

URBAN MARTIAL SAINT

Chapter 5: Siblings of Different Surnames

At 7 PM, the family of five gathered together.

Thanks to Ye Qing's forty thousand yuan, Zhou Hongxia was generous for once, and they had a feast.

Zhou Hongxia's son, Yuan Xiaozheng, was the first to return. He could smell the aroma from far away and immediately ran to the kitchen, completely ignoring Ye Qing sitting in the living room.

Yuan Xiaoyu didn't get home until it was almost dark. She was five years younger than Ye Qing. Without attending university, she only completed two years of vocational school before returning to the county. After loitering around at home for two years, she finally found a job as a receptionist at a karaoke hall in the county.

Having not seen her for five years, Yuan Xiaoyu had changed significantly. She was no longer that somewhat rebellious girl of the past. Now dressed in a business suit, with heavy makeup on her face, one could smell the strong perfume from a distance. Wearing a black miniskirt with her tall figure and black stockings, she did have some good looks.

However, from the moment she saw Ye Qing, she didn't give him a proper glance, unchanged from how she had been in previous years.

Ye Qing politely greeted her, but she just coldly snorted in response. Seeing Ye Qing's military uniform, her lips curled in disdain.

Ye Qing didn't pay attention to her either, just sitting beside his father, listening to him talk about going to Shenchuan.

Finally, when the food was ready, Yuan Xiaozheng came out of the kitchen. He was almost full from the food he had been eating all this time, but he didn't even acknowledge Ye Qing and acted as if he didn't exist.

This was the attitude of these siblings towards Ye Qing, which Ye Qing had long since gotten used to, so he wasn't the slightest bit angry. He didn't have much hope for this home—the only thing he worried about now was his father.

Zhou Hongxia served the dishes and called her children over to sit down, and the five of them finally sat at the same table.

Ye Changwen, in a rare mood, brought out a bottle of alcohol, joyfully saying, "Xiao Yu, Xiao Zheng, this is your brother Qingzi. He's retired now and can come back for good. After all, you are siblings, so you should get closer to each other from now on!"

Yuan Xiaoyu glanced at Ye Qing and said, "Uncle, isn't it not time for retirement yet? How come Qingzi brother has come back? What happened, couldn't you stay in the army anymore?"

"How could that be possible?" said Ye Changwen, a little embarrassed, and he hurriedly explained the reason for Ye Qing's return and mentioned how Ye Qing had brought back forty thousand yuan.

"Hmph, five years in the army and you only bring back forty thousand. Qingzi brother, you were a high achiever from a prestigious university. How come your salary is even less than that of a construction worker?" Yuan Xiaoyu, full of contempt, added, "Although I only did two years of vocational school, my annual salary isn't less than thirty thousand.

You, on the other hand, how much is the army stipend per year, even ten thousand?"

Ye Changwen felt even more embarrassed, but since Yuan Xiaoyu was Zhou Hongxia's daughter, he didn't have the heart to stop her.

Ye Qing replied calmly, "Army stipends were never high to begin with, and we don't do much labor, mainly training. We get our food and clothing from the state, so a little stipend is enough!"

"Oh, is that so?" sneered Yuan Xiaoyu, looking at Ye Qing. "Qingzi brother, if I'm not mistaken, you're twenty-six this year, right? Have you thought about your future? At your age, you should consider marriage. But without a house, what will you offer for marriage? You've earned forty thousand in five years; what can you do with that?

Do you know that good location houses in the county are nearly five thousand yuan per square meter? Can your forty thousand even buy a few square meters? Enough for a bathroom? How do you plan to get married? Are you going to decorate a toilet as your bridal chamber?"

Hearing this, Ye Changwen grew angry, and Zhou Hongxia also thought her daughter had gone too far, immediately saying, "Xiao Yu, watch your words!"

Once Zhou Hongxia spoke, Ye Changwen found it difficult to say more. However, Yuan Xiaoyu completely disregarded her mother's rebuke, giving Ye Qing a scornful laugh and the look of utter disdain on her face.

Ye Qing's expression remained calm as he said, "Auntie, Xiao Yu is right, these matters do indeed need consideration. Now that I've retired, I should find a good job and it's crucial to earn money for a house as soon as possible."

Yuan Xiaoyu scoffed, "Oh? Who do you think you are, Bill Gates or Li Ka-shing? You're twenty-six already, how much faster can you be? Will you be

able to afford a house by thirty? If a man has nothing by thirty, who do you expect will look up to you!"

"Xiao Yu, shut your mouth!" Zhou Hongxia slammed the table, as she had taken five thousand yuan from Ye Qing during the day and now felt obliged to give him some face.

"I won't shut up!" retorted Yuan Xiaoyu angrily. "Mom, don't you see? Why do you think he's come back now? He knows about the possible demolition and compensation here, so he immediately retired and came back to grab the money!"

As soon as she said this, Zhou Hongxia was also taken aback, turning to look at Ye Qing with hostility in her eyes.

Ye Qing responded indifferently, "I came back this time only for Xiao Jun's business. I won't take a penny of the demolition money."

"Qingzi, what are you saying!" exclaimed Ye Changwen immediately. "You are my son, and this is our family house. If there's a demolition, you should get your share of the money!"

Yuan Xiaoyu immediately cried out, "Mom, look, hear what Uncle is saying. When he says 'our home', does that 'our' include us, mother and daughters or not?"

"Ye Changwen, what are you really trying to say!" Zhou Hongxia exploded with anger.

At that moment, the room suddenly became lively, with Zhou Hongxia and Ye Changwen starting to argue with each other first.

Ye Qing felt utterly helpless. He had returned indeed because of his brother Ye Jun's affairs and had never intended to take a penny from his family. In fact, he had given all his money to Zhou Hongxia, hoping only to foster familial harmony. Yet, to his dismay, it ended up causing a commotion.

Just as Zhou Hongxia and Ye Changwen were having an irreconcilable argument, a tall woman in her early twenties entered the yard. Her features were pretty, but her overly glamorous makeup added a worldly air to her beauty. Her eyes, though beautiful, held a hint of slyness.

As the woman entered the room, she immediately drew the attention of the people inside. Yuan Xiaoyu was the first to be taken aback, but she quickly put on a smiling face and stood up, saying warmly, "Manager Lin, what brings you here? Is there an issue at the karaoke hall? Do you need me to go back and help?"

The woman was none other than Lin Mengjie, the owner and manager of the Lanwan Karaoke Hall where Yuan Xiaoyu worked. Ignoring Yuan Xiaoyu, Lin Mengjie scanned the room and her gaze finally settled on Ye Qing. She walked straight over and said, "You must be Mr. Ye Qing."

"Yes, I am," Ye Qing replied, though he was somewhat surprised as he didn't recognize this person.

Lin Mengjie continued, "Old Fifth Yang, Boss Yang, has reserved the best VIP room at the Lanwan Karaoke Hall. He would like to invite you over for a visit. He specifically asked me to come and extend the invitation. I wonder if it would be convenient for you to make the trip?"

At these words, the few people in the room were all taken aback. Old Fifth Yang was one of the most prominent businessmen in the county in recent years. He started as a small-time thug but made a fortune when a gold mine was discovered in the county. He claimed a mining area for himself and struck it rich.

Once the gold mines were reorganized, he used his wealth to lease gold mines and expand his business. He then invested in real estate and developed several successful properties. Now, he had become the wealthiest businessman in the county.

None of the people in the room, except Yuan Xiaoyu, had seen Old Fifth Yang in person. In fact, Yuan Xiaoyu had only seen him a few times at the reception desk and had never had a chance to exchange words with him.

However, what was going on this time? Why would Old Fifth Yang send someone to invite Ye Qing over? Were they close acquaintances?

Ye Qing frowned slightly. He didn't know Old Fifth Yang, but the fact that Yang had suddenly sent an invite made the situation quite clear. It seemed to be related to the incident in the afternoon when he had gotten into a fight.

"Not convenient," Ye Qing stated bluntly, leaving Yuan Xiaoyu nearly fainting on the spot.

Old Fifth Yang invites you to sit with him, and regardless of the matter, that is giving you a lot of face. And you dare to refuse? That was incredibly audacious!

Manager Lin said, "Mr. Ye, Boss Yang merely wishes to have a talk with you. There's nothing else."

"Not convenient!" Ye Qing repeated, this time with a firmer tone.

"Oh, I see," Lin Mengjie nodded and replied, "Boss Yang said that we should not force anyone to do anything unwillingly. Mr. Ye, if you don't wish to come, I won't make you. However, since this was an errand given to me by Boss Yang, I would have trouble explaining to him if I can't fulfill it."

Lin Mengjie paused, glanced toward Yuan Xiaoyu, and said, "Well, if you don't come, then Xiao Yu doesn't have to show up for work tomorrow."

Yuan Xiaoyu panicked immediately: "Manager Lin, how... how is this related to me?"

Lin Mengjie replied calmly, "If it concerns him, it concerns you."

Yuan Xiaoyu quickly turned to Ye Qing, pleading, "Mr. Ye, can't you handle your own issues? Why drag me into this?"

"What in the world is going on?" Ye Changwen stood up and asked, somewhat intimidated by the opulently dressed woman.

"It's nothing serious, just an invitation for Mr. Ye to go and have a visit," Lin Mengjie explained with a light smile. "Mr. Ye, please consider it."

Yuan Xiaoyu glared at Ye Qing, her voice shrill, "Ye Qing, you go right now! I don't care if you have to kneel or bow to Boss Yang, but you cannot involve me in this!"

"Qingzi, Xiao Yu... Xiao Yu's job is not easy to come by," Zhou Hongxia said, her voice breaking into a cry.

"Broom Star, picking fights the moment you get back!" Yuan Xiaozheng burst out angrily, the high school student having no fondness for Ye Qing.

"Qingzi, what exactly happened..." Ye Changwen's voice trembled.

Ye Qing looked at Lin Mengjie, remaining silent for a long while before slowly nodding and saying, "Dad, Auntie, you two eat at home. I'll go and see."

"Qingzi!" Ye Changwen reached out to pull at Ye Qing, but Ye Qing patted his hand, signaling that he shouldn't worry.

"Make it clear, once you get there, speak well with Boss Yang. Don't let this issue involve me, understand?" Yuan Xiaoyu glared furiously at Ye Qing before turning to Lin Mengjie with a forced smile, "Manager Lin, he's just returned from the military and doesn't know our ways. Please... don't be upset!"

Lin Mengjie smiled faintly: "As long as Mr. Ye goes, everything is negotiable."