

The Beauty 391

Chapter 391 The Mastermind Behind the Scenes

"Ling Chen."

A familiar voice came, and Xia Mutong appeared wearing a crisp uniform, looking valiant and impressive, boasting proudly of her ample chest, accompanied by two colleagues who quickly approached.

"Officer Xia, you've arrived just in time. These people have set up an illegal gambling den and are auctioning off women like goods. You must severely punish such heinous behavior." As he spoke, Ling Chen handed his phone to Xia Mutong and played the secretly recorded video for all to see.

After watching the video, Xia Mutong glanced at Lady Tong, who was kneeling on the ground, and said coldly, "Handcuff her and take her back. Get someone to search the place inside and out for me. See if there are any other accomplices or hostages being held."

"Yes, Captain Xia."

The two male police officers nodded and stepped forward to pull Lady Tong up.

"Let go of me!" Lady Tong flailed her arms desperately, struggling furiously, pointing at Xia Mutong and shouting angrily, "Do you know who I am? Let me tell you, I have a very good relationship with the leaders of your police department. If you dare to arrest me, I'll make sure you're packing your bags and leaving tomorrow."

Slap!

Xia Mutong frowned and casually delivered a slap to Lady Tong's cheek, reprimanding, "Shut up. Say one more word, and I'll tear your mouth apart."

Lady Tong was stunned, not expecting the woman before her to be even more hot-tempered than herself, and instantly became like an eggplant hit by frost, lowering her head and walking away with the two police officers.

"Officer Xia, I'll leave that woman to you for now. I have a friend who is still in danger, and I need to find her quickly. I'll contact you by phone later." Without waiting for Xia Mutong to respond, Ling Chen had already run out of the gambling den.

Getting into the car, Ling Chen put his right hand on the gear shift, stepped on the accelerator, and the car shot out like an arrow released from its bow.

The port previously mentioned by Lady Tong wasn't too far away, only about ten kilometers from the gambling den. At this moment, the boat was already on its way back and he didn't know if Leng Feifei was safe. He had to hurry over as soon as possible.

Just then, the pleasant ring of a mobile phone came from his pocket.

Ling Chen took out his phone and glanced at the incoming call display. Seeing it was Zhao Zhengxiong, he immediately pressed the answer button and said, "Xiong, I'm really busy right now, I'll talk to you later..."

"Chen, were you just at the gambling den?"

Hearing this, Ling Chen was slightly taken aback and asked with confusion, "How did you know?"

"My people reported it to me, they saw you outside the gambling den. Chen, you might not be aware, but that gambling den is operated by the gangsters from North City District, I have been keeping an eye on them."

"Is it them?"

"Yes, that's right! Those guys have been expanding their power like crazy after taking over the West District and South District, with no idea of restraint. But the more people they have, the more money they need. So they took risks and did whatever made quick money - running gambling dens, trafficking drugs, they've been involved in almost all kinds of illegal and criminal activities."

Ling Chen asked, "Why doesn't the police do anything?"

"The police in those districts have all taken bribes, no one wants to meddle, no incidents are reported. The previous raids on the gambling dens were conducted by the city police, who are not as easily bribed with money like the district police. I have been collecting evidence of their illegal activities and planning to report them anonymously. I didn't expect that you, Chen, would take the lead by storming in and destroying their den. Now they are in for it."

"It was just a coincidence I came across them. If they hadn't kidnapped my friend, I wouldn't have gotten involved."

"Chen, is your friend okay? Do you need the brothers to help out?"

"No need, I can handle it myself. That's it for now, I'm still driving. We'll chat another day."

"Okay."

After hanging up the phone, Ling Chen's brow furrowed slightly. It turned out all this was the doing of those thugs from North City District. Well, they would have to be dealt with sooner or later. This opportunity was good for a crackdown on their arrogance.

During his contemplation, Ling Chen had already driven to the port.

Gazing out of the car window at the pitch-dark sea surface, he saw a cargo ship slowly approaching the port, preparing to dock.

In the port's parking lot, Ling Chen also spotted several luxury cars worth millions.

Yes, it's here!

Getting out of the car, Ling Chen, concerned about Leng Feifei's safety, quickly ran towards the mooring location of the cargo ship.

Without waiting for the ship to come to a complete stop, Ling Chen leaped up, grabbed onto the net ropes on the side of the ship, and swiftly climbed aboard.

"Who's there?"

A young man who was preparing to secure the ropes on the deck spotted the suddenly appearing Ling Chen and immediately shouted, picking up a harpoon nearby and charging at him.

"Scram!"

Ling Chen didn't even glance at the young man, kicking him down to the ground, and then hurried towards the interior of the ship.

Pushing open the door, before even entering, Ling Chen immediately heard a dispute coming from inside.

"Damn it! I spent so much money on those women, why can't I have my way with them?"

"Calm down, please. It's not that we're stopping you, but Lady Tong just called saying those women can't be touched for now. If you have any complaints, you can go talk to Lady Tong later. I believe she will give everyone a satisfactory explanation."

"When it was time to take our money, you were so willing. Why the change of face now? Fine, get your boss to refund my money immediately, and I won't say another word, I'll just leave. If you can't do that, then get out of the way quickly and don't disturb our mood."

"This... Gentlemen, I've already called Lady Tong, but there's been no answer. Maybe you could wait a bit longer?"

"..."

Following the noise, Ling Chen quickly located the arguing parties—one side was a group of middle-aged men in robes, seven or eight in total, with indignant faces, furious; the other side was five young men, with the oldest appearing to be in charge of the ship.

At that moment, the group noticed Ling Chen's arrival, and they all focused their attention on him, asking, "Who are you?"

Ling Chen was too lazy to waste words with them, fixating on the ship's person in charge and demanded, "Where are the women locked up?"

"You..."

"Your Lady Tong has already been taken into police custody, and the police will be here any minute now. None of you will be able to escape."

Hearing this, everyone's expression changed. Especially for those middle-aged men in robes, who were well-known figures—if the police caught them, their reputations would be completely ruined.

As several middle-aged men hurriedly scrambled to escape, the person in charge of the ship hesitated for a moment and immediately followed suit with his subordinates.

At this time, Ling Chen had no time to deal with them—a priority was Leng Feifei's safety.

After searching several rooms, Ling Chen still couldn't find Leng Feifei's whereabouts. Just then, a seductive moan suddenly reached Ling Chen's ears.

He followed the sound to a locked door and, without saying a word, slammed his body into it.

Bang!

The door flung open, revealing a sensual scene inside that made Ling Chen's eyes widen, unable to look away for a long time.

Chapter 392 The Woman Who Takes Lives

The cargo ship looked old and worn on the surface, but the rooms inside were meticulously decorated, furnished with various lavish decorations. In the middle was a round bed, where a woman was lying. And who else could it be but Leng Feifei?

At this moment, Leng Feifei's gaze was dazed, her clothes disheveled, and she was muttering shameful words in her dreams. Of course, to a man, this might just be the most wonderful music to the ears.

"Feifei, what's wrong with you?" Ling Chen picked up a piece of clothing at hand, covering Leng Feifei's body, but he didn't expect that the woman would suddenly grasp him in a hug and start to frantically touch and kiss him all over his body. Ling Chen was, after all, a normal guy, and Leng Feifei, in terms of both figure and appearance, was top-notch. Even with extraordinary self-control, he couldn't help but feel his heart race. While pushing her away, he said with a somewhat dry voice, "Feifei, Feifei, what are you doing?"

"Don't talk, just hold me tight. Please, I'm begging you." Leng Feifei's consciousness was very confused; as soon as Ling Chen pushed her away, she immediately pounced back on him, hugging him tightly, her breathing rapid and her skin covered in a fine sweat, as if she had a fever.

Ling Chen's heart was racing, but with his keen eyesight, after touching Leng Feifei's forehead and observing her expression, he quickly realized that Leng Feifei was probably drugged. The best way to save her was that thing. Looking at her attractive figure and listening to her enchanting murmurs, he almost lost control but knew better than to take advantage of someone in their vulnerable state and ruin the reputation of a fine young lady.

"What should I do?" he also became somewhat anxious.

Do not peep if it's immoral... Do not peep if it's immoral... Amitabha Buddha...

Ling Chen muttered to himself, holding his breath and concentrating, trying to calm himself down. Soon, he thought of a method that might work. He pushed Leng Feifei away and quickly entered the restroom. After a short while, he came out and then picked up Leng Feifei again, heading towards the restroom.

At that moment, the bathtub in the restroom was filled with cold water. Without hesitation, Ling Chen plunged Leng Feifei into it, pressing down firmly on her shoulders to prevent her from escaping.

After splashing around in the water for a bit, the flush on Leng Feifei's skin gradually faded, and she seemed to regain some consciousness.

"Feifei, Feifei, are you feeling any better?" After a while, seeing her looking somewhat more alert, Ling Chen couldn't help but feel relieved.

"Ling Chen..."

Leng Feifei looked at Ling Chen dazedly, responding weakly and appearing extremely frail. At the same time, her eyes brimmed with tears, a mix of pitifulness and joy. "It's really you, you came to rescue me. Tha-thank you."

Ling Chen asked with full concern, "Are you feeling better?"

Leng Feifei gently rubbed her forehead, biting her thin lips, her expression showing a hint of pain and discomfort. However, seeing her regaining consciousness, Ling Chen took a deep breath of relief.

At this point, Leng Feifei, soaking in the bathtub, noticed her disheveled clothes and her face flushed red.

Realizing that Ling Chen was still in front of her, her originally pale face suddenly bloomed with intoxicating blush, and she hurriedly covered her chest with her arms, concealing the exposed charms.

"Thank you!"

Ling Chen grinned and said, "What's there to thank for? You're my friend; helping you is only natural. Stay in there for a bit; I'll go find you some clothes." After speaking, Ling Chen turned around and exited the restroom.

Chapter 393 The Girl's Thoughts

A few minutes later, Leng Feifei, wrapped in a bathrobe, walked out of the restroom while drying her wet hair with a towel. She found the room empty—Ling Chen was nowhere to be seen; only a set of clothes remained on the bed.

Looking at the pink round bed and the array of sex toys around it, a flush of shame and anger briefly flashed through Leng Feifei's eyes. However, thinking back to what had happened between her and Ling Chen on the bed, she felt her face turning scarlet hot and her eyes filled with bashfulness.

She knew clearly that it was because she had been drugged, which caused her to act in such an embarrassing manner. But in her over twenty years of purity, she had not even held hands with a man, let alone have such an experience.

Just as she was thinking, the door was pushed open from the outside, and the person who entered was none other than Ling Chen.

Seeing the weary look on Ling Chen's face, Leng Feifei asked with concern, "Are you alright?"

"I'm fine," Ling Chen replied with a smile, secretly thinking to himself that it was no easy feat. To free the other women on the cargo ship from the control of the drugs and to bring them back to consciousness, he had nearly exhausted all his energy.

"Feifei, how did you fall into their hands?" Ling Chen asked.

"I had finished night self-study and was on my way back to the dormitory when a few youths stopped me. They used knockout drugs on me, took me into a car... after that, I'm not too clear on what happened. I was in a daze the whole time until I was brought here; only then did I regain some awareness." Having said this, Leng Feifei looked at Ling Chen curiously and asked, "How did you know I had been captured?"

"It was a coincidence," Ling Chen explained casually.

"I've already called the police, and they'll be arriving soon. You can go home after giving your statement to them," Ling Chen reminded her not to forget: "Be more careful in the future, try not to walk alone at night, as dangers are everywhere in society nowadays."

Feeling Ling Chen's concern, Leng Feifei felt a sweet warmth in her heart, as if she had tasted honey, and she nodded with a gentle smile, "I'll be careful."

During the conversation, Leng Feifei couldn't help but take a few more glances at Ling Chen.

She thought back to the last time in the mall when Qi Jianhui had stopped her, it was Ling Chen who had stepped in to help her out. Then, when she was almost violated by Zheng Guangwu, Ling Chen had also saved her at the critical moment, allowing her to avoid a calamity. And now, once again, it was Ling Chen who had courageously stepped forward to rescue her in her time of peril.

As an orphan who had suffered through painful foster homes, she thought she was all alone in the world. But the man before her seemed like her guardian angel, always appearing by her side when she needed help the most.

If it were just once, Leng Feifei wouldn't think too much of it, but this man had repeatedly come to her aid. She didn't believe it was coincidental, but rather a fateful encounter decreed by destiny.

With these thoughts, the way Leng Feifei looked at Ling Chen suddenly shifted with an unusual emotional flutter.

However, at this moment, Ling Chen hadn't noticed too much of that, his gaze constantly sweeping out the window, checking to see if Xia Mutong and the others had arrived.

Ten minutes later, Xia Mutong, having dealt with the casino incident, finally arrived at the port with a large entourage and an ambulance.

Along with Leng Feifei, there were a total of six girls who, with the aid of Ling Chen, were now safe and sound, shaken but with no other discomforts.

After handing the girls over to Xia Mutong, Ling Chen said goodbye to Leng Feifei and Xia Mutong and then drove back alone to Wealthy Manor.

Back at the Nanrong Family, Ling Chen didn't go straight to the villa but headed instead to the wooden-structured villa. This villa was once the residence of Nanrong Wanqing's parents, and since they had left home, it had been sealed up, with no one entering it since.

But not long ago, Ling Chen accidentally discovered that Mr. Yun's secret base was located in the basement of this villa. In order not to alarm the enemy, he had not taken any action but had been secretly surveilling the place.

Stepping into the pitch-dark villa, Ling Chen made his way to the basement with practiced ease.

In the brightly lit basement, several men were tied up, their mouths taped shut, and dumped in a corner.

On the other side, in front of a row of computer equipment, a chubby man was tapping away at the keyboard, his eyes fixated on the files flickering on the screen, his expression one of deep concentration.

"Chubby, you must be hungry. Have some late-night snacks first." Ling Chen put the fast-food box he was carrying onto the table and said.

Since escaping from the island, after deep consideration, Ling Chen decided to turn passivity into proactivity. However, to take the initiative, sufficient intelligence was necessary. Hence, he had discreetly taken control of this secret base and had Hu Fei come over to help gather information.

Hu Fei specialized in this line of work; he knew best which information was valuable.

Seeing the food, Hu Fei immediately abandoned his task at hand, opened a fast-food box, and began to wolf down the contents without any care for appearances.

Ling Chen knew Hu Fei had been exhausted these past few days. To gather more information before Mr. Yun discovered the exposure of this secret base, Hu Fei had barely rested, even developing dark circles under his eyes.

He opened a bottle of beverage and handed it to Hu Fei, asking, "Got any results yet?"

Hu Fei pointed to a computer against the wall and said, "That computer can connect to the God Organization's main server, but it needs a login password. I've asked those guys, and only Mr. Yun knows the password. I'm still trying to crack it. If all goes well, we should have results soon."

"Thanks for your hard work."

"Forget it." Hu Fei immediately waved his hand and said, "Please don't be polite to me. If you're too courteous, I'll feel too embarrassed to ask you for money."

"You rascal." Ling Chen couldn't help but shake his head with a mix of laughter and tears.

As they spoke, the computer suddenly beeped loudly. Hu Fei's eyes lit up. He threw aside the half-eaten fast-food box, hastily wiped the grease from the corner of his mouth, and rushed to the computer. Seeing the data displayed on the screen, he clapped his hands excitedly and exclaimed, "We're in!"

Ling Chen leaned over the computer screen, watching the scrolling folders, repressing the excitement in his heart and asked, "Can you copy them out?"

"Don't worry, I've been prepared for this." Saying that, Hu Fei plugged a USB drive into the computer tower and tapped the keyboard. Soon, a progress bar popped up on the screen.

However, the data on the God Organization's main server might have been too vast and the file sizes too large, several minutes passed, and the progress bar had only moved two percent. At this rate, it would take several hours to copy all the server's data.

Beep, beep-beep!

At that moment, an irritating alarm suddenly sounded from an external device connected to the computer tower, and a red warning light flashed without stopping.

"This is bad!"

Hu Fei's face changed, he frowned and said, "They've discovered us." Speaking, he furiously typed on the keyboard, his eyes glued to the rapidly switching data boxes on the screen, his expression grave.

Chapter 394 Invasion Failed

Ling Chen watched quietly from the side, not making a sound to disturb Hu Fei. Although he was also proficient with computers, he couldn't quite understand these advanced hacking techniques.

Two minutes passed, and a black box appeared in the center of the computer screen, with a line of red English letters on it.

"Damn! It's been locked." Hu Fei cursed loudly and quickly pulled the USB drive from the computer's main unit.

"Run!"

Watching Hu Fei sprinting frantically out of the basement, Ling Chen was puzzled but still followed closely behind. Just as they ran out of the basement, they heard a loud 'boom'—the powerful blast wave from the explosion crazily surged out from the entrance of the basement, throwing Ling Chen and Hu Fei into the air, and they heavily fell onto the floor.

"Fatty, are you alright?"

"I won't die." Hu Fei, rubbing his sore shoulder, grimaced in pain.

Ling Chen coughed twice, waved his arms to disperse the surrounding dust, stood up from the ground, and then returned to the basement.

Under the destructive power of the explosion, all the equipment in the basement was destroyed, and several men who had been tied up with ropes were lying scattered around, already showing no signs of life.

Ling Chen was inwardly shocked; had it not been for Hu Fei's timely warning, they would have both died there.

"Who's there? Don't move!"

At this moment, a burst of angry shouting came from above. Ling Chen recognized it as Zhong Wei's voice and, fearing a misunderstanding, hurriedly went upstairs, only to see Zhong Wei and several others surrounding Hu Fei.

"Captain Zhong, don't be hasty, we are all on the same side, it's alright."

"You're here too?"

Seeing Ling Chen appear, Zhong Wei glanced at Hu Fei, slightly relaxing his vigilance, and waved for Liang Zhao Hui and the others to step back, asking, "Ling Chen, what happened?"

"It's hard to explain in a few words, it was probably an accidental explosion. Captain Zhong, please go explain to Wanqing and the old master, tell them not to worry, I will handle things here."

"Do you want me to call the police?"

"No need, you all go rest, I'll take care of this."

Hearing this, Zhong Wei clearly understood what Ling Chen meant. There must have been something going on in the basement, but Ling Chen didn't want others to know.

In the past, Zhong Wei wouldn't have let Ling Chen get away with such an explanation so easily. But things were different now; Ling Chen's relationship with Nanrong Wanqing was no secret among them. Besides, after having experienced so many things together, Zhong Wei trusted Ling Chen a lot.

Seeing him say this, Zhong Wei tactfully did not pursue the matter further and left with his team.

During this time, Nanrong Wanqing, Su Lin, Nanrong Hao, and Liu Kun all came to inquire about the situation, but Ling Chen sent them all back.

Taking advantage of the dark, Ling Chen and Hu Fei secretly transported the bodies out of the basement, placed them in the trunk of the car, and prepared to find a secluded place to bury them.

As the car drove out of Wealthy Manor, Ling Chen, who was driving, asked, "Fatty, is there any way to hack into their servers?"

Hu Fei shook his head, "No, that computer main unit had special hardware installed, so it could access the God Organization's servers. Other computers won't work." After a pause, with a grave expression, Hu Fei said, "Those guys are really something, they even installed a self-destruction program in the equipment. If it weren't for my high vigilance, we both could've been done for."

"So we've been busy for nothing?"

"I copied a small part of the data onto the USB, but it was damaged by their remote code. I'll try to fix that data when I get back."

"I'll leave this matter to you then."

After handling everything, Ling Chen dropped Hu Fei off at his home, then returned to Wealthy Manor.

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The next day.

Since it was Saturday, Nanrong Wanqing didn't have to work, and Ling Chen spent his time at home watching the news on TV.

The incident at the casino last night had been exposed, and all the major television stations were reporting on it, highly praising the police's actions.

However, Ling Chen was not concerned about that but rather whether the people behind the casino had been caught.

Until now, Xia Mutong hadn't called him, probably indicating no progress.

"Brother Chen."

At that moment, Nanrong Hao's voice came from the doorway. Ling Chen, sitting on the living room sofa, turned his head, seeing Nanrong Hao waving at him, signaling him to come over.

"What is it? Sneaking around, why can't you talk inside the house?" Ling Chen said as he walked over.

Nanrong Hao sheepishly touched his head, "Isn't it because I was afraid my sister would hear. Just now, Xiong called and asked us to come over, saying there's something to discuss."

Ling Chen nodded, "Then let's go." Even if Nanrong Hao didn't say it, he could guess that Zhao Zhengxiong wanted them over probably concerning the people in North City District.

Half an hour later, Ling Chen and Nanrong Hao drove to a courier company in Old City.

To be honest, Ling Chen was still unclear about why Nanrong Hao and his group ran so many courier companies. From what Nanrong Hao and Jiang Hao said, their purpose for setting up courier companies was not just to make money or run a legitimate business but had a greater scheme in mind.

Yet, Ling Chen could never understand what role a courier company could play. Every time this matter was mentioned, Nanrong Hao and his group were always secretive and unwilling to elaborate.

Upon entering the office, Zhao Zhengxiong and Jiang Hao were present, while Jiang Yunkai was busy managing the security company and rarely interfered with matters in Old City.

Ling Chen patted Jiang Hao's shoulder, asking with concern, "Has your injury healed?"

Jiang Hao smiled, "It's already scarred over. The doctor said it's nothing serious, just that it will leave some scars in the future."

"A man with more scars is a real man, look at me." Zhao Zhengxiong rolled up his sleeve, revealing the knife scars on his arm, proudly saying, "I was the one who dared to fight, that's why I could become the boss."

Ling Chen jokingly teased, "Haozi, did you hear that? The four of us, only you don't have scars, seems you're not a real man."

Nanrong Hao nonchalantly said, "What's the big deal, as long as you're a real man in bed, that's enough."

This immediately drew hearty laughter from Jiang Hao and the others.

"Alright, alright, no more jokes," Zhao Zhengxiong put away his smile and said, "Let's talk business, I believe everyone knows about what happened last night. As far as I know, the police, after an overnight interrogation, pulled out a few people, but they were just insignificant small fries, specifically used as scapegoats. The big shots in North City District didn't even scratch a bit, still living freely without a care. I originally wanted to use this opportunity to suppress the influence of North City District a bit, but looking at the current situation, this operation didn't really hurt them."

Nanrong Hao asked, "Xiong, are you thinking of taking them down all at once?"

"Not really, we don't have enough resources to swallow them up yet. However, we need to figure out a way to control their expansion. Otherwise, once they grow stronger, it will be troublesome to deal with them later."

Chapter 395 Confidential Documents

Ling Chen nodded and said, "Xiong's concerns are valid; we indeed need to consider this issue."

Zhao Zhengxiong said, "I've made a rough estimate. Those people in the North City District have been running gambling operations, trafficking drugs, and other illicit activities for over a week. Although it hasn't been long, during this time, they have earned at least around twenty million."

"That much?" Nanrong Hao exclaimed in surprise.

"It's not a lot." Ling Chen explained, "Whether it's the casino or drugs, both are highly profitable, a sure win without any loss. Besides, the people in North City District now control three districts, the market is huge, so it's not surprising they made this much in a short time."

"That's right," Zhao Zhengxiong continued, "The casino has already been shut down by the police, but the drug trade in North City District is still ongoing. If we can't cut off their source of funds, they'll only make more money and expand their influence faster. By that time, it might not be a question of whether we can take them down; they might turn around and bite us instead."

Ling Chen looked at Zhao Zhengxiong and Jiang Hao, giving a slight smile, "Since you've considered this aspect, I presume you already have a solution."

Jiang Hao nodded and said, "Brother Chen, the best way is to cut off their supply. Xiong and I have already found their source of goods, but they are cunning, changing locations for each transaction. By the time we get there, they've already completed the deal, and we can't find either the people or the goods. However, thanks to the insider Xiong planted, we've got the exact location of the next deal. Brother Chen, I know you have a good relationship with Officer Xia, so we'd like to ask for your help."

Ling Chen readily agreed, "No problem. Just give me the location of the transaction, and I'll have Officer Xia take people to set up an ambush in advance."

"This..." Jiang Hao hesitated, glancing at Zhao Zhengxiong with an expression that seemed he had more to say but was holding back.

Seeing this, Ling Chen spoke with dissatisfaction, "What, is there something you can't say in front of me?"

"It's not that," Zhao Zhengxiong explained, "In our plan, the police are the last link. If they show up too early, then our plan will be useless."

Ling Chen, full of interest, asked, "What plan?"

Then, Jiang Hao detailed the plan he and Zhao Zhengxiong had come up with. After Ling Chen listened to it, Jiang Hao spoke nervously, "Brother Chen, I know you don't support us doing illegal activities, but... if we do this, not only would the police benefit, but we could profit as well, so..."

"Are you worried I wouldn't agree?" Ling Chen smiled and waved his hand, "You're overthinking it. I'm not so rigid. How could I refuse such a win-win proposition? Both of you are clever, coming up with such an idea. Okay, I agree. Just go ahead with it, and I'll handle the police."

After speaking, Ling Chen stood up, "If there's nothing else, I'll head back first. Call me if there's anything."

"Brother Chen, that..." Nanrong Hao gazed eagerly at Ling Chen, wringing his hands non-stop with a fawning smile on his face.

Ling Chen glanced at him, fully understanding his intention, and said helplessly, "Alright then, you stay here and act with them. Be safe."

"Thank you, Brother Chen!" Nanrong Hao's face lit up with excitement.

Leaving the courier company, Ling Chen got into the car, ready to return to Wealthy Manor. But at that moment, he suddenly received a call from Hu Fei.

"Hello! Ling Chen, are you free? I've repaired part of the data from last night. Do you want to come and look at it?"

"For something like this, even if I'm not free, I'll make time. Tell me, where shall we meet?"

"The usual place; Old Liu has already prepared the fish hotpot."

"Wait for me, I'll be there shortly."

After hanging up the phone, Ling Chen immediately started the car and drove towards the restaurant where he often met with Hu Fei. The documents concerning the secrets of the God Organization were urgent in Ling Chen's heart.

It took less than twenty minutes on the road for Ling Chen to arrive in front of the restaurant.

Knocking on the door, it opened to reveal Boss Liu, his face waxen yellow and skin slightly dark, immediately appeared before Ling Chen.

"Mr. Ling, welcome, come in, please!" Boss Liu said with a smile, ushering Ling Chen inside.

Ling Chen politely greeted Boss Liu and then walked into the private room.

The small room was steamy and stuffy, with the buzz of an old exhaust fan that was barely effective. In a corner, Hu Fei, having taken off his coat, was enjoying a fish hotpot with relish.

"Eat, don't be shy."

"Cut it out. I'm not like you, eating this early, lunchtime isn't even here yet. Enough chit-chat, hurry up and hand over the data you've repaired."

"I went back last night and didn't sleep all night, been busy with your thing, man, and not even a word of thanks from you," Hu Fei complained, but he still handed over the already prepared file folder.

Ling Chen couldn't wait to tear open the folder and pulled out a stack of documents from inside.

After skimming through, Ling Chen immediately noticed a problem. The information recorded in these documents were all about the past operations of the God Organization, several years old, and essentially worthless.

"Fatty, is there no useful intelligence?"

"Don't rush, look carefully, there will definitely be information that interests you."

Hearing this, Ling Chen patiently continued to read through the documents in his hands. Ten or so minutes passed, his eyebrows slightly furrowed. Ignorance was bliss, the more he read, the more alarmed he became.

All along, Ling Chen's understanding of the God Organization was based on objective knowledge. However, through the recorded content in these documents, he gained a more direct understanding of how colossal the God Organization was.

If there was one thing to describe the God Organization, it would be a sprawling, towering tree. Not only possessing an unshakable foundation, but its branches were also extensive, reaching into various industries and countries.

According to the information provided, in the past decade, more than forty significant incidents around the world had the shadow of the God Organization behind them.

Each incident was meticulously planned, causing huge impacts on international society, directly affecting the political and business circles of various countries.

At this moment, Ling Chen finally understood that what made the God Organization truly frightening was not the overt things, but the secret, unknown mysterious forces behind the scenes.

It was just that the infiltration of the God Organization into Huaxia had just begun, which is why it hadn't seemed so terrifying.

In his shock, Ling Chen's gaze was suddenly captured by a piece of information in his hands.

There was a black-and-white photo attached to that document, and Ling Chen recognized the person in the picture at a glance.

Little Hua!

Not only that, but the word 'Top Secret' was also annotated next to the photo.

The identity of Little Hua had always been a mystery. Ling Chen had questioned He Ziyun about it more than once, but sadly never received an answer. Unexpectedly, there was a record of Little Hua in this data.

Thinking this, Ling Chen immediately opened the documents and began to carefully read through them.

Chapter 396 Little Hua's Secret (Part 1)

After reading about Little Hua's background, Ling Chen's heart struggled to calm down for a long time. He never expected Little Hua to have such a hidden past.

"Have you finished reading the girl's information?" Noticing Ling Chen's dazed expression, Hu Fei put down his chopsticks, wiped his greasy lips, and smacked his mouth, saying, "I was just as shocked as you when I first read it. I couldn't believe that such people existed in the world. Truly, the Great Thousand World is full of wonders. Eh! If I remember correctly, you seem to know that little girl, right?"

Ling Chen nodded and stood up, saying, "Enjoy your meal, I'm not going to join you."

"Hey! You're not planning to go find that little girl, are you?" Hu Fei hastily followed him out of the private room, catching up to Ling Chen's steps and saying, "Considering all the hard work I've put in, take me with you. As long as you bring me, we'll call it even for all the compensation you owe me."

Hu Fei made the offer with a painful heart. He had no choice since, like Ling Chen, his heart couldn't stay calm after reading Little Hua's information last night. Overwhelmed by intense curiosity, he was desperate to know the secrets related to Little Hua.

Ling Chen stopped walking, looked at Hu Fei, and said, "You need to think this through. Little Hua is someone the God Organization closely watches, and they will make a move on her sooner or later. Moreover, if the people from the God Organization find out you know Little Hua's secret, they won't let you off easily. As a friend, I advise you to consider it carefully. If you choose to go with me, you will be standing against the God Organization from now on."

Hearing this, Hu Fei suddenly hesitated, rubbing his round belly as he pondered. After a while, he cursed under his breath and looked up, saying, "Hell, I'm already on your crooked boat, and there's no escape now. Let's go find that little girl."

Seeing Hu Fei's determination, Ling Chen smiled without saying much more, and the two of them left the restaurant side by side.

Not long after, Ling Chen and Hu Fei drove straight to the Qingyun Martial Arts Hall.

When they knocked on the door of the Martial Arts Academy, Little Hua, with a pouty face, opened the door and said unhappily, "Big brother, you don't like Little Hua anymore, you haven't come to see me in so long."

Ling Chen touched Little Hua's head and smiled, saying, "I've been busy."

"Hmph! You're just making excuses." Little Hua muttered, her big round eyes examining Hu Fei as she asked, "Big brother, who is this fat guy?"

"My name is Hu Fei, a friend of your big brother," Hu Fei said with a smile, "You can just call me Fatty."

Little Hua showed little interest in Hu Fei, wrapping her arms around Ling Chen's arms and saying, "Big brother, you're late. Xiaozhu returned to Beijing a couple of days ago."

At the mention of Zhu Xiaozhu, Ling Chen's expression stiffened, and he looked somewhat uneasy. Back on the island, Ling Chen had killed Reylov and detonated the island's bomb, destroying the entire island. With such terrifying destructive force, it was almost impossible for Zhu Hong to survive.

Therefore, Zhu Hong's death was definitely on his conscience.

If Zhu Xiaozhu knew about this, Ling Chen could hardly imagine what she might do; she probably would not deal with him for a lifetime.

With a silent sigh, Ling Chen pushed aside his mixed emotions, composed himself, and asked, "Where's Mr. He?"

"Master is inside. Big brother, do you have business with him?"

Seeing Ling Chen nod, Little Hua immediately pouted and said discontentedly, "I knew it, big brother didn't come specifically for me. Hmph! You go find Master yourself; I'm not playing with you anymore."

Little Hua shook her hands, swishing her braids, and ran off huffily into the bedroom.

Ling Chen laughed bitterly; this little girl was already so grown up yet still so childish.

Entering the main hall of the Martial Arts Academy, he saw He Ziyun dressed in a Qing dynasty outfit, sitting on the ground in the manner of the ancients, holding a Sanskrit scripture.

As Ling Chen and Hu Fei entered, He Ziyun had already put down the scripture and stood up.

"Mr. He, sorry to disturb you. This is my friend, Hu Fei."

He Ziyun gave a faint smile, "I know who he is. Guests are always welcome, please have a seat."

Hu Fei looked at He Ziyun, puzzled as to how he knew him. With his doubt lingering, he sat down with Ling Chen, quietly waiting for Ling Chen to speak.

"Did you come to see me about something?"

Ling Chen handed over a document bag he was carrying to He Ziyun, saying, "Mr. He, I have some information here. Please take a look before we discuss."

He Ziyun pulled out the documents, and after just one glance, a ripple disturbed his normally tranquil, wrinkled face. Lifting his head, he didn't continue reading but placed the documents aside and asked, "Where did you get this information from?"

Ling Chen was forthright, explaining the process of hacking into the main server of the God Organization.

"You're here to clear up Little Hua's identity?"

"Yes," Ling Chen didn't beat around the bush; he was eager to know the truth.

He Ziyun reflected for a moment, sighed, and nodded, "All right. I was considering telling you later, but since you're asking now, I might as well reveal the events of that year. However..." He Ziyun glanced at Hu Fei, asking, "Are you sure you want him to know?"

"The Fatty has also seen that information; he is a trustworthy person."

Seeing Ling Chen vouch for Hu Fei, He Ziyun asked no more. Leaning against the chair, his gaze fell on the leaves fluttering outside the hall, seemingly immersed in the memories of the past.

"This matter goes back decades. At that time, I was the founder of the Ghost organization, leading its members to destroy the God Organization's secret bases one by one, suppressing their influence. The God Organization is a very formidable opponent, and it took us nearly twenty years to find their stronghold and the identity of their mysterious leader."

"When we arrived at that secret base, we arrested or killed all the base members, but unfortunately, the God Organization's mysterious leader fled in a panic with the help of others and also initiated the base's self-destruct mechanism. We were planning to evacuate according to the plan, but a Ghost member involved in the operation discovered an ongoing experiment in the base. Although the base's staff were dead or had fled, the experiment had already started and was in its final stage."

"All along, we didn't know the real purpose of the God Organization. So, with the last few minutes before the self-destruct sequence began, I decided to stay behind to find out while the others evacuated first. With two minutes left on the self-destruct timer, the experiment finally completed. As five

experimental chambers opened, I discovered that each chamber contained a child, both boys and girls, around the ages of four to five."

"Little Hua was one of them?" Ling Chen asked.

Chapter 397 Little Hua's Secret (Part 2)

"Not bad," He Ziyun continued, "Among the five children who participated in the experiment, only Little Hua survived. The other four lost their lives due to various reasons. Given the urgency of the situation at the time, I had no time to delve deeper into the experiment; I could only take Little Hua and escape from the base first. Later, I took Little Hua to the headquarters of the Ghosts. To conceal her identity and avoid the curious eyes of others, I publicly declared her as my disciple."

"In the years following that event, we never gave up on the search for the God Organization, relentlessly pursuing them until, five years later, we received news of the mysterious leader's serious illness and subsequent death. With his demise, the remnants of the God Organization's influence splintered immediately. Having worn myself out after all these years and having Little Hua by my side, I let Qiao Zhen take over my position to continue the legacy of the Ghosts. After leaving the Ghosts, I brought Little Hua here to East Sea City alone and opened this Martial Arts Academy, hoping to settle down. However, as the old saying goes, 'If you don't remove the roots when cutting grass, the spring breeze will bring it back to life.' I never expected that after so many years, the God Organization would rise from the ashes again."

After listening to He Ziyun's story, Ling Chen exhaled deeply, digesting the shock in his heart.

"Mr. He, so that means Little Hua's age..."

He Ziyun chuckled, "Don't be fooled by her child-like appearance; she's actually in her twenties, both mentally and by age."

So that was it!

Ling Chen suddenly realized why the little girl was so cunning and full of tricky ideas—it was because she had the mind of an adult.

To think that he had been so deceived by Little Hua's adorable exterior for so long.

Hu Fei couldn't help but ask, "If she's in her twenties, why hasn't her body grown at all? Could it be a congenital form of dwarfism?"

"No," He Ziyun shook his head. "I have had her examined, and her body is very healthy, not at all like the dwarfism you're talking about. More importantly, the cells in Little Hua's body continue to remain active. Even though her age keeps increasing, her cells have not shown any signs of change. In a regular person, cells would age over time, but this phenomenon hasn't occurred with Little Hua. Therefore, I believe it has something to do with the original experiment."

Ling Chen didn't quite grasp the profound bio-technological aspects, but felt it was very complex. Just like He Ziyun had said, Little Hua's current condition was indeed likely linked to that past experiment.

"Mr. He, if it's all from several decades ago, why won't the God Organization let go?"

"Although the previous leader of the God Organization passed away, there must be others who are aware. There were five children involved in the experiment, and I only took Little Hua. After the secret base was destroyed, they would have certainly searched the scene and found the bodies of the other four children. Not finding the fifth child's corpse would have naturally led them to suspect us. If that experiment was vital to them, they would spare no effort to seek out Little Hua and me. Recently, Zhu Hong was sent to East Sea City, presumably for our sake."

Ling Chen furrowed his brow slightly, "If that's the case, the God Organization probably won't give up easily."

"There's no need to worry too much right now," He Ziyun said. "Their repeated actions have all ended in failure. As long as they know I'm guarding Little Hua, they wouldn't dare to act rashly unless they're confident that they can deal with me."

"Mr. He, though you say that, you still need to be careful. The enhanced drugs developed by the God Organization are very powerful. I've experienced them a few times myself, and..."

He Ziyun cut Ling Chen off with a smile, waving his hand, "You worry too much. No matter how powerful the enhancement drugs are, they're ultimately just a means of forcibly tapping into human potential through biotechnology. In the eyes of us Martial Artists, such methods are not advisable. The unlocking

of potential must be approached scientifically and progressively, not overnight. Otherwise, the more often enhancement drugs are used, the greater the harm to the body. When I clashed with the God Organization back then, they had already developed enhancement drugs. To my knowledge, anyone who has taken enhancement drugs doesn't live past thirty. Despite improvements to the drugs by the God Organization over the years, reducing side effects, the harm to the human body cannot be ignored. Therefore, in the eyes of people like us, enhancement drugs are not worth mentioning, an underhanded tactic."

With that said, He Ziyun changed the subject and continued, "Ling Chen, I know you're busy, but don't neglect your Martial Arts studies for that. Martial Arts Training requires perseverance and must not be taken lightly. At your young age, it's commendable that you've reached the Tiger List, but don't become complacent. In the vast land of Huaxia, there are countless hidden dragons and crouching tigers; the Heaven and Earth Dragon and Tiger Four Rankings do not represent all Martial Artists. On the contrary, the most formidable existences are those you cannot see. Remember, each era has its own prodigies that shine for a few hundred years. Among the current younger generation, there are certainly more than one leading figure apart from you. With your current status, you will definitely have more opportunities to engage with this world. Before that, you must be prepared."

Ling Chen took He Ziyun's earnest advice to heart, knowing that there must be a reason for such caution.

"Mr. He, don't worry, I will work hard."

He Ziyun nodded with satisfaction, "Now that you know about Little Hua's identity, I hope you keep it to yourselves. I will ensure her safety, and if anything unexpected happens, I'll seek your help."

After their chat with He Ziyun, Ling Chen and Hu Fei didn't stay long. Their main reason for coming was to understand Little Hua's identity. Now that their curiosity was satisfied, there was no need to linger.

Before leaving, Ling Chen had intended to greet Little Hua, but upon remembering her true age, he immediately abandoned the idea. For the moment, he wasn't sure how to face Little Hua.

Returning to Wealthy Manor, Ling Chen still had Little Hua on his mind.

"Ling Chen... hey! Ling Chen!"

Hearing the voice next to him, Ling Chen turned his head and saw Su Lin pouting and walking over with a displeased face, saying annoyed, "What are you thinking about? I called you several times without a response. Don't tell me you've been enchanted by another beauty?"

Ling Chen came back to his senses and grinned, "Look at what you're saying, there's no one more beautiful than you."

Hearing Ling Chen's flattery, Su Lin's heart fluttered with joy, and with a coquettish glance, she said melodically, "Don't let your girlfriend hear that, or she might get jealous."

"It's fine; Wanqing isn't that petty."

Chapter 398 The Young Expert

While speaking, Ling Chen sized up Su Lin, only to see that the young lady was dressed in a light-colored coat, with black stockings paired with a short skirt, and a pair of boots. Her delicate face was adorned with light makeup and a touch of eyeshadow, which made her already stunning beauty even more captivating and irresistible.

Tsk tsk!

"Dressing up so prettily, are you planning to meet a man?" Ling Chen teased with a smile.

"Not at all." Su Lin's pretty face blushed as she explained, "We have a classmate gathering today. In a few days, we'll start our internships, so there won't be many chances to meet afterward. That's why everyone decided to get together in advance."

"Where are you guys gathering?"

"At the pub."

"Why go to a place like that? You are all students; be careful not to get into trouble outside."

"Ah, what's there to be afraid of? It's not just us girls, the boys will be there too."

So, there are boys joining in.

Ling Chen nodded, feeling relieved, and said, "Then have fun."

...

Night fell.

After having dinner, Ling Chen received a phone call from Nanrong Hao.

"Chen, have you got everything arranged at your end? We are about to start the operation."

"Are you still worried about how I handle things? I've already notified them. Just be careful on your end; don't let anything unexpected happen." Ling Chen hadn't forgotten the plan Zhao Zhengxiong and the others had made; tonight was the time to act.

After hanging up, Nanrong Wanqing, who was sitting next to him, asked, "What did Nanrong Hao want from you?"

"It's nothing." Fearing that Nanrong Wanqing would worry, Ling Chen dared not tell her. After hesitating for a moment, he stood up and said, "You get some rest early. I have some errands to run and will be back soon."

Although he had advised Nanrong Hao and the others to be careful, Ling Chen still felt uneasy. This was not something to be taken lightly. One slip-up could mean losing lives. For safety's sake, he decided it was better to go and see for himself, to prevent any accidents.

Leaving Wealthy Manor, Ling Chen drove his car straight to the destination. During the call with Nanrong Hao, he had already obtained the address. In less than twenty minutes, Ling Chen arrived at the trading location.

He parked the car on the side of the road, turned off the engine, and looked out through the window. Beside the road was an open-air parking lot with forty or fifty cars, and there weren't many people around.

With his sharp eyes, Ling Chen noticed two vans parked not far away. The tires of the vans were heavily compressed, indicating that there were many people inside. Without a second thought, it was clear that these were the people Zhao Zhengxiong had lain in ambush.

Ling Chen had not planned to show himself during this evening's operation. He would not appear unless something unexpected happened. Some matters needed to be handled by Zhao Zhengxiong and the others themselves; they couldn't rely on him every time. His idea was to cultivate Zhao Zhengxiong and Jiang Hao into figures who could stand on their own.

More than ten minutes had passed, and at exactly nine o'clock, a van drove up from the intersection and entered the parking lot.

When the van came to a stop, the driver's side door opened, and a young man stepped out, cautiously looking around to ensure no suspicious individuals were present before quickly walking away. However, the youth did not go far; he walked up to a Chevrolet sedan in the parking lot, opened the rear passenger door, and got into the car. The Chevrolet was parked so that its front faced the van's position, giving a clear view and an excellent vantage point for surveillance.

Not long after, a Hyundai sedan drove into the parking lot and pulled up beside the Chevrolet.

The car window rolled down, and a tattooed arm holding a hefty backpack reached out from inside the car, which was immediately grabbed by someone from the Chevrolet.

It was easy to guess that the backpack was surely filled with the money for the trade.

A moment later, the person inside the Chevrolet gestured an 'OK' sign with his hand. Then, the sedan started its engine and drove straight out of the parking lot. At the same time, a man got out of the Hyundai and hurried towards the van.

It was time to make a move!

Watching this scene unfold, Ling Chen thought to himself.

True enough, more than a dozen people swiftly emerged from the two parked vans by the roadside, armed with sticks and machetes, closing in on the van from four different directions. Simultaneously, two minivans drove up from the intersection, blocking the entrance and exit of the parking lot, leaving no way out for the van.

Not bad!

A slight smile formed on the corners of Ling Chen's lips.

Zhao Zhengxiong's arrangements were meticulous, they sealed the net first and then slowly caught the small fish.

"Get down!"

Very soon, Zhao Zhengxiong's dozen or so subordinates had surrounded the van and the Hyundai sedan. A young man wielding a baseball bat viciously smashed the car window and shouted, "Everyone get the hell out!"

There was no resistance, people from both cars obediently got out, hands over their heads, squatting on the ground.

At this moment, Zhao Zhengxiong, Nanrong Hao, and Jiang Hao walked in from outside the parking lot, headed straight to the van, and signaled their subordinates with a glance to open the cargo box.

Seeing this, Ling Chen smirked, pressed the start button, and started the car.

By this step, there was no need to continue watching. The drugs had been successfully intercepted, and it was time to execute the next plan.

However, just as Ling Chen was getting ready to leave, a sudden change occurred in the parking lot.

As the cargo box was opened, what appeared before Zhao Zhengxiong and the others was not drugs, but over twenty youths holding machetes.

"Kill them."

With that angry shout, the twenty or so knife-wielding youths immediately surged out of the cargo box, faces fierce, crazily slashing towards Zhao Zhengxiong and the others.

"Fuck off!" Nanrong Hao reacted the fastest, cursing loudly as he kicked the leading youth to the ground.

However, after taking Nanrong Hao's kick, the youth seemed to be fine, quickly getting up from the ground and continuing to charge at them with his knife.

"Damn! He's not even fazed."

Nanrong Hao cursed, while retreating backward under the cover of his subordinates. At this moment, Jiang Hao suddenly noticed that the youths were all dressed in very thick clothes, as if they had cotton stuffed inside their clothes.

No wonder!

This would definitely enhance their resistance to blows, it appeared these people were well-prepared.

"Xiong, you guys retreat first, we'll hold them back."

Zhao Zhengxiong coldly said, "What's there to fear, they have knives, we have knives too, let's fight them. I want to see how fast their knives really are."

Just as everyone was preparing to clash head-on, suddenly three or four dozen people emerged around the parking lot, all wielding clubs and knives.

Sitting in the car, Ling Chen's expression suddenly changed when he saw this scene.

This was the contingency that he had feared.

The opposition was overwhelming in numbers, and Ling Chen, worried for Nanrong Hao and the others' safety, hurriedly pushed open the car door and rushed towards the parking lot.

But at that moment, a sharp glint of cold light suddenly struck, aimed directly at Ling Chen's neck.

Caught off guard, Ling Chen's heart sank, his body quickly responded, his steps rapidly retreating backward, narrowly avoiding the deadly attack of that cold light.

"Who's there?"

His words had barely fallen when a figure suddenly appeared before Ling Chen. To be precise, a youth of a similar age to him.

The youth held a steel knife, his build tall and robust, with sword-like eyebrows and starry eyes, handsome features, and a few strands of hair falling on his forehead, fluttering in the wind, inadvertently revealing the cold, sharp light in his eyes.

Ling Chen frowned and watched the other party, on high alert.

Judging solely by that lightning-fast strike just now, this youth was definitely a master among masters.

Could this person be related to the thugs in North City District?

Impossible!

Ling Chen dismissed his own guess. A master like this would not stoop to fraternize with thugs.

With this thought, he asked, "Who are you?"

Chapter 399 There is Always Someone Better

The youth coldly stared at Ling Chen, his sharp steel knife slightly tilted, ready to strike at any moment.

Ling Chen slightly frowned, "Not talking, or can't talk? Mute?"

"Hand over the Tianling Blade," the youth squeezed the words through his teeth, each word icy cold, like the chill wind of the twelfth lunar month, chilling to the bone.

Tianling Blade?

Ling Chen was momentarily taken aback, quickly realizing that the youth had come for the Tianling Blade.

"Are you a disciple of the Dangyang Sect?"

"My name is Yi Shuiyan, Qin Wu is my junior sister."

Ling Chen's lips curved slightly, finally clarifying the other's identity. However, Ling Chen was puzzled why the Dangyang Sect was repeatedly trying to acquire the Tianling Blade—could the item really hold extraordinary significance for them?

After careful study, he concluded that the Tianling Blade was merely a finely-crafted weapon and nothing more. He couldn't understand why the Dangyang Sect was so fixated on it, relentlessly trying to obtain it.

In the end, the Tianling Blade was just a weapon. If the Dangyang Sect had approached him politely and respectfully, he might have been happy to give it to them out of goodwill, as he believed having more

friends was better than having more enemies. However, the Dangyang Sect did not treat him with courtesy and instead constantly opposed him.

Just now, Yi Shuiyan's strike was clearly meant to kill. Had Ling Chen not reacted promptly, he would have already become a corpse.

Seeing Ling Chen deep in thought and not responding, Yi Shuiyan with the steel knife in hand, stepped closer, coldly saying, "I know you are one of the Eight Eccentrics and also a high-ranking expert on the Tiger List. But, without the other Eccentrics by your side, I want to see if you truly deserve your place on the Tiger List."

Seeing Yi Shuiyan approaching with the knife, Ling Chen immediately drew out Wolf Kiss and held it across his chest to guard against Yi Shuiyan's attack.

However, looking at Yi Shuiyan's three-foot-long steel knife and then at his own Wolf Kiss, which was less than ten centimeters long, Ling Chen suddenly felt things were not fair.

As the saying goes, an inch longer is an inch stronger. Yi Shuiyan's weapon undoubtedly had a significant advantage.

As he pondered, Yi Shuiyan increased his speed, raised the steel knife high, jumped up without any fancy moves, and swung it hard down at him.

The wind from the blade attacked his face; Ling Chen quickly focused, retreating while lifting Wolf Kiss to meet the blade. When Wolf Kiss touched the blade, he immediately felt an overwhelming force, nearly causing the Wolf Kiss to fly out of his hand.

Fortunately, Ling Chen was prepared. As the blade pressed down, he twisted his wrist, allowing Wolf Kiss to slide closely past the blade, bending slightly at the waist to dissipate some of the force.

As soon as the blade came down, Ling Chen had already moved out of the steel knife's strike range. Seeing the sharp tip of the knife slicing past his forehead, Ling Chen's eyes narrowed, he drew a breath, and lunged forward to close the distance between them.

Based on his rich experience, Ling Chen knew that Yi Shuiyan had a significant advantage with his weapon, and only by fighting at close range could he turn his passive position into an active one and control the effectiveness of the steel knife.

A sudden assault halted Yi Shuiyan's momentum, forcing him to retreat several steps with Wolf Kiss.

However, Ling Chen had underestimated the youth before him. As Qin Wu's senior brother, Yi Shuiyan did not lack practical experience like Qin Wu. On the contrary, his agile footwork and anticipatory movements showed that Yi Shuiyan's skills were proportional to his experience.

Just these two aspects alone made him a troublesome opponent.

Ling Chen wielded Wolf Kiss, his expression gradually tensing. His several tricky moves were easily neutralized by Yi Shuiyan, and even though he had taken the initiative, he hadn't gained any advantage.

While deep in thought, a sudden flash of blade light appeared before his eyes. Yi Shuiyan flicked his wrist and the steel blade swung past him like a windmill. Ling Chen, without a word, immediately retracted his move and pulled back his extended arms.

"Tiger List rank five, that's all the skill you have?"

Yi Shuiyan looked up at Ling Chen with a slanted gaze, his eyes filled with sarcasm and disdain.

"The discernment of Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is really declining, even someone like you made the list. You had just used all your strength, while I only exerted sixty percent of my power. Hand over the Tianling Blade, and I shall spare your life."

After hearing Yi Shuiyan's words, Ling Chen's pupils tightened, his eyes revealing a hint of shock. He had thought that Yi Shuiyan's strength was comparable to his own, but only now did he realize that the opponent had always been hiding his true power.

He probably didn't even deem it necessary to use his full strength against him.

With that thought, Ling Chen suddenly felt underestimated and was quite unhappy. However, despite his annoyance, he had to admit that Yi Shuiyan was indeed very strong. He had always considered himself among the best of his generation, yet only after witnessing the impressive power of Yi Shuiyan did he realize he had been seeing the sky from the bottom of a well.

There's always someone better.

At this moment, Ling Chen finally understood the words He Ziyun had told him today at Qingyun Martial Arts Hall.

"The Tianling Blade, hand it over!" Yi Shuiyan's expression was icy, his tone revealing impatience.

Facing his sharp gaze, Ling Chen's lips curved slightly, and his expression gradually returned to calm. Lightly he said, "Sorry, I've always preferred the carrot over the stick. If you want the Tianling Blade, you'll have to take it with your skills."

"Courting death!" Yi Shuiyan shouted angrily. With a light tap of his toe, his body moved like a swift breeze, instantly nearing Ling Chen, swinging his blade furiously.

Sensing the fierce wind from the blade, Ling Chen's eyes widened and his mind was greatly shaken.

Fast, so fast!

The speed at which Yi Shuiyan struck was almost beyond the eye's ability to discern.

Within the cold blade light, Ling Chen only saw a blurry shadow of the blade coming directly at him, unstoppable, and a strong sense of crisis instantly filled his mind.

Unable to react in time, driven by instinct, Ling Chen hurriedly lifted his sword "Wolf Kiss", swinging it overhead.

Clang!

With a crisp sound, a powerful force, like a surging tide, fiercely assaulted him. Ling Chen's legs immediately lost balance, and he kept retreating until his back hit a utility pole on the roadside, where he barely managed to steady himself.

At this moment, Ling Chen frowned tightly, his face somewhat pale, his right arm trembling slightly, his tiger's mouth numb, and his whole arm felt weak and powerless.

Fast, accurate, ruthless!

The three essential elements of sword techniques were perfectly demonstrated by Yi Shuiyan.

Looking at the "Wolf Kiss" in his hand, Ling Chen's expression changed slightly. There was now a nick on the surface of the sword, surrounded by cracks, it was completely destroyed.

When Hu Fei first got the "Wolf Kiss" from the fat man, he kept boasting about it, saying that this weapon was crafted by a master, with top-notch materials and workmanship, yet it couldn't withstand a single strike from Yi Shuiyan.

This clearly showed how strong the young man before him really was.

Chapter 400 Mad Blade Yi Shuiyan

"The blade is destroyed, what else can you fight me with?" Yi Shuiyan sneered coldly, sheathing his sword and standing upright, his posture as sharp as a blade, his aura intimidating and overwhelming.

Ling Chen casually threw away the broken Wolf Kiss, rubbing his sore right shoulder, and replied, "I still have my hands and feet, a pair of fists is enough. Let's go again!"

Hearing this, Yi Shuiyan did not strike immediately but sheathed his steel blade, held the scabbard with one hand behind his back, and extended the other hand forward, speaking indifferently, "I won't take advantage of you. If you want a fistfight, I'm game. Just withstand three moves from me using one hand, and I'll let you go tonight."

One hand?

Ling Chen was slightly taken aback, a surge of nameless anger instantly welling up in his heart. This bastard, he was underestimating him too much, it was an outright insult.

Taking a deep breath, Ling Chen tried to suppress the anger in his heart, maintaining his composure. In such moments, he must not let anger dominate his emotions, which would only impair his ability to think.

Watching Yi Shuiyan opposite him, raising one hand slightly with palm facing upward, his left hand holding the scabbard behind his back, his movements casual. However, Ling Chen dared not act rashly. The stronger the martial artist, the more effortless their actions, each movement naturally flawless, with no trace of vulnerability. Yi Shuiyan had clearly reached this level.

Ling Chen moved his legs without hesitation and launched a direct frontal attack.

Facing an expert like Yi Shuiyan, there was no chance for tricks, only a head-on confrontation.

The moment his feet touched the ground, Ling Chen bent his knees and pushed forcefully, his body flying out again, rapidly closing in with a steel fist aiming straight for Yi Shuiyan's face.

As the fist approached, Yi Shuiyan remained expressionless, his hand lifting lightly, wrapping around Ling Chen's wrist like a nimble snake, then nudging it to the side, which sent Ling Chen's punch veering off course into the air.

One punch missed, Ling Chen did not back down but advanced, powering his shoulder and elbow, fiercely slamming towards Yi Shuiyan.

Feeling Yi Shuiyan's body retreating, Ling Chen felt a surge of elation.

It worked!

However, the joy in his eyes didn't last long and was replaced by shock. Under Ling Chen's shoulder and elbow strike, Yi Shuiyan's feet seemed rooted to the ground, immovable, only his upper body leaning back. As Ling Chen's force exhausted, Yi Shuiyan's upper body sprung forward, crashing into Ling Chen.

Suddenly, Ling Chen lost his balance, and was struck flying.

Bang!

Accompanied by a muffled sound, Ling Chen's body fell heavily to the ground from mid-air, the pain making him grimace.

"One more move!"

Yi Shuiyan's voice came, Ling Chen gritted his teeth and quickly scrambled up. But as he was getting up, a shadow flickered before him.

Soon before Ling Chen could react, a severe pain exploded in his abdomen, Yi Shuiyan's five fingers embedding deep into his flesh, the pain unbearable.

"Get lost!"

Enduring the agony, Ling Chen shouted fiercely, throwing a punch towards Yi Shuiyan. The punch came, and Yi Shuiyan scoffed, completely disregarding Ling Chen's attack. Or rather, Ling Chen's reaction was completely anticipated by him.

Bang!

With a swift twist of his waist, Yi Shuiyan dodged Ling Chen's fist, swinging his fist sideways harshly smashing it into Ling Chen's cheek.

Splurt!

A mouthful of fresh blood spewed out, and the heavily struck Ling Chen felt his head go blank, his consciousness wavering, everything before him blurring.

Wobbling a few times, he finally could not hold on, and collapsed to the ground.

Looking at Ling Chen who couldn't get up from the ground, Yi Shuiyan sneered disdainfully, "So weak, yet dare to claim yourself as a Tiger List expert. Truly disappointing to the extreme."

In the midst of talking, Ling Chen, with his hands pressing against the ground, struggled to his feet, his steps wavering unsteadily as if he could fall at any moment.

But no matter what, he ultimately stood up, albeit looking somewhat disheveled, with his cheeks swollen and his forehead bruised in shades of blue and purple, his body covered in dust.

Seeing Ling Chen manage to rise again, Yi Shuiyan frowned slightly, his eyes revealing a chill.

Suddenly, Yi Shuiyan's expression tensed as if he had made a resolve, he abruptly lunged forward, his palm wind howling, his momentum fierce, aiming straight for Ling Chen's face.

"Stop!"

At this critical moment, a sharp shout accompanied by a flash of cold light came.

Seeing the cold light approaching, Yi Shuiyan's expression changed slightly, quickly retreating. He swung his scabbard forward, knocking the cold light to the ground.

Looking at the diamond-shaped dart on the ground, Yi Shuiyan glanced around, searching for the person who had intervened and coldly said, "Brave enough to make a move, but not brave enough to show yourself?"

"You just said that as long as he can withstand three strikes from you without falling, you'd let him off. Yi Shuiyan, as a leading figure among the younger generation, are you going to go back on your word?"

The voice came from all directions. Yi Shuiyan's eyebrows relaxed, and with a smile that was not quite a smile, he said, "You know me?"

"Yi Shuiyan, the mad blade, one of the youngest experts in the martial arts world today, strong enough to rival those on the Dragon List, a talent vigorously cultivated by the Dangyang Sect, in full glory, and one of the most eligible candidates to win the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony."

Yi Shuiyan nodded and said, "Alright, since you know me, I won't make things difficult for him tonight."

"No, not just tonight. I hope you won't trouble him until the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony begins."

Hearing this, Yi Shuiyan chuckled coldly, "Aren't you asking for too much?"

"There's less than two months left till the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony, Ling Chen will also participate. Whatever grudges or disputes you have with him, wouldn't it be better to settle them at the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony?"

"I don't have the patience to wait that long."

"If you do not agree, then you will never get the Tianling Blade."

As soon as the words fell, three beams of cold light shot out in a trident formation, rapidly closing in on Yi Shuiyan. Seeing this, Yi Shuiyan immediately swung his scabbard, slashing towards the three streams of cold light, intending to knock them down.

However, as the scabbard touched the cold light, Yi Shuiyan's face slightly changed, a look of realization flashing across his eyes.

Such strong Inner Strength!

Is this demonstration meant for me?

Thinking this, Yi Shuiyan smiled and said, "Fine, I agree. The issues between him and me can wait until the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony."

After speaking, Yi Shuiyan didn't linger and turned to leave, disappearing at the end of the street.

Once Yi Shuiyan had left, Ling Chen, whose mind was still somewhat dazed, couldn't hold on any longer and collapsed to the ground, sitting back against a utility pole.

"Are you okay?"

In a daze, a gentle voice rang in his ears. Ling Chen, struggling to lift his head, suddenly saw a blurry figure. Because of the heavy blow to his head, his vision hadn't fully recovered, and everything looked unclear.

"Who... who are you?"

"Don't ask too much now, just rest well when you get back." After saying this, the voice sighed softly, adding, "There's too much strife in the martial arts world. You indeed have talent, but to claim a place for yourself, you still fall far short. Keep working hard; I believe you won't disappoint me."