

## The Beauty 1381

### Chapter 1381 The Great War Between North and South (Part 3)

From the start of the battle, Ling Chen hadn't let Ji Gang show himself, precisely to achieve an element of surprise. The original plan was for Ji Gang to launch a sudden attack, helping Ling Kun and Chen Junfeng to deal with the two Heavenly List experts of the southern Ling Family. Who would have thought Ling Jian was also a Heavenly List expert? So, Ling Chen had no choice but to let Ji Gang take care of Ling Jian first.

Now, Ling Jian was already seriously injured. Even if Ji Gang didn't act, he wouldn't be a match for Xu Ming and the others. Ling Jian clearly realized this too, as he retreated with a grim expression. Seeing the unfavorable situation, Ling Ao and Ling Feng quickly withdrew from the fight, rushed to Ling Jian's side, and guarded the family head behind them, warily watching the others.

At this moment, Qin Genglong and Zhu Qing walked over. The Earthly List experts of the southern Ling Family and those small fry had already been dealt with by them. As long as these three were eliminated, the southern Ling Family would forever become history.

"Ling Chen, what are you standing there for? Hurry up and kill them!" Ling Haitian shouted lightly from not far away.

Ling Chen didn't even look at the other side, acting as if he hadn't heard anything, and simply walked towards Ling Jian, saying, "Ling Family Master, surrender. You have no chance left."

"Surrender?" Ling Jian snorted, "Ling Chen, do you think I lost? No, you're wrong. In my eyes, I will never lose." After saying this, Ling Jian suddenly roared, "What are you waiting for? Move!"

As his words fell, while everyone was feeling puzzled, noise suddenly came from Ling Haitian's direction. Ling Chen turned his head to see Ling Gao holding Ling Haitian's neck, a sharp dagger poised at Ling Haitian's vital point.

This sudden change left everyone present stunned.

"Ling Gao, what are you doing?" Ling Jun shouted from the side, "Put the knife down immediately." Saying this, Ling Jun was about to rush over.

"Stop!" Ling Gao said coldly, "If you don't want him dead, stand still. If anyone dares to take a step forward, I'll kill him immediately."

Ling Chen looked at Ling Gao and said with a faint smile, "So, you're the traitor within the northern Ling Family. I was wondering who exposed the northern Ling Family's secret base. It could have been you, Ling Jun, or Ling Tao. I thought it would be Ling Jun, but I didn't expect it to be you."

Ling Gao sneered, "Even if you know, what can you do about it? What can you do to me now?"

Ling Chen shrugged, "I can't do anything to you, so... what do you want?"

"What do you think?" Ling Jian interjected from not far away, "I told you, we will never lose. Victory is always on our side. Today, we just happen to eliminate all of you northern Ling Family people."

"Why?" Ling Haitian gritted his teeth, "Why betray me?"

"Hmph! You have the nerve to ask why. Ling Jun and I both serve as your deputies and have been dedicated to the northern Ling Family. But you? You only value Ling Jun because he's a Heavenly List expert, giving him all the benefits while leaving all the dirty, tiring work to me. Ling Haitian, have you considered my feelings?"

"Is this why you betrayed me?"

"I know the ins and outs of the northern Ling Family. Following you, the northern Ling Family will never defeat the southern Ling Family. Do you know why? Because you're too greedy. The northern Ling Family has a communal account. It's the collective funds of the northern Ling Family. You, as the family head, instead of strengthening the northern Ling Family, only know how to indulge yourself. Tell me, how much money have you embezzled from the account? And Ling Jun, you two treat the northern Ling Family's communal account like your private bank, taking as much as you want, yet I'm not allowed to do the same. Do you think this is fair to me? Later, Ling Jian approached me, promising that once the southern Ling Family united, I could have whatever I wanted. Ling Haitian, that's the difference, understand?"

Hearing this, Ling Jun shouted angrily, "Ling Gao, what nonsense are you spouting."

"Am I spouting nonsense or are you just guilty?"

"You..."

"Enough!" Ling Jian said coldly, "No need to waste words with them, kill them all, leave no one alive."

Ling Chen's lips curled into a slight smile, and he said, "I should be the one saying that. Sir Chen, no need to be courteous to them, finish them all."

"You dare." Ling Gao shouted, "Ling Chen, you'd better not move, otherwise, I'll kill him immediately."

Ling Chen touched his nose indifferently and said, "If you want to kill, kill him. What's it got to do with me? Do you think I care about his life?"

Ling Chen's words left Ling Jian and the others dumbfounded.

"Ling Chen, you're part of the northern Ling Family, aren't you..."

"Who told you I was part of the northern Ling Family? My dad is, but I'm not. Besides, even if I were, I wouldn't risk my life for people like you. To me, it doesn't matter who among you wins; it doesn't mean anything to me. I only care about my own interests."

"Alright." Ling Jian said, "If you leave with your people, I won't hold it against you, and I won't trouble you in the future. How about it?"

Ling Chen smiled and said, "That's a decent offer, but... I still have a few things unfinished. Back then, Nanrong Yuan was killed by your people, and there's also Miss Lin Yiyi. If you hand over the culprit to me, I'll leave immediately."

"The culprit?" Ling Jian's expression changed, looking at Ling Chen with cold eyes, "It seems we can't agree because I'm the one who killed Lin Yiyi."

"Is that so? That's a pity." Ling Chen sighed softly, "It seems this final battle is unavoidable."

"Ling Chen, we still have three Heavenly List experts remaining. If a fight breaks out, even if you kill us all, you'll pay a hefty price. Since they're dead, why waste your effort for them?"

Ling Chen pondered and nodded, "You make a good point. However, just leaving like this feels unsatisfactory. How about... giving me some goodies? I came all the way here, spending time and effort. You should provide me some compensation."

Hearing this, Ling Jian frowned slightly and asked, "What do you want?"

Ling Chen grinned, "I'm a simple man. Given that your southern Ling Family can afford submarines and build an offshore base, you must have a considerable fortune, so..."

"I understand, fifty billion US dollars, as compensation from our southern Ling Family. How about that?"

"Fifty billion... isn't that a bit low? You've seen it yourself, I've lost a few people too."

"Sixty billion US dollars!" Ling Jian gritted his teeth, "Ling Chen, don't be too greedy."

Ling Chen laughed, "Alright then, since the Ling Family Master is so sincere, I'll agree. Fatty! Come over and collect the money."

Chapter 1382 - 1690: The Great Battle Between North and South (Part 4)

Upon hearing about payment, Hu Fei immediately ran over with his notebook excitedly, placing it in front of Ling Jian. Watching Ling Jian enter a series of numbers expressionlessly, Hu Fei's small eyes lit up with excitement. For him, this was undoubtedly the happiest moment.

Once the computer screen displayed 'Transfer Successful', Hu Fei grinned, nodding at Ling Chen before closing his notebook and retreating.

"Ling Chen, the money is received. Aren't you supposed to withdraw with your crew?" Ling Jian said.

"No rush." Ling Chen said with a smile.

"Ling Chen!" shouted the captured Ling Haitian loudly. "Don't forget, you have all of this thanks to the northern Ling Family. Are you going to betray us too? Tell me how much you need to solve them, and it's not a problem."

"Shut up." Ling Gao, standing behind with a dagger, said coldly, "Ling Haitian, you're not qualified to say such things. How much does the northern Ling Family have? You should know better than me. Forget about sixty billion US Dollars, you can't even provide half."

"I..." Ling Haitian's face changed color, his mouth agape, unsure of what to say.

At this moment, Ling Kun and Ling Tao both looked visibly uncomfortable. All along, they were responsible for the northern Ling Family's external affairs, while the internal matters were handled by Ling Haitian, Ling Jun, and Ling Gao. However, they hadn't expected the internal individuals to be a bunch of parasites, secretly embezzling the northern Ling Family's funds. They fought tirelessly outside for the northern Ling Family's uprising, yet these people enjoyed their lives behind closed doors. Anyone would find it difficult to accept.

"Family Head, is what he said true?" Ling Tao asked gravely.

Ling Haitian hurriedly defended, "Ling Tao, you... don't listen to his nonsense, this is slander. I've never done anything to harm the northern Ling Family. I..."

"Humph!" Ling Gao sneered, "Ling Haitian, you're really shameless to speak such words. You've kept three college students and five mistresses in Beijing and East Sea City, and I've helped in buying houses for those women. Besides, you've purchased properties all over the country, valued around two billion, have I said anything incorrect? Besides these, your annual expenses on food and drinks are at least eight digits."

Hearing this, Ling Haitian's face turned pale, angrily shouting, "You're talking nonsense!"

"Nonsense? Do you know everything you and Ling Jun have done is recorded by me, in great detail. Should I show them these records? So they can see your true face?"

"Family Head, Ling Kun and I have worked tirelessly for the northern Ling Family, without a moment of slack, spending every penny wisely, never indulging in luxurious living, you... alas!" Ling Tao shook his head lightly, "Perhaps Ling Chen is right, the northern Ling Family has no reason to exist anymore."

"No, I..." Ling Haitian tried to speak, but Ling Gao forced his words back with the dagger near his throat.

"Enough!" Ling Chen cleared his throat, saying, "These are family ugliness, no need to say more. Since things have reached this point, there's no need for more words. Sir Chen, go ahead and solve this quickly, so everyone can rest."

With these words, Ling Jian's face turned sullen, coldly demanding, "Ling Chen, you promised me, take the money and leave immediately, are you going to go back on your word?"

Ling Chen shrugged, "Ling Family Master, I'm sorry, I'm a person of integrity. However, my integrity depends on the person. For people like you, it's better off dead." With that, Ling Chen waved his hand, and the always ready Chen Junfeng rushed forward.

At the same time, Ling Kun and Ji Gang made their move, charging toward the trio of Ling Jian.

"Ling Chen, you bastard!" Ling Jian roared angrily, retreating in panic. Meanwhile, Ling Ao and Ling Feng quickly shielded themselves against the onslaught of Chen Junfeng and the three.

Having suffered a setback at Ji Gang's hands, Ling Jian had already lost his combat abilities and could only rely on the protection of Ling Ao and Ling Feng. However, this meant Ling Ao and Ling Feng needed to consider Ling Jian's safety, unable to counterattack freely, their skills restrained, and they fell into a passive stance.

Whoosh!

Suddenly, a sharp sound sliced through the air. A sharp arrow flew from an unexpected angle, straight towards the rear of Ling Jian.

"Family Head, watch out!" Ling Ao's face showed surprise, retreating quickly to intercept the deadly arrow. But, Ling Ao's retreat exposed a weak point in their frontal defense. Ling Feng alone couldn't withstand the combined attack of Chen Junfeng, Ling Kun, and Ji Gang.

In an instant, Ji Gang and Ling Kun flanked from both sides, targeting Ling Feng's wings. Meanwhile, Chen Junfeng dashed forward, nearing Ling Feng rapidly, launching a powerful punch.

Even with Ling Feng's skills, facing a combined assault from the trio was overwhelming.

Bam!

Accompanied by a dull thud, though Ling Feng blocked Ling Kun's attack, Ji Gang's and Chen Junfeng's fists hit him. With a mouthful of blood spat out, Ling Feng's body was launched into the air, crashing heavily onto the ground.

Seeing Ling Feng down, Ling Ao and Ling Jian were taken aback. The tide was already against them, and losing a major figure meant that the two alone couldn't repel the opponent's assault.

"Ling Gao, what are you standing idle for." In desperation, Ling Jian shouted loudly.

Hearing Ling Jian's call, Ling Gao finally reacted, pressing the dagger against Ling Haitian's neck, shouting viciously, "Stop, or I..."

Before Ling Gao finished speaking, Ling Chen signaled Zhang Zhongfeng with a glance, who immediately understood, drew an arrow and placed it upon his longbow.

Whoosh!

Instantly, the arrow pierced through Ling Haitian's chest.

This sudden change left everyone on-site stunned, even Ling Tao was taken aback.

No one anticipated Ling Chen would be so decisive, having Zhang Zhongfeng kill Ling Haitian directly. With Ling Haitian dead, Ling Gao lost his only leverage.

Sensing Ling Haitian's weakening breath, Ling Gao dared not linger, quickly pushing Ling Haitian's body forward and escaping rapidly backward. The situation was lost, and if he didn't flee, his life would surely be left on this island.

"Leave that guy to me." Xu Ming threw out a sentence, swiftly pursuing Ling Gao's escape direction.

Ling Chen felt concerned, given that Ling Gao's strength matched Xu Ming's.

"Big brother, you and second sister go help second brother to prevent any mishaps."

"Okay." Qiu Yong responded and immediately followed with Xia Yue.

Chapter 1383 - 1691: The Unification of North and South (Part 1)

At this moment, the offensive from Chen Junfeng and his two companions grew increasingly fierce, leaving Ling Ao on the defensive. Given the current situation, his defeat was just a matter of time.

"Enough! Everyone, stop!" Suddenly, Ling Gao shouted, quickly retreating to create some distance.

"What is it?" Ling Chen spoke, "Do you have something more to say?"

"I surrender." Ling Ao gritted his teeth, squeezing out a few words, "Let us go, and I will give you anything you want."

Ling Chen shook his head and said, "I'm afraid you can't give me what I want."

"How do you know I can't give it? The Southern Ling Family has a history of hundreds of years, with abundant resources. I can give you as much money as you want."

"This isn't about money," Ling Chen said. "If I let you go, it's like letting a tiger back into the mountains. As you said, the Southern Ling Family has deep resources and endless money. Even if you fail this time, with sufficient funds, you could rise again. At that time, who knows if the Southern Ling Family will come to trouble me once more. There's a saying, 'If the root is not removed, the grass will grow again with the spring breeze.' I want a peaceful life, and as long as you live, I can never be at ease."

Ling Jian chimed in, "I can promise you, we won't cause any more trouble for you in the future."

"Promise?" Ling Chen smiled faintly, "Ling Family Master, do you think your promise has any value? People like us don't easily trust others because you're not someone trustworthy. So, only by killing you can I truly be at ease. Enough has been said. Sir Chen, do it, don't leave them any way out."

Seeing Chen Junfeng and the others slowly approaching him, Ling Ao hurriedly said, "Ling Chen, I am a Heavenly List expert. If you are willing, I can serve you."

Ling Ao's words reached him, but Ling Chen remained unmoved. Heavenly List experts are indeed valuable, but if Ling Ao can betray the Northern Ling Family today and serve him, who knows if he will switch sides again when he falls out of power. A fickle person like this, even if he were the best in the world, would not tempt Ling Chen.

"Ling..." Ling Ao opened his mouth, wanting to say more, but unfortunately, Chen Junfeng didn't give him the chance. With a quick stride, Chen Junfeng was instantly in front of Ling Ao, both fists releasing, Qi Force erupting, and the onslaught was fierce.

Ling Ao had already lost the will to fight. Facing Chen Junfeng's storm-like offensive, he kept retreating, unable to counterattack.

Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh!

At this time, a series of piercing sounds shattered the night sky as several arrows shot towards Ling Ao.

Glancing at the direction from which the arrows came, Ling Ao immediately dodged. However, those arrows suddenly collided with their own tails, altering the trajectory of the foremost one. Such a change was something Ling Ao never anticipated. Or rather, he had never seen such miraculous archery.

Caught off guard, Ling Ao's thigh was struck by an arrow, and his body slumped heavily to one side. In that moment, Chen Junfeng took advantage, punching down and hitting Ling Ao directly on the head.

Instantly, Ling Ao's legs went limp, and he collapsed to the ground, blood gurgling out from his mouth, nose, eyes, and ears.

Seeing Ling Ao lying lifelessly on the ground, Ling Jian and Ling Feng were stunned. They hadn't expected Ling Chen to be so ruthless as to really kill Ling Ao.

"No... no... I... I surrender, spare me..." Ling Jian begged desperately, "I'll do anything if you just let me go."

"Sorry, keeping you alive is just a disaster waiting to happen, so... I prefer to cut the problem at the root." As soon as the words were spoken, without waiting for Ling Jian to say more, Chen Junfeng rushed forward, striking Ling Jian's head with his palm. With Ling Jian dead, Ling Feng also couldn't escape Chen Junfeng's assassination. As of this moment, all three Heavenly List experts of the Southern Ling Family were dead.

Today marks the end of the Southern Ling Family's fate.

Shortly, Xu Ming and Qiu Yong also returned. By their expressions, it was clear Ling Gao had not escaped and would remain on this island forever.

"Ling Chen, he..." Ling Tao pointed to the prone Ling Haitian.

Ling Chen smiled slightly, "Uncle Ling, rest assured, he's not dead, just unconscious." Zhang Zhongfeng's arrow didn't hit a vital point in Ling Haitian, intending to create the appearance of fake death to deprive Ling Gao of leverage.

Of course, if it weren't for Ling Kun and Ling Tao's sake, with Ling Chen's temper, someone like Ling Haitian deserved death.

"Ling Chen, you've done well." At this moment, Ling Jun approached Ling Chen and said, "With Ling Jian dead, from now on, the Southern Ling Family will be history. You played a significant role in this."

Ling Chen looked at Ling Jun in amusement, "Why are you telling me this?"

"Ling Haitian is no longer suitable to be the head of the Northern Ling Family. I think you're great, brave and resourceful, and you command such strong forces. If you take over the Northern Ling Family, I believe the future will be ours."

"You want me to be the Family Head?"

"Yes, I think you're the most qualified for it." Ling Jun looked at Ling Kun and Ling Tao, "I believe they won't have any objections."

"With the fall of the Southern Ling Family, there will no longer be a divide between North and South in Huaxia. There will only be one Ling Family. However, I have no interest in the position of Family Head. Frankly, I'm still wondering if there's any real necessity for the Ling Family to continue to exist."

Ling Jun frowned, "Blood of the Ling Family runs through your veins, how can you utter such blasphemous words?"

Ling Chen nonchalantly shook his head, unwilling to argue further. Why would Ling Jun recommend him to be Family Head? Anyone with a brain could easily guess his intentions. Ling Chen didn't like Ling Jun as a person, nor was he interested in becoming Family Head. The burdens on his shoulders were already heavy enough, and there was no need to add more pressure with the task of rejuvenating the Ling Family. Let someone else handle it.

After a brief rest, as daylight broke from the east, Ling Chen walked over to Ling Kun and asked, "Dad, are you coming with us or...?"

"You go back to East Sea City first. Ling Tao and I have a lot to deal with here."

Ling Chen nodded, quietly advising, "Dad, be careful of those few. The Ling Family is a big cake now, and everyone wants a bite. If things become impossible, just come back and leave them to it."

"Don't worry, I know what to do. Be careful on your way!"

"Got it."

After saying goodbye to Ling Kun, Ling Chen boarded the plane with everyone and flew straight towards East Sea City. Watching the island below grow smaller and smaller, Ling Chen retracted his gaze and slowly let out a breath.

Chapter 1384 - 1692: Unification of North and South (Part 2)

Finally, it's over!

Ling Chen closed his eyes, thinking to himself. From the God Organization to the Southern Ling Family, everything has concluded. From now on, he can finally live a peaceful life.

"Ling Chen." At this moment, Hu Fei's voice came through. Opening his eyes and seeing the satellite phone Hu Fei handed over, Ling Chen asked, "What's up?"

"Mr. He's call, looking for you."

Ling Chen quickly took the satellite phone and asked, "Mr. He, is there something you need me for?"

On the other end of the line, He Ziyun asked, "When can you come back? A lot has happened at the Dragon Tiger Hall while you've been away."

"I'm on the plane now, just a few hours until I arrive."

"Alright, we'll wait for you at the hall."

After hanging up, Hu Fei asked curiously, "Hey! What does Mr. He need you for?"

Ling Chen shrugged, sighing helplessly, "What else could it be? It's always the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion that can make Mr. He this anxious. Sigh! I was planning to relax for a while, but it seems I'm destined to be busy, never a moment of leisure."

After resting on the plane for two hours, by the time it arrived at East Sea City's airport, Jiang Hao was already waiting with a convoy outside the airport.

Getting into the car, Ling Chen massaged his temples and took the fast food Jiang Hao had bought, eating large bites. He hadn't eaten anything since last night, and his stomach was nearly empty.

"Jiang Hao, how have things been lately?" Ling Chen asked casually.

Jiang Hao was among the first to follow Ling Chen. Now, Jiang Hao and Zhao Zhengxiong are well-known figures in East Sea City, controlling the entire city's underground forces. Initially, there was also Nanrong Hao, but since he had to take over Hongyu Group, he didn't have the energy to manage too many things, so he withdrew.

"Chen, don't you trust my work?"

Ling Chen joked with a smile, "I do trust you, but it's important to stay alert in peaceful times. I'm worried you might get too comfortable, and by the time enemies reach your doorstep, you won't even be aware."

"That won't happen. Chen, I'm not idling around; I've been expanding our power. Besides East Sea City, the surrounding towns are under our control. I've discussed with Xiong, and we're planning to continue expanding, taking over a few second-tier cities nearby." Jiang Hao spoke enthusiastically about his plans.

However, despite Jiang Hao's excitement, there was a trace of concern in Ling Chen's eyes.

"Jiang Hao, listen to me, don't expand any further. Just hold onto East Sea City and ignore the rest."

Hearing this, Jiang Hao asked in confusion, "Chen, why should we miss out on such a great opportunity?"

"Underground forces are always part of the underworld, and many things can't see the light of day. Moreover, the nation despises the underworld. Once you cross their line, the government won't stand by idly. When that time comes, you could be in danger. Do you think the government is unaware of what we've been doing in East Sea City? In fact, they've been monitoring us all along. Because you've been following the rules and haven't done anything unjust, no one bothers you now. But if you step over the line, they'll certainly cause trouble for you."

"Really?" Jiang Hao wiped the sweat from his forehead, "Chen, you're not trying to scare me, are you?"

"Have I ever lied to you? In any case, just manage what you have well, and stay away from drugs, gambling, and prostitution. Otherwise, if something happens, even I won't be able to help you. Got it?"

Jiang Hao quickly nodded, replying, "Chen, don't worry, I won't do anything reckless."

As they spoke, the convoy had already reached the headquarters of the Dragon Tiger Hall. Upon getting out of the car, Ling Chen headed straight to the Dragon Tiger Hall's office. Upon entering, he saw He Ziyun and Tong Zhentian both present, waiting for his return.

"Elder Tong, Mr. He, what's the urgent matter?"

"Recently, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has been causing a lot of trouble for our Dragon Tiger Hall, so we wanted to discuss with you how we could turn the situation around."

Ling Chen curiously said, "Elder Tong, our Dragon Tiger Hall has already made a name for itself. Even if the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion follows in our footsteps, they can't surpass us all of a sudden. Could it be... they're using some underhanded methods again?"

"Not really." He Ziyun chimed in, "This Su Mei is much better than Su He, she hasn't used any tricks, but instead seems sincere, even surpassing our Dragon Tiger Hall."

"Is that so?" Ling Chen became interested and asked, "How are they being sincere?"

"The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's foundation is comparable to ours. This time, they not only opened more than a dozen martial arts academies but also offered many rare martial arts secrets. However, the most attractive is the Heavenly Mechanism Pill. You know, the Heavenly Mechanism Pill is a unique elixir of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, especially effective for martial artists. Besides our secrets, Dragon Tiger Hall really can't offer anything comparable to the Heavenly Mechanism Pill. So in recent times, the recruitment rate for the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has been several times higher than ours, and many talented individuals have been poached by them."

Hearing this, Ling Chen's lips curled into a smile as he said, "Who knew, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is willing to spend so much, even offering their Heavenly Mechanism Pill. By the way, Elder Tong, where have they opened their martial arts academies?"

"Beijing, Jinhai City, and many first-tier cities, even here in East Sea City, there's one not far from our Dragon Tiger Hall. This time, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has clearly marked us for competition."

Ling Chen nodded and said, "Competitions lead to progress. As long as it's healthy competition, we'll go along with it."

"So how do you plan to handle this matter?"

"Well..." Ling Chen scratched his nose and said, "I have no understanding of elixirs, so asking me won't help. Besides, elixirs aren't something you can just concoct out of thin air; the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has taken hundreds of years to develop the Heavenly Mechanism Pill. So, if we want to compete with the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, we'll need something equally appealing to draw people in."

"Elder Tong, Mr. He, how about this, let me think about it for a while. Also, I'd like to find some time to visit them."

"Fair enough," Tong Zhentian said. "To my knowledge, Su Mei is also in East Sea City these days; you could meet with her."

"Actually, I have a foolproof solution," He Ziyun said from the side.

"Mr. He, what solution do you have?"

"Isn't the Pavilion Master of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion somewhat interested in you? If you put in a little effort, you might win the lady's heart. Then everything she has will be yours. Elder Tong, do you think what I'm saying makes sense?"

Tong Zhentian laughed heartily and said, "Makes sense, quite a lot of sense. Ling Chen, you should give it a try; after all, you've got nothing to lose."

#### Chapter 1385 - 1693: Martial Arts Academy Rivalry (1)

Ling Chen wore a speechless expression as the two elderly men teased him. As he emerged from the office, Ling Chen met with Chen Junfeng and others. This action was much thanks to Chen Junfeng's help, and Ling Chen felt the need to express his gratitude.

After a brief rest at the Dragon Tiger Hall, Ling Chen drove by himself to the Martial Arts Academy set up by the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. He Ziyun had mentioned that the Academy was not far from the Dragon Tiger Hall. Ling Chen had thought this "not far" meant at least a few kilometers, but after just a few hundred meters of driving, he saw two stone lions standing outside a large gate. On top of the stone lions hung red ribbons, and a plaque at the top bore the four large characters "Heavenly Mechanism Arts Hall," written in a vigorous style.

Ling Chen parked the car and went directly to the entrance of the Heavenly Mechanism Arts Hall. It seemed they were in a rush to open, as many painting jobs were not fully completed, and at the moment, a few painters were outside painting the walls, with the air filled with the smell of paint.

Before entering, Ling Chen saw two young men in the Academy's uniform walking out.

"Hello, sir. May I ask whom you're looking for?" one of the youths asked politely.

Ling Chen smiled slightly, "I'm Ling Chen. I've heard that Master Su is here, so I came by to pay a visit."

Hearing Ling Chen's name, the youth was taken aback, quickly clasping his hands together in respect and saying, "Oh, so it's Mr. Ling, please come in." Inside the Academy, Ling Chen looked around and saw

there were up to a hundred students on the vast practice field, ranging from five or six-year-old children to teenagers. They were all diligently practicing their basic skills.

Seeing this, Ling Chen couldn't help but see Su Mei in a new light. In his eyes, Su Mei had always been a righteous person, never willing or needing to use any unscrupulous means. However, after going through so many things, Su Mei finally changed, or rather... she had gradually matured. As the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion Master, if it were the era when the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion dominated the Martial Arts world, her kind of personality would be suitable. However, when facing competitors, Su Mei's personality is a significant weakness.

From this incident, Su Mei had learned to use strategies to achieve her goals, even if those strategies were not entirely aboveboard. This is one of the essential factors for a mature leader.

In fact, after the incident with Su He concluded, Ling Chen didn't want to clash with the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion anymore. According to his plan, in less than a decade, the Dragon Tiger Hall could entirely surpass the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. However, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion was quite clever and saw through their plan. With the opening of the Heavenly Mechanism Arts Hall, the Dragon Tiger Hall's expansion plans had to be temporarily halted; otherwise, continuing would yield little benefit.

Soon, the two youths led Ling Chen to the reception room. "Mr. Ling, please wait a moment, I'll notify the Pavilion Master right away."

Ling Chen nodded, picked up a cup of tea, and started drinking it by himself.

Meanwhile, in a room within the Heavenly Mechanism Arts Hall, after listening to the two youths' report, Su Mei waved her hand and said, "I understand, you two may leave now."

Once the two youths had exited the room, Su Mei turned to Du Kang beside her and asked, "Elder Du, Ling Chen has come to see me at this time, I'm afraid he's here to cause trouble. What do you think we should do?"

"Ling Chen came alone, so it likely isn't to cause trouble. Pavilion Master, if you don't want to see him, perhaps you can find an excuse to send him away. However, I suggest you meet with him to understand the Dragon Tiger Hall's intention."

"Alright, I understand."

After waiting a few minutes, Ling Chen, seated in the reception room, finally saw Su Mei walking gracefully from outside.

"Miss Su." Ling Chen greeted, standing up and going towards her with a smile.

"Sorry to keep you waiting."

"No problem, the Heavenly Mechanism Arts Hall just opened, you must be busy with many things. I encountered some troublesome matters recently, otherwise, I would have come a long time ago to congratulate you. My visit today was unplanned, and I haven't prepared any gifts; I hope you don't think I'm being stingy."

Su Mei smiled lightly, "Your visit is more than enough to make me happy, please have a seat." Once they were seated, Su Mei said, "Ling Chen, I apologize for taking away the Dragon Tiger Hall's business. I initially thought you were here to demand an explanation."

Ling Chen waved his hand and grinned, "Listen to yourself, am I such a petty person? As I've said before, the Martial Arts world needs fresh blood, only this way can it grow and rejuvenate. The fact that your Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is willing to abandon old habits and innovate makes me happy. I believe, as long as we work together, the Martial Arts world will eventually reach its peak again. So, we're both contributing to the future of the Martial Arts world, with a common goal, there's no need to talk about 'stealing business'."

Hearing this, Su Mei was silent for a moment before saying, "I heard you were missing for some time, what happened?"

Ling Chen acted helpless, sighing, "Floating in the Martial Arts world, how can one not get hurt? The more people you have, the more enemies you naturally accrue. But luckily, I'm someone with a strong life force, there's no obstacle I can't overcome. See, I'm now sitting here perfectly fine in front of you, right?"

Changing the subject, Ling Chen asked, "By the way! Miss Su, may I ask, your grandfather..."

Before Ling Chen could finish, Su Mei gently shook her head and said, "I have no news about him, and the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has severed ties with him. From now on, his actions have nothing to do with the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion."

"Miss Su, you misunderstood me, it's been so long, I don't wish to pursue it further. No matter what, Elder Su counts as half my master. If possible, I hope to sit down with him, have a drink, and chat, and let bygones be bygones." After a pause, Ling Chen continued, "In truth, I understand Elder Su's actions, only that his method was wrong. Miss Su, if you get a chance to see Elder Su in the future, please pass on a message for me. 'Once a teacher, always a father; no matter what happens in the future, he will always be the most respected person.'"

Su Mei nodded, "I'll mention it if the opportunity arises, but I personally think that chance is slim."

"Alright." Ling Chen smiled, stood up, and said, "With the Academy opening, you must have a lot to do, so I won't disturb you further. Let's keep in touch more often. As long as there's nothing going on, I'm usually in East Sea City."

"Then let me walk you out."

As he left the Heavenly Mechanism Arts Hall, Ling Chen exchanged a few polite words with Su Mei before driving back to the Dragon Tiger Hall.

Chapter 1386 - 1694: Martial Arts Academy Showdown (2)

"So, how did it go? What did you chat about with Su Mei?" He Ziyun asked, sitting in the office.

"Not much, just some casual talk." Ling Chen crossed his legs and said, "The Su Mei of today is not the Su Mei of the past. Although we only talked for a while, I could sense her wariness towards me, so I didn't ask too much and came back directly."

In the past, when chatting with Su Mei, she would inadvertently reveal her emotions, but this time, each of Su Mei's smiles felt stiff and not naturally expressed. That's why Ling Chen had this feeling.

"So what do we do now?" Tong Zhentian asked, "Their Martial Arts Academy is opening right at our doorstep. If we don't act, the people in the Martial Arts world will mock our Dragon Tiger Hall for having no courage."

Hearing this, Ling Chen laughed indifferently, "Elder Tong, Mr. He, to be honest, I don't really care about this. Have you forgotten the original purpose of establishing Dragon Tiger Hall? We set up Dragon Tiger Hall not to compete and win but to carry on and revitalize the Martial Arts world, setting an example for everyone in it. From the establishment of Dragon Tiger Hall till now, I think we've basically achieved our goal. Although Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is doing this to limit the development of Dragon Tiger Hall, aren't they also cultivating new talents for the Martial Arts world? I think as long as it's healthy competition, there's no need for us to deliberately fight them, just keep a good direction and maintain a balance."

After listening to Ling Chen's words, Tong Zhentian nodded and said earnestly, "You're right, we were thinking too narrowly. Sitting in this position for a long time makes one uncontrollably want to seek greater power and ambition, almost forgetting what our original intention was. Ling Chen, although I've lived for over half my life, I can't escape the erosion of desires, in this regard, you do the best, being indifferent to fame and fortune..."

"Elder Tong, please stop," Ling Chen hastily said, "I'm not as good as you said, I just don't have much pursuit of power, so I see many things more clearly."

"Alright, both of you stop flattering each other." He Ziyun interjected, "Even if we want healthy competition, we have to come up with a response plan; otherwise, more and more people will be attracted to the Heavenly Mechanism Pill. By then, if Dragon Tiger Hall has no students, that would be truly embarrassing."

Ling Chen thought for a moment and said, "Mr. He, I've seriously considered this issue. Although the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion uses the Heavenly Mechanism Pill as a lure to attract others to join, we all know that they can't possibly offer so many Heavenly Mechanism Pills to everyone. So, there must be some restrictions, and these restrictions won't be low. Otherwise, even if Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has deep foundations, it couldn't withstand such consumption."

"So what do you mean..."

"Try to make Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion lower the conditions for obtaining the Heavenly Mechanism Pill, allowing more people to get it. Once the Heavenly Mechanism Pills are exhausted, what will they

use to lure people? Unless they manufacture fake Heavenly Mechanism Pills, but such reputation-damaging acts Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion likely wouldn't do."

At this, Ling Chen looked at Tong Zhentian and asked, "Elder Tong, what resources do we currently have that we can offer?"

"Martial Arts manuals, that's the only resource we own. However, because of Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's involvement, Martial Arts manuals are no longer novel."

Ling Chen nodded, "The resources of Dragon Tiger Hall are indeed too monotonous. Elder Tong, Mr. He, besides Martial Arts manuals and Spiritual Elixirs, what else do people in the Martial Arts world like?"

"Well..." Tong Zhentian and He Ziyun exchanged a glance, "It should be weapons, especially for those who specialize in the eighteen weapons of martial arts. Their greatest desire is to own a handy weapon."

"Exactly!" Ling Chen grinned, "I can invite Mr. Guo over. The benefit of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is the Heavenly Mechanism Pill, while ours at the Dragon Tiger Hall will be the Divine Weapons. I believe, with Mr. Guo's reputation, we can certainly attract a lot of people."

"That's not a bad idea," Tong Zhentian agreed, "After all, the Heavenly Mechanism Pill is a consumable resource, but weapons are permanent. If it's a long-term battle, Dragon Tiger Hall will ensure we overpower Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. However, will Guo Ming agree to help? As far as I know, he has already retired."

Ling Chen laughed, "Elder Tong, rest assured. I am confident I can invite Mr. Guo here," jokingly, as he and Guo Ming are on the same boat now. As long as he asks, Guo Ming will not refuse.

Mentioning Guo Ming, Ling Chen suddenly recalled something important, which is Ling Gengqiu. Hu Fei has already transported Ling Gengqiu's parts to Beijing, and he wonders how well Ling Gengqiu has been recovering.

Leaving Dragon Tiger Hall, Ling Chen drove home. On the way, he shared his idea with Guo Ming and asked about Ling Gengqiu's recovery.

"Rest assured, he's doing very well now. If everything goes well, he'll be up and about in a few days,"

"Great, Mr. Guo, I'll trouble you with things over there, and I'll pick you up at the airport when the time comes."

Back home, Ling Chen found only Yang Qingling there, as his grandparents were out for a walk. "Mom, where are dad and the others? Didn't they come back already?"

"They went to the hospital. Ling Haitian got injured and is receiving treatment; your dad and Uncle Ling went to visit him." After saying that, Yang Qingling held Ling Chen's hand and advised, "Son, don't be like your dad, better to stay out of Ling Family affairs in the future."

"Mom, don't worry, I'll handle things well."

Just then, the door was pushed open from outside, and Ling Kun and Ling Tao walked in one after the other.

Upon seeing Ling Chen, Ling Kun gestured for him to come over and said, "Son, come here, I have something to discuss with you."

"Okay," Ling Chen replied, obediently following Ling Kun into the study. "Dad, Uncle Ling, what do you want to talk about?"

"It's like this, the Southern Ling Family has already been wiped out, but as you can see, the situation in the Northern Ling Family is problematic now with Ling Gao dead. How to deal with Ling Haitian and Ling Jun is a big issue,"

Ling Tao added, "Ling Haitian definitely can't continue as the Family Head, as for Ling Jun... he's too self-serving. Your dad and I are thinking about who should inherit the Ling Family."

Ling Chen pointed to himself and said, "Dad, you're not thinking of me, are you? I've already made it clear, I have no interest in being the Ling Family Patriarch. Don't look for me. Moreover, the Ling Family is in ruins, and I'm too busy with my matters to have the energy to handle this."

## Chapter 1387 - 1695: Reunion with an Old Friend (1)

"I'm just asking, if you don't have any ideas, then let your dad take over as the head of the Ling Family."

"My dad?" Ling Chen glanced at Ling Kun and asked, "Dad, would mom agree?"

"She shouldn't have any objections. The Ling Family has no rivals now; we just need to develop slowly. I believe your mom will agree."

"Alright." Ling Chen nodded and said, "As long as I don't have to be the head, you guys can do whatever. But Dad, what are your plans for Ling Haitian and Ling Jun? Ling Haitian is not a concern, but Ling Jun is a top expert on the Heavenly List. It's hard to dismiss him, yet keeping him is a problem."

Ling Kun and Ling Tao exchanged glances and said, "Ling Jun can't stay in the Ling Family. We will give him some resources to become self-reliant. From now on, whatever he does has nothing to do with us."

"As long as he doesn't cause trouble, that's fine."

Ling Chen actually means to abandon the Ling Family, but Ling Kun and Ling Tao are obviously reluctant. After all, their bond with the Northern Ling Family runs deep, and seeing the Ling Family become history is heart-wrenching for them.

After discussing with Ling Chen, Ling Kun left the study to find Yang Qingling. Succeeding as the head of the Ling Family is no small matter. Ling Kun definitely needs to convince Yang Qingling and gain her support.

While waiting for his parents to decide, Ling Chen found himself bored and decided to drive out of the house.

Before he knew it, Ling Chen drove to the entrance of Hongyu Group. After parking the car, Ling Chen walked into the lobby alone, where he saw the sofas filled with men in suits, all with briefcases, discussing animatedly.

"Chen?" At this moment, Nanrong Hao's surprised voice came over.

Ling Chen turned his head and saw Nanrong Hao elegantly dressed in a sleek suit, walking toward him with brisk steps.

"Wow! You look more and more like a successful entrepreneur." Ling Chen teased with a smile, "Hey! What are all those people doing there?"

Nanrong Hao glanced at the dozen suit-clad men waiting in the lobby and said, "They're here to discuss business with us. Chen, you wouldn't know, but recently I've been so busy that I barely have time to sleep. Every day there are countless contracts to sign. Look, I've been holding a pen so much, I'm getting calluses."

"Come on, isn't earning money a good thing?"

"Chen, I might have cared about how much money was made before, but now, money is just a number to me. Every day, there's a huge crowd of people here wanting to collaborate with us at Hongyu Group. Our business department has expanded from three teams to ten. By the way! Chen, are you here to see my sister? She's in a meeting now; why don't you come and sit at my place for a while."

Ling Chen nodded and said, "Alright, I have nothing to do today anyway. Might as well have dinner on you."

"No problem, I'll call Jiang Hao and Xiong. We brothers haven't gathered for a long time."

As they spoke, the two took the elevator to the top floor. Nanrong Hao's office was opposite Nanrong Wanqing's. Inside, Ling Chen saw the 'Vice President' sign on the door and chuckled, "You finally got promoted."

"My sister said that in a year or two, once she gets married, she'll pass her position to me. Chen, it's up to you now; my sister can't wait to get married."

"Get lost, it's still early for me and your sister. As for you, being the Vice President of Hongyu Group, aren't there women chasing after you? With your status, there must be countless women interested."

Nanrong Hao waved his hand and said, "Those women are after my money. I'm not interested in gold diggers. Now, I value the feeling; no matter her family background or looks, as long as there's a connection. But, I'm facing a small problem."

"What problem?"

Nanrong Hao embarrassedly smiled and said, "It seems there are quite a lot of women I'm interested in."

"You brat... truly can't change your nature." Ling Chen helplessly shook his head, thinking Nanrong Hao had reformed, but he was still as flirtatious as ever.

After chatting for a while, a series of knocks sounded from outside the door.

"Come in."

After Nanrong Hao spoke, the office door opened from the outside, and secretary Wang Lan quickly walked in. Seeing Ling Chen, Wang Lan smiled in greeting and then turned her gaze to Nanrong Hao, "Mr. Nanrong, the folks from Changlong Technology are here; the chairman is in a meeting and wants you to host them."

"Changlong Technology?" Nanrong Hao was slightly surprised and asked, "Why are they here? Wasn't it scheduled for the day after tomorrow?"

"They changed their schedule last minute, and we just got notified. The manager of Changlong Technology is already at the door, Mr. Nanrong, so..."

"Alright, I got it." Nanrong Hao stood up reluctantly and said, "Chen, sit tight. I'll go meet the guests. Lan, you stay here with Chen."

"Yes." After watching Nanrong Hao leave, Ling Chen asked curiously, "Lan, what's Changlong Technology all about? You seem to value them greatly."

"Mr. Ling, Changlong Technology is a foreign enterprise, ranked within the world's top 100. This time, they have a big project in Huaxia and are seeking partners. They're interested in Hongyu Group's qualifications and want to discuss collaboration."

"I see." Ling Chen nodded; no wonder Hongyu Group gives them such importance. Nanrong Wanqing has always wanted Hongyu Group to expand beyond Huaxia and become one of the world's top 500 companies. Collaborating with Changlong Technology might be an opportunity.

After sitting in the office for a while, secretary Wang Lan received a phone call. With matters to deal with, Ling Chen let her leave first.

Noticing the time was already past four in the afternoon, and with Hongyu Group having visitors, Nanrong Hao would surely be busy hosting them, likely causing the evening gathering to go awry. Thinking of this, Ling Chen sent Nanrong Hao a text message and then got up to leave.

At the door of the office, Ling Chen opened the door and was about to depart. However, at that moment, a group of people approached, led by none other than Nanrong Hao.

"Chen, where are you going?"

Ling Chen smiled and said, "I figured you'd be tied up hosting guests tonight, so I decided to leave. We can gather another day when you're free."

"Chen, wait!"

"What, anything else?"

Nanrong Hao said with a peculiar expression, "Chen, do you know who Changlong Technology sent to negotiate with Hongyu Group?"

"Who?" Ling Chen asked curiously, "Could it be someone I know?"

As soon as the words left his mouth, before Nanrong Hao could respond, a familiar yet strange voice came from the crowd behind, "Ling Chen, long time no see."

#### Chapter 1388 - 1696: Reunion with an Old Friend (2)

Ling Chen's gaze cut through the crowd, landing on the woman standing at the very back, and he couldn't help but be startled.

It was... her!

Unconsciously, Ling Chen thought of her promise. A year, a year later, she would return to East Sea City. He hadn't realized how quickly time had flown by; it had been over a year in the blink of an eye. Looking at that familiar, exquisite face, Ling Chen felt momentarily disoriented, as if everything had happened just yesterday.

Lost in thought, the woman had already approached, smiling as she spoke, "It's only been a bit over a year, and you've already forgotten me?"

Ling Chen snapped back to reality, smiling slightly, "Feifei, how could I forget you? It's been over a year, and you're still the same."

The woman before him was none other than Leng Feifei. Back then, Ling Chen had gotten involved with Leng Feifei to save a life. At that time, Leng Feifei had left a letter and then went abroad to study. In the letter, Leng Feifei expressed her feelings for Ling Chen and also told him that when she returned after studying, as long as he wasn't married, she would definitely pursue him. Over this year or so, Ling Chen had never been idle, and Feifei's words had gradually faded from his memory. Seeing her again now, every word from that letter vividly came to mind.

Looking into Ling Chen's ink-clear eyes, Leng Feifei's lips curved slightly, and her bright eyes seemed to glisten with tears.

"Have I really not changed?" Leng Feifei tilted her head, chuckling lightly as she asked.

Hearing this, Ling Chen carefully observed the Leng Feifei before him. Although her appearance hadn't changed much, her demeanor had transformed profoundly compared to before. If before, Leng Feifei

was a fledgling university student, now she had evolved into a career woman, exuding a sharp and decisive aura from head to toe.

However, Ling Chen felt that although Leng Feifei had changed a lot, the one thing that hadn't changed was her proud bosom. Leng Feifei and Nanrong Hao were university classmates, and back at East Sea University, she was known for her baby face and ample bust. Now it seemed, not only had Leng Feifei's figure become more slender, but her full bosom was even more eye-catching.

Noticing Ling Chen's gaze darting now and then to her prominent features, Leng Feifei's pretty face flushed. This scoundrel... after more than a year, he was still the same.

Just then, Nanrong Hao, standing nearby, cleared his throat and said with a smile, "Chen, since we're all old friends, why don't you stay?"

Ling Chen hesitated for a moment, and feeling Leng Feifei's hopeful gaze, he gently nodded, "Alright, then I'll stay as a guest."

Returning to the office, Nanrong Hao invited Ling Chen and Leng Feifei to sit on the sofa, then personally brewed two cups of tea and placed them in front of them.

Ling Chen inadvertently glanced around; Changlong Technology had sent a team of about ten people, but aside from Leng Feifei, everyone else stood neatly behind the sofa, quiet as could be, as if they had undergone professional military training.

"Didn't you go abroad to study? How did you end up working for Changlong Technology?" Ling Chen asked curiously.

Leng Feifei smiled politely and said, "It's a long story; I'll tell you another time when I have the chance." With that, Leng Feifei turned her gaze to Nanrong Hao and said, "Mr. Nanrong, there's no need to busy yourself. I'm here today to discuss a collaboration. Since it's work time, why don't we chat first and make the final decision when Chairman Nanrong arrives."

Nanrong Hao nodded, "Alright."

Once Nanrong Hao was seated, Leng Feifei said, "I believe Mr. Nanrong has already seen our prospectus, so I'll skip the project introduction and talk about some practical matters. Our project is divided into three phases. The first phase investment is three billion US dollars. Depending on market response, if sales are promising, we will expand globally. Based on our projections, as long as progress is smooth, the second phase investment should be about five billion US dollars."

Hearing Leng Feifei's numbers, Nanrong Hao was a bit taken aback, "Miss Leng, if we invest the amount you mentioned, how much equity would we get?"

"Forty-nine percent, the absolute controlling rights must remain with our company. If Hongyu Group can take on this forty-nine percent stake, it'll save us the time and effort of finding another partner. If you lack sufficient funds, we'll have to share some equity to find other partners. In any case, the number of shareholders in this project cannot exceed four."

Nanrong Hao mused for a moment, then said, "The first phase of funding is not a problem, but for the second phase... I'm concerned we won't have enough working capital. Is there no way to reduce it?"

"I'm sorry, the investment amount can't be reduced by even a cent. Changlong Technology is a world-leading tech company. Although tech products have huge profits, the research costs are equally immense. Mr. Nanrong, as I mentioned earlier, you can choose the amount of equity based on your company's funds. I'll find others to take over the remaining shares. How about it?"

"What kind of project requires so much funding?" Ling Chen, sitting to the side, asked.

"Here," Nanrong Hao handed a project proposal to Ling Chen, "this is it."

Ling Chen casually flipped through a few pages, and his expression became peculiar. The proposal involved numerous tech products, including mechanical wearables and simple mechanical control devices—in short, intelligent robots. However, these intelligent robots are primarily used for military purposes.

Having read the proposal, Ling Chen silently marveled. If all the projects in the proposal were completed, there would be a revolutionary shift in current technology, potentially altering the global military landscape.

No wonder Leng Feifei needed so much investment. If these projects succeeded, the profits would be unimaginably large.

"How about... I take a share too?" Ling Chen tentatively asked.

"You?" Leng Feifei looked at Ling Chen, surprised, "You want to invest too?"

Ling Chen nodded, "Yes, this proposal is very appealing. If successful, it will have a massive impact on the world, and I enjoy being part of something so fulfilling."

"Participating is fine; after all, the decision-making power is in my hands, but regarding funds..."

Ling Chen grinned, "Don't worry about it; tens of billions of US dollars is nothing to me. Haozi, how about giving me some shares?"

"Chen, if you're asking, how can I refuse? However, how much to allocate to you, my sister will have to decide."

Just as Nanrong Hao finished speaking, Nanrong Wanqing entered, accompanied by Wang Lan.

Chapter 1389 - 1697: Reunion with an Old Friend (3)

"Sister, you're finally here." Nanrong Hao hurried over to greet her.

Seeing Ling Chen there as well, Nanrong Wanqing was just about to say hello when her gaze landed on Leng Feifei's face, causing her expression to pause slightly.

"Miss Leng?"

"Sister, you might not know this, but Miss Leng is the representative from Changlong Technology. She's fully responsible for the negotiations with our Hongyu Group."

Upon hearing this, the surprise in Nanrong Wanqing's eyes deepened. She was well aware of Leng Feifei, including what had happened between Ling Chen and Leng Feifei. It was because of these events that she and Ling Chen had fallen into a cold war, neither speaking to the other. Unexpectedly, after over a year without contact, Leng Feifei had returned and transformed into the representative from Changlong Technology.

Nanrong Wanqing was well aware of Changlong Technology's status—a top 100 global enterprise, and if assessed solely on technology, their level would definitely rank in the top three. She was very curious about what experiences Leng Feifei had gone through to have become part of Changlong Technology, and furthermore, to be the negotiator for this collaboration. This role was by no means simple and indicated that Leng Feifei enjoyed considerable trust from the higher-ups at Changlong Technology.

"Miss Leng, hello, it's been a long time." Nanrong Wanqing seemed to forget about Ling Chen standing beside her and walked straight up to Leng Feifei, extending her hand.

Leng Feifei stood up, politely shook hands, and smiled, saying, "Chairman Nanrong, it's a pleasure to meet you. I hope our collaboration will be a great success."

"I heard your conversation just now. Since Ling Chen is interested in joining, I can allocate twenty percent of the shares. I wonder what Miss Leng thinks about that."

"If Chairman Nanrong has no objections, then neither do I." With that, Leng Feifei gestured to the staff behind her, and someone immediately took out several documents from a briefcase and laid them on the table, "These are the contracts, please take a look, and if there are no issues, we can sign right away."

Nanrong Wanqing carefully went through them, confirmed everything was in order, and signed her name. Next to her, Ling Chen, seeing this, signed his name at the end of the contract without even looking.

"Great." Leng Feifei smiled and said: "To celebrate our successful collaboration, I'll host tonight. Please don't refuse."

"Feifei, you are the guest; we can't have you hosting." Ling Chen interjected, "Let me arrange a place, and we can all enjoy a drink."

"Since you've already suggested it, how can I refuse? Well then, if there's nothing else, I'll head off first. See you tonight." With that, Leng Feifei and her group left the office straightaway.

Ling Chen and Nanrong Hao escorted Leng Feifei to the elevator before turning back.

"Wanqing, how did you link up with Changlong Technology?" Sitting on the sofa, Ling Chen asked curiously.

"Changlong Technology is looking for a capable partner in Huaxia. Our Hongyu Group has been making quite a splash lately, so naturally, Changlong Technology noticed us. After several evaluations, they finally decided to partner with us. However, I didn't expect this project to require so much funding. Recently, Hongyu United Investment Company has invested in many industries, and a majority of our funds are depleted. If you didn't want to join, I'm afraid those twenty percent shares would have gone elsewhere. But to be honest, the project proposed by Changlong Technology certainly has potential, but the risks are equally significant. Nobody knows if it will succeed. So, you need to be mentally prepared."

Ling Chen laughed indifferently, "No problem, I don't lack money for now, and I can afford to lose several billion US dollars."

"How's your grandfather doing lately?"

"He's well, his health is still decent. But given his age, some ailments are inevitable."

"I'll find time to visit him." Looking at the time, it was already five-thirty, close to the end of the workday. Ling Chen still needed to arrange the dinner. After setting the time with Nanrong Wanqing, Ling Chen drove home directly.

Upon entering the house, he saw Ling Kun and Yang Qingling sitting on the sofa, chatting softly, with no sign of Ling Tao.

Seeing Ling Chen return, Yang Qingling waved him over. "Mom, what do you need me for?"

"I just discussed with your dad. I've decided to support your dad in taking over as the head of the Ling family."

Ling Chen grinned, "That's great news, Dad. Let me congratulate you in advance."

"Don't say that just yet. Since I'll be taking over as the head, we definitely can't live here. The roots of the northern branch of the Ling family are in Beijing, where there is an old family estate—our foundation. I've decided to move there with your mom, so it's easier to manage the Ling family's affairs."

"To Beijing?" Ling Chen was momentarily surprised, then nodded, "It's fine, after all, Beijing isn't far from East Sea City. I'll visit you often when I have the time." Ling Chen wasn't reluctant. Over the years, he had become independent and self-reliant, long accustomed to living alone, so he didn't mind Ling Kun's decision. Furthermore, Beijing was within his influence, so as long as Ling Kun and Yang Qingling's safety was ensured, it didn't matter where they went.

"Alright, since you have no objection, we'll be leaving in a couple of days."

"So soon?"

Ling Kun nodded, "The Ling family has many matters that need my attention; I can't waste time here."

"Okay, let me know when, and I'll take you to the airport." With that, Ling Chen returned to his room alone and changed into a neatly pressed suit.

Around six-thirty in the evening, Ling Chen drove to a high-end Chinese restaurant. Before arriving, he had already asked someone to book a private room. The restaurant's decor was classic and elegant, with a particularly quaint atmosphere in the private room, surrounded by screens painted with ink lotus and green leaves, creating a refreshing and relaxing ambiance.

After waiting in the private room for a while, there was a knock on the door. As the door opened, Nanrong Wanqing and Nanrong Hao walked in one after the other. Both were in casual attire, without deliberate dressing up. However, with Nanrong Wanqing's natural beauty, there was no need for embellishment.

"Chen, I brought two bottles of good wine today. Let's have a good drink later."

Ling Chen smiled and nodded, "Sure, I'll definitely keep you company." With that, Ling Chen pointed to the seat beside him, "Wanqing, come sit here."

Nanrong Wanqing smiled gently and acknowledged softly. The three of them hadn't chatted long when they saw Leng Feifei walk into the private room, led by a waiter. Although they were all old friends, Leng Feifei was the honored guest tonight, so Ling Chen and the others stood up and courteously invited Leng Feifei to be seated.

Chapter 1390 - 1698: Strong Scent of Jealousy

"No need to be so formal, right?" Leng Feifei said with a smile, "It's not like we're meeting for the first time."

"Your status is different now."

"The status may be different, but I've never changed," Leng Feifei looked at Ling Chen and said, with a hint of deeper meaning in her words.

Feeling Leng Feifei's gaze, Ling Chen's heart skipped a beat. He quickly looked away, chuckled awkwardly, and said, "Feifei is right, we're all friends here, no need to be so distant." Saying this, Ling Chen called over the waiter at the door to serve the dishes.

Soon, all the dishes were served, a total of thirteen, extremely abundant.

While eating, Nanrong Wanqing casually asked, "Miss Leng, how long do you plan to stay in the country?"

"I'll be stationed in Huaxia in the future. The company executives have already issued a notice that I'll be in charge of all Huaxia operations."

"Will you be staying in East Sea City or Beijing?"

"The branch will be based in Beijing. After all, it's the political and commercial center of Huaxia, which is more convenient for the company's development."

Hearing this, Nanrong Wanqing nodded gently, smiled, and said, "Beijing is indeed nice. There are many talented young people there; you might even meet someone you fancy."

"I've been at Changlong Technology for so long, didn't learn much else but met plenty of talented young people from all over the world. However, in my view, none of them can compare to Ling Chen," Leng Feifei said, implying something.

"Ling Chen is indeed exceptional, otherwise, he wouldn't attract so much attention from women. But something good is one thing, whether it belongs to you is another. If you force it, you'll only lose more than you gain. Miss Leng has been in the business world for quite some time, I believe you understand this principle."

Leng Feifei chuckled indifferently, "Chairman Nanrong is right, but as the saying goes, 'Sincerity can break the hardest stone,' with enough effort, even iron trees will bloom."

Listening to the exchange between Nanrong Wanqing and Leng Feifei, Nanrong Hao instantly sensed a strong sense of rivalry. At this moment, Nanrong Hao couldn't help but regret, had he known it would be like this, he wouldn't have come to meddle in the first place. It would be much more enjoyable to go and have fun alone. Thinking of this, Nanrong Hao couldn't help but glance at Ling Chen, only to see him calmly sitting there, eating heartily, seemingly oblivious to the tension in the air.

They went back and forth for more than ten minutes, finally realizing that the main person at the table hadn't made a sound. Feeling their gaze focused on him, Ling Chen picked up his wine glass, took a sip of red wine, smacked his lips, and said, "Haozi, this red wine is nice, where did you get it? Send me two bottles sometime."

Nanrong Hao tactfully replied, "Chen, don't worry, I'll send it over another day. But red wine should be paired with Western food; Chinese food is best with white wine. I still have a few bottles of Moutai, very pure."

"Alright, bring them along. Lately, I've been inexplicably wanting to have a couple of drinks. Hey! Wanqing, Feifei, I heard red wine is good for your complexion, you two should drink more. This vintage isn't common."

Nanrong Wanqing rolled her eyes at Ling Chen, saying nothing. Leng Feifei pursed her lips, chuckling to herself. With their intelligence, how could they not understand Ling Chen was playing dumb? Since the main character wouldn't play along, neither of them had the interest to continue sparring.

After some idle chat, the dinner quickly came to an end.

Leaving the restaurant, Ling Chen told Nanrong Hao to take Nanrong Wanqing home first and to be careful on the way. Watching them leave, Leng Feifei approached from behind and asked, "Are you free? Shall we find a place to talk?"

Ling Chen was about to speak, but at that moment, his phone rang. Taking out his phone, he glanced at the caller ID, apologetically smiled at Leng Feifei, and then answered the call.

"Have you arrived? Okay, I got it. I'll head over to pick you up right away."

After hanging up, Ling Chen turned to Leng Feifei and said apologetically, "I might not be free tonight. I have something important to deal with."

Hearing this, Leng Feifei's eyes showed a trace of disappointment, but she forced a smile and said, "It's fine, I'll be in East Sea City for a few more days, we can meet up when you have time."

"Definitely." Ling Chen nodded.

Leng Feifei had her own chauffeur. Watching her vehicle disappear from sight, Ling Chen immediately got into his car and headed towards the airport. He had just received a call that Guo Ming had just arrived in East Sea City by plane. Compared to Leng Feifei, Ling Chen was now more concerned about Guo Ming's arrival.

Soon, the car left the city and onto the airport avenue. Although it was nighttime, the airport avenue was still bustling with traffic. However, at that moment, a Mercedes sedan suddenly changed lanes beside him and headed straight for the back of Ling Chen's car.

Noticing the Mercedes sedan in the rearview mirror, Ling Chen frowned and immediately increased his speed to widen the distance between the two cars.

However, before Ling Chen could escape from the Mercedes sedan's line of sight, two Range Rover SUVs appeared ahead, flanking him from both sides, blocking the road ahead. Seeing this, Ling Chen realized things were not good. However, the airport avenue was filled with vehicles; even if he wanted to change lanes to evade, other vehicles obstructed his path.

Damn it! Ling Chen silently cursed, slamming the pedal to the metal, heading straight for the Range Rover ahead.

If someone dared to mess with him, he'd see who exactly had a death wish.

Bang!

With a loud crash, the hood of Ling Chen's car collided directly with the rear of the Range Rover. Using the force of inertia, Ling Chen's body crashed through the car window, flying forward. Using this opportunity, Ling Chen's hands firmly grasped the top rail of the SUV, steadying himself.

Once the Range Rover stopped, Ling Chen quickly climbed inside, punching the driver in the seat.

There was no one else inside the SUV besides the driver. Ling Chen shoved open the car door, kicking the unconscious driver out of the seat, then started the engine and drove the wrecked SUV forward.

However, the Range Rover hadn't traveled far before being sandwiched by another SUV and a Mercedes sedan from both sides, crashing into the sides of the vehicle. This time, the entire car was deformed, completely unable to move.

Having no choice, Ling Chen abandoned the car and jumped out.

Glancing at the Mercedes parked at the side, Ling Chen, with no hesitation, rushed straight towards it. But before he could get close, a fierce gust of wind suddenly attacked from the side.

Not good!

A strong sense of danger arose, and Ling Chen quickly halted, turning to look to the side.