

## RTAMM 451

### Chapter 451: Qiu Chenxi Settled Scores with Qiao Nan

“My family can’t possibly let Qiu Chenxi, who is at her prime, to spend all her time waiting for Zhai Sheng. That will be a waste of her youth and it will be too mean of us to do that.”

Qiu Qin grew silent. He thought for a while before saying, “What is Chief Zhai’s thought on this?”

“In fact, it was only a casual talk between the two families. There wasn’t any formal agreement. So, why don’t we forget about what we said previously? By the way, I heard there are a transfer and promotion in your army camp. There’s this position which may seem to be of a lower rank than your current position, but as long as you work hard, you will stand to benefit much more from it. What do you think?”

“Chief Zhai, thank you very much!” Qiu Qin’s eyes lit up. He had been eying that position since a long time ago.

It might seem to be a demotion, but in fact, it was a promotion. It was not easy to secure the position.

Zhai Yaohui was not surprised by this result. He had expected that Qiu Qin would agree to his suggestion, but he did not expect that he would agree to it so readily. “Then, it’s settled. If you have the chance, tell your wife and Qiu Chenxi about what we discussed today.”

“Chief Zhai, rest assured. I will do so.”

After meeting Zhai Yaohui, Qiu Qin called his parents to tell them of the latest updates as soon as he arrived at his workplace. After listening to what his son said, Father Qiu objected strongly to the arrangement. “Son, you are so stupid and shortsighted. How could you give up the bright future for a small benefit? Since Zhai Yaohui could help you secure this position, when you become in-laws in the future, you will be able to get even more benefits than today.”

“Dad, you may be wrong. The people from the Zhai family are upright and fair. They don’t abuse their power for personal gain. This is an exception. If Chenxi marries Zhai Sheng and we become in-laws with the Zhai family, apart from marrying well, I don’t think we can get a lot of substantial

benefits. Mom and you should have known about what happened between Zhai Yaohui and Qi Minlan. In the end, regardless of how domineering Zhai Yaohui is, he ended up obeying his father to marry a village girl. In the past, Chenxi had the support of Zhai Yaohui. However, Zhai Yaohui is no longer on her side. He was the one who told me to call off their marriage. Dad, Zhai Sheng does not like Chenxi and she doesn't have the support of his parents. What do you think is the success rate of her marrying Zhai Sheng? If we insist on it, we may end up with nothing in the end!"

Back then, there were two reasons why Qiu Qin was willing to listen to his parents to marry Qi Minlan. The first reason was that the Qi family and the Qiu family were well-matched in all aspects. The other reason was Qi Minlan's relationship with Zhai Yaohui. As long as Zhai Yaohui felt guilty toward Qi Minlan and wanted to compensate her, the Qiu family would definitely stand to gain from it.

History repeats itself. Qiu Qin was willing to marry Qi Minlan whom he knew was in love with another man. What he did today was merely to call off a marriage that had slim hopes and he stood to gain from it. It was a good bargain.

In fact, as long as Zhai Yaohui supported Zhai Sheng's decision, there was nothing the Qiu family could do to the Zhai family even if they did not give any explanation to the Qiu family.

Like what Zhai Yaohui said, this was, after all, a casual talk between the two families. They had never gone through any formal discussion. It was never taken seriously from the start.

"Dad, it's a pity to spoil the ship for a halfpenny worth of tar, but we must not be greedy. Otherwise, we will stand to lose. If Zhai Yaohui discusses this matter with Qi Minlan, I will definitely not intervene. However, he chose to discuss it with me. Dad, it seems that Zhai Yaohui no longer feels as apologetic toward Qi Minlan as before."

"That cannot be." Father Qiu was stunned.

"Dad, you are also a man. What do you say?"

There was a long silence on the other end of the phone. After a while, Father Qiu said, "Alright. Now that you are in charge of the Qiu family, you have the final say."

"Okay, I will hang up now. If I am transferred to that position, I will be very busy for the next three years at least."

“You must work hard. The Qiu family has to rely on you. Chenxi is a girl. Sooner or later, she will have to get married. Qiu Qin, since we cannot get Zhai Sheng to be our son-in-law, you have to put in more effort to get a good husband for Chenxi. It will be best if they can have two children and one of them will take the Qiu surname. Do you understand what I mean?”

“Understood.”

“Okay, let’s hang up now.”

Since they could not be in-laws with the Zhai family, Father Qiu had begun to plan the future for Qiu Chenxi.

Qi Minlan never would have expected that her actions would lead to her downfall. She only wanted to provoke Miao Jing through having close contact with Zhai Yaohui. However, Miao Jing did not suffer in silence like before. Instead, she flared up and it eventually led to what happened today.

Actually, it was already not easy to get Qiu Chenxi to be engaged to Zhai Sheng. There were a lot of disagreements and unhappiness.

Now that Zhai Yaohui, who was most supportive of Qiu Chenxi, had changed his mind, there was no hope for Qiu Chenxi to be with Zhai Sheng.

After Zhai Yaohui explained to Qiu Qin and made matters clear, they had come to an agreement regarding the marriage of their children. With that, Zhai Yaohui returned home.

Unfortunately, the happy mood in the Zhai family’s residence did not last for long. At about three o’clock in the afternoon, Qiu Qin made a phone call to the Zhai family. “Hi, Chief Zhai, there is something that I have to tell you.”

“What is it?” Zhai Yaohui put down the newspaper in his hand.

“I have told Qi Minlan and Chenxi about our discussion today. Chenxi couldn’t accept it and said that she is going to settle scores with a girl by the name of Qiao Nan. Is she related to your family?” If this young lady had no connections with the Zhai family, Chenxi would not have looked for her as soon as she knew that it was impossible between her and Zhai Sheng.

Qiu Qin did not know much about this. He only knew that his daughter was after this young lady because of Zhai Sheng.

In other words, if the young lady was bullied by his daughter, the Zhai family had to take responsibility for it.

Therefore, he had to inform the Zhai family about it.

“What? Why is it that I heard Nan Nan’s name?” Miao Jing, who was savoring her green tea, caught bits and pieces of the conversation. “What do you mean? Why would the people from the Qiu family mention about Nan Nan for no apparent reason?”

“Sure, I understand.” Zhai Yaohui hung up the phone and looked at Miao Jing. He could make use of this opportunity to hint to Miao Jing. “Qiu Qin has told Qiu Chenxi about our agreement. Qiu Chenxi now knows that it is impossible between her and Zhai Sheng. In retaliation, she threw a big tantrum and said that she is going to settle scores with Qiao Nan. She must be on her way to Qiao Nan’s house.”

“What right does she have to do that?” Miao Jing stood up in anger, her face red. “What does this have to do with Nan Nan?”

#### Chapter 452: A Crazy Qiu Chenxi

“This won’t do. How can she vent her frustrations on Nan Nan and how can we let Nan Nan suffer for our mistakes? Zhai Sheng, Zhai Sheng, look at the trouble your father and you have brought upon Nan Nan!”

“What’s wrong?” Zhai Sheng put aside whatever he was doing and came out upon hearing the commotion. Zhai Hua came out as well.

“What’s wrong? You still have the cheek to ask! Qiu Chenxi knows that it is impossible between the both of you and she is going to look for Nan Nan to settle scores with her. Nan Nan is so unlucky to be your scapegoat. You must go to Qiao Nan’s place to stop Qiu Chenxi from bullying Qiao Nan. If Qiao Dongliang is not at home, Nan Nan has no way to retaliate!”

Miao Jing's countenance changed. "No, I will go as well. I must be there myself to be reassured. Zhai Sheng, get the car now, hurry!"

"Sure!" Miao Jing only heard Zhai Sheng's voice. His person had already run outside to get his car.

"Wait a minute." Zhai Yaohui stopped Miao Jing, his head throbbing at the current situation. "Leave this matter to Zhai Sheng. Why do you want to go and join in the fun?" Zhai Sheng was going there to help his girlfriend. Why would Miao Miao go as well?

"I'm not joining in the fun. I am worried that Nan Nan will be bullied. You still have the cheek to say this. Qiu Chenxi caused all these troubles because of you!" Qiu Chenxi was the daughter of Qi Minlan. Back then, Qi Minlan seemed to be fragile and gentle, but Miao Jing had suffered so much over the years because of her. Like mother like daughter. Nan Nan was so simple and innocent. She would never be a match to Qiu Chenxi!

Since Miao Jing was bent on going to the Qiao family's residence, there was no way that Zhai Yaohui could stop her.

In the end, the family of four went to the Qiao family's residence together. Among them, Zhai Hua was the only one who was thinking of watching a good show.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

Someone was pounding on the door to the Qiao family's residence. From the sound of it, Qiao Nan could feel the pain the person outside must have felt. "Who is it?"

"Qiao Nan, come out right now!" Qiu Chenxi sounded fierce and malicious. One could tell that she must have bad intentions.

"You are?" Qiao Nan was frightened by the tone of the person. The person outside the door sounded as if she was demanding payment of a loan and was on a murderous rage. Qiao Nan was not stupid. She would not open the door for Qiu Chenxi.

"I am Qiu Chenxi! Qiao Nan, you are a liar! A shameless woman! You dared to wile others and snatch someone's fiancé at such a young age! Qiao Nan, you are still a student. Didn't the teachers

teach you the moral values? I feel sad for your teachers. There are so many men in the world. Why do you have to resort to snatching? Does snatching from others feel good to you?!”

She had already sensed that something was wrong with Zhai Sheng, yet her mother said otherwise.

No?

If not, why would her father call at noon to stop she and her mother from going to the Zhai family’s residence and said that he and Uncle Zhai had come to an agreement that what they said in the past was just a casual talk and should not be taken seriously? He also said that she was not young anymore. If she met a boy she liked, she must grab the chance to date him, and if it worked out, they could marry each other.

Marriage!?

In this life, Zhai Sheng was the only person she wanted to marry. Other men would not fit the bill!

What Qiu Chenxi said was offensive and coarse. There were other residents in the area apart from the Qiao family. With the ruckus that Qiu Chenxi created, those at home could hear bits and pieces of what was being said.

Qiao Nan paused momentarily. “Qiu Chenxi, are you sick? Have you forgotten to take your medicine when you came out today? Who is your fiancé?”

“Brother Zhai!”

“Have the two families gone through the procedures? Are the two of you engaged? Have you addressed Auntie Miao as your mom and Chief Zhai as your dad? Did Old Master Zhai agree to it? How long have the two of you been engaged?”

Qiao Nan posed few important questions from the other side of the door to Qiu Chenxi, making her turn red. If she wanted to blame it on others, at the very least, she should have proof. Her argument could not stand strong and yet she created a fuss outside people’s houses. Qiao Nan had to hand it to Qiu Chenxi for her bravery.

“If not for you, Brother Zhai would be engaged to me, but you just had to come between us. Qiao Nan, don’t you think you are too mean and shameless? Is it so good to snatch from others?”

“You failed to be engaged to Brother Zhai. Why am I to be blamed for it? Brother Zhai might not have agreed to the engagement, but Chief Zhai is on your side. Could it be that he is against it as well? It has nothing to do with me that the people from the Zhai family don’t agree to the engagement.” It was good news that Chief Zhai had sorted out his thoughts and gave up on forcing Zhai Sheng to marry Qiu Chenxi.

“Of course it has to do with you. You came between us!”

“Qiu Chenxi, don’t think of bullying me just because I am not from the Zhai family. I know very well about your situation. I am not as close to Auntie Miao and Chief Zhai as you. Will they cancel the engagement between Brother Zhai and the daughter of their close friend just because of me? Qiu Chenxi, your surname should not be Qiu, your surname should be Lai 1 . Both of you aren’t engaged, yet you address him as your fiancé. Now that things do not go well for the both of you, you blame it on me. In this society, there are a lot of people who are divorced. Who can they blame it on?”

“How dare you say this has nothing to do with you?!” Qiu Chenxi was so angry that she kicked at the door. She had never seen such a cunning and pretentious woman. “If you are innocent, why do you not open the door for me? If you have balls, I dare you to open the door!”

Qiao Nan rolled her eyes. “Qiu Chenxi, are you muddleheaded? I am a girl. Or do you have it?”

Qiu Chenxi must be silly to say this.

“You, you...” Qiu Chenxi did not expect that Qiao Nan would be in the mood to talk glibly. “Qiao Nan, open the door now when I’m still nice to you. If you don’t give me an explanation today, don’t think of leading a quiet life! I don’t believe that Ping Cheng High School will accept such an immoral student like you!”

Since Qiao Nan had the audacity to snatch from her, she would make it such that she could not stay in her high school or Ping Cheng!

By that time, there was no way that the Zhai family would accept Qiao Nan who did not graduate from high school and was uneducated as their daughter-in-law. She could not possibly fight with her anymore!

Since Qiao Nan dared to lie to her, she would destroy her!

Qiu Chenxi blamed it on Qiao Nan for her failed engagement with Zhai Sheng mainly because she was the only female, besides his coworkers, who was in contact with Zhai Sheng. Hence she was the biggest suspect of all.

Unless Qiao Nan could point out another person as the culprit, if not she would make things difficult for her.

If Qiao Nan was the one she was looking for, she had the right person by targeting her. If Qiao Nan was not the person, she would also be able to gain Zhai Sheng's attention by creating a fuss.

Chapter 453: Nan Nan Was Better Than You

Once Zhai Sheng went to look for the vixen, she would follow him straightaway and make her suffer.

Nobody could fight with her!

In short, though Qiu Chenxi created a fuss at Qiao Nan's place, her target might not be Qiao Nan. Her real goal was to alert the enemy so that she would be able to find out who the woman Zhai Sheng was with.

Qiao Nan was unlucky that she was the only one that Qiu Chenxi could bully. She had become the 'scapegoat'.

However, no matter how well-thought-out Qiu Chenxi's plans were, she did not expect Qiao Nan to have such a reaction. At her age, she should be rash and easily angered, especially when she was being wronged. However, she could tolerate her harsh words and refused to open the door for her.

Qiu Chenxi's plan did not turn out as she expected.

She had yet to come up with a secondary plan when the people from the Zhai family arrived.



“Qiu Chenxi, you really came to Qiao Nan’s house to look for Nan Nan. I thought that your dad was confused and misunderstood you.” Zhai Hua jumped out from the car and glared at Qiu Chenxi. She was unlike the gentle and well-mannered lady that she had always been when she was at the Zhai family’s residence.

Qiu Chenxi’s hair and clothes were in a mess. What was most shocking was that there were many shoe prints on the door of Qiao Nan’s house. Judging from the shoe prints, they were the same size as Qiu Chenxi’s feet.

Did it mean that before they arrived, Qiu Chenxi actually kicked at the door?

“Sister Zhai Hua, is that you?” Qiao Nan breathed a sigh of relief upon hearing Zhai Hua’s voice. Qiao Dongliang happened to be outside at this time. Qiao Nan was the only one at home. She was worried that if she opened the door for Qiu Chenxi, she would be bullied by her.

“Nan Nan...”

“Nan Nan, Auntie Miao is here, don’t be afraid. What you did is right. Do not open the door to strangers.” Miao Jing hurried out of the car, pushing aside Zhai Yaohui who tried to steady her with his hand.

All these years, she had suffered so much because of Qi Minlan and her daughter. Now that Nan Nan was dragged into it because of her relationship with the Zhai family, Miao Jing was so furious that she vented all her frustrations and grievances onto Zhai Yaohui.

“U-Uncle Zhai, Auntie Miao? B-Brother Zhai? All of you are here?” Qiu Chenxi was not afraid at all when she saw Zhai Hua. She knew that Zhai Hua did not like her. But whether she liked her or not, it did not affect her relationship with Zhai Sheng.

Hence, she was only polite to Zhai Hua for show. She did not really care for her future sister-in-law.

However, she could not maintain her composure in front of the other three people from the Zhai family. Qiu Chenxi had always maintained the image of a gentle lady in front of Zhai Sheng. At the thought of the shoe prints on the door of Qiao Nan’s house, Qiu Chenxi’s face turned red in embarrassment. She paled thereafter.

“If we did not come today, we would have missed a good show. Qiu Chenxi, I never knew that this is how the Qiu family teaches their children to be.” Zhai Hua pointed at the messy shoe prints on the door of Qiao Nan’s house. “All I can say is that Auntie Qi is really good at teaching her daughter. My mom is not capable of this.”

Qiu Chenxi’s eyes turned red. She refused to answer Zhai Hua’s question lest she made matters worse. Instead, she looked at Zhai Yaohui and Zhai Sheng, a pitiful look on her face. “Uncle Zhai, Brother Zhai, my dad called to tell me that my engagement with Brother Zhai was called off. Why is that so? Didn’t we agree to be engaged? Uncle Zhai, I have liked and waited for Brother Zhai for so many years. How could you do this to me? Moreover, how could you do this just because of a person like her? Uncle Zhai, didn’t you dote on me the most in the past?”

Upon hearing the last sentence that Qiu Chenxi said, Miao Jing glared at Zhai Yaohui in anger.

Zhai Yaohui looked stern. “Qiu Chenxi, you are only twenty-two years old this year. Zhai Sheng is still young. He needs to spend more time in the army. Our family doesn’t want you to waste your youth waiting for him, hence we made it clear to your dad. You said that you have spent many years waiting for Zhai Sheng. Could you tell me how long have you waited for him?”

Qiu Chenxi was only twenty-two years old. She was still very young. Since when did she spend all her time and efforts on Zhai Sheng? He had no idea at all.

Zhai Yaohui might have doted on Qiu Chenxi, but he would not wrong his son to favor someone’s daughter.

“I have already made it clear to your dad. It’s almost the 21st century. China has long advocated the freedom of marriage. If you like each other and date each other, or decided to be engaged and marry each other, we will not stop you. But if one of you is not happy, as the parents, we will not insist on the marriage. After all, all parents hope that their children will lead a happy life with their loved ones.”

Qiu Chenxi’s face turned pale, bare of any color.

Freedom of marriage?

What nonsense was that?

“So, the Zhai family wants someone like Qiao Nan instead of me?” Qiu Chenxi ground her teeth. The Zhai family of four rushed over to Qiao Nan’s place as soon as they learned that she was here to look for Qiao Nan. How dared Qiao Nan say that she was innocent!

“What’s wrong with Nan Nan? Nan Nan is better than you. I like Nan Nan. Let’s not talk about Zhai Sheng’s opinions. If I have to choose between you and Nan Nan, I will certainly pick Nan Nan and not you,” Miao Jing said bluntly.

Back then, she had already known that Qiu Chenxi was just pretending to be well-behaved in front of them. That was not her true personality. However, she did not expect that she would be hiding so much from them.

If not for the fact that Qiu Chenxi’s mother was Qi Minlan, she might have been fooled by her pretenses.

Zhai Hua patted the shoulders of Zhai Sheng. “Zhai Sheng, there is hope. Mom’s impression of Nan Nan seems to be getting better and better. Do we tell her the truth now?” They could make use of the chance today to tell their mother of the relationship between Zhai Sheng and Nan Nan. In that case, they could date openly.

Zhai Sheng gave Zhai Hua a warning glance. He did not agree with Zhai Hua.

Zhai Sheng was very clear that his mother said those words to spite Qiu Chenxi. His mother had told Nan Nan long ago of the type of daughter-in-law that she was looking for. His mother was certain that even if others would misunderstand her words, Nan Nan would not misunderstand and would understand her intentions.

The reason why his mother sided with Nan Nan and helped her with no qualms was that she did not know the relationship between him and Nan Nan.

They had to lay low for now. After all, Nan Nan was right. Her fears and concerns were not unfounded.

Until now, Zhai Sheng could not understand the reason behind his mother’s stubbornness. His mother was obviously very concerned about Nan Nan, but there seemed to be a hurdle that could not be crossed in her heart. This posed as an obstacle for Nan Nan and him.

## Chapter 454: Anyone but You

Without clearing this obstacle, his mother would never accept Nan Nan as her daughter-in-law. Before that, he and Nan Nan must not tell his mother about their relationship.

Since Zhai Sheng had given her a warning, Zhai Hua was tactful enough to keep her silence lest others heard about what she said.

Qiu Chenxi paled at Miao Jing's words. "Auntie Miao, are you serious?" Miao Jing would rather choose Qiao Nan than her?

Qiu Chenxi took a few deep breaths and turned to look at Zhai Yaohui reluctantly. "Uncle Zhai, you have always seen me as the daughter of a good friend. I'm not angry that Auntie Miao misunderstood me, but I want to know your thoughts on this."

Zhai Yaohui sighed. "Qiu Chenxi, it doesn't matter what Auntie Miao or I think about this. What matters is how Zhai Sheng thinks about this. Do you understand?"

He was helpless that Zhai Sheng did not like Qiu Chenxi.

In fact, as long as Zhai Sheng was willing, Qiao Nan would not be in the picture.

He might have already been engaged to Qiu Chenxi even before he knew Qiao Nan.

"Does it mean you agree that it's over between Brother Zhai and me?" Qiu Chenxi had a look of absurdness on her face. They had already agreed on it years ago! How could they have a change of mind now?!

Zhai Sheng did so as he had someone else in mind, but what about Zhai Yaohui?

Zhai Yaohui should be trying means and ways to please her because of her mother.

Once Zhai Yaohui made a decision, he would never regret it. “Chenxi, you are still young. You are educated and beautiful. In the future, there will be lots of opportunities to meet boys who are suitable for you. When you get married, I will definitely prepare wedding gifts for you.”

He had watched Qiu Chenxi as she grew up. If she married in the future, he would be willing to prepare some dowry for her, let alone wedding gifts.

Qiu Chenxi’s face was as pale as a sheet. Her frail body trembled slightly. She was a pitiful sight.

After thinking for a while, Qiu Chenxi gritted her teeth, trying to maintain her broken self-esteem. “Uncle Zhai, according to what you just said, does it mean that as long as Brother Zhai likes me and is willing to marry me, you will still accept me?”

“Yes.”

“Nonsense!” Miao Jing glared at Zhai Yaohui. “You may have agreed, but I don’t agree. Anyone can marry into the Zhai family but her. If she wants to marry into our family, fine, she will move in, but I will move out right away!”

Miao Jing, who left no room for discussion, did not know that in the previous life, Qiu Chenxi married Zhai Sheng with the help of Zhai Yaohui and her.

In fact, even if Miao Jing did not fall out with Qiu Chenxi and Qi Minlan, since the first day Qiu Chenxi married Zhai Sheng and moved into the Zhai family’s residence, Miao Jing moved out of the house and would rather live by herself in a small quad than seeing Qiu Chenxi every single day.

“Uncle Zhai, who has the final say in your family?” Miao Jing was too detestable. Back then, she snatched Uncle Zhai from her mother, and now she had to come between Brother Zhai and her. She and her mother must have offended or owed Miao Jing in the previous life. In this life, Miao Jing was after her mother and her to take back what they owed her and to make life miserable for them.

“It doesn’t matter who has the final say. Zhai Sheng is my son. Without me, he will not be here. Zhai Sheng, let me tell you. If you take me as your mom, you can’t marry this woman. If you don’t take me as your mom, I won’t care whoever you marry!” Miao Jing left no room for discussion at all. Previously, she meant that she would leave the house and her husband who did not like her. Now, she meant that if Zhai Sheng married Qiu Chenxi, she would not want him as her son.

Qiao Nan was dumbstruck by Miao Jing's words.

What was wrong with Miao Jing? She would forsake her son because of an outsider? Besides, she was very supportive of Qiu Chenxi a few months ago.

What happened to Auntie Miao? It seemed that she bore some grudges.

Qiu Chenxi was so furious at her words that she bit down hard on her lip. "Auntie Miao, aren't you too much? Uncle Zhai has said that society advocates freedom and autonomy of marriage. If Brother Zhai is willing to marry me, you have no right to stop him."

"He is my son. I may be too much, but as long as Zhai Sheng agrees to it, you have no say at all!" Miao Jing stared at Zhai Sheng with an overbearing look on her face. "Zhai Sheng, have you heard what I said just now? Tell me, will you listen to me?"

Zhai Sheng stopped himself from frowning. He said plainly, "Mom, no matter whether you agree or not, I will not marry her. I don't like her."

He did not like Qiu Chenxi, hence he could listen to his mother. But if the party concerned was Nan Nan, it would not do.

"Alright." At Zhai Sheng's words, Miao Jing gained immediate relief from her years of pent up grievances.

Although she had managed to keep Zhai Yaohui by her side, his heart had been with Qi Minlan.

But Zhai Sheng was her son. She might not be able to keep Zhai Yaohui in hand, but she must be able to control her son.

Fortunately, Zhai Sheng was much more clear-minded than her. She had been muddleheaded for years. If she finally came to her senses only when Zhai Sheng had fallen in love with Qiu Chenxi and had married her, she could not imagine how life would be for her. She would definitely be very miserable.

"Nan Nan, don't be afraid, open the door. I am thirsty after talking for so long." Miao Jing felt much better with the support of her son. It was then that she realized that she was very thirsty.

Since she became the wife of the chief of the army, Miao Jing sought to behave with propriety and not to bring shame to Zhai Yaohui. She did not allow herself to act unruly or to be laughed at in front of others. She could not remember the last time she did not hide her true nature and had a good quarrel. It seemed so far away as if it was in her previous lifetime.

“Sure.” Qiao Nan opened the door for Miao Jing. “Auntie Miao, I only have boiled water at home.”

“It’s okay. It is better than being thirsty. Give me a big cup of water. My eyes and throat are on fire.”

Seeing Miao Jing’s cool manner, Qiao Nan could not help but curl her lips. She darted a look at Zhai Sheng before giving her a big cup of hot water.

Miao Jing was indeed thirsty. She gulped down the whole cup of water in one go. Qiao Nan was stunned. “Auntie Miao, do you feel bloated? Do you want to walk around lest your stomach feels uncomfortable?”

#### Chapter 455: A Contradictory Miao Jing

“I don’t feel bloated!” Now that she was in a good mood, she felt comfortable in anything she did. “Nan Nan, don’t be stingy. Give me another half a cup of water.”

Qiao Nan saw that Miao Jing looked well and so she gave her another half cup of water. “Auntie Miao, is it alright that you sit here without a care about what’s going on outside?” Qiu Chenxi had yet to leave.

After listening to what Qiu Chenxi said just now, it was obvious that she had not given up. She wanted to work harder to obtain the approval of Brother Zhai and marry into the Zhai family.

When encountered with such matters, the average girl would leave in shame and anger. Some might even say harsh words and swear to cut off all contacts with the Zhai family.

But now that the situation had turned so awkward, Qiu Chenxi still had not given up on Brother Zhai. It not only proved that she was bent on marrying Brother Zhai, but it also showed that Qiu Chenxi was very difficult to deal with.

“It’s alright. I don’t believe in Zhai Yaohui, but I believe in my son. It has been more than ten years. Qiu Chenxi often came to look for Zhai Sheng, but he has never paid much attention to her. Nan Nan, I’m not afraid of you laughing at me. Let me tell you something. In the past, I might have wanted the two of them to be together, but in fact, I was happy when Zhai Sheng gave the enthusiastic Qiu Chenxi the cold shoulder.”

Back then, Qi Minlan acted smugly in front of her. She treated her lightly and would laugh at her when she made mistakes.

Every dog has its day. Twenty years had passed since. Now, Qi Minlan’s daughter acted like a clown in front of her son, but her son was not interested in her at all.

“I see.”

This was the reason why Auntie Miao insisted Qiu Chenxi to be with Brother Zhai all these years even though she disliked Qi Minlan and Qiu Chenxi.

When a woman was bent on revenge, she was not to be underestimated.

Qi Minlan might have thought that Auntie Miao was afraid of her and hence she accepted Qiu Chenxi. In fact, Auntie Miao was enjoying her revenge on them.

“Auntie Miao, if Brother Zhai is not interested in Qiu Chenxi but in someone else, but she is not the type of daughter-in-law that you are looking for, will you force Brother Zhai to listen to you by threatening to sever ties with him?”

Auntie Miao was indeed cool when she used that tactic to deal with Qiu Chenxi.

However, as a bystander, Qiao Nan was so shocked that she broke out in a cold sweat.



She could not imagine what would happen when Miao Jing knew about her relationship with Zhai Sheng. Miao Jing might be on good terms with her now, but she might adopt the same attitude that she used on Qiu Chenxi, objecting to their relationship and separating Zhai Sheng and her.

That scene...

Miao Jing smoothed her sleeve. "I'm not foolish. One cannot always use the same old trick. Zhai... Forget it. Don't mention him. Hua Hua and Zhai Sheng are my children. Nobody in the world is more important to me than the two of them. As long as that person is not Qiu Chenxi, I can reason with them and convince them to break up. Nan Nan, you really don't understand. It will be very hard on the average girl to be married to Zhai Sheng."

When Miao Jing said this, there was a sense of burden in her words.

Qiao Nan was absorbed in her own thoughts. "Auntie Miao, if the girl is not afraid of the hardships and wants to be with Brother Zhai, will that be fine? Will you still not allow them to be together?"

According to what Auntie Miao said, she did not object to her relationship with Brother Zhai because of her family background. There seemed to be other reasons.

"Nan Nan, did Zhai Sheng tell you about the girl that he likes and wanted you to sound me out and put in a good word for them?" Miao Jing was sharp. She grabbed Qiao Nan's hand and said, "Nan Nan, you're closer to me than with Zhai Sheng, right? I treat you like my daughter. At this time, you must stand on my side. Do you understand? Nan Nan, don't disappoint me!"

Miao Jing grabbed Qiao Nan's hands as if she was her last straw.

Qiao Nan was in a dilemma. On the one hand, she wanted to come clean. On the other hand, she was afraid of the repercussions.

She could feel that Miao Jing trusted and cared a lot for her, but Qiao Nan could not bring herself to say anything that was against her will. "Auntie Miao, after all, I am just an outsider. I can only promise you that unless you agree, I will never agree to the relationship between Brother Zhai and the young lady. What do you think?"

In other words, as long as Auntie Miao did not agree, she would never marry Brother Zhai. She would never hurt Auntie Miao because of this.

“Really?”

“Yes!”

Miao Jing looked as if she had to have Qiao Nan’s support. With Qiao Nan’s words, her tension eased and she relaxed. “Nan Nan, Auntie Miao believes in you.”

“Mom, you believe in Nan Nan? What is it about?” It seemed that they had settled the problem of Qiu Chenxi. The three of them headed toward Qiao Nan’s house. Zhai Hua strode forward like a man. She did not look anything like a lady. Miao Jing could not help but frown at her.

“It has nothing to do with you. By the way, you are a soldier in the army, but when you’re at home, you are my daughter. Can’t you behave like a lady? You don’t look cool and suave like the soldier. Instead, you have picked up all the bad habits in the army!”

“Mom, don’t nag me about this anymore. I have a headache from listening to it.” Before Zhai Sheng was born, she was always with her grandpa. After Zhai Sheng was born, both of them spent a long time with their grandpa. Her childhood memories were all related to her grandpa.

Old Master Zhai came from a humble background. He was almost illiterate and had been through the most turbulent times in China. Apart from the righteousness of a soldier, he had also learned the slovenly ways of the soldiers.

Zhai Hua’s parents were rarely by her side when she grew up. Her grandpa was the only one whom she could learn from, and so her temperament was similar to that of Old Master Zhai.

By the time Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing noticed it, it was already too late to make her change her ways.

“Brother Zhai, has Qiu Chenxi left?” Would Qiu Chenxi be willing to leave without a satisfactory answer?

“Otherwise, would she be waiting for us to invite her to dinner? My mom said that I have slovenly manners and don’t behave like a girl. Qiu Chenxi may behave like a girl, but she is too thick-

skinned. My dad has made it so clear, yet she still hopes that Zhai Sheng will like her in the future. How could there be someone like her?"

Zhai Hua had no idea what was going through Qiu Chenxi's mind.

It was normal for young ladies to use some wits to get what they wanted, but why did Qiu Chenxi insist on having Zhai Sheng? Zhai Sheng needed to be a willing party as well.

What annoyed Zhai Hua the most was that her mother obviously liked Qiao Nan very much.

Why was her mother unable to accept her if she became Zhai Sheng's girlfriend and decided to marry him?

Chapter 456: Did You Regret It?

Don't tell her that her mom did this purely because she shunned Qiao Nan's poor family background and preferred the rich to the poor?

Zhai Hua was taught by Old Master Zhai to be truthful and honest. She could not accept such things the most.

Furthermore, Zhai Hua was clearly aware of her own mother's background. In terms of family status, her mother was worse than Qiao Nan. Didn't her mother become the wife of the chief? Why could her mother do that and not Qiao Nan?

If Zhai Sheng had not forbidden her from doing so, she would have questioned Miao Jing and clarified why her mother was so contradictory and strange. It was too unacceptable!

What exactly was her mother thinking of!

Zhai Hua's worried mind was in a knot because of this matter.

"I don't like that person either, but your dad was happy to do so. Did I have a choice?" Miao Jing expressed that she would not bear the blame for this. All the while, Zhai Yaohui was the one who

wanted Qiu Chenxi to be married to Zhai Sheng. If Zhai Yaohui had not adopted this attitude, would she have agreed?

The mother-daughter pair unanimously boycotted Zhai Yaohui. This made Zhai Yaohui's face turn black. "We're now at someone's house." They should not speak about everything in front of outsiders. Wouldn't that be ugly and shameful? They were not fearful of being a laughingstock!

Zhai Sheng looked like he was deep in thought as he glanced at Qiao Nan. He then stood up. "Dad, Mom, I'll send you back. It's almost time for Qiao Nan to go to school. It's not convenient for us to stay here."

"Yes, yes, yes, Nan Nan, please don't be late." At the sight of the time, around four o'clock, Miao Jing quickly stood up.

"Don't." Zhai Hua smiled as if she was implying something. "Qiu Chenxi was so crazy today. We've all seen that. The matter between Zhai Sheng and her fell through but this concerns only our two families. Yet, she actually came to create trouble for Nan Nan and wanted to settle scores with her. She's too unreasonable. Judging from what happened just now, who knows if Qiu Chenxi will come back and kick up another fuss? Why don't we do this? Zhai Sheng, pass me the car keys. I'll drive Dad and Mom home. You might as well send Nan Nan to school. No matter how unreasonable Qiu Chenxi is, it won't be that easy for her to enter Ping Cheng High School."

"Should we do this?" Miao Jing hesitated for a while.

Zhai Yaohui glared at Zhai Hua, who seemingly wanted the show to carry on. "You've thought of it so thoroughly. Why don't we do this? Zhai Sheng sends us back while you send Qiao Nan, in case there's a misunderstanding when others see them."

So, his daughter already knew about Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan. Only Miao Miao and he were kept in the dark.

"That won't do." Zhai Hua declined. "I just came back after completing a mission and my body feels very weak. I need to have a good rest. What if Qiu Chenxi comes and creates a fuss again? I may not be able to stop her. Hence, Zhai Sheng is more reliable."

Anyway, she felt that Nan Nan was quite good. She was more than a hundred times better than Qiu Chenxi.

If her father could accept Qiu Chenxi, why couldn't he accept Qiao Nan?

Today, she would help Zhai Sheng and Qiao Nan in the same way that her father brought Qiu Chenxi and Zhai Sheng together in the past!

Zhai Yaohui's face turned black with fury. The daughters of other families were akin to a warm cotton jacket of their parents, but her daughter was born to anger him!

"Mom, what do you say?" Would Zhai Hua be afraid of that glare of Zhai Yaohui? Even if she did, she would not show it in front of others. Moreover, Miao Jing was on her side.

After thinking, Miao Jing said, "What Hua Hua said makes sense. Zhai Sheng, you'll send Nan Nan to school. Your sister will send your dad and me home."

"Alright." Zhai Sheng looked at Zhai Hua with gratitude.

Zhai Hua raised her eyebrows as if to say, 'Don't be anxious to thank me. Next time, remember to help me when I have a problem.'

"Mom, it's late. Let's go back." Taking the car keys from Zhai Sheng's hands, Zhai Hua brought the aware Zhai Yaohui and the clueless Miao Jing away and left Qiao Nan and Zhai Sheng alone.

Zhai Sheng's face turned sullen slightly. Without a word, he entered Qiao Nan's bedroom and took Qiao Nan's schoolbag. "Have you packed all your stuff? Did you miss out anything?"

"No."

"Then, let's go, in case your dad hears anything when he comes back."

"Oh." Qiao Nan shrank her neck. Was Brother Zhai angry because he heard something?

"Why did you say that to my mom?" True enough, while they were walking along the quiet road, Zhai Sheng asked in a sullen tone. "Did you know what it means when you say that?"

Qiao Nan mustered her courage as she lifted her head and looked at Zhai Sheng in the eye. “I knew. It means it will be a few more years until we could be together.”

“Are you sure?” That it was just marrying a few years later and not giving up their relationship?

“I’m certain!” She did not wish to hurt Auntie Miao, but this did not mean she would hurt herself. “Brother Zhai, you must have confidence in me. Besides the matter regarding Auntie Miao, I have not done anything that would make you misunderstand me. Moreover, I’ve discussed the issue about Auntie Miao with you long ago. In the past, I’ve already told you that unless Auntie Miao is willing to accept me, it’s impossible between the two of us. But now, at the very least, I will definitely work hard together with you until Auntie Miao can accept me.”

“Isn’t it just getting married and getting on with life? Why is it so troublesome?” This was a hundred times more troublesome than all the missions he had completed thus far.

He remembered that he spent about three months to carry out his most difficult mission. However, the problem between Qiao Nan and him might not even be able to be resolved in three years, let alone three months.

Qiao Nan’s heart trembled. She said in both a serious and joking manner, “Yes, it’s so troublesome between us. It may be even more so in the future. Brother Zhai, are you regretting it now? Do you wish to find someone who’s easier for you to marry?”

Zhai Sheng paused in his steps and looked at Qiao Nan seriously. “A soldier does not run away from problems. No matter how difficult the problem before me is, I will also take out my greatest courage and energy to overcome this tall mountain of a hurdle! Nan Nan, do you regret it?”

After all, he was the one who took the initiative right from the start. Nan Nan was more passive and had more concerns than him.

“If I regretted it, why would I tell Auntie Miao that today?” Qiao Nan felt relieved. In the beginning, she was the passive one in the relationship, but she was fully committed to it. “Brother Zhai, actually, you don’t know. I’ve never felt confident in front of you. Your family background is better than mine. As an individual, you’re also capable. And taking into consideration Auntie Miao’s feelings, you can find someone better without me. But without you, it’s not possible for me to find someone that I like so much.”

Zhai Sheng grabbed Qiao Nan's hand and held it tightly. "To me, only you're the best." So, this was the reason Nan Nan was uneasy?

"Nan Nan, I've always thought that you're young and don't know much about relationships." He was older and already knew what he wanted. Hence, he took advantage of the situation by taking action first.

#### Chapter 457: The First Intimate Contact

He used hard means to conquer Nan Nan and did not give her any options. While Nan Nan was still ignorant of matters related to the heart, he forcefully stamped the seal of the Zhai family on her.

He fully believed that he would definitely be very good to Nan Nan and give her happiness. There was no doubt that he was the right choice for Nan Nan.

However, he only knew now that he and Qiao Nan were of one heart and mind. She cared about him and he had a very important place in her heart. The love that he gave was reciprocated. What could be more wonderful than this in the world?

Qiao Nan smiled bitterly. She was still young? She was an old woman that was 'more than forty years old'. How young was 'young'?

In the previous life, she did not even get married. In this lifetime, she got involved with someone like Zhai Sheng. Since she got together with him, she had been suspecting if her reborn and everything that happened thereafter was only a dream.

At some point, she might open her eyes and awake to reality. She would be back to that cold and lonely rented apartment. She would again face Qiao Zijin who was already having a glorious life but continued to suppress her. She also had to face her mother who would force her to agree to donate one of her kidneys to Qiao Zijin.

From an extremely unfortunate situation to a fortunate one, this change made Qiao Nan often feel that she was in the clouds, stepping on something soft and unreal. She had an unrealistic feeling of floating in the air.

In terms of love affairs, very few would not think about personal gains and losses. Anyway, Qiao Nan could not do that.

“Brother Zhai, you should believe in me.”

“I do and I always will!” The look in Zhai Sheng’s eyes and his tone became firmer and determined. “Nan Nan, you have to remember. Other people’s attitudes will not change my feelings toward you. You’re the only one who can influence my judgment and decision.”

“Brother Zhai, this is also what I wanted to tell you. I’m used to being bullied by my mom and sister. There’s a sense of slight stubbornness that I can’t change in my bones. You’re the one who started this, but I’m true to you. Unless you don’t want me, don’t believe in the others’ words. Similarly, I will only believe your words. However, if you really don’t want me, Brother Zhai, I will definitely not turn back. Never!”

Sensing Qiao Nan’s determined and devoted love which was similar to his love for her, Zhai Sheng felt an upsurge of emotions in his heart. His eyes were shining as he pulled Qiao Nan strongly into the small dark alley beside them...

Before Qiao Nan could react, her lips had been planted on by similarly soft, thin, and hot lips that sent sparks through her body.

Not only Zhai Sheng’s lips were hot, but even the air that he exhaled from his nose was also so hot that it nearly made Qiao Nan melt.

This kiss of Zhai Sheng did not have any skills to speak of. It even seemed rough and clumsy. Besides kissing with strength, there were not many other actions. Two pair of lips were plastered together and it was difficult to differentiate the breathing between the two people.

However, such a simple kiss which was not even tinged with lust already made the two of them shudder with excitement!

Qiao Nan’s legs were wobbly and her body was crumbling.

Zhai Sheng’s arms, as strong as steel, were holding onto Qiao Nan’s waist, pressing her against him. Their bodies were pressed tightly against each other, just like their lips. There was no gap between them at all.



Qiao Nan's eyes were in a daze, her face flushed in red, while Zhai Sheng's eyes were increasingly brighter and sharper. It was as if he was a hunting leopard that had secured his prey and was prepared to pounce on and completely devour it. He would conquer it entirely by himself and definitely not let anyone else touch it.

How could Qiao Nan, who did not even have a kiss in her previous life, endure such fervent and abundant love from Zhai Sheng? It was akin to a volcano eruption. She was like dough that did not have any ability to resist.

Qiao Nan was truly thankful that her man was a soldier who had perseverance and self-control that were as strong as steel.

If it was other men, Qiao Nan could forget about going to school with the situation today.

Before Qiao Nan could react from her state of daze, Zhai Sheng gasped heavily and buried his head into Qiao Nan's shoulder. His whole body was stiff, turning as hard as steel. His breathing was hotter than before.

When Qiao Nan regained her senses, she already felt that she was not just being hugged by Zhai Sheng. She was seemingly trapped in an extremely tiny cage and surrounded by hard iron bars on all four sides. It even made her feel a little painful.

"Zhai... Brother Zhai, I still need to go to school. If I don't make a move now, I'll... I'll be late." At this moment, Qiao Nan jumped to her senses and realized how inappropriate she and Zhai Sheng had behaved earlier.

Kissed! She and Brother Zhai actually kissed!

All of a sudden, Qiao Nan did not know if she should be pleased that she finally had her first kiss in two lifetimes or feel embarrassed at the situation at hand.

There was a strong reaction in a certain part of Zhai Sheng's body. When Zhai Sheng, who was unable to even move his legs, heard Qiao Nan, his teeth even turned itchy. Through the clothes, he bit her collar bone without reservation and said, "Even if it's a girl, you can't do that too. Be careful when you're bathing in school, understand? When you reach school later, just say that you like to

eat spicy food and Uncle Qiao prepared very spicy Sichuan dishes for you if someone questions you. Understand?"

At the sight of the red and slightly swollen lips of Qiao Nan, which was even redder than her face, Zhai Sheng said in satisfaction.

He was the one who kissed and caused Nan Nan's swollen lips!

Qiao Nan did not know whether to laugh or cry. He was too petty. Moreover, she did not have the habit of being naked in front of people of the same gender. "Brother Zhai, don't tell me that there are barriers when you bathe in the camp with a group of guys!"

If that really was the case, where did the joke of picking up the soap come from in the 21st century?

"I'm a regiment commander. I have my own bedroom and bathroom!" Zhai Sheng refused to mention that when he first joined the army as a new recruit, of course, he had to bathe together with everyone.

At that time, Zhai Sheng did not feel anything at all. However, at the thought of Qiao Nan revealing her body in front of other women, Zhai Sheng felt extremely uneasy and was definitely unable to accept that. Otherwise, he would not have bitten Qiao Nan's collar bone.

Given his strength, there would be a mark even if he did not break the skin. It would take two to three days to disappear.

Unless Nan Nan wished to explain to her classmates, Nan Nan had to cover herself more with her clothing for the next few days at least.

"Brother Zhai, I'm really going to be late if I don't go to school now." Qiao Nan's eyes were red and her body turned stiff. It was not because of other reasons. It was because she had felt the existence of that 'heavy machine gun' with a strong murderous feel against her abdomen.

Although one had not eaten pork, they would have seen a pig running away.

At the thought that Zhai Sheng was already twenty-three years old, a young and impulsive age, Qiao Nan was scared out of her wits. Wasn't it just a tight kiss? Why did it turn out this way?

“Z-Zhai... Brother Zhai, y-you have to calm down.”

#### Chapter 458: Escape from the Mouth of the ‘Wolf’

The sullen voice of Zhai Sheng could be heard. “If I’m not calm, do you think you’ll still be able to stand here without any scathe? Let me relax.”

“Relax! You have to relax!” Qiao Nan was so scared that she dared not move. Her stiff body maintained the same position until half of it turned numb.

Finally, Zhai Sheng took a deep breath in Qiao Nan’s shoulders. He then stood up and slowly separated himself from Qiao Nan. He also helped Qiao Nan smoothened her slightly wrinkled clothes. “Alright, I’ll send you to school.”

“Okay, okay, okay!” Ah, she had escaped from the mouth of the ‘wolf’.

Zhai Sheng really knew how to control himself. It was only when Qiao Nan reached the school safely that she heaved a huge sigh of relief. Fortunately, it was Brother Zhai today. She dared not think otherwise.

“Nan Nan, why are you standing there in a daze? Not going to the classroom?” Zheng Lingling happened to arrive at the school at this time.

“Oh, it’s nothing. I was thinking of a question.” Qiao Nan felt guilty and quickly used studies as an excuse.

“Nan Nan, you’re already very conscientious in your studies. Give us a break.” Did Nan Nan need to be so diligent and think about the solution to a problem even when she was on the road?

Fortunately, her parents were not aware of this. Otherwise, they would definitely use this point as an example and asked her to learn from Nan Nan. Not any typical person could pick up such a learning attitude from Nan Nan.

“Nan Nan, why is your mouth swollen? Did you eat spicy food again when you went home this time?” As guessed by Zhai Sheng, with how Qiao Nan looked, any sharp-eyed person would be able to notice that. However, Zhai Sheng did not expect that the people who knew Qiao Nan were not curious about Qiao Nan’s odd look. They even thought that it’s normal. “Nan Nan, you love spicy food so much. This always happens each time you go home. Yet, you don’t have any pimples growing on your face despite eating so much spicy food. Heaven is too unfair!”

Zheng Lingling already wished to strangle Qiao Nan. This was because she belonged to the category of people that would easily get pimples after taking spicy food.

“My dad and I have been liberated,” Qiao Nan replied guiltily.

“You and your dad are so pitiful.” Zheng Lingling knew a little about the situation of the Qiao family. She also heard that Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin went somewhere else and were not in Ping Cheng. Qiao Nan and her father who loved spicy food had endured so many years of not having them because of Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin. At the thought that they became so crazy about it after being liberated, Zheng Lingling did not know what to say as well.

As a family, it was so painful to have to live their lives in this way.

“One needs to be forward-looking and should not always live in the past. At the very least, my dad and I are doing fine now. We can eat spicy food whenever we wish to now, no matter how spicy the food is.” Qiao Nan smiled.

When Qiao Nan was not at home, although Qiao Dongliang would not shortchange himself, he also did not bother to prepare any exquisite or complicated dishes. It was enough that he could have a simple and full meal. Nevertheless, when Qiao Nan was home, Qiao Dongliang would always prepare many dishes according to both of their dietary preferences. Of course, all these dishes would be spicy. It was to the point of having no kick without any spice.

The way the father-daughter pair ate was as if they had endured more than a decade of non-spicy diet and had to make up for the loss in the shortest time possible.

Fortunately, Qiao Dongliang’s and Qiao Nan’s bodies were healthy enough not to encounter any problems with such a diet. There was no symptom of constipation. On the contrary, Qiao Nan’s skin became better than before.

“That’s true. A good life is awaiting you and your dad.” Zheng Lingling agreed. Qiao Nan was so strong in her studies. Although not every college graduate would be able to land a good job in the future, Zheng Lingling felt that while others might not, Qiao Nan would definitely be able to do so.

As long as Nan Nan was successful in her own right, all the other things did not matter.

Besides, judging from her observation, Nan Nan and her father were not muddleheaded. Most likely, they would not be bullied by others again.

“Ah, right. I have something to tell you. You decide for yourself whether to go.”

“What do you mean by whether to go?” Qiao Nan, who was walking toward the classroom, was pulled back by Zheng Lingling.

“I forgot about it suddenly as I rarely see you being so distracted. When I entered the school, do you know who I saw?” Zheng Lingling smiled in a mysterious manner.

“My dear secretary, can you not play this trick with me? What’s there to guess? How will I be able to guess it?” Qiao Nan rolled her eyes. She hated the game of ‘guessing’. The scope was too wide and the target was fuzzy. What was there to guess?

“Chen Jun. That senior who came to our school before last year. Do you have any impression? I remember that Xu Tingting liked him so much. He’s at the school entrance. He initially wanted to come in but was held back by the security guard.” Since Qiao Nan’s mother came to the school, the security guard kept a tighter watch than before. People who were not from their school were definitely not allowed entry. They would only ask them to leave. “He seemed to remember me and asked me to pass a message to you. He’s waiting for you at the entrance. Do you want to go and meet him?”

“No.” Upon hearing that it was Chen Jun, Qiao Nan’s expression changed slightly and she immediately declined. “I don’t even know him, and neither do I know him well. Did he tell you why he is looking for me? I’m not going to see him.” The Wang family was already in trouble. Most likely, Wang Yang could not be bothered about the matter of the Chen family now.

Since that was the case, she did not mean anything to Chen Jun anymore. Why did Chen Jun still look for her?

“Are you really not going to see him?” Zheng Lingling was a little surprised. “Nan Nan, seriously, you don’t care about anything else besides your studies. Don’t forget that you’re a lady.” Which lady did not like suave guys? Even if they would not be together, it would be good to admire and glance at them a few times.

She was one example. When Chen Jun called her just now, she took the chance to take a few more glances at him. Chen Jun was so good-looking.

If what Xu Tingting had found out was real, then Chen Jun was really someone good-looking with good family background. Who would not want to take a few glances at such a good man? Nan Nan was simply the wonderful and extinct one amongst the ladies.

In the face of Zheng Lingling’s doubt and puzzlement, Qiao Nan proudly lifted her chin. Zheng Lingling felt that Chen Jun was a rare commodity and a good man because they had not seen the world. Chen Jun could not be compared to Brother Zhai at all.

In front of a shiny and bright pearl such as Brother Zhai, it would be strange if she was willing to take a few more glances at Chen Jun, this piece of fish eye.

“Chen Jun is still waiting at the school entrance. What should we do?” Zheng Lingling was stunned.

“You promised Chen Jun to pass the message. Then, I’ll have to trouble our dear secretary to make a trip to tell him that I’m not available to see him.” Qiao Nan patted Zheng Lingling’s shoulders. “You’re a class committee member. It’s your responsibility to share the worries and resolve the problems for your classmates. I look up to you.”

“Don’t kid with me. Take it that I owe you this.” Zheng Lingling ground her teeth. She could only make the trip for Qiao Nan’s sake.

Unexpectedly, Zheng Lingling was back after a short while. She even passed Qiao Nan a slip of note. “This was given to you by Chen Jun. He said that you will definitely go and see him after you read this. What is written in the note?”

Chapter 459: Suggestion

Qiao Nan grabbed the note and did not really wish to open it in front of Zheng Lingling.

It was good that before Qiao Nan could say anything, Tang Mengran came to pass a message to Zheng Lingling. “Lingling, Teacher Liu asked you to go to his office to see him. Hurry. Teacher Liu is waiting for you.”

“Aye.” Zheng Lingling immediately put Qiao Nan’s matter aside and rushed to Teacher Liu’s office.

Once Zheng Lingling left, Qiao Nan quickly turned her back and opened the note. There was not much content in the slip. There were only two phrases: Zhai Sheng, small alley.

When Qiao Nan first saw these four words, she was momentarily stunned. She also did not realize what they meant.

But when Qiao Nan recalled what happened on the way when Zhai Sheng sent her to school this evening, she started to realize what Chen Jun wrote in this note meant.

So, Chen Jun saw what she and Brother Zhai did?

“It’s so difficult to meet you.” Chen Jun, whose back was facing the entrance of Ping Cheng High School, said with a hint of sarcasm on his face when he heard footsteps coming from behind him. He had even believed that Qiao Nan was a fairy from heaven that was pure, sincere, and kind.

In the end, the reason why he did not succeed was not that Qiao Nan was wholeheartedly focused on her studies, but because he was not good enough and did not meet Qiao Nan’s expectations at all.

He really could not tell that the seemingly simple and pure Qiao Nan was even more scheming than him. She wanted more and was even greedier than him.

He had underestimated Qiao Nan in the past. From a certain perspective, Qiao Nan, this woman, was really quite ‘suitable’ for him.

“Senior Chen, why did you look for me this time?” Qiao Nan pursed her lips.

“If you didn’t know why I was looking for you, would you come and meet me now?” Chen Jun sneered. “An honest person talks openly. If you don’t want others to hear about your relationship with Zhai Sheng, then you should know what I want.”

“First of all, what is it about Brother Zhai and me? We’re open and honest. Your threat to me is nonexistent. Secondly, I don’t know you very well. All this while, including today, we only met thrice. What kind of person are you? What are you thinking of? How would I know?” Staring at Chen Jun, that nervous mind of Qiao Nan when she was on the way here finally relaxed.

She had known that given Brother Zhai’s alertness, he would have found out if Chen Jun had been following them.

The greatest possibility for Chen Jun to write her such a note was that Chen Jun initially came to look for her today. However, he did not expect to see Brother Zhai by her side.

Hence, Chen Jun followed them from a distance and hoped to find an opportunity to get close to her when Brother Zhai left.

While they were on the way, Chen Jun saw Brother Zhai pulling her into a small alley and they only came out after a while.

As to how Chen Jun was going to threaten her, he must have imagined and guessed it himself.

Even if Chen Jun guessed it correctly, what could he do to her if she refused to admit it?

Chen Jun was speechless for a while. “Your reaction is quite fast. You don’t seem like a simple eighteen-year-old student who has not stepped into society at all.”

“I’m certainly not quite easy to lie to. So sorry to have disappointed you,” Qiao Nan smiled and replied in Chen Jun’s face.

Chen Jun hoped to trick her into saying something?

No way!



Chen Jun stomped his feet a few times in a sullen manner. He silently vented the negative and dark feelings in his heart.

Yes, he was following Qiao Nan and Zhai Sheng from a very far distance along the way.

With Zhai Sheng's ploy, the Wang family had been controlled by the Zhu family. Hence, there was no hope for his father's promotion this year. He initially looked for Qiao Nan as he wanted to find out more about the truth of the matter, but he did not expect to see Zhai Sheng with her.

Chen Jun was not a green lad who had not seen the world. At the sight of the distance between the two, Chen Jun knew that Zhai Sheng had a close and intimate relationship with Qiao Nan.

When he saw Zhai Sheng pulling Qiao Nan into a small alley and coming out only after some time, as a man who had toyed with many women, could he not know what Zhai Sheng was thinking of? Would he not be able to guess what happened between the two after Qiao Nan was pulled into the small alley?

It was this moment that Chen Jun understood why Zhai Sheng would collaborate with Zhu Chengqi all of a sudden to suppress Wang Yang, affecting Chen Jun negatively as a result.

In fact, he no longer needed to trick Qiao Nan. He already knew the answer.

Nevertheless, the more this was the case, the more sullen he felt and could not accept the outcome. "Qiao Nan, you're an utter disappointment. I've always thought that you're a pure and good lady, and that you're definitely different from other ladies who value a person's status more than their character. I didn't expect that you're the same as those bitches who only look at one's family status and not the individual themselves! I was even moved by... Bah!"

So, the women in this era, regardless of age, even high school students, were already so practical.

It was not that he was not good enough or that he had lost his charm. Qiao Nan's standards were too high. She had long had her eyes on Zhai Sheng. In comparison to Zhai Sheng, of course, he was nobody to Qiao Nan.

"Don't give me a mouthful of nonsense. If you've said enough, I'm going back." Qiao Nan let out a breath and glanced sideways at Chen Jun. She then turned and wanted to leave.

“Qiao Nan, if you dare to leave now, I’ll tell the whole world about your relationship with Zhai Sheng, and also what Zhai Sheng and you did today. Qiao Nan, don’t be silly. Given your status, do you think you’ll really be able to marry Zhai Sheng and enter the Zhai family? Although it’s the 20th century now and a new century is coming, there are still rules in the upper-class society. Zhai Sheng is only toying with you. After he’s sick of you, he will definitely abandon you and cast you aside. Zhai Sheng is different from you. Even if he has a past, it won’t be difficult for him to marry another woman who is more outstanding and chaste. But you can’t. If you become the ‘used shoe’, not every man can accept you. Even if you can lie once, you won’t be able to keep the truth forever. At that time, you still have to divorce.”

Therefore, before anything happened, it was best that Qiao Nan quickly come to the realization. It was better to repent and mend her ways before it was too late.

“Qiao Nan, given your intelligence, you should know that Zhai Sheng is not suitable for you. Zhai Sheng loves you now, but how long can his love last? Before he’s sick of you and abandons you, why don’t you take the chance now to spare more thoughts for yourself when he still has feelings for you? You should consider and plan for your future. Qiao Nan, you’re living such a life now. In my view, you, more than anyone else, are someone that needs to plan more for your future. Qiao Nan, don’t give up and also don’t miss such a good opportunity.”

Qiao Nan was not stupid. She understood what Chen Jun meant immediately.

Qiao Nan tugged the corners of her lips and sneered. “Then, what do you suggest?”

#### Chapter 460: Backup Plan

“A straightforward person does not hide his intentions. Qiao Nan, I can give you all that you wish for.” Chen Jun lifted his chin confidently. “Qiao Nan, you can choose to believe me. Similarly, I will not disappoint you. The only greatest difference between Zhai Sheng and me is that I need to spend a little more time before I can give you what you want to have.”

Of course, if Qiao Nan could agree today, then the time he needed to spend would be greatly lessened.

Qiao Nan and Chen Jun did not understand the matter between Qi Minlan and Qiu Qin. Nevertheless, their current situation was similar to that of Qi Minlan and Qiu Qin in the past. Most

shockingly, Chen Jun made the same choice as the Qiu Qin in the past. As long as he could gain from this, it was not an issue at all to marry a woman who loved another man.

As long as this woman was currently chaste and would wholeheartedly spare a thought for him after marriage, then that would be enough.

“Hahaha.” Qiao Nan sneered thrice. “Chen Jun, I must say that you have been thinking too much. You’re just wasting your time.”

“Qiao Nan, you’re rejecting me? Have you thought about it carefully?” Chen Jun’s expression changed. Could he have overestimated Qiao Nan’s rationality and intelligence? “I don’t need you to reply to me immediately. I can give you a few days of time. As long as you can give me an answer before I return to college, then that will suffice. Of course, if you still have any reservations, I can give you more time. You know my address at the college. After you have sorted your thoughts, you can write to me directly. However, Qiao Nan, you have to remember that my patience only lasts until the end of this summer vacation. I hope you won’t make a wrong decision that will disappoint me.”

Thereafter, Chen Jun turned and left without any hesitation. Having made his point, he did not intend to continue to pester Qiao Nan.

Qiao Nan’s red lips formed a straight line. No, there was something odd about Chen Jun’s behavior today.

Chen Jun must have seen Brother Zhai and her gone into a small alley from afar today. He definitely did not see what they did in the alley. He had simply made a guess. As long as she and Brother Zhai refused to admit to this, not many people will believe it even if Chen Jun used this as a threat and announced it to the world.

Hence, why did Chen Jun leave so confidently as if he was certain that she would eventually sort out her thoughts and agree to his request today? That she would rather give up Brother Zhai and be with him?

“Xiao Qiao, what’s wrong? You look like you are out of sorts. Your mom and sister are not in Ping Cheng. Logically, you should feel quite happy nowadays. Why are you frowning and sulking? Did your mom and sister come back to look for you?” At the mention of Ding Jiayi and Qiao Zijin, Zhu Baoguo felt his head hurt. He was more annoyed about it than when he talked about Wang Yang.

“It’s nothing. I didn’t rest well when I was home this time. I’m just a little tired.” Qiao Nan shook her head.

“I heard from Zheng Lingling that Chen Jun came to look for you today. Did you see him?” Zhu Baoguo rolled his eyes. He could not help bringing up the main topic that he wanted to ask about.

“I’ve seen him.”

“Why?!”

“Why not?” Qiao Nan replied.

“Don’t you know that he’s up to no good toward you? The reason he...” Zhu Baoguo lowered the volume of his voice to prevent other classmates from hearing him. “He appeared previously in your life and even visited your house during the Lunar New Year not because he really liked you. This matter was all Wang Yang’s fault. Wait, shouldn’t you already know?”

“Your dad told you?”

“That... Could my dad keep this from me? I kept feeling that there was something odd about what happened recently, so I went to ask my dad. He told me everything.” Zhu Baoguo was proud of that. His father had said that he would not tell him a word if Zhu Baoguo could not sort this out himself.

“Oh.”

“Oh? What oh!” Zhu Baoguo was angered. “Nan Nan, you’re so silly. You clearly knew that he’s not interested in you. He’s hired by Wang Yang. All the good things and words that he said to you were lies. Why did you still meet him? Nan Nan, don’t tell me that you’ve taken a liking to him?”

“You’re someone who’s going to take the science course in the future, but look at what kind of logic you have. Does meeting him mean that I like him and have romantic feelings for him?” Qiao Nan rolled her eyes at Zhu Baoguo. “Alright, you should take good care of your own matters. Wang Yang suffered a setback at your dad’s side. How do you think your dad knew about the cause of this?”

“Were you the one who told my dad?” How could that be?!

“Otherwise?” Qiao Nan snorted. “Are you still worried now?”

“No, no. Xiao Qiao, you’re so smart. Why would you need me to worry about you? Hahaha, I’ve been too confused by attempting too many questions recently. Don’t take it to heart. Don’t mind me.” Zhu Baoguo smiled in a more relaxed manner.

Zhu Baoguo did not have further questions, but the doubts in Qiao Nan’s heart were still not cleared.

Today, Chen Jun left in such a carefree manner. He even gave her so much time. He did not have any intention to force her into a decision. She did not believe that Chen Jun did not have any backup plan!

Qiao Nan had been thinking about this. Before she could get an answer to it, the answer suddenly appeared in front of her, establishing its existence.

“Nan Nan, have you heard that there’s a new student who will be transferred to our class? Is that person sick in the mind? This semester is ending soon. In the second half of the year, we’ll be going to a different class. How could they transfer school at this time? Did the school agree to it? Is that student pulling out and does not want to take the college entrance examination anymore?”

Tang Mengran’s tone was full of resentment.

It was not easy for Tang Mengran to maintain her place in class one. Even with Qiao Nan’s help, her best results were considered average in the class. If her performance faltered slightly, she would be ranked amongst the last in the class.

If the student could be transferred to class one of Ping Cheng High School, then that meant the student’s results must be excellent.

With another classmate of excellent grades, the possibility of Tang Mengran being kicked out of class one was higher. Hence, of course, Tang Mengran disliked this student.

Fang Fang lifted the glasses up her nose bridge. “Didn’t Nan Nan tell you this matter before? Regardless of how formidable this student is, there’s not much time left in this semester. As for the

issue about class divisions, the school will do so based on humanities and science courses. With your grades, it's not difficult to get into the humanities course at all. You won't be affected by this new student. What's there for you to worry about?"

"That's true. But how could I let my worries down?" Tang Mengran held her face in distress. "It's not like all of you don't know that my grades are the poorest among all of you in the dormitory. I'm the worst amongst you all, so I'm not confident. If there's any slight movement or happening, I have to be more alert in case I become a muddleheaded ghost that doesn't know what happened."

"Poor Tang Mengran, did your parents give you any pressure?" He Yun sighed. She felt that life as a student was bitter.

In school, they had to take examinations and compare their grades every day. At home, they still had to listen to the nagging of their parents.