

Two Trillion 1961

Chapter 1961 - "Candid" Exchange of Views (3)

When Lin Tianyi invited Bai Xiaosheng to sit down, he recited a poem, "I built my cottage in the community of men, and yet there is no noise of carriage and horses. You may wonder how this can be. When the heart is far, the place naturally becomes remote. I pluck chrysanthemums under the eastern hedge, and in calmness see the Southern Mountain. The mountain air is delightful both day and night, and the flying birds come back together. Here lies the true meaning, which I have forgotten to express in words."

"I've also thought about living that pastoral life, free from the hustle and bustle brought by worldly wealth." Lin Tianyi said with a smile.

Bai Xiaosheng also smiled and praised, "Mr. Lin, your heart is so noble, I admire you!"

In his heart, Bai Xiaosheng silently mouthed two words. Bullshit.

Rich people always claim they don't love money, those in power lament about the burdens of authority, yet none of them seem eager to avoid it, truly keeping their distance...

Lin Tianyi could retreat, could enjoy pastoral life, there are plenty of opportunities, he'd be so inclined, unlikely.

When all's said and done, this hobby is just playing around for now, merely a self-perceived liking.

Once both were seated, the butler knocked on the door.

With Lin Tianyi's permission, the butler brought in four extremely beautiful young maidservants to serve them refreshments.

After setting down the items, Lin Tianyi waved them away and personally poured tea for Bai Xiaosheng.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, extended his hand to receive it, and after tasting, he couldn't stop praising the tea.

Lin Tianyi also chatted with Bai Xiaosheng about tea with great interest.

The two chatted lightly for about ten minutes.

Then, Lin Tianyi shifted the topic to the main issue, "Without exaggeration, our Lin family, is quite large and there are many people to provide for. Even though my heart yearns for such noble life, as the head of the family, I must still concern myself with the mundane matters of food and clothing! Mr. Bai, having talked about the refined, we might as well speak of something practical, like our cooperation!"

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, put down his teacup, and said, "I came precisely for this... I'd love to hear Mr. Lin's thoughts first!"

Bai Xiaosheng wanted the other side to "show their hand" first.

Lin Tianyi smiled, "Alright, I'll speak first, let's fully exchange our views."

Bai Xiaosheng nodded at this.

"Let me start with the situation on my side." Lin Tianyi slightly toned down his smile and said to Bai Xiaosheng, "Our Lin family here in Xianggang, maybe not the number one, but certainly one of the top three in business strength, in finance, transport, maritime, external trade, I can proudly say, we have quite formidable strength and unique conditions, even the market here in Xianggang can't fulfill our ever-growing needs!"

Indeed, otherwise Lin Tianyi wouldn't be eyeing our mainland market. Bai Xiaosheng thought.

"The mainland has been developing so well over the years, we want to expand our market there, previously it was just minor skirmishes, this time we want a major collaboration with the enterprise you, Mr. Bai, hold, with your commercial alliance, it truly can be a win-win!"

Win-win? Allowing outsiders to share a piece of our market is what you call win-win? Bai Xiaosheng thought with a cold sneer, but showed no change in expression.

Lin Tianyi continued, "If Mr. Bai feels we can strive together in the European market, I, Lin, would be eternally grateful! I can assure you here, in the European and American market, we will align with Zhenbei Group's Greater China Region strategy, and take your lead!"

This is quite a performance! Bai Xiaosheng thought humorously.

It seems Lin Tianyi not only has eyes on the mainland market but also wishes to insert themselves into our channels in Europe and America.

"We in Xianggang have ports and policies, as well as land and sea transport, whatever needs you may have here, feel free to leave them to us, we will certainly not be stingy to our partners." Lin Tianyi seemed just shy of pounding his chest in assurance.

What this means is, there's no way for us to get in, any business we want to conduct here still has to go through the Lin family's channels.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled and nodded.

Lin Tianyi's words were quite pleasing, and his calculations even more so.

Would he really take Bai Xiaosheng for a fool?!

"Of course, these are merely my offhand remarks, what does Mr. Bai think? Feel free to express your thoughts, let's fully exchange opinions, and find the best cooperation point," Lin Tianyi said with a smile.

After Lin Tianyi made a series of excessive probes, seeing no change in Bai Xiaosheng's expression, he realized this young man was not easily dealt with, thus having Bai Xiaosheng express his own ideas.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, under Lin Tianyi's anticipation, and leisurely said, "For long-term decisions, we can take our time, let's take it step by step in phases, perhaps we start by discussing initial collaboration, allowing us to get to know each other better first."

Lin Tianyi appeared in a listening posture.

"Mr. Lin, we have an enterprise here called Tianyu International, but encountered many issues in its development, I've heard you lead a commercial alliance that could offer assistance." Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile, "Why not start from there, and in return, on the mainland, we will offer equivalent assistance to the Lin family, how does that sound!"

Lin Tianyi laughed.

Let you in?

There's no way!

This opening, cannot be made!

Chapter 1962 - Failed Negotiations

After Lin Tianyi and Bai Xiaosheng had a passionate discussion about collaboration, Lin Tianyi responded to Bai Xiaosheng's first request for cooperation with silence and a smile, suddenly appearing rather "reserved".

Tianyu International, to put it frankly, is merely an enterprise, just a company, and within both factions, it doesn't qualify as an outstanding presence.

However, it serves as a significant outpost for Zhenbei Group's Greater China Region in Xianggang!

Originally, Bai Xiaosheng also had several enterprises here; during his reforms, he merged and reorganized them, gave them a new name, and redefined their main business, which led to the formation of Tianyu International.

The significance that Tianyu International represents is different!

In Lin Tianyi's view, once aiding Tianyu International to gain a firm foothold in multiple markets here and grow, who knows if Bai Xiaosheng will keep investing continually, wave after wave!

Whether it's funding or resources, they have plenty of both!

What Lin Tianyi worries about is that, by then, some of his family's market shares would be taken away by them, and their living space would be squeezed!

After all, while expanding outward is indeed good, here is where their family and business roots lie.

The old home cannot be lost!

Among Xianggang's five major families, the other three have responded to policies in recent years, actively connecting with the Mainland and international scene, developing well on the other side.

Correspondingly, their market share within Xianggang has been shrinking annually. It's inevitable; opening the doors to competitors led to this situation, which is not surprising.

Lin Tianyi doesn't want to end up like that.

In Xianggang, besides the transport, finance, shipping, and international trade sectors he mentioned, in some specific market areas, the Lin Family holds an absolute dominance, sharing the market share exclusively with the Hong Family and many companies in their business alliance.

A significant portion of Tianyu International's business scope overlaps with those dominant markets!

In other words, helping Tianyu International is like raising a competitor, an enemy, and opening up those market doors to them!

How could that be allowed!

Actually, Lin Tianyi knows well that purely defending market shares is impossible under the current economic environment.

What he wants is merely to maintain those self-advantageous markets for as long as possible.

Making a profit for ten or twenty years would be enough to accumulate substantial wealth for the Lin Family.

This persuasion was how he moved the Hong Family on his side.

However, relying solely on the Xianggang market to profit is too low in returns and increasingly struggles to sustain the family's ever-growing system.

Thus, Lin Tianyi also sets his sights on the Mainland, on Europe, America, and even the whole world!

Guarding his purse while coveting others'...

Watching Lin Tianyi like this, Bai Xiaosheng felt a great deal of emotion.

He didn't know exactly what kind of extraordinary predecessors the Lin Family Clan had, who built this industrial empire existing for decades, but he understood that when it comes to preserving the business, the current Lin Family Head, Lin Tianyi, truly reached the extreme.

Cooperation is a mutual win and a process of mutually giving concessions.

Expecting to gain without conceding anything—where can you find such a bargain!

Bai Xiaosheng also believed that Lin Tianyi was not a fool and would understand this.

However, understanding and willingness to act are two different matters.

The face-to-face conversation they were having was about seeking a point of interest balance acceptable to both parties.

Before that, Bai Xiaosheng still wanted to see how Lin Tianyi would respond to his matter about aiding Tianyu International.

After Lin Tianyi's "reserve", he seemed to have thought of an argument, and he smiled at Bai Xiaosheng, "Tianyu International is an enterprise from Mr. Bai's side, this I know. Back when they were established, I even sent someone to the ribbon-cutting ceremony. Later, I further learned some about their management, operations, and appreciated some of their styles. In our business alliance, I have also mentioned multiple times to the member companies that Tianyu International is a very good cooperative partner, worth cooperating with!"

Lin Tianyi started by establishing his "merit".

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, nodding slightly, continuing, "In that case, I must first thank Mr. Lin for the prior support. Since Mr. Lin has created such a good start for our cooperation, I believe you will also make the ensuing cooperation satisfactory for us as well."

Bai Xiaosheng was quick to follow up on the cue.

This remark made Lin Tianyi's laughter a bit dry.

"Haha, Mr. Bai, you don't need to thank me; these are what I ought to do. But... regarding the business scope of Tianyu International here, I must mention, it overlaps with my Lin Family and a great family friend of ours—the Hong Family, establishing a competitive relationship, and with many enterprises in our business alliance, it more or less has certain competition. I really want to help your enterprise develop, but it's just... there are different opinions within the family, and the friendly Hong Family also has many objections, even within the alliance, many business owners do not wish to..."

Lin Zhengyi sighed with difficulty, "The resistance is not small, really..."

"Of course!" Lin Tianyi's tone then lifted noticeably as he said to Bai Xiaosheng, "If Mr. Bai is willing to make some adjustments to the business operations of Tianyu International, so they don't conflict with ours, then I think it's totally feasible!"

This suggestion from Lin Tianyi, as Bai Xiaosheng saw it, was "truly interesting"!

Why did Tianyu International choose to conduct those businesses in Xianggang? It wasn't a decision made on a whim but concluded after careful research and repeated detailed discussions.

Other industries and fields in Xianggang have stable market share, and the development degree of products and services is extremely high, making it less profitable for external businesses to enter.

In other words, the input and output aren't proportional.

Any businessman hopes for a penny investment to bring in ten or a hundred times the return; if a penny leads to a profit of merely one and a half cents, considering all the costs, what's left isn't worth mentioning; you'd be better off saving and earning interest.

Speaking of which, the high development in other market fields might be because the domestic companies in those fields along with their backing families are relatively open-minded and willing to cooperate broadly with the outside. Meanwhile, the markets and fields that Tianyu International targeted are relatively closed off due to the strict defense by the Lin and Hong Families as well as the commercial alliance they lead. It's precisely because of this, there's great room for operation.

And now Lin Tianyi actually suggested Bai Xiaosheng to modify Tianyu International's business?

It was almost like a joke!

Not to mention, it would be barely different from dissolving the company and conducting a reorganization.

It would render all previous investments void, all efforts turn to dust, and greatly damage Tianyu International's reputation.

Who would dare to collaborate with such a company—

Today's such-and-such company, which used to be called Tianyu International, was focused on transportation, now shifting to producing puffed food, once engaged in financial investment, now shifted to selling clothing headgear...

Crossing fields isn't done like this, throwing away the original business entirely, and turning from a hen into a duck in the blink of an eye...

That can't work!

"Changing the main business is out of the question!" Bai Xiaosheng straightforwardly refused Lin Tianyi's "suggestion".

"That makes things difficult!" Lin Tianyi spread his hands and smiled "helplessly".

When it comes to this matter, I did offer you, Bai Xiaosheng, a solution.

It's just that you didn't agree, so don't blame me!

Chapter 1963 - Tonight, It's Too Late

Bai Xiaosheng calmly looked at Lin Tianyi in front of him. Just now, he had resolutely rejected Lin Tianyi's proposal, and then was told by Lin Tianyi that he "could not help". At this moment, Bai Xiaosheng's eyes revealed no emotion.

This Bai Xiaosheng inevitably caused Lin Tianyi to feel a bit of apprehension.

This Bai Xiaosheng was too composed and calm! Lin Tianyi thought to himself.

Earlier, Lin Tianyi's suggestion to change the main business of Tianyu International was more of a test rather than a response to Bai Xiaosheng's demands.

A test of Bai Xiaosheng's limits, his shrewdness, and his... tolerance!

The result was that Lin Tianyi came to a very unfavorable conclusion.

This Bai Xiaosheng was not easy to deal with!

No wonder he became the Executive President of the Greater China Region of the Zhenbei Group at such a young age. The younger generation of my Lin Family, even someone as talented as Lin Chencheng, cannot compare to him! Lin Tianyi quietly lamented.

A genius indeed!

Subsequently, Lin Tianyi took the initiative and said, "Actually, if it were just my Lin Family, I dare to assure you, Mr. Bai, that no matter how much resistance there is within the family, how many opposing voices, as the head of the family, I would spare no effort to eliminate dissent and help you to the end!"

"But this matter is not just about my Lin Family. As you, Mr. Bai, mentioned, hoping our business alliance will assist Tianyu International. This business alliance isn't solely decided by me, there's also the Hong Family, and with the Hong Family involved, it becomes really difficult for me. Not to mention, due to the good relations between our families for generations, it would be inappropriate for me to cause them a loss just for our benefit. Besides, the family head of the Hong Family, Hong Chengtian, my old brother has a personality that's not easy to compromise with. If we're not careful, I might fall out with him over this."

"Moreover, the business alliance consists of many enterprises, which are not subordinates to the Lin Family and won't easily make concessions!"

Lin Tianyi presented Bai Xiaosheng with "facts and challenges," to let him know that he had his difficulties, and it wasn't just about protecting his own area.

Lin Tianyi was also prepared for Bai Xiaosheng to propose other “solutions,” and he was ready to counter them.

In the end, Bai Xiaosheng slightly smiled, sipped his tea, and remained unchanged in expression.

This made Lin Tianyi feel a bit uneasy.

This was the first time he faced such a young opponent and had this kind of feeling.

“If you hadn’t mentioned it, Mr. Lin, I genuinely wouldn’t have known there were such difficulties and obstacles,” Bai Xiaosheng said with a light smile after sipping his tea, “If the Hong Family doesn’t agree, it’s indeed a problem! If your business alliance isn’t resolved, my Tianyu International would really struggle to cooperate with you!”

What Bai Xiaosheng said seemed perfectly reasonable, but Lin Tianyi just felt it didn’t sit quite right.

“It’s good that Mr. Bai understands. Actually, we could plan for the long term. Tianyu International could establish a foothold here over three to five years, and with some support within our capabilities from the Lin Family, there would still be improvement,” Lin Tianyi said.

To avoid ending the conversation on a bad note, Lin Tianyi’s words indicated some flexibility.

“No worries, Mr. Lin, things always have a way of resolving, don’t they,” Bai Xiaosheng smiled with a bit of depth, “Actually, the Hong Family... I’ve had contact with them too!”

This statement from Bai Xiaosheng momentarily stunned Lin Tianyi.

Bai Xiaosheng had contact with the Hong Family?

No one knew when Bai Xiaosheng arrived in Xianggang.

However, claiming that he first approached the Hong Family or even reached some agreement was something Lin Tianyi didn't believe.

"Really, Mr. Bai, you actually contacted the Hong Family..." Lin Tianyi said with a meaningful smile, "Yesterday, I even met my old brother Hong Chengtian, and he didn't mention any of this!"

Lin Tianyi's words obviously expressed disbelief in what Bai Xiaosheng said.

The underlying message to Bai Xiaosheng was to stop playing games like that.

Inciting discord, laying smoke bombs?

If I want to verify, it just takes a phone call!

Lin Tianyi's smile was filled with this implication.

Bai Xiaosheng neither argued nor explained, simply smiling with an indifferent "believe it or not" demeanor.

The more it was like this, the more it seemed to take root in Lin Tianyi's mind, unable to be shaken off.

I'll call old Hong later to give him a heads up. Lin Tianyi quietly thought.

"This time I came to Xianggang, planning to stay for two days. This visit to Mr. Lin was mainly to get acquainted. As for cooperation, we... aren't in a hurry! We can take our time!" Bai Xiaosheng said with a breezy tone.

In fact, the Xianggang market isn't that large; Bai Xiaosheng values Xianggang's policies, port, and many intangible conveniences more.

If he can have those, it's great; even if not, it won't affect Bai Xiaosheng's fundamentals significantly.

After all, the relevant departments are increasing their support for them.

Lin Tianyi didn't feel happy hearing him no longer fixate on the issue of Tianyu International. Instead, he felt somewhat heavy-hearted.

This also means that discussing cooperation with Bai Xiaosheng might be even more challenging!

In the ensuing conversation, Lin Tianyi extensively introduced the strength and many advantages of international integration on their side to Bai Xiaosheng.

Bai Xiaosheng listened without a change in expression, then calmly mentioned that they had won the support of related departments on their side, which was gradually increasing, even though it wasn't as strong as here.

What Bai Xiaosheng implied was that if they kept delaying, their side would have no attraction for him anymore!

You can forget about cooperation, then.

The more Lin Tianyi talked, the more uncomfortable he felt about the situation.

Finally, Lin Tianyi simply changed the topic, discussing various market sectors, the trends, and changes in Xianggang, the mainland, Europe and America, and the world with Bai Xiaosheng.

Bai Xiaosheng was quite happy to engage in such a discussion.

After all, Lin Tianyi has been leading Lin Family for many years, and Lin Family enterprises are renowned in various market sectors, offering numerous experiences.

Bai Xiaosheng didn't mind being a listener, absorbing the information.

The two chatted for about an hour, and the initial subtle, tense atmosphere dissipated completely.

As they talked until the end, Bai Xiaosheng glanced at the time, smiled, and put down his teacup, "It's getting late; I should take my leave now."

Upon hearing this, Lin Tianyi stubbornly refused, "How can that be? Mr. Bai, it's your first visit to my Lin Family; how can I let you leave without even having a meal? It would make me a laughingstock among everyone."

To this, Bai Xiaosheng smiled, "I do have other arrangements. But since Mr. Lin has said so, I can't possibly disregard your invitation. Maybe in the evening?"

Bai Xiaosheng seemed quite adept at setting a time.

Lin Tianyi paused, then smiled, "That sounds good. I'll invite some friends over to meet you, Mr. Bai."

Lin Tianyi personally escorted Bai Xiaosheng out of the study.

Bai Xiaosheng asked the Lin Family's butler to call Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying over before he left.

Lin Tianyi escorted them downstairs, where most of the Lin family's "Chen" generation had already left, including Lin Chensheng, Lin Chencheng, and Lin Chenyu. After all, they were all employed in Lin Family enterprises and had a lot of work to do.

Bai Xiaosheng disregarded others, knowing that Lin Chensheng definitely wouldn't be there as Chengnan would soon call him in the past hour to have him take up his position.

Moreover, Lin Chensheng would be "very busy" throughout the day.

As Bai Xiaosheng shook hands and bid farewell to Lin Tianyi, thoughts ran through his mind.

“Lin Tianyi, oh Lin Tianyi, I came with the genuine intention to talk things over with you, but you didn’t agree.”

“By the evening, it’ll be too late; you’ll have no initiative anymore!”

“From now until the evening, enjoy the surprise I’ve prepared for you!”

Chapter 1964 - How Is This Possible!

Lin Tianyi sent off Bai Xiaosheng and returned to his study to sit quietly, bit by bit recalling the entire conversation and confrontation he just had with Bai Xiaosheng.

Every word Bai Xiaosheng said, every expression, he carefully reviewed.

This was his personal habit, a "review" of his opponent.

After thinking for half an hour, a flash of light flickered in Lin Tianyi’s eyes as he muttered to himself, "He was too calm!"

This Bai Xiaosheng was really too calm!

So calm that it didn’t seem like his first time discussing these topics with me!

So calm, as if every word and deed of mine was within his expectations!

So calm, like he had already prepared various measures to deal with me!

Lin Tianyi had reason to believe that Bai Xiaosheng definitely hadn’t just arrived in Xianggang; he not only had been here for a while, but also had conducted meticulous investigations targeting himself!

Maybe, he even made certain preparations before coming to my house!

Thinking of these, Lin Tianyi couldn't help but feel a chill.

This opponent is very frightening!

Looks like I've been too complacent with my smooth sailing over the years in Xianggang, leading to a decline in my vigilance and response capabilities in comfort.

Unexpectedly, I didn't notice right away!

"Know your enemy, know yourself, and you shall not fear a hundred battles! He has a deep understanding of me, yet my understanding of him exists only on some paper, some documents, which is unacceptable!" Lin Tianyi frowned, muttering to himself.

Subsequently, Lin Tianyi picked up his phone and searched through the large contacts list, finding a name - Lin Chensheng.

Bai Xiaosheng mentioned he knew Lin Chensheng and even got along well. While welcoming Bai Xiaosheng, Lin Tianyi noticed Lin Chensheng's attitude towards Bai Xiaosheng didn't seem like he knew his identity beforehand, but rather gave off a vibe of friends meeting.

This indicates that Bai Xiaosheng and Lin Chensheng had private interactions where identities weren't revealed, and it wasn't just a first-time meeting, but multiple times.

Their relationship is likely not bad!

Being who Lin Tianyi is, he quickly deduced this point.

So now, he needs to study Bai Xiaosheng in reverse from Lin Chensheng's perspective!

A master makes a move, often reverse-engineering from the opponent's game can lead to different discoveries.

Lin Tianyi thought the same.

However, when he made the call, the busy tone continued until the prompt "no answer" sounded.

Lin Tianyi looked at his phone strangely.

My call, and Lin Chensheng dares not to answer?

That kid doesn't have the guts!

Could it be he's working or in a meeting?

But subsequently, Lin Tianyi negated his judgment.

No, Lin Chensheng voluntarily left the family business and should not have any current arrangement.

Of course, it might be possible.

After all, if it's just a trivial position, there are management personnel to dispatch, and they won't bother me, especially recently, I am busy.

Lin Tianyi directly called the relevant person in charge to inquire about the arrangements for Lin Chensheng.

Learning that Lin Chensheng had been idle without any arrangement, Lin Tianyi hung up the phone with doubts.

Five minutes later, Lin Tianyi dialed Lin Chensheng's number again, but still, no one answered.

Lin Tianyi decided to put it aside for now, recalling Bai Xiaosheng mentioning having interacted with the Hong family, he then called the Hong family head, his old friend Hong Chengtian.

This time, the phone hadn't rung many times when it was picked up.

"Hello, Lin my brother, what's up with your call?" A cheerful voice came from the other end.

Lin Tianyi naturally recognized it as the voice of Hong Family Head, Hong Chengtian.

"Brother Hong, are you busy? I have something to ask you." Lin Tianyi laughed.

In front of their people, they speak elegantly and courteously.

But when facing people of the same level and weight, their conversations are down-to-earth, calling each other brothers, no different from ordinary people.

"You want to ask me something?" Hong Chengtian sounded slightly confused but then laughed candidly, "Go ahead, I have the time to chat with you for a bit."

Hearing this tone, Lin Tianyi felt reassured.

The Lin family and Hong family have decades of friendship, and he has been close with Hong Chengtian since childhood, as close as brothers.

What Bai Xiaosheng meant by wanting to find a breakthrough from the Hong family was wishful thinking.

Bai Xiaosheng's words were just a small trick of creating confusion.

Feeling relaxed, Lin Tianyi laughed and told Hong Chengtian over the phone, "I mentioned him to you, that Bai Xiaosheng, yes, the new executive president of Greater China Region from the mainland Zhenbei Group, came to visit me today."

Lin Tianyi briefly told Hong Chengtian about Bai Xiaosheng's visit and the bargaining that took place.

After all, Hong Chengtian is his steadfast ally, co-leading the business alliance with him, and even dealing with Tianyu International was done together.

Therefore, Lin Tianyi needed to inform Hong Chengtian of the situation.

Later, if the Lin family successfully boards Bai Xiaosheng's "big ship," the Hong family will also be brought along by Lin Tianyi.

Having a reliable ally makes everything easier, at least increasing their speaking weight on the other side.

"I see, so he really came." Over the phone, Hong Chengtian showed great interest in Bai Xiaosheng.

Lin Tianyi contemplated briefly and laughed in the phone, "Brother Hong, you know, this Bai Xiaosheng is no simple character, he verbally sparred with me openly and covertly, even claiming that he had already been in contact with you, as if you two had even reached some results."

"Nonsense!"

On the other end, facing Lin Tianyi's probing inquiries, Hong Chengtian responded straightforwardly.

The word "nonsense" was music to Lin Tianyi's ears.

"When have I ever seen this Bai Xiaosheng, nor had any contact with him, not even a bit! Cooperation? Impossible!" Hong Chengtian almost beat his chest across the phone to assure Lin Tianyi.

Feeling more secure listening, Lin Tianyi laughed, "I just thought it was Bai Xiaosheng putting on a show, talking as if it were true. I immediately countered, Brother Hong would never. The Lin and Hong families have decades of friendship, what would he understand!"

Hong Chengtian naturally agreed.

Subsequently, Lin Tianyi and Hong Chengtian chatted for another seven or eight minutes on the phone before hanging up.

After hanging up, Lin Tianyi felt more confident.

"Mr. Bai, you try to deceive me? Ha, you failed this time! Tonight, I can invite Brother Hong over personally to meet him, let's see what he says!" Lin Tianyi smirked, muttering to himself.

Thinking he could take the initiative at the evening banquet, Lin Tianyi was also very happy.

After settling this, Lin Tianyi pondered whether to make another call to Lin Chensheng.

Just then, his study door was knocked on urgently.

"Come in." Lin Tianyi frowned and called out.

Judging by the knocking, it seemed urgent.

What's so urgent?

Entering was not the Lin family's butler but Lin Chencheng.

Usually, Lin Chencheng also helped Lin Tianyi manage various affairs, naturally having the authority to report directly.

"What's the matter, Chencheng?" Lin Tianyi saw that Lin Chencheng's expression wasn't quite right, even a bit flustered, and immediately frowned.

"Uncle Lin... no, Family Head, look, look at this!" In panic, Lin Chencheng even got the address wrong and stuttered.

He rushed to Lin Tianyi in a few strides, holding a tablet computer in his hands.

Lin Tianyi looked in confusion, under Lin Chencheng's gesture, and his eyes fixed, widening, even snatching that tablet computer.

"How is this possible!"

Chapter 1965 - The Two Major Families Trapped in Schemes

On the tablet that Lin Chencheng brought, there was prominently an open news article, published by a well-known financial media outlet in the mainland. Because it was released online, the article's title was extremely long and attention-grabbing, with just a glance at the title giving a general idea of the content, somewhat like a summary—

"Zhenbei Group's subsidiary, Tianyu International, collaborates with four Hong companies including Hong Kong's Jiu Hua Department Store and Wanye Hotel to initiate a superscale collaboration!"

Lin Tianyi was startled.

"Look at this part!" Lin Chencheng pointed to a section of the text and spoke to Lin Tianyi with urgency, "The Zhenbei Group Greater China Region Headquarters expresses optimism about this collaboration and holds high expectations for the four Hong companies and the entire Hong Group, prepared to provide extensive market and cooperation opportunities in the mainland, and is considering discussions within a business alliance including 'Tengyun, Beifeng, and Haoyu' to once again welcome a new core member..."

Actually, within these contents, phrases like "express optimism", "hold high expectations", "prepared", "considering", and "discussions" are all vague and non-committal words, so they don't have to be accountable for whether it succeeds or not.

People not involved will naturally feel it's nothing, but those within will be misled...

Lin Tianyi saw it and heard Lin Chencheng's panic; his eyes contracted suddenly, filled with incredulity.

Hong Chengtian just told him he hadn't met with Bai Xiaosheng and had no substantive progress or results, so how does this explain! Hmm!

Not only is there a formally signed enterprise, but Bai Xiaosheng there also needs to give the Hong family enormous support and treatment!

Lin Tianyi's heart skipped a beat.

If he hadn't met Bai Xiaosheng before, it would be hard to say; once he met him, he determined that Bai Xiaosheng was not someone who would give without getting "what he wants" first!

How could such a person release such major benefits without having received what he "wanted"?

So the question arises.

What does Bai Xiaosheng "want"?

What did Hong Chengtian give to him?

The more Lin Tianyi thought about it, the more terrifying it felt; at this moment, he felt like he was falling into an ice cellar, feeling his spine going cold, his hair standing on end.

"Family Head, the Hong family... didn't they just venture out on their own, abandoning us!" Lin Chencheng trembled as he spoke.

Not knowing Bai Xiaosheng's identity was one thing, but after knowing, Lin Chencheng naturally recalled why Bai Xiaosheng came.

Moreover, Family Head Lin Tianyi had communicated with the Hong family a few times to advance and retreat together, discussing collaboration with Bai to enter the mainland market, which Lin Chencheng was aware of.

On this side, the Lin family hadn't negotiated anything, while over there, the Hong family had already signed a cooperation agreement with Bai.

Even Lin Chencheng was suddenly panic-stricken.

To sum up, the generation of Lin Chencheng is not emotionally bonded with the Hong family like the grandparent and parent generations; they treat each other as brothers.

They are a very pragmatic generation.

"Calm down!" Lin Tianyi sternly whispered to Lin Chencheng, "Just a mere article, look what it did to scare you!"

"Couldn't this just be Bai laying a false trail!" Lin Tianyi used the joints of his curled index and middle fingers to tap on the table.

This reprimand from Lin Tianyi was not so much a rebuke to Lin Chencheng as it was a reminder to himself.

The relationship between the Lin family and the Hong family can't be destroyed so easily!

How could Hong Chengtian not understand the principle of "one prospers, all prosper; one suffers, all suffer."

Furthermore, with someone as straightforward as Hong Chengtian, he is not someone who says one thing and does another.

Lin Tianyi was reasoning with himself in his mind to calm down.

"Family Head, if this was a ruse set by Bai, he should have used various methods to let us see it, but he hasn't. I didn't see this news from someone else, I stumbled upon it myself!" Lin Chencheng swallowed and said tremblingly, "And it's not just one media outlet!"

Lin Chencheng feared that Family Head Lin Tianyi would think he was not up to the task and was easily scared by a little issue.

At this moment, Lin Chencheng was eager to prove he was not such a person.

While speaking, Lin Chencheng even directly moved to help Lin Tianyi scroll the screen.

With each scroll, a news article appeared.

The titles were either long or short, but all were discussing this topic!

Moreover, those who published the news were some major financial media outlets.

Most importantly, they did not use press releases!

What is a press release?

It's a term from the media industry, originally referring to important news articles issued by news agencies in a uniform draft to those media outlets in need.

Press release articles are formulaic, generalized, and vague, often filled with empty words and stock phrases.

But these articles were not; they weren't even reprints of others, and not a single article was repetitive!

In addition, various major financial figures and influencers were also publishing related articles.

Lin Tianyi kept flipping through, until his eyes were blurred by it all.

No matter how confident he was before about the reliability of the Hong family, he was now panicked.

What is an ironclad fact? This is it!

While Lin Tianyi was looking at the tablet, Lin Chencheng also took out his phone to continue browsing the news, getting startled again and again as he read alongside.

"Family Head, because these articles involve Zhenbei Group's Greater China Region, as well as Tengyun, Beifeng, Haoyu, and other major enterprises, they have already reached the top three of the mainland's financial news search rankings!"

"Family Head, the authoritative Hong Kong media outlet—Fortune Discourse, also released a brand new article about this matter!"

"Family Head, these two Hong Kong media outlets have just released new related articles!"

Lin Chencheng exclaimed in surprise, his voice becoming somewhat shrill.

This is definitely not a strategic deception, Bai Xiaosheng's collaboration with the Hong Family is undoubtedly real!

The media is not easily fooled!

Just like that, four key enterprises of the Hong Family signed a cooperation with Bai Xiaosheng, and on Bai's side, they gave unprecedented attention to the Hong Group that goes beyond ordinary partnership relations...

Isn't it obvious? The behind-the-scenes activities speak for themselves!

Lin Tianyi, overtaken by a mix of shock and anger, gritted his teeth and said in a deep voice, "I still don't believe it! The Hong Family, how could Hong Chengtian do such a thing!"

The two families have been friends for decades!

They are steadfast allies!

"Besides, what benefits do they gain by doing this behind our backs!" Lin Tianyi shouted.

Lin Chencheng wore a bitter expression and said sorrowfully, "My Family Head, do you still not understand? It's not just us who want to collaborate with Bai and seek a broader mainland market, including Bai's resources in Europe and America; the Hong Family wants that too!"

Lin Chencheng presented what he believed to be the "truth," enlightening Lin Tianyi, "How could the Hong Family inform us in advance about this matter, if we don't keep a firm stance, what bargaining chip do they have in negotiating with Bai!"

"In plain terms, by us holding on, it allows the Hong Family to raise the negotiation price! Didn't you see how Bai treated the Hong Family, was that the attitude towards a regular partner? Why don't you understand yet?!"

Lin Chencheng seemed to have "seen through everything."

Lin Tianyi, already filled with conflicted emotions, believed six to seven parts of it, and with Lin Chencheng's analysis on the side, he fully believed it...

Actually, Bai Xiaosheng only got a couple of modest cooperation contracts from Hong Wu.

Yet, Bai Xiaosheng insisted on "blowing up" the situation.

Bai Xiaosheng exaggerated the matter with high-profile publicity, stirred it up in the mainland media, social media, then sent the news to Hong Kong media, seeing the mainland media making such a fuss, naturally they also closely followed up.

All at once, in Lin Tianyi's view, Hong Chengtian was beyond redemption!

While Lin Chencheng was running to report this situation to Lin Tianyi, Hong Chengtian received the related news on his side too.

After all, with all parties fanning the flames, this matter had hit the front page headlines.

Hong Chengtian was in his office, browsing those news reports. Although he appeared similar in age to Lin Tianyi, he looked somewhat older, with rugged features not typical of a businessman.

As Lin Tianyi browsed the news, Hong Chengtian was looking at the same content.

"What's going on, when did I order those enterprises to sign with Tianyu International, and why is it causing such a stir!"

Hong Chengtian was equally shocked and angry.

Just now, Lin Tianyi had called to inquire about the matter, and he almost pounded his chest to assure it wasn't true.

And yet, this scene unfolded!

Now, the mud had stuck to his pants, and whether or not it was dirt, it sure looked like it!

Hong Chengtian was about to call Lin Tianyi to explain.

But then he changed his mind.

Because someone beside him reminded, "Those enterprises are managed by Miss Hong Wu, and she has the authority to decide on such signings!"

Hong Chengtian was momentarily stunned, then immediately called Hong Wu.

On the phone, Hong Chengtian sternly questioned, "Girl, what's going on? How did you sign so many contracts with Tianyu International, and it's known worldwide!"

Before Hong Chengtian called, Hong Wu had already seen the news and was equally shocked.

She expected it to be a matter between two companies, but it was broadcasted as an affair between entire groups.

She knew a bit about the Lin and Hong families trying to block each other while also wanting to negotiate cooperation.

This misunderstanding grew bigger!

Hong Wu first thought about whether this would affect her affairs with Lin Chensheng.

But then she reconsidered, thinking that Lin Chensheng had already gone to work at Tianyu International as an executive vice president, which seemed even worse than her decision to sign contracts!

"Dad, Chensheng has become the executive vice president at Tianyu International, and I did it to help him..." Hong Wu explained.

Those words cooled most of Hong Chengtian's anger and shock.

"What did you say? Lin Chensheng went to Tianyu International, as an executive vice president!" exclaimed Hong Chengtian in astonishment.

After confirming several times, Hong Chengtian abruptly hung up the phone.

The person beside him handed him the latest news, "The new executive vice president of Tianyu International, Lin Chensheng, takes office while the former 'failure' of the Lin family rises again..."

As Hong Chengtian read this news, thinking about the reports on the Hong Family, his expression shifted unpredictably.

Lin Chensheng went to Tianyu International, did Lin Tianyi know...

Ultimately, as a dominant figure, Hong Chengtian's thoughts quickly aligned, and his expression dramatically changed, speaking out.

"This is bad! Our business alliance... fear it may fall apart!"

Chapter 1966 - Mutual Suspicion

The family head of the Hong Family, Hong Chengtian, currently had a very chaotic mind. Tianyu International signing contracts with several of his family's enterprises was now causing a citywide storm, known worldwide.

The misunderstanding on the Lin Family's side was huge!

Originally, Hong Chengtian was eager to explain to Lin Tianyi.

Though the two families had a close relationship, once a rift and suspicion were born, it could create an indelible crack between them.

This was something Hong Chengtian did not want to see.

However, after talking to his daughter Hong Wu and learning that Lin Chensheng had actually gone to Tianyu International and become the executive vice president there,

his perspective changed somewhat, and he keenly sensed a huge problem!

Having said that, Hong Wu's cunning, intelligence, ability, and methods were recognized by Hong Chengtian.

Hong Wu also knew that the family was now siding with the Lin Family and was essentially in a "hostile" stance against Tianyu International.

How could Hong Wu be instigated to sign four contracts...

Unless Lin Chensheng begged her!

Hong Chengtian knew that his daughter's intelligence would only drop to a negative value when it came to Lin Chensheng.

There's nothing that can be done about it, when a man and a woman fall in love, one side is always "under control," "bowing in submission."

Hong Chengtian frowned, thinking over these matters in his heart.

Did Lin Chensheng run to Tianyu International and motivate Hong Wu to sign cooperation contracts?

Was this his own wish?

Was it to create a glamorous reputation outside and shed the label of a trash from the Lin Family?

This explanation seemed reasonable, but was it really the truth...

Thinking of this, Hong Chengtian internally criticized Lin Tianyi—

Your good son really added to your family's reputation, "surrendering to the enemy" and bringing a great gift, trapping the Hong Family to your Lin Family's disloyalty and unrighteousness!

The most fatal thing is, if Lin Tianyi questions, "The contract was signed by your daughter, right? Others asked her to sign and she did, and you as the family head knew nothing about it?"

I indeed have no reasonable way to counter!

Of course, that's just the beginning of it, what truly worries Hong Chengtian is another issue, a serious issue!

That is, the business alliance led by the Lin and Hong families might become disunited because of this situation!

In the business alliance led by the two families, although those small families and private enterprises look up to them as leaders, it doesn't mean those people are thoughtless puppets without demands!

Previously, Tianyu International had offered a very high price for cooperation, and to be honest, many companies were tempted, it was Hong Chengtian and Lin Tianyi who "strongly opposed," holding multiple private meetings, to extinguish their thoughts.

Now, what can be said?

Your Hong Family is openly cooperating with Tianyu International, using this as a springboard, and fervently engaging with Zhenbei Group's Greater China Region.

As for the Lin Family, even a trash could go to Tianyu International as an executive vice president!

This eating manner, isn't it too unbecoming!

Will the people in that business alliance think there's something wrong, whether it's reasonable or not?

No!

They will only think—

Oh wow, you two big families let us watch, counting on us to restrain Tianyu International, then ate alone...

Who will listen to the Lin and Hong families in the future.

Thinking of this, Hong Chengtian frowned deeply.

Besides, he also considered a possibility, a dark possibility.

Why would Lin Chensheng, a "trash," run off to become a vice president at Tianyu International?

After hearing his daughter's account, this matter kept bothering Hong Chengtian.

Is this a strategic move by Tianyu International?

Giving the Lin family's trash a high honorary position, then making him persuade his daughter to sign the contract, then using this to pry open the relationship between the Lin and Hong families, as well as their led business alliance?

Thinking of this, Hong Chengtian almost couldn't believe it.

If it were true, what kind of monster would the schemer be, with what kind of calculation!

Lin Chensheng really didn't look like a deputy vice president in an honorary position.

Hong Chengtian tapped his forehead with his finger, using divergent thinking, to contemplate this matter.

Anyway, as long as the ideas remain in his mind, he could think as wildly as he wanted.

Having said that, Lin Chensheng, that so-called trash kid of the Lin Family, although wearing the title of trash, was not only not useless, but even the old master of the Lin Family acknowledged him, both he and his wife believed, if he settled down, he would not be inferior to Lin Chencheng!

The Lin Family allowing Lin Chensheng to start from the bottom was not to abandon him, but rather to train him!

Hong Chengtian recalled the last time he met with Lin Chensheng, chatted a lot, Lin Chensheng was aware of the family's attitude towards him.

Could someone like that easily be deceived?

Even to "surrender to the enemy"?

Even if so, how could Lin Tianyi remain unaware?

No matter what, Hong Chengtian couldn't believe it.

Unlike Lin Tianyi, who had never seemed like a conspirator, this did not mean he wouldn't use divergent thinking to consider the "impossible" possibilities.

For instance, right now, Hong Chengtian was considering—

What if Lin Chensheng's going to Tianyu International, Lin Tianyi knew. What if he even arranged it!

What if all of this... was all arranged by Lin Tianyi!

This idea was extremely wild. Yet, to Hong Chengtian, it wasn't impossible at all.

Lin Tianyi was best at calculations, and if he spent a lot of time and effort, he had the cunning and ability to arrange all of this.

Regarding just now, when he called me to ask if I've had any contact with Bai Xiaosheng... it could also be explained as a smokescreen!

Hong Chengtian ruminated on the reasoning within.

With this big commotion, I'm sure to feel extremely guilty, wanting to compensate the Lin Family, even if previously signed with Tianyu International, and having a "scandal" with the Greater China Region of Zhenbei Group, more in-depth cooperation would also be paused, and even if Lin Family starts some cooperation with them, I wouldn't interfere.

More than that, the Hong Family might vigorously urge the forces within the business alliance that belong to the Hong Family, to cooperate with the Lin Family, as if to make up for the Hong Family signing with Tianyu early on.

In this way, the Lin Family is the ultimate winner!

Hong Chengtian's line of thought had a tinge of "conspiracy theorist" flavor.

Despite having always given the impression of being straightforward and frank, that didn't mean, deep down, he was truly such a person.

After all, to hold up a big family in Xianggang, relying just on integrity wouldn't suffice!

It's just that Hong Chengtian's darkness was buried deep within himself.

"Family Head, Family Head!"

Hong Chengtian was deep in thought until his trusted aide called repeatedly, only then did he return to his senses.

The trusted aide pointed to the mobile phone on Hong Chengtian's desk, which was vibrating with a buzzing sound.

Obviously, a call was coming in.

The name displayed on the phone was Lin Tianyi!

"Has Lin Tianyi seen those news!" Hong Chengtian composed himself, thinking.

It hadn't been long since the last call.

What Lin Tianyi would say in this call, he could almost guess.

"I hope my previous speculation was judging Lin Tianyi with a petty man's heart and that I have misunderstood him and the Lin Family," thought Hong Chengtian as he picked up the phone, "However, the fact remains that the relationship between the Lin and Hong families is not as good as it was ten

years ago. No family is truly inseparable, even blood brothers can part ways, let alone... the relationship of the younger generation of the two families is already far less than before!"

If this wasn't the case, Hong Chengtian wouldn't have entertained the thought of the two families allying by marriage, and Lin Tianyi wouldn't have agreed so readily...

In the end, Hong Chengtian answered the call, his voice showing some urgency, "Tianyi, I was just thinking about calling you! There's a lot of chatter on the internet, I know all about it! And I've checked with Hong Wu. Indeed, she signed the contract with Tianyu!"

Hong Chengtian started by speaking with extreme "frankness," showing his "honesty and transparency."

"Brother Hong, this thing puts me in a very passive position!" Lin Tianyi's voice over the phone sounded deep.

The words carried no blame, but the tone had a sense of accusation.

This "sin" has fallen upon me, I've really got nothing to say, whatever you, Lin Tianyi, ask, as long as it's not extremely excessive, I'm afraid I'll have to agree to it... thought Hong Chengtian.

The least favorable suspicion seemed to become more and more apparent...

Hong Chengtian, after a brief pause, said, "But this matter... Tianyi, do you know?"

"There's more to this matter!"

.....

Chapter 1967 - Each Pursues Their Own Interests

When Lin Tianyi called Hong Chengtian, to be honest, he already believed the Hong Family had actually "betrayed" them. First of all, Lin Tianyi had always displayed characteristics of a "conspiracy theorist" rather than the "straightforward" persona of Hong Chengtian. Deep down, Lin Tianyi really was that kind

of person. Moreover, following this incident, the only person present, Lin Chencheng, insisted on adding fuel to the fire, instilling the impression of the Hong Family's betrayal into their Family Head.

Although a rational big business owner wouldn't easily be swayed by others, they are, after all, human. As humans, they may momentarily succumb to manipulation, especially since Lin Tianyi already sensed there might be issues with the Hong Family.

Before making the call, Lin Tianyi experienced a range of emotions such as anger, disappointment, vigilance, and anxiety.

However, he ultimately believed that even if the Hong Family had the intention of monopolizing benefits, they wouldn't take it too far, and would even leave a share for the Lin Family.

At present, the negotiations with Bai Xiaosheng's side are nothing more than having the Lin Family lead with the Hong Family supporting, just by switching the positions.

Looking at it now, with the Hong Family getting caught in the eye of the storm, it's most appropriate for them to initiate cooperation with Bai Xiaosheng first.

Although this change made Lin Tianyi feel very unsatisfied inwardly.

Lin Tianyi made this call wanting to inquire, to accuse, and to discuss how to proceed further.

It all depended on what Hong Chengtian had to say.

At this moment, Hong Chengtian actually said that there was "another hidden truth" to this matter.

Lin Tianyi frowned upon hearing this. Then, he wanted to hear it! What kind of hidden truth!

The original intention of Hong Chengtian was merely to clarify the matter so that his family wouldn't bear the blame.

Yet, unaware that even mentioning it would deepen Lin Tianyi's suspicion and dissatisfaction.

It can only be said that once a rift occurs in certain matters, no matter what is done, the misunderstandings will only grow larger. The "friendship" between the Lin and Hong families had lasted for decades, and it was impossible that there were no frictions or disagreements. Though people thought they were resolved afterward, they were actually never eliminated and only buried deeply, accumulating over time, awaiting the day they would ferment.

At present, the distrust between Lin Tianyi and Hong Chengtian was ultimately just accumulated conflicts finally finding a flashpoint.

"Old Brother Hong, what do you mean there's another hidden truth?" Lin Tianyi asked calmly.

Listening to Lin Tianyi's tone, Hong Chengtian also frowned slightly.

Lin Tianyi, upon hearing this from me, is your mind really unperturbed, or is it for some reason... You're unable to be surprised?

"Tianyi, the contracts we signed with Tianyu International were not signed by me personally, but were decided upon by my girl, Hong Wu, on her own initiative," said Hong Chengtian.

Lin Tianyi sneered internally, but over the phone, he said, "It was signed by Hong Wu? That child actually wields such significant power? Can she still represent the Hong Family to reach a strategic consensus with the Bai side?!"

Lin Tianyi was clearly skeptical.

"Strategic cooperation? All that is deliberate propaganda by the other party, their wishful thinking!" Hong Chengtian asserted confidently, somewhat probing, to see how Lin Tianyi would respond.

On the other side, hearing this, Lin Tianyi pursed his lips.

What do you mean by wishful thinking? The other party goes to great lengths with high-level publicity about cooperating with you, and it's wishful thinking?

Such proactive and intense publicity often happens when one party's strength and reputation are lower than the other's, needing to borrow prestige for influence.

Never heard of a lion actively preaching to outside animals wanting to establish a strategic alliance with hyenas...

Lin Tianyi silently scoffed.

Over the phone, Hong Chengtian seemed to notice, and he continued, "Tianyi, the real hidden truth I'm talking about is that Lin Chensheng from your family joined Tianyu International, became their Executive Vice President, and it was him who asked my daughter Hong Wu to sign those contracts!"

Hong Chengtian straightforwardly pointed it out, shifting the responsibility.

"What did you say?!" Lin Tianyi immediately sat up, even exclaiming.

"Old Brother Hong, are you saying Lin Chensheng became an Executive Vice President at Tianyu International? That's impossible!" Lin Tianyi said in disbelief.

While speaking, Lin Tianyi exchanged a look with the nearby Lin Chencheng.

"Family Head, Lin Chensheng seems to have quite some interactions with Bai Xiaosheng, it's possible!" Lin Chencheng quickly put it together and said.

Lin Tianyi immediately gave him a glare and motioned for him to stay silent.

Even if there was something unusual between Bai Xiaosheng and Lin Chensheng, now is not the time to mention it!

This might lead Hong Chengtian to misunderstand and make something out of it!

Lin Chencheng quickly kept quiet too.

Yet, Lin Chencheng thought his voice wasn't loud enough, and the other side probably didn't hear it.

Unfortunately, Hong Chengtian just happened to hear it.

So Bai Xiaosheng has a deep connection with Lin Chensheng?!

Immediately, Hong Chengtian became wary.

Could mere Lin Chensheng get in touch with Bai Xiaosheng? Or did you, Lin Tianyi, intentionally leak the information to me!

If this was really Lin Tianyi's plan, then he must want to make the Hong Family feel guilty, leading me to swear we'll have no other cooperation with Tianyu International besides the current four collaborations, and to support every action of the Lin Family with half of the commercial alliance members!

Hong Chengtian's mind turned quickly, "figuring it out" and even thought of a "countermeasure."

If Lin Tianyi was indeed so unscrupulous, then Hong Chengtian wouldn't need to uphold "righteousness" either! He could very well "use their plan against them!"

Anyway, with the current booming media buzz between the Hong Family and Bai Xiaosheng's side, the Hong Family might as well substitute the Lin Family to cooperate first!

Doesn't Lin Tianyi say the Lin and Hong families are as one? Then, it doesn't matter if the Hong Family goes first!

Back off a step, if Lin Tianyi indeed has no issue, he should agree!

After all, the Hong Family stepping up now is the most suitable choice!

Thinking of this, Hong Chengtian directly said, "Tianyi, things have come to this, there's no use in dwelling on the problems caused by juniors. It's better to consider what's next!"

Hong Chengtian was as "direct" as always.

What should be considered next?

Lin Tianyi couldn't help but frown and gently asked over the phone, "Then what does Old Brother Hong think we should do next?"

Lin Tianyi thought, I'll let you go first, to see if there's really a problem with you. If so, at this stage, you should show your true intentions!

At this moment, Hong Chengtian spoke up.

"Given the situation, I think the Hong Family should be the first to approach Bai Xiaosheng and reach a cooperation with them. After it's successful, I will make every effort to bring the Lin Family on board, just as you had planned, only with our main role and support role swapped. What do you think?" Hong Chengtian asked over the phone.

Over the phone, Lin Tianyi's eyes narrowed, his brows already knit tightly.

Next to him, Lin Chencheng became "excited," pointing at the phone, using lip-sync and sign language, and writing on paper, "reminding" his Family Head.

"I wasn't wrong, was I!"

"This matter isn't without the Hong Family's calculation!"

"They want to seize our interests!"

Lin Tianyi's eyes flickered with uncertainty.

"Tianyi, what do you think? If it's inappropriate, just say so, and I will fully cooperate with your Lin Family," Hong Chengtian remained exceedingly "sincere."

These words were also a probe of Lin Tianyi's attitude.

"I think what Old Brother Hong said is great, your good intentions, I understand," Lin Tianyi said with a laugh, his voice as usual, revealing nothing.

"And Bai Xiaosheng..." Hong Chengtian said.

"Bai Xiaosheng visited today, but left in a hurry, saying he'll come again tomorrow. At that time, I will certainly invite Old Brother Hong over, and we'll discuss it again," Lin Tianyi said with a smile.

After that, the two exchanged a few more words and then hung up.

After putting down the phone, Lin Tianyi's smile slowly faded, his eyes turned somewhat frightening.

Bai Xiaosheng is to visit the Lin Family tonight, and what he told Hong Chengtian is that it's tomorrow.

"Family Head, what are we going to do?" Lin Chencheng naturally knew the Family Head had given a false time, which must have some intent, and he couldn't help but ask.

Lin Tianyi first did not respond, then his eyes brightened, seemingly making a huge decision, looking at Lin Chencheng.

"What else can we do, time is running out for us!"

"Tonight, I will sign a contract with Bai Xiaosheng first! Regardless of the cost! Even if it means inviting a wolf into the house!"

When Lin Tianyi said this, he practically gritted his teeth in determination.

Then, Lin Tianyi looked into the void and coldly said, "After all, what is loyalty..."

"Nothing more than acting for one's own benefit!"

Chapter 1968 - Bai Xiaosheng's "Fan"

After Bai Xiaosheng left the Lin Family with Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying, they started "eating, drinking, and having fun," wandering around until Chengnan called him.

On the phone, Chengnan reported two things. First, as per Bai Xiaosheng's arrangement, he contacted media friends in Xianggang a bit later, offering ten times the usual rate to industry writers to create unique-angle reports on the collaboration between Tianyu International and the Hong Family, and he also released the news of Lin Chensheng's appointment. Second, he followed Bai Xiaosheng's instructions to assign Lin Chensheng a significant responsibility, having him host a meeting involving commercial secrets, turning off his phone for several hours.

Bai Xiaosheng was satisfied with Chengnan's arrangements.

After hanging up the phone, he saw Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying looking puzzled, and immediately explained to them with a smile.

After listening to Bai Xiaosheng, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying finally understood Bai Xiaosheng's entire setup.

Bai Xiaosheng helped Hong Wu in exchange for a collaboration between Tianyu International and the businesses under the Hong Family, then conducted high-profile publicity, causing it to become widely known.

At the same time, Bai Xiaosheng gave Lin Chensheng a very high position and made it public.

With this, even if Tianyu International gets entangled with the Lin and Hong families, they are jointly pushed to the media spotlight.

It's practically free advertising for Tianyu International, and it's worth it.

"You guys probably think that I want to make the Lin and Hong families suspicious of each other, creating a sense of crisis in each, to promote them signing with us," Bai Xiaosheng shook his head, "That's the least certain gain. If it happens, it's a pleasant surprise; if it doesn't, I frankly don't care!"

Bai Xiaosheng continued, "What I want is for the companies under the business alliance led by the Lin and Hong families to see this kind of 'selfish' behavior of the two families!"

"From the information we've gathered, it's easy to conclude that there are many different voices within their business alliance. In fact, no cooperation is unbreakable. I want to pry into the minds of those companies, I want them to break away from the alliance and turn to collaborate with Tianyu International. In fact, Chengnan had told me, there are several companies willing to work with Tianyu, they are just under the pressure of the Lin and Hong families. So, if they were previously afraid to collaborate with Tianyu International, fearing repercussions from the Lin and Hong families, now I'm giving them a perfect reason!"

"They see that even the Lin and Hong families are collaborating with Tianyu International, so why can't they?"

"It can't be justified that 'officials are allowed to set fires, but common people are not allowed to light lamps.'"

"As long as Tianyu International cooperates with companies from the relevant market in this area, quantitative changes can lead to qualitative changes. Once the door is opened, it will no longer be within the control of the Lin and Hong families. Once this stagnant water is stirred up, endless opportunities can arise. I believe Chengnan will seize them!"

Bai Xiaosheng explained to Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying in detail.

The two were genuinely impressed.

Bai Xiaosheng's calculation was terrifyingly impressive.

To attack the core of the business alliance dominated by the Lin and Hong families, by thinking outside the box.

It was at this moment that Bai Xiaosheng's phone rang.

It was Hong Wu calling.

Previously, they had a cooperation of sorts, so Hong Wu naturally had the contact of this "big shot."

"This girl might be calling to hold me accountable." Bai Xiaosheng smiled at his phone.

This matter, in essence, had Bai Xiaosheng misleading Hong Wu, but not to the extent of being guilty.

Firstly, Bai Xiaosheng did help Hong Wu reconcile with Lin Chensheng. Secondly, the contracts he signed with Hong Wu were fair and voluntary by Hong Wu. Lastly, in this Tianyu International incident, those who made the first unethical move included the Hong Family.

Bai Xiaosheng bore no grudges against the actions of the Hong Family.

Frankly speaking, in business, as long as it doesn't violate laws, ethics, or morals, whether the plan is overt or covert, it's all fair game, each relying on their abilities.

"If you find it difficult to face her, do you want me to talk to her instead?" Lin Weiwei asked.

She was worried that Bai Xiaosheng might find it challenging.

"No need." Bai Xiaosheng smiled; he wasn't troubled by such matters.

Bai Xiaosheng then answered the phone.

"Miss Hong Wu, your call came sooner than I expected." Bai Xiaosheng chuckled on the other end of the line.

On the other end, Hong Wu straightforwardly asked, "Who exactly are you?!"

In fact, before this call, Hong Wu already had the answer in her mind. She just wanted confirmation now.

Someone who, during their first meeting, made her feel a subconscious sense of awe, who could casually appoint Lin Chensheng as Executive Vice President at Tianyu International, stirring up a storm known to everyone, such a person couldn't be ordinary, his identity practically screamed to be revealed...

"You must already have an answer in your heart. However, I still want to formally introduce myself to you again," Bai Xiaosheng smiled as he spoke to Hong Wu on the phone, "I am Bai Xiaosheng, Executive President of the Zhenbei Group's Greater China Region!"

Bai Xiaosheng!

Even though she already had the answer, Hong Wu was still shocked and inhaled sharply.

It really is him! Indeed, it is him!

Bai Xiaosheng revealed his name, waiting for Hong Wu to vent her emotions.

"Mr. Bai Xiaosheng, you are my idol, did you know that?!" Instead, Bai Xiaosheng was met with this unexpectedly enthusiastic remark from Hong Wu.

This time, Bai Xiaosheng was the one taken aback.

He was prepared for Hong Wu's reactions of "joy, anger, fear, and shock," but didn't expect to become her idol.

While Bai Xiaosheng was bewildered, Hong Wu enthusiastically continued, "Did you know? I've studied your management strategies and measures, I've even read your books and learned about your personal background. Yet... how is it that you look nothing like your photos! Damn it, it must be their poor photography, or the pictures were overly edited, the signed photos that came with the books look nothing like you! I talked to you in person and still didn't recognize you..."

Hong Wu's remarks left Bai Xiaosheng utterly perplexed.

This was all over the place.

"I have never published a book, no, I didn't write it, nor did I have someone write it for me!" Bai Xiaosheng declared adamantly over the phone to Hong Wu—this self-proclaimed "fan" of his, "It must be some success guru who came up with it, then I'm not aware, yes, okay, at some point I'll certainly have my legal team look into this..."

Next to him, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying listened with increasing incredulity, exchanging glances.

The two of them seriously wondered what this conversation was all about...

Eventually, Bai Xiaosheng managed to steer Hong Wu away from this topic.

This time, it was Bai Xiaosheng who took the initiative to ask, "Miss Hong Wu, given that I did withhold some information in this matter, surely there is something... unpleasant for you?"

Even Bai Xiaosheng was a bit curious.

"Unpleasant? Of course, there is!" Hong Wu candidly exclaimed, "You should have revealed your identity to me sooner, though I also blame my own lack of insight! And, just call me Hong Wu, no, call me Xiaowu instead. It sounds more friendly! If you have time, could I consult you about management matters, I find your methods truly amazing..."

Bai Xiaosheng, "..."

Hong Wu was brought back to the main topic by Bai Xiaosheng again.

"Actually, looking at the whole affair, you didn't deceive me, on the contrary, you helped me reconcile with Lin Chensheng, and the collaboration was voluntarily signed by me. Why should I blame you?" Hong Wu candidly told Bai Xiaosheng, "As for the family... so sooner or later they would talk business with you, creating such a big scene now, does it count as a loss? I don't think so! Since it didn't cause harm to my family, why should I be dissatisfied?"

Hong Wu added, "Did Chensheng know about this? Rest assured, knowing him, he would only thank you, without any resentment. His feelings for the family are even less than mine, he would only be grateful to you for giving him this opportunity!"

Hearing Hong Wu's words, Bai Xiaosheng felt quite relieved.

He liked Lin Chensheng and Hong Wu, the kind who could become friends, and he didn't want such a friendship ruined by profit disputes.

After chatting with Hong Wu, Bai Xiaosheng's mood improved as he put his phone away.

But an hour later, he received another phone call.

This call was from Lin Tianyi.

Seeing the name on the caller ID, Bai Xiaosheng smiled.

"I guess, nine times out of ten, he's calling to discuss cooperation!"

Chapter 1969 - The Art of One-Handed Combat

Bai Xiaosheng had mentioned that by stirring up distrust between the Lin and Hong families, he motivated them to consider their own interests, lowering their terms to seek collaboration privately. This wasn't his primary goal, merely a potential surprise.

Now, the surprise seemed to have arrived.

Bai Xiaosheng knew this as soon as he saw Lin Tianyi's name.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying saw it too, their eyes filled with expectation.

To win without a fight is always a good thing.

"Hello, is this Mr. Lin?" Bai Xiaosheng asked.

"Mr. Sheng." On the other end, Lin Tianyi's laughter echoed, "I've come to discuss the dinner banquet with you, I'm all prepared on my end."

Lin Tianyi's words suggested that Bai Xiaosheng had "misjudged" the situation.

Bai Xiaosheng, however, smiled and responded, "Is that so? I'm all ears."

Lin Tianyi eagerly said, "Actually, I initially thought of inviting local celebrities, including friends from the Hong Family. But then I thought, since it's your first visit to the Lin Family, I couldn't turn it into an external social event. So I changed the dinner's format. This time, I've invited the heads of all our major enterprises in Xianggang to listen to your wisdom, Mr. Bai. How about that?"

Bai Xiaosheng also smiled and replied, "Great, with only Lin Family members and no outsiders, we can speak more freely."

“Yes, indeed.” Lin Tianyi laughed heartily as well.

Beside them, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying exchanged a surprised look.

According to Bai Xiaosheng, Lin Tianyi should have been impatient to discuss collaboration with them, not planning a dinner with guests.

“Mr. Bai, you can also bring along your senior management from Xianggang for some friendly exchanges,” Lin Tianyi continued with a laugh.

“I’ll consider it. If they have no other engagements, they can come. However, it might be a bit much trouble.”

“Not at all, anyone you bring along is a guest of the Lin Family! It won’t be a bother!”

Bai Xiaosheng and Lin Tianyi continued the conversation, mostly about the dinner details.

Until the call ended.

Once Bai Xiaosheng hung up, Lin Weiwei couldn’t help but ask, “Lin Tianyi didn’t talk to you about the collaboration, did he, Xiaosheng?”

Bai Xiaosheng and Lin Tianyi might as well have been discussing the menu over the phone, wondering “Do you eat this?” “Do you have any dietary restrictions?”

“The intention lies elsewhere!” Lei Ying remarked slowly from the side.

Lin Weiwei glanced at him; his literary skills seemed to be improving.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled and explained to Lin Weiwei, "If it was only about food and drinks for the evening, Lin Tianyi wouldn't have bothered to call. Do you think the Family Head of the Lin Family has nothing better to do?"

"Right now, the internet is buzzing with news about us and the Hong Family, he couldn't have missed it yet didn't mention a word!"

"Lin Chensheng ran to work at our enterprises, became Executive Vice President, and made the news. Lin Tianyi couldn't have missed it but didn't ask a thing!"

"Knowing yet not speaking reveals a lot!"

"Did you hear? Lin Tianyi said he wouldn't invite any local business friends, only Lin Family members, and he even told me to bring along our senior executives, including Chengnan. What does that signify? Need I say more?"

Bai Xiaosheng chuckled, "Perhaps Lin Tianyi plans to reach a collaboration agreement with us tonight! He might make concessions at the dinner, even publicly support Tianyu International's development here!"

Lin Weiwei was slightly surprised, nodding repeatedly as it made more sense the more she listened.

Lei Ying sensed a few things but wasn't sure how far the other side would go. He nodded along with Bai Xiaosheng's reasoning.

"If I'm not mistaken, Lin Tianyi and the Hong Family Patriarch, Hong Chengtian, have definitely conversed and developed suspicions and disagreements!" Bai Xiaosheng said with sparkling eyes.

This matter, to him, was even more like a surprise.

A surprise come true is always a good thing!

“Right now, Lin Tianyi indeed keeps his cool, not rushing to discuss the collaboration with us, fearing that we’d sense his urgency and leverage it to ask for higher demands,” Lin Weiwei said.

“Precisely.” Bai Xiaosheng affirmed her judgment, nodding approvingly.

“So we just wait until the evening? Not taking any proactive steps?” Lin Weiwei couldn’t help but ask.

“Patience is key; good things come to those who wait,” Lei Ying said with a smile.

But Bai Xiaosheng shook his head at Lei Ying’s take, “This time, he waits; we don’t! I’ll call him to take proactive steps, turning tonight’s collaboration dinner into a celebration of cooperation!”

Bai Xiaosheng’s words left even Lei Ying stunned.

To him, wasn’t Bai Xiaosheng being a bit too eager at this moment?

“Xiaosheng, you’re going to call him about the collaboration now?” Lin Weiwei asked in surprise.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, shook his head, and calmly said, “No rush, let’s wait a bit more.”

Bai Xiaosheng said he’d make the call, then said to wait, which seemed somewhat “contradictory.”

Could calling later make a difference?

Now, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying were both puzzled.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled and murmured, “We still need to give someone else some time to reach out to us!”

...

As Bai Xiaosheng was saying this, Hong Wu was on the phone with her father, Hong Chengtian.

Hong Chengtian's call was simply to get Bai Xiaosheng's phone number.

Hong Chengtian still believed it was Lin Chensheng, the scoundrel, who persuaded his daughter to sign the contract. But for Lin Chensheng to become an Executive Vice President at Tianyu International, there had to be a significant figure involved, who persuaded him to give up on his family's prospects. That person was certainly someone important, maybe even Bai Xiaosheng himself!

Hong Wu, even if enchanted by Lin Chensheng, must have had contact with some influential person to boldly sign contracts for four enterprises.

Hong Chengtian was convinced Hong Wu had Bai Xiaosheng's contact details or could obtain them.

He realized this before making the call.

Initially, Hong Wu was reluctant to give it, dodging her father's request.

Eventually, Hong Chengtian got a little angry.

"Girl, am I still your father? You won't even help your father; are you still my daughter, still part of the Hong Family?"

Hong Chengtian's voice thundered over the phone, starting to "threaten" his own daughter, "You think you can bypass the family with your affair with Lin Chensheng? If I don't agree, let's see what you do! A marriage without parental blessings isn't a happy one! Help your dad, and I'll fully accept Lin Chensheng, support him in every way!"

As soon as he pressured from the angle of Lin Chensheng, Hong Wu caved.

That was indeed her weakness.

In the end, Hong Chengtian got Bai Xiaosheng's number and happily made the call.

Once connected, Hong Chengtian introduced himself, worried Bai Xiaosheng might suspect him to be a fraud.

But Bai Xiaosheng directly accepted his identity.

After all, Bai Xiaosheng had anticipated this.

Giving someone time meant giving Hong Chengtian time!

After brief pleasantries between Bai Xiaosheng and Hong Chengtian, Hong Chengtian eagerly got to the point: he wanted to discuss a mutually beneficial cooperation with Bai Xiaosheng.

Hong Chengtian indicated that to show his sincerity, he'd even help Tianyu International's development in Xianggang.

His proposition was quite open and on point.

Bai Xiaosheng naturally expressed his expectation for their cooperation and emphasized that Hong Wu was his friend, and he was willing to join hands with the Hong Family.

Immediately, Bai Xiaosheng regretted that his schedule was full for the day and he couldn't visit the Hong Family in person.

On this note, Hong Chengtian expressed deep regret as well and repeatedly invited Bai Xiaosheng.

Bai Xiaosheng assured that as soon as he had time, he would visit the Hong Family and guaranteed a friendly cooperation!

With that, Hong Chengtian was satisfied.

After hanging up, Bai Xiaosheng looked at Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying with a smile, showing his phone.

“Now, I can call Lin Tianyi!”

Bai Xiaosheng intended to use Hong Chengtian’s “initiative” to counter Lin Tianyi’s current “passivity,” forcing Lin Tianyi to comply.

The Lin and Hong Families, who always regarded themselves as brother families, would now face a situation where one hand fights the other. Bai Xiaosheng planned for the left hand to strike the right hand, and vice versa—a strategy of mutual pitting!

“Now, although the dinner this evening is important, I need to hurry and secure the cooperation. So I’ll tell Lin Tianyi I’m going there a bit later!” Bai Xiaosheng quipped to Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying, half-jokingly.

Chapter 1970 - Signing with the Two Major Families

Lin Tianyi didn’t manage any family affairs this day, yet he was extremely busy.

In the morning, he was busy meeting with Bai Xiaosheng, negotiating, and going back and forth with his old friend Hong Chengtian, “testing the waters” and “playing mind games”.

After deciding to let the Lin Family go “solo” this time, he called Bai Xiaosheng, ostensibly discussing some banquet matters, but actually laying the groundwork for the evening’s negotiations and cooperation.

At noon, Lin Tianyi had a quick meal, and then contacted key figures holding crucial positions in the family.

These were people he could absolutely trust.

Lin Tianyi had already asked them to prepare cooperation plans, for collaboration with Tianyu International and Bai Xiaosheng's side.

After all, from the beginning, Lin Tianyi was determined to collaborate with Bai Xiaosheng's side. He just didn't expect it to be needed so quickly and urgently.

The situation now was different.

Since Lin Tianyi was leading the Lin Family to "fly solo", the cooperation couldn't follow the original plan, with meticulous bargaining, or even using the "international market" as a reason to fight for more favorable conditions from Bai Xiaosheng.

Instead, he had to voluntarily make concessions.

Lin Tianyi didn't even take a nap but began to communicate one-on-one with key people in Lin Family enterprises, instructing, even pointing out specific changes needed in the cooperation methods and plans.

Those high-level executives of the Lin Family whom Lin Tianyi trusted were all shocked to learn that the Lin Family was going to proactively make concessions to the other party.

In their impression, the family head had never done this before — preparing to concede before negotiating a cooperation?

Unheard of!

Who exactly was this executive president of Zhenbei Group's Greater China Region, to make their family head act in advance like this!

While the surprise lingered in their minds, a few among them also learned that this time the Lin Family was going to "abandon" the Hong Family to fly solo, which almost made their jaws drop.

Although they had thought about this issue in secret, the reality of it still shocked them.

The Lin Family and the Hong Family have had a friendship and business partnership for decades, which is rare.

Yet cooperation with Bai Xiaosheng was important enough to abandon an allied family!

Faced with the shock and confusion of the crowd, Lin Tianyi had no time to explain much to them. After contacting various parties, Lin Tianyi sat in front of the computer, typing away to organize the preliminary cooperation framework.

This would be needed at the banquet, time was tight, and he couldn't trust anyone else to do it, so he had to handle it himself.

Once this was signed, the subsequent detailed cooperation contracts would follow.

"Tonight, I must sign the contract with Bai Xiaosheng. Delays will lead to changes! Making some concessions to him is a reluctant move, but I also have to plan well on how to make concessions little by little, without rushing it! Otherwise, that Bai Xiaosheng might exploit it inch by inch. By then, I'll be passive!"

Thinking about this, Lin Tianyi gradually typed out the cooperation framework, carefully pondering and weighing the details.

This work took Lin Tianyi two whole hours.

After finishing, he was mentally and physically exhausted.

However, fortunately, during the review, he was quite satisfied.

After proofreading the text, Lin Tianyi thought about finding the most reliable and trustworthy person to deliberate on the details further.

Once this framework is signed, future cooperation will have a basis to follow.

At that moment, Lin Tianyi's phone suddenly rang.

Initially, Lin Tianyi wasn't in a hurry to answer the call. Instead, he stretched lazily, feeling an ache all over, with a sense of mental fatigue.

After all, he wasn't a young man anymore, and he had just gone through an intense mental workload.

After stretching, he casually glanced at the phone.

This look immediately refreshed his spirit.

"It's Bai Xiaosheng!" Lin Tianyi exclaimed, grabbing the phone in surprise.

"Why is he calling me again?" Lin Tianyi wondered briefly.

Then, he answered the call.

Could it be that Bai Xiaosheng had something come up last minute and wasn't planning to attend my banquet!

This thought made Lin Tianyi's heart skip a beat.

No, Bai Xiaosheng already agreed!

The Lin Family isn't just anyone, having invited him so formally, how could he cancel last minute!

Lin Tianyi thought to himself.

"Mr. Lin?" Bai Xiaosheng's polite voice came from the other end of the phone.

"It's me, Mr. Sheng. What can I do for you?" Lin Tianyi replied courteously.

Bai Xiaosheng sounded somewhat apologetic, "It's like this, Mr. Lin. About the banquet tonight, I might be a bit late, about half an hour or so!"

Lin Tianyi frowned.

Bai Xiaosheng really wanted to change plans last minute?

But it wasn't a cancellation, just a half-hour delay.

Why?

"Mr. Sheng, is there something you need to handle first?" Lin Tianyi asked.

"It's like this, Mr. Lin. As you know, our group has a company here in Xianggang, called Tianyu International, run by someone named Chengnan. Right now, they're signing several contracts with the Hong Family, making quite a stir. I just received news that the Hong Family wants to expand the scope of cooperation, and the head of the Hong Family, your old friend, Hong Chengtian, personally stepped in. My person in charge, Chengnan, feels his position is not equal to the Hong Family's head, so he wants me to come out. The time just happens to be then. I just got off the phone with Mr. Hong Chengtian myself. It's hard for me to refuse. However, I assure you it won't be too long. Once I'm done with the meeting, I'll head to your banquet. I just wanted to give you a heads-up."