

## Crossing 281

### Chapter 281: Resolution!

Despite being unconscious, Luo Lang's entire face was becoming redder and redder, as his breathing became more and more laboured, and his body began to spasm. This meant that the aphrodisiac in Luo Lang's body was already in full swing.

This caused the typically composed Ling Lan to be at a loss, unsure what she should do. Would dousing Luo Lang with cold water help? Having the barest knowledge of aphrodisiacs, Ling Lan could only be clueless <sup>1</sup>.

Little Four could sense his boss's helplessness, and so quickly rushed off into the learning space to request assistance. Very soon, he returned to say happily, "Boss, Instructor Number One is looking for you."

Ling Lan's heart skipped a beat, and she hurriedly instructed, "Little Four, take care of the hover car and Luo Lang ..."

Before she was even done speaking, a black vortex had appeared before her eyes, about to swallow her whole.

F\*ck, again?! Ling Lan's attention strayed for a split second, and she was pulled right into the learning space by Instructor Number One.

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This was Instructor Number One's personal space. It was forever shaded by cloudy skies, a plateau shrouded in clouds at the peak of the tallest mountain. As usual, Instructor Number One was sitting on the plateau in solitude, resting his eyes as he meditated.

Ling Lan appeared out of thin air behind Instructor Number One. Seeing Instructor Number One's figure, Ling Lan called out respectfully, "Instructor Number One, greetings!"

Only then did Instructor Number One open his eyes and say dispassionately, "So you've come!"

Ling Lan could not help but grumble internally — how much faker could these words be? Instructor Number One was the one who pulled her in here ... was it possible for Instructor Number One to not know when she was coming?

"I heard Little Four say that one of your friends has been dosed with aphrodisiac?" Number One spared no mind to Ling Lan's opinion, asking her about the situation without beating around the bush.

"Yes, Instructor Number One, can this aphrodisiac be cured?" Hearing what he had to say, Ling Lan's eyes lit up. Right, why had she forgotten to come ask the instructors in the learning space? Little Four's mind was still the quickest, thinking of this. Ling Lan firmly gave Little Four a mental thumbs up.

"Aphrodisiacs have no antidote," replied Instructor Number One calmly.

Ling Lan's gaze dimmed at these words — could she only watch as Luo Lang suffered?

“However, that doesn’t mean there is no solution,” Instructor Number One continued to say. This caused Ling Lan’s initially low spirits to perk up once more. Her eyes sparkled as she looked at Instructor Number One, hoping that Instructor Number One would be able to tell her a good plan.

“Your companion’s name is Luo Lang, right?” Instructor Number One did not seem to notice Ling Lan’s impatience, actually beginning to stray from the topic.

Ling Lan quickly replied, “Yes, Instructor Number One. What method exactly can we use to resolve the aphrodisiac in Luo Lang’s body?” *Please, the flames were already lapping at their brows ... Instructor Number One, could you just be efficient and give a direct answer?!*

Instructor Number One’s cold gaze swept over to stare at her, freezing Ling Lan’s anxious impatience instantly, and her mind cleared.

“Calmed down yet?” huffed Instructor Number One coldly, somewhat dissatisfied over Ling Lan’s loss of composure.

“Sorry, Instructor Number One, I lost control of my emotions.” Realising her lapse, Ling Lan quickly bowed her head and admitted her fault.

“Being concerned for a companion is not wrong, but remember, no matter when, you must keep calm. Otherwise, not only will you be unable to help your friend, you might even make things worse for them.” Instructor Number One could understand Ling Lan’s current anxious state of mind, but he could not condone it. On the battlefield, once one lost their composure, not only would they destroy themselves, they would also drag their brother-in-arms down with them — this was unacceptable.

“Understood!” Ling Lan nodded. At this moment, her gaze was no longer lost and panicked; there was only cool rationality and determination in her eyes.

Instructor Number One’s icy stare was fixed on Ling Lan for several seconds. Under this stare heaped with pressure, Ling Lan did not retreat, staring right back at Instructor Number One with a steady gaze.

“Remember what you’ve said today!” Instructor Number One retracted his gaze in satisfaction, before continuing to say, “You’ve forgotten that no matter how long you spend in the learning space, only a second would have passed outside. It won’t delay you from saving your friend.”

Ling Lan bowed her head in shame; she had indeed forgotten about this. It was just as Instructor Number One had said — she had lost her mental balance, her calm, and her judgment. This kind of weak display was indeed worthy of a scolding.

“I remember that, Luo Lang is the one who activated the innate talent Alter Ego, and has still not found a way to control it?” Instructor Number One saw that Ling Lan was already reflecting deeply on her mistake, and so continued with their previous topic.

At this time, Ling Lan had already centred herself and was back to normal. She responded calmly, “Yes, Instructor Number One.” This was also a problem that had been bothering her. She wanted to help Luo Lang, but really did not know where to start. It should be known that Luo Lang’s innate talent was an excellent one, but it was just unfortunately out of control. It was like a double-edged sword; even as it cut the enemy, it would also cut its user. This was also why Ling Lan had always restricted Luo Lang from

activating his innate talent before this. An unstable innate talent would not be acknowledged by either the military academy or the army divisions.

“That is indeed a very good innate talent ...” At this point, Instructor Number One glanced reflexively at Ling Lan, silently awed by how beloved Ling Lan was by the heavens. Even the companions by her side had awakened such powerful innate talents. “If you want your companion to fully master this innate talent, this aphrodisiac incident is actually a great opportunity.”

Ling Lan’s gaze brightened at these words, but remembering the instructor’s previous counsel, she took in a deep breath and suppressed the emotional surge she felt, merely asking calmly, “May I request Instructor Number One to clarify?”

Instructor Number One nodded silently — this reaction of Ling Lan pleased him greatly. Thus, he did not make things difficult for Ling Lan any longer, directly stating the solution, “Find an enclosed space and let Luo Lang activate his innate talent. Within his innate talent, there should be one Transcendent Cold personality. As long as this personality can be brought to the surface, the aphrodisiac issue will be resolved.”

“Extremely frigid?” Ling Lan was rather perplexed — how could this particular personality nullify the aphrodisiac?

“In fact, this will let him cut off all the seven emotions and six desires<sup>2</sup>, leaving him in an extremely cold and rational mode. As long as he can stay in this personality until the aphrodisiac has run its course, your companion will have safely overcome this hurdle,” replied Instructor Number One.

“Will there be any latent issues?” Ling Lan asked after some thought. She did not wish for Luo Lang to have any remnant problems from this method.

“No, but in the process of activating the personality, you need to make sure that your companion retains his rationality. If the wrong personality is activated, you will need to beat it back so that another personality can be activated. And this point will require your strength to enforce. Based on your capabilities at a half step to Domain, you should have no problems,” explained Number One, “Remember, you must keep him conscious. If it’s not an aware personality, you must beat it back, until your companion manages to master how to activate his personalities while retaining his awareness.”

“Understood, Instructor Number One. Is there anything else I should watch out for? If there is nothing, I would like to return now and resolve this as soon as possible,” said Ling Lan with a grim expression. Right now, her mind was most concerned over the problem of Luo Lang and the aphrodisiac.

“Go. Once you are done helping your companion, come back and seek me out ...” Instructor Number One waved his hand, and Ling Lan was sent out of the learning space. The dim space once again subsided into silence. Instructor Number One sighed, his gaze complex, before once more closing his eyes.

Several seconds later, a tear suddenly appeared three metres behind Instructor Number One. A ravishingly beautiful woman in a uniform walked out of the tear — it was Instructor Number Four. Glumly, she whined, “Big Brother, why won’t you let me teach her about sex? This is obviously a great chance. Not only can she help clear the poison from her companion, she can also learn what is meant by the weaponry of women ...”

“Now is still not the time. Ling Lan’s Dominance Dao is gradually entering an optimum state. We cannot cause her heart to waver,” said Number One coldly, “ Besides, Ling Lan doesn’t have any need for this type of weaponry<sup>3</sup> . You are only asked to always be prepared, just in case she cannot regain her female nature in the future ...” At this point in his speech, Instructor Number One’s forehead was tightly creased. Even though Ling Lan’s progress on her Dominance Dao was astounding, in direct contrast, the gentle grace unique to women had slowly faded away ... could this be the price of walking the Dominance Dao?

“That would be such a shame. Ling Lan has such great qualities,” said Instructor Number Four with a forlorn gaze. The supple flexibility of Ling Lan’s body was truly marvellous — this was closely tied to Number Nine’s efforts in cultivating her. It would allow Ling Lan to require only half the effort for double the effect when learning the arts of feminine wiles. She was an absolute high-quality jade ... it was such a pity she had no place in her life right now for these arts to come into play.

“If Ling Lan had not proven successful on the other fronts, I would not stop you. But reality shows that her future will be brighter if she continues to walk the Dominance Dao.” Instructor Number One’s tone held steely conviction. Ling Lan was undoubtedly his most prized successor; there was no other.

“Since you, Number One, have said so, what can I do? But, when Ling Lan is done with her Dominance Dao, you won’t be able to stop me anymore from teaching Ling Lan the arts of female seduction.” Number Four cast these words down sulkily and then returned to her own space.

She had just known her debut was not going to be so early. She still had so many years to wait! She dearly wished Ling Lan could grow up quicker — it would be best if she could arrive at that age where her heart would flower into the spring of love ... at that time, that bloody big brother could no longer prevent her from teaching Ling Lan the methods of women.

Seeing Number Four vanish from his space, Instructor Number One took in a deep breath, calming down his ruffled emotions.

Truly amazing — actually stealthily performing the art of allure right in front of his face without displaying any signs. If his will had not been strong enough, he might really have found it difficult to resist ... Instructor Number One thought about how Ling Lan would also possess this type of allure skill in the future, and combine it with her current cold-domineering-swag aura ... Number One’s brow creased tightly once more. Alright, so he just could not imagine what that result would be like, but somehow it did not seem that it would turn out that lovely.

“Forget it, let’s worry about it when we come to it.” Instructor Number One was unexpectedly displaying some Ah-Q mentality<sup>4</sup> — because he too could not bear to refuse Instructor Number Four and her passion for teaching so many times. In future, Ling Lan would just have to bear with it.

Without knowing it, Ling Lan had been sold out by the Instructor Number One she deeply revered. Even someone as cold and unyielding as Instructor Number One had no choice but to give way a little when faced with the extraordinary charm and allure of Instructor Number Four.

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Sure enough, Ling Lan was back in the hover car after only a second on the clock. Little Four said joyfully, “Boss, you’re back? Have you found a solution?”

Ling Lan nodded and said, “Yes, Little Four. Change destinations immediately. Head for the combat hall!” To find an enclosed space, the only option was the private combat rooms at the combat hall. She did not forget to caution, “Little Four, do not leave any sign that we’re going there.”

“Yes, Boss!” With that, the hover car silently changed directions and began flying rapidly towards the combat hall.

## **Chapter 282: Bestial Personality!**

The hover car stopped not too far from the combat hall, and Ling Lan carried Luo Lang stealthily out of the car. Due to Little Four’s intervention, this hover car had registered as an empty car on the academy mainframe all this while, going around the campus on its designated route. Just like that, Ling Lan snuck Luo Lang into the combat hall without anyone the wiser.

Little Four had long found an empty private combat room, so Ling Lan dashed straight into the room with Luo Lang over her shoulder and Little Four instantly sealed the doors shut behind them.

Of course, on the records of the optical supercomputer of the combat hall, the private room they were in was still listed as unoccupied. However, Little Four used some concealment methods to hide the room from being displayed among the other empty rooms. In other words, regardless of which list one looked in — occupied or unoccupied rooms — they would be unable to find this private room Ling Lan and Luo Lang were in. Similarly, no one would notice one missing room among all the other hundred or so rooms, so this eliminated any chance of Ling Lan and Luo Lang being discovered.

Knowing that Little Four had handled all the precautionary measures, Ling Lan set Luo Lang on the ground and reached out a hand to pat Luo Lang awake.

“Boss, I feel terrible!” The moment Luo Lang woke up, he could feel his body burning up. He panted torturously, forcefully suppressing the need surging from deep within his body.

Yes, he needed comfort and relief, he wanted to take the person before him into his arms ... but this person was his most beloved and revered Boss Lan! Even if Luo Lang’s whole being was screaming at him with want, he held himself back from pouncing at Boss Lan.

Having impure thoughts about Boss Lan was an insult to his boss, Luo Lang felt. Of course, another reason was that Luo Lang believed pouncing forwards would be useless anyway — Boss Lan would surely smack him dead with one slap ...

Seeing that Luo Lang could still maintain some rationality even now, Ling Lan’s heart eased. She had been most afraid that Luo Lang would have lost his mind completely to the drug at this point, and so be unable to activate his innate talent.

Ling Lan did not dare to delay; she quickly told the plan to Luo Lang. Luo Lang’s gaze brightened at her words — if he could solve his lack of control over his innate talent from this incident, his suffering would not have been in vain. So he said, “Do it. Boss, if I really lose my mind, hit me till I wake up ...”

A trace of ruthlessness appeared in Luo Lang's eyes — he had always been willing to be harsh on himself. Even if his entire body became littered with wounds, he still wanted to complete this mission. How could he, Luo Lang, lose to such a trifle as this aphrodisiac?

"Okay!" Ling Lan nodded solemnly in response. This moment did not permit her to be soft-hearted.

Luo Lang pushed aside Ling Lan's hand which had reached out to help him up, climbing to his feet on his own waveringly. In order to hold back the roaring carnal urges within his body, his glossy red lips had been bitten through in several spots. Blood welled up from the wounds to flow downwards, falling onto smooth ivory skin to pool at the hollow of his neck, strangely beautiful in its own right. However, all of Ling Lan's and Luo Lang's attention was currently focused on receiving Luo Lang's personalities. Neither noticed the odd beauty of the scene.

"Innate talent, activate!" Luo Lang used the remnants of his rational mind to activate his innate talent.

Ling Lan saw the shaking figure of Luo Lang go still all of a sudden, and then a wild presence poured out from Luo Lang's body. This aura made Ling Lan frown slightly, a trace of disappointment in her eyes, because this was not the personality Ling Lan and Luo Lang were hoping for. However, Ling Lan's disappointment came and went in a flash. Luo Lang's innate talent was unstable — activating it for a specific personality was like drawing the lottery. If they had gotten it right in one go, now that would truly be miraculous.

Luo Lang slowly raised his head. His initially clear eyes were now bloodshot — there was no longer any trace of Luo Lang's primary identity, only endless savagery and blatant bestial desire remained in his gaze. He slowly opened his mouth wide, slipping out his tongue to lick at his bloody lips. This appearance clearly smacked of greed, but paired with Luo Lang's exquisitely beautiful face, the action actually gave Ling Lan a sense of flirtatious seduction.

"F\*ck!" Ling Lan could not help but curse internally. Who the heck was the real woman here?! The truly male Luo Lang doing such an erotic act — not only did it not cause revulsion in others, it even came off as extraordinarily mesmerising. At this moment, Ling Lan was hit hard by jealousy ...

"Ah ..." Though Luo Lang's small face was currently as red as a plum, brimming with seductive allure, the sound coming from his throat was the cry of a wild beast. That's right. This time, Luo Lang had awakened a bestial personality. It had no so-called rationality to speak of, only retaining the most basic bestial instincts.

Luo Lang in this identity did not recognise any Boss Lan; he only wanted to eliminate this prey before him that made him feel threatened. Thus, he lunged forwards without hesitation, both hands reaching out savagely at what he felt were the fatal points of the other.

Just as Ling Lan was about to activate her Domain and control Luo Lang, Ling Lan recalled Instructor Number One's reminder. She needed to beat back these uncontrollable personalities of Luo Lang's. Erm ... beat back? Alright, she would just do it with her fists then.

Ling Lan resolutely raised her fists and punched out fiercely, striking Luo Lang's thin and lanky body full on.

Luo Lang was sent reeling back with a 'bam', his entire body crashing heavily to the ground.

*“The activation of the bestial personality has greatly increased the strength of Luo Lang’s body. It’s at least three times tougher than before. In the past, this level of power would have sent Luo Lang flying, but now, it is only enough to strike him down ...”* Ling Lan looked at Luo Lang struggling up from the ground, and mentally began cataloguing the benefits this activated personality brought to Luo Lang. *“Also, the endurance of his body has also increased by quite a bit. This punch of mine did not injure him.”*

Luo Lang had already climbed up by this time, his lips curled in a growl in response to the pain of that last hit, and then he leapt forwards once more. His speed and strength clearly showed that he was not at all affected by that first attack. It could even be said that the minor pain had made this personality of Luo Lang’s even fiercer now.

“Then, let’s add on three times the strength. I don’t believe I can’t bring you down!” Ling Lan instantly increased the power behind her fists, once again sending a fist at Luo Lang and sending him flying. Yes, the horrific strength behind her fists this time had sent Luo Lang flying the moment the hit landed. Luo Lang was seen to crash into a wall and then slide down it to slam into the ground.

“Howl!” Pained cries spilled from Luo Lang’s throat. This force had made him feel intense pain. Struggling, he tried to climb to his feet once more, his crimson eyes glaring at Ling Lan before him, filled with brute ferocity and killing intent. The intense pain had caused Luo Lang’s bestial instinct to become utterly berserk.

“Still not submitting? Then I’ll hit you till you submit.” Ling Lan sniffed coldly and charged forwards with a clenched fist. Before Luo Lang could get up, she pressed Luo Lang into the ground and began pummeling him.

Seeing this scene, Little Four’s pair of little legs could not help but tremble violently ... Boo hoo hoo, Boss is really too savage! He is so scary <sup>1</sup> !

This unending set of combination punches made the savage light in Luo Lang’s eyes fade, his crimson eyes actually revealing a trace of meekness, as if begging for mercy. Ling Lan paused with her fists held high, harrumphed coldly, and said, “Do you submit?”

“Awool!” A vaguely stubborn cry escaped Luo Lang’s mouth. Ling Lan’s eyebrow quirked, and she punched down once more, forcefully.

“Hooowl!” Luo Lang’s bestial personality finally gave up and begged for mercy. This cry was unlike the one before — it carried an undertone of fawning.

An idea sparked in Ling Lan’s mind. She stopped her punches and ordered, “Let the primary identity out to talk to me. And don’t you dare slip away. Otherwise, every single time you come out, I’ll beat you!”

Ling Lan’s warning snuffed out all thoughts the bestial personality had of running away. He howled several more times pleading for mercy, and very soon one of Luo Lang’s eyes changed noticeably. The originally wild red of that eye gradually cleared up.

“Ugh, it hurts ... Boss, I’m back?” Sure enough, Luo Lang’s primary identity had returned.

Seeing this, Ling Lan sighed in relief, then said, “Your other bestial personality should still be here. Try and control him a bit.”

That clear eye of Luo Lang's revealed pleasant surprise, while the other crimson eye narrowed, as if planning to resist. Ling Lan raised her fist without hesitation and punched right at that crimson eye.

"Ouch!" Luo Lang sucked in a cold breath. Ling Lan had not held back for this punch — the intense pain of it made both of Luo Lang's personalities moan in pain.

"I've said before, don't try to run. Actually daring to disobey my order." Ling Lan glared fiercely at that blackened panda-eyed crimson eye. Her icy gaze made the bestial personality no longer dare to rebel, obediently signifying its submission.

"Luo Lang, this is a good chance. Control it quickly," Ling Lan quickly instructed Luo Lang.

How could Luo Lang not understand at this point? Ling Lan was helping him to subdue this bestial personality. Without even thinking about it, within his spiritual realm, Luo Lang's primary identity charged without hesitation at the bestial personality beside him ...

The bestial personality instinctively tried to fight back but was paralysed by an invisible force.

It turned out that Ling Lan knew the bestial personality was hiding within that one red eye of Luo Lang's, and so she had released a bolt of spiritual power to press down on Luo Lang's crimson eye. Of course, fearing that she would harm Luo Lang's primary identity, she had not dared to use a spiritual charge.

Unexpectedly, this move of Ling Lan's had unintentionally helped Luo Lang out, allowing him to successfully take control of this bestial personality.

The two personalities fought and tussled within Luo Lang's brain. Due to the pressure from Ling Lan's spiritual power as well as the deep-seated fear the bestial personality now had over Ling Lan's previous pummelling — it was fearful that it would be beaten even worse if it defeated the primary identity — the bestial personality's fighting spirit was obviously weaker than the primary identity's. Under this panicked anxiety, its resistance grew weaker and weaker. In the end, the primary identity subdued it completely, making it fully submissive to the primary identity.

Just like that, Luo Lang was fortunate enough to conquer his first secondary personality, Bestial Instinct<sup>2</sup>. Before he could share this joyful news with Ling Lan, regaining full control of his body, that burning desire within his body rolled over him once more, and this time it was even stronger than it had been at the start.

If his body had not just been pummelled so hard by Ling Lan, his entire body's skin and muscles aching all over, he would not have been able to retain any bit of rationality. In a pained tone, Luo Lang said, "Boss, I've subdued him, but I don't think I can bear any more ..."

"Hurry and activate your innate talent again," Ling Lan's expression changed drastically at his condition, and she quickly urged him to continue with the plan.

"Yes, Boss!" Luo Lang decisively withdrew the Bestial Instinct personality and activated a different personality with his innate talent. Once a personality had been conquered, as long as the primary identity did not want it to emerge, then the personality would definitely not emerge.

## **Chapter 283: The Target Appears!**

Following the emergence of Luo Lang's new personality, a wave of blood-tinged killing intent swept down on Ling Lan. Ling Lan was extremely familiar with this killing intent — it was the bloody intent accumulated after killing over hundreds of thousands of people ... could it be that the personality that Luo Lang had activated this time was a Killing Dao personality?

Sure enough, when Luo Lang lifted his head to look up with half-lidded eyes, a sharp and cold bolt of killing intent shot towards Ling Lan. At the same time, Luo Lang's hands shifted into an attack stance — it was the One-Inch Punch that Luo Lang was so proficient in.

*"Looks like the rational ones are harder to deal with than those irrational ones."* Observing Luo Lang's current stance which appeared to be without any notable weaknesses, Ling Lan could feel that things were now a little troublesome. This personality was giving Ling Lan a vague sense of pressure.

D\*mmmit, no wonder Instructor Number One had said that she would be able to subdue these personalities with her strength at half step to Domain. If she did not have those 10 seconds or so of Domain ability, up against this Killing Dao personality, even if she was already at the optimal peak of Qi-Jin, she would still have to expend quite a considerable amount of effort to defeat him.

As expected, when a follower was too powerful, the pressure upon a boss was great! Heaven knows what other personalities Luo Lang possessed ... in particular, that Transcendent Cold personality mentioned by Instructor Number One, was very likely not an easy one to get along with either. At this thought, Ling Lan felt her teeth begin to ache inexplicably. It really wasn't easy for her to be a boss ...

Ling Lan's somewhat emotional musings made her initially seamless aura ease a little — anyhow, the Killing Dao personality felt that his chance had arrived. And so, Luo Lang could be seen dashing forwards like an arrow to arrive before Ling Lan's face, his long prepared One-Inch Punch striking out at Ling Lan from the most uncomfortable angle for her.

This angle made it extremely hard for Ling Lan to block. If she chose to dodge, the Killing Dao Luo Lang would gain the upper hand. Then, even someone as powerful as Ling Lan would have a very hard time snatching back the flow of the fight anytime soon unless she immediately brought her Domain into play.

Just as the Killing Dao Luo Lang thought he had succeeded at his ploy, an extremely bizarre scene occurred. Ling Lan's waist twisted abruptly, evading this killing move of Luo Lang's with an extremely exaggerated snake-like flexible move.

Her supple and flexible body, which made Instructor Number Four salivate, had completely displayed its prowess here. Ling Lan, who was brimming with masculine strength, had still kept the physical flexibility and suppleness unique to women under Instructor Number Nine's careful tutelage. She had even learned how to utilise this suppleness to its maximum effect.

Having avoided Luo Lang's killing move, Ling Lan charged forwards to meet Luo Lang, sweeping out both her elbows to attack the other's chest.

Luo Lang reacted swiftly — the moment his blow met air, he knew that things were bad for him. He rapidly retreated, but he still was not quicker than Ling Lan's attack.

A ‘bam’ rang out — Ling Lan’s elbows had struck Luo Lang’s chest, pushing him back several paces. As a vital point had been hit directly, even though Ling Lan had already held back on her power, it was still enough to injure Luo Lang. A trickle of blood flowed out from the corner of Luo Lang’s lips.

“Killing Dao personality? I’m someone who has fought my way out of the Killing Dao. Trying to beat me with the Killing Dao? In your dreams!” A cold smirk graced Ling Lan’s lips.

Perhaps the other powerful personalities would cause Ling Lan to hesitate and harbour reservations, but the Killing Dao personality was not among their ranks. Ling Lan, who could be considered an old hat at the Killing Dao, naturally knew everything there was to know about the Killing Dao. Not to mention that the killing intent emanating from Luo Lang’s body right now was truly no match for the killing intent hidden deep within Ling Lan’s body. In other words, Luo Lang’s Killing Dao personality was still rather immature right now. Perhaps after Luo Lang has been through several battlefields and killed a few more people — perhaps then this Killing Dao personality would be much more developed.

“Let me show you what a real Killing Dao is like!” An idea tumbled through Ling Lan’s mind, and the blood-soaked killing intent deep within her body poured out in a torrent. The sheer thickness of it caused the temperature of the sealed room to plummet, also causing the expression of the Killing Dao personality opposite her to shift slightly, a trace of unconcealable greed revealed in its eyes.

As the Killing Dao personality was nourished by bloody killing intent, even as Ling Lan’s substantial blood-soaked killing intent frightened it, it was also deeply attracted by it. Uncontrollably, it began to absorb Ling Lan’s bloody killing intent, its expression carrying a trace of intoxication. Right then, even if he knew very well that consuming this blood-soaked killing intent might put him under the control of the other, the Killing Dao personality just could not resist in the face of this temptation.

Seeing this, Ling Lan’s brow quirked — she had caught on to the weakness of the Killing Dao personality. The corner of her lips tilted up, and she abruptly retracted all the blood-soaked killing intent she had released. The Killing Dao personality who had been blissfully absorbing the blood-soaked killing intent suddenly found that the killing intent was gone and could not help but blink blankly. After realising what had happened, he turned a dejected gaze upon Ling Lan, a type of speechless complaint contained within it.

That look actually reminded Ling Lan of those adorable puppies in the photos she had seen in her previous life. It was the look when those puppies had had their favourite toy snatched away — unbelievably moe no matter how you looked at it <sup>1</sup>.

Suppressing the laughter in her heart, Ling Lan stared coldly at the Killing Dao personality. Her entire demeanour screamed — *I’m not going to give it to you. What can you do about it?*

Motivation to kill flashed across the Killing Dao personality’s eyes. He really wanted to kill the other, snatch the other’s bewitching blood-soaked killing intent for himself, and absorb it completely. But very quickly, he calmed down. Just based on the other’s blood-soaked killing intent which was a hundred times more potent than his own, as well as the other’s previous bizarre evasion skills and efficient attack, he was still no match for him right now, much less talk of killing the other.

Still, that thick and beguiling blood-soaked killing intent — he could not simply give up on it just like that ... the Killing Dao personality looked at Ling Lan with a complicated gaze, and finally opened his mouth to

speak, “Unexpectedly, you are like me. And stronger than me!” A trace of yearning flashed through the Killing Dao personality’s eyes.

“Do you want to advance?” asked Ling Lan with a quirked brow.

“Yes!” replied the Killing Dao personality resolutely. If he could just continue to absorb that killing intent, he would definitely become much stronger.

“If you’re willing to submit to your primary identity, I’ll allow you to fight with me once a week.” Ling Lan offered her conditions.

The Killing Dao personality’s eyes revealed a trace of disdain — he felt that his primary identity was just too weak, not at all worthy of commanding them, the secondary personalities. A weak primary and strong secondaries — this was the true reason why Luo Lang was unable to control his alter egos.

“Are you unwilling? Then I will make it so your primary identity never ever activates his innate talent.” A smirk hung on Ling Lan’s lips. “Let you train your so-called Killing Dao on your own forever in that spiritual realm inside him. Perhaps you can also become strong that way,” said Ling Lan sarcastically. Hells, these secondary personalities actually dared to look down on their primary identity. Did they not consider that they still needed the primary identity to activate his innate talent? What a bunch of simple-minded fools.

Ling Lan’s words made the Killing Dao personality’s complexion pale — this was something he was truly afraid of. Although a large part of why they, the alter egos, were unwilling to submit to the primary identity was because the primary identity was too weak, at the same time, they were also very afraid that once the primary identity took control and had a choice, some of the more unsavoury personalities would no longer have a chance to come out. Thus, they collectively decided not to submit to the primary identity, choosing instead to fight for that one out of several tens or so chances <sup>2</sup> of coming out when the primary identity activated his innate talent.

“Think carefully about it. A chance every week to get some fresh air, or to be trapped forever in the spiritual realm. Any smart person would know the right choice.” Ling Lan was extremely calm. Right now, she had the initiative and power, so she was not afraid that the other would disagree. Since the alter ego wanted to become stronger, and it also knew that she, who was proficient with the Killing Dao, was an extremely great rival, the Killing Dao personality must know that it would require sparring with her to obtain experience in the Killing Dao.

Furthermore, she still had an ultimate move up her sleeve ... that killing intent of hers was excellent nourishment for the Killing Dao personality. If the other was willing to accept her conditions, she would not mind feeding it once a week as well. After all, she could always gain more blood-soaked killing intent from the learning space, so she did not mind wasting this little bit of it <sup>3</sup>.

Seeing the gaze of the Killing Dao personality begin to waver, Ling Lan decided to up the ante. She offered up her ultimate killing move. “Also, every week, if you behave well, I can give you some of my blood-soaked killing intent.”

The Killing Dao personality’s eyes sparkled, “You’re speaking honestly?”

“Of course! A gentleman never goes back on his word — once a promise has been made, even a team of four horses cannot take it back <sup>4</sup>!” stated Ling Lan proudly, her chin lifted high. Would she, Ling Lan, lie to her own follower?

“Deal!” replied the Killing Dao personality firmly. That final lure was too much for him, and besides, being able to get some fresh air once a week, it was worth it even if he had to submit to the primary identity.

“Then let your primary identity out now,” said Ling Lan.

Very soon, Luo Lang’s primary identity had emerged once again. This time, due to the Killing Dao personality’s willing cooperation, it was extremely easy for Luo Lang to take control. It only took several seconds to succeed.

The moment Luo Lang took back his body, he could feel the fearsome power of the aphrodisiac. This time, he did not need Ling Lan to remind him — with the final bit of his rationality, he immediately activated the next alter ego.

Just like that, Luo Lang activated his innate talent again and again, channelling his alter egos, while again and again, Ling Lan beat them into submission, tempted them with benefits, tricked them ... anything, as long as she could get these secondary personalities to agree to submit to their primary identity. Ling Lan could be said to have used up her bag of tricks. Again and again she redefined the baseline of her ethics, leading Ling Lan to silently sigh at how she really was not a good person ...

Just like that, heaven knows how many alter egos she had helped Luo Lang conquer; Ling Lan was feeling rather numb by now. Faint traces of sunlight had begun to peek out from within the dark sky — it was getting ever closer to dawn. Observing from the side, Little Four could not help but become anxious.

This was because, even with Little Four’s help, it would be extremely difficult to sneak back to their living quarters without any trace during broad daylight. Little Four did not know whether he should manipulate things to create the illusion that Boss and Luo Lang had left the villa early this morning to come train in the combat hall ...

Alright, there was still that final bit of time. Little Four decided to wait a little longer in patience. If daylight truly broke, then he would ask his boss whether he should carry out his plan.

In the meantime, Luo Lang had activated yet another new personality. The emergence of the personality brought along a surge of ice-cold air, causing the temperature within the private room to drop noticeably.

The arrival of this chill made Ling Lan’s spirits rally — could it be that the Transcendent Cold personality she had been waiting for all this while had finally appeared?

Luo Lang’s cold and unfeeling gaze swept over, and when he saw Ling Lan, his brow furrowed and he said “So it’s you.”

Ling Lan was taken aback — she had met this personality before? She abruptly recalled that this personality had appeared before not too long ago on the stage during the wagered fight with Leiting. He had been extreme in his cold rationality — paying the price of his own arm to perfectly ensnare the

opponent, achieving an upset by defeating his stronger opponent from a weaker position. Undoubtedly, this was a personality who could be extremely cruel to himself for the sake of victory.

“Severing one’s seven emotions and six desires, only allowing oneself to retain endlessly cold rationality, and taking everything into consideration without qualms that could lead to victory ... you should be that Transcendent Cold personality.” Ling Lan believed that the other was certainly the target she had been seeking. As expected, a tough opponent.

“That’s right. It’s unexpected that you actually know all those details about me. Not simple at all ... no wonder the primary identity is willing to recognise you as boss,” responded the Transcendent Cold personality dispassionately. Of course, a hint of contempt could still be discerned from his tone.

### **Chapter 284: Scheming!**

“I’ve been looking for you for a long time,” said Ling Lan coldly, “I think you should already be aware of the current condition of this body.”

“Seeking me out just for this?” The Transcendent Cold personality figured out why he had been brought out and could not help but scorn, “This kind of little problem, and he already can’t take it? That’s too disgraceful.”

Due to the effects of the aphrodisiac, even though Luo Lang’s face had been punched till it was black and blue, it was still flushed an eye-catching rosy pink. However, his eyes now were clear, as if not at all affected by the chaotic desire within his body. Sure enough, the Transcendent Cold personality possessed the ability to detach himself from all seven emotions and six desires, and was thus able to be so serene in the face of disaster.

However, Ling Lan was beginning to get a vague sense that something was not right. She began to think back on how when each personality had appeared, those personalities had not lost control due to the aphrodisiac — they had not lost their minds and behaved wildly. Even when that mindless Bestial Instinct personality had appeared, what he had displayed had only been the basic instinct of a wild beast and nothing else ...

Could it be that as long as another personality took charge, the effects of the aphrodisiac would actually be contained? In that case, why would Luo Lang suffer the ravaging of the aphrodisiac every time after he conquered those personalities? Ling Lan was rather perplexed.

All these doubts merely flashed through her mind — Ling Lan did not have the time to ruminate on them. Now, the most important thing was still helping Luo Lang to conquer this Transcendent Cold personality so that Luo Lang could fully overcome the effects of the aphrodisiac.

Ling Lan did not think that the aphrodisiac of this future world would be so strong, lasting over the course of an entire night. Every time they had switched alter egos, she had seen Luo Lang’s agonised expression of forced tolerance in between. This made Ling Lan rather worried about Luo Lang’s body. She wondered whether it was too much for him and had harmed the very foundations of his body ... she hoped that it was truly as Instructor Number One had said, that there would be no negative aftereffects!

Ling Lan suppressed the worry in her heart and began to negotiate with the Transcendent Cold personality. "Speak. What would make you willing to submit to the primary identity?"

It would be best if they could avoid a fight — whenever Ling Lan encountered a rational personality that could communicate, she would not resort to violence right away, instead going into negotiation mode first. Ling Lan herself was afraid that Luo Lang's body would not be able to withstand all this pummelling.

"Submit? He's not worthy enough yet," Transcendent Cold responded icily.

"Yet? Which means that it's possible in the future? Does this mean that you actually think well of him?" asked Ling Lan with a quirked brow.

"He is our primary identity. Once he has become stronger than us, we will naturally submit to him," Transcendent Cold replied evenly. This was the truth. Luo Lang's innate talent was out of his control only because the primary identity was too weak, so the secondary personalities could not be blamed for running wild.

"Why don't you all try submitting now? This is actually beneficial for you all as well," suggested Ling Lan.

Transcendent Cold shook his head bleakly and refused, saying, "We have our pride. We only submit to the strong. If the primary identity never finds a way to be stronger than us, he will forever be unable to control us. This is the price he must pay. There are no shortcuts."

"Is that so?" Ling Lan shot back with a half-smile. The reality before them now proved that shortcuts did exist — they just had not been discovered yet before this.

Ling Lan's rebuttal made Transcendent Cold's breath choke. He fell silent for several seconds before opening his mouth to say, "Of course, it's not really that they don't exist. If there is a boss who gains the willing acknowledgement of all of the secondary personalities, we can listen to that boss's orders and recognise the primary identity as our main host."

The Transcendent Cold personality stared coolly at Ling Lan and continued, "It seems that you have discovered this shortcut. Those subdued secondary personalities were most likely conquered by the primary identity in this way. If you defeat me, I too will be willing to submit to you. At that time, you can ask me to submit to the primary identity. I will be willing to obey."

"So that's how it is." Only now did Ling Lan truly understand. Instructor Number One had suggested this method, not for her to seek out the Transcendent Cold personality, but for her to subdue each and every one of these alter egos to help Luo Lang gain complete control.

"Who knows how many alter egos are left ... Do I have to keep fighting till the last one to end this?" Ling Lan muttered to herself, chuckling wryly internally. If luck would have it, she might just have to spend days here — this was truly an onerous task. That's why she had said that being a boss was not so easy ...

"No need. As long as you defeat me, the other secondary personalities will acknowledge you too. Because I am the strongest one among all the alter egos." Transcendent Cold heard Ling Lan's mutters, and replied. Even though his tone was exceedingly cool and level, Ling Lan could still hear the pride and confidence of Transcendent Cold from his words.

That aside, Transcendent Cold's words had also explained why Instructor Number One had said that she must seek out the Transcendent Cold personality. It looked like Luo Lang did not need her specifically to overcome the crisis of the aphrodisiac — rather, Ling Lan needed to defeat the other so Luo Lang could truly master his innate talent.

This so-called chance was just Instructor Number One's excuse to get her to act. No wonder as time passed, Luo Lang's resistance to the aphrodisiac had seemed to get stronger and stronger. Unlike at the start when he had almost lost his reason, he had always been able to successfully activate his innate talent, holding on till the emergence of the next alter ego. In fact, as he had been fighting, the aphrodisiac was already being diffused. It was as the Transcendent Cold personality had said at the start — the aphrodisiac within Luo Lang's body was just a trivial matter, because the drug was already nearing its end, and the effects were no longer that strong.

At this thought, the tension in Ling Lan's heart eased. Since the aphrodisiac was no longer an issue, as long as she defeated this personality before her now and completed the task of letting Luo Lang freely control his innate talent, she would have achieved a rousing success.

"Fine. Let me try then and see how strong exactly is this Transcendent Cold personality." Ling Lan calmly stretched out her right hand, signalling for the Transcendent Cold personality to make his move.

This was the stance a superior used against an inferior — with regards to this, the Transcendent Cold personality did not feel offended or underestimated. This was because the moment he came out, he had sensed the horrifying strength hidden deeply within Ling Lan's body. He knew very well that this person before his eyes was not that opponent he had met that first time he had emerged. This opponent was much stronger, but that did not mean that he had no chance of winning.

A mocking smile appeared on the lips of the Transcendent Cold personality. With a spring of his feet, his figure suddenly disappeared, and in the next second, his fist had arrived before Ling Lan's face. This speed of his had clearly broken past Luo Lang's original speed, hitting Luo Lang's physical limits ...

"Good!" Ling Lan yelled out in approval. Her head tilted to one side, evading the punch, and her palm struck back without any hesitation, aiming for the only opening in this attack of Luo Lang's, the only fatal weakness — his chest!

Ling Lan thought that Transcendent Cold would choose to evade, because if this palm strike landed, based on the strength differential between Luo Lang and her, Luo Lang was certain to be heavily injured. Someone proficient in combat would not be so idiotic as to welcome death ...

However, Transcendent Cold's actions shocked Ling Lan — the other did not dodge, charging forwards fearlessly instead.

"*F\*ck, a lunatic!*" Ling Lan had not expected the other's actions, and since the other was charging forwards intentionally, Ling Lan's palm made contact with Luo Lang's chest in the blink of an eye.

There was already no time to change moves — Ling Lan could only pull back the powerful internal energy behind her palm. Thus, despite striking Luo Lang's chest, as there was no internal energy behind it, her palm did not harm Luo Lang. But right then, there was a sudden twist — Luo Lang's other long readied fist with three layers of One-Inch Punch struck out in a diagonal attack at Ling Lan's lower side.

Stuck in the tail-end of her move, Ling Lan had no possibility of evading. Still, who was Ling Lan? The reflexes of one at the optimal peak of Qi-Jin was incomparable to that of one at early stage Qi-Jin. Ling Lan's other hand swept down into a block and the two forces collided. Powerful forces erupted between the two of them.

A 'boom' of collision, and the two were thrown back uncontrollably. They each stumbled back several paces before finding their footing again.

Even Ling Lan, due to insufficient preparation and a hasty block, now felt heated blood roiling in her chest, a surge of copper-sweet stench pushing at the back of her throat. It should be said that the heartless scheming of Transcendent Cold, in tandem with the three layers of One-Inch Punch he used, had given Ling Lan a bitter taste of trouble.

"Actually daring to use Luo Lang's life to trap me ..." Ling Lan's eyes turned bleak and cold, freezing air beginning to emit from her body. At this moment, Ling Lan's wrath had been piqued.

She found that this Transcendent Cold personality before her was truly without all seven emotions and six desires, only retaining endless cold rationality. For the sake of victory, he had even factored Ling Lan's brotherly affection for Luo Lang into his calculations ... From the start, he had known that his attack would be fruitless, but he also knew that Ling Lan cared for his body very much and would not really want to hurt him, and this was his chance. Frankly, he had almost succeeded. However, Ling Lan was just too strong — despite falling into his trap, she had still managed to withstand his attack by relying on her own superior strength.

"If your heart had not had any reluctance, my plan would not have succeeded," said the Transcendent Cold personality, "Hence, this is not my fault."

At these words, Ling Lan almost spewed out a mouthful of blood. So she was the only one to blame for taking this hit? But thinking about it, what the Transcendent Cold personality was saying was not wrong either — if she had not been reluctant to harm Luo Lang, the other would not have been able to trap her.

"How bloody despicable. Are you not at all worried I would just go through with it for real and kill you?" asked Ling Lan sullenly.

"If that happened, then it would be my mistake. Death would be well deserved." The Transcendent Cold personality's expression was indifferent. In his mind, if his carefully thought-out plan had not succeeded, death would be a proper price to pay — there was nothing to argue about there.

Facing this emotionless Transcendent Cold personality who only knew how to scheme, unafraid of death and impervious to flattery and petty tricks, Ling Lan felt somewhat like her hands were tied. Hells, this personality was just too troublesome to handle — did she really have to fight with lethal means?

It had to be said that the Transcendent Cold personality had indeed latched onto Ling Lan's vital point. Ling Lan could not bear to harm Luo Lang — even though Luo Lang currently looked rather battered, his entire face a swathe of black and blue, his body swollen red and bruised with no patch of unmarked skin, all of these injuries were only skin-deep. Luo Lang would only need to lie in a healing pod for one to two hours, and he would be back to normal. However, if Ling Lan had really been ruthless and injured Luo Lang grievously, Luo Lang may just have to return to the Military Medical Research Centre and

would not have been able to be discharged for 10 days to half a month ... and this was why Ling Lan was now caught in a dilemma.

*“Boss, dawn is breaking. Should I create an illusion of you and Luo Lang coming out from the villa this morning to come spar at the combat hall?”* Right then, Little Four, who could delay no longer, piped up with an alert within Ling Lan’s mindspace.

An idea sparked in Ling Lan’s mind at these words. Yes, by creating this illusion, she would have a reason to send Luo Lang back to the Military Medical Research Centre to trouble Li Shiyu again ...

She could say that, as they had fought, Luo Lang’s old wounds had flared up again. As his primary physician, Li Shiyu would need to take responsibility for this.

### **Chapter 285: Completion!**

At this thought, Ling Lan’s lips could not help but curve up into a slight smile. Since she now had a way to resolve Luo Lang’s injuries, then there was no reason for her to be merciful and hold back.

Ling Lan clasped her hands together tightly, her fingers emitting the sounds of cracking joints. This action made Transcendent Cold’s gaze shift, because he had sensed that his initial plans were likely to be useless now ... still, could the other really bear to be vicious? If that was the case, then, for the primary identity to have acknowledged such a person as boss, wasn’t he too bad at judging character and also too pitiful?

Before the Transcendent Cold personality could ascertain Ling Lan’s true thoughts, Ling Lan leapt forwards. This time, she was prepared to initiate attack. A fist was sent flying straight at Luo Lang’s face. The force behind the punch was fierce and domineering — even before it could touch him, the Transcendent Cold personality could already feel the horrific power contained in the fist.

His countenance shifted, and with a quick slide step, he dodged this attack of Ling Lan’s.

There was a loud boom as Ling Lan’s fist struck the floor of the private room. The ground instantly split apart under the tremendous force.

In fact, the private room was built with high-tech ultra-durable materials, capable of withstanding attacks of Qi-Jin below Domain stage. The effect being displayed right now was also a product of the technology — after 10 seconds, the ground would be restored to normal.

Seeing this great crevasse appear on the private room’s floor, the Transcendent Cold personality confirmed that this person across from him was now truly determined to be ruthless. At this moment, he could not help but scorn his own primary identity once more, thinking that his primary identity really had bad judgement. His boss must not care much for him at all; otherwise, how could he have switched over to become so vicious so easily? Damm\*t, what a failure of a primary identity.

Since he could no longer count on the other’s mercy, the Transcendent Cold personality abandoned his original plans without any hesitation, beginning to look for other openings to exploit.

Meanwhile, the two of them could be seen darting around each other, one attacking one evading, actually fighting on pretty even ground. It had to be said that Transcendent Cold was the strongest

among all the alter egos because he utilised Luo Lang's physical body to its maximum ability — whether it was in terms of speed or power, he had pushed it to the limit. For Ling Lan to defeat the other, it was likely impossible within a short period of time.

This was because the other was calculating the best evasion path for himself under his body's constraints. Transcendent Cold's formidable calculation ability had allowed him to escape by a hair's breadth several times already.

"Looks like it's impossible without using Domain," thought Ling Lan.

Frankly, with Ling Lan's capabilities, it was not impossible to take the other down if she went all out physically. However, she did not dare to use all her strength at optimal peak Qi-Jin, much less the threefold version of One-Inch Punch. This greatly restricted Ling Lan's attack range, which was why Transcendent Cold could escape so many times.

The strength Ling Lan was currently using was carefully calculated so that even if she hit Luo Lang, Luo Lang would only be heavily injured, but no great tragedy would occur. If she added an extra share of strength, she was afraid she might accidentally snuff out Luo Lang's little life.

Right then, the Transcendent Cold personality was finding that even if he schemed a lot, it was futile against Ling Lan who was several times stronger than him. Once strength reached a certain degree, all schemes would become useless.

The Transcendent Cold personality experienced the emotion called hopelessness for the first time ... however, it was not in his character to admit defeat just like that. So, he decided to trade injury for injury; this was an extremely helpless kind of ploy — if he was not at his wits' end, he would not resort to this willingly.

Both fighters intended to bring this fight to a close — when Ling Lan attacked again this time, the Transcendent Cold personality did not dodge. He immediately raised his right fist and with a loud bellow, the 4th form of One-Inch Punch was executed without hesitation ...

Seeing this, rage flickered in Ling Lan's eyes. Without any hesitation whatsoever, she yelled out, "Domain, activate!"

In the private room, a super mini Domain appeared, instantly wrapping around Luo Lang's entire body. In the midst of performing the 4th form of One-Inch Punch, Luo Lang was frozen in that stance just like that, suspended in the air, immobile.

The smaller the Domain, the longer Ling Lan could maintain it. Of course, even with the smallest Domain, Ling Lan could only hold it for no more than one minute. As for this tiny Domain, Ling Lan could hold it for approximately 40 seconds. Although it was not very long, it was more than enough to subdue the Transcendent Cold personality.

"D\*mn it!" Ling Lan roared, her fist hurtling over to strike the immobile Luo Lang squarely. At the instant her fist struck, Ling Lan dismissed the Domain holding Luo Lang secure.

Still, the Transcendent Cold personality no longer had any way of dodging her attack. The fist landed squarely and Luo Lang's entire person was sent flying to crash heavily against the wall of the private room and then bounce off it to crumple to the ground.

A heaving sound, and Luo Lang was spewing out several mouthfuls of blood on the ground. Ling Lan had not held back in this strike; her finely calculated internal energy had been borne by Luo Lang in its entirety. It was unsurprising that Luo Lang had received severe damage.

“Do you know? I really hate you right now. With Luo Lang’s current abilities, using the 4th form of One-Inch Punch will cause the Qi-Jin in his body to run rampant. An unlucky chance could cause his combat realm <sup>1</sup> to fall. The first time, on the arena stage during the wagered fight, you did not want to lose to an outsider and used it. Even though you paid the price of your right arm, I tolerated it ... but now, just because you did not want to lose to me, you chose to use this type of move that would deal 100 damage to the opponent but deal 1000 damage to yourself <sup>2</sup> . Are you a godd\*mn bloody idiot? What Transcendent Cold? You are just a freakin’ brainless blockhead! Calm and level-headed my ass!”

Ling Lan, who was extremely incensed by the other’s actions, had a stony expression on her face as she grabbed the Transcendent Cold personality off the ground and began rapping him smartly on the head with her fists, berating him fiercely all the way.

This attitude of Ling Lan’s made the Transcendent Cold personality instantly descend into a confused stupor. Perhaps, in his world, this type of fire-breathing dragon behaviour was completely incomprehensible ... wasn’t he the one who had gotten injured? Why was the opponent so enraged? Perhaps he had been tricked from the start ... perhaps the other’s affection for his primary identity was in fact sincere, and the other had not been utterly merciless?

Taking stock of his own injuries, Transcendent Cold believed his judgment was accurate. He should have been dejected by the discovery, because he had actually been fooled by the opponent and had lost his chance to win. But for some reason, his heart actually felt lighter, as if this was how things should be.

Transcendent Cold’s stunned gaze had never shifted from Ling Lan’s face — fuming, Ling Lan did not have any patience to speak of. With an angry glare, she said, “What are you looking at? Do you godd\*mn submit or not?”

“...” Transcendent Cold let his silence speak for him. He was already having his head rapped while he was in the other’s hold — how could he not submit?

Seeing Transcendent Cold’s cooperative attitude, Ling Lan’s mood improved. She patted Luo Lang gruffly on the head and said, “If you had just done so from the start, wouldn’t things have been better?” Perhaps noticing the Transcendent Cold personality’s dejected expression, Ling Lan added, “Also, I’m your boss. What’s there to be discouraged about in losing to your boss? How pathetic.”

He was pathetic? Well, at least he’s still better than the primary identity, right ...? The Transcendent Cold personality could not help but scrunch his brow; he was unwilling to accept this critique. “But the primary identity being so weak, won’t Boss look down on him?” Subconsciously, the Transcendent Cold personality had actually begun to worry about the place his primary identity held in their boss’s heart.

“Why don’t you let the primary identity out now?” Ling Lan sent another fist flying to beat away Transcendent Cold’s gloomy emotions. Transcendent Cold did not want to suffer any more of Boss’s fists, so he could only obediently let the primary identity out.

“Boss, you’ve settled yet another personality?” The moment Luo Lang came out, he asked happily. Gathering one personality after another under his control, Luo Lang could feel himself becoming stronger. His innate talent was also beginning to feel increasingly easier to wield.

“Yes, congratulations on escaping from your abyss of misery.” Seeing Luo Lang appear, Ling Lan’s initial wrathful expression calmed into cool stoicism once more, and her tone was as indifferent as it ever was. Luo Lang, as the primary identity, did not sense anything out of the ordinary, but the Transcendent Cold personality on the other side could sense the subtle change in Ling Lan’s aura. It was still cold, her voice just as cool, but compared to when she had been fighting with him, her aura was actually considerably warmer. So apparently even this icy attitude of their boss would change when interacting with the different personalities.

For the first time, the Transcendent Cold personality felt the emotion called jealousy. He actually began to feel envious of his primary identity, who was able to receive Boss’s care and affection.

Luo Lang was a clever babe — hearing Ling Lan’s words, he instantly reacted with joy, “You’ve found the Transcendent Cold personality?”

“Hn. Go subdue it quickly. Your aphrodisiac is also mostly settled,” said Ling Lan calmly.

“Don’t try to resist. A gentleman should never go back on his word!” Ling Lan’s tone shifted abruptly, becoming extraordinarily frigid. Transcendent Cold knew that these words were directed at him. He was just another personality in the same body, but the treatment he received was so different. This tone now and that tone earlier were so obviously worlds apart ... Transcendent Cold thought to himself dejectedly<sup>3</sup>.

Luo Lang could not know Transcendent Cold’s thoughts; heeding Boss Lan’s words, he pounced at the Transcendent Cold personality beside him. The moment he touched the other, the primary identity could sense how powerful the other was. There were no openings for him to attack, so he could only stare at the other helplessly.

“What an idiot!” Transcendent Cold saw this pathetic display of the primary identity, and barked reproachfully. Still, he did not plan to go back on his promise with Ling Lan. Thus, he could only suppress his spiritual power as much as he could, squeezing it down smaller and smaller, until the point where the primary identity could overpower him.

The two personalities began to merge — the Transcendent Cold personality was experiencing everything the primary identity had been through, including those experiences as the other grew up and his bonds with those companions of his ...

D\*mmmit, the primary identity was really too bloody weak. If he had been the primary identity, the prized seat of Boss’s first follower would definitely belong to him<sup>4</sup> and not that simple-minded Qi Long ... Transcendent Cold thought moodily to himself.

This time, the process of subduing the Transcendent Cold personality took much longer than with the other personalities. Day was upon them, and the combat hall was beginning to become crowded. Some were there to enter Closed Door Meditation and seek out insight, while others were there to practise their combat arts. All the students selected their own private rooms and went off to do their respective

things. There were also those students who had no classes today, who did not want to log on to the Mecha World, who had come to the combat hall looking for a spar or two.

Finally, Luo Lang's tightly shut eyes opened. A gleam of cold light came and went, and then Luo Lang could be seen to laugh and say, "Boss, it's done."

"How does your body feel? That is, the aphrodisiac ..." This was what Ling Lan was most concerned about.

### **Chapter 286: Misdiagnosis!**

"It doesn't feel that strong anymore. After subduing the Transcendent Cold personality, the effects have eased greatly. As expected, the Transcendent Cold personality is the sure-kill move against aphrodisiacs," reported Luo Lang excitedly in his cluelessness.

At his side, Ling Lan's cold face could not help but quiver slightly. Fine, she was a bad person. She absolutely would not tell Luo Lang the truth — that, in fact, all his injuries this night were actually unnecessary.

"How are your injuries?" Ling Lan asked, scratching the bridge of her nose, still feeling somewhat guilty.

Luo Lang chuckled wryly, "Not very good. I'm injured pretty badly. Looks like I'll have to go to the treatment centre for another round of treatment."

"It's better to go to the Military Medical Research Centre," said Ling Lan.

The smile on Luo Lang's face stiffened, as if thinking of something. Ling Lan raised a brow and asked, "Recalling that scumbag? Afraid now?"

Luo Lang shook his head and said, "No, that scumbag has been handled by Boss. What do I have to be afraid of?" That said, a hint of coldness appeared on his face. "I believe that he must be wishing he were dead right now."

Luo Lang had full faith in Ling Lan, believing that his boss would not let the other off so easily. Even though his boss might not have taken that pervert's life to minimise the outcry from this incident, his boss would definitely have used some other method to destroy the other, such as crushing the other's future ... this kind of revenge method was also something he approved of. Hating a person did not mean the other person had to die ... destroying that which he prized most — now that was satisfying.

"Don't worry. He will spend the rest of his life in a daze. No one knows you had been abducted. You only made a visit to the Military Medical Research Centre, that's all ..." Ling Lan conveyed Shi Mingyi's final outcome in a few short phrases, also telling Luo Lang that this incident would end here. There would be no continuation.

"Thank you, Boss!" Luo Lang smiled brightly at these words. Despite the mottled bruises on his face, this smile lit up his lovely features, still making others feel that his smile was very beautiful.

“It’s pretty late. We should hurry to the Military Medical Research Centre. The earlier you’re treated, the earlier you’ll be back on your feet.” Ling Lan indicated for Little Four to open the room door, prepared to take Luo Lang to the Military Medical Research Centre.

Luo Lang’s smile stiffened and he said with a grimace, “Boss, can we not go there?”

“Why?” Ling Lan asked curiously.

Luo Lang’s body could not help but shudder a little, a trace of fear on his face as he said hesitatingly, “The medical agent Li Shiyu uses on us causes too much suffering?” He then proceeded to tell Ling Lan every single one of the effects the medical agent produced in their bodies. Ling Lan’s eyes flickered in surprise, and even Little Four within the mindscape was gaping in shock — that medical agent Luo Lang was describing ... why did it sound so much like an enhanced version of gene agents?

Could it be that Li Shiyu had used a medical agent with a similar makeup to gene agents? Ling Lan rubbed her jaw, her expression thoughtful. This would explain why Luo Lang’s body had had a significant elevation in baseline. It would appear that that Li Shiyu was much more capable than she had imagined.

*“Little Four, tell me. Letting that Li Shiyu become the exclusive army doctor of our team, don’t you think that’s a good idea?”* She could not let such a capable military doctor get away.

A clear curve adorned Ling Lan’s lips. Taken in combination with her calculative gaze, Little Four could not help but shiver and say hurriedly, *“Yes, Li Shiyu is pretty good! Boss is wise!”*

After all, he did not even know Li Shiyu that well, so why should he care how things would turn out for him if he fell into his boss’s hands? He only needed to keep his boss happy and that would do. Little Four decisively pushed Li Shiyu into the fire pit!

Having resolved the issue of the team’s military doctor <sup>1</sup>, Ling Lan carted Luo Lang off to the Military Medical Research Centre in a great mood. The moment they arrived at the doorway, they bumped into someone. Ling Lan glanced nonchalantly at the other, and her first thought was that the other seemed somewhat familiar.

Of course, Ling Lan did not take it to heart. She was just about to brush by and enter the doors when that person greeted her on his own with a smile, “Morning, Junior Ling Lan!”

Ling Lan had no choice but to stop. Even though Ling Lan appeared very aloof on the surface — her entire body emanating a cold air, and her demeanour seemingly extremely unapproachable — she was actually a very polite and courteous good child. Generally, anyone who greeted her in a friendly manner would not be spurned by Ling Lan.

“Morning, Senior!” Ling Lan responded lightly.

“Hoho, looks like Junior does not recognise me. I’m Li Lanfeng of the 4th year Mecha Piloting Special Class. Last time, after your arena battle, we met at the treatment centre.” Hearing Ling Lan’s response, Li Lanfeng could tell the other did not know who he was. Thus, he introduced himself good-naturedly, also reminding the other when they had met.

Ling Lan finally recalled who this person before her was. Back then at the treatment centre, he was the one who had spurred Li Shiyu with one phrase into taking over the treatment of her three brothers. At this thought, Ling Lan nodded and said, "So it's Senior Li. Hello."

"Why has Junior come here today?" Li Lanfeng asked curiously. His gaze swept over to see Luo Lang, whose terrible condition was prefaced by swollen eyes and a bruised nose, and instantly cried out, "Eh, why is this junior in such a terrible condition?" He peered closely at the injured person for a long while then cried out again, "Isn't this Junior Luo Lang? Hadn't you already recovered a few days ago and had been discharged?"

Luo Lang laughed awkwardly, and Ling Lan helped him to reply, "Today, we went out early to the combat hall for a spar, and found some minor problem with Luo Lang's body. So we're here to see Dux Li to figure things out."

"I was just about to go see Young Master Shiyu myself. Let's go together," suggested Li Lanfeng, sensing Ling Lan's anxiety. And so the three of them strode together into the Military Medical Research Centre to seek out Li Shiyu.

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At this time, Li Shiyu was in the process of checking the data charting the stats of Qi Long and Li Yingjie from the night before. Seeing the numbers improve day by day, he let out an internal sigh of relief. It looked like the gene agent S-modification did indeed have a significant effect in increasing one's physical constitution. Even with regards to wound recovery, it had strengthened that by several folds — another ten more days or so, and Qi Long and Li Yingjie would probably be fully healed, ready to go back and continue attending physical training.

Thus, he was in high spirits when he suddenly heard someone call out to him from behind, "Young Master Shiyu, hello!"

Li Shiyu turned his head and saw that it was Li Lanfeng. He could not help but smile and say, "Lanfeng, so you've come." During this period of time, Li Lanfeng would pop by to visit him whenever he had the time; this had caused the relationship between the two to become extremely close.

However, Li Shiyu's good mood came to a screeching halt when he saw the person standing next to Li Lanfeng.

"What are you here for?" Li Shiyu rolled his eyes at Ling Lan, his entire face darkening instantly. He was still bearing a grudge over the incident of Ling Lan threatening him.

Ling Lan seemed oblivious to Li Shiyu's displeasure, saying calmly, "I've come here, to return Luo Lang to you." This statement caused Luo Lang, who was standing behind her, to blink blankly, extremely bewildered at why his Boss Lan would say such a thing.

"Return? What do you mean?" Li Shiyu was similarly taken aback, staring at Ling Lan uncomprehendingly.

"His old injuries have flared up again. Who should I look for if not you?" The corners of Ling Lan's lips quirked. Her cold gaze settled firmly on him, and that gaze was so sharp that Li Shiyu's heart skipped a beat or two.

Luo Lang secretly wiped away the cold sweat which had sprung out from his forehead at these words. *Boss, you're truly too black-bellied ... actually daring to blame these injuries on Dux Li.*

Li Shiyu composed himself, then rebutted fiercely, "How can this be? When he left, all his numbers were clearly as good as they could ever be ..."

"But, he was really injured." Ling Lan pointed at Luo Lang, signalling for Li Shiyu to go and examine him.

Li Shiyu stepped forward and felt Luo Lang's pulse. His expression changed instantly, and he hurriedly felt Luo Lang's chest, checking on his internal injuries, and then turned to glare furiously at Ling Lan.

"Why were you so vicious?"

Ling Lan calmly tugged on her own sleeves to straighten them and replied coolly, "You think I would be so vicious while sparring with my own brother?"

"Then where did these internal injuries of his come from? Are you saying that someone else assaulted Luo Lang?" Li Shiyu asked angrily, pointing at Luo Lang's chest.

"Well, of course there was no assault. Early this morning, Luo Lang and I went to spar for a bit in a combat room. We only exchanged a few moves and this was the result," Ling Lan replied calmly, "I only used the strength level Luo Lang was used to from before, but when I hit Luo Lang, he actually became so injured. This made me suspect that Luo Lang's body may not have been fully recovered to begin with, and you actually discharged him<sup>2</sup>?"

"Before he was discharged, I checked to make sure all of his stats were within normal standards before letting him go." Hearing Ling Lan questioning his professionalism, Li Shiyu glared at her. This was something he could not accept.

"I believe you, but I don't trust these machines." Ling Lan thumped a treatment device by her side, "Some injuries may have always been hiding within a patient's body, but those diagnostic devices may never find them. For example, Major General Bob of the Caesar Empire had similarly been declared completely healed by the best hospital, but half a year later, an old wound reared up again, and in the end he could not be saved despite emergency care ... or like with Governor Thira of the Ayin Alliance, who, also due to misdiagnosis, missed the best window of time for treatment and so had to retire prematurely. Even in our Federation, this type of misdiagnoses is not few in number ... do you need me to list out the examples? Li Shiyu, do you think you can say confidently and unreservedly that these examination devices are truly, completely foolproof?"

Ling Lan queried forcefully as she read out the name list of misdiagnosis cases that Little Four had compiled. This caused Li Shiyu's face to flush and pale erratically, but he just could not find any words to rebut the other because everything Ling Lan had said was fact. Even his instructors would never dare to give an absolute guarantee.

"But, the accuracy of the machines is as high as 99.97% ..." Li Shiyu protested weakly. Although there was indeed the chance for misdiagnosis, the odds of it happening were just too low to consider.

"So, there is still a 0.03% chance of error. Can you guarantee that Luo Lang does not fall into this category?" Ling Lan abruptly interrupted Li Shiyu, eyes trained intently on the other as she asked this question.

Li Shiyu's mouth flapped open and closed, but he found that he could say nothing definite. Even though he believed deep down that he had not misdiagnosed Luo Lang, when it came to medicine, there was indeed no way to guarantee a hundred percent safety.

"I heard that, a truly exceptional military doctor is able to determine on his own whether a person has fully recovered, before matching his personal judgement with the output of the diagnostic machines. This basically eliminates all possibility of a misdiagnosis. I would like to ask ... Dux Li, are you already at this level?" Ling Lan was unrelenting, chasing Li Shiyu with another question.

### **Chapter 287: Apprehension!**

Li Shiyu could only continue to remain silent, because his medical skills were indeed still not yet at that level. Typically, military doctors who achieved that stage were those who had been practicing for up to 20 years and more; only accumulated medical experience could allow them to do so.

"If you cannot do that, then how can you argue with me that Luo Lang's injuries are not a relapse of his old injuries?" asked Ling Lan with a raised brow.

*Boss, you're so despicable!* Little Four and Luo Lang saw Li Shiyu being questioned so harshly by their boss that he was completely flummoxed, and they could only shake their heads mutely and sigh.

So easily and casually shunting responsibility to the other, without having to owe the other anything to boot ... once more, it was proven why only Boss Lan could be their boss. Sure enough, Boss Lan was stronger than them on all fronts. Even in terms of despicableness, this was so.

Li Shiyu's chest heaved up and down, making Ling Lan rather worried about whether he would pass out from anger. She could not help but begin reflecting on whether she had taken things too far ... (And you only know this now?)<sup>1</sup>

"Fine. Consider this occasion my fault and just let Luo Lang return for treatment." Li Shiyu finally managed to suppress his anger and replied through clenched teeth. He glared fiercely at Luo Lang, causing Luo Lang to feel a chill penetrate straight to his very bones.

Seeing that stormy expression of Li Shiyu's, Luo Lang turned a pitiful look on his boss, pleading — could he not be treated by Li Shiyu again? Ling Lan pretended to see nothing, but she was cheering for Luo Lang inside her heart. In order to become even stronger, oh Luo Lang, why don't you just endure this suffering for a while? Ling Lan believed that leaving Luo Lang at the Military Medical Research Centre would definitely yield excellent results.

After resolving the issue of Luo Lang, Ling Lan cheerfully left the Military Medical Research Centre. Seeing this, Li Lanfeng quickly said goodbye to Li Shiyu and left as well. He had borne witness to all of Ling Lan's cutting questions earlier and knew that Li Shiyu must be in a terrible mood right now. He was not going to stay and chance earning any spillover hate value.

Li Lanfeng had not forgotten that he had entered together with Ling Lan — if Li Shiyu thought he was Ling Lan's companion, then it would be a tragedy<sup>2</sup>. Besides, he had some things he wanted to say to Ling Lan, so leaving now would be killing two birds with one stone.

And so, Ling Lan and Li Lanfeng left the Military Medical Research Centre together. After walking for a distance, Ling Lan halted abruptly. Lifting a brow, she turned to Li Lanfeng who had been trailing behind her all this while and asked, "Can I help you?"

Li Lanfeng smiled and nodded. Taking a step forward, he drew closer to Ling Lan, causing Ling Lan to frown slightly. This was because she did not like strangers to get too close to her, but Li Lanfeng's following words made her forget all of this.

"Luo Lang's injuries ... have something to do with the Tianji incident, right?" Li Lanfeng said under his breath so only the two of them could hear.

Ling Lan shot a cool look at Li Lanfeng and asked in return, "The matter of Tianji ... I heard their headquarters collapsed. The academy administration is investigating now; there's no official report yet. Pray tell how Senior Li came to this idea? Could it be that you have some insider information? Can you tell this Junior and clear my confusion?"

"Shi Mingyi has become a vegetable ..." Li Lanfeng commented with a half-smile, "Other people may not know where his predilections lay, but I know very well. It's such a coincidence that Luo Lang's appearance is exactly the type that Shi Mingyi favours. I've also found out that Luo Lang had visited the Military Medical Research Centre once yesterday afternoon. But I asked Young Master Shiyu and he knew nothing of it."

Ling Lan's expression did not change at all at his words. As calm as usual, she replied, "Senior Li, baseless conjecture will only lead people to the wrong conclusion. If you want to know why Luo Lang went to the Military Medical Research Centre yesterday afternoon, I can give you an explanation."

Ling Lan paused for a beat then continued, "In fact, since the beginning of yesterday afternoon, Luo Lang had felt something off about his body. So, after finishing the day's physical training courses, he hurried off to the Military Medical Research Centre, thinking to find Dux Li. However, our New Cadet Regiment suddenly received a mission from the administration of the military academy, and this mission was directly assigned by the upper ranks to Luo Lang by name. That's why we called Luo Lang to return, and this is also why Luo Lang had rushed back without seeing Dux Li."

On this end, Ling Lan was composedly spinning a believable tale for Li Lanfeng, while inside the mindscape, the flustered Little Four was hurriedly modifying information on the mainframe according to Ling Lan's words. Who'd have thought that even after she had wiped the slate so clean, this Li Lanfeng before her now had actually still managed to pick at a corner?

As expected of those within the military academy ... this seemingly harmless, genial, gentleman-like Li Lanfeng actually possessed such formidable deductive abilities ... quite frightening when he began to scheme. It was lucky that the other had not been more patient, coming to her immediately with just this bit of suspicion, thus giving her the chance to fill in all the gaps. Otherwise, if he had continued to investigate stealthily just like this, he might really find something incriminating. At that thought, Ling Lan could not help but feel some delayed fear, becoming rather apprehensive towards Li Lanfeng.

Once Little Four returned to confirm that he had settled everything, Ling Lan continued to say, "All of this should be recorded within the school mainframe. I believe that Senior Li has many talents in your camp, so you should be able to find the relevant records ..."

Ling Lan's words made Li Lanfeng's heart clench — had he truly made a mistake?

Just as Li Lanfeng was wavering in shocked indecision, Ling Lan advised him with a half-smile, "That's why, Senior Li, we need to learn how to fully understand the truth first before coming to conclusions. Otherwise, it's very likely that we will bring unwanted trouble to ourselves and others. I believe Senior Li agrees with me, right?"

Ling Lan's words were vaguely threatening, but Li Lanfeng did not mind at all, instead smiling to say, "I was just afraid that this matter really had something to do with Junior Ling Lan and your friends. You all have just offended Leiting, and now if you all offend Tianji as well, life will really become very difficult for you all in the military academy. But since this matter has nothing to do with you juniors, then I can stop worrying."

Li Lanfeng's words made Ling Lan's brow furrow lightly — what was the intention of Li Lanfeng telling her all this? Was he really just being nice?

Li Lanfeng did not care what Ling Lan thought, directly bidding farewell to her. Before he departed, he left one last statement behind which could be taken as an expression of concern, or which may perhaps have some deeper meaning. He said, "Junior, your spiritual mutation is very powerful, but try to use as little of it as you can. You cannot be certain that there is no one else at this military academy with a spiritual mutation similar to yours ... be careful in all things!"

That subtle smile Li Lanfeng directed at her before he left raised warning flags in Ling Lan's mind. What in the world had Li Lanfeng discovered? In her bewilderment, Ling Lan turned to Little Four to ask what he thought, but Little Four's answer only made Ling Lan even more confused.

Little Four said that this Li Lanfeng overall gave him a sense of familiarity, but Li Lanfeng was keeping everything under a tight lid. The slight trace of aura he exuded seemed like someone they knew, but it was also somewhat foreign as well ... Little Four just could not tell who he was like right then; perhaps if they interacted with him a few more times, Little Four would be able to find something more useful ...

Alright, since Little Four also had no good answers, Ling Lan could only push Li Lanfeng to the back of her mind for the moment. Besides, Li Lanfeng did not seem to have any bad intentions right now anyway, so Ling Lan decided not to waste too much effort thinking about him, because she now needed to begin working on the mission the New Cadet Regiment had accepted.

Although Luo Lang had returned to the Military Medical Research Centre to continue treatment, the selection of the honour guard to welcome the examiners still had to proceed. Ling Lan brought Wu Jiong and Xie Yi along, and they began selection activities among the New Cadet Regiment. Over the course of a few days, they finally rounded up a full team of members who fit the criteria the school administration wanted.

Subsequently, Ling Lan's team took charge of the training of this reception team. Those ceremonial tasks, such as lining up and welcoming procedures, were all handled by Wu Jiong, who was from a military elite family. Meanwhile, Ling Lan hung back till the end, where she then unleashed her horrifying force of presence upon them, letting these members accustom themselves to the feeling. Ling Lan believed that these examiners would certainly consist of battle-hardened soldier kings, so they would definitely carry a thick air of killing intent about them. If the members of the reception team

could not get used to this type of oppressive killing intent, then no matter how perfect their preparations in lining up and welcoming the others were, the moment the members met the examiners, they would still be scared spineless by them and become unable to move. That would be too disgraceful for their New Cadet Regiment.

Ling Lan's words received everyone's agreement. In particular, Wu Jiong was deeply moved ... No wonder every time he saw his father or his grandfather, he would be so afraid that he found himself stilling in fright. One look was enough to almost send him slumping to the ground in fear. This was probably the endless killing intent they had cultivated from their experiences on the battlefield affecting his mind and spirit.

On Ling Lan's end, training for the reception was going on like a raging fire, while Luo Lang continued to endure the unbearably torturous treatment procedure under Li Shiyu. With regards to Luo Lang's return, Qi Long and Li Yingjie were filled with extreme schadenfreude.

Frankly, when Luo Lang had left this abyss of misery so early, getting away from the research centre, the two of them had been rather disgruntled. Think about it — they had all been injured within the same trench<sup>3</sup>, so what right did Luo Lang have to escape so quickly while they had to continue staying here and suffer? Of course their feelings would be imbalanced! Thus, when they found out that Luo Lang had returned, all their discontentment was cleared away.

It could only be said that these two were the absolute worst of good friends!

Another ten days went by, and Luo Lang finally recovered fully. Once again, he was discharged by Li Shiyu. Of course, before he was discharged this time, Li Shiyu ran countless examinations on him, even asking his instructor for a second opinion, because he was now extremely afraid that Ling Lan would continue extorting him.

However, in the eyes of Li Shiyu's instructor, this action was so commendable that he was touched. Look at this beloved disciple of his. How cautious and meticulous he was! As a military doctor, this was the correct attitude to have, being responsible for one's own patient till the very end ... and so the instructors' satisfaction levels towards Li Shiyu once again reached an all-time high, which was an unexpected boon for Li Shiyu. Who knows how Li Shiyu would feel about this when he finds out? Should he hate Ling Lan or be grateful to her for creating such a beautiful misunderstanding?

Being discharged along with Luo Lang were Qi Long and Li Yingjie. Qi Long, in particular, had recovered astoundingly quickly. Although his injuries had been the worst among the three of them, his physical constitution was the best and his body's ability to absorb the medical agents was also very strong. Thus, the three of them coincidentally ended up recovering altogether to be discharged at the same time.

When the three of them stepped out of the Military Medical Research Centre, they were so moved that they instantly hid their faces and cried. D\*mmit, they were finally free of that hell!

Even the typically upbeat and fearless Qi Long had been thoroughly traumatised by Li Shiyu's fearsome treatment methods, while Li Yingjie found fear growing within his heart. From this point on, he had an unshakeable psychological apprehension towards his cousin brother. In future, this would cause him to not dare to disobey Li Shiyu's orders at a critical moment ...<sup>4</sup>

It had to be said that Li Shiyu had indeed achieved his objectives through this move. He had established a 'brotherly bond' with Li Yingjie, making them able to watch out for one another in the end. And though this bond was somewhat counter to his original imaginings, at the bottom of it, Li Yingjie would still listen to him now

## **Chapter 288: The Assessment Team!**

The moment Luo Lang came out, he was whisked away by Wu Jiong to join the reception team. Initially, Luo Lang did not want to participate, but when he found out Boss Ling Lan was also part of the team, all his protestations died on his lips. Think about it. The boss was already doing it — how could the follower hide?

Not only that, Li Yingjie, who had just escaped the abyss of misery with him, was also snatched up by Ling Lan to join. Even though he really wanted to object, when Ling Lan swept a glacial stare upon him, Li Yingjie could only rub his nose and obediently accept his fate. Li Yingjie believed that Boss Ling Lan was still 100 times more brutal than his own second elder cousin brother.

Just like that, after training for approximately three days, it was finally their time to debut. Ling Lan led a bunch of handsome youths with stately physiques to the only main road connecting the military academy to the outside world. There, they arranged themselves into a long line, whereafter they stood tall and unmoving. Dressed in the white and blue ceremonial military uniforms specially designed by the school, these youths appeared extraordinarily heroic with maximum visual impact, a real treat for the eyes of any observers.

The administrators of the school who came to supervise were extremely satisfied by this. Of course, this was just the first step — whether these youths were just pretty on the surface, or were true gems, would still depend on their upcoming performance.

The assessment teams from the various army divisions arrived one after the other to the First Men's Military Academy. When they saw the reception team standing there in welcome, they were all startled. When had the First Men's Military Academy begun doing such a thing as well?

"Salute!" Ling Lan cried out, and all the members of the reception team lifted their heads and executed a cadet's salute almost simultaneously. The coordinated dance of their white gloves, along with their stern and serious faces, caused the initially indifferent attitudes of those from the assessment team to shift, becoming serious and proper in turn. They reflexively lifted their hands to return a salute, before solemnly walking past the reception team towards the inner grounds of the school.

As every assessment team walked by the reception team, though their attitudes were extremely solemn, it could not be denied that there was a trace of approval in their eyes. It looked like the performance of the reception team had indeed pleased them.

Seeing this, the administrators of the school could not help but be secretly gleeful, certain that their decision back then was not wrong. These new cadets were surprisingly capable — doing things this way fully displayed the masculine force and daring of the First Men's Military Academy. Taking the members' handsome appearances and their youthful manners into consideration as well, even the most stubborn and bitter soldier could not help but find their mood lifted by such a sight.

All the assessment teams were to arrive over the course of three days. The teams included the 23 permanent army divisions and 10 or so other independent armies. It could not be considered a lot, but it was not very little either — every single assessment team that passed by was greeted by the reception team as if they were facing a great enemy, with all of their strength.

Perhaps the military academy's pretty boy strategy had succeeded, for after the assessment teams arrived at the school, their attitudes did indeed seem much better than before during the previous years. This made the administrators of the school let out a great sigh of relief — it looked like they had done the right thing.

Ling Lan snorted derisively at how the military academy relaxed just like that. She did not believe that the assessment teams would show any mercy just because they now had a good impression of the school. When it was necessary to be ruthless, they definitely would not falter and show mercy. This was the base nature of a competent soldier. It could only be said that the school administrators had been away from the army for too long — they had already forgotten some things.

However, Ling Lan would not go remind these administrators — after all, the cadets just needed to complete the task set by the military academy and that would be enough. As for the final outcome, that had nothing to do with the new cadets at all; Ling Lan was perfectly happy to be a carefree bystander.

However, Ling Lan's composure only lasted for the first two days. On the third day, when the representatives of the 23rd Division appeared, Ling Lan's composed face finally faltered.

The 23rd Division was one of the new permanent army divisions of the Federation. When it had appeared on the name list of assessment teams, it had drawn the collective attention of all the instructors at the academy. Of course, it being the division of her own dad, no matter how cool Ling Lan acted, she could not help but speculate who her dad had sent to take charge of the assessment this time. She naturally wished that a fair and unbiased team leader would be sent so that the 23rd Division could leave an excellent impression with the First Men's Military Academy.

However, when she saw one man stepping down from the special train from the spaceport, her initially unmoved ice-block face finally cracked, giving a violent twitch.

That man who was intentionally pulling his army cap down with a large face-mask covering half his face ... even though he was dressed in a major general uniform, pretending to be aloof, how could this familiar presence fool her eyes?

Ling Lan clenched her teeth internally. *'Bloody hell, why is my idiot dad here?! What in the world is he planning?'*

*"Ah, it's daddy ... !!"* In the mindscape, Little Four's eyes were spilling over with red hearts, squealing joyfully as he stared at Ling Xiao fanatically. He was instantly sent flying with a kick from Ling Lan. *"You bloody keep quiet!"*

*"Boo hoo hoo, Boss, I haven't seen daddy in so long. Why aren't we saying hi to daddy?"* Little Four quickly scrambled back, crying as he hugged Ling Lan's leg, strongly requesting to go reunite with their daddy.

*"It's obvious from a glance that this idiot dad is here undercover. How can I go greet him?"* Ling Lan stared speechlessly at that man who thought he was disguised so well, really unsure what she could say anymore.

Luckily, the people by his side were intentionally blocking off the others' line of sight, and Ling Xiao himself was keeping a low profile, so his identity was not exposed.

When the 23rd Division assessment team passed before Ling Lan, Ling Xiao abruptly stopped. His eyes, the only part of him exposed, were clearly smiling as he asked, "Both stance and ceremony are pretty good. Are you all freshmen?"

*Was he intentionally making conversation?* Ling Lan mentally rolled her eyes dramatically at her dad, but as composed as usual on the surface, she saluted and replied, "Yes, Sir."

Ling Xiao turned to look at the accompanying administrators beside Ling Lan and said with a laugh, "Not bad! Having such flair even as freshmen. It looks like the First Men's Military Academy lives up to its name!" Ling Xiao's intention was absolutely to praise his own daughter, nothing at all to do with the First Men's Military Academy.

However, the administrators registered his words differently. Almost everyone felt that this was the representative of the 23rd Division expressing appreciation for the military academy, and this instantly injected joy onto their faces. It was wonderful! But of course they still acted humble on the surface, repeatedly saying 'not at all, not at all'.

Mind you, even though the previous other divisions had reacted favourably towards the welcoming team, they had not said anything outright, maintaining the unassailable dignity of an army division all the way. It was unexpected that the leader of the 23rd Division's team was so friendly — this made the 23rd Division's impression rise by several notches more in the administrators' eyes.

At the same time, they were awed at how General Ling Xiao was truly General Ling Xiao — even a subordinate of his was so nice, causing others to feel as if visited by a balmy spring breeze. They began to plan — since the 23rd Division thought so well of the First Men's Military Academy, could it be that they would take in more cadets from the school this time? At that thought, the administrators' hearts heated up with excitement. They all prepared to return and pass on the word to all the instructors, telling them to encourage the students to apply for enlistment to the 23rd Division as much as possible ...

This fondness the administrators had for the 23rd Division would continue on indefinitely after this. In future, every year, they would not forget to remind the instructors to encourage their students to choose enlistment with the 23rd Division as much as they could ...

This was Ling Xiao's personal charisma — he would always breed a favourable impression in others' hearts, and they would then choose to follow him without even knowing it!

*"Wowowowow, Daddy's awesome!"* Witnessing this scene, Little Four once again turned into a crazed fan, staring adoringly at Ling Xiao with his face cupped in his hands. At this moment, Little Four looked nothing like an intelligence entity<sup>1</sup>.

Ling Lan stared up at the sky, speechless. She just knew that whenever Little Four met Ling Xiao, his systems would shut down and his higher functions would stop working. It looked like if she wanted to preserve Little Four's reliability, she would need to keep him away from Ling Xiao.

"This youth is pretty good. While we're here at the military academy, is it possible to ask this student to accompany us and take us around the school, so that we can better understand things?" Ling Xiao requested from the administrators smilingly as he pointed at Ling Lan. The administrators naturally clamoured to agree — didn't this mean that the 23rd Division's interest in the school was that much greater? This was a good thing! They must support this!

This move of Ling Xiao's instantly threw Ling Lan's plans out the window <sup>2</sup>, causing Ling Lan to silently gnash her teeth. It looked like Little Four would be unable to help her for a long time after this.

Just like that, within the First Men's Military Academy, the first meeting between the Ling Xiao and Ling Lan father-daughter pair went by so unremarkably without drawing anyone's attention ...

Oh, no, well that was not quite true. After the representative of the 23rd Division assessment team had walked a distance away, Luo Lang, who had been standing right beside Ling Lan, asked her softly with a face filled with confusion, "Boss Lan, you know that person?"

Ling Lan quirked a brow, answering with just a look, as if asking why Luo Lang was asking this question.

"I felt your aura become a little unsteady earlier ..." said Luo Lang uncertainly. Ever since subduing all his secondary personalities, Luo Lang's sixth sense had become extremely sensitive. He was now able to pick up the emotions of those he cared about, like how Ling Lan had obviously felt a little troubled earlier.

"Tell you when we get back," Ling Lan replied lowly. Since her dad was here, she believed that her old man absolutely would not leave quietly without a trace — he would definitely cause some trouble. Moreover, she too wanted to let her dad meet these companions by her side. She wanted to tell her father that these companions were her most treasured brothers and that she hoped Ling Xiao would value them highly as well.

At this time, Ling Lan still had not realised that her current actions were just like that of a child on the cusp of growing up seeking a parent's approval.

Luo Lang nodded his head at her reply and said nothing more. This was because the welcoming ceremony had not ended yet — there were still a few more assessment teams from both the divisions and the independent armies about to arrive.

Three days were enough to make even these youths with excellent physical constitutions feel thoroughly wrung out. When the administrators finally declared the end of their task, the youths all cheered wildly, extremely grateful that they had finally left this abyss of misery behind.

Truth be told, even though the whole thing seemed to only be a few simple movements — standing at attention, lining up, and saluting — the mental pressure the youths were under belied their casual demeanours. These soldiers who were here for the assessment were all battle-hardened soldier kings from various battlefields — an oppressive cloud of killing intent hung around them, constantly challenging the psychological resilience of these youths at every turn.

Facing these strong and formidable examiner-soldiers, the youths had been able to perform their duties so perfectly, composed and assured, unusually calm and undisturbed, all because of Ling Lan's daily bombardment with her own aura. This allowed the youths to become used to this type of killing intent within the shortest period of time possible.

In the end, they had persevered and completed their mission flawlessly. At the same time, they had also left an extremely favourable impression with those assessment team representatives. This established solid foundations for their future development — no matter which army division they went to, as long as they mentioned being part of this year's reception team, those officers would view them with different eyes. It went without question that their future development would definitely not be too bad.

### **Chapter 289: Missing His Son?**

It was worth mentioning that those excellent youths had still been frightened badly by that major general of the 23rd Division. The moment the other had appeared, they had sensed the horrifying force of presence emanating from that major general's body. It was almost enough to crumble their composure instantly. If the other had not stopped to speak with Ling Lan, thus dissipating this pressure, they might not have been able to hold up for long.

This also made them secretly admire the 23rd Division even more ... as expected of General Ling Xiao's man — compared to the other divisions, the 23rd Division's representative was clearly much more impressive. This caused these youths to revere the 23rd Division greatly — 4 years later <sup>1</sup>, quite a number of students would choose the 23rd Division as their enlistment goal.

This was certainly a beautiful misunderstanding. Just think — if the full force of Ling Lan's presence at optimal peak of Qi-Jin was unleashed, it would naturally exceed the pressure exerted by a regular officer. Besides that, the visiting officers were afraid to put too much pressure on the students, so they had all tamped down on their force of presence. Thus, these students had the false impression that the 23rd Division was much stronger compared to the other teams.

Furthermore, Ling Xiao was a god-class operator. Even if he was fully suppressing his presence, when the gap between the realms of two parties was too wide, mere proximity would be enough for the weaker party to feel a tremendous pressure. This was also why those students had felt the pressure so keenly. However, when Ling Xiao had spoken with his daughter, his mood had become joyful, which had subconsciously relaxed his defensive aura, thus reducing that pressure by a significant amount. In fact, it was precisely this kind of moment that would be a prime opportunity to assassinate Ling Xiao. It had to be said that Ling Xiao's only two weaknesses were Lan Luofeng and Ling Lan.

Thus, it wasn't that those other representatives were not strong — the father-daughter duo of Ling Xiao and Ling Lan were just *too* strong, which was why such a wondrous misunderstanding was created.

After bidding farewell to the other team members, Ling Lan led Luo Lang back to their villa. Before Ling Lan could tell Luo Lang the truth, however, Ling Lan received a notification from the school administrators. The message said that there were representatives from the 23rd Division on their way to her villa for a tour.

At the end of the message, the administrators did not forget to remind Ling Lan to try and find chances to extol the virtues of the school. If the academy did well, then everyone would be even better off.

Ling Lan hung up the call with a frigid expression on her face, while the news made Han Jijun and the others exchange looks. The assessment teams had nothing to do with them freshmen ... so why did this person from the 23rd Division want to come find them? Right then, they were a little blind, having forgotten for the moment that the commander of the 23rd Division was Ling Lan's dad, Ling Xiao.

Alright, since Ling Lan had never spoken much about Ling Xiao in front of them, as time went by, they had almost completely neglected the fact that Ling Xiao was Ling Lan's father. This was a classic example of missing something in plain sight. It could only be said that, in their minds, Ling Lan was formidable enough in her own right to make them forget about Ling Xiao's existence.

*"Hells, what other tricks is that idiot father planning?"* A grumpy Ling Lan could only wait in the living room for her dad to arrive, her expression frosty.

Seeing Boss Lan shrouded in cold air, everyone knew that Ling Lan was in a bad mood. By now, Luo Lang could already confirm that his boss most definitely knew that major general back there.

Among those coming to the villa, other than the representative from the school administration, there were only 3 people from the 23rd Division. The leader was Ling Xiao, while the other two trailed behind him silently. When Ling Xiao stepped into the hall of the villa, the other two men automatically chose two strategic positions and planted themselves there.

Seeing this, Ling Lan knew that these two must be her dad's personal bodyguards because of the positions they had chosen. One was at the window — the range of sight at the window was vast, allowing him to have a firm grasp of the situation outside. Meanwhile, the other was standing at a position that would be almost overlooked by all the people in the hall, but where all the people would be clearly captured by his gaze. In other words, any strange movements by the people within the hall would be seen by him. One obvious, one unassuming; one outward-facing, one internal — their cooperation was impeccable.

Ling Xiao nodded at Ling Lan's group of six with a smile. Under the administrator's arrangement, he sat on a sofa in the hall and began chatting amicably with Ling Lan's group, getting a rough idea of their situation. Then, he conversed for a bit with the administrator, and finally, by his request, the representative from the administration had no choice but to leave reluctantly. Of course, when he left, the administrator did not forget to throw a pointed glance in Ling Lan's direction.

Once the administrator was gone, there was only Ling Lan's team left in the villa and Ling Xiao's group of three. Only then did Ling Xiao drop his scholarly gentleman demeanour, shaking out his arms as he leaned back into the sofa and grumbled, "Speaking with them, is really so tiring!"

The way he was behaving, loose and relaxed like he was in his own home, made the corners of the eyes of his two bodyguards twitch subtly. In their minds, they were probably howling: *Sir, please maintain some bit of the decorum and dignity a general should have!*

Of course, this behaviour also made Qi Long and the others stare at one another, uncertain what they should do. If this were a proper conversation, they might still know what they could say, but this type of situation was beyond their expectations, so they really had no clue how to react anymore.

Unanimously, they all turned to look at their boss Ling Lan. Ling Lan had his arms folded across his chest as he stared coldly at the other ... alright, Boss was definitely in a bad mood. They had better keep their distance.

Surreptitiously, Han Jijyun, Xie Yi, and Lin Zhong-qing retreated several steps back in unison. Han Jijyun was a staunch brother, not forgetting to tug on Qi Long's arm to alert this rather insensitive fellow.

Qi Long stared in confusion as the three put some distance between themselves and Boss Lan, but then he checked his boss's aura ... fine, he may be a bit insensitive, but his animal instinct let him understand that Han Jijyun and the others were acting appropriately. And so, he followed suit instantly to retreat, and holding true to the ideology of helping a comrade who had suffered with him before, he did not forget to alert Luo Lang while he was at it.

Just like this, Luo Lang also realised the danger and retreated silently. These actions only took several seconds to complete — if one was not paying attention, the five of them would seem to have dashed back at about the same time.

Perhaps the cold air around Ling Lan was rather aggressive — it took a while, but Ling Xiao finally discovered that his daughter did not seem to welcome his arrival. He quickly stood up and said with an awkward smile, "Cadet, has our visit troubled you?"

"What do you think? Sir Major General?" responded Ling Lan coolly. She could already predict that her initially peaceful and tranquil cadet life, would definitely be destroyed by her old man ... (Truth be told, Ling Lan's cadet life had never been tranquil from the start ... could this be considered Ling Lan wilfully trumping up a charge to condemn Ling Xiao?)<sup>2</sup>

Ling Lan's retort caused Lin Zhong-qing and Xie Yi to suck in a cold breath. Was it really okay to use this kind of hostile attitude when interacting with a major general from the 23rd Division?

Only Han Jijyun seemed to have an inkling spark through his mind, but it went by so quickly that he could not grab hold of it. This made him crinkle his brow and descend into thought.

Those two bodyguards of Ling Xiao also frowned at the same time — Ling Lan's manner made them extremely angry. As Ling Xiao's personal bodyguards, they would not permit anyone to show any disrespect to their senior officer, especially since this senior officer was also the one they revered the most.

The only one who was still as cheerful as ever was Ling Xiao; he did not mind Ling Lan's attitude in the least. In short, no matter what expression or motions his daughter did, in this father's eyes, they were all perfect and wonderful ...*See, this is my daughter! Her proud bones would absolutely never break just from a show of greater power! As expected of a progeny of mine, Ling Xiao's!* In the eyes of this twenty-four filial exemplars dad, his own child was absolutely faultless. If by any chance there was any fault, then it still must be the fault of other people.

Thus, an internally gleeful Ling Xiao walked towards Ling Lan, all smiles as he opened his arms wide and said, "In short, for this duration of time at the academy, I'll be troubling you." Ling Xiao moved forwards, planning to use a passionate hug to convey how proud he was right now, as well as give an outlet for his full berth of fatherly love.

This passionate action of Ling Xiao's made the complexions of Ling Lan's team of five pale. Having already retreated a distance away previously, they once again took several steps back right now in unison, putting even more distance between them and Ling Lan.

They knew very well that their boss really hated any physical contact with strangers. Even with them, unless absolutely necessary, he would not come close and touch them, much less this type of passionate embrace.

Han Jiyun could not help but peek at Boss Lan who was emitting a steady flow of cold air, standing stiffly right ahead of them. He hoped his boss would be able to just tolerate this hug this time — after all, the other was a major general of the 23rd Division. If they offended the other ...

Wait, something was not right. Wasn't the 23rd Division Ling Lan's father's division? Han Jiyun's brain finally seemed to figure something out. He turned his head to stare gobsmacked at that obviously affectionate major general, and a notion sparked through his mind ...

Reality proved that Ling Lan would not resign herself to things she disliked. She abruptly raised a fist and ploughed it straight into the offending person's abdomen.

A 'bam' and Ling Lan sent her dad reeling back into the sofa with one punch. This extremely blatant attack made the two men by Ling Xiao's side blanch dramatically — they had planned to intercept the attack, but they had been frozen in place by a tremendous force of presence at that instant.

Bewildered, they stared at their senior officer, not even daring to struggle. This was because they were well aware who was the source of this force of presence — it was precisely their leader General Ling Xiao.

Looking at Ling Xiao playing up how pitiful he was by laying on the sofa cradling his stomach with a pained expression, Ling Lan blew on her own fists lightly and then asked coldly, "What are you doing here?"

"I missed you," said Ling Xiao, his gaze sad and pleading. Despite appearances, he was actually extremely glad in his heart, because this behaviour of Ling Lan's proved that his daughter had already recognised him even with his disguise. As expected of his daughter — what keen and discerning eyes<sup>3</sup>, able to see the truth with just one glance.

"You actually abandoned the 23rd Division so irresponsibly to come here? Is that how a commander should act?" Ling Lan's ice-block face finally cracked as she bellowed in a deep voice.

Why had she thought that Ling Xiao was a responsible and good man worthy of trust? Sure enough, the idealised image in her heart was having a serious mismatch with reality. Ling Lan felt that she had been duped.

This bellow stupefied Qi Long and the others. They stared in shock at that major general sitting on the sofa cradling his stomach, his eyes the only thing exposed on his face. So he was the gentle-mannered and refreshing-like-a-spring-breeze national idol, General Ling Xiao?

Only Han Jiyun let out a soft sigh, thinking, *'So it is him!'*

“I missed my son, so what’s wrong with coming to visit him?” Since his charade had been exposed by his daughter, Ling Xiao no longer tried to pretend. He sat up properly on the sofa and tugged down that rather stifling mask, declaring why he had come with bold righteousness.

### **Chapter 290: Ling Xiao’s Wish!**

Beneath the mask was, as expected, that handsome face which the entire Federation was crazy about. On it, was Ling Xiao’s trademark smile, still as likeable and respectable as ever.

Ling Xiao’s words made his two bodyguards stare in shock at Ling Lan. Although they had always known General Ling Xiao had a child, they had not known the particulars, much less that he was studying at the First Men’s Military Academy. No wonder the general had randomly decided to come here this time — he was probably here to see his child.

Realisation flashed through the two bodyguards’ eyes, and they turned unanimously to stare somewhere else, showing that they were unconcerned with their senior officer’s private matters. But clearly, their ears were perked up high — deep inside, they were still very curious about how General Ling Xiao interacted with his son ...

These straightforward words of Ling Xiao, filled with fatherly love, left Ling Lan somewhat uncertain on how to react. Mind you, when they had first met, Ling Xiao’s demeanour had been extremely reserved. It should be said that, having been absent for the 16 years of Ling Lan’s life when she had been growing up, Ling Xiao was completely clueless about how he should express his fatherly love ... Equally flustered, both Ling Lan and Ling Xiao had been trying to adapt to their new roles, trying to accept each other’s existence.

Unexpectedly, after this time apart, seeing Ling Xiao again, her father had actually changed his original warm but reserved manner completely, becoming extremely aggressive in his approach, all ‘I am your father so you must accept me’ ... but this type of Ling Xiao was something Ling Lan was not ready for, so she actually did not know what to do anymore.

She couldn’t very well say coyly back that she did not need her dad to miss her ... right, this type of flirtatious conversation was really inappropriate between them. Therefore, Ling Lan could only react with silence!

“You’ve been gone for so long, we all miss you a lot. Also, your mum has been worried these days whether you’re adapting well to life in the military academy, so when she found out about this opportunity, she asked me to come and see.” Ling Xiao saw Ling Lan staying silent and felt that something was up, so after once more expressing how much he had missed his daughter, he decisively pushed the blame <sup>1</sup> onto his wife. Before outsiders, ahem ahem, he still had to maintain his dignity as a general somehow.

Ling Lan peered coldly at him, then replied evenly, “Tell mum that I’m fine on all fronts here. And also, if you are missing your son, I recommend, father, that you go back and discuss things over with mum. Based on the current situation, the both of you could just birth another one. At that time, you won’t have the free time for your mind to stray anymore.”

“Er ... that’s a matter for later.” Ling Xiao could only chuckle awkwardly at this reply of Ling Lan’s which gave him no face, but he did not dare to say anything in return. Who asked him to owe his own daughter so much as a dad?

The fact remained that it was all his fault — putting aside his disappearance for 16 years, why did he have to make such a huge blunder right after he returned? Actually sending his own daughter right into the great wolves’ den of the First Men’s Military Academy ... every time he thought of this, Ling Xiao could not help but stamp his feet and pound his chest, unbelievably frustrated and annoyed.

Although Ling Xiao had received a blow from Ling Lan, his extraordinarily strong heart was completely fine. He continued to carry out his plan with determination. Yes, before he had to leave the military academy, he intended to capture the heart of his daughter and let her call him ‘daddy’ with full sincerity, not this cold and emotionless address she was using now. Just imagining his daughter coyly and adorably calling him ‘daddy’, he felt ardour and zeal coursing through his blood.

Right then, Ling Xiao had conveniently ignored reality — would Ling Lan, with her typically cold-domineering-unruly swag, really morph into a delicate and cute persona and address someone coyly? Clearly, Ling Xiao’s imaginings would absolutely never become reality ...

Before Ling Lan, even Ling Xiao had to back off sometimes — his initially warm smile filled with boundless sunshine even seemed a little awkward now — but it was precisely this conciliatory and compromising display of fatherly love which caused a multitude of feelings to well up in the hearts of Qi Long and the others. Some of them were even looking at their boss with admiration and reverence — as expected of their Boss Lan, even in the face of General Ling Xiao, he could be so collected and domineering ...

Relating the relationship between Ling Xiao and Ling Lan to their relationships with their own fathers, all of them felt like crying. Why was Boss Lan’s father, General Ling Xiao, so good-tempered, so warm and nice, and so tolerant? When they thought about their own dads back home with angry slanted brows and full of criticism, they began to wonder whether they had been wild children randomly picked up from somewhere ... <sup>2</sup>

It had to be said that Ling Xiao’s method of expressing his fatherly love had hurt the souls of these children.

As a result, after reflecting on this pain, Ling Lan’s band of little companions all decided that when they returned home, they would raise their flags and fight for independence, beginning their prolonged revolutionary life. This would also cause their fathers to stab knives at Ling Xiao’s image in the dark depths of the night when no one else was around ...

Against this move of Ling Xiao’s, even the composed Ling Lan was helpless and relented. How could Ling Lan have known that this national idol, this supreme elite of the Federation, would actually be this thick-skinned? Ling Lan, who had always not been good at expressing herself, could only rub her nose at this time, keeping her silence once again. She couldn’t very well heartlessly chase away her dad who had travelled all this way to visit her!

At the heart of it, this behaviour of Ling Xiao’s had still moved Ling Lan considerably — right then, she truly felt like she was a wild and unruly daughter being spoilt and pampered by her father.

Who was Ling Xiao? He immediately sensed the softening of his daughter's heart and was instantly overjoyed, convinced that he had done the right thing.

Honestly, regarding how Ling Lan had always been unwilling to accept him as her daddy, Ling Xiao had been very anxious despite feeling resigned to it. After saying goodbye to Ling Lan previously, he had constantly been thinking how he could resolve this distance between Ling Lan and him.

Ling Xiao had never been a father before — so suddenly having a daughter emerge out of nowhere made him exceedingly flustered, unsure how to communicate with her. Although Ling Xiao did not know what to do, he was someone who was willing to learn. Thus, even while he was working on establishing the 23rd Division, he had not forgotten to purchase lots of reading materials about parent and child relationships from the virtual network. Outside work, whenever he had the free time, he would hide away in his study and pore over these books diligently, trying hard to seek a solution to his problem ...

After reading through countless books, he finally felt it was time to progress to the next stage. Thus, he had decisively grabbed the chance to come down here to the military academy and rushed over excitedly, prepared to sweep away this issue that had been plaguing him for so long in one concerted attempt. In short, he would definitely become the most perfect daddy in his daughter's eyes.

Therefore, the moment they met, he had followed the instructions of the books: *Fatherly love should not be hidden. It must be explicitly expressed, otherwise your child will not feel it and think you do not love him ... Only by letting your child feel your love will he accept you, and only then can you establish a close relationship with your child ...*

Of course, when Ling Xiao read those books, he was absolutely ignoring that line of extremely small print at the bottom of the covers: *This book is only suitable for use on babies aged 0-3.*

Ling Xiao felt as if he had gained something, which made him even more convinced of the efficacy of the books' guidance. All smiles, he looked towards the few youths standing behind Ling Lan and said kindly, "You all must be Ling Lan's good friends. It's a pleasure meeting you all for the first time. And also, thank you all for taking care of Ling Lan all this while."

Ling Xiao's friendly manner flustered Qi Long and the others. Overwhelmed by this unexpected show of favour, they quickly replied, "Not at all, G-general Ling ..." Fine, having gotten used to the stern authoritative image of their own fathers, Ling Xiao's attitude of treating them like equals was undoubtedly a shock to them.

Of course, at the same time, their expressions were dreamy. Even though they had long known that Ling Xiao was Ling Lan's father, they had never met him before. In their minds, Ling Xiao was still that national idol far away out of reach, their lifelong goal in their studies. And now, they had finally encountered their idol in the flesh in such close quarters.

"You all are my son Ling Lan's good friends. Just call me Uncle Ling," said Ling Xiao with a wide smile. When Ling Lan heard this, the frost on her face thawed a little.

Ling Xiao yelled a great big YES in his heart — sure enough, to be a qualified dad, one must treat the little companions who played with one's child with a good attitude. This would make the child feel that they were respected, and they would just love you more and become even closer with you.

“Yes, Un-uncle Ling!” They looked at that face of Ling Xiao’s which was so youthful it could almost pass off as their own elder brother’s, and once more compared it to the grizzled faces of their dads adorned with white sideburns, and were instantly tearing up inside. This cry of ‘uncle’ was truly quite difficult for them. But they were well aware that these words of Ling Xiao meant that he had acknowledged them, accepting them as Ling Lan’s confidants.

Watching Ling Xiao conversing with Qi Long and the others with full sincerity, his attitude warm and an easy smile on his face, Ling Lan stared up into the sky, utterly speechless.

Ling Lan knew her dad’s charisma was boundless, but this was truly too much. With just a simple exchange of words, he had completely taken Qi Long and the other four in under his spell. Seeing their faces filled with idolisation and adoration, Qi Long and the others might have already forgotten that they still had their boss by their side. This made Ling Lan feel a little wistful — as expected, she was still no match for her dad ...

Even more frightening was the fact that, in the mindscape, Little Four had been screaming his adoration non-stop ever since Ling Xiao had arrived. He was making so much noise that her head hurt. Not only that, he was even complaining that Ling Lan was not giving him a chance to talk with Ling Xiao. His various antics expressing his gloom and sadness almost made Ling Lan resort to domestic violence once more. Luckily for Little Four, after being tempered by Instructor Number Five’s countless perverse training torments, Ling Lan still managed to restrain herself before she went berserk.

Still, right after, Little Four was heartlessly thrown by Ling Lan into a small dark room, and the world was instantly peaceful and quiet again. Ling Lan felt refreshed and at ease down to her very soul.

However, Ling Lan’s good mood soon turned sour again. This was because she could hear Qi Long and the others telling Ling Xiao everything that had happened ever since they had entered the military academy without any reservations. They told him how they had been pressed by the seniors since joining the school, forced to accept a wagered fight with Leiting, and how three members of the New Cadet Regiment had been injured heavily in the subsequent arena, requiring Boss Lan to use his mighty fist to settle the issue, etcetera etcetera ...

Fine, telling him all this, so be it. But unexpectedly, that brat Luo Lang actually told Ling Xiao all about the incident with Tianji with a grieved expression on his face. When Ling Xiao heard that there were actually evil and manipulative students within the school that liked the same gender <sup>3</sup>, his initially warm and genial smile finally cracked ...

With a ‘boom’, the livid Ling Xiao slapped a powerful palm down onto the only tea table <sup>4</sup> in the living room of Ling Lan’s villa, pulverizing it into dust.

“Bastard, how dare he!” Ling Xiao roared. His force of presence whipped free for an instant, and all the lights in the hall shattered with consecutive pops, plunging the entire villa into darkness.

Apparently, his daughter, who was as lovely as flowers and jade, was still in so much danger even though she was disguised as a boy ...