The City 351

Chapter 351: Grass Grass Grass Grass!

"I'm at the City Hospital. I'm really fine. If you have something to do, handle your own affairs first." Although Su Changfeng said this, he didn't really think so; he definitely hoped Tang Qiulu would come to take care of him.

"What do you mean you're fine? How could my matters be more important than you? I'm coming to find you right now." After ending the call, Tang Qiulu hurried out the door with an anxious expression.

In less than 20 minutes, Tang Qiulu had already arrived at the hospital. When she saw Su Changfeng's current state, her lips twitched continuously, and her worry turned into amusement.

But she had to hold it in, because with Su Changfeng looking like this, it wouldn't be appropriate to laugh.

When Su Changfeng saw Tang Qiulu frozen there and her twitching lips, he couldn't help but smile bitterly. He had just been imagining Tang Qiulu's reaction when she saw him—nervous, worried, concerned; he had considered all of them. Who knew she would find it funny?

"If you can't hold it in anymore, just laugh." Su Changfeng said helplessly.

Tang Qiulu quickly took a few deep breaths to force her laughter back inside. She walked to the bedside, touched Su Changfeng's 'big' head, and asked, "It's bandaged so tightly; the injury must be severe, right?"

The injury wasn't severe; the reason for the tight bandaging was due to many small wounds on his head, caused by the shattered glass from a beer bottle.

"Yeah, it hurts especially bad. My head is still dizzy." Su Changfeng pretended to be weak as he spoke.

The humor she had been suppressing in her heart disappeared in that moment; with tears in her eyes, Tang Qiulu said with concern, "I'm sorry, it's all because of me."

Su Changfeng held Tang Qiulu's hand and said, "It's not your fault; I was the one who wasn't careful and got ambushed by Tang Xiangdong. Otherwise, he wouldn't be a match for me."

"Didn't you kill Tang Xiangdong?" Tang Qiulu asked.

"No, currently he has support from behind him; it's not a small matter." Su Changfeng said with some emotion.

Tang Lei suddenly intervened, completely changing the nature of the situation. In Beijing, Tang Lei was quite a significant figure, and now Tang Xiangdong had become his pawn. It's not as easy to deal with Tang Xiangdong as it was before.

"Don't worry about what that guy is planning. Right now your health is the most important thing. Don't worry about anything else." Tang Qiulu didn't care who was backing Tang Xiangdong or how powerful they were. In her eyes, even the Tang Group couldn't compare to Su Changfeng's status in her heart. The pity was that the last layer of window paper between her and Su Changfeng had yet to be broken.

Of course, this was partly because Su Changfeng was oblivious to romance; Tang Qiulu had hinted to him many times but he simply couldn't understand, which left Tang Qiulu feeling helpless.

"I don't care who his backer is. In my view, it's just one loser versus two losers; there's no difference." Su Changfeng said with a smile.

"You've got a head injury, yet here you are bragging." Tang Qiulu glared at Su Changfeng.

Seeing that Tang Qiulu's gaze held no accusation, Su Changfeng couldn't help but sigh. Those enticing red lips, he could have had them but didn't expect Huangfu Heibai to use such underhanded tactics to make him lose the match.

"Lost the match." Su Changfeng said dejectedly.

"Qingshan already explained the whole thing on the phone. I know what happened. If it weren't for me, you'd have won." Tang Qiulu said.

Su Changfeng couldn't help but lick his lips and asked, "That match was lost because of you. Is there any compensation?"

Tang Qiulu's face blushed: "Definitely not."

Hearing Tang Qiulu say this, Su Changfeng felt like he was drained of energy, lying on the bed with no desire for life whatsoever.

Just as Su Changfeng was feeling dejected, he heard Tang Qiulu say, "But I'm your wife."

This statement made Su Changfeng suddenly lift his head, looking at Tang Qiulu with eyes shining—wife? Does that mean he could exercise his rights as a husband now?

With a dry throat, Su Changfeng slowly leaned his head toward Tang Qiulu.

Then, the door was suddenly pushed open, and a doctor walked in confidently: "Room check!"

Crap crap crap crap!

Su Changfeng felt a thousand curses run through his mind. Can't you peek into the room from outside before checking it? Of all times, it had to be at this crucial moment!

Tang Qiulu swiftly stood up, unable to hide her embarrassment, she lowered her head.

The doctor only asked a few simple questions and then left, but the atmosphere in the room was different from before, tinged with a sense of awkwardness, and Tang Qiulu didn't sit on the bed again.

A golden opportunity was ruthlessly shattered by that doctor.

In the evening, Tang Qiulu still stayed at the hospital with Su Changfeng. Despite Su Changfeng repeatedly saying he was fine, Tang Qiulu couldn't rest easy and insisted on staying, forcing Su Changfeng to give in.

Early the next morning, the entrance to the Tang Group was bustling with activity. The gates were blocked, preventing the employees from entering.

"Who are these people? Why are they blocking our group?"

"Looks like they're here to stir trouble for the group. I heard it seems the chairman offended these people."

"The chairman hasn't been to the group for a while now; did she provoke someone important in Hai City?"

"Who knows, just when we barely got over a crisis, someone else comes looking for trouble."

Initially, it was just several old men from the Go Association, each holding a chair, sitting at the group's entrance, each smiling slightly.

"It's turned into this; let's see how long Tang Qiulu can hide."

"Who would've thought this couple are both cowards; Su Changfeng's hiding and dares not show his face, while Tang Qiulu doesn't even care about the group."

"We just stepped out, and it's normal for Tang Qiulu not to face us. Does she really have the guts to oppose us?"

"That's right, it's just the small Tang Family, with just a bit of capability."

The few spoke proudly, holding onto their grudge against Su Changfeng for losing the match. Originally intending to find trouble with Su Changfeng, when he returned acting arrogantly, they couldn't find Tang Qiulu.

So they decided to come to the Tang Group to stir trouble, blocking the entrance and preventing anyone from working was extremely malicious and arrogant, but the few were not worried about repercussions, as they believed the small Tang Family amounted to nothing against them.

Then, one old man stood up and shouted to the Tang Group's employees: "Contact Tang Qiulu at once, have her come out immediately."

Chapter 352: Blocking the Group's Main Entrance

"Otherwise, you won't need to go to work anymore. From now on, the Tang Group will be completely shut down. If you don't believe me, then go out and ask who I am."

This old guy was particularly arrogant, and his words angered many people in the group. However, even though these people were angry, they didn't dare to say anything because these old men didn't look like ordinary people, while the group's employees were just regular folks. No one wanted to offend them.

Tang Qiulu's assistant, Wang Xiaoxiao, saw that no one from the Tang Family was stepping forward, so she had no choice but to stand up.

"Chairman Tang hasn't been in Hai City recently. If you need to reach her, can't you wait until she comes back?" Wang Xiaoxiao said.

"Not in Hai City? I bet she doesn't dare to show her face. It's impossible for her to leave Hai City. Who are you? Do you have the right to talk to me?" The old man looked at Wang Xiaoxiao with disdain.

Wang Xiaoxiao wasn't a big figure in the group and usually didn't have much voice, but at this time, none of the Tang Family was stepping up, and she had no choice. She couldn't let everyone keep waiting, as there were issues in the group that needed to be resolved.

"I'm Chairman Tang's assistant." Wang Xiaoxiao said.

The old man laughed. How could a mere assistant dare to speak to him?

“You’re just a minor assistant, so don’t say too much. You have two options: call Tang Qiulu or find a new job elsewhere.” The old man said disdainfully.

Wang Xiaoxiao gritted her teeth and said defiantly, “What right do you have to block our group? We all need to work. What you’re doing is illegal.”

“Illegal?” The old man had a mocking expression and approached Wang Xiaoxiao, giving her a once-over. Though she wasn’t a top beauty, she was decent enough, and her figure was alluring. This sparked nefarious thoughts in the old man, and he said, “Little girl, go ask about me, Zhou Chaohai. Zhou Chengfei is my son. Do you know the consequences of talking to me like this? But don’t be afraid; if you become my secretary, I can pretend you didn’t say anything.”

“Zhou Chaohai!”

“So it’s Zhou Chaohai.”

“No wonder he’s so arrogant. Chao Hai Group was founded by him single-handedly.”

After hearing Zhou Chaohai’s identity, everyone was shocked. They had been curious about the identity of these elders who dared to directly block the Tang Family’s group. Now they understood that the influence of the Zhou Family in Hai City was not something the Tang Family could compare to; only the Gu Family could suppress the Zhou Family.

“You… are Zhou Chaohai.” Wang Xiaoxiao said with some fear.

Zhou Chaohai laughed smugly, feeling very satisfied with Wang Xiaoxiao’s display of fear.

“What do you think? Become my secretary; I can assure you the job won’t be tiring, and you’ll earn more than others. Think about it?” Zhou Chaohai said.

Wang Xiaoxiao was a girl with high demands for quality of life. Her clothes, bags, and cosmetics were all high-end brands. However, she also had the heart of a strong woman. Though she saved up for these things, she couldn't take the route of being kept.

Wang Xiaoxiao understood what kind of job Zhou Chaohai meant by 'secretary,' but she wanted to obtain her desires through her efforts, not by doing this.

"I know you're rich, but if my happiness is obtained this way, I won't do it!" Wang Xiaoxiao said firmly.

Zhou Chaohai's face showed some displeasure. He had rarely been interested in something like this, and it was rare for him to have an intention with Wang Xiaoxiao, but she actually refused?

"Humph, alright, then you can join the others in finding a job. Just a friendly reminder: as long as I say so, no company in Hai City will dare to hire!" Zhou Chaohai said.

Zhou Chaohai wasn't just speaking for fun; Wang Xiaoxiao clearly understood the kind of fate awaiting her after Zhou Chaohai set his sights on her. However, she wouldn't compromise because of this.

"The Tang Family is not so easily defeated. Chairman Tang's personal ability is exceptional, and I believe she can overcome this crisis." Wang Xiaoxiao said.

Zhou Chaohai laughed and said, "What use are her personal abilities? I can block everyone in Hai City from cooperating with the Tang Family; what can Tang Qiulu do about it? In my view, she's just an ant, and your faith in her will ultimately lead to disappointment."

Wang Xiaoxiao looked at the Tang Family members. Even in such a situation, none of them stepped forward to speak for the Tang Family. Some of these people were even leaders in the group, yet all of them were like turtles shrinking into their shells with the current situation.

Wang Xiaoxiao didn't know that the Tang Family members had always been focused only on their own interests rather than caring about the group's problems. These people had been living off the profits from the group, hoping for them to speak up for the group now was nothing but a wild wish.

Moreover, these people not only wouldn't help speak up for the group, they'd resent Tang Qiulu. If it weren't for Tang Qiulu offending these people, why would Zhou Chaohai target their group?

"None of you can contact Tang Qiulu? How does a heap of trash survive?" Zhou Chaohai asked, glancing around.

Not just employees, but the Tang Family's relatives didn't have the courage to meet Zhou Chaohai's eyes at this moment; they lowered their heads, remaining silent.

Wang Xiaoxiao was equally helpless, so she said, "I'll call Chairman Tang right now."

In the hospital, Tang Qiulu was peeling an apple for Su Changfeng when her phone rang, showing Wang Xiaoxiao's name on the screen. Her mind immediately connected the call to problems at the group, since she hadn't been to the group for a few days and wasn't aware of the current situation.

"Wang Xiaoxiao, what's going on?" Handing the apple to Su Changfeng, Tang Qiulu asked.

"Chairman Tang, Zhou Chaohai and others are blocking the group entrance, preventing everyone from working." Wang Xiaoxiao said.

Upon hearing the name Zhou Chaohai, Tang Qiulu instinctively frowned. This old fellow had previously been to the group because of Su Changfeng, and she couldn't have expected he'd actually blockade the group's door this time!

Tang Qiulu didn't understand what was happening before, but now she realized clearly that the earlier visit from Zhou Chaohai and his men was to get Su Changfeng to join a competition. These old folks were members of an association, wanting Su Changfeng to win and boost their reputation.

However, now that Su Changfeng had lost the competition, these people would definitely think Su Changfeng had disgraced them and were causing trouble at the group because of it.

"Okay, I understand. I'll head back to the group right away." Tang Qiulu said.

Chapter 353: Tang Qiulu Steps Forward

After hanging up the phone, Su Changfeng asked, “Did something happen?”

Tang Qiulu sighed and said, “There are some important documents at the group that need my signature.”

She hadn’t planned to tell Su Changfeng about this because he was still injured and recovering was the top priority. She didn’t want this small matter to prevent him from resting properly.

“Then you should hurry back to the group, I’m strong enough now to punch a cow to death—I can take care of myself,” Su Changfeng said.

Tang Qiulu nodded and said, “What do you want for lunch? I can bring it back for you.”

“Anything is fine. If you’re really busy, you don’t have to worry about lunch,” Su Changfeng said.

“Alright, remember to call me if you need anything,” Tang Qiulu said.

Having been taken care of by Tang Qiulu all night, Su Changfeng felt very content. Therefore, he felt no unease when Tang Qiulu left at that moment.

He suddenly remembered the Purgatory matter. He didn’t know how Pangolin was doing and kept the receiver device with him at all times, afraid of missing any messages from Pangolin.

Previously, Su Changfeng considered Tang Qiulu the most important part of his life, but now whether Su Qingtian was still alive ranked equally high for him.

Tang Qiulu was Su Changfeng’s kin, and Su Qingtian was also close family. Both were indispensable to Su Changfeng, but unfortunately, he didn’t know when he would hear news about Su Qingtian. He had no choice but to wait.

Tang Qiulu drove to the group, where all the employees were gathered at the front gate, and a few of the older fellows were sitting there, exuding an air of authority.

Zhou Chaohai sat among them because, among the old fellows, his position was higher.

Since retiring, Zhou Chaohai had never been this much in the spotlight, and though he was well up in years, he still felt a sense of pride, which hadn't waned at all.

"Chairman Tang is here!"

"Finally here, but I don't know whether Chairman Tang can come up with a solution for this."

"Sigh, I think it's tough. Who's Zhou Chaohai? His position is much higher than Chairman Tang's. Plus, not one of those old fellows is simple. If they all target the Tang Family, maybe we'd indeed be out of work."

Wang Xiaoxiao hurried over to Tang Qiulu and said, "Chairman Tang, these people came to make trouble for the group. Could it be that our competitors are trying to destroy us?"

Tang Qiulu shook her head, offered no response, and headed straight toward Zhou Chaohai and the others.

"Finally tired of being a coward? Finally willing to show yourself?" Zhou Chaohai said with a smile to Tang Qiulu.

"Does Su Changfeng have any obligation to win the competition for you?" Tang Qiulu said coldly. Now that she understood why these old fellows were here, she had no need for pretense.

Currently, the Go Association in Hai City had become the biggest joke in the country. Even though they had long resigned from the association, they still faced disgrace. Being ridiculed this way had made these old folks particularly angry. Hearing what Tang Qiulu said, their tempers flared up.

“Tang Qiulu, you better watch your attitude. If I, Zhou Chaohai, speak out, your group will be removed from Hai City,” Zhou Chaohai said.

“Since you’re all so capable, why don’t you compete? Is it impossible for you? Or you? Or you?” Tang Qiulu scornfully pointed at a few of them and said.

The faces of those pointed at by Tang Qiulu changed instantly. If they had the ability, they wouldn’t have asked Su Changfeng to compete. It was because they lacked the capability but wanted to save face that they tried to force Su Changfeng into the competition.

Of course, in their eyes, it wasn’t exactly forcing—it was just how they rationalized it among themselves. If not for Tang Qiulu, even pointing a gun wouldn’t have changed Su Changfeng’s decision.

“Tang Qiulu, we just want Su Changfeng to stand up and kneel down to apologize to us. Don’t be ignorant!”

“A small Tang Family can’t stand against us. I suggest you reconsider.”

“Speaking up for that worthless man gives you nothing and everybody in Hai City knows his reputation, right? It’s just kneeling down to apologize, not a loss for the Tang Family, right?”

Hearing their words, Tang Qiulu looked extremely cold. It was true that people in Hai City largely considered Su Changfeng a coward.

But in Tang Qiulu’s eyes, Su Changfeng wasn’t a loser or coward. He was simply low-key and didn’t like to show off.

“He’s my husband. Of course, I’ll speak on his behalf. And anyway, this matter isn’t his fault; it’s you all who pushed too far. Why should he kneel down and apologize to you?” Tang Qiulu said assertively.

Zhou Chaohai looked at Tang Qiulu with a sinister gaze. Originally, he thought pressuring her would make Su Changfeng come out and apologize, but he didn’t expect Tang Qiulu to be so resolute, completely dismissing them!

“Husband? You actually admit such trash as your husband? Who in Hai City doesn’t know that in three years of marriage, he hasn’t touched you once? Have you resigned to your fate at this point? Willing to let the Tang Family fall into trouble for this loser Su Changfeng?” Zhou Chaohai retorted.

Rumors about Su Changfeng and Tang Qiulu were spread by Tang Xiangdong in Hai City. His influence had greatly contributed to Su Changfeng’s reputation, but that was just that. The current situation wasn’t as the rumors suggested.

Tang Qiulu had gone from detesting Su Changfeng to having a change of heart, acknowledging her feelings for him. She had hinted multiple times to Su Changfeng before that, if he wasn’t so oblivious, they would have already become a real couple.

“Zhou Chaohai, even at your age, you still have no shame? Su Changfeng can’t lose a match and has to bring you face? Things you can’t accomplish, where do you get the idea he should?” Tang Qiulu exclaimed.

Zhou Chaohai and the others had a firm and superior attitude because they genuinely believed they could threaten Su Changfeng at first. This made them feel Su Changfeng could be easily manipulated, which is why they dared to push so aggressively.

Moreover, Su Changfeng had already easily defeated Sima Chenguang in the association before. His participation in the match was a sure victory.

Chapter 354: The Powerful Tang Qiulu

Therefore, in the eyes of these few people, Su Changfeng is not incapable of winning; he’s deliberately trying to embarrass them and deliberately going against them.

He’s just a coward, where does he get the qualifications to not listen to them?

This is what Zhou Chaohai and the others think, overbearing and unreasonable!

“Why are you wasting time saying all this? We only have one condition. Make Su Changfeng come over immediately and kneel down to apologize to us. Otherwise, your group might as well be prepared to shut down,” Zhou Chaohai said, without any intention of bending.

The Tang Family members were particularly angry upon hearing that the entire incident was actually caused by Su Changfeng. The group just got out of one crisis and now it’s in trouble again because Su Changfeng offended these people.

“Qiulu, you have to consider the overall situation of the group. Su Changfeng offended Elder Zhou and the others. Having him come over and apologize by kneeling isn’t a big deal, it’s just proper to do so.”

“That’s right, you can’t risk the entire group for this coward, Su Changfeng. You must think it over.”

“Even though you’re the chairman and we don’t have a say, if you’re going to drag the group down for Su Changfeng, do you think it’s worth it?”

Several members of the Tang Family tried to persuade Tang Qiulu earnestly.

Tang Qiulu sneered coldly. Without Su Changfeng, the Tang Group would have already gone bankrupt, but that’s something Su Changfeng doesn’t want to bring up. These useless individuals actually hope to make Su Changfeng kneel for the stability of the group.

She knew that these guys were not genuinely worried about the group, but were concerned that if the group went bankrupt, they wouldn’t have jobs to support them, and just having Su Changfeng kneel and apologize didn’t threaten their interests. They probably thought it was no big deal.

“Since I’m the person in charge of the group, you don’t have the right to criticize my decisions. If you want Su Changfeng to apologize, that’s impossible,” Tang Qiulu said.

“You…”

“Qiulu, do you really want to see the group go bankrupt?”

“I used to think that you were particularly smart and sensible, but seeing how things are now, I guess I was thinking too much. You’re just a fool who doesn’t know what to do!”

The Tang Family members said angrily to Tang Qiulu.

Although Tang Siwen didn’t speak, she was delighted to see the current situation. If the Tang Group went bankrupt, Tang Qiulu would no longer be the chairman and wouldn’t be qualified to act high and mighty. Right now, she couldn’t wait for the group to collapse so Tang Qiulu would take a big fall.

“Tang Qiulu, everyone is doing it for the good of the group. Why are you so stubborn? Going against Elder Zhou is asking for death.” Tang Siwen said.

Zhou Chaohai listened with a smug face: “It seems your employees are quite aware and know that offending me, Zhou Chaohai, is not something you want to do. Now, I’m giving you one last chance. Make Su Changfeng come out immediately, kneel, and apologize to us, and we can pretend that nothing happened today.

Tang Qiulu ignored Zhou Chaohai’s words and told the employees: “From now on, we’re taking a one-week paid vacation. If you believe in our group, wait for good news. If you think the group is going to go bankrupt, you can start looking for other groups now. I, Tang Qiulu, won’t say a word against it.

These words caused an explosive reaction. The group had just overcome the last crisis, and there’s a lot of work left to do now. Taking a week off would be a significant loss for the group.

But on the other hand, Tang Qiulu’s courage is truly admirable. She exuded extraordinary confidence at that moment, making people feel that even if Zhou Chaohai was targeting their group, it could still survive.

“Chairman Tang has quite the courage, taking a paid week off!”

“The group is still a mess now; can it really survive if we rest for a week?”

“Chairman Tang surely isn’t joking about this. After all, it was the acquisition of the group that made her the chairman, and there might be someone supporting her behind the scenes with ample funds.”

“This makes Hai City much more lively now. Who knows who will be the ultimate victor?”

While these staff murmured, the expressions of Zhou Chaohai and his group were extremely grim. Tang Qiulu’s attitude was particularly strong and unyielding, which was unexpected for them.

Of course, if they really targeted the Tang Group, in their eyes, it would be a piece of cake.

“Tang Qiulu, having such courage at such a young age really surprises me, but your experience in business matters is still lacking, and there’s no remedy for regret. I hope you can bear the consequences,” Zhou Chaohai said coldly.

“Zhou Chaohai, I hope you don’t regret either,” Tang Qiulu directly called out his name, no longer regarding him as a senior.

Zhou Chaohai said with coldness in his eyes: “In 10 days, if the Tang Family doesn’t go bankrupt, Zhou Chaohai will take the Tang surname. You all can bear witness.

Zhou Chaohai’s words, like a military order, made those around not dare to even breathe too loudly.

His decision means he won’t show any leniency to Tang Qiulu.

Comparing the strengths on both sides, Tang Qiulu is not expected to win at all.

The Tang Family is just a second-tier group, while the Chao Hai Group is only below the Gu Family, not to mention there are other groups, too. If these few really joined forces, only the Gu Family could remain unscathed; other groups would be knocked down.

In many people’s eyes, the group is now beyond saving, and under the targeting of Zhou Chaohai’s group, there’s no way it could survive.

Some people even think Tang Qiulu's actions are not worth it, risking the entire group for just a coward. This is plain foolish behavior.

Especially the members of the Tang Family, who are particularly angry. They worked so hard to secure their jobs, and now because of Tang Qiulu's foolish decision, the group is once again in crisis, threatening their livelihood.

But now the group is controlled by Tang Qiulu, and they are just ordinary employees, powerless in the situation.

"Why is it so lively here? I'm not late, am I?" At this moment, a familiar voice rang out from the crowd, and Tang Xiangdong stepped forward.

"Tang Xiangdong, what are you doing here?" Tang Qiulu looked coldly at Tang Xiangdong. If it wasn't for this bastard getting her caught, Su Changfeng wouldn't have lost this match!

Chapter 355: Tang Xiangdong Starts a Corporation?

Tang Xiangdong laughed, his happiness was genuine. Now that he had the funds Tang Lei gave him, he could also own a group and again be the Tang Family's young master.

"I'm here to see how the group gets ruined under your hands, is that not allowed?" Tang Xiangdong said with a smile.

"There's definitely no problem, you can keep your eyes wide open to see how the group rises powerfully in Hai City." Tang Qiulu said.

Tang Xiangdong seemed to hear a joke and laughed heartily. Wasn't Su Changfeng the forgotten child of the Su Family? Did this make her so confident? She really couldn't see the current situation.

"Tang Qiulu, you sure have some nerve, but wait until the company goes bankrupt, let's see if you'll still say that." Tang Xiangdong said.

“This is none of your business. The group’s matters have nothing to do with you. You better get out now!” Tang Qiulu said coldly.

Tang Xiangdong’s expression suddenly darkened, telling him to get out? Did Tang Qiulu have the right to say that? At the moment, he had ample funds in his hands and could start a group comparable to the Tang Family at any time. What right did Tang Qiulu have to speak to him this way?

“Tang Qiulu, you don’t care about the future of the Tang Family people, but I can’t let everyone be implicated with you, so this time I came here to bring everyone good news.” Tang Xiangdong said, then looked at the Tang Family people and continued: “I’m planning to start a group and have 1 billion at hand. If everyone would like to leave with me, you’ll keep the same positions in my group.”

These Tang Family people couldn’t stay calm upon hearing this news.

Tang Xiangdong has 1 billion and plans to start a group. In their view, this is good news, because currently the Tang Family’s group clearly is going to collapse. If they could follow Tang Xiangdong again, they absolutely would have no objections.

“Donglin, you’re not joking, right? You really plan to start a group?”

“Why do you suddenly have 1 billion? This is not a joking matter right now.”

“If you really start a group, we absolutely would follow you.”

The speed at which the Tang Family relatives switched allegiance was even faster than the face-changing speed of Sichuan opera, all looking at Tang Xiangdong with an expectant expression.

“Definitely not joking. Someone saw my ability and plans to invest 1 billion, so I can continue in Hai City. I consider us all family, so only wanted to give everyone a chance. If you don’t trust me, just pretend I wasn’t here.” Tang Xiangdong said indifferently.

“Trust, definitely trust you. I’ll go with you.”

“I’ll go with you too. This rotten group, I’ve long wanted to quit.”

“Tang Qiulu is absolutely not cut out to be a chairman. Under her direction, the group will inevitably collapse. And now you bring such good news, how could we not believe you!”

Hearing these words, Tang Xiangdong smiled and proudly said to Tang Qiulu: “Seems everyone doesn’t quite like you; they’re all willing to come with me.”

“These parasites, now that you’ve taken them away, I should thank you.” Tang Qiulu smiled, completely unconcerned with the Tang Family’s betrayal. These people had no ability and only thought of ways to siphon money from the group with no achievements whatsoever.

“Tang Qiulu, what do you mean by this?”

“The group collapsing under your hands is deserved, a person like you who doesn’t know priority, how can you be a chairman?”

“Though you’re a junior, as elders, we don’t want to argue with you much. Be careful by yourself not to provoke Elder Zhou and the others, that’s the most wrong decision of your life.”

A group of people criticized Tang Qiulu, Tang Xiangdong saw the current situation, his smile becoming even wider.

“Ai, Tang Qiulu, you’ve put Su Changfeng too high. He can’t do everything. You’ll regret this. I see Su Changfeng, that waste, this time he’s specifically helping you.” Tang Xiangdong shook his head, said with a look of lament.

If Su Changfeng were a Su Family member, just this aspect alone would be worth fearing, and Tang Xiangdong wouldn’t dare to trouble him. But he had been abandoned by the Su Family for a long time, even if he got considerable money from the Su Family during those times, probably that money was gone by now.

The Mountain Villa costs nearly a billion, acquiring the Tang Family Group needs considerable funds, in Tang Xiangdong's view, after these two things, whatever Su Changfeng brought from the Su Family is likely used up. Without money, how can Su Changfeng help Tang Qiulu?

Moreover, he currently has Tang Lei as his backup. This 1 billion is just the initial investment, he can still find ways to get more money from Tang Lei. With such a backing, it's only a matter of time before he crushes Su Changfeng.

"Tang Xiangdong, you've only gained some profits, don't celebrate too early. You probably know you're just a puppet." Tang Qiulu said disdainfully.

"Puppet" stabbed Tang Xiangdong's heart, he could be arrogant in front of others, but in front of Tang Lei, he's just a dog. But only he needed to know this, there was no need for others to tell him.

"Tang Qiulu, even if I am a puppet, it's still better than you whose group will soon collapse, speaking this way to me, what's the point?" Tang Xiangdong said.

"The truth will show you who the real winner is." Tang Qiulu said indifferently.

"Winner?" Tang Xiangdong coldly laughed, said: "Then this time I'll show you what a winner looks like."

After that, Tang Dong said to the other Lin Group employees: "Is there anyone interested in working at my group? I'll not only raise your benefits but also give you a stable work environment. You can all see the current state of the Tang Family Group; going against Elder Zhou means the group's collapse is inevitable. You must consider for yourselves. Now the opportunity is here, if you don't grasp it well, you'll miss out."

Tang Xiangdong's words indeed influenced quite a few because most people did not believe Tang Qiulu could weather this crisis. Once the group went bankrupt, they would likely lose their jobs, but now Tang Xiangdong was willing to accept them. It was indeed a rare opportunity.

Wang Xiaoxiao saw the current situation and was anxious as the group's difficulties piled up. If all these employees left, it would undoubtedly add fuel to the fire for the group.

Chapter 356: I Love Him

“Chairman Tang has treated everyone well, and you all know it better than I do. Now that the group is in trouble, we should work together to overcome the difficulties,” Wang Xiaoxiao said.

“With what means? Only if Chairman Tang gets that coward Su Changfeng to come out and apologize will it work, otherwise how can we fight Elder Zhou?”

“That’s right, unless Chairman Tang agrees to let Su Changfeng kneel and apologize, otherwise we can only leave. No one wants to risk their future.”

“Everyone also needs to live. We cannot sacrifice our future for the group.”

Voices of rebuttal arose, and many people began to state their positions. They all agreed to go work for Tang Xiangdong’s group. Now the internal issues of the group had erupted, causing a real crisis for the Tang Group.

Tang Qiulu never expected the situation to become like this. Losing those from the Tang Family wasn’t detrimental to the group, but among these employees, many were the backbone of the group. Once they left, the group would truly be in danger.

“Whoever wants to leave, I won’t force them to stay,” Tang Qiulu said after taking a deep breath. Even if everyone in the group left, she would never make Su Changfeng come out to apologize.

“Chairman Tang, sorry, but we all want to survive,” someone said.

“Sigh, is it really worth it to let the whole group get dragged into this because of a coward?”

“It’s best to leave early, otherwise we’ll end up unemployed sooner or later.”

Tang Qiulu stood there with an expressionless face, watching her old subordinates, who had all joined Tang Xiangdong’s new group. Now, only Wang Xiaoxiao remained standing behind her.

“Chairman Tang, I trust you. I will stay with the group through thick and thin,” Wang Xiaoxiao said firmly to Tang Qiulu. Although she also believed that the crisis was significant, Tang Qiulu had been particularly good to her, and she wouldn’t act ungratefully now.

Tang Qiulu smiled happily and said, “Don’t worry, I surely won’t let the group fall like this.”

“Tsk, tsk, tsk…” Tang Siwen came over to Tang Qiulu, full of emotional sentiments, complaining irritably: “You really do love that coward Su Changfeng deeply. Why didn’t I see you be so passionate towards him before? Now you’re willing to not care about the group for his sake.”

“Tang Siwen, this has nothing to do with you. Shouldn’t you be particularly happy if the group goes bankrupt?” Tang Qiulu said.

“Of course,” Tang Siwen replied without even thinking. “I’m really happy about it, but I just can’t figure out what exactly Su Changfeng, that garbage, has given you to make you willingly do this?”

“I love him,” Tang Qiulu said.

“Pfft…” Tang Siwen couldn’t help but laugh, looking at Tang Qiulu while saying: “Interesting, truly interesting, for a coward to have a place in your heart. Tang Qiulu, your taste is really beyond words. I hope when you’re sleeping on the streets with him, you’ll still say that.”

“No matter what the circumstances are, the love between him and me has always been the same. Someone like you, a gold-digger, couldn’t possibly understand,” Tang Qiulu said coldly.

After hearing Tang Qiulu’s words, Tang Siwen wasn’t angry. Instead, she raised her head proudly and said, “So what if I’m a gold-digger? What’s wrong with wanting a better life in the future? Should I be like you? Follow a coward and sleep on the streets? Offend Elder Zhou, and when the group goes bankrupt, you’ll soon become beggars. Even if that day really comes, I won’t want it either!”

Talking about feelings with someone like Tang Siwen was simply an insult to the word ‘feelings,’ so Tang Qiulu didn’t want to say more to her and just turned her head toward Zhou Chaohai.

“Elder Zhou, do what you can, Tang Qiulu will not back down. If there’s nothing else, I’ll be leaving first,” Tang Qiulu said.

Now, within Zhou Chaohai’s heart, there was a slight admiration for Tang Qiulu; even with things this bad, she still didn’t bend, willing to put the entire group at risk to protect her husband.

But it was only admiration because Zhou Chaohai never showed mercy when it came to dealing with opponents.

This time, with things turning out like this, if he didn’t completely destroy the Tang Group, he’d become a laughingstock.

“Tang Qiulu, I hope we can still talk like this in the future, but from my perspective, I don’t think I’ll be speaking to beggars in the future. Just you wait,” Zhou Chaohai said coldly before angrily leaving with a group of old guys.

The employees of the Tang Group left as well, and those from the Tang Family looked at Tang Qiulu with mocking expressions, as if in their eyes, love was a joke. Moreover, doing this for a coward was indeed very unworthy.

“Tang Qiulu, you handle it on your own.”

“Falling in love with a freeloader, you really are foolish.”

“In the future, if you can’t afford to eat, I’ll consider giving you some leftover food out of our past relations.”

After several elders of the Tang Family finished speaking, they stood behind Tang Xiangdong.

“Donglin, let’s leave too. There’s no point talking with someone like her who’s soon to be finished,” Tang Siwen said disdainfully to Tang Qiulu, then turned to Tang Xiangdong.

Tang Dong nodded with great satisfaction and said, “Really nothing to say, let’s go. Only I, Tang Xiangdong, can provide everyone with a happy life. Tang Qiulu will only drag everyone down.”

After everyone left, Tang Qiulu finally relaxed her tense nerves, exhaling a long breath.

“Chairman Tang, now that all the employees have left, what should we do?” Wang Xiaoxiao asked Tang Qiulu. Tang Xiangdong’s words had incited all the employees to leave, effectively turning the Tang Group into an empty nest.

“Don’t worry, I’ll come up with a solution. For now, you should go home and rest. It’s paid leave,” Tang Qiulu said.

Wang Xiaoxiao was filled with concern. The group needed employees for its daily operations, but now that the old staff was gone, even if Tang Qiulu could find a way to recruit new employees, these new people would be unfamiliar with the internal operations and would need time to get acquainted. Coupled with the recent targeting by Zhou Chaohai, Wang Xiaoxiao could not see a way for the group to survive.

Of course, her concern wasn’t about losing her job; she was worried about Tang Qiulu.

“Chairman Tang, I’m not worried about being unemployed. I just don’t want to see the group being ruined by those old guys,” Wang Xiaoxiao said.

Tang Qiulu knew what kind of person Wang Xiaoxiao was. If she were worried about losing her job, she would have gone directly with that group to Tang Xiangdong’s new company and wouldn’t have stayed.

Chapter 357: Sun Mei Still Hasn’t Learned Her Lesson

“I understand how you’re feeling. Take a good rest for now, consider it an extended vacation from the group. The group will definitely pull through, trust me.” Tang Qiulu said.

Wang Xiaoxiao looked sincerely at Tang Qiulu, realizing that she wasn’t joking, and finally breathed a sigh of relief.

“Chairman Tang, I believe the group can survive this. You’re much more capable than Tang Xiangdong. Even if someone funded him to start a group, he would eventually run it into bankruptcy.” Wang Xiaoxiao said.

Tang Qiulu smiled, looking at the tall building of the group. In fact, she was also unsure. If she had to rely solely on her own means, it would be impossible to save the group.

Therefore, all of Tang Qiulu’s hopes were pinned on Su Changfeng. However, Su Changfeng was currently injured, and she had to wait for him to recover before she could talk to him about this. Giving him a week’s vacation was for this very reason.

After returning to the hospital, Tang Qiulu put on an air of nonchalance. Even if Su Changfeng asked her, Tang Qiulu would dismiss it with a word.

“By the way, how much longer will the group be busy?” Su Changfeng asked. The two had agreed to retake their wedding photos earlier, and he was growing impatient.

“It should be soon, but if you want, we can go take the pictures tomorrow.” Tang Qiulu smiled.

“Tomorrow?” Su Changfeng instinctively touched his head. If he went to take pictures looking like this, the photographer might laugh so hard they couldn’t hold the camera steady. Besides, wedding photos are particularly important and deserve to be taken in the most perfect state.

“No way, if my future son saw me looking like this in the photos, he would laugh at me.” Su Changfeng decisively refused.

The word “son” made Tang Qiulu’s heart race. Although she hadn’t thought about these things yet, she knew they would come sooner or later. As for becoming a mother, Tang Qiulu felt a bit scared but was also quite expectant.

“Who wants to have a son with you? Stop flattering yourself.” Tang Qiulu said, avoiding Su Changfeng’s eyes.

Su Changfeng was overjoyed. Tang Qiulu's tone was playfully coy, which meant that she didn't really reject the idea, and this showed Su Changfeng a glimmer of victory, as if the revolution was about to succeed.

Just as they showed the slightest hint of romance, someone opened the door again, and Su Changfeng felt exasperated. Why did the doctor always appear at the most crucial moment?

However, upon seeing who came in, Su Changfeng's complaints vanished like smoke.

It wasn't the doctor who entered; it was Sun Mei and Tang Zhenhua. It was unexpected that they would come over.

"Dad, Mom." Su Changfeng called out.

"How's your health now?" Sun Mei asked, bringing a fruit basket to his bedside.

"It's nothing, just a minor wound." Su Changfeng said.

"As long as you're okay, that's all that matters." Sun Mei said, then turned to Tang Qiulu, "Qiulu, come out for a moment, I have something to ask you."

After Sun Mei and Tang Qiulu left the ward, Su Changfeng's brows furrowed together. It was clear that Sun Mei's purpose in coming to the hospital was not to see him, but to seek out Tang Qiulu.

"Dad, has something happened?" Su Changfeng asked Tang Zhenhua.

"No, nothing happened, not a single thing. You just focus on resting." Tang Zhenhua said, unable to hide the panic on his face.

Su Changfeng's face turned extremely gloomy. Clearly, something must have happened, but Tang Qiulu didn't want to tell him.

Outside the ward, Sun Mei took Tang Qiulu all the way to the end of the hospital corridor.

“Mom, what’s going on? Can’t you say it in the ward?” Tang Qiulu asked, puzzled.

Sun Mei glanced around the ward, making sure Su Changfeng couldn’t hear them, then said, “Making such a big commotion, now everyone in town knows what happened. What are you planning to do about this?”

Tang Qiulu hadn’t anticipated that the news had spread, even reaching Sun Mei. It must have been Zhou Chaohai deliberately spreading the word to warn the groups working with the Tang Family to distance themselves and cut ties.

That would undoubtedly be a disaster for the Tang Group.

Seeing Tang Qiulu remain silent, Sun Mei pressed on, “What are you thinking about now? You’ve finally become the group’s chairman. Are you just going to watch it collapse? Get Su Changfeng out to handle this immediately.”

“Mom, Su Changfeng is still hospitalized. I currently only intend for him to rest and recover.” Tang Qiulu said.

“Recover? It’s just minor injuries, nothing serious. Right now, the group is what matters most. It’s not like he’s going to die.” Sun Mei said dismissively.

When Sun Mei first learned of this, she was very anxious. In her view, the good days had only just begun, and with Tang Qiulu as chairman, she felt a sense of pride among her friends.

But now, with Zhou Chaohai targeting the group, everything they had obtained seemed to be turning into bubbles. Sun Mei was understandably anxious.

“Mom, do you even know what you’re saying? Can the group measure up to Chang Feng?” Tang Qiulu asked, staring at Sun Mei.

“Why can’t it? Is he going to drop dead right now? His injuries aren’t that serious. Don’t you know what’s more important?” Sun Mei said.

“In my heart, Su Changfeng is the most important. No matter what, everything else will be dealt with after he recovers.” Tang Qiulu said resolutely.

“You’re too stubborn.” Sun Mei was as anxious as if she were on a hot griddle. The longer they delayed, the more the group’s crisis grew, and she didn’t want to see Tang Qiulu working for someone else again; her friends would mock her to no end.

“If you won’t go, then I’ll talk to him myself.” Sun Mei said.

“Mom.” Tang Qiulu said coldly, “I’m warning you, no one is to speak of this in front of Chang Feng until he fully recovers. If you tell him, then don’t blame me for turning against you.”

“Turn against me? Tang Qiulu, am I not still your mother? I’m doing this for your future. He’s fine now, so what’s the harm in telling him?” Sun Mei retorted angrily.

Tang Qiulu knew how selfish Sun Mei could be. Her attitude toward Su Changfeng changed because he cornered Shangguan Feihong to death in the villa, which made her fearful of him.

But when her own interests were at stake, Sun Mei wouldn’t care about Su Changfeng’s feelings at all.

“Is this really for my future, or are you afraid of being embarrassed in front of your friends? Worried that if the group collapses, you won’t have anything to brag about?” Tang Qiulu said.

Chapter 358: Sun Mei’s Incorrigible Malice

Sun Mei’s expression became a little unnatural, but she wouldn’t admit it so easily. Looking defiant, she said, “Daughter, is this how you see me? Am I really such a person in your eyes? I’m only thinking about your future. Can you really be content to let the position you worked so hard to obtain just disappear like that?”

“Worked so hard? If it wasn’t for Chang Feng, would the position of chairman of the Group be mine? If it weren’t for Su Changfeng, where would you get money to buy those branded clothes you’re wearing? Even if you’re thinking just for yourself, shouldn’t you consider timing? Have you ever thought about Chang Feng’s feelings?” Tang Qiulu said angrily.

“You…” Sun Mei’s chest heaved violently with anger, completely taken aback by Tang Qiulu’s accusation.

“Don’t say anymore. Anyway, I won’t agree.” After saying this, Tang Qiulu returned to the hospital room.

Sun Mei kept taking deep breaths, clearly very upset by Tang Qiulu.

Since the change in relationship between Tang Qiulu and Su Changfeng, Tang Qiulu gradually stopped considering Sun Mei’s feelings and often spoke up for Su Changfeng, which made Sun Mei increasingly angry.

If it weren’t for Su Changfeng, Tang Qiulu would still be the obedient daughter she used to be. But now, not only does she often oppose her, she even dares to criticize her!

“Su Changfeng, don’t think that just because you have some stinking money, you can make decisions for us. As long as I’m alive, you’re just an in-law who married into our family,” Sun Mei said viciously.

After returning to the hospital room, Tang Qiulu forced Tang Zhenhua out. Seeing Sun Mei’s angry face, Tang Zhenhua walked over and asked, “How did the conversation go?”

“Your precious daughter really has no sense of rules now. She dare to criticize me! I don’t understand how Su Changfeng has enchanted her so,” Sun Mei said angrily.

Tang Zhenhua quickly patted Sun Mei’s back and said, “Don’t be angry, don’t be angry, why get so worked up? Su Changfeng is not someone we can provoke at the moment. Have you forgotten how he forced his grandmother to death?”

In this matter, Sun Mei was indeed a bit afraid. After all, Shangguan Feihong had hanged herself in front of her. But she also had some confidence, as long as Su Changfeng had feelings for Tang Qiulu and wanted to be with her, he wouldn't treat her like that.

"What am I afraid of? That loser likes our Qiulu. Is he really going to force me to hang myself?" Sun Mei said disdainfully.

Tang Zhenhua nodded. There was some truth to it. Everything Su Changfeng did was for Tang Qiulu, wasn't it? So he wouldn't do anything excessive to Qiulu's birth parents, right?

"But you need to be mindful of your boundaries. If you strain their relationship, we'll end up suffering too."

"Don't worry, I know what to do. I just want Su Changfeng to understand that in our family, it's my word that counts," Sun Mei said.

In the hospital room, Su Changfeng got no information from Tang Zhenhua, and Tang Qiulu wasn't telling him either, which left him feeling a bit helpless.

"If you don't want to tell me, I can just call someone and find out what's really going on," Su Changfeng said.

Tang Qiulu knew this too. Even Zhu Lie was Su Changfeng's friend. It would be very easy for Su Changfeng to find out, and now it couldn't be hidden anymore.

"It's nothing major, just some minor issues with the Group. You just focus on getting better, I can handle it," Tang Qiulu said with a smile.

Su Changfeng believed in Tang Qiulu's abilities, but matters vary in size. If it exceeded Tang Qiulu's capabilities, she wouldn't be able to handle it, right?

And this matter, even Sun Mei knew, clearly it wasn't small. Su Changfeng didn't want Tang Qiulu to bear it alone.

“The Go Association guys?” Su Changfeng asked. At this critical juncture, he couldn’t think of anyone else besides those old guys who would trouble Tang Qiulu.

Tang Qiulu hesitated for a moment and nodded, saying, “It’s Zhou Chaohai. He demands you kneel and apologize to them, but I refused.”

A trace of coldness flashed in Su Changfeng’s eyes. Making him kneel and apologize? The conditions of those old guys were truly shameless.

The Zhou Family in Hai City did have some clout, but in Su Changfeng’s view, they were nothing but garbage.

“This is the easiest way to handle it,” Su Changfeng said to Tang Qiulu.

“No way!” Tang Qiulu reacted strongly to Su Changfeng’s words and said, “Even without the Group, I won’t let you kneel to those guys.”

Those words made Su Changfeng extremely happy. Tang Qiulu’s consideration for him made him feel exceptionally blessed.

“I’m more important than the Group?” Su Changfeng asked.

“Of course,” Tang Qiulu replied without hesitation.

Su Changfeng beckoned Tang Qiulu to sit by the bed.

Tang Qiulu, a bit puzzled, sat by the bed and then asked, “What’s up?”

“The Group still has many collaborations underway, probably enough to keep it afloat for a while. Since you want me to focus on recovery, I’ll do that and then confront those old guys once I’m better,” Su Changfeng said.

This was exactly what Tang Qiulu wanted to see. Unfortunately, the current situation wasn't as good as Su Changfeng assumed. Due to Tang Xiangdong's interference, the Tang Group was already empty, with no employees except for Wang Xiaoxiao.

"Actually… there's something else," Tang Qiulu stammered.

"What is it?"

"It's Tang Xiangdong. He got 10 billion to set up a new Group and poached all our employees," Tang Qiulu said.

10 billion.

Tang Lei really put a lot of faith in Tang Xiangdong, giving him 10 billion directly. But even if Tang Xiangdong was given 10 billion, what could he do to make waves in Hai City?

"10 billion won't last long with Tang Xiangdong; he'll run through it. He's not worth worrying about, and as for the Group's employees, I'll bring in some talent later," Su Changfeng said.

"Do you happen to know anyone from the Headhunting Group?" Tang Qiulu asked skeptically. Su Changfeng had connections in almost every field, with friends in nearly every industry. Was he omnipotent?

"I do know some people. But you must promise me, once this is all over, we'll have our wedding photos taken. We can't leave the wall at home empty forever," Su Changfeng smiled.

Tang Qiulu wasn't opposed to Su Changfeng using this as leverage. She had initially planned to take those photos but had just been too busy.

"Sure, but you must stay put in the hospital for now. Given how capable you are, it shouldn't matter if it takes a little longer, right?" Tang Qiulu said.

Su Changfeng laughed and said, “It’s no big deal, let those old knuckleheads bounce around for a few days.”

Chapter 359: Sealed with Tape

Gu Family Mansion.

Gu Changsheng was making tea, while Liu Chen sat anxiously opposite him. The contrast was stark; one was calm and composed, the other as if his seat was on fire.

“Old Gu, are you really sure about Su Changfeng’s identity? What if Su Changfeng isn’t at all like you guessed? Then the Tang Group will really collapse. You said you wouldn’t get involved way too early. How can you not intervene in this? If you hadn’t said that, Zhou Chaohai wouldn’t have dared to be so arrogant,” Liu Chen said.

The matter of the Tang Group was known throughout Hai City, especially since Zhou Chaohai personally announced that anyone cooperating with the Tang Group would be against him. With that, all groups sided with Zhou Chaohai. In Liu Chen’s eyes, the Tang Family was destined to be destroyed.

“Why are you so anxious? Even if the Tang Group goes bankrupt, it doesn’t seem like you stand to lose anything, right? Why do you care so much about Su Changfeng?” Gu Changsheng asked with a smile.

“Su Changfeng is the most talented young Go player I’ve ever seen. If he puts in the effort, he will undoubtedly become a world-class master. Watching such talent go to waste, how can I just sit back?” Liu Chen explained.

“I advise you to give up on this thought. For Su Changfeng, playing Go is merely a pastime. He won’t rely on it for a living,” Gu Changsheng replied.

He’s the young master of the Beijing Su Family; it’s impossible for him to pursue a Go career. Even though Su Changfeng is highly talented, for him, it’s just a form of entertainment.

“Why? If he gains fame, he can prove he’s not a coward, right? The opportunity is rare; does he not want it?” Liu Chen asked, puzzled.

“A coward?” Gu Changsheng shook his head and replied, “Putting that label on Su Changfeng would be a laughingstock.”

“Then explain it clearly. Let me understand. What exactly is Su Changfeng’s status that you hold him in such high regard?” Liu Chen anxiously sat beside Gu Changsheng, feeling as if something was crawling inside him.

Su Changfeng’s true identity was indeed formidable, and even Gu Changsheng dared not speak of it. But seeing Liu Chen in such a state of urgency, Gu Changsheng also felt he couldn’t hold back any longer.

“Old Gu, we’ve known each other for quite some time. Don’t you understand my character by now? Am I the type to let secrets slip easily?” Liu Chen continued.

Gu Changsheng stood up, took a deep breath, stretched a bit, and said, “I can tell you, but you must remember, this must not be disclosed to anyone else. If you talk in your sleep a lot, then I suggest taping your mouth shut at night, or I can’t guarantee what might happen to you.”

“You’re just bluffing. I want to see just how big a deal it is. Would speaking out really have such serious consequences?” Liu Chen sneered.

Gu Changsheng chuckled and said, “I think you should believe me. It’s really that serious. Otherwise, why would I be so afraid?”

“Fine, fine, I’ll do as you say, tape my mouth shut while sleeping.” Although Liu Chen said this, it was clear he didn’t quite believe it.

In his opinion, even if Su Changfeng had another identity, it couldn’t be that extraordinary. It was probably just Gu Changsheng exaggerating.

“Then pay close attention and listen carefully.” Even though Gu Changsheng was with the Gu Family, he still looked around to ensure no one else was nearby before whispering in Liu Chen’s ear, “Su Changfeng is from the Beijing Su Family.”

“Beijing Su Family?” Liu Chen mumbled, repeating the four words. His expression transformed from confusion to surprise, eventually widening his eyes.

Liu Chen immediately stood up, saying in disbelief, “You mean that he is…”

Gu Changsheng hastily covered Liu Chen’s mouth, saying harshly, “Old fellow, why are you shouting? Are you afraid others won’t hear?”

Liu Chen felt his heart pounding. In many people’s eyes, the Beijing Su Family represented the pinnacle in the country. Even though Su Tian’s death affected the Su Family somewhat, their deep roots made those impacts seem nonexistent.

But why was a well-known coward like Su Changfeng in Hai City a member of the Su Family?

The contrast was just too great, so overwhelming that Liu Chen couldn’t believe it nor dare to believe it.

A person from such a family marrying into a small noble family and enduring three years of humbling humiliations was simply unbelievable.

“Then why… why did he choose to do this? Frankly, just because of his position, even having your Gu Family work under him would satisfy you, right?” Liu Chen said.

Gu Changsheng glared at Liu Chen with displeasure but didn’t refute. What Liu Chen said was true. The Gu Family was the top family in Hai City, which meant there was no path left for them. However, if they could serve the Su Family, despite many constraints, the benefits for the Gu Family would still be significant.

“If I knew, I wouldn’t be so cautious. Precisely because I don’t know what he’s planning, I dare not reveal Su Changfeng’s identity to anyone,” Gu Changsheng said.

Because in his eyes, Tang Qiulu was merely one of Su Changfeng's goals. There's no way Su Changfeng would endure so many years just for Tang Qiulu.

He's from the Beijing Su Family; surely, he isn't short of women around him?

Although Tang Qiulu is very beautiful, she's not the kind to bring down a kingdom. If Su Changfeng wanted, he could have many women more beautiful than Tang Qiulu.

"Then doesn't that mean Zhou Chaohai and the others have met their end?" Liu Chen sighed.

Gu Changsheng chuckled disdainfully, saying, "You already know the answer, don't you need to ask me? I've been fed up with those old guys for ages. Did they really think I didn't know what tricks they were up to behind the scenes? Scheming against our Gu Family? They've just signed their death warrant, taking care of a significant problem for the Gu Family."

"You old fox, from the start, you planned to use Su Changfeng to deal with them, didn't you? That's why you claimed you wouldn't interfere with Su Changfeng's affairs. A real sly old dog," Liu Chen suddenly understood, looking at Gu Changsheng with disdain.

"Don't talk nonsense. I don't have the guts to do such a thing. I merely gave a nudge. It was Zhou Chaohai and the others seeking their own doom," Gu Changsheng said proudly.

In the business world, this little scheme is nothing. Gu Changsheng truly didn't use Su Changfeng for this matter, and he didn't have the guts to use Su Changfeng.

Chapter 360: The Ridiculous Prestige Persists

"I bet those old guys are feeling pretty smug right now. If they found out Su Changfeng's true identity, they wouldn't even find a place to cry." Liu Chen shook his head. Although he didn't sympathize with Zhou Chaohai and his group, thinking about what their fate would be still left him with some thoughts.

At this moment, Zhou Chaohai and his group were indeed feeling particularly triumphant; within a day, all the Tang Group's partnerships had dissolved, and this was all due to Zhou Chaohai's comments.

Now, in the eyes of these people, the Tang Family was utterly beyond recovery. Tang Qiulu had dragged the whole company down for the sake of protecting Su Changfeng.

“No wonder, after all, she’s just a woman. What insight could she have? She didn’t think about her future days at all. Why protect such a useless man? Now the group has collapsed, and from now on, Su Changfeng won’t even be able to live off her.”

In a private club, Zhou Chaohai and his cronies were drinking heartily.

“Old Zhou, it seems you’re still as formidable as ever. Even after stepping down for quite some time, those folks still give you face.”

“Of course, when I, Zhou Chaohai, was making my mark back in the day, I was infamous for my ruthless methods. No one would pick a fight with me for the sake of the minor Tang Family. But this isn’t over yet. Tang Group has to go bankrupt, and Su Changfeng will come out and kneel to apologize. I won’t let him off easily for this disgrace he’s brought upon us. I’ll make him understand how cruel society can be!” Zhou Chaohai said with a cold face.

“By the way, have you all seen the video of him playing chess with Sima Chenguang?” Someone posed this question to the group.

The mention spurred a lively discussion. After Su Changfeng lost, these people had watched the match video through other channels, though they were reluctant to discuss this embarrassing affair.

“It’s kind of strange too. Su Changfeng had a huge advantage in hand, but after coming back from the bathroom, it was like he became a different person.”

“Yeah, I saw that too. By mid-game, even I could’ve beaten Sima Chenguang in his place, but he actually lost?”

“Could it be possible that something happened while he was in the restroom that we don’t know about?”

“Are you suggesting that Huangfu Heibai did something behind the scenes?”

As they were discussing, Zhou Chaohai impatiently tapped the table with his fingers, saying, “Even if something happened that we don’t know about, Su Changfeng is such a coward. He lost the match just because he was intimidated? Didn’t he consider the impact his actions would have on our reputations?”

In Zhou Chaohai’s eyes, since Su Changfeng was there to match, his first concern should have been their reputations. No matter the situation, he had to win the game to save face for them.

“Yeah, even if he dropped dead on the spot, he had to bring home the championship. No matter what threats Huangfu Heibai used, Su Changfeng must not have yielded.”

“Sigh, we shouldn’t have let Su Changfeng, that coward, go in the first place. Over the past three years, though I’ve never met him in person, I’ve heard plenty about his stories—truly spineless.”

“Forget about the match. The more we think about it, the angrier we’ll get. We can only vent all our anger on him now, or else it won’t quell my rage.”

All of their faces showed intense dissatisfaction, as if Su Changfeng was supposed to treat them like grandfathers, having to consider their feelings at all times.

“By the way, during Gu Changsheng’s birthday banquet, wasn’t Su Changfeng given a seat near him? But now that things have blown up, why hasn’t Gu Changsheng intervened in Su Changfeng’s affairs?” someone asked, puzzled. This was something that baffled the crowd.

During Gu Changsheng’s birthday banquet, everyone assumed that Su Changfeng was being groomed by Gu Changsheng. But now that Su Changfeng was involved in such a matter, Gu Changsheng said he wouldn’t intervene, which was truly perplexing.

“Hmph.” Zhou Chaohai said coldly, “Gu Changsheng’s old but sharp. He wouldn’t just do favors for someone for nothing. In my opinion, Su Changfeng was useful to Gu Changsheng before, which is why he deliberately elevated Su Changfeng’s status. But now that Su Changfeng, the useless man, has run out of value, Gu Changsheng kicking him aside is very possible.”

After hearing Zhou Chaohai's explanation, everyone looked enlightened. Since Gu Changsheng retired, he hadn't interfered in his family's businesses for a long time.

Having nothing to do, he spent time at his martial arts gym. Suddenly deciding to cultivate a useless man like Su Changfeng must mean Su Changfeng had something to exploit. He wouldn't have done it otherwise.

"That useless Su Changfeng is indeed quite pitiful. After being used by Gu Changsheng, he was just thrown away."

"It looks like Tang Qiulu relied on Su Changfeng being valued by Gu Changsheng, so she dared to protect him. But how could this foolish woman know that Su Changfeng now has no value in Gu Changsheng's eyes?"

"Perhaps she's counting on Su Changfeng to handle this. I wonder what expression she'll have when she sees the truth?"

Everyone laughed heartily, as if they had entirely ruined the Tang Family.

Given the current situation, the Tang Group was beyond saving now. Not only were all partnerships lost, but also even the group's employees had been taken away by Tang Xiangdong, leaving the Tang Group an empty shell that no one could revive.

On the other side, Tang Xiangdong felt particularly pleased, having pulled the Tang Family's people down to work under him. He once again became a treasure in their eyes.

This feeling of being valued made Tang Xiangdong feel like he was about to take flight. He even daydreamed that in no time, the empire he led would replace the Gu Family, becoming a crucial figure in Hai City.

"Donglin, you're really amazing. You managed to secure a 1 billion investment." Tang Siwen no longer had to work under Tang Qiulu, which was an enormous relief for her, a gift from Tang Xiangdong. She had to praise him.

“With my talent, 1 billion is just the beginning. That investor will inject even more capital in the future. The Tang Family surpassing the Gu Family is just a matter of time.” Tang Xiangdong was slightly inflated.

Tang Siwen nodded without hesitation, fully believing in Tang Xiangdong’s words.

In reality, Tang Siwen knew exactly what Tang Xiangdong was capable of—unless his position was propped up with money, expecting him to use this 1 billion to build an empire to replace the Gu Family was mere lunacy. But due to her dislike for Tang Qiulu, Tang Siwen preferred to place her faith in Tang Xiangdong.