

## **RTAMM 391**

### Chapter 391: When Will Your Mother Come to Her Senses?

“Nan Nan, we’ll stop here today. When we have the chance, let’s meet up and chat again.” At the thought of Qiao Nan’s family situation, Miao Jing swiftly hung up the phone to avoid increasing the cost of Qiao Nan’s phone bills.

After hanging up, Miao Jing said smilingly, “Nan Nan, this young lady, is truly great beyond words. She’s more concerned about me than the two of you. Zhai Sheng, do you think I should formally acknowledge Nan Nan as my goddaughter?”

In the Zhai family, her only daughter was manlier than a man.

As for Zhai Sheng, Miao Jing did not expect much from him.

Now, it was rare for her to meet a young lady that she liked so much. Miao Jing truly liked Qiao Nan and wanted to formally acknowledge her as her kin.

“Not necessary.” Nan Nan would marry into the Zhai family eventually and be his wife in the future. Hence, there was no need to do this. On the contrary, this would cause many inconveniences.

“Why?” Miao Jing was not pleased. “Are you afraid that your sister will be jealous? Don’t worry about it. Your sister is different from the typical ladies. She won’t be jealous.” After formally acknowledging Qiao Nan as her goddaughter, she would have one more person to keep her company at the quad.

“It’s not about jealousy. It’s troublesome.”

“What’s the trouble? It’s simple, not troublesome at all!”

“It’s not troublesome for you but Nan Nan. Mom, did you forget the situation of Nan Nan’s family?”

At the mention of Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, Miao Jing hesitated.

In Miao Jing's impression of the Qiao family, Qiao Nan was good, and she was truly good. She did not have any impression of Qiao Dongliang. As for Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, Miao Jing would rather not take about her impressions of them.

Zhai Sheng prepared a cup of tea for Miao Jing. When Miao Jing took a sip from the cup and remained silent, Zhai Sheng continued, "Actually, the formality is not important. Nan Nan cares about you and you like Nan Nan. If you wish to be good to Nan Nan, formally acknowledging her as your goddaughter is not the only way. Didn't you ask me to send things to Nan Nan on the first day of the Lunar New Year? Both of us even visited her house on the seventh day of the Lunar New Year. If we're really on good terms, there is no need to formally acknowledge her as your kin. That's not important. It's the thought that counts."

At this moment, Miao Jing felt much better. "You're right. It's me, the mother, who can't let go. Nan Nan, this child, is not bad. I'm willing to treat her well and this has got nothing to do with others. I really don't want to talk about that mother and sister of Nan Nan. Nan Nan doesn't have a good life. She has such a mother and sister. She will definitely have to suffer more in the future. If I don't treat her well, Nan Nan, this child, is really too pitiful."

After successfully dispelling Miao Jing's thoughts of formally acknowledging Qiao Nan as her goddaughter, Zhai Sheng curled his lips. "Mom, do you have any other matter?"

"Why?"

"I've some work on hand that has not been settled."

"Sure, I won't disturb you then. Focus on your work. Sigh, it's rare that I visited the army to see the two of you, but the two of you are so busy." After a long day, besides chatting shortly with Nan Nan, she did not manage to talk much with her son and daughter.

At the thought of this, Miao Jing felt gloomy.

If she knew that this would be the case, she might as well stay in the quad. She could look for Nan Nan directly to chat if she had any matter.

However, when she recalled that Qiao Nan was now a student, and was only home for at most three days during the thirty days in a month, Miao Jing felt even more listless.

Miao Jing's situation now was a little similar to that of Qiao Dongliang. She did not have anyone to keep her company or anything to do. Whenever she had spare time, her thoughts would wander.

Not surprisingly, Miao Jing, who was feeling depressed, had failed to observe one situation: Zhai Sheng was apparently busy, but why did he have the spare time to call Qiao Nan but not chat with his mother?

After hanging up the phone, Qiao Nan felt so nervous that she paced up and down at home.

Auntie Miao's reaction earlier was quite normal. Hence, she most likely had not realized that she was Brother Zhai's girlfriend.

When the phone rang again, Qiao Nan picked it up immediately. "Brother Zhai?"

"Okay, my mom has left. Don't worry. She didn't discover anything. No issue."

"Phew..." Qiao Nan let out a sigh of relief. "Why do I feel that I'm working when I'm involved in a romantic relationship with you? Does it have to be so dangerous and exciting? Brother Zhai, you also know Auntie Miao's opinions on typical girls. Tell me. If one day Auntie Miao finds out that I'm the one, will Auntie Miao..."

"There's no hurry. Take it a step at a time." Zhai Sheng didn't give Qiao Nan a definite answer just because Miao Jing said that she wished to formally acknowledge Qiao Nan as her goddaughter.

The fact that Miao Jing thought of this clearly meant that she truly liked Qiao Nan and wished to treat her like her own daughter.

In normal circumstances, if a mother who had a son felt that a young lady was very good, her first reaction would certainly not to acknowledge the other party as her goddaughter. Instead, she would think of ways to match her own son with the girl.

This thought of Miao Jing indirectly revealed that Miao Jing was only willing to accept Qiao Nan as her goddaughter, not as her daughter-in-law.

Hence, if Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan's relationship was exposed, Miao Jing would not accept it immediately. She might even object, run away from this, and say things that would hurt Qiao Nan.

"Brother Zhai?" When he heard that Brother Zhai did not sound so confident, Qiao Nan hesitated too.

"Do you regret it?" Zhai Sheng's tone was sullen. He was obviously unhappy.

Qiao Nan, who was on the other side of the phone, shook her head. "No regrets. But I'm a little scared. What if Auntie Miao won't accept us regardless of all circumstances? What should we do?"

"This won't happen." Zhai Sheng's tone was calm. It gave her a strong sense of assurance. "My mom has not come to her senses yet. She did not like Qiu Chenxi but tolerated the Qiu family who acted like our relatives for more than a decade. But last year, didn't she finally understand after you advised her? My mom likes you. Even if your identity changes one day, she will be willing to accept our relationship after some time."

"I hope that day will come to pass."

Before Qiao Nan could get herself out of the phobia of Ding Jiayi, Miao Jing, an unknown object who could be either a phobia or a sun, had engulfed her.

Qiao Nan truly suspected that she had poor chemistry with mothers. Be it her biological mother or her potential mother-in-law, none of them liked her wholeheartedly.

"Brother Zhai, go ahead and be busy with your work. I won't disturb you anymore. It's inconvenient for me at school. Most likely, I can write you a letter once every two weeks. If there's spare time, we could chat occasionally. Is that fine?" Qiao Nan negotiated. If she wrote too much, it would not be good if she was discovered.

"..." The good-looking thin lips of Zhai Sheng formed a sulky, straight line.

Clearly, he was a soldier and should be the busiest between them two. He had time to contact Nan Nan, yet Nan Nan did not have the time to write to him.

Zhai Sheng wished to be together with Qiao Nan. The greatest worries were that Qiao Nan was still young and he had no time to spare as a soldier.

## Chapter 392: Zhou Jun Wants to Confess His Love

As a soldier's wife, one was destined to be more resilient than other women. She not only had to endure the life where her spouse would always be absent from her side, but she also had to deal with both domestic and external affairs. She might even have to shoulder the responsibilities of caring for the parents from both sides of the marriage.

Being a soldier was not easy. It was also not easy for a woman who married a soldier.

He was afraid that Qiao Nan was young and unable to withstand such loneliness and hardships. However, from today's situation, Zhai Sheng was astonished to discover that Qiao Nan was busier and had less time than him.

Perhaps, when the two of them were married in the future, it was not him who did not have the time to accompany Nan Nan. It was highly probable that Nan Nan would not have the time to bother about him.

The more Zhai Sheng thought about it, the more he felt that this was likely to happen. All of a sudden, he was having a headache.

The wives of everyone in the army were always displeased that their man was spending too little time with them. Why was it that when it came to him, the situation was reversed?

"Regiment Commander Zhai, did you just have a phone call with our future Mrs. Regiment Commander?" Zhou Jun was holding the results of the investigation as he entered the office smilingly. It was just that the teasing beneath his eyes was too obvious.

"Yes, I've finished the call." Zhou Jun took over from Zhou Jun some information regarding Chen Jun's family.

"Regiment Commander Zhai, what kind of person is our future Mrs. Regiment Commander? Is her surname Qiu?" In the past, the regiment commander did not seem to care much about that lady by

the surname Qiu. The regiment commander had now come to his senses. He even knew how to coax the lady by giving her a call.

He nearly believed that this day would never happen.

“Her surname is not Qiu. She’s still very young. Certain things can’t be rushed,” Zhai Sheng replied frankly.

“She’s still young.” Zhou Jun sighed with regrets too. Then, the regiment commander’s situation was similar to his. “Regiment Commander Zhai, how old is Mrs. Regiment Commander?”

“Still studying.”

“She’s also studying.” It’s such a coincidence. The regiment commander’s situation was the same as that of his. “Then, have you seen her parents and gained their approval? Have you settled the matter regarding your relationship?”

The more Zhou Jun asked, the more anxious he felt. This was because he had not resolved all of the problems that he was asking.

If Zhai Sheng had resolved them, he was prepared to seek advice from Zhai Sheng, this superior of his.

“My partner loves to learn. Her parents also take her studies seriously. Her parents don’t have any issue with me, but they don’t know about our relationship. So as to allow her to focus on her studies and avoid causing any worry to her parents, we don’t intend to announce our relationship at the moment. We’ll explain to her parents when she graduates.”

“Yes, that’s absolutely right!” Zhou Jun reacted strongly and he slammed the table. “Regarding this, there’s really no hurry. She’s still studying now. Regarding the current thoughts and actions that I have, the other party’s parents will definitely not feel assured. They’ll be afraid that she won’t focus on her studies. If I make my stand now, the other party’s parents will most likely reject me. No wonder her father objected when my parents brought it up previously. So, this was the reason.”

Nan Nan’s mother was muddle-headed but not Uncle Qiao. He doted on Nan Nan.

It was no wonder that Uncle Qiao refused when his parents brought up this matter.

At the end of the day, the three years in senior high school were critical as they would directly affect students' enrollment into college. During this period, certainly, no hiccups were allowed.

What if Nan Nan could not get into college and complete her studies due to the distractions from their marriage? Wouldn't that mean he ruined Nan Nan's future then?

"But Regiment Commander Zhai, if you don't make it clear to her parents, aren't you afraid that she will be snatched away by others?" The lady that the regiment commander liked must be very outstanding. At the very least, she must be better than the lady with the surname Qiu.

Such a lady was not afraid of having no suitors. She would only be fearful of the long queue waiting to woo her.

"Both of us are very rational. Both of our parents don't know about it, but we already have chemistry and agreement. Therefore, she will definitely become your Mrs. Regiment Commander. No one will be able to woo her away."

"Thank you, Regiment Commander Zhai. I fully understand now!" Zhou Jun gave Zhai Sheng a bow excitedly.

Her father mentioned that Uncle Qiao said before that unless Nan Nan liked him, the Zhou and the Qiao family could not become in-laws. In that case, the greatest problem for him now was not Uncle Qiao, but Nan Nan.

Nan Nan was still young. She had many more years to go before completing her studies. What he should do now was not to get engaged with Nan Nan but to confirm their feelings for each other, and let Nan Nan become his girlfriend first. Thereafter, would he still need to worry and be afraid that Nan Nan, his wife-to-be, would run away?

From Zhou Jun's perspective, Zhai Sheng was in the exact same situation as him. The method used by Zhai Sheng could be completely copied by him on Qiao Nan.

Upon hearing what Zhai Sheng said, Zhou Jun was enlightened and finally knew how to resolve the matter between Qiao Nan and him.

“Regiment Commander Zhai, can I take a day off?” After knowing what he should do, Zhou Jun was not willing to waste more time in case someone snatched Qiao Nan away before him.

Zhou Jun had no idea that Zhai Sheng’s situation was not only the same as his, but they were also referring to the same person. It was just that Zhai Sheng knew about the situation but Zhou Jun didn’t.

So, there was nothing wrong that Zhai Sheng was Zhou Jun’s superior.

“You can make an application yourself. We’ll see if the committee approves it.” Zhai Sheng did not hold Zhou Jun back this time.

“Thank you, Regiment Commander Zhai!” After receiving Zhai Sheng’s confirmation, Zhou Jun happily wrote and submitted his application for a leave of absence as soon as possible.

Fortunately, Zhai Sheng’s team had not received many missions. It was not that difficult for Zhou Jun to take the half-day of leave that he applied for. The committee quickly approved it.

Once he obtained the approval, Zhou Jun went to look for Qiao Nan as soon as possible.

Previously, Zhou Jun did not find out clearly and wasted his trip. Today, Zhou Jun only applied for half a day of leave. Of course, he would not repeat the same mistake. He only rushed over after finding out Qiao Nan’s address. “Nan Nan, are you at home?”

“Who’s that?” Qiao Nan, whose heart was still thumping furiously because of Miao Jing, was frightened by Zhou Jun’s hoarse voice before she could calm herself down.

“Nan Nan, it’s me!”

At the sound of the other party’s voice, Qiao Nan could sense the excited state the other party was in. “Zhou... Brother Zhou?”

Qiao Nan opened the door. “Brother Zhou, why are you here? Shouldn’t you be in the camp now?”



“I applied for leave.”

It was spring. Clearly, the weather was not that warm. However, Zhou Jun was already perspiring profusely. He seemed to have been running around. It was not convenient for Qiao Nan to ask further. “Brother Zhou, come in and take a seat first. I’ll pour you a cup of tea.”

“Okay!” Zhou Jun replied cheerfully as if he was responding to his superior.

In fact, although Zhou Jun had already prepared his script, his entire brains crashed like a computer when he saw Qiao Nan and he completely did not know how to get himself started.

### Chapter 393: I Already Have a Boyfriend

“Brother Zhou, have some water.”

“Thanks.” The cup of water that was served to him was warm, neither too hot nor too cold. It was just right for Zhou Jun to drink it as soon as he took it.

Sensing Qiao Nan’s meticulous and caring manners, Zhou Jun’s adrenaline rushed. The way he was holding the cup was as if he was holding one with wine. He drank the water all at once. “Nan Nan, I have something to tell you.”

Nan Nan was so meticulous to him. Did that mean Nan Nan also liked him?!

“Okay... I can tell.” Qiao Nan hesitated for a while. “Brother Zhou, what do you wish to tell me?”

“Nan Nan, I like you.”

“Ah?” Qiao Nan’s jaws dropped and she shook her head a few times. “Sorry, Brother Zhou. Recently, I’ve been busy with my studies. My hearing is not so good and can’t hear you that well.”

“Nan Nan, I like you. Be my girlfriend. After you graduate from senior high school and attend college, we’ll get married!” Zhou Jun mustered his courage and finished what he wanted to say all at once.

Qiao Nan patted her face which was frozen stiff and then looked at Zhou Jun helplessly. “Why do all of you soldiers confess your love in such a way? Don’t tell me there’s a special consultation class in the army for this? Whatever you all say are the same. There’s only one way to say and do it?”

What Brother Zhou said was exactly the same as what Brother Zhai said!

“Ah?” Zhou Jun was stunned and could not react in time. He also did not realize the deeper meaning in Qiao Nan’s words.

“Brother Zhou, are you serious?” Qiao Nan took a deep breath. “If you’re saying this out of impulse as you’ve been dealt with some blows, I won’t take it to heart. If you’re serious, Brother Zhou... I’m sorry. I can’t accept your love for me.”

Zhou Jun had not come to his senses. After hearing Qiao Nan’s earlier words that carried a deeper meaning in them, and subsequently her rejection, Zhou Jun lost his ability to think. “Why? You... you don’t like me? Or is there anything that I’m not good enough which requires me to change? Tell me. I’ll change.”

Qiao Nan shook her head. “It doesn’t have anything to do with these. Brother Zhou, I treat you like my elder brother. Most importantly, I have someone that I like. I already have a boyfriend.”

Zhou Jun’s back stiffened and he looked a little sullen. “Nan Nan, you should know. Guys of your age are immature. To them, being in a relationship is akin to making a meal order. They’re very casual and irresponsible.”

“Brother Zhou, you’re worried that my boyfriend will desert me and break up with me?” There was a flash in Qiao Nan’s eyes. “Regarding this, you can rest assured, Brother Zhou. He wishes to marry me. First, I’ve not reached the suitable age. Second, I’m still young and wish to focus on learning and studies. Hence, I declined his proposal. I requested to date first before getting married. When I am of legal age, we’ll talk about marriage then. He’s not just toying with me. There won’t be such a day. He’s truly good to me. I’ve agreed to a relationship with him and am devoted to him wholeheartedly.”

“You’re certain?” Zhou Jun was utterly disappointed, feeling that he had not acted swift enough. He didn’t expect that another man was quicker in action and he was, in fact, many steps behind. “You

won't regret it? You're sure that that man is suitable for you and will be responsible for what he said?"

"Brother Zhou, I'm absolutely certain. He will be responsible for what he said. I will also bear all the consequences of my choice. As for whether we're suitable for each other, it's hard to predict what will happen in the future. But now, I feel that he's the most suitable person for me." Qiao Nan did not like to beat about the bush. Since she was already in a relationship with Brother Zhai, she would definitely not give others ambiguous hopes and find herself a 'spare tire'.

"..." Zhou Jun was quiet for a while. He then stood up with great effort. "Nan Nan, I... I only took half a day of leave. My time is up and I should go back to the camp. If there's any matter, let's talk about it another time."

Zhou Jun made his escape. When Zhou Jun was on the way to Qiao Nan's house, he thought of many possibilities. However, he did not expect that Qiao Nan not only rejected him flatly but also had a boyfriend who already proposed to her. The two of them were seriously dating. He stood no chance at all.

It was rare for Zhou Jun, who was almost thirty years old, to take a liking to a woman. However, the woman already had someone else in her heart. Zhou Jun suffered a tremendous blow.

Once Zhou Jun left, Qiao Nan felt so gloomy that she held her head tightly. "What's happening this year? Have I been possessed by evil?"

In her previous life, besides Chen Jun, all the men that she knew were introduced by friends. Everyone had already reached a certain age. All of them wished to find a partner in a similar situation and get married.

During this lifetime, she had already discovered that Chen Jun was most probably trying to win her heart as he was bribed by Wang Yang.

In her previous life, although she was almost forty years old, the only serious boyfriend that she had, Chen Jun, had such an unkempt reason for wooing her. In this life, she was only eighteen years old. Ever since Brother Zhai confessed his love and confirmed their relationship this year, the highly improbable things had happened. The iron tree had not only bloomed but turned into a peach tree full of flowers.

Qiao Nan could not even recall the countless people who confessed their love to her, whether implicitly or explicitly.

Was it the trend to form a group to confess their love at the same time in this era?

Qiao Nan did not know that Zhou Jun's way of love confession was exactly the same as that of Zhai Sheng because Zhou Jun had been greatly influenced by Zhai Sheng.

Qiao Nan did not know all these but when Zhou Jun returned to the camp, Zhai Sheng was almost the first to know that Zhou Jun fell out of love from being rejected by Qiao Nan.

"Brother Zhai, are you around? Can I come in?"

While Zhai Sheng was immersed in his satisfaction of Qiao Nan's efficiency in handling matters, he could hear a young lady's voice at the door of his office.

Zhai Sheng knitted his brows. "Please come in."

"Brother Zhai!" Qiu Chenxi smiled brightly, like a blossomed lily that not only gave out a delicate fragrance but was also fresh and dazzling.

"This is the camp. Please call me Regiment Commander Zhai. Is there any matter?" Zhai Sheng was completely shielded from Qiu Chenxi's radiance and charms. He completely went by the books.

Qiu Chenxi was not affected. She was used to Zhai Sheng's lack of expression during their interactions. Qiu Chenxi knew that Zhai Sheng treated not only her but everyone and every girl the same way. In comparison, when Zhai Sheng was with her, he was still willing to talk. "Brother... Regiment Commander Zhai, it's my first day reporting to the army. I'm not very familiar with the situation here. Can you bring me around to help me familiarize myself?"

She was supposed to be engaged with Brother Zhai last year. However, Grandpa Zhai came back unexpectedly at that time.

Thereafter, there was a rare opportunity to bring up the marriage between Brother Zhai and her during the start of the Lunar New year. She did not expect that Auntie Miao would bring Brother Zhai out.

At the thought of what happened on the seventh day of the Lunar New year, Qiu Chenxi's bright eyes could not help but dim.

## Chapter 394: Rejection

She even suspected if Miao Jing did it on purpose. Why did she pick a day when their family would be visiting the Zhai family to discuss marriage to bring Zhai Sheng out?

Unfortunately, if the matter was successful, Miao Jing would be her future mother-in-law. Hence, Qiu Chenxi dared not vent out her frustration and anger. If she dared to be disrespectful to Miao Jing, Brother Zhai would most probably be even more reluctant to marry her.

Zhai Sheng had been avoiding her. There was really no other alternative. Qiu Chenxi could only take the initiative to come to the army.

"You came here to report?" Zhai Sheng's eyes sharpened. He did not receive any notification regarding this.

"Yes, from today onward, I'll need Regiment Commander Zhai to take care of me. I'm a newbie and don't know anything. Regiment Commander Zhai, you have to guide me." For the sake of wooing Zhai Sheng, Qiu Chenxi spent so much effort to fight for the learning opportunity to come to the army.

"Is that the case?" Zhai Sheng simply picked up the phone and dialed a number. He then found out about Qiu Chenxi's situation. "I roughly understand your situation and your reason for being here. You want to know more about the army. That is fine. I will send someone to look for you and help you familiarize yourself. Do you have any other matter? If not, please help me close the door when you leave."

"Can I seek Regiment Commander Zhai's help to guide me?" Qiu Chenxi could not help but ask.

"It is not convenient, and I could not do that either." Zhai Sheng declined. "There are female soldiers and instructors in the camp. If you need anything else or have any other questions, you may look for the female instructors directly. It seems like you do not have any other matters. You may leave."

“Brother Zhai, on the seventh day of the Lunar New Year, where did Auntie Miao and you go? Brother Zhai, you know my feelings... Do you really hate me so much and don't want to marry me?” Having been rejected by Zhai Sheng many times, Qiu Chenxi could not endure further. She had an ulterior motive for coming to the camp: Zhai Sheng.

When she managed to settle the marriage between Zhai Sheng and her, Qiu Chenxi would immediately think of a way to leave the camp.

Zhai Sheng sat in a prim and tense manner as he looked at Qiu Chenxi. He looked strict and serious. “No, I do not dislike you.”

Qiu Chenxi smiled when she heard this reply.

“To be explicit, I do not dislike you, and neither do I like you.”

“Brother Zhai, you... What do you mean by this?” Qiu Chenxi's smile disappeared and she froze.

“What I mean is that I don't know you that well and don't have many opinions of you. In comparison, I am more willing to train with my soldiers and brothers than to be with you. Regarding the topic of marriage, I believe my attitude has always been obvious. I have never agreed to the matter between us. It is not possible between us. You can spend your effort and time on someone else.”

“But you didn't object to it in the past, though? Haven't you always been keeping mum?” Qiu Chenxi was not convinced. “Brother Zhai, can you tell me? What made you become so direct and decisive all of a sudden? Brother Zhai, do you have someone that you like? It's impossible!”

How could Zhai Sheng have someone that he liked? He was like a block of wood. He did not have the intention and could not be moved. In Zhai Sheng's eyes and mind, there were only the army and the country.

Was there a difference to a woman when she faced the air or Zhai Sheng?

In this world, there would not be any woman who could move Zhai Sheng's heart and even make Zhai Sheng reject the marriage between Zhai Sheng and her. Impossible. Such a woman could not possibly exist in the world.

“It looks like you are aware of my stand now. You can leave. Also, close the door.” Zhai Sheng did not bother about Qiu Chenxi’s questions. Qiu Chenxi could pose them but he did not have the obligation to answer.

Qiu Chenxi ground her teeth. “Brother Zhai, aren’t you being too irresponsible with your words? In regard to the matter between the two of us, our parents have already made themselves clear. Now, you’re telling me not to take it seriously just because you said so? I won’t give up! I’m not satisfied with the answer you gave, and neither can I accept it!”

Zhai Sheng was a man that she liked, someone she had waited for more than ten years.

All of a sudden, Zhai Sheng rejected her flatly and so decisively. There must be other reasons.

If she just gave up like that, her name would not be Qiu Chenxi!

After leaving Zhai Sheng’s office, Qiu Chenxi’s eyes were red with anger. She then casually grabbed hold of a junior soldier. “Can I ask you whether Chief Zhai and his wife are in the camp? Particularly Madam Zhai.”

The junior soldier whom she caught was initially quite pleased. He had never seen such a young, beautiful, and charismatic woman, especially after he entered the army. There was no chance to do so at all.

However, upon hearing Qiu Chenxi’s words, the soldier’s expression changed immediately. After all, it was again another woman who liked their regiment commander and wished to go through Chief Zhai and his wife.

Regiment Commander Zhai was so outstanding. There were countless women who liked him. What was so special about this woman? “They’re in that building. I’m not sure of their exact location. Look for them yourself.”

“Sigh, you...” Seeing that, similar to Zhai Sheng, the junior soldier ignored her and gave her such cold shoulders, Qiu Chenxi stomped her feet in fury. Needless to say, that stinky soldier must have been under Zhai Sheng’s wing. His temper was as bad as Zhai Sheng.

It was fortunate that the junior soldier pointed Qiu Chenxi to the general direction. Qiu Chenxi simply went looking for Miao Jing.

Previously, Qiu Chenxi believed that the matter between Zhai Sheng and her was more or less cast in stone. First, Zhai Sheng didn't like her but didn't reject either. Second, both Zhai Sheng and her parents were very supportive of the marriage. Basically, there was not much obstruction between Zhai Sheng and her.

Zhai Sheng's attitude had changed. However, Miao Jing's attitude was what Qiu Chenxi was most concerned about, one that she could not get over with.

Clearly, Miao Jing liked her so much in the past. If Zhai Hua had any negative opinions of her, Miao Jing would even chide Zhai Hua in front of her. They had not seen each other for a short period of time, yet Miao Jing's attitude not only took an opposite turn, but she also simply brought Zhai Sheng out of the house during the first few days of the Lunar New Year.

For Zhai Sheng to speak with her in this manner today, he might have been influenced by Miao Jing's recent attitude.

Qiu Chenxi did not believe that Zhai Sheng had someone that he liked. However, why did Miao Jing's attitude toward her changed so greatly? She had to find out the bottom of the matter.

Qiao Nan, who was still at the small courtyard, did not know that while she had just rejected Zhou Jun, Zhai Sheng had also kicked away an unwanted love. "Dad, you're back? Did you have a good chat with Uncle Yang?" It was rare that Qiao Dongliang had a day to rest. He went out with his friend to bond and chat. When he came back, he was in a much-lifted spirit and mood.

"Yes, it's quite good," Qiao Dongliang replied happily. "Your Uncle Yang's son found a girlfriend."

"Oh, then I will have a sister-in-law soon? Uncle Yang must be very happy."

"Hahaha..." Qiao Dongliang could not help laughing out loud as he thought of something. Qiao Nan did not know why.

"Dad, is there any more good news?" Qiao Nan felt puzzled. There was something odd about this laugh.



“I’m sure you don’t know. Today, Uncle Yang told me something. It has got something to do with you.”

### Chapter 395: A Daughter That Was Sought After by Many Families

“Something to do with me? What did Uncle Yang tell you?” Qiao Nan raised her brows. Why did Uncle Yang and her father talk about her without an apparent reason?

“Hahaha...” Qiao Dongliang laughed as he patted his thigh. “Don’t Uncle Yang have a son? When your Uncle Yang came to our house and helped us move our belongings that day, you left a good impression on him. He only told me today that he even wished for you to be his daughter-in-law at that time!”

If there was an outstanding daughter in the family, every household would yearn for their son to ask for her hand in marriage.

Qiao Dongliang truly understood what this meant with Qiao Nan as his daughter.

Previously, it was the Zhou family. Now, it was his colleague. As the party that was being ‘begged at’, Qiao Dongliang only had one word to describe the feeling in his heart: overjoyed.

“...” So, her father was so happy because of this matter.

Qiao Dongliang drank some water. “But your Uncle Yang gave up very soon after. He wishes to carry a grandchild soon and can’t wait that long. I’ve met that daughter-in-law of his. She can’t really be compared to you but she’s indeed above-average.”

Qiao Nan poured another cup of water for Qiao Dongliang. “Dad, you’re so happy just because of this?”

“Ah...” Qiao Dongliang gave a sigh. “Not that I wished to only know it at this age, but now that I think of it, it’s actually much better to give birth to a daughter than a son. Given the situation of our family, if either you or your sister were a son, I wouldn’t know what to use to let him marry a wife. You don’t know how much your Uncle Yang spent for the sake of this daughter-in-law.”

He gave birth to two daughters. In the future, others would beg him at his doorsteps. He would not need to do so.

It was not easy to have a son nowadays. Money was needed for marrying a wife and many other things.

Qiao Dongliang only had two daughters. Hence, he never tried to understand this aspect of such a matter. However, when he chatted with Uncle Yang today, he found out that having a son was actually a heavy burden to shoulder.

The youngsters nowadays preferred not to stay together with their parents, wishing to have a home of their own. As parents, they would naturally fork out some money for the couple to buy a house.

Old Yang was so anxious for his son to marry a daughter-in-law because he was afraid that he would need to fork out more money if his son married later.

With Old Yang's son as a comparison, Qiao Dongliang could not help thinking about the time when he married Ding Jiayi.

During that time, it was truly hard for them to be together. There was no formal ceremony at all. They casually invited a few people to a meal and act as witnesses, and had that considered as their marriage.

At that time, the custom of the three popular and must-have items for marriage already existed.

Ding Jiayi fell out with her family. Hence, Qiao Dongliang did not give the Ding family much. He had picked up a wife for free. Of course, Qiao Dongliang did not give any betrothal gift, and neither did Ding Jiayi bring any dowry to the Qiao family.

Qiao Nan sat down and smiled. "Dad, don't make it sound easy. If you raise a son, you need to spend a lot of money for him to marry a wife in the future. Nevertheless, the burden of raising a daughter is not any less. Don't forget that you need a dowry for a lady to be married. Putting me aside, how much do you think my sister wants before she will agree?"

Qiao Zijin had good foresight. Before the property prices rose, she exploited Qiao Nan through their mother to bring a suite apartment as dowry to the Chen family.

The Chen family only required Qiao Zijin's dowry not to be too shabby when Chen Jun married her so that the Chen family would not lose face. As for what Qiao Zijin brought to the Chen family, they did not even bother about it. It had been with Qiao Zijin all along.

Qiao Zijin not only wanted a house but also savings and television as her dowry.

Fortunately, when Qiao Zijin married Chen Jun, it was not at the start of the millennial year.

After the 2000s, China's economy had developed and everyone's standard of living had increased greatly. Regardless, not every household had a car with four wheels at that time. It was unlike in the 2010s where every household owned a car; some even had more than two cars.

Hence, when Qiao Zijin married Chen Jun in the 2000s, the only request that she did not put forth to the Qiao family as dowry was a car with four wheels.

In short, Qiao Zijin was not so easy to deal with.

At the mention of Qiao Zijin, Qiao Dongliang's expression changed. "Did your sister mention to you before how much dowry she wants when she gets married?"

At the mention of Qiao Zijin's character, Qiao Dongliang really could not tell her expectations. But in normal times, Qiao Zijin's expectations of clothing and food were definitely quite high. To put it bluntly, she was the type of person who knew how to enjoy materialistic things in life and would not shortchange herself.

"My sister and I are not on such good terms, but I heard her mention to Mom before that she will definitely marry someone who has a good family background. Otherwise, she will rather not marry. My sister is the type who is concerned about face. If she really finds such a family, is it possible that she won't bring more dowries over, and let the in-law family look down on her?"

"..." Qiao Dongliang was silent for a while. This time, he did not refute Qiao Nan's words because he already knew that Qiao Zijin was truly this kind of person.

What Qiao Nan had described definitely came from Qiao Zijin's mouth.

In other words, the man that Qiao Zijin was going to find was the total opposite of him.

Holding the cup in his hands, Qiao Dongliang smiled coldly. "No matter how high your sister's expectation is, after I'm separated with your mom for two years, we should already be divorced. Your sister belongs to your mom. Even if she raises her expectations, it doesn't have anything to do with me. All of these will be your mom's problems."

At the thought of the words that Old Yang told him today, Qiao Dongliang's heart had become more at ease.

Old Yang was right. If Zijin truly treated him as her father and wished to care about and be filial to him, then it was fine for him to spend more effort and energy on Zijin.

On the contrary, if Zijin did not need this father at all, why did he need to be so keen on being given cold shoulders by his elder daughter?

Qiao Dongliang could not help but admit that based on the current situation, he was not a father that Qiao Zijin needed. Most likely, in Qiao Zijin's heart, the concern that he had for her was unnecessary. She might even feel annoyed with it.

At the thought of the way Qiao Zijin fawned on Wang Yang during the meal that he had with the Zhu family before the Lunar New Year, Qiao Dongliang took a deep breath.

He felt that Wang Yang was a big swindler and Zijin would definitely suffer a setback due to Wang Yang. However, in the eyes of Zijin, Wang Yang was most probably the gold mine that she had long been looking for. How could she bear to give this up?

Even Old Yang knew that one man's meat was another's poison. If he still could not understand it, he would have lived his life in vain.

Upon hearing these words, Qiao Nan hesitated for a while. "Dad, have you really sorted out your thoughts or did you sort it out just for the time being?" Soon after, he would suffer a relapse just as he did in the past and would wholeheartedly be concerned for Qiao Zijin again. He might even make things difficult for Qiao Nan.

“I didn’t sort out my thoughts completely, but I’m not doing so just for the time being. Your sister’s temperament resembles that of your mom.”

#### Chapter 396: One Man’s Meat Was Another’s Poison

“They’re the extremely stubborn type that is impervious to advice. Before Wang Yang makes her suffer, it will be a waste of my breath to persuade her. When she suffers a setback due to Wang Yang, I may not even be able to make her understand. A person will not learn how to walk properly without first having a fall. Your sister was too sheltered by your mom and me. It’s time to let her learn a lesson. It may not be a good thing if one’s life is too smooth-sailing.”

When Qiao Dongliang brought up Qiao Zijin’s matter again, his tone was much calmer than before. He also seemed calmer. “Nan Nan, you’re right. You’re just your sister’s sibling. You don’t owe her anything. There’s no need to make your life suffer because of her. However, I’m different. I’m her father. Even if the whole world deserts her, ignores her, I can’t do that. Your sister’s current thinking is too ambitious and wild, and I can’t control that. As her father, what I can do is... One day, when your sister fails and everyone leaves her, I will then help her as much as I can.”

“Dad, as long as you’re happy.” Qiao Nan pursed her lips. She did not wish to argue with Qiao Dongliang.

She had never suspected the good intention of her father. However, she did not have confidence in Qiao Zijin.

An eternal life of staying by one’s side was easier said than done. Her father’s heart and mind might not be as determined as he thought himself to be.

“Dad, Uncle Yang’s son is getting married and they’ll definitely hold a banquet. Should you help them out then?” Qiao Nan did not voice out her thoughts. It was enough that she knew it herself. “When we moved house last time, Uncle Yang helped us quite a lot.”

“It goes without saying. Today, your Uncle Yang asked for my help. There’s no reason for me to decline. It’s just that, coincidentally, you won’t be around on the day of the marriage. Otherwise, I can bring you along to the banquet.” Qiao Dongliang’s face was full of regrets.

Qiao Nan was amused. “It doesn’t matter. You could wish the couple a long lasting and blissful marriage on my behalf. Dad, I heard that there are many things to prepare for marriage. This time, it’ll be tough on you. Since they’re getting married, have they decided on the banquet menu, where to buy, and how much to buy? Have all of these been settled?”

“Nan Nan, you know quite a lot,” Qiao Dongliang said in astonishment. “There are so many complicated things. I’m not too sure too. Last time, your mom and I had a very simple banquet. We only had two tables of guests. There wasn’t so much trouble. If Old Yang didn’t mention it to me today, I wouldn’t know that there’s so much involved in preparing a banquet. Nan Nan, how did you know so much? It was as if you have done it before.”

As a father, he did not know more than his daughter. Qiao Dongliang felt that he truly needed to reflect on himself.

Logically, Nan Nan studied at school every day. She would revise her studies and do her homework when she was home. She would not come into contact with more people than him. He only just got to know what Nan Nan already knew. Had he been out of touch with the society?

There was a flash of guilt in Qiao Nan’s eyes. Her laughter also sounded weak. “Dad, did you forget that my results are so good? I’ve read so many books and there are all kinds of contents in them. There’re even mathematics questions for matters such as wedding banquets.”

How could she not know?

When Qiao Zijin was getting married, she was the one who prepared everything. Her mother only sat on the stool, opened her mouth, and pointed her fingers left and right. Her father tried to help. However, just like now, her father was of no help at all as he had no experience with it.

Not familiar?

When Qiao Zijin got married, she gained all the experience.

At that time, Qiao Nan even suspected whether it was her parents or her who was marrying the daughter off.

“Really?” Qiao Dongliang had a look of disbelief on his face. Books were truly the most magical thing in the world. They even taught such matters.

“Of course it’s true, Dad. If you need it, I’ll go to the library tomorrow and borrow a book back for you to read.” Since Qiao Nan had already told such a lie, she had to stick to it. As per what she said, there were truly books related to this topic.

“No need.” Qiao Dongliang simply waved his hands. “It’s Uncle Yang who’s getting a daughter-in-law, not me who’s marrying my daughter off. If there’s really such a book, then that’s also good. You help me remember it. When it’s of use on the day I marry my daughters off, you can help me borrow this book then. One month later, I’ll be helping your Uncle Yang. As long as Uncle Yang knows and I assist by the side, I will be able to learn a lot too.”

Qiao Nan pursed her lips and smiled. “Sure. Dad, you’ve been perspiring a lot since you came back. I’ll boil some water for you. If you don’t wish to bathe, sponging your body is also good. It will make you feel more comfortable.”

“Sure.” Qiao Dongliang agreed readily. He then went into his bedroom to get his clothes.

After Qiao Nan boiled the water, she moved it to the restroom. She did not have to bother about the remaining matters.

Both father and daughter had their meal. They then sat together to watch the television for two hours. It was almost nine o’clock when they prepared to go to bed in their respective bedrooms.

Qiao Nan certainly would not fall asleep as soon as she went into her bedroom. She had to read books for an hour.

As for Qiao Dongliang, he was running errands the whole day and had to discuss so many things with Old Yang. He did not feel that tired during the day, but he felt particularly so at this moment as he lay in bed.

Before Qiao Dongliang could let his thoughts wander, and before Qiao Zijin’s name appeared in his mind, he fell asleep within seconds. Qiao Dongliang’s problem was due to stress. Now that he was more relaxed, he was cheerful and in a better mood. All his ailments seemed to be recovering.

In the coming weekend that Qiao Nan was at home, Qiao Dongliang either went out to attend his old friend’s gathering or looked for neighbors to catch up with them.

Moreover, Qiao Dongliang actually revived his habit of jogging in the morning after leaving the army for more than ten years. He woke up at five o'clock in the morning and jogged around the small courtyard. It was only until six o'clock, when he was perspiring all over, that he returned home for breakfast.

There were many things that Qiao Dongliang could do. He even put the issue between Qiao Zijin and Wang Yang out of his mind and did not bring this up to Qiao Nan anymore.

He said he had sorted out his thoughts and would not interfere unless Qiao Zijin could not get over a setback. When the whole world deserted her, as a father, he would then help Qiao Zijin. Qiao Dongliang truly stuck to his words.

Once Qiao Dongliang had calmed down, he was able to sort out his thoughts more clearly.

Even if he showed concern for Qiao Zijin now and fought with his life at stake to save her from falling into the big hole, she would not appreciate his fatherly concern and benevolent intentions. Contrariwise, she might despise him for being a busybody, as if he intended to harm her.

It was really unnecessary for him to do this kind of arduous and thankless matter.

If Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi felt that this was good for them, then he would allow the mother and daughter to create a fuss. Unless they suffered a major setback, any invaluable advice would not register with Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin. They would not listen to any of it.

As such, after Qiao Dongliang put down his worries, he felt much more relaxed.

Chapter 397: Is That Person a 'He' or a 'She'?

Qiao Dongliang was more relaxed. Qiao Nan felt even more so.

With this, she could completely cast aside the matter regarding Qiao Zijin and Ding Jiayi temporarily and focus wholeheartedly on her studies.



“Nan Nan, we’ll have to choose from the two courses starting the second year. Have you decided whether to take the humanities or the science course?” Tang Mengran was holding the application form and hesitating. She was not sure of which option to select.

“There are only two choices to choose from. If your mathematics results are outstanding and you’re more interested in science subjects, then pick science. If you prefer other subjects, then pick humanities,” Fang Fang said nonchalantly.

“Don’t make it sound so easy. My grades for both humanities and science subjects are comparable. It’s really difficult to make a choice.” Tang Mengran held her face miserably. “You might not know this, but my parents hope that I will choose science. They say a good mastery of mathematics, physics, and chemistry is the key to global success. I... I have no confidence in myself. My current mathematics grades are just passable, but I heard that mathematics will be more difficult in the second and third years. I’m afraid I won’t be able to cope.”

“Then, pick humanities,” Zheng Lingling said with certainty. “Anyway, I’ve thought clearly about it. I’ll choose the humanities course.”

“Me too.” He Yun and Tao Zhenqin did not seem to have any hesitation either. They already knew the answer in their heart. “Tang Mengran, don’t listen to your parents. Given their saying, you also need to excel in mathematics, physics, and chemistry before you can attain success anywhere in the world. Otherwise, no matter how formidable these subjects are, do they have anything to do with us?” Tao Zhenqin felt that Tang Mengran was too easily influenced by her parents. Tang Mengran was the one who was studying, yet she did not seem to know her own situation any better than her parents.

“That’s true.” Tang Mengran sighed. “But if I select humanities, will my parents beat me to death?”

Fang Fang shook her head. “You’re too exaggerating. I feel that your parents most probably just told you their views. If you discuss with them properly, they may accept your choice.”

“Nan Nan, what do you think?” Tang Mengran sought advice from Nan Nan.

Nan Nan closed her book. “This matter is easy to resolve. When you go home, simply tell your parents that you’ve had a hard time studying science subjects and that if no one helps you, you totally can’t catch up on your work. Your recent results have improved but it may not be sustainable. Tell them you’re worried that if you select science and no one helps you, your grades will fall and you don’t have any confidence as to which college you’ll get into. If you pick humanities, you will be more confident about it.”

The main point of what Tang Mengran's parents said was in the second part of their words. The Tang couple only wished for Tang Mengran to have a better future.

It would be of great help to Tang Mengran when she stepped into society if she mastered mathematics, physics, and chemistry. However, if Tang Mengran did not do well, enrolling into college would be a problem. It would be needless to talk about the future then.

"My parents know that you have been teaching me mathematics. Why won't you have the time to teach me?" Tang Mengran did not understand.

"The reason is simple. I'm going to study humanities." She already selected humanities. The mathematics knowledge that she would be learning would be different from that of the science class. At the very least, the difficulty level was quite apparent. This was also Qiao Nan's first time to study in senior high school. She could only guess the situation.

If the knowledge and difficulty level between the humanities and science classes were different, regardless of how formidable she was, as a humanities student, could she still guide a science student on their studies?

Fang Fang knitted her brows. "Qiao Nan, are you serious? I thought you would..." Given Qiao Nan's ability, she would not have any problems with the science subjects.

"Yes, I'm more interested in humanities, so I want to select the humanities course."

"Woo!" He Yun sighed. "For us, we selected humanities because we lack confidence in science. An ace student truly lives up to her name. Nan Nan could pick whichever course that she likes. An ace student is obviously determined!"

Zheng Lingling noticed that Fang Fang's tone was different. "Fang Fang, how about you?"

"I selected science," Fang Fang said.

As expected...

“Fang Fang, you actually selected science? You’re the warrior in our dormitory.” After resolving this dilemma, Tang Mengran was in a better mood.

When she went home this time, she would tell her parents as per what Qiao Nan taught her. It would not go wrong.

Fang Fang ignored Tang Mengran and looked at Qiao Nan. “Nan Nan, you can actually select science. I feel that if you select science, the place of the top scorer will not slip from your hands too. Why do you have to select humanities?” Didn’t you feel that you would be wasting your talent?

Qiao Nan leaned toward the bed and smiled. “Can I say that I choose humanities because of interest and not ranking?”

“Forget it. As long as you’ve considered it carefully, then that’s fine. Although I still feel that it’s a waste for you to select humanities.” Fang Fang pursed her lips. She sounded as if she expected something better from Qiao Nan.

Fang Fang’s parents were teachers. She often heard her parents said that the girls’ talent in science subjects was like their lack of a particular nerve as compared to the boys. Most of the time, they could not do better than boys.

It was rare to meet a girl who had the intelligence, talent, and diligence to outshine the boys. Unexpectedly, Qiao Nan wanted to be a humanities student.

“Fang Fang, you don’t need to worry about Nan Nan. Whether Nan Nan selects humanities or science, she will be able to do well. Since that’s the case, how will it be a waste?” He Yun patted Fang Fang’s shoulders. She felt that Fang Fang was taking it too seriously.

Fang Fang’s stance was extremely strong this time. “You all don’t know. I feel that given Qiao Nan’s intelligence, she may achieve one of the greatest successes in one of the scientific areas in the future. She can then contribute greatly to the country, society, and even the whole world.”

“Do you take me as a scientist?” Qiao Nan was dumbfounded. “Where did all your confidence in me come from? I admit that I’m quite good at science subjects, but I’ve never said that I’m a science genius. The results that I attained were all due to my effort. The talent displayed by a real genius can be described as ‘horrifying’. I can’t compare myself with them.”

“Albert Einstein once said that success is ninety-nine percent hard work and one percent genius.” Fang Fang’s face was red. She sounded full of indignation, as if she was at loggerheads with someone.

“Erm...” Qiao Nan was stunned. “Fang Fang, why are you so agitated suddenly? What is the real reason for you to select science?”

“This is my gamble with someone. He insisted that girls will not outdo boys in science subjects. I want to prove to him that, at the very least, I, Fang Fang, will not be worse than the boys. What’s wrong with girls? Why can’t girls choose to study science? Will they definitely not do well in science? His words are obviously favoring the male over the female and discriminating against women!” Fang Fang was so furious that she was clenching her fists tightly. The look on her face showed that she was as angry as she could be.

He Yun’s eyes lit up. “Fang Fang, the person that you mentioned... Are they a ‘he’ or a ‘she’?”

Chapter 398: Do You Already Have the Answer?

“Does it matter?” Fang Fang felt uneasy and she switched the topic.

In the past, Fang Fang was not so persistent in taking science subjects. In fact, when she was a child, she was most fearful of mathematics. Thereafter, as she had been greatly affected by this gamble, Fang Fang was completely at odds with mathematics. She was bent on beating the subject. Even as she was selecting subjects in high school, she would insist on science subjects and not think of anything else.

First, Fang Fang wanted to prove herself to this person. Second, she had relied on this quote to persist until today. She was full of confidence.

Fang Fang thought about it this way. Hence, she also wanted to inspire Qiao Nan with this quote so that Qiao Nan would not waste her talent.

Qiao Nan swept her fringe with her hands. “Fang Fang, there’s something that I don’t know if I should tell you. If I don’t, I’m afraid you’ll constantly be brainwashed and misrepresent a noble person’s original quote. If I do tell, I’m afraid of affecting you negatively. I’m in a fix.”

Fang Fang was dumbfounded. “What do you want to tell me? Is it so serious?” Would she be affected just by a few words? She did not believe it!

She thought of the many things that that stinky man said to affect her, including what he said about the selection of subjects on this occasion. That man persuaded her for a long time and insisted that she select humanities instead of science. She snorted and refused to listen. She would definitely do well!

“Yes, what is it?” Tang Mengran ran over to Qiao Nan’s side and pulled Qiao Nan’s sleeve.

“Tell us. Tell us so that all of us will know.”

“The original quote from the noble person?” Zheng Lingling’s eyes lit up. “Are you referring to what Albert Einstein said? There is nothing wrong with this quote. I’ve seen this since primary school.”

Qiao Nan pulled her hair and said helplessly, “Have you heard about misinterpretation out of context and generalization?”

“Yes, what about it?” He Yun’s curiosity was aroused by Qiao Nan.

Qiao Nan let out a long sigh. “If I didn’t remember wrongly, actually, the full quote says, ‘Success is ninety-nine percent hard work and one percent genius. Nevertheless, usually, the one percent genius is more important than the ninety-nine percent hard work.’”

Although computers were only prevalent after the 2000s and every household had one, the behavior of ‘screenshot’ already existed from way before.

She did not know who, in order to encourage students, took a screenshot by directly snapping and posting only half of what Albert Einstein said. It might be done to encourage all the students in the world, but it also bluffed silly kids such as Fang Fang to make them happy.

“Is... is there really such a matter?”

When they heard that the full version of the noble person's famous quote that they had firmly believed in for so many years was, in fact, like this, everyone in the dormitory except for Qiao Nan was dumbfounded, not to mention Fang Fang.

The first half of the quote encouraged people to put in great effort to learn and improve, but the second half was demoralizing. Although only one percent genius was mentioned, it was also talking about congenital talent. Moreover, the famous quote expressed that talent was indeed more important than working hard.

Fang Fang looked like she had been dealt with a big blow. She lost her usual calm composure as tears welled up in her eyes. She looked as if she was about to cry. Qiao Nan had a fright. "Fang Fang, don't panic. You should look at this quote from another perspective. If you wish to become a scientist, you must have that one percent talent. Of course, if you just wish to be a science class student and perform well in your studies, it's actually enough to rely on that ninety-nine percent hard work. The extent of work is different, so the expectations are certainly different."

"Yes, yes, yes! Nan Nan is right. Nan Nan is a very good example. Didn't Nan Nan say that she's actually not talented? She succeeded because of hard work. That's why her results are so good. Fang Fang, we don't need to be sad. Don't cry." Zheng Lingling hugged Fang Fang's shoulders and patted her back. Similar to Qiao Nan, she felt that Fang Fang was going to cry.

He Yun had a face full of heartache. "I feel so gloomy. I'm so furious. I was such a naive and pure child. I can't believe the school has been bluffing us for so many years. I'm so hurt."

"Don't talk about it anymore. I feel disappointed at the mention of this." Tao Zhenqin held her chest. If Nan Nan did not mention it, she would never know the original quote.

"..." Qiao Nan, who accidentally revealed the truth of the matter, did not know what to say at the sight of the situation. What she said not only affected Fang Fang but also the rest of the dormitory residents after all.

"I... I need to calm down alone." Fang Fang, who felt the most hurt, was dumbfounded. She refused to let anyone accompany her during that evening's self-study time. She ran out, found a quiet place, and was prepared to calm down by herself.

As per her previous practice, Qiao Nan continued to revise her studies in the classroom.

Unexpectedly, the senior that was 'rejected' by Qiao Nan last week with a question came looking for her again. "Hi, Qiao Nan. I hope you still remember your senior from the third year."

When she heard the voice, Qiao Nan lifted her head and raised her eyes. "Senior, have you solved that problem?"

The male student hesitated for a while. He then said as a matter of fact. "I didn't solve it." Nevertheless, he already knew the answer.

Initially, the male student intended to bluff Qiao Nan that the problem was solved by him. But at the thought that Qiao Nan's results were so good and she was able to give him such a difficult problem, she might do it again.

He was able to 'solve' it on this occasion. However, if he could not do it again, wouldn't that be too embarrassing?

The male student was most worried that Qiao Nan would immediately throw him another problem after he had just 'resolved' the current one. He could not possibly leave with Qiao Nan's question every time and pass the answer to Qiao Nan a week later, could he?

Hence, the male student thought of another way. "Then, Qiao Nan, a few days have passed. Have you found the answer?"

If Qiao Nan had not been able to resolve it, then he could discuss and examine it together with Qiao Nan. From no solution to having a solution. Wasn't that a good excuse?

Qiao Nan knocked the tip of her pen on the table a few times. She completely ignored those in and out of the classroom who wished to watch the fun. "Senior, judging from the look on your face, you seem to have gained something."

"Yes, I've consulted someone. At the very least, I've managed to find the solution. I've also understood the whole solution. Do you want to go to the library together to decipher this question?"

"Since senior already has the answer, that's good enough." Qiao Nan smiled. Immediately after, she tore a paper. "This question is too difficult. It's not easy to try to solve it. After getting this question, I solved it on the very same day and found its answer. However, as it's too difficult, I'm not confident of my answer. Since senior has already found the correct answer, do you want to read

what I wrote first to see if my final answer is the same as what you have? That way, I'll know if I've done it correctly.”

“Poof... Cough, cough...” Tang Mengran, who was having some water, directly choked on it. She was coughing non-stop.

### Chapter 399: The Ultimate Tactic

Tang Mengran, whose face was quite fair, turned crimson instantly. It looked extremely scary.

“Slower, slower.” Tao Zhenqin was startled by Tang Mengran. She quickly patted Tang Mengran's back to help her regain normal breathing. “You're not a three-year-old child. Yet, you can choke while drinking water. Don't kill yourself.”

“It's all Nan Nan's fault!” Tang Mengran, who finally managed to breathe normally, said. The crimson color on her face faded gradually. “If not for what Nan Nan said just now, would this happen to me?”

She really took her hat off to Nan Nan. It was definitely impossible to find a second person similar to Nan Nan in the whole world. She was too extreme.

Last week, she saw Nan Nan posing such a difficult and grueling question to an outstanding third-year science student. She had thought that the question Nan Nan found did not have an answer, and the latter did it on purpose to make things difficult for the senior.

Who would have known that the answer would appear today? Nevertheless, it was terrible because Nan Nan was just too merciless.

Obviously, the question that the senior had to consult others to find the answer to had already been attempted correctly by Nan Nan long ago. That was Nan Nan's most unexpected and ultimate move.

True enough, as guessed by Tang Mengran, that third-year senior looked baffled when he read Nan Nan's solution. This was because Qiao Nan's workings were different from what he had in hand. Of course, the third-year senior was confused.



The senior did not understand Nan Nan's workings or train of thoughts. Nevertheless, one thing was apparent. Qiao Nan's final answer was exactly the same as that of his.

Hence, Qiao Nan's answer was correct, and so was her solution.

At that instant, the third-year senior's mouth was seemingly glued and he nearly could not open it.

He wanted to say that what Qiao Nan did was correct. However, he only knew the answer and did not understand how it was derived. Hence, it would be too embarrassing for him to say that.

The face of the third-year senior turned red. He simply covered his face with the paper in his hand and ran out of Qiao Nan's classroom. He left feeling downhearted following the defeat.

When the third-year senior left, there was a moment of silence in the classroom of class one.

The girls did not know if they should admire Qiao Nan's evilness and intelligence or be jealous of her popularity. As for the guys, they were thoroughly shocked by her valiant behavior. This also applied to a few of them who had a crush on her and were thinking of when to take action.

They had harbored hopes that although Qiao Nan had rejected a hundred people, she might have taken a liking to them. No one could predict such matters.

However, at his juncture, none of them dared to have the same thoughts again.

Weren't they making things difficult for themselves if Qiao Nan was their girlfriend?

When Qiao Nan encountered any problems in her studies, they would not be able to help her. Not to mention learning from each other, they would probably be the one consulting Qiao Nan, and she would be the one guiding them. As a guy, their self-esteem would be affected if there were too many such occurrences.

It could thus be said that this tactic of Qiao Nan had not only forced the third-year senior alone to retreat, but also other guys who knew about this incident and liked Qiao Nan. They would distance themselves from Qiao Nan. It was fine to watch from afar. Otherwise, they would hurt themselves.

“Nan Nan, you’re too much.” Zheng Lingling sat in Zhu Baoguo’s seat. She had to take her hat off to Qiao Nan for having thought of this method. “Nan Nan, given your situation, which kind of guy is worthy of you? Nan Nan, don’t tell me that you advocate non-marriage and wish to emulate the foreigners and be a bachelorette?”

Nan Nan was so capable and defiant. It was hard to imagine what kind of man in the world would be worthy of Nan Nan. Even if there was one, it would definitely be difficult to find. It would be akin to digging for gold in the sand.

Zheng Lingling sighed. “Nan Nan, will you be left on the shelves in the future?”

“No need to worry about me. At the very least, I’ve already found someone who can accompany me to the library.” Qiao Nan smiled happily.

“Is it true? Who’s that? Why don’t I know? Confess honestly!” Zheng Lingling jumped in shock. So, it was not that Nan Nan was against having a romantic relationship at a young age, but she had already found someone.

“What do you think?” Qiao Nan refused to answer or reveal further information.

When Qiao Nan said that earlier, her voice was neither too loud nor too soft, but at least a few people could hear it.

Going to the library together was a hint. Qiao Nan was not afraid that others would hear about it or spread the news.

First, she wished to completely break the phenomenon of people asking her for dates. Second, what she said was the truth.

“Impossible, are you lying to me? The few of us from the dormitory are always together, either in the classroom, canteen, or dormitory. We’re never separated from one another. Whom could you revise your studies with in the library? There isn’t such a person, right?”

Zheng Lingling wrecked her brains and could not think of anyone. “Nan Nan, did you do it on purpose...” Looking around her, Zheng Lingling lowered her voice. “Did you purposely say that to let people misunderstand and dispel the thoughts of those guys? Not necessary. Nan Nan, whatever you just said will make anyone who wishes to confess their love to you retreat. There’s no need to

say that. You... you also know the situation in our class. There are two flies that have been targeting you. They're still worried they can't get a handle on you to deal with you. If they tell the form teacher that you're involved in a romantic relationship at a young age, then what should you do?"

Without Zheng Lingling's elaboration, Qiao Nan knew who the two flies that she was referring to were. One was Xu Tingting and the other was Zhao Yu.

"What could they complain to Teacher Liu about me? That I went to the library to revise my studies with my classmate? Teacher Liu would criticize me because of this?" Qiao Nan smiled confidently. "After all, the excuse to revise studies at the library is perfect. Don't worry. Even if they wish to smear my name and complain about me, it won't be that easy to do so."

"Then, what you've just said is real?" Zheng Lingling agreed after some thoughts.

In order to prevent the teachers from catching a handle on them, all those in a relationship said that they went to the library to read books. What could Teacher Liu do to Nan Nan even if he knew about it? It would not be easy for Xu Tingting and Zhao Yu to make this complaint.

"You guess?" Qiao Nan smiled in a deep and mysterious manner. "Alright, you should go back to your seat. Zhu Baoguo is coming back."

"Alright, I'll go back. We'll be starting the humanities class in the second half of the year. Given our results, we may be classmates again. Most likely, Zhu Baoguo has to give up his seat when that time comes," Zheng Lingling said nonchalantly.

Zhu Baoguo seemed completely enlightened ever since he attended senior high school. Moreover, with Qiao Nan's influence, Zhu Baoguo's mathematics results were outstanding. However, the results of his humanities subjects paled in comparison.

Obviously, Zhu Baoguo would definitely opt for the science class in their second year of studies.

#### Chapter 400: A Child That Was Not Weaned

Speak of the devil. Just as Zheng Lingling returned to her seat, Zhu Baoguo came back with a sullen look on his face. "Xiao Qiao, have you really decided to choose humanities class? Clearly, you're

able to do so well in your science subjects. You achieved full marks for almost all of them. Don't you think it's a pity if you don't study in the science class? Did Teacher Liu have a chat with you on this?"

"No." Qiao Nan shook her head. "My grades for science subjects are good, but I've never fared badly in my humanities subjects either. Hence, Teacher Liu has no issues regarding which course I opt to go to."

Zhu Baoguo knitted his brows. There was a flash in his eyes. It was apparent that Zhu Baoguo was in a dilemma at this juncture. "Alright, humanities then. So be it."

"What humanities and so be it? Don't do anything foolish." Qiao Nan rolled her eyes at Zhu Baoguo. "Don't forget the status of your family. Even if you select the wrong choice 'accidentally', your family definitely has the ability to rectify that error."

Was Zhu Baoguo mad? He actually wanted to accompany her to the humanities course. It was not as if this was a case of accompanying the emperor to study.

"Zhu Baoguo, you're not young anymore. You're even older than me by one year. Can you stop being as childish as a kid? In particular, you're acting as if you're a girl that needs people to accompany you to the toilet. Why do you have to be in the same class as me? This time, you choose the humanities course because of me. How about next time? This is your life. You can't keep following me. Aren't you afraid of becoming a laughing stock?"

Qiao Nan did not quite understand Zhu Baoguo's thoughts. Initially, she certainly led and guided Zhu Baoguo.

The master teaches the trade, but the apprentice learns the skill with his own effort.

With Zhu Baoguo's current ability, he was entirely capable of handling his future.

Although he was not Wang Yang's match as of now, he was not easily influenced by others at school. He was now an ordinary student who was able to pick up and fully absorb the knowledge taught by the teachers and put them to good use.

It was time that she retired as she had accomplished what she set out to do.

She was not Zhu Baoguo's real mother. Did she need to keep Zhu Baoguo company for his entire life?

"I..." Zhu Baoguo said in a gloomy manner, "You... We've been classmates and deskmates since junior high school. Now that we're going to be separated from each other in the second year of senior high school, could you bear to let this happen? Don't you think it's a pity?" He was extremely unhappy at the thought of having to separate from Xiao Qiao. Why was Xiao Qiao still able to laugh at this?

Qiao Nan put down her pen and closed her books. She looked at Zhu Baoguo. "You still refuse to admit that you're childish. You keep calling me 'Xiao Qiao' and address me as your younger sister. Don't you think that you're too dependent on me? We have to study separately. You study whatever you like and are good at. There's no reason for you to choose the humanities course for my sake. Zhu Baoguo, judging by your current behavior, I'm really concerned for your future wife. As a man, you have to be responsible and decisive. Don't be more wishy-washy than a young lady like me. Look, have I ever changed my mind because of anyone?"

Actually, the reason Qiao Nan chose humanities was twofold. First, she was interested in humanities. Second, this was the outcome of the discussion with Zhu Chengqi.

She did not know if it was because she was the first woman that had an important place in Zhu Baoguo's life. On the surface, Zhu Baoguo seemed very domineering, bad-tempered, and rather decisive. However, in actual fact, he was very reliant on Qiao Nan. It was as if he would only feel assured and be able to think calmly when Qiao Nan was with him.

To Qiao Nan, it was still the same saying. She was not Zhu Baoguo's mother and could not possibly stay by Zhu Baoguo's side forever.

If the situation continued, Zhu Baoguo would find himself in another problem after just solving one. There would be no end to it.

"Zhu Baoguo, don't tell me that when you grow up and have to pick a wife, you will still need me to look out for you or accompany you to the matchmaking session and decide on your behalf? Thereafter, do I have to take care of all the wedding banquet arrangements for you and your wife? Are you trying to kill your wife with jealousy or kill me with all the work?"

“What are you talking about? What wife? That’s not what I mean. I’m just thinking that finding a good friend in school is hard to come by and we know each other so well. We’ll certainly be happy to continue studying in the same class.”

“Alright, after saying so much, don’t you think you’re like a child that has not weaned or grown up? You’re not mature enough but you should learn to be.” She patted Zhu Baoguo’s shoulders. Zhu Baoguo had not been with Zhu Chengqi long enough. Otherwise, why couldn’t she see Zhu Chengqi’s tough side in Zhu Baoguo?

“Since when I was not weaned?!” Zhu Baoguo felt unjustified.

Qiao Nan tilted her head and looked at Zhu Baoguo. “You still won’t admit it? Think about it. When did Wang Yang do this? Have you seen Wang Yang disregarding his forte and interests to pick something he is weaker in? It’s still fine in our country. You may not know that other countries, such as Korea, have girls’ schools. That means all the students in the school are girls. Actually, even Hong Kong has such schools. If we’re living in Hong Kong and I’m going to study in a girls’ school, are you able to change your gender and accompany me to that school?”

If that was the case, Zhu Baoguo should not go to the girls’ school. He should go to Thailand instead.

Zhu Baoguo waved his hands in irritation. “Alright, don’t talk about it anymore. Xiao Qiao, you seem happy. Are you pleased that we’ll be in a different class?”

Was he the only one who cared and kicked up a fuss due to this matter?

“There’s no such thing as happy or not. We’ll still be friends regardless. In this world, there’s no such thing as we won’t be friends if we’re in different classes. If that happens, our friendship isn’t true to begin with. That said, Zhu Baoguo, why are you in a dilemma? We have a long life ahead of us, not to mention the many years of studies that we still have to go through. You can pick the humanities course for my sake this time. What about the next time? Can you do this all the time? Zhu Baoguo, actually, I don’t quite understand your way of thinking.”

“Ah, fine, fine. You always have a lot of reasons. I can’t outsmart you.” Upon hearing what Qiao Nan said, Zhu Baoguo also could not really understand what he was so unhappy about.

He only knew that he was very unhappy because he had to be in a different class from Xiao Qiao. They would not be deskmates anymore. He was not pleased and not willing to accept this.

“That’s because I’ve all the right reasons. That’s why you can’t outtalk me. Don’t always be so childish and kick up a fuss. You’re a grown-up now and should plan your future properly.” Qiao Nan yawned. “I’m so tired and sleepy. I wish to go to bed soon. Fortunately, it’s almost the end of the evening self-study time. You go and think about your own matters.”

Nevertheless, regardless of Zhu Baoguo’s decision, Zhu Chengqi would have the final say.

Before Zhu Baoguo completely matured, she and Zhu Chengqi really could not afford to slack and worry less for Zhu Baoguo.