

# STAR GATE

## ---- Chapter 15: The Law Enforcement Team of Silver City (I)

10 o'clock at night.

*Rumble!*

Engines roared through a quiet old alley. It'd been a very long time since the street had seen so much action. Car lights flared in all directions and the neighborhood came alive with action.

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*In front of the Zhang family home.*

Li Hao looked silently at the scene developing in front of him. He hadn't wanted to raise too much attention at first, but his thoughts progressed with the situation and particularly after he encountered the scarlet shadow.

The truly formidable hid within the most difficult environment! Elevating himself to a high profile was perhaps another way to keep a low profile.

Starting today, everyone would know that he wanted revenge for Zhang Yuan. There were no other motives or findings driving him. He had no choice but to ask others for help and remained blithely unaware of danger looming over him. He had no idea there were other circumstances at play.

In other words, he was a bull in a china shop.

This kind of Li Hao was precisely the Li Hao that some wished to see. Young, impulsive, brash, but loyal! Intelligent, but not shrewd. Possessing of some smarts, but lacking wisdom.

This would be the image that he built!

It would lower the enemy's guard, but not craft an impression that he was dumb. How would he catch Yuan Shuo's eye if he was dumb? That would ring too falsely.

He always considered what each move might bring and cost him before committing to it. He was only taking a small stone, but he was doing so with great fanfare and widespread excitement!

It was therefore inconceivable that he'd go to all this effort just to cover up retrieving a rock. That was precisely the flow of thinking Li Hao sought. The more unbelievable things were, the less likely people's thoughts would proceed in this direction.

*Rumble!!*

Leather boots crunched gravel as armored inspectors alighted from the cars. They swiftly surrounded the street and approached the Zhang house.

The inspector general hadn't come, but Li Hao immediately recognized the hulking leader at the front. This was the deputy chief of the enforcement teams and second-in-command at the Inspectorate. Although he sat in the same hierarchy level as department head Wang Jie of Classified Affairs, they grasped wildly different levels of authority.

Deputy Chief Liu Long of the enforcement teams was a tall and brawny man. He was dressed casually in a trench coat instead of the black law inspector uniform. It was very out of season, so it was more than likely that weapons brimmed beneath the outer layer.

Li Hao was aware of the deputy chief's style—hard, aggressive, and extremely fierce. Commander of many, Liu Long was plied with high status in the Inspectorate and Silver City.

“Who is Li Hao??” Liu Long’s leather boots crushed gravel into dust as he walked. Watching from a distance, Li Hao’s eyes sparkled from his observation. *Woah, so strong! He’s definitely a powerhouse!*

The Inspectorate might lack users of supernatural talents, but made up for that with combat and boxing experts. Each of their experts could fend off ten enemies by themselves. This deputy chief would certainly be strong in battle.

“Sir, I am Li Hao!” The young man quickly presented himself—chest up, shoulders back, stomach in, voice clear and crisp. “Third Rank Inspector Li Hao from the Department of Classified Affairs of the Silver City Inspectorate greets Chief Liu! I am under orders to investigate this case!”

“Hmph!” Liu Long snorted coldly, his tone particularly frosty. He raked the young man with a sharp glare and he responded angrily, “As a fellow member of the Inspectorate, I find you a disgrace, Li Hao!”

The young man furrowed his brow. The deputy chief roared like a tiger, his words tinged with reluctance, irritation, and a complete lack of concern that other people might hear him.

“What is the Inspectorate? A law enforcement agency! It is the only and most crucial law enforcement agency of the city! As a member of the Inspectorate, you should seek help from your own if you make any discoveries or run into danger!”

“Why did you go through an outsider and have them interfere with our process??” Liu Long hectorated as he bounded forward like a prowling tiger. He took only one step, but crossed one hundred meters with that one step and immediately landed in front of the young man.

Li Hao stilled internally. *A true expert!* He’d met Liu Long before, but not under these conditions. While the young man possessed some skills to his name, he might not be able to even draw his gun in front of the deputy chief.

*Does he actually wield some mysterious power himself? Or is this the natural ability an ordinary person can command when they train to the limit of their physical abilities?*

Cowed, Li Hao lowered his head and his voice shook. "I wouldn't do that!" he said lowly. "I was just asking my teacher for help and didn't expect him to mobilize the Inspectorate. I didn't dare ask us for help because I have no evidence..."

Liu Long harrumphed, but seemed to accept the answer.

"Look for evidence if you don't have any!" he retorted coolly. "Why would that stop you? Out with it, what's happened here?"

Li Hao took a firm mental grip of himself and continued in a low voice, "A self-immolation case. I've reported it to my superior, but don't know if Chief Liu knows of it?"

"I do!"

"Zhang Yuan and I were good friends. I came here tonight to look for clues. I firmly believe that he was murdered and didn't die in an accident..." He paused when he choked up. "But I found someone following me on the way here! Not only that, but someone's searched through his sealed house. I used to come here often because we were so close. At the same time, I found some suspicious footprints outside the complex walls.

"The house has been empty for a very long time," the young man spoke rapidly. "Half the street has moved away and the Zhangs are located at the very end. Logically speaking, there's no reason for someone to come to the house..."

"Take me to these footprints!" Liu Long barked in tones that brooked no questioning. He turned to the large team behind him. "Seal off the street and

search every house. Ask if any strangers have been around! Don't let anyone go and kill anyone who resists!"

"Understood!" The team swiftly dispersed, sending the street into a hubbub as they carried out their orders.

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Li Hao ignored the commotion behind him and brought Liu Long to a shaded portion of the complex walls. He didn't need to say anything. The deputy chief bent down as soon as he saw the shallow footprints and inspected them closely, the look in his eyes changing slightly.

"Hmph!" An arctic look returned to his gaze. Some elites from the team followed quietly by his side and awaited for orders.

"Wu Chao, take a look at this!" Liu Long waved one of them forward. With his white gloves, Wu Chao fit the stereotype of a professional inspector. He also stooped down for a look. What were ordinary footprints to Li Hao's eyes became so much more in the skinny, middle-aged inspector's analysis.

"Suspect, male! Approximately 180 cm of unknown weight, the footprints are shallow. The deepest ones are from two hours ago and the faintest more than half a year. He's decently strong—no less than level two, possibly even stronger!"

Li Hao found the last line odd, but didn't say anything. Liu Long, however, knew that someone from Classified Affairs might not understand.

"The law enforcement teams classify dangerous personnel into three levels. We do not take into account weapons or other external items, just personal skill. Level one is the strongest, level three is the weakest!" He didn't mind explaining to someone he'd yelled at moments ago. "Someone who can kill a member of your department is level three!"

“There’s twenty-eight people in Classified Affairs and some are veteran inspectors...” Li Hao smiled awkwardly. *You’re exaggerating, aren’t you?* The deputy chief snorted mercilessly. “Your department head was strong enough before and had some skill—he wouldn’t be promoted to department head otherwise. But he’s fallen out of practice since being reassigned to Classified Affairs and no longer trains. Any regular enforcer of my team can kill him now, to say nothing of the criminals that we deem dangerous!

“You must understand that we don’t assign ranks to just anyone. All those who receive a number are extremely dangerous!

“A tragic case occurred in Silver City three years ago when a bastard killed all thirty-two members of the Hu family with his bare fists. That is our level three! In all these years, few are those who are assigned a level in our cases.”

That shone a light for Li Hao on how terrifying level three criminals were. Of course, this was an internal standard for the enforcers. It wasn’t standard throughout the Inspectorate, so very few at Classified Affairs mentioned it.

The look in the young man’s eyes changed as he thought back to how Wu Chao had said that the owner of the footprints was level two, possibly level one. Granted, it wasn’t surprising since he most likely had arcane abilities. The law enforcers’ criteria applied to ordinary people. Anyone beyond the norm would naturally be level two, one, or even greater than one.

It was just surprising that level three criminals were already so terrifying. Then, wielders of mysterious energy were possibly beyond his imagination! And how could Wu Chao draw so many conclusions from just footprints?

The skinny, middle-aged man tilted his head with a sidelong glance at Li Hao and smiled in an eerie way. “Comrade Little Li, do you think I’m spewing nonsense?”

“Not at all, just curious about big bro Wu’s abilities...” Li Hao quickly shook his head.

“Are all Veteris students this humble?” Wu Chao laughed hauntingly. “They usually ride high horses, but you’re different. Well, you did also withdraw and become part of us!”

Wu Chao gently pushed off his feet and jumped high into the air, as if showing off for Li Hao. He left a single footprint on the ground when he landed.

“People with different skills land differently on the ground, thereby leaving different footprints. I can even tell which part of the foot landed first and what position they landed in!

“I then go off his landing posture to deduce more information. The footprints we see here are varying levels of depth. He looks to have jumped from a place several meters high, but not all of his footprints support that height. That means he can easily control his muscles...” Wu Chao took a few minutes to explain his process, despite there being no need to under ordinary conditions.

Li Hao was directly involved in the affairs tonight and though he’d withdrawn from the Veteris Institute, he was still deeply entangled with it. It wouldn’t hurt Wu Chao to say a few extra words.

Liu Long listened quietly and spoke only when Wu Chao was finished.

“Enough! He’s not part of the enforcement team, so there’s no need to say so much!”

Li Hao smiled wordlessly.

The deputy chief looked around them and then at the house. “They’ve got some nerve to keep this place under surveillance for so long after killing someone!”

“Chief, isn’t it normal for the suspect to be bold?” Wu Chao chuckled. “Us enforcers might not be able to take them down.”

“Not be able to?” The look in Liu Long’s eyes sharpened with frost. “Not necessarily! Some people always think they’re better than others and have no respect for anything. But haven’t we killed our fair share of those arrogant fools over the years?”

The other enforcers smirked coolly at these words.