

The 80s 1251

Chapter 1251: Beware of Being Set Up

Jiang Conghe saw Jiang Dafang's pale face and smiled slightly, "Scared?"

Jiang Dafang pretended to wipe the imaginary sweat off his forehead and chuckled awkwardly, "I apologize for making you laugh. It's just that I've never seen such large transactions, this..."

"Sit!" Jiang Conghe put the ledger back in the safe and locked it, then sat down and said, "Do you know how Old Master Loo developed the Loo family from a simple peddler to today? Besides a little luck, it was really through cunning, and more importantly, through courage and boldness!"

As he said this, a hint of admiration appeared in his eyes, "The Old Master Loo is an incredibly daring person. There is nothing he wouldn't dare to do, only things he hasn't thought of. And precisely because of this, the Loo family has advanced step by step to where they are today."

As Jiang Dafang listened, a trace of ridicule appeared in his heart. Of course, he even dared to help his daughter snatch someone else's husband, so what's there that he wouldn't dare?

"People, they must have courage and boldness, Dafang, remember, those who are bold have one more chance than others. To gather wealth, you must seek it among risks. This is also when courage is tested," Jiang Conghe said, "Actually, if it weren't absolutely necessary, I wouldn't want you involved in this business!"

"Why?"

"Because you are my son!" Jiang Conghe looked at him and said, "And this is an affair where if you're not careful, you could lose your head."

Jiang Dafang was stunned, and lowered his eyes, "The Loo family is the same, it's also your Yue family!"

"How can that be the same? The Loo family is the Loo family, their last name is Loo, they can be used but cannot be fully trusted, after all, they're not the same last name. However, over these years, we can be said to have mutually exploited each other," Jiang Conghe sighed.

Upon hearing this, Jiang Dafang's momentary tenderness disappeared. This man remained inherently selfish. The Yue family bears the Loo name, yet it's his wife's family. Over these years, he rose thanks to her family, and now he says such things—how can that not chill one's heart?

Thinking of his ruthlessness towards his own daughter makes it even more unacceptable.

"Dad, being an official, naturally thinks more than others!" Jiang Dafang thought for a moment and continued, "But, Dad doesn't trust the Loo family, and the Loo family may not trust us either. After all, our surname is Jiang." Jiang Conghe was taken aback.

"What if they turn this around on Dad? Just like this time, if it's just a deceptive move, then..." Jiang Dafang hesitated, not saying more, this was also something Jiang Conghe had just reminded him of.

This time, for transportation, the Loo family agreed so readily to let him help transport goods, supposedly because Jiang Conghe intervened. But he is an outsider, and especially the son of an ex-wife, would that old fox of the Loo family trust him so completely?

Seeing Jiang Conghe in deep thought, Jiang Dafang continued to instigate, "I'm not worried about anything else, just afraid we'll be used as a tool for others. Dad, if I get unlucky, it's nothing, at worst I'd be in for a few years. But you, you can't afford the slightest negligence."

Jiang Conghe's face gradually grew serious.

"It's not that I don't trust them, but as you know, my last name isn't Loo, who knows how much they might hate me," Jiang Dafang laughed bitterly.

Jiang Conghe pursed his lips and said, "You're right, the old master's thoughts are always a bit more than others, we have to guard against him setting us up."

Jiang Dafang smiled; mistrust between you all is best, the chances for alliances will just become fewer and fewer.

But will the Loo family really set them up?

Chapter 1252: Testing Deputy Battalion Commander Qi's Strength

Qi Taiguo returned home with a heavy heart; Cheng Su was already asleep, and when he turned on the light to take his clothes, she sleepily opened her eyes.

"You're back? What time is it?"

Qi Taiguo said, "Almost midnight. You go back to sleep. I'll take a shower and join you."

"Why so late?" Cheng Su muttered and fell back asleep.

Qi Taiguo turned off the light, took a shower, but still didn't feel sleepy at all. He simply sat in the living room, smoking and thinking about tonight's matter.

The situation had been reported. How would Chief Ning order them, and when would the mission commence?

Although the shipping time from the Loo Family was still unknown, Jiang Dafang's words couldn't be fully trusted. But Qi Taiguo knew this matter should be addressed sooner rather than later, especially when Ning Ge's whereabouts were still unknown.

Ning Ge, what could the situation be now? Dead or alive?

Qi Taiguo felt anxious inside, smoking one cigarette after another, thinking all night. He only dozed off a little as dawn was approaching, and then he went to the barracks for training.

When Cheng Su got up, she didn't see Qi Taiguo, and when she stepped into the hall, she immediately noticed the heavy smell of smoke, quickly opened the window to air it out, and glanced at the ashtray on the coffee table, which was full of cigarette stubs.

How many cigarettes did he smoke? Doesn't he know smoking is harmful to health?

No, usually he's not someone who smokes so much, and he's quite disciplined. She had just cleaned the ashtray yesterday, and now it's this full overnight—did he not sleep at all last night?

It's only when someone is troubled that they smoke so much. What on earth happened?

Cheng Su thought dazedly, when Xiao Yun came out of the room and called her, momentarily diverting her attention, but she still felt full of worry.

Something must have happened; otherwise, he wouldn't have smoked so much!

While Cheng Su was absent-mindedly pondering this, Qi Taiguo, on the other hand, was so frustrated that he intensified the tasks, making all the soldiers grumble, wondering if Deputy Battalion Commander Qi had taken explosives today.

"Ning Le, are you punching cotton? There's no strength at all. If this were the battlefield, you'd have died a hundred times already!" Qi Taiguo saw Ning Le's feeble punches and couldn't help but feel angry inside.

Ning Le, who was also proud and arrogant, replied, "Sir, I'm not punching cotton; I just don't have an opponent." What? Just because he has grievances, he's taking it out on them?

"Say that again!" Qi Taiguo glared.

"Deputy Battalion Commander Qi, how can I practice without an opponent!" Ning Le stubbornly raised his chin.

Qi Taiguo sneered, "You want an opponent, do you!" He started taking off his military vest, getting into a stance.

Ning Le's eyes lit up slightly, while Cheng Jiasheng looked a bit worried.

"Then I'll be your opponent. Recruit, want me to let you have twenty moves?" Qi Taiguo sneered.

Everyone laughed, watching with interest.

Ning Le's face turned red with anger, "Don't underestimate me!" He also took off his top, leaving just a vest, revealing his well-developed muscles.

"Alright! Let's see what you're made of, come on!" Qi Taiguo beckoned with his hand.

This provoked Ning Le, who shouted once, pressed his legs down, and with a kick off his toes, flew towards Qi Taiguo.

He was famous for his combat skills at the military academy, and he showed no politeness or contempt towards Qi Taiguo.

He's proud, not stupid; he knew that Qi Taiguo didn't earn his position by luck, but he also couldn't stand his arrogance, so he decided to test the depth of Deputy Battalion Commander Qi's capabilities.

Chapter 1253: Never Underestimate Your Opponent

Ning Le moved swiftly, thrusting his leg towards Qi Taiguo's face, but Qi Taiguo was just as quick. He grabbed Ning Le's leg and pulled forward, making Ning Le almost perform a split upon landing.

Even with his leg caught by Qi Taiguo, Ning Le remained unflustered. He twisted his body on the ground and nimbly spun around, sweeping his other leg towards Qi Taiguo's legs.

"Good!"

Someone shouted out a cheer.

Qi Taiguo smirked coldly, not retreating but advancing instead. He lunged forward, swinging his fist towards Ning Le's face.

Ning Le narrowly dodged it.

With that dodge, Qi Taiguo was already straddling him, both fists clenched, raining punches on Ning Le's face like a storm. Ning Ge took two punches before quickly clamping Qi Taiguo with his feet and flipping him to the side. Not pausing for a moment, he flipped backward deftly and lunged forward at Qi Taiguo with a punch.

Little did he know, this was just Qi Taiguo's deliberate trap to lure the enemy. As Ning Le lunged in, Qi Taiguo brought a high roundhouse kick towards Ning Le's head.

Thud!

Ning Le spat out a mouthful of blood, and before he could gather himself, Qi Taiguo's whirlwind kick was already before his eyes, too fast to be seen clearly.

Startled, Ning Le quickly used his hands to block, but by doing so, he had already lost.

Because blocking simply gave the opponent an opportunity to exploit, once a flaw was found, continuing could only lead to defeat.

Qi Taiguo's spinning kick halted without landing, and he slowly set his leg down.

Ning Le stood in place, slightly dazed.

Qi Taiguo didn't even look at him, only asked, "Anyone else want to be an opponent?"

Some looked eager to try, and Qi Taiguo said, "Come all at once." He was bottling up his anger!

Such arrogance!

Even someone as composed as Cheng Jiasheng couldn't help but remove his outerwear.

Five or six people rushed towards Qi Taiguo, either kicking or punching, each strike ruthless, maybe incited by Qi Taiguo's earlier arrogance.

But Qi Taiguo handled it unhurriedly, toying with them as if they were chicks, darting in and out deftly, occasionally teasing them, utterly at ease.

This infuriated them even more, making them attack more aggressively. Even Qi Taiguo lost interest in playing and took them down one by one.

Before long, there were soldiers moaning softly on the field.

Watching this, Ning Le felt uneasy inside. Qi Taiguo hadn't even used his full strength; after all, it was just sparring. If he went all out, wouldn't he cripple them?

Qi Taiguo, not even red-faced or panting, commented leisurely while putting on his clothes, "Ning Le is right, without opponents, you can't improve. From now on, all training will be pairs sparring, the sandbags will be removed."

"Ah!"

"Remember, on the battlefield, there's no time to hesitate, no time to think. In battle, every second counts. If you hesitate, the next moment, you might be dead or defeated." Qi Taiguo scanned them coldly and admonished, "The purpose of training, besides honing skills, is to train your quickest reactions, never underestimate your opponent at any time. In a few days, we'll have a real combat exercise, let me see your skills then."

He snorted, wanting to say more, but a messenger soldier ran over, telling him the captain urgently summoned him.

Qi Taiguo's expression slightly tensed, immediately thinking about last night's incident. Is there a mission related to that?

"That's enough for today, dismissed on the spot!" Qi Taiguo shouted before running off in a hurry.

Cheng Jiasheng, clutching his chest, walked up to Ning Le, "How is it? Are you okay?"

Ning Le nodded, watching Qi Taiguo's distant figure, lost in thought.

Chapter 1254: Bring Him Back

Qi Taiguo was indeed correct, it is about that matter of smuggling illicit goods. According to what was said above, receiving secret intelligence, a major illicit goods dealer within Taiguo is secretly manufacturing illegal goods, colluding with officials and businessmen, smuggling out of the country, seriously harming national interests and people's safety, and we must fully crack down on crime.

"For this mission, the orders from above require us, Qing City and Guicheng, along with the Guangcheng Military Region from three provinces to collaborate to strike this smuggling gang and destroy this military factory, mainly assisting the Guicheng Military Region's actions. They named you; you lead the team." Regimental Commander Mai pondered for a moment: "Among this batch of new recruits, is there anyone suitable to take along, let them have a look too."

Qi Taiguo's heart moved, he looked over.

Regimental Commander Mai vaguely said: "That's also the intention from above."

Regarding the list of new recruits coming down to the local military region, Regimental Commander Mai is also aware of some individuals there. With what he said, Qi Taiguo understood and was clear in heart that only those who have been on the battlefield, and experienced the harshness of it, can accumulate more experience and grow.

After Qi Taiguo comprehended, he asked meticulously about the details of this mission, learning the opponent's shipment date is imminent, he became anxious.

Regimental Commander Mai also noticed his urgency, and in addition to checking the new recruits, there are many tasks, after explaining various matters, he let him go out.

Qi Taiguo pondered here and there, first returned to the office and called Ning Gang.

"Photos have already been sent back by the route above, it's a large batch of weapons and ammunition, this must be strictly investigated and cracked down." Ning Gang said deeply: "As for the secret military factory in South County, it hasn't been traced yet, Guicheng is also closely investigating. This encircling task is heavy and not light. Comrade Qi Taiguo, I hope you strike effectively."

"Yes!" Qi Taiguo agreed and added: "Chief, bring Ning Le along this time..."

"Bring him, the boy doesn't know the height of the sky and the thickness of the earth, should understand the harshness of mission warfare. As for whether he can complete the task, it depends on the skills he has learned over the years, bring him!" Ning Gang said.

Having received this approval, Qi Taiguo was relieved.

Ning Gang hesitated over there for a moment and said: "Xiao Si has not yet contacted, it's possible the boy discovered the location of the military factory and was caught! You..." His voice carried a bit of tremor: "Try your best to bring him back!"

Qi Taiguo's heart twitched sharply, his body stood straight, his hand tightly gripping the phone, said: "I will definitely bring him back!"

"Hmm!" Ning Gang's voice sounded heavy, said a few words, then hung up the phone.

Qi Taiguo was dazed, thought about Jiang Dafang, not knowing if he has any news, he is about to set out on the mission. If Jiang Dafang has any information, he doesn't know what to do?

He temporarily forgot to take his phone, thought for a bit, and had to call Ning Gang again, explaining this point: "Jiang Dafang is considered our informant, he should know the shipping time, if..."

"I will have people watch him, any news will be reported to you!" Ning Gang said thus.

Only then did Qi Taiguo breathe a sigh of relief, hung up the phone, turned to look at the map behind him, took a red pen, circled Guicheng South County, then drew a large × inside the circle, tossed the pen, picked up the red file, and turned to leave the door.

Mobilize personnel, get ready to set off.

Chapter 1255: Emergency Deployment

Qi Taiguo gathered his men, assembled them together, and Regimental Commander Mai announced this mission. In the end, he also talked about the difficulty of the task himself.

"This mission is not a drill. It's real bullets and guns against the enemy. During team missions, there's only one rule: absolute obedience to the orders of your superiors. Even if your superior asks you to shoot at him, as a soldier, you must obey unconditionally. Military orders are as immovable as mountains. Do you hear me?" Qi Taiguo shouted sternly.

"Yes!"

Only then did Qi Taiguo glance at the time and said, "Gather at the playground in thirty minutes, gear up and prepare to depart. Dismissed!"

After everyone dispersed, Qi Taiguo nodded towards Regimental Commander Mai, swiftly geared up himself. Unlike past missions, this time he felt more urgent than ever before.

Because Ning Ge was involved in the mission, and he didn't know whether he was dead or alive.

If it's really as Ning Gang said, and he is captured, then the only option is to speed up, faster, faster!

Kid, hold on for me!

Qi Taiguo's eyes were sharp.

Meanwhile, Cheng Jiasheng and Ning Le had finished packing their gear and were talking softly.

"I didn't expect to be dispatched on a mission so soon." Cheng Jiasheng was very excited.

Hearing about the mission, he was truly surprised and a bit excited. Previously at military school, drilling was one thing, but now, truly going to a mission site, that was different.

As men in the military, everyone is patriotic and dreams of heroism. Since becoming soldiers, naturally, they want to achieve something on this path.

Ning Le was also a bit excited, but being from a military family for three generations, he naturally noticed this mission was not simple, and it involved contraband. One careless move might lead to explosive scenarios, so he said, "Don't be too careless, this mission is quite heavy, and it's dealing with those types of things."

Cheng Jiasheng was usually more calm than Ning Le, but this time he was equally excited. Upon hearing this, he nodded and quietly calmed himself down.

Ning Le glanced at their peers who looked at them with envious eyes and then said, "Being dispatched on this mission, maybe our families have made arrangements. You watch, I will definitely achieve something!"

Cheng Jiasheng had thought of this too, realizing this is the influence of family power. Seeing Ning Le's determination, he couldn't let his own family down either, so he made a fist and nodded deeply.

"It's almost time to assemble, let's go!" Ning Le checked the time and picked up his military pack.

Cheng Jiasheng followed him.

Qi Taiguo was currently on the phone with Cheng Su.

"An urgent mission? What is it? Can't even return home?" Cheng Su frowned.

"Yes, you don't need to come over to see me off, I've packed everything." Qi Taiguo said, "No need to worry, it's nothing particularly dangerous. I'll come back once the mission is done. Perhaps I can be back in time for Mid-Autumn Festival."

He didn't want to talk about the hardship of the mission, for fear that she'd worry, so he casually mentioned a few things.

Cheng Su replied, "Alright, another top-secret assignment, huh? I won't probe further. Just ensure you stay safe!"

"Mm! You too, if it's time for you to go back to your hometown but I'm not back yet, take care!" Qi Taiguo said, glanced at the time again, then said, "I have to assemble now, gotta go, we'll talk when I get back."

"Be careful..."

Before Cheng Su could finish, Qi Taiguo hung up the phone. She furrowed her brows, wondering why the mission was so rushed.

"Is the sister-in-law at home?" Someone knocked on the door, and Cheng Su quickly looked towards the door, stunned by the visitor she saw.

Chapter 1256: Returning Home in Glory

The person standing outside the door is none other than Sister-in-law Zhou from Commander Zhou's family, who used to live in the compound, but Cheng Su almost didn't recognize her.

Her round face was glowing, with fashionable curled hair, wearing a black-and-red outfit, black leather shoes on her feet, and even holding a black leather bag on her elbow, looking every bit like a wealthy lady.

At her feet were several big and small gift bags.

"Sister-in-law Zhou, you've returned? Oh my, I almost didn't recognize you! Come in, come in!" Cheng Su quickly made way.

Sister-in-law Zhou brought the gifts in, saying, "I've gained over twenty pounds, you definitely wouldn't recognize me, almost like a pig now."

"This isn't just weight gain, it's opulence, and with your rosy complexion, it's clear you're living well." Cheng Su invited her to sit down, quickly went to pour tea and such.

You can tell how well someone's life is going by looking at their face. See Sister-in-law Zhou, with her face like a full moon, rosy and lively, you can tell she's living smoothly and happily.

"Have some tea." Cheng Su glanced at the doorway again and asked, "Did you come back alone? What about Commander Zhou?"

"He returned too, was with me just now, but met the Zhong family downstairs and started chatting, probably drinking tea there, he'll be up soon!" Sister-in-law Zhou said with a smile, and pushed the gifts on the table, saying, "It's nothing much, don't mind them."

"You're back, just come and sit at our place, why buy gifts?" Cheng Su teased, "When did you get back?"

"Just got in last night, it was late so we didn't come by to disturb." Sister-in-law Zhou replied.

Cheng Su was about to speak when a cough came from the door, she glanced over and quickly stood up to welcome, "Commander Zhou!"

"Just you at home, huh?" Old Zhou laughed heartily, striding in with a big beer belly, holding a big brick-like phone, a gold watch on his wrist, and hair slicked back, looking every inch like a nouveau riche big boss.

"You two have changed so much!" Cheng Su handed over tea, seeing Old Zhou place the big brick phone on the table, feeling a rush of excitement, pointed at it and said, "You've even got a mobile phone now!"

"Wow, sister-in-law, you're really well-informed, you know about mobile phones? They've just come out!" Old Zhou exclaimed, "There shouldn't be any of these in Qing City yet!"

"Not in Qing City yet, but big cities like Guangcheng have them." Cheng Su chuckled softly, "Seems like you're doing well, all transformed, looking like affluent folks!"

Old Zhou laughed heartily, "All thanks to you. Back then, following your suggestion, went to the Special Zone for these years, finally made something of ourselves, can return with dignity now to face the old land and folks!"

Cheng Su teased with a smile, "You can't say that, we're all comrades, if we couldn't make something of ourselves, would we never meet again? Real comrades wouldn't care if you've made it or not? Have some tea."

"But it's also thanks to you, listening to your advice, went there to start in electronics, finally have a bit of foundation now, just opened a company, my son is helping to manage it, only now have some time to visit you." Sister-in-law Zhou said with a smile.

"Congratulations to you, it's a true homecoming in splendor!" Cheng Su said with a warm smile.

The couple modestly said a few words, Old Zhou glanced again, "Where's Old Qi from your family? He's still not back?"

Cheng Su then showed a wry smile, "You came at a bad time, just received a call from him saying he's rushing out for a task, no idea when he'll be back! Are you staying a while?"

Chapter 1257: More Advice for Getting Rich

Upon learning that Qi Taiguo was once again out on a mission, Old Zhou and the others felt quite disappointed as well. They had come back to catch up with old comrades but unfortunately missed him.

However, with Cheng Su around, everyone started talking about their lives and developments over the past few years.

As Cheng Su listened to Old Zhou and the others talk about the development of the Special Zone, she realized that they had seized the opportunity, which was why they had prospered quickly.

"At first, we didn't know any better and ended up being scammed out of quite a bit of money. We had to start over again, and those days were tough. For half a year, the two of us never had a full meal. It was hard!" Sister-in-law Zhou sighed.

Cheng Su patted her chubby hand adorned with a large gold ring and said, "That's how life is. You have to go through ups and downs and endure hardships to grow. There's an old saying that goes, 'A fall into a pit, a gain in your wit.' Who would dare to cheat you now? If anything, you'd be the ones deceiving others!"

Old Zhou burst into laughter, "Sister-in-law, you still have such a way with words."

Sister-in-law Zhou playfully scolded her, "We don't do that kind of mean-spirited stuff!"

"Right, we don't. We're just making money," Cheng Su smiled and said, "Now that your business is there, have you thought about settling down there?"

"We've thought about it. We've even bought a house, but we can't bear to leave you old comrades!" Sister-in-law Zhou said.

Cheng Su let out a sound of acknowledgment and said, "Let me tell you, future development will only get better. Technology will advance, and transportation will become incredibly convenient. Meeting up won't be hard at all! No matter if it's east, west, south, or north, you can hop on a plane and be there in no time!"

"Absolutely, I've seen it rise with my own eyes over the past few years!" Old Zhou added, "This time back, Qing City has changed a lot too!"

"It's a sign that the whole era is developing!" Cheng Su laughed, "This year, I've also moved some of my business to Guangcheng."

"Oh?" Old Zhou and Sister-in-law Zhou exchanged a glance, "Guangcheng is quite close to the Special Zone!"

"Yes. I fancy its prosperity!" Cheng Su thought for a moment, then said, "Commander Zhou, Sister-in-law, now that you're established in the Special Zone, manage it well, and your future achievements will certainly be greater. With capital, it's worth buying some land. Whether you build on it or sell it in the future, it will be a fixed asset. If your company grows into a large group, you'll surely need to mentor juniors like us!"

Sister-in-law Zhou said, "I don't really understand business, I just listen to him!"

Old Zhou had a lot of faith in Cheng Su's words. He responded, "Sister-in-law, do you think there's potential in land speculation?"

Cheng Su's eyes glinted, and she said, "These days, I guess there are more and more people getting into land speculation, right? The era has developed, and more people are venturing out into the world. There won't be a shortage of those settling down in foreign lands like you. I've bought two lots in Guangcheng myself, just waiting for luck!"

Old Zhou's eyes narrowed slightly, observing Cheng Su's calm demeanor, and he started contemplating internally.

Back when they decided to dive into the sea of business, it was Cheng Su's suggestion. He thought it wouldn't matter if things didn't work out, given there was nothing to lose. Although they went through a downturn, they ultimately succeeded, proving Cheng Su's views and analyses were correct.

Now, she was talking about land speculation. Having been part of the business world for several years, Old Zhou's perspective was not what it used to be. He knew that when she spoke like this, it probably wasn't baseless, but rather a real opportunity.

"Sister-in-law always has a unique perspective. I'll definitely have to consult you for advice. By the way, tonight, we're hosting a dinner at your restaurant, inviting everyone over. Sister-in-law, Taiguo's not here, you must do us the honor. I have a lot of business lessons I want to learn from you!" Old Zhou laughed.

Cheng Su modestly accepted the invitation.

Chapter 1258: Envying the Wealthy

Old Zhou and his family returned home in fine attire, and indeed hosted several banquet tables at the Joy Soon Loy Restaurant. Cheng Su, being the owner of the restaurant and a family member of a fellow soldier, naturally had to be present. She generously waived many of the wine bills as a gesture of welcome and dust-clearing for Old Zhou and his family.

Back when Old Zhou was demobilized and changed careers, many people felt pity for them, but now seeing the way the couple carries themselves, it is no longer pity, but envy.

Frankly speaking, living in this world, whether it is joining the army or doing business, isn't it all for the sake of the future, for fame, for profit, and for future generations and family?

Now that he's no longer in the army, the only real loss is the chance to participate in authority, but he's earned money, isn't worried about food and drink, and doesn't have to worry about raising future generations, so diving into business isn't necessarily a bad thing after all.

These couple of years since Old Zhou and his spouse have ventured into business, many people have witnessed their success. After this meal, it was easy to discern some people's dissatisfaction and jealousy, which in turn made Cheng Su's worthiness even more appreciated.

When they fell into hard times, she didn't look down on them, nor did she sneer at them. Now that they are prosperous, she doesn't show jealousy or resentment, behaving just as she always does, with genuine character.

Both of them have lived in the Special Zone and have seen all sorts of odd and evil characters, so they're worldly-wise now, fully aware of who can be sincerely befriended and who should just be a mere acquaintance.

So they remain polite on the surface, but the way they treat others genuinely varies.

The primary intent of Old Zhou and his spouse's return was to reunite with comrades before the festival, and then make a brief trip back to their hometown. Now that Qi Taiguo is not around, Old Zhou left a

phone number. When Qi Taiguo returns, they can meet up for a drink, and if not, they'll have to wait until next time!

Cheng Su said there's plenty of time and she plans to visit Guangcheng often in the future. With phones, keeping in touch is easy.

When the couple returned to their hometown, the people in the courtyard had a discussion about Old Zhou's grand return. There were sighs, envy, praise, jealousy, and even harsh words, but Cheng Su just smiled and let it go.

In this world, there are always people who cannot bear to see others prosper, obvious differences in worldviews, why bother competing?

Even Chunhua and Guiying had a discussion.

"Back then, when they were demobilized, they seemed quite pitiable, but look at them now, adorned in gold and silver, using and eating fancy things, where's there a trace of pity?" Chunhua said, "It's their good luck."

"Exactly, the wealthy ladies on the street seem to dress just like Sister-in-law Zhou." Guiying said with a smile.

"It's all fate. Some people are destined to have such fortunes." Chunhua's words were full of envy.

Cheng Su carried a rice pot into the kitchen and said upon hearing their conversation, "Be it fate or luck, people look glamorous on the outside, but you don't know how much hardship and effort they've endured behind it! I heard that for half a year, they didn't even have a full meal!"

Chunhua was startled.

"So don't just look at how glamorous people appear, the more glamorous, the more effort is put in. Money doesn't just blow in with the wind. Can one prosper relying solely on good luck? Ultimately, it

comes down to personal effort, relying on one's own hands and brain!" Cheng Su continued, "So, don't think about it, work hard yourself, and maybe you'll be the one flaunting gold and silver in the future!"

"I don't have that kind of fortune." Chunhua said in self-mockery.

"Whether you have fortune or not is uncertain, but just talking without action will surely bring none." Cheng Su said earnestly, "Doing it doesn't necessarily guarantee it, but not doing it guarantees none!"

Chunhua and Guiying exchanged a glance, as if gaining some insight.

Chapter 1259: Qi Fenglian, You Shameless Woman

The little whirlwind stirred by Old Zhou and his wife upon their glamorous return swiftly passed. As the Mid-Autumn Festival approached, the weather gradually turned cooler. Qi Taiguo went on a mission, and while Cheng Su occasionally thought of him, having Xiao Yun by her side kept her from feeling too lonely.

Afraid the little girl might feel lonely at home alone, Cheng Su occasionally took her to the jam factory or brought her to the restaurant. Of course, she also visited Qi Fenglian.

After confirming Qi Fenglian's intentions and asking Xiao Yun about her own wishes, they both decided that Xiao Yun would attend elementary school in Qing City and continue there for middle school. Cheng Su then leveraged her own connections to find her a school, registered a spot, and planned to handle the transfer formalities when they returned for the Mid-Autumn Festival, so Xiao Yun could start school in September.

Both Qi Fenglian and her daughter noticed Cheng Su's kindness towards Xiao Yun. Qi Fenglian only taught Xiao Yun to be obedient and to be filial towards her aunt in the future, while Xiao Yun made a silent resolution to emulate her aunt and promised herself to help Cheng Su in the future, as being filial was essential.

Xiao Yun's thoughts didn't really concern Cheng Su, as she always acted according to her conscience.

On the third day of Qi Taiguo's mission, there was still no news whatsoever, and it was unclear how the mission was progressing.

Seeing there wasn't much to do, Cheng Su took Xiao Yun for a stroll, then turned towards the fast food restaurant at the train station to see Qi Fenglian and Baobao.

By three or four in the afternoon, it wasn't meal time yet, so not many people were there. Qi Fenglian was playing with Baobao, and Xiaohua was also teasing him. Seeing Cheng Su arrive, their eyes lit up.

"Go play with your brother and sister!" Cheng Su gave Xiao Yun a nudge, then started talking with Qi Fenglian and glanced at the accounts.

"Uncle passed his college entrance exams, and the family is hosting a meal. Are you going back for it?" Cheng Su asked Qi Fenglian, "Have you arranged your holidays?"

"Everything's arranged. While I'm away, Shi Ling will manage things," Qi Fenglian replied.

Cheng Su nodded. Shi Ling had been around for over a year and was quite capable on her own. The candidate for promotion, Xiaoying, had started dating a junior officer from the military district after a get-together last year. After half a year, they got married. Now pregnant and with an unstable pregnancy, her family was worried about her moving around at the restaurant, so they had her quit her job and rest at home.

Cheng Su felt a bit regretful about this. Xiaoying was a promising talent, but family came first, so she had to put her career aside for now.

Xiaoying herself also felt it was a pity and straightforwardly told Cheng Su that if she came back to work, she'd expect Cheng Su to hire her back.

Running a bigger restaurant now, Cheng Su certainly needed more staff and appreciated Xiaoying's capabilities. She assured her that after having her baby, if there was still a position available, she'd allocate it to her. Only then did Xiaoying feel relieved.

With Xiaoying gone, Cheng Su promoted Shi Ling. Over the past year, Shi Ling, though quiet and reserved, proved herself competent and meticulous, so Cheng Su made her an assistant manager, ensuring someone was in charge while Qi Fenglian was on leave.

The two sisters-in-law kept an eye on the kids while quietly chatting about family affairs, when suddenly, someone burst in yelling.

"Qi! Qi Fenglian, you shameless woman, come out here!"

Qi Fenglian and Cheng Su both frowned and looked up, seeing a round woman standing at the doorway, glaring and yelling at them!

Qi Fenglian looked bewildered. Who was this? She didn't recognize her at all!

Chapter 1260: Watch Your Mouth

Qi Fenglian didn't recognize the woman in front of her, but Cheng Su did. She was none other than Zhang Jisheng's new partner.

And from the looks of it, it was clear she came here to stir up trouble.

Cheng Su saw that Xiao Yun had already stood up, glaring at her with hatred. Her heart stirred; Xiao Yun occasionally went back to Zhang Jisheng's house, so she must know who this woman was too.

Qi Fenglian wasn't foolish either. Seeing the situation, she thought for a moment, and immediately knew who this person was: Lai Jinlan!

"Xiao Yun, take your brother and the others to play in the attic." Cheng Su instructed the younger kids to head upstairs.

Xiao Yun cast a cold glance at Lai Jinlan, carrying Xiao Bao to the attic. Watching this made Cheng Su's heart flutter. The hatred in the child's eyes was obvious, and she feared it had been there for a while, which would not be beneficial for her future growth.

A child harboring hate from a young age would certainly grow up with a distorted mindset. Normally, she didn't seem to exhibit such emotions, but now...

Cheng Su frowned deeply, a trace of worry in her eyes.

"Qi Fenglian, what are you hiding for? This shameless woman, stealing someone else's man, yet can't own up to it, huh?" Lai Jinlan shouted when she saw Qi Fenglian standing behind the counter, not coming out.

Someone in the kitchen heard the noise and peeked their head out. Cheng Su said, "Go on with your work, nothing's happening!" She then looked at Qi Fenglian to see how she would handle this.

Qi Fenglian was filled with anger, wondering who this shameless woman was targeting, and how dare she act like this here?

She walked out from behind the counter, speaking coldly, "Miss, please watch your language and take a look at where you are. This is not a place for you to behave wildly. Moreover, I don't even know you!"

Cheng Su nodded secretly, crossing her arms and remaining silent.

Lai Jinlan was initially stunned by this polite yet barbed remark, then her face darkened, and she said, "You might not know me, but you know Zhang Jisheng, right? I'm Zhang Jisheng's wife, Lai Jinlan!"

Qi Fenglian sneered, "I know Zhang Jisheng, but I've already divorced him. Besides being the father of my children, he has nothing to do with me anymore. Whether you're his wife or not has nothing to do with me. So please, leave. This is a business place, not somewhere to argue!"

"Wow, you're really good with words. Did you use that sharp tongue to woo Zhang Jisheng into catering to you? Hah! How shameless, divorced and still clinging on, can't you see he already has a wife now? Aren't you ashamed!" Lai Jinlan sneered.

Qi Fenglian was trembling with anger. Even with the best temper, she couldn't help but get mad at such falsely accusing and unpleasant words, and she snapped, "Stop spouting nonsense! When did I ever cling to him?"

"You still deny it? He keeps saying he wants to remarry you. Isn't it because you coaxed him? Let me tell you, I'm already pregnant with his child, so you'd better stop your wishful thinking and give up your petty ideas. Destroying a marriage will bring down divine punishment, watch out!" Lai Jinlan spat venomously.

Cheng Su's face darkened at these words, glaring coldly at Lai Jinlan, just about to step out and speak, but Qi Fenglian was a step ahead.

"Rest assured, Qi Fenglian doesn't have a habit of picking up other people's trash. Whoever wants such trash can have it, it's got nothing to do with me!" She glared fiercely at Lai Jinlan, saying coldly, "What happens between you and Zhang Jisheng is none of my concern. Also, inform him not to come looking for me here anymore. Otherwise, he can forget about seeing the kids. I mean what I say! And you, watch your filthy mouth!"