

The Beauty 241

Chapter 241 Jiang Family

"I don't know why my parents left home, and Grandpa never talked to me about it. When I was young, I asked him a few times, but Grandpa was reluctant to talk about it, and every time my parents were mentioned, he lost control of his emotions. Since then, I haven't mentioned it in front of him anymore. However, I've heard quite a bit about my mother from Nanny Wang and my aunt."

"My mom was named Jiang Qing'e, and she was a daughter of the Jiang Family in Yangcheng. She had four siblings, two older brothers, and a younger sister, who you just met, Mrs. Jiang Ying. Back then, my dad met my mom while traveling, and Auntie was with her on the trip. After becoming companions, my parents developed feelings for each other during the journey and exchanged contact information, frequently meeting up and traveling to different places. Their relationship deepened over time. However, when my dad thought the timing was right and proposed, the Jiang Family refused him. I could never understand why; even though the Nanrong Family was already wealthy and the Jiang Family also had influence in Yangcheng, our families were well matched, yet they refused the marriage."

"Even though the Jiang Family was against it, my parents were deeply in love and committed to each other for life. Ignoring their family's objections, my mom ended up marrying my dad. At that time, only my aunt attended their wedding. Because of this, she and my mom were considered traitors by the Jiang Family, disobeying the family's order, so they were expelled. Since then, my aunt has stayed in East Sea City, working at Hongyu Group. My parents had several happy years together, deeply in love as a couple. However, a major incident occurred not long after Nanrong Hao was born, which led to my parents leaving the Nanrong Family and never returning."

"Regarding the incident that happened at the Nanrong Family, all those who knew kept silent, and I couldn't find out more. Later, I asked my aunt, hoping to learn the truth from her, but she told me not to ask too much. She said knowing some things might bring more pain, and they didn't tell me to protect me, to prevent me from being affected by the resentments of the previous generation."

"Yangcheng Jiang Family?" Ling Chen murmured to himself.

Nanrong Wanqing nodded slightly, "I've investigated the Jiang Family in Yangcheng; it's a prominent family with a hundred years of history and significant influence. I tried to contact the head of the Jiang Family, who is my maternal grandfather, but the several letters I sent were all ignored, receiving no response. I guess the Jiang Family did not want to deal with me, so I gave up. Ling Chen, I'm telling you all this just to let you know that my aunt has it tough; she sacrificed a lot for my parents. At the time, she tried her best to persuade the Jiang Family to approve my parents' marriage. For that, she clashed with her family members, ending up without a home to return to."

"Why doesn't she live at your place if she's your aunt?"

"There are three villas in the backyard of the Nanrong Family, besides the ones where Nanrong Hao and I each live, the other one was where my parents used to live. Auntie used to live with them. However, since my parents left, Auntie's character has also become eccentric, refusing to stay in the Nanrong Family anymore; she says it makes her sad, so she insists on living alone."

"I see," Ling Chen finally understood the situation. Yet, the issue that occurred at the Nanrong Family was undoubtedly an intriguing problem.

Scratching his head, he presented the dilemma again to Nanrong Wanqing with a helpless smile, "What should I do now? I've managed to offend Auntie terribly already. With her rigid personality, it's probably too late to apologize."

Nanrong Wanqing helplessly said, "Auntie is still on a rampage right now, even if you go to apologize, she would directly kick you out. You...sigh, I don't even know how to handle you. Refrain from going to the HR department for now, head back to the security area instead. Also, try not to let my aunt see you in the company these days, she might just fire you."

"I'll be careful to avoid her."

Leaving the office, Ling Chen sighed heavily, his face full of worry, regretting his impulsive mistake of offending Nanrong Wanqing's aunt. What bad luck.

Checking the time, there was still an hour left until the end of the workday. Since he was heading back to the security department, he figured he might as well tackle something useful.

He went to the underground parking lot, where his classic muscle car was parked in a corner, spotless. It seemed that in his absence, Nanrong Wanqing had not forgotten to take care of his beloved car. His lips curled slightly, appreciating her considerate nature.

Driving out of Hongyu Group, Ling Chen headed onto the road. After a thirty-minute drive, he parked outside Qingyun Martial Arts Hall.

Reaching the door, he knocked, and the door opened in response. Seeing that it was He Ziyun who opened the door, Ling Chen greeted with a smile, "Mr. He."

"Come on in."

"Where's Little Hua?" Ling Chen walked through the spacious courtyard, not seeing Little Hua, the sticky little girl, and asked.

"She's gone out with Xiaozhu."

Ling Chen was surprised, "Xiaozhu is back?"

"Yes, she arrived last night."

Ling Chen secretly breathed a sigh of relief, glad that he had come at the right time. Since parting from Zhu Xiaozhu that night, there had been an unspoken yet profound gap between them. Without addressing Zhu Hong's issue, he didn't know how to face her. Meeting under such circumstances would probably make both of them feel awkward.

"Did you come to see me about that cultivation technique today?"

Hearing He Ziyun speak, Ling Chen nodded, "Mr. He, how's your research going?"

He Ziyun smiled slightly, "I have to admit, you're enviable for your luck, stumbling upon such a treasure. Although the text of the Internal Cultivation Methods is obscure and difficult, it's undeniable that it's an absolute skill passed down from ancient times. I've been consulting various major sects' archives, and fortunately, persistence pays off; I've translated the Internal Cultivation Methods. Wait here, I'll go get it for you." Saying that, he stood up and walked towards his bedroom.

Ling Chen felt a small thrill of excitement inside. He was well aware of He Ziyun's strength, a renowned figure on the Earthly List, and receiving such high praise from him meant the Internal Cultivation Methods were extraordinary. His external training had reached its pinnacle, but his internal strength

was just beginning. A good set of Internal Cultivation Methods could save him much trouble and detours.

While pondering, He Ziyun returned to the hall, handing over a sheet of handwritten paper filled with characters.

Ling Chen couldn't wait to receive it, and before he had a chance to look at other content, his gaze was already drawn to the few large characters at the top.

Chapter 242 Prajnaparamita Sutra

"Prajnaparamita Sutra?"

Ling Chen was momentarily taken aback. The name sounded strange, somewhat like the title of a Buddhist scripture? Thinking this, he looked at He Ziyun puzzled, hoping to get an explanation from him.

He Ziyun saw his thoughts and couldn't help but smile slightly, patiently explaining: "The reason you find this Internal Cultivation Method obscure is that it involves a lot of Buddhist terminology. I must admit, I too had to consult many ancient Buddhist scriptures to translate this mental method. Personally, I think that the author of this Internal Cultivation Method must have been a Buddhist monk. However, if my guess is correct, there is a significant issue with this Internal Cultivation Method."

"What issue?"

"It's well known that Buddhism values the equality of all beings and bases itself on compassion, saving people with a fearless heart from dire situations. However, this Internal Cultivation Method focuses primarily on killing, which contradicts the principles of Buddhism. Thus, it puzzles me why a Buddhist monk would leave such a mental method for future generations."

Ling Chen slightly raised his lips and chuckled: "Mr. He, as you just mentioned, this is only your conjecture. Perhaps the author of this Internal Cultivation Method wasn't a Buddhist monk but someone else. Who can know the affairs of hundreds of years ago?"

"That's also true." He Ziyun nodded and said, "Maybe I'm overthinking it." After pausing, he changed the subject, "You just asked me why the name of this Internal Cultivation Method resembles a Buddhist

scripture. The reason is quite simple. Buddhism encompasses everything, and this Internal Cultivation Method also harbors all the essences of Martial Arts—changeable in countless ways."

"That powerful?" Ling Chen couldn't contain his excitement, his eyes gleaming.

He Ziyun smiled and said: "That's why I said you are fortunate. You have practiced this Internal Cultivation Method before and didn't see much effect because you didn't approach it in the right way. Only with the correct approach can you understand its mysteries. However, any top-tier Internal Cultivation Method has specific requirements for the practitioner."

Ling Chen asked curiously, "What requirements?"

"The Prajnaparamita Sutra can only be practiced by men; they must be at the peak of their external skills and cannot be older than twenty-five. You meet all these conditions, but there is one most crucial condition you haven't fulfilled, which is why you haven't progressed."

"The most important condition?" Ling Chen felt anxious, "Mr. He, do I still have any hope?"

He Ziyun revealed a meaningfully deep smile: "There is hope. Actually, this condition is not difficult for you; you can meet it anytime you want." Pausing, he cleared his throat and said with a smile: "For the practice of the Prajnaparamita Sutra, the man must lose his virginity."

"What?" Ling Chen widened his eyes, thinking he had heard wrongly. Losing virginity? This was the first time he heard such a bizarre condition.

"That... Mr. He, are you sure you're not mistaken?"

"I have studied it over a dozen times, and I am positive there's no mistake. At first, I thought it was a joke, but after careful study, this condition is actually well-founded. It's useless to explain it to you now; you would understand once you practice the Prajnaparamita Sutra and experience its transformations yourself."

Saying this, He Ziyun smiled and patted Ling Chen's shoulder, "You're not that young anymore; this sort of thing is quite normal, no need to feel embarrassed. If you don't have a suitable partner, you might as well roam the night markets. There are many such places in East Sea City, you might try it out."

Err...

Hearing this talk, Ling Chen was speechless. He Ziyun actually encouraged him to visit those kinds of places, the old man usually seemed so proper, who would have guessed he was so unconventional.

"Come, I'll take you to the training room first, to teach you the introductory mental method."

Following He Ziyun, Ling Chen arrived at a room behind the Martial Arts Academy. This room was entirely built of wooden materials without using a single steel nail. The room was spacious, with several candlesticks placed on each of the walls. Directly across from the door, the wall had a thickly inked 'Quiet' character. In the center of the room, there was a round carpet.

He Ziyun walked directly onto the carpet and sat cross-legged, then patted the spot beside him signaling for Ling Chen to sit down too.

"Internal cultivation involves three key aspects: Body Adjustment, Breathing Control, and Mind Control. Your physical condition is excellent, so there's no need to spend much effort on that; thus, I will teach you Breathing Control directly. Breathing Control is about mastering the correct breathing techniques. Internal cultivation places much emphasis on breathing, you need to achieve three shallow and one deep breaths, maintain a steady breath, only then can you enter what we often refer to as the state of meditation."

While explaining, He Ziyun also provided guidance.

Although Ling Chen had practiced Internal Strength before, his approach was purely by accident, based on his understanding without any guidance, resulting in many mistakes in his practice. Now, under He Ziyun's patient guidance, he closed his eyes, slightly bent his arms, fingertips pointing skyward, while adjusting his breathing, fully relaxed.

Minutes passed, and he felt his body enter an ethereal state. With full concentration, following He Ziyun's instructions, he controlled the Inner Strength within his Dantian, converting it into a warm current, circulating from the Gate of Heaven down to the abyss, completing a cycle.

"Close eyes to transverse the void, hands embracing Kunlun, stabilize essence to settle mind, connecting conscious to heavens... Perceive the void's breath, pull it into the Dantian..."

He Ziyun's voice flowed gently into his ears. Listening to the chanted mnemonic, Ling Chen immediately made the corresponding movements, guiding the warm current in his Dantian through his limbs.

Time ticked by.

Unaware of how long it took, in his meditative state, Ling Chen seemed to forget the existence of time, his mind wholly invested in the practice of the Internal Cultivation Method.

"That will do."

Only when He Ziyun spoke did Ling Chen open his eyes, his handsome face carrying an inexplicable excitement.

"Mr. He, I succeeded." Unable to contain the surprise in his heart, he grinned broadly.

He Ziyun nodded his head, not hiding his admiration: "Your comprehension is good. You've memorized the incantations of the Prajnaparamita Sutra, and without my guidance, you can practice it on your own. However, still the same words I said before, although you've laid the foundation, without meeting its requirement, this Internal Cultivation Method can hardly progress. So... you're an adult now, I need not say more, it's up to you to see what to do."

Ling Chen gave a wry smile, the requirements of the Prajnaparamita Sutra were truly outrageous. Nevertheless, at this juncture, he could only comply; he could not miss the opportunity to master a top-tier Internal Cultivation Method.

Chapter 243 The RV from the Jiang Family

After leaving Qingyun Martial Arts Hall, it was already past four in the afternoon. Ling Chen had stayed in the practice room for a solid five hours, yet he didn't feel the passage of time at all.

It has to be said, Inner Strength cultivation is a very magical thing.

Back at the company, Ling Chen didn't forget Nanrong Wanqing's instructions; he stayed holed up in the security department office without coming out, to avoid bumping into Jiang Ying. Although there were hundreds of people in the company, it was still possible to run into her.

He only breathed a sigh of relief at the end of the workday and drove back to Wealthy Manor with Nanrong Wanqing.

In the car, looking at Nanrong Wanqing beside him, Ling Chen scratched his head, mustering up courage a few times, but just as quickly he chickened out, looking like he had more to say but hesitated. His odd behavior finally caught Nanrong Wanqing's attention, who asked curiously, "What's wrong with you?"

"Nothing... nothing!" Ling Chen forced a smile and nervously shifted his gaze out of the car window, still thinking about what He Ziyun had said.

Damn, to advance in Inner Strength, one has to lose their virginity, and for a perennial virgin, it's really not an easy matter. When He Ziyun mentioned this, Nanrong Wanqing was the first person to come to his mind, but now when it came to it, he couldn't utter a single word.

Although he had established a relationship with Nanrong Wanqing, with her traditional thinking, it was probably not going to be easy to persuade her.

After thinking back and forth, he eventually discarded the idea. His skin may be thick, but there were some things he just couldn't bring himself to say.

Upon arriving at 118 Wealthy Manor, as soon as they got out of the car, Nanrong Hao came running over excitedly, calling out loudly, "Sister, Chen."

Ling Chen smiled, patting his shoulder and said, "You finally got out, kid. How was it inside, they didn't give you a hard time, did they?"

"No, Officer Xia took good care of me, there were no difficulties."

Seeing her brother returning safe and sound, Nanrong Wanqing's frown relaxed, she smiled faintly and nodded lightly, "It's good that you are fine."

To celebrate Nanrong Hao's return home, Nanny Wang specially prepared a lavish dinner, even Nanrong Yong made a rare appearance to join the fun, with the family getting along well and happily.

Two days went by.

Ling Chen was feeling very frustrated; he had been training hard these two days, immersing himself in the cultivation of Internal Cultivation Methods whenever he had time. However, it was proven that what He Ziyun said was true. No matter how he cultivated, the Inner Strength in his Dantian did not grow and remained stagnant.

Without breaking the physical limitations, there's no hope of advancing further in Internal Cultivation Methods.

That day, after dropping Nanrong Wanqing at the office, Ling Chen slipped away to the security department, putting his feet up and enjoying the leisure time.

"Elder Ling, if you're not busy, why don't you join me for a patrol outside, it's not good to stay cooped up in the office all the time."

"Brother Wei, since you've said so, how could I refuse? Let's go!"

Leaving the office, Ling Chen and Wei Jun were about to step outside. But at that moment, Ling Chen's expression suddenly changed, and he quickly pushed Wei Jun in front to block his own body.

Wei Jun was a bit stunned and said: "Elder Ling, what is this..."

"Be quiet."

Ling Chen looked up, his gaze going past Wei Jun's shoulder, looking at Jiang Ying who had just came out of the elevator not far away, and silently breathed a sigh of relief. Luckily, he reacted quickly and noticed her in time. If she had caught him, Nanrong Wanqing would probably be very troubled.

However, beyond relief, Ling Chen's eyes also held a hint of puzzlement. After Jiang Ying came out of the elevator, she hurried along with an anxious look on her face, seeming to have encountered some vexing issue. Employees passing by greeted her, but she seemed not to hear, her eyes fixed on the outside.

Sensing something off about her, Ling Chen couldn't help feeling curious. Jiang Ying was a conservative person with strong principles; this could be deduced from the rules set by her department. It was now working hours, yet she wasn't in her office but instead going out, with a look of urgency on her face—a sign that it was probably no small matter.

If it had been before, he definitely wouldn't have meddled, but now that he knew about Jiang Ying's relationship with Nanrong Wanqing, he couldn't just overlook it.

"Big Brother Wei, you go ahead with your work, I've got something to attend to."

After saying that, without waiting for Wei Jun to respond, he had already caught up with Jiang Ying's pace and quickly left the company.

Arriving at the roadside, a Mercedes-Benz van slowly approached and stopped by the curb. Following that, Jiang Ying walked over to the van, opened the door, and sat inside. The moment the door was opened, the sharp-eyed Ling Chen noticed a young man sitting inside the vehicle, clad in a casual suit.

The youth was in his twenties, with handsome and well-defined features, and short hair dyed white, resembling a delinquent from society. Moreover, his attractive face was expressionless, like someone with facial paralysis.

Watching the van blend into the traffic, Ling Chen gave chase for a few steps and glanced at the van's license plate, frowning slightly. That van did not have a local license plate, and from the letters at the beginning of the plate number, it was evident that the van came from Yangcheng.

Yangcheng, the Jiang Family!

The only people who could make Jiang Ying behave so oddly were probably members of the Jiang Family. Nanrong Wanqing had told him that there had never been any interaction between the Jiang Family and the Nanrong Family, and Jiang Ying had also been expelled from the Jiang Family. So why would someone from the Jiang Family suddenly seek out Jiang Ying?

Thinking of these things, he felt vaguely uneasy.

Night fell.

After dinner, with nothing to do, Ling Chen decided to pop over to the neighboring villa to chat with Nanrong Hao. Upon reaching the door, before even entering, he saw Nanrong Hao touching his glossy hair, coming out from inside the house.

"Brother Chen?" Upon seeing Ling Chen, Nanrong Hao smiled, "You looking for me for something?"

"What's with this flashy getup? Where are you headed?"

"Hao and Xiong found out I was out and insisted on treating me to a fun night."

"Where's the fun gonna be had?"

Nanrong Hao scratched his head sheepishly and chuckled, "That uh... Emperor Foot Bath, you know the place."

"Look at you, all set to go out and enjoy life just after getting out."

"Can't really turn down an invitation like that. Hey, Brother Chen, you interested? We could go together?"

"I..." Ling Chen was about to decline, but then he thought, since he hadn't found the opportunity to lose his virginity, perhaps he should try out such a place. He Ziyun had said, after all, everyone was an adult and there was nothing embarrassing about this kind of thing.

Besides, he was doing this to enhance his own strength, not for the sake of indulgence; surely Nanrong Wanqing wouldn't blame him. With this in mind, he gave a light cough and said earnestly, "You need to start taking life seriously, kid. I need to keep an eye on you for your sister's sake, and I can't let you get into trouble."

"Of course." Nanrong Hao snickered slyly, easily reading Ling Chen's mind, but he didn't expose him.

Clearly wanting to have fun, yet too shy to say it outright and using himself as a shield—Brother Chen sure seemed to be someone with thin skin.

Departing from the Nanrong residence, the two men got into Nanrong Hao's Audi and headed straight for their destination. It took them less than half an hour to arrive outside a luxurious foot bath city, the Emperor Foot Bath.

Chapter 244 Undercover

Emperor Foot Bath City is located in the downtown area and is one of East Sea City's high-end entertainment venues. Every evening, finding a parking spot outside the foot bath city is next to impossible, and guests come and go without end.

When Ling Chen and Nanrong Hao arrived, Jiang Hao and Zhao Zhengxiong were already waiting at the entrance. The four of them met, and Jiang Hao's reaction to Ling Chen's arrival was a mix of surprise and delight. He knew Ling Chen's personality too well; he had invited Ling Chen to such places more than once before, only to be rejected every time.

"Haozi, you really did it, managing to get Chen here." Jiang Hao said, hooking his arm around Ling Chen's shoulder and chuckling, "Chen, we brothers will make sure you enjoy the pleasures of being a man tonight."

Ling Chen kept a stern face and glared, saying, "Cut the crap. I'm just here to keep an eye on Haozi, so none of you lead him astray."

"Come on, Chen..."

"Alright, enough," Nanrong Hao cut off Jiang Hao's words, stealthily giving him a look, "Chen is just here for a look, don't force him. Xiong, is the private room all set?"

"All booked early on and just waiting for you guys."

"Chen, let's go up and take a look." Nanrong Hao energetically led Ling Chen, and the group of four entered Emperor Foot Bath City. At the elevator, a sweet-faced attendant warmly helped open the lift, welcoming the four inside.

Standing in the elevator, Ling Chen saw that none of them reached out to press any buttons, so he asked, "Which floor are we going to?"

Zhao Zhengxiong gestured, "Chen, no need to press anything; it will move on its own." As soon as he finished speaking, there was a gentle 'creak' and the elevator slowly started to ascend.

Tsk tsk!

They really do keep things under wraps here. Ling Chen mused to himself. Emperor Foot Bath City had a total of eight floors, but the elevator buttons only went up to the fourth. Clearly, the floors above the fourth weren't meant to see daylight.

Ding!

The elevator door opened, and Ling Chen followed Nanrong Hao out. Before he could take a good look around, he was hit by a wave of perfume and encountered a sea of white as girls in skimpy clothes flooded in from both sides, dazzling to the eyes.

Ling Chen raised his arm to block the pairs of smooth, lotus root-like arms and quickly made his way out of the crowd. When he looked back, he saw six or seven young ladies in revealing outfits, with not much fabric on their bodies, surrounding Jiang Hao and the others, chirping and sweetly calling them 'boss'.

Nanrong and the others must have often come to places like this; facing so many beautiful women, the three of them were like fish in water, showing no discomfort at all, which reminded Ling Chen of a term – 'smooth drivers.'

Just then, a petite girl noticed Ling Chen standing aside and immediately came over, giggling while pulling his arm, "Handsome, is this your first time here?"

Though Ling Chen had seen the world, he had never seen a scene like this. Feeling the softness against his arm, he swallowed involuntarily, his hands unsure of where to go.

Jiang Hao seemed to sense his discomfort and laughed, easing the tension, "Alright, don't cling to our Chen. Come on, let's go to the private room first."

Entering the spacious and luxurious private room, Ling Chen breathed a sigh of relief and leaned back on the sofa. Turning to see Jiang Hao puffing out smoke, he asked, "Don't the police raid places like this?"

"Heh heh, Chen, you saw it when we were coming up, didn't you? The elevator only goes to the fourth floor. If the police come, they will shut it down. By the time the police rush up here, we'll have already left through a secret door."

Zhao Zhengxiong joined in, "Places like this are common in East Sea, and many have backing. Shut down one, and immediately two more open up. It's never-ending."

While they talked, a middle-aged woman with heavy makeup sauntered over with a flirtatious smile, her face so caked with foundation it seemed it might fall off at any moment.

"Gentlemen, welcome."

"Tao, cut the talk. My brother just got out of the slammer and is fuming. Hurry up and call your girls over," Zhao Zhengxiong called out.

"Boss Zhao, don't rush. I'll call them over to join you right away."

At that moment, Jiang Hao and Nanrong Hao sat together, whispering and grinning wickedly, their eyes occasionally sneaking glances at Ling Chen.

"Leave it to me."

Jiang Hao patted his chest, smiling confidently, then stood up to catch up with Tao and left the private room.

After a few minutes, Jiang Hao returned to the private room first, followed by Tao leading a dozen young and beautiful girls in light attire into the room, lined up in a row, each with a number pinned at their waist and posing seductively, oozing charm.

Ling Chen was immediately captivated; these beauties were all in their early twenties, youthful and beautiful, each with an excellent figure and fair skin. He was overwhelmed.

Jiang Hao said, "Chen, you pick first. If you're not satisfied, I can ask them to bring in another group."

Ling Chen coughed awkwardly, his expression unnatural. Although he had resolved to come here and indulge, now that the moment had arrived, he couldn't help but shrink back.

"Don't be shy, Chen," Nanrong Hao teased. "If you don't choose, then I'll choose for you."

Just then, Ling Chen suddenly felt a piercing gaze from the line of beauties staring at him with a hint of chill. Curiously following the gaze, his eyes locked on a beauty on the far left. His face turned pale when he saw her clearly.

Damn, what is this woman doing here? He inwardly cursed.

He had been too careless.

Blaming the dim light of the private room, the abundance of beauties, and his own lack of attention, he hadn't noticed. Moreover, looking at her pretty face, it seemed she had deliberately applied heavy makeup, not only eyeliner but also fake eyelashes. If one didn't look closely, it would be hard to recognize her.

Now he was in trouble!

He was inwardly groaning, feeling his luck terribly bad to have been caught red-handed on his first time in such an environment.

Seeing him not making a move, Jiang Hao couldn't help but urge him, "Chen, you need to pick or we'll have to make a choice for you."

"Uh... Jiang Hao, didn't you say you had something to take care of earlier? Let's head back first and come another day," Ling Chen stood up and gestured to Jiang Hao with his eyes.

Chapter 245 This is a Trap

However, Jiang Hao did not grasp his meaning, instead, he said: "Chen, are you mistaken? I never said that."

"You..." Ling Chen was infuriated inside. This guy is usually quite clever, how could he not even understand a look from him?

At that moment, the beautiful woman came over with a smile, hugged Ling Chen's arm with both hands, and sweetly said: "Boss, since you're here, why not stay and play for a while? Why rush to leave. Let me keep you company, I'll make sure you're satisfied."

Hearing that overly sweet voice, Ling Chen shivered involuntarily, angry yet tearless, this woman has caught him and won't let him leave.

He squeezed out a smile reluctantly, ready to find an excuse to slip away. But before he could say anything, he suddenly felt pain in his arm—the woman was fiercely pinching his flesh with her nails, her eyes carrying a threat.

"Sit down obediently. If you dare to leave, I will immediately have you arrested."

An inaudibly quiet voice came over, Ling Chen knew he couldn't escape now, so he might as well comply and sat back down obediently.

Jiang Hao and the others thought he was captivated by the beauty, and they all started laughing, giving a thumbs-up: "This lady is amazing, even able to subdue our Chen."

Tao smiled and said: "You can only say that this boss has good taste. This is our newly arrived beauty, working for the first time tonight."

Ling Chen glared at Jiang Hao and the other two angrily, these three idiots are classic examples of losing their brains at the sight of a woman. They had seen Xia Mutong before, especially Nanrong Hao, who had been detained in the station these past few days, almost meeting Xia Mutong every day, yet he didn't recognize her.

After a while, Nanrong Hao and the others each selected a beauty. Once Tao had led the remaining women out, several waiters came in and placed drinks and snacks onto the coffee table.

"Enjoy at your leisure, gentlemen. Call us whenever you need something."

Jiang Hao gave Nanrong Hao a look, picked up a bottle of foreign liquor, poured two glasses, and smilingly handed one to Ling Chen.

"Chen, here, this glass is for you, let's down it in one gulp."

Ling Chen was never afraid of drinking, but with Xia Mutong sitting next to him, he really wasn't in the mood.

"Let's put it aside for now, I'll drink it later."

"Chen, we are out to have fun, don't ruin it," Zhao Zhengxiong came over with a glass of drink, then pointed at the Xia Mutong beside him, dissatisfied, he said: "Hey, it's not like we paid money for you just to sit here, hurry and encourage Chen to drink."

Hearing this, Xia Mutong picked up a glass of foreign liquor, leaned against Ling Chen's body, and coquettishly said: "Boss, come on, let's drink this glass."

This woman... how long is she going to keep up this act?

Ling Chen had no choice but to sip a bit to pacify her.

However, once the alcohol went down, Jiang Hao and the other two took turns pushing drinks, one glass after another, along with Xia Mutong's encouragement to drink, it wasn't long before most of a bottle of foreign liquor was consumed by Ling Chen and Xia Mutong.

The aftereffects of the foreign liquor were strong, Ling Chen felt dizzy, his body seemed to be burning, he was extremely restless. Not just him, Xia Mutong was also not in good shape, her forehead was drenched with sweat, her face flushed red, and she kept exhaling, revealing a seductive attitude.

Seeing that the two had drunk a lot, Jiang Hao came over with a smile, "Chen, how about we take you to rest for a bit?"

Ling Chen nodded, given his capacity for liquor, this situation shouldn't have arisen, but now with the alcohol affecting him, he was very uncomfortable, feeling an inexplicable impulse, wanting to find a quiet place to lay down.

"Haozi, let's go, let's take Chen to the room." Saying this, the two helped both Ling Chen and Xia Mutong up, walked them out of the private room, and into an adjoining guest room.

After settling them in, Jiang Hao and Nanrong Hao immediately exited the room, stood outside the door covering their mouths, snickering quietly.

"Hao, everything okay?"

"Relax, I've notified Tao to add something to that bottle of foreign liquor, Chen won't be going back tonight."

"Well done."

Inside the room.

Ling Chen and Xia Mutong lay side by side on the bed, eyes closed, trying to get a good sleep. However, for some reason, the more they tried to sleep, the less they could, and the restlessness in their hearts grew stronger, almost uncontrollable. He couldn't help but open his eyes and turn his head to look at Xia Mutong beside him, her pretty face flushed red, her fair skin showing a light blush, her mouth slightly open, her two long white legs tightly clamped together, her voluptuous body heaving.

Ling Chen swallowed, with his willpower, he was originally still able to somewhat control himself, but the scene before his eyes indeed made him feel unbearable.

The last bit of consciousness under that inexplicable thinking gradually blurred, and he reached out to the person beside him...

...

Outside the Emperor Foot Bath City.

A commercial van was parked by the roadside, several plainclothes police officers sat in front of a row of computers, watching through the surveillance the guests coming in and out of the foot bath city.

"It's been so long, why hasn't Captain Xia sent a signal yet? Hey, there won't be a problem, right?"

"What's the rush, Captain Xia has her own measures. If there really was a problem, she would have contacted us already. What, are you afraid that someone might take advantage of Captain Xia?"

"I just don't know what the higher-ups were thinking, actually letting Captain Xia go undercover."

"Who else but Captain Xia could be our police station's beauty. I heard this foot bath city has high standards for the looks of their hostesses, besides Captain Xia, our station really couldn't select anyone else more suitable."

Chapter 246 The Arrogant Jiang Family

The next day, 8:00 AM.

Wealthy Manor 118.

After breakfast, Nanrong Wanqing pushed her wheelchair to Ling Chen's bedroom and gently knocked on the door. However, after several knocks, there was utter silence inside, without any response.

Seeing this, she felt a bit puzzled. Normally, Ling Chen got up quite early. Why was he still not around today? As she thought this, she pushed the door open and called out, "Ling Chen, I..." Before she could finish, she saw that the bed was empty and the blanket was neatly folded.

"Where is he?"

"Wanqing." At this moment, Su Lin walked down the stairs, rubbing her sleepy eyes and yawning. Passing by the dining table, she picked up a cup of milk and walked over to Nanrong Wanqing, peering into Ling Chen's room, and asked, "Are you looking for Ling Chen for something?"

"It's nothing."

Su Lin teased: "Cousin, just one night without seeing him and you're already so eager?"

Hearing her teasing, Nanrong Wanqing's pretty face blushed slightly and said, "Don't talk nonsense."

"Today's Saturday, the company has a day off, I guess he's out having fun. Wanqing, since you're also free, how about we go shopping later?"

Nanrong Wanqing hesitated for a moment, and was about to agree when she saw Liu Kun walking in quickly from outside, his expression stern.

"Miss, Young Miss."

"Uncle Liu, is something the matter?"

"Visitors have arrived at home, you'd better go and see."

"Who are the visitors?"

"The Jiang Family from Yangcheng."

Upon hearing Liu Kun's words, the expressions on Nanrong Wanqing and Su Lin's faces changed immediately.

Su Lin frowned slightly and asked, "The Jiang Family and Nanrong Family usually don't have dealings, what are they here for?"

"I'm not sure, but I think their intentions are not benign. Miss, besides the Jiang Family, Miss Jiang is also here, and the old master is currently receiving them."

"Auntie?" Nanrong Wanqing's eyes showed a complex look as she nodded lightly, "I understand. Uncle Liu, Lin, let's go and meet them together."

The three of them arrived outside the main house's living room. Before even entering, they heard a haughty voice saying, "Old man, get out of the way, I'm not interested in wasting words with you, hurry up and call Nanrong Wanqing out."

Hearing the Jiang Family's words to her grandfather, Nanrong Wanqing's pretty face immediately turned frosty, utterly cold.

She pushed her wheelchair, accompanied by Liu Kun and Su Lin, into the living room, and her gaze was immediately caught by a young man. The youth, in his twenties, was wearing a casual striped black-and-white suit, his short hair dyed white, handsome in appearance, but exuding a vibe not matching his age, not maturity, but a bizarre air that was unsettling.

Besides Jiang Ying, there were also two robust men in suits standing by his side, positioned behind him, hands behind their backs, expressions grave.

Noticing her arrival, the young man's lips curved slightly, giving her a half-smile as he nodded to himself: "They say that Nanrong Wanqing of Nanrong Family is a golden flower of East Sea City, with impeccable beauty. This is truly not a lie, a pity that she's disabled."

"Shut up!" Liu Kun angrily said: "This is Nanrong Family's house, keep your mouth clean, don't be rude to Miss."

The young man didn't even give him a proper glance, disdainfully said, "You are nothing but a butler, a dog of the Nanrong Family, what right do you have to speak to me. I personally came to your Nanrong Family, which is already giving you enough face. So let me remind you, when you speak in front of me, show some respect. Aside from Nanrong Wanqing and Nanrong Hao, it's better for everyone else to keep their mouths shut, otherwise, don't blame me for being rude."

"If that's the case, then our Nanrong Family doesn't need your Jiang Family's grace, you can leave now," Nanrong Wanqing said coldly.

The youth scoffed, "It's only because you, Nanrong Wanqing, are speaking. If it were someone else, they wouldn't even have the chance to sit in a wheelchair for the rest of their life."

Seeing the conversation charged with animosity, Jiang Ying quickly intervened, "Alright, we are all family, why must this be so stiff?" As she spoke, she approached Nanrong Wanqing and whispered, "Wanqing, his name is Jiang Han, the son of your second uncle, your cousin."

"Little aunt, I need to correct you, before Jiang Family acknowledges her identity, we're not family," Jiang Han said coolly.

Nanrong Wanqing seemed as if she did not hear his words, looking at Jiang Ying, expressionlessly said: "Auntie, why is he here?"

"He is here on behalf of Jiang Family to discuss some matters with you," Jiang Ying spoke, barely concealing her nervousness, whispered, "Wanqing, listen to your aunt, whatever demands he makes, try not to refuse them. It's for your and Nanrong Family's benefit."

"Auntie, are you asking Nanrong Family to bow down to Jiang Family?"

"Sigh, it's not about bowing down, it's for your family's good. Wanqing, please, whatever you do, do not offend Jiang Family, otherwise, the consequences are not something you can bear."

"Have you all finished talking?" Jiang Han impatiently said, "Nanrong Wanqing, I am here under Family Head's order, to take you back to Jiang Family in Yangcheng. Not just you, but also Nanrong Hao, you both must come with me."

Hearing his uncompromising tone, Nanrong Wanqing felt indignation, she coldly said, "Over these years, I have tried to contact Jiang Family Multiple times, but was always ignored. Now you just show up at my Nanrong Family's home, disrespectful and demanding, why should we follow you? Since Jiang Family doesn't consider Nanrong Family as anything, why should I bother with you?"

"Wanqing..." Jiang Ying looked anxious.

Jiang Han curled his lip, "You don't have to go. But don't blame me for not warning you, if you don't leave with me today, henceforth, Nanrong Family will be erased from East Sea City."

"Hmph! Such arrogance," Nanrong Yong squinted his old eyes and said, "Back then, your Jiang Family couldn't bring down our Nanrong Family, and you won't be able to now either. Go back and tell that old scoundrel not to set his sights on my granddaughter. If he dares touch Wanqing and Nanrong Hao, I won't let him off even at the cost of my old life."

"Old fool, how dare you insult my grandfather?" Jiang Han's expression turned cold, his gaze sinister.

"Enough!" Nanrong Wanqing's face was like frost, she sharply said, "Jiang Han, our Nanrong Family doesn't welcome you, you may leave now."

Jiang Han's lips turned up, he coldly chuckled: "Little aunt, don't blame me for not giving you face, since they're unwilling to cooperate, then I can't help it." With that, he raised two fingers, signaling to the two men behind him.

Jiang Ying hurriedly said, "Jiang Han, let's talk this over, no matter if you acknowledge it or not, she is still your cousin."

"Little aunt, you better step aside, don't force me to take action against you."

Chapter 247 Sobering Up

"Jiang Ying, get out of the way!"

Nanrong Yong waved his massive hand, and although he was just an ordinary old man, he exuded an aura of unspoken authority. As the founder of Hongyu Group, his demeanor was naturally extraordinary. He stood up, one hand pressing on the armrest, his face stern as he said, "I want to see who dares to act wildly in my Nanrong Family's home!"

"In East Sea City, no one dares to provoke the Nanrong Family, but in my eyes, the Nanrong Family is nothing to mention." Jiang Han didn't bother to hide his contempt, "Old man, you've already lost a son. If you don't want to lose a grandson and granddaughter too, you'd better let them go with me quietly." As he finished speaking, he glanced at Nanrong Wanqing, "We've been talking for so long, where is Nanrong Hao? Call him out to see me."

"Who wants to see me?"

As the voice sounded, Nanrong Hao yawned and walked in from outside, wearing a look of fatigue and bearing the appearance of someone who hadn't woken up fully.

Jiang Han observed him, his brows slightly furrowed, and said coldly: "You're Nanrong Hao? Hmph, looking at the dark circles under your eyes, the yellowness of your sclera, and the lack of color on your lips, it's certain that you spent last night fooling around with a woman. I've long heard that the young master of the Nanrong Family is a useless piece of trash, indulging in wine and women, utterly worthless. It seems that the rumors were true. Such useless trash like you isn't worth my energy to bring to the Jiang Family."

Upon these words, the focus of everyone from the Nanrong Family shifted onto Nanrong Hao. Nanrong Yong's face turned the color of iron, his gaze filled with disappointment and frustration. Nanrong Wanqing and Su Lin shook their heads helplessly, not wanting to say anything. Even Liu Kun sighed.

Nanrong Hao's complexion changed slightly; he hadn't expected this bastard to point out his last night's mischief so bluntly.

He retorted unhappily, "What does my being trash or not have to do with you? Who are you, to come here and act recklessly?"

"Jiang Han."

"Jiang Han, Jiang..." Nanrong Hao was shocked, blurting out, "You're with the Jiang Family?" Seeing the other person nod, his expression immediately became grave.

The Jiang Family of Yangcheng, as a member of the Nanrong Family, he was well aware of the grievances between the two.

He looked at Nanrong Wanqing beside him, bent down, and asked softly, "Sister, what are the people from the Jiang Family doing here?"

"Looking for trouble."

"Damn it, the people from the Jiang Family really are up to no good. We from the Nanrong Family haven't looked for trouble with them, yet they dare to come to our door." Nanrong Hao cursed indignantly.

Nanrong Wanqing said calmly, "Enough, you talk less." After speaking, she gave Nanrong Hao a look, who caught on and quickly leaned in, "Go and call Ling Chen, tell him there's trouble at home and he needs to hurry back."

"Chen?"

"What, is there a problem?"

"No, no problem, I'll contact him right now." As soon as he finished speaking, Nanrong Hao ran out in a hurry.

After dialing Ling Chen's number, Nanrong Hao looked anxious and muttered, "Chen, you have to answer the phone."

Having gone to Emperor Foot Bath City last night for pleasure, he had planned to return after midnight. But he drank too much, got all blurry, and just didn't feel like coming back. In the morning, he went to Ling Chen's room, hoping to call him to return together, but no one answered the door no matter how long he called, and no one picked up the phone either. He guessed that Ling Chen probably played too hard last night and was dead asleep.

After some thought, he had to return first. Although the boss has a key to the room, he didn't dare to enter. If he saw any inappropriate scenes, it wouldn't be a big deal for him, but Ling Chen was thin-skinned, who knows if he would give him a lecture.

He dialed once and got no response. Nanrong Hao dialed several more times, not giving up. Finally, on the fourth attempt, the phone was answered.

"Hello, Chen."

"Uh?" A confused voice came from Ling Chen on the other end of the phone, "Who is it?"

"Chen, it's me, Haozi... Stop sleeping, come back quickly, there's been an emergency at home."

"Got it."

"Beep beep beep..." Nanrong Hao smiled bitterly upon hearing the busy tone from the phone. He actually hung up, I wonder if he even took it in.

...

Tossing aside his phone, Ling Chen rubbed his throbbing forehead, lifted the bedsheet, and propped himself up with both hands to sit.

Looking around the room, he was slightly startled. Where is this? His own bedroom didn't look like this.

While he was still in a daze, a soft white arm suddenly stretched out from under the comforter and draped over him.

"This..." Ling Chen quickly rubbed his eyes, fearing he had seen incorrectly, "Is this... a woman? How could there be a woman here?" He hastily lifted the comforter, and upon seeing his own bare body, his face instantly underwent a change, his mouth agape in surprise, taking a long time to snap back to reality.

That's right!

Last night he had followed Nanrong Hao to the Emperor Foot Bath, and then... ran into the undercover Xia Mutong, and following that... As he thought about what came next, he was somewhat afraid to continue.

At this moment, a languid voice came through. The sleeping Xia Mutong beside him started to wake up, rubbing her sleepy eyes, and groggily sat up. Seeing her completely unguarded figure before him, Ling Chen felt a surge of heat within him.

They say a woman is most enchanting just after waking up, and that saying was certainly true.

He suppressed the impulse in his heart, looking at the fading bruises on Xia Mutong's fair skin, cursing inwardly. What on earth had happened last night?

Although he had been drunk, with his tolerance and self-control, it shouldn't have led to this. He vaguely remembered that he seemed to have lost control at that time, his mind unclear, and couldn't recall what happened afterward.

Thinking back now, this situation was very abnormal.

However, he didn't have time to ponder these issues anymore. Feeling Xia Mutong's gaze on him, he turned his head. Their eyes met; Ling Chen felt awkward, while a faint flame seemed to be burning in Xia Mutong's eyes.

"Cough!" Sensing the imminent outbreak of fury in the woman's eyes, Ling Chen decided to act before being acted upon, brazenly taking the initiative with a thick-skinned plea, "Officer Xia, what did you do to me last night?"

"Huh?" Xia Mutong was stunned. No matter how clever she was, she hadn't expected Ling Chen to throw out such a shameless accusation. Seeing his aggrieved expression, she couldn't react for a moment.

"What, you're not speaking because you don't want to take responsibility for this? You women really are heartless..."

"Ling Chen!" Xia Mutong's angry roar emerged just as Ling Chen finished his sentence.

"You bastard!"

Xia Mutong cursed, her eyes brimming with tears, as she made to lunge at him. However, as soon as her body moved, she let out an 'ah' of pain, her eyebrows slightly furrowed, biting her lips lightly.

Seeing the pain on her face, Ling Chen felt somewhat remorseful, dropping the feigned grievance and asked with concern, "Are you alright?"

Xia Mutong glared at him fiercely, her teeth grinding with a rasping sound.

Chapter 248 Responsibility

"This bastard...has no idea how to cherish a lady."

Seeing the ever-changing expressions on Xia Mutong's face, Ling Chen felt somewhat uneasy. After all, as a man, he should take more responsibility for this kind of situation—it was not something that could justly be blamed on a woman.

He gave a helpless smile and said, "Officer Xia, I..."

"Shut up!" Xia Mutong's pretty face turned beet red, and her eyes blazed with fury, "Ling Chen, you have some nerve to dare... to do that to me..." She gritted her teeth, but she couldn't bring herself to finish the sentence.

"Officer Xia, you can't wrong someone without proof. I admit I bear a lot of the responsibility, but this isn't all my fault either..."

"Shut up," Xia Mutong bit her lip, feeling furious and indignant, but at the same time, she was disturbed by some strange thoughts that she couldn't quite articulate.

Knock knock knock!

"Open up! Open up! Police room check!"

Suddenly, a series of urgent knocks came from outside the door.

"Police?" Ling Chen was startled and turned to Xia Mutong beside him, "Officer Xia, I..."

"What about me, hurry up and get dressed."

Xia Mutong said urgently. She pulled out her phone and saw more than a dozen missed calls, cursing inwardly for the oversight. Ignoring her body's discomfort, she snatched a nightgown from the wall and threw it on.

"Hurry up and open the door!"

Hearing the police's urging, Xia Mutong pointed to the bathroom, "Go in there and don't come out."

Without a word, Ling Chen dashed into the bathroom and locked the door behind him. Being caught by the police would be an embarrassingly big deal.

Stepping out of bed, Xia Mutong took two steps towards the door but couldn't help letting out a pained whimper.

Damn it! She cursed angrily in her mind.

When she opened the door, several plainclothes officers stood outside, their faces taut with tension as if ready to break down the door. Seeing her face, the officers were taken aback and then breathed a sigh of relief.

"Captain Xia, why didn't you answer your phone? We've been outside all night, worried that something happened to you."

Embarrassed, Xia Mutong replied, "I had a few drinks last night and slept like the dead, didn't hear my phone ringing. Sorry for making you worry."

"As long as you're alright."

"Go check the other rooms now, don't miss a single one, especially that Tao. She's the manager here, and we need to bring her in."

"Yes, Captain Xia."

After everyone left, Xia Mutong closed the door, walked to the bathroom, and knocked, "Come out."

Ling Chen came out of the bathroom, fully dressed but still wearing an awkward expression, uncertain of how to face Xia Mutong.

"Stay in the room, don't even think about leaving." After saying that, Xia Mutong slammed the bathroom door shut and walked under the shower.

The warm water sluiced over her shoulders, and amidst the steaming mist, Xia Mutong furiously scrubbed her skin with body wash, over and over. Tears mingled with the hot water, quietly streaming down her cheeks.

To be honest, she despised men, loathed them, resisted any contact with them. She had even sworn that she would rather remain unmarried for life than let a man touch her body. Yet, her resolve had crumbled in one night.

Inside the room, Ling Chen sat unnaturally on the bed, silently waiting for Xia Mutong to come out.

Since it had already happened, regret was pointless, and he needed to find a way to resolve it. As he pondered, his eyes inadvertently caught sight of patches of red flowers peeping out from under the bedsheet.

Is this...

His throat tightened, and he lifted the bedsheet, revealing a conspicuous red patch to his eyes.

"It's all over... it's all over..." He muttered to himself, his face full of bitterness. The responsibility was even greater now that he realized she was still...

Creak!

At that moment, the bathroom door opened, and Xia Mutong stepped out, drying her damp hair, with a white towel wrapped around her, revealing her fair skin, as pale as jade or snow.

Ling Chen cleared his throat softly and quickly averted his gaze.

Xia Mutong glanced at him expressionlessly and then walked over to the bedside to pick up her phone and dial a number.

"Alright, you guys head back first, leave a car for me, I will join you at the station later."

After hanging up, Xia Mutong looked at Ling Chen and said indifferently, "You can go now."

"Ah?" Ling Chen was slightly stunned, almost doubting his ears, and said with disbelief, "You're letting me go?"

Seeing his puzzled expression, Xia Mutong felt increasingly irritated. She had struggled for a long time in the bathroom, uncertain about how to handle the situation. It was neither feasible to arrest him nor let him go; after all, both parties were at fault. If she arrested him and he revealed the truth, she wouldn't be able to show her face ever again, and staying in the police force would be out of the question.

After much deliberation, the only option was to let Ling Chen go as if nothing had happened.

"If I say leave, then leave. Why all the pointless talk?" She said coldly, "Remember, nothing happened last night. If you dare to spread a word, don't blame me for being unfriendly."

Hearing this, Ling Chen silently breathed a sigh of relief. Although he was not one to shirk responsibility, Xia Mutong's decision not to pursue the matter was a welcome one. But deep down, he felt an indescribable emotion.

"You still not leaving?" Seeing him sitting dazed, Xia Mutong could not help but urge him again.

Ling Chen stood up and walked straight to the door. Hesitating for a moment, he turned back to Xia Mutong at the bedside, "I'm sorry, if there's anything you need in the future, just tell me. I won't refuse."

At this point, that was the only promise he could make to try and make up for his wrongdoing.

The sound of the door closing echoed. Xia Mutong sat blankly on the bed, her gaze fixed on the sheets, her expression complex, her mind full of tumultuous thoughts.

After leaving the Emperor, Ling Chen suddenly thought of the calls from Nanrong Hao and his heart sank. He had been so consumed by thoughts of Xia Mutong that he had almost forgotten the matter.

Looking at the congested traffic, he frowned, quickly took out his phone, and dialed Nanrong Hao's number, then turned to walk back.

Chapter 249 Fifth on the Tiger List

Bang!

Liu Kun's body slammed heavily onto the ground, a trickle of fresh blood flowing from the corner of his mouth. He had already lost count of how many times he'd been knocked down, his entire body ached everywhere.

Seeing him struggle to his feet again, both Nanrong Wanqing and Nanrong Yong's eyes showed a hint of pity.

"Liu Kun, get down!"

Hearing the deep voice of Nanrong Yong, Liu Kun shook his head, clenched his teeth tightly, and said word by word, "Master, Miss, don't worry about me, I can hold on."

"Hmph! Stubborn to the end." Jiang Han sneered coldly, his face full of disdain, "You think you can stop them? It's like trying to stop a car with your arm, totally overestimating yourself."

Liu Kun stared at the two imposing men in suits, his expression grave, never expecting that the men Jiang Han brought were so formidable. Behind him, Zhong Wei and Liang Zhao Hui were already lying down, unable to fight any longer. Now, the only one who could still stand was him alone.

Su Lin looked anxiously at Nanrong Hao beside her, "Why hasn't Ling Chen returned yet?"

"I just called, he's on his way." Nanrong Hao was anxious too, it was a more than twenty-minute drive from Emperor Foot Bath to Wealthy Manor without traffic, and it was uncertain if Ling Chen could make it in time.

In the midst of their conversation, the two men in suits had already made a move, taking large strides towards Liu Kun.

Seeing this, Liu Kun clenched his fists and propelled forward with the tip of his toes, charging ahead and throwing a punch at one of the men's face.

Bang!

Unexpectedly, the suited man stood still, allowing Liu Kun's fist to smash into his face.

As the fist connected, the suited man appeared unfazed, commenting, "Speed is there, but the strength is still lacking."

Witnessing that it was as if nothing had happened to the man, Liu Kun's expression changed and he hastily retracted his fist. However, before he could pull away, a severe pain shot through his chest, sending him flying uncontrollably backward.

"Come again!" The suited man beckoned with his fingers.

Liu Kun supported himself on the ground, struggling to rise, but the agonizing pain in his chest was unbearable. Based on his many years of martial experience, he knew at least two of his ribs were broken.

"Is that all the Nanrong Family got?" Jiang Han shook his head with undisguised contempt, "Nanrong Wanqing, if you don't want him to end up a cripple like you, you'd better come with me quietly, and stop making me waste my time."

"No way!"

Nanrong Hao clenched his teeth and stepped forward, saying in a deep voice, "My sister won't go with you. Give up that idea."

Jiang Han snorted with a laugh, "A loser thinks he can stand up for you?"

"Nanrong Hao, come back!" Nanrong Wanqing said, her lips barely moving, her beautiful eyes flashing with concern, fearing her brother might act rashly and get hurt.

"Sister?"

"Come back!" Nanrong Wanqing spoke again, her tone leaving no room for doubt.

Jiang Han mocked, "It looks like the Nanrong Family is truly going to fall. You don't even have one man who can stand up for you."

Hearing this, Nanrong Hao, who was about to retreat, glared furiously and could no longer control his rage. He suddenly turned around and charged towards Jiang Han.

However, before he could get two meters away, a thick arm suddenly swung over, hitting him right in the throat. Caught off-guard by the attack, Nanrong Hao's head tilted back as he fell, his head hitting the ground with a 'bang'. Clutching his throat with both hands, his face turned an ashen hue as he emitted 'ugh ugh' sounds, as if he was about to suffocate.

"Nanrong Hao!" Everyone was taken aback.

Su Lin hurried over and helped him up. Instantly, a pool of blood was seen remaining on the ground, and fresh blood was continuously flowing out through Nanrong Hao's thick hair.

"He brought it upon himself," Jiang Han said coldly with a sneer.

Aside, Jiang Ying couldn't stand it any longer and burst out indignantly: "Jiang Han, he is your cousin after all. How can you treat him like this?"

"With all due respect, Auntie, you know the rules of the Jiang Family the best. Trash like him doesn't deserve to be my brother."

"He doesn't deserve to be your brother, and someone like you doesn't deserve to be his brother either."

As those words were spoken, everyone's gaze converged on the entrance.

Seeing Ling Chen stride in, Nanrong Wanqing's tightly furrowed brows immediately relaxed, and she let out a sigh of relief. The hearts of others that had been suspended also settled down. His arrival seemed to provide everyone with a pillar of support.

However, of all the people, only Jiang Ying's look was a bit strange; she couldn't understand why someone who had been fired from the company would appear at the Nanrong Family's residence.

Ling Chen sat down in the living room, glanced at Nanrong Wanqing, gave her a slight nod, then came to Nanrong Hao's side and asked with concern, "Are you alright?"

Catching his breath, Nanrong Hao squeezed out a smile, "It's nothing, I'm fine." He paused, his face filled with surprise, "Brother Chen, how did you come back so quickly?"

"I'll tell you later."

Turning his head, Ling Chen looked at Jiang Han, who was sitting in a chair and was also sizing him up with coldness in his eyes.

"Who did you just call human trash?"

Ling Chen's mouth lifted in a playful smile, "I'm part of the Nanrong Family, so of course, I wouldn't call one of our own human trash. Other than you, who else would be worthy of such a title?"

"How dare you!" Two men in suits shouted in unison, "Dare to disrespect Mr. Jiang, are you seeking death?"

Ling Chen shrugged indifferently, "I've courted death not just once or twice, and yet I'm still very much alive."

"What's your name?"

Hearing Jiang Han's voice, before Ling Chen could answer, Jiang Ying interjected: "His name is Ling Chen, a former employee fired by Hongyu Group."

"Hmph!" Jiang Han sneered, "I thought you were someone with a big background. Turns out you're just a nobody who can't even get on the stage, yet you dare to claim to be part of the Nanrong Family."

"Ling Chen?"

At this moment, the two men in suits exchanged glances, looking thoughtfully at Ling Chen, then said, "We've heard that the newcomer ranked tenth on the Tiger List is called Ling Chen. Is that you?"

"Something like that."

"Tiger List Ranked Tenth?" Jiang Han's expression stiffened, and the look he gave Ling Chen abruptly changed. This unremarkable fellow turned out to be a master from the Tiger List. However, the surprise in his eyes was quickly replaced by a cold sneer, "Tiger List ranked tenth, no wonder you're so bold, daring to be rude in front of me. What a pity, you shouldn't have offended me. After today, the title of Tiger List ranked tenth will belong to someone else."

Ling Chen squinted his eyes, his smile unchanged, as the other party's tone did not take the Tiger List ranked tenth seriously, obviously relying on something.

In thought, the two tall and burly men in suits stepped forward at Jiang Han's signal, holding their heads high with arrogance on their faces.

"Qiu Wen, Qiu Wu, Tiger List ranked fifth."

"Tiger List ranked fifth?" Ling Chen showed a faint look of surprise. How come there are two people ranked fifth on the Tiger List?

Chapter 250 Battling the Fifth on the Tiger List (Part 1)

Qiu Wen seemed to see Ling Chen's confusion and explained, "It seems you don't know much about us brothers. We practice Combined Attack Skills, either we win together or we lose together, never alone. In the Tiger List, besides us brothers, there is also the Northwest Three Swords who are ranked third; their three brothers practice the Sword Array, moving forward and retreating as one."

Is that so? Ling Chen's eyes widened, that's just... too shameless. Two against one, I have no advantage at all, it seems the evaluation criteria of Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion have big issues.

"Ling Chen..."

Nanrong Wanqing couldn't hide the worry in her beautiful eyes. She had heard about the Heaven and Earth Dragon and Tiger Four Rankings from Jiang Yunkai before, and although each list had ten names, the gap in strength was significant. If it's the ninth in the Tiger List, the strength difference with those ranked eighth and tenth is negligible. However, once the ranking difference is too great, the disparity in strength also widens significantly.

Ling Chen is only tenth in the Tiger List, but the Qiu brothers are fifth, the difference in their rankings is too great. She was very worried, unsure if Ling Chen could handle it.

Hearing the concern in Nanrong Wanqing's tone, Ling Chen turned back, cracked a smile, nodded slightly, and gave her a reassuring look.

Turning back, he looked at Qiu Wen and Qiu Wu, a sharp glint flashing through Mo Che's eyes. Previously, he had crossed hands with Song Qing, ranked sixth on the Tiger List, and neither had outperformed the other. This showed that his comprehensive ability could match that of Song Qing. The Qiu brothers ranked fifth, higher than Song Qing, and it was unknown by how much stronger they were. Moreover, critically, they were two people. As the saying goes, one pair of hands is hard to beat four, he really wasn't sure.

"Su Lin." Su Lin, unable to suppress her curiosity, asked softly, "What is the Tiger List?"

"The Tiger List ranks the top martial artists in the world." Liu Kun answered her question from the side.

"Oh!" Su Lin appeared suddenly enlightened, "Uncle Liu, what ranking could you achieve?"

"Me?" Liu Kun gave a bitter smile, his eyes filled with longing, "I don't even qualify to be ranked."

Nanrong Hao, holding the back of his head where it was injured, waved his fist excitedly, "I knew Brother Chen wasn't ordinary."

"Alright." Nanrong Wanqing frowned slightly, speaking softly, "Let's not talk anymore."

Although Ling Chen appeared confident, the worry between her brows couldn't be dissipated; she tightly clutched the armrests of her wheelchair, biting her lip lightly, her stunning face filled with tension.

"Please!" Ling Chen clasped his hands together, following the customary greeting before the start of a sparring match.

However, Qiu Wen and Qiu Wu showed no response, instead, they took off their blazers, rolled up their shirt sleeves, and rubbed their hands together, their expression coldly saying, "Today we are not here to spar and see who is stronger, there's no need for so many formalities. Out of respect for you as fellow experts on the Tiger List, later we will only cripple your legs and spare your life."

Ling Chen slightly curled his lips as if he didn't perceive the malicious intent in their words, nodding, he said, "Then I shall thank you both for your mercy."

"Take this!"

With a roar, Qiu Wen made the first move, charging towards Ling Chen with a swift step, his right palm flat and striking like a venomous snake towards Ling Chen's face.

Seeing this action, Ling Chen's eyes narrowed, a cold light flashed. Such ruthless tactics, directly aiming for his vitals. In a high-level duel, it usually starts with probing and then gradually escalate to full strength. Yet, Qiu Wen didn't hold back from the beginning, clearly underestimating him and aiming to finish the battle quickly.

As the wind from the strike approached, Qiu Wen's fingertips were almost within reach, Ling Chen remained unphased, his expression calm, as he stepped back with his left foot and leaned back. Qiu Wen's arm length was limited, unable to reach further, he had to change his move; his flat palm slightly twisted, transforming into a knife-hand strike, he raised it high above his head and, while lunging forward, chopped towards Ling Chen's neck.

Ling Chen wanted to retreat further, but at that moment, Qiu Wu somehow flanked his side, sweeping a kick across targeting his back neck, coordinating with Qiu Wen's attack, blocking his retreat.

Again, a deadly move!

Whether it's Qiu Wen's hand-chop or Qiu Wu's whip-leg, both were strikingly close, targeting vital areas, almost wishing to cripple him.

Facing the combined attack of the two, Ling Chen remained calm amidst the danger. With a tap of his toes on the ground, his torso suspended in mid-air, his legs hanging upside-down, he kicked towards Qiu Wen and Qiu Wu respectively, neutralizing their attacks.

However, when their legs clashed, his pupils contracted, unable to suppress the shock in his eyes.

In terms of leg techniques alone, he had always considered himself second to none. Yet, after clashing with Qiu Wu, he was astonished to find that his opponent's leg technique was no less superior than his own, even surpassing him in strength.

Utilizing the momentum from Qiu Wu's sweeping leg, Ling Chen supported himself with his hands on the ground and performed a backflip, landing firmly on his feet.

"Cross Training in Hard Qi Gong!"

Looking at Qiu Wen and Qiu Wu, Ling Chen slightly furrowed his brows, for the brief exchange had already allowed him to discern the extent of their skill.

This is troublesome!

It's Hard Qi Gong.

His greatest reliance was his own peak external skills, complemented by years of training, giving him a reaction speed far superior to ordinary people. However, his advantage seemed minimal against Cross Training in Hard Qi Gong. Practitioners of Hard Qi Gong cultivate both internally and externally, possessing not only immense strength but also formidable resistance, exactly what counters him.

In a split second of thought, the Qiu brothers attacked again.

Their steps interweaving, one in front and one behind, constantly changing positions, unpredictably left and right, confusing Ling Chen's vision.

As they approached, a fist as large as a casserole pot rushed towards him, making it unclear who attacked, as Ling Chen could only see Qiu Wen and Qiu Wu shaking in front of his eyes, unable to accurately track their movements.

Ling Chen tilted his head, dodging the fierce punch, then followed through by closing in, his fingers tightly clenched, his fists like dragons emerging from the sea, riding the wind and breaking the waves, suddenly booming out.

Bang! Bang!

Accompanied by several dull thuds, in the blink of an eye, Ling Chen had exchanged several hard blows with the Qiu brothers.

Their style was Hard Qi Gong, with large and open moves, devoid of any fancy techniques, identical to Ling Chen's method of attack, a pure head-on approach.

After several moves, Ling Chen felt a slight numbness in his arms, even a bit of soreness, something he had never experienced before. This clearly showed that Qiu Wen and Qiu Wu completely overpowered him in strength.

Suddenly, Qiu Wen leaned forward, the punch roared with the force of the wind, veins popping on the back of his hand, like a clump of solidified steel, indestructible, thunderously approaching.

Ling Chen's gaze flickered, pushing forward with both hands, trying to misalign Qiu Wen's line of attack. But at that moment, his vision blurred, and the Qiu Wen who was originally in front of him somehow switched places with Qiu Wu, their positions changing so fast they were nearly imperceptible.

Before Ling Chen could react, the oncoming fist had transformed into a whip-leg, sweeping in from the side, striking fiercely against his right shoulder.