

RTAMM 581

Chapter 581: Why Are You Here

However, since Zhai Sheng was her boyfriend, then everything would be different.

“Now that you understand, you have to thank me.” Shi Qing felt very smug.

“Thank you? Nan Nan, what’s wrong? Why are you clutching your forehead? Are you uncomfortable? Is it too hot?” Qiao Dongliang knew that one would catch a cold if they were too cold, and they would catch a cold as well when too warm. It was called pyretic cold. “Or was it too warm when you went out today and now you are suffering from heatstroke? Where do you feel uncomfortable? Do you feel dizzy or do you feel like vomiting? Do you want to lie on the bed for a while? I will get you an ice pack.”

“Dad, don’t be anxious. I’m fine. Sit down and have your meal.” After making sure that Qiao Dongliang was seated, Qiao Nan used her chopsticks to pick two servings of the scrambled eggs into Qiao Dongliang’s bowl. “Dad, Shi Qing’s right. You have a hard time working and you must be tired. You must have more of the food and eat well. Dig in now.”

Otherwise, all the good food at home would be eaten by Shi Qing. It would be such a waste.

“Shi Qing, since you’re staying for the night, what about your clothes?” It seemed like Shi Qing was bent on staying for the night. But fortunately, she was his daughter’s classmate, not a stranger. Qiao Dongliang felt more reassured.

“Uncle Qiao, don’t worry. I have brought clothes with me.” Shi Qing patted the bag next to her, indicating that she was prepared.

Qiao Nan pursed her lips. Previously, she had felt odd that Shi Qing came out from the car with a bag. It turned out that those were her clothes.

It seemed that Shi Qing had already planned to stay for the night at their house.

“Oh, I see.” Since Shi Qing came fully prepared, Qiao Dongliang had nothing more to say.

“Initially, I was thinking of asking Qiao Nan to lend you her clothes. But it’s good that you came prepared. Alright, I have boiled some water for you to bathe. Shi Qing, why don’t you take a shower first, and Nan Nan will shower after you?”

“Sure, thank you, Uncle Qiao.” Shi Qing did not stand on ceremony with them. She took her clothes and went into the bathroom, watching as Qiao Dongliang brought the water into the bathroom.

Qiao Nan, who was watching the television in the living room, ground her teeth. If Shi Qing dared to leave her clothes for her to wash, she would let her know that in the face of absolute intelligence, brute force was useless!

Fortunately, Shi Qing knew her limits. She came out of the bathroom with her cleanly washed clothes. “Do I hang the clothes to dry in the yard? Where are the clips? Can you pass some to me?”

“... Is this your first time washing clothes?” Qiao Nan rolled her eyes.

“Of course not.” Shi Qing retorted. “I took such a short time to wash these clothes. Does it look like this is my first time washing clothes?”

“Well, all I can say is that nobody has taught you the correct way. It’s not good to dry clothes at night. The night dew will get on the clothes. They are bad for the body.”

“Night dew?”

“Forget it. Fortunately, it is summer now, and it doesn’t seem like it will rain tomorrow. You can go ahead to dry it. It will probably dry in two hours’ time.” Qiao Nan picked up her clothes and went into the bathroom. Since Shi Qing looked strong and healthy, there was nothing for her to worry about.

Actually, Qiao Dongliang felt uncomfortable that there was an eighteen-year-old young girl who was the same age as his daughter in the house.

That night, Qiao Dongliang did not watch the drama series that he had been following. He reminded Qiao Nan to sleep early before retiring to his room, leaving the living room to the two girls.

“Qiao Nan, your dad is a good man.” Like her father, he was reasonable and was a good father.

“Okay, stop sucking up to me. I know whether my dad is a good father or not.” Qiao Nan yawned. “Do you want to watch television, or do you want to sleep?”

“It’s too early to sleep.”

“You can’t sleep?” Qiao Nan was amused. She took out the English dictionary that Zhu Chengqi gave her last time. “For now, it will be impossible for you to memorize the Oxford Dictionary. You can start from this that is slightly easier. It’s already quite late. I’m certain that you’ll feel sleepy after reading that for half an hour.”

Shi Qing leaned back and lay motionless on the chair. “It will not take me half an hour. I already feel sleepy just by looking at the cover. Qiao Nan, must you be so ruthless?”

“Yes, because I am sleepy.” Qiao Nan yawned again. Shi Qing was different from her. She could maintain her results as she was diligent. Shi Qing was the genius that Tao Zhenqin and the rest would always marvel at. She disliked memorizing and preferred open-ended questions that required her to be flexible and apply whatever she learned.

To Shi Qing, memorizing was an extremely boring and dull method of studying. It was no wonder that she would feel sleepy.

“There’s no need for me to read that. I’m feeling drowsy right now. Let’s go to sleep.” With that, Shi Qing had a big yawn. As soon as she saw the English dictionary, she felt so sleepy that her eyes were teary.

It was rare that Shi Qing was honest with her. Qiao Nan switched off the television. “Actually, there is another small room in our house. Last night, my sister stayed in that room. Do you want to sleep there?”

She felt uncomfortable that she had to share a bed with another person. In her two lifetimes, she had always been sleeping by herself.

“The room must be cramped and the bed inside must be very small. I am a guest. Is this how you should treat me? Why don’t you sleep in the small room? I will not sleep there.” Shi Qing refused to fall for the trick. She went straight to Qiao Nan’s room.

Qiao Nan stared upward, at a loss for words. She refused to use the room that Qiao Zijin had stayed in previously.

Moreover, the bigger room was hers. Why did she have to give up her room?

Fortunately, the way Shi Qing slept was much better than Miao Jing. She did not have the habit of hugging the person next to her. She would maintain the same sleeping position throughout the night. She lay on her bed and did not turn and toss for the whole night.

At least, Qiao Nan, who could not sleep well when she shared the bed with someone else, did not feel the slightest discomfort throughout the night.

Shi Qing and Qiu Chenxi were indeed relatives. The next morning, Shi Qing woke up and ran for a few laps after Qiao Dongliang went to work. When she came back from her run, she saw that Qiao Nan was sleeping soundly and hence she went back to sleep. However, the two of them were jolted from their sleep by the incessant knocks on the door.

“Who is it?” Qiao Nan rubbed her eyes.

Shi Qing appeared to be wide awake. “Who else could it be but my cousin?” She was indeed early. It seemed that Qiu Chenxi had stomached her anger yesterday and she was all ready to vent her frustrations on Qiao Nan today.

The reason why Shi Qing wanted to stay for the night at Qiao Nan’s house was that she was worried that Qiu Chenxi would come looking for trouble early in the morning.

It was impossible for her to be in the vicinity of her house for twenty-four hours a day. It would be better for her to stay at her house.

In this way, if Qiu Chenxi made trouble at Qiao Nan’s house, she would be the first to know.

Chapter 582: Idea

Qiao Nan was wide awake as soon as she realized that it was Qiu Chenxi. “Is Qiu Chenxi ill? She doesn’t know my true relationship with Brother Zhai. Why does she keep coming after me regardless?” Qiu Chenxi was not a dog, so why would she go after anyone that she saw?

Actually, Qiao Nan felt unjustified to be pestered by Qiu Chenxi.

But she happened to be the woman whom Qiu Chenxi was searching for. In that case, it seemed to make sense that Qiu Chenxi was after her.

Qiao Nan hit herself on the head. She could not think straight early in the morning.

Even if she was Brother Zhai’s girlfriend, Qiu Chenxi had no right to pester her. Brother Zhai had never admitted to being Qiu Chenxi’s boyfriend. Both of them had never started a relationship, and she was not the third party who came between them. In that case, Qiu Chenxi had no right to create trouble for her!

“Your hair is like a bird’s nest and there are eye boogers in your eyes. On the contrary, Qiu Chenxi is dressed up glamorously. I am curious about what Brother Zhai sees in you. You should brush your teeth and wash your face. I will deal with Qiu Chenxi.” Shi Qing gave Qiao Nan a push, causing the latter to almost fall back onto the bed.

“Qiao Nan, come out right now!” Qiu Chenxi kept on banging on the door. It seemed like she was immune to pain. The people who heard the bangs could feel the pain she must have felt in her hands.

Everyone in the neighborhood was used to the fact that people would create a fuss at their new neighbor’s house once in a while.

Even though they were interested in gossip and wanted to find out what was going on, there had been so many such instances that they were tired of it. Besides, most of them had to work and they were not at home.

Earning money for their livelihood was more important than listening to other people’s gossip.

Hence, even though Qiu Chenxi created a huge ruckus, unlike the previous time where there was a huge crowd, not many people appeared to be interested.

Moreover, most of them could recognize Qiu Chenxi. She was the one who made a mistake and scolded the wrong person last time, so they did not bother to stay behind and listen to what was going on.

“Qiao Nan, come out now!”

The door creaked open.

Qiu Chenxi took a step back. The door opened and she caught a glance of a person coming out from the door. Without another word, Qiu Chenxi raised her hand and was about to give a slap to that person.

Shi Qing slanted her eyes, raised her hands, and gave a push against Qiu Chenxi’s hands.

Qiu Chenxi did not manage to slap Shi Qing. Instead, she stepped backward and almost fell down from the push that Shi Qing gave her. “Why are you the one who turned up? Why are you at the Qiao family’s residence? Where’s Qiao Nan? I am looking for Qiao Nan. Get her to come out now!”

Shi Qing stood in the doorway with an overbearing stance. She leaned against the door frame, and her long feet were stretched toward the other side of the door frame, blocking the doorway. “Why can’t I be at the Qiao family’s residence? Get Qiao Nan to come out? Qiu Chenxi, judging from your furious look, I know very well what you have in mind. We have been relatives for so many years. I know you very well. There’s no reason that you don’t know my reasons for being at the Qiao family’s residence. Qiu Chenxi, don’t disappoint me.”

Her attitude was very telling.

“Shi Qing, don’t forget that I am your sister! Qiao Nan is not related to you. Are you helping an outsider instead of helping me? Are you out of your mind?” Qiu Chenxi’s face flushed red in anger.

Shi Qing dug her ears. “You have already said this yesterday. Can you say something new today? I suppose your Chinese teacher had not taught you well when you were in school. You don’t have anything different to say?”

“Shi Qing! Don’t be too much. Do you believe that I will make a call to grandpa right now and he will send someone to pick you up?!” Her concern back then came true. She had brought disaster upon herself.

Shi Qing not only wanted to fight with her for Brother Zhai’s affection, but she also wanted to protect Qiao Nan, preventing her to find out who that vixen that Brother Zhai liked was!

If she had known this would happen, two months ago, she would not have come up with the lousy idea of getting Shi Qing to come to Ping Cheng to help her!

“Go ahead. So what if grandpa sends someone to pick me up? He can’t do anything to me if I refuse to leave. Will the person dare to raise their hands on me? Nobody can force me to do anything against my wishes. Let me tell you. Since I am here, I have no intention of going back to Mo Du. I like Ping Cheng. There are a lot of challenges here. I will stay in Ping Cheng until I finish college entrance examination. Also, don’t think of threatening me with grandpa.” Grandpa was no longer the person in charge in the Shi family. Her father respected him, so he was able to have some say over the family affairs.

Her grandpa might be unreasonable and believed a one-sided story.

But that was fine. She could just ignore her grandpa.

Though one had to appease the elders, if the elders were unreasonable, there was no need for the children to go along with them.

China might have placed importance on filial piety, but it had never practiced unquestioning filial piety!

“Fine, you are capable! Do you think I don’t dare to do it? We shall see!” Qiu Chenxi smiled grimly. She knew that as long as Shi Qing was there, she could not do anything to Qiao Nan. That was why she could not put up any resistance when she was towed away by Shi Qing yesterday. “You should know that grandpa is not in good health recently. If you are bent on angering him and affecting his health, I can’t do anything about it. You are free to do whatever you like! Shi Qing, let me tell you. I am dead set on creating trouble for Qiao Nan! If you are capable, you can be by her side twenty-four hours a day and be her bodyguard. Otherwise, given the Qiu family’s influence in Ping Cheng, I will surely be able to deal with Qiao Nan!”

“In the past, I tried to talk nicely to her, but she was shameless! She refused a toast only to drink a forfeit. I will never be polite to her!”

Since Qiao Nan was not afraid of her when she was being nice, she would no longer be so nice to her! She would show Qiao Nan what she was capable of!

Shi Qing cupped her chin. “Hey, now that you said this, I must thank you for reminding me. You may not know, but since a young age, Qiao Nan is the one person that I find pleasing to the eyes. Moreover, she’s qualified to be my friend, albeit barely. Since it’s so difficult to find someone that I can befriend, how can I allow you to bully her? My dad may have submitted his resignation letter, but you should know how it’s like in the army. It will take some time for the resignation letter to be approved. Since I am in Ping Cheng and don’t have many relatives, it’s not safe for me to stay by myself. There’s also nobody to cook for me. You have given me a good idea.”

Qiu Chenxi knitted her eyebrows. She was confused. She did not give Shi Qing any ideas. Did Shi Qing want to move back to the Qiu family’s residence?

If so, Shi Qing should stand to a side so that she could settle accounts with Qiao Nan.

Chapter 583: Stop Dreaming

“You may not know. I did not come to the Qiao family’s residence early in the morning. In fact, I slept over at the Qiao family’s residence last night. Over here, I will have Qiao Nan as my classmate in school, and after school, Uncle Qiao will take care of me. There is no need for me to prepare my own meals. Why don’t I just stay here? It will be very convenient. Alright, it’s settled. In the future, it will be easy for me to go to school.”

Shi Qing counted with her fingers. Staying at the Qiao family’s residence came with a lot of benefits. There was no way that she would leave.

“You, you want to live in the Qiao family’s residence?” Qiu Chenxi widened her eyes, staring at Shi Qing in disbelief.

“Haven’t I made myself clear?” Qiu Chenxi had said that Shi Qing could never stay by Qiao Nan’s side all the time. In that case, living with her would allow her to be with her all the time.

“Are you crazy?” Staying in the Qiao family’s residence? What was good about the Qiao family’s residence? Why would Shi Qing forsake the grand and comfy the Qiu family’s residence and live here instead? Shi Qing should admit that she was out of her mind.

“You know nothing. The environment doesn’t matter. It’s one’s mood that is important.” During the one month’s time that Shi Qing stayed in the Qiu family’s residence, she did not feel happy at all even though it was her auntie’s house. Everyone in the Qiu family gave her the look as if she was taking advantage of them.

All these years, her father took great care of the Qiu family. In fact, it was Qiu Chenxi who invited her over, yet the Qiu family treated her as such in the one month that she was there.

In order to gain Brother Zhai’s affection, Shi Qing was amazed that she could stay in that place for a month before finding a new place to move to. Her temper had improved.

“Do you mean that you’re in a bad mood while living in the Qiu family’s residence whereas you’re in a good mood here?”

“Of course.”

“You!” Qiu Chenxi was fuming in anger. She was asking for trouble if she invited Shi Qing to her house again.

Since Shi Qing was willing to live in the old and shabby Qiao family’s residence, she deserved such treatment!

“Does it mean that you will not stand aside for me to pass today, and if I pester Qiao Nan in the future, you will help the outsider instead of your relative?”

“Yes, regardless of who is in the wrong, I will definitely protect Qiao Nan.”

“You’re not related to her at all!” She was Shi Qing’s cousin!

“She is close to my heart!” They were close to each other regardless of whether they were related or not.

“Alright, stop arguing with me. With me around, you won’t get to see Qiao Nan. If you want to gain Brother Zhai’s affection, that’s between the two of you. Why do you have to involve Qiao Nan? If you create trouble for her again, you are asking for trouble. I am tired of arguing with you.” Fortunately, Qiu Chenxi did not know that Qiao Nan was Brother Zhai’s girlfriend. Otherwise, given her temper, the Qiao family’s residence would not have any peace.

This type of woman was too terrible.

“Very well, Shi Qing. I will keep in mind what happened today. I shall see how you are going to stay by Qiao Nan’s side twenty-four hours a day. Are you sure you are able to protect her 365 days a year?” She did not believe that she could not do anything to Qiao Nan in Ping Cheng because of Shi Qing.

Shi Qing’s countenance changed. “On account that we are relatives, there’s something that I have to remind you. It’s fine if you wish to spend your time and effort on Qiao Nan, but while you are targeting Qiao Nan, the woman that you are really after may make use of the time to get the Zhai family’s approval and gets ready to be married to Brother Zhai. By then, it’s useless if you cry your guts out. Even if you ruin Qiao Nan, it will be of no help. Someone has become Madam Zhai.”

Fortunately, Qiao Nan was careful enough not to let Qiu Chenxi know the truth.

Otherwise, she would not be able to come up with such an excuse to help Qiao Nan.

Previously, she was envious of Qiao Nan that she could gain Brother Zhai’s affection. Now, it seemed like it was a double-edged sword. It could easily harm Qiao Nan.

If she and Qiao Nan were to switch positions, even if she was Qiu Chenxi’s relative, in order to achieve her goal, Qiu Chenxi might not be willing to give up on Brother Zhai.

Qiu Chenxi might use more violent methods to force her to yield and have Brother Zhai for herself.

In this way, she would be the one who suffered. As for now, it was Qiao Nan who was unlucky.

Shi Qing had no idea whether it was the woman whom Zhai Sheng liked who was unfortunate or it was Zhai Sheng who was unlucky to have known Qiu Chenxi.

“Do you know who the woman is?” Qiu Chenxi could tell that something was amiss from Shi Qing’s tone. “Actually, the reason why I am set on Qiao Nan and will not let her go is that I know that given Qiao Nan’s background, Brother Zhai will not like her instead of me. However, Brother Zhai refused to tell me who the woman is. I know that Qiao Nan definitely knows about the woman. I tried to persuade Qiao Nan to tell me the identity of the woman and assured her that she would stand to benefit from it. But she refused, so I have to...”

Actually, she was not willing to act like a shrew at the Qiao family’s residence. Last time, she even acted like a fool in front of Uncle Zhai.

Perhaps that was the reason why Uncle Zhai accepted the woman.

“Qing Qing, I promise you. As long as Qiao Nan tells me, no, I mean, as long as you tell me who the woman is, from then on, I will never bother Qiao Nan. That woman is my enemy. Before I figure out who the enemy is, Qiao Nan only has herself to blame for being unlucky!”

After listening to what she said, Shi Qing had nothing but contempt for Qiu Chenxi. She could not find the ‘real culprit’, so she vented her frustration on the innocents.

To put it bluntly, Qiu Chenxi was only capable of such deeds. Why would grandpa treat Qiu Chenxi as his beloved granddaughter and dote on her?

It was not because she was not good enough. It was her grandpa who could not tell the good from the bad.

Shi Qing felt that there was no use to argue with Qiu Chenxi. “You don’t have to promise me anything. I don’t know who the woman is. I just feel that don’t you find it a waste of time to pester Qiao Nan every day? You have already tried doing so, but what’s the result? In the end, you embarrassed yourself in front of the Zhai family, and Chief Zhai, who used to be supportive of you, is no longer on your side. But you still refuse to reflect on your mistakes and continue to pester Qiao Nan. When you were in the camp, you must have seen how much Auntie Miao likes Qiao Nan. How will Auntie Miao think of you if you keep targeting Qiao Nan? Brother Zhai may be cold and indifferent, but he values his family. If Auntie Miao doesn’t like you, I am certain that even if Brother Zhai agrees to be with you, you won’t be able to marry Brother Zhai and be welcomed by the Zhai family.”

Chapter 584: Visit Brother Zhai Again

“Impossible!” Qiu Chenxi refused to admit the influence that Miao Jing had on Zhai Sheng.

“Impossible? Then, let’s talk about something that we all know. You should know better than anyone else why Chief Zhai ended up marrying Madam Zhai back then. If not for Old Master Zhai who agreed to the marriage, you should know who would be the Madam Zhai today.”

“It’s not the same! Brother Zhai is not Uncle Zhai. His decision will not be affected by anyone, not even Miao Jing!”

Qiu Chenxi was deceiving others and herself. Shi Qing was amused. “Since you said that Brother Zhai will not be influenced by anyone, does it mean that no matter how you pester Qiao Nan or even Brother Zhai, it will be useless if he doesn’t like you? Yes, Brother Zhai is not Chief Zhai, but he is Chief Zhai’s son. What made you so sure?”

“Then, what should I do?” Qiu Chenxi was in a panic. She knew that she was contradicting herself, but she was at a loss.

When her mother gave Uncle Zhai a call, not only did he know who the woman was, but he also did not object to their relationship. At the thought of that, Qiu Chenxi was scared out of her wits.

Since Uncle Zhai had approved of the woman, it was equivalent to what happened back then when Old Master Zhai only wanted Miao Jing as his daughter-in-law and refused to accept her mother.

In the end, Miao Jing, the vixen, snatched the position of the Madam Zhai from her mother and she, who could have been the daughter of the chief of the army, became an ordinary girl. Now, all she wanted was to be the next Madam Zhai, but Miao Jing was bent on thwarting her plans.

“What to do? You should pester the person that you like. Brother Zhai’s opinion is the most important of all. When you gain his affections, you will seek approval from Chief Zhai. I am no longer the gullible child back then. I can tell how good your relationship with Brother Zhai is. Both of you are not even on good terms with each other. Brother Zhai doesn’t like you at all. You are in serious trouble!”

Shi Qing could not understand why she was so foolish to believe whatever Qiu Chenxi said to her back then.

As what Qiao Nan had said, she was intelligent, but her emotional intelligence was too low.

If she found out about it earlier, she might be able to gain Brother Zhai's affection even before Qiao Nan appeared and become his girlfriend.

To put it bluntly, Qiu Chenxi did not regard her as a relative, but she treated her as her sister!

"I wish to do so as well!" Qiu Chenxi glared at Shi Qing in anger. "Weren't you the one who pulled me out of the room? Now that Brother Zhai is injured, I want to stay by his side and take care of him. He will definitely be touched." The problem was that Shi Qing had thwarted all her plans.

"In order to recruit Zhuge Liang 1 to help him, Liu Bei 2 paid three personal visits to his place. Since you like Brother Zhai and want to be the next Madam Zhai, you must be willing to put in the effort and time. How can you be discouraged by a setback? Given such behavior, how will Brother Zhai and Chief Zhai change their opinions of you? You must persevere until the end."

"Do you mean that I should continue to kneel at the entrance of the camp so that Uncle Zhai will know that I am sincere in looking after Brother Zhai, and allow me to take care of him?" Qiu Chenxi looked hesitant. "It's nearing the end of July now and it's so warm..."

"Fine, then don't ask me for help. You have big goals but you are afraid of pain and suffering. Alright, go back. Tell your mom to think of a way to help you. I am helpless." Shi Qing scoffed at Qiu Chenxi's attitude.

Such a person was not fit to be with Brother Zhai.

She was not willing to put in any hard work and only knew to wait while others did everything for her. She only needed to raise her hand to get what she wanted.

Did Qiu Chenxi see herself as a princess?

She must be crazy!

“What’s there to look at? Bring your miss back. If she stands under the sun for too long and suffers from heatstroke, you may not be able to continue working for the Qiu family.” Shi Qing glared at the chauffeur from the Qiu family and yelled at him. The chauffeur might be burly, but he was taken aback by Shi Qing. He helped Qiu Chenxi to the car and drove back to the Qiu family’s residence.

“Well, your emotional intelligence has improved.” Qiao Nan, who looked refreshed, glanced at Shi Qing and gave her a thumbs-up. “You have improved tremendously. At the very least, you could fool Qiu Chenxi. With your talent, it will not be long before you can have her under your thumb.”

“Of course. I have not lost to anyone since a young age.” Shi Qing lifted her chin proudly. “In the past, I was fooled by Qiu Chenxi. Otherwise, even if I had low emotional intelligence, with my intelligence, I could easily defeat her!” She was smart and confident of herself!

Qiao Nan was amused.

One who was very confident of herself was fooled for nearly ten years by someone who was not as intelligent as her.

Why was Shi Qing able to act so smug in front of her?

Genius!

“After what you said today, do you think Qiu Chenxi will stop coming after me for a while?” Qiao Nan had a headache whenever she saw Qiu Chenxi. She was indeed very good at pestering people.

Shi Qing thought for a moment. “Qiu Chenxi and my auntie are very suspicious of others. They like to act smart. Normally, everyone will be able to tell that I am lying. But given their character, they may think that I am really giving advice to her. After all, in the eyes of the mother and daughter, people from the Shi family have to do everything they can to help Qiu Chenxi secure her future happiness.”

“Was that the truth?”

“More or less!”

Qiao Nan curled the corners of her lips. “I finally believe that you, Qi Minlan, and Qiu Chenxi are relatives.”

The three of them had low emotional intelligence.

People of the same family had similar personalities and temper.

“Hey, Qiao Nan, what you said is a dig at my intelligence. You are using my auntie and Qiu Chenxi to dig at me!” Shi Qing pulled a long face. “I just helped you get rid of Qiu Chenxi and prevent you from being slapped by her. Is that how you should treat your benefactor?”

“Alright, benefactor, do you want to go to the market with me?” Qiao Nan, who wore a long sleeved shirt, took the money that was left by Qiao Dongliang, put on her hat, getting ready to go out.

“To the market again? Why? Do you intend to go to the army camp again to visit Brother Zhai without telling your dad?” Shi Qing was unhappy.

Qiao Nan glanced at Shi Qing who was being childish. She put on the hat for her. “It’s very sunny outside. We have to protect ourselves from the sun. When we came back yesterday, who was the one who said that she wanted to have the shredded chicken porridge? There isn’t any chicken at home. Or do you intend to have plain porridge?”

Shi Qing was thrilled at the mention of the porridge, but she kept a straight face. “This is better. At least, you have a conscience.”

Chapter 585: Good Things Had to Be Shared

To Qiao Nan, cooking shredded chicken porridge was a piece of cake.

At noontime, Shi Qing had a bright expression on her face when she finally got to have the same shredded chicken porridge that Zhai Sheng had. “It’s indeed good. No wonder Brother Zhai loves it. I love delicious food as well. Qiao Nan, don’t be stingy. I am your guest. I should have a few more bowls.”

“Sure, I won’t fight with you. I will keep a bowl for my dad and you can have the rest, okay?” Qiao Nan shook her head. When it came to fighting, Shi Qing was even more ruthless than Zhu Baoguo, and she was as good as her mother when it came to scolding people. But at times, she seemed like a child. There were so many sides to her personality.

Looking at Shi Qing, Qiao Nan suddenly thought of someone—Zhu Baoguo.

When Zhu Baoguo was being childish, he was similar to how Shi Qing behaved right now. When he was in a fight with others, though he was not as good as Shi Qing, he was as ruthless as her.

“Shi Qing, can you do me a favor?”

“What is it?” Shi Qing, who was well-fed, was in a good mood.

“It’s already the second day. Can you make a phone call to your dad to ask him whether Brother Zhai has woken up?”

“I see you’re still worried about him.” It suddenly dawned on Shi Qing that though she was worried when she learned that Zhai Sheng was injured yesterday, she was able to have a good sleep at night, unlike Qiao Nan, who tossed and turned the entire night. As for today, if Qiao Nan had not brought it up, she had almost forgotten to care about Brother Zhai’s injuries.

“Crap, will you just make a phone call?”

“No.” Shi Qing leaned comfortably on the sofa. “I am too lazy to move when I am full. Your phone has a record of my dad’s phone number. You can go ahead and make a phone call by yourself and ask my dad. My dad will surely update you. Since I know about your relationship with Brother Zhai, there is no way that my dad is kept in the dark. Therefore, you can go ahead and make a phone call. My dad will not suspect anything. He has already confirmed his guess.”

“It’s fine if you don’t want to make a phone call. There’s no need to say such nonsense.” Shi Qing was a bad friend. She would argue a point to death. “I will make the call myself.”

Shi Qing was right. Since Officer Shi knew that she was in a relationship with Brother Zhai, there was no need for her to be embarrassed.

Qiao Nan picked up the phone and had yet to press the redial button when Shi Qing, who changed her mind, snatched the phone from her.

Qiao Nan looked at Shi Qing unhappily. "What do you mean?"

Shi Qing smiled with the phone in her hand. "I remember you haven't washed the clothes that you changed yesterday and went with me to the market as soon as you woke up. We are good friends. We should not haggle with each other. Since you prepared the shredded chicken porridge, I will help you make a phone call to my dad, lest you are thin-skinned and embarrassed."

"Why are you being so kind to me? Why do I feel that there's a conspiracy?" Qiao Nan did not believe Shi Qing.

"You are being overly suspicious," Shi Qing said in a righteous voice.

Qiao Nan massaged her forehead. "Fine, you can go ahead and make a phone call. I will wash the clothes." She had no wish to waste her time with Shi Qing on such small matters.

Even though she was not sure what Shi Qing was up to, it was probably just a small joke and no serious harm would be done. She would not take issue with her.

Shi Qing took the phone and smiled as she watched Qiao Nan bring the clothes outside to wash.

After making sure that Qiao Nan had sat down to wash the clothes, Shi Qing lowered her voice such that Qiao Nan could not hear her. She then dialed the phone number to Shi Peng's office at the fastest speed. "Hello, is that Qiao Nan? Do you want to ask about Zhai Sheng's situation?"

Shi Peng seemed to have been waiting for Qiao Nan's phone call. Shi Qing had yet to speak and he had assumed that it must be Qiao Nan on the other end of the phone.

"Dad, it's me. You have got the wrong person. Qiao Nan has gone out to wash the clothes."

"Qing Qing, why are you at the Qiao family's residence early in the morning? If you are worried about Zhai Sheng, you can make a phone call at home. I will update you as well. There's no need for you to make a phone call from the Qiao family's residence."

Shi Qing rolled her eyes. “Dad, you have misunderstood. If I only wanted to ask you about Brother Zhai’s condition, there’s no need for me to be so sneaky. I know that given Brother Zhai’s physical condition, after having the medicine Qiao Nan fed him, there should not be any problem.”

“Then, why did you call at this time?” Shi Peng sensed that his daughter had indeed let go of Zhai Sheng. She no longer felt the heartache for her loss. To Shi Peng, nothing was better this piece of news.

“On behalf of Qiao Nan.”

“Alright. Tell Qiao Nan that Zhai Sheng woke up once last night and was slightly disoriented. This morning, his fever was gone. According to the military doctor, he will be fully awake in the afternoon. He will recover to be stronger than ever in half a month’s time,” Shi Peng said in a pleasant mood. “So, do you care to explain to me why you are at the Qiao family’s residence?”

“Nothing much. I stayed the night at the Qiao family’s residence yesterday. Don’t forget. I was the one who pulled Qiu Chenxi away. She came to the Qiao family’s residence early this morning to make trouble for Qiao Nan. Fortunately, I was the one who opened the door. Otherwise, Qiao Nan would be slapped by her. Qiu Chenxi has a nasty temper. Dad, there’s something I want to tell you. The Qiao family’s residence is quite near to the school. The house you bought for me is quite a distance from the school. There is nobody else in the house except for me. It’s inconvenient to prepare meals for myself. I have decided to stay at the Qiao family’s residence. In the future, I will have Qiao Nan accompany me when I go to school and come back home. What do you think?”

Shi Qing was serious. She was not trying to cajole Qiu Chenxi.

“Since you have thought it through, I will not object to it. I will get someone to send money to the Qiao family’s residence. You can’t be a freeloader. Alright, I will hang up now.”

“Don’t!” If her dad hung up the phone right now, then there was no need for her to get Qiao Nan to leave the room. “Dad, let me tell you. The shredded chicken porridge that Qiao Nan prepared is very delicious. Besides, chicken is very nutritious. You are not in the best of health. You should get two bowls from the canteen.”

“Have you tasted it?”

“Yes, today Qiao Nan cooked it specially for me. I have never tasted it before. It was delicious.”

Shi Peng covered his laughter with his hand. “Does it mean that your real intention in helping Qiao Nan make a phone call is to encourage me to steal the patient’s diet from Zhai Sheng?”

“We are being diligent and thrifty. We are trying not to waste food. Look, it’s summer now. Even if the camp is in the mountains, the food will turn bad after a long time. Given Brother Zhai’s condition, he definitely didn’t have any of the porridge yesterday. One would be able to prepare a big pot of porridge with one chicken. It will definitely turn bad after two nights. After making sure that there are enough for Brother Zhai, we must not let the food go to waste. One should know that every single grain on the plate is the fruit of hard work. Do you understand?”

This time, Shi Peng laughed out loud. He did not expect that his daughter would use such a serious tone to tell him to steal the food from Zhai Sheng. “I suppose you had more than enough of the shredded chicken porridge today?” It seemed that the shredded chicken porridge prepared by Qiao Nan had completely conquered Qing Qing.

Shi Qing touched her stomach smugly with a satisfied look on her face. “I had most of the porridge.”

Chapter 586: Zhai Sheng Had Woken Up

“So, are you sharing it with me?” He was touched that his daughter would think of him when she had good food at the Qiao family’s residence.

“Don’t waste it, Dad, hurry. I suppose if you don’t hurry, the porridge will be finished by others.”

“Okay, I will hang up now.” Shi Peng did not expect that his daughter had made a phone call just to inform him to have some of the porridge. He was glad that she was filial to him.

“Dad, remember to have it.”

“I will hang up now.” Shi Peng hung up the phone first. He was a man and Zhai Sheng’s elder. Even if he really wanted to have the shredded chicken porridge, he would not sound so bold and righteous like Shi Qing.

However, after hanging up the phone, Shi Peng felt that since his daughter was being filial, he should appreciate her effort. Since Qing Qing was full of praise for the shredded chicken porridge, he should give it a try. It was not the working style of the soldiers to let food go to waste.

After having the shredded chicken porridge that Shi Qing recommended, Shi Peng had to agree that it had a different flavor. It was fresh and tasted just right.

However, the porridge that Qing Qing had should be better than what he had. Qiao Nan cooked the porridge herself, while the porridge that he had was prepared by the chef using Qiao Nan's method.

Shi Peng had two big bowls of porridge in the kitchen. He left feeling extremely full.

"Regiment Commander Zhai, you're up." The soldier who stood guard outside heard movements in Zhai Sheng's room. He opened the door to check.

Zhai Sheng propped himself up with the uninjured arm. There was a slight flush on his tanned face. "You can go out first. If there's anything, I will call for you."

"Yes, Regiment Commander Zhai!" The soldier returned to his position at the doorway. He heard the sound of running water coming from the room. The soldier smiled. It turned out that Regiment Commander Zhai needed the toilet.

The soldier went back into the room when he no longer heard the sound of running water. He opened the curtains and the windows. Even though it was warm outside, it was better than the stagnant air in the room. It was good to have some ventilation.

"Regiment Commander Zhai, are you hungry? The porridge is ready. Shall I send someone to get it for you?"

"Porridge?" Zhai Sheng had a strong constitution. After taking the medicine and having a good sleep, he was making a speedy recovery. His wounds healed faster than the average person. "Sure, bring it here."

It was fine that the meal was light. It was more important to appease his hunger.

Zhai Sheng was surprised when he noticed the familiar smell of the porridge. “Is Comrade Xiao Qiao in the army camp?” The shredded chicken porridge must be prepared by Nan Nan.

But Zhai Sheng frowned slightly when he took a sip of the porridge. The taste was not as good.

“Teacher Xiao Qiao seemed to have left something behind when she left, so she returned to the camp yesterday. She happened to know that Regiment Commander Zhai was hurt, so she came to check on you. She also taught the canteen chef how to prepare shredded chicken porridge so that you can have them.”

“Where’s Comrade Xiao Qiao?” She could not have left anything behind. She must have come back to the army camp to check on him.

“She went back with Officer Shi’s daughter yesterday. Regiment commander, is the porridge delicious? Many people said that the porridge is very tasty. I wonder whether it has turned bad after a night.”

“It hasn’t turned bad.” Zhai Sheng felt energized and alert as if he had taken a nourishment pill. He was greeted with a familiar food that his beloved had prepared for him. He felt warm inside by her concern and love for him. “Get me another bowl of porridge. I am famished.”

Since Zhai Sheng had the appetite, the soldier went to the canteen to get another bowl of porridge for him.

“Another bowl.” Since it was prepared by his girlfriend, though Zhai Sheng had just woken up, he had the impulse to finish them in one go.

The soldier blinked nervously. “There’s no more porridge left. I have given all that was left to you. Regiment commander, you have just woken up from sleep. Is it okay to have so much porridge?”

“How is it possible that nothing is left?” Zhai Sheng did not believe his words. “Surely there should be more than two bowls of porridge? One should at least be able to prepare a pot of porridge using one whole chicken.”

Back when Nan Nan prepared the porridge for Uncle Qiao, he was always by her side. No matter how small the chicken was, there should be more than two bowls of porridge.

“Oh, hehehe...” The soldier who was at a loss for words scratched his head and smiled foolishly.

Zhai Sheng put down the bowl and drank half a cup of water. “Tell me, what happened to the remaining porridge?”

“Well, the political commissar seemed to have two bowls of porridge yesterday. Officer Shi is not in good health, so he had two bowls today. Officer Shi said that the weather is too hot and that the porridge may turn bad after a long time. As for the political commissar, he said he had a valid reason for having the porridge.” He had no idea what the valid reason was.

In short, the higher-ups in the army had some of the porridge that was meant for Regiment Commander Zhai. There was no way that the soldier could stop them.

“Okay, I understand. You can go out to fetch some water for me.” Zhai Sheng calmed himself down. Since it was the veterans in the army who had his porridge, as the junior, he could do nothing about it.

To put it bluntly, they were merely two bowls of porridge. It was nothing special.

“Wait, what about my clothes?” He remembered he was still in the clothes that he wore for his mission when he lay down to rest. “Who helped me change my clothes!” Zhai Sheng knitted his brows in anger.

“It seemed to be Teacher Xiao Qiao.” The soldier jumped in shock and pushed all the responsibility to Qiao Nan. “When Teacher Xiao Qiao came into the room, you were sweating profusely. Although the wound had been cleaned, treated, and bandaged, you had not taken the medicine. Teacher Xiao Qiao fed you the medicine and water. She then wiped you down and changed your clothes.”

“Did Comrade Xiao Qiao do all these by herself?” What the soldier said caused a stir in Zhai Sheng’s heart. It was Nan Nan who wiped him down and helped him change his clothes? Why did he not have any impression at all?

Zhai Sheng was upset because of that.

“I, I helped her with some of the work.”

“Comrade Xiao Qiao is a younger sister in my squad. As a soldier, I suppose you didn’t tell anyone about what happened, like what women usually do?” Zhai Sheng was slightly appeased. Nan Nan was always fearful of others knowing their relationship. He did not expect that Nan Nan would be so worried for him when he was wounded.

Even though Nan Nan had not married him, and he had not submitted his marriage report, what Nan Nan did was what a wife would do.

“No, absolutely not.” The soldier waved his hand repeatedly. “When Teacher Xiao Qiao left yesterday, Company Commander Zhou happened to be there and asked a few random questions. In fact, Company Commander Zhou has already told me that Teacher Xiao Qiao is regiment commander’s sister.” Furthermore, he was the one who did most of the wiping and he was the one who changed the clothes. How could he possibly tell this to everyone?

Chapter 587: Called to Say That He Was Well

But it seemed like Regiment Commander Zhai liked the fact that his younger sister tended to him.

“That’s good. Bring me the water.” It was no wonder that although he woke up feeling sweaty today, he did not feel as sticky as he used to be. He had been injured several times during his past missions. This was the only time he woke up feeling good.

“Yes, Regiment Commander Zhai.” The soldier brought the water into the room and stood guard at the entrance. He waited until Zhai Sheng had wiped himself clean before he poured the water away.

Zhai Sheng felt refreshed. He then gave the soldier a serious stare. “From yesterday up until now, apart from Comrade Xiao Qiao, did anyone come looking for me?”

“Yes, Comrade Qiu came looking for you, but the political commissar had already instructed that before you recovered, nobody was to disturb you from your rest. Hence, I didn’t allow her to enter.”

“Since you didn’t allow Qiu Chenxi to enter, why did you let Comrade Xiao Qiao in?”

“The political commissar said that the higher-up had instructed that Teacher Xiao Qiao was to be allowed entry.” He was clueless about the reason behind such instructions.

“Instructions from the higher-up? Did the political commissar tell you himself?”

“Yes!”

“Alright, you can go out now. I want to have some time to myself.”

“Yes, Regiment Commander Zhai.” The soldier breathed a sigh of relief and retreated from Zhai Sheng’s room to return to his post.

Regiment Commander Zhai had a domineering aura. Apart from the usual training, he felt particularly nervous whenever he was alone with him.

Zhai Sheng listened to the voices of the soldiers who were training and running outside, and he could feel the mountain breeze drifting in from the window. He was silent.

Why would the political commissar give such instruction? That nobody except Nan Nan was allowed entry to his dormitory?

Since the orders were given by the higher-up, could it have been his father?

It was no wonder that the political commissar dared to have his porridge. It seemed that because of the odd order from his father, the political commissar had discovered his relationship with Nan Nan.

As for Shi Peng, Zhai Sheng knew that whatever that Shi Qing knew, Shi Peng must have known about it as well. Even if Shi Peng did not know about it at the beginning, Shi Qing would definitely tell him.

Since he was already awake, Zhai Sheng decided to take a walk outside and he ended up at his office where he made a phone call.

Someone answered the phone right away. “Hello, who are you looking for?”

“Shi Qing?” Why was Shi Qing at the Qiao family’s residence?

“Brother Zhai, you are awake.” The first thing Brother Zhai did when he returned to the camp from his mission was to make a phone call to Qiao Nan, and the first thing he did after he woke up from his injuries was to make a phone call to Qiao Nan to tell her that he was doing well. They had deep feelings for each other. “You must be looking for Qiao Nan. I will get her for you.”

“Wait a minute, you haven’t told me why you are at the Qiao family’s residence.”

Shi Qing halted her footsteps and was amused. “Brother Zhai, you may not know. In fact, it just crossed my mind today to move in here. I told my dad today and he agreed. I stay alone in Ping Cheng. As a girl, it’s unsafe for me to live by myself. If there is anything, I don’t know how to call for help. Besides, the Qiao family’s residence is very near to the school. It is located in the school district. I am in the same class as Qiao Nan. If I stay with her, I can go to school and come back home with her. We will have each other as companions.”

“Unsafe?” Zhai Sheng sneered. “Is it unsafe for you, or for those who have designs on you?”

“No matter what, as long as it may be unsafe, as the descendants of the soldiers, I should try to remove all the possible dangerous factors. Brother Zhai, don’t you think so?” Shi Qing swung her legs. “Brother Zhai, are you sure I don’t have to put Qiao Nan on the phone? If you are done chatting with me, I will hang up the phone. I will be having my meals in a moment.”

“Get Nan Nan on the phone.”

“Brother Zhai, you must speak what’s on your mind. Don’t do this in the future. It’s better to make it known as early as possible. If you are too slow, she may not be yours.” Shi Qing sneered at Brother Zhai who was all pretenses in front of her. She had thought that he would continue with his act to maintain his dignity.

“Thank you for your reminder.” Zhai Sheng pursed his thin lips. His eyes revealed that he was deep in his thoughts.

It was not that he was unwilling or afraid to make known his feelings, but it was Nan Nan who forbade him from doing that.

“Hi, Brother Zhai?” Qiao Nan sat down. “Brother Zhai, how is the injury on your arm? Did you change your dressing when you woke up today? Also, have you taken the oral medicine? Don’t be lazy. If you don’t want to have a woman to tend to you, you can get a man to help you. By the way, have you eaten the chicken porridge?”

As soon as Qiao Nan mentioned about ‘chicken porridge’, Shi Qing, who sat next to her, and Zhai Sheng, who was on the other side of the phone, had mixed reactions.

Shi Qing stared intently at the television, but she lowered the volume with the remote control so that she could hear the conversation between Qiao Nan and Zhai Sheng.

Zhai Sheng’s face darkened. “Yes, I have eaten the porridge, but I only managed to have two bowls of porridge.”

“Two bowls? Impossible! I brought one whole chicken to the army. The canteen chef prepared it according to my method. There should be one big pot of porridge. It’s impossible that you only had two bowls of porridge. Could it be that the porridge went bad as the weather is too hot?” If the porridge had turned bad, he would not have any porridge at all.

“None of the above.” Zhai Sheng took out his wallet and stared at the photo of Qiao Nan. She was smiling brightly in the photo. “The political commissar and Officer Shi had helped themselves to the porridge. One of them said that he had a legitimate reason to have the porridge, while the other said that he had the porridge so that it would not turn bad and we would not waste the food.”

Qiao Nan was stunned momentarily. She glanced at Shi Qing, who had a guilty conscience. These reasons were too ridiculous.

“Brother Zhai, when you come back next time, I will prepare the porridge for you.” Since among those who had the porridge, one of them was Brother Zhai’s colleague, while the other was his benefactor, there was nothing Qiao Nan could say.

“This is the only way.” Zhai Sheng looked gloomy. “Don’t worry. The injury on my arm is not serious. The fever is gone and the wound has stopped bleeding. Everything is fine. But it will take some time for the body to recover.”

“How about going home to rest?” The conditions in the army camp were not as good as the Zhai family’s residence. Though Brother Zhai’s injuries were not serious, he had lost a significant

amount of blood. There were not many cooking ingredients in the army camp. It was impossible for her to prepare food that was nourishing for Brother Zhai.

“I won’t go back for the time being.” Zhai Sheng rejected the suggestion. “This time, the mission is not that simple. There is a lot of follow-up work to do. The most important thing is that the main problem has not been completely resolved. Before the mission is completed, there is no chance of going back to Ping Cheng.” For this current mission, what he faced was an organized team. Those people were highly skilled. But more importantly, there was a murderous look about them. They did not seem to be ordinary people. This was different from the information that he had received previously. They could likely be mercenaries.

Chapter 588: Had All the Time in the World

Qiao Nan could sense the change in Zhai Sheng’s tone. She held her breath.

After a long while, Qiao Nan finally said softly, “Brother Zhai, stay safe.”

“Nan Nan, you...” He wanted to ask whether she had any regrets.

“No.” There might be a slight moment of hesitation, but she had no regrets. Her father used to be a soldier. He would tell her about his army life and the missions that he carried out. Since a young age, she knew the dangers that a soldier had to face.

But the difference was that when her father told her about his army life, he was reminiscing about the days when he was in the army, and what happened was all in the past. But in the case of Brother Zhai, he was in the midst of carrying out the mission.

“Brother Zhai, you must be careful. When I am of legal age, you can submit your marriage report, and we will tell Auntie Miao about our relationship.” Given Zhai Sheng’s special occupation, Qiao Nan had the sudden urge to wait no more. She did not want to waste her time on unrelated people and complex human relations. She had decided to spend all the time that she had with Zhai Sheng.

Perhaps it was inauspicious to have such a thought, but Qiao Nan could not help but worry.

It took her two lifetimes to meet such a good man. If she was not able to get married to the man that she loved, she was too pathetic and pitiful.

“Alright.” This was something Zhai Sheng had been dying to hear from Qiao Nan, but he felt somewhat sad to hear it from her under such circumstances. He knew that Qiao Nan was betting her lifelong happiness on him. “Nan Nan, give me some time.”

“Brother Zhai, don’t be in a hurry. Take it slowly. We have all the time in the world. You can take your time. I believe in you.”

As Chief Zhai’s only son, it was impossible that Brother Zhai would be posted to the front line all the time and carry out extremely dangerous and life-threatening missions.

But even if Brother Zhai wanted to leave the front line, he would not be able to do so right now. It would not happen in a few years’ time.

Qiao Nan, who was well aware of this, was very worried. She was fearful that in order to make her feel at ease, Zhai Sheng would complete his missions ahead of time, disregarding his own safety and taking unnecessary risks.

She would rather be on tenterhooks for a few more years than for Brother Zhai to risk his life so that he could fulfill his promise to be with her as soon as possible.

“Alright.” Zhai Sheng understood Qiao Nan’s intentions and quickly discarded the idea that he had in mind. “Nan Nan, you have to be prepared.” If he was to be in the front line for the years to come, being Zhai Yaohui’s son, he might face more challenges and danger.

As a soldier, there was bound to be bloodshed and sacrifice. It was not easy to be a soldier’s wife.

“Brother Zhai, as long as you are willing, apart from being worried about you, I don’t have to prepare myself for such circumstances, do I?” Qiao Nan refused to submit to circumstances. She was not asking Brother Zhai to muddle through his work at the front line in order to stay safe, but at the very least, he could pay more attention to safety and watch out for danger. In that case, it would be less dangerous and risky. This was definitely what Brother Zhai was capable of.

On the contrary, if Brother Zhai had only one goal in mind, which was to complete the task that the country and the organization had entrusted him to the extent that he disregarded his own safety, there would only be one possibility.

Qiao Nan clutched her forehead in worry. Most of the times, these people would die in the front line.

“Yes.” Zhai Sheng gave a deep smile. “I know what you mean. I will pay attention to safety.”

“Alright, Brother Zhai, you just woke up today. You should have lots of rest. Get someone to help you back.” Qiao Nan was relieved that Zhai Sheng was willing to give her such a promise.

“Goodbye.”

“Goodbye.”

“Regiment commander?” The soldier walked toward Zhai Sheng at his beckon. “Are you going back to your dormitory?”

“Yes, give me a hand.” Zhai Sheng had injured his arm, not his legs. However, he had lost too much blood and he had just woken up from his slumber today, so he felt slightly dizzy. Otherwise, he would not have allowed others to follow him around.

“Regiment commander.” Zhou Jun came over in a hurry. “Regiment commander, your injury has not fully recovered. Why aren’t you resting? Are you okay? Did your wound open? Shall we see the military doctor now?”

“Sure.” At the thought of Qiao Nan’s reminder, Zhai Sheng, who was just about to shake his head, changed his mind.

Zhou Jun widened his eyes in shock. “Has the wound started to open?”

“No.” Zhai Sheng walked slowly to the sickbay. “It’s just that I perspired profusely last night and the bandages were soaked. I suppose the medicine is no longer effective. I decide to change the dressing so that Doctor Wang can check the wound.”

“Regiment commander, I will accompany you.” Zhou Jun walked on the other side of Zhai Sheng.

Fortunately, Zhai Sheng went to look for the military doctor, or else, things would be quite troublesome.

Last night, Zhai Sheng was drenched in sweat. When Doctor Wang took out the bandages, the innermost layer was soaked with sweat.

Zhai Sheng's wound that was in stitches had turned white and wrinkled as it was soaked in sweat.

Doctor Wang immediately disinfected the wound and applied medicine to it. He then applied a new bandage to the wound. "Regiment Commander Zhai, you must remember not to tie a dead knot on the bandage and must keep this arm away from the water to keep the wound clean."

"I understand." After the wound was re-bandaged, the first thought that crossed Zhai Sheng's mind was that when Qiao Nan asked about his injuries the next time, he would be able to give her an honest and satisfying answer.

"If there is nothing else, I will go back to rest." Zhai Sheng could no longer sit still after the wound was bandaged.

"Everything's done, Regiment Commander Zhai. You can go back now." Doctor Wang replied honestly. Then, the soldier helped Zhai Sheng back.

Regiment Commander Zhai had left not too long ago before the nurse who was an assistant to Doctor Wang spoke up. "Doctor Wang, what if Regiment Commander Zhai's wounds inflame again? How about I bring him two anti-inflammatory pills? If anything crops up, he will be able to take the medicine."

It would be very troublesome if Zhai Sheng's external injuries inflamed from the infection.

The nurse was right. Doctor Wang could not pick on her words. "Alright, pass the medicine to Regiment Commander Zhai and come back right away."

"Okay, Doctor Wang." There was a sparkle in the beautiful nurse's eyes. She took the medicine that Doctor Wang prescribed and ran to the dormitory to look for Zhai Sheng.

Doctor Wang shook his head helplessly at the nurse. “The nurse has an ulterior motive in bringing the medicine to Regiment Commander Zhai. The young ladies nowadays are so daring. Sooner or later, they will be taught a lesson.”

There was nothing wrong for girls to be daring in pursuing their own happiness. It was not a problem in China. In fact, this was a new way of thinking.

However, Doctor Wang felt that the nurse would be making a futile effort as her subject of interest was Zhai Sheng.

“Forget it. The youngsters have to suffer setbacks before they can learn.” Anyway, nobody would be willing to listen to the advice of an ‘old man’ like him.

Chapter 589: What’s the Matter

“What’s the matter?” The nurse followed Zhai Sheng from afar, wanting to take a few more looks at Zhai Sheng. She intended to wait until he reached the dormitory before she came up with an excuse to enter Zhai Sheng’s dormitory to pass him the medicine.

She was not young anymore. She had been a nurse for all her life, but she was not getting anywhere.

Her family was urging her to find a good man and settle down. Her neighbors and relatives also set her up with blind dates. But she would not take a fancy to those men. If she had to look for a husband, he would have to be as outstanding, masculine, and capable as Regiment Commander Zhai!

The nurse might have it all planned out, but Zhai Sheng’s sense of hearing was better than her.

Zhai Sheng had already noticed that the nurse was following him.

In fact, Zhai Sheng had noticed her as soon as she started to trail behind him.

He had thought that the nurse had something to attend to and that it had nothing to do with him. He did not expect that she would be trailing after him instead of attending to her work. Zhai Sheng did not understand the reason behind her odd behavior.

“Regiment, Regiment Commander Zhai?” The nurse blushed. She did not expect that she would be discovered even before she reached the dormitory.

“Is anything the matter?” The nurse kept quiet and stared at his face instead. It seemed as if his injuries were on his face instead of his arm.

Since Zhai Sheng had already asked her twice, there was no way that the nurse could remain silent. Her face turned bright red and she whispered shyly, “Doctor Wang has prescribed two anti-inflammatory pills for you in case you need it and has asked me to send them to you. Since I am not busy, and if it is inconvenient for you to take them with you, I can send them to your dormitory.”

“It’s inconvenient...” Zhai Sheng knitted his eyebrows. “It’s alright. All of the doctors and nurses must be very busy with taking care of the soldiers who need medical attention. I will not waste your time. You can pass me the medicine. After all, it’s only two pills. If I am unable to bring them with me, he can help me with it.” Zhai Sheng pointed to the soldier next to him.

The nurse pouted her mouth unhappily. She glared at the soldier, warning him not to thwart her plan.

The soldier was amused and angered. He stretched out his hands. “I can take them with me even if there are two rows of pills or two bottles of pills, let alone two pills. Give me the medicine. I will make sure that Regiment Commander Zhai takes the medicine.” When Regiment Commander Zhai was sleeping, it would be difficult to give him the medicine. Now that he was awake, he did not need to help him with the medicine.

The nurse was unhappy that the soldier was insensible. She passed the medicine to him reluctantly. “Regiment Commander Zhai, is there anything that you need to ask regarding your injuries? If so, I can repeat them for you. Also, since you are injured, you have to watch what you eat as well as make sure that your dormitory is airy and well-ventilated. The damp environment is not good for your wounds. How about I go and take a look?”

“No, the sun shines into my dormitory. It will not be a problem.” Zhai Sheng began to make his way back to the dormitory slowly and steadily. “Okay, you should go back to help Doctor Wang. If Doctor Wang does not have enough assistants to help him and cannot attend to the wounded soldiers in time, you will be held accountable for being derelict in your duties.”

“That’s right. You should hurry back.” Although the nurse treated him coldly, on account that she was a woman, the soldier tried to persuade her to go back to her work.

The nurse stomped her feet and left in disappointment.

“Regiment Commander Zhai, you are too popular in the army. All the nurses and the comrades from the dance department have taken a fancy to you. Regiment Commander Zhai, among all of them, who do you like?” Comrade Qiu who came yesterday seemed to like Regiment Commander Zhai as well.

“The position of the wife of the regiment commander has already been taken. You should not overstep your boundaries.” Zhai Sheng knew that other women were interested in him, but he did not care.

Especially what happened just now. Instead of feeling happy that he was well-liked, Zhai Sheng found it to be a bother.

What happened with Qi Minlan was a vivid example that marriage should only involve two parties. If another party was involved, a marriage would only turn sour.

He would not let Nan Nan suffer what his mother had been through.

He would not let Nan Nan take the difficult and rocky path that his mother had taken.

He had to be very clear and leave no doubts with people like the nurse.

“Wife of the regiment commander?” The soldier was dumbfounded. Regiment Commander Zhai seemed to be immune to relationships, yet he already had someone he liked! He only meant it as a casual question. He did not expect that Regiment Commander Zhai would tell him such a big piece of news!

“Regiment commander, who is your future wife? Is she pretty? Does she have a good temper?”

“She is beautiful, smart, and easy-going. The only thing is that she is quite young.” Zhai Sheng’s tone turned gentle.

“She is so outstanding.” The soldier was thrilled. “That’s right. The wife of the regiment commander has to be outstanding. But she seems to sound like Teacher Xiao Qiao?” Beautiful, smart, easy-going, and young.

Zhai Sheng gave a stifled smile. “I will go back to the dormitory by myself. It’s about time. Bring two servings of meals to the dormitory.”

“Yes, Regiment Commander Zhai!” The soldier came back to his senses. If he did not hurry to take the meals, both of them would have to go hungry tonight.

The summer break might be long, but for students, it passed by quickly in the blink of an eye. In particular, for high school students who had a lot of homework, the summer break seemed to have ended as soon it started.

When Qiao Nan spoke to Zhai Sheng on the phone previously, he had mentioned that he would not go home to rest but would stay in the camp. True enough, he did not have the chance to go back home, and Qiao Nan did not go to the camp to visit him as well. Since Miao Jing would bring a lot of food and daily necessities to the camp, it did not matter if Qiao Nan went to the camp or not.

Qiao Nan was occupied with her homework for the summer break as well as her preparation for the third year, while Zhai Sheng was busy with his missions and nursing his wounds.

After a long summer break, most of the students had gained weight, but Qiao Nan, who had lost a few pounds, was the exception.

“Qiao Nan, although actual lessons have not started yet, we have to go to school the day after tomorrow. Have you really decided not to visit Brother Zhai tomorrow?” Shi Qing cupped her chin as she stared at Qiao Nan, who was tidying her homework. She was perplexed.

People in relationships should be very attached to each other and would miss the other party if they did not see them even for a day.

But it was so different in the case of Qiao Nan and Brother Zhai. Qiao Nan seemed to be very calm while Brother Zhai was very disciplined.

If she did not witness for herself that both of them spoke on the phone occasionally, she would have suspected that the so-called relationship between the two of them was fake, and that it was a smokescreen to trick her.

Qiao Nan tidied her exercise books and put them into her schoolbag. "I won't go. Brother Zhai has called me half a month ago to tell me that his arm injuries had healed. As long as the scab comes off, it will be completely healed. He is already able to move about freely. There's no need for me to worry about him or to check on him."

Chapter 590: Self-Torture Ruse

"Fine, I won't say anything if you don't wish to go. He's your boyfriend, not mine. I was worried for nothing." Shi Qing splayed her hands. The bystander was more worried than the party concerned. This had been the case since ancient times. It could not be changed. "Qiao Nan, when I talked to my dad on the phone a few days ago, I heard about an interesting piece of news. Do you want to listen to it?"

"Up to you." Shi Qing was not one who could keep things to herself. Before she became close with her, she had thought that she was cold and aloof. After getting to know her better, she realized that Shi Qing was, in fact, a nagger. Unfortunately, she had become her tree hole.

"These past few days, Qiu Chenxi ordered her chauffeur to send her to the camp every day. She would stay at the entrance of the camp, saying that she wanted to see Brother Zhai and take care of him. Qiu Chenxi almost wrapped herself into a ball. After waiting at the entrance for these past few days, Qiu Chenxi's complexion has turned a shade darker. Hey, it is so amusing."

Qiu Chenxi was quite fair but her complexion had turned dark because of her suggestion. Shi Qing could not help but be thrilled at the thought of that.

"They really decided to use the self-torture ruse?" Qiao Nan was shocked. It was obvious that Shi Qing was mocking her. Could it be that Qiu Chenxi and Qi Minlan were so helpless that they could not tell lies from the truth?

Shi Qing was not surprised. "I have already told you. With my auntie's and Qiu Chenxi's temper, they like to indulge in the wildest fantasy." It would be strange if they did not fall for her tricks. As

long as Brother Zhai could be with her, not to mention standing under the sun, Qiu Chenxi would do anything even if it might be ridiculous.

As long as she planned it well, Qiu Chenxi might be fooled by her.

“I have nothing to say.” Qiao Nan zipped her schoolbag. “Qiu Chenxi is willing to turn a shade darker in order to gain Brother Zhai’s affection, but she will not succeed. Aren’t you worried that they will vent their frustrations on you when they fail to get what they want? I am the best example. You must be careful.” Qi Minlan and Qiu Chenxi were very unreasonable.

“Afraid of them?” Shi Qing sounded like a hooligan. “Now that it is impossible between Qiu Chenxi and Brother Zhai, my grandpa will not dote on her like before. The reason why grandpa is not willing to give up on the Qiu family is that there is still a slight ray of hope. But it will not be long before my grandpa realizes that it is hopeless.”

As long as Qiu Chenxi could not be with Brother Zhai, she would no longer be the favorite granddaughter of the Shi family.

Speaking of this, Shi Qing felt bitterly disappointed.

They were one family, but her grandpa was biased toward Qiu Chenxi just because she was almost engaged to Brother Zhai. He even pampered Qiu Chenxi while he was strict with her.

Could this be considered as family relations? This was purely for one’s benefits.

Could they be considered as one’s family members? They were simply businessmen!

Looking at Shi Qing’s silent and grieved look, Qiao Nan could tell what was on her mind. However, there was nothing that she could say to make her feel better.

This was the harsh reality. Whatever she had been through was far worse than what Shi Qing had experienced.

Until today, she had not been able to forgive her mother and Qiao Zijin.

Shi Qing braced herself up. “Anyway, you don’t have to worry about me. Even if Qiu Chenxi continues to complain to my grandpa, what she says may be of little use. At least, my grandpa will definitely not punish me like what he did in the past. Qiao Nan, you may not know. I spent a lot of my time in the camp and became a better fighter than Zhu Baoguo because of my grandpa. And maybe to a certain extent, Qiu Chenxi. When I was young, I ended up in a fight with Qiu Chenxi over a doll. Qiu Chenxi lost the fight and ended up in tears. My grandpa then punished me to run.”

If not for what happened back then, she would not have such good stamina today.

“If so, should you write a thank-you letter to Qiu Chenxi?”

“Scram.” Shi Qing fell backward onto Qiao Nan’s bed. “Qiao Nan, you have finished your homework, but I have yet to do mine, not even one-third of them. What should we do?”

It was already bad enough that she lost to Qiao Nan in the exams. If her performance in class was worse than Qiao Nan’s, the teachers would have a bad impression of her.

“Do you want to copy the answers? I will lend you mine.”

“Copy? It’s too troublesome.”

“Then, you are free to do whatever you like.” After packing her schoolbag, Qiao Nan finally stopped to rest. “Shi Qing, do you really intend to continue staying here?” Her father had gradually gotten used to having Shi Qing in their house. She had almost become their family.

“Of course! I have already said that we are classmates. In the future, we can accompany each other when we go to school and come back from school. With me around, you’ll be safe. There’s no need to worry about anyone bullying you. My dad has already sent the money to your house.” She paid for her lodgings and meals. She was not a freeloader.

“Don’t mention the money.” Qiao Nan rolled her eyes. “The money your dad gave is enough to buy a house in the small quad. Do you treat our house as a five-star hotel? Because of the money that your dad sent, my dad feels so awkward that he has been treating you like a princess. Moreover, you mentioned that we are classmates. Shi Qing, are you kidding? When school reopens, I am in the humanities class while you are in the science class. We’re not in the same class.”

“What! You chose the humanities course? I thought you chose the science course, no?” Shi Qing sat up from the bed in agitation.

“When did I tell you that I chose the science course? It’s the humanities course that I chose.”

“Then, does it mean that there is no way for me to beat you in the exams? I can never get back at you for my defeat in the previous exams?” Shi Qing was so angry that she rolled around on the bed. “Qiao Nan, you are too cunning. How dare you run away after beating me once in the exams! You are leaving me with no chance at all to defeat you in the exams. How can you be so crafty? This won’t do. You have to study in the science class. I have to make up for the loss of that half a point mark!”

“Alright, stop fooling around. You want to defeat me? Sure, you can transfer to the humanities class. Since you want to compete with me in the exams, the person who makes the transfer will have to be you, not me. Besides, given your dad’s position in the army, it’s a simple feat for you to transfer class at this time.” Qiao Nan was amused.

“I don’t like the humanities course.” One would have to memorize a lot of vocabulary and grammar. It was not as fun as mathematics.

“I like the humanities course. I don’t care whether you like it or not. Anyway, if you want to overtake me, you have to come to the humanities class.” Qiao Nan stared at the messy bed and gave Shi Qing a disdainful look. “Hurry up and tidy my bed. Are you thinking of not sleeping tonight?”

“Qiao Nan, I hate you. You did it on purpose.” Shi Qing sat upright unwillingly, but she tidied the bed abidingly.

“Yes, I did it on purpose, and I am very hateful. We have not used a single cent of the money that your dad gave us. Why don’t I return it to you so you can go back and stay at your house?” Since she was so hateful, why did Shi Qing insist on staying with her? She was so ridiculous.