

RTAMM 1981

Chapter 1981: Watch Where You're Going

Once Jiajia returned home after being discharged from the hospital, everyone who was on good terms with the Zhai family had found out that the Zhai family were about to hold a wedding. Zhai Sheng, who had been divorced for quite a few years, was finally willing to end his bachelor life and get married. However, no one seemed to have found out whom Zhai Sheng was about to marry. It seemed as though the lady he was going to marry was not from within their circle.

But no one cared whether that bride was a real-life Cinderella and only thought that this woman must be rather capable to make Zhai Sheng agree to marry her. It was no wonder that the Zhai family did not care about that woman's background. Nothing could be worse than Zhai Sheng remaining single, after all.

It was also the Qiu family's fault for having raised such a daughter. Many people could not understand how Qiu Chenxi could have turned out in this manner. However, when Qiu Qin's deeds were exposed, everyone finally came to an understanding. As compared to her biological father, Qiu Qin, Qiu Chenxi was simply throwing a small tantrum. It was no big deal at all.

"What are you looking at, uncle?" Wang Yang saw Zhu Chengqi holding something in his hands as he came down. Wang Yang thought that it was strange. Ever since his uncle started recuperating from his illness, he stopped reading the newspaper. At the very most, he would watch the news on television from time to time. So, what was it that was written in such a small font that his uncle was willing to squint to read?

Zhu Chengqi placed the invitation on the table. "It's the Zhai family's invitation. Zhai Sheng's getting married." What shocked Zhu Chengqi was the bride's name.

Wang Yang raised his eyebrow, hoping to watch a good show. "Is that so? Where did this amazing and capable woman come from?" It was not just in his youth. Even now, Zhai Sheng was still someone he looked up to but could never catch up with. The only thing that Wang Yang could feel proud of was that Zhai Sheng was still unmarried and childless at his age.

In both aspects, he had won against Zhai Sheng. "Uncle, can I take a look?" Though this was so, Wang Yang felt a little embarrassed. The Zhai family had already produced three chiefs, and what was most frustrating was that China was a democratic country. As such, the three generations of chiefs in the Zhai family had not inherited their positions from their fathers. They had relied on their own capabilities and military achievements and had earned those positions.

Because of that, even though Zhai Sheng was getting remarried at the age of forty-five, there would still be countless people who would be willing to attend his wedding, not to mention how these people would all be powerful people in high positions acknowledged and recognized by the Zhai family. In short, everyone who was invited had a certain social standing.

Within their circle of acquaintances in Ping Cheng, everyone knew that it was Wang Yang who was taking care of his uncle, Zhu Chengqi, who was childless. Zhu Chengqi had received an invitation but Wang Yang had not. This could only mean that the Zhai family was inviting only Zhu Chengqi and not the Wang family or Wang Yang.

This meant that Wang Yang was not in the Zhai family's circle and that the Zhai family had not accepted Wang Yang yet.

“Go ahead.” Zhu Chengqi did not stop him. If he did not let Wang Yang look at it now, Wang Yang would eventually find a way to take a closer look at the invitation anyway. Besides, there was still a month to the wedding. He was definitely not the only one who had received an invitation. If Wang Yang did not get a satisfactory answer here, he would try his best to get wind of the situation elsewhere.

Instead of letting Wang Yang waste his effort to find out about it, Zhu Chengqi preferred letting Wang Yang take a look at it in case Wang Yang had any suspicions of his own.

“Qiao Nan?!” At the sight of those two words, Wang Yang's expression changed. It was not just Wang Yang. Even Wang Yang's wife, who was drinking some congee, choked.

Wang Yang took a deep breath and his expression eased slightly. “Uncle, do you mean that the woman Zhai Sheng's marrying is called Qiao Nan as well?” This Qiao Nan was not that Qiao Nan, right? If that was the case...

Wang Yang suddenly thought of something. After Zhu Baoguo passed on, Zhu Chengqi had mentioned in passing that it would be good to have a son like Zhai Sheng and a daughter like Qiao Nan. Even if he had a son, that would be all right as well, as long as his son married a lady like Qiao Nan.

Had this invitation not satisfied exactly what Zhu Chengqi had said at that time?

The two young people whom Zhu Chengqi had named and praised were now together. Wang Yang's heart pounded furiously and uneasily. "Uncle, you haven't entirely recovered. Are you still going to attend this wedding in a month's time?" If he was indeed going, was he planning on going alone, or was he going to bring him along?

Wang Yang still wanted very much to enter the Zhai family's circle, but thinking about how he would see the two people whom he hated the most together, Wang Yang did not really want to get involved.

"There are so many people who share the same surnames in China. How would I know whether the Qiao Nan that Zhai Sheng's marrying is the same Qiao Nan that I know? Anyway, there's still a month to the wedding. If my health gets better by then, I might decide to go. After all, our family shares a long history with the Zhai family. Since I'm not in the best of health, I'm not going to risk my own health just to attend a junior's wedding."

Compared to Wang Yang's wife, who dared not eat too much because she was afraid of gaining weight, Zhu Chengqi could not eat too much because of his poor health. "I've finished eating. You two can go on."

After Zhu Chengqi left to return to his study, Wang Yang was no longer in the mood to continue eating. He slammed his chopsticks down on the table in frustration. Anyway, Zhu Chengqi was already old and his hearing was not as good as before. As such, Wang Yang had no qualms about being heard by Zhu Chengqi. "That old foggy..." If he wanted to die, he should do it as soon as possible!

Once Zhu Chengqi was really dead, he would be in luck! But now, no matter how bad Zhu Chengqi's health was, he was still pressing on day after day. As long as Zhu Chengqi was still alive, Wang Yang had to watch his every step and keep up his facade as an obedient nephew in front of Zhu Chengqi.

Otherwise, Wang Yang's years of effort might very well go down the drain if Zhu Chengqi were to change his mind or his will.

Wang Yang could never wrap his head around it. The rest of the Zhu family was already dead and he could be considered to be part of the Zhu family too. Was it not logical for Zhu Chengqi to leave the Zhu family's assets to him? Why did he have to put in so much effort to get something that he deserved? He could even forget about that, but Zhu Chengqi's tantrums from time to time meant that Wang Yang could never live peacefully.

“What nonsense are you spouting?” Wang Yang had always reminded her that they were in Zhu Chengqi’s territory. Even though the caretaker took instructions from the couple, this was the Zhu family’s house, not the Wang family’s.

Chapter 1982: Not a Divorce

Besides, she had always heard Wang Yang talking about how capable and impressive Zhu Chengqi had been in his youth. Even now that he was old, no one had ever taken advantage of Zhu Chengqi. As such, Wang Yang’s wife was even more cautious. “Neither you nor I know whether that old man’s hearing is really bad. Only he has mentioned it. The old man just left and you made such a loud noise by slamming your chopsticks down. What if he heard it? What would he think of us? We’re living such miserable lives with that old man now. We’re still young and can’t possibly die before him.”

Wang Yang’s wife leisurely took a sip of her congee. “Today’s pain is tomorrow’s strength. He’s already on the verge of dying while we still have half our lives ahead of us. What’s the hurry?”

“That’s true.” Wang Yang calmed down. After working so hard for so many years, the day he had been waiting for was finally within reach. Indeed, he had to be more calm and tolerant. “I only got agitated and threw a tantrum because I saw that invitation.”

Seeing Zhai Sheng’s name was one thing, but seeing Qiao Nan’s was another, and her name made Wang Yang feel just the slightest bit guilty. No matter how good Zhai Sheng was, Zhu Chengqi had only talked about having a son like Zhai Sheng. On the other hand, if Qiao Nan could not be the Zhu family’s daughter, even being their daughter-in-law would be good. Qiao Nan held a higher standing in Zhu Chengqi’s heart as compared to Zhai Sheng.

There was no way Zhai Sheng could be Zhu Chengqi’s son. He cared for whatever the Zhai had, but Zhai Sheng did not really care for them. But Qiao Nan was different. Qiao Nan was just an old lady, and neither was she the Qiao family’s only daughter. Wang Yang was extremely unsettled by Zhu Chengqi’s satisfaction in Qiao Nan.

As such, the moment that he saw Qiao Nan’s name, Wang Yang was like a cat whose tail had been stepped on.

Wang Yang’s wife had always heard of Qiao Nan, and that made her even more curious. “Do I really look like her?” Wang Yang had married her simply to coax that old man and prevent that old

man from trying to get Qiao Nan to satisfy his desires. As such, Wang Yang's wife really wanted to meet the real Qiao Nan to see how she looked like. Was Qiao Nan really that good that Zhu Chengqi would rather hand all of the Zhu family's assets over to an outsider than care about his own nephew?

Wang Yang eyed his wife without answering him. She resembled her in terms of her appearance, but not her spirit. Anyone unfamiliar with them might mistake her for Qiao Nan, but no one would make that mistake upon a closer look. As for why Qiao Nan was so easily recognizable, Wang Yang was not sure either.

But Wang Yang thought that that was the reason why Zhu Chengqi cared so much about Qiao Nan. If Qiao Nan had no strengths at all, he would be infuriated for having lost to such an outsider.

"Why are you looking at me like this? That's right. She's getting married to Zhai Sheng. Why don't you show me a photo of her to let me get to know her?" It was all right if he did not want to tell her anything. As long as he showed her a photo, she would naturally have an answer for herself. Initially, she had thought that once the old man was no longer around, she would be able to embarrass Qiao Nan as Wang Yang's wife. After giving Qiao Nan some benefits, she would then be able to settle all their accounts with Qiao Nan and have nothing to do with Qiao Nan from then on.

But she had never expected that a forty-year-old like Qiao Nan was getting married and was about to become the chief's wife. Because of this, Wang Yang's wife was a little upset since that meant that she would never be able to embarrass Qiao Nan.

On the contrary, if they were to meet each other one day, she might even have to take advantage of resembling Qiao Nan, and she might even need to address Qiao Nan as her 'elder sister'. If she was successful in doing that, she and Wang Yang might benefit greatly from that!

She thought about how she would have to suck up to Qiao Nan after finishing with Zhu Chengqi and how this was never-ending. When would others try to suck up to her instead then?

Wang Yang had no idea what his wife was thinking. "You know that old man's temper very well. I rescued your brother once, but I'm sure you know what will happen if the same thing happens a second time and the old man learns of it. If you really care about your brother, you'd better keep an eye on him. Otherwise, even though I'm his brother-in-law, I won't be able to help him."

At the mention of his brother-in-law, Wang Yang fell into a bad mood again. Apart from her face, this woman had not been useful to him at all. In fact, she had even dragged him down.

Upon receiving Wang Yang's threatening glance, Wang Yang's wife shrank her neck and answered in a soft voice, "Don't worry. I've already talked to my parents. Before that old man dies, there won't be another opportunity for him to create any trouble." It was not just for her family. She was doing this for her own future.

Wang Yang might be able to marry a young and pretty lady if they were to get divorced, but she would definitely not be able to find a better man than Wang Yang. If her family wanted to lead comfortable lives, they would have to go along with whatever she asked and they would have to rein her brother in. If Wang Yang were to leave her, both she and her family would be at a loss.

Thankfully, although her brother might be a troublemaker, he was quite sensitive. Upon hearing that his brother-in-law had thrown a tantrum, he immediately distanced himself from those bad influences for fear of ruining his brother-in-law's plans.

"Okay," Wang Yang coldly said. Although his in-laws were not especially capable, at least, they listened well to him. Otherwise, he would never have married his wife even though she did have such a face. It was true that he did not want the old man to have a good impression of Qiao Nan, but he was not intentionally trying to use his wife to discredit Qiao Nan.

Wang Yang knew that if something were to happen, the problem would not be with Qiao Nan but his wife. Wang Yang could not afford to lose this person and this was his only requirement of his wife's family.

"It's about time. You should go to work."

"Alright, keep an eye on the old man." Wang Yang had limited days of leave. While he was around, he naturally spent his time 'accompanying' Zhu Chengqi. While he was not around, his wife hardly left Zhu Chengqi's side either. The couple took turns to keep a close eye on Zhu Chengqi.

At times, his wife would question if he was overthinking it or if he was being overly sensitive. Wang Yang replied that he had grown up with his uncle and he was clearer than anyone else just how his uncle was.

It was exactly because his uncle was very calm that he felt uneasy. In the past, he had been young and had never been able to understand why he was in such a situation. He was clearly more sensible than Zhu Baoguo and was even smarter than Zhu Baoguo!

Chapter 1983: Pot Calling the Kettle Black

But why was it that when outsiders talked about them, he always ranked behind Zhu Baoguo?

When they grew older, Wang Yang finally understood that it was not that others really felt that Zhu Baoguo was better than him. The reason why those people praised Zhu Baoguo was that Zhu Baoguo was the Zhu family's only paternal grandson, while he was a maternal grandson. Compared to Zhu Baoguo, he did not mean much. Everything of the Zhu family would eventually belong to Zhu Baoguo, and based on this alone, Zhu Baoguo had won against him.

To tell the truth, Wang Yang hated Zhu Baoguo very much. However, he was not evil and did not have very complex schemes toward Zhu Baoguo. All he was thinking of was having Zhu Baoguo mix around with those gangsters so that he would eventually become useless. After all, there was no saying whether all of the Zhu family's assets would truly go to Zhu Baoguo alone.

Every time his uncle saw him, his uncle would always praise him and treat him well.

Wang Yang had never expected that Zhu Baoguo had gotten into an argument because of his short temper and had eventually lost his life. Wang Yang had been scared out of his wits at that time. Thankfully, security within the country had not been as tight at that time as it was now. Wanting to arrest the criminal involved, the police had put up his photos all over the internet.

Because of Zhu Baoguo's death, every single one of those gangsters had been shaken and had all run away. Although the Zhu family had never given up on this matter, this short period of time was enough for the Wang family to interfere and pave the way for Wang Yang such that anyone who was arrested would never implicate Wang Yang.

After Zhu Baoguo's death, the entire Zhu family was understandably upset. As such, Wang Yang's abnormal behavior at that time had gone unnoticed by the Zhu family. They simply took it that Wang Yang was upset by Zhu Baoguo's death as well. That was why the usually alert and intelligent Wang Yang suddenly looked as though he had lost his soul for a few days.

That incident had happened so many years ago that Wang Yang had almost forgotten about how he was the root cause of Zhu Baoguo's death. But Zhu Baoguo had died such a long time ago, and now, his son was almost at the age that Zhu Baoguo had died. And it was now that Wang Yang started to feel uneasy, especially in front of Zhu Chengqi.

It went without saying that Wang Yang would never have anything to do with anything that belonged to the Zhu family if Zhu Chengqi were to find out about the truth of the matter. As long as Zhu Chengqi found someone, Wang Yang might very well be implicated.

One did not need to be afraid as long as they did not do anything against their conscience.

Seeing that Zhu Chengqi did not have much longer to live, Wang Yang felt even more so uneasy. Even when he napped, he would dream of what happened to Zhu Baoguo. With everything that had happened, it was inevitable for Wang Yang to be on the edge. Even his wife felt that Wang Yang was being overly anxious.

Yes, they were indeed after the Zhu family's assets, but Zhu Chengqi did not have other relatives. If Zhu Chengqi were to pass away, Wang Yang would definitely be the legal successor. Besides, Zhu Chengqi was not in good health because of how hard he had worked in his youth. It had nothing to do with Wang Yang's family.

They had not caused Zhu Chengqi's illness, and neither did they have anything to do with how long more Zhu Chengqi could live. As such, Wang Yang's wife could not understand why Wang Yang was always so anxious as though they had killed someone.

Despite this, Wang Yang's wife did not dare to bring this up to him. She knew that Wang Yang might not tell her what was going on even if she were to ask him. As long as she did her job and did as Wang Yang instructed her to, the day Wang Yang prospered would be the day her own family would as well. After reminding herself of this, Wang Yang's wife told herself to press on and tolerate everything that was happening.

As a young woman in her early thirties, she never left the house to go shopping. Instead, she spent all her time looking after Zhu Chengqi, who seemed to have one foot in the grave. But she had never complained about anything, much less showed any sign that she was miserable in front of Zhu Chengqi.

Because of her obedience, Wang Yang found a job for that troublemaker brother-in-law of his without hesitation and gave him a sum of money, instructing him to lay low for the time being. His wife's performance was good and his brother-in-law listened well to him. All that was lacking now was Zhu Chengqi's death.

No outsiders knew about what was going on within the Zhu family. Everyone that was close to the Zhu family knew that Zhu Chengqi no longer seemed to be in good spirits after his son's death. He

initially already had a cold expression. After his wife and son's death, Zhu Chengqi had become a recluse and hardly kept in touch with his old comrades.

The only understanding everyone had of Zhu Chengqi was that they had not seen Old Zhu in a long time but that he was still alive.

Outsiders might not have understood the Zhu family's situation, but they were all surprised when receiving the wedding invitation. Oh, Zhai Sheng had finally agreed to get married. They would definitely have to make time to attend this wedding.

Zhai Sheng's imminent wedding was certainly a joyous occasion for the people in the Ping Cheng quad.

Especially those neighbors who had seen Qiao Nan staying in the Zhai family's courtyard for a few days. They could not help but wonder whom Zhai Sheng would be getting married to. Could the bride really be the young lady from the Qiao family?

But that was impossible. While the Qiao family's younger daughter was not ugly, she was old and already forty. Those neighbors thought that a chief would have certain standards and would never marry Qiao Nan who had such a background. Besides, Zhai Sheng's status and position were much higher than their own. There was no way Zhai Sheng would take a fancy to someone whom they themselves did not.

If it was not Qiao Nan, then which young lady had won the heart of this chief, Zhai Sheng?

There were some who could no longer hold their curiosity in and immediately ran to the Qiao family's courtyard to ask about the matter. "Is Old Ding around?"

Ding Jiayi, who was sunning her quilt, was not very happy upon hearing her neighbor's voice. "What's the matter?" Ding Jiayi knew that the Qiao family had gone through too much lately, especially on the news. Their neighbors had been treated to a good show. At one time, their neighbors had even lambasted her and Zijin, saying that they had exploited Qiao Nan.

As such, Ding Jiayi could not find it in her to be friendly toward these old neighbors or even try to get along with them. Even though they all stayed in the same quad, they had never shared good relationships. The Qiao family was not very well-to-do, and these neighbors in the northern part of the quad were always comparing to see which family was better off. It was ridiculous that the pot was calling the kettle black.

Chapter 1984: Wrong Person

“What can be going on? I just want to have a share in your family’s joyous occasion. We’re neighbors, after all, so you should invite us to this wedding. When that time comes, I’ll be sure to give you a fat red packet.” It was the chief’s wedding. They had never been invited to a chief’s wedding.

The Zhai family might have held a wedding in the past, but they had not even been treated to candy, let alone been invited to Zhai Sheng’s wedding.

Logically, since the Zhai family had two children, they must have organized two weddings. The funny part was that the Zhai family did not seem to have cared much about their daughter getting married. It was only when their son was getting married did everyone in the quad learn that Zhai Sheng had a partner. Apart from that, they knew nothing at all.

Although both Zhai Sheng and Zhai Hua had been married once, the people in the quad felt that Zhai Sheng’s remarriage did not seem any worse off than his first marriage. In fact, the way they saw it, this seemed to be Zhai Sheng’s first marriage. After all, this was exactly how everyone else held their weddings. The Zhai family was organizing a large-scale wedding for the first time and had even prepared a whole bunch of candy to distribute to their neighbors in the quad.

Even those who typically hated eating sweets were more than willing to have their share of the Zhai family’s. Now that they had finished eating the Zhai family’s, they tried to get on the good side of the possible bride’s. Both the male and the female’s candies were equally appetizing.

“What nonsense are you spouting?” Ding Jiayi stared at them, wanting to chase them away. There was nothing their family had not been implicated in. Since they did not share a good relationship, there was no point in trying to put up a false front. “Don’t you guys know about our family’s situation? How can you say such things? Scram! All of you!”

After Qiao Zijin received her kidney transplant surgery, she had not exhibited any signs of rejecting the organ and had even been recuperating rather well. However, the atmosphere in the Qiao family had not gotten better just because of Qiao Zijin’s recovery.

Ever since Qiao Zijin found out that Qiao Dongliang had already handed the courtyard’s property deed over to Qiao Nan behind their backs, she had never once been in a good mood. Knowing that her ex-husband had never forgotten Qiao Nan all these years and how snatching her ex-husband from Qiao Nan had been a failure, Qiao Zijin had never felt good, even though she had the intention of marrying Qiao Nan to Chen Jun.

After all these years of marriage and even after having a son, Qiao Zijin could not feel nothing toward Chen Jun having feelings for Qiao Nan. As such, Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi had rushed down to Qingshui Town to drag Qiao Nan out after getting the address from Chen Jun.

While she had been in the hospital, she had blamed her divorce on Qiao Nan. That was a hundred percent true!

Qiao Nan had caused her to lose her marriage and her husband, and she had also caused her to lose years of her youth. Qiao Nan owed her so much. All she wanted was a bit of Qiao Nan's money. Was that too much to ask for? She had not gone overboard at all. In fact, she was already being magnanimous by simply asking for money from Qiao Nan.

If it had been any other woman in her position, they would have fought Qiao Nan to death. But on the account that they were sisters, she would be gracious and let Qiao Nan have Chen Jun and be her son's stepmother if Qiao Nan gave her some money.

But that did not mean that she did not feel miserable.

After returning from a fruitless trip, Qiao Zijin was gloomy and picked a fight with everyone she saw. Of course, the one whom she was most angry at was Qiao Dongliang since Qiao Dongliang was the one who had handed her courtyard over to Qiao Nan secretly. At the same time, Qiao Zijin was displeased with Ding Jiayi as well.

All these years, Qiao Zijin had seen just how much Qiao Dongliang had listened to Ding Jiayi and followed her every command.

Was her mom not capable? There was nothing her mom could not do, right? But the most ridiculous part was that her dad had given the property deed of the courtyard to Qiao Nan, and this had happened right under her mom's nose, but her mom did not even know anything about it! If she had not wanted to get what rightfully belonged to her early, she might not even have found out about this until her mom's death!

A woman who could not even manage her husband and his assets was truly useless.

Qiao Dongliang could not care less about Qiao Zijin being upset, but Ding Jiayi did care. This whole week, Ding Jiayi had been walking on eggshells and treating Qiao Zijin like an empress, hoping that Qiao Zijin would calm down. At the very least, she should not put all the blame on her.

There seemed to be a cloud looming over the Qiao family that would never dissipate. Ding Jiayi's mood was terrible living under such oppressive conditions. Now, these irritating neighbors were even coming to congratulate her and ask for wedding candy! The annoyed Ding Jiayi could only pick up her broom to chase them out of her house. These people were clearly trying to make fun of her family.

Ding Jiayi wanted to give these neighbors candy as well, even though they did not have a good relationship. Because that would mean that Zijin had found a suitable marriage partner and would lead a good life in the future. The problem was that the expected intelligent son-in-law who could pick out a gem had not yet appeared.

“We’re just coming to congratulate you, yet you’re being so nasty! Wow, you’ve not become the chief’s mother-in-law yet, but you’re already putting on airs and not acknowledging us as your old neighbors?” Her neighbors were upset. They had not confirmed if the person whom Zhai Sheng was marrying was indeed the Qiao family’s younger daughter. They were here only to try their luck.

To make it clear, they thought that there was a great probability that it was not the case. If Qiao Nan was getting married, could the Qiao family not know about it and not be doing anything?

In comparison to the Zhai family who was busy getting ready, the atmosphere in the Qiao family seemed cold. It was even colder than other families who were not celebrating any joyous occasions. Seeing that, these neighbors were even more certain. The woman getting married to Zhai Sheng was not their daughter. Of course, it could not possibly be that old and unmarried woman from the Qiao family.

After making sure of that, the neighbors were not afraid of offending the powerless Ding Jiayi. At this time, they were simply using the wedding to pour salt on Ding Jiayi’s wound.

“What chief’s mother-in-law? Have you guys got the wrong person?” Ding Jiayi’s anger dissipated. The only chief in the quad was in the Zhai family. What a family! She did, in fact, want to become in-laws with the Zhai family. The problem was that the two families did not know each other, and Zijin had never even met them before.

As such, there was no way the Zhai family could have known that such a good young lady like Zijin existed within the quad. In that case, how could she possibly become the Zhai family's in-law?

Unfortunately, it was so near, yet so far. If the Zhai family knew that there was such a good child like Zijin in the quad, she would definitely have become the Zhai family's in-law!

Talking about the pride of the quad, the Zhai family, Ding Jiayi's attitude softened and she no longer acted like a provoked hedgehog who wanted to chase her nosy neighbors out of her house. "Isn't Zhai Sheng divorced?" Those ex-in-laws of the Zhai family were no longer worthy of that title. That was all in the past.

The neighbors laughed in bad faith. "So what if he got divorced? He can only get remarried because he's divorced. We've lived together for so many years! How could you not say a thing when such a joyous occasion is happening? If your family gets too busy, you can always ask us for help! What's there to hide about such a joyous occasion? You should have told us and we would have been happy on your behalf! It hasn't been easy for Nan Nan, and her day is finally coming. She's already an old lady of forty. She's been unmarried all this while, and now that she's getting married, she's getting married to the best person in this entire quad!"

At the mention of Qiao Nan, Ding Jiayi was annoyed. This also made Qiao Zijin, who was about to step out, stop in her tracks. Instead of coming out, she left the door open to eavesdrop on the conversation.

Ding Jiayi furrowed her brows. "You old women are spouting nonsense! What does the Zhai family's joyous occasion have to do with us or that wretched—I mean, Qiao Nan? Why did you bother mentioning Qiao Nan?"

That wretched girl was already forty. If it was not for Zijin's kindness and willingness to give her a chance, that wretched girl would probably become a bag of old bones before she could find a man who was willing to marry her. Humph! She did not even know to cherish such a good sister like Zijin. Where was that wretched girl even hiding now?

If Qiao Nan were to appear after Chen Jun got remarried to some other woman, it would be too late to regret it then.

"It seems like you really don't know anything about it. Or are you trying to hide it from us because you're scared that we'll try to ride on your laurels? Everyone knows about the Zhai family's situation, and it's difficult for our families in the northern courtyard to even enter the southern courtyard. I haven't even been inside myself. Qiao Nan's really impressive. She's the pride of our

northern courtyard! Not only did she manage to enter the southern courtyard, but she even managed to stay in the Zhai family's house for a few days. Now that the Zhai family is organizing a wedding, who could it be if not your Qiao Nan? She's such a proper lady, and she even stayed in someone else's house for a few nights. Who would believe that nothing happened? Qiao Nan wouldn't allow herself to be taken advantage of, right?"

Humph! She was already an old lady of forty. How could she be so lucky to enter the Zhai family's house in the southern courtyard? If Qiao Nan really thought that she would be able to become a modern-day Cinderella and have a relationship with the Zhai family, then it would truly be too shameless of her!

Now that the Zhai family was organizing a wedding, Qiao Nan should have some self-awareness and distance herself from the Zhai family instead of adding trouble to the new bride. Someone like that was not likable at all.

It was not just Ding Jiayi. Even Qiao Zijin almost flew into a rage. She had to resist the urge to rush out and confront those neighbors. What did they mean that Qiao Nan had stayed in the Zhai family's house for a few days? When did that happen? Why did she know nothing about that? Besides, when had Qiao Nan gotten to know the Zhai family and gotten so close?

Not only had she managed to enter the southern courtyard, but she had even stayed a few nights at the Zhai family's house! She had never even dreamed of doing such a thing! How could Qiao Nan be so lucky and daring to do something that she had never dared to do?

In that moment, Qiao Zijin had tossed Chen Jun to the back of her mind. Even in another twenty to thirty years, Chen Jun and all his descendants would never climb to a position that could match up to the Zhai family's. As such, Chen Jun was nothing compared to the Zhai family.

If Qiao Nan had known the Zhai family all along, why had she wasted her time and youth on Chen Jun? There was no comparing Chen Jun and the Zhai family. Even if she did not get married to Zhai Sheng, as long as someone in the Zhai family was willing to take her on as a goddaughter, she would have a whole range of men to choose from.

What was different was that those men would never cheat on her like Chen Jun had, and they would even treat her like a queen.

Thinking about how Qiao Nan had deprived her of that happiness, Qiao Zijin was seething in anger. She had always known that Qiao Nan was such an evil and scheming person but her dad had never

believed her, even saying that she owed Qiao Nan. Now, he had better open his eyes and see who the one who owed the other was!

Qiao Nan owed it to her! Qiao Nan would never be able to repay her debt in her entire lifetime or even a few lifetimes! Qiao Nan had ruined her biological sister's life!

Unlike the enraged Qiao Zijin, Ding Jiayi was confused but calmed down very quickly. "That's impossible. Don't make up such things. As a mother, I'm much clearer than you are just what kind of person Qiao Nan is. If you want to make a fool of us, you should, at least, come up with something sensible. No one in our family knows the Zhai family."

She could describe that wretched girl's life without even looking at her. She was sure that that wretched girl was busy working. There was no way she would have time to suck up to the Zhai family, much less find a marriage partner, date, or get married.

Zijin was a university graduate. Even if there was such a chance, the one entering the Zhai family's house in the southern courtyard would be Zijin, not that wretched girl. If Zijin had not been able to do so, there was no way that wretched girl would have been able to do it. "Do you think I'm brain-dead? This is just like striking the lottery! But I would have to buy a lottery ticket before I even stand a chance of winning! Since I didn't even buy a ticket, how can I believe you when you say something like that?"

How could she rush up to the Zhai family's house and treat them as in-laws? That was utterly ridiculous! These neighbors were really just waiting to watch a good show for free.

They had been neighbors for decades, but Ding Jiayi had never expected their hearts to be pure evil.

Chapter 1986: Never Considered

These people had not only taken her for a fool but had even played such a cruel prank on them, wanting the Qiao family to get into even more trouble for them to use as a basis for their chats in their free time.

These neighbors could not deny that they were waiting to watch Ding Jiayi as though they were watching a show, but Ding Jiayi's words upset them. "Don't be so mean. We're just trying to help you. It's true that Qiao Nan did stay over at the Zhai family's house for a few days. Quite a few of us saw Qiao Nan getting off the Zhai family's car with several large bags. The Zhai family treats Qiao Nan extremely well. It's not just us who know about this. Old Qiao knows about it too. How

could you, as a mother, know less about Qiao Nan's situation than outsiders like us? Don't tell me that you didn't even know that Qiao Nan came back?"

But it was normal for her not to know either. As long as Qiao Nan was no fool, she would not be so foolish as to return home and jump into the fiery pit with a mother like Ding Jiayi around.

"..." Ding Jiayi was almost speechless, and she felt utterly humiliated since there was yet another matter that Qiao Dongliang had known but she had not. In the past, the couple had always discussed matters with each other, especially Qiao Dongliang, who had never made any decisions behind Ding Jiayi's back.

Now, Qiao Dongliang practically treated Ding Jiayi as an outsider. No matter what decision he had to make, he did not even bother letting Ding Jiayi know about the matter, much less discuss it with him.

Ding Jiayi might not have believed everything else, but she had no choice but to believe them once they said that Qiao Dongliang had known that Qiao Nan had stayed in the Zhai family's house for a few days. After all, she had a perfect example in front of her that was the incident with the property deed. In fact, that incident was not over yet.

Because of the property deed, Ding Jiayi had gotten angry at Qiao Dongliang and had not spoken to Qiao Dongliang in two to three days. Now that this was happening to her too, Ding Jiayi felt so aggrieved that she was on the verge of tears.

Ding Jiayi, whose eyes were all red, unhesitatingly chased all her neighbors out. "Get out, all of you! No matter what, these are all my family's affairs. I don't care who you are. You'd better scram!" These outsiders had absolutely no say in her family's affairs!

Since this was not their house, they had no choice but to leave. They could not afford to stay, in case Ding Jiayi decided to report the matter to the police.

After chasing those nosy neighbors away, Qiao Zijin walked in front of Ding Jiayi, tears filling her face. "Mom, tell me the truth. What does Dad mean by this? The last time, he knew that Qiao Nan was in Qingshui Town but he didn't tell me about it and even handed the property deed over to her! He knew that both you and I were anxiously looking for Qiao Nan since she stole the money I needed urgently to save my life. Dad even knew that Qiao Nan was back in Ping Cheng and even in this quad. It wouldn't even have been a hundred meters away for us to look for her. Why didn't my dad say anything? Why did he hide it from me?"

And it had happened recently!

At her lowest and when she had one foot in the grave, Qiao Nan had gotten to know the Zhai family, and because of this relationship, Qiao Nan was now living such a comfortable life. On the other hand, she had to sell her house to raise enough funds for her surgery.

She could not understand the difference in her dad's treatment toward her and Qiao Nan since they were both his daughters. It seemed as though Qiao Nan was her dad's only daughter while she had been picked up from the dumpster. Even if one was biased, they could not be any more biased than her father! Did her father want to see her be sent to jail?

She thought about the damage that the news had done to her while she had been receiving treatment in the hospital. If those people had known about their family's relationship with the Zhai family, would they have treated her in that manner? Of course not!

Qiao Nan wanted to ruin her, and so did her dad. Why? Why were her relatives all like that?

"Don't cry. We haven't confirmed it yet. When your dad comes back, we can clear things up and get your dad to explain the situation to us. It wouldn't be good for us to malign your dad if those people were just spouting nonsense, right?" Ding Jiayi tried to comfort Qiao Zijin, hoping that these were not true. She truly hoped that Qiao Dongliang had never done anything to wrong her or Qiao Zijin.

Qiao Zijin wept as if trying to dry her tears. "Mom, it's a disaster. Even you don't believe what you just said. My dad is so vicious. He knows that Qiao Nan has struck rich, and he can't be bothered with me since I don't have a job or a husband and can't be filial to him. He needs only Qiao Nan as his daughter to enjoy his old age. He's looking down on me!"

Her dad clearly thought that Qiao Nan was more capable than her and would be better able to take care of him. With such a capable daughter like Qiao Nan, he could very well just kick this useless daughter out, right?

At the thought of this, Qiao Zijin sneered. What kind of biological parents were they? They did not really love her or Qiao Nan. They were simply treating them as tools to support themselves. As pitiful as Qiao Nan was, she was nowhere better.

Qiao Zijin had not stopped crying by the time Qiao Dongliang returned. The moment she saw Qiao Dongliang return, Ding Jiayi ran over anxiously and clutched onto him. “Old Qiao, hurry and explain the situation to Zijin. Just now, a few of our neighbors came over and said that Qiao Nan has been back for a while and living in the Zhai family’s house in the southern courtyard. They even said that you knew all about it. You should have heard the kind of nonsense those people spouted! They said that Zhai Sheng’s getting married, and they even dared to say that the person whom Zhai Sheng is going to marry is Qiao Nan! How could that wretched girl ever have such good fortune? Don’t you think it’s ridiculous?”

It was impossible. Zijin had not been able to marry into the Zhai family, so how could the Zhai family have taken a fancy to someone like Qiao Nan, who was so stingy and ugly? That was a lie that no one would believe!

“Zhai Sheng’s marrying Nan Nan?” Qiao Dongliang was stunned. Qiao Dongliang knew that Qiao Nan had lived with the Zhai family while she was back in Ping Cheng. The problem was that Qiao Dongliang had not known about the extent of Qiao Nan’s relationship with the Zhai family, and neither did he dare to ask about it.

But Qiao Dongliang had never even considered the possibility of Qiao Nan getting together with Zhai Sheng.

Chapter 1987: Impossible

Ding Jiayi hit Qiao Dongliang a few times. “That’s nonsense. Qiao Nan doesn’t even know the Zhai family. How could she possibly get married to Zhai Sheng? Those people who said that just want to embarrass our family. How could you stand on their side? Do you think that our family hasn’t gotten enough attention? How can you be so shameless to try to associate us with the Zhai family?”

They had a treasured son-in-law like Chen Jun, who was nothing. In comparison to the Zhai family, Chen Jun was nothing more than a stalk of grass. Ordinary people like them could not even dream of getting close with the Zhai family. “Don’t be silly. Think this through carefully. We can’t let those people make fun of us anymore. We weren’t even the ones who came up with this rumor. These people really have too much free time on hand that they dare to spout such nonsense!”

Ding Jiayi got agitated as she spoke, wanting those neighbors to appear in front of her so that she could rip all of their mouths apart right then and there.

It was normal for their family to have a small argument every three days and a big fight every five days.

These neighbors of hers were so evil. They dared to play such pranks on them even while knowing that their family's situation was not good. People like that were sure to be sent to the lowest levels of hell after their deaths!

"Let go of me." Qiao Dongliang returned from his trance and flung Ding Jiayi away, returning to his room alone. Although it had happened a little late, Nan Nan had finally found a marriage partner, after all. Marrying one's daughter was not just a matter of talk. He had to prepare some things for Nan Nan. He could not possibly let Nan Nan marry into the Zhai family with nothing at all, right?

But perhaps, he should try to get in touch with Nan Nan to determine whether this matter was indeed true.

Thinking about how he had learned about his daughter's marriage from his neighbors, Qiao Dongliang felt sour and hurt. But he dared not put the blame on Qiao Nan because he knew that Qiao Nan had the least responsibility in how this family turned out.

With Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin around, it did not matter what Qiao Nan did. As long as the two of them were around, there would never be peace or harmony in their family.

Seeing that Qiao Dongliang had returned to his room, Qiao Zijin wiped away her tears. "Mom, what does Dad mean by this? Is he admitting to it, or is he denying it?" Qiao Zijin's heart felt cold. Chen Jun had told her dad about Qiao Nan a long time ago, but her dad had kept that from her mom.

She had not believed it then, but when the truth was finally exposed, it was indeed proven that her dad had been hiding it from her mom. Now, her neighbors were saying that her dad had already known that Qiao Nan was back in Ping Cheng, was living in the Zhai family's house, and even had a close relationship with them! Her dad was not denying it. Did that mean that it was true?

Qiao Nan really knew the Zhai family and was even getting married to that impressive and powerful Zhai Sheng?

At the thought of this possibility, Qiao Zijin did not feel upset but despair. She had lived forty-two years of her life suppressing Qiao Nan and beating Qiao Nan in every aspect. Now that half her life was over, she was in a downward spiral. On the contrary, Qiao Nan seemed to be rising to the peak of her life.

Qiao Zijin could not get over this stark difference.

Especially when she thought about how so many people had agreed with her about Qiao Nan. If Qiao Nan were to get married to Zhai Sheng, all those people would unhesitatingly change their stances. How they had praised her and denigrated Qiao Nan at that time would be exactly how they would do it now, only with different subjects.

From then on, she would become a negative example in everyone's eyes, while Qiao Nan would be the epitome of success and 'other people's kids' that everyone talked about. Qiao Zijin was anxious. She would never be able to accept such a day befalling her.

Ding Jiayi was in a panic too. She had never even dreamed that she would have such a close relationship with the Zhai family one day. And this was all Qiao Nan's credit. How could that be?

How could it not be Zijin who raised the Qiao family up to become the family that everyone envied? How could it be that wretched girl, Qiao Nan? Was the Zhai family crazy? Did they not know that Qiao Nan had not even graduated from high school and had low educational qualifications? Did they not know that Qiao Nan was only semi-literate?

Apart from that semi-literate Qiao Nan, they still had Zijin, who was a university graduate, in their family. Even a blind man would know that Zijin was a hundred, or even a thousand times, better than Qiao Nan. If they really wanted a daughter-in-law, they should at least have chosen Zijin and not that semi-literate Qiao Nan! "Zijin, don't panic. We still aren't sure about the situation. Even if what they're saying is true, I have reason to believe that the Zhai family has been duped by Qiao Nan."

"Even if outsiders don't know about Qiao Nan's background, we do. Qiao Nan's nothing more than an unmarried and unqualified old woman of forty. She's not pretty or smart, and neither does she have a sweet mouth. Does she even have any qualifications? If we compare you and Qiao Nan, she's so bad that I can't even stand taking a second look. Our family's so ordinary, and even I wouldn't take a fancy to Qiao Nan. The Zhai family's no fool. Would they give up good young ladies for someone like Qiao Nan? There must be a misunderstanding somewhere. We have to think of a way of letting the Zhai family know the truth. We can't let them be taken in by Qiao Nan's lies!"

Once the Zhai family learned of Qiao Nan's character and background, she would never have a chance of marrying into the Zhai family. Perhaps, she could even take this chance to let the Zhai family know about the existence of such a good young lady like Zijin in the quad. If the Zhai family had fallen for Qiao Nan's tricks, there was no reason that they would not take a liking to such a good young lady like Zijin.

At the thought of this, Ding Jiayi was elated. Not only would she be able to expose Qiao Nan's lies and punish her for abandoning her family when Qiao Zijin was seriously ill, but she would also be able to secure the happiness of her elder daughter!

If Zijin were really to get married to Zhai Sheng, Chen Jun had better run as far as he could and not have any contact with Zijin in the future. What a joke! Did they really think she was a piece of sweet cake that everyone could get a piece of if they wanted?

"Zijin, come. Don't you think Mom's analysis is right? Didn't you say that there are many people who can make fake identity cards now? And there are even so many students coming back after studying abroad. Don't you think that Qiao Nan came up with an illustrious background for herself to dupe the Zhai family? Anyway, think about it. When Chen Feng grows older, would you let your son marry someone like Qiao Nan?"

"Of course not!" Qiao Zijin replied without a second of hesitation.

Chapter 1988: Don't Fancy Her

"Our Feng Feng has such a good family background. He could marry any girl. Why would he want someone like Qiao Nan?" Qiao Nan was totally unqualified to stand next to Feng Feng. Even if Ding Jiayi was just using an analogy, Qiao Zijin felt that using her son as an example together with Qiao Nan was an insult to him.

Ding Jiayi smiled. Indeed, she didn't think wrongly. "That's correct then. The Zhai family's conditions are much better than the Chen family's. You yourself aren't willing for Chen Feng to marry a girl like Qiao Nan. The Zhai family's requirements would definitely be higher than ours. It's either that this matter's fake, or Qiao Nan forged her identity to deceive the Zhai family. Qiao Nan's from our family. By doing this, she is embarrassing us. We cannot let Qiao Nan ruin the Qiao family's reputation. Zijin, if you do this well, our family might really have a chance to be in-laws with the Zhai family. It won't be a lie."

Ding Jiayi felt that Qiao Nan was impossible, but she was full of confidence in Qiao Zijin.

Qiao Zijin blushed. "Mom, what are you talking about?" Compared to Qiao Nan, her conditions were naturally better. However, if their hypothesis was valid and Qiao Nan forged her identity, this meant that the Zhai family had pretty strict requirements on Zhai Sheng's other half.

She was only much better than Qiao Nan's real conditions, not better than Qiao Nan's forged conditions. The Zhai family had a good sense of judgment and might not necessarily fancy her. "Mom, the reason why I want to say everything clearly to the Zhai family is not to leave a good impression in front of them so that we can have a good relationship. I just feel that since Qiao Nan's from our family, I don't wish for a liar to be in our family."

Of course, if the Zhai family really felt that she had a good character, she was very willing to interact with them. Qiao Nan had lied to the Zhai family. Actually, she should indeed get closer to the Zhai family and treat them well to compensate them for being cheated by Qiao Nan.

"Something's wrong with all of you. You shouldn't go to the Zhai family now but the hospital!" After looking around for a long time, Qiao Dongliang felt quite helpless that he didn't have much money in his pockets to prepare a dowry for Qiao Nan. There wasn't a choice. When he was working, his salary wasn't high. The Qiao family had relied on Qiao Nan for a living.

Later when Qiao Zijin fell sick and was hospitalized, Qiao Dongliang used most of the money he had saved with great difficulty to treat Qiao Zijin. After seeing the numbers on his passbook, Qiao Dongliang realized how embarrassing he was. Based on those pitiful numbers in the passbook, how would he have the face to say that he would prepare a dowry for his younger daughter? Even if he couldn't let his daughter marry off in a glorious state, it had to be at least decent.

At this time, Qiao Dongliang couldn't help but think of the remaining money Qiao Zijin had from selling the house. Qiao Dongliang didn't mention this previously not because he really felt that the house Ding Jiayi bought with Qiao Nan's money should all belong to Qiao Zijin. If one wanted to be calculative, this sum of money belonged to Qiao Nan.

Qiao Dongliang said nothing when Qiao Zijin waited for this life-saving money earlier. Now that Qiao Zijin's illness was better and she still had so much money in her hands, he didn't want everything. He only wanted Qiao Zijin to fork out three hundred thousand yuan, of which he would use two hundred thousand yuan to buy Qiao Nan a car and give Qiao Nan the remaining to buy home appliances.

With this three hundred thousand yuan as a base, Qiao Dongliang felt that if Qiao Nan were to really marry Zhai Sheng, her dowry wouldn't look too shabby.

Qiao Dongliang had been thinking about how to convince Qiao Zijin to fork out this sum of money. Before he could do so, he first heard Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin discussing how they wanted to reveal Qiao Nan's 'secret'. Qiao Dongliang was so angry that his face turned green. "You always

say that Nan Nan has no conscience. I think both of you are inferior to pigs and dogs. You're simply perverse!"

The furious Qiao Dongliang poked Ding Jiayi's head with his hand. "Nan Nan's a piece of meat that fell from your body after you were pregnant for ten months. Do you not want to see Nan Nan well? Will you be happy only after you step on her? Did Nan Nan owe you? You're the one who owes Nan Nan! I've never seen a mother more ruthless than you. You don't even treat Nan Nan as your daughter. However, you have the cheek to snatch Nan Nan's things and give them to Zijin on the basis that you're Nan Nan's mother. You're really shameless."

"And you, Qiao Zijin. You're really your mom's good daughter. Your cold-bloodedness is exactly the same as your mom's. I haven't said it, but do you really not remember what shameless things you did before? The thing I regret the most was that you asked Nan Nan to drop out of school back then and I agreed in cowardice as I felt that it would be too tough to provide for both children's studies. Back then, how did you marry Chen Jun? Chen Jun was Nan Nan's boyfriend and your brother-in-law. You slept with him and even got pregnant with his child. You have really thrown our Qiao family's face for eighteen generations straight! I really regret it. Why didn't I give you a beating back when I knew about this so that you would be scared and understand what face and values are all about? I should never have let you give birth to Chen Feng!"

Qiao Dongliang was really filled with hatred. Qiao Zijin was already forty-two years old. He didn't know if it was still useful to beat her now. However, he simply couldn't tolerate it anymore.

Both of them scolded Nan Nan like she was their enemy. However, once they talked about snatching Nan Nan's things away, they became excited. It was as if Nan Nan's things should rightfully belong to them. Those ugly looks were simply unbearable!

Qiao Dongliang didn't understand how one of these two ugly women could be his wife and the other, his elder daughter. His father was still an old revolutionary who had killed foreigners on the battlefields.

If his father knew that there was a granddaughter like Zijin in the Qiao family, he would have been angered to death alive. He was wrong. He didn't know how to teach children, but Ding Jiayi only knew how to lead them astray!

Qiao Dongliang, who was filled with hatred, couldn't be bothered if Qiao Zijin was already a grown-up and even a mother. He picked up things and started to hit Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin with them. Both of them couldn't escape.

To Ding Jiayi, who had been beaten and had bruises on her body that hadn't completely disappeared, this didn't seem to be something unusual. She gradually got used to being beaten. However, to Qiao Zijin, who had always been spoiled, that was completely different.

Even when Qiao Zijin was young and didn't do well in her exams, Qiao Dongliang and Ding Jiayi never scolded her, let alone hit her. Even when she was pregnant with Chen Jun's child back then and had forced Qiao Nan to break up with Chen Jun so that she could marry Chen Jun, Qiao Dongliang didn't lay a hand on Qiao Zijin either.

Chapter 1989: She Can Fork Out the Money First

She was already forty-two years old but was actually beaten by Qiao Dongliang. How could Qiao Zijin stand such treatment? As she avoided the hit, she felt hatred in her heart. "I knew it long ago. Now that Qiao Nan managed to be on good terms with the Zhai family, you think that she is promising and only recognize her as your daughter. It wouldn't be a pity even if you beat me to death, right? You don't even recognize me as your daughter anymore. On what basis are you qualified to hit me? Go and find your obedient daughter!"

No matter how weak the forty-two-year-old Qiao Zijin was, she was still middle-aged. Even if Qiao Dongliang was a man, he was already in his sixties this year. As soon as Qiao Zijin resisted and flung him back, Qiao Dongliang, who never thought that Qiao Zijin would dare to retaliate, was caught off-guard. He fell backward with a crack. From the sound alone, it was clear that Qiao Dongliang's fall was quite solid.

"Old Qiao!" Ding Jiayi saw Qiao Dongliang's eyes widen. His face looked stiff and something seemed very wrong. She tried to pull Qiao Dongliang up from the ground. Qiao Dongliang was in so much pain that the veins in his neck bulged and the bones in his body made a light crisp sound. After that, he fainted. "Are you insane? He's your dad. How can you hit him? Quick. Call 120 quickly! Something's wrong with your dad. He has fainted."

Ding Jiayi didn't know that her attempt to support the injured Qiao Dongliang was aggravating the situation. She was the one who caused Qiao Dongliang to faint and the culprit to cause him a second injury.

Qiao Zijin was shocked. She refused to admit that this was her doing. "Don't blame it on me. My dad must be pretending. Haven't Qiao Nan been pretending over the years as well? My dad's completely looking up to Qiao Nan now and is deliberately trying to frighten me. How did I hit him? I didn't even push him. At the very most, I ran when he was hitting me. This is none of my business. Don't push the responsibility to me. Dad, don't pretend to faint. If you're really admitted, don't expect me to fork out that huge sum of money for you. I'm a divorced woman. I'm counting on this sum of money for a living."

After talking for a long time, Qiao Zijin didn't dial 120. Qiao Zijin knew it in her heart how much power she exerted. She just flung her hand. After that, she didn't even touch a corner of her dad's clothes. She was beaten up so badly by her dad, but she wasn't in a hurry to go to the hospital. Her dad was pretending so well as if it was real.

Ding Jiayi's heart shivered. "You damned child. Something's really wrong with your dad. I'm not lying to you. Call an ambulance quickly!" Didn't she see how Old Qiao had fainted? "When your dad fell behind on his bottom, I heard the cracking sound of his bones. I don't know if your dad has a bone problem."

After hearing Ding Jiayi's words and seeing that Qiao Dongliang had fainted with cold sweat on his forehead, Qiao Zijin became afraid and took out her mobile to dial 120.

On the way to the hospital, the doctor asked how Qiao Dongliang got injured. Qiao Zijin lowered her head and didn't say anything. Ding Jiayi, who always placed Qiao Zijin first, said vaguely, "The floor was slippery. He accidentally fell."

"After his fall, did you touch the patient?" The doctor's face changed. This person was old. His physical mechanism naturally couldn't be compared to when he was young. His bones were especially brittle now. To an elderly, a heavy fall can be fatal, let alone a slip.

"No. We aren't doctors. We don't know what to do." The doctor heaved a sigh of relief at Ding Jiayi's words. However, what Ding Jiayi said next made the doctor secretly cry for Qiao Dongliang. "When he fell, I was afraid that the floor would be too cold for him. I tried to lift him up. However, I was too weak and didn't manage to do so."

After hearing Ding Jiayi's words, the doctor didn't want to say anything else. To an injured person, not having the slightest common sense of medical care was really terrible!

The doctor wasn't sure what Qiao Dongliang's situation was like now. He definitely suffered a fracture. However, the specific details could only be confirmed after taking an X-ray back at the hospital.

"Zijin, what are you doing? Hurry up and hand over the money. Didn't you hear the doctor say that your dad suffered a fracture? He needs to take an X-ray and might even need to undergo an operation." There was only one person in the family who was sick and had to do a kidney transplant. Ding Jiayi was very familiar with the hospital procedures.

Qiao Zijin moved her mouth unhappily. “My dad will spend a lot of money to see the doctor, right? It’s not that I don’t care about his life and death. I just feel that he isn’t just my dad alone. A lot of money has to be spent on him today. Someone will provide a living for Qiao Nan soon. I still have to provide a living for myself, you, and Dad. I only have that little money in my hands. What if I give all of it to Dad today for his treatment? How would our family of three continue to lead a life in the future?”

She hadn’t gotten the courtyard yet. However, she had to part with a part of the one million yuan in her hands today for her dad’s hospitalization. Upon thinking about this sum of money which she wasn’t even willing to spend on herself but now had to first spend it on Qiao Dongliang, who no longer had her in his heart, Qiao Zijin felt unhappy.

She had a house in her hands. However, she would rather stay in the hospital for months just so that others would fork out the money to treat her illness. If she could be so cruel to herself, then without a doubt, she would be crueler to anyone other than her who was deemed as an ‘outsider’.

Ding Jiayi wasn’t really a fool. She was taken aback and asked, “Zijin, your dad got injured because of... Do you not want to use this sum of money for your dad’s illness?”

“No, that’s not what I meant. I only have a dad. How can I not care now that he’s sick? However, he doesn’t only have me as a daughter. Everyone should care about him together.” It was such a huge sum of money. On what basis should she fork out the money all by herself?

The Zhai family was providing for Qiao Nan. She was definitely not lacking money and would have a lot of good days in the future. Now that Qiao Nan became the chief’s wife, she had to take care of the relatives from her own family, right? Her dad’s hospitalization was the best time for Qiao Nan to do something.

If she did everything, then what else could Qiao Nan do? She couldn’t possibly prevent Qiao Nan from being a filial daughter, right?

In short, she could fork out the money, but it shouldn’t be her alone. Also, Qiao Nan’s current conditions were much better than hers. If they really had to fork out money, Qiao Nan should pay most of it. For her, a divorcee and jobless woman, to fork out a bit of money was more than enough.

There wouldn’t be anything else that she was willing to fork out.

“Mom, Dad’s already hospitalized. Quickly make a call to Qiao Nan and tell her about this. After she’s here, she can fork out the money first. If it’s not enough, I’ll add on to it later.”

Chapter 1990: The Issue of Money

“Both of us are Dad’s daughters. Since something major happened to Dad, we can’t keep it from her, right?”

Now that they had to fork out money, Qiao Zijin especially hoped that what the old neighbors said was true.

There was no choice. She couldn’t contact Qiao Nan and didn’t know where she was. If they couldn’t find Qiao Nan, how were they going to get her to fork out the money? However, if Qiao Nan was really marrying Zhai Sheng, then the Zhai family would be their Qiao family’s in-laws. As long as they could find the Zhai family, it didn’t matter if they couldn’t find Qiao Nan.

As the in-laws, the Zhai family had to do something now that her dad was injured and hospitalized, right? Wasn’t Qiao Nan going to marry Zhai Sheng? If her dad didn’t recover from the injuries and couldn’t be discharged from the hospital earlier, how was Qiao Nan going to marry Zhai Sheng?

The Zhai family should be more concerned about her dad’s health condition than their family.

Ding Jiayi stared at Qiao Zijin in a daze. “You mean we have to call Qiao Nan over and fork out the money?”

“Yes. Mom, didn’t you also say that Qiao Nan became ambitious and she’s no longer close to us? It’s really nothing for me to spend more money on you and Dad. However, it doesn’t make sense for Qiao Nan to take our family’s money but ignore your lives. I’m not asking for much. I just want Qiao Nan to hand over all the money that she had taken away from our family back then. If there isn’t enough for Dad’s illness this time, I will provide the shortfall no matter how much it is.”

Wasn’t it just a fracture? It should cost less than a few tens of thousands yuan.

Hearing that the nurse was already urging them, Ding Jiayi’s eyes became damp. “Zijin, see if this works? Your dad’s in a hurry to undergo the operation. You fork out all the money first. When we’ve found Qiao Nan, I’ll get her to pay you back whatever you have forked out. Do you think this is alright?” When she thought of how the doctor looked, Ding Jiayi knew that Qiao Dongliang had suffered a really bad fall this time.

Ding Jiayi deeply understood how much of a money-burning place the hospital was two months ago. She was really afraid that the delayed payment would adversely affect Qiao Dongliang's condition. If Qiao Dongliang didn't recover well from this fall, he would have to rely on her alone to serve him in the future. Just thinking with her toes, Ding Jiayi knew that if Qiao Dongliang faced difficulty moving in the future, not only would Qiao Zijin not serve him, but she might not even be willing to feed Qiao Dongliang a mouthful of food.

As such, whether Qiao Dongliang could get better and whether his ability to move about would remain the same as before he was injured were directly related to Ding Jiayi's future quality of life. Compared to money, Ding Jiayi would rather spend more money now so that she could lead an easier life in the future.

Qiao Zijin dawdled for a while. "Mom, Dad's already hospitalized. When I was hospitalized, Qiao Nan didn't care. She can't possibly not care about Dad now as well. I feel that you should make a call quickly to the Zhai family and let them tell Qiao Nan that Dad's hospitalized. Isn't Qiao Nan marrying Zhai Sheng soon? Qiao Nan might be at the Zhai family now as well. Call the Zhai family quickly. Qiao Nan would arrive immediately within ten minutes."

Her mom asked Qiao Nan to fork out the money? If this happened a year ago, she would definitely believe it without thinking. However, now... If her mom had the ability to control all of Qiao Nan's money, would she have to resort to selling her own house?

Qiao Zijin said a lot of things wrongly in the past. However, it was only this time that everything was guessed pretty accurately. Qiao Zijin wasn't willing to fork out money. Ding Jiayi was worried that if Qiao Dongliang didn't receive timely treatment, his inconvenient actions in the future would have a great impact on her life. Especially when the X-ray was out and the doctor told Ding Jiayi that Qiao Dongliang suffered a fracture more than once, even if she had to be thick-skinned and slap herself in the face, Ding Jiayi could only make a call to the Zhai family.

Ding Jiayi previously said that Qiao Nan would definitely not be lucky enough to be on good terms with the Zhai family and that she must have used deceptive means to get close to the Zhai family. Now, Ding Jiayi became thick-skinned and addressed the Zhai family as in-laws so that they could help find Qiao Nan and ask her to rush to the hospital where Qiao Dongliang was.

As such, when Qiao Nan, who had avoided Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin for half a year, met them again, it was at the hospital. Of course, Qiao Nan was not alone when she arrived at the hospital. Zhai Sheng had accompanied her. Once she heard that Qiao Dongliang fell and suffered more than one fracture, Qiao Nan didn't say another word. She took her passbook, got into Zhai Sheng's car, and rushed to the hospital.

The Qiao family looked for her only for one thing: money. Aside from money, it was still about money. Even if Qiao Zijin had a lot of money in her hands, Qiao Nan didn't expect her to be willing to fork out the money at this time to treat Qiao Dongliang's illness.

Qiao Nan really appeared and she even brought along Zhai Sheng. When the two appeared side by side, Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin were so shocked that they couldn't speak. Qiao Zijin looked at Ding Jiayi carefully. She didn't forget what Ding Jiayi told her when they were at home.

Zhai Sheng was every child's role model in Ping Cheng's quad. Qiao Zijin had heard of Zhai Sheng's name a lot, but this was the first time she saw him in person. It could be said that before Zhai Sheng's appearance, Chen Jun was the best man Qiao Zijin had seen before, in terms of looks and background. However, when she saw Zhai Sheng now, Qiao Zijin suddenly realized that she couldn't even remember clearly how Chen Jun, whom she had gotten a divorce with less than a year ago, looked like.

This man before her could make any woman fall in love with him. It was just that when the blooming Qiao Zijin saw Qiao Nan, who was standing next to Zhai Sheng, she felt particularly uncomfortable. Did this mean that what the old neighbors said was true? Qiao Nan got close to the Zhai family and she stood a chance at marrying Zhai Sheng?

Qiao Nan didn't say anything. Due to Zhai Sheng's presence, it wasn't convenient for Ding Jiayi to say anything to Qiao Nan either. When Qiao Nan and Zhai Sheng stood together, Ding Jiayi subconsciously got closer to Qiao Zijin as if she was finding an ally. What Ding Jiayi didn't know was that Qiao Zijin actually wanted to get closer to Zhai Sheng more now.

It was a pity that Qiao Zijin wasn't so gutsy.

To be honest, Qiao Nan really didn't look good. Her relationship with her dad wasn't as good as that in her dreams. At this moment, Qiao Nan didn't even have the energy to ask how Qiao Dongliang got injured out of the blue and was sent to the hospital.

Thankfully, after an hour, the doctor came out. "Don't worry. There's no problem with the operation. What the patient needs next is to recuperate well. Also, the patient isn't young anymore. You should pay more attention to him when at home and give him more calcium supplements. It's still alright this time. When he gets older in the future, it will not be a trivial matter anymore if he suffers a fall like today again."