

The Beauty 471

Chapter 471 Accident on the Arena

At this moment, the number of red cloths increased, shooting towards the stage from all directions, almost enveloping the entire platform.

At the same time, bright red cloths crisscrossed in midair, converging together, filling the entire venue with vivid colors, giving a surreal feeling.

At this time, Zhou Qi, who was outside the platform, looked at the changes before him with furrowed brows, ready to shout orders. But before he could speak, a beautiful woman suddenly approached Zhou Qi and whispered a few words in his ear.

Whatever she said, Elder Zhou's face instantly changed, bearing a complex expression.

After the woman left, Zhou Qi shouted towards the noisy stands, "Everyone, please calm down. Take your seats and don't panic. Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion will handle this." After finishing his words, Zhou Qi turned to look for Han Yu and Ling Chen on the stage. However, the stage was surrounded by red cloths, and no one could be seen.

"Ling Chen, Han Yu, respond if you can hear me."

"I'm here."

"I am here too." Ling Chen's weak voice followed.

"Both of you stay put. The martial arts competition is suspended. Without my permission, no one is to act rashly. Han Yu, did you hear me?"

Han Yu replied indifferently, "Elder Zhou, don't worry, I'm not in a hurry. Let's let him live a little longer."

At this moment, in the center of the platform, surrounded by red cloths, Ling Chen sat down on the ground gasping for air. Since no one could see him, he didn't need to care so much.

But, these mysteriously appearing red cloths baffled Ling Chen, with no clue as to what was happening.

Just as he was pondering, the red cloth above Ling Chen suddenly split open. Before Ling Chen could react, a delicate jade hand reached through the split and grabbed his shoulder, lifting him off the ground.

"Who..." Ling Chen's expression changed, about to rebuke, but a hand covered his mouth.

Smelling the faint fragrance at the tip of his nose and feeling the smooth hand, Ling Chen instantly determined that it was a woman beside him.

"Stay quiet."

The familiar voice sounded, and Ling Chen turned his head only to see an exquisitely flawless face before his eyes.

"Porridge girl?"

Recognizing the person, Ling Chen was momentarily stunned, asking with a look of surprise, "Did you do all this?"

Porridge girl nodded gently, her beautiful eyes examining the injuries on Ling Chen's body. Her brows slightly furrowed, and her pale, pretty face showed clear concern.

"Porridge girl, what are you doing?" Ling Chen curiously looked at her and asked.

"Stop asking, I'll treat your wounds first." Saying this, porridge girl took out a porcelain bottle from her pocket. She opened the lid, tilted the bottle towards Ling Chen's wound, and gently shook her wrist.

As the white powder from the bottle sprinkled on the wound, Ling Chen felt a cool relief. It not only stopped the blood but also eased much of the pain.

"What medicine is this? It's quite effective."

"Golden Cicada Powder, an ancient Chinese medicine formula."

After speaking, porridge girl put away the bottle and looked at Ling Chen seriously, "You're no match for Han Yu."

"I know." Ling Chen shrugged his shoulders. At this stage, he had no other options and could only brace himself. To live is luck; to die is fate.

In his view, the latter was more likely, given the huge gap between him and Han Yu.

Sensing the concern in porridge girl's eyes, Ling Chen laughed wryly, "It doesn't matter. If it comes to it, I'll just die."

"No!" The porridge girl shook her head, speaking firmly, "You can't die, at least not now."

Ling Chen grimaced and said, "Do you want me to admit defeat? You've also seen Han Yu's attitude; he would never accept my surrender. By proposing a fight to the death, he intends to kill me. I thought I had the strength to fight him, but little did I know he had hidden his power so deeply."

"I'm not asking you to admit defeat."

Hearing this, Ling Chen looked at the porridge girl in confusion and asked, "Then what do you..."

"I know that unless one of you dies, this battle will not stop. Therefore, you must defeat him."

"How can I win?" Ling Chen sighed, feeling helpless as he spoke, "Mere belief won't change anything."

The porridge girl was silent, gazing at Ling Chen with luminous eyes glittering mysteriously. Suddenly, she changed the subject and asked, "I heard that the Inner Strength mental method you practice is the Prajnaparamita Sutra?"

Ling Chen nodded, his look towards the porridge girl bearing a trace of surprise.

"How did you know? I don't recall mentioning it to you."

"I have my ways of finding out things. That...Prajnaparamita Sutra..." As she spoke, a faint blush crept across the porridge girl's pretty face, and her bright eyes filled with shyness, she hesitated, unsure of how to continue.

Seeing her silence, Ling Chen couldn't help but press on, "What about the Prajnaparamita Sutra?"

Forget it!

Hearing Ling Chen's voice, the porridge girl bit her thin lips and sighed inwardly.

He was going to find out sooner or later.

With this in mind, the porridge girl glanced at Ling Chen, who lay on the red cloth, and took out a pill from her pocket, presenting it to him while speaking indifferently, "Eat this."

"This medicine...ugh..."

Before Ling Chen could finish, the porridge girl had already forcibly stuffed the pill into his mouth.

As soon as the pill entered his mouth, it was immediately swallowed with his saliva. Ling Chen stared at the porridge girl, dumbfounded, and asked, "What medicine did you give me?"

No sooner had he spoken than Ling Chen felt his hands and feet go numb, as if he had lost all sensation, becoming incredibly stiff, even unable to move his fingers. Noticing the change in his body, Ling Chen was instantly alarmed.

"Porridge girl, you..."

"Don't talk."

The porridge girl gestured for silence and then took out her handkerchief, gently covering Ling Chen's face and masking his eyes.

At this moment, Ling Chen had a myriad of questions racing through his mind, clueless as to what the porridge girl was up to. Between drugging him and covering his face, her actions were shrouded in mystery, utterly baffling. Though he hadn't known the porridge girl for a long time, Ling Chen believed that she would never harm him.

As he pondered, the porridge girl quietly unfastened the buttons of her clothes, slipping off her garment amidst the vivid red cloth.

As her tops fell away, a snow-white body was suddenly revealed in full glory; her graceful figure, willowy waist, and a pair of slender and fair legs radiated an alluring charm.

Through the veiled fabric, Ling Chen could vaguely make out the porridge girl's movements, and that flawless, delicate body.

For a moment, Ling Chen's mind went blank, and he was completely entranced.

What...what is she doing?

Could it be...

Lost in wild thoughts, the porridge girl's jade arms were already reaching towards Ling Chen. Tenderly and with a hint of intoxicating shyness, she began gently to unfasten Ling Chen's clothes.

Chapter 472 Dedication

At this moment, if Ling Chen still did not understand what porridge girl wanted to do, he would be unworthy of being a man.

However, facing the actions of porridge girl, Ling Chen was not only shocked but even more puzzled. He couldn't understand why porridge girl would do such a thing. He remembered that when porridge girl was sparring with He Ziyun, she had told him that she was engaged.

If she had a fiancé, then why would she still do such a thing? Didn't she consider her fiancé's feelings?

"Porridge girl..."

Ling Chen was about to speak, but porridge girl's finger had already landed on his lips. Without letting him say anything more, a warm body leaned against him, her impressive bosom pressing tightly against his chest, soft and silky.

Porridge girl's face blushed, biting her thin lips, her arms soft as tender lotus roots wrapped lightly around Ling Chen, burying her cheeks in his chest, her eyes brimming with shyness.

"Why?" Ling Chen swallowed, struggling against the temptation, but his body involuntarily reacted instinctively.

Porridge girl's eyebrows lowered, a blush rising on her fair and beautiful face, enchanting and moving, a faint blush spreading over her soft body.

Watching Ling Chen whose eyes were covered by a cloth strip, porridge girl leaned into his ear and whispered softly, "Don't ask anymore, you'll know one day."

Accompanied by a faint moan, their bodies intertwined closely, filled with the aura of spring.

In the fiery red silk, like the festive candles in a wedding chamber, it witnessed the union of the newlyweds.

...

At this moment, within the venue, everyone was looking at the area around the ring, and the red silks crisscrossed overhead, buzzing with discussions. No one knew exactly what had happened, only seeing members of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion under Zhou Qi's direction, encircling the ring tightly, preventing anyone from approaching.

Meanwhile, in an inconspicuous corner of the venue, a masked woman lifted her head and gazed at the gently swaying red silk above, her beautiful eyes unwillingly shimmering with shyness and a hint of hidden bitterness.

In the blink of an eye.

A quarter of an hour had passed.

Everyone was waiting patiently.

Suddenly, the delicate woman who had appeared next to Zhou Qi reappeared. After a brief conversation, Zhou Qi waved his hand and commanded, "Take down the red silks."

At the command, the members of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion promptly pulled down the red silks surrounding the ring. Soon, Han Yu and Ling Chen, who had been on the ring the whole time, reappeared before everyone's eyes.

"Ladies and gentlemen, there was a little accident just now which the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has resolved. Now, the competition will continue."

As Zhou Qi's voice fell, everyone's attention refocused onto Han Yu and Ling Chen. Regardless of the incident just now, what people cared about most was the result of this competition.

Han Yu held the Longquan Sword in one hand, his cold gaze fixed on Ling Chen across from him, a faint cold smile hooking at the corner of his mouth: "You should be content for having lived this long."

Hearing this, Ling Chen glanced up at Han Yu, remaining silent, his sharply contoured face showing no signs of emotional fluctuation, like a pool of dead water, filled with a deathly stillness.

Switching his gaze, Ling Chen looked around, his obsidian-bright pupils shining with complex lights.

She's gone!

Porridge girl had left quietly without a word, which made him feel somewhat forlorn.

Here and now, it felt like everything that had just occurred was like a dream, wonderful, yet not real, his thoughts still immersed in that dream.

"Be careful!"

Suddenly, a shout from the stands startled Ling Chen awake. Looking up, he saw Han Yu, holding the Longquan Sword, charging towards him rapidly, closing in within two meters in the blink of an eye.

Seeing the sharp tip of the sword approaching, Ling Chen lightly tapped his toes, swiftly retreating a few steps backward. Following that, he raised his right hand, drew a bow and aimed an arrow straight at the oncoming Han Yu.

Hmph!

Han Yu sneered, looking disdainfully at the longbow in Ling Chen's hands, showing no signs of retreat; instead, he quickened his pace.

Three meters... two meters... As Han Yu kept closing in, Ling Chen still stood tall, maintaining his bow-drawing posture, unflinchingly staring at Han Yu.

As Han Yu stepped within two meters of Ling Chen, the Longquan Sword he held aloft, plus the length of his arm, put the sword tip less than half a meter from Ling Chen's face.

What is he doing?

Seeing this scene, everyone present was stunned. In such a perilous situation, a matter of life and death was about to be decided, and yet Ling Chen still held his bow and arrow without any intention of dodging.

Just as everyone was dumbfounded, Ling Chen's fingers suddenly released.

Whoosh!

The long-awaited arrow finally shot out.

Clang!

Accompanied by a crisp sound, the sharp arrow directly hit the tip of the Longquan Sword.

At that moment, Han Yu, who held the Longquan Sword, had a change in expression. Looking at the slightly trembling blade, his face showed a hint of shock.

What surprised him was not Ling Chen's accuracy, but the Inner Strength contained in the arrow. That force actually traveled through the blade and transmitted to his palm, numbing it.

Impossible!

Han Yu couldn't believe it. He thought he had fully assessed Ling Chen's abilities; with injuries, it was impossible for Ling Chen to exert such powerful strength.

While in shock, Ling Chen suddenly leaped up from the ground, swiftly closed the distance, and his steel fist thunderously shot out, bringing a roaring wind.

Seeing the fist closing in, Han Yu immediately gathered his focus, staring intently at the fist, and took a small step back with both feet. Considering the distance between him and Ling Chen, this step would be enough to make Ling Chen's steel fist miss.

Indeed!

Ling Chen's steel fist stopped less than two inches away from Han Yu.

"It's my turn now."

Han Yu curled the corners of his mouth, and with a light flick of his wrist, the Longquan Sword swiftly sliced towards Ling Chen's arm.

However, just then, a strong force suddenly burst out from Ling Chen's fist. It traveled through the air and fiercely struck Han Yu.

Caught off guard, Han Yu's body jerked backward and he instantly flew out, landing awkwardly on the platform.

Such an unexpected turn of events stunned everyone.

Is this... the external release of Inner Strength?

How is that possible!

Just a moment ago under Han Yu's attack, Ling Chen seemed powerless and was covered in wounds. But in such a short time, Ling Chen's strength had erupted to this level, almost reaching the realm of externalizing Inner Strength.

Could it be... like Han Yu, Ling Chen had been hiding his true strength all along?

At this moment, the most emotionally fluctuating ones must be Qiu Yong and the others. Seeing Ling Chen suddenly grow stronger, everyone was both shocked and thrilled. Regardless of what changes had occurred in Ling Chen, at least they saw a glimmer of hope.

"How... How did you do this?" Han Yu incredulously looked at Ling Chen, his eyes flickering uncertainly.

Chapter 473 The Number One Rookie

"Wanna know? Beg me."

Upon hearing Ling Chen's teasing words, Han Yu's expression suddenly turned cold.

He dared to propose a deathmatch to Ling Chen because he was confident in his own strength. With his hidden prowess, he could easily annihilate Ling Chen. But now, the situation was wildly beyond his expectations.

Ling Chen's martial arts realm had actually reached the level of projecting inner strength externally, which dealt a great blow to his confidence.

Who would have thought that this guy was concealing even more deeply than himself? From a sure win to a fifty-fifty situation, how could he not be worried?

During his contemplation, watching Ling Chen approach step by step, Han Yu's eyes flashed fiercely, his expression as somber as water.

"Come on, continue."

Ling Chen hooked his finger, gesturing Han Yu to make a move.

"Don't be arrogant in front of me, you're not worthy." As the words fell, Han Yu let out a thunderous shout, pushed off the ground suddenly with both feet, and leaped up high like a great roc spreading its wings, rushing towards Ling Chen at breakneck speed.

Seeing the Longquan Sword stabbing down from above, Ling Chen lightly moved his feet, shifting positions while dodging the long sword's attacks.

After several strikes missed, Han Yu's face grew uglier and uglier. Without waiting for Ling Chen to counterattack, he advanced with his sword again, pressing step by step, not giving Ling Chen a chance to fight back.

Seeing Ling Chen continuously retreating under Han Yu's onslaught, the crowd couldn't help but worry.

Although Ling Chen's sudden burst of strength was eye-catching, he was at a disadvantage in terms of weaponry. And his arrows were all used up; he only had a longbow in hand, which was of no use. If he couldn't solve this problem, the risk Ling Chen was facing would undoubtedly be far greater.

Just then, a scene that played out on the stage made everyone stand up in unison, their faces showing disbelief and shock as they looked at Ling Chen.

Under Han Yu's frenzied offensive, the originally disadvantaged Ling Chen suddenly seized the opportunity and used the bowstring of the longbow to entangle the blade of the Longquan Sword.

The Longquan Sword was sharp indeed, but the longbow in Ling Chen's hands was personally forged by the master artisan Guo Liang, even a simple bowstring was tempered through a thousand hammerings.

"Release!"

Ling Chen softly shouted and pulled hard on the longbow, forcibly yanking the Longquan Sword from Han Yu's hands.

With the long sword snatched away, Han Yu's face instantly turned pale as he hurriedly closed in, trying to take back the Longquan Sword. However, Ling Chen, having finally seized the sword, was not about to give him the chance.

Not allowing Han Yu to come close, Ling Chen twisted on the ball of his foot, unleashing a sweeping leg kick that forced Han Yu back several steps.

It's over!

Everyone gloated over Han Yu's predicament.

Without the Longquan Sword, Han Yu's advantage had vanished. Everyone knew that Han Yu's greatest strength lay in his swordsmanship, not hand-to-hand combat. On the other hand, Ling Chen, especially in the previous fights, such as the deathmatch with Yi Shuiyan, demonstrated his brutal and ruthless hand-to-hand skills, filled with malice and murderous intent.

If it came down to just hand-to-hand combat, Han Yu would likely be no match for Ling Chen.

As everyone anticipated the turning of the tables, Ling Chen, with one hand holding the bow and the other wielding the Longquan Sword, looked at Han Yu with a calm gaze.

"Come again!"

Faced with Ling Chen's provocation, Han Yu stood at the edge of the stage with a darkened face, hesitating and lingering, not daring to make a move.

Seeing this, Ling Chen took a big step forward and actively walked towards Han Yu.

Seeing Ling Chen closing in step by step, Han Yu finally lost his composure, retreating continuously around the edge of the platform.

Suddenly, Han Yu clenched his teeth, turned around violently, and leaped off the platform, sprinting away from the event.

"I concede defeat in today's battle. Ling Chen, mountains remain unchanged, rivers flow forever, remember this!"

As Han Yu's words echoed throughout the venue, everyone present was stunned. They had not expected Han Yu to act so shamelessly, not only giving up the duel but also fleeing directly.

Watching Han Yu's retreating figure, Ling Chen silently placed the Longquan Sword on his bow, drawing the bow fully.

Whoosh!

Accompanied by a whooshing sound, the Longquan Sword shot out instantly.

"Young Master, be careful!"

The Han Family members who came with Han Yu saw Ling Chen's sudden move, their faces changed dramatically, and they quickly cried out in warning.

By this time, Han Yu had no idea what was happening behind him. Hearing the voice of his family from the back, he instinctively turned around, only to see a flash of sword light.

Before he could react, the sword light pierced directly through his chest, impaling his body.

Looking at the Longquan Sword in his chest, Han Yu's face gradually turned pale. He lifted his head, looking blankly towards Ling Chen on the platform, his mouth twitching slightly as if he wanted to say something. However, before he could speak, his body fell straight down, eyes wide open, motionless on the ground.

Dead?

For a moment, the venue was dead silent. Although no one had much affection for Han Yu, the shock was undeniable when they saw him killed by Ling Chen.

There had never been a death in the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony before, but this session had undoubtedly broken precedent.

"Ling Chen, how dare you kill our young master, I'll fight you to the death."

Several Han Family members in the seating area glared at Ling Chen, with hatred in their eyes, they rushed to the platform, determined to kill Ling Chen to avenge their young master.

"Stop!" At this moment, Zhou Qi's cold voice commanded, "Han Yu's death was his own doing. Agreeing to a fight to the death, you should have anticipated this outcome. Anyone who dares to disrupt the rules and seek private revenge against Ling Chen, don't blame Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion for being merciless."

With these words, the faces of the Han Family turned very ugly.

Zhou Qi's intent was clear; they could not seek revenge against Ling Chen now or even after the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony ended. Otherwise, it would be opposing the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion.

They were well aware that Zhou Qi's sudden show of force had a lot to do with Han Yu's death. Had Han Yu lived, his future in martial arts would have been boundless, and the talent-valuing Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion would naturally have granted certain concessions. Now with Han Yu dead, there was no need for the pavilion to give any face to the Han Family.

"Get down!"

Hearing Zhou Qi's scolding, the Han Family members looked poisonously at Ling Chen, wishing they could slay him on the spot. However, facing the intimidation from Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, the Han Family ultimately did not dare to act, sadly descending from the platform and removing Han Yu's body from the venue.

After they left, Zhou Qi stepped onto the platform, looked around at the audience, and announced aloud, "I declare that Ling Chen is the victor of this battle; he will face Song Ge in the final duel..."

"Elder Zhou."

Song Ge rose from his seat, smiling as he said, "As everyone has seen the duel just now, I think there's no need to continue."

Zhou Qi, with a surprised look, asked, "You're giving up?"

"Indeed," Song Ge nodded, "First place, Ling Chen truly deserves it."

Chapter 474 Mr. Yun Crashes the Conference (Part 1)

"Alright then." Zhou Qi hesitated for a moment and said, "Since this is your decision, I respect your choice." As he finished speaking, Zhou Qi turned to look at Ling Chen and smiled, "Mr. Ling, congratulations on winning the championship of the rookie competition in this Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony."

Ling Chen smiled lightly, gratefully glancing at Song Ge. He was indeed surprised by Song Ge's voluntary forfeiture.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the top three newcomers have been determined. First place, Ling Chen. Second place, Song Ge. Given Han Yu's death, this rookie competition will only have the top two. According to the rules of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, and the agreement between Ling Chen and Han Yu, the rewards for both the first and third place will go to Ling Chen."

Hearing this, everyone envied Ling Chen. One man receiving two generous awards was unprecedented.

"Ling Chen."

At this moment, Hu Fei, sitting next to Qiu Yong, waved at Ling Chen on the stage, a look of urgency on his face.

"Elder Zhou, I'll be right back." After saying that, Ling Chen quickly returned to his seat and asked Hu Fei, "Fatty, what's wrong?"

"There's been an incident."

Hu Fei fiddled with the laptop on his lap, whispering, "Remember I told you the other day that someone hacked into the ship's computer system? Just now, that person logged into the system again and shut down the ship's signal jamming device."

"Did you find the person's location?"

"Wait!" Hu Fei rapidly typed on the keyboard, bringing up a series of codes. After a moment, Hu Fei, who was intently staring at the computer screen, suddenly changed his expression, rubbing his eyes as if he doubted what he saw.

Unable to restrain his impatience, Ling Chen urged, "Did you find it?"

"Found it." Hu Fei nodded, but his tone was somewhat odd.

"Where?"

"The cockpit."

"What?" Ling Chen was taken aback. The cockpit was staffed by personnel hired by Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion; an outsider would certainly be detected unless... Realizing the potential situation, Ling Chen felt uneasy.

"Fatty, you and Zhou Jun hurry to the cockpit and check it out."

"Okay." Hu Fei and Zhou Jun responded in agreement.

However, just as they were about to get up and leave, a well-dressed, refined middle-aged man suddenly appeared outside the venue, followed by more than thirty people.

Seeing the middle-aged man leading the group, Ling Chen's pupils constricted, his face showing a hint of shock.

It was him.

Mr. Yun!

How could he appear here? Could it be... Recalling Hu Fei's words, Ling Chen's complexion turned. Could it be that the cockpit was already under the control of Mr. Yun's men?

At this moment, Mr. Yun, strolling leisurely, walked into the venue surrounded by his subordinates. Facing the gaze of everyone present, Mr. Yun said with a mild smile, "What a lively event. I heard that the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony is a grand gathering in the Martial Arts of Huaxia, and indeed its reputation is well-deserved."

Zhou Qi frowned at Mr. Yun and his followers, and said sternly, "Who are you?"

"People call me Mr. Yun, and you may do the same."

"Mr. Yun? Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion did not invite someone like you. How did you get on board?"

"I have my ways." As he finished speaking, Mr. Yun glanced over everyone present, his gaze finally settling on Ling Chen, his smile neither warm nor genuine, "Ling Chen, we meet again."

Upon hearing this, everyone turned their eyes towards Ling Chen, not expecting them to know each other.

Zhou Qi asked, "Ling Chen, do you know who he is?"

"He is from the God Organization."

God Organization!

Zhou Qi's expression shifted, his aged eyes suddenly flashing with sharpness and vigilance as he looked at Mr. Yun.

"Our Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has always kept to itself, separate from the God Organization. What are you up to?"

"Nothing much, I just want to make a deal with Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and with everyone present."

"Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion rejected your proposal many years ago, we have no interest in cooperating with you. Please take your people and leave immediately. Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion does not welcome uninvited guests."

Mr. Yun said with a smirk, "What if I don't leave?"

"Then don't blame me for being impolite. Guards!"

At the command, Zhong Yang immediately arrived with more than a dozen members of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion.

Seeing the other party ready to take action, Mr. Yun's subordinates immediately raised their weapons, aiming at the foreheads of Zhong Yang and his men. Zhong Yang instinctively stopped in his tracks, not daring to move forward.

They were unarmed, how could they confront these people with force? Even with skill in martial arts, they dared not to act recklessly.

Mr. Yun laughed triumphantly, "Gentlemen, I advise you not to act recklessly, otherwise my little devices don't have eyes. If someone gets hurt later, don't blame me for not warning you."

Zhou Qi spoke coldly, "Are you bullying us because you think Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has no one capable?"

"No, no!" Mr. Yun shook his head, "I absolutely do not mean that. On the contrary, I know the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion is full of talented people. If it wasn't for this reason, I wouldn't have put so much effort into coming here to see all of you." He paused, then continued, "I admit, the virus incident a while ago was caused by me, but I had no intention of harming anyone. Even if Ling Chen hadn't found a solution, I would not have let you die."

"What exactly do you want?"

"It's simple, I want to cooperate. Additionally, let me make it clear that you would be working with me, not with the God Organization."

Zhou Qi, frowning, said, "I don't see much difference between the two."

"Of course, there's a difference, but you don't need to know right now." As he spoke, Mr. Yun looked at everyone present, his lips curling into a slight smile, "I know you are all unhappy with my previous actions, but no worries, I believe you will agree to my proposal."

"Mr. Yun, do you think you can threaten us with these people?" Ling Chen spoke up.

"No, I am well aware of everyone's abilities; these people are only here to ensure my safety, not to target you. However, let me be frank with you all, I have installed six bombs on this ship. If I detonate them, no matter how skilled you are, you won't be able to escape. So, I hope you consider carefully whether you want to live or be buried at sea. The choice is yours."

The crowd was taken aback by these words, and the calm on their faces vanished in an instant.

"Ling Chen."

Hu Fei said quietly, "I just checked, and there are six unknown signals under the ship, which must be the bombs he mentioned."

"Is there a way to disarm them?"

"Those bombs are controlled by signals. They hacked into the ship's system to shut down the signal jamming device, to avoid interfering with the explosives' signals."

Chapter 475 Mr. Yun Crashes the Conference (Part 2)

"Fatty, is there a way to continue blocking the bomb signal?"

"It's possible, but only if I can take control of the system on the ship to reactivate the signal blocking device," said Hu Fei, staring intently at his laptop screen with a troubled look. "However, they have already taken control of the system, and taking it back from them might take some time."

Ling Chen nodded and said, "Go ahead and do it, and I'll try to buy you some time."

In the midst of speaking, Zhou Qi's voice came from the stage, asking in a deep tone, "What kind of cooperation do you have in mind?"

Mr. Yun replied with a faint smile, "I hope you can help me with a few matters. Once everything is settled, I will certainly not let you down. Whether you desire fame or profit, I'll do my utmost to satisfy all of you. How about that?"

"Not interested."

The voice emerged, and Mr. Yun turned to look at Ling Chen in the audience seating, saying with a mocking smile, "Ling Chen, I'm afraid you don't have the luxury to refuse right now, unless you want to die here."

"Mr. Yun, have you ever considered your daughter in your actions? If she learns what you've done, her character suggests she will never come to terms with it."

Shaking his head, Mr. Yun retorted, "You don't need to pressure me with her, as I have never regretted choosing this path. Plus, I don't care whether she understands me or not." Turning to face Zhou Qi, Mr. Yun continued, "I'll give you three minutes to think. If you can't give me a satisfactory answer, don't blame me for being ruthless."

Hearing this, Ling Chen frowned silently, his gaze sweeping across the fully armed team members, pondering his options.

Over thirty people, each armed with guns. Their positioning showed they were experienced combatants, keeping Mr. Yun protected in the center, watching everyone on the stage. Any sudden movements would be immediately noticed.

Capturing them all in a short span of time was a daunting task. Moreover, even if they subdued Mr. Yun, it would do nothing to resolve the current crisis. As long as the bomb remained active, their lives were in constant danger.

Mr. Yun had likely come to terms with life and death by showing up in person.

To fail was to perish.

"Fatty, how's it going?" After much deliberation, Ling Chen could only place his hope in Hu Fei. If the signal-blocking device could be reactivated, other concerns wouldn't matter as much.

Hu Fei wiped the sweat from his forehead, his fingers flying across the keyboard. Suddenly, his expression changed, and he cursed, "Damn it."

"I've been discovered."

"What?"

"They've found out that I'm trying to take control of the system, and they've taken the entire ship's system offline. I can't even log in now."

"What should we do?"

Hu Fei gave a wry smile and said, "No choice, unless we can get into the cockpit and reboot the system."

After a moment of thought, Ling Chen turned to Zhou Jun and asked, "Are there any other exits in this hall?"

"Yes," Zhou Jun replied, pointing towards the back. "That door there leads to the serving room. There's a freight elevator in the serving room that goes straight to the cargo hold."

"I'll find a way to distract those men. You hurry to the cockpit," said Ling Chen, still somewhat uneasy. After all, the cockpit was under the control of Mr. Yun's men, who likely had heavy firepower. Zhou Jun and Hu Fei alone might not stand a chance. Thinking it over, Ling Chen couldn't help but turn his gaze towards Song Ge.

Understanding his intention without a word, Song Ge nodded and said, "I'll go with them."

"Be careful," Ling Chen responded.

Then, Ling Chen stood up, flipped over the seating area, and headed straight towards Mr. Yun.

"Stop!"

Seeing Ling Chen approach, a few combatants looked at him warily, aiming their guns at his forehead as they shouted sharply.

Facing the dark muzzles, Ling Chen remained fearless and continued towards Mr. Yun.

Bang!

A crisp gunshot rang out, and a spark flew up right beside Ling Chen's foot.

"If you dare to take one more step forward, the next bullet won't miss," the other party declared coldly.

Ling Chen pointed to his forehead with a challenging expression and said, "If you dare, shoot here."

"Enough!" Mr. Yun waved his hand to signal his men to hold their fire. He then looked at Ling Chen and said, "I don't want to hurt you, but don't push your luck. To me, your worth lies only in ensuring my daughter's safety. And you're not my only option. If you die, I will find someone else to protect my daughter, so you'd better behave."

"You keep mentioning your daughter. Have you ever thought about what will happen to her if your identity is exposed? Given your status, you must have a lot of enemies. And if she finds out what you've been up to, she'll likely never forgive you. Also, don't tell me you don't care—if you truly didn't, you wouldn't be going to great lengths to ensure her safety. You gave us three minutes to think, and now I will give you three minutes to consider your options. Either leave with your men, and I'll act as if nothing happened. Otherwise, if I leave here alive, I will surely tell her everything."

Mr. Yun's face became stern as he said, "Are you threatening me?"

"You can take it that way."

"Fine," Mr. Yun replied, his tone icing over. "In that case, don't blame me for not being compassionate. Kill him!"

At his command, a team member quickly aimed at Ling Chen's forehead, his finger lightly squeezing the trigger.

"Hey!"

However, at that moment, a languid voice suddenly came from the satellite phone in Ling Chen's hand behind his back.

Hearing that familiar voice, Mr. Yun's expression shifted, and he quickly pressed down the muzzle of the gun.

Ling Chen grinned and brought the satellite phone in front of him, speaking casually, "Wanqing, do you know who I'm with right now?"

"Who?"

"Mr. Yun. I just found out. Mr. Yun has another identity. Do you want to know what it is?"

"What identity?"

Nanrong Wanqing's voice came from the satellite phone, causing Mr. Yun's complexion to turn sour as he coldly ordered, "Take his phone away."

On his command, two combatants rushed towards Ling Chen, reaching to snatch the satellite phone from his hand.

Seeing their actions, a sharp gleam flashed in Ling Chen's eyes, accompanied by a chilly coldness.

"Wanqing, I have something to do, I'll talk to you later."

The moment the call ended, Ling Chen tossed the satellite phone straight at the face of one of the men. Then, without waiting for them to react, he quickly struck out with his fists, landing heavy, solid punches on both men.

Chapter 476 Zhu Hong Reappears

Ling Chen, now successfully promoted to the Dragon List, is unmatched in close combat. Even more than thirty people together are not his opponent, let alone two. Those two didn't even have the chance to shoot before Ling Chen easily subdued them. Moreover, all of this happened in the blink of an eye, not giving them a chance to react.

"Stop!"

When the crowd turned around and saw their companions subdued by Ling Chen, several combat team members immediately rushed forward with their guns and shouted coldly: "Let them go now."

If Ling Chen hadn't been blocked by his companions, they would have shot without hesitation.

"Relax, I won't harm them, but..." At this point, Ling Chen's lips curled into an intriguing smile.

Clang!

A crisp sound came from the ground. The combat team members looked down and saw a grenade rolling from Ling Chen's feet.

"Get down!"

The pupils of the men sharply contracted as they yelled and threw themselves to the ground.

Boom!

The floor immediately exploded, creating a large hole, with flames splattering everywhere, sending numerous wooden splinters flying. Fortunately, the explosion was more than ten meters away from the stands, so the blast wave did not harm the spectators.

Right at the moment of the explosion, Mr. Yun was quickly covered by his subordinates, thus avoiding any injuries. However, those closer to the explosion weren't so lucky; they were left wounded and disheveled by the wooden splinters.

Before the crowd could recover from the blast, two smoke grenades were tossed in, falling from the sky into the crowd. In an instant, thick white smoke enveloped everyone.

In the midst of the dense smoke, Zhang Zhongfeng stood up from his seat, holding his longbow horizontally, his eyes half-closed. Meanwhile, Yang Chen pricked up his ears, listening attentively to the sounds in the smoke before relaying the position to Zhang Zhongfeng.

As the smoke gradually dissipated, three members of the combat squad raised their heads and hurriedly helped Mr. Yun to his feet.

"Boss, are you alright?"

Mr. Yun frowned, shook his head, and scanned the surroundings. When he saw over twenty dead bodies before him, his facial expression changed drastically.

So many subordinates killed silently. Moreover, most of them had arrows stuck in their bodies.

"Mr. Yun, your people are almost gone, aren't you going to surrender?" Zhou Qi asked coldly.

At this, Mr. Yun suddenly smiled, clapping his hands in appreciation: "Not bad, truly formidable. My choice was not wrong. If you join me, I can indeed be much stronger."

Zhou Qi snorted lightly: "I advise you to stop dreaming. No one here will submit to you."

Mr. Yun calmly said, "I dared to come here today already prepared to face life or death. If I can't succeed, I'm ready to die together. Having you as my funeral companions would make my death worthwhile." After saying this, he glanced at his watch, "You have one minute left to make a decision."

While they were talking, Ling Chen scanned the seats and noticed that Song Ge, Zhou Jun, and Hu Fei had already disappeared.

One minute, hoping they could make it in time.

Meanwhile, the trio of Song Ge was in the cargo elevator heading to the cargo hold.

With Zhou Jun who knew the area leading, they saved a lot of time and quickly headed for the cockpit.

On the deck, as they ran, the three suddenly heard a buzzing sound from mid-air. Zhou Jun looked up and saw a helicopter flying towards them. Beneath the helicopter, something large, about two meters tall and shining with metallic luster, was dangling from a rope.

"What is that?" Zhou Jun murmured to himself.

Song Ge glanced and said in a serious tone, "Never mind that, we have more important things to do. I'll take care of those in the cockpit first, you guys hurry over." Saying this, Song Ge lightly tapped his toes and swiftly climbed up the side of the ship.

In the venue, Ling Chen looked directly at Mr. Yun, surrounded by the members of the combat team, and asked, "You said earlier that this cooperation represents you personally, not the God Organization. What does that mean?"

"Don't you think you ask too many questions?"

Ling Chen shrugged and said, "Since we're all going to die, you might as well satisfy my curiosity before I die."

Mr. Yun responded indifferently, "You don't need to know that."

During their conversation, a person suddenly appeared at the entrance of the venue. To be precise, it was a person clad in armor. The body, limbs, and head were all covered by armor plates, obscuring any real features, resembling a humanoid machine, stepping into the venue one stride at a time.

As the humanoid machine entered the venue, everyone's attention was drawn to it.

"Is this a new type of weapon developed by your God Organization?" Ling Chen asked, frowning.

"No, he became like this, thanks to you."

"He?" Ling Chen's mind stirred, thoughtfully looking at the humanoid machine, pausing after each word: "The 'he' you mentioned, could it be..."

"Ling Chen, we meet again."

Before Ling Chen could finish speaking, a hoarse voice suddenly emanated from the humanoid machine. Even though the voice had changed significantly, Ling Chen felt a sense of familiarity.

Thinking of the owner of the voice, Ling Chen's face slightly shifted, his tone filled with disbelief.

"It's you? Zhu Hong!"

How is this possible!

Back then on that island, the entire island was obliterated by the explosion. Under such circumstances, the chances of escaping were almost nil, yet Zhu Hong had survived.

He had assumed Zhu Hong was dead all this time. For this, he had always felt guilty every time he saw Zhu Xiaozhu, unsure how to face her.

After a brief moment of stupefaction, Ling Chen composed himself and looked at the humanoid machine, saying, "Since you're alive, why not show your true face? Hiding in that armor, are you ashamed to be seen?"

"You're right, he indeed has no face to show now," Mr. Yun added. "When I found him, his body was severely burned and badly damaged. Not only was his appearance ruined, but he also lost the ability to walk, so I had a special suit of armor made for him that he could survive with the help of the Life Support System inside."

"Living like this, if it were me, I'd rather die."

"You're right," Zhu Hong said coldly. "I thought about dying, but until I've exacted my revenge, no matter the cost, I will keep living."

"Revenge?" Ling Chen narrowed his eyes and nodded lightly: "Alright, since you want revenge on me, I'm ready to confront it to the end."

Chapter 477 Zhou Qi's Strength

"Revenge is only a matter of time, but I don't want you to die yet, that would be too easy for you. I want you to watch firsthand as your friends die one by one in front of you, to taste the pain and torment that I've endured," Zhu Hong said through gritted teeth, his tone filled with immense hatred.

Ling Chen furrowed his brows and said in a deep voice, "You're forcing me to kill you."

Zhu Hong smirked coldly, "Do you think you have the ability to kill me now?"

"Let's find out." As soon as he finished speaking, Ling Chen lightly tapped with the tip of his foot and charged straight towards Zhu Hong. When he got close, his fist tightened, Inner Strength converged, and he fiercely launched a punch, hitting the armored surface.

However, under Ling Chen's full-force blow, the thick armor surface only dented slightly and did not cause serious damage. This outcome immediately surprised Ling Chen, thinking about how hard the armor was. He had originally thought it was just a layer of iron sheet, not expecting it to be this terrifyingly hard.

Watching Ling Chen's astonished face, Zhu Hong laughed triumphantly, "This armor is made from tank armor, did you really think your fists could break through its defense? Hah! Wishful thinking. And thanks to that exoskeleton armor, this armor is the ultimate weapon created based on it."

Clang!

Right after Zhu Hong finished speaking, a sharp arrow suddenly flew from mid-air, striking the armor, penetrating three inches deep, and directly tearing through the armor's defense.

Seeing this scene, the crowd couldn't help but exclaim and turned their gazes towards Zhang Zhongfeng.

The fact that an arrow could penetrate the armor was truly unbelievable; the force needed to do so must have been immense.

"It seems that your armor isn't much after all," Ling Chen said mockingly.

Zhu Hong, frustrated and agitated, said, "Fine, I want to see how capable you all really are." After speaking, a gun barrel suddenly extended from the side of his mechanical arm and aimed at the eight eccentrics in the seating area.

As the gun barrel slowly turned, a string of fire snakes instantly spat out, and bullets crazily shot towards the seating area.

In the blink of an eye, the front rows of seats were filled with numerous dense bullet holes. Thankfully, just before Zhu Hong opened fire, Qiu Yong and the others had already dodged to the sides, crawling on the ground, avoiding being hit by bullets. However, although they narrowly escaped, the people sitting in the back rows were not so lucky; their bodies were instantly penetrated by bullets, blood flowing freely.

"Stop!"

Hearing Mr. Yun's voice, Zhu Hong stopped firing and sneered, "Who else wants to try?"

"Very well!" Zhou Qi stared coldly at Mr. Yun, holding back his anger, "Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion originally did not want to engage in a conflict with you, but since you hold no regard for Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and dare to act recklessly on our territory, don't blame us for being impolite."

As soon as he finished speaking, without waiting for Mr. Yun to respond, Zhou Qi suddenly flashed, disappearing from his spot. By the time everyone realized what happened, they heard a loud 'bang' near their ears.

Immediately after, the humanoid armor Zhu Hong wore suddenly flew up, crashing heavily to the ground with a loud clang of metal.

This sudden change immediately covered Ling Chen's face with shock. He had been standing right next to Zhu Hong, so he felt it most vividly. By his estimation, the armor on Zhu Hong weighed at least a thousand pounds, but in the light attack by Zhou Qi, it was directly blown away; such strength was certainly not something a Dragon List expert possessed.

Could it be... Thinking of his speculation, Ling Chen looked at Zhou Qi with a trace of awe in his eyes.

Earthly List expert!

The Zhou Qi in front of him was definitely an Earthly List expert.

It makes sense, seeing as the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony is such an important event, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion would surely arrange for someone capable of keeping the peace to preside over it. No wonder that reckless Zhou Jun could act without a care, having a grandfather who is an Earthly List expert backing him, who would dare not show him some respect.

Watching Zhu Hong climbing up from the ground, Ling Chen sneered secretly. This guy was asking for trouble, of all people to provoke, he had to provoke a master from the Earthly List.

Seeing Zhu Hong stand up again, Zhou Qi snorted coldly and walked over again.

"Stop!" Mr. Yun's face hardened, fearing the situation would spiral out of control, he quickly shouted aloud.

Zhou Qi looked at him expressionlessly and said word by word, "I'll tell you, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has never been afraid of threats. Anyone who dares to do this has only two ends, either death or a death without a place to be buried. You have already violated the taboo of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. For people like you, Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion will never compromise."

Hearing this, Mr. Yun no longer had the pleasant demeanor he had earlier, and said sternly, "Do you want us to perish together, to exchange so many lives for mine?"

"I can't decide for them; it's their business how they choose to act. Even if they are willing to compromise with you, I have nothing more to say, I'm just telling you the stance of Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. No matter what the outcome is today, you will face the furious retaliation of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion."

"Well said." Ling Chen clapped his hands and looked at Mr. Yun, whose face was ashen, "You probably didn't expect the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion to be so tough before you came, did you? Mr. Yun, I admit you are a capable man, but your tactics do not work on everyone; the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion won't buy your act. It's still not too late to surrender, don't wait until your last card is played before you regret."

"What do you mean by that?"

Ling Chen was about to speak, but at that moment, Zhou Jun walked in from outside the venue and gave Ling Chen an 'OK' sign.

Ling Chen grinned and turned to Mr. Yun, "Your trump card is nothing more than the bombs installed under the ship. How about this, I give you a chance to detonate the bombs."

Mr. Yun frowned and said, "Are you forcing me?"

Ling Chen shook his head and replied, "I'm not forcing you, I just want to tell you that your trump card has been invalidated. If you don't believe it, you might as well try it."

Mr. Yun's expression changed, and he immediately pulled out a walkie-talkie from his pocket.

"Team three, respond."

"I hear you, but I'm not your team member; they're all lying on the ground, probably can't respond to you."

Hu Fei's mocking voice came through the walkie-talkie, making Mr. Yun's expression turn extremely ugly.

"You guys are tough, I admit defeat this time."

Mr. Yun took a deep breath, threw the walkie-talkie on the ground, and said indifferently, "Since I'm in your hands, kill or do whatever you want with me."

Without saying another word, Zhou Qi immediately lifted his hand ready to strike towards Mr. Yun's neck.

"Wait!"

Seeing Zhou Qi's action, Ling Chen quickly intervened.

"What, do you want to do it yourself?"

"No. Elder Zhou, his identity is not simple, and he still has great use. Better hand him over to me for disposal."

Mr. Yun, being a high-ranking member of the God Organization, certainly knew a lot of intelligence. Moreover, more importantly, he was, after all, Nanrong Wanqing's father; he couldn't just watch him die before his eyes.

Chapter 478 The Cunning Mr. Yun

"Do you intend to spare his life?"

"Elder Zhou, rest assured, I will not let him threaten the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion again. After the ship docks, I will imprison him for life."

Zhou Qi hesitated for a moment, then nodded and said, "Alright, for your sake, I'll spare his life today. Zhong Yang, take him away and confine him somewhere."

"Yes!"

After Zhong Yang escorted Mr. Yun away from the venue, Zhou Qi pointed to armored Zhu Hong and said, "This man must be handed over to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion for disposal."

"No problem."

Zhu Hong had killed a guest invited by the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion; naturally, the pavilion would not let him go. Initially, I intended to deal with him personally, but now it seems there is no need. Even Zhu Hong himself probably did not expect things to turn out this way, thinking he was fully assured of his actions.

As per tradition, it should have been a celebration after the competition for newcomers. However, due to this unexpected incident, everyone lost the mood, so they quickly dispersed, leaving only a few members of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion to clean up the bodies at the scene.

Back in his room, Yuan Yun sneered, "That Mr. Yun is really bold, daring to confront the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion directly. I really don't understand what he was thinking."

Xia Yue chimed in, "What I find most surprising is Elder Zhou. He's actually a top expert on the Earthly List."

While everyone was discussing vigorously, Qiu Yong saw Ling Chen sitting on the sofa, silent and deep in thought, and couldn't help asking, "Ling Cheng, what are you thinking about?"

"Mr. Yun's actions this time were somewhat strange," Ling Chen thoughtfully said. "From his past actions, it's evident he is a cautious person and would not take risks lightly. This action doesn't seem to fit his style."

Qiu Yong took over the conversation, saying, "Maybe he was too confident."

"Perhaps," Ling Chen nodded, but a trace of doubt still lingered in his mind.

Night fell.

The night deepened, and past midnight, everyone had gone to their rooms to rest early.

Ling Chen lay on the bed, head on his arms, legs crossed, continuously swinging his toes.

After much thought, Ling Chen felt no sleepiness at all and simply got up from the bed and walked straight out of the guest room.

Leaving the room, Ling Chen took the elevator directly down to the cargo hold, where he saw Zhong Yang and several members of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion guarding an iron door.

"Mr. Ling," Zhong Yang greeted with a smile and asked, "You're not sleeping this late?"

"I couldn't sleep, just taking a walk. Mr. Zhong, can I go in and see him?"

"Elder Zhou instructed me that others may not, but there's no issue with you, Mr. Ling." With that, Zhong Yang signaled to his subordinates, who immediately unlocked the door.

"Mr. Ling, if you need anything, just call me."

"Thank you!"

Entering the small room in the cargo hold, inside was a simple folding bed and an untouched dinner on the floor. Mr. Yun sat on the bed with his legs crossed, his eyes slightly closed, appearing as though he was dozing.

"Looking for me so late, is there something you need?" Hearing the approaching footsteps, Mr. Yun opened his eyes and looked at Ling Chen.

"I have some questions that keep me awake if I don't clear them up."

"What would you like to know?"

"Earlier today at the venue, you said the collaborator this time was you, not the God Organization. Why? Since you are a senior executive of the God Organization, this operation should represent them. Could it be that you intend to go it alone, leaving the God Organization behind?"

Mr. Yun, with a smile that was not quite a smile, said, "You're quite clever."

"Now that we have come this far, aren't you going to say anything?"

"Mr. Ling, do you think I lost?" Mr. Yun shook his head meaningfully, "If you think so, you are wrong. Regardless of the outcome, I am the winner."

A winner?

Ling Chen furrowed his brow, completely not understanding his meaning. In such a predicament, he couldn't see where Mr. Yun could possibly be winning.

Mr. Yun seemed to perceive Ling Chen's thoughts, smiling and saying, "From your perspective, I might have lost. But from mine, I have won. Moreover, let me give you a heads-up: after the ship docks, you'd better be careful and arrange for some people to meet you. Otherwise, you could be in big trouble."

Upon hearing these words, the previously perplexed Ling Chen immediately understood.

"You've become a traitor."

Mr. Yun smiled, said nothing, and simply closed his eyes, ignoring Ling Chen.

Leaving the cargo hold, Ling Chen returned to his room alone and then picked up a satellite phone to dial a number.

After talking with Mr. Yun for a few minutes, Ling Chen was sure of the situation. He could confirm that Mr. Yun had betrayed the God Organization. As for his reasons, only he would know.

The God Organization must have discovered Mr. Yun's betrayal, hence forcing him to make this move.

If the operation went smoothly and he successfully negotiated a collaboration with the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, Mr. Yun could use the pavilion's power to protect himself and make the God Organization wary of him. Even if the operation failed, he wouldn't have to worry about his life being threatened, as he had pre-calculated everything.

As long as he was on this ship, given his relationship with Nanrong Wanqing, he would definitely not stand by and watch him being killed. Moreover, Mr. Yun was aware that he would definitely hand him over to the Ghost Organization for custody. With the Ghost Organization's protection, he could also escape persecution from the God Organization. Thus, as Mr. Yun had said, no matter the outcome, he was the winner.

Having figured this out, Ling Chen couldn't help but admire Mr. Yun, who had calculated every move in advance, thus daring to appear without any hesitation.

Just then, there was a sudden knock at the door.

Ling Chen got up and opened the door, only to see Zhou Qi and Zhou Jun, the grandfather and grandson, standing outside.

"Elder Zhou, why are you here? Please come in!"

Once inside the room, Zhou Qi got straight to the point, "Ling Chen, we just received a message from someone claiming to be from the God Organization."

"What did the message say?"

"They're demanding we immediately release Mr. Yun. Moreover, they've sent a helicopter to pick him up."

Trouble!

Ling Chen silently cursed, surprised by the God Organization's swift action.

"Elder Zhou, what are you planning to reply?"

"I wanted to ask your opinion. After all, I've handed him over to you, so it's your call on how to handle this."

Ling Chen thought for a moment and said, "Elder Zhou, I definitely need to take him with me, but... I'm worried about involving the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion."

Zhou Qi waved his hand, "You don't need to worry about us; the God Organization wouldn't dare mess with us easily. Also, their talk was negotiation, not a forceful demand to hand him over. However, we can protect you on this ship, once off the boat..."

Before Zhou Qi could finish, Ling Chen interrupted, "Elder Zhou, once off the ship, it becomes my concern."

"Alright, I'll get back to them as soon as possible."

Chapter 479 Reunion with Tea Girl

"Right!" Zhou Qi suddenly shifted the topic and said, "There's one more thing I almost forgot. Mr. Ling, you were the champion of this year's newcomers' competition. As a reward from the ceremony, you will become a member of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. I wonder when you will have time. We can keep it simple, just go through the formalities for you and Mr. Song. Once you join the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, we all become one family. No matter what happens, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion will provide you with protection, just like this time. If acting under the name of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, even the God Organization won't dare to touch you. Although the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion fears the God Organization, they also dare not lightly provoke us."

Mr. Ling's eyes sparkled, this sounded quite good. If he had the backing of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, he could probably walk more confidently in the future, who would dare provoke him.

"Elder Zhou, are there any other benefits to joining the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion?"

"Benefits?" Zhou Qi said with a smile, "There are plenty of benefits. Since you were the champion of the newcomers, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion will definitely cultivate you vigorously. Within a few years, your strength will significantly improve."

"How will they cultivate me? Do I have to stay at the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion all the time?"

"Of course. The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion possesses the richest resources, where else could you go if not there."

Hearing this, Mr. Ling hesitated. Being stuck in the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion all the time meant no freedom anymore. Thinking this, he asked, "Elder Zhou, after joining the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, am I not allowed to move freely?"

"The Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion has its rules. Free movement is allowed, but most of the time you must stay in the Pavilion, unless your strength reaches a certain level, then you could be permitted to go out freely."

"What level?"

"It's best to become a master on the Earthly List. With your capabilities, as long as you cultivate diligently, you could break through your current limits and reach that rank within at most five years."

Five years?

Mr. Ling was startled. Spending five years in the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, given his temperament, he couldn't sit still for that long. Besides, the outside world was waiting for him; he didn't have so much time to waste in the Pavilion. In five years, by the time he became an Earthly List master, Nanrong Wanqing might have married someone else.

"No, this won't work." Mr. Ling shook his head and said, "Elder Zhou, if that's the case, then I can't join the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion. Sorry, I still have many personal matters to attend to, and I probably don't have time to stay in the Pavilion."

Zhou Jun, who was beside them, couldn't help but persuade, "Mr. Ling, this is a rare opportunity, you really shouldn't miss it. Think about it, after five years, when you become the youngest Earthly List master, how glorious that would be, right?"

"What use is glory?" Mr. Ling said dismissively, "There are always higher skies beyond the skies, and other people beyond people. The Martial Arts world of Huaxia is full of hidden dragons and crouching tigers, you never know how many unknown masters are out there. Even if one's martial skills are strong, they will eventually be surpassed by others, and I don't want to become an obsessive martial artist. Besides, my personality isn't suitable. I'd rather go back to my colorful world and be an ordinary person."

"As you wish." Zhou Qi finally spoke, "This kind of thing depends on your own will; the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion won't coerce. Alright, if there's nothing else, then I'll go and respond to the people from the God Organization."

As Zhou Qi and Zhou Jun turned to leave, Mr. Ling seemed to think of something and quickly called out to Zhou Qi.

"Mr. Ling, is there anything else?"

"Elder Zhou, you remember Dongfang Yu, right? Initially, your people from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion saved him from our hands, and you promised us some convenience during the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony. I won't argue about the convenience, but you from the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion should at least give us a reason, not let us suffer losses without knowing."

"Dongfang Yu... I remember now, there indeed was such a matter. Sorry, if it weren't for your reminder, I almost forgot about it. The reason the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion intervened on behalf of Dongfang Yu is that he is a master on the Earthly List. Mr. Ling, in Huaxia's Martial Arts world, let alone the Heavenly List, even Earthly List masters are quite scarce. Therefore, as long as it's not too excessive, our Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion will extend some leniency and privileges to them, giving them a chance to reform. If they don't heed the advice of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and continue to act recklessly, the Pavilion won't provide any further protection."

Mr. Ling nodded, "Since you put it that way, I won't pursue it. But if Dongfang Yu comes to trouble us again..."

"You have nothing to worry about. If he dares to harm you, you won't need to lift a finger; the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion will take care of it."

"That's comforting. Gentlemen, have a good journey, I won't see you out."

The next day.

Morning.

When Mr. Ling got up, the port of Jinhai City was already in sight.

Due to the event that occurred yesterday, the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion decided to end this voyage early, sending everyone back to land to avoid further unexpected incidents. After all, the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony was already finished, except for the final celebratory ceremony which wasn't held as usual, everything else went smoothly.

After packing up, Mr. Ling went to Qiu Yong's room to greet him, then he headed alone to the deck.

Standing in front of the cabin door marked with warning signs, Mr. Ling hesitated for a moment, and finally gathered the courage to push open the door.

His main purpose here was not to meet the mysterious Tea Girl, but to inquire about the whereabouts of Porridge Girl. Since Porridge Girl left yesterday, he hadn't seen her again. Mr. Ling had searched almost the entire ship but found no trace of Porridge Girl. Thus, he pinned his last hope here.

That night, he had seen through the surveillance video that Porridge Girl had entered and exited the room where Tea Girl resided. It was evident that the two women knew each other, and perhaps Tea Girl knew where Porridge Girl was.

Entering the cabin, before Mr. Ling reached the door of Tea Girl's room, he saw a delicate-looking woman coming towards him, blocking his way.

Yesterday at the venue, Mr. Ling had seen this delicate-looking woman, knowing only that she was a member of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, but not her exact identity.

"Mr. Ling, I'm very sorry, but this area is not open to outsiders, please leave as soon as possible."

"I'm here to find the owner of that room. Could you please send a message for me, tell her I have something very important to discuss?"

"Please wait a moment."

Shortly after, the person came out of the room and said indifferently, "You may enter, but you have only five minutes."

"Thank you!"

Walking into the room, it was arranged just like the last time, with a curtain separating the middle. Behind the curtain, a delicate silhouette could be vaguely seen.

"Have a seat."

Tea Girl's pleasant voice came from behind the curtain.

"What important matter do you have for me?"

"You know someone called..." Mr. Ling was about to directly mention Porridge Girl, but then he thought that the name 'Porridge Girl' was only his nickname for her, and Tea Girl might not know who he was talking about.

He quickly changed his words: "The other night, a woman with a covered face came here, I need to know her whereabouts."

Chapter 480 A Pile of Business Cards

"Sorry, I'm afraid I'm going to disappoint you. I do indeed know that masked woman you mentioned, but before she left, she specifically instructed me not to reveal a single word if you came asking about her whereabouts. That was her request, and I must keep my promise."

Ling Chen touched his nose and said helplessly, "Can you at least give me a hint?"

Tea Girl replied indifferently, "That's not possible either. Apart from this question, I can consider other inquiries, so don't bother wasting your effort."

Seeing that she refused to talk more about the porridge girl, Ling Chen had no choice but to change the topic: "Then tell me, what's her relationship with your Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion?"

"There's not much of a relationship, just that her master has some connections with our Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion."

"Her master?" Ling Chen's interest was piqued. In all the time he had known porridge girl, she had never mentioned her master. Considering how capable she was, her master must be a remarkable person.

"Do you know who her master is?"

"I do, but I won't tell you. It's better for her to tell you herself."

This woman!

Ling Chen was speechless, always so secretive about crucial matters as if it were some big secret.

Seeing that Ling Chen remained silent, Tea Girl seemed to read his mind and said, "Some things are destined; you can't force them. I'm not telling you because it's not yet time for you to know."

After a pause, Tea Girl continued, "I have two things here for you, consider them a reward for helping the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion through its crisis." As she spoke, a file bag slid out from under the curtain and landed on the coffee table.

Ling Chen picked up the file bag, about to open it, but heard Tea Girl say, "Look at it after you go back."

"Then I won't be polite, bye! Hope to see you again." After speaking, Ling Chen got up and left the room.

Stepping out of the cabin, Ling Chen stood on the deck, gazing at the approaching port, a faint smile playing on his lips. After so many days out, he could finally return.

"Mr. Ling."

In contemplation, several middle-aged men walked over side by side, smiling amicably and greeting Ling Chen, who politely responded.

"Mr. Ling, this is my business card, please visit me if you get the chance, don't forget to call me so I can show you hospitality."

"Mr. Ling, this is my business card, please keep it."

"And mine..."

With such enthusiasm, Ling Chen couldn't refuse and accepted all the business cards offered to him. While receiving the cards, he glanced at them casually and was surprised.

These attendees of the Heavenly Mechanism Great Ceremony looked unremarkable, quite ordinary, but besides being skilled masters hiding their prowess, they all run their own businesses across the country, each one bearing the title of chairman.

Wow!

These days, even martial artists are turning into entrepreneurs.

Perhaps because it was almost time to leave, many people specifically came over to thank Ling Chen. In less than half an hour, his pockets were stuffed with hundreds of business cards, his smile almost stiffening.

It wasn't until the luxury cruise ship reached the port that Ling Chen was finally relieved.

"Mr. Ling."

At this moment, Zhou Qi and Zhou Jun appeared on the deck with Mr. Yun.

"Elder Zhou." Ling Chen greeted.

"I'll leave him in your care, remember to be extra careful after getting off the ship, don't let anything happen."

Yuan Yun smiled and said, "Just rest assured, Zhou Qi, with us eight eccentrics here, anyone who comes looking for trouble is asking for it."

Zhou Qi bowed with clasped hands, "Gentlemen, then I won't see you off any further, have a safe journey, take care!"

"Until next time."

Just when Ling Chen was about to disembark, he suddenly remembered something and turned to ask Zhou Qi, "Elder Zhou, I almost forgot, wasn't there a prize for the first place? I should be able to get something."

Before Zhou Qi could reply, Zhou Jun couldn't help but laugh, "Don't worry, you won't miss out on your prize. Because this ended quite abruptly, we didn't have time to prepare it; we will notify you later and take you to the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion to receive your prize."

"Really?" Ling Chen grinned and nodded, "Alright, then I'll wait for your news."

Although he couldn't join the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, visiting it would still be an interesting experience.

"Hey! Elder Zhou, does that mean I'll meet the Pavilion Master there?"

"The Pavilion Master? Haven't you already met her?" After saying that, Zhou Qi laughed loudly, and together with Zhou Jun, left the deck.

I've met the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion Master?

Ling Chen was a bit confused.

When did this happen, and how did I not know?

Could it be... Suddenly, a thought struck Ling Chen, and his mouth gaped open in surprise.

No way, she is the Pavilion Master of the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion.

Damn! No wonder everything was so secretive, not willing to reveal her true identity; so that's why.

Ling Chen sighed regretfully, realizing he should have interacted more with her had he known earlier. Ah! Such a good opportunity wasted.

After disembarking, Ling Chen followed the footsteps of Qiu Yong and others, accompanying Mr. Yun and Hu Fei to the port exit.

At the gate, five black Chevrolet SUVs drove up one by one and parked along the roadside. The leading Chevrolet's door opened, and a young man in a suit and sunglasses jumped out.

Seeing Ling Chen waiting at the exit, the young man's handsome face immediately brightened with a happy smile, and he shouted, "Tang Yuan."

"Old Tang, you sure are punctual," Ling Chen greeted with a smile.

"Got your call last night, the General immediately sent me with people to come here overnight, prepared to assist you," Tang Yuan said, then glanced at Hu Fei beside him and joked with a laugh, "Fatty, long time no see, you've gained more weight; be careful or no woman will fancy you."

"Get lost, I don't care about women, as long as I have money," Hu Fei remained true to his nature.

"Old Tang, is everything arranged on your end?"

Speaking of business, Tang Yuan immediately stopped joking, his expression serious, "This time, I specifically transferred a squad of special forces from the military, over thirty people, all fully equipped. Additionally, I contacted the local police, and they will assist us all the way to ensure we reach the airport safely." Pointing to the five Chevrolets, Tang Yuan added, "All equipped with bulletproof glass, even rocket launchers can't penetrate."

Ling Chen nodded. The more thorough the security preparations, the more reassured he felt, but still, he cautioned, "Just be careful, the people from the God Organization are not to be underestimated; they will also be fully prepared."

"Don't worry, I know, let's get everyone on board."

Mr. Yun was the key protection target this mission, for his safety, Ling Chen and Tang Yuan flanked him on either side, riding in the same vehicle, while Qiu Yong and others took other vehicles.