

## Middle Age 541

### Chapter 541: The Secret of the Vatican

At eight o'clock in the afternoon, Ah Jiao and Xiao Wu arrived at Bird City almost at the same time, and Old Hei, who was picking them up, brought them back together.

Qi Yun glanced briefly at the test report Ah Jiao brought back. The data on it was almost the same as the one provided by Hua Weiguo, except it had the stamp of the Department of Ecological Environment at the bottom.

With this report, he could go and negotiate with those enterprises.

"Thank you for your hard work. You should go back and rest, and take Xiao Wu with you. Get to know each other a bit better."

Qi Yun put down the document and turned to the slightly apprehensive Xiao Wu. "Being here is just like being at home. If you have any issues, feel free to talk to me or anyone else here."

Xiao Wu's personality was somewhat similar to Chen Wei's, both being quiet and reserved. Additionally, he hadn't yet moved past the grief of Old Tong's passing, so he spoke even less, simply nodding silently before leaving with Ah Jiao.

After the two left, Qi Yun took a deep breath, still concerned about those two artifacts, but neither Guo An nor Brother Hui had received any news about Yamamoto Ichiro, and seemingly had no other leads.

He lit a cigarette, thought for a few seconds, and then dialed De Gaulle's number, intending to leverage his resources in Japan to track down Yamamoto Ichiro.

This guy had mentioned during his previous visit to Huaxia that he personally had business in Japan, and it seemed to be quite substantial.

However, it was managed by professional managers on the surface, so very few people knew about this.

Although they were currently 'plastic allies,' they were allies nonetheless, so lending a helping hand to each other isn't unreasonable, is it?

"Mr. De Gaulle, I need your help..." Qi Yun jumped straight to the point as soon as the call connected.

Sure enough, De Gaulle didn't decline and readily agreed after hearing him out: "No problem. I have some people in Osaka and Tokyo. I'll have them investigate immediately."

After discussing business, Qi Yun asked about the previous deal: "The information I gave you last time about your cousin, have you verified it?"

De Gaulle fell silent for a few seconds before responding: "Yes, I just received the test results an hour ago. He is indeed not a member of the Gwen Clan."

Qi Yun sensed that the other party didn't sound very pleased, which puzzled him.

Doesn't this essentially mean they hold an ace over his cousin?

Once the news spreads, his cousin would lose the qualification for succession, making the position of the decision-maker within reach.

Why is this guy still unhappy?

But he refrained from asking more questions and merely inquired about when he might fulfill his promise: "Regarding the two conditions I mentioned last time?"

"Since I promised, I will honor it as agreed," De Gaulle answered directly. "Once I've gained control of ASML's shares, I will transfer them to you unconditionally."

"Additionally, if you plan to deal with the Boot Clan, I can use my influence to assist you. However, this is just my personal influence. Until I formally assume the position as Family Head, I don't have the authority to utilize the family's deeper resources."

Qi Yun noted that the other party didn't seem to be evasive, thus he nodded with satisfaction: "Alright, I can wait for you."

The two then communicated about the latest developments regarding the map clue.

"You know the uniqueness of St. Peter's Basilica, my people can't freely search like they can elsewhere, so they are currently negotiating with several cardinals."

"Based on my judgment, the clues are likely hidden in the Vatican Secret Archives beneath the basilica, where nobody can enter without the Pope's permission."

"The Vatican Secret Archives?"

Qi Yun found the name somewhat familiar, as if he had heard it somewhere before. After recalling for a moment, he remembered its introduction.

The Vatican Secret Archives can be considered the most mysterious place in Vatican City. Its predecessor was an archive established in Saint Lawrence-in-Lucina, dating as far back as the 4th century AD.

Initially, its purpose was simply to store some papal documents, but as the Vatican expanded, many valuable files had also been included in the archive.

In the early 17th century, Pope Paul V officially established it as the Catholic Church's secret archive.

Reportedly, the length of the shelves holding the documents inside now reaches 80 kilometers!

The various documents involved range from medieval papal directives to major events in modern countries, and even numerous records about ancient civilization relics.

It is said that some of the relic lists found during the Crusades are also hidden inside.

There are even evidences of UFO sightings, research materials from America's Area 51, alien-related stuff, essentially everything you can think of.

Countless people have wanted to enter this Vatican Secret Archives to explore, but the church's management is stringent. To gain access, papal approval is mandatory.

However....

"Isn't this Vatican Secret Archives not actually under St. Peter's Basilica?" Qi Yun voiced his doubts.

De Gaulle chuckled, and when he addressed this question, his tone carried a hint of pride: "That is merely what the church tells the public. The real Vatican Secret Archives, in fact, lies underground of St. Peter's Basilica. That is where the Vatican stores its most confidential documents."

"The secret is known only to successive popes and cardinals, and...families like ours that are even older than the Roman Church."

Qi Yun smacked his lips, surprised to learn of such a revelation.

"Do you have a way to persuade the Pope to let you in?"

"Today's church is no longer what it was back in the day, but a group of profit-driven mortals. I believe they would personally welcome me in if enough is offered as compensation." De Gaulle's voice carried undisguised mockery.

As soon as the call between the two ended, small factions began emerging throughout places like Osaka and Tokyo in Japan, joining the quest to track down Yamamoto Ichiro.

The actual controllers behind these small factions were, in fact, De Gaulle.

As dawn approached, Qi Yun, who had been waiting for news, finally received a call from Ge Dabao.

As expected, it was Guo An's Q Security Department that first found clues.

"The person has been found! The last location where Yamamoto Ichiro was seen was outside a villa in the Kamigyo District of Capital City. The villa owner has a rather special status; they are members of the Hatoyama Clan in Japan."

"The Hatoyama Clan?"

"Yes, this clan holds significant influence in Japan, and has even produced a prime minister among its members," Ge Dabao explained.

Upon hearing this, Qi Yun's expression unintentionally hardened. Yamamoto Ichiro not only could not be reached but had run off to the territory of the Hatoyama Clan, clearly hiding out.

Why is he hiding? The answer seemed obvious.

Qi Yun despised betrayal more than anything in life, and anyone daring to do so must pay the price...

Chapter 542: Even Ultraman Would Get His Head Smashed

Capital City, on the streets of the Upper Capital District.

After receiving the message from Qi Yun, Chen Wei and Da Pao drove over here.

"Is it that building up ahead?"

Da Pao slowed down the car, lowered the window halfway, and his gaze fell on the villa hidden behind the camphor trees ahead.

The roof had green tiles and white walls, with a plaque in Japanese characters above the entrance that they couldn't understand.

There were no bodyguards or guards visible at the door, it was very quiet.

Chen Wei squinted and looked for a while before speaking, "I'll sneak in to check out the situation, you stay out here for backup."

Da Pao frowned at him, "Didn't the boss say we have people on our side here? Maybe we should call for some support, and I'll go with you."

"Forget it..." Chen Wei shook his head, "Guo An's men aren't suited for this kind of work; they've gone through a lot to remain unnoticed here, exposing their identities wouldn't be good."

As he spoke, he zipped his jacket up to cover half his face, took two pistols from his backpack, and handed one to Da Pao.

After checking the guns, he attached a silencer to the barrel, then opened the car door, "Don't worry, I'll go in first and see if Yamamoto Ichiro is inside."

Da Pao didn't insist and nodded, "Alright, be careful."

Chen Wei softly acknowledged and quickly disappeared into the night.

Actually, at the alley entrance several hundred meters away, an old Crown car was parked, with a few people inside sent by De Gaulle, all armed.

However, Chen Wei and Da Pao didn't trust them, so they made those people wait at a distance.

Chen Wei used the shadows of the camphor trees, moving quickly along the wall like a nimble cat.

He scanned over the top of the wall but saw no bodyguards, not even surveillance cameras.

Wasn't this Hatoyama Clan supposed to be formidable? With this level of security?

Chen Wei wondered to himself but didn't stop, quickly reaching the back wall of the villa.

The walls here in Japan aren't particularly high, just over two meters, with no barbed wire or broken glass on top.

They're meant more to keep out gentlemen than thieves.

The two-meter-high wall seemed like nothing to Chen Wei. He took half a step back, bent his knees to gather strength, and swung his arms back naturally, launching himself forward like a loaded spring.

As he neared the wall, he lightly pushed off with his foot, landing on the edge with his right hand, used his palm to lift his upper body, then smoothly swung his left leg over the wall, followed by his right leg. The entire movement was fluid and silent.

Like a ghost, he didn't make a sound upon landing.

After landing, Chen Wei didn't pause for a second, squatting close to the wall to hide in the darkness.

A corridor lay ahead, with dim paper lanterns every few meters.

Chen Wei cautiously observed his surroundings, then quickly moved forward, confirming no one was around.

He tiptoed, only the front half of his foot touching the ground, moving lightly and swiftly through the corridor, reaching the corner of the veranda on the west side of the main house.

Just as he was about to peek into the main house, a chill ran down his back, as if a sinister snake was eyeing him.

Chen Wei's body instantly froze, hair on his neck standing on end.

For someone to get so close without him noticing, radiating such a sense of menace, the opponent had to be a master!

He quietly pulled out his pistol and quickly scanned the ground's shadows with his peripheral vision.

The paper lanterns in the corridor flickered in the breeze.

Under a tree three meters to his left, a dark silhouette hugged the trunk so closely it almost blended into the night, with only the eyes reflecting a cold gleam.

"Shing!"

The next second, a sharp noise burst forth without warning!

The shadow shot out from behind the tree like an arrow, stepping silently on fallen leaves, the long knife in hand thrusting straight at Chen Wei's back!

The speed was so fast it left no time to react!

Chen Wei felt as if he had plunged into an icy abyss, a chill running from his feet to his head.

His years of combat experience triggered instinctive reactions, lunging to his right while swinging his gun back, "biubiu," firing two shots.

The shadow was equally quick, lightly tapping a foot on the floor to slide half a meter to the left, deftly avoiding the bullets.

Then the shadow flipped their wrist, suddenly producing three shuriken, hurling them straight at Chen Wei's chest.

Seeing this, Chen Wei instantly recognized the shadow's identity—a ninja.

Because shuriken are a staple of ninjas.

He was startled, not expecting to encounter a ninja.

No time to think, he leaned back almost parallel to the ground, dodging as the shuriken narrowly missed his nose.

"Thud thud"

Two embedded in the corridor behind him, another lodged into the flesh of his shoulder.

Sharp pain shot from his shoulder, but Chen Wei didn't even groan, using the backward momentum to kick off the ground, sliding two meters forward just in time to avoid the ninja's follow-up knife strike.

"Biubiu!"

Chen Wei fired again, emptying the clip, but the ninja's movement was too erratic and fast, dodging the bullets again.

His eyes narrowed, tossing away the gun, charging forward, swinging a punch at the ninja's head.

Ninjas are feared mostly for their elusive movements, appearing and disappearing without a trace, hard to guard against.

If engaged in close combat, their advantage in movement is greatly reduced. Furthermore, the narrow corridor limits their evasive options; if caught, those flashy dodges are impossible.

Chen Wei's punch was fast and powerful, aimed directly at the ninja's face.

The ninja was forced to retreat but swung the long knife with inertia from the retreating motion, the blade gleaming toward Chen Wei's waist.

Chen Wei didn't dodge at all, stepping quickly while aiming his beefy fist forward, clearly ready to go all out.

He was already injured, and the fight had been noisy, several shots fired. Even with the silencer, it made noise; any more enemies would spell trouble.

Thus, he decided on a life-or-death move against the opponent.

The punch carried tremendous force; struck by it, even a ninja, let alone an Ultraman, would be crushed.

"Squish!"

The sharp katana slashed open Chen Wei's waist, blood spurting out, the pain causing a slight shudder.

But his fist didn't waver, carrying the sound of a breaking wind, crashing onto the ninja's face!

"Thud!"

A muffled sound, like a watermelon smashed by a heavy mallet.

The ninja's head deformed instantly, the body falling back like a severed puppet, slamming into the corridor post, lifeless, the long knife clattering to the ground.

Chen Wei sighed in relief, clutching his bleeding wound, and stumbled back a few steps. Without checking if the ninja was dead, he sprinted towards the courtyard wall.

Time to run!

The fight surely alerted others, and now injured, staying longer would mean capture.

As he was about to climb over the wall, that chilling feeling returned on his back.

"Whiz whiz whiz!"

A familiar wind-breaking sound—three more shuriken headed for his back.

Chen Wei instinctively shifted left, lunging forward, disappearing over the wall, leaving a trail of blood on the grass.

Chapter 543: News from De Gaulle

In the courtyard, Hatoyama Yuchi arrived late, wearing pajamas.

He glanced at the ninja on the ground, whose head was already disfigured, with a dark expression.

"What's going on?"

Beside him, another ninja lowered his head and respectfully replied, "Someone just broke in and was discovered by Murakami."

He paused, his gaze turned towards the corpse on the ground, "That person was very strong, but he killed Murakami and also got injured himself. He was hit by my dart while escaping, and probably hasn't run far. Our men have already gone after him."

"Bang, bang, bang!"

As soon as he finished speaking, a series of intense gunshots erupted outside in the alley, breaking the night's silence.

The few people in the courtyard instantly froze, the ninja who replied jerked his head up, looking outside the courtyard.

The gunfire didn't last long, just about ten seconds, followed by the harsh screech of tires on the ground, and then the sound of a car engine roaring away.

Soon, a subordinate came running to report, "Someone was waiting in the alley, they helped him escape."

Hatoyama Yuchi's face turned completely dour, with a streak of fierceness in his eyes, thinking about how many years it's been since anyone dared to provoke the Hatoyama Clan.

"Go and bring all these people back!"

His subordinate sensed Hatoyama Yuchi's anger and did not dare delay, immediately leaving to make arrangements.

Not far away in the room, Yamamoto Ichiro withdrew his gaze from the open door gap.

He sank onto the ground, face pale, his back soaked with cold sweat staining his pajamas.

He faintly guessed that the commotion outside was definitely brought by Qi Yun.

He knew well that Qi Yun asked him to guard that old house in the morning because of the concern that rescue personnel would arrive and discover the existence of the hidden compartment.

Although he didn't understand why Qi Yun didn't take those two treasure swords when he left, choosing to hide them in the compartment instead...

But now it's no longer important, having stolen the items himself, Qi Yun definitely won't let him off.

This instilled a sense of fear within him...

Qi Yun being able to track his location in just a few hours showed that their real capabilities were far beyond what he had learned.

If even hiding in Hatoyama Yuchi's territory wasn't safe, how could he be sure to safely leave Japan even if he got the money?

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On the street, an old Crown and a Civic were racing along.

Inside the Civic, Da Pao drove while anxiously checking on Chen Wei's condition.

"How is it? Did it hit any vital spot?"

Chen Wei's left hand clutched his abdominal wound, right hand trembling as he reached for his back where a dart was lodged, shot by a ninja when escaping over the wall, half embedded in the muscle, the other half protruding through his clothing.

He took a deep breath, gritted his teeth, and grabbed the tail end of the shuriken and yanked fiercely!

"Mm!"

Chen Wei's body shuddered violently, cold sweat instantly covered his forehead, and he couldn't help but let out a muffled groan.

As the dart was pulled out, the wound on his back seemed to tear open, and blood spurted out quickly soaking most of his shirt.

Chen Wei glanced at the dart, then tossed it out the window.

"No poison, not a major problem."

As soon as he said that, he couldn't help but cough.

Pulling out the dart too forcefully had aggravated the knife wound on his abdomen, causing it to ooze blood again, the pain from multiple wounds intertwining, making his face even paler.

Seeing his state, Da Pao was immediately anxious, almost pushing the accelerator to the gas tank.

About ten minutes later, the two cars turned into a secluded alley, stopping at the entrance of a building.

Not daring to go to the hospital, they had to let De Gaulle's people take them to the nearest base to treat Chen Wei's wounds, or excessive blood loss could be problematic.

Da Pao helped Chen Wei inside to lie down, then took over the first aid kit and needle found by De Gaulle's men, immediately starting to stitch Chen Wei's wounds.

No anesthesia was available, he could only bear it.

After stitching several wounds, Chen Wei felt like he'd just come out of a steam room, he spat out the towel he'd been biting on, gasping heavily.

"Call... Call the boss."

Da Pao nodded, took out his phone, dialed Qi Yun's number, and told him the situation in detail.

On the other end of the call, Qi Yun leaped up from his chair upon learning that Chen Wei was seriously injured.

"How is he?"

"The wounds have been treated, no major issues for now, but..." Da Pao hesitated, glanced at the weakened Chen Wei, "he still needs to get to the hospital quickly."

"Those people are definitely searching for us outside..."

Qi Yun pondered for two seconds, then instructed, "Stay put there for now, I'll have someone come pick you up shortly."

After hanging up, he furrowed his brow and paced back and forth in the study.

The development of events was somewhat unexpected; he had thought with Chen Wei and Da Pao's skills, plus the help from De Gaulle's men, retrieving items from Hatoyama Yuchi wouldn't be difficult.

But unexpectedly, the opponent had a batch of skilled ninjas under their command.

His own experience was still too shallow, knowing too little about those ancient families, leading to this negligent decision.

"Really shouldn't underestimate these ancient families..."

Qi Yun internally cautioned himself to never again be so careless.

After taking a deep breath, he picked up the phone and called Ge Dabao, instructing him to contact colleagues in Japan for Chen Wei and his team to be taken to a safe place.

Once that was done, he immediately dialed De Gaulle's number.

The other party had already received reports from their men, so no further explanation from Qi Yun was needed.

"What do you plan to do?" De Gaulle asked thoughtfully.

Qi Yun held the phone, his tone icy, "I won't hide it from you now, the person I asked you to investigate stole two very important things from me."

"Since he's hiding in Hatoyama Yuchi's territory, that means my items are also there."

"I must retrieve the items, and have him handed over."

There was a brief silence on the other end before De Gaulle spoke again, "When I was in Japan, I had dealings with the Hatoyama Clan, I can share some of their secrets with you."

Qi Yun nodded, "Please go ahead."

He had heard Ge Dabao talk about some of the Hatoyama Clan's situation, but he only knew the general picture.

"You should be aware that their clan once had a Japanese Prime Minister, the most recent being Hatoyama Norio."

"Though that was over ten years ago, and now their clan is inevitably declining in politics, they still wield considerable influence."

"His son Hatoyama Kiichi is now a member of Japan's House of Representatives, belonging to the right-wing D-faction, and has close ties with many high-ranking officials in Japan."

"The Hatoyama Yuchi you mentioned is his cousin, in Huaxia's terms, he is Hatoyama Kiichi's right-hand man."

"As Hatoyama Kiichi gradually rises, their clan has also faced internal conflicts, due to differing political views, splitting into two factions."

"Some follow the lead of the old Family Head, Hatoyama Norio, adhering to rules, standing against war and confrontation, and leaning more towards peaceful coexistence with Huaxia."

"The rest follow Hatoyama Kiichi."

"You should know the stance of the right-wing D-faction, their actions are always aggressive and overbearing, lacking mercy."

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Chapter 544: Calling Big Bro for Backup

Qi Yun listened quietly as De Gaulle finished narrating the situation of the Hatoyama Clan, unexpectedly finding that the internal dynamics of this family were quite complicated.

Back in the Meiji era, the first-generation leader of their clan, Hatoyama Hei, stepped onto the political stage.

At that time, this man held the position of Speaker of the House of Representatives, and during the Nagasaki Incident in 1886, Hatoyama Hei provided significant support to the Qing government, helping it secure compensation payments.

Later, his son Hatoyama Ichirō achieved even greater success, directly taking the position of Prime Minister.

Like his father, Hatoyama Ichirō also opposed war and advocated for peaceful coexistence with Huaxia, having publicly expressed dissatisfaction with the cabinet's aggressive actions on multiple occasions.

During that special period, not a single member of the Hatoyama Clan participated in the war.

Afterwards, it was his grandson's turn, the current elder head of the Hatoyama Clan—Hatoyama Norio—to assume the position of Prime Minister.

This man not only inherited the will of his ancestors, resolutely opposing war, but also sought to ease relations with neighboring countries, courageously acknowledging the crimes once committed by Japan and outright rejecting visits to that particular shrine.

Therefore, up until Hatoyama Kiichi's generation, the entire Hatoyama Clan had always been very close to Huaxia.

Unfortunately, by the time it reached Hatoyama Kiichi, a turning point began to appear.

Aside from the above information, Qi Yun also recognized the prowess of this family, akin to Japan's version of the "Kennedy Clan," it was simply a perfect handover of power.

"Thank you for telling me this information, I owe you a personal favor," Qi Yun promised De Gaulle.

No matter the man's true intentions, at least this information could greatly assist him in better understanding the situation.

From the current circumstances, even if he were to have a conflict with Hatoyama Yuchi, he might only face Hatoyama Kiichi's faction, rather than the entire Hatoyama Clan.

"No need to be so polite, Mr. Qi, we're friends, and friends should help each other," De Gaulle said with a satisfied smile, suddenly finding Qi Yun to be quite perceptive.

"Moreover, if you're really planning on taking action, I suggest you try to get in touch with Hatoyama Norio. With him pulling some strings with the authorities, you wouldn't face much pressure from the government level."

"Given your status in Huaxia, it shouldn't be difficult to contact him."

Qi Yun nodded after hearing this, considering the suggestion to be a good one: "Alright, thank you."

"Well, that's settled then. I also have some connections in the Japanese National Police Agency, so if you need help, feel free to contact me," De Gaulle said eagerly.

Qi Yun couldn't quite grasp what De Gaulle was up to, not only volunteering important information but also offering help from the police agency.

There's no such thing as a free lunch, De Gaulle must be plotting something...

But it's not the time to think about this now. Qi Yun shook his head and continued scrolling through the numbers in his contacts, making another call.

"Hello, big brother, are you asleep?" Qi Yun asked, baring his teeth.

On the other end, Fu Wentao replied with a displeased tone, "You better have something urgent, or don't bother seeing me again."

Already expecting Fu Wentao's attitude, Qi Yun quickly put away his joking demeanor and became serious, "Big brother, do you have any experts to lend me a few people?"

"Experts?" Fu Wentao asked suspiciously, "What do you need them for?"

"Here's the thing..." Qi Yun briefly explained the situation, "Not only did I not get the items back, but my subordinates also got injured."

Fu Wentao chuckled upon hearing this, "You really handled this matter a bit rashly."

"Did you think after meeting that person, you could disregard all the heroes in the world?"

"I was indeed rash, I've reflected deeply," Qi Yun nodded and agreed, admitting his mistake, and then added, "But it's also because I was eager to make a contribution, wanting to retrieve the item quickly to give it to you, big brother."

"To give me?" Fu Wentao chuckled again, "What is it that you're in such a hurry to give me?"

"Emperor Qianlong's Nine Dragon Treasure Sword!" Qi Yun declared word by word.

"What did you say!? Say it again?" On the other end, Fu Wentao's teasing tone instantly vanished, replaced by a loud shout.

"I said, it's Emperor Qianlong's Nine Dragon Treasure Sword!" Qi Yun repeated once more.

The receiver fell silent, only Fu Wentao's rapid breathing could be heard.

From the time of purchasing the Golden Rattan Chair, Qi Yun noticed that whether it was Fu Wentao or the late Elder Tong, these descendants of former Qing dynasty elite families seemed to have a special affection for items from that era.

Especially those associated with the emperor...

Thus, during a previous visit to Beijing, the gift Qi Yun brought was similarly a ring worn by Emperor Qianlong, which hit Fu Wentao's soft spot directly.

"You're not joking with me? Wasn't that item lost a long time ago?" Fu Wentao raised his voice and asked.

"I wouldn't dare joke with you, big brother. It is indeed the Nine Dragon Treasure Sword, but I can't conveniently explain the specific reasons to you right now," Qi Yun seriously responded.

Fu Wentao remained silent for two seconds, then asked, "What do you plan to do?"

"My plan is..." Qi Yun briefly outlined his thought process.

After listening, Fu Wentao said in a deep voice, "Then come over first, I'll prepare some people for you, just take my plane over."

"Alright, I'll take the earliest flight over."

After hanging up, Qi Yun immediately booked his ticket and then called Xiao Wu, telling him to set out with him in the morning.

As for Niu Da and others, they would stay behind to ensure the safety of Zhao Qing and his daughter.

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At ten in the morning, the plane landed at Beijing Airport.

Qi Yun, accompanied by Xiao Wu, walked out of the terminal and saw Li Yaohua already waiting at the exit.

"What happened? The boss didn't tell me anything," Li Yaohua asked curiously.

Qi Yun patted his arm and explained, "I'll explain on the way, take me to the Cultural Heritage Administration first."

Forty minutes later, the car stopped at the entrance of the National Cultural Heritage Administration, where Xiao Hanguang's contact, Xiao Han, led Qi Yun to the office.

Upon meeting, Qi Yun directly stated his purpose: "Leader, I'm going to Japan shortly. You have a wide network, and I'd like to ask you to help arrange a meeting with Hatoyama Norio once I'm there."

Although the person has retired, it's still not easy to meet him casually, introductions are necessary.

Xiao Hanguang gave him a surprised look, "What do you want to meet Hatoyama Norio for?"

Qi Yun didn't hide anything and explained the situation briefly, without revealing what the two very important items were.

Upon hearing, Xiao Hanguang furrowed his brow, then earnestly advised, "You certainly have your plans, so I won't say much more."

"But given your special status, you must ensure not to get caught on anything when taking action, understand what I mean?"

Qi Yun nodded, "Understood, I'll be careful."

"Alright." Xiao Hanguang waved him away, "You can go, I'll arrange it for you later."

#### Chapter 545: The Little Master at Making Big Brothers

After leaving the Bureau of Cultural Relics, Qi Yun hurried to meet Fu Wentao, who was about to attend a financial summit in Germany, making the timing very urgent.

Chaoyang District, a luxurious villa on the mountainside.

In the courtyard stood seven or eight burly men, all dressed in black suits, each with sharp eyes and a calm demeanor.

If you look closely, you'll notice that the temples of these people are slightly protruding compared to ordinary people, a sign of external martial arts training at its peak.

Qi Yun stepped into the villa, feeling a strong sense of oppression as he passed by these men, as if suddenly short of breath.

Behind him, Xiao Wu seemed unfazed, merely curiously observing these people.

By the pavilion, Fu Wentao was sitting on a recliner sipping tea, waving at Qi Yun upon seeing him arrive.

"Went to see Xiao Hanguang?"

Qi Yun nodded and sat down on a nearby chair: "Yeah, I asked Director Xiao to help contact Hatoyama Norio, I plan to meet him first when I get there."

"Haha, it seems you have a good relationship with Xiao Hanguang?" Fu Wentao glanced at Qi Yun with a faint smile, "Your big brother skills are not bad, kid."

Qi Yun grinned without feeling awkward; lacking strength himself, he had to find more big brothers for support.

Fu Wentao took a sip of tea and leisurely continued: "The Xiao Family has been strong these years, especially Xiao Hanguang's uncle, who is one of the potential successors. If you become his disciple, who knows, I might have to call you big brother someday."

"Big brother, what are you saying! No matter when, you are my big brother! With just one look from you, I'd charge into battle for you!" Qi Yun pretended to complain, secretly marveling inside.

Surprised by Xiao Hanguang's impressive background, it's no wonder he didn't give face to anyone last time in J Province.

Fu Wentao laughed loudly, getting up from the chair: "Alright, enough chitchat, I have to leave soon."

As he spoke, he pointed to the seven or eight burly men not far away, "Take these people with you, they should be enough to deal with those ninjas."

Qi Yun also stood up, asking Fu Wentao, "You're letting me take these people, but is your safety okay, big brother?"

Fu Wentao shook his head and nodded at the nearby butler Zheng Lin, speaking casually: "Zheng Lin will be with me."

Qi Yun looked at the plain-looking middle-aged butler, feeling a surge of doubt.

Could this guy be a master as well?

His thin appearance and friendly facade don't look like it at all.

But since Fu Wentao said it, it wouldn't be false.

Thinking of this, Qi Yun suddenly remembered something.

Last time at the airport, he was puzzled about why Fu Wentao went to the United States without even a bodyguard, but it seems the real expert was always by his side...

"These people came from the same place as the bodyguards in that big courtyard last time, they're as strong as the little friend behind you." Fu Wentao said, patting his shoulder, and advised: "You must be more careful in their territory, don't leave yourself stranded there."

Qi Yun felt another shock in his heart, no wonder the oppression was so strong from them.

If Chen Wei and Niu Da are the top aces from special forces, these people are the aces among aces.

After all, they are responsible for safeguarding...

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Over an hour later, Qi Yun and his team took Fu Wentao's Gulfstream jet to Japan.

On the plane, he asked the leader of the eight bodyguards: "Brother Quan, this operation may have some risks, what weapons do you think everyone needs?"

"I'll have the people over there prepare first."

The middle-aged addressed as Brother Quan bowed slightly: "Mr. Qi, you're very kind; you're the boss's friend, I don't deserve such titles."

"Just call me by my name, or you can call me Old Quan."

Qi Yun waved dismissively: "No need for formality, you're a few years older than me, calling you Brother Quan isn't wrong."

"Let's talk about the weapons."

Seeing Qi Yun say this, Brother Quan didn't insist anymore: "Alright, my team and I are proficient in shooting and combat, prepare two Glock 19 pistols and a knife for each of us."

"Sure, anything else needed besides these?" Qi Yun replied and immediately took out his phone to message Da Pao, having him arrange with De Gaulle's men.

"No need, it's just a few ninjas." Brother Quan's tone was relaxed, revealing immense confidence.

...

Meanwhile, in Kyoto City, in Hatoyama Yuchi's residence.

After hearing the report from his subordinate, he extinguished the cigarette butt with a cold expression.

"You can't even find a few people, what's the point of me keeping you bunch of useless?"

The subordinate, hearing Hatoyama Yuchi's icy tone, buried his head lower: "We... We've already searched along their escape route and checked all hospitals, but... we just can't find them."

"They seem to have vanished without a trace, not leaving a single mark."

"Vanished without a trace?" Hatoyama Yuchi sneered, eyes filled with malice, "Contact the police department, even if they're hiding underground, make sure to dig them out for me."

"I'll give you one day, if there's no sign of them by tomorrow, you can commit seppuku."

The subordinate, upon hearing the word 'seppuku', shivered violently: "Yes! I'll definitely find them by tomorrow!" Saying this, he bowed and retreated.

After the subordinate left, Hatoyama Yuchi stood up and asked the air: "Has the item been delivered?"

Upon his voice's fall, a shadow appeared from the pillar's shadow, precisely the ninja who had previously injured Chen Wei with a hidden weapon.

His entire head was wrapped in a black cloth, obscuring his appearance, with only a pair of eyes visible.

"It's been sent to Tokyo." The response was somewhat hoarse, and very low, like the hiss of a deadly snake...

At four in the afternoon, a private plane landed at the airport.

After disembarking, Qi Yun and his team swiftly moved to the parking lot, where two business cars were already waiting.

"Boss." Da Pao jumped out of the passenger seat of one car, and upon seeing the men following Qi Yun, his muscles instantly tightened as if facing a great enemy.

These men gave him a sense of extreme danger, a feeling he had never encountered facing any enemy before.

"No need to be tense, they're on our side." Qi Yun patted his shoulder and pointed to Brother Quan for introduction, "This is Brother Quan."

"This is my brother Da Pao."

After the introductions, Qi Yun inquired about Chen Wei's condition: "How's Brother Wei?"

"Guo An's brothers arranged treatment for him, and he's no longer in danger." Da Pao replied.

Qi Yun nodded: "Okay, let's go."

#### Chapter 546: Standpoint

Inside the business vehicle, Qi Yun raised his wristwatch to check the time, took out his phone, edited a text message, and sent it out. The message simply read, "I've arrived."

Not long after, the phone vibrated, displaying a reply on the screen from a hotel located in Tokyo.

Qi Yun glanced at it briefly, then put the phone away.

The two business vehicles sped down the expressway, entering the Tokyo city area after more than forty minutes and finally stopping on a street near Asakusa Temple.

Opposite the street was a courtyard that occupied several acres, surrounded by white walls. Inside the walls were several buildings, all featuring a strong Edo-period architectural style.

The main gate of the courtyard comprised two heavy black ebony doors, with a wooden plaque next to it displaying the word "Hatoyama."

On each side of the gate stood a half-human-height stone statue, with weathered cracks adding to the aura of the place.

This is the longtime residence of the Hatoyama Clan, a political family with a hundred-year legacy.

Qi Yun led Da Pao and Brother Quan out of the car, and the three crossed the street to the gate.

Da Pao took two steps forward and knocked on the door, soon hearing the soft sound of footsteps approaching from inside. The ebony door opened slightly, revealing the head of an old butler in a blue kimono, his figure thin and lean.

"Hello, I'm Qi Yun, and I've come to meet Mr. Hatoyama Norio."

Qi Yun spoke in Mandarin, but the old butler clearly understood and silently opened the two doors, gesturing for them to enter.

Qi Yun nodded slightly to the butler and stepped over the threshold.

Upon entering, the smell of sandalwood swept over him, standing in stark contrast to the bustling street outside. Inside, the courtyard was laid with smooth bluestone paths, flanked by tall cherry trees, which lent a peaceful feeling just by looking at them.

"This is truly a place for cultivating oneself in tranquility."

Qi Yun mused inwardly, following the butler across the bluestone and stopping in front of a wooden house.

The butler opened the door again, gesturing for him to enter.

Qi Yun glanced at Da Pao and Brother Quan, instructing, "Wait for me outside." With that, he stepped inside.

Inside the room, an elderly man with graying hair was reading, with numerous Buddhist scriptures on the table before him.

Hearing the disturbance, he raised his head to assess Qi Yun as he entered.

Prior to arriving, Qi Yun had already seen photos of Hatoyama Norio and thus recognized the elderly man as the former Prime Minister of Japan.

"Mr. Hatoyama, hello."

Hatoyama Norio closed the book, gesturing to a cushion on the opposite side of the table, "Please sit."

His spoken Mandarin was clear and very standard.

Qi Yun nodded and sat down on the cushion.

"Mr. Hatoyama, I apologize for the unexpected visit and hope you aren't offended."

Hatoyama Norio waved his hand, speaking peacefully, "No problem, just tell me directly why you're here."

Seeing his straightforwardness, Qi Yun refrained from pleasantries, "Alright, I'll be direct."

"I have had two treasures stolen from me..." Qi Yun began by briefly explaining the situation, then continued, "The Nine Dragon Treasure Sword and Tai'e Sword are among Huaxia's most precious artifacts, and I'm sure Mr. Hatoyama is aware of their cultural significance to our nation."

"I was planning to donate them to a museum soon, but the theft occurred unexpectedly."

"Therefore, my intention in coming to Japan is to request Hatoyama Yuchi to return these two treasures."

Qi Yun did not choose to hide anything from the elderly man, as failing to explain the seriousness might result in the matter not being addressed.

"I know you are a senior figure in the Hatoyama Clan and have always valued cultural exchanges between the two countries, so I hope to gain your assistance."

"Tai'e Sword..." Hatoyama Norio softly repeated these three words, lifting his head after a while to speak to Qi Yun, "This matter is indeed Hatoyama Yuchi's wrongdoing, but I am now merely a retired old man. Even if I asked him to return the swords, he wouldn't listen."

"So, I'm sorry, I can't help you."

"Mr. Hatoyama misunderstands." Qi Yun shook his head with a sincere smile, "I seek your presence not to have Hatoyama Yuchi return the items via you."

"But to inform you that these two treasures are very important to Huaxia, being part of our culture."

"We are steadfast in bringing them back to our country, which may very likely lead to a conflict with Hatoyama Yuchi."

"Before that happens, I hope Mr. Hatoyama can alert your family's political connections not to intervene in this conflict, or else... it could escalate to national confrontations."

"I believe this is something you'd prefer not to see..."

Qi Yun's words were concise and clear, and he positioned his stance as representative of Huaxia's stance.

Hatoyama Norio has always been positioned to minimize conflicts and promote friendly relations between the two countries, so Qi Yun's words had to be considered seriously.

After half a minute of silence, he slowly spoke, "I understand your meaning, I will do what I can to restrain the Hatoyama Clan's influence in the political arena, preventing participation in your conflict with him."

Qi Yun felt inwardly relieved, initially expecting more effort to persuade, but didn't anticipate such understanding from the elderly man, not choosing favoritism due to Hatoyama Yuchi being part of the Hatoyama family.

With such vision, it's no wonder he became prime minister.

"Thank you, Mr. Hatoyama." Qi Yun expressed sincere gratitude.

Hatoyama Norio nodded lightly, "You don't need to thank me; I'm merely making the choice that should be made."

"But I can only do my best; as for the result, I can't promise you."

Qi Yun chuckled, "Having achieved this, old sir, we are already exceedingly grateful."

The Hatoyama Clan has stood strong in Japan for a century, with each generation's head having vast networks of students and followers. Although Hatoyama Norio left office long ago, his political influence wouldn't be less than his son Hatoyama Kiichi's.

Therefore, any aid from him would surely alleviate Qi Yun's burdens significantly.

After leaving the Hatoyama family's old residence, Qi Yun proceeded to the intelligence base Guo An has in Tokyo.

The person in charge was a middle-aged man with glasses, who saluted Qi Yun and then led him alone to an office.

"Advisor Qi, here is detailed information we've gathered on Hatoyama Yuchi, including some of his illegal businesses." The person in charge handed over a report.

Qi Yun took it and began analyzing it thoroughly.

This Hatoyama Yuchi truly seemed different, his way of doing things utterly contrary to the Hatoyama Clan.

This fellow not only engaged in illegal high-interest loans and flour sales but even involves himself in human trafficking business, essentially committing all kinds of crimes.

And most of his earnings end up in his dear brother Hatoyama Kiichi's pocket, serving as capital for gaining favor.

All this is to prepare for his future pursuit of higher positions.

Having reviewed all the material, a plan gradually formed in Qi Yun's mind. Leaving Guo An behind, he immediately sought Brother Quan and the others to begin arranging his strategy.

"Here's what you'll do..."

#### Chapter 547: Let Me See Your Strength

At six in the evening, Qi Yun arrived alone at a high-end hotel in Tokyo, where he had a face-to-face meeting with a mysterious person in the presidential suite for over ten minutes, before heading directly to the airport.

More than two hours later, the Gulfstream G70 landed at Kansai International Airport.

De Gaulle's subordinates had prepared two business cars, and as soon as Qi Yun and the group arrived, they headed straight to Capital City.

Under the night sky, Capital City was brightly lit but lacked Tokyo's bustling noise. In the distance, the Higashiyama mountains were hidden in the night, and one could vaguely make out the silhouette of the temple on the mountain peak.

After entering the urban area, the two business cars parted ways, one heading north, eventually stopping at the very spot where Chen Wei and his group had parked the previous night.

Ahead was Hatoyama Yuchi's private villa.

After the car came to a halt, Qi Yun stepped out and led Xiao Wu, Brother Quan, and four other teammates to the entrance of the villa.

Perhaps because of last night's attack, there were two more subordinates of Hatoyama Yuchi at the villa entrance. Upon seeing Qi Yun and his crew, their eyes instantly became vigilant, and they immediately shouted, "止まれ!お前らはどこの者だ!"

Qi Yun didn't comprehend their words at all, nor did he intend to pay any heed, striding forward boldly.

The two subordinates saw him completely ignore the shout, their faces instantly darkened, and their hands simultaneously reached for the guns at their waists, with one turning back to yell into the courtyard, clearly to alert others.

Yet, before the guns could be drawn, a shadow quickly streaked past them like lightning.

Before the two could discern what it was, their guns hit the ground with a clang, and their bodies went limp, losing all motion.

Brother Quan stood back behind Qi Yun, his expression stern, as though nothing had happened.

In that split second, he not only knocked out the weapons from their hands with a knife palm but also struck them on the nape, performing the entire sequence with fluid grace.

This is the level of skill equivalent to the Zhongnanhai bodyguards!

Beside him, Xiao Wu looked at Brother Quan in surprise, eyes full of eagerness.

Ever since descending the mountain at sixteen, he had been beside Elder Tong, honing systematic Inner Strength skills but rarely engaging in combat. Watching Brother Quan's moves just now sparked a desire to spar with him.

When Qi Yun's group had just entered the courtyard, the corridor ahead suddenly rang with the clattering sound of footfalls.

Soon after, a group of more than twenty burly men with mustaches charged in, encircling Qi Yun and the others.

All of these mustachioed men wore black kimonos with wide belts strapped at the waist, their faces full of heft, showing the ferocity of seasoned street operatives.

Leading them was a scar-faced brute, glaring at Qi Yun's group and shouting in Japanese, "八嘎!你们是什么人!"

Qi Yun still did not respond, his expression unchanged as he swept a glance at them, then stopped and took out a cigarette pack from his pocket, placing a cigarette in his mouth.

"Snap!"

As the lighter's flame flickered, Brother Quan and the five others suddenly moved.

They shot out like arrows, as fast as Bolt's sprint in a hundred meters.

Before the scar-faced man could react, Brother Quan was already before him, right knee with the sound of wind, slamming brutally into his abdomen.

The brute hadn't anticipated this sudden assault and attempted to parry with his katana, but his abdomen had already taken a solid hit, bending him over in pain, his katana clanging to the ground.

Brother Quan promptly grabbed the back of his neck, pressing down fiercely, causing the brute's face to slam onto the blue stone, with a groan of incapacitation.

The rest of the subordinates were similarly overwhelmed, unable to stand against Qi Yun's team, the scene resembling wolves among sheep.

Within just half a minute, the once fierce group of more than twenty could not stand anymore.

Just after dealing with the men on the ground, a sudden sharp sound came from behind the corridor pillar, with a throwing dart shooting straight at the smoking Qi Yun.

"Watch out!"

Guarding Qi Yun's side, Xiao Wu muttered lowly, while rapidly reaching for the dagger at his waist, wrist flicked, the cold gleam flying out.

"Clang!"

The crisp metallic collision resounded, with the dagger striking precisely at the dart, knocking it down.

Seeing this, Brother Quan and the others quickly recalibrated their positions, drawing out their guns to protect Qi Yun in the middle.

The ashes of Qi Yun's cigarette fell, and his tightly clenched hand in his pocket quietly loosened.

Though outwardly calm, Qi Yun was far less composed internally, but pretended to maintain an unfazed demeanor.

Seeing his subordinates demonstrate such bravery, his previously slightly unsettled heart was completely relieved.

"Whew~" Qi Yun exhaled a smoke ring, turning to Xiao Wu beside, "Show me your strength, go catch that rat hiding in the shadows."

Xiao Wu's eyes ignited with battle spirit at these words, and he swiftly launched forward like an arrow, heading for the column behind which the dart had just been shot—the ninja was certainly lurking nearby.

Before he got close, a shadow suddenly flitted out from behind the pillar, raising his hands with two shurikens aimed directly at him, flashing a cold gleam as the ninja drew out a long knife from the waist, moving with a bizarre footwork straight at Xiao Wu.

Xiao Wu's gaze hardened, yet he showed no panic, halting abruptly, body twisting to the left to narrowly avoid the shurikens, while his left hand formed a palm, channeling Inner Strength to strike at the ninja's wrist holding the knife.

The ninja quickly reacted, flipping the wrist, turning the stab to a chop to repel Xiao Wu.

But Xiao Wu wouldn't back down, right hand gripping the opponent's forearm tightly, fingers exerting power, causing the blade to freeze suspended in mid-air, unable to move further.

A trace of astonishment flashed through the ninja's exposed eyes, feeling an excruciating force clenching on his forearm like iron clamps, inducing numbness even in the wrist.

Unbelieving of this young man's formidable prowess, despite having weapon advantage, he was forced to a standstill.

In his moment of distraction, Xiao Wu powered up again!

With a loud "crack" of bone breaking, Xiao Wu pressed forcefully, shattering the skeletal joint of the ninja's forearm!

The ninja groaned deeply, face blanching instantly, hand losing hold of the long knife which clattered to the ground.

Realizing his inferiority in just one exchange, his gaze toward Xiao Wu was full of dread and despair.

Xiao Wu gave no breathing room, attacking with fierce momentum, following up with a full-powered punch to the opponent's chest.

The ninja lurched backward from the punch like a kite with a broken string, blood gushing profusely from his mouth.

Before he hit the ground, Xiao Wu quickly stepped up, grabbing his collar, swinging him forward like a chick.

With a heavy "thud," the ninja fell squarely in front of Qi Yun on the bluestone.

Prone, his mouth constantly spewed blood, staining the ground beneath him, the broken forearm twisted at an uncanny angle, painful just to look at.

Xiao Wu patted the dust off his hands and stood lightly back beside Qi Yun, as if crushing an ant was all it entailed.

#### Chapter 548: Submission

The scene in the courtyard shocked everyone present, including Brother Quan and his men, who looked at Xiao Wu with a different gaze.

Qi Yun's hand holding the cigarette also stopped mid-air, his eyes full of astonishment.

He had thought Xiao Wu would be fierce, but not to this extent!

"Clip clop, clip clop."

The sound of wooden clogs stepping on the ground arose. Qi Yun looked up and saw several people coming from the back courtyard at the end of the corridor, including Hatoyama Yuchi and Yamamoto Ichiro!

Hatoyama Yuchi was surrounded by several ninjas as he arrived closer. Upon seeing his men lying crisscrossed on the ground, especially one ninja in a miserable state, his face turned dark enough to drip water, eyes brimming with murderous intent.

"It's...it's Qi Yun," Yamamoto Ichiro stammered from the back.

From the moment he saw Qi Yun, he finally realized the magnitude of the trouble he was in.

"Baka!" Hatoyama Yuchi suddenly clenched his fist, pulled out a handgun from his back, and aimed to fire at Qi Yun's group, "Kill them all for me!"

However, just as he uttered these words, his arm merely lifted halfway when a "bang!" echoed through the courtyard.

The ferocity on Hatoyama Yuchi's face had not yet faded when he felt a sharp pain in his wrist. The handgun dropped to the ground with a clang, blood dripping down his hand.

Startled, he looked up to find Brother Quan had already drawn his handgun, and it was precisely Brother Quan who had shot his wrist.

"Baka!"

A number of ninjas around shouted and drew their swords, ready to charge forward.

"Swish swish swish!"

Several companions beside Qi Yun simultaneously raised their guns, fingers on the triggers, ready to open fire at any moment.

The dark gun barrels pointed uniformly at the charging ninjas, causing them to freeze instantly.

The ninjas indeed had peculiar movement skills, capable of evading bullets to an extent.

With one gun, they could attempt to dodge, but now there were nine guns!

Apart from Brother Quan, each of the other four teammates held a gun in each hand, providing a covering fire that was impossible to evade.

The scene suddenly reached a stalemate, and even the air felt heavy.

Qi Yun dropped the cigarette butt to the ground, extinguished it, and only then looked at Hatoyama Yuchi, slowly saying, "Hand over my things. You should know what I'm talking about."

Hatoyama Yuchi didn't show much fear, clutching the wrist that got shot, staring at Qi Yun with a livid expression, "Do you know what you are doing?"

Qi Yun's face remained expressionless, replying indifferently, "No need to threaten me. If I feared your threats, I wouldn't have come here."

Hatoyama Yuchi found himself speechless, his face looking even uglier, his eyes full of undisguised aggression.

Being the representative of the Hatoyama Clan in the Capital City, calling himself the underground emperor of the Capital City wasn't an exaggeration. He had never been underestimated like this before.

"Fine! Not fearing threats, are you? Do you think bringing a few people and guns allows you to desecrate the Hatoyama family?"

"You will pay for your ignorance!" Hatoyama Yuchi sneered coldly, arrogant even in this situation, he didn't believe Qi Yun dared to kill him.

Qi Yun detested arrogant individuals and promptly gestured at Brother Quan.

The latter pressed his finger on the trigger again and fired.

"Bang bang!" Two gunshots rang out consecutively.

As bullets flew, a ninja shielded Hatoyama Yuchi, the bullets piercing the air into the ninja's calf.

Brother Quan planned to shoot Hatoyama Yuchi's knee, but was obstructed by this guy.

To be fair, these ninjas were indeed loyal, even faced with life-threatening danger, none retreated.

The ninja hit in the calf grunted, knees hitting the ground, blood oozing instantly, trickling down his pants.

Hatoyama Yuchi's eyes blazed, as if trying to kill Qi Yun with his gaze, shocked by such audacity from Qi Yun's group.

"Though you're with the Hatoyama Clan, you don't represent them."

In a calm tone, Qi Yun raised his watch to check the time, and continued, "I'll give you two minutes to decide, either hand over my things or I'll have those two tons of flour in the dock warehouse dumped into the sea."

"If you don't believe me, you can call your men to check."

Flour?!

Hatoyama Yuchi heard this word, pupils constricting, his fiery gaze replaced by shock.

How could he know where the goods were hidden?!

Seeing Qi Yun's confident demeanor, Hatoyama Yuchi grew anxious, immediately pulling out his cellphone, apologizing to his men. But the voice speaking on the other end was a Huaxia person...

This sank his heart.

The two tons of flour were his supply for the next month. If Qi Yun dumped them, not only would his investment of several billion yen go to waste, but his market grip in the Capital City could collapse.

Because flour is a lucrative trade, and he's not the only one in on it. Major syndicates with connections are dividing this market.

Though the Hatoyama Clan is formidable, it barely intimidates against massive profits.

Once lost, reclaiming the market is tough, with consequences leading to unmeasurable losses.

As he struggled with uncertainty, Qi Yun's voice sounded again.

"You have one minute left."

Hatoyama Yuchi shot his head up, eyes bloodshot, arrogance gone, asking gravely, "Are you sure you want to be an enemy of the Hatoyama Clan?"

Qi Yun smirked coldly, "I've already said, you don't represent the Hatoyama Clan. Call the police department if you don't believe me, see if anyone comes to save you."

He glanced at his watch again, "But hurry, only half a minute left."

Hatoyama Yuchi, utterly baffled by Qi Yun's words, couldn't understand his meaning. The police department in the Capital City belongs to the Hatoyama Clan, how could they disregard him?

"3"

"2"

"1"

As Qi Yun finished the countdown, Brother Quan pulled out a phone, pressing the call button.

"Tell me your answer," Qi Yun asked Hatoyama Yuchi.

Hatoyama Yuchi scanned Qi Yun's eyes, glanced at Brother Quan's glowing phone, swallowed hard, "The thing you want isn't here. I've already sent it to Tokyo, handed to Hatoyama Kiichi."

Upon hearing this, Qi Yun's eyes narrowed, not here?!

To discern if he was lying, he even attempted to gather intel.

Unfortunately, not everyone's information is traceable...

After a moment's silence, Qi Yun finally spoke, "Get him to call, immediately send my things back."

Chapter 549: Which Fool Dares Court Death?

In Tokyo, lights illuminated an office building belonging to the Hatoyama Clan, where Japanese Congress member Hatoyama Kiichi was still dealing with business matters.

Though now 48 years old, he showed ample enthusiasm in his work, not only busy with public affairs in Tokyo's election district but also making decisions on many major issues for the Hatoyama Clan.

Nevertheless, he thrived on it. As he stated in media interviews, 48 is the age for making a breakthrough.

This guy not only has ambition but also possesses a decisive and ruthless personality, even treating himself with the same severity.

Not long ago, his father—former Japanese leader Hatoyama Norio—had taken a trip to Huaxia and publicly expressed some opinions, creating a massive uproar domestically in Japan, with many calling him a traitor.

Upon learning the news, Hatoyama Kiichi immediately severed ties with his father to avoid being influenced, even held a press conference to declare his ignorance of the matter, publicly ending their father-son relationship.

This shows that although he has entered the political arena not long ago, growing up in such a political family, he has already become a qualified politician who will stop at nothing to achieve his goals.

"Ring ring ring!"

Just as Hatoyama Kiichi was looking down at the documents, the phone on the table rang. He glanced at the caller ID on the screen and walked to the window to answer the call.

"Big brother, I'm in trouble over here..."

As soon as the call connected, Hatoyama Yuchi on the other end poured out the events that had just occurred and added, "He wants to reclaim those two swords, or else he'll dump my warehouse goods into the sea."

"Baka!" Hatoyama Kiichi gripped his phone tightly; the neon lights outside casting sinister shadows on his face. "Have him take the call!"

An outsider daringly challenged the Hatoyama Clan in Japan—unforgivable!

Though his role now is just that of a congress member, he speaks more authoritatively than the leader of the Democratic Party after taking over the political resources left by the Hatoyama family over generations.

So which fool has come courting death?

In a villa in Capital City, Qi Yun merely glanced at the phone Hatoyama Yuchi handed over and didn't even raise a hand to take it, his lips curling into a cold smile: "I think you still haven't grasped the situation."

With that, he turned to instruct Brother Quan, "Dump half of his goods first."

Brother Quan immediately took out his phone, called the team at the warehouse, and pressed the speaker button; his voice echoed clearly through the yard: "Dump half of the warehouse's flour into the sea."

The response came from the other end, along with the sound of wooden planks being pried open.

This noise stabbed like a dull knife in Hatoyama Yuchi's heart: "No! Please don't be reckless!"

Two tons of goods, even half would cost billions, his heart was practically bleeding.

Yet Qi Yun paid no heed to his cries, checked the time on his watch, and remained calm: "From Tokyo to here takes about four hours. I'll wait here until midnight."

"If by then I haven't received what's rightfully mine, not only will your goods disappear, but you'll pay a terrible price too."

After saying this, he took out his phone, editing messages while walking towards the pavilion.

"Xiao Wu, go catch Yamamoto Ichiro."

"Yes." Xiao Wu replied, striding toward the ninjas.

His footsteps were heavy, echoing dully on the bluestone slabs, each step felt like stepping on the ninjas' hearts.

The ninjas across instinctively tightened their grips on their long swords but retreated half a step under Xiao Wu's icy gaze.

The ferocity of this young man was still fresh in their minds; nobody dared to stop him hastily, especially since the target wasn't Hatoyama Yuchi.

Yamamoto Ichiro, hiding at the back of the group, collapsed onto the ground, his back pressed tightly against the corridor post, his face white as paper.

Ever since he saw Qi Yun in the yard, an ominous premonition filled his heart.

Secretly guarding Hatoyama Yuchi and others in front of him was his final shred of hope, praying that Qi Yun would forget about his minor role.

But now reality extinguished all his fantasies.

As Xiao Wu walked toward him, he trembled uncontrollably, muttering "don't come over," hands pushing against the ground trying to move back but barely moved an inch due to weak legs.

Xiao Wu reached Yamamoto Ichiro without hindrance, ignoring his shouts, grabbed his collar expressionlessly like lifting a chick.

With feet off the ground, Yamamoto Ichiro waved his arms in fear, only to have his wrist clamped firmly by Xiao Wu's other hand, unable to move.

"Bring him over." Qi Yun, seated on the stone bench in the pavilion, having just finished editing the message, gestured at Xiao Wu.

Xiao Wu carried Yamamoto Ichiro towards the pavilion, deliberately pausing when passing by Hatoyama Yuchi.

Hatoyama Yuchi looked at the terrified Yamamoto Ichiro, and recalling Qi Yun's "terrible price" statement, his heart sank to the bottom; he wasn't so sure Qi Yun wouldn't harm him now.

He knew well this tactic from Huaxia called "Knocking the Mountain to Shake the Tiger," if he couldn't get the items, he'd be the next in trouble.

"Bang!"

Xiao Wu threw Yamamoto Ichiro onto the floor before Qi Yun, causing him to whimper in pain, almost passing out.

Yet he couldn't care about the pain, hurriedly got up from the ground, knees kneeling before Qi Yun, repeatedly bowing his head.

"Mr. Qi... I... I shouldn't have stolen your things, I know I was wrong, please forgive my foolishness."

Yamamoto Ichiro's forehead kept hitting the bluestone slabs, he seemed determined, soon blood stained the floor, yet he continued bowing, repeating pleas.

Initially believing Hatoyama Yuchi could protect him, he saw firsthand even the latter was controlled by Qi Yun, leaving him utterly terrified, only survival instinct remained.

Qi Yun sat on the stone bench, cigarette in hand, not lifting an eyelid, watching Yamamoto Ichiro's continuous bowing impassively.

Until the blood stained his shoe, he slowly spoke: "You don't know you're wrong, you just know you're about to die."

His voice chilled Yamamoto Ichiro, dropping him into an icy abyss.

"I... I truly know I'm wrong! Mr. Qi!" Yamamoto Ichiro's voice quivered and was tearful, teeth chattering, "I shouldn't have been greedy, stealing your treasure, please, for my previous service, grant me a chance!"

"Did I not pay you for your service?" Qi Yun sneered; his rewards previously far exceeded market prices.

He could accept errors but not betrayal.

"Throw him out, hand him over to the people outside."

Chapter 550: You Dare Stab Me in the Back!?

On the other side, Hatoyama Kiichi listened to the busy signal on the phone, his face ashen.

He gritted his teeth and immediately dialed the number of the head of the Kyoto Prefectural Police Headquarters.

In his eyes, Qi Yun was already a dead man. He had to let him know the consequences of provoking the Hatoyama Clan.

"Good day, Mr. Hatoyama!" came the respectful voice of the chief on the other end of the line.

The chief was much like Li Tongwei, a key figure in the Kyoto police department.

If it were just a regular member of Congress, the chief wouldn't need to be so respectful. The reason for his respect was largely due to the surname of the person on the line.

"Yoshikata! Please immediately dispatch the police to seal off all the exits in the western part of the Capital City!" Hatoyama Kiichi's voice was filled with suppressed anger, his right hand gripping the phone tightly. "A group of H Xia people are illegally armed and have kidnapped my cousin. I want you to go and arrest them immediately!"

"At all costs, do not let them leave the Capital City!"

As a politician, he naturally prioritized the use of political resources he could mobilize to handle the situation.

However, what he didn't anticipate was that the chief, who had always been obedient to him, didn't immediately carry out his order this time.

The chief was silent for two seconds before speaking hesitantly: "Mr. Hatoyama, I'm really... really sorry. Just ten minutes ago, I received a call for help from Nara County. There is a large-scale protest there, and I have already dispatched all police forces to maintain order..."

Hatoyama Kiichi was taken aback. Who would protest in the middle of the night? And if such a thing happened, why was he not notified?

It was clearly an excuse from the other party, and a poor one at that.

Hatoyama Kiichi's initial anger quickly calmed down, and he keenly sensed that something was off about this situation.

"Yoshikata, we're friends. If you have any difficulties, please tell me directly. I won't make it hard for a friend."

Listening to Hatoyama Kiichi's "sincere" words, the chief once again fell silent. After a long while, he sighed and replied, "I'm sorry. Your father called me asking me not to intervene in this matter."

Father!?

Why would he suddenly get involved and specifically call the police headquarters to prevent intervention?

Ever since cutting ties with Hatoyama Norio, it had been some time since he last contacted him. Even though they both lived in Tokyo, he rarely returned to the old home of the Hatoyama Clan.

So he was unaware that Qi Yun had gone to meet with Hatoyama Norio.

"When did he call you?" Hatoyama Kiichi asked in a deep voice.

The chief sighed on the other end of the phone, his tone filled with helplessness: "This afternoon, Mr. Hatoyama asked me not to take any action for the time being."

This afternoon?

Hatoyama Kiichi's face showed a hint of suspicion. Could that old man have known that trouble would occur with Hatoyama Yuchi?

"Did he give any reason?"

"No," the chief said with a bit of hesitation, trying to persuade him, "Mr. Hatoyama, he is still your father, after all..."

Hatoyama Kiichi ignored the rest of the useless words and hung up after the other party finished speaking.

He immediately contacted other connections in Kyoto, but the answers were similar to what he heard earlier, with only the Public Security Intelligence Agency willing to cooperate, as it was run by someone he had supported.

"Damn it!"

Hatoyama Kiichi angrily threw his phone on the ground, venting his rage.

He couldn't understand why his father would do this, and what angered him more was that despite the political resources taking so many benefits from him, they still obeyed his father when the time came.

What does that make him, the fourth-generation leader of the Hatoyama Clan!

After venting his anger, he bent down to pick up the phone from the ground, its screen shattered.

He stared at his distorted reflection in the black screen, a ferocity welling up from his heart.

How dare you stab me in the back!?

You brought this upon yourself...

"Knock, knock, knock!" There was a knock on the office door.

By the time the secretary entered, Hatoyama Kiichi's fierce expression had vanished, replaced with the kind face he showed before the cameras.

"Congressman, here is your itinerary for tomorrow..."

...

In the Capital City, Hatoyama Yuchi still stood in the courtyard, his expression complicated.

From the time he called his cousin until now, several hours had passed, but there was still no movement outside, clearly not matching his expectations.

Where is his entourage? Why has no one come to protect him?

And the police department has yet to make an appearance, causing an unprecedented fear to well up within him.

Why is nobody coming to save him?

Could it be that this person named Qi Yun has some extraordinary background, beyond even the reach of the Hatoyama Clan?

"Impossible... No one can stand above the Hatoyama Clan!" he whispered to himself, trying to convince himself, but his gaze swept over the calm figure in the pavilion, and his confidence wavered further.

Hatoyama Yuchi gripped his injured wrist tightly. Although it had been simply bandaged, without further treatment it would surely be useless.

Just then, the sound of engines roaring finally came from the alleyway outside, and it sounded like more than one vehicle had arrived.

Hatoyama Yuchi looked up abruptly, a flash of joy in his eyes. It must be reinforcements sent by the clan!

He struggled to rush out, but was stopped by the ninja standing by.

"Damn it, you're dead!" Hatoyama Yuchi screamed at Qi Yun, his voice filled with excitement.

Qi Yun glanced at him. Although he couldn't understand the gibberish he was shouting, it was probably something stupid like "You're dead meat..."

At the entrance of the alleyway outside the villa, seven or eight black Mercedes and several cars marked with "Public Security Intelligence Agency" blocked the way.

Hatoyama Kiichi sat in the back of one of the cars, frowning as he looked ahead, displeased as he asked, "Go see what's going on, why aren't we moving."

Before the subordinate in the passenger seat could check, someone ran over to report.

"President! The road ahead is blocked, they won't let us through!"

Upon hearing this, Hatoyama Kiichi was instantly furious, slamming the armrest and shouting angrily, "Damn it! Are you all idiots? Do I have to teach you how to handle this too?"

The reporting subordinate's face turned pale, quickly bowing to explain: "President, the ones blocking the road are... the Yakuza..."

"Yakuza?!"

Upon hearing those words, the rage on the verge of erupting within Hatoyama Kiichi dissipated significantly.

In Japan, the Hatoyama Clan may be politically grounded, but with several generations of accumulated connections and resources, even the Yakuza, a long-standing organization, had to defer to them.

In the past, even the Yakuza leaders were polite to him, so why would they suddenly dare block his car on the road?

"Yes... yes, President." Sweat trickled down the subordinate's forehead as he feared being used as a scapegoat, "They... they are asking to speak with you..."