

Middle Age 511

Chapter 511: Fu Wentao—My Name Is My Identity

Fu Wentao's gaze shifted to the window, with a hint of intrigue in his tone: "If I'm not mistaken, once the solar energy project is finalized, you should be transferred from this newly established subsidiary to the state-owned W's group headquarters for a position."

"This way, you can attain the XZ level, and with that status, you can take on more critical roles in Guo An."

"That person is paving the way for you, isn't it clear now?"

Qi Yun listened, completely stunned. Is this a sign to... move into the system?

Fu Wentao turned to see his expression, couldn't help but smile: "What? Not willing?"

Qi Yun shook his head, his tone a bit dazed: "I don't know, never thought about it before..."

"You should see, big brother, I'm quite a slacker, not fond of restrictions, maybe not entirely suitable..."

"Plus, I still have business to handle... can't just give up like that."

Fu Wentao downed his champagne and patted his shoulder: "Don't worry, even if you get in, you'll be a special case."

"Maybe... they'll directly assign you to that mysterious department."

"Mysterious department?" Qi Yun looked puzzled, could Guo An not be the most mysterious?

Fu Wentao laughed, not explaining further: "Alright, this is just my guess, the specifics depend on the leadership's final arrangement."

The car drove onto the main road, dappled shadows of trees falling through the windows onto Qi Yun's face. The words "mysterious department" echoed in his mind, curiosity peaking.

Seeing Fu Wentao's unwillingness to divulge more, he knew pressing for answers wouldn't help, so he temporarily bottled up his curiosity.

"Big bro, do you also have a status in the system?" Qi Yun asked tentatively.

Fu Wentao exhaled smoke rings, glanced at him sideways and replied confidently: "No, the name Fu Wentao is my status."

Qi Yun clicked his tongue; a big shot is indeed a big shot, he could give top marks for this act.

Yet, it was no exaggeration. Even the prime minister of Oil Country, the future leader Salaman, treated Fu Wentao with utmost respect.

Moreover, Fu Wentao's relationship with that person was evidently unusual, considering last time Qi Yun left the building with Xiao Hanguang, he didn't receive the treatment of being escorted to the parking lot by a secretary.

Xiao Hanguang was already a figure in elite circles, and even Old He didn't want a direct confrontation easily.

It shows the true weight of Fu Wentao's name.

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Qi Yun had just been dropped off at the hotel when Li Yaohua, who had been waiting, pulled him to the restaurant for a meal. The latter had received a new appointment, no longer needing to go to Africa, and was about to join the headquarters.

For Li Yaohua, this was undoubtedly a big leap forward, fully entering the Fu Family's core power.

To express gratitude to his good brother, he spent a fortune to gift Qi Yun a Maybach S680!

6.0T+V12 engine+612 horsepower+bulletproof body; with such specs, who wouldn't be dazzled?

Moreover, he thoughtfully arranged a license plate with five sixes for Qi Yun! The plate alone was pricier than the Maybach!

Qi Yun initially wanted to decline the gesture, as he's not one to flaunt excessively, but Li Yaohua gave him no chance—the car had already been arranged early morning and was en route to Bird City.

"Great kindness is not easily expressed; besides my wife, what's mine is yours, so don't stand on ceremony, brother." Li Yaohua raised his glass for a toast.

Warmly yet helplessly, Qi Yun raised his glass to lightly clink with his: "Alright, I accept, thank you."

"That's better. It's not really about showing off, but in this S gathering, some people are shallow. Displaying a bit of strength saves a lot of trouble."

Qi Yun nodded in agreement with this point.

While they were chatting casually, the phone on the table rang. Qi Yun looked at the screen and then stood to tell Li Yaohua: "I'll take a call."

With that, he took his phone to a quiet corner of the restaurant and pressed the answer key.

On the other end was Lu Xingye's loud voice: "Report, Chief! There's progress on what you asked me to investigate."

Qi Yun's spirit rose, and he lowered his voice: "Hm, tell me."

Before returning from Treasure Island, he had handed the middleman Bai Xiaosheng to Lu Xingye, asking him to find out the information on the employer who hired thugs against him and gather evidence.

"We sent a virus-laden message via Bai Xiaosheng's chat software to the other party. We've now located them in a self-built house in the village of Sha District, Bird City."

"I'll send the detailed address to your phone shortly."

"Turns out it's them!"

Qi Yun had suspected it was Ma Chaoyang's group before, and hearing they were in Bird City only strengthened his conviction.

But a position in a self-built house in the village... must be just underlings.

"Alright, understood, thank you."

"No need to thank me, Chief!"

After ending the call, Qi Yun immediately dialed Duan Pingyu.

"Hello, Boss."

"I'm giving you an address. Arrange for someone to go and capture the people inside, weapons usage is authorized if necessary!" Qi Yun instructed succinctly.

Duan Pingyu didn't inquire further, responding loudly: "Yes! I'll handle it immediately!"

"Good, keep me updated at any moment."

After hanging up, Qi Yun exhaled deeply, aware of Old He's immense influence. Even if things on the USB were proven, without catching Brother Biao, Ma Chaoyang might only get five or ten years, while Old He might...

But he refused to settle for this. He wanted these people sentenced to death!

Repeated attempts on his life; even a clay man has some fire.

"No matter your rank, I still want to confront you!"

Qi Yun gritted his teeth, clutching the phone. After considering it was still risky, he then called Director Duan to explain the situation.

Not out of distrust for his men's abilities, but fearing another instance like before when Government Office intervened.

Though Duan Pingyu and his team were currently Guo An's external investigators, they only had investigative rights, not independent enforcement rights.

Director Duan, after hearing the report, affirmed his support: "If there's no evidence, fine. But since we've found it, there must be accountability."

"Rest assured, I'll send Ge Dabao with a team right now. As long as they're there, they won't escape. No one can get them off!"

"Damn it, when the tiger doesn't roar, we're seen as soft targets!"

Qi Yun's heart warmed hearing this: "Thank you, Director. With your backing, I feel much more secure."

Chapter 512: Who the Hell Wants to Die If They Can Live?

Bird City, a certain urban village.

Beside the dust-filled dirt road, an inconspicuous old Jetta was parked, blending perfectly with the black market cars like those of Chang'an and Geely around.

Inside the car, Duan Pingyu, An Zai, Da Pao, and Ge Dabao were staring at the courtyard diagonally opposite, discussing their plan for the capture operation.

"We had the community contact the house owner; this house was rented out two months ago. The tenant was a middle-aged man with a crew cut, and from the description, he likely matches the Brother Biao you're talking about."

Although the current rental system is quite strict, both landlords and tenants need to register with the community and the police office.

But here in the urban village, it's mostly occupied by migrant workers, so many landlords find it troublesome and don't take the regulations seriously, cooperating with registration only when community workers check.

Additionally, there are no surveillance cameras nearby, which results in them having very little vague information, unable to confirm whether the opponent has accomplices or is carrying weapons.

Duan Pingyu lightly tapped his fingers on the steering wheel, gazing at the mottled iron door of the courtyard.

He lowered his voice, speaking decisively, "Let the three of us handle it. Captain Ge, you lead a team to block the perimeter."

Ge Dabao frowned, pressing Duan Pingyu's arm to refuse, "No, it's too risky for just the three of you to go in. Who knows how many people are inside?"

"I'll bring a team and go in with you."

Before Duan Pingyu could respond, An Zai, beside him, spoke up, "Hehe, Captain Ge, don't worry. We've sparred with those guys before. If it wasn't for the government office people supporting them last time, we would have caught them already."

"Moreover, the boss wants them captured alive. Too many people will alert them prematurely. The three of us will be enough."

Ge Dabao froze upon hearing this, recalling the last time when Chen Wei took on four, resulting in two deaths and two escapes, realizing that all of Qi Yun's men were elite warriors, so he stopped insisting.

After a brief silence, he ultimately agreed to Duan Pingyu's plan, "Alright, I agree with the three of you going in, just make sure to pay attention to safety. If capturing alive isn't possible, you're permitted to shoot to kill!"

He then took a few earpieces out of his pocket and distributed them to the three, "Call for support at the first sign of trouble!"

Duan Pingyu and the others put on the earpieces, answered in acknowledgment, then opened the car door and swiftly walked towards the small courtyard opposite.

Meanwhile, Ge Dabao issued orders over the channel, "Group one and two, tighten up over here and block the adjacent alleys. Group three, get the vehicle ready to provide support!"

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Inside the courtyard, besides a self-built four-story building in the north, there was a simple prefab house on each side, with a Lang Yi parked in the middle of the courtyard.

This Lang Yi had appeared at the old sewage plant previously, except the license plate had been changed.

Inside a room on the third floor, Brother Biao, Liu Zi, and the driver of the earth mover, Old Cat, were playing poker.

Suddenly, Brother Biao's phone, placed on the bamboo mat, rang.

He glanced at the screen before putting down the cards, taking the phone and walking outside, all the way to the rooftop terrace, where he closed the door and pressed the answer button.

As soon as the call was connected, an urgent voice came through the earpiece, "You've been exposed! Get out immediately!"

Brother Biao was shocked. They had been hiding here for many days, stocked up with supplies, barely leaving the house—how could they have been exposed?

Besides them, only two people knew about this location, and those two would never betray them.

But there was no time to ponder over this now. He quickly reached the edge of the terrace, crouching to peek down below, noticing two new business vans had appeared across the street without him knowing.

As a seasoned hitman, his first instinct was that something was off with these two vans!

Brother Biao pulled back, and with a hoarse voice said, "It's too late; they're already here."

"I won't be taken alive. Tell him for me, my son will be great one day!"

Although the data showed he was unmarried, he actually had a son, but very few knew about this, including Liu Zi and the others.

Why did Old He trust him implicitly?

Why was it that even though Secretary Ji was the one communicating with him, a single call from Old He and he'd unhesitatingly put a bullet in Secretary Ji?

He had been dealing with Secretary Ji for quite some time, surely they had a bit of camaraderie?

Moreover, logically speaking, someone of Old He's stature wouldn't normally interact with those doing the dirty work.

That he dared to step forward from behind the scenes was surely because he felt invincible...

Upon hearing Brother Biao's assurance, Ma Chaoyang on the other end of the line felt his tense nerves relax slightly.

Since escape was out of the question, it was best for Brother Biao to remain silent forever, eliminating the risk of being implicated.

He opened his mouth, wanting to utter a few more insincere words.

But Brother Biao didn't give him the chance, ending the call abruptly...

Clutching his phone, Brother Biao paused on the screen for two seconds before slowly opening the photo album, which contained an encrypted folder. After entering a few digits, a photo popped up on the screen.

It was a boy of about ten, wearing a prestigious city school's uniform, holding a crumpled award certificate for being a three-good student, smiling with his little tiger teeth showing...

Brother Biao gently touched the boy's face on the screen with his fingers, then sighed deeply, standing up resolutely and pulling out a replica of a Type 54 pistol from behind his waist.

He didn't choose to go downstairs to inform those two "brothers," but quickly went to the east side of the terrace to survey the situation.

The terrace was about twelve meters above the ground, next to a narrow alley. There were protruding aluminum alloy protective windows on the second and third floors, but they were quite narrow.

To the right, a PUV drainpipe ran from the terrace down, but it was only fastened with simple straps and expansion screws, looking unreliable.

Brother Biao's eyes continually swept between the alley, the protective windows, and the drainpipe, ultimately deciding to risk it.

No one was in the alley. If he could get down, there might be a chance to escape.

Though he talked tough earlier, who wouldn't choose life over death if they could?

Having made up his mind, Brother Biao decided to slide down the drainpipe.

He took a deep breath, holstered his gun again, and lay on the terrace, moving his legs out first. He clamped his feet around the drainpipe as braking support, slowly lowering his body, until finally, both hands also gripped the drainpipe.

As he slowly descended, the drainpipe started to creak, with dust crumbling from the wall where the expansion screws were fixed, as if it might be torn away at any moment.

But the die was cast; he had no other choice now, so he bit the bullet and continued down. Just as he slid to about the second-floor level, a loud "bang!" exploded in the air.

Chapter 513: Ma Chaoyang's Bloody Urine

"Bang! Bang! Bang!" Three successive gunshots shattered the peace of the urban village.

Brother Biao, clinging to the drainpipe, felt a chill in his heart. He immediately realized that it was Liu Zi and the others inside the house who had clashed with Guo An's men.

He glanced down the building; there were still four or five meters to the ground. Jumping from this height could risk spraining an ankle. After all, he was just a hardened hitman, not a special forces operative like Chen Wei and the others.

But there was no time to hesitate now. He could already hear Liu Zi's screams. If he delayed any longer, Guo An's men would soon surround the place, and there would be no chance to escape.

"Damn it!" Brother Biao cursed under his breath, suddenly releasing his grip on the drainpipe. His body plunged down like a stone.

"Plop!"

He landed feet first, then crashed heavily to the ground, feeling a piercing pain in his ankle.

But at this moment, he couldn't worry about that. He struggled to get up, drew the pistol from his waist, and staggered into the alleyway.

However, before he could take a few steps, a loud shout suddenly came from behind.

"Stop!"

Brother Biao hesitated, a trace of ruthlessness flashing across his face. Without any hesitation, he turned and fired two shots: "Bang! Bang!"

The two Guo An agents behind quickly ducked behind the wall to avoid the shots.

Seeing this, Brother Biao turned his head and prepared to keep running.

However, the moment he turned his gaze forward, he was met with a despairing sight.

At the other end of the alley, unbeknownst to him, stood two Guo An agents, guns aimed directly at him...

"Drop your weapon! Or we'll shoot!"

Brother Biao's body stiffened, his hand tightened around the gun. He knew there was no escape now.

But he couldn't be captured alive; there was only one path left.

"Drop your weapon!" The agents yelled again, edging forward slowly, their guns still locked on his chest.

Brother Biao looked down at his gun, a bitter smile on his face.

The next second, he quickly raised his arm, turning the gun towards his own temple.

"Bang!"

A gunshot echoed in the alley!

As blood splattered, a sharp pain suddenly surged through Brother Biao's right arm holding the gun, as if struck by a sledgehammer. His fingers went limp, and the Type 54 pistol dropped to the ground.

His body swayed to the left, unable to stand, collapsing to the ground with only one thought in his mind: it was all over.

Several Guo An agents looked up towards the source of the gunshot. At a third-floor window, Duan Pingyu was slowly lowering his gun.

From the moment Duan Pingyu and the others entered the courtyard until Brother Biao was shot, the entire process took just two or three minutes.

When Ge Dabao led men into the main building and saw Liu Zi and Old Cat lying on the stairs with arm wounds, their pistols scattered nearby, he couldn't help but give Duan Pingyu and the others a thumbs up.

"Brilliant!"

Duan Pingyu shook his head with a smile: "These guys were quite cautious. The doors and windows on the first floor were all locked tight, so we had to force our way in."

"As long as none of you were hurt, the mission was well done!" he said, waving to the officers behind him. "Take them away!"

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Five minutes later, except for a team left to secure the scene, everyone else got into vehicles and departed.

Since Duan Pingyu and the others had fired shots, they had to return to the station to file a report. So they joined Ge Dabao's convoy on the way back.

While driving, he called Qi Yun to report the situation.

"Even Brother Biao was caught; they've all been taken into custody now and are being brought to the station."

On the other end of the line, Qi Yun let out a long breath of relief.

With Brother Biao captured, the matter involving Ma Chaoyang and the others wasn't just simple corruption anymore. Qiu Jiahao and his son, Secretary Ji, Director Han—these were all tied to Brother Biao's gang.

As long as they could get Brother Biao to talk, they could bring down everyone who had been trying to take him down.

"Alright, I understand." Qi Yun thought for a couple of seconds, then instructed, "Do this: don't return to Guo An just yet..."

Meanwhile, Ma Chaoyang paced anxiously in his office.

He already knew that a task force had been sent from above and had already begun covert investigations on him. For the past two days, he had been so worried he could neither eat nor sleep, and even urinating had started to draw blood.

But fortunately, the task force hadn't officially summoned him yet, likely due to their earlier precautionary measures which had prevented them from finding more evidence.

Besides, his mentor had promised to protect him, which was why Ma Chaoyang hadn't rushed to flee.

Yet at such a crucial moment, Li Biao's crew had the worst possible timing, adding fuel to the fire...

"Ring ring ring~" The phone rang.

Ma Chaoyang glanced at the screen and hurriedly answered: "What's the situation over there?"

"They don't seem dead! I heard three people were taken away in custody!"

"Crash!" Ma Chaoyang's phone slipped from his grasp and fell to the ground. He suddenly felt a dizzying buzz in his ears; those two words 'not dead' hit him like a sledgehammer in the heart.

"Impossible..." he staggered, taking half a step back before collapsing into the chair.

Li Biao had done too much dirty work for him. If captured alive, there was no guarantee he wouldn't talk.

If Guo An then handed over the evidence to the task force, he would undoubtedly face inescapable doom, and even his beloved mentor couldn't save him.

In fact, don't even think about protection; if the task force was determined to take action, even his mentor might struggle to escape unscathed.

"Damn it! A bunch of useless idiots!" Ma Chaoyang, losing control of his emotions, shouted orders hoarsely.

After venting for several minutes, he gradually calmed down.

"No, I have to leave immediately!"

Having understood his situation, Ma Chaoyang quickly picked up the phone beside him and called his mentor.

Zhongshan Road, No. 479.

Old He was in another elder's office discussing matters.

"Old He, the photovoltaic project with the Oil Country is extremely important for our province. If we can land this project, it will significantly aid our development plans to build a technologically advanced energy province, and it might even attract other foreign investors in the future."

Old He smiled bitterly at this: "I think so too. But after meeting with the Oil Country's delegation a few days ago, I felt their interest in collaboration wasn't very strong."

"Moreover, Old Zhou from Energy B told me that their real purpose for coming here might not be the photovoltaic project."

"Oh?" The elder furrowed his brows suspiciously, "Then what are they here for?"

Old He hesitated for a moment, then slowly shook his head: "It's unclear..."

The office fell into a brief silence. After a moment, the elder spoke again: "We still need to strive for it."

"I'll ask some friends in Beijing to look into it. If the Oil Country truly intends to bring in the photovoltaic project, then we'll offer more favorable terms to get this project."

"Alright." Old He nodded slightly, just about to express his commitment when his phone suddenly rang.

He glanced at the phone, then frowned and hung up.

Chapter 514: Wendong's Care

A dozen minutes later, Old He returned to the office, closed the door, and redialed Ma Chaoyang's phone number.

As soon as the call connected, Ma Chaoyang's anxious voice whispered, "Teacher, Li Biao and his team were captured alive by Guo An's men!"

Old He's grip on the phone tightened suddenly, but his face showed no hint of panic.

He leaned back in his leather chair behind the desk, glancing out the window, his voice still calm: "What are you panicking about?"

"When did this happen?"

"Not even half an hour ago!"

Old He frowned slightly and slowly spoke: "He knows what to say and what not to say."

"But... what if he can't withstand the pressure..." Ma Chaoyang's voice was urgent, clearly revealing his panic inside.

Although the teacher seemed as composed as always, appearing to have everything under control, he could no longer provide sufficient reassurance.

Because he knew very well that ever since Qi Yun was forced to be released, the entire situation had gradually slipped out of their control.

"Teacher, the investigation team has already started thoroughly investigating the matter from two years ago, and Qi Yun must have handed over the materials to them!"

"Now Li Biao has been captured... he knows too much! If he spills, I'm finished!" Ma Chaoyang's voice grew more urgent, even carrying a hint of pleading, "Teacher, maybe I should leave first! I've already sent my family to Altai for a vacation. As long as I can get out, I'll never return!"

"Leave?" Old He sneered, his tone filled with undisguised sarcasm, "If you try to run now, it's as good as confessing."

"Do you think the investigation team isn't watching your family's movements? Or do you think they'll let you leave at this time? Where do you think you can run to?"

These successive soul-searching questions hit Ma Chaoyang like a heavy hammer, plunging the office into silence, filled only with the sound of heavy breathing.

How could he not know what the teacher was saying? He obviously understood; being in this position, he had encountered similar situations too many times.

Even during public speeches, he had used these arguments to teach others not to act rashly and not to harbor any faint hopes...

Yet, when it came to him, he behaved just like those who had already stepped inside a sewing machine prison, whether there was a chance or not, at least attempting to escape first, refusing to wait idly for the inevitable.

Old He seemed to perceive his thoughts, sternly warning, "If you dare to leave Bird City, what awaits you will not be a summons, but handcuffs!"

"The more this situation escalates, the calmer you must remain! Don't lose composure!"

Ma Chaoyang involuntarily twitched his eyelids, further tightening his already tense nerves.

He certainly knew that it was hard to escape now, but being constantly enveloped by that sense of panic nearly suffocated him.

"But... but what about Li Biao?"

"Teacher, maybe you could... ask the S Bureau to intervene and retrieve him?"

Hearing such nonsensical remarks from the other end, Old He's head felt twice as heavy; it was obvious that his student had completely lost his bearings, even losing his fundamental ability to think.

He leaned against the back of his chair, fingers lightly tapping the desk, creating a "thok thok" sound, as if he was making a firm decision.

After a long pause, he muttered, "Leave this matter alone, stay in your office honestly, and leave the rest to me."

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PM, Beijing.

Inside the study, after a busy day, Wendong placed several documents on the desk and pointed to the chair opposite: "Sit down."

Qi Yun obediently pulled the chair and sat down.

"Boy, you used Kongjun Base to receive lithography machines? Why didn't you say so directly at the time?" Wendong asked casually while twisting his thermos cup.

Qi Yun chuckled awkwardly, "Haha, Leader, not everything was settled then, I was afraid that if something unexpected happened, it would cause false joy."

Wendong nodded: "Not rushing or hesitating is a good quality. You're right, the lithography machines are too sensitive. Until they're thoroughly in our hands, it's indeed not wise to announce anything."

"I've already arranged for the guards at Kongjun Base, the goods will temporarily be stored in the warehouse, watched over 24 hours until the people from T Baside arrive, then they'll be transferred to the research institute."

"Yes, the leader has considered everything comprehensively." Qi Yun timely praised.

Wendong's face showed a faint smile as he glanced at him: "Alright, I called you over to talk about the Oil Country matter."

"I've already exchanged opinions with several departments in the afternoon, and everyone supports the transaction in principle, so it should be promoted quickly."

Upon hearing this, Qi Yun let out a long sigh of relief.

Although Fu Wentao had assured him that there's an eighty to ninety percent chance, if there was resistance, he would coordinate with those people.

But without hearing direct confirmation from above, there was always a burden on his mind.

"Oil Country plans to purchase Beidou's authorization under the guise of a photovoltaic project. They informed me that you'll form a joint venture subsidiary with the Guozhi Committee to handle photovoltaic project matters."

"I talked with the Oil Country people about this, and they plan to invest a total of one hundred billion US Dollars in three phases to purchase photovoltaic modules, energy storage devices, and introduce the complete construction technology for photovoltaic power stations."

At this point, Wendong handed over the documents on the table, "Since you're in charge, you get to decide where the project lands."

"These are materials prepared for you, with detailed information on the photovoltaic industry development in several provinces, you pick one, and I'll inform the local Guozhi Committee to fully support you in completing this."

Qi Yun paused momentarily, not expecting Wendong to have given him the choice.

However, he quickly realized it was a reward from above for bringing back the lithography machines.

It's a hundred billion USD deal! In the current environment, orders of this magnitude are enticing for any province.

Moreover, more important than the USD is market expansion; once Beidou's reputation grows in Oil Country, neighboring desert brothers might ask for introductions from the big brother.

Overall, this deal would undoubtedly be a great opportunity, making attracting orders easy, those local leaders and corporate heads would definitely treat Qi Yun favorably?

"Thank you, Leader, for your kindness!" Qi Yun flashed a toothy grin, quickly reaching to examine the materials.

The data in the document was very detailed, not only covering the photovoltaic industry figures of several provinces but also introducing local leading groups.

These groups are all state-owned enterprises, and he just needs to pick one from them to collaboratively form a joint venture subsidiary.

The specifics afterward will naturally be handled by dedicated staff.

Of course, the subsidiary's major shares will definitely belong to the group company, but for Qi Yun, it doesn't matter since he's not actually planning to run a photovoltaic company.

As Fu Wentao mentioned, once things progress smoothly, he'll be transferred to a position within the group.

Chapter 515: Diehard

After leaving Wendong's residence, Qi Yun got into the car with a joyful mood.

He hadn't decided on the spot which area to partner with, as it was such a significant matter that naturally required thorough consideration and examination.

However, what he didn't know was that the photovoltaic project had already begun to quietly spread in certain small circles.

The next morning at ten o'clock, at the western suburb cemetery.

The sky was gray after a light rain, and the air was filled with the dampness of soil and pine branches.

As Tong Lao's ashes were carefully moved into the grave by two staff members dressed in plain clothes, everyone present held their breath involuntarily.

Qi Yun held a black umbrella, standing at the back of the crowd with a solemn look.

There were quite a few people attending today, and he even saw a familiar face—Director Fu of the National Museum.

But clearly, it was not the right time to greet anyone, so Qi Yun didn't step forward.

After the urn was placed properly, an elderly man who bore a seven to eight-tenth resemblance to Tong Lao stepped forward to fill the grave with a shovel.

Soil rolled onto the urn, making a faint "rustle" sound. The elder's back was hunched, and his body trembled slightly.

Once the ceremony concluded, people went in turn to place a bouquet of flowers beside the tombstone, saying words of remembrance.

Qi Yun looked at the elder by the tomb and asked Fu Wentao beside him, "Brother, who is that old gentleman?"

Fu Wentao's gaze fell on the elder's hunched back, and he spoke in a low voice, "That is Uncle Tong's brother, Tong Yangming."

Qi Yun nodded; no wonder they looked alike.

Over half an hour later, the crowd gradually dispersed. Qi Yun quickly approached Director Fu to greet him politely, "Leader, you're here too."

Director Fu was slightly surprised to see him, but asked no further questions, simply nodding slightly, "Hmm, my father had some connections with the Tong family, and since he's not well enough, he sent me to see Tong Lao off."

Qi Yun wasn't surprised at this, considering how interconnected the top circles were, where most of the older generation knew each other.

At that moment, a middle-aged man next to Director Fu whispered a few words to him, and after hearing them, Director Fu gave Qi Yun an apologetic smile, "I heard from Old Xiao about your recent work, you've done well."

"Today's occasion isn't convenient, but if you have time tonight, you can come to my house, and we can have a good chat."

Qi Yun hastily nodded, "Alright, leader, you go ahead."

Director Fu replied with a light "Hmm," patted his arm, and headed towards the parking lot with his secretary.

Only after the two walked away did Qi Yun retract his gaze.

Previously, Xiao Hanguang had advised him to find time to visit Director Fu when he arrived in Beijing, saying it would do him no harm.

From Xiao Hanguang's attitude, it was evident that although Director Fu's position seemed somewhat marginal compared to other departments, he was certainly not lacking in influence.

However, Qi Yun's approach to engage was not primarily because of this, but because when he was detained under orders from Old He and others, Director Fu had personally stood up for him in Bird City, an act of kindness that Qi Yun had remembered in his heart.

After the funeral, Qi Yun went to Diaoyutai to meet with Salaman.

This time, Salaman even personally came to the elevator to greet him.

Salaman had already heard about the progress of the Beidou project cooperation and expressed his sincere gratitude to Qi Yun.

"Qi Yun, you are not just a friend of Salaman, but also a distinguished guest of the Oil Country!"

"If you need any help, I will use all my strength to assist you!"

Qi Yun accepted the champagne from the other party, responding with a light smile, "Hehe, since you said we're friends, there's no need for words of thanks."

"The help you've given me before, I've always remembered."

The two exchanged a knowing smile and clinked their wine glasses lightly.

Even though they could both see that their "sincerity" was somewhat diluted, it did not affect their close relationship at the moment.

And as long as their interests aligned in the future, they would remain close...

After the pleasantries, Qi Yun proactively brought up the issue of the photovoltaic project.

Salaman showed great enthusiasm for this and immediately called the head of the delegation.

"This is Abdu from the Ministry of Industry of the Oil Country. If there's anything you need to communicate, you can have your people contact him directly."

"My stance is, as long as you're ready on your side, we can sign the agreement at any time, and the first phase of \$4 billion can be allocated immediately."

Hearing this, Qi Yun felt relieved...

That evening, after visiting Xiao Hanguang and Director Fu, Qi Yun planned to return to Bird City.

Before leaving, he once again went to Tong Lao's courtyard and saw the young man Xiao Wu.

Xiao Wu evidently had deep feelings for Tong Lao, still looking worn out, with red-rimmed eyes.

Qi Yun glanced over two suitcases on the bluestone slab, indicating that the young man was also planning to leave.

"Leaving?"

Xiao Wu silently nodded, without a word.

Qi Yun didn't mind. It's normal for experts to have some unique personality.

"Where are you planning to go next?"

Xiao Wu still did not answer.

Qi Yun sighed, knowing that the other had yet to emerge from the sorrowful emotions.

After two seconds of silence, he sincerely said, "Would you be willing to work with me in the future? You can set your salary, and any requests you have can be made."

Upon hearing this, Xiao Wu looked up at Qi Yun, his eyes showing a trace of confusion.

But ultimately, he lowered his head again.

Seeing this, Qi Yun said no more, understanding that some things cannot be forced.

So he patted the other's arm, "If you need any help, contact me; you have my number."

Saying so, he left the courtyard with Chen Wei.

...

Bird City, a certain hospital.

Director Duan looked through the glass of the door at Brother Biao, who was handcuffed to the hospital bed inside.

"Still unwilling to confess?"

Beside him, Ge Dabao nodded with some resignation, "This guy clearly is an old desperado and a die-hard, hasn't said a word since being captured."

"And when he was caught, he was prepared to shoot himself, luckily Qi Yun's people stopped him."

After hearing this, Director Duan looked stern, "What about the other two?"

Because the three, including Brother Biao, all had guns and resisted when they were caught, each was shot in the arm by Duan Pingyu and his team and were sent directly to the hospital for treatment after capture.

Ge Dabao glanced at the neighboring ward, "The other two are the same, they probably guessed that even if they talk, it's a death sentence, so they refuse to cooperate."

Director Duan was silent for two seconds, then asked, "Have you checked their family situations?"

"We have, just finished cross-validation with the household registration department and the field team, all their relatives have passed away, they have no ties," Ge Dabao replied with a sigh.

Director Duan knitted his brows tightly, "No ties?"

"Check again! Check their spending records, communication records, and their whereabouts over the past year. I don't believe they care about nothing."

"Even if it's a pet dog or a plant, whatever can matter to them, dig it out for me!"

Chapter 516: No Less Cautious Than Anyone

At 10:30 PM, beside a quiet tree-lined path, Li Tongwei from S Office opened the car door and got out, promptly boarding the black Audi A6 parked in front.

"Leader."

After getting in, Li Tongwei respectfully greeted Old He.

Old He nodded slightly, glanced at the phone in his hand that had lost signal, and then put it into his pocket.

"Tongwei, you've been in this position for quite some time, haven't you?"

Upon hearing this, a hopeful glimmer flashed in Li Tongwei's eyes.

To have come this far, he had naturally worked his way up from the trenches; his political acumen was sharp without a doubt, so he could roughly guess the leader's intention in privately meeting him.

When such a remark is used as an opening, the subsequent conversation content is most likely related to his position.

"Yes, Leader, I've been in this position for five or six years." Li Tongwei answered in a calm voice. Though he guessed that perhaps an opportunity was coming, he still remained composed and did not show any impatience.

Old He's fingers lightly tapped on his knee, his gaze scanned outside through the car window.

The street lamp above had gone out, conveniently shrouding the Audi A6 in darkness.

"Five or six years, that's not short."

"Liu Fu, the SZ's age catches up, and he's going to Ren University later this year, leaving a vacancy. Who do you think would be suitable?"

Li Tongwei pondered for a while, then bitterly smiled and shook his head: "Leader, I'm afraid it's not appropriate for me to opine on such matters without due consideration."

"Hehe." Old He chuckled, glimpsed at him, and seeing Tongwei's reluctance to express an opinion, decided to come right out with it, "I am preparing to recommend you to fill his position."

Li Tongwei's breath hitched, sweat beaded in the palm of his clenched fist, and his entire body tensed.

Even though he had speculated countless times in his mind, hearing these words from Old He's mouth made his heart race uncontrollably, his ears even ringing momentarily.

He quickly bowed his head to quietly wipe the sweat from his palms...

When he raised his head again, the excitement in his eyes had largely subsided.

In terms of caution, Li Tongwei prided himself on being second to none.

The enticing bait was already dangling in front of him; it would be false to say he wasn't tempted, but before biting the hook, he had to ensure there was no angle he could get hooked on.

Otherwise, he might not even get to taste the bait and could end up losing his life.

"Leader... this, this is too sudden. Thank you for your trust in me, I will unconditionally obey the political arrangements, no matter what position I am in, and will fulfill my duties without fail..."

At first glance, these words seemed fine, but they weren't what Old He wanted.

He looked deeply at Li Tongwei, as if just realizing how cunning he was.

Old He's tapping suddenly ceased, and the air in the car seemed to freeze; his originally amiable smile turned into something more inscrutable.

"Obeying arrangements is a duty, but opportunities aren't given out of thin air." Old He's voice turned low, no longer beating around the bush, "There's something I need you to do..."

A few minutes later, Li Tongwei got out of the Audi A6 and returned to his car.

"Director, should I drive you home?" the driver asked, turning his head.

Li Tongwei seemed not to hear, his face full of hesitation. After a full half-minute of silence, he spoke slowly, "Go buy me a pack of cigarettes."

"Alright." The driver replied, pushed open the door, and got out.

After the driver left, Li Tongwei took out a cigarette box, lit one, and took several deep drags as his expression gradually turned resolute.

He took out his phone from his pocket, scrolled through his contacts, and dialed a number.

...

In the early morning, a flight from Beijing slowly touched down.

Qi Yun emerged from a special passage with Chen Wei and Niu Da, boarding a government vehicle that had been waiting for some time.

"Leader, Captain Ge and the others are now at the city hospital. I'll take you there," drove Guo An, the officer said.

"Alright, thank you." Leader Qi Yun nodded, responded politely, showing no airs.

Before boarding the plane, Ge Dabao had already spoken to him on the phone, saying that the captured guys were hardcore elements, unwilling to cooperate, and it would be hard to extract any valuable information from them in the short term.

So, after learning this, Qi Yun decided to stop by to see what was happening, perhaps to help expedite proceedings to bring Ma Chaoyang's group to swift justice.

Half an hour later, the car stopped in front of the inpatient department building, and Qi Yun and his party took the elevator to the 14th floor.

Just as they stepped out of the elevator, they saw the area cordoned off, with the entire 14th floor sealed.

The entrance to the fire exit and elevator was guarded by several uniformed Guo An officers verifying identities. Besides Guo An personnel, only attending physicians and nurses were allowed to enter this floor, showcasing extremely tight security.

Seeing Qi Yun's group emerge from the elevator, several officers immediately unfurled the cordon, and Qi Yun strode directly to an office at the end of the corridor.

Inside the office, Ge Dabao and several officers were still poring over the files of Brother Biao and his crew, trying to extract key information. Hearing the door open, he looked up, "You're back."

Qi Yun nodded at him, "How is it going?"

Ge Dabao set down the file in his hand, rubbed his tired eyes, and said with a weary tone, "Same old, the three of them have sealed lips like welded shut, not a piece of useful information can be pried out."

"We're checking their detailed information through various channels, hoping to find some clues."

During their conversation, the elevator doors opened again in the distance, and a figure in a white coat and mask emerged.

"Doctor Kang, haven't you finished your shift? Why are you back?" The guarding officer asked, puzzled.

The man referred to as Dr. Kang extended his left hand, took off his mask actively, and smiled, "The duty nurse mentioned there was some oozing from the patient's wound, so I came to check."

"I see." The officer thought nothing of it and opened the cordon.

Because Brother Biao and their identities were special, the hospital had specially arranged for Dr. Kang and four nurses to attend, barring other doctors from contact.

So there was nothing unusual about him returning to handle an emergency.

However, the officer did not notice that although Dr. Kang's face was calm, his right hand inside the white coat's pocket was faintly trembling.

Dr. Kang walked down the corridor, first stopping at the nurse's station to have the nurses prepare some sutures, gauze, and other tools, then carried a tray intending to head to the opposite ward.

The nurse behind also came around the counter, preparing to follow and assist, but was stopped by Dr. Kang, "No need for you to come, I can handle it myself."

"Go prepare three batches of anti-inflammatory fluids."

The nurse was momentarily stunned, gave a nod, and turned back to the nurse's station, "Understood."

Dr. Kang proceeded directly to the door of a ward diagonally opposite, which housed Liu Zi; next door were Old Cat and Brother Biao.

The officer at the door knew him, so did not obstruct, opened the door, and then stood quietly at the entrance.

Dr. Kang lifted the tray in his hand at the officer at the door, explaining, "I need to treat his wound." He then approached the patient's bed.

Chapter 517: Brother Biao's Intel

In the hospital room, Liu Zi leaned against the bed, his left wrist cuffed by a silver bracelet to the railing, while his right hand was hooked up to a drip.

His face was pale, his eyes vacant as he stared at the ceiling in a daze, not even turning his head upon hearing the noise.

Doctor Kang glanced at him, placed the tray on the cabinet beside him, and then bent down to prepare to remove the bandage from Liu Zi's arm.

His hands were still trembling slightly; as he removed the bandage, he discreetly observed the officer at the door, noticing that the officer was constantly watching him, which heightened Doctor Kang's already tense nerves.

"The wound is bleeding a little, I need to disinfect it for you."

After removing the bandage, Doctor Kang wiped the sweat off his forehead with his sleeve, his gaze sweeping over the rack where the IV bottles hung at the head of the bed; there were three or four bottles left, which would take several hours to finish dripping.

It took him only a few minutes to treat Liu Zi's wound. During the bandaging, he glanced over his shoulder again to find that the officer's gaze never left him.

Doctor Kang had no choice but to tidy up his tools and leave the hospital room quickly...

At the office at the end of the corridor, Qi Yun finished understanding the situation and said to Ge Dabao, "I'll go see him."

Ge Dabao nodded, "Okay, go ahead."

Qi Yun exited the office and, led by a Guo An officer, walked straight to Brother Biao's hospital room.

He pushed open the door, the smell of disinfectant immediately assaulted his nostrils.

Brother Biao's situation was similar to Liu Zi's, except he had jumped from a height of over five meters and had fractured his leg bones; now his leg was in a cast.

Upon hearing the noise at the door, he turned his head to look, seeing Qi Yun entering.

Brother Biao was obviously stunned for a moment, but quickly turned his head back, resuming his cold demeanor.

Qi Yun glanced at the unopened lunch box on the cabinet, confirming that Ge Dabao was right— he indeed was a stubborn case.

Without saying a word, he went straight in for the kill on Brother Biao.

[Current Intelligence Points: 16]

[Available Intelligence Types: Red (consumes 3 Intelligence Points), Blue (consumes 6 Intelligence Points)]

Hmm? There are actually two pieces of intelligence information?

[Intelligence Level (Red): Li Biao's son, Li Xiaoshuai, is in Grade Four, Class Two, at the Second Experimental Primary School. Yesterday, Li Xiaoshuai's nominal guardian (assigned by Old He) took a long leave for him and took him away from Bird City]

He has a son?

Qi Yun gave Brother Biao a surprised look, not expecting that he would hide it so deeply, with no records of it in his personal data.

[Intelligence Level (Blue): Li Biao has hidden ten kilograms of gold bars in the ceiling of the bathroom at his old lover's house]

Ten kilograms of gold bars! That's worth several million!

All these people involved in illegal dealings love stashing gold bars; it's a bit old-fashioned thinking.

Look at Baixiaosheng from Treasure Island; they're already using encrypted cryptocurrency...

After analyzing the intelligence, Qi Yun pondered for a moment, pulled over a chair, and sat down.

"Wanna chat?"

As expected, Brother Biao didn't even blink.

Qi Yun didn't get angry, crossed his legs, and asked casually, "Do you know Li Xiaoshuai?"

Brother Biao suddenly showed a reaction upon hearing the name "Li Xiaoshuai."

He turned his head abruptly, stared into Qi Yun's eyes, his pupils instantly narrowing.

But it was only a momentary surprise, and he quickly returned to his usual self.

"What Li Xiaoshuai? Don't know him." Perhaps even Brother Biao didn't notice the slight tremble in his voice.

The secret buried for years being exposed by someone made him feel nervous and at a loss.

Qi Yun chuckled lightly, "You think I'm bluffing? You don't genuinely believe there's any secret that Guo An can't uncover on this land, do you?"

"Let me give you another piece of news. Someone took a long leave for your son yesterday and has already taken him away."

Qi Yun originally thought the other party would panic or be afraid upon hearing this, but Brother Biao didn't react at all, which was somewhat unexpected.

"Why? Not worried?" Qi Yun put away his smile, leaning forward slightly, "You should know who took your son away, right? Why are you so assured of them?"

Brother Biao quickly calmed down from his fear, his gaze remaining fixed on the ceiling above him, as if Qi Yun's questions had nothing to do with him.

After a while, he slowly turned his head, his eyes fell on Qi Yun's face, and he pulled out a faint sneer from the corner of his mouth, "Why should I worry? Compared to you guys, I'd rather trust him."

"Stop wasting time and hurry up and sentence me to death."

The room fell into a brief silence. Qi Yun didn't rush to respond, realizing this guy was tough as nails, determined to stay on his chosen path, and had great trust in Old He...

At the same time, Doctor Kang also finished treating Old Cat's wound, preparing to enter this room to check on Brother Biao, only to be stopped by Chen Wei at the door: "Please wait for a moment, there's an interrogation going on inside."

Doctor Kang's expression froze, his right hand hidden in his pocket unconsciously clenched.

"I just need to check the wound to see if it's ruptured and bleeding, won't interfere with your investigation, it'll only take two minutes." He smiled politely and lifted the tray in his hand.

"No." Chen Wei's tone didn't relax even slightly, his hand still blocking the door, "Please leave immediately, I will inform you once the interrogation is finished."

Doctor Kang's smile froze instantly, not daring to say more, he had to turn around and leave.

As he turned, he also released his right hand hidden in his pocket, revealing that he had been holding a thin syringe all along.

The syringe contained a highly toxic liquid, which, when injected into the human vein, could cause a person's heart to stop within minutes, with the cause of death appearing to resemble sudden cardiac arrest, as was the demise of Qiu Jiahao and his father.

Originally, his plan was to inject a shot in the infusion bottles for all three during the check-up, ensuring their simultaneous death and allowing him to leave safely.

But the officer at the door kept a tight watch on his every move, leaving him no opportunity to strike.

Forced by circumstances, he had to resort to the backup plan, which involved the anti-inflammatory solution he had just asked the nurse to prepare.

Later, after finishing the check-up, he would quietly modify the anti-inflammatory solution and instruct the nurse to administer it under the guise of re-treating the wound.

This way, he could also withdraw quickly...

But now he was delayed again by Chen Wei...

As for why not wait until tomorrow, the urgency was because someone hadn't given him much time.

There was the earliest flight at six in the morning, and before then, those who approached him must receive the news of Brother Biao and the other two's demise to let him and his family leave.

And all of this was orchestrated by Old He.

Originally, he held Brother Biao's vice in his hands, not worrying too much about Brother Biao spilling information.

However, yesterday when Ma Chaoyang phoned him to report, a certain detail made him change his mind.

Ma Chaoyang informed Brother Biao, and the other party guaranteed that he wouldn't be captured alive.

Yet the final result was that all three were fucking captured alive.

Holding guns and even being given advance notice, was suicide really so difficult?

It was this guarantee that made the already suspicious Old He trust Brother Biao less and decide to silence him forever.

Chapter 518: Dead?

Back in his office, Doctor Kang was restless, constantly glancing at the clock on the wall, anxiety consuming him.

After a few minutes of indecision, he walked out of his office to the nurse's station and asked the duty nurse, "Is the anti-inflammatory solution ready?"

"It's ready." The nurse pointed at the small trolley nearby.

Doctor Kang nodded, casually found an excuse to temporarily send the young nurse away, and then pushed the trolley into the other room where he modified the three bottles of anti-inflammatory solution.

When he emerged after finishing, Qi Yun also happened to leave Brother Biao's ward.

Doctor Kang's eyes narrowed slightly as he picked up the tray and went to Brother Biao's ward, pretending to treat his wounds.

After dressing the gauze, he retreated and returned to the nurse's station.

"The wounds of the three patients are inflamed, you should administer the anti-inflammatory solution to them now," Doctor Kang instructed the young nurse.

"Administer it now? But Huahua just finished giving them the solution right before her shift ended, and it hasn't been six hours yet," the nurse hesitated, flipping through the medical records.

Doctor Kang reached for the medical record and pretended to scrutinize it before closing it swiftly, speaking sternly, "The afternoon dosage wasn't enough. I just checked the wounds and found the inflammation hasn't subsided; it needs another dose, otherwise it will be harder to handle tomorrow."

"Do as I said, if anything goes wrong, I'll take responsibility."

The young nurse hesitated but didn't ask further, "Okay, I'll go administer it now."

Seeing the young nurse push the trolley towards Liu Zi's room opposite, Doctor Kang breathed a long sigh of relief. He dared not linger, fearing exposure and unable to extricate himself, thus he quickly disappeared down the corridor...

Not far away, in the office, Qi Yun was recounting the information he had "arranged for investigation" to Ge Dabao.

"He has a son!?" Ge Dabao showed surprise.

Qi Yun nodded, "Yes, attending fourth grade at the Second Experimental Primary School, named Li Xiaoshuai, took an extended leave from school yesterday, suspect he's already been taken away."

After speaking, he added, "But this guy's mouth is tight, even knowing his son is taken, he remains indifferent."

Beside him, a J officer interjected angrily, "These people are truly shameless! Using children as bargaining chips!"

Ge Dabao frowned, remained silent, and after contemplating for a few seconds, he immediately made arrangements, "Xiao Liu, take a team and investigate his son's information immediately, bring the child back safely!"

"Dayou, come with me to interrogate him, we must make him talk." Ge Dabao said as he picked up the documents on the table, eyes determined, "Even if he trusts those people, his heart surely cannot be at ease."

"Lao Qi, you've been through so much traveling, go rest now. I'll notify you with any news immediately."

"Alright." Qi Yun didn't refuse, he had done his part, and the rest was left to the professionals, "An Zai, get us some midnight snacks."

"Okay." An Zai agreed promptly and walked away.

Qi Yun also stood up from his chair, patting Ge Dabao's arm, "Thanks a lot for your hard work."

...

On the other side, Doctor Kang left the inpatient building, then dashed headlong to the parking lot.

Getting into his car, he shakily took out his phone and dialed a number.

"I...I've done as you said, once those people find out the suspect is dead, they'll surely suspect me, send me away now!"

Responding was a middle-aged man's voice, "No need to worry. Even if they suspect you, it doesn't matter. I'll arrange for a J car to take your family to the airport once results are confirmed, ensuring you board smoothly."

Doctor Kang's heart still pounded furiously as he started the car and quickly drove away, shouting tearfully, "Don't lie to me!"

Though he had no confidence, he dared not utter threats, only praying the other side would keep their promise, as the person on the phone had already revealed their identity upon contacting him.

Moreover, they held evidence of his dirty dealings with pharmaceutical companies, enough to ruin the latter half of his life; he wouldn't dare risk such a deadly act otherwise...

In the ward, Ge Dabao and another J officer resumed interrogating Brother Biao, a case of Red Bull placed on the floor beside them, clearly ready to break him tonight.

Ge Dabao laid the transcript on the table, grabbed a can of Red Bull and popped the tab, taking a big sip as his gaze fell on Brother Biao's taut face, "Do you really think your son is safe in their hands?"

Brother Biao kept his eyes shut, unresponsive, as if asleep.

Ge Dabao remained calm, continuing to persuade, "You know your situation; even if you don't speak, with your accomplices' identification and our evidence, conviction is certain."

"Once you're dead, your son becomes a burden to them. Will they still treat him well?"

"I've seen too much of this over the years..."

Finally, Brother Biao's closed eyes trembled involuntarily, but he didn't open them, merely his Adam's apple moved, swallowing back words on the verge of escaping.

He understood Ge Dabao's words were true, and internally, he also didn't fully trust those people, but had no choice.

Firstly, because his son was under their control, knowing his own fate was sealed, he dared not risk it.

Secondly, even if his son were safe, who would care for him after his death? If he spoke recklessly, would they retaliate?

Seeing from his perspective, the visible options were limited.

He didn't think the 'Boss' would fall, given the Boss had rooted in the region for so long, with influence untouchable; even if he disclosed everything, it might have no impact, potentially putting his son in danger.

Thus, he chose endurance, hoping his willingness to die might reward his son with a better future...

As silence pervaded inside, voices emerged from outside the door.

"The patient just got his wound treated. Per Doctor Kang's order, I need to administer anti-inflammatory solution immediately to prevent infection," the young nurse explained to Guo An at the door.

The J officer shook his head firmly, "No, suspects are being interrogated inside. Regulations prohibit disturbance. Wait till the interrogation is over."

The young nurse, helpless, pushed the trolley back, intending to return later.

Time passed quickly, though Captain Ge explained the stakes clearly, Brother Biao showed no sign of cooperating.

Suddenly, a shout echoed down the hallway!

"Something's wrong! The suspect's heartbeat stopped!"

Chapter 519: The Key Man—Comrade Qi Yun

"What? Someone's dead!?"

On the way home, Qi Yun received a call from An Zai. The news coming through the receiver left his face full of shock.

"How did they die!?"

"Brother Wei, turn around and go back!"

Before long, Qi Yun was hurrying back to the hospital, where he saw Ge Dabao questioning a young nurse in the corridor.

"What did you inject him with just now?"

The young nurse was already terrified, clutching the hem of her shirt with trembling hands, "It... it was the anti-inflammatory liquid prescribed by Doctor Kang, called... cefoperazone sodium... He said the patient's wound was bleeding, so I... I just did as he said..."

As she spoke, she shrank back to the corner, tears streaming down her cheeks, "I... I really didn't know there was a problem with the injection! Doctor Kang..."

Ge Dabao's eyebrows furrowed together. Seeing that he couldn't get more information, he signaled the police officer beside him to take her away.

"Send those bottles of anti-inflammatory liquid for testing immediately!"

"And go bring Doctor Kang back!"

"Yes!" The officer beside him quickly received the order and hurried off one by one.

Qi Yun walked up and asked in a low voice, "How is Brother Biao?"

Ge Dabao turned, glancing in the direction of Brother Biao's ward, "He's fine. We were just interrogating him, and the nurse didn't have time to get him on the IV."

Relieved by these words, Qi Yun recognized this was clearly an attempt to silence them, but luckily the most critical person was not dead.

"This was a oversight... It's my responsibility." Ge Dabao sighed.

Qi Yun thought for a moment, then patted him on the shoulder, "Now's not the time to talk about responsibility."

"Although the suspect is dead now, this might be an opportunity for us. I don't believe he can keep his mouth shut."

Ge Dabao paused, instantly grasping the meaning behind Qi Yun's words.

Minutes later, they returned to Brother Biao's hospital room. Although Brother Biao didn't know exactly what was happening outside, he had heard some commotion, and an ominous feeling had settled in his heart; he just didn't want to believe it.

"Your two brothers are dead, someone poisoned their IV bottles."

"If we hadn't been interrogating you just now, do I even need to say what kind of outcome you would've faced?" Ge Dabao didn't mince words, stating the truth directly.

Upon hearing this, Brother Biao's eyebrows furrowed tightly. It went without saying that he knew who wanted them dead.

But despite knowing, Brother Biao still had no intention of cooperating. To him, the three of them were already on a dead end path, whether they died in execution or were killed by those sent by his own people. There wasn't much difference.

However, there was a slight fear creeping into his heart, he couldn't understand why Old He still didn't trust him.

Seeing the other party remain silent, Ge Dabao continued, "In this situation, can you still trust him?"

"Even if you don't think for yourself, you should consider your son, who is now constantly in danger!"

"As long as you cooperate, we will do our utmost to bring your son back safely..."

Unfortunately, no matter how Ge Dabao tried to persuade, Brother Biao remained unresponsive.

At this moment, Qi Yun, who had been silent, suddenly spoke up.

"What do you think Old He would think if he found out you were still alive?"

With these words, Brother Biao turned sharply, his eyes fixed on Qi Yun, looking as if he wanted to eat him alive.

Qi Yun shrugged indifferently, "You don't have to look at me like that. You can put yourself in his shoes, what would you do if you were him?"

Brother Biao's chest heaved violently, and there was a hint of panic in his eyes that even he hadn't noticed.

He opened his mouth to retort but swallowed his words.

Qi Yun's words were like a needle, bursting the bubble of self-deception he had been in.

If he were Old He, knowing Liu Zi and Old Cat were dead while he was still alive, what would he think?

Qi Yun, observing his reaction, continued, "Guo An's people are already looking for your son and will ensure his safe return."

"However, you know what kind of person Old He is and how much power he holds; if he remains free, do you think your son can ever live in peace?"

Brother Biao swallowed, clenching his handcuffed fists so tightly it affected his breathing. "Save... save my son!"

As the words fell, Qi Yun and Ge Dabao exchanged a glance and both breathed a sigh of relief.

If the guy had kept silent, they wouldn't have been able to do much with him in the short term.

"Don't worry, we will surely bring your son back safely. Now, let's get your story straightened out." With that, Ge Dabao called someone to take a statement, while he and Qi Yun left the room together.

They proceeded to the emergency exit, where Ge Dabao took out a pack of cigarettes, offering one to Qi Yun before lighting one himself; with a deep inhale, the tense atmosphere from earlier finally dissipated a bit.

Qi Yun held a cigarette between his fingers, sitting on the stairs, "Will you find his son?"

Ge Dabao sat down on the stairs beside him, flicking the ash of his cigarette, "Don't worry, whether it's a living person or even just a mosquito, they'll manage to find him."

Qi Yun nodded, having no doubt about that claim, given the machinery of Country.

"With Li Biao's confession, can we move against Old He?"

"This matter can't be rushed," Ge Dabao said with a bit of helplessness, "You know his position; unless it involves certain sensitive issues, it's not something we can handle."

"But the investigation team is here for this matter. The Commissioner wants us to quietly secure the evidence and then hand it over to the investigation team."

"Understood." Qi Yun exhaled a long plume of smoke, pondering for a while, "If we release a rumor that Li Biao and the others are all dead, won't it make the other side relax their vigilance more?"

Ge Dabao's eyes lit up, "You really are a crafty one, that's a good suggestion!" Saying this, he extinguished his cigarette and stood up, "I'll make the arrangements now to prevent any information leaks!"

...

At eight-thirty in the morning, just after finishing his morning run, Old He received a call from Li Tongwei.

"Boss, it's done."

Old He wiped sweat with a towel, asking casually, "Confirmed?"

"Yes, confirmed."

"Good, I understand, wait for the result then."

Old He hung up and breathed a long sigh of relief, suddenly feeling hungry and told the housekeeper to prepare more breakfast.

Although neither of them explicitly mentioned what was resolved, they both understood the implication of the dialogue.

At ten to nine, Old He cheerfully arrived at the office. As soon as he sat down, his secretary knocked on the door and came in to report.

"Sir, he came to see you personally just now."

"Did something happen?" A hint of seriousness flashed in Old He's eyes; if it weren't important, the person wouldn't need to come personally.

The secretary shook his head, "No, he asked you to stop by his office."

Old He said no more, making his way upstairs.

A few minutes later, he met the elder in the office.

"The secretary mentioned you came to see me personally earlier, is there an urgent matter?"

The elder set down his thermos cup, gesturing for Old He to take a look at a document.

Old He took the document and sat on the sofa next to him. After reading just a few lines, shock was clear in his eyes.

"Qi Yun!?"

The elder nodded, "That's right, this came from a friend of mine just now."

"The Oil Country's photovoltaic project procurement has been confirmed, a total of ten billion USD! That's not a small order."

As he said this, his eyes shifted to Old He, continuing with a hint of deeper meaning, "If I remember correctly, Qi Yun works in our J Province, right?"

"With him overseeing the photovoltaic project affairs, it's an advantage for our J Province. I think you should get in touch with him, to ensure the photovoltaic project lands in J Province!"

Old He didn't quite catch the latter part of his words, maintaining composure outwardly, but internally, a storm was brewing.

He couldn't comprehend why someone so minor could suddenly become a key figure, even reaching a point where he himself had to make arrangements...

Moreover, he couldn't refuse because it was indeed part of his duties...

Chapter 520: No Face to Show Here

Golden Collar Villa, Qi Yun had just sent his daughter and Zhao Qing to kindergarten, and was about to check on the construction of the health product factory, only to receive a somewhat unexpected call.

Qi Yun's steps halted beside the car, looking at the words "S Prefecture Office, Director Luo" displayed on the screen, a hint of surprise flashed in his eyes.

Previously, when searching for Loulan Ancient City relics in Lop Nur, he had met Director Luo once. After returning to Bird City, Qi Yun had specifically thought of visiting him, but Director Luo had avoided meeting him.

Why would he suddenly call now, and for what reason?

Qi Yun steadied himself and pressed the answer button, "Hello, Director Luo." His tone was neither humble nor pushy, and he addressed him as "you" instead of the previous "you" in a formal sense.

"Haha, Consultant Qi, hello!" Director Luo was much more enthusiastic on the other end of the line, "Sorry for calling suddenly, hope I'm not disturbing you?"

Qi Yun was even more surprised, not expecting the other party to lower himself that much, and even respectfully addressing his position.

It seems not only does he know about Qi Yun's current situation, but he also likely needs something from him.

Otherwise, a person in such a high position wouldn't need to be so humble.

"You're too kind, Director Luo. What can I do for you?" Qi Yun opened the car door and sat down, speaking in a still steady tone.

Director Luo on the other end chuckled twice, warming up even more, "Haha, well, I was wondering if Consultant Qi has time for lunch? I'd like to treat you and casually inquire about the photovoltaic project."

Qi Yun smiled upon hearing this, no wonder the other party was so enthusiastic, turns out it was for this matter.

These people are really well-informed; just after the top decision was made, they already got word.

However... it's definitely not Director Luo who caught wind, his level isn't high enough to hear news from Beijing.

And Director Luo is part of S Prefecture Office, not responsible for this kind of economic construction work, so the answer to who sent him to make this call becomes clear.

Qi Yun glanced out the car window, casually replied, "Sorry, Director Luo, today might be inconvenient, my company has some urgent matters to handle. Another day, I'll treat you."

Director Luo was clearly taken aback on the other end, probably didn't expect to be so bluntly refused.

"Then... tonight? Or tomorrow is good too? Just a simple meal, won't take up too much of your time, mainly want to consult on the photovoltaic project's implementation ideas."

"Our S Prefecture is very focused on this project! Really hope it can finally settle in J Province!" Director Luo was still persistently trying.

Qi Yun heard the urgency in the other's tone, seems Old He gave Director Luo quite some pressure, but it has nothing to do with him.

"Sorry, I've just returned from Beijing, my hands are quite full with work, can't really get away, another day."

Saying that, he didn't give the other party a chance to speak, directly hung up the phone.

Qi Yun pocketed the phone, a hint of coldness flashed in his eyes.

If possible, he'd naturally want the photovoltaic project to land in J Province, after all, it's a place he's lived in for half his life, there are some feelings involved.

But there's a precondition, which is Old He being out of the picture.

He's not about to become a stepping stone for him.

...

Elsewhere, in Old He's office, after listening to Director Luo's report, his face already not looking good turned even darker.

"Leader, what do you think..."

Director Luo didn't finish, but the meaning was clear, Qi Yun totally ignores him.

Being able to reach this position, he surely is a seasoned veteran, naturally knowing why Qi Yun has such an attitude, after all, last time Xiao Hanguang and Director Fu personally went to S Prefecture to support Qi Yun, anyone even slightly informed knows what's up.

Old He was tight-lipped, remained silent for a long time before pretending to be calm, "Go find Director Li from the Guozhi Committee in the province, you two discuss it and then communicate with Qi Yun again."

Director Luo heard, quickly nodded in agreement, "Yes! I'll contact Director Li right away."

Having someone to share the pressure is the best for anyone in this situation.

After leaving the office, Old He's secretary came up, asking in a lowered voice, "Director, is Qi Yun acting so high-handed?"

The secretary, though looking young, had a shrewd look in his eyes, of course knowing Qi Yun's background is very complex, after all, he can even make connections with the Crown Prince of the Oil Country.

The reason for pretending to ask is also to gather more information, as he just arrived recently, Old He doesn't absolutely trust him, knowing more inside details certainly won't hurt.

Director Luo didn't stop walking, only gave him a side glance, replied somewhat impatiently, "High-handed? He has the capital to be high-handed."

Pausing at this, remembering the tense atmosphere in Old He's office earlier, he added a touch of warning in his tone, "Don't ask questions you shouldn't, be smart yourself, think of the consequences before acting."

If the other wasn't someone he recommended, he wouldn't bother to say more.

The secretary quickly nodded, attitude very proper, "Yes, I understand, thank you for the guidance, Director."

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At Yunqing Pharmaceutical Corporation, Qi Yun looked at the newly replaced gilded sign at the entrance of the pharmaceutical factory, the corners of his mouth involuntarily turned up.

"What do you think? Is this name okay? Matches with your network company." Cao Yufei asked with a smile beside him.

Qi Yun, hands behind his back, nodded with an air of authority, "Mm, it's nice."

The two walked into the factory area, the entire pharmaceutical factory had undergone extensive renovation and rebuilding under Qi Yun's substantial financial input.

Including the two large warehouses previously burned down by fire, and the old office building, all renewed entirely.

"The equipment brought from Germany has been installed, Pang Zefeng has already started leading people in research."

"Health products don't inherently have high technical content, I estimate sample production in at most a month."

"Then we'll contact an advertising firm, and with you personally appearing for promotion as a celebrity, the effect surely will be good!"

Cao Yufei continued detailing the pharmaceutical company's situation and its future direction, overall quite promising, and Qi Yun's investment of over thirty million wasn't wasted.

"Alright, I'll leave this to you, I have one requirement, be sure to ensure product safety," Qi Yun said with a serious tone.

"Rest assured on this." Cao Yufei solemnly nodded, "Our production raw materials are inherently harmless, I'll also specifically establish a quality control department, strict oversight will be implemented."

"Good, then go about your work, I'll head to the other company. If there are any issues with application procedures later, feel free to call me."

Qi Yun didn't linger for long, once he had a general idea of the situation, he rushed to the network company again.