

Middle Age 381

Chapter 381: Venting Some Steam (Part 4)

"Where's Xiong Jun!" one of them shouted at the female technician.

Two female technicians crouched in the corner, too scared to speak, trembling and crying.

Seeing this, the three didn't ask further and immediately began searching the room.

The private room wasn't very big, including the bathroom it totaled about thirty square meters.

One of them pushed open the bathroom door and immediately saw Brother Xiong curled up inside the wooden bath barrel.

"Found him!" The burly man kicked over the bath barrel, and Brother Xiong, like a catfish slapped onto the shore, rolled on the tiles wearing only shorts.

As he tried to get up, someone ruthlessly stomped on the back of his neck.

"Wait! Wait!" Brother Xiong shouted hastily, "Buddy, you need money or work done? If it's money, name your price, I'll give it to you right away, if it's work..."

"I need nothing from you!" Before Brother Xiong could finish, a foot kicked him in the face, his head slammed into the tile, and a gash on his forehead started oozing blood.

A burly man stepped forward, grabbed the fat flesh on the back of his neck, and hauled him out of the bathroom, causing Brother Xiong to cry in pain.

But the three didn't care much, dragging him to the hallway and gave him a thorough beating, lasting a good three minutes, directly knocking Brother Xiong unconscious.

Even so, they exercised some restraint, not targeting vital spots, otherwise Brother Xiong wouldn't have lasted even three seconds.

After the beating, two of them each grabbed one of Brother Xiong's arms and dragged him like a dead dog towards the elevator.

In the lobby, those followers who saw their boss's miserable state were scared silent, those in pain and groaning ceased complaining.

These men acted swiftly and left quickly, adeptly tossing Brother Xiong at the doorstep of the club before darting to a parked van in the distance.

The van's engine was kept running, as soon as they got in, the exhaust pipe spewed a burst of blue smoke, disappearing swiftly down the street.

Seeing the tough guys leave, the club's staff finally dared to come out trembling, all shocked at Brother Xiong's state.

"Quick... Get him to the hospital!"

Although it wasn't peak visiting hours, there were always guests willing to soak 24/7 at the club, so many people pulled out phones and began recording for social media.

"Holy shit! Everyone..."

After a while, two police cars finally arrived belatedly...

Half an hour later, Chen Wei stopped the van in a surveillance blind spot, got out and changed the license plate, then instructed the five burly men: "Split up, find a place to stay, wait for my call."

"Got it."

They were quite efficient, not saying any unnecessary words, immediately heading off in different directions.

After everyone left, Chen Wei got back in the car, drove another ten minutes, finally reaching a vast wasteland filled with abandoned cars.

...

Meanwhile, a black Audi slowly drove out of the city government courtyard.

Inside the car, the secretary sitting in the passenger seat turned to report: "Chen from Puxin District is making quite a move, mobilizing a lot of resources against Ji."

"Some people below want to hear your opinion, whether to intervene."

Sitting in the back, the glasses-wearing middle-aged man slowly shook his head: "They're conducting a lawful and compliant inspection, why intervene? Tell them to focus on their work."

"Understood." The secretary instantly grasped the leader's stance, hesitated briefly, then tentatively said: "Only Chen is stepping up, it doesn't seem to be from the opposition."

"Hehe, don't mind those things, Ji has been overstepping the bounds lately, it's time to wake him up."

Chapter 382: Drenched in Sweat

PM, inside a luxury riverside residence.

Ji Liyang sat on the sofa, his face showing a solemn expression.

He tapped into some of his connections, finally solving most of the company's current issues, but the temporary task force sent from the district seemed to have completely set their sights on him. Not only did they stay put, but they even pulled in more personnel from departments like tax, ready to thoroughly investigate to the end.

Even though he could ultimately find someone else to take the fall, keeping the fire away from himself, the signals behind all of this were extremely dangerous.

The once highly esteemed Mr. Ji, who was always a guest of honor wherever he went, now found himself being handled deftly by even a second-rate district official, with no one stepping up to support him. It's clear that he's been abandoned by the higher-ups.

As soon as his opponents realize that the upper echelons aren't backing him anymore, they will definitely seize the opportunity to add insult to injury and cause him trouble.

This situation is exactly what Brother Xiong was worried about.

In essence, they're just pieces on someone else's chessboard, but he once had a crucial role that brought greater benefits to those behind the scenes.

But once he's discarded, he becomes no different from Brother Xiong.

"Ding ding ding~"

A series of phone rings interrupted, Ji Liyang glanced at the phone on the coffee table, it was a call from his assistant.

"Hello, what's up?"

"Chairman, there's... there's trouble with Xiong Jun!" The assistant's tone was somewhat urgent.

Ji Liyang frowned: "What happened?"

"Someone from Xiong Jun's side said that two hours ago, a group rushed into the bathhouse and severely beat Xiong Jun, then tossed him at the bathhouse entrance."

"He just got treated at the hospital, when police came over saying he's involved in several criminal cases and will be arrested. He's already being watched, and they'll take him away once his condition stabilizes." The assistant spoke quickly, concisely explaining the events.

After hearing this, Ji Liyang's hand gripping the phone clenched tight, instinctively feeling this was aimed at him.

"Got it."

Ji Liyang coldly replied, then hung up and quickly found Director Guo's number in his contacts, dialing through.

But the receiver only emitted an outage message, which made Ji Liyang's expression even worse.

Given the special nature of the unit, the phone was normally on 24/7, why would it be turned off suddenly?

This inevitably stirred anxiety in his heart...

Brother Xiong had done many shady things for him, so if that guy starts speaking erratically after going in, he'd be placed in a passive position.

Although he always took great care, confident that he didn't leave any incriminating evidence, who knows if Brother Xiong might have conducted some covert maneuvers, maybe secretly recorded something...

In the past, he believed that even if Brother Xiong had a hundred guts, he wouldn't dare speak indiscriminately upon going in, because as long as Brother Xiong wasn't foolish, he'd know he could easily get him out.

But now, in this situation, he's not that certain.

...

Changning Street, Sheraton Hotel.

Qi Yun and Li Yaohua were having tea in the room.

"Brother Chen just called me, everything went unexpectedly smooth, and no one has approached him yet." Li Yaohua crossed his legs, his demeanor relaxed.

Qi Yun fiddled with the teacup in his hand, somewhat surprised: "Wasn't Ji Liyang said to have strong backing?"

Li Yaohua shook his head: "Not sure what's up, but this saves us trouble, no need to find other connections."

Qi Yun nodded slightly: "Let's wait for him to return my things then."

"Alright, let's go relax a bit." Li Yaohua got up, stretching lazily, "Feeling a bit weary, need a girl to give me a good rub."

Qi Yun wasn't interested in this, grinned and waved his hand: "I'll let Shi Feng go with you, all expenses on me, get a few more."

"Boring." Li Yaohua glanced at him, then pushed the door open and left.

After he left, Qi Yun turned toward Chen Wei nearby: "Brother Wei, have those people gone?"

"No, you didn't say to let them go, so I arranged for them to stay temporarily." Chen Wei responded.

Qi Yun nodded, regarding the matter with Brother Xiong, he had already coordinated with Brother Chen, so even if those people stayed, it wouldn't pose significant issues.

After pondering a bit, he spoke again: "How are those people's skills?"

"Efficient and quite capable." Chen Wei spoke concisely.

"Okay then, you find Duan Pingyu to get a detailed understanding of these individuals, then personally investigate their backgrounds. If everything checks out, I'll talk to them and keep them on." Qi Yun rubbed his chin as he said.

"Alright." Chen Wei acknowledged, pulling out his phone to contact Duan Pingyu.

Meanwhile, in Shanghai's Second People's Hospital, inside a patient ward.

Brother Xiong, just finished with treatment, was lying on the hospital bed, wrapped in bandages like a mummy.

Not just external injuries, his ribs were broken several times, and arms dislocated, now the only parts he could move were his two eyes.

Brother Xiong strained to turn his eyes, glancing at the two policemen standing outside the door, still bewildered why the situation suddenly turned this way.

Having just taken a beating, now about to be arrested, his life suddenly dropped from heaven into hell.

At this moment, he very much wanted to call Mr. Ji to ask what's going on, but clearly, the people outside wouldn't give him that chance.

Chapter 383: Drenched in Sweat

At this moment, the on-duty nurse walked into the ward, ready to change his IV drip.

Xiong Ge struggled to open his mouth, his eyes full of hope: "Help...help me..."

"Don't talk, you need to rest now." Before he could finish speaking, the nurse interrupted, swiftly changed the IV drip, and then pushed the cart away.

"Damn..."

...

The next day, Qi Yun was awakened from his slumber by a ringing phone.

He picked up his phone and saw Professor He's name displayed on the screen.

Qi Yun suddenly became alert, sat up abruptly, and guessed that there might be some progress with the Lop Nur stone tablet.

"Hello, Professor He."

"Qi Yun, I have some findings here to tell you."

Over the phone, Professor He wasted no words, directly addressing the matter, "I sent data related to that stone tablet to Beijing University some time ago. After analysis, it's now basically confirmed that the stone tablet dates back to the third century BC, or even earlier."

"It's over a hundred years earlier than the establishment of the Ancient Loulan, so the writing on the stone tablet doesn't belong to Kharoṣṭhī script, but rather resembles very early ancient Sanskrit."

"Ancient Sanskrit?" Qi Yun was stunned after hearing Professor He's explanation, "Didn't Zhan Hongbo say he saw similar symbols on a bronze artifact before? How does it relate to Sanskrit?"

"This was also a point of confusion for me," Professor He patiently explained, "Later, after equipment testing, we found that the symbols on the stone tablet and the script aren't from the same era."

"In other words, the symbols were carved on later."

"I see." Qi Yun nodded and continued to ask, "Can those texts on the stone tablet be translated now?"

"Yes, I'll send you the translated content later." Professor He paused, deliberating slightly, "But the syntax of ancient Sanskrit is quite unique, so I can't guarantee my translation is completely accurate. You might need to verify it through other means."

"Alright, I understand, thank you, Professor He." Qi Yun expressed his gratitude and inquired about the situation on-site, "Has the ancient city relic been excavated?"

"Parts of the city wall have already been discovered..."

A few minutes later, the call ended, and Professor He sent a short message.

"There are traces of a golden crow on the red rock; spring snow melts first."

Qi Yun muttered these words to himself, scratching his head.

What does it mean?

He stared at the screen for a long time, unable to figure it out, and simply forwarded it to Ignacio for investigation.

"The shipwreck map marks six locations, and the purple information contains six clues. Could it be that other locations also have texts like this?"

"Hmm, very likely."

Qi Yun murmured to himself as he got out of bed and went to the bathroom to wash up.

...

Elsewhere, Ji Liyang, who had been sleepless through the night, had bloodshot eyes.

The ashtray nearby was filled with cigarette butts, showing he had a rough night.

After hesitating for a long time, he finally picked up the phone and dialed Chen Jianhui's number.

Given the circumstances, he not only needed to protect his position but also to figure out why the other side was targeting him.

The phone rang a few times before quickly connecting, and Chen Ge's deep voice came through.

"Hello, Chen Shuji, it's Ji Liyang."

"Oh, Old Ji, anything you need?" Chen Ge feigned nonchalance.

Ji Liyang cursed inwardly but spoke politely, maintaining a low posture, "Haha, Chen Shuji, do you have time this morning? I would like to visit you and discuss some developments regarding the company."

The reason was legitimate as Tianyang Group is within the Puxin District and is a large-scale company, so it should maintain close contact with district leaders.

In the past, he delegated these tasks to his deputies, rarely stepping in himself, because he represented a higher level of connection.

Chen Ge guessed that Ji Liyang wanted to talk, so he didn't refuse: "Alright, come to my office."

"Okay, I'll be there shortly."

Without further conversation, they ended the call. After tidying up, Ji Liyang headed straight to the district office.

An hour or so later, led by a liaison officer, he arrived at Chen Ge's office.

"Chen Shuji, long time no see, you're still as energetic." Ji Liyang wore a smile, reaching out his hand.

Chen Ge didn't ignore him, shook hand with him, then gestured to the chair opposite, "Have a seat, Old Ji."

He originally had no major conflicts with Ji Liyang. Although they weren't aligned, they always maintained a façade of cordiality. This time, targeting Ji Liyang was mainly due to Li Yaohua's intervention.

"Here, have some tea."

"Good, good." Ji Liyang took a sip from his cup, remarked, "The company has been busy lately, always wanted to visit but couldn't find time. Also didn't want to disturb your work."

"Haha, no disturbance at all. Your company is a major enterprise in the district, contributing significantly to the district's development. You're always welcome to visit." Chen Ge responded while fiddling with the tea set.

He wasn't in a hurry. If Ji Liyang didn't bring up the topic first, he'd play dumb along with him.

His involvement in targeting Ji Liyang was clear, but it was strange that no one had approached him from yesterday until now, combined with Ji Liyang's low posture, he sensed something unusual.

"Yes, I was just free today, so I specially came to visit you." Ji Liyang nodded with a smile, placed his cup down, and asked casually, "By the way, Chen Shuji, I heard from the people below that the district is conducting a corporate compliance check lately?"

"Yeah, there's such a thing." Chen Ge replied without lifting his head, "A temporary team was formed, just following procedures."

Ji Liyang felt his muscles twitch, thinking, damn, you started off by thoroughly checking my finance department, is that 'following procedures'?

Yet he remained calm, followed the conversation casually, "That's good, that's good. I was worried the company might have done something wrong to attract the team's attention."

Chen Ge laughed heartily: "Old Ji, you overthink. The team follows a list for random checks, it's just luck of the draw."

"Nonetheless, compliance is a basic responsibility for a company. If any issues are found, they should be rectified, and accountability is necessary. That's principle."

Ji Liyang echoed with a smile: "Yes, yes, if our work is lacking somewhere, once the team points it out, we'll definitely make corrections as required."

Chen Ge nodded slightly, giving Ji Liyang a deep look.

By this point, Ji Liyang's attitude was clear, he was willing to lower his head.

He was also indirectly asking, why the hell are you targeting me, spit out the reason already.

Chen Ge took another sip of tea, then said something unrelated to work, "Old Ji, I heard from G An last night that they arrested someone named Xiong Jun. This guy's involved in quite a few illegal activities, not only stealing things others bought at an auction but also resorting to kidnapping and threats. Don't you think such people deserve severe punishment?"

Ji Liyang was stunned, unable to react for a long while.

So it wasn't those guys targeting him...

It was solely because Xiong Jun messed up the situation, leading Chen Jianhui to pressure him...

But would those people sever ties with him just because of a single Chen Jianhui? The answer was clearly no.

Being a shrewd person, Ji Liyang quickly understood the key point: Chen Jianhui was merely the straw that broke the camel's back. The higher-ups were likely dissatisfied with him for a while now.

Upon realizing this, he felt a bit sweaty.

"What's wrong, Old Ji?" Chen Ge called out when he saw no response.

Ji Liyang snapped back, forced a smile, and shook his head: "Nothing, you're right, such people definitely deserve severe punishment."

Chapter 384: Quite a Few Secrets

Puxin District, district government compound.

Ji Liyang walked out of the office building, his face extremely grim.

He quickly walked to his car, opened the door, got in, and then took out a rarely used phone and dialed a number.

"Hello, has that shipment left?"

A deep voice came from the other end of the phone, "It left yesterday afternoon. It's already at the warehouse at East London Dock."

Ji Liyang listened, holding the phone in a contemplative silence for a while, "Since it's gone, let it be. This shipment is very important, make sure to keep a close eye on it."

"Understood."

"Also, get someone from outside to come and do a job, quickly!" Ji Liyang's tone was icy. "Xiong Jun can't be kept. Get it done cleanly."

Before meeting with Brother Chen, he might have considered figuring out a way to manage Xiong Jun in the future, but once he confirmed his suspicions, he quickly dismissed the thought.

After all, the situation he faced was incredibly dangerous; he might not even be able to protect himself, let alone save Xiong Jun.

But Xiong Jun knew too much about him, and this time he also caused such a big trouble. It's better to make sure he stays quiet forever, lest a long night is fraught with dreams.

"Alright, I'll arrange it immediately." The person on the other end of the phone heard this instruction without much reaction, clearly not for the first time.

"That's all."

After hanging up, Ji Liyang looked out the window, then picked up another phone and called his assistant.

"Help me prepare a transaction agreement..."

...

An hour later, at the Sheraton Hotel.

Qi Yun was working out with Chen Wei in the hotel's gym, when Li Yaohua, who was sitting in the lounge area watching girls, suddenly shouted over, "Old Qi, a phone call."

Qi Yun wiped the sweat from his face, walked over, and picked up the phone. The incoming number was unknown.

"Hello, who is this?"

"Mr. Qi? This is Ji Liyang."

Qi Yun paused for a moment, then replied coolly, "Oh, what's up?"

"Haha, it's like this. There might be a misunderstanding between us, and I'd like to explain it to you in person. Can we meet?" Ji Liyang answered in a gentle tone.

Qi Yun glanced at Li Yaohua next to him and concisely said, "Sure, in half an hour at the Sheraton Hotel lobby."

"Okay, see you then."

After the call ended, Qi Yun told Li Yaohua, "Ji Liyang called, wants to meet."

Li Yaohua broke his gaze away from the attractive woman up front and chuckled, "Couldn't hold his nerve that fast."

Qi Yun was also somewhat puzzled. It all seemed too simple; he had just started exerting pressure, and the other side already backed down.

Given the other party's background in Shanghai, they shouldn't give in so readily...

"Phew~ let's go see what he has to say." Qi Yun tossed the towel into the clutter bin and motioned for Chen Wei to leave.

Li Yaohua blew a kiss to a beautiful mature woman in front and made a gesture to call her before unwillingly getting up.

...

Half an hour later, Qi Yun took a shower, changed clothes, and met Ji Liyang in the hotel lobby, accompanied by Li Yaohua.

Ji Liyang had met Qi Yun at the auction, so he recognized him. Upon meeting, he greeted politely, "Mr. Qi, it's a pleasure to meet you."

Qi Yun, of course, knew the other was just being polite, so he nodded coldly without much response.

Ji Liyang turned his gaze to Li Yaohua beside him and asked tentatively, "And this is?"

Li Yaohua didn't even acknowledge him, directly ignoring him while fiddling with his phone, flirting with the beautiful woman from earlier.

"A friend," Qi Yun casually replied.

Ji Liyang didn't ask further and got to the point, "Haha, Mr. Qi, there might have been some misunderstandings between us earlier. I'm here to clear them up."

Qi Yun said nothing, just nodded slightly, signaling him to continue.

"The matter with Xiong Jun was entirely his own decision, not under my orders," Ji Liyang said, pausing, "But since it's happened, I'm willing to apologize to Mr. Qi for the offense caused."

"I..."

"No need for pleasantries." Ji Liyang's words were abruptly interrupted by Qi Yun, "I believe you're quite busy."

Ji Liyang gave an awkward smile, but quickly composed himself. In the past, he would never have been so humble, but the current situation was pressing, and he could only endure temporarily.

"Haha, alright." Ji Liyang took a document from his briefcase and pushed it in front of Qi Yun, "This is a transaction agreement. I'm willing to purchase the Buddha Head for thirty-five million. What does Mr. Qi think?"

After speaking, he even prepared a pen for signing in advance, seemingly convinced Qi Yun would not refuse.

Before coming, he had instructed subordinates to learn from Brother Xiong's little brother about the events of that night, but he only knew about the conflict between Brother Xiong and Qi Yun's group in the restaurant and Brother Xiong's break-in at Old Wai's house later.

He was unaware that Qi Yun had previously unhesitatingly refused Brother Xiong's offer of twenty-five million.

So he saw the fifteen million Qi Yun spent on the Buddha Head at the auction and thought the additional twenty million would be his price for the troubles caused, believing it acceptable since no real loss was inflicted on Qi Yun.

Qi Yun listened to Ji Liyang's offer without reaching for the agreement document, merely glanced at him and refused, "I think you're mistaken. I never said I would sell it to you."

Ji Liyang's expression stiffened, pondering, "Mr. Qi, are you unsatisfied with the price?"

Qi Yun shook his head and said calmly, "I have no intention of selling. If you want to talk, return my item first, and then we'll discuss other matters."

Ji Liyang heard this and stared at Qi Yun for a long time, sensing the latter's firm attitude.

But that Buddha Head had already been shipped to London, and he had already arranged a deal with the buyer there, so he couldn't hand it over now.

After weighing his options for a moment, Ji Liyang tentatively asked again, "Mr. Qi, I own a five-star hotel in the Puxin District. How about I give it to you for free? Would that work?"

Qi Yun looked up, somewhat surprised, and glanced at Ji Liyang. This was Shanghai, and even if it wasn't in a prime location, investing in a five-star hotel would cost at least fifty to sixty million, right?

The other party would rather pay such a high price than hand over the Buddha Head. Why?

Even Li Yaohua, who was standing next to them, was a bit surprised after hearing this.

Although Qi Yun's expression was not good, he was somewhat curious inside.

He picked up the cigarette pack on the table, taking advantage of lighting a cigarette, and secretly launched an intelligence query on Ji Liyang.

[Available intelligence query types: Red (costs 3 intelligence points), Green x2 (costs 9 intelligence points)]

When he saw the changes on the transparent screen, Qi Yun's facial muscles involuntarily twitched.

Goodness, so many secrets, even green-level intelligence, and two of them at that!

Let me take a peek at your little secrets~

[Intelligence Level (Red): Ji Liyang has long known about the Buddha Head's hidden Dog Head and has already used his connections to transport it abroad, planning to sell it for a sky-high price to a top foreign tycoon.]

After reading this intelligence information, Qi Yun's gaze sharpened. No wonder Ji Liyang was unwilling to hand over the item; it had already been shipped abroad.

At the same time, he cursed inwardly, calling Ji Liyang a bastard with no bottom line, who not only exploited domestically but also sold national treasures abroad, a true loss of conscience.

Although China has specific laws prohibiting the exit of many precious cultural relics and antiques, given the other party's local connections, achieving this wasn't difficult.

Damn it! Things have already been transported; there's no point in discussing this further! There's no way to reconcile this matter!

This scoundrel must be sent in for punishment!

[Intelligence Level (Green): Ji Liyang realized that the higher-ups were dissatisfied with him and planned to abandon him, so he secretly prepared five million euros in unregistered bonds and the Bronze Cauldron acquired from an auction, intending to visit a higher-up tonight;

The bonds are currently in a bank safe on Hong Kong Island, and Ji Liyang has arranged for a trusted aide to retrieve them, detailed information ****]

No wonder Ji Liyang caved in so quickly. It turns out he's about to be abandoned...

Five million in unregistered bonds! Qi Yun's heart raced.

If such illegal activity is happening, it's my duty to stop them, now that I know about it, right?

[Intelligence Level (Green): Ji Liyang illegally transported a batch of precious cultural relics to London, including the Dog Head and Sheep Head from the Twelve Bronze Heads, with a total value exceeding five billion. These cultural relics are currently hidden in Warehouse 98 at Canary Wharf, East London.]

More surprises!

Qi Yun's expression was rich, previously regretting the loss of the Dog Head, but now not only was its whereabouts known, but there was also an additional Sheep Head.

Not to mention the fact that these were originally his; such precious national treasures cannot be sold to foreigners by Ji Liyang.

Ji Liyang saw that Qi Yun hadn't spoken for a long time and looked unsure, thinking that the latter was still dissatisfied with the price he offered. He tentatively spoke again, "Mr. Qi, if you're still not satisfied with this condition, we..."

"Satisfied." Qi Yun snapped out of his excitement and calmly flicked the ash from his cigarette. "Prepare the transfer agreement, and we'll settle this now, and we'll consider everything even."

Of course, this was a lie. The hotel would be accepted, and those bonds would be accepted too, but the matter wouldn't end there.

Ji Liyang gave Qi Yun a suspicious glance and nodded, "Okay, I'll notify the lawyer now to prepare the relevant documents and send them over."

Although losing a five-star hotel was painful, the profit from the Dog Head more than compensated for the loss.

Besides, what he needed most now was time; as long as Brother Chen didn't trouble him again and stabilized through this crisis, he could earn back ten five-star hotels in the future.

...

Over an hour later, a lawyer from the Tianyang Group arrived at the hotel with the documents.

"Mr. Qi, take a look, and if there're no issues, we can sign now." Ji Liyang handed over the agreement.

Qi Yun looked through it briefly and then handed it to Li Yaohua, "You sign it."

"Hmm?" Li Yaohua raised his head, puzzled, "Why should I sign it?"

"You sign first, and I'll explain later." Qi Yun handed over the pen and urged him.

Li Yaohua stared at Qi Yun for a while and, seeing his serious expression, took the pen, looked at the document, and signed his name.

After both parties signed, Ji Liyang pointed to the lawyer behind him, "Let her handle the remaining procedures; everything should be settled by this morning."

"Alright." Qi Yun didn't doubt this; although Ji Liyang lost his upper-class connections, he could still arrange such a small matter easily.

"Since the misunderstanding is cleared, Mr. Qi, you see..." Ji Liyang smiled, leaving his sentence half-finished.

Qi Yun said calmly, "I'll notify the others, but Xiong Jun violated the law, and there's nothing I can do."

"Of course, anyone who breaks the law should be punished accordingly." Ji Liyang replied decisively, showing no intention of bargaining, which surprised Qi Yun somewhat.

But thinking about it, Xiong Jun was just a pawn in the other party's eyes. Without him, they could always support a Tiger Army or Leopard Army.

It was merely mutual exploitation with no sentiment involved.

Qi Yun nodded slightly, "Let's leave it at that."

With satisfaction, Ji Liyang stood up, "Alright, I still have some matters to attend to, so I won't stay long. Farewell." With that, he left with the lawyer.

After they were far gone, Li Yaohua turned his head, full of questions, "Why did you have me sign it?"

"I don't want the hotel; it's a gift for you." Qi Yun lit a cigarette, speaking briefly.

"A gift for me?" Li Yaohua was stunned.

Though a senior executive in the Fu Family, and quite wealthy, casually gifting a five-star hotel worth fifty to sixty million was beyond him.

"Yes, it's for you." Qi Yun said earnestly, "This was entirely possible thanks to your help, so it's only right you don't walk away empty-handed. As for any favors you owe to Brother Chen's people, I won't interfere."

Returning to his senses, Li Yaohua quickly shook his head, "Buddy, I appreciate it, but I can't accept the hotel."

"Helping you was purely out of our friendship, and I never expected you to repay me."

"I understand that." Qi Yun patted his shoulder, baring his teeth in grin, "You flew over from Beijing at my call; it really warmed my heart."

"This hotel's a gift, unrelated to any repayment."

Even after hearing this, Li Yaohua hesitated, "You didn't get back the item you spent millions on, and then you gave me the compensation; how can I accept that?"

"There's no need to feel uneasy. Let me tell you something else." Qi Yun leaned in, lowered his voice, "This guy is in London..."

"How did you know!?" Li Yaohua turned in surprise, eyes wide, "Is the information accurate?"

Qi Yun's face was serious, "The news just reached me, it's definitely accurate."

"So your plan is?" Li Yaohua probed.

"Exactly what you're thinking." Qi Yun flicked his cigarette ash with determination in his voice, "Such national treasures shouldn't be left overseas; if possible, they should be brought back."

Though Singaporean, Li Yaohua, being Chinese, agreed with Qi Yun's idea: "How do you plan to do it?"

"First, acquire the items and return them, and then we can deliberate on donating them or otherwise. Initially, Qi Yun wanted to buy the Dog Head and donate it, but with so much more, such valuable items, a good reason would be needed for donation."

Chapter 386: Security Company Recruitment

Li Yaohua listened to Qi Yun's plan and nodded slightly, "How many people do you have in London?"

Earlier, Qi Yun mentioned that the information was sent back by people below, so he instinctively thought Qi Yun had people in London.

Qi Yun smiled bitterly and made up an excuse, "I have just two people there, and they're both women, not suitable for this task."

Li Yaohua frowned, touched his chin, and replied, "The company has people over there, but for something like this which might involve shooting, it's not convenient for me to handle it privately."

"Why don't you call the boss? Let him help you arrange it."

Qi Yun could sense the concerns in his words, weighed it for a while, and finally shook his head slowly, "I'll send someone myself; you just help with the entry and weapon issues."

Fu Wentao's favor is too valuable, and he doesn't want to use it unless absolutely necessary.

Only through mutual exchange can relationships last long, but currently, he has nothing to offer in return.

Seeing that Qi Yun had made a decision, Li Yaohua didn't insist further, "Alright, I can arrange that."

"Should I inform Brother Chen?"

Qi Yun nodded, "Ji Liyang seems to have been abandoned by the top; a piece of meat that's lost its protection, probably many want to get a bite."

"Abandoned?" Li Yaohua was a bit surprised, "No wonder it was so easy for him to come and bow his head."

"Yes, let's wait until our side is done. If no one takes action, let Brother Chen lead an attack on him! This traitor cannot be allowed to get away with it."

After the exchange in the lobby, Qi Yun returned to the hotel room.

He took out his phone and dialed Brother Hui in Hong Kong Island, and they talked for about ten minutes on the phone.

After hanging up, Qi Yun turned to Chen Wei, "Brother Wei, what did Duan Pingyu say about those people?"

"They haven't done anything too outrageous outside; as for their detailed background, I haven't had time to investigate yet," Chen Wei replied succinctly.

Qi Yun thought for a moment and instructed, "Send me their info; I'll find someone to ask first."

"Okay." Chen Wei responded, took out his phone, and sent the information of those people.

Once Qi Yun received it, he forwarded it to Zhang Dayong and immediately dialed his number.

"Hey, what's got this busy guy calling me?" came Zhang Dayong's teasing on the other end, sounding in good spirits.

"Haha, have you sorted out that matter?" Qi Yun casually asked.

Recently, Zhang Dayong was busy with the promotion to the head of the New District Branch, temporarily putting aside his old subordinate Zhou Hongchang's transfer, which was eventually facilitated by Qi Yun.

After listening, Zhang Dayong laughed heartily, "You're really up-to-date; the appointment just came down yesterday."

"Oh, congratulations then, Director Zhang." Qi Yun joked with a smile.

From both the perspective of personal friendship and his own interests, he hoped Zhang Dayong would do better and better.

"It was a bit tricky at first; thanks to your help with those two paintings which spoke for me at critical times," Zhang Dayong said with emotion, "Let's talk about some things when we meet; you didn't call just for pleasantries, right?"

"Yes, I need a small favor; just sent you a message. Help me check if these people have a clean record." Qi Yun didn't exchange pleasantries and directly stated his request.

"Sure, I'll reply to you shortly."

"Okay, that's it for now."

After the call ended, Qi Yun put away his phone, waiting for the response.

After about ten minutes, Zhang Dayong replied with a brief message, "Clean, with service experience."

After reading the message, Qi Yun made a decision and instructed Chen Wei, "Get in touch; I want to meet them."

...

Puxin District, Garden Stone Bridge Road.

Here lies the country's most expensive residential area—Tangchen Yipin.

Even during this current downturn in the real estate market, its unit price still reaches a daunting 270,000 per square meter, with random apartments costing easily over a hundred million, and the total value of all residences exceeds 1.2 trillion, truly terrifying.

Those living in this area can only be described as either wealthy or noble.

Miss Lu, who appeared at Wangjiang Pavilion that night, owns an enormous mansion over here, nearly 800 square meters.

In a luxuriously decorated bathroom, Miss Lu, who had just woken up, was soaking in the bathtub and talking on the phone.

"Sis, can you come back for my birthday next month?"

"No, I have a bunch of things to deal with here," came a lazy voice from the other end of the call.

Miss Lu pouted, "Are you so willing to help him cultivate his relationships that you've given up your own life? I haven't seen you for over half a year."

"It's a crucial moment right now; he wants to move forward, so what can I do? I just support him from behind," sighed the voice on the other end. "Your sister isn't as fortunate as you; you live like a little princess all the time."

"You're mocking me again!"

"Alright, alright, something came up here; I'll call you later."

Miss Lu, feeling downcast, put down her phone, her demeanor starkly different from that night at Wangjiang Pavilion.

"Ring ring ring~"

The phone she had just hung up began ringing again. Miss Lu glanced at the caller ID and then put it to her ear.

"Hello, Guo Ju."

"Miss Lu, someone has already made a move against Old Ji, and this time the top is not speaking up for him. I reckon he won't last long, but there's some business unfinished on my side," Director Guo's tone was a bit anxious.

Miss Lu reached out her slender fingers and thumbed the rose petals in the bathtub, casually replying, "You don't have to rush; Chen Jianhui's action against Old Ji isn't the intention of those behind him."

Chapter 387: Security Company Recruitment

Guo Ju paused, "What's that?"

"I'm not really sure, but you can ask Chen Jianhui. I'm quite curious myself too."

Guo Ju hesitated for a moment, "Alright, I'll meet him tonight."

...

Gaodong Town, inside a residential home.

Qi Yun met the five sturdy men who dealt with Brother Xiong. They came from different places and had lived abroad with Duan Pingyu, maintaining good friendships.

Qi Yun sat on the rosewood sofa, raised his eyes to seriously examine the five men, and slowly began, "I've transferred the agreed fifty grand to your accounts."

"Thank you, boss." The men thanked in unison.

"I pay, you work; no need to thank me." Qi Yun waved his hand casually, "Now, sit down. I came today to discuss another matter."

The men sat on the chairs beside quietly awaiting more information.

"I plan to start a security company, and I would like to hire you for jobs in the future." Qi Yun tapped the armrest of the sofa with his finger, his gaze sweeping across their resolute faces, "You can negotiate the pay terms; I'll try to accommodate your needs."

The room suddenly fell silent, with the men exchanging glances without immediate Reply.

After a few seconds of silence, the eldest-looking bearded man, his voice gruff, opened up first, "Boss, I'd like to ask, what kind of work will we be getting into?"

Instead of discussing terms, he started by asking about the work content, indicating caution.

"The work isn't fixed, typically resolving certain hassles for me, but I won't involve you in anything immoral." Qi Yun pulled out a pack of cigarettes and lit one, "There could occasionally be borderline tasks, but generally, the targets aren't good people."

Puffing out a smoke ring, his eyes surveyed them, he further added, "You know Duan Pingyu works for me now. If you're unsure, you can inquire with him."

Upon hearing this, they exchanged glances again.

The bearded man rubbed his rugged palm against his knee, contemplating, seemingly the decision-maker among them.

"Old Duan mentioned you before, said you conduct your affairs well." He hesitated, continued, "We used to work abroad, did all sorts of jobs, as long as they're not immoral, we can handle it."

Qi Yun nodded, placing the cigarette case on the table, "I won't shortchange you on pay, but expect some risk in this line."

The room fell silent again.

Suddenly, the bearded man snickered, "Boss, back in Zhongdong we protected oil pipelines, and when bullets whizzed by our scalps, we got just five hundred dollars a day. We're not scared of danger."

Beside him, a crew-cut man rasped out, "As long as the pay's right, danger's nothing."

Though crude, they were people who'd risk their lives for money; it was what it was.

Qi Yun chuckled too, "Relax, since you're working for me, I won't put you in unnecessary danger."

"Let's face the unfortunate: even if an accident occurs, I won't abandon you."

The bearded man nodded earnestly, "Boss, we trust you."

Rather than believing Qi Yun, they trusted Duan Pingyu, with whom they'd once shared arms, and the fifty grand already in their accounts.

Previously, they might not earn so much in a year abroad, yet this job posed little risk, plus the boss had all connections smoothed out, leaving no one chasing them after completion.

"Alright, since everyone's okay with it, let me task you." Qi Yun dropped the smile, briefing them, "I want you to head to London today..."

After the instructions were given, Qi Yun pointed at Chen Wei beside him, "Brother Wei leads this assignment. Everything needed will be prepared for you there, and departures arranged after finish."

Qi Yun hadn't planned for Chen Wei's involvement initially, but considering the shipment's value, a trustworthy individual was crucial.

Even though these guys were buddies with Duan Pingyu, in significant interest, what feelings wouldn't be abandoned?

Qi Yun didn't essentially distrust them; it's simply that trust is relative, built on time and experiences.

Currently, he couldn't just hand over assets worth five billion without reservations.

"Anyone got questions?" Qi Yun scanned them.

Upon hearing, the men stood straighter, loudly affirming, "No problem!"

"Okay, get ready for departure shortly." Qi Yun nodded satisfied, turning to Chen Wei, patting his shoulder, "Don't worry here, I'm back to Niao City tomorrow."

"Prioritize your safety; if impossible, abort, and I'll figure alternatives."

Chen Wei nodded stoically without much speech.

...

Over an hour later, Qi Yun arrived at the newly opened antique shop by Lao Wai as directed by Shi Feng.

Located on a bustling street in Puxin District, tourists flowed through frequently.

As Lao Wai recounted, this hundred-square-foot shop alone cost annual rent equivalent to half a 760 car; hard to tell the exaggeration level within.

Qi Yun glanced up at the black ebony plaque hanging above the wooden door, engraved with three gilt-yellow characters: "Guanfu Hall."

Stepping in, the shelves were scattered with numerous porcelain antiques, Shi Feng and Lao Wai were deliberating over an ink-stone in the guest area.

Seeing Qi Yun enter, Lao Wai hurriedly stood to greet warmly, "Brother Qi is here."

Qi Yun smiled, scanning the place, "Haha, looks pretty decent."

Lao Wai rubbed his hands chuckling, "It's alright, barely making a living."

"Lao Wai, excessive humility is showing off." Shi Feng turned with a remark, "Your shop's decent; what's mine then?"

"Hahaha." Lao Wai patted Qi Yun's back, "Come, sit over here."

After seating, Shi Feng picked up the kettle to pour a cup for Qi Yun, "Is the affair handled?"

Qi Yun sipped, not answering directly, but instead staring at Shi Feng's unsettling complexion, surprised, "What happened to you?"

Shi Feng smiled awkwardly, "Wasn't I partying with your friend last night, indulged a bit too much."

Qi Yun smacked his lips, "You're that weak now?"

"Minor issue." Shi Feng dismissively waved, tossing wolfberries into the teacup, "Recover with supplements."

Watching his scant locks left, Qi Yun sighed, "I'll get something for you later."

"Maybe later, how're your things going?" Shi Feng queried again.

"All done." Qi Yun replied before turning to Lao Wai, "Xiong Jun's arrested by police, probably won't get off easy; consider it revenge for you."

Lao Wai was startled, evidently unawares of Qi Yun's clout in taking down Brother Xiong.

After a few seconds of silence, he opened his mouth with slight guilt, "This matter, I..."

Qi Yun guessed his intentions, raised a hand interrupting, "We're all family; no need for excess words. You were dragged into this because of me."

"I plan flying back tomorrow, let's find a place to have drinks tonight."

Seeing Qi Yun's remarks, Lao Wai dropped lingering thoughts, gladly nodding, "Alright, I'll arrange evening plans!"

...

Hong Kong Island, Central, outside East Asia Bank.

Inside a black van, two young men intensely watched the bank's entrance.

Soon, a middle-aged man hurried out of the bank with a briefcase, followed closely by three muscular men wearing sunglasses.

One youth in the van noticed the scene, quickly pulled out his phone and dialed a number.

"The person's out of the bank, carrying the case."

The other end promptly replied, "Follow him, act at Lantau Island!"

Chapter 388: I Won't Be Taken Alive

Hong Kong Island, Lantau Island.

Several workers wearing orange vests suddenly appeared by the roadside, carrying maintenance warning signs in their hands, constantly looking down the road ahead, as if they were waiting for something.

The leader held a phone in his hand, continuously communicating with the person on the other end.

"We're two kilometers out of the tunnel, how far away is it?"

"Got it!"

After hanging up the call, the leader waved his hand, "Action!"

The workers in orange vests immediately swarmed onto the road, setting up the maintenance warning signs in the middle of the road. One of them even had a signaling baton in hand, well-prepared.

About a minute later, a black Mercedes appeared in sight. The driver saw the situation on the road ahead and immediately began to slow down.

The burly man in the front passenger seat frowned and asked the driver, "Was there a notice about roadworks here?"

The driver mumbled indifferently, "Every day there's roadwork here or there, who pays attention to these things?"

The burly man said no more and instead signaled to the two companions in the back seat, and all three of them discretely reached for their back waists, becoming alert.

In the middle of the backseat, Ji Liyang's trusted aide held a briefcase, also nervously looking ahead.

Inside the case were bearer bonds worth five million. Any sign of trouble made him uneasy.

The car's speed continued to decrease, and just as they were about to reach the warning signs, there was a loud "bang" as a black van behind crashed directly into the rear of the Mercedes, pushing it forward a few meters.

In the chaos, the driver hurriedly slammed the brakes to stop the car.

This was on a hillside; if the car had gone off the road, it would have been a disaster with no survivors.

The bodyguard in the passenger seat seemed to sense danger and reacted extremely quickly, immediately instructing the companions behind, "Get out!"

However, their hands had just reached for the door handle when they heard the roar of engines from ahead.

In the next second, three vans rapidly closed in with a screech, tires skidding on the pavement as they stopped directly in front of the Mercedes, completely blocking the road.

Meanwhile, the van that had crashed into the Mercedes followed closely, parked tight against the rear, leaving no room to escape.

The bodyguard wasted no time in gripping the gun in his hand, quickly opening the car door to get out.

However, the burly man in the passenger seat had just stepped one leg out when he immediately pulled it back.

It turned out that the workers in orange vests had surrounded them without them knowing and were pointing black gun barrels directly at them.

"Clatter!"

The van doors swung open and a dozen men quickly jumped out, all carrying weapons, marching towards them with a murderous aura.

Inside the Mercedes, the driver had already been scared stiff by the sudden change, his hands frozen on the steering wheel, pupils contracting violently.

"What do we do? What do we do?" Ji Liyang's aide clutched the suitcase tightly, glancing around in fear.

A few bodyguards wore grim expressions, realizing they had been caught. The attackers were well-prepared and had clearly been targeting them from the start.

The burly man in the passenger seat tried to stick the gun barrel through the door crack but immediately heard a "bang" as a bullet left a hole in the car door.

"You better not move!"

A dozen men surrounded the Mercedes, each holding a piece of truth in their hands.

The leader approached the rear of the Mercedes, reaching for the door handle, but the bodyguard inside had already locked the door.

The leader didn't hesitate, raising his hand and pressing the muzzle of his gun against the car window.

The bodyguard's face was extremely grim, struggling for two seconds before ultimately unlocking the door.

There was no choice; this wasn't an armored vehicle. With so many people surrounding them, in close combat, any one of them could turn them into a sieve with a single magazine.

The leader opened the rear car door, looking straight at Ji Liyang's aide in the middle, pointing at the suitcase he was holding, making his intentions clear.

"What...what do you want!"

It's no wonder Ji Liyang trusted him with five million. This guy was indeed loyal, trembling with fear, yet still clutching the suitcase without letting go.

The leader obviously had no patience, gesturing for the bodyguard next to the aide to get out of the car.

The bodyguard was just a hired hand and wouldn't risk his life for a lost cause. He got out of the car immediately.

The leader leaned inside the car and struck the aide on the forehead with the butt of his gun, causing him to cry out in pain.

Taking advantage of this, the leader snatched the suitcase from his hands, then pointed his gun at his head, speaking in a low voice, "The code!"

The aide was utterly terrified, trembling as he spoke, "9...9527."

Once the password was known, the leader climbed out of the car, placed the suitcase on the Mercedes trunk, and spun the lock open.

After just a brief glance, confirming that the bonds were indeed inside, he closed the suitcase and ordered the others, "Withdraw!"

The group came quickly and left just as fast, the entire process taking less than five minutes. The vans roared away from the scene.

Once they disappeared to the end of the road, people from the cars that had been blocked behind got out and ran over to check the situation.

Inside the car, the aide trembled as he took out his phone, calling Ji Liyang, stammering as he reported the situation just now.

Chapter 389: I Won't Be Taken Alive

Ji Liyang's face darkened as if it could drip water after hearing this. He clenched his phone tightly in his right hand and uncharacteristically cursed, "Damn it!"

He really couldn't understand why such a covert matter would be known ahead of time, and someone would steal his stuff.

The only possibility was that there was a traitor among them...

But the most important thing now was to get his stuff back. He had some connections on Hong Kong Island, so he quickly found a certain boss's number and dialed it.

...

On the other side, after four vans left Lantau Island, they drove into a scrapyard where vehicles prepared earlier were already waiting.

The leader ordered his subordinates, "Go to the pier immediately. There's a boat on the other side to take you to Vietnam. No one leaves for three months after getting there!"

"Yes," the subordinates replied and then swiftly drove away.

Once everyone left, the leader also got into a car, pulled out his phone, and dialed a number.

"We got it."

Inside Major Tom's Bar office.

Brother Hui held the phone and said to the other end, "Give me a location, and I'll send someone to pick it up. The money will be brought over to you as well."

"Half an hour later, at Fulin Reservoir."

"Alright," Brother Hui replied, then added a word of caution, "You'd better hide somewhere too."

The leader remained expressionless, "I don't need you to tell me how to do things."

"I won't be caught alive."

Brother Hui didn't say more, silently hanging up the phone.

He hadn't sent his own men to rob Ji Liyang; instead, he found professionals for the job.

Although he was also a big shot in the street territory, the quality of his men was far from comparable to these professionals, as could be seen when Qi Yun had asked him to capture those two white guys last time.

It's not that there were no gunmen under him, just very few, maybe three or five, and even those couldn't be exposed to light.

Because being in street territories means you're a marked man, and if you have a bunch of dangerous people who casually pull out guns, the authorities certainly wouldn't tolerate it.

This incident is neither too big nor too small.

On the large side, although guns were drawn, no one was hurt.

On the small side, Ji Liyang was robbed of fifty million and certainly wouldn't let it slide. Once reported, the authorities would pursue it.

The reason Brother Hui took part in this affair wasn't to help Qi Yun, but purely for the profit, taking a gamble.

Because the latter didn't let him do it; he merely hinted very discreetly about this intel to him.

The fat chance was there, it was up to you if you wanted to seize it.

Fifty million!

And in bearer bonds, which are hard currency on the black market. If sold, they might fetch sixty or even seventy million. Who wouldn't be tempted?

So after much thought, Brother Hui contacted Old Lei for the job.

As for how he would repay Qi Yun later, that discussion was for another time.

...

At 8 PM, in Shanghai, at the entrance of an unremarkable neighborhood.

Ji Liyang was sitting in the car making a phone call.

"Haha, Secretary Xu, I'm already downstairs at the leader's house."

"Hey, Old Ji, you might not be able to meet the leader today," came a sigh from the other end of the phone, "Don't rush this; wait a bit longer for the right time."

Upon hearing this, the smile on Ji Liyang's face immediately froze. He was silent for a while before asking again, "Then when do you think it would be convenient?"

"Wait for my call." The other end left this and hung up.

Ji Liyang listened to the beeping in the receiver, stunned in place.

Agreed to meet yesterday, and today refused?

He angrily smashed the phone onto the carpet to vent his anger.

Ji Liyang felt particularly unlucky these past two days, and it all started with that auction.

It was just him and Qi Yun bidding for that Buddha Head, and the latter suddenly increased the price from ten million to fifteen million, making him very displeased. Seeing that Qi Yun was a new face, he decided to teach him a lesson.

Little did he expect to hit a steel wall, losing a five-star hotel and getting roughed up by Brother Chen, setting off a chain reaction...

The person he was going to meet tonight was his last hope. If he couldn't maintain this relationship, he truly wouldn't be far from death.

You could tell from the other party's evasive attitude how dangerous his current situation was.

What's more terrifying is that tonight's rejection won't stay a secret, as there are no secrets in their institution. Once the news spreads tomorrow, those holding steak knives and watching will waste no time in attacking him.

Ji Liyang sighed, his eyes empty as he stared out the window. He knew that even if he wanted to run now, he might not have the chance.

...

The next morning, Lao Wai personally drove Qi Yun and Shi Feng to the airport.

After the three of them said their goodbyes in the parking lot, Qi Yun and Shi Feng boarded the plane back to Bird City.

Meanwhile, at Dover Port in the southeast of the United Kingdom, a speedboat was racing toward the shore.

This port is one of Europe's main shipping hubs, but it's also a hotspot for smuggling and illegal immigration cases.

The predawn sea breeze, laced with a stench, kept slapping the guardrails as Chen Wei looked at the approaching shore, took out his phone, and dialed a number.

"We've arrived."

On the other end, another Chinese person responded succinctly, "Go straight west after landing, about a kilometer. I'll be waiting for you here."

"Okay."

Hanging up the phone, Chen Wei waved to the other five people. They gathered their things, and as soon as the speedboat docked, they quickly vanished into the darkness.

Ten minutes later, a black commercial vehicle appeared by the roadside ahead. Chen Wei was about to make another call to confirm when he saw the driver's door open, and a young man jumped out, waving toward them.

Chen Wei signaled to his companions and walked over quickly.

"From Shanghai?" The young man inquired.

Chen Wei nodded, subtly looking over the other person.

"Mr. Li arranged for me to come. You can call me Xiao Yuan," the young man said, extending his hand.

Chen Wei knew the "Mr. Li" he mentioned was Li Yaohua, so the identity matched, and he shook hands with the other, "Chen Wei."

Xiao Yuan pointed to the commercial vehicle and said, "Let's leave here first; there will be a patrol coming in about ten minutes."

"Alright," Chen Wei and his companions all got in the vehicle.

Xiao Yuan quickly started the vehicle and drove out of the port.

"Brother Wei, everything you asked for is in the bag at the back. If you need anything else, just tell me, and I'll try to get it for you."

"Also, Mr. Li asked me to be your guide during this period; except for the things you need to handle, I won't interfere with anything else. You can ask me for help with anything else."

"Thank you," Chen Wei said, bending down to pick up a black backpack from under the seat.

"No need to thank me; I'm just following orders," Xiao Yuan smiled kindly.

Chen Wei didn't say more, unzipping the bag where he found several sets of fake identification documents, as well as guns and ammunition.

He casually took out a pistol, skillfully pulled the slide to test it, then tossed the bag to a bearded man, letting them choose.

The bearded man, named Yin Guolong, commonly known as Eagle, is nearing forty and has quite a bit of experience. He didn't pick much, but randomly took one, fitted a magazine, and handed the bag to the others.

The guy with the buzz cut took the bag, looked through it, then gnashed his teeth and asked Xiao Yuan, who was driving, "Brother Xiao Yuan, this short gun isn't fun at all. Can you get some longer ones?"

Xiao Yuan paused, glanced at the rearview mirror with a smile, "Long stuff is available but too conspicuous, easy to get tracked."

"If you need them, I can get some. Shotguns, rifles, no problem."

His words were casual because the Fu Family's core power abroad lies in Europe. Although their base is in Frankfurt, they also have strong influence in the UK, so acquiring these things isn't much trouble.

Besides, in the UK, while guns are banned, one can legally apply for a hunting rifle, so there are plenty of people with guns at home; various rifles and shotguns are not uncommon.

The buzz cut's eyes lit up, about to say something more when Eagle suddenly elbowed him, gesturing with his eyes towards Chen Wei.

Before they left, Qi Yun had clearly instructed them that Chen Wei would lead the team, so it was better to let him handle these kinds of matters.

The buzz cut gave an awkward smile and swallowed his words.

Chen Wei glanced at him and said calmly, "Let's stick with the pistols, long guns are too conspicuous. We'll finalize the action plan once we reach our destination, and we'll avoid using guns if possible."

"After the mission, if you want to play with something, let Xiao Yuan get it for you."

Chapter 390: All Captured

In the early morning in London, it was raining continuously, and a black business car stopped by the roadside.

This place is not far from Canary Wharf, with private warehouses lining both sides of the street.

Inside the car, Xiaoyuan pointed to the large iron gate across the road and said to Chen Wei and the others, "That's No. 98. I checked, this warehouse is rented long-term to a Belgian businessman."

Chen Wei glanced at the tightly shut iron door and then looked around the street: "Can you arrange a nearby spot for us?"

Xiaoyuan took out a bunch of keys from his pocket: "It's already prepared, right at the apartment around the corner."

Chen Wei took the keys and then instructed the others: "Starting today, we'll take turns keeping watch here, two people per group, and quickly find out what's inside the warehouse."

The others nodded: "Alright."

...

Bird City, a residence in the Sha District.

In the living room, Captain Tian Mingliang of Criminal J cast a serious look across the faces of everyone present, including Vice Captain Zhou Hongchang, who had recently taken office.

"This mission is directly issued from above, participants are limited to the six people in this room, the mission details must be strictly confidential, not disclosed to anyone!"

"During the mission, you will work temporarily here, specific work arrangements led by Hongchang."

"Next, I'll introduce the mission details." As the projector started, a light beam was projected onto the screen.

"The deceased's name, Qiu Jiahao, male..."

After a dozen minutes, Tian Mingliang went downstairs, pulled out his mobile phone, and dialed a number.

"Leader, everything has been arranged."

"Yes, proceeding in secret, using all newcomers, won't attract attention from others."

...

At 3 PM, Qi Yun and Shi Feng landed at Tianshan Airport.

The two first took a short break at Shi Feng's shop, then together went to visit old man Chen, whom Qi Yun had always been grateful to for his significant help; without the connection from him, he wouldn't have known Fu Wentao, the influential figure.

After a period of recuperation, old man Chen's health had mostly recovered. After a brief conversation, Qi Yun didn't linger any longer and had Zhong Rui drive him home.

Today was Sunday, Zhao Qing took her daughter to play with the two little girls at Brother Peng's house, so when Qi Yun got home, the house was empty.

Qi Yun grabbed a bottle of water from the fridge, sat on the sofa, and dialed Zhao Qing's phone.

"I'm home, when are you guys coming back?"

However, the voice on the receiver wasn't Zhao Qing, but Brother Peng's wife, Song Xiaojing.

"Oh, you can't wait to see little Qing, huh? Wait a bit, I'll send them back after dinner."

Qi Yun paused a bit, then replied with a smile: "Haha, it's just to avoid causing you trouble, sister-in-law."

"I'm not afraid of trouble, let Nuannuan play with Peng Sixin a little longer."

Zhao Qing also added with a smile: "We'll come back late."

"Alright, give me a call later, I'll pick you up."

"Okay." Zhao Qing responded obediently.

After the call ended, Qi Yun put down the water bottle, picked up the BMW 5 Series car keys, and left again.

In the afternoon, he visited Shao Yuewen from group Z, and Xia Shaohua from the industrial and commercial bureau, without discussing anything official, just to maintain connections.

Through this trip to Shanghai, he realized even more the importance of high-level relationships; you can avoid mixing politics, but maintaining good relations with those at the top is still necessary, in case of any changes, they could at least say a word for you.

He originally wanted to visit someone he had met at Lop Nur before, Director Luo of the S Prefecture office, but the other party said he wasn't in Bird City.

Qi Yun didn't know if he really wasn't there, or simply didn't want to have too much private contact with him.

But thinking about it, that made sense, being the director of the S Prefecture office, this was a high-level leader, thoroughly in charge of the entire S Prefecture, someone like him, a businessman with shallow connections, would understandably not get a meeting.

After wrapping up these matters, the time came to 11 PM, Qi Yun went to Brother Peng's house to pick up Zhao Qing and his daughter and return home.

Since tomorrow there was school, the little girl obediently went to bed after whining to her dad for a while.

After Zhao Qing finished freshening up and came out of the bathroom, Qi Yun embraced her waist and asked: "Didn't you say you had something to tell me?"

That night at the hotel, the two were on a video call, Zhao Qing was about to speak, but was interrupted by the police outside the door.

Zhao Qing paused her motion of drying her hair, turned to look at Qi Yun, and bit her lip, "You know I grew up in a welfare institution from a young age."

"Yes." Qi Yun nodded, appearing indifferent on the surface, but actually already having an idea of what Zhao Qing wanted to say, because of the incident that happened at the kindergarten gate, which Gao Min had reported to him later.

Though he didn't proactively bring it up to Zhao Qing, he had ordered Gao Min to deal with the matter, if those two people harassed Zhao Qing again, just drive them away.

Perhaps this approach seemed immature, especially since Zhao Weilin was Zhao Qing's biological father.

However, Qi Yun himself had no goodwill towards this person, and additionally had repeatedly gone to the kindergarten gate to make Zhao Qing cry, as Zhao Qing's man, he naturally wouldn't indulge such actions.

It's fine to posture with him considering the other is his future father-in-law, he can tolerate it, but bullying Zhao Qing is certainly unacceptable.

So ever since then, Zhao Weilin hadn't been able to smoothly see Zhao Qing, every time he got to the kindergarten gate, he was driven away by Gao Min along with the kindergarten security, and if he didn't leave, they'd call the police.