

RTAMM 2501

Chapter 2501: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (2)

As a sniper, not only did Old Zhai have fantastic eyesight, but his hearing was also good.

In the past, he had not observed carefully, but after hearing some rumors, Old Zhai realized that Father Miao seemed to be limping. Even though Father Miao had tried his best to hide it, a careful observer would still notice it.

Old Zhai was sure that Father Miao had been fine the first time they had met. So, why was Father Miao limping now?

It turned out that a Japanese soldier had followed the bloody trail to the Miao family's house when Father Miao had brought Old Zhai at that time.

Thankfully, Father Miao was a smart young chap. Otherwise, Old Zhai would probably have had to face Father Miao's gravestone instead of seeing him limp around.

Because he had been afraid that the Japanese would find them, Father Miao had stripped Old Zhai of his clothes and had thrown them down the cliff after transporting him home behind his family's backs.

When the Japanese came to their door and interrogated Father Miao, he timidly replied, "I-I saw that that man had two yuan on him and I couldn't resist taking it, but... That man was already dead. I was afraid that someone would find him, so I threw his body off the cliff. Sir, I can swear to you that I didn't do anything more than take the two yuan. I didn't kill that man. By the time I found him, he was already brutally beaten up and full of injuries. He was bleeding so severely that he wouldn't have survived anyway."

Of course, the Japanese soldiers were not so easily taken in and naturally suspected Father Miao's words.

At that time, the Eighth Route Army already had quite a high status amongst civilians, and even normal civilians had been protective of them. The Eighth Route Army had practically become a belief in people's hearts.

The Japanese had encountered too many civilians who would much rather die than expose the Eighth Route Army. That was why they did not believe Father Miao's words.

Thankfully, the Miao family had young girls around the age of ten at that time.

Giving it some thought, the Japanese simply shot Father Miao in the leg. The pain was so excruciating that Father Miao hugged his leg and rolled around in pain.

The Japanese soldiers threatened to shoot Father Miao in his other leg if he didn't confess the truth.

Even under such a threat, Father Miao did not change his statement. Because the soldiers had indeed seen some bloodied clothes at the bottom of the cliff, they finally retreated.

To Father Miao, that shot in the leg wasn't the end of his disaster but the beginning.

The only ones whom the Japanese soldiers hunted relentlessly were the Eighth Route Army.

Hearing that Father Miao had killed an Eighth Route Army soldier and had even relented in front of the Japanese soldiers for the sake of two yuan, the Miao family had faced the brunt of relentless criticism from the whole village.

Even under such duress, Father Miao had not exposed Old Zhai's whereabouts. He had chosen to remain hungry so that he could leave some food for Old Zhai. Then, he would send the injured Old Zhai off once the Eighth Route Army got news of this situation.

Father Miao had no other choice. He didn't know whether he could trust everyone else in the village. If the Japanese soldiers had not believed him and had even placed spies among them, he would not only be unable to protect the Eighth Route Army in the end, but the Japanese would probably even kill off his entire family if he were to tell the truth.

It was all because of protecting the Eighth Route Army that Father Miao's life had gone downhill.

Because of how important Old Zhai was to them, the Eighth Route Army had repeatedly thanked Father Miao for his care and for saving such a good comrade.

Thanks to the Eighth Route Army's attitudes, anyone who dared to speak ill of Father Miao was deemed to be pro-Japanese.

Although Father Miao and the Miao family's names had been restored, Father Miao hadn't been able to save his leg because he hadn't gotten treatment in the nick of time.

Apart from that, Father Miao's position in his family was no longer the same as it had been in the past.

Father Miao's father had died at the hands of Japanese soldiers long ago, and the whole Miao family depended on Father Miao to support them.

Before that incident, the whole Miao family loved Father Miao. It was only because of Father Miao that their family was able to survive through such a tumultuous period and have food to eat.

But ever since that incident, Father Miao was handicapped and was no longer able to do as much for the family as he had in the past.

The Miao family was already used to Father Miao's endless contributions and sacrifices. And of course, they were full of complaints toward Father Miao now.

Because of that, the family had gotten even more upset when Father Miao had married a bride without any betrothal gifts and even more so after she had gotten pregnant. "Our house is as big as a bird's nest. It isn't even big enough for all of us. How will we stay here once you have a child? It'll be terribly noisy! Besides, my second brother isn't young anymore. He'll be getting married soon too. Where will my second brother and his wife stay then?"

With such disagreements within the family, Father Miao remained silent for a long while. After getting Mother Miao's approval, the couple eventually moved out of the family home and moved into an abandoned hut in the village. That was the one that Old Zhai had seen.

After learning about the whole incident, Old Zhai was even more silent than Father Miao had been the day before he moved out.

He touched the gun in his pocket and told himself to hold it in. Those heartless people of the Miao family were still people of their country.

His gun was only for defeating his enemies, not his own people.

Even after comforting himself in that way, Old Zhai still felt the need to release his pent-up anger and scold the Miao family. They weren't worth Father Miao's sacrifices!

If not for the fact that he was injured and his enemies were looking for him, he would definitely run straight to the Miao family's house to beat up all those heartless people. Unfortunately, his appearance would only cause more trouble for Father Miao, just like the previous time.

Were people like that still considered family?

When he was useful to them, Father Miao was their brother. Now that he was useless, they heartlessly kicked him out!

Old Zhai couldn't swallow such a situation.

Old Zhai held it in for a long time before coming to a conclusion. "Brother Miao, I've thought it through. If your wife gives birth to a son, name him Miao An. If it's a girl, she'll be Miao Jing. Miao An will be my son's brother, and naturally, little Miao Jing will be my son's wife. That's a deal. You can't refuse. If you refuse, I'll take it that you're looking down on me!"

Hearing Old Zhai's words, Father Miao didn't know whether to laugh or to cry.

Someone else had named his son or daughter for him! What was he to do as a father?

Chapter 2502: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (3)

“Alright. Alright. If it’s a boy, he’ll be called Miao An. If it’s a girl, she’ll be called Miao Jing.”
Anyway, both these names sounded pleasant and his child wouldn’t be at a loss with such a name.

Father Miao was even thinking about how he would have a son, Miao An, this time and a daughter, Miao Jing, next. It would be fine if they had a little Miao Jing first too. They would simply have a little Miao An next time.

In any case, he wouldn’t let any of these two names go to waste. He would surely put them to good use with his children.

Upon hearing Father Miao’s agreement, Old Zhai finally felt relieved. He believed that with Father Miao and the child’s names, he would definitely be able to find the Miao family in the future.

Old Zhai knew clearly that he would have to return after recuperating and report the situation to the organization, just like he had done the previous time.

After about three days, Old Zhai left without leaving anything behind.

After Old Zhai’s departure, Father Miao thought nothing more about these two chance encounters and simply lived his own life.

Father Miao had worked hard for the Miao family for many years, but when he had brought Mother Miao out from the Miao family’s house, he had taken nothing with him. Not the money that he had earned nor any of his things.

Now that Mother Miao was pregnant and they needed money for childbirth and to raise the child, Father Miao had to wrack his brains to find a way to put food on the table and to nourish Mother Miao. Otherwise, Mother Miao would not even have enough milk for the child even if she were to give birth.

As such, Father Miao always headed into the mountains, intending on hunting animals to sell or to nourish Mother Miao.

But accidents often happened without any warnings.

At that time, when Father Miao had been shot by the Japanese soldiers while saving Old Zhai, his conditions had been so poor that he hadn't even been able to visit the village's doctor, let alone a hospital.

All Father Miao thought about was how he didn't even know when he would be able to get back to work because of his injury. If he were to spend the family's funds on treating his injury, what would his family live off?

With that thought, Father Miao didn't visit the doctor to treat his injury and simply applied ointment on it.

Because of that, the bullet had remained lodged in Father Miao's calf for two years. Every time the weather changed, Father Miao would feel the injury acting up, reminding him of its existence.

Once, Father Miao insisted on going into the mountains to hunt despite his injury acting up. Along the way, he spotted a ginseng on a steep slope.

Although Father Miao didn't know much about it, he knew that ginseng was an expensive product. Perhaps, he would even be able to use it when Mother Miao gave birth.

If he could dig that ginseng up, their family wouldn't have to worry about finances for a good period of time.

Because that slope was really steep, Father Miao had been very careful while going over. But right at that moment, Father Miao's injury acted up. Not only did his calf hurt, but it also caused Father Miao to lose sensation in his whole lower body.

As soon as that happened, Father Miao rolled down the steep slope, hitting his head on a hard rock.

By the time someone spotted Father Miao, he was almost drawing his last breaths. Naturally, the ones who found Father Miao spotted the ginseng nearby and knew that Father Miao had gotten into an accident because of it.

The villagers were kind, and knowing that Mother Miao and her child would lead a difficult life once Father Miao was gone, they dug up the ginseng and sent it to Mother Miao so that she would be able to pay for Father Miao's funeral rites.

Because she was pregnant, Mother Miao couldn't withstand the shock from the news that Father Miao was gone. She felt like her whole world had come crashing down.

It was just a ginseng. How could that compare to her husband coming back alive and well?

The greatly shocked Mother Miao immediately started bleeding, and after struggling for a full day and night, she finally gave birth to a daughter.

No matter how upset Mother Miao was, she remembered her husband smiling and telling her that they would at least have two children, a son and a daughter. Their son would be named Miao An, and their daughter would be named Miao Jing.

Now that she had given birth to a daughter, her name was naturally Miao Jing.

After naming her child, Mother Miao quickly followed Father Miao and passed on.

With both Father and Mother Miao gone, Miao Jing's uncles and aunts had a heated discussion about who was going to raise Miao Jing on the account of the ginseng. In the end, Grandma Miao's favorite second son, or Miao Jing's second uncle, gained custody of her.

Because of taking care of the family, Father Miao had gotten married late in life and had given birth to Miao Jing late as well.

But Miao Jing's second uncle was different. After all, his elder brother, Father Miao, had saved up some money for him, and he had a house ready for him too.

The moment Father Miao moved out of the house with Mother Miao, Second Uncle Miao immediately got married and even gave that young lady a significant amount of dowry.

The Miao family's treatment of Second Auntie Miao and Mother Miao was as different as day and night.

Of course, this difference in treatment was naturally a result of Grandma Miao's bias.

After getting custody of Miao Jing, Second Uncle Miao officially started raising Miao Jing.

“Miao Jing, can’t you work faster? Don’t you know that your second uncle and brother are working in the fields to earn points? Remember that it’s because of your uncle and brother that you’re able to eat and live here. Now that you’re grown up, you can’t be heartless and forget how good your uncle and brother have been to you.”

Second Auntie Miao kept berating Miao Jing along the way and was just short of tugging on Miao Jing’s ear to ask if she already knew that.

To be honest, Miao Jing had heard these words from a young age and could already recite them. “I know. Second Auntie, let’s hurry. We still have to send Uncle and Brother their meals.”

Second Auntie Miao replied with a satisfied hum that Miao Jing had not retorted her.

Second Auntie Miao’s gaze landed on Miao Jing from time to time, and her gaze was strange.

Second Auntie Miao had never understood this. She had never given Miao Jing anything good and had always left the delicious food for her own husband and children. If there were any leftovers after that, she would have them for herself.

It was normal that Miao Jing had not starved to death since they had fed her, but how could Miao Jing be getting prettier by the day? She wasn’t anything like other young ladies in their village.

Second Auntie Miao thought deeper about it and felt that Miao Jing surely resembled her mother, who had lived such a short life.

Mother Miao had gotten married to Father Miao without a dowry because of her poor family background. Her parents had passed on, and she had been adopted.

At that time, people normally married wives who could work hard and give birth to many children. Skinny and good-looking young ladies like Mother Miao weren’t popular at all.

Because of that, Mother Miao was pretty much the best-looking young lady in the entire village.

Chapter 2503: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (4)

Miao Jing had inherited her mother's good looks and was rather pretty.

Initially, Second Auntie Miao had been rather upset. Her own daughter wasn't as pretty as Miao Jing, and because Miao Jing had been doing household chores since a young age, she was already 'famous' in that aspect.

Because of that, when Miao Jing turned fifteen, there were often people in the village who turned up at Second Uncle Miao's house, asking if Miao Jing had already found a marriage partner. It didn't matter if she was still young. They could simply get engaged and wait until she was eighteen to get married.

Second Uncle Miao and Second Auntie Miao's first child was a girl as well and was only a few months younger than Miao Jing.

Everyone who visited Second Uncle Miao's house only talked about Miao Jing. On the contrary, no one ever mentioned Miao Lanlan, who was of the same age. Because of that, Second Auntie Miao hated Miao Jing, who was stealing the attention from her own daughter. As such, any scolding and hard work were all reserved for Miao Jing alone to torture her.

Miao Jing knew about this situation as well.

Even if she didn't, there would be people who would tell her. "Miao Jing, I'm your Mother Li."

"Mother Li." Miao Jing recognized her as the one who often matchmade others. But the situation was different now. Arranged marriages and blind marriages were no longer allowed. As such, it was difficult to be a matchmaker as well.

Mother Li grabbed Miao Jing's hand. "Look what a good girl you are. Your hands are so thick."

Miao Jing retracted her hand. "Mother Li, the chairman has said that workers are the most glorious. Since I'm not at the age to produce offspring, it's only right that I love to work. Everyone's hands are full of calluses, including mine. They are my pride."

“So why hasn’t your Second Auntie allowed your sister, Lanlan, to do the same?” Did they think others were fools?

If not for the fact that all three generations of the Miao family were poor, and Elder Miao had been crippled when he had been alive, the second son of the Miao family and his family would have been condemned as filthy landowners given the way they raised their children.

Which seventeen or eighteen-year-old young lady had never worked in the fields to earn money for the family? The daughter of the Miao family lazed around all day, waiting to be fed like a princess.

Humph! She couldn’t care less about a young lady like that!

Wouldn’t she be bringing trouble to another family and ruining her own reputation if she were to matchmake this young lady?

“Miao Jing, listen to me. Your second uncle’s family doesn’t treat you well. I’ll find you a family that loves and cherishes you. I’m doing this for your good.”

Miao Jing smiled. “I know you’re doing this for my sake, but I’m still young and I’m in no rush to get a partner.” If she had the chance, she would actually want to further her studies.

When she was younger, she never had the chance to go to school. It was always Lanlan attending school. Only after her chores was she able to learn a little secretly by the side.

Afterward, schools had closed and the teachers had gone missing. As such, Miao Jing’s desire to study naturally remained unfulfilled. Thankfully, Miao Jing heard that the production division was going to set up a literacy class and invite educated youth to the countryside. Of course, Miao Jing was interested in it.

Miao Jing knew that Mother Li was doing this for the benefits she would reap as a matchmaker, but it wasn’t wrong that Mother Li cared for her too.

But she didn’t want to get married. She knew that her husband’s family would definitely refuse to let her attend the literacy classes.

Ever since the educated youth from cities arrived, the young ladies in the villages were no longer willing to get married and had raised their standards. They all wanted to get married to people from the city.

Because of that, even married young ladies were firmly controlled by their in-laws so that they wouldn't get close to those educated youths and be led astray.

Miao Jing knew about this situation.

She didn't think that these youths from the city were any better than the men in the village, nor did she think that the men in the village were worse than these educated youths. But Miao Jing didn't want to get married if that meant that she wouldn't be able to attend the literacy classes.

It was true that she lived a tough life in her second uncle's family, but apart from having more to eat once she got married, nothing would change. She would still have to work and do chores, so why would she be in a hurry to get married?

"Miao Jing, are you looking for educated young men?"

"No, those educated youths are different from us." It wasn't just the educated young men but the educated young women as well. Whenever they looked at those from the production division, their eyeballs always rolled downward. Miao Jing hated their attitude.

It wasn't that all of the educated youths were like that, but most were.

Apart from attending the literacy classes, Miao Jing had never had any other interactions with them.

"Then... Miao Jing, don't tell me you want to repay your second uncle? Don't you know that he is only able to live comfortably like this because of your dad? Without your dad, he would never have had the money to get married and have children. Besides, your dad only died because of that ginseng. It's only right for your uncle to have raised you all these years."

In fact, Mother Li had done the calculations for Second Uncle Miao.

Not only had he not lost out by raising his niece, Miao Jing, but he had even earned from it.

From the time Miao Jing was adopted by him, she had started to work for him. She had started off with taking care of her younger siblings and washing all of the family's clothes.

Apart from cooking, Miao Jing took care of all of the family's household chores.

Of course, Second Auntie Miao never allowed Miao Jing to get anywhere near the stove. It wasn't that she was afraid that Miao Jing would get injured because she was young. It was because she was afraid that Miao Jing would poison the food or steal food for herself while cooking.

That was why she handed all household chores over to Miao Jing, except for this one.

Because of that, Miao Jing could do all kinds of chores, except for cooking. Even as she slaved for her second uncle's family, she had never gotten the chance to learn to cook. After she got married, Grandma Zhai was still alive and Miao Jing hadn't needed to learn to cook. After Grandma Zhai passed away, the family had already hired an auntie to help around because of their status.

In that way, Miao Jing had never dared to skive on work, nor dared to eat any more than was given to her. Apart from that ginseng, Miao Jing had earned more than enough to support herself over the years in her second uncle's house.

That meant that there was no kindness Miao Jing needed to repay Second Uncle Miao.

Besides, Second Uncle Miao had raised his daughter, Miao Lanlan, like a princess. Miao Jing, on the other hand, had become a servant to her. Even at this age, Miao Jing still washed all of Miao Lanlan's clothes.

Miao Jing was obviously older, but she always only got the clothes that Miao Lanlan no longer wanted to wear.

Not only had Second Uncle Miao gotten a free ginseng, but he had also gotten a free servant at home.

It was a little blunt, but it was the truth.

Chapter 2504: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (5)

“Mother Li, it’s late and I need to go get my work done. Otherwise, my uncle and auntie are going to get angry.” Miao Jing didn’t deny that Mother Li’s words were the truth. The problem was that she would have had nowhere to go if her second uncle hadn’t taken her in.

Because of that, no matter how tough it was in her second uncle’s family, Miao Jing dared not overthink it. She could only accept her fate and work as hard as an ox but eat less than a dog.

Miao Jing had never considered her personal issues, but others in Second Uncle Miao’s family had already done so.

“How’s it going? Which family are you sending your niece to? How about the one next door? All three generations of the family are poor, just like us. If you send your niece there, they’re willing to give us forty-five kilograms worth of food.”

“That family’s quite good too. They’re in the production division and are in charge of slaughtering pigs. If your niece marries into the family, she won’t have to worry about having nothing to eat.” Of course, as their niece, it would be alright for her to be filial to them too. “Besides, if your niece marries him, he’s willing to pay fifty yuan as the bride price. To be honest, your niece is really valuable. Look at all three families I’m showing you. None of them have poor conditions. She’ll live comfortably once she marries into their family. I think I’ve done my part as her second auntie by doing this much.”

Second Uncle Miao listened to Second Auntie Miao praising herself. He didn’t need his wife to tell him what kind of families his wife had chosen for his niece, Miao Jing.

Yes, all three generations of the first family were poor. The grandpa was a thug, the father was a slacker, while the son was a cripple. Was a family like that good?

It was because his son was a cripple and couldn’t get married that the family was willing to fork out forty-five kilograms of food to marry his niece.

As for the second family of butchers... Sigh...

The butcher was already in his twenties and almost ten years older than Miao Jing.

A few years ago, this man had been engaged, but when he saw his fiancée talking to another man in school, he had beaten up both the man and his fiancée because of his bad temper and had even scolded the woman, saying that she was flirtatious and easy.

In the end, the young lady decided that she would rather stay single her whole life than get married to someone like that.

As for the third...

Second Uncle Miao didn't want to say anything. While the second man was almost ten years older than Miao Jing, the third was more than ten years older than her!

This man was getting a second wife and already had two sons and a daughter. His first wife had died from exhaustion.

Yes. Fifty yuan sounded like quite a lot, but there were rumors that this man was involved in illegal dealings.

If he was caught by Little Red Soldiers, the whole family would be brought down along with him.

As such, Second Uncle Miao felt that it had indeed been tiring for that man's first wife. She had been the only one taking care of the household while bringing home the bacon at the same time while her husband indulged himself in illegal dealings. How could she not have been exhausted?

The combination of fear and exhaustion would wear down the toughest of people.

"I've talked for a long time and my mouth is getting dry. Hurry and give me a response. Miao Jing is your niece and you're closer to her as her biological uncle. Hurry and make a decision. They're waiting for us to respond." Second Auntie Miao nudged Second Uncle Miao, wanting him to give her an answer.

No matter how much the families were willing to give them, it would be free money for them.

Since they were taking advantage of others, Second Auntie Miao didn't mind how much she would be able to get. What she cared about was marrying Miao Jing off as quickly as possible so that she could find a good partner for her own daughter, Miao Lanlan.

As long as Miao Jing remained in their family, those visiting would always only mention Miao Jing. It felt like they had all forgotten about her daughter's existence.

Second Auntie Miao might have such calculations in her mind, but Second Uncle Miao was no fool either. Otherwise, he couldn't have enjoyed the benefits of the hard work that Father Miao had put in.

Second Uncle Miao puffed on his cigarette. "None of these families is suitable. Of course, if you want to make a decision, I can't stop you either."

Miao Jing had been living with their family for so many years, and many in the production division talked about how he was like a nasty landowner for treating his own niece as a servant.

It was his elder brother who had paid for his house and given him the money to get married.

He was only living a comfortable life because of his elder brother and had even gotten hold of the ginseng that his elder brother had given up his life for. Even so, he was so harsh on Miao Jing. He was no different from landlords who exploited the laboring people's efforts and achievements.

Second Uncle Miao remembered clearly how intense the struggle and fight had been over the past few years.

Second Uncle Miao had no intention of getting himself and his whole family entangled in that mess just for some small benefits they could gain from Miao Jing.

Once Little Red Soldiers caught wind of Miao Jing's situation, their lives would become even more miserable than death.

Thinking about situations he had witnessed, Second Uncle Miao shivered and turned his back to face Second Auntie Miao, expressing his unwillingness to participate in the matter. "If we don't do this well, it'll become an arranged marriage. I won't stop you from doing what you want to do. But if you ask for my opinion, I think that none of these three people is good enough for my niece."

“You...” Second Auntie Miao was frustrated and incensed that her plan had not succeeded. “Why do I work so hard? Isn’t it all for our family? As long as Miao Jing is here, no one cares about your daughter. Otherwise, do you think I would have put so much effort into looking for a partner for Miao Jing? If I have so much time, don’t you think I would have spent it looking for some good families for our Lanlan?”

“If you’re really thinking about Lanlan, I think you’d better find Miao Jing a normal family. Don’t talk about how we’re letting other families get a daughter-in-law for free by not getting any dowry. You know very well how much we got from that ginseng that my elder brother left behind. Don’t talk about Miao Jing. Even if my elder brother left another child for us to raise, we wouldn’t even need to spend a single cent of our money trying to raise them. As long as you aren’t finding a family for Miao Jing based on how much you’ll receive in return, I’ll agree to it.”

Even if it was his wife doing such a thing, Second Uncle Miao wasn’t willing to bear that responsibility.

Bearing that responsibility could mean giving up his life.. He wasn’t going to let his wife take whatever he had gotten from his elder brother to another man when she got remarried.

Chapter 2505: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (6)

He wouldn’t do such a foolish thing.

In short, Second Uncle Miao would definitely try to gain as many benefits as he could for himself.

But if that meant taking on a huge risk that involved his own life, only a fool would do it, and anyone who did deserved to die.

“But she grew up in our family. Miao Jing doesn’t have parents and only has us as her uncle and auntie. Isn’t it embarrassing if they don’t even give us any dowry now that she’s getting married?”

Second Auntie Miao was reluctant to give up. She wanted to glean the benefits, but of course, her husband had to bear the risk.

“I’ve already made myself clear. If you really choose any of those three families, I won’t stop you. You can do as you please.” But there was no way he was going to get involved. If anything happened, he had nothing to do with the money. He would let everyone know that he had not agreed to it. It had been Second Auntie Miao who had insisted on going through with it.

“You...” Second Auntie Miao’s hand trembled. “I’m your wife and gave birth to two grandsons and a granddaughter for the Miao family, and this is how you treat me?”

Second Uncle Miao sneered. “Yes, you gave birth to two sons and a daughter for me. The problem is that my family didn’t marry you for nothing. You’re only thinking about the money you’ll receive from marrying Miao Jing off, but have you thought about what dowry Miao Jing will bring along with her? Do you think we’re still living in the past where you took my family’s money but you came with nothing but the clothes on your back? If not for the fact that I knew your family would never return my family’s food and money, do you think I would have proceeded with the marriage? If that happened now, I’m sure you would have gotten sued!”

Second Auntie Miao nearly fainted from anger. “You!” He was bringing up the past!

“Let me tell you one last time. If you insist on marrying Miao Jing into such a family, I’ll get a divorce from you if anything happens. The children and I won’t go down with you for that small sum of money. There’s no room for discussion on this matter!”

With that said, Second Uncle Miao walked out of the door and no longer cared about Second Auntie Miao.

“It’s your fault that my parents quarreled with each other. You jinx! Think about how well my mom treats you. She cares so much about you that she even picked out three families for you. If you have even just a little bit of conscience, hurry and go tell my dad that you’ll marry into any one of those three families that my mom picked out.”

Miao Lanlan shoved Miao Jing, asking Miao Jing to be the peacemaker between her parents.

Of course, Miao Jing refused. “There’s no point in trying to convince Second Uncle once he’s made his decision.”

“Then, don’t try to convince him. Just pick a family and go there. That’s a way of settling the matter too.” She hated Miao Jing’s guts and felt uneasy as long as Miao Jing remained in the family.

“If I do that, Second Uncle might misunderstand that Second Auntie forced me to do that. Then, don’t you think they’ll get a divorce? I have no parents since I was born. Lanlan, you’re my cousin. It’s terrible not having parents. I don’t want you to be in the same boat and not have parents either.”

Miao Jing expressed her concern for Miao Lanlan, and Miao Lanlan, who had been pampered by Second Auntie Miao, was obviously no match for Miao Jing. After a moment of hesitation, she stopped trying to force Miao Jing to do as she said.

After Miao Lanlan stopped mentioning it, Miao Jing simply acted as though she had never overheard the conversation between her uncle and auntie and simply lived as per normal.

It wasn’t that Miao Jing was exceptionally bold by doing that. It was just that she had grown up beside these two people and naturally understood their tempers.

Her second auntie was intent on taking advantage of her now that she was of marriageable age.

Unfortunately, her second auntie had no guts to go through with her plan unless her second uncle was willing to bear the consequences for her.

As long as her second uncle refused to do so, her second auntie would definitely not dare to go through with it. She knew that her second uncle would definitely have a way of making everyone in the production division believe that he had nothing to do with the matter and that it had been orchestrated by his wife alone.

Miao Jing wanted to laugh even more when she thought about her uncle. He was a wolf in sheep’s clothing. He was cruel, demanding, and lacked any conscience, yet he still thought that he was being humane.

What he had retorted her auntie with was that he was afraid of getting into trouble by receiving a bridal price.

But her uncle had never once said that she was his niece and the only bloodline of his elder brother.

Neither had he ever said that he was willing to do his best to give his niece a good dowry and find a good family for her for the sake of his elder brother.

Miao Jing sighed. Who cared about how her second uncle and auntie fought with each other? All she cared about was that her second auntie would never dare to decide on her marriage behind her second uncle's back.

Miao Jing couldn't be bothered to think about the kind of person she would marry in the future, or whether she would even get married at all.

It was difficult enough to get past each day.

Miao Jing was right about the selfishness and coldness between her uncle and auntie, but what she didn't know was how her peaceful life was going to change because of the Zhai family's appearance.

That day, Miao Jing had just returned from a day's work in the fields, smelling of sweat and was full of mud.

She hadn't even entered the gates before Second Auntie Miao rushed out and pushed her to the side. "Look how dirty and embarrassing you are. Lanlan, your grandma hasn't been in good health lately and misses you terribly. I've already applied for leave with your supervisor. Take these clothes and go to your grandma's house for a few days. I'll pick you up once your grandma's health improves in a few days' time."

As Second Auntie Miao spoke, she stuffed the clothes into Miao Jing's arms and pinched Miao Jing on the arm, warning her to cooperate.

Miao Jing was in a daze. Lanlan? Was her Second Auntie Miao calling the wrong person?

"Why are you still standing here? Hurry and go to your grandma!" Second Auntie Miao pushed Miao Jing so hard that she nearly fell.

"No. Where..." Grandma?

Second Auntie Miao ground her teeth and said in a low voice, "I'm warning you not to spout nonsense. You're Lanlan now. You'd better not return for three days. I don't care where you go. You should be able to find somewhere now that you're grown up. If you don't listen to me, I'll do all I

can to get you married out and I'll make the decision in regard to whom you marry. But if you listen to me for these three days, I'll listen to you and get your approval when you get married. I won't make a decision without your consent. How's that?"

Second Auntie Miao was afraid that Miao Jing would ruin her plan.

Chapter 2506: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (7)

As compared to whatever she had in mind, letting Miao Jing decide on who to marry didn't mean much anymore. Anyway, Second Auntie Miao had already gotten the best deal.

Miao Jing was in shock. When had her second auntie ever spoken to her so nicely?

Second Auntie Miao didn't give Miao Jing any chance to understand the situation before chasing her away.

Miao Jing simply thought that she wouldn't be at a loss since she would be able to decide whom she would marry as long as she stayed away from the Miao family for three days. She could do that. As such, she turned and left.

Second Auntie Miao heaved a sigh of relief and put on a goose-bumps-inducing smile after sending Miao Jing off.

Old Zhai lifted his head to look at Second Auntie Miao. "Did someone visit?"

Second Auntie Miao's gaze shifted uneasily, not daring to meet Old Zhai's dark eyes. "Yes, someone returned. It was my daughter, Lanlan. My mom hasn't been in good health lately, and she misses her granddaughter very much. I handed her her clothes and asked her to go visit her grandma. Chief Zhai, what's the matter?"

"Your daughter, Miao Lanlan?"

"Yes, yes. Chief Zhai, you have such a good memory. I only said it once, but you were able to remember it. Jingjing, what are you doing? Hurry and pour some water for your Uncle Zhai."

Miao Lanlan did not respond, and after zoning out for three seconds, she finally realized that the ‘Jingjing’ her mother was calling for was her.

Miao Lanlan’s movements were a little stiff, but she listened to her mother, poured some water for Old Zhai, and addressed him as ‘Uncle Zhai’.

Of course, a farmer’s family had no tea to serve, and it was all filled with stalks and old tea leaves.

But Old Zhai had grown up in such a family too and was thus used to it. “Can you tell me how Brother and Sister-in-law Miao passed away?”

Second Uncle Miao, who had remained silent, felt his legs give way. He opened his mouth but couldn’t speak a word, and beads of cold sweat formed on his forehead.

Seeing Second Uncle Miao in a fright, Second Auntie Miao was incensed. Why was her husband acting as though he had caused his brother’s death?

“Chief Zhai, this was what happened. At that time, my sister-in-law was already nine-month pregnant. My elder brother wanted to earn more money to raise his child, so he went into the mountains to get some ginseng but fell to his death. After my sister-in-law heard about it, she went into labor but soon followed my elder brother as well. I’m not trying to say anything, but in the past, no one would have dared to raise a child like Miao Jing. She was like a jinx—no, Chief Zhai, that’s not what I meant. I know. We believe in science. Science.”

Miao Jing was a jinx, but she believed in science.

If not for the kindness of their family that they were willing to take Miao Jing in, Miao Jing would have starved to death a long time ago.

All credit went to their family that Miao Jing was still alive and well today. Now, she was just trying to get some benefits back from Miao Jing. That wasn’t asking for too much, was it?

To Second Uncle Miao’s family, Old Zhai’s appearance was like gold falling from the sky.

When Second Auntie Miao had first heard that he was a chief, she had been so frightened that her face had turned pale.

Then, when she learned that Father Miao had saved him not just once but twice, Second Auntie Miao immediately understood that the chief was living comfortably now and wanted to repay Father Miao.

If Father Miao had still been alive, Second Uncle Miao's family would never have been able to be in the spotlight. Nonetheless, they would be able to get some benefits.

Although Second Auntie Miao had never witnessed personally just how well Father Miao treated Second Uncle Miao, she had heard all about it.

Unfortunately, Father Miao was no longer around. But the first thing the chief had asked upon learning about it was whether Father Miao's child was a boy or a girl.

Second Uncle Miao replied that it was a girl.

Old Zhai asked, "What's her name?"

Second Auntie Miao hurriedly responded before Second Uncle Miao had the chance to do so. "Miao Lanlan!"

Second Uncle Miao looked at Second Auntie Miao in shock, wanting to ask her what she meant. When had his daughter become his elder brother's daughter?

Second Auntie Miao was afraid that Second Uncle Miao would ruin it for her and nudged him, wanting him to keep quiet so that she could continue speaking.

Second Auntie Miao felt that this was the best thing that had ever happened to their family.

Initially, she had still been worried about what kind of family to find for her precious daughter so that she would have a blissful life.

With this chief in front of them, she didn't even need to worry about that now. If the chief had a son, it was even possible for her to marry her daughter to the chief's son based on the fact that Father Miao had saved him twice.

After all, the chief owed the Miao family two lives.

Old Zhai laughed. "Miao Lanlan? Isn't she called Miao Jing?"

Second Auntie Miao felt her heart almost leap out of her chest. Did the chief know Miao Jing? Then, what would she do now that she had lied?

"I was the one who gave her that name. I made a pact with Brother Miao to name his child Miao An if it was a boy, and Miao Jing if it was a girl. Did he change the name in the end?"

"No, no. My elder brother's daughter is named Jingjing. I was so panicked that I called out my own daughter's name. Don't misunderstand, chief. Yes, my niece is Miao Jing. So, you were the one who named her. I was wondering how my elder brother managed to come up with such a sophisticated name when he wasn't educated."

He had never met her. That was good.

As long as no one in the village caught wind of the situation before she sent Lanlan over, her daughter would have a blessed life awaiting her.

It was all thanks to her as a smart mother that Lanlan could live a good life.

Of course, if her daughter did well, she couldn't possibly forget about her parents and younger brothers who were toiling it out in the countryside back home.

Their whole family would lead comfortable lives with their daughter taking care of them in the future.

Second Auntie Miao thought that she had succeeded. Of course, if Old Zhai had been taken in by her little lies, there was no way he would have become a chief.

Old Zhai remembered clearly that Father Miao had been crippled because of him and had even been chased out by his family.

Old Zhai had always wanted to repay Father Miao for that but had never gotten the chance to visit his family.

In the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chiang Kai Shek faction that retreated to the other side of the gulf was always trying to return. Not only did Old Zhai have to manage his soldiers, but he also had to go to the frontlines of the war. His wife was exceptionally weak, and that worried Old Zhai as well. Old Zhai didn't even have the time to take care of his children, let alone visit his benefactor, Father Miao.

Later on, the tumultuous decade further exhausted the old revolutionary, Old Zhai.

They had finally toppled the 'Four Olds', and political order had finally been restored.. After putting everything in place, Old Zhai finally had the chance to visit the Miao family to see how Father Miao was doing.

Chapter 2507: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (8)

But who would have expected that he would only have the chance to visit Father Miao's grave instead of Father Miao himself?

Before meeting Second Uncle Miao's family, Old Zhai had already heard news of how Father Miao and his wife had passed away, and how the couple had treated Miao Jing afterward.

He had pretended to be unaware of the situation and visited Second Uncle Miao's family just to have a sense of their attitudes.

Twenty years ago, Old Zhai had already felt that Father Miao still had feelings for his family no matter how badly they treated him.

If the Miao family had a conscience and treated Miao Jing well after Father Miao's death, Old Zhai didn't mind giving Second Uncle Miao's family some benefits on Father Miao's account.

After all, after the Miao couple passed away, Second Uncle Miao's family had taken Miao Jing in and had raised his daughter-in-law.

After giving Second Uncle Miao some money, Miao Jing would have nothing to do with Second Uncle Miao's family ever again. That sum of money would be like buying out the connection between Second Uncle Miao's family and Miao Jing.

But now...

He eyed the trembling Miao Lanlan. He knew that he could save himself that sum of money.

Thinking about Miao Jing whom Second Auntie Miao had just chased away, Old Zhai stood up, not willing to waste any more time in this house. "Alright. I understand. It's late and I should get going. You don't have to send me off. I'll take my own leave."

Second Auntie Miao was stunned. What? He was leaving just like that?

They hadn't even spoken much, much less talked about her daughter, yet he was already leaving?

Her husband's brother had saved the chief twice and the chief had merely asked about him and was going to leave without doing anything? What would happen to her Lanlan? Wasn't the chief going to help Lanlan find a good family to marry into?

"Chief, there's no hurry. Our house might be a little small, but we can offer you a room to stay. Lan—no, Jingjing grew up without parents and doesn't even know how her parents were like. Since you were so close with my elder brother, why don't you chat with Jingjing and tell her more about my elder brother? Jingjing is so pitiful. I can't even answer her whenever she asks me about her parents because I married into the family too late. My heart always aches whenever I see that other children have parents while my niece doesn't."

Did he hear that? Their child was so pitiful. Since the chief was here to visit his benefactor, and he was no longer around, shouldn't he stay behind to take care of his benefactor's only daughter?

Otherwise, why did he even return? She would rather never have known that her brother had saved such a remarkable figure.

Old Zhai stopped in his tracks and eyed Miao Lanlan, giving a sinister smile just like Second Uncle Miao's. "I think it isn't too difficult for this little comrade to find out about her parents. Little comrade, can you tell whether your parents are really dead?"

"..."

"..."

"..."

Second Uncle Miao's family of three remained silent. Miao Lanlan didn't know how she should answer the question.

She hoped that her mother was right and that she would lead a comfortable and blissful life if she were to take Miao Jing's place and marry into a good family. But she was timid and didn't dare to do so.

When the chief asked her if her parents were dead, she didn't know how to answer him.

Obviously, both answers seemed unsuitable.

It was then that Second Uncle Miao and Second Auntie Miao regained their senses. If their daughter admitted that her parents were dead, it would be cursing them.

Second Auntie Miao was superstitious and thought that such words were too inauspicious. She was afraid that she wouldn't be able to hide her anger if her daughter were to admit to it.

Only Second Uncle Miao's face was ghostly pale. "Chief, if you miss my brother, you can visit him anytime."

"Okay."

Old Zhai felt that Father Miao's younger brother was quite a cunning person. Throughout his whole visit, he had not said a word and had allowed his wife to go on with her monologue. By not participating and watching on from the sidelines, he proved that he was willing to do so too.

As expected... He was just like that heartless creature he had known back then.

Second Auntie Miao wanted to stop Old Zhai, but she dared not go against Second Uncle Miao.

Only after he had left did Second Auntie Miao shout at Second Uncle Miao. "Look at what you did! How useless you are! It's so rare that an important figure visited us, yet you let him leave just like that? Is Lanlan even your daughter? Are your sons really your sons? Do you know that we could have become in-laws with the chief if we let Lanlan marry the chief's son? We wouldn't even have to worry about our lives in the future."

Her husband had ruined the whole family's happiness!

Second Uncle Miao shoved Second Auntie Miao. "What else do you know apart from picking a fight with me? That guy is a chief! Do you think he can't see through your lies? I think the chief already knows the truth regarding Lanlan and Miao Jing!"

"What? That's impossible!" Second Auntie Miao was in disbelief. "The chief doesn't even know Miao Jing. Besides, I didn't even let the chief see Miao Jing. How could he possibly know that Lanlan is our daughter and that the one who left is the real Miao Jing?"

Second Uncle Miao sneered. "Otherwise, why would he be a chief while we're still farmers? Besides, do you think only our family knows who my elder brother's daughter is? Do you think everyone in the production division is blind?"

Before coming to their house, the chief would have been able to understand their family's situation just by asking anyone in the production division.

"Dad, what shall we do? Will I still be able to follow the chief into the city and live a comfortable life?"

Miao Lanlan was disappointed. She had thought that this would be her chance of improving her life.

"If you want to live in the city and marry into a good family, it'll all depend on Miao Jing's conscience." Frustrated, Second Uncle Miao took a puff of his cigarette. "That chief will surely bring Miao Jing away and treat her well. If Miao Jing still treats me as her uncle, and you guys as

her relatives, we might still be able to reap some benefits. Even just a little help from a chief would mean that our entire family will live well.”

Second Auntie Miao was not happy. “Why? Why can Miao Jing marry the chief’s son but my daughter can’t? What rights does she have? My daughter is much prettier than Miao Jing! It’s so obvious that my daughter belongs in the city!”

Chapter 2508: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (9)

“Miao Jing is a jinx. Isn’t the chief afraid that people in his family will meet with accidents and die early just like your elder brother and sister-in-law?”

Of course, her niece wouldn’t be as close to her as her daughter was.

Thinking about how Miao Jing had been suffering in her hands all these years, Second Auntie Miao would have to coax Miao Jing and suck up to her instead once Miao Jing married the chief’s son. Second Auntie Miao hated the idea of that! There was no way she would let that happen!

“Don’t you think you’re overthinking it? The chief may be impressive, but he isn’t a god. How could he possibly know that? In my opinion, it’s better to just go with my plan and let Lanlan take Miao Jing’s place and enjoy a good life. Apart from my own daughter, I will trust no one. Do you think Miao Jing will remember us once she gets married into a good family? Think about how we’ve treated her all these years.”

Second Auntie Miao finally spoke the truth at this point in time.

To be honest, they hadn’t just treated her averagely. They had treated her extremely poorly.

It was exactly because Second Auntie Miao was clear about that that she was unwilling to let Miao Jing have such a good opportunity.

She felt that Miao Jing would definitely ignore these poor relatives of hers once she went with the chief and had a good and comfortable life to live.

Besides, she couldn't possibly watch on as Miao Jing went to live a blissful life.

Miao Jing was a jinx. She had better be filial to her uncle and auntie for the rest of her life. That was the attitude she ought to have.

Second Uncle Miao laughed self-deprecatingly. "I really hope I'm overthinking it, but from what I see, that isn't the case. I won't talk about anything else. But the chief might very well come and deal with us once he finds out that you lied to him that Lanlan was Miao Jing. You're such a failure. Have you never thought about the consequences before trying to cheat others? Our three children are really going to be ruined by you!"

If he had known that this was going to happen, he should have knocked this b*tch unconscious and dragged her into the room the moment she opened her mouth.

Look at how much trouble she had caused in such a short span of time.

"Dad, don't scare me. I can't be frightened like that." Miao Lanlan had already been stunned by Old Zhai's anger.

Usually, Miao Lanlan was haughty and arrogant in front of Miao Jing. Even though Miao Jing was a few months older than her, she had never once addressed Miao Jing as her elder sister. In fact, she only addressed Miao Jing by her name when she was in a good mood.

When she was in a bad mood, Miao Lanlan would simply call Miao Jing whatever she wanted.

But in front of Old Zhai, Miao Lanlan dared not act so recklessly. She was no different from a little kitten.

Second Auntie Miao had already said that she was Miao Jing, but Miao Lanlan dared not step forward to get close to Old Zhai, nor try to please him.

Miao Lanlan felt that the gaze of that impressive chief alone was enough to make her legs give way.

Miao Lanlan had already been in such shock, and after hearing her dad's words, she felt as though she was going to faint from fear.

“Humph!” Second Uncle Miao huffed. “You’re just like your mom. Since you’re so timid, why didn’t you tell him that you’re Miao Lanlan and that you’re our daughter when your mom said that you were Miao Jing? You want to take advantage of others, but you don’t have the courage to actually do it! I get so frustrated looking at you two! I’ve already said my piece. If the chief really comes back to deal with you two, I’m going to chase both of you out of the house.”

Anyway, he still had two sons. It didn’t matter if he didn’t have a wife. In another few years’ time, his sons would get married and he would have people to serve him all the same.

“Mom...” Miao Lanlan hugged Second Auntie Miao as she burst into tears. “Mom, I’m so scared. What shall we do? We didn’t do anything wrong. Why would the chief try to get back at us and want our lives?”

Second Auntie Miao herself was in fear too, but she couldn’t show that in front of her daughter.

Second Auntie Miao held her daughter in her arms, trying to console herself and her daughter. “Don’t be afraid. Think about it. Those four olds that were so impressive have already been defeated. One of them was even Chairman Mao’s wife! So what if he’s a chief? Is the chief more important than the chairman? We’re ordinary folks who haven’t done anything against the law. We’re not slave drivers or traitors. They have no right to take our lives. Don’t worry. Listen to me. We’ll be fine.”

Miao Lanlan sniffled. “Mom, are you still sending me to the chief’s side to let me have a good life? Will I marry the chief’s son?” Besides, did the chief even have a son?

Second Auntie Miao smiled bitterly. Did she want to?

Of course she did. She was almost going crazy just thinking about it.

If she succeeded in doing so, she would become in-laws with a chief. Of course, she wanted her daughter to marry well.

But after learning about Miao Jing’s name, the chief had shown no interest in Lanlan at all, much less talked about bringing Lanlan along with him or finding a good partner for her.

Before the chief left, he hadn't even said anything or asked them if they wanted him to help with finding Miao Jing a partner or even to treat Miao Jing well on his behalf, much less offer to give her a dowry if she were to get married.

Now, Second Auntie Miao couldn't help but think that it was normal for a family like theirs to not be able to become in-laws with the chief.

But her husband's elder brother had saved the chief twice, after all! Twice!

How could the chief do nothing now that Miao Jing was going to get married?

As long as the chief sent some things over to Miao Jing, Second Auntie Miao would have the final say over what she could bring with her and she had to leave at home.

Second Auntie Miao had already thought it through. There was no way the chief would send too few things over to Miao Jing, and neither would he send cheap things over.

Perhaps, she could even use these gifts to prepare a good dowry for her daughter and even help her two sons get married.

But the chief had not said a word and had simply taken his leave after understanding the family's situation!

At the thought of this, Second Auntie Miao was infuriated.

"Mom, since the chief is gone, shouldn't you get Miao Jing back? Otherwise, who's going to wash our clothes, feed the pigs, and take care of the livestock tomorrow? You'd better not ask me to do all that. It's so smelly and dirty. I'm not going to do it."

With her mother around and reassuring her that nothing would happen, Miao Lanlan, who had been sobbing just moments earlier, was back to her usual arrogant self.

Second Auntie Miao patted her thigh. "If you didn't mention it, I would really have forgotten all about all the household chores awaiting that jinx.. Since the chief is gone, I'd better go get her back."

Chapter 2509: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (10)

“It’s rare that she was finally useful for once, but who would have known that her dad had saved such a stingy chief? He didn’t mention giving us anything or bringing you to the city to lead a comfortable life! What bad luck!”

“Mom, hurry and get her home. There’s a hole in my clothes. I need her to mend it for me.”

“Alright. Don’t worry. I’ll get her back right away.”

Since that chief was so heartless, he had better not blame her for treating Miao Jing as a servant. After all, Miao Jing had grown up in their family. Without her husband, Miao Jing would have starved to death a long time ago.

Did Second Auntie Miao think that she would be able to find Miao Jing now?

Of course not. The moment Old Zhai left Second Uncle Miao’s house, he managed to catch up with Miao Jing to stop her in her tracks. “Are you Miao Jing?”

Miao Jing looked at the man in front of her warily. “Who are you? You’re not from our production division. I’ve never seen you.” Why would she tell a stranger who she was?

“You...” Old Zhai sighed. “I’m your Uncle Zhai. If you don’t mind, I’ll call you Miao Miao.”

Jingjing sounded pretty good too, but the Miao family had already addressed Miao Lanlan as Jingjing. Old Zhai felt uneasy using that name again.

Could Miao Jing possibly say that she minded? Even if she did mind, that person had already addressed her as so.

“Don’t worry. I’m not a bad person. I knew your dad. In fact, it’s all thanks to your dad that I’m still alive today. He saved me twice. Unfortunately, before you were born, both your parents passed on and they weren’t able to tell you about me.”

Miao Jing naturally had admiration for her parents. “You... knew my dad? And my dad saved you? That’s impossible! My dad’s a normal citizen. You don’t look like a normal citizen.”

Old Zhai laughed. “What do I look like then? I’ll tell you all about your dad and myself.”

“...”

After hearing her father’s past with Old Zhai, Miao Jing was no longer as wary of Old Zhai. “I know that you’re a chief now. So? My parents are no longer around. I guess you won’t have the chance to repay them even if you want to.”

He had such a high status while she was nothing more than an orphan. What could he possibly want from her?

“Why wouldn’t I have that chance? It’s true that your parents aren’t around anymore, but you’re still around.” Old Zhai had been rather upset upon learning that Father Miao was no longer around.

Apart from his wife, he had never owed anyone anything, and neither had he ever wanted to owe anyone anything.

But now that Father Miao was no longer around, he would never be able to repay this debt of gratitude. “Did you know that I was the one who named you? I have a son. While you were still in your mother’s belly, I made a pact with your dad. If you turned out to be a boy, you would be my son’s younger brother. If you turned out to be a girl, you would be my daughter-in-law. Miao Miao, are you willing to go back with me?”

Miao Jing gave it some thought and answered, “No.”

“Why?”

“Because it’ll be an arranged marriage.”

Old Zhai laughed. Brother Miao had been a man of few words while he was alive, but he was very opinionated.

He was afraid that Miao Miao's character and temperament would be dull even though she was pretty just because she had been raised by Second Uncle Miao's family. If that was the case, it would be extremely difficult to get Zhai Yaohui to marry Miao Miao. "Then, what should we do so that it won't be an arranged marriage?"

"Shouldn't marriage be a choice? I haven't even met your son, and I don't know anything about him. How can I get married to him? If you really want to repay my dad and treat me well, that's fine. I want to leave this place and see the outside world. I want to study and rely on my own efforts to survive in this world. Will you help me with that?"

Those were Miao Jing's dreams that she would never be able to fulfill if she were to remain in Second Uncle Miao's house.

"You've never gone to school?"

"No. I've only attended some literacy classes for a few days. I'm not lying to you. I'm not cultured at all." He was a prominent figure. He couldn't possibly get an illiterate lady as his daughter-in-law.

As such, Miao Jing felt that it was a little incredulous and ridiculous asking such a favor of Old Zhai.

It was quite miserable being the son of this chief. He hadn't even met her and knew nothing about how she looked, and yet, he had almost gotten himself a wife just like that.

"You want to go to school?"

"Yes." But going to school costs money and time.

Her second uncle would never give her the money to do so. Besides, if she were to go to school, she would have less time to do household chores for them.

All these years, Second Uncle Miao had taken good care of his two sons and had taught them all about farming, but Miao Lanlan had been pampered and spoiled by Second Auntie Miao.

As for the work that Miao Jing did, it was no different from what the boys did.

“Alright, I can help you if that’s what you want. If you want to go to school, I’ll help you go to school. If you meet my son and think that he’s a good catch, you can be my daughter-in-law. If you don’t like him, I won’t force you. You can be his sister, and I’ll be your dad.”

Old Zhai had a feeling that he had something to do with Father Miao getting into an accident while picking ginseng.

After all, Old Zhai had never forgotten about how Father Miao had become a cripple.

Miao Jing stared at Old Zhai in shock. “Are-are you serious?”

Those words moved her. If she liked his son, she would become the chief’s daughter-in-law. Otherwise, she would simply become the chief’s daughter.

No matter what, she wouldn’t be at a loss.

Would she take advantage of this situation?

Miao Jing pondered about it for a while before coming to a conclusion. Of course she would take advantage of it!

Of all the things her second auntie had said, there was one that was true. Only a fool wouldn’t take advantage of a bargain.

Miao Jing knew that Old Zhai could very well be her only chance of living the life she wanted. If she lost this opportunity, she would have no choice but to continue as part of the production division until the day her auntie decided to sell her off like a pig.

Since Old Zhai had proposed such a great offer where she wouldn’t lose out either way, Miao Jing thought that it was worth a gamble.

She didn’t think that he would be able to take advantage of an orphan like her anyway.

“Alright, I’ll leave with you. But I’ll make myself clear. If I think that your son isn’t suitable, I won’t get together with him.”

“Alright, that’s a deal. If you don’t take a fancy to my son, I’ll acknowledge you as my daughter.” Old Zhai stroked his chin without saying a word. He was confident in his son’s face.

As for his character, there was no way his son would go astray with him around. If his son dared to make the slightest mistake, he would definitely beat his son until he no longer dared to do it again!

Chapter 2510: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (11)

With that deal made, Miao Jing didn’t head to Miao Lanlan’s grandma’s house. Instead, she hopped on Old Zhai’s vehicle and headed to the city.

By the time Second Auntie Miao learned of the situation, Miao Jing had already arrived in the city with Old Zhai.

At that time, Zhai Yaohui knew that his father had gone to visit his benefactor. He also knew that his father had already made a pact with the Miao family. If the Miao family had a son, he would have a younger brother. If the Miao family had a daughter, he would have a wife.

Zhai Yaohui had no understanding of the Miao family. Besides, the one whom the Miao family had saved twice was his father and not him.

He couldn’t control how his father wanted to repay the Miao family, but there was no way he was going to let his father offer him to the Miao family as repayment.

“Yaohui, you’re back? Have some water.” Grandma Zhai felt a little bored staying home alone. In the past, she had focused on raising her son while her husband was fighting in the war.

Now that the war was finally over, she couldn’t keep her husband at home while her son went to school every day and spent little time at home.

Knowing that Grandma Zhai wasn't in good health, Zhai Yaohui rushed over. "Mom, didn't I tell you not to take it too hard on yourself? You can always get the auntie to handle things at home. You should rest well since you're not in good health."

What the two men at home worried and cared most about was Grandma Zhai's health.

In Zhai Yaohui's childhood memories, it was always his mother comforting him with her gentle and caring voice. His father had always existed only in their conversations.

Even though Zhai Yaohui was a son, he shared a very close relationship with Grandma Zhai. On the other hand, Zhai Yaohui was distant from Old Zhai.

Grandma Zhai shook her head. "It's just getting you a glass of water. I haven't done anything else. Besides, your dad always stops me from doing anything. It's really very boring staying at home alone every day." Even if she wasn't sick, staying like this would probably make her sick.

"Why don't you go out? Didn't some aunties come to chat with you in the past? Why haven't I seen them lately? Did they bully you?"

Grandma Zhai laughed. "How do you know that they bullied me? How do you know that it didn't happen because of my bad temper?"

Zhai Yaohui frowned. "What did they do?"

His mom was such a kind person. There was no way it had happened because his mom had a bad temper. It must have been something those people had done that had angered his mom. "Mom, I know the children from those families. I'll get justice for you."

Zhai Yaohui was younger, and there was no way he could take revenge on the elders who had upset his mother. It was a matter of courtesy.

But that wasn't the case for the children in those families.

It was common for young people to get into fights while they were still young and feisty.

They weren't three-year-old children who would tell on each other to their parents or teachers anymore. No matter what, he had to get justice for his mother.

Grandma Zhai was elated by her son's concern. "Don't be so reckless. Those people didn't anger me. I just feel that we can't click. Their mindsets are too complicated."

Grandma Zhai was a simple woman. When she had first gotten married to Old Zhai, the only person in her heart was Old Zhai. After giving birth to Zhai Yaohui, she had dedicated her entire life to these two men.

The problem lay with Old Zhai's position and status. Even though Grandma Zhai was simple, it didn't prevent people with motives from getting close to her.

If not for Old Zhai helping generations of impoverished citizens and not having committed any crimes in the past ten years, his enemies would have dragged him down a long time ago with different excuses.

Because he was being watched, Old Zhai didn't dare to act recklessly. That was why he had waited for years before going to visit Father Miao although he never forgot about the Miao family.

Because of that, there were many who dared not get close to the Zhai family before the situation settled down for fear that they would be targeted because of their associations with the Zhai family. Amongst them was Shi Peng's father. Before the situation settled, he never severed ties with Old Zhai, but neither did he ever get too close to the Zhai family. His relationship with them remained ambiguous and was that between a stranger and a friend.

Now that the situation had stabilized, Old Zhai's position had risen significantly in the central government.

Because of that, there were hordes of people waiting to get into the Zhai family's good books. Of course, that included the Shi family.

Of course, if they wanted to win favor with the Zhai family, they had to try their luck from all aspects.

After giving it some thought, there were some who felt that their breakthrough would come with Grandma Zhai. As long as they could handle Grandma Zhai, they would definitely be accepted by the men in the Zhai family as well.

The first few times, Grandma Zhai hadn't gotten a clear understanding of what was going on. But it started happening more frequently, and all the women started lamenting about how their lives were difficult and it would be great if someone would be able to help them before they even formed a deep relationship with Grandma Zhai.

It was then that Grandma Zhai understood that these so-called friends were only around because of her husband.

Before long, Grandma Zhai lost her patience. If they visited, she was sorry but she didn't feel well and couldn't entertain guests. If they wanted to go out with her, she was sorry but she wasn't feeling well and couldn't go out. If they wanted to bring a physician, she was sorry but her husband had already brought her to the doctor. The doctor said that she would definitely get better with enough rest.

Although Grandma Zhai had finally gotten rid of those bothersome people, she had indeed gotten more bored.

Zhai Yaohui felt helpless upon understanding the situation. There was no way he could ask his father to step down from his position.

Because of that, there was no way the people around them could have only pure and simple intentions.

"Mom, do you want to go out for a holiday?" Going back to her hometown, for instance.

Grandma Zhai shook her head. "Will I have to go alone?"

Zhai Yaohui was speechless. If he allowed his mother to go alone, his father would definitely skin him alive.

"I can't rest easy about the two of you. Both of you are like kids who need people to take care of them. Your dad has me, but I don't know how long more I'll be able to take care of him. As for you,

hurry and get a wife for yourself so that I won't have to worry about you after I leave. Yaohui, be honest with me. How's it going with the young lady of the Shi family?"

Zhai Yaohui frowned. "Mom, why are you suddenly talking about the Shi family? I thought you didn't like those people with hidden motives."

Unfortunately, no one in the Shi family, apart from Shi Peng who was rather upright, was any good.