

## RTAMM 2241

### Chapter 2241: Having Grievances

Among children of the same generation as Zhai Sheng, they could rarely see a child as outstanding as Zhai Sheng. There was really nothing to say about the Zhai family's blessings. Zhai Sheng casually married an older woman but said woman could give birth to triplets. Why did they feel that everything good in this world was taken up by only the Zhai family?

Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing were completely in a state of retirement. Naturally, Zhai Sheng was responsible for all external matters while Qiao Nan was responsible for all internal matters. Those who wanted to have a good relationship with the Zhai family could no longer contact Miao Jing. Instead, they had to go through Qiao Nan. As long as the other party became friends with Qiao Nan, they could continue their good family relationship with the Zhai family.

As such, ever since Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing started taking care of their grandchildren, Zhai Sheng's side didn't have many changes. However, Qiao Nan's side had so many changes that they couldn't be described with just a simple word 'big'. Outsiders were very eager to go after Qiao Nan and became proud if they could become friends with her.

A change of sovereign brings a change of ministers. Miao Jing handed over all the rights of the Zhai family's matters to Qiao Nan for her to handle. Of course, those friendships of the past wouldn't be so useful anymore. Smart people understood one fact: The people in charge of the Zhai family now were Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan!

Even if her identity and status had changed, the way Qiao Nan handled things didn't change much. It wasn't late to make friends now. Knowing that these people were rushing over for the Zhai family, Qiao Nan wouldn't use an arrogant attitude to reject them. However, similarly, she wouldn't be so foolish to really make friends with them and treat them as close buddies.

Qiao Nan's clear-headed attitude surprised a few people. Those who engaged in wishful thinking had no choice but to dispel such thoughts.

"Hi, we meet again." As Qiao Nan got out of the car, she bumped into Li Yayan, whom she first met when she collected her books previously. "We're so fated. You left without telling me your name then. This time, should we introduce ourselves?"

"..." Qiao Nan was stunned. "You're also studying here?" It wasn't that Qiao Nan was presumptuous, but the country had long implemented the nine-year compulsory education. As such,

a lot of parents started to pay attention to their child's learning abilities. The Qiao family's situation was considered to be completely strange. Qiao Nan wasn't sure if Li Yayan was an only child, but based on the vibe that she was giving off, Qiao Nan didn't feel that Li Yayan was someone who wanted to receive higher education as she was career-focused.

Li Yayan smiled. "You also know that we normally choose only one major in university. Choosing two majors would be too tiring and I can't do that. After stepping into society upon graduation and finding the right person to get married to, I realized that I'm still interested in other things. Anyway, my family doesn't have to rely on my salary from work for a living and my husband encouraged me to learn more things. That's why I signed up for this."

Li Yayan knew that Qiao Nan had only graduated from junior high school. Her father-in-law looked down on her and always complained that she was inferior to Qiao Nan. Li Yayan wasn't willing to take this lying down.

That was because Qiao Nan was very lucky, alright? She coincidentally fitted into the image of an obedient daughter that Zhu Chengqi and his wife who had passed away for years had always wanted. She didn't understand. Qiao Nan only had a junior high school certificate. Compared to the requirements of contemporary society, even if they couldn't be considered completely illiterate, they could be considered semi-illiterate. As such, why did Zhu Chengqi like Qiao Nan and always treated her, an outsider, as his daughter?

Zhu Chengqi was confused and wasn't clear-headed. It was difficult for people to accept him making such a wrong decision. Her father-in-law looked so energetic and wanted to join the excitement. She, a university graduate, couldn't be compared to someone with a junior high school certificate? Li Yayan didn't feel good at all.

Li Yayan was thinking that if Qiao Nan really got married to Wang Yang, aside from the fact that Qiao Nan could help the Wang family to get the Zhu family's inheritance, she didn't believe that her father-in-law would be willing to bring Qiao Nan out to meet other people. Based on the Wang family's conditions, if they had a daughter-in-law who only graduated from junior high school, they would lose a lot of face. As such, Li Yayan was very certain that even though her father-in-law had complained about and despised her during the new year, if she were to change positions with Qiao Nan such that Qiao Nan was the Wang family's daughter-in-law, her father-in-law would only let Qiao Nan stay at home and be a daughter-in-law who couldn't be seen in public.

In the face of Father Wang, a person with many provocations, Li Yayan didn't have much respect for him. Change was the only constant. With the example of Qiao Nan in front of her, Li Yayan had already thought about it.

When Zhu Chengqi's inheritance was back in their hands, she would wait for her father-in-law to completely hand over the Wang family to her husband. When that happened, she could be the madam of the Wang family and no longer had to look at other people's faces. If there was such a day, the first thing that Li Yayan wanted to do was to bring her son back to her side so that she could raise him.

She knew that her in-laws had kept her son by their sides so that he wouldn't be close to her, his biological mother. Hah. There was no child in this world that wouldn't be close to their biological parents. Sooner or later, she would let her in-laws understand this.

Li Yayan pulled back her thoughts and smiled at Qiao Nan. Everything just now was just her thoughts. Only if she handled this person before her could she stand a chance of transforming the things she had thought of just now into reality.

Qiao Nan raised her eyebrows. "So, it's like this. You really like to learn."

"The main thing is that there are people supportive of my decision. Oh, right. Since we've met by chance, let's have a meal together. We can go dutch."

It wasn't that Li Yayan was reluctant to pay for the meal but she knew that Qiao Nan was a careful person. If she said that she was going to treat her, Qiao Nan would most probably refuse. If everyone went dutch, at the very most, they would just be having a meal at the same table.

Qiao Nan looked at Li Yayan a few more times. The first time they met, she wanted her to wait for the bus together. The second time they met, she wanted to have a meal with her. If she were younger and Li Yayan was a male, she couldn't help but wonder if Li Yayan was planning to pursue her. But she was already forty-one years old and was a mother of three. Li Yayan was similarly married. So, what was Li Yayan really up to?

"I'm sorry. My children at home are still young, and my elders are waiting for me to go back to eat. I can't make it this time." Qiao Nan wasn't lying. Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing were indeed waiting for her to have lunch together as she didn't have lessons in the afternoon. Qiao Nan would only have meals in the school cafeteria if she had classes in the afternoon.

Li Yayan blinked. "You're heading back to have lunch with the elders and children? How filial. A lot of young people nowadays live freely."

“In my case, I have a son. But my parents-in-law have been helping take care of my son. My husband is very supportive of me furthering my studies too. That’s why I’ve become the most relaxed one in my family. At times, I feel a little bad when I think about it.”

Qiao Nan would probably have something to say since she was a daughter-in-law too.

Initially, she had wanted to raise her son herself, but her parents-in-law had refused to allow her son to even be by her side. On the other hand, Qiao Nan had almost given her life to give birth to the triplets for the Zhai family. She had become a heroine in the Zhai family. Hadn’t Qiao Nan already established a foothold in the Zhai family? Why did she have to do these things herself? Did Qiao Nan’s parents-in-law not help out?

In the beginning, Li Yayan had been rather upset that her son was not with her. When she missed her son, she couldn’t do anything more than call him or look through his photos. Her parents-in-law refused to allow them to have video calls, saying that the light from the phone was bad for her son’s eyes. While they were at home, they never allowed her son to play on the mobile phone. As such, it was better if they did away with something as troublesome as video calls.

Li Yayan had been full of resentment because of that. She had already thought it through. Once she helped Wang Yang get back all of the Zhu family’s assets, she would have to demand her son back. She believed that Wang Yang would definitely agree to it, even if her parents-in-law didn’t.

Once they owned the Zhu family’s assets, both she and Wang Yang would remain in the capital to develop their careers and would probably not return to Ping Cheng. As their son, it was only right for him to stay by their side. It was impossible that she was the only one who missed their son. She was sure Wang Yang did too.

If he didn’t miss him, Wang Yang wouldn’t have spent all his time with their son when they went back to Ping Cheng for the new year. Li Yayan understood Wang Yang in that aspect. Because she knew that Wang Yang felt the same way, Li Yayan was confident about bringing her son over. As compared to Ping Cheng, the educational standards were definitely higher in the capital.

Once they moved their son’s household registry to the capital, their son might even have a higher chance of getting into Peking University! For their son’s sake, her parents-in-law couldn’t afford to refuse her request.

Li Yayan gathered her drifting thoughts. Although she was resentful, Li Yayan knew that not needing to raise her child had made her life much easier. Especially before a child turned one, all she knew was to cry no matter what the situation was. It was hardest to take care of children of that age.

She had never experienced that period, but Qiao Nan was right in the midst of it. It wasn't easy taking care of just one child, let alone three in Qiao Nan's family. Qiao Nan probably suffered three times that of normal mothers! "Oh right, how old are your children? If you have the ability, you can simply hire a nanny to take care of them. That way, you won't have it so tough. You'll even have more time for yourself. Besides, you won't have that much time to spend with your children now that you're studying."

Leaving aside the Zhu family's money, the Zhai family was already well-to-do initially. They wouldn't be so stingy that they refused to hire a nanny, right? If that was the case, it was useless being the daughter-in-law of the Zhai family.

After all, she had always had an auntie taking care of all the household chores, whether it was in Ping Cheng or the capital. She had never needed to wash a single piece of clothing or make a meal. Didn't all women want to marry well so that their lives after marriage would be easier?

Qiao Nan was stunned. "You can't say that..." She didn't think that taking care of her children was troublesome at all. It might have taken a toll on her body, but that was incomparable to the joy she felt. "My children are still young, so it's natural that my parents-in-law and the auntie help take care of them too. It's just that I feel that I can't leave my children. Personal time? Isn't studying my personal time? Thank you for your kind intentions but I have to go."

What was Li Yayan driving at? Why did she ask her out for this meal? And why was she always beating around the bush?

It was not as though she was an important figure. Even if Li Yayan had a meal with her, she wouldn't be able to gain much from it. As such, Qiao Nan was not suspicious of Li Yayan. She simply thought that Li Yayan was an eccentric and excessively enthusiastic classmate.

As soon as she said that, Qiao Nan caught sight of her car.

After bidding Li Yayan goodbye, she got into the car and headed home.

"Why did you get back so late today?" Miao Jing looked at Qiao Nan while carrying Da Bao. "Our triplets have been kicking up such a fuss. How are our children so smart? They can recognize people around them! They're closest to their mom!" Miao Jing had felt rather helpless when the three children had refused to finish their milk earlier.

Not only had the three children's statures grown, but so had their tempers. Just two months earlier, they had been infants who only cried when they were hungry. Now, they were only four-month-old babies but they had become bad-tempered babies who refused to drink their milk unless they saw their mother.

"What's wrong with them?" Qiao Nan washed her hand before picking up the triplets. She stroked San Bao's stomach. "When did she last have her milk?"

"Ten minutes ago but she only had half a bottle." Miao Jing complained.

Qiao Nan stroked San Bao's little nose. "You're such a small one. How can you refuse to have your milk? If you don't drink it, you'll never grow up and you'll be a midget in the future! You won't be pretty!"

The moment Qiao Nan arrived home, the auntie made fresh milk for the three children. The auntie handed them each a bottle to feed the three children. Perhaps, it was because their mother was around that the three children were now more than willing to have their meal. With their chubby hands, they grabbed onto the milk bottles and sucked on them enthusiastically.

Because she was busy taking care of the three children, Qiao Nan had no time to have her own meal. After all, they had already had half a bottle of milk earlier and the auntie had only made slightly more than half a bottle for each of them.

After finishing their milk, the triplets couldn't help but let out a burp, letting them know that they were full and even a little bloated.

"Nan Nan, go have your meal. I'll carry San Bao for a walk so that she won't feel uncomfortable after having her milk." After coaxing Da Bao, Miao Jing took San Bao from Qiao Nan's embrace. Because she had just been in her mother's embrace, San Bao was in a good mood.

#### Chapter 2243: Burdened

San Bao, who was full and sleepy, let out a graceful yawn in her grandma's embrace. She blinked gently before eventually falling asleep.

Now, Zhai Yaohui had already mastered the art of coaxing babies. Er Bao was especially obedient in Zhai Yaohui's arms and didn't even throw a tantrum. He had even fallen asleep before Da Bao and San Bao. Seeing how adept Zhai Yaohui was with children, Miao Jing was full of regret. She

should have kept Zhai Hua and Zhai Sheng by her side at that time to let Zhai Yaohui raise them too.

In that case, their two children wouldn't have been so resentful against them for having neglected them in their childhood. That would also mean that there would have been much less resentment in the family.

“Dad, it's been hard on you.” Compared to Miao Jing's thoughts, Qiao Nan was full of gratitude. Qiao Nan couldn't help but wonder if it was because of Zhai Yaohui's age that he had entirely put down his status as a chief in this lifetime.

In her dream, Zhai Yaohui had only started to play with the three children when they had grown older and could speak. But in reality, Zhai Yaohui could almost take charge of a child's daily life all by himself. Just like now, he had taken good care of Er Bao alone!

Based on that alone, Qiao Nan felt that Zhai Sheng couldn't compare to Zhai Yaohui.

“It's not hard at all.” Zhai Yaohui placed the sleeping Er Bao back in the pram and moved his sore arm. He really had to accept that he had grown old. Er Bao was only four months old but his arm was already aching from carrying him. In another few months' time when the triplets grew even older, he wondered whether he would still be able to carry them. “You're busy with your studies and the children are still so clingy to you. You're the one who has it tough since you have to shuttle back and forth between school and home.”

Thinking about how Qiao Nan didn't seem to have had many opportunities in the past year of being married into the Zhai family, Zhai Yaohui felt rather guilty. He had heard about how other daughters-in-law were playful and wild. When he looked at his own daughter-in-law, who cared most about her own family, Zhai Yaohui was extremely grateful.

It didn't matter what outsiders thought about Qiao Nan as the Zhai family's daughter-in-law. He felt that Qiao Nan was the most suitable candidate for the Zhai family and Zhai Sheng.

“It's alright.” Qiao Nan didn't feel that way. While she had been in the Qiao family, she had led a life unlike that of the wild Qiao Zijin. In the past, Qiao Nan had either been working, traveling to work, or looking for work.

Her life had been that simple. Qiao Nan felt that her life had become much more enriching and interesting now that the three children were in her life. Because of that, Qiao Nan had thought that

Li Yayan's words had been rather ridiculous. Was it really that difficult to return home to see her children and have a meal with her parents-in-law?

Li Yayan had never lived through truly hard times.

Li Yayan was muddleheaded, indeed. She was born in the eighties and had a younger brother, whom her parents favored. The problem was that Father and Mother Li loved pampered their daughter too. People born in the eighties naturally had it easier than those born in the seventies. Li Yayan and Qiao Nan were from entirely different generations, and there was also a huge difference in their lifestyles.

As such, what she had done had been useless against Qiao Nan, who couldn't even understand why Li Yayan was feeling aggrieved. When she married into the Zhai family from the Qiao family, she had gained a loving family after having had a neglectful and aloof family. Qiao Nan felt like she had ascended to heaven from hell! Raising children was what Qiao Nan had been dreaming of for over a decade. And having a harmonious family and being doted on by her elders was something that she had yearned for for forty years.

Everything that was burdensome to Li Yayan was blissful to Qiao Nan.

With such a premise, Qiao Nan would never understand Li Yayan's difficulties even if Li Yayan went out of her way to try to plant something in Qiao Nan's mind to convince her that the Zhai family wasn't treating her well enough. Even if Li Yayan were to explicitly tell Qiao Nan her thoughts, Qiao Nan would never agree. She wouldn't understand it, and neither would she agree with it.

"Nan Nan, you've been attending school for such a long time. Have you made any close friends?" Miao Jing felt that even she smelled of the triplets' fragrance after placing San Bao down. Miao Jing enjoyed it very much. Looking at Qiao Nan, who had given birth to the triplets, Miao Jing felt that Qiao Nan was the most attractive and beautiful woman in the world. "Nan Nan, don't pressure yourself too much. Our family's status doesn't mean that we aren't like normal people. You can have your own circle of friends. Although it's true that it's not always so simple between adults, you have to give it a shot, don't you think?"

Earlier on, those who had gotten to know Nan Nan had only done so because they had wanted to take advantage of the Zhai family. They were no friends, merely acquaintances. Miao Jing hoped that Qiao Nan could get out of the shadow of the Zhai family to have her own circle of friends who would have nothing to do with the Zhai family.



How could anyone afford to not have any friends at all? Miao Jing didn't want Qiao Nan to follow in her footsteps. If she had had friends at that time who could guide her along the way, she wouldn't have been so foolish, almost harming her two children in the process.

But she knew that Qiao Nan was an intelligent child and would never let herself get into a similar situation. Nonetheless, she hoped that Qiao Nan would be able to live a much more fulfilling life than she had.

“Qiao Nan, your mom is right. You don't have to feel too burdened when you make friends. Not everyone in the country or world knows that you're the Zhai family's daughter-in-law. I'm sure that you'll be able to find yourself some true friends.” Zhai Yaohui acknowledged Qiao Nan as his family and thus treated her well. “Of course, if you're still worried about the triplets, we could always hire another auntie. Your mom and I aren't young, but we should at least be able to take care of them until they turn three.”

Afterward, the triplets' parents would have to take care of and educate them themselves.

Qiao Nan smiled. What was the matter? Why was everyone, both her family and outsiders, talking about how to spend her free time? It was as though staying at home and taking care of her children was a chore to her. But that was not the case at all. She didn't think that her life was monotonous just because of her children.

#### Chapter 2244: Being Dragged Down

Her life wouldn't necessarily get more interesting just because she made new friends.

Was it so easy to make friends?

In her dream, Qiao Nan had once made the effort to make friends. Apart from her roommates from high school, she shared the closest relationship with Shi Qing. When she went to university, she got close to another senior. At that time, Qiao Nan had already thought that she was very blessed and fortunate to have so many true friends.

“Dad, Mom, why are you guys suddenly talking about this? Is someone spreading some groundless rumors again?”

“...” Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing shared a knowing look. Qiao Nan was right. Someone was saying something.

Because Qiao Nan did not like interacting with others, she never interacted much with her neighbors ever since she had moved into the military quad. If not for the Zhai family, Qiao Nan would be no different from a lone wolf.

There was no way the gossip would cease.

In the past, everyone had looked down on Qiao Nan. As such, they simply thought that Qiao Nan knew her place and felt unworthy to have such neighbors. That was why she hardly left the house. It was better that way. It would save everyone's dignity, and she couldn't fit it anyway.

But the situation was different now. Many wondered why the Zhai family's daughter-in-law rarely appeared in the quad or interacted with others. Was it Qiao Nan who refused to interact with others? Or did the Zhai family have some ulterior motive and thus prevented Qiao Nan from doing so?

Apart from the children's full-month celebration, Qiao Nan almost gave off the wrong impression that she was merely a disposable tool that the Zhai family had found to have children. Now that she had given birth to their children, she would simply become a nanny who took care of them.

The Zhai family was frustrated, especially Zhai Yaohui. After all, they had known each other for a long while. There were so many matters concerning the state, so why didn't they pay more attention to their development of the country and state? Why had they learned to gossip now that they were older?

Zhai Yaohui had not asked Qiao Nan to make friends to clear this misunderstanding. He simply felt that Qiao Nan had indeed been too aloof in the past. Perhaps, it was because she had never had any free time in the past due to the Qiao family. After marrying into the Zhai family, she had gotten pregnant almost immediately and had gone to school even while pregnant. In the past year, Qiao Nan had had almost no time to rest. Naturally, he wished for Qiao Nan to have personal time and her own life.

After a discussion with Miao Jing, they decided that they would take up more responsibility in taking care of the triplets while they were younger so that Qiao Nan could get out and expand her social circle.

It didn't matter if outsiders mistook Qiao Nan as a dispensable tool that the Zhai family used for childbirth, but it would be terrible if Qiao Nan herself thought so too.

“No, it’s nothing.” Miao Jing laughed awkwardly. She had never expected Qiao Nan to hit the bullseye. Because Qiao Nan had questioned her when she had let her guard down, Miao Jing couldn’t even smile while answering her.

Of course, Qiao Nan didn’t believe Miao Jing, especially after seeing her expression. “Dad, Mom. Others will never be able to tell whether we live our lives well. Only we will be certain about that. I think my life is pretty good now. I might be a little busy taking care of three children at once, but if you guys try to get me to make friends instead of taking care of the children, I think I’ll feel empty. Besides, I think that friends made in that situation aren’t reliable.”

One didn’t make friends with a purpose. If one made friends for the sake of doing so, those friends wouldn’t be true friends anyway.

After spending so much time and effort, she wouldn’t even be able to achieve her goal. What was the point in doing so, then? She would even be exhausted because of it. Qiao Nan had no strong desire to make friends. She was more than content to simply go with the flow.

Since Qiao Nan had already stated everything out reasonably, Zhai Yaohui let go of his worries. Anyway, he had only said so because he was worried about Nan Nan, not about outsiders. He had always felt that Qiao Nan might not have high educational qualifications, but she had always been very transparent. The more he interacted with her, the more Zhai Yaohui felt so.

Even though Qiao Nan had not attended school full-time, she had still been able to rank in third place last year. That showed Zhai Yaohui that not only was Qiao Nan’s emotional intelligence high, but neither was her IQ low.

It was truly such a pity that such an outstanding child had been born in the Qiao family. They had seriously dragged her down. As long as Qiao Nan had the chance, she would definitely be able to prove her worth and show that she wasn’t the ‘useless servant’ in everyone else’s eyes.

If Qiao Nan had not grown up in the Qiao family, Zhai Sheng might have still gotten married to her eventually. Perhaps, when outsiders spoke of the couple, they wouldn’t talk about ‘the woman whom Zhai Sheng married’ but ‘the man whom Qiao Nan married’ instead.

Zhai Yaohui had no idea that the scenario he imagined had indeed happened in Qiao Nan’s dreams. When Qiao Nan appeared, they had never addressed her as ‘Zhai Sheng’s wife’. In fact, there were people who addressed Zhai Sheng as ‘Qiao Nan’s husband’ instead.

“The two of you are really...” Seeing that Zhai Yaohui had ‘compromised’ so easily, Miao Jing was upset. “Nan Nan, haven’t you met anyone you can get along well with now that you attend school often?” Wasn’t it easier to find true friends in school? Since Nan Nan was pursuing her studies, wouldn’t it be the perfect time for her to make some friends?

While this conversation was going on, Qiao Nan had finished her lunch. “Mom, don’t worry about me. The school I’m attending is different from the school you have in mind. The school you’re thinking about is where students go to. The school I attend is purely for self-improvement and upgrading our skills.”

Anyone who attended an adult school was after a diploma or an even larger goal. People who belonged to the former category paid to get their diploma, while those in the latter wanted to broaden their horizons and knowledge. It didn’t seem realistic to make friends there.

Of course, Qiao Nan had not immediately rejected them. But she had never had much good luck ever since she was young apart from having gotten married to Zhai Sheng and joining the Zhai family. As such, Qiao Nan had absolutely no expectations toward this matter.

#### Chapter 2245: Don’t Be Embarrassed

However, listening to her parents-in-law talking about making friends, a person came to Qiao Nan’s mind. That was no other than Li Yayan, whom she had met twice or thrice. She and Li Yayan were both women. Since Li Yayan was not courting her, did that mean that she wanted to be friends?

She had not taken the initiative to make friends, so it was interesting that someone else had tried to initiate a friendship.

Because she didn’t have any classes in the afternoon, Qiao Nan spent the rest of the day at home. Taking care of her children all the time? As a student, there was no way Qiao Nan would have so much free time. She had not carried all those books home for nothing. With an entire lifetime’s worth of experience, it was much easier for Qiao Nan to purchase the books that she needed now with a few simple clicks online.

Zhai Sheng’s salary was entirely in Qiao Nan’s hands and he didn’t limit Qiao Nan’s spending at all. However, to get her money’s worth of these terribly expensive books, Qiao Nan worked hard to read through them conscientiously. As such, while she was at home, Qiao Nan spent most of her time immersed in her books, apart from when the children were awake.

Professional nannies? While she was studying at home, it was usually her mother-in-law who poured her glasses of water!

Qiao Nan did not have much on her mind. It was either on her family or on her studies. The problem was that not everyone around her was that 'simple'.

"Is your chauffeur not here yet?" This was Li Yayan's nth encounter with Qiao Nan. Because she had been met with failures the previous times, Li Yayan had learned that she would have to understand Qiao Nan's schedule if she wanted to make friends with her. Then, she would find the right time to strike after learning about Qiao Nan's habits.

Qiao Nan shook her head and looked at her watch, feeling a little deflated. "We still have class in the afternoon and the last class in the morning ended slightly later." Since this was an adult school and there were no boarding facilities, the food options in the canteen were rather limited. If one arrived just slightly late, there would only be rice left with no other dishes available.

Qiao Nan had chosen to eat in the school canteen not to save money, but to save time. But she knew that she wouldn't be able to save too much time. As a mother to three children, Qiao Nan couldn't afford to go hungry. Otherwise, she might be entirely out of energy to even carry her children once she got home.

Li Yayan smiled. "How coincidental! My class ended late too and I was thinking of going to get lunch somewhere. Do you want to head over together?"

Knowing that Qiao Nan had a full day of lessons today, Li Yayan had already made her plans. Whether Qiao Nan decided to eat in the canteen or head out for lunch, she would sit next to or in front of Qiao Nan for sure. Her efforts had finally paid off. She had not waited in vain today.

This time, Qiao Nan had not refused but laughed instead. "Alright." Perhaps, it was because Qiao Nan was feeling a little bored that she felt no point in always rejecting Li Yayan, no matter the motive she had behind getting close to her. If she rejected Li Yayan again, Li Yayan would definitely try her luck again. In that case, it seemed preferable to let Li Yayan get her way so that she could see what Li Yayan was up to.

Having successfully invited Qiao Nan, Li Yayan let out a wide smile. "Oh right, what do you like to eat? Do you prefer Chinese food or western food? Or hot pot? A buffet?" In order to gain Qiao Nan's favor, Li Yayan naturally tried to suit Qiao Nan's taste.

Qiao Nan gave it some thought. “Let’s go for a buffet.” Actually, Qiao Nan preferred having hot pot to buffets. But she was not close to Li Yayan, and it was their first time having a meal together. Qiao Nan felt a little uneasy having hot pot with her, and neither did she like western cuisine. As such, a Chinese buffet seemed like her best option.

“How coincidental! I quite like buffets myself! There’s a place nearby that is quite good. I’ve been there several times alone. Shall I bring you to have a try?” Li Yayan asked, showing off her familiarity with the area.

Not only did Qiao Nan not refuse her enthusiasm, she even accepted it fully. Qiao Nan simply nodded in agreement to whatever Li Yayan said. In the end, Qiao Nan indeed saw a buffet restaurant not far away with Li Yayan leading the way. Given the crowd in the restaurant, it seemed as though the food there was pretty decent.

Li Yayan had kept her sight on Qiao Nan along the way and she had realized that Qiao Nan had remained calm and natural the whole time, without any hint of suspicion. Li Yayan couldn’t help but let out a sigh of relief. She hadn’t even been this anxious when she had been a student herself. Facing Qiao Nan made her feel even more nervous than taking an exam!

In order to gain Qiao Nan’s trust, Li Yayan had memorized Qiao Nan’s timetable and now knew Qiao Nan’s habits like the back of her hand after Wang Yang sent someone to check on her.

Initially, Li Yayan had intended on using this meal to get closer to Qiao Nan. Of course, since she had already done so much research, Li Yayan had also gotten a sense of all the restaurants in the vicinity of the school. Li Yayan dared not be even the slightest bit careless about which restaurant had better food, or which one suited Qiao Nan’s palate more. If she brought Qiao Nan to a lousy restaurant and Qiao Nan refused to lunch with her from then on, neither her in-laws nor Wang Yang would ever let her off.

Li Yayan knew that there were several items on this restaurant’s menu that Qiao Nan would like since she enjoyed eating spicy food. Since Qiao Nan had finally accepted her invitation, Li Yayan naturally brought Qiao Nan to this restaurant.

Since she had already paid for her own meal, Qiao Nan was not going to be embarrassed about it. Because she had to take care of her children while studying, Qiao Nan used up a lot of physical and mental capacity. As such, her appetite had grown drastically.

Li Yayan had only taken a little as courtesy, but in the blink of an eye, Qiao Nan had heaped a small mountain on her own plate! Li Yayan was dumbfounded. “Will you be able to finish everything?”

What Li Yayan was more curious about was whether Qiao Nan was not afraid of gaining weight after eating so much.

“Is it a lot?” She glanced at the food on her plate. “It’s not a lot. I’m just too embarrassed to take a few plates at the same time. After I finish this plate, I’ll probably go for a second serving.” It wouldn’t be too late even if Li Yayan were to ask her that question after she had her third or fourth plate of food.

#### Chapter 2246: Getting Messier

Li Yayan gave a simple one-worded reply in a daze. It was only when she saw Qiao Nan taking in several plates’ worth of food did Li Yayan shake her head and regain her senses. “Your-your appetite is pretty good. I guess you must have been using up a lot of energy lately.”

What she didn’t understand was how Qiao Nan could hold such a voracious appetite in that petite body of hers. She was probably no more than 1.6 meters and weighed approximately 45 kilograms. Besides, was Qiao Nan’s stomach a black hole? Why didn’t she seem to gain any weight even after eating all these? She thought about how she didn’t even dare to eat anything greasy or sweet for fear of gaining weight although she was in her early thirties.

Even so, every time she returned home to visit her parents, her mom would ask her without fail, “Yayan, have you gained weight again? Now that you’re thirty and have given birth, it’ll be easy for you to gain weight since you don’t move around much. Wang Yang has such a great background and he’s handsome too. You’d better not let anyone get the chance to take your place. Wang Yang might not be able to have an affair with his status, but he can surely divorce you to get remarried.”

Because of their son-in-law, Wang Yang, the Li family’s conditions had improved drastically. There was no way Mother Li was going to let such a good son-in-law slip through her fingers. In order to prevent that from happening, Li Yayan had to make an effort. As long as Li Yayan kept herself at her peak, there wouldn’t be any chance for other women to get their way.

If Li Yayan stopped caring about her image, the position of Wang Yang’s wife would be someone else’s sooner or later.

Because of her mother’s constant nagging about how she couldn’t afford to eat too much, Li Yayan had restrained herself all this while. Buffets had never been on Li Yayan’s menu. She had no other choice. Buffets were delicious and offered too many of her favorite dishes all at once. There was no way she would be able to control herself.

Just like now, Li Yayan had only taken a few bites but it had already gone over her calorie limit. Thinking about those terrible calories, Li Yayan shivered and quickly put down her fork. She wiped her hands and stopped eating. “Qiao Nan, were you naturally born with this physique? Do you never gain weight no matter how much you eat?”

“Yes.” Qiao Nan nodded and took a sip of water. “That’s exactly the case.” Her dad said that she took after her paternal grandpa, while Qiao Zijin took after her maternal grandma’s family. Because of that, Qiao Zijin had always been disgruntled. Even while knowing that Qiao Nan would never gain weight no matter how much she ate, Qiao Zijin would always convince her mom not to feed Qiao Nan.

Li Yayan looked at Qiao Nan in envy. “How nice it would be to have such a physique. You won’t even have to worry about eating foods high in calories!”

Qiao Nan was already past the age of forty and had just given birth to triplets a few months ago and yet, her figure was no different from that of an eighteen-year-old teenager. It would have been perfect if she had Qiao Nan’s physique. “You’ll never lose out in buffets.”

Thinking about how Qiao Nan had everything she wanted, Li Yayan couldn’t help but make a sour comment.

Before getting to know Qiao Nan, Li Yayan had always thought that she had good fortune. The Li family was not particularly well-to-do, but neither had they ever starved. At that time, there were many who were envious of her when she had married Wang Yang, for having found a man with such an outstanding background.

Those whose husbands could barely compare to Wang Yang were either older than him or were in their second marriages. More importantly, they were all pot-bellied. It was disgusting. There was not a single one whose appearance and family background could compare to Wang Yang’s. As such, Li Yayan felt as though she was the most fortunate woman in the entire world as others watched on in envy when she married Wang Yang.

But after meeting Qiao Nan, Li Yayan had none of those thoughts. Qiao Nan had been much luckier than her, and Qiao Nan had a much more fortunate life than her. Apart from her age, Qiao Nan lost out to her in every aspect. The problem was that Qiao Nan had married into a better family than she had. Even her uncle, Zhu Chengqi, favored an outsider like Qiao Nan over his own nephew and niece-in-law!



Even all these didn't mean much. Now, Li Yayan was green with envy over how Qiao Nan could afford to eat as much as she wanted without gaining any weight.

Even upon hearing the sourness in Li Yayan's tone, Qiao Nan didn't slow down. After all, it was not Qiao Nan's first time hearing such words.

In the past, Qiao Zijin would always try to provoke Qiao Nan with buffets too, saying that buffets were the most suitable for people like Qiao Nan. When others went to buffets, the owners of the restaurants probably rolled in money. On the other hand, if they were to have many customers like Qiao Nan, the restaurants would probably go bankrupt.

Was there anything better than having a big appetite but never gaining any weight?

Qiao Nan couldn't help but burp after having her fill. "It's true that buffets are suitable for people like me. Or should I say that it's the most economical?" The food here indeed tasted good. At least, Li Yayan had not made a bad recommendation.

Li Yayan was in a panic. She had really been a fool! She had intended on making friends with Qiao Nan, and it hadn't been easy to invite Qiao Nan out for lunch. Why had she said such a foolish thing and committed such a low-level mistake? "Qiao Nan, please don't misunderstand. I didn't mean anything else. I just thought that it's really worth it for you to go to buffets. That you wouldn't lose out... Not..."

The more anxious one was, the messier one's thoughts got. The messier one's thoughts were, the easier it was for mistakes to slip out.

Seeing how anxious Li Yayan was, Qiao Nan chuckled and handed her a piece of tissue. "I never expected this restaurant to have such good heating."

"Tell me about it. Look, I'm already sweating." Li Yayan regretted her words the moment she said them. She had hit a soft spot.

Earlier, Li Yayan had always thought that she simply lacked the opportunity to meet Qiao Nan. She had graduated from a second-tier university, after all. There was no way a junior-high-school graduate would be her match. As long as she was given a chance, she would definitely be able to befriend Qiao Nan and make Qiao Nan a close friend who would pour out her heart to her. It would be a breeze.

As such, Li Yayan had felt that it couldn't be easier to get the five million yuan that should have gone to Qiao Zijin now that she had this opportunity.

## Chapter 2247: Good at Teaching

But now, Li Yayan was not so confident anymore. Perhaps, it was because Qiao Nan felt as though she was now part of the Zhai family. She was nothing more than a junior high school graduate, so how could she be so confident? In fact, she seemed much more like an ignorant country bumpkin in front of Qiao Nan. Not only had she been in a frenzy, but she had even said the wrong things, offending Qiao Nan out of the blue.

Li Yayan constantly reminded herself to remain calm. It didn't matter that they had not started on a good note, as long as she pulled everything back on track along the way. That way, she would get the money for her brother to get a wife all the same.

"It's fine. Don't get anxious." Wasn't Li Yayan just a silly young girl in Qiao Nan's eyes? Qiao Nan had taken everything that had happened in her dream as experience from another lifetime. Combining her ages from both lifetimes, she was almost older than her own parents! "Have a drink. It tastes pretty good. It's not too sweet. You won't have to worry about gaining weight."

She glanced at her watch. Since there was still an hour to her next class, Qiao Nan felt that she had more than enough time to listen to what Li Yayan had to say.

"Thank-thank you." Li Yayan awkwardly accepted the drink. Then, she took the glass over and gulped half a glass' worth of the drink down in a shot. Only then was she able to calm down slightly. "Qiao Nan, have I ever told you that I'm not actually from the capital?"

Friendship between women often started from gossiping. Besides, they could probably get closer by sharing their experiences with each other.

"Really? How coincidental. Neither am I!" She had only moved her household registry to the capital after getting married to Zhai Sheng.

"Is that so?" Li Yayan knew her limits. It was obviously a moving scene when people from the same hometown met each other, but this was not the right time to tell Qiao Nan that she was from Ping

Cheng too. “You’re just like me, then. I’m sure you’ve found it difficult to make friends after moving to the capital. I don’t really understand it. Aren’t we all Chinese? Why do they look and talk to me differently when they find out that I’m not from the capital? Even though some of them are willing to associate with me, I still find it awkward and think it’s better not to contact them. Honestly, I feel quite miserable about it.”

Li Yayan was not entirely lying. If there was no regional discrimination, why did people always talk about locals and foreigners? It seemed as though foreigners from other countries were more valued and welcomed than their own fellow countrymen.

Qiao Nan leaned back slightly. “It depends. This isn’t always the case from my experience. There are a lot of helpful and welcoming people in the capital too.” It would be hard for others to be friendly to her if she didn’t have pure intentions herself.

Li Yayan smiled bitterly. “I guess your situation is different from mine. I’ve noticed that you always rush home to take care of your parents and children if you’re not in school studying. Apart from furthering my studies, my family doesn’t really need me to do anything. That’s why I have a lot of free time. Perhaps, that’s why I get upset by such a situation. If not for my husband moving here for his career, I would have returned to my hometown a long time ago. After all, my friends and family are all there.”

“People say that there’s nowhere better than home and that no one is better than one’s own family. I guess one’s hometown will always be the best. But once a woman gets married, she has no choice but to follow her husband. That’s why I haven’t even been able to find a close friend whom I can ask out on dates.”

Qiao Nan resisted the urge to yawn. It was normal for one to get sleepy after a meal. “You don’t look young anymore. How old is your child? Is he in school already?” As long as she had to raise a child, there was no way she would be able to rest easy. Even if Li Yayan didn’t need to go to work, she still had to go to school.

Qiao Nan couldn’t understand how Li Yayan could have so much free time that she needed to find a friend to kill time with. In both her dream and in reality, she had never had such free time.

“I have a four-year-old son who just started attending kindergarten. You know, my parents-in-law can’t take their eyes off him. Because my husband and I have come here to develop his career, we had no choice but to leave our son with my parents-in-law. That’s why I have so much free time.” Li Yayan had many thoughts running through her mind as she brought up the topic of her son. If possible, she wanted to fly back to Ping Cheng right away to see him.

“I see.” Qiao Nan stroked her chin. “Have you considered bringing your child to the capital? Honestly, it’s still better for children to grow up with their children. Besides, the educational standards in the capital are quite good, and the best universities in the whole country are here too. If your family is able to do so, you should bring your child to the capital. It’ll definitely be helpful in his development in the future.”

Li Yayan was so emotional that she almost knocked the plate off. “That’s what I think too!” The educational standards were much higher in the capital. If she didn’t start her son off from a young age, he would definitely lose out to other children in the future. “But the old folks in my family dote on him too much. Sometimes, they pamper him so much that they don’t even know what’s good for the child. Is that doting on him? They’re just spoiling him! It’s really sad, especially when they have their own ulterior motives!”

There had been a particular situation that had upset Li Yayan when she had returned during the new year.

She had finally gotten the chance to spend some time with her son and Li Yayan wanted to spend every second by her son’s side. But in the day, her parents-in-law did all they could to prevent her son from spending any time with her. At night, her son kicked up a huge fuss, insisting on being with his grandparents.

Her son’s behavior upset her. Li Yayan had already lain down, but her son’s tantrum had unsettled her. As such, she had gotten up to make some milk to coax her son.

But when she arrived at her parents-in-law’s door, she heard her mother-in-law ask her son, “Little precious, do you like your mom more or grandma and grandpa more?”

Her son replied in his baby voice, “Grandpa and grandma.”

“Do you like us the best?”

“Yes.”

“Since you like us so much, don’t leave with your mom. Will you stay with grandma and grandpa?”

## Chapter 2248: Truly Hurt

“Alright. Good boy. Go to sleep.”

Hearing how her mother-in-law taught her son, and how her father-in-law didn't cut in, Li Yayan felt cold all over even though the room was heated.

But Li Yayan had not brought up this matter to Wang Yang because she knew that Wang Yang was filial and might not even stand on her side or agree to let her bring their son away. Instead of upsetting Wang Yang again, Li Yayan had simply decided to bury this in her own mind.

As the popular saying went, daughters-in-law suffered until they became mothers-in-law themselves.

Li Yayan could only wait until she became the matriarch of the Wang family. Then, she would treat her parents-in-law exactly how they had treated her!

Li Yayan could never talk about such things to the Wang family. And her own family would probably say that her parents-in-law were simply trying to help lighten her burden by taking care of her son. It would be better for her to head to the gym to maintain her figure or go for facials at beauty salons if she had any free time. There were throngs of women who would gladly take her place. Li Yayan had better know how fortunate she was.

And neither was she willing to talk about such things to her close friends in Ping Cheng.

Why?

In their eyes, she had lucked out by marrying Wang Yang. Li Yayan had no intention of letting anyone know just how unhappy she was after marrying Wang Yang. Not about how she had never gained her father-in-law's approval, how she had no say over her own son, or about how her parents-in-law were stirring up trouble behind her back.

Now that she had met Qiao Nan, Li Yayan felt that she had finally met someone she could pour her heart out and vent her grievances to.

After hearing Li Yayan's rant, Qiao Nan poured no less than three glasses of water for Li Yayan, for fear that she would get thirsty from speaking so much. Seeing Li Yayan in this manner, Qiao Nan

finally believed just slightly that Li Yayan was indeed looking for a friend. Or should she say a tree hole to pour out her grievances to?

Qiao Nan nearly suggested for Li Yayan to find a psychiatrist. It wasn't that Li Yayan was mentally unsound, but she needed someone to listen to her. Otherwise, she could simply believe in Jesus and confess to a priest.

"Qiao Nan, there are times I miss my son so much that I can't fall asleep. How could those old folks be so selfish and not even think about the child at all?"

Qiao Nan handed Li Yayan another piece of tissue. Previously, it had been to wipe away her sweat. This time, it was naturally for her tears. "It's hard to say. Perhaps, you should find a chance to speak to your husband. Since it's for the good of your son, I'm sure that your husband won't stubbornly stand by his parents' side for the sake of being filial since it affects the future of your son."

She could tell that Li Yayan's husband was not one who was whipped for his wife. It was exactly because of this that Li Yayan felt aggrieved. He treated her as an outsider because he was not on her side.

"Communication? I do want to communicate with him, but he only listens to his parents. He never listens to me. I don't understand why he doesn't have an opinion of his own even now that he's all grown up. We're not even living with his parents. Why does he still have to listen to his parents all the time? Is he still a child?"

If Wang Yang could be more decisive and bold in matters regarding her son, she would have brought her son over to the capital a long time ago. How nice it would be for their family to be living in the capital together.

She didn't understand what Wang Yang was afraid of. Wang Yang had gotten to where he was not because of the Wang family, much less because of his father. To put it bluntly, if her mother-in-law was not the daughter of the Zhu family, and Wang Yang the nephew of Zhu Chengqi, Wang Yang would never have gotten to where he was today.

It was obviously thanks to the Zhu family that he had risen to his position, but Wang Yang was more willing to listen to his father. In fact, he wasn't even close to his uncle, Zhu Chengqi, who had helped him out. At times, Li Yayan couldn't help but wonder if Wang Yang was a fool. If Wang Yang acknowledged that fact and had gotten closer to Zhu Chengqi, they might not even be in such a situation with Qiao Nan today.

“Have more water.” She had never expected Li Yayan to sob so uncontrollably and suddenly. With no other choice, Qiao Nan opened another pack of tissue for Li Yayan because the other had already been used up. “Rehydrate yourself.” Whether it was through her saliva or tears, Li Yayan had already lost too much water from her body.

It was important for women to hydrate themselves.

In that way, Qiao Nan had listened to Li Yayan’s monologue for almost an entire afternoon. Only when she had fifteen minutes left to class did Qiao Nan interrupt Li Yayan, “Li Yayan, I still have class this afternoon...” So, she couldn’t afford to continue listening to Li Yayan’s nonsense any longer.

Li Yayan felt that her eyelids were a little swollen. “I’m so sorry for making you listen to my nonsense. Please hurry on for your class. I feel much better now that I’ve talked to you about that. Qiao Nan, if we get the chance in the future, can I invite you out for lunch again? I-I really need a friend who can listen to me. Qiao Nan, you should understand my feelings toward you, right? I’ve always felt that you feel very familiar, as though I’ve known you for a long time. Qiao Nan, are you sure we’ve never met?”

Qiao Nan couldn’t be sure whether Li Yayan had truly not realized how similar they looked, or whether she was just pretending not to have noticed. Qiao Nan smiled and answered, “Sure, if we get the chance.”

Li Yayan had invited her for lunch three to four times before finally succeeding. Qiao Nan couldn’t even be sure about when she would have time to have lunch with Li Yayan again. Since Li Yayan had such confidence, she wasn’t in a place to reject her either.

“Thank you, Qiao Nan. You’d better hurry on to class. I won’t take up any more of your time. Bye!”

“Goodbye.”

Seeing Qiao Nan leave the restaurant, Li Yayan took out her cushion from her bag nervously. “I’m done for. I’ve made my eyes so swollen. I really went all out today!”

Deep down in her heart, Li Yayan knew that she had been trying to gain Qiao Nan's pity in the beginning. But as she continued, she had truly cried because she was feeling too miserable. That was why her eyelids had gotten so swollen.

#### Chapter 2249: Disgusting

That wouldn't do. She had to hurry and call the chauffeur to take her home so that she could rub eggs on her eyes to reduce the swelling.

Her mom was right. Wang Yang had a good background. As long as the Zhu family's inheritance was settled, Wang Yang's conditions would only get better. She couldn't afford to let a vixen take her place. She had to ensure that she was in tip-top condition at any moment.

Forget it. She had better not head home to rub her eyes with eggs. It would be better for her to go straight to the beauty salon.

When Li Yayan returned from the beauty salon, it was almost dinnertime for Wang Yang. "Why are you back so late? Were you with Qiao Nan the whole time?" Hadn't she said that Qiao Nan had classes in the afternoon? Had Qiao Nan skipped class just to spend time with Li Yayan?

If that was the case, Wang Yang would have to teach Li Yayan a lesson. No matter how good their relationship was, they couldn't do that! The Zhai family definitely wanted Qiao Nan to upgrade herself so that she wouldn't be an embarrassment to them. The Zhai family would definitely not stand in the way of Qiao Nan making friends. But if Li Yayan was a bad influence, they would definitely find a way to separate her from Qiao Nan!

In fact, Qiao Nan might not even dare to talk to Li Yayan in the future if the Zhai family were to say something. If they went too far with their actions, it would only backfire.

"I wanted to, but Qiao Nan had classes in the afternoon. If not for her afternoon classes, I might not even have gotten the chance to have lunch with her. I had too much fun chatting with her, so I decided to go to the beauty salon in the afternoon."

Wang Yang had indeed smelled a fragrance that wasn't present at home on Li Yayan. As such, he knew that Li Yayan was not lying. However, Wang Yang couldn't understand the logic behind Li Yayan visiting the beauty salon because she had had too much fun with Qiao Nan. "How was it with Qiao Nan today?" Wang Yang didn't care about anything else. All he cared about was how close Li Yayan had gotten to Qiao Nan.



Li Yayan winked at Wang Yang and gestured an 'okay' sign. "Qiao Nan refused to have a meal with me the previous two times, but today, she agreed to have lunch with me!"

Wang Yang finally let out a smile toward Li Yayan. "Not bad. But I'd better remind you about something. I received a text today and it seems like Qiao Zijin has already bought a ticket to the capital. I'm sure you know what that means. I didn't force you to break off your ties with your family even after getting married, and I've always been helping your family out too. But there's a limit to everything. Your family's lives in the future will depend on how capable you are and how much effort you put in."

There weren't many men who liked women who always helped their own families out, and neither did he. In the past, Li Yayan had had to sacrifice her own interests if she wanted to help her own family out. As such, Wang Yang had never cared much about it. But Wang Yang would never tolerate anything more than that. He had never been a generous person anyway.

A year ago, Li Yayan had discussed with Wang Yang about giving her brother a sum of money to make a down payment on a house. At that time, Wang Yang had not even uttered a word. His expression was clear enough to show his stance. It was true that that sum of money didn't mean much to the Wang family, but money didn't grow on trees.

Why should his sister and brother-in-law have to pay for his down payment if his own parents couldn't afford it? That made no sense!

Of course, the moment she heard that Qiao Zijin headed for the capital, Li Yayan became nervous. The five million yuan determined whether her brother could buy a house and a car to get a wife and whether her parents would get a grandchild this year. The money belonged to their family, and no matter what, she wouldn't allow Qiao Zijin to have it. "Don't worry, dear. I have my eye on Qiao Nan. Not only did we have lunch together today, but we even chatted for over an hour! I believe that it won't be long before we become friends."

Wang Yang nodded. "Yayan, do you know why you're better than Qiao Zijin?"

"Yes, because Qiao Zijin's relationship with Qiao Nan is worse than that between strangers. Although I've only met Qiao Nan, I'm sure that Qiao Nan has more trust in me and is more willing to get close to me than Qiao Zijin. So, I'm sure that I have a higher chance of winning than Qiao Zijin, even though she may be Qiao Nan's sister." Li Yayan was clear about that.

If not for the fact that the relationship between Qiao Zijin and Qiao Nan was so atrocious, she would never have had the confidence of being able to get the five million yuan back from Qiao

Zijin. When it came to Qiao Nan, she had much more confidence in herself than Qiao Zijin. If Qiao Zijin could do it, she would definitely be able to do it much more easily.

Since she had a higher likelihood of succeeding, there was no way Li Yayan was going to give up on that five million yuan before Qiao Zijin gave up.

Wang Yang patted Li Yayan's elbow, agreeing with her.

Qiao Zijin had absolutely no idea that Wang Yang had betrayed her and had even tasked his wife with such a mission of getting the five million yuan back after seeking her out. Having endured a tough year in Ping Cheng, Qiao Zijin couldn't wait to be back in the capital and to get the ten million yuan.

With ten million yuan, she wouldn't have to suffer anymore even if she couldn't stay in the capital and be forced to return to Ping Cheng. When that time came, she wouldn't even bother about her parents even if they came begging her. Hadn't they favored Qiao Nan all along? Since that was the case, they had better not think of taking advantage of her once she got rich.

Despite making that promise to herself, Qiao Zijin's expression did not lighten. She gazed out toward the prosperous capital and her stubbornness was apparent in her gaze. It didn't matter. She would depend on her own efforts and hard work to earn the ten million yuan. Then, she would live her own carefree life.

At that moment, Qiao Zijin's phone rang. She took it out to see that Ding Jiayi had texted her. "Have you arrived in the capital safely?"

Qiao Zijin let out a cold sneer, with no intention of replying to Ding Jiayi's message. If her mom was so worried about her, why had she refused to make the trip with her no matter how much she had asked?

If her mom really loved her, she should have taken the initiative to accompany her to the capital and persuade Qiao Nan to accept Wang Yang's proposal. She had been forced to come to the capital alone and fight the battle alone and yet, her mom was now being a hypocrite and asking about her. How disgusting!

Chapter 2250: Feeling Regretful

Qiao Zijin didn't reply to Ding Jiayi's Weixin. Ding Jiayi waited and waited. She couldn't help but give Qiao Zijin a call. "Hello? Zijin, it's Mom. Have you reached the capital?"

Upon receiving Ding Jiayi's call, Qiao Zijin thought that since she no longer had to pay for her mobile bills anymore, it was alright for her to receive her mom's long-distance call. "Why didn't you ask me if I found a place to live in in this big capital?" She was already an adult. Could it be that she would get lost? It wasn't important if she had reached the capital. It was more important to find a place to live after arriving in the capital.

Since Qiao Zijin had already asked so, Ding Jiayi could only ask, "Have you found a place to live in? You should have reached quite early today. If it's really difficult, make do at a small hotel tonight first. You can find a house again tomorrow." What time was it now? The intermediaries should have been closed. How was she going to find a house?

Qiao Zijin rolled her eyes. "Alright. If you're really concerned about where I'm going to stay, you should have accompanied me to the capital. If you had, would you have to worry about where I'm going to live? By then, you could take care of me yourself. I know that you and Dad only have Qiao Nan in your hearts now. If you don't want to make this call, then don't. Don't say these hypocritical words deliberately to disgust me. Do you think I don't have enough troubles right now?"

She obviously knew that Ding Jiayi didn't mean this. However, Ding Jiayi wasn't willing to come over to the capital to accompany her and wasn't willing to help her convince Qiao Nan so that she could earn ten million yuan. At this time, Ding Jiayi had already become Qiao Zijin's most hated person. Even if she was thinking about Qiao Nan, Qiao Zijin wouldn't have felt so terrible.

To Qiao Zijin, Qiao Nan wasn't a trouble. Qiao Nan represented ten million yuan. She was her god of fortune.

It was precisely because of this that Qiao Zijin didn't care what Ding Jiayi was thinking about. She used these hurtful words on Ding Jiayi as she wanted her to feel terrible. Since Ding Jiayi wasn't going to make her happy, on what basis should she say coaxing words to make her happy and let her live peacefully in Ping Cheng?

Furthermore, Ding Jiayi wasn't willing to accompany her to the capital. That meant she didn't care about her. Since she didn't care about her or love her, why was she asking her about her house now? Wasn't that being hypocritical?

Upon hearing Qiao Zijin's words, Ding Jiayi felt extremely uncomfortable. "Zijin, you obviously know that this isn't the case. Aside from myself, the person I love the most in this lifetime is you. If I don't love you, who else do I love?"

She sacrificed more for Zijin compared to Old Qiao. As for Qiao Nan, she didn't sacrifice anything for her at all.

She didn't love Zijin? She gave all her maternal love to her elder daughter, alright? Zijin said such hurting words. Did she want her to lead a miserable life?

"I definitely believe that you love yourself. You love me? Mom, do you think I'm a three-year-old? Alright, keep those words. In our family, aside from Dad who's willing to be coaxed by you, Qiao Nan and I don't buy your tactics. We know what kind of person you are. Spouses are the ones accompanying each other in their old age. You only need your man by your side. Qiao Nan's a fool. You treated her so badly when she was young, but when you're old, she's willing to provide for you and take care of you. Of course you would become bold. I'm not that good-tempered. You don't acknowledge me as your daughter. I'll just treat it that God raised me. After leaving the capital this time, I won't be heading back to Ping Cheng. I'll also change this mobile number. Don't find me again in the future."

If she didn't do anything concrete, her mom would really think that she was joking.

After saying these words, Qiao Zijin didn't give Ding Jiayi any time to react. She immediately hung up the call. She also changed her mobile number. After reaching the capital, she copied the important numbers to her phone and bought a local SIM card in the capital.

At this time, Qiao Zijin deliberately waited for the call with Ding Jiayi to be over before pulling out the chip neatly from the phone and throwing it into the rubbish bin. Thankfully, she didn't top up any money to this phone number during the new year. Otherwise, it would be a pity to waste the additional phone charges.

After doing this, Qiao Zijin hummed a tune and went to find a small hotel that she was going to stay in tonight.

Qiao Zijin understood it in her heart that this matter wouldn't be finished just like that. She had said such ruthless words. Her mom would definitely be frightened. Her mom wouldn't be able to call her in the future. Wouldn't she be worried and scared?

In the capital, aside from finding Qiao Nan for help, there wasn't anyone else her mom could find. As such, she would be able to meet Qiao Nan soon.

This was what Qiao Zijin had thought of on her way to the capital. Aside from this, Qiao Zijin simply couldn't think of any other ways where she could come into contact with Qiao Nan and persuade her to know her limits and know when to stop.

Just as Qiao Zijin expected, Ding Jiayi wanted to call her again to persuade her not to be so stubborn and say such hurtful words. Who knew that the call didn't get through? In other words, once Qiao Zijin changed her phone number, Ding Jiayi had lost all contact with her.

Even if Qiao Zijin was already forty-three years old this year, Ding Jiayi basically treated her as a thirteen-year-old, showering her with care and concern. The situation suddenly changed. How would Ding Jiayi feel at ease? She immediately became anxious and went to find Qiao Dongliang for help. "Old Qiao, Zijin threw tantrums with me just now. She said that I don't care about her and I don't love her. She's not going to return to Ping Cheng anymore. She even said that she's going to change her phone number and asked me not to keep in contact with her. When I called again, she's really not picking up. Old Qiao, what do you think we should do?"

The capital was so big and there were so many people. How was it easy to lead a life in the capital? More importantly, in a place like that, how was Zijin going to live on her own? What if she ran into bad people? What if she ran into an accident and her family couldn't be contacted? What should Zijin do?

Ding Jiayi nearly scared herself to death with such thoughts. At this moment, Ding Jiayi couldn't wait for her to grow out a pair of wings so that she could fly to the capital and find Qiao Zijin.

If she had known that Qiao Zijin would do this, Ding Jiayi expressed that she'd rather spend money on two more tickets so that she could send Qiao Zijin to the capital and accompany her to find a house before returning to Ping Cheng.