

Ability 311

Chapter 311: I am not interested in money!_2

"Wow, I'm so envious of Beichen, he gets to go abroad again!"

"No kidding, it's not been that long since his trip to Divine Light Country University, and now he's off to Atlantis University. Who knows, there might be another trip soon!"

"Hey Beichen, can we switch places? I'll use your name and travel abroad. I really want to see if those blue-eyed beauties have such fair skin."

"As if you could! Don't forget you still have that one-year campus observation disciplinary action. Have you finished writing your self-reflection letter? I haven't seen it posted on the bulletin board at the school gate yet!"

Han Yuan and Liang Dong expressed their envy, while Wu You, standing nearby, jabbed at Han Yuan, constantly reminding him of his current disciplinary status and the potential risk of being expelled if he made another mistake.

Wu You's words made Han Yuan sigh deeply.

"Comparisons are always hard to take!"

"When will I ever get such a great opportunity to go abroad?"

Liang Dong also felt a bit wistful. There was only one spot for the physics department, and it went to Lin Beichen.

Out of the tens of thousands at Imperial Capital University, only fifty people were selected!

On a larger scale, out of so many universities in the Great Xia Kingdom, only Imperial Capital University received an invitation from Atlantis University!

And beyond the universities of the Great Xia Kingdom, looking at the world, so many countries didn't get this opportunity.

Whenever they thought of this, the three dorm mates looked at Lin Beichen with eyes full of complexity.

"What's there to be envious about? Last time during the Divine Light Country trip, I encountered the eruption of Jingli Mountain, and I was lucky not to have taken a lava bath!"

"It was really dangerous!"

"Besides, the relationship between the Great Xia Kingdom and Atlantis hasn't been good in recent years. They might just find an excuse to detain you there!"

Seeing his roommates down because they weren't chosen, Lin Beichen tried to comfort them.

But to Han Yuan, Liang Dong, and Wu You, no matter what Lin Beichen said, it sounded like he was being pretentious!

Clearly, he was enjoying it, but he had to make it sound so difficult!

Just like that famous saying, "I have no interest in money!"

"Right, Beichen, the school sports meet is in a few days. Next week you're off to Atlantis University for the academic exchange, are you still competing in the sports meet?"

Liang Dong asked, while Han Yuan and Wu You nodded, looking at Lin Beichen in agreement.

They all wanted to see what extraordinary performance Lin Beichen would put on at the sports meet.

Given the recent test evaluations, they were completely convinced of Lin Beichen's potential, thinking he was a freak!

It seemed like he was good at everything!

And not just good, but exceptionally so!

Definitely not the type to just get by with luck.

"I should... go, as long as the principal doesn't stop me!" Lin Beichen said meaningfully.

"The principal? Why would he stop you?"

"You're overthinking it. The principal is too busy with running the entire Imperial Capital University to worry about every single top student!"

"I bet the principal doesn't even remember your name!"

The three of them were skeptical, thinking Lin Beichen was being pretentious again.

After all, seeing the principal was a rare event—they hardly got a chance each semester. The last time Han Yuan saw him was when he risked being expelled to meet him in his office.

The next morning.

During morning reading class, the department head suddenly came into the room.

"Beichen, the principal wants to see you. Come with me now!"

After saying that, the department head left.

These words shocked Han Yuan, Liang Dong, and Wu You.

"The principal actually wants to see you!?"

"No way, he actually cares if you're participating in the sports meet?!"

"You're my pride, man!"

"I still don't believe it. He probably wants you to fill out some forms!"

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Facing their doubts and sighs, Lin Beichen gave a helpless gesture and walked out of the classroom into Hao Jianhua's office.

When Hao Jianhua saw Lin Beichen push open the door, he set aside the list of sports meet participants and looked at him, saying:

"Beichen, I saw your registration for the sports meet yesterday. Don't go, leave some room for other students!" freewebnovel.com

"You're leaving for Atlantis University soon, you need to adapt to the time difference!"

Lin Beichen was a bit taken aback: "Just for this?"

"Principal, you could have just called."

"But I've already registered. The physical education teacher in the physics department has high expectations of me. She gave me full credits for her class!"

"I have to live up to her expectations, right?"

Lin Beichen tried to explain, but Hao Jianhua's expression grew serious.

"I want you to keep a low profile on campus, considering your identity!"

Hao Jianhua seemed to swallow his next words. He got up, opened the door to check the surroundings, then locked it before returning to his seat.

"There's considerable interest in your identity outside!"

"Recently, the security bureau reported that foreign hackers have been attempting to access student phones here, aiming to gather information on you!"

"That's why I gave Han Yuan a hard time!"

"Additionally, I have some misgivings about the academic exchange with Atlantis University. Maybe you shouldn't go this time!"

Hao Jianhua wasn't joking. He genuinely worried about Lin Beichen's safety, not using the excuse to keep the spot for someone else.

The Atlantis University exchange opportunity was too valuable to miss, yet the potential risks made him hesitant—thus this decision.

Lin Beichen understood Hao Jianhua's well-meaning concern, but he wasn't going to back down. The trip to Atlantis might help him sense other elements!

"I'll keep a low profile, Principal. But this trip to Atlantis University could help me break through in my cultivation. I have to go!"

"Besides, if they have other motives and I don't go, the academic exchange might get canceled."

Lin Beichen honestly shared his thoughts, leaving Hao Jianhua deep in thought.

"Alright, but remember to stay out of trouble!"

Hao Jianhua eventually agreed.

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The school sports meet started on schedule, drawing a massive crowd of staff and students.

On the plaza, Hao Jianhua attended the opening ceremony in formal attire.

Standing beside him were the top campus leaders, all gathered together.

Department heads, teachers, and other staff sat in the front rows below.

The contestants rested in designated areas.

At the very back were the departmental students.

Several cameras were set up on both sides of the field. Various media, including Imperial Capital Television, covered the event live.

The scene was grand. Students in uniform formations filled the entire field.

As Hao Jianhua finished his speech, officially opening the sports meet, the crowd erupted in cheers.

The contestants attracted a lot of attention.

However, physics department students, often absent from such events, were scarce, with only Lin Beichen and his three friends representing.

More focus was on athletes with impressive backgrounds, including those who joined on sports scholarships.

Some had provincial or even national competition experience!

Everyone, both teachers and students, anticipated the competition's start.

In the lineup of contestants, Lin Beichen's group occupied a single spot, unlike the other departments with lengthy participant lists and cheer squads!

Some even had coaches.

In contrast, Wu You, the tallest at 6'1", held a banner for the physics department alone.

Only a few onlookers from the physics department were present, aside from a female teacher.

But she was busy with architecture students, likely focusing her energy there.

The meet included eighteen major events, with preliminary rounds on the first day.

Soon, Liang Dong was elected by the three to draw for competition order.

Chapter 312: You're Such a Jinx with Those Charcoal Black Hands!

Not long after, Liang Dong walked down from the stage.

On his face, there was not a trace of a smile.

"What's wrong? Which round?"

"Hurry up, which round did we draw? Which teams are we competing against?"

Han Yuan and Wu You were both anxious and nervous. In their view, they were the only rookies at this sports meet.

All the other competitors were tall, strong, and muscular, obviously athletes, and gave off a pressuring vibe on the field.

If they drew relatively weak teams, maybe they still had a slim chance to get to the finals.

"Third round!"

"400 meters, four-person relay race!"

"Against the architecture department!"

Liang Dong felt somewhat disheartened, lacking confidence.

The architecture and civil engineering departments are filled with top-tier athletes and are the main forces in sports.

And now he had drawn them!

"Your luck is as black as your skin, even blacker than coal!"

"We might not even get past the preliminaries!"

"Seriously, I bragged to the girls that we'd at least be in the top three!"

"Not making it to the finals would be so embarrassing!"

Han Yuan kept complaining, believing that it was Liang Dong's bad luck that determined their fate in this sports meet.

Liang Dong clasped his hands together, showing silence and helplessness. Things hadn't gone as he wished, but it wasn't up to him.

When the final competition sequence was announced on stage, any initial hope the female teacher had for the physics department Lin Beichen disappeared with just a glance.

It was clear she believed the outcome was already decided.

"What do we do, Beichen? I looked around, this competition is a bit unfair, see over there, there are third-year students!"

"Even though the e-commerce department doesn't have any famous athletes, those third-year students are physically stronger than us!"

"You picked the most impossible competitors!"

Han Yuan complained, resonating with Wu You, both of them exchanged a look, nearly going up to strangle him.

Noticing the unfriendly atmosphere, Liang Dong ran off a hundred meters!

Shouting loudly, "Don't blame me, what could I have done?!"

Lin Beichen silently watched from the side, feeling sorry for Liang Dong, who was definitely bearing the blame.

"Beichen, what do we do? You have connections, ask the principal to change it!"

"I think, as long as we don't go against the architecture and civil engineering departments and those few cheat-like third-year teams, I'm confident I can lead us into the top three!"

Han Yuan patted his chest in front of Lin Beichen, it was the only solution he could think of.

Lin Beichen looked calm, it was impossible for him to approach Hao Jianhua for such a minor issue. Participating in the sports meet was just for fun, the results didn't matter.

Moreover, Hao Jianhua wanted him to quit and give other groups a chance.

"Since we're here, let's stay calm!"

"Don't panic, I'm here!"

"Just don't lag too much behind, leave the final sprint to me!"

At this moment, Liang Dong came back from the convenience store, bringing four bottles of energy drinks and handed them over, saying, "Actually, there's still hope!"

"In this group, only the architecture department and the e-commerce department stand out, the other three teams are probably about the same level as us!"

"As long as we stay steady, getting into the top three allows us to enter the finals!"

The words of Lin Beichen and Liang Dong sparked renewed morale in the F4 male group.

Especially Han Yuan, who became extremely excited!

"For the girls!"

"We must make it to the finals!"

He now thought the importance of getting into the top three wasn't as important as not getting eliminated in the preliminaries.

Soon, the 400-meter relay race began first, the entire stadium was crowded, aside from the track, there was barely any standing room!

The cheerleaders, showing off their midriffs and hot bodies, became a particularly eye-catching sight.

With the referee's gunfire, the first two groups started the competition.

Ultimately, with the best times of 61.62 seconds from one group and 61.13 seconds from another, six teams were chosen, while six were eliminated.

Finally, it was Lin Beichen's turn, the four of them had already taken their positions and entered the track.

Han Yuan took the lead, Wu You second, Liang Dong third in the relay, and Lin Beichen for the final sprint!

This matchup drew more attention compared to the previous two races, even the cheerleaders stopped to watch.

The female teacher stood with her hands on her hips, also watching the field, though her gaze stayed fixed on the architecture department's side.

On the stage, Hao Jianhua also watched the competition unfold.

The initial two races hadn't interested him at all, but with Lin Beichen's team involved, he grew concerned!

He quickly called an assistant from below the stage, instructing the journalist responsible for the live broadcast to turn off the camera!

Though many of the heads didn't understand, they didn't question it, feeling pressured by the principal.

On the track, the referee raised his pistol, making the final readiness sign.

Han Yuan's forehead was dripping with sweat before the race even started, a sign of his tension.

He could feel his heart beating rapidly!

"3"

"2"

"1"

"Come back!"

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However, before the gunshot, Han Yuan impulsively rushed out!

Seeing this, the students in the field jeered.

"Who's this guy, desperate to win or what!"

"Physics department, how embarrassing!"

Chapter 313: You're Such a Jinx with Those Charcoal Black Hands!_2

"The ones running alongside, who cares!"

"Not sure. I'm more interested in whether the architecture department or the juniors perform better!"

"The architecture department has a provincial track champion and a city-level first place in the team! With such a strong lineup, it should be a good show!"

"Haha, the e-commerce department has juniors from various majors, all older and taller than the freshmen from other departments. I think they can win!"

"Doesn't matter. I just want to see if they can finish the 400-meter relay in under 60 seconds!"

"The national champion team did it in 45 seconds!"

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The crowd's discussions made Han Yuan even more nervous, and the referee came forward to scold him.

"Don't take it too seriously, just have fun!"

"Yeah, the more you care about something, the harder it is to achieve. Relax a bit. If you blow it, it's not the end of the world!"

Wu You, Liang Dong, and Lin Beichen all came forward and patted Han Yuan on the shoulder.

This instantly made Han Yuan feel much better!

The murmurs in the stadium gradually faded in Han Yuan's mind. He no longer paid much attention to external voices and felt less pressure.

He seemed to let go of everything and instantly felt less nervous!

When the referee raised his gun to start the countdown again, Han Yuan's previous tension was gone, and he became much more composed.

This allowed him to focus on the starting positions of his competitors, and he quickly tried to imitate their movements.

With the sound of the starting gun, the six figures on the track shot out like lightning!

Everyone seemed to hold their breath, and the entire stadium fell silent, watching intently.

For a short while, the six competitors were neck and neck!

The start was almost even, but Han Yuan ultimately lacked some athletic talent and gradually fell behind. However, the gap wasn't huge, and he was in fourth place!

Soon, it was time for the first handoff. Wu You started running, and Han Yuan smoothly passed the baton to him.

But from here, the lag began to show.

The architecture department made a smooth handoff and was already far ahead, while the e-commerce department followed closely!

The other three departments were catching up!

This made Liang Dong, who was third in line, extremely anxious. He saw the architecture department already close to his position while Wu You was still half a distance behind!

"Hurry up, Wu You!"

"Faster!"

If he could, Liang Dong would have run back to take the baton from Wu You himself. He was so anxious that he stomped his feet!

Wu You used all his strength, but one by one, the other runners surpassed him, and he had no way of catching up!

This was probably the difference in skill.

Eventually, Wu You handed the baton to Liang Dong, but by then, they were more than halfway behind the first place!

They were the last team!

Liang Dong didn't say a word as he took the baton, sprinting forward with all his might. He had some professional training back in high school, and his feet seemed to fly!

He quickly closed some of the gap, moving up to fifth place!

Fourth place!!

When he reached the third-place runner, Liang Dong started to feel the strain and couldn't keep up!

Wu You's earlier lag had cost too much!

At this moment, Lin Beichen, the last runner, had already started to gather speed. At the same time, the architecture and e-commerce departments had completed their final handoffs!

Soon after, Liang Dong caught up and handed the baton to Lin Beichen.

"Beichen, it's up to you!"

Liang Dong shouted as he slowly came to a stop, watching Lin Beichen's back.

Wu You and Han Yuan also came over, the three of them standing shoulder to shoulder. They exchanged glances and could only laugh. They no longer cared about the outcome.

The important thing was that their bond as the F4 boys group had grown even stronger!

But suddenly, the stadium erupted in cheers and encouragement! Their laughter was cut short!

They instantly realized what was happening and turned their gaze to the track!

They saw Lin Beichen moving like lightning, his speed still increasing!

In the blink of an eye, he had caught up to the third place, closing quickly on the first and second!

This moment reignited the excitement in the three of them. Originally, they didn't expect much from the race, but Lin Beichen's performance once again amazed them!

They suddenly regained hope of making it to the finals!

"Go, Beichen!"

"Come on, Beichen!"

"Go, go, go!"

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Even the female teachers on the sidelines put down their phones, their eyes fixed on the familiar figure catching up to the first and second place!!

"How is this possible?!"

On the stands, Hao Jianhua got up excitedly, watching Lin Beichen close the gap from the last position to third in no time, now right behind the first and second!

The architecture and e-commerce departments sensed the tension on the field, turning to see Lin Beichen suddenly appear behind them. They were both shocked!

When they looked back previously, the third place was more than ten meters behind, and the last place was nowhere in sight!

When did this guy come up so fast!!

The pressure was immediate on them, pushing them to give their all in one final sprint!

The finish line was right ahead!

But no matter how they accelerated, that figure caught up and ran alongside them!

First place: "Architecture Department," "Physics Department."

Second place: "E-commerce Department!"

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The results were announced, and the stadium erupted in excitement!

Screams and cheers filled the air!

The female teachers were in shock. They expected Lin Beichen to be exceptional, but his teammates showed no particular strength. A relay race requires more than just one person's effort, and not being last was the best they could hope for.

Yet, her highly regarded architecture department was matched by the physics department!

The juniors from the e-commerce department were pushed to second place!

No one had expected this outcome, and the spectators were initially only interested in who would be stronger between the architecture department and the juniors.

"53.73 seconds!"

On the stands, the referee announced the time!

The cheers erupted again, so loud they seemed to shake the ground. This result made the other departments who hadn't competed yet start to lose confidence.

"The best national result is only 45 seconds, and Imperial University is unreal!"

"With this time, they could probably do even better!"

"Yeah, they didn't perform at their best earlier. There's room for improvement!"

"That's terrifying!"

"Breaking 60 seconds is already impressive. A time of 53 seconds is top-tier even at the provincial level!"

"Damn, I said the freshmen at Imperial Capital University were outstanding this year. Seeing it today has blown my mind!"

"You all focused on the wrong part. That young guy is the real deal!"

"He's the one who turned the tide, catching up from last to first!!"

"Didn't you see the end? He caught up so fast it forced the architecture and e-commerce departments to panic and sprint early!"

"It's him again! The high school exam perfect scorer, Lin Beichen!"

"Academic genius!"

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Lin Beichen's name spread once again across the stadium.

Everyone gained a new understanding of Lin Beichen.

Only on the stands, Hao Jianhua was sweating, unsure whether such exposure to the public would be good or bad for Lin Beichen!

He knew geniuses had to stand out among the crowd and couldn't stay hidden!

But he worried about whether he could nurture such a talent properly.

In the end, 12 teams made it to the finals.

Of course, Lin Beichen had also registered for other events like long jump, high jump, table tennis, soccer, and shot put, but they were not all on the same day.

Hao Jianhua also called him back to adjust his schedule and prepare for the Atlantis University trip in two days.

The remaining events were left to Han Yuan, Liang Dong, and Wu You to compete in.

Chapter 314: Takeoff!

At this moment, the three disciples sent by the Celestial Master's Mansion had descended from the mountain to make connections.

Each of the three held a jade token.

Each jade token had nine holes, of which seven corresponded to the seven stars in the sky.

The position of the eighth hole pointed to an intermediary relay station, while the ninth hole's position was the final destination!

The three of them headed north along three different routes.

On the left route, the disciple traveled through Beihu Province, exiting Hanwu City and heading all the way north!

The middle route went straight through Hui'an Province, taking a direct line north!

The right route moved through Jiangzhe Province, passing through Hang City!

Though the routes seemed different, their final destination was the same, and they would ultimately converge at the same point, the final destination!

In fact, from the moment they descended, the Celestial Master already had it all figured out.

The rough direction indicated by the three jade tokens was to the north!

The destination would eventually emerge in the northern region!

But what kind of force they would ultimately connect with, that he did not know. It would depend on the positions indicated by the holes carved in the tokens left by successive sect leaders.

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That day, the three disciples from the Celestial Master's Mansion successively arrived at the location indicated by the eighth hole on the jade token.

Combining the jade tokens with the compass and the star map in the sky, they accurately found the intermediary station!

The intermediary station on the right route was a dilapidated Daoist Temple, standing amidst the mountains, surrounded by desolate wilderness and devoid of human presence.

However, the Daoist Temple's architecture was quite ancient, its style consistent with that of the Celestial Master's Mansion.

Looking inside from the entrance, the surroundings were overgrown with weeds, and vines spread over the walls, showing it had fallen into disrepair.

It was hard not to suspect whether anyone still lived in the temple.

On the left side of the entrance, there were a few acres of farmland, planted with various vegetables and flowers.

The main gate was open wide, and above it was a plaque with three large characters carved on it: "Qing Daoist Temple."

Upon entering the temple, the surroundings were encompassed by ancient pavilions and tile-roofed houses. The walls were beginning to crack, clearly showing the ravages of time.

"Is anyone there?"

"Is anyone there?"

"Is anyone there?"

...

The disciple looked around inside the house but saw no one respond, which immediately made him feel a chill.

After several generations of sect leaders, the ancient methods of communication and relay stations had likely ceased to function, having not been updated for centuries!

If that were the case, the jade tokens might also have become useless!

The final contact point could be as abandoned as this temple, dissipating through the tides of time and human affairs.

If they could not reach the position indicated by the ninth hole, the three could not reunite!

Who then could unravel the secret of the Celestial Master's Mansion's black hole?

Thinking of this, he became a bit unwilling. He searched the courtyard and fortunately found some traces of human activity.

Inside the main hall, candles and incense were still burning before the Daoist deity's statue, and there were wooden meditation stools around, though everything appeared old and dilapidated!

Even though no one responded within the temple, the disciple did not leave. Instead, he sat in meditation before the deity's statue until the sky outside began to darken, when he finally saw someone arriving with a lantern and a bundle of firewood, approaching the temple from the mountain.

In this secluded, isolated mountain, without electricity or the internet, and far from worldly dust, it was indeed quite tranquil as well.

As the figure approached, he saw it was an elderly white-haired man, over eighty years old, his face deeply lined with the passage of time.

Though thin and frail, carrying the heavy firewood, he looked as if a gust of wind could blow him down, yet still he carried the lantern back to the temple, placing the firewood in the kitchen.

As the old man passed by the main hall's entrance, he was surprised to see someone meditating inside, solemn and sincere, seemingly praying earnestly without noticing his arrival.

"It's late. Who might you be?"

"How did you find this place?"

The old man tapped his shoulder, awakening the meditating disciple, who then opened his eyes wide with excitement, examining the elder carefully!

From the old man's attire, he saw the clothing of Daoism, and this sight felt very familiar to him!

"Greetings, elder. I am a disciple from the Celestial Master's Mansion, sent by the Celestial Master with the jade token to establish contact, and thus I found this place!"

"..."

The old man was instantly speechless. At the mention of the Celestial Master's Mansion, his body froze like a puppet, his eyes lost in reflection!

The wrinkles on his already weathered face deepened further, his expression filled with shock as he intently stared at the ancient jade token in the disciple's hand!

His trembling hands took the token, examining it repeatedly under the candlelight, his initial suspicion turning to astonishment!

The old man found it incredible, stepping outside while holding up the jade pendant, aligning the holes with the seven glowing stars in the sky!

He then took out a compass, quickly toggling several switches, and a moonbeam aligned with the eighth hole on the jade token, falling right onto the compass!

The compass needle spun accordingly, after which he retrieved a parchment map and searched it repeatedly.

Finally, he let out a long sigh, looking heavenward.

The eighth hole on the jade token precisely corresponded to his current location!

The elderly man's frail body collapsed onto the stone steps at the main hall's entrance, his face filled with a grave expression as he looked at the bewildered disciple inside.

"It has been hundreds of years. I am already the fourth inheritor."

"Times have changed, and dynasties have altered. Nothing now is like it was back then!"

Chapter 315: Takeoff!_2

"Now there are no disciples in the hall, no one willing to stay with an old man like me and the deserted Daoist Temple. I thought that with my generation, there would be no one to take over, facing a generational gap."

"Unexpectedly, someone still came in the end!"

"But your arrival surprised this old man. You came with the Jade Token, which means the thing suppressed by the Celestial Master's Mansion is about to emerge!"

"Elder, what is suppressed under the Celestial Master's Mansion?"

The young disciple eagerly stepped forward to inquire, as this was his biggest question throughout the journey.

He knew only to follow the Jade Token, without knowing where it led or what it sought.

Upon hearing that there was a black hole in the courtyard of the Celestial Master's Mansion, suppressing something, his curiosity was piqued.

"Some things, it's better if you don't know."

"Traditionally, only the Sect Leader is privy to the details within."

"Moreover, even I do not know the specifics. I am here merely to wait, waiting for that day to come, to point the way for disciples who seek the path."

The elder's solemn face did not change as he spoke, his deep eyes gazing into the end of the starry sky, as if able to see through the mysteries of the heavens.

"Elder, how long have you been guarding this deep mountain forest?"

The young disciple moved closer, voicing his inner question.

"Over eighty years, from my birth to the day of your arrival!"

The elder's hoarse voice was like a bright lantern in the dark night, igniting the direction in the disciple's heart.

One person could endure loneliness, not swayed by worldly prosperity, willing to retreat into the deep mountains, remaining hidden from the world, and still hold to his mission for over eighty years without wavering.

In the young disciple's heart, a sense of reverence for the elder arose.

That night, he stayed overnight at the Daoist Temple.

The next morning, the elder engraved a Seal on the Jade Token, a line connecting from the eighth position to the ninth position!

And handed him the old sheepskin map.

Despite feeling somewhat reluctant, the young disciple, keeping to his mission, packed up and set off again, heading in the direction indicated by the Jade Token.

The other two routes also followed the guidance of the Jade Token, finding a relay station one after another, and successfully obtained the information for the ninth position, the final connection point, thus embarking on the journey.

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Imperial Capital University.

A bus adorned with a banner pulled up in front of the dormitory building.

And there, Hao Jianhua was already waiting downstairs with heads from various levels of the academy, and numerous reporters were also on site, setting up their best angles.

And the fifty students listed for this academic exchange with Atlantis University, including Lin Beichen, had already gathered downstairs and lined up.

Before departure, Hao Jianhua delivered a motivational speech.

It was mostly standard talk for the media, and to promote this academic exchange.

Lin Beichen did not listen carefully, knowing it was the usual routine, much like the previous exchange trip to Divine Light Country.

As the speech concluded, the group boarded the bus.

The bus drew many envious looks as it drove out of the Imperial Capital University towards the nearest Imperial Capital International Airport.

Here, a flight had been booked in advance by Hao Jianhua. The group of fifty students, along with four instructors and Hao Jianhua, boarded the direct flight to Atlantis.

Lin Beichen looked around. Although the flight was chartered and filled with Imperial Capital University students, he realized he did not know anyone!

Except for Hao Jianhua!

None of these people had he even seen around the campus.

But at this moment, their faces showed excitement and eagerness.

Some took out their phones to capture the moment, some conversed, discussing the subjects they wanted to exchange at Atlantis University.

Others remained quiet, engrossed in their books, unmoved by the trip.

Lin Beichen fell into this last group, pondering what new elements might be discovered in Atlantis when a sweet female voice rang out to his right.

"Hello, classmate, may I swap seats with you?"

"I see you're reading; I'd like to enjoy the view outside the window!"

Lin Beichen turned and saw a girl with glasses, her silky black hair naturally draped over her shoulders. Although lightly made up, her fine features and fair skin were still distinct and pure.

She wore a light white top paired with the university skirt, giving off a simple and cute vibe.

"Can I refuse?"

Lin Beichen wasn't easily swayed by a pretty face, and although she was indeed attractive, he didn't yield to her beauty.

Enjoying the beautiful views along the way could make the dull journey pass more quickly.

"When we get to Atlantis, I can treat you to a meal. My dad does business there, not far from Atlantis University!"

"My surname is An, An Xiaoran. You can call me Xiaoran. Perhaps in Atlantis, you might need my help."

The girl extended her hand in a friendly gesture, but Lin Beichen kept reading, making her uneasy. It seemed no one she had approached so openly had ever rejected her.

This made her curious, so she tilted her head to glance at the book in Lin Beichen's hand.

"Human Body Discharge Research Theory!?"

An Xiaoran gave Lin Beichen a peculiar look. His appearance was clear and clean, not fitting the image of a scientist engrossed in odd experiments.

"You seem quite normal. How come you study such an eccentric subject?"

Her words drew curious glances from the front and back rows.

They all looked at the title of the book Lin Beichen was holding.

"Wow, what kind of subject is that?"

"Never heard of it!"

"Hello, classmate, I'm Li Peng from the Electronic Applications Department!"

"Can't you give the girl your seat since you're not looking out the window anyway? Don't occupy the spot!"

"If I were assigned a window seat, I would have switched right away!"

A hostile voice came from behind An Xiaoran. It was a well-built young man, wearing gold-rimmed glasses and a finely tailored light blue suit, clearly custom-made.

Among the few students, he appeared more distinguished.

However, Lin Beichen heard his words but did not pay any attention.

This left the young man behind feeling a bit embarrassed as Lin Beichen completely ignored him!

"Did you hear me?"

"I'm talking to you!"

The young man behind repeated his words several times, but Lin Beichen only glanced back briefly without responding.

This drew the attention of several rows of students.

Anger mounted on the young man's face.

"Forget it, just another research-obsessed brain. No point in talking to him! Miss, let me upgrade you to business class where no one will disturb you!"

The young man behind, now angry, muttered a few curses before standing to invite An Xiaoran.

"I am Li Yan, Li Peng's older brother, from the Architecture Department!"

"If you need any help on this trip, I am always available!"

"Thank you, but that's not necessary."

An Xiaoran, a bit surprised, smiled and shook her head, responding politely.

She hadn't expected to attract so much attention; she just wanted to see if she could change her seat.

It wasn't absolutely necessary to change.

Seeing no positive response, Li Yan sat down but looked at Lin Beichen with more disdain.

Embarrassed in front of so many people, and receiving no response, his expression darkened, but considering the crowd, especially with the girl he liked present, he refrained from continuing.

After everyone retracted their eyes, An Xiaoran glanced sidelong at Lin Beichen, seeing that he remained undisturbed even after Li Yan's remarks, still engrossed in his book.

This piqued her curiosity even more.

How could such a clear-looking guy study such a peculiar subject?

Chapter 316: Little Black, Your Driving Skills Are Somewhat Shaky!

Almost all of the participants in this academic exchange are top scholars in their respective professional fields.

They all felt a bit excited to be able to visit Atlantis, a university with considerable international prestige, for this academic exchange.

A person sitting ahead of An Xiaoran on the right side turned around upon hearing the commotion, adjusted his glasses, and repeatedly studied An Xiaoran. Finally, he confirmed her identity and became excited immediately.

"No way, Xiaoran!"

"You look even better in person than in the photo on the school's honors board!"

"I'm in the field of quantum communication, a sophomore, and I'm your fan!"

"My name is Lin Peng, I've always admired you, your achievements are what I aspire to!"

"The third phase engineering design of Imperial Capital University, you were actually a participant, wow, I'm so envious!"

"You got pre-admitted into a famous international courtyard design studio even before finishing your junior year, An Xiaoran!"

"I thought you looked familiar, turns out I've seen you on the honors board!"

An Xiaoran naturally nodded and smiled in response to each remark. She hadn't intended to reveal her identity, but many people recognized her anyway.

"It's nothing, really. It was just a coincidence that my design style matched that of the studio, so I got pre-admitted."

Her words shocked quite a few people.

Several people immediately approached her to introduce themselves, exchanging pleasantries and getting to know each other.

This made Li Yan, sitting behind her, feel somewhat inferior; everyone here had such astonishing credentials!

The honors board at Imperial Capital University is updated once a year!

Anyone whose photo is displayed on the honors board must have achieved extraordinary accomplishments in a specific field, far beyond Li Yan's own achievements!

Take Lin Peng, for example. He has exceptional talent in the quantum field, having completed university-level courses by his freshman year and entering the research lab directly in his sophomore year to work on projects.

Thinking about this, Li Yan shrank his neck and took a deep breath, looking around and recognizing several familiar faces!

Around him, at least six or seven people had their photos up on the honors board.

This was just among the faces he could see. If he stood up, the number would probably be much higher!

He had heard that the academic exchange participants were all top scholars in various fields.

Apparently, Li Yan was here only because his father was the largest shareholder of the school!

If it was purely based on academic performance, he would likely be the weakest in this entire room!!

Of course, at least he felt somewhat better compared to Lin Beichen, who was sitting right in front of him. In his view, Lin Beichen had become foolish from studying too much, obsessing over strange things.

"Let's switch seats. I find it annoying, everyone greeting me and me not wanting to respond; I want to look at the scenery!"

"Could we, please, big brother?"

An Xiaoran whispered softly in Lin Beichen's ear, tugging at his sleeve, feeling somewhat helpless for this bold move.

She hadn't expected so much attention, with over a dozen people asking for her WeChat contact. Given that they were all classmates, she couldn't easily refuse.

But it wasn't her preference; she didn't want to ruin the atmosphere.

Lin Beichen put down his book, looked at her, and held up three fingers.

"Three meals!"

"Deal!"

An Xiaoran didn't hesitate, high-fived him, and squeezed into the inner seat. If Lin Beichen had moved even a second later, she would have landed on his lap!

"Ah, finally some peace. Big brother, help me deal with them, please. I want to enjoy the scenery!"

An Xiaoran sighed with relief, covered her face with her hat, leaving only a small slit for her eyes to glance at the passing clouds outside.

Lin Beichen smiled wryly, then took out a topographic map and began studying it.

He discovered that the presence of elements was strongly related to geological factors; certain terrains had a much higher concentration of certain elements than others!

For instance, the Fire Element on Jingli Mountain, and Electric Element during rainy days!

So Water Element might be in the sea or rivers!

Freshwater area or saltwater area?

Where would Earth Element be? As humans constantly tread the ground, there is almost constant contact with the earth, yet no Earth Element is sensed!

Including Wood Element, whether it's related to trees, flowers, or plants!

The book in Lin Beichen's hand, "Human Body Discharge Research Theory," was found in the Imperial Capital University library.

It describes a thesis published in 1989 by an obscure foreign scientist, explaining the principles of human body discharge.

At that time, the work received almost no attention, and to this day, the book remains in a dusty corner, unread.

But after Lin Beichen read it, he was quite amazed. The book detailed the Electric Element extensively and matched many situations he had experienced with the Electric Element during his Enlightenment!

The book explained in detail that Electric Element could, under specific conditions, be stored in the human body and released through contact with metals.

But it didn't go too deeply into this subject before the book ended. Lin Beichen speculated that the scientist might have discovered some secrets about the Electric Element but not very deeply!

He thought this book could be annotated and recompiled, then used as material for the Martial Cultivation Extreme warriors in the security bureau!

Chapter 317: Little Black, Your Driving Skills Are Somewhat Shaky!_2

Perhaps this could help them understand the existence of the Electric Element.

...

Time flew by quickly, and the plane landed at the largest airport in Atlantis.

Led by Hao Jianhua, everyone disembarked from the plane.

However, as soon as they got off the plane, the group was separately guided by the airport staff through a special passage for a second check-in.

This action puzzled Hao Jianhua, but he thought that since they were entering Atlantis as a group, a second check-in was understandable, so he didn't suspect anything.

The fifty-plus people formed a long queue and passed through the check-in gate in order.

However, when it was Lin Beichen's turn, the airport staff confirmed his identity repeatedly before allowing him to pass.

The group passed the inspection smoothly and exited the hall.

Outside the hall, a bus was already waiting. A dark-skinned foreigner stepped out, speaking fluent Xia Country language.

"Hello, Principal Hao! It's been a year and you still look the same!"

.....

It was clear that he and Hao Jianhua were close friends. They embraced warmly upon meeting.

Then the group boarded the bus.

"Sign the attendance sheet in the order of your seats on the plane," Hao Jianhua instructed while climbing the bus steps. After that, he got off to talk with the dark-skinned man.

At the same time, in the airport operations room of Atlantis.

"Team Fen, the target individual has been verified and identified upon entry."

"The target individual has boarded the bus!"

"Proceed according to plan!"

"Yes!"

...

The earlier check-in staff member called Griffin to report the situation. After hanging up, he dialed another number.

The phone rang three times but was then disconnected.

Just as Hao Jianhua was cheerfully conversing with the dark-skinned man, an airport staff approached.

"Is Lin Peng one of your companions?"

"Yes, he's a student on this academic exchange!" Hao Jianhua recognized the name Lin Peng.

"His passport and ID card were lost, he needs to go to the hall to claim them."

The staff member's statement puzzled Hao Jianhua. He returned to the bus and asked Lin Peng, "Lin Peng, check if your passport and ID card are still with you."

Lin Peng opened his backpack in surprise. He clearly remembered putting his passport and ID card in the backpack during the security check.

Indeed, when he opened his backpack, they were gone!

"Strange! They're gone!"

Hao Jianhua shook his head and sighed, instructing, "Everyone, stay on the bus and don't wander off!"

After saying this, he got off and went back to the hall with the staff member.

On the bus, Lin Peng continued to rummage through his backpack, checking every pocket thoroughly. He still didn't find them.

"Strange, I clearly remember zipping up the backpack after putting them in!" Lin Peng scratched his head, puzzled.

Given his memory, it was extraordinary, especially for someone who excelled in quantum communication—he wasn't the type to forget things easily.

He vividly remembered putting the passport in his backpack and zipping it up, so how could it be gone?

Despite thinking it over, he couldn't figure it out. However, since the staff found it, it wasn't truly lost, which was fortunate.

But they waited for half an hour.

Hao Jianhua finally appeared in everyone's sight and soon boarded the bus. He signaled the dark-skinned man to start driving the bus towards Atlantis University.

"Keep your passport and ID card safe!"

"Everyone, check once more!"

"Atlantis University is in another state from the airport. It will take two to three hours by bus, so rest on the bus!"

"Our destination is a hotel closest to Atlantis University where we'll be staying!"

As Hao Jianhua finished speaking, the bus erupted in cheers. Everyone was thrilled and began looking forward to the academic exchange with the internationally renowned university!

They wondered what made the world's top universities special!

Along the way, they also hoped to see the origins of some of the world's leading companies, and this exchange involved many scientists and business tycoons—quite a formidable lineup!

At the moment, everyone wore joyful smiles, looking at the beautiful scenery outside the bus window, feeling the beauty of a foreign land.

For many, this was their first time abroad, and they didn't want to miss any scenery outside.

This time, An Xiaoran sat by the window, with Lin Beichen next to her, following the seating order on the plane.

As time passed, the bus left the bustling town.

Many first-time travelers abroad realized the place wasn't as grand as they had imagined!

Atlantis was similar to the Great Xia in terms of buildings, with dense structures only around the airport.

As they moved further, fewer buildings appeared, and fields and mountains began to emerge—they were traveling on a two-way four-lane road similar to provincial roads in Great Xia, but driving on the left side.

They noticed scenes reminiscent of rural fields in Great Xia; there were people planting, burning straw, and some herding cattle!

Houses were sparsely located.

There were few vehicles on the road.

Unconsciously, they passed through a mountain tunnel and reached the winding halfway up the mountain, gradually ascending.

Through the window, they could see the houses below getting smaller, and the passing cars looked like toy cars.

As they reached the mountaintop, shrouded in clouds and fog, the driver turned on the hazard lights and slowed down.

"My worldview is shattered!"

"I thought Atlantis was incredibly prosperous!"

"Yet, it also has rural areas!"

"The roads here are bumpy, the city center might be bustling, but the outskirts are worse than ours!"

"Agreed. I thought we'd reach Atlantis University shortly after landing, but we still have to travel for hours, crossing mountains!"

...

The students complained, largely because the bumpy road made travel uncomfortable.

Especially the steep mountain roads, it was a rough ride!

Pa Ding!

Suddenly, a metallic snapping sound echoed from the back of the bus!

At first, they thought they'd hit a rock, but the bus, which the driver had been controlling to descend slowly, suddenly seemed out of control, accelerating rapidly!

The bus felt like it lost all resistance, sliding downhill naturally!

All the students panicked immediately, with many screams filling the bus!

Even Hao Jianhua stood stunned for a moment!

He struggled to reach the driver, asking urgently, "What's going on!!!"

"The brakes!"

"The brakes are out!"

The driver, in a panic, shouted back, his hands busy controlling the steering!

He kept stepping on the brake pedal, and the handbrake kept moving!

But it was futile!

The bus accelerated down the winding road!

At the bottom was a sheer cliff, and if they veered off the road, everyone inside would likely perish!

Cold sweat covered the driver's forehead as he shifted to the lowest gear, which produced a screeching sound from the engine, but only slightly slowed the bus!

All the students panicked!

They'd never witnessed such a scene!

Seeing the distance to the bottom, several hundred meters, how could they not be terrified!

The bus swayed and could go off the road at any moment, plunging into the abyss!

Instinctively, everyone held onto the handles, not daring to let go!!

Who could have guessed they'd encounter such a scene!

The bus was a cacophony of screams!

An Xiaoran turned and clung to Lin Beichen, utterly terrified!

The bus shook non-stop, even Hao Jianhua clung tightly to the handle!

Yet the next turn was approaching!

Everyone watched in horror as the bus sped towards the bend—without brakes, there was no way they'd make it. If they veered off the road, they'd plummet off the cliff!

Rational students began using emergency glass breakers to shatter windows!

Soon, others followed suit, breaking windows with their emergency tools!

Chapter 318: Something Bizarre Happened!

The car window glass shattered instantly under the banging.

The glass of four consecutive windows was shattered, but the students near the windows, seeing the rapidly passing mountainside, realized the vehicle was moving very fast.

They hesitated.

The car itself was traveling on a very narrow mountain road. If they jumped out, they might not control their bodies well and could roll down the mountainside.

Jumping out and waiting were both not the best solutions.

But they still refused to give up, watching and thinking. If they really reached the turning point, they would surely die.

Jumping out might still hold a glimmer of hope.

One after another, four people came to the window, with half their bodies already out, but their hearts were in utter panic, lacking confidence.

The others watched, not knowing what to do.

Lin Beichen observed all this and made a decision, standing up from his seat immediately.

"Hold on to me, don't let go."

An Xiaoran wrapped her arms tightly around Lin Beichen from the front, looking up at his determined gaze, and hugged him even tighter.

Lin Beichen stood up, grabbed the handle on top of the seat to his right, lifted himself up, and grabbed the handrail to suspend himself, beginning to swing back and forth.

He controlled the amplitude of the swing to influence the car's balance.

But, his effort alone, with An Xiaoran holding onto him, wasn't enough to affect the vehicle significantly.

Seeing this, other students followed suit. This involved more people than those who had smashed the windows.

Almost everyone in the carriage, including Hao Jianhua, grabbed the handrails and started swaying.

The entire car was instantly affected, starting to tilt left and right.

In extreme cases, the left wheels lifted off the ground.

The driver turned around in surprise, more than fifty people swaying in unison, actually making the car wobble.

"Listen to me."

"At the moment of the turn, we all swing to the right."

"Driver, steer to the right."

Lin Beichen shouted, everyone heard him in unison, and the driver nodded in a panic.

This was their last hope.

The critical moment of the turn was upon them.

Everyone swayed in unison, achieving an impressive level of coordination. At the exact moment of the turn, the driver sharply turned the steering wheel to the right.

The over fifty people swung in unison, and the whole car began to tilt.

Almost everyone present closed their eyes, too afraid to look. Life and death came down to this moment.

They started praying.

An Xiaoran clutched Lin Beichen, her eyes tightly shut, feeling the tilt of the car, and in terror, she bit Lin Beichen's shoulder.

But at this moment, Lin Beichen could not care about that.

He was the only one in the carriage with his eyes open, witnessing everything. He saw the left tires indeed lift off the ground, but the tilting wasn't enough...

Just a little more.

Everyone swung their bodies, leaning right onto the seats.

But the car continued forward, not achieving the purpose of flipping over.

Lin Beichen felt an unprecedented crisis.

He started to panic a bit.

"Are we really going to meet our end here?"

Lin Beichen questioned himself. At that moment, the car was already at the edge of the road.

Everyone screamed in terror.

Just then, a mass of lightning appeared in Lin Beichen's hand, mixed with blue flames and surrounded by a golden light.

The three elements merged...

Suddenly, he struck the ground outside the right window.

Boom...

The impact lifted the car's left wheels, causing it to tilt to the right. The tremendous energy wave exploded on the ground, creating a massive shockwave.

The force rebounded through Lin Beichen's hand, pushing the entire car to the left.

The car rolled over to the left and slid for several meters, finally coming to a stop at the edge of the road.

As the car came to a complete halt and the surrounding noise ceased, everyone slowly opened their eyes and looked around.

"Did it stop?"

"Did we really flip the car over?"

"Are we safe?"

"Woah, that was so thrilling, we were so close."

"So terrifying, we walked through the Ghost Gate."

"Thank heaven, and our ancestors' blessings."

"Scared me to death, I thought we were going to die here."

"..."

The students came back to their senses from the terror, checking their surroundings.

The entire carriage was a mess, people piled on people to the left side. Only a few people holding onto the handrails had managed to stay upright, standing up first.

Hao Jianhua's arm was slightly injured, having hit the car body in the roll.

He helped himself up, and his first reaction was to get everyone out of the vehicle.

"Quick, get out of here."

"Climb out through the windows, help the girls."

"Forget the luggage, get out first, check the injured."

"Hurry, hurry, hurry."

Under his urging, the students quickly climbed out of the car through the broken windows.

Fortunately, many had held onto the handrails in advance, and most were able to climb out in turn, checking their injuries afterward to find only minor scrapes and no serious harm.

"Can you let go of me now?"

Lin Beichen looked at An Xiaoran in his arms, still clinging tightly to his neck with her legs wrapped around him, practically hanging on him.

Her petite body was trembling, eyes tightly shut, still not daring to open them.

"The car has stabilized, come down now."

Chapter 319: Something Bizarre Happened!_2

"No, I'm scared!"

Lin Beichen felt a bit helpless and led her, struggling to crawl out of the narrow window.

It wasn't until he looked at the entire vehicle that he realized the car body was severely deformed, and the front windshield was shattered into pieces.

The driver, Xiao Hei, had a slight bleeding on his forehead but was pressing it with a tissue to stop the bleeding.

Everyone looked at each other and let out long sighs, marveling with tears of relief.

They had just survived a near-death experience.

The events that had just occurred were still vivid in their minds, too thrilling, enough to be remembered for a lifetime.

"It's strange. I clearly remember the car was tilting to the right. How did it end up flipping to the left?"

"I remember we all had our eyes tightly shut, but I could hear a sound like an electric current!"

"Yes, I heard it too. It seemed to pass right by my ear, and then there was a loud bang. It felt like the shockwave from a severe explosion flipped the vehicle over!"

"That's right. I felt it too. There was definitely an explosion!"

"I felt it too!"

"So did I!"

The group, having disembarked from the vehicle and gradually recovering from their fear, began to recall the events that happened on the bus.

They all felt this incident was bizarre and fishy.

And they weren't alone; most of them had heard the explosion.

"Everyone, look! There's a crater left by the explosion."

"Oh my God, the crater is so deep, and it's cracked."

"How could it be such a coincidence? The explosion happened just as the vehicle was passing by."

"It can't be that coincidental, can it? I was fully conscious, and although the vehicle swayed at the last moment, it wasn't enough to flip it over. It was still sliding forward, and then the explosion happened."

"Did anyone see it clearly?"

Lin Peng stepped forward, looking around. He asked everyone, and they all shook their heads, indicating they didn't dare open their eyes at the time.

There were over fifty people, yet not one of them saw what just happened clearly.

In fact, Lin Beichen was the only one who did not go up to check the explosion crater because he already knew what caused it.

While the others went back to check the explosion marks, Lin Beichen approached the flipped vehicle to inspect the underside.

Before the vehicle lost control, he had heard the sound of metal snapping. Lin Beichen suspected it was the brake pads.

As expected, the brake calipers on both rear wheels were shattered.

The front brake pads were similarly broken, with a corner fractured, which reduced the braking force. They were still emitting steam clearly from friction.

"Hey, kid, still not willing to let your girlfriend down?"

The driver, Lao Hei, noticed that Lin Beichen didn't follow the crowd but was checking the brake pads, so he walked over.

Lin Beichen was stunned by the remark. He had been so focused on the incident that he hadn't noticed An Xiaoran was still holding onto his shoulder, reluctant to come down.

"Can you come down now, Miss An?"

"My feet and hands are numb, I can't move!"

An Xiaoran looked around and saw Hao Jianhua's stern gaze on her, and also noticed the driver Lao Hei looking in her direction, which made her cheeks blush with embarrassment.

After a moment, she finally managed to get back on the ground.

"S-Sorry, I was too nervous..."

An Xiaoran brushed her long hair behind her ear, her head lowering more with each word as she felt incredibly embarrassed. She vaguely remembered biting Lin Beichen's shoulder, but all she wanted now was to hide and not see anyone.

"You'll have to pay for the rabies vaccine when we get to our destination. For the bite mark on my shoulder."

Lin Beichen said, pulling down his sleeve to reveal the deep bite mark on his shoulder.

Originally embarrassed, An Xiaoran furrowed her brows, stepping back and retorted angrily:

"You need a rabies vaccine for animal bites! I'm a human, not an animal!"

The awkwardness was replaced by anger; she stomped her foot in frustration, wondering how he could think of her that way.

"Alright, alright, you two can squabble later. I need to borrow your boyfriend for a bit."

"He's not..."

Lao Hei grinned, showing his teeth. Before An Xiaoran could explain, he had already pulled Lin Beichen aside.

Xiao Hei was a cheerful person. Even after a near-death experience, it was already in the past.

He still had a doubt, though, about the brake pads. Both he and Lin Beichen had noticed it.

"I checked the brake pads before we set off. There shouldn't have been any issues."

"I suspect someone tampered with it before we left."

"I've heard you all are top scholars in various fields. Can you tell me anything?"

Lao Hei voiced his concerns, asking Lin Beichen.

"It might not be the case. The mountain road is rough. Maybe the brake pads were damaged by hitting rocks."

Lin Beichen didn't elaborate much, especially as other students started to gather around, watching the underside of the vehicle.

However, neither Lao Hei nor Lin Beichen continued discussing the brake issue to avoid causing panic.

During this period, Hao Jianhua reported the situation to Atlantis University, and they arranged for another vehicle and an ambulance to come to pick them up.

Hao Jianhua then conveyed this news to everyone, which was a rare piece of good news, allowing them to relax a bit.

...

...

In a building, next to Griffin's desk, the phone rang.

"Your agents really messed up!"

"The vehicle flipped, but out of over fifty people, only a few had minor injuries and no serious damage."

"Their principal contacted me, and they've arranged another vehicle to pick them up. It's back to the hotel after that. Do you have any other plans?"

The voice on the other end of the phone was from the President of Atlantis University, Sittelberg.

He delivered the latest news to Griffin with a tinge of mocking sarcasm in his tone.

"I understand."

Griffin, not wanting to explain more, hung up the phone with a trace of anger in his heart.

He immediately dialed another number.

"Hei Yi, initiate the second plan!"

After a long wait, he finally received a female voice response.

"Henry doesn't fail easily. He tampered with all four brake pads, and it still didn't work?!"

Hei Yi was one of Griffin's most trusted poison experts.

Henry was a top-notch assassin, specializing in making accidents look like they happened naturally.

Hei Yi was surprised by Griffin's words.

In her experience, that stretch of road had caused numerous successful accidents and had a perfect success rate.

Henry was an expert at making accidents look perfect, such that when the vehicle reached the downhill section, incidents occurred.

Even if the police arrived, they couldn't find any traces, ultimately ruling it an accident.

It was his specialty, and creating a minor issue with a student bus shouldn't have been a problem.

From Hei Yi's perspective, it was just pure luck for the survivors.

However, she also began preparing for the next part of her plan.

...

...

In the Great Xia Kingdom, inside the Safety Bureau's meeting room.

Song Xiangdong was presiding over a domestic security meeting, with many high-ranking officials gathered, including several military figures present via remote video on the big screen.

Song Xiangdong was discussing staff allocations, and assignment adjustments.

At that moment, an elderly man knocked on the door, revealing a side profile. He looked at Song Xiangdong and gestured for him to come over.

This made Song Xiangdong's expression somber. Hesitating for a moment, he put down the meeting materials.

"The meeting is adjourned. We will resume in the afternoon."

The high-ranking officials inside the meeting room were puzzled, watching Song Xiangdong's back as he left. What matter could be more important than this high-level meeting?

Song Xiangdong did not provide an explanation. He felt a heavy weight, for the man who came to see him was the chief of the national religious affairs bureau.

His appearance was a surprise to Song Xiangdong.

As he left the meeting room, he saw an elderly man with white hair, a thin frame, and a slight hunch, waiting with a cane.

Beside him was the oldest four-star general from the previous meeting of the four-person group.

Chapter 320: Checking into the Hotel

There were also two young disciples dressed in Daoist attire, accompanying the elderly man with the cane.

The group consisted of four people.

Song Xiangdong's expression was serious. He roughly understood something. Leading the way, he guided them to a top-secret conference room.

The conference room was small, but the walls were windowless and void of any electronic devices, only chairs and lights, making it impenetrable.

Upon entering the room, Song Xiangdong sent the guards down the hallway away.

The elderly man with the cane also instructed the two young disciples to wait outside the door.

Inside the room, there was only Fu Daoyi, the elderly man with the cane, and Song Xiangdong.

Fu Daoyi, the Consul General responsible for religious affairs in the North China Region, had discussed matters regarding Dragon Tiger Mountain with Song Xiangdong a few days ago.

The elderly man with the cane, on the other hand, was in charge of religious affairs in three of the Great Xia Kingdom's five war zones: North China, Central China, and Southern China.

Throughout the country, each war zone had one Supervisor, which means there were five Sect Leaders in total.

Above them, there were two Supervisors overseeing all religious affairs.

Out of the five war zones, two Supervisors managed, respectively, two and three war zones. The elderly man with the cane, Xu Zhenxiao, was one of them.

"Supervisor Xu, you have been stationed in Southern China for many years. Today, you came to North China, appearing together with Brother Daoyi, making me feel uneasy."

"Is it because of the matter concerning Dragon Tiger Mountain?"

"Could it be? The suppressed entity has truly shown activity? Have they dispatched disciples down the mountain to make contact?"

"And they are heading towards North China, correct?"

After entering the room, Song Xiangdong's mind raced. From the fact that the two of them appeared at the safety bureau together, he could roughly guess a few things.

"Correct!"

"The Celestial Master's Mansion has already dispatched disciples down the mountain, utilizing the Jade Token as a means of communication. They are splitting into three routes, using the three major Daoist temples, Qingdao Temple, Qingxin Temple, and Qingzhen Temple, as relay stations, and then heading north!"

"It appears that the contact methods and locations left by successive Sect Leaders of the Celestial Master's Mansion will ultimately appear in the North China Region."

"And in the North China Region, there are three influential families with ties to the Celestial Master's Mansion, one of them being the safety bureau!"

The elderly man with the cane, Xu Zhenxiao, explained step by step, leaving Song Xiangdong shocked and puzzled.

"They have already passed the relay stations and headed north?"

"There are three families in the North China Region? Why do I not know about this?"

As the person in charge of national security affairs at the safety bureau, although he rarely dealt with religious matters, he still understood some of them.

Moreover, speaking of the other two influential families, in Song Xiangdong's impression, the North China Region seemed to lack any family comparable to the safety bureau.

"They are different from you, they are not from the political sphere!"

"Hundreds of years ago, as the world order changed and dynasties transitioned, many respected Elders and Sect Leaders from the Celestial Master's Mansion either retired or descended the mountain."

"Some entered politics, others entered business!"

The elderly man with the cane continued to elaborate, and Fu Daoyi nodded in agreement.

His great-grandfather had been a former Sect Leader of the Celestial Master's Mansion. After descending the mountain, he entered politics, and the position had been passed down to Fu Daoyi as the fourth generation.

"So, the other two families are business magnates?"

"There are quite a few in the North China Region. I truly do not know which."

Song Xiangdong rarely dealt with these matters, usually managed by Fu Daoyi, the North China Region's Sect Leader.

"I believe that soon, the disciples descending the mountain from the Celestial Master's Mansion will arrive in the North China Region. Ultimately, which family they seek out will be determined by the Jade Token guiding them."

"Only the family chosen by the Jade Token can ascend the mountain!"

"Otherwise, even if they go, it will be useless."

"Why would it be useless?"

Song Xiangdong asked, puzzled.

The elderly man with the cane took a sip of tea and then continued:

"Bloodline. It is rumored that when the Celestial Master's Mansion was founded, they employed certain mechanisms, using a person's bloodline to set up locks or keys to trigger mechanisms."

"But this is merely a rumor. Perhaps each family has different methods, depending on how that Sect Leader set it up in the updated books."

"It could be a bloodline, it could be a key, it could be a scripture—it could be anything."

"Since your safety bureau is unaware of it, it is possible that, in the end, the chosen family is not yours, but one of the other two in the North China Region."

Xu Zhenxiao's deep and determined cloudy eyes glinted, stroking his white beard as he fell into deep thought.

At his age, he had thought there would be no more events unfolding.

Unexpectedly, the suppressed entity from the Celestial Master's Mansion had shown activity.

The land, calm and peaceful for nearly a thousand years, might yet experience another storm of bloodshed, repeating the era of divine and demonic chaos.

"For now, we can only wait for the Pathfinder to arrive and see where fate falls."

Fu Daoyi spoke meaningfully, with a hint of anticipation.

"Since there has indeed been movement at the Celestial Master's Mansion, it is time for the safety bureau to intervene and control public discourse online."

"If this continues to develop, more people will pay attention to the theories surrounding the Celestial Master's Mansion, causing additional trouble."

Song Xiangdong acknowledged this.

Initially, when discussing with Fu Daoyi, there had been no confirmation of any incidents at the Celestial Master's Mansion; everything was now clear, and indeed, something earth-shattering had happened.

Public rumors were true!

However, precisely because of this, Song Xiangdong felt the danger and believed that intervention was necessary.

After the meeting, the elderly man, Xu Zhenxiao, was arranged to stay at the safety bureau, while Fu Daoyi, the North China Region's Sect Leader, needed to contact the other two business magnates.