

RTAMM 2351

Chapter 2351: Settling Scores (1)

Father Wang was Wang Yang's father, and Wang Yang's stand naturally represented Father Wang's. In the future, Father Wang should simply live his life with his son. Poor relatives like them would neither try to take advantage of Wang Yang nor climb up over his head. They would simply sever all ties.

Hearing his brother say that, Father Wang's stroke nearly worsened. Growing up, his brothers had always listened to whatever he said.

Father Wang was used to being the ruler of the Wang family. Now that no one was taking him seriously, and everyone even severed ties with him, Father Wang was anxious and furious and did not know what to do. Should he scold his brothers for being disrespectful and saying such infuriating words, or should he make a call to reprimand Wang Yang?

If not for his disobedient son who had made trouble for him, the Wang family would never have rebelled against him, nor would his younger brother have usurped the position of the head of the Wang family from him.

His younger brother was disobedient while his son was unfilial. The thought of it made Father Wang roll his eyes in fury. He had worked hard his whole life for the sake of the Wang family and his relatives. Although they had performed well in the past, they were all rebelling against him now. What a mess!

If he had not been in charge of the Wang family all these years, would the Wang family have gotten to where they were today? These ingrates! Did they really think that any Tom, Dick, or Harry could be the head of the Wang family?

Before Father Wang could go on his rant and scold them, the Wang family simply took their leave.

The money and resources Old Master Wang had spent on Wang Yang couldn't be gotten back. Even the house that Father Wang was living in now was Old Master Wang's. When Old Master Wang had passed away, he had split his assets among his sons but had left this house to his eldest son, Father Wang. No matter what, Father Wang was his eldest son, and Wang Yang was his eldest grandson. As

such, it was only natural for the house to go to Father Wang, who would then pass it on to Wang Yang.

In the past, the Wang family had been entirely focused on the Zhu family's assets. As such, no one really cared about the house left behind by Old Master Wang. Now, no matter how unjust they felt it was for Father Wang to receive the house, there was no use in arguing over it since the will had been effected such a long time ago.

After making themselves clear to Father Wang, the Wang family left the house, swearing never to return. Because of everything, they despised Wang Yang, and Wang Yang didn't acknowledge them as his uncles or aunts either. Not meeting would save everyone some face, at the very least.

In the future, they would live their separate lives and not interfere in each other's.

In reality, these words were targeted at Father Wang. The Wang family's brothers still discussed with each other before doing anything. It was only Father Wang who had no place in their discussions.

Evidently, the Wang family had come to a consensus about kicking Father Wang and Wang Yang out of the Wang family.

After learning of this result, Father Wang's anger could no longer be controlled and he fainted. Thankfully, the doctor arrived in time and Father Wang's condition did not deteriorate. But the doctor reminded Father Wang that he would soon go into a vegetative state if he continued flaring up in this manner.

Hearing the doctor's words, Father Wang felt like his life had been a failure. His brothers refused to acknowledge him, his son was living in the capital and did not care about his father, and even his wife was not by his side to take care of him. As for his grandson, Mother Zhu had brought him to the capital to reunite him with his parents.

The lively and bustling Wang family had suddenly become cold and desolate. In the past, they were countless people who surrounded him. But in the blink of an eye, the only one left apart from him in the Wang family was the nanny who had been hired to take care of him.

In the face of such loneliness, Father Wang was full of resentment and he couldn't help but call Wang Yang. "Wang Yang, I raised a good son indeed. You didn't care about anything I said or acknowledge me as your father. Look, your uncles are now mad at me and they're following in your

footsteps by disowning me. In the future, we won't even be relatives and I'll be a lonely old man. Perhaps, no one will know if I pass away one day. Are you happy now? I must have accumulated eight lifetimes' worth of bad luck to have gotten a son like you! If I had known that you would become so rebellious, I would have put my effort into cultivating your brother instead of wasting all of the Wang family's resources and money on you!"

It was uncomfortable listening to his father calling him a heartless fool.

Wang Yang took a deep breath. "Alright, stop bringing up the money that the Wang family spent on me all these years. If you really feel that I owe you or the Wang family, let's settle the accounts. How much did grandpa spend on me that year? I'll let Mom tabulate how much she has spent on the Wang family all these years. If there's anything short, I'll make it up to you. Anyway, my mom's no fool. She kept her accounts well."

"..." Father Wang had thought that this had been a good reason to punish Wang Yang severely, so much so that he would beg for forgiveness. Who would have expected Wang Yang to retaliate with such a strategy? Especially after hearing that Mother Zhu had written down every single sum that she had handed over to the Wang family, Father Wang didn't know whether he should be angry or guilty.

"Don't you know something called inflation? It might be the same hundred yuan, but in the past, it could cover our entire family's expenses for the whole month. Now, a hundred yuan can probably only last two days. How then can we calculate it in this manner?"

Wang Yang laughed. "You have an account book in your heart too. You're just bullying me because I'm ignorant. I can't deny that you're right. But if I'm not wrong, Mom has been constantly giving the Wang family money, right? I might not have known in the past, but now, I do. After the Wang family spent their money on me, their expenses have fallen on my mom. The Wang family has never stopped asking for money. I'm sure they ask for money more than once a year, right? Does Mom's money that she gave them in the past not have inflation?"

"Besides, I'm sure my mom has forked out much more than whatever my grandpa did at that time.. I'll just treat everything extra as interest."

Chapter 2352: Settling Scores (2)

"It's good enough that you haven't lost any money. Don't you think so?"

In other words, he had never taken advantage of the Wang family financially because of Zhu Baoguo's death.

"You bastard!" Father Wang screamed. "The one whom your mom married was me, not you! Couples are one. Your mom's money is my money. We have common property. The money that your mom gave your uncles wasn't hers alone. You still owe it to the Wang family! Don't you dare bring your mom's money into the picture!"

Wang Yang sneered. "My mom's money is yours, and yours is the Wang family's. But why does the Wang family's money have nothing to do with me? If that's the case, I'll owe the Wang family for the money they spent on me. But I'll also owe you and Mom for the money you spent on raising me. Wouldn't that mean that I owe double the money? How about this? Why don't I call Mom and get her to talk to you about how much her money has to do with you and the Wang family?"

Wang Yang had never ridiculed Qiao Nan. Although she did not have high educational qualifications, she was more than capable of earning her keep. But such a capable person had been bullied by Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin. Even her husband had been snatched away by Qiao Zijin.

At this moment, Wang Yang suddenly understood Qiao Nan's frustration. At times, some things had nothing to do with one's abilities. It was all about one's character and shamelessness. People like that said the most infuriating things and often positioned themselves in the most advantageous positions. What was his was still his, but what belonged to others was also his. Everything was his. If anyone wanted anything, they had better earn it for themselves. But even then, they would still have to consider if he would want those things. Only if he didn't would whatever one earned be theirs to keep. As long as he wanted it, everyone had better forget about having it.

There was no point in trying to argue against such warped logic. There was no way of convincing him otherwise. In fact, one would only get annoyed by the other party's unreasonable attitude.

To be honest, he was not much better than Qiao Nan.

Qiao Nan had handed over all her earnings to Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin. As for him? He listened wholeheartedly to his father and did whatever his father told him to do. If not for this lawsuit, he would still be listening to his father, looking down on his mother, who treated him sincerely, all the while being a slave to the Wang family. Not only would he have to supply them with money, but he would even have to be their coolie. Only when he settled the matter would he have finished his job. Even then, they wouldn't think of it as him having done them a favor. It was something he had to do since he owed it to the Wang family.

He had never thought that anything was wrong with such a stupid explanation, and he had even thought that everything his dad had said was right. In fact, he had even thought that it was his duty to do so. Had his brain been eaten by a dog at that time?

Wang Yang thought that it was incredulous and no longer wanted to continue with the topic. His dad could say whatever he wanted, but he would do whatever he wanted. If he really owed the Wang family anything, he would simply return them whatever was owed. If his dad tried to come up with a pile of fake 'IOUs', he would never admit to it, nor would he ever return them anything.

“It seems like we’ve come to an understanding regarding the money...”

“...” Father Wang’s eyes widened. He was furious that he couldn’t beat Wang Yang to death at the moment. Understanding? Since when had they come to an understanding? Why was he not in the loop about that? He had made it clear that Wang Yang still owed the Wang family, but Wang Yang had said that his mom had already paid off his debts, including the interest, for him. In fact, the Wang family had even taken advantage of him.

“Since we’ve already covered the matter of money, let’s talk about me making use of the Wang family’s resources. Those people aren’t very educated to begin with and aren’t very good workers either. If my memory serves me well, the Wang family simply arranged for average jobs for them. Not only are their jobs average, but their salaries aren’t high, and the benefits are quite average too. I really believed you when you said that the Wang family’s resources had been spent entirely on me in the past. But I don’t believe that anymore. It’s true that grandpa liked me when he was still alive, but he paid much more attention to you, his son.”

He had been deceived like a fool because he had not contemplated these matters in the past. Now that he was finally using his intelligence, he had suddenly realized that the relationships that he had held dear to him in the past were nothing at all!

“When the old master was still alive, he valued you and was always thinking about how to bring you to greater heights. If the Wang family had so much resources, your position wouldn’t have been so low before you married my mom. Wasn’t that why the Zhu family had objected to your marriage and others even said that you were trying to climb the social ladder by marrying into the Zhu family? I can’t deny that the Wang family does indeed have resources. But Dad, don’t you think that you’re going overboard by trying to cheat me like a three-year-old and saying that the Wang family’s resources were expansive? I know that you were already in cahoots with the old master to fool me like you had done to my mom because you knew that the Zhu family’s assets would definitely go to me after Zhu Baoguo’s death given how much my mom cared about me. Only by coaxing me would the Zhu family’s assets become the Wang family’s.”

At the thought of this, Wang Yang's voice changed.

In the first few years after Zhu Baoguo's death, Wang Yang had often had nightmares. At that time, it was always either Old Master Wang or Father Wang who would have accompanied him. They had constantly reminded him how much the Wang family had sacrificed for his sake just to settle the matter. As such, nothing would happen.

Every time he heard that, Wang Yang felt thankful to have a father and grandpa like that. He knew that the resources and money mattered very much to everyone else in the Wang family too. But his grandpa and father had not spared anything and had used everything that his uncles desired on a teenage boy like him.

As such, he had given up everything and dedicated his whole soul to repay the kindness he had received.

The more he found out about the truth, the colder Wang Yang got toward the Wang family. Now, he wasn't going to listen to Father Wang's words anymore. He was already a man in his thirties. If he were to continue to be taken in by these lies, he would have wasted all that rice growing up.

"Alright, let's not talk about the specifics of the Wang family's resources. You know very well just how my youngest uncle's daughter fared in school. Do you need me to remind you how she eventually became a civil servant? Also, wasn't I the one who resolved the matter when my second uncle's son almost got caught because he was corrupted?"

"I have three uncles and two aunts. Is there even a single child in these five families that I've never helped?"

Chapter 2353: Settling Scores (3)

"When they wanted me, I gave them money. When they needed connections, I gritted my teeth and relied on my uncle to get them the connections they wanted. As compared to those hooligans who simply got normal jobs, don't you think that I've repaid the Wang family?"

Wang Yang felt exhausted as he talked about it. How had he been so stupid at that time? Connections grew weaker every time one used them. Every time he used his uncle's name, it grew less effective too. If he had not used those connections then, he could definitely have used them in the future to pave the way for his son.

Unfortunately, he had treated the Wang family so well without any care for his son, and yet, the Wang family still thought that he had not done enough for them.

It was obvious who the true ingrates were.

Father Wang was unable to retort Wang Yang because everything he had said was true. After some thought, Father Wang finally managed to force out a reply. "There's no comparison between the two. Those hooligans had nothing to do with the Wang family. The people whom you talked about earlier are all your siblings. It's only right for family members to help one another. How could you bring that up when talking about how the Wang family's resources were spent on you? It was only right for you to do that!"

While devastated, Wang Yang's mind was now clear. "If that's the case, things will be even easier to settle. I was the old master's eldest grandson. It was all because of your teachings that I hated Zhu Baoguo so much. You elders have to take responsibility for me causing Zhu Baoguo's death too. In fact, you have to bear most of the responsibility. We're a family, so it was only right for you to have settled the matter with the Wang family's money and resources at that time. Didn't you say that we're a family? It's only right that we help one another. How can we talk about a family member owing another anything?"

After swallowing a breath, Wang Yang continued. "Since no one owes anyone anything, there's no need to settle any accounts. Didn't you say that my uncles and aunts are all angry at me and want to disown me? Relationships depend on fate and willingness. Since we don't have that fate, that's fine. Let's not disturb each other anymore."

Wang Yang had a good understanding of the Wang family's temper, courage, and abilities.

Before this call, Wang Yang had thought of leaving a way out for the Wang family. After all, someone in the Wang family might unexpectedly do very well. But now, Wang Yang had changed his mind.

Even if someone were to rise up in the Wang family, there was no way they would ever rise up to his position, much less surpass him.

Wasn't the Wang family envious of him? But that didn't matter. After all, he was the only one in the entire Wang family who had an impressive uncle like Zhu Chengqi. Seeing it in this way, he had not been at a loss pretending to be Zhu Chengqi's son all these years.

He had vented his anger and had settled his accounts with Father Wang before hanging up. Less than a minute later, Wang Yang called Li Yayan over. “Dear, make a call to Qiao Nan and let her know about the Wang family’s plans.”

Li Yayan was stunned. “Dear, what’s wrong with you? Are you thinking of...” Was he hoping that the Wang family would succeed? Then, was he going to join forces with them?

If they were to tell Qiao Nan that the Wang family was trying to target the Qiao family, the Wang family’s plan would never succeed. If the Wang family were to learn that they had been the ones who had let the news out, they might very well view them as enemies from then on!

Wang Yang sneered. “I’ve thought of these things too simply all this while. Even now, I still have no clue how Qiao Nan found out about the truth behind Zhu Baoguo’s death after all these years. It’s clear that Qiao Nan’s the only intelligent one in the Qiao family. Do you think that Qiao Nan would let her guard down just because I withdrew the lawsuit? I can’t help but wonder if Qiao Nan already knows about the Wang family’s plans by now.”

As such, it was impossible for Qiao Nan to entirely let her guard down. Not only would Qiao Nan have already guessed that the Wang family would have plans of getting back at her, but Qiao Nan might even be watching the Wang family’s every move by now.

Li Yayan shuddered. “Is Qiao Nan really that evil and impressive?”

“Otherwise, how would she have married Zhai Sheng or become Zhu Chengqi’s goddaughter? This woman appears to be a harmless little bunny, but she’s actually a roaring tiger. If they dare to underestimate Qiao Nan, they will end up like me, wasting my whole life’s efforts.”

Wang Yang sighed deeply. So what if he had found out about that now? There was no way of salvaging the situation.

Li Yayan moved closer to Wang Yang to draw warmth from him. “If Qiao Nan’s so smart and has already guessed the actions of the Wang family, what’s the point in me calling her? Isn’t that unnecessary?”

In the past, she had been ignorant and had simply treated Qiao Nan as an uneducated old woman. That was why she had been so bold to think of taking advantage of Qiao Nan.

Now that she knew that Qiao Nan was someone whom Wang Yang couldn't even provoke, Li Yayan no longer had the guts to approach her.

Wang Yang's expression remained indifferent. "I don't know why Qiao Nan's putting on an act. For some reason, she gets even more agitated than Zhu Chengqi at the mention of Zhu Baoguo's death. Others might even have mistaken her for Zhu Baoguo's mom. It's true that I'm involved in Zhu Baoguo's death. How do you think Qiao Nan feels toward me? I've already taken the initiative to drop the lawsuit. We can't afford to offend someone like Qiao Nan. Even if there's no possibility of ever being on good terms with her, I have to be soft. Otherwise, Qiao Nan might find a reason to get Zhai Sheng to deal with me. Then, we'll have no choice but to leave the capital and return to Ping Cheng."

He had already severed his ties with the Wang family. Unless he had no other choice, there was no way Wang Yang would agree to return.

Qiao Nan? He had better not have any ideas of getting revenge on her. He had better keep his distance from her as far as possible. That was already the best he could do.

Because he had already offended her greatly in the past, it was only natural that he had to find ways to make up for that now.

Chapter 2354: Scheming (1)

Even though this was merely a pretense, he was not willing to give up any opportunity.

"Oh." After understanding Wang Yang's intentions, Li Yayan obediently acted as his loyal servant. Zhai Sheng alone was trouble enough for Wang Yang. Now that she had become the master of the Zhu family, Qiao Nan had risen to the position of an empress herself. If they were to combine their efforts and act against Wang Yang, there was no way he would be able to fight back. As such, they had to do their best to please this couple. If there was the slightest opportunity to be their lackeys, they would not even hesitate for a moment!

Li Yayan was no fool, and after the truth behind Zhu Baoguo's death had come to light, she knew that Qiao Nan would no longer bother about her. In fact, if she were to call Qiao Nan, she might very well reject the call. There was no way she would get to have a meal with Qiao Nan again as she had done in the past.

As such, Li Yayan didn't want to lose such a good opportunity to get on Qiao Nan's good side. Instead of making a call, Li Yayan decided to let Qiao Nan know of this situation through a text message.

After reading through the message, Qiao Nan deleted it before conveying the message to Zhai Sheng. "Brother Zhai, what do you think Li Yayan is trying to do?"

Qiao Nan had complete confidence that Wang Yang had not given up on the lawsuit out of his own will. In fact, he was probably still raging about having given up something he had chased after for his whole life. It was good enough if Wang Yang didn't look upon her as an enemy if he were to see her. It was absolutely incredulous that Li Yayan was secretly sending her such information. Could it be that the couple had fallen out?

Zhai Sheng understood these things much better than Qiao Nan. "Wang Yang probably asked Li Yayan to send this message. Wang Yang's hoping that we'll let him off and not pursue the matter or make trouble for him."

Qiao Nan's eyes widened in shock. "Is that possible? I don't really believe it!" That was Wang Yang they were talking about! Whether it was in her dream or in reality, Wang Yang was used to having his way. Even when he lost, Wang Yang would hold his head up. He was even more arrogant than the winning party!

It seemed strange for Wang Yang to be begging for mercy.

Zhai Sheng planted a light kiss on Qiao Nan's lips as a consultation fee. "Wang Yang's half a politician. All politicians know that it's easier to break someone down with soft words. One must be skilled with their words if they want to survive in the political circle. Without the Zhu family's assets in the picture, your relationship with Wang Yang will return to normal. Besides, you're now the new master of the Zhu family. Given Wang Yang's current situation, it'll be dangerous for him to have you as an enemy." Besides, he was on Nan Nan's side too.

If Nan Nan wanted to deal with Wang Yang, he would definitely support her wholeheartedly and do his best to get rid of Wang Yang.

Wang Yang couldn't afford to offend either one of them, much less both of them. He had to give in and compromise whenever possible.

After Zhu Chengqi's death, Wang Yang had lost his previous confidence. Now, he wouldn't even need to take any action to chase Wang Yang out of the capital if Wang Yang continued acting arrogant and refused to humble himself. There were throngs of people waiting to settle down in the capital. It was easy to replace someone like Wang Yang. Everyone was clear of that.

After hearing Zhai Sheng's words, Qiao Nan was sure that Wang Yang had no intention of playing tricks on her now. But to be honest, Qiao Nan wasn't too pleased about that either. She knew that she wasn't a particularly vicious person who could harden her heart and deal with others brutally. But it wouldn't be easy for her either if Wang Yang were to insist on driving himself into a corner.

Qiao Nan had resolved to exerting her authority in order to get revenge on Wang Yang on behalf of Zhu Baoguo and the Zhu family. Who would have known that Wang Yang would have 'kneeled down'? And unfortunately, Qiao Nan had always been one to take a more defensive approach rather than an offensive one.

Wang Yang's attitude broke Qiao Nan's resolve to use more heavy-handed methods. It felt suffocating now.

Zhai Sheng laughed and took Qiao Nan into his arms. "Don't get upset. If you really feel unhappy, you don't need so many reasons to deal with Wang Yang. Besides, do you think that Wang Yang can change the past by acting soft now? Do you want me to help you? But are you so persistent about Zhu Baoguo's death because of Chief Zhu or because of Zhu Baoguo himself? You were his classmate in junior high school, right?"

Although Zhu Baoguo had already been dead for over twenty years, Zhai Sheng felt uneasy that his beloved wife was so concerned about another man. As such, he had taken the effort to understand Zhu Baoguo's situation.

The past between Qiao Nan and Zhu Baoguo had been easy to check up on. Just a few days after Qiao Nan dropped out of school after completing her second year of junior high school, Zhu Baoguo had gotten into an 'accident' with those hooligans. According to his documents, Qiao Nan had been a bookworm while Zhu Baoguo had been a delinquent who hardly even attended school. This meant that the two of them had hardly had any chance to meet each other.

From the evidence, it was likely that Qiao Nan had developed a dissatisfaction and aversion to Wang Yang because of Zhu Chengqi. But as Qiao Nan's husband, Zhai Sheng felt that Qiao Nan's negative feelings toward Wang Yang were purely because of Zhu Baoguo alone.

Having a husband who understood her best didn't frighten Qiao Nan. In fact, she felt moved. It was only because Zhai Sheng cared about her and observed her emotions that he understood her thoughts. The problem was that it was impossible to explain the situation regarding Zhu Baoguo.

Qiao Nan was reluctant to lie to Zhai Sheng, and neither did she think she would succeed in doing so. But to be honest, there were times she couldn't even tell if those experiences had been from another lifetime, or if it had simply been a dream. Besides, no one could answer her about whether she should bring those feelings into real life.

"It's difficult to say?" When they had first met in Qingshui Town, Zhai Sheng had already felt that Qiao Nan was full of secrets. He had clearly met Qiao Nan for the first time in Qingshui Town, but strangely, Qiao Nan seemed to know all about the Zhai family.

If it had been anyone else, Zhai Sheng would have suspected them to be an enemy who had investigated his family background. But because it had been Qiao Nan, Zhai Sheng had not felt that way. However, Qiao Nan had been strange in that sense indeed.

It could be said that Zhai Sheng had been giving Qiao Nan the time and opportunity to let him know about this matter once she was ready ever since he had met her in Qingshui Town.

Chapter 2355: Scheming (2)

Now, their children were already learning to walk. Still, Qiao Nan remained mum about these things. Now that they had brought up the issue of Zhu Baoguo, Zhai Sheng wondered if Qiao Nan was finally ready to talk about the past.

"Brother Zhai, I'll talk to you alone once the triplets have gone to bed." It was better for her to clear the air about some things now that they had been married for more than a year.

"What's this about?" Miao Jing, who was taking care of the children, saw the couple's expressions stiffen, and the atmosphere cooled significantly. "Haven't you already settled the Zhu family's assets? Zhai Sheng, did you run into some problems and want Nan Nan's advice?"

Zhai Yaohui took a glass of water for Da Bao. "No, if Zhai Sheng needed Qiao Nan's advice on a problem, I would have kicked him out of the house a long time ago." As a man in the Zhai family, they couldn't possibly depend on their wives to solve their problems! If the old master were to find out about it, he would probably rise up from his grave in anger!

Zhai Yaohui admitted that Old Master Zhai had raised his two children. Because of that, both his son and daughter were not considerate toward him. What they loved most was creating trouble for him.

Miao Jing rolled her eyes at Zhai Yaohui. “When the children get a little older, they’ll know that you’re speaking ill of Zhai Sheng. Then, they’ll be mad at you and ignore you. Don’t you dare ask for my help then.”

Zhai Yaohui felt a little embarrassed and he stroked Da Bao’s head. “That won’t happen. Da Bao’s so close to me. How could Da Bao get angry at me or ignore me? Isn’t that right, Da Bao?”

Da Bao, who had just finished his water, burped before heading back to the pile of toys and playing with his siblings. As for whatever his grandpa had just said, Da Bao was still too young to have understood anything.

“See, Da Bao’s ignoring you.” Miao Jing patted Da Bao’s chubby backside in delight. She treated Da Bao so well. How embarrassing it would be if Da Bao was close to only his grandpa and not her. To think that he was always talking about how the men in the Zhai family held up the whole world for their women.

In front of the three children, Old Zhai was always fighting with her for their affection.

Miao Jing had initially been concerned about the situation between Qiao Nan and Zhai Sheng, but after quibbling with Zhai Yaohui, she had completely forgotten about the main topic. It was only when she was lying in bed that night that she had suddenly remembered it. What had gone on between Nan Nan and Zhai Sheng? Why had the atmosphere been so strange?

Zhai Sheng walked out of the nursery. “Don’t worry. The triplets are sleeping soundly. They won’t wake up until tomorrow morning.”

As the children grew up, their mealtimes became more predictable, and they no longer required such frequent meals. As long as they were well fed before their sleep, the triplets could sleep through the night and only wake up the next morning once they were hungry.

There was no way of avoiding it, and Qiao Nan had no intention of running from it anymore. Just as she was rehearsing her script inwardly, Zhai Sheng embraced her, letting her lean against himself comfortably. “There’s no hurry. You can take your time.”

Although she had been slightly nervous, Qiao Nan's thumping heart gradually calmed down as she listened to Zhai Sheng's heartbeat in his embrace. "I've never really thought of how to tell you about this because even I don't really believe these things myself. But as we interacted more, it felt like everything was true."

"..."

Qiao Nan's words were like a tongue twister that would confuse anybody. Not only was it confusing, but it also contained many riddles. Thankfully, Zhai Sheng wasn't at a complete loss after he processed Qiao Nan's words in his brain several times. "Okay."

Zhai Sheng's affirmation was undoubtedly to calm Qiao Nan down.

Qiao Nan caressed Zhai Sheng's chest. "Three years ago, Qiao Zijin got divorced from Chen Jun because of her affair. She was diagnosed with uremia not long after. You know about that, right?"

"Yes." That matter had made the headlines in Ping Cheng at that time.

It was exactly because of that that Zhai Sheng knew that Qiao Nan had been through a painful time.

Feeling Zhai Sheng's heartache, Qiao Nan smiled. "Don't worry about me. That was the time I was reborn. All of my pain left along with that car accident. At that time, Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin were no longer able to hurt me no matter how ridiculous they got." Her hardest times had been before that car accident. Now that she was living a blissful life, Qiao Nan was no longer willing to think about that painful past where she had been so foolish.

"When Qiao Zijin contracted uremia, my mom got me to prepare money for Qiao Zijin's treatment. It took me a lot of effort to raise a hundred thousand yuan for Qiao Zijin to stay comfortably in the hospital. But just as I was about to send the money over to Qiao Zijin, I heard that Qiao Zijin didn't just intend on making me pay for her hospitalization bills. She was afraid of dying and was afraid that she wouldn't be able to wait for a suitable kidney donor. Since my parents were already too old, their kidneys wouldn't last long either..."

"So, she wanted to take advantage of you?" Zhai Sheng's expression became extremely cold and his hands clenched tightly into a fist behind Qiao Nan's back. If Qiao Nan had been just slightly weaker at that time, her body would not even be intact now!

Apart from his passion for the military and his devotion to the state, Zhai Sheng had never thought of himself as a selfless man.

Everyone had only two kidneys that were irreplaceable. Qiao Zijin had never been a good person. She had bullied Qiao Nan for so many years. If he had to pick between Qiao Zijin and Qiao Nan, he wouldn't even need to consider it. He would let Qiao Zijin die!

As a soldier, he would have the obligation to seek justice for Qiao Zijin if she had been killed wrongfully. The problem was that Qiao Zijin had simply fallen sick. There was no one to be blamed for that. Zhai Sheng was especially disgusted by how Qiao Zijin was willing to hurt others to improve her own life.

"That's right." Qiao Nan answered indifferently. When she spoke about this, Qiao Nan was so calm and emotionless that it seemed as though she was recounting someone else's story.

Chapter 2356: Scheming (3)

"I dropped out of school early and had a lot of time to earn money at work. The first time I spent my salary of more than twenty years was to buy back the Qiao family's courtyard which was sold to support Qiao Zijin in her university education. Then, she took all the money away and bought a house for Qiao Zijin as her dowry. I, who had worked hard for more than twenty years, was left with nothing."

"I lost my money and even had to tolerate their humiliation and abuse. No matter how good-tempered I am, there's a limit. After hearing their conversation, I left the hospital with the one hundred thousand yuan that I've finally managed to raise. However, in the process of leaving, she found out and we ended up in a tussle on the road. This caused me to be in a car accident. Speaking of which, I've always thought that that driver was pretty unlucky. If he didn't accidentally bump into us arguing, even if he had to send his car for an examination, he wouldn't have gotten into such big trouble and lost so much money."

Three years had passed. Qiao Nan still felt sympathetic toward that driver. She felt that he was extraordinarily unlucky.

Zhai Sheng patted her back lightly as if coaxing a child. He said silently that those things had passed. No matter who it was in the future, they didn't need to think about harming her again as he was guarding her by her side.

Qiao Nan, who didn't feel upset, cheated quite a bit of comfort from Zhai Sheng. Qiao Nan wanted to laugh. Could it be that she had benefited?

“Brother Zhai, nobody knows that before I woke up from the coma of that car accident, I had a dream. An extraordinary dream!”

“Did this dream have something to do with your attitude toward Zhu Baoguo?” Zhai Sheng still couldn't understand their relationship until now.

“Yes, I was forced to drop out of school when I was in the second year. I don't know if the resentment in my heart was too deep, but in my dream, I returned to the summer vacation of that year when I was forced to drop out of school.”

Qiao Nan selectively shared her dream. “In the dream, Zhu Baoguo wasn't dead. I saved him. Although I was only a teenager in the dream, I always felt that I was a forty-year-old auntie. I looked at Zhu Baoguo like he was my son. After that, Wang Yang continued to have bad intentions. Indeed, he even tried to scheme against Zhu Baoguo several times. If not for Wang Yang finding Zhu Baoguo earlier on the day of the middle school examinations, I feel that Zhu Baoguo wouldn't have been so late. Wang Yang might have caused Zhu Baoguo to miss an examination on purpose!”

Middle school examinations were different from college entrance examinations. There was no such thing as repeating.

Zhu Baoguo's grades weren't top-notch, but under Qiao Nan's lead, they were considered excellent.

In this premise, once Zhu Baoguo lacked an examination score in one of the subjects, his results would look horrible. Zhu Baoguo would have to spend some money to get into an ordinary college, let alone a top-notch one.

Wang Yang only had one motive, which was to harm Zhu Baoguo. If he couldn't harm him to his death, then he would at least make him a failure in school. Of course, because of Qiao Nan's appearance in the dream, not only did Zhu Baoguo stop keeping in contact with those people from the society, but he was also positively influenced by Qiao Nan to study hard and improve his grades.

In order to kick Qiao Nan away from Zhu Baoguo so that he wouldn't be brought up well by her, Chen Jun appeared again. What was different was that this time, Qiao Nan didn't fall for his tricks.

What was more peculiar was that at about the same time, Zhai Sheng had already started to reveal his feelings for Qiao Nan.

“In my dream, I had a good relationship with Shi Qing. Uncle Shi didn’t pass away early. He watched Shi Qing marry Zhu Baoguo and she even gave birth to a son with him. He became a grandfather. To others, Wang Yang might have only caused Zhu Baoguo his death. To me, Wang Yang has harmed two families, causing them to lose their happiness. I heard that Shi Qing adopted a child from the orphanage. One has to know that the child Zhu Baoguo and Shi Qing gave birth to was good-looking and smart. Since young, he had grown up together with our triplets. He was such a good child...”

Zhu Baoguo was gone, needless to say about his son.

“Do you understand it now? I feel that Wang Yang killed my son and caused my grandson not to be born!” Qiao Nan treated Zhu Baoguo like a son. If that was the case, Zhu Baoguo’s son would be considered Qiao Nan’s grandson.

Because of Wang Yang, so many people who originally had a close relationship with Qiao Nan couldn’t lead a happy life. In this lifetime, Qiao Nan felt that Wang Yang, Qiao Zijin, and Ding Jiayi were three big existences. She never had a happy day with the three of them around.

Wang Yang wanted to curry favor with her or pretend to be obedient in front of her. Both wouldn’t work with Qiao Nan. As long as Wang Yang didn’t make a mistake such that she had something of his in her hands, she wouldn’t do anything to him. Of course, if Wang Yang refused to live honestly, no matter what he did or who he harmed, Qiao Nan expressed that she would eliminate this scumbag on behalf of justice!

Before this, Zhai Sheng might have been a little jealous. There wasn’t a choice. Zhai Sheng was jealous even of his biological son, let alone an unrelated male. However, after listening to Qiao Nan’s explanation, Zhai Sheng felt comfortable in his heart. He categorized Zhu Baoguo together with Da Bao and Er Bao.

“How was I like in your dream then?” In reality, Wang Yang, Zhu Baoguo, Zhu Chengqi, and even Chen Jun, this ‘ex-brother-in-law’, had appeared in Nan Nan’s dream. As Nan Nan’s husband and the father of their children, what kind of a character did he play in Nan Nan’s dream?

Qiao Nan laughed. She couldn’t help but bite Zhai Sheng’s lips. “Oh, what shall I do? It was rare for me to have a dream of a different life. However, why did I fall into your hands twice? Aside from me, at least you got married to Qiu Chenxi once. Look how pitiful I am. When I was in high

school, we fell in love. When we were in university and upon reaching the legal marriage age, you pulled me to register our marriage and get the certificate. I couldn't even have more experience of dating. After just one relationship, I got married and gave birth to the triplets quickly. Brother Zhai, don't you think that I lost out?"

Brother Zhai and Qiu Chenxi were married for a short three years while she and Chen Jun just got into a relationship. Brother Zhai and Qiu Chenxi really got married, and thus, it was his second marriage with Qiao Nan.

Both of her first marriages were with Brother Zhai. Brother Zhai's first marriage partner wasn't her. She had suffered a huge loss, alright?

Zhai Sheng pinched Qiao Nan's nose. After confirming his guess, he felt comfortable in his heart. Indeed, it was like this.

Chapter 2357: Breaking In (1)

"Didn't you say that he who strikes first prevails and he who strikes late fails? It has always been the style of soldiers to act quickly, mercilessly, and accurately after securing the target. I was your husband both in and out of your dream. You should have already been used to this."

Zhai Sheng was satisfied with his performance in the dream.

He only got married to Qiao Nan now in his forties. Sometimes, Zhai Sheng couldn't help but feel depressed and angry as he had led a happy life. Before he transferred to the capital, he was living in the same city and quad as Qiao Nan.

After spending only two days in Qingshui Town, he had developed different feelings for Qiao Nan. If he had discovered Qiao Nan's existence earlier in the quad, he would definitely have developed the same likeness for Qiao Nan then. He would stay by her side and get married to her once they were of legal age to do so.

As such, how would there be a Qiu Chenxi? More importantly, there would have been more time for him to spend together with Qiao Nan. They wouldn't have been ten or twenty years late.

Zhai Sheng always had such a regret. However, after knowing his existence in the dream, the thorn in Zhai Sheng's heart softened. It didn't feel as terrible as before.

“In the dream, how old did we live until? After the children grew up, what kind of daughters-in-law, son-in-law, and grandchildren were there?” They had triplets in the family. There should be a bunch of children in the house when they became grandparents.

Zhai Sheng’s math wasn’t bad. His memory was good as well. In Qiao Nan’s dream, not only did Shi Qing marry Zhu Baoguo and give birth to a son, but Zhai Hua also didn’t marry Wei De. Instead, she got together with Tian Dong and gave birth to a child... These children spent quite a long time in the Zhai family and were about the same age as the children from the Zhai family.

As such, there would be so many children from the triplets’ generation that the Zhai family could open a mini kindergarten class, let alone their grandchildren’s generation.

Qiao Nan’s smile fell and she placed a hand on Zhai Sheng’s shoulder. “This lifetime was really happy and complete. There weren’t any shortcomings. If I have to pinpoint something, it would be that I woke up before the triplets graduated from university and I was only forty years old. Because of the car accident, I was lying on the hospital bed.” That lifetime in her dream didn’t continue to the end.

Sometimes, Qiao Nan didn’t dare to think about the things in her dream. Firstly, she was afraid that she would confuse the happiness in her dream with reality. Secondly, if everything in the dream was true and she woke up in another world after falling asleep at the age of forty, would the self in her dream not wake up at all? Or would her life in reality be just a short period of time for her self in her dream?

Qiao Nan didn’t dare to think that the self in her dream had died when she was just forty years old. If that was the case, the her in her dreams had caused Zhai Sheng to lose his wife and happiness when he was forty-five years old. After returning to reality, she had married Zhai Sheng at approximately the same time so that the Zhai Sheng in real life could have a real marriage and a happy life.

As such, Zhai Sheng had married her both in and out of her dream. It wasn’t that Zhai Sheng had benefited. Instead, he was considered unlucky. Otherwise, why would Zhai Sheng not have life-long happiness regardless of if he was in her dream or not?

Zhai Sheng’s eyes became a little dark. “Don’t think too much. A dream is just a dream. Your dream is more unique in that it’s close to reality. Also, no matter in or out of your dream, I could marry you as my wife. No matter what, I’m not on the losing end. Instead, I became lucky.”

Happy for the rest of his lifetime?

As he listened, although the time now was shorter, at least he had met Nan Nan both in and out of the dream and had gained happiness. If there wasn't Nan Nan, he would have met all the 'other women'. How would he be able to be happy for the rest of his lifetime?

"Brother Zhai..." Qiao Nan sniffed. She felt bad that she made the Zhai Sheng in her dream happy for only twenty years. Although the triplets went to university, they hadn't graduated. In her eyes, the triplets were still children who hadn't grown up. If she was really 'dead', her triplets would become motherless children. What should she do if they didn't find good partners when they grew up or if San Bao was bullied? Without her by Brother Zhai's side, would he become the same as in the past where he didn't like to talk and interact with people and not have a private life aside from the army?

These possibilities broke Qiao Nan's heart so much that she couldn't breathe.

Qiao Nan never told everything in her dream to Zhai Sheng as she herself couldn't face these 'possibilities'. She wanted to escape everything in her dream more. She couldn't accept that the four family members she deeply loved became unhappy because of her.

Zhai Sheng hugged Qiao Nan and flipped over such that he was on top of her again. "You women always like to think too much. A dream is just a dream. If you turn reality into a mess because of your struggles in the dream, the triplets would definitely laugh at you if they find out about this. Nan Nan, I've given you too much time and freedom. Look how bored you are now. It's getting late. Let's 'sleep' soon."

At the mention of 'sleep', Qiao Nan's sadness disappeared almost immediately. It wasn't that it disappeared quickly. It was simply because in the face of Zhai Sheng, an old man in his forties who had more vigor than a young man with desire, how would Qiao Nan be his match and still have the energy to feel sad about her suspicions and doubts in her dream?

When Qiao Nan, who was holding her severely aching waist, realized the next morning that she was late for class, she expressed that she was no longer going to talk to Zhai Sheng about her 'dream'.

Even if Zhai Sheng's performance previously was considered formidable, it was obvious that he seemed to have suffered some agitation yesterday night. He even treated her like an inflatable doll...

Miao Jing secretly laughed when she saw Qiao Nan coming down from upstairs late. The son who got married the latest was so happy after marriage now. Why would she, as a mother, be upset? This marriage came late, but at least it was sweet. “You’re hungry, right? Come over and eat quickly. I’ll take care of the triplets with your father. Are you still going to school today?”

Qiao Nan paused in her action of eating porridge and resisted the urge to blush. “I’m not going. Actually, I think I’m good. It’s already June, so the school is just doing revisions now. It’s the same if I revise at home. It’ll be fine if I just take the examination then.”

It was already so late. As a good student who never skipped classes or was never late, Qiao Nan couldn’t afford to lose that image of hers.

“Ah!” San Bao was so happy when she saw her mother. She patted her hands and wanted her to carry her.

Chapter 2358: Breaking In (2)

When San Bao saw her mom eating, she couldn’t stop herself from salivating. “Ahhh!”

Qiao Nan saw right through her daughter. When she lifted San Bao with her arms, Qiao Nan frowned. “San Bao, it seems like you are gaining weight again. At this rate, Mom won’t be able to carry you anymore.”

San Bao had no idea what Qiao Nan was thinking. Her sparkling eyes were fixed on the bowl. Qiao Nan scooped up a spoonful of porridge and sent it to San Bao’s mouth. She was old enough to eat it.

San Bao clicked her tongue as she chewed on the porridge. It was soft and sweet, and San Bao liked the taste. She opened her mouth again, just like a chick waiting to be fed. Qiao Nan gave her about three spoonfuls, then brought her to the toys room to play Da Bao and Er Bao. “The two of you have to take care of San Bao. If I find any one of you bullying each other, you are going to be punished. Is that understood?”

There was no need for Qiao Nan to warn them. Da Bao and Er Bao would always give in to San Bao. As Qiao Nan spoke, Da Bao had already brought San Bao her favorite toy and left it in her arms. San Bao giggled as she tried to put the toy into her mouth. “San Bao, no biting.”

San Bao stopped the chewing for a while but continued after Qiao Nan got back to her breakfast. She knew that grandma and grandpa wouldn’t stop her from doing it.

Miao Jing ran her hands through San Bao's hair. "Bad girl, it seems like you would only listen to your mother's scolding. Am I too kind to you?" The three children were never so obedient under Old Zhai and Miao Jing's care.

Er Bao and San Bao gave Miao Jing their brightest smiles, and Da Bao gave a toy to Miao Jing. It was like the children were trying to please their grandma to soothe her anger.

Miao Jing wasn't really angry, to begin with, and the kids' action blew her last bit of displeasure away. She looked at the children and gave each of them a kiss on the cheek. True enough, she had the prettiest and the most adorable grandchildren in the world.

Qiao Nan's life was getting better day by day, but Qiao Zijin was running downhill these days. It was no wonder that Qiao Zijin thought of Qiao Nan as her nemesis.

Qiao Zijin clearly remembered the days that Qiao Nan suffered under Ding Jiayi's oppression. The worse Qiao Nan's life was, the better Qiao Zijin lived. Now, however, Qiao Nan had married Zhai Sheng and inherited a huge fortune from the Zhu family. It was no doubt that she was a winner in life. Looking back at her own life, it seemed like divorce, sickness, and poverty were all that she had. What angered her most was that Ding Jiayi was no longer on her side.

She had moved back to Ping Cheng for a month, and Ding Jiayi had yet to contact her. On the day she arrived in Ping Cheng, Ding Jiayi even locked her outside the door. Qiao Zijin felt her rage rising.

If it weren't a rented house, Qiao Zijin would have smashed everything in sight.

Qiao Zijin had always been the one ignoring Ding Jiayi, and her mother used to do whatever she wanted. She thought of Ding Jiayi as an obedient dog that would run over with her tails swinging whenever she called. It's been a month since Ding Jiayi stopped listening to her, and Qiao Zijin thought that she couldn't let her mother get away with such an attitude.

"Are you sure that this is your house?" The locksmith asked again before working on the lock.

Qiao Zijin rolled her eyes. "Sir, this is Ping Cheng Residence. Would the guard let me in if I didn't live here? This is where I grew up, and I just happened to lose my key. No one is coming home

anytime soon; Otherwise, I wouldn't be spending money on you. Do you really think I want to pay for a new lock?"

The locksmith would always ask his clients the same question. He couldn't find fault in her words, but he didn't understand why she had such a strong reaction. "Fine, I'll start." It wouldn't hurt to double-check.

"Yes, please."

Qiao Zijin folded her arms as she watched the locksmith work. Qiao Zijin couldn't enter the house, but she did come by once in a while. Ding Jiayi hadn't responded to her for seven days straight, so Qiao Zijin had an idea how mad her mother was.

Qiao Zijin didn't care about what Ding Jiayi thought. She was merely worried about her expenses if she had to live outside.

Since her mother could change the lock, she figured that she could do the same.

Qiao Zijin knew that Ding Jiayi was out for groceries, and she wouldn't return any time soon. Therefore, she called for the locksmith right away.

It didn't take long for the skilled locksmith to do his job. After setting up a new lock, he took two hundred yuan and left.

With the keys in her hand, Qiao Zijin dragged her luggage into the courtyard. Although the lock had changed, she was happy to see that her room still looked the same. The only thing that put a frown on her face was the moldy stink coming from her sheets. It seemed like they hadn't been washed in a long time.

Qiao Zijin's room was the second biggest in the house, and everything in it belonged to her. She scanned around the room and found a few layers of cotton sheets lying around.

Yes, cotton.

It was June, and warm cotton sheets were obviously no use in this heaty weather.

Chapter 2359: Breaking In (3)

Ding Jiayi used to keep these sheets in Qiao Nan's small room during summer. Qiao Zijin simply couldn't accept the fact that her room had become the storeroom. The stacked sheets made her feel hot just by looking at them.

Qiao Zijin scoffed as she realized that her mother was treating her like how she treated Qiao Nan in the past. What happened to Qiao Zijin being the favorite child? Bullsh*t!

"Eh?" Ding Jiayi got back from shopping, only to find that the lock had changed. Although she could still fit the key, it wouldn't open.

Before Ding Jiayi figured out what was going on, the door was opened from within. Qiao Zijin was all smiles. "Mom, it must be tiresome buying groceries by yourself. I've poured you a cup of tea, so come in and have some rest."

Ding Jiayi was taken aback. A brief smile appeared on her cheeks before her expression went sullen. "Why are you here? Didn't you find yourself a place to stay?" Since the day that Qiao Zijin left, Ding Jiayi had had a month of peace.

On the first few days, Ding Jiayi didn't know if she was relieved or heartbroken. However, it only took two weeks for her to get used to the days without Qiao Dongliang and Qiao Zijin by her side.

Qiao Zijin's sudden appearance had made her rather uncomfortable. "How did you get in here?"

"How else?" Qiao Zijin sounded gentler than usual, but the look in her eyes was still unscrupulous. "Mom, I've heard about the family's situation. I got into the house the same way you did. It was a smart method, so I learned it from you."

Tsk, it seemed like her mother wasn't the only one enraged. Her father moved out without a word as well. She wasn't sure about the situation before, but she was certain that her father had not shown up a single time in the past month.

Qiao Dongliang was determined to stay away from Ding Jiayi, and that was what caused her to not contact Qiao Zijin for so long. Although Ding Jiayi always spoke highly of herself, Qiao Zijin knew that her mother was nervous about Qiao Dongliang leaving.

Qiao Zijin knew that Qiao Dongliang was the reason that Ding Jiayi held a firm stand against her for the past month.

Qiao Zijin hadn't forgotten about what she had done in the capital city, so she was ready that Ding Jiayi would be mad at her for a while when she got back to Ping Cheng. That's why Qiao Zijin had nothing to say when she changed the lock.

"You..." Ding Jiayi was furious. "This is my house. Get out!" Qiao Zijin's actions made Qiao Nan cut ties with her, and Qiao Dongliang had moved out of the house. She didn't even know where Qiao Dongliang had been living. The sole reason that she ended up like this was thanks to Qiao Zijin.

If someone asked Ding Jiayi who she hated the most, her answer had changed from Qiao Nan to Qiao Zijin. Sure, there was a brief moment of happiness when she met her daughter again, but it was immediately washed away by her wrongdoings.

"Mom, what do you mean?" Qiao Zijin went through so much trouble to get back into the house, and there was no way she would see herself out that easily. Most importantly, she didn't want to spend money renting a place. "Mom, come on in. Let's put the groceries down and have a talk after."

Qiao Zijin dragged Ding Jiayi into the room and closed the door behind her. "Mom, I see that you bought fish. How about braised fish for dinner? I'd love that. Mom, this is your home, and it's also mine. This is the place that I grew up in. Where else would I be? It's hard to earn a living nowadays, and everything is becoming more expensive. It's better if we spend less, right?"

Of course, if Ding Jiayi really didn't want to see her, she could provide her a free place to stay. That was the only way she would consider moving out.

Ding Jiayi could feel her hands trembling in rage. "Do you know how old you are? Do you know how old your dad and I are? You are already over forty, and we don't need you to look after us. All you have to do is to take care of yourself. No one your age would still be staying with his or her parents! Be it getting married or renting a place, I don't care. Just take care of yourself."

That was what Ding Jiayi was like.

When she favored Qiao Zijin, she wanted to give her everything good. Now that Qiao Zijin was no longer close to her, she wouldn't allow her to live in her house or spend her money.

This was how she treated Qiao Nan in the past, and she's doing the same thing to Qiao Zijin.

Unfortunately, Qiao Zijin was not as filial and easygoing as Qiao Nan. If she did what Ding Jiayi asked for, she wouldn't be Qiao Zijin.

Qiao Zijin giggled. "Quit joking around, Mom. If I'm married, I would be living with my in-laws. The problem is that I have divorced, so I don't see anything wrong with living with you. I have always taken care of myself, and have you forgotten about the money that I sent you and Dad? I've paid for my living, food, and other expenses. Mom, are you eating off my allowance as well?"

Qiao Zijin wasn't shameless enough to talk about the house.

The Qiao's residence was sold for Qiao Zijin's college fees, and it took Qiao Nan years of salary to buy it back.

"Your money? How much have you earned from your 'job'?"

Chapter 2360: Fighting It Out (1)

Ding Jiayi knew better than anyone else how much money Qiao Zijin had in her pocket. She also knew that Qiao Zijin got every cent from Qiao Nan. Could the cash even be considered as hers?

What's wrong with spending her money?

As Qiao Nan's mother, Ding Jiayi thought to herself that the money belonged to her anyway. Qiao Zijin definitely had a large sum of cash left after selling the house, so she had no right to be settling accounts with her.

The elders always said that money was worth more than a filial son. Ding Jiayi knew better than anyone that she couldn't leave her life in the hands of a daughter like Qiao Zijin. "Do you think I'm spending your money? How can you be shameless enough to say that? Fine! Get lost! I won't spend a single cent of yours ever again! Get out!"

Ding Jiayi used to be happy when Qiao Zijin visited, but all she felt at that moment was sheer hatred.

“Hehe...” Qiao Zijin smirked. She didn’t say a word, but her purpose was obvious. She would never leave unless there was a free place to stay.

Ding Jiayi’s yelling didn’t bother her at all. Qiao Zijin was used to the way that Ding Jiayi yelled at Qiao Nan, so she had enough experience to brush that aside. “Mom, I’m tired. Remember to call me when lunch is ready.”

“No, you...” Ding Jiayi wanted Qiao Zijin to leave, but Qiao Zijin wouldn’t listen to a word she said. There was nothing that Ding Jiayi could do against her tenacity. The only reason that Ding Jiayi could get on top of Qiao Nan in the past was thanks to her obedience. Now that both her daughters were out of her control, Ding Jiayi’s words worthed nothing more than the passing wind.

At this moment, Ding Jiayi finally understood that she only had value in the family when her daughters saw her as a mother. When the girls neglected her presence, she felt the anguish of being all alone.

Ding Jiayi couldn’t accept Qiao Nan’s attitude toward her, but it was understandable at least. Ding Jiayi didn’t forget about the things that she had done to her. However, why did Qiao Zijin have the right to do this to her? She might have been mean to everyone else in the family, but she had done nothing sorry to Qiao Zijin.

Ding Jiayi was on the verge of breaking down, but Qiao Zijin had already shuffled back to her room. Before Ding Jiayi got home, Qiao Zijin had cleaned up her room to its original state. After seeing the skyscrapers, she realized that she was the most comfortable in her own home.

Since Qiao Zijin held such a firm stand, Ding Jiayi couldn’t change anything by crying.

What to do?

What else!

They had to carry on with their lives.

Ding Jiayi tidied herself up and started cooking up lunch. No matter how much she hated Qiao Zijin, she had to feed herself. There was nothing else that she could do.

“Mom, is lunch ready?” Smelling the scent of the served dishes, Qiao Zijin walked out of her room. “Mom, after eating out so much, I realized that you make the best food. I’ll be having it in my room since my computer is still on. Thanks, Mom.”

Then, she snatched the plates from Ding Jiayi’s hands and walked back into her room. Ding Jiayi did not even have the chance to say a thing before Qiao Zijin shut the door in her face.

Last time, Ding Jiayi couldn’t stop Qiao Zijin from taking her money and identifications. Today was just the same as she watched Qiao Zijin snatch the dishes from her hands.

Ding Jiayi had been the only person in the Qiao’s residence, and she had never considered the probabilities of Qiao Zijin’s return. Therefore, she had only bought enough groceries to cook up a meal for herself. This method managed to shove Qiao Zijin out last time.

Ding Jiayi was pulling the same trick without much thinking. If her living here couldn’t be stopped, she should at least pay for her own food.

However, Qiao Zijin wouldn’t fall for the same trick twice. She was younger and stronger, so it wasn’t hard for her to get on top of an old woman.

Qiao Zijin thought to herself that she was just trying to fill her stomach, and there were surely enough ingredients to make another meal. She hoped that her mother could learn her lesson after this.

All she had to do was to cook up a meal for two, and they would be able to live peacefully together like any mother and daughter. Qiao Zijin thought that she’s pretty easygoing since her request was simple.

Qiao Zijin asked for free food and accommodation, and nothing would change her mind.

Instead of making a fortune, Qiao Zijin lost some money when she messed around in the capital. These days, she grew more worried looking at the balance in her bank account.

She knew that she wasn't in a position to be picky, and her mother's cooking tasted fine. Qiao Zijin figured that she had to hold back her attitude and would eat whatever her mother made.

Qiao Zijin still acted like a princess. After finishing her meal, she dumped the dirty plates into the sink and went right back into her room.