

Middle Age 521

Chapter 521: I'll Damn Well Handle the Negotiation Myself!

New District, Guozhi Committee Building of Province J, Director Li is standing at the window making a phone call.

"Haha, Chairman Jiang, I heard you have some relationship with that consultant Qi. This time, I really need your help to get in touch. I'm truly out of options and have come to you for help."

Chairman Jiang on the other end of the line pondered for a moment and then slowly spoke: "Director Li, it's not that I don't want to help you make the connection. The rumors outside aren't reliable. I've only met Qi Yun twice, and we don't have a deep relationship."

"He doesn't give you much face, let alone pay attention to an old man like me on the brink of the grave."

Director Li's smile froze, and his voice carried a hint of pleading: "Chairman Jiang, how could you say that... Everyone in the business circle of Province J knows your status. Even if you've only met twice, if you speak up, the consultant Qi would give some face."

He paused, fearing that Chairman Jiang might refuse again, and quickly added: "To be frank, on one hand, I truly want to fight for this solar project to be in Province J. It would bring great vitality to our local supporting industries."

"On the other hand... This matter was personally assigned to me by He. If I can't even meet him, I can't explain it to He."

"Please just help me out, even if it's just to pass a message, to get the consultant Qi willing to talk with me."

"Ah!" Chairman Jiang sighed.

Last time, when Qi Yun was arrested, he also helped secretly under the coordination of Vice Secretary Peng, so he clearly understood the conflict between Qi Yun and old He and didn't want to get involved in this matter.

But Director Li, who was calling, had quite a good personal relationship with him, and it wouldn't be very humane to refuse again after what he said.

"Alright, I'll ask for you, but I can't guarantee if he'll be willing to meet you."

Upon hearing this, Director Li felt relieved: "Thank you so much, Chairman Jiang! As long as you're willing to help, regardless of the outcome, I'll remember this favor!"

As long as he could meet him, his responsibility would be fulfilled, regardless of whether the project negotiations succeeded or not; at least he would have an explanation for old He.

Anyway, the reason behind this is clear to anyone with a discerning eye; even with all his authority, old He can't just offload the blame onto someone else.

On the other side, in the office of the municipal zx, Vice Secretary Peng also received a call from Director Luo, the content similar to that of Director Li's side.

However, old Peng didn't have such a deep relationship with the other party, and last time, he directly bypassed the municipal zx, and directly had provincial zx issue procedures to arrest Qi Yun, clearly not considering them worthy, so he was even less likely to do this favor.

"Alright, Director Luo, rest assured, I'll communicate with Qi Yun now."

Although he agreed politely, after hanging up the phone, old Peng immediately tossed the matter aside, humming a little tune and continuing to read the newspaper.

...

In the car returning to the company, Qi Yun received a call from Chairman Jiang.

The latter first mentioned Director Li coming to him and then added: "I'm giving you this call purely because of my relationship with him."

"As for whether you want to meet him, that's up to you, don't worry about my side."

Qi Yun listened with a faint smile at the corner of his mouth: "Chairman Jiang, I understand your intention. And thank you for specifically telling me these things."

"He has no face with me, but you do. Since you've spoken up, I'll meet him then."

"However, I'll only meet him alone. Let him call me this evening."

Chairman Jiang on the other end of the line paused, then laughed and sighed: "Haha, it turns out this old man still has some influence."

"Then I'll inform him."

"Alright, I'll come to visit you once I'm done in these couple of days."

After hanging up, Qi Yun lit a cigarette.

If the solar project is eventually going to land in Province J, then interacting with the Guozhi Committee of Province J is inevitable, just a matter of time.

Since Chairman Jiang made the call, it might be better to give the other party face and meet Director Li in advance after all.

More than ten minutes later, Qi Yun arrived at the company, and just as he entered the lobby, Zhong Rui jogged over to greet him.

"Boss."

Qi Yun nodded slightly, walking towards the office, while asking, "Is there anything on the company side that needs my attention?"

"The trading company is operating normally, there is nothing at the moment that requires your attention."

"But... there's a little trouble on the network company side..." Zhong Rui said in a hesitant manner.

Qi Yun paused his steps and glanced at Zhong Rui: "What trouble?"

Zhong Rui looked in the direction of Xiang Xiaoyue's office across and hesitated: "Shall we talk in your office?"

Qi Yun looked puzzled but didn't ask further, instead, he headed towards the office.

Zhong Rui quickly followed, and the two went into the office one after the other as he gently closed the door behind him.

"Here's the thing, boss, last time I reported to you that Tianhong Games wanted to discuss an acquisition with us."

"Hmm, I said to let Xiang Xiaoyue handle it, right?"

Zhong Rui nodded: "Yes, Director Xiang clearly rejected their acquisition proposal, but they didn't give up and started using some despicable means."

"Not only did they approach our employees and offer double salaries to poach, but they also hired internet trolls to smear our game."

"Furthermore, when Director Xiang was on her way home from work the day before yesterday, she was... harassed by two thugs, likely hired by them." Zhong Rui shared cautiously, observing Qi Yun's reaction.

As expected, Qi Yun's expression turned extremely unpleasant.

Poaching, smearing, these can still be considered business practices, but hiring thugs is disgracefully despicable.

"Why didn't you tell me earlier?"

Zhong Rui shrank his neck: "Director... Xiang told me not to say, she said she'd handle it herself..."

"She's a girl, encountering such a situation on the way home, how can she handle it? Did she report it to the police? Was she hurt?" Qi Yun's voice carried a hint of anger, not directed at Zhong Rui, but at the disgraceful behavior of Tianhong Games.

"She reported it... They haven't found anyone yet. Director Xiang wasn't injured, just a bit frightened..." Zhong Rui replied cautiously.

Qi Yun frowned: "Where did it happen? Was there no surveillance around?"

"On Changning Road... There's no surveillance around there."

After he got the location, Qi Yun pondered for two seconds, took out his phone, and found Luo Yang's number to dial.

"Well, Director Qi, what makes you think of calling me today?" Luo Yang joked familiarly on the other end of the line.

"Haha, I need a favor." Qi Yun smiled, getting straight to the point, "Help me find two people..."

If it's about finding people, especially those mixed in society, Luo Yang's team is second to none.

After arranging matters, Qi Yun looked up at Zhong Rui again and continued to ask: "Who's the person they sent over?"

"His name is Ding Junkai; he's the deputy general manager of Tianhong Games, quite young, and has a rather arrogant attitude."

"I investigated this person a bit, and the online information says... he seems to be related to the boss behind Tianhong Games' Net One Company." Zhong Rui answered cautiously.

Net One Company?

Both surnamed Ding?

No wonder they're so brash.

Qi Yun picked up a cigarette box, lit one up, smoked two puffs, and said expressionlessly: "Isn't he aiming to acquire? Call him now and tell him to come over, I damn well want to talk to him in person!"

Chapter 522: Fighting for President Qi in This Life

At four in the afternoon, an Alpha business car stopped at the parking lot of Qi Yun Company's office building.

The car door opened, and the first to step out was a young man in a black suit.

He looked to be about twenty-six or seven years old, with meticulously styled hair and a limited edition sports watch on his wrist—the Vice President of Sky Rainbow Game Company, Ding Junkai.

He also held another identity as the second son of Ding Sanshi, the owner of Net One Company.

Net One Company is a domestic internet giant, covering game, social, and e-commerce sectors, with a market value in the billions, almost an unquestionable presence in the industry.

Especially in the gaming sector, when an ordinary small company gets targeted, there's almost no chance to refuse.

Either get acquired or be crushed by capital pressure.

If there isn't strong financial backing, there's virtually no third choice—similar incidents are all too common.

For the current acquisition, Ding Junkai represented the capital, so in his eyes, a small, shabby company like Yunqing Technology was merely trivial. It's Qi Yun's honor that he's interested...

Right behind him getting off the car were Hu Chengqi and Yan Xirui, who had visited once before.

It was apparent the former was very respectful of this young master Ding, quickly bowing down to lead the way once they got off: "President Ding, this way."

Ding Junkai did not respond, tugged at his suit collar, and his gaze swept over the office building in front of him, filled with arrogance.

Yan Xirui standing behind pursed her lips quietly, inwardly scoffing, unsure why this guy was putting on airs in Jiang Province! Wearing a suit in the middle of summer!

But despite her inner rant, she dared not express it on her face, merely followed the two into the building.

Before long, the elevator arrived at this floor of Qi Yun Company, where Zhong Rui was waiting to guide them to the meeting room.

Zhong Rui pushed open the door, gesturing for them to enter, with a plain tone: "President Ding, Manager Yan, Manager Hu, please come in. Our boss is still handling some matters and will join us shortly."

Upon hearing this, Ding Junkai's tone carried a slight impatience: "Make it quick, my time is valuable, I don't have time to waste here."

Without waiting for Zhong Rui's response, he directly entered the meeting room, glanced around, and finally settled into the chair next to the main seat, sitting down unceremoniously, as if he was the company's owner.

Zhong Rui gave him a glance, placed three bottles of water down, and then left the meeting room, heading to Qi Yun's office next door to report.

"Boss, they're here."

Inside the office, Qi Yun was on the phone with Tao Ziming, nodded at Zhong Rui, and continued talking on the phone: "Can you confirm if the data Lucas has will aid your research?"

"Yes! He already showed me a part of it, if we can access the complete experimental data, the research time can be halved!"

"I am confident to produce the new materials within a month! And it will be at least two generations ahead of the current market batteries!" The excitement in Tao Ziming's voice was evident.

Qi Yun tapped his fingers on the desk, decisively made a decision: "One million USD is not a problem, I can allocate the money."

"But I've already invested over a hundred million, Old Tao, don't disappoint me."

Upon hearing this, Tao Ziming solemnly assured: "Rest assured, President Qi, once we obtain the complete data, I guarantee we can produce samples within a month!"

"Once our product is mass-produced, it will be revolutionary in the new energy battery field!"

Seeing his confident demeanor, Qi Yun didn't say more: "Alright, I trust you. Arrange the transaction with him, I'll have the money wired from abroad."

"Okay!" Joy filled Tao Ziming's voice, "President Qi, I won't let you bear this alone, I'll voluntarily transfer 15% of the company shares to you without compensation. The transfer agreement is ready, you can sign it anytime."

A flicker of surprise flashed in Qi Yun's eyes, unexpected that this guy knew how to repay kindness, he indeed didn't choose the wrong person.

Based on the two billion valuation his father-in-law-to-be gave Dawn Technology, 15% of the shares amounted to thirty million.

"Old Tao, that's unnecessary." Qi Yun's tone was slightly emotional, "The reason I chose to invest initially was because of you, I believe you can achieve something remarkable."

"Forget about the shares, producing new materials is the greatest return to me."

The words actually mixed with some exaggeration, Qi Yun's initial investment of over thirty million was primarily based on trust in the system's intelligence...

Though the atmosphere had built up, you should say something touching in the end, right?

But Qi Yun wasn't being insincere; he truly did not intend to take the 15% shares.

As a founder, Tao Ziming had already relinquished a considerable amount of his shares for new material research.

If he were to take this 15%, then the person would practically be reduced from a boss to a mere worker.

Regardless of Qi Yun's inner thoughts, when Dawn Technology becomes a sensation and is under the spotlight, others might discuss Qi Yun's greed and it wouldn't be good for his reputation.

In business, reputation becomes more crucial when the scale increases...

"President Qi, I..." Listening to Qi Yun's few poignant words, Tao Ziming was even more moved, immediately expressing his willingness to stand by President Qi forever—only to have Qi Yun say there were matters waiting to be handled, ending the heartfelt conversation.

"Alright, then President Qi, I'll let you carry on with your business. I'll report any progress to you immediately."

After hanging up, Qi Yun glanced at his watch, showing no intention of getting up.

He pointed to the sofa beside him: "Sit, report to me your mental dynamics since taking charge of the company."

Zhong Rui touched his nose, walked over to the sofa and sat down: "Boss, you're not going to meet them?"

Qi Yun crossed his legs, lit a cigarette, and replied calmly: "No rush, the time isn't right."

...

Downstairs, inside a van in the parking lot, Luo Yang's lead hand asked one of the lackeys next to him: "Is Xiaohu ready?"

The lackey leaned in to respond: "Ready, all nearby surveillance is off, Xiaohu brought over the girl he's cheating with, that woman is a professional scammer, sure to fool them."

The lead hand nodded with satisfaction: "Tell him to check the blood bag and ensure it bleeds the instant contact is made."

"Don't worry, Brother San, that woman won't lose to professional actors in deceit!"

With arrangements in place, the lead hand opened the car door, and jogged to a J car parked by the roadside.

As the window rolled down, he obsequiously handed over a cigarette, speaking with a grin: "Captain Ma, it's all set."

Ma Baoguo waved a hand, and replied casually: "Be mindful of the impact, don't cause too much disturbance."

The lead hand nodded and bowed quickly: "Rest assured, Captain Ma, it'll be handled properly!"

"Alright, off you go." Ma Baoguo said no more, took out his phone, and started to draft a message.

...

Back in the office upstairs, Qi Yun picked up his phone from the desk, glanced at it, then stood up: "Let's go, time to meet this young master Ding."

Chapter 523: Even If Your Old Man Came, He Wouldn't Dare Boast Like That!

Qi Yun had just arrived at the office door when he vaguely heard Ding Junkai's complaints inside.

"Hu Chengqi, go ask them what the hell they're doing?"

"If I walk out of this door today, I won't give them another penny. Let them wait for bankruptcy!"

"Don't be angry, Mr. Ding. I'll go right away and have their boss come see you." Hu Chengqi's voice had a hint of flattering: "This Qi Yun must be deliberately stringing us along, trying to get more money from us."

"Don't worry, I'll talk to him properly later, and make sure he obediently agrees to sell the company to us."

No sooner had he finished speaking, Qi Yun strode in swiftly, his gaze sweeping over the two by the table, with a cold smile at the corner of his mouth: "Looks like Manager Hu can read minds. You even know what's on my mind."

Hu Chengqi's smile froze, his hand still in the posture of pushing the door, glancing awkwardly at Ding Junkai.

Seeing Qi Yun enter, Ding Junkai raised his eyebrows, and the anger that was simmering again flared up.

He looked at Qi Yun, his tone condescendingly arrogant: "Leaving us waiting here all day, is this you deliberately putting on airs with me?"

Qi Yun glanced at him, expressionless, and placed a document titled "Acquisition Agreement" on the desk, then pulled out a chair and sat down.

"I've seen your acquisition plan; selling the company to you isn't impossible."

Hearing this, Ding Junkai scoffed, a smug smile curling at his lips.

He leaned back in his chair, adjusting his sleeves: "Had you said this earlier, it would've saved a lot of time."

"So, what are your terms?" In his view, Qi Yun was just fronting, and now wasn't he obediently conceding?

Young Master Ding had never failed to get anything he wanted since he was born, and if he had, he'd just ask his dad for more Gold Coins.

If not for the need to show some achievements for the smooth takeover later, he wouldn't have bothered to come all the way to this lousy company.

Hu Chengqi also breathed a sigh of relief, quickly moving forward, plastered with a smile: "Exactly, exactly, President Qi, it's great you're willing to part with it."

"We came with utmost sincerity this time, even Mr. Ding personally stepped in..."

"Stop talking for a moment." Qi Yun raised his hand, interrupting Hu Chengqi before he finished speaking.

Hu Chengqi's smile froze once more, retreating awkwardly a couple of steps, not daring to speak further.

Recently, the internet had been flooded with news about Qi Yun, which he had seen; this was someone praised on the mainstream news, not someone a small fry like him could afford to offend.

It's uncertain whether Qi Yun could handle Ding Junkai, but dealing with him would likely be just a word.

The reason he had spoken as he did earlier was out of concern for this Young Master Ding's face, after all, he had to rely on him for promotion and raises, but it didn't mean he was unaware of the situation.

Qi Yun could donate national treasures without blinking an eye—how could he be just an ordinary small boss? Only someone like Ding Junkai, with his eyes on top of his head, would be foolishly ignorant.

But speaking of which, wasn't this Young Master Ding unaware of Qi Yun's background? Of course not.

Before they came from Rongcheng to Bird City, a detailed dossier on Qi Yun had been gathered by Tianhong Games Company's professional business team.

Ding Junkai had glanced at it casually, but he didn't care.

Because his father was someone who attended the Great Assembly Hall every year, welcomed by big shots wherever he went, which led him to mistakenly believe that his father's prowess equaled his own, hence he didn't regard Qi Yun highly.

Qi Yun ignored the cowering Hu Chengqi on the side, his gaze falling on Ding Junkai: "I have just one question, answer it honestly, and I'll agree to discuss the acquisition."

Ding Junkai frowned, his face once again showing impatience: "Say it."

"One of my employees was harassed on their way home by two thugs; did you arrange for that?" Qi Yun's tone remained calm, as if asking an inconsequential question.

Upon hearing this, Ding Junkai's eyes flickered for a second, then he laughed in response: "Your employee was harassed? What's it got to do with me? I'm not so bored as to meddle in your employee's affairs."

Although arrogant, he wasn't brainless; how could he admit to such a thing?

Despite his belief that even if he admitted it, Qi Yun couldn't do much to him, spreading it around wouldn't sound good, and it might lose him points with his father.

Meanwhile, Hu Chengqi lowered his head further, wishing he could vanish like a transparent person.

Back when Ding Junkai asked him to do this, he thought it was inappropriate, but being of low status, Young Master Ding wouldn't heed his advice.

Qi Yun seeing the two's demeanor, was already certain it was connected to them, thus his reprisal would now be justified.

"I simply wanted an honest answer; since you're unwilling to admit, there's no need for us to discuss the acquisition."

"Please, go ahead." Saying this, Qi Yun stood up, preparing to leave.

Seeing this, Ding Junkai's face immediately filled with anger, he slapped the table fiercely, following suit to stand up: "You dare mess with me?"

"I flew all the way from Rongcheng to negotiate the acquisition with you, and you think you can dismiss me with a sentence like 'no need to discuss'?"

"Figured out I'm messing with you?" Qi Yun chuckled.

"You damn..." Ding Junkai, stifled by these words, turned livid, glaring with anger, pointing at Qi Yun, "Stop being so disrespectful! Believe me, I could have your company shut down tomorrow!"

Seeing things going awry, Hu Chengqi quickly stepped up, tugging Ding Junkai's arm, whispered: "Mr. Ding, calm down, let's talk properly..."

"Young man, I advise you speak to me civilly." Qi Yun stepped forward two steps, suddenly raised his hand, patting Ding Junkai's face, "Even if your father came, he wouldn't dare boast like that!"

"Slap, slap, slap."

Though the force wasn't heavy, the insult was extreme for Ding Junkai.

Especially that last remark, it was infuriating enough to almost explode his lungs.

All the blood in Ding Junkai's body rushed to his head instantly, his face turning from livid to flushed, his cheek burning where Qi Yun had patted him.

"Qi Yun! You're damn crazy!"

He suddenly shook off Hu Chengqi's hand, clenched his fists, ready to go at Qi Yun.

Fortunately, Hu Chengqi acted quickly, grabbing Ding Junkai from behind, pulling him back cautiously, anxiously shouting: "Mr. Ding! Don't be impulsive! You can't resort to violence!"

He knew that if things indeed escalated, it would certainly be them facing embarrassment if the word got out.

After all, the media now loved this kind of sensational news; whether Ding Junkai would be castigated by the Tri-Stone is uncertain, but his job would certainly be lost.

Chapter 524: Can't Tell the Jokers Apart Anymore!

Qi Yun let out a cold laugh, gave Ding Junkai a deep look, and then left the meeting room.

Ding Junkai was held tightly by Hu Chengqi, unable to do anything but watch that elegant figure disappear at the doorway.

His chest heaving violently, the veins on his forehead pulsed, and he kept roaring, "Qi Yun! You're finished, damn it!"

Hu Chengqi's arms were sore from holding on, sweat beading on his forehead.

Only Yan Xirui stood in place, her eyes showing no trace of panic, but rather a hint of intriguing calm.

She watched Qi Yun's departing figure and thought, this man is so manly...

After Ding Junkai kicked over two chairs and vented his anger, Hu Chengqi finally dragged him out of Qi Yun Company.

Once they exited the elevator, he instantly turned into a strongman, easily shaking off Hu Chengqi, who he couldn't budge earlier.

If it weren't for the cold gaze fixed on him at the meeting room door, he would have shown Qi Yun who's boss, considering all those hours at the gym weren't for nothing.

But that person's gaze was too sharp, making his heart quiver; that kind of presence, he'd only seen in his father's bodyguards.

"Contact Lawyer Hu right away, have him go to the Press and Publication Administration. I want their damn game taken down today!"

"Damn it! Can't even tell the difference between big and small cards once I'm named!"

Ding Junkai cursed as he pulled out his phone from his pocket, ready to call his "good brother" Young Master Liu, planning to have them shut down Qi Yun Company.

Hu Chengqi followed behind, nodding repeatedly. He wanted to ask if they should inform Director Ding about contacting the Press and Publication Administration, but seeing the other party's look of near-explosion, he swallowed his words in silence.

"Alright, alright, President Ding, calm down. I'll contact him right away."

Arriving at the parking lot entrance, Ding Junkai yanked open the car door and sat in the back seat, urging the driver as soon as he got in, "Hurry up! Go back to the hotel!"

The driver didn't dare delay, and as soon as everyone was in the car, he quickly shifted gears and hit the gas.

However, just as the car pulled out of the parking space, and hadn't even gone two meters, a middle-aged woman in a floral dress suddenly darted out in front, with a grimy cloth bag slung over her arm, heading straight for the front of the car!

"Bang"

A muffled sound, and the woman fell in front of the car.

Immediately after, came a sharp, piercing wail, "Ah!"

Sitting up straight in the backseat, Ding Junkai's already angry face turned as black as a pot's bottom. He irritably patted the front seat, shouting angrily, "How the hell are you driving? Are you blind? Didn't see someone?!"

The driver shivered in fear, quickly slamming on the brakes, and turned back with a trembling voice to explain, "President Ding, I... I didn't see her... she jumped out suddenly!"

Hu Chengqi was also stunned, hurriedly getting out to check.

But when he reached the car's front, he was instantly shocked by the scene before him.

The woman lying on the ground had blood all over her forehead, her expression weak, and her hair and the front of her dress stained dark red.

At a speed of twenty to thirty kilometers per hour... could it really have injured someone like this!?

His first thought was that it was a scam...

However, before he could recover, several more people suddenly came out from around, raising their phones and starting to shout, "Everyone look! Someone's been hit! To get someone injured like this, the heart is too black!"

"Exactly! See that? The boss of the vehicle is still sitting inside, not even a word of apology."

"..."

These people spoke one after another, pushing the bewildered Hu Chengqi aside and heading straight for Ding Junkai inside the car.

Ding Junkai was also dumbfounded at that moment, why was the blame on me? It's not even me driving the damn car!

But these people didn't give him a chance to react; their phone cameras nearly pressed against his face, accompanied by a barrage of unbearable verbal attacks.

"Hey! Is the boss sitting inside? Won't get out to check after hitting someone, hiding inside like a coward?"

"Look at those fine clothes and the luxury car, yet no conscience? To hit someone like that, and you won't even get out!"

"..."

Faced with these buzzing voices around him, Ding Junkai was infuriated, instinctively raising his hand to push these people away.

But before his outstretched hand could touch them, one person at the car door suddenly fell backward, lying on the ground and crying out in pain.

"Assault! Assault!"

Even though he lay on the ground, he still clutched his phone, camera focused intently on Ding Junkai, afraid of missing any "violent" scene.

This left Ding Junkai totally bewildered. This was a setup.

"Damn!? Not only hitting someone but dared to assault!?"

While he was still dazed, someone in the crowd shouted, and the originally onlooking people started to crowd around.

"Not admitting fault after hitting someone, and now assaulting people? Is being rich so extraordinary?"

"Damn it! This is too shameless! Get him!" Someone pointed at Ding Junkai's nose and cursed before slapping him hard across the face.

"Slap!"

The crisp sound of the slap was particularly jarring, and Ding Junkai's head snapped to the side, his left cheek instantly turning red, along with a ringing sound in his ears.

He was stunned for two seconds, having just been slapped upstairs by Qi Yun, and now, just a few minutes later, being hit again?

Ding Junkai felt a wave of blood rush to his head, about to explode, when he saw more large hands reaching for him...

Those filthy hands, dirt embedded in the nails, came straight for a close encounter with his handsome face.

"Slap!"

"Bang!"

Several punches landed on his cheek and chin, causing Ding Junkai to stagger backward, the back of his head hitting the car door with a thud, sending his vision into darkness from the pain.

He tried to lift his hand to block, but someone tightly grabbed his wrist, the filthy nails nearly digging into his flesh, the clammy touch making him sick.

The muscular man who had slapped him stepped forward again, grabbed his collar, and pressed him against the car, lowering his voice with a cold laugh in his ear, "Heard you're quite arrogant?"

"Stop! Stop it!" Hu Chengqi finally realized what was happening and shouted desperately, trying to force his way through the crowd, but those who were watching and filming were as strong as damn fitness instructors, and he couldn't squeeze in.

Just as Ding Junkai was being tormented to the point of having no will to fight, the melodious sound of a police siren finally echoed from the distant street.

The thug holding him instantly let go, the crowd gradually backed away.

Although Ding Junkai had been slapped several times, these people had controlled their strength, primarily focusing on humiliating attacks, so he wasn't really hurt.

Ironically, the man who had been "pushed" by him earlier was still lying on the ground, continually shouting, "Assault!"

Chapter 525: So I'm the One Being Taken Away!?

The sound of sirens grew closer, and within two minutes, Ma Baoguo arrived next to the Alfa with several officers, one of whom quickly opened the law enforcement camera and scanned the scene.

"Everyone, please step back! Keep your distance!" Ma Baoguo shouted loudly, dispersing the crowd, then asked sternly, "Who called the police? What exactly happened?"

The man lying on the ground immediately seized the opportunity, shouting, "Officer! It was him! His car hit someone, I advised him to take the person to the hospital, but he pushed me! Look at how I'm almost broken in half!"

Saying this, he deliberately twisted his body, pretending to be in unbearable pain.

The middle-aged woman in front of the car cooperatively covered her chest, her voice weak as if she were on the verge of passing out, "Officer... My head is dizzy... My heart feels unwell... Please... please take me to the hospital..."

"Officer..." Hu Chengqi, squeezed to the back door, was just about to speak when someone suddenly reached out and covered his mouth, dragging him back.

"If you know what's good for you, you'll keep quiet, it's none of your business," Luo Yang's lead warned him.

Hu Chengqi paused for a moment, then wisely nodded.

The sly old fox had long seen through the situation; Young Master Ding was playing dirty, and people were just repaying in kind.

In any case, the matters had reached this point, he was certainly going to lose his job, so there was no need to further offend Qi Yun.

Covering his burning cheek, Ding Junkai finally regained his composure; his meticulously groomed hair had been pulled into a mess like a bird's nest, and his eyeliner was smudged...

He lowered his head and looked at the nasty black mark on his wrist, raising his hand to point at the strong men who had made a move earlier, "You... you damn..."

His voice trembled with anger and humiliation, his lips quivering.

Before he could finish his sentence, Ma Baoguo interrupted him with a sidelong glance, "What's wrong with you? You hit people and still curse them? But with us, that doesn't exist."

Hearing this, Ding Junkai was taken aback, weren't these people here to save him!?

"I..."

Ma Baoguo didn't give him a chance to speak, immediately turning to issue orders, "Take him and the driver back for questioning! Call 120 to take the two injured people to the hospital for examination."

"What?"

Ding Junkai looked dumbfounded, was I the one being taken away!?

He felt as though he were about to spit out ancient blood. In over twenty years, he had never suffered such humiliation...

The officers beside him didn't give him time to dawdle, immediately escorting him towards the police car.

"Officer! I have evidence of them hitting and beating people to provide to you..."

Upon hearing the earnest cries of the crowd behind him, Ding Junkai couldn't hold on anymore, his blood rushing with anger, causing him to faint.

Nevertheless, two officers thoughtfully supported him onto the car.

Inside the office building beside them, Qi Yun stood in front of the broad floor-to-ceiling window, asking Xiang Xiaoyue next to him, "How about it? My Director Xiang, do you feel relieved?"

Xiang Xiaoyue, standing with her arms crossed, watched as the police car slowly drove away, finally letting a smile play on her previously tense lips.

Downstairs, Yan Xirui, who had been observing closely, suddenly looked up at the third floor, revealing a faint smile.

...

At eight o'clock in the evening, Qi Yun sat in his new car—a Maybach S680, given by his good brother Li Yaohua—setting off to meet Director Li of the Guozhi Committee.

He rested his hand on the leather armrest, crossed his legs, feeling very much like a boss. No wonder rich people love the Maybach; it's indeed comfortable.

Even more striking than the twin M car emblem on the hood was the license plate with five sixes, an unparalleled existence.

The only comparable plate in J Province is one with five eights, owned by the boss of the province's first private enterprise, Radiant Group.

It was he who had previously wanted to trade a flat for Qi Yun's meteorite, Young Master Liu's father.

"Ding-ding-ding~"

Just as Qi Yun was inspecting the control buttons in the back, the phone in his pocket rang.

He took out his phone to see De Gaulle's name on the screen.

The EUV lithography machine had been shipped to the Kongjun Base the day before, so Qi Yun roughly guessed the purpose of the call.

"Hello, Mr. De Gaulle."

"Good evening, Mr. Qi, I hope I'm not disturbing you." De Gaulle still maintained a polite demeanor, whether intentionally or otherwise, it didn't make people resentful.

Qi Yun chuckled, "Haha, no problem, I'm available now."

"That's good."

"I assume Mr. Qi has received news about the second lithography machine; I called to discuss the location of the final place on the map, could you inform me?" De Gaulle spoke directly, without beating around the bush.

Qi Yun, upon hearing this, did not immediately respond, quickly weighing the pros and cons in his mind.

The location of this last place is crucial, impacting his subsequent plans.

It's not that he intends to renege, but he holds another piece of news of vital importance to De Gaulle, seeking to make another deal with him.

After a moment's reflection, he slowly spoke, "Mr. De Gaulle, I understand your feelings, and as I have promised you, I certainly won't renege."

"Alright then, once you've handled your business in Shanghai, why not come to Bird City once more so we can discuss face-to-face."

"I will not only tell you the final location but also share a piece of news concerning whether you can successfully control the Gwen Clan in the future."

On the other end of the line, De Gaulle remained silent for two seconds, his breathing seemed to slow a beat.

Everything he was doing, aside from his own obsession with the secret, was predominantly to become the talker of the Gwen Clan.

Qi Yun's words immediately piqued his intense curiosity.

"Mr. Qi, you seem to know quite a lot about my affairs."

Qi Yun did not deny this: "Haha, since you have emphasized multiple times that we are partners, I naturally need to know more about you."

"Rest assured, Mr. De Gaulle, this meeting is sure to bring you unexpected gains."

"Great! I'll head to Bird City tomorrow and meet with you." De Gaulle ceased to hesitate, promptly giving his answer.

...

Elsewhere, outside the New District Branch.

Hu Chengqi was holding his phone, reporting the "incident" involving Young Master Ding on the other end.

"How is the person who was hit?"

This was the first question Ding Sanshi asked; he did not first inquire about his son's injuries but about the condition of the person hit.

Hu Chengqi's mind turned quickly, cautiously replying, "The hospital feedback indicates no major issues, primarily just from the shock."

His response was quite deliberate, merely stating the facts without any subjective judgment.

"Alright, understood."

Ding Sanshi, having heard this, said no more, promptly hanging up the phone...

(Big shots, it's the beginning of the month, please give monthly votes!)

Chapter 526: He Doesn't Know What's Good for Him

New District, a hotel specially designated for hosting guests in S Prefecture.

When Director Li of the Guozhi Committee saw Qi Yun step out of the Maybach with the five sixes license plate, he was visibly taken aback for a moment.

However, he quickly regained his composure, warmly stepping forward to extend his hand: "Ah, Consultant Qi, hello, hello."

"I'm Li Hongqi, we spoke on the phone earlier. You can just call me Old Li, Consultant Qi."

"Haha, Director Li, you're too kind." Qi Yun also reached out to shake hands, maintaining a polite formality without taking liberties.

"No need to be so formal, just being able to meet you is already a huge honor for me, Old Li. The tea is already brewed in the private room, Consultant Qi, please, this way." Li Hongqi sidestepped to lead Qi Yun into the hotel, walking with a spring in his step.

Once inside the private room, Li Hongqi personally pulled out the chair for the main seat for Qi Yun and busied himself with pouring tea: "Consultant Qi, please try this tea. It's our local ancient tree snow chrysanthemum, the taste is quite good."

"Thank you." Qi Yun accepted the teacup with a word of thanks, "Director Li has been very considerate."

Li Hongqi's face was filled with a sincere smile: "It's the least I can do."

"I know that right now, the Guozhi Committees from all over must be wanting to meet with you, so the fact that you made time to see me makes me both nervous and happy." As he spoke, he sat down in a side seat, slightly leaning forward, clearly putting himself in a humble position.

Qi Yun took a sip of tea, the clear bitterness of the snow chrysanthemum mixed with a mild aftertaste spreading over his tongue. He put down the cup and got straight to the point: "Director Li, let's not beat around the bush."

"I know why you want to meet me, but it's not the right time yet. Today, let's simply have a meal and become friends."

"When the time is right, I'll have a good conversation with you about the photovoltaic project."

"Do you understand what I mean?"

The smile on Li Hongqi's face froze for a moment, his brow furrowed slightly.

But in just two seconds, he quickly responded, chuckling heartily: "I understand! I understand! Consultant Qi is right, making friends is more important than anything, the project can wait, let's eat first!"

He understood the implication in Qi Yun's words, it was not a rejection of the J Province Guozhi Committee, nor a rejection of him, Li Hongqi, otherwise, Qi Yun wouldn't have mentioned making friends at all.

So, who was he rejecting? The answer was obvious.

Li Hongqi quickly picked up the menu and handed it over to Qi Yun, becoming even more affable: "Consultant Qi, have a look, see what you'd like to eat?"

"Don't be fooled by the exterior of this hotel; it's actually a hidden gem. We even have fresh cold-water fish just caught this morning from Boteng Lake..."

Qi Yun glanced at the menu but didn't reach out to take it, just waved it off with a smile: "Director Li, you decide, I'm not picky, let's just pick randomly."

Li Hongqi understood the hint and promptly instructed the waiter to prepare some home-style dishes, making sure not to go overboard in terms of standards.

During the meal, although the two did not discuss the project further, they did bring up several photovoltaic companies in J Province.

If there's a leader, it's naturally TBEA, which has long been listed among the Fortune 500 and achieved revenue of over 100 billion last year. Unfortunately, this company is no longer purely state-owned; otherwise, it would undoubtedly be the best partner candidate.

"Personally, I think Siluo Energy is quite good, they have a considerable technical advantage in photovoltaic equipment production."

As Li Hongqi spoke, he discreetly observed Qi Yun's reaction, and seeing that there was no obvious resistance, he added, "When there's a chance, I'll invite their company's head out to learn from your experience with President Qi."

Qi Yun nodded with a smile: "Alright, it's not really about learning, it's about mutual exchange."

He found Li Hongqi quite interesting and a person of tact, definitely worth befriending.

Most importantly, the fact that Li Hongqi readily agreed to the earlier suggestion at least indirectly proved that Li Hongqi didn't have too unyielding a relationship with Old He...

The meal didn't last very long, about half an hour, before Qi Yun took his leave.

Li Hongqi maintained a very humble demeanor, personally seeing Qi Yun off to the car.

"Alright, thank you for your generous hospitality, Director Li. I'll be in touch by phone." Qi Yun waved at him.

"Consultant Qi, you're too kind! It was an honor to host you!" Li Hongqi smiled and waved goodbye until the Maybach disappeared at the gate, then he heaved a sigh of relief and wiped his brow.

It had been a long time since he'd been this humble; usually, it's others waiting on him.

Luckily, he hadn't lost his key "business" skills.

"Snap!"

Lighting a cigarette, Li Hongqi smoked as he contemplated how he would report to Old He.

Only when the cigarette butt burnt close did he take out his phone, found Old He's number, and dialed it.

"Boss, I just met that Qi Yun, he doesn't seem to know what's good for him..."

On the other end of the line, Old He listened in silence, only dryly chuckling after a long moment:
"Alright, I understood."

"Boss, do you think..." Li Hongqi only said half of his sentence, but the implication was clear.

Old He didn't respond further, his face darkened as he hung up the phone.

He was feeling a bit cornered by Qi Yun...not even given a chance to talk.

And he couldn't wield authority over Qi Yun, with so many watching this matter, the implications would be too severe, and even that person wouldn't be able to ignore it like last time.

Because this time, Qi Yun could bring substantial benefits locally. Once the photovoltaic project lands in J Province, it wouldn't just be Old He benefiting; everyone needed that achievement.

...

Meanwhile, in the speeding Maybach, Qi Yun was also holding his phone, talking with Zhang Dayong.

"Qin Shizhang just called me, inquiring about that Boss Ding's matter. I got in touch with Ma Baoguo for some information to report to him.

"His suggestion is to reach out to the injured party and see about a possible reconciliation. Boss Ding sent someone to relay this."

Qi Yun chuckled upon hearing this; Qin Minghui was indeed a clever person, choosing his words very carefully.

Having Zhang Dayong contact the injured party was essentially asking for Qi Yun's opinion.

And rather than calling Qi Yun himself, he delivered the message through Zhang Dayong to clearly show respect for Qi Yun's choice, implying that Boss Ding didn't have that much clout with him.

However, Qi Yun knew that this was likely just the beginning.

The fact that Boss Ding wasn't directly approaching him for a resolution and instead started using connections to try and spring someone meant that he certainly had some aces up his sleeve, without a doubt, unfazed.

Which, upon reflection, seemed normal; after all, people who frequently attended Great Assembly Hall meetings, despite having their base in Guangdong Province, should undoubtedly have solid connections with several big figures.

"Ah~" Qi Yun sighed, initially considering that if Boss Ding approached directly, he might sell him some favor, but evidently, the man didn't particularly regard him highly.

If he wanted to play, then Qi Yun was ready to play.

After all, this was somewhat Qi Yun's home ground, and he couldn't let Boss Ding have his way so easily; otherwise, once word got out, how could he maintain his standing, let alone ward off future opportunists?

"That guy had some thugs harass my employee, and Luo Yang has already found them, I'll have them sent over to you shortly."

Zhang Dayong saw that Qi Yun had made up his mind and didn't say much else: "Alright, I know what to do."

"By the way, the flour situation you asked me to look into last time has some leads. I'll tell you when we meet up."

Qi Yun nodded: "Okay, I'll come by another day."

Chapter 527: Exciting Intelligence

In the early morning, at the Golden Collar Villa.

Qi Yun, who had just battled for two hours, went to the balcony and comfortably lit a cigarette.

Recently, he has been working continuously, and even his performance in certain aspects has declined.

The scene before him changed, and familiar lights appeared.

[Current Intelligence Points: 9]

[Today's Intelligence 1 (Red): Yesterday, while in a drunken state, Xiao Wu injured several provoking thugs severely at a restaurant on the North Third Ring Middle Road and has now been lawfully arrested by the local police station, soon to face prison time]

The young ones are still quite impulsive...

Qi Yun sighed and took a phone from his pajama pocket to send a message to Li Yaohua, asking him to help get this kid out the next day.

Whether or not he can bring him under his wing, solving such minor issues is just a matter of speaking for Qi Yun, considering the face of the late Mr. Tong.

[Today's Intelligence 2 (Green): Yesterday afternoon, a herder living near the Tianshan Bogda Peak witnessed a small-scale landslide. When he reached the landslide site halfway up the mountain, he found water suddenly gushing out from the previously dry old riverbed, meandering down the furrow and finally into the main river channel;

This spring water is not from snow melting but self-flowing water from rock fissures nurtured deep within Tianshan for centuries!

The water quality is even superior to the already known Bird City Spring, with dissolved solids over 1500 mg per liter, it doesn't freeze even at minus 20 degrees]

Tianshan Bogda Peak?

Bird City Spring?

Qi Yun paused. He knew Bogda Peak, not too far from Bird City, with an elevation of over five thousand meters, is the highest peak in the eastern section of Tianshan.

He also knew Bird City Spring, where a 300 ml bottle is sold for sixteen yuan! Much more expensive than familiar brands like Yiyun!

It looks cheap but is essentially a water-based assassin!

Its main selling point is exactly what the intelligence mentioned, self-flowing water from rock fissures nurtured for 400 years deep within Tianshan, high in minerals, weakly alkaline, known as Tianshan God's Water!

"So...they discovered a water source greater than Bird City Spring!?"

A flash of ecstasy instantly filled Qi Yun's eyes! Isn't this the golden phoenix that lays golden eggs?

He immediately started searching online for detailed information about Bird City Spring, anxiously wanting to know the actual value of this water source in the intelligence.

Bird City Spring's daily output is about two hundred cubic meters, almost equivalent to two hundred thousand liters, which translates to over six hundred thousand bottles each day, priced at sixteen yuan per bottle, produces nearly ten million yuan worth of mineral water daily!

If Bogda Peak's water source could reach the standards of Bird City Spring, wouldn't it be incredibly profitable to build a water plant here?

But this is merely an idealistic imagining...

The more Qi Yun explored, the more his fiery enthusiasm gradually cooled.

The reality is that Bird City Spring not only spent four to five billion yuan to build the plant but also invested billions in advertising, yet the outcome is an annual loss, completely unable to compete with major brands.

So...even with the golden phoenix, one still needs market channels and sales resources...

This has a different approach than his healthcare product market, which no single product can monopolize.

But mineral water is different; those few brands occupy nearly 90% of the market share, each spending no less than one billion on advertising annually!

Qi Yun deeply inhaled another puff, his mind slowly cooling.

Perhaps relying on his own strength to build a plant, produce, and sell is not the best choice.

It takes too long and costs enormous investment, even if the product eventually goes to market, it likely won't withstand those established competitors.

The only option is to use the water source as capital for cooperation with one of them...or directly sell the information to them in exchange for enough benefits...

[Today's Intelligence 3 (Red): Half an hour ago, a box truck delivering flour unloaded three hundred kilograms of "flour" at a grain and oil shop on Tianhe Road in the development zone]

Flour!?

Qi Yun frowned. A few days ago, he asked Zhang Dayong to investigate this matter, unexpectedly receiving the relevant intelligence today.

After a few seconds of thought, he found Eagle's number and dialed it.

"I'll send you a location, you head over..."

"Right, first quietly figure out the situation, don't alarm the others."

...

The next morning, after breakfast, Qi Yun rushed to the Provincial Museum Bureau, planning to pay a visit to Hua Weiguo and ask him to perform an on-site inspection at Bogda Peak.

Because for the water source matter, not only must samples be brought back for water quality testing, but an on-site survey is also needed to confirm the spring's output, water source stability, and potential geological risks in the surrounding area.

After all, Bogda Peak is a nature reserve, and reckless actions are not permitted.

Moreover, in the future when negotiating collaboration with those established drinking water companies, he must have an authoritative and complete data report to support his claims.

Otherwise, just making verbal claims, they are unlikely to have full trust...

At the Provincial Museum Bureau, in the Deputy Director's office, Hua Weiguo saw Qi Yun visiting and quickly greeted him warmly at the entrance.

"Oh, a rare guest! I thought of looking for you when I came back a few days ago, but couldn't reach you by phone." Hua Weiguo shook Qi Yun's hand continuously.

Qi Yun chuckled: "I went to Beijing a few days ago, had a lot going on."

"Director Hua..." He paused, glancing at the sign on the door, then laughing and correcting himself, "I should now call you Director Hua, congratulations, Director Hua!"

Indeed, Hua Weiguo has been adjusted from the position of Director of the Archaeology Department to Deputy Director of the Cultural Relics Bureau due to assisting Qi Yun in locating Genghis Khan's Tomb and participating in subsequent critical excavation work.

"You kid!" Hua Weiguo pointed at Qi Yun, then patted his arm and led him to the sofa in the reception area.

"Oh, it's only because of you that I still have opportunities at my age." He sighed, pouring tea for Qi Yun.

"Thank you." Qi Yun thanked, taking the tea cup and placing it on the table, "Actually, it's not much related to me, mainly due to your dedication and contributions that brought about this great reward."

Hua Weiguo smiled and shook his head, recalling the numerous dangers faced during their last visit to Genghis Khan's tomb, yet knowing those were not the main events.

If Qi Yun hadn't intervened to push him into that archaeological team, he would have retired as the Director.

Though it was just a small step, the rewards enjoyed were worlds apart.

It's not an exaggeration to say that many people spend their whole lives struggling to surpass this hurdle.

Thus, he was genuinely grateful to Qi Yun from the bottom of his heart.

"You coming at this moment must mean you have more than congratulations to share with me, right?"

"Just straightforwardly tell me what the matter is."

Chapter 528: Not Looking to Offend That Guy

In the Cultural Relics Bureau, inside the Deputy Director's office.

Seeing Hua Weiguo take the initiative to ask about the reason, Qi Yun didn't hold back anymore and immediately stated his intention.

"Hehe, I do have something I'd like you to help with."

"I recently discovered a spring near Bogda Peak..."

"Natural spring water from rock fissures!?" Hua Weiguo was startled upon hearing this, and asked with wide eyes, "Are you sure?"

Archaeology and geology are intertwined, so as an archaeology expert, Hua Weiguo is naturally well aware of how rare natural spring water from rock fissures is.

It requires hundreds of years and various extremely harsh conditions to possibly form.

Qi Yun showed a wry smile on his face: "If I were sure, I wouldn't be coming to you."

"The purpose of my visit today is to ask you to make a trip and help me check it out on-site."

After hearing this, Hua Weiguo looked at Qi Yun, pondered for a moment, and then understood the latter's intention.

"Are you worried about information leaking?"

Not going to the Geology Bureau but instead coming to him; isn't that the implication?

Qi Yun replied candidly: "That's correct. Before things are settled, I don't want any additional complications."

Hua Weiguo nodded, considering Qi Yun's caution reasonable. If the natural spring water from rock fissures at Bogda Peak is real, its value would be enormous, and even the slightest leak could attract those looking to profit.

Those old companies hire a large number of geological and water quality experts every year, globally searching for quality water sources and are very well-informed.

"Alright, no problem."

"Coincidentally, I've just finished my work here, and I'm temporarily without any commitments."

Hua Weiguo said this as he stood up, went to the desk, picked up the phone, and said, "I'll first call the Reserve Management Bureau, apply for mountain access permission under the guise of re-checking the South Slope Ancient Shepherd Path site, which is a bit more discreet."

Qi Yun immediately gave a thumbs up: "You're really thoughtful."

With Hua Weiguo's help, things became much simpler. After leaving the Cultural Relics Bureau, Qi Yun called Ah Jiao, asking her to accompany Old Hei and Hua Weiguo.

The mountain roads are tough, and with the two of them, they can take care of each other, plus Ah Jiao is sharp enough to lend a hand to Hua Weiguo.

...

On the other side, inside the office building of Net One Company in Hang City.

Ding Sanshi stood in front of the bright floor-to-ceiling window, holding a mobile phone and speaking to a prominent figure.

"Mr. Chang, I'd like to inquire about something; do you know Qi Yun well?"

On the other end, the man referred to as Mr. Chang frowned; if the other party really only wanted to ask about Qi Yun, was it necessary to call him?

After pondering for a couple of seconds, he replied ambiguously: "I am somewhat familiar, you and him...?"

Ding Sanshi chuckled twice awkwardly: "Haha, my family member got into a misunderstanding with Qi Yun in J Province, and now the person has been held by the local branch."

"Is that so!?" Mr. Chang's frown deepened.

"Yes, yesterday I contacted Captain Qin of Bird City to help understand the situation, but he seems to be on a business trip..."

"So, I have no choice but to ask for your help to inquire..." Although Ding Sanshi's words were vague, his message was clear.

Mr. Chang remained silent for quite a while. As the deputy to Old He, he knew full well what Qi Yun's current situation was.

It's normal for Qin Minghui to refuse to get involved.

Can he learn from Qin Minghui? The answer is that he can't really.

Because when he worked in Guangdong Province, Ding Sanshi did him a lot of favors, and they have a deep connection.

In theory, given his status, having the New District Branch release someone should only be a matter of a phone call, with no hesitation needed.

Because, in his opinion, a small Zhang Dayong wouldn't dare to defy his will.

But the problem is that doing so would put him at odds with Qi Yun.

That guy is currently at the peak of his powers, even Old He is being roasted over a fire with no way to deal with him.

If he offends that guy at this point, will he too be roasted over a fire?

Seeing Mr. Chang's prolonged silence, Ding Sanshi asked again: "What? Is it not convenient for you, Mr. Chang?"

Mr. Chang cleared his throat, his tone softened, neither agreeing nor refusing directly: "It's not that it's inconvenient; it's just something you need to reconsider."

"Old Ding, you may not be aware of Qi Yun's current influence."

"I don't know if you've heard of the Oil Country photovoltaic project, just the orders exceed a hundred billion USD, and he was specifically named to be in charge."

"So, if your family member's conflict with him isn't too deep, my advice is to give him some face and let it go."

Although Mr. Chang's tone was very sincere, in Ding Sanshi's ears, it sounded like mere excuses.

He asked grimly: "What if I don't want to give him this face?"

The receiver fell silent again, and after a long while, Mr. Chang sighed and said, "As a parent, I understand your thoughts."

"What I'm saying is just my personal advice, if you insist on asking me, I can help you."

This time it was Ding Sanshi's turn to hesitate. He could sense from the other party's words the importance placed on Qi Yun, appearing inconsistent with some of the information he had gathered.

Moreover, Mr. Chang's meaning was clear; this matter would consume the emotional bond built up over many years.

Seeing this, Mr. Chang added: "I also have another suggestion for you, perhaps you can try contacting Old He..."

...

At twelve o'clock in the afternoon, a flight from Shanghai landed at Tianshan Airport.

De Gaulle led two bodyguards quickly to the parking lot and got into a long-waiting Maybach.

More than half an hour later, at the same teahouse from his last meeting with Qi Yun, the two met again.

Without unnecessary pleasantries, De Gaulle, as soon as he sat down, couldn't wait to ask, "Mr. Qi, can you now tell me the location of the last site?"

Qi Yun smiled, seeing the other's eager appearance, and did not hold back, saying each word carefully: "Vatican, St. Peter's Basilica."

"St. Peter's Basilica!?" De Gaulle's pupils suddenly contracted, staring at Qi Yun with disbelief in his voice: "Mr. Qi, are you serious?"

Qi Yun picked up his teacup and took a sip, his expression calm: "I'm a person of integrity, and since we're in a cooperative relationship, I have no reason to deceive you."

De Gaulle gradually calmed down, knowing that Qi Yun's words were indeed true.

All clues must be gathered to unlock the final secret, and Qi Yun already holds a unique clue, so he indeed has no reason to deceive him.

He was merely shocked that the final clue would be located at the core holy site of global Catholicism.

Chapter 529: Terms of Exchange

In the tea room, as De Gaulle recovered from his shock, he almost immediately pulled out his phone and sent a message to his subordinates, ordering them to head to Italy immediately.

His clan had been searching painstakingly for this secret for hundreds or even thousands of years, traversing almost all continents, and now finally had the last clue. How could he not be eager?

Moreover, this secret was about to be unveiled by him personally, in his generation.

This would be an unparalleled honor for him, and he could thereby ascend to the position of the spokesperson for the clan, standing at the pinnacle of power!

After the successful message prompt appeared, De Gaulle finally put away his phone, still showing residual excitement in his eyes.

He picked up the teacup on the table and drank it in one shot, pondering, "Mr. Qi, thank you!"

"However, I am very curious about how you managed to pinpoint the exact location of these places on the map."

"As far as I know, the map doesn't contain any hidden information, and even Louis I, who commissioned the map, could only describe a general area."

"My ancestors spent long years searching for each location, yet you could identify these positions accurately."

"I implore you to resolve my doubts."

After hearing this, Qi Yun smiled, playing with the teacup in his hand: "Mr. De Gaulle, you're asking a bit too much."

"Everyone has their secrets, don't they?" He paused a bit as he said this, looking at De Gaulle meaningfully, "Just like your deal with Mr. Christophe."

Qi Yun mentioning this again made De Gaulle's nerves instantly tense up. He stared fixedly at Qi Yun, trying to discern something from the latter's calm expression.

Ever since his last meeting with Qi Yun, he had interrogated everyone who had seen Christophe that day, even including the driver and the servants at the manor.

But the result was fruitless. None of these people were the leakers.

That was another deeply buried doubt in his heart. He really couldn't figure out how Qi Yun knew about this matter.

"You don't have to be so on guard, I have no intention of threatening you with this."

Qi Yun leaned back leisurely on the chair, speaking slowly: "What I can tell you is, I also learned about this matter by chance, and I won't disclose it."

"After all, we are now in a cooperative relationship, and undermining you is of no benefit to me."

De Gaulle's taut nerves relaxed slightly, but the doubts in his eyes were not completely dispelled. He wouldn't easily trust anyone, even his wife with whom he shared a bed.

"Let's talk about something else." Qi Yun gave him no time to think, continuing, "I want to make a deal with you."

De Gaulle remained silent for two seconds, then nodded: "Please go ahead, Mr. Qi."

"I know you are vying for the position of the Gwen Clan's Sect Leader, and your deal with Christophe is to overpower other contenders in the clan, especially your cousin, right?"

De Gaulle didn't argue, nor did he show surprise again.

"Let me talk about my terms."

"First, I know you registered a new company and reached an agreement with Christophe; he will help you acquire 8% of ASML's shares, allowing you to enter the board."

"I want to become the actual controller of this company, and that 8% shares will be temporarily held by you on my behalf."

"Second, I have a feud with the Boot Clan in the United Kingdom. Based on my understanding, your Gwen Clan doesn't have much contact with them. I need you to help me deal with them."

As Qi Yun kept narrating, De Gaulle's expression grew more lively. His eyes widened, and his gaze at Qi Yun became increasingly odd, as if he were looking at a lunatic.

"Mr. Qi, do you understand what you are saying?"

"Do you know how much that 8% of shares cost me?"

"And the Boot Clan, they are one of the top ten powerful clans in the United Kingdom, not even inferior to my own clan. Why would I go out of my way to deal with them with you!?"

Qi Yun didn't mind his attitude and calmly lit a cigarette: "Don't get so agitated. Listen to my offer first before deciding."

De Gaulle took a deep breath to regain his calm.

"I can tell you a secret, a secret that will ensure your success in becoming the sect leader of the clan!" Qi Yun's voice wasn't loud, but it carried an undeniable aura.

De Gaulle jerked his head up to look at him, his eyes widened even more than before, seeming to want to confirm whether Qi Yun was joking.

In such ancient clans that have been passed down for hundreds of years, the sect leader's position is not easily attainable; the competition is extremely intense.

One must rely on the resources at hand and also need the support of the elders' council. Even his uncle, the current sect leader George, cannot solely decide who will succeed.

Many have fought fiercely for it in the past, only to return defeated.

De Gaulle had secretly groomed alliances for years for this position, pulling in business heads, currying favor with elders, even daring risky deals with Christophe, yet he couldn't say for sure he would succeed.

And Qi Yun's light remark of assuring him the position seemed an absurdity.

If anyone else said such words, he might have already got up and left.

But Qi Yun... was a bit elusive, very mysterious, especially with the things he knew...

After a few seconds of silence, De Gaulle shook his head, not quite convinced: "Mr. Qi, you might not be very familiar with clans like ours."

Qi Yun watched his shaking head, smiling noncommittally, picked up the teapot and poured him tea: "You're right. I haven't delved deeply into the Gwen Clan's internal affairs."

"However, I know your biggest rival is your cousin."

"And the secret I'm about to tell you can make him completely out of the running!"

"With your abilities, once your cousin is out of the picture, no one else should qualify to compete with you, right?"

On hearing this, De Gaulle shook his head again, thinking Qi Yun had some dirt on his cousin: "That's useless; your secret doesn't make a decisive impact. When choosing the sect leader, the clan elders don't care about these."

Qi Yun sighed, realizing that it was difficult for the other party to believe without revealing the secret.

"I need an assurance. If the secret I tell you can ensure you ascend to the sect leader's position, then accordingly, you need to meet the two conditions I just mentioned."

"Of course, if you still find it useless afterward, then just pretend I never said anything."

"Based on our previous cooperation, I still have faith in Mr. De Gaulle's integrity."

De Gaulle stared at the burning cigarette in Qi Yun's hand, the smoke curling around, rendering the latter's face all the more elusive.

Qi Yun's words were like a hook drawing at his most ardent desire.

Chapter 530: Deal and Compromise

After some deliberation, De Gaulle sat up straight and spoke with a serious expression, "I swear on the honor of the Gwen Clan..."

"Mr. Qi Yun, do you think this guarantee is acceptable?"

Qi Yun nodded with satisfaction. Although foreigners could be devious, most generally kept their promises, especially an ancient family with royal blood like theirs.

Moreover, he wasn't worried about the other party giving him an empty promise because he held a clue about that map in his own hands. If he chose not to cooperate, they would never unlock the secret.

If this guy tried to play any tricks, Qi Yun would release this information, and the elders of the Gwen Clan would certainly not sit idly by.

"Your cousin is not actually your uncle Old George's biological son, nor is he part of the Gwen Clan."

Boom!

Qi Yun's calm tone sounded like a thunderclap to De Gaulle, exploding in his ears and leaving his mind blank.

He jumped up from his chair, pressing his hands on the table, staring hard at Qi Yun, eyes filled with shock and disbelief, his voice trembling: "Wha... What did you say!?"

"That's impossible! My cousin grew up with me, how... how could he not be a member of the Gwen Clan?"

His cousin had even participated in many crucial overseas trade negotiations as the "rightful heir of the Gwen Clan."

For so many years, no one had ever questioned his cousin's identity.

So Qi Yun's words completely overturned his understanding.

Qi Yun paid no attention to his loss of composure, his tone still bland but each word piercing: "With today's advanced technology, a DNA test can have results in less than half an hour, right?"

"Also, I'll give you another piece of information: your uncle Old George has known about this for a long time."

"And, when it comes to choosing an heir, he is more inclined towards you."

De Gaulle seemed to be under a petrifying spell, frozen on the spot, Qi Yun's words echoed repeatedly in his ears, leaving his mind in chaos.

"Well, Mr. De Gaulle, is this secret weighty enough for you?"

De Gaulle only came to his senses after a long while, squeezing out a hoarse sentence from his throat:
"I... I need to verify this."

He didn't disbelieve it; it was just too... implausible?

Why did the uncle know and yet...

"No problem, but don't make me wait too long." Qi Yun stubbed out his cigarette in the ashtray, stood up, and walked out of the private room.

"I'll wait for your call."

...

Meanwhile, in the guest room of the New District Branch.

Zhang Dayong was meeting with someone whom Qi Yun was also familiar with, Director Luo, who had previously called and wanted to see him.

"Director Luo, you could have just called me directly. I would have come to your office right away, no need for you to make a trip yourself," Zhang Dayong said sincerely while pouring tea.

As for how genuine this sincerity was, only he knew in his heart.

Director Luo held a teacup with a formulaic smile on his face, "Haha, Director Zhang, you're too kind. I know the grassroots work is busy, I don't want to delay it."

This remark was quite clever. Was Zhang Dayong considered grassroots? In some eyes, yes, in others, no.

In the eyes of the Office Director in S Prefecture, it was grassroots, setting the stage for his following words.

After exchanging a few pleasantries, Director Luo finally got to the point: "Director Zhang, I'm here to ask for your help with something."

Inwardly, Zhang Dayong's heart skipped a beat, but he maintained a humble smile: "Director Luo, just let us know what you need from the branch, and as long as it's within our duties, we'll do our best to support."

He deliberately emphasized "within our duties," although he wasn't sure why Director Luo was here, he had some guesses.

Director Luo nodded in satisfaction: "Actually, it's not a big deal. Did a young man named Ding Junkai get brought in by your Z squad yesterday? I heard it was all a misunderstanding with someone?"

After speaking, he took a sip of tea, subtly observing Zhang Dayong's reaction.

Zhang Dayong felt a sinking feeling; so it was about this, as there hadn't been any major cases in the district recently.

Quickly thinking for two seconds, he replied with a smile: "Oh, I'm not quite sure. How about you wait a moment, Director Luo, I'll go and ask?"

The two exchanged knowing smiles, and Director Luo gestured with a hand: "Haha, sure, go ahead."

He was well aware of Zhang Dayong's intentions but wasn't worried. His coming here personally represented Old He.

No matter if it was Zhang Dayong or the people behind him, could they refuse?

Old He, now troubled by Qi Yun, was in a relatively passive position, but he could still manage these two.

Indeed, there was a simpler way to handle this: Li Tongwei could just call Zhang Dayong to release him.

But that would be against protocol, and with the investigation team hovering around, Old He didn't want to cause more trouble, so he sent Director Luo to handle it privately.

One point Director Luo got wrong, though: Once Zhang Dayong left the office, he didn't call Qin Minghui but directly called Qi Yun.

Now in a deadlock with Qi Yun, especially after Xiao Hanguang and the others had visited.

So, if he was asked not to release, he would dare stubbornly comply, as he held the reasonable ground.

On the phone, upon hearing Zhang Dayong's account, Qi Yun instantly became vigilant.

He could guess with all but certainty that it was Ding Sanshi's doing, though he hadn't expected the involvement with Old He.

After pondering quickly for a few seconds, he decided, "Do as he says."

Qi Yun knew well that this incident couldn't really harm Ding Junkai, just keep him locked up a few extra days.

The consequence of this would be Zhang Dayong possibly becoming a target. It made no sense to let him suffer for his own issues.

Zhang Dayong felt relieved hearing Qi Yun's reply.

Returning to the guest room, he wore the same humble smile: "Haha, Director Luo, I've clarified everything."

"I just had someone contact the victim again, and they're willing to reconcile. Once the paperwork is done, Ding Junkai can leave."

...

Over half an hour later, after signing the papers, Ding Junkai exited through the front gate, where Hu Chengqi, waiting by the street for a long time, jogged over immediately, asking with concern, "Director Ding, are you alright?"

Feeling irritated, Ding Junkai pushed him away and got into the nearby business car, taking out his phone to dial a number.

"Hello, Young Master Liu..."

...