

## Constellation Door

### Chapter 26: Master and Disciple (4)

“Alright. I will call the Inspection Office immediately and send them over. If Zhang Yuan was murdered, the academy won’t ignore the matter either. Leave the place for now. In an hour at most, people from the Inspection Office and the Silver City Ancient Academy will be there.”

“Thank you so much, Professor,” said Li Hao gratefully. His teacher looked formidable but was very kind when his students needed him. That was why Li Hao was so reluctant to get him involved. He was unwilling to tell him about the red shadow.

Professor Yuan might seem scary and authoritative, but at the end of the day, he was an ordinary person like any other. Li Hao didn’t want to put his professor in danger.

“You’re welcome,” said Professor Yuan. After a few more talks, he cut off the communication.

...

Silver City ancient Academy.

Yuan Shuo was over seventy years old but he was still full of energy and very strong physically. He looked more like a soldier than a scholar.

There was a file on the desk in front of Professor Yuan Shuo. A file about six self-immolation cases.

“The Inspection Office is indeed full of holes!” He placed the communicator down. He rubbed his temples and cursed. It was so easy to get the files leaked. Many in the Silver City could get their hands on it if they were trying hard enough! The Inspection Office had become more and more careless over the years.

‘That student of mine is really... troublesome. He even went on to investigate the cases by himself! And he dares to report directly to the Inspection Office at that. Even at a glance, all this seems very unusual.’ Professor Yuan sighed. ‘You are really naïve, Li Hao,’ thought Professor Yuan. ‘Don’t you know the Inspection Office is full of holes?’

Anyone could see after having a look at the cases that they were connected. Something was terribly wrong.

“The Li family’s sword, the Zhang family’s saber, the Zhao family’s fist, the Liu family’s leg ...,” hummed Yuan Shuo. He wondered if this was related to Li Hao.

“Six people are dead,” he muttered. “I don’t know if the song is related to the deaths but...”

As a citizen of Silver City and much older in age, Yuan Shuo knew the song. He was a scholar. When he saw the names of the dead people in the case file, he was immediately reminded of the Silver City song. The surnames were all similar.

Yuan Shuo dialed a number in his communicator. “I am Yuan Shuo,” he said in a steady but commanding voice. “My student is in danger. The self-immolation case that happened a year ago might have been a homicide. Can you get more information on that?”

“...”

“I don’t care about that. Li Hao is my student. He became my student the moment he joined the academy. Do you know why? Because he is a genius! A top-tier explorer. He is the future of the Department of Ancient Civilization for all I know! Because of your negligence, he had no choice but to withdraw from the academy. Do you know how much damage that has caused?”

“...”

“Li Hao has made some excellent discoveries, but your Inspection Office is full of holes! He is in danger! He is at the Zhang house as we speak. I don’t care what you do but you have to save him from there. I don’t care if you have to level the streets, even! You have to get rid of ghosts and monsters, if that is what it’s going to take!”

“...”

“Cut the cr\*p! Send your people over immediately! I don’t care how big of a commotion it makes. Surround that street and push forward. Lure out the murderer who might be hiding there. I have only one request. Nothing should happen to Li Hao.”

“...”

“That’s it, then! If you can’t deal with that, then I will go directly to the Night Patrollers. Six self-immolation cases! SIX. Do you think I am blind? Anybody can see the connection. If my student dies because you are unwilling to take action, I will make a lot more fuss than this and skin your office, do you get me?”

“Professor Yuan, please calm down. I’ll deal with it immediately. Please don’t worry!” said the captain of the law enforcement team from the other end.

The captain had a headache. Professor Yuan didn't have direct control over the Inspection Division as a whole but he knew many powerful people. He had served at the Silver City Ancient Academy for almost fifty years, some of his students held many powerful titles around the Silver City.

If things got out of hand, it would truly be worrisome.

"Don't tell me not to worry! The academy will send someone there too. If nothing works, I am going to go personally. I would like to see who would dare to kill a student of the academy!" Yuan Shuo was enraged. Li Hao needed him to blow things up and he would do it gladly.

As for him, no one would dare to eliminate him. Far too many people knew him and needed him for now. As for Li Hao, he would make sure they didn't dare touch him at all.

Yuan Shuo's anger disappeared the moment he cut off the communication. He looked out of his room and sighed softly.

'Kid, you need to be careful. As for Zhang Yuan's matter, you have done enough,' thought Yuan Shuo.

"What a pity!" he mumbled regretfully. It was a pity that he couldn't draw in the mysterious energy himself. If he could, he could get involved more and solve this matter before it got out of control.

'If I could draw the mysterious energy, with my attainments of skills from The Book of Five Beasts, I would be three times stronger. All the ghosts, shadows and monsters would be insignificant!' thought Yuan Shuo.

"Hmph!" grunted Yuan Shuo in indignation. "If only the Night Patrollers could let me enter the mystical realm!" He wouldn't have worked with them otherwise.

All these years, he tried to think of a way but he was at a loss. He sighed. "Li Hao..."

'The Li family sword...', stuck in his mind.

Yuan Shuo closed his eyes. 'Li Hao should just return to the academy and be my assistant,' thought Yuan Shuo. He felt he was too old now and he needed to prepare a successor to take over his responsibilities.

## **Chapter 27: Silver City Law Enforcement Team (1)**

10 O'clock at night.

The sound of cars vrooming filled the air, The quiet old street hadn't been so lively for such a long time. Lights shone and people came out of the cars. Old street seemed to have come to life for a moment like in the past.

...

Li Hao watched the scene from in front of the Zhang family residence. He didn't want to be the center of attention. However, he changed his mind when he found out that he could interact with the red shadow.

He was suddenly in the spotlight now. Li Hao knew he was important but because of that, he had intended to keep a low-profile. But now, he wanted to let everyone know that he was investigating the case only because of Zhang Yuan and nothing else.

Li Hao wanted to establish that he had no personal stake in this. He was not trying to discover anything. He wanted everyone to assume that he was impulsive and impetuous and he made a mess because he was loyal to his friend. No other reason.

Perhaps people wanted to see him like that. Li Hao believed that would work in his favor. He wanted to establish himself as reckless and imprudent while lacking critical intelligence to understand things.

That was what Li Hao wanted to be seen as! It would lower his enemy's guard and make them think that he was stupid. But that wouldn't work either. If Li Hao was that stupid, he wouldn't have been able to catch the attention and favor of Professor Yuan Shuo that easily. That would seem too fake!

With each step, Li Hao thought about what he could and couldn't do. He had taken only a small stone and made such a big commotion. He needed this commotion to hide the fact that he had taken the stone in the first place.

If this story got out, no one would even believe it. That was what Li Hao was after. The more outrageous a story seems; the less people will pay attention to it.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Leather boots thudded on the ground. A team of fully armed Patrol Officers surrounded the old street. More Patrol Officers arrived and entered the Zhang family residence.

The Inspector General hadn't come, thankfully. But Li Hao recognized the brawny man at the front of the group. He was the captain of the law enforcement team. He was even rumored to be second-in-command to the Inspector General.

In level, he was considered the same as the Chief of Inspection Office, Wang Jie. However, his duties were entirely different, as was his authority.

The captain of the law enforcement team, Liu Long, wasn't to be trifled with.

He did not wear a black inspector uniform today but was in casual clothes with a trench coat over the shirt. It was not suitable for the current weather.

Li Hao figured he was carrying a lot of weapons under that trench coat. He had heard about the captain of the law enforcement team. He was tough and regal. He was also dangerous. This captain had killed many people.

"Who is Li Hao?" shouted Liu Long as he walked forward. His leather shoes crushed the stones on the ground. As he saw Li Hao from afar, his eyes flashed.

Amazing! He was an expert!

The inspection Division as a whole might not have any Supers, but there were some combat experts who could easily take on ten people at once. One such expert looked at Li Hao now.

"Level 3 patrol Office Li Hao reporting, sir!" Li Hao walked over and stood straight. "I was here to investigate a case under orders. Greetings, Captain Liu! It is an honor to make your acquaintance."

"Hmph!" Captain Liu grunted. His gaze was sharp when he looked at Li Hao. There was a hint of anger in those eyes. "Li Hao, as a member of the Inspection Division, you are a disgrace."

Li Hao flinched. He frowned. Captain Liu's voice was cold and unyielding. It was like the roar of a wrathful tiger. He didn't even care if anyone heard him.

"The Inspection Office comes under the Inspection Division. It is the most crucial organization in the whole of Silver City! As a member of such an organization, why are you undertaking an investigation without proper authorization? You should have directly reported to your office in the face of anything suspicious."

Liu Long's voice was intimidating. He took a step forward towards Li Hao. There had still been some distance between the two but that one step had covered that distance and now the captain stood in front of Li Hao in the blink of an eye.

Li Hao's heart froze. A true expert!

He had seen Liu Long before, but he had never seen him this close. If Li Hao pulled out a gun in front of someone like this, he would already be dead.

'But...did he make use of the mysterious power as well?' wondered Li Hao. 'Or was it possible for someone to be this powerful with training?'

Li Hao was nervous. He lowered his head. "I wouldn't dare, sir," he said in a trembling voice. "I was in danger and the only person I could think of was my teacher at that moment. I did not dare to ask the Inspection Office for help because I had no concrete evidence to trouble them with something like this."

Liu Long snorted. "If you didn't have evidence, then look for one now! Tell me, what happened here?" He seemed to have acknowledged Li Hao's answer for now.

Li Hao hesitated. "I have already reported on the self-immolation cases. I assume Captain Liu is well-informed about that?"

Captain Liu nodded. "I know about them."

"I am Zhang Yuan's best friend. I was very close to him so I felt it to be my duty to confirm about his death. I came here to see if I could find any clues about his... condition because I am sure that his death was not an accident but a murder."

Li Hao calmed himself and continued, "I was looking around the house when I realized that someone was following me. I am very familiar with my friend's house as I have spent a major part of my childhood here. I noticed that somebody had been in the house because things weren't where they were supposed to be. I became even more suspicious when I found footprints right outside the courtyard wall of the house."

"There aren't many people here," said Li Hao. "Most of the people who used to live here have moved away. The Zhang family residence is in the deepest part of the old street where nobody ventures. So, technically, no one should have been in the vicinity of this old house."

## **Chapter 28: Silver City Law Enforcement Team (2)**

"Take me there." Liu Long's words were irrefutable. He turned to the group behind him. "Seal off the entire street and search each and every house, every corner. Ask around and find out if anyone has seen a stranger in this area. Don't let anyone leave or enter. If anyone resists, tell them they would be doing so at the risk of being shot."

"Yes, sir!" The group dispersed to follow the orders. They were fast and efficient.

...

Li Hao couldn't care less about their noisy bustle. He led Liu Long towards the outside walls of the Zhang family residence.

Li Hao didn't need to say anything. Liu Long carefully observed the shallow footprint. He squatted down to have a closer look.

"Hm." Liu Long's eyes were sharp and cold. There were a few law enforcement team elites beside him. They waited for the captain's orders.

"Wu Chao, come and take a look!"

The man strode forward. He had white gloves on. He squatted down and checked the footprint.

All Li Hao saw were a few blurry prints in the ground. But the man who went by the name of Wu Chao could gather so much information from just a few footprints!

"The suspect is a male! The height is about 180 cm, the weight is unknown, and the footprints are shallow. The deepest footprints should have been left about two hours ago, and the shallowest ones should have been left more than half a year ago. He is not weak. He seems to be no lower than a Class 2. It is possible he might be a lot stronger than that."

Li Hao thought that was strange but he knew better than to interrupt. Liu Long was considerate of the fact that Li Hao, as a Level 3 Patrol Officer might not know what it meant. So, he explained, "The law enforcement team ranks the dangerous elements by class. Not just weapons or skill but any dangerous element or entity. We group them in three classes."

"Class 1 is the strongest, Class 3 the weakest," continued Captain Liu. "To be able to kill a member of the Confidential Information Room, a Class 3 is enough."

"We have a total of twenty-eight people in the Confidential Information Room," informed Li Hao. "There are several old Patrol Officers..." Li Hao was embarrassed.

Liu Long sneered. "The head of your Inspection Office, Chief Wang Jie, isn't as weak as he seems. He had some skills otherwise he wouldn't have been able to lead your office at all. But after being transferred to the Confidential Information Room in your Inspection Office, he has been out of practice. I bet even the lowest ranker from the law enforcement team could tackle him easily now."

"Not all bandits are as dangerous as to be classified in this manner," continued Liu Long. "Only the very dangerous ones are classified into the 3 categories."

"Three years ago, there was a massacre in Silver City. The bastard who killed 32 people of the Hu family with his bare hands in one night was a Class 3 Bandit. In all

these years, there have been very few bandits in Silver City who have been ranked in classes.”

A Class 3 Bandit, although considered the weakest, was actually so terrifying going by the law enforcement team’s standard.

Li Hao’s expression turned grave as he thought about the Class 2 or even possibly Class 1 Bandit that Wu Chao had mentioned. Li Hao was surprisingly not shocked. That person used a mysterious power to control the red shadow, after all.

Li Hao was only surprised that a Class 3 bandit could be so powerful. If that was so, the mysterious person that he had witnessed might be even stronger beyond his imagination.

What stunned him the most was how they were able to gather so much information from a few footprints alone. That was amazing!

Wu Chao, a middle-aged man, turned to look at Li Hao. “Officer Li, do you not believe me?”

“No! I mean, there is no doubt about your abilities, of course. I am just very surprised,” said Li Hao hurriedly.

Wu Chao smiled. “Are all students of Silver City Ancient Academy this humble,” he said. “They all seem so stuck up and pretentious. But you... you are strange. I heard you dropped out of the academy to join the Inspection Office.”

Wu Chao jumped in the air and landed on the ground leaving a pair of footprints. He smiled. “People with different skills and weight will have different reactions when they land on the ground. The depth of the footprints they leave will be different every time. Even the front and back parts of an entire footprint can be restored. Depending on where the person landed first, their posture can also be determined.”

“From the way a person lands, I can deduce information about pretty much everything regarding them. The footprints you showed us are of different depths. He must have landed from a few meters high, but the footprints aren’t very deep. This means that whoever it was could easily control their muscles ...”

As Wu Chao explained, Li Hao listened. The explanation wasn’t really needed. But Li Hao, even if he had dropped out, was still a student willing to learn.

Liu Lon had been listening silently and didn’t interrupt. After Wu Chao was done explaining, he said, “Alright! He is not part of our team so there is no need for him to know so much.”

Li Hao just smiled gratefully at them but didn’t say anything.



Liu Long looked at the old house of the Zhang family. "They are quite bold. They kill someone and monitor the victim's house for days, months even!"

Wu Chao smiled. "Captain, isn't it usual for the enemy to be this bold? The law enforcement team might not be able to do anything to them."

## Chapter 29: Silver City Law Enforcement Team (3)

Liu Long's eyes flashed. "That's not true! Some people always think they are superior to others, and in the process, they underestimate their enemy. But over the years, hasn't our law enforcement team killed those high and mighty criminals?"

As he said that, others laughed a little. Li Hao, on the other hand, was curious. 'What does that mean? Are they talking about mysterious people with magical powers?' he wondered.

Li Hao was engrossed in his thoughts when Liu Long turned to him. "Officer Li, sometimes you need to believe in the strength of the law enforcement team. I know you had your own reasons to reach out to your professor. However, I can see that you are not as stupid as you pretend to be. You were able to dig out the self-immolation cases and connect it to your friend's death. That shows patience and grit. Our Inspection Office needs someone as meticulous as you."

"You did not directly turn to the law enforcement team, so you might have a lot of concerns regarding the organization. I understand." Liu Long's voice was indifferent. "However, you must remember that even a strong dragon cannot suppress a simple snake in its territory sometimes. You might think that the six cases are not something ordinary people can solve. But my team has people who can even surpass the Class 1 bandits sometimes."

Liu Long's voice rang. He appeared domineering. "In the Silver City, even the dragon has to coil up to rest sometimes. That's where we come in. It's not like things cannot be done without the Night Patrollers! It's not like I haven't beaten some of the Night Patrollers myself!" The captain scowled in displeasure.

Li Hao was stunned. 'Was it true?' he wondered.

The captain had mentioned the Night Patrollers without any hesitation. He had seen right through Li Hao. Li Hao had wanted to involve the Night Patrollers because this case involved a mysterious power but the captain had seen through his intentions.

Li Hao quickly tried to think of an excuse. "I don't understand, Captain..."

“Liar!” said Liu Long, coldly. “What’s there to not understand? You dig out the six cases out of countless cases. You understand everything. Do not lie to me that you don’t know about the existence of the Night Patrollers. No matter how powerful they might seem to you, there is still someone above them!”

“Li Hao,” said the captain, a little more gently. “The Inspection Division and the Night Patrollers are managed by the same organization. We are all colleagues. The first taboo that the Night Patrollers broke was when they attacked their own people. Why are you so afraid of them? They can just as likely be scolded for doing something wrong as the rest of us!”

Li Hao was shocked. Everyone else was a little wary. The Night Patrollers, supposedly respected, feared and even revered, were not even worthy of such devotion in the eyes of the captain!

An old female Patrol Officer behind Li Hao chuckled. “Officer Li, the captain is just bragging now. But he is right. They aren’t as high and mighty and fearful as you expect. Those guys are simply unlucky. Every time they appear, people assume something big has happened. They come with an ominous omen.”

“How dare you?” thundered Liu Long. One of his team members had accused him of bragging!

The female Patrol Officer laughed. She seemed neither to care nor fear the captain. She turned to Li Hao again. “The reason why the captain is working himself up and why we are interested in you is because we feel that you are wasting your talent at the Confidential Information Room. Li Hao, would you consider joining us in the law enforcement team?”

Li Hao was speechless. He could not respond. His mind had truly turned blank.

Liu Long looked at him, his face cold, but his tone calmer. “I see that you are a little clever, patient and loyal. You seem acceptable. I can offer you a position as a Level 2 Patrol Officer. You will mainly do some case analysis, filing—”

The female Patrol Officer interrupted the captain with a gentle smile. “To put it simply, the law enforcement team needs talents like you. You have proven yourself to be meticulous when you found a connection between the six cases out of thousands of cases you might have gone through. We of course have many strong and boorish people in the law enforcement teams but they sometimes lack essential analyzing skills. Sometimes, they find some clues but not enough to continue the case.”

“For example, your friend Zhang Yuan’s case. At the time, the law enforcement team didn’t find significant clues and obviously didn’t connect them to the other six cases. The case appeared simple enough and was dropped. Otherwise, if we had seen this pattern, we would have started a serious investigation into it,” she explained.

'They are actually recruiting me?!' thought Li Hao, still too stunned to speak.

The law enforcement team actually needed him! They were even offering to up his rank to level 2! Liu Long was so cold to him, he had thought the captain was really displeased but it seemed that was not the case.

Liu Long looked at him indifferently. "If you join us, you might be able to solve the self-immolation cases much faster. We don't have many people who are good at analyzing things so we transfer the cases to the blaster Night Patrollers most of the time. But with you in our team, we could find more clues. If you request your professor to put you in contact with the Night Patrollers, who knows how many favors you will owe him?"

His words hit Li Hao with clarity. Captain Liu was right!

He was intending to ask professor Yuan to put him in contact with the Night Patrollers, but that would mean he would owe him big time!

## **Chapter 30: Silver City Law Enforcement Team (4)**

Liu Long looked at him coldly. "Take your time and think about it," he said. "This is not a small matter, after all. The law enforcement team doesn't lack elites. The most important thing is to catch this culprit before he wrecks any more havoc. He could be an expert or even a Super for that matter."

Liu Long strode away and headed to the Zhang family residence. Li Hao followed. He put aside the offer for now and thought of how he could get the captain to demolish the house. This was his best friend's home. Li Hao

"Search the house!" Liu Long ordered. "If we can't find any useful clues, we will raze this place to the ground anyway. We will dig three feet under to see if we find anything. If we don't, we will set fire to the whole damn place. I would like to see what they have been searching for by keeping an eye on this place for so long!"

Li Hao gasped inwardly. The captain looked fierce and domineering, it seemed he was also very reckless! That worked fine with Li Hao. That was what he wanted anyway.

"I don't care if I have to burn it! If you really want whatever you are looking for, then show yourself!" should Captain Liu into the air.

The captain's way of handling this case was in line with Li Hao's taste. As a member of the Inspection Division, working in one of their Inspection Offices, Li Hao was well aware of the law enforcement team. However, he had always thought the organization a

little useless compared to the Night Patrollers. But now he doubted himself. 'How could a team led by such a person as Captain Liu be useless?'

But the fact remained that the law enforcement team was like a sieve, full of holes. Otherwise, how could the case reported by Li Hao have been leaked? Maybe there was indeed a mole in the team

Li Hao was lost in his thoughts when the female Patrol Officer, who had interrupted the captain so fearlessly, approached and smiled at him. "Officer Li, please don't mind the captain. He is always like that. In fact, he appears cold and indifferent towards you because he really thinks you can be an asset to our team. Despite how he appears, he is really hoping you will join us."

Li Hao was perplexed. Was it really necessary for them to recruit him? He felt like he had done nothing so remarkable as to be offered a place in the law enforcement team. He had only reported a case.

The female Patrol Officer chuckled, noticing his surprise. "The captain has said before. We don't lack in terms of combat skills, weapons, or authority. But we do need smart and meticulous people who can spot things when something is wrong."

She sighed. "Also, you have no personal connection with the law enforcement team as a whole. The captain feels that there are traitors among us. He tried to find the moles but couldn't. He is disappointed with himself because of that. He can't be seen investigating the internal workings of the whole team. So, he is turning to you. I hope you can use your wisdom to find the vermin in the law enforcement team too!"

Li Hao's shock never seemed to end today. So, Liu Long already knew that there was a mole. Not only did he know about it, but he also wanted to investigate it. Liu Long was recruiting him to be his weapon!

Li Hao hesitated. The female Patrol Officer smiled reassuringly towards him. "Please do consider it. You can work with us to solve your friend's case. And even if we fail, you will have the opportunity to participate in the investigation anyway with the Night Patrollers."

"Those in the Confidential Information Room aren't allowed to undertake investigation by themselves. It is admirable that you dropped out of the academy to find out what happened to your friend. But being in the Confidential Information Room will only take you so far. A year is enough, don't you think? Or, are you planning to remain there forever pouring over old case files yet not being able to get involved in solving them?"

Li Hao's mind wandered again. He realized he was so distracted tonight. He had always disliked the law enforcement team because he had thought them incompetent at handling cases properly. None of the people here were ordinary. They were extraordinarily smart otherwise they wouldn't have been recruited to work for the most infamous law enforcement agency.

The female Patrol Officer's words rang in his mind. He hesitated. Will they find out that he had taken the saber-shaped stone of the Zhang family from the chimney?

He had been so scared of being discovered by the enemy that he had not considered that he might be outed by the law enforcement team itself.

Li Hao had been glad when Liu Long had arrived with his team. He had no problem with the house being burned down. That was what he wanted. But would they notice that he had taken the stone? Could they really be fooled by the replacement stone he had placed inside?

'I will just blame the person who controls the red shadow,' thought Li Hao apprehensively. 'I will just say I don't know anything!'

He had been careless. One shouldn't overestimate oneself. He had not considered the fact that the law enforcement team would catch his act. He had underestimated Captain Liu's team.

Li Hao continued to follow Captain Liu while being lost in thought. The cold and overbearing captain, the charmingly persuasive female Patrol Officer, and Wu Chao who could see countless clues at a glance...

The law enforcement team indeed had some hidden talents that shouldn't be underestimated.

If the law enforcement team that he had always thought incompetent were this meticulous, how would the Night Patrollers be?

Li Hao had dreamed once of joining the Night Patrollers. Li Hao had wanted to solve the case with them to know why the six self-immolation cases occurred. Even if he died, he would at least have an answer. But these people were so smart. Li Hao felt that he couldn't hide anything from them. They would find out anyway. Or, they might already know...

Li Hao suddenly felt a chill down his spine when he considered that possibility.

"The outside world can be scary. The Confidential Information Room is like a secret safe hideout. It is certainly comfortable." Liu Long looked at Li Hao.

Li Hao felt as though the captain was testing him. 'Was he testing me when he declared to burn down the house too?' wondered Li Hao.

The captain hadn't asked him about anything yet. He hadn't asked Li Hao if he had found or seen anything. Li Hao was afraid. He wondered if he had smiled or appeared relieved when the captain had declared to burn the house down. 'No, I didn't react.'

Li Hao thought he deserved praise for keeping his cool!