THE WAY OF RESTRAINT

Chapter 101: Golden Bell Training Study, Study, and Study Again

"Impact resistance training consists of three levels: first, muscle hardness; second, bone density and toughness; third, the shock resistance of internal organs and the brain. Only when both the external and internal are trained as one can you achieve the indestructible body."

"In addition, there are various techniques involving agility and reflexes, which allow you to dodge the moment the strike lands, or to use relaxed breathing to prevent the impact point from concentrating on a single area—thus neutralizing 99% of the shock and penetration."

"Moreover, the highest-level skill is the cultivation of a sixth sense—an ability to foresee danger before it arrives. With this sense, one can avoid harm before it strikes, achieving a perfect fusion of mind and body, and remain undefeated forever."

In the training room, under the supervision of Professors Luo and Ma, Su Jie began intensive training in a complete regimen of external hardening techniques: Thirteen Protectors External Training Golden Bell Cover Iron Shirt Dragon-Tiger Vajra Hard Qi Gong.

Odell had named this system the "Thirteen Protectors External Training Golden Bell Cover Iron Shirt Dragon-Tiger Vajra Hard Qi Gong," which made sense. It included fierce roars like dragon cries and tiger howls and drew on the secret techniques of Shaolin's Vajra Hard Qi Gong, among other traditions.

Su Jie stripped off all his clothes, leaving not a stitch.

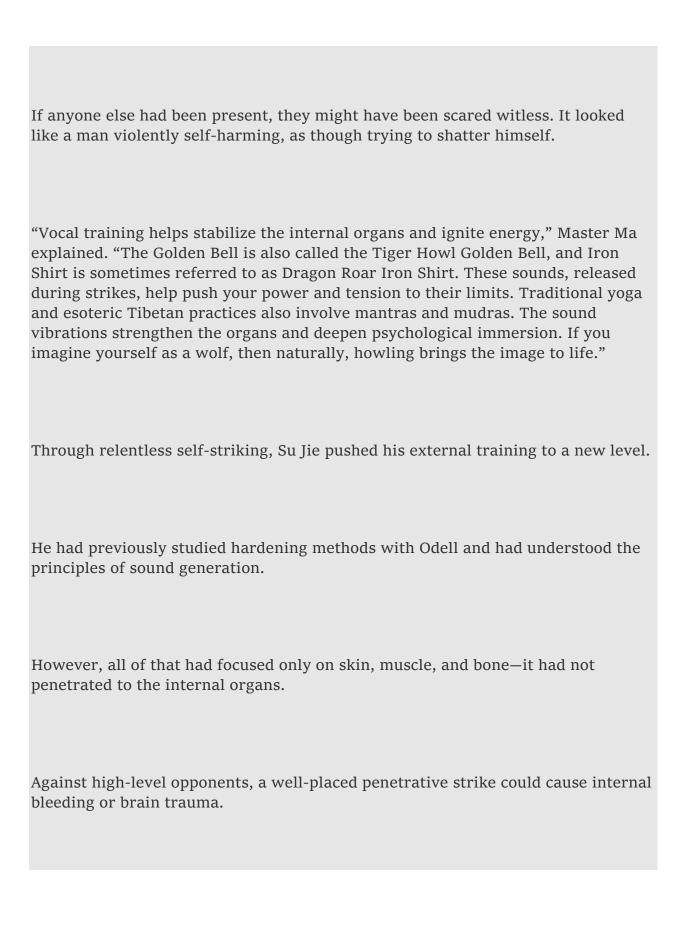
Standing firm, his stance was as steady as a mountain. He imagined himself being struck by ocean waves, scoured by waterfalls, even charged by thousands of soldiers—and yet he remained unmoved.

He pictured himself calm and composed even as Mount Tai crumbled before him.

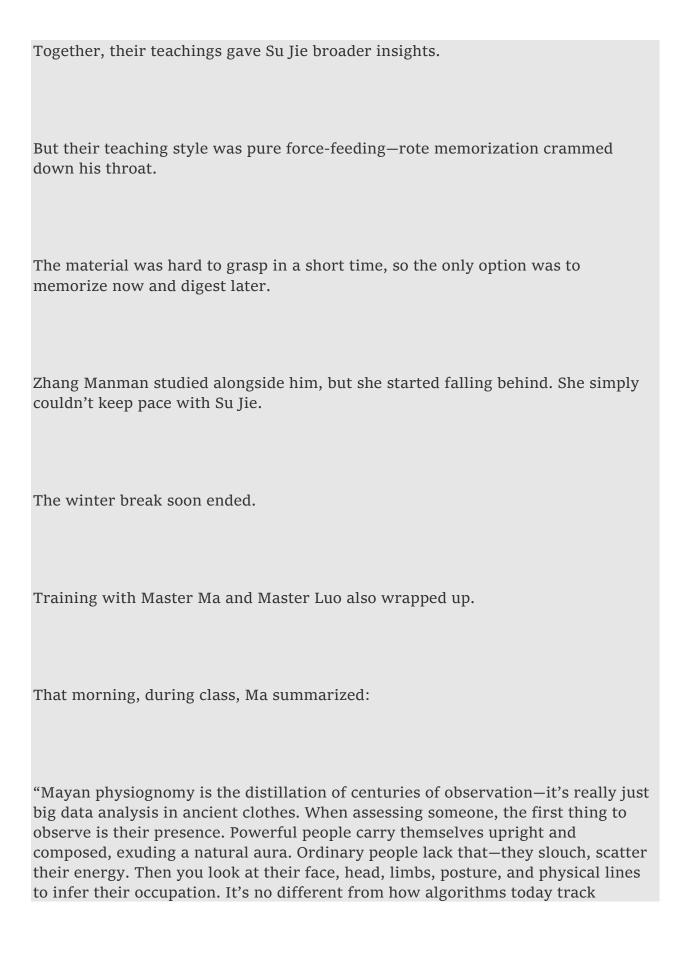
His muscles swelled across his entire body. His skin was covered with tiny bumps, like steel beads, giving him an intimidating, almost inhuman appearance.

"Now channel your breath and energy throughout your body. Imagine being slashed and stabbed by blades and spears across every inch of your flesh. Imagine yourself as an indestructible iron man. In external hardening, psychological suggestion is critical. It strengthens your defenses and stability. For Golden Bell, the suggestion is that you are encased in an impenetrable bell, fearless and invulnerable. For Iron Shirt, imagine yourself clad in iron armor, charging through all obstacles. The Thirteen Protectors' approach is to envision yourself as a mighty general, armored and fearless on the battlefield. The deeper the suggestion, the deeper the mastery."

Master Luo added, "Alright, time to begin the impact routines—self-striking. No one knows your body better than yourself, so once your training reaches a certain depth, it's best to perform the massage and impact routines solo. This particular sequence was developed by AI at the Typhon Training Camp. While it differs slightly from Odell's method, it is more scientifically refined."
Smack smack smack
On screen, a foreign man, also completely bare, moved with whip-like arms, striking his body in rapid succession—like a storm beating down.
Ordinary people can't even reach their own back with ease, but high-level yoga practitioners are different; their bodies are as flexible as snakes. Some can even bend their heads through their legs and back around.
Su Jie had already surpassed that kind of flexibility. His arms were more limber than any yogi's.
Boom!
He inhaled deeply and suddenly exploded into motion—slapping, pressing, ramming, and pounding his body with both arms. Simultaneously, he let out roars and chants: sometimes a tiger's growl, sometimes a dragon's cry, sometimes a sharp "Yah!", and at other times deep sounds like "Om," "Ma," "Mi"—similar to esoteric mantras from Tibetan practices.



Now his training focused on stabilizing the internal organs, integrating the internal with the external. In particular, his brain's resilience was significantly enhanced.
This was not just martial arts—it was a complete fitness and conditioning system.
Master Luo had somehow obtained research from the Typhon Training Camp. Combined with his own knowledge, and further developed in collaboration with Master Ma, the system was tested and refined on Su Jie.
Aside from fetal posture sleep training, Su Jie had spent these days immersed in impact conditioning.
In the mornings, Master Ma dragged him to class for studies in psychology and Mayan physiognomy. In the afternoons, Master Luo taught him architecture and feng shui.
Ma was skilled in feng shui but excelled in reading people. Luo also read people, but his true strength lay in geomancy and architectural feng shui. Both had some medical knowledge as well.
One focused on individuals; the other on the environment.



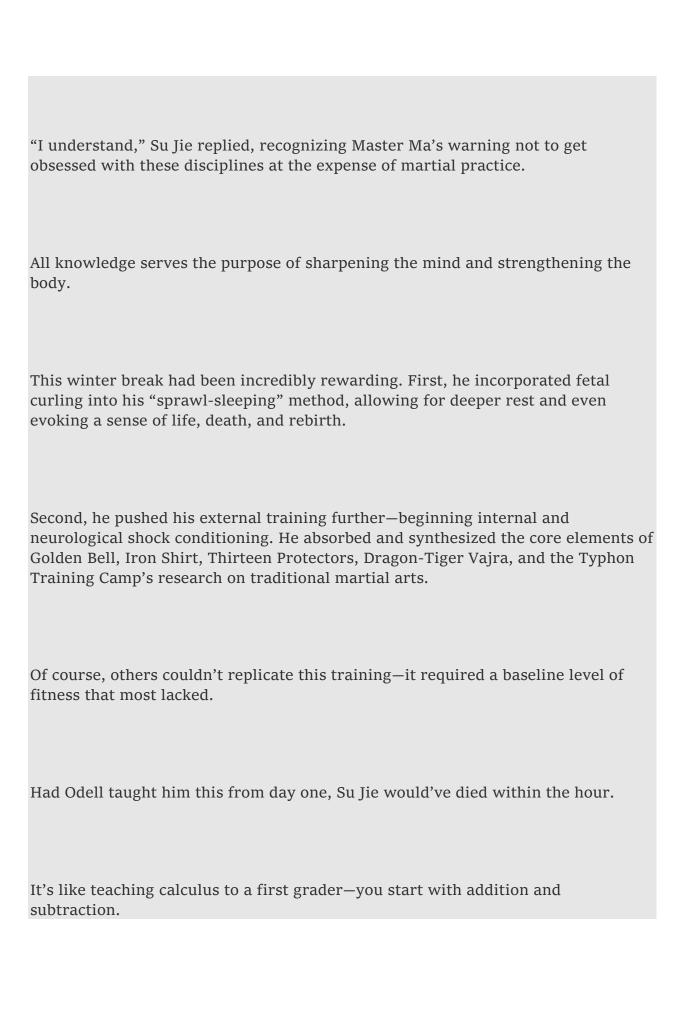
browsing habits to target ads more accurately. Honestly, AI will surpass all fortune-tellers in the future. China's current supercomputers already lead globally. One hour of their computing equals billions of people calculating for millennia. In martial arts fiction, you have legendary masters creating peerless techniques—soon, AI will outclass them. As for fortune-telling? Algorithms will make ancient seers like Yuan Tiangang, Li Chunfeng, and Liu Bowen look like amateurs."

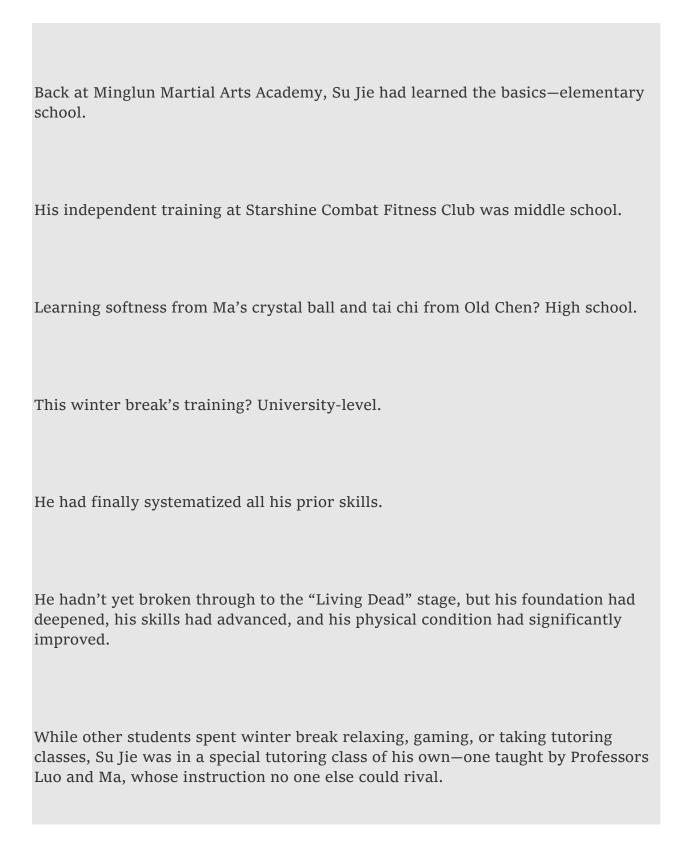
Zhang Manman nodded. "Yeah, sometimes I casually mention something to a friend—without ever searching for it online—and next thing I know, I'm getting ads for that exact thing. Especially from Haoyu Group's platforms. It's spooky. That's big data prediction for you."

"Exactly," Master Luo added. "Feng shui and architecture are the same—they're rooted in magnetic fields, psychology, airflow, color, and environment. Heaven, Earth, and Man are one. The harmony between human beings and nature—that's feng shui. Nature holds countless mysteries we can learn from. That's the essence of this field. It's an endless science. I've made instructional videos and case studies. Take them and study at your own pace."

Master Ma also gave Su Jie a hard drive containing his teaching materials.

"Whether it's physiognomy or feng shui, it all contributes to martial cultivation and personal growth. Curiosity is everything—discovering the unknown and pursuing truth is fun and refreshing. Like they say, 'If I can understand the Way in the morning, I can die in the evening.' But that journey must be rooted in physical strength. Without a strong body, all of it is useless," Master Ma said. "Even great leaders have said that the body is the foundation of revolution, and health is the source of happiness. So whether you study physiognomy or feng shui, always keep your martial training and physical health as your focus. Don't get lost in the weeds—extract what's useful and move on."

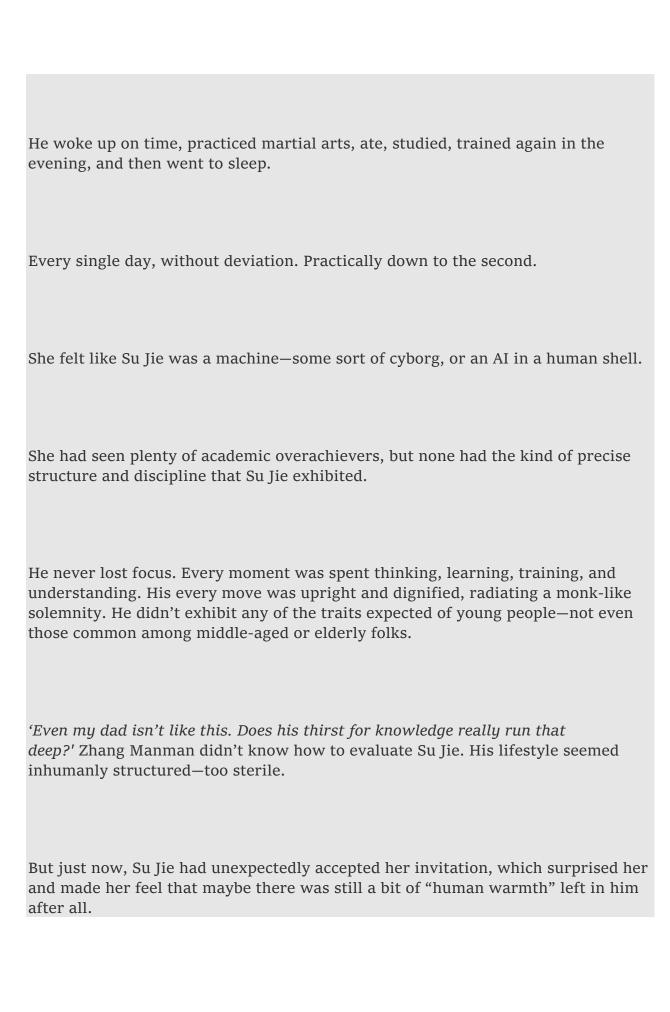




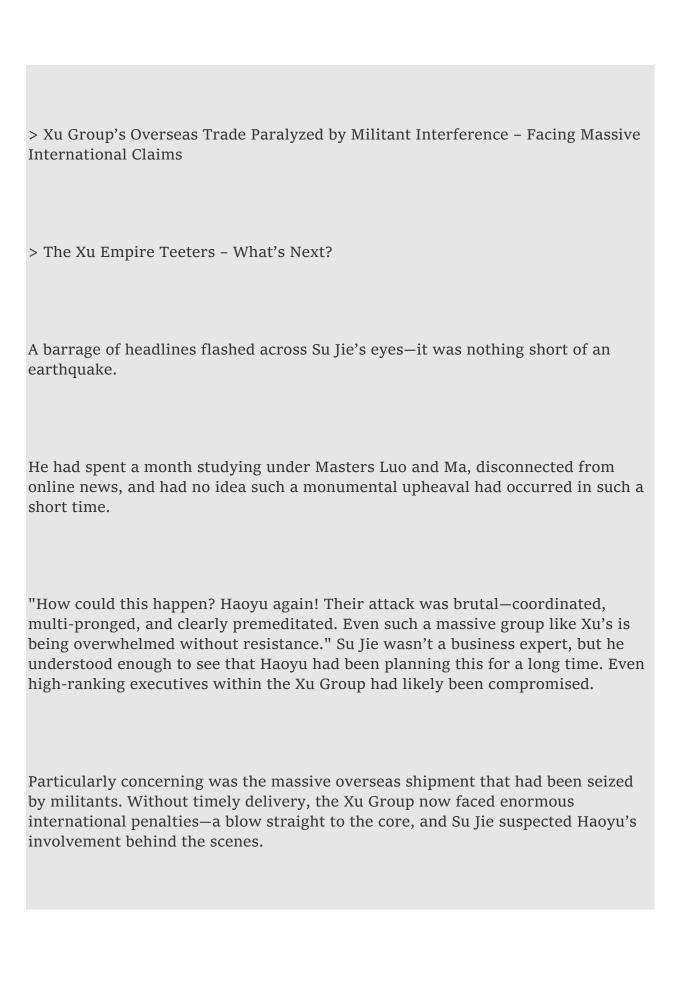
Chapter 102: The Xu Family Crisis

'Su Jie, you're leaving already? You haven't even finished learning from Master Ma and Master Luo!"
That day, seeing Su Jie packing his bags to return to S City, Zhang Manman couldn't help but ask.
'They've already taught me the essence of physiognomy and feng shui. But I can't grasp it all at once—there's too much to digest. Trying to absorb more now wouldn't be productive. Besides, I've already taken a month off," Su Jie replied.
In terms of regular attendance, Su Jie was definitely not a model student. By the time he reached his third year of high school, he was frequently taking extended leaves—sometimes disappearing for a month at a time.
His homeroom teacher had gotten used to it. As long as his grades didn't slip, she turned a blind eye.
Moreover, after speaking with his parents, the teacher, Chen Juan, knew that Su lie was learning other valuable things outside of school, which gave her peace of mind. After several exams, she realized Su Jie had completely mastered the high school curriculum and was already self-studying university-level courses. In class, there really wasn't much left for him to learn.

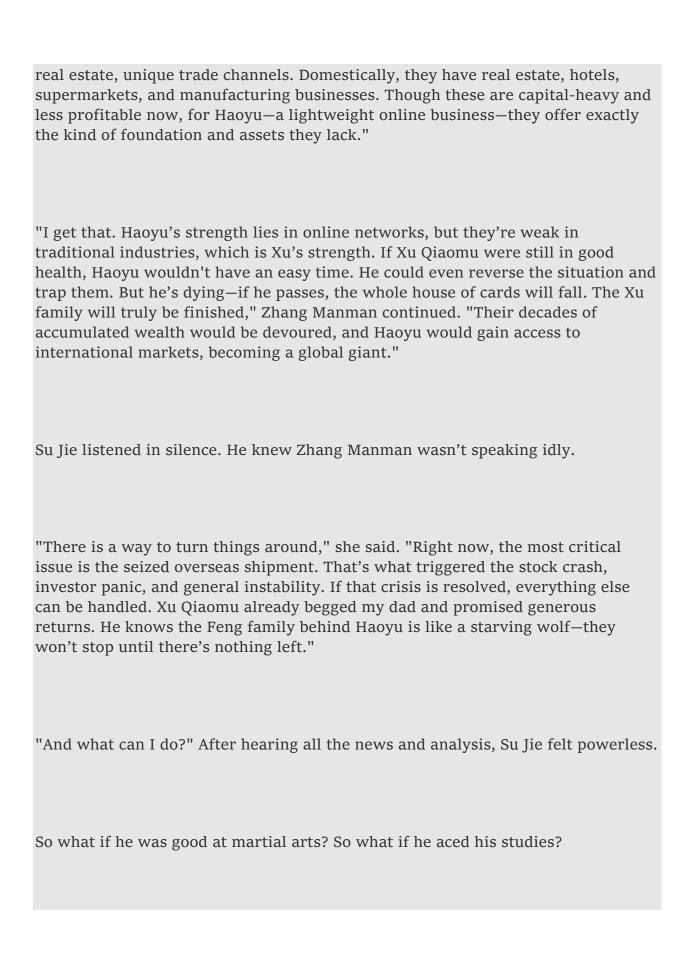
"Aren't you going to explore B City a bit more? I know it pretty well since I used to come here often. How about I show you around?" Zhang Manman offered. "Sure. I plan to apply for college here anyway, so it's good to get familiar with the area. It'll be convenient to get back too—just a two-hour flight," Su Jie nodded. Traveling from B City to S City took only two to three hours by plane, with over a dozen flights daily. It was almost like taking a bus. Both were international metropolises with excellent transportation. "Huh?" This time, it was Zhang Manman's turn to be surprised. "I've invited you out a few times in the past few days, and you kept turning me down, saying you needed to study. Why the sudden change of heart today?" "Really? I don't remember," Su Jie was momentarily stunned, then recalled she had indeed brought it up more than once. Seeing that Su Jie wasn't pretending, Zhang Manman laughed. She didn't know exactly why, but ever since she met Su Jie at Minglun Martial Arts Academy, she had felt he was an incredibly disciplined and regimented person. After spending some time in Master Ma's courtyard with him, she became even more certain—he dedicated nearly every second to learning. Back then, she had other matters to attend to and didn't stay long. Now that they were both studying and living together here, she had a firsthand look at how intense Su Jie really was.



"By the way, how's your company going?" Su Jie suddenly remembered something
"Take a look at this news first," Zhang Manman replied, pulling out her phone and handing it to him.
> Massive Shake-Up in the Xu Family!
> Xu Qiaomu's Will Revealed – Xu Jiazhi from the Third Generation Takes the Helm
> Xu Ziming, Xu Zide, Xu Ziqiang, Xu Jiahao, and Xu Jiaren Under Investigation fo Embezzlement; All Shares Transferred to Haoyu Group
> Xu Jiahong Also Transfers Shares to Haoyu Group
> Xu Family Stock Plummets; Haoyu Group Takes Advantage for Acquisition
> Haoyu Executive Li Xiaozhen Leads the Charge to Seize Board Control



He couldn't help but think of Feng Hengyi again.
The subsequent share acquisition and boardroom takeover were aggressive and lethal—like a master duelist aiming straight for the heart.
"Hmm?" Su Jie noticed something—Haoyu's executive in charge of the takeover was none other than Li Xiaozhen, the woman he had once saved on a whim, and the ex-girlfriend of Xu Jiahong. She lived in a fifty-million-yuan mansion that was worse than a landfill.
"Xu Jiahong got played. Dated a woman and didn't gain anything—ended up leaking tons of family intel instead. Now Haoyu's going for the kill. The Xu family doesn't have any real heavy-hitters left—they probably won't be able to withstand the assault," Zhang Manman commented. "If Xu Qiaomu were ten years younger and full of energy, Haoyu wouldn't stand a chance. But right now, they're in serious danger."
"Is there any way to turn this around?"
The Xu family was Su Jie's mother Xu Ying's side of the family. Although she had cut ties, never taken a cent from them, and wanted nothing to do with them in the future, Su Jie still didn't want to see the family wiped out by Haoyu like this.
"If they succeed in swallowing the Xu Group, Haoyu will become fully-fledged," Zhang Manman said. "The Xu family owns a lot, especially overseas—companies,



In this kind of corporate war, he was just a regular nobody—completely out of his depth.
His little club with Hua Xing might earn some money, ease the financial pressure, but it was still just a small-time operation. Even if it ran for ten thousand years, it could never compete with Haoyu.
"Come with me overseas. Help me get that shipment back," Zhang Manman said bluntly. "It's a great opportunity to train."
"What?" Su Jie's voice faltered. "You mean take the goods back from militants? Are you serious, or are we filming a Hollywood action movie?"
As a model student, that sounded like pure fiction to him.
"You think this is a movie?" Zhang Manman shot back. "Doing business in warzones is lucrative, but incredibly risky. China is stable and safe, but many places abroad are in total chaos. If you want to take your martial arts further, this is a chance to see the real world. Of course, we don't have to fight—we can negotiate. But muscle is essential. You're stronger and more focused than I am. You'd be my best assistant. If we pull this off, I'll help your sister break free from Haoyu's grip. Deal?"
"Really?" Su Jie's biggest concern had always been his sister.

"Of course. These days, changing jobs is easy. Worst case, she just pays a penalty fee. Haoyu may be ruthless, but this is still a country ruled by law—they can't do whatever they want. If we help the Xu family survive, you're Xu Qiaomu's grandson. That alone opens up all kinds of strategic options for counterattacking Haoyu."

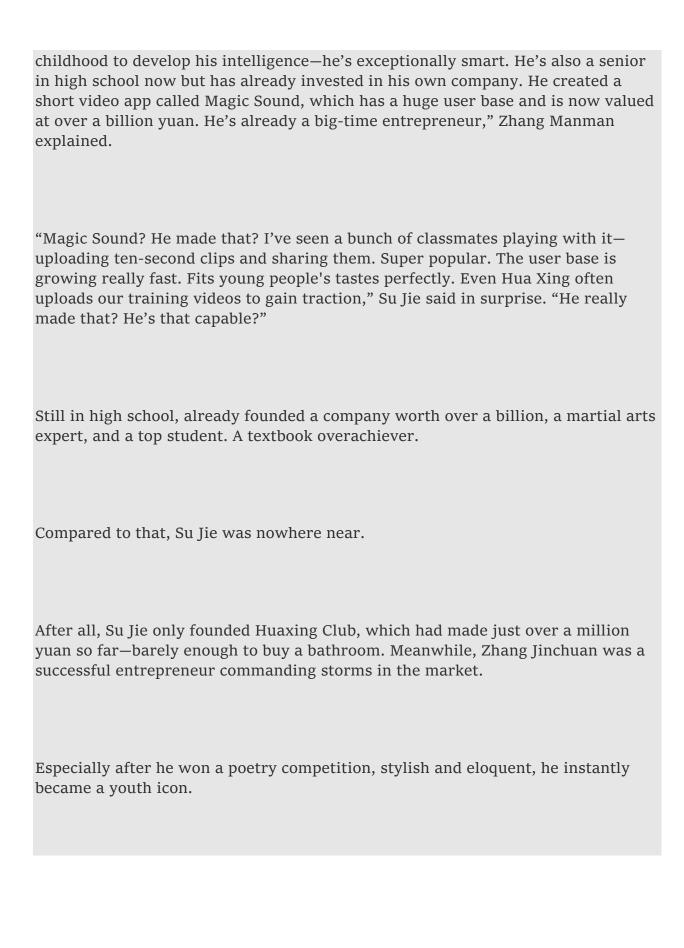
"I really don't know much about this," Su Jie admitted after a moment. "But I'll go overseas with you. I want to see the bigger picture—and hopefully, solve this crisis once and for all."

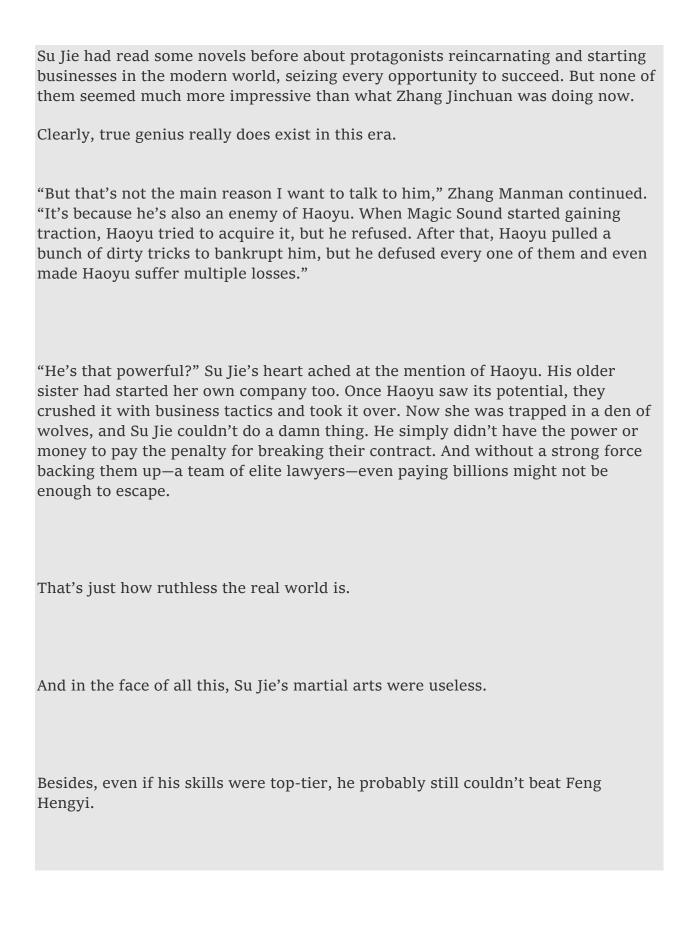
Chapter 103: Young Prodigies Not the Only Genius

"Before that, I want to take you to meet someone. He's kind of like you," Zhang Manman said to Su Jie. "If we can get him on board this time, our odds will increase significantly."

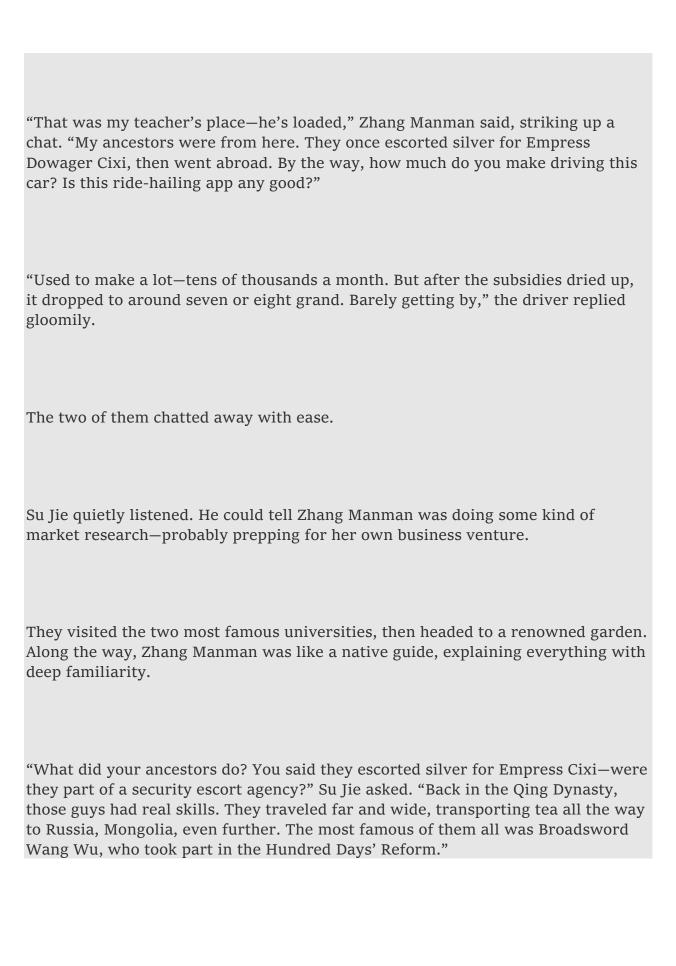
"Who is it?" Su Jie asked.

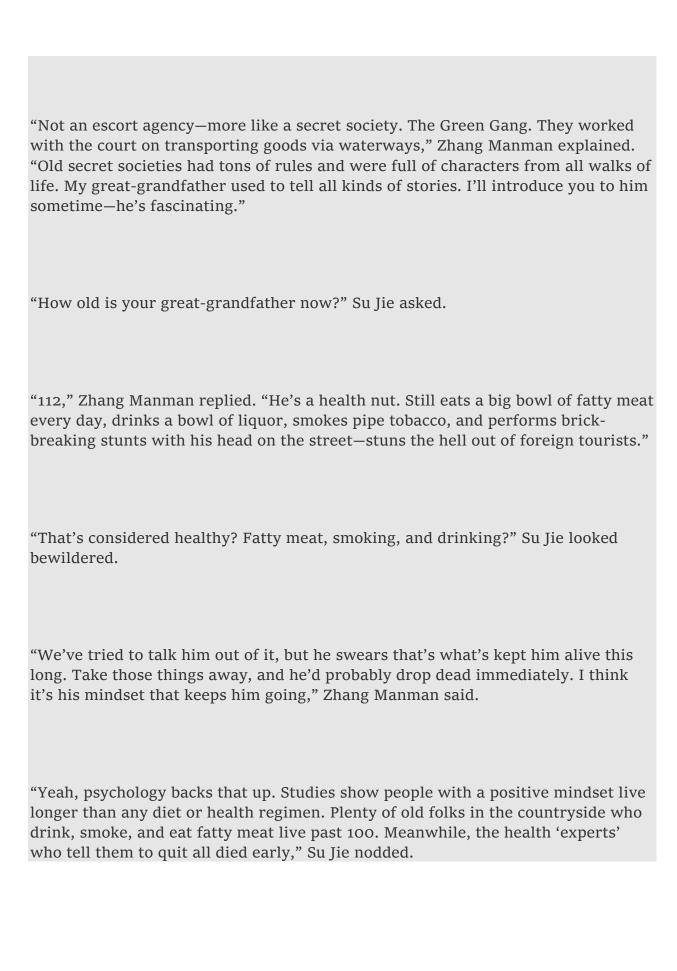
"Zhang Jinchuan. He used to be Master Luo's student and learned a lot from him, but he wasn't content. He went on to study under many experts. He's a martial arts prodigy, born into a martial arts family. Though we share the same surname, we're not related. His family traces back to the Zhang clan from Daoist Longhu Mountain. Apparently, he's been practicing Daoist qigong with his elders since

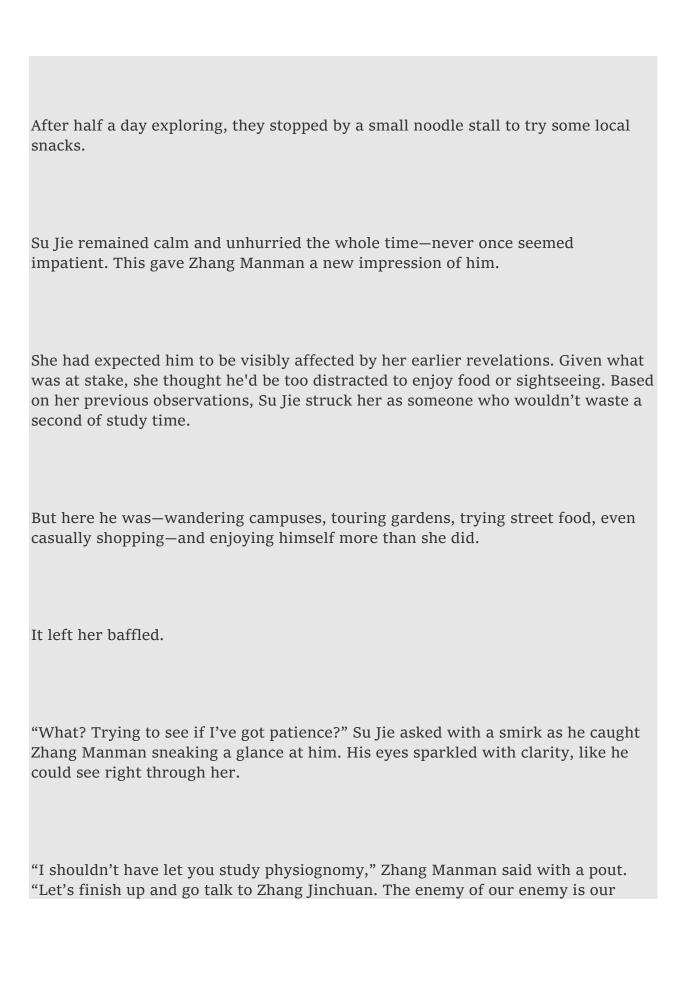


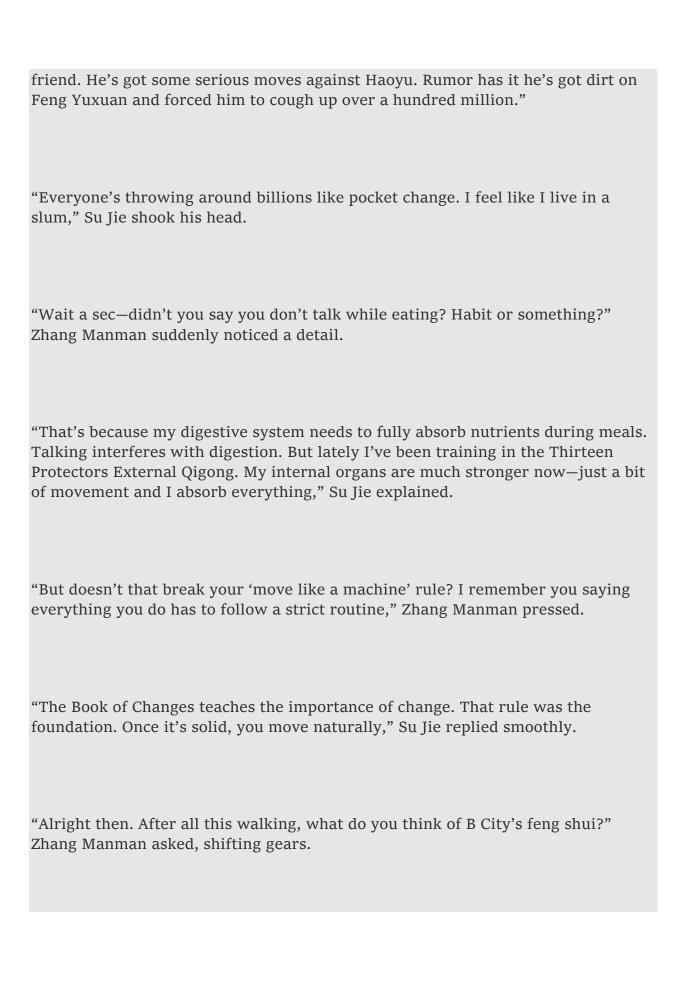


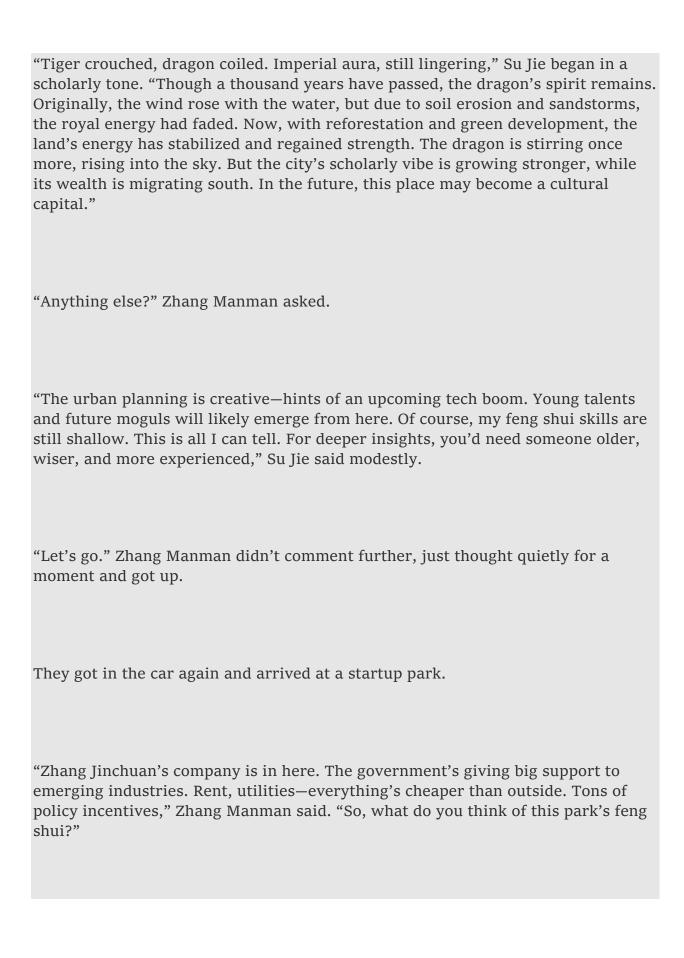
To him, Haoyu was a massive behemoth. Beating them in a short time was impossible.
Su Jie had a long-term plan—three to five years. In that time, he'd build his strength, expand his network, gain allies and influence. Only then could he challenge Haoyu.
After all, he was just an ordinary high schooler. No matter how gifted, he couldn't take on a corporate juggernaut worth hundreds of billions alone.
But someone else had done it—Zhang Jinchuan.
"Let's go," Zhang Manman said, walking to the door and hailing a car via an app.
The car had bottled water and a variety of snacks. The driver was young, in uniform, wearing white gloves, and the interior was spotless.
"Let's stop by a couple of universities, then head over to Haizi Lake for a stroll through the gardens," Zhang Manman said in a crisp local accent.
"Oh?" the driver perked up at her fluent dialect. "You're a local? I thought you were from out of town. That courtyard earlier—was that your house? That place has to be worth at least 300 million yuan."











"Feng shui starts with the bigger picture," Su Jie paused before answering. "In the face of national momentum, feng shui is a minor art. When the country is strong, even the harshest desert can become a lush oasis. Yu the Great tamed floods, the First Emperor built the Great Wall, the Sui emperor dug the Grand Canal—all were feats of national strength. And now, we're even more capable."

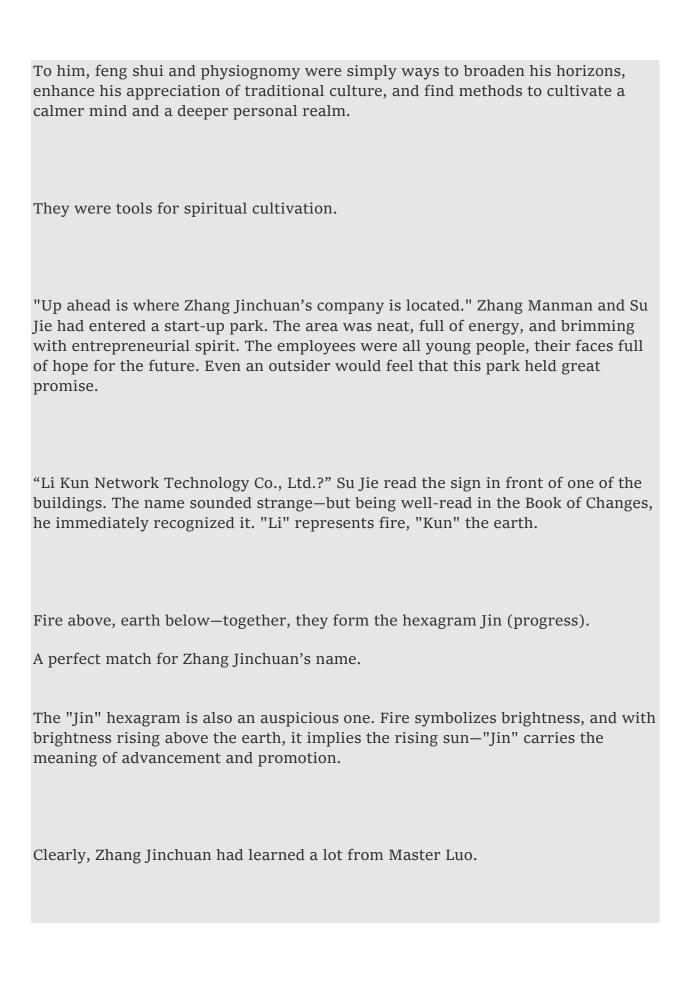
Chapter 104: Holding All the Cards

Su Jie had only scratched the surface of feng shui and physiognomy, but thankfully, he had developed the habit of keen observation. Every blade of grass, every tree, every person, and every event left an imprint deep in his mind. A bit of analysis and calculation led him to conclusions—and he moved on without leaving a trace.

The foundational knowledge he learned from Master Luo and Master Ma was like formulas in mathematics, physics, or chemistry. Observing a residential complex, a street, or a person became a problem-solving exercise.

Through continuous practice and comparison, he slowly became more proficient and began to grasp some essence of it all.

But he had no intention of showing off this knowledge.

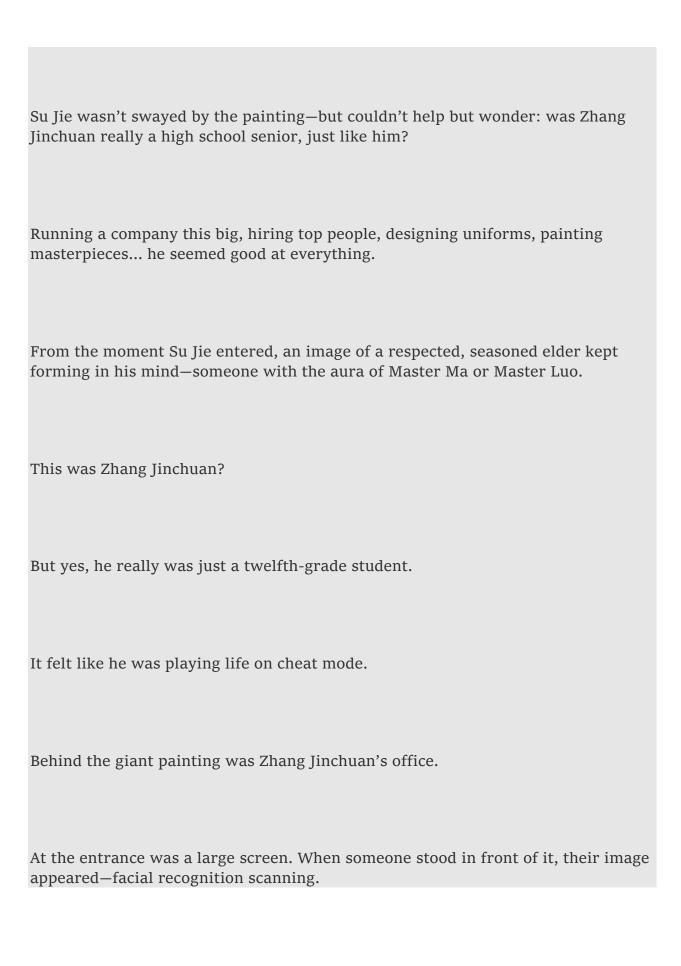


with bright floor tiles. Fresh flowers had been carefully placed at key positions near the entrance. A light breeze carried their fragrance into the noses of passersby, refreshing and uplifting. The breeze was soft, natural, and gentle—meandering from between the tall buildings above, then calming as it reached this spot. It nourished people without dispersing wealth. In feng shui, the wind matters greatly. As the saying goes, "a strong wind is like an arrow." If wind isn't handled properly, it brings illness and loss. There's science behind this too. Wind carries away body heat. Over time, this leads to chill seeping into the body, which causes illness, fatigue, and irritability. And	
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Even in architecture, airflow is a serious field of study.
When Master Luo gave lectures to Su Jie, he even cited the example of the Twin Towers in New York. During their construction, engineers didn't yet understand wind tunnel testing. As a result, once completed, the towers created enormous wind tunnel effects when city breezes blew past—making the area around them nearly impassable.
This is what's called "evil wind" in feng shui—a sign of misfortune.
But in front of this building, everything had been designed with care. Color, sound scent, and tactile sensation, the signage, the reception area, even the guards—all projected an image of vibrant positivity. It felt like a company with fresh, modern vitality.
Anyone arriving to do business here would instinctively think: "This place is solid. It has a future."
At the door, a young woman in casual wear came out to greet them.
Her outfit wasn't overly formal, nor did it look sloppy. It seemed purposefully designed—brimming with energy, clean, crisp, and professional—unlike the often tacky corporate wear at other companies.

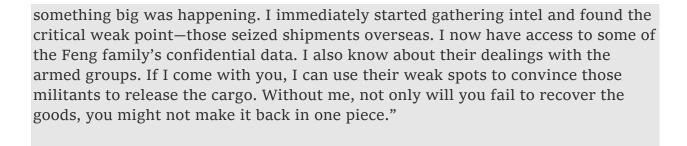
'Whoever designed this company's clothing has real talent,' Su Jie thought, and couldn't help but ask, "Who designed your uniforms?"
"Our boss did," the young woman said with a touch of pride. She looked like a college student intern, but carried herself with surprising experience. "You must be Ms. Zhang Manman. Our boss is waiting in the office. Please follow me."
As she led them through the company, they passed rows of workstations filled with energetic young programmers typing away or teams brainstorming in meeting rooms. The company had around a hundred employees, all looking hardworking, talented, and focused—no slackers or management headaches in sight.
"Zhang Jinchuan really knows how to lead a team. He must be excellent at interviews," Su Jie thought, impressed.
The company may not have been large, but like a sparrow with all its vital organs it was perfectly structured—and filled with top-tier talent.
It also became clear why Zhang Jinchuan had sought out Master Luo to learn physiognomy.
Once mastered, such skills were incredibly useful for an employer. Building a great team was the foundation for a company to take off.

Upstairs, they were greeted by a massive painting.
It depicted a towering mountain shrouded in mist, reaching into the heavens. Within the swirling clouds, faint hints of dragon scales and claws peeked through—making it feel as if a divine dragon was hidden among the peaks, about to burst forth.
In the distance lay rivers, lakes, cities, and people—an entire landscape of the nation.
The painting radiated tremendous energy. Though only a few fragments of the dragon were visible, they made viewers feel watched—small, humbled, and awed.
"This piece is called "Cloud Dragon over Buzhou". Our boss painted it himself. It combines classical ink techniques with modern oil painting," the assistant explained briefly, but with impact.
Anyone who saw it would stop and admire it. And through that admiration, they'd naturally feel a sense of reverence toward the artist—and that changed the psychology of any negotiation.
This too was part of feng shui layout—just as much modern psychology and interior design as traditional mysticism.





"This is Su Jie. Technically, he's your junior—just finished training under Master Luo," Zhang Manman introduced.
"Impressive." Zhang Jinchuan nodded and shook Su Jie's hand. His expression showed respect—but Su Jie picked up on the subtle signals. Jinchuan wasn't truly impressed. To him, Su Jie was just another person.
"Let's get to the point," Zhang Manman sat down and cut straight to business. "Jinchuan, I laid everything out clearly in the email. I wanted to talk in person to finalize it. You already know your company has gone head-to-head with the Feng family. And knowing their temperament, they won't let it go. They'll use every tactic they've got. This is the perfect chance to strike back. It'll be a challenge for your kung fu, too. Are you in?"
"I understand," Zhang Jinchuan said calmly, seated on the sofa. Every move was composed and elegant—mature far beyond his years. He looked at both Manman and Su Jie. "The Feng family's actions have indeed gone too far. If they swallow the Xu family, their power will snowball. If they target my company next, I'll be in deep trouble. But let's be frank—this is dangerous, and the benefits are limited. Manman, I'll level with you. I know what the Xu family offered you. If I get involved, success is guaranteed. Without me, your odds are under 50%. So I want 60%. Fair, right?"
"That's too much," Zhang Manman frowned. She hadn't expected Jinchuan to be so bold—or greedy.
"Not at all," Jinchuan replied. "Let me explain why I'm asking for 60%. The moment I heard the Feng family was moving to acquire the Xu family, I knew



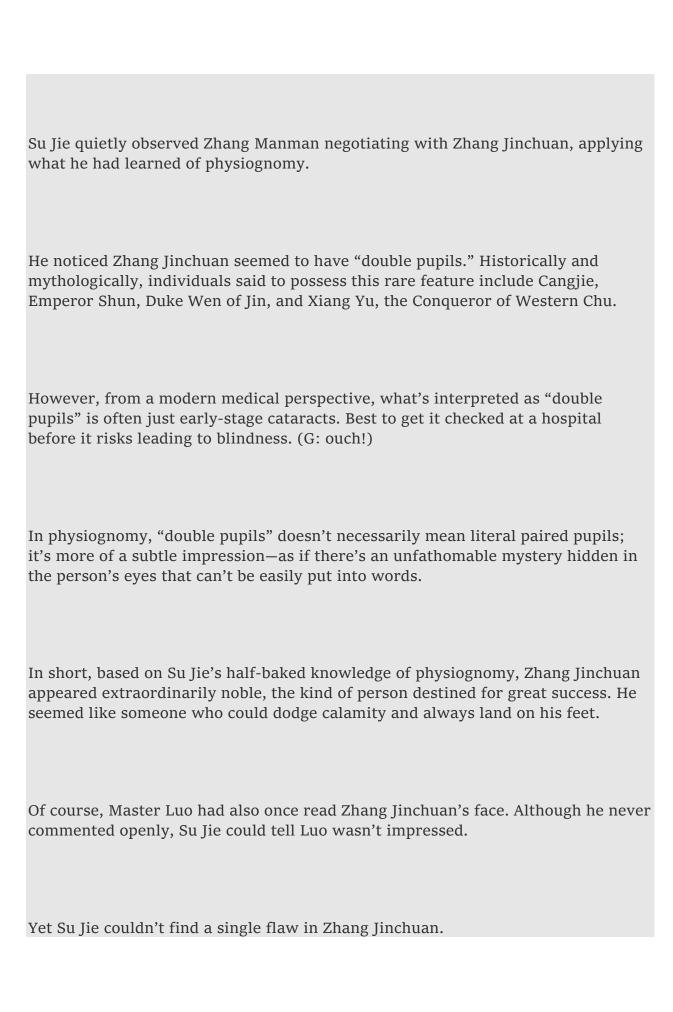
"You have intel on Haoyu?" Zhang Manman was visibly shocked. "How did you get it?"

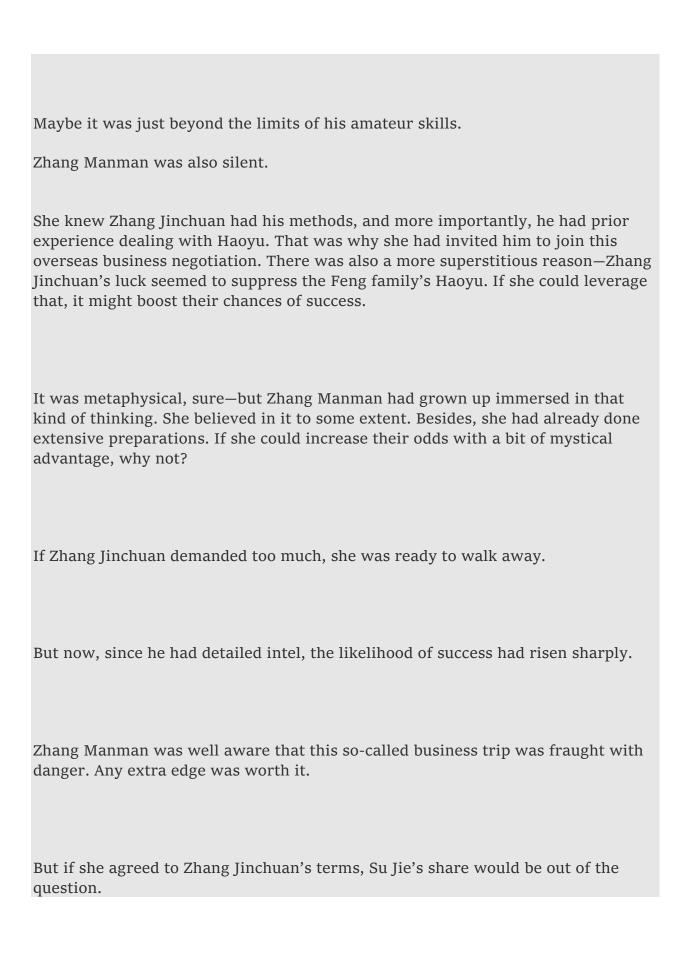
Su Jie frowned.

The flow of the negotiation had been completely taken over by Zhang Jinchuan.

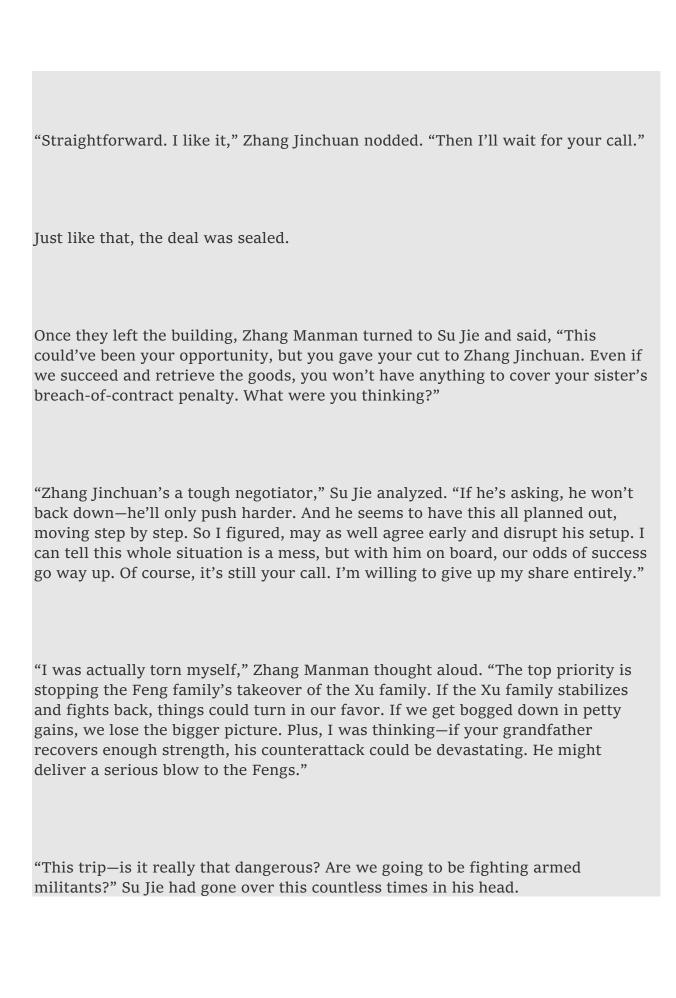
Chapter 105: Exceptional Talent, Difficult to Befriend

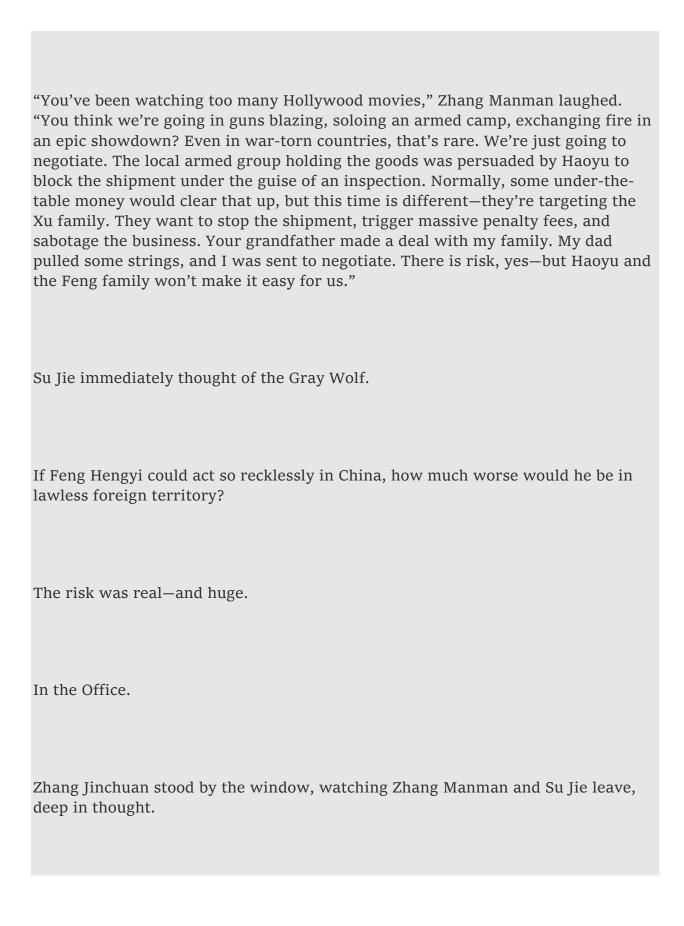
'From a physiognomic perspective, Zhang Jinchuan's fate is extremely prominent. His forehead is full, his facial features heavy like mountains, and his spirit glows with intensity—there even seems to be a trace of double pupils. His gaze is sharp, like a hawk soaring in the clouds and surveying the world below. His ears are spread open, as if he can hear the secrets of life and death—like a divine monkey who listens to the whispers of fate. This is what's known as 'hawk-eyed and monkey-eared.' Especially the appearance of double pupils—since ancient times, this has been a sign of great strategic talent.'



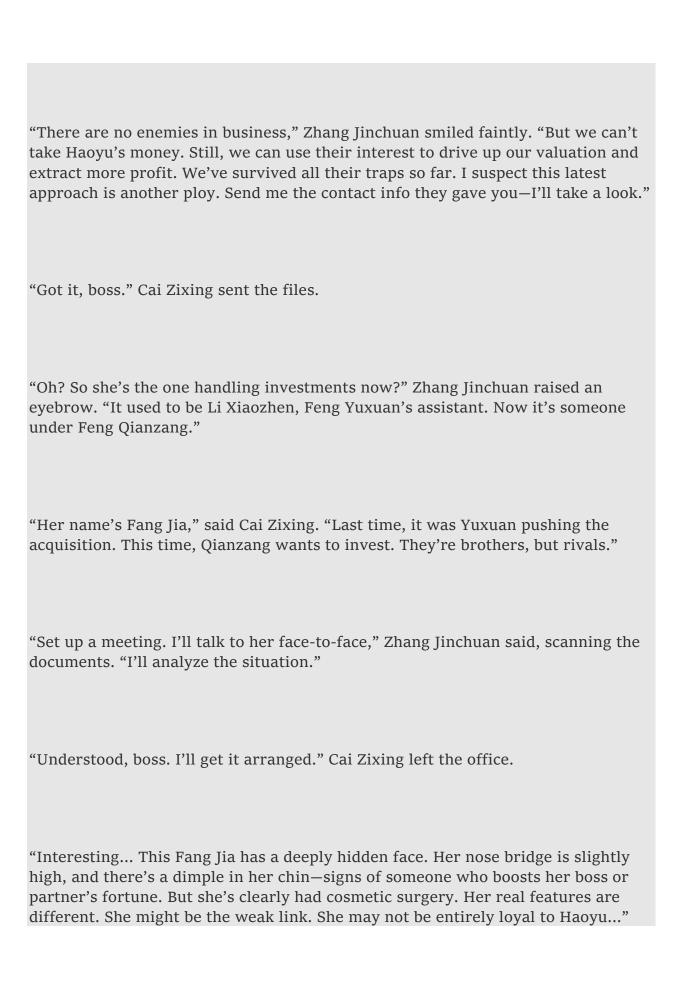








Just then, a bespectacled young man entered. "Jinchuan, you could've asked for more. Why back off at the last minute?"
He was Cai Zixing, Jinchuan's business partner and a shareholder in the company. Six or seven years older, a seasoned talent agent who had joined the startup at Jinchuan's persuasion. His skills had quickly brought in orders and stabilized company management—like the anchor of a ship.
"Zhang Manman's father is a powerful man. I need to leave some wiggle room," said Zhang Jinchuan. "And that Su Jie—he's got potential. I want to bring him into the company. He seems mild and quiet, but he's got a rebellious core. He won't easily bow to others. If I want him to truly work for me, I'll need some unconventional methods."
"You really have a knack for reading people," Cai Zixing nodded. "Back when you convinced me to join, I honestly didn't believe a word you said. You were just a kid. Why would I give up a multi-million salary to join a startup paying peanuts? But somehow, you persuaded me. To this day, I still think it's a miracle."
"And now look where we are. You were making two million a year. Even after 20 years, that's just 40 million. And you were already stuck in your company—no room to move up, and your relationship with your boss wasn't great," Zhang Jinchuan smiled. "Now, in just two years, we're valued at over a billion—and we're still climbing."
"Yeah, I've been talking to investors. Some funds are willing to invest at a three-billion valuation. Even Haoyu Group's investment arm came back, offering to buy in at a premium. What do you think?" asked Cai Zixing.



Zhang Jinchuan muttered, stretching. "So, Master Luo taught Su Jie his skills too? Then I must bring him into the company. He could be my key to unlocking the next stage of growth. Time to double down."
After setting down the files, he stood in his office, arms wrapped as if holding a giant ball—or perhaps a baby.
He was practicing zhan zhuang, a foundational standing meditation in traditional martial arts.
But his posture wasn't static—it slowly evolved.
Like the movement of celestial bodies.
He started with Hun Yuan Zhuang, transitioned to Three Powers Posture, then to Dragon Form, Tiger Crouch, Turtle and Serpent, Open Bow
His movements combined traditional martial arts techniques, Buddhist mudras, and other disciplines—an eclectic mix, all executed with deliberate slowness.
Taiji is slow—but his movements were glacial.

To an onlooker, it might've been maddening.

But like the growth of plants—unseen in the moment, obvious in hindsight—he moved steadily, subtly, and with purpose.

Chapter 106: Scenery Beyond the Borders

He kept at it until nightfall—seven to eight hours in total—just to finish this one set of movements. He was ten times slower than a turtle.

"Not good enough. Still not slow enough."

After completing the set, Zhang Jinchuan glanced at his watch and shook his head. "I still haven't truly slowed down. Only when I can perform this Minglun Daoyin Technique continuously for three days and nights will I have truly mastered it. To the extreme, slowness becomes speed, and speed becomes slowness. They transform into one another. From the peak of yin arises yang, and vice versa. Tension and relaxation follow the same principle. Principal Liu Guanglei's standing technique is genuinely formidable. I just don't know how it compares to Typhon Training Camp's special methods. Liu Zihao trained at Typhon for a while and came back much stronger—his moves in film are now flawless. But he's never truly achieved stillness, never reached the pinnacle. It's like sitting on a treasure without knowing it. The real martial arts evolution of the Minglun Martial Arts Academy lies in this ultra-slow-motion standing technique. The slower it is, the deeper the kung fu."

While contemplating, he suddenly made a move.
Swish swish swish
His arms moved with unbelievable speed, leaving afterimages behind.
He opened the drawer of his desk and pulled out a stack of playing cards. With a flick of his wrist, the cards sprang to life, almost as if they were sentient.
He casually drew the two of diamonds. With a quick flick, it turned into the ace of spades.
Then he demonstrated techniques like palming, switching, and stealing cards—moves more magical than any magician. Whoosh!
After playing with them for a while—testing how refined his sleight of hand had become—he flicked his wrist, and a card shot out like a blade, spinning rapidly. With a thud, it pierced through a book on the shelf and embedded itself inside.

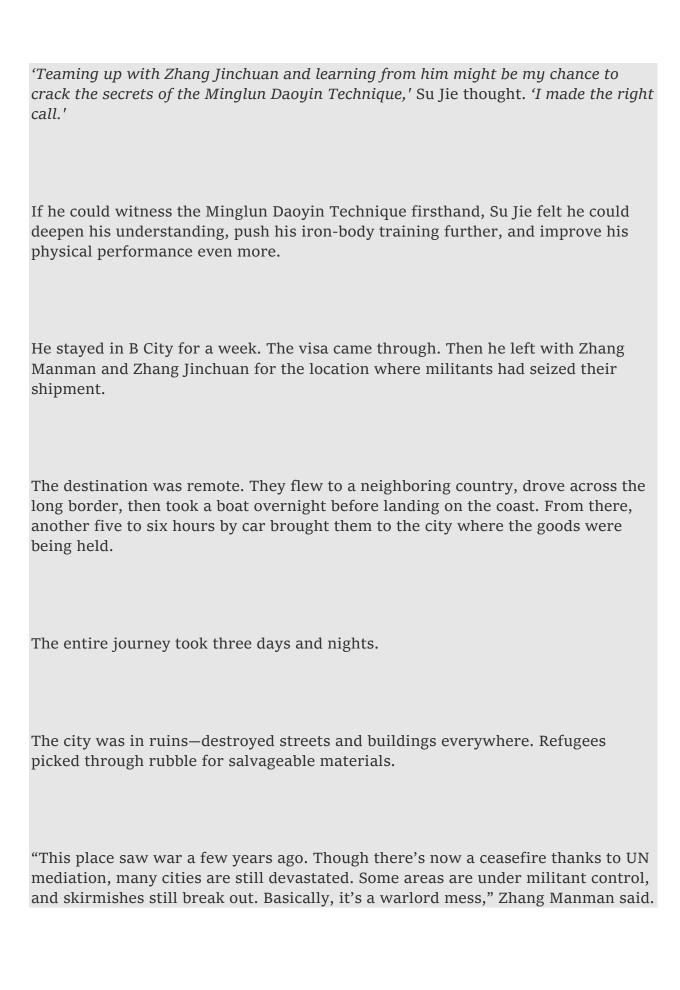


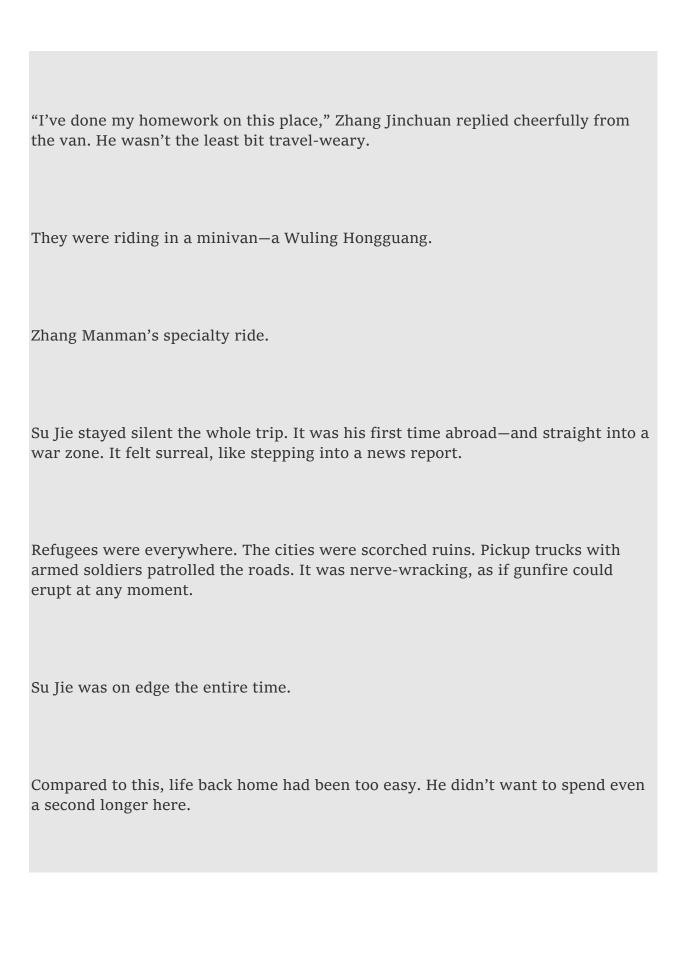
"I always knew the Fengs were snakes," Su Jie nodded. "Every company they invest in ends up getting controlled. Can't believe so many businesses still fall for it."
"Not much choice," Zhang Manman shrugged. "Under capital pressure, most companies take a gamble. They want to scale up, so they cling to a bigger player. And they need the money. At Minglun, the old headmaster Liu Guanglei is buried in research. Day-to-day stuff is left to Liu Zihao, who's trying to partner with Haoyu Group to fast-track the Academy's expansion. But he has no fear of Feng's influence. Sure, he can shoot flashy fight scenes, but when it comes to business? He's still no match for old fox Feng Shoucheng."
"By the way, did you get my visa processed? How long will it take?" Su Jie asked.
"Fast. Within a week. We're not going to a major country—just some small war- torn place. They're pretty lax." Zhang Manman waved it off. "Did you know Zhang Jinchuan studied at Minglun Martial Arts Academy for a year too? We didn't get much out of it, but he picked up the Minglun Daoyin Technique developed by Liu Guanglei."
"Minglun Daoyin Technique?" Su Jie raised an eyebrow. He knew about daoyin—it was likely one of the oldest forms of martial arts. Zhuangzi wrote, 'Blow, exhale, breathe; mimic the bear, stretch like a bird—these are the daoyin masters, who cultivate the body and live long like Pengzu.'

In essence, it uses breathwork and physical movements to strengthen the body and extend life.
There are many daoyin forms. The earliest was found in silk manuscripts from the Mawangdui Han tombs. There are also cave paintings, and later developments like the Five Animal Frolics, Yijin Jing, Xisui Jing, and even Golden Bell Cover, Iron Shirt, and Thirteen Protectors Iron Body—all variations of daoyin.
"The Minglun Daoyin Technique is a unique method from the Minglun Academy. It blends ancient physical movements with modern medical science, refined over thirty years of practice. And its core trait? Just one word—slow," said Zhang Manman.
"Slow?" Su Jie hadn't learned much during his time at Minglun, but what he did was high-quality. Unfortunately, he missed out on their most profound teachings. Clearly, this technique was the Academy's true hidden gem.
"They say the movements are so slow that most people don't have the patience. It's extremely difficult to get started," Zhang Manman explained. "Even something as simple as raising a hand can take over an hour."
"Raising a hand takes over an hour?" Su Jie couldn't believe it. No one would have the patience to do that.
Even tai chi isn't that slow.

People practicing it might go nuts—spectators even more so.
"My dad said that if you can truly master the Minglun Daoyin Technique, your strength and endurance will skyrocket." Zhang Manman continued, "Apparently, Liu Zihao didn't have the patience for it. But Zhang Jinchuan did. I didn't learn it myself, but I once saw Liu Guanglei practice it—he stood there all day with one leg lifted."
"Modern kinesiology says muscle memory comes from repeated high-speed drills. That's how you build skill for real combat." Su Jie said, "Tai chi values slowness as a path to speed, but everything has limits. Too slow, and it's counterproductive."
"Exactly. I don't quite get it either. Seems like a waste of time," said Zhang Manman. "But my dad insists it's top-tier stuff. Unless you immerse yourself in it, you'll never really understand."
"Fair," Su Jie admitted. "When I first practiced the hoe strike, I didn't realize how much depth there was to such a simple move. Minglun isn't just a school—it's a research institute. If they developed this technique, there must be solid theory behind it. If I ever get the chance, I'd love to study it."
Su Jie had shifted his training by now.

He no longer practiced the tai chi-style joint exercises originally taught to him by Odell. Instead, his new regimen included Golden Bell Cover, Iron Shirt, Thirteen Protectors Iron Body, and other "hard qigong" forms.
His training was intense—roars like thunder, howling chants, body slaps with vine-like arms, and wild, swaying movements like a tree in a storm.
This was the advanced stage.
The earlier methods suited beginners. His new techniques were advanced material from Odell's curriculum, though Odell never actually passed them on. Instead, Master Luo somehow got ahold of some videos, studied them with Master Ma, and passed them to Su Jie, adding their own insights.
Sure enough, after training, Su Jie's stamina improved drastically. His internal organs grew tougher, his mind steadier, and his body shock-resistant. Inside and out, he was like iron.
He realized cultivation truly had no limits. He once thought his training had plateaued—without breaking into the "Living Dead" realm, further gains were impossible. But now, it was like discovering a new continent.
He understood now—no matter how much he knew, he still had so much to learn.





Meanwhile, Zhang Manman and Zhang Jinchuan were calm and composed, as if they'd been to places like this before.

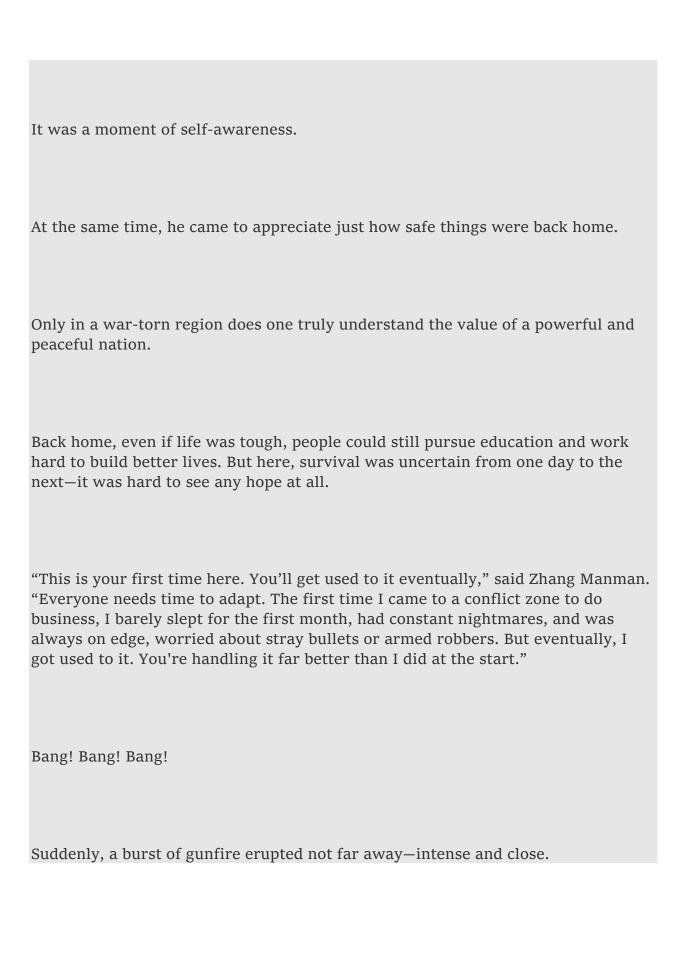
Zhang Jinchuan was even chatty: "Now that this country's rebuilding, the provisional government is slowly restoring order. Investments from around the world are pouring in to seize new opportunities. Rebuilding from ruins creates massive business potential. Sure, it's dangerous—but where there's money, there are always people willing to risk their lives."

"Like us," Zhang Manman said, slapping Su Jie on the shoulder. "Relax. It's relatively safe now. Our country's helping with the rebuilding effort. With our national power backing us, even the militants don't dare mess with us. Didn't you notice how the soldiers smiled and nodded when they saw us?"

Chapter 107: A Moment of Weakness in the Heart

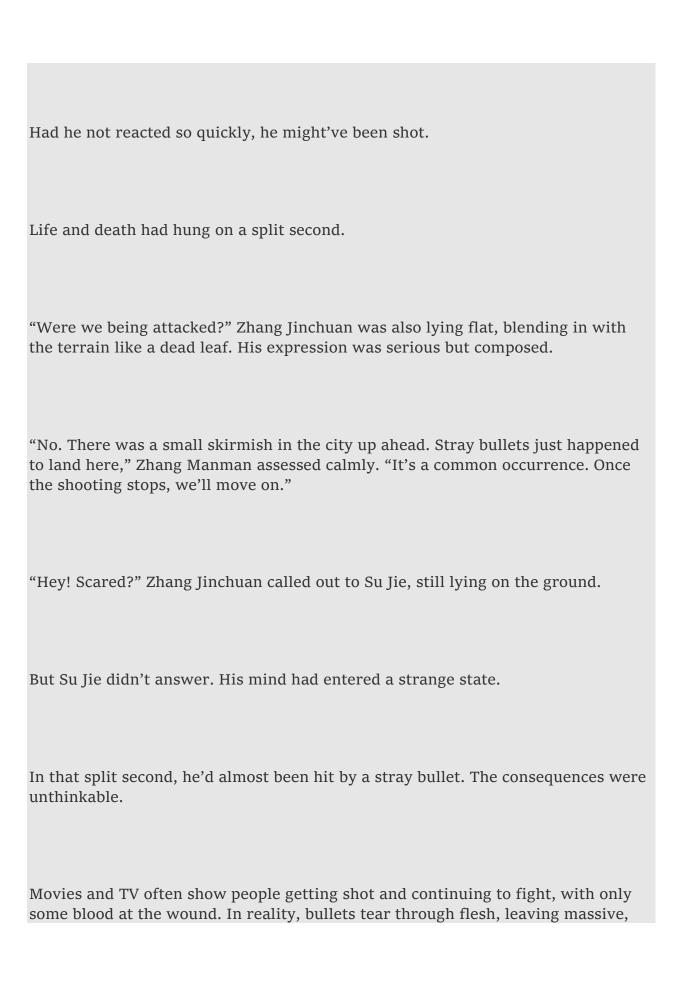
Su Jie saw the occasional passing pickup truck loaded with soldiers armed to the teeth. It was impossible not to feel nervous.

Although his martial arts were solid, his mental fortitude strong, and he'd been through multiple real-life combat scenarios—believing himself to be someone who could stay calm even if Mount Tai collapsed before him—the sight of armed soldiers in a foreign land shattered that illusion. He realized he wasn't as psychologically resilient as he had imagined.



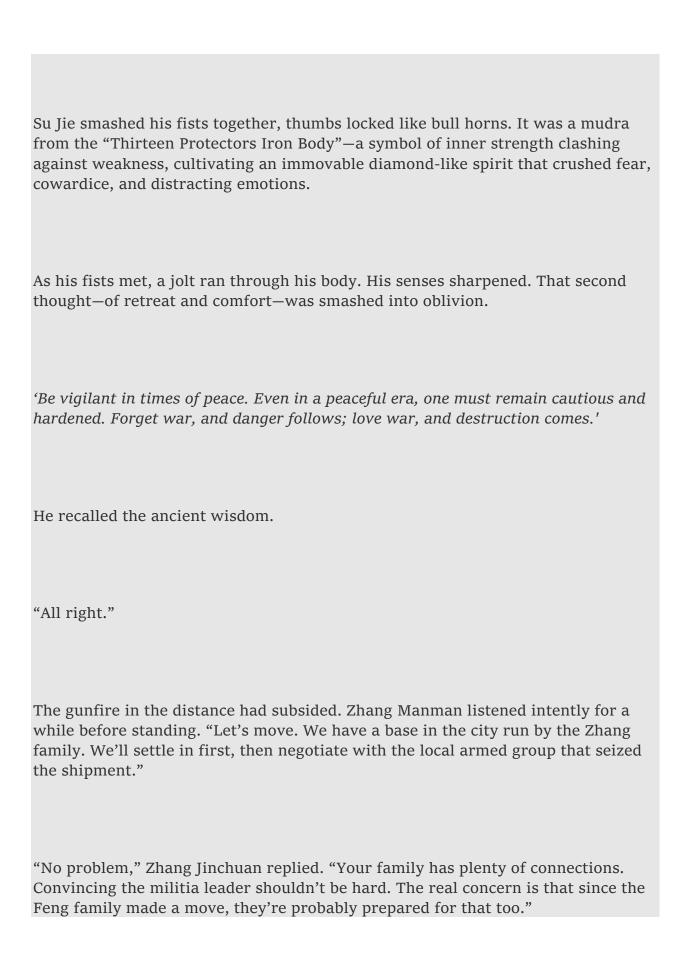
Su Jie's body instantly tensed up like a pouncing leopard. He crouched low, ready to spring into action.
Zhang Jinchuan also instinctively ducked his head, seemingly experienced in finding cover within the vehicle—his movements fluid and practiced, clearly not his first encounter.
Zhang Manman, however, remained calm. She slammed the brakes. The van slowed down and turned sharply to the roadside before coming to a stop. She immediately got out of the vehicle.
"Never stay inside a car during a situation like this. It's too large a target and can easily become a priority for attackers. And unless it's an armored vehicle, regular cars can't stop bullets—using them as cover is useless," Zhang Manman explained as she stepped out, wearing a tan camouflage uniform that blended in well with the local terrain, allowing her to hide among grass and dirt.
Naturally, Su Jie and Zhang Jinchuan were dressed in the same gear.
Each of them carried a backpack filled with various essentials—most importantly, medical kits, military rations, and water.
They also had military-grade knives tucked into their sleeves.

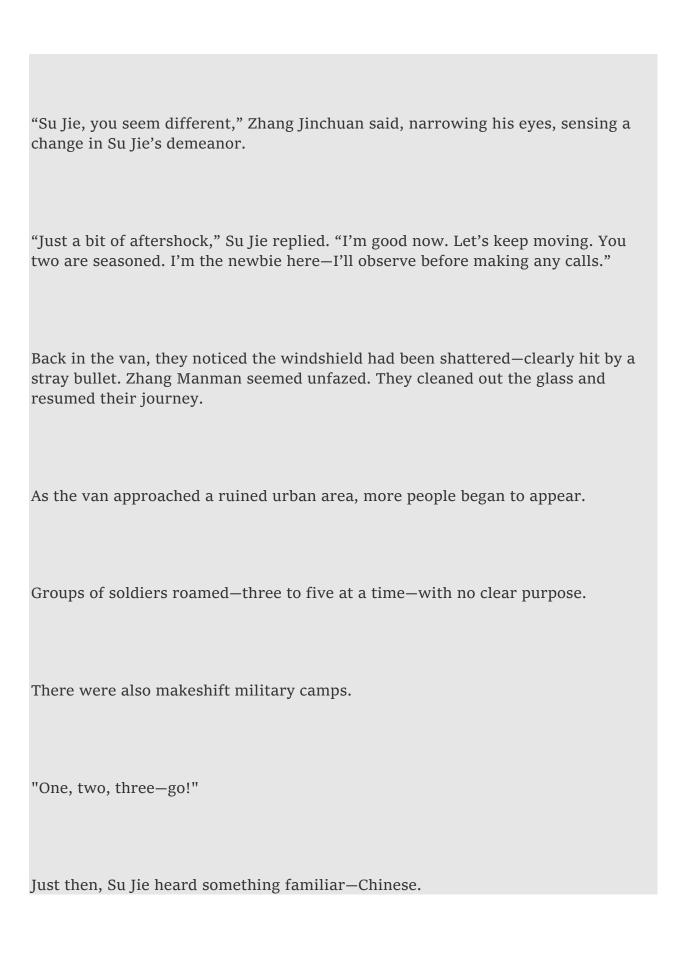
It was full-on field-ops special forces gear—who knew where Zhang Manman had sourced it from.
However, none of them carried firearms—for obvious reasons related to local sensitivities.
After exiting the vehicle, the trio quickly moved a few hundred meters away and took cover by the roadside.
Suddenly, another wave of gunfire rang out—loud and rapid.
"Down!"
Zhang Manman hit the dirt.
Su Jie felt his scalp tingle. A surge of danger overwhelmed him. Acting purely on instinct, he leapt forward and flattened himself to the ground like a snake, trying to press himself into the earth.
Just where he had been standing moments ago, several small craters appeared in the dirt. No bullets were visible—no one knew where they had ricocheted off to.

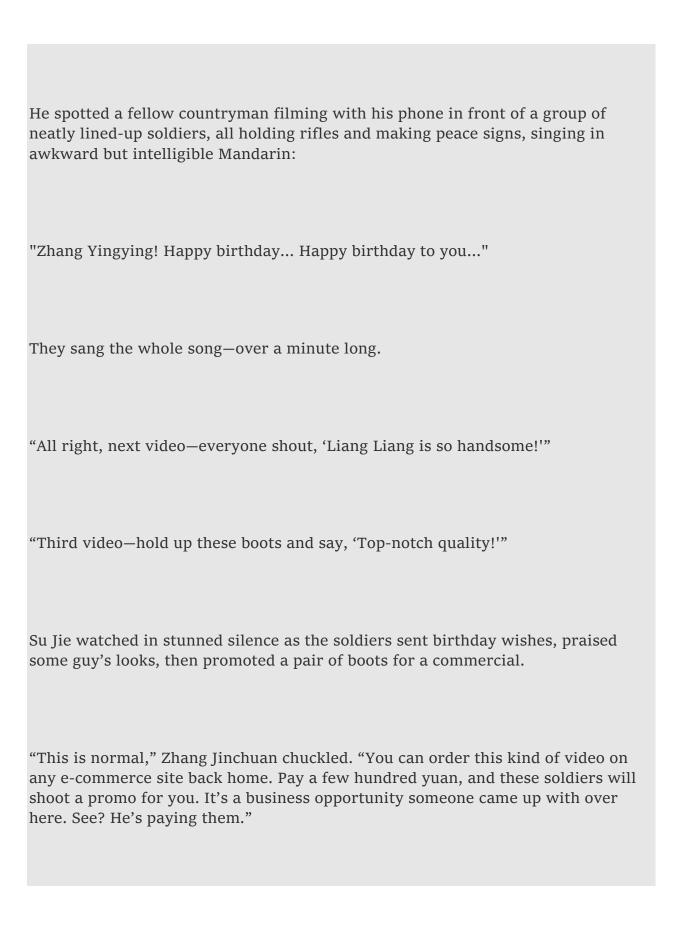


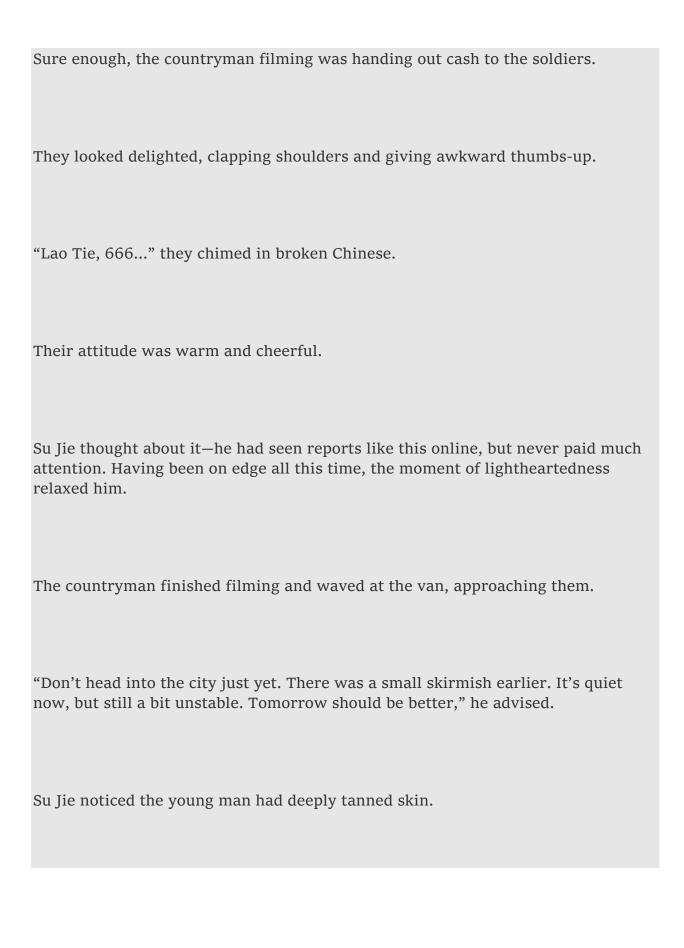
gaping holes. Without immediate medical treatment, disability or death is almost guaranteed.
He was just a student from back home, suddenly thrown into a foreign war zone, nearly dying from a stray bullet with no rhyme or reason.
It had truly been a brush with death.
He had fought in many matches and even been attacked by Grey Wolf with a knife—but compared to stray bullets, all that now seemed like child's play.
'Life and death are unpredictable.'
It took more than ten seconds for Su Jie to come back to himself. Just now, it had felt like a dream—surreal and disconnected. But looking at his arm, now scraped and bleeding, he realized everything was terrifyingly real.
And what came next might be even more dangerous.
Two conflicting thoughts arose in his mind. One was a desire to embrace danger–knowing that if he survived it, his psychological resilience would reach a new level.

Huang Dingyi had said Su Jie's "Hoe Strike" technique had the flavor of ancient warriors charging into battle, but lacked the genuine essence of lived combat. It was all mental suggestion—untainted by blood and fire.
Now, having dodged a bullet—literally—Su Jie had tasted that essence.
But it wasn't enough. He needed more of it to make the "Hoe Strike" truly unstoppable.
The second thought was to turn around and go home. Live a quiet, safe life. Why risk dying in a foreign land? Martial arts can be practiced slowly. Money can be earned over time. Lose your life, and it's all over.
Especially if he died not by some enemy's hand, but by a random stray bullet during someone else's firefight—that'd be a senseless, meaningless death.
But in the blink of an eye, Su Jie realized this was the soft, comfort-seeking part of his psyche speaking up. In peaceful times, such thoughts are easily hidden. But in a harsh environment, they surface, trying to erode resolve and weaken willpower.
"Destroy it!"









"Bro, you're something else—found a niche business in a warzone," Su Jie greeted him, genuinely warmed by meeting a fellow Chinese abroad.

"Just a small thing. Got lots of orders. These soldiers are happy, too—it's a source of income and it's safe. Now they all protect me, worried I'll get hurt and stop paying them. A lot of people here are tired of all the fighting. If there's a way to make money that's also fun, why not?" the young man grinned. "I'm here for engineering work. What about you guys?"

Chapter 108: Strategizing a Countermeasure

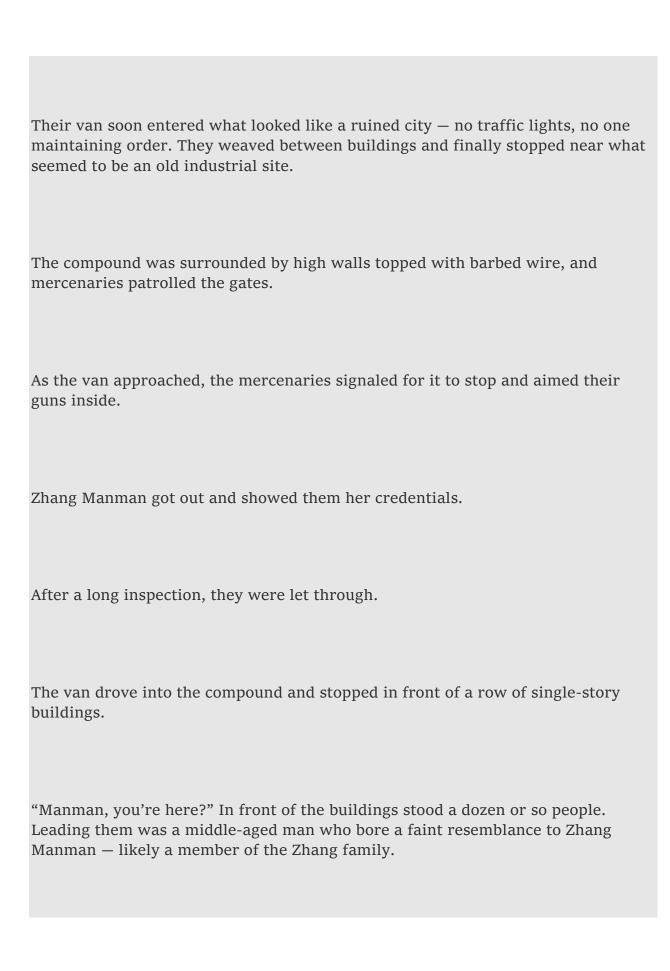
The young man's name was Qiu Tianyou. He had come here with the construction crew to assist in rebuilding efforts. By chance, he discovered some business opportunities and started operating a small venture, which unexpectedly became wildly popular and booming.

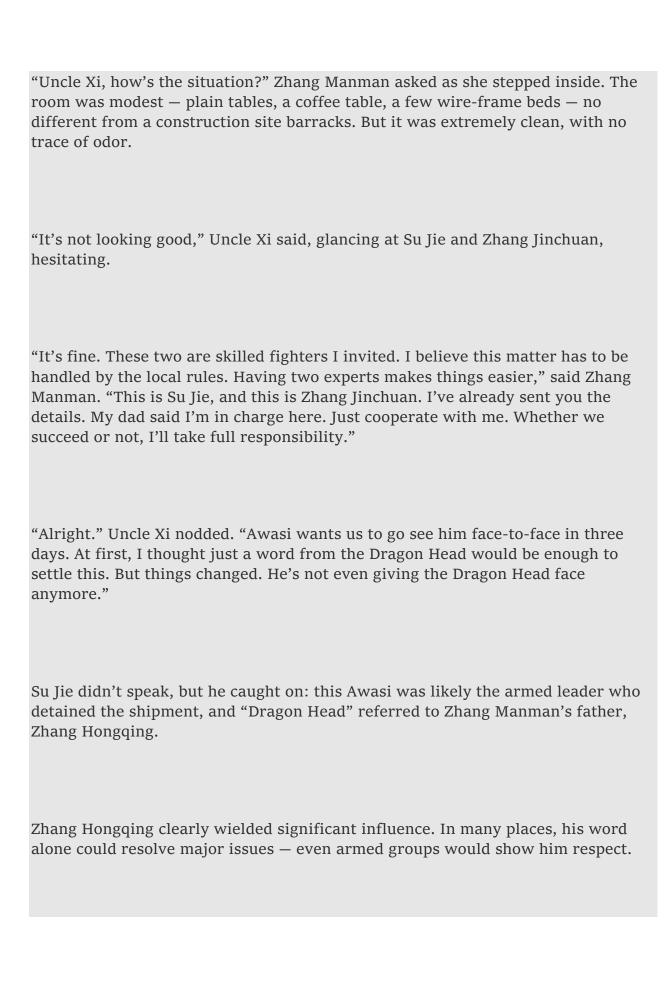
"I opened a restaurant here, and next to it I set up a few old-style projectors to play classic films. People came to watch movies. In just one year, I made several million," Qiu Tianyou was chatting with Su Jie, Zhang Manman, and Zhang Jinchuan. While speaking, he gestured toward a cluster of makeshift shelters in the distance — temporary prefab units. Next to them were many stoves and burners, where cooks were busy preparing food. A constant stream of soldiers and civilians came to eat.

Some military armored vehicles — even tanks — were parked nearby, with soldiers constantly climbing down to eat.

Even soldiers from opposing sides, who were clearly not on good terms, queued up in peace. Next to the dining area was an open lot with a large hanging screen. Far off behind it, an old-style projector was playing a film — a classic from the "Wong Feihung" series. As the rousing, heroic music kicked in and Wong Fei-hung made his entrance with his shadowless kicks and dynamic moves, the crowd burst into cheers. "Martial Art films are the most popular here — every screening is packed," Qiu Tianyou said. "Whenever there's a showing, soldiers from distant cities even drive hundreds of miles in military vehicles just to watch. They really lack entertainment. Last time, a bunch of soldiers even grabbed me and begged me to teach them Chinese Martial Art. But I don't know any! They just wouldn't believe it." After chatting for a while, someone called out to him from a distance. Qiu Tianyou quickly excused himself. "I've got to get back to business. Be careful. If anything comes up, contact me. Maybe I can pull some strings." Watching Qiu Tianyou walk away, Su Jie felt something stir within him. Just a restaurant, a screen, and an old projector — yet it brought together people of different races, cultures, and even opposing factions in temporary harmony.

Martial Art seemed to act as a bridge — a medium for civilizational dialogue.
Maybe learning Martial Art wasn't just for fighting. It had other purposes too.
"Let's go," Zhang Manman said. "Chinese Martial Art really is popular all over the world, especially in war-torn areas. Everyone wants to learn because life is so unpredictable. The head of the armed group that detained the shipment is also a Martial Art fanatic. That's why I brought you two along."
"It's not that simple," Zhang Jinchuan said. "The Feng family's trading group is tight with that armed leader. In fact, they even trained his men. From what I know, Feng Hengyi — the third son — is about our age, but he's helped train those fighters. The soldiers he trained are all tough and capable of holding their own. Plus, Feng Hengyi has other deals with the head, which is why they dared to detain the shipment."
"Seems like Feng Hengyi's business extends beyond the Feng family's Haoyu Group," Su Jie thought, his understanding growing clearer.
Zhang Jinchuan had access to a lot of intel, but he didn't share it all — just bits and pieces to show his value.
"Feng Hengyi trained from childhood in the most secretive Typhon Training Camp—basically started martial arts in the womb," Zhang Manman added. "Feng Shoucheng invested a huge amount in grooming him. Now, there's a powerful force backing him, and he's clearly part of it."





But now, that respect seemed to have hit a wall.
"No matter what, we'll meet him in three days," Zhang Manman said. "Jinchuan, time to put your intel to use. Don't you have a lot?"
"Awasi's shift in attitude makes sense — I bet someone from the Feng family has arrived," Zhang Jinchuan said. "This cargo seizure is the Feng family's ace move, aimed at striking a fatal blow to the Xu family. If we resolve it too easily, the Fengs would lose face. But I think a few of Awasi's subordinates are ripe for defection. One of them, a woman named Fuya, has an account on M@skNet. I've already made contact. In the next three days, I can feed you internal intel."
"Impressive." Uncle Xi and the others looked at Zhang Jinchuan with newfound respect.
They hadn't expected this young man to be so capable.
Su Jie remained quiet. He couldn't contribute much yet. Compared to Zhang Jinchuan's strategic maneuvering, he felt a bit green. Only now did he truly grasp the other's brilliance — no wonder he'd launched such a successful company in such a short time. He wondered how good Zhang Jinchuan's martial arts were.
Although Su Jie had been traveling with Zhang Jinchuan for several days, he'd never seen him fight.

"By the rules here, this will probably come down to a duel in the end," said a young man nearby. "So, I want to see how good you guys really are." "This is Zhang Xian — one of the top fighters of our generation," Zhang Manman whispered to Su Jie. "There are a lot of armed groups around here, and clashes are frequent. But people realized full-blown fights are too costly — they waste ammo, manpower, and make it easy for others to take advantage. So everyone agreed to resolve disputes the old-fashioned way — like Roman gladiators. Each side picks a champion. Whoever wins, calls the shots. I suspect our negotiations will end with this method." Su Jie understood. In places where power struggles run deep, people often rely on primitive methods like this to resolve conflict. He'd seen it in old Hong Kong gangster films: disputes settled through gambling or one-on-one fights. Large-scale shootouts cost too much and invite outside interference. A duel gives both sides a face-saving way out. It was a very Western solution — during Europe's Middle Ages, duels were common among nobles. Boxing itself came from this tradition.

Even the famous poet Pushkin died in a duel.
"Zhang Xian, I know you're not happy. You think you can handle this on your own and don't see why I brought outsiders in — let alone gave them sixty percent of the cut. But you don't understand — this can't go wrong. I think your skills are still lacking. If you don't believe me, Su Jie, why don't you give it a try with him?" Zhang Manman said.
Since Zhang Jinchuan had just demonstrated his value, Zhang Manman naturally wanted Su Jie to show his as well — to avoid anyone looking down on him.
At that, Zhang Jinchuan frowned slightly. He was beginning to notice — Zhang Manman clearly favored Su Jie. In subtle ways, she unconsciously leaned toward him.
Su Jie nodded and stood up, facing Zhang Xian. "Let's try."
He stepped forward. Zhang Xian moved three paces ahead, sizing him up. "You go first," he said, maintaining his composure.
Su Jie didn't hesitate. "Alright then, here I come."

His foot slid forward, and he shot toward Zhang Xian like a runaway train. As he advanced, his hand rose from below and then came crashing down — like a fisherman casting a net to catch everything in one sweep.
His upward and downward motions formed arcs, natural and unrefined — no hint of artifice, no trace of force. Pure and vast.
Zhang Xian suddenly felt darkness fall over him, as if the sky were collapsing. His feet felt rooted to the ground, immobile. Su Jie's palm seemed to sever the connection between his body and mind — his brain and limbs disconnected.
The palm landed on his face, then pressed down gently.
Zhang Xian collapsed, unsure how he'd even hit the ground.
"Hm?" Zhang Jinchuan watched Su Jie's technique—a move called "Hoe Strike"—and finally saw its true power. Even he couldn't help being impressed.
Chapter 109: A Close-Combat Defeat

Su Jie's martial arts had improved drastically. He was already formidable during his fight with Zhou Chun, and after a series of intense training sessions—especially under the joint tutelage of Masters Ma and Luo—his strength had grown

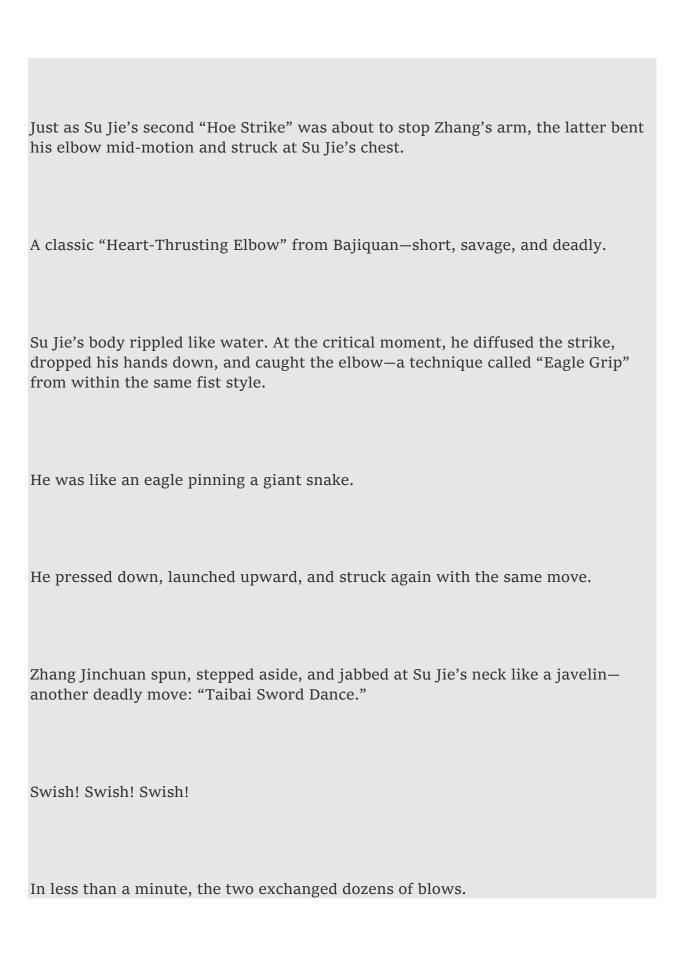
significantly. By integrating the "Great Corpse State" with the natural relaxation of an infant's sleep, his physical conditioning reached new heights.
He transformed his foundational training—both scholarly and martial—into an advanced hard-body technique: the "Thirteen Protectors Iron Body Technique," which fused Iron Shirt, Golden Bell, Tiger-Dragon Vajra Hard Qi Gong, and other forms of internal and external training. His body became tough, resilient, and powerful—like a rare war god from the annals of history.
His signature move, the "Hoe Strike," became near perfection.
With that kind of skill, Zhang Xian was no match.
"I don't accept this! Again!" Zhang Xian stood up, shaking his head, convinced that Su Jie had caught him off guard with a sneak attack.
"Alright, you go first this time," Su Jie replied sincerely.
Zhang Xian feinted left, hands up, then suddenly retracted and struck toward Su Jie's center with a fierce punch.
Smack!

Before the punch landed, Su Jie parried it cleanly. The next thing Zhang Xian saw was a palm on his face, gently pressing him down into the ground again. "I don't believe this!" Zhang Xian leapt up and launched another furious assault. But just as he moved, another palm landed on his face—down he went again. Now he understood. The gap between their skills wasn't small—it was a chasm. Admitting defeat, he stared curiously at Zhang Manman, wondering where she found someone like Su Jie. This guy was unbelievably strong. Though Zhang Xian was from a collateral line of the Zhang family and lacked the resources of direct descendants, martial arts depended more on grit and talent. Among the direct lineage, a few might surpass him, but no one could match Su Jie's level—he was in another league entirely. "This skill... it's practically otherworldly," Uncle Xi and the other Zhang family members were shaken. The Zhangs were a massive clan, even larger than the Xu family. They'd expanded overseas since the late Qing dynasty. Originally bodyguards and caravan escorts, they had built vast business empires and weathered all sorts of storms—none of them were easily impressed.

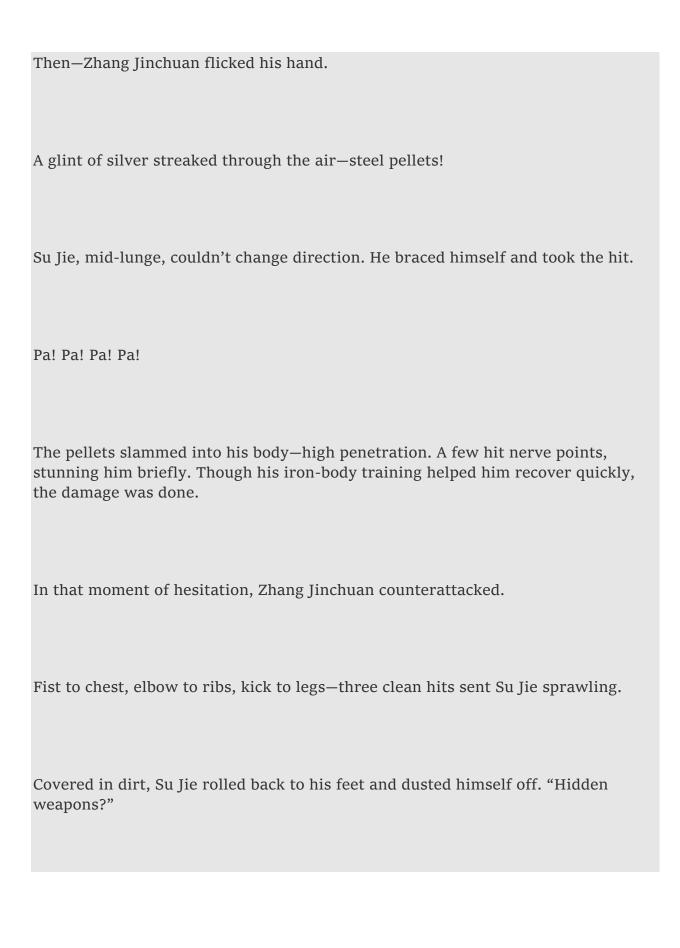




"Here we go," Zhang Jinchuan stood.
Su Jie sprang up and took the initiative.
His movement glided like skating on ice—again, his signature "Hoe Strike." Fingers slightly curled, palm cupped inward like a vortex, locking his opponent in place.
Zhang Jinchuan said nothing. He dodged like a ghost, twisted away, then countered with a sharp straight punch to Su Jie's head.
Even before the fist landed, Su Jie felt the air compress and ripple.
He shrank his body back, raised his arm to intercept—another "Hoe Strike" reversal.
This move wasn't just an opener—it was also a block. It could mimic spear, sword, or any weapon.
Buzz



Zhang Jinchuan never repeated a move—his attacks blended techniques from countless disciplines: karate, Muay Thai, kickboxing, even military kill strikes. It was overwhelming.
Su Jie, on the other hand, used nothing but his "Hoe Strike." Dodge, block, counter—endlessly. It looked like he was on the defensive, barely landing hits.
But Zhang Jinchuan knew better—none of his strikes could break through. Su Jie was like a turtle: unbreakable shell, with a head that might snap out and bite at any second.
And turtles don't let go once they bite.
Suddenly, Zhang Jinchuan leapt back—seven or eight steps, out of striking range.
Su Jie didn't know why he retreated so far, but he could sense the fight wasn't over.
He rushed forward to close the gap.



"In ancient martial arts, hidden weapons were number one. You should know that," Zhang Jinchuan said calmly.
"I lost. No argument there," Su Jie admitted. He could tell Zhang Jinchuan hadn't gone all out—many tricks were still hidden. Their spar was more of a technical exchange, not a death match. He hadn't used his full power either.
Still, he realized he was likely inferior. In a true fight, he'd probably lose eight ou of ten.
The use of steel pellets had disrupted his rhythm completely. He hadn't seen it coming. And in real life, anything goes. In the old days, hidden weapons were the deadliest part of martial arts: throwing knives, sleeve darts, iron beans, slingshots—one strike could end a fight.
Novels often portrayed hidden weapons as dirty tactics used by low-tier villains. In reality, someone who mastered hidden weapons in one year could kill a martial artist who trained for decades.
Odell had warned him early on—when facing someone with a knife, always watch for throws.
Zhang Jinchuan's hidden weapon technique was precise—those small steel pellets were thrown en masse, impossible to guard against.

'Good thing it was just steel pellets. If it were a gun, I'd be dead. Some agents trained in quickdraw can fire in under a second. No time to react,' Su Jie thought. He wasn't bitter about the loss. He was reflecting.

The defeat was a valuable lesson. His skills were enough for street brawls and exhibitions, but against professionals trained in killing? He'd be done for.

Chapter 110: Ambushed: Real Danger and a Trial of the Heart

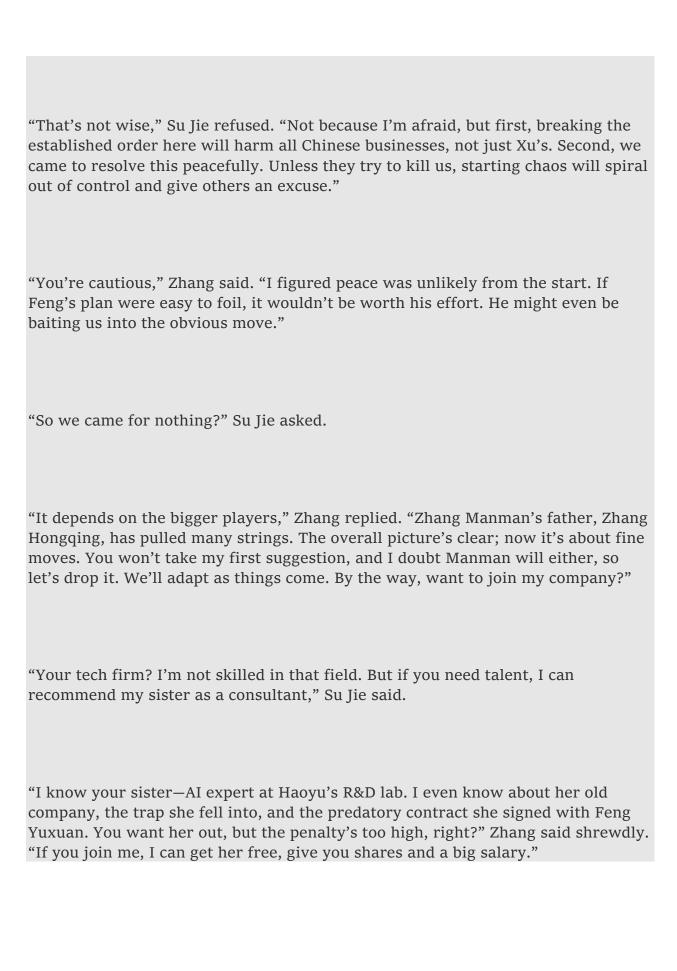
"Our sparring match doesn't really mean much," Zhang Jinchuan said. "Neither of us dares to go all out. It's no different from those traditional martial arts 'hand exchanges.' I look forward to the day we can fight for real—on a platform, in a cage, whatever it takes. That's when I'll see your true potential."

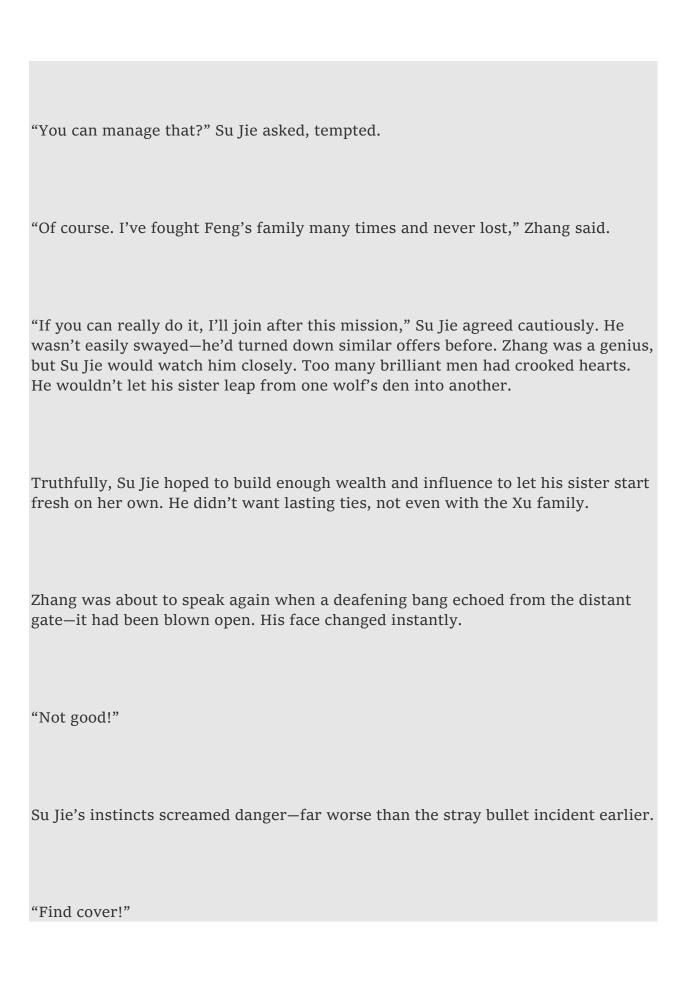
"After so many moves, your technique is above mine, and your stamina is better," Su Jie replied. "But your ability to take hits is a little weaker."

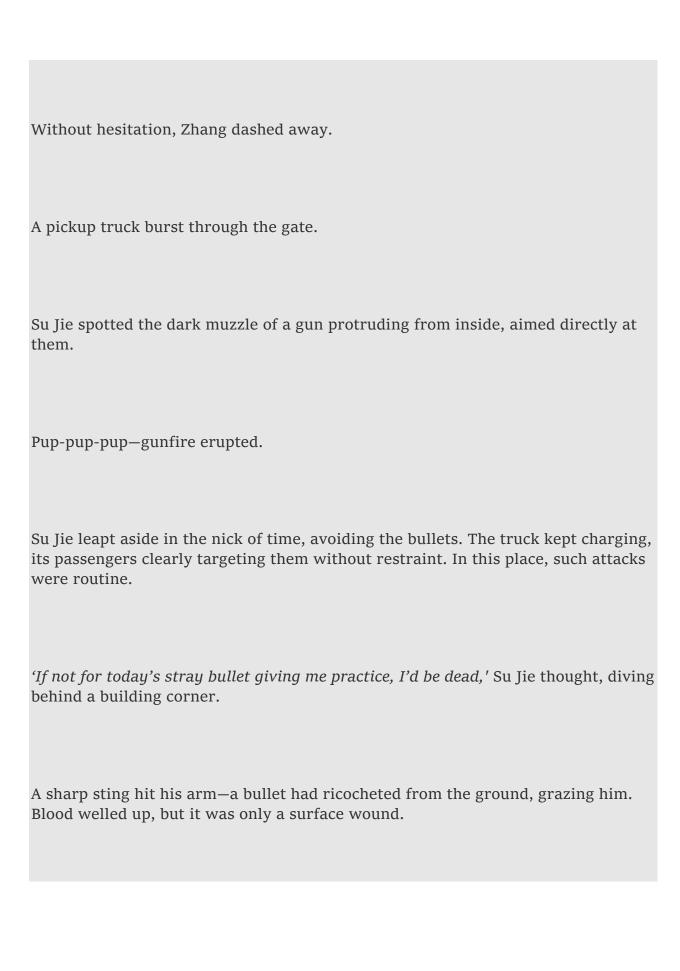
"You've trained specifically to withstand blows, haven't you?" Zhang asked. "Specialized conditioning, over and over again. I know Uncle Mang did electric current stimulation experiments on you. Even elite agents find that agony unbearable, yet you endured it. That's impressive."

"You know about that?" Su Jie was surprised Zhang had studied him too. "Of course. I'm a direct disciple of former principal Liu Guanglie. Many coaches at the Minglun Martial Arts Academy stay in contact with me. I even planned to set up a research fund there, but the Haoyu Group barged in and ruined it. Damn those Fengs—they have to meddle in everything." "Minglun Martial Arts Academy is a gold mine—remedies, human physiology, kinesiology, psychology research, plus its brand value. In sports science, it's toptier. I can't understand why Liu Zihao would invite the wolf into the house," Su Jie said, shaking his head. Decades of teaching experience and priceless experimental data made the academy the nation's number-one sports science brand. "Zihao's short-sighted," Zhang said. "If it were me, I'd proceed steadily, wait for the right opportunity. As living standards rise, sports and wellness will have huge market potential. The health supplement industry is a mess right now—what's needed is a credible giant to dominate. Minglun could have soared, but thanks to that interference, they've set themselves back years. Mark my words, the fallout will be obvious later. Personally, I see big potential in things like Neizhuang Liquor—mass-produce it, and it could take the world by storm. Remember that tycoon who came back from ruin just by selling health supplements?" Su Jie thought of the Nie family's "secret ointment" and "internal strengthening wine." Ordinary names, extraordinary effects—essential to his own progress. Without them, his intense training might have left him crippled. The liquor, taken in small amounts, heated the organs, sharpened the mind, boosted dopamine and endorphins, and primed the body for peak performance without side effects. The

ointment strengthened joints, promoted circulation, and healed injuries quickly. Used together, they turned dedicated training into rapid transformation.
"What a shame," Zhang said. "Those remedies were perfected over decades, tested thousands of times, all from ancient formulas passed down to Minglun. And Liu Zihao just handed them over. My sources say Haoyu plans to mass-develop them with him, pushing into the supplement market."
"Haoyu has the online channels, Zihao has the media brand—but these can't yet be mass-produced. I worry Haoyu's greed will ruin their reputation," Su Jie admitted.
"They will. Haoyu devours markets like locusts," Zhang sneered. "Word is Feng Shoucheng's three sons have been altered in fortune—one's a Taotie, one a Pixiu, one a Yazi. Ancient beasts, never sated, never merciful."
"We both know the truth about face-reading," Su Jie said. "Right now, I just hope we can get the armed group to release the detained cargo so the Xu family's shipment leaves safely, or Feng's scheme will succeed."
"The cargo's on three cruise ships at a nearby port, guarded by armed men. No one can leave, and supplies cost a fortune. On top of that, daily port fees and detention fines are piling up. Two options: storm the place, drive them off, and have the crews sail out—quick and direct. I've analyzed it: they're lightly manned and disorganized. Or wait for negotiations. But if Feng keeps interfering, delays will multiply. Commercial talks can drag on forever."
Zhang's first proposal was straight from an action film—storm in and rescue everything.







Swiftly, he tore a bandage from his clothes, the kind pre-treated with disinfectant and coagulant, and wrapped it tight in seconds.

'This is real excitement!' His adrenaline surged—no fear, only exhilaration, like an athlete injected with pure energy. This was far more thrilling than any fight.