

## Middle Age 77

### Chapter 77: A Man and a Woman Alone in a Room

After both parties signed the contract, Brother Peng stayed behind to continue discussing follow-up issues with Mendeleyev, while Qi Yun left first.

Leaving the hotel, he hailed a cab by the roadside and headed in the direction of Wei Yong's house.

When it comes to fruit, Wei Yong is the expert, so he had already discussed this matter with him last night. The two decided to first take a look at the situation before making a decision.

"Knock knock knock"

Qi Yun arrived at the door of Wei Yong's house and raised his hand to knock on the door.

After a short while, the door opened from the inside, surprising him as it was Wei Yong's sister-in-law who answered.

"Brother Qi!" The sister-in-law's eyes lit up with a touch of excitement when she saw Qi Yun standing at the door, her tone joyful.

Qi Yun was slightly taken aback, then immediately put on a polite smile: "Ah, not working today?"

"No, we only officially start work tomorrow." The sister-in-law softly replied while gracefully squatting down to bring Qi Yun some slippers.

Qi Yun slightly nodded, asking no more questions. He remembered Wei Yong mentioning that she worked as a salesperson at a 4S store; starting work a few days later was normal.

Today, the sister-in-law was wearing a loose-fitting home outfit, yet even so, her squatting unintentionally outlined her alluring curves.

Qi Yun quickly glanced over, then hurriedly shifted his gaze inside the house and asked, "Where's Old Wei? I called him, but no one answered."

"Brother-in-law said earlier that he went to get the car serviced, probably didn't take his phone." The sister-in-law said this as she considerately placed the slippers by Qi Yun's feet.

Qi Yun thanked her, put on the slippers, and walked inside, slowly sitting down on the sofa.

The sister-in-law quickly brought over a steaming cup of tea and said softly, "Brother Qi, please sit for a while, brother-in-law should be back soon."

"Oh, is it just you at home?" Qi Yun casually asked.

"Yes, my sister and Xiaoqin went to buy groceries together." The sister-in-law said as she sat down gently beside Qi Yun.

The subtle fragrance from the sister-in-law filled the air, and with a man and a woman alone in the room, Qi Yun couldn't help but feel a bit awkward.

But at the moment, it seemed hard to find a topic of conversation, so he could only stare intently at the TV screen in front of him.

The sister-in-law seemed to also sense the slightly awkward atmosphere, cleared her throat lightly, and broke the silence first: "Brother Qi, where's Nuannuan? Is she home alone?"

"No, Nuannuan went to the park with a neighbor today."

The sister-in-law gently nodded, then earnestly looked over Qi Yun again, with a smile at the corner of her mouth: "Brother Qi, you're quite well-dressed today."

Even though Qi Yun wasn't thin-skinned, upon hearing this his old face still flushed because it had been many years since anyone used the word "handsome" to describe him.

Considering he was discussing business with Mendelejev today, he had deliberately dressed a bit formally this morning, even pulling out his cherished coat.

"Oh, I just went to discuss business, needed to dress decently. At my age, what's there to be handsome about?" Qi Yun touched his nose and responded.

The sister-in-law covered her mouth and laughed gently, "Brother Qi is already handsome by nature and has a masculine charm. A little dressing up makes you even more outstanding."

Qi Yun felt a little embarrassed, so he tactically picked up the teacup to drink water.

At this moment, the sound of unlocking the door came from outside, and Wei Yong was back.

"Hey, Old Qi's here?"

"Yeah, I've just arrived, is the car all set?" Qi Yun took the opportunity to stand up and said.

"All sorted, shall we head out now?"

Qi Yun nodded: "Let's go then, the earlier we leave, the sooner we'll return."

"Alright, let's go."

With that, Wei Yong put on the jacket he had taken off halfway, with a portion of his phone sticking out from his pocket.

The sister-in-law also stood up from the sofa to see them off: "You two drive safely, goodbye Brother Qi."

"Alright, see you." Qi Yun politely replied.

The two of them went downstairs and got into Wei Yong's small truck, heading to Bayin, which was about a hundred kilometers away.

Taking the national highway, it took nearly two hours to reach their destination.

Judging by the architectural style, this area seemed to be predominantly inhabited by ethnic minorities. The houses on both sides had distinctive features, with unique roof designs and colorful paintings on the walls, exuding a strong ethnic vibe.

Along the way, Qi Yun repeatedly asked several times about the location of Ding Kang's strawberry farm, but the locals couldn't understand Mandarin, so communication was impossible.

Eventually, they only obtained detailed directions from the local government office.

The small truck bumped along the country roads. On either side were fields and orchards, and they finally saw some greenhouses up ahead. A wooden sign at the entrance read "Strawberries for Sale."

They got out of the car and entered the farm. In front of them, there were three greenhouses, with an estimated total area of over a thousand square meters, not very large in scale.

A scruffy middle-aged man stood ahead with a feed bowl feeding chickens. He looked up at them and asked, "What do you need?"

"Hello, we're looking for Boss Ding Kang."

The middle-aged man placed the feed bowl on a nearby chair and walked over: "I'm Ding Kang."

Qi Yun was slightly taken aback, then politely smiled.

Taking two steps forward, he extended his hand and said, "Boss, hello, my name is Qi Yun, and this is my friend Wei Yong. We are in the fruit business and wanted to see if there's any opportunity for collaboration."

Upon hearing this, Ding Kang's face lit up with joy: "In the fruit business? Perfect, come quickly to see my strawberries." With that, he grabbed Qi Yun's hand and led him toward the greenhouse.

Wei Yong hurriedly followed behind.

Walking into the greenhouse, a rich aroma of strawberries filled the air.

Rows of strawberry plants were neatly arranged, and most of the strawberries were plump and bright red, clearly on the verge of ripening.

"Look here, my strawberries are all grown with organic fertilizers, not sprayed with any harmful pesticides, absolutely green and healthy." As Ding Kang spoke, he casually picked a few strawberries and handed them to Qi Yun and Wei Yong, "Try them, I'm sure the taste will satisfy you."

Although Qi Yun wasn't very knowledgeable about fruits, the strawberries did indeed seem different from those he had bought several times before from the fruit supermarket.

Firstly, they were smaller, and secondly, not as visually appealing as those sold in supermarkets.

But the taste was very sweet, and juicy.

"So, what do you think? Didn't disappoint you, did I?" Ding Kang looked at the two with eyes full of expectation.

"My strawberries are naturally grown, without using any growth-enhancing agents, so they are smaller and not as visually appealing, but in terms of taste and quality, there's no question."

"The ones in this greenhouse are about to be harvested, and I have another batch stored in the town's cold storage from a few days ago."

After tasting some, Wei Yong nodded slightly: "They're alright, but don't you usually have your strawberries reserved before they're even picked? Why do you have some in cold storage?"

Ding Kang's face suddenly darkened, and he sighed heavily, "Ah, this year's market is really unusual. Usually, around this time, people would be scrambling to pre-order even before the strawberries were ripe."

"This year, I don't know why, but all our old clients said they couldn't sell them. I harvested 3,000 kilograms last time and sold less than half of it, so I've no choice but to store them in the cold storage to hold on for a few more days."

Upon hearing this, Qi Yun also fell silent. Farmers like them dread two situations the most: natural disasters and goods that don't sell.

After pondering for a moment, he asked, "How much do you have in the cold storage? How is it being preserved?"

At this point, Ding Kang frowned even more: "There's about 2,000 kilograms left in the cold storage, and it might keep for another three or four days. If it doesn't sell by then, it'll be a total loss."

"Have you tried looking for buyers in the city?" Wei Yong asked as well.

"Oh, I've tried, but the supermarkets and wholesale markets don't want my type. Smaller fruit shops need too little, their prices are low, and transporting them there would be a significant loss." Ding Kang said helplessly.

Qi Yun thought for a moment, then smiled and said, "Boss Ding, we'd love to help you, but this is quite a large quantity. Give us a moment to discuss if there's any way to handle it."

Hearing this, Ding Kang's eyes sparked with hope, and he quickly said, "Sure, sure, you take your time to discuss. I'll wait here, hoping you two bosses can find a solution for me, or else my year's work will have been for nothing."

"Rest assured, I will definitely give you the lowest price."

Qi Yun nodded and gave Wei Yong a signal, and the two stepped outside.

"Old Wei, with his 2,000 kilograms in stock, plus what's about to be harvested, that's quite a quantity, and his strawberries really don't have the visual advantage. Do you have any ideas?"

Wei Yong folded his arms and pondered for a while before replying, "If it were just about a thousand kilograms, we could take a truckload back and set up a stand. It might sell well, but this two or three thousand kilograms..."

Qi Yun understood this logic as well. Although it's still February, the midday temperature has warmed up, and strawberries don't last long once out of the cold storage. If they don't sell, they will become a loss just to have them on hand.

He rubbed his chin, took two deep drags on his cigarette, and suddenly had an idea.

The street's milk tea shops seem to use strawberries as an ingredient. Lower-end ones might use strawberry pulp, but high-end shops use fresh strawberries.

With this in mind, he immediately called up Lao Feng.

"Hello, what's up, Old Qi?" The phone was very noisy on the other end. It seemed the hotpot restaurant was doing well.

"Lao Feng, here's the thing..."

"I remember there's a milk tea shop next to you. Can you ask them if they need strawberries?"

Lao Feng immediately agreed after listening: "Alright, I'll ask them now and call you back later."

After about ten minutes, Qi Yun's phone screen lit up with Lao Feng's call back.

Qi Yun quickly extinguished his half-smoked cigarette and pressed the answer button: "Hey, Lao Feng, how is it?"

"They usually use higher quality strawberry ingredients than average. If the price doesn't exceed 60 per kilogram, they might want several dozen kilograms."

"Alright, got it."

After hanging up, Qi Yun relayed the situation to Wei Yong.

Wei Yong nodded after listening, "If that's the case, it might indeed be feasible, but I'm not sure what price Ding Kang can offer us."