

RTAMM 2071

Chapter 2071: Three Months

“Try this soup. It doesn’t look very oily and it looks quite refreshing.”

“That’s right. He’s a grown man. He must know how to take care of himself. He’s already going to be a father. Nan Nan, don’t worry. He should be the one taking care of the both of you.”

Miao Jing thought that it had been such a coincidence, or perhaps, the Zhai family was truly fated with this child. His existence had never bothered Qiao Nan, causing all these experienced women to be deceived as well. But just as his father, Zhai Sheng, returned, that child reminded everyone of his existence in the Zhai family!

The child was predestined for the Zhai family, especially Zhai Sheng.

Her own child was the best child in the world, and Miao Jing, who had just become a grandma, was viewing everything through rose-tinted lenses. That beansprout in Qiao Nan’s stomach would still need another month to grow its hands and feet. At the very most, it would only be two centimeters long at this point in time. How would such a small beansprout have so many ideas at this time? There was no way an embryo could have such complex thoughts.

After the meal, Miao Jing could not seem to calm herself down and stayed around Qiao Nan. The news that she would soon be a grandma excited her beyond imagination. After enduring it for an entire day, Miao Jing finally thought of someone to share this piece of good news with. “Hua Hua, it’s me. It’s your mom.”

Zhai Hua had been rather happy to receive Miao Jing’s call. After all, Zhai Hua realized that she had already had everything she had yearned for in her youth in her own family. Because she was no longer as stubborn as she had been and was now more open-minded, Zhai Hua’s relationship with her family had gradually improved.

Even though Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui had left for the capital with Zhai Sheng, leaving only Zhai Hua and Jiajia in Ping Cheng, Zhai Hua was no longer resentful toward her family. She no longer felt that her parents only cared about their son, Zhai Sheng, while neglecting her.

It was just that Zhai Hua’s joy was soon killed and Miao Jing’s words made Zhai Hua roll her eyes. “Mom, do you think I’m a three-year-old child? Do you really need to introduce yourself to me?”

She could immediately guess who had called her just by looking at the phone number. It was certainly her mother.

Her dad was a man and was not good at expressing his feelings. As for Zhai Sheng, he was a stupid younger brother who was also heartless. There was an eighty percent chance that her mom, Miao Jing, was the one calling her. The remaining twenty percent was left for Qiao Nan. There was no way Zhai Yaohui or Zhai Sheng would ever make a call to her.

If not for the fact that Qiao Nan had signed up for many courses and examinations, Zhai Hua would have thought that the probability of Qiao Nan calling her would be eighty percent, while her mom calling her would be twenty percent. It was not that she looked down on her mom, but Qiao Nan had finally married into the family after much difficulty. Her mom cared so much about Qiao Nan that she seemed to care more about Qiao Nan than her own biological daughter.

Thankfully, Zhai Hua had long passed that age where she would get jealous over such trivial matters. It would be childish to throw a tantrum over this.

“Tell me. Why are you in such a good mood to call me today?” Although her dad was already retired, her mom would definitely not lead an entirely carefree life in the capital.

“Is Jiajia around?”

“Yes.” Zhai Hua waved Jiajia over. “It’s grandma. Do you want to talk to her?” It was the end of August, and after returning from their vacation in Sanya, the mother and daughter had been spending some precious time with each other. The previous day, Zhai Hua had brought Jiajia to register for high school. In two days’ time, she would be sending Jiajia off to high school.

“Grandma!” Jiajia called sweetly. “Grandma, my vacation is over, but when the National Day holidays come, I’ll visit you and grandpa with Mom.” Aside from her vacation to Sanya, this holiday had not been relaxing for Jiajia. Apart from having more opportunities to spend time with Zhai Hua, Ping Cheng High School had also organized a summer vacation class.

Of course, not all students were invited to join this class. Jiajia had scored well in her examinations and had entered a top class. This summer class was naturally for top students.

After entering high school, Jiajia even had to attend military training. As such, her schedule was packed. Otherwise, Jiajia would have gone to the capital to visit her grandparents now that Zhai Hua had mended her relationship with her family.

“Alright, grandma will wait for you to visit us during the National Day period.” Miao Jing’s heart leaped when she heard Jijia’s voice. “Oh right, Jijia. Grandma has a piece of good news to share with you today. Try to guess what it is!”

Jijia frowned. No wonder her mom scolded her grandma for being childish just now. She had stopped playing such games in elementary school. “I won’t guess it, grandma.” The scope was so wide and she had not even given a hint. How was she supposed to guess it?

“Hahaha. Jijia, do you want a younger sister or a younger brother? Do you want to be an elder sister? Congratulations! In another seven months’ time, you’ll be an elder sister!”

Jijia was momentarily stunned but she leaped up immediately. “Grandma, are you saying that my auntie is pregnant and that you’re going to become a grandma? I’m going to become an elder sister?” Yes, she was going to become an elder sister!

“Are you serious?” Even Zhai Hua perked up. “I was wondering why your grandma suddenly called today. It’s because of such good news! How many months pregnant is your auntie?” Zhai Sheng was indeed impressive. Should Zhai Sheng not have returned to the military once he went back to the capital? How could he have gotten Qiao Nan pregnant so quickly?

Zhai Hua could not help but wonder if it was because Zhai Sheng had held back for such a long time before meeting Qiao Nan that his tadpoles were more energetic than an average person’s. That was why he had managed to be so efficient.

“Grandma said that I’ll be an elder sister in another seven months’ time. So, that means that auntie is probably three months pregnant,” Jijia said. “Grandma, is auntie pregnant with a younger brother or sister? Or will she let me have both at once?” She swore that she would definitely be a good elder sister.

Zhai Hua knocked Jijia on the head gently. “Don’t be silly. Your auntie’s only three months pregnant.”

Chapter 2072: Over the Moon

“There are some tests that can’t be done so early.” Especially one regarding the sex of the child. Such tests were usually forbidden by the state. Besides, it had only been three months. The baby’s hands and feet had probably not even grown out yet. She could not remember exactly but guessed that the baby in Qiao Nan’s stomach was probably only as big as the size of a fingernail.

“...” Jiajia rubbed her head, feeling aggrieved. She was still young and had never given birth to a child. How was she supposed to know all about those things? “Grandma, tell auntie to stay in good health. I’ll visit her and my younger siblings during the National Day holiday.”

Since her questions were useless now, she would just wait until National Day. Then, she would find out for herself. By then, her auntie should be heavily pregnant.

After hanging up the call, Jiajia jumped around in glee. It made it seem as though the baby she was looking forward to was not in Qiao Nan’s stomach but her mother’s, Zhai Hua’s, stomach!

“Alright. Stop acting like a monkey. I’m getting giddy.” Seeing her daughter, who was usually matured and even more obedient than Wei Wei, acting so childishly and innocently, Zhai Hua was pleased. “Are you really that happy that your auntie is pregnant and that you’re going to be an elder sister?”

She had had no idea that Jiajia yearned to be an elder sister so badly.

Could it be that Jiajia knew that the state disallowed her from having a second child because Wei De was a soldier? Was that why she had never mentioned anything about it? “Jiajia, actually, the government has already allowed people to have a second child...”

If she had known that Jiajia wanted a younger sibling so desperately, it was not as though she could not give birth to one.

Before her divorce, Wei De had occasionally asked her if their family would have a second child since the state now allowed it. Wei De had not been particularly explicit when asking about it and simply made mention of the subject. At that time, Zhai Hua had been in a bad mood and retorted that they already had a daughter, Jiajia. There was no need to have another child.

After all, Zhai Hua had already been upset with the entire Wei family placing more emphasis on Wei Wei than Jiajia. It was only natural for Jiajia to love her own child. Zhai Hua was worried that the Wei family would treat Jiajia even worse if their second child turned out to be a boy.

Besides, the Wei family loved their grandson, Wei Wei, dearly. Having another grandson would be nice, but not having another did not matter to them either. As such, Zhai Hua never considered the problem of having a second child ever again.

Now, Zhai Hua's life revolved around Jiajia. She had already gotten a divorce from Wei De and there was absolutely no possibility of reconciliation. Even so, Zhai Hua foolishly brought up hypothetical situations, knowing that Jiajia liked younger siblings.

If she had not gotten divorced from Wei De, she might very well have given Jiajia younger siblings, given how enthusiastic she was about them. By now, they would even be old enough to run around!

Jiajia hurriedly waved her mom off. "Mom, don't get any weird ideas. That's not what I meant. It doesn't matter if it's you or auntie that gives birth to my younger siblings. They'll be my younger siblings all the same. If I really wanted a younger sibling from you, I would have told you about it a long time ago. Besides, I think that it's better for my auntie to be the one giving birth. Mom, don't tell me you're regretting your decision and you're thinking of getting back with my dad." That was why she was trying to use Jiajia as an excuse.

In that moment, Jiajia was straddled in a dilemma. Of course, she wanted her mom to be happy. It was just that she disliked her paternal grandma's family and her dislike only intensified by the day.

It was not just talk that Jiajia liked younger siblings. Because Wei Wei had not been a good elder brother, Jiajia often thought about how she would definitely protect her younger siblings instead of bullying them like Wei Wei had. She would take them out to play, teach them, do their homework with them, watch television with them, play games...

But the siblings whom she liked so much should never be born in the Wei family or live in the same shadow of Wei Wei as she had.

Even if that would no longer happen now, Jiajia still hated the idea of it.

"What nonsense are you spouting?" Zhai Hua's expression changed and she hit Jiajia on the head again. "Being married once is more than enough for me since I already have you. I don't have any interest in finding another man, whether that be your dad or someone else. I was just thinking that I might have given birth to another child a long time ago when I was still married to your dad if I had known you wanted to be an elder sister so badly."

Jiajia heaved a huge sigh of relief. "So that's what you meant. Thankfully, I never spoke out wanting a younger sibling then. Otherwise, my heart would ache so badly."

“Why?” Did she not like having younger siblings? Why would her heart ache?

Jiajia sat beside Zhai Hua and told her indifferently. “When the state started to allow for people to have another child, I heard Wei Wei ask grandma and grandpa whether you and Dad would have another child. If you were to have a son, would my dad still love him all the same, and whether grandma and grandpa would favor the youngest child instead of him? Grandpa remained silent but grandma immediately replied that he would never like any child that came from you. There was no one who could ever replace Wei Wei’s place in her heart.”

Jiajia knew that her younger siblings would never be welcome in the family and would even be forced to endure the horrible torture that she had already been through.

Jiajia also knew that her dad was a soldier and could not have a second child. As such, even after the state announced such a ruling, Jiajia had never once let known to Zhai Hua her desire of having a younger sibling. “But I’m finally becoming an elder sister! Hahaha! Mom, how many children do you think auntie is pregnant with? Do you think she’ll give me a younger sister or brother? Since a second child is allowed now, do you think auntie will give birth to another child after this? No, as an elder sister, I have to prepare a present. Mom, wait a minute. Don’t disturb me. Let me go to Baidu and see what kind of toys and animations babies like nowadays. I have to keep myself updated. Otherwise, we might not have any common topics to talk about in the future.”

Knowing that Qiao Nan was pregnant, Jiajia became the person who was most excited. That had been truly unexpected.

Perhaps it was because she was going to be an elder sister that Jiajia was able to distance herself from the hurt and sufferings she had experienced in the Wei family when talking about them. It seemed as though she had not been the one going through all that because she was over the moon about the news that she was about to become an elder sister.

Chapter 2073: Who Did It?

Zhai Hua, who had been left behind, had the urge to drop everything at once and rush to the Wei family’s house to give this whole family of white-eyed wolves a good beating.

Since Jiajia had already instructed her not to disturb her, this meant that Jiajia would not disturb her either. As such, Zhai Hua returned to her study room and retrieved a thick envelope. Within it was the latest news of the Wei family that her friends had gathered on her behalf.

Just because Zhai Hua had decided not to pursue the matter even after she had suffered so much with Wei De did not mean that others were willing to do so as well. Besides, given their understanding of Zhai Hua, they had always felt that Zhai Hua could not possibly simply take it lying down after being bullied and continue raising her daughter just like that.

Initially, Zhai Hua had indeed planned on taking revenge. However, her temper now that she was a mother could not compare to when she had still been a young lady. Now that she was living a comfortable life, there was no point in caring about those people who made her uncomfortable. That would only make her life even harder.

For Jiajia's sake, Zhai Hua decided to sever all contact with the Wei family. She did not want to know, much less care about, the Wei family. As such, Zhai Hua had never bothered to look through the information that had been sent to her out of good intentions. But today, she was going to do so for Jiajia's sake.

As a mother, Zhai Hua's heart could soften and she could control her temper for her daughter's sake. Similarly, her temper could get even worse and her attitude even more vicious for the sake of Jiajia.

Jiajia liked having younger siblings so much but had never dared to let her parents know about it simply because of something Mother Wei had said. This angered Zhai Hua. She was mad at herself and also the Wei family. The Wei family were truly bast*rds with no limits. Jiajia had had such a heavy burden at such a young age and she had known nothing about that as a mother.

If not for Qiao Nan's pregnancy that they had suddenly brought up this topic, she would never have known that the Wei family had said such cruel words in front of Jiajia. She had truly wasted all of her money on the Wei family all these years.

Zhai Hua could not help but think about how to deal with the Wei family, but the moment she saw the documents, her anger subsided. The Wei family was already in such a sorry state. If she wanted to torture them even further, the only thing left was probably death.

Because Wei De had married Zhai Hua, he was always treated politely, and people had no choice but to address him respectfully as a company commander. Even those who were in higher positions than him were especially courteous to him given the fact that he was the Zhai family's son-in-law.

Because he had lived such a life for over a decade, Wei De had already long forgotten about how careful he had to be in the military before getting married to Zhai Hua, and how he even had to flatter others occasionally.

It was hard for anyone to tame their temper once it had been developed, especially for someone as foolish as Wei De. It was hard for even the most intelligent person to do.

Wei De was no longer the son-in-law of the Zhai family nor a company commander in the military. After going out into society, he even faced many obstacles and setbacks. As such, Wei De's temper had gone out of control. Then, he had been careless, had been cheated of his money, and his business had failed. Wei De had not even inquired about the status of the person who had deceived him and had immediately gone to find him to settle their accounts. It turned out that that person was well-known locally. Was he not just driving himself into a corner?

Such fraud was not one that concerned money or not handing over the goods. Instead, there had been many loopholes that had favored the other party when they had signed the contract. Wei De had never done business, and neither did he have any lawyers as friends. It was only natural for him to not understand the contract and be fooled.

Besides, it was Wei De who had turned up to make a fuss as though he was about to kill someone. As such, the other party had simply exerted slightly excessive self-defense, sending Wei De to the hospital.

After Wei Wei was hospitalized, the hospital and the police tried to get in contact with the Wei family. Unfortunately, Mother and Father Wei were not in a good place. Their family's three-storied house had been sold by Wei Wei and his mother. Because all the procedures had been legal, there was no way of getting that house back.

Although the elderly couple moved back to their old house, they were staying in an abandoned house. In this era, it was difficult to find a house that no one wanted to live in. Every plot of land was precious, after all. As such, one could only imagine Mother and Father Wei's living conditions.

It was very difficult for the elderly couple to live in the countryside. They had no money, no house, and no food. If not for the little bit of food that they borrowed from their old neighbors, the elderly couple would never have been able to survive in the countryside.

They had survived by relying on borrowed rice grains and the vegetables they occasionally plucked from their relative's plantations.

In the past, Mother and Father Wei had been brought away by Wei De gloriously. Now, the two of them had become the lowest of the lowest in the village. There were people who wondered why

Mother and Father Wei had given up on a comfortable life in the city to return to the countryside in their old age. Eventually, the news spread, and the villagers finally realized the immoral acts that the Wei family had committed.

Although the villagers did not watch them starve to death helplessly, they had formed a terrible impression of the Wei family after finding out that they had bullied others and committed marriage fraud in this manner. Thus, Mother and Father Wei did not interact much with others upon returning to the village. The villagers would even specifically instruct their kids never to play near the Wei family's house.

There was nothing crueler and more painful to Mother and Father Wei than such cold treatment after having been respected for over ten years.

Mother and Father Wei could not even take care of themselves and the first thought that came to Mother Wei's mind when she heard that her son had been sent into the hospital was that Zhai Hua must have done so out of revenge. Thus, Mother Wei called the police directly, asking them to arrest Zhai Hua. Since Zhai Hua had been the one who had beaten Wei De up, it was only natural that she had to pay for all of his hospital bills.

Moreover, even if Wei De was discharged from the hospital, Zhai Hua had to compensate the Wei family for the mental stress she had caused them.

Hearing Mother Wei's ridiculous demands, the police officer was stunned and reiterated that this matter had nothing to do with the Wei family's ex-daughter-in-law at all. Wei De had brought this beating upon himself through his careless business dealings. There was no one else to blame.

Chapter 2074: Burned

The only reason he had made this call was to inform the Wei family of Wei De's situation. As for whether the Wei family decided to return to Ping Cheng to take care of Wei De, that would be none of his business.

There was no way Mother Wei would believe the police officer's words. Because the result was not one that she wanted, she blasted out at the police officer. "This is clearly the rich and powerful bullying normal folks like us. I know that that Zhai woman's father is an old chief and that her brother is a chief. That's why you're all in cahoots. You're all helping that woman, right? Don't forget your status. Your salary is paid by taxpayers like me. I'm the one who gives you enough money to support your family. How can you bully us taxpayers like that?"

If not for the fact that Mother Wei was being extremely unreasonable, the police officer might just have mistaken Mother Wei for a cultured person based on her last few sentences. “If you are really suspicious of me, I welcome you to make a complaint. I’ve already made myself clear. You can do whatever you want.”

He had only made this phone call to inform the Wei family of Wei De’s situation. As long the Wei family was kept in the loop, nothing else that followed had anything to do with him, and neither would he have to take any responsibility for it. The Wei family could make a huge fuss if they liked. If they went overboard and if someone were to call the police on them, he would then come into the picture again.

Otherwise, he had better just do his job.

Zhai Hua had nothing to do with Wei De being sent to the hospital, and Mother Wei had not been successful in her attempt to extort Zhai Hua of money. All these situations added together were undoubtedly a huge blow to the Wei family.

Left with no other choice, Father Wei made a trip to Ping Cheng to fetch Wei De back to their old home. In the past, Wei De had been the epitome of a successful child. This time, however, it went without saying that the Wei family had become the biggest joke in the entire village.

Almost everyone would use the Wei family as a negative example to educate their children about moral values.

The Wei family was truly the worst of the worst. Not only had they committed marriage fraud, but they had even treated their granddaughter worse than Wei Wei, favoring males over females. And what had come of all of it? Wei Wei had sold the Wei family’s house and that chief’s daughter had simply taken back everything that belonged to her.

It was because the Wei family was full of immoral people that the heavens took back everything that the Wei family had. Now, the Wei family had become the worst family in the village. Apart from his parents, who were already too old to work, Wei De had no one else by his side. He had neither a wife nor any children.

Father Wei had not gotten a lot of money from those people for Wei De’s injuries. The people whom Wei De had provoked were not just ordinary hooligans. They had deceived Wei De to earn more money in the first place. Besides, they had already known that Wei De had nothing much to begin with.

Apart from that small sum that the police officers demanded they pay, the other party refused to fork out a single cent more.

In the end, the other party paid for Wei De's hospitalization bills when Wei De was discharged and gave Father Wei an additional ten thousand yuan to purchase some nutritional supplements.

This ten thousand yuan was like a drop in the bucket for the Wei family. There was nothing they could do with such a small sum of money. Even so, the Wei family had to have a careful plan for the ten thousand yuan so as not to waste it away.

And so, this ten thousand yuan became the only asset of the Wei family. Although Wei De had recovered from his injuries, he had no means of returning to Ping Cheng or to continue living in Ping Cheng, hoping to strike it out with a business and stand up tall in front of Zhai Hua again.

After learning about the Wei family's situation, Zhai Hua's expression was calm as though the Wei family's information was simply a fictional story. Zhai Hua stood up and shredded these documents. Then, she lit the fire and burned them all, not leaving even a single shred.

She had no intention of discussing whether the Wei family's situation was retribution for their past actions. The son whom Wei De cared most about had taken Wei Xiaomei and had run away, leaving nothing for Wei De at all. This son was truly Wei De's...

"Mom, what's that smell? Why is there a smoky smell at home?" Jiajia, who had awoken to use the toilet, had been taken aback by the smell and had run over to check on her mother.

Zhai Hua did not panic and answered calmly, "It's nothing much. I just shredded some useless documents and I'm burning them. They have been taking up quite a lot of space at home. Don't worry. Your mom isn't a five-year-old kid. Do you think I'll burn our house down? Have you decided what you're preparing for your younger sibling?"

"I'm wondering if I should prepare two presents since my auntie doesn't know whether it's a boy or a girl. Just in case, I should just prepare a present for a girl and a boy. Having one present go to waste is better than not preparing anything as an elder sister." This was the solution that Jiajia had come up with after a long time.

Zhai Hua finally let up a smile in front of her daughter. “Is that so? I think it’s a good idea. We’ll do just that. You can do whatever you want. It’s not like we’re too poor to afford it anyway. You can just ask me for more money if you need it.”

Jiajia laughed. “Mom, do you think I’m going to let you off so easily? You’re overthinking it! Mom, it’s late. You should sleep, and so should I. Once the school term starts, I’ll have military training as well. I heard that military training is quite scary. I wonder how strict the military training in Ping Cheng High School is.” Jiajia shrugged. She had never had the experience of undergoing military training.

Zhai Hua pinched Jiajia’s nose. “I wonder who declared that she was going to be a female soldier just two months ago? She even said to her mother that she was qualified! You haven’t even become a true female soldier and such minor military training has already frightened you. To think that you’re Zhai Hua’s daughter. It’s unfortunate that you weren’t around when your great-grandpa was still around. He loved children so much that he sent all the children in the family to the military early. There’s no way he would have allowed you to be exposed to the military only now. Military training? Those in schools are just for students and children to play around.”

Real military training in the military camp was much tougher than those in schools.

Jiajia stuck out her tongue. “I won’t talk to you anymore. I’m going to bed.”

Chapter 2075: Changed

Walking out from the study room, Jiajia thought of those burned ashes just now and lowered her eyes. She returned to her room silently. There was only so much to Wei Wei, the person her father and grandparents treated as their precious. However, perhaps apart from themselves, they had never liked anyone else.

After all, she had grown up together with Wei Wei. Jiajia didn’t know what Wei Wei experienced after returning to the countryside. However, she felt that if the Wei family hadn’t done something sorry to him, Wei Wei wouldn’t have been so bold to sell the Wei family’s remaining building.

In reality, when Zhai Hua wanted to get a divorce with Wei De and she heard that the Wei family was going to send Wei Wei to the countryside to reunite with Wei Xiaomei, not only did Jiajia feel that she had won, but she also developed the thought that Wei Wei had lost, just like her.

Favoring boys over girls? In their father's heart, he valued himself the most. When encountering a critical problem, her father could just abandon his son just like that. It was as if the love for more than ten years before was fake and didn't exist.

Actually, before Zhai Hua got to read the information, Jiajia had already read it while cleaning the house the other day. The more she read, the more indifferent she was to those people from her grandma's family. Otherwise, Jiajia wouldn't have inadvertently mentioned the topic of younger siblings in such a casual manner today.

She was upset and minded in the past because she really thought that no matter if it was her or her nonexistent younger brother, her grandparents didn't like the children that were born to her mother. However, Jiajia understood now that her grandma's family didn't like her and that they 'truly' liked Wei Wei.

After knowing this truth, she had reason to believe that Wei Wei, who always felt that he was blessed, would only suffer more than her after knowing the truth.

After thinking about this, Jiajia really felt that there was nothing to be persistent about the Wei family and there was nothing she couldn't let go of.

She understood it herself. She hoped that her mother would also understand this and not let herself feel troubled because of everything about the Wei family.

How good was it now? She and her mom were living happily together. Uncle married aunt and aunt was pregnant with a baby. Everything was developing in a good direction. The most important thing was for a family to be safe and happy together.

"Really?" Qiao Dongliang was flattered to have received Qiao Nan's call. When he knew that Qiao Nan was already pregnant, Qiao Dongliang was so happy that he didn't know what to do. "How many months has it been? Did the doctor say anything? Are you and the child well? Do you need to pay attention to anything?"

It was a good thing to be pregnant. However, Nan Nan wasn't young anymore. It was definitely tougher for her to be pregnant now than any pregnant woman. When he thought of how Ding Jiayi had treated Qiao Zijin like a queen for ten months when she was pregnant, Qiao Dongliang wanted to find someone to take care of Qiao Nan as well.

Of course, such a thought lasted only for a moment. It wasn't easy for Qiao Nan to be pregnant at this age. People would have paid more attention to her than Qiao Zijin initially. Let Ding Jiayi go over to take care of the pregnant Qiao Nan? Qiao Dongliang felt that even if he was a father and he didn't know anything in this regard, he'd rather do these things by himself than let Ding Jiayi do so.

Others didn't know but he did. He was worried that Ding Jiayi would come up with bad ideas to harm Qiao Nan and the child in Qiao Nan's stomach.

"Don't worry. The child and I are doing well thus far. It's only three months now. I'll go for a checkup after the fourth month." Qiao Nan touched her stomach that wasn't protruding yet. No one knew how blessed she felt right now. Her child was returning again.

"That's great. Is Zhai Sheng home?" Nan Nan's pregnancy was a good thing. It must be made known to Zhai Sheng, his son-in-law.

Qiao Nan looked at Zhai Sheng, who was cutting fruits for her. She said sweetly, "Brother Zhai's the one who sent me to the hospital for a checkup. That's when I knew I was pregnant. Brother Zhai is cutting fruits for me now. The doctor said that as long as they aren't too cold, it would be beneficial for me and the child if I eat more fruits."

Because of the doctor's words, everyone in the Zhai family, including Zhai Sheng, nearly turned the Zhai family into a wholesale fruit market. They went to buy everything nutritious and fresh that a pregnant woman could eat. As for the price, they didn't take a second look.

The Zhai family had always been thrifty. Qiao Nan was long used to the Zhai family's lifestyle. After coming to this lifetime, she had adapted very well. After all, compared to Qiao Nan's treatment in the Qiao family, it was already nourishing for her that the Zhai family didn't treat her harshly even though they led a simple lifestyle.

However, after the Zhai family revealed characteristics of being controlling over pregnant women and infants, Qiao Nan felt that she became the one with the best treatment in the Zhai family. Perhaps it was really that she was older and it was tough for her to be pregnant. It seemed that the Zhai family valued her pregnancy now as much as they did when she was pregnant with triplets in her dream.

Knowing that his daughter was pregnant and Zhai Sheng was by her side, Qiao Dongliang was even more satisfied. "That's good. After a woman becomes pregnant, her cravings will become a little uncontrollable. Sometimes, one would go crazy over thinking about what to eat. How are you?"

“Yes...” Speaking of this, there was something Qiao Nan was craving for. However, it couldn’t be bought in the capital and it wasn’t easy to buy in Ping Cheng. “Dad, do you remember when I was five, you made a type of pickled ginger at home? That ginger tasted spicy and especially sour...”

Back then, Qiao Nan was only five years old. A child’s taste bud was more sensitive than an adult’s. As the taste of this pickled ginger was too pungent, the young Qiao Nan couldn’t accept it. Qiao Dongliang pickled this ginger as it served as a condiment with porridge in the morning. It was cheap to pickle one’s own ginger and it was a childhood memory of Qiao Dongliang. As such, Qiao Dongliang did this on a whim.

It was a pity that Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin didn’t eat spicy food. Similarly, the mother-daughter pair couldn’t accept the spiciness of that ginger. At that time, Qiao Nan was still young and she didn’t know how to appreciate the wonder of pickled ginger.

For a family of four, Qiao Dongliang made a small jar of pickled ginger. Aside from Qiao Nan pouring the pickled soup into her porridge, Qiao Dongliang had eaten all the pickled ginger himself. Ever since then, Qiao Dongliang had never made pickled ginger anymore.

It was such a distant memory. If Qiao Nan didn’t mention it, Qiao Dongliang would have forgotten himself. However, Qiao Nan had no choice. She didn’t know if it was the child in her stomach creating trouble, but her cravings had completely changed from the usual.

Chapter 2076: Intensifying

Not only did she dig out the memory that was buried in her memory, but she also drooled at the thought of the taste of that pickled ginger.

“You want to eat pickled ginger?” Qiao Dongliang was surprised.

“Yes. Is it troublesome to do this? Otherwise, you can let me know how to do it and I’ll try it myself?” Ever since she thought of that taste of pickled ginger, Qiao Nan felt that nothing was delicious. Spicy food lacked the acidity of pickled ginger while sour food lacked the spiciness of pickled ginger. The perfect combination of spicy and sour was only reflected in pickled ginger.

In this lifetime, before she got pregnant, Qiao Nan never thought that she would be the kind of person who would lose her senses just because she had a craving. In reality, ever since she had this thought, she even dreamed of when she was five years old at the Qiao family enjoying the taste of her first bite of pickled ginger.

After confirming that his daughter really needed him, Qiao Dongliang straightened his back. “Sure, I’ll tell you what to do. You’ll let Zhai Sheng take this down for you?” Although he said this, Qiao Dongliang decided to make a trip to the vegetable market personally tomorrow morning to pick a dozen kilograms of old ginger that were suitable to be pickled.

Telling others was completely different from others doing it. Qiao Dongliang was worried that the person in the Zhai family making pickled ginger didn’t have his own craft.

To be honest, the method of pickling ginger was unique to the Qiao family. When Grandma Qiao was still alive, the family was poor and there was little food. Coincidentally, the ginger that happened to be planted grew well. The problem was that in an era when staple food wasn’t enough, which family would be willing to spend money on condiments like ginger? It was already good if one could be full. How could one still afford to be picky?

There wasn’t a choice. Food shouldn’t be ruined. As such, Grandma Qiao made pickled ginger for the family. It was also a habit developed at that time. Thereafter, Grandma Qiao would make some pickled ginger at home from time to time to eat as a dish. To Qiao Dongliang, pickled ginger was part of his childhood memories.

Of course, the Qiao family’s pickled ginger had the Qiao family’s unique craftsmanship. Qiao Dongliang shared these pointers clearly over the phone. However, he was afraid that the Zhai family wouldn’t do it well. As such, Qiao Dongliang thought that the Zhai family could make some not-so-authentic Qiao family’s pickled ginger first so that Qiao Nan could eat it for a few days.

On his end, he would help make some as well. Once the pickled ginger was ready, he would get a courier to send it over to Qiao Nan. Qiao Dongliang also knew that even though pickled ginger was cheap, the cost of express courier to the capital could be as much as ten times more than the cost of pickled ginger. However, Qiao Nan wanted to eat it. It was worth it no matter how much money he had to spend.

The next morning, Qiao Dongliang, who was about to be a grandfather, became the first person to enter the vegetable market aside from the vendors. He bought a bunch of ginger and a few packets of seasoning.

“Mom, Dad woke up especially early today. It’s already afternoon and he is still in the kitchen. What is he up to?” Qiao Zijin couldn’t help but feel curious. She leaned over to Ding Jiayi and asked, “Even if he’s preparing a meal, he shouldn’t need to stay in the kitchen all morning, right? Mom, do you feel that Dad’s especially excited today? He’s even humming.”

Too many things happened to the Qiao family in the past year. Qiao Zijin couldn't remember how long ago it was that she last heard Qiao Dongliang humming. "Did anything good happen in the family?" Why didn't she hear about anything?

Ding Jiayi, who was watching TV, sat to the side. "The weather's so hot. Why are you sitting so close to me? Move away." When she was saying this, Ding Jiayi's eyes never shifted away from the TV. As for Qiao Zijin's question, Ding Jiayi's words didn't have the effect of clarifying her confusion.

Ever since the topic of the one hundred thousand yuan ended, Qiao Zijin thought that by leaving Ding Jiayi alone for a while, she would understand it and no longer mention to her about the one hundred thousand yuan. Although she no longer mentioned it, Qiao Zijin clearly felt that her mother was much colder toward her and no longer only had her in her eyes and heart, unlike the past.

"Mom, are you still angry at me?" If she could, Qiao Zijin didn't want to take the initiative and mention the matter about the one hundred thousand yuan in front of Ding Jiayi. After all, until now, she never thought of taking the one hundred thousand yuan out and save Ding Jiayi's so-called marriage. They were already so old. Only young people filed for a divorce.

Furthermore, as her father said, at this age, there wasn't any difference in them getting a divorce or not. Her mom was the only one who was feeling nervous and worrying for nothing.

Ding Jiayi cracked the melon seed and glanced at Qiao Zijin. "Angry at you? Why should I be?" See? She didn't even dare mention the one hundred thousand yuan.

"Mom..." Qiao Zijin called her 'mom' for a long time, like a spoiled child. Without a doubt, this worked on Ding Jiayi in the past. However, this wasn't the case now. This set of tactics no longer worked on Ding Jiayi.

It used to work in the past. Qiao Zijin used to say a bunch of fictional words about filial piety to coax Ding Jiayi. Ding Jiayi always thought that by depending on this daughter of hers, Qiao Zijin, she could live the life of an old lady. As such, no matter what Qiao Zijin said, Ding Jiayi would always agree.

However, now...

Ding Jiayi drank a sip of water to moisten her throat. "I'm your mom. I always know that it's very nice to call someone. If others heard this, they might think that we have a ghost in the house in broad daylight."

"Mom, why do you suddenly have this attitude toward me?" Qiao Zijin was unable to accept Ding Jiayi's 180-degree change. She had a completely opposite attitude, like someone who suddenly became clear after being addicted to madness for a while. "Mom, you weren't like this in the past. In the past, you used to think for my best. You won't give up on anything that's good for me. You won't do anything that would be against me. Mom, you've changed."

She became more selfish and only had herself in her heart. She had forgotten about her, the daughter!

She asked for fifty thousand yuan previously and one hundred thousand yuan now. What about the next time? Her mom's appetite was growing and she was asking for more money. It was such a huge amount of money but her mom dared to ask her for it. She only had a total of one and half million yuan. At this rate, within three years, her mom would take away all of her money.

She thought of how Ding Jiayi only asked Qiao Nan for ten or twenty thousand yuan a month when Qiao Nan was still at home in the past. The tides have turned. When Ding Jiayi asked her for money, it was now fifty thousand yuan or even a hundred thousand yuan! Was she used to exploiting her daughters? It was starting to get worse now!

Chapter 2077: Mentality

Qiao Zijin felt that she should give Qiao Nan a call now and have a good chat with her. Others might not understand her. However, Qiao Nan suffered from this issue before. She would understand her. In this family, her father ignored her and her mother was only after her money. She was now like Qiao Nan in the past. As a daughter of the Qiao family, she and Qiao Nan were really too pitiful and unlucky.

An enemy's enemy was a friend. After having Ding Jiayi as a common enemy, Qiao Zijin felt that she should be able to become affectionate with Qiao Nan. Who asked them to have been oppressed by the same person? "Mom, you're in a bad mood now. I'll return to my room and not disturb you. When you're happy, I'll find you again."

Ding Jiayi didn't stop her when Qiao Zijin wanted to return to her room. Ding Jiayi didn't know how to use the computer. It was good enough that she was occupied by the TV in the living room.

After returning to her room, Qiao Zijin hurriedly took out her mobile and dialed a number that was foreign to her. “Hello, is this Nan Nan? It’s me. I’m your sister...”

When she saw a foreign number, Qiao Nan only thought of trying to pick it up. She didn’t expect that Qiao Zijin would actually call her. “Why do you have my number?”

“I...” Qiao Zijin thought for a while. “Do you need me to spell it out? In this family, who did you give your number to? Nan Nan, you don’t have to guard against me. I’m calling you today to tell you that I understand your pain completely. Mom’s really different from other moms. Other moms only want to help their children lead a better life. Apart from reaching out to ask for money, our mom didn’t make any contributions at all. Nan Nan, you don’t know that Mom’s about to go crazy. It wasn’t enough that she asked me for fifty thousand yuan earlier on. Just recently, she even asked me for one hundred thousand yuan. You know that I don’t have a job as well. I didn’t manage to become a civil servant either. I’m spending all the money in my pockets. If I become a civil servant and have a monthly salary, it would be alright for me to give Mom living expenses... Hello? Hello!”

Before Qiao Zijin could finish her words, Qiao Nan hung up the call and switched off her phone. She was a pregnant woman now. She should stay away from electronic products like mobile phones.

As for Qiao Zijin’s grievances and affirmation, Qiao Nan didn’t care at all. Qiao Zijin had such a good relationship with Ding Jiayi, and Ding Jiayi always helped Qiao Zijin. Would she believe that the two of them had fallen out? Even if that was the case, it didn’t have anything to do with her. Who knew why they were fighting? The word ‘money’ probably triggered a war between them.

No matter what the reason was, it wouldn’t be something good. If she really interfered in this matter, she would be the only one suffering in the end. Who knows? Perhaps this might even be a show that the mother-daughter pair put on to deceive her. It wasn’t that such a similar method wasn’t used before.

Right. Civil servant. It should be because of that.

“What’s wrong?” Seeing that Qiao Nan’s face changed quite a bit, Zhai Sheng sat next to Qiao Nan with a plate of fruits in his hand. “Have an apple.”

Holding Zhai Sheng’s hand, Qiao Nan took a bite. “I just had a call with my dad. I forgot to switch off my phone and received an annoying call. It’s alright. I’ll feel better in a while.”

“Qiao Zijin called?” Zhai Sheng had good listening skills. Coupled with his strong analytical skills, he could guess it correctly. “This should have nothing to do with your dad.” After so long, that father-in-law from the Qiao family did alright.

“I know.” The apple was crisp and delicious. Qiao Nan couldn’t help but finish the apple slices in Zhai Sheng’s hand in two mouthfuls. “I probably misunderstood Qiao Zijin. I haven’t given birth yet, but she thinks that I’ve gone dumb just because of a pregnancy. Oh right, what’s the result for the civil service examination? Qiao Zijin kept mentioning it in the call. I’m guessing she’s trying to get us to help her.”

After Qiao Nan finished a slice, Zhai Sheng subconsciously fed her another one. Feeding subconsciously was something new to Zhai Sheng. However, he wasn’t irritated at all. In fact, he was enjoying it. Zhai Sheng couldn’t help but think that if Qiao Nan were to give birth to a daughter, he would be willing to feed her like this as well. “Qiao Zijin was already rejected in the interview.”

Zhai Sheng had already said it before that they went by the books. They only looked at abilities, not relationships. Zhai Sheng never really cared about how it was like to recruit civil servants in the past. However, this year was definitely the most impartial, open, and fair in the history of Ping Cheng. They only looked at results and not connections.

The Qiao family’s neighbor’s child had some abilities but wasn’t the best. As such, she passed the written test but was rejected during the interview easily. Thankfully, everything was public. After knowing that she was rejected, she went to look at the information of other candidates and was convinced.

Since there wasn’t any small action or inside story in this matter, she had no choice but to be convinced. She knew it clearly in her heart that since this had already happened, it would be useless for her to say anything else. Her family had really missed the chance to have a relationship like what the Zhai family and the Qiao family had.

The only time they missed this chance was also basically the only chance in this lifetime. The neighbor’s family had nothing else to say to this. It was just that ever since then, the Qiao family’s connections in the northern quad seemed to have worsened again.

“It was a failure.” Qiao Nan didn’t care about this matter at all. If not for Qiao Zijin’s call today, she would have forgotten about this. “As long as the results are fair and it’s purely based on abilities,

there's nothing else to be concerned about. Oh right, I don't plan to use my phone anymore. Thankfully, I've left behind my landline when there's a need to communicate in the past."

After receiving Qiao Zijin's call today, Qiao Nan blacklisted her number immediately without a second word. Even if Qiao Zijin called using another number, it would be easy for Qiao Nan to drag the number to the blacklist. Furthermore, it would cost Qiao Zijin money to change her number.

Even if one card cost only a few dozen yuan, based on Qiao Zijin's stingy character, she wouldn't persist for something like this. Before Qiao Zijin could do this, Qiao Nan's first reaction was to blacklist all the numbers.

"You're worried about the Qiao family's matters?" Both of them were already married. However, Zhai Sheng was still a little confused about Qiao Nan's true attitude toward the Qiao family at times. As a family, Qiao Nan's feelings for the Qiao family must be complicated. Zhai Sheng was only afraid that even Qiao Nan herself couldn't figure out her mentality toward the Qiao family.

Chapter 2078: Goddaughter

Qiao Nan smiled, almost spitting the fruit in her mouth out. "Brother Zhai, you're overthinking it. There's no need for me to worry about the Qiao family. Don't worry. The Qiao family is doing just fine." Apart from the fact that Qiao Zijin had suddenly decided that she no longer wanted to live and had died under Qiao Nan's wheel in her dream.

In this lifetime, Qiao Nan had no plans of learning to drive. While traveling around in the capital, taking the bus was no better than taking the subway. There was no escaping the crowd either way.

Although she had not been in the wrong, Qiao Nan had no wish of experiencing what she had experienced in her dream ever again.

"That's good too. That'll spare you some worry." Marriage life suited Zhai Sheng just fine. It was true that one's life became more harmonious if one were to find the right person to live with. "Oh right, I got a call from Old Chief Zhu the other day. It seems like he's been hospitalized."

Everyone in the Ping Cheng quad knew that Zhu Chengqi had not been in good health. If not for the fact that Zhu Chengqi did not enjoy going to the hospital, Zhu Chengqi would have become a regular at the hospital. As such, Zhu Chengqi must have been in severe pain or suffering from a serious illness for him to have been admitted into the hospital.

Qiao Nan stiffened. "Do you know how Old Chief Zhu is doing?"

"Not very well. The doctor says that he has only a few months left to live. That's why Old Chief Zhu has been transferred from Ping Cheng to the capital for treatment. Unfortunately, the doctors came to the same conclusion." The state was extremely concerned about an old revolutionary like Zhu Chengqi.

Besides, Zhu Chengqi had sacrificed his whole life for the state. That was why he did not have even one relative by his side in his old age. As such, special attention was paid to Zhu Chengqi.

"Why didn't I hear you talk about Old Chief Zhu coming to the capital?" If she had known that Old Chief Zhu was in the capital, she would have paid him a visit a long time ago. "Which hospital is Old Chief Zhu in? Shall we visit him this afternoon?"

"You're anxious and worried?" Zhai Sheng patted Qiao Nan's back, comforting her. "Nan Nan, I don't know whether to say that you're intelligent or foolish." He was happy that Nan Nan trusted him and was willing to act foolishly in front of him. But it was not good to expose oneself in this manner.

There had been too many suspicions and there would come a day when the couple would have to face them. He had not mentioned them nor asked about them, but that did not mean that they did not exist. If they were to ignore these problems, it would only result in negative feelings between them as time went by. "Nan Nan, I believe that couples should trust each other and not hide anything from each other. Don't you think so?"

Qiao Nan's expression paled slightly as she leaned into Zhai Sheng's embrace. "Yes, we should, but now is not the time. I got married from the Zhu family, so it's natural for me to be concerned about Old Zhu." In her dream, Old Chief Zhu had been her godfather and his fatherly love for her had not been any less than Qiao Dongliang's for her.

It had not been easy for Zhu Chengqi to love her as he did as a godfather.

In her dream, Zhu Chengqi even had a son, Zhu Baoguo. In reality, Zhu Chengqi's life was indeed pitiful.

"Do you know why Old Chief Zhu agreed to help us out with that?" Since they had already started on this topic, Zhai Sheng decided to continue discussing this topic in depth. "I've been looking into the Zhu family. There's something wrong with that guy, Wang Yang."

Qiao Nan smiled bitterly. Brother Zhai was impressive. He was right. There was a big problem with Wang Yang. “Brother Zhai, if I were to tell you that Old Chief Zhu wanted to acknowledge me as his goddaughter but that was all ruined by someone, would you believe me?”

“How... how did you find out?” Since she spoke about it in the past tense, it had obviously not happened. If the Zhu family had spoken about it, there was no way no one in the quad would not know about this. It seemed a little illogical that no one else but Qiao Nan knew about the matter.

Leaning in Zhai Sheng’s embrace, Qiao Nan recounted the entire series of events to him. “Brother Zhai, do you remember the guy who found me at my rented apartment and kicked on my door?”

“Chen Jun.” Zhai Sheng had never regarded Chen Jun as a love rival. However, given that he had once harassed Qiao Nan, Zhai Sheng had naturally checked on Chen Jun and knew vaguely about his situation. Of course, Zhai Sheng knew clearly just how Qiao Zijin had managed to get her brother-in-law to become her husband.

Qiao Nan smirked and said, “That’s him.”

“What does he have to do with the Zhu family?” Chen Jun could not possibly have any dealings with the Zhu family.

“He doesn’t have any relationship with Old Chief Zhu, but he does have a relationship with Wang Yang.” Up until now, Qiao Nan had still not understood why Wang Yang thought so highly of her that he had found a man of such high standing like Chen Jun to seduce her in order to ruin her image in front of Old Chief Zhu such that he would never want to acknowledge her as his goddaughter.

“After Zhu Baoguo left, Old Chief Zhu was heartbroken. Later on, Old Chief Zhu had wanted to get a goddaughter...”

“And the goddaughter that Old Chief Zhu wanted to acknowledge was you?” Was that the reason? Goddaughter?

“Yes, Old Chief Zhu had wanted to acknowledge me as his goddaughter. I heard that it’s because I fit the image of the daughter that Old Chief Zhu and his wife had had in mind. It was just that Madam Zhu had passed away after giving birth to their son, Zhu Baoguo. Wang Yang... He’s not a

good person. He's always been eyeing the Zhu family's assets. He was afraid that Old Chief Zhu would decide to hand everything he had over to me once I became his goddaughter instead of taking care of his biological nephew. That was why he got Chen Jun to date me..."

Wang Yang had been spot-on. After she had gotten together with Chen Jun, Old Chief Zhu no longer talked about acknowledging a goddaughter. "Brother Zhai, I must have let Old Chief Zhu down at that time, right?"

Zhai Sheng had never expected there to be so many things going on behind the scenes of such a simple matter. But Zhai Sheng reminded Qiao Nan. "You're overthinking it. Even I as a bystander can tell that there's something wrong with Wang Yang. Even though Old Chief Zhu is the party involved, I believe that he has good judgment and that won't get past him."

"Then?"

"If Wang Yang had really arranged for Chen Jun's appearance, he might have been able to fool others, but he definitely could not have fooled Old Chief Zhu. If he really wanted to accept you as his goddaughter, that had already caused you substantial harm!"

Chapter 2079: Scum

"If he really planned on acknowledging you as his goddaughter and stopped talking about it afterward, and even stopped caring about you, that must have had nothing to do with you getting together with Chen Jun. Quite on the contrary, he stopped mentioning you or paying attention to you to protect you from being watched and preyed on by Wang Yang."

Even the most brilliant people made mistakes. Wang Yang was ambitious while Qiao Nan was in a vulnerable position and no match for Wang Yang at all. Zhu Chengqi had to have full confidence in raising Qiao Nan into someone who could defeat Wang Yang in the shortest possible time.

Otherwise, Zhu Chengqi's good intentions toward Qiao Nan would only harm her. Just like in the past, he would simply have to divert his attention away from Qiao Nan to maintain peace on the surface. Then, Wang Yang would not even care about a trivial character like Qiao Nan.

As such, Zhai Sheng had reason to believe that Zhu Chengqi had given up on Qiao Nan not because of his disappointment in her. Zhu Chengqi had allowed Qiao Nan to return to her normal life to protect her. At that time, the only one left in the Zhu family was Zhu Chengqi alone.

That was the saddest and loneliest time in Zhu Chengqi's life but he had never stopped working. Evidently, Zhu Chengqi could not spare too much time trying to protect Qiao Nan from Wang Yang during the worst period of his life.

No wonder. No wonder Old Chief Zhu, who rarely interacted with anyone, had suddenly offered his assistance to allow Nan Nan to get married from his house. It was because Old Chief Zhu had intended to do so a long time ago. Since Old Chief Zhu had been prepared to acknowledge Nan Nan as his goddaughter, it was no surprise that he would let Nan Nan get married from his house.

"So, that's why..." Qiao Nan was overwhelmed by the information. She had always thought that Wang Yang's ploy had succeeded and that Zhu Chengqi had been exceptionally disappointed with her. That was why she had not become Zhu Chengqi's goddaughter in the end. But it turned out that had not been the case. Her godfather was still silently protecting her even though he was not physically present, just like how he had in her dream.

Qiao Nan sat up suddenly, scaring Zhai Sheng. Zhai Sheng quickly supported Qiao Nan's waist to prevent her from moving too much, afraid that she would injure the baby in her stomach. "What's the matter? Be careful. Thankfully, Mom didn't see that happen. Otherwise, she would nag at you forever."

Pregnant women could not move around too much. Pregnant women could not eat too much cold or raw food. There were so many things that she could not do...

No matter how smart Zhai Sheng was, he was nearly getting overwhelmed and confused by the countless forbidden actions. Of course, Qiao Nan's sudden movements were also forbidden in the Zhai family.

"Nothing." Qiao Nan stroked her stomach, which was not very obvious yet. "Brother Zhai, I'm just feeling a little emotional thinking about it. I thought that I was capable enough, and that's why... Brother Zhai, weren't you curious about how I managed to get so many people looking for me for translations even though I only have a Level Four certification? Although it's not popular anymore, my business hasn't suffered. Brother Zhai, do you think there's been someone helping me behind the scenes?"

Could that person be the old chief, Zhu Chengqi?

In the past, Qiao Nan had thought that she had managed to earn a high salary and carry the burden of supporting the entire Qiao family because of her own hard work and efforts, even though she was only a junior high school graduate.

Now that Qiao Nan thought carefully about it, she had always been quite lucky throughout her life. It was suspicious enough that she had been able to hold down such a lucrative job as a translator for more than ten years.

Initially, Qiao Nan had had no idea that Zhu Chengqi had intended to acknowledge her as his goddaughter or that Chen Jun's appearance had been planned by Wang Yang. It was only because of her dream that Qiao Nan had learned of these truths.

Zhai Sheng had thought about this some time ago, but at that time, Qiao Nan had not agreed to marry him yet. Since he had not even gotten her hand in marriage, Zhai Sheng naturally had no time to try to find out about who had been treating his future wife so well all those years. "I think it's highly possible."

Upon getting Zhai Sheng's affirmation, Qiao Nan got even more anxious to visit Zhu Chengqi in the hospital. "Brother Zhai, will you bring me to visit Old Chief Zhu?" Even though Old Chief Zhu had not acknowledged her as his goddaughter, she would still regard him as her godfather because he had taken care of her for two entire lifetimes!

Zhai Sheng supported Qiao Nan, but unfortunately, the couple had not managed to meet Zhu Chengqi. The first time, the couple had been rejected at the door with the excuse that Zhu Chengqi's condition was not stable and that he could not receive any visitors. The Zhai couple could try again once Zhu Chengqi's condition stabilized.

The second time, they were rejected once again with the same excuse.

After making two fruitless trips, Qiao Nan could not help but ask Brother Zhai on the way back, "Brother Zhai, do you really think that Old Chief Zhu is too ill to see us, or do you think that Wang Yang is doing something behind Old Chief Zhu's back again?"

Now, Qiao Nan was filled with disgust toward Wang Yang. Was Wang Yang entirely shameless? He should know very well why Zhu Baoguo had passed away at that time. Even though he had not intended to kill Zhu Baoguo and had only wanted to teach him a lesson, it was still Wang Yang's decision that had led to the death of an innocent person, Zhu Baoguo.

Even after causing the death of Zhu Chengqi's only son, Wang Yang was still eyeing Zhu Baoguo's place, wanting to take over everything that should have belonged to Zhu Baoguo. There were no

words to even describe how evil and psychopathic Wang Yang's cruelty was. Wang Yang's immoral acts were too numerous to even count.

"I can't say for sure." After learning about the truth behind everything, Zhai Sheng thought back about how Wang Yang had been looking at him and Qiao Nan with wariness on the day of their wedding.

This could only mean that Wang Yang had the guts to treat them in this manner behind Old Chief Zhu's back. Yet, even if Old Chief Zhu was truly ill, there was no reason for him to be controlled by Wang Yang. Because Zhai Sheng had not interacted with Zhu Chengqi, he could not be certain of Zhu Chengqi's current condition. As such, his suspicions were nothing more than groundless speculation.

The Zhai couple returned in vain and their actions quickly found their way to Wang Yang's ears.

Chapter 2080: Will

Wang Yang looked a little haggard with large dark circles around his eyes. It was evident that Wang Yang had not had a good rest lately. "Have Qiao Nan and Zhai Sheng left yet?"

Wang Yang's subordinate sensed that Wang Yang's tone was strange. Normally, one would put Zhai Sheng's name before Qiao Nan's. Given Qiao Nan's status, one would normally address her as Zhai Sheng's wife instead of calling her by her name.

Someone with no status would always be known by someone else's name. "Don't worry, Mr. Wang. They've left. They left quite quickly, in fact. The chief, in particular, had no intention of pursuing the matter at all." Chief Zhai had to have the best temper amongst all the chiefs he had ever met.

But it did not seem easy to talk to that person with such an icy cold expression.

"Okay." Wang Yang took a puff on his cigarette before choking on it. "Remember never to let those two meet that old man. The old man's condition has been getting worse and I guess he won't have many more months to live. As his only relative, I just want the old man's last days to be as peaceful as possible. I don't want him worrying about all these complicated relationships. It'll just drain him of his energy."

“Don’t worry, Mr. Wang. Our hospital understands your concerns. Indeed, Old Chief Zhu shouldn’t be disturbed and needs more rest given his condition.” He had done nothing wrong. These were facts.

Wang Yang rubbed his forehead. “Alright. We’ll need your help to take care of the old man. If there’s any hope, please don’t hide it from us. We have to try it out no matter what. The old master has sacrificed his life for the country and the people. If it was possible, I would exchange ten years of my life for one year of the old master’s.”

“We will. We all know that you’ve been very good to Old Chief Zhu. I’m sure Old Chief Zhu would be happy to know just how much you care about him. I won’t disturb you any longer. I’ll get in touch with you if anything happens.” After reporting the situation, the hospital staff went back to work.

As compared to Zhai Sheng, Wang Yang was a nobody. Unfortunately, the hospital staff had no way of getting close to Zhai Sheng. As such, they could not lose out on the opportunity to do Wang Yang a favor.

Besides, everyone knew that everything of the Zhu family would eventually belong to Wang Yang once Old Chief Zhu passed away. It might be true that Wang Yang could not compare to Zhai Sheng now, but once he inherited the Zhu family’s assets, he would not be that far off anymore.

Although it was not much, the hospital staff already regarded Wang Yang as a potential investor.

“You’re back? Nan Nan, are you tired? Come have a seat here.” Knowing that her son had brought her daughter-in-law to visit Zhu Chengqi, Miao Jing could not stand in their way. Qiao Nan might be pregnant, but Zhu Chengqi was seriously ill. If not for Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan’s insistence, Miao Jing would very much have preferred for Qiao Nan to rest at home.

Qiao Nan felt fine. “Don’t worry, Mom. I’m not tired because Brother Zhai has been taking care of me. Besides, didn’t the doctor say that pregnant women should have an adequate amount of exercise? Exercise is good for both the mother and the baby. That amount of exercise was actually quite little.” As she approached her fourth month of pregnancy, Qiao Nan could feel her little tummy getting tighter.

There was indeed a little baby growing inside her.

In about a week's time, she would reach the fourth month of her pregnancy and would need to visit the hospital for a checkup again.

“Alright. I won't worry about you anymore since you two have already discussed it.” Miao Jing was finally willing to let her go because Zhai Sheng was by her side. If Zhai Sheng was not at home, Miao Jing would never have let Qiao Nan go out of the house. The streets in the capital were terribly crowded and the air quality was poor too.

At this time, Miao Jing could not help but think back to the environment in Qingshui Town. It was much better for the elderly or pregnant women like Qiao Nan to spend their time in Qingshui Town. “I guess you guys didn't get to meet him again?” Miao Jing had never had much contact with the Zhu family.

This was involuntary. Zhu Chengqi's wife had passed away early and his mother had passed on even earlier. As such, the Zhu family did not even have a mistress. It was thus inconvenient for Miao Jing to visit the Zhu family.

Miao Jing had not forgotten how Zhu Chengqi had helped out during Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan's wedding. Even though Zhu Chengqi had indeed assisted them, Miao Jing did not understand why they were so persistent about meeting Zhu Chengqi. Even after failing to meet him once, they had gone a second time.

Unable to suppress her curiosity, Miao Jing asked, “Zhai Sheng, Nan Nan's a pregnant woman, after all. You know very well what the capital is like. Are you still planning to make a third trip?” Was there a need to go to such an extent even if they wanted to express their gratitude toward Zhu Chengqi?

There was seriously no reason for these two children to be so enthusiastic.

Thinking about the rumors that she had heard, Miao Jing's heart ached for her two children. “I didn't intend to share this with you because I was afraid that you would feel uneasy hearing it, especially Nan Nan. It's already easy for pregnant women's minds to run wild and I might very well find those people to settle the accounts if anything happens to Nan Nan. Thinking about it, are there certain things that our family should take note of so as not to cause any misunderstandings?”

Hearing Miao Jing's serious tone, Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan became somber as well, and Zhai Sheng asked, “What's the matter, Mom? You can be direct with us.”

Miao Jing let out a deep sigh. "It's those people... I heard quite a lot about Zhu Chengqi's condition. It really hasn't been easy for him to live like that, but at least, he hasn't lived his life in vain. I wonder if it's because the men in the Zhu family have too sinister auras, especially Zhu Chengqi. He doesn't even have a single relative by his side apart from his nephew. Zhu Chengqi is about the same age as your dad, but his health is in such bad shape. There have been quite a few people spreading rumors that there will be trouble once Zhu Chengqi passes away since there isn't anyone in the Zhu family to inherit his assets."

Everyone knew that if Zhu Chengqi were to leave a will now or a few words at his deathbed, anyone who caught Zhu Chengqi's eye now would stand to gain the most.

To put it clearer, anyone who managed to coax Zhu Chengqi and get into his good books now stood to gain from Zhu Chengqi's death by inheriting all of his assets.