

Doctor 171

Chapter 171: Have Her Sign an Autograph for Me

Fang Bai and Baili Mingyue's seats were somewhat distant from the stage, and Baili Mingyue could only see Ye Wumei's figure but could not make out her facial features clearly.

Fang Bai's senses were keen, and he not only saw Ye Wumei's appearance clearly but even understood the length of her breath and her heartbeat rate as if within his grasp.

One must admit that Ye Wumei, known as the "National Youth," indeed had reason to be proud of herself.

She was in her early twenties, with a figure and looks that were perfect to the extreme, paired with a fresh and unsullied temperament, she was simply the ideal partner in the eyes of men.

Renowned as the "Heavenly Singer" in the music scene, Ye Wumei's voice, as soon as she sang, stunned everyone, capturing the hearts of all present.

Her voice was like a warbler singing in the clouds when high-pitched, a murmuring brook in a deep ravine when low, like pearls falling on a jade plate when fast, and like a mountain spring flowing when slow. Every note and every tone was captivating and moving, soothing to the heart and soul.

Apart from the wonderful music and Ye Wumei's singing voice, there wasn't a single other noise; eighty thousand spectators were holding their breath, immersed in the dual pleasures of sight and sound.

Even Fang Bai was influenced by Ye Wumei's singing. He squinted his eyes slightly and quietly enjoyed the performance of the woman who sang and danced.

When the song ended, there was a brief silence at the venue, followed immediately by thunderous applause, with tens of thousands crying out Ye Wumei's name. The powerful sound wave seemed able to lift the roof of the stadium.

After a short rest, Ye Wumei began her second song, and she changed the style completely, from a song full of Huaxia's ancient charm to a modern, energetic dance song.

Wearing a black tank top and hotpants, Ye Wumei sang and danced passionately, igniting the enthusiasm of the tens of thousands of spectators, who all stood up, and swayed along with the music rhythm and Ye Wumei's singing, reaching a fever pitch in the venue atmosphere.

Baili Mingyue also stood up and twisted her slender waist in time with the music.

Around 10:30 p.m., after a concert that lasted for three hours, the audience still hesitated to leave even after Ye Wumei departed the stage.

"Did you enjoy the concert today? Can we go home now?"

As they left the stadium together, Fang Bai asked Baili Mingyue with a smile.

"Not yet!"

Baili Mingyue lifted up the poster of Ye Wumei in her hand and said, "I want to wait for Ye Wumei at the door and have her sign it."

Looking around, Fang Bai saw thousands of fans like Baili Mingyue with posters in hand, obviously all waiting for their idol's autograph. He said with a wry smile, "If I were Ye Wumei, I would've either slipped away early or come out later."

"Ye Wumei rarely comes to Yanjing for a concert, and if I miss this chance, I don't know how long it will be until the next one. Fang Bai, dear Fang Bai, will you please keep me company a little longer?"

"All right then," Fang Bai conceded to Baili Mingyue's persistent pleas and nodded in agreement.

After about half an hour, there was still no sign of Ye Wumei's motorcade, and Baili Mingyue couldn't help but feel deflated.

Just then, Fang Bai's ears twitched, and he whispered to Baili Mingyue, "We won't see your idol here! She's just left in her car from the back door."

"How do you know?"

"Because I'm a Martial Artist!"

Fang Bai pointed to his ears, saying, "My hearing is much more sensitive than that of ordinary people; I heard Ye Wumei's voice."

"Fang Bai, think of something quickly! I know you must have a way, right?"

Baili Mingyue, almost on the brink of tears, grabbed one of Fang Bai's arms and began shaking it.

Fang Bai, having no other choice, sighed and said, "Then you promise me, after you get Ye Wumei's autographed poster, you'll go home and rest, okay?"

"Okay."

"Follow me."

Fang Bai took Baili Mingyue's little hand and said, "Let's go find Ye Wumei for her autograph."

As Fang Bai swiftly pulled her along, Baili Mingyue asked, "How do we find her? Do you know where Ye Wumei went?"

"I think I heard her say that she was going to the food street to have a night snack. Let's go there and look around; maybe we'll run into her!"

"Ha, the food street, I like it there too! We'll go look for Ye Wumei's autograph and have some night snacks while we're at it."

Located in the northern part of Yanjing, the food street spans roughly two kilometers east to west and is a pedestrian street. Come evening, customers from all over flock there to taste the unique local delicacies from all across Huaxia.

By the time Fang Bai and Baili Mingyue arrived at the food street by taxi, it was already close to eleven at night.

At that hour, the other streets were sparsely populated, but the food street was still teeming with people, and many of the snack shops that were open 24 hours shone brightly, bustling with business.

"There are a hundred or two hundred snack shops here, do we have to search them one by one?"

Standing at the entrance of the food street, Baili Mingyue couldn't help but worry.

Fang Bai smiled and said, "I'm here! Just follow me."

Side by side, they walked on, and every two or three hundred meters, Fang Bai would prick up his ears, listening carefully to the activity inside the snack shops lining the street.

"Does Ye Wumei like spicy food?"

When they reached a noodle house, Fang Bai stopped, smiled, and asked.

"Yes!"

Baili Mingyue nodded and said, "I've seen an interview with Ye Wumei. She said in the program that she likes spicy food... Fang Bai, how do you know? You're not a fan of Ye Wumei."

Fang Bai pointed toward the noodle house and said, "Because Ye Wumei is in there having a night snack! I've had these noodles before, and they're very spicy!"

Without saying another word, Baili Mingyue turned on her heel and charged into the noodle house.

In the large dining hall of the noodle house, which was furnished with more than a dozen tables, some customers were having their night snacks, and on the west side of the hall were several private rooms.

"Fang Bai, Ye Wumei isn't here! Did you get it wrong?"

Baili Mingyue stood in the hall, looked around but did not see Ye Wumei, and couldn't help but ask.

Fang Bai pointed towards the private room 7 on the east side and said, "She's inside there!"

Baili Mingyue turned to look at private room 7 and found herself facing the watchful eyes of two bodyguards stationed at the door.

The bodyguards, dressed in black suits and wearing large sunglasses, were intimidating in stature, and Fang Bai knew they were Yellow Level Martial Artists. He was certain they had heard the conversation between him and Baili Mingyue.

Ye Wumei, who was in the private room having a night snack with an assistant, seemed to have heard something as well, and quieted down.

Knowing Fang Bai had formidable strength, even more so than her own father, Baili Mingyue was unafraid of the two bodyguards and walked straight over, intending to enter the private room.

Chapter 172: Wishes Come True

"Stop right there!"

Two bodyguards extended their hands, blocking Baili Mingyue.

"I am a loyal fan of Ye Wumei, please let me in, I just want Ye Wumei's autograph."

Baili Mingyue raised the poster in her hand, pleading weakly.

"Ye Wumei you're looking for isn't here. Please leave."

One of the bodyguards spoke coldly, reaching out to shove Baili Mingyue, trying to make her leave.

Just then, the door of private room number 7 opened from the inside, and a woman wearing large sunglasses, a white chiffon blouse, and long, shoulder-length hair walked out. She glanced hurriedly at Baili Mingyue, then swiftly headed towards the back door of the noodle shop under the cover of a middle-aged woman who followed her out.

"Ye Wumei! Wait for me!"

Baili Mingyue caught sight of the slender back of the woman in the white chiffon blouse and recognized her instantly. She excitedly shouted and tried to follow, only to be blocked by two burly bodyguards.

The woman in the chiffon blouse was Ye Wumei herself, and the person closely following her was one of her assistants.

After her concert had ended, Ye Wumei, accompanied by two bodyguards and an assistant, came to the food street for a late-night snack, planning to leave unobtrusively; unexpectedly, she was still discovered.

It wasn't that Ye Wumei didn't want to give Baili Mingyue an autograph; she was simply afraid to do so.

Ye Wumei had not brought many people with her on this outing. In such a public setting, once her identity was exposed, it could potentially cause a large crowd to gather, making it difficult to escape.

So the moment she heard in the private room that a fan was seeking her autograph, Ye Wumei immediately decided to leave with her assistant while the two bodyguards stayed behind to block her path.

Having heard Baili Mingyue cry out her name from behind, Ye Wumei knew things were going to be troublesome. She sighed, looked back to wave her hand signaling her assistant to also stay, building a second "defensive line" against her fans, and then she promptly used her movement technique to dash towards the back door.

Being a Martial Artist, although only Yellow Level early-stage, Ye Wumei moved quickly, her figure blurring a few times before she had already passed through the noodle shop's back door.

Ye Wumei was no stranger to this noodle shop and knew that beyond the back door there was a small courtyard, whose surrounding walls weren't high. With her abilities, she could easily leap over the wall and reach the wide street outside.

Once there, all she had to do was hide in a quiet spot and then phone her assistant to have the assistant and the two bodyguards disengage and come pick her up in their van.

"Ye Wumei, don't go!"

Baili Mingyue, blocked by the two bodyguards, couldn't move an inch and, seeing that Ye Wumei had vanished in the blink of an eye, was on the verge of tears.

The noodle shop had other diners who were also fans of Ye Wumei. Hearing Baili Mingyue calling out Ye Wumei's name, they immediately surged towards her, surrounding her to inquire about the situation.

Upon learning from Baili Mingyue that Ye Wumei had just been there having a late-night snack, those fans too became excited, clamoring and trying to break past the two bodyguards and the assistant to chase after Ye Wumei.

Although the number of fans in the noodle shop gradually increased, the two bodyguards they faced were large, powerful Martial Artists. For a while, they couldn't break through, and both sides ended up deadlocked in the corridor leading to the back door.

"Let's go. I'll take you to find Ye Wumei."

Fang Bai walked up to Baili Mingyue, whispered in her ear, then grabbed her hand, squeezing through the crowd to get outside the noodle shop.

Customers at the food street mainly surged towards the noodle house, leaving Fang Bai and Baili Mingyue unnoticed. Thus, Fang Bai, with his arm around Baili Mingyue's slender waist, led her in executing their movement technique, quickly making their way to the southern end of the food street.

Upon reaching the southern end, they darted west for dozens of meters and at the dimly lit exit of a small alley, Fang Bai and Baili Mingyue successfully intercepted Ye Wumei.

"Ye Wumei... I've finally waited for you!"

Seeing Ye Wumei wearing large sunglasses and nervously looking around, Baili Mingyue excitedly called out again, but afraid of being overheard by others, she lowered her voice this time.

Ye Wumei, upon hearing Baili Mingyue's voice, knew she was the one who had shouted and exposed her identity at the noodle house, sighed helplessly.

"Hello. You want an autograph, right? Give me your pen... Where should I sign?"

Observing that no one seemed to be paying attention to them, Ye Wumei breathed a sigh of relief and forced a slight smile on her face.

Ye Wumei was an early stage Yellow Level Martial Artist and could have easily brushed Baili Mingyue aside and left, but she didn't want to hurt the feelings of this devoted fan. She decided to quickly give an autograph and then send this fan away so she could slip away herself.

"Sign on your poster."

Baili Mingyue, thrilled by Ye Wumei's agreement to give her an autograph, fumbled to hand over her pen, then with Fang Bai's help, the two spread the poster out in front of Ye Wumei.

Ye Wumei swiftly waved her hand, inscribing her name in lively, flowing script at the bottom of the poster, then handed the pen back to Baili Mingyue.

"Ye Wumei, I want to take a photo with you!"

Ye Wumei had planned to leave after giving the autograph, but Baili Mingyue, who had finally gotten a chance for a one-on-one encounter with her idol, was not going to let it slip away so easily. She immediately pulled out her cell phone and handed it to Fang Bai.

"Fang Bai, please, help us take some photos together!"

Baili Mingyue said urgently, standing next to Ye Wumei, pressing close to her body and striking a scissors hand pose.

Ye Wumei, resigned, obliged Baili Mingyue and let Fang Bai take several photos, including two where, at Baili Mingyue's request, she took off her sunglasses to pose together.

"Ye Wumei, thank you so much. You're really the best. I'll always support you!"

Holding the poster in one hand and her cell phone in the other, an ecstatic Baili Mingyue thanked Ye Wumei repeatedly.

With Ye Wumei's personally autographed poster and the photos together, Baili Mingyue now had something to brag about to her classmates at school.

Imagining her classmates' envious and jealous faces upon seeing her poster and the photos with Ye Wumei, Baili Mingyue could barely contain her excitement.

"You're welcome. Goodbye."

Ye Wumei nodded at Baili Mingyue and, not daring to stay any longer, quickly exited the alley.

After walking more than two hundred meters to a large tree beside the street, Ye Wumei finally stopped, took out her cell phone, and called her assistant who was still at the noodle house, asking her and the two bodyguards to quickly extract themselves and come pick her up in the car.

"Are you satisfied now? Can we go home?"

After Ye Wumei left, Fang Bai, observing Baili Mingyue still immersed in excitement, asked with a smile.

Chapter 173: Should I Call Her My Master's Wife?

"Hehe... Let's go, time to head home. Fang Bai, I really owe you one this time. To express my gratitude, I'll cook a few extra dishes for you tomorrow!"

Baili Mingyue put away her phone, rolled up the poster in her left hand, affectionately linked her right arm with Fang Bai's, and walked with him out of the alley, strolling along the main street.

Hearing Baili Mingyue mention cooking for him made Fang Bai develop an immediate headache.

Recently, Baili Mingyue had grown increasingly passionate about cooking and even bought several cookbooks to study, but despite her efforts, her culinary skills remained mediocre and barely edible.

Before, whenever Baili Mingyue cooked, Fang Bai would eat a large portion of it to avoid hurting her self-esteem and confidence. However, since he had taken Ghost Hand as his disciple, Fang Bai had finally escaped the "dire straits."

Whenever Fang Bai couldn't bring himself to eat her cooking, he'd let Ghost Hand "feast" on it. He would privately instruct Ghost Hand not only to eat but to eat happily, to praise the food incessantly, and after finishing, to act as if he was savoring the delicious aftertaste.

If Ghost Hand complained or grumbled, Fang Bai would put on a serious face and tell him that enduring hardship is part of becoming a superior person. If he couldn't stomach such trials, how could he cultivate martial arts and become powerful?

Ghost Hand dared not argue out loud but would think to himself, how could cultivating martial arts be related to eating? Isn't eating well beneficial for cultivation? Whenever Master took him out to eat, they

would gorge on meat and drink heartily. Why didn't he say that enduring hardship is the way to become superior then?

"Being a disciple is to have no human rights!"

Each time after Ghost Hand ate most of Baili Mingyue's cooking with a fake smile on his face as instructed by Fang Bai, he could only silently lament in this way.

After walking about ten meters, Fang Bai's ears twitched, and he heard angry shouts and delicate admonishments about two hundred meters ahead. It sounded like someone was fighting there.

Fang Bai looked forward, but due to the multiple layers of flowerbeds and trees, he couldn't see clearly what was happening. However, based on the delicate chiding sounds, it seemed to be the superstar Ye Wumei making the noise.

But Ye Wumei's chiding didn't last long before it abruptly stopped.

"What is it?"

Seeing Fang Bai's unusual expression and his frown, Baili Mingyue asked curiously.

Fang Bai was about to answer when he saw a black van burst from the curb, speeding down the wide avenue towards the distance, quickly disappearing from sight.

From inside that black van, Fang Bai faintly sensed Ye Wumei's presence and heartbeat, along with at least four Yellow Level Martial Artists.

The four Yellow Level Martial Artists should all be women, with three being mid-Yellow Level Martial Artists and one being high-Yellow Level.

Although it was only a momentary sensing, Fang Bai's memory was exceptional. Even though he had not seen the faces of the four Yellow Level Martial Artists in the car, the next time they passed each other, he would recognize them just by their aura and heartbeat.

"It's nothing."

Fang Bai guessed something might have happened to Ye Wumei, but since he was unacquainted with her, he had no interest in meddling in other people's business.

Besides, they were quite distant from each other, and the van was moving too fast. Even if he wanted to give chase now, he probably couldn't catch up.

When they arrived back at the courtyard, Jiang Yuzhi had already gone to rest while Ghost Hand was still awake, waiting to open the door for them.

"Master, if you guys keep progressing, am I going to have to call her Mistress?"

After watching Baili Mingyue return to her room, Ghost Hand snickered and whispered to Fang Bai.

"You really have a wicked smile!"

Fang Bai rolled his eyes and responded irritably, "Mingyue is still a high school student. I have no inappropriate thoughts about her."

"What's a high school student got to do with it? Didn't she just celebrate her eighteenth birthday today? In the secular world, that's considered adult and mature, time for the picking."

"Pick your head!"

Fang Bai slapped Ghost Hand on the head and said sternly, "Go back to your room and cultivate! In a while, I'm going to assess your cultivation progress. If it isn't up to standard, I'll punish you by making you eat Mingyue's cooking every day!"

Ghost Hand shivered in fright, immediately shut his mouth, and obediently returned to his room to sit in meditation and cultivate.

The next day, in the early morning, Fang Bai and the now-recovered Ghost Hand headed to the mountains for cultivation. On their way back, before they even entered Yanjing City, Fang Bai's mobile phone began to ring insistently.

When Fang Bai saw Tang Wenrou's name on the phone screen, he immediately pressed the answer button.

"Fang Bai, want to make some money? There's a big business opportunity!"

Tang Wenrou's first words immediately piqued Fang Bai's interest.

"Officer Tang, is there another reward for a wanted criminal?"

"It's not clear over the phone. If you have time, come find me at the Yanjing Police Station's Major Crime Division. I'll explain it to you in person."

"You're working on a Sunday too?"

"Not just me, the whole Yanjing Police Station is working overtime! There's been a major case!"

"Alright, I'll get to you before nine o'clock!"

Fang Bai knew that if Tang Wenrou referred to it as a "big business opportunity" or a "major case," it was certainly an event that would cause a sensation. Fang Bai was also filled with curiosity.

After returning to the courtyard house to wash up, Fang Bai hastily ate some breakfast and then rode his newly-bought motorbike to the Yanjing Police Station.

For Fang Bai, riding a motorbike in Yanjing City was much more convenient and faster than driving a car.

Upon arriving at the Yanjing Police Station, Tang Wenrou was seen sending one of her friends out the door.

Fang Bai recognized Tang Wenrou's friend; it was Dongfang Leiming's granddaughter, Dongfang Rushi.

"Hello, Doctor Fang."

Dongfang Rushi, seeing Fang Bai here and also knowing Tang Wenrou, showed a hint of surprise in her eyes, then nodded and greeted him.

"Hello."

Fang Bai cracked a slight smile, thinking to himself that this Dongfang Rushi truly had character—always maintaining a poker face, no matter who she was in front of, in stark contrast to her romantically charming and adorable sister, Dongfang Ruhua.

"You know Dongfang Rushi?"

Tang Wenrou also did not expect Fang Bai to know Dongfang Rushi. After seeing her off, she asked Fang Bai casually.

Fang Bai shared with her how he had once saved Dongfang Leiming. After listening, Tang Wenrou nodded and said, "Since you came to Yanjing, you have saved both Dongfang Leiming and Lu Jianfeng, becoming an honored guest of both the Dongfang Family and the Lu Family. That's a good thing. As long as you manage your relationship with these two families well, it will be of great benefit to you in the future."

With a nonchalant smile, Fang Bai knew what Tang Wenrou meant by "it's always cool under a big tree"—as long as he maintained a good relationship with the Dongfang Family and the Lu Family, he could get along well in Yanjing in the future.

Chapter 174: Ye Wumei Goes Missing

For others, boarding the massive ships of the Dongfang and Lu Families was indeed a rare opportunity, but Fang Bai didn't care about these things.

In Fang Bai's mind were numerous earth-shattering cultivation techniques from his previous life; as long as he persevered and continued his cultivation diligently, his strength was sure to grow stronger. When he reached a certain realm, he would attain a state beyond the mundane world, capable of looking down on everything.

By that time, all those wealthy and prominent clans would be insignificant in his eyes.

"What is Dongfang Rushi doing here?"

The poker-faced yet stunning image of Dongfang Rushi suddenly emerged in Fang Bai's mind, prompting him to ask involuntarily.

"Do you know Ye Wumei?"

"Ye Wumei?"

Fang Bai was taken aback, then nodded, "Yes, I went to her concert with a friend last night."

"Let's talk in my office..."

The two walked side by side to Tang Wenrou's office, and after sitting down, Tang Wenrou took the initiative to make a cup of tea for Fang Bai before she said, "Ye Wumei disappeared after her concert last night... All signs indicate that she might have been abducted."

"Oh? Who abducted Ye Wumei?"

Tang Wenrou had dropped a bombshell, but Fang Bai seemed not to be too surprised.

Last night, Fang Bai had heard Ye Wumei fighting with someone and guessed that something might have happened, but he never imagined that the extraordinarily beautiful and ethereal superstar could have been abducted.

"If only we knew who it was..."

Tang Wenrou walked to her seat, rubbed her temples, and sighed, "Ye Wumei vanished in the middle of last night, and by this morning, the news had already spread throughout Huaxia. The higher-ups have ordered our police station to cancel all days off from today and dedicate all efforts to solving the case!"

After a pause, she continued, "Ye Wumei belongs to the Ye Family from Yuezhou. The Ye Family has announced through our police force a reward of ten million for any clues or information related to Ye Wumei."

"Dongfang Rushi and Ye Wumei are very close friends. She came a moment ago to specifically inquire about Ye Wumei's situation and mentioned that the Dongfang Family is willing to provide all possible assistance to help the police find Ye Wumei."

"Ten million, that's no small sum!"

Fang Bai knew that the Ye Family of Yuezhou, like the Su Family of Zhongzhou, the Shen Family of Anxi, the Dongfang Family of Yanjing, and the Lu Family, were powerful and influential families in Huaxia. Given Ye Wumei's own status as a superstar known as the "National Sweetheart," her influence was not to be underestimated, no wonder the situation had blown up so much.

Tang Wenrou said, "Ye Wumei disappeared in Yanjing, so our police station is under great pressure. The Ye Family not only demands our Yanjing Police Station to do everything in its power to find her but has also sent many experts from their family to investigate. I really can't imagine who would be bold enough to provoke the Ye Family, this behemoth!"

As Tang Wenrou reached this point in her explanation, she glanced at Fang Bai and saw him deep in thought. She asked, "Besides the ten million reward from the Ye Family, our police station has also offered an additional one million... How about it, are you interested in getting involved?"

Fang Bai smiled, "Eleven million in rewards is indeed tempting, but it won't be easy to claim. Alright, since Officer Tang has given me an opportunity to make a fortune, I'll give it a try!"

Tang Wenrou said, "Judging from the scene of Ye Wumei's disappearance, the person who abducted her must not have acted alone; it's likely a crime syndicate with substantial backing. So, getting involved in this matter carries certain risks. If it weren't for our previous cooperation and the fact that you are a powerful martial artist, I wouldn't have notified you."

"Here is a dossier provided by the Ye Family on Ye Wumei, take a good look at it, I hope it will be of use to you."

In the end, Tang Wenrou handed over a detailed file on Ye Wumei to Fang Bai.

Fang Bai quickly flipped through the profile of Ye Wumei, finding that the record included her age, hobbies, facial features, personality, temperament, and some living habits, among others. There were also a few recent photos of Ye Wumei attached at the end.

"If you come across anything, and you can't deal with it alone, notify me immediately, and I'll bring people to assist you. Remember, never take risks alone."

After Fang Bai had finished looking at Ye Wumei's profile, Tang Wenrou said solemnly.

"Understood."

Fang Bai laughed, saying, "I'm someone who's really afraid of death, so I never play the hero alone. If I encounter danger, I'll definitely run away first, and then get help!"

Tang Wenrou was somewhat skeptical of Fang Bai's words; she knew that Fang Bai wasn't the type to fear death. Otherwise, he wouldn't have risked his life to protect her during the "Fresh Fish Manor" explosion.

Thinking of that explosion, Tang Wenrou still felt a chill in her heart. She glanced at Fang Bai and couldn't help but feel a warmth in her chest, and asked softly, "About the bet you made with National Doctor Qian Haoduo, to remove the scars on your back within a year, how is it going?"

"The scars are still there, but they will be gone soon. Hehe, the ten million in cash from Qian Haoduo is as good as mine! Officer Tang, once I get the ten million, I will treat you to a meal!"

"All right."

After sitting in Tang Wenrou's office for a while and finishing the tea, Fang Bai stood up and prepared to leave.

"By the way, is Nunnery Master Jingxian doing okay?"

Just before leaving, Fang Bai suddenly remembered something.

Some days before, Fang Bai had visited the Lu Family with Tang Wenrou and, on their way back passing by Tang Wenrou's villa, found that Nunnery Master Jingxian had suffered from deviation during her cultivation. It was thanks to Fang Bai's intervention that Nunnery Master Jingxian was saved from disaster.

"My master is doing very well, and moreover, she turned misfortune into a blessing, advancing to Yellow Level Perfection. My master said that if it weren't for your help that time, she would have been left crippled. She asked me to express her gratitude to you on her behalf."

Mentioning her master Nunnery Master Jingxian, a faint smile finally appeared on Tang Wenrou's cool and pretty face.

The news of Ye Wumei's disappearance spread overnight and was almost universally known. After leaving the Yanjing Police Station, wherever Fang Bai went, he could hear people discussing the matter.

When he returned to the courtyard at dusk, Fang Bai found Baili Mingyue sitting under the grape arbor in the yard, daydreaming with somewhat red-rimmed eyes.

"Mingyue, what's wrong?"

Fang Bai thought Baili Mingyue had been bullied again and stepped forward to ask.

"I heard people say that Ye Wumei was kidnapped by bad people..."

Baili Mingyue had only said a sentence when the tears couldn't stop flowing down her face.

"The police will handle this matter, why are you crying?"

Seeing Baili Mingyue crying her eyes out, Fang Bai couldn't help but chuckle dumbfoundedly.

"I... I'm sad!"

Baili Mingyue wiped her tears and said with a sob, "Also, I feel... I feel like it's my fault that Ye Wumei is missing."

Chapter 175: Tracking

"What does that have to do with you? Mingyue, don't drag yourself into everything. It can lead to serious trouble!"

Fang Bai said this with both amusement and annoyance.

"If I hadn't insisted on getting Ye Wumei's autograph, she wouldn't have revealed her identity, nor would she have left that noodle shop, giving the bad guys a chance to take advantage of her..."

"This has nothing to do with you, don't feel guilty."

Fang Bai sat opposite Baili Mingyue, speaking seriously, "The bad guys wanting to kidnap Ye Wumei must have been premeditated, they already had their eyes on her. Even if you weren't there last night, Ye Wumei probably couldn't have avoided the disaster."

"Really?"

"Really!"

Upon hearing Fang Bai's words, Baili Mingyue felt somewhat relieved, but she was still worried about her idol being kidnapped by the bad guys. She stood up, walked over to Fang Bai, grabbed his sleeve, and pleaded, "Fang Bai, you are so powerful, could you catch the bad guys and rescue Ye Wumei? Please, I'm begging you!"

Fang Bai smiled and said, "Then you tell me who kidnapped Ye Wumei, and I'll go catch them right now, okay?"

Baili Mingyue was stunned, then said in a daze, "But... I don't know who kidnapped Ye Wumei!"

"If you don't know, and I don't know, then where am I supposed to go to catch the criminals and rescue Ye Wumei?"

Fang Bai stood up, smiled, and patted Baili Mingyue on the shoulder, saying, "So, this matter needs to be investigated slowly. We just need to figure out who kidnapped Ye Wumei and where they are now, then we can think of a way to save her... Don't worry, the police have already issued a Bounty Order. The criminals will soon be caught, and Ye Wumei will be fine."

Whoosh—

With the sound of the wind, a white figure flashed by, and the Lightning Mink sprang out of nowhere, landing on Fang Bai's shoulder, affectionately rubbing his cheek.

"Little Mink, you can't be lazy at home these next few days. You're going to help me with something."

Fang Bai reached out and touched the smooth white fur of the Lightning Mink, thinking to himself how miraculous this little creature was. No matter what, it always remained spotless, looking like a snowball even if it hadn't bathed for days.

The Lightning Mink's senses were extremely sharp, even Fang Bai had to admit he was no match for it in that regard. Compared to it, those police dogs were nothing.

Moreover, the Lightning Mink was also very powerful; even if it encountered a formidable enemy, it could be a great help.

Therefore, Fang Bai decided to take this little fellow along to investigate Ye Wumei's whereabouts.

The reason why Fang Bai wanted to get involved in Ye Wumei's case was not just for the 11 million yuan reward. The main reason was that during his last visit to Yanjing Police Station, he could tell Tang Wenrou was under great pressure from her superiors. If he could successfully resolve this matter, it would be a big favor to her.

Additionally, Baili Mingyue's plea had also played a role. Fang Bai knew that if Ye Wumei encountered misfortune during this kidnapping, Baili Mingyue would likely be saddened for some time.

Regardless, Baili Mingyue could be considered a friend, and Fang Bai hoped his friends could live happily every day.

"Master, what are you and Little Mink going to do? Can I come with you? Staying in this small courtyard every day is driving me crazy!"

The voice of Ghost Hand floated over, and soon his figure appeared under the grapevine.

Ghost Hand's injuries had long since healed, and after practicing the "Buddha's Fury Golden Staff Technique" taught by Fang Bai for some time, his spirit had returned to peak condition, making him stronger than before.

But hiding every day in the courtyard for cultivation, unable to go out, made him feel like a bird trapped in a cage, both suffocated and wronged.

"You can go out if you want, but you have to wait until Uncle Baili comes back!"

Ghost Hand's wish to fly from the 'cage' was mercilessly crushed by Fang Bai.

"When will Uncle Baili come back?"

Ghost Hand asked pitifully.

"If all goes well, probably in about half a month!"

"Oh my... that long..."

Ghost Hand covered his face with his hands, showing a painful expression.

In fact, Ghost Hand just wanted to go out, but even if Fang Bai had truly agreed, he wouldn't dare to show his face carelessly.

Because he was all too aware that his own strength was not yet sufficient for self-protection, and accidentally running into disciples of the three major sects could mean the end of his life.

Additionally, Ghost Hand was worried that if he ventured outside, it might expose his whereabouts and lead the disciples of the three major sects to the siheyuan, potentially involving his master and Baili Mingyue's mother and daughter.

After chatting with Baili Mingyue and Ghost Hand in the siheyuan for a bit, Fang Bai gave Liu Zhenguo, the director of acupuncture and massage at Yanjing Hospital, a call to ask for leave. Then, he left with Little Mink to investigate Ye Wumei's whereabouts.

A man and a mink, they first arrived at the noodle shop on the food street.

At booth number 7 where Ye Wumei dined last night, Fang Bai had Lightning Mink sniff around, helping it memorize Ye Wumei's scent. Then, following the scent, they went to the small courtyard out back and from there to the alley outside.

Exiting the alley and walking about two hundred meters westward brought them to the scene where Ye Wumei had fought with someone the night before. Here, Lightning Mink circled for a moment and "chittered" a few sentences with Fang Bai.

Fang Bai's face lit up with joy as he stroked the little head of Lightning Mink and swiftly continued west down the street.

Upon reaching an abandoned factory on the outskirts of the city, Fang Bai found a black van. Though the van was burned beyond recognition, he still identified it as the one that had taken Ye Wumei away last night.

If Ye Wumei was indeed kidnapped, the perpetrators probably torched the vehicle to prevent others from tracking them.

However, they certainly would not have anticipated that Lightning Mink was an animal endowed with awakened intelligence, an extreme rarity. Once it had caught Ye Wumei's scent, it could locate any place she had passed through, and even if Ye Wumei were taken to the ends of the earth, she would not be able to escape its pursuit.

Leaving the abandoned factory, they headed north, and after swiftly covering several dozen miles, they arrived at the banks of Black River.

The Black River meandered eastward from there, flowing into Bohai Bay, hundreds of miles away.

"Little Mink, are you sure that scent is headed east?"

Standing by the side of Black River, Fang Bai turned and asked.

Lightning Mink nodded vigorously, brimming with confidence, as if to say, "Trust me, it's right."

"Alright, let's follow the river eastward then!"

Without a second word, Fang Bai displayed his movement technique and sped along the riverbank embankment to the east.

It was now noon, the weather was hot, and there weren't any pedestrians on the dike for most of the day. Fang Bai moved at full speed, his figure darting by so fast that only a faint silhouette was visible. Anyone who saw it would certainly think they had seen a ghost in broad daylight.

A few hundred miles was no challenge for Fang Bai now. He had hardly stopped to rest since he began his frenzied sprint, his True Yuan and physical energy depleting significantly. However, with a supply of Elixirs and Essence Stones in his Spatial Ring, he could always replenish his expended resources.

Fang Bai had also brought plenty of food and water, so there were no worries about sustenance.

Chapter 176: The Island

As dusk fell, a man and a mink had traversed mountains and rivers, sprinting hundreds of miles from Yanjing to reach the seaside.

This was Fang Bai's first time at the seaside since being reborn through body possession.

Standing at the seaside, feeling the sea breeze blowing in his face, a look of delight appeared on Fang Bai's face.

Because within the sea breeze, Fang Bai actually sensed faint Essence Energy, although this Essence Energy was not as concentrated as that within the remote and deep mountains of the inland, it had the advantage of being continuous and unending.

"If I have the opportunity in the future, I'll buy a villa by the sea to settle down, then set up a Gathering Essence Array, and sit in the Array to cultivate facing the sea every morning and evening. The effect must be good."

Fang Bai silently enjoyed the bursts of Essence Energy brought by the sea breeze, musing to himself.

The Lightning Mink clearly also sensed the existence of Essence Energy in the world, letting out excited "squeaks" and displaying great excitement.

"Little Mink, once this matter is over, we can get a handsome reward, and then we'll find ways to make more money. After that, we'll find a suitable place by the seaside to buy a large villa to live in. What do you think?"

Fang Bai asked, patting the little head of the Lightning Mink.

The Lightning Mink excitedly jumped around on Fang Bai's shoulder, firmly agreeing with his suggestion. Then it raised its front paw, pointing towards the vast sea, and let out several "squeaks."

"You mean to say, Ye Wumei has been kidnapped to the sea?"

Fang Bai and the Lightning Mink were standing at a small dock by the seaside. Many fishing boats were moored at the dock, indicating that the nearby fishermen all went out to sea from here to fish.

Squeak—

The Lightning Mink squeaked a few more times, indicating that Ye Wumei's scent was still strong and that she hadn't been at sea for too long. If they pursued now, they might catch up.

"On land, no matter what dangers I face, I have a way to deal with them. But once at sea, it's a lot more troublesome! Little Mink, do you think we should take the risk and continue the pursuit?"

Fang Bai looked at the rolling waves and hesitated a bit.

Squeak, squeak, squeak—

The Lightning Mink squeaked a few times, then bared its teeth at Fang Bai in a mocking grin.

Fang Bai laughed heartily and flicked the Lightning Mink's little head with his finger, saying, "I'm not afraid of dying, but I'm worried that if I lose my life, my family and friends will be very sad. And you, little critter, would have to be buried with me."

The Lightning Mink posed with its front paws on its hips, squeaking more, meaning that as a naturally born swimming expert, even if it fell into the sea, it wouldn't die.

"Alright, since you're not afraid, then let's chase! Swimming definitely won't do, we have to find a boat to go out to sea... Ah, there seems to be a yacht rental over there, let's go check it out!"

As he spoke, Fang Bai ran with Little Mink to a nearby stall that rented yachts to tourists, asked about the prices—the cheapest yacht was a thousand yuan per hour, the more expensive ones were tens of thousands per hour, and if you hired someone to pilot the yacht, the price would double.

Fang Bai glanced briefly, the more expensive yachts were relatively luxurious, better equipped, and faster.

Although Fang Bai didn't know how to pilot a yacht, he had a photographic memory, so learning was not hard for him.

After registering his identity and paying a day's rent, Fang Bai had someone teach him on the spot twice and soon mastered the basics of piloting a yacht.

"Little Mink, we're off!"

In order to catch up with the boat that had kidnapped Ye Wumei as quickly as possible, Fang Bai specially rented a more expensive yacht. After filling the yacht with fuel, it could travel up to 5,000 nautical miles, which should be enough.

One man and one marten boarded the yacht, and following the direction indicated by the Lightning Marten, they sailed full speed towards the southeast.

An hour later, the sky gradually darkened, but the yacht maintained its speed.

About another hour passed, and Little Mink became excited, pointing to the front left and screeching as if it had made some astonishing discovery.

Under the bright moonlight, Fang Bai looked in the direction Little Mink was pointing and saw an island standing several nautical miles away.

"Are you saying that Ye Wumei was kidnapped to that island?"

Fang Bai turned his head to ask the Lightning Marten, and after receiving an affirmative response, he slowed down the yacht's speed and approached the island slowly.

There was a dock on the south side of the island with lit lamps and shadowy figures. It seemed like there were guards, and the yacht would definitely be discovered if it were to sail directly there.

"If we try to forcefully enter from the south, we will inevitably alert the people on the island, and if harm comes to Ye Wumei as a result, it would be more loss than gain. To be safe, let's land from the north side!"

Fang Bai reduced the yacht's speed to its slowest, circled to the north side of the island, and anchored the yacht a few nautical miles away from the shore.

Splash—

With a splash, Fang Bai, accompanied by the Lightning Marten, jumped into the sea and swam towards the island.

Even though it was windy and the waves were high tonight, they did not pose an obstacle for Fang Bai and the Lightning Marten.

There's no need to mention the Lightning Marten—the little creature was in its element once it entered the sea, darting forward over ten meters in a flash and proudly showing off to Fang Bai.

Fang Bai didn't back down either. His "Dragon Soaring to the Heavens" movement technique was not only dominant on land but also effective in the water. With a slight twist of his body, he also covered distances of over ten meters, in no way inferior to the Lightning Marten.

Man and marten quickly landed on the island.

They clambered up the cliffs on the north side and traversed through a lush forest until they spotted a row of houses ahead and then stopped, hiding in a patch of weeds.

Peering through the gaps in the weeds, they could see that the houses were connected, with lights on inside and the occasional laughter of young women emanating from inside, intermixed with a clear, bell-like sound of angry scolding.

Fang Bai's ears perked, and his eyes brightened as he let out the breath he was holding.

Fang Bai had recognized that the bell-like angry scolding was coming from Ye Wumei. Moreover, Fang Bai could sense that Ye Wumei's pulse, heartbeat, and breathing were all normal, indicating that she was unharmed and had not been mistreated.

There was one person guarding each side of the house, and Fang Bai was surprised to find that all four guards were women and that each was a mid-level Yellow Level martial artist.

Each of these four young women, dressed in tight black tops and pants that accentuated their figures, had ear-length hair and were decidedly beautiful.

Inside the house where laughter was occurring, Fang Bai already knew from their emitted essence energy that these were the same women who had kidnapped Ye Wumei near Yanjing's gourmet street the night before.

Based on the appearance of the four women guarding outside, Fang Bai deduced that the figures and appearances of the four women inside were unlikely to be much different.

Fang Bai found it hard to imagine that these eight women, all with superior looks and figures, would belong to a criminal gang responsible for the sensational crime of kidnapping "National Sweetheart" Ye Wumei.

And this island was likely one of their hideouts.

Chapter 177: Human and Mink Collaboration

Kidnappers take hostages for two reasons: one is for money; the other is for vengeance.

If it were for vengeance, these eight women could have killed Ye Wumei and disappeared by now. However, they haven't harmed her yet, which suggests that it's mostly about money.

"Ye Wumei, you don't need to be afraid. As long as you cooperate with us, we won't hurt you,"

said one of the four women inside the room, raising her voice and speaking to Wumei after a round of laughter.

"Who exactly are you? What do you want with me by bringing me here?"

Ye Wumei asked loudly, seemingly unafraid.

Fang Bai couldn't believe that this big star, seemingly delicate and lovely, was so tough. An average woman would have been crying and trembling with fear if she had been kidnapped.

The woman who spoke earlier chuckled: "Who we are is, of course, something we won't tell you, but you should find out soon enough. As for why we brought you here..."

Her voice paused for a moment, and then she sneered, "Our people have already sent a message to the Ye Family. As long as the Ye Family transfers one billion US dollars into our designated account within three days..."

"One billion US dollars... your appetite is too big; you'll choke on it! The Ye Family will never agree to your absurd demands!"

Ye Wumei interrupted the woman angrily before she could finish.

"Hehe, I know the Ye Family is rich, and your father, Ye Xing, as the Family Head, will surely pay the ransom for his only precious daughter. Of course, if Ye Xing refuses to pay, we don't mind killing the hostage."

"You know what 'killing the hostage' means, right? It means sending you off to see the King of Hell... Tsk tsk, such a delicate beauty, it would be such a pity to put a knife to that neck."

"Just kill me now, then!"

"That we cannot do. You are the bargaining chip we're using to negotiate with the Ye Family; killing you would mean an irrevocable break with the Ye Family, and we would gain nothing. So, unless absolutely necessary, we won't touch you."

"Also, kidnapping you isn't just about the one billion US dollars. Besides the money, Ye Xing must also publicly kneel and apologize to Ms. Linghu in front of all Huaxia media. Only then will we let you go."

"Ms. Linghu?"

"That's right, she's our boss."

"Why?"

Ye Wumei loudly asked in confusion, "I've never heard of Ms. Linghu before! My father definitely doesn't know her either! Why does he need to kneel and apologize to her?"

"You're wrong; your father not only knows Ms. Linghu but is also very familiar with her! Hehe, I'd really love to see what Ye Xing looks like when he kneels and apologizes to Ms. Linghu."

"You won't succeed!"

Ye Wumei's voice was filled with anger as she said loudly, "My father will never submit! The Ye Family's martial artists will soon find you and bring you to justice!"

"Great, if Ye Xing is ready for a fight to the death, then we're determined to see it through to the end! Tell me, if Ye Xing loses his only precious daughter, do you think he will be in pain?"

"You... despicable! Shameless!"

"No matter how despicable and shameless we are, we can never compare to Ye Xing's faithlessness and inhumanity, he's worse than a beast!"

Fang Bai's hiding spot was only just over a hundred meters away from the houses, allowing him to hear every word spoken by Ye Wumei and the woman clearly.

From their conversation, Fang Bai discerned some unusual details—it seemed that the group of female kidnappers didn't abduct Ye Wumei solely for money; there were some inexplicable grievances involved.

Especially the phrase "Ye Xing's faithlessness and inhumanity, worse than a beast" led Fang Bai to speculate that there must have been an intriguing past between Ye Wumei's father, Ye Xing, and that "Ms. Linghu", which turned love into hatred, making them enemies.

However, Fang Bai had no interest in meddling in others' grudges and resentments. He only wanted to rescue Ye Wumei and deliver her to Tang Wenrou, which would not only alleviate the pressure Tang Wenrou faced but also award him a generous bounty.

There were eight female kidnappers inside and outside the house. To successfully rescue Ye Wumei, he needed to first take out the four on the outside without alarming the four inside, otherwise startling them would complicate matters.

"Little Mink, it's your time to shine."

After thinking for a few moments, an idea popped into Fang Bai's mind. He patted the Lightning Mink's tiny head and pointed towards the house, making several hand gestures.

Understanding Fang Bai's intent, the Lightning Mink swiftly darted off from his shoulder in the direction of the house.

The Lightning Mink was very small and incredibly fast. At full speed, the four Female Martial Artists guarding the house could not see what it was, only perceiving a flash of white before it appeared inside the house.

"What kind of animal is that little thing? It looks so cute!"

"It looks like a little marten!"

"Strange, how can there be such an animal on this tiny island?"

"I like this little creature! I'm going to catch it and keep it as a pet!"

The four Female Martial Artists responsible for guarding Ye Wumei were feeling bored, but the appearance of the Lightning Mink instantly piqued their interest.

One of them, with a delighted expression, swiftly moved to the door, shut it tight, and then lunged towards the Lightning Mink, intending to snatch the fluffy and adorable little creature to keep as a pet.

The Martial Artist was of the Yellow Level mid-stage and had a movement technique capable of catching up with a galloping wild horse. She thought that catching a small marten in a room of just a few dozen square meters would be a piece of cake.

However, what she didn't expect was that no matter how hard she tried, every time her fingers were about to touch the little marten, it eluded her.

"Oh, it's driving me crazy! This little guy is too cunning! Sisters, stop sitting there and laughing—come help me catch it!"

After trying for a while and expending a significant amount of True Yuan, the Martial Artist was panting with exertion and still hadn't caught the Lightning Mink. She was both angry and frustrated, so she started calling for her companions to help.

The other three Female Martial Artists got up with smiles on their faces and joined the first, taking up positions in four different directions to encircle the Lightning Mink and slowly tighten the circle.

The Lightning Mink lay motionless on the ground, its shiny little eyes constantly moving—whether it was out of fear or preparing to escape was uncertain.

"Let's see where you run this time!"

The four Female Martial Artists moved closer slowly, cutting off all avenues of escape for the Lightning Mink. When the circle had tightened to about ten meters, the Martial Artist who had initially lunged for it transformed her hands into eagle claws and pounced once again towards the Lightning Mink.

As she leaped forward, the Lightning Mink made its move as well.

Chapter 178: Hello, Star Ye!

The Lightning Marten's figure transformed into a streak of white light, swiftly circling the four female warriors before appearing beside Ye Wumei, who was bound up like a zongzi, and let out a light howl.

As its howl sounded, the four female warriors who were trying to capture it seemed to have all the bones sucked out of their bodies and collapsed on the ground simultaneously.

With its speed, the Lightning Marten used its sharp front claws to quickly sever the tendons in the hands and feet of the four female warriors who had encircled it, depriving them of their ability to move, and then notified Fang Bai with a howl that it had dealt with the four women inside the house.

Three of the female warriors were mid-level Yellow Level, and one was a high-rank Yellow Level; joined together, their strength was formidable. However, they were facing a Lightning Marten comparable to a warrior of Profound Level Perfection and had no power to resist.

If the Lightning Marten had wanted to kill them, their tendons would surely not be the only things severed—it would have been their throats.

The Lightning Marten's favorite method of killing was to slice a long gash in the victim's throat with its sharp front claws, allowing the blood to spurt wildly.

"Little Mink is a success!"

With raised eyebrows and a joyous expression, Fang Bai listened to the marten's howl.

Then, he moved swiftly, leaping out of the concealing underbrush like a soaring Dapeng and landed in front of one of the female warriors guarding the house.

Before the female warrior could react, Fang Bai's fingers flickered across her body, striking several points in rapid succession.

The female warrior, her acupoints blocked, immediately collapsed, unable to move or speak, her eyes reflecting horror.

The other three mid-level Yellow Level female warriors almost simultaneously noticed Fang Bai and quickly drew their guns, preparing to shoot at him.

Each of these female warriors was skilled in martial arts and armed with firearms, which could be considered as adding wings to a tiger.

While the use of firearms was often scorned by other martial artists in the Ancient Martial World, it was undeniable that firearms could be quite effective at times.

Especially in current society, for the weaker disciples of the Semi-Hidden Sects, carrying firearms for self-defense had become the norm.

However, using firearms against Yellow Level Martial Artists might be effective to some extent, but using them against warriors of Profound Level Perfection like Fang Bai meant they wouldn't even get the chance to fire a shot.

Before the three female warriors could shoot, Fang Bai slightly raised his arms, and a few inch-long steel needles turned into specks of cold light and sped towards them.

At such a short distance, the speed of the hidden weapons launched by Fang Bai was not much slower than that of bullets.

Whoosh—

Whoosh—

Whoosh—

The needles broke through the air with a faint sound, each embedding in the chests of the three female warriors.

The three could only feel a numbness in their chests, followed quickly by an overwhelming wave of drowsiness sweeping over them. As darkness fell upon their sight, their guns dropped to the ground, and they collapsed into unconsciousness.

Having dealt with the four female warriors outside, Fang Bai pushed open the door and strode in confidently.

At that moment, the four female warriors inside the house lay on the ground, feet to feet, twisting their heads to look at the Lightning Marten perched on Ye Wumei's shoulder, their eyes wide open with expressions of terror,

Ye Wumei, tightly bound, also wore a look of stunned bewilderment, obviously unaware of what had just happened.

"Star Ye, hello!"

Fang Bai walked straight over to Ye Wumei, crouched down, reached for the ropes on her body, and with two fingers, he lightly snipped them, causing the tough and sturdy ropes to break apart.

The Lightning Marten leaped from Ye Wumei's shoulder to Fang Bai's, calling out proudly with a "chirp chirp," apparently boasting about its accomplishment.

Ye Wumei wriggled a few times, freeing herself from the ropes and standing up to move her numb limbs. She glanced at the Lightning Marten with some trepidation, then looked at Fang Bai with confusion and asked, "Who... who are you?"

Yesterday evening, when Ye Wumei was signing a poster for Baili Mingyue, Fang Bai stood to one side; however, Ye Wumei was in a hurry to leave and did not pay close attention to Fang Bai. Therefore, she couldn't recognize him when they met again now.

"I'm here to rescue you,"

Fang Bai answered with a smile.

"Rescue me?"

Ye Wumei's face brightened at first, but then she frowned slightly and asked doubtfully, "Are you the expert my father hired?"

"No,"

Fang Bai shook his head.

"Are you with the police?"

"No."

"Then you..."

"Strictly speaking, I am a doctor. Oh, right, one of my friends is a fan of your singing. Last night, I attended your concert at the Yanjing Sports Stadium with that friend..."

"How did you know I was kidnapped?"

Because Fang Bai's appearance was so sudden, Ye Wumei worried this might be a trick the kidnappers had staged, and she continued to ask cautiously, with a guarded expression.

"That question is quite naive!"

Fang Bai really wanted to refuse answering the question, but to alleviate Ye Wumei's doubts about him, he had no choice but to respond helplessly, "Don't forget, you are a big star watched by tens of thousands. Every move you make attracts a lot of attention. The news of your disappearance and possible kidnapping spread last night, and by this morning, it was all over Huaxia. It would have been weird if I didn't know about it."

"Then why did you come to rescue me?"

This question was what Ye Wumei cared about the most. In her mind, if Fang Bai was neither with the Ye Family nor the police, why would he come to rescue her without any reason?

"I rescued you for three reasons,"

Fang Bai held up one finger and said, "First, for the reward. After your disappearance, the Ye Family and the police offered rewards of ten million and one million respectively for information about you. I wanted the money, so I made a move."

"Second, to help a friend who is a police officer,"

Fang Bai held up a second finger and continued, "My police officer friend currently works at the Yanjing Police Station and is in charge of the case of your disappearance. I know she is under a lot of pressure, so for the sake of our friendship, I helped her out."

"Third..."

Fang Bai held up a third finger, then added, "The friend who went with me to your concert last night is your devoted fan. After learning about your possible kidnapping, she begged me to rescue you, so I came."

Ye Wumei found Fang Bai's earnest words convincing, and after some thought, she asked, "This island is probably a thousand miles away from Yanjing. How did you find this place?"

In Ye Wumei's mind, there were only two ways Fang Bai could have found this place.

First, he witnessed her kidnapping and then tracked her here.

Second, he had an insider within the kidnapping team who could provide real-time information.

But, considering what Fang Bai had just said, it seemed neither of these possibilities existed.

"Actually, I was able to find you thanks to this little guy!"

Fang Bai pointed to the Lightning Marten perched on his shoulder and said, "This little guy has a very sensitive sense of smell. It picked up your scent at the scene of your disappearance last night, and then led me by following your scent..."

Chapter 179: I Can't Swim

Seeing Ye Wumei gazing at the Lightning Mink, seemingly in disbelief, Fang Bai smiled and said, "Do you find it incredible? Yes, if I were you, I'd also find it hard to believe. But it's true—this Little Mink not only led me here but also helped me rescue you... You saw it subdue those four female bandits just now, didn't you?"

"No... I didn't quite catch it..."

Ye Wumei said, a bit embarrassed.

When the Lightning Mink suddenly attacked, it overpowered the four Female Martial Artists in a flash of lightning, so fast that Ye Wumei saw only a streak of white circling the bandits without clearly making out anything else.

"Little Mink's strength is much greater than yours; it's normal you didn't see clearly. Anyway, this little guy played a significant role in successfully rescuing you."

"Is this Little Mink really that powerful? It traversed thousands of miles, braving mountains and rivers, just to find me by following my scent?"

Ye Wumei widened her beautiful eyes, observing Little Mink with interest, still somewhat disbelieving in her tone.

Squeak—

The Lightning Mink waved its two front paws and bared its teeth at Ye Wumei as if it were a bit angry.

"Haha..."

Fang Bai stroked the Lightning Mink's body, soothing it, and smiled at Ye Wumei, "This Little Mink is no ordinary animal—it has awakened its intelligence and understands human speech. We've rescued you, but you doubted us, so it's angry and protesting to you!"

Seeing Little Mink's seemingly human expression of anger, Ye Wumei felt there was something inappropriate in her words, and the smile on Fang Bai's face at that moment also gave her a comforting feeling.

"I'm sorry... I'm sorry... I shouldn't have doubted you, thank you for saving me..."

Ye Wumei's suspicions greatly diminished, and she quickly apologized to both the person and the mink.

Fang Bai waved his hand and said, "Let's save the talk for later; this place might be a hideout for the bandits and isn't safe. We need to leave immediately."

Although they had dealt with the eight Female Martial Artists inside and outside the house, there were still many of their companions at the island's makeshift dock. Although Fang Bai wasn't afraid of them, they could leave without alarming them.

The two, along with the mink, executed their movement technique, darting from the house and through the dense forest, reaching the north side of the island under the bright star and moonlight.

"Our yacht is right ahead. Once we get on the yacht, we could possibly reach the shore in three to five hours if we're fast enough."

Fang Bai stood on the shore and pointed towards the sea a few miles away,

"Yacht? There's nothing there! I don't see anything..."

As a Yellow Level early-stage Martial Artist, Ye Wumei's vision was much better than that of a normal person, but she was far short of Fang Bai. He could faintly make out the silhouette of the yacht, while all she could see was an expanse of sea.

"Let's go, we'll swim over!"

Fang Bai voiced a low command and jumped into the sea with the Lightning Mink.

A dozen meters out, Fang Bai looked back to find Ye Wumei still standing on the shore, her hands tightly clasped in front of her chest in an immensely anxious manner. He swam back and urged, "Come on, get in the water quick!"

"I... I can't swim..."

Ye Wumei looked at Fang Bai with pleading eyes, her voice tinged with a cry.

"No worries, just jump in, and I'll take you across."

Fang Bai hadn't expected Ye Wumei to be a non-swimmer. Seeing her standing by the sea, facing the water as if she were confronting a ferocious beast from ancient times, her face filled with concern and fear, he couldn't help but chuckle inwardly.

"Okay... I'll jump!"

Ye Wumei knew that at this time, being shy and timid would only drag Fang Bai down. She gritted her teeth, closed her eyes, and leaped into the sea.

As a Yellow Level Martial Artist, she could take on several ordinary strong men on land with no problem, but in the water, she immediately panicked. All her martial arts skills were rendered useless. She extended her hands towards the sky, scrambling to grab at anything that might offer support.

"Help...uugh..."

Ye Wumei wanted to shout "save me", but as soon as she opened her mouth, a salty wave of sea water rushed in, burning her nostrils and making her agony unspeakable.

"I'm done for... I'm going to die..."

In that moment, Ye Wumei felt as if she was the only person left in the entire world, utterly alone and tears of misery started to flow.

A not-so-large wave hit her, and Ye Wumei swallowed another mouthful of water, feeling her body start to sink. Despair overwhelmed her.

"Don't be afraid, I'm here!"

Just then, a strong hand grabbed Ye Wumei's left arm, followed by a gentle voice.

Ye Wumei felt as if she had seen a beacon of light in an endless darkness. She rushed towards it desperately and then wrapped her arms around it, fearing that if she let go, it would vanish.

"I say... superstar, can you... not hug so tight? You're... about to strangle me... and I'm suffocating too..."

Fang Bai said, his voice intermittent and muffled.

Ye Wumei's head surfaced, and she breathed deeply, feeling like she had never needed air as much as she did now.

A moment later, Ye Wumei recovered from her panic and felt a warm sensation in her chest. She looked down and was stunned.

At this moment, Ye Wumei, like an octopus, had her arms tightly wrapped around Fang Bai's neck and her legs coiled around his waist, in an extremely ungraceful position.

Furthermore, after embracing Fang Bai, she instinctively tried to stay above water, making her body rise a full head higher than his. Her arms clasped tightly around Fang Bai's neck, burying his face in her chest.

The heat emanating from her chest was the warmth of Fang Bai's breath as he spoke and breathed against her skin.

To make matters worse, it was the height of summer and both of them were lightly dressed. Soaked by the sea, their clothing clung tightly to their skin, making it almost as if they were wearing nothing at all.

Ye Wumei had never been this close to any man in her life. Realizing this, she first froze, then felt her scalp explode, and let out a shrill scream, releasing both her arms and legs.

As a result, with a splash, she fell into the sea once more, and then swallowed another two mouthfuls of sea water.

"Help... save me..."

The moment she hit the water and gulped down sea water, Ye Wumei panicked once again, immediately forgetting what had just happened, desperate to grab onto something.

Being unseemly and embarrassed was certainly better than drinking her fill of sea water and feeding the sharks.

So when Fang Bai extended his arm towards her again, Ye Wumei clung to him just as tightly as before.

This time, Ye Wumei simply shut her eyes tightly, refusing to look at or think about anything, treating Fang Bai as if he were a log.

"Superstar, if you keep hugging me like this, I can't move! We still need to get on the yacht! Actually, you don't need to hug this tightly, you just need to hold onto one of my arms with both your hands, and you won't sink... Don't believe me? Try it... Yes, that's it..."

After Fang Bai patiently explained for quite a while, Ye Wumei finally overcame her psychological fear. She held onto Fang Bai's arm that was extended on the surface of the water, and finding that indeed she wouldn't sink, she finally relaxed.

Chapter 180: Desperate Situation

Thinking back to the inappropriate and embarrassing situation just now, Ye Wumei's somewhat pale cheeks flushed with two spots of red, and her body felt somewhat hot and weak.

As Ye Wumei settled down, Fang Bai also let out a long sigh of relief.

Fang Bai was in the prime of his youth, and the unconscious movements made by Ye Wumei earlier had stirred up his desires. He recited the "Calm Heart Mantra" in his mind over and over to forcefully suppress the urges that had risen within him.

Sigh—

Fang Bai exhaled deeply and began to swim towards the yacht with a one-armed stroke, moving as smoothly as a fish.

When the two got onto the yacht, the Lightning Mink had been waiting for a while already, its unique white fluffy fur originally sopping wet, but after rapidly shaking itself a few times, it was completely dry and even more lustrous and sleek than before.

"Here are my clothes, you go inside and change first. Though they won't fit properly, it's still more comfortable than staying in wet clothes," Fang Bai said after starting up the yacht, pulling out a set of clothes for Ye Wumei from his Space Ring on his finger.

Ever since he had the Spatial Ring, he would often store some essentials like food, drinks, and clothing inside it, which made going out very convenient.

Ye Wumei found it astonishing how Fang Bai magically produced a clean set of clothes out of nowhere.

However, at this moment, she was not in the mood to ask questions, quickly entering the yacht's cabin to take off her wet clothes and change into Fang Bai's.

Although Ye Wumei was more than 1.7 meters tall, rather tall among women, Fang Bai's clothes were still several sizes too large for her.

Nevertheless, this also covered up the contours of her beautiful and shapely body, which had been accentuated by her wet clothes clinging to her, thus preventing Fang Gang from getting carried away with wild thoughts and desires.

After starting up, the yacht returned at full speed following the same path they had come from.

With the Lightning Mink guiding them, the yacht's navigation equipment was almost unnecessary.

After two or three hours of sailing through the night, the Lightning Mink suddenly started to leap up and down beside Fang Bai, making strange noises.

Fang Bai's brows furrowed as he looked through the cockpit windows at the surrounding sea, his expression growing increasingly serious.

"What's wrong?"

Seeing the Lightning Mink, which had been quietly lying on Fang Bai's shoulder, suddenly become anxious, and Fang Bai's expression turning grave, Ye Wumei couldn't help but feel tense.

"Someone is chasing us!" Fang Bai said in a grave tone, "If I'm not mistaken, it could be the accomplices of those who kidnapped you!"

"Are there many of them?"

Ye Wumei thought to herself that the eight Yellow Level Martial Artists who had been guarding her on the island had been effortlessly taken care of by Fang Bai and the Lightning Mink. If there weren't too

many pursuers and their strength was also at the Yellow Level, Fang Bai and the Lightning Mink should be able to handle them.

"There must be a lot of them... otherwise, Little Mink wouldn't be so anxious. It must have sensed a significant threat," Fang Bai said with a solemn voice.

"What do we do?"

"There's no way around it, we can only take it one step at a time," Fang Bai said, then fell silent, narrowing his eyes and pricking up his ears, quietly listening and watching.

A moment later, Fang Bai finally spotted four yachts appearing behind them on the sea.

The four yachts, all equipped with searchlights, were not only much larger than the one Fang Bai was driving but also almost twice as fast, visibly closing the distance at a rapid pace.

"Four yachts... each with eight people on board..."

When the chasing yacht closed in to within three hundred meters, Fang Bai, relying on his powerful sensory ability, finally figured out the detailed situation of the people on board.

"Thirty-two people... all martial artists?"

Ye Wumei's heart hung suspended, and she asked anxiously.

"Yes, thirty-two people, all martial artists."

"What kind of strength do they have?"

This was the question Ye Wumei cared about the most.

If the martial artists in pursuit were not strong, they might still stand a fighting chance even if they were caught, but if each one of the adversaries was outstanding, then they would be in big trouble.

"On each yacht, there is one Profound Level Martial Artist, and the others are Yellow Level Martial Artists."

"There are four Profound Level Martial Artists?"

Ye Wumei exclaimed in shock, her complexion turning pale suddenly.

Ye Wumei was just a lower-tier Yellow Level Martial Artist; to her, Profound Level Martial Artists were beings far above her, capable of crushing her with a flick of their finger.

Although Ye Wumei guessed that Fang Bai and that Lightning Mink were also Profound Level Martial Artists, they were about to face four Profound Level Martial Artists, in addition to twenty-eight Yellow Level Martial Artists. Outnumbered and outpowered, the situation was grim.

The four yachts quickly closed the distance to about a hundred meters, with two of them suddenly accelerating and maneuvering to the front from either side of the yacht driven by Fang Bai.

"Ye Wumei, Miss Ye, I know you are on that yacht... heh, it's surprising that our people were watching so closely, and yet you almost managed to escape... To knock down our eight people silently and without a trace, it seems that the person who saved you is not weak!"

A woman's voice suddenly came from the yacht on the front left.

The woman was speaking using the yacht's loudspeaker system; her voice could travel over a thousand meters, and both Ye Wumei and Fang Bai heard it clearly.

"If our people weren't alert, and had we found out you had escaped one or two hours later, it really wouldn't have been easy to catch up to you. Now you are trapped, with nowhere to run. Stop the yacht obediently and wait for us to come over and arrest you! Otherwise..."

The woman continued to shout, her voice suddenly growing stern, and she said loudly, "Otherwise we will sink your little yacht, and then, Miss Ye, your life will be over."

No sooner had she finished than a barrage of bullets came shooting toward the yacht driven by Fang Bai.

The rain-like bullets hit the yacht, producing loud "bang bang" noises; it was probably a warning from the pursuers, meant to compel Ye Wumei to stop the boat.

"It looks like they are ready to get serious..."

Fang Bai's gaze was fixed on the two yachts at the front, and his pupils suddenly constricted.

Because he clearly saw that on the two yachts at the front, not only were there people aiming guns at them, but there were also individuals shouldering portable missiles.

Ye Wumei apparently saw the missiles as well and immediately turned as white as a sheet, biting her lip silently in despair.

Although they were martial artists and ordinary gun bullets might not necessarily be fatal to them, they were utterly incapable of contending with powerful heat weapons like portable missiles.

If the yacht were hit by a missile, they would likely be killed instantly.

Even if they miraculously survived, what chance of survival would they have in the vast sea?

"In a moment, I'll take you to jump into the sea. Don't panic. Hold your breath before you hit the water... as long as you possibly can. You must believe in me; I have a way to escape with you. If you really can't hold your breath any longer while underwater, push me... Remember, no matter what I do, don't struggle or resist..."

After exchanging a few words with the Lightning Mink, Fang Bai suddenly turned his head to look at Ye Wumei, quickly conveying these instructions to her.

Despite not knowing where Fang Bai's confidence came from, Ye Wumei still took a deep breath and nodded, saying, "I'll listen to you!"