

## **The Billion 181**

### Chapter 181

C181 – Poor Zhao Dahai!

Upon hearing this, President Chen's face lit up with a delighted smile.

He mused to himself, "Yesterday, when it came to drinking, I couldn't best you."

"Mr. Su assured me I wouldn't get drunk."

"Could Mr. Su's words possibly be false?"

"Never!"

"Waiter, let's order!"

Seated confidently, President Chen declared with a boastful air, "Zhao, you're going to end up drunk today, and I'm picking up the tab."

Zhao Dahai smirked and retorted, "You're so headstrong!"

But President Chen was brimming with confidence.

He ordered an array of beer, red wine, and white wine.

Zhao's eyes bulged at the sight.

"Chen, we shouldn't drink this much."

“You’re not leaving until you’ve finished your drinks today!”

President Chen was visibly thrilled.

“Chen, everyone knows you’re a lightweight. We won’t tease you if you get drunk. Ease up.”

“Cut the chatter. Are you scared?”

“Scared of you?”

“Then quit your yapping and drink up!”

President Chen, without further ado, snatched a bottle of Maotai and set out three cups.

“Zhao, you’ve traveled all the way from the capital, and I’ve yet to properly welcome you.”

“I’m going to drink three cups first!”

With that, President Chen downed three cups in quick succession.

Zhao Dahai was flabbergasted.

“Zhao, don’t be ridiculous. We’ve had our differences, but there’s no need for you to come here on a suicide mission.”

Yet President Chen, seemingly oblivious, poured another six cups.

“Zhao, I hear you’re three years shy of 60. Here’s to good fortune!”

And with that toast, President Chen knocked back another six cups.

Zhao Dahai was utterly bewildered.

Was that excuse even valid?

Should he be calling the police?

Nobody drinks like this, right?

Especially not white wine!

Sure, Maotai is a fine liquor, but President Chen can't just guzzle it down! It could kill him.

"Zhao, aren't you drinking?"

President Chen set down his cup, "I've had nine cups! You can't drink any less!"

"I..."

Zhao Dahai blinked, "May I have some food first?"

"Sure, I'll wait for you."

President Chen settled into his seat with a contented smile.

Zhao Dahai had a purpose for his words; he was well aware of President Chen's low tolerance for alcohol. Despite not having eaten anything, President Chen had hurriedly downed a considerable amount of liquor, which might soon lead to his fainting, especially since the dishes were still a while away from being served. If President Chen passed out, Zhao would be off the hook for drinking.

But as time ticked by, Zhao grew anxious. Why hadn't President Chen keeled over yet? There he was, sitting and smiling as if nothing was amiss!

President Chen, on the other hand, was over the moon. The sensation was incredible. In the past, alcohol would leave his throat burning and his stomach aching. But now, he savored the rich aroma of the wine without any adverse effects. The liquor tasted potent in his mouth, yet it seemed to turn to water by the time it reached his stomach, causing nothing more than a slight bloating.

Mr. Su's creations were nothing short of miraculous. If he decided to sell these items, he'd make a fortune.

Soon enough, the dishes arrived one after another. Zhao Dahai couldn't hide his frustration. "Why hasn't President Chen passed out yet?" he wondered. Had President Chen suddenly become invincible to alcohol? Could he really drink a thousand cups without getting drunk? Such a notion was preposterous.

Little did Zhao know that President Chen's newfound resilience was all thanks to Su Ming's assistance.

With the table finally set, Zhao had no choice but to reluctantly nibble on some food. He licked his parched lips and poured himself a glass of wine. Nine cups. Drinking them slowly was one thing, but to finish them all at once?

"Don't worry, Zhao. I know you're not one for quick drinking. Those earlier drinks were just a toast to you. Now, let's get down to the real drinking," President Chen said, not even bothering with the food as he filled his glass once more.

"Cheers!" he declared and downed his drink in one gulp.

Zhao Dahai felt a chill run down his spine. What in the world was happening? Was President Chen okay? Had his brain been affected by yesterday's drinking?

With President Chen having taken the lead, Zhao Dahai felt compelled to follow suit. His pride demanded it; he had to drink.

The pair clinked glasses in a toast.

They'd been steadily drinking for a while.

Zhao Dahai was thoroughly inebriated.

Soon, his eyes swirled, and his tongue felt numb, yet President Chen was bursting with energy.

Zhao Dahai was so baffled he wanted to dissect President Chen to figure out his secret.

What was happening here?

The man who had been floored by a few drinks yesterday was suddenly unstoppable today?

"No... I can't handle any more... I'm done drinking, done..."

Zhao Dahai's words were slurred and clumsy.

"Zhao, are you seriously drunk already? We've barely started," President Chen chortled.

He was over the moon!

You mocked me before, saying I couldn't hold my liquor. Well, today I'm going to show you what a real drinker looks like!

"Waiter, bring a bucket with some ice in it!"

Zhao Dahai overheard the request.

What was President Chen up to?

The waiter promptly arrived with a spotless bucket filled with the hotel's ice cubes.

President Chen grinned at Zhao Dahai, "Today, Zhao, you're going to witness something extraordinary!"

With that, President Chen uncorked several bottles next to him—beer, red wine, white wine, and a handful of mixers.

A whole bucket brimming with booze!

Zhao Dahai was gobsmacked.

Wasn't he worried about wrecking his stomach?

"Watch me go to town on this," President Chen declared, and with Zhao Dahai staring in disbelief, he hoisted the bucket and guzzled it down.

Zhao Dahai was astounded.

He nearly sobered up from the shock.

He was utterly outdone!

President Chen drank heartily, emptying the bucket in no time.

"Fantastic!" he exclaimed, wiping his mouth and bellowing with satisfaction.

Apparently, Mr. Su's concoction had transformed not just his tolerance but also the capacity of his stomach. Downing that much liquor was a breeze.

Zhao Dahai was frozen in his seat, his breath nearly caught in his throat.

Could this be real?

A hallucination?

Had he overindulged the night before and was still caught in a drunken stupor?

With this thought, Zhao Dahai slapped himself.

Ouch!

That definitely hurt!

From then on, a legend circulated around the hotel.

A deity of drink had rendered a man senseless with his extraordinary capacity for alcohol.

As the man left, he continued to shout, "Fake, it's all fake... Ah... I've had enough. I'm never drinking again... Mom, he made me drink..."

President Chen became renowned after that incident.

Poor Zhao Dahai, it took him three full days and nights to rise from his bed after getting home.

Just as he was feeling better, the sight of President Chen sent a chill down Zhao Dahai's spine.

Without thinking, he blurted out, “I’m not drinking anymore!”

His voice boomed, echoing through the bank’s lobby. The outburst left customers, bank employees, and even the security guards dumbfounded.

What was happening?

Why was he refusing to drink?

Was Zhao Dahai still half asleep?

Could he be sleep talking?

Chapter 182

C182 – I will Give You Something to Drink

The man dispatched from the capital’s main branch fled in a panic, having uncovered nothing.

Muttering to himself in the car, he vowed:

“I’ll never touch alcohol again!”

“I’ve fallen ill from drinking!”

Su Ming was oblivious to this episode.

With ample funds at his disposal, Su Ming contemplated purchasing the adjacent building.

He clutched a map in his hands.



The plot in the city center was sizable. Should Su Ming acquire all the nearby real estate, he could potentially transform it into a farm!

He envisioned cultivating flowers and greenery, raising livestock, and creating a home for himself.

Such a life seemed idyllic.

Yet, he wasn't particularly knowledgeable about these matters.

No matter, he had an ideal person in mind.

Wang Guohui had previously gifted Su Ming a skyscraper, indicating his extensive familiarity with the local buildings.

With this in mind, Su Ming dialed Wang Guohui's number.

"Mr. Su!"

The phone crackled with Wang Guohui's voice, brimming with astonishment, "You're calling me yourself..."

Feeling a bit awkward, Su Ming said, "I need to ask you something."

"Absolutely, Mr. Su. Just hold on, I'm on my way to meet you," Wang Guohui replied.

Su Ming gripped his phone, wondering what Wang Guohui was up to.

"Mr. Su, please wait for me!"

With that, Wang Guohui ended the call. Su Ming wasn't concerned; it was preferable to have Wang Guohui come to him for a more thorough discussion.

Wang Guohui arrived in under ten minutes.

Seeing him, Su Ming couldn't help but chuckle.

Wang Guohui was dressed in a suit jacket but sported pajama bottoms and slippers below.

His slippers bore the emblem of the White Cloud Club.

Clearly, Wang Guohui had been enjoying himself at the White Cloud Club.

Catching Su Ming's amused look, Wang Guohui glanced down and instantly felt embarrassed.

He had forgotten to change.

The news of Mr. Su needing him had sent him into such a flurry of excitement that he had slipped up.

"Mr. Su, what can I do for you?"

Wang Guohui approached Su Ming, eager to assist.

"I'm interested in purchasing several properties in the area. Could you offer some advice? I'm looking to acquire all the buildings around here..."

Wang Guohui was taken aback by Su Ming's ambition.

“Mr. Su, I’m not trying to discourage you, but you’re aware of how costly downtown real estate is. The property I secured for you was only available because the owner was bankrupt and in dire need of cash. I’ve inquired about the other properties, but no one seems willing to sell...”

Su Ming nodded. “Let’s do this: arrange a meeting with the other property owners for me. I’d like to have a chat with them to see if they might consider selling their land to me.”

“Absolutely, no problem at all.”

Wang Guohui nodded. “Mr. Su, may I inquire about your reasons for buying the land?”

As soon as the words left his mouth, Wang Guohui regretted them, wishing he could give himself a slap.

There was no need to question Mr. Su’s motives for purchasing land.

Clearly, Mr. Su intended to use it for farming!

“The plots I have are too small. I’m looking to buy more land to expand my crop cultivation.”

“Understood!”

Wang Guohui quickly concurred.

He decided not to probe further into why Mr. Su wasn’t purchasing farmland in the suburbs.

Mr. Su was a tycoon.

Why would he farm on the outskirts?

“I won’t take up any more of your time. This isn’t an urgent matter, so just inquire when you’re free.”

Su Ming gave a knowing smile.

Wang Guohui's cheeks flushed with embarrassment.

Truthfully, he wasn't ashamed of the massage at the White Cloud Club.

Yet, for some reason, he felt he had made a misstep in Mr. Su's presence.

He was overcome with a sense of guilt.

Suddenly, Su Ming remembered something and returned to the villa.

He picked up a cup.

It contained the oddly colored coconut juice, with the remnants of President Chen's lipstick still visible.

Su Ming had thought about discarding the coconut juice, but that seemed wasteful.

Someone promptly volunteered to come forward.

Unaware of the actual situation, Wang Guohui felt a surge of excitement when he saw Su Ming holding a cup of water.

Could this be the discovery of another treasure?

"Drink this—it's the good stuff."

Su Ming, with a look of revulsion, passed the cup to Wang Guohui.

“Alright!”

Wang Guohui missed the look of disgust. Without a word, he took the cup and downed a few sips.

He’d used the items Mr. Su had given him on several occasions!

Each one was a rare gem of the highest quality!

Despite the coconut juice’s resemblance to poison...

But given his past experience with the Body-stretching Pill, he had no doubts about Mr. Su’s offerings.

Maybe the more something from Mr. Su resembled poison, the higher its quality.

He watched as Wang Guohui finished it in one go.

Su Ming involuntarily shut his eyes.

Don’t ask why.

He felt slightly nauseous.

“It smells amazing!”

After finishing, Wang Guohui even licked his lips, echoing President Chen’s words.

“Enough, I feel like I’m going to throw up!”

Su Ming kept the words to himself, merely thinking them.

“Mr. Su, may I ask what this is for?”

Wang Guohui blinked before posing the question.

“It’s to boost your alcohol tolerance. Drink this, and you won’t get drunk no matter how much you imbibe.”

“Is that so?”

Wang Guohui was ecstatic.

As a boss who frequently needed to drink with clients during negotiations, this was a godsend.

Age had taken its toll, and his body wasn’t as resilient as it once was. Even with Su Ming’s Body-stretching Pill, his tolerance hadn’t improved much.

He never imagined he’d come across such a treasure!

“Thank you so much, Mr. Su!”

Wang Guohui was on the verge of tears, filled with immense gratitude.

By Mr. Su’s side, he could maintain not just the vigor of a man but an unbeatable tolerance for alcohol.

How could he ever repay Mr. Su?

Wang Guohui was resolute. He would excel at any task Mr. Su assigned him.

“You may go back now.”

“Yes!”

Wang Guohui left, buoyant with anticipation.

He was eager to show off his newfound virility!

Once Wang Guohui was out of sight, Su Ming stood up, his attention turning to the thriving strawberry plants.

The chickens and pigs within the breeding zone were thriving in health.

He even supplemented their diet with extra feed.

Afterward, Su Ming returned upstairs.

In his usual routine, he dove into mobile gaming and enlisted the aid of two allies to join his in-game battles.

But ever since Su Ming had taken the Body-stretching Pill, his reflexes and awareness had sharpened dramatically!

In the past, achieving master-level play demanded considerable effort from him. Now, he navigated the game with the ease of a fish gliding through water.

He used to seek assistance to climb the game’s ranks, but these days, he sought companionship in his virtual quests to avoid the solitude of solo play.

And don't bother asking why he didn't seek a female companion.

Should the question arise, he'd simply say he's a man of uncomplicated tastes.

Chapter 183

C183 – A Group of Old Men

The next morning, Su Ming, freshly awakened, checked his phone. A message popped up, leaving him torn between laughter and tears.

"Mr. Su, I'm on my way. I promise to complete the mission!" It was from Wang Guohui.

"Alright, go for it!" Su Ming encouraged with a quick reply.

After a refreshing shower, a change of clothes, and a bite to eat, Su Ming approached the door. The sunshine was radiant, enhancing his already cheerful mood. He stretched leisurely and made his way to the door, opening it to find...

A gathering of elderly men, their hair a uniform shade of white.

The door's opening prompted a smile from the lead man, sending a shiver of goosebumps across Su Ming's skin.

What was this about?

"Mr. Su, we meet again," the old man said, rubbing his hands together.

Su Ming frowned, puzzled. "I don't recall ever meeting him."

The old man's smile widened, causing Su Ming's stomach to turn. "Do you remember the antiques you sold?"



A moment of clarity struck Su Ming. "And you are?"

The old man sighed, a hint of frustration in his voice. "Mr. Su, I've been overshadowed by these gentlemen; it's understandable that you don't recognize me. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm Lee Qingshan."

"What do you want with me?" Su Ming inquired.

Lee Qingshan hesitated, "There's a matter I'd like to discuss with you."

"Go ahead," Su Ming prompted.

"We've successfully sold most of the antiques you entrusted to us, and you've received the payment. However, among them are pieces that are national treasures. The government has taken an interest and wishes to acquire them."

Lee Qingshan spoke with evident tension, carefully watching Su Ming's reactions, anxious not to upset him. "Please, Mr. Su, don't be upset. I didn't intentionally reveal any information. I was just so thrilled that I couldn't resist snapping a photo."

Su Ming was resigned.

"So, the government wants my pieces?" he asked calmly.

"Yes," Lee Qingshan confirmed, sweating profusely at Su Ming's stoic demeanor. "But rest assured, we're prepared to offer you compensation."

"I require no compensation," Su Ming replied with a serene smile. "Contributing to my homeland is a duty I embrace wholeheartedly."

Lee Qingshan breathed a sigh of relief. "Mr. Su, you truly are an exemplar for the youth."

“Mr. Su is certainly accomplished for his age.”

Su Ming quickly gestured with his hands in dismissal.

Lee Qingshan’s demeanor shifted abruptly. “Mr. Su, I have another question for you.”

Su Ming was momentarily taken aback. “What’s that?”

“Do you happen to have a girlfriend? My granddaughter just turned 18 this year.”

“I thought we agreed on fair competition. What’s this about?”

“I was supposed to speak first, remember?”

The old men began to bicker among themselves.

Su Ming was flabbergasted.

What on earth were they up to?

It was then that Su Ming noticed a group of young women standing behind the old men.

Were these gentlemen, aside from their official business, also here to set up their granddaughters on blind dates?

Yet, the girls were not particularly attractive.

Regardless of their looks, they should take care of their health.

Even with comfortable lives, they shouldn't overindulge.

Su Ming exclaimed, "Enough!"

The quarreling elders froze in their tracks.

The plumper girls sent him flirtatious glances.

He said, feeling quite embarrassed, "I already have a girlfriend."

Su Ming had no choice but to fabricate.

The elders were taken aback.

"No problem, you can always break up with her."

"Exactly!"

Su Ming was taken aback by their response.

"Stop!"

Just then, a commanding voice cut through the noise. The elders fell silent and parted ways. A middle-aged man in a Sun Yat-sen suit approached slowly.

"Mr. Su, greetings. I'm a government official. We owe you a great debt for securing those treasures."

He seemed a respectable figure.

Su Ming responded with a smile, "I'm a son of the imperial court, with a heart full of patriotism. I willingly donated those national treasures."

"Mr. Su, is this your residence?"

He had just noticed the yard behind them.

"Yes, it is."

Su Ming nodded with ease.

"Do you farm this land?"

The elders were astounded.

They had assumed Su Ming was of high standing, which explained his possession of such fine items.

They had never imagined he was a farmer.

The old men couldn't believe Su Ming was cultivating land right in the heart of the city.

So young, yet uninterested in chasing fame or wealth, they were instantly filled with remorse.

Chapter 184

C184 – Auction

Su Ming couldn't help but voice his doubt, "Is there something wrong?"

"No!" came the chorus of hasty denials from the group of elders.

“My back’s been acting up lately. Granddaughter, would you mind giving it a rub?”

“My eyesight’s been on the decline, too.”

At Su Ming’s query, the old men became visibly flustered.

Su Ming blinked in surprise.

“Mr. Su, there’s one more thing,” the official-looking elder spoke up.

Su Ming blinked again.

The elder smiled and said, “With your extensive collection of antiques, I’m sure you have a wealth of knowledge about them. There’s an auction tonight—would you be interested in attending?”

“An auction?” Su Ming echoed, his interest piqued.

He had always watched auctions on TV and envied the wealthy bidders. But now, he was one of them.

“Sure,” Su Ming nodded. “Pick me up this evening.”

“Great!” Tang Soong chuckled with delight. “I forgot to introduce myself—I’m Tang Soong.”

“Okay, see you tonight,” Su Ming replied, shaking hands with Tang Soong before the latter departed.

“Mr. Su, my granddaughter is quite the beauty!”

“Beat it, your granddaughter doesn’t hold a candle to mine!”

Su Ming blinked as he stood at the door, then promptly closed and locked it.

He made a hasty exit through the back door, grateful for the quiet escape.

President Chen arrived early to find the door locked and left, crestfallen.

He aimlessly roamed outside for the rest of the morning.

Across the street, Su Ming glanced at his house from a distance, relieved to see the old men had dispersed. He slipped in through the back door and opened the front, breathing a sigh of relief at the empty entrance.

He checked on the two plots of land and his livestock, feeding the pigs and chickens, which were thriving.

Evening arrived quickly, and Old Master Tang was punctual. Su Ming hopped into the car, and they headed straight for the auction house. It was his first visit to such a venue. The entrance was strictly guarded, with a queue of people waiting to be checked in. Security was tight since the items up for bid were of great value, and any damage would come at a cost to the auction house.

Old Master Tang led Su Ming through the VIP entrance, and they swiftly made their way into the auction house, directly into a private box. Upon entering, Su Ming couldn't help but feel a bit out of place as he observed the row of elderly gentlemen seated in orderly fashion.

"Mr. Su, my granddaughter is truly stunning," one of them remarked.

Old Master Tang's brow furrowed slightly. "Let's not bring that up again," he said, causing a wave of disappointment among the elders. Su Ming, however, felt the matter was irrelevant to him.

"Mr. Su, please have a seat," Old Master Tang offered with a smile, gesturing towards a chair.

Su Ming and Old Master Tang took their places side by side on two plush sofas at the forefront, while the other gentlemen perched on smaller stools.

“This auction is dedicated to antiques,” Old Master Tang explained. “All the pieces here have been authenticated by experts.”

Su Ming understood Old Master Tang’s implication. Having previously unveiled a collection of antiques, Old Master Tang undoubtedly saw Su Ming as a fellow enthusiast. Knowing Su Ming was financially comfortable, he probably expected him to bid on a few items. Su Ming, aware of Old Master Tang’s thoughts, had no reason to decline the hospitality. After all, he was a government official, and befriending him came with only advantages, no drawbacks.

The room buzzed as the lights flickered, signaling that the attendees had nearly all arrived. An elderly auctioneer made his way to the front, his gait unsteady but his spirit undiminished.

“We have many familiar faces here today,” he began, his voice filled with gratitude for the opportunity. “And we have some truly exceptional items up for bid.”

With a light tap on the table, he commenced the auction.

“You’re all connoisseurs here, so I’ll spare you the introductions. Our first lot is a painting by Zhu Da,” he announced. “As you may know, Zhu Da’s works are characterized by their focus on flowers and birds and his distinctively bold style. Genuine pieces by him are scarce in the market these days.”

“This piece comes to us from a friend who’s fallen on hard times. Rest assured, it has been thoroughly authenticated,” he assured the crowd. “We’ll start the bidding at one million!”

Zhu Da’s painting was undoubtedly a prize. Though Su Ming wasn’t well-versed in the art world, he recognized the name as that of a descendant of Zhu Yuanzhang.

He simply lived during a time when one dynasty gave way to another. The upheaval of that period shaped his distinctive painting style. This painting’s market value was exceedingly high, and below, a flurry of bidding ensued as people eagerly raised their paddles.

“Mr. Su, if you wish to bid higher, please press the button in front of you,” the auctioneer instructed.

“Alright,” Su Ming responded with a nod. Truthfully, he had little interest in the painting.

“A Zhu Da masterpiece!” someone exclaimed.

“To own a piece by Zhu Da would leave me without a single regret,” another voiced wistfully.

A group of elderly gentlemen appeared on the verge of a heated debate. Su Ming couldn’t help but feel exasperated.

Why did they always seem to fall into argument upon meeting?

Chapter 185

C185 – National Treasure

“Shut up!” barked Old Master Tang.

The elderly men fell silent in an instant.

Su Ming understood the dynamics at play.

Old Master Tang was a figure of authority.

On the way over, he had casually mentioned his background.

He served as the honorary president for several museums and had unfettered access to their collections.

The group of old men trailing him were avid antique enthusiasts.



They were keen on antiques and thus heeded Old Master Tang's commands without question, careful not to cross him.

"Zhu Da's paintings are highly valuable, with a particularly high success rate in transactions," noted Old Master Tang with a nod.

His voice carried a tone of admiration, yet it was clear that the painting was beneath his personal interest.

Eventually, the painting sold for over 80 million to an envious buyer.

Su Ming had anticipated a dull auction experience.

But with Old Master Tang's commentary, he found it rather engaging.

Before long, another item was presented.

"Ladies and gentlemen, we're confident this is a fine piece, but its provenance is unknown. All we know is that it's an ancient artifact," the auctioneer announced with a sigh and a shake of his head. "I'm committed to honesty and won't deceive you. If it appeals to you, feel free to bid and add it to your collection."

The crowd's enthusiasm waned upon hearing this; the provenance of an antique was crucial.

"I've examined this item myself," Old Master Tang chimed in, nodding. "Regrettably, I couldn't determine its origin either, though its antiquity is certain."

Su Ming nodded in agreement.

An item with noble ties would be highly valuable, whereas something from the common folk would be of little worth.

“Let’s start the bidding at 100,000!” announced the auctioneer, clearly lacking confidence in the piece.

Suddenly, Su Ming’s mind was alerted by the System: “Precious treasure detected!”

He was taken aback; it was the first time the System had issued such a prompt!

Eagerly, Su Ming widened his eyes and activated the scanner to inspect the item.

It was a fragment of the ancient text, The Five Codexes.

Su Ming was momentarily frozen in shock.

He was looking at the long-lost The Five Codexes, a text he had encountered in his historical studies.

The civilization of the imperial court has a rich and extensive history spanning thousands of years. Throughout this time, many ancient texts have been lost, with The Five Codexes standing out as one of the most notable.

It served as a testament to the imperial court’s rich cultural heritage!

Yet, it has now vanished from history!

Who would have guessed that the object before them was, in fact, a long-lost ancient tome!

“It seems that nobody here is willing to take a gamble.”

The auctioneer shook his head, about to dismiss the lot, when Su Ming abruptly hit the button before him.

The elderly gentlemen were taken aback.

Old Master Tang shared their astonishment.

“Mr. Su, please don’t joke around. I’ve examined this item; it’s not worth the asking price.”

The group of elders desperately attempted to dissuade Su Ming.

Old Master Tang blinked, his reaction more subdued than the flustered elders.

“Mr. Su, what makes you interested in this item?”

“I have a premonition that it’s a gem.”

Su Ming offered a cryptic smile.

The elders around him were left agape.

A gem?

How did we overlook it?

We may be advanced in years, but we pride ourselves on our ability to spot treasures.

“Did we really fail to recognize its value?”

“It seems inconceivable...”

“One person might be mistaken, but if all of us are wrong, it’s a disgrace worthy of death.”

“Absolutely!”

Su Ming overheard their exchange.

Well then!

He hadn’t come to the auction to witness a bidding war, but rather a murder scene!

No, more like a mass suicide!

“VIP seat number one bids 110,000. Will anyone raise the bid?”

“110,000 for the first time!”

“110,000 for the second time!”

“110,000 for the third time! Sold!”

With the final strike of the gavel, the item was officially sold.

Unable to contain his excitement over such a find, Su Ming stood up and made his exit.

The elders were left bewildered. Could it truly be a valuable piece?

They hurried after Su Ming.

But upon seeing the dark object...

Their enthusiasm quickly waned.

To the elders, it looked nothing more than a pancake.

Even if it was a relic from millennia past.

It remained, unmistakably, a pancake.

To think, 110,000 spent on an ancient pancake...

“You must be the buyer, am I correct?”

The staff member chuckled, handing over the auction item to Su Ming while simultaneously accepting the payment.

The intermediary fee was handled by them, leaving Su Ming uninvolved.

Old Master Tang stood to the side, giving a knowing wink.

Despite his brief acquaintance with Su Ming, Old Master Tang could see the young man’s composure and poise, far from someone impulsive.

“Mr. Su, I’m quite intrigued. What prompted you to purchase this?”

“A hunch,” Su Ming replied with a blink.

He activated the scan once more.

The Five Codexes were concealed beneath layers of debris, simply in need of a good cleaning!

The scan's revelations brought clarity to Su Ming.

It all made sense now.

"A hunch?"

"Mr. Su, any chance your hunch includes marrying my granddaughter?"

"Enough! Is this really the time for such talk?"

"I'm worried sick; my granddaughter is 18 and still unwed!"

"Enough! My granddaughter is 19, still unmarried, and I'm not fretting. Why are you so worked up over yours at 18?"

Su Ming tuned out the old men's squabbling.

He gently set the auction item down on a flat surface.

"If I'm not mistaken, this could be the remnants of The Five Codexes."

"What?!"

The statement left the old men utterly astonished.

"Impossible, impossible!"

"Absolutely impossible!"

“How can you say that? It looks like nothing more than a cake. How could it possibly be the remnants of The Five Codexes?”

“Mr. Su, The Five Codexes are ancient texts predating the establishment of the Xia Dynasty, composed of bamboo slips. How could this item be a few bamboo slips?”

“Exactly!”

The old men vehemently shook their heads in disbelief.

We acknowledge you possess many treasures.

We also recognize your wealth.

But to suggest this item is truly a fragment of The Five Codexes, we’d remain skeptical even under threat of violence!

Chapter 186

C186 – It Was My Intuition

Even Old Master Tang couldn’t help but chuckle. “Mr. Su, you’re pulling my leg, right? How could that be possible...”

“Old Master Tang.”

Su Ming turned to him and inquired, “Have you ever come across a treasure that’s been enveloped in something, making it impossible to extract?”

“Indeed we have.”

“And what’s your usual approach in such cases?” Su Ming pressed on.

“We typically soak the treasure in warm water.”

“Well, let’s give it a shot.”

Su Ming’s suggestion was met with skepticism from the group.

Was Mr. Su serious?

If he was, the situation could become quite unmanageable.

But surely, it couldn’t be.

The old men recalled their earlier bluster, and their faces paled.

If Mr. Su’s claim turned out to be true, did they actually intend to hang themselves?

The thought alone was staggering.

A collective suicide of elderly gentlemen.

Observing Su Ming’s earnest demeanor, Old Master Tang grasped the gravity of the situation. He quickly escorted Su Ming to the back to procure a basin of warm water. Being an auction center, where antiques and jade were routinely handled, they were well-equipped for such tasks.

All eyes were riveted on the unfolding scene.

After the treasure had been submerged for a solid half-hour, the staff gingerly retrieved it, then meticulously peeled away the encasing layers with fine tweezers.



Only after a painstaking hour did the treasure reveal its true form.

It was a severely damaged Bamboo Slip, faintly inscribed with characters.

These were unmistakably the script of the Xia civilization!

The artifact before them was the genuine fragment of The Five Codexes!

The old men were so overwhelmed that they collapsed to the floor.

But at that moment, they were of no concern to anyone.

The entire work area was abuzz with excitement!

A fragment of The Five Codexes!

Its importance was monumental!

It was nothing short of a national treasure!

A testament to the imperial court's civilization, it confirmed the existence of a pre-Xia era.

This was far more than a mere artifact.

In essence, it was the very spine of the imperial court's civilization!

Old Master Tang's hands quivered with emotion.

Tears streamed down his face.

“I never imagined I’d have the privilege of witnessing this treasure in my lifetime... I’m truly astonished.”

Old Master Tang extended a trembling hand toward it, but ultimately, he withdrew it.

This artifact was incredibly valuable.

During the final cleanup, the cleaning crew discovered a thin bronze layer.

It appeared that the book’s owner had taken great care to preserve it, but over time, it had suffered some corrosion.

This was why nothing could be seen when they subjected the artifact to an X-ray examination.

Who could have imagined that this item was, in fact, a national treasure?

Meanwhile, the auction continued unabated.

The auctioneer was still enthusiastically conducting the sale.

Suddenly, a staff member hurried up to him, causing the old gentleman to furrow his brow at the apparent lack of manners.

“You...”

Just as the old gentleman was about to reprimand him, the staffer leaned in and whispered something in his ear.

“What did you say? Repeat that!”

The old gentleman was taken aback. Forgetting the auction was still in progress, he dropped the gavel to the floor and followed the staffer in haste.

“Let me see!”

He made his way through the crowd, stepping past the fallen elders, and approached Old Master Tang directly: “Is it really true?”

Old Master Tang gave a solemn nod: “Soong, I’m afraid it is.”

Grandpa Soong was in a state of disarray. He hadn’t expected the item he had dismissed as junk to be such a gem!

It was a national treasure!

“Who discovered it? And who bought this treasure?”

It was only then that Grandpa Soong came to his senses, wondering who the discerning buyer was.

“Mr. Su.”

Old Master Tang let out a sigh, filled with a sense of inadequacy.

He had lived 84 years, yet he didn’t compare to a young man in his twenties.

“Mr. Su?”

Grandpa Soong was taken aback by the high regard Old Master Tang held for Su Ming.

His surprise grew upon learning that Su Ming was a young man.

“Soong, have no doubts, it was Mr. Su who found it. Several of the treasures our museum has acquired were generously donated by Mr. Su,” Old Master Tang explained, sensing Grandpa Soong’s skepticism.

“You’re Mr. Su?”

Grandpa Soong was astounded.

“Mr. Su, I’ve long heard of your accomplishments. Could you share why you decided to bid on it?”

“We’re all eager to know.”

“How did you determine it was a fragment of The Five Codexes?”

“We examined it with a magnifying glass for quite some time and found nothing.”

The group of elders was buzzing with excitement. This revelation was of utmost interest to them.

Su Ming said with a smile, “Just a hunch!”

He couldn’t let on that he had access to a System.

Besides, Su Ming wasn’t sure if the System would vanish on the spot if he disclosed its existence.

Losing the System would be a huge setback for him.

The old timers were skeptical of his claim.

All the items previously auctioned were genuine and of immense value.

Yet, Su Ming had bid on an item that had been overlooked by everyone else.

But there was a sense among the crowd that Su Ming might be harboring an undisclosed secret.

It was someone's personal business, after all, and they couldn't very well pry.

"Mr. Su has quite the knack. He must have a keen eye for choosing girlfriends."

"We were worried over nothing."

"Looks like I can't let Mr. Su marry my daughter now."

"Your daughter is over forty."

Su Ming felt resigned.

They were still on about this.

Su Ming's find sent shockwaves through the auction hall.

Word spread like wildfire.

The auction came to an abrupt halt.

They had all underestimated a Top Grade national treasure, priced at a mere 100,000 yuan.

Their regret was palpable.

Chapter 187

## C187 – The Strawberries Are Ripe

The crowd was swept up in a wild celebration!

Word of the national treasure's discovery spread rapidly.

But this was no ordinary treasure; it was proof of the imperial court's ancient civilization!

Some foreign scholars had been spreading malicious lies about the imperial court.

They claimed that the imperial court's civilization was only 2,000 years old, not 5,000.

This treasure could validate the imperial court's 5,000-year history.

In essence, this damaged relic was the imperial court's very backbone!

"Let me see it, quick!"

"Hold your horses!"

"Where did my watch go?"

"Who snatched off my wig?"

Chaos reigned at the scene.

"Silence!"

Old Master Tang gave his cane a firm thump, his frown deepening, his presence commanding.

With his words, the room fell instantly quiet.

Su Ming blinked, taking it in.

Old Master Tang was, without question, a heavyweight in the world of antiques.

No one would dare ignore his commands.

His influence was considerable.

For those who cherished such treasures, falling out of favor with Old Master Tang was tantamount to a death sentence.

“Make way, make way!”

Just then, a flurry of footsteps approached from outside.

The auction house’s security team sprang into action.

These guards were highly trained, as befitting an establishment that dealt in priceless antiques, artwork, and jade.

A skilled security force was essential to ensure the safety of the items up for auction.

They swiftly brought order to the pandemonium, cordoning off Old Master Tang and Su Ming from the rest of the crowd.

“Mr. Su, I can’t thank you enough for this.”

Old Master Tang reflected inwardly that he simply didn't measure up to Su Ming.

His respect for Su Ming had grown from admiration to reverence, especially after Su Ming's selfless donation of several national treasures.

He had always believed his talent for appraising antiques was nearly unmatched domestically.

Now he realized Su Ming's expertise far surpassed his own.

"Old Master Tang, you flatter me. It was nothing more than a helping hand."

Su Ming offered a modest smile.

"Mr. Su, rest assured, we'll transfer the funds to your account."

"Old Master Tang, it's a mere trifle, just a few hundred thousand yuan. I did it for the country; I have no need for the money."

Su Ming waved dismissively and glanced at the clock. "Old Master Tang, it's getting late. I should be on my way."

Old Master Tang nodded urgently. "Escort Mr. Su out through the back door, please."

"Understood!"

Upon hearing this command, several security guards approached and began to lead Su Ming out the back.

A murmur rippled through the crowd.



So this young man is the enigmatic buyer?

He's that impressive!

They couldn't miss the chance to befriend someone of his caliber!

A cluster of onlookers prepared to intercept Su Ming at the back exit, eager to make his acquaintance.

Su Ming was clearly no ordinary man.

"Should anyone dare to hinder Mr. Su's departure, I'll burn his entire collection!" Old Master Tang declared shrewdly.

As expected, the crowd instantly fell in line at his threat.

The old man was a force to be reckoned with.

No one dared cross Old Master Tang, for the repercussions were dire.

Su Ming had two reasons for leaving: the chaotic scene was not to his liking, and more importantly, his strawberries should be ripe by now.

He was eager to see what sort of bounty they would yield.

Politely refusing the offer of a ride from the security, Su Ming hailed a cab and headed home.

Arriving at his farm, he inspected the strawberries under the glow of the streetlights. They were indeed ripe, their leaves a lush green, a sight to behold.

Excited, Su Ming rubbed his hands together and hastened to the nearest plant. Crouching down, he examined it closely.

What was this?

The strawberry's fruit was actually a small, square box, red and modest in size.

Curiosity piqued, Su Ming grasped a box and tugged it free from the branch.

"Congratulations, you've obtained the Invincible Truth Pill!"

"Once consumed, the Truth Pill compels the speaker to utter only truths for a duration of ten minutes."

Su Ming was astounded.

He was suddenly reminded of a film he'd seen where Professor Snape concocted a Truth Serum.

Different names, yet identical effects.

What a marvelous find.

Su Ming burst into laughter.

Then, the System chimed in: "You may dissolve your three thousand Truth Pills in water to create a spray, though the effect will last only half as long."

This item was a pill, so for it to work, someone had to ingest it.

If it were turned into a spray, it would be much more convenient to use.

Su Ming was suddenly invigorated.

After taking a Body-stretching Pill, he tapped into his Stamina Talent to get to work.

He had five acres of strawberries to tend to.

Each strawberry plant bore a Truth Pill.

Su Ming casually grabbed a large bag from the warehouse.

At night, Su Ming diligently worked away.

It took him three hours to complete the harvest.

Once he stored the goods in the warehouse, Su Ming breathed a sigh of relief.

“Successful crop harvest. You’ve earned 25,000 experience points.”

“Congratulations on your level-up!”

“Congratulations, you’ve earned a chance at the lottery.”

Su Ming was astounded by the sheer number of experience points he had received.

Typically, an acre could support over 7,000 strawberry plants.

But due to the System, there were 5,000 plants per acre.

The five acres were valued at 25,000 experience points.

Su Ming realized that this was more experience than he had earned from all his previous plantings combined.

Farmer: Su Ming

Level: 6

Experience: 41,200 / 50,000

Farm: Level Two

Breeding: Level One

Skills: Blessing from Plants, Initial Scanning Ability, Stamina Talent

Above all, he had won a chance at the lottery.

Su Ming was eager with anticipation.

He thought to himself, "Let the lottery begin."

"The System is now drawing."

"Congratulations, you've won Immunity to Mosquitoes!"

"With this skill, mosquitoes won't bite you."

Chapter 188

C188 – The System also Knows How to Joke

Su Ming nearly spat blood.

“The System has detected the Host’s dissatisfaction and will proceed to unbind.”

Su Ming’s heart skipped a beat, and panic set in.

“No, don’t!”

“It was just a joke.”

Su Ming quickly offered an apology.

“The System was joking too!”

Su Ming was taken aback.

The System was actually interacting with him!

Typically, it only sent notifications when he was planting or harvesting.

And it would only remind him that an item was a national treasure during an auction.

“Please be assured, Host. The skills provided by the System will prove useful in the future. Just be patient!”

“Fine.”

Su Ming shrugged.

The skill might seem pointless, but it did have its uses.

At the very least, he wouldn't need a mosquito net in the summer.

The strawberries in the field had wilted.

Su Ming tidied them up and earned another 1,000 experience points.

Massive planting was the key to leveling up fast!

After clearing the field, it was already 2 a.m.

"I'm not going to farm today."

Thanks to his Stamina Talent, he was still bursting with energy.

But he was a farmer, after all.

He needed to keep a regular rest schedule.

He felt a twinge of guilt.

With a heart full of the day's bountiful harvest, Su Ming was in high spirits as he pondered what to plant next while heading back to his villa.

After a shower, he grabbed a bite from the fridge and then hit the sack.

The next morning came early.

Su Ming rose, stretched, and showered.

Stepping out of the villa, he opened the front door.

The bustle of people outside lifted his mood even further.

Life was truly blissful!

As Su Ming was about to return inside, he noticed a figure crouched on the steps of the Heavenly State Building.

The person looked vaguely familiar.

It was Captain Wu!

Dressed in plain clothes with a look of concern, Captain Wu was perched on the steps, smoking a cigarette, surrounded by a cluster of butts.

What had happened?

Driven by curiosity, Su Ming approached.

“Captain Wu, what seems to be the trouble?”

Su Ming asked, his eyes wide with concern.

“Mr. Su!”

Upon spotting Su Ming, Captain Wu quickly got to his feet.

Having squatted for too long, he wobbled unsteadily, nearly toppling over.

Su Ming stood there, dumbfounded.

Su Ming quickly stepped forward to steady Captain Wu.

“Mr. Su, my apologies, I didn’t get a wink of sleep last night.”

Captain Wu’s face was drawn and tired.

“Captain Wu, what’s happened to you?”

Su Ming inquired.

With a heavy sigh, Captain Wu said, “Mr. Su, are you aware of the theft that occurred half a month ago?”

After a brief pause, Su Ming nodded, “I vaguely remember that case. What about it?”

The biggest jewelry store in the area had been hit by thieves half a month earlier.

These days, it was rare for jewelry stores to be targeted.

Security technology had become so sophisticated.

Yet, against all odds, a band of robbers had struck half a month ago.



And they had pulled it off!

Coincidentally, the city's electrical circuit was under repair that night.

The city experienced a blackout for fifteen minutes.

That's when the robbers made their move.

The incident sent shockwaves through the community. As the head of the detective unit, Captain Wu got a call from city officials just five minutes after the heist. They demanded a swift resolution to the case.

Captain Wu was known for his integrity and keen investigative skills.

The leadership had great confidence in him.

But from the look on Captain Wu's face, it seemed things weren't going as well as hoped.

"We've been on the case for half a month and finally nabbed a suspect."

Captain Wu's brow was furrowed with concern, "The problem is, this guy's a seasoned criminal with a strong sense of how to evade detection. We've combed through his place, his phone and bank records, and came up empty. We were hoping to extract something useful from his statements, but he's tough. We grilled him all night yesterday, and he didn't utter a single word..."

Before Captain Wu could finish, his stomach grumbled loudly.

He sheepishly scratched his head.

“I’m a bit peckish...”

“Well, it turns out I’ve got some food in my fridge. Captain Wu, if it’s not too much trouble, why don’t you come over and have a bite?”

“That would be imposing...”

Fifteen minutes later.

Captain Wu was slurping up a large bowl of noodles, savoring every bite.

Wasn’t Captain Wu embarrassed just moments ago?

Yet there he was, eating heartily and without reservation, with five cloves of garlic laid out before him.

Though Su Ming hadn’t touched the garlic, his mouth still burned with spice.

Captain Wu downed a bowl of noodles with five whole bulbs of garlic?

That’s right, five entire bulbs, not just cloves!

Didn’t Captain Wu find it incredibly spicy?

Yet, Su Ming felt a pang of sentiment.

Captain Wu was the epitome of dedication in the police force. Despite his exhaustion, he continued to work tirelessly, refusing to succumb to sleep.

Suddenly, Su Ming had an epiphany.

He had a Truth Pill.

Now was the perfect opportunity to put it to use.

A sly grin spread across Su Ming's face.

The suspect was about to run out of luck.

In a country prospering like this, he could've chosen any legitimate job, but instead, he opted for illegal trades.

He had no one to blame but himself.

Captain Wu's rapid eating was a skill honed from years on the job.

At times, his workload was so overwhelming that he'd scarf down a bowl of instant noodles in just two minutes.

With a full belly, Captain Wu felt significantly better.

"Captain Wu, I've never actually seen the suspect before. Could you take me to see him?" Su Ming inquired.

Captain Wu blinked, a hint of hesitation in his eyes: "Mr. Su, I apologize, but the regulations..."

"Captain Wu, I took a course in criminal psychology back in college. Perhaps I could be of some assistance?" Su Ming offered.

The wheels turned in Captain Wu's head.

Su Ming's proposition did hold merit.

If it meant cracking the case, any method that wasn't illegal was fair game!

This case was simply too critical to ignore.

"Alright, Mr. Su, if you wouldn't mind accompanying me."

Chapter 189

C189 – Thirsty?

Su Ming felt a wave of gloom wash over him when he heard those words.

Follow him...

It almost sounded like he was being led off to prison.

"Captain Wu, just give me a moment," he called out.

Rising to his feet, Su Ming made his way to the warehouse.

He uncapped a bottle of mineral water and dropped in a Body-stretching Pill.

Then he added a hair growth pill for good measure—Captain Wu was, after all, thinning on top.

Approaching Captain Wu with the water in hand, Su Ming offered, "Captain Wu, those noodles must have left you parched. Have some water."

Captain Wu was about to express his gratitude when his eyes landed on the bottle.

What on earth was that color?

A Body-stretching Pill alone would turn the water as black as ink. But with the Hair Growth Pill...

The color turned rather...

Odd.

It wasn't a pure black.

Nor was it a pure purple.

The color had hints of red. Shift your gaze, and there were shades of blue.

What in the world was this?

This...

Mr. Su, we have no bad blood between us...

There's no need for this...

Captain Wu blinked: "Mr. Su, I... I'm not thirsty!"

Su Ming couldn't help but chuckle at Captain Wu's obvious fib.

Not thirsty, huh?

You doused your noodles with soy sauce earlier. It looked salty enough from where I stood.

Your lips are cracked from dryness, and yet you claim you're not thirsty?

Still, Su Ming understood why Captain Wu was hesitant.

With its bizarre hue, the water wasn't exactly inviting.

Such a complex color.

It was the sort of shade you'd expect from poison, not a refreshing drink.

"Relax, Captain Wu. This concoction is nothing but beneficial," Su Ming assured him with a smile.

Captain Wu listened warily.

You better not be pulling my leg!

If this stuff doesn't kill me, that's a win. But you're saying there are additional benefits?

What kind of benefits?

Is it a swift, painless demise?

Mr. Su, we're not at odds, are we?

Someone accused me of money laundering in the papers, and I confronted you about it.

But I gave you my reasons!

And I didn't waste time in rounding up the rumor-mongers!

Murder is a crime...

And I'm a cop...

Surely Mr. Su isn't in league with those crooks...

No, that couldn't be...

Su Ming caught the look of indecision on Captain Wu's face.

He shook his head, at a loss for words. It was clear to him that Captain Wu's mind was a whirlwind of wild thoughts.

Stepping aside, Su Ming grabbed an empty cup, uncapped a bottle of mineral water, and poured a bit into the cup before downing it in one go.

He smacked his lips appreciatively after finishing.

"Nice flavor!"

Su Ming exclaimed with genuine enthusiasm, "It's mango-flavored."

"Mango-flavored..."

Captain Wu was taken aback.

I fail to see any connection to mangoes here.

“Give it a try, Captain Wu.”

Su Ming offered, his smile widening as he filled a cup for Captain Wu.

“No, thanks, I’m not thirsty!”

Captain Wu was resolute, shaking his head.

The idea was terrifying; he wouldn’t drink it!

He was adamant about not drinking it!

“Mr. Su, a client of mine brought some local delicacies from back home. I know you’re well-off and lack for nothing, but these delicacies truly have a remarkable taste, so I thought I’d bring some for you to sample...”

Just then, President Chen’s voice carried in from outside the villa. Su Ming had left the door open, and President Chen, seeing him through the glass, had walked in with his items.

As he reached the doorway, he caught sight of Su Ming offering Captain Wu a drink.

He heard Captain Wu’s refusal as well.

“Mr. Su, have you come across another fine item? Captain Wu, are you certain you don’t want a taste?”

“I’m certain I don’t,” Captain Wu asserted.



“Well, then I will,” President Chen declared, tossing his things aside and dashing over, worried Captain Wu might change his mind. He snatched the cup and gulped down the contents.

Captain Wu couldn’t help but swear under his breath.

“President Chen, are you out of your mind...”

Captain Wu rose to his feet in alarm.

But it was too late; President Chen had already taken the drink.

“Tasty! It’s got a mango flavor!” President Chen announced.

Captain Wu was utterly bewildered.

He wondered, “Are you two in cahoots to make a fool of me?”

“Captain Wu, I assure you, this is the good stuff. You’ll be sorry if you don’t try it.”

President Chen set the cup down.

Watching President Chen’s composed demeanor, Captain Wu blinked, puzzled.

He was about to respond when President Chen suddenly paused, lost in thought.

President Chen clutched his head and frantically scratched at it.

Captain Wu jumped in alarm.

It really was poison!

Why would Mr. Su do such a thing?

Could he be heartbroken?

It seemed likely.

Mr. Su could end up in prison for this.

Captain Wu felt it was such a waste.

Reaching into his back pocket, Captain Wu produced a pair of handcuffs: "Mr. Su, you're under suspicion of murder. Please come with me."

Su Ming was taken aback.

Just then, President Chen let out a sudden yell, giving Captain Wu quite the scare.

"My hair!"

President Chen felt the top of his head.

He had sprouted a significant amount of hair.

Hair can greatly affect a person's appearance.

Many middle-aged individuals face intense stress in life, making hair loss an unavoidable issue.

President Chen, in his fifties, had tried countless remedies for hair loss, but to no avail.

Yet now, Mr. Su had miraculously regained a full head of lush hair.

“Mr. Su, I can’t thank you enough!”

Overcome with emotion, President Chen burst into tears: “Your help has been immense. I’ll give you my daughter’s hand in marriage!”

“Get lost!”

Su Ming’s mind flashed back to the group of old men from the previous night.

He felt a wave of goosebumps wash over him.

He had the sudden urge to boot President Chen out the door.

“This thing actually has that capability!”

Captain Wu was dumbfounded: “I need to try it!”

Chapter 190

C190 – Could Mr. Su Do It?

Captain Wu, who had initially been resistant to Su Ming’s offer, picked up the bottle of mineral water and took a drink. After finishing, he wiped his mouth and exclaimed, “This really tastes like mango!” He had expected an odd flavor, but was completely taken aback to find it genuinely mango-flavored.

A warmth began to spread from his abdomen to his limbs and brain. Before he knew it, his fatigue had vanished, replaced by a surge of vitality. His left leg, which had been aching, no longer pained him. Even the discomfort in his stomach, a result of eating too hastily, had eased. Stomach issues were common among his colleagues, where time was of the essence.

For twenty years, Captain Wu had been plagued by recurring stomach problems, usually kept at bay with medication. Now, to his relief, the discomfort had disappeared. He felt incredibly healthy, almost in disbelief as he stretched out his hand. Energized, he was confident he could run five kilometers with ease.

Then, an itch on his scalp caught his attention, prompting him to scratch it. To his astonishment, he felt new hair growth. "Mr. Su, this water is miraculous!" he exclaimed.

President Chen replied with a smug grin, "Everything Mr. Su offers is top-notch."

"Indeed," Captain Wu agreed, still in awe of the potion's effects.

"Captain Wu, shall we head out?" someone suggested.

"Alright," he replied, shifting his focus back to the task at hand. His health had been restored, and his hair had regrown, but the case remained unsolved.

Su Ming, carrying several bottles of the mineral water, followed Captain Wu to the criminal investigation unit. President Chen stayed behind in the villa to tend to Su Ming's plants.

On their way, Su Ming spotted Wang Guohui's car. Dressed in pajamas with disheveled hair, Wang Guohui was glancing anxiously at his watch. Clearly, he had slept poorly the night before and hadn't even had time to change before rushing to work. It was easy to predict that a confrontation with President Chen was imminent.

Inside the criminal investigation unit, led by Captain Wu, Su Ming encountered officers with stern faces and furrowed brows. They had hoped for a breakthrough after apprehending a suspect, yet no clues had emerged.

"Captain Wu, welcome back."

In the office, a weary senior policeman addressed Captain Wu, "Did you uncover anything on the surveillance footage from the Guoxing Building?"

"Nothing."

Captain Wu let out a sigh and responded, "Chief, they were thoroughly prepared and their counter-surveillance skills are top-notch. We've hardly found any useful leads."

"And who might this be?"

The chief's attention shifted to Su Ming.

"Chief, this gentleman here is Mr. Su."

Captain Wu grinned at Su Ming and introduced, "Mr. Su, meet our chief. He's heading up this investigation."

"So, you're Mr. Su."

The recent diamond affair had stirred up quite the uproar, so naturally, the chief was familiar with Su Ming. He inquired, "Mr. Su, what brings you here? Are you looking to file a report?"

"That's not it."

Captain Wu shook his head and explained, "Mr. Su has a background in criminal psychology, which could prove beneficial to our case interrogation. As luck would have it, our bureau's two psychology experts are away for training. I believe Mr. Su could be of assistance."

"Then we're in your debt, Mr. Su."

The chief spoke with a veneer of courtesy, his skepticism about Su Ming quite apparent.

Captain Wu was a renowned figure in criminal investigation circles, known to make even hardened criminals tremble at his sight.

He had encountered all manner of criminals.

And yet, even Captain Wu had his limits.

The prospects seemed grim.

But Su Ming merely offered a slight, knowing smile.

He remained silent.

In his mind, Su Ming mused, "You're all venerable figures in the police force, having made significant contributions, yet you lack a System!"

With his System, there was no task Su Ming couldn't accomplish.

Led by Captain Wu, they soon reached the room adjacent to the interrogation chamber. Through the surveillance, they observed a middle-aged man seated inside.

The man, in his forties, was somewhat overweight with short hair. His eyes were closed, and he remained silent.

Upon seeing the man, Captain Wu immediately felt a headache brewing.

"Captain Wu, allow me to have a word with him," Su Ming offered cheerfully.

“Mr. Su, this individual is a repeat offender. Talking to him might not yield any results,” Captain Wu expressed his doubt.

Can Su Ming pull it off?

Captain Wu was skeptical of Su Ming’s assertions.

This wasn’t some kind of therapy session.

Interrogating this particular suspect was proving to be a tough nut to crack.

He was a hardened criminal with a lengthy rap sheet.

Yet, Su Ming just flashed a cryptic smile and stepped out of the surveillance room alongside Captain Wu.

“Do you really think you’re up for this?”

Captain Wu was uncertain.

“Let me give it a shot.”

Su Ming appeared brimming with confidence.

Captain Wu felt a weight lift from his chest.

Perhaps he had overestimated Su Ming.

Against such a hardened criminal, Su Ming surely had no recourse.

Money might line Mr. Su's pockets, but it doesn't solve everything.

Jobs like these require the hands of a professional.

And while Mr. Su may have the looks, they're no weapon against a ruthless felon.

"Mr. Su, maybe we should just call it off..."

Captain Wu wavered.

From his perspective, Mr. Su was young and affluent, a sign of a charmed life.

He probably hadn't faced many obstacles.

If Su Ming ran into trouble here or got pushed around by the criminal, it could leave him rattled.

And if Su Ming ended up spiraling into depression, Captain Wu would never forgive himself.

"No worries, Captain Wu. Let me have a go at it. Who knows? I might just succeed."

Su Ming offered a reassuring smile.

"Okay then..."

Captain Wu unlocked the door, still tinged with concern, and cautioned Su Ming, "If he gets under your skin, just let it roll off your back, alright?"