

A True Story from the Late Qing Dynasty

China Uncensored Staff

In the late Qing dynasty period, late 19th century, in Shanghai:

Mr. Jia was asked by his boss to collect money from Nanshi district, which is located near the Huangpo river ferry service. After nearly half a day's running around, and talking to many old clients, Mr. Jia had collected over 1800 yuan for his boss's company. By that time, Jia was also very thirsty, hungry and tired, but he wanted to get back to his boss quickly, so he sat down in a tea house to have a quick cup of tea before rushing back.

Shock! Jia discovered after he arrived at his company that his little leather money bag was not with him! He felt his head spinning, he could not think clearly, and he was all sweaty and shaking, as 1800 yuan in China at that time was almost enough for a person to survive for a whole lifetime. His boss was certainly very upset.

Meanwhile, a Mr. Yi went to the tea house and sat where Jia had been sitting. Mr. Yi tried to get some business going, but did not have much luck, so he planned to go back home early, as he was living on the other side of the Huan po river. There was still some time before the ferry left, so he sat down for some tea.

While waiting for tea to be served he found a little leather bag, and it felt heavy. He opened it: Good lord, that much money! My life is saved! He felt so good. But soon, he worried that if someone might, because of losing this money, lose more things in life, could possibly even lose his life!

An old Chinese saying: "Do not take indecent money." Mr Yi thought: "If I took this money, I might as well take the full responsibility to make sure the money gets back to the real owner."

Mr. Yi sat there waiting. Many people came and went, and just before sunset, Mr. Yi saw a person with a pale facial expression stumble along the street towards the tea house, with another two people following him. After the three entered the house, the pale faced man looking around and told the two man with him in desperation: "Here it was, I sat here!..." The three of them all keep looking up and down.... Mr. Yi figured that they must be the real owners, so asked the man: " Are you looking for a leather bag?" Mr. Jia nod his head continuously and said: "

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Yes, Yes!" and he could not believe that Mr. Yi handed him the money bag! Mr. Jia wanted to kneel down before Mr. Yi, and said, "You saved my life! I was going to hang myself tonight if I could not find this!"

Earlier back at the company, Mr. Jia asked his boss to let him check the route he had passed that morning, but his boss wondered if Mr. Jia had really lost the money or just wanted to escape, so asked two men to accompany Mr. Jia.

"Well, check the amount of money." Mr. Yi asked Mr. Jia. Jia checked, and not one yuan was missing.

Jia insisted on offering Mr. Yi 20% of the amount. Yi refused. "10%?...5%?..." Jia kept pursuing Mr. Yi, but Yi still refused. Jia suggested: "Could I invite you for a dinner?" Yi would still not accept. Jia finally said to Yi : "I will prepare a small meal at breakfast tomorrow for you at XX restaurant, I won't leave if we do not meet!" and Jia and his two workmates left.

The next day, Jia saw Mr. Yi arrive at restaurant. Jia was just about to raise his glass to thank Yi, when Yi shouted to thank Jia first: "Just because you left your money bag, you saved my life! The ferry that I meant to take yesterday afternoon was over turned midway, due to heavy tides, all 23 people on that ferry drowned!"Everyone in the restaurant was startled by the news and praised Mr. Yi's noble deed that saved two lives.

That was not the end of the story. Mr. Jia's boss, was so happy, and wanted to meet a person with such integrity. The boss met Yi, and they became good friend instantly. The boss invited Mr. Yi to work for his company as the accountant. Soon Mr. Yi became the son in law of the boss, and took over the whole business.

Mr. Yi's story spread far and wide and many people came to do business with this company.

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