

The 80s 951

Chapter 951: Love Comes Down to "I Do

Under the sycamore tree at the jam factory, Cheng Su handed a handkerchief to Ying Xiaoya, looking at her with sympathy.

"You saw it, he doesn't have me in his heart at all." Ying Xiaoya took the handkerchief, wiped her tears, sniffled, and crumpled the handkerchief in her hand into a pickle.

Just now, her words were clearly said out of spite, but he, he actually took it to heart and even said that his family was introducing him to someone.

Thinking about it, tears welled up again for Ying Xiaoya.

"You're being spiteful, and so is he. Why do you guys make it so hard? Can't you just talk it out?" Cheng Su asked.

"Should I, as a girl, really be the one to say something?" Ying Xiaoya retorted.

"Of course not, the guy should definitely take the initiative in love." Cheng Su shook her head and said, "Of course, it's not that a girl can't be proactive, but overall, a guy should take the lead. If he really wants to be with you, he will find a way!"

"But now, he, he said what he said!" Ying Xiaoya bit her lip, her eyes red.

Cheng Su looked at her compassionately and said, "What he said was also out of spite, it might not be true. But if he doesn't have the courage to step forward, then you shouldn't wait any longer."

Ying Xiaoya was stunned, looked at her, and asked, "Are you asking me to give up?"

"Would you really give up just like that?" Cheng Su sneered.

Ying Xiaoya pouted, "I, I'm just mad at him for being so hesitant."

"It's normal for him to be hesitant. After all, he's been married and has a child. He's also afraid of wasting your time."

"Whose side are you on anyway? First, it's mine, then his!" Ying Xiaoya glared at her.

Cheng Su rolled her eyes and said, "I'm not on anyone's side. I'm just speaking from both your perspectives, as an outsider."

"Xiao Pinshan's concerns are because he has a child, while you have a clean background. If you are to be together, there will definitely be many challenges. In his heart, he might want you to have a better option, because being a stepmother is hard."

"And on your side, I think a woman shouldn't endure too much hardship. Given his situation, if he still won't take a step forward, if he's not brave enough to move on, and it's just you rushing ahead, then this kind of relationship isn't worth having. It's too exhausting," Cheng Su said.

Ying Xiaoya sniffed.

"And as an outsider, as your good friend, of course, I hope you consider carefully and have a better option. But that's just my hope. Only you know if the shoes suit you. Ultimately, the choice is in your hands. If Xiao Pinshan is willing to stand out and make an effort, then whether he's been married or has children doesn't really matter," Cheng Su looked at her and said, "The key is whether he's willing to give his all for you, for your relationship, and whether he's committed to earning recognition."

"Go to our unit's matchmaking event, and take a good look at his heart. If you go and he still shows no action or response, don't waste any more of your feelings on him. Love should be relaxing and sweet. A love that is too bitter, you won't be able to endure. It's too burdensome," Cheng Su said, "Love should be carried by two people together. Relying on just one person won't take you far. Xiao Ya, no matter how much you love, you need to see this clearly."

In Cheng Su's heart, she believed Ying Xiaoya deserved a boy of equal standing, but if she truly liked Xiao Pinshan, she wouldn't say anything. She understood that when you truly love someone, you don't care about whether they've been married before. Ultimately, love comes down to three words: I'm willing.

Chapter 952: No Boat to Board After Suzhou

Cheng Su and Ying Xiaoya returned to the office, and Xiao Pinshan glanced at Ying Xiaoya, noticing her eyes were red like a rabbit's. His eyebrows furrowed, and his lips pressed into a line.

"Manager Xiao, let's talk about this month's report!" Cheng Su didn't miss Xiao Pinshan's look and called him over.

Xiao Pinshan responded and brought over a stack of report materials, beginning to report to Cheng Su.

No matter Xiao Pinshan's emotional intelligence, Cheng Su was very satisfied with his work capability. Even when she and Ning Ge weren't around, he handled things in an orderly way, which was reassuring.

"Does Friendly want to come to our company for a technical exchange?" Cheng Su listened to Xiao Pinshan and was momentarily taken aback.

"Yes, President Cheng, do you think we should refuse?" Xiao Pinshan asked. A technical exchange, if not handled well, could leak their own secrets and such.

Cheng Su smiled, "No need to refuse, let them come. Exchanges between peers are common. Tell Xiao Zhu and them to keep it under control."

Xiao Pinshan noted it down in his notebook.

Cheng Su glanced again at the sales report and was a bit surprised to see that this month's jam sales profit was highest from cherry jam.

This jam was the most expensive one sold by their company, and it was unexpected for it to be so high, which was quite surprising.

"Now cherry season has long passed, and what's left are stock from the fruit warehouses, so there's not much jam produced, making it in demand," Xiao Pinshan explained.

Cheng Su smiled slightly, "Indeed, rarity makes things precious."

Xiao Pinshan agreed wholeheartedly.

"It's almost December, and now is the cherry off-season, but our business can't afford an off-season. Next year's goods should be ordered early from the suppliers to avoid them raising prices and causing a rush. It's better to pay more deposit to ensure our supply," Cheng Su said.

"Understood!" Xiao Pinshan had complete confidence in Cheng Su's instructions, and he noted them all down.

Cheng Su asked a few more questions, including about newly joined distributors, among other things, ensuring all work was clearly explained.

Just as Xiao Pinshan was putting away his notebook and about to leave, Cheng Su stopped him again.

"Is your daughter eight? Attending primary school now?"

Xiao Pinshan, who had just started to stand up, sat back down and said, "She's nine this year, in third grade. The little girl is quite introverted."

"Children from single-parent families are often more sensitive. You also need to pay attention to her education. No matter how busy work gets, don't neglect your child's growth. If you really can't manage, consider getting another assistant to help," Cheng Su said with a smile.

"Thank you for your concern, President Cheng. I'll consider that," Xiao Pinshan replied gratefully.

"Children need to grow up in a sound family environment. Manager Xiao, you really need to think carefully whether it's time to give your child a complete family," Cheng Su added, "Of course, in life, the most important thing is to be true to your heart. Manager Xiao, you're a wise person. Engaging in deceitful actions is really something you should avoid."

Xiao Pinshan stared at her blankly.

Cheng Su smiled gently, stood up, patted him on the shoulder, and said, "Manager Xiao, there's a saying in Guangdong that after Suzhou, there are no boats to take, meaning if you miss this village, there's no inn. Think it over!"

Xiao Pinshan frowned.

He looked over and saw Cheng Su walking to Ying Xiaoya's side, discussing what clothes to wear for a social gathering and how to dress up.

Watching Ying Xiaoya's smile, a sudden dull ache hit Xiao Pinshan's heart, and he tightly pursed his lips and looked away.

He left the office as if fleeing, failing to notice the gaze that followed him from Ying Xiaoya.

Chapter 953: The Humble Chen Shouwang

Marrying a soldier isn't easy, yet the number of applicants is still quite large. Even some of Cheng Su's staff were willing to apply and take a look. Perhaps they were inspired by the tall and mighty image of Cheng Su's husband. Either way, they felt that being like Cheng Su was quite fortunate.

So, Cheng Su submitted four names, including Ying Xiaoya, to the list.

The tumultuous November passed, and as they entered the twelfth lunar month, the first snow gracefully fell, officially marking the start of winter and the year's end.

By the year's end, they needed to inventory and settle the profits of several businesses, making Cheng Su even busier. Coupled with her academic commitments, she wished she could clone herself to handle everything.

And it was during this time that Hualing, who had disappeared from the family compound for two months, returned.

When Cheng Su saw Hualing, she furrowed her brow.

After a long absence, Hualing looked much better than before, no longer as thin, but her eyebrows were filled with aggressiveness and resentment.

It was clear that resentment had lingered in her heart, refusing to dissipate.

Accompanying Hualing, naturally, was Chen Shouwang. He seemed even more cautious than before, wearing a forced smile as his back slightly hunched, with gray hairs appearing at his temples.

As Qi Taiguo said, Chen Shouwang's future was ruined. Even if he wasn't expelled, he was already done for.

This blemish would burden him for life, meaning he would never be considered for any promotions again.

Currently, he's still in his position due to Hualing's parents' influence. Once Hualing's father steps down, it won't take long before Chen Shouwang moves to civilian life and retires from the army.

Cheng Su said, "It's better for him to switch careers now, anyway. He has no future in the military. Enduring those strange looks from others, he might as well use his father-in-law's connections to become a minor clerk somewhere."

She didn't say this out of sympathy for Chen Shouwang, but just stating the facts.

Qi Taiguo felt the same way, but how someone else's family thinks is not something they can interfere in.

Seeing Chen Shouwang humbly accommodating himself in front of Hualing, pitifully like a lapdog, Cheng Su could only sigh with pity and sorrow.

Chen Shouwang was indeed pitiful and sad, but he brought this on himself. He had to suffer the consequences of his actions.

"What are you standing there for? Go get me some hot water to wash my face!" Hualing's commanding voice came from inside their room.

Whatever Chen Shouwang said was inaudible, but it was surely a meek acquiescence.

As their door opened, Chen Shouwang came out with a kettle in hand. Upon seeing Cheng Su, he forced a smile and hurried awkwardly to the kitchen.

Seeing this, Cheng Su frowned even more deeply. If this continues, their marriage may exist but it certainly won't be a happy one. What's the point?

With a strong woman and a weak man, Hualing will undoubtedly keep holding onto the affair, and Chen Shouwang, feeling guilty, wouldn't dare to retort, only living by Hualing's expressions. But if this drags on, he'd only become so low that he couldn't stand up straight.

Cheng Su almost foresaw their future married life — compromising for the sake of the child, they might never divorce. Chen Shouwang might constantly adhere to Hualing's expressions until his death, their lives resembling those of strangers.

And another possible outcome is that he'd continue to acquiesce, until one day when he couldn't bear it anymore, and everything erupts, eventually ending in divorce.

Regardless of the outcome, as long as Hualing keeps holding on like this, it's bound to happen. So, what's the point?

Chapter 954: Love and Hate

Cheng Su didn't plan to meddle in Hualing's family affairs. After all, everyone's choices and beliefs are different, and she couldn't judge whether others' decisions were right or wrong.

But even though she didn't intend to get involved, Hualing sought her out.

Qi Taiguo was also home at the time. Seeing Hualing arrive, he knowingly stood up and said to Cheng Su, "I'll go find Old Gao for some tea and chat."

Cheng Su nodded slightly, handed him his coat, and after he left, she welcomed Hualing in.

Hualing took note of the tacit understanding between the two, feeling an immense envy and jealousy in her heart.

They were both the same kind of people, so why were they so in sync, while she and Chen Shouwang seemed like enemies?

"Want an apple? I'll peel one for you!" Cheng Su pointed to the apples on the coffee table and, without waiting for Hualing's response, picked up a knife to start peeling.

Hualing stared fixedly at her, asking, "Do you really look down on me?"

Hearing this, Cheng Su almost cut her own finger. She looked up and asked, "Why do you think that?"

"If it were you, you'd get a divorce, right? But I haven't, I'm still struggling, holding on to such a man." Hualing scoffed at herself.

Cheng Su lowered her head, continuing to peel the apple, and said, "Everyone's situation is different, and so are their personalities and choices. You have a child; that would be your biggest constraint."

"Yes, the child is my biggest constraint." Hualing touched her abdomen with some sorrow and said, "I only had a child after a few years of marriage, it was very hard. After this happened, I wanted to abort the child and divorce him, but the doctor said my pregnancy wasn't easy to come by, and if I terminated it, not only would it harm my body, but I might not even be able to conceive again in the future."

Cheng Su was taken aback: "You went for a checkup?"

Hualing nodded: "I actually went to the operating table, but I couldn't bear to go through with it, so I came down. My parents wouldn't allow it either."

Cheng Su didn't expect this turn of events. She cut the apple into two and handed half to Hualing, saying, "So, they saved Chen Shouwang?"

Hualing nodded again: "They disagreed with the divorce. Chen Shouwang showed a good attitude of admitting his mistakes, cut off ties with that woman, and swore not to betray me again. My parents softened and said the child can't be without a father, and even if I remarried, I might not find someone who truly cared for us, mother and son."

Cheng Su sighed, having foreseen this outcome. The thoughts of the older generation were indeed like this.

"They all pressured me, talking to me every day about how children of single parents turn out. I had no other way." Hualing laughed coldly.

"So, my dad pulled some strings and gave that woman a sum of money to change her story, saying they were just ordinary friends. Ha, how laughable is that? Who would believe such an explanation?" Hualing said, "From start to finish, I was just a joke; no one would believe it."

"Whether others believe it or not has nothing to do with you. Things are already like this; caring about others' opinions is meaningless. Since you've chosen this path, you should focus on how to walk it. What do you plan to do? Are you just going to keep this up, having a love-hate relationship with Chen Shouwang?" Cheng Su asked.

"Love-hate relationship?" Hualing murmured, then suddenly laughed, "Exactly, our relationship now is indeed one of love and hate. There's nothing wrong with it; it's just fine this way. Not getting a divorce doesn't mean I forgive him. I will remember his betrayal to me and this family until I die." Cheng Su noted the madness in her eyes and couldn't help but rebuke, "Are you crazy? Aren't you just punishing yourself this way?"

Chapter 955: Leave It to Time

In Cheng Su's opinion, it's the most foolish thing to be serious with oneself, and that's exactly how Hualing is, being serious with Chen Shouwang, and even more with herself.

She makes Chen Shouwang uncomfortable like this, but isn't she making herself unhappy too? While punishing Chen Shouwang, isn't she also punishing herself?

Upon hearing Cheng Su's words, Hualing's face darkened, and she said, "Unless the needle pierces the flesh, you don't feel the pain. How could you understand my feelings if you haven't gone through such pain?"

Cheng Su retorted, "I haven't experienced it? True, I haven't experienced infidelity. But in the first half of the year, what I went through, don't you know? Wasn't I in pain then? Compared to infidelity, I also lost a child. Who feels more pain?"

Hualing was at a loss for words.

"At that time, the more I wanted to divorce Qi Taiguo, the more painful it was. How did I get through it later? By experiencing life and death. In the face of life and death, other pains or grievances seem insignificant. At that moment, it was enough that he was there; nothing else mattered that much. So I chose to let go, because I couldn't give up on him." Cheng Su's eyes slightly welled up as she recalled that time.

Hualing looked at her, lightly biting her lip: "How can it be so easy to forgive? How can it be?"

"It's not that you have to forgive now; I just want to tell you that since it has happened, dwelling on the past is just being hard on yourself. You can choose not to forgive, but it's merely a stalemate with him. But if you confront him each day, how can you confront the remaining days? Can you do it for a month or two, for decades? Just thinking about it is exhausting. Don't you feel tired?" Cheng Su said.

"I know, but it's too difficult. Whenever I think of the scene of him with that woman, my heart feels like it's being cut with a knife. Letting go is too hard!" Hualing suddenly began to cry.

"Then don't think about it. Since you've already decided not to divorce, you just have to go through with it, not for anyone, just for the child. Aren't you choosing this for the child? Now you can still love and fight with Chen Shouwang, but you can't after the child is born. Children are the most sensitive, with the purest hearts. They can tell if mom and dad are in love. It's only when mom and dad are in love that the child feels happy. Do you want your child to live watching your faces every day? What happiness can such a child talk about?" Cheng Su said.

A sudden rebuke.

Hualing bit her lips tightly: the child, it's all for the child.

Cheng Su noticed her pale face, softened her tone, and said, "Hualing, it's normal to feel angry and resentful in your heart. We all understand. Choosing not to divorce, choosing to forgive, is indeed very difficult. It's not something that can be achieved overnight. But first, you have to open your heart, you have to let go first. It's really difficult now, so why not leave it to time? Time will make you see everything clearly, including people and your own inner heart."

"Really?" Hualing was full of pain, and this is what she has been pondering.

"It will. Time is a very good thing, as long as you're willing, it will always lead you to clarity, out of confusion, onto the right path." Cheng Su held her hand and said, "But the premise is that you must first be willing, willing to let it go. Leave the rest to time!"

Time will heal all wounds, will explain everything.

The premise is for Hualing herself to learn to be willing to hand it over to time.

Hualing pondered Cheng Su's words for a long time before saying, "Thank you!" And added, "I'm not as good as you!"

Chapter 956: Seizing the Chance to Set Three Rules

Cheng Su wasn't sure if Hualing listened to her advice, maybe she did, but whether she can follow through is another unknown.

Some people aren't easily persuaded. Cheng Su feared most those who are advised one moment and forget the next, the kind that hears and doesn't act on it; stubbornly getting stuck, advising them is futile.

But seeing Hualing like this made Cheng Su uncomfortable, she tossed and turned at night unable to sleep.

Qi Taiguo reached for the light cord and turned on the lamp, looking over, said: "Can't sleep? Let's talk?"

That sounded good, Cheng Su wanted to get up, but Qi Taiguo held her down, saying: "Just lay there, it's cold outside; you'll lose warmth soon."

Cheng Su had to lie back down.

"What did Hualing say to you?" Qi Taiguo, with one hand under his head, lay on his side, his other hand resting on her waist.

Cheng Su replied: "Nothing much, just the same three lines back and forth."

"Didn't you advise her? I see Chen Shouwang is getting old too." Qi Taiguo said: "If they continue living like this, sooner or later they'll exhaust each other's patience."

"I've said that to her countless times, whether she listened is hard to say." Cheng Su sighed: "I just feel that life is unpredictable, in these short two or three months, a person can change so much. You talk about Hualing, she used to be like a delicate flower, so proud, looking down on everyone, but in the blink of an eye, she's full of hostility, just like a resentful woman. I find it frightening."

Qi Taiguo patted her waist in comfort.

"It's not just her, even my big sister is the same, the resentment between her brows makes people feel annoyed and frustrated. No wonder there's a saying that shows how a woman is doing; just look at her face. With the resentment they have now, how can they be good?" Cheng Su said solemnly.

"It's all adversity, quite normal too, the key is whether one's mind is resilient and can overcome it." Qi Taiguo thought of the big sister and felt a bit annoyed.

"Yeah!" Cheng Su sighed and looked at him, asking: "Seeing them like this makes me think if I was the same back then, with eyes full of hostility, resentful and negative energy all over me?"

Qi Taiguo's hand froze on her back.

"Was I particularly ugly back then?" Cheng Su didn't intend to let him off.

Qi Taiguo pondered, then looked at her, gritting his teeth, said: "Back then, you weren't ugly, but you were like a hedgehog, daring no one to get close; if anyone got close, you'd prick up and couldn't let them closer. I found it quite scary, and uncomfortable." He shifted his tone, saying: "But I know there's a reason; going through those things, it's normal to protect yourself from harm."

Cheng Su felt a little sour inside, moved closer to him, saying: "At that time, you must have felt bad too, right?"

Qi Taiguo nodded: "It was tough; I'd rather you argue with me than be silent, giving me the cold shoulder."

Cheng Su rolled into his arms, said: "Sorry, I only thought of myself back then, it's my fault."

"It's okay, but promise me, from now on we won't stay silent if something's wrong; if we argue, let's lay it out and not leave it unresolved overnight, okay?" Qi Taiguo seized the opportunity to make a request.

Cheng Su raised her eyebrows: "You're setting rules for me?"

Qi Taiguo nodded seriously: "Yes, to prevent old habits."

"Alright, rules it is." Cheng Su hooked his little finger with hers.

Chapter 957: Smeared with Dirty Water

As the twelfth lunar month came around, Cheng Su was not only busy with her studies but also had business matters to attend to. She also had to prepare for the New Year by taking care of all the social and personal obligations, including those with various suppliers and manufacturers. Sending gifts at the end of the year had become a customary practice.

For this purpose, she discussed with the heads of various industries and finalized a variety of procurement lists. Song Xiaojang, who was in charge of general procurement, was being run ragged by her directions.

Qi Fenglian came to Cheng Su exasperated at this time, asking for leave, saying that she was mostly recovered from her illness and wanted to go back to deal with her matters with Zhang Jisheng.

Cheng Su asked, "Did he really run back home?"

"Where else could he go? I called back home to ask, and he is indeed there," Qi Fenglian said angrily. "This person is outrageous. He's spreading rumors at home that I'm too wild outside and don't regard him highly, so I'm making a fuss about divorcing him. And also..."

Cheng Su felt something was off and asked, "And what else?"

"And he's also telling people that I want to divorce him because you and Taiguo are instigating it behind the scenes, trying to break up our family. What kind of person is this? How can he be so shameless?" Qi Fenglian said with hatred. "I must have been blind to marry him in the first place."

She wanted to know Zhang Jisheng's whereabouts, so she called home. The daughter-in-law there, who was quite close with her, told her that the whole village was now gossiping about her and Zhang Jisheng wanting a divorce, and the rumors were detailed and elaborate.

This infuriated her to the point of physical pain. Clearly, it was Zhang Jisheng who was shameless, yet he dared to twist things upside down and falsely accuse them.

Cheng Su's face darkened. "Did he really say that?"

Qi Fenglian nodded and said, "That's why I have to go back. Otherwise, even the truth would be turned into lies by him. I can't let him distort the facts."

"But, can you handle it yourself if you go back?" Cheng Su asked again, "Or, should I and Taiguo discuss and find a way to accompany you back?"

Qi Fenglian was too soft-hearted, and with someone as despicable as Zhang Jisheng, Cheng Su was afraid she would suffer.

"It's fine. What's the worst he could do to me? It's year-end, and you're both busy, don't waste time on me. If things get out of hand, I'll call you," Qi Fenglian said firmly this time. Through this incident, she finally saw the inherent despicability of Zhang Jisheng.

Seeing her insistence, Cheng Su let her go, but there wasn't a bit of optimism in her heart.

Zhang Jisheng's actions were obviously to pre-emptively attack, but what was the purpose? Anyone could guess it was because he didn't want to divorce Qi Fenglian.

Cheng Su wouldn't bother with other matters, but if Zhang Jisheng falsely accused them of instigating the divorce, she would be the first to oppose it.

Even if they did instigate, it was because Zhang Jisheng himself was despicable and incompetent.

After Qi Fenglian left, Cheng Su waited for Qi Taiguo to return and told him about the incident.

Qi Taiguo was so angry he almost blew the roof off, angrily saying, "Zhang Jisheng, I see this bastard hasn't learned his lesson. I knew he wouldn't behave. I should've known to keep him in the shelter a few more days."

"Now's not the time to say that. We need to figure out a solution. I think Sister definitely can't handle the Zhang family on her own. We can't just sit and wait," Cheng Su said.

Qi Taiguo coldly said, "Don't worry, the things Zhang Jisheng did, he has a record. I made sure the police chief wrote him a confession letter back then. He can't deny it!"

Cheng Su let out a slight sigh of relief, but they didn't expect this storm to completely sweep over them.

Chapter 958: Complete Fool

Zhang Jisheng had it all planned out. He thought he would first present himself as the victim, using his parents and relatives' ignorance of the truth to say that Qi Fenglian looked down on him for not being able to make money and was instigated by her brother and others to file for divorce.

He reckoned that if the issue blew up, Qi Fenglian would not dare to come back due to the judgmental eyes of their relatives. By dragging it out, and by sincerely admitting his mistakes, the subject of divorce would eventually fade away.

Zhang Jisheng calculated meticulously, yet he didn't realize that this move would only further infuriate and repel Qi Fenglian and her family, pushing the situation into an irreparable state.

They say that when a person acts foolishly, they truly become invincible. Zhang Jisheng was nothing more than a fool.

Zhang Jisheng's intention was to vent to his parents and relatives, without considering that rumors always have a tendency to spread rapidly, reaching every corner of their village.

Mother Zhang was outraged upon hearing her son's words. She had been tirelessly helping Qi Fenglian take care of the children at home, and now, after gaining some worldly experience and earning a bit of money, Qi Fenglian dared to despise the Zhang family's poverty?

When she heard that it was Qi Taiguo and his wife instigating it, she was furious. She immediately thought of when Qi Fenglian gave birth, and Qi Taiguo's wife, named Cheng Su, was so domineering that she disregarded their wishes and signed off on a cesarean section.

With new and old grievances, Mother Zhang stormed with the children to the Qi family, hurling accusations of bullying, that they thought they were superior because of their official ranks, and intended to break apart their family, leaving the two children with no parents, which scared the children into wailing.

Mother Qi and Father Qi were bewildered. Out of nowhere, their in-law charged at them, hurling insults. What did it mean?

It was still Father Qi who stopped the chaos first and asked Zhang Jisheng what was going on.

Actually, Qi Taiguo resembles Father Qi quite a bit. Now, seeing his father-in-law's face darken, Zhang Jisheng recalled the scene of Qi Taiguo grabbing him by the neck and instinctively shrank his neck.

But he couldn't afford a divorce, nor could he afford to lose his two children. Otherwise, if he were to remarry in the future, what kind of woman could he possibly marry? Right now, seeing that Qi Fenglian's family is about to prosper, he doesn't want to lose such wealthy relatives.

Upon thinking of this, Zhang Jisheng knelt before Father Qi with a thud, saying, "Father-in-law, it's Fenglian who wants to divorce me. I know I am incapable and can't earn money, and I've been a bit muddle-headed. But from now on, I promise to be good to her and the children. Father and Mother-in-law, I swear."

"Divorce? Why would Fenglian want a divorce for no good reason?" Mother Qi nearly screamed. Divorce, has Fenglian gone mad?

Father Qi also stared at Zhang Jisheng, "Exactly, for no good reason, why would Fenglian mention divorce? What did you do?"

He was no fool. He knew Fenglian's personality and that she wouldn't say such things unless absolutely necessary. Surely, there was some irreconcilable conflict between them, and why was Zhang Jisheng making such a big deal?

It must be said, when Father Qi became shrewd, his mind was very clear, and he always got to the heart of matters.

"What else could it be? It's your dear son and daughter-in-law instigating it." Mother Zhang shrieked, "Your Qi family has risen to power. Your son has climbed to high office, your daughter-in-law has made a lot of money, so now, you look down on us poor relatives? They have a little quarrel, and they instigate Fenglian to talk about divorce. Do they have any conscience? Just because they have money, do they think they can break up others' families? It's pitiful for the two children, soon to have no father and mother. Oh, what sort of justice is this?"

Qi Taiguo and Cheng Su are considered the exemplary son and daughter-in-law in Father Qi's eyes, and it's no easy task for anyone to throw mud on them. He coldly said, "Mother-in-law, hold your tongue and let Zhang Jisheng speak about what he did that led Fenglian to want a divorce!"

Chapter 959: Unbelievably Stupid

Zhang Jisheng was already feeling guilty, and with his father-in-law snapping at him like this, he felt even more guilty, his eyes dodging as he stammered, saying it was nothing, they just had a small argument.

But the more he couldn't explain, the more Father Qi felt suspicious, and said, "If you don't want to say, that's fine. I will personally ask Fenglian and Taiguo. If it truly is that they look down on you and want a divorce, then I won't acknowledge them as my children." Saying this, he turned to Mother Qi and said, "You, go, call Taiguo and ask what's really going on."

Mother Qi acknowledged and quickly went inside.

Last month, Qi Taiguo got a promotion and received a bonus. He told Cheng Su about it, suggesting they install a phone back home. It would be more convenient for staying in touch in the future, without having to call other people's houses for relaying the message.

Cheng Su agreed, so now the Qi family had a phone installed.

Seeing how things were turning, Zhang Jisheng panicked and wanted to leave.

Father Qi kept watching him and, seeing his change in expression, felt more convinced that something had happened that they didn't know about.

"Father-in-law, um, we'll leave now!" Zhang Jisheng said through a forced smile.

It was at this moment that Zhang Jisheng realized he might have made a foolish mistake. He should have kept things quiet and begged Qi Fenglian not to divorce, rather than blowing things up like this.

But now that things were blown up, what could he do?

His usual instinct told him that leaving was the best option.

"Why are you in such a hurry to leave? There's a phone at home, and your mother-in-law already went to make the call. We'll have a result soon." Father Qi said coldly.

"No, there's still something to do at home." Zhang Jisheng said, trying to pull his mother.

Mother Zhang sensed something was wrong. Could it be her son was hiding something else? Otherwise, why did he look so guilty?

Meanwhile, Mother Qi dialed Cheng Su's house, but no one answered, so she dialed Qi Taiguo's office instead. Hearing her son's voice, she didn't say a word and started scolding him right away.

"That Zhang Jisheng said it was you two who instigated your elder sister to get a divorce. What's really going on? Why on earth a divorce? Was it you or Cheng Su who instigated it?" Mother Qi asked furiously.

Divorce is not a good thing, and it's not pleasant to hear either. If a daughter of the Qi family were to divorce, what would others think? How could they hold their heads high!

Qi Taiguo couldn't help but laugh in extreme anger upon hearing Zhang Jisheng even dared to come and cause trouble at their home. How could he be so stupid, truly an imbecile!

"Mom, it wasn't us who instigated it. It was elder sister herself who wanted to divorce, and we agree with her decision. Zhang Jisheng is not a decent person, he's just a scumbag, he..."

Mother Qi listened with her eyes wide open and lips trembling, gripping the phone, and asked, "Are, you saying it's all true? Zhang Jisheng, he dared, dared..."

Mother Qi couldn't finish her words. Patronizing prostitutes, contracting a venereal disease, caught in the act, heavens, is this the doing of her supposedly honest son-in-law?

Might as well have a lightning strike take her away right now.

"Mom, it's better not to have such a son-in-law. Elder sister has already returned. I'll arrange some time to go back to help her sort this out. We can't let Zhang Jisheng sling mud at us." Qi Taiguo said coldly and hung up the phone.

Mother Qi listened to the beeping sound from the receiver, her head buzzing.

She stumbled out of the room, seeing Zhang Jisheng pulling his mother to leave, her eyes widened immediately, and in one swift move, she dashed forward: "Zhang Jisheng, you coward, heartless scumbag piece of trash, how dare you mistreat my Fenglian, I'll tear you apart, you bastard!"

Chapter 960: How Have I Wronged the Zhang Family?

Regret, deep regret. The burning scratch marks on his face made Zhang Jisheng feel he had done something irreparable, regretting it desperately.

Now, he knelt before his in-laws, head hung low, enduring Mother Qi's vicious curses.

Father Qi's face was ashen, his hands clenched into fists. He hadn't expected things to turn out like this. No wonder, no wonder she wanted a divorce; who could endure this?

Yet he stubbornly refused to repent, claiming it was their own son and daughter-in-law who incited the divorce. This, this fool!

Previously, he seemed timid and cowardly, but as long as he treated Fenglian well, it was enough. But now, no matter how he looked at him, he seemed utterly foolish, beyond redemption.

This disgraceful incident, it's shameful enough just to be talked about.

Mother Zhang was also stunned. She hadn't expected her son to do such a thing, but she decidedly stood by her son, especially seeing his disheveled state.

"Nine out of ten men visit prostitutes; Jisheng was just momentarily confused by those cheap women. It wasn't ***; it was just a business transaction. In the future, he won't dare do it again. Why make such a fuss over divorce? Besides, what about the two kids? Jisheng, apologize to your in-laws now." Mother Zhang nudged her son forward.

Zhang Jisheng immediately said, "Father-in-law, Mother-in-law, I'm sorry, I swear I won't do it again."

"Stay away, who knows if your dirty disease is gone. Get away." Mother Qi shouted, keeping her distance.

Zhang Jisheng's face flushed; he bit his lip tightly: "I've healed, truly, I've healed." After finding out about the disease, he took money from Qi Fenglian to get treated.

The term "dirty disease" made Mother Zhang's face change several times.

Truly a worthless fool, confused and careless—eating without wiping his mouth!

"Yes, dear in-laws, on behalf of the children, give him a chance to change!" Mother Zhang shifted Xiao Bao on her back, pinching his leg where it couldn't be seen.

Baobao cried out loudly.

Mother Qi felt compassion but truly hated this foolish man. How dare he do such despicable things?

Meanwhile, Qi Fenglian hurried home in a flurry. The moment she entered the village, she felt the judgmental stares that made her face burn. At her in-laws' house, only Father Zhang was there, but the look he gave her was akin to a poisonous snake.

"Father-in-law, where is Zhang Jisheng?" Qi Fenglian looked around but found no one.

"Don't call me that, I can't bear it. Aren't you divorcing Jisheng, then why come back here?" Father Zhang said coldly, tugging forcefully at the bamboo strips of the basket: "I thought you were good; who knew you'd go out, gain some knowledge, and your heart would turn wild, looking down on our poor family."

Qi Fenglian couldn't help but argue: "Father-in-law, you're only listening to Zhang Jisheng's side. Do you even know what he's been up to out there?"

"My sister-in-law found him a job, but he felt it was too hard and got fired, and that was over. He went astray outside, even got a dirty disease, passed it on to me, and got caught like a red-footed hen; did he tell you all this?" Qi Fenglian angrily said, "What kind of person am I? You don't know after all these years? I've been married into the Zhang family for so long, worked hard and bore the hardships. You favored the younger ones, did I ever say a word? If it weren't unbearable, would I divorce him? Saying I despise the Zhang family for being poor, if that were true, would I have lived here for over ten years? Father-in-law, our actions should reflect conscience. Ask yourself honestly, as a daughter-in-law, how have I ever wronged you or the Zhang family?"

Father Zhang was dumbfounded. What did she say? What did Jisheng do?