

The 80s 691

Chapter 691: Using a Condom is Not Safe

Cheng Su's situation had stirred quite a buzz, and there was not a single person who didn't sympathize with her. Neighbors from her building, including those who lived on the same floor, saw her return home from the hospital and brought eggs and other items to visit and comfort her.

Chunhua always remembered how Cheng Su had helped take care of her when she had her baby. Now that something had happened to Cheng Su, her mother-in-law and birth mother were there, so she didn't need Chunhua's care. Instead, Chunhua bought a basket of eggs and took them over.

"Why did you buy these? I have money; do I really lack a few eggs to eat? Keep them for yourself and your children," Cheng Su said reproachfully.

"You have yours, and this is my goodwill. Besides, if I didn't bring them over, Old Liang would be displeased!" Chunhua replied.

Liang Shurong also remembered Cheng Su's kindness and had long instructed Chunhua to help out if possible, even buying some eggs to nourish her.

Cheng Su once again sighed. It was easy to kick someone when they're down, but difficult to offer help amidst hardship. It wasn't that she was in need of a few eggs, but rather that Chunhua's family, despite not living in ease themselves, still offered their kindness. That was truly precious.

This couple always remembered favors. Even though Chunhua was a bit tactless in daily conversation, her heart was in the right place, and Cheng Su's past kindness was not in vain.

"Then I thank you very much," Cheng Su was not one for pretense, so she simply thanked her, thinking at most she would lend a hand in the future if there was an opportunity.

"Susu, have some soup," Mother Cheng said as she brought in a bowl of soup and put it down.

Cheng Su leaned over and saw it was greasy chicken soup, which made her frown.

She rarely drank such greasy soup, feeling like it was more oil than broth, so the sight of the chicken soup made her throat feel clogged with grease.

"Mom, this is too oily," Cheng Su resisted.

"All chicken soup looks like this. How else are you going to nourish your body if you don't drink more?" Mother Cheng gave her a stern look, served some in a bowl, and said, "Drink it while it's hot."

"Shouldn't we skim the oil off first?" Cheng Su took a spoon and carefully scraped off the layer of chicken fat.

"You're so fussy. In the past, we couldn't even get such greasy food, and had to make do with just vegetables and grass," Mother Cheng huffed. "Aunt Cheng, times have changed. Young people these days don't eat things that are too greasy," Chunhua said with a smile, before telling Cheng Su, "But you should still listen to your mom. It's good stuff; the essence is all in there!"

Cheng Su certainly didn't agree.

Mother Cheng went back to preparing the meal, and Chunhua looked around, not seeing her mother-in-law, and couldn't help asking where she went.

"I have no idea, probably out wandering about," Cheng Su said.

Chunhua made an 'oh' sound, looked at her, and said, "This incident is in the past now, don't keep it on your mind too much, just focus on recovering first."

Cheng Su smiled and nodded.

Chunhua hesitated for a moment, then asked, "But to be honest, weren't you using contraception? How did you still end up pregnant? You didn't actually believe in that 'pulling out' method that some people talk about, did you? Because that's just not reliable."

Cheng Su coughed, nearly spitting out her soup, and said, blushing, "Nothing like that; we always use condoms."

Although everyone involved was an adult, Cheng Su still felt bashful discussing such intimate matters with others.

Chunhua, not noticing her embarrassment, went on, "See, even with a condom it's unsafe. I guess I should just get an IUD, especially since we're only allowed one child for now. It saves the trouble of condoms, which are uncomfortable for both parties, and they're not safe. You never know if one might have a tear."

Suspecting the quality, since Cheng Su got pregnant despite using condoms, who knew for sure? It wasn't like one could check each one before use for tears, could they?

Chapter 692: Why Does the Mother-in-law Feel Guilty?

Mother Qi walked in from outside and, seeing Chunhua holding the child, greeted her, "Sister-in-law from the Liang family, you've come for a visit!"

"Yes, Grandma, I was just wondering where you had gone off to!" Chunhua said with a smile.

"I'm not familiar with this place, where could I go? I just took a stroll downstairs," Mother Qi replied. Her eyes immediately noticed a bowl of oil on the table and she asked, "Why is this oil left out here?"

Chunhua hurriedly answered, "This is the oil from chicken soup. Sister-in-law Qi said it was too greasy, so she scraped it off."

Mother Qi frowned and said, "Even if you don't drink it, you shouldn't throw it away. Keep it, it can still be used for cooking."

Cheng Su was taken aback, and even Chunhua found this amusing, and said, "Grandma is really frugal."

"You don't know the cost of household essentials if you don't run a home. You young ones don't know, back in the days of famine, let alone meat, there wasn't even a single vegetable to eat, to stay alive we ate nothing but Buddha's earth and tree bark. Once we had something to eat, it was all green vegetables, people's bellies were like water, not a speck of fat in them!" Mother Qi took the opportunity to educate them, saying, "Back then, a pig, nobody liked the lean meat, what they wanted was the snowy white fat meat, why? Because it was oily! So, wasting, it's not acceptable."

Cheng Su pretended not to hear, while Chunhua glanced at Cheng Su and laughed, saying, "Times have changed, life's better now, Grandma, you should enjoy life a bit."

Mother Qi sighed, "How can I enjoy such fortune when my precious grandson just..."

Seeing Cheng Su's face change, Chunhua quickly said, "Grandma, I feel a little thirsty at the moment, could you trouble yourself to pour me a cup of water?"

"Oh, just wait!" Mother Qi went to get the thermos in a hurry.

Chunhua looked sympathetically at Cheng Su, thinking to herself that although her own mother-in-law favored male grandchildren, Yuer had been treated well upon her birth, with good care during her postnatal period.

As for Cheng Su's mother-in-law, well, it's all destiny, showing that no one's life is perfect.

Mother Qi poured water for Chunhua, then went to pick up the bowl of chicken soup oil that she claimed would be kept for cooking.

Chunhua took a sip and continued speaking to Cheng Su, "Getting a coil is good too, convenient, and safe. This contraceptive stuff may be questionable, the quality of goods nowadays, you don't know if they're any good. If they break and you end up pregnant, like us who've already had children, we can't have more, and then being caught and taken for an abortion, that would harm the body!"

"That's one in ten thousand," Cheng Su said with a smile. "The things promoted by the state, even if their quality isn't the best, they won't just break. If that were the case, there would be children running all over the place!"

Mother Qi had just grabbed the bowl of oil in her hands when she heard the conversation of the two, her expression slightly changed, her heart faltered, her hand trembled, and she spilled the bowl of oil.

"Oops." Chunhua moved aside in time to avoid being splashed by the soup oil, which would have been difficult to wash out of her clothes otherwise.

"Mom. Are you alright?" Seeing the soup spilled on her hand, Cheng Su quickly asked.

"I'm fine, I'm fine, just not as nimble as I used to be, truly old, old," Mother Qi dodged Cheng Su's gaze, saying, "Hold on, I'll go grab a rag and mop."

With that, she briskly walked out.

"Your mother-in-law is really something, but it's for the best, saves her from actually using that oil for cooking, which wouldn't taste good. Sister-in-law? Sister-in-law Qi?" Chunhua waved her hands in front of Cheng Su.

Cheng Su snapped back to reality: "Hmm?"

"What's got you so lost in thought!"

"Nothing," Cheng Su smiled faintly, lowered her head to drink the soup, but in her heart, she felt strangely suspicious and doubtful.

Was it her imagination, or did she really sense that her mother-in-law looked very guilty just now? Why should she feel guilty?

Chapter 693: Refusal to Make Amends

Jiang Conghe, a chief from Yanjing, had been dispatched to the locale, and regardless of the reason, the local military district had to take some action. Moreover, as the family of a chief was assaulted, it was inevitable that personal responsibility must be pursued. Otherwise, how could one save face?

As a result, Qi Taiguo was summoned by Commissar Tan for a reprimand.

"The assailants are your mother and mother-in-law. As their son, it's your duty to educate them properly. You cannot abet the abuser. We live in a society with laws, and such wanton fighting has to be reported to the public security for filing a case. Considering your family's special circumstances, you should go and offer an apology to Commander Chiang. I will mediate on your behalf as well, and we can consider the matter settled," said Commissar Tan as he looked at Qi Taiguo.

Qi Taiguo furrowed his brow and pursed his lips.

Apologize? He hadn't even settled his accounts with them yet. Why should he apologize?

"Commissar Tan, I want to ask, how will we pursue the matter of my wife being pushed by Madam Jiang to the point of miscarriage? As a soldier sworn to protect my country and family, how can I focus on charging into battle if my family is subjected to such bullying?" Qi Taiguo said with evident heartache.

Commissar Tan choked on his words and after a long pause, he said, "This was indeed unfair to Comrade Cheng Su. But Commander Qi, keeping the situation at a stalemate is not a solution. You have to consider your own future. There will always be another child!"

Qi Taiguo suddenly felt an overwhelming sense of desolation and disgust. His spirit deflated, he said with drooping eyelids, "If the families of soldiers cannot be protected, what's the use of discussing promotions or futures? As a soldier, what's the point of serving if I can't even protect my own family? How can we speak of protecting the country?"

Hearing the despair and contempt in Qi Taiguo's tone, Commissar Tan's expression grew stern as he said, "Comrade Qi Taiguo, you need to assess your attitude properly."

"Commissar Tan, I refuse to make that apology. My wife is still recovering at home. I cannot even demand justice for her, yet I am expected to kowtow to the abuser? What kind of husband and man would I be?" Qi Taiguo said, lifting his head defiantly.

"You..." Commissar Tan gasped in frustration, seething with anger. What a stubborn ox!

After thinking for a moment, his voice softened as he said, "I understand you're upset, and this matter has had significant repercussions. You have to give everyone a way to step down gracefully. Rest assured, I'm aware of your demands and have already reported them to the higher-ups. Military Doctor Chiang will be immediately transferred. Does that satisfy you now?"

Qi Taiguo remained unmoved. In his eyes, the transfer of Chiang Qing was inevitable; with the scandal having escalated to this point, did the military district even care about its image?

Seeing no signs of Qi Taiguo softening, Commissar Tan couldn't help feeling agitated himself.

The two were at an impasse.

Regimental Commander Mai walked in, whispered a few words to Commissar Tan, who was taken aback, then looked at Qi Taiguo and thought, this young man is indeed lucky.

"You may go back for now. In the future, you must rein in your family members and prevent impulsive incidents," Commissar Tan told Qi Taiguo.

Qi Taiguo was somewhat surprised and looked towards Regimental Commander Mai. What had happened?

"Nothing much, just that there's been a call from Beijing. It seems that Commander Chiang might have to return to the capital soon to deal with some matters," said Regimental Commander Mai with a smile. If Commander Chiang was leaving, naturally, his family would have to leave as well, and this issue would be left unresolved.

Qi Taiguo tilted his head slightly, saluted the two men, and walked out of the office.

The moment the door closed, he overheard Regimental Commander Mai speaking to Commissar Tan that the matter had caused a deep impact, that the higher-ups were quite shocked, especially since there was a significant military parade this year, which concerned the morale of the entire nation's military...

Qi Taiguo stood for a while, the corners of his mouth curving into a slight smirk, and then he walked away.

Chapter 694: Fire Breaks Out at the Chiang Family's Rear

Jiang Conghe was furious. From the moment he got off the train to seeing his family, nothing went smoothly, especially with his daughter. In just one evening, he felt he had gained considerably more white hair.

He was thinking about how to deal with Qi Taiguo, to make him kneel and apologize, to strip him of his military uniform.

A mere company commander had the audacity to be so arrogant—if left unchecked, wouldn't anyone feel free to trample on the Chiang Family's dignity? This time, he absolutely could not let it go!

Jiang Conghe dropped hints to Commissar Tan and others, waiting for Qi Taiguo's arrival, eager to see how he would humiliate him.

However, what awaited Qi Taiguo wasn't Qi Taiguo's arrival, but a long-distance call from Mr. Taishan.

"Such a big incident happened, and you didn't even think to discuss it with me first?" Loo Linjun, Jiang Conghe's father-in-law, roared at him over the phone.

Jiang Conghe's brows furrowed. No matter the occasion, his father-in-law always barked orders at him as if he hadn't changed at all from the days when he was just a squad leader—even now that he was a commander.

He held back his annoyance, responding dismissively, "Father-in-law, these trivial matters—I didn't want to bother you with them, so I didn't mention it!"

"Trivial matters? Qingqing has fallen ill and you call that trivial? Are you waiting for her to be completely ruined to consider it serious? And what have you two been up to? Shufen caused someone to have a miscarriage?" Loo Linjun interrogated.

Jiang Conghe felt a pang of alarm in his heart. How did his father-in-law know about this?

"Father-in-law, how did you..."

"How did I find out, right? The whole circle is buzzing with it now. The director of the Yanjing Cultural Work Troupe caused someone to lose her baby, all to snatch a company commander for her daughter!" Loo Linjun erupted in a tirade, "Have you lost your minds, spreading such a disgraceful affair around, not ashamed at all? Do both of you care nothing for your reputations and futures? Do you think we're still living decades ago?"

Jiang Conghe's mind buzzed.

Spread around, it's all spread around?

His daughter, Jiang Conghe's daughter, fell in love with a married man, and his wife helped her to snatch him—and now it's spread around?

"Now, they're all saying that the Chiang family uses its power to bully others, without any shame. They're even digging up your past affairs. I tell you, Shufen and the others have been spoiled to the point of ignorance, and you're no different? You should have kept such matters under wraps instead of raising such a ruckus. Ah, don't get too comfortable in your command position yet, I'm telling you!" Loo Linjun's shrill voice came through the phone.

Jiang Conghe snapped back to reality, "How is this possible? Father-in-law..."

"You think your command position is secure? There are plenty of people eyeing it, and many who wish to see you step down, starting with the Ning Family," Loo Linjun sneered.

The Ning Family, yes, the young and the old in the Ning Family were in business partnerships with Qi Taiguo's wife.

That Ning Ge brat, a complete rich fool—would he let this opportunity slip?

"It was the Ning Family that spread the word?" Jiang Conghe's face darkened.

"It doesn't matter who spread it. What's done is done; everyone who needs to know, knows. You act without thinking of the consequences, charging ahead is useless when the rear is on fire," Loo Linjun was exasperated, having spent so much money to finally get him transferred back to the Capital, only for him to end up causing more problems than solving.

"You immediately roll back here, secure this key position first, and forget about the troubled waters of Qing City. Also, bring back Shufen and Qingqing. If they refuse, knock them unconscious and drag them back. What a disgrace!" Loo Linjun dropped the bombshell and violently hung up the phone.

The dial tone buzzed in the phone, and Jiang Conghe's head was still reverberating. How did things turn out this way?

Chapter 695: Hurry Up and Leave

Lu Shufen saw Jiang Conghe holding the phone with a dazed expression and couldn't help but nudge him and ask, "What's wrong?"

After answering the phone, you look like you've seen a ghost. What happened?

"Something bad happened," Jiang Conghe said, tossing the phone aside. "Let's go, we need to get back to Beijing immediately."

Lu Shufen was shocked, "What happened? We're leaving now? But Qi Taiguo hasn't even come to apologize yet!"

Was her being hit, her tooth that got knocked out, all for nothing?

She came back all fired up, just to suffer such a big loss and go back in defeat? She wouldn't accept this!

"Who has the time to care about that bastard child now? We need to get back to Beijing first, something big has gone down back there," Jiang Conghe stood up and glared at her.

"Then at least tell me what happened! What's with your cryptic urgency, are you trying to kill me with anxiety?" Lu Shufen shouted.

"What else could it be? Besides the mess you've stirred up, what else could it be?" Jiang Conghe retorted in anger.

It was all her fault for being so impulsive. Why did she go to see that woman? Even if she had to see her, why did she have to touch her? Now look what she's done, caused a huge problem.

Lu Shufen stood frozen in place from being yelled at.

"I caused trouble? Jiang Conghe, make yourself clear. What do you mean by that? Are you saying I'm the one who caused trouble? Isn't everything I've done for the sake of Qingqing? Don't you have a stake in your daughter? Now you say such things and shift the blame onto me, do you have no conscience?" Lu Shufen fell onto the sofa, crying and cursing in indignation.

"Enough with the crying, you will have plenty of time to cry later. Father-in-law just called and said it's all over the circles in Beijing that you helped Qingqing steal someone else's husband and even caused the woman to miscarry," Jiang Conghe said irritably, "Tell me, is this good news? If we don't go back now, can we even maintain our positions? And you have the face to cry."

It's spread everywhere!

The sobbing stopped, and Lu Shufen's face turned pale with horror. How could she face anyone after this?

"Who did this, who spread it?" Lu Shufen screamed.

Jiang Conghe's face darkened, "Does it matter now who spread it? The important thing is to hurry back and deal with it!" Otherwise, his political achievements would be tainted. After all, the one she went

after was no ordinary person; the other party was also a military man, and his wife was pregnant. It was a downright scandal.

He had to think carefully about how to spin this and calm the storm. What should he do? Maybe blame it on Qi Taiguo for seducing his daughter?

No, that wouldn't work, it was too idiotic, and it might even backfire.

Lu Shufen was also frantic. She was a prominent director, her reputation was crucial. With rumors like this spreading, how could she face the political elite again?

This was a stain!

Lu Shufen paced frantically, and upon seeing Chiang Qing's closed door, she grabbed Jiang Conghe again, "What about Qingqing?"

Jiang Conghe's expression darkened slightly, "Of course she has to go back with us. Why would she stay here?" Wasn't it embarrassing enough?

"If she had been obedient, would today's incident have happened?" Lu Shufen was close to tears, thinking of her daughter's undisguised hatred for them, which made her feel waves of panic.

"If she doesn't listen, we will tie her up and take her back if we have to," Jiang Conghe said coldly.

No one could stop his ascent, not even his wife and children.

"Go call her! And Xiao Tian, everyone, let's go!" There could be no more trouble here for now. As for Qi Taiguo, there would be time to deal with him, as long as he remained in a high position.

Chapter 696: Gave Birth to a Debt-Collecting Girl

Chiang Qing gazed at her reflection in the mirror, the pretty face that she used to have had lost its shape in just a few days, her skin was dull and lifeless, eyes lacked luster, and her hair was dry and yellow, sticking to her cheeks like a madwoman's.

The beauty that had once been hers, he couldn't even appreciate, and now this ugliness, he disdained it even more!

Chiang Qing looked at herself in the mirror with disgust. She glanced left and right, found a pair of scissors, and with a snip, cut off her long hair.

Why, why had her fate turned out this way? Why couldn't she compare to a village wife? Why?

Chiang Qing frantically cut her hair, and soon, her once beautiful tresses were uneven and ragged. She screamed and threw the scissors towards the mirror.

Bang!

The glass shattered, sending pieces flying everywhere.

"Qingqing... Qingqing, what are you doing? Heavens, her dad, Old Chiang, come quick!" Lu Shufen screamed at the sight of the hair on the floor and the broken mirror.

Jiang Conghe rushed in quickly and, seeing the mess all over the floor and his daughter standing there dazed, was filled with rage.

"Come with me." Jiang Conghe grabbed Chiang Qing's hand and dragged her out of the room, and upon seeing her disheveled hair, he couldn't help but explode, "Look at you, what have you become!"

Chiang Qing shook off his hand, casting him a disdainful glance.

Grinding his teeth, Jiang Conghe said to Lu Shufen, "Grab whatever you can, and let's go. Where's Xiao Tian, Xiao Tian!"

Chiang Tian yawned as he walked out of the room and asked, "What's happening?"

"Help your mother pack up; we're going back to Beijing immediately," Jiang Conghe said.

Chiang Tian was stunned, but seeing the look on his father's face, he didn't dare argue. He just let out an "oh," and upon seeing Chiang Qing's hair, he couldn't help but exclaim, "Sis, your hair!"

Chiang Qing gave him a cold look, then turned to Jiang Conghe.

"Don't even start saying that you won't go; you will have to leave no matter what you say," Jiang Conghe said before she could speak.

"I want to see Qi Taiguo. I won't leave until I do," Chiang Qing stated.

Jiang Conghe was furious, "What did you say? Say that again!"

"Without seeing Qi Taiguo, I won't leave, unless you carry my corpse out!" Chiang Qing said, lifting her chin defiantly.

"Qingqing..." Lu Shufen was heartbroken.

Slap!

Jiang Conghe slapped Chiang Qing's face hard, roaring: "Are you threatening us? If you want to die, then go ahead and die, go on!"

Heaven, what sin had he committed to have begotten such a daughter who seemed bound to torment him!

Five vivid red finger marks appeared on Chiang Qing's face.

"You're insane, why did you hit her, you think she isn't hurt enough?" Lu Shufen, protective of her daughter, rushed over, touched Chiang Qing's face, and asked with pain, "Does it hurt, Qingqing? Mom will go get the ointment!"

Chiang Qing pushed her hand away and looked at Jiang Conghe expressionlessly, saying word by word, "I want to see Qi Taiguo!" She was indifferent to the slap mark, as if the slap hadn't landed on her face at all.

Lu Shufen was stunned, crying out, "My daughter, stop being foolish. Why do you still want to see him? He only wants to kill you, how could he possibly see you? Why are you so foolish!" She cried while beating her own hand.

She's possessed, utterly possessed, this daughter of hers.

Chiang Qing remained unresponsive, just staring straight at Jiang Conghe, her eyes brimming with resolve and stubbornness.

Jiang Conghe, looking into her indifferent eyes, stumbled back a step, pointed at her, but couldn't utter a single word.

Chapter 697: A Higher Official Can Crush You to Death

Parents never seem to win against their children, and Jiang Conghe was no exception. Exhausted in body and mind for his daughter, he looked at her gaunt face and compromised.

Chiang Qing's lips curved slightly as she listened to him give commands over the phone. Then she turned and went back to her room. She had to dress up nicely.

Commissar Tan was stunned when he received Commander Chiang's orders. After hanging up, he sighed to Regimental Commander Mai, "At this point, Commander Chiang still hasn't given up, wanting to see Qi Taiguo. Actually, it's Military Doctor Chiang who isn't letting go." Honestly, after all this trouble, did Military Doctor Chiang not have a brain? Didn't she feel ashamed?

Regimental Commander Mai frowned and said, "You know what Taiguo is like, especially at a time like this. How could he possibly obey?"

Having just witnessed Taiguo's stubbornness, Commissar Tan asked, "What should we do, then?"

Regimental Commander Mai also worried. After a long pause, he said, "How about we say there's a temporary emergency mission and assign it to him? He might not be able to return in time?"

Commissar Tan glared at him, disapproving the half-baked idea, but with no better option, he said, "Let us first talk to Taiguo and see if he'll go. After all, he holds the rank of commander. We should afford him some respect. If he agrees, that's best. If he doesn't, then we delay. Commander Chiang is in a rush to return, he surely won't wait."

Regimental Commander Mai wasn't very hopeful, but, bound by his superior's command, he had no choice but to make the call, cursing Chiang Qing in his heart.

When she first arrived, everything had been normal. Who would have thought she'd turn out to be such trouble? This incident in the forces under his watch was ruining him. Fortunately, such a menace was about to leave.

As Regimental Commander Mai had predicted, Taiguo, upon receiving the call, rejected the idea outright without a second thought. What good would it do to meet now that their relationship had soured?

"Actually, it might be good to meet. After all, Commander Chiang does have that military rank, and now that things have escalated this far, he will inevitably have to admit fault. Give him a way out so that both sides can disengage with dignity, right?" Regimental Commander Mai couldn't help but mediate, saying, "I'm not pointing fingers or anything, but with his rank, and you're still a company leader and a soldier. Even if he doesn't cause trouble openly, what if he schemes against you in secret? Can you handle being assigned to separate locations from your wife? What will you do, Taiguo? You might not fear being discharged, but it's better to avoid making enemies if possible. Once you're out of the military, given your current status, how can you protect your family? A rank higher can crush a person. Besides, don't put Chief Ning in a difficult position."

When he heard the name 'Chief Ning', Taiguo hesitated.

Seizing the moment, Regimental Commander Mai said, "This is really your last chance. Military Doctor Chiang... she's leaving too. It's the final opportunity, and you're not going to see her. Consider it a send-off for a senior officer, right? Besides, you're just making an appearance. I get the impression from Chief Ning that they're having a rough time in Beijing, Commander Chiang's got plenty of trouble. This matter has come to the attention of higher-ups. I bet the Chiang Family will have to apologize to you in the end."

Taiguo thought for a moment, then said, "Let's make it at the entry gate of the base. I'll join the troop in sending off Commander Chiang." He practically spat out the words through clenched teeth, his hands balled into fists.

Regimental Commander Mai exhaled in relief, saying, "Alright, Commissar Tan and I will be there. You can just join us." With that, he considered the matter settled. Whatever happened in the Capital was none of his business.

Taiguo hung up the phone and exhaled a turbid breath, his eyes deep and inscrutable, revealing neither joy nor anger.

Chapter 698: I Hate You!

At the entrance of the military base, a military vehicle was parked, with several members of the Chiang family inside.

Outside the vehicle, Jiang Conghe was speaking with Commissar Tan, sweeping his gaze across the crowd only to find Qi Taiguo nowhere in sight.

How audacious, these people must be taking his words for nothing but wind. Where was Qi Taiguo? Why hadn't they summoned him!

Commissar Tan, looking at Jiang Conghe's face covered in sweat, turned his gaze towards Regimental Commander Mai.

Regimental Commander Mai's face was plastered with a smile, but inside he was drumming. Over the phone, Qi Taiguo had promised all was well; this kid couldn't have bailed on him at the last minute, could he?

Just as he was thinking this, he saw Qi Taiguo sauntering over leisurely. Cursing silently, "Damn kid."

Jiang Conghe also spotted Qi Taiguo, and his expression immediately turned icy, his eyes filled with both annoyance and menace. It was this mere company commander who had tripped him up, caused him such a loss.

"I heard Commander Chiang was leaving, so I came especially to see you off," Qi Taiguo saluted.
"Commander Chiang, have a safe journey!"

Look at that, look at that attitude. It was truly infuriating.

Jiang Conghe turned to Commissar Tan and said, "I've heard long ago that the Qing City Military Region breeds talents. I came here on a whim to see for myself and, indeed, I find the younger generation quite formidable. Commissar Tan, Regimental Commander Mai, you truly lead your troops well. Looking at Commander Qi's attitude, saying he's a 'calf not afraid of tigers' is no exaggeration."

'A calf not afraid of tigers' was a compliment, but to the others' ears, it sounded more like a warning.

"Commander Chiang flatters us!" Commissar Tan wiped the sweat from his forehead and chuckled awkwardly.

Qi Taiguo lifted his head and looked straight at Jiang Conghe, saying, "I don't dare accept such praise from Commander Chiang. The moment I joined the national army and became a soldier, I pledged to be a fair and just soldier who fears neither power nor foes, dedicated to protecting my home and my country."

Fears neither power nor foes, is that a counterwarning?

Jiang Conghe let out a cold laugh, his eyes shooting a fierce, dark gleam, locking eyes with Qi Taiguo. As their gazes met, it was as if sparks flew in the air.

"Let's hope Commander Qi maintains this fearless heart," Jiang Conghe said coldly.

"Never forget why you started," Qi Taiguo replied in an equally icy voice.

The onlookers sweated at the scene; from a distance, Dong Jun thought to himself, such a stubborn fool, time will tell when he meets his downfall.

Regimental Commander Mai thought, this ancestor is not giving us a way out, it's a declaration of war.

He exchanged a look with Commissar Tan, both conveying the same thought: better not to have come had we known, just by looking at Commander Chiang's face, you could tell he was ready to kill.

Jiang Conghe snorted and climbed into the car, there would be plenty of time in the future, there was no rush. First, stabilize the rear before slowly dealing with this kid.

"Commander Chiang, have a safe journey," Commissar Tan hurriedly waved.

At this moment, Chiang Qing got out of the car, staring daggers at Qi Taiguo.

Everyone knew what this meant and instinctively stepped back, giving them space.

Seeing her, Qi Taiguo's eyes unmistakably showed disgust and hatred.

Chiang Qing's heart clenched, she began, "I—I didn't know Cheng Su was pregnant, I didn't know it would come to this."

She was explaining, but what for? Would such words make him forgive her? Not blame her?

Qi Taiguo said nothing and turned to leave.

"Qi Taiguo," Chiang Qing called after him. "Do you really hate me that much?"

Qi Taiguo remained silent and kept walking, leaving her with his decisively unwavering back.

"I hate you! I hate you, Qi Taiguo!" Chiang Qing yelled after him, before collapsing to the ground and bursting into desperate sobs.

Chapter 699: The Tampered Sleeve

Cheng Su lay in bed, pondering carefully about her unexpected pregnancy.

She wasn't a stickler for rules and understood a saying, that in this world no absolutes exist. Putting all else aside and just talking about contraception, it's not as if using birth control implies absolute safety from pregnancy.

In her past life, she had heard about someone who got pregnant despite having an IUD inserted or being sterilized; of course, technology advanced in later times and humanity's compassion grew, so sterilization was not final and could be reversed if someone wanted to have children again.

But I digress, even with an IUD or sterilization, pregnancies could still unexpectedly happen, so using a condom wasn't a guarantee of 100% safety either—there could be leaks.

But was that probability large?

Cheng Su closed her eyes and calculated the time of the child's conception—it had only been a month or so, around February. They never finished outside, always used condoms; had they really leaked or broken?

Was the quality of these condoms truly that poor, or were they too loving?

No, something was off.

Cheng Su's heart was in turmoil. She took a deep breath and pondered closely.

What came to her mind was her mother-in-law's guilty, evasive eyes. Why was she feeling guilty, and what were Chunhua and she discussing at the time?

That's right, they were talking about the safety of condoms.

Why would a woman who had reached the age of understanding the divine mandate be so sensitive and guilty about this topic?

Cheng Su chuckled to herself.

This time, when her mother-in-law just arrived after the miscarriage, although she did blame her for not knowing about the pregnancy, she wasn't overly persistent in talking about it. Why was that? She had been longing for a grandson for so long; logically, this shouldn't have been her reaction—she should've been very angry!

Something was wrong with her mother-in-law!

Cheng Su opened her eyes, her memories retreating as fast as a movie's rewind until it came to a sudden stop.

Her expression changed slightly, and she suddenly rolled out of bed, rushing to the nightstand, pulled open the drawer, and rummaged through it.

At last, from a pile of assorted items, she found that box of condoms, shook it, and found it almost empty, with just one condom left dangling inside.

Cheng Su's hands trembled as she opened the box and tipped it over; the lone condom fell out.

She picked it up and felt it, her entire body breaking out in goosebumps, her heart thumping wildly.

The condom, which should've been smooth, felt rough, not smooth at all. She held it up to the light and saw, almost imperceptible, that the plastic was punctured as if by a sharp object and was rough to the touch.

Feeling the raised, prickly surface of the packaging, Cheng Su felt her heart drop into an icy crevice, waves of cold washing over her.

Was this a quality issue?

Not giving up, Cheng Su glanced at the needle stuck in the mosquito net, pulled it out, and, with shaking hands, pricked the condom. The resulting rough bursts were nearly identical.

Tears suddenly streamed from Cheng Su's eyes, falling like pearls off a broken string.

It hadn't been an accidental pregnancy, not an issue with the quality of condoms, but rather these condoms had been tampered with. That was why she became pregnant!

No wonder.

No wonder her bag looked rummaged through during the New Year's events, no wonder she came out of their room.

No wonder she called Qi Taiguo to ask if there was anything uncomfortable with her.

No wonder she was dodging around, unable to meet Cheng Su's gaze.

No wonder she was feeling guilty!

So it was, so it turns out that her unexpected pregnancy was all designed and engineered by her own hand!

All because of her—the mother-in-law who longed for a grandson so desperately!

Chapter 700: You Did a Good Deed!

Grief, anger, all kinds of indescribable emotions swept over Cheng Su, as if these unspeakable tendrils were tightly choking her throat, making it impossible for her to breathe.

She couldn't imagine, nor did she dare to imagine, how someone could be so despicable, so low, to scheme and design things just to achieve their own ends.

Is this what a family is?

Ha ha, Cheng Su cried and laughed at the same time, repeatedly pounding her chest.

Where was this any kind of family? They were clearly villains.

Using a needle to burst ***—such a clichéd plot, she thought only existed in TV dramas and novels, yet never expected that one day, it would happen to her.

It was too ridiculous!

Anger surged through her limbs, and Cheng Su's tears flooded like a deluge.

If not for her, how could she have suffered so? How could she have lost her first child so inadvertently?

The child, her own flesh and blood, was now gone, vanished into the cold machinery.

Cheng Su lay on the bed, crying so hard that she couldn't catch her breath, beside herself with grief.

In the other room, Mother Cheng and Mother Qi were preparing lunch. Seeing the steamed egg on the table, Mother Qi felt a sour pang in her heart and said, "How many eggs did you use to steam this custard? It's too rich!"

Mother Cheng's heart skipped a beat and she responded with a laugh, "Not many, just two or three. I just thought, the more nutritious, the better for Susu to recover quickly and have a big, healthy grandson for us in the future! Don't you agree, in-law mother?"

Mother Qi pursed her lips with a sour tone, "These young people nowadays, they are so much more precious than in our time. Back then, not to mention losing a child, even after having a child, we didn't have much to eat. We couldn't even rest a full month after giving birth before we had to work in the fields!"

Was she blaming herself for making too good a meal for her daughter?

Mother Cheng felt a wave of nausea in her heart, thinking to herself that she didn't use your money to eat. In this household, her daughter was the one earning more!

With this in mind, she said, "Yes, back then, we didn't have anything to eat, we were poor. What was there to eat? It's the same now, but fortunately, our Susu is capable and can earn money. Even if we eat a few more eggs, we can afford it."

Mother Qi gave her a sideways glance and smirked inwardly, knowing well that your daughter is good at business; no need to mention it in front of me.

The two mothers-in-law kept bickering, when Qi Taiguo returned with a bunch of fresh roses in his hand, the flowers still wet with water, looking tender and beautiful.

Mother Qi frowned at the sight and asked, "Where did these flowers come from?"

Qi Taiguo was in high spirits, feeling relieved with the troublesome person gone from the house; he had gone out to buy a bunch of flowers to give to Cheng Su to cheer her up.

"I bought them, Susu likes them," Qi Taiguo smiled and asked, "Where is she?"

Upon hearing that he had spent money on something inedible, Mother Qi stumbled a step and bellowed, "What? Where did you learn this trick? If you have spare money, you should save it, not waste it on these worthless flowers. You can't eat or drink them; that money would've been better spent on a few eggs!"

Mother Cheng, however, was thoroughly pleased. Her son-in-law knew how to make her daughter happy, and of course, she was only too happy about it. Although she also felt the pinch of money, when it was for her daughter, she wouldn't care!

Qi Taiguo paid no mind and said, "It's not worth much, as long as she likes it. I'll take it to the room."

Mother Qi's face grew long and sour.

Just as Qi Taiguo approached the room door, it was flung open from the inside.

Cheng Su rushed out, bumping into him and making him stumble, flowers falling and petals scattering.

He paused in shock, only to see Cheng Su march up to Mother Qi and slam something down in front of her, "Your fine work!"