

## **RTAMM 281**

### Chapter 281: Thanks to You

Teacher Liu took the key that was left by Teacher Feng. He then followed the home address left by Qiao Nan and went to her house.

Luckily, Qiao Dongliang listened to Qiao Nan. He worked part-time and was at home today. Otherwise, Teacher Liu would have made a futile trip.

“Teacher Liu, what brings you here?” Qiao Dongliang was surprised when he saw Teacher Liu. “Is this a home visit?” He remembered they just had the parent-teacher conference not too long ago. Was it not too soon for a home visit? “Did something happen to Nan Nan at school?”

“No, she’s fine. Rest assured that it’s not what you think. However, it’s true that I am here regarding Qiao Nan. I am here today to discuss something with you. Is your wife around?” Teacher Liu asked cautiously, seeing that the mistress of the house did not seem to be around.

A woman who would do such terrible things to her own daughter... He could not imagine what she would do to an outsider like him.

“She... Qiao Nan’s mom has gone to work, and she does not stay here as it is not convenient for her. She stays at where we used to live in.” Qiao Dongliang found it awkward to explain their living arrangements.

“I see.” Teacher Liu breathed a sigh of relief and smiled. “That’s good.”

“That’s good?”

“Qiao Nan’s Dad, this is what happened. When you came to our school for the parent-teacher conference, Qiao Nan’s mom... Recently, there have been many rumors about Qiao Nan circulating in the school. High school students face a lot of pressure, and our school does not want them to bear pressure from public opinion. Qiao Nan may be smart and intelligent, but she is only a child. As her elder, we all care for the juniors. In the end, the principal came up with a solution. We understand that it cost you some money to rent this place. Our school will provide you free lodging. Here is the key. The people from our school have cleaned the small cottage. Both of you can move into the

cottage right away. In this way, those rumors will die down by itself. After all, our school is not in the position to clarify the rumors or make further explanations.”

“I feel embarrassed to accept the house.” Qiao Dongliang’s face was red. He wanted to reject the keys. He was able-bodied and could support his daughter and himself.

But Qiao Dongliang knew that he had to accept their kind gestures. He could not refuse just because of his self-esteem. Otherwise, Qiao Nan would remain the center of gossip and be ruined by those rumors.

They were the root of the problems. If not for Ding Jiayi sneaking to the school behind his back and spouting nonsense, there would not have been any trouble at all.

“There’s nothing to be embarrassed about. The principal hopes that Qiao Nan can put her full attention on her studies and not be distracted by other meaningless stuff. Qiao Nan is very outstanding. We believe that she will do us proud in three years’ time. Qiao Nan’s dad, you don’t have to feel burdened by our gestures. If you need any help, feel free to tell us. We have someone waiting outside to help you move your belongings.”

“Alright!” Qiao Dongliang placed his hands on his knees as support and stood up.

Initially, he moved to this place for Nan Nan’s sake. As long as it was for the interests of Nan Nan, he did not mind having to move house for the second time.

“Okay, let us know whatever that you need help with.” It was rare that Qiao Nan’s father would agree to their suggestion so readily. Teacher Liu also hoped to resolve this matter as soon as possible.

Since Qiao Dongliang had the experience with moving house, it was a piece of cake to him this time around, and he packed his things in a jiffy. “These are all that I have. I have to trouble you to help me to move them to the new place.”

Qiao Dongliang asked Teacher Liu and the helpers to help bring the belonging to the new place first while he had a talk with the landlord.

He had paid the first three-month rent in advance.

Qiao Dongliang and Qiao Nan had stayed in the house for more than two months. The period of their stay had yet to reach three months.

But in order to be clean-cut, Qiao Dongliang did not ask the landlord to return half the monthly rent to them. After returning the keys, he went directly to the 'new house', limping his way there.

"I am very sorry to have caused you so much trouble." Qiao Dongliang blushed in embarrassment. He did not know what else he could say.

He was shamed thoroughly because of his wife, Ding Jiayi. The Qiao ancestors were shamed as well.

"Don't worry about it. You can rest assured that I will tell Qiao Nan that you have moved." Teacher Liu was relieved that he had finally resolved this matter.

"Thank you, Teacher Liu. I have caused you a lot of trouble. By the way, when you go back to school, could you let Qiao Nan know that I have some business to take care of and will have to leave home for two days? I will be back before she returns. Please tell her not to think too much about it."

"I see. Sure, I will pass the message to Qiao Nan. Then, we will go off now."

"Thank you for your hard work." Qiao Dongliang walked Teacher Liu to the door.

Qiao Dongliang turned grim when he was left alone in the cottage. The small cottage was much better than the one he rented previously. It was much larger and there was a garden with beautiful scenery.

In addition, Teacher Liu and the helpers had helped with the cleaning and the moving of their belongings. Qiao Dongliang did not need to do any cleaning and the new house was sparkling clean. It looked much better than the Qiao's house in the quad.

Qiao Dongliang could not help but feel angry at his current situation. If he could, he would thrash it out with Ding Jiayi right away. He wanted to know whether Nan Nan was her biological daughter. Why would she hate Nan Nan to the core? Why was she so bent on destroying Nan Nan?!

Had it not for Teacher Liu, he would have been kept in the dark, having the false impression that Ding Jiayi had learned from her mistakes and had really changed for the better.

Ding Jiayi was hopeless!

He should not have given Ding Jiayi a chance.

It was time for him to do something. He could not spare Ding Jiayi any longer. Otherwise, Ding Jiayi would only be more and more arrogant and unreasonable!

After making up his mind, Qiao Dongliang closed the door to the small courtyard silently and returned to the house.

Qiao Dongliang sat on the bed and finally had the time to sort out his thoughts.

Ding Jiayi went to the school and spouted nonsense about Nan Nan. But how did the teachers find out about the truth that Nan Nan was maligned and come up with a solution to the problem? As her father, he was the last person to know what happened to Nan Nan at school.

“Yes, you can rest assured that the matter has been resolved. Everything has come to an end. Well... The principal will not allow this incident to have any negative impact on Qiao Nan. Qiao Nan is a very outstanding student. It is an honor for our school to have her with us. We will do our best to protect students like Qiao Nan and will not let anything happen to her. Well, that’s right. We have to thank you for helping out.”

Chapter 282: Who Rendered Assistance Secretly

“If not for the information that you sent to me in the nick of time, even if I wanted to help Qiao Nan, the principal might not agree with me. Now that the matter is resolved, Qiao Nan has you to thank for.”

After successfully completing the task that the principal had assigned to him, the first thing Teacher Liu did when he returned to school and sat down to catch a breath was to call the person who sent him the information.

“What! You want to keep this from Qiao Nan? Oh, you are worried that Qiao Nan will be distracted. It will not affect her studies... Oh, alright, I will not say anything. Yes, it’s most important that she focuses on her studies. Okay, I know what to do. Anyway, I have to thank you on behalf of Qiao Nan. As her form teacher, it’s my responsibility to help my student. Alright, goodbye.”

After putting down the phone, Teacher Liu patted his chest for a few times and breathed a sigh of relief.

He was very cautious when he was on the phone, lest he made a mistake or said something wrong and angered the person on the other side of the phone. This was more stressful than talking to the principal.

But Teacher Liu could not understand why that person would contact him all of a sudden and send him the information in such an opportune time. The information had been of great help to him.

Without the information, even if he believed Qiao Nan was innocent, he was not confident that he could prevent Qiao Nan from being expelled.

If Qiao Nan was no longer his student, it would definitely be a great regret in his teaching career.

Nevertheless, everything had turned out well.

Most importantly, not only did he manage to prevent Qiao Nan from being expelled, his influential relative who never kept in touch actually contacted him because of this incident.

If Qiao Nan ended up as the college entrance examination top scholar in the province, by that time, with the help of his relative, her future would be very promising. With that thought in mind, Teacher Liu was bursting with enthusiasm!

“Regiment commander?” Zhou Jun knocked on the door and walked into Zhai Sheng’s office. “This is the topographic map for the mission. Regiment commander, who was on the phone?” It did not seem to be related to military affairs.

“It’s just a relative in the family.” Zhai Sheng took the topographic map and studied it carefully. “Have you looked at this topographic map?”

“I have looked through it. It is a difficult fight.” Zhou Jun turned serious at the mention of work. He had forgotten about the call just now. “Regiment commander, this military exercise is very unfavorable to us. Do you think someone wanted to do us in, and thus performed this cheap trick?”

“Even so, are you not confident of winning?” Zhai Sheng began to outline the mission plan. “In the face of absolute strength and ability, all cheap tricks will be rendered useless like paper tigers. As long as we thoroughly analyze the terrain and study the method of attack, there is no such thing as a losing battle!”

“Yes, Regiment Commander Zhai!” Zhou Jun was full of respect toward Zhai Sheng. He looked at Zhai Sheng and gave him a salute.

Zhai Sheng was younger than Zhou Jun by more than two years, but Zhou Jun fully respected Zhai Sheng, who was much younger than himself. He genuinely treated him as his superior.

After he was convinced that Qiao Nan’s matter had been settled and she would no longer be affected by it, Zhai Sheng devoted all his attention to the military exercise. He dared not slacken or be off his guards.

On the other hand, Qiao Nan, who did not know that Zhai Sheng had done so many things for her, heard from Teacher Liu that she had moved again. “What? My dad moved again?”

“That’s right. The new place is about five minutes away from where you used to stay.” Teacher Liu handed the new address to Qiao Nan. “The school has arranged this place for the both of you. Qiao Nan, you must study harder in the future. By the way, your dad wanted me to tell you that he has some business to attend to and will be away for a few days, but he will definitely be back before Friday.”

“Arranged by the school?” That was to say that they did not have to pay the rent for the new house? Why would the school be so good to them?

“Yes. Alright, the school has made arrangements for you. You don’t have to worry anymore. Qiao Nan, now you should know that the school places a lot of importance on you. You must not let the teachers and the school down.”

Qiao Nan smiled. "Teacher Liu, I will be under a lot of pressure. But no matter what, it is my duty as a student to study well. I will not slacken. I have to thank the school and Teacher Liu for making such arrangements for me."

Qiao Nan did not know why the school was so good to her and had made such arrangements, but in comparison to Ding Jiayi, Qiao Nan chose to believe in the school.

"Alright, you can go back now." After passing another set of keys to Qiao Nan, Teacher Liu asked Qiao Nan to go back to the classroom.

"Nan Nan, how was it? What did Teacher Liu want with you?" Zheng Lingling and the rest of them were very concerned about Qiao Nan. As soon as Qiao Nan came back, the five girls gathered around her.

"Don't worry. Teacher Liu wanted to tell me that all the misunderstandings have been cleared up. Everything is fine now." It was not convenient for Qiao Nan to spell out everything. Hence, she could only assure them that everything was fine now.

"Is everything okay now?" Fang Fang asked in disbelief. After all, things had gone out of control. Even if Zhu Baoguo intended to curb the rumors, there was no way that the problem could be solved so easily!

"It's true that I am fine now. Don't worry. Very soon, you will know that I'm really okay." The school arranged a free house in the school district for her and her father so that people would not believe in the rumors that she was selfish and leeches on her family.

Since the school had made up their mind to help Qiao Nan, they would not keep quiet after making the arrangements. They would make an announcement sooner or later.

In the end, things had turned out well. Initially, Qiao Nan was worried about how the school would handle the matter. It was definitely inappropriate to let others know of the Qiao family's private affairs. Besides, they might not believe it. On the other hand, it would not be suitable to keep quiet and do nothing about it. At school, they might be able to contain the damage done to her reputation, but they could not control how outsiders think of the school and of her.

In this way, all the problems would be settled.

“That’s good.” Seeing that Qiao Nan did not seem to be lying to them, He Yun and rest of them were relieved that the problem was settled and returned to their seats.

Zhu Baoguo pestered Qiao Nan. “Are you sure everything is really okay? Don’t lie to me. How was it resolved?”

Zhu Baoguo was not as easily dismissed as the rest. He would not believe Qiao Nan unless she told him everything.

“What do you think this is?” Qiao Nan showed Zhu Baoguo the key to the new house. “This is given by the school. That was how the problem was solved.”

“Why is the school being so generous to you? Is it for real?” Zhu Baoguo asked in disbelief.

“Of course it’s real.”

Zhu Baoguo slightly relaxed. “If it’s really true, then you have made the right decision to choose Ping Cheng High School instead of the top-notch The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China.”

#### Chapter 283: Had a Terrible Time

“Alright, don’t worry about me. You should worry about your own results.” Qiao Nan kept the key. “You must not tell anyone of this.”

“I am not a fool.” Zhu Baoguo crossed one leg over the other. Xiao Qiao did not mention about the house to the girls from the dormitory. It seemed like she was not as close to them as she was to him. At least, Xiao Qiao had a conscience and knew who had her best interests at heart.

Zhu Baoguo was in a particularly good mood that Qiao Nan let him in on her secret. Not only did he cross his legs but also hum a tune, causing the students in class one to be bewildered by his good mood.

Zhu Baoguo was always very protective of Qiao Nan. He took care of her as if she was his child.

Now that Qiao Nan ran into such a big trouble, why would Zhu Baoguo be so happy about it?

Zhao Yu knew Zhu Baoguo well. She knew something must be going on. Zhao Yu gritted her teeth, wrote a note, and threw it to Xu Tingting. It said, 'Did you receive any news? Is Qiao Nan's matter resolved?'

After Xu Tingting read it, she wrote a note in reply. 'No, this is a serious matter. I don't believe Qiao Nan has the ability to resolve it within a few days. The die is cast and the rumors have been spread. We must not let Qiao Nan get away from it.'

Ever since Ding Jiayi's incident, the two people who were at loggerheads decided to come to a truce and deal with Qiao Nan together.

Zhao Yu felt much at ease after receiving Xu Tingting's reply. She was glad that she was not alone in the fight against Qiao Nan.

After thinking about it, Zhao Yu drew on the note in which the conversation with Xu Tingting was written, tore it, and threw it into the trash bin.

Zhu Baoguo, who witnessed the scene, sneered. It seemed that both of them did not heed his words. They had better not create any troubles for Xiao Qiao. Otherwise, he would not be lenient toward them!

In the evening time, the student who was on duty was on the way to empty the trash bin into the big garbage bin when he noticed that Zhu Baoguo and a few of the second and third-year students were waiting beside the big garbage bin. He stood on the spot as if he was a rabbit who saw a tiger. He dared not take another step forward.

"What's wrong? Come forward!" A tall and tanned second-year student chewed on chewing gum and said in anger, "Are you going to keep us waiting? Do you know we have been stung by mosquitoes as you are way too slow?"

The student's eyes turned red and he almost burst out in tears. "I... I did not mean it. I am sorry."

Although the student on duty had no idea what he had done to antagonize the boys, he apologized right away.

“It’s good that you know. Hurry up, empty the trash bin onto the ground right now.” The second-year student said.

“Onto the ground?” The student looked at the big garbage bin not too far away and hesitated.

“Do you have any problems with it?”

“No, no!” The student on duty dumped all the rubbish onto the ground. The second-year student’s face turned black in an instant. “Are you a fool? You should not stand but squat down. Anyway, I don’t want to waste my time on a fool like you. Search for the shredded papers and take them out.”

“Me?” The student on duty pointed at himself in disbelief.

“Of course! Are you telling me to do it instead?” The second-year student grew more and more impatient. “Are you doing it or not?!”

“I will do it right now!” The student on duty had no choice but to go through the rubbish in search of the shredded papers.

“Don’t try to act dumb and piece the pieces together. Instead of acting on our orders, use your brain to think.”

“Oh.” The student on duty did not dare to disobey his orders. He did whatever he was told to do.

Luckily, Zhao Yu did not tear the papers into very small pieces. It only took a while to piece all the shredded papers together.

The student on duty was dumbfounded when he read the contents on the paper. It seemed like Zhao Yu and Xu Tingting had a part to play in the recent rumors about Qiao Nan!

Given the relationship between Qiao Nan and Zhu Baoguo, were Zhao Yu and Xu Tingting courting death?

“These two women!” Zhu Baoguo’s face turned dark. Zhao Yu and Xu Tingting clearly knew that he would not let anyone harm Xiao Qiao, yet they dared to plot against Xiao Qiao. It seemed he must show them what he was capable of!

“Big brother, what do we do about this?” The second and third-year students could not wait to join in on the fun. They had not expected that the young girls would be so scheming.

Initially, they were unwilling to follow Zhu Baoguo’s orders to look through the trash bin for the note that the girls had thrown away. They felt that they should not bother themselves about the petty quarrels between the girls. After all, the girls were just having a small argument. It would not be anything more than that.

But now they realized that they were wrong. Girls could be very ruthless when they decided to plot against someone.

“Alright, let’s settle it this Friday.” Zhu Baoguo nodded. This time, he would not let Zhao Yu and Xu Tingting off again.

“After you go back to the class, you should know what can be said and what cannot be said, right?” A third-year student patted the shoulder of the student on duty.

The student on duty nodded immediately. “I only came here to empty the trash bin. Nothing happened at all.” Zhao Yu and Xu Tingting did themselves in. It had nothing to do with him. He did not want to be any part of this.

“It’s good that you know your place.” The third-year student smiled. “Okay, clear the rubbish and throw it over there, then you can go. Big Brother, let’s go?”

“Yes.”

The student on duty had to clear the rubbish by himself. He frowned to himself. If he had known, he would have chosen a spot that was nearer to the rubbish garbage to empty the rubbish. In that case, it would have saved him the trouble to bring the rubbish over to the garbage bin.

“Feng Zhaoxiang, what are you trying to say? Why do you give me strange looks today? Have I offended you?” Xu Tingting was used to the besotted looks the boys cast her. She was not used to the look of dislike in their eyes.

Feng Zhaoxiang, who was the student on duty that evening, smiled. “Nothing. You didn’t offend me and I didn’t provoke you. Don’t block my way. There is a physical education class tomorrow. I have to get the keys from the teacher to prepare the equipment in advance so as not to be in a flurry tomorrow,” Feng Zhaoxiang, the sports representative, said in an indifferent tone.

When Xu Tingting had her back to him and they were about two to three meters away from each other, Feng Zhaoxiang stopped and turned to look at her. A woman who liked to cook up trouble was very unlikable.

Zhu Baoguo would deal with Xu Tingting eventually!

After having dinner, Qiao Nan went to the evening self-study class. On the other hand, Ding Jiayi had a terrible time.

Chapter 284: Serve You Right That Your Husband Left You

“That’s impossible. I don’t believe you. You must have hidden my husband away. Hand him over now. Otherwise, I will not leave. I will sit here at your doorstep. I will report to the police as well. Where did you hide my husband? Don’t think that because he is by himself and unwell, hence you can bully him. Believe it or not, I will make sure you go to jail!”

As usual, Ding Jiayi went to the house that Qiao Dongliang rented to prepare his dinner after getting off work. She would usually have her dinner before going back.

Ding Jiayi was willing to shuffle between the rented place and the Qiao’s house because she wanted to please Qiao Dongliang so that he would forgive her. More importantly, Ding Jiayi could save some money. She could have her lunch at the factory and her dinner at Qiao Dongliang’s place.

In this way, Ding Jiayi could save a lot on her meals every month as she only had to pay for her own breakfast in the morning.

After a day of hard work, Ding Jiayi was tired and hungry. She longed to go back 'home' for a hearty meal.

But Ding Jiayi was denied entrance when she reached the rented place.

The door was closed tightly and locked. No matter how Ding Jiayi pushed at the door, it would not open. She tried calling for Qiao Dongliang, but there was no response.

The neighbors who happened to pass by could not stand the noise and told Ding Jiayi that some people came here during the day. They looked as if they were helping Qiao Dongliang move his belongings. They deduced that Qiao Dongliang went somewhere else to stay.

Ding Jiayi could not believe what she heard.

It was not easy to rent a house in the school district. Old Qiao had spent so much effort and money on Qiao Nan, that wretched girl. He could not possibly have moved house again. Besides, there was nowhere he could move to.

She did not display any inappropriate behavior recently. She did not do anything to that wretched girl in front of Old Qiao. Why would he move house without any apparent reason and keep her in the dark? Why did he not leave any message to let her know where he moved to?

"What's wrong with you? I have told you that your husband has left and had returned the place to us. He is your husband, not our family. I have no idea where he moved to. If you insist on creating a fuss, I will have to call the police! It's very late now. It's already eight o'clock! We still have to sleep, so please leave now." The landlady was angry beyond words. She did not know that the wife would be so unreasonable.

She made it sound as if they had done something to Qiao Dongliang for the money! She must be out of her mind.

"No, I won't go. I won't leave! If you don't return my husband to me, I won't leave! Unless you give me the address to the place where my husband moved to, I will not leave." Ding Jiayi banged at the door of the landlady's house. She refused to leave.

If she left, how was she able to find out the whereabouts of her husband and reconcile with him?

“Why are you so unreasonable?” The landlady’s face turned red in anger. She wished to give Ding Jiayi a blow to her head so that the latter could come to her senses, but that would be going against the law. “Had I known that your family is so troublesome, I would not have rented the house at all!”

“Then, why did you rent it to my husband?” Ding Jiayi was angry at the landlady. If Old Qiao did not find a place to rent, he would not move out with that wretched girl and be separated from her.

“...” The landlady did not expect Ding Jiayi to push the blame to her. She was completely speechless. “There’s no way that I can talk sense to people like you. Your husband seems to be well-mannered and polite. You are his wife, yet he did not tell you that he has moved. Isn’t it obvious that the problem lies with you? With a wife like you, it’s no wonder your husband treats you in such a way and refuses to let you know his whereabouts.”

Initially, the landlady was furious that her tenant, Qiao Dongliang, had caused such big trouble for her. But right now, she felt sympathetic toward Qiao Dongliang.

He must have been so unlucky to have married such a wife. No wonder he wanted to hide from his wife.

“What did you say?” Ding Jiayi was infuriated by the landlady’s words. She screamed and pounced onto the landlady like a tigress, itching to get her hands on her face.

“Go somewhere else to throw your tantrums!” At first, the husband of the landlady had no wish to intervene in the women’s quarrel, lest Ding Jiayi said that he bullied woman.

However, he could not do nothing when he saw Ding Jiayi use force on his wife. Without a word, the landlord gave Ding Jiayi a push. “If you are sick, you should go to the hospital to see a doctor. Don’t come to our house to create a fuss. We aren’t afraid of you. If you continue with your crazy acts, I will not have any qualms about beating you!”

Then, the husband said to his wife, “Give me five yuan.”

“Okay.” The landlady knew what her husband meant. After getting the five yuan, she threw it at Ding Jiayi. “When your husband returned the house, he did not ask me to return the half-month rent that he had already paid for. Now that I have returned you the money, we are quits. If you dare to create a din again, I will call the police!”

“How can both of you gang up to bully me?” Ding Jiayi, who was pushed to the ground, was still in shock. The door slammed shut on her. She caught a glimpse of the warm light inside the house before the door was closed. She sat on the ground and burst into tears.

“Old Qiao, where are you? Do you know that I have been bullied? They refused to tell me your address. They must be up to no good. Old Qiao, please come back. I have suffered such grievances.”

Ding Jiayi had a sulky face as she cried, but she made no move to leave. If the landlady did not give her a satisfactory answer, she would not budge.

Anyone would be frustrated at strangers who cried their guts out in front of their house. Moreover, Ding Jiayi spoke as if the landlady was in the wrong. In fact, the landlady was so angry that she wished she could use a chopper on her.

Ding Jiayi made it sound as if the landlady had taken a fancy to Qiao Dongliang, and thus refused to tell Ding Jiayi his whereabouts.

“Damn!” The landlady could not help but swear. She opened the door and came out.

Ding Jiayi curled her lips, revealing a victorious smile. After the landlady told her where Qiao Dongliang was, she would insist that if Old Qiao had truly moved, he would surely have left a message for her. The landlord and landlady must have wanted to sow discord between them, so they deliberately kept it from her.

She was so smart. She would not fall into their traps.

Ding Jiayi’s triumphant smile vanished in an instant. The landlady poured a basin of water on Ding Jiayi. “We just washed the vegetables. Here is the muddy water. We have been very kind to you. If you refuse to leave, I will treat you to a basin of water that I use to wash my feet next time!”

Chapter 285: I Am Qiao Nan’s Mom

The landlady then shut the door. "I have never seen such an unreasonable person. There are really all kinds of fish in the sea!"

Ding Jiayi was splashed with dirty water. She was soaked to the bones and she felt sorry for herself. She sobbed her guts out and seemed more aggrieved than Xiang Lin Sao, the typical tragic character in Chinese fiction.

Ding Jiayi sniffed and wiped the water off her face with her sleeves.

Old Qiao was really ruthless. Recently, she had been minding her own business. No matter how much she disliked that wretched girl, she still prepared her meals for her. She did not even raise her voice at her.

She had changed for the better, yet Old Qiao never changed his attitude toward her. Now that Old Qiao had moved, he did not even bother to tell her. Was his heart made of stone?

Could he not see the efforts she had put in the past few months?

Even if his heart was made of stone, he should have been moved by her actions.

Ding Jiayi did not understand why Qiao Dongliang moved again without any apparent reason. Unlike last time, he did not tell her where they moved to.

Would she lose her husband forever because of this incident?

Unknowingly, Ding Jiayi ended up at the house that Qiao Dongliang rented previously. Looking at the familiar but distant door, Ding Jiayi burst into tears again. She slumped against the door and sat on the ground crying. "Old Qiao, you are so ruthless. Haven't I done well enough?"

Did Old Qiao want her to be the servant of that wretched girl?

In the past few months, she treated that wretched girl with respect as if she were her elders. Both the father and daughter were heartless and ruthless!

It was autumn now. The weather was dry during the day but windy and unbearably cold at night. Ding Jiayi was wet to the bones. She felt chilly in the windy autumn night.

Ding Jiayi shivered from the cold. She wrapped her arms around herself and curled up like a shrimp. She leaned against the door, refusing to leave.

She was worried that if she left, she would never find Qiao Dongliang again and she would lose her husband forever. It seemed to her that as long as she stayed there, Qiao Dongliang would return to her.

A gust of wind blew over her and she shivered in the cold. Ding Jiayi leaned against the door and fell asleep shortly.

Ding Jiayi slept through the night. When she woke up the next day, dawn was just breaking.

Ding Jiayi felt dizzy. She held onto the door and stood up. She smiled bitterly to herself. "I should have known that Old Qiao turned heartless all because of that wretched girl. I am too foolish to camp here over the night."

Ding Jiayi put her hand to her burning forehead. Ding Jiayi knew that she had a cold and fever from sleeping in the open on a windy night. Moreover, she was wet to the bones from the basin of cold water that was splashed on her.

She was saddened that nobody noticed that she slept out in the open and sent her to the hospital. Her family was ruthless to her, and the people in this world were no different either.

Ding Jiayi leaned against the wall, feeling dizzy. She finally made her way back to the Qiao's house.

As soon as she reached home, Ding Jiayi was so sick that she took off her clothes hurriedly and plopped down onto the bed. She fell asleep right away, barely covering herself with the blanket.

Ding Jiayi slept for the whole day. She had completely forgotten that she had to work.

When she woke up again, the sky was already dark. She had not eaten anything for the past twenty-four hours and she was so hungry that she had gastric pains. Even though she had slept for the whole day, she was still burning with fever.

Her body felt hot, and there was no strength in her arms and legs. There was also nobody around to take care of her.

Ding Jiayi could not help but break down in tears. Her tears kept flowing down her face.

Ding Jiayi moved her lips and realized that her lips were so dry that they cracked at the slightest movement.

Ding Jiayi, who had not had a good rest for one whole day, felt like drinking some water. But she could only taste the blood that was on her lips.

“Why did things turn out this way?” Ding Jiayi cried into the blanket. She did not understand why she would end up like this. Her husband was not around, and both of her daughters were studying. No one cared whether she was well or not.

In the past...

Ding Jiayi suddenly remembered that when she was sick, Qiao Nan would always stay by her side and take great care of her.

Ding Jiayi gritted her teeth and dried her tears. “I don’t believe I can’t survive without all of you.”

Ding Jiayi put on her clothes and slowly made her way outside. She started to search for the fever medicine. She was stunned when she saw the fever medicine. It was the same fever medicine that she threw into the trash bin when Qiao Nan fell sick last year.

This time, Ding Jiayi could not help but sink into despair. Tears flowed down her cheeks uncontrollably.

Nobody knew how Ding Jiayi went through that night.

Perhaps when one was sick, they would be particularly vulnerable. Hence, Ding Jiayi cried harder when she looked at the fever medicine.

But when her fever subsided and she was finally slightly better, her heart hardened just like the hard-shelled animals that had gone through molting during specific seasons and formed a new and harder layer of shell.

“As I have said, I am the mother of Qiao Nan. She is a student at your school. She is from class one. Let me in.” Three days had passed since then. On Thursday, Ding Jiayi came to the school with a fierce look on her face. Blocked by the guards at the entrance of Ping Cheng High School, she insisted that she was the mother of Qiao Nan and wanted to enter the school.

“Don’t let her in!” Upon receiving the call from the guards, the principal was so furious that he hung the phone after giving the instructions to the guard.

It was not difficult to arrange for Qiao Nan and her father to stay at the house that was left by Teacher Feng. But most importantly, the principal and some of the teachers had spent a lot of efforts to keep the false rumors that Ding Jiayi spread under control.

The rumors had yet to die down completely, but the culprit was here again.

As soon as the principal knew that Ding Jiayi was at the front gate, he wished to send her away and ban her from stepping into the school again.

The school was not a public place. Ding Jiayi could not come and go as she pleased. It was ridiculous of her to have thought that she could enter freely whenever she felt like it as if the school was her home.

“Sorry, we cannot verify that you are the mother of the student from class one.”

Chapter 286: Call 110

“Besides, the students are currently studying in class. This parent over here, please go back. You won’t want to disturb your daughter while she is studying as well, right? Our school has its own regulations. Except for teachers and students, nobody is allowed to enter and leave the school grounds at will. So please go back. If you have something to say, you can tell your daughter when she comes home from school. Today is Thursday. There is no class tomorrow.”

Since the principal had said so, the guards certainly did not dare to open the gate and let Ding Jiayi enter the school.

Regarding the last time when Ding Jiayi entered the school, although the principal did not hold anyone responsible for it, he had verbally warned the guards that they should not allow any outsiders into the school.

Take the parent-teacher conference as an example. Since the child's father had already arrived, why would the mother sneak in behind the father's back? Besides, the school only requested for one of the parents to attend the parent-teacher conference.

Even if the parents cared about their children's performance and insisted on coming, they would usually turn up together. They would not sneak in one after the other.

Therefore, not only was the principal angry at seeing Ding Jiayi, but the guards were also fearful that this parent would create troubles. They refused to open the door.

"Aren't you going to open the door?!" Ding Jiayi, who was denied entry to the school, fumed. "This is not my first time here. Don't try to lie to me. When I was here last time, I told you that I am Qiao Nan's mother and I was allowed entry. If you refuse to let me enter the school, I will call the police!"

"There's nothing that we can do if you want to report to the police." The guards wanted to know if Ding Jiayi really dared to call the police.

"You!!" Ding Jiayi sneered. "Fine. Since you refuse to open the door and do not allow me to see my daughter, I have other ways!" Ding Jiayi gritted her teeth and pulled at her sleeves. Without a care for the passersby who were staring at her, she climbed the iron gate, trying to make her way into the school.

"Oh my god!" One of the guards was dumbfounded and shouted to his colleague. "What are you waiting for? Call the principal right now."

"I have never seen such a parent before!" The principal slammed the table in anger.

“Principal, what do we do now?” The guard at the other end of the phone was troubled. “We advised her not to climb, lest she falls. Even though we have not touched her, she screamed like a banshee, saying that we’re harassing her.”

The guards felt angry that they were maligned.

By heavens and hells, they did not even touch the parent! How could they possibly harass her?

Furthermore, at his age, he could tell right from wrong clearly. He would not do something so indecent, unless he was blind. Otherwise, he would not be interested in a shrew like this parent.

“Call the police!” The principal was fuming.

“Alright, we will report to the police.” With the principal’s consent, the guard felt that he was in control of the situation.

After hanging up, he dialed 110 to call the police. The guards did not say much but told the police that someone was creating a fuss at the school gate, disturbing the students. Most importantly, she damaged the public property and the school gate. Everyone who tried to calm her down was attacked by her. Their clothes were torn during the struggle.

China placed great importance on education. As soon as the police heard that someone created a fuss at the school gate, they arrived in a police car in less than a quarter of an hour.

Before the police had time to ask Ding Jiayi for an explanation, she attacked them without any thoughts, disregarding the fact that they were police officers.

The guard did not malign Ding Jiayi when he reported that she attacked people. It was true that she used force on others.

It was very dangerous of Ding Jiayi to climb the gate. The guards wanted to help her down, but she hit and screamed at the guards, crying and scratching the guards. Their uniforms had a slight tear during the tussle.

When the police arrived, Ding Jiayi scratched and screamed at them as well. In particular, one young police officer asked Ding Jiayi politely to tell him what happened exactly.

But Ding Jiayi reached out toward him and scratched at his face, leaving a streak of blood on the face of the young police officer.

“Damn, is this person a patient who ran out of the psychiatric hospital? Is it because she didn’t take her medicine?”

“She is not in the right state of mind. She is too aggressive. Handcuff her lest she hurts others.” Sensing that the situation was not right, the senior police officer gave the orders and restrained Ding Jiayi with the help of other police officers.

“Harassment! The teachers at school are harassing the parents!” Ding Jiayi, who was beyond reasons, cried for help blindly. The passersby were alarmed by her shouts.

When they heard Ding Jiayi’s cry for help, they had thought that the teachers from the school had harassed the parents. After all, nobody would make a joke about such a thing. But when they took a closer look, they were speechless. The ‘teachers’ were in police uniforms. Did the parent mean that the police officers had harassed her?

“Quiet down! We will send you to the hospital now. The doctor will prescribe a medicine for you.” The senior police officer was helpless. He could only send such a lunatic to the psychiatric hospital. If he brought her to the police station, she would bring disaster to his fellow police officers.

“It turned out that she is mentally unsound.” The passersby finally realized what was going on.

“Police?” The handcuffs felt cold to the touch. Ding Jiayi finally came to her senses. She realized that she was handcuffed by two police officers and they wanted to bring her to the hospital. “Police officers, I am not sick. I have got the wrong person. I was not referring to you. I was referring to the guards. My daughter studies at this school. She is a student here. I want to see my daughter, but they stopped me from seeing her. It is a misunderstanding.”

“Police officers, we don’t know this parent.” The guards denied right away.

“What nonsense are you talking about! I was here a few days ago for the parent-teacher conference. I have been here before!” Ding Jiayi retorted.

“There were too many people at the parent-teacher conference that day. We can’t remember. Did you sneak your way in? Police officers, as you have seen, this person is way too dangerous. We are not worried about ourselves, but the students are still young and may be frightened by her. What if she launches an attack at the students and injures the students? Our school will not be able to answer to the parents. Police officers, you have to help us,” the guard said without blinking his eyes.

“Don’t worry. We will not let her into the school.” The young police officer wiped his face and realized that there was a streak of blood on his face.

“Qiao Nan, you wretched girl! Your mom is here! Come out of your hiding place now!”

## Chapter 287: Celebrate Too Soon

Seeing that the police sided with the school, Ding Jiayi had no choice but to shout loudly, hoping that Qiao Nan would hear her.

“...” The guard’s expression turned grim. He took an old towel and shut her up with it as if she was a prisoner. “Police officers, I am really sorry. Our school places great importance on education. The students are having their lessons now. We have no other choice but to do this. What’s more, we want to protect her, lest she turns hoarse from her shouts. Others may not understand the situation and misunderstand that we are doing harm to her.”

“We understand. Alright, we will send her to the hospital,” the police officers said nicely.

“How can you be police officers? Didn’t you hear what I said just now? If my daughter is not studying at this school, how will I know her name?” Ding Jiayi spat out the towel in her mouth and fumed in anger.

The guard was worried. Would the police officer believe her words? How did she easily spit out the towel in her mouth?

“Qiao Nan is the provincial top scholar in middle school examination. She has done Ping Cheng proud. You are not the only one who knows her name. We know her as well. Does that mean we are her father?” The police officers laughed. Qiao Nan was on the Ping Cheng newspaper. Everyone in

Ping Cheng knew that Qiao Nan was the provincial top scholar in the middle school examination. How could this woman claim that Qiao Nan was her daughter?

“Damn!” Ding Jiayi screamed like a cat whose tail had been stepped on. If these two police officers were the father of Qiao Nan, what would become of Ding Jiayi?

“I have placed it securely!” The guard stuffed the towel that Ding Jiayi spat out back into her mouth. He did not stuff it properly on his first try hence she could easily spit it out. This time, he was sure that she would not have the chance to spout nonsense anymore.

“Good.” The police officers led Ding Jiayi into the police car.

“Have a safe journey.” The guards wiped the beads of perspiration on his forehead as he watched Ding Jiayi left with the police officers. They had never encountered such an unreasonable parent in their career. If she were to create more troubles next time, they would definitely resign.

The principal breathed a sigh of relief when he heard that the police had finally taken Ding Jiayi away.

Ding Jiayi was a curse to Qiao Nan and to the school.

“Haha, it is our fortune that Qiao Nan did not come to our school.” The principal of The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China heard the news and was elated.

The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China and Ping Cheng High School were among the top high schools in Ping Cheng. The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China was a private school, whereas the latter was a public school. But when it came to the reputation of the school, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China was a notch higher than Ping Cheng High School.

Therefore, most of the good students would choose to go to The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China. Ping Cheng High School was the next best alternative.

Ping Cheng High School had always wanted to catch up with The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China, but the latter did not care about the former.

This year, due to Qiao Nan, the relationship between the two high schools had become strained.

In the past, it was rare for students in Ping Cheng to come in the first place in the middle school examination. Usually, the top scholar would be from the province. In general, there was an 80% chance that the student would choose The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China, and a 20% chance that the student would choose some other high schools but not Ping Cheng High School.

However, Qiao Nan was an exception. Not only was she the middle school examination top scholar from Ping Cheng, but she also chose to study at Ping Cheng High School.

Because of the previous incident, whereby Qiao Zijin used Qiao Nan's essay as her own and took part in the essay competition and the matter was then escalated to the Education Bureau, the director of the Education Bureau had a bad impression of The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China and Qiao Zijin. Hence, it put The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China in an awkward position. On one hand, they hoped that Qiao Nan was their student as she was very outstanding. On the other hand, they harbored resentment toward Qiao Nan as they suffered shame due to the essay incident.

What made matters worse was that after the results were out, Qiao Nan chose to enroll in Ping Cheng High School instead of The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China.

The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China wanted Qiao Nan to join them, but because of the essay incident, they did not take the initiative to approach Qiao Nan.

To The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China, it was a pity not to have a middle school examination top scholar as their student.

Ever since Qiao Nan's enrollment in Ping Cheng High School, some of the teachers in The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China would track Qiao Nan's results diligently, more so than the teachers of Ping Cheng High School. Whenever there was an important exam in Ping Cheng High School, the teachers would find a way to know Qiao Nan's performance as soon as the results were out.

Every time they knew of Qiao Nan's ranking in Ping Cheng High School and her total score, only those parties concerned would know the mixed feelings they felt deep down.

As the form teacher of the first year's class one in The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China, the teacher was not only concerned about Qiao Nan's results, but also managed to get the test papers of Ping Cheng High School and let his student who ranked first in the level do the test papers.

The form teacher turned pale at the results.

The form teacher thought that no one would know that he was secretly monitoring Qiao Nan's results, but in fact, the principal had learned about it. After finding out the difference in the score between the student who ranked first among the level in their school and Qiao Nan who ranked first among the level in Ping Cheng High School, the principal felt even more gloomy and depressed than the form teacher.

Every year, The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China would do well in the college entrance examination. No matter how well the students from Ping Cheng High School did in the exams, they were no match for The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China.

However, things were different this year. The principal of The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China could not help but feel worried given that Qiao Nan had such good grades.

He had been the principal for a long time. He could tell that Qiao Nan was a good student. As a principal and a teacher, it was one's greatest regret and chagrin that such a good student did not study in his own school.

Three years from now, would the college entrance examination top scholar be from Ping Cheng High School? Did that mean that The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China would have to relinquish the top spot to Ping Cheng High School?

Definitely not!

The principal of The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China was still upset about this matter, pondering whether he should think of ways to make Qiao Nan transfer to their school when Ding Jiayi stirred up trouble at Ping Cheng High School.

The form teacher and the principal always had the firsthand information about everything that was related to Qiao Nan, whether it was good or bad. They were even more concerned about Qiao Nan than some of the teachers in Ping Cheng High School.

They learned that Ding Jiayi had tarnished the reputation of Qiao Nan and she almost could not study at Ping Cheng High School. She then made a ruckus at Ping Cheng High School and was taken to the police station. Ding Jiayi was the mother of Qiao Nan, and Qiao Nan was a student at Ping Cheng High School. Once everyone knew about this, Ping Cheng High School would be in trouble!

Fortunately, Qiao Nan did not study at The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China. Otherwise, they would be the one who had to face all these troubles.

While the principal from The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China was still gloating over others misfortune, crossing his legs, and enjoying his tea while humming a song in his office, his phone rang. “Hello, what did you say?! Can you repeat what you said?”

#### Chapter 288: Refused to Go to the Police Station

The principal spat out the tea in his mouth and asked in disbelief again, “Did you say that the police station just called to inform Qiao Zijin from the second year’s class eight to go to the police station to bail her mom, Ding Jiayi?”

“Yes, principal. What should we do now?”

“What do you mean? It has nothing to do with the student in our school. The student is still a child. Where are the other family members? Is she the only one who can bail her mom?”

One should not gloat over the misfortune of others. It had only been a while since he was feeling happy over Ding Jiayi’s incident and he was struck with such a heavy blow.

The students in The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China had only been to the police station for good reasons. They had never been there for any bad conduct. Be it in the past, now, or in the future, this would never happen.

“But the police officers said that they cannot reach Qiao Zijin’s father to bail Ding Jiayi out.” They only knew that Ding Jiayi had a daughter named Qiao Zijin. The police had nobody else to look for beside her.

The most troublesome thing for the form teacher of the second year's class eight was that to bail someone out, not only did one need to be present, but one also had to sign and pay for the bail. Furthermore, there were a series of procedures to follow. Since Qiao Zijin was only a child, she could not handle all these by herself.

In other words, if the school did not manage to find Qiao Zijin's father, Qiao Zijin would have to go to the police station. As her form teacher, she would have to go as well. She might even need to pay for the bail as well.

At the thought of this, the form teacher had a headache.

She had never been to the police station, yet she had to go to the police station because of a student whose results were below average. The form teacher could not help but feel that it was her misfortune to have Qiao Zijin as her student.

The form teacher had barely finished her sentence before she heard a beeping sound coming from the other end of the phone.

The principal was so angry that he hung up the phone.

Ding Jiayi was just like the God of Plague. Whoever was in contact with her would be unlucky.

It was true that she had a daughter in Ping Cheng High School, but what was upsetting was that she had a daughter in The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China as well!

It was not long ago that the form teacher was gloating that Teacher Liu from Ping Cheng High School had to deal with a troublesome Ding Jiayi. But shortly after, she finally understood that one should not celebrate too soon as things could still go wrong!

The principal had hung up on her. What should she do next? She could not possibly do nothing. If the police made a second call to the school, it would be a disgrace to them.

Teacher Cen, the form teacher of second year's class eight, had no other choice but to interrupt the lessons and get Qiao Zijin to come with her. "Qiao Zijin, you don't have to go to your classes today. You need to come with me to a place."

Qiao Zijin smiled and felt proud as she stood and followed Teacher Cen to the office. She thought that the teacher must have good news for her. "Yes, Teacher Cen." Did the school have any upcoming competition and Teacher Cen wanted her to participate in it?

It would be nice if that was the case. This time, she would not make the same mistakes again.

She was two years older than Qiao Nan. She believed she could do whatever that Qiao Nan was capable of. In fact, she would work harder and put in more effort than Qiao Nan.

"Your mother is at the police station. They just called for you to bail your mother out. Let's go." She only had herself to blame for being Qiao Zijin's form teacher. Otherwise, she would not have needed to go to the police station at all.

Teacher Cen told herself that after the current batch of students graduated, no matter how high the pay was, she would not be the form teacher of class eight again!

"P-police station? I... I will not go!" Qiao Zijin was shocked. She did not ask why Ding Jiayi was taken to the police station. Instead, she made her stand clear that she did not want to go to the police station.

Teacher Cen smiled bitterly. "I do not want to go either but she is your mom." She was not her mother! She had never been to the police station for her mother's sake before. If possible, she would rather not go to the police station.

"Let's go."

"No, Teacher Cen. I am afraid! I will not go. If I go to the police station, how will others look at me in the future? The students will look down on me." Qiao Zijin shook her head, hoping to hide in one of the corners of the office.

"Don't worry. You are not the one who was in the wrong. You are only there to bail your mom." Teacher Cen was getting impatient. She walked over and pulled Qiao Zijin's hands. "It's getting late. The day will be gone by the time we bail your mom out. Let's get this done as soon as possible. When you return, you may still have some time to do your homework."

“No, I won’t go.” Qiao Zijin grabbed the desk with her other hand, refusing to go. “Teacher Cen, what happened to my mom? Besides, you should be looking for my dad. He should be the one to settle problems like this. I am just a child. I don’t know anything at all. I will not be of any help.”

Where was her father?

Where was he now when her mother was taken to the police station?

“The police station couldn’t reach your dad, so they looked for you instead!”

“I am not the only daughter. The police officers can look for Qiao Nan.” Qiao Nan was deemed as more capable than her. Since her mother was in trouble, Qiao Nan should be the one to go to the police station. She refused to go. Never.

Qiao Nan would have to go to the police station. Even if Qiao Nan refused to go, she would not go as well!

Teacher Cen sneered. “Your mom was taken to the police station all because of your sister. Alright, there’s no way you can avoid it. Let’s quickly resolve it so that we can be at ease. This concerns the reputation of the school. Qiao Zijin, you have to go!”

“Why?!”

“If the police station calls our school for the second time and finds out that as her daughter, you refuse to bail your mother, what will the others think of you? What will others think of our school?” A few days ago, Ding Jiayi tried to smear the reputation of Qiao Nan. Now, Qiao Zijin would be the talk of the town instead, and the school would be affected as well.

If not for all these, Teacher Cen would rather wash her hands off this matter.

If the reputation of the school was affected because of Qiao Zijin, as her form teacher, Teacher Cen would have to bear the responsibility.

“Is it so serious?” Qiao Zijin was dumbfounded. She simply refused to go to the police station. Why would this tarnish the reputation of the school?

“Okay, let’s get going. I am not willing to go either. I am just unlucky to be your form teacher. You have brought nothing but trouble. Don’t worry. I will accompany you to bail your mom. But I hope that your family will not create troubles and implicate the school again in the future! Do you understand?!”

Teacher Cen glared at Qiao Zijin. The latter was too scared to speak and could only nod her head in acknowledgment.

From the teacher’s words, Qiao Zijin knew that if her family created any trouble again, she would not be able to study at The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China anymore.

### Chapter 289: Terrible Teammate

Over at the police station, Ding Jiayi finally realized the seriousness of the matter. Unlike the arrogant attitude she had at Ping Cheng High School, she sat down quietly by the side like a small kitten, keeping to herself and not making any sounds.

As the police officers had witnessed Ding Jiayi’s crazy antics previously, even though they did not send her to the hospital, they kept a watch on her lest she turned crazy and hurt others.

“Hello, we are here to bail Ding Jiayi.” Teacher Cen took a deep breath and plastered a smile on her face, indicating her purpose.

“Zijin!” Hearing her name, Ding Jiayi looked up and saw her beloved daughter, Qiao Zijin. She rushed forward and hugged Qiao Zijin. “Zijin, you are the only one in the family who cares for me. It’s good that you still treat me as your mom. Zijin, do you know that your dad and Qiao Nan, that wretched girl, are so ruthless that—”

“Mom!” Qiao Zijin was so embarrassed that she tried to bury her face in Ding Jiayi’s arms. She did not dare to look up for fear that the police officers would remember her face. “Okay. Don’t say anything now. If there’s anything, you can tell me when we are home!!!”

It was so embarrassing. Why must her mother say all those things at the police station?!

The people in the police station were slightly surprised. This woman who seemed to be mentally unstable was not to be underestimated. Her daughter was very smart. She studied at The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China, the best high school in Ping Cheng. Qiao Nan, the top scholar in the middle school examination, had the same surname as well. Was she her daughter?

...

She was such a crazy woman, yet she gave birth to two smart daughters. Did she give all her intelligence to her children?

“Hello, police officers. Qiao Zijin is the daughter of Ding Jiayi. I am the form teacher of Qiao Zijin. I will help with whatever procedures needed.” Teacher Cen smiled reluctantly. If possible, she wished to leave this suffocating place as quickly as possible.

“Okay, please come with me.” The police officers did not give Teacher Cen a hard time. They respected her as the teacher of The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China.

Teacher Cen grabbed the bag in her hand nervously and followed the police officers to fill in the necessary documents.

Ding Jiayi held on to Qiao Zijin’s hands helplessly. She had a lot to tell Qiao Zijin. She wanted to tell her all the grievances that she had suffered and that she was sick.

But whenever Ding Jiayi started to speak, Qiao Zijin would pinch her, hinting for her to keep quiet. Ding Jiayi had no choice but to keep quiet.

Fortunately, Ding Jiayi did not commit serious offenses. She had damaged the public property and attacked the police officers. As long as they decided to let the matter rest, bailing her out should not be much of a problem. Therefore, Teacher Cen did not need to hire a lawyer for Ding Jiayi. After filling in the necessary documents according to the police officers’ instructions, she handed in the bail money and left with Ding Jiayi.

It was rare that the daughter who was still in her school would be the one who bailed the mother out from the police station.

“Teacher Cen, I have fallen sick and have yet to recover. There is nobody at home. Can Zijin take two days off from school to take care of me?” When they were about to part, Ding Jiayi could not bear to be separated from Qiao Zijin, so she made the request to the teacher.

“Mom...”

“Okay.” Teacher Cen faked a smile. “Today is Thursday. She will be able to go home tomorrow. There’s no need to ask for two days off. One day will do. Anyway, your daughter will not be able to do much learning at school either.”

After that, Teacher Cen walked off without waiting for their reply.

“Teacher Cen!” Qiao Zijin wanted to catch up with Teacher Cen, but Ding Jiayi held on to her hands. “Mom, what are you doing? How will Teacher Cen think of me now? Can you stop doing all these? You are not helping me but bringing harm to me. Do you know it is very embarrassing for me to go to the police station to bail you? This could have affected the school as well. Do you know that if things like this happen again, the school will most likely expel me?!”

“What have I done? I have told the teacher that I am sick and I need you to take care of me for two days. Is there anything wrong with that?” Ding Jiayi began to cry and made a lot of noises. “It was all for your sake that I quarreled with your dad. If not for you, would your dad move out with that wretched girl? If not for you, would he not tell me what his new address is? I lost my husband all because of you. Now that I am sick, I just want you to take care of me for two days. Is it too much to ask of you? Zijin, you said that you will be filial to me in the future, but how is this being filial to me?”

“Okay, we are in the public. There are so many people looking at us. Let’s go back. Don’t you want me to wait on you at home? Let’s go back now.” Qiao Zijin was so embarrassed that she tried to cover her face with her sleeves. She pulled Ding Jiayi and hurried home.

“I’m so tired.” Qiao Zijin did not relax a bit upon reaching home. “Mom, what happened to Dad? You said that he moved again? Where did he move to? Dad did not even turn up when you were taken to the police station. Isn’t that too much of him? I am only a child, yet I had to go in his stead?”

“I have no idea. When I went looking for your dad two days ago, the house was empty and the landlord told me that your dad has moved. But I have no idea where he moved to. If it wasn’t for the fact that your dad has moved, I would not sit through the windy night by the pavement and end

up with a cold and a fever. I have not fully recovered yet. Feel my forehead. It's still burning with fever." Ding Jiayi took Qiao Zijin's hand and placed it on her forehead.

"Mom, what have you done to make Dad so angry that he moved again?!" Qiao Zijin was so exasperated that she felt like crying. "Didn't you say that you would behave yourself for now and keep a low profile? Didn't you say that you would leave Qiao Nan alone? Don't push all the blame to me and tell me that you did all these for me. I was at school, and I did not tell you to do anything for me. Mom, do you not want your family and your husband anymore? Dad is so furious that he moved, yet you were up to no good again after two months?"

Qiao Zijin was scared out of her wits at the fact that Qiao Dongliang moved with Qiao Nan to a new place for the second time.

Last time, when Qiao Dongliang moved out with Qiao Nan, she had thought that Qiao Dongliang would definitely divorce Ding Jiayi in no time. She did not have any friends or classmates who came from a single parent family. She did not want to be the exception.

"Mom, I beg of you to behave yourself. Will that do? If Dad really wants to divorce you, you will regret it later. Tell me, what have you done?" Qiao Zijin was worried that her father would really divorce her mother. Hence, she had been very well-behaved for the past two months. In the past, she had always been thinking of ways to bring down Qiao Nan. She had never been this proper and dutiful ever since Qiao Nan was born.

A terrible teammate was worse than a tough rival.

Qiao Zijin had been behaving herself in front of Qiao Nan, but Ding Jiayi tried to pull tricks on Qiao Nan behind her back and antagonized Qiao Dongliang. Qiao Zijin did not know what to do with this mother of hers.

Chapter 290: I Did Not Provoke Qiao Nan

Ding Jiayi felt terribly wronged. "I didn't do anything. I have no idea what's wrong with your dad. Why would he move without telling me? You can't blame me for this. It must be that wretched girl who bad-mouthed me in front of your dad. I must have owed that wretched girl in my previous life. She is born to collect debts from me!"

For the past two months, she felt that she had been very well-behaved. This time, the problem certainly did not lie with her.

“Has Nan Nan been back from school? Impossible, if I remember correctly, like me, Nan Nan will only be back this week. Mom, when did Dad move without telling you?” Qiao Zijin counted with her fingers. She felt perplexed.

Ding Jiayi thought hard about it. “No, that wretched girl never took leave to come back.”

“If so, how could Nan Nan badmouth you in front of Dad?”

“Don’t forget that your dad went to Ping Cheng High School for the parent-teacher conference last weekend. I tried to please your dad by volunteering to go with him, but he refused!”

“Parent-teacher conference?” Qiao Zijin frowned. “Then, she might have the chance to talk to Dad. But over the years, Qiao Nan did not complain about us to Dad. This time around, something serious must have happened to make Dad move to a new place. Mom, think again. Did you provoke Dad or Nan Nan during or after the parent-teacher conference?”

“I didn’t provoke her!” Ding Jiayi said. “I didn’t even get to see her, so how could I provoke her? Are you helping me or helping her?”

“Are you lying to me? Did you really not provoke Qiao Nan?” Ding Jiayi said matter-of-factly with not even a slight twinge of guilt in her tone. Qiao Zijin began to have doubts. If her mother really did something, she would keep it from others, but she would not lie to her.

“I swear I didn’t do anything!”

“Then, it would have to do with Dad and Qiao Nan.” Qiao Zijin pursed her lips. “Let’s forget about what happened previously. This time, it is too much of Dad to move to a new place without telling us. Mom, we have to think of some ways to find Dad and get him to give us an explanation. I don’t believe that Dad will abandon you and me for Qiao Nan.”

“No, your dad will not do that. I am his only wife. In the future, that wretched girl and you will have your own family. I will be the only one who will stay by his side until the end. They say that when young couples turn old, they will be each other’s companion. Your dad will not abandon me. It must be that wretched girl who gave your dad this idea. Your dad won’t abandon you and me.”

She did not believe that the wretched girl would stay by Old Qiao's side until he grew old, and that she would choose to stay single all her life for her father.

"You should know that Dad values Qiao Nan very much. He will listen to whatever Qiao Nan says. Why did you still anger her? Right now, even if you do a hundred good things, it will not be comparable to Qiao Nan putting in a good word for you. Do you understand? If you want to reconcile with Dad, it's not enough to please Dad. You have to work on pleasing Qiao Nan as well. I am not asking for much. If you give Qiao Nan a tenth of the attention and care that you give me, Qiao Nan will certainly be happy too."

As long as it was for their long-term benefit, she did not mind her mother giving some attention to Qiao Nan.

Anyway, when her mother had reconciled with her father, her mother would revert to the usual ways and give her all the attention again.

"I have treated her as if she was my ancestor. I didn't beat her or yell at her. I served her food and waited on her every day. What more could I do?!" The fear and worry that plagued Ding Jiayi the past few days vanished as soon as Qiao Zijin was by her side. Ding Jiayi calmed down and felt more confident.

"If you insist, there's no way that we can continue this conversation. Mom, you have to remember. Dad will only be happy when Qiao Nan is happy. Whether your relationship with Dad will change is totally dependent on yourself. Something must have happened to make Dad move to a new place without telling you. You may be able to find him this time, but you can't guarantee that you will always be able to find out his whereabouts. Most importantly, Qiao Nan is only in the first year. No matter where Dad moved to, it should be within Ping Cheng. But if Qiao Nan enters the college in three years' time and leaves Ping Cheng, will Dad still stay in Ping Cheng? Will you be able to find him then?"

"Then, we must forbid that wretched girl from studying in a college that is not in Ping Cheng!"

"You don't even know where Dad is. How are you able to stop Qiao Nan from enrolling in the college of her choice? If Qiao Nan has good results and you refuse to let her continue with her studies, Dad is not going to let you off. Enough of all these foolish words. It's been a year. Do you think that Qiao Nan is still the young lady who obeys us? If you thwart her study plans, she will lodge a complaint to Dad and you will be the one who suffers. After being plotted against by Qiao Nan for so many times, haven't you learned your ways, Mom?"

Qiao Zijin had a headache. After what happened at the Zhai's residence, she finally realized that unless she had absolute confidence, she had better not provoke Qiao Nan.

There was one thing that she regretted the most. Qiao Nan would always keep her silence even when being bullied at home, but she had such good connections outside. She was on friendly terms with the influential Zhai family.

If she knew that Qiao Nan was acquainted with the daughter of the Zhai family, she would have asked Qiao Nan to introduce her to the Zhai family so that she could be on friendly terms with them.

Qiao Nan could only manage to be close to the children in the family. If it was her, she would have a way to win the favor of the elders in the Zhai family to the extent that they would treat her as their goddaughter.

That day, Qiao Nan had left and Qiao Zijin did not realize it in time.

Though the Zhai family had seen the disgraced and ugliest side of her, she was thick-skinned enough to pester Zhai Hua and Miao Jing, trying to be close to them. However, Zhai Hua and Miao Jing did not pay much attention to them. They merely gave polite and short replies. They did not have the time to have a proper chat before Zhai Hua mentioned that they had something on and shut the door on them.

Qiao Zijin looked at the tightly shut door and knew that she had missed a golden opportunity.

Qiao Nan had the approval of Elder Lee, while Elder Zhu was full of praise for her. On top of that, she also knew people from the Zhai family.

Qiao Zijin could not take it lying down. She was certainly very outstanding. However, she never had the opportunity to get to know those influential people. She was not as lucky as Qiao Nan who had endless chances.

If she had known that Qiao Nan was so capable, she definitely would have tried to get along with Qiao Nan. With her temper, it would be easy to coax some information from her.

Be it the Lee family, the Zhu family, or even the Zhai family. If she had connections with any of them, she would not need to worry about her future or getting a good husband.

