

RTAMM 1971

Chapter 1971: Child

Zhai Sheng did not reply but his expression revealed everything.

Qi Minlan also saw that Qiao Nan seemed to have no reaction to this piece of news as though she had already known all about it. Qi Minlan felt extremely embarrassed for both herself and Qiu Chenxi. She could not understand why Zhai Sheng would tell her daughter's love rival about such a thing since they had been husband and wife once.

No wonder this woman dared to fight against Chenxi for a man even though she was merely a caretaker. Because she knew of Chenxi's past, she had the right to be confident even though she was only a caretaker.

In an instant, tears started streaming down Qi Minlan's face. "I'm a mother and you should know that I don't have many years left to live. Can we find somewhere to sit down and have a chat? I'm old and my legs aren't strong anymore. I can't stand for long."

No matter how embarrassing it was, Qi Minlan had no choice but to press on. Children were debts, and for the sake of her daughter's happiness, Qi Minlan had no other choice.

Zhai Sheng looked at Qiao Nan. Seeing that Qiao Nan did not refuse, Zhai Sheng then said, "Alright, then come on in. Anyway, we'll be moving tomorrow." Nan Nan would not be living here in the future. There would be no problem letting Qi Minlan in for a chat.

The way Zhai Sheng treated Qiao Nan as the center of his world and the way he listened to her made Qi Minlan extremely sour and heartbroken that she had lost such a good son-in-law. She had always known that the men of the Zhai family were good men who would be much more considerate toward their partners than other men.

Initially, as long as Chenxi had been intent on living an honest life, this happiness should have been her daughter's.

After entering the house, Qiao Nan prepared three cups of warm water and did not prepare any tea for Qi Minlan. Since her guest did not mean well, there was no point in Qiao Nan treating Qi Minlan as a revered guest.

Qi Minlan held the warm cup in her hands but her heart was cold. "Zhai Sheng, how much do you know about Chenxi?" The conversation had already been started, and Qi Minlan's initial plan had been ruined. As such, she could only choose another path.

"What I know is naturally more than what you want to hide from me." Zhai Sheng had been tired of dealing with Qiu Chenxi and Qi Minlan since a long time ago. "All these years, my parents have been quite worried about my second marriage. I'm sure your family is clear of that. After I marry Nan Nan, we'll have a child as soon as possible to fulfill my parent's dreams of being grandparents. It's Qiu Chenxi's second marriage, and I can't control the kind of man she finds. But if she really wants children, my suggestion is for her to adopt one or find a man with a child."

"..." Qi Minlan's face lost all color. She had truly not expected that Zhai Sheng had already found out about this fact that she had thought was well-hidden. "Zhai Sheng, if Chenxi was healthy and still fertile, would you—" not be so insistent on not wanting Chenxi to the point you wanted to get together with a caretaker?

"There's no such thing as 'if'. If we really want to talk about it, don't you think that my behavior during those three years of marriage is enough to prove my stance? In those three years, I was extremely irresponsible, unlike my usual self. My family has always taught me to take on responsibilities as a man, but do you know why I didn't do so after marrying Qiu Chenxi?"

Zhai Sheng talked to Qi Minlan about his three-year marriage to Qiu Chenxi for the first time. “That’s because I had no feelings for Qiu Chenxi. Before I got married, I made it clear to Qiu Chenxi that I didn’t like her and didn’t want to marry her. If she cared about her own happiness, she had better not come to our family. But she still chose to get married. After making that decision, I once again told her that I was a soldier, and with no foundation of feelings, the only thing I can promise her was that I would never cheat on her or betray her. At the same time, I didn’t think that I was responsible for her feelings or happiness.”

Before getting married, Zhai Sheng had already made himself clear and had told the Zhai family that he did not want to marry Qiu Chenxi.

But after finding out about this situation, Qiu Chenxi had taken the initiative to look for the Zhai family and had even convinced them that she would persuade Zhai Sheng otherwise. Since Qiu Chenxi was the one who chose that path, Zhai Sheng had simply fulfilled everything he had said before his marriage.

Zhai Sheng did not think for a moment that Qiu Chenxi had landed in this state because of him, and neither should he have to take responsibility for Qiu Chenxi’s happiness.

“My relationship with Qiu Chenxi before she did all those immoral acts was no better than it is now. Qi Minlan, if you really care about Qiu Chenxi’s happiness, I hope that you’ll let Qiu Chenxi know that there is no possibility between her and me. If she continues with her nonsense, the only thing she’ll be doing is wasting her own time. Her actions will not have any impact on my future happiness.”

Qiao Nan had been keeping mum the whole time, but she blushed at the last part of Zhai Sheng’s words. She understood what Zhai Sheng meant by his words: since Qiu Chenxi was barren, she should not try to disrupt his plans of having descendants.

Qiao Nan silently laughed at herself. She was probably overthinking it. How could that have been what Zhai Sheng meant?

Qi Minlan's eyes were red, and watching a seventy-year-old auntie cry was rather heart-wrenching and emotional. "So you know everything. Yes, Chenxi can't have children, but she's my daughter. No matter how wrong she is, I can't give up on her."

"But she's not my daughter. The moment she decided to give up on herself and decided to end our marriage, I already had nothing to do with her. Do you mean that I should lose my right to happiness for the sake of her happiness?" That was such a ridiculous idea that only Qiu Chenxi and Qi Minlan could come up with.

"As long as you're willing, there can be a perfect solution to this. Chenxi has been proud all her life. After getting divorced from you, those friends of hers haven't been good company. Just take it as though you're fulfilling a mother's wishes. Zhai Sheng, get remarried to Chenxi. I don't care about those three years and how you treated Chenxi. I won't even care about how the two of you get along after you get married, but Chenxi won't be as insensible and do those foolish things again, nor will she have too many demands on you. I know that it's about time for you to have your own child at this age. Both Chenxi and I agree on that. It's alright if you're unwilling to be with Chenxi. It doesn't matter who you choose to be with. Once you have a child, everything of the Zhai family will belong to that child. My only request is that this child must call Chenxi 'mom'."

Chapter 1972: Impossible

As Qi Minlan said that, she looked at Qiao Nan since her 'perfect plan' required Qiao Nan's agreement and cooperation. If Qiao Nan disagreed, Zhai Sheng would not agree to it either given how much he cared about her.

Thinking about her daughter's frail look and frequency of crying these days, Qi Minlan gritted her teeth and knelt down before Qiao Nan. "Miss Qiao, I know that it's very shameless of me to be saying this, but I have no other choice. Chenxi is my daughter. I have no other wishes but for her to be Zhai Sheng's wife in name. You guys can do whatever you want in private. Miss Qiao, I hope that you can fulfill the wish of someone who has one foot in the grave."

What Qi Minlan meant was that the person who married Zhai Sheng had to be Qiu Chenxi and that Qiu Chenxi would be Zhai Sheng's legal wife and the chief's wife. It did not matter if Zhai Sheng gave all of his love and affection to Qiao Nan in private.

At the very least, Qiu Chenxi would not be alone. If Qiao Nan were to give birth to Zhai Sheng's child, this child would simply have to address Qiu Chenxi as 'mom'. Apart from that, Qi Minlan did not care about how that child would interact with Qiao Nan, and neither would she make any other requests, much less ask that child to stay by Qiu Chenxi and be raised by Qiu Chenxi.

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In reality, before kneeling down, and even before Qiao Nan had called Zhai Sheng over, Qi Minlan had already thought of such a plan. She did not believe that Qiao Nan would not feel inferior getting married to Zhai Sheng with a background like hers.

Qiu Chenxi had already said that she could not give birth to children but wanted to have a child by her side, and this child had to be Zhai Sheng's, no less. If she were to adopt a child that had no relation to Zhai Sheng, Qiu Chenxi thought that it would be meaningless to raise that child. On the other hand, it would be different if she were to raise Zhai Sheng's biological child.

The one who raised a child was more important than the one who gave birth to the child, after all. As long as she held this child within her grasp and shared the same ideas as the child, she would still be able to live as the matriarch of the Zhai family and the mother of that child even if Zhai Sheng did not like her and did not have feelings for her.

Because of Qiu Chenxi's desires, Qi Minlan had finally come up with this solution after a long while. This child had to be Zhai Sheng's, but Zhai Sheng loved Qiao Nan. Thus, she could give Qiao Nan a sum of money. That way, Zhai Sheng could fulfill his wishes of being with Qiao Nan and she could make Qiao Nan have Zhai Sheng's child.

Chenxi might have such a plan but Qiao Nan did not. The way ordinary women thought was that as long as a man had only one son, all of the man's assets would immediately be his son's. Then, whatever belonged to her son would belong to her too. There was no difference in that.

She allowed Qiao Nan to have Zhai Sheng's child and promised that everything in the Zhai family would belong to that child. In that way, Qiao Nan would have no reason to refuse. Moreover, she would even give Qiao Nan a huge sum of money. After giving birth to the child, Qiao Nan could then take the money and move to a better place.

Yes, after Qiao Nan gave birth, she would have to leave. If Qiao Nan wanted her money, her requirement would be for Qiao Nan to never see the child again before he came of age.

Qi Minlan was worried that the child would no longer be on Qiu Chenxi's side if Qiao Nan were to meet the child often.

But Qi Minlan did not dare to say anything of that manner. She was begging Qiao Nan to leave Zhai Sheng so as to let her daughter take that place. Besides, looking at how much Zhai Sheng cared about Qiao Nan, Zhai Sheng might just get angry if Qiao Nan were to leave after giving birth to the child. Then, he might decide to only raise the child and not marry Qiu Chenxi, blaming Qiao Nan's departure on Qiu Chenxi. What would happen then?

Qi Minlan had no other choice and could only humble herself even more. Apart from being the chief's wife in name, Zhai Sheng could give everything else to Qiao Nan. Neither she nor Qiu Chenxi would care or try to stop him as long as Qiao Nan agreed to it and was willing to let them have their way.

Of course, Qiao Nan could not accept Qi Minlan kneeling before her. As such, the moment she saw Qi Minlan kneel down, Qiao Nan could not stop her, but she could at least move away from the direction Qi Minlan was facing. "Brother Zhai is right. Qiu Chenxi is indeed your daughter. Without a mother like this, there would never be a daughter like her."

Qiao Nan had already felt that what had happened in the Qiao family had been ridiculous enough. Who would have known that she had encountered an even more ridiculous thing today? What Qiao Nan could not understand was how her chances of encountering such bizarre situations were so high when others did not encounter these situations even once in their lives! "Brother Zhai is willing to marry me and the Zhai family has already accepted me. I can be the Zhai family's wife legally and publicly. Why should I become a mistress just because of your request?"

"Do you really think that only getting your daughter to be Mrs. Zhai in name is the biggest concession you're making? You seem to be forgetting that I can have everything that you're asking for. Why would I choose to give up being Mrs. Zhai to be a lowly mistress? How did you even come up with such an idea? How could you even bear to bring it up? Do you really think I'm retarded?"

What Qiao Nan wanted to say was that Qiu Chenxi and Qi Minlan were probably mentally unsound. Only a fool would agree to such a request.

Qi Minlan felt as though she had exhausted all of her remaining dignity by kneeling. She already had once step in the grave, but she had never knelt down before anyone but her parents and her ancestors. Today, however, she had kneeled down before a caretaker who was even younger than her own daughter. This was the greatest shame in Qi Minlan's life.

But she had no other choice since her daughter could not fight for herself. For the sake of her daughter's happiness, it did not matter even if she had to sacrifice a little of her own dignity. But who would have known that Qiao Nan wouldn't make way for her and had even said such humiliating words? Qi Minlan could no longer hold it in.

Qi Minlan looked at Qiao Nan sharply. "Miss Qiao, don't forget that you're only a caretaker. You should treat me with respect. Be careful that you're struck by lightning because of that attitude of yours!" Even without Qiu Qin's help, it would be easy for her to deal with Qiao Nan.

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She had wanted to have a discussion with Qiao Nan not because she was afraid of Qiao Nan, but because she did not want Zhai Sheng's impression of her daughter to get any worse, turning something that was almost impossible into truly impossible.

Chapter 1973: Ridiculous

If not for Zhai Sheng standing in the way, she could have finished off someone like Qiao Nan with her words.

If Qiao Nan thought that she could put on airs in front of her, she was horribly wrong.

"Natural disasters can't be avoided, but man-made ones can." Zhai Sheng's voice was low. "You've been living in Ping Cheng. Haven't you heard anything? Everything of the Qiu family has already been reclaimed by the state. Perhaps, you missed it because you made a trip down here today."

A starving camel is still bigger than a horse, but comparing her family's power with the Zhai family's was truly laughable.

He knew that Qiu Qin was dishonest, but he had never expected Qiu Qin to be dishonest to such an extent. If they really wanted to find out about everything that Qiu Qin had done, merely taking away his privileges as an old cadre was already letting him off easily. As long as they had evidence of the money that Qiu Qin had been bribed with and embezzled, it did not mean that Qiu Qin could escape punishment just because he had spent that sum of money.

In short, the government had confiscated everything that Qiu Qin owned, including that large house Qi Minlan had been living in.

People? Qi Minlan would never find anyone willing to 'help' her. Rats leave a sinking ship, after all. Everyone would try their best to avoid the Qiu family as much as possible for fear that they might be misunderstood for having been involved in the Qiu family's shady dealings due to their close relationship. Helping the Qiu family? They were already kind enough by not treating the Qiu family as jinxes.

The Qiu family had lost its power and its assets had been confiscated. That meant that Qi Minlan had neither power nor money. Was it not ridiculous how a seventy-year-old old lady was talking about torturing a forty-year-old junior to death?

Qi Minlan shuddered. "What do you mean?"

"What do I mean? If you don't understand what I'm saying, I wouldn't mind you making a call to check on the Qiu family's situation. Qiu Chenxi should still be in Ping Cheng, so she should be able to tell you about the situation." When Nan Nan made a call to him, saying that the Qiu family had turned up at her door, he was confused about why the Qiu family was not concerned about their own situation and could even be bothered to look for Nan Nan at such a time.

That could only mean that the Qiu family got into trouble very shortly after Qi Minlan left.

Qi Minlan might be old, but that did not mean that she was so confused that she did not understand what Zhai Sheng meant. She had always known that Qiu Qin was useless and had not even been able to keep his pension as an old cadre. That was why he had let out all of his anger on her and Chenxi and had left to live with that vixen and his illegitimate child.

But Qi Minlan did not believe that the Qiu family would fall so easily and so thoroughly just like that. If all of the Qiu family's assets were really confiscated, where would she and Chenxi live? Besides, would they only confiscate what the Qiu family had on the surface? What about whatever that vixen and that illegitimate son of Qiu Qin had?

Qi Minlan was clearly in an agitated state, her hand trembling while holding her phone. It seemed as though that phone might just drop to the ground at any moment. Any impatient person who witnessed the scene would have grabbed the phone over from Qi Minlan to make the phone call on her behalf.

“Hello...” Qi Minlan asked unsteadily. “Is this Chenxi?”

Qi Minlan had not finished her sentence before she heard a cacophony of noises from the other end of the phone. She could even make out the sound of someone crying. These cries were not unfamiliar. In fact, Qi Minlan was very familiar with the sound of this cry. What was different was that every time she heard this sound, that voice was always very happy, especially when that person was in front of her, since that person was younger than her and was able to capture Qiu Qin’s heart better than her. This woman was none other than Qiu Qin’s mistress who had even given birth to his son.

“Mom.” Qiu Chenxi’s voice sounded a little numb as though she had lost the ability to think or feel. “Mom, where are you? Come back. I’ve thought it through. I won’t get married. Mom, let’s go to the orphanage and adopt a child. In the future, the three of us will live together. We won’t need anyone else.”

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Just within a few hours, Qiu Chenxi had completely given up on Zhai Sheng. What made Qiu Chenxi lose all hope was her own biological father, and not Zhai Sheng himself. That was the most ridiculous part.

She glanced at the sobbing woman who looked not much older than herself, then at the tall and muscular young man who should have only been a few years older than her child. Then, Qiu Chenxi continued. “Mom, come back. In the future, I’ll support you. Let’s lead good lives with just the three of us.”

She did not care about how others would live their lives.

“Chenxi?” Qi Minlan was all too clear about how desperately her daughter wanted to get back together with Zhai Sheng. It was exactly because of this that Qi Minlan could not understand why her daughter had suddenly changed her mind. Shouldn’t Qiu Chenxi’s desire to get back into the

Zhai family increase as the Qiu family's situation worsened? Why was it the exact opposite? Had the Zhai family done something to Chenxi?

Qiu Chenxi laughed self-deprecatingly as though she knew that Qi Minlan had some ideas running through her mind. "My dad found out that his daughter is still rather useful at critical moments like this. As long as I get remarried to Zhai Sheng, his son will be Zhai Sheng's brother-in-law. No matter how much the Qiu family loses today, they'll be able to recover even more tomorrow. Mom, don't you think that's just ridiculous? Mom, after you return, get a divorce from my dad, and don't let him take advantage of you. He has a mistress and has even committed the crime of bigamy."

Qiu Chenxi had always been an extremely selfish person. The only reason she had wanted to reconcile with Zhai Sheng was for the sake of her own pride and a comfortable future. It was never for the sake of a certain someone in the Qiu family.

Upon finding out that Qiu Qin had another family and another son outside, Qiu Chenxi had already lost all feelings for her father, Qiu Qin. Initially, it had already been difficult to get back together with Zhai Sheng. But today, as the Qiu family was losing everything, Qiu Qin had brought his mistress and their illegitimate son to the Qiu family's house, asking her to take good care of her brother! For the first time, Qiu Chenxi realized how Qiao Nan must have felt when she had gone to find her.

It was truly ridiculous!

How could she have wanted to reconcile with Zhai Sheng to benefit others, especially that bast*rd that she hated the most? That would even benefit that mistress!

Chapter 1974: Send Her Back

Then, she thought again about how Qiu Qin had exposed the fact that she was barren in front of that woman's family and how he had declared that her brother's child was also her child.

Even if she could not have her own children, her brother would send his own children over to her for her to raise them once she got back together with Zhai Sheng so that she would not have to worry about growing old alone.

Bah!

Qiu Chenxi did not believe a single word of Qiu Qin and felt that his words were ironic. Instead of an adopted child, she had to raise a child with blood ties to Zhai Sheng to feel as though her status in the Zhai family was secure. In that case, could she possibly bring that shameless bast*rd son who addressed her as his auntie to enjoy life in the Zhai family?

At that very moment, Qiu Chenxi lost all will to fight because of Qiu Qin's words.

Qiu Chenxi would never let her hard work benefit others. The only reason she had wanted to reconcile with Zhai Sheng was to take advantage of the Zhai family's power to teach her cheating father, that mistress, and her son a lesson. If her marriage benefited the people whom she wanted to lecture the most, that would be utterly ridiculous.

Thankfully, the events that followed made Qiu Chenxi feel relieved. After Qiu Qin found himself a mistress, Qiu Qin had been the one forking out the money for all of her expenses. Initially, everything had been under that woman's name and everything had been fine. But for some unknown reason, everything had suddenly been transferred to their son.

That son's job had also been arranged by Qiu Qin. Now that Qiu Qin was in trouble, his son was not spared either, and however much he had gained due to his father, they were all taken away. Naturally, all of the assets that Qiu Qin's son owned were confiscated as well.

Because he had lost that family, Qiu Qin had no choice but to bring his true love, son, and grandson back to the Qiu family's house, instructing Qiu Chenxi to get along well with her brother's family and to treat that 'auntie' like her own mother. From today on, they would have a family reunion and stay under the same roof.

1

But just as Qiu Qin finished his words, the inspectors arrived at the Qiu family's house. Earlier, they had confiscated the son's everything. Now, they were there to confiscate all of Qiu Qin's assets. They had to conduct their affairs systematically. They were not going to leave anyone out.

Qiu Qin had been retired for a few years and had handed everything in his career over to his son. What Qiu Qin had done in the past was exactly what his son continued to do. As such, the government was simply getting rid of those in power early on so that they would not do even more harm to the country, its people, and the government in the future. After cleaning up the younger

one's affairs, they naturally had to settle their accounts with the older one so that they would both cough up whatever they owed the country and the people.

Such a huge incident had just happened in their family, yet her daughter was still able to speak with her calmly. Moreover, what she had just said was simply shocking that Qi Minlan was scared stiff. "Chenxi, are you alright?"

"Mom, I'm fine. I'm very awake. I don't think my mind has been clearer. Mom, come back..." Before Qiu Chenxi could complete her sentence, there was a deafening noise at the other end of the phone call. Qiu Qin seemed to have heard what Qiu Chenxi had told Qi Minlan and had scolded Qiu Chenxi for being unfilial for abandoning her father and younger brother, wanting only to support Qi Minlan. What she heard seemed to be a slap.

Because she could only hear but not see what was going on, Qi Minlan's expression turned pale. She could not be sure of who had delivered the blow and who the victim was.

Qiao Nan frowned. She did not know what was going on, but she could guess that the Qiu family's situation did not seem very optimistic. In her dream, Qiu Qin was someone who had committed treason by stealing and selling the country's confidential documents. Thankfully, the police had managed to catch Qiu Qin in time and retrieve the documents before any real damage was done.

2

The problem was that no one might have noticed that in this lifetime. Qiao Nan did not even dare to think about how much damage Qiu Qin could have done toward the country and the people in the decades that he had been working.

Now that he was exposed, they would simply lump everything together to settle the accounts. Given Qiu Qin's age, even if he would not get caned, he would never live to see another day outside jail.

Qi Minlan did not seem to be in a good state, and Qiao Nan looked at Zhai Sheng awkwardly. Zhai Sheng patted Qiao Nan, trying to comfort her. "I'll get someone to send her back." It was true. Qi Minlan was advanced in age, and it was already late at night. Zhai Sheng would never let Qi Minlan return alone.

But Zhai Sheng had never expected Qiu Chenxi, who had been making such a din, to have agreed so unhesitatingly to disappear from his sight in the future just because of Qiu Qin. He had thought

that Qiu Chenxi would definitely turn up in front of him, crying and making a fuss because of Qiu Qin's situation. She might even beg Zhai Sheng to help settle Qiu Qin's matter.

Now, it seemed that Qiu Chenxi did not have much of a relationship with her father, Qiu Qin, anymore.

After sending Qi Minlan off, Qiao Nan finally breathed a sigh of relief. Qiao Nan had experience dealing with Qiu Chenxi, but not Qi Minlan. "Brother Zhai, it's not early anymore. You'd better go back and get some rest."

"Are you kicking me to the curb now that you don't need me anymore?" Zhai Sheng asked coldly. She was trying to kick him out now that he had just solved her problem. He had not even had time to drink the cup of tea that Nan Nan had prepared for him earlier.

1

Qiao Nan blushed but did not admit to it. "Since when have I done that? Was I the one who invited this trouble over?" But she had to admit that Qiu Chenxi's and Qi Minlan's brains were wired quite differently. It was not as if Qiu Chenxi was the only woman left in the world. How desperate would Zhai Sheng have to be before agreeing to reconcile with Qiu Chenxi?

It was impossible between the two of them. Even a normal outsider knew that. The first person that Qiu Chenxi had to eliminate from her list if she wanted to get married was Zhai Sheng!

Zhai Sheng frowned, thinking that it was not his fault that this troublesome mother-daughter pair caused trouble either. Truthfully speaking, it was his father who had brought this trouble to them. He was simply taking on this responsibility on his father's behalf. "Didn't we say that you're moving to my house? Let's leave together. Have you finished packing?"

Zhai Sheng was serious about Qiao Nan moving to the Zhai family's old villa. Qiu Chenxi and Qi Minlan might no longer be a problem, but who was to say that they would not cause any more trouble for them? Before the New Year, had a man not come knocking on her door previously?

Chapter 1975: Settling Together

“We’re really moving?” Qiao Nan took things as they were. She felt depressed that Qi Minlan and Qiu Chenxi kept troubling her. However, they were gone now, and it didn’t seem that they would be returning in the future. Qiao Nan felt a little lazy to move house. “Actually, there’s nothing much now. It’s inappropriate for me to move over now.”

Zhai Sheng carried Qiao Nan. “You’re still hesitating? Haven’t you thought it through? I’ve even typed the marriage report out. If you regret it now, it’s the same as you being a hooligan.”

Qiao Nan blushed even more as she leaned in Zhai Sheng’s arms. “No hesitation, no regrets. I just feel that our relationship hasn’t reached that stage yet, so it’s inappropriate for us to live together.” The main point was that people could easily gossip. If such gossip could be avoided, then there’s nothing wrong with wanting to listen to it less.

“Since you’re not regretting it or hesitating, what are you saying so much for? Just move in. I believe in your actions more.” Zhai Sheng was a decisive person. He never cared about other people’s gossip. He understood that even if Qiao Nan was a perfect person, there would still be gossip when the two of them were going to be together.

This was unavoidable. Why should he sacrifice his happy times because of outsiders’ opinions? “Your room’s there, right? It seems like you haven’t finished packing. Let me help you. I normally pack luggage quickly. Take a seat outside and drink that cup of tea. Give me five minutes. I promise to help you pack your luggage. We’ll return together.”

Since Qiao Nan wasn’t taking the initiative, Zhai Sheng didn’t mind being more proactive. He was a big man. He should be taking the initiative. Furthermore, for a heavier task like packing luggage, Qiao Nan should indeed sit down, rest, and have a cup of tea. He should do it.

As he finished his words, Zhai Sheng moved quickly into Qiao Nan’s room. He dragged out the big suitcase that Qiao Nan placed in the corner, opened the closet, and started working.

Qiao Nan didn’t have a lot of clothes. Even if she had left the Qiao family and lived alone, Qiao Nan didn’t add too many clothes for herself. It was because of Miao Jing’s insistence when she went to Ping Cheng this time that Qiao Nan added a few more new clothes. Qiao Nan had little clothes and Zhai Sheng moved fast enough. When Qiao Nan recovered herself and wanted to stop Zhai Sheng, the suitcase was already one-third filled.

Qiao Nan stopped Zhai Sheng in a flurry. “There’s no need to. I can do it myself. Go and have a drink outside. I’ll pack my luggage quickly.” The clothes in the closet were already half empty.

After packing the clothes, he would be pulling out the underwear from the drawers next. Upon thinking about these intimate items, how would Qiao Nan dare to say that she didn't want to pack her luggage? It was already not bad if she could put these items into her suitcase with her own hands.

It was a pity that Qiao Nan's hands and feet were not as quick as Zhai Sheng's. When Qiao Nan grabbed the remaining coats from the closet, Zhai Sheng had already pulled out the drawers without a word. With a nonchalant look, he placed the neatly folded pile of underwear into the suitcase.

1

Qiao Nan could feel smoke rising from her head. Especially when she saw her underwear in Zhai Sheng's hands, Qiao Nan felt that she could consider dying. "Brother Zhai, I really don't need your help. I can do it myself. Go out and rest. Give me five minutes. I'll be done soon."

This time, Qiao Nan didn't give Zhai Sheng the opportunity to refuse. She stood between Zhai Sheng and the cabinet so that Zhai Sheng couldn't get close to it and reach out for the clothes again. She also placed both hands on Zhai Sheng and kept pushing him outside.

How would Zhai Sheng pay attention to Qiao Nan's strength? As long as Zhai Sheng wasn't willing to, it was impossible for Qiao Nan to even get him to move a step, let alone being pushed outside.

It was just that one must know their limits. Furthermore, Qiao Nan had already promised to move to the Zhai family's old villa. Since he had already obtained the result he wanted, he should slow down his attacking speed.

After leaving Qiao Nan's room obediently, Zhai Sheng sat down and drank a glass of water. Not a single drop was left. After drinking water, Zhai Sheng still felt thirsty. However, he lowered his head and reached out his hand. He seemed to be measuring something. "So, were they that small?"

2

Zhai Sheng didn't forget the feeling when he had those silky fabrics in his hands. In fact, his heart suffered quite a bit of agitation. Zhai Sheng was embarrassed to show it in front of Qiao Nan just now. Now that Qiao Nan wasn't around, the action of Zhai Sheng reaching out his hand and squeezing it in midair seemed a little awkward.

When Qiao Nan finished packing and walked out with her luggage, she was still blushing. “Brother Zhai, I’m done.” Initially, Qiao Nan still wanted to dawdle in her room. She felt quite shy to look Zhai Sheng in the eye now.

However, based on Zhai Sheng’s performance just now, Qiao Nan was worried that if she was slower, Zhai Sheng was going to come in and take the initiative to pack her luggage again. Upon thinking of that extremely embarrassing moment when Zhai Sheng held her underwear in his hands, Qiao Nan didn’t have any further thoughts. How would she dare to play any tricks?

Zhai Sheng cleared his throat and stood up. “Let me take your luggage.” Zhai Sheng took her suitcase in one hand and held Qiao Nan’s hand with the other. The couple left side by side.

Xiao Xu had been waiting in the car. Upon seeing that Qiao Nan really walked out with Zhai Sheng, he smiled heartily. “Sister Qiao, should I address you as Madam Zhai now?” He shouldn’t be addressing her wrongly now, right? She was going to stay in the Zhai family’s old villa soon. It would be too overboard if she didn’t let him address her as Madam Zhai.

Qiao Nan felt a headache. “Don’t rush to call me that. I’m fine if you want to call me Sister Qiao or Auntie Qiao.” She wasn’t in a hurry to be addressed differently. Please let her deceive herself a while more.

“Is something troubling you?” Qiao Nan’s look of deep thoughts attracted Zhai Sheng’s attention. “Weren’t you alright a few days ago?” Nan Nan’s performance today seemed to be back to how it was a few months ago. She was more sensitive now.

Qiao Nan laughed bitterly. “Even if there is something, I can’t hide it from you. Let’s talk again when we’re home.” Xiao Xu was around now. It wasn’t convenient for Qiao Nan to mention the Qiao family’s situation. She didn’t want Xiao Xu to listen to a joke.

Zhai Sheng held Qiao Nan by the shoulder so that she leaned in his arms. He was telling Qiao Nan silently that she shouldn’t feel embarrassed no matter what happened. He would always be by her side and accompany her to resolve the issue.

Chapter 1976: Something Happened to Jiajia

This time, Qiao Nan was moving into the Zhai family's old villa as half the owner. She felt different. However, Qiao Nan's room was unchanged. After all, they weren't married yet. There wasn't a need for them to stay in the same room before getting married. Thankfully, when Qiao Nan was living in the Zhai family's old villa before, her room was just next to Zhai Sheng's. Now that Qiao Nan was moving in, of course her room would remain the same.

On the way back, Xiao Xu gave Sister Zhao a call and asked her to clean up the room Qiao Nan previously lived in. Sister Zhao said that she had always been cleaning Qiao Nan's room. Even her quilt was exposed to the sun in the day. She guaranteed that there would be no problem.

Upon hearing Sister Zhao say this, Xiao Xu became completely relieved.

Sister Zhao diligently brought water and fruits into Qiao Nan's room. From the corners of her eyes, she saw Zhai Sheng standing next to Qiao Nan all the time like her protector. Sister Zhao understood it more in her heart now. "Sister Qiao, if there's anything missing, remember to let me know."

Even though Sister Qiao might be more familiar with this house than her, her identity was different now. When Sister Qiao returned this time, she was going to be the mistress of the house and her master.

"I've taken a look. Everything's complete. Thanks for your hard work, Xiao Zhao." Qiao Nan shook her head. She could tell that someone had been cleaning up her room all this while. Even before sitting on the bed, she could faintly feel the warmth and dryness of the room from the sun.

"Alright, I'll get going first." Sister Zhao didn't forget her identity. After doing what she was supposed to do, how would she dare to continue staying and prevent her owners from dating?

Zhai Sheng pulled Qiao Nan and sat down. "You can tell me now, right? Aside from Qi Minlan, did you run into anything else?"

Qiao Nan sighed. She initially didn't want to say this. However, Qiao Nan felt that she should say this now. "Sister Zhai Hua called me. The Qiao family already knows that I had been living in Qingshui Town. The landlady later told me that there was a mother-daughter pair from Ping Cheng who came to find me yesterday. Brother Zhai, you should understand, and you should be able to tell that the Qiao family isn't planning to just let me off like that. There're four people in the Qiao family. However, the only one who's capable of earning money is me. They are still expecting to count on me to provide a living for them. They want me to work hard so that they can lead a good life."

Qiao Nan understood this very clearly.

She hadn't outlived her usefulness yet. If she still had something of value, how would Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin be willing to let her off?

Zhai Sheng narrowed his eyes. "So it's regarding this. Before deciding to be together with you, I've long known about your family situation. I still want to marry you regardless. This means that I've long considered it carefully. From a legal or human perspective, children have the obligation and responsibility to support their parents. However, there's no reason to provide for them together with your sister. Even if you are providing for your parents, they can't demand everything. Rest assured. No matter how unreasonable the Qiao family is or how much they kick up a fuss, it doesn't mean that everyone is obliged to indulge them."

More importantly, he and the Zhai family would provide support to Nan Nan. They wouldn't let her be controlled without limits by the Qiao family anymore. Yes, Zhai Sheng wasn't willing to use the term 'family' to describe the Qiao family.

At this time, both Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan thought that the main reason why Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin came all the way to Qingshui Town to find Qiao Nan was the money in her pockets. When they found out that Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin even planned for Qiao Nan to marry Chen Jun, be Chen Feng's stepmother, help Qiao Zijin keep an eye on the Chen family's inheritance so that it could be handed to Chen Feng completely in the future, and do all the hard work for Qiao Zijin so that when everything in the Chen family became Chen Feng's in the future, she could return the position to Qiao Zijin, both of them knew that not only was the Qiao family's mindset absurd, but also very scary.

Qi Minlan and Qiu Chenxi couldn't think as much as Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin.

Zhai Yaohui initially planned for Zhai Sheng to bring Qiao Nan back to Ping Cheng so that the Zhai family could hold a wedding banquet for the couple. However, an unexpected incident disrupted Zhai Yaohui's original plan such that Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan had to return to Ping Cheng in a rush ahead of schedule.

When Qiao Nan met the Zhai family again, it was in a hospital. Seeing that the Zhai family didn't look good, Qiao Nan stepped forward and walked next to Zhai Hua. "Sister Zhai Hua, why did Jiajia get into a car accident out of the blue?"

Hatred flashed in Zhai Hua's eyes. "It's all Wei De's fault. It's fine that he doesn't cherish a daughter after having a son. But he even wanted to kill Jiajia!" If not for Wei De finding Jiajia at school and pestering her on the main road, how could Jiajia have been knocked down by a car?

What made Zhai Hua infuriated was that everything was just an accident. Wei De didn't do this on purpose, and he was Jiajia's father. Even if this matter was investigated, Wei De didn't need to bear any legal responsibility. Upon thinking that her daughter was still in the operating theatre receiving treatment but nothing was happening to the culprit, Wei De, who caused all of this, Zhai Hua wished she had a gun beside her so that she could rush over and kill Wei De.

If the law couldn't punish Wei De, then she would do it!

Seeing the hatred in Zhai Hua's bloodshot eyes, Qiao Nan could only continue to comfort Zhai Hua. "Sister Zhai Hua, don't be too worried. Jiajia is a good child. Nothing will happen to her."

Didn't the call say that although Jiajia ran into a car accident, her condition wasn't too serious? The other party was driving carefully and not at a fast speed. Moreover, after Jiajia was knocked down, the car owner immediately sent Jiajia to the hospital and also contacted Jiajia's family.

Jiajia wasn't the Qiao Zijin in her dreams. As such, Qiao Nan believed that nothing bad would happen to an obedient child like Jiajia.

Indeed, within half an hour after Qiao Nan's words, Jiajia's operation was over. "Don't worry. The patient's operation was very successful. Thankfully, that car wasn't speeding and the patient's injury was quite minor. Except for a slight fracture in some places, no internal organs were injured. The patient is young and has a fast metabolism. I believe her recovery speed wouldn't be too slow."

"Thank you, doctor." Upon hearing that his granddaughter was fine, Zhai Yaohui hugged the frightened Miao Jing and thanked the doctor.

The doctor knew Zhai Yaohui's identity. How would he dare to accept the old chief's word of thanks? However, being thanked by the old chief undeniably made the doctor feel very proud.

Chapter 1977: The Appearance of Tian Dong

After sharing some points to take note of, the doctor left and continued his work.

Once Jiajia was pushed out, Zhai Hua rushed forward. “Jiajia, don’t be afraid. Mom’s here. Mom’s here with you.”

Jiajia had already gained a little consciousness, but the anesthetic had not worn off completely yet. She only knew that her mom was by her side. As such, she shouted ‘mom’ a few times vaguely and didn’t say anything else.

Seeing that her originally lively and healthy daughter was lying in bed sickly and had some serious bruises and swellings on her body, Zhai Hua felt extreme heartache. “I’m going to kill Wei De, that beast.” On account of Jiajia, she didn’t settle scores with Wei De and only let him lead a life that he wished he was better off dead. That was her biggest mistake.

If not for her being too softhearted, how would Wei De have the chance to harm her Jiajia again?

Zhai Sheng grabbed Zhai Hua. “You’re already a mother. How are you still so impulsive? How can you not think before speaking? Let’s not talk about you killing Wei De. Even if you just cripple him, you might arrogantly think that you have helped Jiajia avenge her. The next second, Jiajia would immediately lose a father and have a mother who’s in jail. Did Jiajia owe you in her previous life? Must you, her mother, torture her like that as well?”

“Then, what should I do? Should I just let this go and benefit that beast?” She was unwilling to take this lying down!

...

Zhai Sheng was silent for a while. In the past, the Zhai family was really polite to Wei De for Jiajia’s sake. They only made Wei De lose everything that he had gained from relying on Zhai Hua and didn’t drive him to a corner. It wasn’t that they didn’t have ways to deal with Wei De or teach him a lesson.

After Wei De caused Jiajia to be in a car accident and hospitalized, even if it was for Jiajia, this matter could no longer be left alone. It was just that they were in the hospital now and not their own home. Some things could be done, but some words couldn’t be said outside. “Don’t worry. I’m Jiajia’s uncle. Of course I will care about Jiajia’s matters and give the both of you an explanation.”

Zhai Sheng was not surprised not to see Wei De in the hospital. Wei De was an irresponsible man to begin with. Jiajia wasn’t Wei De’s only child and wasn’t a boy. Wei De’s feelings for Jiajia were just

like that. If Wei De dared to stay in the hospital at this time, he would definitely be beaten up severely by the Zhai family.

Anyone with a brain could imagine these situations.

In reality, Wei De wasn't afraid of being beaten up. He was still worried that he wouldn't have a chance to be beaten up and use the tactic of self-torture to gain pity. If the Zhai family beat him up but was still unwilling to forgive him and give him another chance, then he would really be disadvantaged.

Wei De was in a terrible situation now. He had no money, no power, and no one. It was very difficult for him to continue living in Ping Cheng. If he got beaten up for nothing and the Zhai family wasn't appeased, he might end up being unable to work anymore and having to spend a lot of money in the hospital. Wei De knew that even if he was hospitalized for the first day, he would have to be discharged the next day. Who asked him to have no money?

His health and the money in his pockets determined how long he could continue living in Ping Cheng and how much time he had for Zhai Hua and Jiajia to change their minds and accept him again. Wei De didn't dare to risk making losses. As such, it wasn't that he was reluctant. He just felt that he stood little chance of winning and might lose badly instead. That would not be worthwhile.

Wei De became smart. However, the Zhai family became more silent now.

Seeing that even Zhai Sheng wasn't talking now, Zhai Hua was nearly angered to tears. The sins she had created were nothing. No matter how much she fell, she would always tell herself that she deserved it! Who asked her to be blind that year? Everyone told her that Wei De wasn't good and was unreliable. She would rather believe an outsider than her family. Not only was she blind but also deaf. If she wasn't unlucky, who else would be? Wei De was too much of a scumbag that she had to wonder who else was as stupid as her to be scammed by him.

As such, no matter how painful her heart was, Zhai Hua had nothing else to say. However, she couldn't tolerate the fact that her willfulness in her youth had caused so much pain to her only daughter. The child was innocent. Didn't Wei De have even the most basic instinct as a father to protect his child?

Even a vicious tiger wouldn't eat its cubs. Wei De wasn't even comparable to a beast!

The previously silent Qiao Nan asked, "After all, this involves a car accident. The police would have filed a record, right?"

"Yes," Zhai Yaohui replied.

"It's more troublesome to hold someone accountable for this matter. However, it doesn't mean that we can't ask for a statement. Wei De's inappropriateness caused Jiajia to be in a car accident. Moreover, he hasn't appeared to see Jiajia until now. This is the truth. Although the court decided to give Jiajia to us back then, it didn't deprive Wei De of the right to see Jiajia. However, based on the incident today, I feel that in this regard, there is room for further negotiation."

As long as Wei De was deprived of the right to see Jiajia, the chances of Wei De coming into contact with Jiajia would be greatly reduced. At least in school, even if they heard that Wei De is Jiajia's father, they could reject Wei De's request to see Jiajia. No matter how one looked at it, since it was based on the court's ruling, at least public opinion wouldn't cause too much harm to Jiajia.

Zhai Hua's eyes shone. "Can that be done?" It wasn't too bad if Wei De couldn't see Jiajia again in the future.

"I'll handle this." Zhai Sheng expressed that it was certainly possible. Even if it wasn't, it had to be. Jiajia was already hospitalized after being in a car accident. Wei De, as a father, didn't do anything. He still wanted to see Jiajia in the future? In his dreams!

"Is the child alright?" At this moment, a male voice suddenly interjected. Qiao Nan looked back and was so shocked that she couldn't recover herself.

"No worries. Thank you." Zhai Yaohui's tone was not bad when he saw the man, even though he was the car owner who knocked down Jiajia. However, if not for Wei De's harassment, which forced Jiajia to avoid him in a panic, the car owner wouldn't have encountered such a bad thing.

Not to mention that after Jiajia was knocked down, the car owner had immediately sent her to the hospital. The sooner the car owner sent Jiajia to the hospital, the more helpful it was for Jiajia to receive better treatment. As luck would have it, the car owner was an 'acquaintance' of the Zhai family.

Tian Dong shook his head. "After all, I was the one who knocked her down. All is good as long as the child's fine." Upon thinking of how Jiajia's body was covered with blood, Tian Dong felt heartache for her.

Chapter 1978: They Had Known Each Other Since They Were Young

He didn't expect this girl to be Zhai Hua's daughter. She didn't look like Zhai Hua. Perhaps she looked more like her father.

Upon seeing Tian Dong again, Qiao Nan was shocked. Compared to the Tian Dong in her dreams, Tian Dong in reality seemed to be colder. His suit and cold eyebrows revealed that Tian Dong was a cold and difficult person to approach. Tian Dong's coldness and Zhai Sheng's coldness felt completely different.

Zhai Sheng had a sense of military might. On the other hand, Tian Dong had a compelling sense of decisiveness and restraint.

The Tian Dong in her dreams was a successful businessman, so much so that he could make Qiao Nan rich as well. In the commercial world that was full of sudden and perplexing changes, Tian Dong, as a returning Chinese businessman, could firmly occupy the market and become a leader. This proved that even if it was in a dream, Tian Dong was never a weak junior who could be easily bullied.

However, no matter how she compared, the Tian Dong in her dreams was more approachable than the Tian Dong in reality.

As Qiao Nan sized Tian Dong up, Tian Dong similarly noticed Qiao Nan's presence. Tian Dong was actually quite 'familiar' with the Zhai family. However, only Qiao Nan was quite foreign to him. Perhaps he knew of Zhai Sheng's situation as he smiled at him and asked, "When are you going to invite me to your wedding banquet?"

Zhai Hua's daughter got into a car accident. Apart from Zhai Sheng's other half, Tian Dong couldn't think of another person who could stay by Zhai Sheng's side now and care about Jiajia's situation together with the Zhai family.

"A month later." Zhai Sheng didn't rebut him. "If you want to attend the wedding banquet, you have to give me your address, right? How long are you staying in the country for? When are you going back?" The Tian family had been developing abroad. Apart from the year when Old Tian passed away that Tian Dong and his family returned to the country for a month, they were always overseas. "If you're in a rush, you might really not be able to attend my wedding banquet."

Tian Dong frowned. "A month? No matter what, I'll think of ways to attend your wedding banquet." Tian Dong returned to the country only for business. Now that the country was getting more developed, Tian Dong felt that his business could get a foothold here. For convenience's sake, not only did Tian Dong buy a car in Ping Cheng but also a house.

Initially, the Tian family had a house in Ping Cheng. Everyone thought that since the Tian family went abroad when Tian Dong was a child, they would have sold their house in Ping Cheng. However, the Tian family didn't do so.

It wasn't until Tian Dong was thirty-five years old that he returned to the country for the first time to intervene in business. That was when Tian Dong sold the Tian family's house. In the blink of an eye, ten years had passed. Tian Dong didn't seem to have any intention to buy back the Tian family's house. Instead, like an ordinary person, he bought a big house in a district with good security to act as his temporary lodging when he returned to the country for business.

Tian Dong wrote down his address for Zhai Sheng. "I'm staying here now. My number's below. We can keep in contact more if there are opportunities in the future."

The Tian family did business, whereas the Zhais were officials. If the Tian family's business could receive a little care from the Zhai family, their journey would definitely be smooth sailing. Even if they couldn't get the care of the Zhai family, it would definitely not be wrong for the Tian family to have a good relationship with the Zhai family.

Zhai Sheng received Tian Dong's paper. "What happened today has caused you quite a lot of trouble as well. We will keep in contact in the future."

After chatting casually with Zhai Sheng and greeting the rest of the Zhai family simply, Tian Dong left. He was very polite throughout. However, it seemed that he wasn't particularly close to the Zhai family.

After Tian Dong left, Miao Jing, who had been leaning against Zhai Yaohui, suddenly sighed loudly. As for the reason, aside from Miao Jing herself, only Zhai Yaohui, her husband, would understand.

After a long time, Zhai Hua suddenly said, "Damn. Dongzi left just like that? I didn't expect Dongzi, who was quieter than a girl when he was young, to be taller than Zhai Sheng after growing up. I really can't tell. We were all childhood playmates. How could he leave without saying hello to me? That's too unjust!"

She suddenly saw her childhood playmate, and her daughter got into a car accident. Zhai Hua was distracted and her IQ was lacking. She was especially agitated when she saw the childhood playmate who was often bullied to tears by her had grown up into a man she had to look up at. She always thought that even if they were to meet a thousand years later, Tian Dong should be as weak as when he was young and needed someone to protect him.

Unexpectedly, when they met again when they were middle-aged, even if Tian Dong didn't say anything to her and was just standing at the side quietly, she actually felt the pressure?!

Upon thinking about the pressure, Zhai Hua's heart raced. "What did Dongzi eat overseas? He's so tall now. Did he get hormonal shots?!" He must have resorted to unspeakable means. Otherwise, how would Dongzi grow up to be so manly? His figure was no worse than an army veteran!

Seeing that after her daughter met a man like Wei De, she still had such a normal reaction when seeing other men, Miao Jing could only sigh heavily.

"Dad, Mom. I'm going to see Jiajia." Zhai Hua paid attention to Tian Dong only for a few seconds. In her heart, only Jiajia was the most important. Thankfully, Jiajia's injuries weren't serious. The doctor said that she could be discharged from the hospital not too long later. Otherwise, Zhai Hua wouldn't be able to have such a reaction even if the emperor was here, let alone Tian Dong's appearance today.

Miao Jing nodded. "Go and accompany Jiajia. She must be frightened by what happened today. I'll get the auntie to give Jiajia more supplements." Jiajia was growing up. Now that she was injured, how else would she be able to keep her body well if not for supplements?

To the Zhai family, Tian Dong's appearance was just a small episode. However, for Qiao Nan, Tian Dong's appearance wasn't that simple. It was just that she was hiding a lot of words in her heart. It wasn't convenient for her to tell anyone, so she could only hold them back in silence.

After returning to the Zhai family, Zhai Sheng pulled Qiao Nan's hand and wanted to have a private conversation with her. "You know Dongzi?" Nan Nan's reaction when she saw Dongzi today was quite different.

Qiao Nan froze before shaking her head to deny. "No. I saw him for the first time today. I just find it strange. I didn't expect Sister Zhai Hua to know such an outstanding man. You've known each other since you were young. Is he on good terms with Sister Zhai Hua?"

“It could be considered that we’ve known each other since we were young. However, their family went abroad within a few years. Dongzi grew up overseas. Their relationship? They had a good time playing with each other back then.”

Back then, everyone was young and knew nothing but having fun.

Chapter 1979: Decision

Zhai Sheng could sense that what Qiao Nan meant to ask was not about a platonic relationship between those two. “Don’t worry. Zhai Hua may be divorced, but she still has Jiajia by her side. Getting married and having children aren’t her only way out.”

Zhai Sheng himself had gone through an undesirable marriage. At that time, he had never thought that remaining unmarried and childless was a mistake. Because he had had such thoughts in the past, Zhai Sheng was not going to force Zhai Hua to find another suitable partner so quickly after getting a divorce from Wei De so as to give Jiajia a stepfather.

If he, someone without a child, did not think that remarriage was important, much less Zhai Hua, who already had a daughter. Zhai Sheng thought that it was more important to consider whether Zhai Hua herself wanted to get remarried. If Zhai Hua met someone whom she fancied, and as long as that man was not anything like Wei De, he definitely would not stop Zhai Hua.

Conversely, if Zhai Hua no longer wanted to get married and simply wanted to live out the rest of her life with only Jiajia, he did not see a problem with that either.

Qiao Nan knew that Zhai Sheng had misunderstood her. She did not mean to be a matchmaker for Sister Zhai Hua and pull Sister Zhai Hua closer to Tian Dong, even if Tian Dong had promised to get married to Sister Zhai Hua when she turned thirty, just as he did in her dream. After all, Zhai Hua had gotten married to Wei De and had even given birth to Jiajia.

At that time, Sister Zhai Hua had gotten together with Wei De. Since Sister Zhai Hua had already gotten married to another man, Tian Dong could not possibly have remained unmarried just because of that promise he had made. After all, the one who had broken their promise was Sister Zhai Hua, and not Tian Dong.

Qiao Nan guessed that Tian Dong should have gotten married after Zhai Hua had done so herself. Qiao Nan felt that it was a pity that Zhai Hua had missed out on such a good man.

Qiao Nan thinned her lips. "Brother Zhai, don't you think that Tian Dong should be married at his age?" She was only curious about Tian Dong's marital status.

She was already forty but was still unmarried. However, Zhai Sheng had once been married. She had no intention of being a matchmaker, but what if Tian Dong and Sister Zhai Hua were fated for each other?

Zhai Sheng and Zhai Hua could have gotten divorced, but Tian Dong could very well still be married. However, if Tian Dong happened to be divorced as well, it would not be impossible between Zhai Hua and Tian Dong!

Qiao Nan's hypotheses were all based on whether Tian Dong had gotten divorced. Otherwise, even she would not agree to it. She could not possibly ruin some other woman's happiness and family just to give Zhai Hua happiness, right?

"I don't know." Zhai Sheng could sense Qiao Nan's care toward Tian Dong. But this time, Zhai Sheng was not jealous because he knew that Qiao Nan was only concerned because of Zhai Hua. "After the Tian family went abroad, my family hardly kept in touch with them. This was the first time we've met since they went abroad."

Because they had not kept in touch, the Zhai family had not received any news about whether Tian Dong had gotten married or had children. Although Jiajia had not been severely injured, the random encounter today had not been a good opportunity to catch up. They had not even spoken much to each other since the Zhai family had to continue staying by Jiajia's side.

Qiao Nan rubbed her forehead. Perhaps, this was all excessive concern. Whether or not Zhai Hua wanted to get together with Tian Dong did not depend only on whether Tian Dong was single. Jiajia's opinions mattered too. Forget it. She would put this matter aside for the time being. No matter how much she was stressed out over it, she probably would not be able to come up with an answer. "Do you think that Jiajia's performance in her middle school examination will be affected by her condition?"

"I don't think so. I heard from Zhai Hua that Jiajia's results are quite good and she finished learning everything from the textbook quite early on. Now, she's been revising all that knowledge. But now, her results aren't that important. It's more important that she recuperates well." Jiajia's situation was different from Wei De's. Jiajia herself was an extremely hardworking child, and in the face of such a situation, Zhai Sheng was extremely willing to help Jiajia out.

Wei De might be her father, but he could not even match up to his own daughter. Every time Wei De asked the Zhai family for help, he relied on his mouth and did not try to do anything for himself. Instead, he relied only on the fact that he was the Zhai family's son-in-law and waited to see success come his way, thinking that it was only right for things to go his way.

In the face of someone who simply waited for a free lunch like Wei De, Zhai Sheng had never once helped Wei De just because he was Wei De's brother-in-law. He had never acknowledged Wei De as his brother-in-law anyway. Even if Wei De had been a blood relative, Zhai Sheng would never have helped Wei De either.

The Zhai family cared very much about Qiao Nan's opinions. Jiajia had gotten into a car accident, after all. She was a student in her last year of middle and was about to take her middle school examination. After such a major incident happened, the court obviously had to consider the new requests made by the Zhai family carefully for Jiajia's best interests.

Without a doubt, the Zhai family still had the greatest chance of winning this case. It was because of Wei De's carelessness that the accident had happened. After all, it was someone else who had knocked Jiajia down. Wei De's biggest mistake was not checking his environments, thus leading to the accident.

But it was an accident, after all, and no one had wanted it to happen. Because of that, the court had no intention of pursuing the matter. However, the one grave mistake Wei De had made was not turning up after his daughter was hospitalized. He had not even tried to take responsibility by paying for his daughter's hospitalization bills, much less care for her.

As a father, Wei De was not just an average failure. He was truly a great disappointment. After his daughter got into an accident, he had not even tried to take up any responsibility or care for her at the very least. Moreover, Wei De had been the cause of the accident in the first place. Based on Wei De's behavior, the court agreed that Wei De should never be allowed near Jiajia in the future without the Zhai family being present.

The Zhai family were not at all surprised by the court's decision, but the troublesome part was that no one knew Wei De's whereabouts after the decision was made. As such, no one had been able to inform the Wei family about the court's decision.

Thankfully, that made no difference for the Zhai family. Zhai Hua had decided to send Jiajia to school and pick her up from school once she was discharged. It was not that Jiajia was still young, but she had simply been too lax about her daughter in the past because she had felt that her daughter was obedient.

Chapter 1980: Agreed

If Wei De were to show up, Jiajia would not know how to face her father and might not know how to reject him.

If Zhai Hua was around, the situation would be entirely different. Zhai Hua would be the one dealing with Wei De and would also be the one rejecting him. Once Jiajia graduated from middle school and went to high school, it would be even more convenient. Once she was in high school, Jiajia would be in a boarding school. Then, Zhai Hua would only need to send and pick Jiajia up once every two weeks.

Jiajia, who learned of this decision after waking up from anesthesia, did not refuse. “Mom, why has Dad become like this?” Both she and her mom had witnessed her dad sleeping with her aunt. After the court agreed to her parents’ divorce, her dad had the cheek to show up in front of her, saying that it was entirely her aunt’s fault and that he was innocent.

Jiajia said that she might be young and thus ignorant about the adults’ world and relationship troubles. However, she did know that Wei Wei, who was a few years older than her, was her father’s son. That could not be denied. With Wei Wei’s existence, all of her father’s explanations did not matter to her. He was not being truthful, and he was even trying to lie directly in her face! Did he treat her as a three-year-old child?

Jiajia was broken and infuriated because of her father’s foolishness. In Jiajia’s heart, her father had always been an upright soldier. A hero!

Because the hero in her eyes had suddenly become a big fat liar, Jiajia had no intention of seeing Wei De for the time being. The more interactions she had with him, the greater the destruction of her father’s image in her mind was until there was nothing left.

Even after she got into a car accident, Jiajia still could not understand why her father was so different from the image she had of him in her mind. Her father was not sincere, not great, and not upright at all. In fact, her father was much more like those evil villains in the television dramas that her grandma used to watch!

It was also because Wei De himself had destroyed the upright image of him that Jiajia had that Jiajia tried her best to avoid him. It was because she was trying to get away from him that she had not seen the oncoming traffic and had been knocked down and hospitalized. Now, as the anesthesia was slowly wearing off, Jiajia could not help but wonder if she had had a nightmare or if this was reality.

It was only when the anesthesia completely wore off and the pain in her injured areas struck her that Jiajia confirmed that she had not been dreaming and that this was, in fact, reality.

Jiajia had intended to ask some questions, but upon seeing Zhai Hua feel sorry and heartbroken for her, Jiajia swallowed those questions and asked instead, “Mom, why did you fall for Dad at that time? You must have been blind. I have never met my great-grandpa, but I’ve seen how good my grandpa and uncle are. With such great examples by your side, how could you have married someone like my dad? You’re amazing, Mom!”

If this had not been her dad, her words would have been much ruder.

Real men should be like her grandpa and uncle. Her dad could never compare with her grandpa or uncle. Her grandpa respected her grandma, and even though they were already old, they shared a better relationship than young couples nowadays. Even though her uncle had not married Auntie Qiao yet, her uncle treated Auntie Qiao with so much care and protection.

They were nothing like her dad or paternal grandpa, who always lazed around on the sofa, waiting for the women in the house to serve them like they were emperors. Even though her dad’s actions were not as exaggerated when they were in their own house, her dad was always trying to be controlling although her mom was the one forking out the money.

After seeing how the women in the Zhai family lived and thinking about how her mother lived, Jiajia could not understand how her mother had managed to regress to such a stage. She wondered if her mother had really grown up together with her uncle. After getting used to living with the Zhai family, how could her mom have accepted the Wei family’s lifestyles?

“At that time, your mom wasn’t just blind. Her whole mind was filled with water!” Since her daughter was in the mood for jokes, Zhai Hua played along. Zhai Hua had always felt guilty toward Jiajia. Just because of a mistake that she had made in the past, she had lived a miserable life in the following decade after getting married. More importantly, she had implicated her daughter, Jiajia.

She had once said that she would let her daughter live a better life than herself if she ever had a daughter and would never let her daughter go through whatever she had. But in the end? Her daughter had never gotten what she had never had, and neither did her daughter have what she had.

Jiajia laughed, discovering for the first time that her mother was rather humorous. “Mom, let’s forget it. But in the future...” Jiajia was rather sensible since she was already a teen. She knew that her dad had wronged her mom, betrayed their family, and had committed an unforgivable sin.

What Jiajia had not said was just how much she had given up on her father, Wei De, in that moment she had gotten into the accident. She had fallen backward indeed, but as long as her father had grabbed onto her, she might not have been knocked down. But her father had been afraid. Not only had he not tried to save her, but he had even jumped backward to save himself!

Her father had been chasing her all the while and had even been so close that he would have been able to grab onto her if he stuck his arm out. Then, there was a loud screeching noise before Jiajia felt as though she had been electrocuted. Initially, she only felt that she had been knocked down but did not feel any pain.

It was only when she saw her father panic did Jiajia slowly start to feel the pain. She did have some memory of all this. But in the end, the one who sent her to the hospital was not her father.

“In the future, as long as I don’t agree to it, he’ll never have the chance to meet you or interact with you,” Zhai Hua said coldly. “We reapplied to the court, and because of his behavior, the court agreed. Jiajia, you don’t have to worry. Mom will protect you.”

After a long while, Jiajia only hummed in agreement. Jiajia did not know what more she could say. Jiajia was still a child and had moments of willfulness. After getting into such an accident, it was hard for Jiajia not to get angry at Wei De or even find an excuse for him. Besides, Wei De had never even shown up to express his concern. Taking all these into consideration, Jiajia had no intention of meeting her father, Wei De, for the time being. She was simply afraid that seeing him would hurt her again.