

## RTAMM 331

### Chapter 331: Zhai Sheng, the Silly Fool

Maybe in a year, or half a year, or even a month, Brother Zhai might meet a person he really liked, and he would realize that his affection for her was that of the care and concern for one's relatives and younger sister.

Brother Zhai had helped her so much. If he could find his happiness, she would be more than willing to let go. She hoped that Brother Zhai could be with someone he really liked.

However, she was human as well. She also had feelings and would be hurt. She could let him go, but she was not sure whether she would be happy when the time came.

Zhai Sheng had the same expression as Qiao Nan. Both of them were frowning, deep in thought. "Nan Nan, you seem to distrust me very much, and you don't believe what I said. Did you say we are not suitable because you already have someone you like, and that person isn't me? Nan Nan, one must be honest and fulfill their promises. You wrote in the letter that you will not start a relationship while you are still studying. Nan Nan, I am so disappointed in you."

Qiao Nan hugged her stomach, feeling a slight pain inside. "Brother Zhai, are you joking with me, or are you serious? You told me not to fall in love, not to start a relationship while I am still young, but you confessed your feelings to me and talked about marriage. If I agree, isn't that breaking my promise to you? Isn't that starting a relationship while I am still young?"

"Firstly, I was talking about relationships with other people. Secondly, I did not ask that you start a relationship with me. I wanted to be engaged to you."

Qiao Nan was rendered speechless by what Zhai Sheng said.

"Well, we have settled the previous two problems. What else do you find not suitable?"

"Yes!" Qiao Nan rubbed her stomach. "Your mom doesn't like me! Brother Zhai, you should know my relationship with your mother. We do not click, and we are just like enemies. I want to find a mother-in-law who can treat me like her biological daughter. Brother Zhai, you may not know. Auntie Miao doesn't like me. In fact, she dislikes me very much. I am not saying that she is biased."

Indeed, the Zhai family is too outstanding. It is beyond my reach. I have never thought of becoming Cinderella. I am afraid that I will end up in the worst state. Brother Zhai, we are too far apart in terms of social status.”

“Nan Nan, as a young woman and as a student, how can your thinking be so backward and feudal? Everyone is equal. The party and the chairman have said working class is the most glorious. Twenty years ago, the peasants had a high status in society. As a person living in modern society, how could you differentiate people based on their social class? Nan Nan, your way of thinking is too backward. You must be with me so that I can make a positive influence on you.”

Qiao Nan was lost for words. She had a bitter smile on her face. “Brother Zhai, are you debating with me? You should know I didn’t mean it that way.”

She did not differentiate people based on their social class. It was this world and the society that discriminated people based on their social class.

It was a fact that Auntie Miao disliked her. Last time, when she saw that Auntie Miao’s shoes were broken, she wanted to buy a new pair for her. However, Auntie Miao thought she was after her money instead.

If not for the fact that Auntie Miao was Brother Zhai’s mother, when she encountered such an incident, she would not be so silly as to be humiliated by others.

“What does that mean? No matter what, you can tell me if you face any problem. We will solve it together.” No matter how difficult the problems were, he could resolve them. He believed that he could win over the heart of his wife-to-be.

“I... I...” Qiao Nan placed her hands on her stomach, feeling dizzy. She had not finished her sentence but fainted right into the arms of Zhai Sheng.

“Nan Nan?” Without a word, Zhai Sheng put his arms around Qiao Nan’s waist and lifted her into his arms, wanting to rush to the hospital at the fastest speed. But when his hand accidentally touched her bottom, he could feel something sticky. He lowered to check and smiled. It came at the wrong timing.

When Qiao Nan woke up, she could feel that she was lying in a warm bed, her stomach feeling warm and comfortable. But amidst all this, Qiao Nan sensed the persistent pain in her lower abdomen and the uncomfortable wetness in her lower body. She blushed red in embarrassment.

Her menses had come!

Wait! She remembered that she was in a discussion with Brother Zhai about how they were not suitable for each other. Why was she on the bed now?

“You have woken up. Drink a cup of hot sugar water.” Zhai Hua sat by the bed and helped Qiao Nan up.

Qiao Nan looked at Zhai Hua in confusion. “Sister Zhai Hua, how come you are here?” Was it already the morning of the Lunar New Year?

“It’s two o’clock in the morning.” Zhai Hua rolled her eyes and yawned loudly. She had never been awake at this time except when she was in the army performing missions. “If it was not me, then do you expect that Zhai Sheng would help you change and take care of you?”

Zhai Hua was angry at the thought that she was woken up in the middle of the night by a sweaty Zhai Sheng. He stood in the dark, dragging her out of her bed and insisted that she helped him.

What was the use of having a younger brother? He only knew to anger her and did not know to take care of her. She was a woman as well!

It was too much!

“It is already two o’clock?” Qiao Nan sat up suddenly and felt that there was a gush in her lower body, making her buried her face in the blanket in frustration.

She felt so embarrassed. Brother Zhai was with her when she had her first menses. This time around, it was Brother Zhai who discovered it as well.

Given how embarrassed she was in front of Brother Zhai, how could she possibly marry Brother Zhai? She did not have the cheek to face him.

“What’s wrong? Is it still painful? Dysmenorrhea is an illness. It must be cured. As a woman, you must pay more attention to your health. Dawn is breaking. I will bring you to a veteran practitioner

of traditional Chinese medicine. He is a good Chinese physician. Whenever my mom and I have any problems, we will look for him.” Qiao Nan had to take care of herself. She would have to depend on Qiao Nan to give her nephews and nieces.

“No need. In fact, I don’t have dysmenorrhea. Today is an exception.” Qiao Nan shifted her bottom. “Sister Zhai Hua, I have to go to the toilet.” If she did not go to the toilet, she might soil the sheets.

“This is no exception. You fainted from the pain. You should have seen Zhai Sheng’s dark and somber expression when he came looking for me. Moreover, it was in the middle of the night. He gave me a big fright!” What surprised Zhai Hua the most was that Zhai Sheng, who was usually calm and composed, would behave in such a silly manner.

### Chapter 332: Zhai Sheng, the Mr. Nice Guy

The small quad that Qiao Nan stayed at was not near to the quad. Zhai Sheng who was in a panic carried Qiao Nan back home and went dashing to the quad, asking Zhai Hua for help.

If not for Zhai Hua’s reminder, he would like to run back to the small quad with Zhai Hua.

They were not training in the army! They did not need to run!

Qiao Nan blushed and rushed to the toilet. Sure enough, the sanitary pad was soaked.

She flushed in embarrassment at the thought of Zhai Hua helping her to change into new pants and sanitary pad. Not even her mother had ever done such things for her.

“Sister Zhai Hua, it’s hard on you. I am fine now. It’s the Lunar New Year. You should go back home. When you go back, please tell Brother Zhai that I am fine. I apologize for worrying him.” Qiao Nan felt much better after changing the sanitary pad.

“I won’t tell him. I am still mad at him. You tell him by yourself.” Zhai Hua snorted and turned her face to a side in anger.

“What is it that you want to say?” Zhai Sheng came in with a bowl of porridge in his hands. “Nan Nan, since you have woken up, you must be hungry. Have some porridge first. Have you finished the brown sugar water?”

“I am about to finish it.” Qiao Nan lowered her head in embarrassment at the sight of Zhai Sheng. She drank the cup of sweet and hot brown sugar water. After finishing the drink, she then realized that something was amiss. “I don’t have brown sugar at home.”

Qiao Zijin had dysmenorrhea, but she did not.

She started her menses more than a year ago. The dates were accurate, and it would come once a month. Whenever she had her menses, she would not feel painful. Compared with Qiao Zijin, she was very healthy.

Hence, they did not have brown sugar at her house.

“Alright, no more questions. Believe me. You won’t want to know how he bought this packet of brown sugar.” Zhai Hua seemed to be gloating. She was happy that she was not the only one who was woken up by Zhai Sheng and had her sleep interrupted in the wee hours of Lunar New Year’s Eve.

She felt comforted that she was not the only one who was so unlucky.

“B-Brother Zhai bought it?” Qiao Nan wanted to bite off her tongue. If she had known, she would not have asked about the brown sugar.

“Alright, have some of the porridge.” Zhai Sheng brought the porridge to Qiao Nan. “I have already contacted the Chinese physician. You can have some sleep after having the porridge. I will bring you to the Chinese physician when it’s eight in the morning.”

“No need!” Qiao Nan lifted her head. “Actually, it is not that serious. I usually don’t find it painful. I don’t know what happened today...”

“We must have a look to be on the safe side. Finish the rest of the porridge and have some sleep,” Zhai Sheng said assertively, leaving no room for negotiation.

Qiao Nan knitted her eyebrows and finished the porridge. When she was getting ready to sleep, it crossed her mind that she had not brushed her teeth today. Was it okay to sleep?

Women felt especially weak during their first day of menses.

A few hours ago, Qiao Nan had a big fright. Moreover, she just had her food and she felt more comfortable now. Hence, she fell asleep in no time.

“Okay, Nan Nan is asleep. I will go back now. Today is the first day of the Lunar New Year. It is inappropriate for you to stay here. What if our parents ask about you? What Nan Nan said is very true. Mom doesn’t like her, and Dad will not give us an easy time as well. Even Grandpa who can’t be easily persuaded hasn’t seen Nan Nan yet, but you went ahead to tell Nan Nan that you want to be engaged to her! If it wasn’t for the fact that Nan Nan has her menses, I have reasons to suspect that she fainted as she was scared out of wits by you.”

Nan Nan was still very young, yet Zhai Sheng told her that he wanted to marry her. Every woman would be scared stiff.

If anyone dared to tell her this, she would give him a tight slap on the face.

Zhai Hua knew that Zhai Sheng was serious about Qiao Nan, and he really intended to marry her. However, Zhai Hua felt that they could consider marriage in three to four years’ time. Nan Nan was still young. She was like a flower that had yet to bloom. She did not understand the affairs of the heart and she did not even get to know a few more boys either.

Was Qiao Nan lucky or unlucky to have met such a domineering and overbearing Zhai Sheng?

“I will leave Mom and Dad to you.” Given Nan Nan’s situation, he could not leave. He would not be at ease.

“What?! Why must I do this?” Zhai Sheng gave Zhai Hua a glare, telling her to speak softly. She lowered her voice and said, “This is your business. What does it have to do with me?”

“Because you’re my elder sister.”

“Then, let me address you as my elder brother.”

“Sure, go ahead. Remember to help me out when Mom and Dad ask about me,” Zhai Sheng said matter-of-factly.

“I have to hand it to you.” Zhai Hua gave him a thumbs-up. “I am so sleepy. I have to go back to sleep. As for Nan Nan, you must know your limits. She is still a child!” She almost wanted to tell Zhai Sheng to let Qiao Nan go. She was still so young.

Previously, when Zhai Hua was pulled to the small quad and saw the blood on Qiao Nan’s pants, she had almost thought that it was Zhai Sheng who did that to Qiao Nan.

“I know what to do.” Zhai Sheng shot Zhai Hua a cold stare. Nan Nan was still very young. He cherished her more than anyone.

“Crap.” Zhai Hua was upset. She did not have a good night’s sleep and had done Zhai Sheng such a big favor, yet he gave her such a disdainful look. She could not be bothered to say anything else. She would get herself out of his sight!

Qiao Nan only woke up when it was morning.

It was too late when Qiao Nan realized that something did not feel right. She felt with her hands and realized that her pants were stained again.

“What’s wrong?” As soon as Zhai Sheng heard some movements in the room, he, who had breakfast ready, opened the door and came in. “Why is there blood on your hand, you...” Zhai Sheng stopped in mid-sentence. He understood what was going on.

Qiao Nan could imagine how red her face was.

Qiao Nan silently pulled the blanket and covered half of her face. “Brother Zhai, you haven’t gone back? Brother Zhai, can you go out for a while...”

“Sure.” Zhai Sheng stood up and left Qiao Nan’s room.

Qiao Nan jumped out of bed as soon as Zhai Sheng closed the door. This was the most special Lunar New Year that she had in her two lifetimes. Why was it that she would be in such an embarrassing situation whenever Brother Zhai was around?

Qiao Nan flushed red when she saw the stains on the bed sheets. She silently took out her under\*\* and sanitary pad and ran to the toilet to change out of her soiled clothes.

When Qiao Nan was changing the under\*\*, she noticed that there was a thermos flask in the toilet, and it was filled with hot water.

Without a doubt, Zhai Sheng prepared this for Qiao Nan and she knew what it was meant for.

### Chapter 333: Who Did the Washing

Qiao Nan gritted her teeth and wiped her body with the hot water. After a while, she came out of the toilet feeling refreshed.

She was dumbfounded when she came out and realized that the bed sheets and the blanket on the bed had been changed!!

Her father was still at the quad. In this house, there was nobody around except for her and Brother Zhai. So, the person who helped her change the bed sheets and the blanket must be Brother Zhai. The reason why he changed them must be that he knew that she...

Qiao Nan covered her face. She looked up, not knowing what to say.

She seemed to feel a faint ache in her stomach again. She felt that her menses flow was so heavy that she might need to rush to the toilet again.

She dressed at the fastest speed and dashed out. "Brother Zhai, you..."

Qiao Nan wanted to ask Zhai Sheng where the soiled blanket and bed sheets were and tell him to leave them by the side.

However, she was stopped in mid-sentence by the sight of Zhai Sheng wringing the water out of the clean bed sheets...

“B-Brother Zhai, y-you have washed them?” Washed...

“Yes.” Zhai Sheng flung the bed sheets and the blanket after wringing out the water. “Now that the sun is out, I will bring them out to dry. It will not freeze. It’s cold outside. You should stay in the house. I will bring out the bed sheets and the blanket to dry. If you are hungry, you can have the food first. They are piping hot.”

Qiao Nan was in a daze. She watched Zhai Sheng as he hung them out to dry. She came out of her daze and asked, “Y-yesterday...”

Qiao Nan was like a cat on a hot tin roof. She started to search frantically around the house.

Brother Zhai had washed the dirty bed sheets and the blanket. But what about the under\*\* and pants that she had dirtied?

If they were washed by Zhai Hua, even though Qiao Nan would be embarrassed as well, Zhai Hua was a woman, after all. Qiao Nan would feel better if that was the case. However, Qiao Nan had a terrible thought in her mind. She was particularly obsessed about finding out where yesterday’s soiled pieces of clothing were.

She prayed silently in her heart. She would rather see her dirty clothes being thrown into the basin by Zhai Hua. She did not wish to find them being washed and put out to dry.

Unfortunately, whatever that she was dreading came true.

Qiao Nan saw that the under\*\* and pants that she wore yesterday was drying in the big toilet. Without a word, Qiao Nan banged her head against the wall.

Why did her menses have to come in the middle of the night and be seen by Brother Zhai?

Though it was embarrassing for her if her soiled clothes were washed by Sister Zhai Hua, it was still bearable.

Qiao Nan was so embarrassed at that possibility that it might be Brother Zhai who washed them.

“Nan Nan, come and eat your breakfast. After the meal, I will bring you to see the Chinese physician.” Zhai Sheng’s clear voice resounded in the quiet house. His voice was particularly clear such that Qiao Nan could hear his pronunciation and feel his breathing.

Qiao Nan hung her head as she had her breakfast. After the meal, she said in a sullen voice, “Brother Zhai, I am fine. There is no problem with me and I don’t need to go to the hospital. I swear that this is really my first time.” This is the first time that she fainted from the pain.

“No.” After Zhai Sheng had his food, he cleaned up the dishes and said, “Let’s go.”

Did Brother Zhai really intend to take her to see the doctor for that reason? Was she the only one who was embarrassed and felt that it was inappropriate?

“Doctor Zhong, how is Nan Nan?” Sitting in a medical hall that smelled of Chinese herbal medicine, Zhai Sheng asked with a look of concern on his face.

“Her constitution is very good. There is no problem with her. However, she has to continue to maintain her good habits. She should not have cold stuff, especially when she has her menses. It will be good to take a hot bath.” Doctor Zhong told Zhai Sheng what to take note of in daily life. “That’s about it. Don’t have Popsicles and ice-cream. They will result in a cold uterus. She does not have this problem, though.”

The doctor was very serious in telling them what to take note of while Zhai Sheng paid full attention to the doctor. Qiao Nan opened her mouth and wanted to interrupt them, telling the doctor that she was the one who was here to see the doctor. He could tell her these privately!

“Does she need to take any medicine as a supplement? She has a heavy flow. Will it affect her health? If there is no problem, why did she faint?” Zhai Sheng was worried about Nan Nan as he knew that monthly menses would be a strain to one’s body. Moreover, Nan Nan seemed to have a heavy flow.

There was only so much blood in one person, and Nan Nan had such a heavy flow. Would she be anemic? Did she need to have some supplements?

Qiao Nan felt as if the world had collapsed around her. How could Zhai Sheng be having such a serious discussion with the doctor regarding her condition and her heavy flow?

Could Brother Zhai not adopt such a serious attitude as if he was discussing national affairs when in actual fact the topic that he was discussing with the doctor was her menses?

As Qiao Nan became agitated, she could feel that she needed to rush to the toilet again.

“I have taken her pulse. The young lady used to suffer from malnutrition. However, she is still young and we can give her more nourishment. But because of this, she is not as strong and is slightly feeble. The reason why she fainted must be that she was agitated. As for her flow, it has to do with her mood swings as well.”

That was right. She was agitated!

Qiao Nan shouted in her mind.

“All medicine has toxicity to some degree. It will be better for her to take tonics instead. I will give you a few recipes for the tonics. You can prepare them for her.” Doctor Zhong pushed his glasses and wrote three pages worth of recipes. Qiao Nan could not help but be dumbfounded.

Today was the first day of the Lunar New Year. Did the doctor not need to spend time with his family? His recipes could rival the thousand-word essay that she wrote.

“That’s about it.” Doctor Zhong kept his pen and gave the written recipe to Zhai Sheng. Qiao Nan, who reached out her arm to get the recipe, had her hand suspended in the air.

Qiao Nan did not understand. She was the party concerned and the recipe was obviously for her, so why did Doctor Zhong discuss with Brother Zhai and hand the recipe to him? It was as if he was her guardian.

“Thank you, Doctor Zhong.”

“You’re welcome. This is my duty as a doctor.” Doctor Zhong smiled bitterly. “But Zhai Sheng, I have a suggestion for you.”

## Chapter 334: From Today Onward, You Are a Military Wife

“If you really want to thank me, don’t come to me on the first day of the Lunar New Year next time. Can you give me a day off?”

“Sure.” It was not every time that Nan Nan would have her menses and faint on the first day of the Lunar New Year. The probability of that falling on the first day of the Lunar New Year was very low.

Doctor Zhong was relieved that Zhai Sheng agreed readily.

In the future, there would be a day when Doctor Zhong, who was a rare romantic, had arranged a whole day of activities to spend a happy golden wedding anniversary with his wife, but had to check on Qiao Nan because the latter fainted. It was then that Doctor Zhong lamented that Zhai Sheng found fault with the choice of his words!

“Brother Zhai, thank you very much for what you did for me today and yesterday.” Qiao Nan took a few deep breaths. She sat in Zhai Sheng’s car, feeling a mixture of unease and genuine sincerity. In her two lifetimes, ever since a young age, or, rather, ever since she could remember, nobody had ever cleaned her clothes for her before.

Even on the day when she was reborn and was ill and had gone to the hospital for the drip, she still had to wash two to three days’ worth of clothes after she recovered.

Most of the time, she was the one who washed the clothes for the whole family. However, when she was sick, nobody helped her wash the clothes. She could not count on her mother or her sister to wash them, let alone her father. But all of a sudden, a man would wash her soiled clothes for her. Qiao Nan was touched by his gestures, feeling warm inside. It was even warmer than the hot water bag that Zhai Sheng prepared for her to place it on her tummy last night.

Zhai Sheng had done everything that her closest kin had never done for her.

Thinking of what Zhai Sheng said to her last night, and how he treated her, Qiao Nan was touched by his proposition and started to waver.

“Nan Nan, I don’t want to force you. But please seriously consider what I said last night. I will be responsible for my words and actions. As long as you are certain about us, then that is enough. As for others, it is not a problem. You are the only one who will pose a problem for us.” Though Zhai Sheng did not sleep a wink yesterday, he sat in the driver’s seat, looking very clear-minded and energized. One could not tell that he had stayed up all through the night.

“Well, I will think about it again!” Qiao Nan clenched her fists, mustered her courage, and said what her heart told her to. “At least, I want to give it a try.”

“Very good. Since you have already promised, then you must always remember that you are a military wife. You must be determined and firm. And as a soldier, I will be totally loyal to you. This is my promise to you!”

“Wait...” She only said that she would give it a try. She did not say that she wanted to get married. How could she become a military wife all of a sudden? That was too big of a jump!

“What’s the matter? Are you not serious about me?” Zhai Sheng arched his eyebrows.

“Of course I am serious!”

“Since you are serious, and you promised to get along with me, then we should have marriage in mind. Isn’t that so?”

“This...” Since she agreed to go out with Brother Zhai, she certainly did not intend to break up with him.

“Chairman Mao said that entering a relationship without the intention to marry is equivalent to acting like a hooligan. Nan Nan, are you trying to do that to me?”

“Absolutely not!”

“Then, that will do.” It was set in stone. Zhai Sheng stopped the car at the door of the small quad and helped Qiao Nan out of the car. “I have to make a trip back home. You have a good rest at home. When I am done with my errands, I will come back to check on you.”

“No need!” Qiao Nan said in a hurry. “My dad will be back soon. Even if both of us are very serious and responsible, I am still young nevertheless. Brother Zhai, can we keep this from the others for the time being? I am still in high school. My dad doesn’t want me to be distracted.”

Zhai Sheng seemed to rush at things. Qiao Nan was taken aback by what he said.

She clearly said that they would take the time to understand each other and spend time with each other. But according to Brother Zhai, it seemed as if everything was cast in stone.

Was it because she did not have much experience in relationship and thus she did not know that everyone in this era who was in a relationship at a young age would be like Brother Zhai who was quick and resolute?

“Do you want to keep it from everyone or do you want to let others know at a later time?” Was he that unpresentable?

“I want to let them know at a later time!” Qiao Nan took a deep breath. “Brother Zhai, you have said that you are considering marriage and I have also said that I hope to get your parents’ approval. I am still too young to get married. It is better not to tell anyone about us. I want to get the approval of your parents. I can’t change my family, but I can change myself. You may not mind, but the opinion of others will have an impact on us. I want to improve myself so that I can be an excellent match for you. Till then, can we keep it from others first?”

Moreover, she only promised to go out with Brother Zhai.

Was having a relationship at a young age a glorious thing? Was it worthy of telling everyone about it? She felt that it was inappropriate to do that.

Zhai Sheng looked at Qiao Nan seriously. After he was sure that Qiao Nan only wanted to keep it from others for now and was not trying to brush him off, he nodded after a long while. “I respect your decision.”

“Thank you, Brother Zhai.” Qiao Nan sighed in relief. “Brother Zhai, I will go back to rest. You... You must know your limits. Even though Sister Zhai Hua will cover up for you, the people in the Zhai family will not be easily fooled.”

Qiao Nan was sure that Zhai Hua knew of Zhai Sheng’s intention toward her.

It was no wonder that when her mother framed her last time, Sister Zhai Hua helped her and admitted that the key was given by her. It was not that Sister Zhai Hua was good to her. She did that on account of Brother Zhai.

That said, Brother Zhai seemed to have harbored feelings for her since a long time ago. Why was it that she had no inkling at all?

“I know what to do.” Zhai Sheng touched Qiao Nan lightly on the head. He watched her as she went back into the house and closed the door. Only then did he drive the car back home. By then, everyone in the Zhai family had gotten up. Zhai Hua was the last one to wake up. Miao Jing had to drag her out of her bed. Zhai Hua’s hair was as messy as a bird’s nest and she still had a sleepy look on her face. She was sitting by the table, eating glutinous rice balls.

Zhai Yaohui put down the newspaper and was displeased at Zhai Sheng. “Today’s the Lunar New Year. Where have you been driving to so early in the morning? I have not heard of any missions assigned to you by the army. It is rare that all of us can celebrate a family reunion together. Zhai Sheng, you have to put aside whatever it is in your hands.”

Actually, Zhai Yaohui intended to talk to Zhai Sheng about Qiu Chenxi this morning.

Old Master Zhai preferred the environment in the countryside and would go back sooner or later. When he left, Zhai Yaohui wanted to discuss the marriage of Zhai Sheng and Qiu Chenxi. At the very least, he wanted them to be engaged first.

### Chapter 335: The Brutish Old Master Zhai

What was done could not be undone. By then, for the sake of Zhai Sheng’s happiness and future, he believed that his father would not create a fuss or make things difficult for the two families.

Zhai Yaohui had planned to talk to Zhai Sheng, but Zhai Sheng was not at home, so there was nobody for him to discuss with.

“Who are you lecturing?” Old Master Zhai was unhappy and jumped to his grandson’s defense. “Think about when you were young and your mother was still around. How many times did you

accompany your mom and me during the Lunar New Year and have glutinous rice balls together on the first day of the Lunar New Year?”

Old Master Zhai was an old revolutionary. He would not ask his children to devote all their time to him.

In fact, when he knew that Zhai Yaohui could not return home as he had to serve the country, it was these special moments that made him especially proud of his son. On the other hand, his wife would always nag at him.

Therefore, Old Master Zhai could not stand it when Zhai Yaohui reprimanded Zhai Sheng for not staying at home.

“Dad...” Everyone would always obey Zhai Yaohui’s orders when he was in the army. However, he could do nothing about his father. Zhai Yaohui was teaching his son the right way. His father could not always side with Zhai Sheng. “Dad, Zhai Sheng is no longer young. Don’t you hope that he will marry early so that you will have great-grandchildren to play with?”

His father would definitely soften his attitude at the mention of babies.

“What! Are you cursing me?” Old Master Zhai was furious. “Your mom left us at an early age. I promised her that I will live to a hundred years so that I can take a look at the children of Hua Hua and Zhai Sheng. I am strong and healthy. At the very least, I can live for another ten years. I don’t believe that Zhai Sheng will not be married and I will not get to see my great-grandchildren by then. I don’t favor boys over girls. As long as they are Zhai Sheng’s children, I won’t mind if they are boys or girls. Having a great-grandchild may be important, but the daughter of the Qiu family will never do!”

“Why?” Qiu Chenxi was two years younger than Zhai Sheng, and they both played together in the quad since childhood. Zhai Sheng did not have the chance to get to know more friends. The only people that he was in contact with were from the army. There was no chance that he would get to know other girls.

Compared with marrying a stranger, like what people did in ancient times, they at least knew Qiu Chenxi.

If Qiu Chenxi was unsuitable, he had doubts whether he would ever be a grandpa in his life.

“Because my grandson doesn’t like her!” Old Master Zhai said angrily. “Nobody is more important than my grandson. Since my grandson doesn’t like her, it will not do. Besides, I don’t think that the daughter from the Qiu family has a good personality. She doesn’t deserve my grandson, so I don’t agree to this match. Zhai Sheng, you have to work hard. You have to do me proud and find a good girl for yourself. I will stand on your side. As for you, you are not good at choosing, yet you want to teach Zhai Sheng the wrong ways. If you were to choose back then...”

To Old Master Zhai, his son was outstanding in all aspects except that he could not tell which woman was good to him and which was not.

Miao Miao was such a good daughter-in-law, yet Yaohui kept thinking about the daughter-in-law of the Qiu family. He was so shameless!

If Qiu Chenxi was not that woman’s daughter, he did not believe that Yaohui would be so enthusiastic about bringing Qiu Chenxi and Zhai Sheng together.

“Grandpa, rest assured. Zhai Sheng is very smart. He knows what kind of wife he wants.” Zhai Hua, who knew what was going on, finished the last bite of the glutinous rice balls and joined in the conversation. In fact, Zhai Sheng did not need to search anymore. He already had one in mind.

“Zhai Sheng, tell me. Is there someone you like?” Old Master Zhai’s eyes sparkled as soon as he heard that Zhai Sheng had been making progress.

If his grandson had found a girl that he liked, then they should hold the wedding as soon as possible. By next year, he would be able to play with his great-grandchild. If he was lucky, he might be able to watch as his great-grandchildren grow up and go to school!

“Grandpa, there’s no hurry. I will definitely bring you along.” Zhai Sheng did not change the topic. Instead, he told Old Master Zhai very seriously that he would bring his grandpa to take a look eventually.

“When will it be...” Zhai Yaohui had thought that Zhai Sheng was talking about the future. He did not realize that his son meant that he already had a girl that he liked. “Zhai Sheng, your grandpa may dote on you, but you must not lie to him.”

“Zhai Sheng is willing to cajole me, and I am willing to be coaxed by him.” Old Master Zhai jumped to Zhai Sheng’s defenses.

“Dad...” Zhai Yaohui had nothing to say.

Old Master Zhai snorted. “It’s useless. No matter what, I have the final say. Nobody can force my grandson. And don’t use what happened back then to rebut me. If you are half as good as Zhai Sheng in judging people, your mom and I would not have to worry for you back then. If you were not my son, do you think you could marry Miao Miao?”

Miao Miao was a virtuous wife. If Zhai Yaohui was not his own son, he would not have agreed to let such a good girl like Miao Miao to be married to him.

In fact, Old Master Zhai was the one who brought Zhai Yaohui and Miao Miao together.

When Old Master Zhai was lecturing Zhai Yaohui, the rest of the family kept silent. Miao Jing, who was brought up several times in the conversation, dared not interrupt either.

As a daughter-in-law, Miao Jing should feel happy that her father-in-law was on her side.

But whenever Old Master Zhai sided with her, although Miao Jing was moved that he defended her, she felt disheartened at Zhai Yaohui’s attitude as well. After so many years, even if his heart was made of stone, he should have been touched by her actions.

Unfortunately, he kept thinking of that woman.

Zhai Yaohui failed to discuss the engagement between Qiu Chenxi and Zhai Sheng. Instead, he was lectured by Old Master Zhai. In the end, Zhai Yaohui could only continue reading his newspapers.

“Zhai Sheng, have some glutinous rice balls. Your mom made it herself. There is minced meat inside.” After giving his son a lecture, Old Master Zhai pulled Zhai Sheng to his side and gave him a bowl of glutinous rice balls.

Zhai Sheng, who was tall and well-built, looked very humble in front of his grandpa who was slightly hunched. The two of them got along very well.

Zhai Hua gave Zhai Sheng a thumbs-up. Luckily, he asked his grandpa to come back in time. Otherwise, her father and mother might decide to take actions first before reporting. They might have agreed on the marriage between Zhai Sheng and Qiu Chenxi even before their grandpa visited them.

Zhai Hua did not really care who her sister-in-law would be.

Qiao Nan was good, but Qiu Chenxi was not too far off as well. Most importantly, Qiu Chenxi's family was worthy of her brother.

However, in their house, it was not good enough to come from a good background. What mattered most was whether Zhai Sheng liked the girl or not.

Zhai Sheng ate the glutinous rice balls made by his mother. There was a sparkle of light in his eyes.

#### Chapter 336: Is Your Liking More Important Than That of Ours

Regarding the matter between Qiu Chenxi and him, if he could settle the internal conflict in his family and put forth a unanimous stand to outsiders, the Qiu family would not be able to create any waves on this.

"Zhai Hua, come with me to the bedroom. I have something to ask you." After the family finished the sweet dumpling soup in the morning, Miao Jing let the housekeeper clean up the table as she pulled Zhai Hua into the bedroom. "I've something to ask you. You have to answer me honestly."

Zhai Hua felt uneasy as she distanced herself away from her biological mother. "Mom, tell me directly what you have in mind."

"Does Zhai Sheng have a lady that he likes? Zhai Sheng is always in the army and doesn't have much opportunity to interact with girls. Don't tell me it's a female soldier in the army? Do you know who she is?"

Zhai Yaohui did not realize anything. Nevertheless, as a mother, how could Miao Jing not be able to tell from the tone of her son?

In the past, when they brought up the matter regarding Qiu Chenxi and him, he was expressionless, not to mention having any reaction. It was as if he were not the person who would be marrying Qiu Chenxi. However, he reacted today!

If something was not happening to the son, would Miao Jing, as a mother, believe it?

“How’s her family situation? If everything is good, why is the family willing to send the daughter to the army to suffer? Is it because her family situation is not too good?” If that was truly the case, she really had to think of a way.

“Mom, what are you talking about?” Zhai Hua pulled a long face. “I’m a female soldier too. Is the situation in my family not good enough? Moreover, as long as Zhai Sheng likes her, does the girl’s family situation matter? When you said this, didn’t you feel like you were slapping yourself, Mom?”

Zhai Hua did not understand. Her mother’s family background was not good too. She had a lot of poor family members and unfortunately, they were a problematic lot.

When her mother despised others, why didn’t she think of herself first?

Sometimes, Zhai Hua could not help thinking that her parent’s relationship had always been so-so. Her mother was anxious about her father, but her father never seemed to care about her mother. Was it because of this temper of her mother?

Anyway, Zhai Hua expressed that her mother was good in everything except in this aspect of her character which she could not accept.

“You don’t understand.” Miao Jing’s expression changed. She clearly understood what Zhai Hua was implying. “You have to remember that I’m doing this for the sake of Zhai Sheng and you. You’re still too young and don’t know what kind of choices are the best for you. Mom dotes on both of you.”

Zhai Hua directly interrupted Miao Jing. “Mom, I’ll listen to whatever you say but not this kind of matter. Forget about the past. If Zhai Sheng really has someone that he likes and doesn’t take a liking to Qiu Chenxi, yet you insist to force Zhai Sheng to be with Qiu Chenxi, then that won’t do! Mom, what if I fall in love with a man whose family background is worse than mine, or even

incomparable? In the future, are you going to stop me too? Would you rather that I spend my whole life with the family background of the other party than to allow me to find someone that I like to happily spend my life with? Are you looking for a son-in-law or power?"

Miao Jing's expression changed greatly. She lifted her hands and nearly slapped her daughter's face. "How could you say that about me? I'm your mother!"

"Precisely. You're my mom, and that's why I'm angry. You're my closest kin. Don't you wish to see Zhai Sheng and I find our happiness? The other party is someone that we're going to spend our life with in the future. Mom, do you think it's more important that you like him, or us?" The matter between Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan rang a warning bell to Zhai Hua.

In actual fact, Zhai Hua had already realized this problem a long time ago. It was just that she did not have an opportunity to talk to Miao Jing about this.

As Zhai Yaohui's reputation and status were high, he was often not at home. Miao Jing was also anxious about her husband. When Zhai Hua and Zhai Sheng were young, she often left the two children under the care of the auntie in the house while she accompanied Zhai Yaohui to various places everywhere.

As a result, Zhai Hua had never had a good chat with Miao Jing.

"Hua Hua, you... do you also have someone that you like? And this person's family background is not too good?" Miao Jing's face turned pale. She could not care much about her daughter's attitude when she spoke to her. She anxiously asked, "When did it happen? Why didn't I know? How long have you known that person?"

"Know?" Zhai Hua sneered. "Mom, to put it bluntly, I'm your only daughter. You don't even know when my first menstrual period came, and neither were you there to keep me company. You're always with Dad."

Zhai Hua let out a sigh and asked herself to calm down. "Even if I wish to tell you, you have to give me a chance to do so. Mom, I don't wish to mention much about what happened when I was a child. I'm not blaming you, but I hope that you can respect the opinions and choices of Zhai Sheng and me."

"Hua Hua, are you blaming me?" Miao Jing's pale lips shivered. She looked as if she had taken a big blow.

“I blamed you before. I blamed you when I was just a child. But I don’t blame you anymore.” Zhai Hua said very calmly, “There are all kinds of fish in the sea. In comparison, although you’re not always with Zhai Sheng and me, you didn’t treat us too badly. At the very least, you wanted to but you’re unable to take care of us.”

Zhai Sheng and Zhai Hua, this pair of brother and sister, grew up with and had been through difficult times with each other. Although the two of them had never stopped bickering, their relationship was extremely good. The important place that they had in each other’s heart had exceeded that of Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing.

Zhai Hua was concerned for Zhai Sheng in everything as if she were a little mother.

Each time Zhai Hua had something that she could not handle, Zhai Sheng was the one who stood up to help Zhai Hua like a little father.

Miao Jing, this mother, hardly appeared in the lives of the two children. She rarely left an impression. Although she could not take care of the two children, at the very least, she did not harm the children.

In the past, Zhai Hua could understand her mother rationally but had never forgiven her mother emotionally. However, when she saw Ding Jiayi’s situation, Zhai Hua then felt that her mother was actually considered quite good.

It was just that Miao Jing’s opposition toward Zhai Sheng had aroused Zhai Hua’s sense of danger and dissatisfaction.

At the sound of ‘dong dong’, Miao Jing turned away. “I need to go out to attend to some matters.”

After leaving this sentence hurriedly, Miao Jing headed straight to the entrance of the house and asked the driver to drive out the car. She then got into the car and left.

Miao Jing ran out of the house abruptly, stunning Old Master Zhai. He then shivered and shouted at Zhai Yaohui. “See the sin that you’ve committed. If you’re not a father now, and if it was twenty years ago, I would definitely hit you with a whip. You’re asking for it!”

Zhai Yaohui's thin lips formed a line. His cold and stiff brows moved but he did not refute Old Master Zhai at all.

“Grandpa, I'll accompany you to the study room to play chess.” Zhai Sheng's expression was similar to Zhai Yaohui's. It was equally cold and forbidding. It made people distance themselves. It was just that Zhai Sheng's anger was mostly directed at Zhai Yaohui, his father.

“Right. Grandpa feels uncomfortable when I see your dad. The family is fine, yet he had to do this again and again. I'm so furious.”

### Chapter 337: Qiao Nan, I Have Something to Ask You

Failing to appreciate the happiness in his life. He was talking about his incapable son.

On the other hand, while Zhai Sheng had a rather unhappy breakfast, Qiao Nan was delightfully having the breakfast of love prepared for her by Zhai Sheng. She not only felt the warmth in her tummy but also her heart.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

There was the sound of someone banging loudly on the door. Qiao Nan had to get up from her warm and snug bed. “Dad? A-Auntie Miao?”

Qiao Nan thought that her father had finally woke up and come back after realizing that she was not in the house of the Qiao family. However, Qiao Nan never expected that Miao Jing, the spouse of the chief of the army, would come knocking on her door in the morning of the first day of the Lunar New Year.

It was the first day of the Lunar New Year. Many boot-lickers must be crowding the main entrance of the house of the Zhai family. Their purpose was to wish the chief and his spouse in the Zhai family a happy new year.

Most probably, the Zhai family was overcrowded. As the lady owner of the Zhai's residence, why would Auntie Miao come to her house?

“Miao... Auntie Miao, you... Why did you come here?” At the thought that her son was not at his own home during the Lunar New Year’s Eve as he was taking care of her and helping her wash so many things, Qiao Nan had a guilty conscience.

Did Auntie Miao discover something?

At the thought of the bad impression that Auntie Miao had of her, Qiao Nan had a headache. So, Auntie Miao picked the first day of the Lunar New Year to come to her house to warn her to stay further away from Brother Zhai?

“You spoke quite coherently last time. You’ve become a stutter after the Lunar New Year?” Miao Jing’s eyes were slightly red, and her tone was not too good. The tone was quite strong.

When she heard Miao Jing’s tone, Qiao Nan felt guiltier. “You... do you want to come in and sit down? If you have something to say, take your time to tell me.”

She had just agreed to try and get along with Brother Zhai. Within a few hours, the matter between her and Brother Zhai had been exposed and they would be forced to break up with each other. This would be a depressing Lunar New Year.

“Why are you blocking me from entering the house?” Having that said, Miao Jing pulled the corners of her lips embarrassingly. She realized that she was venting her anger on Qiao Nan and quickly softened her tone. “It’s cold outside. You don’t look too well. Let’s go into the house quickly.”

“Oh.” Qiao Nan shut the door. She followed behind Miao Jing abidingly like a little daughter-in-law.

“Sit.”

“Oh.”

“I’ve something to ask you. Reply to me honestly.”

“...” Qiao Nan’s head felt like it had been beaten by a stick. She felt dizzy and her hands could not stop perspiring. “Sure.”

“You’ll be eighteen years old after the Lunar New Year. You should already have had your first menstrual period?”

“Ah? Oh, yes, yes.” Did Auntie Miao come to punish her for her crime because Brother Zhai helped her wash the bed sheets and quilt? At the thought of the son that she raised helping another woman wash things, Qiao Nan felt that she would not feel good either if she were in Miao Jing’s shoes.

Qiao Nan took a few deep breaths and shut her eyes. She looked as if she was waiting for her judgment.

“You... When it first came, how did it feel?” After a while, Miao Jing hesitatingly asked a ridiculous question. “You’re still young and should still remember it.”

“Remember...” She remembered nonsense.

Her first menstrual period?

To Qiao Nan, the menses that she had two years ago was definitely not the first time. Her first period was an occurrence in her previous life.

“It’s good that you remember. Tell me about your situation. Your mom... I don’t think she took good care of you. When it came, were you afraid? Your mom wouldn’t guide you, but what about your sister?”

“It wasn’t in time for me to be afraid.” Qiao Nan smiled bitterly.

“What do you mean by that?” Miao Jing was not satisfied with this reply.

“When I said it wasn’t in time to be afraid, it’s because I helped wash my sister’s stained clothes when she had her first menstrual period. Therefore, I already knew that a lady will bleed when she grows up. When my time came, I’ve already washed the stained clothes for my sister for three years.” At the sight of Miao Jing’s expression, Qiao Nan gave her another reply. “However, when my sister had her first menstrual period, I was scared. Women have to bleed. At that time, I was thinking about why that had to be the case. There’s so much blood. Was my sister sick? Would she die? Would I become like that in the future too?”

Because of that, one year after she quit school in her previous life, her menses finally came.

At that time, she already knew that women would actually not die when their menses came. However, it was undeniable that Qiao Nan would feel panicky without a female senior to accompany and guide her along.

“Your mom didn’t guide you. Don’t you blame her?”

“My mom would not bother about me. I already knew about it before that day came. So, I was already prepared. There’s nothing to blame her about. It’s good that I knew a little about the situation. Auntie Miao, why are you asking this?” Qiao Nan did not really understand. Auntie Miao kept asking her whether she was afraid and whether she blamed her mother. It did not seem like she came for Brother Zhai’s matter.

“Qiao Nan, do you hate your mom?”

“At the very least, I dislike her. We’re not close.”

“...” Miao Jing looked defeated. She covered her face with both hands.

Her husband’s heart did not belong to her. In the end, she did not even take proper care of her two children. She was such a failure.

The miserable state of Miao Jing made Qiao Nan frowned. “Auntie Miao, did I say something wrong?”

“You didn’t say anything wrong. I was wrong.”

“If you did something wrong, change it then.”

“Change? It’s too late.” Hua Hua was already twenty-five years old and a grown-up lady. She would not need a mother who did not fulfill her duty to keep her company anymore.

“Why is it too late? It’s not like the person is not around anymore. If there’s a will, there’s a way.” So, after Auntie Miao said so much, the problem was actually with Brother Zhai and Sister Zhai Hua?

“Then, if your mother wants to make it up to you, will you still be able to accept her without any reservation and be close to your mom?”

“...” Qiao Nan rolled her eyes. “Auntie Miao, are you sure you want to smear yourself and insist to compare yourself with my mom? My Mom... Auntie Miao, can you not talk about my mom? Otherwise, I’ll be the one feeling depressed. Auntie Miao, please don’t be silly and use my mom as an example. It’s not suitable. You’ve seen for yourself one of the things that my mom did to me. But in the end, she’s still my mom. When she’s old, I still have to support and take care of her. I’ve to send her to the hospital if she’s sick. Auntie Miao, other than neglecting Brother Zhai and Sister Zhai Hua, did you torture them like what my mom did to me? You’re too depressed. That’s why you keep bringing up my mom.”

“That’s true. I’m much better than your mom.” After hearing what Qiao Nan said, Miao Jing finally regained some confidence.

Miao Jing gained some confidence but Qiao Nan felt depressed. Did she misguide Miao Jing? Why did she feel like punching Miao Jing for her words?

“Tell me, can I really change if I do so now?” Would Hua Hua and Zhai Sheng still be willing to accept her as their mother?

“Auntie Miao, you’re asking the wrong person for this question.”

“Asking the wrong person? Then, who should I ask?”

Chapter 338: Be Selfish Once for the Sake of Her Happiness

“Ask yourself. I’m not you. How will I know how determined you are to change and how long you can persevere? You’re the one who’s going to change, not me. Auntie Miao, you’re asking me if you can do it. You’re kidding me.”

“Qiao Nan, if you’re married one day, to you, is your husband or children more important?”

Children!

Qiao Nan was able to reply to that question without even thinking.

Qiao Nan had just opened her mouth but Miao Jing smiled. “I’m so silly. Why did I ask you this question? You’re still young. You don’t even know when you’re getting married, not to mention children. I’m really muddle-headed to have asked you this question.”

“...” Qiao Nan pursed her lips and rolled her eyes hard.

What did it mean that she did not know when she was getting married? If she was willing to agree, she could get married immediately. Furthermore, she would be married to the son of the woman that was sitting opposite her right now!

Qiao Nan’s action of rolling her eyes with dissatisfaction amused Miao Jing. “You’re already eighteen years old. You’re a grown-up lady, yet you’re still so childish in your manner. Are you usually ostracized by others when you’re at school?”

“Auntie Miao, do you know what is called the ‘ace student’? As a top student, I’m still quite popular at school.” Although she’s not liked by everyone, there’s still quite a number who liked her and treated her well.

“Qiao Nan, do you have any guy that you like at school?”

“...” Qiao Nan’s leg slipped and she nearly fell. “Auntie Miao, did you come here today to do a population survey? The topic has changed too swiftly. Is it appropriate?”

“Do you?”

“I have someone that I like.” But he’s not from the school, and he’s your son.

“What if, I’m saying what if, your dad does not think that the guy suits you and thinks that he knows another guy that’s more suitable for you? For the sake of your happiness, how can your dad bring the boy and you together?”

“…”

“I’m asking you.”

“Auntie Miao, are you sure you’re asking me and not my dad? Why are you asking me what my dad should do?”

“Don’t be so dimwitted. You can change your identity and put yourself in your dad’s shoes. Or you can think of it in this way. If you become a mother in the future and encounter such a situation, what will you do?”

Qiao Nan’s brows stiffened and three imaginary vertical lines appeared on her forehead. On her head, the word ‘awkward’ seemed to have been carved.

In other words, Auntie Miao, who would possibly be her future mother-in-law, was seeking her advice for ways to double-cross herself?

“Auntie Miao, I’m only eighteen years old. I’m still too young to be a mother.” After enduring for a long time, Qiao Nan could only say this as she did not feel like coaxing and lying to Miao Jing.

Anyway, if she had to provide some ideas to let Brother Zhai be together with another woman, she was definitely unable to do that.

Besides, when Auntie Miao encountered such a problem, shouldn’t she look for friends of the same age to chat and analyze to find a solution? She was just a child, but Auntie Miao treated her like one of her sisterly friends. Was it appropriate to ask her about this?

When Qiao Nan said that, Miao Jing was stunned too.

Yes, water must have flooded her brains. It was not appropriate to pose this kind of question to a child.

Miao Jing could not understand too. When she encountered any problems, she would first come to Qiao Nan and it seemed like she wanted to seek Qiao Nan's advice. Was she muddle-headed by anger?

"I'm just asking you casually. You can reply casually too. You've borrowed my place to study for a year. Reply to this question and treat it as repayment to our family." Miao Jing, who felt awkward, turned red. She was as embarrassed as a young lady.

"Since you said that... Auntie Miao, are you really so certain that your children will not find happiness if they marry the person that they like?" How much did Auntie Miao know? Was she deliberately testing her or did she hope that she would withdraw from the relationship on her own accord? Was the conversation that they had earlier for the sake of bringing up this topic?

"Of course I'm absolutely sure. I've seen such real cases." She was that living example. She didn't want Hua Hua and Zhai Sheng to follow in her footsteps. There was too much suffering.

Qiao Nan ground her teeth. Should she persuade? Should she be selfish?

"Auntie Miao, the example that you mentioned, how's their situation now? Is their life worse than mine?"

"Not really."

"There you have it. There's a saying that one man's meat is another's poison. It's the same vice versa. The example that you've seen may not be representative of everything. If you don't try, how will you know that the outcome is definitely bad? What if it's good? No two individuals are the same in this world. Therefore, when facing the same situation, there'll be a different outcome for different people. Auntie Miao, don't you feel that you're too presumptuous?"

After being in a long state of dilemma, Qiao Nan decided to help herself and be selfish for once.

Her mother was biased toward Qiao Zijin, and her father favored the weaker one. No one favored her.

If she did not favor and dote on herself, who would still love her in this world?

“This...” Miao Jing became more hesitant.

“Auntie Miao, actually, you don’t need to feel anxious. Everyone is still young. The man that you mentioned may not marry the woman that he likes immediately. There’s still a long time to get to know each other. If they are really suitable for each other, there’s no need to deter them and treat the other party as a bad person. If they’re not suitable, they’ll break up even if you don’t persuade them to do so. You don’t need to do anything.”

“But there’s another lady...” Qiu Chenxi’s family background was good. She was good-looking and had many admirers. If not for the fact that Qiu Chenxi liked Zhai Sheng, given her qualities, she would already have a boyfriend.

What if the reality proved that Zhai Sheng was not compatible with the lady that he liked? Yes, they would break up eventually. But at that juncture, what if Qiu Chenxi already had a boyfriend or was going to get married? Wouldn’t Zhai Sheng lose at both ends?

When she heard Miao Jing’s worries, Qiao Nan let out a long sigh. “Auntie Miao, how lousy is that guy that he only has two ladies to choose from? Is the lady that you mentioned so outstanding? Is she the number one in the world such that it’ll be a loss to all the guys if they don’t marry her? Perhaps it’s a loss to the girl for not waiting for the guy?”

Toward the end of her speech, Qiao Nan’s tongue was nearly entangled.

Now, she was most curious. Who exactly was that extremely outstanding and beautiful rival in love whom Auntie Miao was so anxious about?

Given the situation of the Zhai family, most people would take the initiative and find ways to be in-laws with them. Was there such a good lady and in-law that would make the Zhai family so anxious and afraid to lose?

Miao Jing patted her legs with strength. “That’s right. Why didn’t I think of that?”

Putting aside that she was the daughter of that woman, there were many other ladies with a similar background as Qiu Chenxi in the quad.

## Chapter 339: The Karma of Kidnapping Other People's Son

Even if she did not want Zhai Sheng to follow in Zhai Yaohui's and her footsteps and suffer for life, she could also introduce other better ladies to Zhai Sheng.

Her son was so outstanding. If Qiu Chenxi was anxious to get married, that would be her loss. She dared to bet that if his son was willing to marry, there would be many good ladies who were willing to be married to him. Why was she so anxious?

Qiu Chenxi was popular. Was her son unpopular?

Having thought about it clearly, Miao Jing comfortably leaned back. "I'm hungry. What food do you have? Quickly take them out."

Qiao Nan lifted her head and held her neck. She felt more sullen.

What was this Auntie Miao trying to do? She treated her like a psychologist. After asking her numerous questions, she not only did not remunerate her but also wanted her to serve her food and drinks. Was this the karma of kidnapping Auntie Miao's son?

An hour ago, she just nodded in agreement and kidnapped other people's son. Didn't this karma come too quickly?

Qiao Nan silently meditated. She had no choice but to continue waiting on Miao Jing.

"There's only white porridge?" Miao Jing shriveled her lips and had a look of disdain.

"Auntie Miao, I believe the Zhai family has everything. Why don't you get the chauffeur to send you back? You can eat anything that you wish then."

"Forget it. The guest should adhere to the host's convenience. White porridge it is." Miao Jing took over the white porridge from Qiao Nan and started drinking it. The porridge was slightly bland but extremely thick. After drinking the top layer of the rice soup, her tummy felt extremely comfortable. "It tastes fine."

“Haha.” Of course, it’s fine. This was prepared by Brother Zhai. Auntie Miao did not realize that it was cooked by her own son?

Qiao Nan did not know that besides Zhai Hua, who had taken Zhai Sheng’s porridge before when she was having a high fever, no one else, including Old Master Zhai, had the fortune to taste his porridge, not to mention Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing.

Miao Jing did not even know that Zhai Sheng knew how to cook, not to mention tasting the food prepared by her son.

After disentangling the knot in her heart and filling the stomach that was empty when she left the house in the morning, Miao Jing’s brows relaxed and her attitude softened much. “Alright, it’s late. I should go back. You look unwell. Rest at home. Don’t neglect your health just because you’re young. Young people don’t know how to cherish themselves.”

Multiple exclamation marks floated in Qiao Nan’s heart. She scolded in her heart: What the hell was this.

Who was the one who dug her out from the bed? Who held on to her and treated her like an understanding sister and grabbed her for a chat?

As Qiao Nan’s emotions were affected, she felt a hot flush at her lower body.

“Don’t need to send me off. I’ll leave on my own. Go and rest.” Miao Jing waved her hands. She did not bring any rainbow. She left without a care, leaving behind Qiao Nan who was red with fury.

Miao Jing finally left. Qiao Nan waddled like a duck as she clamped her legs and walked slowly toward the toilet.

When she saw that her pad was extremely wet as expected, Qiao Nan felt extreme grief and resentment.

Yesterday, in the middle of the night, she fainted due to menstrual cramp as Brother Zhai’s words gave her a big fright. Today, she was ‘bleeding profusely’ after being questioned by Auntie Miao.

She never knew that her menses would become heavier with the changes in her emotions. It was terrible...

She kidnapped other people's son and this was her 'karma'. She dared to ask Brother Zhai, who also kidnapped other people's daughter, whether his life was carefree afterward.

Qiao Nan yawned. She did not know if she was especially tired because of her heavy menses on this occasion. Once Miao Jing left, Qiao Nan closed her eyes and fell onto the bed. As she covered herself with the blanket, she felt warm and fell asleep soundly within three minutes.

"Miao Miao, you're back?" At the sight of Miao Jing coming back in less than one and a half hours' time, Old Master Zhai was extremely surprised. He had thought that Miao Miao would be back only in the afternoon.

Almost everyone in the Zhai family was used to it. If Miao Jing was in a bad mood, she liked to leave the house for an entire day and would not come home unless the sky was dark. However, when the night came, Miao Jing would be like a house swallow. She would definitely come back home and never stayed overnight outside.

"Miao Miao, do you feel better now?" When he saw Miao Jing, who left with a gloomy face and returned with a bright one, Old Master Zhai was even more shocked. Where did Miao Miao go? Her mood had lifted?

Miao Jing sat down and replied. "Yes, it's all good. Dad, I've made you worry."

"Everyone belongs to the same family. Why are you so polite?" Old Master Zhai was embarrassed to say this. Because he gave birth to a son who sinned but he picked Miao Miao, this daughter-in-law.

Ring! Ring! The phone beside Miao Jing rang at this moment. Miao Jing simply picked it up. "Hello. Oh, it's Qiu Chenxi. Is something the matter? It's the first day of the Lunar New Year today, so it's not convenient to go out. Another day? I'll see you on another day, then. Bye."

"..."

"..."

“...”

When the members of the Zhai family heard this phone conversation, everyone was shocked.

Zhai Yaohui accidentally turned the newspaper in his hands upside down and Zhai Hua blinked her eyes in disbelief. In the past, when Qiu Chenxi asked her mother out to ‘strengthen’ their relationships, her mother would always agree. She did not even bother if the date and time were convenient. It was as if Qiu Chenxi was the senior. Today, her mother actually rejected, rejected, rejected!

Important matters must be mentioned thrice!

How was that possible!

“Zhai Sheng, come over!” Zhai Hua curled her fingers at Zhai Sheng. Although Zhai Sheng disliked this action, he walked over nevertheless. “Why do I feel that Mom has been behaving very oddly recently? Now, each time she’s out when her mood is sour, she’ll be back within two hours and not the whole day. Moreover, her mood will become better when she’s back. What is happening?”

Most importantly, each time her mother was out, there was a change in her character.

The pair of high-heeled shoes that her father gave to her mother was not suitable, but her mother not only treated it as a treasure but also wore it and maintained it at every opportunity. When she came back that day, the heels of the shoes were all broken. Her mother did not even mend it. She said she wanted to lock it up. From that day onward, she had not seen that pair of high-heeled shoes.

Her mother clearly disliked Qiu Chenxi but obsessively treated her as her future daughter-in-law. Her mother would not listen to her no matter how she persuaded. She treated Qiu Chenxi so well as if she was praying to her ancestors.

It was truly ‘the mystery of leaving the house for a walk’.

“Zhai Sheng, should we follow Mom when she leaves the house for a walk next time?”

“You can be a fool yourself. Don’t include me in your silly acts,” Zhai Sheng said with sarcasm.

“What? Don’t think I really won’t bash you up. Grandpa is here. He will help me.” Zhai Hua almost spat blood. “I don’t believe that you’re not curious. If the situation is not right, I’m a little worried.” She was afraid that the character that influenced her mother so greatly would be problematic and dangerous to the Zhai family.

#### Chapter 340: The Game of Go Between Mother and Son

To the Zhai family, it was certainly a good thing that someone could provide guidance and point Miao Jing in the right direction. However, it would be a major problem if the other party had an ulterior motive.

“Do you think Mom doesn’t even have this little sense of judgment?”

“It’s hard to say.” Zhai Hua knitted her brows. When her mother was rational, she was definitely a smart woman. However, when she’s in the blind alley, her intelligence was completely ‘offline’.

“What’s there to talk about?” Miao Jing, who just came into the room, happened to hear Zhai Hua’s last sentence. “Your grandpa is still outside and the two of you are hiding in the bedroom to chat. Is this appropriate? Is it good to leave your dad and grandpa outside to be hostile with each other?”

Zhai Hua felt a little guilty. She heaved a sigh of relief when she saw that Miao Jing seemed to have heard only her last sentence. “I’ll go and keep Grandpa company by playing chess!”

“Are you accompanying your grandpa to play chess or is it your grandpa accompanying you?” Miao Jing immediately smiled. Her father-in-law was good at playing chess, but Hua Hua was a ‘spoiler’. She would retract three moves with each move she made.

“I’m the one accompanying Grandpa.” Zhai Hua straightened her neck. “Mom, I’m not talking to you anymore. I’m going to look for Grandpa.”

Just as she finished talking bad about her biological mother, the latter appeared.

Although Miao Jing might not have heard anything, Zhai Hua could not help feeling guilty. She simply ran off and left Zhai Sheng to clean up the mess.

“Zhai Sheng, Mom wants to talk to you about something.”

“Speak.”

“You’re still young. Mom will not ask you a lot of other questions, and neither do I wish to ask. Mom just wants to tell you that you’re still young and should give that lady and yourself more opportunities and time to understand each other. That lady is definitely younger than you. Do you remember President Mao’s words? Mom certainly trusts that you’re a responsible man who knows how to restrain yourself.”

Miao Jing was not afraid of anything else. She was only afraid that her son and the young lady would taste the forbidden fruit before she could even find out who that young lady was. This might cause an unplanned premarital pregnancy.

If that truly happened, given the temperament of the Zhai family, that lady had to be married into the family.

The possibility of having a blissful marriage for such an impulsive and hasty union was very low.

He did not wish to delay her son’s future or let him ruin the young lady’s life.

“Sure, I’ll be with her for another two years. After two years, I’ll bring her home for her to meet all of you.”

“Two years? Sure.” Miao Jing readily agreed. She thought that she had bought some time and gained two years. She did not know that Qiao Nan was only in the first year of senior high school. Not to mention two years, it would be at least two and a half years before Qiao Nan would bring up the subject of marriage to Zhai Sheng.

Hence, Zhai Sheng did not compromise. In reality, he had to make concessions.

Miao Jing’s mood lifted as she thought that she had achieved her objective. She smiled. “Son, we have a pact here. Mom will not stand in the way of your relationship in these two years. However,

you're a man, a soldier, and also a member of the Zhai family. You have to maintain your performance in the army. Otherwise, even if Mom agrees, your dad and grandpa will not do so. You should understand even if I don't tell you what is important to the male members of the Zhai family and what do they care about. If your performance in the army is affected because of that lady, at that time, Mom is not the one who stands in your way, but you're the one who ruins your own chance. Understand?"

"Yes." Zhai Sheng was trying to hold back that bright flash of shrewdness beneath his eyes. Her mother used this tactic on him?

"Fine, we'll do that then." Having achieved both her minor and major goals, Miao Jing was in a much brighter mood.

As the spouse of a soldier, Miao Jing was clearly aware of the hardships that came with it. It was a small issue to endure physical hardship. But most importantly, the wife of a soldier had to endure loneliness. When the country and the citizens needed them, the soldier would have to rush to the front line.

This type of situation meant that he would possibly not be around when the family member needed him.

Not every woman would be able to endure the loneliness and solitude of not having her husband by her side every time she needed him.

Zhai Sheng was only twenty-two years old. Miao Jing estimated that the young lady in a relationship with him was about twenty years old.

She was at a beautiful age and her son had taken a liking to her. This young lady was definitely not bad-looking.

How many times could her son meet with the lady in a year? It would not exceed the ten fingers of her hands. If the lady had many pursuers, she did not believe that the lady would always remain true to his son. It was not that she was not confident of her son, but the truth of the matter hurt.

They were only dating. If that lady could not endure it, they would break up eventually to avoid everyone suffering. This was because she would only endure more hardships if she truly became the wife of a soldier.

Miao Jing had endured the hardships for years. Hence, she was clearly aware of the bitterness of it.

Miao Jing thought that it would be difficult to resolve the problem regarding her son. She did not expect that it would be so easy. Miao Jing felt much more relaxed. “Do you know where Qiao Nan stays at now?”

“Yes.”

“That’s great. I think the body constituent of Qiao Nan, this young lady, is quite weak. Your grandpa is back. A lot of stuff has been piling up in the house. Pick some suitable ones for Qiao Nan later and send them to her.”

Zhai Sheng raised his brows as his lips curled into a smile. “Mom, how did you know that Qiao Nan is unwell?” Nan Nan just had her menses yesterday, so her mother must have seen Nan Nan today. “Mom, did you go to Nan Nan’s place just now?”

“Qiao Nan is alone at home. Can’t I go there to chat with her and keep her company?” The son was too smart. As a mother, she really worried at times.

“Fine!” A hidden and cunning smile flashed across the pursed lips of Zhai Sheng. There was a feeling of a military ruffian within the righteous look on his face. “Then, I’ll send the stuff over to her now?”

“Sure.” The earlier she ate them, the more nutritious it would be. “You should pick some peaches or something. It’s more appropriate, right? Ah, I’m so foolish. I might as well get your sister to pick the stuff. After all, your sister is a lady. She’ll be more aware of Qiao Nan’s situation.” Miao Jing stood up. “Right, I forgot about one more matter. Keep the keys properly. Qiao Nan is indeed a good child. But please don’t give the keys to any Tom, Dick, Harry in the future. Not everyone is as honest and pure as Qiao Nan.”

“I won’t.” Holding the keys, Zhai Sheng was not angry for the first time.

How could he possibly pass his house keys to outsiders? He would only pass it to his own people.

“Grandpa, wait, I’m not making this move anymore. I... I’ll take this step. The earlier move is not counted.” Just as the mother and son pair came out of the study room, they heard Zhai Hua retracting her move in the chess game.

“Why aren’t you making this move now? Alright, alright, I’ll give in to you one more time.” Old Master Zhai helplessly placed the chess piece back into the original position and waited for Zhai Hua to make her next move. When Zhai Hua made the next move, Old Master Zhai’s face turned black. “After playing chess with me for so long, you’ve not improved by a bit. This move is not better than the earlier one.”