

The Beauty 571

Chapter 571 Yinan Village

"Just the four of us?"

Hu Fei waved his hand and said, "Don't count me in. I can only provide computer assistance. Killing and rescuing people is something you need to handle."

Kaelina frowned slightly and said, "How can just a few of us fight against the people from the God Organization? By the time we supposedly rescue someone, we might be dead without even seeing them."

"Don't worry, I have already made arrangements. We're running out of time, let's discuss it on the way."

Leaving the Old City area, Hu Fei led everyone into a car and drove straight to the airport.

By the time the group arrived, a private plane was already prepared at the airport. It was provided by Hongyu Group. After a phone call with Nanrong Hao, everything was arranged immediately.

As the plane ascended into the sky, Hu Fei opened his laptop carried with him and projected the screen onto the plane's large built-in display.

"Everyone here is a friend of Ling Chen. Currently, since Ling Chen is missing, rescuing Miss Nanrong relies solely on all of you. Let me first explain the situation to everyone."

As he spoke, Hu Fei tapped on his keyboard, and immediately, an image appeared on the large screen.

Looking at the image, everyone in the room exchanged puzzled glances.

"Hu Fei, what's the situation with this village?" Kaelina asked.

"I've done some investigation; this village is called Yinan Village, a southern village with over a hundred years of history. According to my intelligence, after Wu Jun took Miss Nanrong, they arrived at Yinan Village by car. Wu Jun is a traitor of the Ghost Organization and now works for the God Organization. Wu Jun's presence in Yinan Village suggests there's a big issue there. That's all I know for now; any other information will be provided once we arrive there."

An hour later, Hu Fei led everyone out of the airport and by car to a town near Yinan Village.

Before the trip, Hu Fei had already booked a hotel. Although the hotels in the small town were simple, everyone was not picky.

Upon entering the hotel, Hu Fei went directly to Room 109 and knocked on the door.

The door opened, and a middle-aged man appeared in front of everyone.

"Come in."

Entering the room, Hu Fei put down his luggage, sat down on the sofa, and introduced the middle-aged man, "Let me introduce everyone, this is Bai Huanjun, a friend of Ling Chen, specifically responsible for covertly protecting Miss Nanrong. We were able to find Yinan Village thanks to his help."

After he finished, Hu Fei changed the topic and asked, "How's the situation in Yinan Village, can you tell us?"

"I'm not very clear about the situation inside the village. I tried to investigate, but I found that the surroundings are heavily guarded with many concealed sentries making it impossible to approach undetected. Also, I'm most worried about the villagers of Yinan Village. Before you arrived, I took a closer look, and although those villagers seem like ordinary people, the way they walk and their stature doesn't seem normal, leading me to suspect those villagers are disguised members of the God Organization."

Hu Fei asked, "How many villagers does Yinan Village have? Have you counted?"

"I'm not sure of the exact count, but definitely not less than a hundred people. Including the surrounding sentries, there could be around two hundred."

As he spoke, Bai Huanjun spread a map on the table and continued, "The geographical location of Yinan Village is very advantageous, situated by mountains and water, and there is a large bamboo forest nearby. This environment can hide a lot of things."

Kaelina glanced at the map and asked, "Have you checked that bamboo forest?"

"No, the bamboo forest is installed with many motion-sensing devices. Any disturbance is immediately detected. I didn't dare to enter. But the stringent defense there indicates that there's something significant hidden within."

Jiang Yunkai frowned and said, "If that's the case, it's not just about rescuing Miss Nanrong; even getting in is a problem."

"No, there are ways," Liu Dongsheng, who had been silent up until now, spoke up.

Seeing him speak, everyone eagerly asked, "What do you suggest?"

Liu Dongsheng pointed at the map and said, "He just mentioned that Yinan Village is by the mountains. Since it's by the mountains, we can approach from the other side of the mountain and directly infiltrate Yinan Village from the mountaintop."

Bai Huanjun speak in a grave tone, "That mountain peak is a hundred meters tall, steep, and completely bare all around providing no cover at all, making it easy for the enemy to spot us."

"That's not a problem," Liu Dongsheng confidently smiled and said, "Leave it to me. However, I need to go there first before we act."

"No problem," Hu Fei nodded and said, "It's already nighttime, a perfect opportunity. Let Bai Huanjun accompany you there. Since the enemy is numerous and powerful, direct confrontation is out of the question. First, we need to locate where Miss Nanrong is being held, then we can plan the rescue."

Under the pure moonlight, Yinan Village was silent, all the houses darkened, unable to see any light, only the occasional bark of a dog could be heard.

"Miss Nanrong, I advise you to cooperate with us and tell us the information Mr. Yun left you. This way, you can avoid a lot of pain."

In a brightly lit room, Wu Jun paced back and forth in front of Nanrong Wanqing with his hands behind his back.

On the side, Nanrong Wanqing lay on a bed, her hands and feet bound with belts, rendering her unable to move. Multiple thin wires connected her head to various devices.

Hearing Wu Jun's question, Nanrong Wanqing, looking pale, said, "I don't know any information. Killing me would be futile. Yes, I know Mr. Yun, but I've only met him once or twice, we're not close. Do you think he would share critical information with a stranger?"

"Stranger?" Wu Jun laughed and looked at Nanrong Wanqing, "Miss Nanrong, are you really unaware or just pretending in front of me? Don't tell me you don't know Mr. Yun's real identity."

Nanrong Wanqing tried to defend herself, "I only know he is called Mr. Yun, I know nothing else, you must have mistaken."

Wu Jun shook his head and replied, "Don't worry, there's no mistake," he paused, continuing, "Since you claim not to know Mr. Yun's identity, let me tell you then. 'Mr. Yun' is just his pseudonym, his real name is Nanrong Yuan. Does that name sound familiar to you?"

Nanrong Yuan!

So he is...

At this realization, Nanrong Wanqing looked dazedly at Wu Jun, her mind blank. This news was a bolt from the blue for her, making it hard to accept.

All these years, she had been searching tirelessly for her father's whereabouts. But, what she didn't expect was that she had already met her father before.

Why?

Why did he lie to me?

Chapter 572 Disadvantageous Start (1)

Watching the stupefied expression on Nanrong Wanqing's face, Wu Jun said with a half-smile, "Miss Nanrong, do you now know the true identity of Mr. Yun?"

Nanrong Wanqing slowly turned her head, and replied indifferently, "What does it change, knowing that? I still stand by what I said earlier, he gave me nothing. You might as well save your effort."

Hearing this, Wu Jun frowned slightly, his eyes fixed on Nanrong Wanqing's clear and beautiful eyes. With his years of experience, Wanqing did not seem to be lying. While pondering, he glanced again at the data displayed on the machine. Just as he deduced, the lie detector's readings were normal.

Could they really have targeted the wrong person?

Just as he was thinking, a person in a white lab coat came in from outside. The individual walked straight up to Wu Jun and whispered a few words in his ear.

Whatever was said, Wu Jun's eyes suddenly lit up.

"If that's the case, I will leave her in your care." With that, Wu Jun turned and left the room.

After Wu Jun had left, the person in the white lab coat approached Nanrong Wanqing, took a syringe and a bottle of the drug from the table.

Seeing the person roll up her sleeve, Nanrong Wanqing struggled desperately, asking anxiously, "What are you doing?"

Without a word, the person in the white lab coat plunged the needle into Nanrong Wanqing's body. As the drug from the syringe was injected into her, Nanrong Wanqing felt a wave of weakness wash over her, and her consciousness gradually blurred. Within two minutes, she had deeply fallen unconscious.

...

At this moment.

On a mountain surrounding Yinan Village, two figures climbed rapidly under the cover of night.

After a while, the two figures, one after the other, successfully reached the summit of the mountain. From the top, they had a clear view of the entire Yinan Village.

Liu Dongsheng stood on the edge of the mountain peak, and after a few glances downward, he saw that one side of the mountain was as smooth and flat as if cut by a knife, almost vertical to the ground, with no place to leverage against.

"I told you, it's impossible to descend from here," Bai Huanjun said.

"There's nothing impossible," Liu Dongsheng replied blandly.

After observing the surrounding environment, Liu Dongsheng committed several positions to memory and then returned to the hotel with Bai Huanjun.

Around four o'clock in the morning, Kaelina, Liu Dongsheng, Jiang Yunkai, and Bai Huanjun climbed the mountain again.

Upon reaching the summit, Liu Dongsheng took off his backpack and pulled out a bundle of thin metal wire.

"Crossbow."

Without a word, Kaelina immediately handed over the crossbow she had just assembled.

Liu Dongsheng connected the metal wire to the tail end of the arrow, then inserted the arrow into the crossbow. On the edge of the mountain peak, he raised the crossbow with both hands, aimed at a spot in the corner of Yinan Village, and gently squeezed the trigger.

Whoosh!

With a whistling sound, the arrow shot out with the metal wire attached, flying directly from the mountaintop to the ground, piercing through the middle of a tree trunk.

The range of a typical crossbow is at most a few dozen meters, but to meet their needs, Liu Dongsheng and the others had specially modified the crossbow to increase its tension, extending the range from a few dozen meters to over a hundred.

After setting down the crossbow, Liu Dongsheng tugged on the metal wire, and seeing that it was successfully secured to the tree trunk, everyone breathed a sigh of relief.

"I'll go down first, wait for my signal."

After speaking, Liu Dongsheng hooked a carabiner onto the metal wire, used it to bear his weight, and slid down directly.

Two minutes passed, and the metal wire gave a slight shake. Seeing this, Kaelina and the others subsequently used the metal wire to leave the summit.

Once on the ground, the four regrouped, and Liu Dongsheng put on his earpiece and established contact with Hu Fei outside Yinan Village.

"We've entered."

"Be careful."

"Understood!"

Liu Dongsheng pointed towards the east side of Yinan Village and said, "Let's split up and search. If we're discovered, you know what to do."

Kaelina and the others nodded. They had considered all possibilities before the action and formulated corresponding strategies.

After splitting up, Bai Huanjun quietly approached a house. He pushed the door and found it shut tight. He immediately pulled out a dagger from his waist and lightly scraped it through the door crack.

With a soft noise, the door opened as if on cue.

It was pitch-dark inside the room, hard to see even one's own fingers. Bai Huanjun controlled his breathing and moved lightly, trying his best to avoid making any sound that could reveal his presence.

Upon entering, Bai Huanjun looked around, frowning instantly—the whole house was empty. However, the bedroom bedding was neatly folded, and the place was spotless—a clear sign that someone lived there.

"Did you see anyone?"

At that moment, Jiang Yunkai's voice came through the earpiece.

"No."

"Neither have I."

"I checked two rooms, no one's there."

Hearing everyone's response, silence fell in the earpiece.

Bai Huanjun had observed during the daytime that there must be over a hundred people in the village, but now not a single one was in sight—an obviously abnormal situation.

Right then, lights suddenly lit up in the pitch-black room, illuminating everything.

The abrupt change made Bai Huanjun's face turn pale. He spun around, looking at the door, only to hear a 'bang'—the door locked instantly.

Following that, a green gas began to emanate from a corner of the room and quickly spread, engulfing the room in a blink of an eye.

Bai Huanjun covered his nose with one hand and pressed the earpiece with the other, saying in a heavy voice, "Can anyone hear me?"

However, not a single response came through the earpiece.

Damn!

A sense of dread sank in Bai Huanjun's heart—he had a bad feeling.

No response meant that there was a good chance something had happened to the others.

Without hesitation, Bai Huanjun hurried toward the door.

Bang!

With the impact of his body, the door burst open, and Bai Huanjun tumbled to the ground. Before he could get up, several burly men rushed over from both sides and pinned him to the floor.

"Don't move!"

Feeling the cold blade of the dagger, Bai Huanjun didn't utter another word and gave up resisting.

Ten minutes later, the hood over Bai Huanjun's head was lifted, and the bright light immediately flooded his surroundings.

Looking around, Bai Huanjun saw Liu Dongsheng and the others next to him. And Hu Fei was also captured, head drooping and looking dejected.

"Ha ha! Having friends visit from afar is a delight. Welcome, everyone."

Laughter echoed as they looked up to see Wu Jun striding in from outside the door.

Hu Fei furrowed his brow and asked, "How did you know we were here?"

"That's a good question," Wu Jun said with a smug smile. "Did you really think no one knew of your whereabouts? Let me tell you the truth, we've known you were here since you checked into the hotel."

Hearing this, the faces of Hu Fei and the others turned sour.

Chapter 573 Disadvantageous Start (2)

"I underestimated you."

Hu Fei helplessly shook his head. They had been careless, initially believing that the God Organization's influence was confined to Yinan Village, but now it seemed the situation was not so simple, as even the surrounding towns were likely infiltrated by the God Organization. Hence, their presence was exposed as soon as they arrived.

At this thought, an inexplicable horror filled Hu Fei's heart.

The God Organization must have been operating in this locale for decades, otherwise, their influence wouldn't have penetrated so deeply.

Wu Jun smiled and said, "It's not that you underestimated, it's that you do not understand the God Organization. Otherwise, you wouldn't have made such foolish decisions."

"Where is Miss Nanrong being held?" Kaelina asked.

Upon hearing this, Wu Jun sized up Kaelina with a playful smile: "Miss Kaelina, I think you should be more concerned about your own safety right now. You were lucky to escape last time because your life was spared by chance. If I were you, I'd have found a deserted place to hide long ago, unlike you, who actually came here seeking death."

After speaking, Wu Jun's gaze swept over Bai Huanjun and Jiang Yunkai. When his eyes landed on Liu Dongsheng, he asked with interest, "I know the others, they have more or less some connections with Ling Chen. What about you? Why are you muddying the waters here?"

Liu Dongsheng answered indifferently, "For friends."

"Friends?" Wu Jun laughed out loud, "I too was once for my country, for my friends, but what did I end up with? Endless life-threatening missions only earned me some worthless medals that can't be shared with outsiders, completely useless. I used to live for others, but now I've learned to live for myself."

"Enough talk. What are you planning to do with us?"

Wu Jun glanced at Kaelina who had spoken and said, "Originally, I planned to kill you directly, but you're lucky, we've just discovered a new technology and need test subjects. You'll have the honor of witnessing the miracle."

"Take them away and lock 'em up."

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Sunrise, the dawn sky aflame like fire.

Ling Chen looked out at the distant sea level, took a deep breath, relaxing his body and spirit, savoring the essence of nature.

Right then, a ship appeared on the calm sea, slowly moving towards him.

Ling Chen stood up, observing the gradually approaching ship, and quickly made his way towards it.

Coast Guard boat!

When Ling Chen recognized the symbol on the boat, his expression froze. Why would a Coast Guard boat come to such a place?

As he wondered, Ling Chen suddenly noticed someone at the bow of the boat waving, faintly hearing a voice calling his name.

Who could it be?

Ling Chen looked intently, but the Coast Guard boat was too far away to clearly see the person's features, he could only tell by the voice that it was a woman.

Due to the shallow coast, the Coast Guard boat couldn't come closer and stopped dozens of meters away at sea. Shortly after, a motorboat launched from the Coast Guard boat and headed straight for shore.

When the motorboat drew closer, Ling Chen could finally see who was on board.

Xia Mutong.

It was her!

As the motorboat reached the shore, Ling Chen hurried forward, his face filled with surprise and exclaimed, "Officer Xia, what brings you here?"

"It's to find you," Xia Mutong said with teary eyes.

Since that day after meeting with Su Mei, Xia Mutong felt displeased by Su Mei's attitude and thus contacted the police in Jinhai City to ask them for assistance in searching for Ling Chen.

Over the past few days, she had been searching along the coastline by boat. Hard work pays off; she finally found Ling Chen.

Seeing Ling Chen safe and sound in front of her, Xia Mutong angrily asked, "You're fine, why didn't you return? Do you know how many people are worried about you?"

Embarrassed, Ling Chen touched his nose and said, "I'm sorry for making you worry."

In fact, he had wanted to return to East Sea City long ago, but Su He wouldn't allow him to leave. Moreover, he rarely got the opportunity to be mentored by a master, and he wanted to learn more, which is why his return was delayed for so many days.

"Officer Xia, did something happen that you came to find me?" Ling Chen asked.

He felt it strange in his heart. He had thought of many possible people who would come to find him but never expected Xia Mutong. Thus, he guessed if something might have happened in East Sea City.

Xia Mutong said irritably, "Can't I come to find you if there's nothing wrong?"

"No, no, no," Ling Chen quickly waved his hand saying, "That's not what I meant."

"Alright, you hurry up and pack up and come back with me. I got a message the day before yesterday, Miss Nanrong has disappeared."

"What?" Ling Chen's expression changed.

"Wait for me, I will come right away." After speaking, Ling Chen quickly rushed into the house.

At that moment, Su He was inside the house, cleaning the fish that had just been caught. Seeing Ling Chen rushing in, without waiting for him to speak, Su He pointed to a bottle on the table and said, "That is the medicine I prepared for you. Take it three times a day, for two or three days. Your injuries won't cause major issues."

"Elder Su..."

"Enough, you don't need to say anything. Just go back, and don't come looking for me anymore. I've taught you all I can. Whether you can comprehend it is up to you."

"Elder Su, thank you!" Ling Chen said gratefully.

Su He waved his hand, not saying much more, and continued with his tasks.

Having secured the bottle, Ling Chen turned and walked to the door, then turned back, bowed deeply to Su He, and then pushed the door open and left.

Back on the boat, Ling Chen borrowed Xia Mutong's phone to call Bai Huanjun. Bai Huanjun was responsible for secretly protecting Nanrong Wanqing's safety, and since she was missing, he should be the most informed.

However, after dialing the number, there was no response for a long time.

Ling Chen frowned, and then dialed Hu Fei's number. But the result was the same; all showed that the phones were turned off. After some thought, Ling Chen entered Nanrong Hao's phone number.

"Hello! Haozi."

"Chen?" Hearing Ling Chen's voice, Nanrong Hao immediately exclaimed excitedly, "Chen, we finally got news from you, we were almost worried to death."

"Alright, never mind that, where is Wanqing?"

"Big Sister disappeared; it's been several days with no news. Chen, you should hurry back, everything here is in chaos."

"Don't panic, tell me clearly how exactly Wanqing disappeared."

"I heard from my cousin that a man named Wu Jun came the other day. He said he was your comrade-in-arms. He told Big Sister that you had been seriously injured and it wasn't convenient for you to come back, and he would take Big Sister to see you. Worried about your safety, she didn't even think and just agreed to go with him."

Wu Jun!

Hearing this name, Ling Chen's pupils shrank, and a raging fury instantly surged from the bottom of his heart.

Chapter 574 Changling City

The traitor finally showed up.

"Haozi, where's the fatty? Have you seen him?"

"You mean Big Brother Hu? No, I went to the Old City to look for him. They said Brother Hu left two days ago, I don't know where he went. Oh, that's right! When Brother Hu left that day, there was also Kai and Miss Kaelina; there were five of them in total."

Five people?

Ling Chen was struck with a thought; Hu Fei must have gathered everyone including Kaelina probably to rescue Nanrong Wanqing. However, it's been two days without any news, something might have happened.

"Haozi, are you really sure you don't know where they went?" Ling Chen asked, unwilling to give up.

"I... Eh! I almost forgot, the day Brother Hu and the others left, they asked me to prepare a plane. Hold on, let me ask the pilot and see where they went that day."

"Good, as soon as possible."

When they reached the port, Ling Chen rushed anxiously towards the junction.

"Ling Chen, where are you going?" Xia Mutong called out from behind.

"Officer Xia, you go back first, I have something else to handle." Saying this, Ling Chen stopped a taxi and got straight in.

"You..."

Watching the taxi speeding away, Xia Mutong stomped her foot angrily and cursed: "Bastard."

He himself had worked hard to find him, and he didn't even say thank you.

Oh no!

Suddenly, Xia Mutong's face changed slightly, remembering that her cell phone was still on Ling Chen. Thinking of the information stored in her phone, Xia Mutong's pretty face turned red.

After more than half an hour's drive, Ling Chen finally arrived at the airport. Nanrong Hao had already called to inform him of the location where the plane landed, a city in the southern part of Huaxia.

Boarding the plane, Ling Chen took out his phone and dialed a number from memory.

"Hello!"

The call connected, and a sweet voice immediately came through.

"It's me."

"Mr. Ling?" The person on the line exclaimed joyfully: "Great to hear from you. Where are you now?"

"I'm on a plane to Changling City. Do you have anyone in Changling City? I need help."

"Please wait a moment; I will arrange something for you now." After a while, the woman on the phone said: "Mr. Ling, I've sent the number to your phone. Once you arrive, contact this person directly, and he will provide you with all the help you need."

"Good, thanks!"

Two hours later.

Changling City airport exit.

Ling Chen walked out alone from the passage and looked around by the roadside, then took out his mobile phone, ready to make a call.

But then, a hand suddenly rested on Ling Chen's shoulder from behind.

Ling Chen sharply turned around, his fist clenched, ready to strike. However, when he saw the face of the person, he paused, looking surprised, and asked: "Why is it you?"

The other person chuckled: "Why can't it be me?"

Looking at Zhou Jun in front of him, Ling Chen asked: "Who else came from Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion?"

"Quite a few people. Come on, I'll take you to meet them."

Once in the car, Ling Chen, sitting in the passenger seat, asked with confusion: "How did you know I would come here?"

"The Secret Society notified us. We knew Nanrong Wanqing was missing, and your rushing to Changling City means you must have obtained some clues."

Ling Chen shook his head and said: "Can't say there's a clue; I only know my friends came to Changling City and they all lost contact."

"No worries, you've greatly helped Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion, and the Pavilion Master has already ordered to assist you fully in rescuing Miss Nanrong."

"Thanks!"

"We're brothers, no need for thanks."

Soon, Zhou Jun drove to a five-star hotel in Changling City.

Entering the presidential suite, Ling Chen immediately saw Su Mei standing by the window.

"Miss Su?" Ling Chen was surprised; he hadn't expected her to come here personally.

Su Mei slowly turned around, her beautiful eyes looking directly at Ling Chen, and smiled: "I thought something had happened to you."

"I've always been lucky."

Saying this, Ling Chen also greeted Zhou Qi and Song Ge.

"Miss Su, how much intelligence have you gathered?"

"Not much, our intelligence network in Changling City is limited and we can't gather detailed information. But don't worry, someone else knows better."

"Who?"

As Ling Chen spoke, there was a knock on the door.

"Speak of the devil."

Zhou Jun quickly walked to the door and opened it. Instantly, a man in his thirties with a weathered face walked in.

"Mr. Ling, hello, we meet again."

Seeing the visitor, Ling Chen was slightly startled, and surprised he said: "Mr. Sang Ji? Weren't you abroad, when did you come back?"

"The organization needed me, so they called me back."

Hearing this, Ling Chen glanced at Sang Ji and then at Su Mei, understanding suddenly. It seemed the Secret Society and Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion have a good relationship. With two forces helping him this time, he felt much more confident.

"Mr. Sang Ji, do you know where the territories of the God Organization are?"

"That's exactly what I want to talk about, Mr. Ling, this operation might be troublesome. According to the intelligence from our Secret Society, the God Organization has been establishing its influence in Changling City for many years, deeply rooted. Our Secret Society has always believed that the headquarters of the God Organization is actually established inland, but over the years, we have never identified the exact location. Until coming to Changling City, we were certain that this place must be the core base of the God Organization."

Ling Chen, unable to wait, asked: "Where is the base?"

"We're not clear yet, but don't worry, the Secret Society has already sent people to gather intelligence. If nothing goes wrong, I believe we will find their location soon."

Meanwhile, the hotel's internal phone rang suddenly.

Zhou Qi picked up the receiver and greeted. It was unclear what was said, but Zhou Qi looked at Ling Chen with a strange expression and said: "It's for you."

"For me?" Ling Chen walked over curiously and asked: "Who is it?"

"Don't know, he just said for you to take the call."

Ling Chen took the receiver and put it to his ear, saying: "This is Ling Chen, who is this?"

"Little brother Ling, you remember me, huh."

Hearing the laughter from the other end of the phone, Ling Chen's face immediately turned cold, and he spoke deliberately: "Wu Jun, it's you!"

"Haha! Looks like you still remember me."

Ling Chen coldly said: "You killed Uncle Mu and Mrs. Chen; I will eventually settle this score with you."

"Uncle Mu and Mrs. Chen were good people; I didn't want them to die either, but sometimes, to win, you must pay a price. Alright, Ling Chen, I didn't call to reminisce. I know you've arrived in Changling City. If you want to save Nanrong Wanqing, you better do exactly as I say. Otherwise, you will only find her corpse."

Chapter 575 Wu Jun's Conditions

Ling Chen, suppressing the rage in his heart, gritted his teeth and said, "What do you want me to do?"

Wu Jun said with a smile over the phone, "Don't rush. I hear you have quite a few friends with you. How about we find a time to meet? We can all sit down and have a chat. What do you think?"

"You set the time and place, I'll be there punctually."

"Good, you're as straightforward as ever. That's settled then, wait for my notification."

After finishing, Wu Jun hung up the phone.

Putting down the receiver, Ling Chen looked at the people present and said in a deep voice, "It's Wu Jun, he knows we've arrived in Changling City."

Zhou Jun slightly frowned and asked, "What does he want?"

"He's arranged to meet us. Not just me, all of us. Miss Su, Mr. Sang Ji, representing Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and Secret Society respectively, it's up to you whether you go or not, I will not force you."

Sang Ji, unconcerned, replied, "Since I've come, I won't leave empty-handed. Mr. Ling, rest assured, Secret Society has commanded me to assist you fully. No matter the danger, I'll stand by your side."

Ling Chen nodded, expressed his thanks, then turned his gaze to Su Mei, asking, "Miss Su, what does the Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion think?"

Su Mei opened her mouth, about to speak. However, before she could, Zhou Qi interjected, "The Pavilion Master's status is unlike others; she should not easily put herself at risk. Pavilion Master, in my view, you should return to Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion as soon as possible. We few are enough to handle things here in Changling City."

"This..." Su Mei hesitated.

"Miss Su, Elder Zhou is right, you are the Pavilion Master of Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion; it needs your presence. If something were to happen to you, it would be a devastating blow to Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion," Ling Chen said. "You should listen to Elder Zhou's advice and head back to the Pavilion."

"Alright then." Seeing Ling Chen speak up, Su Mei nodded gently, no longer conflicted.

Night fell.

After sending off Su Mei, everyone went back to the hotel to wait for Wu Jun's message.

When Ling Chen pushed open the door of his hotel room, he saw a note on the floor. He picked it up and examined it, his expression immediately darkening.

It finally arrived!

Nine o'clock at night.

Ling Chen, accompanied by Sang Ji, Zhou Qi, Zhou Jun, and Song Ge, drove to a restaurant in Changling City.

The restaurant was located in the bustling downtown area of Changling City, occupying about a thousand square meters. Walking into the restaurant, Ling Chen led the way, only to find it eerily empty.

"Ling Chen, are we at the wrong place?"

Hearing Zhou Jun's question, Ling Chen shook his head. The details on the note were clear; he couldn't have mistaken it.

Just then, the sound of footsteps came from the staircase. Ling Chen looked up to see a man in a suit jogging down from upstairs.

"Mr. Ling, welcome, Mr. Wu is waiting for you upstairs." The suit-clad man gestured them to follow him up to the second floor of the restaurant.

When they reached the outside of a private room, Ling Chen pushed open the door and immediately saw Wu Jun sitting by a round table. He was alone in the room.

Seeing an enemy inflamed him with anger, and Ling Chen was no exception.

Just thinking about the man in front of him, the killer of Mu Zhiyuan and Chen Ping, a cold glint burst from Ling Chen's eyes, itching to tear the man apart.

However, considering Nanrong Wanqing's safety, Ling Chen had to suppress the hatred inside him and entered with an expressionless face.

"Elder Ling, welcome, welcome," Wu Jun laughed heartily, rising to greet him warmly, "Come, everyone, take a seat. There's no one else here, no need to be formal."

Ling Chen, without uttering a word, sat opposite Wu Jun and coldly asked, "Stop the pretense. Since I'm here, let's talk straight, I don't have time to dawdle with you."

Facing Ling Chen's icy words, Wu Jun's smile remained, saying, "Elder Ling, don't rush, we have plenty of time. First, try the red wine I prepared especially for you. This is a rare vintage from Lafite Vineyard, 1982; almost impossible to find on the market. I received it as a special reward from higher-ups for my distinguished service; I've never had the heart to drink it. I wouldn't bring it out for anyone but you."

Hearing this, a fierce look flashed through Ling Chen's eyes.

"Killing Uncle Mu and Mrs. Chen, forcing Ghost Organization to dissolve, is this what you call an achievement?"

"Elder Ling, water flows downwards, people strive upwards, who doesn't seek better development? I dedicated over a decade to Ghost Organization and ended up with nothing."

"That's just your excuse for betrayal."

"Think whatever you want, but I'm living well now, I can have many things just as I wish." Wu Jun turned his head towards Zhou Qi and others, his smile widening, "Elder Ling, I actually admire you, getting powers like Heavenly Mechanism Pavilion and Secret Society to willingly help you. But here, even if the General himself came, what could he do to us?"

"Wu Jun, don't forget, this is Huaxia's territory."

Wu Jun, smugly, said, "I know, and that's exactly why they won't dare to touch us here, unless they want to start a war."

Sang Ji sternly said, "We didn't come here to listen to your nonsense. Tell us, what will it take for you to release Miss Nanrong?"

"Are you just here for Miss Nanrong? Elder Ling, don't you want to save your friends?"

Hearing this, Ling Chen's expression suddenly changed.

Just as expected!

Hu Fei and the others had fallen into the hands of God Organization.

"Where are they?"

"Relax, they are alive and well for now, but I can't guarantee they will continue to be. If you want to save them, you'll need to pay a price."

"What price?"

Wu Jun picked up a document from a nearby chair and threw it before Ling Chen, saying, "We lack a rare material developed by Ghost Organization. After the organization was dissolved, everything was moved to a new base. I know you have a good relationship with the General, so I'm asking for your help. Just bring me these materials, and I will immediately release your friends."

Ling Chen glanced at the document, didn't even touch it, and directly said, "How can I trust your word? Do you really expect me to trust a traitor?"

Wu Jun chuckled, pulled out a cell phone from his pocket, and placed it in front of Ling Chen.

"I don't need your trust. This is a countdown. If you can't bring the materials back within the specified time, then sorry, you'll never see your friends again." After saying this, Wu Jun stood up and walked out of the private room.

Chapter 576 The Present Differs from the Past

Watching Wu Jun's retreating figure, Zhou Jun said coldly, "Why go through all that trouble? Just grab him and force him to reveal the whereabouts of those people."

"No way," Zhou Qi shook his head and said, "Don't act too rashly. If he dares to come to meet us alone, he isn't afraid of us resorting to coercion."

Sang Ji chimed in, "Capturing Wu Jun will accomplish nothing." While speaking, he glanced at the time displayed on his mobile phone—forty-eight hours left.

"Two days' time... Mr. Ling, do you have any plans?"

Ling Chen said helplessly, "Hu Fei and his team total five people, plus Wanqing, making six of them all in the hands of the God Organization. We'd better not act recklessly."

"Are you prepared to comply with his demands?"

Ling Chen looked at Zhou Jun, who had spoken, and nodded, "There's no other way. They have the upper hand now, so I must comply." After a pause, Ling Chen continued, "Conveniently, I have to report the situation here to the old General and see how they plan to handle it."

"That's good," Sang Ji said, "If the government gets involved, maybe things will get handled more efficiently. Here's the plan: you rush to Beijing, and we'll stay here waiting for you, meanwhile helping you gather information."

"Thank you for your trouble."

"Don't mention it."

After the group had agreed, Ling Chen picked up the materials Wu Jun had left behind and immediately set off for the airport.

At midnight, after a two-hour flight, the plane finally landed at the capital's international airport.

Exiting the airport, a familiar figure came toward him, waving his hand in greeting.

"Tang Yuan."

"Old Tang."

Ling Chen nodded at Tang Yuan; before coming, he had already called him to pick him up.

Since the Ghost Organization was infiltrated, the old General had ordered the relocation of the base, and its new location was unknown to him; Tang Yuan was needed to lead the way.

After getting into the car, Tang Yuan started the engine and asked, "What brings you to Beijing at this hour?"

"I've run into some trouble—take me to see the old General first."

"This..." Tang Yuan appeared somewhat troubled as he said, "Brother, it's not that I don't want to take you to the old General, but..."

Ling Chen asked, puzzled, "What happened?"

With a sigh, Tang Yuan said helplessly, "Times have changed. Our days aren't as good as before. Whether it was the Ghost or Lonely Wolf organization, the old General's word used to be the command; no one dared to object. But now, things are different. Recently, someone from above was appointed to supervise Lonely Wolf's operations. Officially, the old General is still in charge, but in reality, a lot of his power is restrained. Everything needs that person's approval before proceeding. So it's not just us feeling stifled—even the old General is."

"How does that relate to me seeing the old General?"

"That person, since coming to Lonely Wolf, has enforced many reforms, one of which is the security of the base. Unless you are a member of Lonely Wolf, no one is permitted to enter the base, the location must be kept confidential. Anyone who violates the rules is directly expelled and subject to military court punishment. Although everyone knows your relationship with the old General, rules are rules, and since you've retired, I can't take you to the base." Tang Yuan looked regretfully at Ling Chen and said, "Tang Yuan, I'm sorry. It's not that I don't want to help you, but I truly can't."

"So I can't see the old General?" Ling Chen frowned inwardly.

Now he understood why Wu Jun had entrusted him with this task—after Lonely Wolf enhanced security, it was very difficult for the God Organization to infiltrate, hence they asked him to step in.

"Even if we can't enter the base, I have informed the old General. He suggested we choose a place to meet, and he will come to see you."

"Alright then."

Half an hour later, Ling Chen and Tang Yuan drove to the city and checked into a hotel.

Not long after entering the room, they heard a knock on the door.

Tang Yuan got up and opened the door, quickly stepping aside and saying, "General, Mr. Han, please come in."

Seeing Qiao Zhen and Han Bing enter the room, Ling Chen approached and greeted them.

Qiao Zhen patted Ling Chen's shoulder and said with a sigh, "Tang Yuan must have told you. Kid, I apologize. We can only meet outside now."

"It's alright. General, Mr. Han, please take a seat."

Once the four were seated, Han Bing asked, "Did you come to Beijing in a hurry because there's some important matter?"

"General, frankly speaking, the situation is like this..." Ling Chen recounted everything succinctly, without any concealment.

For Ling Chen, whether it was Qiao Zhen, Han Bing, or Tang Yuan, they were not just brothers or superiors and subordinates, but more like family. Therefore, he never concealed things from them.

After listening to Ling Chen, Qiao Zhen took the materials from him and glanced through. His expression slightly changed, and he passed the documents to Han Bing.

Surprised by the contents recorded in the documents, Han Bing exclaimed, "They want this?"

"Exactly, this is the material Wu Jun gave me. General, I've looked over these documents on the plane. Is this material very rare?"

Qiao Zhen nodded and said, "This material is called HZ1, a special fluid with high viscosity. Anything coated with a layer of HZ1 will have its defensive power enhanced, making it bulletproof to ordinary bullets. Additionally, this substance is highly breathable, so covering the entire body with it won't cause any harm. When we developed HZ1, it was intended to make bulletproof vests. Later, we found it was an overkill for such purposes and classified HZ1 as a military secret, with plans to use it in the military field."

Han Bing continued, "HZ1 is difficult to manufacture, hence the base has a very limited stock—less than ten kilograms."

"General, Mr. Han, you know I wouldn't ask for help without real need. I truly have no other option. If I can't meet Wu Jun's demand, Wanqing and my friends will be in mortal danger."

Han Bing gave a wry smile and said, "It's not that we don't want to help you, in the past, we wouldn't hesitate at your request, but now it's different. All valuable items in the base are stored in the warehouse, which can only be accessed when both the old General and the supervisor are present. We are willing to talk, but that person is not easily fooled. If we don't explain the reason, he will never agree to the private use of HZ1. "

Ling Chen anxiously asked, "What shall we do then? General!" Ling Chen looked to Qiao Zhen for help.

After pondering for a moment, Qiao Zhen said, "How about this: I'll talk to that person, explain the situation in Changling City and see what his plans are. If it really doesn't work out, I'm willing to risk this General's title to help you. Anyway, I feel stifled as a General, I might as well retire and go home."

Chapter 577 The Wanted Criminal

Ling Chen was well aware of the old General's temperament, he said so, which meant this matter was very likely under control.

"General, Wu Jun only gave me forty-eight hours, so we have to hurry and can't delay for too long."

"I know that, just stay here for now, I will arrange for Tang Yuan to contact you."

After seeing off Qiao Zhen and his two companions, Ling Chen stood alone at the windowsill, gazing at the night scene outside, his brows furrowed as he silently prayed for Nanrong Wanqing and Hu Fei.

The night passed.

Ling Chen sat in the room, having spent a sleepless night, he was still patiently waiting for news.

At seven o'clock in the morning, the ringtone of the cellphone on the desk suddenly sounded. Glancing at the incoming caller ID, Ling Chen hastily picked up the phone, eager to ask: "Old Tang, have you sorted it out?"

"Something happened." A deep voice came from Tang Yuan on the phone.

"What happened?" Ling Chen's heart jolted, he hurriedly asked, "What's going on?"

"The General and Mr. Han have been captured."

"What?"

Hearing this, Ling Chen's face changed dramatically, he said in a deep voice, "Who dares to arrest them?"

"Who else but that bastard, the General went back last night to negotiate with him, hoping the bastard would make things easier. Who knew the bastard was totally unmoved and even scolded the General, saying he shouldn't have protected you. Not only that, he suspected that you might have been bought by the God Organization like Wu Jun, insisting on sending someone to arrest you for interrogation. You know the General's temper, he couldn't hold back at the moment, he pulled out a gun and pointed it at that bastard's head, forcing him to open the warehouse door."

"And what about you, are you okay?"

"The General gave me the HZ1 and told me to bring it out for you. I'm on my way to the hotel now, but the situation is a bit tricky, that bastard has sent quite a few people after me, I'm afraid I won't be able to meet up with you."

As Tang Yuan spoke, his voice suddenly became more rushed: "Tang Yuan, there's no time, hurry to the train station, we'll meet there."

After speaking, before Ling Chen could say anything more, the phone was hung up.

Time was of the essence, without time to think any further, Ling Chen quickly packed up and left the hotel.

In less than twenty minutes, Ling Chen arrived outside the train station by taxi. Surveying the crowd amidst the bustle, his eyes roamed, searching for any sign of Tang Yuan.

Suddenly, a shouting voice came from the crowd in front: "Stop, don't run!"

Ling Chen's gaze shifted, only to see Tang Yuan pushing through the crowd, straining to break free, with at least a dozen men in suits following him.

In the heat of the chase, Tang Yuan's eyes met Ling Chen's and, brightening, he rushed over with increased speed.

The moment they met, Tang Yuan lightly reached into Ling Chen's pocket without any hesitation, brushing past him and continued racing forward.

Those men in suits were only focused on Tang Yuan, completely overlooking Ling Chen at their side.

At this moment, Tang Yuan, who had struggled out from the crowd aimed for a dash toward the roadside. But he had not run far when he was tackled to the ground by several men in suits who had caught up from the side.

"Let's see where you run now!"

A suit-clad man, panting heavily, fiercely kicked Tang Yuan's midsection. Unsatisfied, he delivered several more kicks.

Seeing Tang Yuan being brutally kicked, Ling Chen's eyes instantly turned cold, his fists clenched, ready to step forward.

However, as Tang Yuan was pulled up from the ground, he noticed Ling Chen's move and quickly gestured with his eyes for him to stop, gently shaking his head, signaling him not to come over.

Ling Chen glanced and then noticed that the bulges at the waists of these men in suits - they all carried weapons. Moreover, there was a gun pressed against Tang Yuan's back; if he were to act rashly, it could jeopardize Tang Yuan's life.

Seeing those men in suits taking Tang Yuan away by car, Ling Chen could only watch helplessly, unable to do anything.

The old General, Han Bing, and Tang Yuan could only be rescued later when another opportunity arose.

Walking into the train station, Ling Chen reached into his pocket and pulled out a key. The key had been sneakily placed in his pocket by Tang Yuan as he passed by him.

404!

Looking at the number marked on the key, Ling Chen quickly located the train station's storage locker and used the key to open the corresponding locker. Instantly, a black backpack was revealed inside the locker.

Unzipping the bag, as expected, inside was a transparent cylindrical container filled with HZ1.

Shouldering the backpack, Ling Chen turned and left the train station, then hailed a cab to the airport at the roadside.

With the item in hand, it was time to head back to Changling City.

The cab moved along the road, with Ling Chen sitting in the back, watching the traffic flow outside the window, his gaze suddenly sharpened, and he thought to himself that something was not right.

The cab had just passed the hotel where he had stayed the previous night, and he clearly saw several cars parked outside the hotel, with more than a dozen men in suits hurriedly entering the hotel.

When those people captured Tang Yuan and didn't find the HZ1, they would definitely suspect him.

This was trouble!

As expected by Ling Chen, when he arrived at the airport, there were many more policemen outside, each holding a mobile phone, scrutinizing the surrounding crowd.

It was clear enough that they had his photo displayed on their phones.

The airport was locked down, and other places were surely the same. The HZ1 was so important, they would undoubtedly spare no effort to search for his whereabouts.

It looked like he could only leave by land. Luckily, there was enough time, and a delay of a few hours was not a major issue.

As he was thinking this, Ling Chen suddenly saw several Lincoln Sedans approaching the airport's intersection.

When the Lincolns stopped, several airport security guards who had been waiting at the entrance immediately greeted them, surrounding the cars to prevent bystanders from getting close.

As the car doors opened, Ling Chen was taken aback. To his surprise, the person who stepped out of the Lincoln was Tang Shiyun.

In addition to Tang Shiyun, Zhu Yansong was present, followed by seven or eight assistants and entourage, carrying both large and small bags.

He hadn't expected to encounter her here.

Ling Chen's lips curved up slightly, and an idea quickly came to mind.

He glanced around, then made his way into the oncoming crowd. Moving through the crowd, he ended up with a duckbill cap and a scarf, both swiped from someone else.

Having donned the scarf and cap, Ling Chen quickened his pace, heading straight towards the group where Tang Shiyun was.

"Sir, I'm sorry, but you cannot go through here," an airport security guard blocked Ling Chen, signaling him to leave.

Ling Chen couldn't be bothered with him, and shouted loudly, "Girl!"

Hearing that familiar address, Tang Shiyun, walking in the middle of the group, quickly turned her head, her face full of joy as she looked around, finally fixing her gaze on the waving Ling Chen.

"Ling!"

Tang Shiyun let out a joyous laugh, her delicate face brimming with happiness.

With Tang Shiyun speaking up, the security guard naturally did not dare stop Ling Chen any longer, immediately allowing him to pass.

Chapter 578 Escape (1)

"Ling," Tang Shiyun affectionately wrapped her arms around Ling Chen's arm and asked, "When did you come to Beijing?"

"I arrived yesterday." As he spoke, Ling Chen looked around, watching the patrolling police to avoid revealing his identity.

However, he overlooked one thing.

Being with a highly sought-after celebrity, it's difficult not to attract attention. Seeing more and more people focusing on him, Ling Chen quickly said, "Are you taking a private jet or a commercial flight back to East Sea City?"

"The company arranged a private jet, why?"

"Let's go, I'll go back with you."

"Really?" Tang Shiyun said excitedly, "That's great."

"Hurry up." Ling Chen, fearing his cover might be blown, urged Tang Shiyun to leave quickly.

Having a major star by his side made everything convenient; they entered through the VIP lounge and then were driven directly to the boarding gate.

After boarding the plane, Ling Chen put down his backpack and breathed a sigh of relief. Luckily, he ran into Tang Shiyun today; otherwise, it might have taken several more hours to reach Changling City.

"Ling, what were you doing in Beijing?" Tang Shiyun asked curiously. "I haven't seen you for a while, and you weren't in East Sea City either."

"I've been busy elsewhere," Ling Chen answered casually.

After chatting for over ten minutes, Ling Chen looked out the window and asked, "Why haven't we taken off yet?"

"I don't know, it was supposed to depart at eight o'clock, and it's already past time," Tang Shiyun was also puzzled.

Zhu Yansong stood up and said, "I'll go ask the pilot."

In a little while, Zhu Yansong returned to the cabin and said, "Mr. Ling, Tang, the flight is going to be delayed by half an hour."

"Delayed?" Ling Chen's heart sank, immediately having a bad feeling. He hurriedly asked, "Mr. Zhu, what's the matter?"

"Just now, the control tower relayed a message, all planes leaving Beijing are to be inspected, apparently to catch a fugitive. Ah! What a waste of time, how could there possibly be a fugitive on our plane?"

Just as he thought!

Ling Chen's heart thudded, it seemed that guy wouldn't rest until he caught him.

What could he do now?

Thinking for a moment, Ling Chen stood up from his seat and said to Tang Shiyun and Zhu Yansong, "Girl, Mr. Zhu, let's talk inside."

There was a separate bedroom in the back of the airplane, and once inside, Tang Shiyun asked, "Ling, what's going on; what's so important that we had to come here to talk?"

Ling Chen confessed, "I won't hide it from you, the fugitive they're looking for is me."

"You?"

Hearing this, Tang Shiyun and Zhu Yansong were taken aback.

"Ling, what... what's going on?" Tang Shiyun looked at Ling Chen, her face filled with disbelief. "How did you become a fugitive?"

Ling Chen gave a wry smile and said, "It's a long story, I was trying to save someone. Anyway, I can't be found by those people, I hope you can help me."

"Ling, don't worry, I won't let those people take you away."

"Mr. Zhu, what about you?" Ling Chen asked.

He knew Tang Shiyun would stand by him, but he was unsure about Zhu Yansong.

Zhu Yansong hesitated for a moment then spoke, "There are only friends on this airplane, no fugitives."

Ling Chen's lips slightly curled into a smile as he sighed in relief and nodded, "Thank you!"

If Zhu Yansong had refused to cover for him, he would've had to flee and find another way out of Beijing.

Not long after, several men in suits appeared at the boarding gate.

Upon entering the cabin, Zhu Yansong immediately stood up to greet them, smiling as he asked, "Gentlemen, is there anything I can help you with?"

One man in a suit held out a cellphone, swung a photo in front of Zhu Yansong, and asked, "Have you seen this person?"

Zhu Yansong scrutinized the photo carefully and then shook his head, saying, "Sorry, I don't recognize this person."

The man in the suit looked at Zhu Yansong with a mixture of suspicion and disbelief, saying, "Since you don't recognize this person, surely you wouldn't mind us checking around, right?"

"Of course not, it's just..." Zhu Yansong appeared somewhat troubled.

"Just what?" the man in the suit frowned slightly.

"Gentlemen, I mean no offense, but this plane is Miss Tang's private jet. She is resting in her room, and I hope you will not disturb her."

"Miss Tang? Which Miss Tang?"

"Could it be Tang Shiyun?" Another man in a suit took over, his face showing unhideable excitement.

"Exactly, Miss Tang."

"Enough talk, hurry up and search," the leading man in the suit impatiently waved his hand, gesturing for his subordinates to check the cockpit and the bathroom.

"That... sir..."

The man who was interested in Tang Shiyun patted Zhu Yansong on the shoulder and asked with a flattering smile, "Could you get me an autographed photo of Miss Tang? My daughter is a loyal fan of hers; I hope you can do me this favor."

"Of course, no problem," Zhu Yansong smiled and said, "Please follow me."

Instantly, the two men approached the bedroom and gently knocked on the door. After getting a response from Tang Shiyun, Zhu Yansong pushed the door open and went in.

Before the man in the suit could enter, Tang Shiyun appeared at the doorway, blocking him outside.

"Mr. Zhu, who is this gentleman?"

"His daughter is your loyal fan, and he wants an autographed photo from you."

The man in the suit earnestly said, "Miss Tang, I am often busy and rarely at home with my daughter. Next month is her birthday, so I'd like to prepare a special gift for her. Please help me out."

Hearing this, Tang Shiyun smiled and said, "Okay, please wait a moment."

After speaking, Tang Shiyun returned to her room, rummaged through her luggage for a photo, then came back and signed her name in front of the man, adding a few words of blessings.

"Is this okay?"

"Yes, yes," the man in the suit nodded excitedly, full of gratitude. "Thank you, Miss Tang."

"You're welcome! If there's nothing else, I'm going to rest now."

"Alright, then I won't disturb Miss Tang any further."

With that, the man in the suit turned and left the doorway.

The leader saw that the man in the suit had returned and immediately asked, "Has that room been checked?"

"It's been checked, only Miss Tang is there, no one else."

"Boss, all clear, no fugitive found."

"Then we should go."

"Gentlemen, take care, I won't see you out."

After seeing off the men in suits from the plane, Zhu Yansong finally breathed a sigh of relief and quickly returned to the outside of the bedroom, knocking on the door.

"Mr. Ling, Tang, those people have left."

Just after he spoke, Ling Chen came out from behind the door. He had been hiding there this whole time, and thanks to Tang Shiyun blocking that person at the doorway, his presence went unnoticed.

Chapter 579 Escape (2)

Fortunately, Zhu Yansong alerted the aircraft crew beforehand and kept them from turning him in.

Thanks to everyone's help, he managed to escape capture this time.

After clearing the suspicions, it wasn't long before the aircraft finally received the control tower's permission to take off.

As the plane ascended, Ling Chen finally felt a weight lift off his chest.

Returning to Beijing, he didn't expect to stir up so much trouble. To help him, the General, Han Bing, and Tang Yuan all broke the rules, and he didn't know what kind of punishment they would face.

Although he had escaped from Beijing, the HZ1 was still on him; he couldn't shake off the label of a fugitive for the time being.

Ah! What a headache.

Ling Chen sighed inwardly, Nanrong Wanqing and Hu Fei's fate were uncertain, still waiting for him to rescue them, and then this problem arose, truly troubling.

"Ling, what are you thinking about?"

Seeing Tang Shiyun bring her head closer, Ling Chen pulled his thoughts back and smiled, shaking his head, "Nothing."

"That..." Tang Shiyun looked at Ling Chen, hesitating as if she wanted to say something.

Ling Chen smiled slightly; he well understood what Tang Shiyun wanted to ask. However, even if he told Tang Shiyun, she wouldn't understand.

"Don't worry about me, it's just a misunderstanding; I will prove my innocence soon."

Hearing this, Tang Shiyun tactfully didn't ask further.

"What have you been busy with recently in Beijing?" Ling Chen diverted the subject.

"I attended several performances, and with the New Year coming up, everywhere is recording programs. I've been running around outside every day this month, barely had any rest."

"Don't tire yourself out too much, take care of your health," Ling Chen said with concern.

Tang Shiyun helplessly said, "I know, but sometimes I can't help it. Before, I thought stars were glamorous, only now do I realize that the glamour is superficial, and in reality, it's tough. After these two days, I plan to go home and spend the New Year with my parents. Ling, why don't you join us?"

"Me?" Ling Chen chuckled bitterly and politely declined: "I'd better not. Your mom sees me like an enemy, if I went, your family wouldn't have a peaceful New Year."

"That's true." Tang Shiyun sighed helplessly, pouting, "My mom is just like that, nobody can change her. Thankfully, she has toned it down a bit; she's not like she used to be."

"Regardless, she is your mom, you should treat her well." After saying this, Ling Chen turned his head to look out the window at the blue sky and white clouds, his lips curving into a bitter smile.

He had promised Nanrong Wanqing they would spend the New Year together at home; little did he know such a thing would happen.

At the moment, all he could hope for was to safely rescue everyone.

...

East Sea City.

Criminal Investigation Headquarters.

"Captain Xia."

A uniformed male officer hurriedly ran into Xia Mutong's office, handing over a document and said, "Captain Xia, this is a new order we just received, instructing us to immediately lock down the airport and look for an escaped inmate."

"An escaped inmate?" Xia Mutong asked without looking up: "Which escaped inmate?"

According to the superiors, the escaped inmate stole government property and is an extremely dangerous person. Two hours ago, this inmate escaped from Beijing, and the superiors believe he is likely to come to East Sea City."

"What's the inmate's name?"

"Ling Chen!"

Upon hearing the name Ling Chen, Xia Mutong abruptly lifted her head and stared at her colleague, pausing between words to ask, "Who did you say? Say it again."

"Ling Chen."

After confirming the name of the fugitive again, Xia Mutong quickly flipped open the file. Seeing the familiar photo on it, Xia Mutong was completely stunned.

How did he become a wanted criminal in just a few days?

Such an unreliable bastard! Xia Mutong thought to herself.

"Captain Xia, the higher-ups want us to take action quickly, what do you think..."

"Alright, I know. Notify everyone, head to the airport immediately," Xia Mutong commanded, suppressing the doubts in her heart.

"Yes." The colleague saluted and immediately left the office.

After he left, Xia Mutong thought for a moment, then picked up the phone on her desk and dialed her own mobile number.

When she had broken up with Ling Chen, he still had her mobile phone. If nothing went wrong, this number should be able to reach Ling Chen.

As the call connected, it immediately started ringing.

Connected!

A few seconds later, the call was answered, and a familiar voice came through, "Hello! Who is this?"

Hearing Ling Chen's voice, for some reason, Xia Mutong felt inexplicably irritated and spoke in a displeased tone, "Guess who."

"It's Officer Xia," Ling Chen chuckled awkwardly and asked, "Officer Xia, do you need something from me? Oh, right! I'm borrowing your phone for a few days, I'll return it when I get back."

"Stop beating around the bush, what did you steal?"

"I... how did you know?"

Xia Mutong snorted softly, "How could I not know? Your warrant has already been sent to my desk. Ling, I'm telling you, you'd better surrender willingly, don't make me come and arrest you."

"No way!" Ling Chen's tone suddenly became serious, "Officer Xia, once I settle my matters, I will definitely come to you and surrender. Until then, I hope you can help me."

"Are you asking me to break the rules?"

"You're in charge of the entire unit, they all follow your orders. Just turn a blind eye this time, I'll handle the rest."

"Don't even think about it, I will never show favoritism. The moment you step into East Sea City, I'll definitely arrest you." With that said, without waiting for Ling Chen to say anything more, Xia Mutong immediately hung up the phone.

Leaving the office, Xia Mutong went directly to the technical surveillance department and handed over a note, "Track this mobile phone's signal and report its location to me at all times."

"Yes, Captain Xia!"

Ten minutes later, the plane finally landed at East Sea City Airport.

Ling Chen, blending in with Tang Shiyun's group, walked through the VIP entrance and reached the airport exit. Before he could exit the main door, Ling Chen saw more than a dozen policemen stationed at the door, checking each passing traveler.

"Miss, you go ahead, I have something else to do."

Tang Shiyun glanced at the policemen at the door and immediately understood. Still, she couldn't help but say worriedly, "Ling, be careful."

"I know. I'll visit you another day, goodbye!"

Ling Chen waved his hand, then blended into the crowd and disappeared in an instant.

The police were stationed at all exits of the airport, but this was no obstacle for Ling Chen. Soon, he found an opportunity, and while the police were not looking, he slipped away with the flow of people exiting the airport.

Once outside the airport, Ling Chen stood by the roadside, raising his right hand, ready to hail a taxi.

But at that moment, a hand suddenly reached out from behind and rested on his shoulder.

Chapter 580 Hu Fei's Backup Plan

Who?

Ling Chen suddenly turned around, his gaze meeting a pretty face filled with a faint anger.

Uh... Ling Chen was stunned for a moment, squeezing out an awkward smile, and said, "Officer Xia, what a coincidence." Saying this, Ling Chen's eyes darted around, checking his surroundings to prevent anyone from approaching.

Xia Mutong glared at Ling Chen and hummed softly, "Stop looking. There's no one else here, just you and me. If I wanted to catch you, you would have been surrounded by now."

Hearing this, Ling Chen instantly realized. He was carrying Xia Mutong's phone, she must have located him through the phone signal.

Seeing that Xia Mutong was alone without any subordinates, Ling Chen breathed a sigh of relief. From Xia Mutong's demeanor, it was clear she wasn't planning to arrest him.

"What's in this backpack?" Xia Mutong asked. As she spoke, she reached out to snatch the backpack.

Fortunately, Ling Chen was quick and clutched the backpack to his chest. Xia Mutong ended up grasping at air, and her ample chest bumped directly into Ling Chen's arm.

Embarrassed, Ling Chen stepped back and said, "Officer Xia, we're all friends here, help me out."

"You should at least let me know the reason."

"This..." Ling Chen hesitated, then confessed the truth, "Wanqing is kidnapped, this thing can trade for her life."

"Really?" Xia Mutong's expression loosened, and frowning, she asked, "Then why didn't you call the police?"

"If calling the police was useful, I would have done it already. Officer Xia, I'm short on time, I have to go; I'll come back to you after I resolve this."

Having said that, without waiting for Xia Mutong to respond, Ling Chen quickly dashed towards a taxi at the roadside and dived into it.

Watching the taxi drive away, Xia Mutong stamped her foot in frustration and muttered to herself, "I'll see where you can escape to."

Saying this, a hint of triumph flashed in her eyes.

Sitting in the taxi, Ling Chen turned off his phone to prevent Xia Mutong from tracking his signal again.

Now labeled as a wanted criminal, his ID was certainly of no use, and he couldn't travel by plane, car, or train. He had no choice but to drive to Changle City.

Arriving at the Old City, Ling Chen used a public phone to call Jiang Hao. Soon after, Jiang Hao arrived in a car.

"Chen."

"Give me the car; you take a ride back."

Jiang Hao stepped out of the driver's seat and seeing Ling Chen about to start the car and leave, he hurriedly said, "Chen, don't rush off."

"You have something else?"

"There seems to be a problem in Hu's office; I've been trying to contact you, but your phone was unreachable."

Ling Chen, puzzled, asked, "What's the problem?"

"I'm not sure; his computer keeps showing some messages, and I don't understand this stuff. Hu has instructed us not to touch his computer, so I dared not mess with it. Chen, maybe you should take a look?"

Ling Chen found this strange; Hu Fei had been captured, so how could there be an issue with his computer?

After some thought, Ling Chen decided to go with Jiang Hao. Hu Fei's office wasn't far from there, and it wouldn't take much time.

At a courier company in the Old City, Ling Chen followed Jiang Hao to Hu Fei's office. As soon as he entered, he heard a continuous 'beep' sound from the computer.

"Chen, have a look, it has been beeping for days now."

Ling Chen nodded, walked directly to the computer screen, and immediately, a dialog box popped up with options to accept or reject. Without a second thought, Ling Chen clicked accept.

As the dialog box disappeared, a screen popped up in the center of the monitor, displaying several flashing red dots.

"This is..."

Ling Chen looked at the images displayed on the computer screen, his eyes suddenly brightened, and a faint smile appeared on his lips.

This chubby guy... had a trick up his sleeve all along!

"Jiang Hao, I'm leaving first. Keep an eye on the screen for me, don't let anyone touch it, you hear?"

"Understood, Chen."

"Don't turn off your phone, I'll contact you at any time."

Leaving the courier company, Ling Chen drove alone toward the highway entrance.

A night passed.

After a journey of more than ten hours, Ling Chen finally drove into Changling City.

Having not slept for two consecutive days and nights, he was extremely exhausted at this point. However, it was crucial time, he couldn't afford to be tired and hurriedly rushed to the hotel to meet with Sang Ji and others.

"Elder Zhou, I've brought the stuff."

Ling Chen set down his backpack, panting as he spoke.

Sang Ji shook his head, saying, "We mobilized a lot of intelligence resources, but the information we gathered is very limited, probably not much help to our operation."

"That's not a problem; I know where the person is."

"You know?" Zhou Jun looked at Ling Chen in surprise and asked, "Where are they?"

Ling Chen brought over a map, spread it out in front of everyone, and then pointed to a location on it.

"Yinan Village."

Zhou Qi and others looked at each other and asked, "Are you sure?"

Ling Chen nodded firmly and said, "One hundred percent sure. Before Hu Fei was captured, he had taken precautions and carried a tracker on him. Through the tracker's signal, we can narrow the area down to fifty meters."

Sang Ji pondered for a moment and said, "Yinan Village is located on the outskirts of Changling City, even separated by a town. Since they are detained in Yinan Village, it indicates that the place is a core area of the God Organization. Otherwise, they wouldn't have sent the prisoners to such a far place. I will immediately contact the Secret Society, let them mobilize all forces, and start a search in Yinan Village to see if they can find any valuable clues."

Ling Chen looked at the time and added, "There are seven hours left until the deadline set by Wu Jun. You guys better hurry. Also, be very careful, don't expose your tracks."

"Don't worry, I know what to do."

Zhou Qi, seeing the exhausted look on Ling Chen's face, couldn't help but say, "You've worked hard too, take some rest first, I'll call you when it's time."

"Alright, thanks."

Lying on the bed, Ling Chen closed his eyes and soon, thunderous snores began to sound.

The night deepened.

Ten o'clock.

Ling Chen took a shower in the hotel bathroom, then, carrying the backpack with HZ1, went alone to the agreed location.

It was still that same restaurant from last time; when Ling Chen arrived, the restaurant's main hall was desolately empty, not a person in sight.

Ling Chen didn't hesitate, heading straight to an upstairs private room.

Upon entering, he saw Wu Jun sitting by a round table, holding a wine glass, gently swirling the red liquid inside.

Seeing Ling Chen striding in, Wu Jun greeted him with a radiant smile, "Ling, you're very punctual. Did you bring the goods?"

Ling Chen threw his backpack onto the table and asked, "Here's the stuff, where's the person I asked for?"

"Ling, I apologize, but there might be some changes to the conditions we had agreed upon previously."

Hearing this, Ling Chen's face turned cold, and just as he was about to rebuke, he heard a burst of hurried footsteps coming from outside the private room.