

## Martial Arts 551

Chapter 551: Leaving Without Saying Goodbye

Everyone in the large conference room seemed to have been struck by lightning; their minds buzzed, their mouths half-open, but no words came out.

In their understanding, powerhouses like their Chairman must have already thought of an escape plan upon hearing this news.

With his strength, he could easily go to any large city within Yan Country if he wanted to. Even the three super-large cities wouldn't be difficult to reach if he set his mind to it.

It was already very rare for him to inform them a day or two in advance.

But the Chairman just said he would stay behind?

"Yes, you heard correctly, and I didn't misspeak," Chen Fan said calmly.

He gazed at everyone steadily, "I will stay and defend Anshan City until the day it falls."

Every word he spoke was powerful and echoed through the entire conference room, striking deeply into everyone's heart.

Several people's faces immediately lit up with a trace of joy.

Because not everyone had an escape route.

Most of them were D-level Awakened. Impressive to ordinary people, yet, among the Awakened, they were undeniably at the bottom tier. If they left Anshan City, they would have nowhere to go.

But if the Chairman stayed behind, perhaps they and their families could remain as well.

However, more people were still deeply worried.

According to what the Chairman had said earlier, the Fierce Beasts were serious this time; Anshan City couldn't hold out.

Xie Ming and several others regained their composure from the shock at that moment.

They looked at each other, incredulous, wondering if they were dreaming.

"Alright, I've said what I needed to say; the meeting is over now," Chen Fan glanced at the clock and walked off the platform.

"Cha-Chairman."

Someone raised a hand, eyes filled with a hint of pleading, "What about us? Do we stay or leave?"

"Yeah, Chairman, if you stay, should we stay with you? Can Anshan City be saved?"

"Chairman, you're so powerful; please teach us what to do?" Several voices chimed in.

Chen Fan paused, not turning around, and slowly began to speak, "This time is different from before. I will not command you as the Chairman. Therefore, no matter what choice you make, just make sure you do not regret it yourself."

With that, he stepped out.

"Chairman!"

"Chairman!"

Watching Chen Fan disappear in front of them, everyone felt as if they had lost their pillar of support, slumping into their chairs in dejection.

The large conference room became silent once again.

Someone noticed Hua Jun still sitting there and immediately spoke up, "Chairman Hua, will you stay or...?"

Everyone's eyes turned toward him.

"I will probably stay," Hua Jun said with a wry smile.

For one, if he didn't stay, he had nowhere else to go.

For another, a voice inside him told him to trust the Chairman.

If he dared to make such an unexpected decision, perhaps there was a chance — despite this Beast Tide being unusual — that Anshan City might still hold out in the end?

Their spirits lifted.

"However, the Chairman is right. It's ultimately your choice," Hua Jun said with a bitter smile as he stood up and headed for the door.

"Bro, what about us?"

Someone whispered among Xie Ming's group, their faces grim.

They had already decided to leave.

They came here to inform Hua Jun and hoped to connect with Chairman Li to see if they could travel together for some protection.

But unexpectedly, Chairman Li chose to stay...

What should they do now?

Stay too?

They didn't have the strength of an A-level Awakened. When the city fell, they wouldn't be able to leave even if they wanted to.

Leave?

It was hard enough to enter large cities, even the medium-sized ones were challenging for C-level Awakened like them. Now, especially with things being so volatile, the journey itself would be fraught with danger.

"Let's go," Xie Ming said through gritted teeth, making up his mind.

Knowing that staying was a dead end, they might as well leave and perhaps find a sliver of hope.

"Shouldn't we at least tell the Chairman?" a woman hesitated.

After all, they had stayed here for a while.

Maybe telling him would change their fortunes?

"No need," Third Brother sighed, seeing through her thoughts, "Didn't you hear the Chairman? Whatever decision we make, he won't stop us. Leaving unannounced might spare us some awkwardness."

They remained silent for a moment, then rose and left the room.

Watching this, others felt restless inside.

If even Brother Xie's group, genuine C-level Awakened, were leaving, wouldn't it be easier to travel with them?

As for whether they could enter the city with them, that would be a problem for later. It was better than staying here to die.

Someone hesitated for a moment before getting up to quickly follow them out.

More people remained seated, unsure of what to do.

"I think we should stay," someone suggested, "We're from Anshan City. At a time like this, staying and defending it makes sense, doesn't it?"

Chapter 552: Leaving Without Saying Goodbye\_2

"I think so too. Didn't we manage to hold off the previous Beast Tides as well?"

"Hmph, you did say the previous ones," a cold voice interrupted, "Didn't you hear what the chairman said earlier? This time is different, it's comparable to the one ten years ago. Do you think Anshan City could hold off if it were like ten years ago?"

"Even if it's not the scale of ten years ago, it's still very difficult for us. Have you all forgotten how many people die every time a Beast Tide erupts in Anshan City? Not just ordinary people, but quite a few of us Awakeners die as well."

The meeting room fell silent again.

Yes, even if they managed to hold off, many of them would still die.

"But if we leave, where could we go?" someone sighed, "Small cities might take us in, but medium-sized cities only recruit at least C-level Awakened, right?"

"Maybe they'll take us in?" someone said hopefully, "The situation isn't the same now, they need a lot of manpower to defend the city. Even if we're just D-level Awakened, we're still more useful than ordinary people and Martial Artists, right?"

"That's true, maybe we should give it a try?"

After leaving the meeting room, Hua Jun didn't go back to his office but took several turns and arrived at Chen Fan's office door.

Just as he raised his hand to knock, a voice came from inside.

"Come in."

Hua Jun breathed a sigh of relief. On his way here, he had been worried that the chairman wasn't in the office and had gone somewhere else.

But that possibility should be very small.

After pushing the door open and entering, a figure stood in front of the window, gazing into the distance.

Hua Jun quietly closed the door and softly asked, "Chairman, did you expect me to come?"

"Not exactly."

Chen Fan turned around and looked at him, "I just guessed you might come."

He said, walking to his desk and sitting down, "Tell me, what did you come for? If you are seeking my advice, there's no need for that."

"No need."

Hua Jun said quickly, "Chairman, I've thought it through. I've decided to stay and defend Anshan City with you."

"Are you sure?"

Chen Fan asked.

"I'm sure."

Hua Jun gritted his teeth and then nodded heavily.

"Good, as long as you don't regret it."

Chen Fan nodded.

"?"

Hua Jun was taken aback.

"What's wrong? Does something seem strange?"

"A little, yes."

Hua Jun gave a wry smile, "I thought you would tell me how dangerous it is to stay and ask me to think it over carefully."

"It's indeed very dangerous to stay. Even I don't have absolute confidence in winning."

Chen Fan sighed lightly, "But as I said, I won't interfere with your choices. Since you've decided to stay, then let's prepare. The Beast Tide will probably reach here by tomorrow."

"Yes, Chairman!"

Hua Jun shivered in excitement, his eyes showing a spark of determination.

He came here to see if the chairman really intended to stay.

It seems he did.

There was no rousing pre-battle speech, but he knew, his chairman was such a person.

As for Anshan City's fate after the Beast Tide arrival.

They could only do their best and leave the rest to fate.

...

Time slowly passed.

The ordinary people in the city also sensed something was off.

Large numbers of guards appeared on the city walls, trucks loaded with ammunition drove on the roads, and many guards with loaded guns patrolled the city. Meanwhile, notices were posted in prominent places.

The surrounding crowd immediately gathered to see.

Before long, their faces turned pale, bodies trembling, with some almost falling to the ground.

It was a call-to-arms notice.

Because the Beast Tide was about to erupt, the City Lord's Mansion was urgently recruiting young men to enlist and defend the city, offering good benefits.

If they were Martial Artists, there would be additional rewards.

Those interested could go to the City Lord's Mansion to sign up immediately, effective long-term.

These notices were posted all over the streets and alleyways, spreading quickly throughout Anshan City.

The once bustling Anshan City immediately fell silent, with an air of fear lingering around.

Those who survived to this point had all experienced multiple Beast Tides and knew exactly what that meant.

Some saw it as an opportunity and, after a moment of hesitation, resolutely headed towards the City Lord's Mansion.

Rather than waiting to die inside the city, they'd rather pick up weapons and fight the Fierce Beasts outside.

After all, they ended up in such a plight because of the Fierce Beasts. If not for Chairman Li of the Anshan City Awakened Association taking them in, they'd still be outside struggling to sleep peacefully at night.

Moreover, becoming a guard meant they would get three meals a day with meat, receive firearms and armor, and earn a decent salary. If they were unfortunate enough to die in battle, their families would get a substantial compensation.

Such conditions were already quite good for ordinary people.

Of course, some also noticed that vehicles formed convoys leaving the city during these tense times. Through the windows, they saw not only adults but also elderly and children.

Among them were familiar faces, which made them quickly withdraw their gazes in fright, not daring to look further, wondering to themselves if those in the cars were Awakeners. Were they planning to leave now with their families?

In a spacious office in the Awakened Association, desks filled the room with many people seated behind them, the sound of keyboard typing incessant.

Several people in military uniforms sat upright, not daring to make a sound.

People frequently came in, picked up documents, and left in a hurry.

"Ring, ring."

A phone rang urgently, and Hua Jun answered it. After a few murmurs, he hung up, looking at Chen Fan with a complex expression, "Chairman, Xie Ming and the others just left."

The typing suddenly paused, and many faces showed astonishment.

At such a critical moment, several C-level Awakeners in the city actually left?

What?

"Hmm."

Chen Fan nodded.

This outcome was not unexpected. If they had intended to stay, they would have come earlier, not waited until now.

He looked at the sky; it was already twilight, the sky ablaze with a beautiful glow, resembling the calm before the storm.

The next moment, he stood up and said:

"Starting today, city patrols will be twenty-four hours. Anyone who tries to cause trouble at this time will be executed without mercy."

"Yes!"

Hua Jun quickly responded.

The guards in military uniforms also stood up and saluted.

Leaving the Awakened Association, Chen Fan took out his Martial Arts Association phone, seeing over a dozen missed calls, many from Gu Ze, with messages filled with urgency.

The others were from Sun Wei and others in the Martial Arts Association, clearly in response to the notice he had posted earlier in the afternoon.

His family, having already been informed and mentally prepared, hadn't sent any messages.

"I need to get back, both to the Martial Arts Association and the village."

Chen Fan thought, putting away his phone and heading towards the Martial Arts Association.

Once he dealt with these matters, he would study the Longevity Technique to enhance his combat strength.

Thinking about it, he couldn't help but feel a bit of anticipation.

Even though the third volume of the Longevity Technique was just a Supreme-level Martial Arts, it was unlike any other typical Supreme-level Martial Arts.

He wondered what effects it would have at the Perfection Realm.

Chapter 553: Opportunity Arises

This evening, the Martial Arts Association was unusually quiet.

The hall that was usually bustling with people had its numbers reduced by half.

Those who remained, along with some staff members, seemed listless and sighed frequently.

Until the tranquility was broken by a soft sound of footsteps.

"Is it Brother Chen?"

An eagle-eyed person recognized Chen Fan.

"Brother Chen? Is it him?"

"Is it really him?"

Many people widened their eyes in surprise, thinking, "Is this the Chen Fan everyone spoke about, whose strength is fathomless?"

"Brother Chen, you're back."

Someone raised a hand to greet him.

"Brother Chen, have you just returned? Do you know what happened in the city?"

"Yes, something major happened in the city this afternoon!"

"Are you talking about the beast tide?"

Chen Fan said, "I saw it on my way back."

"Yes, it's about the beast tide." The speaker lowered their head.

"How did a beast tide suddenly break out?"

"Indeed, it was so sudden, no one was prepared at all."

"Those fierce beasts are the enemies of our human race. If they really launched an attack, it would be strange for them to notify us, wouldn't it? However, according to the notice, the beast tide will likely reach the outskirts of Anshan City by tomorrow or the day after. Sigh."

Worried voices echoed from all around.

They were only slightly stronger than ordinary people.

If that day came, it would be easy for them to die in the beast tide.

"Don't worry. When the car reaches the mountain, there will be a way through," Chen Fan said with a smile, "Maybe this time, Anshan City can be defended again?"

The awakening ones in the city had options in such situations.

Although some of them had mediocre combat abilities, their special superpowers were valued by the Awakened Association of medium and large cities, and they might be recruited into the city.

But these people in front of him didn't even have a choice.

"Really?"

Upon hearing his words, the crowd's eyes lit up, regaining some spirit.

"Brother Chen, is what you said true? Can Anshan City really be defended?"

"It should be possible."

Chen Fan smiled and said,

"In previous beast tides, Anshan City has always held out. This time, it should also be able to hold out. Moreover, I heard that the new president of the Awakened Association is an A-level Awakened, much stronger than the previous presidents. If he chose to stay, then we should be able to defend the city."

"Really? An A-level Awakened?"

"There's an A-level Awakened in charge in Anshan City?"

"Is it true? I heard that Awakened of this level could only be found in large cities. How could such a small city like ours attract such a powerhouse?"

Everyone's faces showed expressions of disbelief.

"I just heard about it."

Chen Fan smiled, "We'll know for sure when the time comes."

At that moment, a voice rang out.

"Brother Chen, you're back?"

Xu Jie appeared from the elevator entrance without anyone noticing. He looked at the crowd in the hall and said, "The president and the others are in the meeting room. Would you like to come and have a look?"

"Sure."

Chen Fan responded and smiled at the people present before walking towards Xu Jie.

As the elevator doors closed, the previously quiet hall was filled with discussions again.

"Brother Chen just said there's an A-level Awakened in the Awakened Association. Is it true?"

"I'm not sure. Our Martial Arts Association's relationship with the Awakened Association has been quite distant in recent years, with barely any contact."

"Since Brother Chen said it, it should be true, right? That's Brother Chen, even our president listens to him obediently."

"But that's an A-level Awakened! A big shot like the president."

The discussions continued.

Chen Fan followed Xu Jie to the meeting room.

When they opened the door, more than ten people were seated inside. Many of them were new faces, evidently Entry Force Martial Artists who had joined the association recently.

"Brother Chen, you're here."

Sun Wei, who was sitting in the chief seat, immediately stood up from his chair, forcing a smile.

A few others, including Gao Shan, also got up.

The others seemed a bit at a loss, unsure whether to stand up or remain seated.

"President."

Chen Fan smiled at him.

"Let me introduce him to everyone. This is Brother Chen Fan, our association's number one person."

Sun Wei introduced to the new faces, "I was able to break through from Transforming Force to the Meridian Refining Realm all thanks to Brother Chen."

Upon hearing this, several people hurriedly stood up from their chairs and cupped their fists in greeting towards Chen Fan.

They had heard this rumor before but were half-believing. Now, hearing it from the president himself, it carried more weight.

"Everyone, please sit. No need for formalities." Chen Fan waved his hand.

"Sit down."

Sun Wei nodded to everyone.

He had actually been waiting for Chen Fan to return, and had even made a phone call along the way, but no one answered.

Chen Fan also took a seat and said, "President, you called me here probably to ask about the beast tide, right?"

"Yes."

Sun Wei sighed, "We only received the news in the afternoon that the beast tide had broken out. I couldn't believe it in my heart, it was too sudden, without any prior signs."

Not long after, headquarters sent an email notifying the presidents in each district about this matter. Only then did I have to believe it was true. Brother Chen, what do you think we should do next?"

Chapter 554: Opportunity Arises\_2

In the room, more than a dozen pairs of eyes turned to look.

"President, what is your choice?"

Chen Fan did not rush to answer, but instead asked a question in return.

"Us?"

Sun Wei and others exchanged a glance.

"Brother Chen, to speak without fear of you laughing, we've discussed for so long, yet we still don't know what the best course of action is," Xu Jie, who was sitting by the door, said with a bitter smile.

"Yes, if we stay, it's probably a dead end. The President received news that this time, the beast tide is more ferocious than before. Anshan City, being a small city, likely cannot hold out," Tu Yue said, glancing at Sun Wei.

"That's correct," Sun Wei nodded, "The email we received from headquarters particularly emphasized this point, suggesting we prepare for the worst, and if possible, it's best to head to a safer place."

"Heading to a safer place is easier said than done," someone interjected, "I heard that a lot of Awakeners have already left the city by car, which indicates the situation may indeed be bleak. But even if we decide to leave, where to go is another question entirely."

"Yes, yes."

Many voices echoed in agreement.

"Alright."

Chen Fan nodded slightly. He could tell that everyone actually wanted to leave, but were helpless because they had no way out.

"Brother Chen, what about you?" someone asked, "Are you staying or leaving?"

The room immediately fell silent.

"I will stay."

Chen Fan replied without hesitation.

"?"

Everyone was shocked.

They were not only surprised by the answer but also by his tone, which was so decisive and without the slightest hesitation.

"Brother Chen, you, you're going to stay?" Xu Jie gaped.

In private, some of them had mentioned to Sun Wei that Chen Fan had quite a close relationship with the President. If Chen Fan went to the headquarters, it wouldn't be much of an issue.

Could they possibly hitch a ride with him?

When Sun Wei heard, he could only shake his head with a bitter smile, saying the matter wasn't as simple as they thought.

Yet Chen Fan's words now were far beyond their expectations.

"That's right."

Chen Fan nodded slightly; he had already told Chang Fei and the others in the morning, so it was natural to repeat it to Sun Wei and the rest.

After listening, Sun Wei and the others held him in high regard.

After all, if they were in Chen Fan's place, they probably would have left a long time ago.

At the same time, they were all somewhat curious about what realm Chen Fan had reached. Meridian Refining Realm? Or True Essence Realm?

If he was only at the Meridian Refining Realm, shouldn't he lack the confidence to say such things?

"Brother Chen, what if one day Anshan City falls?" Sun Wei couldn't help but ask.

"I hope that day never comes."

Chen Fan showed a bitter smile.

If it truly came to that, besides his own family, he could only save a few if he could.

"Yes, I really hope that day never comes," Sun Wei sighed.

If possible, who wouldn't hope that Anshan City could hold out? It would be best if the beast tide never happened at all.

"Since Brother Chen is staying, I will stay too."

Gao Shan said, "I was here during the last two beast tides, so there's no reason not to be here this time."

"Yes, and since we don't know where else to go, we might as well stay."

"I'll stay too. Let's all protect Anshan City together."

Voices rose one after another.

Because for most of them, Anshan City was already the best place they could find.

Seeing this, Chen Fan smiled slightly and said, "Then let's work hard together."

"Yes, work hard together!"

Everyone nodded heavily.

Because they were protecting not just their own lives, but also their families.

If they did not resist with all their might, when the city fell, they might be able to escape, but it wouldn't be so easy for their parents and wives to leave.

"Alright, this meeting has lasted long enough; everyone should disperse and start preparing,"

Sun Wei coughed.

"Don't overthink it. Thinking too much is useless. We'll find out what happens when the time comes."

"Yes, President."

"President, we'll head back now."

"My wife has been calling me all afternoon. I need to go back and comfort her."

"Yes."

Everyone got up to leave.

"By the way, Brother Chen, there's something I forgot to tell you," Sun Wei suddenly remembered and called out to Chen Fan, who was also about to leave.

"What is it, President? Please speak,"

Chen Fan showed that he was all ears.

"Someone came to challenge us this morning."

Sun Wei smiled wryly.

"Someone came to challenge? Here?" Chen Fan was taken aback, pointing to the ground.

"Yes, it was a woman, quite pretty, and no one in our whole association knew her.

However, despite being a woman, her strength is not ordinary, especially her body technique. Even I couldn't see through her. She claimed to be a True Essence Realm Martial Artist.

I feel that even if she's not in the True Essence Realm, she has at least opened six or seven of her Eight Extraordinary Meridians and is only a step away from the True Essence Realm." Sun Wei said seriously.

"I see."

Chen Fan had a strange expression on his face.

A strange young woman claiming to be in the True Essence Realm.

A person came to mind.

Could it be Wang Lingling? After borrowing the Longevity Technique from him and getting bored, she came here to stir up trouble?

"Yes, Brother Chen. After hearing the comments around, she learned about you and said she would come tonight to have a match with you."

"..."

Chen Fan was speechless.

At a time like this, she still had the mind to spar?

No, even if the beast tide wasn't imminent, he had no interest in sparring with her.

"President! President!"

A rush of footsteps could be heard.

"President! Brother Chen!"

Xu Jie hurried over, pointing to the hall downstairs, "That woman is here again, asking if Brother Chen has returned and wants to spar."

"This..."

Sun Wei looked at Chen Fan.

From a selfish perspective, he hoped Chen Fan would face her and defeat her to regain some reputation for their association.

However, he knew he had no right to ask Chen Fan to do so.

"Let's go take a look."

An idea formed in Chen Fan's mind.

In one afternoon, nearly half of the members of the Awakened Association had left.

The remaining members were generally of average strength.

If he wasn't in the city and something unexpected happened, these people might not be able to handle it.

But with Wang Lingling, a True Essence Realm Martial Artist, it would be much easier.

He had been thinking all along about how to get this woman to agree.

Now it seemed, the opportunity had arrived.

...

"Where is he? Why hasn't he come out yet?"

In the hall, Wang Lingling, wearing a clean set of clothes, stood with her hands on her hips, imposing in presence.

"Didn't they say he was back? Why doesn't he dare to see me? Could he be scared?"

She squinted her eyes and sneered, "In the morning, I heard you all praising this Chen so highly, heaven above and earth below, and this is it? So disappointing."

Well, admitting defeat isn't that bad. After all, I'm too strong. It's normal for your people not to be my match. But hiding like a turtle with its head withdrawn into its shell is quite disgraceful, isn't it?"

Everyone present dared not speak, each lowering their heads.

They had experienced her strength firsthand.

"Who is hiding like a turtle, not daring to come out?"

A voice echoed.

"It's Brother Chen!"

"Brother Chen is here!"

Everyone turned to see a group of people walking towards them.

Chapter 555: You Won, You Can Set Any Terms

Walking at the front, naturally it was Chen Fan.

While Sun Wei and the others followed behind.

The people in the hall, upon seeing this scene, couldn't help but show a trace of surprise on their faces.

Wang Lingling's gaze also shifted over.

She sized up Chen Fan for a moment, frowned slightly, then crossed her arms and snorted coldly, "Are you the Chen Fan that everyone praises?"

"That's me."

Chen Fan looked at her, feeling a bit speechless inside.

After all, they had met, not just once, but even interacted this morning.

Of course, he wouldn't go out of his way to reveal his true identity to the other party.

"It really is you."

Wang Lingling nodded, glanced at Sun Wei, and said, "Your president should have told you what happened earlier, right?"

Upon hearing this, everyone present felt a bit embarrassed.

Although being outmatched isn't something worth discussing.

But the one in front of them, who is quite young, losing to her was indeed quite disgraceful.

"Told me, so are you here now to have a sparring session with me?" Chen Fan asked with a smile.

"That's right."

Wang Lingling responded straightforwardly, "I've heard that you're the strongest here. My realm is the True Essence Realm, what's yours? If it's not the True Essence Realm, I think there won't be any suspense in the outcome later."

With that, the field fell silent, and everyone's eyes were on Chen Fan.

Including Sun Wei, who deep down had long been curious about Chen Fan's true realm but felt awkward to ask.

"My realm?"

Chen Fan smiled, "It's also the True Essence Realm."

The whole place was in an uproar at once.

"My goodness, Brother Chen is actually already in the True Essence Realm!"

"Isn't that too strong? Even at headquarters, there aren't many True Essence Realm martial artists, right?"

"No wonder he was walking at the forefront earlier, even the president was polite to him, he's truly a True Essence Realm martial artist!"

Though everyone had some expectations, hearing this directly from the person involved, they were still shocked.

"Brother Chen really is a True Essence Realm martial artist now." Sun Wei thought, recalling how Chen Fan was just an Entry Force Martial Artist when he first joined the association.

After some time, now he had reached the True Essence Realm; the speed of his cultivation was as fast as a rocket.

"You're also in the True Essence Realm?"

Wang Lingling's face showed a hint of displeasure.

She came here for a sparring match, mainly to show off, as martial artists her age in the True Essence Realm were rare.

Yet the person before her, looking even younger, was also in the True Essence Realm?

"Alright."

She grinned, revealing a hint of fighting spirit in her eyes, "Since you're also a True Essence Realm martial artist, let's spar and see who's better."

The atmosphere in the field instantly became tense.

Everyone looked at Chen Fan then Wang Lingling, hoping the former would thoroughly defeat the latter to vent their frustrations.

However, what Chen Fan said next made them freeze.

"Sorry, I have things to attend to, and I don't have the time to spar with you here."

"?"

Wang Lingling was also taken aback and then laughed, "Don't tell me you're saying this because you know you're not my match?"

Chen Fan shook his head and said, "You should be aware of what's happening in the city. Perhaps the beast tide will arrive tomorrow, with time for sparring, it's better spent on cultivation, maybe increasing our strength a bit more."

Wang Lingling's mouth slightly opened, momentarily left speechless.

Around them, people's expressions became grave.

"It's just a beast tide?"

Wang Lingling pouted.

With her strength, she couldn't stop the beast tide, but escaping wouldn't be difficult.

"All that talk, you're just afraid of losing, unwilling to spar with me?"

"Afraid of losing?"

Chen Fan smiled.

"Do you think I'm not your match?"

"What else?"

Seeing that her goading worked, Wang Lingling enthusiastically added, "If you're a man, spar with me, don't make excuses, dare you?"

"Alright."

Chen Fan's smile widened.

She was using goading tactics.

He was also playing along.

"Since we're going to spar, why not add a little bet to make it more interesting, do you dare to agree?"

Wang Lingling's eyes immediately narrowed.

Although usually alert, she smelled a hint of danger.

Everyone who had been annoyed with her started encouraging her.

"Miss, weren't you shouting confidently just now? Elder Chen agreed to spar, why are you hesitating now?"

"Haha, I think she's scared? Maybe she was just bluffing initially."

"Girl, if you don't dare agree, just say it, don't be so hesitant."

"Who said that!"

Sure enough, Wang Lingling got angry and looked at everyone, "Who said I'm not his match. I just didn't expect him to propose adding a bet."

Then, she turned to Chen Fan, "You first say what bet you want to add, I'll consider whether to agree."

"Alright."

Chen Fan replied, "It's simple, the loser has to agree to do one thing for the winner."

"The loser has to do one thing for the winner?"

Wang Lingling's face was full of suspicion, "Do what?"

This guy can't be planning something against me, right?

Although she felt, with her strength, she wouldn't lose, but as the saying goes, a gentleman doesn't stand under a dangerous wall, if his request is too much, she won't agree.

Chapter 556: You Won, You Can Set Any Terms\_2

"If you lose, you have to stay and help us defend Anshan City," Chen Fan said.

"Defend Anshan City?"

"Defend Anshan City?"

Exclamations arose in succession.

Soon, everyone's gaze at Chen Fan was filled with admiration.

Such clever planning!

Having one more True Essence Realm Martial Artist to help resist the Fierce Beasts would greatly increase the chances of defending Anshan City.

"So that's Brother Chen's plan."

Sun Wei nodded quietly.

He figured as much, given Chen Fan's personality, there's no way he would back down, it was clearly a strategy to advance by retreating.

Brilliant, truly brilliant.

"Stay and help you defend Anshan City?"

Upon hearing this request, Wang Lingling felt relieved but her expression also turned quirky.

This guy, so that's his scheme.

Quite the schemer.

However, it wasn't entirely unworkable since the Longevity Technique she had was borrowed by someone surnamed Li; she wouldn't get it back until three days later.

In the meantime, helping to fend off the Fierce Beasts wasn't a big deal.

Of course, they shouldn't expect her to go all out, especially not to the point of risking her life.

She's not foolish, wouldn't give her life for strangers, not even for acquaintances.

"Yes, help us defend Anshan City," Chen Fan nodded, adding, "The duration will last until the city falls. If the city doesn't fall, you must stay indefinitely. If someday the city does fall, you're free to leave. What do you think?"

Wang Lingling nodded upon hearing this.

She thought it was acceptable.

After all, in her perspective, it was uncertain whether Anshan City could last for three days; it might fall within a day or two.

She actually preferred not seeing the city fall.

Moreover, the most crucial point was that she didn't think she would lose.

"Alright, if I lose, I'll stay and help you defend Anshan City until it falls. But if I win, what can you do for me?" she asked, her eyes rolling a bit.

Ordinary things wouldn't catch her interest.

"You can make any request you want, and I will agree," Chen Fan said without concern.

"!!!"

Everyone was shocked, thinking that Chen Fan was being reckless.

What if the other party made an extremely outrageous demand? For example, asking Chen Fan to commit suicide, although that was highly unlikely, some requests might be just as difficult.

"So confident?"

Wang Lingling smiled, "Alright, you said it, no backing out."

She had already decided internally to make Chen Fan find her a complete set of Supreme-level Martial Arts or Divine Demon-level Martial Arts.

"I won't back out."

Chen Fan also smiled.

Not the slightest bit unsettled.

Because he knew the other party had no chance of winning, not even a sliver.

Both had their own calculations in mind.

The members of the Martial Arts Association, however, looked worried.

The reason Chen Fan had added this stake was for everyone's benefit. Having an additional True Essence Realm Martial Artist to help defend Anshan City was such a great thing they could laugh about in their dreams.

But if he lost... it would be a disaster.

Anyone could see this woman was no simple character, both in strength and in scheming.

It was too late to take back his words now.

In the hall, an open space quickly appeared, and Chen Fan and Wang Lingling stood facing each other.

"Make your move."

Wang Lingling beckoned to Chen Fan with her finger.

"You make the first move."

Chen Fan shook his head, "If I make the first move, you won't have any chance to strike."

"You!"

Wang Lingling gritted her teeth in anger, "Fine, you said it. I'll see if your skills are as good as your mouth."

With that, she appeared in front of Chen Fan almost like an instant teleportation, more accurately, in mid-air in front of him, executing a vicious whip kick towards his face.

Instantly, a series of sonic booms echoed, violent shockwaves swept out, knocking everyone watching to the ground.

"Is this the strength of a True Essence Realm Martial Artist?"

Those who were knocked down looked incredulous.

The aftershock of a single strike already had such power.

What if they were at the center of the attack?

In the arena, Chen Fan dodged the incoming kick effortlessly by just leaning back.

"?"

A hint of surprise flashed in Wang Lingling's eyes.

She had almost used all her strength in that kick to quickly end the match and slap this guy in the face.

But he managed to dodge it? And effortlessly at that?

"I don't believe you can dodge this one."

She twisted her waist and swept her left leg like lightning, aiming again at Chen Fan's face.

But he tilted his head and dodged easily.

Angry, Wang Lingling landed and immediately flashed behind Chen Fan, aiming a sweeping kick at empty air.

Looking up, she saw Chen Fan smiling at her.

"Is he faster than me?"

Her heart skipped a beat.

It was already astounding that someone in the Awakened Association could surpass her in body technique, but now someone in the Martial Arts Association too?

Impossible, a small place like Anshan City, with two experts superior to her?

"Do you still want to continue?"

Chen Fan asked.

His voice resonated through the hall, invigorating everyone.

Their movements had been too fast to see, but it seemed Brother Chen held the upper hand?

"Great, it looks like we've won this time!" someone exclaimed excitedly.

"Yes, Elder Chen not only regained our face, but also brought another True Essence Realm expert into the city. Our chances of defending Anshan City just increased."

"Elder Chen is indeed foresighted."

Sun Wei and others felt happy but were cautious not to celebrate prematurely, fearing unexpected turns.

Wang Lingling snorted, "I admit I can't hit you, but you might not be able to hit me either."

"Oh?"

Chen Fan asked.

"You can try and find out."

Wang Lingling said, fully focused on Chen Fan's every move.

Admitting defeat in front of so many people was not an option for her.

"Fine."

Chen Fan said and pointed a finger like lightning at her shoulder.

The speed was so fast that even the surrounding Sun Wei and others, and Wang Lingling herself, couldn't react.

By the time she realized something was wrong, it was already too late.

Because she found her body immobilized like a log.

The Sea of Qi inside her felt as still as a dead sea.

"What did you do to me?"

She glared at Chen Fan, a touch of fear in her voice.

"Didn't you say I couldn't hit you?"

Chen Fan withdrew his hand and glanced at her, "So I sealed your acupoints, making you immobile for a while. Now tell me, did I hit you or not?"

Wang Lingling's face turned red, a chill ran down her spine.

If he could seal her acupoints without her noticing, didn't that mean he could take her life any time?

Such speed.

This, is this guy really a True Essence Realm Martial Artist?

"Admit defeat."

Chen Fan said, "If you concede, I'll unseal your acupoints, but I also hope you honor our previous agreement."

"I, I admit defeat."

She lowered her head, "I will honor our agreement and help you defend Anshan City until the day it falls."

"Good."

Chen Fan nodded and unsealed her acupoints.

Wang Lingling moved her body, feeling no abnormalities, she sighed in relief.

Then, she looked at Chen Fan, feeling like she had been outwitted by him.

Chapter 557: Chen Family Fortress, is Already a Thing of the Past

"Why are you looking at me like that?"

Chen Fan's tone carried a hint of helplessness, "I didn't force you to spar with me, and the bet was agreed upon beforehand, wasn't it?"

Wang Lingling was at a loss for words.

Yes, if you think about it, it was her insistence to spar.

The bet was also agreed upon in advance.

She just didn't expect that she would actually lose, and lose so decisively.

"Got it, I'll keep my promise."

With a rather frustrated mumble, she turned and walked out.

Helping out is one thing, but don't expect her to risk her life for the people here.

No one dared to block her path, and even if they had the guts, they likely didn't have the ability, so they all stepped aside to make way.

As they watched her disappear at the doorway, someone whispered, "Just letting her go like that? Shouldn't we have her sign some kind of agreement? What if she leaves later?"

"Yeah."

Many people realized this and looked at Chen Fan.

"Don't worry."

Chen Fan laughed, "She is a True Essence Realm Martial Artist, quite a prominent figure in our Yan Country. She won't go back on her word."

If it were someone else, he would undoubtedly take measures to prevent them from reneging.

But for her, there was no need, because she wouldn't leave until she obtained the Longevity Technique, even if someone tried to chase her away.

"If a few more experts could join us, that would be even better."

He sighed lightly to himself, not expecting them to follow him out of the city to kill fierce beasts. If they could just stay in the city and deal with some stragglers, that would be enough.

Hearing this, everyone breathed a sigh of relief.

"Brother Chen is right, she is a True Essence Realm expert, she wouldn't stoop so low."

"Yeah, although she's got a bit of a temper, she probably wouldn't go back on her word. We've judged a noblewoman with a villain's heart, hahaha."

"Thinking about having a True Essence Realm Martial Artist defend the city with us during the beast tide, it really puts my mind at ease."

"Right, with Brother Chen, our Anshan City will have two True Essence Realm Martial Artists. I think we'll have a good chance of holding it."

"What do you mean 'a good chance'? We're definitely going to hold it, right?"

"Yes, yes, I misspoke, we'll definitely hold it,ahaha."

Instantly, the previously oppressive atmosphere in the hall became cheerful.

Only a few insiders still wore somewhat forced smiles.

Having an extra True Essence Realm Martial Artist was naturally a great help.

But this beast tide was no small matter.

"President, I have something to take care of, so I'll be leaving first. You guys should go back and get some rest too." Chen Fan said, glancing at the pitch-black sky outside, it was already night time.

He needed to go back home and check things out.

...

In a five or six-story residential building, in a certain room on the second floor, the living room was full of people.

All familiar faces.

Zhang Ren, Liu Yong, Gu Jianghai, the Wei Brothers, and so on, each of them furrowing their brows, their faces looking grim. If there were cigarettes, the living room would probably be filled with smoke, like a fairytale realm.

Chen Guodong was also among them, frowning slightly, though compared to the rest, he seemed a bit better, as he had been mentally prepared, knowing about the upcoming beast tide.

"Guodong, Xiaofan isn't coming back?" Gu Jianghai asked.

Actually, these people seemed to have come together intentionally, besides wanting to hear Chen Guodong's opinions, they also wanted to ask Chen Fan what they should do.

They had experienced beast tides before.

But those times were in small villages, and they had been lucky to survive. Those unlucky had naturally perished long ago.

But this time was different.

They were in a city.

"Not yet, for now."

Chen Guodong smiled bitterly, "He might be busy and can't get away for now. I'll give him a call and ask."

"No, no." Gu Jianghai quickly waved his hand, "I was just asking casually. Xiaofan should be busy, for now, let's not disturb him."

"Yes, yes." The others agreed.

Zhang Ren who was standing by also nodded slightly.

He had been to the Martial Arts Association and knew that Chen Fan had a high status there. Even Sun Wei spoke to him with great respect.

In such critical times, he was likely in the martial arts association, discussing strategies with everyone.

Next, he spoke up, "I know what everyone is worried about. From my previous experience, the chances of Anshan City being breached by fierce beasts is very low."

"Really? Old Zhang?"

"It's true. Old Zhang was a native of Anshan City and participated in the city defense battle," Liu Yong said loudly.

"That's right."

Zhang Ren nodded, "Two years ago, Anshan City also had a beast tide. I was in the city at that time, defending against the fierce beast attacks."

"And then?"

Wei Tianyuan asked.

"The situation was very critical at that time. Several times, the city walls were breached by the rampaging beasts, and many beasts poured into the city through the gaps, causing heavy casualties."

Everyone's faces turned pale.

"Fortunately, we held the city."

Zhang Ren said, "Led by the Awakeners from the Awakened Association, the fierce beasts that broke into the city were all killed, and the beast tide was repelled. It lasted about a week, and when the beasts saw they couldn't breach the city, they left."

Chapter 558: Chen Family Fortress, is Already a Thing of the Past\_2

Chen Guodong and the others all breathed a sigh of relief.

But they also knew that this process was bound to be extremely difficult, with many close calls.

"Old Zhang, if the beast tide really comes, do we need to go up to the city walls and fight the fierce beasts?" Someone asked nervously.

In an instant, the room fell silent.

This question was the second core issue, aside from whether Anshan City could hold.

Previously, in the wild, after the beast tide erupted, each of them immediately hid in tunnels, took up weapons, and fought the fierce beasts, which was akin to a desperate gambit for the elderly.

But here, if the city's guards really forced them to defend the city, they had no other choice.

And going up to the city walls meant a high likelihood of death.

"Generally speaking, no."

Zhang Ren shook his head and said, "After the beast tide erupts, there will naturally be Awakeners, martial artists, and guards to fend them off. But if the losses are too severe, then we will have no choice but to mobilize the ordinary people in the city to operate the guns and cannons against the fierce beasts."

"Old Zhang, what about the last time? Ordinary people in the city?"

Zhang Ren didn't speak, he just nodded silently.

A beast tide! Standing on the city walls, looking out, the sight was filled with fierce beasts!

Not only were there beasts running on the ground, but also those flying in the sky, and those burrowing from underground. The ones coming from underground were the most terrifying!

Sometimes, when people were walking on the road, they would suddenly fall through with a plop, and the next thing you'd hear was the spine-chilling chewing sounds coming from below.

Even if someone reacted and used hot weapons to attack, the bullets would most likely just hit the dirt, wasting ammunition.

In this situation, not to mention the guards, the death rate among martial artists was also extremely high. If the ordinary people were not forced into the battlefield, they wouldn't be able to hold out.

Of course, if ordinary people go up to the walls, they will die even faster...

Suddenly, the room fell silent again, leaving only the sound of everyone's breathing.

"Actually, this is also our duty."

Chen Guodong sighed lightly and said, "That Chairman Li has let us move into the city without spending a cent. In some sense, he's already saved our lives."

"Yes." Wei Tianyuan started to speak, "If we hadn't moved in and were still at Chen Family Fortress, it wouldn't take a single night for the fortress to get overrun by fierce beasts. At least half of us would be dead, and even if the remaining half hid in the tunnels, who knows how long we could hold out."

"Brother Wei is right. In my previous village, several hundred people hid in the tunnels. Within a week, more than half of them starved to death. The rest were so desperate they had to resort to... resort to..." A middle-aged man trailed off, unable to continue.

"Yes, we are much luckier compared to those living outside." Chen Guodong's eyes swept over everyone. "So, it's our duty to go up the walls and fight against the fierce beasts, isn't it? This is not only for Anshan City, but also for ourselves and our families."

At these words, everyone was moved.

Death is feared by everyone, for life is precious and once lost, it's gone forever.

But sometimes, life must be risked to protect certain things, like the safety of family.

If Anshan City falls, they won't fare any better.

Only if Anshan City stands can their families survive.

"Guodong is right. Chen Family Fortress is in the past. Now, we are all people of Anshan City. Protecting Anshan City is not for others, but for ourselves, for our families." Liu Yong said earnestly.

"Yes, there is no more Chen Family Fortress, only Anshan City."

"Anshan City is our home."

One voice after another arose.

Determination gradually showed in everyone's eyes.

"I saw today that the city is recruiting for people to join the defense, men of fighting age, and martial artists get better treatment. We can barely be considered martial artists. How about we all sign up

tomorrow morning?" Wei Tianyuan said with a smile. "Then we can go up the walls together and kill some fierce beasts."

"Great, let's do it together. To be honest, these fierce beasts have harmed us enough. Now that we have the chance, we can take revenge for our dead relatives and friends!"

"Count me in. To be honest, I've always wanted to handle a real gun, and this time, I might get the chance."

"Not only a chance to handle a gun, but to fire cannons too!"

"Are you serious about firing cannons?"

"Of course I'm serious. What, you think it's that kind of firing?"

"Hahaha.

The room erupted in laughter.

The always serious Zhang Ren couldn't help but smile too, his eyes glancing at the many smiling faces, showing deep reluctance.

When the beast tide hits, ordinary people hiding in the city are relatively safer, but once on the walls, they are mere consumables, facing near-certain death.

Many of those present tonight might never be seen again tomorrow or the day after...

Selfishly, he hoped they could all stay at home, but if everyone in the city felt that way, who would go to the walls to fend off the fierce beasts?

If no one is willing to step up, it would mean the beast tide storms into Anshan City, and everyone dies.

The laughter gradually faded, and the room fell silent.

How could they not understand that going up meant almost certain death?

But as said before.

They are now part of Anshan City, protecting it means protecting their families.

"Ahem, it's getting late. Sister-in-law also needs to rest. Let's end the discussion here tonight." Someone coughed lightly and said.

After all, talking too much about it becomes too emotional. A bunch of men crying in a room, what a sight?

Better not to say more, the future will unfold on its own.

"Yes, indeed, it's getting late. Let's all go back and rest."

"I hope the beast tide is just a joke from the City Lord's Mansion, and everything will be normal tomorrow." Someone laughed.

"Yes, yes."

Everyone stood up, chatting as they headed toward the door.

Chen Guodong escorted everyone to the door, waving and reminding them to be careful on the way.

After several minutes, the crowd gradually dispersed, leaving only Zhang Ren, Liu Yong, and the Wei Brothers.

"Guodong, up for a drink?"

Liu Yong smiled, "Maybe this will be our last gathering."

"Don't jinx it!"

Chen Guodong glared at him.

But after hesitating for a moment, he nodded, "Alright, let's have a drink."

"Where to?" Wei Tianyuan asked.

"There's a small restaurant not far downstairs. Let's go there."

"Alright, let's go."

They exchanged glances and walked downstairs.

A figure watched them from behind.

It was a long moment before the figure retracted its gaze, and a long sigh escaped its lips.

The figure was none other than Chen Fan.

He had already been at the door for a while and had heard everything clearly.

While touched, he felt more sadness.

He had seen the outcome of ordinary people facing the beast tide that afternoon. Even with hot weapons, it was to no avail.

Yet they still chose to risk their lives for their families.

He didn't want to disrupt the mood, so he didn't knock on the door.

He also didn't want to disturb the small gathering of his father with Uncle Zhang and Uncle Liu.

The only thing he could do was to do his utmost to defend Anshan City, so this hard-earned peace could continue.

Chapter 559: Asking Elder Wang for a Favor

"Knock, knock."

Chen Fan adjusted his expression, then reached out and knocked on the door a few times.

"Who's there?"

A woman's voice sounded from inside the house, a bit wary.

Chen Fan nodded secretly to himself. A bit of wariness is always good. Although Anshan City seemed calm at the moment, it was a mix of all kinds of people, and there might be some with ill intentions.

When the beast tide erupts in the near future, those people are likely to start stirring up trouble.

"Mom, it's me."

He spoke softly.

"Xiaofan?"

A voice filled with surprise and joy echoed from inside the house.

"Is it Big Brother? Has Big Brother come back?"

At the same time, another voice full of delight sounded.

"It's me, Mom."

Chen Fan responded.

Soon, a rapid succession of footsteps approached from afar, and with a click, the door opened, revealing two figures.

"Brother!"

Chen Chen exclaimed, then threw himself into Chen Fan's arms.

"You're all grown up now, still acting like this."

Chen Fan said with a laugh, gently patting his back.

"Xiaofan, you're back."

Yin Fang's eyes sparkled with tears.

She had been worrying about Chen Fan's safety since the afternoon.

She only held back from contacting him because her husband said Chen Fan was very busy and had a lot to do.

"Yes," Chen Fan could see her inner turmoil and glanced outside before speaking softly, "Let's talk inside."

"Sure, sure."

Yin Fang nodded repeatedly, stepping inside before turning around to ask, "Have you eaten? If not, I'll cook something for you. It won't take long."

"I've eaten, Mom."

Warmth flowed through Chen Fan.

Home is indeed a safe haven, a harbor from the storm.

"Have you eaten?" Disappointment briefly flashed across Yin Fang's face before she said, "Then you must be thirsty. I'll get you a cup of water."

"Okay."

Chen Fan hesitated for a moment, then nodded.

A smile immediately appeared on Yin Fang's face.

"Brother."

Chen Chen spoke up, "You came back a bit late. Just now, Dad and Uncle Zhang were here with many others, discussing the beast tide."

"Were they?"

Chen Fan pretended not to know, "So, why didn't I see anyone? Where did Dad go?"

"They all left. Dad and Uncle Zhang probably went out to talk, but they'll be back soon. Brother, you won't leave tonight, right?" Chen Chen asked with hopeful eyes.

Although their days were much better than before.

At least they didn't go to bed hungry every night, nor did they wake up in the middle of the night starving, only being able to drink some water to fend off hunger.

But he still missed the days at the Chen Family Stronghold, when the two brothers shared a bed, talking about everything and anything.

"No, I won't leave tonight."

Chen Fan smiled.

"That's great!"

Chen Chen's eyes turned into slits from his wide grin, "Brother, I've got some questions about the fist technique to ask you."

"Sure, you can ask me whatever you want later." Chen Fan patted his head.

"Brother, can you stop patting my head all the time? It won't grow taller." Chen Chen removed Chen Fan's hand, protesting.

At this moment, Yin Fang walked over with two cups of plain water.

"Both are warm, you can drink them right away."

She gently placed the two cups on the table with a smile.

Chen Fan picked up a cup, took a few sips, and then put it down slowly before speaking, "Mom, besides coming to see you this time, I have something to tell you."

"Go ahead," Yin Fang nodded.

"It's about the beast tide. I've mentioned it to you before, and now the city has issued a notice. It's almost certain to happen, but you don't need to worry too much."

He said, "I'll do my best to ensure Anshan City isn't breached. But if that day comes, I'll take you away to a safe place."

Hearing this, the two people in the room looked at each other, their expressions relaxing a little.

"That's what you said, but Xiaofan, you still have to be very careful."

Yin Fang glanced toward the door and said, "Also, if you can, try to take care of your dad and the others. I heard them say they're joining the city guard army tomorrow morning to help defend the walls against the fierce beasts. Honestly, I don't want him to go, but everyone else is going, so your dad can't just not go..."

"Hmm, don't worry, Mom, there won't be any danger."

Chen Fan said seriously.

"Yes, Mom believes you."

Yin Fang nodded repeatedly.

...

Late at night, a crescent moon hung high.

Jiangnan City was still brightly lit, bustling with activity. The bars, restaurants, and KTVs were packed with people. The streets were filled with traffic, showing no signs of tension.

Even small cities had many people who heard the news, let alone Jiangnan City.

Many people already knew about the impending beast tide and were aware that this time it would be much larger than before.

But since they were in a big city, they felt relatively at ease. Even if the beast tide reached the city walls, the city's guard forces were so strong that they didn't need to worry excessively.

Thinking of the people in small cities and the ordeal they were about to face, many felt a sense of schadenfreude.

Martial Arts Association Headquarters.

Basement level one.

"Tap, tap."

Footsteps echoed loudly in the quiet corridor.

The owner of the footsteps was a burly man with a resolute face and sharp, gleaming eyes.

This man was none other than Shi Tao, the President of the Jiangnan Sub-district Martial Arts Association.

### Chapter 560: Asking Elder Wang for a Favor\_2

He walked forward and finally came to the outside of a secret chamber. He reached out and knocked three times on the stone door.

After the third knock, the stone door suddenly opened to both sides, revealing the scene inside the stone chamber.

This seemed to be a place for storing books. At a glance, there were bookshelves taller than a person, filled with all kinds of books, including some made of bamboo.

An elderly scholar with white hair and beard was lying on a reclining chair, reading a book with great interest.

Seeing him arrive, the scholar put down the book in his hand and smiled, "Shi Tao, you're here."

"Greetings, Elder Wang."

Shi Tao bowed and saluted.

Elder Wang nodded, put the book aside, and said, "Your expression is different from usual. What happened?"

"Yes, something has happened."

Shi Tao sighed deeply and said, "The Beast Tide has erupted."

"The Beast Tide..."

The smile on Elder Wang's face also froze.

"If it were the previous Beast Tides, it would be manageable; but this time, the scale far exceeds before. It is likely that this will be the final battle between our Yan Country and the Fierce Beasts."

"So the day has come after all."

Elder Wang sighed lightly.

It was as if he could already see a scene of mountains of corpses and rivers of blood.

"Yes."

Shi Tao also showed a look of regret, "I thought I could have more time to break through to the Mid Stage of Celestial Human Realm to have a greater chance against the Fierce Beasts, or even reach the Late Stage and be able to contend with a Beast Emperor Level Fierce Beast. But unfortunately..."

Elder Wang heard this and didn't know what to say for a moment.

The Heaven and Earth Tribulation is both a calamity and an opportunity.

If Shi Tao survives it, with his talent, not even to mention the Late Stage of Celestial Human Realm, he might even touch the Divine Cultivation Realm.

But if he fails, he will be stuck at the Early Stage of Celestial Realm.

"Don't put too much pressure on yourself."

He comforted, "Yan Country is not just you alone; those few Beast Emperor Level Fierce Beasts will naturally be blocked by the three S-Class Awakened. If it really comes to a moment of life and death, those noble families shouldn't stand by and do nothing."

Shi Tao smiled bitterly upon hearing this.

If they wanted to act, they would have done so ten years ago.

However, those noble families all have their own Grotto Heaven Blessed Lands.

If Yan Country really perishes, they can just hide in their Grotto Heaven Blessed Lands, and no matter how powerful the Fierce Beasts are, they can't get in.

With such a retreat, how can those Celestial Human Realm old fellows possibly take action? The longer one lives, the more one is afraid of death.

"Elder Wang, to be honest, this time I came not only to tell you about this but also to ask you for a favor."

Perhaps afraid the latter might misunderstand, he added, "Rest assured, Elder Wang, I don't want to ask you to come out and help us fight the Fierce Beasts. Every generation has its own destiny; you've done enough for our generation."

"No need to be so polite."

Elder Wang smiled and shook his head, "I've lived a long life, which is enough. Tell me, what do you want me to help with?"

"I would like Elder Wang to secretly protect someone."

"Secretly protect someone for you?"

Elder Wang showed a look of surprise.

"Yes."

Shi Tao envisioned someone in his mind and said, "In the coming time, I will be too busy. But I have high hopes for this person. If something happens to him, it will be a great loss to our Yan Country."

"Who is he?"

Elder Wang couldn't help but feel curious.

"Chen Fan."

Shi Tao uttered two words.

"Chen Fan? The name sounds familiar."

Elder Wang paused.

"Yes, it's him."

Shi Tao smiled bitterly.

"Is it really him?"

Elder Wang looked into his eyes, "The same Chen Fan who reached the True Essence Realm at such a young age? The one who improved the Pill Formula?"

"Yes, it's him."

"Oh."

Elder Wang nodded slightly, then suddenly frowned, "I remember he's in a small town called Anshan City. That place is indeed very dangerous with the Beast Tide erupting, but with his skills, staying at the headquarters, there's no one who can do anything to him, right?"

"What if he doesn't want to come?"

"What?"

Even Elder Wang couldn't stay calm upon hearing this.

"He refused to come?"

"Yes."

Shi Tao also looked helpless.

"When I left the headquarters in the morning, I asked Chang Fei and others to contact him, informing him about the full outbreak of the Beast Tide, and telling him to bring his family to the headquarters immediately. But he refused."

"How could this be?"

Confusion was all over Elder Wang's face.

In the outermost areas, one faces not only endless waves of Beast Tide but also Beast Kings and even Beast Emperor Level Fierce Beasts!

This small place can easily be razed to the ground by a Beast Emperor Level Fierce Beast.

Staying there is a death wish.

"Chen Fan said he wants to stay and guard Anshan City." Shi Tao's voice sounded, "If it comes to the point that it can't be defended, he will come, but not now."

"This..."

Elder Wang half-opened his mouth, not knowing what to say for a moment.

Call him overconfident? He is indeed overconfident.

Even the S-Class Awakened dare not do this.

What can a mere True Essence Realm Martial Artist achieve?

But his actions are indeed considering ordinary people. In his time, such a person would undoubtedly be a hero.

But such heroes usually don't have a good ending.

"So, you want me to go to Anshan City."

"Yes."

Shi Tao nodded, "You don't have to intervene in Anshan City's matters, Elder Wang, but if Chen Fan is in danger, I hope you can save him and bring him to the headquarters. Like I said, if he dies, it would be a loss not just to our Jiangnan Sub-district Martial Arts Association, but also to Yan Country."

"Indeed."

Elder Wang agreed, "I've always been a bit interested in that young man, thinking to meet him when he comes to the headquarters and if his character isn't too bad, to give him some opportunities.

Now hearing what you say, I'm even more interested. There have been many talented people throughout history, but few with both talent and virtue. Very well, it's been a long time since I've gone out; these old bones should move around."

Hearing this, Shi Tao was pleased and couldn't help but say, "Elder Wang, you agree?"

"Why wouldn't I agree?"

Elder Wang looked at him and smiled, "You rarely ask me for help, and I won't refuse, right? Besides, I'm also curious about that young man, to see if he is worth your attention."

"Thank you, Elder Wang."

Shi Tao bowed deeply.

Though he had guessed before coming that Elder Wang would most likely agree to help, there was still a chance of being refused.

"Haha, it's no trouble. Give me his information and I'll leave tomorrow morning."

"Yes, Elder Wang. Actually, I have already prepared the documents." Shi Tao said, taking a folder from his Spatial Ring.

"You, always so thorough." Elder Wang shook his head with a smile, still extending his hand to take the folder and started reading.

After a few minutes, he closed the folder and said, "Leave it to me. If you have other matters, go ahead and handle them. No need to stay here with me."

Shi Tao bowed and then turned to leave.

As he stepped outside, his face showed a look of relief.

With Elder Wang's intervention, Chen Fan should be safe.

Shi Tao also had his own matters to attend to now.

"Hopefully this time, the final winner will be our Human Race."

He thought to himself as he walked forward.