

## Middle Age 391

### Chapter 391: All Captured (2)

"A few days ago, your business partner brought someone to see me, that person..." Zhao Qing paused, her eyes starting to redden. She fought back her emotions and continued to speak, "That person claimed to be my biological father."

"Although I can no longer remember what he looked like, there's a feeling in my heart that what he said is true."

"And later... they showed me the test report."

Zhao Qing didn't continue speaking, instead she collapsed into Qi Yun's arms, beginning to sob softly.

Qi Yun gently patted her back, speaking softly, "I'm sorry, actually I met him before, and he is indeed your father."

"The reason I didn't tell you is because I wasn't sure if you'd want a father suddenly appearing in your life..."

"But what I want to tell you is that I will always be your support, and I have the ability to make you happy, so you don't need to feel burdened. Whether or not you acknowledge him, I will support you."

Zhao Qing cried in Qi Yun's arms for a long time, until her sobbing gradually subsided, then she raised her red eyes, fingers clutching the corner of his clothes: "Thank you, actually... I still have some impression of him from when I was young."

Her voice was very small, as if searching for those sealed fragments from the depths of her memory, "I remember he always wore a dark blue coverall and would put me on his shoulders to go buy orange candies at the post exchange."

"Later he disappeared... he wasn't there when my mom died either..."

Qi Yun didn't delve into the memories that caused Zhao Qing pain. Instead, he raised a hand to wipe away her tears, grasping her hand tightly, "I know this matter may be hard for you to accept right now. You can acknowledge him if you want or it's okay if you don't."

"I'll take care of you, we don't need him, there's nothing to worry about."

"Mm." Zhao Qing leaned lightly on his shoulder, whispering softly, "With you here, I'm not afraid."

...

The next day Qi Yun rose early, first ran five kilometers in the neighborhood, then prepared breakfast for Zhao Qing and their daughter, personally sending them to kindergarten.

After returning home, he first contacted Chen Wei, learning that they were already gathering information and preparing for action.

Then he called Duan Pingyu.

"How are things over there?"

On the other end of the phone came the whirring of wind; Duan Pingyu's voice was intermittent: "Yesterday I heard from a herdsman in Qiqian Village, that there indeed were a group of foreigners appearing in the surrounding ranch, quite a number, with three or four vehicles."

"I just found their track near here, closing in."

"Alright, keep yourself safe."

Qi Yun understood the situation, and didn't say more.

Originally he wanted to ask Ah Jiao about the progress of the team there, but received a call from Niu Da instead.

"Hey, Brother Niu."

"Boss, things have gone awry here, we... we've all been captured." Niu Da's voice was somewhat weak.

Upon hearing this, Qi Yun's head buzzed, his hand gripping the phone tightly: "What happened?"

Earlier Ah Jiao had reported to him that they were being watched, but with Niu Da and Old Hei's combat prowess, they managed to resolve the issues without danger. He didn't expect they'd all get captured this time.

"A team found our hiding spot just now. They were very well prepared, two of them were incredibly skilled, I'm no match for them, and was completely controlled."

"Their leader wants to talk to you."

Qi Yun forced himself to calm down and continued to ask, "How are you guys? Is anyone injured?"

"I got a minor injury." On the other end came Niu Da's heavy breathing, "The others are alright for now."

Hearing that Niu Da and the others were temporarily safe, Qi Yun relaxed a bit inside; as long as the people are okay, there's still the possibility for a rescue.

However, the people sent by the opposition this time could injure Niu Da, meaning they truly have strength.

"Pass the phone to him."

"Okay."

After a momentary silence, a middle-aged man's voice came through the receiver, speaking in English.

"Hello, Mr. Qi."

"Allow me to introduce myself, my name is Charles de Gaulle Gwen."

Charles de Gaulle Gwen, when Qi Yun heard this name, his heart sank. This was the person who had previously investigated him and sent those two white men to Hong Kong Island.

"What are you trying to do by capturing my people?" Qi Yun asked solemnly.

"Oh! Mr. Qi, I think you misunderstand." De Gaulle replied with a smile, "I didn't capture your people, just invited them to be my guests. They are free, and can leave anytime."

"Misunderstand?" Qi Yun sneered, "Then kindly let them leave now."

"Mr. Qi, please don't be hasty. As I said, they are free," De Gaulle seemed oblivious to Qi Yun's icy tone, continuing to speak unhurriedly, "I assure you that after our enjoyable conversation, I'll let them leave."

"What are we talking about?" Qi Yun asked patiently.

The other party's words were pleasant to hear, but Qi Yun wasn't naive enough to believe they could easily let Niu Da and the others get off. The only thing to do now was to follow their lead.

"Let's talk about the San Jose shipwreck." There was an imperceptible urgency in De Gaulle's voice, "I'm curious, besides those treasures, did you find anything on that sunken ship?"

Qi Yun squinted his eyes, this statement was very targeted, indeed directed at the map.

However, analyzing from De Gaulle's words, he seemed to know something, but wasn't certain.

To probe how much information De Gaulle had, Qi Yun decided to feign ignorance: "I don't understand what you mean, the things salvaged from that sunken ship were just some gold coins and jewelry."

"Mr. Qi, I hope our conversation can be simple and honest," De Gaulle was clearly dissatisfied with this answer, he got straight to the point, "I'm not interested in those treasures. According to the captain of the salvage ship, you once brought up a wooden box, right?"

"That's right." There was no point in denying this, not only the captain, but many crew members saw it that night.

"What was inside the box?" Without waiting for Qi Yun's answer, De Gaulle continued to ask, "Was it a map?"

Qi Yun's heart skipped a beat; regarding the map's existence, only he, Old Hei, Ignacio, and his teacher were aware at the moment.

Old Hei wouldn't say anything, Ignacio had warned him to keep it confidential, believing he wouldn't leak it to outsiders. So how was Charles de Gaulle aware?

Seeing Qi Yun silent and not answering, De Gaulle got more urgent, "Mr. Qi, please trust that I truly bear you no ill will. I sent people to investigate just to confirm a few things."

"I can promise that as long as you answer me honestly, I can immediately let your people go!"

Qi Yun pondered for a while, unable to determine the truth of De Gaulle's words, but now Old Hei and the others were under his control, and he seemed to have no other choice.

He picked up the cigarette box on the table, lit a cigarette, took two deep drags, and finally gave the real answer: "Yes, that's correct."

Because he wasn't sure how much information De Gaulle had, he worried denying the map's existence might endanger Old Hei and the others...

"Very good." De Gaulle seemed relieved, "That map..."

"First let my people leave." Qi Yun interrupted.

"No problem, I'm instructing my men to send them away now." De Gaulle kept his word, indeed arranging for Old Hei and the others to be released.

"Mr. Qi, trust me, we are not enemies. I understand some things may confuse you, but don't worry, I will provide you with answers."

Qi Yun didn't reject the offer, instead said blandly, "We'll talk again in half an hour. I need to ensure my people can leave safely."

"Understood, I'll call again in half an hour."

Based on Charles de Gaulle's previous actions, there seemed to indeed be no hostile intentions.

Nevertheless, Qi Yun wouldn't let his guard down just because of a few words. After ending the call, he immediately dialed Ah Jiao's number.

"Hey, did you guys get out?"

"Yes, he let us go and even arranged a vehicle for us, this is the outskirts, and we're heading into the city." Ah Jiao responded quickly.

Qi Yun temporarily breathed a sigh of relief, continuing to instruct, "Don't linger over there, head to the airport immediately and take the earliest flight back."

"Alright." Ah Jiao no longer insisted, the other party's power was unexpectedly strong, even among them with the highest combat power, Niu Da, was easily injured by them. There's no point in staying there further; if they could capture them once, they could capture them again.

## Chapter 392: The Secret of the Map

Ah Jiao and her team gathered a lot of information about the Gwen Clan in Lyon.

One point that caught Qi Yun's attention the most was that this family had a very long legacy, even tracing back over five hundred years, making it one of the oldest families in Europe.

By normal standards, politics and business are often intertwined, and such ancient families would generally have members entering politics. But perplexingly, the Gwen Clan seems to have no political involvement.

Not just now, but even going back hundreds of years, there are no records.

Even the business matters were managed by professional teams, with the family always staying hidden behind the scenes.

Their current Sect Leader is George Gwen, a man over sixty, who hardly ever appears in public. Not just him, the entire Gwen Clan is extremely low-key.

However, according to a message from Ah Jiao, this old man seems to be on the brink, and the most likely successor to the leadership position is not George's son, but his nephew De Gaulle.

As for the internal strife within, outsiders are certainly not privy to it.

The family's strength is undoubtedly formidable, given the accumulation over hundreds of years. To really confront this family would be extremely dangerous.

As Qi Yun was pondering, Ah Jiao was about to enter the city and confirmed that no one was tailing them.

Meanwhile, De Gaulle's call came through once again.

Qi Yun glanced at the caller ID, tapped his finger on the table, and pressed the answer button.

"Mr. Qi, I trust you've felt my sincerity." De Gaulle's voice came through the receiver, still very pleasant sounding, "Please believe me, we are not enemies, we could even become partners."

"What do you want to cooperate on?" Qi Yun's tone was calm and guarded.

"Regarding that map you obtained from the shipwreck!" De Gaulle spoke directly, "I'm willing to offer a high price to buy it from you!"

Qi Yun shook his head without thinking: "Sorry, I have no intention of selling."

"Wouldn't you like to hear my offer?" De Gaulle probed.

"No need." Qi Yun's attitude was firm.

Just the gold and jewels from the shipwreck brought him three hundred million in wealth, which in their eyes, the map is valued even more than those treasures; what exactly is its worth?

Qi Yun could guess it would be a tempting price, but compared to money, he was more intrigued by uncovering the secret hidden within the map.

Because many things cannot be measured with money, such as the first point marked on the map corresponding to the Loulan Ancient City ruins and the mysterious stele over two thousand years old. These treasures are priceless.

"Alright, since Mr. Qi is unwilling to sell, I won't insist." De Gaulle sighed and continued, "But I hope you can answer one more question for me."

This time, Qi Yun didn't refuse outright: "Tell me first, but I may not answer."

"Is the map you obtained recording six locations?" De Gaulle's voice trembled slightly as he asked.

Upon hearing this, Qi Yun's eyes narrowed instinctively. From De Gaulle's words, he seemed to have some knowledge about the map, but not much.

"How about this, you answer one question for me first, and then I'll tell you the answer."

"Sure, Mr. Qi, go ahead." De Gaulle replied straightforwardly.

After a brief consideration, Qi Yun slowly asked: "I want to know how you learned about the map and what secrets it conceals."

De Gaulle was silent for a moment, and when he spoke again, his voice seemed to carry an air of antiquity: "I knew about the map because my ancestor was on that ship."

"And he was the highest officer on that ship."

"The San Jose was loaded with gold and jewels, intended to sail to the Great Qing Empire and exchange these treasures for the emperor's support to send troops to escort the crew to a certain location."

"However, the ship never succeeded in reaching the Great Qing Empire, but vanished at sea."

"For years, generations of my family have been searching for it until you discovered it in the Atlantic Ocean."

Qi Yun felt a chill inside upon realizing the narrative involved such a story.

Previously, Ignacio had mentioned that Louis II had also sent people to places like Lop Nur to search for something, but never found it.

Taking this information into account, it's unlikely that De Gaulle was lying.

When the San Jose set sail from Spain back then, it must have been during Kangxi's reign in China. They came with gold and silver treasures likely to persuade the emperor to send troops to help them find the location of Satellite City.

Because even if those people held the method to decode the map, they would probably only have the overall terrain, not specific coordinates like Qi Yun.

With just over a hundred people on the ship, finding an ancient city relic in Lop Nur was evidently impossible.

"As for the secret hidden behind the map, it relates to an ancient legend."

"What legend?" Qi Yun asked unconsciously.

De Gaulle paused, then continued: "Legend has it that over a thousand years ago, Charlemagne's fourth son, later known as Louis I, received enlightenment from Jesus."

"Jesus guided him to a mystical space, where those who reached it could attain eternal life."

"But to reach that space, one must first visit six locations and acquire the path guide."

Chapter 393: The Secret of the Map (2)

"Later, Louis I told others about this matter, but everyone thought he was crazy. Only he firmly believed in it and kept sending people around the world to search."

"Before he died, he left information about those six locations and drew a map. The map you found in the shipwreck was based on the one from back then."

At this point, De Gaulle stopped speaking.

After listening, Qi Yun was filled with emotion — "eternal life," those two words again!

Having received a modern education, he naturally didn't believe in the notion of eternal life. If eternal life were possible, it wouldn't be Louis I; Qin Shi Huang would have lived until now.

But how could the six locations depicted on the map be explained... After all, he really did find Satellite City and the stone tablet in Lop Nur.

Could the words recorded on that stone tablet actually be the so-called guide?

Is all of this a coincidence... or...

"Mr. Qi, I've already told you the secret of the map, now it's your turn to answer my question." De Gaulle's words interrupted Qi Yun's thoughts.

Qi Yun came back to his senses and, after a moment of silence, said, "Yes, the map does depict six locations."

He paused for a moment and then asked, "According to you, the map in the ship was drawn based on the one from back then, so there should be many preserved maps like this, right?"

"Why do you still want to buy it from me?"

De Gaulle sighed upon hearing this: "No, the map you have might be the only complete one left."

"Because of Louis I, the entire Louis Family attached great importance to this matter. To ensure the locations on the map were not easily leaked, only two copies of such a map were made."

"These two have always been kept by the Louis Royal Family. Later, when Felipe V inherited the throne of Spain, another map was drawn and taken to Spain."

"Shortly after inheriting the throne, he handed the map to his brother, Prince Augustus, ordering him to set sail in search of clues, and Prince Augustus was my ancestor..."

"Later, as France began to experience turmoil, the two maps kept by the royal family could not be completely preserved, so the map you have is the only complete one left."

Qi Yun was overwhelmed by the intricate relationships of these European royal families and asked, smacking his lips after a moment, "So, you're actually a member of the Louis Family, right?"

De Gaulle did not deny it: "That's right, strictly speaking, our Gwen Clan can be considered a collateral branch of the Louis Family."

Qi Yun didn't expect the other to be a royal noble and asked, "Is your family still seeking the so-called eternal life?"

This time De Gaulle didn't answer quickly: "Mr. Qi, I think the fact that I told you these things earlier proves my sincerity, and I do want to cooperate with you."

Qi Yun lit a cigarette, took two puffs, and said calmly, "You are honest with me, so naturally, I will be honest with you."

Although some of what the other party said could be verified with the information he currently had, it didn't guarantee it was completely true.

De Gaulle seemed satisfied with this response and addressed Qi Yun's earlier question: "Yes, our family is still exploring the secret behind the map because we're holding those two fragmented pieces."

"As for the other members of the Louis Family, they have long since given up this seemingly absurd pursuit."

Qi Yun nodded after hearing this. No wonder, after the shipwreck incident, only this Gwen Clan was investigating him.

Maybe there are others involved, but they are keeping it very hidden and haven't been discovered by him.

"I've answered your questions, now let's talk about cooperation." De Gaulle steered the topic back on track.

"How do you want to cooperate?" Qi Yun's response was ambiguous.

De Gaulle seemed to sense his wariness and swallowed back some of his original words, beginning to reveal some information: "The two fragmented maps we hold show a total of three locations, and over the past fifty years, my family has made discoveries at two of them."

"The remaining one already has a rough location, and I believe it won't be long before we find the key clues."

"As long as Mr. Qi is willing to share the maps of the remaining three locations with me, I can not only pay you a handsome reward, but when we truly decipher all the mysteries in the future, I can take you to that legendary space!"

"Of course, if Mr. Qi has any concerns, you don't have to tell me all the locations at once. You can tell me one location at a time, and after I hand you the clues, then you can tell me the subsequent ones."

De Gaulle's remarks sounded very sincere, but Qi Yun internally let out a cold laugh.

He blew out a smoke ring and said flatly, "You're still not being completely honest."

"Why would Mr. Qi say that?" De Gaulle looked surprised.

Qi Yun unhurriedly said, "Haha, you said there were three locations still missing, but I think, to be precise, it should be two, right?"

"As far as I know, Louis II once sent Duke Tieren out to search, and when he returned, he brought back a blue stone from Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa."

"Am I right?"

Since this Gwen Clan is also related to the Louis Family and is still tirelessly pursuing these secrets, Qi Yun didn't believe they wouldn't have such a critical clue in their possession.

This information was provided to him by Ignacio, and if he hadn't known about it in advance, he might have fallen for De Gaulle's tricks.

The other party says nice things, promising to take him along once all the clues are gathered, but who knows if they'll purposely leave the African point for last.

Qi Yun would be waiting foolishly at home, while they would've already set off.

There was a brief silence on the other end of the phone as De Gaulle seemed to be caught off guard by Qi Yun knowing about this.

As he pondered how to cover it up, he heard Qi Yun continue, "I think we should discuss cooperation later. I still lack trust in you for now."

"If you truly want to cooperate, you can come find me in China."

De Gaulle seemed to realize too that continuing this discussion might not yield any results. Even though he had revealed many secrets to Qi Yun earlier, this final concealment was enough to destroy all previous trust.

He sighed and replied, "Alright, I will personally come to China in the near future, and we'll discuss the cooperation when we meet."

"Okay." Qi Yun didn't say anything more and ended the call.

Whether or not to cooperate with the other party, extracting some information during a meeting is always beneficial. Judging from the conversation just now, the other party probably knows a lot more.

The critical reason why Qi Yun was always cautious with De Gaulle was that his subordinate, named Legov, was still detained by the authorities and hadn't been released.

Yet De Gaulle hadn't mentioned this subordinate at all from start to finish, leaving it unclear whether he had completely forgotten or simply didn't care.

In short, someone who doesn't care about the life and death of their subordinates is probably not a good person.

Half an hour later, Qi Yun received a message from Ah Jiao that they had safely arrived at the airport and were taking the earliest flight back.

...

Shanghai, Tianyang Group.

Ji Liyang was escorted away from the office building by several plainclothes officers, and rumors began to spread in some circles.

"Lao Ji was taken away by people from that department; this time there's truly no one to speak up for him."

"Who's targeting him?"

"Lao Chen wouldn't reveal, but it's said that Ji Liyang specifically went to the Sheraton Hotel lobby to meet someone and was very humble. As for the identity of the person, if you're interested, you can look into it."

"Haha, I'm actually quite interested."

On the other side, inside Maple Capital's office.

Zhao Weilin had returned from Bird City and was back to work, as there was still a big pile of things waiting to be handled and he couldn't delay any longer.

"Knock, knock, knock."

Assistant Dong Anyun knocked on the door and walked in.

"Chairman, I've figured out the Tianyang Group's situation."

"What's going on?" Zhao Weilin asked without looking up.

Dong Anyun had a peculiar expression on her face, hesitantly speaking: "It seems... it seems to be related to Qi Yun."

Upon hearing the name Qi Yun, Zhao Weilin finally looked up, staring blankly at her: "Which Qi Yun are you referring to?"

Dong Anyun nodded and handed over the newly gathered information: "It's him, take a look for yourself."

Zhao Weilin took the documents and began reviewing them carefully, his expression also turning peculiar.

## Chapter 394: Not Quite Used to This Spending Pace

Madrid, within a certain research institute.

Ignacio listened to Qi Yun's narration while flipping through the materials in his hands, a barely suppressed excitement spreading across his face.

"What he said is most likely true!"

"Indeed, Prince Augustus' second daughter married an Earl named Tyler Gwen."

Qi Yun pondered for a moment: "If what he said is true, and they've already found clues for the other two locations, then cooperating with them is indeed necessary."

Ignacio did not express an opinion on this, only offered a worried caution: "Qi Yun, these ancient family powers are incredibly formidable. In Europe, they can even shape a nation's direction, so you must prepare thoroughly."

"Thanks for the reminder, I will be careful." Qi Yun nodded, then continued, "Has there been any progress regarding that phrase?"

Previously, after Professor He translated the content of the stone tablet for Qi Yun, he immediately informed Ignacio.

"The person who helped you translate is very knowledgeable and our conclusions are quite similar."

"Looking at the literal meaning, it seems to point to a certain location. But to pinpoint the final position, perhaps we still need the remaining five clues."

Qi Yun rubbed his chin and slowly spoke: "Alright, if that De Gaulle comes to China to meet me, I'll find a way to exchange for the clues he holds."

"Hmm, let's leave it at that for now. I'll inform you immediately upon any discovery on my end." Ignacio replied, and the two ended the call.

Qi Yun put down his phone, organizing the information about the map in his mind.

A total of six locations, he already knew of two: Lop Nur and Northern Mongolia, and he already grasped the clues obtained from Lop Nur.

According to De Gaulle, his family had obtained clues from two locations and was currently searching for the third.

Adding the location Duke Tieren found in Africa years ago, it came to a total of six locations.

In other words, as long as he could get the Northern Mongolia clue, and De Gaulle's family successfully obtained theirs as well, the hidden secrets of the map would soon be completely unveiled.

But that's merely the ideal outcome.

The actual situation is that De Gaulle only mentioned his family is searching for the third location but did not specify where it is.

However, based on previous intelligence, Qi Yun speculated the group excavating the tomb in Northern Mongolia is most likely the De Gaulle family.

Thus, the two groups' objectives overlapped; even if Northern Mongolia's clues were obtained, the final location's information would still be missing.

"Whatever! I must grasp the Northern Mongolia clues!" Qi Yun decided firmly in his heart.

Since the stone tablet in Lop Nur couldn't be taken away, if the ancient city ruins were exposed, De Gaulle would surely make connections, who knows if they'd discover the secrets on the stone tablet.

Moreover, their words can't be entirely trusted, they might indeed have a complete map.

Thus, he must have a clue unknown to outsiders to maintain some control in collaboration. Without the clue he possesses, the other party likely can't achieve their goals.

[Today's Intelligence 1 (Red): The body of Qiu Jiahao was found at home three days ago, the police, after examining the crime scene, concluded it was an accidental death caused by a sudden heart attack]

Qiu Jiahao is dead!

Upon seeing this intelligence, Qi Yun was stunned, standing frozen in place.

Last month he received intelligence that the other side was being watched secretly, so he had Duan Pingyu quietly watch for a few days, partly to gather clues, partly to protect Qiu Jiahao.

Later, due to manpower shortage from other matters, Duan Pingyu was withdrawn, unexpectedly now the person is dead... and from a heart attack too!

Qiu Jiahao's father, Qiu Yuanshan, announced to the public the cause of death was also a heart attack... Yet the former had told Qi Yun his father hadn't had any heart issues!

Now Qiu Jiahao's cause of death also became a sudden heart attack, which is thought-provoking...

Qi Yun suspected it is very likely related to that USB drive.

No one anticipated Qiu Jiahao enduring hardship, escaping from Mianbei Park, ultimately couldn't escape death... inevitably making Qi Yun sigh.

Simultaneously, his vigilance rose once more.

Why did these people kill Qiu Jiahao, and could he himself be already exposed to their view...

Although Qi Yun wants to resolve this hidden danger soon, achieving this is not easy, for their positions are too high; even handing the USB drive over to Beijing might not help and might even backfire.

He must await the right moment...

After pondering for a moment, Qi Yun picked up his phone, sent Zhang Dayong a message, inviting him to meet shortly, hoping to inquire about some detailed information regarding this case.

[Today's Intelligence 2 (Purple 3/6): 88°58'86"W, 20°68'29"N]

Another set of coordinates!

Qi Yun immediately opened his phone map software, attempting to input this set of coordinates.

As a result, the location on the map is southeast Mexico, a place called the Yucatan Peninsula, where a very famous ancient city-state ruin exists—Chichen Itza!

It was once the most flourishing city-state of the Ancient Maya Kingdom, symbolizing the peak of the Mayan Civilization.

Chapter 395: Not Quite Used to This Spending Pace

Regarding Mayan Civilization, although Qi Yun doesn't understand it deeply, he has heard a lot of rumors, the most famous being the 2012 doomsday.

Though the doomsday didn't actually come, many people still firmly believe in the Mayan prophecies.

First it's the Ancient Loulan, then the Ancient Maya Kingdom, and the African Peak Mount Kilimanjaro... Those areas on the map, each holds significant meaning, could there really be some mysterious space?

Additionally, has the clue from the Mayan Ruins been grasped by De Gaulle's family?

This question might only be known once meeting them.

[Today's Intelligence 3 (Red) An hour ago, Shao Yuewen visited his old father-in-law at No. 2 Health Road in Tianshan District, intending to remove the deputy title in this change.]

No. 2 Health Road!

That's the office location of... being able to help Shao Yuewen manage such a crucial position in the ZZB, it seems his old father-in-law is no ordinary person.

To exaggerate a bit, if this step is crossed, it's equivalent to entering another realm.

It seems I was wrong before, the sister I acknowledged is so well-connected.

Hmm... I'll have to visit more often in the future.

After receiving today's intelligence, Qi Yun changed his clothes and headed to the company.

It's been a while since he last came, and the company has added many new faces, all of whom were requested by Xiang Xiaoyue for research and operations.

In the office, Qi Yun listened to the work report from Xiang Xiaoyue and Zhong Rui while looking at the report on the desk.

"So you're saying, in less than a month's time, you've spent over ten million of mine?" Qi Yun looked at the number at the end of the report, his heart involuntarily twinged.

He knows promotion spends money, but didn't expect it to be this aggressive, spending sixteen million in just twenty days.

Previously, every time Zhong Rui paid out funds, he would report to Qi Yun first and pay only with his approval.

Later, due to many things, Qi Yun granted certain autonomy to him, with amounts below one million not requiring his consent.

And this sixteen million was accumulated from many amounts not exceeding one million.

Xiang Xiaoyue, sitting opposite him, showed no signs of unease for spending so much money, her face unchanged: "Yes, and in the next month, I might need to spend another eighteen million."

Qi Yun, hearing this, trembled as he picked up the cigarette box on the desk, but considering the presence of a woman, he refrained from smoking and put the cigarette box back.

He earns money fast, but can't withstand this rate of spending.

"Tell me what you plan to spend this eighteen million on."

Xiang Xiaoyue pulled out her phone to check her work records: "As you mentioned before about hiring Zhazha Hui as an endorser, I've already negotiated with his agent, two years for four hundred fifty thousand, additionally I've contacted a number of well-known game streamers..."

After listening to her explanation, Qi Yun pondered for a moment, knowing that for a product to succeed, such investments are essential.

He wasn't upset about spending so much money, just not quite used to the pace of spending...

"Alright, Zhong Rui, go ahead and cooperate with her."

"Yes, boss." Zhong Rui quickly agreed.

Qi Yun looked at Xiang Xiaoyue again, sighed helplessly: "Xiaoyue, spending this money must show results, otherwise if I ever go bankrupt, you'll be the first responsible."

Xiang Xiaoyue stood up confidently and replied: "I already said before, in two months, you'll see the results."

"If you really go bankrupt, I'll work for you for free for a lifetime." With that, she left the office after saying "I'll get busy now."

Qi Yun shook his head and called Xie Mengmeng to understand the situation of the trading company.

The trading company is developing very well, having already occupied the major market of Jiang Province, with a pure profit of over four million last month.

Not just domestically, but also on the goose side, ever since Qi Yun got the black hand D to settle some people on the ground, Mendeleev's business has been smooth sailing, as soon as the goods arrive, they are immediately divided by the distributors, and no one dares to envy him anymore.

After all, the black hand D's fierce reputation is too great, not to mention legitimate businessmen, even those in the same social circle, dare not provoke them.

Aside from these two companies, the situation with the jewelry company is also very good, with sales nearing three billion before the second quarter ends, more than doubling the same period last year.

You know the profit in the jewelry industry is quite terrifying. According to President Bi's words, if this momentum keeps up through the second half, each of them could get at least one billion by year-end.

And then there is Dawn Technology, of which Qi Yun just gained 51% equity. Ever since his funds came in, Tao Ziming has completely stopped worrying about money, not only increasing two experimental personnel but also renovating a lab, significantly improving work efficiency.

Although there's no major progress yet, Qi Yun knows that research can't be rushed, it's about building a solid foundation first.

As long as this new material is developed, the value of this company will soar and might even easily surpass Blue Sky Jewelry Company.

After dealing with the company affairs, Qi Yun chatted with Brother Peng for a while, and seeing it's lunchtime, he drove to a restaurant near the New District Branch Station.

In the private room, Zhang Dayong, with rosy cheeks, was truly exuberant after good news.

"Hehe, your spirits are getting better and better." Qi Yun pulled up a chair to sit down and said jokingly.

Zhang Dayong laughed heartily, picking up the teapot to pour Qi Yun a cup of tea: "Isn't all thanks to you, Qi? When did you come back?"

"Yesterday." Qi Yun said, sipping his tea.

Zhang Dayong nodded: "Your sister-in-law is also coming in a couple of days, when the time comes I'll invite you over for a meal at my house to properly thank you."

"Dinner is fine, no need to mention thanks. I'll bring a good bottle when I come." Qi Yun replied with a smile, "Will your sister-in-law go back to the county after coming here?"

Zhang Dayong sighed: "I want her to bring the kids over, but first her job transfer is quite troublesome, second the kid is starting junior high next year, here there's no school district house, schooling is also a problem."

Qi Yun nodded silently, saying nothing.

He evaluates Zhang Dayong as cautious and principled.

Such people won't risk their political career over petty gains or risk.

And his various helps to Qi Yun might have slight interest elements, but more are the friendship between them.

So these petty matters, in the eyes of people at Zhang Dayong's level, might just be a few calls, but for him, they are indeed troublesome.

"Come on, start eating, I've been waiting hungry." Zhang Dayong said with a smile.

He had work in the afternoon, so the two didn't drink, each had a bottle of fruit beer.

"By the way, let me ask you something." Qi Yun said casually while picking his food.

Zhang Dayong was eating rice, without raising his head: "Mm, say it."

"A few days ago, someone died at Jingxiu Bay in the New District, do you know? A man, twenty-six or twenty-seven, named Qiu Jiahao."

"Qiu Jiahao? Haven't heard from people below." Zhang Dayong glanced at Qi Yun, "Do you know him?"

Qi Yun didn't deny: "Help me ask the detailed situation of this case, how exactly did he die, and if there's any suspicious clue on site."

Zhang Dayong placed the chopsticks down, gently tapped the table with his fingers, raising his brows slightly: "The homicide didn't directly report to me here, I'm guessing it's handled by the criminal investigation team, I'll ask for you." Then, he picked up the phone beside him to make a call.

Qi Yun pressed his hand, looking serious: "This matter is heavily associated."

Zhang Dayong was slightly startled, then nodded: "I understand."

## Chapter 396: Gunshots

Inside the private room, Zhang Dayong picked up his phone, pondered for a few seconds, and dialed a number.

"Xiao Wang, go to the Criminal Investigation Department this afternoon and bring all the murder case files from the past three months within our jurisdiction to my office. I need to report to the municipal bureau tomorrow."

"Yes, including the ongoing cases."

After ending the call, Zhang Dayong put down his phone and said to Qi Yun, "I'll check it later and get back to you."

"Alright." Qi Yun took a sip of fruit beer, not saying much more.

Over half an hour later, Qi Yun and the others had almost finished their meal, and Zhang Dayong started to call for the bill.

"Shall we go?"

Qi Yun checked his watch, handed over a cigarette, and said, "No rush, let's wait a bit."

Zhang Dayong suspiciously took the cigarette and asked, "Is there something else?"

Before Qi Yun could answer, there were two knocks at the door, and Zhong Rui entered holding a briefcase, quickly walking over to Qi Yun's side.

"Boss, the contracts are all prepared. We secured the best locations and areas." Zhong Rui said as he opened the briefcase and took out two documents.

Qi Yun glanced over them and said, "Alright, you can go now."

"Okay." Zhong Rui nodded, then exited the private room.

Zhang Dayong didn't rush him, thinking Qi Yun was just handling business matters.

Once the room door closed again, Qi Yun handed over the two contracts.

"What's this?" Zhang Dayong was taken aback.

Qi Yun smiled at him, "Didn't you say you didn't have a house in the school district? I recently bought a few properties on Xuanwu Street. Have you heard of School No. 15? It's the best high school in our city and is about to relocate there."

"Consider this house rented to you. You can live there as long as you like, just pay me the rent when the time comes."

"When you have money, I'll sell it to you at a cheaper price."

Zhang Dayong looked at the contract for a large three-bedroom unit of 138 square meters. If he were to buy this now, it would cost at least one to one and a half million.

As for the rent, he understood this was Qi Yun's way of taking care of him. He knew that even if he paid, Qi Yun wouldn't take it.

After a long silence, just as he was about to decline, Qi Yun blew out a smoke ring and spoke first, "What? Don't like this one?"

"You know I'm not lacking in this regard. If you feel bad, consider it a dorm I've prepared for your nephew. That should be okay, right?"

"Alright, thank you." Zhang Dayong didn't say much more, silently putting the contract into his bag.

Qi Yun nodded in satisfaction and stood up, "Alright, you treat this meal as if you're thanking me."

"Okay, my treat." Zhang Dayong also stood up and responded cheerfully.

The two walked out of the private room side by side.

That night, Liu Meng also returned home with a real estate purchase contract.

Although he got a decent compensation last time, thanks to Qi Yun's help after a beating, his family was still living in that courtyard house.

"What's wrong? You look upset." In the courtyard, Li Cuixia, who was hanging laundry, noticed her husband looking troubled and asked, "What's that in your hand? A divorce agreement?"

Liu Meng glared at her and handed over the contract, "See for yourself."

Li Cuixia finished hanging the last piece of clothes, wiped her hands on them, and took the contract to read it.

"Oh my, you bought a house?" Li Cuixia's eyes widened as she looked up at Liu Meng, "Why didn't you discuss it with me?"

Liu Meng sighed, took a small stool, and sat down, "Old Qi gave it to me this afternoon. This house is in the school district of School No. 15."

"School No. 15!?" As a parent, Li Cuixia naturally knew the prestige of School No. 15. Its middle school department was already among the top in the city, and the high school department had become a provincial key school in recent years.

Moreover, the transition rate from middle school directly to high school was not small, so getting into School No. 15 already gave a significant advantage in terms of academic progression.

If Qi Yun hadn't often snuck out during high school to play games all night, he wouldn't have ended up only attending a junior college.

After the initial shock, Li Cuixia continued to browse the contract until she saw the transaction price of 1.4 million, and her expression turned hesitant again.

"Can we even afford this house... Last time, we gave four million to Dad, and if we spend 1.4 million on this house, we won't have much left for our daughter's university or marriage..."

Before his wife could finish, Liu Meng interrupted her with a wave, "1.4 million is the minimum transaction price due to tax system restrictions. Today when Zhong Rui took me to the transaction hall to transfer the ownership, I saw others buying houses in this neighborhood for more than 1.6 million!"

"Zhong Rui said this house was bought by old Qi a while ago for 780,000, and he's still selling it to us for 780,000."

"Huh?" Liu Cuixia wasn't too joyful on hearing this; instead, she got more conflicted, gripping the contract tightly with both hands, "We shouldn't take this house then. Last time, during Xiao Jie's issue, Brother Qi Yun helped us a lot and we haven't even thanked him yet. Now we're taking a big advantage again."

Liu Meng sighed and shook his head, "I can't argue with him, the transfer procedure is already done."

"My only thought was for our daughter to study here so she can do better in school, and that's why I finally agreed."

"But I have no face to take this benefit. Take the remaining 60,000 out from the bank tomorrow, and I'll find a chance to take it to his place directly."

Although Li Cuixia verbally blamed Liu Meng for not discussing it with her, in reality, Liu Meng made most of the major family decisions, and Li Cuixia rarely opposed him.

"Alright, I'll withdraw it tomorrow."

Chapter 397: Gunfire (2)

...

On the other side, Qi Yun was lounging in the recliner in his study at home, reviewing the materials Zhang Dayong had just sent him.

From the autopsy report, it seemed Qiu Jiahao did indeed die of a sudden heart attack, but Qi Yun was skeptical of this conclusion due to the room for manipulation in this matter.

On the other hand, although it was unclear if Qiu Jiahao had a history of heart problems, the whole situation seemed too suspicious.

The criminal investigation team hadn't found anything unusual at the scene. The door locks showed no signs of being tampered with, and there weren't any discernible footprints in the house, let alone clues on the body's skin surface.

From the scene photos, it appeared that Qiu Jiahao had died from a heart attack.

However, Qi Yun knew that with those people's methods, fabricating a scene of death by heart attack wasn't difficult.

That's because the other party had silently infiltrated both Qiu Jiahao's and Qiu Yuanshan's homes on two separate occasions.

"We must remain vigilant these next few days..."

If he was already exposed, the other side would certainly make their move soon.

Thinking of this, Qi Yun picked up his phone and sent a message to Gao Min.

...

Two nights later, deep in the night, East London, Canary Wharf.

On the roadside, inside a black SUV, Chen Wei was pointing at a flat map and spoke to a few of the group named Eagle: "After observing these past two days, there are a total of twelve of them, divided into two shifts, with six people in each shift."

"These men are armed with pistols, submachine guns, and other weapons. Judging by their movements, they seem to have undergone specialized training, possibly retired military personnel."

Saying this, Chen Wei glanced at his watch and continued, "Someone will come by to deliver a late-night snack at one in the morning, and we'll take that opportunity to make our move."

"We're divided into three groups. Eagle, An Zai, Da Pao, and I will go in through the front. Lao Bai will cover the entrance, and Bing Zi will take care of driving the truck in the rear. After we succeed, quickly drive the truck over to load the goods."

The others nodded in agreement: "Understood!"

Chen Wei glanced at each person: "Check your equipment. Once inside, aim to subdue them; handle the situation as it arises."

As soon as he finished speaking, the sound of gun bolts being pulled echoed in the car. The six men checked their weapons and ammunition, readying themselves for the operation.

Twenty minutes later, a Chevrolet with a pizza advertisement sticker drove toward them.

Chen Wei patted Xiao Yuan on the shoulder: "You head out first, I'll contact you once it's over."

Xiao Yuan didn't insist on staying, as his orders did not involve participating in the actual operation.

"Alright, Brother Wei, be careful."

"Hmm." Chen Wei responded, opened the car door, and shouted, "Go!"

The group exited the vehicle, with the exception of Bing Zi who was handling the driving and Lao Bai who was providing support. The remaining four charged into the middle of the road to intercept the Chevrolet delivering the pizza.

The brake lights of the Chevrolet lit up abruptly on the dark street. The driver was about to curse when Chen Wei pressed the muzzle of his gun to the driver's forehead.

"WTF! Don't panic, mate!" The black-skinned driver was bewildered by this sudden turn of events. Although crime wasn't rare in Great Britain, with muggings and phone snatchings happening often, he had no idea what to make of a takeaway robbery.

"Shut up, get out of the car." Chen Wei's voice was deep and steady; although the Glock was pressed to the driver's forehead, the safety was still on.

"OK, OK, calm down, mate, calm down!" The driver seemed used to big scenes and did not exhibit excessive panic even with a gun to his head. Instead, he continued to urge Chen Wei to stay calm.

He raised his left hand, then slowly unfastened his seatbelt with his right hand, pushed open the car door, and got out.

Eagle quickly stripped the driver's pizza shop uniform and put it on himself before swiftly taking the driver's seat.

Chen Wei gave An Zai and Da Pao a look, signaling them to get into the car first, and then expressionlessly asked the driver, "Hand over your license!"

The driver cooperated, pointing to the position of the glove compartment before slowly reaching into the car window and taking out his license from inside, handing it over.

Chen Wei glanced at the license, returned it to the driver, then took five hundred pounds from his pocket, shoving it into the driver's hand, and said in a low voice, "I need to borrow your delivery car. Consider this rental fee, in half an hour, you can call the police."

"I know your name and where you live, so you better do as I say."

The driver hurriedly nodded: "Oh, mate, you are too kind, feel free to take the car if you like, I won't report it."

"If you don't report it, you might be in trouble. Just do as I say," Chen Wei left him with that and got into the car.

Three minutes later, the pizza delivery Chevrolet arrived at an adjacent street, right at the entrance of Warehouse 98.

Though Ji Liyang had been taken away back in the home country, for some reason, the people inside this warehouse remained as usual, unchanged. Perhaps there were still others involved in the business.

Behind the wheel, Eagle honked twice, calmly exited the car, retrieved an insulated box from the trunk, and then stood under the surveillance camera at the entrance of the warehouse, waving.

The black driver had done this the previous two nights.

About half a minute later, there was movement inside, the iron door slowly rose, and a burly man in a black tank top poked his head out, sizing up Eagle: "Why haven't I seen you before?"

Eagle shook the thermal box, responding in a slightly accented voice: "Yes, I just joined."

The guard didn't give it much thought, stepped forward to take the box, and turned to re-enter the warehouse.

At this moment, Eagle suddenly ducked low, his right hand quickly drawing a gun from his waistband, simultaneously kicking the guard's knee hard. The guard lost his balance, stumbling, and the box flew out of his hand.

Quick to react, he reached for his thigh to grab his gun, but Eagle's weapon was already against his temple, the cold metal making him freeze instantly.

"Move and I shoot." Eagle spoke again, his accent gone, voice icy.

Almost simultaneously, Chen Wei, An Zai, and Da Pao swiftly exited from the Chevrolet's rear, moving with ghost-like speed. They ignored the controlled guard at the door, rushing straight into the warehouse.

Seeing this, Eagle delivered a forceful blow to the guard's neck with the gun stock, causing him to collapse, unconscious.

Eagle deftly took the walkie-talkie from the guard's waist and quickly followed into the warehouse.

The warehouse was large, with two levels; the first floor alone spanned three to four hundred square meters with neatly arranged wooden crates on the ground, and the ceiling's fluorescent lights flickered.

Chen Wei led the charge, gun unwaveringly pointed ahead, as An Zai and Da Pao followed closely, the three of them advancing in a triangular formation.

These operations required speed; since there were cameras at the entrance, the recent events had surely been noticed by the opposition.

The trio had barely made it past the iron gate, advancing less than ten meters when footsteps echoed from the depths of the warehouse.

Two more guards in black tank tops hurried toward them, each holding a submachine gun, instinctively raising their weapons at the sight of intruders.

"Bang! Bang!" Chen Wei's silenced pistol fired first, bullets accurately hitting the wrists of the two, causing their guns to clatter to the ground.

The situation was clear: they were about to open fire, leaving Chen Wei no choice but to act preemptively.

As the shots were fired, An Zai rushed forward, elbow smashing into the jaw of the left-side guard, sending him collapsing with a groan, while Da Pao locked the other one's throat, knee driving into his lower back, subduing him swiftly.

Just then, from the staircase on the second floor, an automatic rifle was raised, silently taking aim at the three below.

Chen Wei's instincts flared with danger, honed from years dodging bullets, prompting him to shout a warning.

Yet, before he could utter a word, a shot rang out with a "Bang!"

Chapter 398: Operation and the Archaeological Team

Canary Wharf, Warehouse No. 98.

The sudden sound of gunfire erupted, bullets whizzed past Chen Wei's ear, striking the wooden crate behind him, wood chips flying.

"Second floor!" Chen Wei roared, throwing himself towards a nearby pillar while blind-firing two shots in the direction of the stairs.

"Rat-tat-tat!"

Two rifles began to roar from the position at the stairway on the second floor.

An Zai reacted quickly, leaping to the side while grabbing a fallen submachine gun from the ground, spraying bullets towards the iron staircase. The bullets sparked off the iron, forcing the people upstairs to pull their heads back.

Da Pao, on the other hand, grabbed an unconscious guard on the ground to use as a shield, crawling towards the base of the stairs.

At this moment, Eagle, who had entered the warehouse later, also quietly came up, but he did not fire his weapon. Instead, he quickly gestured towards Chen Wei across from him, which Chen Wei understood and nodded.

There were a total of six guards in the warehouse. One was dealt with at the door, two more were just taken down, and there were two upstairs. This meant there was still one person hidden in the shadows.

This person who hadn't fired was far more threatening than the upstairs firing positions, so after assessing the situation, Eagle quickly reacted, planning to stealthily find this person's location.

After An Zai finished spraying a burst from the submachine gun, he quickly ducked behind the nearby shelves, casually tossing the submachine gun aside and switching back to his pistol.

With the lack of suppressive fire from the submachine gun, the rifles upstairs fired again, shooting several times at An Zai's hiding spot. Bullets whizzed overhead, preventing An Zai from poking out his head.

Chen Wei, pressing against the pillar, took a breath and glanced up towards the iron staircase. The rifles upstairs kept firing sporadically, bullets popping against the nearby wooden crates.

Now both he and An Zai were pinned down, leaving only Da Pao free to move below the stairs.

In this situation, they had to act quickly; they couldn't predict when the enemy's reinforcements might arrive.

Besides, the gunshots could attract attention, who knows if a concerned citizen might call the police.

So the time left for them to act was not much.

After taking two deep breaths, Chen Wei yanked his earpiece and quickly said, "An Zai and I will draw their fire, Da Pao will find a chance to take out the two upstairs!"

"Three, two, one!"

As the words fell, Chen Wei suddenly leaned out from behind the pillar, firing three shots at the beams above the iron staircase!

The bullets clanged as they sparked, the guards upstairs instinctively ducking for cover, pausing their rifle fire for a half-second.

Almost simultaneously, An Zai raised his pistol and fired at the wooden box beside the stairway, bullets bouncing off the crate boards, creating the illusion that both of them were fiercely charging the front.

In this extremely brief window, Da Pao darted out of the shadows like an arrow from a bow.

He didn't charge directly at the middle of the stairs but climbed up the column on the inside of the iron staircase, his boot sole hooking onto the rung gaps, nearly hanging as he leveraged up, reaching the edge of the second-floor platform in an instant.

The guard on the left had just adjusted his aim when he caught sight of the motion out of the corner of his eye, snapping his head around to raise his gun.

But Da Pao was faster!

He lunged at the guard, his left hand clamping the opponent's gun-wielding wrist like a vice, yanking it towards his chest while his right elbow precisely jabbed under the guard's armpit.

The guard grunted as his rifle fell free, instinctively swinging fists in retaliation, but Da Pao dodged to the side, pressing a knee into his midsection, slamming him brutally onto the concrete floor with inertia.

Before the guard could struggle, Da Pao kicked fiercely at the guard's head, knocking him unconscious.

At the same time, he quickly drew a pistol from his waist, firing two shots at another guard three meters away, who was shooting downstairs.

The bullets thumped into the guard's shoulder, causing him to grunt and stagger backward, his rifle clattering to the ground as blood seeped from the wound.

Da Pao quickly advanced, this time choosing not to knock him out but instead swiftly confiscating the guard's weapons, then shouting into his earpiece: "Upstairs cleared!"

Meanwhile, Eagle had silently reached the highest stack of wooden crates on the right side.

He held his breath, pressing his ear against the crates, faintly hearing what seemed like soft breathing from above.

The enemy was indeed hiding up there!

Eagle's eyes sharpened as he surveyed the surroundings, then he released a surge of strength, stepping on the edge of the bottom crates, vaulting upward. Using this push, his left leg stepped onto the edge of the mid-level crates, his body leaping diagonally like a cheetah, landing steadily on the top crates.

The guard on top heard the disturbance and looked up, only to see Eagle already upon him!

He hurried to raise his gun to fire, but Eagle moved too swiftly, instantly extending his left hand, gripping the guard's wrist firmly and pressing down. The submachine gun bullets thudded into the boards, wood splinters flying.

The guard, startled, tried to raise his gun again, but Eagle did not give him the chance, kneeling his chest to knock him backward, both of them tumbling off the crates.

After hitting the ground, the guard started to rise, only to have a cold gun barrel already pressed against his head.

"I suggest you don't move!"

The guard's body stiffened immediately, taking a few heavy breaths, ultimately dropping the submachine gun and raising his hands.

From the moment Chen Wei and the others entered the warehouse to the time all the guards were dealt with, it took less than three minutes, even with the intent to subdue rather than kill.

If they had decided to just shoot to kill, it probably wouldn't have taken even a minute.

Eagle and his men were no less capable than Chen Wei and Niu Da; this was the power of top-notch retired special forces!

Chapter 399: Action and the Archaeology Team (2)

In the center of the warehouse on the first floor, the only two guards who hadn't fainted were kneeling on the ground, and Chen Wei directly shot a bullet in front of them, his tone cold: "Answer me one question, I'll only ask once."

"Where are the goods shipped from China three days ago."

...

On the other side, it was just after dawn in the bird market.

Qi Yun was awakened by the ringing of his phone, looked at the caller ID, and then swiftly got out of bed.

"Hey, Brother Wei!"

"We've secured the goods, and we're now heading out of the city." Chen Wei's words were concise over the phone.

Qi Yun immediately woke up upon hearing this: "Is anyone injured on your side?"

"No, but the guards on the other side had weapons. We fired, but no one was killed." Chen Wei calmly replied.

"Alright, I understand." Qi Yun paused, then continued, "Just head directly to the dock; someone there will assist you."

"Okay."

After hanging up, Qi Yun dialed Harris's number, waiting for half a minute before the call was answered.

"Qi Yun, my friend." Harris's laughter came through the receiver, amid loud music.

Qi Yun skipped the courtesies and spoke directly: "Harris, my people are already heading to the dock."

"Alright, rest assured, the ship you need has long been prepared, waiting at the dock. Once out of the inland sea, a cargo ship will be there to assist." Harris responded with confidence.

Upon hearing this, Qi Yun immediately smiled and thanked him: "Okay, once this is handled, I'll personally come to thank you!"

"Haha, I'm on vacation in the free America, you're welcome to find me anytime!"

"Alright, enjoy yourself!"

After ending the call, Qi Yun let out a long breath.

This time, asking for Harris's help, he paid the other party five million US Dollars, and Harris specifically arranged a container cargo ship, waiting in the open seas near the United Kingdom, ready to transport Chen Wei and his group along with the shipment to the dock at Hong Kong Island.

About Harris's capabilities, Qi Yun was quite confident, there shouldn't be any issues, since it wasn't the first time he asked for help from him.

"Hmm? What's up?" Zhao Qing stretched beside him, turning her head groggily.

Qi Yun smiled, touching her cheek: "Nothing, just dealing with some matters. What would you like for breakfast? I'll make it for you."

"I want fermented glutinous rice eggs~" Zhao Qing replied, eyes closed and mumbling.

"Hehe, alright, I'll make it for you."

Qi Yun got up from bed, washed up, and began preparing breakfast for the big and small one.

Two hours later, he received another call from Chen Wei, who told him they were already on the cargo ship, finally allowing Qi Yun's hung-up heart to settle.

Once Zhao Qing took their daughter out, Qi Yun first went through today's intel, but it was mostly worthless information, so he changed clothes and stepped out himself.

Thirty meters away in another building, Niu Da was teaching Old Black some boxing techniques in the living room.

The quarters were already quite spacious, and since people here didn't care much for TV, they had Zhong Rui arrange for the living room to be renovated into a gym, where they usually trained when idle.

Qi Yun stepped into the living room, watched the two practice for a while, then eagerly called out to Old Black: "Come, let's spar a few rounds."

Old Black hesitated upon hearing this.

Qi Yun knew what was bothering him, chuckling: "Don't underestimate me, you won't lose your salary if you hurt me."

Old Black was still somewhat awkward, reluctant to respond.

Qi Yun didn't give him a chance to refuse, immediately took off his short sleeves, revealing a solid frame: "Come! Don't hold back!"

As his voice fell, he sprinted forward, swinging a punch directly at Old Black's face. Old Black, unable to do anything, could only raise his arms to block.

The next second, Old Black's expression changed noticeably, stepping back two paces while rubbing his arm painfully, evidently not expecting Qi Yun's strength.

"I told you not to underestimate me!" Qi Yun laughed, moving forward again as the two formally engaged in the living room.

Minutes later, Old Black, panting heavily, retreated to the side: "Boss, I admit defeat!"

Qi Yun took the towel handed by Niu Da, wiping away sweat: "You've made quite a progress." He knew Old Black wasn't using full force just now, mainly defending passively, otherwise he might not have had the upper hand.

"Boss, you're impressive, I might not even stand a chance against your moves in a few months." It's no wonder Old Black never excelled in Ah Jiao's team for his wits, he even flatters others clumsily.

Qi Yun smiled: "Train hard with your Brother Niu, when you can last three minutes against him, I'll give you a raise!"

While they chatted, the sound of the door opening came again from outside, as Ah Jiao and Ah Jie entered.

Seeing the three big men in the room with bare torsos, Ah Jiao shyly turned her head away.

Minutes later, the five sat around on the sofa, Qi Yun's expression turning serious.

"Tomorrow we're heading to Northern Mongolia, this time..."

...

Over an hour later, after detailing tasks to Niu Da and others, Qi Yun then drove to Xin Da to find Wei Xueming.

In the office, Wei Xueming holding a tea mug, his tone helpless: "You, always giving me tough problems every day."

"I've found the people for you, but you must ensure to bring them back intact, without any incidents."

Qi Yun quickly promised after hearing this: "Don't worry, Old Wei, I'll definitely protect these people."

"This time it's an archaeological team being assembled; these people are going with you for archaeology. Watch your actions, don't let words spread." Wei Xueming subtly cautioned.

"Yes, understood." Qi Yun nodded in acknowledgment.

Since calling De Gaulle a few days ago, he saw increasing importance in the site at Northern Mongolia, hence must grasp the clues there.

Through several pieces of intel, he learned that people in Northern Mongolia have been grave digging and tomb raiding, thus guessing they must know some secrets, with the clue likely hidden in a tomb.

So he contacted Wei Xueming, asking help to assemble an archaeological team, intending to find the clues at the coordinates.

Excavating soil in sandy areas is not the same as tomb raiding; one needs legal procedures, otherwise it's tomb raiding, even if finally no items are taken from the tomb, merely damaging the structure is illegal.

Therefore, Qi Yun dared not act privately; such actions were fine if undiscovered, but if reported, even his status as a committee member wouldn't help.

"Did you catch any wind this time? Could you share?" Wei Xueming took off his glasses, probing Qi Yun.

In fact, after recent interactions, he quite liked Qi Yun for his capabilities, sense of propriety, and awareness of boundaries; helping him assemble the archaeological team and resolve approval procedures were favors done out of personal relations.

Qi Yun shook his head with a bitter smile: "You're overestimating me; if there's real information, it wouldn't come to me, those tomb raiders would've gone long ago."

Wei Xueming glanced skeptically, evidently not believing: "If you don't want to say, forget it; if there's nothing else, hurry up and go."

Qi Yun didn't mind, patting the tea he brought onto the desk: "Alright, I'll leave first. Coming to pick the archaeology team up early tomorrow."

"This tea leaves are good, remember to try them, don't just give them away."

He's genuine in these words; the two cans of tea were the same as those gifted to Old Chen last time, authentic Wuyi Mountain Dahongpao, costing Qi Yun over two hundred thousand for less than a kilo.

...

Another side, in a residential area in the New District.

Zhou Hongchang pointed at the projection screen, introducing to several colleagues: "In the past days, Xiaoyan analyzed surveillance information returned from the command center; starting June 7th, these two have frequently appeared at the same locations as the deceased."

"Moreover, they showed up in turns; I speculate they might've been monitoring the deceased."

Someone beside raised a hand to ask: "But we investigated Qiu Jiahao's background and found nothing special. His father used to serve as a deputy bookkeeper in the neighborhood, but he passed away a few months ago."

Zhou Hongchang's expression turned grave: "That's exactly what we need to investigate!"

Chapter 400: Genghis Khan!?

The next day, a convoy drove into the East City highway entrance, headed for Northern Mongolia.

In the leading car, Qi Yun was idly chatting with a man in his fifties.

"There are quite a few tombs over in Northern Mongolia, ones from the Liao, Jin, and Yuan dynasties have all been excavated, and there's even a rumor that Genghis Khan's tomb is over there."

"Genghis Khan!?" Qi Yun smacked his lips.

Historians once predicted that the scale of that tomb could be on par with Qin Shi Huang's Mausoleum. What if we really unearthed Genghis Khan's coffin?

Thinking about it, it's not impossible. After all, the marked areas on the map are anything but simple, like Loulan Ancient City, Africa's Mount Kilimanjaro, the Mayan Ancient City—none of these are obscure places.

So even if we did unearth Genghis Khan's tomb, it wouldn't be all that shocking.

Thinking of this, Qi Yun swallowed his saliva, his mind racing with possibilities.

Although the discovery of Loulan Ancient City hasn't been exposed yet, the province is already considering rewarding him. If he were to find Genghis Khan's tomb, what kind of credit would that be? Wouldn't he have to go to the capital to receive commendation?

"Well... Director Hua, if we really find Genghis Khan's tomb, can our current team enter the chamber?"

"Hahaha." Director Hua pointed at Qi Yun, "You really dare to dream, huh."

"But even if we find Genghis Khan's tomb, we can't just excavate it on our own."

"Our team has approval from the Provincial Cultural Heritage Authority, but that's only for ordinary tomb excavations. For something as significant as Genghis Khan's tomb, we'd have to report it to the National Cultural Heritage Administration first. We don't have the authority to touch it."

Director Hua is a department head at the Provincial Cultural Heritage Authority and is a good friend of Wei Xueming, even somewhat of a mentor to him. That's why he's brought the team to help Qi Yun, and when it comes to archaeology, he's definitely an expert.

Qi Yun was taken aback to hear this, thinking it's best not to get involved with Genghis Khan for now.

"If we don't enter the chamber, how do we determine whose tomb it is?"

"Archaeology isn't what it was a decade ago. We've integrated some high-tech equipment. The first step is to secure and protect the area, then directly use remote sensing equipment to scan the terrain, determine the tomb structure and burial area. With this basic information, we can roughly estimate the tomb's significance..."

Director Hua explained in elaborate detail to Qi Yun.

...

Meanwhile, in Northern Mongolia, in a low-lying area deep within the grasslands.

A group of fair-skinned, blue-eyed foreigners squatted as they adjusted their equipment.

The blond man leading them held a cigarette in his mouth and slid his fingers across a tablet. The screen displayed a satellite map with marked red dots.

In clumsy Chinese, he turned to a few hired tomb raiders beside him and said, "This is the place. You guys hurry up; there are three more areas after this."

A youth in his twenties spat disdainfully and grumbled, "What exactly are you looking for? We've dug up plenty of good stuff over the days, and you won't let us keep anything—just keep pushing us to dig."

The blond man didn't answer, giving the youth only a cold glance.

Immediately, several burly men stood up beside him, glaring at the youth with the same unfriendly expression, as if one word from the leader could see him buried alive.

The youth was unperturbed, stubbornly holding his ground, "What, you think you can dig without me if you kill me?"

As the tension was about to escalate, another tomb raider with a goatee pulled the youth aside, chastising him under his breath, "You looking to die? Why challenge them? Take the money and work, stop the nonsense!" He shot meaningful glances at the youth, watching the blond man out of the corner of his eye.

These foreigners were ruthless and had weapons with them from who knows where. If things turned ugly, it wouldn't end well.

The youth quieted down, but still gave the dirt mound a harsh kick, scattering clumps of soil everywhere.

The goateed man quickly turned to the blond man, plastering a smile on his face, "Boss, don't mind him. The kid's young and clueless. We're getting to work." He yelled at the youth and another man, "What are you standing around for? Get the gear!"

The two men hurriedly retrieved a Luoyang Shovel, a metal detector, and a small hydraulic soil extractor from the back of the off-road vehicle.

The goateed man personally grabbed the Luoyang Shovel, stabbing it into the ground and stepping on the pedal, pushing down hard. The shovel's blade cut through a layer of loose black soil, mixed with grass roots and gravel, and went over a meter deep.

When he pulled it out, it brought up only more loose black soil mixed with roots and stones.

The goateed man moved half a step aside, inserted the shovel again, this time bringing up light yellow soil, finer but still loose.

"Bring the rod!"

The goateed man called out, and the youth immediately brought two connecting rods. The goateed man added another shovel rod section and dug for the third time.

This time, he still brought up yellow soil, but the goateed man remained calm, continuing to attach rods to the Luoyang Shovel, eventually reaching four or five sections. Suddenly, his wrist jolted as the shovel head seemed to hit something hard, unable to go deeper.

His eyes lit up as he slowly pulled out the shovel. This time, the shovel's tip was covered in something different—blue-gray soil clumped like bricks, hard to break with bare hands.

"Found it!" The goateed man picked up a clump and smiled, "Compacted soil mixed with lime, and the layer's at least half a meter thick. Now this is real covering soil—there's definitely something beneath."