

RTAMM 2531

Chapter 2531: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (32)

Qi Minlan headed straight for Grandma Zhai's room. "Auntie, Brother Zhai told me that you're not feeling well. Where do you feel the discomfort? If you really feel unwell, I'll send you to the hospital with Brother Zhai. There are some things that shouldn't be delayed."

Qi Minlan interrupted the mother and son's conversation. Grandma Zhai was stunned. "Why is Minlan in our house?"

Qi Minlan smiled. "Auntie, did Brother Zhai not tell you that I was here?"

No wonder she had waited for such a long time downstairs. It turned out that Auntie Zhai didn't even know about her presence.

Auntie Zhai liked her so much. She would immediately have gone down the moment she learned that she was here. There was no way she would have kept her waiting alone.

"Auntie, what's wrong? Do you want me to massage you?"

Since they had been chatting for such a long time, Auntie Zhai's condition was probably not so bad to necessitate a visit to the hospital, right?

It was just as well. She would use the chance to be filial to Auntie Zhai and curry favor with her.

Seeing Qi Minlan's flattering smile, Grandma Zhai shivered subconsciously and moved aside. "No, I feel alright now. You don't have to massage me."

Qi Minlan felt that it was a pity that she hadn't been able to show off. "Auntie, shall I stay here and spend some time with you and Brother Zhai?"

Grandma Zhai shook her head. Although she was around, it was better for Qi Minlan and her son not to remain in the same room.

It would be embarrassing for her son if word were to get around.

“I’m alright now. I can get off my bed. We’d better go downstairs. It’s more convenient to talk downstairs.”

Qi Minlan had wanted to support Grandma Zhai, but she lifted her hand for Zhai Yaohui to support her instead, causing Qi Minlan’s hands to remain in the air awkwardly.

But Qi Minlan refused to give up. After Grandma Zhai got off the bed, she walked over to Grandma Zhai’s side, wanting to help Grandma Zhai down with Zhai Yaohui.

From that, it really did seem like Zhai Yaohui and Qi Minlan were a couple. That made Grandma Zhai feel even more upset.

Although she was unwilling, she was already used to keeping the peace and had no way of rejecting Qi Minlan.

With that, Grandma Zhai slowly made her way downstairs with Qi Minlan’s help.

When she arrived downstairs, Grandma Zhai quickly retracted her hand. After seeing Qi Minlan sit down, she quickly sat down on another sofa. “I want to sit here.”

Qi Minlan frowned slightly, feeling that there was something strange about Grandma Zhai today. “Auntie Zhai, I’ll sit with you.”

Grandma Zhai reached out her hand to reject her. “No need. This sofa is meant for one person.”

In the past, Qi Minlan would definitely have taken the chance to sit with Zhai Yaohui on the two-seater sofa.

She would have felt that Grandma Zhai was the most open-minded mother-in-law, who was helping her get closer to Zhai Yaohui.

But not today. Before leaving the house, Old Master Shi had reminded Qi Minlan again and again that Zhai Yaohui was no longer the most important person, but Grandma Zhai.

Winning Grandma Zhai's heart would mean winning the entire family's heart.

For Qi Minlan, Grandma Zhai was the easiest person to break through.

But they had not kept in contact over the past year, and Qi Minlan did feel quite guilty in front of Grandma Zhai.

As such, Qi Minlan looked shyly at Zhai Yaohui, seemingly trying to comfort him before running to Grandma Zhai's side like a good daughter-in-law. "That's alright. I'll sit beside you. It's enough for me. Auntie, I've been quite busy and haven't been able to visit you lately. I missed you. I want to sit with you and not with anyone else now."

The 'anyone else' was obviously Zhai Yaohui.

Grandma Zhai was already trying her best to avoid Qi Minlan, yet Qi Minlan insisted on sitting with her. Grandma Zhai was on the brink of tears yet again.

Previously, it had been tears of sadness. Now, they were tears of grievance.

The one whom she liked hadn't stayed, while the one whom she disliked insisted on staying by her side and making a din.

It was all her son's fault. If her son wasn't so useless and had won Miao Miao's heart, Miao Miao wouldn't have left!

It was all because they hadn't shown their appreciation to the one they should have but liked the one they shouldn't have that had led to this situation.

Grandma Zhai took a deep breath. "Minlan, you're here for Yaohui, right? If the two of you need to chat, there's no need for me to be involved. The weather looks good today. I'm going out to have a walk."

She couldn't be bothered about her son.

Her son could like whomever he wanted and marry whomever he liked. Couldn't she have some space and time for herself?

Grandma Zhai stood up and intended on leaving, but Qi Minlan was determined to cling to her today instead of having some time with her son. "Yes, the weather looks good. Auntie, I'll follow you. Let's leave Brother Zhai alone. I'll follow you. He was the one who didn't contact me for a whole year while he was in the military."

Qi Minlan seemed to be throwing a tantrum at Zhai Yaohui as though they were a very close couple. Grandma Zhai nearly had a heart attack upon hearing that.

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Why did she not know about her son getting so close to Qi Minlan?

This was bad.

She wanted to get rid of Qi Minlan and let Zhai Yaohui handle her.

But Qi Minlan was no different from superglue that Grandma Zhai couldn't get rid of today.

Grandma Zhai had always been weak, and her emotions affected her health. Seeing that Grandma Zhai's heart ache was very well going to turn into a true ailment, Zhai Yaohui quickly stepped up. "Mom, don't go into the sun. Why don't you take a nap? Qi Minlan, I'm sorry to have to make you wait. I'll help my mom up. You can have some tea and wait here."

People with some self-awareness ought to leave when they saw that the host was not feeling well.

But Qi Minlan didn't see herself as an outsider, and of course, she didn't have such self-awareness. "If Auntie is feeling unwell, you should find a doctor. If you don't want to go to the hospital, we can call a doctor over. Auntie, I'll help you."

Zhai Yaohui decisively refused. “No need. You’re a guest. It isn’t right for you to help out. I think it’s right that I should get a doctor over. Qi Minlan, I’m sorry, but we don’t have time to entertain you today. If you want to visit my mom, you can come over another day when my mom is feeling better.”

“You don’t have to entertain me. I can help out.”

“We don’t need help from our guests. Qi Minlan, please leave.”

Since Qi Minlan didn’t understand his words earlier, Zhai Yaohui could only be more explicit and straightforward.

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“If you want to take care of my mom, leaving would be the greatest help you can give.”

“...”

“...”

Both Qi Minlan and Grandma Zhai were a little stunned. Grandma Zhai had never thought that Zhai Yaohui would be capable of saying such blunt words, and neither had Qi Minlan expected that Zhai Yaohui had stopped her from taking care of Grandma Zhai not because he was afraid that she would get tired from taking care of her, but because he treated her as an outsider and was trying to chase her out!

Qi Minlan’s face paled. “Brother Zhai, what did you say? I-I didn’t get that. Did I misunderstand you?”

That was impossible.

If Zhai Yaohui treated her in this way, how could he have chased that countryside girl away even when knowing that Chief Zhai liked that girl?

Hadn't Zhai Yaohui done that for her sake?

Besides, she couldn't have overthought it, right?

Otherwise, why had that countryside girl lived here for such a long time but had suddenly moved out once Zhai Yaohui returned? That didn't make any sense.

"I'm not sure whether there has been a misunderstanding. What I know is that there must have been one in the past. Qi Minlan, please leave. Although we're not together alone in a room, it's hard for people not to misunderstand us. It wouldn't be good if this leads to a fight between you and your boyfriend. We grew up together and I'm your elder brother. If anyone bullies you, you can find me. I'll help you."

"Elder brother? Boyfriend?" At the mention of these two words, Qi Minlan felt dizzy as though the whole world was spinning around her. She nearly lost her balance. "Brother Zhai, what do you mean? Since-when have I ever had a boyfriend?"

Qi Minlan quickly explained herself. "It's true that I have some male friends, but my boyfriend..."
Is you!

Qi Minlan was intelligent and understood that the Zhai family's position might have been threatened over the past ten years, but they had never toppled.

As such, Qi Minlan had never severed her ties with Zhai Yaohui so that she would still have a backup plan.

Even though she had always had men around her, Qi Minlan had always maintained a distance from them and had never allowed herself to go all the way with them.

In fact, they were all good friends. None of the men had ever been able to call themselves Qi Minlan's boyfriend.

That was why Qi Minlan had managed to answer Zhai Yaohui in a breeze.

It was just that such a rapid answer sometimes revealed one's guilt even more.

This was the seventies. Unless men and women were prepared to get married, it was rare for men and women to go out together, much less hold hands. When one man and woman's hands accidentally touched, they would inevitably blush.

Often, men didn't even dare to look openly at women even when they fell for them. Instead, they had to visit their houses.

Although they spoke of gender equality, it wasn't good for male and female comrades to get too close. It was especially easy for females to get misunderstood as immoral.

Thankfully, the Shi family's background was good, and Zhai Yaohui was outstanding.

Otherwise, rumors would have been all around.

Since such a brilliant man like Zhai Yaohui didn't even mind his fiancée, Qi Minlan, having so many male friends, it was best that bystanders not comment too much about it.

After all, it was better to destroy ten temples than destroy a marriage.

Perhaps, it was because of the environment that Qi Minlan comforted herself and thought of it as reality. She had never done anything that wronged Zhai Yaohui.

She and her male friends only had normal conversations, just like any friends would. There was only one man she was intimate with, and that was her fiancé, Zhai Yaohui.

Qi Minlan thought that she had seen through the situation perfectly, but Zhai Yaohui's reminder was a rude shock to Qi Minlan that everything had been a misunderstanding.

The past? What had happened?

Of course, it had to be their relationship as an engaged couple.

Since Zhai Yaohui had already made himself so clear, Qi Minlan had no way of lying to herself or others anymore. “Brother Zhai, we grew up together. You can be direct with me. I’ll go crazy trying to guess. Why don’t you just tell me what you mean?”

“I know that you and the Shi family have been telling others that you’re my fiancée. You should know very well that our families have never settled this officially, and neither have we ever held any engagement ceremonies or parties. You’re just a younger sister to me.”

He had no romantic feelings for Qi Minlan.

Zhai Yaohui had not felt it in the past, but now, it felt unbearable to be with Qi Minlan.

Zhai Yaohui was never one to force himself to do something against his wishes. He would even use silence to deal with things he didn’t like.

But Zhai Yaohui had already thought it through. He had to clear the air between him and Qi Minlan.

“Younger-younger sister?” Even though Qi Minlan had already seen that coming, those words made Qi Minlan feel incredulous.

Younger sister?

Who was he trying to cheat?

Who would have no reaction and remain silent when others said that his younger sister was his fiancée?

Was Zhai Yaohui trying to lie to her, to others, or to himself?

Qi Minlan had to pinch herself to stop herself from exploding.

She couldn’t wrap her head around the situation. She had listened to her dad and tried to improve her relationship with Auntie Zhai. That way, she would receive Auntie Zhai’s affirmation and Auntie Zhai would urge Zhai Yaohui to marry her as quickly as possible so that she would officially become the Zhai family’s daughter-in-law.

She hadn't even started working on Auntie Zhai, and Zhai Yaohui had stopped her before she could even do anything!

Zhai Yaohui's attitude had changed so quickly and he had become so firm with no room for negotiation that they were simply siblings and not an engaged couple all because of that vixen from the countryside.

When Miao Jing left, Qi Minlan had happily thought that she had won.

Qi Minlan had coincidentally bumped into Miao Jing while leaving, and Miao Jing had even said some congratulatory words to her. At that time, Qi Minlan thought that she had stepped all over Miao Jing!

But now that she looked back at it, Qi Minlan felt that she had been challenged.

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At that time, that vixen from the countryside had not been begging for mercy. Instead, she had been mocking her!

Qi Minlan really wanted to ask Zhai Yaohui what he saw in Miao Jing. In what way was Miao Jing better than her that Zhai Yaohui would give her up for Miao Jing's sake?

Because of a third party like Miao Jing who came from the countryside, Zhai Yaohui was going to give up on their feelings which they had developed since they were young?

There were too many things that Qi Minlan wanted to ask and do.

But she was afraid that she wouldn't be able to control her emotions once she started speaking and would explode.

Only failures weren't able to control themselves.

Even if Zhai Yaohui didn't want to be with her, she had to have self-control and not embarrass herself in this situation.

To do so, Qi Minlan nearly pierced through her palm with her fingernail.

Her eyes brimmed with tears. "Brother Zhai, you should know that I've never treated you like a biological brother. I've always... Brother Zhai, how could you not know how I felt all these years? Brother Zhai, we were fine in the past. Can you tell me why you suddenly think of me as a sister instead of your partner or fiancée?"

Zhai Yaohui felt a little guilty because of Qi Minlan's question.

Why?

Zhai Yaohui realized that he had always been rather vague toward Qi Minlan. His actions made it unclear whether he regarded Qi Minlan as a sister or a partner.

It was only after Miao Jing's appearance that Zhai Yaohui started feeling differently.

Especially when he returned home after a year and saw Miao Jing, Zhai Yaohui felt that he was no longer able to see Qi Minlan as a partner.

Zhai Yaohui was pretty clear about this in his heart.

He felt that it was this change in attitude that had led to the change in feelings for Qi Minlan.

In that way, Qi Minlan was innocent. He was the one at fault.

He wasn't afraid of admitting to his mistake so that he could correct it.

"Minlan, I'm sorry that I didn't clarify how I truly felt in the past. That's why you've been hurt. But I really treat you as my biological younger sister. If you have any trouble in the future, you can always come to look for me."

Zhai Yaohui knew that Qi Minlan had close male friends, but she was right. She had male friends, not boyfriends.

Qi Minlan hadn't given up on her childhood sweetheart for another man. It was Zhai Yaohui who had brought up the matter of backing out.

As a responsible man, Zhai Yaohui indeed felt that he owed Qi Minlan in this case.

It wasn't overboard to return whatever he owed. He would naturally make it up to Qi Minlan.

Qi Minlan's face paled as her hands started trembling. "Brother Zhai, is it really impossible between us? Will it be possible if I try harder? Or if we give ourselves more time?"

Why? What rights did Zhai Yaohui have to kick her aside and say that he only regarded her as a sister now that he had made a name for himself?

How could Zhai Yaohui be so blind to choose a vixen from the countryside over her when she was so outstanding?

This was unfair! Too unfair!

Qi Minlan hated Zhai Yaohui for being so brutal, as well as Old Zhai and Grandma Zhai for being so heartless.

Even when faced with the years of relationships they had built up and Zhai Yaohui's foolish decision, neither Old Zhai nor Grandma Zhai had tried to stop Zhai Yaohui. The elderly couple had even respected Zhai Yaohui's foolish wishes!

Qi Minlan hated the Zhai family to her guts.

She wanted to see just how well the Zhai family would do in the future since they would rather have an ignorant countryside bumpkin as their daughter-in-law and give up such a good daughter-in-law like her!

There would come a day the Zhai family would regret choosing Miao Jing over her!

She would definitely wait for such a day to come. She would use facts to prove to the Zhai family that only women like her had the right to become the mistress of a family like the Zhai family.

“It’s impossible.” Zhai Yaohui had already thought it through. It was impossible between him and Qi Minlan. Of course, he couldn’t give Qi Minlan any room for imagination.

If he was softhearted at this point, then he would really be harming Qi Minlan because she would be unable to regain her senses for a long time. “Minlan, you’re a good girl. You’ll definitely find someone who’ll truly love you and cherish you.”

“But that person isn’t you, right?”

“...”

“Hehe...” Qi Minlan laughed self-deprecatingly. “I like you but you don’t like me. Is that person who’ll love and cherish me important? No, of course not. Brother Zhai, I really don’t understand why you would have a change of heart so quickly. Are men more heartless than women? You managed to pull yourself out, but I can’t. Brother Zhai, it’s best that we don’t meet. Otherwise, I’m afraid that I’ll get even more upset.”

With that, Qi Minlan cupped her crying face and ran out of the Zhai family’s house.

“...” Zhai Yaohui took a long, deep breath. No matter what, this matter with Qi Minlan was finally over. “Mom, now that Qi Minlan is gone, do you want me to send you to the hospital, or do you want me to call a doctor over? Forget it. I think I’d better call a doctor over.”

Grandma Zhai pushed Zhai Yaohui aside. “There’s no need to call a doctor or send me to the hospital. I feel much better now. Of course, if you’re able to get Miao Miao back, I won’t feel any discomfort at all. I’ll probably be even more energetic and alive!”

“Mom, were you faking it earlier?”

While Qi Minlan was around, his mom had been so unwell that she needed a doctor. But the moment Qi Minlan left, his mom’s expression looked much better. Was Qi Minlan poison?

“Of course it was real. Why would I fake an illness at my age? Be careful about what you say!” Grandma Zhai rolled her eyes at Zhai Yaohui. But it was good as long as her son didn’t have feelings for Minlan.

How had she not realized earlier that Minlan didn’t fit in with their family? It would only cause everyone pain if they had to live together.

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What had she been thinking? What had she even seen in Qi Minlan to think that she should be part of the Zhai family?

Thinking about her past self, Grandma Zhai could only say that she must have been in an unclear state of mind.

“Mom, stop it.” His mom’s face had been so pale earlier. How could she have gotten better just because Qi Minlan had left?

“I’ll get the doctor over.”

“Do what you like. I’m really feeling fine now.” Grandma Zhai couldn’t care less. “If you really want me to be healthy and live happily, get Miao Miao back. If you marry Miao Miao and give me a grandson, I can die in peace even if I die right away.”

“Mom...” Zhai Yaohui’s expression changed. He hated his mom’s analogy.

Both he and Old Zhai hated it when Grandma Zhai said these words.

“Alright, I won’t say that word. Now, why don’t you tell me when you’ll bring Miao Miao back and get married? You already learned about Miao Miao’s family a year ago. We really owe Miao Miao too much. Besides, I don’t think that it’s repaying kindness by marrying Miao Miao. You’re my son. Do you think your dad and I don’t understand you?”

“Your dad was the only one who thought that way in the past, but now, I agree with him. Yaohui, Miao Miao is really a good girl and she’s suitable for you. If you’re clear about how you feel, you’d better grab this opportunity and not miss out on Miao Miao. If you don’t cherish a good young lady like Miao Miao, someone else who cherishes her will marry her. It’ll be too late to regret it then.”

Opportunities waited for no man.

Old Zhai had wanted to visit the Miao family earlier to repay Father Miao for saving his life.

But because of the ten years of turmoil, he was afraid that he wouldn’t be able to repay the Miao family by visiting them and might even bring trouble to the Miao family for the third time.

Who would have known that there was no need for the Zhai family to be afraid of anyone after the situation stabilized? Miao Jing was the only one left of the Miao family anyway.

This had always been a huge regret in Old Zhai’s heart. As Old Zhai’s wife, Grandma Zhai’s heart ached for her husband too.

That was why Old Zhai’s and Grandma Zhai’s attitudes toward Miao Jing were different. She was the only one left in the family, after all.

In the past, Grandma Zhai might have thought that this was simply her and her husband’s thoughts. But today’s incidents proved that Zhai Yaohui had such thoughts too.

“Mom, what are you talking about? Didn’t I say I’ll call for the doctor?”

“Go ahead. I didn’t stop you from calling the doctor. Yaohui, Miao Miao is pretty and capable of doing household chores. Now, she even has a job and earns money for herself. Don’t you think that the workers in the factory will soon introduce men to Miao Miao? What if Miao Miao brings her partner over to our house? Should your dad and I help out?”

“Actually, it’ll be good if Miao Miao can find someone who will be sincere toward her and treat her well. Miao Miao’s so pitiful. She lost her family at birth. I’m sure she yearns for a family of her own. I’m not afraid of anything, but I’m afraid that Miao Miao might not see through her husband. But thankfully, she still has us. Even if she can’t judge a person well, your dad and I will be here to help her.”

“...”

“Even if we’re gone in the future, Miao Miao still has you as her brother. Yaohui, promise me that you’ll take good care of Miao Miao and not let others bully her. If Miao Miao gets bullied, your dad and I won’t let you go. You’ll have to take responsibility for it!”

Hearing Grandma Zhai’s words, Zhai Yaohui wondered whether he was indeed their biological son, or whether Miao Jing was their true biological child.

“Mom, stop making such wild guesses. With our family around, no one will bully Miao Miao. Besides, Miao Miao is still young and has just started working. There’s no hurry for her to get a partner. If you really want to get a grandchild, wait another year or so.”

Grandma Zhai disagreed. “I shouldn’t need to wait for a year. You know so many people in the military. There should be good ones, right? I heard your dad say that the Shi family might not be very good, but Qi Minlan has a brother named Shi Peng. Yes, that chap is pretty good, isn’t he? Do you two have any interactions in the military? Do you think he’s suitable for Miao Miao? If we want to protect Miao Miao, we’d better introduce a good man to her before others do.”

He was just reluctant to admit it.

She didn’t believe that she wouldn’t be able to force her son to tell her the truth.

If Yaohui was willing to introduce a partner to Miao Miao, she wouldn’t be Yaohui’s mother from now on.

Thankfully, Zhai Yaohui knew nothing about that. Otherwise, he wouldn’t know whether to cry or laugh.

She was his mother and he was her son. Was his mom crazy?

“Shi Peng is a good man, but he isn’t suitable for Miao Miao.”

“Not suitable?” See, what did she say? “Didn’t you say that he’s a good man? Since he’s good, why isn’t he suitable?”

“His personality isn’t right.”

“What’s wrong with his personality?”

“Mom... He’s just unsuitable. There’s no need for so many questions. It’s just a feeling that I can’t put into words. Of course, if you really want to know, I’ll try my best to tell you why.”

Thankfully, Zhai Yaohui had a quick reaction and indeed thought of several reasons why that man was unsuitable.

Because he hadn’t been able to pinpoint any specific reasons, even Zhai Yaohui himself felt a little guilty and wondered if he had any other ideas toward Miao Jing.

“Look, our family knows all about Miao Miao’s situation. My dad and you are open-minded and don’t mind that Miao Miao is alone. But what about the Shi family? Will the Shi family be as understanding as us and not mind her poor family background?”

It wasn’t that Zhai Yaohui looked down on Miao Jing and thought that she had poor conditions. It was the truth, and he was merely speaking for the majority.

Any family with slightly better conditions would never pick a young lady like Miao Jing who had no familial relations.

It was true that Miao Jing was pretty, but there was no lack of pretty young ladies with good family backgrounds in this world.

No matter what, Miao Jing would never stand a chance.

Unless Miao Jing found someone with similar conditions who wouldn’t pick on such problems.

But the Shi family had good conditions, and Shi Peng was doing well for himself.. That meant the Shi family would definitely be very picky when it came to selecting Shi Peng’s wife.

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The Shi family wouldn't fancy ordinary women. There was no chance at all that they would fancy someone like Miao Jing.

“Miao Miao doesn't have a strong character. However, Uncle Shi has the final say in the family. Let's not mention that Shi Peng has no feelings for Miao Miao now. If he really fancies and likes Miao Miao, but Uncle Shi has any opinions about her and despises her, Miao Miao would have no way to retaliate and Shi Peng can't protect Miao Miao. If Shi Peng were to protect her, the Shi family would definitely kick up a fuss, and Miao Miao wouldn't be left with a good reputation.”

If Miao Jing were to get together with Shi Peng, Zhai Yaohui couldn't say a single reason why that would be good.

On the contrary, if Grandma Zhai were to ask him why the two of them were inappropriate together, Zhai Yaohui felt that as long as he was given another three minutes of thinking time, he could come up with a lot of reasons.

“Based on your words, Miao Miao can only find someone from her own factory? Alright, if Miao Miao finds someone of a similar background, our family can always protect her.”

All the young men in the army, including Shi Peng, were under Zhai Yaohui's control. However, the male colleagues in Miao Miao's factory weren't.

When Miao Miao really had a target in mind, she wanted to see if Yaohui would still be as stubborn as now.

The mother-son pair was chatting happily and completely forgot about Qi Minlan.

Qi Minlan cried and left. At first, she was just pretending for the Zhai family to see.

Qi Minlan came knocking on the door today. Based on Grandma Zhai's and Zhai Yaohui's sudden change of attitude, how would Qi Minlan really give up so easily? Don't even think about it.

No matter what, she had to continue to put up a stiff resistance, right?

As such, Qi Minlan didn't run too far away.

As long as Grandma Zhai let Zhai Yaohui chase after her, he could reach Qi Minlan in a few steps.

Qi Minlan's speed gave Zhai Yaohui some leeway to chase after her. Who knew that the conversation between Grandma Zhai and Zhai Yaohui didn't even mean to leave her any face?

Before she ran far, she heard Auntie Zhai told Zhai Yaohui that as long as she left, her heart felt more comfortable and she no longer needed the doctor.

Did Auntie Zhai feel uncomfortable because of her appearance?

What a joke!

When she heard how Grandma Zhai addressed Miao Jing as Miao Miao so intimately to Zhai Yaohui, Qi Minlan nearly vomited blood.

What else could Qi Minlan not understand now? The entire Zhai family had changed, including Zhai Yaohui and Grandma Zhai.

These people liked Miao Jing, who was from the countryside. They treated her as their treasure.

Everything she once owned in the Zhai family now belonged to Miao Jing.

Upon thinking that Grandma Zhai was really concerned about Miao Jing and was afraid that she would be bullied, Qi Minlan's eyes became bloodshot as she left with heavy footsteps.

“What's wrong? Why are you so angry? Who offended you?”

What was rare was that Zhai Yaohui was home and Qi Minlan's brother, Shi Peng, was also at home.

Upon thinking that Zhai Yaohui had returned a day earlier than him, Shi Peng asked, “A conflict with Zhai Yaohui?”

Speaking of Zhai Yaohui, Shi Peng really wanted to persuade his sister.

They were family. As such, no matter how Qi Minlan used to play, although Shi Peng disagreed, he didn't say much. He was afraid that if he interfered too much, Qi Minlan would become more rebellious.

His sister wasn't young anymore. She should grow up and become more sensible. She shouldn't do things that she shouldn't do. Wasn't it good to lead a good and honest life?

It wasn't easy to find an outstanding man like Zhai Yaohui. It was his sister's blessing to have met Zhai Yaohui.

However, no amount of blessing could withstand one squandering. If his sister played too much, she might really lose Zhai Yaohui.

Who knew that before Shi Peng could say his words of persuasion, Qi Minlan exploded first? “Don't mention Zhai Yaohui to me again. I disallow you to say his name. Zhai Yaohui? Who is he? He actually dared to abandon me? A few years ago, I had boyfriends other than him! He didn't dump me. I didn't want him first! Brother, aren't you aiming for a promotion recently? Brother, you must win. You must be more outstanding than him and suppress him!”

As long as her brother was better than Zhai Yaohui, Zhai Yaohui wouldn't be seen as outstanding.

Shi Peng was stunned. “Minlan, what's wrong? What happened between you and Zhai Yaohui?”

It seemed that it wasn't a simple matter like throwing tantrums.

Qi Minlan cried. “The Zhai family hid a vixen from the countryside. They want her and no longer want me. Brother, Zhai Yaohui said it had nothing to do with me. He doesn't want me anymore. He only treats me as a sister. Brother, I'm so sad. You have to help me take revenge.”

“Take revenge?” What kind of revenge?

Indeed, Shi Peng knew that there was another person in the Zhai family. However, he never felt that this person would become an obstacle between Zhai Yaohui and his sister.

Who would have known that...

“That woman snatched everything away from me. Zhai Yaohui’s ungrateful. After having that vixen, he forgot about our engagement. That vixen is a third party. Zhai Yaohui abandoned me. He betrayed me. You can’t watch me being bullied and not care about me. You have to help me get justice.”

Shi Peng asked, “Have you held a banquet with Zhai Yaohui yet?”

Engagement?

Shi Peng admitted that the parents of both families were optimistic about Minlan and Zhai Yaohui being together. However, it was just a tacit attitude without clear words.

Now that Shi Peng heard Qi Minlan talk about an engagement, he became different.

If his sister was really engaged with Zhai Yaohui, then what Zhai Yaohui did was indeed unkind. He had done something sorry to his sister.

As Minlan’s brother, he had to help seek justice from Zhai Yaohui for Minlan. However, why didn’t he know that they were engaged?

“...No.”

“Then, did Dad and Mom talk to Old Zhai about the two of you?”

“...No.” Qi Minlan flew into a rage out of humiliation. “Brother, why are you asking me about things that didn’t happen before? These aren’t important now. What is important is that Zhai Yaohui had another woman behind my back. He did something sorry to me! You have to help me take revenge!”

Shi Peng could neither laugh nor cry. “Both parties’ parents didn’t talk about the two of you. You didn’t hold a wedding banquet either. Then, did you and Zhai Yaohui talk about marriage before?”

“...”

“Is that a no as well? Since these three situations didn’t happen, how are you engaged with Zhai Yaohui? Since when did he do something sorry to you?”

If Zhai Yaohui was really in the wrong, he wouldn’t let him off.

However, he also couldn’t make Zhai Yaohui a scapegoat for something that didn’t exist.

Chapter 2536: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (37)

“Didn’t both our families know about us and silently agreed to it?”

How was it that she and Zhai Yaohui were unrelated? Weren’t these relations? They were related!

Shi Peng disagreed. “Silently agreed to it? What kind of answer is this? Can things like marriage be silently agreed to? Minlan, let me tell you. You’re losing out on this situation because of this attitude.”

The so-called silent agreement couldn’t even be considered a promise. There was no matchmaker and no certificate. If word of this spread, the Zhai family might have little reason, but their Shi family was even more unreliable.

If both families really had the intention for their children to get married to each other, why didn’t they say so clearly in the first place?

Even if the Zhai family didn’t say it clearly, there’s still the Shi family. Didn’t the Shi family have the intention to say things clearly as well?

Everyone knew that the Zhai family's status was higher than the Shi family's.

How would the Shi family's attitude not make people doubt that the Shi family was interested in the power of the Zhai family? After that, they didn't dare to urge the Zhai family for fear that the marriage between Qi Minlan and Zhai Yaohui would be ruined if they annoyed the Zhai family.

Shi Peng knew that his father had some thoughts. His sister had quite a lot of thoughts as well.

He didn't expect these thoughts to be quite unreliable.

Based on what his sister had said, he couldn't blame Zhai Yaohui even if Zhai Yaohui really married another woman, let alone if Zhai Yaohui didn't acknowledge his relationship with his sister now.

Wasn't there a saying that only an officially married woman was considered a wife?

Those who didn't walk this clear path were not considered to be serious.

"Alright, if you and Zhai Yaohui don't have any witness in this regard, our family can only suffer this loss in private. Forget it. Zhai Yaohui... It's fine. Let's find another better one. There're benefits even if there's no Zhai Yaohui. Think about it. If Zhai Yaohui doesn't treat you well, based on the Zhai family's situation, it won't be as convenient for me as an older brother to help you. If you find another person, I can help you keep an eye on your man."

Zhai Yaohui was too powerful. If he really became his brother-in-law, Shi Peng wouldn't have the slightest sense of being an older brother.

For a person with a strong aura like Zhai Yaohui, and upon thinking about his sister's style, Shi Peng felt that they were not suitable.

Based on how his sister was playing the field, she would anger and annoy Zhai Yaohui sooner or later.

Military marriages generally couldn't be divorced. However, nothing was absolute.

As he thought about this, Shi Peng felt that it wasn't a bad thing that Zhai Yaohui's marriage with the playful Qi Minlan didn't work out.

"Brother, am I your sister, or is Zhai Yaohui your brother? He bullied me like this, but you're not helping me at all. Brother, are you still my brother? Is there a brother like you?"

Qi Minlan was unhappy and dissatisfied with Shi Peng's attitude.

"What do you want, then?" Shi Peng had a headache. This was the situation now. Who asked them not to prepare beforehand?

The work done in the early phase wasn't well, thus leading to the embarrassing situation now. Why was all the responsibility and blame on him now?

"Brother, go create trouble for Zhai Yaohui. Help me teach him a lesson. He entered the army two or three years later than you. You should be better than him, right?"

Since Zhai Yaohui made her feel uncomfortable emotionally, she was going to make him feel uncomfortable physically.

He dared to abandon her. Zhai Yaohui did not need to think about leading a peaceful life.

"..." Shi Peng didn't really want to bother himself with Qi Minlan, his sister.

When Zhai Yaohui and Qi Minlan were together in the past, he had always abided by the rules. He never took advantage of Qi Minlan or became particularly close to any girls aside from her.

Such an outstanding Zhai Yaohui had already done so well. However, Qi Minlan played with a bunch of boys.

Even if the marriage between the two didn't happen, Shi Peng couldn't go against his conscience and say that Zhai Yaohui had done something sorry to his sister. He could only hide her ugliness and say that they were not suitable for each other.

Zhai Yaohui wasn't a scumbag to his sister. How could Shi Peng go over and hit Zhai Yaohui?

Shi Peng wasn't willing. However, Qi Minlan was not willing to let things off just like this.

Not only did Shi Peng not get a good rest and be reunited with his family after finally coming home, but he even argued with Qi Minlan until he had a headache. "Alright, stop it. I'll go and find Zhai Yaohui to settle scores, okay?"

Upon knowing that if he didn't agree to Qi Minlan, she would definitely not let him off, Shi Peng hurriedly raised his hands up in surrender, signaling that he would listen to her.

Qi Minlan smiled. "Brother, I know that you treat me the best. Brother, don't be merciful when you lay a hand on him. I'm feeling so uncomfortable now that I want to die. My heart aches until I can't breathe. Think of how uncomfortable I am now, and you will know how heavy a hand you should lay on Zhai Yaohui then."

"Okay, I'll listen to you."

Shi Peng stood up, picked up his clothes, and left.

Qi Minlan kept following Shi Peng, which made him more speechless.

Qi Minlan smiled only when she saw Shi Peng walk in the direction of the Zhai family with her own eyes. "Zhai Yaohui, you abandoned me. Don't think that it's so easy to bully me, Qi Minlan. You want to marry a girl from the countryside? We'll see how embarrassing you and your Zhai family are in the future!"

Even if Zhai Yaohui was regretful for not marrying her back then, she definitely would not show him any good looks.

Her brother was right. Without Zhai Yaohui, she could still find someone else.

There were so many men in this world. Why did she have to be so fixated on Zhai Yaohui?

Zhai Yaohui would definitely be making a wrong decision by marrying Miao Jing. However, she was going to marry the right person and show Zhai Yaohui how happy she was.

Qi Minlan walked over to the Zhai family slowly since Shi Peng had not yet returned after an hour.

Qi Minlan knew that there was a small empty house behind the Zhai family's house. Although it was said to be a small house, it wasn't small at all.

Old Zhai had trained Zhai Yaohui's skills in this small house.

Sometimes, Shi Peng would come over here to train as well. As such, Qi Minlan was quite familiar with this small house.

Knock! Knock!

"Please enter." Zhai Yaohui's rapid breathing could be heard from inside.

Qi Minlan pushed open the door and entered. She saw Zhai Yaohui in a sorry state. His clothes seemed to be tattered, and he was sitting on the ground, wiping his sweat profusely.

Qi Minlan's eyes shone first. Then, she looked nervous. "Brother Zhai, are you alright? How can my brother do this?"

"..." Zhai Yaohui remained silent and didn't say anything.

"Brother Zhai, don't misunderstand. I've already persuaded my brother. Since you feel that we aren't suitable for each other and you only treat me as a sister, I'll respect your decision no matter how much I like you. We've already decided on this. Perhaps I looked too upset when I returned. My brother got angry and... I've already persuaded my brother. Really, I couldn't hold him back. I don't know what happened to him.. He became so bad-tempered."

Chapter 2537: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (38)

"Brother Zhai, I apologize to you on behalf of my brother. Really, he's just feeling heartache for me. He didn't hit you deliberately. I hope you can forgive my brother. If you really want to blame someone, blame me. My brother did this for me. I will try my best to control my emotions in the

future and not look so sad or uncomfortable so that my brother wouldn't find you trouble in the future anymore."

"Oh..."

After a long while, Zhai Yaohui replied indifferently.

"Oh?" Qi Minlan couldn't help but repeat his words. What kind of answer was this?

She was hurt so badly by Zhai Yaohui and had suffered so many grievances. She didn't allow her brother to take revenge, and Zhai Yaohui only gave her an 'oh'?

Where was Zhai Yaohui's conscience? Where were his guilt and remorse?

"Is there anything else?" Zhai Yaohui stood up. He wiped his face and neck with a towel.

She had to say that the physique of a man who was a soldier was really attractive. He was like a walking hormonal machine.

Even women who didn't know how to appreciate muscled men could not help but blush when they witnessed this scene.

Qi Minlan's eyes floated for a while. She didn't look at Zhai Yaohui's looming and well-defined chest muscles. "Nothing else."

"If that's the case, go back. I have to take a shower."

"..." Qi Minlan took a breath. "Brother Zhai, are you angry at me because of my brother?"

Her brother wanted to hit Zhai Yaohui. What did this have to do with her? Zhai Yaohui's attitude wasn't right. Was his conscience really eaten by a dog?

"No." Zhai Yaohui hung the towel on his neck. "I really have something to attend to."

“Oh. I’ll head back then.”

Zhai Yaohui’s attitude was quite infuriating. Was Zhai Yaohui angry as he had fought with Shi Peng? Qi Minlan couldn’t tell from Zhai Yaohui’s expressionless face if he was angry, and even if he was, she also couldn’t tell if he was angry at Shi Peng or her.

Out of helplessness, Qi Minlan could only leave solemnly once again.

Once Qi Minlan left, Shi Peng walked over from the small room next to him. After laughing at himself, he sat next to Zhai Yaohui and said nothing.

Zhai Yaohui looked at Shi Peng pitifully. Shi Peng was quite unlucky to have such a sister.

1

Shi Peng wasn’t an unreasonable person. Even if Qi Minlan cried and kicked up a fuss, it was impossible for Shi Peng to find Zhai Yaohui and beat him up.

Both of them had the habit of exchanging blows with each other. In order to pacify Qi Minlan, Shi Peng came over to exchange blows with Zhai Yaohui after promising her verbally.

Actually, Qi Minlan wasn’t very observant.

It was never an overwhelming victory for either Zhai Yaohui or Shi Peng. If the two of them really fought hand-to-hand, it was impossible for Zhai Yaohui to just have tattered clothes and sweat profusely.

No matter what, his face would be bruised and swollen, and there would be blood at the corners of his mouth, right?

Based on Zhai Yaohui’s look just now, it could only be proven that Zhai Yaohui was engaged in rigorous exercise, not a fight.

Shi Peng didn’t say anything after he arrived. He just said that he wanted to practice with Zhai Yaohui.

Coincidentally, after Grandma Zhai kicked up a fuss, Zhai Yaohui felt troubled in his heart, and exchanging blows with Shi Peng could allow him to vent his frustration.

Who knew that Qi Minlan would come knocking on the door at this time and separately make her presence known in front of Zhai Yaohui and Shi Peng respectively?

After hearing Qi Minlan's words, how would Zhai Yaohui not understand that Shi Peng was forced over by her?

Qi Minlan was obviously the one who forced Shi Peng over to teach Zhai Yaohui a lesson. In the blink of an eye, Qi Minlan confused right and wrong and pushed all the blame and responsibility to Shi Peng alone.

Zhai Yaohui was very happy that he really only regarded Qi Minlan as a sister.

Otherwise, based on Qi Minlan's character, there would never be a peaceful day at home.

"Get lost. What kind of look is that?" Shi Peng was feeling uncomfortable in his heart. The truest side of his sister was finally shown to Zhai Yaohui. However, after becoming the betrayed person, Shi Peng didn't feel good in his heart.

Zhai Yaohui patted Shi Peng's shoulder. "If you're feeling uncomfortable, don't hold it back. You can practice with me. This matter more or less has something to do with me."

Shi Peng flung Zhai Yaohui's hand away. "There's no need to."

Zhai Yaohui knew that his sister, Qi Minlan, had a lot of thoughts. Could it be that Shi Peng felt this the first time today?

Shi Peng had long realized that ever since Qi Minlan knew why she was surnamed Qi and not Shi, she became weird and her character wasn't as likable as before.

It was just that he became the party concerned today and deeply experienced this again.

“However, I still have to congratulate you that the marriage with my sister didn’t work out. Otherwise, you would have plenty to worry about at home in the future.”

Even though she was his biological sister, Shi Peng had to admit that Qi Minlan was trouble.

Zhai Yaohui smiled. “I’ll no longer need to have a headache over your sister, but you do.”

Things between him and Qi Minlan didn’t work out and they were now brother and sister. This meant the two of them wouldn’t have anything to do with each other in the future.

However, Qi Minlan was going to be Shi Peng’s sister this lifetime. Could Shi Peng continue to not be involved in her matters?

Shi Peng’s face fell and he lay on the ground, not wanting to move. “Thank you. I still remember this. I don’t need you to remind me.”

After Shi Peng returned to the Shi family, Qi Minlan acted as if nothing had happened in front of Shi Peng. She surrounded him and kept addressing him as her good brother.

The more passionate she was, the colder Shi Peng’s heart was as he listened by the side.

While they were having a meal, Elder Shi suddenly said, “Shi Peng, how’s your competition with Zhai Yaohui? Is the possibility of you getting a promotion higher than Zhai Yaohui?”

Shi Peng paused in his action of eating. Initially, he didn’t plan to share this matter with his father.

He didn’t expect him to actually find out about it through other means.

Whoever won in this competition would mean that he had a high chance of becoming the successor of Chief Zhai, an old revolutionary.

Qi Minlan’s eyes shone. “Brother, will you be the next chief candidate if you win?”

If that was really the case, what was the point of her trying every means to be with Zhai Yaohui?

Although being the chief's sister didn't sound as nice as being the chief's wife, at least she had something to do with the chief!

"..." Upon seeing how concerned his father and sister were, Shi Peng felt uncomfortable in his heart. None of these two relatives considered for his good.

In the face of such selfish concern, Shi Peng felt cold in his heart. "Indeed, there is this matter."

"Are you confident?"

Old Master Shi's hand trembled and he became agitated. He no longer touched his favorite dishes.

Wasn't that the position that Old Master Shi had been persevering for all this while?

Chapter 2538: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (39)

It was fine if he wasn't in that position. He still had his son and grandson. As long as his descendants could do it, it similarly meant that their Shi family was no worse than others!

The opportunity that Old Master Shi had been yearning for had finally arrived.

As such, Old Master Shi didn't allow Shi Peng to make any mistakes in this matter. He had to win against Zhai Yaohui and get that position.

"Brother, you're so formidable. Furthermore, you entered the army three years earlier than Zhai Yaohui. Brother, I believe that you can definitely do it."

Shi Peng wondered. Was that so? It was only today that he found out how high a position he held in his sister's heart.

It was just that the matter his sister asked him to do was really difficult.

She was confident in him, but he wasn't. Would that do?

1

After what had happened today, Shi Peng's mentality for Qi Minlan had undergone great changes.

Shi Peng was very unwilling to believe that his biological sister acted differently in public and in private.

However, the truth told him that Qi Minlan was indeed such a person.

The saddest thing was that he was the target of her double-crossing. He could not help but feel upset.

When she was making use of him, she discredited him in front of Zhai Yaohui without even thinking about him. When she needed him, she addressed him as her brother with so much affection.

Seeing how Qi Minlan ran around like a butterfly among the flowers and the more affectionate Qi Minlan was to him, the more uncomfortable Shi Peng felt in his heart.

Such a person was his only biological sister.

Shi Peng laughed and didn't dare to think too much. He was afraid that the more he thought about it, the more he would suffer.

As Shi Peng was competing with Zhai Yaohui now, even if Zhai Yaohui had already told Qi Minlan that it was impossible between them and that he only treated her like a biological sister, Qi Minlan was still in a good mood every day.

Previously, Qi Minlan still kept a distance from the other boys she was dating, but from then on, Qi Minlan could be said to have simply let herself go.

Qi Minlan revealed to others, either intentionally or unintentionally, that she was now single and could accept other people's pursuits.

Upon hearing the news, Lanlan was undoubtedly the most depressed. “Minlan, isn’t that woman already gone? Why did you... Did you break up with Zhai Yaohui? It couldn’t be, right? Aren’t the two of you engaged? You actually gave up such a good man like Zhai Yaohui. Won’t that woman from the countryside benefit from this then?”

How good was Zhai Yaohui? He was good-looking and had a good family background.

If Qi Minlan didn’t want Zhai Yaohui, she would definitely regret it in the future.

No matter if she had little knowledge or not, Zhai Yaohui was the most outstanding man out of everyone she saw.

If she were Qi Minlan, she would definitely stay by Zhai Yaohui’s side and not leave him. She would also not let Zhai Yaohui have the opportunity to break up with her.

Was Minlan a fool for losing such a good boyfriend and then finding someone who was worse?

“What benefits are there?” Qi Minlan was stubborn. “I, Qi Minlan, have such good conditions. Plenty of people would want me. Lanlan, don’t worry. I’ll definitely do the things that I’ve promised you. Even if I and Zhai Yaohui broke up, I will definitely introduce you to a good match in the future. It’s a pity that my dad is quite old-fashioned. Otherwise, I would have just introduced you to my brother and let you be my sister-in-law.”

Lanlan blushed. “Minlan, what nonsense are you uttering?”

She knew how high Uncle Shi’s standards were.

Uncle Shi didn’t agree to let her be friends with Minlan at the start. Had she dared to have unrealistic ideas about being Uncle Shi’s daughter-in-law, she would have long disappeared from Minlan’s side.

“Lanlan, I’m telling you this as you’re my best friend. I’m not going to tell anyone else. My brother is competing with Zhai Yaohui. As long as my brother wins, he should be the next chief in the future. Even if Zhai Yaohui is capable, he would just be basking in his dad’s glory. What does he

have? A man like him isn't as good as you think he is. My brother relied on his abilities to become the chief. That's what I call capable!"

Qi Minlan was really quite proud of this.

Lanlan frowned and didn't want to say anything to agitate Qi Minlan.

However, she really wanted to ask, "Aren't they competing? The results aren't out yet."

Why was Qi Minlan so certain that the winner would definitely be Brother Shi instead of Zhai Yaohui?

Everyone in school had heard about how formidable Zhai Yaohui was.

If the eventual winner was really Zhai Yaohui, Qi Minlan would really be left with nothing.

"Minlan, don't you want to be well-prepared? Even if Zhai Yaohui really lost to your brother, he's pretty good as well. If, and I say if, Zhai Yaohui won, what will you do? If you continue to be together with Zhai Yaohui, you're not the future chief's sister but the future chief's wife. You will still gain in the end. Isn't that good?"

Wasn't this more secure?

Could it be that Qi Minlan didn't understand this?

However, the current situation didn't allow her to make such a decision. "You don't know that my brother entered the army a few years earlier than Zhai Yaohui. He has performed well. Zhai Yaohui is only in the army for a year. On what basis is he competing with my brother? I'm certain that my brother will win. Zhai Yaohui is so bad-tempered. Isn't he ignoring me because his father is the chief? When my brother becomes the chief, I'll see if he still treats me coldly like before."

Even if she really still wanted to be together with Zhai Yaohui as she thought he was the best, she had to wait until her brother defeated Zhai Yaohui and became the chief.

Qi Minlan believed that by then, she didn't need to take the initiative to find Zhai Yaohui. Zhai Yaohui would repent and seek her forgiveness.

Didn't Qi Minlan 'like' Zhai Yaohui because he was Chief Zhai's son?

If Qi Minlan was such a person, she naturally felt that others were the same.

Seeing how confident Qi Minlan was, Lanlan could only swallow her words of persuasion so that the two of them wouldn't argue.

Miao Jing naturally didn't know about the Zhai family's matters.

After leaving the Zhai family, Miao Jing didn't adapt well for a period of time at the start.

After all, the Zhai family's conditions were too good.

Thankfully, Miao Jing had led an extremely miserable life at Second Uncle Miao's house. As such, she had already trained her adaptability.

After Miao Jing got used to working life, she looked better every day and there were more smiles on her face.

“Are you counting money again? Haven't I told you that if you have money, don't always take it out? You have to keep it well. If you lose it, there's no point crying then.”

Miao Jing's colleague saw Miao Jing counting money and couldn't help but remind her.

Chapter 2539: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (40)

As colleagues, everyone appeared kind and friendly on the surface. However, when it came to money, nothing was certain.

Even if they stayed in the same dormitory, who knew what kind of person the roommates were?

“I won’t lose it,” Miao Jing answered confidently. “I’ve already accumulated a hundred yuan. I’m going to return this to someone.”

She had earned this sum of money with her hard work. She could finally repay the favors of the Zhai family.

Even if there wasn’t enough money and it was far less than what the Zhai family had spent on her, it was fine. She was still young.

She would return a hundred yuan this time and another hundred yuan the next. A few years down the road, she could naturally clear her debt.

“That relative of yours?”

Her colleague had heard of Miao Jing’s situation.

There was no choice. Miao Jing’s monthly salary was fifty to sixty yuan. That was quite a lot.

However, Miao Jing was always reluctant to spend it on food or clothes. When the salary was paid, she always kept it well. She had never seen her spend a single cent.

Based on this, couldn’t Miao Jing save a hundred yuan after two months?

“Speaking of which, that relative of yours treats you well.”

Upon thinking that Miao Jing had no parents but her relative was willing to fetch her over to stay and groom her to study, she felt that it was really rare to have such honest relatives nowadays.

“Yes, I will definitely repay them well in the future.”

Miao Jing was well-liked in the factory as she felt grateful to others and was seeking ways to return their kindness.

Even if Miao Jing rarely mentioned this relative's situation and didn't share much content other than she was full of gratitude, anyone could guess that Miao Jing's relative was in good condition.

Why was that the case?

Miao Jing's job was not bad, right?

Being a worker at a factory was a good job that many people yearned for.

One had to know that everyone knew how many workers were needed in each factory. Under normal circumstances, newbies couldn't get in.

Only if the parents working as workers gave up their positions to their children would there be slight changes to personnel in the factory.

When Miao Jing got in, no one in the factory had given up their position for her. That said, Miao Jing's relative was really capable.

Secondly, look at Miao Jing's dressing.

Miao Jing's clothes weren't bad, and they were fifty to sixty percent new.

Miao Jing had said before that she didn't have parents. So, where did these new clothes come from? They must have been bought by that relative.

Miao Jing had such a capable and wealthy relative. As long as Miao Jing was more thick-skinned and stayed close to them, Miao Jing could rely on them for a living forever without having to work.

However, Miao Jing didn't. Not only did she take the initiative to work, but she even saved all her salary so that she could pay the relative back.

Based on Miao Jing's actions, the elders in the factory thought highly of her. They felt that she was a rare good girl.

Really, based on Miao Jing's good character, a lot of people would have gone to the Miao family and wanted them to be their in-laws if not for Miao Jing having no parents and there was no one left in her family.

However, even if that was the case, it wasn't that no one had developed a sharp eye for discovering capable people.

On the contrary, people who fancied Miao Jing and wanted to find a chance to interact with her might not be the best-rounded, but their conditions weren't bad.

"Miao Jing, are you really not joining us for the movie the night after tomorrow? Don't worry about it being too late. A lot of male colleagues from our factory will be going as well. It's definitely safe. If it wasn't safe, I wouldn't have dared to go myself." Her colleague blinked and said to Miao Jing, "You're going to your relative's house tomorrow. You can watch a movie the day after tomorrow. Isn't this schedule great? There won't be any delay at all."

Miao Jing shook her head. "I'm not going. Watching a movie costs money."

Rather than spending money on boring things like watching movies, she'd rather save it so that she could return it to the Zhai family sooner.

Her colleague became anxious. "How much does it cost for a movie ticket? Furthermore, you don't have to spend a single cent. Someone's treating you!"

Most importantly, the person treating her was a male colleague!

Miao Jing insisted. "If someone's treating, then all the more I'm not going. It's not easy for me to earn money. It isn't easy for anyone to earn money. How would I have the cheek to take advantage of people like that? How can I go just because someone's willing to treat me? I'm not going."

She was really not used to spending other people's money. "It's late. I'm tired. I shall sleep first."

As she said this, Miao Jing packed up her things and removed her clothes. She lay on the bed and fell asleep quickly.

Upon seeing Miao Jing like this, her colleague sighed. Did Miao Jing understand? If male and female colleagues went to watch a movie together, it was equivalent to going on a date.

Miao Jing had already moved out of her relative's house. She had to find a marriage partner and give birth to children, right?

Seeing that they were still young and could afford to be picky, Miao Jing should look around more.

Don't casually find someone to marry only after they became old. That would be suffering a loss.

Her colleague had the heart to persuade her, but Miao Jing was already asleep. Out of helplessness, her colleague could only sleep as well. She was thinking of how to explain to that male colleague who fancied Miao Jing the day after tomorrow so that he wouldn't misunderstand her.

It was fine that they didn't make it to the movies this time. There was always another time.

The times were different now. The movies in the cinema played at an increased frequency.

"Miao Miao, you're here to visit Aunt?"

Once Miao Jing returned to the Zhai family, the sick Grandma Zhai immediately regained her spirits. She held Miao Jing's hand and sat down. When they chatted, she looked alive. "How were you at the factory for the past two months? Have you adapted well? Are you getting along well with your colleagues? Did anyone bully you?"

Grandma Zhai's nervous look was as if her daughter who had just joined the workforce was finally home. Grandma Zhai was afraid that her precious daughter would be bullied outside and wouldn't tell her that she was suffering.

Miao Jing understood that Grandma Zhai was concerned about her. As such, she shared some details with her. "Aunt, don't worry. My colleagues treat me well. They even invited me to watch a movie tomorrow. There would be a lot of people."

"A lot of people?!" Grandma Zhai became alert. "Are they all female colleagues?"

“No, there are male colleagues as well. They invited me to a movie and even said that I don’t need to pay as they’ll be treating me. You really don’t have to worry about me. I’m good outside.”

The speaker had no particular intention of mentioning something, but the listener read too much into it.

1

There were male colleagues, and they even wanted to pay for Miao Jing’s movie ticket. If nothing was brewing, Grandma Zhai expressed that she would have lived for years in vain. “A male colleague invited you to a movie? Is it during the day or night?”

“It’s not a male colleague who invited me but my female colleague who lives in the same dormitory as me. It’s at night. It’s because it’s at night that male colleagues are joining us.. It’s safer for everyone to stay together.”

Chapter 2540: Miao Jing and Zhai Yaohui (41)

“But I didn’t accept the invitation. It’s quite tiring working every day. If I have free time, it would be better to read some books or get more rest.”

That was truly how Miao Jing felt.

The factory didn’t allow her to do it, and she had to remain in the dormitory.

Otherwise, Miao Jing would definitely have spent her time doing some handicraft instead of watching a movie.

It was true that her pay was low, but it was money nonetheless.

The Zhai family had spent quite a lot of money on her. All she thought about was how she could earn more money to repay the Zhai family as soon as possible.

Since the factory didn't allow her to start her own small business, she would much rather remain in the dormitory to read than watch a movie with a bunch of people.

Grandma Zhai grabbed hold of Miao Jing's hand and smiled. "That's true. It's tiring to work and run around when you have the free time."

She had a sense of whether others had feelings for Miao Miao.

But she was also sure that Miao Miao had no feelings for the other party.

If Miao Miao felt that the other party was good, Yaohui would stand no chance.

"Miao Miao, after you left, I had no one to chat with. Since you guys have the time for a movie tomorrow night, why don't you stay here with me instead tonight?"

Miao Jing shook her head. "That won't do. I still have to work tomorrow. I just end an hour and a half earlier than usual tomorrow."

It would be much more convenient to stay in the dormitory so that she would be able to get to work on time.

If she were to stay in the Zhai family's house, she would surely be late unless she woke up exceptionally early.

"Oh." Grandma Zhai didn't want Miao Jing to lose sleep just to spend time with her. "Then, can you visit me again tomorrow? Look, I'm the only one in such a big house. Sometimes, I feel that there's no point in living such a life anymore."

Her son was all grown up and was of marriageable age, but he had delayed his plans time and again and had even rejected his only marriage partner a month ago.

Grandma Zhai didn't know when Zhai Yaohui would finally be willing to get married and give her a grandchild.

She was home alone and had nothing to do. This loneliness was driving her crazy.

Miao Jing felt a little embarrassed but could feel Grandma Zhai's loneliness. Thus, she had no choice but to nod. "Alright. I'll visit you again tomorrow. Auntie, it isn't early anymore. I'll head back first."

"Alright. I'll see you again tomorrow."

Grandma Zhai was over the moon, and even when Old Zhai returned, she was still smiling widely.

"What's the matter? Why are you in such a good mood?"

"Miao Miao came to visit me and said that she'll come again tomorrow. Oh right, Miao Miao brought me a present. I haven't opened it yet. Oh, it's a scarf. It's beautiful and warm. I..."

As Grandma Zhai took the scarf up and wrapped it around her neck, a few notes fell to the ground. "Miao Miao..."

It turned out that Miao Miao hadn't come to visit her but to return her money today.

In the short span of two months, not only had Miao Jing earned enough to buy a present for Grandma Zhai, but she had even returned them a hundred yuan. Old Zhai was impressed. "Alright, Miao Miao is being filial to you. Just accept it. Once Miao Miao and Yaohui get married in the future, the money will still be theirs eventually. It doesn't matter who keeps the money for now. Just treat it as though you're safekeeping it for the children."

It was no big deal.

"I'm worried that Miao Miao isn't eating well or taking care of herself just to save this sum of money. Do you understand?"

"No, Miao Miao knows that her health is her capital. You're underestimating Miao Miao."

"I'm underestimating Miao Miao? Then, do you think very highly of your son?"

“What do you mean?” Old Zhai stopped in his tracks and walked over to sit down next to Grandma Zhai.

Grandma Zhai sighed. “Miao Miao told me today that a male worker invited her to watch a movie for free tomorrow night. What do you think that male worker means? Do you think he has too much money to spare that he’s treating Miao Miao to a movie at night? Thankfully, Miao Miao didn’t agree to it. Otherwise... No, I feel so panicked.”

“Oh?” Old Zhai couldn’t ignore the matter either. “Wait a minute. Let me make a call to Yaohui.”

Old Zhai had already guessed that someone would surely fall for a good young lady like Miao Jing. What he had not expected was his son’s love rival to appear so quickly! It had only been two months since Miao Jing had started working.

Wasn’t this a little too fast?

“Hello, Dad. What’s the matter?” In order to prove himself and show that he was outstanding in and of himself, and not just because he was his father’s son, Zhai Yaohui didn’t have much rest each day.

Zhai Yaohui had only taken a break a month ago because his leader had forced him to do so along with Shi Peng.

“A male worker invited Miao Miao for a movie tomorrow night. He’s paying for her.”

Zhai Yaohui, who had a fountain pen in his hand, was stunned. Not only had he ruined his writing, but he had even pierced a hole through several pieces of paper because of how hard he was pressing down on the pen.

Looking at the pen, Zhai Yaohui knew that he had ruined his pen.

As such, Zhai Yaohui took out a new pen from his drawer, pulled out the cap, and tried to fill the pen with ink.

But even after a long time, he had not been able to fill it properly.

Zhai Yaohui took a deep breath and gave up on the pen. “Is Miao Miao going?”

“Do you think Miao Miao should go?”

“Of course not!” Why was this even a question? “It’s too unsafe for her to be going out alone with a man at night. It will be bad for her reputation as well. If that male comrade has feelings for Miao Miao, he should come to our house and visit us. He’s too frivolous, not suitable for Miao Miao!”

Zhai Yaohui had just stopped short of saying that the other party might be a beast that was waiting to take advantage of Miao Miao. What would they do then?

“You spend all your time in the military and don’t even get to see any girls. What do you know? We’re in a free society. Young people are free to date whoever they like. What’s wrong with them trying to get to know each other through watching a movie together? I think Miao Miao should go. Miao Miao’s greatest wish in her whole life is to have a family of her own...”

“Isn’t our family her family? She already has one!”

Zhai Yaohui raised his voice as anger bubbled up within him.

Wasn’t she being too greedy to desire another family when she already had one?

“That’s her extended family. Miao Miao should have a small family of her own. But it doesn’t matter even if you think that Miao Miao’s male colleague isn’t good.. I already said that it will be easy for us to recommend a good male comrade to Miao Miao given our family’s status.”