

RTAMM 2511

Chapter 2511: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (12)

Of course, that naturally included Qi Minlan, who nearly became his partner.

Grandma Zhai sighed. “It doesn’t matter whether I like her. Do you like her? You’re the one marrying her and will be the one living with her. Only your opinion matters. It doesn’t matter whether your dad or I like her. Do you understand? Both you and that young lady from the Shi family aren’t young anymore. If you really have feelings for her, hurry and settle the matter and marry her. Don’t play hard to get and delay the matter. That isn’t too good.”

In the past, the Shi family’s attitude had been rather vague. In fact, they would always make excuses whenever the children were mentioned, saying that there was no hurry.

But now, the Shi family was in more of a hurry than anyone else and was rushing everyone, including Grandma Zhai.

“Mom, Qi Minlan has quite a few boys around her. You don’t have to worry about her.” Zhai Yaohui was annoyed at the mention of Qi Minlan.

Zhai Yaohui and Qi Minlan were childhood sweethearts who had grown up together.

In the early days of the founding of the country, before the war, they had lived together as neighbors and got along pretty well.

Grandma Zhai had always had a regret of only being able to give Old Zhai a son because of her poor health. Besides, Grandma Zhai herself desired a daughter to be by her side.

Because they were neighbors, and Qi Minlan was adorable and sweet as a child, Grandma Zhai took a liking to Qi Minlan. She always told the young Zhai Yaohui that Qi Minlan was his younger sister and he had to protect her well.

Grandma Zhai was the one who had raised Zhai Yaohui, so it was only natural for him to listen to her.

Seeing how the two children played well together, Old Master Shi had joked that they could become in-laws in the future.

Grandma Zhai didn't object, but Old Zhai replied, "That won't be necessary. I've already found Zhai Yaohui his future wife."

Old Master Shi was in disbelief. "Old Zhai, we're living in a new era. We can't arrange marriages like we did in the past. Didn't you choose your own wife too? How could you be so biased as a father? Why can't he do what you did?"

Old Zhai simply told everyone that he had already found Zhai Yaohui's future wife. Apart from that, he said nothing else.

Based on Old Zhai's attitude, no one truly believed that Zhai Yaohui had already matchmade his son away.

A family like theirs wouldn't make decisions on their children's marriage so flippantly.

Besides, they had never seen anyone who fitted the bill amongst those who interacted with the Zhai family.

As such, Old Master Shi concluded that this was simply Old Zhai's way of trying to refuse his offer.

They were all in the same circle and had hidden motives of their own.

Old Zhai refused to let the Shi family's daughter become his daughter-in-law because he didn't like the Shi family.

Although Old Master Shi was angry, he couldn't deny the fact that his family background was not as stellar as the Zhai family's.

He knew that he would do the same if he were in Old Zhai's place, so Old Zhai's actions were completely understandable.

Nonetheless, Old Master Shi instructed his daughter to spend more time with Zhai Yaohui because he didn't believe in the existence of that girl.

If Zhai Yaohui fell for his daughter and insisted on marrying her, there was no way Old Zhai would refuse and insist on Zhai Yaohui marrying the girl of his choice.

Qi Minlan already understood all of this at the young age of around ten.

As such, she listened to her dad and very cleverly spent all her time with Zhai Yaohui, relying on him in everything, and even addressing him affectionately as 'Brother Zhai'.

Before long, everyone thought of the two children as a couple even though they were still young.

Everyone thought that the relationship between Qi Minlan and Zhai Yaohui would progress smoothly until they grew up and got married. Who would have known that everything would have changed over the span of ten years?

Qi Minlan no longer clung to Zhai Yaohui, and there were many males who started appearing by Qi Minlan's side.

All these boys were Little Red Soldiers who had 'actively participated' in all sorts of activities in the past ten years. They were the top of the proletariat class.

Qi Minlan mixed well with these boys and had them wrapped around her finger.

She told these boys that she had a sibling relationship with Zhai Yaohui. It was because Zhai Yaohui was an only child and Grandma Zhai liked little girls that she had gotten close to the Zhai family.

If not for the fact that Grandma Zhai liked girls and she pitied Grandma Zhai, she would never have had much interaction with the Zhai family.

Chairman Mao had already said that women could hold up half the sky.

There were many who prioritized boys over girls, but the mindset they should have was one like Grandma Zhai's.

She was only willing to visit Grandma Zhai because she felt that Grandma Zhai had a good mindset.

To be clear, she visited the Zhai family not for Zhai Yaohui but for Zhai Yaohui's mother.

Qi Minlan had always been a sweet talker and had been able to coax Grandma Zhai since she was a child. It was a given that she was able to win over a few inexperienced boys a few years down the road.

Apart from Qi Minlan, there had never been a second girl by Zhai Yaohui's side.

Compared to Zhai Yaohui's simple life, Qi Minlan's life seemed much more interesting and colorful.

Zhai Yaohui was aware of this situation.

Qi Minlan had already made her attitude clear, and Zhai Yaohui wasn't going to be a fool. As such, he refused without any hesitation when Grandma Zhai brought up the matter of marriage to Qi Minlan. "Mom, I treat her as a younger sister."

Grandma Zhai sighed. She had heard about Qi Minlan's behavior as well.

Grandma Zhai was traditional and respected her son's wishes. Otherwise, there was no way Grandma Zhai would have even taken a fancy to a girl like Qi Minlan. "I'm bringing this up because of your dad. You know where your dad went, right? What will you do if your dad really brings a girl back from the Miao family? I know your dad's temper, and I'm sure you do too. I'm afraid that you won't even be able to do anything then."

Grandma Zhai was worried sick about the father and son.

She didn't want Old Zhai to get angry, and neither did she want Zhai Yaohui to marry a girl whom he didn't even like for the sake of his father.

That wouldn't be good for her son or the girl. Neither of them would live blissfully in the future.

Then, that wouldn't be repaying kindness but taking revenge. "Since you saved me twice, I'll let my son ruin your daughter!" That was repaying kindness with ingratitude!

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Upon thinking about this, Grandma Zhai felt that this type of situation was too terrible. The girl didn't do anything wrong. Her father was considered to have accumulated good karma. Why did it become bad karma in the end?

To prevent this situation from happening, Zhai Yaohui had plans.

Even if the Miao family had saved Old Zhai before, in Old Zhai's heart, would other people's daughter be closer to him than his biological son?

No!

Grandma Zhai expressed that if her son chose Qi Minlan, she would dote on the Miao family's daughter like she was her own. Without her son, she would think of ways to find a good match for her.

Grandma Zhai had a good plan. However, she couldn't win against a son who loved to pull the rug from under her feet. "Mom, is Dad coming back?"

"Soon. I've already said things clearly to you. While there's still time, think of something quickly. Otherwise, I can't help you either."

"Mom, do you really think you will have a good daughter-in-law if I marry Qi Minlan?" Zhai Yaohui looked at his mom and asked, "Mom, you'd better speak the truth. Do you think Qi Minlan is compatible with me? Does she like me?"

He wasn't even asking if she sincerely liked him.

Grandma Zhai sighed loudly. "Alright, it is possible not to be with Qi Minlan. Why don't you hurry up and find another one quickly?"

Zhai Yaohui smiled. "Mom, it's not as if you don't know that the university I'm in is famous for having mostly male students. Furthermore, I'm going to graduate and join the army soon. How can I find someone?"

If there were already so few female students in university, he didn't even need to think about it once he was in the army. "You want me to casually find a girl to be my partner? Mom, won't you feel worried?"

Grandma Zhai felt frustrated and she couldn't help but slap her son on the back. "This won't do, that won't do. Are you planning to listen to your dad and marry that girl surnamed Miao? If you marry her and treat her badly, even I won't let you off, let alone your dad!"

Zhai Yaohui smiled again. "Mom, I was taught and raised by you. How would I do something that you don't like? Don't worry. If I agree to marry a woman, I would definitely be with that woman for the rest of my life. If I don't treat a woman who is going to be with me for the rest of my life well, who else will I be good to?"

Grandma Zhai touched her chest, signaling that she no longer wanted to talk to him.

After talking for so long, her son eventually didn't give her a clear answer.

Alright, treat it that she was being a busybody. She was no longer going to care.

At this time, Qi Minlan, who was being mentioned by Grandma Zhai and Zhai Yaohui, was also talking about her and Zhai Yaohui.

Old Master Shi said, "Minlan, how are things between you and Yaohui? When is their family coming over to propose marriage? When are you getting married to Yaohui?"

Qi Minlan only felt annoyed. "Dad, don't ask me this question. You will have the answer faster if you ask the Zhai family directly!"

“What’s wrong? The both of you haven’t reconciled yet?” Old Master Shi frowned. “You know how formidable the Zhai family is. I’ve already told you how Zhai Yaohui rendered meritorious service when he was in university even without relying on Old Zhai. Your eldest brother had worked so hard in the army before getting to where he is today. Once Zhai Yaohui enters the army, he might overtake him soon.”

Qi Minlan became unhappy. “That’s not necessarily true. Brother’s current position in the army isn’t low. Zhai Yaohui rendered meritorious service, but so did Brother. Dad, can you not laud the spirit of the enemy and belittle your son?”

Old Master Shi’s face hardened. “You still dare to rebut me. Tell me! What’s the situation now?”

How would Old Master Shi not understand his biological daughter? Based on Old Zhai’s current identity and status and Zhai Yaohui’s eye-catching and outstanding performance, how would his daughter not have good feelings toward such an excellent man and not want to be with him?

His daughter’s attitude meant that there was a situation which he didn’t understand and his daughter couldn’t resolve.

Qi Minlan felt aggrieved. “Dad, I took the initiative to find Zhai Yaohui, but he ignored me. In front of outsiders, he didn’t acknowledge that I’m his girlfriend. He said that I’m his sister!”

It was so infuriating!

After Old Zhai got promoted to chief, coupled with Zhai Yaohui’s outstanding performance, many people were vying for Zhai Yaohui to be their son-in-law.

Zhai Yaohui was tall with a height of 1.8 meters. He was good-looking and talented. Where would one be able to find such a good match?

As such, although there were a lot of male students in Zhai Yaohui’s university major, he was quite well-known in several nearby universities. A lot of girls liked him.

If not for Zhai Yaohui’s cold behavior such that it wasn’t easy to get close to him and the conservative times, Zhai Yaohui would have received love letters that could fill his desk every day.

Everyone had vanity. Upon seeing so many girls like Zhai Yaohui but couldn't get close to him, Qi Minlan felt that she was different.

These people liked her boyfriend. They couldn't get close to Zhai Yaohui, but she could anytime she wanted to!

As such, the overall situation was set. Qi Minlan didn't take the initiative to date Zhai Yaohui. However, she 'ran into' him a lot of times. "Brother Zhai, what a coincidence. We can actually meet in school."

As a typical man, Zhai Yaohui naturally didn't realize that Qi Minlan had deliberately worn new clothes and long skirts for him, let alone her meticulously combed and neat haircut. Of course, for the makeup and lipstick Qi Minlan applied to her face, Zhai Yaohui didn't notice them either. "It's pretty coincidental. You're not busy recently?"

In the past chance encounters, Qi Minlan always told Zhai Yaohui that she was very busy and didn't have time to chat with him for long.

Zhai Yaohui expressed understanding of this situation every time. Today was no exception. "Forget it, I shan't disturb you. You have important things to attend to. Bye."

It was a 'chance encounter', to begin with. Furthermore, for Qi Minlan, who was accustomed to being chased by boys, to take the initiative to have a 'chance encounter' with Zhai Yaohui was already giving him face.

Zhai Yaohui left so coldly and didn't cherish her appearance. How would the angry Qi Minlan chase after Zhai Yaohui? She stomped her feet and left as well.

In the second 'chance encounter', Qi Minlan lifted her chin and walked past Zhai Yaohui.

Who knew that even after she had silently counted to ten in her heart, Zhai Yaohui didn't call or greet her?

After Qi Minlan stopped and looked back at Zhai Yaohui, she realized that the distance between them had already become so long.

Chapter 2513: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (14)

As Zhai Yaohui's steps were bigger than hers, Zhai Yaohui had already walked quite far after she counted to ten.

Qi Minlan really became angry when Zhai Yaohui still ignored her for the third time, and this scene was witnessed by her classmates.

Qi Minlan swore that unless Zhai Yaohui realized his mistake and apologized with flowers and gifts, she was never going to bother with him.

When she was young, Qi Minlan was already used to Zhai Yaohui's care. When she grew up, Qi Minlan was similarly used to boys taking the initiative to get close to her. In the face of Zhai Yaohui's cold reaction, how would Qi Minlan not lose her temper?

However, as days passed, none of the flowers, gifts, or apology that Qi Minlan had in mind arrived.

It came to the point that as long as she didn't work hard, the two of them wouldn't even be able to have a 'chance encounter' in school.

Upon thinking that it had been many years since she had a good chat with Zhai Yaohui, Qi Minlan felt a little panicked.

However, upon thinking how good Zhai Yaohui was to her and how Grandma Zhai treated her like she was her biological daughter, Qi Minlan felt that if she wanted to marry Zhai Yaohui, it would be impossible for him to reject.

"..." After knowing this situation, Old Master Shi felt speechless. "Minlan, a girl doesn't need to endure hardship but can't be willful or pretentious. When you were giving Zhai Yaohui attitude, a lot of girls were willing to display their gentleness to Zhai Yaohui. Don't regret it only when Zhai Yaohui marries another girl. That will be too late."

Qi Minlan didn't believe it. "Impossible. Zhai Yaohui is as cold as ice. Aside from me, when did you see other girls appearing by Zhai Yaohui's side? It's either Zhai Yaohui doesn't marry, or he will definitely want to marry me. However, I'm angry. He doesn't know how to coax girls at all. He

doesn't know how to make me happy. Even if he wants to marry me now, I'll have to think about it. I'm not prepared to get married yet."

She was still so young. There were a lot of good times ahead of her.

Aside from her, there were no other girls by Zhai Yaohui's side. However, she was different. Aside from Zhai Yaohui, she had so many pursuers.

Aside from being not as good-looking as Zhai Yaohui, not having as good family backgrounds as Zhai Yaohui, and not as outstanding as Zhai Yaohui, these men were sweet-talkers. They knew how to coax her and make her happy every time.

They could tell if she was wearing newly-bought clothes. They could also tell what hairstyle she had, what makeup she used, and what lipstick she put on. Then, they would keep complimenting her.

How were they like Zhai Yaohui, who was a block of wood?

She deliberately dressed up and wore new clothes to meet Zhai Yaohui. Only Zhai Yaohui enjoyed this special treatment.

In the end... She was infuriated!

Qi Minlan expressed that if she were to get married to Zhai Yaohui, she would definitely be bored to death by his character.

Before getting married, she had to enjoy the pursuit of other boys more.

After all, if she were to get married to Zhai Yaohui, she could no longer be close to other men. This wasn't appropriate.

Qi Minlan had such a mindset. It was obvious that she naturally wasn't in a hurry to restore her relationship with Zhai Yaohui as a couple. She was just dissatisfied now that Zhai Yaohui didn't care about her as much as other men did.

“If that’s really the case, then that’s great.” Old Master Shi also hoped that his daughter was Zhai Yaohui’s only target as a marriage partner. As long as he became in-laws with Old Zhai, he didn’t believe that he wouldn’t be able to obtain benefits from him.

Old Master Shi had long planned well. Once the two families were in-laws, Old Zhai would no longer refuse to give him benefits.

However, the premise was that the person who married Zhai Yaohui must be Qi Minlan. Otherwise, no matter how well Old Master Shi had thought of things, they would just become thoughts in the end and wouldn’t be realized.

Life was unpredictable. Furthermore, the Shi family didn’t have that good a relationship with the Zhai family. How would the father-daughter pair guess everything correctly?

“Come in. Miao Miao, treat this as your own home in the future. Don’t be polite toward Dad—I mean, Uncle.”

Upon hearing the sound at the door, Grandma Zhai walked over. Her man was back and there was a young girl next to him.

“I’m home.” Upon seeing Grandma Zhai, Old Zhai’s eyes shone. “Did you miss me the few days that I was away?”

Grandma Zhai blushed. “You’re still so indecent...” At their age, what was there to miss?

One had to know that when he participated in the war of resistance, she was the only one raising Yaohui in the family. Why didn’t he ask her then if she missed him or not, especially since he was away for such a long period of time?

After knowing that Grandma Zhai was Old Zhai’s wife, Miao Jing bowed to Grandma Zhai in a proper manner. “Hello, Auntie. I’m Miao Jing. I might have to disturb you for a while, but I will definitely work hard to move out soon.”

After being used to living in a short mud house, Miao Jing couldn’t adapt well to living in a tall brick house suddenly. She always felt that there was no place she could set foot on as she wasn’t sure if her shoes would dirty other people’s floor.

They were not the same kind of people, to begin with. However, Miao Jing felt that this feeling was more obvious now.

“Oh, you’re Miao Jing. I often hear my husband address you as Miao Miao. Can I address you as Miao Miao too?” Before seeing Miao Jing, Grandma Zhai was still quite worried.

Her husband had made meritorious service and became the chief, so there was a bunch of people who harbored ill intentions toward them.

If this girl from the countryside was eyeing something from their family, she was worried that there would be trouble at home since her husband would only be focused on repaying kindness.

In reality, when Miao Jing said “I will definitely work hard to move out soon” the first time she met Grandma Zhai, she felt that these words were a bit blunt and weren’t particularly polite. It was as if the Zhai family wanted to chase her away and couldn’t include her in their family.

However, Grandma Zhai noticed the self-esteem and persistence in Miao Jing’s words. How could she be unhappy?

“Yes.”

Old Zhai felt that his partner wasn’t repulsive to Miao Jing. Thus, he winked at her. ‘How is it? My taste is not bad, right? Yaohui is my biological son. Would I be casual in finding my daughter-in-law? If she wasn’t a good girl, would I allow her into our family?’

Grandma Zhai ignored Old Zhai’s cheekiness. She smiled and held Miao Jing’s hand, where she felt some calluses. “Are your parents alright at home?”

Was the Miao family patriarchal? This young girl had thick calluses on her hands. The feeling of holding her hand was worse than that of holding hers, an old woman’s.

If that was really the case... Grandma Zhai started to worry again.

When she was in the countryside in the past, Grandma Zhai had seen too many cases where the married daughter would try to take as many things as she could from her in-law family to give to her own family so that her younger brother at home would be taken care of.. In the end, both families didn't lead a good life.

Chapter 2514: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (15)

This was pretty troublesome, and it was not something that could be easily solved.

Grandma Zhai didn't see a problem covering for the Miao family, but the situation was still rather tense.

What if the Miao family caused trouble for her husband and son?

If that happened, she wouldn't be able to provide much help.

She didn't expect to find a daughter-in-law that could benefit the Zhai family, but she didn't dare to accept one that would potentially harm the family.

Although the Miao family had saved Old Zhai before, it didn't seem fitting as a parent to allow Old Zhai to bring his daughter into the family.

Grandma Zhai wasn't exactly worried about Miao Jing's other relatives. She was concerned about her parents.

Old Zhai's expression changed. "Miao Miao's parents... have passed away. Her father, a close friend of mine, left this world before Miao Miao was born, and his wife died not long after..."

Grandma Zhai didn't expect that. "Miao Miao, I'm sorry to hear that. I didn't mean to hurt you."

So that was the reason.

Grandma Zhai looked at Miao Jing with sympathy. How did this girl live until this day without her parents?

Old Zhai didn't want to dwell in the past. "I'll tell you more next time."

He would have told Grandma Zhai everything even if she didn't ask; He didn't want Grandma Zhai to misunderstand anything.

Grandma Zhai nodded. "You must be starving. Let's eat for now."

If it weren't for all the dirty tricks that Grandma Zhai had to put up with before, she wouldn't have been so doubtful when it came to Miao Jing.

After knowing Miao Jing's background, Grandma Zhai felt bad for asking so many questions. "What are your favorite dishes? I'll prepare them for you."

Miao Jing was not a picky eater, and she knew she shouldn't be picky when she was a guest. "I will have whatever you prepare, Auntie." She was indeed starving.

A simple bowl of noodles was the fastest to prepare, and Miao Jing felt like it was the most fulfilling meal she had ever had.

Grandma Zhai was glad to see Miao Miao enjoying the meal. "Miao Miao, You have an older brother that is coming home soon. I'll introduce him to you, and you can look for him if you need anything in the future."

Miao Jing's hands froze for a moment. She knew that that person was Old Zhai's son, and it was whom Old Zhai wanted her to marry.

After pondering for a moment, Miao Jing spoke firmly. "Sure, I will definitely look for my older brother if I need anything." She emphasized the words 'older brother' as she wanted to make it clear to the elders that she didn't want to have anything to do with their son. As a child that came from the countryside, she didn't dare to think about marrying into the chief's family.

Miao Jing knew her place very well as she was used to being on the receiving end. She had had enough of being treated like a lowly being, so she didn't want to get too close to people that were out of her league.

Grandma Zhai glanced at Old Zhai, who raised his brows at her. 'Did you think that our son was every girl's dream? What about now?'

Grandma Zhai was speechless at Old Zhai's mockery. Why was he so happy about their son getting rejected?

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Was it something to be proud of?

It wasn't Old Zhai that was rejected, so he saw nothing wrong with taking pleasure in his son's misfortune. Most importantly, he had already found the love of his life.

Grandma Zhai was speechless...

Zhai Yaohui was about to finish his work, so he was able to return home pretty early. When he arrived at the gate, the guard told him about Miao Jing. "Yaohui, Chief Zhai brought a girl with him. Is she your relative?" It was the guard's first time seeing her.

Zhai Yaohui was confused for a minute before she figured out who it was.

It seemed like she really came to his family.

Zhai Yaohui's initial reaction was the same as Grandma Zhai's. He thought that the Miao family wasn't exactly credible as they handed their daughter to someone that they'd only met twice.

Therefore, Zhai Yaohui didn't have a good first impression of Miao Jing.

As Zhai Yaohui stepped into the house, he saw a dark-skinned girl whom he had never met. Her big eyes were bright and sparkling like a pair of beautiful black pearls.

After scanning Miao Jing from head to toe, Zhai Yaohui found nothing special about the girl. If his father really wanted him to marry her, he would reject it by all means.

While Zhai Yaohui was studying Miao Jing, the latter was doing the same.

Zhai Yaohui was taller than most men, and his handsome face was the type that all girls would like.

Miao Jing couldn't help but blush for a second without anyone noticing.

However, when Miao Jing was reminded of his status, the spark in her heart was extinguished right away.

“Yaohui, this is Miao Miao. Miao Miao, this is your brother Zhai.” Old Zhai introduced them to each other.

Zhai Yaohui nodded without much care, but Miao Jing didn't dare to show any disrespect and greeted Zhai Yaohui with a bow. Afterward, she stayed a distance away from Zhai Yaohui without looking at him again.

Miao Jing kept reminding herself in her heart that he was the son of the chief. If she had any indecent ideas, she might be thrown back to the countryside to live with her uncle again.

Soon, she cleared her mind of any ambiguity as she recognized the position she was in.

Old Zhai glared at Zhai Yaohui. He was ashamed of his son as Miao Miao wouldn't even look at him. Back in the days when Old Zhai was hitting on Grandma Zhai, she couldn't even take her eyes off him.

It was Zhai Yaohui's turn to be speechless.

Why did he have a father that loved to mock him so much?

“How about I take Miao Miao to shop for some new clothes?” Old Zhai had seen the clothes that Miao Miao brought with her. They were filled with patches here and there.

It didn't matter when she was in the countryside, but now that she's in the Zhai family, it was a different story.

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Grandma Zhai looked at Zhai Yaohui. “Aren’t you tired? You are going to fall sick if you keep running around at this age. Yaohui, aren’t you free now? Take Miao Miao to buy some new clothes.”

Grandma Zhai should have been the one for the job, but she was not fit enough to ride the car at her age. Therefore, she had to leave the job to the men.

Old Zhai always listened to his wife.

Moreover, he could tell what Grandma Zhai’s true intention was.

“Speaking of which, I just realized that my leg has been hurting. I was shot in war years back, and that injury must have been recurring lately. I’m sorry, Miao Miao. I can’t be the one to follow you around today. Tell my son if you need anything and take some cash with you.”

Zhai Yaohui handed a stack of cash to Miao Jing. It was at least a hundred yuan.

Miao Jing had never had so much money before and thus avoided it subconsciously. “No... I... I will just ask Brother Zhai if I need anything.” Having someone to buy it for her and receiving so much money were two different stories.

Miao Jing felt that it was not appropriate for her to hold onto the money.

“You are a girl, so there are things that are not appropriate to ask from a guy like your Brother Zhai. Take the cash.”

Grandma Zhai had nothing against Old Zhai giving her money. Since Miao Jing was already in her family, Grandma Zhai was going to treat her like her own child.

Miao Jing didn’t know what to do. “I... I have never had so much money. What if I lose it?”

Old Zhai answered her swiftly, “If the money is lost, I will bet your Brother Zhai up!”

Miao Jing was at a loss for words. Why was Zhai Yaohui getting punished for her mistake?

Old Zhai said that Zhai Yaohui was trained to be vigilant, and he should be able to spot it if anyone tried to steal the money. If someone really got their hands on the cash, Zhai Yaohui deserved to be beaten up as it would mean that his years of training had gone to waste.

Zhai Yaohui saw nothing wrong with it. “Take the money with you. If you find it embarrassing, I can wait for you outside the store.”

If he refused to take her out, he was worried that his father would say worse things about him.

Miao Jing would rather figure things out on her own than have Zhai Yaohui follow her around.

However, since Zhai Yaohui had agreed to it, Miao Jing didn’t dare to say anything. She could only follow behind timidly as Zhai Yaohui ordered her to board the front passenger seat of the car.

Zhai Yaohui was satisfied with the way Miao Jing followed his instructions religiously. “I’m starting the engine.”

Miao Jing wore the seatbelt carefully before nodding.

After receiving Miao Miao’s acknowledgement, Zhai Yaohui stepped on the gas. The car zoomed off, giving Miao Jing a shock of her life.

Unfortunately, Qi Minlan happened to see Zhai Yaohui driving off with Miao Jing when she returned from her friend’s house.

All of Qi Minlan’s friends knew that she was Zhai Yaohui’s ‘girlfriend’. “Minlan, why is a girl sitting in your boyfriend’s car? Does Zhai Yaohui have a sister? Why have you never mentioned it?”

Qi Minlan’s expression was sulky as she knew for a fact that Zhai Yaohui didn’t have a sister in his family.

If the Zhai family did, Grandma Zhai wouldn’t have treasured her like a daughter.

So, where did this woman come from? If Zhai Yaohui dared to do anything sorry to her, she would never forgive him!

Watching Qi Minlan's expression go from bad to worse, her friends figured that that woman wasn't Zhai Yaohui's sister. "She might just be a friend of his. We all know how popular Zhai Yaohui is in school. However, Zhai Yaohui hasn't allowed anyone near him except for you. However, as a friend, I do have to say that you are spending too much time with us. Zhai Yaohui is graduating soon, so he must be pretty free. Aren't the two of you spending too little time on dates?"

It would have been understandable if they were in a long-distance relationship.

However, they lived close to each other, but she couldn't even remember the last time that Qi Minlan went on a date with Zhai Yaohui. No matter how much her friend believed her words, it didn't seem like what normal couples would do.

"Minlan, Zhai Yaohui is not a man that comes by easily, and you have to grab onto that opportunity. There are plenty of women waiting to take your place." If she weren't Minlan's friend, she would be going after Zhai Yaohui as well.

"I know that."

Qi Minlan took a deep breath. "I grew up together with Zhai Yaohui, and his mother sees me as a member of their family. The relationship between us is already accepted by the Zhai family. Not only am I Zhai Yaohui's girlfriend, but I'm also his fiancée. Those women stand no chance. I will ask Zhai Yaohui about the woman in his car when he's back, and he'd better give me a good answer."

Her friend pondered before speaking. "Don't start a fight with Zhai Yaohui. If your relationship falls apart, those women are going to have a good laugh."

Qi Minlan calmed down after listening to her friend's words.

She had nothing to gain from fighting with Zhai Yaohui, and she would only become a laughingstock for other girls.

She would never do something foolish like that.

Qi Minlan knew that Zhai Yaohui was not a man that would comfort her.

If she spoke to Zhai Yaohui calmly and logically, Zhai Yaohui would reply in the same way.

However, if she were to throw a tantrum, Zhai Yaohui would not bother saying a single word to her.

After so many years, Qi Minlan had Zhai Yaohui figured out.

The only problem was that Qi Minlan couldn't control her temper.

If Qi Minlan were to act like a princess around Zhai Yaohui, he would never let her have it her way..
“Lanlan, I know that you are saying it for my sake.”

Chapter 2516: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (17)

“Don't worry. I won't fight with Zhai Yaohui. He's already graduated and I'm graduating soon. Perhaps, I'll send a wedding invitation to you soon. When that time comes, will you be my bridesmaid?”

Feeling her good friend's concern, Qi Minlan's mood improved.

Her close friend, Lanlan, smiled. “That's for sure. Your family's so impressive and the Zhai family's even more impressive. If I become your bridesmaid, I might even get to ride on your laurels and marry into a good family.”

Qi Minlan laughed. “If you don't see anyone suitable at my wedding, don't worry. I'll definitely recommend someone good to you.”

Lanlan blushed. “Alright. That's a deal. Don't forget about me when you get your happiness. Don't blame me for being shameless if I have to remind you!”

Lanlan was truly moved. She had made many calculated moves to get to know Qi Minlan because she had an average family background.

But Lanlan's good treatment toward Qi Minlan wasn't entirely fake. She felt that Qi Minlan wouldn't shortchange her if she felt her sincerity.

With a good friend like Qi Minlan, she would definitely have good opportunities lying ahead of her.

Of course, Zhai Yaohui, who was taking Miao Jing out shopping, had no idea of this. Even if he did have an inkling of it, he would probably not care about it anyway.

Zhai Yaohui took Miao Jing to a clothes shop, allowing Miao Jing to shop for ready-made clothes.

It wasn't that there weren't tailors around, but Miao Jing didn't have any clothes with her. As such, she needed them in a hurry, and buying ready-made ones was naturally the best choice.

But Miao Jing stood in front of the clothes hesitantly, so much so that Zhai Yaohui wanted to ask if there was anything wrong.

Thinking about how Qi Minlan had deliberated for a long time between two dresses that looked similar during the one and only time he had gone out shopping with Qi Minlan, Zhai Yaohui finally spoke up. "If you really like them, just buy both of them. I was already prepared to buy two to three sets of clothes for you anyway. There's no need to be in such a dilemma."

Miao Jing widened her eyes. She couldn't even bear to buy just one set of clothes, but she was going to buy two or three at a time?

Yes, Miao Jing was troubled because she felt that they were all good and didn't know which to buy.

To Miao Jing, who had never held money in her hands, it was daylight robbery that a piece of clothing cost more than ten yuan!

If she were to cut some fabric and make her own clothes, she would be able to make herself two sets of clothes with the same amount of money! This store was no different from stealing her money.

It was just that Miao Jing knew that city dwellers thought differently from people from the countryside.

Especially since Zhai Yaohui casually said to simply buy two to three outfits when she couldn't even bear to buy one, Miao Jing was even firmer in her decision. "No, let's just buy this one."

Miao Jing pointed at the cheapest outfit in the entire store.

Zhai Yaohui frowned. "You won't have enough to wear if you only buy one set." Miao Jing probably wouldn't be able to wear the clothes she was currently wearing anymore.

Otherwise, his father wouldn't have asked him to take Miao Jing out shopping.

Miao Jing shook her head. "I'll just buy one outfit. After I change into it, I'll get some fabric and make my own clothes. For the same price, I'll be able to make two outfits. That way, I'll have three sets of clothes in total."

Having three sets of clothes just so that she would be able to send them for laundry. Miao Jing had never dared to dream of having such a luxury in the past.

Zhai Yaohui didn't mind Miao Jing buying whatever she wanted as long as the numbers were right. Zhai Yaohui would simply support Miao Jing no matter what.

Apart from buying clothes, Zhai Yaohui also brought Miao Jing to a store that specialized in female lingerie. "Hello."

"Yes, do you have any needs?" Seeing that Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing were of a similar age, the shopkeeper thought that they were a couple who were on a date.

But the shopkeeper thought that it was strange that the man was well-dressed, while the lady was dressed in ragged clothes.

The shopkeeper had probably last seen this style of clothes quite a few years ago.

“She’s my relative, and I’ve brought her here to get some clothes. She doesn’t really understand some things. Do you think you can help me talk to her about it and choose some pieces for her? I’ll pay for them.”

The shopkeeper understood the situation at once and smiled as she brought Miao Jing to look at ‘clothes’.

Miao Jing had to suppress the urge to ask why she had to get more clothes. After all, she had already gotten a new outfit as well as some fabric. She had everything she needed.

It was only until the shopkeeper explained to her that women needed specialized underwear that Miao Jing blushed, noted the price down silently in her heart, and allowed Zhai Yaohui to pay for the items.

While Zhai Yaohui made the payment, Miao Jing felt her heart bleed.

These clothes were almost as expensive as the outfit and fabric she had bought earlier. Why were two pieces of clothing so expensive?

Did city dwellers have too much money to spend that they didn’t even know where to spend their money?

Miao Jing’s painful expression delighted Zhai Yaohui.

Zhai Yaohui had few opportunities to bring women out shopping. He felt that it was tiresome. After all, Qi Minlan could shop all day without stopping.

At that time, Zhai Yaohui couldn’t help but think that Qi Minlan was quite suitable for the military with her endurance and energy.

Moreover, every time Qi Minlan couldn’t choose between two to three items and he suggested that they buy all of them, Qi Minlan would be over the moon and stick to him, calling him affectionately.

It was Zhai Yaohui who paid for Qi Minlan’s purchases most of the time.

Zhai Yaohui was only willing to do so because Grandma Zhai had instructed him as such.

After this happened two to three times, Zhai Yaohui realized that Qi Minlan always chose more than two pieces of clothing because she wasn't spending her own money but the Zhai family's money.

It wasn't that Zhai Yaohui couldn't bear to part with the money, but he was truly disgusted by Qi Minlan's attitude.

As such, Zhai Yaohui never liked to accompany Qi Minlan every time Grandma Zhai tasked him with doing so. Zhai Yaohui simply turned up to make payment and left right after that.

Thankfully, that didn't happen often. After all, the Shi family had started to distance themselves from the Zhai family.

At that time, even if Zhai Yaohui had been willing to spend his money on Qi Minlan, she wouldn't dare to spend it for fear that others would misunderstand her relationship with Zhai Yaohui.

The only woman Zhai Yaohui had ever interacted with was Qi Minlan. As such, Zhai Yaohui felt that Miao Jing's behavior was rather fresh and amusing.

If Miao Jing felt bad, that probably meant that Miao Jing wasn't one who would spend money freely just because it wasn't her money.

Zhai Yaohui's impression of Miao Jing had improved tremendously, and he felt that Miao Jing was much more pleasing to the eye now.

"Alright.. We'll take these."

Chapter 2517: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (18)

"Don't!" Miao Jing rushed to stop Zhai Yaohui in a panic, not allowing Zhai Yaohui to make payment. "We can just buy one set."

“Are you intending on making the other two sets yourself?” Zhai Yaohui asked.

“Can’t I?” Wasn’t it just two pieces of cloth? She had already seen them. Besides, wasn’t she already buying one set? She could simply go home and analyze it. She didn’t believe that she wouldn’t be able to replicate it.

It was just clothes made out of two pieces of cloth. It was daylight robbery that they were paying so much for them!

Zhai Yaohui shook his head. “It’s best not to be too naive or confident.”

There was definitely a reason that they were sold for such high prices. If everything could be made at home, how would such shops remain open?

Miao Jing widened her eyes and felt upset. She could tell that Zhai Yaohui was mocking her!

But Miao Jing didn’t put up a fight with Zhai Yaohui. She made her own mental calculations. The piece of cloth that Zhai Yaohui had cut for her was quite big, and she would have some leftover after making herself two sets of clothes.

With the leftover cloth, she would definitely be able to make this underwear thing they were talking about.

Thankfully, the clothes sold at that time were made of cotton and not nylon or chiffon. As such, the material used to make outerwear could also be used for underwear.

By the time Miao Jing got in the car, she had many things in her hands.

Zhai Yaohui had wanted to help Miao Jing with them, but she insisted that she didn’t need any help because she was a young lady from the countryside and was strong.

Thinking about how Qi Minlan was so weak that she looked like she was going to collapse under the weight of her shopping bags, Zhai Yaohui silently agreed that young ladies from the countryside were pretty good. At the very least, they were independent.

When they returned to the quad, Miao Jing had just gotten out of the car when she saw a very beautiful and elegant young lady standing in front of the Zhai family's gate.

The moment that young lady caught sight of her, that young lady stared at her as though they were enemies.

Miao Jing had just arrived in the city that day. That person had probably gotten the wrong person. How could they be enemies?

Miao Jing's calm and collected stature infuriated Qi Minlan, and she stomped her feet in front of Zhai Yaohui and Miao Jing.

She pointed a finger at Miao Jing. "Brother Zhai, who is she? Why was she in your car? Did you buy all of this for her? Brother Zhai, I'm your fiancée. Don't you think you should give me an explanation?"

Miao Jing's eyes widened in shock and anger.

She had thought that the Zhai family was truly good to her. Even though she had never dared to think too far, the Zhai family had always insisted on letting her marry Zhai Yaohui. That proved just how much the Zhai family cared about repaying kindness.

But now, Miao Jing no longer felt the same way.

Even though she was from the countryside, was poor, and was an orphan.

Zhai Yaohui already had a fiancée. How could she possibly be with Zhai Yaohui? What did they take her for?

Miao Jing, who had high self-esteem but was self-conscious, would have reached out to slap Zhai Yaohui's face if not for the multiple shopping bags in her hands that she couldn't bear to drop on the floor.

Was the Zhai family trying to trick her into a marriage? They didn't even let her know that Zhai Yaohui had a fiancée!

Although she didn't know why the Zhai family bothered to lie to a poor girl from the countryside like her, that couldn't cover up the fact that they had indeed lied to her!

Zhai Yaohui was speechless.

Sighing, Zhai Yaohui looked toward Miao Jing. "I don't have a fiancée." Then, he turned to Qi Minlan. "Since when have we gotten engaged? When did we ever have an engagement ceremony, and when did you even become my fiancée?"

Miao Jing was in disbelief. The female side seemed to be at a disadvantage in such a situation.

If word got out, wouldn't this young lady not be able to get married in the future?

Qi Minlan's face flushed red in anger and embarrassment. "Brother Zhai, how could you deny it? We grew up together. Auntie already regards me as a daughter. Haven't both our families always silently acknowledged our marriage?"

"Silently acknowledged?" Zhai Yaohui retorted. "So you've silently acknowledged it too?"

"I..." Qi Minlan wanted to reply in the affirmative, but when she looked into Zhai Yaohui's eyes, she no longer had the courage to do so.

"Minlan, I know that you're an opinionated girl, and I also know that I have the same place in your heart as Shi Peng because we grew up together. You don't have to worry about what our parents think. I'll settle this matter."

Anyway, based on his parents' attitude, there no longer seemed to be the need to settle this problem.

Qi Minlan's face turned pale. "You're abandoning me just because of a woman like that? We've been together for so many years and this is how you treat me? Zhai Yaohui, you're heartless!"

Qi Minlan had never expected to receive such a devastating answer.

Not only had Zhai Yaohui not explained the relationship between him and that countryside girl and that everything was just a misunderstanding, but he had even said that they were only siblings!

He would even find a way to solve the problem since the silent acknowledgment between the two families didn't count for anything.

Solve? What was there to solve?

She didn't need it to be resolved in this way!

Qi Minlan cupped her face and ran off in tears.

Miao Jing was stunned and finally spoke up. "Do... do you want to go after her?" That young lady looked really hurt, and it was true that the relationship between that girl and Zhai Yaohui was complicated.

Hearing that Qi Minlan was Zhai Yaohui's fiancée, Miao Jing had felt a little sour.

But logic was logic, and feelings were feelings.

She couldn't help but sigh upon learning that an outstanding man like Zhai Yaohui already had a fiancée of around the same age. Everyone lived different lives indeed.

Before her new life had started, it had already ended.

"There's no need to go after her. She lives nearby and knows the place well. Nothing will happen to her."

Based on his past experience, it was best not to get close to Qi Minlan or try to comfort her when she was throwing a tantrum. Doing so would only anger her even more and cause her to throw an even bigger tantrum.

"Then, shall we go back?"

“Yes.”

They walked into the house side by side and Grandma Zhai’s eyes almost welled up with tears. “You guys are back! Miao Miao, what did your Brother Zhai buy for you?”

She was a child who had lived such a tough life. Brother Miao had only lost his life because of her Old Zhai.

Yaohui hadn’t become an orphan because Miao Miao had become an orphan in his stead.

Their family owed Miao Miao too much. Even if they were to repay her with their son, they would never be able to repay that debt.

In the time that Miao Jing had gone to buy her clothes, Old Zhai had told Grandma Zhai about Miao Jing’s situation, including how Second Uncle Miao’s family had wanted to let their biological daughter take Miao Jing’s place.

After learning about the whole situation, Grandma Zhai was no longer afraid, even though she knew that Miao Jing had such terrible relatives like Second Uncle Miao’s family.

Chapter 2518: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (19)

Grandma Zhai knew that she would definitely treat Miao Jing extremely well as long as Miao Jing became her daughter-in-law.

It didn’t matter that Miao Jing had no parents since her birth. She and Old Zhai would treat Miao Jing like their biological daughter to make it up to her.

“We bought a lot and spent a lot of money,” Miao Jing said in a small voice in embarrassment. What she had spent was not her money but the Zhai family’s.

“No, it wasn’t a lot at all.”

Grandma Zhai understood from a glance that there was no way they had bought a lot from what Miao Jing was carrying. “But Miao Miao, will this be enough?” In her opinion, this was too little.

Grandma Zhai turned her gaze to Zhai Yaohui. He was the one who had brought Miao Miao out. It was entirely his fault that Miao Miao hadn’t bought enough.

Zhai Yaohui didn’t feel upset at being blamed. After all, it wasn’t Miao Jing who had suggested doing this in the first place. It had been his parents. Could he possibly settle the accounts with his parents?

“It’s enough. Definitely.”

Miao Jing, who had never had any new clothes to wear, had not only gotten a new outfit but also some fabric to continue making more clothes.

Three sets of new clothes!

Even Miao Lanlan would never have the chance to get three new sets of clothes in a year!

She had never thought a day like this would come where she would live a better life than Miao Lanlan!

Grandma Zhai grabbed hold of Miao Jing’s hands. “Remember to let me know if you don’t have enough. Don’t shortchange yourself. If your dad hadn’t saved Old Zhai twice, my family would be in ruins. It’s only right that we’re good to you. Don’t think too much about it or feel burdened. Child, I know you’re a good child and you’ve been through a lot.”

Miao Jing sniffled. She didn’t want to have too drastic of a response and only nodded stiffly.

She didn’t mind the suffering she had gone through.

The only thing she minded was never having the chance to meet her parents and not knowing how they looked like.

She would never get the chance to do so in this lifetime.

Although the technology of photography had been around decades ago, Father and Mother Miao had never had the means to take photographs for memory's sake.

Knowing that she would never be able to make up for this regret, Miao Jing never mentioned it. After all, it would only add to her own as well as others' trouble. "Auntie, do you have a sewing machine at home?"

"Yes, I'll take you there." Grandma Zhai stood up and brought Miao Jing to the sewing machine. "Are you planning on making your own clothes?"

"Yes." Miao Jing nodded.

"Do you know how to do it? Do you need me to teach you?"

Miao Jing shook her head. "There was an elder sister who had a sewing machine back in my village. She taught me and I know how to use it."

"Alright. Take your time with it. If you need any help, you can look for me or the auntie, alright?"

"Yes."

A sewing machine was expensive, and Miao Jing had not gotten many opportunities to use one back in the countryside.

Now that she had one in front of her, Miao Jing's eyes lit up and she was eager to give it a go.

Unfortunately, Miao Jing was dumbfounded when she finally had the chance to use it.

She knew how to use the sewing machine, but she had no idea how to cut the fabric into a proper shape.

It wasn't that the Miao family never made their own clothes, but similar to how they never got Miao Jing to cook, Second Auntie Miao was afraid that Miao Jing would ruin their clothes. As such, she never got Miao Jing to help make their clothes.

It was terribly easy to cut the fabric and she could do that herself. It was better that she did it in case that jinx stole her fabric.

Because of Second Auntie Miao's actions, Miao Jing knew only how to sew and not to cut the fabric.

Thinking back to what Grandma Zhai had told her earlier, Miao Jing hesitated for a while before sneaking off to look for that 'auntie' for help.

The Zhai family's caretaker had already gotten instructions from Old Zhai and knew not to offend Miao Jing. The Zhai family already regarded Miao Jing as part of their family.

Although she was just a young lady from the countryside, her status was much higher than hers since she was only a hired help.

Without hesitation, the caretaker skillfully cut the fabric into the right shape and size for Miao Jing.

At that time, there were many people who were already used to either buying fabric and getting someone to make their clothes or doing it themselves.

That was undoubtedly the cheapest way. As such, many people were able to tailor their own clothes.

After taking some measurements for Miao Jing, the caretaker cut the two outfits' worth of fabric without much wastage.

"Thank you. I'll continue from here."

The caretaker nodded and didn't ask anymore, leaving Miao Jing alone to work in the room.

While Miao Jing was happily making her own clothes in the room, the family of three was gathered in the study to talk about Miao Jing. "Yaohui, I've already told you about the entire situation. We're not heartless people. I'm sure you know how you should treat Miao Miao."

Hearing Grandma Zhai's stern tone, Zhai Yaohui didn't know whether to laugh or cry. "Am I not treating her well?"

"I want you to treat her even better. Do you understand?" Treating her well didn't account for much. They wouldn't be able to return Miao Miao's parents to her that way. Neither would they be able to give Miao Miao a happy and blissful childhood by treating her well.

They couldn't do anything!

"Yaohui, everything you have is all thanks to the Miao family and Miao Miao's sacrifice. We have to have a conscience." Without the Miao family, the mother and son would be the ones living miserable lives.

"Mom, do you have to be so serious?"

"Of course!" Old Zhai slammed the table. "Tell me right now. Do you really want to get married to that young lady from the Shi family? I'm telling you that I won't agree to it. Even if you don't get married to Miao Miao, you can't get married to Qi Minlan from the Shi family. Your mom is softhearted and only gave birth to a son like you. That's why she foolishly treated Qi Minlan like a daughter. But that young lady from the Shi family is too complicated and ambitious. She isn't suitable for you. Your mom and I will be driven to our graves by her if you two get together."

Old Zhai had no idea that he would live a good life with his wife in their old age even though Zhai Yaohui never married Qi Minlan in the end, but that wouldn't stop Miao Jing from being tortured by a nightmare that was Qi Minlan.

Hearing Old Zhai's words, Grandma Zhai seemed to want to speak up for Qi Minlan.

She knew that Old Master Shi wasn't that great of a person, but Qi Minlan was pretty good. After all, she had seen Qi Minlan grow up.

Even though Grandma Zhai didn't think that Qi Minlan was that bad, she trusted Old Zhai much more than Qi Minlan.

Thus, Grandma Zhai chose to keep her mouth shut and didn't insist.

She had no choice. She didn't think that Qi Minlan was a bad girl, but she did agree that Miao Jing was good too!

Chapter 2519: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (20)

Grandma Zhai had grown up in the countryside too, and she liked to do many things on her own without asking for help from others.

Grandma Zhai was reliant on herself, but Qi Minlan wasn't.

In the past, Grandma Zhai always comforted herself by saying that Qi Minlan had been born in a good era and had a good father. It was understandable that she was pampered and didn't like to do things herself.

She was different. In her younger days, she would have starved to death if she hadn't worked hard.

They were from two different eras. It was too much to ask for if she wanted Qi Minlan's lifestyle and habits to be like hers.

The problem was that the situation was different now. What changed was that Grandma Zhai had met Miao Jing, who had the same upbringing and ideals as her. Grandma Zhai felt like she had found someone who understood her!

It didn't matter that her husband was an official and no longer an ordinary citizen.

Didn't they say that citizens were citizens after all?

Why were people getting more corrupt when their days had only just started getting better?

Grandma Zhai and Miao Jing were the same kind of people, and Grandma Zhai naturally favored Miao Jing even though she had watched Qi Minlan grow up.

But unlike Old Zhai, Grandma Zhai didn't think that Qi Minlan wasn't good. She simply felt that Miao Jing was more suitable for her son, and she liked Miao Jing more.

Zhai Yaohui sighed. "I've always felt that this is a personal issue. After all, I spend quite a lot of time in the military as well and there's no hurry to get married. That was why I didn't bring it up. Since we're talking about it, I'll just let you guys know. Mom, Dad, I treat Qi Minlan as a younger sister. Besides, Qi Minlan has already had quite a few boys around her in the past few years. I'm not going to get together with Qi Minlan. Please stop talking about it. It won't be good for me or Qi Minlan. It might cause unnecessary misunderstandings."

Old Zhai slammed the table. "Since when have I ever talked about that? I've never said anything like that. It was that Shi guy who wanted to marry his daughter to you and made others misunderstand the situation. That's why I dislike the Shi family. Only Shi Peng is tolerable. Everyone else annoys me."

His son was engaged to Qi Minlan?

Nonsense!

No matter how blind he was, he would never let his son marry a woman like that. Besides, his eyes were perfectly fine. He would never be taken in by people like that!

Seeing Old Zhai flare up, Grandma Zhai moved her lips but remained silent.

She liked Qi Minlan, but after this tantrum, Grandma Zhai accepted her fate.

Now, Grandma Zhai felt a tinge of regret. She could only hope that her past behavior wouldn't drag her husband and son down.

Zhai Yaohui was ambitious in his career while Miao Jing was inquisitive and wanted to learn.

Because the two young people were in no hurry to find marriage partners, Old Zhai and Grandma Zhai could do nothing but comfort themselves while waiting patiently.

What pleased the elderly couple was that these two children were indeed the Zhai family's children and were more outstanding than others.

Miao Jing might have been limited culturally and might only have known a few words, but she was inquisitive and eager to learn.

Zhai Yaohui had bought Miao Jing everything she needed to study, and with Old Zhai's arrangement, she started learning under a teacher and also studied hard alone.

Of course, it was impossible to become an extremely cultured and educated person in a short span of time.

But within the short span of a year, not only was Miao Jing able to recognize all the Chinese characters, but she had even built a strong language foundation.

In the end, Miao Jing had even started to do calligraphy under Old Zhai's influence.

While Miao Jing couldn't compare to daughters of respectable families, she could be compared to beautiful daughters from humble families.

As for Zhai Yaohui, he had attained quite a few achievements after participating in several large-scale missions while still in school. There were still many achievements that were waiting to be awarded to him once he graduated and joined the military.

As such, Zhai Yaohui was already ahead of his peers the moment he joined the military.

Old Master Shi's worry from a year ago had finally become a reality.

Shi Peng was two years older than Zhai Yaohui and had entered the military earlier than him. However, Zhai Yaohui had very easily caught up with Shi Peng.

The old revolutionaries of Old Zhai's generation were no longer young, and many of them were starting to relinquish their positions and titles, creating opportunities for the younger generation.

Because of that, it was natural that there was intense competition and pressure on Zhai Yaohui and Shi Peng's generation.

Ever since the previous quarrel, Qi Minlan had not contacted Zhai Yaohui in almost a year.

Firstly, Zhai Yaohui had gotten much busier than he had been in school now that he was in the military. Even Miao Jing, who hadn't moved out of the Zhai family's house, hadn't even gotten the chance to meet Zhai Yaohui, much less Qi Minlan.

Secondly, Qi Minlan had a good family background, was pretty, and was at the peak of her youth.

Without Zhai Yaohui around, there was no way Qi Minlan would have a shortage of any boys around her.

Qi Minlan wanted to prove to Zhai Yaohui and the Zhai family that she had other suitors apart from Zhai Yaohui.

If Zhai Yaohui didn't cherish her and the Zhai family didn't control Zhai Yaohui well or chase Miao Jing away, it would be terribly easy for her to get married to another man.

But now that Zhai Yaohui was equal with Shi Peng in the military and was competing with Shi Peng for the future chief's position, Qi Minlan started getting uneasy.

She was outstanding, but Zhai Yaohui was not bad either. In fact, he seemed even more impressive.

If she missed out on Zhai Yaohui, where would she get a second Zhai Yaohui or even someone who was more brilliant than Zhai Yaohui?

Besides, she had already heard that that countryside girl living in the Zhai family was living on the Zhai family's accounts.

Over the past year, that countryside girl had been studying hard and was no longer illiterate.

If Qi Minlan were to lose to someone worse than her in every way, wouldn't she be too ashamed to go out and face others in the future?

With that thought, Qi Minlan was upset. Of course, she couldn't let Miao Jing get her happiness either.

That day, Miao Jing was on her way home to the Zhai family's house when she was stopped in her tracks by Qi Minlan and several other people. "I heard that you're Miao Jing?"

"You are?" It had been a year since they had first met. Of course, Miao Jing, who was dedicated to her studies, had no idea who Qi Minlan was.

Lanlan's face turned green.. "You snatched Minlan's boyfriend and you dare to act as if you don't know Minlan? We're all women. How can you be so shameless? I'm warning you that Zhai Yaohui is our Minlan's fiancé!"

Chapter 2520: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (21)

"If you have a bit of shame, you'd better scam from the Zhai family's house. Is it very nice to spend other people's money? Is everyone from the countryside like you? Do they all like to take advantage of others and snatch other people's things?"

Miao Jing's face flushed red then turned pale.

Even without Qi Minlan saying such things to Miao Jing, she had already had such thoughts. But Miao Jing retorted. "What has it got to do with you whose money I spend? Who are you to tell me to scam? You said that I snatched other people's things? Whose things did I snatch?"

Since they were already saying such nasty things, they had better be clearer with their words.

Qi Minlan lifted up her chin. "Since you're so shameless, I'm not going to spare you either. I'm Zhai Yaohui's fiancée. The Zhai family already acknowledged me a long time ago. Of course I'm not happy with you living in my fiancé's house! I'm warning you that I'll chase you away once I get married to Zhai Yaohui anyway if you don't move away on your own accord now."

She must really have gone crazy from taking advantage of others that she dared to act innocent in front of them even though they had made themselves so clear.

"Did you hear that? Zhai Yaohui is Minlan's. Do you know what you're doing? You're the third party in a relationship! The law now dictates that one man can only have one wife. Even if you're

willing to be his mistress, the law won't allow it. Besides, you'd better not set your sights on a family like the Zhai family!"

Lanlan really looked down on Miao Jing.

She had heard Minlan say that Miao Jing had lost both her parents, and it was only after she joined the Zhai family that she had learned to read and write.

This girl couldn't even compare to her! In fact, they were miles apart, and yet, she had managed to move into the Zhai family's house and get to know Zhai Yaohui! This countryside girl had good fortune indeed!

Miao Jing clenched her fist. There were some things she could rebut, but it wouldn't make much difference.

There were some things she could do but didn't have enough power to do yet.

To be honest, Miao Jing had heard much nastier things growing up with Second Auntie Miao.

But for some reason, Miao Jing felt that the words of these two girls hurt even more than her second auntie's. "Are you done?"

"I'm done. So, when are you going to scram?"

She really had no intention of ever meeting this shameless countryside girl again.

Miao Jing took a deep breath. "I'm sorry. I've never learned to scram, and neither am I going to scram. You said that you're Brother Zhai's fiancée. But I've lived with the Zhai family for almost a year and they have never told me of your existence. I think you don't know, but Uncle Zhai likes me very much. If I hadn't refused, Brother Zhai and I might have been engaged now."

"Besides, I'll wait until you really marry Brother Zhai, becoming his wife and Uncle Zhai's daughter-in-law, before letting you chase me away."

With that, Miao Jing turned to leave.

“You can’t leave!” Lanlan grabbed hold of Miao Jing. “How can you be so shameless? We’ve made ourselves very clear and Minlan even tried to leave you a way out. If you continue being so shameless, don’t blame us for being nasty!”

Miao Jing looked at Lanlan. “What are you planning to do to me? Don’t you already know that I’m from the countryside? I might not have anything else, but the one thing I do have is strength. Are you sure you want to fight with me? Your surname is Qi, right? Miss Qi, it doesn’t matter if I fight with you today. But Uncle Zhai’s family cares quite a lot about me. I’ll definitely let Uncle Zhai know about today’s matter. Alright, do you want to fight?”

Lanlan was incensed. “We have so many people against you alone. Do you think we’ll be afraid of you?”

“That’s right. What’s the point in wasting our breath on her? Let’s just beat her up until she’s afraid!”

Qi Minlan held Lanlan back. “Wait a minute.”

Qi Minlan didn’t care about anything else, but she had to care about something Miao Jing had said. “Miao Jing, we’re all adults. This is between you and me. We can settle it among ourselves. Do you think you’re still three years old that you’re trying to tell on me to our elders?”

“I don’t think that it’s purely between you and me. Besides I feel that there’s a need to tell Uncle Zhai about this. Besides, you’re Brother Zhai’s fiancée. If I’m not afraid of telling them about this, why should you be afraid?”

“Minlan?” Lanlan was confused by Qi Minlan’s behavior. “I’m sure you’ve seen it. She’s from the countryside. She has nothing and that’s why she’s so shameless. There’s no use trying to reason with her. Let’s...”

“Let’s go.” Qi Minlan’s face was entirely green.

Qi Minlan had already thought it through. If Miao Jing chose to move away on her own accord, she wouldn’t take issue with all the money that Miao Jing had spent over the past year.

She would simply treat it as though she had thrown some money to a beggar.

If Miao Jing wasn't self-aware, she would beat Miao Jing up until she was.

But this girl from the countryside seemed to have gotten smarter now that she had studied a little.

Because Miao Jing said that she was going to tattle on her, Qi Minlan had no other choice but to give up. After all, Miao Jing's behavior was unexpected.

She had thought that Miao Jing would have some self-respect and not try to create any more trouble for the Zhai family because she had leeches off them for the past year.

Even if she beat Miao Jing up, Miao Jing should endure it and tell the Zhai family that she had accidentally bumped into something.

But before Qi Minlan could even start to beat her up, Miao Jing took the initiative to say that she would definitely complain about her. How could Qi Minlan go on in that case?

Putting aside how Old Zhai would feel about this, Qi Minlan knew that Grandma Zhai would no longer like her as much once she learned about this.

Besides, Zhai Yaohui hated unreasonable people who used violence to solve problems.

"Minlan?" Lanlan couldn't believe her ears. "Minlan, did you say something wrongly?"

They had waited for a long time before finally being able to corner her. But they hadn't even done anything, much less deal with her. She hadn't even been frightened by their words.

And they were going to leave just like that? How embarrassing!

"Alright. Stop it. Let's go. I'll think of another way to deal with her." She had no other choice, unless she wanted to let Miao Jing have Zhai Yaohui instead.

Since the party concerned, Qi Minlan, had said so, Lanlan had no choice even though she was reluctant. She could only follow behind Qi Minlan.

Miao Jing breathed a sigh of relief. It was true that she wouldn't be able to fight against so many people at once.

The Zhai family had always told her that she had to let them know if anyone ever tried to bully her.

Miao Jing felt that it was only right to let them know of today's incident.