

## **Two Trillion 1221**

Chapter 1221 - A "List

Chu Wei took leave.

Just less than a week into his job at Shenhe Group, he went on vacation, setting a record of sorts.

But only he knew his own suffering; he had no choice but to take leave.

This day, Bai Xiaosheng "tested" him, randomly selecting issues from a sea of information and questioning at will.

It was damn frustrating!

Chu Wei cursed endlessly in his heart.

Those questions, it would be odd if he could answer them; even Yu Shuangyu would probably fail!

Bai Xiaosheng clearly wanted to crush him!

What if he couldn't answer?

Bai Xiaosheng's suggestion was to work overtime.

And if overtime didn't help, what then?

Bai Xiaosheng's additional advice was to pull an all-nighter.

Thus, Chu Wei, who needed goji berries in his flask as a middle-aged man, suddenly felt like he was back in his high-school days of regular minor and major tests; unfortunately, his current mental and physical strength couldn't compare to his younger years.

Chu Wei sought external help and complained, but Yu Shuangyu didn't intervene, and Han Hefei outright sided with "Lin Sheng."

Chu Wei simply couldn't hold on anymore, so with part genuine and part feigned sickness, he decided to take leave and seek refuge.

Actually, Bai Xiaosheng's initial "torment" of him started as a way to vent for the harassed Lin Weiwei, but as the investigation deepened for ease of operations, they needed Chu Wei gone, yet without a valid reason to expel him, they had to ruthlessly force him to take leave on his own.

With Chu Wei gone, only Bai Xiaosheng's team of three remained in the assistant office.

As the first assistant, Yu Shuangyu often went out with Han Hefei, and the third assistant, who they had never met, was in Europe.

Suddenly, the assistant's office became Bai Xiaosheng's three-person domain.

Such "favorable conditions" were incredibly advantageous!

At this moment, Bai Xiaosheng and his team had just finished a phase of work, were resting, drinking tea, and conversing in low voices.

"Xiaosheng, the reputation you've built here within a week is so useful! Plus your assistant position! Now, it's incredibly smooth to gather information from various departments. Even if it's inconvenient to take away, we can still review on site," Lin Weiwei said softly, pointing to a decorative pin on her collar that was actually a custom recording device brought from headquarters.

Lin Weiwei smiled brightly, "Today's gains are even greater than yesterday!"

Then, she excitedly added, "In just a couple of days, we can directly request headquarters to send reinforcements to conduct a thorough investigation here!"

Just thinking about it was exhilarating.

"Also, the major moves we made in Nandu and Qinggang recently have greatly benefited the ones at the headquarters such as assistants and affairs officers. I believe they are now eagerly hoping we can stir up another major event somewhere!" Lin Weiwei said cheerfully.

Bai Xiaosheng and Lei Ying looked at each other and smiled.

The investigation of Nanyu and surrounding provinces took just a week to achieve surprising results, and it seemed just a step away from a "big capture."

Speaking of which, this time the strategy was correct, directly targeting the "enemy" from within.

"I think we need to speed up! Over at Nandu and Qinggang, Officer Lin Ke has been dragging it out, and he really can't delay any longer. Our 'disappearance' there could only be concealed for three or four days, and nearly a week has already passed. I'm worried Shen Peishen might have already noticed something!" Lei Ying cautioned, always planning prudently.

That's why, with his constant reminders, Bai Xiaosheng and his team had avoided many wrong paths over the past two years.

Bai Xiaosheng nodded upon hearing this, "Tonight, I'll contact headquarters! I'll report in detail and escalate our actions!"

He spoke and then couldn't help but frown lightly, touching his forehead and murmuring, "But I always feel like our investigation here is still insufficient. Also, there's this annoying feeling... I just can't pinpoint what it is..."

Lei Ying frowned lightly and nodded slightly.

Actually, he too had a similar, vague, uncomfortable feeling.

Completely baseless, completely intuitive.

But, without any evidence, Lei Ying never mentioned it, to prevent upsetting his colleagues.

But now, it seemed Bai Xiaosheng felt similar.

This wasn't a good sign...

"Xiaosheng, are you worried that we're rushing and our investigation isn't thorough enough? Don't worry! Once we reveal our identities and forcibly inspect the confidential information here, and then outpace them, I believe we can catch them all!" Lin Weiwei was rather optimistic and confident.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled at her.

That nagging feeling inside him, even he couldn't clearly explain what it was, just a slight discomfort...

Perhaps it's best to put it aside for now.

Maybe, it's all in my head?

Bai Xiaosheng thought to himself.

Currently, aren't things going quite smoothly?

Although the information currently held was still somewhat "crude", it was already sufficient to initiate an investigation of most businesses here.

Just as Bai Xiaosheng was mulling over these thoughts, there was a knock on the door of the assistant office.

Then, a person walked in.

Bai Xiaosheng looked up.

It was an acquaintance.

The HR director of Shenhe Group, also the deputy director of the Administrative Department, Wang Qiaobei.

Seeing him, Bai Xiaosheng smiled and stood up.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying also rose.

Bai Xiaosheng was currently Han Hefei's assistant; this gesture was unquestionably a great honor.

"Assistant Lin!" Wang Qiaobei called out with a smile, hurrying over with a paper in hand.

This middle-manager, holding significant positions in two departments, was very busy; his personal visit undoubtedly meant business.

Chapter 1222 - A "List"\_2

"What's the matter, Director Wang, is there something you need?" Bai Xiaosheng asked.

"It's like this, Assistant Lin, I need to use an official seal, but last time Mr. Han used it and it's still with him. He sent someone to deliver the key to me, allowing me to open his office safe. However, according to the regulations, when Mr. Han is not present, at least one assistant and another person must be present to open it," Wang Qiaobei said with a smile, "You'll have to come with me."

To open Han Hefei's office safe!

Bai Xiaosheng's heart stirred, but his face remained expressionless, and he jokingly said, "So there's supervision involved, the procedures are quite strict. Indeed, having two people present can avoid unnecessary trouble."

"Yes," Wang Qiaobei chuckled.

"Then I'll go with you," Bai Xiaosheng agreed.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying watched as the two men left the assistant's office.

"This is actually a good opportunity!" Lin Weiwei couldn't help saying.

"It's just that Sheng is not professional enough, it would be better if I followed," Lei Ying sighed.

With his skills, he could easily take some things unnoticed.

"Hopefully, there will be some gains," Lin Weiwei muttered.

...

In the hallway, Bai Xiaosheng and Wang Qiaobei chatted as they walked, quickly reaching Han Hefei's office.

Upon opening the office door and locking it from inside, Wang Qiaobei led Bai Xiaosheng straight to Han Hefei's desk.

Behind the desk, on the inside, there was a safe about the height of half a person.

"This safe of Mr. Han's is too obviously placed, shouldn't it be embedded into the wall, or somewhat disguised?" Bai Xiaosheng joked.

Wang Qiaobei smiled and said nothing.

Actually, given Han Hefei's status and temperament, who knows if he had another hidden safe.

Of course, that wasn't their concern anymore.

The two approached the safe and Wang Qiaobei took out the key, entering the password given by Han Hefei to unlock the safe.

This type of safe used a dynamic lock, changing its code each time. The new code generation had its own rules, probably only known by Han Hefei himself.

That is to say, Wang Qiaobei and the others could only open it once with the key and couldn't afford to make a mistake.

Thus, Wang Qiaobei was extremely cautious, careful not to overlook even the slightest detail.

When unlocking it, Bai Xiaosheng stood by, not watching closely, but instead showed interest in observing the knick-knack on Han Hefei's desk.

During Wang Qiaobei's pause to catch his breath, he noticed Bai Xiaosheng wasn't watching him closely, and couldn't help praising inwardly—

This Assistant Lin, knows the ways of the world and how to avoid suspicion!

It's impressive for a young person to handle such matters this well!

Wang Qiaobei continued to focus on opening the safe.

Bai Xiaosheng looked at the objects on the desk.

Han Hefei, usually taciturn, had a sharp gaze and tone when speaking. He seemed difficult to get along with but was also someone who enjoyed life's pleasures.

Looking at his desk, there were several fascinating ornaments and a large succulent plant.

The pot of succulent had a huge bulbous stem covered in spines and fresh green leaves, remarkably rare.

"Is this... 'Euphorbia obesa'?" Bai Xiaosheng exclaimed, "Such a large plant with such quality is rare, this must have cost quite a bit."

Caught by the impulse, Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but reach out to touch the pot.

Just as Wang Qiaobei opened the safe door and before taking out the official seal on top, he heard Bai Xiaosheng's comment and instinctively turned back to see Bai Xiaosheng's action and suddenly shouted, "Don't touch!"

Han Hefei is a Virgo!

People born under Virgo fiercely despise imperfection and abhor others touching their things.

Startled by Wang Qiaobei's sudden shout, Bai Xiaosheng flinched and involuntarily exerted a bit more force.

The pot of "Euphorbia obesa" was almost pushed off the table.

Wang Qiaobei nearly had his soul scared out of him, he lunged forward and threw himself onto the desk, grabbing the succulent with both hands.

Beads of sweat the size of beans instantly appeared on his forehead.

Actually, even if Wang Qiaobei hadn't saved it, the pot of Euphorbia obesa might not have fallen off.

But only after grabbing it did Wang Qiaobei heave a heavy breath and settle his heart.

A big man lying in an unseemly manner on the desk, Wang Qiaobei didn't care at all, carefully holding the succulent, he gently moved back on the table.

It was as though what he was holding wasn't a Euphorbia obesa but a ticking time bomb that could blow him to pieces if mishandled.

Although the metaphor wasn't entirely fitting, the actual impact wouldn't be much different.

This succulent was a treasured possession of Han Hefei; any mishap could be disastrous.

The new assistant would be doomed, and he too would be unfortunate, perhaps even losing his job!

Wang Qiaobei carefully moved the Euphorbia obesa back to its original position and after looking it over carefully from all sides to make sure it was positioned just right, adjusted it slightly.

Virgos like Han Hefei could spot even the slightest changes!

He needed to be careful!

"Is it alright?" The "Assistant Lin" behind him seemed to have just regained his senses, cautiously muttering.

Wang Qiaobei wiped his sweat.

Actually, if he hadn't shouted, the plant might not have been pushed off, so he was also partly to blame.

Thankfully, nothing bad happened this time, and Assistant Lin could still remain as an assistant.

Wang Qiaobei adjusted his mood, turned around, shook his head, "No, fortunately, nothing happened!"

Seeing Lin Sheng also seemed to breathe a sigh of relief, Wang Qiaobei felt like saying a few more words.

"Assistant Lin, since you're new here, you might not know, Mr. Han doesn't like others touching his things. He personally takes care of this desk, even housekeeping isn't allowed to tidy it up," Wang Qiaobei said earnestly.

"It was my oversight, I also like plants and seeing such a rare succulent beauty, I couldn't help myself! I really owe you for this one, Director Wang, thank you!"

Chapter 1223 - A "List"\_3

Bai Xiaosheng spoke with an unmatched earnestness, his attitude was simply too good to be true.

Given that Wang Qiaobei could become the head of HR and additionally the deputy head of the administrative department, he naturally was extremely skilled in dealing with people. Seeing Bai Xiaosheng's sincere demeanor, as if he owed Wang Qiaobei a favor, he didn't say much more, just smiled, "You flatter me, Assistant Lin, let's focus on the task at hand."

After the recent incident, Bai Xiaosheng swapped places with Wang Qiaobei, with Bai Xiaosheng standing near the safe, watching Wang Qiaobei approach. Bai Xiaosheng stepped aside to give him room to retrieve the seal from inside.

Wang Qiaobei took the seal, closed the safe, and smiled broadly at Bai Xiaosheng, "Alright, let's go."

"Let's go!" Bai Xiaosheng was also brimming with smiles.

Upon leaving Han Hefei's office and locking the door, they bid each other farewell.

Wang Qiaobei then hurried off, heading back to the administrative office.

Bai Xiaosheng made a beeline for the assistant's office.

His pace was noticeably quicker.

Once back in the assistant's office, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying were looking through documents. Seeing Bai Xiaosheng return, they were about to greet him but then realized he turned around and locked the door.

The two exchanged glances and immediately moved closer.

This meant...

There was a situation!

Like a magician, Bai Xiaosheng produced a hidden page of paper.

Wang Qiaobei wouldn't be scared by a mere shout, especially not from the Bai Xiaosheng who wanted to use the *Euphorbia obesa* to attract attention.

While Wang Qiaobei was distracted by the commotion to save the plant, Bai Xiaosheng got to the safe. With a light flick of his index finger, he rifled through the multitude of documents, flipping all the pages in less than a second. With Red Lotus's assistance, his rapidly scanning eyes captured every partial snippet of text, which were then etched into his mind, for Red Lotus to analyze in milliseconds.

The most valuable page was thus discovered by Bai Xiaosheng.

With enough speed, taking it out and concealing it wasn't a difficult task.

"This..." Lin Weiwei took the page Bai Xiaosheng had brought back, and her eyes widened in disbelief, her face a picture of incredulity, "!"

It was a bridge fund statistical sheet!

It involved many companies, all related to Shenhe Group!

As a financially robust entity, Shenhe Group claimed to have no need for such means of fundraising, and even if there were issues with their cash flow, it should be resolved through corporate channels rather than private operations.

Furthermore, most of the company names listed matched those they had investigated!

Except, this list was twice as long as the one they had.

And a plethora of names appeared!

Without a doubt, this paper was a list!

A list of Shen Peishen's true power base in this area!

After Lei Ying read it, his expression changed as well, "So this is the whole picture!"

The troubled enterprises and individuals they had been able to grasp were only the tip of the iceberg. Now, with the rest exposed and taken into account altogether, it was shockingly extensive!

It wasn't only Nanyu and the surrounding provinces and cities, it even reached areas far beyond!

"With so many companies, so many people, on such a grand scale, it's an operation unmatched by Nandu or Qinggang, surpassing any prior investigations. This place must be where Shen Peishen's core loyal forces are located!" Lin Weiwei said excitedly.

Their usual investigations significantly weakened Shen Peishen.

But this time, it might actually deal a severe blow to Shen Peishen!

"This time, the number of people coming over to coordinate our investigation here can't be compared with the situation in Nandu. In fact, we might even need one or two Senior Affairs Officers to take charge!" Lei Ying said gravely.

Bai Xiaosheng, looking at that special list, also broke into a sudden smile.

Excitement and joy filled his heart.

He believed this list would bring him considerable points, propelling him through the latter half of his current promotion phase.

A fervent heat rose uncontrollably within Bai Xiaosheng!

Even he, for a moment, found it hard to contain himself.

It seemed that tonight, he would need to contact the headquarters to discuss with Mr. Xiahou Qi and mobilize all possible and available forces!

In order to prevent Shen Peishen from forcibly interfering, even calling Zheng Honghu and Li Haofeng to oversee was necessary!

Bai Xiaosheng pondered and planned.

The more he thought about it, the more excited he got!

...

That same day, after work, Han Hefei and Yu Shuangyu finally returned to the company.

Dismissing Yu Shuangyu, Han Hefei locked the office door by himself, then walked slowly to the desk and opened the safe.

Once the door was open, Han Hefei crouched there, looking at the contents inside.

Just looking, without making any other movements.

The vast safe was meticulously organized, with files and the company seal arranged neatly, not a thing out of place.

People born under Virgo seek perfection.

Having asked Wang Qiaobei to retrieve the seal was the same as moving his possessions, so naturally, he wanted to ensure nothing was amiss.

Han Hefei looked on expressionlessly.

Those perfectly stacked documents seemed to have one or two papers slightly bulging out.

Han Hefei extended his hand towards the protruding papers...

With a gentle push from his pinched index and middle fingers.

That slight irregularity was neatly aligned once again.

Han Hefei smiled faintly, stood up, and gently closed the door of the safe.

Click.

Now it was perfect!

Chapter 1224 - A Once-in-a-Thousand-Year Opportunity

"The situation is like this, Elder Xia, I need support from here!"

Bai Xiaosheng stood in front of the floor-to-ceiling windows of the hotel, looking at the city lights of Nanyu, and gave Xiahou Qi a detailed and exhaustive report of what he knew, also stating his demand—

"The more, the better!"

Shen Peisheng is after all human, not divine, despite decades of dedicated development in the Greater China Region, accumulating a deeply terrifying foundation.

Still, his power has its limits!

This time, it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to severely damage Shen Peisheng!

According to Bai Xiaosheng's plan, he would oversee operations in Nanyu and summon a large number of Affairs Officers and Assistant Officers to thoroughly investigate local corporate enterprises under Shenhe Group.

Moreover, the "list" he obtained showed that in both northern and southern provinces, there were capital cities where businesses were secretly colluding with Shenhe Group, indicating those locations as additional "bases" of Shen Peisheng!

Bai Xiaosheng intended for Zheng Honghu and Li Haofeng to lead teams to these places for thorough investigations; with these two Senior Affairs Officers in charge, even Shen Peisheng wouldn't be able to interfere!

Striking these three locations simultaneously will leave Shen Peisheng completely overwhelmed and unable to cope!

"Elder Xia, this is the best opportunity! I have gathered a lot of evidence against Shen Peisheng here. Coordinated investigations across the three regions, I believe, will unearth even more evidence. By then, Shen Peisheng will truly have no escape and will receive the punishment he deserves!"

Bai Xiaosheng spoke very earnestly.

Not solely for points or promotions, he also wished to restore clarity to the Greater China Region!

"Mhm." On the phone, Xiahou Qi pondered for a moment before speaking deeply, "Actually, I've noticed Shen Peisheng's various moves long, long ago. Previously, I turned a blind eye to stabilize the situation and to secure my position as CEO of the Greater China Region."

"Later, once my position stabilized, and his foundation became firm as well, both parties reached a tug-of-war state where I couldn't touch him without ample concrete proof as the CEO here!"

On the phone, Xiahou Qi sighed deeply, unable to suppress a few bouts of coughing.

Although the treatment and medication provided by Bai Xiaosheng were effective, they ultimately only treated the symptoms, not the cause!

The only way to completely cure it was to step down from the CEO position of the Greater China Region to avoid excessive strain!

Xiahou Qi was aware of this and wasn't particularly clinging to his position.

However, before resigning, Xiahou Qi wanted to restore clarity to the Greater China Region, leaving it to his successors!

"Concerning Shen Peisheng, his obsessions and ambitions originate from him, but the triggers are with me, due to my indulgence, which has led to the current situation. I bear undeniable responsibility!"  
Xiahou Qi's voice was hoarse, "So, before I truly step back, I want to see him and those gathered around him completely ousted!"

"Sheng, there was a time when I was actually quite disheartened, thinking I might not be able to do it."

Xiahou Qi's voice elevated, "But fortunately, I have you!"

"Go ahead and do it, I'll make arrangements now!"

"Zheng Honghu and Li Haofeng, along with another Senior Affairs Officer, are all at your command!"

"Headquarters can allocate about half of its Affairs Officers and Assistant Officers, all under your coordination!"

"This time, let's have a decisive battle with old Shen!"

"Completely clear the sky for our corporations in the Greater China Region!"

Xiahou Qi's words were passionately stirring, instantly lighting up Bai Xiaosheng's eyes.

"We will, we'll definitely make it this time!" Bai Xiaosheng affirmed.

...

After hanging up the phone, Bai Xiaosheng let out a long breath and turned back to Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying staring at him.

"Are you two ready?" Bai Xiaosheng asked with a smile, his expression extremely serious, "The busy time is coming!"

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying exchanged smiles.

When had they ever feared hard work?

That young female receptionist, that debt collector blended into society, now both are career elites with annual millions in salary.

Following Bai Xiaosheng, what does a bit of hardship count for!

...

After Bai Xiaosheng reported his work to Xiahou Qi, it was already 10 p.m.

Hanging up the phone, Xiahou Qi started contacting Li Haofeng, Zheng Honghu, and others, initiating personnel deployment and work arrangements.

This matter needed to be fast, so Xiahou Qi kept busy until half-past midnight, continuously arranging for two and a half hours until his phone nearly overheated.

Unable to manage alone, he called Wang Mubei for help.

Near the end, Xiahou Qi's face appeared tired, unable to stop coughing, even the medicine prescribed by Bai Xiaosheng barely helping.

"Elder Xia, you must rest!" Wang Mubei became genuinely anxious.

While holding his throat and struggling to shake his head, Xiahou Qi squeezed out a smile, "Mubei, this is an opportunity! It's rare for Sheng to have caught Shen Peisheng's weak point, I must help him! This is also helping me!"

"But you—" Wang Mubei spoke urgently.

"I'll be fine! Continue!" Xiahou Qi's voice was hoarse, as he commanded sternly, "The first batch of reinforcements must depart at dawn, and the first wave of support for Bai Xiaosheng must arrive by tomorrow morning!"

"I, Xiahou Qi, was once a man of decisive action and strategic vision, is this minor ailment enough to render me decrepit?"

Xiahou Qi coughed violently, yet laughed heartily.

"I, will not accept this!"

...

Another new day.

In the morning, Han Hefei did not go on his usual rounds to the subsidiary company but arrived at the company early instead.

After Yu Shuangyu arrived, he was quite surprised to find Han Hefei already there.

Although he knew there was no outing planned today, it was still puzzling to see Mr. Han arrive so early.

Thus, Yu Shuangyu went to ask if there was any special schedule for the day.

Han Hefei's response left Yu Shuangyu stunned.

"Let's take a rest today, we've been busy... for too long!"

Han Hefei even offered him a rare smile, the Virgo workaholic leader now lazily sitting in his chair, leisurely shutting his eyes to rest, and even waved him off, signaling him to go out.

Yu Shuangyu respectfully retreated, carefully closed the door behind him, his face full of confusion.

Today's oddities did not end here.

Mr. Han came early, but Lin Sheng, the usually punctual new assistant, was surprisingly late!

Yu Shuangyu checked the time; it was already nine o'clock, the official start of the workday, but as assistants, they should have arrived fifteen minutes earlier!

"Lin Sheng, he's actually late?" Yu Shuangyu was surprised and somewhat excited, "Lin Sheng usually works flawlessly, and I never get a chance to reprimand him. Now that he's late, as the primary assistant, it's only right for me to scold him! He has no choice but to accept it!"

A rare opportunity.

Yu Shuangyu even specifically went to the corridor near the elevator, thinking about reprimanding Lin Sheng properly when he arrived.

It would be great to let everyone passing by see his authority.

As Yu Shuangyu was planning this, instead of Lin Sheng, Chu Wei came.

"Assistant Yu!" Chu Wei looked miserable as he hurried over to him.

Chu Wei, who had taken a day off, thought about it all day yesterday and finally felt that continuously taking leaves wasn't a solution, so he called Yu Shuangyu.

On the phone, he was part pleading and part resolute, saying he'd rather resign than work with Lin Sheng any longer, and if Yu Shuangyu could help him out of this misery, he'd be forever grateful.

Considering that using Lin Sheng as a scapegoat to rebuke Chu Wei might be enough, Yu Shuangyu agreed to help him over the phone, promising to assist him out of misery today.

That's why Chu Wei returned to the company.

"Today, you must help free me from this plight; I truly can't stand it anymore." Chu Wei pleaded with a troubled face, reiterating his request.

"Don't worry, old Chu." Yu Shuangyu smiled, "This time I'll help you out of this misery, but afterward, you'll have to work hard with me."

"Rest assured, Assistant Yu, I'll be your man from now on!"

Hearing this, Chu Wei was so moved he almost volunteered himself eagerly.

After speaking, Chu Wei curiously looked around, "Assistant Yu, what are you doing here?"

Hearing such a question, Yu Shuangyu's lips curled into a cold smirk, "Old Chu, I'm waiting here to stand up for you!"

Chu Wei was startled.

"Lin Sheng hasn't arrived; he is late." Yu Shuangyu said in a low voice with a smile.

Chu Wei's eyes brightened.

Although this was a trivial matter, Yu Shuangyu could exploit the situation to severely scold that bastard Lin!

Just like how that bastard Lin, relying on his memorization of data, messed with him for nearly a week!

Thinking about Lin Sheng getting reprimanded made Chu Wei feel extremely relieved.

Thus, he eagerly stood with Yu Shuangyu, waiting to see Lin Sheng make a fool of himself.

The two men waited expectantly.

Finally, Bai Xiaosheng appeared.

When the elevator doors opened and they saw Bai Xiaosheng, Yu Shuangyu and Chu Wei couldn't contain their excitement.

But soon, they realized something was amiss.

Today's "Lin Sheng" was very different, dressed in a sharp suit, looking dashing and extraordinary.

Even more unbelievably, "Lin Sheng's" aura had completely changed, solemn and authoritative, his gaze inducing an involuntary sense of fear.

Following behind him, Bai Ying and Fang Cheng seemed like completely different people too.

Not just them three, behind them followed seven or eight unfamiliar faces.

Those people followed Bai Xiaosheng out of the elevator, an imposing entourage flanking him on both sides.

Yu Shuangyu and Chu Wei were both baffled.

Bai Xiaosheng glanced at the two men, expressionless, leading his group past them.

"I've confirmed with the front desk, Han Hefei is in. Take us to see him!" Bai Xiaosheng commanded.

Chapter 1225 - Unprecedented, Major Move

Yu Shuangyu and Chu Wei stared at Bai Xiaosheng in front of them dumbfounded, feeling incredibly unfamiliar.

Looking into Bai Xiaosheng's eyes, they even felt a hint of... palpitations!

Yu Shuangyu and Chu Wei, having been in the professional world for many years, understood that when a person occupies a high position for a long time, to the point where they can determine the fate and fortune of others, they naturally develop a special kind of aura.

A single look or tone of voice could induce fear in others.

This is what is commonly referred to as presence!

Mr. Han has it.

But the Lin Sheng in front of them seemed even stronger, so much so that it gave them the illusion of suffocation.

Chu Wei had long been intimidated by Bai Xiaosheng, and upon seeing him, his face instantly paled, barely holding back the urge to comply.

However, in the end, Chu Wei managed to hold back, shifting his gaze to Yu Shuangyu to make a decision.

Yu Shuangyu looked at Bai Xiaosheng, swallowed, and although he had spent years by Mr. Han's side and had some resistance to the aura of authority from those above him.

After all, at Shenhe Group, Mr. Han was the real boss!

As soon as Yu Shuangyu remembered this, he instantly calmed his mind, frowned, and said sternly and with feigned bravado, "Lin Sheng, what nonsense are you speaking?! You even dare to call Mr. Han by his name, have you no respect for the rules! I'm asking you, what's the reason for your lateness, and who are these people?!"

Yu Shuangyu's roar impressed Chu Wei.

Assistant Yu really stood his ground with that show of authority.

This Lin Sheng who shows no respect for his superiors, will definitely be in for it if it gets to Mr. Han!

Chu Wei secretly looked forward to it.

However, seeing that Lin Sheng, Bai Ying, and Fang Cheng were followed by quite a few people, looking as if they were here to cause trouble, what was going on here?

Chu Wei didn't understand either.

Bai Xiaosheng looked at Yu Shuangyu dismissively.

Lin Weiwei had already stepped forward, expressionless, and said to Yu Shuangyu in a deep voice, "Is Shenhe Group still under the Zhenbei Group?"

The abrupt question caught Yu Shuangyu off guard.

"Of course, our Shenhe is naturally part of the Zhenbei Group!" Yu Shuangyu retorted coldly.

Chu Wei also knew that.

Otherwise, why would he, despite such great "grievances," still not be willing to leave Shenhe Group.

Zhenbei Group!

A world-class financial conglomerate!

Truly boundless prospects!

"As long as it's still part of Zhenbei Group, then things will be easy!" Lin Weiwei smiled and reintroduced Bai Xiaosheng to Yu Shuangyu and Chu Wei, "This person, whom you know as Mr. Lin Sheng, is actually Mr. Bai Xiaosheng, the Senior Affairs Officer of Zhenbei Group's Greater China Region, ranking two levels above your Mr. Han!"

Lin Weiwei's introduction was like a thunderbolt out of the blue.

Instantly, it left Yu Shuangyu and his companion in complete shock.

Senior Affairs Officer of Zhenbei Group's Greater China Region?

Two full ranks above Mr. Han!

"What nonsense, he is not..." Yu Shuangyu muttered.

He was the first to disbelieve.

Chu Wei was the second.

"We have been investigating you, and now, we are here to deliver the notice of punishment." Lin Weiwei said indifferently, even producing a report stamped with the Greater China Region Headquarters' seal.

Upon seeing that official document and the seal on it, Yu Shuangyu was utterly dumbstruck.

Being often around Mr. Han Hefei, he had certainly heard certain things and knew, at the very least, about the role of an Affairs Officer.

And this Lin Sheng, was actually Bai Xiaosheng?

A Senior Affairs Officer?

The previous visits to the company, were they conducting an investigation?

Now, are they here to announce a punishment?

...

A flood of information rushed in, leaving Yu Shuangyu feeling somewhat dazed and nearly overwhelmed.

Seeing Yu Shuangyu's expression, Chu Wei was also taken aback.

Could it be that what these people said was true!

This Lin Sheng...

No, Bai Xiaosheng...

Was the real power player!

Even more so than Mr. Han Hefei!

Chu Wei's expression immediately twisted into bitterness as if he were chewing a mouthful of bitter melon mixed with coptis.

Watching the two stand there like statues, Bai Xiaosheng knew leading the way was out of the question, not that he had expected them to.

After all, he was already very familiar with this place.

Bai Xiaosheng stepped forward, bypassing them, heading directly to Mr. Han Hefei's office.

The others followed Bai Xiaosheng silently in agreement.

Yu Shuangyu and Chu Wei were left behind like discarded rags, ignored where they stood.

"Assistant Yu... Mr. Han, could it be..." Chu Wei's face twisted as he stammered to Yu Shuangyu.

The last two words choked in his throat, as if he couldn't spit them out.

"It's over!" Yu Shuangyu's face was pale as paper as he muttered the words Chu Wei couldn't say.

Then, Yu Shuangyu stepped forward, closely following those people.

He wanted to see for himself how things would end!

Mr. Bai Xiaosheng and his party headed straight for Mr. Han Hefei's office. Although there were fewer Shenhe Group employees on this floor, there weren't none.

Seeing the group, employees hurriedly dodge and whisper in secret.

"What's going on? Is that... Assistant Lin? He looks quite different, quite imposing!"

"And Bai Ying, Fang Cheng... Who are those people behind them? Mr. Han's guests?"

"I have no clue, but something feels off!"

"Look, look, Assistant Yu is following behind them, and he looks upset..."

"What in the world is happening!"

...

Shenhe Group's employees whispered among themselves, unable to make heads or tails of the situation, so they all quietly followed.

Mr. Bai Xiaosheng walked all the way to the door of Mr. Han Hefei's office, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying rushed up, one on each side, and helped him push the door open,

Mr. Bai Xiaosheng, along with the Affairs Officers and Assistants, entered directly.

Behind the desk.

Mr. Han Hefei was lying in his chair with his eyes closed, resting. Hearing the commotion, he sat up and opened his eyes, frowning as he saw Mr. Bai Xiaosheng and the others, his gaze sharp as two fierce beams shot out.

"You..."

"Mr. Han Hefei." Mr. Bai Xiaosheng smiled calmly, "Let me reintroduce myself."

"My name is Bai Xiaosheng, from the headquarters, Senior Affairs Officer."

Mr. Bai Xiaosheng's introduction halted the words that were on Mr. Han Hefei's lips.

"So, it's Senior Affairs Officer Bai Xiaosheng!"

...

Yu Shuangyu and others waited anxiously outside Mr. Han Hefei's office.

There was someone guarding the door, and even Yu Shuangyu was not qualified to enter.

Fortunately, it took less than five minutes before someone came out.

Everyone was taken aback at the sight.

Lei Ying and another Affairs Officer were nearly escorting Mr. Han Hefei out of the office.

"Go to the Assistant's office, where we will interrogate you!" Lei Ying nearly "ordered" Mr. Han Hefei.

Mr. Han Hefei was expressionless, yet obeyed Lei Ying and walked towards the direction of the Assistant's office.

Seeing that even "Fang Cheng" could command Mr. Han Hefei, Yu Shuangyu, Chu Wei, and the surrounding Shenhe employees, all inhaled sharply, completely speechless.

"So these people are this powerful..." Chu Wei's face was bitter, fighting back tears.

It seems like joining Shenhe and thinking of climbing the ladder was just wishful thinking...

...

Before long, Lin Weiwei came out of the office. She caught sight of Yu Shuangyu and pointed, commanding, "You, go and inform all department heads to assemble here now. Our Senior Affairs Officer has an announcement to make!"

Yu Shuangyu shuddered and after a moment, whispered back, "Yes."

...

Within a day, Shenhe Group underwent a complete overhaul.

Every corner of the company was abuzz with astonishing news.

Their Shenhe, a subsidiary of Zhenbei Group, had a big shot from the Greater China Region Headquarters come down. This big shot was actually their boss Mr. Han's assistant for a week, and that was Lin Sheng!

This big shot brought people to thoroughly investigate their issues, and Mr. Han has been suspended for inquiry...

...

Countless shocking messages kept coming.

Shenhe was shaken!

In fact, it wasn't just Shenhe Group that was shaken.

In Nanyu and surrounding provinces and cities belonging to Zhenbei Group, a slew of enterprises was under investigation.

Overnight, hundreds of Affairs Officers and Assistants emerged "out of nowhere."

Auditing accounts, checking internal information...

With Nanyu as the core, the surrounding provinces and cities were all shaken!

And not just that, in the southern and northern regions, two provincial capital cities also saw the appearance of Senior Affairs Officers, Affairs Officers, and Assistants.

They were like hurricanes, thoroughly checking problem enterprises and continuously expanding their successes!

After a day, the entire Zhenbei Group's Greater China Region was shaken!

Everyone understood.

A real storm was coming!

So fast it was imperceptible, so ferocious it surpassed storms and tsunamis!

This day was changing!

Chapter 1226 - Old Soldiers Never Die

Bai Xiaosheng, leading his team, was conducting an intense investigation into Shenhe Group just as the Zhenbei Group Greater China Region Headquarters was holding a top-level meeting.

In this most senior-level meeting, there were only Xiahou Qi and six Senior Affairs Officers, four Senior Affairs Officers were missing.

Because including Bai Xiaosheng, Zheng Honghu, and Li Haofeng, four people, were scattered in every corner of the country, launching the largest and most forceful investigation in nearly a decade!

Various messages had been frequently transmitted back to the Greater China Region Headquarters this morning.

It could be said that each piece of news was sensational!

Now, this headquarters, missing nearly half of its people, was filled with discussions everywhere.

"Mr. Xia, what exactly is going on!"

In the current meeting, Grand Affairs Officer Shen Peisheng, with his beard and hair bristling and eyes bloodshot to an extreme point, seemed infuriated and even started yelling at Xiahou Qi while banging on the table, looking highly agitated—

"When did our headquarters start such a massive-scale investigation!"

"I came early this morning, and nearly half of the Affairs Officers and assistants at headquarters were missing, with four Senior Affairs Officers all out!"

"Such a big move, and we didn't know anything about it beforehand!"

"Are we still Senior Affairs Officers if we don't even have this right to know!"

Shen Peisheng was essentially launching a barrage of questions at Xiahou Qi.

Xiahou Qi's complexion looked quite pale, yet his spirit was still flickering.

Last night, he didn't sleep until 2 a.m., yet he arrived at the company at 8 a.m. sharp.

All this was to face such a situation.

Here, only he, as the president, could resolve the matter.

Before coming, Xiahou Qi had eaten a double dose of the Traditional Chinese Medicine Pills left by Bai Xiaosheng, which helped him endure last night's exhaustion without breaking into a coughing fit in public and struggling to speak.

Shen Peisheng's explosive outburst also triggered many grievances from other Senior Affairs Officers.

"Indeed, I also support the thorough investigation by headquarters, but you should have at least informed us in advance!"

"We are Senior Affairs Officers, and yet you withhold information from us? This clearly means you do not trust us!"

"Mr. Xia, do you think all of us here are unreliable and untrustworthy? Then you might as well dismiss us now!"

"Exactly! We've been here for so many years; even if not credited for achievements, we've endured hardships. To be relegated to being distrusted, it's an insult to us!"

"This matter, Elder Xia, you owe us an explanation!"

"Indeed, give us an explanation!"

The remaining Senior Affairs Officers also vented their dissatisfaction.

Xiahou Qi looked at them.

Indeed, there were people he did not trust among them, including those siding with Shen Peisheng.

Of course, there were also those holding a neutral stance.

To ensure the success of Bai Xiaosheng's current operation, Xiahou Qi only dispatched those he believed reliable, and did not inform anyone present about the situation.

Now, their emotions had erupted.

Naturally, Xiahou Qi had to provide an explanation.

"Everyone! Everyone!" Xiahou Qi called out sternly, managing to suppress the voices of dissatisfaction.

"Old Shen, and everyone..." Xiahou Qi spoke unhurriedly and gravely—

"This operation was decided late last night based on Senior Affairs Officer Bai Xiaosheng's advice, with the personnel being mobilized in the middle of the night."

"If you don't believe it, feel free to ask Human Resources, Administration, and Logistics staff. They all were woken up by me in the middle of the night to book tickets and hotels to ensure the personnel's travel."

These three departments were also managed by trustworthy and reliable people chosen by Xiahou Qi.

Otherwise, it wouldn't have been possible to keep these details hidden from the Senior Affairs Officers present until now.

However, Shen Peisheng definitely knew about these matters even earlier since people under his supervision were being investigated, and with the conflicts arising there, hiding it was impossible.

Therefore, it was necessary to dispatch Senior Affairs Officers!

Therefore, they had to act swiftly and decisively!

"I do not distrust everyone; it's not that I intentionally keep things from you all. It's merely a matter of different arrangements and divisions of labor. Someone needs to handle the investigations while others need to stay at the headquarters. It's just a difference in division of labor; where does it concern trust issues!"

"Today, even if you didn't come to me, I would have called a meeting to share the information!"

"Once the investigation reports arrive at headquarters, the moment I get a copy, each of you will have one too. You will receive the information exactly when I, Xiahou Qi, receive it!"

"Isn't that acceptable?"

After delivering his speech forcefully, Xiahou Qi couldn't help but pause to catch his breath for several seconds, his gaze intense as it swept over the crowd, but he could hardly suppress the occasional cough.

Everyone was stunned by Xiahou Qi's commanding presence.

Underneath the table, Xiahou Qi's hands rested on his knees, clenched into fists, slightly trembling.

He was fighting hard to suppress his discomfort, causing his legs to quiver lightly.

A feeling of pain long absent, along with dizziness, continued to assault the old man's body.

He persisted, enduring pains ordinary people could hardly bear.

He had to present himself as firm as a lion to dominate the crowd before him.

Especially Shen Peisheng!

Shen Peisheng was looking at him, and he was looking back at Shen Peisheng.

These two, who had been rivals and friends for decades, faced each other.

"Mr. Xia, in these tumultuous times, even if we send people out to investigate, is it necessary for all four Senior Affairs Officers to go?" Shen Peisheng's voice was cold and deliberate, each word sharp as a blade, "Have you forgotten, initiated by me last week and supported by everyone present here—"

"About the selection, assessment, and dismissal systems in the Greater China Region, the discussion of twelve chronic issues, exploring fourteen pilot research initiatives... We need to finalize the framework for these issues in the next day or two, as we have already announced the timeline publicly!"

"Currently, with the absence of the four Senior Affairs Officers and many key Affairs Officers, who is going to handle that workload? If no substantial results are produced... wouldn't my announcement from headquarters be nothing more than worthless paper!"

"Where would the authority of headquarters stand, and its credibility!"

Shen Peisheng's words pressed aggressively.

"These tasks will be distributed among the remaining Senior Affairs Officers and Affairs Officers. I will personally oversee each symposium, ensuring nothing goes overlooked! Grand Affairs Officer Shen Peisheng, are you satisfied now?"

Xiahou Qi stood his ground.

However, after saying this, Xiahou Qi couldn't help but cough softly, yet his gaze remained resolute, fixed on Shen Peisheng and everyone present.

The Senior Affairs Officers around him exchanged looks, seeing Xiahou Qi and Shen Peisheng at loggerheads, with Xiahou Qi emotional, they hesitated to speak to avoid worsening the situation.

"Accepted! Then we'll trouble Mr. Xia!" Shen Peisheng said forcefully, then stood up.

The heavy solid wood chair was pushed back noisily, grinding against the floor.

"I still have work to do on my side. Elder Xia, please make sure to attend the meeting and provide your guidance!"

Shen Peisheng left brusquely after dropping these words.

The Senior Affairs Officers looked at Xiahou Qi, whose voice was hoarse. He glanced at Shen Peisheng's retreating figure, then back at the others and raised his voice, "For those who need to have meetings, I will attend! But I must warn everyone, in these troubled times, everyone has responsibilities! You must not leave headquarters without authorization!"

He was determined to keep everyone, especially Shen Peisheng, anchored at the headquarters!

"Meeting adjourned!"

...

One by one, the Senior Affairs Officers left silently. As the last person walked out and the door of the conference room closed, Xiahou Qi's body shook violently, bending over as if a shrimp, his hands covering his mouth.

Painful coughs emanated from between his palms.

Sweat beads quickly covered Xiahou Qi's forehead.

His body could hardly support him anymore.

Wang Mubei hurried in, catching Xiahou Qi in this state, and rushed over in shock, pulling out medicine from his pocket to administer it to Xiahou Qi.

However, this time, it took a full two minutes before the medicine alleviated Xiahou Qi's pain.

"Elder Xia, you should go to the hospital!" Wang Mubei said shakily.

Xiahou Qi's face was pale, his expression weak, but his eyes were resolute.

"Sheng and the others are still out there fighting! Let me guard the rear for them!"

At that moment, Xiahou Qi was like an old soldier who had battled on the fields, who, despite being physically overwhelmed, would not retreat even a single step.

Chapter 1227 - You, are too cooperative!

Bai Xiaosheng led the investigation on the third day.

The progress on all fronts was swift, with new "surprises" emerging almost every day.

Not only on Bai Xiaosheng's side, but Zheng Honghu, Li Haofeng, as well as another Senior Affairs Officer, also continually made gratifying progress.

One problematic individual after another was unearthed, and one achievement after another awaited reaping!

Nearly every Affairs Officer and assistant who participated in the investigation was highly excited, dedicating themselves wholeheartedly to their work.

Nanyu City, Shenhe Group, ten o'clock in the morning.

Bai Xiaosheng walked down the corridor, with Lin Weiwei following beside him, reporting the achievements they had made in the short span of two hours that morning.

"Just now, Han Hefei has confessed to two more issues."

"The first one involves Shenhe colluding with one of its subsidiary trading companies to falsify accounts. That subsidiary is in the area that Great Affairs Officer Zheng Honghu is responsible for. I have already sent the information over to them. The feedback has come; the person in charge there refuses to recognize the issue. However, the accounts are currently being audited. I believe there will be results soon!"

"The second involves a ship company under the Group that received a large sum of bridge capital from Shenhe this March, purportedly for private investment. The ship company is located in Haofeng Great Affairs Officer Li's investigative jurisdiction. At present, it is also under investigation."

Lin Weiwei was also extremely excited.

In less than three days, the achievements they'd made were substantial. Although nearly ninety percent required investigation and verification and were not yet finalized, the future awaiting them would be a startling surprise.

It was believed that after this battle, Shen Peishen would be thoroughly destroyed, and Bai Xiaosheng would ascend to the top rank of Senior Affairs Officer due to his merits!

Correspondingly, both she and Lei Ying would rise with the tide!

And these participating Senior Affairs Officers, Affairs Officers, and assistants would also receive ample rewards!

In short, this ardor will surely lead to universal jubilation!

Bai Xiaosheng listened to these good news and pondered slightly.

If it had been the day before yesterday, he couldn't have stopped the excitement.

If it had been yesterday, he would have been very content.

But today, hearing such good news in succession, with so many positive updates, he couldn't help but feel somewhat numb.

"Xiaosheng, what are you thinking about?" Seeing Bai Xiaosheng's silence, Lin Weiwei asked curiously and then smiled, "Today isn't as shocking as the past two days, but the day has just begun. I believe that as we go on, we will get more good news from Han Hefei's mouth!"

Lin Weiwei's words made Bai Xiaosheng pause midstep, his brows slightly furrowed.

"Weiwei, during these days, has it always been Lei Ying who's been questioning Han Hefei?" Bai Xiaosheng asked.

Although he was stationed in Nanyu, he could only spend half a day monitoring the questioning of Han Hefei before he was caught up managing other people's inquiries.

After all, many enterprises were embroiled in the issue in Nanyu and the surrounding provinces and cities. With about twenty related companies and seventy to eighty Affairs Officers and assistants coming to help, with so many people and so much to deal with, he couldn't possibly focus on Han Hefei alone!

"Yes, at the beginning it was, but because we were afraid Han Hefei might not be cooperative. However, Han Hefei has been very cooperative. Later on, it was other Affairs Officers who took over. Lei Ying went to help investigate other enterprises in Nanyu City. What's wrong, Xiaosheng?" Lin Weiwei queried.

Bai Xiaosheng furrowed his brows, remaining silent.

"So, from the beginning up to now, Han Hefei has been very cooperative!"

"Yes," Lin Weiwei said, "With us here, what could Han Hefei do if he were uncooperative?"

It didn't matter whether it was Bai Xiaosheng, Lei Ying, or she herself; they were all experts in investigation. If Han Hefei dared to hide anything, they could definitely tell. If push came to shove and they had to resort to measures, Han Hefei would not last long.

From this perspective, Han Hefei seemed to be quite sensible.

"I want to go see Han Hefei!" Bai Xiaosheng suddenly said.

Upon hearing that Bai Xiaosheng wanted to see Han Hefei, Lin Weiwei had no objections and immediately followed him straight to the assistant's office.

At the moment, the assistant's office was emptied out, temporarily serving as an interrogation room.

Since this was a corporate investigation and not a legal authority, Han Hefei's freedom could not be restricted. However, he was required to come to the company every day. Upon arrival, he had to go directly to the assistant's office to confess his issues; otherwise, the Group would file a lawsuit.

Han Hefei kept to the agreement, arriving punctually and more on time than for work.

When Bai Xiaosheng entered the room, Han Hefei was sitting behind the desk, holding a teacup and drinking tea. One Affairs Officer and two assistants in charge of questioning were organizing documents; they appeared to have just finished a round of questioning.

"Haofeng Great Affairs Officer!"

Seeing Bai Xiaosheng come in, the Affairs Officer and assistants promptly stood up and greeted him with smiles.

"Hard work," Bai Xiaosheng nodded, smiling back at the two, "I'm going to chat with Han Hefei for a bit."

"Okay."

The Affairs Officer and the two assistant officers tactfully picked up their things and stood up to leave, vacating the space.

Bai Xiaosheng walked straight over and sat down opposite Han Hefei.

Han Hefei held his teacup, still calm and composed, and only glanced at Bai Xiaosheng upon his entrance.

"Mr. Han seems to be in good spirits. Are you used to it here?" asked Bai Xiaosheng.

"What's there to not be used to? I've been working here for about fifteen or sixteen years," Han Hefei said with a light smile, lifting the teacup in his hand, "even this tea is from my office. How could I not be used to it?"

Bai Xiaosheng nodded and stared at him, asking, "I heard Mr. Han is very cooperative with our work!"

Bai Xiaosheng watched for any changes in Han Hefei's expression.

"With Senior Affairs Officer Sheng personally visiting, how could I not cooperate? What else could I do? Resist, not comply?" Han Hefei shrugged with a laugh, "To confess and seek leniency, right? Group regulations, I'm still somewhat aware. If my cooperation can lead to headquarters considering a reduction in punishment, decreasing some charges, then why not be willing! To maximize cooperation is best for everyone!"

Han Hefei admitted frankly why he was so readily confessing; it seemed he had already guessed what Bai Xiaosheng was going to ask.

Bai Xiaosheng's smile slightly receded as he fixated on Han Hefei's eyes, just watching him.

Han Hefei met Bai Xiaosheng's gaze, his eyes calm and unwavering.

Truly, Han Hefei was remarkable—as of now, Bai Xiaosheng couldn't penetrate his current emotional state.

Some people are naturally adept at controlling their emotions and composure!

Not to mention decades spent in the corporate world!

"What you're doing now doesn't match your character!"

Bai Xiaosheng made an abrupt, unsolicited comment to Han Hefei.

"Is Senior Affairs Officer Sheng implying that he wants me not to confess so readily because that would match your judgment of me?" Han Hefei asked with a laugh in response.

Bai Xiaosheng looked at him seriously, not in the mood for jokes.

"Up to now, you've shown no resistance, you've been very cooperative, but you've not fully disclosed everything you know."

"Every day, you surprise us, but each and every surprise, we can't seem to quickly realize."

"The items in your safe, every piece leads to a clue we can follow, but none are serious enough to be a death warrant."

Bai Xiaosheng looked earnestly at Han Hefei.

"I'm starting to have doubts!"

What doubts Bai Xiaosheng held, he did not say; he merely continued staring at Han Hefei.

Han Hefei also stared back.

For a full two minutes, Bai Xiaosheng stood up and walked out.

There was no result.

From Han Hefei, Bai Xiaosheng felt he couldn't get the answers he was looking for.

Lin Weiwei hurriedly followed Bai Xiaosheng out of the assistant's office.

Han Hefei watched the door close, took another sip from his tea cup, and murmured in a voice only he could hear, "You're very impressive!"

"But, so what." Han Hefei's expressionless face finally revealed a hint of a smile.

A mocking smile.

Bai Xiaosheng paused by a window in the corridor, and Lin Weiwei approached, surprised, "Xiaosheng, what's wrong?"

Bai Xiaosheng fell silent, then suddenly said, "I'm going to call Elder Xia!"

He moved to a corner, dialed the number, and waited patiently.

Once, no answer.

Twice, no answer.

Bai Xiaosheng's eyes grew more serious, his grip on the phone tightening.

"Elder Xia!"

Chapter 1228 - Heroes, Twilight

Bai Xiaosheng was calling Xiahou Qi, and while Xiahou Qi's mobile phone was not turned off, he did not carry it with him either. Instead, it was left on the desk in his office.

Xiahou Qi himself was in the meeting room, listening to a presentation.

At this moment, Xiahou Qi looked extremely unwell.

For someone as patient and restrained as him, his current condition was clearly visible to everyone present!

It was evident how dire the situation was.

Xiahou Qi sat there, his body slightly trembling, his eyes sometimes lucid and sometimes blurred, giving a sense of tottering.

His physical energy consumption was nearing its limit.

Now, Xiahou Qi's energy had weakened to a state comparable to the frailness of old age, so much so that even standing up and sitting down required him to hold onto the desk, and he no longer refused help from others.

Ordinary people might think, it's just a meeting, sitting still, no need to run or jump, no need to work, how much physical strength could it possibly consume?

It appears so.

However, a meeting, especially a high-level meeting involving major decisions, requires a huge investment of mental and intellectual energy from the decision-makers.

Once seated, the meeting could go on for hours.

Such meetings consume more physical energy than physical labor.

Especially for such an elderly person who also suffers from chronic illness.

Moreover, Xiahou Qi had already persisted for three consecutive days.

Morning to afternoon, one meeting after another, attending such high-intensity meetings.

Others can rest, but he cannot.

Xiahou Qi personally promised Shen Peishen and other Senior Affairs Officers that he would attend every meeting, and he was true to his words.

Even though Wang Mubei pleaded bitterly, he still stubbornly insisted!

This elderly man, with a tenacity and determination unfathomable to ordinary people, was overcoming his physical and psychological limits.

Now, like a dimly flickering lamp in the darkness, clearly weak and possibly extinguishing at any moment, he still endured every minute and second.

This perseverance touched every attendee.

Today, Shen Peishen also attended this meeting. He sat there, staring at Xiahou Qi.

Even he, as a competitor, was somewhat convinced!

"You are staking your life for a fight of victory and defeat with me, I can afford to lose, but can you?"

Full of admiration, Shen Peishen really wanted to ask.

That was one question, and the other was—

"If I win, I win everything, but if you win... what's left for you! Staking your life, is it really worth it?"

Xiahou Qi's gaze was too weak to notice the meaning in Shen Peishen's eyes.

The meeting was still in progress when suddenly there was a knock on the door.

The person presenting stopped and looked towards the door.

Everyone in the room also looked towards the door.

In this unexpected interruption, Xiahou Qi forcibly gathered his energy, looked towards the door, and issued a hoarse and low voice.

"Come in!"

Poking his head in was Xiahou Qi's assistant Wang Mubei, who looked at the elder with a somewhat unbearable gaze, yet still gently reported the truth, "Elder Xia, people from the Group headquarters have arrived!"

Wang Mubei's words silenced the meeting room.

The headquarters mentioned by Wang Mubei referred to Zhenbei Group headquarters!

Even the headquarters noticed the big moves on the Greater China Region side and sent people over?

Aside from Xiahou Qi and Shen Peishen, the rest of the people present, be they Senior Affairs Officers or Affairs Officers, whispered among themselves.

"People from the headquarters? Did they hear something happening here and come to inquire?"

"These past days, our Greater China Region has almost turned upside-down, I was just wondering when the headquarters would respond!"

"I wonder what stance the headquarters will take towards these actions..."

Whispers spread.

Xiahou Qi coughed lightly, and the chatter below ceased.

"Then I, will go meet them." Xiahou Qi said weakly, his voice sounding extremely fragile.

As he spoke, he was about to stand up.

"There's no need, Elder Xia, let us come to you instead."

Outside, suddenly a firm voice was heard.

Xiahou Qi was startled.

This voice was very familiar!

Then, the doors of the meeting room were pushed open, and Wang Mubei was gently pushed aside.

A group of people walked in.

Leading them was a man nearing middle age, who carried himself with an air of importance.

Everyone present was startled.

This person was none other than Fang Beijun, the Senior Affairs Officer who had gone to the headquarters!

"So, it's Fang!" Xiahou Qi struggled to show a smile, "It's you who came, good! You are also promoted from our Greater China Region, not an outsider, so I won't get up to welcome you."

Xiahou Qi said thus.

Actually, without someone to help, it was very difficult for him to stand up.

"Elder Xia! Elder Xia!" Fang Beijun, seeing Xiahou Qi's condition, was deeply moved and called out twice, taking two quick steps forward before stopping, smiling and saying, "We are all insiders here, you don't need to stand up when you're feeling unwell."

Xiahou Qi returned the smile.

Xiahou Qi did not get up, but Shen Peishen did.

The entire venue, as if following his lead, saw every Senior Affairs Officer and Affairs Officer rise to their feet.

"The big leader has arrived, welcome, welcome, welcome the leaders from the headquarters!" Shen Peishen laughed, subtly elevating Fang Beijun.

Fang Beijun seemed to appreciate this elevation, smiling and nodding.

Shen Peishen's words, seemingly like a command, were immediately met with incredibly enthusiastic applause from those present, as if welcoming the "leader" from above.

Fang Beijun laughed heartily, pressing his hands down, "Mr. Shen, you flatter me! Everyone, please don't be too formal, we are all family!"

Chapter 1229 - The Hero, Approaching Twilight\_2

Shen Peisheng and Fang Beijun chatted and laughed as if they were old friends.

Xiahou Qi silently observed Fang Beijun, observed Shen Peisheng, and observed the people in front of him who were obedient to Shen Peisheng.

Without uttering a single word.

Nearly all those on Xiahou Qi's side had been sent away, and even those who remained were excluded from the meeting.

Thus, witnessing such a scene before his eyes was not surprising.

"Fang, what brings you here this time?" Shen Peisheng changed his address, sounding even more cordial, "Let's deal with the important matters first. Once we're done, I can play my part as the host. You haven't visited in a long time."

Shen Peisheng deliberately or inadvertently acted like he was the one in charge here.

Fang Beijun seemed oblivious, as if he hadn't noticed anything amiss.

The other Senior Affairs Officers and Affairs Officers present all acted as if it were totally normal.

Xiahou Qi narrowed his gaze slightly, silent, still watching them calmly.

"Indeed, I barged in and interrupted such an important meeting; obviously, I should attend to the serious matters first." Fang Beijun chuckled, looking at Xiahou Qi with a bit of solemnity, "Elder Xia, reports from the Greater China Region say you are ill and unfit to continue overseeing the work!"

Xiahou Qi's eyes narrowed at such a statement.

"You are a great contributor, and the higher-ups have always valued you, specially sent someone to check on you, and express their well-wishes. As an old-timer from the Greater China Region, I happen to lead this vanguard task."

"I'm stepping in on behalf of my superiors, and now such a look, pssh..."

"Your complexion really doesn't look good!"

Fang Beijun seemed to be drawing a conclusion.

Behind him, some people were filming, some were taking out notebooks to make notes, and there was even someone carrying a medical kit – a doctor in tow!

Xiahou Qi's eyes grew fierce.

Wang Mubei, standing at the door, was so shocked that his eyes widened.

Who reported that Xiahou Qi was unwell?

Who had the authority, the conditions to do so?

It was clear even without guessing that it must have been Shen Peisheng!

Whether Fang Beijun's arrival was a coincidence or a maneuver, it was indeed intriguing!

The two of them, with that recent exchange, were too in sync. Instead of concerning about Xiahou Qi's health, it seemed more like they wanted to use health as a pretext to force Xiahou Qi to "rest" and take away his power!

Shen Peisheng sought to seize power!

Sima Zhao's heart, an open secret!

At this moment, everyone in the room turned their eyes to Xiahou Qi, their gazes filled with clear intent.

With a doctor's examination and their "proof," along with Fang Beijun's conclusion...

The matter of Xiahou Qi's serious illness would surely be confirmed.

Would his position as the President of the Greater China Region be taken away?!

"Elder Xia is seriously ill, he needs to recuperate!"

"Exactly, if you keep pushing on, who knows if the illness might become uncontrollable!"

"The headquarters care so much, Elder Xia, you shouldn't refuse."

Seeing Shen Peisheng and Fang Beijun acting in such tacit agreement, watching the utterly "in sync" gazes of everyone in the room, seeming ready to add fuel to the fire!

Xiahou Qi's eyes suddenly blazed like fire, and he stood up fiercely.

Glaring at everyone, his hair and beard bristling, Xiahou Qi bellowed, "All of you, shut up!"

"How is my health any of your business to conjecture!"

Like an old lion at twilight, Xiahou Qi let out one last deafening roar.

These words were for everyone present, for Shen Peisheng, and also for Fang Beijun and his people!

Thinking that because Elder Xia is ill, they could plot against him like this?

Delusional!

After roaring, Xiahou Qi felt waves of dizziness.

This made his body wobble, nearly causing him to fall.

Xiahou Qi's large hands, skin like the bark of a withered tree, heavily pressed onto the table's surface, strenuously support his body.

Following that was a wave of severe pain spreading throughout his body.

Excitement and anger further exacerbated his physical condition.

He began to cough violently.

The entire room plunged into silence.

Everyone silently observed the President of the Greater China Region, their gazes cold and indifferent.

Xiahou Qi was like the last barrier standing in the way of everyone's "future" there, each wishing he would fall.

Before, they could only wish, but now there was an opportunity!

"Why go to such lengths, Elder Xia." Fang Beijun sighed leisurely, seemingly full of regret, and then smiled persuasively, "When your body is already like this, what are you still clinging to? Let go, your health is what's most important! The group will arrange for your recuperation, and the work here can be taken over by Grand Affairs Officer Shen Peisheng, wouldn't that be perfect?"

Fang Beijun's title for Xiahou Qi had quietly shifted from "You" to "You."

Shen Peisheng chuckled, showing his stance to those "from the headquarters" following Fang Beijun, "Although, I, Shen Peisheng, am not young myself, my health is still a bit better than Elder Xia's. If the situation requires, then I won't demur and take over this mess here."

Following Shen Peisheng's words, whether it was Senior Affairs Officers or Affairs Officers present, they all eagerly voiced out —

"Sir Shen's selflessness for the public good truly is a noble deed!"

"Yes, with Sir Shen overseeing the work, I'm sure it will even surpass the past!"

"This mess is all due to Sheng as the Senior Affairs Officer being reckless, it's also time for Sir Shen to do some cleaning up!"

"Elder Xia, step down and hand over the work to Sir Shen."

"We will certainly spare no effort to assist Sir Shen in handling all problems!"

...

Everyone was chattering, kissing up to Sir Shen, persuading Xiahou Qi.

They were like buzzing flies, and with Shen Peisheng's and Fang Beijun's cold, mocking smiles when looking at himself, Xiahou Qi's vision started to twist and blur.

Chapter 1230 - Heroes, Twilight\_3

"Fang Beijun, so you've come. Well then."

"Shen Peisheng, you too have said quite a lot."

"But, I need none of it!"

"My health is even better!"

"As long as I'm here, I'm the one who calls the shots in the Greater China Region!"

It seemed like a fleeting resurgence of energy, as Xiahou Qi, from seemingly nowhere, strung several sentences together.

His voice was low and hoarse, yet unwaveringly firm.

His body swayed like a flat boat amid tumultuous waves, seemingly on the verge of capsizing at any moment, yet still he stood his ground, unwavering.

He said he would hold the last gateway for Bai Xiaosheng and the others.

And he meant to do just that!

Shen Peisheng stared steadily at his old foe and walked over to Xiahou Qi, step by step.

With each step, a smile slowly spread across Shen Peisheng's face.

For decades, he felt he had never smiled with such glee.

"Elder Xia, why bother? Moreover, is there any point to this?"

"We have been rivals for decades, neither of us able to overpower the other. But now, as you grow old, you've become muddled, entrusting your hopes in that Bai Xiaosheng."

"Do you really think that what he obtained in Nanyu was due to our oversight?"

"No, I allowed him to find it on purpose!"

"Oh, speaking of which, I would have thought it impossible for anyone else to have gotten their hands on it so smoothly! Bai Xiaosheng is truly not an ordinary man; he actually managed to do it!"

"Yet his success is precisely what's digging your grave! It made you send away all your support here, wearing you out with endless toil, making it impossible for you to carry on!"

"Being betrayed by the younger generation you trusted most, how do you feel about it now, tell me, I'm actually quite eager to hear!"

With a voice that only the two of them could hear, Shen Peisheng spoke these words.

Xiahou Qi stared fixedly at him, biting on the corner of his mouth, focusing to keep his consciousness clear.

Even the corners of Xiahou Qi's mouth seemed to faintly ooze blood. "You haven't won yet!"

Shen Peisheng silently laughed, seemingly in mockery of Xiahou Qi.

"Not won? Where did you get that idea from? Do you think that half the people in the Greater China Region won't submit to me?"

"Let me tell you, once I've fully taken control, you'll see how I deal with that Bai surname kid, and with Li Haofeng, Zheng Honghu, Chen Yucheng!"

"These people whom you think represent the future hope of the Greater China Region, I won't let off a single one!"

"You are their root; if you fall, can they last long?"

"You'd better take good care of yourself, recover well, once you're in better shape, I'll be sure to have you watch with your eyes wide open as your years of hard work go up in flames!"

Shen Peisheng said with utmost earnestness, lowering his voice.

The people in the room, perhaps some faintly heard something, but wisely pretended they heard nothing, continuing to whisper among themselves.

Merely discussing that Shen Peisheng should succeed to the position, and Xiahou Qi should relinquish power.

"You dare!"

Xiahou Qi, upon hearing Shen Peisheng's threat, suddenly widened his bloodshot eyes, the whites laced with red veins, glaring at Shen Peisheng like a ferocious demon.

His emotions grew more intense, and he couldn't stop coughing violently, his coughs uncontrollable, sending droplets of blood spewing with his saliva.

Shen Peisheng stepped back in disgust but then sneered coldly watching the current state of Xiahou Qi.

The mighty President of the Greater China Region!

What a pitiful old hound in its twilight years!

"To set up this trap for you, I've sacrificed my direct lineage and painstaking efforts, now it's my time to reap the rewards. You can't stop it!" Shen Peisheng whispered.

In your dreams!

Xiahou Qi longed to tell Shen Peisheng that, but alas, every time he opened his mouth, his throat wheezed like a broken bellows, racked with endless coughs.

Not a word could he speak.

The crowd in the room quieted down, looking at Xiahou Qi with indifference.

There, Fang Beijun also looked on coldly.

He had received quite a few benefits from Shen Peishen and had expended a great deal of effort to secure this opportunity.

The doctor who came with Fang Beijun was about to step forward but was stopped by Fang Beijun.

"It's just a cough, let's wait a bit," said Fang Beijun with a smile.

The doctor immediately fell silent and stepped back.

"Elder Xia!" Wang Mubei called out from the door urgently, disregarding everything as he dashed over.

This time, no one stopped him, not even Shen Peishen, who allowed him to come forward.

Xiahou Qi heard Wang Mubei's voice, and like seeing a glimmer of hope, summoned all his willpower to clench his teeth, one hand covering his mouth and the other tremblingly reaching out to his assistant.

"Medicine!"

Xiahou Qi said with the last of his strength.

The medicine Bai Xiaosheng had given him—he had one last pill!

The medicine wouldn't cure the illness, but it could suppress the pain, enabling him to speak.

As long as he could get some relief, he, Xiahou Qi, would not fall. He would personally call headquarters to tell them he was okay!

At that time, neither Shen Peishen nor Fang Beijun would take his position away!

Xiahou Qi looked at Shen Peishen, the scene in his eyes somewhat distorted but still fixating the other man firmly in his sight.

Shen Peishen!

I've battled with you for decades!

You haven't won yet, and I haven't lost!

At the last moment, as long as I am here, I will guard this final line for Sheng and the others. Your schemes are cruel and indeed surprising, but you won't succeed!

No!

Xiahou Qi was conveying his beliefs through his eyes.

Shen Peishen looked on indifferently at Xiahou Qi as he reached towards Wang Mubei, without the slightest intention of stopping him.

Wang Mubei looked anxious, his hand already reaching into his pocket, drawing something out.

"Medicine!"

Xiahou Qi's gaze turned to Wang Mubei, bursting out with power, shouting out loud.

He staked all his remaining energy on that pill.

The room fell silent, everyone watching the scene.

Finally, Wang Mubei drew out the pill, his expression urgent as he handed it over.

Xiahou Qi watched as his hand inched closer to the pill, his eyes brightening slightly.

Hope was approaching...

However, just at the last few inches, the pill stopped.

Xiahou Qi seemed as if he could reach it, yet he couldn't.

Xiahou Qi lifted his eyes in stunned disbelief.

Wang Mubei's eyes brimmed with tears, his face full of regret.

"I'm sorry, Elder Xia. In the end, you have to step down, and I still need this job, need to provide for my family."

Wang Mubei appeared despondent.

"Forgive me!"

The pill fell from Wang Mubei's hand, and then he crushed it under his foot.

Accompanying Xiahou Qi's last hope dissolving into dust.

To be betrayed by the person he trusted most was more lethal than all other blows combined.

Xiahou Qi stared straight at Wang Mubei, his heart dead with grief, and gave a final, miserable smile.

Then, Xiahou Qi's eyes closed, and his body fell straight backward.

"I'm sorry, Sheng. This last line of defense... I couldn't hold it for you..."