

## RTAMM 381

### Chapter 381: Punished to Sleep in Study Room

Recently, Yang Yang had been very well-behaved, and he did not get into arguments with Baoguo either. Their relationship had improved, thus it should not be difficult.

After speaking with Wang Qinglin on the phone, Zhu Qin made a phone call to Elder Zhu. “Hello, Dad, it’s me. There’s this situation that I have to tell you, please let Brother know as well. I don’t know how these people do their work, but they are paid by the government, yet they do not do their work. If Qinglin is affected by them, I will not let this matter rest.”

Wang Qinglin had been talking about this project for quite some time. He was very ambitious and confident. He believed that after finishing this project, given his political achievements, there would be chances of him getting promoted this year.

When Zhu Qin married Wang Qinglin, she was actually marrying down.

At that time, the Wang family was not as well-to-do as the Zhu family. Regardless, Zhu Qin had taken a fancy to Wang Qinglin, and she married him as he was good to her.

However, Zhu Qin had become accustomed to the fact that whenever Wang Qinglin met with any trouble, she would always go to the Zhu family for help. Zhu Qin did not find anything wrong with that.

“Is that so? I don’t know much about these things. I will tell your brother about it. He will make the decision.” It was rare that his daughter called him, but Elder Zhu was unhappy when he learned that it was regarding his son-in-law.

At the other end of the phone, Zhu Qin smiled. “Dad, are you joking with me? There’s nothing that my brother cannot settle.”

Elder Zhu massaged his forehead. “That is if your brother is willing to. You should know your brother’s temper recently. I can’t do anything about you siding with the Wang family, and I can’t control how your brother behaves as well. Both of you have grown up, and I am old. If there is

anything in the future, settle the problem by yourself. Can you let me have a peace of mind and enjoy my retirement?"

Zhu Qin said guiltily, "Dad, what's wrong with you? It's not good for your health to lose your temper."

"What's wrong? Qin-er, you only know to ask. Why don't you think about it yourself? Whenever Wang Qinglin has any trouble, you will call me for help. Why don't you call your brother directly? Qin-er, do you think that I've become muddle-headed and foolish from old age? Do you think that I do not understand what's going on?" Elder Zhu was unhappy at having to play the role of a messenger for his daughter.

Zhu Qin looked awkward. "Dad, are you in a bad mood today?" She had always called her father for help and he had never rejected her. Why was her father so angry today?

"Fine, I will bring up this matter to your brother. But you must not have too much expectation." Elder Zhu sighed. His children were debts owed in his previous life. "You have grown up, and your husband is your top priority. I can't say anything about it. Your brother has grown up as well, and I can't stop him from doing whatever he wants either. This is the current situation. We shall see how it goes."

Zhu Qin had yet to say a word, and her father had already hung up on her. She could only hear the dial tone from the other side of the phone. "Hey, Dad? Hello?! Did you just hang up on me?" As long as her father spoke up, there was no way that her brother would refuse to help.

Zhu Qin hung up and stared at the phone.

In the end, did her father agree to it or not? What exactly happened to her father?

Zhu Qin was perplexed. When Wang Qinglin came back home at night and asked about this matter, Zhu Qin told him what had happened.

Wang Qinglin took off his clothes and sat down on the bed, deep in his thoughts. "Didn't your dad ask you to give your brother a call? Why don't you call him to ask?" It seemed that Zhu Chengqi still had the final say. The sum of money had already been reserved for him. Initially, it would not take long for him to get the money, and he would be able to do something big by then.

But why was his request disapproved now? Could it be that Zhu Chengqi put a stop to it?

“Sure, but it’s too late now. How about I call my brother tomorrow?”

“Yes, tomorrow will do.”

The Wang family had rested. Over at the other side, Zhai Yaohui, who was rarely at home, gave a call to Zhai Sheng. “Hello, Zhai Sheng.”

“Dad? Is anything the matter?” Zhai Sheng was looking through some information when he picked up the call from Zhai Yaohui.

“I heard that you are in charge of Wang Qinglin’s matter. Why are you?” All along, the Zhai family had nothing to do with the Wang family.

“Grandpa once taught me that as a soldier, we must do practical things for the country and the people, and we must never resort to deception. Since Wang Qinglin dared to play tricks, there is nothing wrong with me withholding the money. I have been through the accounts, and they are full of problems. I could not possibly watch by while he uses the people’s money and engages in such unrealistic projects. Our country is big and we have a lot of talent. If Wang Qinglin is not up to it, we can give others the chance. We can give this power to others instead. Dad, do you think there is a problem?”

When Zhai Yaohui first heard about this, he had thought that Wang Qinglin had provoked Zhai Sheng. However, Zhai Sheng justified himself with valid reasons. There was no way that he could say anything.

As Zhai Sheng’s father, how could Zhai Yaohui not be able to tell which of Zhai Sheng’s words were true and which were not?

All that Zhai Sheng said was to give excuses for this matter.

Zhai Yaohui took off his reading glasses. “Alright, since you don’t wish to say, I won’t force you. But don’t use those excuses to dismiss me. There isn’t a big problem regarding this matter. You just have to know the limits.”

Almost everyone knew that there were problems with Wang Qinglin's accounts.

Nowadays, among the people who worked for the people and the country, most would not be truthful in their accounts. The only difference was how they prepared the accounts and whether they knew their limits.

Wang Qinglin knew his limits. Even if Zhu Chengqi was his relative, he did not go way overboard. Hence, though there was something wrong with his accounts, nobody really cared. After all, they had to take into account the Zhu family.

"Sure. Dad, it's getting late. You should sleep." Zhai Sheng was not surprised that Zhai Yaohui would say this.

Zhai Yaohui hesitated for a moment. "It's still early..."

Zhai Sheng, who was flipping through some information, halted in his tracks. There was a glint of smiles in his eyes. "Is Mom still angry with you and wanted you to sleep in the study room?"

As soon as Zhai Sheng said this, sounds of someone overturning the teacup could be heard from the other side of the phone. "What are you talking about? I meant I want to read through some notes. Alright, I will hang up now!"

After hanging up, Zhai Yaohui cleared up the overturned teacup clumsily. It was late. He did not want to bother the helpers at home since they must have gone to sleep. He had no wish to wake them up.

Looking at the overturned teacup, Zhai Yaohui sighed.

His face turned black when he looked at the bed that he laid out in the study room. Ever since he married Miao Jing, he could not remember the last time that he made his own bed or stacked his own blanket. He almost did not know how to stack them.

Chapter 382: Someone Confessed to Qiao Nan

Miao Jing knew his habits and had spent some time in the army. Hence, she would always fold the blanket into a square shape resembling that of tofu.

Looking at the blanket that he had folded, Zhai Yaohui found it very displeasing.

It was folded into a square shape as well, but he just kept finding faults with it.

Maybe he had been used to the way Miao Jing folded the blanket and thus could not stand the sight of the blanket that he folded himself.

Zhai Yaohui lay down on the bed and covered himself with the blanket, thinking to himself that women were fickle-minded. Back then, Miao Jing liked Qiu Chenxi a lot and felt that she and Zhai Sheng would make a good match. It was the couple's unanimous decision to go ahead with the engagement of the two children. He was not the only one who made the decision.

Who would have thought that Miao Jing would have a sudden change of mind, saying that she was dissatisfied with Qiu Chenxi and objecting strongly to the match?

He remembered the Qiu family visited them on the seventh day of the Lunar New Year to discuss the marriage of the two children, but Miao Jing left with Zhai Sheng, leaving him with Qiu Qin and his wife. Zhai Yaohui turned gloomy at the awkwardness and exasperation that he felt then.

He did not blame Miao Jing for making the situation to be so awkward, yet she lost her temper at him and he ended up being laughed at by his son today.

Zhai Yaohui pulled the blanket in anger. He felt like going back to the room to tell Miao Jing that the room and the bed were not hers alone. He could sleep wherever he pleased!

But after thinking for a long time, Zhai Yaohui abandoned that thought and fell asleep in the study room.

Zhai Yaohui was preoccupied with his quarrel with Miao Jing. Hence, he did not pay much attention to Zhai Sheng.

Otherwise, the father should know the son best.

As long as Zhai Yaohui paid more attention to his son, he would have noticed that things were going on between Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan. They had only been together for barely a month and would have been discovered by Zhai Yaohui.

Qiao Nan, who had her full attention on her studies, did not know that Zhai Sheng had done so much for her.

“Qiao Nan, do you want to go to the library to read books together?” A student who looked decent asked Qiao Nan to go to the library together.

Qiao Nan slanted her head and looked at him. “Sorry, I’m not going.”

When he left, Qiao Nan went back to do her problem sums.

Tang Mengran sat down in Zhu Baoguo’s seat quietly. “Luckily, Zhu Baoguo was called away by the teacher. Otherwise, the boy might not have been this lucky.”

“What do you mean?” Qiao Nan did not understand. “Besides, I am the one who is unlucky.” She had been asked by many boys to go to the library with them.

Qiao Nan did not understand why they must go to the library and not stay in the classroom to study instead. It was such a waste of time to go to the library.

If the boys were interested in going to the library, they should ask their own classmates.

She did not know any of the boys who asked her to go to the library with them.

This was what made her perplexed.

Tang Mengran cupped her face. “For goodness sake, Nan Nan, do you really not understand or are you pretending?”

“What do you mean?” Qiao Nan knitted her eyebrows.

“Oh my god, do you really think that the boys asked you to go to the library just to read the books?” Tang Mengran widened her eyes in disbelief. Who told her that Nan Nan had both high IQ and EQ? Given what she said just now, she seemed to have low emotional intelligence!

“Not for reading? That... impossible!” Qiao Nan belatedly realized what the boys’ real intentions were. “The school does not allow us to be in a relationship. This is Ping Cheng High School!” It was the second best to The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China.

“Nan Nan, why are you so naive? If all the students are so obedient and always listen to what the teachers say, then the world would be much more peaceful!”

“Why do they use going to the library to read books as an excuse?” Since the boys were interested in her, why did they beat around the bush? They could not blame her for not coming to her senses.

Tang Mengran, who was sitting in Zhu Baoguo’s seat, flipped his books. “That is to escape from the teachers. Even if one wants to go against the rules, one must be clever at it as well. Otherwise, if one is caught by the teachers, the consequences will be unbearable. But if both of you are reading at the library, even if the teachers catch you, they can do nothing about it. They can’t possibly say that students are not allowed to interact with each other.”

“Hehehe.” Qiao Nan smiled. She did not know that the students at this age would use this tactic to start a relationship.

“Nan Nan, you have rejected ten boys. What kind of boys do you like then?” This was what Tang Mengran was most concerned and most interested about.

“Ten?” Qiao Nan did not have any idea how many boys had asked her to go to the library.

“There’re definitely ten of them. I took note of them for you. About five of them are from the same level. Their scores are in the top fifty. There were also three second-year students and two third-year students.”

Qiao Nan twitched the corners of her lips when Tang Mengran listed the boys one by one. “The second and third-year students? Are you sure you didn’t make any mistake?”

“Of course not!”

“So, if they are caught by the teachers, they will simply say that they are tutoring me?”

“Hahaha, who knows?” Tang Mengran was thrilled that her roommate was the subject of interest among the boys from all levels. Apart from feeling a slight twinge of regret that she was not the one, she felt proud that she shared the same dormitory as Qiao Nan.

Fang Fang pushed her glasses and walked up to Qiao Nan. “Don’t you find them a bother?”

“Of course!”

“Then, you must come up with a solution to deal with it once and for all.” Fang Fang was annoyed at seeing boys from different classes and levels hanging around their class. “Otherwise, it will only go on and on.”

“This is true.” Zheng Lingling agreed with Fang Fang. “Nan Nan, don’t be angry when you hear this. I heard that because you have rejected so many boys from first to third years, some boys are betting to see who will be the first one that can make you accept him.” In other words, those who confessed to Nan Nan might not truly like her. They could be doing it for their dignity.

Qiao Nan rolled her eyes. “We are already in high school now. How could they be so ridiculous? But thank you. Now that I know about this, I know what to tell them next time.”

Previously, she did not know that asking her to go to the library to read books was, in fact, a discreet confession.

If she had known it, she would have rejected them upfront.

Fortunately, it was not too late to know now. She must make sure that she made herself clear so that it would not happen again, lest it created trouble for all of them.

Chapter 383: Powerful Rejection



Just like what Zheng Lingling said, after Qiao Nan rejected the second year student that day, a third-year student came looking for Qiao Nan a few days later, asking her to ‘study together’ with him. “Qiao Nan, I am in my third year now. I know more than you. If you have any problems in your studies, we can discuss and find a solution together. It may not be good to work on it alone.”

The third-year student was smart. He knew that Qiao Nan valued learning, so he tried to appeal to her through learning.

In the past, Qiao Nan did not care for these things. Hence, there were a lot of things that she had ignored.

Ever since Tang Mengran’s reminder last time, Qiao Nan had become much more sensitive.

Qiao Nan noticed that when the third year student turned up at their class, many of the people in the class had their eyes on them. Many students were particularly crowding around the doorway of their classroom as if they were in for a good show.

“You are in the third year?” Qiao Nan tapped her pen on the desk.

The third-year student flashed a confident smile, showing his white teeth. “That’s right. Like you, I am very interested and confident in my studies. My results have always been good and I have always ranked in the first ten in the level. If we study together, we can have a lot of discussions about the problems that we encounter in our studies.”

Tang Mengran patted Zheng Lingling’s shoulder. “I have some impression of this senior. His family is very well-to-do. The watch that he wears costs over a thousand dollars. Do you think he will be successful?”

Zheng Lingling gulped. “He will definitely be disappointed. Can’t you see that Nan Nan does not have any impression of him? He is just like a passerby. He will not succeed. What I am curious about is how Nan Nan is going to reject him once and for all.”

Qiao Nan arched her eyebrows and glanced at the empty seat next to her that belonged to Zhu Baoguo.

After Tang Mengran’s reminder last time, Qiao Nan had figured out a pattern.

These boys who asked her to go to the library to 'read books' would usually come when Zhu Baoguo was not in the classroom. "You have come at the right time. I have a mathematics problem that I can't solve. Can senior take a look at it?"

"Sure." The student smiled. He was most worried that Qiao Nan would not give him any response. As long as she was willing to talk to him, he had a way to make her agree to go out with him.

Since the third year student agreed to help, Qiao Nan tore a clean page from her book and wrote said problem on it. She then handed the pen and rough paper to the third year student. "Senior, please help me solve this."

"No problem." The third-year student took the paper with confidence.

He was in the top ten among all the third year students. He had no problem with the third year questions, let alone first year ones. It was child's play to him!

"I will have to trouble senior." Qiao Nan leaned toward Zhu Baoguo's empty seat, leaving enough space for the third year student.

But the third year student soon lost the self-confidence that he had at the beginning. He was full of doubts and looked troubled. He frowned, deep in thought. He never stopped writing, and the rough paper was now covered with workings and calculations. However, he still could not get the answer.

When he realized that there was no more space on the paper, he hesitated before asking, "Can you give me another piece of rough paper?"

"No problem." Qiao Nan generously gave him a stack of rough paper. "Feel free to use them."

With the stack of rough paper, the third year student had lots of paper to work his calculations on.

The third-year student leaned against Qiao Nan's table for a quarter of an hour, writing three pages worth of calculations, but he just could not get the answer. "This question..."

"It's okay if you can't solve it..."

“No, I can solve it. It’s just that this is your classroom. This is not the environment that I am familiar with. I am not used to it. Why don’t I bring it back with me first? When I solve it, I will come back to show you how to solve it.” The third-year student blushed in embarrassment. One could tell that he was just giving excuses.

Not your own classroom? Unfamiliar environment? Could not think clearly?

If this were the case, then the third year student could not possibly sit for the exam or the college entrance examination.

For the college entrance examination, it was common to sit for the exams in different classrooms. Some students even had to go to other schools.

“Sure, no problem.” Qiao Nan nodded and agreed readily.

With that, the third-year student left the classroom without another word.

Fang Fang pursed her lips. “Nan Nan, what kind of problem is that? I want to give it a try, can I?”

“Sure.” Qiao Nan smiled. “Why don’t I write the question on the blackboard? Everyone who is interested can try it. We can discuss as well. This is what schools are for.”

After that, Qiao Nan walked up to the blackboard.

Qiao Nan, who rarely wrote on the blackboard, had a piece of chalk in her hand and started writing. Her handwriting was beautiful and neat. It drew the attention of others.

“For goodness sake, Nan Nan, your handwriting on the blackboard is so beautiful! I heard many people may have good handwriting, but since they are not used to writing on the blackboard, their words will not look nice on it.” He Yun was amazed. Qiao Nan’s handwriting was much more beautiful than the teacher’s. They looked as if they were printed onto the blackboard.

“You should have been accustomed to it. Nan Nan is an all-rounder. She outshines us all.” Tao Zhenqin ground her teeth in a mixture of admiration and anger.

“Here is the question. Let’s give them a try.” He Yun picked up the pen and started to work on it. She wanted to know what kind of question could scare a third-year student away.

When most of the students in class one were working on this problem, several students from other classes, and even other levels, copied the question and spread it around.

It seemed that everyone felt that only those who could solve the problem were qualified to go to the library with Qiao Nan.

“Oh, my god! I give up. My brain cells are dying. This question is too difficult. Nan Nan, do you want us dead by coming up with such a question?”

Tang Mengran was the first to give up.

Tang Mengran knew her standard. Given this kind of difficult question, she would not be able to solve it in ten days or even ten years.

She did not believe that this kind of question would come up in the three years of high school.

Tao Zhenqin was the second to give up, and Fang Fang was the last to give up.

Regardless of whoever gave up first, everyone in class one gave up even before the self-study session was over.

Everyone knew their own standard.

They could tell whether they could solve the question or not.

Nobody was able to solve such a difficult question.

Chapter 384: Someone Helped Provide for Her

Anyway, since there was no way that they could solve it, it was better to spend time on some other things, rather than wasting time on the question.

Besides, there were so many people in class one. It was not that everyone who worked on the question was interested in going to the library with Qiao Nan.

Just like what Tang Mengran said, trying to solve the question would kill a lot of brain cells!

Because of this question, Qiao Nan finally managed to have some peaceful days. Nobody came to ask her to go to the library with them.

The people in the same dormitory gave a big thumbs-up for Qiao Nan's brilliant plan.

Initially, they were still agonizing over what kind of method should Qiao Nan use so as not to hurt others and bring trouble to themselves.

She was, after all, a top student. Her way of refusal was so effective and domineering. This was something that ordinary people could not think of.

"Dad, I am back." Qiao Nan went back home in two weeks' time. "Dad, what's wrong?" When Qiao Nan returned home, Qiao Dongliang was sitting in a daze at home.

"You have started school, and your sister has started school as well. It's been half a month, yet your mom hasn't looked for me even once." Qiao Dongliang said anxiously, "Your mom and your sister... Nan Nan, do you think I should go back and take a look quietly?"

"Dad, are you worried about sister's tuition fees and living expenses? There's no need to worry. My mom and my sister are leading a good life, a much better one than before. They can have whatever they want to eat or buy." Qiao Nan changed out of her pair of shoes and put her schoolbag in her room.

As it was inconvenient at school, she mailed her letter to Zhai Sheng on her way home.

Besides mailing the letter, she also had two letters from Zhai Sheng inside her schoolbag.

Zhai Sheng was a soldier. He was busy with military affairs, yet he could write her two letters in half a month. She felt ashamed that she only had one letter for him.

“How is that so? Where did your mom and sister get the money? Nan Nan, are you sure that what you heard is correct?” Qiao Dongliang did not believe it. Ding Jiayi did not have any cash with her, let alone such a big sum of money. Even though Ding Jiayi was in charge of the money at home, he knew how much money they were left with.

After they spent the money on sending Zijin to The High School Affiliated to Renmin University of China and for his medical expenses from the car accident, the family really had not much money left.

“Zhu Baoguo was the one who told me this. It should be the truth. Besides, my sister treats Wang Yang as her younger brother. He is a dependable younger brother. Compared with Wang Yang, I am embarrassed to say that I am my sister’s younger sister. Wang Yang has covered my sister’s tuition fees and living expenses.” Qiao Nan had two glasses of water in her hand, one for herself while the other for Qiao Dongliang.

With one glance, Qiao Nan knew that her father had spent the whole day agonizing over the problem of Zijin’s tuition and miscellaneous fees. Not to mention water, he might not even have had a proper meal today.

Her father could steel his heart and not care about Ding Jiayi, but he could not do so for Qiao Zijin. It was impossible.

Similar to the previous life, she was almost forty years old and was still not married. Her mother tried means and ways to prevent her from having a boyfriend, let alone getting married. However, even though her father was disappointed and had lost all hope in her, he would still remind her to find a partner and get married soon whenever he saw her.

Once, her father also hinted that as long as the man had a good moral character, his family background did not matter. More importantly, it would be best if the man stayed far away from them, if possible, out of Ping Cheng.

Qiao Dongliang took the drink and finished drinking it in one go. He was stunned upon hearing what Qiao Nan said. “Nan Nan, is it true?” Wang Yang gave Zijin so much money that it could cover for her tuition and miscellaneous fees as well as her living expenses?

How could this be?

There was nothing in this world that could be obtained without any hard work. There was no free lunch in this world.

Why would Wang Yang give Zijin so much money? Why would he provide for her expenses?

“I don’t know. Zhu Baoguo told me so. I don’t think Zhu Baoguo would lie to me.” Qiao Nan said this matter-of-factly.

“Why would Wang Yang do that?” Qiao Dongliang was exasperated. He furrowed his eyebrows in anger.

“No idea. My sister gets along quite well with Wang Yang. Maybe my sister regards Wang Yang as her younger brother, and Wang Yang also treats my sister as his elder sister.”

“Impossible!” Qiao Dongliang refused to believe it. Unless it was Wang Yang’s father who regarded Zijin as his daughter, it was no use even if Wang Yang treated Zijin as his sister. Wang Yang’s father was the one who earned the money, not Wang Yang. He might be able to pay for Qiao Zijin’s tuition fees for a semester, but it was impossible to finance Zijin all the way through college.

This was not a small amount. Wang Yang could not possibly have so much money. By that time, the elders of the Wang family would come to know of this matter.

This was definitely not that simple.

“Then, I really don’t know the reason, unless Zhu Baoguo lied to me.” Seeing that Qiao Dongliang had finished the water, Qiao Nan stood up and went to the kitchen, giving Qiao Dongliang enough time and space to figure out what was going on between Qiao Zijin and Wang Yang.

“No, Baoguo won’t lie to Nan Nan. There is no need for him to lie.” Qiao Dongliang did not notice that Qiao Nan had left the living room. He was thinking hard about the problem at hand.

Qiao Dongliang had always known that Wang Yang and Zhu Baoguo did not get along well with each other.

In that case, it must not be for Zhu Baoguo's interest that Wang Yang offered help to Qiao Zijin. Nevertheless, in what way would this harm Zhu Baoguo?

He kept on reciting Wang Yang, Qiao Zijin, Zhu Baoguo, and Qiao Nan over and over again in his mind. Qiao Dongliang seemed to have figure out something, but he could not bring himself to believe it.

If that were the truth...

Qiao Dongliang felt as if his heart was being wrenched by someone. It was so painful that he almost cried out.

Someone dared to make use of his elder daughter to deal with his younger daughter, and the elder daughter seemed to go along with them. There was no way that Qiao Dongliang could make himself accept this painful truth!!

"Dad, have a bowl of noodles." By the time Qiao Dongliang came back to his senses, a bowl of hot and fragrant noodles with fried egg was placed in front of him. "Ever since I came back, I could hear your stomach rumbling for a couple of times. Have you eaten anything today?"

Qiao Nan had just said this and there was another rumble from Qiao Dongliang's stomach.

Qiao Dongliang took the bowl of noodles, looking embarrassed. "I did not do my duty as a father. I did not take good care of you, but you have to take care of me instead." He could not remember whether he had eaten or not today.

"Dad, hurry to eat the noodles. They will not taste good when they turn soggy." Qiao Nan wrinkled her nose in disgust. She preferred her noodles to be slightly undercooked. Qiao Dongliang had the same preferences as well. However, as Qiao Dongliang had not had any food today, she was worried that the noodles would be difficult to digest. Hence, she cooked it longer than usual.

Regardless, Qiao Nan would never eat soggy noodles.

Chapter 385: A Tough Call



Qiao Dongliang picked up the chopsticks and had yet to take a bite. He looked at Qiao Nan. “Nan Nan...”

“Dad, whatever it is, we can wait until you finish eating.”

“Okay.” Qiao Dongliang sighed and slurped down the bowl of noodles. “Nan Nan, you have more to say to your sister. How about you ask her why would Wang Yang give her so much money and even provide for her? You must persuade your sister that it’s not good to take money from others.”

“Dad, you are her father. Why don’t you go? Why did you ask that I persuade her? Ever since a young age, we did not have much to talk about. Besides, she will never listen to what I say. In comparison, she will listen to what you say.” Qiao Nan was unhappy. She was not willing to be like those spineless people who tried to please everyone.

Wang Yang gave Qiao Zijin money because he was after Qiao Nan. She was not foolish enough to persuade Qiao Zijin not to be used by Wang Yang. If she did that, she was asking for a beating.

Qiao Nan pursed her lips. She cleaned up the tableware after Qiao Dongliang had finished eating. She came back and sat down thereafter. “Actually, there is a simple way to make my sister stay far away from Wang Yang. My sister has only one aim in mind. If I quit school and work, all the money that you earn will be used to finance my sister through college. She may be greedy for money, but she does not have any reason to take Wang Yang’s money. If you tell her this, there is no need for any persuasion and she will definitely be happy.”

Qiao Dongliang stiffened. “Is there a way where we can have the best of both worlds?”

Qiao Nan smiled in exasperation. “Of course there is a way where we can have the best of both worlds, but you must get my sister’s cooperation. You and Mom never stopped her from studying, but she wanted more. It is not a matter of whether I am willing or not. My sister simply won’t listen to a word that we say. Unless she gets what she wants, it is no use to say anything to her. My sister will not listen, and she will not do it. Dad, you must understand that the problem lies with my sister.”

If Qiao Zijin’s desire could not be satisfied, she would not listen to other people no matter what they told her.

Such was her temper, and no amount of persuading would do.

“Dad, do you believe it or not? If I drop out of school, and you only have to provide for my sister alone, there is no need for you to say anything and she will stop hanging out with Wang Yang. More importantly, once I quit school, Wang Yang may not be willing to care about my sister or to spend money on her anymore.”

Wang Yang wanted to stop her from studying with Zhu Baoguo so that she would not be a positive influence on Zhu Baoguo.

If she quit school, Wang Yang would have nothing to worry anymore. Hence, he would no longer need to waste so much of his time, energy, and money on Qiao Zijin.

The Wang family might be rich, but they were not so foolish as to provide for someone’s daughter.

“Nan Nan, for the sake of both of you, can’t you think of a way to persuade your sister?” Qiao Dongliang refused to give up. He had only two daughters and he hoped that both of them would do well.

Qiao Nan pursed her lips and her voice sank. “No, Dad. Since you can’t do it, let alone for me. If you are worried, you can visit her and try to persuade her. I have no other solution.”

Since Qiao Zijin always mixed with Wang Yang, she might be led astray by him. She had been very kind to Qiao Zijin by not adding salt to the injury now.

As for other things, her father did not need to think too much about it. She would never agree to it. “Dad, the school has given us a lot of homework. I have to go back to my room to do the homework. As for my sister, if you have any thoughts about it, it’s better to talk to her as soon as possible. If she gets entangled with Wang Yang, it may be too late to put a stop to it.”

With that, Qiao Nan returned to her room. She took out a box and placed the letter that Zhai Sheng wrote to her safely inside.

When Qiao Nan was doing her homework, she could hear the sound of Qiao Dongliang leaving the house.

Qiao Nan paused momentarily before continuing with her school work.

She had said that she would not care for Qiao Zijin, but she would never stop her father from showing concern for her.

The day was still bright. Qiao Nan had finished half of her homework when Qiao Dongliang came back home. Qiao Nan put down the pen and went to the kitchen. “Dad, the rice has been cooked and the dishes have been steamed, ready to be eaten. If you are hungry, you can eat them.”

Qiao Dongliang had a defeated look on his face. He rubbed at his face. “Nan Nan, do you have anything to ask me?”

“No.”

Qiao Dongliang smiled bitterly, feeling gloomy. “Nan Nan, am I a failure as a father? Zijin won’t listen to a word that I say, and you are not willing to listen to me as well. All of you have grown up and have a mind of your own.”

As a father, he did not seem to have any use anymore.

When faced with issues and problems, Zijin and Nan Nan did not need his help as they had their own way of thinking.

“If you really feel that we have grown up, then just let us be, Dad. You can have it easy. Besides, you may not be able to take us in hand. Why do you make life so difficult for yourself?” Qiao Nan poured a cup of water for Qiao Dongliang.

For two lifetimes, her father had not been able to make Qiao Zijin and her listen to him.

It was impossible in the previous lifetime, and it would be all the more impossible in this lifetime.

Actually, she and Qiao Zijin were quite similar to each other deep down inside. Once they had made up their mind, they would not listen to their father no matter how he tried to persuade them.

“I... I merely want the best for our family.” Was that too much to ask for?

“Dad, this does not concern you alone. It’s not good enough that you think that way. The other party has to have similar thinking as you. If everyone is willing to go with your idea, then it will be good. But Dad, if others do not agree with you, what you are doing is an arduous and fruitless task.”

Both she and Qiao Zijin would not give him any credit for his effort.

Since she had a chance to continue with her studies, why must she go through so much effort to make sure that Qiao Zijin did not go astray?

She had the chance to continue with her studies not because Qiao Zijin decided to go easy on her or had helped her. In fact, she was the one who sorted her own thoughts and persisted. Qiao Zijin had done nothing to help her.

“Dad, it’s quite late. You should eat so that you can wash up and sleep.”

“I won’t eat.” Qiao Dongliang was angry. He did not see anything wrong with his way of thinking. He did not ask Nan Nan to sacrifice herself. He only wanted Nan Nan to persuade Zijin to stop being so muddle-headed. It was not a complicated matter, but Nan Nan refused to listen to him. Zijin and Ding Jiayi disregarded him as well. What was the use of staying in this family?

Qiao Dongliang, who sulked and pulled a long face, hit the table before returning to his room in anger. He did not have any dinner at all.

Seeing this, Qiao Nan said nothing.

#### Chapter 386: Did Not Have the Cheek to Do That

Qiao Nan finished her meal quietly and put Qiao Dongliang’s share into the pot to keep it warm. “Dad, I have put the food in the pot. You can eat them when you are hungry. It should still be warm.”

After saying this, Qiao Nan washed the dishes and went back to her room to continue with her homework.

Qiao Nan felt bad that her father refused to eat in a fit of pique.

But no matter what, Qiao Nan was not willing to give in. She had to stand firm this time.

In the previous life, Ding Jiayi used this method to force Qiao Nan to compromise time and again.

The difference was that Qiao Dongliang would sulk and refuse to eat whereas Ding Jiayi would create a fuss and complain that she had a hard time bringing up Qiao Nan and had a difficult life in this family, yet her younger daughter refused to help, saying that since her daughter treated her in this way, she'd be better off dead. She would carry on and on, not giving her a moment of peace.

If Ding Jiayi used the tactic of refusing to eat, she would cry as if having gastric pain and screamed that she was breaking out in cold sweats.

Qiao Nan had seen through all sorts of tricks that Ding Jiayi had used.

She was immune to Qiao Dongliang's method whereby he sulked and refused to eat.

Qiao Dongliang knew that Qiao Nan had returned to her room to do her homework. He felt bitter that she did not show any concern for him.

Qiao Dongliang had not told Qiao Nan that when he went to the Qiao family's residence today, he did not get to talk to Qiao Zijin. They did not even allow him to enter the house. The door was locked by Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, and he could only stand outside the house.

He did his best to convince and persuade Qiao Zijin, but she did not appreciate his good intentions and ignored him totally.

Now that he was back at home, aside from preparing a meal for him, Qiao Nan refused to say anything else to him. She was not willing to go with his wishes to persuade Qiao Zijin.

He felt so angry and helpless that his daughters refused to listen to him.

For parents, daughters were supposed to be the apple of their eyes. However, his two daughters were not considerate at all. They created a fuss instead, albeit each to a different extent.

“Morning, Dad.” Qiao Nan had done whatever she could do, but there were things that she would not compromise. She had a clear conscience and had a good rest yesterday. She woke up feeling refreshed. “I have cooked some porridge and bought some dishes to go with it. Do you want to eat them, Dad?”

Seeing that Qiao Nan was full of energy and was able to eat and sleep well, Qiao Dongliang felt even more depressed. “Nan Nan, aren’t you worried about your sister at all? She is your biological sister.” Qiao Dongliang was perplexed.

Back then, his parents only had him. He did not have any siblings. Otherwise, when his parents were no longer around, he would not be so helpless that he would need Uncle Lee’s help to be able to marry Ding Jiayi.

If he had a relative by his side, at the very least, he would have been able to lead an easier life.

But right now, Zijin and Nan Nan had each other. Should they not cherish each other?

“Dad, if you look at it from another perspective, if my sister and I switched places, what do you think my sister would do? Take for instance what happened recently. Mom suspected that I stole the key to Zhai family’s residence and pilfered from them. I won’t argue about whether what Mom did was right or wrong, but what did my sister do then? Dad, if you compare it to what I did now, I feel that I have done more than enough. Yes, she is my sister. Although I can’t give her unconditional support, at least I did not do what my sister did to me.”

Qiao Nan would not change her mind because of what Qiao Dongliang said. What Qiao Dongliang was doing now was what Ding Jiayi would always do. She had been used to it.

“Nan Nan, did you bear grudges against your sister for what happened last time? Family members don’t bear grudges against one another.” Though Qiao Dongliang could not rebut what Qiao Nan said, he did not know that there were so many misgivings between Qiao Zijin and Qiao Nan and that Qiao Nan would be so frank about it.

Qiao Nan tousled her hair. Her father’s old habits were acting up again.

Qiao Nan pondered for a while before looking at Qiao Dongliang. “Dad, as Chinese people, we place a lot of importance on reciprocating each other kind intention. Do you agree?”

“Yes.” Did Nan Nan mean that since Zijin had ‘misunderstood’ her in the past, hence she wanted to teach Zijin a lesson?

“Since she is the elder sister, she has to set an example. She has to treat me well first, and only then will I be good to her.” Qiao Nan was not in a hurry. She took her time to finish her sentence. “In the past few years, everyone knows whether my sister treats me well or not. As for me, even if I am not the best sister in the world, I am definitely a good younger sister to her. That I can say with confidence. You want me to be sincere to my sister? Sure, I can do it. But first, she must be genuinely good to me. As long as my sister can do it, I can do it as well. Dad, you have to remember that she must be sincere. I don’t want her to put up pretenses.”

“But your sister has a nasty temper. She won’t take the first step. Nan Nan, how about you giving in to your sister? If we do not deal with Wang Yang’s matter well, it may affect your sister’s life.”

“Dad, even if we must not be calculative with our loved ones, why must I give in to her time and again? Why couldn’t she take the first step? Is it because I have a good temper and so I have to be the one to give in?” Qiao Nan pulled a long face. “Dad, actually, I didn’t want to tell you this. But I don’t want to be the bad guy, so I have to make it clear. Ever since Zhu Baoguo made improvements in his studies, Wang Yang came looking for me when you were away. He wanted me to stay away from Zhu Baoguo or else he would not let me off. I don’t want to badmouth my sister, but Wang Yang is definitely not a good person.”

“Does it mean that Wang Yang targeted your sister because of you?”

“Dad, if you insist on putting it that way, could I say that Wang Yang was onto me because of Zhu Baoguo? Since that is so, I will tell Uncle Lee and Uncle Zhu tomorrow that because of Zhu Baoguo, Wang Yang has been targeting me and my sister. Should I tell them to be responsible for solving the problem between my sister and Wang Yang? Or should I alienate Zhu Baoguo and cut off any contact with him? In that case, Wang Yang will not target me and he also will not drag my sister down with him. What do you think?”

Qiao Dongliang had a bad headache. “Alright, stop it. This cannot be done.”

He did not have the cheek to tell the Zhu family and the Lee family to settle the problem between Wang Yang and Qiao Zijin.

Chapter 387: Problem with Being Cooped Up at Home

Qiao Dongliang knew that he spoke those words in a fit of pique. If he were not Qiao Nan's father, he would not have said that.

It was only in front of Qiao Nan that he acted like a willful child, wanting her to be tolerant toward him.

Wang Yang might be up to no good, but Qiao Zijin was not a fool. She was an adult and should have the ability to think for herself. If not, then she was foolish enough for not being able to tell that she was used by Wang Yang. But Qiao Zijin was obviously aware of the situation, yet she willingly collaborated with Wang Yang.

No matter what happened in the future, she would have to bear full responsibility.

Since she was willing to do so, nobody was to blame for whatever that happened in the future.

Qiao Dongliang let out a long sigh. "I am such a disappointment. Whenever I am reminded about how much you have suffered in the past, I would tell myself not to let you down. But in fact, I have let you down time and again. Nan Nan, you don't understand. No matter how angry I am with your sister, she is also my daughter. Both of you are my daughters. It's a tough call. I cherish both of you."

"When you grow up, get married, and have your own children, you will understand."

Qiao Nan pursed her lips and replied after a short while. "Dad, even if I grow up and have children in the future, I will definitely not let my children grow up to be like my sister. My sister thinks that our family owes her. No matter how much we do for her, she deserves to be treated that way. Dad, my sister's temperament is different." Qiao Zijin could not be compared with her future children.

"Alright, it's fine if you don't want to have anything to do with your sister. I won't make things difficult for you. It's true that it is not your fault. It is your sister who got to know Wang Yang. It's not that I don't understand, but I just can't let go."

Qiao Nan did not know what she could say to her father. No matter what she said, she would be in the wrong. It was better to remain silent.

"Fortunately, you are very clear-minded. In our family of four, three of us are confused. If you cannot stay clear-minded at all times, then that is the end of our family." Qiao Dongliang smiled



bitterly. “For me, I can’t help doing this. When I know that your sister has landed herself into such a situation, I cannot think properly. Nan Nan, you have to remember that if such things happen again in the future, as long as you think that you are right, you must not listen to me. I am a father. I can’t just think of you. I have to consider for your sister’s well-being as well. You have to think for yourself. Your mom and I are muddle-headed, but you have to stay calm and clear-minded. Otherwise, you will stand to lose.”

Qiao Dongliang wanted to be good to Qiao Zijin and help her regardless of whether she was right or wrong. This had been a habit of his. He had been brainwashed by Ding Jiayi for more than ten years. It was not easy for him to change at short notice.

In the past, Qiao Dongliang was unaware of this, but he had improved gradually by being aware of his habit and way of thinking.

“Dad, you can rest assured that I will do so. It’s not easy to lead a life according to one’s wishes, but I can assure you that I will try my best to ensure my happiness whilst not hurting others.” Qiao Nan breathed a sigh of relief. She had thought that they were going to end up in a quarrel because of Qiao Zijin.

It was a relief that they did not end up in a quarrel.

“It’s okay. You should get busy. I just can’t think straight right now. Let me calm down.” Qiao Dongliang smiled reluctantly. He still needed some time to come to terms with it.

He had to be able to sort it out by himself so that he could move on and feel at ease.

“Dad, don’t coop yourself up at home. I remember that you have quite a lot of friends in the factory and some of them are fairly close with you. Take for instance the uncle who helped us move last time. Since today is the weekend and you are not working, and I suppose Uncle Yang is not working as well, how about you buy a bottle of wine and some food to go with the wine and go over to his house to have a chat with him? You can go out for a walk. It’s not good for you to stay indoors all day long.”

Women would have to go through menopause. As for men, they would also experience similar situations.

Her father stayed at home every day. Apart from going to work, he was alone by himself.

He would watch the television, but he was constantly by himself regardless. He might be very bored.

Qiao Nan realized that she had not been considerate enough. Her father was too lonely and did not have her mother to bicker with. Every half a month, she would only be back from school for two days. For the rest of the time, her father had nobody to talk to.

Not to mention the problem with her sister, this alone would be too much for her father to handle.

She had neglected this issue.

“I-is this okay?” Qiao Dongliang was slightly tempted. He also felt that it was too suffocating to be at home every day.

“Of course. Uncle Yang will definitely welcome you. Dad, go along. I am fine.” Qiao Nan pulled Qiao Dongliang out of the house. “Dad, you are always busy with work. You should reward yourself and have some fun. After your meal with Uncle Yang, you can walk around with him. Now that spring is here, there are a lot of beautiful scenic spots in Ping Cheng. I heard that there is a village called Xia Village in Ping Cheng, where the sunset is particularly beautiful. Though it’s still early, and you may not be able to see the sunset, you can see the peach blossoms. Dad, if you go to the village, you must remember to pick some for me. We can leave them at home and they can last for a long time.”

“Are you sure you can stay at home by yourself? Don’t you need me to accompany you?”

“No need. I need a quiet environment to read my books. Dad, if you stay at home, you will be watching television by yourself at most. That is so boring. Go and have a chat with Uncle Yang. Just come back home before dinner.”

Apart from working, her father had nothing to do. Whenever he was free, he would start to worry about Qiao Zijin and her studies. The more he thought about it, the more he felt helpless, and this would not be good for her father.

“Alright, I won’t disturb you. I will look for Uncle Yang. While I am not at home, you must remember to prepare your own lunch.” Qiao Dongliang was slightly tempted. Since Qiao Nan persuaded him to go, he finally agreed to it.

“Dad, don’t worry. I won’t starve myself. I won’t cook those difficult dishes. It’s easy to cook a bowl of noodles and fry an egg. I won’t let myself suffer.”

“Good, then I will go out now.” Qiao Dongliang pushed the bicycle out of the house.

Qiao Nan breathed a sigh of relief at Qiao Dongliang’s departure.

The phone rang as soon as Qiao Nan returned home. “Hello, how are you?”

“Nan Nan, it’s me.”

“Brother Zhai? How come you have the time to give me a call?” Qiao Nan was very surprised.

“Is it convenient to talk now?”

“Yes, my dad just went out to look for his friend.”

Zhai Sheng’s voice turned grim. “Nan Nan, do you remember that you made a promise to me before I returned to the army? It’s been more than half a month, so where’s your letter?”

Chapter 388: Became Military Wife for No Reason

This little girl had no conscience at all.

“I sent it out yesterday!” Qiao Nan stuck out her tongue. “Brother Zhai, I am a high school student now. This is a very crucial time for me. I am very busy with my studies and homework. I don’t even have the time to rest, let alone write you letters. I had to write the letter that I sent to you yesterday in secret.” Otherwise, she would be discovered.

“Is that so?” Zhai Sheng did not believe it. “Did any male students disturb you recently?”

Qiao Nan leaned back and sat down. “Disturbed me? Let me think about it. I’m not too sure about the past, but several people asked me if I wanted to go to the library with them to read books this semester.”

“Are they interested in you?”

“How do you know?” Qiao Nan was shocked. She merely told Brother Zhai that people asked her to go to the library. How did come to this conclusion?

“I am a man, and I am your boyfriend.” Sure enough, many people were eying his wife-to-be.

“Brother Zhai, don’t be anxious. You may know about it, but I was clueless. I really thought that they wanted to go to the library with me. However, I found it a nuisance and refused them. After my classmates’ reminder, I came up with a brilliant plan to solve this problem.” It turned out it was obvious what those male students were after. She was the only one who was clueless.

“Very good. I believe you can handle these things well. Aside from this, do you have anything else to say to me?” It was not enough that Nan Nan had solved this problem. It seemed that he had to find another chance to declare his rights.

“Brother Zhai, how are you doing in the army? Is it very tough?”

Zhai Sheng pulled a long face. “I am in the army. I am well-fed and well-clothed. The hard work is definitely inevitable. Apart from this, what else do you want to tell me?”

Qiao Nan knitted her eyebrows. What else could she say to Brother Zhai? What was it that he wanted to hear?

Zhai Sheng’s expression turned grim at Qiao Nan’s silence.

Even though the two of them were on the phone and Qiao Nan could not see Zhai Sheng’s face, but from his breathing sounds on the other end of the phone, Qiao Nan felt that the atmosphere was a bit odd and suffocating. “Brother Zhai, I have a question for you.”

“Alright.” Zhai Sheng’s voice was so cold that people would freeze from it.

“When a man asks a woman what is it that she wants to tell him, how do you think this woman should answer the man’s question?”

Zhai Sheng pursed his lips. “What is the relationship between this man and woman? You haven’t made it clear. People in different relationships will answer the question differently.”

“They are dating.”

“Are they purely dating? Some couples may be in a relationship today, but they will break up tomorrow.”

Qiao Nan rubbed at her blushing face. “It’s a couple who are dating with the intention of marriage.” This answer should be correct, right?

“Alright.” There was a slight change in Zhai Sheng’s tone. It was like spring had arrived after the harsh winter, and warm was the atmosphere. Apparently, he was pleased with the answer.

Qiao Nan was speechless. If she told Brother Zhai now that in a few years’ time, there would be a lot of couples who married and divorced each other, would Brother Zhai be so angry at her that he would want to strangle her?

“Brother Zhai, so how should the woman answer in such a situation?”

“When an engaged couple has been apart for half a month, and the fiancé asks the fiancée what is it that she wants to tell him, what do you think the fiancé wants to hear from her?”

“I miss you?” Qiao Nan asked tentatively. However, they were only dating. When did they get engaged to each other? When did she become his fiancée? Why did she not know about it?

“You should change your tone. It’s not an interrogative sentence that I want.”

“I miss you!”

“Well, I miss you too.”

Qiao Nan looked upward. It turned out that this was what Brother Zhai wanted to hear.

Since there was another round of silence on the other end of the phone, Zhai Sheng continued, “What else do you want to tell me?”

Qiao Nan knitted her eyebrows, looking awkward. “When are you coming back? I want to meet you?”

Though Qiao Nan used interrogative sentences, the tone was acceptable. Zhai Sheng did not ask that she changed her tone. “Nan Nan, you have to bear in mind that you are a military wife. I am a soldier, and my duty is to protect the country. The earliest that I can go back is in May. During the time that I am away, you must prove that you are worthy of my trust. Do you understand?”

Qiao Nan secretly scolded at Brother Zhai inside her mind. Was he teasing her?

They had turned from a dating couple to an engaged couple, and now she was turned from an ordinary high school student to a military wife?

The jump was too huge!

“Nan Nan?”

“Yes.” Qiao Nan nodded with all her might. “I will definitely be worthy of your trust. But Brother Zhai, I heard that there are female soldiers in your army. In addition to the usual training, weathering the natural elements, and rolling around in the mud, there are also soldiers who specialize in literary or artistic pursuits like dancing, singing, and performing arts. Is that true?”

“Yes, but I never participated in these activities.” Zhai Sheng did not lie. He admitted very straightforwardly that there were such people in the army.

“Very good. Brother Zhai, you must prove yourself to be worthy of my trust and choice as well.” Qiao Nan breathed a sigh of relief. If she was not mistaken, she did not meet Brother Zhai or fall in love with him in the previous life.

She only heard that Zhu Baoguo had died from an accident. She never heard that someone like Brother Zhai stayed single all his life.

When she died, she was almost forty years old. He should be about forty-five years old.

Therefore, in the previous life, Brother Zhai who did not meet her had already married and might have had children with another woman. Qiao Nan was not sure whether this woman was Qiu Chenxi. But if this person was not Qiu Chenxi, then she might be one of the female soldiers in the army.

In this life, her appearance in Zhai Sheng's life might have destroyed his chances with the woman that he married in the previous life. Qiao Nan could not help but feel uneasy, particularly when she knew that Zhai Sheng might have had children with the woman in the previous life.

Though she and Chen Jun had dated in the previous life, they only held hands at most. But Brother Zhai and the woman had married and had children.

Qiao Nan knew that she should not be bothered about what happened in the previous life. She could not possibly hope that Zhai Sheng remained single for the rest of his life. Besides, her appearance in this life might have destroyed any chances of Zhai Sheng being together with that woman.

To put it bluntly, she snatched Zhai Sheng away from the woman whom he married in the previous life.

#### Chapter 389: Discovered by Accident

The more she thought about it, the more upset Qiao Nan was and her voice turned feeble. "Brother Zhai, what if you didn't know me and didn't meet me? Would you like Qiu Chenxi or marry one of the female soldiers in the army?"

Brother Zhai led a very simple life. His life was all about the army.

Therefore, apart from the female soldiers and Qiu Chenxi, Brother Zhai probably would not have any chance to get to know other women. He might not want to waste any time to get to know other women and experience the complicated process of falling in love before getting married.

Zhai Sheng pondered for a while before saying, “Yes, without you, I might have been married to Qiu Chenxi.”

Qiu Chenxi was someone that his parents approved of. They had known each other since they were young. As long as he was willing, he and Qiu Chenxi could be married right away. It was much simpler and easier than marrying another woman. Zhai Sheng knew himself well. He was not willing to waste his time, so choosing Qiu Chenxi was the most time-saving and effortless way.

“Brother Zhai, do you have to be so frank about it? Aren’t you afraid that I will be angry and break up with you?” Qiao Nan was displeased. She knew that if she did not appear in Brother Zhai’s life, he would have married some other woman.

Brother Zhai was so sure that he would have married Qiu Chenxi without her. It implied that he liked Qiu Chenxi.

If that were the case...

Qiao Nan gritted her teeth. She could not stand a third party in their relationship. After what happened with Chen Jun, she would not make the same mistake again.

She could bear with the fact that she might not be the woman that Brother Zhai loved the most, but she must be the only woman in his life. There must be nobody else.

Sensing that Qiao Nan was angry, Zhai Sheng felt assured instead. One would only be angry if one cared for and cherished that person. Even though he was the one who confessed his love and kept Nan Nan by his side, it was never a one-sided love. Qiao Nan had the same feelings for him as well. “You won’t be angry with me, and you won’t break up with me either. The reason why I would consider marrying Qiu Chenxi is very simple. It is purely for the sake of convenience. I have known Qiu Chenxi for many years. She and the Qiu family know my temper. I won’t do things to please her or sweet-talk her. The Qiu family can’t use this as an excuse to make things difficult for me. Qiu Chenxi must be aware of this as well. Marrying Qiu Chenxi is simply to answer to my parents. It has nothing to do with me.”

“Brother Zhai, is this how it is going to be if you really marry Qiu Chenxi?” This was treating marriage casually and carelessly. It was too perfunctory and fake. Brother Zhai was marrying for his parents.



Who was the one getting married in the end?

Judging from Zhai Sheng's tone, Qiao Nan could tell that even if Zhai Sheng really married Qiu Chenxi, it was not because he had feelings for her. It was for the sake of his parents.

"Don't be upset. Without you, I would feel that the arrangement was very good and convenient. But luckily, you appeared in my life. It is only when two people have feelings for each other will the marriage last forever." Before he knew what love was, he felt that marrying Qiu Chenxi would be a good option. But now that he understood about love, he knew that it was his greatest fortune to know Nan Nan.

Marrying the person you loved and marrying someone that you did not love was totally different.

Back when there was only Qiu Chenxi in his life, he would not think of her or miss her when he was in the army.

On the contrary, after confirming his relationship with Qiao Nan, Zhai Sheng would always have Qiao Nan on his mind. He did not find it an annoyance or bother. Instead, whenever he thought about her, he would feel warm inside as if he was recharged.

There was no better state than this!

"Nan Nan, you may not know. In fact, my mom doesn't like Qiu Chenxi at all. As for why she always goes along with Dad, I have no idea. But after she chatted with you on a few occasions, Qiu Chenxi no longer poses any problem for us. Nan Nan, I must hand it to you. You have won against your rival without doing anything. You have what it takes to be a military wife." Zhai Sheng smiled happily.

When Nan Nan was slowly making her influence on his mother, they were not in a relationship yet.

It was totally by pure coincidence.

"It just happened by chance." Actually, Qiao Nan still did not understand what was it that she said that brought about the change in Miao Jing.

According to Brother Zhai, ever since she helped Miao Jing clean up from her fall in the muddy puddle, Miao Jing had begun to act differently.

No matter how Qiao Nan thought about it, she remembered Auntie Miao looked as if she was worried that Qiao Nan would try to take advantage of her on that day. If that was the case, which part of her words made Auntie Miao change her attitude toward Qiu Chenxi? She was clueless.

“By the way, things might be happening on your side recently. No matter what the Wang family’s response is or what attitude Wang Yang has, you don’t have to be bothered.” Zhai Sheng changed to a serious topic.

“The Wang family? Wang Yang? What do they want to do?” They were already providing for her mother and her sister. Would they be so free as to create more trouble?

Zhai Sheng laughed lightly. “Don’t be anxious. The Wang family will not make trouble for you. They themselves are in trouble.”

“Who is creating trouble for them? You?”

“Yes.”

Zhai Sheng acted as if it was nothing to be concerned, but Qiao Nan was worried. “Brother Zhai, will this have any impact on you?”

Thinking about how Qiao Dongliang sided with Qiao Zijin, and how Zhai Sheng sided with her now, Qiao Nan felt a mixture of jealousy and happiness.

For her father, she and Qiao Zijin were his beloved daughters, but for Brother Zhai, she was the only one that he cared for.

“You can rest assured that I will not be affected.” Zhai Sheng felt comforted at Qiao Nan’s concern for him. He relaxed, his anger gone. If someone came in at this time, they would be able to tell that Zhai Sheng was talking on the phone with a woman, someone that Zhai Sheng liked and was in a relationship with.

“Brother Zhai, you must be careful. In fact, you don’t have to do anything about the Wang family. Uncle Zhu will not sit and watch helplessly. Even though they are relatives, the Wang family is after Zhu Baoguo and as he is the only son of Uncle Zhu, Uncle Zhu will not sit by and do nothing.” Protecting Zhu Baoguo was Zhu Chengqi’s responsibility.

“This is none of my concern. I only know that Wang Yang wants to make use of Qiao Zijin to deal with you. I want to make life difficult for the Wang family. This is what I must do as your boyfriend,” Zhai Sheng said stubbornly.

No matter what Zhu Chengqi did, it was to protect his son. But everything he did was to protect Nan Nan.

Zhai Sheng was in the middle of a conversation with Qiao Nan when someone opened the door to his office. “Zhai Sheng, what are you doing? I have knocked on the door for so long, but you did not answer. Are you very busy?” Miao Jing frowned. “Your sister and you are the same. Both of you only have eyes for your work. Are you on the phone with someone?”

#### Chapter 390: I Am on the Phone with Nan Nan

Seeing the phone in Zhai Sheng’s hands, Miao Jing had thought that her son was working and she was disturbing him.

Before Zhai Sheng was able to answer, there was a rustle on the other end of the phone. It seemed that things had been knocked onto the ground.

Zhai Sheng was not shocked by the sudden appearance of Miao Jing. In fact, it was Qiao Nan, who was on the other side of the phone, who was in shock. When she heard Miao Jing’s voice, she threw the phone away. By the time she came to her senses and wanted to pick up the phone, she accidentally bumped into the things on the table, and so it ended up in a mess.

“Brother Zhai, quick, hang up the phone!” Qiao Nan did not know what reaction Auntie Miao would have if she knew that the person whom Zhai Sheng dated was her.

But Qiao Nan knew that even if Miao Jing did not like Qiu Chenxi as her daughter-in-law, she would not accept her for the time being.

Zhai Sheng did not listen to Qiao Nan. Instead of hanging up the phone, he held it in his hand and looked at Miao Jing as if he was doing serious work. "Is anything the matter, Mom?"

"Nothing. I am just here to look for you and Hua Hua. I have nothing to do at home." Miao Jing felt bored. Zhai Yaohui was back at the army and she came with him to accompany him. However, he was always full of praises for Qi Minlan. Miao Jing had no wish to hear all these anymore.

Therefore, although Miao Jing came to the army with Zhai Yaohui, she could not be bothered with him.

More importantly, apart from her husband, Zhai Yaohui, her daughter and son were all here in the army. Since she had no wish to accompany her husband, she looked for her children instead.

Zhai Hua was the first person that Miao Jing went to look for. She had not even got a few words across, but Zhai Hua had already been assigned a mission and left for work just like that.

"Who is on the phone with you? Is it important? If so, I will go out first." Miao Jing knew that the phone call might be confidential.

Actually, since Miao Jing was the wife of the chief and Zhai Sheng's mother, it was alright for her to listen in. However, she was never willing to create any trouble for her children, so she would rather excuse herself when he was working.

"No need. It is Nan Nan who is on the phone." Zhai Sheng shook his head.

"Brother Zhai..." Qiao Nan was so angry that she wanted to cover Zhai Sheng's mouth. As she could not do that, she thought of covering the mouthpiece. But she was in a hurry and did not know whether she should cover the mouthpiece or the receiver.

"Nan Nan? Why would she look for you?" Miao Jing did not go out of the office. Instead, she sat down. "Nan Nan and you... have been in close contact?"

Zhai Sheng was in the army all year round. Apart from the days when he would be at home during his break, she did not remember receiving any calls from him. Miao Jing felt it odd that Qiao Nan would call Zhai Sheng.

“She is not looking for me. She is looking for you,” Zhai Sheng said calmly without batting an eyelid.

“Looking for me? Why is she looking for me? Why would she call you if she is looking for me?” Miao Jing smiled upon hearing that Qiao Nan was concerned for her. Nevertheless, she was puzzled.

Zhai Sheng held the phone in one hand and said calmly, “Nan Nan could tell that you are not in a good mood and she could not find you at home. So, she asked me about your whereabouts, wanting to know about your situation and to cheer you up.”

“Really?” Miao Jing’s eyes lit up, looking comforted. “Give me the phone. I will talk to Nan Nan myself.”

If Qiao Nan wanted to ask about her, there was no need for Qiao Nan to talk to Zhai Sheng. Qiao Nan could ask her directly.

“Brother Zhai...” Qiao Nan put the phone aside once again when she heard that Brother Zhai tried to put Miao Jing on the phone. Brother Zhai was adding trouble to the already messy situation!

Not waiting for Qiao Nan to finish her sentence, Miao Jing’s voice could be heard from the other end of the phone. “Hello, Auntie Miao, how have you been?”

“I am good.” Miao Jing gave a candid reply. “How about you? Are you doing well in your studies? I heard that girls will find it difficult to keep up with the studies in high school. Can you keep up with the progress? Actually, if you have any problems with your studies, you can ask Brother Zhai. Of course, it is best to pick a time when he is free, or when he is back at home. Although he is a soldier, he is quite clever and smart.”

Qiao Nan calmed down slightly. “Auntie Miao, thank you for your concern. Right now, I am doing well in my studies. I haven’t encountered any major problems for the time being. I know Brother Zhai is very busy, so I don’t usually call him. He gave me this number two years ago and I have only called him twice since then. It’s the truth...”

Qiao Nan had, in fact, betrayed herself with her own words. But Miao Jing did not notice it. “It’s okay. I know that you know what you’re doing. I am sure you will not disturb him.”

Qiao Nan only called Zhai Sheng twice in two years, and one of the phone calls was regarding her.

Miao Jing felt particularly pleased.

Zhai Sheng noticed that Miao Jing was having a good chat with Qiao Nan. He stood up quietly and poured her a glass of water, lest she felt thirsty.

“Yes, well, I won’t go back for the time being. You must study hard. Don’t worry about me. I am fine. I am an adult. I will manage myself and my emotions. You should focus on your studies. Speaking of which, apart from Zhai Sheng, it’s been a while since there is someone who is good at studying in the quad. Nan Nan, you must make us proud.”

“Auntie Miao, you can rest assured that I will work hard. Even if it is not for the quad or for others, I have to do my best for myself. Auntie Miao, I want to study at the college in the capital in the future.”

“Study in the capital? Then, you have to work harder. There are a lot of good schools in the capital. Enrolling in these schools will not be that easy. Nonetheless, after you go to college, you may even have a chance to study overseas as long as your results are good. Nan Nan, you are a girl. All the more reason for you to seize the opportunity, do you understand?”

“Don’t worry, Auntie Miao. I have this in mind as well.” In the two lifetimes, Qiao Nan had been interested in English. She wanted to spend more time and put more effort into her English.

Zhai Sheng knitted his eyebrows when he heard the topic of studying overseas. Given his position, he could not go overseas under normal circumstances.

In other words, if Nan Nan really went abroad to study, it would be a long-distance relationship for both of them. Unless Nan Nan returned from her studies, he would not be able to see her.

“Mom.” Zhai Sheng did not like what he heard. He looked at his mother, reminding her to take note of the time.