately calmed down now that she was no longer affected by Zhai Sheng’s presence. It was as though she was a phone that had just been cut off from the Wi-Fi connection. Qiao Nan patted her chest. “F*ck! I guess I underestimated Brother Zhai’s influence on me. Why does it feel like my brain is on strike with Brother Zhai around?”

Feeling herself in an abnormal situation, Qiao Nan began panicking. She could not go on being so muddleheaded. If she did, she would ‘get into trouble’ very soon.

Qiao Nan was like a cat on a hot tin roof. After pacing around the room several times, Qiao Nan’s head suddenly shot up in confusion. Upon looking around the room, she hit herself on her head. “My brain is not only on strike! My IQ is practically in the negative region!”

It was only now that Qiao Nan finally realized that she seemed to have been tricked once again. But Qiao Nan did not dare to guess who had tricked her, much less pin the blame on Zhai Sheng. What Qiao Nan knew was that she had been asked to choose her own room previously. Even though she had not picked a room and had agreed to stay in any room, she had never expected to stay right next door to Zhai Sheng! That was not just ‘any room’!

Looking again at her luggage that had already been placed on the bed, Qiao Nan’s gaze became complicated. She had not said a single word to Xiao Xu from the time she had alighted from the car. Similarly, Xiao Xu probably had had no interactions with Zhai Sheng since then. How could it be so coincidental that Zhai Sheng had brought her straight to the room next to his and that Xiao Xu had accurately brought her luggage into this room without any hesitation either?

Xiao Xu's actions undoubtedly proved that Zhai Sheng had intended on doing so long ago. But how was that possible?

Qiao Nan collapsed on her bed, paralyzed by worry. Her brain completely shut off. She had refused to allow herself to overthink anything, but why was it that people around her were doing things that made her misunderstand and get more confused?

She could not withstand a life like that!

No matter how depressed and confused Qiao Nan felt, she could only throw a small tantrum in her own room. When it came to dinner time, she dared not wait for anyone to call her, much less allow others to wait for her at the dinner table.

Seeing Xiao Zhao, who had taken over her job and brought the dishes out, Qiao Nan felt as though there were nails on her chair, and she felt extremely uneasy. "Xiao Zhao, is there anything I can help you with?" In short, she did not feel at ease sitting there and waiting for her meal.

"No, there's no need." Xiao Zhao was pleasantly surprised by Qiao Nan's offer but rejected her kind offer. Qiao Nan was still unclear about the Zhai family's intentions, but Xiao Zhao had overheard their conversations more than once. That was why Xiao Zhao was clear that her 'senior' had gotten lucky and had caught the eye of the Zhai family.

Just some time ago, Qiao Nan had been in the same position as she was in, a caretaker of the family. But today, their statuses were as different as night and day. Qiao Nan was the master sitting at the table, waiting to be served, while she was still a salaried caretaker.

Sigh. Why was there such a stark difference between people's lives? Why were some people always so lucky and fortunate while others were not?

Xiao Zhao had only thought about such a thing for a moment before she quickly got rid of such a thought from her mind. Qiao Nan, who had once been her peer, had been able to achieve what she had only dreamed of for a moment! It was no wonder that Xiao Zhao had thought about it for a long while. Thankfully, Xiao Zhao was no Qiao Zijin. Her thoughts were merely her thoughts, and she would not act on them.

Xiao Zhao would not be so foolish as to offend Qiao Nan instead of trying to please her now that she knew that Qiao Nan was very likely going to become the mistress of the family. Working in the Zhai family was not hard, and the salary was not low either. Most importantly, she was working for the chief.

Having worked under Zhai Sheng for a month, Xiao Zhao had already experienced the benefits of working for the chief. Earlier on, there had been some problems with the household registration for her son. As such, she had been unable to register her son for school. She had not talked to Zhai Sheng about it but had mentioned it in passing to Xiao Xu. As expected, within the same week, she received news that her son would be able to attend a better school when the terms started in spring!

When the family of Xiao Zhao's ex-husband found out about how Xiao Zhao's mom had completely taken care of her child's schooling problem, the whole family was dumbfounded. They could not be clearer about Xiao Zhao's abilities. Their family was rich, but Xiao Zhao had neither money nor power. How had Xiao Zhao been able to solve a problem that even their family had not been able to solve?

Afterward, her ex-husband's family heard that Xiao Zhao was working as a caretaker for a powerful and important figure. Of course, as long as she did not make any mistakes and did her job well, she would be able to find someone to help her out with something she had no ability to solve.

Hearing the change in Xiao Zhao caused Xiao Zhao's husband to reconsider his situation. He knew that if he had connections with someone in the government sector, his business would improve by leaps and bounds. Not only would he be able to have more business, but it would also come much more quickly. Thus, he visited Xiao Zhao to ask her of this favor.

Xiao Zhao's ex-husband expressed that he would give Xiao Zhao a million yuan for her retirement once he made it big, as long as Xiao Zhao was willing to do him this favor. He even promised that all of his earnings would go to their son, and not anyone else. As such, Xiao Zhao would indirectly be helping their son as well.

Having been tricked by her ex-husband once, Xiao Zhao was no fool this time. She was not after the one million yuan, but she had to consider the fact that her ex-husband's assets would eventually end up in her son's hands. As for whether she would be able to help her ex-husband out, that was something else. What was most important was helping her son get hold of her ex-husband's assets.

She had been the one by her ex-husband's side and had toiled alongside him to come to where the family was today. Without her, there was no way her ex-husband's family would be so successful today. As such, it was only natural for all of her ex-husband's assets to be passed down to her son.

Thus, Xiao Zhao made her ex-husband sign a letter of guarantee that ensured that he would transfer all of his assets to her son.

Her ex-husband had only been trying to coax her with those words. The new wife that he had just married was already pregnant with a child. With a new child in the family, her ex-husband would definitely favor that child from his new wife. How could he possibly be willing to leave all his assets to her son?

Besides, he was still young and still had to work hard to bring his family business to greater heights in the future. On what basis should he hand the family business over to his son who had never done anything for the business? Xiao Zhao's ex-husband had never expected that there would be such an improvement in Xiao Zhao. Now, words alone were no longer able to move her. If he was capable, he would have to sign a letter of guarantee and get a lawyer to settle the paperwork. Otherwise, she would never believe him!

Chapter 1834: Celebrating the New Year

Xiao Zhao was absolutely resolute. However, no pain, no gain. In the end, the couple failed to come to an agreement. Thus, Xiao Zhao never mentioned anything about her ex-husband in front of Zhai Sheng.

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After this incident, Xiao Zhao's son, who was starting to become more sensible, realized that his mom loved him more than his dad did. His dad's heart had long been biased toward that child in his stepmother's tummy.

Children were not that gullible, and they could distinguish between people who treated them well and those who did not. Besides, children were usually closer to their moms when they were younger. After seeing how his parents treated him in completely different manners, his heart was entirely biased toward his biological mother, Xiao Zhao, even though he continued living in her ex-husband's house. The moment anything happened in her ex-husband's family, her son would immediately relay the matter to her without missing a beat.

That was how Xiao Zhao had found out about how her ex-husband's family had been unable to resist the urge and had finally gone to check on whether the child in that woman's stomach was a boy or a girl. In the end, the ultrasound scans revealed that the child was a girl. Upon finding out

that they were having a granddaughter instead of a grandson, Xiao Zhao's ex-parents-in-law no longer treated their new daughter-in-law as well as before. Only her ex-husband's passion did not die down, and he even claimed that having a daughter was pretty good as well.

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Thinking about how she not only had a son but a son whose heart was entirely for her, Xiao Zhao felt much more at ease and calm, even toward her ex-parents-in-law who had treated her so poorly.

She was someone who already had a son. She had heard that Sister Qiao was not only older than her but was also unmarried. Perhaps, Sister Qiao had suffered so much in the past, and all of her accumulated blessings were being used now.

Now that Xiao Zhao herself was leading a good life, there was no reason for her to hope that someone else would have a harder life than her. "There's no need for that, Sister Qiao. Please remain seated. I'm almost done. I know that the chief likes to eat the dishes that you cook. Please try what I've made and let me know how it is. Please tell me about my shortcomings so that I'll be able to improve on it and make the chief happier."

She should not feel that she's left behind just because Sister Qiao had been doing a similar job in the past. In fact, she should be happy.

Even though she had not interacted much with Sister Qiao, she had a rather good impression of Sister Qiao. Sister Qiao was good-natured, and it would be her good fortune to have a mistress like Sister Qiao. With the chief's background, he could very well marry a troublemaker, just as her ex-husband had. If that were to happen, her life would be just as hard as it had been before her divorce.

At this moment, Xiao Zhao could only sigh. Once she found out about how Qiu Chenxi had once been together with Zhai Sheng, and after she experienced for herself the kind of person Qiu Chenxi was, Xiao Zhao would definitely and resolutely cling on to Qiao Nan and be determined to have Qiao Nan as her mistress.

Zhai Sheng was a leading figure in the whole of China, let alone a small town like Qingshui or Ping Cheng. Qingshui Town was rather remote. The only reason it had been slightly developed was due to the Zhai family's old villa. In other words, Qingshui Town had produced three generations of chiefs. Was this not something to be proud of?

Today, it was not just Zhai Sheng who was recuperating in Qingshui Town. Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing were around too! Zhai Yaohui had already stated that Zhai Sheng was here to recuperate and that they could save those unnecessary red tapes and procedures. It was best that official visits be avoided as well so that they could give Zhai Sheng a peaceful environment to recuperate. That would be more helpful to Zhai Sheng.

Even so, now that it was almost the new year, there were many people coming to visit the Zhai family's old villa. Of course, these people had not come empty-handed either and had always brought some gifts along. But because of the country's strict anti-corruption rules, the Zhai family did not accept valuable gifts from their visitors. Thus, their visitors were all rather careful and only brought some imported fruits along with them. Not a single valuable or expensive item appeared.

Because of such a fuss, more people got to know about the Zhai family's presence, and with that, even more people started to visit the Zhai family's old villa as well.

At the Wei family, Wei De changed out of his military uniform and into his casual clothes. Ever since retiring from the military, Zhai Hua was turning into an average housewife. As she helped Wei De keep the clothes that he had just removed, he said, "Your parents have finally come back. Do you think we should pay them a visit? Shall we spend the new year with your family?" They had been spending the new year with his parents all these years. This year was exceptionally important.

In fact, if it was possible, Wei De very much wanted to spend every New Year's Day with the Zhai family. He truly longed for a better relationship with his father-in-law. At his age, he was still a company commander and had the desire to be promoted even further. How nice it would be to be promoted directly to a regiment commander, entirely bypassing the position of a battalion commander.

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Wei De knew very well that if he had not married Zhai Hua, he would never have become a company commander, let alone a regiment commander. His goal had remained as clear as day even after marrying Zhai Hua. He had never even dreamed of becoming a chief like Zhai Sheng. His eventual goal was still to become a regiment commander, and to do so, he would definitely need the support of the Zhai family.

Zhai Hua stopped in her actions. "How are you going to explain it to your parents? Your dad will be fine, but you should know well about your mom's temper. She's already said that she's getting a daughter-in-law, not giving her son away. Won't your mom fly into a rage if you spend the new year at my house?"

Her mother-in-law wished for the Zhai family to support the Wei family and to push Wei De up through the ranks. She even felt that Wei De had done the Zhai family a favor and was their benefactor by marrying an old lady whom no one else wanted.

Thinking about how her mother-in-law looked down on her, Zhai Hua's expression was sour. Based on her character in the past, she would never have used her words to defend herself in front of someone as unreasonable as her mother-in-law. She would always use her force. But dating and marriage were two separate things. If she had known that Wei De had a mother like that, she...

In fact, Mother Wei was the main reason that Zhai Hua had distanced herself from the Zhai family and had refused to visit her parents. She herself could not stand Mother Wei's behavior. She thought about how her parents had been certain right from the start that Wei De was not a good person, but she had insisted on her way and had married him nevertheless. From that, it was certain that her parents would never take a liking to someone like her mother-in-law. In fact, they would probably flare up if they were to know about her.

Of course Zhai Hua had feelings for her own family. Only with such a comparison did Zhai Hua realize that her family treated her well. It was just that Zhai Hua had always used her indifference to disguise herself since she was young. After Zhai Hua became a mother, Zhai Hua did not know how to express herself in front of her daughter.

Chapter 1835: Sequential

In the end, she was afraid to contact her family and did not know how to communicate with them either. That was why the Zhai family misunderstood that Zhai Hua was still angry at them and bore a grudge because they had disagreed to her marriage to Wei De at that time.

But in reality, Zhai Hua's heart was still for her family.

At the thought of her mother-in-law's temper, Zhai Hua asked Wei De impolitely whether he had a plan to deal with his mother.

At the mention of his mother, Wei De felt his head hurt a little. Thankfully, Zhai Hua was already out of the military and her temper had improved tremendously. Otherwise, given Zhai Hua's temper in the past, she would have gotten a divorce from him a long time ago with all the fuss his mom had made.

If so, all of his efforts would truly be in vain. But through this incident, Wei De had gotten a little fearless. After giving birth to their daughter, not only was Zhai Hua unable to leave him, she had even lost all the temper she had had in the past! “I’ll talk to my mom. There shouldn’t be a problem.”

His mom would probably not be so clueless as to be an obstacle to his future.

After hearing about Wei De’s plan, his mom had indeed gotten upset, just like Zhai Hua had expected. “It’s the new year. Our family should spend time together. What do you mean by leaving your dad and me alone while you spend time with another family? If you really treat them as your family, you should invite them over to have a meal with us!”

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If her son had not been kind enough to marry Zhai Hua, the Zhai family would have been disgraced by their daughter who could not be married. They were all white-eyed wolves who were full of ingratitude!

“Mom.” Wei De did not say anything, but his tone changed slightly and he looked at his mom with a different gaze. Mother Wei quickly tried to salvage the situation. “Don’t be upset. That’s just what I think. How could I really stop you guys? I’m just upset on your behalf. Did the Zhai family allow you to join them when you guys wanted to join them the last time? I’m just feeling bad for you, son.”

It was only then that Wei De’s expression eased. “Mom, no pain, no gain. I want to fulfill my dreams of becoming a regiment commander. Only then will I be able to help Xiao Wei surpass me.”

In that way, their Wei family would only get better and better from generation to generation. When it came to Xiao Wei’s generation, their family would not be much worse off than the Zhai family even without the Zhai family’s help. Once he became a grandpa, he would be the one who would have made the greatest contribution to the Wei family.

“If you can bear with it, what else can I say? Why don’t you bring Xiao Wei along this time instead of Jiajia? Jiajia is a girl. It’s better for her to stay at home and learn to be docile. Xiao Wei is a boy and has to get to know the world.” A scolding was a scolding, but Mother Wei was clear that her family depended on the Zhai family.

Her son relied on the Zhai family, and more so would her grandson have to in the future.

All along, she had never given Jiajia the opportunity to get close to her maternal grandparents. She was afraid that Jiajia would follow in Zhai Hua's footsteps and start to hate her son. In that case, she would have wasted money raising Jiajia! Xiao Wei was such a good kid, and it was just as well that the Zhai family had no children. If her grandson caught the eye of the Zhai family, her grandson would have an unbridled future!

That was why Mother Wei did not want to pass up such a good opportunity and wanted Wei De to bring Wei Wei along.

After giving it some thought, Wei De said, "We can bring Xiao Wei along, but we have to bring Jiajia as well." If they did not bring Jiajia along, he was afraid that the Zhai family would not even be willing to open the door for his family to enter and celebrate the new year together.

Mother Wei thought that her grandson was the best kid in the world and that there was no way anyone would dislike him. But Wei De was still rational and knew that the Zhai family would take a different view toward Wei Wei. As such, he knew that such self-infatuation and confidence would come back to bite him. It was better to remain calm at times like these. Only then would he be able to fulfill his goals and reach the greatest height.

Wei De was not Mother Wei and was clear that the Zhai family's door might not even be open to them if they did not bring his daughter along. Up until now, the only person that the Zhai family disliked was himself. They still treated their granddaughter, Jiajia, very well. Besides, it would make no sense for him to bring his 'nephew' without bringing his daughter along.

It had not been easy for Wei De to come this far, and he was not going to allow such a small error to obliterate his existence in front of the Zhai family. If he exposed everything, his efforts over the last ten years would have been in naught.

His 'nephew' was important, but his future was even more so. Only if he was in a stable position and had connections would he be able to help Wei Wei become a second-generation official and have a smooth journey. Besides, Wei Wei was still young. There was no need to rush into certain matters. His own affairs took precedence.

Hearing that her grandson would not be able to go over and only that money-wasting granddaughter would, Mother Wei was upset. Fortunately, Mother Wei listened to whatever her son said when it came to important decisions. There was not a single person she knew that was more capable than her son. It was her son who had allowed the family to live such a comfortable life and let her live the life of a rich old lady, like she had seen on television.

“All right, I’ll listen to you. You can take Xiao Wei along next time when you get the chance. Ah De, don’t forget about Xiao Wei. He’s our Wei family’s only hope. You have to help him.”

Sigh. She did not know whether it was a good thing that her son had found the Zhai family as his in-laws. Now that he was already their son-in-law, shouldn’t the Zhai family do all they could to push him up through the ranks? Once Ah De was in a good position, they could handle Xiao Wei’s matter on their own.

She could not understand why the Zhai family was being so petty and stubborn, refusing to help her son. They were all a family now that Zhai Hua had married their son. After all these years, her son was still a mere company commander. She had always known that her son’s goal was to become a regiment commander.

“Okay.” Wei De was pleased that his mother was no longer going to kick up a fuss. Only when New Year’s Eve was almost over did Wei De tell Zhai Hua. “Have you bought new clothes for Jiajia for the new year? Don’t save on it. Get Jiajia a few more sets of clothes. I’ll send you guys down to Qingshui Town tomorrow for a few days so that Jiajia can spend some time with your parents.”

Zhai Hua looked at Wei De. “Are you serious? Have you talked to your mom about this?”

“Yes, does my mom look like such an unreasonable person? Jiajia has been spending time with her all these years. It’s rare that she’s getting the chance to spend some time with your family during the new year. Of course she’ll agree to it.” Wei De was unhappy. His mom had always been rather reasonable, and he had always been obedient to her.

Zhai Hua sneered but remained silent. That was only natural. The one her mother-in-law loved the most was not Jiajia but Xiao Wei.

Chapter 1836: Not His Biological Mother

Of course her mother-in-law would not mind since she was only bringing Jiajia along, and not Xiao Wei. “We’re bringing only Jiajia?” Zhai Hua was clear about the Wei family’s intentions.

An unmarried daughter had given birth to a son out of wedlock. The Wei family had been rather funny. Even now that Wei De was already a company commander, they had never thought of finding that irresponsible father of Wei Wei to give him a complete family. Instead, they had excitedly taken Wei Wei, who was the son of some unknown man, as the grandson of the Wei family and had even treated Wei Wei better than Jiajia.

All these years, Zhai Hua had accumulated quite a lot of pent-up anger.

It was exactly because of how much the Wei family adored Wei Wei that Zhai Hua knew that the Wei family would stop at nothing as long as it benefitted Wei Wei. No matter how shameless they had to be, they would still do it for Wei Wei’s sake.

The Zhai family’s background was simply too enticing. There was no way the Wei family would be able to control themselves and not let Wei Wei try to get connected with the Zhai family. Thankfully, Zhai Hua could rest assured about this.

Even after Wei De had married her, all the Zhai family had done was help Wei De get into the position of a company commander. Wei Wei? There was no way the Zhai family would be willing to help him out. If Wei Wei really wanted to get into the military, he had to strive hard for it. There was no way the Zhai family would interfere.

In that way, even though Zhai Hua had a clear idea about what the Wei family was up to, she had never expressed any opinions. She knew that the Zhai family would never agree to it. If she were to disagree with the Wei family, she would be ostracized by her mother-in-law for several days. It was all right for her to be treated in this manner, but Zhai Hua was not going to let her daughter, Jiajia, be implicated and be ostracized as well.

“You’re indeed Xiao Wei’s good aunt.” Wei De was overjoyed that Zhai Hua had taken the initiative to talk about Wei Wei. Because the Zhai family had not completely accepted him as a son-in-law, Wei De had rationally decided not to bring Wei Wei along. But Zhai Hua was different. Zhai Hua was the daughter of the Zhai family, a precious gem in the Zhai family’s eyes, after all.

If Zhai Hua was the one who decided to bring Wei Wei along, the Zhai family would have to endure it even if they were unhappy about it. If they could not do so, their anger would be directed at Zhai

Hua anyway. There was no way he would be implicated in the matter. After all, he had gotten an opportunity recently. As long as the Zhai family was willing to help him out, he would be promoted to a deputy battalion commander and would be one step closer to becoming a regiment commander.

“Do you mean that you want to bring Xiao Wei along as well?”

“No.” Zhai Hua rolled her eyes. Did he really think she was that same fool she had been ten years ago? “I’m just curious because you didn’t mention Wei Wei this time. Our whole family knows just how much emphasis you and your mom place on Wei Wei. Since you’ve discussed it with your mom and have decided not to bring Wei Wei along this time, I’ll definitely respect your decision.”

When she was at home, Jiajia did not always get things that Wei Wei had. This time, Jiajia had the chance to go to the Zhai family’s house, while Wei Wei did not. It would definitely help sort out some of her daughter’s feelings.

“Neither of us feels that it’s unsuitable for Xiao Wei to go. We’re just afraid that your parents might be unhappy seeing Wei Wei around. Of course, if you’re willing to speak well of Xiao Wei in front of your parents, we can definitely bring Xiao Wei along.” At this moment, Wei De had the urge to call Wei Wei over to cajole Zhai Hua.

“I think that you’re both right. My parents will definitely be unhappy seeing Xiao Wei. It’s the new year. Let’s not do something that will anger my parents. If we’re going to anger them, we might as well spend the new year at home ourselves.” Zhai Hua was no fool and was not going to take the bait.

When she had first met Wei Wei, Zhai Hua had treated him well. But later on, he had been pampered by the Wei family so much that he became a bully. The moment Jiajia was born, he was so envious of Jiajia that he started bullying her.

Before Jiajia had started on solids, she had not been able to speak yet and was always crying. Zhai Hua had been worried and had thus sent Jiajia to the hospital for a thorough examination. The doctor who examined Jiajia said that Jiajia was in good health. It was just that the young nurse had found some bruises on Jiajia’s body when she had undressed her. Those marks looked like they were from pinches, but the prints were so small that they could not have been an adult’s.

Afterward, Zhai Hua had even caught Wei Wei right in the act of pinching Jiajia. It was then that Zhai Hua had decided to give up her passion for the military to take care of her daughter.

Not only was the Wei family aware of Wei Wei bullying Jiajia, but Mother Wei had even defended Wei Wei by saying that it was because Wei Wei loved his younger sister so much that he was touching her. She was basically saying that it was only because Wei Wei had been unable to control his strength that he had accidentally hurt Jiajia. Children were unaware of their own strengths, after all.

Although many years had passed since that incident, Zhai Hua had never once forgotten about it as a mother. From then on, Zhai Hua's attitude toward Wei Wei underwent a complete change, and she never took the initiative to interfere in Wei Wei's matters. It was always Wei De who dealt with any matters regarding Wei Wei. Even if Wei De asked for her help, she would always push the responsibility away.

When Wei Wei grew a little older and understood what was going on around him, he gradually realized that the person who ruled the family might be his grandma, but the most powerful and impressive person in the family was actually his aunt, Zhai Hua. However, Zhai Hua refused to accept Wei Wei's flattery at this point in time.

Now that Wei De was praising Zhai Hua as Wei Wei's good aunt and that she did everything with Wei Wei in mind, Zhai Hua refused to accept it. She would have to put in a tremendous amount of effort to be worthy of that praise.

She was still in the right state of mind. There was no way she was going to accept such flattery.

"You're still angry at Xiao Wei. No wonder Xiao Wei told me that his aunt doesn't like him." Wei De's head hurt. It did not mean that he had forgotten about it just because he had not mentioned it.

Xiao Wei had truly been spoiled by his mom. Just because Zhai Hua had turned all her attention to Jiajia the moment the latter was born and no longer treated him as well as she did before, he had been upset and had bullied Jiajia. From then on, Zhai Hua had never bothered about Xiao Wei.

When he first brought Xiao Wei to Ping Cheng, Zhai Hua had been the one to arrange for Xiao Wei to attend kindergarten. From then on, Zhai Hua refused to help him anymore. Although Xiao Wei was not attending a terrible school, it was much worse than he had expected.

He had not treasured it while he was young. Now that he was older and knew how much of an impact his school would have on his future, it was too late. Zhai Hua no longer cared about Xiao Wei and had turned her attention to Jiajia alone.

“You know very well that I’m only his aunt, not his biological mother. Isn’t it normal for me to dislike him for bullying Jiajia? To me, he can’t compare to Jiajia. Even his biological father doesn’t like him and doesn’t want to be with his mom. It’s even more normal that I don’t like him.” The man who fathered Wei Wei had abandoned him so mercilessly. Not to mention how Wei Wei had once bullied her daughter.

Chapter 1837: Hit Me?

Wei De’s expression changed because of Zhai Hua’s words. “You’ve gone too far in saying that. Don’t you know how sensitive Xiao Wei has been because he doesn’t have a father? Don’t you dare say such a thing in front of Xiao Wei. He’ll be hurt! Xiao Wei was young and insensible in the past, but he’s admitted his mistake. As an elder, don’t you think that you should give Xiao Wei a chance to correct his mistake? Can you forgive Xiao Wei? He really likes you.” And he really needed his aunt’s help as well.

Zhai Hua sat straight up and the coldness in her expression was even clearer. “Why didn’t I see you telling your mom these things? Your mom treats Wei Wei well and cares more about Wei Wei. If I don’t favor Jiajia, I’m afraid that she might be hurt.”

There were so many people who loved and adored Wei Wei. They did not need another one to adore him. But apart from her, there was no one else who loved Jiajia, so it was only natural for her to reserve all her love for her daughter. Naturally, that would also mean that she had no extra time to care about Wei Wei.

“You...” Wei De had nothing to say at the mention of his mom. “Yes, it’s true that my mom cares more about Wei Wei, but isn’t that because Wei Wei is her grandson? She’s advanced in age. Why are you being so petty with her? Don’t you know to respect your elders and love your juniors? You’ve done neither.”

“Wei De, do you mean that one may steal a horse while another can’t even look over a hedge? Your mom is an old foggy and treats Wei Wei better than Jiajia. Not only do you not feel bad for Jiajia, but you’re even asking me to respect your mom and not take issue with that? All right, I won’t. I can’t be bothered to talk to you guys. Do you think I’m doing something wrong by treating my daughter well and not wanting to love a child who doesn’t have a father? Wei Wei, how can you be so shameless? Do you really think that I’ll only be a good daughter-in-law if I think about the Wei family in everything that I do and have my world revolve around your family?”

Did he really think that she had no temper just because she had not exploded?

Thinking about how aggrieved Jiajia had been because of the Wei family and how Jiajia had always been exceptionally quiet and refused to speak or smile in front of the Wei family, Zhai Hua's heart ached.

Whose fault was it that her daughter was not close to her grandma at all? Was it not that old woman's fault? As a father, Wei De had never once been on Jiajia's side to comfort her. Instead, he always told Jiajia not to hold it against her grandma because of her age and that she had to be filial to her grandma.

Why should she?

"Wei De, don't think I don't know anything just because I haven't said anything. Have you forgotten about how angry your mom was when I bought this house to give Jiajia a better living environment? Because of that, you were humiliated in the army and even threw a tantrum at me. In the eyes of your Wei family, a child without a father like Wei Wei is more important than Jiajia and is better than Jiajia in every way. Since you guys have made Wei Wei into a little emperor, what's wrong with me spoiling Jiajia like a princess? Why? Will you only be happy only if I kneel before Wei Wei and sacrifice everything to be his slave? Do you guys really think that you're the royal family?"

Recalling what the Wei family had done over the years, Zhai Hua truly thought that the family was insane!

"Are you happy now?" Wei Wei was not deaf. Quite on the contrary, his ears were rather sharp. Wei Wei, who was in high school, had overheard his aunt speak ill of him, and his self-esteem had been hurt badly. He looked at Jiajia with reddened eyes. "Yes, I might not have a father. You have a father and a mother, a complete family. You have a much more blissful life than me, so why can't auntie care a little more about me?"

Was it because he had bullied Jiajia when he was young and insensible? His aunt was so petty! It had been more than ten years since that incident, but she was still speaking about him in this manner! She did not think that he was part of her family!

He hated this family to the guts and could not wait to go back to his grandparents. Apart from his mom, only his grandma loved him the most. His uncle said that he loved him like a father would, but he was only an uncle, after all. He could not compare to a real father.

Jiajia felt no better than Wei Wei, but in the face of Wei Wei's accusations, she was not going to back down. "Of course I'm happy. I'm proud to have a mom who loves me with all her heart. It's all right that grandma and grandpa don't like me or that Dad favors you. I still have the best mom in the world. I don't care about anything else. I can give them all to you since you don't have a father!"

Now that both Jiajia and Wei Wei had grown up, the conflict between the two of them had only intensified.

Jiajia disliked Wei Wei and had never had an amicable relationship with him from the start. But she had always known that her mom loved her and treated her well. Because she had heard her mother's words firsthand, Jiajia was much more comforted.

Because of her family's influence, Jiajia was still aware of some practical problems in real life. Jiajia knew that her dad had only been promoted to the rank of a company commander because he had married her mom. Wei Wei had his uncle, and his uncle treated him well. But she had her uncle too. She had heard that her uncle was a chief and that even her dad was afraid to meet her uncle. Her grandpa was even more impressive and was an old chief.

Jiajia had never said anything, but she had always taken whatever she had heard to heart. As such, Jiajia felt that the Wei family was trying to take advantage of the Zhai family. Her dad had married her mom with ulterior motives because her mom was a daughter of the Zhai family.

Wei Wei yearned to get some affection from her mom not because he truly liked his aunt but because her mom was a daughter of the Zhai family. As long as her mom was willing to put some effort into helping Wei Wei, he would be able to study in a better school and would have a better future. He might even get the chance to study abroad.

No one else in the Wei family could provide him with such a bright future apart from her mom. What Wei Wei cared about was not his aunt's love and concern. It was the unbridled future that his capable aunt could provide him with that he was concerned about.

Jiajia was not of age yet but had gradually matured because of the cruel reality around her. She was not naive or a helpless romantic like usual junior high school girls were.

"You!" Wei Wei had not expected that his words would not evoke sympathy or comfort from Jiajia. In fact, Jiajia had said the exact same thing her mom had. Hearing her call him a fatherless child made Wei Wei so infuriated that he wanted to punch Jiajia straight in the face.

Jiajia knew that Wei Wei had been trained by Wei De since he was young and his martial arts skills were rather decent. That was why no one dared to provoke Wei Wei in school. “Why? Do you want to hit me? I dare you to touch me!”

Chapter 1838: No Need to Worry

“Do you believe that I’ll get you expelled from your high school if you so much as touch a strand of my hair? If you want to benefit from my mom, you’d better act honestly and humbly in front of me. I can’t believe you’re trying to show off in front of me. Have you forgotten that this is my mom’s house and not your grandma’s?”

1

That’s right. It was ‘her mother’ and ‘his grandma’. In Jiajia’s heart, Mother Wei was Wei Wei’s grandma, not hers.

“Why are you speaking to your brother like that?” Wei De came out upon hearing how Jiajia was speaking to Wei Wei. Even he wanted to slap his daughter. Jiajia was indeed Zhai Hua’s daughter. The way she spoke was exactly the same as Zhai Hua!

But Zhai Hua supported her daughter. It did not matter that no one else in the world loved Jiajia. Zhai Hua’s love was for Jiajia alone. “Wei Wei, how can you upset your sister as a brother? If you can’t get along with Jiajia, then you’re not welcome here. You can behave however you like in the Wei family’s house. That’s your business. But not here in my house!”

“Zhai Hua, you’re too much! How can you say that to a child?” Wei De’s face darkened. No wonder Jiajia dared to say such things to Xiao Wei. Zhai Hua had taught her to do so.

Zhai Hua stood by her daughter’s side, allowing her daughter to hold her hand. Without any fear, she stared right back at Wei De. “What’s wrong with what I said? I think I spoke the truth. If you aren’t used to what I said to Wei De, you can take everything that I just said. I’ve left some things unsaid not because I’m unwilling to admit that I was young and foolish but for the sake of everyone. Wei De, if you’re really upset and feel that you can’t stay here, you should just return to the Wei family’s house with Wei Wei. It’s true that you’re more like a family with Wei Wei. Neither Jiajia nor I am part of your family.”

Her words caused Jiajia to cling to Zhai Hua even more closely.

“You’re already at this age. Jiajia already knows about everything. Even if you’re not frustrated about arguing about Wei Wei all day, I am. Since we can’t seem to get along, let’s not live together anymore. It’s true that it’s difficult to get divorced in the military, but you know my family’s situation too. No matter how difficult it is, we’ll get it done. Don’t worry. Our divorce won’t have an impact on your position as a company commander. You won’t have to take any responsibilities. The Zhai family will take care of the divorce.”

1

“...” Wei De, who had originally intended on kicking up a huge fuss suddenly mellowed at the mention of a divorce. It was true that his position as a company commander would not be affected, but a divorce would mean that he would never be promoted to a deputy battalion commander, battalion commander, or a regiment commander.

In the short run, his divorce from Zhai Hua might not have any impact on his position as a company commander, but it was hard to say what would happen in the long run.

So there was no way Wei De would be willing to divorce Zhai Hua. It was not Zhai Hua that he would miss but the career that he would be able to get because of Zhai Hua. “Hua Hua, we’ve been married for such a long time, and Jiajia is also grown up. How could you talk about divorce in front of our kids? Aren’t you afraid that you’ll scare Jiajia? I’m sure you know how Xiao Wei was bullied while growing up for having no father. Do you want Jiajia to be bullied like that too? Jiajia is my only daughter. If I don’t love Jiajia, who could I possibly love? I can’t bear for her to go through so much suffering!”

Wei Wei, who had been used as a comparison, felt as though someone had stabbed him multiple times, and he was now bleeding uncontrollably. Wei Wei’s face turned red as he burst out of the door. Wei Jiajia was right. This was her home, not his. His home was with his grandma. In the future, he would never visit his uncle’s house anymore to avoid hearing such things about himself.

“Xiao Wei!” Wei De could not let Wei Wei return home alone. Mother Wei’s house was quite a distance away. Even though Wei Wei could take public transport alone, Wei De had always fetched Wei Wei from Mother Wei’s house and sent him home afterward.

Besides, Wei De's feelings toward Wei Wei were not purely those of an uncle toward a nephew. It was just that it was better to leave that unsaid. "Look what you've done! Why did you have to hurt his heart? He won't go since you said so! I'm worried about Xiao Wei going home alone. I'll send him back."

Grabbing his car keys, Wei De rushed out of the house.

Zhai Hua was not the least bit surprised that Wei De was only concerned about whether Wei Wei had been hurt at this moment. He had never thought about Jiajia's feelings. Hugging her daughter's frail body, Zhai Hua felt utterly guilty. "Jiajia, it's Mom's fault."

She should never have ignored her family's advice at that time and naively married Wei De, certain that Wei De would give her happiness. It was fine that Wei De had not been able to give her happiness, but why did he have to treat Jiajia in this manner? Was someone else's son really more important than his own daughter?

Jiajia sniffled. She was already used to this. "Mom, do you think grandpa and your family will like me?" Her paternal grandma and her family did not like her, but she still had her maternal grandparents. "Will they think that I'm a good kid now that we're going to visit them?"

"Yes, I'm sure they will." Zhai Hua kissed her daughter's face. "You know, if not for... Your grandparents love you very much and have always wanted to see you. They want to have you by their sides. It's just that you're still studying and your studies are important. We couldn't do it in the past, but now that your grandparents are in Ping Cheng, Mom will bring you over to celebrate the new year with them."

Zhai Hua had no doubt that her parents would genuinely love Jiajia. She knew that the Zhai family would definitely provide Jiajia with the love and affection she craved.

"Mom, I want to meet grandpa and grandma as soon as possible. I'm already on vacation. Can we meet them tomorrow?"

"All right, we'll go over tomorrow. I'll send you over. I've already helped you pack your clothes into the luggage in your room. Jiajia, would you be willing if your grandparents want to bring you to the capital to study?" She did not believe a single word of Wei De now.

For her daughter's future, she should not keep her daughter by her side. It might be better for her parents to bring her daughter to the capital. She was willing to do whatever was best for her daughter.

"Mom, will you go too?" Jiajia was hesitant. It was her first time, after all, so it was only natural that she felt uneasy.

Zhai Hua hugged her daughter tightly within her embrace. "Don't worry about it. It's still too early to be thinking about it. There's no hurry to make a decision. Go to bed early tonight so that you'll have enough energy to meet your grandparents tomorrow. Oh, your uncle is injured, so remember not to bother him too much." Zhai Hua had not forgotten about Zhai Sheng's injury.

Before her marriage, Zhai Hua had been closest to Zhai Sheng.

Chapter 1839: Understanding

But in the end, the relationship between the siblings had staled because of Wei De's appearance. For so many years, Zhai Hua had never once admitted defeat to Zhai Sheng. Even now that she knew that Zhai Sheng was recuperating in the Zhai family's old villa, she had not put down her pride to visit Zhai Sheng.

If not for her daughter as an excuse this time, Zhai Hua might never have mustered up the courage to face her family again.

People were often like that. People who were typically bold and courageous often became hesitant and indecisive when it came to official matters.

"Yes." Jiajia's mood improved now that she knew she was about to meet her grandparents. Upon returning to her room, she saw that her luggage had indeed been filled. Her mom had packed all her clothes on her behalf. Thus, Jiajia simply washed up, brushed her teeth, and went to bed. She knew that she would finally be meeting relatives who were not the Wei family when she awoke the next day.

Although there was finally peace with Jiajia and Zhai Hua, there was chaos over on the Wei family's side.

Wei De had run closely behind Wei Wei the moment he ran out. He had been afraid that Wei Wei would run too quickly and that he would not be able to catch up with Wei Wei. But when he drove out of the gate, he saw Wei Wei waiting for him.

Wei De heaved a sigh of relief and opened the door for Wei Wei. “You rascal! You have such a hot temper! Do you know how worried I was when you ran out without a word? I’m glad you still have some conscience to wait here for me.”

It was actually not because of his conscience but his slyness. He had expected Wei De to leave Jiajia and Zhai Hua to chase after him. It was not as though something like that had not happened in the past. Every time this happened, Wei Wei felt as though he had won against Jiajia, who had a father and a mother, and had a better life than her.

So what if she had a father? When anything happened to him, his uncle would abandon his daughter to chase after him anyway.

“Uncle, you’re so good to me. How nice it would be if you were my dad.” Wei Wei was not only hurt but also angry because he had always been mocked and ridiculed for being fatherless. Today, it had been his aunt, who held the highest position in their family, who had said such a thing. Wei Wei felt that he was being looked down on.

He wanted a father too. It was not as though he had chosen to be fatherless. “Just how heartless is my father. You and grandma have always been telling me that I’m an outstanding kid, but my dad doesn’t want me. Uncle, I hate my dad. If he ever comes to acknowledge me as his son in the future, I’ll definitely punch him. You’ll have to save me then.”

Wei Wei knew that it was wrong to beat other people up. If he went too far, he would even have to go to jail. But that did not matter since he had a company commander as his uncle. At that time, his uncle could even be a regiment commander! As long as no one died, it would not be difficult for his uncle to save him from jail.

Life was blissful as a second-generation official.

Upon hearing Wei Wei’s hatred toward his father, Wei De’s face subconsciously scrunched up. “Do you really hate your dad that much? Perhaps your dad has his own difficulties and has never given up on you. On the contrary, he might love you very much. Maybe he’s done everything for your good.”

Wei Wei laughed dryly. "It's okay, uncle. You've been trying to comfort me with these words for years. Do you really think I'm still a three-year-old child who will be appeased by these words? Why haven't I seen him comfort or love me when other children are ridiculing me for being fatherless? Forget it. If I'm fatherless, then so be it. In my heart, you're my father."

If his uncle became his father and was good to only him, then Jiajia would not have a father. So what if he was fatherless? He could snatch someone else's father to become his own and laugh at someone who had laughed at him!

Humph! Who was more pitiful in that case?

Wei De did not know whether to laugh or cry at Wei Wei's words. Wei Wei was still young, after all, and he was only saying such things out of spite. As such, there were some truths that he still had to hide from Wei Wei for the time being. Otherwise, he would have worked hard for nothing all this while. Only by persisting in this moment would Wei Wei have a more stable and secure future.

For a better future, it was better for Wei Wei to suffer a little now. He still had to keep some secrets to himself. Wei Wei was still young and impulsive. If Wei Wei knew who his biological father was and spilled this secret, there would be no way to salvage the situation.

Having been married for such a long time, Wei De had changed, and so had Zhai Hua. The couple knew very well how the other had changed. Wei De no longer tried to coax Zhai Hua as he had done when they had been dating, and Zhai Hua was no longer as innocent and easily coaxed or appeased as she had been in the past. The relationship between the couple had staled a long time ago, and they were now treading on thin ice. With any more agitation, Zhai Hua's mention of divorce would no longer be a mere warning but reality.

Wei De sighed. Before reaching his goals, he would have to spend some time and effort in trying to cajole Zhai Hua. Recently, he had been too self-absorbed and had forgotten how to woo Zhai Hua carefully and meticulously. That was why he had not been able to resolve the issue of Wei De's schooling.

"Xiao Wei, you're all grown up. I know that you understand quite a lot. It's just that you've been used to your grandma spoiling and pampering you that you think that your aunt should treat you well because you're the only son in the Wei family. Apart from your grandma and your parents, it's only natural that no one else will treat you well. Don't listen too much to your grandma. Your aunt has quite a fierce temper. It means nothing even if your grandma adores you to death. It'll be better for you to get your aunt to love you and take care of you like her own son. Xiao Wei, you still have a chance to do so now. Don't regret not grabbing this opportunity in the future!"

As long as Xiao Wei coaxed Zhai Hua well, he could have whatever he wanted in the future. It was true that his relationship with Zhai Hua was a little still and that it was difficult for him to get Zhai Hua to listen to him now.

If he were to anger Zhai Hua again because of Xiao Wei, he might face some trouble becoming a deputy battalion commander, let alone solving the issue of Xiao Wei's schooling. Of course, if Xiao Wei managed to gain Zhai Hua's affection through his own efforts, there would be no such troubles. "Xiao Wei, you're smart. I'm sure you know exactly what to do. Stop quarreling with Jiajia in the future. Even if you win an argument with Jiajia, the only one at a disadvantage is you." Xiao Wei should understand such a principle.

He could only suck up to an aunt like Zhai Hua. She was certainly not someone he could offend.

Chapter 1840: Eavesdropped

Wei Wei, who was already in high school, didn't need to be taught to understand. After all, there were so many students in school. Wei Wei had often heard topics such as 'how much money my dad earns' and 'what kind of official my dad is' being discussed. Wei Wei realized that as long as he mentioned his aunt, all the students would shut up. Thus, he understood that Zhai Hua was a capable woman.

It was just that time couldn't be turned back. He was willing to let bygones be bygones, but his aunt disagreed. "I have tried, but my aunt doesn't like me. I apologized to her, but she didn't accept it." Didn't he pinch Jiajia when he was young and insensible? How many years ago was that? But his aunt still remembered it until today. No wonder his grandma didn't like his aunt and despised her.

"I've said it before. It depends on how capable you are for your aunt to reaccept you and treat you as her son again. If you make it, you'll lead a happier and easier life than me in the future. If you don't, I'm afraid you won't be able to escape from tasting the bitterness I experienced back when I was young." If he couldn't be promoted to the regiment commander's position, he wouldn't be able to make a good arrangement for Xiao Wei in the future.

Wei Wei felt distressed. "Okay, I'll think of ways again to see how I can resolve the conflict between me and Jiajia. Aunt cares about Jiajia the most. If Jiajia is willing to treat me as a biological brother, I think aunt wouldn't treat me too harshly."

Sigh. He didn't understand it. His grandma had taught him since he was a child that girls weren't valuable and that Jiajia, who was a money-losing daughter, wasn't as important as him. Why was it that when he grew up, he had to please a girl instead?

Indeed, grandsons or granddaughters weren't important. What was important was to have good parents!

After Wei De sent Wei Wei off, he didn't leave immediately. Instead, he pulled Mother Wei into the room for a chat. "Mom, do you still want the best for me and Xiao Wei?"

"Of course." She wanted this even in her dreams. "If I don't, would I let you marry Zhai Hua, that old woman whom no one wanted, and cause Xiao Wei to be a fatherless child since young? Do you know how many times Xiao Wei had fought with others as they had laughed at him for being fatherless?"

Her grandson had really suffered huge grievances.

Wei Wei, who coincidentally came over to find Mother Wei, was about to open the door when he heard Mother Wei's words. In the Wei family, Wei Wei had the biggest say. He never had to knock on anyone's door upon entering. This habit was naturally formed because of Mother Wei.

Wei Wei was stunned. Didn't grandma say that his mother had an affair with a man outside and then gave birth to him? Why did his grandma's words sound like he had known who his father was all along?

"Mom, don't say such words often in the future. If anyone hears them, there will be trouble. Do you know that Zhai Hua has always been angry that you only treat Xiao Wei well and completely ignored Jiajia? She even mentioned that she wanted a divorce today." Wei De had a headache. If it was possible, he didn't want anyone to mention his real relationship with Wei Wei.

His 'sister' was honest. Even if she was resented and hated by Wei Wei, she never mentioned the topic of 'father' in front of the children. Instead, in order to make him feel guiltier toward Wei Wei, his mom had mentioned this matter from time to time to stimulate him.

If he didn't do so back then, it would be a problem for him to become a platoon leader today, let alone a company commander. Who knows? He might even be forced to retire early because of his poor performance. How then would the Wei family be able to lead a good life today, and how would his mom be able to become an old privileged woman?

This topic was a taboo in their Wei family. His mom was really confused.

Mother Wei looked embarrassed. "I didn't say it to anyone outside. Aren't we at our own house where there are only the both of us? I feel wronged for Xiao Wei. If there were others around, I wouldn't have mentioned this." She wasn't a fool.

"Wait a minute. You said that Zhai Hua wants to divorce you. How thick-skinned is she to mention that to you? Even if someone should mention it, it should be you! If you hadn't married her back then, who else could she have married given her age? Now that she's married and has children, she wouldn't be able to find another man after getting a divorce. She wants to divorce? Is she insane?" Once Mother Wei started speaking, she degraded Zhai Hua completely. It was as if Wei De was no different from a garbage collector when he married Zhai Hua back then.

Wei De rubbed his temples and sat down. "Okay, Mom. Don't use this set of rhetoric in front of others. Back then, if I didn't pretend to be a grandson, how would I pursue Zhai Hua successfully? The women from the Zhai family aren't eager to get married. As long as the Zhai family is willing, Zhai Hua could get married a third or fourth time, let alone a second time. The men she finds might even be stronger than me."

This was the truth. This was the benefit of having power!

As such, he wasn't willing to take this lying down and admit defeat. In this lifetime, he had such a huge difference with Zhai Hua. He had to pretend to be a grandson to marry Zhai Hua. Regardless of the number of times Zhai Hua was married, someone would still want her. How unfair was this reality?

He had already experienced such a lifestyle. He didn't want his son or his son's son to be the same as him, living without dignity and face. To sacrifice his generation so that the generations after would lead a good life, Wei De felt that everything he had suffered was worth it.

After hearing what her son said, Mother Wei didn't feel good in her heart. How good was her son? Compared to others, especially with Zhai Hua, he was only lacking in terms of family background. Her wonderful son was ruined by an old woman like Zhai Hua, but the Zhai family wasn't grateful and even bullied Ah De. On what basis? That the Zhai family had a high status?

If their family had a high status as well, that old woman from the Zhai family would just be waiting to die alone. Hadn't she relied on the Zhai family's status at her age as well? Did she really think that she was an eighteen-year-old young lady whom everyone was vying for?

“Okay, since you don't like to listen, I won't say it anymore. As long as you and Xiao Wei lead a good life in the future, I don't have any other expectations in this lifetime. You and Xiao Wei are the most important people in my life. Nothing is more important than you father-and-son pair being well. Starting today, if I see Zhai Hua in the future, I'll treat her and Jiajia better. I'll treat that mother-and-daughter pair like ancestors to coax them. Will that do?”

As long as she did this, the Zhai family would be willing to return like for like and treat her son and grandson better. If that was the case, it wasn't impossible for her to treat Zhai Hua and her daughter the same way. What she wanted was reciprocity. They could continue to be relatives if everyone was more polite with one another.

The Zhai family treated her son well. She would treat the Zhai family's daughter well. The logic was that simple.

“Oh...” Wei Wei was stunned. What did his grandma's word mean? What was meant by ‘you father-and-son pair’?