

Chapter 254 Without Alarming the Enemy

I took a deep breath and pulled open the drawer. Mount Wuxiang was lying inside.

Old Yu's room had an antique feel. In the center of the room, there was an enormous picture frame—almost two by two meters—that would fit Mount Wuxiang.

I put the painting in the frame and sat on a chair opposite it, silently contemplating the painting.

I did not much about oil paintings or art in general. I could not tell whether or not it was a good painting.

But I could see that among the cherry blossoms of Mount Wuxiang, there was a graceful and gentle woman holding a child's hand as they looked at the scenery.

The woman looked remarkably like my mother, and the little boy was none other than me.

I felt overwhelmed by emotion. I suddenly remembered that my parents had once brought me on a business trip when I was very small. There was a mountain near where we were staying, and my mother would bring me out for evening walks. That mountain must be Mount Wuxiang.

The carefree me in the painting would never have imagined that my parents would one day die in a car accident and leave me an orphan. Mount Wuxiang had become a memorial to them.

Ho Zhitian railed about grievances and so had Liu Rushi. I wondered whose grievances were greater than mine.

Just because of this imaginary leadership position, I had become an orphan and suffered unreasonably for ten whole years between the ages of seven and seventeen.

"Old Yu, you must have experienced the incident forty years ago."

"It looks like someone has already told you everything. Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. What is in the past is in the past."

"The incident forty years ago does not concern me. I just want revenge for my parents. I'm going to give it to you straight. I know the truth behind my parents' accident. Someone did not want Old Ge's appointed family to be the leader. Mount Wuxiang was locked in a vault in New York, and Ho Zhitian himself had disappeared overseas. Those ungrateful curs wanted to force my mother to forge Old Ge's last words and tried to use an accident to threaten her. However, the situation spiraled out of control... I can't just let my parents' death be. I don't want the painting. Tell me who else was involved in planning the accident besides Jiang Ming, and I'll give you the painting. A fair exchange."

Old Yu was considered this silently.

After a long time, he finally replied, "Young man, I've told you before. What you hear might not be the truth, what you see might be false. Taking turns to take revenge is endless. Why not forget it?"

"How can I forget it?! If someone killed your parents, could you forget it?!"

Old Yu sat calmly. He seemed to be peering at me from behind his sunglasses.

It felt as though there was a stone sitting uncomfortably on my chest. Why did I have to forget all that I had suffered while the murderer got away scot-free?! It was not fair!

"Uncle Yu, I believe you knew my parents. You're a senior in that world. Could you ask your conscience whether my parents were wronged? Even if I don't avenge them, should I not be answerable to them?" At this point, I choked up. "They didn't just destroy my family, they destroyed my aunt's family too. My aunt was very close to my father. Her husband died in this accident. My aunt tore up all my father's photos and scolded my mother in her sleep. Do you know what those people destroyed just for their own self-interest?!"

Old Yu sighed deeply. "Fine, I can tell you. But before I do, you need to answer a question. If you can answer it, I don't want the painting, and I will tell you everything."

Old Yu paused and got up to walk toward Mount Wuxiang. The huge frame stood right in the middle of the room, looking like a large screen.

Old Yu circled the painting several times, then stopped in front of it and asked me, "Where are Old Ge's last words?"

I grumbled to myself, wondering what he meant. Then, I examined the painting inch by inch.

When I was done, I was stunned. "It's really not there."

It was just a normal painting. There were no last words.

Old Yu smiled. "These martial artists are greedy and therefore easily fooled. Your mother was famed for her cunning mind. How could anyone leave their last words on a canvas?"

"Why aren't there any..."

I gazed up at the painting that was taller than me. The cherry blossoms and the mother in the painting looked back down on me.

No matter which angle I examined it from, there was no trace of anything that could resemble last words on it.

"Why didn't anyone else notice?"

I could not believe that so many people and so many pairs of eyes could not have noticed that the painting did not contain the last words they were searching for.

How about Ho Zhitian? It was one thing if no one had seen the painting before. But Ho Zhitian must have seen the painting, and yet he said that the last words were on it.

I thought that the last words might be on the back of the painting, but there was nothing there; it was blank.

I was so confused. Where were they?

Old Yu asked, "Did they not notice, or did they not want to notice?"

"You're saying that everyone was lying? They were maintaining a ridiculous lie?!"

"The ones who did not realize cannot say, the ones who realized will not say. That is the truth," Old Yu replied.

I had been absolutely blindsided by this. After all this, and there was nothing on the canvas.

Ho Zhitian was definitely aware. He could not tell the truth that there were no last words in the painting. If he did, no one would have protected him. The painting was his amulet. He had to lie from the very beginning.

I grimaced. "So this painting is like the emperor's new clothes? My parents died because of this deception?"

"You're too pessimistic. It's that your mother tricked everyone. She would have been delighted it worked."

Old Yu smiled proudly.

He touched the painting. "What do you think of this painting? I think it's a masterpiece. Your mother and I thought it was a masterpiece, and priceless."

I had no idea what to say and left Woodfire Wonton feeling depressed.

I asked Old Yu to keep the painting for me. It was safer with him for the moment.

The painting could not be destroyed and needed to show up from time to time to remind everyone of its existence. This way no one would openly oppose Old Ge's last words.

Even if those last words did not actually exist.

I would not be able to come here again, lest anyone find out that I knew Old Yu.

After some thought, I asked Qingqing to pick me up from nearby Wanda Plaza. My driver's license had not yet been reissued, and calling for a car seemed too conspicuous.

Thanks to the cruise ship incident, I was now famous across Tong City. The driver of the car I took just now recognized me.

I had been so busy recently. There were too many things to do and it was no longer convenient for me to appear in public. Perhaps I needed an assistant.

Qingqing started making fun of me the moment she picked me up in the parking lot. "Aiyoh, Mr. Zhang, you're really the people's hero now. You're such a model citizen. Please sign an autograph for me."

"Shush you. I'll sign a few times on your dismissal report. Drive to Junran."

"You're so feisty today, who annoyed you?"

Qingqing stuck out her tongue and glanced at me in the rearview mirror. She did not say anything else, but drove to Junran Plaza by the sea.

There was nothing I could do about the martial artists. The urgent matter now was the gun smuggling case.

Before Tsai Xiaobing brought men here to get to work, I had to get Deputy Commissioner Xu dismissed from his position. But I had to do it without alarming Rock.