

Chapter 196 Crackdown

"There are too many people here. Someone's going to recognize me. I'm afraid that everyone in the Black Dragons will know who I am by tomorrow." Zhao Zichen heaved a sigh. "How troublesome."

"We can't help that. Jiang Ming's such a scheming old fox. Even if he doesn't kill you today, he wants your identity to be leaked. At least we have our lives."

The smoke and fire made everyone listless, and the firefighters put us all into ambulances. Ergouzi was sped to the hospital, while the rest of us—since we could all breathe—waited for our turn.

Chu Xiaoxiao was awake by now and Baldie led her over. She was huffing mad and she raised her hand to hit me. I flinched involuntarily, then controlled it and let her hit me. I was in the wrong and deserved the punishment.

But Chu Xiaoxiao's slap did not land. She sniffed and said, "You saved lives. I won't hit you."

She looked so angry and miserable that my heart ached that I hugged her to me. However, she stomped on my foot. "But you risked your own life, and I'm still angry about that!"

"Never again, my lady."

"Remember, your life is mine. Got that?"

"Yes, ma'am!"

Chu Xiaoxiao rolled her eyes. Seeing that I was really alright, with a snort, her tears turned to laughter.

Just then, the ambulances arrived. We all got on and headed to the hospital.

Zhao Zichen and his men were not badly injured. Instead, it was the stab wound on my hand that was more serious and needed to be debrided. Zhao Zichen found the best surgeon for me.

The hospital was quiet at the late hour, and the surgeon cleaned my wound with care.

Zhao Zichen knocked on the door. Seeing that I was still being treated, he said quietly, "I'll do it."

The surgeon passed him the tweezers and left the room. Zhao Zichen glanced at Chu Xiaoxiao who was dozing while leaning on me and sighed. "The plan failed?"

I nodded helplessly. "Baldie told you?"

"Baldie said that Jiang Ming's target was never me from the start. It was always you. I never expected him to see through our plan. I heard he was resourceful but hadn't realized he was crafty. This is the first time I feel defeated. Maybe my Red Lanterns are really no match for his Black Dragons."

I had never seen Zhao Zichen so despondent before.

"He didn't see through our plan. It's just that he's calculative that every step is so detailed. Once we walked into his trap, there was no way out. He has Plan Bs for his Plan Bs unto infinity. He's a really difficult person to deal with."

I was not in a much better mood than Zhao Zichen.

When I fantasized about confronting Jiang Ming, I only imagined that he was an intelligent second-generation rich man, like a smarter version of Chen Yuzhou.

I knew that revenge would be difficult. Jiang Ming was a tough opponent.

However, I met him today and saw for myself his horrifying plans, his depraved personality, and his extremely capable uncle.

When it came to intelligence, we were just on par with Jiang Ming. For martial arts, Baldie and I combined were barely a match for Jiang Ming's uncle's little finger.

I described to Zhao Zichen everything that had happened at Jiang Ming's villa, including our encounter with his uncle.

"I was in the military for too long. I don't know much about the outside world."

I guessed that Zhao Zichen would know. Otherwise, he would not have Baldie as his bodyguard.

He heaved a sigh and said, "Ugh, the thing that worried me the most has happened. When we were planning to assassinate Jiang Ming, I was worried that his uncle would return. I didn't expect that we would have such bad luck. The more we worry, the more it will happen."

"What kind of person is his uncle? A light leaf made such a big impact on Jiang Ming's face."

"Jiang Yunqing learned his skills in the Void Sect. After that, he traveled around and his whereabouts were always uncertain. However, he's very protective. Apparently, someone wanted to kill Jiang Ming about ten years ago, and he was the one who sent Jiang Ming away. I was worried that he would suddenly show up, and he did. It wasn't any fault of our planning, but God's will," he smiled bitterly.

"Jiang Ming didn't come away without any losses. That arm of his will take months to heal. His uncle also promised me that Jiang Ming would not seek us out for revenge. If he's true to his word, at least Jiang Ming will be delayed."

"Jiang Yunqing's word can be trusted, but can he keep an eye on Jiang Ming all the time? He only returns to the family home once every few years. But you're right, at least it will delay Jiang Ming. Now that my identity is going to be leaked, and the Red Lanterns and Black Dragons have fallen out, we need to prepare for the next battle."

I smiled. "Jiang Ming is waiting for Jiang Yunqing to leave. We are too."

Zhao Zichen gave me a knowing smile. "Once Jiang Yunqing leaves, we'll kill Jiang Ming. You met him. Did you find out more about your parents?"

"Don't mention it. It's getting more complicated."

Zhao Zichen was an astute man. He dropped the topic when I did not respond.

By the time my wound was clean, the sun was almost rising. Chu Xiaoxiao was exhausted and lay against me in a deep sleep.

I was tired, yet I could not sleep. I kept thinking over what Liu Rong and Jiang Ming had said.

I was sure that Jiang Ming was involved in my parents' car accident. However, I could not be sure if he was the one who orchestrated it.

Looking at it now, there was no way to avoid linking Han Kun to my parents' accident. Gan Ling also had to know something.

I could not help but be reminded of Han Kun's attitude. I had always been suspicious of why he had not allowed me to investigate the accident.

Why on earth not?!

If Han Kun was really involved, why did he do it?! For money? No, he was not that kind of person. For my mother? That was even more impossible. My mother was a victim too.

I really wanted to ask Han Kun what was going on?! However, he was currently missing. There was no way to ask him.

I suddenly felt overwhelmed, as if I was being enveloped in a black hole, surrounded by countless problems and dusty secrets. I had never expected all this when I started.

The local news the next day surprised me. The open warfare between the Black Dragons and the Red Lanterns had shocked the higher levels of the government. The provincial department bypassed the Tong City municipal bureau and set up a task force to take a stand on and crack down on gang activity in Tong City.

This did not affect the Red Lanterns much. They had always stayed hidden and kept a low profile, and Zhao Zichen had been thinking of training them for some time.

But even though Jiang Ming had ordered them to keep a low profile, the Black Dragons were used to strutting around. They ignored the crackdown and before the day was done, they had already lost at least seven people.