

## Crossing 1161

### Chapter 1161 Settle!

After thinking through Ling Lan's enlightening words, Li Lanfeng's eyes suddenly shined brightly. He smiled and asked, "What if that person dislikes me?"

Ling Lan stared into Li Lanfeng's eyes. "If you wore your mask, she might not like you. However, if you reveal your face, no one will be able to dislike you. Lanfeng, believe me when I say that"

Even she was unable to resist the lure of his face, and she was the strongest person she knew. Well, there might be people who just didn't like his kind of face... she would lit a candle for Li Lanfeng if the girl he liked was one of those people.

"Only woman?" Li Lanfeng muttered quietly.

"What did you say?" Ling Lan wasn't sure if she had heard correctly since Li Lanfeng spoke in a very soft tone.

"Nothing." Li Lanfeng gathered his thoughts. "I just want to know how to seduce... I mean chase the person."

Li Lanfeng suddenly raised his eyebrows and showed Ling Lan a cheeky smile. "What methods do you have? Don't tell me you don't know. Your fiancées didn't just drop from the sky."

Ling Lan had never felt so frustrated before. She never expected Li Lanfeng to think of her as a casanova because of her fiancées. Furthermore, her fiancées indeed really did drop from the sky figuratively.

However, Ling Lan couldn't tell him the truth. She looked through the love books Little Four gave her and tried to find a suitable answer.

She needed to come up with a concrete solid plan so that Li Lanfeng could live a happy life. Ling Lan sighed. It was so difficult being a regiment commander. Not only did she have to train her comrades, she needed to worry about their future too.

"Maybe you can confess to her first?" Ling Lan was a straightforward person.

Li Lanfeng turned hesitant. "Well, the person currently has someone else. If I confess directly, I would most probably be rejected."

Ling Lan creased her brows. "You want to be a home-wrecker?"

Li Lanfeng seemed flustered. "No, it's not confirmed yet." Nothing was confirmed if Ling Lan wasn't married yet.

Ling Lan's expression softened. Although she was close with Li Lanfeng, she would still look down on him if he decided to be a home-wrecker.

"I believe that I'm more suitable than the person's current partner," Li Lanfeng said earnestly when he saw Ling Lan's expression turning soft. Gender was an issue but he didn't care. He believed he could get what he wanted in the end.

Ling Lan left for only two days but he was already missing her terribly. He didn't have the mood to eat, work or do anything productive. He just wanted to stay in bed and relish in their past memories. When he received Ling Lan's message to come to the virtual world, he had been waiting in the virtual world ever since 10pm last night. He didn't want to waste even a second of time when in the presence of Ling Lan.

The time they spent apart made him realise that if he lost Ling Lan, he wouldn't be able to live normally. He would be like a dead person walking on the surface of the planet. He had been living like a dead person for 13 years. He only felt alive after meeting Rabbit in the virtual world when he was 13 years old.

He yearned for the hope and warmth Ling Lan gave him. He couldn't bear to let go of it. He didn't want to fall into that deep dark room all alone again. He had no path of retreat now. He could only walk on this path of self-destruction.

But he really wanted to continue on this path even if it meant the end of him! Since Ling Lan gave him hope for his life which made him alive, why couldn't he continue on this path? Ling Lan's connivance caused his greediness for her love to grow. It destroyed every rational thought in his mind.

'I'm sorry, Ling Lan. I want to try accepting my fate at least once. If I didn't try my best for at least once, I wouldn't be able to give up. In the past, I hated my Phoenix Thrall Fate. Yet, now, I wish that it is true. I wish that you're the king in my Phoenix Thrall Fate. If it is you, I won't mind accepting my fate.'

Ling Lan could tell that Li Lanfeng was serious about his new-found love. She didn't really know what love should feel like, but based on her understanding of Li Lanfeng, he would either not love or love with all his heart. If his love wasn't reciprocated, he would be crippled.

'Ah! This is so troublesome!' Ling Lan scratched her head in her mindscape. She didn't want her strategist to be crippled because of love. Don't you know how hard it is to groom a trustworthy and capable strategist?

She had two advisers in her mecha clan, Han Jijyun and Li Lanfeng. Han Jijyun was more forthright while Li Lanfeng was more scheming. They complimented each other perfectly, making them the best combination of advisers. She would be really hard-pressed to find another combination of strategist as perfect as them again, as none of them could be easily replaced.

"I have prepared my heart for this love." Li Lanfeng had already decided to give it his all.

"Little Four, what do we do now?" Ling Lan frowned deeply in her mindscape.

"Boss, I'm also clueless. I have not evolved enough to know what love is." Little Four felt helpless too. He was evolving quickly but the difficulty of Boss's problems seemed to be evolving at a faster rate than him. Little Four suddenly felt the urge to evolve quickly to understand the weird emotion called love.

After experiencing helplessness of the situation, Little Four realized he wasn't competent enough for his role as the number one follower of Boss. He clenched his tiny fists as he told himself that he must evolve faster.

Luckily, the ten instructors of the learning space didn't know Little Four's thoughts. Otherwise, they would have charged out from the learning space together to prevent him from having such thoughts. They wouldn't be able to handle it if Little Four evolved too quickly.

"What do I do now? Li Lanfeng is still waiting for my answer." Li Lanfeng was usually frustrating but this smitten Li Lanfeng was even more frustrating. She and Little Four were completely helpless about his problem. How was she able to think of a way to help Li Lanfeng chase his future wife when she never had any experiences herself?

"How about telling him to go slowly?" Little Four couldn't bear to see Ling Lan scratching her head until her hair turned messy.

Ling Lan's eyes immediately lit up. She patted Little Four's head. "Not bad."

Ling Lan guiltily looked at Li Lanfeng and coughed in embarrassment. "Cough... how about you chase after her slowly."

"Chase slowly..." Li Lanfeng went into deep thought.

"Yes, chase slowly. Constantly appear in front of her and seduce her in whatever ways you can." Ling Lan speed-read through the book about seducing women in her mindscape. She read from the book. "Create an ambiguous atmosphere and tease her occasionally."

"Of course, you must do all these discreetly. Otherwise, the person you love will pounce on you" Ling Lan was reading a different book now. She flipped the book so quickly that she didn't notice the cover page. The title was 'A woman's way of love'.

When Ling Lan said those words, she quickly felt that something wasn't right. She closed the book and read the cover. 'Damn it, this is the wrong book! Huh!' She didn't forget to throw the book at Little Four's forehead.

### **Chapter 1162 Easy To Deal With?**

Little Four bared his teeth to display his anger. Ling Lan glared at him and signalled for him to look at the title of the book.

Little Four stuck out his tongue when he saw the cover. After he teased Ling Lan, he quickly shrunk into a corner and no longer dared to act so flippantly. Sob, he didn't do it on purpose. He was in too much of a hurry just now so he made a mistake.

Li Lanfeng was listening attentively to what Ling Lan was saying. When she mentioned about seducing the other party and making them pounce on him, his eyes lit up.

"Do you understand what I'm saying?" Ling Lan asked with uncertainty.

She didn't even know what she was saying. Would Li Lanfeng understand her?

"Yes, I understand perfectly." Li Lanfeng smiled. The smile was so bright that Ling Lan's heart started to waver.

Fortunately, Ling Lan from birth always had a face that couldn't display emotions which stopped Li Lanfeng to realise how seductive his face was against Ling Lan. Thus, Li Lanfeng would have to continue suffering from his requited love.

"That's good." Ling Lan was satisfied with her explanation. He was able to understand her even when she didn't understand her own words.

Ling Lan felt extremely happy that she was being so knowledgeable about love. She read through more books about love and started teaching Li Lanfeng about love. Whether it was useful or not didn't matter to her.

All in all, Ling Lan wanted Li Lanfeng to slowly confess to the person he liked. She felt that if Li Lanfeng continued pestering the lady, with the help of his face and her fabulous love advice, he would have a high chance of success.

Even she wouldn't be able to handle it if Li Lanfeng kept seducing her with that face of his.

Li Lanfeng smiled happily as he listened to Ling Lan's advice. After Ling Lan had satisfied her ego and left the virtual world, he retracted his smile.

"Chase slowly and naturally... all these are useless. The only useful thing is seduction. Ling Lan, no matter how straight you are, I'll make you gay. I can't be the only one going to hell. That is unfair, especially after receiving such good advice from you." Li Lanfeng gave an evil smile.

Li Lanfeng immediately left the virtual world. If he wanted to seduce Ling Lan, he had to wait for her to come back first. The most important matter now was to handle the small fries in Base Nebula. He had already ringed them dry of their intel about the organization behind them, leaving them essentially useless to him now.

He and the rest of Lingtian didn't realize that there were so many spies in Base Nebula. Without this baiting plan, they would have never known how broad the influence of the spies was. In one of the mecha clans they were suspicious of, more than half of the soldiers were spies.

No... spy was not the best word to describe them. These people were soldiers from the Federation who got lured or brainwashed by their enemies. Hence, turning into spies who leaked out various information of the Federation.

However, in the overall big picture, these people were just a small matter. The worst thing was the people who were controlling them behind the scenes. Based on the clues they found, many departments in the military were involved. It seemed that some higher authorities were part of their enemies too.

This wasn't something they could handle. That was why they didn't expose that one powerful faction. They were only in charge of keeping an eye on the grass-root factions. As for the more powerful faction, Li Lanfeng knew that Ling Lan had asked his father for help.

There were some things Li Lanfeng wouldn't ask. No matter how safe the virtual world was, there might be loopholes. Some things shouldn't be talked about.

'Prince Ling won't be fighting in the challenge. What is happening?' This was the thought going through most people's heads.

"Is it because he is incapable of fighting? Or is he confident in the abilities of his subordinates?" The people that were anticipating the fight with the Ling family and the Lan family were puzzled.

"This Ling Lan seems like a smart person." This was the comment by some of the more intelligent people.

"He made a good move. The Ling family is able to retreat now. Interesting." The mastermind behind the chess game felt pity but excited.

The outcome was just like what they had expected. It was no surprise that Ling Lan was a no-show. The mastermind was confident in the plan. He didn't get flustered when something unexpected happened. Instead, he felt excited. He felt that he could finally play a chess game that was worth playing.

"However, there will be some changes in the conference." The assistant beside him reminded. He hoped that the man wouldn't forget about their hundred years old plan because of his playfulness.

"It's alright. That sly old fox, the First Marshal, isn't someone we can fool. Even if the Ling family and the Lan family are at loggerheads, he will still team up with Ling Xiao if he is able to benefit from the cooperation." The mastermind sneered. "Lan Yu doesn't care about his family. If not, he wouldn't have sent his grandsons to the battlefield when four of his sons had died there. In the end, none of his grandsons came back."

"But he managed to get what he wanted because of that." The assistant respected the First Marshal for his ruthlessness.

"That's why I said that we can't fool him." The mastermind frowned. "Lan Yu has no weakness. Everyone thought that the Lan family was his weakness but it was just a shield he pushed out. He could forsake it anytime he wants. Among the three great marshals and the ten great generals, he's the hardest to deal with."

"Who's the easiest to deal with then?" The assistant was curious.

"Everyone thinks it's Ling Xiao." The mastermind smiled. "Maybe it is because he has too many weaknesses. Anyone of them is enough to give him a fatal blow. But, because of this, no one knew which weakness they should make use of. However, in reality, he is another kind of figure that is hard to deal with."

"So, he is not easy to fool too?" The assistant didn't expect this conclusion.

The mastermind thought for a moment and sighed. "From the looks of it, yes. Even if we found so many weaknesses, we can't find the chance to really harm him."

### **Chapter 1163 Mission!**

"Who is harder to deal with? Him or Lan Yu?"

"Of course it is Ling Xiao. Ling Xiao has many enemies, both within the Federation and outside the Federation. Many people want to get rid of him because he has ruined the future of everyone in his

generation. They will jump at any mistake he makes and attack him together. No matter how powerful Ling Xiao is, he can't fight with everyone. He will be dead."

"Moreover, the First Marshal is now old. Ling Xiao, on the other hand, is at the prime of his age. Yet, he still hadn't reached the peak of his career. Everyone can tell who they should place their focus on. Once Ling Xiao gains enough power to control the Huaxia Federation... he might be even able to control the entire interstellar zone." The mastermind scoffed. His gaze turned vicious. "We can't allow that. We must kill Ling Xiao."

"So the target for this mission isn't the First Marshal but Ling Xiao?" The assistant was enlightened. At first, he was a little confused over the mastermind's actions. He couldn't understand why he didn't continue with the plan as it wasn't his style to retreat.

"Yes. I need to know what Ling Xiao's ultimate fatal weakness is." The mastermind smiled. He seemed to have found his answer to his question.

"What is it?" When the assistant noticed that smile, he knew he could ask the question.

In response to the question, the mastermind glared at him coldly. The assistant knew that he had asked something he shouldn't have. His expression changed. He wiped the cold sweat on his forehead. He didn't dare to make a sound.

"You should be aware of what you can ask and what you can't. Don't be like those people before you. You know how they died," the mastermind said calmly.

"Yes!" The assistant lowered his head and replied. His master was friendly most of the time but once someone overstepped their boundary, he would punish them without the slightest hesitation. The people who used to be in his position disappeared because they had spoken out of line.

Just now, he almost peed in his pants. Fortunately, his question hadn't not cross his master's bottomline. If not, he would have been killed already.

Three days passed quickly. The challenge between the Lan family and the Ling family came to an end.

Lan Rong didn't summon the domain realm masters from his family to fight in the challenge. He only sent those who reached the optimal peak of Qi-Jin, including himself. As for Luo Lang, he walked to the arena alone. In the end, the Lan family lost. Everyone thought that the Lan family would be furious but instead, Lan Rong dragged Lan Jin along and apologised to Luo Lang.

Lan Jin was unwilling to apologise but he knew he couldn't resist his elder brother's orders. Otherwise, he would not have a day of peace in the Lan household so he gritted his teeth and apologised.

As for the highly anticipated Lan Ying, he didn't even appear near the arena. This showed the Lan family's attitude. It was as though this battle had nothing to do with the Lan family. To them, this challenge was just a personal feud of Lan Rong and Lan Jin.

Plus, since Ling Lan also didn't appear, it meant that this challenge also had nothing to do with the Ling family.

The people who were waiting for a good show were disappointed. They hoped that a grudge between the two families would form through this fight but the actual fight never started. This matter just turned into a heroic act of Luo Lang protecting the honour of his idol, Ling Xiao.

Of course, those people were unwilling to end the matter in such an anticlimactic manner so in the end, the stupid Lan Jin was coerced by those people into ambushing Luo Lang and his friends. He brought some people along with him but in the end, he was beaten up badly by Li Yingjie. He felt extremely embarrassed.

These were all small matters, gossips that people talked about after a meal. No big issues arose from this.

The Lan family had many connections in the military but they were all controlled by Mistress Lan. If she didn't want to move, Lan Jin couldn't do anything to Li Yingjie and his friends.

Plus, even if he did, the Li family would retaliate in turn. Although the Li family wasn't as powerful as the Lan family in the military, handling such matters were still easy for them.

However, there were still some problems that arose from the altercation. With the deliberate 'help' from certain people, Luo Lang and his friends' names became more famous than the Ling family and the Lan family's names.

Since they were under Ling Lan, the public would compliment her too, and the overall reputation of the Ling family rose.

On the other hand, the reputation of the Lan family dropped. There was even a rumor that the people from the Lan family dared to humiliate General Ling Xiao because he and the First Marshal had a falling out.

Ling Lan never went out of her room but the rumor still reached her ears.

"It is no surprise that everyone hopes the Ling family and the Lan family will become enemies." Ling Lan smiled when she heard the rumor from Li Yingjie.

"Lan Jin is stupid but Lan Rong is not. He expressed the attitude of the Lan family immediately after the challenge." Luo Lang's eyes were calm. "The Lan family doesn't want to fall out with the Ling family."

"The other factions hoped that we would fall out so that they could benefit from it." Xie Yi seemed disgusted with the acts of their enemies. "I don't understand. Why can't we work together to fight with our public enemies like the Twilight Empire? What's the point of calculating against each other?"

"The three great marshals were created to prevent dictatorship. However, there are cons too when creating three such powerful figures. No one wants to be the person being suppressed. No one wants to become the incompetent one. All three marshals want to control the Federation so that he can run according to his will. As long as the true leader hasn't been decided, this fight will continue."

"Our Federation has always been in an internal conflict," Ling Lan sighed.

"Since they can't get what they want, they wouldn't stop, right?." Gu Dongyang asked seriously.

“Definitely. As long as we are on Planet General, they will continue to butt heads against us,” Ling Lan replied indifferently.

“They are now waiting for us to jump into their trap during the conference.” Luo Lang remembered the news Gu Dongyang brought. The other party had made ample preparations within these three days.

“What do we do now?” Li Yingjie scratched his head. Because of a certain someone, he was traumatized of scheming now.

“What do we do? We will just wait and see.” Ling Lan was composed.

She had completed her task. It’s time to see if her father was capable enough to hold the end of his deal.

### **Chapter 1164 Knight Ace Mecha Clan’s Power?**

On Planet General, everyone was focused on the conference that was about to begin. This conference was held for the public hearing of the report of the battle between Knight Ace Mecha Clan and Lingtian. The latter had completely wiped out Knight Ace Mecha Clan without leaving any survivors, which had raised questions about the brutality shown by Lingtian’s regiment commander, Ling Lan.

Ling Lan’s background was known to the people who needed to know. Those who were oblivious to the information, had no idea who Ling Lan was. However, no matter if they were the former or the latter, Ling Lan’s name was known by all. Those who knew of his connection with the Ling family wanted to see what this legendary Prince Ling looked like. Those who didn’t know of his connection with the Ling family were also keen on seeing what she looked like because of her mecha clan’s military merits and achievements.

Ling Lan led Luo Lang, Xie Yi, Li Yingjie and Gu Dongyang into the conference room.

The audience quickly frowned as they saw Ling Lan walking in with a face full of terrifying scars. Many of them all pitied her in their minds. By just looking at her scars, everyone in the audience hardened their impression of the terrifying backlash one could get from operating above one’s level.

Only the four who came along with Ling Lan knew that on the way to the conference room, their regiment commander’s scars became more and more pronounced on his face. In the end, the scars returned to the point when he was first being treated.

However, the four of them didn’t freak out as they knew that their regiment commander was trying to invoke pity within the audience. Manipulating the feelings of the people around him was something their regiment commander always did. As long as there was a way he could take advantage of people, he would do so in a heartbeat.

The military report conference was quite efficient. They didn’t waste any time before calling for Ling Lan to go up the stage to start her report. Ling Lan’s oral report exactly reflected the content she had reported to the military previously on documented reports perfectly. Many of the officers who participated in the conference were all nodding in agreement, while the soldiers watching the conference all clenched their fists as they imagined themselves being in the battle based on Ling Lan’s vivid description. These soldiers hated that they were not in the battle as well.



However, soon after Ling Lan's oral report reached the casualties sustained in the battle, the massive number of soldiers who had died for the cause made all the soldiers watching the conference feel a sharp pain in their hearts. Everyone only saw Lingtian's victory but neglected the price Lingtian had to pay for winning this battle. (Of course, Little Four meddled with the numbers of soldiers perished in battle.)

At the end of the report, Ling Lan said without a change in her tone, "The mecha operators in my mecha clan were all putting their lives on the line on the battlefield. We went into battle without knowing whether we would be able to return alive. It is true that we have achieved feats that we should be proud of. I really do not care about those merits and achievements that do not belong to us. However, I will not accept my clan members being slighted with their rightful merits after risking their lives on the line for the Federation."

These words were said to the officers who had ordered the relocation of her clan to Base Nebula. Many military officers in the audience all had embarrassed looks on their face. After all, they were some of the ones who were suspicious of Lingtian Mecha Clan's achievements in the battle.

The host of the conference looked at the military officers sitting below the stage. He asked calmly, "Are there any questions for Lingtian Mecha Clan's Regiment Commander, Ling Lan, about his report?"

The audience was silent. A lot of the officers were looking at the colleagues beside them, but no one stood up on their own.

"If there are no questions, we will enter the three minute Q&A session. If during this time, no one asks any questions or disagrees with his report, then we will officially approve the report of Major General Ling Lan from Lingtian Mecha Clan. The rewards of it will be given thereafter," announced the host based on the proper procedures.

Murmurs began to echo within the audience. After a few seconds, one of the officers finally raised his hand, stood up and asked, "I would like to ask Regiment Commander Ling a question. Were Knight Ace Mecha Clan not as strong as what we have reported it to be? I just find it impossible for your clan to wipe out the 18th ranked clan of Caesar."

A cold gleam flashed past Ling Lan's eyes. The gleam was like a sharp sword slicing towards the officer who had spoken. Even though the distance between them was not close, the officer still felt his entire body being trapped in an ice world.

After giving the sharp glare, she retracted the energy she used. That officer seemed to have suddenly regained his strength. The feeling of being on the brink of death disappeared too quickly. He didn't know whether he was going crazy or he was actually on the brink of death for that instant.

"We can easily deduce the strength of Knight Ace Mecha Clan. Caesar has many mecha clans that are ranked higher than Knight Mecha Clan. I welcome you to go and wipe one of them out. That way you'll be able to decrease the the overall strength of the Caesar Empire and make the Federation look good." Ling Lan responded nonchalantly with a strong tone in her voice. It was as if she was seriously suggesting a solution and not actually mocking the person who posed the question.

After hearing those words, the officer from the military headquarters went pale and red in the face. In reality, although the military ranks of these officers were quite high and many of them were once ace

operators, their piloting abilities was probably not even comparable to a standard ace operator because of their time spent in the office. If they were actually to go into battle, they would probably be the first to die.

“If we can’t determine Knight Ace Mecha Clan’s actual strength, then we can’t determine Lingtian’s military merits and achievements.” Many people were suspicious of this point. Lingtian’s merits were indeed necessary, but they could not reach a collective agreement on the matter.

All in all, these people wanted to take away Lingtian Mecha Clan’s merits and achievements because they didn’t want another Ling Xiao to appear. That was because the more merits Lingtian Mecha Clan acquired, the person who led them, Ling Lan, would receive more and more rewards and merits. With a rank of major general, if she was rewarded even more, she would soon be promoted to a lieutenant general... That would be crazy.

Although major generals were considered generals, other than those with actual military power, many of them were actually pseudo generals. Those pseudo major generals were mostly those who acquired it through academics and arts. Many of them were also people who used their ancestors’ connections to acquire the position. In the Federation, there were many people with the rank of major general, but not many with real military power.

Thus, although these officers were not too comfortable with Ling Lan acquiring the rank of major general with military power at such a young age, she was still not that radiant as there were many pseudo major generals along with her. However, everything would be different if she was a lieutenant general. Lieutenant general rank and above didn’t have any pseudo ranks that existed. Anyone with the rank of lieutenant general or above in the Federation had real political power with a terrifying faction under their control.

Those lieutenant generals were usually 50 to 60-year-old individuals. Some were even older than that. The youngest ones were around Qi Yaoyang’s age. They wouldn’t be able to handle having a snot-nosed brat suddenly appearing among them...

This was why many of the factions within the military headquarters cooperated with each other to be a hindrance to Ling Lan’s future. One Ling Xiao was already their limit. If another appeared... was the Federation going to belong to the Ling family then?

No one was willing to give up the power they had in their grasp. Even those who were open-minded would still fight to maintain their influence. On the surface, they considered it as developing and nurturing the next generation but in actuality, it would be a battle between the old and young. They would see who was going to be the last one standing

“Knight Ace Mecha Clan’s ranking in the Caesar Empire is clearly displayed to the public. Do you really think that the Caesar Empire may have cooperated with us to purposely send out a weak Knight Ace Mecha Clan to help us acquire military merits?” Li Yingjie, who was originally listening to the conference quietly, finally couldn’t hold it in and jumped up as he faced the murmurs of people doubting Knight Ace Mecha Clan’s real capabilities.

His words immediately silenced everyone in the audience. If someone were to actually say Ling Xiao and Ling Lan cooperated with the Caesar Empire... that would definitely be the greatest joke of the entire

century. Many of the well-known ace mecha operators from the Caesar Empire had all perished by Ling Xiao's hand back in the day. If someone were to say who the Caesar Empire hated the most, Ling Xiao might not be the first or second on the list, but he would be at least one of the top three individuals in that list.

### **Chapter 1165 No Prisoners?**

Seeing the audience return to silence, the host looked at the time on his communicator and saw that the time for the conference was about to end, but before he could make an announcement.

The doors of the conference room slinged open. A group of soldiers in the uniforms of the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee appeared in front of everyone.

"They're here." Ling Lan and company steeled their focus when they saw it was the people from the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee. They were ready for a fierce battle.

"They're here." Some of the officers who knew the people from the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee were coming finally let out a sigh of relief. They were right on time.

"Why is the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee here?" The host of the conference saw the uninvited guests and instantly frowned.

"Sorry for the intrusion, Major General Gao." The person who spoke was a major general. Seeing the host, Major General Gao, he politely responded to his impolite intrusion.

When Major General Gao saw the people who rudely barged in had a good attitude, he felt a bit better about the situation, but he still had a heavy tone in his voice. "Major General Bai, we have important matters to decide here. If you have something to say, please do so immediately."

"I have incriminating evidence about someone here. After investigating it, the evidence is indeed real." Major General Bai revealed his right palm and a microchip was on it.

After hearing Major General Bai's words, those who didn't know the truth all had slight changes in their expressions. Everyone in the audience started to feel their hands were getting clammy as the nervous feeling wrecked through their body.

Major General Gao's eyes suddenly became focused. He asked in a serious tone, "Who is the person in question?"

Major General Bai's gaze fixed on calm Ling Lan and said slowly, "Major General Ling, can you please explain the contents of the report?"

Hearing the inconspicuous question, Ling Lan tapped the table in a rhythmic manner and said plainly, "Explain what report?"

"We have received a report informing us that you gave the order to kill the already surrendered soldiers in the battle of the Nebula Boundary even after they were considered prisoners of war." Major General Bai spoke out the contents of the report with great force in his tone of voice.

His words made all of the officers in the audience audibly gasp. Killing prisoners of war was against the humanitarian code. Once this claim was proven to be true, it would stain Ling Lan's reputation forever.

Ling Lan's future would definitely be destroyed. Not only that, the most serious part was that it would affect Ling Xiao.

The Federation would also get into big trouble because of it. The Federation might even get attacked by other nations. The image of justice and righteousness they had built since its inception would collapse in an instant.

"I can only say the claim is completely absurd," Ling Lan responded calmly.

"However, after our analysis of the evidence we have received, the claim is 70% likely to be true," Major General Bai said in a serious tone.

"Your analysis?" Ling Lan smiled coldly. "Those who weren't even on the battlefield actually have the audacity to analyze whether the report of the battle I have given is real? You are joking, right?"

Hearing such mocking words, Major General Bai wrinkled his brows. He bit his lip and said, "We are looking for the truth. We have come here in the hopes that you can personally explain the report we have received. I hope Major General Ling will cooperate with the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee."

"In order to ensure fairness, this report will be shown to the public. Please excuse us, Major General Ling." Major General Bai handed the microchip to his subordinate. His subordinate immediately walked to the optical supercomputer of the conference room and inserted the microchip in it.

A virtual screen was displayed behind Ling Lan and not long after, a recording of the battle was played.

It was the battle of Lingtian and Knight Ace Mecha Clan. The person who was responsible for the recording of the video was probably a member of Lingtian. In this recording, they could clearly hear Knight Ace Mecha Clan surrendering and also hear Lingtian accepting the surrender. However, after Knight Ace Mecha Clan had given up on defending themselves, Lingtian still executed an order to kill. That voice which called for the order to kill was clearly Ling Lan's voice.

"Huu" After seeing this, everyone was in an uproar. They all had a look of shock as they looked at the calm and cold-looking young man on stage.

"Major General Ling, please explain what you saw." Major General Bai sighed. If it wasn't for the fact that someone gave him this video recording and after his hackers analyzed it many times to eliminate the possibility of it being fake, he wouldn't have come to make such a scene. After all, the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee was also proud of the fact that they had wiped out Knight Ace Mecha Clan. Murder? Major General Bai wasn't someone who believed in peace on a life-or-death battlefield. Why would it matter if some annoying prisoners were killed? In his eyes, this matter was not a problem.

It was clear that someone wanted to go against the Ling family. Condemning for mindless murder was the most effective way of attacking them. Major General Bai knew he was just a chess piece that was being used to create chaos, but no matter how much he didn't want to do this, he still had to go against his own guts and show himself.

"That's something that's not possible. I never even appeared on the battlefield," Ling Lan said calmly. "I suspect that your video recording has been meddled by hackers."

“But our hackers didn’t find any traces of the video being meddled,” replied Major General Bai.

“There’s more than meets the eye. Are you sure your hackers’ judgment is accurate?” Ling Lan raised her eyebrows.

“That’s why I said I’m only 70% sure of it,” Major General Bai replied in a more easy-going tone.

Ling Lan smirked slightly. That was enough to prove that the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee was quite angry that they were being used. They didn’t want to go with the arrangements made by the hands behind the curtains.

“How about this? I also have a video recording with me. This video was recorded by Major General Liu. Please watch it.” Ling Lan turned her wrist and a microchip was placed between her right index finger and middle finger.

Luo Lang moved quickly and arrived beside Ling Lan. Ling Lan handed the microchip to Luo Lang and Luo Lang moved quickly again. He arrived at the optical supercomputer and played the video in microchip.

It was clear that the video recording of the battle Ling Lan was going to show was more intense and bloody than the one Major General Bai had shown. It was because Major General Liu, Liu Furong, was on the front lines personally. It was a fierce battle. From his point of view, the video would show mechas exploding from time to time. Some were from Knight Ace Mecha Clan and the rest from Lingtian. Everyone in the audience felt as if their heart were being ripped to shreds especially when a mecha operator from Lingtian lost their life. They would occasionally shout out the Huaxia Federation’s chant and fight to their last breath.

This scene made many of the military officials tear up. They remembered the time when they were on the battlefield themselves and how pure their hearts were. There weren’t any complicated thoughts like they currently had. They only had one thought and that was to protect and battle for the nation they loved, even if they were to sacrifice their lives.

The intense and depressing battles with countless deaths wouldn’t just stop because of their emotions. Everyone just went crazy to forget about the pain in their hearts. That was because they were about to face the enemy who killed their comrades, so they had to push aside all emotions for revenge. No matter if it was Knight Ace Mecha Clan or Lingtian, they all had this thought in their minds when they battled.

They saw the last few remaining individuals from Knight Ace Mecha Clan still pouncing towards their opponents, choosing to cause mutual destruction. The people watching the video recording now knew what Knight Ace Mecha Clan was like. They were indeed the 18th rank mecha clan in the Caesar Empire. They fought to their last breath and didn’t give up.

Ling Lan then looked towards Major General Bai and said, “You can have your hackers analyze whether this video has been meddled with or not.”

Ling Lan was definitely not worried about the video Little Four had created. If the Federation’s hackers actually found something... then Little Four would lose his

job.

## Chapter 1166 He Is Little Brother Shaoyun!

Major General Bai wouldn't just accept any contradicting evidence presented before him without verifying it first even though it aligned with his wishes, even if it was from a major general.

He contacted the hackers from the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee to examine Ling Lan's video evidence.

The entire conference room was dead-silent. Even those people who had dubious intentions didn't dare to make a sense in front of the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee.

After hearing Major General Bai's acknowledgement of her evidence, Ling Lan walked back to her seat and closed her eyes calmly.

Her calmness in the midst of a mess received a good impression on the soldiers around her, even Major General Bai gave her a look of approval.

However, he couldn't help but remember what his chief had told him before coming to the conference room.

"No matter how Ling Lan reacts, you must control the situation. Try to drag the time for as long as you can." This sentence showed the stance of the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee. They didn't care whether Ling Lan killed prisoners mercilessly or not. They just didn't want to declare her guilty.

The Disciplinary and Investigation Committee had investigated all kinds of crimes within the military, and they were known for their ruthlessness in doing so. They would rather mistakenly kill a suspect than to let go of any suspicious suspects.

Plus, they didn't have much of a choice to not be so, as most of the people they had investigated were powerful people in the military. Some might even control a part of the military. So, if they weren't vicious enough to people of such high caliber, how could they protect the rights of a normal soldier?

Moreover, the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee only sided the soldiers from the Federation. As for their enemies, it had nothing to do with them. They were happy if more of them died. Hence, they would ignore similar reports unless evidence was plastered in front of them.

There were some people who were extremely compassionate in the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee but under the arrangement of their chief, these people were normally kicked out or promoted to unimportant positions. They were unable to shake the true beliefs of the committee.

In reality, Ling Lan wasn't as calm as she seemed.

After an analysis by Little Four, it was confirmed that this video was filmed by Ling Yi.

"Boss, the ungrateful bastard actually reported you. That's so infuriating." Before Ling Lan could say anything, Little Four started jumping on conclusions.

"Little Four, don't be angry. We shouldn't jump to conclusions," Ling Lan consoled him.

"Boss, why are you speaking up for him?" Little Four felt that if Ling Yi didn't have bad intentions towards Boss, he would have kept this video to himself.

“He wasn’t planning to report me. He wanted to report Li Lanfeng.” Ling Lan was angry that Ling Yi recorded this video but she didn’t lose her cool.

“Why were you reported then?” Little Four was puzzled.

“Someone from that organisation managed to gain his trust and is most probably staying beside him. The person is quite capable too. He managed to evade the surveillance of Li Lanfeng and you and send the video out.” Ling Lan complimented her enemy.

“Yes, I’m surprised too. I only allowed information to be sent out after confirming that they were safe.” Little Four frowned. This was the first time he met such a setback.

“Even though the technology of the virtual world in this era is not as advanced as Mandora, the hackers here have awakened abilities which allows them to evade your supervision. You must not underestimate them. We need to be more careful in the future.” Ling Lan knew Little Four had an unblemished track record in the virtual world. He had never met any setbacks before so this was a good opportunity to teach him to be cautious.

At first, Little Four was just a dutiful piece of technology. However, as he continued advancing, he became more and more humane. He started to have emotions.

In the process of getting more humane, he slowly picked up the bad habits of humans. For instance, he became careless and scatter-brained. His thoughts kept jumping around when he thought of something interesting. He was not that perfect piece of technology anymore. But, compared to the Little Four before this, Ling Lan preferred the current bubbly Little Four.

Relationships go both ways. Both parties have to work hard to ensure that the relationship continues and gets better.

Little Four nodded at Ling Lan’s words. In the past, Little Four always thought that hackers of this galaxy wouldn’t be a threat to him. However, this was not the case now.

“It looks like I need to investigate the innate talents of hackers.” Little Four finally got interested in the hackers from this galaxy.

He didn’t feel that the hackers here were a threat before this event because he felt that the technology of Mandora was much more advanced than this galaxy. He got arrogant.

However, the setback this time forced him to acknowledge the skills of the hackers here. They might have some abilities that Mandora didn’t know about.

“Are you able to find out who’s the person hanging around Ling Yi?” Ling Lan asked.

“I’m now looking for him. It’ll take a while.” Little Four was more cautious this time. He could have done it within a few seconds but he decided to take some time to ascertain his findings before releasing it. Hence, he was slower than usual.

“There’s no hurry. Take your time.” Ling Lan believed Little Four’s ability. Plus, she had the time to wait. She was pleased to see Little Four becoming more cautious. She felt like a proud mother of a growing child.

'Why am I having this feeling?' Ling Lan was stunned. 'Sigh, am I destined to take care of people?'

While the people from the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee were examining the video, and while Little Four was finding the culprit, Ling Lan managed to rest her mind as she waited for the result, which dissipated the cold aura around her a little. She seemed more friendly and gentle now. The scars on her face weren't as scary as before. She looked much more pleasant.

In the corner of the conference room, Mu Chaoran suddenly grabbed Tang Ningyu's right shoulder.

Tang Ningyu frowned at the force of the grab.

"What's the matter?" Tang Ningyu looked at Mu Chaoran curiously.

Mu Chaoran was flabbergasted. He seemed to have discovered some astonishing secret.

"Little Brother Shaoyun..." When Tang Ningyu thought that Mu Chaoran wasn't going to reply to him, he heard these three words.

Tang Ningyu was dumbfounded. "What did you say?"

Mu Chaoran lifted his finger with difficulty and pointed at Ling Lan. His voice was hoarse as he said, "Little Brother Shaoyun."

Tang Ningyu looked towards Ling Lan. He didn't sense anything before this but due to Mu Chaoran's reminder, he could feel Little Brother Shaoyun's aura on Ling Lan. Although it was very faint, it was still very distinct to him.

"That's impossible!" Tang Ningyu immediately opposed the idea. How could their pure and innocent Little Brother Shaoyun be this cold and ruthless major general in front of them?

"We always thought that Major General Ling didn't use the identity the mainframe gave him to enter Planet Azure. Before I saw what was currently in front of me, I believed this. However, I realize that we have made a mistake." Mu Chaoran gave a bitter smile.

"What do you mean?" Tang Ningyu didn't believe that Ling Lan was Pei Shaoyun but deep down inside, he wished that Mu Chaoran was able to convince him.

"We disregarded the remarks for the mission. It's a five-star perfect score." Tang Ningyu felt like slapping himself. "We missed such an important clue."

"What does the perfect result have to do with the disguise?" Tang Ningyu was still in shock so his brain malfunctioned a little.

Mu Chaoran didn't reply to him. He just smiled bitterly at Tang Ningyu. He massaged his temples to gain some time to arrange his thoughts.

After ten seconds, Tang Ningyu grabbed Mu Chaoran's left hand and said, "Five-star perfect pass! So that's the reason."

"Yes. If he got a five-star perfect pass, it meant that he followed exactly what the mainframe told him to do. That means that he could only have disguised himself as a student!" Mu Chaoran looked at Ling Lan



with a complex expression. If he didn't retract his force of presence, they might never have realised the truth.

"No wonder Little White is his pet. From the start, he is Little Brother Shaoyun. That's why Little White always follows him around." Mu Chaoran had linked everything together.

"Our relationship is fake." Tang Ningyu's expression changed. He was fuming slightly.

"It was fake from the start. We just got too immersed in our roles." Mu Chaoran seemed to be in a daze.

He finally understood why he told Ling Lan the delay back when they were in his room. His instinct was telling him that Ling Lan was his beloved Little Brother Shaoyun.

"Yes. We were all under disguise. However, why did he say that he wasn't Pei Shaoyun on Planet Haijiao? Why did he say that he didn't recognise us? Why didn't he confess to us? Are we unworthy to be his friends?" Tang Ningyu was hurt. "He knew that we are looking for Shaoyun. We hid our identities but our feelings for Shaoyun are real. It is real."

"But, does Little Brother Shaoyun really exist?" Mu Chaoran suddenly understood why Ling Lan lied to them. The pure and innocent Shaoyun only existed in their memory. On the other hand, Ling Lan was some high and mighty figure. Even when he was currently hurt, his position as an imposing figure of the military could never change.

Tang Ningyu immediately calmed down after hearing what Mu Chaoran said. He looked at Ling Lan again.

Ling Lan retracted her force of presence but even so, she still gave him a huge sense of pressure. Her aura was gentler but everyone still didn't dare to look at her. If he and Mu Chaoran hadn't advanced to the domain stage, they might be lowering their heads like most of the people in the room.

"He isn't Pei Shaoyun." Tang Ningyu was dejected.

"Thus, he denied it. He really isn't our Little Brother Shaoyun." Mu Chaoran was sad but at the same time, he felt relieved. The Pei Shaoyun he had been thinking about so dearly never existed.

Mu Chaoran remembered the first time he met Pei Shaoyun. His smile was bright and shy. It was so pure that even he felt guilty. His gaze was always so sincere. Even if you lied to him, he would choose to believe you. His blatant display of innocence hurt him.

He was the most perfect young man on the planet. Mu Chaoran wanted to protect him at all cost. He wanted to protect that innocence forever so that it would never get tainted.

"Damn it, I don't believe it." Mu Chaoran suddenly slapped himself. This sudden self-slap shocked the people beside them. Tang Ningyu glared at the people who had clearly overreacted, and they quickly turned their heads around in fear.

"Chaoran, what are you doing?" Tang Ningyu asked in a low voice.

Mu Chaoran looked at Tang Ningyu. He forced a smile. "Even though I kept telling myself that Little Brother Shaoyun is not real, I can't convince myself. I don't believe that our Little Brother Shaoyun's smile and words are fake. I don't believe it."

"I can't convince myself too." Tang Ningyu looked at Ling Lan. He made a decision. "He is the only person that can give us an answer."

Mu Chaoran looked at Ling Lan. Yes, he wouldn't be able to give up unless he received an answer from Ling Lan personally. He knew that Pei Shaoyun was the devil in his heart. He wouldn't be able to forget it so easily.

Ling Lan sensed something going over in the audience so she opened her eyes and scanned the crowd.

When she saw Tang Ningyu and Mu Chaoran, her gaze wavered a little. However, she still nodded at them before closing her eyes again.

Those two people were looking at her strangely so Ling Lan was on her guard. The force of presence around her quickly increased. Many people who were looking at her retracted their gaze.

"Boss, I found him." Little Four finally gave her a piece of good news.

Ling Lan asked immediately, "Who is it?"

"This person!" A young and familiar figure appeared in Ling Lan's mindscape.

"It's him... that's unexpected." Ling Lan was surprised. Although she knew that her enemy would definitely send someone to get close to Ling Yi, she didn't expect the person to be with Ling Yi since the Scout Academy. This person had accompanied Ling Yi for sixteen years... he wouldn't be easy to deal with.

She wondered if this person knew his mission right from the start or was he only told after he became an adult. If it was the first option... this was a scary person.

### **Chapter 1167 Answer!**

Major General Bai finally received the verdict from the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee. The video evidence Ling Lan gave them was real. If this video was fake, they would commit suicide.

After obtaining Ling Lan's video, they compared it with the video sent by the unknown leaker. It allowed them to discover something amiss. Without Ling Lan's video, they wouldn't be able to notice the small problem with the first video evidence they had. This was why they took such a long time to reach a verdict.

Actually, the problem with the first video was Little Four's work. Little Four was someone who bore grudges. Hence, he messed with the video to take his revenge. He made a small change to the video. It was just a very small change but it made a very big impact. Anyone that wasn't stupid would be able to notice the change.

This was what Little Four wanted. The small change would spur the hackers from the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee to investigate further.

Major General Bai received the verification. He said to Ling Lan, "Major General Ling, your video is real. There's no problem with

*it.*"

An uproar exploded in the room.

If Ling Lan's video was real, it meant that the one sent by the unknown leaker from the Lingtian Mecha Clan was fake. The rights of a prisoner were important but framing your superior was a great offense. If caught, the leaker would be sent to the military court and be stripped of his identity as a soldier. He might even be put in jail.

Ling Lan was young but she was a major general. If someone framed her, he would have to squat in jail for more than twenty years at least.

There were very few framing incidents because of this heavy punishment. Those that did it were prepared to die trying as the success rate for such cases was very low. After all, the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee wasn't easily fooled.

"We've discovered something new in the first video that was sent to us. Once we verify its authenticity, we'll give Major General Ling an answer," Major General Bai continued sincerely.

Major General Bai hated acts of framing. He felt that anyone who did this was unworthy of being a soldier.

"Sure!" Ling Lan opened her eyes and nodded at Major General Bai.

Major General Bai smiled slightly when he saw Ling Lan's indifferent expression. He respected General Ling Xiao greatly so he felt happy that his idol had a qualified successor. He was also surprised that Ling Lan managed to take care of this issue easily before he had a chance to perform.

He wondered if the video was prepared beforehand or did Ling Lan just happen to bring it along. He quickly rejected the former. The Disciplinary and Investigation Committee was split into different factions but they still had the integrity to not harm the prestige of the Federation. They would never leak any information out. So, he was sure no one had informed Ling Lan to prepare a counterevidence beforehand. He had never encountered any leakage of information from the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee in his time in the military.

While everyone's focus was on Ling Lan's conference, the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee secretly sent more than 20 teams to the various government departments.

In front of the military safety department.

The soldier on duty saw a bunch of people running towards him and shouted, "Who's there?"

The leader of the group took out a metal card from his chest pocket and said coldly, "The leader of Team 02 of the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee."

'The Disciplinary and Investigation Committee?' The soldier on duty shuddered. He quickly took out his optical supercomputer and scanned the metal card.

Beep. The person's status was stated on the optical supercomputer. He was indeed the leader of Team 02 of the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee. The soldier was stunned by the person's rank. He was a major general.

The highest-ranking officer in the military safety department was his head, a major general. Although their ranks were the same, the soldier knew that their head wouldn't dare to offend this Major General Luo from the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee.

"I'll report to my head now." The soldier was stunned but he didn't forget his job.

"There's no need for that. I hope that you'll maintain silence from now on." Luo Yang stopped the soldier. A major walked out from the group behind him and aimed his beam handgun at the soldier's waist.

"I'm sorry. Please cooperate with us." The major spoke without any change in expression.

The soldier on duty knew that something big must have happened. Some of his superiors in the military safety department must have done something bad.

Luo Yang noticed that his subordinates had controlled the situation so he entered the building of the military safety department.

There were many workers inside the building. Many people were astounded to see the group of them walking in with a cold aura. However, since they came in from the main door, none of the workers went to question them.

Luo Yang seemed familiar with this location. He led his team to the elevator and they went up to the highest level. There was only one office on this level. It was the office of the head of the military safety department, Major General Jiang Wei.

Luo Yang motioned at the two people beside him, and the two of them stood quickly beside the door of the office.

The door opened automatically and Luo Yang led his team inside.

The office had an open concept. Some beautiful female officers were busy working in the office. Some were contacting through their communicators while most sat in front of their optical supercomputer with their eyes glued to the screen.

The female officers noticed the commotion and looked over. One of them saw that the leader was a major general so she got up and saluted. "Major general."

The other female officers stood up in a flurry and saluted too. Luo Yang frowned at the messy greeting.

"Is Major General Jiang Wei in?" Luo Yang controlled his unhappiness and asked.

"Yes." The female officers nodded. Luo Yang was a cold and stern person. These female officers looked as though they had never met such an officer before so they were frightened.

"Bring me to him." Luo Yang ordered.

"Yes, major general." The female officers pushed and shoved each other. The female officer at the front was pushed out.

The female officer gritted her teeth and said, "May I know who you are so that I can report to my head?"

'Finally, someone who is asking the correct question.' Luo Yang had a bad impression of the female officers so when he noticed one that was not so bad, he took a second look at her.

### **Chapter 1168 Clearing Mission!**

"There's no need for that. Just bring me in." Luo Yang knew that this was a necessary procedure but he didn't want the female officer to alarm her head. Hence, he rejected her.

The female officer bit her lips helplessly. The other party was a major general but not informing her head about a visitor was against the rule. Should she bring him in?

"He just wants you to bring him in. Why are you hesitating so much? Hurry up and lead the way." At that moment, her superior whispered to her.

The female officer sighed with an air of helplessness. She had to listen to her superior. Forget it, she would be the one taking the blame if anything went wrong. The female officer convinced herself and led Luo Yang in.

Once they reached the door, the female officer turned to look at Luo Yang. Luo Yang signalled with his eyes for her to quickly open the door.

She turned around and sighed at her helplessness again. Then, she took out her metal card and swiped it at the door. The door opened.

Luo Yang walked in without any hesitation.

Jiang Wei thought that it was one of his officers walking in so he didn't look up when someone entered his office. He only sensed something was amiss when he heard the footsteps of multiple people.

He raised his head and saw Luo Yang standing in front of his desk. He was puzzled when he saw the insignia on his shoulder. "May I know who you are?"

Luo Yang took out his work I.D and answered sternly, "The leader of Team 02 of the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee, Luo Yang."

'The Disciplinary and Investigation Committee!' Jiang Wei's eyes bulged out in shock. He hurriedly stood up from his seat, walked out from behind his desk, and asked, "The reason for your visit?"

As the head of the Military Safety Department, Jiang Wei knew nothing good would come from a visit by the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee. However, he was not afraid, he just wondered who they were looking for.

Luo Yang lifted his hand and one of the officers behind him took out a piece of document from the file in his hand and passed it to Luo Yang.

Luo Yang took the document and scanned it in front of him. "Major General Jiang Wei, please come with us."

"What do you mean?" Jiang Wei was flabbergasted.

"Exactly what you heard." Luo Yang was used to this type of reaction. That was usually the first sentence everyone said when he invited them to leave with him.

“You don’t have the authority to do this. I’m the head of the Military Safety Department. I’m a major general.” Jiang Wei glared at Luo Yang. He was furious at the uninvited guests’ disrespectful behaviour.

“The Disciplinary and Investigation Committee can invite anyone, even if he is a general.” Luo Yang replied calmly. Of course, if they wanted to invite a general for tea, their head would have to go personally.

However, they weren’t able to invite officers whose rank was higher than a general. In that case, they had to collate enough evidence and send it to the military headquarters, the Ministry of Justice, and the Flying Dragon Special Forces before they could come near such high caliber officers. These three factions would then take a vote. If more than two factions agree to the warrant, they would then be able to impeach the officer.

Hence, it was almost impossible to impeach the three great marshals and the ten great generals, unless they betrayed their country. However, someone in such a high caliber position generally wouldn’t have any reasons to betray their country. It would just be hurting themselves, and no one who at the top of the food chain was stupid enough to do so.

Jiang Wei was green with anger. He had heard about how forceful the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee was but he had never seen them in action before. He thought that they would only be forceful to those small characters, not high-ranking officers like him. Now, he knew their methods were the same towards soldiers of any rank.

They silently confronted each other for more than a minute. Finally, Luo Yang opened his mouth. “Major General Jiang, please.”

Jiang Wei sneered. Suddenly, he flicked his right hand in an attempt to press a button below his desk.

Before Jiang Wei could touch the button, someone tightly clasped his hand.

“Major General Jiang, this won’t look good on your record,” Luo Yang was stern as he impassively said.

“You charged into my office without any warning. Are you trying to start a rebellion?” Jiang Wei glared at him.

Luo Yang sneered. “Major General Jiang, you’re showing your true colours here.”

Jiang Wei let out a loud roar and a strong force of presence started to burst out from his body.

“I knew you would be difficult.” Luo Yang released his force of presence too.

“Domain!” Jiang Wei’s expression was filled with indignation and anger. He didn’t expect the major general who came to catch him was a domain realm master too. Moreover, Luo Yang’s aura was more powerful than his own. That meant that he might be a titled domain realm formidable warrior so subduing him, an average domain realm master, would be a piece of cake.

“You should analyze the situation you are currently in and make the right decision, Major General Jiang. If things get out of hand, you won’t be able to remain in the military,” Luo Yang reminded him.

Jiang Wei’s expression kept changing before he deflated like a balloon with no air as he realised that there was no way out. The other party had come too well prepared, so he closed his eyes and calmed his

emotions. He gritted his teeth as he spoke to Luo Yang. "Fine, I will cooperate. However, once I know who reported me, I won't let him off."

"You can do whatever you want." Luo Yang didn't care about the threat.

Everyone who went to the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee would threaten them but not many would be able to come out with the same attitude, especially those high-ranked soldiers, as those officers were usually called for tea when they had found enough evidence against them.

Plus, the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee wasn't the mastermind in this matter. Their department head didn't tell them much but he guessed that it must have something to do with one of the three great marshals. A few of the ten great generals must be involved with the matter too.

It was obvious that the higher authorities wanted to clean up some bad apples within the military. Based on what he knew, Jiang Wei wasn't the highest-ranked person on the list given to him as there was an even bigger fish on the list with their head personally looking for it.

Their head was good at keeping secrets so no one knew about the reason behind the sudden 'invites'. He could only guess what happened when he saw his head heading out personally.

Similar events occurred in various other departments. The Disciplinary and Investigation Committee acted quickly and precisely. They didn't give the other party any time to react.

This was the result of their hard work over the last three days. In these three days, they did a thorough investigation on these people and predicted their actual stages in physical skills. To get all this information, they worked overtime for all three days. Then, they sent the best candidates to catch these people. These factors combined allowed them to have it gone as smoothly as it was.

### **Chapter 1169 Department Head!**

"Chief, we just received a report. People from the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee have appeared everywhere within the military headquarters. They took away many high-ranking officers, some were even major generals." One major general anxiously walked into his senior officer's office and reported what he just read.

"Major generals? Do you know who they are?" The general, who was in the office looking through documents, was in shock.

"I only know of one from the Military Safety Department, Major General Jiang Wei. I am not privy to the other names on the list yet," replied the major general softly. He hurriedly came to bring the news because he had heard Jiang Wei was asked to leave with the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee on his way over here.

"Did they discover us?" After hearing Jiang Wei's name, the general felt his heart sinking to his stomach. However, he quickly eliminated the possibility. In all of these years, he followed the rules to the T, focused on his work and never made any mistakes. As for Jiang Wei, he was only just related to his faction, so he wouldn't affect him too much.

However, what was the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee planning to do with these series of invites? The general began to think more deeply about this. He must find out the reason behind the vast undertaking. That way, he would be able to avoid getting caught in the midst of the storm.

Right at that moment, an angry voice could be heard from outside of his office. "Hey, what are you doing? This the nation's Network Security Department. It's not some place where you can just come and go as you please."

"Make them quiet down," said a lazy-sounding voice.

Then, the sound of a few bodies thumping could be heard. Afterwards, it became completely silent.

The general had a grave expression on his face. He immediately stood up and walked quickly to the door of his office. The major general followed behind him.

When they walked out of the office, they saw a lieutenant general with his back towards them and hands clasped behind his back. Beside him, there were two major generals with two groups of majors following behind them. They locked down the office and held down the staff members. Some had attempted to resist, but were mercilessly struck unconscious.

After sensing their arrival, the lieutenant general with his hands behind his back turned around. He instantly smiled after seeing them, "General Wu, long time no see." The general's military rank was clearly higher than this lieutenant general, but this lieutenant general's expression wasn't the least bit polite and was quite casual.

General Wu saw the person who came and narrowed his eyes. With a hint of coldness in his eyes, he spoke slowly, "Lieutenant General Yang, I didn't know such a busy person like yourself would actually have the time to come visit me."

"I can't help it. There's someone here that I need to personally invite to leave with me," Lieutenant General Yang smiled even more.

"That wolf in sheep's clothing!"

General Wu screamed in his mind.

"I'm not sure who Lieutenant General Yang wants to invite," said General Wu. He didn't know which one of his lieutenant generals or deputy generals was so unlucky that the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee was on their tail.

After hearing that, Lieutenant General Yang smirked lightly. "I will have to trouble General Wu to come with me!"

After saying that, Lieutenant General Yang gave a pose as if he was saying 'After you'!

'They are targeting me!' General Wu's expression changed instantly. A hint of killing intent appeared in his eyes for a moment as he shouted angrily, "You're screwing with me!"

The angry shout didn't affect Lieutenant General Yang at all. He calmly put out his right hand and patted the bottom part of his uniform. It was as though he was trying to get some dust off it. Then, he raised his eyes and spoke nonchalantly, "General Wu, don't lose your cool."



General Wu looked at him angrily to show the frustrations he had. He spoke in a sharp tone, "I'm the head of a department. Lieutenant General Yang, if you want to take me, it's going to take more than just a warrant from the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee."

Although for those general rank or below, the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee could write up their own warrants for their arrest, however there was a restriction when doing so. That restriction was that people who were at top ranking positions of the nation could not be taken in for questioning without proper authorization.

After all, the nation's various department heads were the heart of the nation and couldn't be just taken away so easily. If anyone wanted to take them away, they would require the signatures of at least two out of the three marshals for such a warrant.

After hearing those words, Lieutenant General Yang opened his palm in front of him. A major standing behind him quickly walked up and placed a document into his hand.

Lieutenant General Yang took the document and handed it to General Wu. He then smiled and said, "This is what you want? The signatures of the three marshals."

General Wu's eyes immediately narrowed. He quickly grabbed the document from Lieutenant General Yang's hand. He opened it and did indeed see the clearance for the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee to take away the nation's Network Security Department Head Wu Shangyong away. The signatures of the three marshals were present on the warrant.

"That's not possible." He was someone who was brought up to this position by the third marshal and was very respectful towards the first and second marshals. He never did anything selfish nor did break any rules. Even when the third marshal helped him raise up the ranks, it was still through proper procedures. It was because he didn't do anything out of line, followed the rules and was always praised for his work that he had gotten to his current position. He had also received a medal of the highest honor for doing well in his position, The Golden Thorn.

Although he wasn't as bright and glamorous as General Ling Xiao, he was still a role model in the military that was respected and loved. Why would the three marshals agree to such a warrant?

General Wu couldn't figure it out. He could only repeatedly say that it was impossible.

"Lieutenant General Yang, somebody is framing me." General Wu suddenly realized it. He understood that he was being framed.

"That's why, General Wu, we need you to go to the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee and cooperate with us." Lieutenant General Yang smirked. "You just need to make everything clear for us. Just like how Major General Ling had done during the conference. Faced with the accusation of killing prisoners, didn't he make it clear to us?"

After hearing those words, General Wu's eyes showed a hint of shock. He seemed to have realized something and his face turned slightly pale.

"Haha, General Wu, it looks like you've remembered something," seeing General Wu's pale expression, Lieutenant General Yang laughed out loud.

After laughing for a few seconds, his smile suddenly turned cold. "It's not that we didn't report it, but rather because the time to wasn't right. General Wu, don't think for a second that no one is unaware of the things you've done. It was because back then, no one wanted to go against you. Otherwise, you would've been taken down from your high horse long ago."

Lieutenant General Yang's words helped General Wu regain his composure. He calmly said, "Lieutenant General Yang, what have I done? I really don't know. Please help me understand. Even a criminal still needs to be told what crime they committed right?"

Lieutenant General Yang shook his head. "We will tell you, just not here. General Wu, please come to the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee with us."

General Wu knew he now had no choice but to go to the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee. He snorted coldly, tossed his arm out in frustration and walked out of the Network Security Department.

Major General Bai, who was currently at Ling Lan's conference, instantly breathed a sigh of relief after receiving the report that the mission was completed.

He stood up and spoke to the host of the conference, Major General Gao, "I just received news that our Disciplinary and Investigation Committee's hackers have found new evidence. We've found the parts of the video that had been altered. Thus, we can confirm that the video sent in as an accusation against Major General Ling was fake and unusable."

"Thus, Major General Ling is not guilty of anything. He is innocent," said Major General Bai without hesitation.

### **Chapter 1170 Independent Army!**

The conference room erupted with commotion again. However, this time, they all shared the same emotion-anger. Almost all of them wanted to inhibit Ling Lan's rise to the top, but the most they would do to achieve that goal was to just remove some of the merits from the Lingtian Mecha Clan. They had no intention of slandering Ling Lan.

"This is too much! We must punish the offenders severely," an officer sitting in a corner exclaimed angrily.

Everyone nodded their head in agreement to the officer's words. "Yes, we must punish them."

Ling Lan opened her eyes in surprise when she heard someone helping her. She turned her head to look at who was helping her when everyone else ignored her plight.

Her eyes met Mu Chaoran's eyes that were staring directly right into her. He gave an evil smile and moved his lips. He mouthed a sentence silently.

'Little Brother Shaoyun, I'll always protect you.' Ling Lan learned to read lips before so she understood what Mu Chaoran was saying.

She frowned slightly in response. She realized that she had made a mistake to retract her aura in front of someone as sensitive as Mu Chaoran.

However, she turned calm quickly. She initially didn't want to continue the relationship with the two of them because the three of them started the relationship with a false identity in the first place. Once the mission ended, everything between them should have ended. There shouldn't be any feelings of camaraderie or friendship because all of them communicated under the disguise of someone. However, she didn't expect that Mu Chaoran and Tang Ningyu would desperately hold onto that fake friendship until now.

Moreover, even if she was recognised now, she would not be burdened as their imaginary relationship with Pei Shaoyun didn't affect her anyway.

After rationalizing everything in her head, Ling Lan turned her gaze away from Mu Chaoran and Tang Ningyu's direction with an ever-unchanging expression.

"It looks like he isn't affected at all," Tang Ningyu commented with pity. He was hoping to see at least a minute reaction from Ling Lan.

"Honestly, if he didn't retract his force of presence just now, I won't believe it even if someone told me that he is the cute and innocent Little Brother Shaoyun. I would have just thought that the guy was making fun of me." Mu Chaoran gave a bitter smile. He couldn't wrap his head around the idea of how an expressionless man such as Ling Lan was able to act as a cute and pure little boy.

Shaoyun's smile was bright enough to light up the universe. It was able to invoke happiness within the people around him. His smile was like a special bestowment to the world before him from the angels above. Yet, in actual fact, under that cute and pure persona was a cold and ruthless soldier who could force everyone around him to bow to his will.

These two personalities which were on completely different sides of the spectrum, manifested in the same person. It was inconceivable. Mu Chaoran thought that he was living in a weird world for a second.

Mu Chaoran ignited the rage in everyone's heart. They decided to work together to get rid of the offenders first. No one hoped that while they were fighting for their lives on the battlefield, they still had to guard against their own nation. The act of framing went over their bottomline. Currently, everyone's attention shifted from Ling Lan and the Lingtian Mecha Clan to the person who sent the report and evidence.

Major General Gao mildly coughed out to attract everyone's attention, and the noisy room quickly turned quiet.

"If all of you have no queries about Major General Ling's report, we'll input Major General Ling's report into the mainframe and wait for the mainframe to give him his merit."

To make sure that the merits and rewards were handed out properly and fairly, they were all distributed by the mainframe. This was to prevent innocent people from being snatched of what they deserved.

The officer in the corner shouted again, "I have nothing against it."

"Why would we be against it? Will we frame Major General Ling?" Another voice followed closely.

"Yes, I have nothing against it too."

"Me too."

Not everyone had underlying intentions when attending this conference. There were still some soldiers that maintained their principals in the military. They were triggered when they heard the question so they quickly voiced out their support.

Those people that wanted to stop Ling Lan from climbing up too quickly gave up their initial intention after hearing the questions too.

Were they supposed to frame a man of merits? This was something even they condemned.

When these people gave up making it difficult for Ling Lan, the result was obvious. Even if some people still wanted to suppress her, they had no choice but to follow the majority. They had to follow the crowd and give Ling Lan and her mecha clan the honor they deserved.

Very soon, the mainframe calculated the merits and rewards for each individual in the Lingtian Mecha Clan.

Everyone in the Lingtian Mecha Clan would rise in one rank. Some people who performed outstandingly would rise three ranks (If their initial ranks were not very high to begin with). Some who performed slightly better managed to rise two ranks.

Many veteran mecha operators, who had been stuck as a senior colonel for many years, managed to be promoted to a major general after this battle. Lingtian Mecha Clan couldn't be compared with the other famous legendary mecha clans in many aspects but in terms of the number of major generals, it towered over them.

The military headquarters was dumbfounded when they saw this verdict.

"Is this... alright?" an officer stammered. They knew that the rewards for the battle would be great but they didn't expect it to be so monstrous. The list of more than 40 major generals was enough to shock them.

"Shall we move some major generals out?" Someone suggested.

"But Lingtian is an independent mecha clan. No, it's an independent army now! It will be difficult to move any of them out" Once a mecha clan reached certain criteria, the regiment commander could request for the mecha clan to become an army. There were two requirements to become an independent army. First, there must be more than 15 major generals. Second, the regiment commander must be a lieutenant general.

After the battle, the Lingtian Mecha Clan fulfilled both requirements. Once they finished the registration process, they would be able to become an independent army.

In the history of the Huaxia Federation, no independent mecha clan managed to turn into an independent army within a year.

The independent armies now were formed from the hard work of many generations of soldiers. Of course, most mecha clans would never even fulfill the requirement even after many successive generations of successors. This fact could be further strengthened just by the sheer number of independent mecha clans in the military but with only 26 independent armies on the opposite side.

Lingtian was the only mecha clan in the past 100 years to turn into an independent army. It would be the 27th independent army.