

Middle Age 291

Chapter 291: Overnight Fortune (Part 2)

Ajie quickly ran to the cabin, and soon returned with several thick waterproof storage bags, and started busying himself with Old Black and Tata.

Qi Yun didn't mention asking the crew for help, so Jeff didn't take the initiative either. After all, these items were quite valuable, and who knew if the crew might get any funny ideas.

The silver coins were just packed, and the winch machine lifted up another metal net basket. This time, it not only contained silver coins but also quite a number of gold coins and gold bars!

The purity of these gold items was also not high, only about 80%. From the well-preserved surfaces of some gold coins, one could see the imprint of a head, likely that of a king at the time.

Speaking of the silver coins earlier, the crew on the ship remained relatively calm.

But when this pile of gold appeared, the air on the deck seemed to freeze instantly.

Several crew members stared intently at the gold, excited expressions hiding their greed.

Captain Jeff noticed this, veins bulging on his forehead. He shouted, "What the hell are you looking at! Do your own work now!"

Even he probably didn't realize that there was a hint of tremor in his voice...

In the corner, Chen Wei calmly watched all this, his expression stern, his gaze sweeping over everyone's faces one by one.

The rumble of the winch machine continued, with hooks constantly being lowered and raised.

When a dark brown wooden box appeared on the deck, Qi Yun's attention was instantly drawn to it.

The box wasn't large, roughly the size of an adult's palm, with green fuzz and barnacles covering its surface.

What intrigued him was that this wooden box had been soaked on the seabed for over three hundred years, yet showed no signs of damage.

He took a hose from the first mate nearby and sprayed the box, and after cleaning off the green fuzz, the true appearance of the box was revealed.

The wood grain on the surface looked delicate, and the front seemed to be carved with a flower-like pattern, though it wasn't clear at the moment.

The lid of the box had a delicate latch, whose keyhole was blocked by microorganisms from the ocean.

Qi Yun vaguely felt that the contents of this box might be unusual, and planned to study it carefully once back in the cabin.

The salvage operation continued until late at night when Ajie handed a tally sheet to Qi Yun, listing all the findings from this salvage.

Silver coins: 8,320 pieces.

Gold coins: 1,963 pieces.

Gold bars: 120 bars.

Gems: 68 pieces.

There was also a large pile of porcelain, but unfortunately, all reduced to fragments.

Although Qi Yun appeared calm on the surface, he was actually thrilled inside.

He didn't know how much other items were worth, but just melting and selling those gold coins and bars would fetch at least a few million!

Just then, Ah Jiao also came to the deck from the cockpit and whispered to Qi Yun, "The exploration is complete; there's nothing else in the sunken ship."

Qi Yun nodded at her and instructed a few people to move all the items to the resting room in the cabin.

He then said to Jeff, "Captain Jeff, let's return as soon as possible."

"Everyone worked hard this trip. Once we return, I'll give everyone a \$10,000 hard work fee."

At these words, the surrounding crew cheered, their exhausted faces instantly breaking into smiles; their monthly salary was less than three thousand US dollars, and 10,000 would be more than three months' pay.

Jeff's face also radiated joy, and he quickly nodded, "Alright, Mr. Qi, I'll arrange the return immediately."

He then leaned in closer, whispering, "Regarding tonight's matter, I'll ensure the crew doesn't spread it."

Qi Yun chuckled and patted his arm, turning to leave without further comment.

Actually, the money wasn't meant as hush money because he knew well that it was hard to keep this a secret.

The real purpose was to share some benefits with the crew, keeping them balanced and preventing them from doing anything irrational.

However, he also knew human greed might not be satisfied with just ten thousand US dollars; as long as he remained true to himself, if anyone sought trouble, Chen Wei would teach them a lesson.

Back in the resting cabin, Qi Yun found Old Black on the bed next to his, prompting him to ask, "Where's Brother Wei?"

Old Black scratched his head and explained, "He switched with me to guard the items next door while I protect you here."

Hearing this, Qi Yun nodded slightly, knowing Chen Wei was undoubtedly concerned the items might cause trouble, so he deliberately switched to the next room to avoid endangering Qi Yun's safety.

Qi Yun trusted Chen Wei's skills and didn't think much of it. He sat by the bed, laid the wooden box on the table, and started examining it closely.

Under the strong flashlight, Qi Yun finally saw the pattern on the box more clearly; it resembled an iris flower.

Once seen in history books, this iris was a symbol of the Bourbon Dynasty. Later, as descendants of the Bourbons, the Spanish Royal Family also inherited the iris emblem.

The items in this box must belong to a Spanish Royal Family member from over three hundred years ago...

Qi Yun's gaze fell, inspecting the rusted lock once more; the keyhole was blocked, and he needed to find a locksmith to open it.

Thinking of this, he lifted his head and asked Old Black, "Can you pick locks?"

Old Black nodded, "Yes!"

Joy flickered in Qi Yun's heart; he didn't expect the large man to have such a skill. So, he handed over the wooden box immediately, "Help me open this lock."

Old Black examined the box, then took hold of the lock body with his calloused hand, twisting the lock head with his thumb and forefinger.

With a "pop" sound, the rusty lock head was forcibly pulled out by him.

He handed the box to Qi Yun with a big grin, saying, "Alright, boss."

Qi Yun clicked his tongue and asked, "Is that how you pick locks?"

Old Black, embarrassed, scratched his head, "Sometimes I use a hammer or other tools; this lock was simple."

Qi Yun shook his head with a smile, opened the lid, releasing a musty scent mingled with seawater.

Inside, the box was lined with a piece of blackened velvet, and a yellowed scroll was pinned in the middle with something resembling a silver brooch.

Qi Yun took the scroll, still damp. Whether it was parchment or leather, it hadn't decomposed after so many years in water.

He considered drying it with a towel but worried about damaging what's recorded, so he left it to air dry.

Carefully unfolding the parchment, he saw the edge had a pattern identical to the one on the wooden box, the iris emblem again.

Once the parchment was fully opened, a larger design appeared before his eyes.

This design didn't seem drawn onto the parchment; it seemed more like it was etched on.

It had lines, markings, and some characters, though they seemed to be in Spanish, which he couldn't understand.

Qi Yun stared at the design for a long while, but he couldn't figure out what it was.

He sighed, took a cigarette from his pocket, and lit it up, catching Old Black stealing glances at him curiously, afraid of making Qi Yun unhappy.

Qi Yun handed the parchment to him with a playful grin, "Take a look, what does this design resemble?"

Old Black rubbed his hands, cautiously taking the parchment and squinting up close.

Qi Yun was about to tell him he was holding it upside down when Old Black said, "Boss, these winding lines look like a map..."

A map?

Qi Yun was stunned, got up, and stood beside Old Black, surprised to find that the parchment indeed resembled a map when viewed upside down.

But without any context, he couldn't determine what location the map depicted...

After pondering for a while to no avail.

Sleepiness overtook Qi Yun, so he stuffed the parchment and wooden box into a bag, entrusting it to Old Black's care, and he collapsed into a deep slumber on the bed.

Chapter 292: Gunshots in the Dead of Night

The next day, Qi Yun woke up and went to the dining room for breakfast.

Breakfast consisted of only simple bread and instant coffee. He had just taken a bite of bread when he saw Captain Jeff carrying a plate and walking over.

"Mr. Qi, how was your rest last night?"

Qi Yun smiled and replied, "It was okay."

Jeff sat down opposite him and continued, "The sea weather is nice today. We expect to return to Cape Town Port tomorrow morning."

Qi Yun nodded, took a sip from his coffee cup, and was about to say something when he heard a commotion coming from the direction of the cabins, faintly hearing Old Black's scolding.

Qi Yun immediately frowned, put down the coffee cup, and quickly got up to walk toward the cabin direction.

Seeing this, Jeff also quickly got up and followed.

Upon reaching the cabin door, they saw a strong black man being restrained against the ship's body by Old Black.

Qi Yun recalled seeing this black man on the deck last night, and he seemed to be named Ao Debiao.

"What's going on?"

Seeing Qi Yun arrive, Old Black dragged the person over and said, "This kid was sneaking around outside our room."

Ao Debiao suddenly struggled, veins bulging on his neck, speaking incomprehensibly.

Captain Jeff frowned and looked at him, then said to Qi Yun, "Mr. Qi, he says he was just passing by, intending to fetch some tools from the innermost storage room."

The commotion in the corridor attracted many people, besides Ah Jiao and other few gathering around, several crew members also watched from not far away.

Qi Yun turned around and scanned the faces of those crew members, finally signaling to Old Black with his eyes, "Let him go."

Old Black hesitated for a moment, then released his grip.

Ao Debiao was freed, rubbing his wrist, quickly retreating behind Captain Jeff.

Qi Yun stared at him for a moment and then said to Jeff, "Captain Jeff, you also know the value of those things last night, so please inform the crew not to come to this area again to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings."

Jeff promptly nodded and agreed, his face full of smiles, "Mr. Qi, rest assured, I will gather all the crew members for a meeting later to strictly forbid them from entering here again."

After saying this, he turned and glared at Ao Debiao, signaling him to leave, but Ao Debiao dawdled and cast a fierce look at Old Black before leaving.

Once the crowd dispersed, Qi Yun patted Old Black on the shoulder, "Good job, keep being vigilant."

No matter whether Ao Debiao was genuinely just passing by, Qi Yun could only assume the worst, as such massive wealth could easily drive people to lose their sanity.

"Everyone disperse," Qi Yun instructed Ah Jiao and the others, then pushed open the door to the adjacent cabin.

Inside, Chen Wei sat solemnly on the bed, several bags filled with treasures placed at his feet.

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On the other side, Captain Jeff gathered all the crew members, briefing them on what had just happened, and sternly forbidding them from entering the cabin area again.

The crew displayed varying expressions after hearing this, and once the crowd dispersed, Ao Debiao was left alone by Jeff.

"I advise you not to harbor any ill intentions, or you won't be able to bear the consequences," Jeff said, staring at Ao Debiao gravely.

Ao Debiao looked innocent and defended, "Captain, I really was just going to the storage room to grab tools..."

Before he could finish his explanation, Jeff gestured him silent, interrupting, "I don't want to hear your excuses. If you don't want to lose your life over this, then you'd better behave."

Ao Debiao opened his mouth, wanting to say more, but Jeff gave him no chance, turning around to enter the cockpit.

As he watched Jeff's silhouette vanish, Ao Debiao's expression swiftly changed, losing the former appearance of grievance and leaving only a face full of malice.

He spat to the side and then strode over to an electrical control room at the stern.

Inside, besides Ao Debiao, there were four other people, one of them dressed in white as the first mate.

Seeing Ao Debiao enter, the first mate looked at him and asked, "What did Jeff say to you?"

"He warned me not to target those people," Ao Debiao said angrily.

"Does he suspect you?" another person beside him asked.

Ao Debiao shrugged, "Maybe, I'm not sure."

The first mate didn't continue this topic, instead asking, "Did you see those gold coins? Are they in Mr. Qi's room?"

"No," Ao Debiao replied with a bitter face, "Their people are very alert. I barely took a glance through the window, and that tall guy immediately came out and subdued me."

Upon hearing this, the first mate's expression turned somewhat grim, and cursed, "You're useless, can't even handle such a small task!"

Ao Debiao shrank back, silenced by the scolding.

"Those treasures are right under our noses, yet we can't even touch a hair?" said the first mate, full of unwillingness.

A crew member in the corner came closer, lowering his voice, "There's another person with them who always follows Mr. Qi, I guess he's a bodyguard, looks like a tough character."

"If it doesn't work out, maybe we should just let it go..."

"Let it go?" the first mate suddenly turned around, his eyes fierce, grabbing a wrench on the table and slamming it against the wall, "A fortune we couldn't earn in a lifetime is right before us, are you just going to let it go like that?"

The previous crew member swallowed hard and dared not speak further.

The first mate loosened his collar and continued, "There are four guns on the ship. I'll try to get the keys from Jeff and steal the guns. With guns in hand, we won't fear their bodyguard."

"Once we pull this off, we won't need to return to Cape Town. We'll leave directly on the lifeboats; by then, I will contact other ships for support, and once ashore, we'll all become millionaires!"

Chapter 293: Gunshots in the Dead of Night

The people nearby, hearing this, immediately became excited again, with greed filling their eyes.

On such ocean-going ships as theirs, there are guns on board, mainly for defense against pirates.

"That's right, as long as we have guns in our hands, we can control the situation."

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Late at night, Lao Hei lying on the bed suddenly opened his eyes, his ears moving slightly as if listening for some sound.

The next second, a "bang!" sound was heard outside, as if something had collided with the wall.

Following that was a series of consecutive gunshots, "bang! bang! bang!"

The sudden change broke the silence of the sea.

Qi Yun, who was sleeping soundly, was startled awake by the gunfire and sat up abruptly.

In the dark, Lao Hei had swiftly turned over and gotten out of bed, holding a gun, his facial expression cold and stern: "Boss, we have a situation."

Before he finished speaking, urgent footsteps and chaotic shouting mixed with muffled collision sounds came from outside the door.

Qi Yun quickly put on a jacket, preparing to go out and see what was happening.

At this moment, Lao Hei blocked him and advised, "Boss, you stay in the room, let me go out and check first."

Without waiting for Qi Yun's reply, he leaned against the door and listened to the sounds outside, then swiftly opened the door and slipped out.

Qi Yun felt a bit worried; the gunfire just now sounded very close, probably coming from the corridor outside, most likely related to Chen Wei.

Though he absolutely trusted Chen Wei in terms of skills, bullets are blind, under the gun muzzle all are equal; even the best skills may not suffice.

However, his worry didn't last long, as Lao Hei quickly returned after going out.

"What's the situation?" Qi Yun asked anxiously.

"The danger has been dealt with, maybe the boss could come out and take a look." Lao Hei scratched his head and said.

Qi Yun looked at him suspiciously, then stepped outside.

In the corridor, several figures lay haphazardly on the ground, moaning continuously, with crimson blood flowing beside them, guns scattered around.

Chen Wei was squatting, collecting those guns one by one and removing the magazines.

Seeing that Chen Wei was fine, Qi Yun finally felt relieved and went over to ask, "Brother Wei, what's going on?"

Chen Wei removed the magazine from the last gun and stood up to respond, "These guys were sneaking outside trying to unlock the door, but I handled them."

Although his words were light, Qi Yun could imagine how dangerous the situation must have been earlier.

Qi Yun stepped forward, eyeing the few people on the ground who were wailing repeatedly, besides the ones he had seen during the day, Ao Debiao, there were the first mate and three other crew members.

The commotion was not small and soon alerted others; first, Ah Jiao and others rushed over, concernedly asking, "Boss, are you okay?"

"I'm fine." Qi Yun shook his head at her, just about to ask her to call the captain Jeff, when he heard footsteps from the other side of the corridor.

Chen Wei and Lao Hei became instantly vigilant, one hand hidden behind their backs.

The newcomer was Captain Jeff; he looked at the scene in astonishment, his gaze sweeping across everyone's faces and finally landing on the moaning first mate on the ground.

"What on earth is going on?" Jeff's voice carried anger, looking at the guns at Chen Wei's feet, "Who allowed you to take guns in private?"

Only moans answered him.

Jeff frowned, then turned to ask Qi Yun, "Mr. Qi, are you okay? What actually happened?"

"These people took guns wanting to rob things, but my people subdued them." Qi Yun replied with a calm face.

Upon hearing this, Jeff's face changed drastically, staring at the miserable first mate and Ao Debiao on the ground, a flicker of unnoticeable panic flashed in his eyes: "This is simply absurd! Mr. Qi, please rest assured, I will certainly give you a satisfactory resolution to this matter."

With such an incident occurring on the ship, as the captain, Jeff could not shirk responsibility; he now understood clearly, the only thing he could do was to try and pacify Qi Yun's anger. If Qi Yun chose to expose this, both he would be finished, and possibly their whole company undone.

After all, no one would entrust their safety to a bandit company.

Qi Yun took out a cigarette from his pocket and lit it, coldly staring at the people on the ground, saying nothing.

Seeing this, Jeff cleared his throat, grinning: "Mr. Qi, would you allow me to take them to the infirmary to treat their wounds? Although they deserve it, it would be troublesome if they truly died here."

Qi Yun exhaled a circle of smoke, his gaze sweeping over the wounds on their arms, after a moment of silence, he nodded: "My people will accompany you."

Jeff begrudgingly forced a smile, nodding in agreement: "No problem."

Having said that, he instructed the nearby crew members: "Take them to the infirmary."

Qi Yun gave Lao Hei a look, Lao Hei understood, and followed them out.

Once Ao Debiao and the others were taken away, Jeff glanced at the guns on the ground again, forcing another smile: "Mr. Qi, about these guns... how about I take them and keep them safe with me, rest assured there won't be any more mishaps."

Qi Yun glanced at him, replying flatly: "For now, we'll help you keep these guns; they'll be returned once we dock."

Jeff's smile froze instantly, his Adam's apple struggling to move, knowing Qi Yun no longer trusted him.

"Okay, we'll do as you say, I'll report the incident on the ship to the company immediately."

Qi Yun nodded, saying no more.

Seeing his lack of interest in conversation, Jeff did not linger, instructing two crew members to clean the area, then he proceeded to the infirmary.

Inside the infirmary, Ao Debiao and others' wounds on their arms had been simply bandaged, temporarily stopping the bleeding, but to remove the bullets, they'd have to wait until they could go to a hospital after docking; the ship's medical conditions were limited, unable to perform surgery.

Their faces were pale one by one, not knowing if it was due to excessive blood loss or sheer fright.

Jeff walked in, glancing at the people on the beds, his brows tightly knit, his voice severe: "You are practically courting death! Do you realize the trouble you could cause the company with this act?"

None of them responded, each showing a painful look with their heads down.

"I will report this to the company immediately, prepare yourselves for jail."

The first mate, hearing this, hurriedly raised his head, struggled to support himself, and pleaded: "Captain, please don't do this; we were momentarily lost, blinded by the treasures. For the sake of our years together, please help us."

"Help? How can I help you?" Jeff sneered, "Stealing guns to rob clients' belongings, do you know the nature of this?"

"You foolish ones not only harmed yourselves but will implicate everyone on the ship, causing us all to lose our jobs because of your stupidity!"

Having said this, Jeff didn't waste more words, instructed the nearby crew in charge of guarding to do a few things, and left the infirmary immediately.

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In the morning, the Deep Sea Hunter docked at the Cape Town port.

As Qi Yun just stepped off the ship, he saw Kaisen, the vice president of the salvage company, and another middle-aged man walking briskly towards him.

Kaisen came closer, apologetically bowing and apologizing: "Mr. Qi, regarding what happened last night, I represent the company to express our sincere apologies to you."

"This is our company's boss, Pete; upon hearing the news last night, he specially traveled from Johannesburg to apologize to you and hopes to gain your forgiveness."

The middle-aged man named Pete also spoke, "Mr. Qi, please rest assured, we have contacted the police bureau, those crew members will definitely face legal penalties."

"Additionally, after the company's deliberation, we decided to waive your fees for this ship hire this time..."

Pete's words were cut off by the roaring engine sound.

The next second, a few black Land Rover Range Rovers stopped nearby, a well-dressed burly man stepped out, walked up to Qi Yun, and bowed: "Mr. Qi, hello, President Li sent us to pick you up."

Chapter 294: The Mysterious Treasure

Yesterday morning, Qi Yun called Li Yaohua, asking him to arrange for someone to pick them up at the port today.

After all, South Africa is quite chaotic, and since he carries such a batch of priceless treasures, who knows if some shady figures might catch wind and jump out.

Although Chen Wei is strong, even a skilled fighter can be overwhelmed by numbers, so for safety, he still requested Li Yaohua to send reliable people over.

As for the intents of Kaisen and Pete, he's well aware. Their humble attitude is simply to prevent him from exposing the matters on the ship.

Qi Yun glanced at Kaisen and Pete's frozen expressions, flicked the ash from his cigarette, and said calmly, "I appreciate your gesture. The fare is what it is; no need to waive it. After being out at sea for a few days, I'm a bit tired, so let's leave it at that for today."

With that, he stepped toward the nearby convoy, with Chen Wei closely following behind, while others carried bags to the cars.

Kaisen and Pete watched Qi Yun's departing back with some anxiety, wanting to explain further, but were stopped by the burly man from before, ultimately watching helplessly as Qi Yun got into the car.

At that moment, Captain Jeff and a few crew members escorted Ao Debiao and five others down from the ship.

Pete saw them, and his eyes were practically spitting fire, but due to his status, he didn't resort to violence, merely spewing a barrage of harsh words, then furiously took out his phone to call a familiar police chief.

In the car, the burly man from before respectfully said to Qi Yun, "Mr. Qi, Mr. Li will be over tonight, let me take you to his manor first."

Qi Yun nodded slightly, "Alright."

The convoy left the port, speeding along the coastal road.

Cape Town truly deserves its reputation as a popular tourist city; the view by the sea is indeed beautiful, with bikini-clad beauties visible everywhere.

Forty minutes later, Qi Yun and his group arrived at a manor, which covers a large area, probably about the size of two standard football fields.

The manor was luxurious, with lawn gardens, fountain pools, and a three-story European-style building.

As the car stopped, a silver-haired old butler came forward, bowing respectfully to Qi Yun, "Mr. Qi, Mr. Li instructed that all your needs at this manor are under my responsibility."

Qi Yun thanked him and followed the old butler into the house.

Once everything was settled, he messaged Ye Hanwen, informing him of his safe return, and then requested the sheepskin parchment from Old Hei, taking a few photos of the patterns on it and sending them to Ignacio, hoping this Spanish history expert could decipher something.

Less than ten minutes later, Ignacio's call came through.

"Qi Yun, where did you get the things in the photos!?" Ignacio's tone was quite agitated.

Hearing his tone, Qi Yun guessed he must have noticed something, so he smiled and asked, "Mr. Ignacio, do you recognize these patterns?"

"You, answer my question first." Ignacio was rather impatient.

Seeing his urgency, Qi Yun didn't beat around the bush and responded directly, "I salvaged this sheepskin parchment from a shipwreck, located at the coordinates you helped me decipher last time, and the shipwreck was called San Jose."

"San Jose!? Are you certain it's the San Jose?" Ignacio exclaimed in shock.

"Yes, it's written on the hull: San Jose."

Qi Yun could hear Ignacio's rapid breathing through the phone and asked, "Is there a problem?"

"No... no problem." Ignacio took a deep breath, trying to calm himself, and continued, "If my guess is correct, the contents of this sheepskin parchment might be related to a very ancient legend."

"Ancient legend?" Qi Yun was intrigued, "Mr. Ignacio, can you tell me more?"

Ignacio gathered his thoughts, and slowly began, "This sheepskin parchment has the mark of the fleur-de-lis, which only became the emblem of the Spanish Royal Family in 1700."

"At that time, the Spanish king was Charles II. As he couldn't produce an heir, he left no descendants, and after his death, the throne was seized by the Bourbon Dynasty in France, eventually with Louis XIV's grandson, Philip V, ascending the throne."

"I once read in an ancient book unearthed in Egypt that the entire Louis Family, starting with Louis II, after each king ascended the throne, they would mobilize forces to search for a mysterious treasure."

Hearing this, Qi Yun was increasingly curious, "What treasure?"

"I don't know; I've reviewed many ancient texts only finding sparse mentions." Ignacio sighed and continued, "Based on your discovery of the San Jose wreck location and my years of research, I have a bold hypothesis."

"Back then, the San Jose might not have been as rumored, returning to Spain laden with colonial plundered treasures, but rather sent on a mission by the king, and the mission might be related to that mysterious treasure."

Qi Yun instinctively nodded, regrettably, the ship had been submerged for too long without more valuable clues.

After thinking it over briefly, he asked, "I think the patterns on the sheepskin parchment resemble a map, what do you think?"

Ignacio agreed, "It is indeed a map, and it's an exceptionally important map, as ordinary maps wouldn't have the fleur-de-lis mark."

Chapter 295: The Mysterious Treasure (Part 2)

"It might even be a map related to that mysterious artifact..."

Qi Yun swallowed upon hearing this, "Mr. Ignacio, can you tell where this map points to?"

Ignacio was silent for a long time, and the rustling sound of paper turning came through the receiver, "From the shipwreck location and my previous research, I speculate it is most likely to the east."

"We still need more information to know the exact location."

East?

"I'll do my best to help you decipher this map. If you discover anything else, be sure to let me know immediately!"

Without needing Qi Yun to say it, Ignacio had already taken on the task himself.

"Okay, Mr. Ignacio, I'll leave it to you then."

After hanging up, Qi Yun rubbed his chin, muttering the word "east."

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A little after 8 PM, Li Yaohua arrived at the manor by car.

Upon seeing Qi Yun, he enthusiastically went up to hug him, "Brother Qi, haven't seen you for a few days, was the sailing trip smooth?"

Qi Yun replied with a smile, "Ran into some minor troubles, but overall it went well."

After some pleasantries, the two went inside, where the butler had already prepared a sumptuous dinner.

Li Yaohua raised his wine glass to speak, but a subordinate came in to report, "Outside, there are two people who claim to be from a salvage company requesting to see Mr. Qi."

Qi Yun was momentarily stunned and quickly guessed it was Pete and Kaisen whom he met at the port that day.

The fact that they could find him here showed they had put in considerable effort.

Li Yaohua turned to Qi Yun, asking for his opinion.

After a brief thought, Qi Yun said, "Let them wait for now; I'll see them after dinner."

The subordinate acknowledged and left.

"Brother Qi, is there something troubling you?" Li Yaohua asked.

Qi Yun shook his head with a smile, briefly recounting the incident on the ship, "They are likely here to show their sincerity."

After listening, Li Yaohua said angrily, "Crew members seizing the employer's property at gunpoint? No wonder their company can't thrive. In my opinion, they might as well close down sooner rather than later."

Qi Yun chuckled, not taking it too seriously. As long as the other party showed enough sincerity, this matter could be put to rest, and there was no need to fall out with Kaisen and the others.

After dinner, Qi Yun and Li Yaohua went to a room in the corner on the second floor, where Chen Wei was still stationed.

When Li Yaohua saw the bags filled with gold coins and bars, his eyes widened involuntarily.

"These... were all salvaged from the sea?"

Qi Yun nodded slightly, "Indeed." These were just some coarse items like gold coins and bars; he didn't feel it appropriate to say something like "Take what you like."

Li Yaohua stared at the gold coins for a moment, then smacked his lips with some emotion, "Brother Qi, you really had a bountiful trip, while I've worked half my life and still can't match what you found in just a few days."

Qi Yun shook his head, smiling, "Elder Brother Li, you're too kind. I merely got lucky and made some small fortune, nothing compared to you."

Li Yaohua waved his hand, indicating Qi Yun need not be modest, then asked, "Brother Qi, what do you plan to do with these items?"

"Naturally, sell them. Elder Brother Li, do you have any connections to introduce?" Qi Yun replied without hesitation, as this was one of the reasons he sought out Li Yaohua.

These items had no documentation, and it would likely be troublesome to bring them back to the country. Handling them abroad would be the best option.

Li Yaohua thought for a moment and replied, "I know a few wealthy collectors; I can help you get in touch."

Qi Yun's face lit up upon hearing this, "Then I'll be relying on you, Elder Brother Li. Once it's done, I'll be sure to repay you generously."

Li Yaohua patted Qi Yun's shoulder, "No need for thanks between us. However, if you want to sell these things smoothly, you must keep it discreet."

"Some things can be handled quietly, but once exposed, trouble will come knocking."

Qi Yun understood what trouble the other was referring to and nodded in agreement, "Rest assured, Elder Brother Li, I understand."

"I know Brother Qi is not someone who likes to show off. I'll go make some calls now." With that, he walked out.

Qi Yun also left the room and went to the reception room on the first floor.

In the reception room, Pete and Kaisen were nervously waiting, not having touched a drop of the tea on the coffee table.

After learning the background of those three Range Rover license plates, their already tense mood grew even worse. Not daring to delay, they rushed over with sincerity after dealing with those crew members.

Seeing Qi Yun approaching, the two hurriedly got up from the sofa.

Pete took half a step forward with a smile, "Mr. Qi, sorry for disturbing you so late."

Qi Yun waved a hand at them, "You came to see me so late; what's the urgency?"

Pete exchanged a glance with Kaisen, who placed a suitcase on the coffee table and opened it to reveal a pile of crisp new USD bills.

Kaisen, full of apology, explained, "Mr. Qi, we came to express our apologies again. We've handed those crew members over to the police, ensuring they'll never leave prison in their lifetime."

Qi Yun believed these words; in Africa, life for powerless and insignificant guys was indeed worth less than paper.

"I'm very sorry for the mismanagement of our company, which caused you distress. This money is a small token of our company's appreciation, and we hope you accept it."

Qi Yun listened with a faint smile on his face, glancing at the suitcase on the coffee table. Roughly estimating, it seemed to contain at least fifty or sixty thousand.

This show of sincerity touched him deeply.

"Haha, I personally am fine, but my female assistant was indeed frightened. Since you put it that way, I'll accept it on behalf of my female assistant, and let's leave it at that."

Seeing Qi Yun willing to let go, both of them collectively breathed a sigh of relief, and their faces instantly showed a relieved expression.

Pete wiped the sweat from his forehead and smiled with effort, "Mr. Qi, you are magnanimous. Should you ever need our company's services again, please feel free to ask. I guarantee such an issue will never occur again."

Saying this, he pulled a gold-lettered business card from his suit pocket, "This is my private number, available 24/7."

Qi Yun accepted it with a smile, "Alright, then I'll thank Mr. Pete in advance."

"Serving Mr. Qi is our honor." Pete bowed again, lowering his stance significantly, "If there's nothing else, we won't disturb your rest any longer."

"Alright, I'll see you out."

With that, the group walked towards the outside.

When they reached the entrance of the manor, Qi Yun spoke again, "By the way, regarding the items salvaged from this sea trip, I hope your company can strictly restrain those crew members and not spread the word."

Pete nodded hastily, "Don't worry, Mr. Qi. We've sternly warned them upon docking not to reveal a single detail to outsiders."

Qi Yun nodded with satisfaction, "Good then."

After seeing Pete and Kaisen off, Qi Yun looked around. Every few dozen meters was a bodyguard on patrol, giving him no security concerns.

Anyone brazen enough to try for those items was essentially courting death.

Anyone with any sense would know better than to provoke the owner of this manor.

Returning to the manor, Qi Yun gathered everyone except Chen Wei.

He glanced over their faces one by one before pointing at the suitcase on the coffee table, "This sea trip was hard on all of you; the money in this suitcase, you all take half and split it equally. The other half, Ah Jiao, deliver to Brother Wei later."

Upon hearing this, their faces instantly lit up with joy, exclaiming, "Thank you, boss!" as they hurried to the coffee table to divide the money.

Tata stood still, embarrassedly raising a hand and softly asked, "Mr. Qi, do I have a share too?"

Qi Yun nodded at him, "Of course, if you want it."

"I do! I do! Thank you, Mr. Qi!" Tata said, quickly rushing over.

...

The next day, a business car drove into the manor, with Li Yaohua accompanying three middle-aged men out, one of whom had a white handkerchief atop his head.

Chapter 296: Three Hundred Million!

"Qi brother, this is Felix, Harris, and Salaman," Li Yaohua introduced to Qi Yun, "They are very interested in that batch of goods."

After saying this, he introduced Qi Yun to them: "This is my boss's friend, Mr. Qi Yun."

As soon as they heard Qi Yun was Fu Wentao's friend, their previously casual expressions instantly turned serious.

The white man named Felix pushed his gold-rimmed glasses and immediately reached out his hand, "Hello, Mr. Qi."

Qi Yun had a polite smile on his face as he responded, "Hello, Mr. Felix, I've heard a lot about you."

Immediately after, the black man named Harris and the man with a white cloth on his head, Salaman, also stepped forward to greet him.

After a round of pleasantries, they moved to the reception room, and as soon as they sat down, the butler brought a few glasses of red wine.

Salaman took a wine glass, glanced at the few large bags on the carpet, and then looked at Qi Yun, saying, "Mr. Qi, please forgive my boldness, I need to rush back to Saudi tonight, so can I see the batch of goods now?"

"Of course," Qi Yun nodded to Chen Wei behind him. The latter immediately stepped forward, opened all the bags on the floor, and the room was instantly filled with glittering treasures.

Felix stood up, gently swaying his wine glass, and his pupils behind the gold-rimmed glasses contracted instantly upon seeing the silver coins, "These are double-column coins from the time of Philip V!"

He went to a bag, picked up a silver coin, placed it in his palm, examined it closely, and sighed, "Unfortunately, it's not well-preserved."

"It's okay, Felix. If you're not interested in these silver coins, I'd be pleased to buy them all," the black Harris came over, full of a sly smile, clearly knowing Felix beforehand.

Felix gave him a glance, stood up, and continued looking at the gold coins in the next bag, "This... this is a cross pattern! Are these gold coins also from the time of Philip V?"

He then raised his head and looked at Qi Yun, seemingly wanting confirmation from him.

Qi Yun smiled and nodded, complimenting, "Mr. Felix has a good eye. Indeed, all these treasures are from the same period."

Beside them, Harris squeezed over, grabbed a gold coin and scrutinized it, his thick lips almost touching the coin.

"Indeed, they are the batch of gold coins produced in 1700; I've seen the same ones in a London antique shop before."

At this moment, Salaman also came over, holding a small cloth bag, which contained dozens of gems.

He looked down at a gold coin, then said to Qi Yun, "Mr. Qi, I want all these gems and gold coins, you set the price."

"Our country is building an unprecedented structure, and I think these gold coins and gems would make excellent decorations."

Qi Yun slightly started upon hearing this, looking at Salaman, inwardly clicking his tongue; truly worthy of one with a white cloth, this talk is so extravagant.

Yet, before Qi Yun could respond, Felix and Harris next to him disagreed.

"Mr. Salaman, the oil in the Middle East can certainly pile up a mountain of gold, but these are precious cultural artifacts and shouldn't be reduced to exterior decorations!" Felix said, his face solemn.

Harris was all smiles, "Mr. Salaman, your royal palaces are already studded with diamonds, why compete with us for these few antiques? Why not let Felix have those gold coins, and let's all be friends."

Salaman remained unmoved, ignoring them, continuing to rub the gems in the small cloth bag, "Mr. Qi, these gems plus gold coins, twenty-five million US dollar, cash transaction, can be wired to your account immediately."

"This is my sincerity."

Hearing this, Qi Yun's heart involuntarily twitched violently.

He had previously calculated that this batch of goods could be worth at least a few million, and now indeed they have offered millions, just in US Dollar!

At the current exchange rate, twenty-five million US Dollar is almost 180 million, happiness comes too suddenly...

"Hmph." Felix, who had been ignored, sneered, "It seems Mr. Salaman doesn't see us, then I'll offer thirty million US Dollar."

These words made the room's atmosphere instantly tense.

Li Yaohua, who had been silent on the sofa, hurriedly stood up to advise, "Gentlemen, you are all guests invited by me, there's no need to be angry over such a small matter, let's discuss slowly."

"Exactly, business is business, no need to strain relations," Qi Yun also mediated.

Though continuing the competition could drive up the price of this batch, whoever it ends up selling to would certainly leave the other unhappy.

Qi Yun didn't want to offend people of this level for mere immediate interests; in comparison, developing friendships here could mean endless opportunities to make money in the future.

Seeing both Li Yaohua and Qi Yun speaking up, neither side spoke further as it was their territory and face had to be given.

Besides, the Fu Family behind them is an entity even their family would yield to.

"Haha, since all of you are interested, let me suggest something, see if it suits you," Qi Yun said with a smile.

Harris extended a plump hand, "Please go ahead, Mr. Qi."

Qi Yun took out a slip of paper documenting the counts from his pocket, placed it on the coffee table, "This records the quantity of the batch; since you all want it, I suggest splitting it among you equally, and as for the price, you three can decide together."

Harris was the first to nod, "I agree with Mr. Qi."

Felix adjusted his gold glasses, speaking blandly, "I don't have any issues."

Salaman tapped his fingers on the cloth bag twice and finally placed it on the coffee table, "I agree too."

Both sides made concessions, and the atmosphere in the room was no longer as oppressive as before. The three of them gathered to examine the remaining items in the bags.

After checking everything, the three gave their final price.

The gems and gold coins were originally to be priced at thirty million, as Felix suggested, but Qi Yun proactively refused, demanding only twenty-five million, which earned unanimous praise from the three.

Those silver coins and gold bars were priced at sixteen million.

The total added up to forty-one million, US dollar!

Converting to RMB, nearly three hundred million!

Once everything was allocated, Salaman and the other two immediately called to instruct their personnel to transfer the funds, as there was no way Qi Yun's account could hold that much money. On Li Yaohua's advice, the money was temporarily stored in the Fu Family's overseas account.

"Qi brother, I can arrange to open an account for you at the Swiss Bank tomorrow, or if you want to transfer the money back domestically, I can also help, though it may take a little longer."

Considering this, Qi Yun replied, "Please help me transfer fifty million back domestically, and keep the rest in the Swiss Bank."

"No problem, it's a small matter," Li Yaohua responded immediately.

After his assistant confirmed the funds were received, the transaction was complete, and Salaman and the others prepared to leave.

"Mr. Qi, it's a pleasure meeting you, here's my contact information, feel free to reach out when visiting the Middle East," Salaman handed Qi Yun a pure gold card.

Taking it, Qi Yun's mind buzzed; this card alone weighs at least twenty grams.

A single card worth over ten thousand? Talk about extravagance, this crowd fits the bill.

"Alright, I'll surely visit the Middle East to see Mr. Salaman if I have the chance," Qi Yun responded courteously.

Felix and Harris beside him were much more low-key, simply taking out their phones to exchange contact information with him.

"Mr. Qi, if you have such treasures to handle in the future, feel free to contact me; my family owns many auction houses, and seeing it as a favor, I'll charge a lower commission," Felix jested.

Then Harris chimed in, "Or you can find me too; though I'm not as wealthy as they are, I treat friends with more generosity."

Qi Yun nodded with a smile, "Certainly."

After seeing them off, Li Yaohua took the initiative to introduce, "Felix is a noble from Spain; as he said, his family owns many auction houses, not as famous as Christie's, but in Europe and Africa, they are top-tier."

"Harris's brother is a renowned broker; their business extends beyond antiques; they can get you a tank or helicopter if you need."

"As for Salaman, you should have figured it out."

Qi Yun clicked his tongue; none were simple characters.

"Li elder brother, gratitude doesn't need words, just call if you ever need me."

Li Yaohua waved with a smile, "It's too formal to say such things between us, mutual help!"

...

At night, Qi Yun had just finished calling Zhao Qing to report his safety, when Shi Feng's call came in with bad news—the old ghost had an accident.

Chapter 297: Did Something Leak?

Two days later, Qi Yun and his group landed at Bird City Airport.

Since learning of Old Ghost's accident, he had politely declined Li Yaohua's warm invitation and hurried back on the earliest flight.

Outside the airport, Zhong Rui drove to pick them up. Qi Yun asked him to take Ah Jiao and the others to get settled while he headed straight to Antique Street to find Shi Feng.

Inside Qiuyue Pavilion, Shi Feng was facing away from the door, wiping a porcelain vase on the display rack. Upon hearing footsteps, he quickly turned around, saw that it was Qi Yun, and hurriedly tossed aside the silk cloth to greet him.

"You're finally back."

Qi Yun had no time for pleasantries and frowned, asking, "What exactly happened? How did Old Ghost suddenly disappear?"

Shi Feng pulled Qi Yun by the arm to sit down nearby and then handed over his phone: "See for yourself."

"That afternoon, Old Ghost sent me a message, and then I couldn't reach him anymore. I tried getting someone to find him but to no avail."

Qi Yun took the phone, staring intensely at the message on the screen.

"Someone's looking for me with bad intentions." It was just that one short sentence.

After reading the message, Qi Yun furrowed his brow, subconsciously connecting Old Ghost's disappearance to the last two tasks he had asked him to do.

"Did he take on any other work before he disappeared? Or did he have any enemies?"

Shi Feng shook his head after hearing: "I don't know whether he took any jobs, but as for enemies... If his previous deeds were exposed, his enemies would be all over the place."

Qi Yun sighed. There really was no clue at all.

Shi Feng continued, "I'm not telling you this so you'll help find him. We're all in the underworld, taking money to solve problems for others. Old Ghost was a loner, and he always expected this day might come."

"I'm worried they might be coming for you. After all, he just finished a job for you, so you need to be careful lately."

"You know Old Ghost's skills. If they can find him..."

Shi Feng didn't finish, but Qi Yun already understood his meaning.

Recently, he had Old Ghost do two things: steal a ledger from the villa of that big slick, and then place it in Deputy Squad Leader Zhou's study.

The influence of these two people was undeniable. If Old Ghost slipped up at any point, they might indeed find him...

Qi Yun tapped his right hand on the table, staying silent for a long time.

Shi Feng pulled out a cigarette and handed one over: "From what I know of Old Ghost, even if caught, he'd never give you up."

"But since they can find Old Ghost, they might discover you through other channels, so you can't be careless."

"Don't get involved with Old Ghost's matter. I've looked up some friends who are also checking his whereabouts. I'll inform you if there's news."

Qi Yun took a silent drag from the cigarette, deeply inhaling twice before he slowly shook his head: "If Old Ghost was indeed taken by my adversary, knowing I was behind it is only a matter of time, so whether I get involved or not is actually the same."

"I'll handle this matter myself, don't you worry. The opposition is not small, and I don't want you getting implicated."

Shi Feng heard this, his hand holding the cigarette froze in mid-air, and he chuckled lightly: "I'm a lone wolf now, what do I have to fear from being implicated?"

"I've known Old Ghost for over ten years. He's my friend, too. I can't stand by and do nothing."

Qi Yun frowned, looking at him and sighed, "The opposition is likely from the city government. Involving you won't do any good. Listen to me, let me figure something out first. You just wait for my news. When I need your help, I'll let you know."

He knew that Shi Feng had some connections in the antique circle and knew some big-time businessmen, but it depended on the situation.

For trivial matters, it might work to ask for their help, but for something stormy like this, they'd likely back out at any sign of trouble.

Shi Feng exhaled a long puff of smoke and finally nodded silently.

Qi Yun flicked the ash off his cigarette and immediately took out his phone to call Zhang Dayong.

Zhang Dayong was an old buddy of his; their relationship was not just about interests, so he could comfortably ask for his help.

"You finally remembered to call me. Disappeared for two months? Looked for you a few times and couldn't find you." Zhang Dayong said with a laugh on the other end of the line.

Qi Yun smiled. Although anxious inside, he sounded calm: "Haha, just got back from abroad today. Do you have time? Can we meet up?"

"What's up?"

Qi Yun didn't hide the truth: "Yeah, need your help with something, not convenient to talk over the phone."

"Then let's meet at that tea house from last time, see you in an hour." Zhang Dayong agreed readily.

"Okay, see you then."

After hanging up, Qi Yun got up to leave.

Shi Feng saw him to the door and offered a final word of caution: "If it's not doable, just let it go. People like Old Ghost in the underworld accept the risks."

Qi Yun didn't respond, waved his hand without looking back.

Once in the car, he didn't rush to the tea house but dialed President Bi's number.

The phone rang twice before President Bi answered with a hearty laugh: "Haha, I heard from Old Ye that you've made a killing out at sea, calling me to treat me to a meal?"

When Qi Yun returned from Cape Town, he had informed Ye Hanwen, so it wasn't surprising that President Bi knew he was back.

"A meal can wait, I have an urgent matter to ask your help with." Qi Yun laughed in response.

President Bi heard and replied without hesitation: "What's the matter? Just say it."

"Here's the deal, I need to withdraw five million in cash. Do you know anyone at Construction Bank who could help me with that?"

"Five million?" President Bi was stunned for a moment; it's not common these days to need that much cash.

"Yes."

Upon Qi Yun's confirmation, President Bi didn't ask further but pondered briefly before replying: "I'm not acquainted with anyone at Construction Bank, all our company business is with CIMB. I'm on pretty good terms with their New District branch manager."

"So, just head to CIMB; I'll call their manager, and then have finance meet you to retrieve it."

Qi Yun didn't refuse: "Alright, thanks."

"No need to mention it between us." President Bi laughed and hung up.

Ending the call, Qi Yun patted Chen Wei on the shoulder, who was in the driver's seat, instructing: "Brother Wei, go to the New District CIMB."

Upon hearing this, Chen Wei quickly started the car, reversed, and drove away.

Qi Yun rubbed his chin, organizing his thoughts for a moment, and dialed another unknown number.

"Hello, who is this?" came a deep voice from the other end of the line.

"My name is Qi Yun, a friend of Baldy Hong (Hong Weize). I have a business proposal to discuss. Can we meet up?"

The other end was silent for two seconds, then responded, "Time, place."

"An hour later, Tianfu Tea House."

Chapter 298: Swapping Wives

New District, Traffic Bank, in the office.

President Tian Yaosheng warmly brought a cup of tea to Qi Yun: "Mr. Qi, Mr. Bi has already explained everything to me, and I've arranged for someone to handle your business downstairs. Please have a seat for a moment."

Qi Yun took the cup and thanked politely: "President Tian, sorry for troubling you."

Tian Yaosheng waved his hand: "Mr. Qi, don't say that. Since Mr. Bi personally instructed me, how could I not handle it satisfactorily?"

"We may not be familiar now, but we will be friends in no time. Mr. Qi, if you ever need my help, just let me know."

Qi Yun naturally knew why the other person was so enthusiastic. For banks like theirs, there is a huge deposit pressure every quarter, so whether it's the president or those below, they all strive to maintain good relationships with high-value clients.

And being a major shareholder in Mr. Bi's company, certainly makes him one of their target clients.

Qi Yun picked up the teacup and took a sip, then smiled lightly: "Since President Tian considers me a friend, I'll have the company's finance department open an account here, and I'll deposit fifty million in the next few days."

Tian Yaosheng's small eyes lit up like bulbs upon hearing this, and he clapped his hands in praise: "Mr. Qi, you're straightforward!"

"Rest assured, I will definitely arrange an experienced account manager to serve you, ensuring your satisfaction."

As he spoke, he seemed to remember something, got up and went to the safe nearby, pressed his fingerprint, took out a beautifully packaged brocade box, and placed it on the tea table in front of Qi Yun.

"Mr. Qi, this is a gift we specifically customized for prestigious clients like you. It's not costly, just a token of my appreciation, and I hope you accept it."

He opened the lid as he spoke, revealing a set of very ancient-looking Yixing clay teapots inside.

Qi Yun didn't know how much it cost, but since it was kept in a safe, it was probably not cheap.

"Hehe, since it's President Tian's gift, I'll accept it, thank you."

Tian Yaosheng's smile deepened upon hearing this.

Being people of status, since the gift was accepted, the matter of the fifty million deposit was certainly settled.

He had been worried about meeting this quarter's deposit target during the morning meeting, and now it was resolved over a cup of tea. No wonder he heard magpies chirping when he left home this morning.

"Mr. Qi, no need to say that. I should be the one thanking you." Tian Yaosheng smiled with wrinkles piling on his face, swiftly repackaged the Yixing teapot set, and poured Qi Yun another cup of tea.

While they were talking, there was a knock on the office door, and a beautiful woman in professional attire appeared at the entrance.

"President, the VIP transaction has been completed, I came to inform you."

Tian Yaosheng nodded and waved her over: "Xiao Jing, you came at the right time. Let me introduce you, this is Mr. Qi, also a shareholder of Mr. Bi's company."

"Mr. Qi will open an account with us in a couple of days, you should personally handle it for him."

The woman named Xiao Jing had a gleam of joy in her eyes and gently smoothed her skirt, bowing slightly: "Hello, Mr. Qi."

Qi Yun nodded slightly to her as a greeting.

Although Xiao Jing was quite attractive and slim, Qi Yun had no improper thoughts.

"Mr. Qi, Xiao Jing is very capable. Let her serve you in the future, what do you think?" Tian Yaosheng asked with a smile.

Qi Yun said calmly: "That's fine."

Upon hearing this, Xiao Jing stepped over to Qi Yun, bending slightly and presented her WeChat QR code on her phone,

as a fragrant breeze wafted, revealing subtle glimpses of her chest inadvertently.

"Mr. Qi, let's exchange contact details. Let me know when you're coming, and I'll reserve a parking space for you in advance."

The reason was impeccable, showing her experience and skill.

Qi Yun did not refuse, and took out his phone to add her as a contact.

"You have successfully added a new friend— 'Never Awake Xiao Jing'"

After completing the operation, Xiao Jing remained slightly bowed, speaking softly: "Alright, Mr. Qi, feel free to contact me at any time."

Qi Yun nodded, put away his phone, and then looked at Tian Yaosheng, saying: "President Tian, since the transaction is done, I'll take my leave now, I have a meeting with a friend soon."

"Alright, alright, I'll see you out." Tian Yaosheng got up with a smile to send him off, and Xiao Jing followed behind.

They went to the VIP room on the first floor, where the finance person from the jewelry company and Chen Wei, who was holding two black canvas bags, were waiting.

"Mr. Qi, the transaction is complete, anything else?" The finance person asked respectfully.

Qi Yun nodded slightly to her: "Well done, there's nothing else from my end."

"Okay, then I'll head back to the company."

"Hmm." Qi Yun responded, turning to Tian Yaosheng, "Then President Tian, we'll be off."

Tian Yaosheng's smile spread: "Alright, Mr. Qi, take care."

After seeing Qi Yun off and waiting for the car to drive out of the parking lot, Tian Yaosheng's stiff smile finally relaxed.

He instructed Xiao Jing beside him: "This is a significant client, you have the opportunity now, make sure to seize it, be proactive."

Xiao Jing naturally understood the implications, nodding with a smile: "Don't worry, President, I know what to do."

...

After leaving the bank, Qi Yun headed straight to the teahouse next to the New District Branch.

Zhang Dayong had arrived a few minutes earlier and was already sipping tea.

Chapter 299: Changing Brides (Part 2)

When Qi Yun came in, he joked, "You rascal, when we used to drink together your glass was always lower by three points. Now you've got a big attitude, I have to wait for you, huh?"

Qi Yun naturally caught the joke in his words and didn't mind, pulling out a chair and sitting down by himself.

Zhang Dayong picked up the teapot, poured a cup of tea, and handed it over: "What's up?"

Qi Yun raised his watch to check the time, looked up, and replied: "No rush. I'm here for two things, and someone else will drop by later. I need you to back me up."

"Someone else?" Zhang Dayong asked suspiciously, "Who?"

Qi Yun raised his teacup and took a sip: "You should've heard of him, Luo Yang."

"Luo Yang?" Zhang Dayong was dumbfounded, "The one doing the gravel business?"

"That's right, him." Qi Yun nodded.

"You're involved with him?" Zhang Dayong was a bit puzzled; in his impression, Qi Yun avoided those kinds of businesses.

Qi Yun explained: "Not involved, but some people under me have conflicts with him, so I want to chat with him to see if we can resolve them."

Actually, he reached out to the other party this time for two reasons, one being to ask them to find out the whereabouts of Old Ghost.

Truth be told, when it comes to the most informed in the area, aside from the aunt at the village entrance, it's these big guys with small-time followers everywhere who catch any tiny rumor faster than the Hat Uncle.

Initially, Qi Yun was reluctant to approach Luo Yang, but Hong Weize mentioned that Luo Yang had quickly expanded his power in the past six months, and now not only the Sha District but the New District is under his control.

So to inquire about Old Ghost, indeed, he can't avoid him.

Furthermore, since he's seeking help from the other party, he might as well solve the issues of Ah Jiao and the others too.

Although he could have them continue to lay low and avoid trouble, such things need to be handled sooner or later. Ah Jiao and the others are already on Luo Yang's radar; if they're carelessly bumped into and attacked, it's not worth the risk.

As the two chatted, a sudden commotion came from outside the room.

"You dog, what a small world after all!"

"Boss, it's him! Last time, this kid injured our buddies!"

Upon hearing the noise, Qi Yun quickly got up and pushed open the door.

In the corridor, a middle-aged fat man dressed in a suit and ties stood leading, none other than the big shot Luo Yang.

Behind him were two subordinates who, despite wearing coats and leather shoes, gave off a gangster vibe.

The three men were glaring at Chen Wei with ill intent.

As for Chen Wei, he remained with a cool demeanor as if he completely disregarded the three people before him.

"Ahem, it's President Luo, right?" Qi Yun cleared his throat, interrupting.

Luo Yang turned his head, sized up Qi Yun, and spoke: "You must be Baldy Hong's friend?"

Qi Yun nodded and opened the door to the room: "Let's chat inside."

Luo Yang's mouth twitched an ambiguous smile: "Sure."

Saying this, he followed Qi Yun into the room, but as soon as he passed the screen, his steps stopped, and a surprised expression crossed his face.

Right in front, Zhang Dayong was holding a cup of tea, looking at him with a half-smiling expression.

"President Luo, come and sit."

Luo Yang snapped out of his surprise, quickly stepped forward: "Oh, Director Zhang, you're here too."

Luo Yang, managing to establish himself in New District and Sha District, certainly has connections at some level.

But, having relationships is one thing, treating high-ranking officials in the government office still requires at least basic respect because if they can't deal with you, they can easily deal with your underlings.

They could slowly take a batch of them away, then who would you rely on for business?

This is the main reason why Luo Yang kept his posture low, not that he was really afraid of Zhang Dayong, but it's not worth putting on a show.

Zhang Dayong naturally knew what was going on, but in his mind, he wasn't afraid of Luo Yang at all, because he had someone behind him, and they were powerful.

So later if Luo Yang didn't show a good face to Qi Yun, Zhang Dayong would definitely step in to educate him.

"Haha, I'm good friends with President Qi, heard he had some trouble and came to see what's up."

Upon hearing this, Luo Yang's smile froze; it was clearly meant as a warning shot.

At this time, Qi Yun lifted the teapot, poured a cup of tea, and placed it in front of Luo Yang: "President Luo, have a seat and drink some tea first."

"Okay." Luo Yang responded, pulled out a chair, and sat down.

Seeing the willingness to talk, Qi Yun called out towards the door: "Brother Wei, bring the stuff in."

Chen Wei outside heard him, and walked in carrying two black canvas bags, placed the bags on the table, then exited and closed the door.

Qi Yun stood up, unzipped the two bags, stacks of fresh red bills appeared.

Luo Yang stared at the cash in the canvas bags, somewhat surprised.

Not only him, but Zhang Dayong across from him was also stunned, unclear about Qi Yun's intentions.

Qi Yun smiled and began explaining: "President Luo, since you graced us with your presence today, I'll speak straightforwardly."

"Before, my three employees might have had some misunderstandings with your wife's little brother, causing him a loss of five million, here is exactly five million, consider it as compensation to your wife's little brother from me on behalf of those three employees."

"President Luo, can past events be let go?"

Though five million is not a small amount, for Qi Yun, who just earned three hundred million, it's nothing much.

Moreover, in his heart, he acknowledged the skill and loyalty of Ah Jiao and her team, hence was willing to pay this amount hoping to erase their potential worries.

Chapter 300: Swapped Wives_3

Luo Yang glanced at the two bags of cash on the table, then turned his gaze to Qi Yun. After staring at him for a few seconds, he smiled and said, "Haha, since President Qi has spoken, I'll give you this face. The matter with those three people is in the past."

Upon hearing this, Qi Yun also smiled, lifted his teacup, and said, "President Luo is straightforward. I'll use tea instead of wine to thank you for this gesture."

With that, he drained his teacup.

After putting down the cup, he planned to continue talking about finding the person, when he noticed Luo Yang looking at him with a half-smile before saying, "But President Qi, my little brother-in-law's issue is settled, yet your subordinate outside has injured several of my employees."

"Although the medical expenses aren't much, my face is genuinely lost. How do you think we should settle this account?"

As soon as he said this, the atmosphere in the room became somewhat oppressive.

Zhang Dayong's face darkened, and his gaze at Luo Yang was tinged with coldness.

However, Qi Yun remained calm, speaking in a steady tone, "What does President Luo suggest?"

He naturally didn't believe the other was looking to save face; this wasn't a petty thug issue. Face was nothing compared to profit. Besides, the only ones who knew about the incident were Luo Yang's men, and there were no outsiders, so losing face didn't exist.

Luo Yang toyed with the teacup in his hand, a playful smile on his face, and remained silent for a long time.

Just as Zhang Dayong was about to lose his temper, Luo Yang suddenly burst into laughter, "Hahaha, President Qi, I'm just kidding around, don't take it to heart."

"I'll finish this cup of tea, and now we're friends, meeting through a little quarrel!"

With that, he raised his teacup in a gesture.

Qi Yun watched Luo Yang's every move calmly and only let out a light laugh when Luo Yang emptied his cup, saying, "President Luo, that was quite a joke, my heart almost couldn't take it."

Luo Yang laughed twice, his thick hand slapping his knee, "Haha, I'm a rough person, that's just my nature, please forgive me, President Qi."

Silently watching, Zhang Dayong's icy expression finally relaxed.

After a few more pleasantries, Qi Yun got to the point, taking a photo out of his pocket and sliding it in front of Luo Yang, "President Luo, the other reason I invited you this time is to ask for your help in finding the person in this photo."

"He's a friend of mine, and he went missing a few days ago in an urban village in the New District, and we haven't found any trace of him since."

Luo Yang glanced at the photo, and his expression immediately froze. He looked up to stare at Qi Yun, asking, "Did something happen to Old Ghost?"

Qi Yun looked surprised upon hearing this, exclaiming, "You know Old Ghost too?"

Luo Yang nodded, "I grew up poor, with three siblings below me, and the family couldn't afford to feed so many mouths, so I started mixing in society at a young age."

"Old Ghost and I apprenticed under the same master; he's like a senior brother to me. But later on, I broke the rules and was expelled by the master."

Qi Yun clicked his tongue upon hearing this, remarking on the connection, indeed.

"Old Ghost did run into trouble. Two days ago, he sent a message to my friend saying someone was targeting him, and then he couldn't be reached anymore."

Upon hearing this, Luo Yang looked concerned, "I'll arrange for people to investigate immediately and notify you as soon as there's news."

"Director Zhang, I'll visit you another day." With that, he got up and headed towards the door of the private room.

Qi Yun glanced at the two bags of money on the table and called out, "President Luo, take the money with you."

Without turning back, Luo Yang waved his hand, "Got a new wife, my little brother-in-law's matters have long ceased to be my concern."

Watching his departing figure, Qi Yun couldn't help but smile, finding the man rather interesting.