

## RTAMM 2111

### Chapter 2111: Who Was Hindering Who

However, that was fine. As a father, he wouldn't give up on his own child. As long as Zijin was willing to learn it right and turn back, even if he had to start from scratch, he would be willing to do so. He would be willing to use his last breath and teach Zijin how to be human.

"..." Qiao Zijin's body shook. "Dad, what are you talking about?" Her ears weren't working well and she didn't seem to have heard him clearly. "Forget it. Since I didn't hear it, let it be. It shouldn't be anything important. Dad, after chatting for so long, I'm thirsty. I'll head out to drink water. You said that I've grown up and am about to become a grandma in a few years. You and Mom aren't young anymore. Who am I to interfere in your matters? No matter what decision you make, as a child, I would only express my support. As long as you've thought about it, you can decide how you want to interact with Mom."

She purely volunteered to help as she hoped that her parents would reconcile. Their feelings would then be the same as before and they wouldn't get into conflicts often. If they reconciled, it was a good thing for her dad as well. She wouldn't take advantage of it.

She was here to help her parents get back together. Who knew that once her dad spoke, he actually wanted her to return the one and a half million yuan to Qiao Nan? On what basis should she do that? No!

Who said that the money belonged to Qiao Nan? It obviously belonged to her. The name on the bank account was her, Qiao Zijin, not Qiao Nan. Her mom just asked her for one hundred thousand yuan. It was just one hundred thousand yuan and she didn't agree to it.

She thought that her mother's attitude of asking people for money once every two days was already hateful and greedy enough. Who knew that the most vicious person was her dad instead? Her mom wanted a six-digit figure. Her dad wanted a seven-digit figure and her to empty her pockets completely.

Without money, was her dad planning to let her beg for food on the streets in the future?

That was too overboard!

Qiao Zijin didn't want to completely fall out with Qiao Dongliang yet. Even if she couldn't accept Qiao Dongliang's words, Qiao Zijin only pretended that she didn't hear them. She casually said a few vague words and let this matter pass.

Qiao Zijin had such thoughts but Qiao Dongliang didn't. "Zijin, I know you heard what I've just said and you understand them too. So, are you going to return the one and a half million yuan in the bank to Nan Nan? It's just a simple yes or no. As an adult, you should speak and do things in a straightforward manner. There's no significance in playing dumb. You have to know that if you pretend to be dumb often, you aren't pretending anymore. You are really dumb."

It was also because of Qiao Dongliang's words at the end that Qiao Zijin was sad and ran out crying. Not only did her dad want her to beg on the streets and return all the money to Qiao Nan, but he actually said that she was dumb as well. Even if she wasn't very good at studying, her teachers and classmates never scolded her like that before in school. However, her birth dad said that she was dumb.

Qiao Zijin, who couldn't bear this, cried very badly, like a little girl. She ran out angrily from Qiao Dongliang's room and wanted to complain to Ding Jiayi how pitiful she was so that Ding Jiayi wouldn't always throw tantrums at her. Otherwise, it would seem that she was going to be blamed either way in front of her parents.

The tragedy was that in the recent period—no, recent year, Qiao Zijin had been extremely unlucky. Whatever she thought of didn't succeed.

She was completely unsuccessful when she acted pitiful in front of Ding Jiayi. Ding Jiayi had no intention to be fooled at all.

Ding Jiayi proposed that Qiao Zijin had better give one hundred thousand yuan to her so that she could use it to coax Qiao Dongliang. Qiao Zijin became angry and pointed out that Ding Jiayi was like a blood-sucking vampire who leeches on her children. However, after Qiao Dongliang asked her to return all the money she had to Qiao Nan, it didn't seem that unacceptable when Ding Jiayi asked her to fork out just one hundred thousand yuan.

Compared to her everything, which was a seven-digit figure, a six-digit figure was just one-fifteenth of it. It wasn't a lot.

Even if the one hundred thousand yuan eventually became two hundred thousand yuan, as long as she could achieve her goal, Qiao Zijin would be more than willing to fork out the money. It was the one and a half million yuan that Qiao Dongliang mentioned that really frightened Qiao Zijin.

Qiao Zijin initially didn't find the chance to talk to Ding Jiayi about this one and a half million yuan. After that, she felt that there was completely no need to mention this again. Ding Jiayi only requested two hundred thousand yuan. If Qiao Zijin forked out two hundred thousand yuan, then Ding Jiayi's side could at least be peaceful for a while.

Qiao Zijin couldn't help but guard against Ding Jiayi. What if she mentioned this one and a half million yuan and Ding Jiayi developed new thoughts? What should she do then?

Even if her plan could succeed and she could really marry into the Zhai family to take over Qiao Nan's position, Qiao Zijin was still unwilling to bear with the one and a half million yuan. This amount of money was for her to live. She couldn't give it to anyone.

However, her mom was the kind of person who might say that since she needed her help and that she would be marrying Zhai Sheng in the future, she didn't need to worry about money. As such, she could fork out this sum of money first and pay filial piety to her mom.

In order to prevent such a situation from happening, Qiao Zijin dared not start a conversation like this.

After having this new plan, Qiao Zijin hid all the pitiful words and grievances that she wanted to say initially in front of Ding Jiayi. She didn't give Ding Jiayi any clue. As such, the curious Ding Jiayi could only come over and ask Qiao Dongliang.

Qiao Dongliang didn't want to say that Ding Jiayi had spoiled Qiao Zijin rotten. Since Ding Jiayi kept saying that Qiao Zijin was the best daughter in this world, if there was anything, Ding Jiayi should ask this representative of a good daughter and not him, the bad representative of a husband. Wasn't this right?

"Old Qiao, it has been so long. Are you still angry?" With this tone and expression, Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin were really in sync.

Qiao Dongliang relaxed his shoulders. He couldn't remember how many times he had sighed. "No, I'm no longer angry as I don't have the energy to be angry anymore. If I'm angry at the both of you, I'm just going against myself."

After being angry for half a day, Old Ding and Zijin didn't know where they were wrong. No, they never realized that they were wrong. Even if he was willing to point it out, Old Ding and Zijin were unwilling to listen. He didn't understand. He got married and had children. Other people did the same too. Why was it that it was so easy for others to lead an ordinary life? He wanted to lead a simpler life. Were such days so difficult to come by?

Back then, he married Ding Jiayi, causing Ding Jiayi to fall out with the Ding family. Did he make a wrong decision, or did Ding Jiayi make a wrong decision? Did he hinder Ding Jiayi, or did Ding Jiayi hinder him?

Chapter 2112: Bad Luck

Now that so many years had passed, it was difficult to be sure of certain things.

Did she regret it?

She probably did. She had stubbornly left her family, gotten married to someone of her own choice, and had no contact with her family from then on. Was such a woman really forced by her family to do so? Or was there something inherently wrong with her?

In the past, Qiao Dongliang could never figure out the answer to this question. Now, he finally understood. Qiao Nan had such a family too and he was all too clear about the sufferings Qiao Nan had faced in the Qiao family in her younger days. Even so, Qiao Nan had never completely left her family in the lurch.

Qiao Dongliang understood that Qiao Nan had not left Qiao Zijin to die in the hospital when she had left with all her money a year ago without paying for Qiao Zijin's hospitalization bills.

At that time, Qiao Nan had been the most rational of them all. She knew that the family had two properties under their name and that the Qiao family would never reach the end of their straits no matter what. As such, she had taken her money and left.

That was why Qiao Dongliang believed that Qiao Nan would never have taken off with the money needed to save Qiao Zijin's life no matter how much she hated the Qiao family if they had not had two properties under their names. After he had been injured by Qiao Zijin, Qiao Nan had been the first to offer money for his treatment. That was the strongest evidence.

Even with such a family, Qiao Nan was able to do it, so why had Ding Jiayi been unable to do so? No matter how much trouble the Ding family had run into, they had never come to ask the Qiao family for any help. On the other hand, Ding Jiayi had always scolded Qiao Nan for being useless and unfilial, yet Qiao Nan was always the first person who came to Ding Jiayi's mind whenever she ran into trouble.

In comparison, Ding Jiayi was not as bold as the Ding family and did not mean what she said.

Having been husband and wife for half their lives, Qiao Dongliang was now clear of the answer with such a stark comparison.

“Old Qiao?” Ding Jiayi shouted for Qiao Dongliang. “Old Qiao, we've been together for decades. What's there that we can't discuss with each other? If you think that I've done anything wrong, why don't you tell me? I can change. How's that? Didn't you say that Qiao Nan is pregnant? Both our daughters have become mothers. What's the point in us going to the extent of getting a divorce? How embarrassing it would be if our grandchildren were to find out about it! Why don't we just live our lives peacefully from now on? I won't argue with you in the future and we can have civil discussions if we have any disagreements.”

“Civil discussions?” That was rare. He had never heard such words coming out of Ding Jiayi's mouth before. “Old Ding, it's been so many years, but you've never gone back to visit your family. I'm guessing that your mom isn't around anymore. Did you know when your mom passed away?”

“...” Did she know? She did. She had always known.

It was just that Mother Ding had passed away just as Qiao Zijin had gotten married to Chen Jun. There was nothing more glorious than becoming in-laws with a police commissioner. Ding Jiayi had initially intended to bring her daughter back to brag about how capable and impressive her daughter was to all the villagers.

Unfortunately, Qiao Zijin had snatched such an outstanding son-in-law over from Qiao Nan. Ding Jiayi was afraid that they would let slip about that when they returned, thus letting her family find out about the matter. Then, she would not enjoy any glory. Quite on the contrary, she would be terribly embarrassed. It was not as though she did not know just how menacing her biological mother could be. She would never give her mom the chance to slap her in the face.

It was just as well since neither Qiao Zijin nor Chen Jun was good with words. Ding Jiayi had only touched on the topic before Qiao Zijin raised her disagreement. What hometown? What grandma?

Did she have a grandma? Why had she never met her? Since Qiao Zijin was unwilling to even participate in it, there was no need to talk about Chen Jun.

As such, she had missed out on such a good opportunity.

When Qiao Zijin was about five months pregnant, Mother Ding could not hold on any longer. Someone had sent the news of this to Ding Jiayi, asking if she intended to return to send her mother off. Bygones were bygones, after all. In her hometown, Ding Jiayi still had two younger brothers.

Did Ding Jiayi really not want to acknowledge her younger brothers or take care of them once Mother Ding left?

Ding Jiayi was upset when she heard that. This person must have been sent by the Ding family, most likely her mother herself. Knowing that her mother was still thinking of only her brothers on her death bed, Ding Jiayi was certain that she had not made the wrong choice by leaving at that time. Not only had her mother refused to apologize to her, but she had even gotten a fellow townsman to try to coax her into being her younger brothers' slave.

In short, her mother's mind was only concerned about her two sons. She could not be bothered with her daughter. Since that was the case, there was no need for her to torture herself by sending her mother off or even assuring her that there would be someone to take care of her two precious sons after her death.

There was no such good deal in the world.

After murmuring about it in her heart, Ding Jiayi not only sent that townsman away but also told him that their mourning clashed with her joyful occasion. Her elder daughter had married well and had such good fortune that she was already five months pregnant. Because of that, she could not afford to leave her daughter alone.

Ding Jiayi had settled this matter alone without getting Qiao Dongliang involved. She simply felt that it was double blessings upon their family that Qiao Zijin had gotten married and pregnant consecutively. Why had Mother Ding purposely chosen such a time to die? She was such bad luck.

If she were to tell the family about this matter, the atmosphere in the family would become somber and awkward. Anyway, her mother had never thought about her all these years, much less acknowledged her. She was not her mother's daughter anymore, so it did not matter whether she visited her mother or not.

Based purely on how much her mom hated her, she was certain that her mom might even be happier if she were not to go. If she were to turn up, her mom might even get so angry that she might just jump out of her coffin to chase her away! Since she knew that that would be the case, Ding Jiayi felt that it was better not to make mention of the matter at all.

Now that Chen Feng was all grown up, Ding Jiayi had almost forgotten about the matter. Now that Qiao Dongliang had suddenly brought it up, Ding Jiayi was taken aback, not understanding why Qiao Dongliang had suddenly made mention of it. “Old Qiao, didn’t I tell you about the life I had in the Ding family?”

Chapter 2113: Being Filial to Us

“I don’t want to think about the Ding family or even talk about it. Old Qiao, don’t force me.”

Qiao Dongliang smiled slightly and said sarcastically, “Old Ding, do you think that you had a harder time in the Ding family, or did Nan Nan have a harder time growing up in our family?”

“Of course, I had it harder. Compared to us, the children of Zijin’s generation have it good!” Was there even a need for a comparison? They were children of different generations. It was natural for children of later generations to lead more comfortable lives. There was no way they could be compared!

“Why don’t you tell me how Nan Nan had an easier life than you did in the Ding family?”

“Why was she not happy? We didn’t lack any food and she always got fish at every meal. When I was younger, only the adults or my younger brothers got any meat in the family. I was never allowed even a tiny piece of it. She studied for so many years while I wasn’t even given the opportunity to go to school!”

Qiao Dongliang looked away. “So, you mean that she had it easier because of that? Initially, I felt the same way too. Our country is advanced and nowadays children really have comfortable lives. If I didn’t remember wrongly, Nan Nan was born quite a few years later than Zijin, right? You can lie to me about how well Nan Nan ate but you can’t lie to yourself. I’m a man and I might not know about everything, but I’m sure I’ve gotten a clear picture of everything now. Yes, Nan Nan had the opportunity to go to school, but that was only because education was compulsory for nine years. Nan Nan only finished her second year of junior high school before leaving school, so she actually only studied for nine years. All the money that she earned was all spent on our family. She never got to see a single cent of her salary. Blessed? How blessed she was! You had to support your brothers in the Ding family but Nan Nan had to support her elder sister. Blessed! Indeed!”

Qiao Dongliang could not bear to talk about it any longer. "I've gotten my water and you've said your piece. I'm going back to my room. The thing I regret the most was teaching Nan Nan to be filial and not retorting or fighting back against her elders. I taught Nan Nan so many things, but I never taught her to have her own limits when being kind to others and to love herself even as she was filial to her elders. If Nan Nan had the courage you had and had run away, think about how well she could have lived her life."

Given that Ding Jiayi was such an opinionated person, the Ding family could not have treated Ding Jiayi too badly.

Even after Qiao Dongliang returned to his room, Ding Jiayi was still lost in her trance. When she realized that she had been left alone in the living room, she flew into a rage. How could Old Qiao compare her to Qiao Nan? Did that mean that Old Qiao felt that Qiao Nan had had it tougher than her and that she was worse than her own mom?

Nonsense! How could she be worse than her mom? No, that was definitely not the case. She and her mom were completely different. She was much better than her mom. So what if Qiao Nan had not completed her nine years of mandatory education? She had not even attended a single day of school and could only learn from her younger brothers. She was obviously much better than her mom! Qiao Nan was much more fortunate than she had been!

Ding Jiayi tried to calm herself down. There was no point in saying some things. A hundred good words were nowhere as good as a single truth. Once she handed the two hundred thousand yuan over to Old Qiao, she did not believe that he would still treat her in this manner.

Still this attitude? Facts proved that even with that two hundred thousand yuan, Qiao Dongliang had not changed his attitude toward Ding Jiayi.

With an even greater goal ahead of her, Qiao Zijin had settled the matter of the two hundred thousand yuan efficiently. Within two hours, Qiao Zijin handed the bank card with two hundred thousand yuan over to Ding Jiayi. Ding Jiayi had no intention of accepting the card and instead turned around and handed it over to Qiao Dongliang. "Old Qiao, here's two hundred thousand yuan that Zijin gave us for our retirement. You can keep this money and manage it."

Seeing that the two hundred thousand yuan was for him, Qiao Dongliang felt out of place. "Where's the money from?" Old Ding could not possibly have so much money in her possession.

“Zijin is being filial to us.” Of course, Ding Jiayi would never admit that she had gotten the money from Qiao Zijin and that Qiao Zijin had not been especially willing or happy to do so. Anyway, the money was already in her hands. There was no point in dwelling on that. “Old Qiao, you can keep our money in the future. I have no objections. I did that in the past, so you can take on that role from now on.”

Ding Jiayi remembered clearly just how fierce her argument with Qiao Dongliang had been that day. Since Qiao Dongliang had started to care about such things, they would split everything equally. In the past, she had held the purse strings. She would simply let Qiao Dongliang take charge from now on. She had no issues with that. It was just a trivial matter between the couple. Why had it gone to the extent of a divorce?

Looking at the bank card in Ding Jiayi’s hand, Qiao Dongliang sighed. He could not decide whether to accept it. After some hesitation, Qiao Dongliang took it from Ding Jiayi’s hand. Seeing that Qiao Dongliang had accepted it, Ding Jiayi was elated. “Old Qiao, you’re not angry at me anymore. Now that we’ve made up, can I move back in? You don’t know how small and stuffy that tiny room is.”

Ding Jiayi did not even want to think about how she had managed to survive three whole months in that room. Thankfully, Qiao Zijin was pampered and was already used to having air conditioning in the Chen family’s house. As such, she had requested for air conditioning units to be installed in the Qiao family’s house too. Ding Jiayi had spent three months of summer in the living room without returning to that tiny room.

She felt as though she would faint if she were to spend even a minute in that suffocating room. That room was not fit for humans, especially in summer.

After spending almost half a year in that small room, Ding Jiayi missed the large room she had shared with Qiao Dongliang. Ding Jiayi thought that the couple had made up since Qiao Dongliang had accepted the two hundred thousand. Since they had reconciled, it was only right for her to move back into their shared room.

How was Ding Jiayi to know that one should always watch her words? It was better for her to have kept her mouth shut.

Even after accepting the two hundred thousand yuan, it was impossible for Qiao Dongliang to entirely forgive Ding Jiayi for her failure in raising and educating Qiao Zijin and Qiao Nan well. After Ding Jiayi said that, Qiao Dongliang’s gaze only got colder. “Is that so? You haven’t even slept in that room for a year. You spent the whole summer in the living room. Nan Nan had to spend her entire childhood in that room until she moved out. Didn’t you always say that that room was

quite good? Nan Nan stayed there for over ten years, but you can't even stand staying there for a year?"

"..." Ding Jiayi had never expected Qiao Dongliang to bring up the past in this way.

#### Chapter 2114: Unlucky

Furthermore, how long ago was this matter? Ding Jiayi didn't remember that Qiao Nan had also lived in this house for a long time. "Old Qiao, let's lead a good life and stop making trouble, alright? You could discuss anything with me. I'll listen. Old Qiao, you have to know that we will be spending a lot of time together in the future. Qiao Nan... Alright, treat it that I wasn't good to Qiao Nan in the past, but that's all in the past."

"It's not that I'm trying to be wise now, but if I didn't manage Qiao Nan in the past and prevent her from finding a man to marry casually, do you think a man with good conditions like Zhai Sheng would be able to fancy Qiao Nan? Would Qiao Nan have the chance to marry Zhai Sheng? Let me tell you. Qiao Nan's biggest blessing in this lifetime is that she has a mother like me who brought her luck. If not for me, she wouldn't have the chance to become the chief's wife and live in the capital."

Qiao Nan had good days like today as she had depended on her. If Qiao Nan dared to be unfilial toward her in the future, God would definitely be intolerant and take back everything Qiao Nan had now, causing her to be unhappy.

How many mothers in this world could help their daughters be the chief's wife? Qiao Nan was lucky to have been born to her. She didn't give birth to other daughters. See? None of them could marry Zhai Sheng.

"Old Qiao, you have to think of it this way. In the TV show 'Journey to the West', Tang Seng had to go through many sufferings before obtaining the sacred texts. Qiao Nan suffered in the past. That was fine. As long as she's living better than anyone else now, isn't that enough? Isn't Qiao Nan more blessed than a lot of people now?" At least, she was more blessed than her. She couldn't compare to her at all.

When she was at the Ding family, her life wasn't as comfortable as Qiao Nan's. In fact, she suffered more than Qiao Nan. After looking at Qiao Nan, she looked back at herself. Qiao Nan suffered for forty years. However, she was going to lead a glorious life for the remaining forty years. When she was at the Ding family, she suffered for twenty years. After marrying Old Qiao, she continued to suffer for a few years.

It wasn't easy for them to be nearly successful. However, after giving birth to Qiao Nan, her life was immediately beaten back to its original shape. Until now, in order to please Old Qiao and appease him, she could only throw tantrums at Zijin and ask for two hundred thousand yuan. With her as an example, what was Qiao Nan dissatisfied with?

As humans, one had to cherish one's life and be grateful. She was to be blamed for not teaching Qiao Nan well when Qiao Nan was young. Otherwise, how would Qiao Nan have the habit to be hypocritical?

Once Ding Jiayi said these words, everybody would have to concede defeat to her. Qiao Dongliang suddenly remembered that after confirming that Qiao Nan was going to marry Zhai Sheng, he went to see Qiao Nan. Back then, Qiao Nan said that the reason why she could marry Zhai Sheng was because of her personal luck. It had nothing to do with others, especially Ding Jiayi's harshness toward her. That wasn't the original condition to fulfill her happiness.

Back then, Qiao Dongliang only treated it as Qiao Nan having thought too much. Because of the past, she had said such ridiculous words. It was when Ding Jiayi said something similar did Qiao Dongliang realize that Qiao Nan's understanding of Ding Jiayi was deeper than him. Look. Ding Jiayi didn't seem to think so.

She used to treat Nan Nan so badly in the past but still felt that she was really meritorious. Without her, it was impossible for Nan Nan to marry Zhai Sheng and have such good happiness now. This wasn't the first time this topic was brought up. However, it was the first time that Qiao Dongliang found it ridiculous. "If that's the case, the content of our chat last time is correct. The person you're really biased toward isn't Zijin but Nan Nan. You couldn't bear to be cruel toward Zijin, thus the person who became the chief's wife is Nan Nan. Could this be considered no pain, no gain? If Nan Nan should thank you, what do you think Zijin should think of you?"

Wonderful. Such an explanation was wonderful. He gave it one hundred marks.

"I..." Once Qiao Zijin was involved, Ding Jiayi couldn't answer. If she had long known that by managing Qiao Zijin ruthlessly and making her life a little more difficult in the past, she would have a chance to marry Zhai Sheng after the age of forty, she would have definitely done so.

Who was Chen Jun? He couldn't compare to Zhai Sheng at all. However, she didn't know that being fierce toward Qiao Nan actually helped her in the end. If she had known earlier, this honor and treatment would definitely belong to Zijin.

“Our conversation is over. I’m tired and want to rest. You should watch your TV now as well. Also, I’m used to sleeping alone in this room. I don’t want another person to squeeze with me. If you really want to, you can clean up the study room and live there yourself.” No matter how disappointed he was with Ding Jiayi, Qiao Dongliang wasn’t the kind of person who could be completely unsympathetic to Ding Jiayi.

The room Qiao Nan had lived in in the past was extraordinarily small and cramped. He only wanted Ding Jiayi to experience Qiao Nan’s sufferings back then. He thought that in this way, Ding Jiayi would cultivate her morals and no longer scold Qiao Nan like she had in the past.

It was a pity that his method wasn’t effective at all.

Ding Jiayi had already stayed in the living room for the entire summer. It was nothing to let her stay in the study room. The study room couldn’t be bigger than the living room. Furthermore, the Qiao family only installed a large air conditioner in the living room.

Ding Jiayi had been staying in the living room all summer. This caused Ding Jiayi to be the most comfortable person in the Qiao family.

Sigh... How was Ding Jiayi willing to accept such a result? She had already forked out two hundred thousand yuan. She didn’t expect Old Qiao to accept the money but was still angry at her. It didn’t seem like his anger was appeased. As such, Ding Jiayi got neither the person nor the money.

Ding Jiayi stomped her feet and complained to Qiao Zijin, “Zijin, your dad is becoming more out of hand. He has already accepted the money but refuses to let me return to the room. As a man, where is his backbone? He really doesn’t want to reconcile with me and return me the money.”

Old Qiao was only taking the money and not doing anything.

“Who asked the both of you to be a couple?” They were both horrible. No wonder the elderly often said that people of the same family had similar personalities and temper. Her parents’ greedy faces were exactly the same. A few days ago when she ordered takeaway, didn’t her mom eat her food while remaining angry at her?

When she no longer ordered takeaway and her mom started preparing her own meals again, she similarly didn’t prepare her share. Upon thinking how she had such a shameless pair of parents, Qiao Zijin only felt that she was too unlucky.

## Chapter 2115: You're the Best

Thankfully, one didn't air dirty linen in public. If people knew that she had such parents, it would be absolutely embarrassing.

Ding Jiayi scratched her head. "The problem is that your father accepted the two hundred thousand yuan but is still giving me this attitude. What does that mean?" If Old Qiao didn't take the two hundred thousand yuan, she wouldn't have felt so terrible now. By accepting the money, didn't that mean he had forgiven her and no longer wanted to argue with her?

"How would I know?!" The more Ding Jiayi said, the angrier Qiao Zijin felt. In her eyes, Ding Jiayi and Qiao Dongliang were birds of the same feather. Their greedy faces were equally ugly. When she refused to fork out money before, her mom even argued with her.

Great. Now, her dad accepted the two hundred thousand yuan but didn't have the intention to reconcile with her mom. So, what was the point of her mom throwing tantrums at her for about a month previously? "Mom, aside from money, don't you have other ways to coax my dad?"

Qiao Zijin didn't want to care about Ding Jiayi's and Qiao Dongliang's matters. She didn't care if her parents were on good terms or not. The only thing she cared about was now that her parents' relationship was like this, would the two of them still be able to wholeheartedly help her improve her relationship with Qiao Nan such that once Qiao Nan didn't survive after giving birth, they would help her persuade Qiao Nan to let Zhai Sheng marry her and for her to take care of Qiao Nan's three children?

It had been almost two years since she got a divorce from Chen Jun. It wasn't easy for Qiao Zijin to finally find the best way out for herself. As such, she really didn't want to give up on this best way.

Once this matter succeeded, her second marriage would only become more successful than the first. It would also be more enviable. How many people's first marriages could be compared to her second marriage, let alone their second marriages?

"How do I know?" Ding Jiayi didn't know what to do either. Over the years, it had always been Qiao Dongliang coaxing Ding Jiayi. Ding Jiayi had never coaxed Qiao Dongliang before. She saw how it was always the husband scolding the wife in other people's houses. In their house, Qiao Dongliang rarely threw temper at her. He wasn't like her dad, who always laid a hand on his wife when he was in a bad mood.

Upon thinking that her mom was beaten up by her dad before but Qiao Dongliang never touched even a single strand of her hair, Ding Jiayi was proud of this marriage. It was until last year that Qiao Dongliang broke the habit of never laying a hand on Ding Jiayi and beat her up.

“You don’t know. Apart from not knowing anything, can you say something else? Qiao Nan is only close to Dad now. If Dad doesn’t help us, our previous discussion would be for nothing. Dad has to help me in this matter.” From the way Qiao Nan only kept in contact with their dad, it wasn’t hard to tell that among all the people in the Qiao family, Qiao Nan only had a little bit of affection toward Qiao Dongliang, her birth dad.

In that case, Qiao Nan would definitely not listen to her mom’s and her words. In the entire family, only her dad could possibly persuade Qiao Nan.

“Don’t be anxious. Isn’t there a few more months?” It wasn’t as if Qiao Nan was going to die the next day. There wasn’t a need to be so much in a hurry. “You should know how your dad’s temper is like. At least, your dad has already accepted the two hundred thousand yuan. This could be considered a good start. At the very most, both of us could be more united in the future and continue to coax him. No matter how bad-tempered your dad is, he would be appeased one day as well. When your dad’s attitude softens, it will be easy to resolve the matter regarding Qiao Nan.”

“Is it really that easy?” Qiao Zijin didn’t quite believe Ding Jiayi’s words. After all, based on the current situation, she was at a loss as to how to improve her sibling relationship with Qiao Nan.

“Of course. Trust me. Let’s not argue anymore. Of course, in front of your dad, it’s either you don’t mention Qiao Nan at all or say more good words about Qiao Nan. Not too long later, your dad’s heart would soften and he would treat us as good as before. Just like we have discussed before, your dad must not know what we will be up to after Qiao Nan dies from giving birth.”

Old Qiao’s role was to act as a matchmaker in the middle. As long as Old Qiao mended their relationship with Qiao Nan, she and Zijin would naturally take care of what happened next. As long as Old Qiao didn’t know too much, this plan was still feasible.

If Old Qiao knew about their plans too early, everything would be ruined. In this lifetime, it would be impossible for Qiao Zijin to be the chief’s wife.

Qiao Zijin rolled her eyes. She restrained her temper and stuck to Ding Jiayi. “Mom, you’re the best to me. I’ll listen to you. After I become the chief’s wife, I’ll fetch you to the capital to stay in a big house together with us!”

She had to fetch her mom over. Even Fengfeng, her birth son, was brought up by the elders from both families and Qiao Nan. She didn't even raise her own son before. How would she be willing to raise Qiao Nan's three children? She didn't know how to bring a child up.

Rather than let the three children be miserably taken care of by her, why didn't she put them in the hands of someone who could take care of them well from the start? What she could do was to wait for the three children to grow up, help them find a good school, and urge them to study hard so that they wouldn't be like their birth mother, who only had a junior high school certificate and was semi-illiterate.

Although she was the three children's stepmother, she was also their birth aunt. She was a university student. Her son, Fengfeng, would definitely be a university student in the future as well. She believed that under her and Fengfeng's influence, no matter how poor Qiao Nan's genes were, she would be able to raise Qiao Nan's three children up to be more outstanding than Qiao Nan.

As a stepmother, she was willing to urge the three children more than Qiao Nan. That was considered good, right?

Forget it that Qiao Zijin once snatched Chen Jun, this scum, away from her hands. How would Qiao Nan have guessed that while she was happily pregnant with triplets, Qiao Zijin had already calculated that all four of them wouldn't be safe and she was just waiting for her to die so that she could take over her children, her man, and everything she had in the Zhai family?

"Ouch..." Touching her stomach and looking at that small baby bump, Qiao Nan expressed that that kick was hard enough and she didn't know who had kicked her.

"What's wrong? Are the children troubling you?" As Qiao Nan's stomach grew bigger, everyone in the Zhai family became very nervous.

During National Day, Zhai Hua brought Jiajia over to the capital to visit Nan Nan. Jiajia couldn't wait to be by Qiao Nan's side twenty-four seven. Especially after hearing the younger siblings in Qiao Nan's stomach start to react and would greet people with small fists and kicks from time to time, Jiajia's eyes were practically glued to Qiao Nan's stomach.

Chapter 2116: Decent

The elders in the family were naturally pleased that Jiajia was excited about having younger siblings. Qiao Nan was pregnant with three children! Ever since her stomach had started to show in

the fourth month, Qiao Nan's stomach was not only as big as a balloon, but it even seemed as though someone was constantly blowing it up. It even looked different in the morning and in the afternoon, less say each day!

At only five months pregnant, Qiao Nan's stomach was so big that it resembled one of someone who was about to give birth. Everyone who saw Qiao Nan could not help but worry about her.

Zhai Hua was afraid that Jiajia would be insensible and accidentally press on Qiao Nan's stomach. As such, Zhai Hua had decided to stay by Qiao Nan's side the entire day to protect her until she left with Jiajia. She knew that everyone else but Jiajia in the family knew their limits. No matter how mature Jiajia was, she was still a child and would inevitably make mistakes at times.

After Jiajia left, Miao Jing and the auntie were the only ones, apart from Zhai Yaohui, staring at Qiao Nan's stomach every day, worrying on her behalf. Qiao Nan's protruding belly was so large that Miao Jing and the auntie could not help but want to stay by Qiao Nan's side the entire day to prop up her stomach.

Her stomach was humongous and she was carrying three children! A mother's love was indeed incredible.

In fact, it was not just the Zhai family. Whenever Qiao Nan left the house to exercise every day, their neighbors in the quad could not help but feel that Qiao Nan had indeed raised the level of the entire quad no matter how much they had looked down on Qiao Nan in the past. At this time, these people could not help but be kind to Qiao Nan. Not only did they look at her in a different light, but they even slowed down their steps and lowered their voices when walking past Qiao Nan for fear of scaring her.

Pregnant women could not afford to be scared.

Now that Qiao Nan's stomach was growing so rapidly, everyone who took care of her in the Zhai family had started to tense up. On the day that Qiao Nan took her exam, Zhai Yaohui was no different from an anxious parent sending his child to the examination hall and insisted on seeing Qiao Nan enter the examination hall before he finally relaxed.

Initially, Zhai Yaohui had been rather supportive of Qiao Nan when he had first found out that Qiao Nan was so enthusiastic about learning and upgrading herself, thinking that Qiao Nan was a very opinionated child and a good match for Zhai Sheng.

But it was only natural for him to change his mind after learning that Qiao Nan was pregnant with the triplets. While it was good that she wanted to improve herself, she had to look at the situation she was in. Now, there was nothing more important than the health and safety of Qiao Nan and her children.

Unfortunately, no one had known that Qiao Nan was already pregnant when she had signed up for the examination. If they were to stop her now, it would only show that the Zhai family cared more about the children than Qiao Nan herself.

Sigh. Zhai Yaohui was thrown into a dilemma.

Thankfully, there were many candidates on the day of the English examination, but they were all of a certain standard. Upon seeing that Qiao Nan was a pregnant lady, not only did they not squeeze beside Qiao Nan, but they even stood aside to give her space to walk and breathe.

With these students' consideration toward Qiao Nan, Zhai Yaohui could do nothing but sit in the car and wait for more than an hour until the exam ended.

Once Qiao Nan got into the car, Zhai Yaohui nodded and said, "I thought that children nowadays were spoiled. It seems like our country's educational system is doing rather well. These young people haven't let the country down."

"That's right." Miao Jing handed Qiao Nan some water. "But Nan Nan, you know that your stomach has gotten bigger. It's alright since this exam was only two hours long, but what about going to school?" The students here were good, but that did not mean that all students had such a good temper.

Nan Nan was a treasure. No one could touch, or much less injure her. She would never use such precious Nan Nan to test out the overall quality of character in the country.

There would be too many people in the classroom breathing the same air. The air quality was sure to be poor.

"Nan Nan, I don't mean to discourage you from learning. It's just that..." Shouldn't Nan Nan give birth to her children before continuing with her studies? Nan Nan had three precious babies in her stomach. She and the auntie alone would definitely not be able to handle them. Besides, she was already advanced in age. It would be good enough for her not to add on to her children's troubles.

Miao Jing had already thought it through. At the very most, they would hire two more helpers. Then, each helper would take care of one child. Three helpers would definitely be sufficient to take care of her three grandchildren. She might be old, but if she and Old Zhai were at home, they would definitely supervise the helpers from the side and chip in when needed.

After quenching her thirst, Qiao Nan wiped away her sweat and smiled. “Mom, don’t worry. I understand. Before Brother Zhai returned to the military, I already discussed this with him. At the very most, I’ll graduate a year later. Besides, I can still study at home. I’ve already applied for leave from my teacher and I don’t intend to return until I finish my confinement period.”

Qiao Nan was studying at a school for mature students, and it did not have strict requirements. As an adult school, it was natural for there to be situations that prevented their students from completing the course or continuing with their studies.

Besides, it was not as though Qiao Nan gave up completely. She was simply asking for leave to give birth to her children and would continue her studies at a later time. Of course, her teachers quickly approved it. Zhai Sheng had already made a trip down to help Qiao Nan settle the paperwork as well.

Before this, Qiao Nan’s stomach had not been so big that going to school posed a danger to her. As such, Qiao Nan had delayed it for a while. Now that she was past five months pregnant, Qiao Nan was clear just how big and heavy her stomach had gotten. Since she had already applied for leave, Qiao Nan decided that it was time to rest and use her special privilege instead of torturing herself by holding on.

Miao Jing was elated by the news. “You discussed this with Zhai Sheng? Yes, that’s how Zhai Sheng should be acting now that he’s a husband and going to be a father.” If he had to rely on his parents to consider all these possibilities, he would be a failure. “Let’s go. The auntie prepared a whole feast tonight. Remember to eat up.”

Chapter 2117: Grade

Qiao Nan swallowed her saliva a little awkwardly. The auntie that the Zhai family had hired had superb culinary skills, so much so that Qiao Nan could not control her appetite. Qiao Nan was the kind of person who could never gain weight no matter how much she ate. Besides, she was now eating for three babies inside her!

Leaving aside how well she ate, she took in the nutrients well too. When she had gone for her fifth-month checkup, the doctor had told her that the triplets were developing so well that they were doing better than even an average singleton at five months! That could be good for the babies but it was not a good thing for the mother, especially since Qiao Nan was pregnant with triplets.

The more the children grew, the more difficult it would be for Qiao Nan to give birth in the future.

For the sake of the children and the mother, the doctor advised Qiao Nan to control her appetite a little. She still needed adequate nutrition, but there was also a need to control the growth of the children.

In Qiao Nan's case, all they had to do was to ensure that the children developed fully in the mother's womb without any defects. It was impossible for the triplets to grow to the same size as a singleton before birth. That would be too straining on the mother..

It should be a good thing for the babies to be doing well, but because of many different factors, it was not as such for Qiao Nan. But Qiao Nan had not let Miao Jing know about this situation yet. "Mom, the doctor told me not to eat too much. The triplets are growing as quickly as normal babies. The doctor said that it isn't very good."

The faster the children grew, the less time they would be able to spend in her womb. No matter what, Qiao Nan was advanced in age for a pregnant woman and had to pay more attention to the small details.

"Oh?" Miao Jing was taken aback and her eyes widened. Miao Jing had the urge to get all the delicious things in the entire world for Qiao Nan to eat. How was she to know that a problem would occur all the same if Qiao Nan were to eat too much? Miao Jing was troubled over that. "Alright, I'll discuss this with the auntie later. When we eat in the future, we'll try to control our meals. We'll eat nutritious food. That shouldn't be a problem."

"Okay," Qiao Nan replied with a smile. "Mom, don't worry. Once you worry, Dad will worry too. The children and I are still fine." The doctor said that her life would only get tough after the seventh month of pregnancy.

Actually, Qiao Nan had already experienced that pain once in her dream. The difference was that she had been well-nourished and had only been in her early twenties when she had been pregnant.

Now, she was already forty and it was inevitable that her energy and physical strength could not compare to that in her twenties.

There were both advantages and disadvantages.

Since she had already experienced it once, she believed that she would not only succeed but would even be able to do it better this time. As though the babies were responding to Qiao Nan's thoughts, a little bump appeared on Qiao Nan's stomach, causing a slight soreness.

Stroking that little bump, Qiao Nan smiled. She had no idea which baby it had been, but it had been gentle.

1

By the time Qiao Nan reached home, the auntie had already prepared a whole table's worth of food. "You're back? How was your exam? You must be hungry. Hurry and wash your hands and sit down." The auntie wiped her hands dry. "Oh right, Nan Nan. Your dad called today. I told him that you went for an exam and that you would call him back later."

"Alright, thanks, auntie." Having sat for a draining exam, Qiao Nan was obviously hungry. After washing her hands, Qiao Nan sat down for her meal. But because she had remembered the doctor's words, Qiao Nan tried her best to control her appetite.

Now that she had learned of the doctor's instructions, Miao Jing no longer continually put food into Qiao Nan's bowl. After seeing that Qiao Nan had had enough, Miao Jing stopped putting more food into her bowl. She had not been used to it at first, and after picking up the food, she realized that she could neither eat it nor give it to Qiao Nan. As such, it all went into Zhai Yaohui's bowl. "Old Zhai, eat up. These are Nan Nan's favorite dishes."

1

Old Zhai had better eat more and finish everything up so that Nan Nan would not feel bad.

"..." It was rare that his wife was willing to use some of her care and concern on him, even if it was not truly genuine. As such, Zhai Yaohui finished up everything that Miao Jing had given him. Zhai Yaohui had heard the conversation between his wife and his daughter-in-law in the car earlier.

After thinking it through, Zhai Yaohui had indeed taken Miao Jing's advice, quietly finishing the dishes that Qiao Nan liked first. Seeing Zhai Yaohui's behavior, Qiao Nan did not know whether to cry or to laugh. "Dad, don't force yourself. I'll just have my fill. If I still want more, I'll just have some fruits. Having fruits should be fine. I won't be greedy."

She was not a three-year-old child and would not put herself and her children in danger just because she was feeling a little hungry.

Zhai Yaohui coughed in embarrassment, feeling as though his wife had had too much of an influence on him. "No, it's because I went out today that I used up a little more energy. That's why I want to have more. But that's about it. I'll let the auntie clean up the rest."

1

Within an hour after her meal, Qiao Nan received Qiao Dongliang's second call. Knowing that Qiao Nan could not use her phone, Qiao Dongliang had started to call the Zhai family's landline from the fourth month of Qiao Nan's pregnancy. "Hello, Nan Nan, you're back? I heard that you went for an exam today. What exam did you go for?"

Thinking about Qiao Nan's belly, Qiao Dongliang was a little worried. He was afraid that the other candidates were young and insensible and would scare Qiao Nan by bumping into her. That would not be a small matter.

Upon confirming that Qiao Nan had returned home safely, Qiao Dongliang could finally rest assured. "Why didn't I hear about you taking an exam?" He had only known that Nan Nan was studying. He had not expected her to sit for an exam so quickly.

"It's not that kind of exam. It's an English test. Don't you remember that I like English very much and how I often took on translation jobs in the past? I didn't have the chance to do so in the past, but now that I do, I want to get a Level Six certification in English."

"Level Six?" Qiao Dongliang was stunned. When he said that, Qiao Dongliang eyed Qiao Zijin from the side of his eye. Qiao Dongliang knew about English test grades.

To earn more, Qiao Nan had taken the Level Four certification a long time ago.

## Chapter 2118: Wrong Choice

Afterward, there had indeed been quite a few parents of junior high school students who had gotten Qiao Nan to tutor their children. Qiao Dongliang had heard about it. All the children whom Qiao Nan had tutored had not only made great progress in their English, but their scores had also improved by leaps and bounds.

Qiao Zijin had also gotten herself a Level Four certification much later while she had been in university. Since then, neither of his daughters had done much else. As such, Qiao Dongliang had thought that Level Four was the highest possible grade.

Now that he heard that Qiao Nan had gone for a Level Six exam, Qiao Dongliang did not know how to feel. He had a feeling that Qiao Nan would definitely pass the exam as long as she went for it.

As a mere junior high school graduate, his younger daughter had a higher grade than his elder daughter, who was a university graduate! That was ridiculous! The Qiao family had spent so much money on Qiao Zijin, and it seemed as though all that money had gone to waste. “How did it go? Was it difficult?”

“It was actually easy.” The Level Six grade was truly not difficult for Qiao Nan.. Even before going for the exam, Qiao Nan had not revised much. After seeing the exam paper, Qiao Nan knew that she could have produced one that was much more difficult than that. As for the listening exam, Qiao Nan wondered if she had brought her experiences from her dream into reality. Her listening abilities in English had become on par with that in Chinese.

As such, it went without question that this exam was no problem for Qiao Nan at all. In fact, she might even have passed with flying colors.

“So simple?” Hearing Qiao Nan’s tone, Qiao Dongliang was even more surprised. Qiao Nan made it seem as though it was as normal as eating a meal. “If it’s really that easy, I’ll let... Nothing. Oh right, how have you and the children been? I sent you another parcel. Remember to get someone to collect it. Don’t collect it yourself.”

“Dad, you don’t have to send me anything. I don’t lack anything. I’m not even picky about my food nowadays. Rest more if you have the time and spend the money on yourself.” Qiao Nan had never expected that the money that she gave Qiao Dongliang every month would be used on her and the children.

Nothing was more important than Qiao Dongliang living a peaceful and healthy life.

“Don’t worry about those things. I know what to do. How could I shortchange you when you’re so filial? You know that the cost of living in Ping Cheng is not very high. Besides, I still have my pension. Apart from my meals, I don’t have anything else to spend my money on. You should pay more attention to your health. I’ll visit you during your confinement period.”

“Oh, alright. Dad, do you have anything else?” After her meal and sitting and chatting, Qiao Nan felt especially sleepy. It was time for her afternoon nap. Pregnant women had to get their fill of sleep. Qiao Nan was already yawning as she talked to Qiao Dongliang, who could sense Qiao Nan’s exhaustion even through the phone. “Are you sleepy? Hurry and hang up, then. I just wanted to know if you’ve been well. Go have a nap. I won’t disturb you.”

“Alright, Dad. Bye.” Qiao Nan could not hold on anymore and her eyelids were almost glued shut.

The moment Qiao Dongliang asked her to hang up, Qiao Nan did so without a moment of hesitation.

“Nan Nan, let me help you.” The auntie went up to Qiao Nan and helped her back to her room.

Now that Qiao Nan’s stomach had grown much bigger, she was not as agile as she had been. The pregnancy had been kind on Qiao Nan thus far, apart from the fact that she was in need of much more sleep. Just like now, Qiao Nan was so sleepy that she could not even open her eyes. It was because of this that Miao Jing was worried about Qiao Nan continuing her studies.

At home, there were three people who could take care of Qiao Nan, but who would take care of Qiao Nan in school?

Because of this, the Zhai family had remodeled the room on the first floor into Qiao Nan’s room for the time being before she gave birth. In that case, Qiao Nan would not have to walk far to return to her room once she got sleepy. That would also save Qiao Nan the trouble of climbing the stairs to return to her room.

Qiao Nan was only five months pregnant, but because she was pregnant with three babies, she could not even see her toes when she looked down. As such, Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing were frightened every time they saw Qiao Nan climbing the stairs.

Miao Jing expressed that she could not afford to be frightened at her age.

That was why Zhai Yaohui had come up with the idea of moving Qiao Nan's room from the second floor to the ground floor to save everyone some worry.

“Dad, why did you hang up? I haven't spoken to Nan Nan and you didn't talk to Nan Nan about me either.” The moment Qiao Nan was helped back to her room, she fell asleep immediately once she lay down. On the other hand, there was no peace and quiet in the Qiao family. Qiao Zijin flared up at Qiao Dongliang. “Dad, why didn't you tell Nan Nan that I was the one who paid for most of the things in that parcel that you sent over?”

Her dad had better not try to steal her credit and lie to Qiao Nan that he had paid for all those things alone.

She had never expected her dad to get shrewder as he aged. She had always thought that she resembled her mom while Qiao Nan resembled her dad. They were both too honest. After forty years, the only honest person in the Qiao family was Qiao Nan.

Qiao Dongliang had been a little reluctant to hang up. If not for the fact that Qiao Nan had been exhausted, he would have continued the conversation. It was true that Qiao Dongliang liked sons, but he liked children who studied well even more.

When he had been younger, it had truly been too burdensome sending both his children to school. Besides, Qiao Nan had 'taken the initiative' and had given in. Of course, even without Ding Jiayi's influence, Qiao Dongliang had already been slightly biased toward Qiao Zijin based solely on the fact that she was the most highly educated in the Qiao family.

After Qiao Zijin graduated from university, she acted as though she had finally finished an arduous task and no longer touched anything related to academics ever since then. On the other hand, Qiao Nan's living conditions had improved after marriage, and with such an opportunity, she had taken the chance to sign up for all sorts of courses and exams.

## Chapter 2119: Sending Things

There was no way Qiao Dongliang would not feel the difference in the sisters' attitudes.

Qiao Dongliang gradually realized that Qiao Zijin had been chasing after the status of a 'university graduate' while Qiao Nan pursued further education because she truly wanted to widen her knowledge. Perhaps, they had dragged down the only person in their family who was actually good at studying.

At the thought of that, Qiao Dongliang was filled with regret. "Didn't you hear Nan Nan yawning? She's tired. What could be more important than getting enough rest? Didn't you say that you understand how you did Nan Nan wrong in the past and that you're going to make it up to her now? Why are you behaving like this now?"

"Dad, isn't it just because I'm in a hurry to perform?" Qiao Zijin felt a little awkward. Her guilt was not genuine and yet, she had to make others believe that she did, in fact, feel guilty. It seemed like she still had a long way to go so that she would not let anything slip.

Her dad was not that good at reading people, but the Zhai family was. If she could not hide her true intentions from the Zhai family, the Zhai family might refuse to let her marry Zhai Sheng even if Qiao Nan were to ask Zhai Sheng to marry her.

"How would Nan Nan know that I've changed for the better if I don't show it? You know that Nan Nan got angry at me the last time. Yes, I wasn't a good sister and had been depending on my younger sister. But I've changed, haven't I? I really do want to improve my relationship with Nan Nan. Besides you and Mom, Nan Nan is my closest kin and the one who treats me the best."

While saying this, Qiao Zijin confused herself. She felt as though she was speaking the truth and lies all at once. The truth was that Qiao Nan was indeed the only one who treated her well apart from her parents. The lie was that her closest kin left was Qiao Nan. Besides her parents, the one whom she loved most and was closest to her was her son, Feng Feng.

Qiao Dongliang was full of resentment. "Since you've grown a heart and realized that, why did you still hurt Nan Nan in that way last time? Rome wasn't built in a day. You treated Nan Nan so coldly and badly for so many years. Do you really think that she'll warm up to you just because of that parcel? There's no way of hurrying this. You have to take it slow. What you need to do now is to prove yourself through your actions and not your words. Once you've done enough, Nan Nan will naturally feel it even without you saying anything. I'll help you as much as I can to ease the tension, but I definitely will not speak up for you."

If he were to speak well of Zijin in front of Nan Nan before Nan Nan felt Zijin's sincerity, not only would he not be able to salvage the sisters' relationship, but he might even hurt Nan Nan so much that she would ignore her father.

Because he was clear of that, Qiao Dongliang had already decided not to mention Qiao Zijin's situation to Qiao Nan in case he irked Qiao Nan. Qiao Dongliang had such control, at the very least.

Slowly. He asked her to take it slow. She did not have that much time! Qiao Nan was already five months pregnant. In two to three months' time at the very most, Qiao Nan would definitely have to give birth. She had already searched the web about this, and most doctors had said that it was common for mothers with multiple births to give birth prematurely in their seventh or eighth month.

Now, not only did she have to make up with Qiao Nan, but she even had to develop an extremely close relationship with her. Otherwise, there was no way Qiao Nan would agree to leave her husband and children in her hands. If there was any tension between her and Qiao Nan, it might be difficult for her to visit Zhai Sheng and the three children if Qiao Nan were to pass on. The Zhai family did not need her to take care of the three children. Besides, given the Qiao family's conditions, they had almost no rights to request for the three children to live in the maternal grandma's house.

Qiao Zijin did not want to take it slow, but unfortunately, there was no way Qiao Zijin could speed up the process without Qiao Dongliang's help either.

"Zhai Sheng, why are you back?" Coincidentally, Zhai Sheng had returned on the very day that the parcel had been delivered. His superior knew that Zhai Sheng's wife had gotten pregnant very soon after they had gotten married. Zhai Sheng was already forty-five and they joked that this child seemed to be just like children that other couples had by accident later in their lives.

As such, everyone was very understanding. Besides, Zhai Sheng had already made great contributions to the country and the people while he was younger. It was no big deal for him to get more time off now. As such, Zhai Sheng had about three to four days of vacation every month.

If Zhai Sheng had been slightly more selfish, he could have chosen not to remain in the military camp all the time, given his current position and status. However, Zhai Sheng had his own principles. Even though he was now a leader, Zhai Sheng had not changed his habits.

All soldiers under Zhai Sheng were the cream of the crop and the pride of the military. Because Zhai Sheng excelled at training his subordinates, it was hard for his superiors to let him go too. Moreover, Zhai Sheng had never talked about that matter and was passionate about developing talents for the country. That was why this matter had dragged on until now.

Because they were already taking advantage of him, they had to give in to Zhai Sheng in some ways. Whether it was the talents that Zhai Sheng developed or Zhai Sheng himself, they had to treasure and cherish all of them.

Zhai Sheng did not even try to refuse when he had been given time off and immediately rushed home. Seeing Zhai Sheng homesick amused many in the military. It was true that a man with a wife was indeed different. Any normal man would cherish their own wives, after all.

After getting married, Chief Zhai had become more homesick than anyone else. The chief's wife was indeed impressive for having managed to tame the dragon that was their Chief Zhai.

Zhai Sheng had just arrived home when he heard that a parcel for Qiao Nan had arrived. After confirming that Qiao Dongliang had sent it to Qiao Nan, Zhai Sheng carried the huge parcel in. Zhai Sheng himself was eye-catching enough, and he was even more so while carrying that huge parcel. "What's that huge bag of things? Did you buy them?"

Zhai Sheng had just returned from the military. There was no way he would have had the time to go shopping.

"No, I think my father-in-law sent them to Nan Nan."

#### Chapter 2120: Possessed

Zhai Sheng put the parcel down. "Mom, do you want to open it?" Zhai Sheng knew that the family no longer allowed Qiao Nan to touch any sharp things such as scissors or knives, so the job of opening the parcel would have to be delegated. "Does Nan Nan know that my father-in-law sent her a parcel?"

Zhai Sheng thought about how much Qiao Dongliang would have spent on this parcel. No matter how much Qiao Dongliang had spent, he would simply find a way to repay Qiao Dongliang for it in the future.

"She does." Miao Jing cut through the wrapping quickly. "He called Nan Nan a few days ago when she came back from her English exam. He did mention the parcel but I didn't expect him to send so many things. It doesn't look like pickled ginger."

Pickled ginger should be packaged in a hard container but this felt a little soft.

“Pickled ginger?” Hearing those two words, Qiao Nan knew for sure that her father’s parcel had arrived. “Brother Zhai, you’re back?” Of course, seeing Zhai Sheng beside the parcel was the biggest surprise.

Zhai Sheng’s eyes glimmered but he quickly frowned. “You’ve gotten so big.” The protruding stomach in front of Qiao Nan caused Zhai Sheng’s heart to pound rapidly. He rushed over and took the auntie’s position beside Qiao Nan. “I thought you haven’t reached your sixth month yet?”

Zhai Sheng did not interact much with women and had almost never gotten the chance to see how other pregnant women looked like. Zhai Sheng had never even visited Zhai Hua throughout her entire pregnancy. Seeing how his wife’s stomach was so bloated was a huge shock to Zhai Sheng. “Have you gone for a checkup? What did the doctor say? Is it normal for your stomach to be so big?”

Qiao Nan’s heart warmed as she felt Zhai Sheng support her stomach. “It’s normal for it to be big. Other people carry only one baby but I’m carrying three. If my stomach isn’t bigger than normal, that would mean that our children aren’t growing well. Don’t worry. The doctor said that the children and I are doing well and nothing serious has happened yet.”

Following Zhai Sheng, Qiao Nan sat down. “Don’t get so worried. My stomach isn’t at its biggest yet. The children are still growing.” So, he had better not treat her stomach as a fragile balloon that was going to drop or break.

Although Zhai Sheng had not said anything, Qiao Nan knew that Zhai Sheng was worried about that from his expression alone.

Besides, the way Zhai Sheng had acted was proof enough. He had practically carried her whole stomach! Qiao Nan had the urge to remind Zhai Sheng that her stomach was part of her body. No matter how Zhai Sheng tried to carry it, she would still be the one carrying the weight. It would truly be a wonder if Zhai Sheng could carry her stomach the way one carried a ball.

“It’s going to grow even bigger.” Zhai Sheng could not seem to accept that. “Does that mean that they’re growing too well and are too well-nourished? Mom, you and auntie should take note.” Zhai Sheng did not know much about pregnancy, but he knew just how hard it was for one’s waist to suddenly grow so rapidly.

Moreover, Zhai Sheng had read quite a few books on pregnancy and child-rearing in the military. He understood that it was a burden on the mother’s body if the child grew too well. Qiao Nan was pregnant with three babies, and as such, she had to bear three times the burden.

“That goes without saying. The auntie and I have been discussing it.” Miao Jing rolled her eyes at Zhai Sheng. Zhai Sheng might want to be a good husband and dad, but she was a good grandma too. “It’s good that you’re back. Our family is full of people who need to be taken care of. The doctor said that it’s better for Nan Nan to get more exercise now while she isn’t too big yet. It’s beneficial for both the children and Nan Nan. If you didn’t come back, I might even have asked Hua Hua to help out.”

It was only because of the schooling Jiajia that Miao Jing had held off. It was the best time for Zhai Hua to take care of Qiao Nan.

Zhai Sheng nodded slightly. “I can stay for about four days this time. I’ll take care of all of Nan Nan’s matters in that time.” After finishing his sentence, Zhai Sheng asked Qiao Nan softly what she had gone off to do with the auntie earlier.

Zhai Sheng had expected to meet his wife first the moment he arrived home. Then, the next would definitely be his children. Who would have known that the first person he would meet was his mom?

Qiao Nan blushed and explained that she had gone to the toilet. Typically, pregnant women started urinating frequently in their seventh or eighth month because their babies were pressing against their bladders.

Because Qiao Nan was pregnant with three babies, such symptoms had appeared early. There was nothing strange about that.

But Miao Jing had no idea that her son was throwing a small tantrum because she had been the first person he had seen upon returning home. After opening the package, she was shocked to find numerous baby outfits. “Nan Nan, what’s with your dad? Why did he buy so many outfits at once? Although we might be having three children, this is still a lot. Besides, we don’t even know the genders of the babies yet. Isn’t he afraid that the outfits won’t be evenly distributed?”

In reality, Miao Jing had bought even more than what was in this parcel. But Qiao Dongliang’s and Miao Jing’s backgrounds were different. Miao Jing could afford it because she had her husband, Zhai Yaohui.

After his retirement, Qiao Dongliang received a small pension that was barely enough for his monthly living expenses. Qiao Dongliang would have done his utmost as a grandpa if he were to buy just one outfit for his grandchild, let alone this whole parcel's worth.

These things were not cheap at all.

Miao Jing wondered if Qiao Dongliang had struck the lottery recently. Otherwise, how would he have had enough money to buy all these things?

Qiao Nan glanced over and there was suspicion in her eyes too. "I don't think my dad bought them. Not all of them, at least."

"It wasn't your dad? Then, was it your mom?" That could not be. She was already surprised that Qiao Dongliang had sent these things over. If Ding Jiayi had bought any of these things, Miao Jing would suspect that the Qiao family had been possessed. That was not the Qiao family's style at all!