

The Beauty 1511

Chapter 1511 Ubiquitous Enhancement Potions (1)

Inside the briefcase, there were unexpectedly three vials of drugs, and not only that, the bottles of those three vials were labeled with the English word 'Enhancement'.

Enhancement drugs? Ling Chen frowned slightly, how was this possible? How could enhancement drugs fall into the hands of such low-level criminals?

"Officer Xia, can I take a look at this thing?"

"No way!" Xia Mutong refused outright without even thinking: "This is evidence of a crime, no one can touch it." Saying so, Xia Mutong carefully sized up Ling Chen and asked, "Where have you been lately, there's been no news at all, I thought you disappeared."

"Busy abroad for a while, just got back to East Sea City. Well, Officer Xia, if there's nothing else, I'll head out." With that, Ling Chen turned and was ready to leave.

"Wait!" Xia Mutong said indignantly, "Rare to see you, and you're leaving just like that? Aren't we friends anymore."

"Of course we're friends, does Officer Xia have any instructions?"

"Go sit outside for a while, once I'm off work, we'll grab a bite to eat, I have something to tell you."

"Sure, no problem." Ling Chen smiled and nodded, greeted Zhang Ling, and then left the residential building.

"Captain Xia, do you know him?" After Ling Chen left, Zhang Ling asked with great curiosity. However, there was a hint of gossip in her tone.

"Don't ask what shouldn't be asked, just do your job well." Xia Mutong felt a bit overwhelmed by the new recruit assigned to her from above. Sometimes she couldn't help but question whether this was the elite from the police academy.

Before long, reinforcements arrived and transported all the criminals and evidence back to the police station. After dealing with the issues, Xia Mutong came downstairs alone, only to see Ling Chen leaning against a big tree, waiting for her to come down.

Walking up, Xia Mutong patted Ling Chen's shoulder and said, "Let's go, I'll treat you to a late-night snack."

Ling Chen grinned: "Officer Xia is treating, I certainly have to make an appearance. Let's go, my car is parked over there."

The two got in the car, and Ling Chen drove directly to the old city, now the new economic development zone, looking for a food stall. Since he left the old city, he hadn't been here to eat for a long time, he quite missed the taste here.

After ordering a few braised dishes and a few bottles of beer, Ling Chen poured a glass for Xia Mutong and asked with a smile, "Officer Xia, why are you in the mood to come out for a late-night snack with me today?"

Xia Mutong picked up the glass and drank it clean in one gulp, saying, "I'm preparing to leave East Sea City."

"Leave East Sea City?" Ling Chen was taken aback and asked in confusion, "Why? Aren't you doing well in the police station?"

"It's because I'm too capable, the higher-ups decided to transfer me to a post in Beijing." Saying this, Xia Mutong's lips slightly turned up, showing a hint of pride and satisfaction.

"Turns out it's a promotion, you scared me there, I thought you were going to quit. Come on!" Ling Chen raised his glass high, a sincere smile on his face, "Congratulations! May you rise one rank a year, strive to become a high official soon."

"What's so good about being a high official, I prefer doing practical work, not suited for sitting in an office."

"So you asked me out for a late-night snack today as a farewell?"

"More or less." Xia Mutong nodded and said, "The transfer report has already been issued, leaving for Beijing early tomorrow, today was my last case in East Sea City." Saying this, Xia Mutong showed a somewhat poignant expression, she sighed and said, "Honestly, I've been in East Sea City for so long, there aren't many friends around, you're one of the few."

"It's because of your strong-willed nature, you're more dominating than those men. If you ask me, you'd better change a bit, show the softer side of women."

Hearing this, Xia Mutong couldn't help but glare at Ling Chen, and said petulantly, "What do you mean, are you saying I'm not womanly enough?"

"Not that you're not womanly enough, it's just..." Ling Chen was about to continue speaking, but feeling the murderous gaze from Xia Mutong, he instantly closed his mouth and swallowed back the words he was about to say.

"Why aren't you continuing?"

"Well... every woman has her own charm, wouldn't you say?" Ling Chen forced a smile, not daring to say anything further.

Unconsciously, more than twenty bottles of beer had appeared on their table, Xia Mutong's tolerance to alcohol was good, after drinking more than ten bottles, she could still maintain clarity, though her cheeks were a bit flushed. Under the dim light, looking at Xia Mutong's slightly tipsy and confused gaze, and her brilliantly red pretty cheek, Ling Chen couldn't help but swallow.

Just talking about the charm of women, now was when Xia Mutong was truly exuding charm.

The drinking continued until past midnight, Ling Chen then helped the drunken Xia Mutong leave the food stall. Getting in the car, Xia Mutong's body almost slumped over the seat, head tilted to one side, eyes closed, seemingly asleep.

This woman... Ling Chen shook his head, knowing Xia Mutong for so long, he had never been to her house, he didn't even know where she lived. Helplessly, Ling Chen took out his phone and called Hu Fei for help in finding Xia Mutong's address. Soon, Hu Fei sent the location to his phone.

After a drive of over twenty minutes, Ling Chen finally arrived at the destination. Opening the car door, he looked at the already asleep Xia Mutong and lifted her petite form, carrying her up the stairs to her house. Xia Mutong wasn't a local, this was a place she rented. Finding the key from Xia Mutong's pocket, Ling Chen directly opened the door and entered.

Turning on the light inside, he saw the room of less than forty square meters was very exquisite, spotless, and although there wasn't much furniture, everything was in order. Click! Ling Chen tsked, never expected the fiery little girl had such a virtuous side, really unexpected.

Carrying Xia Mutong into the bedroom, Ling Chen felt a rush, nearly having a nosebleed. In Xia Mutong's bedroom, there was a clothesline, hung with various intimate garments in bright colors, making Ling Chen's eyes swirl.

Finally calming his mind, Ling Chen exhaled, then gently placed Xia Mutong's petite form on the bed. Just as Ling Chen was about to pull a quilt to cover her, a hand suddenly reached out from under the quilt, grabbing Ling Chen's wrist.

"Don't, don't go!"

Hearing Xia Mutong's murmuring voice, Ling Chen smiled slightly, "Don't worry, I won't leave, you go to sleep."

As he spoke, Xia Mutong's eyes suddenly opened, staring unblinkingly at Ling Chen standing by the bedside.

Ling Chen felt somewhat uncomfortable under Xia Mutong's gaze, awkwardly smiling as he said, "Well... I'll go pour you a glass of water." After saying that, Ling Chen got up intending to leave, but Xia Mutong's hand continued to clasp his wrist tightly, with no sign of letting go.

Looking at Xia Mutong's fiery eyes, Ling Chen couldn't help but cough lightly. Damn! Was this little girl tempting him?

Chapter 1512 Mass-Produced Enhancement Potions (2)

As their eyes met, feeling the somewhat awkward atmosphere around them, Ling Chen asked, "Aren't you thirsty?"

Xia Mutong stared straight into Ling Chen's eyes and retorted slowly, "Ling Chen, are you even a man?"

Upon hearing this, Ling Chen raised an eyebrow. Seeing the challenging look in Xia Mutong's eyes, a wicked fire welled up inside him. Damn! This girl dared to question his manhood. Had she forgotten past lessons? It seemed he needed to teach her a lesson to make her remember.

Before Ling Chen could say anything else, Xia Mutong grasped his arm with a slight force and pulled him directly onto the bed.

The blanket was pulled over, and the room was filled with boundless spring romance.

...

The next day.

Ling Chen woke up from the warm bed, his arm naturally reaching out beside him. But he quickly realized he was alone. Where was she? Ling Chen opened his eyes wide and saw that he was the only one on the bed; Xia Mutong was nowhere to be found.

After getting dressed, Ling Chen went to the living room, where he saw a note pinned down by a teacup on the coffee table. It was a message from Xia Mutong, saying she had already left for Beijing. After reading the note, Ling Chen couldn't help but pat his forehead. What had happened lately? His alertness had decreased so much that he didn't even notice Xia Mutong leaving.

Thinking back to the wonderful night before, Ling Chen couldn't help but smile. Was this woman giving him a farewell gift? Or... was she trying to make sure he always remembered her?

Leaving Xia Mutong's place, Ling Chen found a breakfast stand on the street and grabbed something to eat before driving to the base.

As soon as Ling Chen walked into the control room, Hu Fei immediately got up to greet him and asked, "Why are you here? Weren't you supposed to rest at home for a while?"

"It's nothing, I'm not that fragile."

Noticing the cheerful expression on Ling Chen's face, Hu Fei nudged his arm and asked quietly, "How did it go last night?"

"What do you mean, how did it go?"

"Come on, stop pretending with me. Last night you asked me for Xia Mutong's address. Are you telling me nothing indescribable happened?" Hu Fei smiled suggestively.

"Get out of here. She was drunk, and I just took her home. Don't overthink it."

"Am I really overthinking it?"

Faced with Hu Fei's persistent questions, Ling Chen glared at him and said grumpily, "Fatty, keep it up and I'll kick you so hard you'll only be able to look at beauties but never touch them."

"Alright, alright, I won't ask anymore. What a big deal, still so shy about something as normal as romance."

"Enough chatter. I didn't come here to chat, I have something serious to ask you."

"Go ahead, what's the serious matter?"

"Last night, while Xia Mutong was on a case, she caught a few people during an illegal transaction. I found out they were dealing strength-enhancing agents, priced at 1.8 million per bottle. I'm curious. Back when I was at Yingtai Group, strength-enhancing agents were astronomically priced. Why have they become so cheap now that even those low-level criminals can get their hands on them?"

"There's nothing strange about this. You've been in the hospital for over half a month, and a lot has happened outside. Honestly, the strength-enhancing agent issue has a lot to do with you."

"Me?" Ling Chen asked, puzzled. "Why?"

"Do you remember when you were at Yingtai Group, you gave Seland the formula for making strength-enhancing agents to ensure that Zhu Hong couldn't stay at Yingtai Group? This made Yingtai Group wrongly believe that Zhu Hong was secretly dealing with other military enterprises. Although you achieved your goal, that formula remained in Yingtai Group's hands. Recently, various military enterprises suddenly received the formula for strength-enhancing agents. Moreover, this document has been spreading wildly online. I can assure you, we weren't behind this, so the mastermind is likely Zhu Hong. He resents Yingtai Group for betraying him, so he wants to strike back and rob them of their competitive edge. So, the strength-enhancing agent has become commonplace and is no longer a secret."

Ling Chen frowned slightly and asked, "What about the government? Haven't they taken any measures?"

"They've already taken action; all the information about strength-enhancing agents has been removed from the internet. However, while the data has been deleted, some people have preserved it and are secretly producing it." With that, Hu Fei opened the drawer of his desk, took out a bottle of agent, handed it to Ling Chen, and said, "I bought this from the black market for two million. Although it's a strength-enhancing agent, its efficacy is nowhere near that of a genuine agent, barely half as effective."

"Why?"

"Do you think it's so easy to make strength-enhancing agents? Without professionals and specialized equipment, how many people can produce a strength-enhancing agent? So, the one in your hand is at best a semi-finished product. However, it's very popular in the market because it doesn't have much of a side effect on the human body, reducing the danger to just twenty percent. It's considered a relatively stable product. Now, a special organization has been established in the country to crack down on this stuff severely."

"It's all my fault," Ling Chen sighed.

"Don't blame yourself. Even if you hadn't handed over that formula to Yingtai Group, it would have happened sooner or later. Zhu Hong had this technology, and do you think he would keep it to himself? No way! He would definitely trade the technology. So, all you did was speed up the spread of strength-enhancing agents."

"Regardless, I have an undeniable responsibility. Fatty, do me a favor and try to gather as much information as possible, then pass it to the government. What I can do now is try to make amends." With that, Ling Chen asked, "By the way, have there been any updates on Zhu Hong?"

Hu Fei shook his head and said, "No. After this incident, he should lay low for a while."

"Let's hope so."

"Take care and get some rest during this time. Don't worry about these things. With us around, nothing will happen."

"Alright, thank you then."

As he left the base, Ling Chen was driving home when he received a call from Ling Gengqiu.

"Hey, brother, what's up?"

"Where have you been? I haven't seen you for more than a month. I'm telling you, I can't stay with the Ling Family any longer, you need to get me out of here." Ling Gengqiu complained over the phone.

Ling Chen asked with a smile, "Brother, what's going on? You're the family patriarch; do they dare to boss you around?"

"Don't mention it. Precisely because I'm the patriarch, I have to be careful with everything so as not to ruin the image they have of me."

Chapter 1513 - 1819: Missing an Opportunity

Ling Chen smiled; he understood the nature of his ancestor. Proficient in eating, drinking, whoring, and gambling, especially with women. None of the younger generation in the Ling family could surpass him. Perhaps it was the constraints at home that made Ling Gengqiu want to leave.

Well! I'm free lately, and apart from myself, there's no one else at home. Just right to bring Ling Gengqiu over, having someone to chat with isn't bad.

"Brother, how about this? I'll call my dad later and ask him to send someone to bring you to East Sea City. How does that sound?"

"Alright, it's settled then. You better not fool me, or watch how I deal with you."

After hanging up the phone, Ling Chen dialed Ling Kun's number directly. His father was quite easy to talk to, agreeing after just a few words.

Back home, Ling Chen took off his jacket and walked straight to the bathroom to take a hot shower. Suddenly, he realized a problem: his right arm didn't hurt as much as before and could make larger movements.

Recovery is swift! Ling Chen smiled to himself; his body recovering quickly was certainly something to be happy about. However, thinking about his martial arts prowess, he couldn't help but sigh. If only his strength could recover. This action made him realize a serious problem: his lack of strength forced reliance on others, undoubtedly exposing them to greater risks.

Ever since the incident with Qin Genglong, he had been blaming himself immensely. If he were stronger, this wouldn't have happened.

However, Ling Gengqiu once told him that his Dantian was damaged, a mark of a martial artist. Once there's an issue with the Dantian, it's like his whole life is wasted, at best he could practice some flashy moves but wouldn't achieve great success.

In the morning, after a little rest and having lunch, Ling Chen received a call from Ling Gengqiu. He had already arrived at East Sea International Airport and was on his way here.

Heh! He's quite impatient, unwilling to wait a moment longer. Called in the morning, and couldn't wait to come in the afternoon.

After more than half an hour, Ling Gengqiu arrived at Ling Chen's residence by car.

"Brother." Ling Chen stood at the door, with a smile greeted Ling Gengqiu.

Entering the house, Ling Gengqiu lay casually on the sofa, hands behind his head, very satisfied he said, "It's more comfortable here with you, way more relaxed. Let your dad know I'll be living here from now on."

Ling Chen said amusedly, "Brother, you are the ancestor of the Ling family, how could you be like this."

"What did I do? Others worship their ancestors, yet here you are making me do this and that, turning me into free labor."

"Brother, you can't say that. Everyone just wants to rebuild the Ling family, to elevate it further. Don't you want to see the Ling family regain its former glory?"

Ling Gengqiu waved his hand dismissively, "Don't talk to me about that. I have no interest in the glory you speak of. I've lived for so many years, money and fame mean little to me. Right now, enjoyment is most important." At this, he glanced at Ling Chen, and his eyes lit up. Before Ling Chen could react, he saw Ling Gengqiu leap from the sofa and ran to him, sniffing around him.

"Hey! Brother, what are you doing?"

Ling Gengqiu grinned, looking at Ling Chen, "You rascal, not bad. Be honest, were you with a woman last night?"

Ling Chen's face turned red, coughed lightly and shook his head, "No such thing. Brother, don't talk nonsense."

"Come on, no need to hide from me. Besides, who am I? An expert in romance, I can spot the signs instantly. Hey! Who's the girl? Have I seen her before?"

Facing Ling Gengqiu's overwhelming curiosity, Ling Chen said frustratedly, "Brother, if you keep this up, I'll send you back to Beijing right away."

"Alright, alright! I won't ask. You're not that young anymore, and you still get shy."

"Brother." After a few casual talks, Ling Chen sat beside Ling Gengqiu with a serious face, saying, "I have something to ask you. My Dantian is damaged; isn't there another way to recover? I feel like a cripple, unable to protect myself. You've lived for so many years, there's got to be some solution?"

"For a martial artist, Dantian damage is detrimental, almost impossible to recover. However, there's always an exception. To give you an example, the Dantian is like a plant; the longer you train, the thicker the Inner Strength, nourishing the Dantian more vigorously. But in your case, the Dantian is already withered. Only by continuously watering and nurturing it could there be the slightest hope of revitalization."

After a pause, Ling Gengqiu continued, "Last time when I soaked you in the medicinal bath, coupled with the Nine Elements Pill's effects, I aimed to reactivate your Dantian. Unfortunately, your body absorbed the medicine, but there was no change."

"Why?"

"It's simple; rebuilding needs a trigger. You're missing that trigger right now, hence unable to activate your Dantian."

"Trigger?" Ling Chen muttered, "Brother, what kind of trigger can reactivate the Dantian?"

"Hard to say, could be stimulated by danger, or perhaps nourished by a woman; there's no definite answer, so I can't give you an exact one."

Danger... Ling Chen shook his head silently. Abroad, he encountered quite a bit of danger, almost dying every time, yet his Dantian showed no response. Evidently, the so-called danger stimulation didn't work for him.

As for nourishment from a woman, he just had an encounter with Xia Mutong last night, and it seemed to have no effect.

Seeing Ling Chen deep in thought, Ling Gengqiu patted his shoulder, "Don't overthink it, triggers are rarely sought, the more you dwell, the less you gain. So, you should let go of everything now, don't think about anything, just enjoy life. Who knows, you might succeed one day."

Hearing this, Ling Chen couldn't help but smile wryly. Easy to say, enjoy life... Right now, he can't afford to enjoy, too many issues to handle, he can't pass them all onto others.

"Brother, aside from the trigger you mentioned, is there any simpler, faster way?" This trigger thing is too elusive; who knows if it's going to work.

Ling Gengqiu thought carefully and said seriously, "There is, actually."

"What method?" Ling Chen asked eagerly.

Chapter 1514 - 1820: Alchemy (1)

"Go find a building over a hundred meters tall and jump off the rooftop. I guarantee the shock will reactivate your Dantian."

Upon hearing Ling Gengqiu's words, Ling Chen was stunned on the sofa. Just now, seeing Ling Gengqiu's serious expression, he thought he really had a solution. But he didn't expect him to say something so flippant.

"Brother, don't mess with me, please? I'd definitely die if I did as you say."

Ling Gengqiu shrugged and said, "I'm telling the truth. This method is one hundred percent effective. Whether you're willing to try it or not is your business." After saying that, Ling Gengqiu ignored Ling Chen and took out his phone to chat with beauties on WeChat.

Sigh!

Ling Chen sighed quietly, looking at the high building not far from the window, thinking to himself, do I really have to jump?

Thump thump thump!

Just then, there was a knock on the door. Ling Chen got up and opened it, only to see Tong Zhentian standing outside. "Elder Tong?" Ling Chen was surprised. He didn't expect Tong Zhentian to come in person, and hurriedly invited him in.

Seeing that Ling Gengqiu was also in the house, Tong Zhentian quickly went up to greet him. "Do you need to talk? Then I'll go upstairs first." After saying that, Ling Gengqiu, still holding his phone, went upstairs.

"Elder Tong, please sit!" Ling Chen ran to the kitchen, brewed a cup of hot tea, and handed it to Tong Zhentian. "Elder Tong, you could have just called. There's no need to trouble yourself to come here."

"I heard that you were injured recently and are recovering at home, so I came to check on you and discuss a few things."

"Elder Tong, please, go ahead."

"It's about the Martial Arts Association. Do you remember when we were in Beijing last time, Qi Yong, the Sect Leader of the Dangyang Sect, came to us? He wanted to collaborate with Dragon Tiger Hall to

oppose the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, but we refused. As expected, after our refusal, Qi Yong went directly to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion to negotiate cooperation."

"And what was the result?" Ling Chen asked, "Considering Su Mei's character, she probably wouldn't agree, right?"

"Well, how should I put it, to my knowledge, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion Master didn't agree but didn't refuse either—just said a lot of vague words. That's why I came to discuss this with you. The ambiguous attitude of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is not good for our Dragon Tiger Hall."

Ling Chen nodded. It was indeed a troublesome issue. During the restructure of the Martial Arts Association, there were nine positions, including the President and Vice President, and Dragon Tiger Hall only secured one position. The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and Qi Yong's faction each took four. Originally, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion was assured of five positions, but Qi Yong's sudden involvement disrupted their plans.

Because of Qi Yong, the power in the Martial Arts Association entered a special equilibrium.

"Elder Tong, hasn't anyone from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion contacted you?" Ling Chen asked.

"No, no one's approached me yet. I've heard they're busy with other alliances, seemingly dealing with something major, so they're not focusing on this at the moment."

Ling Chen knew the situation. The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion was collaborating with the military to capture Zhu Hong and Chen Quan. Unfortunately, the mission hadn't made any progress. Ling Chen had mixed feelings about it. While he wanted Zhu Hong captured, he didn't want the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion to cooperate with the military. Otherwise, with the Pavilion's dominance, gaining military support would be very troublesome.

"Elder Tong, any movements from Qi Yong?"

"None. Even if there were, I'm unaware. Qi Yong operates cautiously. I've had people watch him 24/7, but he only meets with martial artists and doesn't engage in any wayward behavior."

"If they're so secretive, we'll have to wait. In any case, you are part of the Martial Arts Association. Until things become clear, don't strain the relationships. We're at a disadvantage in this situation."

"I understand," Tong Zhentian said. "Actually, the main reason I came is to ask you to visit the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and have a good talk with Su Mei."

"Talk? Elder Tong, what do you want me to discuss with her?"

"Cooperation. Whether you can establish cooperation or not is secondary. The primary goal is to express your stance and observe Su Mei's response. This will let us gauge if she and Qi Yong have any agreements."

Ling Chen nodded. "I understand what you mean. Alright! I'll find time to visit the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and meet some old friends."

"Good, then it's settled. Rest well at home and recover quickly; Dragon Tiger Hall still needs you to hold the fort."

After sending off Tong Zhentian, Ling Chen was about to tidy up when Ling Gengqiu came downstairs.

"Finished chatting?"

Ling Chen glanced at Ling Gengqiu and said blandly, "Brother, why play dumb? Don't think I don't know you were eavesdropping upstairs."

Ling Gengqiu chuckled, "Kid, aren't you going to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion? I'm free anyway, so I'll go with you, to keep you company."

"You want to go with me to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion?" Ling Chen looked at Ling Gengqiu strangely.

"Why are you looking at me like that?"

"Brother, be honest, do you have some agenda? As long as I've known you, I've never seen you this proactive."

"Knock it off; stop asking so many questions now. I'll tell you when we get to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion."

"You can come, but be careful. I can't guarantee whether Su Cheng'en and Su He are at the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion."

Upon hearing Su Cheng'en's name, Ling Gengqiu's eyes narrowed slightly, as if contemplating something.

"Oh! Brother, there's something I almost forgot to tell you," Ling Chen suddenly remembered. "You once mentioned Su Cheng'en seemed strange, not immortal yet living so long, there must be an issue."

"That's right, I did say that. I've fought him several times, and his body's quite problematic." Pausing, Ling Gengqiu looked at Ling Chen and asked, "So, do you know why?"

"Honestly, my second brother was once Su Cheng'en's disciple. He told me about Su Cheng'en." Ling Chen then explained everything Xu Ming had relayed to him back then.

"Corpses... Heavenly List experts..." Ling Gengqiu, with one hand stroking his chin, thought for a moment before asking, "Are you sure that's what he said?"

Ling Chen nodded. "Brother, how could I forget something so important? I'm not very knowledgeable in this area. You've lived for hundreds of years, so you should understand things like this better."

Chapter 1515 - 1821: Alchemy (2)

Back then, when Ling Chen discovered He Zhishen's tomb, Xu Ming told him that apart from He Zhishen, there were other people in this world who lived long lives, and one of them was his master, Su Cheng'en.

Su Cheng'en took on many disciples, but all of those disciples mysteriously disappeared in their thirties and forties. Until later, by chance, Xu Ming found many skeletons beneath his room where he lived. Not only that, the heads of those skeletons were all smashed. According to Xu Ming's guess, those skeletons must have been Su Cheng'en's former disciples. After learning that his master was a brutal murderer, Xu Ming chose to escape.

At this moment, after listening to Ling Chen's narrative, Ling Gengqiu pondered for a while and then slowly said, "If that's the case, I may know the reason for Su Cheng'en's longevity. Su Cheng'en is the creator of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, knowledgeable and wise, and his aptitude and intelligence are slightly inferior to mine. Moreover, Su Cheng'en mastered an alchemy technique, passed down from ancestors many years ago. Alchemy is a profound skill, and it's unknown where Su Cheng'en learned it. The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion became the largest force in Martial Arts due to his alchemy skills, and he crafted pills like the Nine Elements Pill."

After pausing, Ling Gengqiu continued, "I think Su Cheng'en probably uses his alchemy skills, utilizing Heavenly List experts as drug primers to brew elixirs for himself to extend his own life."

Upon hearing this, Ling Chen's expression changed, and he asked in surprise, "Brother, do you mean... Su Cheng'en uses people to craft potions?"

Ling Gengqiu nodded and said, "I know it sounds very cruel, but it was common in ancient times. Haven't you heard that some ancient emperors, to achieve immortality, sought alchemists to craft longevity pills? Those alchemists used young boys and girls as drug primers, crafting pills for the emperors to consume. However, there is no such thing as a true immortality pill in this world; most alchemists who the emperors summoned were frauds, and the pills made from boys and girls might at best contribute to strengthening one's physique."

"Heavenly List experts are not ordinary people; to be precise, Heavenly List experts surpass ordinary people's limits in some aspects. Therefore, elixirs brewed using Heavenly List experts possess extraordinary effects. Yet, this method belongs to the unorthodox ways and carries significant side effects. Last time when I faced off against Su Cheng'en, his strength steadily overwhelmed me, but in the end, his body suddenly cracked. Thus, it can be concluded that he does not possess immortality; although the elixirs extended his life, they could not alter his physical body, and when his body cannot withstand the internal power, it explodes, which is a fatal flaw for Su Cheng'en."

"I see."

"Unless Su Cheng'en solves this problem, he will never bear to fight against me, which is why he has yet to appear. So, we need not worry about him for now."

Ling Chen nodded and said, "Brother, there's no time to lose. I'll book two plane tickets, and we can set off for the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion tomorrow. What do you think?"

"I'm fine with it, since I'm idle anyway. To be honest, I haven't visited the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion for many years, and I don't know what changes have occurred there." As he spoke these words, Ling Gengqiu's eyes revealed a trace of nostalgia, though what he was nostalgic for, Ling Chen could not fathom.

The next morning, Ling Chen drove to the airport with Ling Gengqiu and boarded the plane heading to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion.

After a few hours of arduous travel, the two people finally arrived in the forest outside the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. Gazing at the lush trees surrounding him, Ling Gengqiu walked while lamenting, "When I came here back then, the mountains around were bare, devoid of any vegetation. In the blink of an eye, hundreds of years have passed; things have changed and people are no longer the same."

Ling Chen playfully teased, "Brother, the 'people' in 'people are no longer the same' refers to those beauties, doesn't it?"

Upon hearing this, Ling Gengqiu grinned and said, "You're still the one who understands me."

As they talked, Ling Gengqiu suddenly halted, his gaze darting to the side. Immediately, he plucked a leaf from a branch, his wrist subtly flicking, and the thin leaf instantly transformed into a sharp blade, swiftly flying out.

As Ling Gengqiu acted, a cry of pain echoed from the jungle, followed by a muffled 'thud', as if something had fallen to the ground.

"Who's there?" Ling Chen vigilantly looked toward the direction of the sound, striding quickly in its direction. Upon approaching, he saw a young man lying on the ground, the leaf embedded right in his

shoulder. Fortunately, Ling Gengqiu had held back a bit of force; otherwise, the leaf would have pierced through his body.

"Are you a scout of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion?"

The man slowly climbed up from the ground, looked at Ling Chen and said, "Mr. Ling, this is not your first time at the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, you should be familiar with our rules."

"I apologize; my companion is just too cautious. Go and notify your Pavilion Master, tell her that I'm here and would like to meet."

"Yes."

After the man left, Ling Chen and Ling Gengqiu did not proceed forward but stayed where they were waiting. He was no longer a friend of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, and if he forcibly entered, he would encounter resistance. He came here this time to discuss cooperation with Su Mei, and there was no need for confrontation.

After about ten minutes, the young man returned, and with him was Ling Chen's friend, Song Ge.

"Ling, we meet again." Song Ge greeted him with a smile.

"Hello, Song." With that, Ling Chen pointed to Ling Gengqiu beside him and said, "Let me introduce you, this is my brother."

"Hello, pleased to meet you." Song Ge exchanged some polite remarks, then said, "Ling, the Pavilion Master is waiting for you in the hall, let me lead you there."

"Much appreciated."

Before long, the trio arrived outside the central tower of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. Entering the tower and climbing two flights of stairs, they reached the council hall of the Heavenly Mechanism

Pavilion. Upon entering the door, Ling Chen's gaze was immediately drawn to Su Mei's charming face. After a long absence, Su Mei still looked the same as before, her delicate features, skin white as snow, wearing a loose outfit with a minority ethnic flair, sitting gracefully there, her slender lips slightly curved in a subtle smile.

If anything was different, it was the change in aura; now Su Mei seemed even more mature than before, exuding the charm of a mature woman, indescribable yet irresistibly attractive, even Ling Gengqiu beside her widened his eyes, carefully observing the young Pavilion Master of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion.

Chapter 1516 - 1822: A More Mature Master Su

"Ling Chen, long time no see." Su Mei stood up, walked gracefully to stand in front of Ling Chen, and gave a faint smile, like a hundred flowers blooming all at once, incomparably gorgeous. That blend of innocence and sultriness made Ling Chen freeze on the spot.

Tsk tsk! This chick is really getting more and more outrageous. Innocence and sultriness are supposed to be two extremes, yet both kinds of charm appeared on Su Mei at the same time, which was truly surprising. However, Ling Chen had to admit that this kind of charm was indeed hard to resist.

As the saying goes, "With one backward glance, a hundred charms are born, making all the powdered faces of the six palaces lose their color." This ancient line fit Su Mei quite well.

"Master Su, I'm very glad to see you." After speaking, Ling Chen glanced around the council hall and asked, "Why don't I see Elder Du?"

"Elder Du has some matters to deal with and can't spare the time to come receive you for the moment. I'll apologize on his behalf first."

"You're too polite, Master Su. Elder Du is a senior, I should be the one visiting him. How could we trouble him to come receive us?"

"Thank you for your understanding." Su Mei smiled sweetly, then turned her gaze toward Ling Gengqiu beside him. After sizing him up twice, a barely noticeable gleam flashed across her eyes.

"Ling Chen, you still haven't introduced me."

"This is my elder Ling. He insisted on tagging along to Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion to broaden his horizons, so let's just ignore him." Ling Chen didn't mention Ling Gengqiu's name. Come on, Su Mei knew who Ling Gengqiu was, and not only that, Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion had detailed files on Ling Gengqiu. Back then, it was Su Mei who gave him those files, which was why he understood Ling Gengqiu's past so well.

"Song, could you trouble yourself to take my elder around for a stroll? I've got something to talk over with Master Su."

"Alright. Ling, this way, please!"

Watching Song Ge and Ling Gengqiu leave, Ling Chen and Su Mei both sat down. In the huge council hall, only the two of them remained.

"Ling Chen, you came all the way from East Sea City to Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. What's the matter?"

Ling Chen opened his mouth and said, "Master Su..." Before he could continue, Su Mei suddenly raised her hand to stop him, and said with some dissatisfaction, "When did you become so distant? Didn't you used to just call me by my name? How come now it's 'Master' this and 'Master' that every time you open your mouth? Do you not see me as a friend anymore?"

"That's not how it is. Private friendship is one thing, but right now we're respectively representing Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and Dragon Tiger Hall, so we can't address each other as friends." Ling Chen smiled and said, "Of course, if you're willing to give me some preferential treatment for the sake of our friendship, I'd be more than happy to talk to you as a friend."

"You're right." Su Mei nodded slightly and said, "I was being a bit immature. So go ahead, what did you come to me for?"

"Master Su, it was Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion that first proposed rectifying the Martial Arts Association. Now that the rectification is done, I wonder if you're satisfied with the result?"

Hearing this, Su Mei gave Ling Chen a meaningful look and said, "Nothing in this world is absolutely perfect. There are things to be satisfied with and things to be dissatisfied with. That's inevitable."

As expected!

Ling Chen rubbed his nose. Su Mei had learned to talk like an official now. What she said sounded very reasonable, but in fact contained nothing.

"Then what do you think of Qi Yong as a person?" Ling Chen simply tore off the fig leaf and asked outright.

"He's a man with ambition and scheming. Ling Chen, why did you suddenly bring him up? Don't tell me you're very interested in him?"

"Don't!" Ling Chen hurriedly waved his hand. "Watch your wording, please. What do you mean I'm interested in him? I'm not gay. I'm a real man and only interested in beauties—for example, great beauties like Master Su." As he said this, Ling Chen deliberately let his gaze linger for a moment on Su Mei's two full mounds.

Feeling where Ling Chen's eyes had landed, Su Mei's pretty face flushed red. She shifted a bit uneasily, turning her side toward Ling Chen.

"Haven't seen you for a while, and you've really gotten better at talking." Su Mei rolled her eyes at Ling Chen, a hint of playful reproach in her tone.

"Can't be helped. People always say my IQ is high but my EQ is low, so I've got to make up for my shortcomings." Pausing for a moment, Ling Chen shifted back to the main topic, his expression turning serious. "I heard Qi Yong came looking for you."

"I also heard he went to see you."

"Since that's the case, let's not beat around the bush. We both know exactly what Qi Yong is after. To be blunt, whether it's for Dragon Tiger Hall or Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, Qi Yong is like a ticking time

bomb. He could explode at any time and hurt both our forces. Before that happens, I hope we can take precautions early."

"You mean... weed Qi Yong out? Didn't you tell me back then that only healthy competition between each other can allow the Martial Arts world to develop? Wouldn't doing this go against your original intention?"

"There's nothing wrong with healthy competition, but please listen carefully: I said healthy, not vicious. Qi Yong came to us for cooperation purely to join one side and suppress the other, then reap enough benefits from that to strengthen himself and seize greater discourse power. Master Su, do you think that still counts as healthy competition?"

Su Mei lowered her head slightly, as if mulling something over, and didn't respond immediately.

Seeing this, Ling Chen went on, "Master Su, like I said just now, I only want to take preventive measures in advance, nothing more. I hope you understand."

"I understand. But I still need to think this over carefully. After all, every decision we make now could affect the future development of the Martial Arts world."

"Of course." Ling Chen nodded with a smile and said, "I'm not asking you to answer me right away. Don't worry, I'll give you plenty of time to consider it."

"Thank you! You've been rushing about all this way, you must be tired. I'll arrange lodgings for you first so you can rest early. Once I've thought it through, I'll come find you."

"Alright, then I won't disturb you."

Leaving the council hall, Ling Chen waited outside the tall tower for a while. Soon, he saw Song Ge walking over with Ling Gengqiu.

"Ling, come on, I'll take you to see your rooms."

Not long after, under Song Ge's arrangements, Ling Chen and Ling Gengqiu were each settled into a room. On top of that, Su Mei also assigned four Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion Disciples to stand guard outside. Officially it was to serve them better, but Ling Chen knew very well this was open surveillance.

After a short rest, by dusk, Ling Gengqiu came in from outside. Seeing Ling Chen, who had just finished dinner, he said, "You full? I'll take you out for a walk."

Ling Chen picked up a napkin, wiped the oil from the corner of his mouth, and asked, "Elder, where do you want to take me? I've been to Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion a few times already. There's nothing much to see. I'd rather stay in the room and sleep if I've got the time."

"Cut the crap." Ling Gengqiu kicked Ling Chen lightly. "Come with me, I'll take you somewhere."

Chapter 1517 - 1823: Wave-cutting

"Brother, there are people from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion guarding outside. If we go out, they're sure to keep watch."

"What's there to be afraid of? Just a few youngsters, easily handled."

Ling Chen spoke with some concern, "Right now, we're guests of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, don't turn us into their enemies."

"Don't worry, I know what I'm doing." With that, Ling Gengqiu headed straight for the door. Upon exiting, a disciple of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion stationed outside asked, "Where are you two headed?"

"Just had a big dinner and feeling too full, going out for a walk. Surely you won't restrict my personal freedom?" Ling Gengqiu responded.

A disciple from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion smiled slightly, "Of course not, but the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is quite large, I'm afraid you might get lost. How about I follow behind you to ensure you don't lose your way?"

Ling Chen nodded, "Alright, then I'll trouble you." Ling Chen realized he couldn't shake off these followers, so he simply let them come along.

Leaving the guest room, Ling Chen walked beside Ling Gengqiu, wandering aimlessly.

"Look! Entering from there leads to the Yangxin Pavilion." Ling Chen pointed out. Ling Gengqiu turned his head slightly, looking displeased, "Do you think I wouldn't know where Yangxin Pavilion is? I could walk out of here with my eyes closed."

Ling Chen shrugged, sensibly keeping his mouth shut. After walking not too far, as they passed a small slope, Ling Gengqiu suddenly grabbed Ling Chen's arm and quickly headed into the nearby bushes. Before Ling Chen could react, Ling Gengqiu leaped with him, and they suddenly found themselves dropping into a pit.

"Don't make a sound."

Upon hearing Ling Gengqiu's reminder, Ling Chen softly responded, looking upward. However, the thick vegetation above almost completely covered the entrance, leaving it dark and impossible to see anything clearly.

At this moment, footsteps sounded around them, followed by several voices reaching their ears.

"Huh! Where are they? Weren't they just here? How did they disappear in the blink of an eye?"

"Strange, we were clearly following behind, didn't any of you see them?"

"No. This is bad, the Pavilion Master specifically instructed not to let them out of sight for even a moment."

"What should we do now?"

"You three continue searching the area, I'll report back to the Pavilion Master." With those words, the footsteps gradually faded away.

"Let's go, we need to get up there." Finished speaking, Ling Gengqiu grabbed Ling Chen's shoulder and with a pull, they immediately jumped out of the over two-meter-deep pit.

"Brother, how did you know there was a pit here?" Ling Chen asked curiously.

Ling Gengqiu slightly curled his lips, proudly smiling, "I used to sneak around the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion frequently, and this was a good hiding spot. It's been so many years, yet it's still here, not changed a bit. Honestly, being back at the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion feels like going back in time." Ling Gengqiu paused, pointing to a mountain path not far away, "Come, let's go there."

Not long after, the two reached the hillside. In the dim moonlight, Ling Chen glanced around and noticed many raised mounds and tombstones on the slope.

"Brother, is this the graveyard of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion?"

Ling Gengqiu nodded, "Right! Successive Pavilion Masters of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and their families are buried here, and only those who have contributed to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion have the honor of being laid to rest on this land." With that, Ling Gengqiu continued up to the top of the slope.

Reaching the top, Ling Chen looked closely and saw two tombstones, one with the name Su Cheng'en and the other with the name Han Xiaoyue.

"This is the tomb of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's founders, the couple Su Cheng'en. However, Su Cheng'en is not dead, so it's an empty grave." As he spoke, Ling Gengqiu pointed to another tombstone, "This is Han Xiaoyue, Su Cheng'en's wife."

Su Cheng'en's wife... As these words were uttered, a fierce look flashed in Ling Gengqiu's eyes, and Ling Chen beside him felt a chilling aura, involuntarily shivering.

"Su Cheng'en's wife... wasn't that..." Ling Chen suddenly realized, immediately understanding why Ling Gengqiu's emotions were so stirred.

Back then, this Han Xiaoyue was originally Ling Gengqiu's wife. Later, due to her hatred for Ling Gengqiu's unfaithfulness, she castrated him in a fit of anger and remarried Su Cheng'en. No wonder Ling Gengqiu came here, he wanted to see his former wife's grave.

However, Ling Gengqiu's recent demeanor seemed off, not like he came to pay respects to Han Xiaoyue.

With thoughts racing, Ling Gengqiu pointed to Su Cheng'en's nearby grave, "Dig it up."

Dig it up?

Ling Chen was slightly taken aback, almost thinking he heard wrong. "Brother, are you sure you want to... dig it up?"

"Nonsense! Hurry up, if the people from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion come, it'll be trouble."

With the older generation's word, Ling Chen dared not disobey and started digging the grave, pushing the soil to the sides. Before long, the topsoil was cleared away by Ling Chen. At this point, Ling Chen's hands suddenly touched something hard.

Coffin? Ling Chen was startled and quickly cleared the soil, revealing a wooden box about a meter long beneath. This... didn't resemble a coffin. Ling Chen glanced twice, puzzled, turning his gaze to Ling Gengqiu.

Ling Gengqiu spoke blandly, "This is something I used long ago, always buried here."

Hearing this, driven by curiosity, Ling Chen carefully opened the wooden box, where lay a sword. Though buried in the soil for centuries, the sheath was completely undamaged, and under the moonlight, the gems embedded in it sparkled brilliantly.

Simply from the sheath, it was undoubtedly a divine weapon. Ling Chen glanced at Ling Gengqiu, noticing he had nothing to say, so he held the hilt, slowly drawing the sword from its sheath. Instantly, a sword emanating a biting cold light appeared before Ling Chen's eyes.

Feeling the chill emanating from the blade, Ling Chen marveled softly; this was a true divine weapon. Despite being buried for centuries, it remained unaffected, still sharp as ever.

"Brother, should we take this sword back?"

"Its name is Wave-cutting, a keepsake between Han Xiaoyue and me back then. After all these years, everything's changed, and this sword no longer holds any meaning for me, it's yours now."

"For me?"

"What, you look down on it?"

"Brother, how dare I despise what you give, it's just..." Ling Chen chuckled wryly, "I'm now devoid of martial arts, what's the use of having it?"

"Do with it as you wish, take it home as a decoration if you'd like. Alright, don't delay anymore, let's restore the soil and head back."

Chapter 1517 - 1823: Wave-cutting

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"Do with it as you wish, take it home as a decoration if you'd like. Alright, don't delay anymore, let's restore the soil and head back."

Chapter 1519 - 1825: Hidden Evidence of Crime

"Yu." Ling Chen looked at Yu Beifeng and said, "Actually, we have a mutual friend."

"Friend?" Yu Beifeng's lips moved, his cold eyes slowly shifting to Ling Chen's face, "I have no friends."

"Xu Ming!" Ling Chen spat out the two words with a smile, "I believe you are not unfamiliar with him."

"You mean... Xu..." Mentioning Xu Ming, a peculiar expression instantly appeared on Yu Beifeng's face, like he was reminiscing and pained at the same time, various emotions flashed across his eyes, incredibly complex.

After a good while, Yu Beifeng's emotions seemed to settle, and he asked, "How is Xu? I haven't seen him for many years."

"He's doing well now." At this point, Ling Chen's eyes flashed as he said, "Yu, can I ask you something? Do you know why Xu left Su Cheng'en back then?"

Yu Beifeng shook his head and said, "I'm not quite sure about the specifics. I just occasionally heard Master mention that... Xu was a traitor, unable to focus on martial arts, always longing for the colorful world outside."

"Is that so?" Ling Chen smiled, "Yu, regardless of what Su Cheng'en told you, I want to tell you that he deceived you. Not only that, he deceived everyone. Your Xu didn't leave because he longed for the outside world. The primary reason he left was to save his life. He knew clearly that if he continued to stay by Su Cheng'en's side, he'd surely die."

"Why? Did Xu commit some kind of mistake? Master is a very generous person, even if mistakes are made, he would at most scold a bit, never attack."

"Yu, you're mistaken; you've been kept in the dark about many things. Before Su Cheng'en took you two as disciples, he had many disciples, and without exception, those people all disappeared mysteriously. To be precise, they're all dead. The murderer who killed them is Su Cheng'en."

Upon hearing this, even Du Kang on the side became interested, "Ling Chen, how do you know these things?"

"My second brother told me." Seeing the puzzled looks of Du Kang and Yu Beifeng, Ling Chen patted his forehead and explained with a smile, "I forgot to tell you that my second brother is Xu Ming, one of the Eight Eccentrics. Elder Du, he used to visit the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion as one of the Eight Eccentrics. Don't you remember?"

"Now that you mention it, I do have an impression."

"By the way!" Ling Chen changed the subject, looking at Yu Beifeng and asking, "Is Su Cheng'en at the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion?"

"No." Yu Beifeng shook his head, "Master elder went out, not sure when he'll be back."

"So, you're living alone?" Ling Chen glanced around thoughtfully and said, "If you want to know the truth, I can take you to see it. How about it, Yu, are you interested?"

Seeing Yu Beifeng deep in thought, Du Kang said, "I invited you here today to offer you a different path. Although I don't know much about Su Cheng'en, I'm aware of what he's done. You're innocent; there's no need for you to shoulder the faults committed by Su Cheng'en."

Under Du Kang's persuasion, Yu Beifeng finally nodded and said, "Okay, I hope you can provide evidence convincing enough for me."

"No problem."

Leaving Du Kang's residence, the trio headed straight to the valley of Yangxin Pavilion. Upon seeing the wooden house not far away, Ling Chen quickened his pace. Soon, under Yu Beifeng's guidance, they entered the wooden house.

"Yu, where is your room?"

Yu Beifeng pointed to the bedroom next door, and Ling Chen immediately walked in. Turning on the light and examining the room environment, Ling Chen focused his gaze on the floor. Knock knock knock! Tapping on the wooden floor, Ling Chen looked up and asked, "Elder Du, did you bring a knife?"

"What are you planning to do?"

"The secrets you're interested in are underneath here."

Hearing this, Du Kang stepped forward, gesturing for Ling Chen to step aside. Following this, Du Kang took a deep breath, Inner Strength brewing, and suddenly punched out. Boom! With a loud noise, the wooden floor instantly shattered. Ling Chen leaned over for a look and discovered another layer beneath the wooden floor. Possibly due to age, the bottom layer was already cracked.

"Yu, was this upper layer of the wooden floor laid later?"

Yu Beifeng nodded, "That was when I was very young, done by Master personally."

Then it's right! Ling Chen nodded secretly. He remembered Xu Ming once said that he originally discovered many skeletons beneath the floor, leading him to learn Su Cheng'en's secret, thus choosing to leave. Su Cheng'en repaved the wooden floor, probably fearing Yu Beifeng would find out.

With Du Kang's help, the wooden floor was soon broken open, revealing the dirt underneath. Ling Chen didn't hesitate, directly starting to dig and cleared away all the earth. After digging about a finger deep, a white hard object suddenly appeared in the dirt.

Finally found! Ling Chen's eyes brightened, hurriedly taking the object from the dirt, unsurprisingly, it was a skull.

As the soil beneath was dug deeper, more and more skulls and bones emerged. Huff! Ling Chen gasped, wiping the sweat off his forehead with his sleeve, and asked, "Elder Du, Yu, should I continue digging?"

"No need, stand up, take a rest first." After speaking, Du Kang picked up a skull from the ground, looking at the top's shattered skull with a grim face, "Didn't expect... truly didn't expect... he's this cruel." Saying this, Du Kang turned his gaze to Yu Beifeng beside him, saying solemnly, "Now, you should believe."

Yu Beifeng stared at the ground full of bones, his face pale, seemingly not yet recovering from shock.

"Yu, these were your former seniors, their strength reaching the Heaven List, then mercilessly killed by Su Cheng'en to satisfy his perverted desires. If you don't quickly detach from Su Cheng'en, you'll ultimately end up like them."

"I... need to calm down." After saying that, Yu Beifeng turned and left the bedroom.

"Ling Chen, thanks to you, I've seen the true nature of Su Cheng'en."

"Elder Du, no need to be polite. By the way!" Ling Chen curiously asked, "How did you come to know Su Cheng'en?"

"I had already said, there's nothing that happens at the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion I don't know. Many years ago, I discovered Su Cheng'en, but at the time didn't know his identity, thinking he was an enigmatic expert. Until one time by chance, I saw Su He running to meet Su Cheng'en, even knelt before him and knocked several times. From then, I started suspecting Su Cheng'en's identity. Later, I secretly investigated, discovering his true identity."

Chapter 1520 - 1826: Senior Brothers Reunited (1)

"Elder Du, are you quite shocked?" Ling Chen asked, "A person who died hundreds of years ago appearing alive in front of you—any normal person would find it hard to accept this."

"You're right," Du Kang nodded, "When I confirmed Su Cheng'en's identity, I was indeed shocked because it overturned everything I knew. Actually, over the years, I've secretly conducted many investigations to try to understand the reason for Su Cheng'en's 'undying,' but with no results. If it weren't for you enlightening me today, I might never have known."

"Elder Du, there's something I'd like to ask you. Does Su Mei know about Su Cheng'en's existence?"

"Well..." Du Kang hesitated, then shook his head, "I'm not sure. However, Su Mei is a descendant of the Su Family, and now, the only descendants of Su Cheng'en left are Su He and Su Mei. So, if she does know of Su Cheng'en's existence, it wouldn't be surprising. Why, are you worried?"

Ling Chen nodded noncommittally and said, "If Su Mei knows about Su Cheng'en's existence, then we can't rule out that she might have a secret connection with Su Cheng'en and Su He. Elder Du, you're a reasonable person. The incident with Skyhawk Pavilion almost ruined Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's reputation; it took a lot to stabilize the situation. If Su Mei has any involvement with Su He, and this gets exposed, you understand the consequences."

Du Kang was silent for a while and then said, "You're right. Although Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion was founded single-handedly by Su Cheng'en, its development to this day is not only a credit to the Su Family but also the efforts of countless predecessors." He looked at Ling Chen and continued, "I understand your point, but I'm a person of Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, and guarding it is my duty. Rest assured, I'll urge the Pavilion Master to avoid going astray."

As they spoke, the two arrived outside the wooden cabin. They saw Yu Beifeng standing alone on a rock, gazing into the distance, lost in thought. Ling Chen and Du Kang stood silently behind him, waiting. They knew Yu Beifeng needed time to accept the reality—after all, a mentor he relied upon for decades was in fact a murderous fiend; this revelation would torment anyone.

After some time, Yu Beifeng slowly turned and, looking at Ling Chen, asked, "Didn't you say you know where my Senior Brother is? Can you take me to him?"

Upon hearing this, Ling Chen immediately nodded, "Of course, that's no problem."

"Then I'll trouble you. When you leave Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, ask Elder Du to notify me. I'll wait for you outside." With that, Yu Beifeng walked straight into the wooden cabin. Soon, he emerged carrying a pile of bones.

"Yu, what are you doing?"

"They're all my Senior Brothers; I must bury them."

"Let me help you."

"No need, you all go ahead, I need some time alone to calm down."

Ling Chen glanced at Du Kang, who nodded. The two then returned to Yangxin Pavilion. They sat at Du Kang's place for a while, drinking a whole jar of wine, before Ling Chen excused himself and returned to his guest room.

Lying on his bed, Ling Chen rested his hands behind his head, the corner of his mouth slightly curled into a faint smile. To be honest, his visit to Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion this time was primarily to discuss Qi Yong with Su Mei, but he unexpectedly gained something more. Taking Yu Beifeng away effectively stripped Su Cheng'en of his left and right arms.

While deep in thought, Ling Chen's pocket rang with a cell phone tone. At such a late hour, who would be calling? Ling Chen retrieved his phone, glanced at the caller ID, and saw it was from an unknown number. After hesitating briefly, he answered the call, saying, "Hello, who is this?"

"It's me."

Upon hearing the voice, Ling Chen immediately sat up on the bed, his voice deepening, "Zhu Hong? You dare call me."

"Why wouldn't I? Not to waste words with you, I'm calling because I need your help." Zhu Hong stated.

"Zhu Hong, did I hear wrongly? You need my help? It's late at night; are you sleepwalking?"

Zhu Hong replied casually, "Don't rush, listen to me first. I know you have strong ties with the government and military, so I'm hoping you can help persuade the military higher-ups to withdraw the accusations against me. In return, I can give you what you want. How about it?"

"What exactly?"

"Ling Gengqiu's missing limb; aren't you quite interested in it?"

Ling Chen pondered for a moment before replying, "I'd like to help you; however, you've committed treason. Even with my connections to the military, they won't revoke their charges against you."

"If it weren't difficult, I wouldn't have sought you out. I trust with your ability, you can achieve this. So, I'll give you a month; if you handle it, I'll immediately send you that limb."

"What if I fail?"

"Simple, then you'll never find it; I'll toss it into a meat grinder." After saying this, Zhu Hong ended the call without further ado.

Ling Chen was left unsettled after setting down his phone. Truly, from the bottom of his heart, he didn't want to assist Zhu Hong. However, he was left with no alternative. Concerning Ling Gengqiu's missing limb, regardless of the cost, he had to acquire it. Due to the lack of the limb, though Ling Gengqiu was resurrected, his power had yet to return to peak form.

It seemed that he still needed to seek help from the old general or Pang Jiulin regarding this matter.

Early the next morning, after waking from a night of sleep and just having breakfast, Song Ge arrived.

"Ling, the Pavilion Master requests your presence."

"Alright, noted."

Arriving at Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's conference hall, Ling Chen waited for a while. Soon, Su Mei walked in gracefully from outside, "Sorry for the wait."

"No need for such formal words," Ling Chen smiled softly. Once Su Mei sat down, he asked, "Has Master Su called me here to say she has made up her mind?"

Su Mei nodded, "Currently, the Martial Arts society needs steady progression, so the appearance of Qi Yong could have a significant impact. I agree with your suggestion to clear out Qi Yong and his group first. As for the competition between Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and Dragon Tiger Hall, we'll deal with that later. What do you think?"

Ling Chen clapped his hands and smiled, "We're indeed thinking along the same lines. However, Qi Yong is the Dangyang Sect Leader and holds some weight in the Martial Arts world; we can't just storm the Dangyang Sect and take him down. I think the best approach is to make him retreat voluntarily."

"I was thinking the same," Su Mei concurred, "I mulled over it last night and came up with an idea, but... I'm not sure if it's appropriate."

"Tell me about it; I'll help you evaluate it."