

## **The Beauty 1601**

### Chapter 1601 - Coordinates

After getting off the car, Ling Chen looked around at his surroundings. Although it was just after eight o'clock, the area was shrouded in darkness, with only one dim street lamp. Perhaps due to the place being relatively remote, there were no residents, and the few shops were already closed.

Qiu Yong glanced around and asked, "Are you sure this is the place, Ling Cheng?"

Ling Chen nodded and said, "There's no mistake, the coordinates are right here." As he spoke, he took out his phone to check the precise position of the coordinates. Walking along the road for more than ten meters, Ling Chen looked left and right before spotting a small alley on the right side. The group crossed the alley and immediately arrived at a wall over two meters high. Yuan Yun spoke, "Ling Cheng, there isn't even a house here, just a wall. Are you sure you didn't get it wrong?"

"No, there's no mistake, the reason we can't see anything is because..." Ling Chen cast his gaze downward, "They're beneath us."

"You mean..." As the group listened to Ling Chen, they immediately understood, "So where do we enter?"

"Let's look around, there's definitely an entrance nearby. If it were me, I'd choose a place that's not easily discovered as a cover." With that, Ling Chen pointed to a row of shops not far away and said, "Those shops are not far from here, maybe the entrance is hidden within them. Let's go, since there aren't many people now, let's search first."

The shops Ling Chen referred to weren't many—only four in total, so it wouldn't take much time. These included a supermarket, a breakfast shop, a restaurant, and a repair shop. The eight people discussed and divided into groups of two to search, which saved them a lot of time.

Soon, Ling Chen and Wei Jiahao reached the repair shop. The door was locked, but Wei Jiahao excelled at mechanisms, and a regular lock posed no challenge to him; it was quickly opened.

Entering the repair shop, a strong smell of motor oil filled the air. The shop owner had already gone home, and Ling Chen was not worried about being discovered, so he directly turned on the light. The

repair shop wasn't large, about twenty or so square meters, with a metal rack next to the north wall holding tools and car repair parts, and a pile of materials removed from cars in the other corner.

In the middle of the repair shop was a small car hanging by a machine, seemingly still being repaired.

Due to the small size, Ling Chen and Wei Jiahao quickly searched without finding any secret passages or entrances. Exiting the repair shop, they saw Yuan Yun and Zhang Zhongfeng's teams coming out of the restaurant. After regrouping, they shared their findings and then focused on the supermarket.

At this point, Xia Yue and Qiu Yong, who were responsible for searching the supermarket, had not come out yet. Ling Chen and the group walked over directly.

Upon entering the supermarket, Qiu Yong and Xia Yue were seen inspecting the wall shelves. Seeing everyone enter from outside, Qiu Yong said, "You came just in time; I found something here."

Upon hearing this, the group immediately gathered. Qiu Yong pointed to a shelf next to him, which was over one meter wide and two meters tall, and said, "I've checked all the shelves with Xia Yue—only this shelf is fixed to the wall without a gap."

Wei Jiahao approached, inspected carefully, and nodded, "You're right, this is indeed a secret door and should be controlled by a mechanism. Let's search for it."

The group responded in unison and spread out to search for the mechanism. Ling Chen walked while observing and quickly arrived at the cashier's table. He took a closer look and then crawled under the cashier table, finding a hidden button below. Extending his finger, he pressed it lightly, and a 'click' sound was heard nearby.

"It's open!" Hearing Wei Jiahao's voice, Ling Chen immediately returned to the shelf. Indeed, the shelf tied to the wall protruded outward, revealing an entrance over one meter tall.

"I'll go in first." After saying that, Ling Chen strode forward through the entrance. Inside, there was a spiral staircase descending about five or six meters before reaching the bottom, replaced by a spacious passage. Long strip lighting on the walls ensured no one could suddenly sneak up on them.

Moving along the passage, though Ling Chen's pace wasn't slow, his focus was highly concentrated, ready for any sudden attack. However, to everyone's surprise, they encountered no obstructions or noises, as though the place was deserted.

Before long, the group passed through the passage into a spacious basement. The basement was extremely large, about a hundred square meters. Despite its size, it was quite empty, with only a few office desks.

"Ling Cheng, look at this," Yuan Yun pointed to the spot along the wall in the basement.

Ling Chen quickly walked over and immediately understood Yuan Yun's meaning. Numerous rectangular marks on the floor along the wall indicated the previous presence of objects. Moreover, the office desks bore traces of a computer setup. Ling Chen pulled out his phone to check the coordinates, which matched his current location precisely.

This indicated Jiang Yue'e had sent out the emergency message from here.

"Ling Cheng, there's another passage here."

Hearing Qiu Yong's voice, Ling Chen looked up and saw a door in the southern end of the basement—an enforced blast-proof door that had already been opened. Generally, anything behind such doors would be significant, warranting protection by a blast-proof door.

Entering the door revealed a rather narrow passage with dim lighting. Walking and observing, Ling Chen discovered that the sides of the passage were lined with small cells only a few square meters each, equipped with beds and toilets. Furthermore, each cell emitted a foul odor. Xu Ming frowned slightly, saying, "This must be where captives were held."

Ling Chen nodded without speaking and continued forward. Reaching the end of the passage, he suddenly stopped, scrutinizing the left cell. Next, he pushed the door open and walked inside.

This cell arrangement was similar to the others, but what caught Ling Chen's attention was its tidiness, with the bed sheets neatly folded. Additionally, a faint fragrance lingered inside.

If he guessed correctly, this should be a woman's room.

#### Chapter 1602 - The Trail Runs Cold

Ling Chen lifted the blanket on the bed and flipped the mattress as well, hoping to find any information left by Jiang Yue'e. Unfortunately, after searching the entire room, there was nothing found. It seems Jiang Yue'e might have left in a hurry, or she was worried about being discovered, so she didn't leave any clues.

"Ling Cheng, should we get moving?" Yuan Yun poked his head in from outside and asked.

Ling Chen responded, turned around, and prepared to leave the room. Suddenly, his eyes were drawn to a mirror on the wall. It was a very ordinary mirror, but its screws at the corners were loose. Of course, that's not the most important part. Ling Chen attentively noticed that there were many marks on these screws, and they weren't rusted, indicating that someone often unscrewed them and then reattached them.

Who would be so bored as to do this kind of thing?

Without thinking much, Ling Chen directly unscrewed all the screws. As the mirror was removed, Ling Chen discovered a hole hidden in the wall behind the mirror, which was not large, only about ten centimeters wide, and nothing was placed inside. But when Ling Chen put his hand inside, he found that this hole was connected to the room next door.

Soon, with Yuan Yun's help, the mirror in the neighboring room was also removed. Just as Ling Chen expected, the hole connected the two rooms. However, Ling Chen was puzzled, not knowing the purpose of this hole.

Jiang Yue'e lived here, clearly under confinement. Could it be that due to loneliness, she made this hole to facilitate communication with the people in the neighboring room? Thinking of this, Ling Chen felt this possibility was high.

Forget it! Since nothing was found, there's no need to continue staying here.

Ling Chen shook his head and sighed quietly. Originally, he hoped to rescue Jiang Yue'e from here and reunite her with Nanrong Wanqing and Nanrong Hao, but now it seems he underestimated those

people. Upon learning the location, he hurriedly rushed over, but unfortunately, he was still a step too late—the opponents must have anticipated this and hence hastily moved everything out.

Coming out of the basement, the group got into the car directly. However, they didn't leave but parked the car in a hidden place, secretly monitoring the movements of the supermarket. Yet, until the next morning, both the restaurant and repair shop next to it opened, but no one opened the supermarket for business.

Seeing this, Ling Chen went alone to the restaurant, using the excuse of buying fast food to indirectly inquire about the supermarket's situation. Unfortunately, the restaurant and repair shop owners didn't know the supermarket owner well. While everyone often met, the supermarket owner rarely communicated with them, always appearing silent and reserved. However, the supermarket owner was very punctual, opening for business every morning at seven-thirty without interruption day after day, year after year.

Back in the car, Ling Chen said, "Let's go back. They probably won't be returning."

"What about the supermarket owner? Did you find out anything?"

Ling Chen shook his head and said, "Couldn't find out anything. The supermarket owner is very cautious, never revealing his residence or origin to anyone. Even knowing his appearance isn't useful—they will surely guard against us, not allowing us to easily find them."

"So where are you planning to go now? Directly to the airport or find a place to rest for a while?" Yuan Yun asked.

"Let's go to the airport." Ling Chen rubbed his temples and said, "There's nothing much in Beijing. By the way, brother, where are you planning to go next?"

When Ling Chen returned to East Sea City previously, he thought Qiu Yong and his group would return with him. But upon asking, he found out that Qiu Yong's group planned to look around and wouldn't be returning to East Sea City anytime soon. The Eight Eccentrics couldn't sit still, and if not for helping him, they wouldn't have stayed at Dragon Tiger Hall for so long. Now that the Martial Arts Tournament is over, Ling Chen has not only gained many helpers but also advanced to the Heavenly List in strength, so

Qiu Yong and the others aren't worried about Ling Chen's safety. Taking advantage of this Martial Arts revival, they wanted to travel around and relax. Ling Chen naturally had no objection to their decision.

In fact, in his heart, he felt somewhat indebted to the Eight Eccentrics, as they helped him a lot, yet he had nothing to repay them.

"Haven't thought of where to go yet." Qiu Yong laughed and said, "We have no specific destination, anywhere is fine."

"Brother, make sure to keep in touch with me, so I can have peace of mind."

"Don't worry, I will."

As they spoke, Ling Chen's phone suddenly rang. Taking out his phone, he saw it was a call from Tong Zhentian, and Ling Chen quickly answered, "Elder Tong, what can I do for you?"

"I heard you're back in Beijing?"

"Yes, just finished handling business, now heading to the airport."

"Don't rush back yet, I need your help with something." Tong Zhentian said, "Remember the Golden Dragon and Wang Teng, the senior practitioners I introduced to you last time?"

"Of course I remember."

"They want to visit Dragon Tiger Hall headquarters and stay for a while; I'm still dealing with matters on my end and don't have time to accompany them back. Since you're in Beijing, it'd be great if you could take them to East Sea City, so they don't get bored at the hotel."

"Alright, no problem, I'll go get them." With that, Ling Chen hung up the phone and asked Yuan Yun to head to the hotel first.

If Tong Zhentian hadn't mentioned those two senior practitioners, Ling Chen would've really forgotten about them. It's strange; the Martial Arts Tournament is over, yet they're not returning home but want to visit Dragon Tiger Hall instead—what exactly are those two senior practitioners planning?

In thought, Ling Chen asked, "Brother, have you heard of Golden Dragon and Wang Teng, the senior practitioners?"

Qiu Yong nodded and said, "Of course I've heard of them. When I first started, they were already famous masters, unfortunately, I never had the chance to meet them, so I'm not very familiar with them. Why mention them all of a sudden?"

"Nothing much, just asking."

Soon, the business car arrived at the hotel entrance.

"Brother, I'll go first, keep in touch anytime."

"Alright."

After watching the business car leave, Ling Chen arrived at the room where the two senior practitioners were staying. He knocked on the door, and a middle-aged man opened it. Ling Chen immediately recognized him as Wu Qiong, Golden Dragon's apprentice.

"Mr. Wu, hello, are the two senior practitioners ready?"

Wu Qiong nodded with a smile and said, "All packed up and ready to go, thank you for your trouble today."

Ling Chen quickly said, "You're welcome; it's our honor to have you visit Dragon Tiger Hall."

Chapter 1603 - The Reason for Their Support

After a while, Golden Dragon and Wang Teng came out of the bedroom, with Yu Hao following behind carrying two large suitcases. Ling Chen rushed over to greet them, taking the luggage, and led the four out of the hotel.

Two hours later, the group of five settled into the first class of a flight heading to East Sea City.

Looking at Golden Dragon and Wang Teng beside him, Ling Chen attempted several times to initiate a conversation but didn't know what topic to use. Moreover, these two elder veterans had their eyes closed as if resting, showing no interest in chatting.

At this moment, Golden Dragon slowly opened his eyes and glanced at Ling Chen beside him, meeting his gaze. Ling Chen quickly smiled and asked, "Elder Huang, would you like something to drink? I'll ask the stewardess to get it for you."

"There's no need." Golden Dragon smiled and asked, "Do you have something you want to ask me?"

"I..." Ling Chen opened his mouth but wasn't sure how to begin. Would it be too rude to directly ask why they were coming to make peace with Dragon Tiger Hall? They were here to support Dragon Tiger Hall after all; if his offense caused them to leave in anger, he'd be the villain. Furthermore, Tong Zhentian had repeatedly instructed him to treat these distinguished guests well and avoid any neglect.

As thoughts raced through his mind, Golden Dragon seemed to see through Ling Chen's thoughts and said with a smile, "Actually, even if you don't say it, I can guess what you're thinking."

Surprised by these words, Ling Chen asked, "Elder Huang, really?"

"You must be wondering why I came to find you, to make peace, as anyone would be suspicious of our motives. But I want to assure you, there's no ill intent as we're truly trying to contribute something to the Martial Arts alliance by supporting Dragon Tiger Hall."

After pausing, Golden Dragon continued, "At our age, there's nothing much to seek, just hoping to exert some leftover energy before we die. Back then, Wang Teng and I chose to retire because the entire Martial Arts alliance had deteriorated, no longer filled with the passion of the past. Now, with the emergence of Dragon Tiger Hall, the status quo is finally disrupted, and Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is

no longer dominating. Seeing this Martial Arts Tournament, I believe it won't be long before the Martial Arts alliance will present a flourishing scene. It is because there's hope for Martial Arts that we choose to return."

Speaking of this, Golden Dragon suddenly looked at Ling Chen and asked, "Do you know why we chose Dragon Tiger Hall instead of Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion?"

Ling Chen shook his head and said, "I'm not sure."

"Although we withdrew to the mountains and forests, we've actually kept in contact with each other—the old men. Recently, I spoke with Master Hui Yun and Dan Xuzy about the current state of Martial Arts. They believe the responsibility for Martial Arts' development still lies with Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion due to its rich heritage built over hundreds of years, despite the problems in recent years. They feel these issues are understandable, and with guidance and correction, Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion can still lead Martial Arts to glory."

"However, Wang Teng and I disagree with their view. The decline of Martial Arts to its current state places significant responsibility on Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. Therefore, we don't really want to support them. Comparatively, we are more inclined to support Dragon Tiger Hall. The initial intention of Dragon Tiger Hall is commendable, turning Martial Arts into a nationwide sport, making it widely accepted, and achieving both fitness results and promoting Huaxia Martial Arts, preserving its essence—in this aspect, I truly admire your approach. Hence, Wang Teng and I reached a consensus that since Dan Xuzy and others are supporting Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, we will support Dragon Tiger Hall; otherwise, if everyone supports Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, your Dragon Tiger Hall won't stand a chance and will eventually be oppressed."

"I see." Ling Chen said earnestly, "Thank you, two elder veterans."

"No need for thanks; we're all striving for the Huaxia Martial Arts community with common goals. As long as the entire Martial Arts alliance can rise again, we're willing to accept any cost."

"By the way," Ling Chen curiously asked, "Elder Huang, during the Martial Arts Tournament, aside from Master Hui Yun and Dan Xuzy, there seemed to be quite a few others with Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. Do you know them?"

"I know some, and others I've only heard of. They are reclusive experts in Martial Arts who seldom appear, yet Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion managed to invite them. But you don't need to worry; with us supporting you, they won't dare act recklessly."

"Golden Dragon is right." Wang Teng joined in, "On the surface, Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion appears strengthened with so many experts assisting, but in reality, their situation isn't as good as it once was."

Hearing this, Ling Chen asked puzzled, "Why?"

"Simply because, what kind of people do you think Master Hui Yun and Dan Xuzy are? A monk and a Taoist, both compassionate beings. If Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion intends to do something outrageous, Master Hui Yun and Dan Xuzy would be the first to object. I've interacted with them for years; they are both straightforward, with right and wrong clearly differentiated, not tolerating any evil, so Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion's days will not be as good as they were."

Ling Chen chuckled and said, "Then it seems, our Dragon Tiger Hall has gained a great advantage."

"Don't be too quick to celebrate." Golden Dragon said, "For now, Dragon Tiger Hall must stabilize its position, preserve its strength, and avoid conflict with other factions in the short term."

"Why?" Ling Chen was somewhat puzzled.

"Currently, the Martial Arts alliance is in a recovery phase, and many family powers will gradually rise. Just watch; it won't be long before those concealed Martial Arts families and forces will emerge. Although Martial Arts will usher in a prosperous period of flourishing diversity, likewise, conflicts will increase. As one of the Martial Arts powers, Dragon Tiger Hall is bound to be drawn into this. Therefore, you must be vigilant, preparing early for Dragon Tiger Hall's future."

"Elder Wang, it's unlikely to become so chaotic, isn't there still the Martial Arts Association..."

Before Ling Chen's words were finished, Wang Teng waved his hand and said, "Very soon, the Martial Arts Association will become a mere formality. Think about it, now the Martial Arts Association consists of your three powers, yet the emerging forces in Martial Arts far exceed your three. Do you think they will respect you and follow your arrangements?"

Golden Dragon nodded and said, "Wang Teng and I have discussed this issue. For a long time, the entire Martial Arts alliance will definitely become chaotic—the territories, the interests—these are things everyone desires to seize. Dragon Tiger Hall and Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion possess considerable resources and hold many interests, inevitably attracting jealousy from other forces. Therefore, your two groups might very likely become the target of public criticism."

#### Chapter 1604 - Ling Chen's Suspicion (1)

Chaos... After listening to the two seniors, Ling Chen slightly frowned. It seemed like the more challenging path was yet ahead.

Unknowingly, the plane had already landed at East Sea City's airport. Upon exiting the airport, a special vehicle was already waiting by the roadside. Soon after, a group of five finally arrived at the headquarters of Dragon Tiger Hall.

"Elder Huang, Elder Wang, let me show you around first."

"Alright, sorry for the trouble."

The two main parts of Dragon Tiger Hall are the martial arts grounds, a place to train new disciples that well demonstrates the teaching strength of Dragon Tiger Hall, and the Book Collection Pavilion. Everyone knows that the most precious part of Dragon Tiger Hall is undoubtedly the pavilion, as it contains countless martial arts secrets. This is precisely what attracts a large number of people to join.

After touring the martial arts grounds, Ling Chen led Golden Dragon and Wang Teng outside the Book Collection Pavilion. As the most important place, there were naturally heavy security measures in place. Not only were there people specially assigned to guard, but there was also the most advanced security system that required two key figures from within Dragon Tiger Hall to be present to open the pavilion doors.

Currently, He Ziyun is in charge of the Beijing branch, Tong Zhentian is still handling the martial arts association matters in Beijing, and Qiu Yong has also left. At present, the only one remaining at the East Sea City headquarters is Ling Chen. Although he couldn't take the guests into the Book Collection Pavilion, Ling Chen still showed them the quantity and classification of the secrets within.

Ever since the establishment of the pavilion, all martial arts secrets have been systematically organized into electronic files. However, some particularly valuable martial arts have been retained in paper form to avoid electronic data leaks.

Through electronic archives, one can access the content of numerous martial arts secrets.

After over an hour of touring, Golden Dragon and Wang Teng praised the foundation of Dragon Tiger Hall highly. For any influence to grow stronger, its foundation is crucial, and Dragon Tiger Hall undoubtedly possesses such qualities. Moreover, with the support of Golden Dragon and Wang Teng, Dragon Tiger Hall is empowered with some of the previously missing elements.

After arranging accommodations for Golden Dragon and the others, Ling Chen returned to his office for a brief rest. He had already arranged with the two elders to have a meal together later. They are honored guests, so he had to show his sincerity.

Using this opportunity, Ling Chen gave Zhong Wei a call to inquire about Qiang's situation. This mysterious Qiang suddenly appeared and recognizes only Nanrong Wanqing, whether this was coincidence or deliberate, he had to find out.

Currently, though he wasn't beside Nanrong Wanqing, he had left Ling Gengqiu with her. Even if Qiang harbored malicious intentions, Ling Gengqiu could ensure Nanrong Wanqing's safety.

After lunch, Ling Chen initially intended to accompany Golden Dragon and the others around East Sea City for some sightseeing, but they politely declined his offer. As Wang Teng stated, having lived in the mountains for many years, practicing self-cultivation, they didn't quite enjoy hustle and bustle. Thus, they preferred staying in their rooms to meditate.

Ling Chen didn't insist and, after sending the four back to Dragon Tiger Hall, he drove straight to the Nanrong Family. Entering the villa where Nanrong Wanqing resided, Ling Gengqiu was comfortably seated on the sofa with his legs crossed, with several fruit plates and tea placed nearby, attended by someone.

"Old Bro." Ling Chen stepped forward, plucking a strawberry from the fruit plate: "You sure know how to enjoy. Don't forget what I told you."

"Relax, your girlfriend is fine, I've been keeping tabs on that guy. Move over, don't block my view of the TV."

Ling Chen shook his head helplessly and asked: "Where's Wanqing?"

"She's in her room."

Immediately, Ling Chen headed upstairs toward Nanrong Wanqing's bedroom door. Knock knock knock! He knocked, only entering after hearing Nanrong Wanqing's voice from inside. The spacious bedroom seemed empty of her presence, but there was the sound of running water from the bathroom.

She was bathing, which explains why her voice was so soft outside.

"Sit for a bit, I'll be out soon." Nanrong Wanqing's voice came from the bathroom.

Ling Chen responded, found a chair, and sat down by himself, picking up a newspaper from the coffee table to read. The headline was striking, with bold characters: 'Tang Shiyun's Scandalous Boyfriend Exposed'.

Seeing the headline, Ling Chen immediately focused on the photo beneath.

This photo was likely taken from a distance and amid a crowd. However, even so, Tang Shiyun's position was clear to discern. In the photo, Tang Shiyun wore a mask and a cap, with hands wrapped around a man's arm.

Ling Chen stared, his expression shifting slightly.

This... isn't that himself? Ling Chen immediately realized this photo was obviously shot during the Martial Arts Tournament. These paparazzi were unexpectedly dedicated, secretly tailing Tang Shiyun. It was unfortunate the crowd and shot from afar prevented him from noticing.

Though, fortunately, despite the captured intimate actions with Tang Shiyun, the angle of the photo wasn't quite clear, only catching his side profile without clarity. As long as it wasn't someone who knew him, identifying him was difficult.

Just then, Nanrong Wanqing opened the bathroom door and emerged. Ling Chen raised his head, seeing Nanrong Wanqing clad in a robe, shoulders revealed, wet hair like a lotus emerging from the water, carrying a faint fragrance, alluring and captivating.

Noticing Ling Chen's stunned gaze, Nanrong Wanqing's pretty face slightly blushed, shyly smiling. That smile, like a hundred flowers blooming, enchanted Ling Chen, stirring an impulse within him.

It's happening again! Ling Chen hurriedly diverted his gaze, taking a deep breath, suppressing the desires within. As his skill approached the Heavenly List realm, the Prajnaparamita Sutra had shown corresponding changes. Previously, due to the Sutra's influence, he had little resistance against womanly charms. Now, the Sutra's effect on the body was even stronger, leaving him uncomfortable at the slightest provocation.

Luckily, his will was resilient enough to restrain such impulses.

Ling Chen coughed lightly, forced a smile: "Wanqing, please get dressed first." He then inserted the newspaper among others to prevent Nanrong Wanqing from seeing it. Though she knew about his relationship with Tang Shiyun, such reports would inevitably make her uncomfortable.

Once Nanrong Wanqing was dressed, Ling Chen asked: "Wanqing, has Qiang acted unusually these past days?"

Chapter 1605 - Ling Chen's Suspicions (2)

Nanrong Wanqing shook her head and said, "I know what you're worried about, but rest assured, he has no ill intentions towards me."

"Don't think of him as being so simple," Ling Chen advised, "His background is definitely not simple, better to be cautious."

"I understand what you mean. However, don't overthink him too much either. I've been running the company for years; if I haven't learned anything else, I at least have a good eye for people. I can sense that he's genuinely kind to me, without any malice."

Ling Chen said helplessly, "Better safe than sorry, don't make a judgment too early."

Nanrong Wanqing smiled slightly and said, "I know you're worried about me." Then she suddenly shifted the topic, "Has Shiyun contacted you these days?"

"Contacted me?" Ling Chen paused for a moment, rubbing his nose, "Why would she contact me for no reason."

Seeing Ling Chen's guilty look, Nanrong Wanqing pursed her lips and smiled softly, "Don't you know what happened?"

Uh-oh! Ling Chen thought something was amiss. From her tone, it seemed she knew about that news. Thinking quickly, he shook his head, "I have no idea what you're talking about. Hey! By the way, why haven't I seen Su Lin, isn't she at home recently?"

When Ling Chen forcibly changed the subject, Nanrong Wanqing couldn't help but feel a bit helpless. This man had everything perfect, but unfortunately, he was too outstanding. The better the man, the more easily he attracts women. But then again, if Ling Chen weren't so exceptional, how could she have taken an interest in him.

However... Nanrong Wanqing sighed lightly and decided not to dwell on the issue.

"Lin has already started working, she found a suitable archaeological institution a while ago. She's been there for almost a month now."

No wonder! Ling Chen nodded secretly. The Martial Arts Tournament was held recently, Nanrong Wanqing and Nanrong Hao both went, and Su Lin, who loves the excitement the most, didn't go. It was somewhat surprising to him, but it turns out she had already started working.

As he was thinking, Ling Chen's phone rang. He took out his phone, glanced at the caller ID, and immediately answered the call, asking, "Zhu Qing, what's up?"

"You asked me to secretly track those assassins you let go, I've got results just now."

Upon hearing this, Ling Chen's eyes lit up immediately, asking urgently, "Found the people behind it?"

"The mole hidden among the assassins just made a call at a public phone booth, and afterward, he bought a ticket to Jinhai City."

"Jinhai City?" Ling Chen was intrigued, could those controlling Jiang Yue'e have gone to Jinhai City? Thinking quickly, Ling Chen instructed, "Follow that person to Jinhai City and see what you can find."

"Got it."

"Be careful on your own."

After hanging up the phone, Nanrong Wanqing next to him asked, "Do you have to go out for something?"

"No," Ling Chen smiled and said, "I'm your personal bodyguard now, of course, I need to stay by your side. By the way! Are you going to the company later?"

Nanrong Wanqing nodded and said, "I've been busy in Beijing all this time, there are still a lot of tasks piled up at the headquarters. Nanrong Hao has already gone, but he probably can't handle everything alone."

"Looks like Nanrong Hao has already settled in."

"Thanks to you, if it were in the past, with his personality, he definitely wouldn't stay at the Hongyu Group obediently helping me. But now it's good, he's basically familiar with the company's business."

After training for another year or two, gaining enough experience, I can then hand over the heavy responsibilities of chairman to him."

"What are you planning to do then?" Ling Chen asked curiously.

"Me?" Nanrong Wanqing glanced at Ling Chen and said calmly, "Of course, it's to find a man to take care of me."

Uh... Ling Chen smiled and rubbed his nose, this was no longer a hint, but an explicit indication. At this moment, he could not afford to hesitate even a bit. Because he knew, even the slightest hesitation would hurt Nanrong Wanqing.

"No problem." Ling Chen nodded straightforwardly, "I'll take care of you then."

As they were talking, there was a 'knock knock knock' sound at the door. Ling Chen got up and opened the door, only to see Zhong Wei standing outside, saying, "The car is ready, we can leave anytime."

After a brief preparation, Ling Chen, Nanrong Wanqing, Ling Gengqiu, and Qiang got into the luxurious yet discreet Rolls-Royce, escorted by two Land Rovers, slowly headed towards the Hongyu Group.

Upon arriving at the Hongyu Group headquarters, Ling Chen escorted Nanrong Wanqing to her office, then took Ling Gengqiu and Qiang to the adjacent lounge.

The lounge was well-equipped, with a TV, massager, bathroom, and pool table, it had everything. Just like usual, Ling Gengqiu was holding a phone, using social media apps to chat with girls. Since that severed limb was found, the quality of beauties Ling Gengqiu chatted with had been getting better and better, often staying out all night.

If it were someone else, they wouldn't last, their body would sure be weak. But Ling Gengqiu was different, he practiced the Prajnaparamita Sutra, and in this aspect, his ability was very strong. Moreover, the more frequent, the more energetic he got. Honestly, Ling Chen sometimes envied him, probably no man wouldn't want such a lifestyle.

After glancing at Ling Gengqiu playing with his phone, Ling Chen turned his gaze to Qiang beside him. This person was still the same as usual, sitting there quietly, without saying a word, not sure how he endured the boredom.

Maybe they spent quite a lot of time together in these past few days, Qiang's attitude towards Ling Chen had softened a bit, no longer being so on guard all the time.

At this time, Qiang stood up from his seat and walked straight to the bathroom in the lounge. After a while, he came out, walked to the sink, his eyes fixed on the square mirror. Suddenly, he reached out his hand, touching the four corners of the mirror. But this mirror was embedded in the wall, the surface had no additional screws to hold it in place.

Qiang touched it, then withdrew his hand, and returned to sit next to Ling Chen.

Looking at the once again quiet Qiang beside him, Ling Chen narrowed his eyes slightly, his gaze carried a hint of sharpness, seemingly trying to see through the other.

Just now, all of Qiang's subtle movements were watched by Ling Chen. It seemed unintentional, but Ling Chen thought of something else. When they went to Beijing to search for Jiang Yue'e, they found the room Jiang Yue'e was staying in.

At that time, they found a mirror in the room, the screws in the four corners were all loose. Not only that, but the wall behind the mirror had a hole dug, connecting with the room next door. Ling Chen never figured out what the purpose of that hidden hole behind the mirror was. But after seeing Qiang's move just now, he started to feel suspicious.

#### Chapter 1606 - Ling Chen's Suspicion (3)

Everyone has habitual actions, formed over a long time. It was clear that when Qiang reached out to touch the mirror just now, it was entirely due to habit and not because there was an issue with the mirror.

Could it be... Qiang is in cahoots with those people?

With this thought in mind, Ling Chen leaned closer to him and asked, "Do you know Jiang Yue'e?"

Upon hearing the name 'Jiang Yue'e', Qiang, who had always been expressionless, showed a distinct change in expression. A sharp gleam flashed in his dazed eyes, and he became like a sword unsheathed, sharp and apparent.

As expected!

Ling Chen nodded secretly. Judging by Qiang's reaction, he certainly knew Jiang Yue'e. After pondering for a while, Ling Chen took out his phone and called Hu Fei. Shortly after, a photo was sent to Ling Chen's phone.

The photo showed a young woman, in her twenties, with delicate features, very beautiful, and very similar to Nanrong Wanqing. Looking at the photo on the phone, Ling Chen immediately verified his guess. As expected! Qiang's attitude toward Nanrong Wanqing was not a coincidence, but because he had mistaken Nanrong Wanqing for Jiang Yue'e.

Their mother-daughter appearance and temperament were quite similar, so Qiang had this misconception.

If Ling Chen was correct, the person living next to Jiang Yue'e back then was Qiang.

Unfortunately, Qiang was not good with words, unable to express even the most basic ideas, otherwise, they might have been able to extract some valuable information from him.

"Brother, keep watch here while I take a walk," Ling Chen said as he got up.

"Go ahead," Ling Gengqiu replied, eyes glued to his phone without looking up.

Leaving the lounge, Ling Chen walked to the chairman's office and glanced inside. He saw Nanrong Wanqing discussing something with several company executives. Seeing they were busy, Ling Chen didn't go in to disturb them but instead went directly to the vice president's office.

As he pushed the door open, he found only one person in the spacious office, Nanrong Hao. At this moment, Nanrong Hao was sitting at the desk, holding a mouse and staring intently at the computer screen. Hearing the door sound, he quickly clicked the mouse, then turned his eyes to the door.

Upon seeing Ling Chen, Nanrong Hao immediately breathed a sigh of relief and said, "Chen, you nearly scared me to death."

"What's this sneaky business you're up to?" Ling Chen laughed as he walked to the desk, glancing at the computer screen, which only had a tidy desktop and nothing else.

Nanrong Hao laughed sheepishly and said, "Nothing, just learning a bit of overseas experience."

Hearing this, Ling Chen knew exactly what he meant; this kid was surely hiding in the office browsing those inappropriate sites secretly.

"Your sister is so busy, yet here you are taking it easy."

"I just finished my work," Nanrong Hao pointed to a thick stack of folders on the desk, scratched his head, and said: "Every day there's so much to handle, I worry about going bald from overthinking."

"Never mind talking about this nonsense, I have something serious to ask you," Ling Chen said seriously: "Have you ever considered that your mother might still be alive?"

"My mother?" Nanrong Hao was stunned for a moment, not quite responding. After a while, he came to his senses and asked, "Chen, why did you suddenly bring up my mother?"

"You're my brother, so I don't want to hide it from you. We discovered some clues a while ago. Jiang Yue'e, who is your mother, should still be alive."

"Is that true?" Nanrong Hao suddenly stood up, speaking excitedly: "Chen, you better not be kidding me."

"I wouldn't joke about something like this."

"My mother is still... alive... alive..." The news was so shocking that Nanrong Hao became a bit incoherent. After a long moment, he gradually calmed down and asked: "Chen, have you told my sister about this?"

Ling Chen shook his head and said: "Not yet. Currently, we've only found clues and haven't discovered her whereabouts, so I'm not planning to tell her yet. Otherwise, it might be a joyful surprise followed by disappointment."

Hearing this, Nanrong Hao's heart was moved, and he immediately understood the underlying implication of Ling Chen's words.

"Chen, does it mean my mother is in some danger?"

"She's likely being controlled by some organization, and the specifics are still under investigation. If there's further news, I'll notify you."

"Chen, can you take me along? That's my mom, I don't want to sit at home, helplessly worrying," Nanrong Hao pleaded, looking at Ling Chen: "I know I'm not very capable, but rest assured, I won't interfere with you all."

Ling Chen patted Nanrong Hao's shoulder with a smile, saying, "Since I told you about this, naturally I'll let you participate." Just back in the lounge, he seriously pondered over this matter. Because of the issue with Nanrong Yuan previously, he felt a bit guilty toward the Nanrong family. Therefore, this time, since it involved Jiang Yue'e, he didn't want to secretly handle it and exclude the Nanrong family. Letting Nanrong Hao participate in the matter, regardless of the outcome, at least it showed he had tried his best.

"Okay, get back to your work then. I'll inform you when there's a next move."

After stepping out of the office, Ling Chen was about to return to the lounge but received a call.

"Hello! It's me."

"Where are you now?"

"At Hongyu Group, why, what's the matter?"

"In ten minutes, a car will come to pick you up, bring Qiang with you, and someone will be there to make a deal."

"Deal?" Ling Chen was slightly surprised and asked, "Fatty, be clear, what deal."

"Jiang Yue'e."

Hearing the name from the other end of the phone, Ling Chen couldn't help but be startled.

"Jiang Yue'e? You're not telling me someone plans to use Jiang Yue'e as a bargaining chip for Qiang, are you?"

"Exactly! Someone just contacted me, they seem to know we're looking for Jiang Yue'e and have voluntarily put forward this request."

"Why would they do that?"

"How would I know? Since you want to save Jiang Yue'e, and they've presented the opportunity, do you plan to pass it up?"

Ling Chen pondered for a moment and replied, "Alright, I understand."

After hanging up, Ling Chen stood there, somewhat dazed. The whole matter was so bizarre! No matter who controls Jiang Yue'e, judging by their methods towards their own people, they're undoubtedly

ruthless individuals. But the fact that they've actively approached him, to release Jiang Yue'e, was truly perplexing.

Qiang... Ling Chen hesitated for a moment then headed toward the lounge.

A few minutes later, in the underground parking lot of Hongyu Group, Ling Chen and Nanrong Hao stood side by side, watching the entrance of the parking lot quietly waiting.

Nanrong Hao rubbed his hands and kept looking around, unable to hide the tension on his face.

"Chen, are you sure those people will release my mom?"

Chapter 1607 - Family Reunion (Part 1)

Ling Chen nodded and said, "They said it themselves, it shouldn't be fake." As soon as he finished speaking, a Mercedes business van slowly drove in from the parking lot entrance and soon stopped in front of them.

As the van stopped, a middle-aged man jumped out from the passenger seat, glanced around, and then focused his gaze on Ling Chen and Nanrong Hao opposite.

"Where are the people?" The middle-aged man asked coldly.

Without a word, Ling Chen gave Nanrong Hao a look. The latter understood and quickly walked to the side of the Cadillac, opening the back seat door. Immediately, Qiang was seen lying in the car, eyes shut as if he had fainted.

"Where's the person I want?" Ling Chen asked the other.

The middle-aged man turned around and gestured to the Mercedes business van. Soon, the trunk was opened, and two men led a woman down. She wore a hood, hiding her face. The suited man walked up, grabbed the woman's arm, dragged her in front of Ling Chen, and then took off the hood.

Seeing the unfamiliar yet familiar face before him, Ling Chen gently nodded. He had only seen photos of Jiang Yue'e in her youth, and although more than two decades had passed, Jiang Yue'e's appearance hadn't changed much, except for a slight increase in her body size.

"Mom!"

Upon seeing Jiang Yue'e, Nanrong Hao immediately became excited, and he couldn't help but shout.

Jiang Yue'e slowly turned her head, looking at the fast-approaching Nanrong Hao, and bright tears instantly welled up in her eyes.

"Are you... Little Hao?" Maybe due to being overly emotional, her voice carried a slight tremor.

Nanrong Hao grasped Jiang Yue'e's hands tightly and nodded vigorously. At this moment, the mother and son who hadn't seen each other for over twenty years met again, and a thousand words turned into tears, slowly rolling down their cheeks.

Watching the reunion between Nanrong Hao and Jiang Yue'e, Ling Chen couldn't help but breathe a sigh of relief. A slight smile graced his lips as he genuinely felt happy for their family reunion.

However, Ling Chen hadn't forgotten the main matter. Seeing the people taking Qiang into the van, Ling Chen immediately walked over. Before he even got close to the vehicle, the suited man reached out to block Ling Chen.

"The transaction is complete. From now on, we stay out of each other's business."

"Don't rush. I just want to ask, who exactly are you?"

The suited man replied coldly, "That's not a question you should be asking. As I've said, you better not meddle in our affairs, or else you won't have a good outcome."

Hearing the threat, Ling Chen didn't take it to heart. He pointed to Jiang Yue'e behind him and said, "She's my future mother-in-law. You've imprisoned her for years; shouldn't I, as her son-in-law, help her get justice?"

"Ling Chen!" The suited man snapped, "Don't push too far. I know who you are and have no intention of becoming your enemy. Everything that happened before was a misunderstanding. We've safely returned her to you, which should already express our sincerity. Remember, it's not that we're afraid of you; we just don't want unnecessary trouble. If you keep pursuing us, don't blame us for being unkind."

"I'm not afraid of trouble. If I wish, none of you will leave here alive."

"Is that so?" The suited man sneered, "You can try. But I advise you not to do it. If anything happens to us, none of you will make it out alive either."

"You..."

"Let them go." Suddenly, Jiang Yue'e's voice came from behind.

Ling Chen turned his head and glanced at Jiang Yue'e next to Nanrong Hao. Although he didn't understand Jiang Yue'e's intention, he chose to follow her advice.

Seeing Ling Chen no longer speaking, the suited man immediately got into the vehicle. Soon, the Mercedes business van disappeared from their sight.

"Mrs. Jiang, why let them go?" Ling Chen asked in confusion. He had already arranged to detain these people and uncover the forces behind them. To be safe, he had even specifically had Ling Gengqiu hiding nearby. Even if they had experts accompanying them, he was confident in capturing them.

"Things aren't as simple as you imagine," Jiang Yue'e said. "These people are ruthless. If you had acted just now, even if they couldn't escape, neither would we survive."

"Why?"

Jiang Yue'e explained, "The trunk of that business van contains a few barrels of oil. If detonated, none of us would escape. These people were already prepared for mutual destruction, so it's best not to provoke them." Speaking of this, she sighed, "It's just a pity for Qiang. I painstakingly managed to help him escape, only to send him back there."

Ling Chen curiously asked, "Mrs. Jiang, what place are you referring to?"

Before Jiang Yue'e could speak, Nanrong Hao said, "Chen, don't ask so many questions now. My mom just came back; let her rest."

"I'm sorry, I asked too much." Ling Chen smiled apologetically, "Haozi, please take Mrs. Jiang upstairs first."

Nanrong Hao nodded and escorted Jiang Yue'e into the parking lot elevator. Watching them leave, Ling Chen took out his phone and dialed a number.

"Hello! Fatty, can you track their location?"

"They're on West Street, heading straight south. I've already sent people to follow them. Rest assured, the entire surveillance system of East Sea City is under my control, and they won't get away."

"Okay." Hanging up the phone, Ling Chen took the elevator straight to the top floor. Standing outside the chairman's office, he hadn't pushed the door open yet, but he already heard Nanrong Wanqing's excited sobbing from inside. After hesitating for a moment, Ling Chen withdrew his hand from the doorknob and turned towards the adjacent lounge.

Now is their time for family reunion; it's best not to disturb them.

Back in the lounge, Ling Chen glanced around and found it empty; Ling Gengqiu hadn't returned yet.

Where has he gone now?

Ling Chen shook his head, poured himself a cup of tea, and sat down.

A moment passed, and Nanrong Hao came in from outside, his eyes red, evidence of having cried earlier.

"Chen, my elder sister wants you to come over."

Ling Chen nodded, stood up, walked to Nanrong Hao's side, and joked, "How does it feel to have the family reunited?"

"Chen, thank you!" Nanrong Hao expressed heartfelt gratitude, "We could reunite as a family thanks entirely to you."

"We're family, no need for such courteous words."

Walking into the adjacent office, Ling Chen saw Nanrong Wanqing accompanying Jiang Yue'e on the sofa, both with slightly reddened eyes. After the excitement of their meeting, their emotions had calmed considerably.

Seeing Ling Chen enter from outside, Nanrong Wanqing quickly stood up from the sofa and hurried towards Ling Chen. When their eyes met, Ling Chen gave her a slight smile before turning his gaze to Jiang Yue'e beside her.

Chapter 1608 - Family Reunion (Part 2)

"Mrs. Jiang."

"Ling Chen, I have to thank you. If it weren't for you, I wouldn't have been able to see Wanqing and Little Hao in this lifetime."

Ling Chen smiled and said, "Mrs. Jiang, please don't say that. This is what I should do." He paused for a moment, then shifted the topic, "Mrs. Jiang, can you tell me about that organization? I heard from Wanqing that you left when they were children and have been out of contact ever since. Have you been with that organization all these years?"

Jiang Yue'e replied, "It's a long story, we'll talk about it slowly when we have time." At this point, she turned to Nanrong Wanqing and asked, "Have you been in contact with the Jiang family over the years?"

Nanrong Wanqing shook her head and said, "No, basically cut off contact. Two years ago the Jiang family sought me out once, I refused to go back with them, they forcibly abducted me. If it weren't for Ling Chen's rescue, I might not have been able to return. Mom, the Jiang family treated us like that, do you still want to go back?"

"No matter what, I'm still part of the Jiang family, and..." Jiang Yue'e sighed softly, "Some things can't be explained in a few words. Don't worry, nothing will happen to me when I go back this time, they..."

"Mrs. Jiang," Ling Chen interrupted, "if you're considering returning to the Jiang family, I advise you to reconsider."

"Why?"

"The Jiang family no longer exists. I went to the Jiang family not long ago regarding your matter and found no one there, only large swathes of bloodstains. Blood analysis showed that all ten plus members of the Jiang family should be dead, but their bodies weren't found. I always found it strange, just who entered the Jiang family, killed them all, and left no survivors."

Upon hearing this, Jiang Yue'e's face changed involuntarily. She quickly stood up from the sofa, hurried to Ling Chen's side, and asked urgently, "You say...the Jiang family is all dead?"

"Yes." Ling Chen nodded.

For a moment, Jiang Yue'e's complexion turned extremely pale, with no trace of color on her lips. "Dead... they're all dead... I warned them not to do such things, yet they still..."

Seeing Jiang Yue'e mumbling to herself, Nanrong Wanqing and Nanrong Hao couldn't help but worry. They quickly moved to her side, each holding one of her arms, "Mom, the dead can't come back, don't be too sad."

Ling Chen looked at Jiang Yue'e, "Mrs. Jiang, I suspect the Jiang family's deaths might be related to the organization that kidnapped you."

"You mean them?" After pondering for a while, Jiang Yue'e suddenly shook her head, "No, it wouldn't be them, they wouldn't do that."

"You're so sure?"

Jiang Yue'e calmed her mood and said, "I can't guarantee anything else, but I can be sure of this." Hearing her say this, Ling Chen opened his mouth, preparing to ask further. However, before he could speak, Jiang Yue'e rubbed her temples and said, "I'm a bit tired now, Wanqing, Little Hao, take me back to rest first."

"Alright." Nanrong Wanqing responded immediately, promptly having Nanrong Hao prepare the car.

Accompanying Jiang Yue'e onto the car, Ling Chen hesitated for a moment but did not get into the Rolls-Royce. Instead, he joined Zhong Wei in the Land Rover in front. It was a rare reunion for their family of three, presumably with much to say. While he and Nanrong Wanqing were in a relationship, they weren't family, so it was better to leave them some private space.

Before the convoy set off, Ling Gengqiu hadn't shown up, unaware of where he had gone.

Returning to the Nanrong family house, Nanrong Wanqing and Nanrong Hao escorted Jiang Yue'e to her room. Zhong Wei, following Nanrong Wanqing's instructions, went to invite Nanrong Yong over. Jiang Yue'e's return to the Nanrong family was undoubtedly a big event.

Ling Chen stood at the door, quietly leaning against the doorframe, listening to the Nanrong family's chit-chat, with a slight smile on his face.

He had thought rescuing Jiang Yue'e would be troublesome but hadn't expected it to be so easy. Regarding the people contacting him and sending Jiang Yue'e back, Ling Chen believed the man in the suit wasn't lying—the other side didn't want to provoke him. A few days ago, that group attacked the base and got heavily taught a lesson. Judging by their reaction, they didn't seem to recognize him, hence their reckless intrusion.

At that time, a hacker breached the base's surveillance system and learned his appearance. If he's guessed correctly, those people must have secretly investigated his identity. Because of this, they decided to send Jiang Yue'e back.

Smart people! Ling Chen chuckled to himself, this was his evaluation of that group.

Now, with the power he holds, aside from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, who dares to challenge him? Whether in terms of the number of Dragon Tiger Hall members or the experts on the Heavenly List, he far exceeds other martial arts forces. Anyone with a little bit of sense wouldn't want to be his enemy.

However, he was quite interested in that organization and eager to understand more. Unfortunately, Jiang Yue'e wouldn't say much; she just reunited with her family, so he couldn't spoil the atmosphere. For now, he could only wait for the right opportunity to ask Jiang Yue'e. Additionally, there was the matter of the Jiang family's fate.

Previously, at the Hongyu Group, from Jiang Yue'e's tone, she seemed to know the reason for the Jiang family's slaughter but didn't say it.

Recalling when he first established a relationship with Nanrong Wanqing, Ling Chen heard a lot about Nanrong Yuan and Jiang Yue'e's affairs. Not only was Nanrong Yuan capable, but Jiang Yue'e was also a strong woman, not the feeble type. From today's interaction, she seemed like someone with deep thoughts.

As he pondered, he heard Nanrong Yong's voice coming from the living room, "Ling Chen, what are you doing outside? Come in."

"Coming!" Ling Chen responded and strode inside.

Upon entering the living room, he saw Nanrong Wanqing and Nanrong Hao sitting on either side of Jiang Yue'e, while Nanrong Yong sat on the single sofa opposite them, all smiling. Obviously, the reunion after so many years made everyone very happy.

As Ling Chen approached, Nanrong Wanqing's delicate face inexplicably flushed, charming and shy, with a hint of joy in her eyes.

Ling Chen, however, didn't notice much and walked up to them, asking, "Old sir, what do you need me for?"

Nanrong Yong smiled and said, "I just told Yue'e that you're Wanqing's boyfriend, so I brought you over for a chat."

Hearing this, Ling Chen couldn't help but glance at Jiang Yue'e next to him with the corner of his eyes, who was looking at him with a smile.

"Ling Chen, I just heard from Wanqing about many things you've done. I'm really grateful for you helping her time and again. If it weren't for you, the Nanrong family might not have today's success."

Chapter 1609 - Family Reunion (Part 3)

"Mrs. Jiang, please don't say that. It's what I should do." Ling Chen said humbly.

"What's your main job now?"

"Work?" Ling Chen was slightly stunned, unsure how to answer. If he were to speak frankly, he didn't really have a proper job.

"Mom, Ling Chen does many things, it's hard to explain all at once. You'll slowly come to understand as you get to know him better." Nanrong Wanqing timely chimed in.

"Alright, alright, I won't ask then." Jiang Yue'e dotingly looked at Nanrong Wanqing, smiling: "They say girls are distant, and you haven't even married yet but you're already speaking for him. Seems like my place in your heart won't compare to his in the future."

Nanrong Wanqing blushed slightly, saying: "Mom, just listen to yourself. Your place in my heart will never change."

"Me too." Nanrong Hao hurriedly added.

As they spoke, Ling Chen suddenly heard his phone ringing in his pocket. He took out his phone and said apologetically: "You guys chat, I'll step outside to take a call."

Leaving the room, Ling Chen answered the call and asked: "Fatty, any progress?"

"There's been a situation."

"What's the situation?"

"Those guys drove to the southern suburbs of East Sea City, where the surveillance coverage isn't extensive. I can't track their position and the sent personnel haven't found their car."

"Lost them?" Ling Chen frowned slightly; this outcome was unexpected. East Sea City was his territory, and tracking a car should have been easy, yet they lost them.

"Hang on, I need to take another call. It's probably news from the people I sent." After a while, Hu Fei's voice returned: "Just found that Mercedes van, but there's no sign of anyone; they must have switched cars."

"Do you know what those people look like?"

"I do. I've checked the previous surveillance at Hongyu Group's parking lot; I'm clear about their appearances."

"Alright, do your best. If you really can't find them, forget it. They don't want to be antagonistic towards us, and we don't need to invite trouble."

Hanging up the phone, Ling Chen suddenly remembered Ling Gengqiu hadn't returned yet. At once, he called Ling Gengqiu to see if he was out partying again. However, though the call connected, no one answered.

Calling twice in a row, and still no answer, Ling Chen gave up, as his ancestor was used to leisure and couldn't be bothered to keep his feet in check.

Night fell.

Ling Chen took some time to return to Dragon Tiger Hall, greeting the old masters Golden Dragon and Wang Teng. After all, esteemed guests had come, and he couldn't neglect them. Tonight, the Nanrong Family was destined for a sleepless night, so Ling Chen decided not to go back, choosing instead to stay at Dragon Tiger Hall for the night, returning in the morning.

Close to midnight, as Ling Chen was about to sleep, he received a call from Ling Gengqiu. Answering the phone, Ling Chen said: "Old brother, you wouldn't have just climbed out of a beauty's bed expecting me to pick you up, right?"

"No nonsense, can't you locate cell phone signals? Come quickly." With that, Ling Gengqiu's side went silent, though the phone remained connected.

What's going on? Ling Chen was puzzled, having known Ling Gengqiu for so long, he'd never seen him so serious. Without time for more thought, Ling Chen promptly called Hu Fei, rousing him from bed.

Soon, Hu Fei locked onto Ling Gengqiu's location through his cell signal. When this location was sent to Ling Chen's phone, he was momentarily stunned; wasn't it the suburbs of East Sea City? Why was Ling Gengqiu there?

"Hey! Ling Chen, how come this cell signal is over there?"

Hearing Hu Fei's surprised tone, Ling Chen asked, puzzled: "What's wrong?"

"That area is where those people switched cars."

Could it be a coincidence? Ling Chen pondered for a moment and said: "I'm heading over first, bring people to meet me there."

Ending the call, Ling Chen immediately drove towards Ling Gengqiu's location. Though fewer cars were on the road at night, the distance from the city center to the suburbs was quite far. It took a full fifty minutes before Ling Chen arrived at the destination.

Getting out of the car, surrounded by sparse buildings, the area was pitch black, without any residential houses, just factories and warehouses.

Following Ling Gengqiu's location, Ling Chen soon found a factory building. Pushing open the door, Ling Chen was surprised to find it brightly lit inside. Seeing this scene, he couldn't help but step back a bit, looking at the building's windows outside, which were all dark. Aha! No wonder nothing was discovered, as the factory windows were covered with sunshades, blocking any light from getting out.

Quite cautious!

Entering the factory, Ling Chen left the door open to help Hu Fei find it accurately. The factory's space was huge, with two cars parked near the entrance, a van and a sedan. Walking along the corridor forward, Ling Chen found several people lying on the ground, already unconscious.

Could this be Ling Gengqiu's doing? Just thinking, he heard Ling Gengqiu's voice echoing from inside the factory: "Brat, get in here."

Quickening his pace, Ling Chen soon reached the innermost room of the factory. Entering the room, he saw two chairs placed inside, each with a person sitting on it. Looking closely, Ling Chen was surprised to find that one was the suited man he'd seen at Hongyu Group earlier today. At the moment, he was leaning against the chair, face pale, looking near death. But neither of these people showed any blood, and it was unclear what method Ling Gengqiu had used on them.

"Old brother, what... what are you doing?" Ling Chen asked, puzzled. He had assumed Ling Gengqiu went out to party, but unexpectedly, he'd secretly tracked these people and settled them.

Ling Gengqiu glanced at Ling Chen, saying flatly: "Ask less for now; quickly handle the people here."

As he spoke, sounds of cars came from outside the factory, likely Hu Fei and his team arriving. Since Ling Gengqiu was unwilling to explain, Ling Chen stopped asking more; no matter Ling Gengqiu's purpose, he'd tell him eventually.

Heading outside the factory, Hu Fei brought over ten people along. Shortly, those inside the factory handled by Ling Gengqiu were all cleared out. With the exterior settled, Ling Chen returned to the innermost part of the factory once more.

"Old brother, the outside is cleared up, but these two..." Ling Chen pointed to the two people seated in the chairs, intending to ask Ling Gengqiu what to do with them.

Ling Gengqiu seemed to ignore Ling Chen's question, saying to himself: "I've given you chances. Tell me, where's that person?"

However, the two men remained silent.

Chapter 1610 - Netherworld Snake (1)

Seeing this, Ling Gengqiu asked no more questions. With a casual flick of his hand, the chests of two men caved in immediately. Without even a cry of agony, they both died on the spot.

Watching Ling Gengqiu's face, cold as frost, Ling Chen was somewhat taken aback. He had never seen Ling Gengqiu like this before.

"Big brother..." Ling Chen attempted to say something, but before he could finish, Ling Gengqiu suddenly said, "Let's go. It's time to head back."

As Ling Gengqiu headed out, Ling Chen dared not slack off and quickly followed behind him, walking straight out of the factory. Once in the car, Ling Chen greeted Hu Fei, asking him to take care of the bodies, and then drove back to the city with Ling Gengqiu.

Throughout the journey, Ling Gengqiu sat in the passenger seat, his eyes gazing out the window, seemingly deep in thought.

"Big brother, what's going on?" Ling Chen couldn't help but ask. Ling Gengqiu withdrew his gaze from the window, turned to look at Ling Chen, and said, "Let's find a place to drink, and I'll tell you slowly then."

Ling Chen agreed. After entering the city center, he found a roadside stall, took Ling Gengqiu to a spot, and sat down. Before long, the owner brought over some braised dishes and a few bottles of erguotou. After a few drinks, Ling Chen put down his glass, looking at Ling Gengqiu in front of him, waiting for him to speak. The latter took his time to speak slowly, "Earlier in the parking lot when I was hiding under that car, I followed them all the way to where they were staying. I know you have many questions about why I sought trouble with them. The reason is simple: that person had a tattoo on his neck."

"Tattoo?" Ling Chen was taken aback, trying hard to recall. If he remembered correctly, the man in the suit seemed to have a snake tattooed on his neck. However, tattoos are quite common, so he didn't pay much attention at the time.

"Big brother, does that tattoo have a significant background?"

"The origin of that tattoo is quite extraordinary, and I'm afraid it dates back hundreds of years. Back then, the Martial Arts world had not yet seen the establishment of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. There were two powerful organizations in the Martial Arts world — one was the Zhu Family, who were initially royal henchmen but later became a family specializing in training assassins. Besides the Zhu Family, there was another organization known as the Netherworld Snake, the most brutal assassin force in the Martial Arts world. They were notorious for their brutal methods. While other assassins mainly focused on stealth killings, Netherworld Snake assassins were different. Every time they were to assassinate a target, they would notify the target in advance, indicating when they would be killed. No matter how those targets tried to evade or how many experts they hired to protect themselves, once the time came, the target would inevitably die in a highly cruel manner. For this reason, the Netherworld Snake became a force everyone in the Martial Arts world feared."

"Later on, when the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion was established, it joined forces with other Martial Arts factions to besiege the Netherworld Snake, killing many of them. Since then, the Netherworld Snake seemed to have vanished without a trace. However, the Netherworld Snake was not eliminated; they just shifted from light to dark and became even more secretive in their actions. They also changed the way they operated, so nobody knew of the Netherworld Snake's existence anymore. As time went by, people gradually forgot about the Netherworld Snake. If I hadn't seen that tattoo on that person's neck today, I wouldn't have recalled this matter."

After listening to Ling Gengqiu's story, Ling Chen asked, "Big brother, are you sure you're not mistaken? Tattoos are quite common now, and many people like to tattoo things on themselves."

"There's no mistake." Ling Gengqiu affirmed, "The Netherworld Snake tattoo is quite unique. The neck only has a snake head tattooed, but if you channel your Inner Strength, other parts of the tattoo will appear. I've verified it; that person's tattoo is exactly the same as the Netherworld Snake tattoo from hundreds of years ago."

"So, that killer organization called Netherworld Snake has continued for hundreds of years."

"Exactly!" Ling Gengqiu nodded, "The Netherworld Snake committed numerous atrocities back in the day, harming many people, including some of my friends who fell victim to their assassins."

No wonder! Ling Chen finally understood why Ling Gengqiu seemed like a changed man. It turned out to be for revenge. Those people were indeed unlucky — something that happened hundreds of years ago ended up with retribution falling upon them.

"Kid, the Netherworld Snake is considered a major force in the Martial Arts world. Since you're part of this world, you'd better find a way to eradicate the Netherworld Snake. Such a scourge must not be left alone, or it will cause trouble for the entire Martial Arts world."

Ling Chen touched his nose. Previously, the Netherworld Snake people found him and proposed that they would leave each other alone. Now, in this situation, Ling Gengqiu took the initiative to act and wiped them all out, making it impossible for him to coexist peacefully with the Netherworld Snake.

Alas! With this thought, Ling Chen sighed helplessly. His ancestor certainly knew how to create trouble for him — eliminating people without even giving a heads-up. Now, he had no way out. As his mind raced, Ling Chen seemed to think of something and curiously asked, "Big brother, when you interrogated those two people before, what were you trying to find out from them?"

Ling Gengqiu waved his hand, "No need to ask. Just focus on your own affairs." Pausing for a moment, Ling Gengqiu continued, "I might not be able to stay by your side for a while. If anything comes up, you'll have to figure out a way on your own. I don't think I can help you."

Upon hearing this, Ling Chen's face changed slightly, and he hurriedly asked, "Big brother, where are you planning to go?"

"I've already said, don't ask things you shouldn't ask." After saying this, Ling Gengqiu picked up his glass, downed the contents in one go, and then got up to leave the stall. By the time Ling Chen caught up, Ling Gengqiu had already vanished into the night.

Getting into the car, Ling Chen let out a wry smile. All this time, he had never seen Ling Gengqiu be so serious and solemn. As someone who had lived for hundreds of years, whatever he was about to handle must be no simple matter.

Forget it! Since the ancestor doesn't want him to know, he sees no need to delve deeper. Just like Ling Gengqiu said, it's best to focus on his own matters.

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In the blink of an eye, a week had passed. During this period, Ling Chen found time every day to visit the Nanrong Family to ensure Nanrong Wanqing and Nanrong Hao's safety. Aside from that, he spent his other time at the Dragon Tiger Hall. Tong Zhentian hadn't returned, and Qiu Yong and his group went wandering about. With no one else to manage the Dragon Tiger Hall, Ling Chen had to take up this responsibility. Fortunately, the Dragon Tiger Hall was already on the right track, with specific people handling each task. He only needed to oversee the hall without worrying about other matters.

That night, after Ling Gengqiu resolved the Netherworld Snake issue, Ling Chen also successfully rescued Qiang and took him to the Nanrong Family. With Jiang Yue'e present, Qiang should be safe. Moreover, with an Earthly List expert nearby, their safety was guaranteed.