

Middle Age 471

Chapter 471: Who the Hell Told You to Smuggle Your Own Goods!?

Under the wall of the main hall, six sturdy men kneeled in a row, each showing fear on their faces.

Beside them, Eagle, Da Pao, An Zai, and Duan Pingyu stood with guns in hand, exuding a deadly aura.

Qi Yun didn't look at those trembling guys, his gaze went straight to the bearded man on the far left.

Yesterday it was this fellow who boasted about having an in-depth exchange with him.

"Raise your head."

Qi Yun's voice wasn't loud, yet it fell into the bearded man's ears like a plunge into an icy cave. He never expected Qi Yun to be released so fast, and damn it, he even brought people to kill overnight.

The main thing is, the people who came were so damn fierce!

They really had no power to resist, didn't even have time to draw their guns, and were pinned down by these people.

The bearded man was terribly panicked, knowing in his heart that Qi Yun was definitely targeting him, so he was too scared to raise his head.

Duan Pingyu took two steps forward, landing several gun butts on the man's forehead, making the bearded man flesh torn and bleeding.

"I told you to raise your head!"

The bearded man howled in pain for a while, was forced to lift his head, his face full of bloodstains: "Qi... Brother Qi, spare me, I was forced! Secretary Ji made us do it!"

"Forced?" Qi Yun sneered, pointing to the thick wooden stick he held, "Actually, it's not worth my time to bother with a small fry like you."

"But who the hell told you to smuggle goods!?"

The bearded man's face turned instantly pale, lips trembling, eyes filled with terror.

Of course, he knew what Qi Yun meant by "smuggling goods."

Qi Yun threw the stick on the ground, saying to the others, "I have a task for you, if you do it well, I'll let the five of you go."

Upon hearing this, the five immediately raised their heads, with a desperate desire to survive in their eyes. The lanky man on the far right was the first to kowtow: "Whatever you say! We'll do whatever you want!"

Qi Yun kicked the wooden stick at his feet, speaking plainly: "Treat your brother well, huh."

Hearing this, the bearded man nearly wet himself from fright, subconsciously trying to scoot back on his knees.

The five collectively eyed the stick on the ground, then turned their gaze to the bearded man, showing varied expressions.

Some were sympathetic, others had a cruel smile.

Qi Yun glanced at his watch, then walked out of the room.

"It's your only chance, seize it."

As his voice fell, the five hesitated no longer, instantly standing up, with four pouncing on the bearded man and the lanky man bending down to pick up the stick.

Even though the bearded man struggled desperately, it was no use, and soon he was held firmly on the ground...

Eagle and the others exited the room and closed the door.

Soon, the room filled with miserable wails...

Qi Yun listened for two seconds, felt a bit discomfited, and walked out toward the yard.

Just then, his phone in his pocket rang. He pulled out his phone, took a look, and pressed the answer button.

"Hello, my guys are at the perimeter."

"Alright, come arrest them."

After a brief exchange, Qi Yun waved his hand to Eagle and the others: "You withdraw first."

The latter nodded and left with Duan Pingyu and the others.

Soon after Eagle and the others left, red and blue lights flashed in the distance, followed by the wailing sirens approaching rapidly, with seven or eight police cars soon parked outside the yard gate.

The strong men inside the house heard the noise, hurriedly opened the door to check, and when they saw the mass of police officers in the yard, they were all stunned.

Zhang Dayong got out of the car and commanded loudly, "Lock down the scene immediately! Bring everyone back to headquarters for overnight interrogation!"

"Technical team, survey within a two-kilometer radius!"

"Yes!"

With an order given, all officers swiftly sprang into action.

Once this place was uncovered, it was definitely a shocking case!

After assigning tasks, Zhang Dayong approached the BMW 5 Series parked not far away, opened the door, and sat inside.

"With such a move, they're definitely going to defend their territory, are you prepared for it?"

Qi Yun flicked some ash off his cigarette, his tone calm: "Even if I don't fight back, they still won't let me go."

Zhang Dayong remained silent for two seconds after hearing this, then looked directly at Qi Yun: "Do you have any leverage against them?"

This conjecture made sense, otherwise, those big figures wouldn't target Qi Yun for no reason.

Qi Yun looked at him, pondered for a while, then ultimately chose not to conceal: "Yes, but it's better you don't know, otherwise it'll be an unending battle between them and you."

"Hehe." Zhang Dayong gave a self-mocking smile, "I know what kind of person I am. In their eyes, I'm just like a slightly bigger ant."

He paused before explaining, "I'm asking not because I want to know, but someone wants to see you."

"I guess he's figured it out and mostly wants what you have in your hand."

"He wants it?" Qi Yun was taken aback, but quickly understood the reason behind it.

Right now is a crucial moment, some matters are about to reach a conclusion, and compared to the person behind Zhang Dayong, Ma Chaoyang undoubtedly holds the advantage, reasons not necessary to elaborate.

That person must have their own trump card, otherwise, they couldn't possibly hold their ground against Ma Chaoyang, so now what Qi Yun has in his hands is most likely going to affect the final outcome.

If Zhang Dayong had said these words before Qiu Jiahao's death, Qi Yun would have outright refused to meet because he didn't want to get involved in those struggles.

It's like a whirlpool, initially, you might not feel the terror at the periphery, but as time progresses, you will be drawn closer to the center, until it's impossible to escape.

But now the situation is different, he has already been forced into the fray, although with the intervention of two bigwigs like Xiao Hanguang, the storm has temporarily been defused, those people will not give up so easily.

As long as the thing remains in Qi Yun's hands for a day, the matter between both sides isn't over, only that in the short term, it might not be as brazen as this time.

After thinking for a long time, Qi Yun took a deep breath and slowly nodded: "Alright, help me tell him I agree to meet."

"It's best to hurry, I'm going to Beijing the day after tomorrow."

In making this decision, it also means he is going all in.

If the thing is only in his hands, the other side might still have hope, but once the thing is leaked, the other side will definitely lose it.

Zhang Dayong also knew the importance of this matter and quickly nodded: "I'll contact him right now." With that, he pushed the car door open and went out to make a call.

Within a few minutes, Zhang Dayong returned, sticking his head through the car window: "He said one hour later, Hutao Villa."

"I still have matters to handle here, so I won't accompany you."

Hutao Villa?

Qi Yun was somewhat surprised, he increasingly could not understand that little restaurant.

"Alright, you carry on, I'm heading over now."

"Okay, call if anything comes up anytime."

...

On the other side, Secretary Ji sat on the sofa in his living room, worriedly smoking a cigarette.

At this moment, his phone on the coffee table suddenly lit up, someone sent him a text message.

Secretary Ji picked up the phone, and after reading the text, his eyes instantly showed a terrified expression.

He hurriedly stubbed out the cigarette, quickly walked to the bedroom, and dragged his wife, who was coaxing their child to sleep, out.

"I need to tell you something, this time I'm in trouble..."

After roughly explaining, he hurriedly added, "When you go to work tomorrow, don't show any unusual behavior! After work, go home and take the child to live at his grandfather's temporarily."

"Once the storm calms down, I'll contact you."

His wife listened, face full of panic: "What about you? What will you do?"

Secretary Ji sighed heavily: "Don't worry about me, just take care of the child, I will leave some money for you."

"If anyone comes looking for you in the future, just say you don't know anything, they can't do anything to you."

His wife grabbed his arm, tears uncontrollably streaming from the corners of her eyes: "What about him!? Doesn't he care about you?"

Upon hearing this, Secretary Ji irritably shook her hand off: "Don't ask anymore, just do as I say!"

Seeing him angry, his wife dared not say another word, she usually had no say in this household.

She also knew her husband had other women outside, but for the sake of the child, she didn't dare to tear open that window paper, usually just being timid and submissive.

Secretary Ji took a deep breath, his tone softened a little: "This is all for your good, behave."

"Alright, I'm heading out, there are things to arrange."

...

Late at night, Hutao Villa.

As Qi Yun just stepped out of the car, he saw President Lu, Lu Zhaoxue standing at the door, seemingly waiting for him on purpose.

"President Qi is here, please come in." Lu Zhaoxue smiled appropriately at Qi Yun, gesturing him inside.

Qi Yun didn't expect the other side to personally wait for him here, instantly thinking this woman must have an unusual relationship with that person.

"President Lu, thank you for the trouble."

Lu Zhaoxue nodded, leading Qi Yun to a private room deep in the corridor.

Inside the private room, a distinguished-looking middle-aged man was manipulating the tea set on the table. Seeing Qi Yun enter, the middle-aged man naturally greeted, as if the two were old acquaintances.

"Little Qi is here, come over and sit, just brewed tea."

Qi Yun strode forward, sitting on the rosewood chair opposite the middle-aged man, without initiating a handshake, just smiling and responding: "You are too kind."

The middle-aged man pushed a cup of freshly brewed Dragon Well tea before him, the tea clear, probably comparable to the Dahongpao Qi Yun gifted to someone during his first two visits.

"Taste it, pre-Qingming Lion Peak Dragon Well, Xiao Xue arranged for it."

This "Xiao Xue" obviously referred to Lu Zhaoxue beside him.

Qi Yun thanked, reaching out to lift the teacup, confirming his earlier suspicion, that these two indeed had a story.

Lu Zhaoxue didn't linger in the private room, after closing the window, she left space for the two.

Nobody knew what Qi Yun and the middle-aged man talked about, but shortly after Qi Yun left, several city bigwigs received calls overnight...

Moreover, Zhou Hongchang soon took away a few hitmen under Brother Biao's command from West Mountain.

Chapter 472: Meritorious Service While Bearing Guilt

The next day, Qi Yun still got up very early, but since he was injured, he didn't follow Chen Wei for training.

After washing up, he applied some medicine to his wounds and then went to the study to receive today's intelligence reports.

[Current Intelligence Points: 21]

[Today's Intelligence 1 (Red): Six people from Thailand are living in a rental apartment across from Golden Collar Villa. They are professional assassins sent by James Boot, planning to kidnap you and your family, but haven't found the right opportunity yet.]

Qi Yun's eyes narrowed, another assassination attempt?

Luckily, he had been cautious recently, sending Gao Min and three others to protect Zhao Qing and his daughter, and had provided them with weapons.

But who the hell is this James Boot?

Qi Yun immediately picked up his phone to search for information on this guy, and a few minutes later, he put down the phone, his expression was grave, feeling uncomfortable.

The Boot Clan is one of the top ten families in Great Britain, having significant influence in both political and business circles. Their main enterprises are several energy companies, and they control more than half of the mining areas in Wales!

Their overall strength is comparable to the Gwen Clan where De Gaulle belongs.

And this James is the current Sect Leader of the Boot Clan.

"Damn it! When did I provoke another giant?"

Qi Yun lit a cigarette, thought for a long while, and connected this James to those artifacts.

Because the other party is in the United Kingdom, and the only thing he did there was send Chen Wei and others to retrieve those artifacts.

"In that case... perhaps that warship was also sent by James..."

Qi Yun sighed silently, really damn powerful... can even command a warship...

Suddenly having such a powerful enemy made him inexplicably agitated, but after finishing the cigarette, his eyes suddenly lit up, an idea sprang to mind.

"Maybe I can make good use of these people..."

[Today's Intelligence 2 (Green): Secretary Ji's mistress contacted a specialist in money laundering, intending to clean 120 million and convert it into clean US dollars for Secretary Ji's overseas account; this money laundering specialist is currently staying in room 801 of the Nanning Road Sheraton Hotel, and the two parties will meet at twelve noon to discuss details.]

million! Secretary Ji really has a big stomach...

[Today's Intelligence 3 (Red): Fu Wentao, entrusted by the upper echelon, is currently in touch with the United States' Blackstone Group, aiming to obtain a batch of EUV lithography machines through certain benefits exchange.]

EUV lithography machines...

Qi Yun sighed, this stuff is really hard to get, the export control is extremely strict...

With his capabilities, it seems he can't help for the moment.

After receiving today's intelligence, Qi Yun hurriedly left home after preparing breakfast, as Xiao Hanguang and the others had a flight at nine in the morning; he needed to go to the airport to see them off.

The car was still driven by Chen Wei, but a black Chuanqi M8 followed behind, carrying Eagle, An Zai, Da Pao, Duan Pingyu, while Qi Yun had the remaining personnel protect his daughter and Zhao Qing.

"Have them keep an eye out and observe if anyone's following, if discovered, don't alarm the other side immediately."

Qi Yun reminded, then grabbed his phone to call Liu Meng to inquire about the thousand-year-old ginseng, only to hear a notification saying the call could not be connected.

Qi Yun frowned, Liu Meng tried to contact him the night before, but at that time Qi Yun had been taken away and couldn't be reached, so Liu Meng sent a message saying he had arrived at the village at the foot of Changbai Mountain and would enter the mountain the next morning.

Based on the timeline, he should have come out of the mountain by now...

...

Over an hour later, in the special passageway at Tianshan International Airport, Qi Yun met Xiao Hanguang and Director Fu, who were about to board the plane.

"Hey, aren't you supposed to be lying at home recovering from your injuries, what are you doing here?" Xiao Hanguang glanced at him, asking with a mixture of mockery and humor.

"Haha, it's such a minor thing, and you two leaders made a special trip for me, I just couldn't let it go in my heart. Even if I were missing a limb, I'd crawl over to see you two off."

Qi Yun shamelessly replied, seemingly having no understanding of what shame meant.

Xiao Hanguang was amused by his manner, glancing at the leaders who hadn't left yet, then patted Qi Yun's arm, neither too gently nor too firmly.

"Don't give me that; you better behave for the next few days and get that face healed, then get to Beijing the day after tomorrow!"

Director Fu also smiled kindly, adding from the side, "Director Xiao is right, if you show up looking bruised to meet that person, it would just cause trouble, hurry up and get healed."

"Yes, yes, I'll definitely listen to the two leaders and heal quickly!" Qi Yun promptly responded.

This seems like an ordinary conversation, but the local big wigs who came to see them off caught a hint of something unusual.

Many speculated in their hearts, with all the arm patting and friendly smiles, could it be that the young man has a special relationship with these two? No wonder they came specifically from Beijing to support him...

Xiao Hanguang nodded, "Alright, head back, we're boarding the plane."

"Alright, goodbye leaders!"

Qi Yun watched as the two walked onto the jet bridge with their assistants, then turned and walked out of the airport. Seeing the odd looks from those big players, he naturally understood the situation.

He had two purposes for coming here; one was to see Xiao Hanguang off, the other was to leverage the situation...

He wanted these people to see his close relationship with Xiao Hanguang so that anyone planning on scheming against him in the future would have to consider whether they could withstand the wrath of these two big shots.

Including the person he met late at night at Hutao Villa, whose gaze towards Qi Yun also underwent some changes.

...

After leaving the airport, Qi Yun glanced at his watch to check the time and instructed Chen Wei, "Brother Wei, head to the Nanning Road Sheraton Hotel."

Chen Wei nodded and started the car.

Ten minutes into the drive, his earpiece buzzed with a report from Eagle in the rear car.

"A car is tailing us; the driver is very cautious, keeping a distance."

Hearing this, Chen Wei immediately relayed the situation to Qi Yun.

"Let them follow, but don't alert them," Qi Yun instructed, then picked up his phone to call Ge Dabao, engaging in a conversation that lasted a solid five or six minutes.

After hanging up, he turned to Chen Wei and said, "Brother Wei, I have a plan..."

Half an hour later, the car pulled into the parking lot of the Sheraton Hotel. Qi Yun opened the car door and got into the business van beside them.

He whispered a few instructions to Eagle, who nodded, got out of the car, and walked briskly into the hotel.

About half an hour later, An Zai turned to report to Qi Yun, "Boss, the person came out, left through the back door of the hotel."

Qi Yun nodded, "Let's go, bring him into the car."

"Okay," An Zai replied, then drove the car around to the back of the hotel.

At this moment, a man wearing a baseball cap and a mask was walking towards the street corner.

The man appeared very cautious, constantly scanning left and right as he walked.

The business van moved forward leisurely, and when the masked man reached the front of the car, An Zai suddenly slammed the brakes, and the van screeched to a halt.

The sudden change startled the masked man, and like a frightened bird, he started to run forward.

However, before his leg could land, someone yanked him by the collar from the back door, almost lifting him off the ground.

Panicked, the masked man turned around and saw Eagle standing behind him at some point, looking at him with a faint smile.

At the same time, the van's door swung open, and four strong arms reached out, pulling the masked man into the vehicle without a word.

The van made a turn and returned to the outer parking lot.

Inside the car, once the mask and hat were removed from the masked man, a tanned face was revealed.

Qi Yun stared at him for a moment, then said expressionlessly, "I know what you're up to, and I know why you're here."

"Help me with something, and I'll let you go, as if we never met."

The masked man's pupils shrank sharply, his Adam's apple bobbed violently, and his gaze at Qi Yun was filled with panic, but he didn't reply.

Qi Yun gently tapped his phone on his knee, a cold smile appearing on his face, "What, you don't believe me?"

"Washing 120 million... if you get caught, you'd be in prison for life, right?"

At these words, the masked man's face instantly turned pale.

He subconsciously clenched his pant leg, his Adam's apple bobbed again, and he finally managed to squeeze out a hoarse sentence, "How... how do you know!?"

"You don't need to worry about how I know, just tell me if you can cooperate," Qi Yun said, checking his watch before adding, "You had an appointment at twelve, right? You're running out of time."

The moment these words were spoken, the masked man looked even more terrified, "You! You're spying on me!! You're with the government!"

Qi Yun remained silent, but Da Pao beside him gave a solid slap across the neck, which made the masked man grimace with pain, leaving his neck red.

"Stop the nonsense, just answer the questions," Da Pao warned sinisterly.

The masked man shrunk his neck, not daring to speak further.

He showed a struggling expression, lowered his head, hesitated for a good four or five minutes before raising his head again, "I... I'll cooperate..."

Qi Yun withdrew his gaze, speaking slowly, "Do you have any accomplices? You think you can wash 120 million by yourself?"

The masked man swallowed, "Officer... Sir, I'm actually just a middleman, responsible for negotiating with clients. Once the terms are agreed, the money laundering team in Dubai remotely operates and can transfer the funds to the client's designated account."

Qi Yun nodded slightly, judging that this guy didn't seem capable of laundering 120 million alone.

"Is the account receiving the money directly told by the client to the people in Dubai?"

"No," the masked man shook his head, explaining, "The people in Dubai, for safety, never have any direct contact with clients. All communication goes through me as the middleman."

"And we don't take any client's business; the black market conducts a background check first before introducing people to us."

Qi Yun rubbed his chin, pondered for a moment, and then locked eyes with the other party, "I'll give you an account, and you should have Dubai transfer the money to it when the time comes."

He then pointed to Eagle beside him and continued, "From now on, he's your assistant and will stay with you the entire time."

"Since you guessed our identity, cooperate honestly."

"Rest assured, I'll let you go once the job is done."

The masked man nodded repeatedly, "Does this count as meritorious service? Will my sentence be reduced?"

Chapter 473: Counterkill and Revenge

Sheraton Hotel, parking lot.

The masked man, led by the eagle, had just left when Qi Yun received a call from Ge Dabao.

"Hey, my people have arrived. They're just behind you and have spotted the car you mentioned."

"Through binoculars, it looks like there are four people in the car."

Qi Yun glanced at the rear-view mirror: "Alright, I'll send someone over to find you."

"Okay... but are you sure about this?" Ge Dabao's tone was filled with concern, "If something goes wrong, bullets don't discriminate."

"There's nothing to hesitate about, this is very important to me. Besides, they seem to want to capture me, so the risk isn't too high," Qi Yun replied with great certainty.

"Alright, just be safe." Seeing his determination, Ge Dabao didn't push further.

After hanging up, Qi Yun edited a text message and sent it out. About ten minutes later, a reply came through.

"Let's go, they've brought the stuff," Qi Yun called out to Chen Wei, opened the car door, and headed into the hotel.

When they emerged again, both had lightweight bulletproof vests under their clothes.

Back in the car, Chen Wei expertly loaded the gun, chambering a bullet, then nodded to Qi Yun.

"Let's go, head towards the less populated areas of West Mountain."

Chen Wei placed the gun in the car door's storage compartment, then started the car and left.

An Zai and his team remained parked in the business vehicle at their original spot.

After driving for three to four minutes, Chen Wei noticed the van that had been tailing them via the rear-view mirror. The other party was clearly cautious, maintaining a distance of six to seven cars.

Over an hour later, the car reached the outskirts. Chen Wei turned the steering wheel and entered a fork leading deep into West Mountain.

On this road, there were hardly any cars, and the further they went, the more desolate it became. The asphalt turned into gravel, and dense trees lined both sides, blocking out the sunlight completely.

The van hesitated for a few seconds at the fork but decided to follow.

Observing this, Chen Wei promptly warned, "They might be planning to act."

Qi Yun, who was also watching the rear-view mirror, picked up his phone to call Ge Dabao: "I'm about to stop."

"Okay!" was the single-word response from the other end.

Qi Yun hung up, signaled to Chen Wei: "Stop."

Chen Wei nodded and slowly pulled the car to the roadside.

Once fully stationary, he glanced at the rear-view mirror, picked up the gun and tucked it into his back waist, then opened the door, stepping out to the other side of the car, posing as if he was about to relieve himself.

The van behind them continued without slowing, quickly closing the distance to four or five meters.

Yet Chen Wei remained unperturbed, casually unbuckling his belt while his eyes focused on the right side.

"Screech!"

Suddenly, the sharp sound of brakes echoed!

The van abruptly halted two meters behind the BMW; the door slammed open, and three men in floral shirts dashed out, each holding a black Type 64 pistol, pointing the dark barrels at Chen Wei.

"Don't move!"

As the gun barrels appeared, Chen Wei's pupils constricted instantly, his hands halted mid-action of unbuckling the belt.

Without any hesitation, his body twisted sharply to the right like a spring, while his right hand swiftly drew a Type 92 police gun from his back waist.

"Bang! Bang!"

Two muffled gunshots rang out almost as one, bullets striking precisely at the chest of the killer on the far left.

The opponent's finger was just about to pull the trigger, but his body had already lurched backward like hit by a heavy hammer, his fingers twitching weakly.

Without pause, Chen Wei raised his wrist, sending the third bullet whirring forward, hitting the man's forehead center!

This was Qi Yun's first time witnessing Chen Wei seriously open fire, executing the Mozambique shooting method, swiftly incapacitating a person in the blink of an eye.

Virtually simultaneous with his shooting, the remaining two gunmen pulled their triggers.

"Bang bang!"

The two shots whizzed past Chen Wei's shoulder.

Taking advantage of the momentum, he slid to the front of the BMW like an eel, crouching down, his breathing steady.

The two killers behind the car exchanged glances, one moved left and the other right, flanking towards the front of the car.

In that instant, Chen Wei crouched down, propped himself on the ground, and fired two more shots!

"Bang bang!"

Two bullets skidded along the ground, drilling precisely into the ankle of the killer on the right.

The opponent screamed in agony, lost his balance, and fell to the ground!

"Bang!"

Almost without delay, before his scream even faded, another gunshot echoed!

Everything happened in a flash, even Qi Yun, hiding in the passenger seat, hadn't yet fully crouched down, but two were already dealt with.

The remaining killer panicked instantly, two of his companions being dispatched swiftly in a three-on-one, what else was there to fight for!

The van still had another killer driving who hadn't disembarked, watching the scene unfold through the windshield, he froze in shock.

His hand, initially reaching for the door, recoiled as if electrified, swiftly shifting gears, and floored the pedal, preparing to flee.

Meanwhile, the killer at the BMW's rear regained his senses, ignoring his sleeping companions, diving headlong into the van.

"Screech~"

The van's tires ground against the rocky surface, emitting a piercing scream as the engine roared violently, the vehicle shot forward at high speed.

As Chen Wei got up from the ground, seeing the van accelerating away, worried about gunfire from the vehicle, he dodged towards the side of the car, yelling at Qi Yun, "Duck!"

Chapter 474: Counterkill and Revenge _2

Qi Yun didn't need the reminder; he had already buried his head under the armrest box.

Emphasize being cowardly when necessary; after all, staying alive is the priority.

However, those two assassins were probably just focused on escaping at the moment, without any thought of confronting Chen Wei head-on. Not a single shot was fired.

The van slipped past their BMW, kicking up a huge cloud of dust.

Chen Wei pressed against the car door, squinting his eyes and fanning away the choking dust. He raised his hand, aiming for the tires of the van in front, but due to the poor visibility, he eventually gave up.

Just then, a roar of engines came from behind, and three black Passats were racing towards them at high speed!

In less than ten seconds, the foremost car was less than ten meters away from them.

The leading car slightly veered off, giving way while gradually slowing down, as the two cars behind overtook it and chased after the van ahead.

Once the leading car came to a steady stop, Ge Dabao pushed open the car door and ran over briskly, urgently shouting, "How is it! Are you hurt!"

Chen Wei didn't answer him but hurriedly opened the passenger door to check on Qi Yun's condition.

Qi Yun lifted his head, gasping heavily, not yet recovering from the excitement.

Compared to the calm Chen Wei beside him, it seemed like he was the one who had just fired a shot.

"I'm fine!"

The sensation of gunfire exploding near the ears was nothing like watching a movie. It was damn thrilling, with adrenaline surging.

Seeing that he wasn't hurt, Chen Wei also breathed a long sigh of relief, supporting him by the arm as he helped him out of the car.

Qi Yun waved his hand, indicating he didn't need support, then took a moment to check Chen Wei, and asked with concern, "You're not hurt, are you?"

Chen Wei shook his head, acting as if nothing had happened.

Ge Dabao also ran over at this point, and seeing both of them unharmed, he finally felt relieved.

He turned his head to glance at the two corpses nearby. Upon seeing the gunshot wounds on the assassins' bodies, he was momentarily stunned and looked at Chen Wei with a newfound sense of awe.

Though he had investigated Chen Wei before and knew he was tough, witnessing it firsthand made him reassess his impression.

If it were target practice, he could manage, but real combat was a completely different story.

Not only must one face bullets that could fly at any moment but also react instantly to kill the enemy, and that's not something just anyone can do.

Ge Dabao swallowed hard, gave Chen Wei a thumbs up, and said, "Impressive!"

Chen Wei maintained his stern demeanor, just nodding slightly, then discharged the chamber and secured the safety of the gun before handing it over.

Ge Dabao took the gun, removed the magazine to check briefly, then stored it in his holster.

"Director Duan asked me to tell you: just this once, no repeats!"

"If word gets out, it'll be troublesome to deal with."

Upon hearing this, Qi Yun quickly nodded, baring his teeth as he replied, "Yes, yes, thank Director Duan for me."

Ge Dabao nodded, "The report will say the gun was fired by me." After finishing, he patted Qi Yun on the shoulder, smiled, and added, "Thanks, kid, you inadvertently helped me earn another big achievement!"

Qi Yun didn't mind. Like the other said, the matter was in violation itself, and if it were exposed, it would be very troublesome.

Not to mention Chen Wei, even though he was an off-book investigator, he wasn't qualified to carry a gun.

It was because of Director Duan and Ge Dabao's trust in him, with full understanding of Chen Wei's skill and background, and considering they were dealing with professional assassins, they agreed to Qi Yun's request exceptionally.

As for why not directly let Ge Dabao and the others apprehend the assassins, naturally, it was still about the gun permit issue.

Since yesterday's interaction with Xiao Hanguang and others, Qi Yun realized it was even harder than he imagined, so upon learning that intelligence, he devised this plan.

For losing those precious artifacts, foreign powers retaliated crazily, sending professional assassins to attack him, and even fired shots nearly hitting him.

Luckily, he was with Ge Dabao at the time; the latter swiftly took down the assassins, keeping him safe.

However, although Guo An's report would say this, Qi Yun would also mentioned it externally, it's merely a reason for granting a special gun permit, and it's also to silence some people.

If the big shots really inquire, Qi Yun would definitely explain honestly, as such little tricks can't fool the higher-ups, and Guo An would surely report truthfully too.

The fact that assassins attacked him is true; even if no gun permit is issued, they'd at least send some armed comrades to protect him and his family's safety.

Right then, the voice of a report came through Ge Dabao's earpiece.

"Captain Ge, both assassins opened fire in resistance and have been killed."

"Roger, seal the scene, notify the bureau to send someone over!"

After instructing, Ge Dabao also told Qi Yun, "You should leave for now, later go find Director Duan, he wants to ask you something."

"Alright." Qi Yun nodded, "Thanks."

"Words alone don't cut it; treat the team to a meal later." Ge Dabao laughed and waved, "Hurry up and go."

"Haha, sure thing." Qi Yun replied, as he and Chen Wei drove away from the scene.

Meanwhile, two other assassins from the rental house opposite Golden Collar Villa were captured by Guo An's police. Thus, all six professional killers sent by James from Southeast Asia were wiped out.

Chapter 475: Counterkill and Revenge _3

...

An hour later, Qi Yun appeared in Director Duan's office.

The latter looked him up and down, sighed, and said, "You brat, can't you stay out of trouble for just one day? You're out and about again before even recovering from your injuries."

Qi Yun acted all pitiful, his tone filled with helplessness, "Director, I'm caught in the circumstances. They want to kill me, I can't just stick my neck out and wait for it..."

Director Duan glared at him and shook his head, "I need to remind you, kid, our power is meant to protect the people. There are many eyes watching us, don't always focus on your personal matters in the future."

"If it weren't for the involvement of foreign assassins this time, we wouldn't have intervened."

"Yes, yes, the Director is correct in the criticism. I will definitely improve my ideological study when I return," Qi Yun nodded quickly in response.

Seeing him so obedient, Director Duan knew it was an act, but seeing no issue with his attitude, he refrained from further criticism.

"About the matter of you bringing back that batch of artifacts from abroad, the Chief has already spoken to me about it. You handled it well, it deserves praise."

"The Chief's intention is to give you some rewards internally."

Qi Yun's eyes lit up upon hearing this, his mind instantly becoming active, but he pretended to decline on the surface, waving his hand repeatedly, "There's no need for rewards. I just did what needed to be done. Returning those artifacts to our country is much better than any reward."

Director Duan's mouth twitched slightly, and he glared at Qi Yun again, "Fine, since you have this kind of ideological awareness, I will relay your opinion to the Chief."

Qi Yun forced a couple of laughs, "Haha, I think that's not really necessary. Well, I did pay quite a price for this matter..."

"Alright, you've really mastered the art of putting up a front, kid." Director Duan spoke with resignation, "The specifics of the rewards are still under discussion. Aren't you going to Beijing in the next couple of days? You should have a result when you return."

"Okay, okay." Qi Yun nodded with a grin.

"Let's talk about serious matters now." Director Duan sat up straight, his tone becoming serious, "The following conversation is me asking you as a private individual. If you don't want to answer, you don't have to."

Seeing this, Qi Yun stopped his playful demeanor, nodded seriously, "Please go ahead."

Director Duan glanced at him and slowly began, "Regarding the matter of you being caught by the smuggling bureau this time, I want to know the specific reasons behind it."

Qi Yun was taken aback upon hearing this. Previously, Ge Dabao had explained some situations, including the matter of taking away Secretary Jiang. So before coming, he had some vague predictions, but when the question was actually asked, he was momentarily unsure of how to respond.

It's not about not trusting Director Duan, but rather being afraid of implicating him. After all, Director Duan had instructed Ge Dabao to personally go to the smuggling bureau to ask for him, but they still didn't manage to get him out.

Director Duan seemed to read his mind, picked up his water cup, took a sip, and continued, "I know what you're thinking. Although I'm asking you as a private individual, the reason I'm asking this question is related to a case."

"The case has a high confidentiality level, and I can't reveal it to you at the moment."

...

After Guo An left, Qi Yun received a call from Eagle, who told him the matter was settled and that the team in Dubai would handle the laundering next. The entire process could take two to three days.

After hearing this, Qi Yun thought for a while and then instructed Eagle, "Keep an eye on him for the next few days, release him only after the money arrives."

Eagle on the other end hesitated, "Really release him?"

"Release him; I've already promised. I must keep my word. You know I'm a man of my word." Qi Yun paused, then added with a chuckle, "But after releasing him, if he gets caught by the police again, that's not my concern."

This was already part of his plan; handing him over to Ma Baoguo directly doesn't worry him that the guy might spill the beans, and it's good for him to go through some reformation.

After finishing the call, Qi Yun immediately dialed Ah Jiao's number.

"Keep an eye on the money in the account for the next couple of days. After it arrives, donate ten million to Star Children's Welfare Institute, and each of you gets a bonus of two million."

"Use the remaining part for your prior project."

The account provided to the laundering team in Dubai by the intermediary was the same one Ah Jiao and her team used during fraud operations before, all bought with fake identities from the black market, and it's an account from Hong Kong Island, so it's very secure.

According to the intermediary, Dubai's team would take a 60% commission, leaving only forty-eight million clean.

Qi Yun didn't plan to pocket this money himself, aside from donating ten million to the welfare institute in the suburbs and giving bonuses to his brothers, the rest is handed over to Ah Jiao and her team to complete their unfinished business.

Although forty-eight million is not a small sum, it's somewhat tainted, doing some good deeds with it is better. He didn't have this condition before, but now he doesn't lack these tens of millions.

"Boss, you are so noble!" Ah Jiao giggled and praised him.

After handling his affairs, Qi Yun bought some gifts and paid visits to Wei Xueming as well as Yu Qixuan and Vice Director Tong, expressing his gratitude sincerely.

However, it was somewhat regrettable that Vice Director Tong was dealing with very important work, and Qi Yun couldn't manage to see him.

...

The next afternoon, a release caused a sensation within the local circle.

Director Fang and Director Han, due to multiple violation issues, were both dismissed from their positions. Director Han, being slightly better off, only lost his stable job, whereas Director Fang directly landed in jail, sentenced to five years.

Chapter 476: Counterkill and Revenge _4

Those who know the inside story understand well that this announcement seems sudden, but it is actually an inevitable result.

However, Qi Yun didn't have time to pay attention to this because he was already on a plane to Beijing. Accompanying him were Chen Wei, Niu Da, Duan Pingyu, and Da Pao, along with Zhao Qing and Nuannuan.

It happened to be a weekend, and given that Qi Yun was feeling a bit on edge recently, he was somewhat uneasy about leaving them behind, so he decided to bring them along.

At eleven in the evening, just when the darkness was setting in, Director Han walked out of a certain compound looking dazed and disoriented.

As soon as he got to the roadside and hadn't yet raised his hand, a taxi pulled up. The driver leaned out and asked, "Boss, need a ride?"

Director Han took one look at the driver and got in the car: "Four Seasons Garden."

"No problem!" the driver replied, and with a press of the gas pedal, they sped off.

After getting into the car, Director Han leaned his head against the window, staring blankly outside, lost in thought, to the point that he didn't even notice when the taxi went the wrong way.

Over twenty minutes later, as the car drove into a dark alleyway, Director Han finally snapped back to reality, noticing the dim surroundings.

"Driver, I was going to Four Seasons Garden, did you take the wrong turn?" Director Han asked, frowning.

The driver turned off the engine, removed the keys, and gave Director Han a sinister smile: "I didn't."

As soon as he said that, two burly men emerged from the darkness, opened the passenger door, and dragged Director Han out without a word.

"What are you doing! What do you want!" Director Han realized something was wrong, and while shouting, he began to struggle desperately.

"Bang!"

A solid punch landed on Director Han's abdomen, causing him to curl up like a shrimp, his shouts turning into painful groans.

With his arms restrained, the two strong men dragged him toward an abandoned warehouse at the end of the alley.

Despite Director Han's frantic struggles and cries, only dead silence responded to him.

The warehouse was filled with the stench of urine, the sole light source being a low-wattage incandescent bulb overhead.

Director Han was thrown to the ground hard. He struggled to look up and saw the taxi driver squatting at the warehouse entrance, smoking.

"Who are you?! What do you want with me?"

The taxi driver smiled at him: "Don't worry, someone else will join you soon."

Director Han was stunned, not understanding the meaning behind the driver's words.

But the taxi driver didn't offer further explanation, simply motioning with his head to the two burly men: "Tie him up and gag him."

Meanwhile, under a luxury apartment building in the New District.

Lao Hei squatted by the greenery, speaking into a phone: "The man is out. He and his mistress drove separate cars..."

Outside the residential area, in an old SUV parked by the roadside, a young man with white hair hung up the phone as he saw a Volkswagen Jetta exit and started following from a distance.

After exiting the community, the Jetta circled around and then entered an underground parking lot in a mall. It stopped for just a few minutes before starting again, heading to a busy food street.

It was clear that Secretary Ji, driving the car, was extremely cautious, checking the rearview mirror almost every ten seconds to ensure he wasn't being followed.

After nearly half an hour of weaving through the city, the car finally got on the expressway around the city, heading towards the city outskirts.

The white-haired man followed from afar, glanced at the upcoming road sign, and called back to his companions: "This guy's probably headed out of the city. Let's get him when we reach a deserted spot."

The two companions in the back seat nodded, making preparations.

Another twenty minutes or so passed, and Secretary Ji had already reached the provincial road, continuing north with plans to cut across the Altai border.

"Bang!"

Just then, a loud crash came from the car's rear, sending the Jetta skidding, nearly careening into an adjacent irrigation ditch.

Secretary Ji struggled to stabilize the steering wheel, quickly braking to slow down.

Looking through his rearview mirror, he saw an SUV behind with its hazard lights flashing, also slowing down.

"Cao Nima!"

Thinking it was an accidental rear-end collision, Secretary Ji cursed furiously and parked the car, ready to get out and check the damage.

But as soon as he stepped out, he saw three dark figures emerge from the SUV, sprinting toward him at top speed.

Secretary Ji hesitated, realizing the danger, and reached to get back into his car, but those three were already upon him.

One of them kicked him in the lower back, and with a painful groan, Secretary Ji lost consciousness...

Upon waking up again, he found himself in a warehouse, his hands and feet tightly bound.

A mere two or three meters away, another person was receiving the same treatment as him...

Chapter 477: Biaozi! Save Me!

A large dirt-hauling truck was parked beside a narrow street without streetlights.

In the passenger seat, a middle-aged man with a buzz cut turned his head to look at the dark alley not far away, took out his phone, and dialed a number.

"There was a change of plans; he was captured by another group."

"I followed them and now I'm at the old warehouse by the old sewage plant."

There was a long silence on the other end of the line, then a cold voice said, "Give it a try, if it doesn't work, make him shut up."

"Okay." The middle-aged man with a buzz cut spoke no more unnecessary words and, after hanging up, instructed the driver, "Tell Liu Zi to bring the gear over."

The driver nodded, took out his phone, and sent a message to Liu Zi.

After arranging everything, the middle-aged man with a buzz cut lit a cigarette and looked towards the alley with a cold gaze.

Originally, they planned to get rid of Secretary Ji with a traffic accident, but fate had other plans, and an unexpected turn of events got the guy kidnapped...

More than forty minutes later, another Lavidia drove up and stopped behind the dirt truck. The car door opened, and an unremarkable man quickly got out.

"Brother Biao!"

The middle-aged man with a buzz cut squatting under the cement pole ground out his cigarette with his thumb and forefinger, then stood up and tucked the butt into his pocket.

"Did you bring the gear?"

"Brought it!" The newcomer nodded and took a shoulder bag off, unzipping it to reveal several pistols inside.

Brother Biao and the dirt truck driver each took one.

"Let's go."

The three of them said no more, hunching over as they plunged into the pitch-black alley.

Inside the abandoned warehouse, besides Secretary Ji and Director Han lying on the ground, there were six unfamiliar faces, led by that white-haired man from before.

Secretary Ji struggled incessantly on the ground, emitting continuous "whimpering" sounds, his eyes wide open, showing that he desperately wanted to speak, but his mouth was gagged.

The white-haired man finished his box meal, squatted down in front of Secretary Ji, and patted his face, "You'd better keep quiet."

"We won't take your lives. At dawn, we'll take you back to Hong Kong Island, then send you by ship to Siberia to mine."

If he hadn't said this, it would've been better; upon saying it, Secretary Ji struggled even more fiercely.

The white-haired man tore the cloth from his mouth, teasingly, "What? Don't want to go mining?"

"Hah!" Secretary Ji gasped violently, coughed a few times, then hoarsely shouted, "Big brother! Are you guys working for Qi Yun? Help me send him a message, I have money! I'm willing to compensate!"

For Secretary Ji to have climbed to his current position, his brain was naturally quite sharp. Seeing Director Han also being tied up, he already guessed who was behind this.

The white-haired man gave him a look that was half-smiling, half-not, "I don't know any Qi Yun. Don't trouble yourself, obediently go mining and maybe you'll have a few more years to live."

Saying this, he changed his tone, suddenly becoming menacing, "If you keep making noises, I'll toss you into the sea to feed the fish! I guarantee not even a bone will be left!"

Secretary Ji's face immediately turned pale, and the words stuck in his throat. Cold sweat dripped down his temples.

He could sense the ruthlessness about this man and knew the white-haired man wasn't joking, for he'd encountered such types before; in the eyes of desperados, human life was worth less than a piece of toilet paper.

"Don't... don't kill me..." Secretary Ji swallowed hard, his voice trembling, "I have money! I'll give you money! Any amount you want!"

"BANG!"

At that moment, a loud noise came from behind; the old rusted iron door of the warehouse was kicked open from the outside!

The next second, three figures dashed into the warehouse, spreading out in a triangle; as soon as they stopped, they pointed their guns together!

Inside, the white-haired man and the others froze at the sight of the dark gun barrels, clearly not expecting anyone to join the scene suddenly.

"No one move if they don't want to die!"

Liu Zi, who was shouting, had a gun in each hand, his expression fierce!

Secretary Ji, seeing the face of the leader, suddenly shouted hoarsely like grabbing a lifeline, "Biao! Save me!"

Brother Biao did not respond, just used his gun to gesture over the people with the white hair, coldly saying, "I'm taking him; anyone who moves dies."

The people on the white-haired man's side exchanged looks but dared not make a rash move. With the dark gun barrels so close, no one wanted to wager their lives.

Only the white-haired man had an extremely ugly look on his face, clenching his back teeth tightly.

He was the trusted horse under Brother Hui; on this trip, Brother Hui specifically instructed him to handle things smoothly. If Secretary Ji were taken away now, how would he explain it to the boss back home?

"Come over yourself!"

Brother Biao's commanding shout echoed in the warehouse again, signaling to Secretary Ji to crawl over on his own.

Because he wasn't sure whether the group had weapons, he didn't want to take risks by approaching.

Secretary Ji, seeing someone coming to rescue him, suddenly erupted with incredible strength from within his little universe, rubbing his face on the ground, kicking with his legs, creeping like a worm towards the door with all his might.

Right now, he didn't care how embarrassing it looked; survival mattered above all.

In the corner, Director Han, whose mouth was gagged with cloth and had been whimpering all along, also wriggled towards this side with all his might, needing to seize this chance and hitch a ride out of here!

The men the white-haired man brought were intimidated by the dark gun barrels, and no one dared to step up and stop him.

Just then! The white-haired man, who was half-squatting on the ground, suddenly moved!

He leaped up like a swift leopard, lunged towards Secretary Ji, his right hand choking his neck while flipping his body to shield himself behind Secretary Ji.

"Don't move!" The white-haired man shouted loudly, his left hand somehow holding a gleaming folding knife, pressing it against Secretary Ji's carotid artery.

The knife blade broke the skin, and bright red blood slowly dripped along the blade.

Everything happened too quickly!

Brother Biao and his two men were focused on the six people inside, and didn't react in time; plus, as the trusted aide under Brother Hui, naturally, the white-haired man also had some skills.

So caught off guard, Secretary Ji was taken hostage.

Faced with this sudden change, Brother Biao did not show much reaction, his eyes still cold as if thinking about something.

Liu Zi and the dirt truck driver had their fingers on the trigger, ready to fire at a moment's notice.

Secretary Ji gasped for air as the chokehold suffocated him, his face turned the color of a liver as he struggled futilely with limbs, looking at Brother Biao with eyes full of a desire to survive.

"Biao~ save me~"

"Shut up!" The white-haired man shouted angrily, tightening the hold, hiding his head behind Secretary Ji's head, not daring to move, fearing that Brother Biao and the others would suddenly shoot him without warning.

"If anyone moves, I'll slit his throat!"

Secretary Ji's cries abruptly stopped, leaving just the croaked gasp in his throat, so frightened that tears flowed from his eyes.

The atmosphere inside the warehouse grew increasingly tense. Just when the white-haired man thought he had the situation under control, Brother Biao at the door suddenly had a flash of murderous intent!

"BANG!"

A gunshot rang out!

Chapter 478: Entering the City!

The sound of gunfire erupted in the warehouse like a thunderclap!

A bullet accurately pierced through Secretary Ji's forehead, scattering red and white matter that splattered across the white-haired man's face.

Secretary Ji didn't even have time to let out a scream before his body collapsed like a broken burlap sack, silent forever.

The shooter was none other than Brother Biao!

Seeing that it was impossible to take Secretary Ji away alive, he chose to silence him permanently...

Almost at the same moment Brother Biao fired his gun, Liu Zi and the dump truck driver also pulled their triggers!

"Bang! Bang! Bang!"

Several gunshots rang out in succession, bullets whizzing toward the white-haired man and his associates.

The white-haired man reacted quickly, grabbing Secretary Ji's back and using him as a human shield.

"Puff, puff, puff~"

Several bullets pierced flesh, ringing in his ears.

The other five quickly sought cover, dodging as bullets struck the steel structure of the warehouse, sending sparks flying.

"Bang! Bang! Bang!"

Brother Biao and his two companions fired while retreating, and after emptying a magazine, they turned and ran without looking back.

The sound of gunfire still buzzed in the warehouse, but the footsteps of Brother Biao and his companions had already faded away at the alley exit.

After nearly half a minute, the white-haired man poked his head from behind Secretary Ji's corpse, glancing toward the door, confirming that they had fled. He then pushed aside Secretary Ji's body and got up from the ground.

As soon as he stood up, a searing pain shot through his left arm. Looking down, he saw that his sleeve was soaked with blood.

"Damn!" he cursed through gritted teeth, realizing he hadn't noticed when he got shot amid the chaos.

At that moment, a voice came from behind: "Damn it! This one's dead too!"

The white-haired man turned sharply, seeing one of his men kicking Director Han.

The man was lying on the ground, his back shirt soaked a deep brown from blood. Clearly, he had been hit by a stray bullet earlier and had long since expired.

...

At Beijing Airport, Qi Yun and his group had just reached the exit passage when they saw Li Yaohua already waiting there.

Li Yaohua approached and embraced him, then patted his shoulder, asking, "How about it? All okay?"

Qi Yun knew what he was referring to and shook his head with a smile, "Close call but safe."

Li Yaohua nodded slightly, scrutinizing him up and down, "I heard it got quite chaotic this time. You could have at least given me a heads-up if there was trouble."

"Just managed to handle it. If it became unmanageable, I would've definitely asked for your help," Qi Yun replied with a sigh.

He was being truthful. Ever since Gao Min reported someone was tailing Nuannuan and Zhao Qing, he sensed the opponents were becoming desperate. So, he had preemptively informed Chen Wei, in case anything happened to him, to contact Li Yaohua if he didn't return within three days.

This was Qi Yun's other card, in case Xiao Hanguang and his men didn't go to Bird Market, then Fu Wentao was the one sent.

Li Yaohua chose not to inquire further, planning to discuss it in detail later. He then turned his gaze sideways, with a gentle smile on his face, "This must be your daughter. The little girl is truly beautiful."

Nuannuan wasn't at all shy, tilting her little face up, eyes bright as she looked at Li Yaohua, and cheerily greeted, "Hello Uncle!" She quickly added, "My name is Qi Nuan, but you can call me Nuannuan."

"Hahaha!" Li Yaohua laughed, amused by her cleverness, and fished out a beautifully wrapped chocolate from his pocket, "Here, a welcome gift from Uncle."

Nuannuan looked at Qi Yun, and seeing him nod, reached out to take it, sweetly thanking, "Thank you, Uncle!"

Qi Yun smiled, wrapping his arm around Zhao Qing's waist, introducing her to Li Yaohua, "This is my wife, Zhao Qing."

A soft red hue crept onto Zhao Qing's face as she raised her hand to brush her hair back and greeted warmly, "Hello Brother Li."

Hearing this, Li Yaohua playfully punched Qi Yun's arm, smiling, "You're something, hiding well indeed."

He then turned to Zhao Qing, with a tone of friendly familiarity, "Qi Yun often spoke of you, and today I finally get to meet you in person."

Zhao Qing responded with a gentle smile.

Li Yaohua gestured with a side wave of his hand, "Let's go, get in the car first. I've arranged dinner for you at the hotel."

The group walked toward the parking lot, with Qi Yun retrieving his phone from his pocket and turning it on as they walked.

As soon as the screen lit up, several messages popped up.

Qi Yun scanned them briefly; the last one had been sent half an hour ago by Eagle. Upon reading its content, his eyes narrowed, and he halted mid-step.

Zhao Qing, holding his arm, also stopped and asked, "What's wrong?"

"Nothing," Qi Yun shook his head, smiling as he replied, "You go get in the car with Nuannuan first, I need to make a call."

Zhao Qing didn't ask further, leading Nuannuan by the hand to the van ahead.

After they left, Qi Yun dialed Eagle's number, lowering his voice as he queried, "How did he die?"

On the other side of the line, Eagle recounted the events in detail, adding, "Two of them sustained minor injuries. I've temporarily arranged for them to stay over at West Mountain."

Upon hearing this, Qi Yun's eyebrows furrowed tightly, remaining silent for a long while.

He could already deduce who sent the people to kill Secretary Ji—essentially a dogfight, wasn't it?

After a moment of silence, Qi Yun finally spoke, "When it gets bright, have them leave the city first, and fly out from the neighboring city. Try not to show your faces."

Although this matter would likely be suppressed by the other party, given the loss of life, it was safer to stay away.

After hanging up the phone, he exhaled deeply and then headed towards the van.

...

The next day, at eight-thirty in the morning.

Having tidied himself up, Qi Yun left the hotel by car, heading straight for the West District.

The drive took about an hour, and the vehicle finally stopped on the street corner. Across the street stood an impressive compound.

Qi Yun adjusted his shirt, opened the car door, and walked toward the main gate alone.

At the gate of the compound, several armed guards stood at their posts.

As Qi Yun approached, he noticed a figure jogging in his direction.

"Are you Mr. Qi?"

Qi Yun nodded slightly, "Yes, just call me Qi Yun."

The girl extended her hand with a smile, "Hello Qi Yun, I'm Su Xiaohan. Chief Xiao sent me to pick you up."

Qi Yun lightly shook her hand, "Thank you for the trouble."

Su Xiaohan, clad in professional attire with her hair tied in a neat ponytail, exuded the vigor of youth as she spoke, "No trouble at all, Chief Xiao is waiting for you inside. Please, follow me."

She turned and walked into the compound, with Qi Yun following, his eyes discreetly scanning the surroundings.

Reaching the security kiosk, Xiaohan showed her credentials, and the security personnel meticulously verified them before allowing them to pass.

It wasn't over yet; besides identity verification, there was another stringent check for hazardous items, and non-staff like Qi Yun weren't allowed to carry even a phone.

After passing through security, Xiaohan led Qi Yun into the massive office building ahead, finally meeting Xiao Hanguang in a reception room on the second floor.

Chapter 479: Commendation from the Big Bosses

As Qi Yun stepped into the reception room, he immediately felt a solemn and dignified atmosphere enveloping him.

The floor was covered with a thick beige carpet, and a large ink landscape painting with powerful brushwork hung on the front wall. On the sides, several exquisitely framed calligraphy pieces with steady handwriting and profound phrases were displayed.

On the sofa sat, besides Xiao Hanguang, another elderly man and a middle-aged man.

"Leaders, Qi Yun is here," Xiao Han announced softly, then stepped aside and exited.

Xiao Hanguang stood up from the sofa, beckoned to Qi Yun, and then looking at the elder beside him, introduced, "Leader, this is Qi Yun."

Qi Yun dared not be negligent, took a deep breath, and quickly walked forward.

The elder nodded slightly, his gaze sweeping over Qi Yun's face, observing him carefully yet discreetly.

Despite the elder's kind eyes, Qi Yun still felt an imposing aura of authority from someone long accustomed to a high position emanating from him.

This face-to-face encounter felt entirely different from seeing him on television, as if he were standing before a towering mountain.

"Xiao Qi, please sit," the elder finally spoke. Though only a few seconds passed, it felt like an eternity to Qi Yun.

"Yes." Qi Yun inwardly breathed a sigh of relief and somewhat cautiously sat on a single sofa beside him, sitting only halfway, ready to get up at any moment.

It wasn't that he was stage-frightened; the meeting was too high-profile. Even Secretary Ji would only dare to sit one-third if he were here.

The elder, looking at him, showed a gentle smile and lightly tapped the sofa arm with his fingers, "No need to be so nervous, make yourself at home."

"Okay," Qi Yun nodded, his tense nerves relaxing slightly, yet he still sat upright.

The elder's smile deepened, "Xiao Qi, Director Xiao has briefed me on some of your work. I invited you here today not only to meet you but also to thank you and commend you on behalf of the country."

"Your discoveries of the Loulan Ancient City ruins and Genghis Khan's Tomb hold milestone significance for our archaeological research."

"More impressively, you managed to bring precious national treasures back from overseas with your efforts and donated them back to the country, a magnanimity worthy of everyone's admiration."

As he finished speaking, the middle-aged man next to him took a small velvet box from his briefcase, opened it, and respectfully handed it to the elder, who took it and stood up.

Seeing this, Qi Yun quickly stood up straight, his chest rising slightly as he fixed his gaze on the velvet box in the elder's hands.

Xiao Hanguang and the middle-aged man also stood up, their expressions solemn.

The elder walked to Qi Yun, slowly lifted the box lid, and a golden medal came into view. On its face were intricate gears and a stalk of wheat, gleaming with a solemn luster.

"After careful consideration, it has been decided to award you the 'Outstanding Contribution to National Cultural Heritage Protection Award,' with a first-class merit!"

"This not only affirms your contributions but also praises your patriotic devotion."

His voice was grave and forceful, with each word resonating deeply within Qi Yun's heart.

Qi Yun sprang up, letting his hands rest at his sides, feeling a slight sweat in his palms. This might be one of the most nervous moments in his thirty-plus years of life.

Looking at the medal, his Adam's apple bobbed twice, "Leader, this... I merely did what I should."

"Being able to bring lost national treasures home and let sleeping ruins reemerge is the greatest honor itself."

"Honor belongs to the meritorious," the elder lifted his hand, gently pinning the medal onto Qi Yun's shirt, "Cultural heritage is the lifeblood of a nation; your work guards the roots and soul for the entire nation."

"This honor is well-deserved!"

Qi Yun felt a surge of passion at these words, realizing that irrespective of any personal motives, at least at this moment, he would still act selflessly.

"This medal is the answer the nation gives you," the elder stepped back half a step, glancing at the golden medal on Qi Yun's chest, "and also the testimony history provides."

"Yes! Thank you, leader!" Qi Yun stood straight, raised his right hand, and offered a somewhat informal salute.

Given his role as a field investigator, saluting in this manner was fitting.

Moreover, he was well aware that detailed information about him likely lay on their desks long before this meeting.

The elder patted Qi Yun's shoulder, gently guiding his hand down, his tone encouraging, "Keep up the good work, the country needs young talents like you."

The middle-aged man conveniently stepped forward and handed over a neatly folded red certificate, "This is the first-class merit commendation order."

Qi Yun solemnly took it with both hands, saluting once more, "Thank you, leader!"

The middle-aged man nodded slightly, his eyes also full of encouragement.

"Alright, be seated," the elder returned to the sofa, "This afternoon, the National Cultural Heritage Administration will hold a special commendation ceremony for you, and the media will highlight your stories to inspire contemporary young people to learn from you."

Qi Yun smiled modestly and nodded obediently.

The elder took a sip of tea, his tone no longer as stern as before, "Xiao Qi, personally, is there anything difficult that you need our help with?"

Qi Yun felt a surge of joy, knowing the main topic had finally arrived.

He discreetly glanced at Director Xiao, who gave an almost imperceptible nod, and Qi Yun felt reassured. He then sat up straight, "Thank you for your concern, leaders. I have no difficulties."

Chapter 480: Commendation from the Big Boss (Part 2)

After a pause, as if recalling something, his face turned slightly unnatural, "If I have to say... it's because of these artifacts that I've offended some foreign forces, which has posed a certain threat to my personal safety..."

This was not something easy to say, as it indirectly pointed out certain issues, so Qi Yun was also very cautious in his wording.

But after all, with such a vast territory and a considerable population base, it's unrealistic to completely eradicate some issues; there will always be some fish that slip through the net.

The elder hearing this, turned to look at Xiao Hanguang beside him, who quickly leaned in to whisper an explanation: "Leader, it's like this..."

After Xiao Hanguang finished speaking, the middle-aged man also interjected: "Wenting from National Security reported a situation the day before yesterday, there are six..."

After listening to both their accounts, the elder's face gradually darkened, and the room instantly fell silent as if a pin could be heard dropping.

"These guys are quite daring," the elder snorted coldly, then turned his gaze back to Qi Yun, "Go on."

Qi Yun nodded and cautiously began speaking again, "Leader, I have an unreasonable request, which is to apply for some gun permits for my security company to protect my family's safety. I wonder if you think it's feasible..."

After speaking, he seemed to fear the elder might have concerns, so he hurriedly added, "Rest assured, leader, the members of my security company are all retired special forces soldiers with undoubtedly solid quality and no ideological issues. We guarantee not to use the gun permits for any illegal activities, otherwise you can shoot me!"

The elder's fingers paused on the armrest of the sofa, looking at Qi Yun with a steady gaze, the air in the reception room seemed to tense up again.

Gun control in the country has always been strict, and the approval for gun permits is even more cautious. Apart from special transport companies and professions like forest rangers, it's basically impossible for ordinary people to obtain one.

Therefore, Qi Yun's request undoubtedly tread on a sensitive boundary, no wonder even Xiao Hanguang and Director Fu said it's difficult to handle.

"A gun permit is not an ordinary document," the elder slowly opened his mouth, his voice not loud but carried with it an imposing aura, "Domestic gun control is the baseline for maintaining social security, and it cannot be relaxed in the slightest."

Hearing this, Qi Yun's previously active thoughts instantly cooled down halfway. If it were someone else, he might still try to argue, but facing this big-shot in front of him, he didn't say more.

Just as he was secretly sighing in his heart, the elder's voice sounded again.

"However, your situation is special," the elder shifted the topic, looking at the middle-aged man beside him, "Wendong, you explain the related regulations."

The middle-aged man referred to as Wendong immediately bent a bit and said, "According to the current gun control laws, security companies with special service needs can be equipped with official guns after approval."

"Analyzing the current situation, the foreign threats faced by Comrade Qi are clearly high-risk, and all his security team members are retired military personnel. If screened and qualified, they have the basic training for gun usage, theoretically meeting the application conditions for special service."

"Furthermore, he himself is an off-staff investigator for National Security, engaging in work that is full of danger. Providing him with some special defense measures is procedurally justifiable."

The elder nodded and refocused his gaze on Qi Yun, his voice steady, "The country remembers your contribution and it must also ensure your safety."

"But guns, once out of control, are a major disaster." He paused for a moment, his tone intensifying a bit, "I can approve your application, but there are three conditions."

Qi Yun immediately straightened his posture: "Please, leader, instruct!"

"First, the guns are strictly for the close defense of you and your family, to be used only in scenarios of clear threats, and strictly prohibited for any other purposes or leakage."

"Second, every gun must be registered and subject to periodic verification by relevant departments. Your security company must establish a strict gun management system, with clear records of who uses a gun, when, and where."

"Third, any issues arising, whether accidental discharge, misuse, or gun loss, the responsibility lies squarely with you! I will only hold you accountable!"

"Merit must be rewarded, and mistakes must be punished without leniency!"

Though the elder's tone was heavy, the requirements he stated were all reasonable, granting Qi Yun convenience while drawing a clear line.

Qi Yun did not hesitate in the slightest, solemnly replying, "I fully accept! I guarantee strict compliance with the regulations, and if I violate them, I willingly accept any punishment!"

The elder nodded with satisfaction, then looked at Wendong again: "You handle this for Xiao Qi, contact Lan Tianlei and Xiang Zhenghao."

Wendong immediately stood up straight: "Yes."

The elder also stood up from the sofa, once more scrutinizing Qi Yun: "I hope that the next time we meet, you will bring me good news."

Qi Yun felt a surge in his heart, quickly straightening his chest, meeting the elder's gaze with burning eyes, "Please rest assured, leader, I will do my utmost and will not betray your trust."

The elder nodded slightly, said nothing more, and turned towards the resting area inside the reception room.

Wendong quickly followed, nodding towards Qi Yun as he passed by.

After they left, Xiao Hanguang patted Qi Yun's arm, "Let's go, kid."

After leaving the office, the two of them got into Xiao Hanguang's special vehicle, slowly heading in the direction of the Cultural Heritage Administration.

In the back seat, Xiao Hanguang rolled down the car window and asked Qi Yun, "How do you feel?"

"Quite tense," Qi Yun replied while carefully removing the medal from his chest for safekeeping.

Xiao Hanguang chuckled and handed him a bottle of mineral water, "This medal is quite weighty, personally awarded by the leader, I don't even have such an honor."

Qi Yun took the water bottle and smiled, flattering, "I couldn't have done it without your support, leader."

Xiao Hanguang laughed, "You kid, why do I enjoy talking to you so much? How about coming over to be my liaison officer?"

Before Qi Yun could respond, the young lady in the front passenger seat turned her head, batting her pretty eyes, and asked with a pout, "What? The director isn't satisfied with my work?"

Seeing this, Qi Yun couldn't help but take another look at her. Daring to speak to Xiao Hanguang in such a tone, it seems this young girl also has a formidable background.

After chatting for a few moments, Qi Yun changed the subject, lowered his voice, and asked, "By the way, leader, who is this Wendong leader?"

After taking a few sips of water, Xiao Hanguang gave Qi Yun a peculiar glance, "Why are you inquiring about him, is there something else?"

Qi Yun pondered for a few seconds before nodding lightly, "Yes, there is one more thing on this trip to Beijing, but just now wasn't a convenient time to report it."

Upon hearing this, Xiao Hanguang frowned, seemingly guessing something.

"Is it related to the previous incident?"

"Yes," Qi Yun did not hide it, because he knew very well that Xiao Hanguang was not with the other side, otherwise, he wouldn't have saved him.

Moreover, without the other party pulling strings, with his identity, he wouldn't have been able to meet that Wendong leader again.

The atmosphere in the car instantly became a bit somber. Xiao Hanguang turned his head, looking out the window, with a touch of melancholy in his voice, "Perhaps now is not a good time."

Qi Yun contemplated the meaning in the other's words, and after a long silence, he too sighed, "Leader, this time I brought my family with me."

Xiao Hanguang was startled, his gaze gradually becoming sharp.

"I'll give him a call tonight, you meet him yourself."

...

In the afternoon, the National Cultural Heritage Administration organized a large commendation ceremony for Qi Yun. In addition to the staff from the administration, there were also many people from the propaganda office.

That night, official media on major internet platforms began competing to report the news.

Along with this news were on-site photos of the Lop Nur ancient city ruins, information related to Genghis Khan's Tomb, and pictorial materials of those over twenty precious artifacts.

Back in 2019, a gambling king from Macau had donated a bronze horse head from Yuanming Garden to the National Cultural Heritage Administration, which at the time caused quite a stir in the country.

This time, the donation was even more extravagant, not only including two other bronze statues from Yuanming Garden but also a Western Zhou period Bronze Cauldron, a Han Dynasty bronze wine vessel, and Tang Dynasty tri-colored glazed pottery figurines, each of which could be the centerpiece of a museum collection!

Now all donated by Qi Yun at once, the weight of the donation shook the entire cultural relics community.

On CCTV's evening news broadcast, Qi Yun's name quietly entered the sight of tens of millions as the news ticker scrolled.