

## RTAMM 2271

### Chapter 2271: Useful

The thought of Qiao Zijin's temper made Ding Jiayi's head hurt. She had worked hard the whole day, and in the end, she had ruined Qiao Zijin's plan. Leaving aside how she had worked in vain, she might even get a good scolding from Qiao Zijin. How terrible!

No wonder Old Qiao had remained indifferent even after hearing that Zijin had fallen ill. Perhaps, Old Qiao had already guessed that Zijin had faked her own illness.

Obviously, Qiao Zijin had no intention of answering Ding Jiayi's question. She had already made such a huge sacrifice, but Qiao Nan hadn't even taken the bait! In that case, how was she ever going to meet Qiao Nan, convince Qiao Nan to settle with Wang Yang, give up her inheritance, and not pursue the lawsuit?

If she didn't get to meet Qiao Nan, she wouldn't even be able to tell Qiao Nan all that.

"Mom, did you tell Qiao Nan that I contracted pneumonia? Mom, I'm so seriously ill. Just make a call and tell her to visit me." Qiao Nan would probably feel better seeing her in such a sorry state. Then, it would be even easier to discuss the matter.

"No, I'm not calling them." Ding Jiayi refused. "While you were ill, I kept calling the Zhai family. That family is really vicious. They knew that I have a Ping Cheng card, and they picked up every time but refused to say anything. Do you know that I have less than ten yuan in my phone card now?"

It would just be giving those people another opportunity to waste her money if she made another call.

She had intended on getting Qiao Nan to pay for all of her expenses this time, including Zijin's medical expenses and whatever she would need to nourish herself afterward. But Ding Jiayi couldn't even get through to Qiao Nan! She even had to fork out a hundred yuan to top up her phone card!

"Mom, just try making a call. I think they might have thought that we were lying. They might not have known that I was really sick with pneumonia. We're all relatives. How could Qiao Nan not visit me when I'm so seriously ill? Mom, I know that it's hard on you, but try to tolerate it for my

sake. Qiao Nan's living so well now. After you and Dad pass away, I'll have to rely on Qiao Nan. I can't afford to have a strained relationship with her. We're sisters, after all."

Before making this trip to the capital, Qiao Zijin had already made up her mind. She would try her best not to provoke Qiao Nan. That way, there would still be room for discussion. Just as she had said, Ding Jiayi and Qiao Dongliang were already advanced in age and might pass away at any moment. Then, Qiao Zijin wouldn't have many relatives left.

Amongst them, Qiao Nan was the one who gave her the most security, and Qiao Nan was the only one whom Qiao Zijin felt that she could rely on.

That was why Qiao Zijin had decided to hurt herself instead of stirring up trouble for Qiao Nan. She was counting on her younger sister, Qiao Nan, to take care of her once Qiao Dongliang and Ding Jiayi passed on.

As for her son, Chen Feng, she wanted him to live well. So, there was no way she was going to become a burden to him. Supporting him would be Qiao Nan's responsibility. Qiao Nan probably wouldn't refuse to spend a little money on her once she grew older. After all, she couldn't possibly leave her sister to starve to death.

"I can't do anything." Ding Jiayi refused without any hesitation. "Qiao Nan doesn't even think of herself as my daughter or as your sister anymore. I think Qiao Nan might burst out in laughter if she hears your ideas. Sisters? A daughter? Qiao Nan is not acknowledging any of us now. If not for the blood ties between us, Qiao Nan wouldn't even bother about us now. Zijin, you'd better sober up. None of your dreams will become reality."

Ding Jiayi's head hurt. "Qiao Nan is doing well for herself now. She has no use for her poor relatives like us. We never had a close relationship with Qiao Nan in the past anyway. It's really no surprise that she's chosen to abandon us now. Zijin, we'll only be able to benefit from her if she's willing to let us do so. It'll be difficult for you to take advantage of her. It's practically impossible. Zijin, you'd better return to Ping Cheng with me. The five million yuan will never be ours. Qiao Nan is really different from us now."

Common folk like them would never even earn five million yuan in their entire lifetime. But Qiao Nan could easily give someone five million yuan! She was different now! The most infuriating part was that she had always looked down on Qiao Nan, and yet, it was Qiao Nan who had risen up and entered the circle!

If Qiao Zijin was in Qiao Nan's place now, Ding Jiayi would have gone crazy from joy.

“Mom, have you gone mad?” Qiao Zijin shook Ding Jiayi’s hand away. “Weren’t you the one who taught me that nothing is impossible as long as one has the will? It’s five million yuan! Not five hundred yuan. I’ll be able to get that huge sum of money with just a little bit of effort. Why should I give it up? Mom, help me. As long as I succeed, I’ll give you a million yuan. With a million yuan, you can cajole Dad in any way you please. With a million yuan, you won’t need to worry about having no one take care of you when you’re old. You can always hire someone to take care of you and Dad.”

“What about you?” Ding Jiayi realized that Qiao Zijin had never made mention of herself. “When your dad and I are immobile, Qiao Nan, who is married and lives in the capital, won’t be able to come back, but what about you? If your dad and I hire someone to take care of us, where will you be? Are you not going to take care of us?”

Qiao Zijin laughed. “If you have a million yuan, why would you still need me around? Mom, I’ve always been rather clumsy since I was young. It’s not that I don’t want to take care of you and Dad. But look at me. I can’t even take good care of myself. How could I possibly take care of you and Dad? I might make everything worse! It’ll be much better for you to hire a professional to take care of you!”

Was there even a need to ask such a question?

Knowing what others had to do while taking care of her parents, her parents might not even agree to her taking care of them, even if she was willing to do so.

Ding Jiayi remained silent for a while. Qiao Zijin’s words had made Ding Jiayi come to a realization. Once she and Qiao Dongliang could no longer move around, Qiao Zijin didn’t intend to fork out money or effort to take care of them. She would leave them in the lurch and leave them to fend for themselves.

Perhaps, Qiao Zijin had never considered her or Old Qiao in her future plans.

If she and Old Qiao were useful, they would be considered her parents. Once they were useless to her, they were two old foggies who had better scram!

Chapter 2272: Hire a Helper

Yes, she fully understood her daughter’s intentions now.

Ding Jiayi's eyes reddened. "Zijin, you're really a heartless child. Your dad didn't allow me to come to the capital, but I insisted on coming. But your dad was right. I was making trouble for myself by coming to the capital to take care of you. I deserve it. If you want to earn five million yuan, you'd better work hard for it. I won't interfere in it. Since you're awake, I'm going to buy a bus ticket back to Ping Cheng this afternoon. Take good care of yourself."

As expected, Qiao Nan was unreliable, and so was Zijin. She had to return to Ping Cheng right away to beg for Old Qiao's forgiveness. In the future, Old Qiao would be her life. She wouldn't care about her daughters or grandchildren. She had already made the decision not to interfere in Qiao Zijin and Qiao Nan's relationship ever again.

The five million yuan had made Ding Jiayi understand something. Even if she were to help Qiao Zijin convince, or even force, Qiao Nan to give up the inheritance such that Qiao Zijin earned five million yuan, Qiao Zijin had no intention of ever living with her or Old Qiao, or being filial to them apart from giving her one million yuan.

Because Qiao Zijin was her favorite daughter, Ding Jiayi was unable to accept Qiao Zijin's attitude toward her. She was always at Qiao Zijin's beck and call.

Ever since she was a child, Zijin had always said that she would definitely be filial to her once she made a name for herself. But why was Zijin not honoring that promise now? All she thought of was to throw the elderly couple as far away as possible so that they would never drag her down. She had been such a good kid in the past. Why had she turned out in this way?

Ding Jiayi refused to admit that she was the cause of Qiao Zijin turning out in this manner or that it had been her atrocious education. Ding Jiayi simply felt that she could no longer face Qiao Zijin and wanted to leave the capital to return to her familiar Ping Cheng as soon as possible to be with Qiao Dongliang. "Here's your bank card. When you were admitted to the hospital, I had to make a payment of two thousand yuan. I withdrew a total of ten thousand yuan. Here is the rest of the money. You can keep it."

Qiao Zijin felt sober all of a sudden. Ding Jiayi saw no need to remain in the capital. She understood that an extra person in the capital would mean higher expenses.

Unless she pushed all responsibility for her expenses to Qiao Nan so that Qiao Zijin could stay with her and save on her own living expenses, even if Qiao Zijin were to convince her to stay, Qiao Zijin would definitely look at her in disdain because she would have to have to pay for her mom's living expenses as well.

It was not the first time something like this had happened. But every time it happened, Ding Jiayi was disappointed and hurt all over again. No matter how well Ding Jiayi treated Qiao Zijin, she would always feel hurt and despair. Now, Ding Jiayi had lost all hope in her daughter, Qiao Zijin. “Your dad was right. You guys are all grown up and have your own lives. As parents, we should stop interfering in your lives. You can do whatever you want in the future as long as it makes you happy. I’ll live well in Ping Cheng with your dad. You won’t have to worry about us.”

In other families, children could work and earn money with peace of mind if their parents were safe at home.

Unfortunately, that was not the case in their family. Even if she and Old Qiao took good care of themselves, Zijin would never feel assured. In fact, she would feel that her parents were useless to her.

“Mom...” Qiao Zijin was stunned. She had even thought that she had not fallen ill in vain, after all. Even if Qiao Nan had not come to visit her, she had managed to get Ding Jiayi to the capital, at the very least. She had already contracted such a serious illness like pneumonia. No matter what, her mom would have to stay in the capital for a few months to take care of her and would probably only return to Ping Cheng after ensuring that she had fully recovered.

The court date for the lawsuit was just around the corner, and the result would probably be out during the time that her mom was here to take care of her. Together with her mom, she would make use of this time to force Qiao Nan to give up the inheritance. Then, she would give her mom a million yuan, while getting five million each from Qiao Nan and Wang Yang. With the remaining nine million yuan, she would be able to live a carefree life however she wanted.

Who would have expected Ding Jiayi to tell Qiao Zijin that she had paid for her own hospitalization bills and that Ding Jiayi had withdrawn ten thousand from her account? Qiao Zijin had paid for her own medical bills. No one else had.

While she was still feeling the pinch from the sum of money, Ding Jiayi’s following words dealt Qiao Zijin another huge blow. “What? Mom, you’re returning to Ping Cheng today? But-but I just woke up. I contracted pneumonia. Didn’t you say that my fever went up to forty degrees? Mom, I just woke up and my fever hasn’t entirely subsided. I’m still really weak. Are you abandoning me and returning to Ping Cheng just like that? Mom, am I still having a fever, or did I hear that wrongly?”

How could her mom abandon her and leave her in the lurch just like that?

Even without the five million yuan in the picture, her mom should at least continue to take care of her because she was sick!

Ding Jiayi poured a glass of water for Qiao Zijin, who angrily pushed it away. "I'm not drinking it. Mom, explain yourself. Are you leaving me to die?"

Ding Jiayi didn't flare up. Since Qiao Zijin wasn't going to drink it, she simply put the glass down. "You're sick, but your dad and I aren't getting any younger. Your dad needs someone to take care of him too. It's true that you haven't fully recovered, but you have money and can get a nurse to take care of you. It shouldn't cost too much. You should be able to get discharged before you finish the remaining six to seven thousand yuan."

"Your mom's old and clumsy. I can't even cook dishes to your liking. A nurse is different. Not only are they professionals, but they're also young and strong. Besides, you're the one who pays them. If they don't take good care of you, you can force them to improve because you're their employer."

Ding Jiayi was simply returning Qiao Zijin whatever she had told her earlier about getting someone to take care of her and Qiao Dongliang.

At first, Qiao Zijin had not realized it. "How's that the same? You're my mom. No matter how good outsiders are, can it compare to my own mom taking care of me? Besides, professionals are more expensive the better they are..."

"So, are you saying that hired help won't be able to take care of you as well as your mom but those that I hire will take better care of me than my own daughter? Yes, hired help will cost you money, but your mom can be a free-of-charge caretaker."

#### Chapter 2273: Knew in Her Heart

Ding Jiayi was truly hurt, even though she had already subconsciously known that Qiao Zijin had such a view of her mother.

It was just that Ding Jiayi had treated it as though she was overthinking it since Qiao Zijin had not explicitly expressed it. Although Qiao Zijin had not clearly said that out loud, the meaning was not dissimilar. She had devoted herself to taking care of Qiao Zijin, but Qiao Zijin treated her no different from a free servant.

When she needed help, she called for her mom. When she had no need for her, she tossed her aside, hoping that she would never appear. Otherwise, she would only be wasting her money. “Zijin, you’re a mother too. You have Feng Feng. Have you ever thought about how you would feel if Feng Feng treats you like how you treat your dad and me in the future? You aren’t even willing to support your dad and me in our old age. Do you really think Qiao Nan would do so as your sister? You don’t even have such a close relationship with her!”

“Shut up!” Qiao Zijin was infuriated. She hadn’t managed to meet Qiao Nan, and now, her mom was rebelling against her! “Feng Feng’s my son. I know that my son won’t leave me in the lurch.”

“Yes, you’re my daughter too. Before today, I always thought that my daughter would never leave me in the lurch or not support me either. As a mother, how could I ever have those thoughts about my child? One’s own child will always be the best in one’s eyes. But facts have proved that I am, unfortunately, wrong.” Ding Jiayi brought up the example of the three generations in their family.

Qiao Zijin sneered. “Then, you’re wrong. Who would think of their child in that way? Did I hear that right? Mom, didn’t you do that? When we were younger, Qiao Nan always helped you out with household chores, never forgetting to help you sweep and mop the floor. But you always called her a wretched girl. At that time, I thought that Qiao Nan was a fool for helping you with the chores. I never helped out but you always praised me and gave me the best food to eat all the same. Didn’t you always tell me that Qiao Nan was a heartless wretched girl and that she would never amount to much? That was why you never counted on her supporting you. You said that she would never be filial to you even if she got rich.”

“You remember that, don’t you? Anyway, I do. Look, who says that parents don’t speak ill of their children? Haven’t you always done so?” Relationships between children and their parents were never so blissful. Who said that parents always favored their own children?

Hadn’t her mom used this example to tell her that Feng Feng wouldn’t be filial to her in the future if she wasn’t filial to her mom now?

Qiao Zijin didn’t believe in that. “Mom, do you know why I have such confidence in Feng Feng and know that he’ll be filial to me?”

“Why?” Ding Jiayi was stunned by Qiao Zijin’s gaze. She was slightly frightened, no longer wanting to hear Qiao Zijin’s next words. But she couldn’t run away now. “Feng Feng’s your son. It isn’t strange for a son to be like his mother. If I’m not wrong, Feng Feng has never been close to you. In the two years since you’ve been divorced from Chen Jun, I haven’t even seen Feng Feng once.”

As such, there was a high possibility that Feng Feng would refuse to entertain his own mother. Anyway, Zijin was not a good mom herself. What gave her the confidence to say that Feng Feng would definitely be a filial son?

“In the past, I always let Qiao Nan take care of Feng Feng when I brought him home, not you. Mom, do you remember how I always stopped you from playing with Feng Feng? I said that a kid of Feng Feng’s age was too active and even I couldn’t handle him at times. That’s why I said that it would be better for Qiao Nan to do it.”

“Yes, so?” Ding Jiayi didn’t understand why Qiao Zijin would suddenly bring up such a trivial matter.

“Do you really think that I was afraid that Feng Feng would tire you out? I was simply afraid that you would lead him astray. It’s alright for me to be selfish since you pampered me anyway. Dad was right. You were the one who raised me to be like this, so you’ll have to tolerate me no matter what kind of fuss I kick up. But I know that I don’t have that patience. Qiao Nan does, so I got her to take care of Feng Feng. Look, I spent as little time as possible with Feng Feng in the past. Before he started school, he was either with his grandma or Qiao Nan. After starting school, it was always the teachers who took care of him. But every time he sees me, he’ll still address me politely as his mom.”

Qiao Zijin was almost in tears. She had been foolish her whole life, and that was how she was prepared to live the rest of her life. Living willfully was the best way to live. Selfish people were always at an advantage. She had no intention of changing her temper at her age.

When it concerned her, it didn’t matter if she continued being so selfish. But when it came to Chen Feng, Qiao Zijin had already given it some thought. She had often asked Qiao Nan to take care of her son so that she would raise him well.

Did Qiao Zijin not know that her son didn’t like her? Of course, she did!

When Qiao Zijin had had an affair and had been forced to divorce Chen Jun, no one else in the Chen family had wanted to talk to her. Although her son knew that she had been at fault, he had never criticized her. In fact, upon seeing how badly she had been sobbing, he had poured her a cup of tea.



It was because of Chen Feng's cup of tea that Qiao Zijin had gotten the courage to divorce Chen Jun without further hesitation. The Chen family liked their grandson, Chen Feng. If she were to drag the matter on any further and ruin the reputation of the Chen family, their anger would turn toward Chen Feng sooner or later.

In order to protect her son's status in the Chen family, Qiao Zijin had decided to get divorced from Chen Jun as quickly as possible with nothing to gain. If not for her son, Chen Feng, Qiao Zijin wouldn't have been much nicer to Chen Jun than she had been to Qiao Nan. Chen Feng was a piece of her, after all. Apart from her son, Chen Feng, the only person she ever cared about or shared affection to was herself.

"Mom, you don't have to worry about me. It doesn't matter that I don't know how to educate my son. Qiao Nan did that for me. I know that Feng Feng won't leave me in the lurch."

#### Chapter 2274: A Solution

"But I've never been of much help to him as a mother. When he grows up, the only thing I can do is to try to solve my own problems and lighten his burden. Mom, don't you think I'm much luckier than you? I have only one son, but my son has never abandoned me."

Qiao Zijin's gaze and tone were filled with sarcasm. Her mom had been the one to raise her in this manner, and yet, her mom was pretending to regret everything now. What a joke!

The mother and daughter were peas in a pod. There was no way of reasoning between the two of them. Only when common sense stood on their sides did it exist. Otherwise, it was nothing but nonsense!

"What's the use of having two children? Isn't Qiao Nan good? You keep saying that she's bad, unfilial, stupid, and foolish. You don't know how happy I am every time I hear that. Your disappointment in Qiao Nan will only benefit me. Look, you always say that you can't depend on Qiao Nan and that she ill-treats you. But why don't you think about why Qiao Nan's always the first person you think of when either Dad or I fall sick? Do you really think you're only after Qiao Nan's money? Deep down in your heart, you know that Qiao Nan is the most reliable person in our family. If you don't even want Qiao Nan when she's like that, I won't be greedy. I think our Feng Feng is brilliant."

Her son was not her husband. She had countless requirements when it came to men. But when it came to her son, Chen Feng, there was nothing she could nitpick on. Why had she allowed Qiao Nan to become Chen Feng's stepmother? Why had she been willing to lose to Qiao Nan years later to let her marry Chen Jun?

Firstly, the one whom Chen Jun truly loved was indeed Qiao Nan. Only if Chen Jun married Qiao Nan would he stop fooling around outside. That way, Chen Feng would never get another sibling. Secondly, and more importantly, there was no one apart from Qiao Nan who could raise Feng Feng to be an upright, just, and kind person.

For her son's sake, it wouldn't matter if she lost to Qiao Nan again.

What Qiao Zijin had not expected was Qiao Nan meeting Zhai Sheng. Zhai Sheng had even decided to marry Qiao Nan, and the Zhai family had even agreed to it. That was why her plan to make Qiao Nan her son's stepmother had failed.

“So be it if you don't want to take care of me. But you'd better think this through, Mom. I don't have a good temper and I'm selfish. I can set a fire, but I won't allow anyone to light a candle. I'm allowed to scheme against you, but you'd better not harbor any of these thoughts against me. If you abandon me now, you'd better be mentally prepared for how I turn out and how I treat you in the future.”

Severing ties with her? She could dream on!

Her mom had raised her to have such a temper, so her mom had better endure it until the very end. Sorry, she wouldn't agree to her mom throwing her aside now.

Ding Jiayi felt devastated, having been threatened by her own daughter. Hadn't it been her daughter's lack of filial piety and schemes to make her free labor that had disappointed her? Why did it seem like she was the cause of everything now? Had she brought about her own downfall? Did she really deserve this?

Also, what did Zijin mean by her last sentence? Was Zijin going to pester her until the very end? Did that mean that Zijin had to agree to her throwing her aside? “What-what do you want? What can you do to me?”

Their family no longer had any semblance of a family. To take care of Zijin, she had angered Old Qiao and had gone through much trouble to come here. But Zijin was treating her with such an attitude, and she was even threatening and provoking her with these words!

Qiao Zijin leaned back comfortably on the bed and laughed. “Mom, have you ever seen what truly unfilial children do? To be honest, Qiao Nan has never worried you, and neither have I caused too much trouble for you. That’s why you and Dad think this is a big matter. I’m capable of much more than you think.”

Ding Jiayi had never experienced it, but Qiao Zijin had heard a lot about such cases in the years that she had been married to Chen Jun. Ping Cheng was an area undergoing redevelopment. Some old farmers live normally and never earned much, but they had small fortunes.

Because their villages had been under the demolition plan, many problems had arisen in almost every family with sons. Knowing that they would be compensated with cash as well as a house for relocating, their sons were led astray into the bad habit of gambling. Because it was someone else’s game, it was impossible for them to win.

As such, money leaked out of their pockets. But they had to pay their debts no matter what.

The old farmers had finally earned a small fortune because of the relocation, but because of their ‘good sons’, not only had they been forced to give up all of the compensation they had received, but they had even needed to put up their new houses for auction to pay off those debts.

Worst of all, they had only been able to solve the matter after selling everything valuable in the family. Initially, they had finally been given a chance to improve their lives, but now, they were back to square one, possibly even worse off than before. Before the relocation, they had land and could plant their own rice and vegetables, at the very least. The problem was that there wasn’t any land for them to plant for sustenance after the relocation. They had to buy everything.

Not only had it become harder to earn money, but their family’s expenses had also increased. Because of that, there had been many tragedies. Of course, Chen Jun couldn’t afford not to care about the matter once it blew up. As a result of the severe crackdown, he had finally been able to get the situation under control.

Every time she heard about a family who had a ‘good’ son who eventually resulted in the breakup of the entire family and how their daughters-in-law had run off with their grandchildren, Qiao Zijin couldn’t help but chuckle. Hadn’t her mom wanted a son? If her mom had just one son like that, she would have ‘struck rich’!

Then, her mom would know how 'blissful' it was to be a mom with a son.

In the past, Qiao Zijin had always watched on from the sidelines. But because of her mom's attitude today, Qiao Zijin felt that she should, perhaps, let her mom have a taste of how it was to have a child like that in the family. Prostitution, gambling, and drugs were strictly forbidden.. Leaving aside prostitution, she would use either gambling or drugs to show her mom what a truly 'unfilial' child was like.

## Chapter 2275: Reservations

Of course, up until now, Qiao Zijin was still not prepared to do drugs. She hoped that her son would have an unbridled future. For her son's sake, she had already been willing to divorce Chen Jun. So, there was no way she was going to let Chen Feng have a drug addict as a mother. If she were to be sent to a rehabilitation center, her son would be utterly embarrassed. Then, it wouldn't be that easy for him to inherit Chen Jun's position in the future.

As for gambling, she would not touch it for the time being either.

But that would depend on Ding Jiayi's performance as a mother in the future.

She had already given her mother a chance. If they came to a compromise, they would both live well. But if her mom were to go overboard, she could do so too.

Ding Jiayi had no idea what was going through Qiao Zijin's mind, but the moment she saw Qiao Zijin's gaze toward her, Ding Jiayi couldn't help but shiver. Qiao Nan was the best example right in front of them.

Having been constantly lectured by Qiao Dongliang in the time that Qiao Zijin had been away, Ding Jiayi hadn't remained entirely unmoved or unchanged. Under Qiao Dongliang's brainwashing and influence, Ding Jiayi had gradually realized that every time she sucked Qiao Nan dry, Qiao Zijin couldn't be left out of the picture. She couldn't deny that every single cent that she squeezed out of Qiao Nan always went to Qiao Zijin.

It seemed that she would only think of getting money from Qiao Nan whenever Qiao Zijin asked her to do something. Even in Qiao Nan's second year of junior high school, it had been her elder

daughter, Qiao Zijin, who had said that she was going to high school and it would be expensive to put her through school. In the future, it would be even more expensive when she went to university. Her dad's low salary would probably be just enough to cover her school fees, whereas there was still Qiao Nan, who was only one grade below her.

It was already hard enough to put one child through school. Her dad would definitely not be able to afford to pay for both his daughters' school fees. It would be better for her to stop studying and to find a job instead. Since Qiao Nan was younger than her, she would let Qiao Nan continue with her studies. However, Qiao Nan was in a grade below her. That would mean that their family would have to fork out an additional year's worth of school fees.

But that didn't matter to her. As an elder sister, it was only right for her to work hard. An additional year's worth of school fees meant nothing. What she cared about was wasting the five thousand yuan fees that she had just paid. Initially, she had thought of graduating from university as soon as possible so that she would be able to earn some money to pay her parents back.

But if she were to stop at high school, she would probably not be able to find such a well-paying job. Even so, she was willing to sacrifice her own interests for the sake of the family. She believed that as long as Qiao Nan knew of the family's difficulties, she would share the same idea and be willing to do the same thing.

Even if Qiao Nan was unwilling to do so, it wouldn't matter since she was the elder sister. She would just let Qiao Nan have her way.

After hearing how sensible and thoughtful Qiao Zijin was, Ding Jiayi naturally stood on Qiao Zijin's side. When she had used five thousand yuan to buy Qiao Zijin's way into The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China, Ding Jiayi had felt her heart bleeding even though Qiao Zijin was her favorite daughter.

It was five thousand yuan! That was almost all of the Qiao family's savings at that time. Ding Jiayi couldn't bear to see the money go to waste. Because of the five thousand yuan, she couldn't afford to let Qiao Zijin drop out of school and let Qiao Nan continue instead.

Besides, Qiao Zijin was in a higher grade than Qiao Nan. Allowing Qiao Nan to continue studying would mean paying another year's worth of school fees. She had heard that university fees were exorbitant, and neither were the high school fees cheap. Given their family's situation, it would definitely be better if they could save on a year's worth of fees.

Ding Jiayi had always favored Qiao Zijin to begin with. Seeing how sensible Qiao Zijin was, Ding Jiayi immediately cut in and said that there was nothing wrong with Qiao Nan making this sacrifice for her sister and for the family. Since they had to make such a sacrifice, it was better for it to be the one who would lose the least, and the one who made the least contribution to the family.

It would only be a waste of the family's money for Qiao Nan to continue with her studies. On the other hand, if they were to let Qiao Nan drop out of school to work, not only would they save money, but they would even have extra income. That would make a significant difference to their family's finances.

Years later, Ding Jiayi no longer remembered why she had insisted on Qiao Nan dropping out of school, even going to the extent of selling all of Qiao Nan's textbooks and not leaving a single of Qiao Zijin's unused books.

But every time Qiao Dongliang mentioned it, Ding Jiayi's memories gradually filled her mind yet again.

Initially, this had been Ding Jiayi's reason for making Qiao Nan drop out of school. Afterward... Because Qiao Nan had said that she wanted to enrich herself by reading and self-studying, Qiao Zijin had told Ding Jiayi that it was possible that Qiao Nan wanted to return to school. If that was the case, were they supposed to allow Qiao Nan to return to school now that their family was doing slightly better?

After hearing Qiao Zijin's words, Ding Jiayi had taken action immediately. Returning to school? What a joke! Reading all those books had given Qiao Nan such a ridiculous idea!

Qiao Zijin was the only university graduate in their family, and their family's situation had finally improved after such a long time. If their family were to have another student to support, would the rest of them still be able to survive? As part of the family, why didn't Qiao Nan strive to lessen their burden? Contrarily, she was even intending on increasing their burden! That was unforgivable!

As such, Ding Jiayi had simply sold off all the books that Qiao Zijin no longer needed, depriving Qiao Nan of any chance of reading them. Since she could no longer read them, Qiao Nan would probably know to keep her place.

As these memories returned one by one, Ding Jiayi started to fear her 'beloved daughter', Qiao Zijin. Qiao Zijin had been the one who instigated her to do all those things to Qiao Nan. In other words, she had been manipulated by her most beloved daughter, and in the end, she was the one

who had become known as the vilest one in the family. She was seen as the one who had been hurting Qiao Nan all this while.

The only thing that comforted Ding Jiayi after she remembered all these things was that Qiao Nan was no fool. Under normal circumstances, a person in Qiao Nan's place would definitely hold the most resentment toward Ding Jiayi. Obviously, Qiao Nan was not only academically smart, but she was also not that foolish when it came to interpersonal relationships. She hated Ding Jiayi, but she didn't hate Qiao Zijin any less.

In that way, neither of them had been able to escape that fate, at the very least.

Having figured out how intelligent and frightening her daughter, Qiao Zijin, was, Ding Jiayi had started having her reservations about doting on Qiao Zijin.

#### Chapter 2276: Scared Stiff

And now that Qiao Zijin had said such frightening words, Ding Jiayi had the urge to huddle up and start sobbing. Qiao Nan refused to acknowledge her and thought of her as her enemy. As for her elder daughter whom she had always doted on, she regarded her mom as an enemy too. What sins had she committed to have gotten such unfilial and heartless daughters?

Now, Qiao Zijin was finally in the mood to drink water. "Alright, Mom. Stop acting as though you're the most pitiful person in this world. You're an impressive old woman. Just think about how well you used to manipulate Qiao Nan. What's the point of scolding Qiao Nan and me in your heart? Why don't you scold us outright if you want to so that we can correct it?"

Ding Jiayi was short of breath and dizzy.

Was this still her daughter? Even her ancestors weren't as amazing as her own daughter. "Fine, you're good. I can't win against you. I've wronged you as a mother. I've never done anything to benefit you. Will that do? Don't bother calling me your mom in the future. It'll make much more sense for me to call you my mom. You can do whatever you want. The capital isn't for humans. I can't stay here. I'm returning to Ping Cheng!"

This conversation with Qiao Zijin scared Ding Jiayi to death. She couldn't understand whether the capital was a good place. If it was, why had Qiao Zijin turned into such a frightening character that

she couldn't recognize? If the capital was a bad place, why was Qiao Zijin insisting on staying here?

But Ding Jiayi was clear of one thing. The capital wasn't a good place for her. It was a place filled with nightmares, and a place she couldn't wait to get away from.

Qiao Zijin placed her cup down, her gaze filled with disappointment. "Mom, are you really in a rush to return to Ping Cheng today? I'm your daughter. There's something that will benefit both of us, and I won't even have to put in much effort. It can't get any better than this. Mom, I think you can afford to stay here for a few more days. If you have nowhere to stay, you can stay in my rented apartment. It's a million yuan we're talking about. With a million yuan, do you still need to care about what your two daughters do? And let me remind you that there aren't any buses back to Ping Cheng in the afternoon. You'll have to take a flight back. Didn't you say that you haven't gotten in touch with Qiao Nan?"

Actually, Qiao Zijin was sure that the Zhai family would be more than willing to give Ding Jiayi a free plane ticket if they were to know that Ding Jiayi wanted to return to Ping Cheng instead of making trouble for Qiao Nan. After all, it would benefit them to send Ding Jiayi away in case she stirred up trouble for Qiao Nan again.

After she had married into the Chen family, her parents-in-law had never treated her especially well, but Qiao Nan had extremely good fortune. Besides, Qiao Nan's parents-in-law had a higher status than her former parents-in-law. Not only did the Zhai family not pick on Qiao Nan, but they even treated her as though she was their biological daughter. It was everything a woman who got married could ever ask for.

Qiao Nan was already living such a blissful life. If she were to inherit such great wealth, bad luck was sure to strike her.

Didn't they always say that trouble and misfortunes never came alone, while blessings never came in a pair? If she was too blessed, she would surely be cursed too! It was best for Qiao Nan to give up the Zhu family's inheritance. Only then would she be able to live her life peacefully and blissfully.

This wasn't just superstition. If not for the Zhu family's inheritance, Wang Yang would never have had his eye on Qiao Nan or wanted to deal with her. Sometimes, letting go was the best choice. Without that sum of money, she would gain a much more peaceful life. She was sure that Qiao Nan would not be at a loss even if she were to agree to this deal.



As Qiao Nan's only sister, there was nothing wrong with her getting some benefits while helping Qiao Nan out of a tight spot. She could swear to the heavens that she would never cause any trouble for Qiao Nan in the future, and neither would she ever need Qiao Nan's help if Qiao Nan agreed to her conditions and she managed to get ten million yuan.

From then on, she would stay in her own lane and treat Qiao Nan as any other stranger along the road.

That would be a win-win situation for everyone. Qiao Zijin couldn't think of a reason for Qiao Nan to turn her down. If Qiao Nan provoked Wang Yang and won the lawsuit, she would still be able to get the Zhu family's inheritance. But what if she lost? In that case, there was no way Wang Yang would agree to give Qiao Nan ten million yuan for a settlement fee.

It was better to be practical and realistic. Ten million yuan was quite a huge sum of money. Anyway, she had done nothing to deserve or earn it. If she risked it all and ended up not getting a single cent, it would be too late to beg anyone then.

Ding Jiayi's hand trembled uncontrollably. She no longer wanted to speak with Qiao Zijin. "I-I'm heading back."

"What's the hurry?" Qiao Zijin laughed and crawled out of bed, decisively taking out the money and identity card from Ding Jiayi's pocket. "Mom, you know how old you are. You should admit that you've gotten old. It's normal for people to become muddleheaded when they get old. You don't have to be so polite with me. We can always solve your problems together. Didn't Dad lose his identity card the previous time? This is the capital. It won't be as easy for you to replace your identity card if you lose it here. I think I'd better keep it for you."

Qiao Zijin was much younger than Ding Jiayi. Ding Jiayi was no match for Qiao Zijin when she tried to snatch Ding Jiayi's identity card and money from her. Even if Ding Jiayi was upset, Qiao Zijin had taken away everything she needed to return to Ping Cheng.

Just earlier, Qiao Zijin had said that she wouldn't stop Ding Jiayi from returning to Ping Cheng as long as she was sure about it. It hadn't even been half an hour since then, but Qiao Zijin had already forcefully taken Ding Jiayi's identity card away. Qiao Zijin's overbearing attitude scared Ding Jiayi stiff.

She understood from Qiao Zijin's attitude that Qiao Zijin would never allow her to return to Ping Cheng unless she helped convince Qiao Nan to settle the Zhu family's matter.

Just a few months earlier, Ding Jiayi had stolen Qiao Dongliang's identity card from his pocket. But at that time, she hadn't been as bold as Qiao Zijin to snatch it from him.. She had been so furtive and frightened while taking it from him.

## Chapter 2277: Afraid of a Misunderstanding

In the end, Ding Jiayi wasn't even sure about how she had returned to Qiao Zijin's rented apartment. Looking at the narrow and cramped space, Ding Jiayi felt claustrophobic and short of breath. She couldn't help but grasp at her chest so much so that there was an angry red scratch mark across her chest until that suffocating feeling dissipated.

The coldest of winter had passed and the warm spring had finally arrived. In fact, summer was not that far away. But the moment Ding Jiayi thought about how Qiao Zijin had snatched her money and identity card from her while smiling, Ding Jiayi couldn't help but shiver. She could feel a chill down her spine.

Especially when she thought about how Qiao Zijin had compared her to Qiao Dongliang losing his identity card, saying that it was easy for old people to get muddleheaded and lose their belongings, Ding Jiayi couldn't help but cry. Had Old Qiao lost his identity card because he had been muddleheaded? Why had she even taken his identity card? How could Zijin say such heartless words?

Before marrying Qiao Dongliang, Ding Jiayi had indeed suffered for almost twenty years. But ever since getting married to Qiao Dongliang, Ding Jiayi's life had undergone a drastic change. Ever since then, this was Ding Jiayi's first being cramped up in such a tiny room. Even though Ding Jiayi had stayed in that suffocating room that Qiao Nan had once lived in for a few days, it had still been much better than this rented apartment.

Ding Jiayi had thought about it the whole night without any sleep. In fact, she had cried through the night. Ding Jiayi had neither love nor pity for her daughter, Qiao Zijin, anymore. She was only filled with fear. She always said that Qiao Nan was a debt collector and an unfilial wretched girl. But after seeing Qiao Zijin's other side, Ding Jiayi realized just how scary and difficult a child who was truly a debt collector was.

People were often like that. In the past, Ding Jiayi had spoken so badly of Qiao Nan. But now that she had learned of Qiao Zijin's true nature, Ding Jiayi had almost been scared to death. No matter how much she hated Qiao Nan, it couldn't compete with her fear of Qiao Zijin now.

“Hello...”

There was no doubt that Ding Jiayi had been detained by Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi had no choice but to get Qiao Nan’s help to return to Ping Cheng.

“Beep...” Just like before, the moment the display showed Ding Jiayi’s mobile phone number, both Miao Jing and the auntie would simply pick up without speaking so as to waste Ding Jiayi’s money.

It was true that they couldn’t do much by doing so, and in fact, Qiao Nan might even end up footing the bill. But that didn’t matter. Ding Jiayi was used to having her way in the Qiao family and had always treated Qiao Nan so poorly. Ding Jiayi would definitely be furious in the face of such a situation.

Ding Jiayi had always been the one disgusting Qiao Nan. Now that they had the opportunity, it was Qiao Nan’s chance to disgust Ding Jiayi instead. It was just a couple hundred yuan worth of phone calls. They could afford to waste that. They would simply take it as though they were buying themselves some happiness.

With that consensus, both Miao Jing and the auntie got through it smoothly. Initially, Ding Jiayi had called over ten times the previous day. But upon learning of Miao Jing’s intentions, she had given up trying to reach Qiao Nan. Miao Jing had thought that she would enjoy some peace and quiet for some time, but Ding Jiayi had started calling them again after just a night!

Because of that, the Zhai family’s hatred toward Ding Jiayi only intensified.

Now, Ding Jiayi no longer had the time to be upset about the Zhai family’s attitude toward her, or whether Qiao Nan was behind their attitudes toward her. Having cried for an entire night, Ding Jiayi felt as though her eyes were so swollen that she couldn’t even open them. Now, she had no other desire than to have Qiao Nan help her leave the capital and Qiao Zijin so that she could peacefully return to Ping Cheng.

Only Qiao Nan would be able to help her out with that. “Hello, please don’t hang up. I’m not trying to cause any trouble.”

The moment she got through, Ding Jiayi didn’t care about whether the other party would be able to hear her and begged for a chance as quickly as she could.

Unfortunately, the call ended just a second later.

Qiao Nan was Ding Jiayi's only way out of the capital. As such, Ding Jiayi couldn't even stop to worry about the cost of the calls. The moment the other party hung up, Ding Jiayi immediately redialed the number yet again. "Please pick up. It's really nothing too troublesome..."

"I'm looking for Qiao Nan..."

"I have an urgent matter..."

"This has nothing to do with Qiao Zijin..."

Ding Jiayi had no idea how many times she had tried calling them or how many times she had repeated herself. What she knew was that her phone was now heating up and she had already gone through half of her phone card's credit.

Just as she thought that there was no chance of her succeeding today and that she would have to suffer in the hands of Qiao Zijin in the capital, Ding Jiayi's phone rang.

In that moment, Ding Jiayi thought that Qiao Zijin felt hungry or uncomfortable in the hospital and was asking her to visit. As a result, Ding Jiayi had been so scared that she had nearly tossed her phone out. It was only when she confirmed that the number was not Qiao Zijin's that Ding Jiayi dared to pick up the call. "Hello?"

"It's me." She could tell that the other party sounded rather tired.

In the past, Ding Jiayi had hated this voice so much so that her brows would be furrowed into a deep frown the moment she heard it. But now, Ding Jiayi felt that this voice was the most beautiful and moving sound she had ever heard.

Qiao Nan knew nothing of Ding Jiayi's joy and excitement at this moment. "What's up? If you don't go overboard with your request, I might agree to it. Let me remind you that Qiao Zijin's just my biological sister. There's nothing more than that. Chen Jun doesn't even want to support her. I won't agree to any requests to support her."

Qiao Zijin's illness truly had nothing to do with her. Now that Ding Jiayi was here, was it possible for Qiao Zijin not to recover? They had better not expect her to fork out any money for Qiao Zijin's treatment or anything related to her illness. What was in these people's minds? Had she not made herself clear when Qiao Zijin had contracted uremia?

"No, no. You're mistaken. I'm not calling you for Qiao Zijin. I'm sorry that I was in too much of a rush and couldn't explain myself earlier. I'm finding you because of my own problem. Qiao Nan, you have to help me. This really has nothing to do with Qiao Zijin."

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Ding Jiayi was in a panic, afraid that Qiao Nan would misunderstand her and the situation would come to a standstill again if she delayed her explanation.

#### Chapter 2278: Someone Will Pick You Up

If she misunderstood that she had called regarding Qiao Zijin, causing the Zhai family to misunderstand as well and hang up on her, she would truly have no other way out.

"Qiao Zijin?" Qiao Nan laughed. That was rare. This was the first time Ding Jiayi was calling Qiao Zijin by her full name, and in such a cold tone, no less. Ding Jiayi had always addressed her as 'Zijin' or 'my Zijin'. "Why? Have you guys gotten into a fight again?"

Well, this wouldn't be their first. But every time they fought, they would soon reconcile and it would be as though nothing had even happened. Then, they would work together to scheme against her again. Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin were the mother-and-daughter pair who worked the best together.

Qiao Zijin was Ding Jiayi's drug!

Ding Jiayi didn't blame Qiao Nan for talking about her fight with Qiao Zijin in such a tone. If she were in Qiao Nan's place, she wouldn't believe it either. After all, she had had too many similar experiences. Zijin was always the one at fault and she always said that she would let Zijin understand her mistakes to correct them.

The problem was that every time Zijin apologized and tried to coax her in tears, she would immediately soften her heart and feel that Zijin had not meant what she had said. Then, she wouldn't hold it against Zijin anymore.

She knew that Qiao Nan would probably not believe her. Even if Qiao Dongliang had been the one on the call, he would probably have the same reaction as Qiao Nan.

“Qiao Nan, I was wrong. I was really wrong about you in the past. You-you’re not a bad child, and neither is Qiao Zijin a good child. I want nothing more at my age but to spend my remaining time peacefully with your dad in Ping Cheng. I won’t visit the capital in the future and I really won’t cause any trouble for you. Qiao Nan, you have to help me. I was the one who gave birth to you!”

“...” Qiao Nan pursed her lips, resisting the urge to hang up. She hated Ding Jiayi’s last words that she had given birth to Qiao Nan. So what if she had? She felt like she had already returned her life to Ding Jiayi through that car accident two years ago. As for filial piety, she was already sending enough money to Ding Jiayi and her dad every month as a monthly allowance because they could no longer work.

If Ding Jiayi still thought that that was insufficient and that she owed it to her, she would simply regard today’s call as self-abuse.

Qiao Nan took a few deep breaths. “I’m not paying for Qiao Zijin’s hospitalization bills. Neither will I ever agree to whatever you want regarding the Zhu family’s inheritance. There’s no use begging me.”

“No, don’t hang up. It has nothing to do with that....” Feeling that Qiao Nan was on the verge of hanging up, Ding Jiayi’s tears fell uncontrollably and she shouted in a panic. Ding Jiayi’s grief and desperation stunned Qiao Nan. “You... What happened?” What was going on?

Ding Jiayi had cried? She cried?! Qiao Nan felt like digging her ears to see if she had too much dirt stuck in there. It was not uncommon for Ding Jiayi to cry. After all, Ding Jiayi had used this trick quite often in the past.

But this time, it seemed a little different. It was probably the most sincere and serious cry that Qiao Nan had ever heard. “Alright. Stop crying. Tell me about it.” Anyway, she was not going to make any promises.

After making sure that Qiao Nan had not hung up on her, Ding Jiayi quickly put forward her request. “Qiao Zijin stole my money and identity card. I-I want to return to Ping Cheng to your dad. I don’t want to stay in the capital for another day, but...” How was she supposed to get a bus ticket to return home without any money or an identity card?

The problem of money would be relatively easily solved. She thought that Qiao Dongliang wouldn't be too stingy about giving her some money to purchase a bus ticket. But what should she do about her lost identity card?

"Is it that simple?"

"Yes, I want to return to Ping Cheng." Ding Jiayi was almost out of breath from crying. There was no way she was going to ask for help from Qiao Nan on Qiao Zijin's behalf. The mention of Qiao Zijin scared her. Ding Jiayi knew that this was nothing to Qiao Nan. If she had asked anyone else, the matter might not have been so easily resolved. "I don't have an identity card, so I can't buy a ticket."

Qiao Nan hesitated for a long while. It was not her first being tricked by Ding Jiayi. The moment she heard Ding Jiayi crying, Qiao Nan couldn't help but wonder what Ding Jiayi was up to this time. Qiao Nan didn't believe that Qiao Zijin would have gotten into such a heated argument with Ding Jiayi. In fact, she had always thought that Ding Jiayi would selflessly remain as Qiao Zijin's guardian angel without any complaints.

"Let me ask you again. Do you want to return to Ping Cheng, or are you after something else?" There was a huge difference between these two things.

"I just want to return to Ping Cheng. I hope you can send me back. It doesn't matter what it takes." Ding Jiayi wasn't highly educated and didn't know about the story of 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf'. Although Ding Jiayi wasn't surprised that Qiao Nan didn't believe her, she was a little sad, to say the least.

She was already in such a miserable state. She had placed all of her hopes and dreams on Qiao Zijin only to realize that Qiao Zijin was even more unfilial than Qiao Nan. Not only had she stolen her identity card, but she had even threatened and bullied her!

Ding Jiayi wondered what terrible sins she had committed that she had landed up with a mother like that and had even given birth to two heartless and unfilial daughters. Others gave birth to children too. But why were her children both so heartless?

"Alright, I understand. Are you leaving today or tomorrow?"

“Can I leave today?” Having endured an entire night of torture, Ding Jiayi had no desire of staying in the capital for another hour. She had thought that Qiao Nan would be able to help her, but it would still take some time. But it turned out that she would be able to return today!

“Where are you?”

“In Qiao Zijin’s rented apartment.”

Qiao Nan replied, “Alright. Someone will call you in half an hour. Pick up that call and follow him back to Ping Cheng.” Buying a bus or plane ticket required an identity card. As long as Qiao Zijin held on to Ding Jiayi’s identity card, she was going nowhere.

Chapter 2279: Wouldn’t Be Able to Make It

The problem was that Qiao Zijin had forgotten about a situation. Yes, the Qiao family didn’t buy a car. However, a lot of people had private cars. It could be said private cars were a common sight. If Ding Jiayi took someone else’s car to return to Ping Cheng, then an identity card wouldn’t be required.

It was more expensive to take someone else’s car to return to Ping Cheng. However, to Qiao Nan, if Ding Jiayi was willing to leave, even if she didn’t have the Zhu family’s inheritance, this little sum of money was nothing to her. She could afford it.

“Alright...” At this moment, Ding Jiayi was like a headless fly. She naturally did what Qiao Nan said.

Qiao Nan said that someone would call her mobile and contact her. Ding Jiayi kept her phone plugged to the power source to ensure that her battery was fully charged. Then, she stared fixedly at the phone, afraid of missing out on a call or text message.

Indeed, half an hour later, Ding Jiayi’s phone rang. “Hello? Are you the person my daughter found?”



The other party was speechless. If he was a liar, once Ding Jiayi said so, could he still say no? Thankfully, he wasn't a liar. "Yes. Are you Madam Ding, Qiao Nan's mother?" It was better to confirm her identity, lest he picked up the wrong person.

"Yes, I'm Qiao Nan's mother. Qiao Nan's my daughter." Ding Jiayi heaved a sigh of relief. Qiao Nan did what she said. She really arranged for her to return to Ping Cheng.

After confirming her identity, the driver heaved a sigh of relief. "Hello. I've already reached the destination. The car plate number is... Can you come down? You're going to Ping Cheng, right?"

"Yes, I'll come down immediately." After Ding Jiayi closed the door, she brought her own things and went downstairs. Based on the car plate number, she found the car. "Qiao Nan sent you to pick me up, right? You're taking me back to Ping Cheng?"

"Yes."

"May I check if Qiao Nan has already given you the money for sending me back?" He was making a trip to Ping Cheng because of her. This trip would definitely not be cheap. Even if she still had money to pay for this trip, she wasn't very willing to fork it out as she felt the pinch, let alone the fact that Qiao Zijin had already taken all her money.

The other party looked at Ding Jiayi helplessly via the rearview mirror. "Madam Ding, don't worry. We won't charge you twice. Someone will pay for your fare back to Ping Cheng this time. I won't ask you for a single cent. Don't worry." It was all about credit when doing business. Furthermore, he heard that the person who hired him to drive had a strong background. How would he be so stupid?

"That's good." After confirming that she didn't need to pay for anything, Ding Jiayi no longer hesitated. "It's tough on you. I hope you can drive faster and send me back to Ping Cheng earlier." Looking at the time, if the driver drove faster, she might even be able to return to Ping Cheng today.

"Alright." This was a big business. Even if Ding Jiayi didn't say anything, the driver would have done everything properly.

Ding Jiayi, who was sitting in the car, saw that she was getting further from Qiao Zijin's rented house. She couldn't help but loosen her frowning eyebrows. It could be said that she was going to leave this scary place. No matter who called in the future, she was never coming back to the capital.

Ding Jiayi's phone rang. Ding Jiayi was shocked and took out her phone. It was actually the new number Qiao Zijin was using after she came to the capital. Without thinking, Ding Jiayi cut off Qiao Zijin's call and refused to pick up. Until now, she couldn't forget what Qiao Zijin had said to her and her expression yesterday when she had taken her money and identity card from her pockets.

To prevent Old Qiao from coming to the capital earlier, she helped Qiao Zijin steal his identity card and tore his train ticket. In the end, Qiao Zijin actually said that she and Old Qiao were both old and particularly prone to losing things. That period when Old Qiao 'lost' his things was the best proof. Until now, Ding Jiayi still felt hatred in her heart.

Because of this, Ding Jiayi was given a slap to the face. What was more infuriating was that she was slapped by both Qiao Zijin and herself. If she had known that Qiao Zijin was so rebellious and would be so ruthless to her, the biological mother, why would she do so many unpleasant things over the years such that Old Qiao had opinions about her and Qiao Nan didn't want to acknowledge her?

Old Qiao was right. If not for Qiao Zijin teaching her bad things by her side, her relationship with Qiao Nan wouldn't have been so bad that she didn't enjoy any blessings after Qiao Nan became prosperous. Based on Qiao Nan's character, even if she didn't like Qiao Nan and her attitude toward her wasn't good, as long as there wasn't a Qiao Zijin in the middle, their relationship would be poor at most, and not as bad as now.

After Ding Jiayi rejected the first call, Qiao Zijin called again. Ding Jiayi still carried the same attitude as before. She refused to look, listen, or pick up her call.

Qiao Zijin reacted quickly. Seeing that Ding Jiayi wasn't prepared to pick up her call today, she sent a text message instead. "Mom, are you going to ignore me, your daughter? Don't forget that you don't have any money on you now. Aside from Qiao Nan, you only know me. Only I can take care of you. I'm hungry. Quickly make something for me to eat and bring it to the hospital. Also, I think I'm almost healed. Help me prepare the discharge procedures. I want to see Qiao Nan."

After that, Qiao Zijin sent another text message. "Mom, the house I rented is quite small, right? There's only one room. When I hadn't divorced Chen Jun, even my wardrobe was bigger than the current place I'm living in. You must not be used to living in a house like a bird's nest. However, don't worry. With me around, I will definitely work hard to make you lead a comfortable life. By then, we will find Qiao Nan and discuss things together. Also, prices in the capital are different from those in Ping Cheng. Qiao Nan used to transfer you one thousand yuan every month previously. That is definitely not enough in the capital. Furthermore, she used to transfer the money to Dad in the past. Let's discuss it with her so that she would transfer your share to you directly. Ask her to

give you five years' worth of money at once. You can take it easily and she can give it readily. That would be much less troublesome.”

After seeing such a long message, Ding Jiayi felt that her vision was blurred. Although she had a hard time reading it, she understood what Qiao Zijin meant. Qiao Zijin still wanted her to stay and let Qiao Nan provide for her. Of course, at the same time that Qiao Nan was providing for her, Qiao Zijin would be able to take advantage of this as well.

As long as Qiao Nan agreed, it would be very easy for Qiao Zijin to gain a foothold in the capital.. She would live in Qiao Nan's place and spend her mom's money for food and everything else.

#### Chapter 2280: No Changes

In that case, Qiao Zijin could maintain her state of 'only in but not out'. She would be leading a better life, and the money in her pockets would be increasing as well.

Indeed, Qiao Zijin would think about how to make her own life better and more relaxed. No wonder Old Qiao used to lecture her that a child like Qiao Zijin didn't need them, her parents, to worry about her. She could live well on her own.

Ding Jiayi didn't pick up Qiao Zijin's call. After reading Qiao Zijin's messages, Ding Jiayi immediately deleted them. From the start to the end, she always maintained an ignoring attitude.

“...” Seeing that Ding Jiayi didn't react to her after a long time, Qiao Zijin, who was in a medical gown, became more temperamental and her looks turned ugly. This caused her ward mate to call a doctor over for her to see if her cold was recurring.

“Ignoring me. She dared to ignore me. Is she seeking death?” The 'death' Qiao Zijin was talking about wasn't an exaggeration but a fact. Qiao Zijin had taken all of Ding Jiayi's money. Although Ding Jiayi didn't need to pay rent for the house, she had to spend money on her meals, right?

Qiao Zijin knew very clearly what her rented house contained.

Qiao Zijin didn't like to cook, especially if the place she rented was so small that there was only room for sleeping. Qiao Zijin couldn't accept carving out a small corner to serve as a kitchen. As such, she often bought most of her meals.

If she decided to be more luxurious, she would order takeaway. If she felt that she should save a little, she would buy a steamed bun. Anyway, it cost only two or three yuan.

After Qiao Zijin was admitted into the hospital, there was naturally no food in the house. If Ding Jiayi was hungry in the rented house, there would, at most, be only one pack of instant noodles left. The problem was that since Ding Jiayi arrived in the capital yesterday, three meals had already passed.

Ding Jiayi dared to act in a fit of pique and not contact her. If she continued to be hungry for a few more meals, she probably wouldn't even have the energy to find her to admit her mistake. She didn't want her to faint from hunger in her rented house, causing her to have to wait on her mom instead.

After losing her temper, Qiao Zijin could only continue calling her. The food in the hospital was both expensive and unpalatable. Even if she wanted to order takeaways, the hospital didn't allow them to be delivered to her ward. She couldn't go downstairs and pick up the delivery herself. If she wanted to eat something good, she had to rely on her biological mother, Ding Jiayi. It wasn't that she couldn't settle the discharge procedures on her own. She was just lazy. As long as Ding Jiayi came over, not only would she be able to help her buy food, but she could also leave the hospital in a relaxed manner.

“Pick up the call...”

Qiao Zijin gritted her teeth when the call still didn't get through. She could only continue to send Ding Jiayi short messages. “Mom, don't make me angry. You know I'm not good-tempered. Don't make me anxious. This won't be good for the both of us. We are mother and daughter. If there's anything, we should discuss it together. If there's any misunderstanding, we should communicate too. If you ignore me, we will only have more conflicts and the conflicts will become deeper. Mom, you don't want something to happen until we both can't salvage the situation, right?”

When it came to Ding Jiayi, Qiao Zijin was too used to being bold and righteous. Even if she needed help from Ding Jiayi, her words weren't polite at all. The meaning of threat was already very obvious.

In the past, this tactic might still work on Ding Jiayi or Ding Jiayi might have been frightened by Qiao Zijin. However, Ding Jiayi was very insistent this time and wasn't affected by Qiao Zijin's messages.

Just when Qiao Zijin was about to flare up, Ding Jiayi, who had been thinking for a long time, finally decided to send Qiao Zijin a short message. Not only did this message not make Qiao Zijin feel better, but it even made her angrier. "Qiao Zijin, you don't have to wait for me. If you want to be discharged from the hospital, do the procedures yourself. If you're really hungry, make do with the hospital food. I'll return first."

Once Qiao Zijin saw the last sentence of Ding Jiayi's message, she became furious, let alone the contents in front. Returned? Where to? Her mom's identity card was still in her pocket. Moreover, her mom didn't have a single cent on her. Where could her mom go?

Impossible!

Qiao Zijin sent another short message. "Who are you? You're not my mom. My mom is the owner of this phone. No matter how you managed to get this phone, it's best to get in touch with me so that I can find my mom back. Otherwise, you're in deep trouble. Do you know who my brother-in-law is? He's the chief!"

Qiao Zijin felt that since Ding Jiayi had no money and identity card, she couldn't go anywhere. It was strict in the capital. Without an identity card, she wouldn't be able to board the train. From how her dad wanted to come to the capital last year, one knew that since Ping Cheng was so strict, it was impossible that the capital would be less strict than Ping Cheng.

Upon seeing Qiao Zijin's message, Ding Jiayi didn't know whether to laugh or cry. Then, a revenge-like pleasure emerged in her heart. So, she didn't believe that it was her in person and that she had sold her phone, huh?

In order to clarify Qiao Zijin's doubts, Ding Jiayi stopped sending messages and called her.

"Hello, let me tell you—"

"It's me." Upon knowing that Qiao Zijin really misunderstood about the phone, Ding Jiayi hurriedly stated her identity so that she wouldn't say anything to make her angry.

“Mom, it’s really you? Did you lend your phone to someone else just now? Forget it. Now’s not the time to talk about this. Mom, look at what time it is now. I’m hungry. Prepare some food and send it to the hospital. I also want to be discharged. Anyway, I’m no longer running a fever. It’s a waste of money if I continue staying in the hospital.”

Qiao Zijin was psychologically scarred about staying in hospitals due to the previous time when she had uremia. She always felt that if she stayed in the hospital for a day longer, she would have to spend a lot less money on herself in the future. Otherwise, her one million yuan would only be enough for her to be seriously ill twice or thrice and stay in the hospital twice or thrice.

Things got out of hand yesterday. After Ding Jiayi left, Qiao Zijin didn’t feel regretful at all. All along, she only had one set of tactics to deal with Ding Jiayi, which was to coax her. They were never harsh to each other before.

Qiao Zijin knew how useful the trick of coaxing was when dealing with Ding Jiayi. Qiao Zijin didn’t know how Ding Jiayi would react if she changed her style and used hard tactics. After a night, Qiao Zijin’s tone softened. Her tone and attitude when speaking to Ding Jiayi returned to how it was before.

“There’s no rush.”