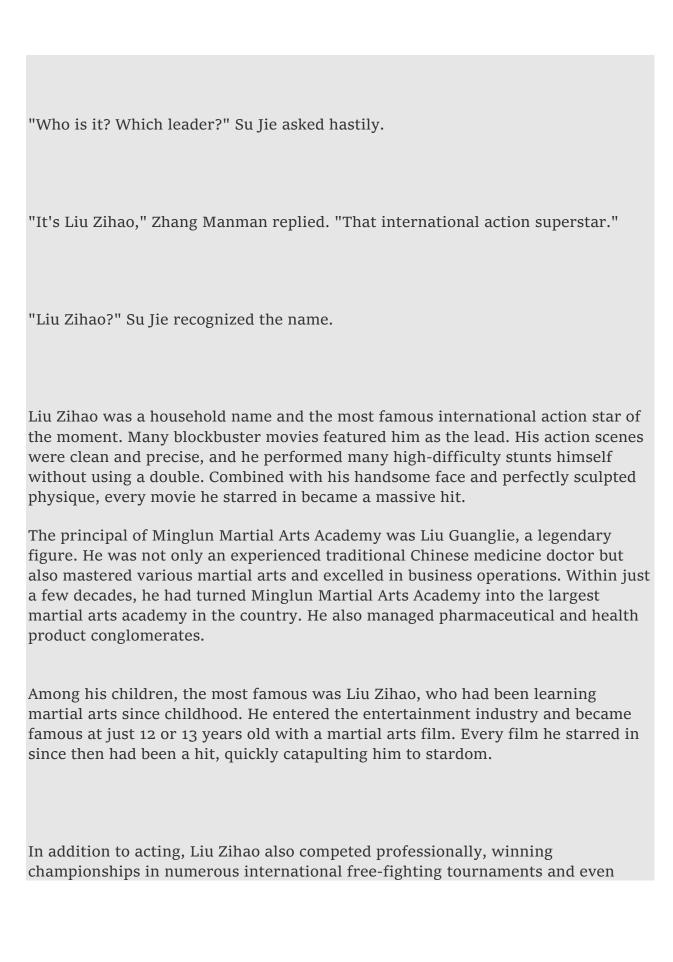
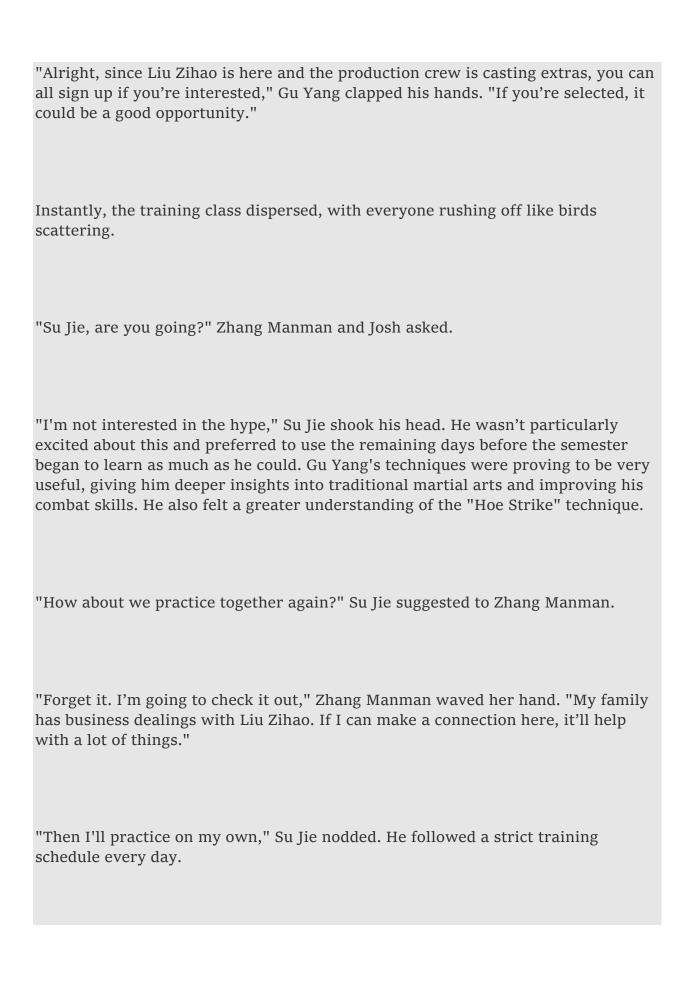
THE WAY OF RESTRAINT

Chapter 31: A Single Core, All Moves as No Move

"Your low blow kick is rather ruthless."
Watching Gu Yang guide others, Su Jie recalled the earlier scene and felt a slight chill in his lower body. "Why are all your moves aimed at kicking the crotch or poking the eyes?"
Zhang Manman blushed slightly. "We girls are weaker, so we can only aim for the vital spots with quick strikes."
Just as Su Jie was about to say something, a commotion erupted at the academy gate. A convoy of luxury cars drove in, with many people carrying cameras following a central vehicle. Security personnel were maintaining order, making it clear that someone significant had arrived.
Many students who had been training gathered around, and the entire field was filled with a buzz of excitement.



defeating several world-renowned champions. These accomplishments boosted his fame even further.
On top of all this, Liu Zihao was also a business prodigy. He founded his own film and investment companies, amassing immense wealth and becoming a prominent figure in the business world.
If life were a novel, Liu Zihao would undoubtedly be the overpowered CEO protagonist.
"He's preparing to shoot a large-scale martial arts film, and the location is his alma mater, Minglun Martial Arts Academy," Josh said as he walked over, his eyes filled with admiration as though he were gazing at a deity. "I checked the academy website yesterday, and they're recruiting extras. I've got to go. If I get selected and can act alongside Liu Zihao, that would be nice." (G: here he actually says 奈斯 which sound like - nài and - nìi = Nice.)
"Nice (奈斯)" was the phonetic translation of the English word "nice," which had become a popular internet slang for something enjoyable or great.
Su Jie had also seen Liu Zihao's action movies. His skills were indeed sharp, and his acting was impressive. He could be fierce and wild like a beast when playing tough roles or tender and affectionate when portraying soft-spoken characters. Unsurprisingly, he had a massive female fan base.



Once everyone had left, Gu Yang smiled. "You're not one to follow the crowd, are you? It seems you've mastered the 'Long-armed Ape Reach' technique. Do you want to learn something new?"

"You're willing to teach me? Didn't you say we should only learn one move a day?" Su Jie asked, somewhat surprised.

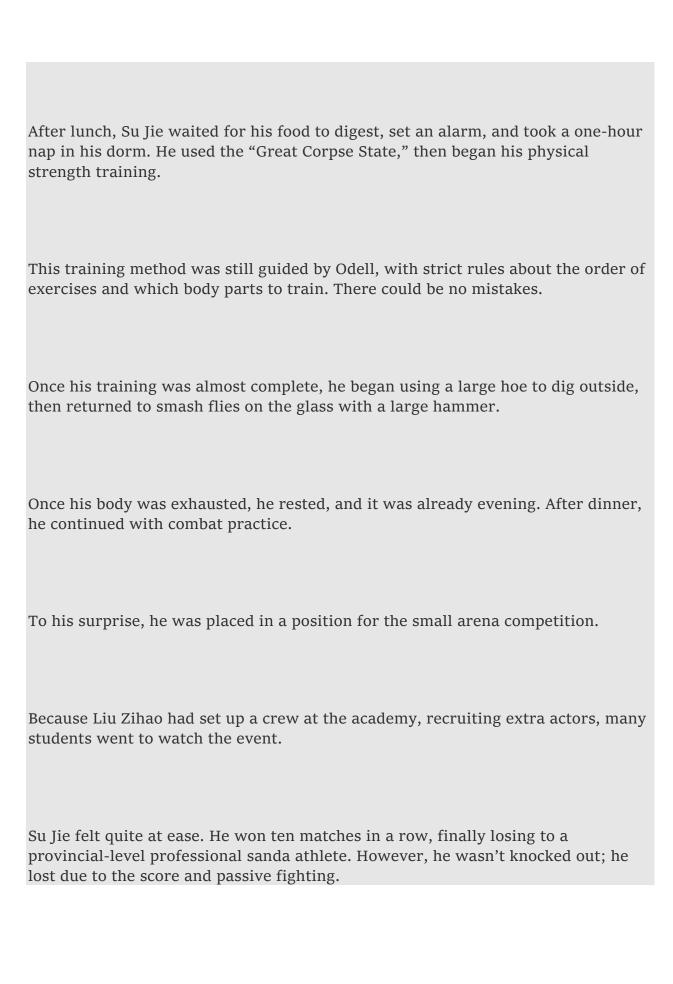
"That's for the other students. You're different. Since you learn quickly, it doesn't matter. The saying 'don't bite off more than you can chew' refers to people who, without fully mastering one thing, rush off to learn something else. You've already absorbed the Hoe Strike move into your bones, so the more moves you learn in the future, the more they'll blend into this one, and the more variations will emerge." Gu Yang asked with interest, "Do you now understand the essence of the Hoe Strike move?"

"The essence of this move isn't the drill, nor raising the hand, and certainly not the pounce, fall, flip, or strike. The real internal training lies in that sudden burst of reaction. It's about mastering the moment of explosive response when startled. With any move, you can capture that shock and burst of energy. Every animal, and human too, has an amazing reaction when startled. Our training core is to enhance this reaction, and enhance it again," Su Jie explained his view.

"You've already reached the point of 'getting the meaning, not the form'." Gu Yang sighed, "That's right. The true essence of Hoe Strike is to train this response. Whether it's a person or an animal, in a relaxed state, the mental state is calm, but when startled, the mind becomes extremely tense, and the burst of power is astonishing. However, the body often can't withstand this explosive power and might get injured, or even suffer from exhaustion. Through training, we aim to normalize this explosive power, so that the body can handle it and gradually strengthen it. The more we increase both the explosive power and physical

condition, the more this move will improve. Once that's achieved, the technique itself doesn't matter much. I've never seen a genius like you."
"Coach, I'm not a genius." Su Jie said, somewhat speechless. "Actually, I find martial arts much easier than studying. If you ask me, a single math course is far more difficult to learn than martial arts. Also, subjects like physics, chemistry, and biology are much more profound than martial arts."
"Uh" Hearing Su Jie's comment, Gu Yang was at a loss for words.
He realized that Su Jie had a point. Natural sciences like mathematics, physics, chemistry, and biology were all profound, the foundation of human civilization. People could live without learning martial arts, but not without studying these sciences.
Even someone who had immersed their whole life in martial arts, like Gu Yang, felt that martial arts could never surpass any of the subjects in natural science.
"I originally prepared eighteen moves, representing the essence of various martial arts academys. Since you learn quickly, I'll teach you all of them today," Gu Yang said. "The first move is 'Long-armed Ape Reach from the Monkey style. Next is 'Tiger's Roar and Crane's Call' from Hong Quan. Then there's 'Mandarin Duck Chain Kick' from Spring Leg, 'Breaking Bones' from Eagle Claw, 'Cannon Fist' from Shaolin, 'Little Ghost Grinding the Mill' from Bagua Palm, 'Hard and Soft Horizontal Cut' from Karate, and 'Body Throw' from Judo"

"Wait, Karate and Judo too?" Su Jie interrupted.
"All martial arts and combat techniques in the world have their own core signature move," Gu Yang replied. "Each has its own unique force-generation techniques and core philosophies. For example, Muay Thai's essence is a sweeping kick. I also have boxing's slipping and weaving drills. Alright, I won't go on introducing. Once you've learned the moves, you can think them over and look them up online. Of course, the internet is full of mixed information that can lead you astray, but our academy's official website has videos, lessons, and explanations, so it's quite reliable."
Su Jie nodded. In the past, he couldn't understand any martial arts manuals, but now after watching some videos online or reading classic old manuals, every word felt profound, and he could grasp the meaning deeply. Additionally, watching training and competition videos from world champions allowed him to intuitively learn, gaining practical knowledge.
Martial arts were simple, Su Jie thought to himself. At least it was simpler than studying. The key was to endure the initial painful and confused period.
After several hours of training with Gu Yang, he had learned all eighteen moves before lunch. The moves were simple, but they contained deep techniques from various martial arts academies, which weren't easy to fully comprehend in a short time.
Su Jie thought he needed to reflect on how to integrate all of these into the "Hoe Strike" move.



In the fight, Su Jie was as clever as a ghost. When he found someone stronger, he immediately ran around the ring, passive in his approach, making the opponent furious but unable to land a single hit.
He discovered a trick: in every competition, there were many rule loopholes that could be exploited, often allowing one to win a breather. Unlike street brawls where there were no rules and anything went. So as long as one knew how to use the rules in a match, victory was relatively easy.
"Did this student really win ten matches in a row? Is he a professional?"
The small arena competition had quite a few spectators, including some big shots.
Su Jie's impressive performance immediately caught people's attention.
"He's a temporary entrant," someone quickly got a hold of Su Jie's information.
After the match, Su Jie noticed that his account had an extra 20,000 yuan. He felt relaxed and happy. This meant his college tuition and living expenses were taken care of.

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Chapter 32: A Millennium of Innovation Who Reigns Supreme, Technology or Manpower?

"Making money is really easy. I used to see news about online streamers earning hundreds of thousands, even millions, a month and thought it was an exaggeration. But now, in just about a month, I've made 150,000. I can hardly believe it," Su Jie said after finishing his match, heading straight to find Uncle Mang.

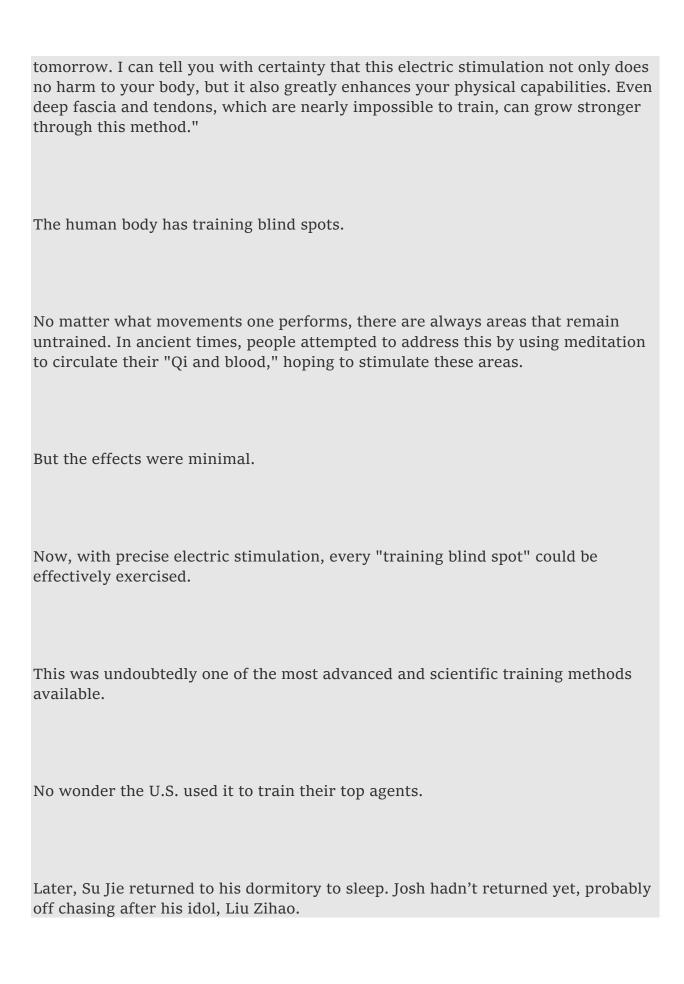
The mere thought of the electric current stimulation made him want to leave, but his nature was inherently tenacious. He thrived on challenges, forging ahead against the current. So, gritting his teeth and steeling his resolve, he made his way to Uncle Mang.

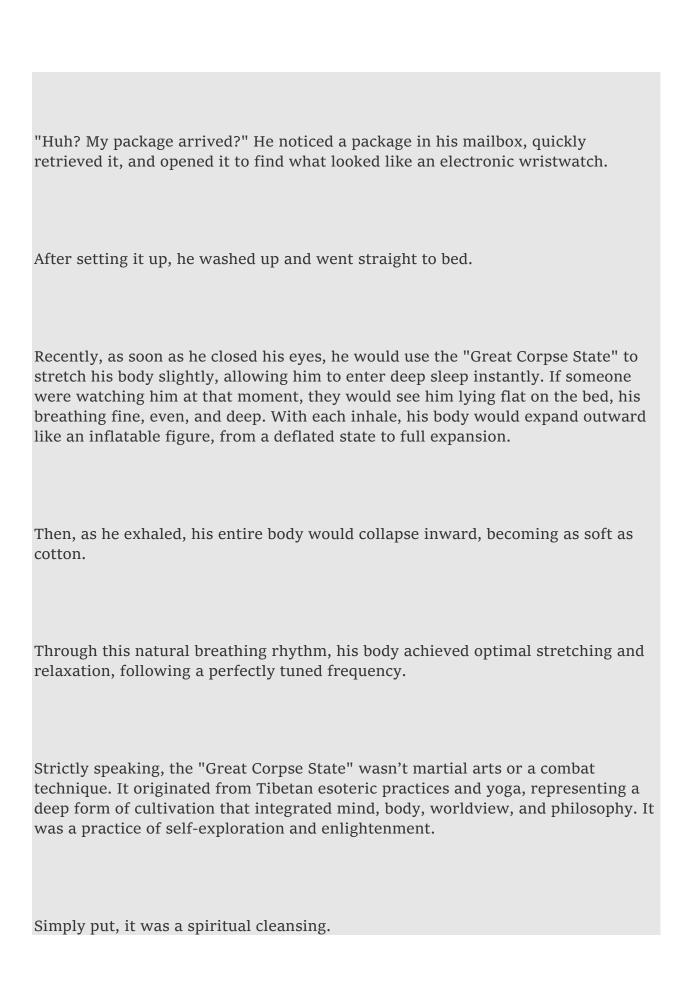
"I thought you wouldn't come today," Uncle Mang said upon seeing Su Jie. "Kid, your willpower is truly remarkable."

"Let's do this." Su Jie felt like he was walking to his execution. At this moment, he deeply empathized with the underground revolutionaries who endured torture before the nation's liberation.

The process remained the same: first massage, then acupuncture, followed by nutritional supplements, and finally, the electric current stimulation.

This time, the electric shocks were as excruciating as ever—utterly unbearable. When the pain reached its peak, he even thought he might be brain-dead. Fortunately, the inner-strength tonic he had taken seemed to have some painrelieving properties. He didn't completely lose consciousness and instead used his iron-body martial arts to relax, leveraging the electric stimulation to train his ability to switch between tension and relaxation—his internal energy control. Gradually, he began to understand the benefits of electric stimulation. Compared to physical impact training, electric currents could reach deeper, penetrating even the bone marrow and activating every neuron and muscle fiber. After enduring a hellish ordeal, Su Jie surprisingly managed to avoid losing control of his bodily functions—a clear sign that his physical endurance had improved significantly. Uncle Mang was even more thrilled than he was, continuously recording various data points. Once the session was over, Su Jie lay down for half an hour. When he finally got up, he felt incredibly light—his entire day's fatigue had vanished. "Incredible. Your muscle fibers have become significantly more resilient in just one day," Uncle Mang exclaimed after analyzing the data. "You must come again

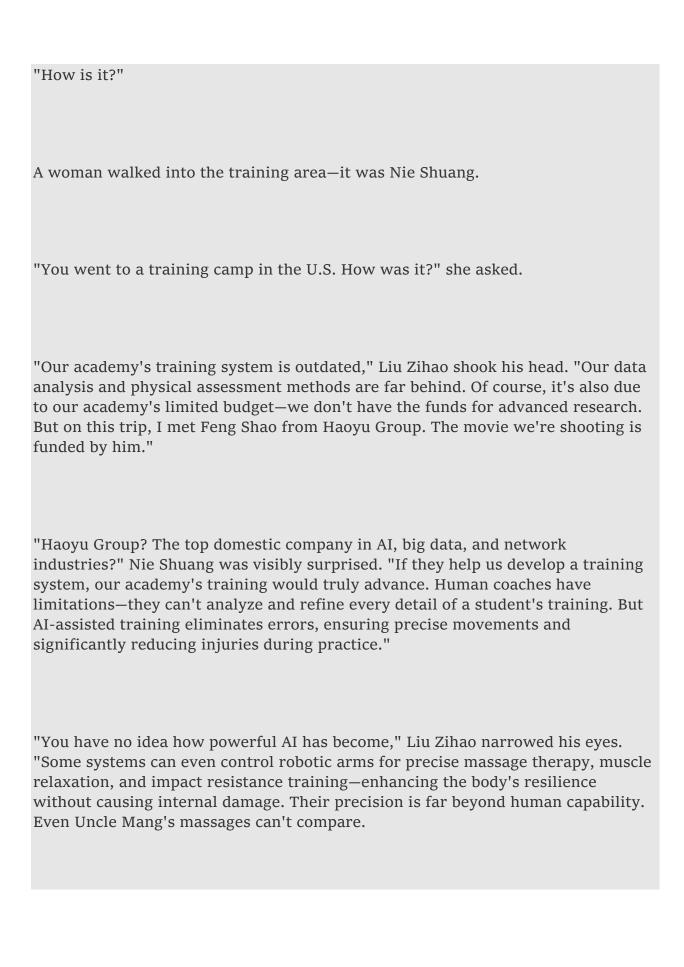




From a scientific perspective, it was a method of psychological training.
Odell had traveled multiple times to Tibet, India, and other spiritual centers worldwide, seeking "supernatural" power. He believed that such power stemmed from the mind, so he searched far and wide for training techniques, testing them through his own practice and human experiments.
Su Jie was one of his test subjects.
Among all his experiments, Odell found that the "Great Corpse State" was the most effective and easiest to implement. However, truly mastering its essence remained incredibly difficult.
It was extremely rare for someone like Su Jie to enter the right state on their first try. Because of this, Odell took the time to train him, recognizing him as a valuable talent.
Gu Yang was the same, as were Nie Shuang and Uncle Mang.
However, Su Jie found it perfectly normal—after all, studying and learning were much harder than this.

While Su Jie was in deep sleep, in a secret training room at Minglun Martial Arts Academy, Liu Zihao was also training. He was tall, handsome, and had a perfectly toned body with no excess fat. His muscles trembled slightly with each breath, producing a faint buzzing sound.
Bang! Bang!
He furiously pummeled the sandbag, which weighed over a thousand pounds, yet his punches made it sway as if it were a mere scrap of paper.
His arm span was astonishingly long, and each punch was so fast that it left only a blur. Every strike carried a deep penetrating force.
Snap!
Suddenly, he kicked the sandbag, sending it flying before it burst apart, scattering its contents all over the floor.
Training complete.

A mechanical voice echoed through the training room. On a large screen in the room, a virtual female face appeared—it was an artificial intelligence training system.
Liu Zihao stepped onto a machine, which immediately began analyzing his data: heart rate, pulse, muscle density, bone structure Numerous statistics were compiled together.
After several minutes of calculations, the screen displayed a set of recommendations.
"You can still replenish your nutrition today. The recommended meals and supplements are as follows"
A complete nutritional plan appeared on the screen, followed by suggested body treatments.
"Trapezius muscle, soleus muscle, biceps Lactic acid buildup detected. Recommended treatment: alternating ice and heat therapy, along with the application of the following medications"
A full recovery plan was laid out.



"Additionally, martial arts techniques have been rigorously analyzed, making them more aligned with biomechanics. In the future, martial arts systems will undergo a complete transformation."
"That makes sense," Nie Shuang agreed. "Take Go, for example. Humans spent thousands of years refining its strategies, believing they had grasped the ultimate truths. But when AI appeared, it shattered those strategies—like a god revealing that everything we thought we knew was wrong. Martial arts will likely face the same revolution.
"Humans learn from every fight, creating better combat techniques over time. But AI can simulate billions—even trillions—of fights in mere seconds. What takes humans millennia to refine, AI can perfect in just a few hours. It's terrifying."
"There's something else," Liu Zihao added. "I heard a rumor that the world's number-one combat coach, known in the industry as the 'God-Maker'—Odell—is here. Did anyone try to recruit him?"
"No one noticed him," Nie Shuang was shocked. "That coach has trained numerous world champions and is a top-tier martial artist himself. But wasn't he with the 'Typhon' training camp? That's the most secretive, brutal, and elite training camp in the world. Didn't you train there for a while?"
"The Typhon camp relies heavily on AI training systems now, making Odell redundant. So he left—essentially, he got laid off. The camp's leadership tried to retain him, but he felt insulted and still chose to leave," Liu Zihao explained. "I actually tried to recruit him myself, but he turned me down."

"I recently discovered a martial arts prodigy in the temporary martial arts class," Nie Shuang said. "I was planning to have him enter professional combat competitions, but he refused. He has a physique similar to yours—he might even serve as your stunt double or join the 'Liu Family' team in the future."
"Oh?" Liu Zihao showed little reaction and simply nodded. "Since you recommended him, bring him to see me tomorrow when I have time. If he's talented, obedient, and willing to sign contracts with both the academy and the company, I might consider mentoring him."
Nie Shuang frowned slightly but said nothing as she left the training room.
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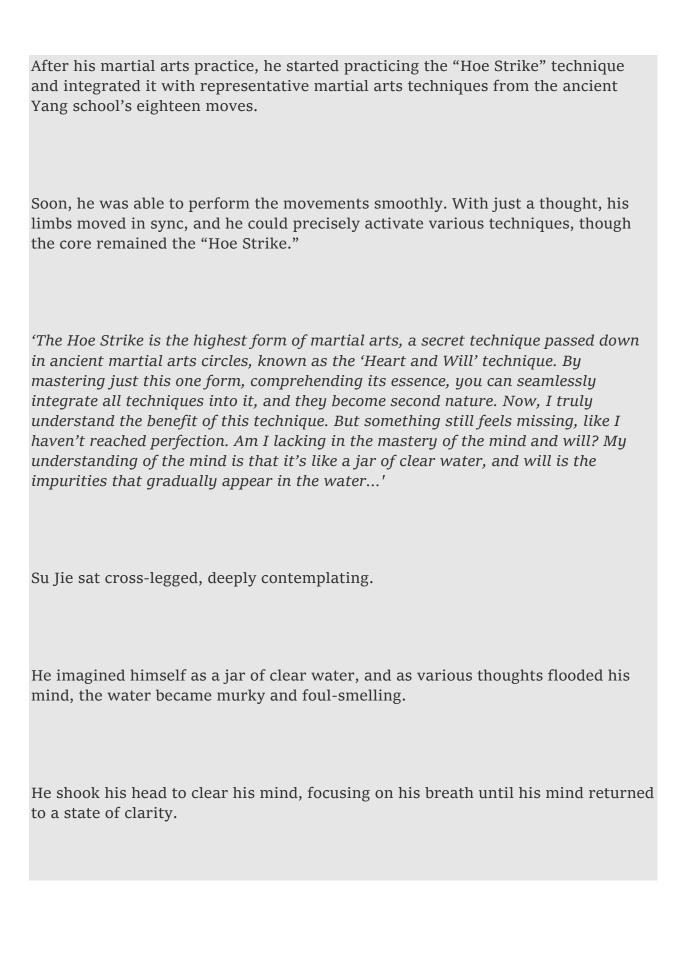
Chapter 33: Encountering a Trap, Calm and
Dual Cultivation with a Fox Demon
Immortal Divine Tribulation
Flower Stealing Master

The next morning, Su Jie began his usual training routine.

As he went through his exercises, he felt an increasing sense of comfort and flexibility. His body was much more agile than before. He started with some basic joint stretches in the open field, his body heating up as dopamine gathered in his system from the physical activity. It was that pleasant, slightly tipsy feeling—like the aftereffects of a drink.

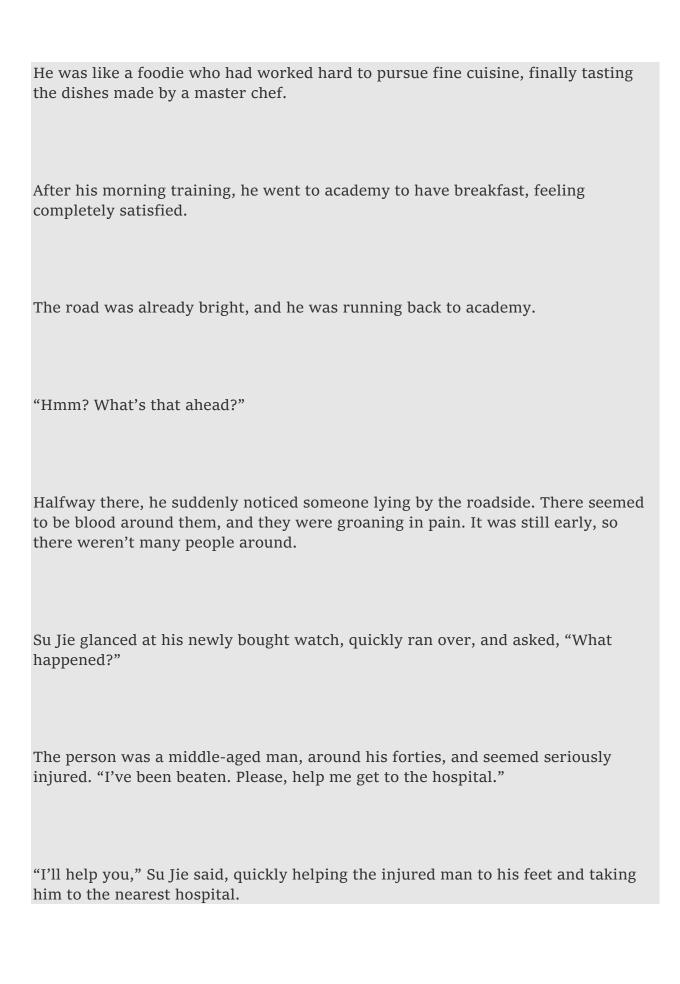
This was the perfect state to be in.
This was the best warm-up before martial arts practice.
According to Odell's theory, warming up before exercise with aerobic activities produces dopamine and endorphins in the body. Dopamine is stimulating, while endorphins serve as painkillers. It gives a feeling akin to being mildly drunk: the sense of being invincible, yet still clear-headed. This is the optimal state for martial arts training.
Swish!
Su Jie shifted his weight, and his body surprisingly performed a backflip, landing smoothly on the ground.
"What? I can do a backflip now?" he exclaimed in surprise.
He had always practiced practical movements, from digging and turning the earth to the later horizontal punches and strikes. He had never practiced flashy moves like backflips. These acrobatic stunts—like high kicks and flying kicks—had no use in real combat. If you used a backflip in a real fight, your opponent would exploit the opening and strike you down in an instant.
Even in traditional martial arts, high kicks were forbidden. Martial arts sayings even advised not to kick higher than your knee.

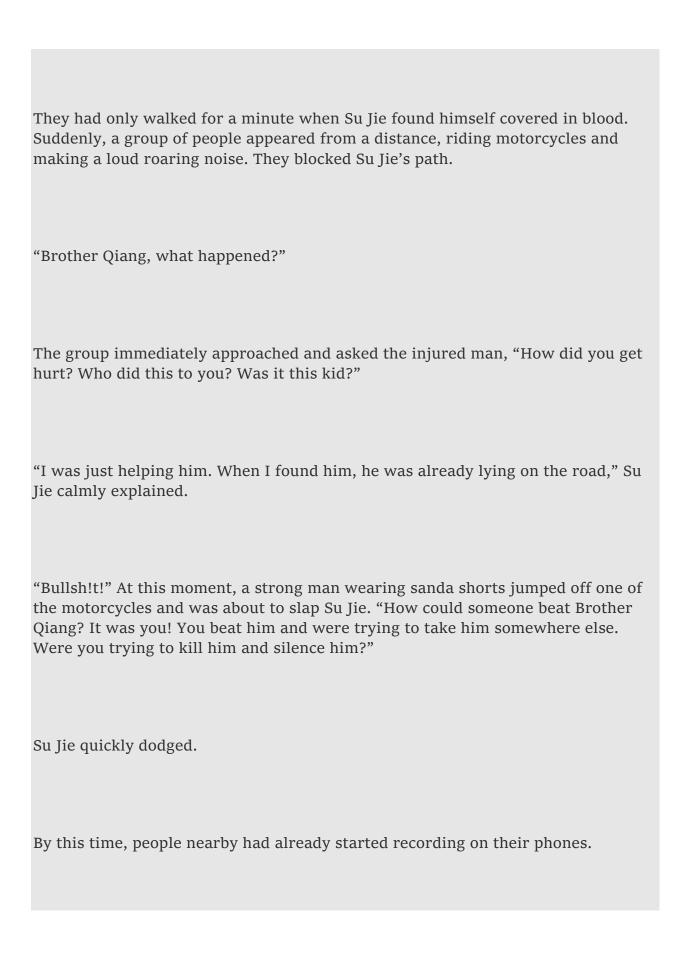
Of course, in competitions, high whips and sweeps can score points or knock out opponents, but Su Jie analyzed carefully and realized that the arena is a far cry from true combat.
He had never practiced backflips before, but now, without effort, he could perform one. This was a result of his improved physical fitness and balance. It had all come naturally.
Backflips are useful in performances and often earn applause. Some actors even rely on them to make a living.
He continued testing his flexibility and balance, performing many acrobatic-like movements with ease.
'Could this be the result of the electrical stimulation? I've only been at it for two days, and my muscles are so relaxed? It's a shame this method can't be used by others—seems like no one at the academy is doing it. Forget about electrical stimulation; even Uncle Mang's massages are too intense for most. Is it my willpower that's naturally so strong? Or is it because of Odell's training?'
Su Jie thought for a moment but concluded that his progress was most likely due to the foundation laid by Odell's training.



In this clear water, one thought appeared—the core training of the Hoe Strike technique.
The thought grew stronger, and eventually, the entire jar was filled with the technique's practice and application, leaving no room for anything else. After practicing, it suddenly returned to clarity.
"That's it." Su Jie suddenly jumped up, holding a heavy iron hoe, and with a powerful swing, it dropped.
He now wielded the hoe effortlessly, as if it had no weight.
"This is it. This is the harmony of mind and will," Su Jie realized. 'When not in use the mind must remain pure, free of distractions. But once you activate it, all your focus converges into one strong thought—only the technique exists, and everything else, including your opponent, ceases to exist. After stopping, the powerful thought returns to clarity. This transition allows you to unleash your greatest power, making your technique pure. But what is the scientific principle behind the harmony of mind and will? I should consult an expert. I know that too much thinking can lead to mental fatigue and shorten life. Many centenarians in rural areas have lived simple lives with few distractions, which is why they live so long'
Su Jie finally grasped the true core of the technique—the harmony of mind and will. He began to practice it earnestly.

Sure enough, as he practiced, it felt completely different from before. It seemed as though all his strength could be released, and his speed, accuracy, control, and impact were greatly enhanced.
It was like a company that had once been poorly managed with no central figure. Everyone was unsure who to follow, resulting in low efficiency. But when a strong leader arrived, everything was reorganized, and the company's efficiency increased by a thousandfold.
'Chinese martial arts seek a unified force, which is the efficiency of muscles working together. Even a weak body can unleash great power if the movements are coordinated. But this unity is physical. The true unity, however, lies in the harmony of mind and will,' Su Jie finally understood the core of Chinese martial arts. He no longer had any doubts. Now, he understood why Odell had trained him in the "Great Corpse State"—it was a way to cultivate a pure, undistracted mind.
"There is no more doubt. What's left is to train my inner self, making it purer, and then train my body, making it stronger."
Su Jie knew that understanding the true essence of martial arts was one thing, but truly becoming strong was another. It still required constant forging and refining, where both mind and will had to be practiced until they could be triggered in an instant.
At this moment, Su Jie was truly enjoying the "flavor" of Chinese martial arts.





"It's him! I was out running this morning and bumped into him. He attacked me without warning, beat me up badly, and tried to drag me to a remote place to bury me. He's a murderer!" The middle-aged man, Brother Qiang, suddenly screamed, completely different from his earlier gasping and weak demeanor.
"Grab this kid and take him to the police station! What a murderer!" At this moment, the man in sanda shorts with his shirt off lunged toward Su Jie and threw a powerful punch at his chest. It was a hook punch, very forceful, indicating that the man had trained for a long time.
Without thinking, Su Jie swiftly moved to the left side of the man. He didn't strike instead, he lightly swept his leg in a technique from the ancient Yang family's 18 forms—the "Mandarin Duck Chain Kick."
This move primarily involved hooks and sweeps, designed to quickly trip an opponent by hooking their foot, causing them to lose balance and fall. Compared to other moves, it wasn't as damaging, but it was clean, swift, and stealthy. The enemy wouldn't even realize what hit them, making it a useful technique to subdue an opponent and make them reconsider.
Thud!
The man fell flat on his face, covered in dirt, but wasn't injured. He was, however, dazed and couldn't get up for a while.

At this moment, fists started raining down from the others nearby.
Su Jie received several punches to his head and body, but fortunately, his internal martial arts training was strong, and he didn't suffer any injuries. With a few more blows, he created an opening and pushed through.
Of course, at this point, he could have struck harder, knocking out a few of them. But Su Jie knew that if he went too far, the others would surely get hurt, maybe even seriously, and that would lead to legal trouble.
"Kid, if you try to run, I've already recorded everything. As soon as you move, we'll call the police. You won't get away."
One of them hopped on a motorcycle, ready to chase after Su Jie.
"What are you doing?"
Just then, a loud shout came from a distance, and someone ran over quickly.
'Is it him?' Su Jie realized that the person running toward him was none other than Coach Zhou Chun. It was because of him that Su Jie had caused him to lose a jar of precious internal strengthening wine.

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Chapter 34: Staying Calm, A Failed Scheme Backfires
Chapter 34: Staying Calm, A Failed Scheme

Zhou Chun walked over. His tall stature and imposing presence immediately

"This is a student from Minglun Martial Arts Academy. Why are you attacking him?" Zhou Chun questioned loudly, then turned to Su Jie. "Don't be afraid, come

"Stop right there!"

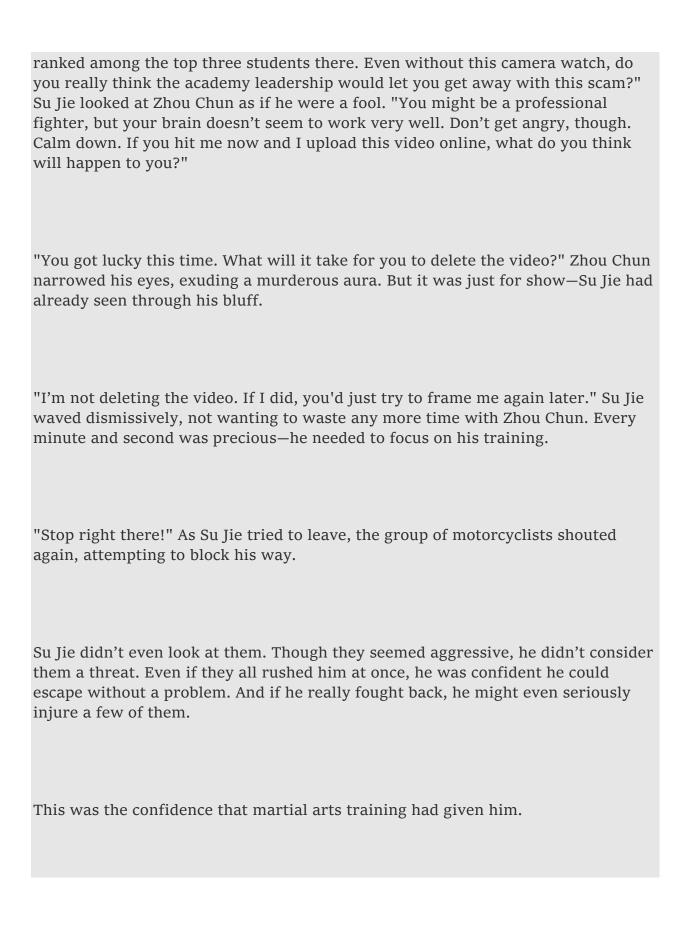
stand behind me."

intimidated everyone present.

Su Jie obediently moved behind Zhou Chun.

"Coach Zhou, your student attacked someone. He beat up Brother Qiang like this! Look, he's even got Brother Qiang's blood on him. What do you plan to do about it?" A motorcyclist stepped forward, his voice even louder, almost a roar. This group of people all looked tough and well-trained, seemingly fighters from a boxing gym. "You really hit Brother Qiang?" Zhou Chun turned to Su Jie. "Who told you to attack people? Even though you're a temporary student, you still have to follow academy rules. If outsiders bully you, the academy will stand up for you. But if you assault someone without reason, the academy won't protect you." Su Jie remained calm. "Coach, I only helped someone up, but I was framed." "Framed? Do you have proof? There are no surveillance cameras here, and all these people are pointing fingers at you. Even if you go to the police station, you won't be able to explain yourself clearly. You might even get detained. Why don't you just take a step back? I'll negotiate with them, and we'll treat this as a lesson learned. Otherwise, if you're detained, your parents will be notified, and so will your former academy. This will turn into a big mess." Zhou Chun deliberately tried to intimidate him. An ordinary student would have been scared out of their wits. "Then, Coach, please talk to them," Su Jie said quickly. "I guess I was just unlucky for helping someone." "That's more like it." Zhou Chun stepped forward, walked a short distance away, and had a discussion with the group. Then he returned and said to Su Jie, "Good





"I'll count to three. If you don't step aside, I'll post it online immediately," Su Jie said to Zhou Chun.
"You little b*stard!" Zhou Chun was so furious that he nearly exploded. "I want to see how you leave today. Never mind whether your watch's pinhole camera is real or fake—even if it is real, you're here, and once we catch you and make you sign the contract, do you think you can just walk away? Put your fingerprint on it now!"
"Sorry, but I'm leaving."
Suddenly, Su Jie exerted force, darted outward, hooked his foot, and then pushed. The three men surrounding him were sent flying and collapsed onto the ground. He then broke through the encirclement and sprinted away.
Immediately, everyone shouted and chased after him.
However, Su Jie's speed and endurance were beyond what these people could handle. After a few minutes of pursuit, he was already nearing the academy. Zhou Chun hurriedly signaled for the others to stop.
"Brother Chun, what do we do?" asked the middle-aged man who had staged the accident, known as 'Brother Qiang.' "That kid is way too cunning. Should we chase him into the academy?"



The modern fighting scene was divided into official national tournaments and large-scale commercial competitions. Official national tournaments were rare, and members of the national Sanda and fighting teams were formal athletes. According to regulations, they couldn't participate in commercial matches and were only allowed to compete in sports events. However, after retirement, they could enter commercial competitions. Commercial fights, on the other hand, were thriving. Many corporate-sponsored tournaments, like the "XX Cup" or "King of Kings," offered lucrative prize money and even attracted global participation. Several major corporations in the country organized free-fighting tournaments, with championship prizes exceeding five million yuan. Of course, this was still nothing compared to international boxing. Top international boxing champions could earn hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars from a single fight. Nie Shuang from Minglun Martial Arts Academy saw Su Jie's potential and wanted to sign him, but Zhou Chun had also set his sights on him and resorted to underhanded tactics to scare him into signing.

"Looks like I've become a hot commodity," Su Jie chuckled, twisting his watch. He wasn't bluffing—his watch really did have a pinhole camera, and the footage was already uploaded to a cloud storage server.
After Gu Yang warned him about Zhou Chun last time, Su Jie had stayed on alert and bought this device online. Sure enough, it came in handy. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been able to clear his name, no matter how justified he was.
In reality, there had been many cases of people helping elderly folks only to be falsely accused.
Not to mention, this incident had taken place in a remote area without surveillance cameras. The injuries and blood on those men were real, and he had gotten some on himself as well, making things even harder to explain.
"The world is a dangerous place," Su Jie, a high school student, sighed. "Luckily, I spend a lot of time online and have seen all kinds of things. Better safe than sorry—I need to be even more cautious from now on."
Shaking off the unpleasant encounter, Su Jie had breakfast and prepared for another full day of training.
His current training regimen was immense—at least three times the intensity of what Odell had gone through in his time. But he enjoyed it. A day without training felt unbearable.

Now that he had money, he could afford plenty of nutritional supplements to keep up with his regimen. On top of that, Uncle Mang's acupuncture, massage therapy, electric stimulation, and internal fortification wine had significantly improved his physical condition.
He assumed his stance and trained for about an hour, sweating profusely. That morning, in the wilderness, he had gained insight into the essence of "unity of heart and mind" in martial arts. His execution of the "Hoe Strike" technique had reached a near-mastery level, aligning with the old manuals' description of "true intention arising from unintentional movements."
He repeatedly refined this move, his body naturally flowing into countless variations.
The eighteen freestyle combat techniques Gu Yang taught were indeed masterpieces. Anyone with real skill who practiced them thoroughly could seamlessly integrate them into actual combat.
Su Jie, having real battle experience, understood their depth and value.
"Good."
Just as Su Jie was practicing, a voice came from the side.

It was Nie Shuang.
At that moment, Nie Shuang's eyes sparkled with excitement. She was an expert, and she could clearly see the state Su Jie was in.
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Chapter 35: A Firm Refusal No Idol Worship
"Ah, it's Sister Nie. Are you looking for me?" Su Jie stopped and asked.
"Your martial arts" Nie Shuang was still in shock. "How is this possible"
"What's wrong?" Su Jie asked.
"It's nothing." Nie Shuang quickly said, "Speaking of which, I need to thank you. Without you, I wouldn't have won that jar of internal-strength wine from Zhou Chun. By the way, Zhou Chun is a narrow-minded person, and he has some influence outside. He didn't send anyone to trouble you, did he? Last time, I told Gu Yang to warn you to be careful. Have you been on guard?"
"I actually have something to tell you." Su Jie sent the video to Nie Shuang and briefly explained what had happened that morning.

"D*mn it! Zhou Chun is actually this despicable!" After watching the video and listening to the recording, Nie Shuang's face turned red with anger. It took her a while to calm down before she stared at Su Jie. "How do you want the academy to handle him? You now have evidence, and if you report this to the police, he could be charged with extortion."

"I don't really care." Su Jie shook his head. "Even if he were convicted of extortion, the sentence wouldn't be long, especially since he didn't succeed. Besides, he never directly got involved—he just played the role of a mediator. Even if I reported him, at most, he'd receive a warning or some disciplinary action. Of course, there's another way—I could post this video and an article exposing the situation online, making it a trending topic. That would ensure he gets the punishment he deserves. But if I do that, Minglun Martial Arts Academy's reputation would take a huge hit. Imagine the headlines: 'Coach at the Nation's Top Martial Arts academy Tries to Frame a Student.' Wouldn't that tarnish the academy's name? But if Zhou Chun keeps pushing his luck, I won't have a choice. One more thing—I don't want to gain fame this way."

'This kid has a sharp mind,' Nie Shuang frowned. 'He presents logical arguments, analyzes the situation thoroughly, and even implies something deeper...'

Su Jie's words suggested that the academy was responsible. If he exposed the incident, it would damage the academy's reputation. Though he seemed to be considering the academy's best interests, his underlying message was clear.

"In the end, Zhou Chun is still a coach at this academy. For him to do something like this, the academy cannot escape responsibility," Nie Shuang said decisively. "So, on behalf of the academy, I'll make three promises: First, Zhou Chun will be dealt with strictly. Second, we will compensate you. Third, we will ensure that Zhou Chun never troubles you again. Now, tell me, what kind of compensation do

you want?"
"Compensation? I don't need any for now." Su Jie thought for a moment. "In about ten days, I'll be leaving the martial arts academy to return to high school. Without Uncle Mang's acupuncture therapy and electrostimulation, my progress will definitely slow down. Do you have any suggestions?"
"I still say the same thing," Nie Shuang sighed with regret. "You should just enroll in our martial arts academy officially. You can still take the college entrance exams, and it won't interfere with your training. Not only will you get free tuition but you'll also receive a scholarship. Plus, we'll provide you with resources to help you become a professional fighter. Even geniuses need consistent, intensive training—otherwise, they're just wasted potential. If you go back to a regular high academy, you won't have as much time to practice. You also won't have the same environment, training partners, or real combat opportunities. No one succeeds alone. In ancient times, Shaolin Temple gathered countless martial artists who trained and exchanged techniques daily, which led to the creation of many martial arts styles. The same goes for Minglun Martial Arts Academy. Martial arts, like scientific research, can never be developed by just one person."
"I'll think about it. Anything else?" Su Jie remained unmoved.
"Alright." Nie Shuang shook her head. "How about this? I'll give you a jar of our specially made medicinal balm. Combined with Uncle Mang's massage, it'll help your body stabilize its conditioning. Also, I want to introduce you to someone. It took a lot of effort for me to recommend you to him. If he takes a liking to you, you'll have plenty of opportunities in the future."
"Who?" Su Jie asked.

"Liu Zihao." Nie Shuang tried to see some sign of idol worship in Su Jie's eyes, but there was none.
Liu Zihao was an international action superstar with countless devoted fans wherever he went. In fact, ninety-nine percent of the students at Minglun Martial Arts Academy had enrolled after watching his movies.
Yet, Su Jie didn't seem the least bit interested.
'From his movements, I can tell he has deep martial arts skills,' Su Jie thought to himself. 'I don't worship idols or chase after celebrities, but observing a master isn' a bad thing.'
Josh, on the other hand, was fanatical about Liu Zihao. He always said that he admired only two Chinese people: Bruce Lee and Liu Zihao.
Getting to meet Liu Zihao and asking for an autograph would probably make Josh go crazy with excitement.
"Thank you, Sister Shuang," Su Jie said politely, showing his appreciation.

"Follow me." Nie Shuang led the way, but she was still thinking, 'This Su Jie... He doesn't seem like a high academy student at all. He's way too mature. Most high schoolers at this age are obsessed with celebrities or gaming. Even top students would be trembling with excitement at the thought of meeting a superstar. But he acts like it's just another ordinary event. Usually, only kids from poor families mature early because they have to take on responsibilities sooner. But Su Jie's family seems well-off...'

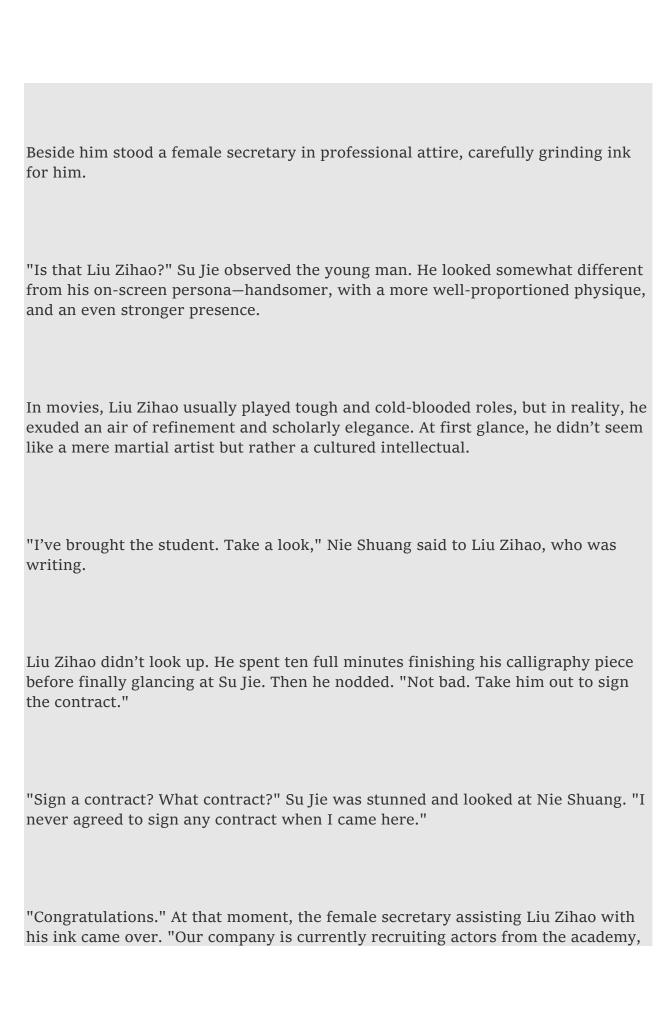
Before long, Nie Shuang brought Su Jie to a secluded building deep inside the academy. Security guards were stationed outside, preventing outsiders from entering as if they were guarding an important official.

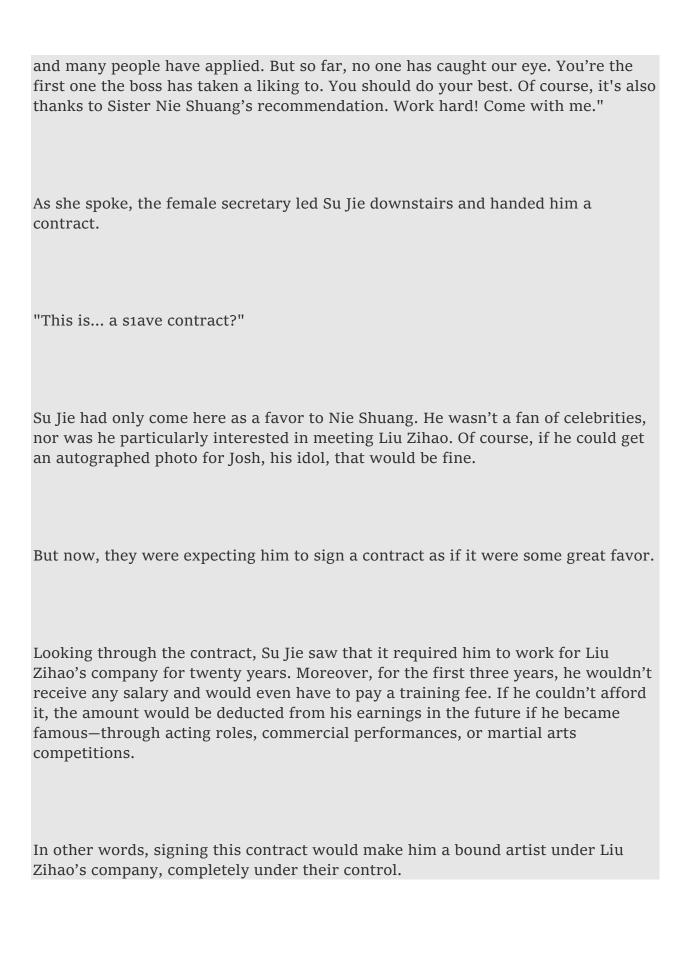
However, seeing Nie Shuang, the guards did not stop her and allowed her to bring Su Jie inside.

The building was quiet and entirely made of wood, giving it a peaceful and refined atmosphere. It was likely designed by a professional architect to promote relaxation and focus. The academy generally kept this area off-limits, and the outer gates were always closed.

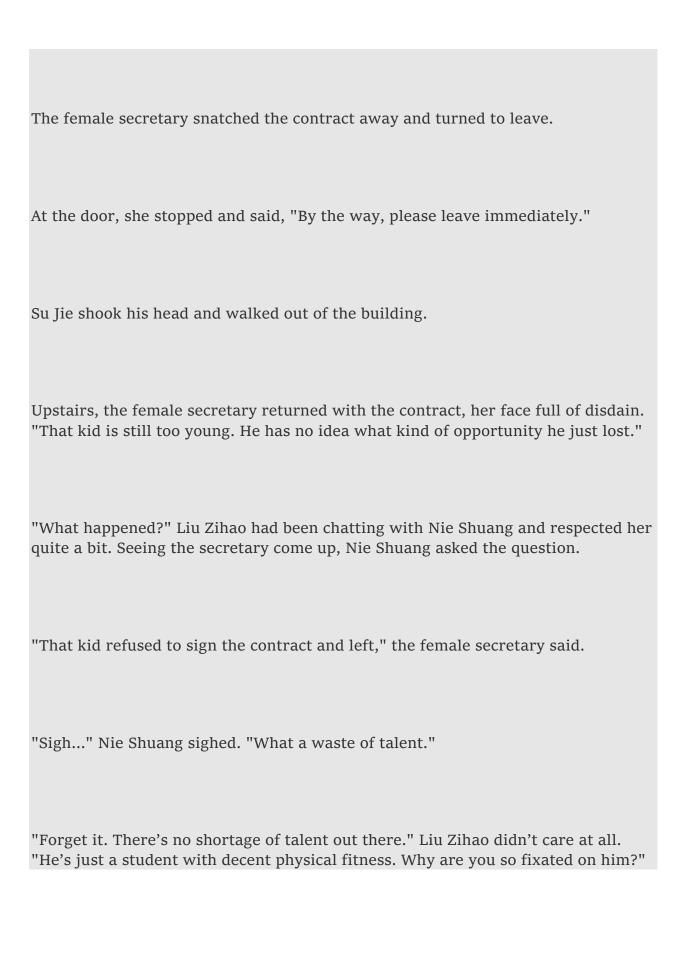
At the highest level of the building, there was a large square study, about two hundred square meters in size. The room was spacious, filled with bookshelves and a large desk.

A young man, dressed in loose-fitting clothes, was practicing calligraphy with a brush.





Su Jie wasn't interested in being an actor, a martial arts competitor, or a celebrity But even if he were, he would never sign such a contract.
Of course, other young men and women might have signed it without hesitation. But Su Jie had his own life plans and was far more mature than most adults.
"What? You have objections?" The female secretary frowned when she saw Su Jie hesitating. "Do you know how many people dream of signing this contract? If it weren't for Sister Nie Shuang's recommendation, you wouldn't even get the chance to see it."
"Sorry," Su Jie replied politely. "I can't sign this contract right now. I need to discuss it with my parents first." His response was already quite tactful.
"Young man, you should cherish this opportunity. Our company won't wait for you," the female secretary said impatiently. "I'll give you one last chance—three minutes. If you don't sign, you won't get another opportunity."
"Sorry," Su Jie said again, still maintaining his courtesy.
Swish!



"I suspect that he has undergone training from the godmaker Odell, which is why his physical abilities have improved so quickly. On top of that, he's the only student in the academy who can endure Uncle Mang's massage techniques. Right now, Uncle Mang is giving him acupuncture and electrical stimulation. You know, that electrical stimulation is used by the U.S. military to train super agents, yet he can withstand it. I'm really curious about his extraordinary willpower. Either Odell trained him using some special methods, or he has an unusual level of resilience," Nie Shuang shared her suspicions.

"Oh?" Liu Zihao was intrigued. "Uncle Mang is a medical doctor and a computer science expert. He's also highly skilled in martial arts. If not for that unfortunate incident, he wouldn't have ended up at our academy. My father personally funds his research every year. I didn't pay much attention to Su Jie before, but he actually has such strong willpower?"

"I wouldn't recommend someone recklessly," Nie Shuang said, waving her hand. "Don't be fooled by the fact that he's a student. He's actually more capable than most adults. This contract of yours probably isn't suitable for him."

"No matter how talented a young person is, if they have the wrong personality, they're difficult to manage. I want obedient actors, not troublemakers. The more talented someone like him is, the more likely they'll turn against you in the future," Liu Zihao said dismissively. "Ever since I returned from the Typhon training camp, I've realized that technology is the most important thing. With the right technology, even ordinary people can be trained into super soldiers."

"I'll try to convince this student first," Nie Shuang said as she stood up and left.

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Chapter 36: Secret Ointment, Strengthening Bones and Body for Complete Shaping

"Today, Nie Shuang actually brought out her family's secret ointment for you."
While massaging Su Jie, Uncle Mang took out a jar of ointment. The ointment was a vibrant green, emitting a fragrant aroma. When applied to the skin, it gave a cooling sensation, as if one were bathing in an icy world, refreshing the mind and invigorating the spirit.
"What kind of ointment is this?" Su Jie knew that Nie Shuang had always treated him well. Although he had refused her offers multiple times, she still gave him the ointment as compensation for the Zhou Chun incident.
This matter had nothing to do with her originally, but to protect the academy's reputation, she still attempted to keep his mouth shut.
"The Nie family used to prepare dishes for the imperial court. You've heard of the famous Nie's Private Kitchen. Besides that, they also had ancestors who served as imperial physicians, responsible for the emperor's health. As the saying goes, 'culinary and medicine are inseparable.' Even now, many medicinal dishes in the academy follow Nie family recipes," Uncle Mang explained.

Su Jie had indeed heard of Nie's Private Kitchen. The reason Odell came here was not just to find hidden masters and learn from them, but also to taste this renowned cuisine.

The authentic Nie's Private Kitchen was exceptionally delicious and highly nutritious, truly a feast for the senses. After eating with Odell for a month, Su Jie had not only enjoyed every meal but also noticed significant physical growth during that time.

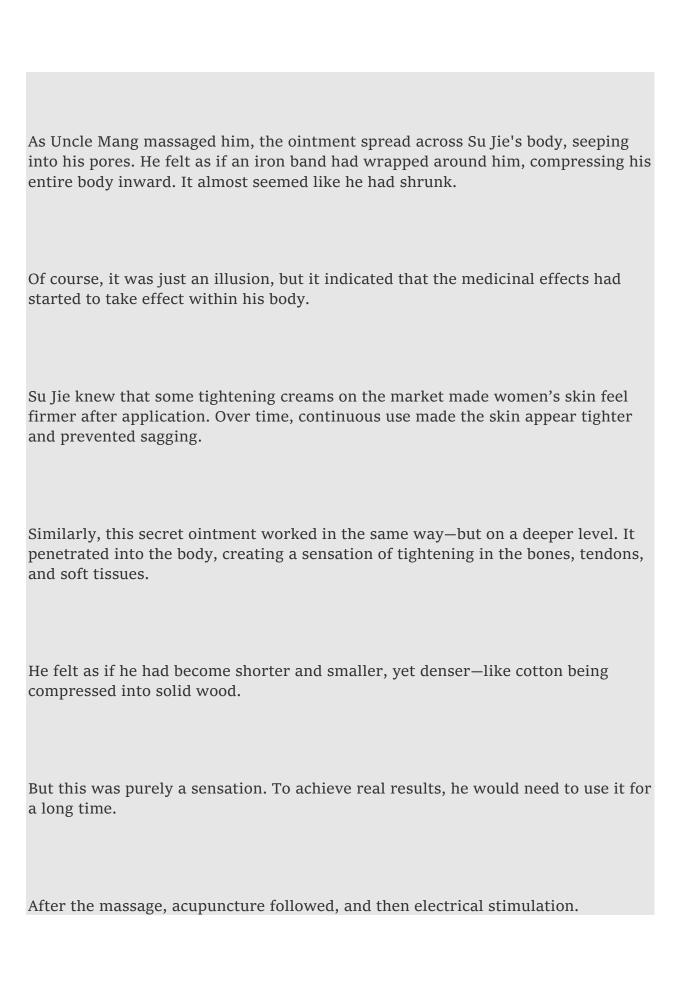
The medicinal dishes in the academy, however, were not true Nie family recipes—just some modified versions.

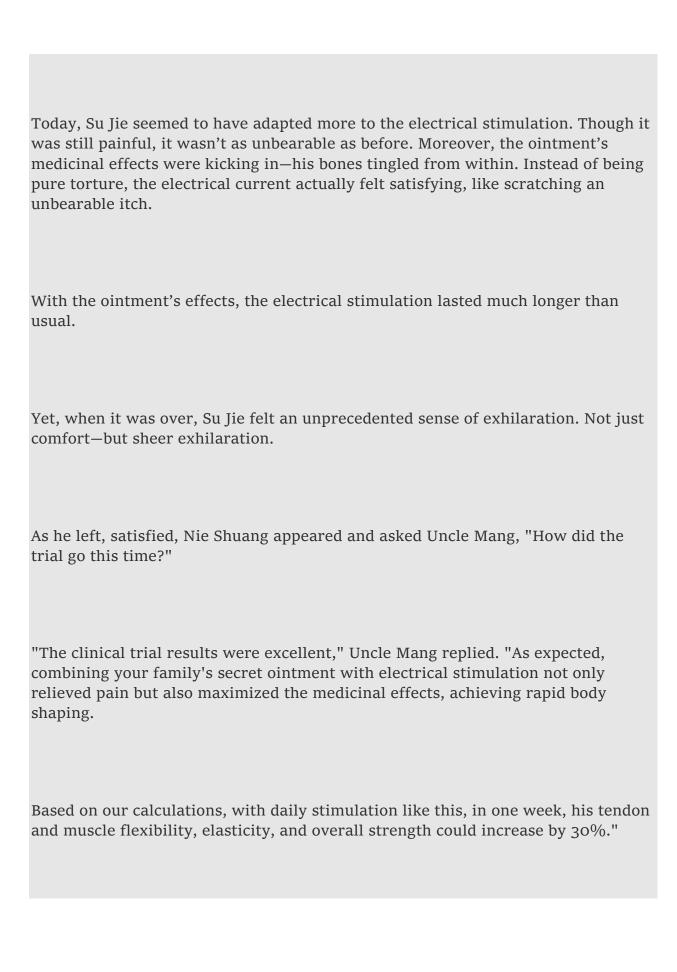
"This ointment is for strengthening the tendons and bones, right?" Su Jie asked.

"That's right, but that's only part of it," Uncle Mang replied. "You know that during the Qing Dynasty, apart from archery and horseback riding, the emperors also trained in 'buku', which was wrestling. Wrestlers always applied a layer of oil to their bodies to prevent injuries and protect their tendons and bones. Back then, a Nie family physician was responsible for creating the emperor's ointment, and it was incredibly effective.

Now, the Nie family has thoroughly analyzed the ingredients of this ointment and refined it through numerous lab experiments. The current version focuses on rapid recovery, enhancing tendon and fascia elasticity, and protecting the joints. It penetrates through the skin into the tissue layers, working from the outside in—making it the best medicine for external body conditioning.

This jar of ointment isn't available on the market. It's an experimental product from the lab and isn't ready for mass production yet."



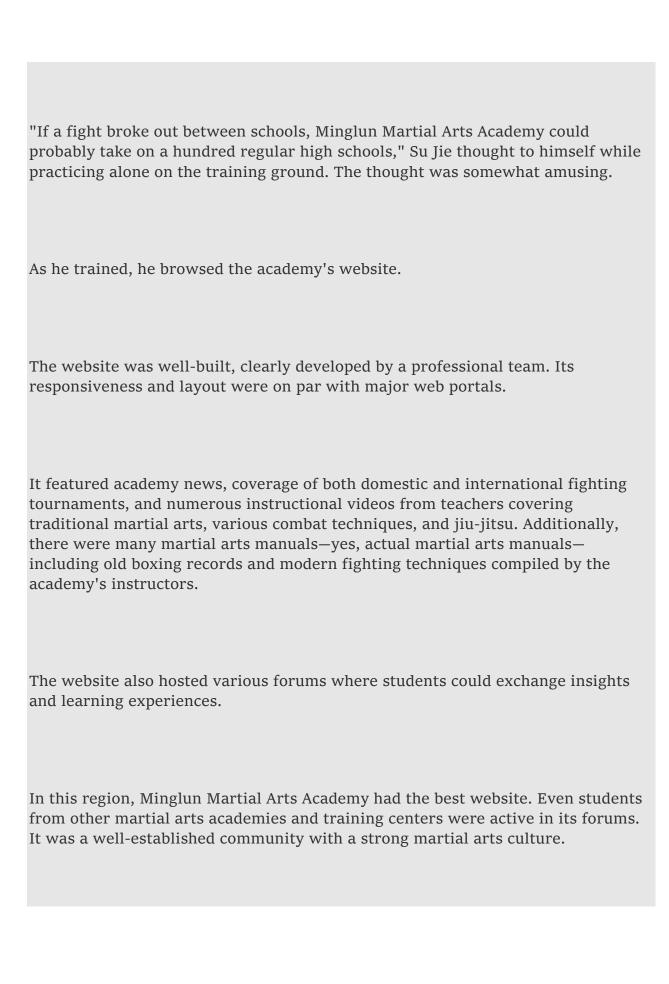


"I brought out this secret ointment not just to keep him quiet but more importantly to support your experiment," Nie Shuang said. "Su Jie has strong external martial arts conditioning, making him the perfect test subject. If the experimental data proves effective, we can use this combination to train others or even enhance our own physiques."
"Exactly," Uncle Mang nodded. "These past few days of experiments have provided us with valuable data—at the very least, we've determined how much pain a person can endure, how resilient the nervous system can be, and how muscle spasms from pain stimulation can enhance elasticity. We're also figuring out the right balance in the data."
"In fact, research on physical fitness is already well-documented in training camps worldwide," Nie Shuang said. "What's lacking is data on the interaction between mental resilience and physical strength. For example, what kind of endocrine response is triggered when a person is in extreme joy?
Or what substances does the body release to protect itself in moments of extreme pain? These are the key subjects we need to study."
"You're absolutely right," Uncle Mang agreed. "From Su Jie, I've gathered a lot of information on how psychological endurance affects physical endurance. Many psychological hypotheses have been confirmed through him—he's an excellent test subject.
If I'm not mistaken, Odell has been conducting similar experiments on him since he arrived."

"Odell is pursuing the so-called supernatural abilities," Nie Shuang remarked. "But in my view, it all comes down to achieving absolute mental tranquility—an insight that sees through everything, allowing the mind to influence the body in profound ways. That's why he went to Tibet and India—to observe those who cultivate their minds and see how far they can go. Physical conditioning is relatively easy, but mental conditioning is far more difficult. However, I can see that your research is already yielding some results." "I've made some progress. Before, I hadn't made much headway. I used massage as a cover to make bets, but in reality, it was all to find the perfect research subject. It wasn't until Su Jie arrived that I made a breakthrough and obtained some critical data. Right now, the biggest issue is that our academy's computers and artificial intelligence aren't very advanced. If we could introduce cutting-edge analysis systems, my research would advance by leaps and bounds." "Just wait," Nie Shuang said. "Zihao has secured an investment from Feng Yuxuan, the successor of Haoyu Group, which is the leading company in domestic artificial intelligence computing. The two of them have a good relationship, and Feng Yuxuan has agreed to join our academy's artificial intelligence human training project."

"Haoyu Group is indeed very strong in computing. If this project gets up and running quickly, my data and ideas, once researched, could significantly elevate our academy's training standards. Not only would we be able to produce more toptier fighters, but we could also cultivate elite security personnel for the nation," Uncle Mang said.
"If things progress further, you might even have a chance to regain your sight," Nie Shuang remarked.
"Don't bring that up again. It's better this way. Being blind means I don't have to see the superficiality of the world, and my mind can remain at peace," Uncle Mang replied coldly.

Inside the Martial Arts Academy
The training field was filled with students practicing, creating a heated and intense atmosphere, completely different from regular academies.
In ordinary schools, especially high schools, physical education classes were often sacrificed in favor of academic subjects to prepare for college entrance exams. But here, martial arts took priority, and every student had exceptional physical conditioning.



Su Jie spent an hour browsing the site daily, learning new things and staying updated on the latest trends.
"Minglun Martial Arts Academy really does offer a lot of high-end medicinal treatments. For example, this special ointment called 'Tiger ointment'—it looks like a simplified version of what I've been using, but it's still insanely expensive." He noticed that a small bottle of the ointment cost thousands of yuan.
In fact, the most valuable aspect of the academy's website was its medicine section. It sold medicinal oils, ointments, and various supplements designed to enhance physical conditioning. The academy's principal was originally a renowned traditional Chinese medicine practitioner, so all the formulas were highly effective.
Beyond that, the forum contained numerous testimonials from students, overseas martial artists, and professional athletes who had used these treatments. Many shared their experiences and improvements, giving Su Jie plenty of valuable information. Even after he left the academy, he could still purchase specific products for his own training.
"What? A contract with Haoyu Group?" Just as he was about to browse further, he noticed a news update.
"Haoyu Group That's where my sister works." Su Jie frowned deeply.

Then, he saw a picture of Liu Zihao shaking hands with someone.
The man was tall, handsome, and even more striking than Liu Zihao. His sharp features and imposing presence rivaled that of top celebrities.
Haoyu Group's young successor, Feng Yuxuan.
"It's him." Su Jie's eyes flashed with a hint of cold determination. If Gu Yang were here, he would immediately recognize it as hatred.
"Good thing I didn't sign a contract with Minglun Martial Arts Academy. Otherwise, I'd be at their mercy. If Liu Zihao is teaming up with that guy, then there's no way I can work with this academy." Su Jie shook his head, closed the website, put away his phone, and resumed training.
After a while, his mind finally calmed, and he regained focus.
"Normally, I can enter a focused state in just a few seconds, but after seeing that news, it took me a full five minutes to settle down. This proves that external factors can still greatly affect my mentality. I wonder when I'll be able to train myself to remain unmoved by outside distractions, to do what needs to be done with unwavering determination."

Su Jie acknowledged his weakness.
"That guy still affects my state of mind."
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Chapter 37: Observing Chicken Fights Feels More Natural

Ever since Su Jie comprehended the realm of "heart and intent in harmony" in the wild, his martial arts had been improving at an astonishing rate every day. It was like a child going through a growth spurt with good nutrition and ample sleep, visibly getting taller by the day.

Now, Su Jie was intelligent, fully focused, using the most scientific training methods, and had excellent nutrition and medicine. He also received massages from a medical doctor specializing in sports recovery. On top of that, he had gained insight into the profound essence of boxing techniques. Under such conditions, his training progress in a single day was equivalent to several months for other students at the martial arts academy.

This was no exaggeration. Just in terms of training volume, Su Jie performed the "Hoe Strike" move at least tens of thousands of times each day.

Ordinary students could not do nearly as much. Even if they forced themselves to complete a third of his routine, they would be so sore that they wouldn't be able to move for days.

However, with proper massage, acupuncture, medicine, and electric stimulation, Su Jie not only eliminated muscle fatigue and restored his body to normal but also accelerated his growth, allowing him to increase his training volume day by day.

This intense training continued for seven more days.

It was now August 24th, with only eight days left until the new school year started on September 1st. Normally, Su Jie should have bought a ticket home to prepare for school, but he had no intention of leaving.

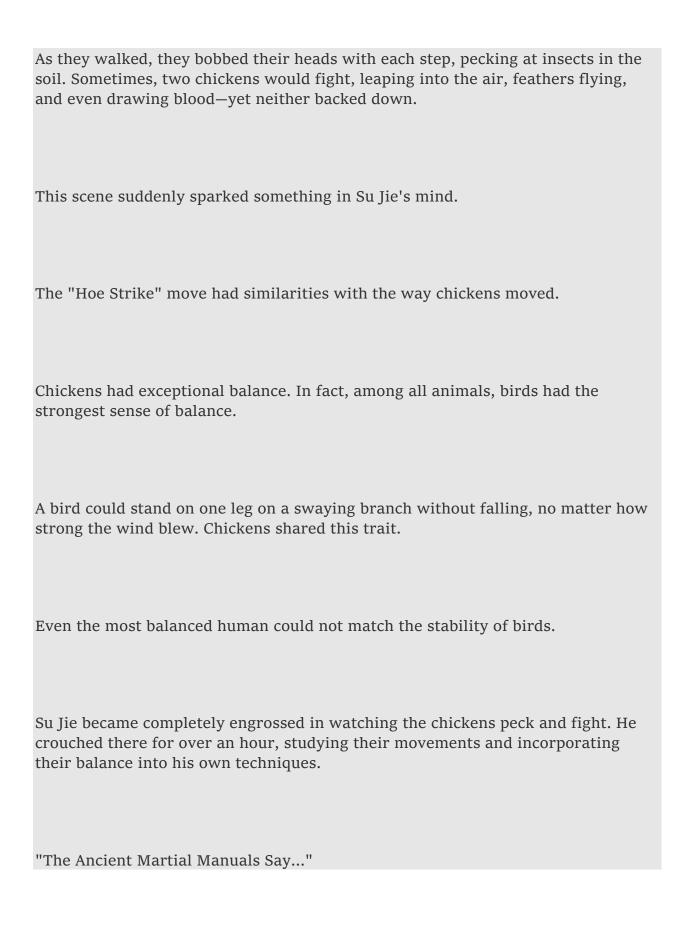
During these seven days, he devoted himself entirely to training, thinking of nothing else—solely focused on improving his physical and mental strength. Every day, after training, he would undergo Uncle Mang's grueling massages, acupuncture, and electric stimulation. He also applied the Nie family's specially formulated medicinal ointment.

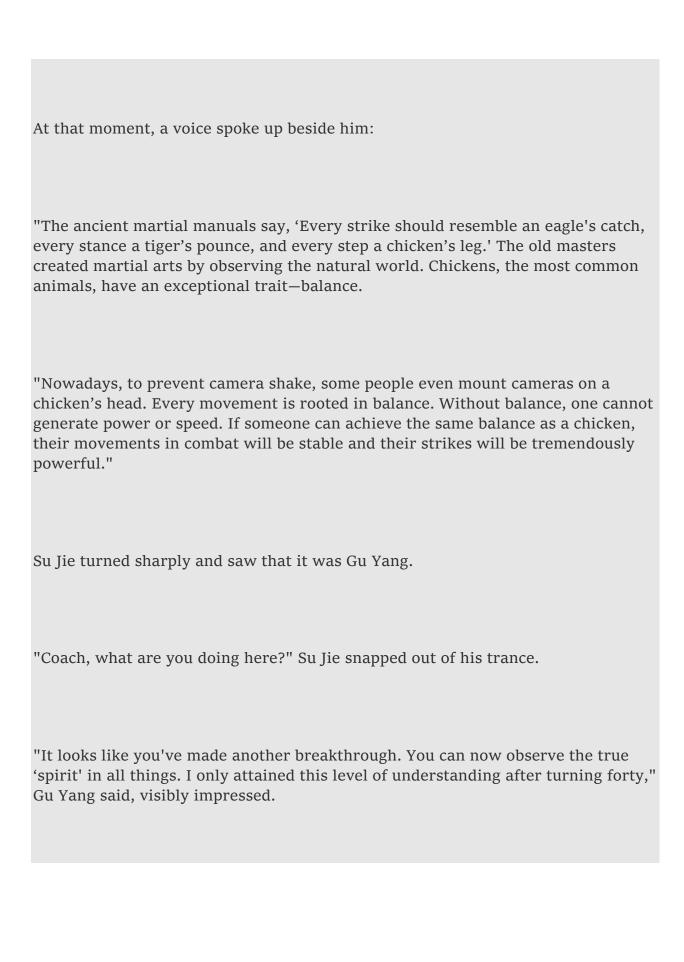
At his age, he was in a prime growth period. In the previous days, he had been growing rapidly, and if it had continued, he would have soon surpassed 1.9 meters in height. However, with the effects of the electric stimulation and medicinal absorption into his bones, his growth seemed to have halted. Instead, his body became denser and more solid.

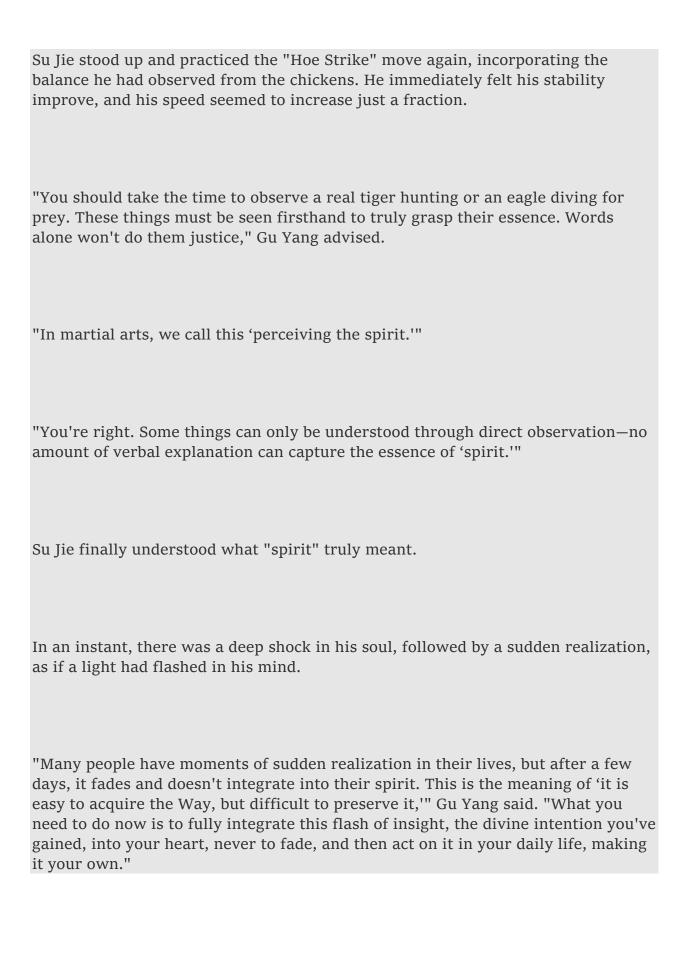
Before, his rapid growth had made him feel somewhat weak, but now that his height had stabilized, he could feel the hardness and resilience within his bones.

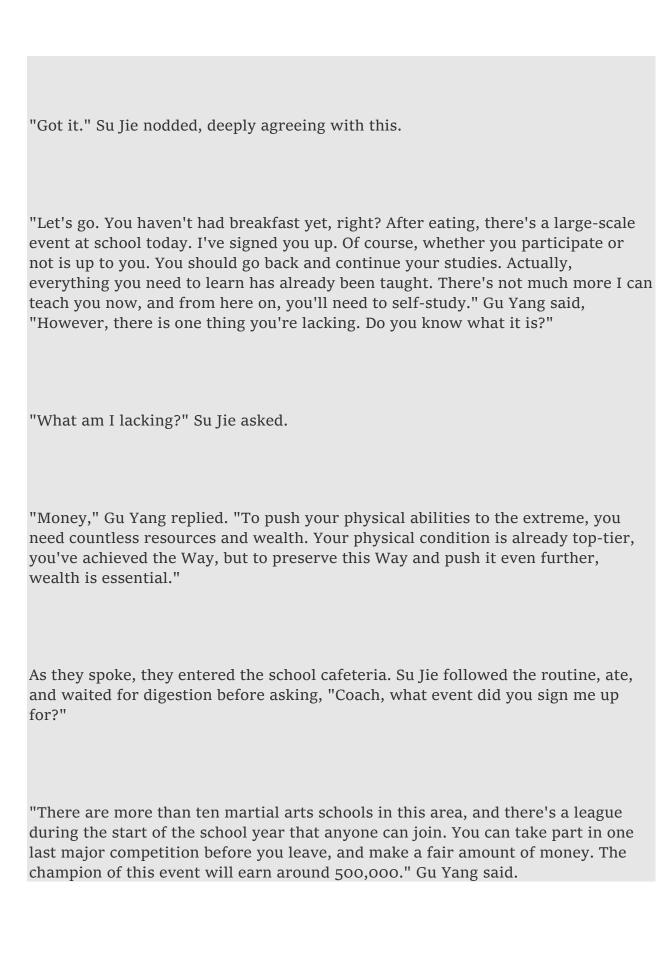
This was not just psychological—it was real. Tests showed that his bone density and toughness were exceptionally high, surpassing ordinary athletes and even some professional fighters.
Although Su Jie's physique remained the same as before, without significant muscle mass increase, he felt much stronger and more powerful. His body seemed as if it were forged from steel, and with every punch and kick, he felt capable of destroying anything in his path.
Beyond that, he found that he could now perform complex movements with ease—even flashy parkour-style flips and multiple mid-air rotations, despite never deliberately training them. He only had to visualize the moves in his mind, and his body could execute them effortlessly.
This was the result of his physical fitness reaching a peak and his mind and body achieving perfect coordination.
During these seven days, Su Jie had once again made a major breakthrough in his martial arts, stepping onto a whole new level.
He still participated in the queue for fights every day. Sometimes, he managed to get a spot, sometimes not, but whenever he did, he won at least ten matches in a row and made a decent amount of money.

This was also because, with the start of the school year approaching, the number of participants had increased.
By late August, the martial arts academy had fully resumed its curriculum. During the day, the training fields were packed, and every practice area was overcrowded. Even Josh and Su Jie's training had to come to a halt because the arenas were always occupied.
Since the day Josh was knocked down by Su Jie in a street match, he had been secretly training every day. No one knew exactly what he was practicing, but Su Jie rarely saw him anymore.
Su Jie guessed that Josh was holding back his frustration, preparing for a rematch.
The Morning of August 24th
Su Jie trained from 3 a.m. to 6 a.m. as usual before heading back to the academy for breakfast. On the way, he suddenly stopped.
He had spotted a group of chickens foraging in the wild.









"That much?" Su Jie was surprised.
"This league, involving ten martial arts schools and over a hundred local martial arts gyms, is sponsored by Haoyu Group, so the prize money is much higher than usual. You've probably earned quite a bit from smaller competitions recently, but it's still not enough." Gu Yang waved his hand. "With your current state, winning the championship shouldn't be a problem."
"I've earned 170,000 from these recent competitions," Su Jie said, clicking his tongue. He realized that with skill, one could make quite a bit of money.
"Afterward, we'll head to the sports hall for the preliminaries." Gu Yang patted Su Jie's shoulder. "I think practical combat is still quite important for you. You've already mastered the correct training methods, so even if you go back to studying, you can continue practicing. The only thing you're lacking is practical experience."
'Since it's Haoyu Group funding it, I might as well take the money. If I don't, I'd be wasting an opportunity,' Su Jie thought to himself.
When they arrived at the sports hall, it was already 8 AM, and despite the early hour, the place was crowded yet orderly, like a large-scale sports event. The school had many staff managing the venue, which was divided into multiple rings.

Su Jie quickly found his ring number on the registration machine, then sat on a chair outside the ring to wait.
This competition was free fighting, focusing on standing techniques, not mixed martial arts. Once a competitor fell, they would score points and could no longer pursue the fight.
The sports venue had more than thirty temporary rings, each with a referee. The competition was intensively prepared.
It would start at 9 AM and continue until evening, with a knockout system. There were three sports halls, meaning there were hundreds of people competing at any given time.
This fast-paced, high-efficiency competition was becoming very popular.
This area was the heart of martial arts in the country, with competitions as common as eating and drinking. Nearly all students were accustomed to the daily routine of competitions.
Of course, because of the frequency of competitions here, even ordinary students who fought a few times would become formidable figures.

Su Jie was assigned to ring 13.
There were more than ten chairs under the ring, all occupied by competitors.
Looking at his number plate, Su Jie sat in his assigned spot and saw a young man sitting next to him. The young man was fair and handsome, about the same age as Su Jie, with his eyes closed in rest.
Su Jie knew that, according to the rules, this young man was his opponent. He couldn't help but greet him.
"Hey, we're opponents later, right?" Su Jie smiled.
The young man opened his eyes, glanced at Su Jie, and then indifferent, closed them again, ignoring him completely, as if Su Jie wasn't even worth his words.
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Chapter 38: There's Always Someone

Chapter 38: There's Always Someone Stronger

"This guy is really arrogant."	
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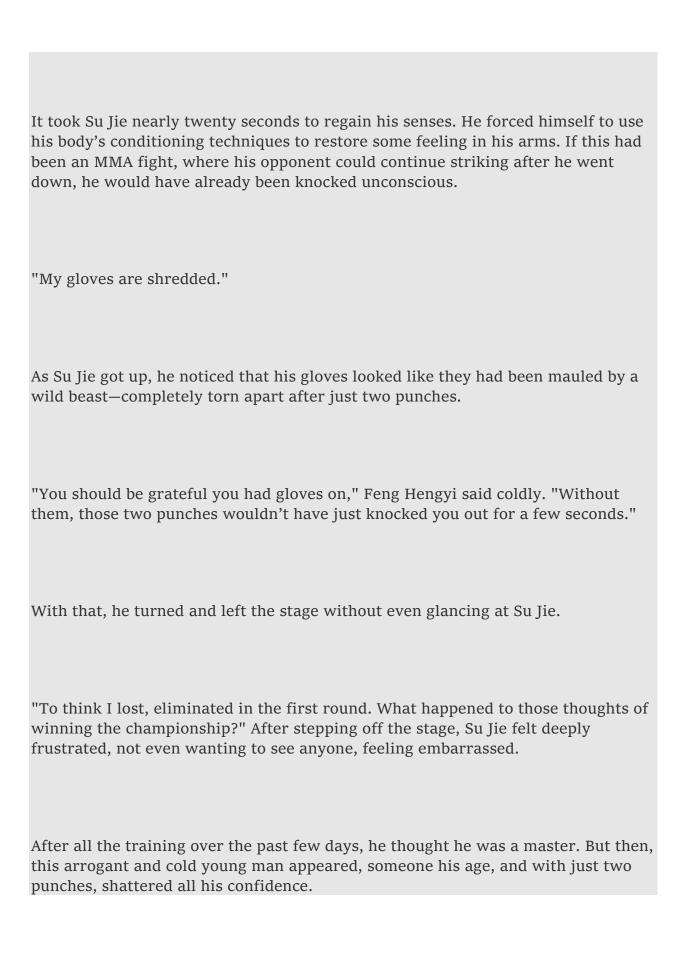
Su Jie noticed that the young man ignored his greeting. Feeling wary, he observed him carefully from the corner of his eye.
Since this young man was his opponent, Su Jie had to know his enemy well—only then could he be invincible.
After secretly observing for a while, Su Jie couldn't find anything particularly special about him. His physique was average, his breathing and demeanor showed no signs of a master, and he didn't exert any overwhelming presence. No matter how he looked at it, the young man seemed like an easy opponent.
"Never mind. The champion's prize money this time is 500,000. If I win, I can truly achieve financial independence and free up a lot of time to do what I want." Su Jie cleared his mind and adjusted his state.
"Su Jie, Feng Hengyi! Get up here!"
The referee on the stage called out their names, and both Su Jie and the young mar immediately stood up.
The previous match had just ended, and it was now their turn. The competition was tightly scheduled, just like dumplings being dropped into boiling water one after another.

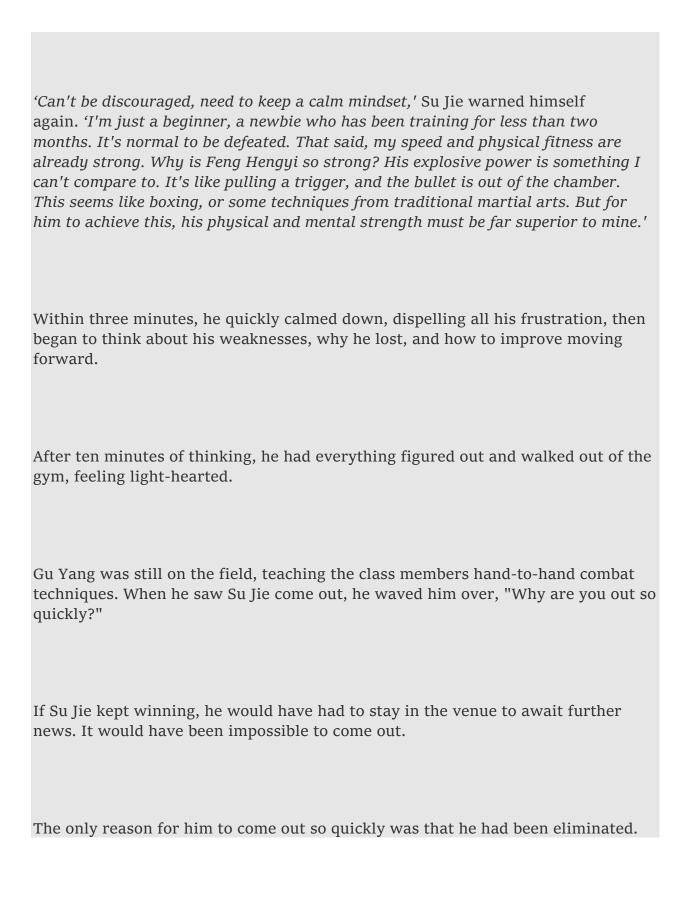
Su Jie put on his gloves and stood in position, waiting for the referee's signal to begin the fight.
His opponent, the young man, also put on his gloves but then closed his eyes, placing one hand behind his back as if he were lost in his own world, completely disregarding Su Jie.
If his earlier indifference was just cold aloofness, this was outright contempt and humiliation.
Su Jie's eyes narrowed. In that instant, he suddenly felt a sharp sense of danger from Feng Hengyi. This person was truly confident—there seemed to be something terrifying hidden within him, ready to erupt at any moment, with the power to destroy him.
Even though Feng Hengyi had his eyes closed, Su Jie felt as if he were being watched by a ferocious beast, sending shivers down his spine.
'I'm no match for Feng Hengyi.'
A thought suddenly surfaced in Su Jie's mind, one he couldn't suppress no matter how hard he tried.
The referee glanced at Feng Hengyi's posture but said nothing—he had seen all sorts of unusual fighting styles in the ring, even students using drunken boxing.

"Begin!"
At the referee's signal, Su Jie began moving. His steps were as light as a chicken walking, exceptionally balanced and stable. As he moved in a circling pattern, he gave off the impression of a bird perched on a branch—ready to take flight at the slightest disturbance.
In other words, his movements made it nearly impossible for his opponent to land a hit.
He had mastered the alertness of a chicken—always ready to flutter away at the slightest sign of trouble.
"One."
As Su Jie circled, searching for an opening, Feng Hengyi remained still, merely uttering a single number.
"Two."
"Three!"

On the third count, Feng Hengyi moved.
In a flash, he lunged forward, and his fist was already inches from Su Jie's face.
"So fast!"
Even though Su Jie was being extremely cautious, he hadn't anticipated Feng Hengyi's explosive power. In that instant, Feng Hengyi didn't seem human—he had transformed into a human-shaped beast, his energy and spirit condensed into a single blade.
No, it was more like a bullet.
For a split second, Su Jie felt as if Feng Hengyi's punch had ignited like a gunpowder barrel, expanding rapidly before his fist shot forward like a bullet.
The speed and explosive force of that punch far exceeded Su Jie's limits.
Bang!

Su Jie raised both arms to shield his face, and even with the gloves cushioning the impact, the sheer force sent him airborne. His feet left the ground as he completely lost balance.
Before he could recover, Feng Hengyi's second punch arrived. The first had been a jab; this one was a cross—heavier and more powerful.
Already off balance, Su Jie had no way to withstand it. However, he instinctively maintained a defensive stance known as "Tiger Covers Head"—like a tiger emerging from its cave, keeping its head protected to avoid a sneak attack.
Boom!
The arena trembled as Su Jie crashed to the ground. Even with his arms shielding him, the punch had knocked him down hard. His blood surged chaotically, and his arms felt numb, as if he had been hit by a car.
"Stop!"
The referee immediately stepped in and asked, "Can you get up? Counting down ten, nine five, four, three, two, one. Feng Hengyi wins!"





"I got eliminated in the first round," Su Jie said honestly. "It really is true that there's always someone better. Two punches and I was on the ground, my gloves were even shattered."
"Shattered gloves?" Gu Yang was initially skeptical, but when he saw the gloves Su Jie brought out, he couldn't help but fall into thought. "This power is extraordinary. Come, let's go see your opponent."
Leaving the class members to continue practicing their techniques, Gu Yang took Su Jie back into the gym, just in time to see Feng Hengyi in the second round of the competition.
Whoosh!
The two merely touched, and Feng Hengyi's opponent collapsed onto the ground, clutching his stomach and convulsing in pain, and even the referee didn't notice what had happened.
However, Su Jie barely saw it clearly. Feng Hengyi had landed a clever hook to the abdomen, a technique from boxing. It was elegant and fast, almost like a bullet leaving the chamber.

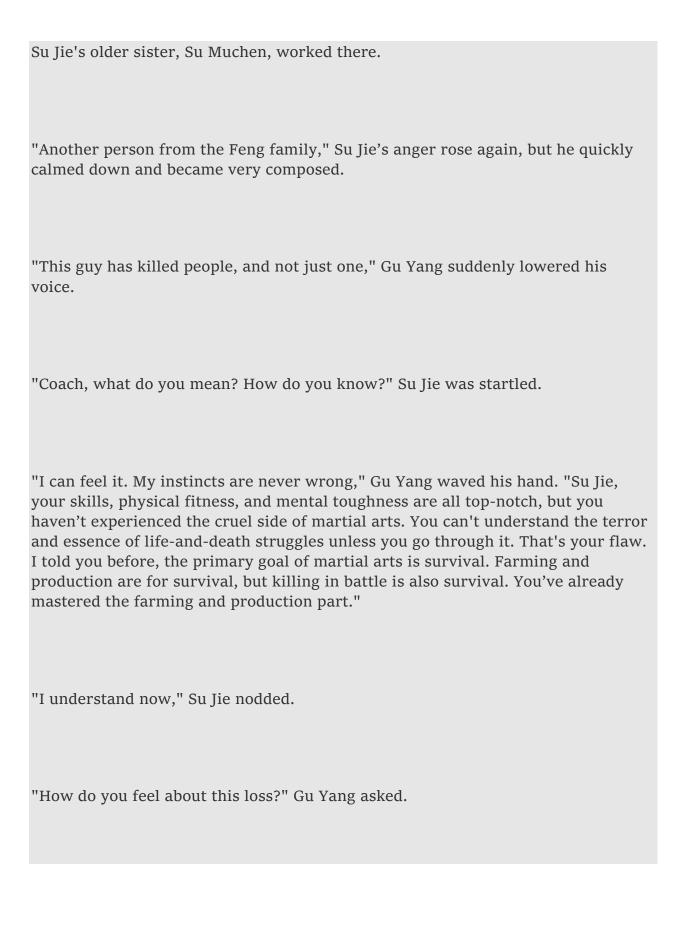
Of course, no human speed can match that of a bullet. But the essence of a punch, as fast as a bullet's exit, could be learned from such a moment.

"Impressive. The heart is like gunpowder, the punch like a bullet, quick-witted and deadly," Gu Yang said. "Let's go. You didn't lose unfairly. So it was him. If I'm not mistaken, he's from the Typhon Training Camp."

"Typhon Training Camp?" Su Jie was surprised. "I've heard of Typhon. It's a giant from Greek mythology with a hundred heads, called the king of all beasts."

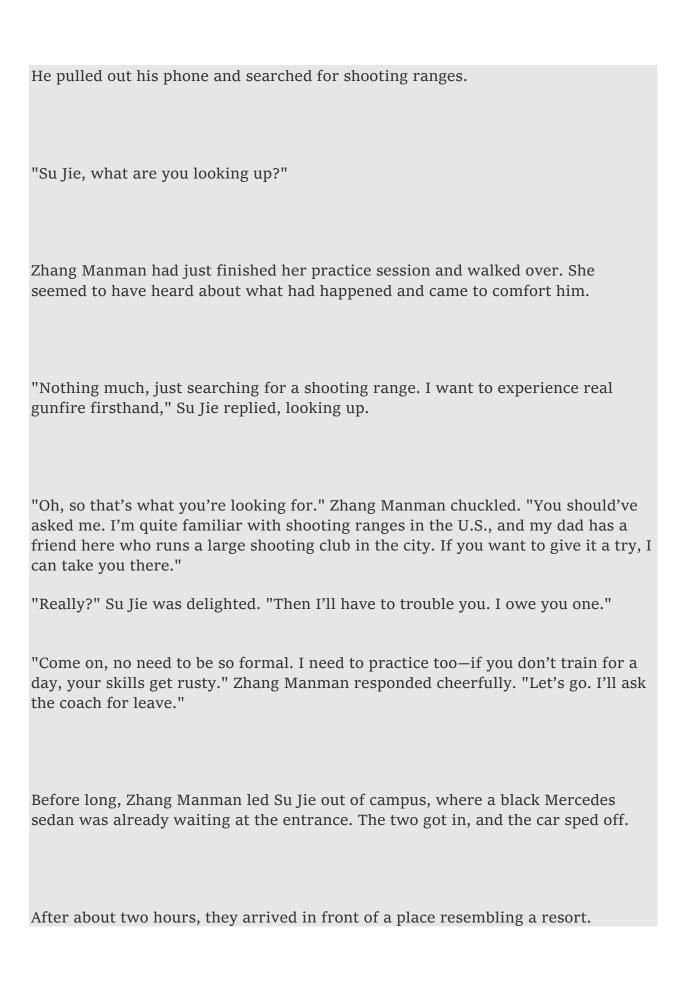
"In this world, there are several secret training camps dedicated to researching the limits of the human body. The US has long had its so-called 'Superman' program. The Typhon Training Camp is the most famous one. They use big data, AI, and all sorts of high-tech methods, collecting all the martial arts data and analyzing it through scientific systems to train practitioners. They have the most advanced training methods, the best supplements, and countless clinical trial data, offering the most effective ways to train the body and mind. This is something our Minglun Martial Arts Academy could never match. But the Typhon camp is a secret base, not open to the public. No one knows where it is. You could think of it like America's Area 51," Gu Yang shook his head. "This Feng Hengyi must be from the Feng family. I don't know why he's here to stir up trouble. Our league is sponsored by Haoyu Group, and it's not like there's a lot of money involved. The Feng family is so petty that they want to take it back?"

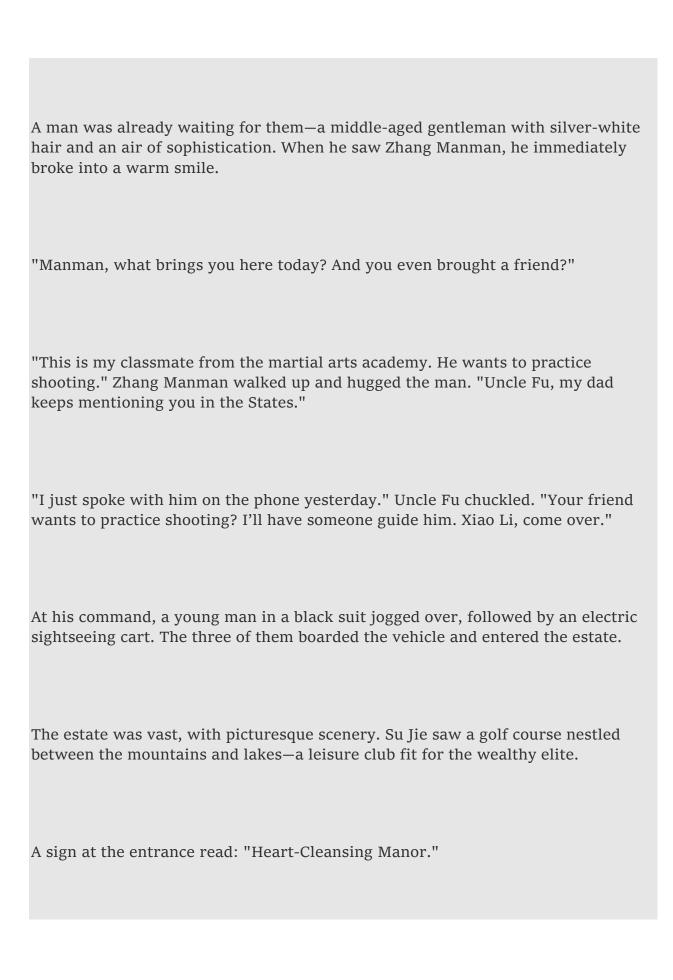
The founder of Haoyu Group was Feng Shoucheng, who had turned a small business into a massive multinational enterprise. He had several sons and daughters.



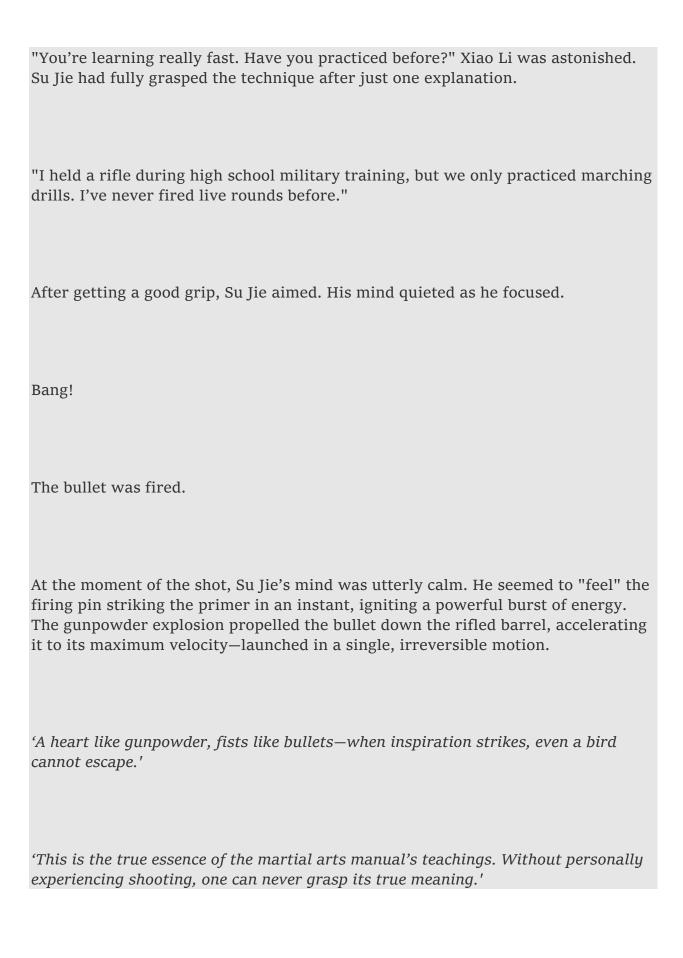
"Actually, it's normal. There's no fighting without losses. I'm just a beginner who's been training for two months. I just need to keep my mindset calm and learn from my mistakes," Su Jie shook his head. "The road in life is long, and I'm still at the starting line. I just need to focus on every detail."
"If you have the chance, you could also go to the Typhon Training Camp and see it for yourself," Gu Yang said.
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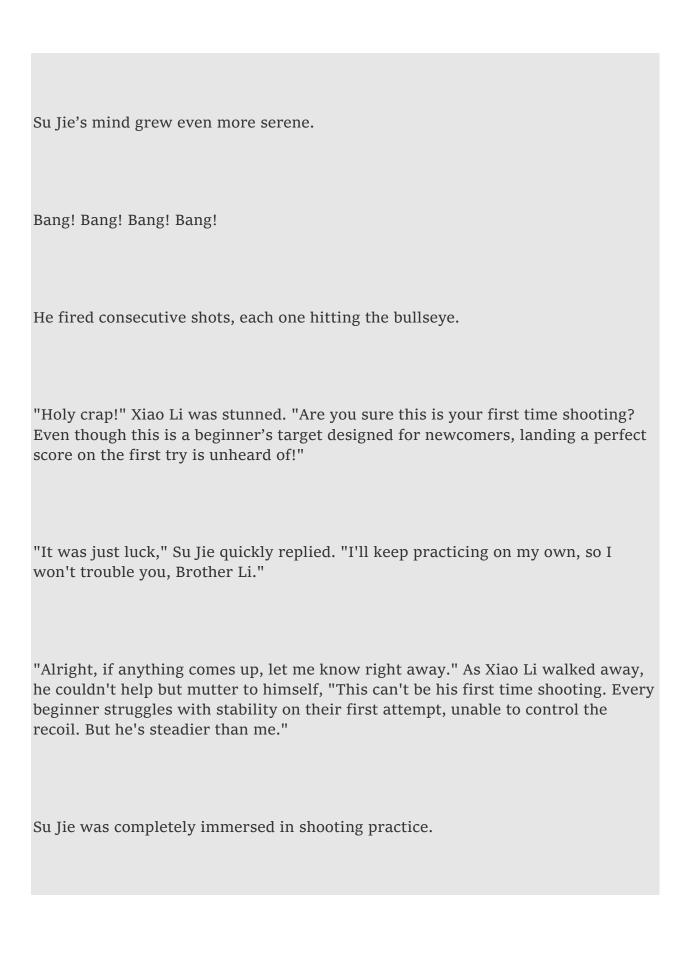
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Chapter 39: Shooting Practice A Glimpse of Mastery
'I have no idea how to get into the Typhon Training Camp. I'd love to see what kind of training they offer to produce experts like Feng Hengyi.'
Su Jie kept pondering this thought. Even if he prepared in advance, he was certain he wouldn't be a match for Feng Hengyi. Whether it was physical fitness, mental fortitude, or technical skills, his opponent surpassed him in every way.
However, the most crucial aspect was the explosive power in Feng Hengyi's punches—they struck like bullets.
Su Jie attempted to mimic that force, but no matter what he tried, he couldn't capture its essence.





Bang! Bang! Bang!
Gunshots echoed from a massive hall. As they entered, they saw many people wearing noise-canceling earmuffs, firing at targets. The deafening shots sent chills down one's spine, yet also ignited an exhilarating rush.
"This must be your first time shooting, right?" Uncle Fu asked.
"Nice to meet you, Uncle Fu. I'm Su Jie," he introduced himself. "Yes, this is my first time."
"Xiao Li, teach him," Uncle Fu instructed. "Manman, let's find a place to catch up."
"Alright." Zhang Manman raised an eyebrow. "Su Jie, have fun on your own."
"Got it."
Su Jie walked up to a shooting stall as Xiao Li approached, picking up a handgun and fluently explaining how to load and grip it.





For him, practicing shooting wasn't just about improving accuracy—it was about understanding its essence.
The gunpowder ignited, propelling the bullet in a spiraling trajectory out of the barrel.
This instantaneous change and explosive force had many similarities to martial arts.
Martial arts were about continuously learning from everything, integrating their essence into one's practice.
Gradually, Su Jie felt as if he himself had become a gun. With the slightest movement, his heart ignited, and his fists followed. This wasn't about exerting force or perfecting posture; it was purely about the connection between mind and intent.
After half an hour of live-fire practice, Su Jie set down the gun, having fully grasped its rhythm and essence.
He called out to Xiao Li and asked if there were any sandbags available.

"Sandbags? You mean a place for combat training and fitness? Yes, we have one. I'll take you there." Xiao Li wasn't sure what Su Jie intended to do, but he knew Su Jie was an important guest and had to be served with utmost care.
Soon, he led Su Jie to another facility filled with various fitness equipment. Severa people were training, with instructors guiding them.
To Su Jie's surprise, this place also offered modern combat disciplines like boxing, judo, taekwondo, karate, aikido, and Muay Thai. However, there was no sign of traditional martial arts, such as the ever-popular Tai Chi.
"This is a resort, primarily focused on relaxation, entertainment, and wellness," Xiao Li explained. "If you want to work on fitness, muscle-building, or body sculpting, we have top-tier bodybuilding coaches. If you want to learn other disciplines, we have professional instructors for one-on-one training. We also offer specialized massage therapists and nutritionists. Here's the information."
As he spoke, Xiao Li gestured for a nearby attendant, who quickly brought over an exquisitely crafted card.
Surprisingly, the card was made of metal, listing various available services, all offered around the clock.
"Having money is really something"

Su Jie sighed inwardly as he examined the card. He could tell that the resort's services were indeed top-notch. Many of the instructors were highly skilled, and the one-on-one coaching was a huge advantage.

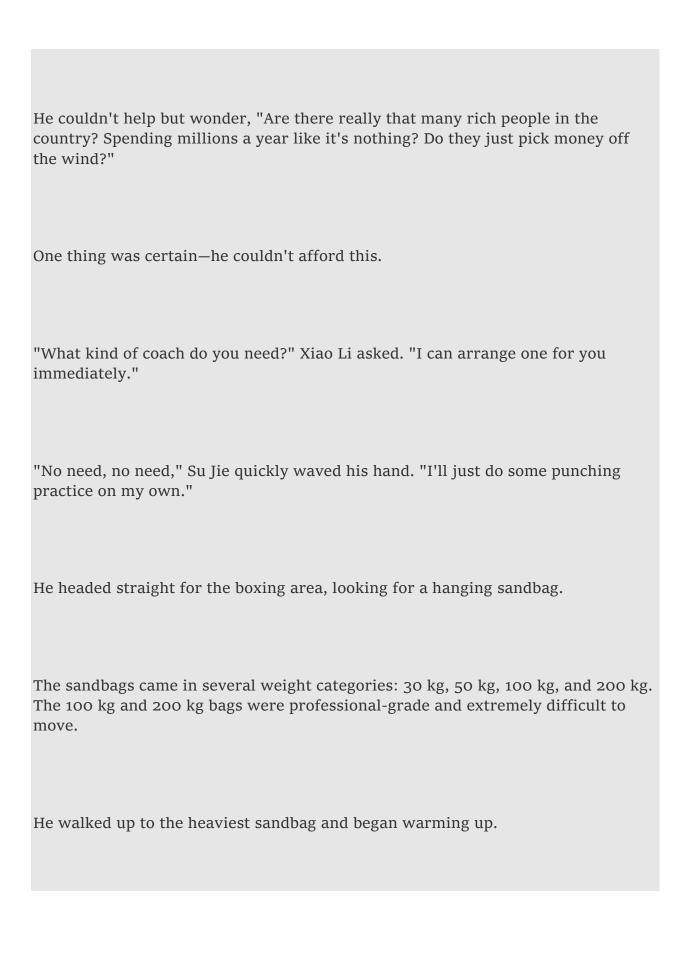
It was nothing like Minglun Martial Arts Academy. Although Coach Gu Yang was excellent, he had to train dozens of students at once, making it impossible to give everyone individual attention. Only Odell had ever provided Su Jie with true one-on-one instruction.

Additionally, students at Minglun Martial Arts Academy had to do their own laundry, line up at the cafeteria, and handle chores like cleaning. But here, the service staff acted like personal attendants, taking care of everything in the most comfortable and considerate way.

For instance, a wealthy person coming here for a retreat and wellness training wouldn't have to worry about anything—just daily exercise and relaxation.

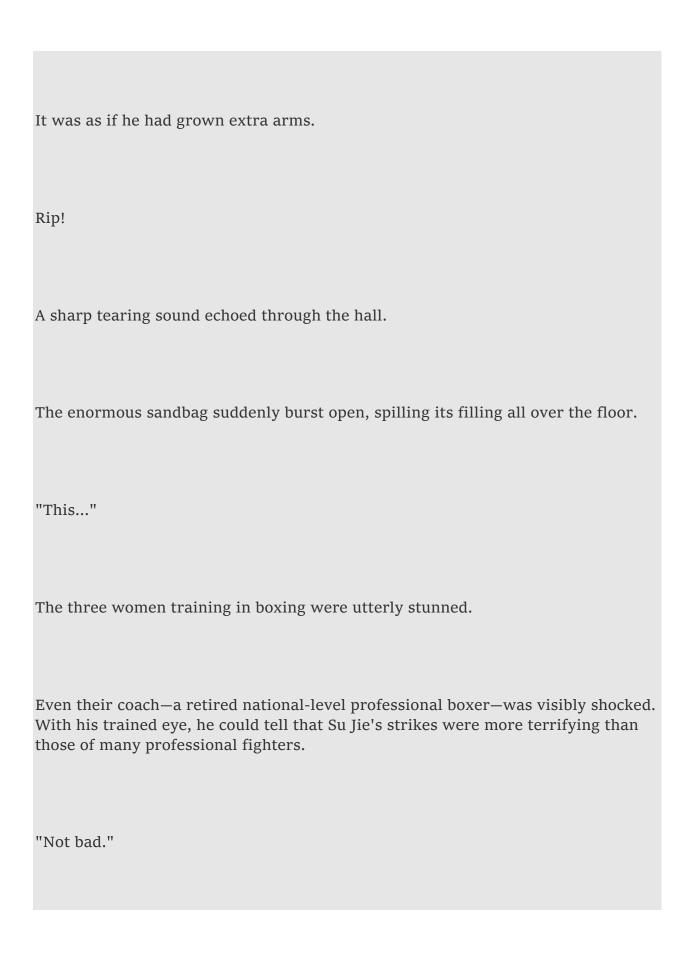
Of course, the cost was extremely high. First, entry required an annual membership, with a base fee of over a million. On top of that, there were numerous additional charges. Spending a few million a year here was completely normal.

Yet, when Su Jie looked around, he noticed that the place was packed.



There were several people training in the boxing area. Strangely, they were all women, dressed in form-fitting athletic wear that accentuated their curves.
Generally speaking, boxing was considered a man's sport—brutal and intense. Women usually preferred slower-paced aerobic exercises like yoga or dance. However, recently, women's boxing had been gaining popularity.
Su Jie had seen news reports about female celebrities training in boxing daily, which had sparked a trend among elite women in society.
For women, boxing had two main benefits. First, it helped with body sculpting and maintaining an ideal physique. Second, it provided a means of self-defense. Su Jie found it to be a great choice.
Although professional boxing matches were harsh, women learning the sport weren't training for competition. They were simply practicing for fitness and vitality.
"That sandbag is for professional training. Most people can barely make it budge. Does he really think he can punch it?" one of the women boxing trainees paused to watch.
"Maybe he's just trying to show off. Ignore him, let's keep training."

Boom!
At that moment, Su Jie finished his warm-up. In a split second, he imagined an explosion igniting deep within his heart, propelling his entire body forward.
Instead of using his fists, he executed a move called "Hoe Strike."
With an upward thrust and a downward chop, he struck like a tiger pouncing from a mountain.
With a single hit, the massive sandbag—normally difficult for an average person to even shake—began to sway.
But Su Jie didn't stop there. He sidestepped, shifted his weight, and launched another strike in rapid succession.
Boom! Boom! Boom!
Dozens of consecutive "Hoe Strikes" followed, pushing his speed and power to their peak. His movements embodied the sensation of a bullet leaving a gun barrel, the rhythm of gunpowder igniting.



Su Jie, however, paid no attention to the onlookers. He had just realized that his explosive power and striking technique had advanced significantly, as if he had taken a major step forward.
And it was all thanks to being "instantly defeated" by Feng Hengyi's two punches. That experience had given him invaluable insights and had "awakened" something deep within him—something he hadn't even realized was growing arrogant.
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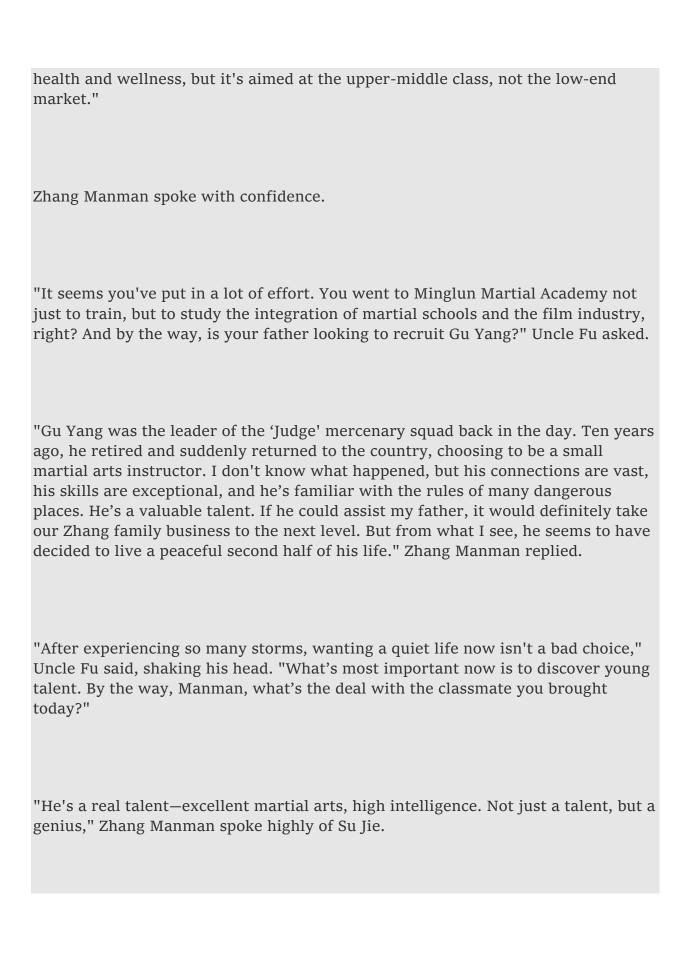
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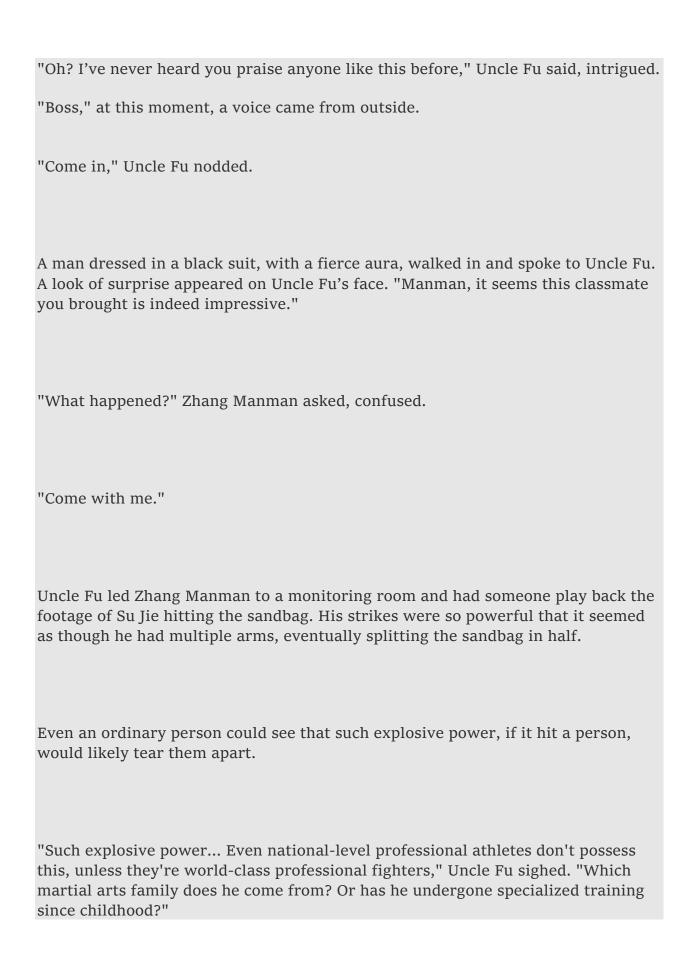
Chapter 40: The Story Behind Heart-Cleansing Manor and Gu Yang

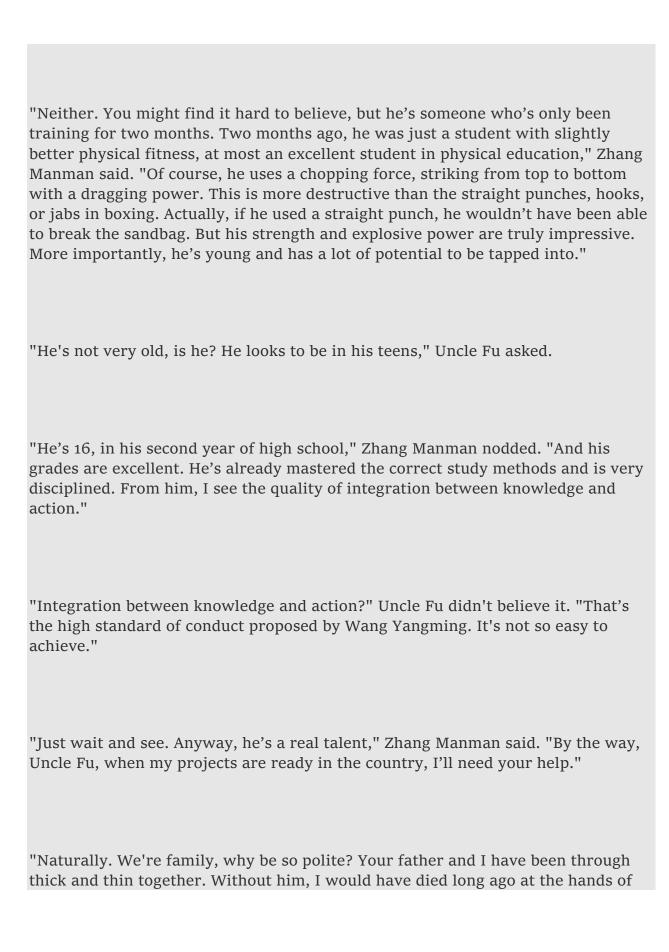
"Manman, this trip back to the country isn't just about learning martial arts, is it?"

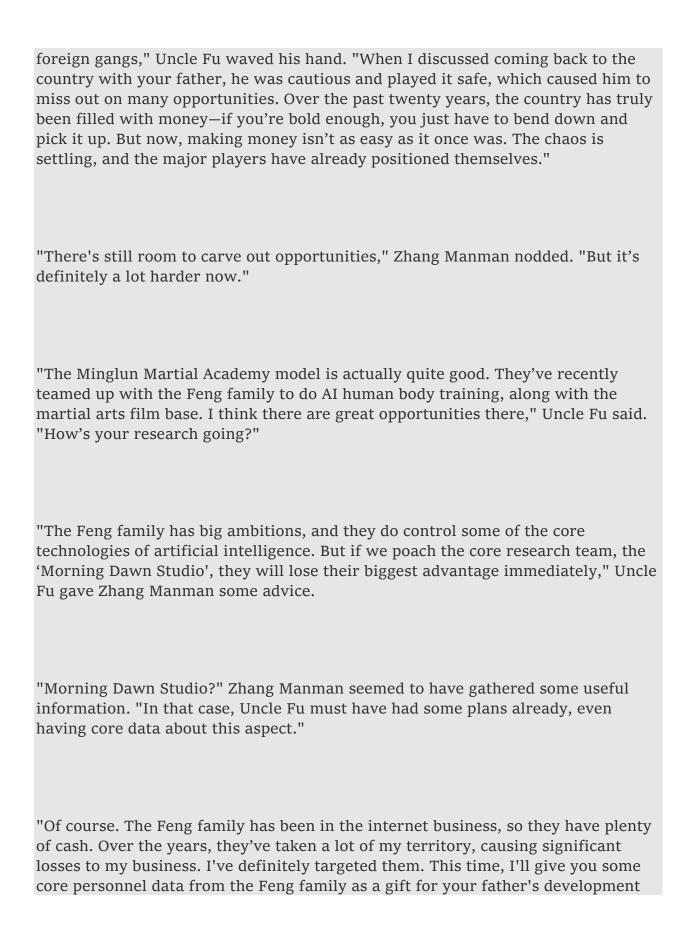
In a quiet tea room within the manor, the middle-aged man with silver hair, Uncle Fu, said to Zhang Manman while sipping on fragrant tea. "Your father wants to return to the country and develop here; after all, home is where the heart is. He's mentioned it to me many times. But now he doesn't know what industry to focus on. Our line of work in real estate is already a sunset industry, and there doesn't seem to be any good direction for transformation."

"Real estate really isn't working anymore. Ten or twenty years ago, it was golden everywhere, but now the trends are in online games, film and television culture, artificial intelligence, video streaming, and blockchain technology. I've been back for quite a while, and I've been investigating and researching. I've found that the only promising industries in the future are two categories: high technology and cultural entertainment. Beyond that, health and wellness is still a viable option, like what Uncle Fu is doing now. It's essentially entertainment combined with

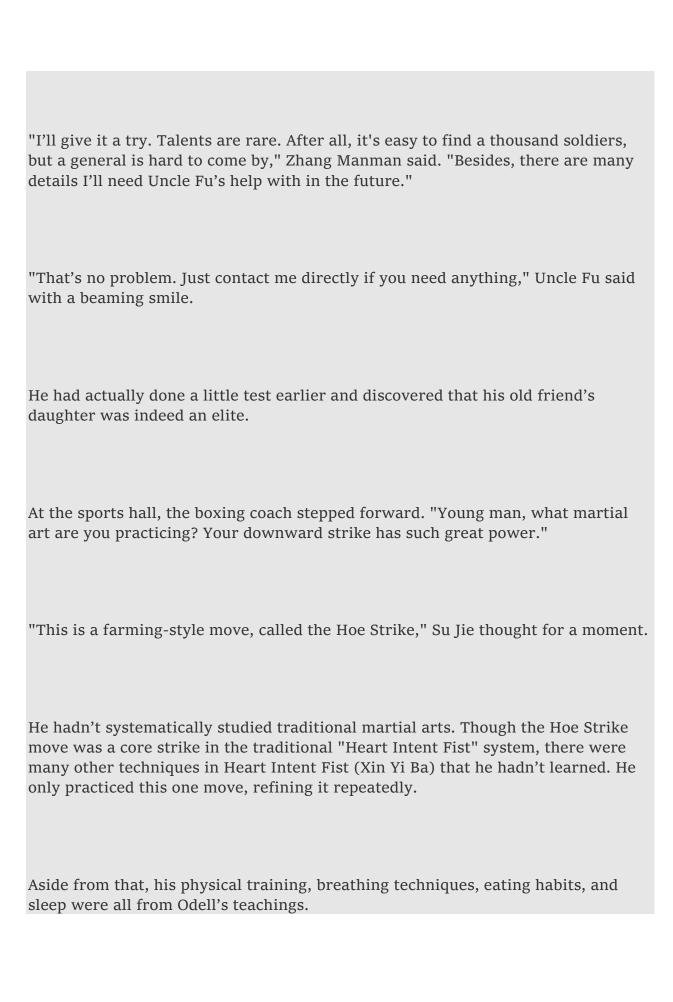




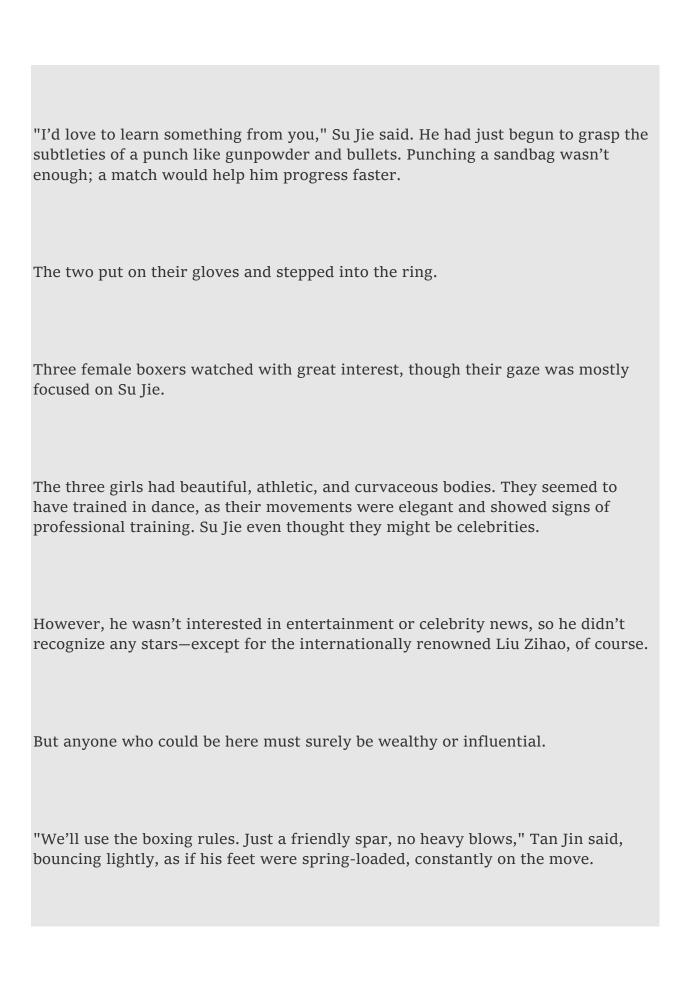




back home. How does that sound?" Uncle Fu clapped his hands, and someone quickly brought over a stack of paper documents.
"Don't blame Uncle Fu for being cautious. Take a look at it, memorize it, and then I'll take it back and burn it. We won't need to transmit it over the network," Uncle Fu said, staring at Zhang Manman.
Zhang Manman flipped through the documents, carefully inspecting each page. She took a full hour to finish before suddenly closing the file and returning it to Uncle Fu.
"It looks like you've really received some special training, like an intelligence agent. You memorized all the data in just an hour," Uncle Fu remarked. "It seems your father was right to send you back to collect business information."
"Uncle Fu is too kind. This matter isn't as simple as it looks." Zhang Manman seemed to have engraved the data into her mind. "But right now, I'm alone and can't do everything on my own. I need to recruit people, find reliable hands, and form a team."
"So, you're interested in Su Jie? And Gu Yang?" Uncle Fu frowned. "Su Jie is fine; after all, he's just a young man and can be swayed. But Gu Yang is a man of great experience, someone who has already seen it all. What makes you think you can move him? Though, if you can, he's not only a top-tier expert but also the best manager. Years ago, when he became the leader of the Judgment mercenaries, he turned the team from a third-rate group into an elite one. However, he later withdrew from the world due to some disillusionment."



Additionally, Gu Yang had taught him a few unarmed combat moves, and he had nearly a hundred matches' worth of experience from the ring. Of course, he also trained in modern combat techniques like wrestling, boxing, Muay Thai, and kickboxing. He combined all these martial arts into this single move, the "Hoe Strike." With just a small adjustment, there were countless variations, but at the core, it remained unchanged—a hoe. It was this purity that gave it such immense power. "Impressive," the boxing coach said. "Young man, how about we have a match?" "What's your name, teacher?" Su Jie asked politely, knowing that the coaches here were formidable figures. Boxing had many advantages, especially its practicality in real combat. The moves were simple, but simplicity made it easy to learn yet hard to master. Boxing only had straight punches, hooks, and jabs, without using legs. It was strong in both combat competitions and street fights, but the moves were considered ungraceful, with no aesthetic appeal, which is why it hadn't been widely accepted. "Tan Jin," the boxing coach replied. Though he was in his early thirties, in the world of combat sports, especially in fighting disciplines, he could be considered an experienced veteran.



Su Jie simply stood still, his eyes locked on Tan Jin's.
The eyes are the window to the soul. Many thoughts are revealed through the eyes—fear, pleading, murderous intent, hatred, and more. A sensitive person can read others' intentions just by looking into their eyes.
Suddenly, Tan Jin's eyes widened, as if a fierce tiger was about to pounce. In the next instant, his eyes sharpened like an eagle staring down its prey from the sky.
Su Jie noticed the shift in Tan Jin's gaze and casually glanced at his ribs, where the next attack would likely target—a hook aimed at his side.
In less than a second, just from three changes in Tan Jin's gaze, Su Jie had gathered this much information.
Whoosh!
Tan Jin made the first move.
His body swayed like a snake, moving from side to side. This was a typical boxing move, designed to find an opening in the enemy's defense while avoiding being locked onto. At the same time, it allowed him to adjust his optimal point of force and striking position.

In the midst of this, Su Jie felt as if Tan Jin were a raging bear, charging forward, swinging his shoulders, his movements filled with immense power.
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