

The Beauty 1131

Chapter 1131 He Is Ling Gengqiu

"Ling Cheng."

Seeing Qiu Yong and others walking side by side, Ling Chen quickly stepped forward and asked, "Is everyone uninjured?"

Yuan Yun smiled, "What could happen to us? The main force in the battle just now was Agula's people; we were just the backdrop. However, Agula is quite honest, actually sending over half of his forces."

"Compared to sending troops to help me, the benefits I've brought him are greater," Ling Chen said. "He now has enough manpower and weapons; defeating the rebels is only a matter of time. Soon, he'll be able to re-enter the President's Mansion and establish a new regime."

When he initially decided to help Agula, Ling Chen had considered it comprehensively. Agula's identity was evident: the leader of a nation. Building a good relationship with him was undoubtedly a worthy investment, and there might be times in the future we'd need his help.

"Brother, you all must be tired too. Go rest first, and I'll come find you once I finish handling things here. Porridge girl, please arrange accommodation for my brother and the others. By the way!" While speaking, Ling Chen looked around and asked, "Has anyone seen Kai?"

Wei Jiahao chimed in, "Sixth brother, are you talking about Kai? I saw him over there just now."

Ling Chen nodded, "Alright, I got it." With that, Ling Chen quickly walked in the direction Wei Jiahao pointed.

Before long, he saw Jiang Yunkai with a dozen or so subordinates pacing around the base, pointing and discussing something. Clearly, Jiang Yunkai was extremely excited.

"Kai, what are you doing here?" Ling Chen called out.

Seeing Ling Chen approach, Jiang Yunkai excitedly waved his hand and shouted, "Chen, come here quickly, I have something to discuss with you."

Once closer, Ling Chen curiously asked, "I say, Kai, what's making you so excited?"

"Chen, I just thought of a great plan. We can build a training camp here. Look, this is a desert, no jurisdiction, unlike back home where there are so many restrictions. Moreover, there are many organizations in this desert, and we can totally use them for practice. This way, our people can quickly gain actual combat experience. How do you feel about my suggestion?"

Hearing Jiang Yunkai's words, Ling Chen was indeed tempted. This desert truly was a good place. Building a training camp here, syncing training with real combat, was undoubtedly the fastest way to cultivate talent. Moreover, the organizations in this desert were not good people, some even being terrorist organizations wanted by various countries.

However, Ling Chen was still a bit worried. After all, this place had no weapon restrictions. While it was a good place for training talent, it was also full of danger.

Seeing Ling Chen's hesitation, Jiang Yunkai said, "Chen, aren't you on good terms with Agula? We can discuss with him and seek his support. With the protection of government forces, who would dare move against us, do you think?"

Ling Chen thought about it and nodded, "That's true. Alright, I'll discuss it with Agula later."

"That's great." Jiang Yunkai looked very pleased. He knew that Ling Chen's words indicated he had agreed.

After staying at the base for two days, Ling Tao finally arrived in the desert by helicopter.

Having not seen him for a long time, Ling Tao still looked the same, seemingly very young, like someone in his twenties. However, from the porridge girl, Ling Chen learned that despite Ling Tao's young appearance, his actual age was probably much older than Ling Kun. This was something Ling Chen found unbelievable, not knowing how Ling Tao managed it.

Ling Tao first inspected the laboratory and only relaxed after learning that the Clones were not an issue.

"Alright, you all leave. I want to chat with Ling Chen alone."

Upon Ling Tao's words, the porridge girl immediately led others out of the lab. Ling Chen felt a bit excited; he knew that after waiting so long, Ling Tao was finally about to lay it all out for him.

After everyone left, Ling Tao walked to a culture vessel on his own, looking at the young man lying inside, not speaking for a long time, appearing very calm. After a few minutes, Ling Tao pointed at the young man in the culture vessel and asked, "Do you know who this person is?"

Ling Chen blinked. Isn't this nonsense? If he knew who this person was, why would he ask you?

Ling Tao didn't seem to expect Ling Chen to guess and said to himself, "Hundreds of years ago, his name was very famous, even you should have heard of him. Not only that, the martial arts you are practicing now were also created by him."

Hearing this, Ling Chen was immediately dumbfounded, his mind a blank. After a while, Ling Chen gradually regained consciousness, saying in an incredulous tone, "You wouldn't be telling me his name is Ling Gengqiu, would you?"

Ling Tao glanced at Ling Chen, smiled slightly, and asked, "What, do you find it unbelievable? Indeed, for an ordinary person, this news would be shocking. But, what I want to tell you is, he is indeed Ling Gengqiu. To be precise, he is the clone of Ling Gengqiu."

Ling Chen listened carefully to Ling Tao, his mind racing to keep up with the pace.

"So, the severed arm stored in the freezer is from Ling Gengqiu's original body? But... how is that possible? Ling Gengqiu has been dead for hundreds of years, his body long turned to a pile of bones. How could it have been preserved so well?"

"Ling Chen, you must remember, in this world, there's nothing absolutely impossible. Perhaps others couldn't do it, but our ancestors could. Now you should understand why I didn't want to tell you the

truth too early. This matter, for you, is still hard to accept. Even your father needed several days to come to terms when he discovered the truth. Do you still want to continue listening?"

Ling Chen nodded without hesitation. When capturing Lin Guodong, the latter repeatedly reminded him that the Ling Family's internal struggles all stemmed from Ling Gengqiu. At the time, he couldn't understand why a man dead for hundreds of years could influence grudges among later generations. Now was undoubtedly the best time to uncover this secret. If missed, who knows when he would get the chance to learn the truth.

"Alright, since you insist on understanding, I'll tell you the whole story. But you must remember, this is a secret of the Ling Family and must never be revealed to outsiders. Otherwise, the repercussions would be unimaginable."

"Don't worry, I have a tight mouth and won't blab."

"Come with me, let's find a place to sit. This matter is not something that can be explained in a few words."

Chapter 1132 - 1139: Survive

Heart of the desert.

Zhu Hong and another man trudged forward, their footsteps heavy. They had stripped down to almost nothing, as the desert's high temperatures were unbearable for anyone without cooling systems after prolonged exposure.

On that day, to evade capture, Zhu Hong and another man charged with protecting him drove a jeep recklessly all over the place. Fortunately, they succeeded in shaking off their pursuers. Unfortunately, they got lost.

Losing direction in the desert is undoubtedly a fatal mistake.

That jeep had no GPS, no compass, and certainly no food, only two bottles of water. Half a day into the desert, the jeep ran out of fuel. With no other options, Zhu Hong and his companion had to use their legs in an attempt to walk out of the desert.

The first day they could barely hold on, but by the second day, Zhu Hong was truly at his limit. The water they brought was long gone, and in desperation, they resorted to drinking their own urine. To survive, Zhu Hong had to endure such nauseating actions. In the bottle, there remained only half of their urine, their last source of hydration.

With not enough to drink, even urine was scarce.

"Let's take a break." the man next to him spoke. Walking for most of the day, under the scorching sun, thirst and hunger set in; even a body made of iron wouldn't withstand it.

Zhu Hong remained silent, quietly sitting down on the sand. His throat parched, he took out the water bottle, staring at the little remaining liquid while the eyes of both men remained fixed on it.

They knew the water was only enough for one of them. But who should drink it?

Zhu Hong's status was undoubtedly higher than the other man's; after all, he was Ling Beichuan's representative and logically, should be the most deserving of the water. Yet, Zhu Hong thought differently. The man beside him was sent by Ling Beichuan, specifically to ensure his safety.

More importantly, this man was highly skilled, capable of killing him with ease. This is what worried Zhu Hong the most, something he tried his best to avoid.

After a brief mental struggle, Zhu Hong finally made a decision. He unscrewed the bottle cap, avoiding the increasingly cold gaze of his companion.

"Here, you drink. I can still hold on."

Seeing Zhu Hong offer the bottle to him, the man was slightly startled. Clearly, Zhu Hong's action was unexpected; he thought Zhu Hong would drink the last bit of water himself but was surprised by Zhu Hong's gesture.

At the moment Zhu Hong unscrewed the cap, the man did feel a surge of murderous intent. To kill Zhu Hong and snatch the last of the water. In this desolate desert, the longer one survives, the greater the hope for escape.

Receiving the bottle, the man's cracked lips curled slightly. Indeed, this guy was quite self-aware. Immediately, he tilted his head back and gulped down the last drop of water.

But just then, an unexpected turn of events unfolded.

As the man tilted his head back, Zhu Hong, who was previously motionless, suddenly lunged at him, knocking him to the sand. Simultaneously, Zhu Hong somehow produced a dagger in his hand.

Without a hint of hesitation, Zhu Hong gritted his teeth and the sharp dagger plunged into the man's heart.

Intense pain struck, causing the man to grip Zhu Hong's arm tightly, his eyes wide with anger and a hint of resentment.

He never anticipated Zhu Hong would ambush him while he drank water. He blamed himself for being too careless, thinking Zhu Hong was afraid of him and thus offering the last bit of water. Clearly, Zhu Hong had premeditated this move. Offering the last of the water was a tactic to feign weakness, lulling his guard. Only then did Zhu Hong have the chance to successfully launch his attack.

Feeling his strength gradually ebb away, the man opened his mouth, yearning to curse. Yet, his weakened body left him without the energy to speak.

Watching the man's eyes slowly close, Zhu Hong finally let out a sigh of relief, collapsing onto the corpse.

After taking a moment to rest and regain some strength, Zhu Hong pulled out the dagger lodged in the man's heart.

In that instant, a torrent of blood flowed from the wound.

Blood... Blood... Water...

Zhu Hong swallowed hard, his expression twisting into something feral. Finally, the desire to survive overcame everything. Without hesitation, Zhu Hong opened his mouth, leaning forward to gulp voraciously.

At this moment, he couldn't feel anything, his mind singularly focused.

Survive... Survive... He couldn't give up; this corpse was his sole hope out of the desert.

Quenching his thirst, Zhu Hong slowly lifted his head. His face mask was now stained with crimson blood, resembling a beast that had just hunted its prey, eyes afire with red, devoid of human rationality.

Huff... Huff...

Zhu Hong gasped heavily, a flicker of awareness returning to his eyes. Looking at the corpse lying there and the blood on his hands, the metallic taste in his mouth, Zhu Hong seemed to go mad, roaring hoarsely at the sky like a devil, striking fear.

"I cannot die... I cannot die... I must leave alive, I will leave alive."

Like a chant, Zhu Hong opened his mouth, quietly mumbling. With each murmured word, his gaze grew resolute.

In such a desperate situation, willpower decided everything.

Not knowing how long it took, Zhu Hong ceased his chant, his eyes now icy and resolved, disturbingly calm.

Glancing at the discarded dagger, Zhu Hong picked it up and grabbed the corpse's arm, slicing down.

To survive, he needed food...

...

Desert base.

Ling Chen placed a cup of tea in front of Ling Tao, then sat down across from him.

Ling Tao watched the tea leaves whirl in the cup, his fingers gently tapping the chair's armrest, seemingly pondering his next words.

"Before I tell you the secrets of the Ling Family, I think it's necessary to first clarify the family's internal factions, so you understand what follows."

Ling Chen nodded silently, presently an attentive listener. He was mentally prepared; no matter how startling Ling Tao's story might be, he was ready to handle it.

At this moment, the vast meeting room echoed only with Ling Tao's voice.

"Within the Ling Family, there are two factions. One is the Southern Ling Family, the force you've been dealing with. The other faction is the Northern Ling Family, which is the force we represent. You may wonder why, although both are members of the Ling Family, they divide into two factions. The reason is quite simple: because of Ling Gengqiu."

Chapter 1133 - 1140: Shocking Hidden Truths (1)

"Ling Family in the south is considered the orthodox lineage of the Ling Family, while our northern Ling Family is descended from Ling Gengqiu. Speaking of which, our ancestor is Ling Gengqiu."

After listening to Ling Tao's story, Ling Chen felt confused and couldn't help but ask, "But as far as I know, isn't Ling Gengqiu's lineage supposed to only include me? How did so many people suddenly appear?"

Ling Tao smiled, nodded, and said, "I understand your confusion, so what I'm about to tell you next is the greatest secret of the Ling Family." At this point, Ling Tao paused slightly and looked at Ling Chen, asking, "How much do you know about Ling Gengqiu's life?"

"The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion once provided me with a document that recorded Ling Gengqiu's life events. Ling Gengqiu was considered a playboy, leaving romantic ties everywhere, and later his wife ruined him, leading him to become a monk. The Prajnaparamita Sutra is a cultivation technique Ling Gengqiu created during his monastic life. Later, Ling Gengqiu left behind a pile of relics and then disappeared; no one knows where he died of old age. That's all I know, I don't know if it's correct?"

"What you said is correct, but you only know part of it, the part before Ling Gengqiu disappeared. I think you must be completely unaware of the events after his disappearance, which is the secret I'll tell you."

Ling Tao took a sip of water, moistened his throat, and then slowly said, "To outsiders, it seemed like Ling Gengqiu disappeared, but in fact, he changed his name and identity, re-entered the secular world, and began a new life. Also, the key point I'd like to tell you is that although Ling Gengqiu was ruined by his wife, he still had the ability to reproduce."

"That's impossible!" Ling Chen blurted out. Anyone with common sense knows that a man who has lost his manhood can't possibly have offspring. Moreover, medical skills in that era were far less advanced than today's. Unless...unless Ling Gengqiu's manhood was only cut halfway. If that's the case, it might be possible to continue to reproduce.

Ling Tao seemed unsurprised by Ling Chen's astonishment, he smiled and said, "Our ancestor was different from ordinary people, many things that seemed impossible happened to him. Not only that, according to the information we have and verified by multiple parties, back then Ling Gengqiu indeed became a eunuch. Nevertheless, Ling Gengqiu still fathered offspring. Don't think I'm fooling you; in fact, our existence is the best evidence."

"Ling Chen, you and your father's lineage were born before Ling Gengqiu's incident, while we... were fathered after Ling Gengqiu changed his identity. Moreover, our amorous ancestor didn't change his ways after adopting new identities, didn't stop getting involved in affairs, and owed numerous emotional debts, spawning countless illegitimate children. Those illegitimate children mostly didn't take Ling Gengqiu's surname but followed their mother's."

"As far as I know, Ling Gengqiu adopted three identities altogether. You can imagine how many women he harmed in his lifetime. Of course, those details aren't the most important; the key is that each of Ling Gengqiu's identities lasted sixty to seventy years."

"Sixty to seventy years?" Ling Chen widened his eyes, doubting if he had misheard, "This... how is this possible? Each identity lasts sixty years, adding up to nearly two hundred years altogether. Are you telling me our ancestor lived two to three hundred years?"

At that moment, Ling Chen suddenly recalled a top-secret document he had seen previously. That document was obtained from the God Organization's hands and had records about Ling Gengqiu. Moreover, the content in that document didn't differ much from what Ling Tao said. At the time, he thought the document was ridiculous; whether ancient or modern times, such a thing was impossible.

Though some individuals have lived long lives, their lifespans generally do not exceed one hundred and thirty years. Someone like Ling Gengqiu, who lived two to three hundred years, is absolutely non-existent.

Holding that thought, Ling Chen dismissed the top-secret document as a joke and didn't take it seriously. Now, listening to Ling Tao's story, Ling Chen finally realized that the content in that document might all be true.

Seeing Ling Chen's shocked reaction, Ling Tao smiled slightly and said, "I know it's unbelievable, even akin to fantasy, but I can definitely tell you it's real. Using today's science to explain, the human body is like a treasury yet to be explored, containing numerous unknowns. We may not have discovered its secrets, but that doesn't mean it won't happen."

Ling Chen agreed with Ling Tao's statement. Modern science has advanced significantly and has confirmed that genetic mutations are possible. Perhaps his ancestor was just one of those exceptions.

"Ling Gengqiu thought no one knew his secret, but regardless of what secret it is, it will eventually be discovered over time. The one who discovered this secret wasn't anyone else, but the southern Ling Family."

"Given that Ling Gengqiu lived so many years, those in the Ling Family who knew him should be dead. Why would anyone recognize him?"

"Well... you can't blame others; the blame lies with Ling Gengqiu himself; it's all enthusiasm that caused the trouble." With that, Ling Tao couldn't help but sigh.

After listening to Ling Tao's story, Ling Chen was left somewhat amused and speechless; his ancestor truly aligned with a popular saying nowadays.

Don't dig your own grave, and you won't die!

Back then, after Ling Gengqiu adopted a new identity, he encountered a beautiful woman on the street. With Ling Gengqiu's enthusiasm, he naturally became infatuated. For that reason, Ling Gengqiu exerted his charm, persistently pursuing, and eventually won over the beauty.

However, Ling Gengqiu never expected that the beauty's husband was someone from the Ling Family. Not only that, but Ling Gengqiu was caught red-handed.

Although those in the Ling Family who recognized Ling Gengqiu were dead, Ling Gengqiu's portrait had always been preserved in the Ling family's ancestral hall as a member of the lineage. Therefore, when the Ling Family saw Ling Gengqiu, they assumed they were mistaken. After all, how could the person from the portraits still be alive?

At the time, the Ling Family thought it was a coincidence; so many years had passed, Ling Gengqiu couldn't possibly still be alive. But there was a very conspicuous feature on Ling Gengqiu's face. Previously, when observing those Clones, Ling Chen also noticed that Ling Gengqiu had a mole on his nose and at the corner of his mouth.

If it was just physical resemblance, it might indeed be a coincidence, but the moles in identical positions were clearly not coincidental. Realizing he had caused massive trouble and exposed his whereabouts, Ling Gengqiu fled discreetly before the Ling Family could confront him.

Chapter 1134 - 1141: Shocking Secret (2)

Ling Gengqiu's escape made the Ling Family believe that Ling Gengqiu had a guilty conscience, thus further solidifying their suspicions.

A monster who has lived for two hundred years deserves attention. So, the Ling Family spared no effort to find out the secret to Ling Gengqiu's longevity. After investing countless time and effort, the Ling Family finally had considerable success.

Whether it was the identity Ling Gengqiu is using now or the ones he used before, the Ling Family found them out, including all his descendants, who were also recorded by the Ling Family.

Decades later, the Ling Family, who had been carefully planning their search, finally got a grasp on Ling Gengqiu's movements.

Unfortunately, although they saw Ling Gengqiu, he still managed to escape. However, the meticulous Ling Family had already noticed that even after decades, Ling Gengqiu's appearance hadn't changed much.

Simply put, time hadn't left any marks on him.

After that incident, Ling Gengqiu completely disappeared and never appeared again. However, the Ling Family did not give up searching for him, and this secret was passed down from generation to generation until today.

Once Ling Chen had mostly digested this secret, Ling Tao put down his teacup and continued, "When you used to confront the God Organization, you should have noticed that they conducted a lot of experiments using human bodies. In your opinion, those bodies were ordinary people, but I want to tell you that they were not ordinary people. On the contrary, their identity is the same as ours, they are all descendants of Ling Gengqiu. As I mentioned earlier, Ling Gengqiu had too many illegitimate children. After hundreds of years of propagation, there are very many descendants with Ling Gengqiu's blood. Otherwise, do you think the God Organization would randomly choose someone for experimentation?"

"According to the information and materials we have, we believe Ling Gengqiu's genes are quite different from ordinary people. Moreover, our researchers speculate that Ling Gengqiu likely has a rare healing ability. It is precisely because of this that he can continue to have offspring despite sustaining physical damage."

Ling Chen asked, "Don't you have Ling Gengqiu's severed arm? Can't extracting genes from him confirm this point?"

"We have conducted experiments in this regard. On Ling Gengqiu's clone, we cut an incision with a knife, and ten minutes later, that incision automatically healed without leaving a trace. It's evident that our speculation is correct; Ling Gengqiu indeed possesses a rare self-healing ability. However, for some unknown reason, this ability cannot be perfectly manifested in the clone. If the clone suffers serious injuries, it will still die. Currently, we have shifted our direction and re-extracted Ling Gengqiu's genes to see if he has any other special abilities."

Upon hearing this, Ling Chen suddenly realized a problem and couldn't help but ask, "Since Ling Gengqiu has special abilities, logically he wouldn't die easily. Plus, he's lived more than two or three hundred years; living a few hundred more shouldn't be a problem. Why did he die?"

"I'm not quite sure." Ling Tao said, "However, based on our investigation, Ling Gengqiu died by dismemberment. As you saw, the severed arm was found in a cemetery at the cost of a great deal of effort and resources. When we found the severed arm, there was a corpse in the coffin, but it wasn't Ling Gengqiu himself. At that time, that corpse's hand was tightly clutching the severed arm. You didn't see the eerie scene when the coffin was opened; that corpse had already turned into a skeleton, but the severed arm was unaffected. To be honest, in this science-dominated era, many things remain unexplained."

"Have you investigated the identity of that corpse? Perhaps starting from that angle can clarify the reason for Ling Gengqiu's death."

"We have investigated these clues, but we could only find a name, and beyond that, no other information." Pausing briefly, Ling Tao continued, "I asked our researchers, to solve Ling Gengqiu's issues, we must find his head and torso. Only by dissecting his body organs can more data be obtained."

"Does that mean we're now ahead?"

"No, you're mistaken; we're not ahead but have fallen behind instead. From what I know, the Southern Ling Family has already found one of Ling Gengqiu's arms and a leg. Moreover, their objective is like ours, also seeking Ling Gengqiu's other parts. Over the years, we've verified through various channels, and the only certainty is that Ling Gengqiu's main body parts should be buried in East Sea City. As for the specific location, we haven't figured it out yet."

East Sea City?

Ling Chen was startled. So that's how it is! Could it be Lin Guodong told him that the main battlefield for the future Ling Family will be in East Sea City, probably because of this reason.

"Do you know why we haven't invested our forces into East Sea City all this time?" Ling Tao said with a smile, "Because of your existence. A few years ago, we planned to gradually move our influence into East Sea City. But your sudden emergence made us change our minds. In these two years in East Sea City, you've done extraordinarily well, exceeding our expectations. Not only have you established your own power, but you've also expelled the God Organization from East Sea City. Now, the God Organization is considered completely dismantled, but the remnants have been absorbed by the Ling Family. If it wasn't necessary this time, I wouldn't have asked you to help. You're still young, with much room for growth, and I hope to give you more time to mature."

"Here, I want to remind you. A key figure from the Southern Ling Family has long been stationed in East Sea City, and his task is to search for clues regarding Ling Gengqiu. That person is very good at hiding; we only know he is called Ling Beichuan. Aside from this, we know nothing about him. Your growth will become an obstacle for some people, and they certainly will attempt to halt your expansion, so you must be careful."

"I know this. If I'm not mistaken, Zhu Hong has been bought by Ling Beichuan. I think Ling Beichuan is definitely planning to use Zhu Hong to limit me." Ling Chen said.

"You deal with these matters on your own; I won't intervene. In short, if possible, I hope you can firmly control the entire East Sea City in your hands. This way, we'll have a lot of leverage."

Ling Chen nodded, saying, "I can't guarantee other things, but I'll do my best."

"Good!" After speaking, Ling Tao stood up, saying, "I still have to hurry back; take care, and contact me if anything arises."

Watching Ling Tao's departing back, Ling Chen suddenly remembered something and quickly called out, "Wait!"

Ling Tao turned back and asked, "Is there anything else?"

Chapter 1135 - 1142: The Golden Ratio

"Where's my dad?"

"I told you, he's on a secret mission right now and can't reveal his whereabouts for the time being. Don't worry, your dad's skills are very strong, there won't be any danger."

"Okay, then I won't ask about that. I just want to know one thing: was it my dad who killed Su Zhengyang and his wife from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion?"

"Ling Chen, I think it's better for you to know less about this kind of thing."

"Why?" Ling Chen said in a deep voice, "Do you know this matter has been bothering me all this time? I can't sleep well, and I've been thinking about it every day, unsure of what to do. You know me well, don't you? If so, you should know that Su He is considered my Master, and Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion Master Su Mei is also my friend. Right now, I'm caught in the middle, torn from both sides. I'm not asking anything else now, I just want to know the truth."

"Perhaps the truth will make you more painful?"

"That doesn't matter. Even if it's more painful, it's better than me guessing blindly."

Ling Tao thought for a moment, nodded, and said, "Alright. Since you want to know, I might as well tell you. Your father's involvement in the death of Su Zhengyang and his wife is real. Moreover, he personally killed Su Zhengyang."

Even though he was mentally prepared, Ling Tao's admission still made Ling Chen's heart sink. So it's true! The relationship between himself and the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is there, yet his father killed Su Mei's biological parents. Once the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion learns the truth, I'm afraid they'll immediately cut ties with me. Furthermore, they might join forces to retaliate against me.

Exhaling deeply, Ling Chen looked at Ling Tao and said, "Was it your order?"

"The death of Su Zhengyang and his wife was an accident. We never intended to kill him. It's just that something happened at that time. If Ling Kun hadn't acted this way, the dead person might very well have been your father." Saying this, Ling Tao walked up to Ling Chen, patting his shoulder and said, "I know you're not comfortable inside and don't know how to face the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, but I ask you to trust your father. If it weren't under special circumstances, your father wouldn't easily resort to killing. And this matter has a lot of complexities, it's not something that can be explained in a few words. When the time is right, I'll naturally tell you."

After saying this, Ling Tao left Ling Chen in silence and walked out of the meeting room alone.

After Ling Tao left, Ling Chen sat quietly on the chair, digesting Ling Tao's words.

Ling Kun killed Su Zhengyang and his wife, this undoubtedly puts him in opposition to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. In the future, they can only be enemies, not friends. But what Ling Chen couldn't understand is why his father would do such a thing? He clearly knows about his relationship with the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, isn't this putting himself in a bad position?

Could it be...he didn't consider my feelings?

While pondering, Porridge Girl walked in from outside the meeting room. Looking at the meditating Ling Chen, Porridge Girl said, "Mr. Ling is gone."

"I know."

"What did he say to you?" Porridge Girl asked curiously. As a woman with a keen mind, she could sense the change in Ling Chen, as if he had become another person, looking deeply troubled.

"Nothing." Ling Chen stood up on his own and asked, "Are you going to stay here?"

Porridge Girl nodded and said, "Mr. Ling just told me that he will soon send someone else to take over the security work at the base. During this period, I must stay here. If everything goes smoothly, I should be able to return to East Sea City in a month."

"Take care outside yourself. If there's trouble, call me. There are still many things to handle in East Sea City. I can't stay here for too long."

"Alright, I'll arrange a car for you. There's a flight tonight that can go directly to East Sea City."

"Thank you!"

"What's there to be polite about? Alright, you should rest for now, I'll inform you once everything is arranged."

Evening.

After twelve o'clock.

Ling Chen and Qiu Yong and others arrived at East Sea International Airport by plane. This time, only eight of them came back, Jiang Yunkai and others will charter a flight tomorrow to return.

"Brother, thank you for your hard work this time."

"What's so hard about it? To be honest, we just went through the motions, and other things were helped by Agula." Saying this, Qiu Yong looked at Ling Chen and said sincerely, "Ling Cheng, although you didn't say it, I know you have things on your mind. Whatever the issue, don't overthink it. No matter what happens, we'll support you from behind."

Ling Chen tried hard to squeeze out a smile and nodded slightly, "I know. Thank you, Brother!"

"Alright, enough of this. Rest early tonight."

"Let's get in touch another day."

Back home, it's already two in the morning.

Nanrong Wanqing and the others were long asleep, the house was pitch dark without a bit of light. Ling Chen tiptoed into his bedroom, took a shower, then lay on the bed in a large 'X' shape, eyes staring at the ceiling, quietly thinking.

After a long time, a soft sigh escaped from Ling Chen's mouth.

Perhaps...it's time to make a decision!

Next morning.

Ling Chen yawned, wearing floral shorts, and walked straight out the door.

"Ling, you're back?" Seeing Ling Chen appear, Tang Shiyun was very surprised, and ran over to hug Ling Chen's arm, saying, "Ling, when did you return? You didn't tell me in advance so I could pick you up."

"I can find my way, what's there to pick up."

While talking, Zhu Xiaozhu and Liu Xiyao simultaneously came out of the bedroom.

Looking at Ling Chen's muscular body and those eight evenly sized abs, Zhu Xiaozhu's pretty face blushed slightly, and her beautiful eyes flashed a hint of shyness.

Compared to Zhu Xiaozhu, Liu Xiyao seemed more bold. She looked at Ling Chen with an appreciative gaze, nodded, and praised, "Your physique is really good, probably better than those fitness coaches."

Ling Chen proudly smiled, patting his strong chest and said, "That's right, my physique is rare and of golden proportion."

Hearing Ling Chen boast, Liu Xiyao laughed and teased, "Really? I think Xiaozhu's figure is great too, front and back are perfect, why don't you two compare and see who truly has the golden proportion."

"Xiyao!" Zhu Xiaozhu's face flushed red, and she couldn't help but say with a hint of blame, "Why bring me into this out of the blue."

"You're no longer young, why are you still so easily shy like a girl? We're all adults, just joking around, no harm done."

"Shiyun is still a child. Xiyao, don't lead her astray."

Seeing Zhu Xiaozhu call her young, Tang Shiyun immediately disagreed, she straightened her young and tender chest, protesting, "Xiaozhu, I'm already nineteen, not young anymore."

Ling Chen secretly glanced and tut-tutted. You have to admit, this girl is developing quickly, almost catching up with Zhu Xiaozhu.

Chapter 1136 - 1143: Dragon Tiger Hall (1)

"Ling, what are you looking at?" Noticing Ling Chen's gaze, Tang Shiyun held his arm, her soft chest gently pressing against it.

Since she wasn't wearing clothes, Ling Chen could clearly feel the soft tenderness, causing his heart to flutter. Hearing Tang Shiyun's voice, Ling Chen immediately redirected his gaze, maintaining a serious demeanor, and said, "Nothing much. Girl, have you been busy these past few days?"

"Originally, I had a few commercial performances, but the company heard I might be in danger, so they postponed them all and let me take a break for a while."

Ling Chen nodded and looked at Liu Xiyao, asking, "Xiyao, is there nothing going on these days?"

"Not really. Your people patrol the area 24 hours a day; no one dares to approach this villa. Didn't you send someone to find that person's whereabouts? Have you still not found them?"

"There's no progress yet, but don't worry, I'll deploy all our forces to find that guy." With that, Ling Chen patted Tang Shiyun's little head and said, "I'm going downstairs to chat with my friends; remember to come down for breakfast later."

Upon reaching the first floor, Bai Huanjun was already waiting for Ling Chen's appearance. Having learned Ling Chen returned last night, Bai Huanjun removed his disguise early in the morning, reverting to his original form.

"You've worked hard these days."

"It's not too tiring, just staying at home every day, occasionally going out to show my face, not much hard work involved. But for you, I heard from Kai that you guys had a great time outside this time. It's a pity I didn't join, but remember to take me along next time."

As he spoke, Bai Huanjun handed over a pre-prepared file to Ling Chen.

"What is this?"

"I asked some old friends to investigate and finally got some information on Old K. The nickname 'Old K' isn't famous domestically or internationally, but according to the data, he has planned multiple bombings abroad, and six countries are pursuing him. However, Old K is a very smart criminal. He keeps a low profile, rarely appearing unless committing a crime, so no one knows his whereabouts."

"No leads from Fatty yet?"

"Not yet. Unless he reveals himself, given his low profile, it's very hard for us to locate him."

Ling Chen thought for a moment, then said, "Old K was hired by Zhu Hong, and no one except Zhu Hong probably knows his whereabouts. During the desert battle that day, Zhu Hong fled by car and is currently nowhere to be found. To my knowledge, he hasn't returned to the country yet. Go back to the base later and tell Fatty to enhance airport surveillance, and arrest Zhu Hong as soon as he shows up."

"Alright, I'm heading back to the base now."

After seeing Bai Huanjun off, Ling Chen joined the women for breakfast, then drove alone to the Old City.

A couple of days ago, Tang Guolun had called Ling Chen, saying that the Dragon Tiger Tower had been fully constructed, and the interior was also completed, asking him to come take a look when he had time. Until then, though interested in the establishment of Dragon Tiger Tower, Ling Chen hadn't been very involved. However, after talking with Ling Tao and learning the truth, Ling Chen finally decided to create a Martial Arts force capable of rivaling the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion.

Upon arriving at Dragon Tiger Tower, Ling Chen directly entered the main building. There's no denying Tang Guolun's efficiency; in such a short time, the building is finished with painting and decoration, exuding grandeur everywhere. Having just been completed, the property was filled with a strong smell of paint. At the moment, more than a dozen workers were cleaning the building to remove the odors.

"Ling Chen."

Responding to the voice, Ling Chen turned his head and smiled to greet Tang Guolun.

"Boss Tang, thanks for your hard work."

"It's alright. There's still some finishing up to do, but it should be done in a couple of days. When are you planning to have people move in?"

"This month, maybe," Ling Chen thought for a while and replied. The main base of Dragon Tiger Tower has been established, and recruiting Martial Arts practitioners will be the next task, which isn't easy. Moreover, Ling Chen has concerns given the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's longstanding dominance, unmatched in experience and influence. Planning to compete directly with them, Ling Chen wonders whether they might try to restrict him.

"Right! Boss Tang, can you help me make a plaque in a couple of days?"

"Dragon Tiger Tower?"

"No, change it to Dragon Tiger Hall," Ling Chen opened his mouth to say. He had pondered deeply over the naming of Dragon Tiger Hall. Considering the present times, it's better to have a more modern and agreeable name. 'Dragon Tiger Hall' is neither too ordinary nor pretentious, making it just right.

Ling Chen has thought through the development of Dragon Tiger Hall. Besides recruiting Martial Arts elites, he's going to open a Martial Arts Academy to impart Martial Arts skills. With an abundance of Martial Arts manuals as support, Ling Chen is confident. If he's going to do it, he might as well do it big. He clearly understands he started late and cannot compare with the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, which boasts centuries of history. So, he must embark on an unconventional path.

These days, whenever Ling Chen is free, he studies the advantages and disadvantages of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. The advantages are self-evident; the historical foundation is unparalleled. However, its disadvantages are equally apparent. Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, owing to its years of history, has amassed countless Martial Arts manuals, including some lost cultivation techniques. Yet, it covets its treasures, keeping all Martial Arts manuals hidden and never sharing them.

Furthermore, Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion treats these manuals as lures to attract Martial Arts elites. In reality, they never transmit truly valuable manuals to outsiders. To them, these valuable manuals are their cornerstone.

Therefore, Ling Chen made a decision; he won't be like the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, hoarding these manuals. Instead, he will publicize them, and anyone joining Dragon Tiger Hall will be free to choose their learning path.

The aim is not only to break the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's monopoly but also to attract more Martial Arts elites. Besides, Ling Chen hopes to keep these lost Martial Arts skills alive. He understands that throughout history, many valuable Martial Arts got lost mainly because masters withheld some absolute skills during apprentice training, refusing to pass them on. This greatly contributed to the loss of many Kung Fu.

Ling Chen's decision is also intended to enhance Dragon Tiger Hall's influence.

After chatting with Tang Guolun for a while, Ling Chen didn't stay long; he drove straight to the base. Since Dragon Tiger Hall has been built, there are plenty of matters to attend to.

Chapter 1137 - 1144: The Hunt for Zhu Hong

In the base, after learning about Ling Chen's purpose, Hu Fei immediately called a group of people over. Most of them were young people, mainly females.

"Hey! These are the technical talents I've trained recently. There aren't many people, just over twenty, but it's more than enough to manage the backup base of Dragon Tiger Hall."

Ling Chen nodded. This was something he had initially agreed upon with Hu Fei; the base and Dragon Tiger Hall should be separate in terms of intelligence and other activities, operating independently. Simply put, the base and Dragon Tiger Hall would be two distinct forces, not to be confused with each other. After all, Dragon Tiger Hall focuses on martial arts conflicts.

Two days passed in the blink of an eye.

Early in the morning, Ling Chen was awoken from his sleep by a phone call. Groggily, he picked up the phone, glanced at the caller ID, and immediately sat up in bed, quickly answering the call.

It's unclear what was said on the other end of the line, but Ling Chen's eyes lit up, and he responded, "Alright, I understand." After hanging up, Ling Chen started dressing while calling Hu Fei.

"Fatty, get everyone ready. Zhu Hong will soon appear at the airport."

In a rush, Ling Chen didn't even brush his teeth, chewed on a piece of gum, and drove to the airport. Half an hour later, racing along the way, Ling Chen finally arrived at the airport before Zhu Hong. As soon as he got out of the car, he saw several police cars parked outside the airport.

"Mr. Ling." A policeman greeted Ling Chen as soon as he saw him. Ling Chen nodded at him; these were all Xia Mutong's subordinates. Because he dealt with Xia Mutong quite often, the police were familiar with Ling Chen.

"Where is Officer Xia?"

"Captain Xia went inside with the team and is setting up an ambush."

"Thanks!" Ling Chen thanked him and quickly made his way to the airport exit. He had informed Xia Mutong, after all, this was an airport full of people, and if things got out of hand, it could cause unnecessary trouble. Therefore, having Xia Mutong take action was most suitable.

Near the exit, Ling Chen looked around, searching for Xia Mutong and her team. It didn't take long before he spotted Xia Mutong hidden among the crowd. To avoid alarming the target, Xia Mutong and her colleagues wore plain clothes. Ling Chen squeezed through the crowd, reached Xia Mutong, and tapped her on the shoulder.

"You're pretty fast." Xia Mutong glanced at Ling Chen.

Ling Chen grinned, "This is capturing Zhu Hong, of course, I have to be more active."

Upon hearing this, Xia Mutong snorted lightly, muttering discontentedly, "As if that's true." Just then, a voice came through Xia Mutong's earpiece.

"The target has appeared."

As soon as the words were spoken, Ling Chen immediately turned his gaze towards the airport exit. At this moment, a large group of travelers was emerging from the airport. Ling Chen squinted his eyes, carefully scanning the crowd. Before long, a young man wearing a baseball cap and a mask appeared at the exit.

Despite the mask, he couldn't completely hide the silver mask underneath. Xia Mutong fixed her gaze on the target, quietly giving the order: "Everyone, be attentive. See if the target has any companions."

Ling Chen chimed in, "It's just Zhu Hong alone, feel free to make a move."

Xia Mutong nodded, promptly issuing the action command. In an instant, six or seven plainclothes officers swiftly surged from the crowd towards Zhu Hong. Before Zhu Hong could react, one of them had already pinned him to the ground.

This sudden turn of events immediately caught the attention of nearby travelers, some of whom took out their phones to record the scene.

By this time, several plainclothes officers had already restrained Zhu Hong, and Xia Mutong strode over, directly removing his mask and baseball cap.

"Zhu Hong, you are under arrest!" she declared, pulling out a pair of handcuffs and securing them on his wrists. "Take him back to the station, monitor him closely. Without my permission, no one is allowed to visit."

"Yes, Captain Xia."

Watching Zhu Hong being taken away, Ling Chen exhaled deeply; finally catching this guy. Luckily, everything went smoothly without any unforeseen events.

...

Later that morning.

A young man hurriedly dashed into a guesthouse, not bothering to catch his breath, he said urgently: "Bad news, I just got word that Zhu Hong has been captured."

"What?" People inside the room stood up, one of them asked gravely, "Are you sure? Where did you get this information?"

The young man quickly moved to a computer, opened a video-sharing website, and soon, the video of the police arresting Zhu Hong at the airport appeared on everyone's screens.

Seeing Zhu Hong being captured and then escorted into a police car, everyone's expressions turned extremely grim.

"Old K, what do we do now?" All eyes inevitably turned to a middle-aged man.

Old K pondered for a moment, then said, "Don't panic yet; just because someone is wearing a mask similar to Zhu Hong's, we can't be certain it's him." After a pause, he continued, "As far as I know, Mr. Ling sent a skilled bodyguard to accompany Zhu Hong, specifically to ensure his safety."

The young man who delivered the news said, "The person sent by Mr. Ling has probably died. We received reports that an operation abroad failed, and the entire team was either killed or captured. So, since only Zhu Hong returned to East Sea City, it indicates the others faced misfortune."

"Have you tried calling Zhu Hong?"

"We've all tried, but the call doesn't go through, so... this video is likely real. Mr. Ling stated that no matter what, Zhu Hong must be dealt with. If it's impossible to rescue him, he must be silenced permanently. He knows too much, and if he spills to the police, not only we but even Mr. Ling's location could be exposed."

"So what does Mr. Ling mean?"

"Take action promptly, locate Zhu Hong, and ensure he hasn't disclosed our intel to the police. If he hasn't, try to rescue him. On the contrary, kill him. Mr. Ling is prepared to relocate at any time, and as soon as you get the news, inform us immediately."

Old K tapped his fingers lightly on the table, his expression blank, "Zhu Hong is now detained at the station; are you suggesting we storm the police station? This is Huaxia, not overseas; you should know the consequences of such actions. To go against the entire police force is akin to challenging the country itself—a ridiculously foolish act. Though you hired me, I won't do something leading to certain doom."

"You've misunderstood." The young man hurriedly explained, "We're not asking you to act at the station; Mr. Ling has some connections, and he'll have Zhu Hong transferred directly to prison, where you can act en route to free him."

Chapter 1138 - 1145: Fishing Operation

"Captain Xia, a directive just came down from above, instructing you to immediately transfer the prisoner captured today to the prison." A policeman walked into Xia Mutong's office and handed her an order signed by the director.

"Transfer?" Xia Mutong frowned and said, "We haven't even interrogated him yet, why transfer him so quickly?"

"The higher-ups said, given the prisoner's special identity and extreme danger, our police force doesn't have enough resources to protect him, so we need to transfer him immediately to a high-security prison."

Xia Mutong looked at the document signed by the director and said helplessly, "Alright then, since it's the director's order, immediately notify everyone to prepare. We'll leave from the parking lot in half an hour and directly transfer the prisoner to the prison."

After the colleagues left the office, Xia Mutong immediately picked up the phone and called Ling Chen.

"Hello! Looks like your guess was right, they have someone on the inside. The order has already come down, and in half an hour we'll be transferring the prisoner. I think they'll definitely try to intercept along the way... alright, get here as soon as you can. I'll wait for you in the parking lot."

After hanging up the phone, Xia Mutong put on her police uniform, completed her gun and bulletproof vest, and quickly walked out of the office.

Half an hour passed quickly, and in the parking lot on the basement level of the police station, Zhu Hong wearing a prison uniform with chains on his hands and feet, was escorted by several police officers into a prisoner transport vehicle.

Xia Mutong glanced at Zhu Hong sitting in the prisoner vehicle, turned to the police responsible for guarding Zhu Hong and instructed, "Keep a close watch on him. If he tries anything, shoot to kill immediately. That's my order, understood?"

"Captain Xia, you can rest assured, this guy won't escape our grasp."

"Hmph!" Zhu Hong, who had been silent all along, sneered disdainfully, "Just you few? Be careful or you won't even know how you ended up dead."

"Zhu Hong, stop being arrogant in front of me. Now that you're in my hands, don't think you'll have a nice time again." After saying that, Xia Mutong slammed the car door shut, signaling the driver to start the car, and the convoy prepared to depart.

Not long after, the convoy left the parking lot and drove onto the road. At the back of the convoy, an Audi followed, with Ling Chen in the driver's seat.

Upon receiving Xia Mutong's notification, Ling Chen immediately drove over. As he expected, after Zhu Hong was caught, Ling Beichuan would surely take action. This was a perfect opportunity to lure the snake out and capture Ling Beichuan's men in one fell swoop.

The journey from the police station to the prison was about an hour, and because of the city's traffic congestion, it took more time.

On the way, the convoy moved intermittently, struggling to maintain a speed of sixty kilometers per hour. After twenty or so minutes, the convoy reached a junction at an intersection. Ling Chen stopped the car behind the convoy, and stuck his head out the window, looking at the traffic lights ahead. It's been a minute already, but it's still a red light, which was clearly unusual.

While thinking, a garbage truck came from another road, and as it crossed the intersection, suddenly changed lanes and crashed directly into the lead police car of the convoy.

Boom!

Under the collision impact from the garbage truck, the police car was instantly wrecked, with its body even deformed. Meanwhile, Ling Chen saw through the rearview mirror, another garbage truck rapidly approaching from behind, seemingly aiming to seal off the convoy's rear route. Without time to think, Ling Chen hurriedly pushed open the car door, leaped out of the vehicle.

The next second, accompanied by a loud crash, the front of the garbage truck hit the tail of the Audi viciously. Driven by the inertia impact, the Audi charged straight forward, crashing into the police car ahead.

At that moment when the convoy was cornered, more than twenty people jumped out from the two garbage trucks respectively, swiftly heading towards the prisoner transport vehicle in the middle.

These people all wore suits and masks to prevent identification. Before they could reach the prisoner vehicle, Ling Chen tapped lightly on his tiptoes, leaped into the air, and jumped onto the roof of a police car, striding rapidly forward. In an instant, Ling Chen overtook the group of robbers, blocking their path.

A man in a suit at the forefront saw Ling Chen appear and, without a word, swung the electric baton in his hand, aiming directly at Ling Chen's head.

Seeing this, Ling Chen slightly shifted his footsteps, dodging the electric baton attack, and simultaneously, leaned his body slightly forward, executing a Mountain Collapse technique, and slammed his shoulder hard. There was a scream of pain, and the body of the man in the suit was instantly knocked out.

Hearing their companion's scream, the group of suited men immediately focused their gaze on Ling Chen.

"Go, stop him!"

As the words fell, before Ling Chen could strike again, a man in a suit with a mask had already appeared in front of Ling Chen.

Ling Chen surveyed the opponent, a hint of surprise flashed across his Mo Che-like pupils. Although this person was wearing a suit, from his graying hair, it could be seen that the man was not young.

Thoughts raced through his mind, a fierce gust of power suddenly approached, pushing rapidly towards Ling Chen's front. As the gust came, Ling Chen only noticed a shadow flash in front of him, with the opponent's punch forcefully aiming straight for his face.

So fast!

Ling Chen's heart was startled, he managed his thoughts and swiftly shifted his footwork. As the Nine Yang Qiankun Step was deployed, Ling Chen's body seemed like a gust of wind, dodging the opponent's attack in time.

A master... who knew that Ling Beichuan valued Zhu Hong so highly, sending a master here for the rescue.

At this moment, smoke bombs were thrown from all directions, surrounding the prisoner vehicle in the middle. In an instant, thick smoke engulfed the scene, obscuring the entire prisoner vehicle, making it impossible to see anything.

While Ling Chen was still entangled with the master, several suited men quickly reached the back of the prisoner vehicle, smashed open the window glass, and threw a flashbang inside.

Boom!

The blinding flash exploded, and hearing commotion from inside the vehicle, several suited men said nothing, immediately opened the car door. At this moment, the police officers responsible for guarding Zhu Hong were lying on the ground, covering their eyes, intermittently moaning in pain.

"Quickly take the person away!"

"Mr. Zhu, let's go."

Under the crowd of suited men, Zhu Hong quickly fled from the prisoner vehicle. Just when everyone was ready to leave, a cold shout suddenly came: "Stop!"

Looking intently, they saw Xia Mutong holding a gun, coldly watching Zhu Hong and his companions. On her forehead, there was a wound several centimeters long, with blood gushing out, trickling slowly down her cheek. She was sitting in the first police car earlier, which happened to be smashed by the garbage truck. Luckily, her physical strength was extraordinary, among her colleagues in the vehicle who were knocked out, she was the only one unscathed.

All eyes stopped, Zhu Hong and his men instantly halted, coldly glaring at Xia Mutong.

"Put your hands up!" Xia Mutong commanded softly.

Chapter 1139 - 1146: Life or Death Uncertain

Zhu Hong let out a cold smile, completely unmoved. At this moment, a man in a suit standing next to Zhu Hong suddenly accelerated, charging straight at Xia Mutong.

Seeing the opponent rapidly approaching, Xia Mutong bit down, without thinking, she directly pulled the trigger. 'Bang!' As the gunshot rang out, the man in the suit abruptly turned, performing a perfect dodge, with the bullet almost grazing the edge of his clothes.

Dodged it?

Xia Mutong stared blankly at the man in the suit, momentarily stunned, she never imagined someone could dodge a bullet, this... this must take incredible perception and reaction ability.

At this moment, the man in the suit had already closed in, Xia Mutong held the pistol, her finger slightly pulling, preparing to shoot again. However, before she could pull the trigger, a powerful force suddenly struck, directly knocking the pistol out of her hand.

With the loss of the gun's intimidation, Xia Mutong's heart sank, she swiftly swung a punch to meet the opponent's attack. As the fists collided, Xia Mutong felt an overwhelming power surging forth, like a sweeping wave, impacting her body. Unsteady, Xia Mutong leaned back, retreating three or four steps before finally stabilizing herself.

Seeing Xia Mutong steady her body, a trace of surprise flickered in the eyes of the man in the suit. The power of his punch was formidable, only Earthly List experts could withstand it. However, this female officer before him was no martial artist, yet she managed to take his hit head-on, truly impressive.

It hurts!

Xia Mutong slightly furrowed her brow, her wrist continuously rotating. After that punch, her whole arm felt incredibly sore, with no strength at all. Fortunately, she had undergone modification experiments

from the God Organization, her body was extraordinary, her strength exceptional. Otherwise, that punch just now would have been enough to break her arm.

Without waiting for Xia Mutong to launch an offensive, the man in the suit leapt forward, closing the distance in an instant, his fists like twin dragons emerging from the sea, aggressively charging toward Xia Mutong.

Although possessing extraordinary strength, Xia Mutong's other aspects couldn't compare to an actual expert. In the blink of an eye, before she could react, the two punches had already struck her body. Power erupted, Xia Mutong felt her body lighten, directly lifted off the ground, crashing hard against the prison van, landing heavily.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, the man in the suit rushed forward again, his fist descending toward Xia Mutong's head. If this punch hit, Xia Mutong would likely die on the spot.

"Mutong!" Seeing the danger Xia Mutong was in, Ling Chen's expression changed drastically, quickly sprinting toward Xia Mutong. However, he hadn't run far when a white-haired man in a suit blocked his way.

Ling Chen's heart sank, through the previous exchange he realized, the person before him was extremely skilled, definitely ranking among the top five on the Earthly List. With his current strength, shaking off the opponent's entanglement was impossible.

What to do?

Was he really going to watch Xia Mutong get killed? At this moment, Ling Chen felt very guilty. He intended to use Zhu Hong to lure the snake out of its hole and catch them all, yet Bai Ling Beichuan unexpectedly sent so many experts to rescue Zhu Hong.

Calculated everything, except this one point.

"Stop!" At this moment, a cold voice sounded. It was Zhu Hong who spoke, hearing his shout, the suit-clad man who was about to end Xia Mutong's life immediately withdrew his fist, turning his head to look at Zhu Hong who was striding over, speaking in a deep voice: "What do you want?"

Zhu Hong said nothing, walking to Xia Mutong on his own.

"Officer Xia, thanks for your earlier care, I feel I should repay you somehow." Saying this, Zhu Hong bent down, pulling out a dagger from Xia Mutong's waist. Looking at the sharp blade, Zhu Hong let out a malicious smile, his arm swinging down fiercely.

In Xia Mutong's shocked gaze, the dagger stabbed into her body. In an instant, blood splattered, Xia Mutong's face turned pale instantly.

"Ling Chen!" Zhu Hong turned his head, looking at Ling Chen who was being held back not far away, coldly laughing as he said: "I want you to watch as I kill those around you one by one, she is just the first. Unless you die, otherwise, I will let you experience what true pain feels like." After speaking, Zhu Hong waved his hand, lightly shouting: "Let's go!"

Watching Zhu Hong and others escape by car, Ling Chen clenched his fists tightly, his rage evident, his lips almost biting into blood. "Ah!" He roared loudly, venting his anger and hatred.

"Ling... Ling Chen..."

Hearing Xia Mutong's groans, Ling Chen regained a bit of composure, hurriedly running to Xia Mutong's side, cradling her head, concerned as he said: "Don't be afraid, you'll be fine, I'll get you to the hospital right away."

"I...I might... not make it..." Xia Mutong's mouth opened, her breath like a thread, face pale as paper, lips void of any color.

"No, don't give up, hold on, you can do it." Ling Chen shouted while lifting Xia Mutong's delicate body, flagging down a taxi on the roadside, swiftly heading to the hospital.

Ten minutes or so passed, Hu Fei, Jiang Hao, and Nanrong Hao arrived at the hospital with their men. Seeing Ling Chen sitting in the corridor, Jiang Hao hurriedly ran over and asked: "Chen, how is Officer Xia's condition?"

"I don't know." Ling Chen replied, turning to Hu Fei and asked: "Fatty, have you found their whereabouts?"

"I've already sent people to track them secretly, we should have results soon."

"Let's go, anyhow, we can't let them off this time."

"Chen, what about Officer Xia?" Nanrong Hao asked.

Ling Chen said sternly: "I've contacted the police station, they'll send someone over soon. Right now, Zhu Hong is the priority, nothing else matters. If Zhu Hong escapes, Officer Xia's efforts will be in vain."

At this moment, several cars slowly drove into a compound. The car doors opened, Zhu Hong got out first, others followed behind him. After walking a few steps, Zhu Hong suddenly staggered forward, directly collapsing onto the ground.

"Mr. Zhu, what's wrong?" Several men in suits quickly helped Zhu Hong.

Zhu Hong coughed a few times, speaking weakly: "It's nothing, just got beaten up by those cops."

"Help Mr. Zhu into the house."

"Wait!"

"Mr. Zhu, is there anything else?"

"Old K." Zhu Hong called out.

"Here I am." A man in a suit stepped forward, taking off his mask, asking: "Does Mr. Zhu have any orders?"

Zhu Hong looked at him and said: "Ling Chen and his people won't let this go easily, they're definitely searching for us everywhere now. Send people to check for any tails, if anyone is tracking, kill them directly."

Chapter 1140 - 1147: A Scheme Within a Scheme

Back inside the house, Zhu Hong was carried by several people and placed on a sofa. A gray-haired man in a suit stepped forward and said in a low voice, "Mr. Zhu, I want to know what you told the police. Did you disclose anything about Mr. Ling?"

Zhu Hong glanced at him and said, "Do you think I would betray Mr. Ling? I'm a sensible person. Mr. Ling is my savior; I would never do anything to betray him. Besides, only by doing so do I have the value to continue living, don't I?"

The man stared into Zhu Hong's eyes, nodded, and said, "Very well, that's what I hoped to see. Now that you've escaped from police custody, you'll continue to handle things here, and I need to report back to the boss."

"Wait!" Zhu Hong, lying on the sofa, sat up and looked at him. "Take me with you to see Mr. Ling."

"Why do you want to see the boss? The boss isn't in good health. You can tell me, and I'll relay the message."

"No, it's a very serious matter, and I must report to Mr. Ling in person." Zhu Hong paused and added, "It has to do with Ling Chen and the Northern Ling Family."

The Northern Ling Family?

Upon hearing those four words, a strange look flashed across the man's eyes. Looking at Zhu Hong, whose gaze was determined, the man was silent for a moment, then suddenly smiled.

"I see. You want to show your value in front of the boss, right? Fine, if that's the case, I'll grant your wish. You two..." He pointed at the two men in suits present and ordered, "Go, get the car ready."

"Yes."

Before getting in the car, a man in a suit held a scanner and swept it over Zhu Hong's body, not missing a spot. Watching the man's actions, Zhu Hong said discontentedly, "What does this mean?"

"Don't mind it, it's just to ensure you aren't carrying or have implanted any tracking device. The boss's place needs to stay secret; the fewer who know, the better." With that, the man put away the scanner, nodded, and said, "No problem, get in the car!"

Half an hour later, a luxury car stopped in front of an old residential building.

With the help of the two suited men, Zhu Hong slowly walked and followed them up the stairs to the top floor of the building. The man in front knocked on the door, and soon, a young man peeked out, looked at him, and said, "Housekeeper Luo."

"Is the boss here?"

"The boss is in the living room."

"Alright, you go down first; we need to see the boss." Housekeeper Luo gestured to Zhu Hong inside. They walked straight into the living room. Seeing Ling Beichuan in a wheelchair, Housekeeper Luo slightly bent over, quickly walked to Ling Beichuan, and said respectfully, "Boss, we're back. Zhu Hong didn't let you down. Additionally, Zhu Hong told me he knows something about the Northern Ling Family."

Upon hearing this, Ling Beichuan, who had been closing his eyes, opened them and turned to Zhu Hong, weakly saying, "Go ahead, what information did you get?"

Zhu Hong didn't speak and instead stared into Ling Beichuan's eyes. After a moment, he suddenly asked, "Are you Ling Beichuan?" As he spoke, both Housekeeper Luo and Ling Beichuan noticed a clear difference in the voice from earlier.

This person...isn't Zhu Hong!

Housekeeper Luo reacted the fastest, stepping forward to shield Ling Beichuan, coldly asking, "You're not Zhu Hong. Who are you really?"

'Zhu Hong' smiled slightly, casually removing a silver mask. Instantly, a stranger's face appeared before the two of them.

"I am Bai Huanjun. You might be hearing my name for the first time."

Housekeeper Luo's pupils narrowed as he said, word by word, "The previous hijacking of the convoy and the scene of police killing were all fake?"

"Exactly, it was all a play. Luckily, we performed well without any flaws." Bai Huanjun said with a proud smile.

"If I'm not mistaken, you must be Ling Chen's person. However, Ling Chen sent you alone to die; I really don't know what he was thinking." Housekeeper Luo said coldly, stepping forward to make a move.

Bang!

At this moment, a loud bang came, and the door was suddenly kicked open. Then, a team of fully armed police stormed in from outside. Housekeeper Luo looked closely and was shocked to discover that the leader was none other than Xia Mutong, who had been 'killed' earlier.

"Nobody move, raise your hands!" Xia Mutong raised his gun, aiming it at Housekeeper Luo and Ling Beichuan in the wheelchair, and shouted lightly.

Housekeeper Luo squinted his eyes, looking at Bai Huanjun's triumphant smile, and said coldly, "That's impossible. I checked, and you weren't carrying any tracking devices, nor was anyone secretly following you. How did you expose your location?"

"Let me explain that." A voice came, and Ling Chen entered with a team from outside.

"It's actually simple; some things don't rely on technology. Thanks to Little Fei's help, it has been monitoring your movements from above without you noticing."

Little Fei was the hawk trained by Song Mingzhe. For this operation, Ling Chen specifically borrowed Little Fei to assist in tracking Bai Huanjun's whereabouts. He knew Ling Beichuan's men would be cautious, and implanting a tracking chip in Bai Huanjun would easily get discovered. Therefore, Little Fei was the best choice, and facts proved his decision was right.

"Is Zhu Hong dead? Or was he really captured by you? Otherwise, you wouldn't have disguised as him to lure us into action." Ling Beichuan, who hadn't spoken, said. Faced with the current situation, he remained very calm.

"Whether he's dead or not, I don't know. I think...he might now be lost in the desert." Ling Chen said.

The phone call he received this morning was actually from Agula. Before returning to East Sea City, Ling Chen commissioned Agula to continue searching for Zhu Hong's whereabouts. Agula told him they found an abandoned jeep in the desert's depths, which was the vehicle Zhu Hong and his people used to escape. However, they found no trace of Zhu Hong on site. In such a vast desert, it's impossible to walk out on foot. Moreover, according to the jeep's remaining traces, Zhu Hong and his group have been lost in the desert for several days and might have starved to death in some unknown place.

For this reason, Ling Chen decided to let Bai Huanjun impersonate Zhu Hong being captured. As for the capture scene, it was pre-designed, allowing the travelers to have the opportunity to record. This way, once the video circulated online, Ling Beichuan and Old K would quickly learn about Zhu Hong's capture.