

The Beauty 1451

Chapter 1451 Cripple (1)

Step by step, Su He walked toward Ling Chen, gathering all the strength in his body. Feeling that intense sense of danger, Ling Chen's brows instantly knit into a straight line, his gaze locked firmly on Su He. In that moment, aside from death, he couldn't feel anything else.

Because he had forcibly pushed his body to its absolute limit, all his strength was completely drained. He felt incomparably weak; he couldn't even stand steadily. Even if he wanted to run, he no longer had the strength to escape.

Watching Su He slowly draw near, Ling Chen let out a helpless sigh. It seemed that this time, he was doomed.

While he was still thinking, Su He had already reached him. Before Ling Chen could say anything else, Su He's hand shot out like lightning, striking Ling Chen's body in an instant. Under the impact of that powerful force, Ling Chen's body was like a kite with its string cut, flung straight into the air before crashing heavily to the ground. A few crisp cracking sounds rang out—sounded very much like bones breaking.

Staring at the stars in the night sky growing increasingly blurry, Ling Chen opened his mouth, but not a single word came out, as if everything he wanted to say was blocked in his throat. He struggled, trying to move his limbs and push himself up from the ground. But it felt like every bone in his body had shattered; forget getting up, he couldn't even feel anything at all.

Not only that, a sharp, tearing pain suddenly erupted from his Dantian, flooding through his whole body and making him wish he were dead. Ling Chen clenched his teeth tightly, forcefully enduring that wave of agony. However, as the seconds ticked by, he felt his consciousness slowly slipping away, and everything in front of his eyes was turning blurry.

Am I... going to die? Ling Chen thought to himself.

Seeing Ling Chen slowly close his eyes, Su He walked straight over, raised one palm, gathering his Inner Strength, ready to deliver a blow to Ling Chen's head and completely end his life.

But right at that moment, a rush of hurried footsteps suddenly came from behind. Su He jerked his head around, only to see two figures in the darkness charging rapidly toward him. When the two figures drew close, Su He finally saw that the one running in front was actually Su Cheng'en, and from the look of things, he seemed to be fleeing from Ling Gengqiu.

"Old Su, don't run! If you've got guts, fight me head-on!" Ling Gengqiu shouted loudly from behind. But Su Cheng'en acted as if he hadn't heard a thing, just kept sprinting forward with everything he had.

Watching Su Cheng'en and Ling Gengqiu rapidly close the distance, one behind the other, Su He couldn't help but be stunned. What... what the hell was going on? Just earlier, Ling Gengqiu had clearly been at a disadvantage, getting beaten back by Su Cheng'en. How had the situation reversed so drastically in such a short time?

"What are you standing there for? Move!"

At this moment, Su Cheng'en was still sprinting full tilt as he shouted at Su He. Snapping back to his senses, Su He reacted at once, hurriedly scooping up the unconscious Wang Hao from the ground and striding after Su Cheng'en. When the two ran side by side, the sharp-eyed Su He noticed that a gash had opened up on the left side of Su Cheng'en's face, flesh torn and bloody.

Not only that, as Su Cheng'en ran, that gash seemed to be stretching longer and longer, and other parts of his body were also showing red lines of varying lengths, as if they might burst open at any time. The sight made Su He's heart lurch.

Watching the three of them flee at high speed, Ling Gengqiu originally wanted to give chase and finish them off. But when he saw Ling Chen lying unconscious on the ground, Ling Gengqiu immediately abandoned the idea of pursuit, rushing instead to Ling Chen's side and pulling him into his arms.

"Brat, wake up! Wake up!" Ling Gengqiu slapped Ling Chen's pale face with all his strength, but no matter how he shouted, Ling Chen didn't react at all, as though his life had already been snuffed out.

Not good! Face grave, Ling Gengqiu scooped Ling Chen up in his arms, carried him to the car parked by the roadside, laid him in the back seat, then started the engine and sped straight toward the hospital.

An hour went by.

Having received the call, Ling Kun and his wife, along with Ling Tao, rushed to the hospital in a hurry.

"Old Ancestor." Seeing Ling Gengqiu sitting in the corridor, anxiously waiting, Ling Kun hurried over and asked urgently, "Where's Ling Chen? Where is he?"

Ling Gengqiu pointed at the emergency room with its red light on and said, "He's still inside being resuscitated."

"Old Ancestor, what on earth happened? Why is Ling Chen injured? He... he's going to be okay, right?" Yang Qingling could no longer suppress her anxiety and asked with a deeply worried expression.

"We were ambushed," Ling Gengqiu said in a low voice. "It was Su Cheng'en and his people. Ling Chen was besieged by Su He and the others. Outnumbered, he was seriously wounded. By the time I got there, it was already too late."

"Su Cheng'en!" Ling Kun roared through gritted teeth, "Those bastards again! If anything happens to Ling Chen, I will never let them go!"

As he spoke, the doors of the emergency room were suddenly pushed open from inside. Seeing the doctor in a white coat come out, Ling Kun and the others immediately crowded around, impatiently asking, "Doctor, how is my son?"

The doctor sighed and said, "His injuries are extremely severe. He has more than thirty fractures all over his body. Fortunately, luck was on his side; his life has been saved. However, he may have to spend the rest of his life in a wheelchair." Pausing for a moment, the doctor then asked, "Have you found the person responsible?"

The person responsible? Everyone froze for a second, then immediately understood what the doctor meant. He must have thought Ling Chen had been in a car accident and that the multiple fractures all over his body were caused by a collision.

Since the doctor had misunderstood, Ling Kun couldn't be bothered to explain. Even if he did, the other side wouldn't understand.

"Doctor, does that mean his body can't fully recover?"

The doctor in the white coat shook his head and said, "His body is extremely weak right now. It's already a miracle he survived. Even if he recovers, he won't be able to do any strenuous work."

Yang Qingling hurriedly asked, "Doctor, can I go in and see him now?"

"You'll have to wait. We still need to run some more checks on his condition. If everything goes as expected, you can see him in about two hours."

Not long after, Ling Chen was pushed out of the emergency room on a bed by several doctors and transferred to the intensive care unit. Ling Kun, Yang Qingling, and the others quickly followed, standing outside the ward and looking at the unconscious Ling Chen through the glass, all silently grieving.

In the blink of an eye, more than two hours passed. With the attending doctor's permission, Ling Kun and the others finally entered the ICU. At this moment, Ling Chen was receiving an IV drip. His entire body was wrapped in bandages like a mummy. Even his head was fixed to the bed so that he could only stare at the ceiling, unable to move.

"Son..." Seeing Ling Chen in such a miserable state, Yang Qingling's tears burst forth like a breached dam, streaming down her face as her heart clenched in pain.

"Mom, don't cry. I'm still here, aren't I?" Ling Chen moved his lips and forced out a hoarse sentence.

"The doctor already told me that you..."

"Enough!" Before Yang Qingling could finish, Ling Kun cut her off.

Chapter 1452 Crippled (2)

The doctor's diagnosis regarding Ling Chen was revealed only to his immediate family, not to Ling Chen himself. Knowing his condition would likely deal a heavy blow to him. Right now, the most important thing is for Ling Chen to recover properly; Ling Kun doesn't want anything else affecting Ling Chen's mood.

At this moment, Ling Gengqiu walked to the bedside and asked, "Brat, how are you feeling? Are you okay?"

"Alright, not too bad, it's just..."

"Just what?"

"I feel a sharp pain in my abdomen, it has lasted for a long time."

Hearing this, Ling Kun immediately said, "I'll go get the doctor."

"No need, I'll take a look." As Ling Gengqiu spoke, Ling Kun was taken aback, only then remembering Ling Gengqiu's abilities.

Ling Gengqiu placed his hand on Ling Chen's pulse, examining carefully for a while. After a moment, Ling Gengqiu's face turned grave, and he slightly frowned. Noticing Ling Gengqiu's change in expression, Ling Kun and the others felt worry in their hearts and hurriedly asked, "Elder, what's wrong with him?"

"It's very bad, extremely bad." Ling Gengqiu seemed unconcerned about Ling Chen's perception, directly using two uncomfortable words.

Very... extremely... These words changed the looks on everyone's faces in the room.

"Elder, what... what exactly is wrong with him?" Ling Kun carefully asked.

"His Dantian was destroyed." Ling Gengqiu said, "His hard-earned Inner Strength is all wasted, now he's no different from a normal person." Pausing, Ling Gengqiu added, "Given his current physical condition, he might not even be as good as a normal person."

"Dantian was destroyed..." Ling Tao said coldly, "Su Cheng'en and his group are truly malicious; they actually did this to Ling Chen."

"Be content." Ling Gengqiu said calmly, "It's already miraculous that he's alive. Lacking strength isn't a big deal, at most the Ling Family can send more people to protect him in the future."

Ling Kun nodded, "Elder is right, as long as you're alive, there's hope for everything."

Due to severe injuries, Ling Chen said only a few words before falling asleep deeply. Afraid of disturbing Ling Chen's rest, everyone left the intensive care ward.

At this time, Tong Zhentian and others who received the news rushed to the hospital. Through the glass window, everyone looked at Ling Chen sleeping on the hospital bed, feeling uncomfortable in their hearts.

Just this evening, they were drinking together, and in such a short time, things have turned out this way.

"Du Kang..." Thinking of Du Kang's reminder, Tong Zhentian sighed lightly, muttering to himself, "If we were a bit more cautious, perhaps this wouldn't have happened."

Pausing, Tong Zhentian turned his gaze to Ling Gengqiu who was sitting on a bench in the corridor, seeming to ponder something.

"Elder Ling." Tong Zhentian walked up, clasping his fist towards Ling Gengqiu.

"Sit down." Ling Gengqiu gestured to the seat beside him.

"Elder Ling, Ling Chen's situation is dire, do you have any good ideas?"

"Dantian damage cannot be repaired by anyone." Ling Gengqiu shook his head, "To survive is already his good fortune; we should not hope for too much."

Upon hearing this, Tong Zhentian smiled bitterly, "Looks like it's really the end for Dragon Tiger Hall."

"Dragon Tiger Hall?" Ling Gengqiu asked puzzled, "What does this have to do with Dragon Tiger Hall?"

"Ling Chen is a candidate for the martial arts association seat, given his identity and past deeds, it should have been assured. But now his Dantian is ruined, martial arts skills are gone, he's like a normal person. Even if he's contributed significantly to Martial Arts, lacking basic strength makes it hard to convince others, Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion will surely use this chance to suppress Ling Chen. By then, Ling Chen might miss the opportunity to get that slot."

Ling Gengqiu responded, "Even if Ling Chen doesn't work, you can find someone else."

"It's useless, we initially wanted to trade the Nine Elements Pill for support from a Martial Arts master, however..."

"Nine Elements Pill?" Ling Gengqiu's eyes lit up, eagerly asking, "Do you have Nine Elements Pill?"

Tong Zhentian nodded, "Yes, it's something Ling Chen got from Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion in the past, never used it, we intended to use it for trade."

"Luckily your trade didn't go through, otherwise Ling Chen would really have no hope."

Tong Zhentian, understanding Ling Gengqiu's implication, excitedly asked, "Elder Ling, do you have a way to help Ling Chen recover?"

"Initially, I had none. But with the Nine Elements Pill, the situation changes."

"Really?" Tong Zhentian appeared very pleased, "Elder Ling, how confident are you?"

"Well..." Ling Gengqiu hesitated a moment, uncertainly said, "About fifty-fifty. Where is that Nine Elements Pill?"

"With me, Ling Chen had entrusted it to me before, I kept it in a very safe place. But the Nine Elements Pill is in East Sea City, I'll immediately head back to East Sea City to retrieve it."

Ling Gengqiu nodded, "Okay, you must handle this personally, it concerns Ling Chen's future, I'm not comfortable with others."

"No problem." Tong Zhentian responded, after greeting He Ziyun, he immediately arranged to be driven to the airport.

Throughout the night, everyone waited outside the intensive care ward for Ling Chen to wake again.

Seeing Yang Qingling overly upset, Ling Kun worried about her health, thus arranging a room beside the intensive care ward for her to rest for a while.

"Elder." Watching Ling Gengqiu seated on the corridor bench, Ling Kun walked over, and said, "It's getting late, do you want to rest?"

Ling Gengqiu waved his hand, "Don't worry about me, I'm fine." After a pause, Ling Gengqiu looked at Ling Kun, indicating him to sit beside him.

"Elder, any instructions?"

"Today Su Cheng'en came for me, his strength is formidable, I am no match in my current state. He pursued me all the time, hence I couldn't attend to Ling Chen. But although Su Cheng'en is strong, I noticed his weakness."

"What weakness?"

"His body has significant issues." Ling Gengqiu said gravely, "I always felt it odd, now it seems my suspicion wasn't wrong, Su Cheng'en didn't achieve immortality through a breakthrough, he must have reached it by other means."

Hearing this, Ling Kun's expression changed, asking surprised, "Elder, can he forcibly prolong his life?"

"This is also what puzzles me." Ling Gengqiu said confusedly, "How did that old thing achieve it?"

Chapter 1453 - 1761: Cripple (3)

"Although Su Cheng'en's strength is formidable, his body cannot withstand the intensity. Once the body works at high intensity for a long time, signs of collapse will appear. Today, Su Cheng'en experienced such a situation, giving me the chance to turn the tables. Otherwise, it is likely Ling Chen would have been killed by Su He."

Ling Gengqiu said, "This proves that though Su Cheng'en's strength is intimidating, he has considerable instability. As long as we know his weakness, we can exploit it in the future."

"Ancestor, you are wise and capable. Is there truly no way for Ling Chen?" Ling Kun asked, his eyes full of hope.

Ling Gengqiu smiled faintly and was about to speak when a sudden sound of hurried footsteps came from outside. The two turned to see Tong Zhentian walking briskly toward them.

"Elder Tong," Ling Kun quickly stood and greeted him, "Elder Tong, what brings you here so late?"

"Did you bring the item?" Even before Tong Zhentian replied, Ling Gengqiu interjected.

"Brought it." With those words, Tong Zhentian pulled out a small box from his pocket and handed it to Ling Gengqiu.

"Ancestor, what is this?" Ling Kun asked curiously.

Ling Gengqiu stood and said, "Whether Ling Chen can recover depends entirely on this." Without waiting for Ling Kun to ask more, Ling Gengqiu gestured to Tong Zhentian, "Let's go."

Watching the backs of Ling Gengqiu and Tong Zhentian gradually fade, Ling Kun hesitated but ultimately did not follow. Since the ancestor said so, he just had to wait.

After leaving the hospital, Tong Zhentian invited Ling Gengqiu into the car, then instructed the driver to head to the branch of the Dragon Tiger Hall. Along the way, Tong Zhentian kept sneaking glances at Ling Gengqiu, with a strong sense of curiosity in his eyes.

"You've been looking for so long, still not enough?" Ling Gengqiu stated calmly.

Being caught, even at his age, Tong Zhentian felt slightly embarrassed, and he laughed awkwardly, "Elder Ling..."

"Don't you find that title awkward?" Ling Gengqiu turned his head to Tong Zhentian, "Where do I look old to you?"

Tong Zhentian was momentarily speechless. Indeed, Ling Gengqiu appeared to be middle-aged, and addressing him as 'Elder Ling' truly seemed inappropriate.

Originally, Tong Zhentian thought the title 'Elder Ling' was awkward. However, the aura Ling Gengqiu gave off was that of an elder.

Seeing Tong Zhentian's silent look, Ling Gengqiu smiled, "I look much younger than you, just call me Ling, you're getting a great bargain."

"Alright, Ling." Tong Zhentian agreed readily.

After a pause, Tong Zhentian asked curiously, "Ling, what method do you have to save Ling Chen?"

"You're a martial artist too, have you ever heard of the concept of destruction before rebirth?"

"Destruction before rebirth?" Tong Zhentian muttered to himself, his face suddenly showing a shocked expression, "Ling, does this situation truly exist? I thought it was merely a saying, not real."

"Destruction before rebirth indeed exists, but through the years, many things have been lost in martial arts." Ling Gengqiu said, "It is an opportunity we're looking for, and Ling Chen's cultivation of the Prajnaparamita Sutra matches this opportunity well. Now with the help of the Nine Elements Pill, we can forcibly create this opportunity for him. However, whether it succeeds is another matter entirely. Many factors are involved, and no one can assure success."

Tong Zhentian nodded and said, "As long as there is hope, miracles can happen."

The car arrived at the branch of the Dragon Tiger Hall as they spoke.

"Ling, do you need anything prepared?"

"No rush, arrange a quiet room for me; I need to study this Nine Elements Pill closely."

"Alright, no problem."

Soon, the room was prepared. Once inside, Ling Gengqiu seemed to detach from the world, not stepping out for two whole days and nights.

Over those two days, Ling Chen lay on the hospital bed, personally cared for by Yang Qingling. Though Ling Chen's body was recovering rapidly, the injuries were too severe; not only was his Dantian damaged, but multiple bones were fractured, rendering him nearly incapacitated. So, even with fast recovery, he couldn't get up in a short time.

After two days of rest, while Ling Chen couldn't get up yet, his spirits were fairly good; at least he could chat with everyone.

"Mom, stop feeding me cabbage porridge every day, make some meat for me," Ling Chen complained.

"The doctors advised that given your current condition, you must avoid greasy foods."

Ling Chen appeared frustrated; with his mother present, he had lost all his rights.

"Oh! Mom, where is the ancestor? Haven't seen him these two days."

"I don't know; your dad said he and Elder Tong seemed to have gone somewhere. Are you looking for him? Want me to call your dad?"

"No need, it's nothing urgent, no reason to make him run around. Mom, my body is recovering well enough; you don't need to stay here all day, go home and rest for a few days."

"How could I? You're my son; I can't entrust your care to others." Yang Qingling smiled, "If you don't want me to care for you, Wanqing is in Beijing, shall I have her come?"

"No, mom, please don't call her; I don't want her to see me like this."

"You rascal care about others' feelings now, yet why not consider mine as your mother? You have everything now, why get involved in such dangerous affairs? Is living an ordinary life not good enough?"

Chapter 1454 - 1762: Destruction Before Rebirth (1)

"Important matters?" Ling Chen asked curiously, "Elder Tong, what is it?"

"We have a plan that might restore your body to its original state."

Upon hearing this, before Ling Chen could speak, Yang Qingling couldn't wait to ask, "Elder Tong, really? What kind of plan are you talking about?"

Tong Zhentian lightly coughed and said, "I must be clear, although this method might restore Ling Chen's body, the chances are only fifty percent. In other words, there's a fifty-percent risk."

"Elder Tong, what is the risk?"

"It might be worse than your current situation."

Ling Chen smiled and said, "I'm like this now, how much worse can it get?" He had lost all his strength, unable to move his hands and feet, worse than an ordinary person.

"Elder Tong, do you mean... there's a risk to his life?" Yang Qingling asked.

Tong Zhentian nodded and said, "I mentioned there is a fifty-percent risk. Of course, we will do our best to control and prevent this risk from occurring. Ling Chen, what do you think?"

"I think the risk is still too great." Yang Qingling shook her head in opposition, "Actually, I don't expect him to recover to his former self. I just hope he can live like a normal person. I've asked the doctor, and in his current state, as long as he rests well for a few months, his limbs can regain mobility. So, I disagree with doing this."

"Mom..." Ling Chen wanted to say something, but Yang Qingling already stopped him, "Alright, you don't need to say anything, I won't allow it anyway."

Ling Chen felt a bit powerless; he really wanted to give it a try. Honestly, his current situation made him feel somewhat hopeless. An ordinary person... after experiencing so much, does the identity of an ordinary person still suit him? Not to mention, with so many enemies, if he lacks the ability to protect himself, he could be in danger at any moment.

However, he couldn't ignore Yang Qingling's words; as a son, he always had to consider Yang Qingling's feelings. Thinking of this, Ling Chen looked at Tong Zhentian, blinked, and said, "Elder Tong, thank you for your kindness."

Having known Ling Chen for so long, Tong Zhentian certainly understood what he meant.

"Alright, I'm just making a suggestion. If you don't want to, I won't force you." With that, Tong Zhentian turned and walked out of the hospital ward.

Night fell.

With Ling Chen's persuasion, Yang Qingling finally agreed to go home and rest for the night.

Not long after Yang Qingling left, Tong Zhentian brought He Ziyun along. The two helped Ling Chen onto a wheelchair and then pushed him out of the hospital. At this moment, a business car was already parked at the hospital entrance, taking the three directly to the Dragon Tiger Hall's branch.

Upon arrival, Tong Zhentian and He Ziyun directly brought Ling Chen to a room.

"Elder brother?" Seeing Ling Gengqiu in the room, Ling Chen asked, "Why are you here?"

"All for you, kid." Ling Gengqiu pointed to the large wooden barrel in the center of the room and said, "I've prepared everything for you; I've done all I can. What happens next depends on your own fate."

With the help of Ling Gengqiu, Ling Chen slowly climbed into the wooden barrel and sat cross-legged. Soon, Tong Zhentian brought in a few young men, each carrying a wooden bucket filled with a pungent liquid, very thick, whose nature was unknown.

As the liquid was poured into the large wooden barrel, Ling Chen's body, except for his head, was submerged in the viscous liquid. Suddenly, he felt his skin itching as though thousands of ants were crawling all over him.

"Elder brother, what is this stuff?"

"A medicinal decoction I've prepared for you; it's very beneficial for your body." As he spoke, Ling Gengqiu took a wooden box from his pocket and opened it in front of Ling Chen.

Seeing four small pills inside, Ling Chen curiously asked, "What are these?"

"Nine Elements Pill. The Nine Elements Pill is too strong in effect; I was afraid your body couldn't handle it, so I split it into four parts. This way, your body can better absorb its effects."

With that, Ling Gengqiu placed one of the pills in Ling Chen's mouth.

Once the pill was swallowed, Ling Chen immediately felt a warm current flow through every part of his body.

"Are you ready?"

Hearing Ling Gengqiu's question, Ling Chen nodded and said, "OK!"

"Alright, the process will be painful, and I hope you can withstand it. If you really can't take it, remember to tell me, and I'll stop immediately." After finishing, the young men moved to the large wooden barrel, lifting it and placing an iron frame and an iron plate beneath it.

Seeing the young men bringing in a large pile of firewood, Ling Chen's expression slightly changed, and he asked, "Elder brother, what are you going to do?"

"You'll see soon." Under Ling Gengqiu's instructions, a roaring fire was soon lit beneath the large wooden barrel. As the fire burned the iron plate, the temperature quickly transferred to the inside of the wooden barrel, making the viscous liquid increasingly hot.

In just over ten minutes, Ling Chen began to find it unbearable as his entire body became scorching hot and uncomfortable.

"Elder brother, are you sure there won't be any problems?" Ling Chen asked worriedly. Sitting in the large wooden barrel with a fire constantly burning beneath him, he was really afraid of being boiled alive.

"Don't worry, it's fine. I'll step out for a bit; call me if you need anything."

After Ling Gengqiu left, Ling Chen was left alone in the barrel. Feeling the growing heat, Ling Chen gritted his teeth and closed his eyes slightly, clearing his mind of all distractions.

Minute by minute, steam continually rose from the barrel, almost covering Ling Chen's body. Although the liquid inside was piping hot, thanks to the Nine Elements Pill, its power was protecting his body, helping to reduce his pain.

In the blink of an eye, a night passed.

Though Ling Gengqiu and others didn't enter the room, they remained worried about Ling Chen's safety, waiting at the door. If anything happened to Ling Chen, they'd rush in immediately.

At dawn.

He Ziyun quickly arrived outside Ling Chen's room and said, "Yang Qingling has come, saying she wants to see Ling Chen. What should we do?"

"No!" Ling Gengqiu shook his head and said, "Ling Chen is at a crucial stage, and no one can disturb him. Go tell her that Ling Chen is doing well under my watch, and she shouldn't worry."

"Alright."

"Ling, how long will it take Ling Chen to recover?" Tong Zhentian asked from the side.

"It's hard to say." Ling Gengqiu thought for a moment and said, "At least a week or two, depending on his body's condition. The more he absorbs, the longer it takes."

Chapter 1455 - 1763: Rebirth Through Adversity (2)

"Mr. He, I must see Ling Chen." At this moment, Yang Qingling's attitude was very firm. No matter how He Ziyun tried to persuade her, she remained unmoved.

"Ling Chen is not in a suitable condition to see anyone right now. I know you care about him, but worry can cause chaos. Elder Tong and the others are watching over Ling Chen, ensuring nothing happens to him. You should go back and wait for news."

"No way!" Yang Qingling was very angry. She thought she had persuaded Ling Chen, but unexpectedly, her son sneaked out of the hospital when she wasn't paying attention.

He Ziyun patiently advised, "This is Ling Chen's own choice. As his mother, why can't you respect his decision?"

"If it weren't for you guys instigating from the side, would he have done this? He's my son. I must ensure his safety. I'd rather he becomes an ordinary person than let him bear such great danger."

"Qingling." At this time, Ling Kun came in from outside.

"You're just in time. Ling Chen is inside. Help me get him out."

Ling Kun sighed softly and said helplessly, "Why are you doing this? Ling Chen is not a child anymore; he's an adult. Since he made such a choice, we should support him. Let's go, come back with me."

"How can you say that?" Yang Qingling said in a hurry, "Isn't he your son? Don't you care about him at all?"

"It's not a matter of caring or not. You're oversimplifying the situation. I understand why he's doing this, so I support him. Besides, you're only considering your own feelings. Have you thought about Ling Chen's feelings? Do you think he's willing to be an ordinary person? He's not! If it were me, I would make the same choice as him."

"You... you all... Fine! Since you say so, I won't interfere. However, if anything happens to Ling Chen, I will never let you off." With that, Yang Qingling stormed out.

Watching Yang Qingling's departing figure, Ling Kun sighed softly and said, "Mr. He, I'm really sorry for troubling you."

"It's okay, I understand her feelings. You should spend more time with her."

"I understand, I'll head back now, Ling Chen..."

"Don't worry, as soon as there's news, I'll let you know immediately."

In the blink of an eye, ten days had passed.

During this period, apart from Ling Gengqiu coming into the room a few times to deliver medicine to Ling Chen, he remained in a state of deep sleep.

"It's been so many days, why hasn't he come out yet?" Tong Zhentian appeared a bit anxious.

"The longer the time, the better the effect. Don't worry. The current situation is better than I expected." At this point, Ling Gengqiu glanced at the worried-looking Tong Zhentian and asked, "What? Is there something you're worried about?"

Tong Zhentian spoke, "Tomorrow is the last day of the deadline. We originally wanted Ling Chen to run for a spot in the martial arts association, but with him like this, we... sigh! The Nine Elements Pill has already been given to Ling Chen. This means we're down two spots, and in this competition, we're likely to lose to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion."

"Winning or losing doesn't matter," Ling Gengqiu said calmly. "As long as Ling Chen is safe, that's our greatest victory."

"I hope we'll have a chance to turn the tables in the future."

...

Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion.

"Elder Du, has the list been compiled?"

"Yes, it's done. A total of thirty-six people have signed up to run for committee membership. I just took a look and discovered something strange."

"Something strange?" Su Mei asked curiously, "What is it?"

"In this list, apart from Tong Zhentian being the president of the martial arts association, there's only one other person, Ye Liangyong, who signed up. Besides him, Dragon Tiger Hall hasn't sent anyone else, not even Ling Chen. According to our previous assumptions, Ling Chen would definitely run. Given his contributions to the martial arts world, he would certainly secure a spot. So, I find it a bit strange that Dragon Tiger Hall seems to have given up this competition."

"Is that so? Let me take a look at the list." Su Mei frowned slightly as she took the list handed by Du Kang.

Scanning the list of over thirty people, Su Mei said, "A third of the names here are people we've arranged. Of the remaining twenty, Dragon Tiger Hall might have their people among them. Elder Du, you should be cautious."

"Rest assured, Pavilion Master, I've checked. Of the remaining twenty, there are few who qualify for the spots. The only one with some competitive edge is that Ye Liangyong. So, I still feel my guess is right, Dragon Tiger Hall seems ready to give up this time."

"This isn't like Ling Chen." Su Mei said, "From what I know of him, he wouldn't give up halfway. He would go all out regardless of the outcome. By the way, Elder Du, have there been any updates on Ling Chen lately?"

Du Kang shook his head and replied, "Since that day we drank with Ling Chen and the others, I haven't seen them. Also, according to our people, Ling Chen seems to have disappeared recently without a trace."

"I see..." Su Mei pondered for a moment and then said, "Elder Du, keep an eye on the movements of Dragon Tiger Hall, see if there's anything we can find out."

"Understood! And... about the martial arts association...?"

"Proceed," Su Mei said. "No matter what issues Dragon Tiger Hall encounters, we must do our job well. What was to be an interesting competition now seems to lack a decent opponent for our Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion."

"That's all thanks to the Pavilion Master's excellent leadership."

Upon hearing this, Su Mei couldn't help but laugh, "Elder Du, since when did you learn to flatter? Alright, you can get back to work now."

Du Kang nodded and turned to leave. Standing outside, looking at the sky, a trace of indescribable anxiety flashed in Du Kang's eyes.

Ling Chen has had no news for so long, could it really be... Thinking of this, Du Kang sighed softly.

After returning to Yangxin Pavilion and resting briefly, Du Kang headed toward the former valley of Yangxin Pavilion.

Soon after entering the valley, the solitary wooden house appeared in Du Kang's sight. After hesitating for a moment, Du Kang walked up to the wooden house and gently knocked on the door.

Soon, the door was opened from the inside, revealing a young man facing Du Kang.

"I warned you not to come here," the young man said coldly.

"Sorry, I just wanted to ask, haven't they returned yet?"

"No."

"Have they sent any messages to you?"

"No."

"They..."

"No," the young man said coldly. "I can't answer the questions you're asking, so you might as well go back."

"Why?"

Chapter 1456 - 1764: Election List

"There's no reason why, I'm just doing this for your own good. If they see you here, they definitely won't let you go," the young man said coldly.

"Alright, I'll go back first then," Du Kang sighed silently. He and the young man in front of him had a friendship that no one else knew about. The last time he had warned Ling Chen, it was because he had gotten some information from this young man.

It's been so long, and there's been no news from Ling Chen. Could something have really happened to him?

...

Another week went by.

This day, Tong Zhentian, the President of the Martial Arts Association, came alone to the association. Today was going to be a grand event in the Martial Arts circle. The Martial Arts Association would be completing its restructuring, and all the candidates would be selected.

As the President, Tong Zhentian naturally was the one responsible for hosting this event.

When he arrived at the Martial Arts Association, many people were already there. To show their importance to this meeting, not only did Du Kang come, but even the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion Master Su Mei was there, along with all those distinguished Martial Arts Elders who all came to show their support.

At nine thirty in the morning, the meeting started on time. Tong Zhentian strode to the front of the meeting room, looked at everyone present, and said, "Everyone, I'm glad you all could make it. Today is an important day, a day worth remembering for the entire Martial Arts community."

"Today, we will elect two Vice Presidents of the Martial Arts Association and six committee members. By the deadline for registration, we received a total of thirty-eight applicants. So, all spots will be chosen from these names."

"Elder Tong, how do you plan to select them?"

Upon hearing the question from the audience, Tong Zhentian replied, "Very simple, we will evaluate each candidate's abilities comprehensively, and then select the ones qualified. Finally, we will hold an on-site vote to select the final candidates." After a pause, Tong Zhentian continued, "First, regarding the Vice President candidates, we have two spots, and for one of them, I propose the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion Master, Su Mei. Does anyone have any objections?"

This proposal immediately gained the consent of everyone present. If it weren't for Tong Zhentian, with Su Mei's status and position, there would be no problem for her to be the President. So, nobody dared to object to Su Mei becoming the Vice President of the Martial Arts Association.

"Great!" Tong Zhentian nodded with a smile and said, "Since no one has any objections, it's decided then. Congratulations, Miss Su!"

"Thank you!" Su Mei responded politely.

"Alright, next we have another Vice President spot. I reviewed all the names on the list and think that several individuals not only meet the qualifications but are all seasoned veterans in the Martial Arts community. Next, I'll read out the names of these people to see if anyone has any objections..."

As Tong Zhentian read out each candidate's name, the crowd murmured among themselves, discussing without the slightest disagreement about the candidates proposed by Tong Zhentian.

These people were all renowned figures in the Martial Arts community, not only powerful but also respected.

"Alright! The candidates I just mentioned all have the capability to take on the role of Vice President. What do you all think?"

"Elder Tong, you're being unfair. Why aren't our names on the list?" Suddenly, a discordant voice echoed through the crowd.

Everyone turned to see a group of twenty to thirty people walking into the meeting room.

Seeing these familiar and unfamiliar faces, the meeting room immediately became lively.

"Wow! I didn't expect them to come here?"

"Those who come are not friendly, and the friendly ones do not come. This is going to be interesting."

Looking at the group walking into the room, both Tong Zhentian and Su Mei furrowed their brows. They recognized these people as members from various sects in the Martial Arts community.

The Martial Arts community had long been dominated by the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion until the rise of the Dragon Tiger Hall. However, the sects in the Martial Arts community had never been able to rise to prominence and had remained unnoticed.

Tong Zhentian glanced over, and these thirty-some individuals should all be representatives of these various sects. If it were only one or two sects, Tong Zhentian would not have taken them seriously at all. However, these individuals represented more than a dozen sects in the Martial Arts community, united together they were a force not to be underestimated.

When the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion first proposed the restructuring suggestion, Tong Zhentian had indeed considered these sects. However, even though these sects had long histories, they didn't have any outstanding talents. Therefore, Tong Zhentian chose to overlook them, not expecting them to show up at this time.

It seems these sect members also realized that the restructuring of the Martial Arts Association would have a certain impact on them.

"I don't recall inviting you," Su Mei said, her tone indifferent. Since everyone involved in the restructuring meeting was invited by the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, what Su Mei said was quite appropriate.

A middle-aged man seemed not to notice the icy tone in Su Mei's voice and smiled to himself, "We indeed did not receive an invitation. However, we're all part of the Martial Arts community. The restructuring of the Martial Arts Association concerns the future of the entire Martial Arts community. Don't we have the right to participate? Or does the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion look down on us small sects and thus deem us unworthy of an invitation?"

"That's not what I'm saying," Tong Zhentian chimed in, "We issued a public notice earlier that anyone can become a member of the Martial Arts Association, but the prerequisite is to register and go through our selection process. Did any of you sign up?"

"Haha! Elder Tong, I'm really sorry. We've been secluded in training and are not well-informed. By the time we learned about it, the registration period had already ended."

"Are you blaming me for not personally notifying you at your homes?" Tong Zhentian said in a deep voice, "Rules are rules, and even if you missed out, you can't blame others. We still have to continue selecting the candidates for the Vice President positions. If you have nothing else, please leave so as not to disturb us."

"Elder Tong, if you say that, it's really heartless. We're all martial artists; why is it that what you guys say becomes the rule? You are a respected elder in the Martial Arts world, and we respect you. However, the restructuring of the Martial Arts Association is crucial to the future of the entire Martial Arts community. Why is it that the fate of the Martial Arts world is decided by just these dozens of people present? I feel that this approach is too unfair. Since it's such a big matter for the entire Martial Arts community, everyone should have the right to participate."

"You want to participate? Fine! I'll let you participate," Tong Zhentian nodded and said, "You can stay there and serve as our witnesses."

"Elder Tong, after we've said so much, don't you understand what I mean? Fine, let's put everything on the table. Some of our names must be added to the list of candidates. Moreover, our sects must also have the right to vote."

"Wishful thinking!" Su Mei stood up abruptly and said coldly, "Elder Tong is giving you face, and yet you really think you're someone important."

Chapter 1457 - 1765: Election (1)

"Master Su, we're simply expressing our thoughts, why so angry?" A middle-aged man emerged from the crowd, addressing those present: "Some of you might know me, and some might not. Let me introduce myself, my name is Qi Yong, I come from the Dangyang Sect, and I'm currently the Sect Leader. As I've just taken over the Dangyang Sect, many might not know me well."

"Qi Yong, I know you." Su Mei chimed in: "I've checked your background and know what kind of person you are. Someone as shameless as you, a disgrace to the Martial Arts world, I've been quite generous letting you live till now, yet you dare to cause trouble at the Martial Arts Association."

Qi Yong let out a hearty laugh: "Master Su, look at your words, am I really that bad? Besides, the reform of the Martial Arts Association is a major event concerning countless Martial Arts members, I'm part of this and it's related to my interests, so of course, I have to participate. What's wrong with that?"

After a brief pause, Qi Yong glanced at the crowd and continued: "We came this time representing thirteen different factions within the Martial Arts, and to save time, I won't introduce them individually. In short, I, Qi Yong, am entrusted by these factions to attend this meeting, hoping to contribute something to the Martial Arts world."

"You?" Su Mei frowned slightly and mocked: "If you don't stir trouble for the Martial Arts world, it'll be a blessing, I dare not count on you to contribute anything. Guards! Throw them out!"

"Tsk, tsk!" Qi Yong said with a smirk: "Master Su, what a mighty air, if I recall correctly, isn't this the Martial Arts Association? Master Su, this is not the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, and the President hasn't spoken, what qualification does a Vice President have to issue orders?"

"You..."

"Alright, everyone, let's keep it down." Tong Zhentian interjected: "Ladies and gentlemen, my apologies, please go outside for a break, the meeting is temporarily adjourned, there are matters I need to discuss with Chairman Su."

Upon hearing this, everyone began to rise and gradually walked outside.

"Old Man Tong has spoken, we certainly must show respect." Qi Yong chuckled and left the meeting room with his followers.

After everyone had left, Su Mei looked at Tong Zhentian and asked: "Old Man Tong, why not just kick him out? A lowlife like him doesn't deserve much consideration."

Tong Zhentian shook his head and said: "No, you're thinking too simply. If it were just one Qi Yong, I certainly wouldn't care. But, he has thirteen factions supporting him, we must take him seriously." Saying this, Tong Zhentian turned his gaze to Du Kang, asking: "Mr. Du, what do you think?"

"You're right, we can't ignore this factor." Du Kang said: "Although Dangyang Sect isn't a major sect, it's of moderate size, and as for the other twelve factions, even if they're smaller ones, this combine force becomes a noteworthy presence, we must acknowledge it."

"Old Man Tong, Elder Du, you might not know what kind of person Qi Yong is. When Qi Yong became Sect Leader of Dangyang Sect, spies from Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion collected much information on him. I've studied it, Qi Yong is an Earthly List expert, driven by greed, he will stop at nothing for gain, including taking the position of Sect Leader in Dangyang Sect. You may remember, the previous Sect Leader was Yi Shuiyan, who often opposed Ling Chen, but later due to God Organization, Yi Shuiyan was

bribed and participated in enhancement experiments. Although the experiment succeeded, not long after, severe side effects occurred in Yi Shuiyan's body, ultimately leading to his untimely death."

"Following Yi Shuiyan's death, the position of Sect Leader in Dangyang Sect immediately opened up. At that time, Qi Yong wasn't part of Dangyang Sect. In the contest for the Sect Leader position, Dangyang Sect split into several factions. During this time, people from one faction sought external assistance to suppress others, and Qi Yong was brought in."

"Qi Yong is a very shrewd person, upon joining Dangyang Sect, he seemed to aid a faction in gaining the Sect Leader position, but in reality, he secretly recruited people from various factions to strengthen his own power. Qi Yong is indeed skilled in rallying people to his cause. Eventually, Qi Yong secured control over the position of Sect Leader firmly. Because of my understanding of him, I chose to drive him away."

"In that case, it speaks to Qi Yong's capabilities." Tong Zhentian remarked: "Nevertheless, we cannot ignore their presence. The reform of the Martial Arts Association must gain the approval of all in the Martial Arts world to be effective. If we don't handle Qi Yong and his people properly, they could cause trouble for us."

"Old Man Tong is right, I agree." Du Kang joined in: "Pavilion Master, Qi Yong and his people coming in at this time have a clear reason, they want a place in the Martial Arts Association. I propose we include them in the list of candidates for a vote, do you think anyone will vote for them?"

"What if they're dissatisfied?"

"We've given them the opportunity, and if they continue to disturb us, we can teach them a lesson. If this incident gets out, I doubt anyone will criticize us."

Du Kang's suggestion was quickly agreed upon by Tong Zhentian and Su Mei.

"I'll go and inform everyone of our decision to prevent any disagreements." Tong Zhentian said.

Su Mei smiled slightly: "I believe everyone here is smart enough to understand our intention." Suddenly, Su Mei changed the topic: "Old Man Tong, there's something I've been meaning to ask, why didn't Ling Chen attend such an important occasion today?"

"Him? He had some urgent matters, and recently might not have the energy for these affairs."

"That's too bad."

With that said, Du Kang walked out to call everyone back into the meeting room. Soon, Tong Zhentian shared their decision with everyone present. As expected, everyone understood and no one objected.

"Mr. Du, go bring Qi Yong and his people in."

As Qi Yong and others returned to the meeting room, Tong Zhentian spoke: "Qi Yong, after our discussion, we've decided to make an exception and give you a chance to become candidates in the Martial Arts Association. However, the slots are limited, you can only nominate three people."

Chapter 1458 - 1766: Election (2)

Qi Yong grinned and said, "Three are enough, thank you for making it happen, Elder Tong." As he spoke, Qi Yong personally handed a list over to Tong Zhentian.

Tong Zhentian glanced over it casually, then turned to Su Mei and said, "Master Su, now that everyone is here, let's begin, so as not to waste everyone's precious time."

Su Mei nodded. Soon, ten young men entered from the corridor next to the meeting room and distributed a slip of paper to everyone. At the same time, a young man hung a prepared list at the front of the meeting room for all to see clearly.

"Ladies and gentlemen, these are the candidates. Please write the name of the person you consider suitable on the slip and hand it to our staff," Su Mei said. "We are now selecting the Vice President of the Martial Arts Association, please cast your votes."

Dozens of participants silently wrote names on the white slips of paper. Soon, the staff collected all the slips from everyone and handed them over to Du Kang.

"I will now count the votes," Du Kang said, taking out a slip and reading the name on it. A young man immediately added a mark below the person's name to record the vote count.

After a few minutes passed, seeing the name with the most votes, Tong Zhentian and Su Mei nodded in agreement. The eyes of everyone were sharp; everyone knew who was qualified to be the Vice President of the Martial Arts Association.

"Alright!" Tong Zhentian stood up from his seat and said, "The first round of voting is over. Congratulations to Tian Boliang on becoming the Vice President of the Martial Arts Association."

Tian Boliang, one of the renowned figures in martial arts, is now over sixty, proficient in Inner Boxing, with many disciples under him, holding a certain prestige in the martial world. Before the voting started, Tong Zhentian was already optimistic about him, believing he had a strong chance of being elected.

Upon being elected, Tian Boliang slowly stood up, smiled, and cupped his fists toward everyone present, saying, "Thank you all for your support and recognition. I will do my utmost to promote Huaxia's martial arts."

"Sir Tian serving as Vice President is indeed well-deserved."

Everyone offered their congratulations.

After the venue gradually returned to quiet, Tong Zhentian continued, "Both the President and Vice President have been elected. Next, we will select six committee members. But first, let me emphasize that the Martial Arts Association is not a one-man decision. Even as the President of the Martial Arts Association, I do not have the right to make any major decisions alone. In the reformed Martial Arts Association, all major matters in the martial world will be decided by a vote among us nine. Therefore, the six committee members must be people of integrity and competence."

At Tong Zhentian's indication, the staff re-entered the meeting room. This time, everyone took longer, seemingly contemplating their choices seriously.

After more than ten minutes, all the slips were collected.

Du Kang picked up the first slip, raised his eyebrows slightly at the name on it. After a brief pause, he slowly announced, "Qi Yong!"

Hearing the name 'Qi Yong,' both Tong Zhentian and Su Mei were taken aback; they hadn't expected the first name to be Qi Yong.

Tong Zhentian furrowed his brow, glancing at everyone in the meeting room. He was curious to know who would nominate Qi Yong.

At this moment, Du Kang picked up another slip and read, "Qi Yong!"

Qi Yong? Again, Qi Yong! Tong Zhentian and Su Mei exchanged a glance, both looking somewhat displeased. This election seemed to be slipping out of their control.

After Du Kang had read out 'Qi Yong' five more times, other names started appearing. However, by the time Du Kang finished reading all the slips, Qi Yong's votes far exceeded everyone else's, ranking first.

This result left everyone feeling incredulous. This Qi Yong, seemingly emerging out of nowhere, unexpectedly had such a wide network, to everyone's surprise.

Although Tong Zhentian and Su Mei had many doubts about this outcome, as President and Vice President, they couldn't openly express skepticism. Otherwise, people might think they had a bias against Qi Yong.

Among the six individuals with the most votes, Tong Zhentian noticed an issue. Besides Qi Yong, there were five other spots. Of these, only two were people arranged by Su Mei, while the remaining three, though slightly renowned in the martial world, were not the most distinguished candidates. Tong Zhentian couldn't understand why they were chosen.

Thinking quickly, Tong Zhentian glanced at Su Mei. Seeing her frowning with a stern expression, it was clear to Tong Zhentian what she was thinking. Before the vote, Su Mei had already arranged for at least four of these slots to be her people. However, the result didn't align with her plan.

"Hahahaha!" Suddenly, there was a hearty laugh. Qi Yong stood up from the crowd, cupped his fists toward everyone present, and said with a smile, "Thank you all for your recognition and esteem, I will

endeavor to do my best." After a pause, Qi Yong looked over at Tong Zhentian and Su Mei and said courteously, "I look forward to your guidance in the future, Elder Tong and Master Su."

Tong Zhentian nodded, saying nothing more.

This voting result left Tong Zhentian and Su Mei in no mood to continue the meeting. After hastily announcing the results, Tong Zhentian left the meeting room.

Su Mei and Du Kang followed closely behind, along with Tian Boliang, as the three followed in Tong Zhentian's footsteps to the Martial Arts Association's office.

"Elder Tong, what's really going on here?" asked Su Mei as soon as they entered.

"Don't ask me, I know nothing," Tong Zhentian said seriously, sitting in his chair. "There are definitely problems with the voting results."

"Indeed, I feel the same. For someone like Qi Yong to receive such a high number of votes is clearly abnormal," agreed Su Mei, turning to Du Kang: "Elder Du, what do you make of this?"

"It was anonymous voting, so we don't know who voted for Qi Yong. Asking them directly would only lead to speculation, which could have bad repercussions."

"So what do we do? Are we really letting Qi Yong join the Martial Arts Association?"

"The voting results are out. Do you want us to reverse them?" Tong Zhentian asked. "No matter what, we can't rashly change the results. Otherwise, who would trust us in the future?" After pondering for a moment, Tong Zhentian said, "Mr. Du, we'll have to trouble you to investigate this quietly, particularly regarding Qi Yong. Maybe we can find a reason in all this."

"Don't worry, I'll keep an eye on him personally."

Chapter 1459 - 1767: Qi Yong

"Come, cheers!"

In a hotel located in Beijing, Qi Yong and others gathered around a round table, holding their wine glasses high, each face filled with an excited smile.

"Sect Leader Qi, congratulations!"

"Haha!" Qi Yong grinned and said, "It's not just congratulations to me, but to everyone present. In time, we will surely surpass the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and Dragon Tiger Hall, and hold the entire Martial Arts world in our hands."

"If that day truly comes, it will be thanks to Sect Leader Qi. Without Sect Leader Qi's brilliance, how could we have the opportunity to stand on equal footing with the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion?"

"That's right! With Sect Leader Qi's capabilities, we will definitely be able to overpower the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. At that time, the Dangyang Sect will flourish under Sect Leader Qi's leadership."

Hearing everyone's congratulations, Qi Yong's smile was radiant. Hmph! The Dangyang Sect... the Dangyang Sect is merely his stepping stone. What he wanted was not just the Dangyang Sect.

"Sect Leader Qi, this time we tricked the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and the Dragon Tiger Hall. Do you think they will cause us trouble?" someone asked worriedly.

Qi Yong nodded and said nonchalantly, "The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and the Dragon Tiger Hall surely won't let this go. If I'm not mistaken, someone is probably finding ways to monitor us right now. However, you don't need to worry. Since I dared to do this, I've naturally prepared. Moreover, everything is already arranged, and even if they want to investigate, they won't find anything."

"That's the best."

...

"Ling, has Ling Chen not come out yet?" Returning to the Beijing branch, Tong Zhentian headed straight to the backyard. Seeing Ling Gengqiu guarding outside the door, he asked a question.

"If he had come out, I wouldn't need to stay here." Although guarding outside, Ling Gengqiu's life was quite leisurely, with a small table in front of him, a few plates of braised dishes, and several bottles of Moutai.

"Come, have a drink with me." Ling Gengqiu took out an empty glass, placed it in front of Tong Zhentian, and filled it for him.

Tong Zhentian picked up the glass and drank it all in one go, involuntarily letting out a sigh.

"What, have you encountered anything troubling?"

"There was a problem at the Martial Arts Association. Today, a troublemaker appeared."

"Isn't that a good thing?" Ling Gengqiu said, "You said before that there wasn't any hope for the Martial Arts Association's matter. Since there's a troublemaker, it means you still have a chance."

"I initially thought so too. Originally, this election should have been a landslide victory for the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, but that Qi Yong suddenly appeared and disrupted the arrangements of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. I just checked on Qi Yong's background; he is ambitious and capable. Moreover, he is now the head of the Dangyang Sect, holding a certain amount of resources. I worry..."

"Dangyang Sect?" Before Tong Zhentian finished speaking, Ling Gengqiu suddenly interrupted him, saying, "The Dangyang Sect still exists?"

"Why, do you have any connections with the Dangyang Sect?"

"Not really a connection. Many years ago, the Dangyang Sect was a large sect, and its status in the Martial Arts world was not weaker than the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. At that time, the head of the Dangyang Sect was an extremely powerful master, ranked second in the world. His Luoyun Palm had defeated countless Martial Arts masters, and even the Pavilion Master of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion had to be wary of him. At that time, the Dangyang Sect was the only Martial Arts force capable of competing with the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion."

"Unfortunately, good times did not last long. The head of the Danyang Sect died unexpectedly, which was undoubtedly a disaster for the Danyang Sect. As expected, within just two years, the Danyang Sect was suppressed by the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, descending from a top-tier power to a third-rate force in the Martial Arts world. I thought they had long been extinct, but I didn't expect them to be so resilient, surviving till now."

Tong Zhentian said with a face full of surprise, "Ling, I didn't think you were so knowledgeable about the history of the Martial Arts world."

Ling Gengqiu chuckled and did not continue to delve into this topic. Just kidding, he personally went through the rise and fall of the Danyang Sect; he couldn't possibly tell Tong Zhentian that.

"The head of the Danyang Sect never accepted any disciples because he died early, and his Luoyun Palm was thus lost. However, I've heard people say that the head of the Danyang Sect hid his Luoyun Palm within the Danyang Sect. Have you heard of this martial art in your years in the Martial Arts world?"

Tong Zhentian shook his head and said, "No."

"Is that so? In that case, the Luoyun Palm manual should still be within the Danyang Sect." Ling Gengqiu said with a contemplative expression, blinking his eyes.

"Ling, it's just a manual. Is there a need to take it so seriously?" Tong Zhentian said, "The Dragon Tiger Hall has collected countless kinds of manuals, and if you are interested, you can go to the library some other day."

Ling Gengqiu waved his hand and said, "You don't understand. Luoyun Palm is not like any other martial art. Back in the day, the head of the Danyang Sect, although a Heavenly List expert, there were many Heavenly List experts in the Martial Arts world stronger than him. However, with the power of the Luoyun Palm, except for the Pavilion Master of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, almost no one was his match. Therefore, Luoyun Palm is an extremely powerful martial art. If used well, it can bridge the gap in strength."

"Really that formidable?" Tong Zhentian was taken aback.

"Of course!" Ling Gengqiu thought for a moment and asked, "Has the Dangyang Sect changed locations?"

"No. Why, are you interested in that Luoyun Palm?"

"Nonsense, who wouldn't want to experience a powerful martial art? Besides, will you let such a skill be lost?" Speaking of which, Ling Gengqiu glanced at the room behind him and shook his head helplessly, saying, "It's a pity that kid hasn't come out yet. I'm not comfortable leaving now. Otherwise, I would surely visit the Dangyang Sect myself."

Regarding Ling Gengqiu's idea, Tong Zhentian didn't know what to say. With Ling Gengqiu's strength, he could go wherever he wanted. The mere Dangyang Sect was nothing to him.

"Ling, if you decide to go to the Dangyang Sect, could you do me a favor and check on Qi Yong?"

"Alright, I'll keep it in mind."

As they spoke, a peculiar noise suddenly came from the room behind. Ling Gengqiu and Tong Zhentian, who were drinking, stood up abruptly and rushed toward the room.

As the door opened, a pungent smell assaulted their senses. Ling Gengqiu looked carefully and saw a raging fire at the bottom of a large wooden barrel, and the entire iron plate had turned an extremely bright red. Inside the large wooden barrel, steaming hot air kept rising, almost enveloping Ling Chen's head.

Listening to the strange noises coming from the wooden barrel, Ling Gengqiu and Tong Zhentian exchanged a glance and immediately rushed towards the wooden barrel.

Bam!

Ling Gengqiu struck with his palm, hitting the surface of the wooden barrel. Immediately, the large wooden barrel flew off the iron plate. Tong Zhentian swiftly reacted, catching the large wooden barrel with both hands, then slowly placing it on the ground.

As the steam in the barrel gradually dissipated, Ling Chen's body finally appeared in the sight of the two.

Chapter 1460 - 1768: Qi Yong (Part 2)

At this moment, Ling Chen's body appeared somewhat strange. Originally of yellow skin, his complexion had turned a dark color, as if poisoned, looking quite terrifying. Tong Zhentian said in a deep voice, "What's wrong with him?"

Ling Gengqiu shook his head, also unclear about Ling Chen's current condition. He quickly walked to the large wooden tub, softly calling Ling Chen's name, hoping to wake him up. However, Ling Chen seemed to be in a deep sleep, without any reaction to the outside world.

Seeing this situation, Ling Gengqiu reached out and patted Ling Chen's cheek, but the result was the same.

"Could there be a problem?" Tong Zhentian asked somewhat worriedly.

Ling Gengqiu said nothing but took Ling Chen's hand from the thick liquid. Ling Chen's body temperature was high due to soaking in the boiling thick liquid. Ling Gengqiu cautiously held Ling Chen's wrist, checking his condition.

After a while, under Tong Zhentian's gaze, Ling Gengqiu spoke, "His body is normal, without any abnormalities."

"Then why isn't he waking up?"

"I don't know this. Maybe the medicine is too strong, all gathered in his body, and he hasn't fully absorbed it. How about we wait and see, maybe he'll wake up later?" Saying this, the two carefully lifted Ling Chen from the large wooden tub and moved him to the big bed.

Later, Tong Zhentian called others to help clean Ling Chen's body and change him into clean clothes.

One night passed.

The next morning, Ling Chen lying on the bed slowly opened his eyes, looking at the surrounding environment. Where is this... In a daze, Ling Chen's memory gradually cleared.

That's right! Thinking of the previous events, Ling Chen couldn't help but raise his hands. What amazed him was that the perception of his limbs had been restored.

Overjoyed, Ling Chen jumped up from the bed, continuously shaking his arms and legs. Not only had his perception recovered, all the pain vanished as if he hadn't suffered any injuries at all.

Just then, the door was pushed open from outside, and Ling Gengqiu, Tong Zhentian and He Ziyun entered. Seeing Ling Chen standing by the bed, He Ziyun's eyes lit up, smiling with joy, "You kid finally woke up."

"How are you feeling?" Tong Zhentian asked with concern.

Ling Chen smiled and nodded, "Not bad, I feel full of strength."

Hearing this, Ling Gengqiu couldn't help but ask, "Have your powers returned?"

"Uh... not quite." Mentioning his strength, Ling Chen seemed somewhat disappointed. He had already tried earlier, although his body had recovered, his dantian was empty, without any trace of inner strength. It seemed that his dantian was not repaired; now he's just a relatively strong ordinary person.

"Not recovered?" Ling Gengqiu walked to Ling Chen's side, curiously saying, "Impossible! I'm using an ancient method; even if you can't return to your peak period, you should at least sense the presence of inner strength. Could it be... something went wrong?"

"Lie on the bed, I'll check for you."

Without a word, Ling Chen obediently lay on the bed. Ling Gengqiu first checked Ling Chen's pulse, then conducted a full-body examination.

"Ling, how's Ling Chen's situation?"

Ling Gengqiu rubbed his chin, showing a thoughtful expression, "You silly boy, you really can't feel inner strength?"

Ling Chen shook his head, smiling bitterly, "Brother, why would I lie about such a thing? If there was indeed inner strength in my body, I would definitely sense it."

"That's odd. I just checked your body; your dantian has been repaired. According to logic, even if your powers don't return to peak status, they should recover somewhat, not devoid of inner strength."

After hearing Ling Gengqiu's analysis, Tong Zhentian spoke, "Could it be that his dantian had suffered severe injury, though it has recovered, it remains in a standby state, requiring activation to use."

He Ziyun agreed, "I think Elder Tong's words make sense. Ling Chen's dantian is like an engine, currently in a shut down state, needing a key to activate for it to operate again."

"Key?" Ling Gengqiu thought carefully, nodding slightly, "Perhaps. But what is this key?"

"This..." Tong Zhentian and He Ziyun exchanged looks, both running out of words.

"Enough! Asking you is useless." Saying this, Ling Gengqiu turned his gaze back to Ling Chen, "You silly boy, try cultivating these days and see if you can generate inner strength within your body."

"Alright." After a pause, Ling Chen asked, "By the way! How long have I stayed here?"

Tong Zhentian replied, "About two weeks."

"Half a month?" Ling Chen's expression slightly changed, not expecting to be unconscious for so long.

Damn! Thinking of the Martial Arts committee matters, Ling Chen hurriedly asked, "Elder Tong, has the issue with the candidates been resolved?"

"No need to worry about this matter for now. We were already preparing to give up, yet unexpectedly Cheng Yaojin disrupted the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's plans." At this, Tong Zhentian recounted the day's events to Ling Chen.

"Qi Yong?" Ling Chen murmured the name of the person, his facial expression appearing somewhat odd.

"This Qi Yong has tremendous courage, daring to go against the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and Dragon Tiger Hall, isn't he afraid of us joining forces to trouble him?"

"Qi Yong is a smart person. Since he dared to do this, he naturally has his dependencies. Actually, we've discussed this issue seriously over the past few days. Qi Yong isn't acting impulsively; his actions are well-thought-out." Tong Zhentian said, "The Martial Arts committee needs reform. At this critical moment, if we act against Qi Yong, it will inevitably affect our reputation. Recently, we have been advocating eliminating tyranny, not allowing a single entity to dominate in Martial Arts, advocating for healthy competition to enable progress and development in Martial Arts. If we take strong measures to suppress Qi Yong, wouldn't it contradict our proposed ideals? Therefore, we can't act rashly."

"What about Su Mei? How is she reacting?"

"The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is very angry at Qi Yong's emergence. Understandably so, Su Mei had finally arranged everything, only to have Qi Yong disrupt it. You know, besides the president and vice president of the Martial Arts committee, among the six committee members, along with Qi Yong, there are four people on one side, while the other two are candidates arranged by the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion."