

Two Trillion 341

Chapter 341 Two Purposes! _1

Facing Mr. Bai Xiaosheng's persistent questions, Mr. Kevin was neither hurried nor slow; he even took a sip of his wine before he smiled slightly, put down his glass, and looked at Bai Xiaosheng.

"Mr. Bai Xiaosheng, have you ever thought about the failure of Kaisen?"

Bai Xiaosheng looked at him steadily, nodded slightly, and admitted, "Even if Ron takes this document back and implements it smoothly for a year, the likelihood of Kaisen's failure still reaches fifty-five percent!"

With the aid of Red Lotus, Bai Xiaosheng had calculated the odds.

"Wow!"

Mr. Kevin exclaimed dramatically, then locking his gaze on Bai Xiaosheng, his lips curled into an admiring smile, "Ron's own team came up with a figure of fifty-four point five percent, our team concluded fifty-eight percent, and after seeing the analysis, I believe Ron Team's figure is the most accurate! Your individual calculation is only off by zero point five percent! Mr. Bai Xiaosheng, I must admit, you're a genius!"

Mr. Kevin looked at Bai Xiaosheng, his eyes sparkling.

One man against a team!

"I don't beat around the bush when I talk to smart people. That would be insincere," Mr. Kevin said earnestly.

Bai Xiaosheng quietly watched Mr. Kevin, waiting for him to continue.

The others silently observed Mr. Kevin as well.

"Within three to five days at the earliest, or ten days to half a month at the latest, the news from there will come. Hmm, after that, there probably won't be a company called Kaisen anymore," Mr. Kevin said expressionlessly, "because they've gone bankrupt!"

Kaisen had gone bankrupt!

Although he had been prepared for such news, Bai Xiaosheng's heart still skipped a beat when he heard it.

For Zhongjing Media, this was a great loss!

For Ron, it was nothing less than...

A disaster!

Bai Xiaosheng sighed to himself.

Ron was a friend he valued and he felt sad about this outcome for him!

"In fact, during Ron's last negotiation, he didn't know that Kaisen was already on the path to destruction. I merely... hastened the process," Mr. Kevin said with a smile, "You know, Kaisen is a partnership with a total of five shareholders, including Ron."

"Those people, you can't expect all of them to have extraordinary vision in business. In fact, they are misers, idiots, idealists, engineers," Mr. Kevin said as he categorized the shareholders of Kaisen, clearly expressing his disdain for each of them.

"Defeating them isn't a very difficult thing to do, as long as you have resources! In the business world, the political arena, or even women," Mr. Kevin said with a laugh.

"Separate them one by one, break them one by one!" Bai Xiaosheng said solemnly.

Mr. Kevin clapped lightly and gave Bai Xiaosheng a thumbs up.

"You're right, separate them one by one, break them one by one, they are nothing more than loose sand!" Mr. Kevin lamented, "This group of loose sand not only lacks unity, but at moments involving their interests, they care only about their own shares. Among these people, the one I admire the most is actually Ron! He has been struggling, trying, and attempting to turn the situation around. Unfortunately, he had no idea that even his partners were betraying him; the very day he handed them the plan, it ended up in my hands!"

Mr. Kevin looked at Bai Xiaosheng seriously, "Do you know, seeing this document, I was horrified, it's a long-term plan capable of reducing over an eighty percent failure rate to almost even odds, and even if they could hold on for two to three years, the outcome would still be uncertain!"

Mr. Kevin sighed, "It was precisely after seeing it that I decided, regardless of the cost, to bring down Kaisen immediately!"

Mr. Kevin's words were the ultimate recognition and praise for Bai Xiaosheng!

Chen Jiuzheng silently exhaled a heavy breath and looked at Bai Xiaosheng deeply.

Chen Changqing was even more stunned; he had never anticipated that the man whom he had always thought only won against him by luck and unorthodox methods—Bai Xiaosheng—possessed such formidable capabilities!

Unable to help himself, Chen Changqing gazed at Bai Xiaosheng, beginning to regard him as his true rival in his heart!

Bai Fei, Bai Ran, and Yang Qian'er were as if struck by lightning, speechless.

The Bai Xiaosheng who appeared so calm, even nonchalant, was being held in such high esteem, so highly regarded by a prominent figure!

Bai Xiaosheng just sighed deeply.

Man's calculations are no match for heaven's!

Unexpectedly, it was his proposal that hastened the demise of Kaisen Company!

The business world is cruel, terrifyingly so.

"Mr. Kevin, may I inquire as to your intentions for coming to Zhongjing this time? Are you considering a partnership with Zhongjing Media?" Bai Xiaosheng asked calmly.

When he said this, he glanced at Chen Jiuzheng.

Chen Changqing immediately took note and thought to himself: This guy's mind is meticulous; he must be suspecting whether my uncle is trying to profit from this, whether he is trying to get involved with Zhongjing Media.

Chen Changqing was now very attentive to every move Bai Xiaosheng made.

But what difference did it make if Bai Xiaosheng guessed something?

Cooperation between Zhongjing Media and Kelson was hugely beneficial in itself, at the very least, it found them the fastest access to a market partner!

Honestly speaking.

Chen Changqing was never too keen on Bai Xiaosheng's participation, especially after realizing his capabilities. The credit for success in brokering the partnership, Chen Changqing coveted for himself!

This desire was also driven by a spirit of competition.

"Cooperating with Zhongjing Media is just one of my reasons for coming here!" Kevin said with a smile, responding to Bai Xiaosheng's question.

One of the reasons?!

Chen Jiuzheng glanced at his old classmate, wondering, besides the unmentionable side of their cooperation, was there a "second" reason?!

"Old friend, I'm not intentionally concealing anything from you. Actually, this matter isn't of much relevance to you. It pertains more to Mr. Bai Xiaosheng, and if he agrees, I think it could be quite helpful to me," Kevin said, still smiling.

"Oh? What matter requires specifically Mr. Bai's assistance?"

Chen Jiuzheng's interest was piqued, and not just his, but Chen Changqing's as well.

"Mr. Bai Xiaosheng, why don't you take a guess?" Kevin said, smiling and looking at Bai Xiaosheng.

This foreigner, there's a sly gleam in his eyes.

Bai Xiaosheng looked at Chen Jiuzheng, then at Chen Changqing. Whether it came to controlling Zhongjing's industries or having leverage within Zhongjing Media, he had no advantage—yet Kevin seemed to favor him immensely...

Bai Xiaosheng lowered his head in thought, then suddenly he raised his head and looked incredulously at Kevin.

"The connection you're interested in is my relationship with Ron! Are you here because of Ron too? Although he can't change the current situation, he still has a top-notch business consultant team at his disposal, his own personal team, and you're eyeing that team!"

Bai Xiaosheng's astonishment made Kevin's eyes blaze with brilliance, and he couldn't help but burst into applause.

"Bai Xiaosheng, you're a genius!"

While the others were shocked, Bai Xiaosheng was far from pleased, his gaze flickering uncertainly.

So, Ron is coming back soon...

...

While Bai Xiaosheng and the others were engaged in an animated conversation, Hao and his group were rushing over, filled with aggressive energy.

Lei Ying might look rough, but he was more meticulous than a woman when it came to getting things done. When he entered the establishment to inquire about Bai Xiaosheng and the others, he didn't just ask one person, nor did he only ask the waiters.

In fact, they had already learned of Bai Xiaosheng and the others' whereabouts: at the Dingxiang Building.

Lei Ying had even given a handsome sum of money to a waiter to act as an inside man.

Not long ago, Lei Ying finally received the news.

Excited, Hao rushed over with his men.

All the while, Bai Xiaosheng and his party remained blissfully unaware.

Chapter 342: Looking for Someone? You're Not Worthy!_1

He shattered the company that Ron cherished as his own blood, and even set his sights on someone else's private business consultancy team; this Kevin, truly audacious in his thinking!

Mr. Bai Xiaosheng was also astounded.

"Ron returns to Zhongjing to seek help from Zhongjing Media?" Mr. Bai Xiaosheng asked.

"Well, I don't know about that, perhaps he has that intention, or perhaps he came for you!" Kevin shrugged.

Before talking to Bai Xiaosheng, he didn't think a single person's efforts could amount to much.

But having communicated with Bai Xiaosheng, Kevin's opinion significantly changed!

A person can indeed have the power to change the situation! At least this young man before him, he had the ability to create this miracle!

If Mr. Bai Xiaosheng is interested in Kelson, I am willing to offer him three times, no, five times the salary he receives at Zhongjing Media to poach him!

Kevin's gaze toward Bai Xiaosheng also subtly shimmered with brilliance.

Chen Jiuzheng sat right next to him, seeing his expression clearly and immediately becoming vigilant.

It looks like my old classmate is desperate for talent! However, I must secure such talent at all costs and cannot let Kevin poach him!

Chen Jiuzheng thought to himself.

Little did Bai Xiaosheng suspect that he had been placed on the must-have list by two big shots. As long as he was willing, a three to five times pay increase was no problem at all, and they would agree without hesitation to even higher offers.

But neither Chen Jiuzheng nor Kevin could have imagined that Bai Xiaosheng was truly unpoachable.

His real identity is the future president of Zhenbei Group—what kind of salary could sway his intentions!

"Mr. Kevin wants me to persuade Ron to join Kelson with his team?" Mr. Bai Xiaosheng said with a bitter smile, "I'm afraid, I don't have that ability. To bring down Kaisen, crush it, and then expect him to join you—that's a bit too idealistic."

Indeed!

The crowd nodded silently.

"It might be impossible for others, but you—I believe you can create a miracle," Kevin stated earnestly.

"What if Ron's team joins me instead!" Chen Jiuzheng suddenly spoke up, laughing, "Kelson might be difficult, but my side is possible, how about..."

"Chen Jiuzheng, you're going too far, stealing my people," Kevin protested playfully.

Actually, the reason he hadn't spoken up was that he feared Chen Jiuzheng would take notice.

And now, as expected.

"We're old friends; the team working for me means you can use them too," Chen Jiuzheng chuckles, as if he were really joking.

But there were no jokes to be made here—it involved business, it involved interests. Yet owing to collaboration and relationships, everyone was probing half-heartedly.

"All right, let's set these matters aside for now. In any case, we need Mr. Bai Xiaosheng's help to retain Ron's team. Mr. Bai, what do you think about this matter?" Kevin asked.

Chen Jiuzheng also looked toward Bai Xiaosheng.

Bai Xiaosheng remained silent.

Rationally speaking, Kaisen's downfall was externally caused by Kelson, by Kevin, but even if they acted despicably, that didn't mean they were in the wrong.

Kaisen's collapse had internal reasons—its organizational structure and leadership were scattered, unable to unite and weather the storm together. Even if they survived this crisis, countless other Kelson-like companies could swallow them in the future.

Ron, working with a team of incompetents on his idealistic path, was doomed to be sabotaged.

How far one can go isn't just about oneself but also about those who accompany them on their journey.

"I haven't seen Ron yet, and I'm not sure about his attitude. When the time comes, I'll have a good talk with him," Mr. Bai Xiaosheng said earnestly.

This statement was too vague.

A good talk—how, about what, persuading him to join which side?

A hint of dissatisfaction flickered in the depths of Chen Jiuzheng's eyes.

Kevin, however, remained composed and smiled.

"Well then, Mr. Bai Xiaosheng, I hope we can establish more contact and that our friendship will last a long time," Kevin raised his glass as a toast.

Chen Jiuzheng suddenly realized.

Kevin was interested not just in Ron's team but also in Bai Xiaosheng; if he could get him on board, the chances with Ron's side would be much greater.

"Yes, indeed, on our first meeting, we should talk less about work and more about feelings. Come on, let's drink," Chen Jiuzheng said with a beaming smile, raising his glass to Bai Xiaosheng.

Facing a toast from the two tycoons, Bai Xiaosheng returned the gesture with a smile.

The others also lifted their glasses in accompaniment.

Just as everyone was about to take a sip from their raised glasses, a loud bang echoed through the room—the private room door was kicked open.

Everyone was startled.

Chen Jiuzheng's hand trembled, spilling his drink all over himself.

Scuffling noises followed as five people rushed in from outside.

It was Hao and his crew.

Except for Cheng Xiaosi, who was still guarding Bai Shuanglei at Ju Feng Garden, even the two who had gone downstairs were called back.

Hao charged in aggressively, a fierce grin on his face, enjoying the thought of them being so frightened they'd wet themselves just at the sight of him. After all, they outnumbered the others!

To his surprise, upon entering, the other party was taken aback, and so was he.

This small private room was packed!

The number of people on the other side was more than twice their own!

"Who are you guys!" Chen Jiuzheng, alarmed and furious, glared at the drink stain on his clothes.

"Enough bullshit, I'm your damn grandpa!" Hao, with his triangular eyes, was fixated on Bai Ran and Bai Fei.

They're outnumbered? So what!

When it came to fighting, they were professionals. To him, all the cultured-looking people in the room were just paper tigers!

Using force could intimidate a whole bunch of them.

Now was definitely not the time to back down—roll up your sleeves, it's time to fight!

Chen Jiuzheng's face darkened instantly, looking incredibly menacing.

In front of a roomful of people, in front of Mr. Kevin, someone had barged in and called himself their grandpa.

Courting death!

"Throw them out!" Chen Jiuzheng commanded fiercely.

Without a second word, the four bodyguards he had brought along charged in.

The sound of dull thuds spread throughout the room.

Fist after fist landed with a punch.

"You want a fight, huh. Look who the hell you're messing with!" Hao shouted, but when he turned his head, he was dumbfounded.

Of the four people who followed him, aside from Lei Ying who was still exchanging blows with someone, the other three had already been knocked to the ground by Chen Jiuzheng's bodyguards, wailing miserably.

It turned out that they were the real paper tigers...

It had all happened too quickly!

His buddies were street-brawling experts, and they were all down just in the time it took to say a few words?!

No wonder Hao was astonished; who Chen Jiuzheng was or whom he chose as his personal bodyguards—each of them was a master among masters. How long would it take them to deal with some little thugs!

Only Lei Ying remained undefeated, and not only was he not losing, but he was also holding his own against four!

Meanwhile, Bai Xiaosheng drank his wine, ate his food, and marveled.

The room was cramped, not leaving much room to maneuver, and Lei Ying was injured, yet even so, he was able to take on four at a time.

Utterly insane!

If this guy were to become my assistant... Awesome!

Bai Xiaosheng was quite moved by this idea!

Chen Jiuzheng's bodyguards were tough men; like hyenas facing a fierce tiger in Lei Ying, they couldn't be scattered or repelled, relentlessly charging wave after wave.

Hao stood to the side, shivering intensely.

He could see it now.

These folks were tough nuts to crack!

And he wasn't here to chew bones; he was looking for those from the Bai family. There had been a misunderstanding here!

"It's all a misunderstanding!" Hao yelled, "Everyone, I didn't come to cause trouble, I'm just looking for someone..."

"Looking for someone?" Chen Jiuzheng snapped, "Do you think you have the right? Beat the hell out of him!"

Chapter 343: Debt Collection Comes with Risks (Please Subscribe)_1

Hao and his group came storming over, originally intending to strut around and intimidate with a display of power.

Instead, they ended up getting beaten like dogs and were thrown out.

If it weren't for Lei Ying's protection, Hao would have probably had difficulty even walking out on his own. Even with Lei Ying's protection, he still took a couple of punches to the face, resulting in a bloodied nose and a blackened eye socket.

Lei Ying took the most hits while covering for Hao and didn't utter a sound as he quickly led him away.

The remaining three were crying for their parents, wishing they had grown an extra pair of legs. This group stumbled out in a mess, not daring to stay in Dingxiang Building and instead rushed back to Ju Feng Garden.

Bai Xiaosheng watched calmly as if the whole violent incident were nothing more than a grand performance.

"Mr. Bai Xiaosheng really is composed and unruffled," Kevin praised, then asked with a hint of curiosity, "Those men, they seemed to be coming for you. Do you have any trouble that I can help with?"

Even though Kevin was in Zhongjing, away from his own turf, he still had countless ways to deal with the problem.

As long as Bai Xiaosheng asked, he would definitely be able to do it.

"There's no need to trouble Mr. Kevin, it's just a small, insignificant issue," Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile.

If he had to ask Kevin for a favor over such a small matter, wouldn't that be a loss for him?

"You, a foreigner, should not get involved in our matters here. Sheng, if there's a problem, feel free to let me know," Chen Jiuzheng chimed in, not wanting to be outdone. As Chen Banbi, dealing with such a trivial matter would be a piece of cake for him.

"Thank you, Mr. Chen, but there's no need to let such a small matter affect our enjoyment of the drinks," Bai Xiaosheng said, raising his glass with a smile.

"Haha, true that!" Chen Jiuzheng laughed and nodded.

Both big shots raised their glasses to Bai Xiaosheng once again.

Chen Changqing watched from the side with a mix of envy, jealousy, and dissatisfaction. The important figure he had treated with great respect was now sitting on an equal footing with Bai Xiaosheng...

Bai Fei and Bai Ran were genuinely impressed.

Only now did they understand why Bai Xiaosheng was unconcerned about Hao and his group from the start.

Look, with just a word from Bai Xiaosheng, not one but several important figures were eager to help him solve this dilemma.

Perhaps in the eyes of these significant figures, this was not even a problem...

It seemed that our cousin really was extraordinary!

Bai Fei and Bai Ran looked at him with newfound respect and awe.

Yang Qian'er, who had been silent all this time, watched Bai Xiaosheng with bright, sparkling eyes that were full of admiration.

...

Subsequently, Bai Xiaosheng, Chen Jiuzheng, and Kevin enjoyed fine wines and exquisite foods, discussing industry trends, politics and economics, as well as sports like golf, tennis, and horse riding.

The more Bai Xiaosheng talked, the more amazed the others became; he knew far too much.

Even Chen Changqing and Kevin were somewhat surprised, hearing of many things they had never known of before.

Bai Xiaosheng gave Kevin pointers on golf techniques and taught Chen Jiuzheng horse riding and fishing...

Seeing the two big shots humbly seeking advice, everyone was speechless...

Actually, with Red Lotus with him, Bai Xiaosheng was like a walking encyclopedia, with endless knowledge at his disposal. Coupled with his confident eloquence, his ability to explain things was bound to surprise.

What a talent, a great talent indeed!

The gazes of Chen Jiuzheng and Kevin couldn't help but shine when they looked at Bai Xiaosheng...

"How can he know so much? Could it be that he's also from some major family!" Chen Changqing questioned in amazement, unable to contain his doubts.

It wasn't just him; Chen Jiuzheng and Kevin were thinking along the same lines. Their eagerness to recruit Bai Xiaosheng intensified.

...

On the other side, Ju Feng Garden.

Thanks to Mr. Bai Xiaosheng and Yang Qian'er's commotion, Boss Shen lost out but didn't lose too much.

After all, the wine had not been uncorked, and the dishes had not been touched; they were simply returned.

The piece de resistance that Boss Shen himself had prepared actually didn't cost that much in terms of ingredients...

What annoyed Boss Shen was being played; the deal hadn't gone through, but seeing Hao with eyes so red with rage, he feared some item might have gone missing. After weighing the two situations, he felt somewhat better.

Boss Shen had even asked Hao what he had lost, to which Hao had irritably replied, "I lost face!"

Being played like that meant losing face, didn't it?

Out of sympathy for a fellow sufferer, Boss Shen didn't demand compensation from Hao's group, but he insisted that they still had to order food; otherwise, what was the point of occupying the private room?

Reluctantly, Hao ordered some dishes and had Cheng Xiaosi watch over Bai Shuanglei, who wasn't allowed to eat.

That served as a punishment; if it hadn't been for Cheng Xiaosi's incompetence, they wouldn't have lost the person.

"You better watch out, if I find out even a single dish is missing a mouthful, you're not getting any spending money this month!" Hao warned Cheng Xiaosi before leaving.

What a cruel brother-in-law he was!

As Cheng Xiaosi was watching over Bai Shuanglei, the more he heard the snoring, the more annoyed he got; the more he looked at the fat man, the angrier he became. He went straight to the bathroom in the private room, filled a basin with water, and drenched him with it.

"Ah, what happened!" Bai Shuanglei sat up suddenly, looking at Cheng Xiaosi in panic. It took him batting his mung bean eyes for a while to recognize him. His face still wore a drunken, confused smile, "Shuanglei, Brother Shi... what are you doing... eh, are we eating yet?"

Even in his drunken stupor, the fat man was still thinking about eating, which infuriated Cheng Xiaosi so much that he started slapping him around.

"It's all because of you, you bastard, that we're in this mess! What were you betting for, why did you borrow money? Isn't it good enough to just carry bricks honestly!" Cheng Xiaosi said as he slapped and scolded him.

Bai Shuanglei was so beaten he became confused.

In these times, it was those who lent money who were preaching righteousness...

As Cheng Xiaosi was beating Bai Shuanglei, the door to the private room was flung open, and several people burst in. Cheng Xiaosi turned his head and was startled.

His brother-in-law Hao sported dark circles under his eyes and had blood on his nose and mouth. He was propped up by Lei Ying. The buddies behind him were in even worse shape, grimacing with their teeth bared, faces bruised and swollen. As they entered, they fell to the floor in disarray, gasping for air.

"Brother-in-law!" Cheng Xiaosi jumped, rushing over quickly.

Lei Ying dumped Hao into his arms and collapsed onto the sofa, gasping for air.

The brawl had been infuriating. Lei Ying was injured and could only exert half his strength. The space was cramped, they were outnumbered, and he had to protect Hao, which hadn't spared him from getting hit quite a bit.

The opposing bodyguards were formidable players, skilled in Sanda, boxing, and Muay Thai, striking both ruthlessly and underhandedly, likely the sort to split several red bricks with a single palm strike.

Cheng Xiaosi, in a panic, fumbled with a cigarette, lighting one for Hao. Collapsed on the sofa, Hao trembled as he took a drag, and while it was difficult, he said with some fervor, "In these times, even debt collectors get beaten up, what a world!"

What happened?

Cheng Xiaosi was curious, but he didn't dare ask. He was afraid that if he said the wrong thing, he would get dragged into it.

"What do we do now?" Cheng Xiaosi whispered.

"We wait!" Hao sat up, touched his face, winced with a grimace, but his face showed a trace of vicious determination, "I refuse to believe they won't be alone! I must have that money!"

"And if you can't get it?" Cheng Xiaosi carelessly mumbled.

"Then we release the guy." Hao nodded towards Bai Shuanglei.

"Ah?" Cheng Xiaosi was taken aback.

Release the guy, just like that?

"Have him go and raise the funds. If a single penny is missing, I'll kill him!" Hao said angrily, "From now on, we'll keep a close eye on those who borrow money; I can't personally go after them anymore. The business risk is too high!"

Chapter 344: I Can Give You the Truth_1

Bai Xiaosheng and his group had been enjoying the banquet for over an hour, and both hosts and guests were having a grand time.

Chen Jiuzheng, after all, was a busy man and couldn't get a moment of peace even in the evening. He received several calls during the dinner and eventually had no choice but to leave; Mr. Kevin also accompanied him.

The moment they left, Chen Changqing naturally didn't intend to stay any longer either. Having hosted the banquet, he had completely become Bai Xiaosheng's supporting role, which was frustrating beyond belief.

"Then let's leave together; I will also see off Mr. Chen and Mr. Kevin," Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile.

Seeing someone off was just a pretext; seizing the opportunity to leave was the real intention.

Although Hao and his crew had been soundly thrashed, no one could guarantee they had really left. If they were still around, that would be problematic.

Bai Xiaosheng's plan was immediately understood by Bai Fei, Bai Ran, and Yang Qian'er, who followed him out.

Downstairs, Yu Qing was already waiting.

The bill had been settled.

It covered everything, including the private room where Bai Xiaosheng and his party had feasted!

"Chen, you're really something! So good at handling things, truly promising!" Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but praise.

Chen Changqing was caught between laughter and tears as he cursed inwardly.

But on the surface, all he said was, "It's only right. After all, Mr. Chen and Mr. Kevin are my guests!"

Deep down, Chen Changqing still had an unspoken grievance:

I ended up accompanying you!

With this thought, Chen Changqing felt even more aggrieved.

Why should it be like this! He hosted, his guests were not fully entertained, and he spent quite a bit of money.

Bai Xiaosheng, you're really a jinx!

Unable to hold back, Chen Changqing cursed inwardly again.

...

A group of people rushed down the stairs.

It was past mealtime, and the number of people outside had dwindled.

Chen Jiuzheng and Kevin's group, as well as Chen Changqing's party, all had driven here, and their cars were already packed full, so naturally, Bai Xiaosheng couldn't shamelessly ask for a ride.

After bidding them farewell, Bai Xiaosheng hurriedly led Bai Fei and the others away swiftly, even taking a detour on the way.

Just as he felt they were about to be safe, a lone figure strolled towards them from up ahead on the road.

Bai Xiaosheng frowned slightly.

What a persistent nuisance, impossible to shake off!

Lei Ying!

"Stop wasting your energy; I was a mercenary for three years, a special forces soldier for two, and I'm very skilled at tracking. You can't run away!" Lei Ying said, his eyes gleaming as he looked at Bai Xiaosheng, "You can fight well, and I want to experience it again!"

You freak! Who wants to fight you!

If you want to fight, go to a competition!

Bai Xiaosheng itched to curse.

"They still need a few minutes to get here. If you knock me down, won't you be able to leave?" Lei Ying suggested with a smile, his eyes shining with an intensity that was chilling, even more so in the fading light, making him seem like a lone wolf lurking in the night.

Lei Ying advanced, his footsteps light and soundless, without the slightest hint of hesitation.

I'm still all sore; is he already fine again, this freak!

Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help scratching his head.

Now there was trouble!

Just as Bai Xiaosheng was fretting, Bai Ran suddenly whispered something in his ear.

Bai Xiaosheng's eyes flashed.

From dozens of steps away, Lei Ying suddenly sped up, shooting forward like an arrow released from the bow, his swift motion causing Bai Fei and Yang Qian'er next to him to exclaim in shock.

Facing Bai Xiaosheng, a formidable opponent, Lei Ying was more excited than he'd ever been, entering a frenzied mode with his fighting spirit through the roof.

The punches he threw all carried a bracing wind.

"Lei Ying, don't you want to know who set up your parents all those years ago!"

As the fist neared, Bai Xiaosheng suddenly shouted out.

With a single sentence, Lei Ying froze as if fixed in place, his entire body rigid, with his fist only less than half a foot away from Bai Xiaosheng.

"What did you say?!" Lei Ying asked.

His voice was eerie, as if coming from hell!

Every dragon has its reverse scale, and every person has their taboo.

This was Lei Ying's taboo!

"Your parents were conned badly back in the day, and it was Hao who lent you the money to pull through, right? Afterward, you agreed to be his bodyguard for three years. Now, how many days are left?" Bai Xiaosheng asked calmly.

His hands were actually clenched tightly; just moments ago, he nearly wanted to fight back.

However, fighting back was really not a good idea!

Lei Ying was like a combat machine with self-repair capabilities.

If he fought back again, Bai Xiaosheng felt sure he would end up truly miserable.

"Why would you know about this?!" Lei Ying's eyes turned fierce as he shouted, "Speak!"

"I told him," Bai Ran said loudly.

"You? How do you know!" Lei Ying narrowed his eyes suspiciously as he viewed her.

"Don't you think it's strange that I drank a whole bottle of baijiu and have nothing to show for it now," Bai Ran said.

Lei Ying sized her up and nodded silently.

"That's because I wasn't drunk at all!" Bai Ran said, "I've been pretending to be drunk all this time, and while I was pretending, I overheard a secret about you!"

Bai Ran narrated the matter in detail, and Lei Ying's gaze flickered uncertainly.

"You, such a meticulous thinker, I don't believe you never had any doubts about this matter!" Bai Xiaosheng said to Lei Ying with a smile.

"Evidence, I need evidence!" Lei Ying said with a heavy voice.

"Evidence?" Bai Xiaosheng pondered for a moment and then laughed, "I can give you evidence, but what's in it for me?"

Lei Ying furrowed his brow, "What do you want?"

Bai Xiaosheng laughed.

...

Hao and his men followed the location given by Lei Ying and tracked them down.

From a distance, he saw Lei Ying alone, cornering two men and two women.

There were no hefty bodyguards nearby, no bystanders!

Hao got excited, thinking that now it was finally his turn for revenge!

Hao's men were also excited, semi-encircling the scene.

"You're Hao, right? You've come at just the right time, let's talk about the debt repayment issue," Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile upon seeing Hao, snapping his fingers.

Debt repayment? Now he wanted to pay back the money?

Hao was startled, and then a fierce grin appeared on his face as he walked over.

With Lei Ying there, Hao felt very confident.

"Hao, I want to know how much money Bai Shuanglei owes you?" Bai Xiaosheng snapped his fingers and asked.

"One million one hundred thousand!" Hao said.

"Wasn't it nine hundred seventy-five thousand?" Bai Xiaosheng asked curiously.

"Bullshit!" Hao shouted, but the number made him furrow his brows slightly.

Lei Ying quietly watched them from the side.

"Nine hundred seventy-five thousand is also a large sum. If it was three years ago, that would be astonishing, enough to buy a house," Bai Xiaosheng snapped his fingers and sighed.

"Yes," Hao said involuntarily.

"If an elderly couple was conned out of so much money, even if they sold their house at that time, it probably wouldn't have amounted to this sum. Tell me, how could you be so kind to lend them the money? You really are a good Samaritan," Bai Xiaosheng snapped his fingers, emoting.

"That's because, it was..." Hao involuntarily followed this train of thought, recalling nine hundred seventy-five thousand, a house, an elderly couple, his eyes clouding with confusion.

"That's because their son is very capable, and you wanted him to work for you, right?" Bai Xiaosheng abruptly stopped snapping his fingers, his eyes conveying temptation, "That must have been the most gratifying thing for you, come on, say it, let's share in the glory!"

As he spoke, Bai Xiaosheng extended his hand in front of Hao and snapped his fingers.

Hao's gaze straightened.

A sly smile crept across his lips, "Alright, I'll say it!"

Chapter 345 Hypnosis_1

Bai Xiaosheng used hypnosis on Hao.

From the moment Hao arrived, Bai Xiaosheng's every action, including snapping his fingers and his suggestive speech, was all part of the hypnosis.

Actually, hypnosis isn't as mystical as it seems. For some people with strong wills, it can be quite difficult to employ.

Hao was different. When he rushed over, his face was clearly overly joyous, believing himself to be safe and his guard at its lowest.

Even so, Bai Xiaosheng didn't just use his voice and language to induce hypnosis; he had many other techniques at his disposal. When he locked eyes with Hao, even the frequency and number of his blinks were a strong suggestion.

These were things ordinary hypnotists couldn't possibly achieve; Bai Xiaosheng could only reach this level with the help of Red Lotus.

After using it once, Bai Xiaosheng felt his brain foggy and burned, similar to the time he was at the Antique Jade City in Tiannan, when he gambled on stones—that feeling of brain "overload."

If I use it a couple more times, my brain might just "burn out"; never doing this again! Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help muttering to himself.

Luckily, Hao was successfully hypnotized.

Lei Ying's face turned dark as he stared at Hao.

Meanwhile, Cheng Xiaosi and the others tried to approach, but with a cold glare from Lei Ying, they immediately dared not move.

"It was only through a friend that I found out that the elderly couple had a son, a renowned expert in combat, who, according to reports, took on multiple masters from different countries, one against a dozen or twenty. He had joined the mercenaries and later became a commando."

Hao's eyes were blank, his face wore a smile, and he mumbled, "Doing our line of work, mingling in the underworld, it's very dangerous, I wanted to find an expert bodyguard as well, so... so I had Cheng Xiaosi look for someone, gradually approaching the old couple, deceiving them into playing the stock market and then encouraging them to borrow money to invest."

"This elderly couple borrowed from all their relatives and friends, took out all their savings, and even their son's US dollars from being a mercenary, totaling nine hundred and seventy-five thousand, all given to the investor. Once the investor got the money, he ran away, leaving the couple unable to repay their friends, and in the end, they could only sell their house. However, their house wasn't worth that much, so I lent them thirty thousand."

"When Lei Ying returned, I told him the money was borrowed by the old man, and I made him be my bodyguard for three years. This young man is a huge filial son, so naturally, he agreed..."

Hao's ramblings revealed the truth about the past, and he couldn't hide the smug look on his face.

"Actually, the investor and the one who bought the house, all those people were found by me! Only Cheng Xiaosi and I knew about this!"

Lei Ying's face turned ashen instantly, his eyes brimming with murderous intent!

A pair of iron fists clenched with a crackling sound.

He glanced at the dumbstruck Cheng Xiaosi not far away.

Cheng Xiaosi almost knelt down.

He never expected Hao to reveal such a secret in public, the others wore expressions of astonishment, looking at each other in disbelief.

They too had not anticipated that Hao, always known for his loyalty, could be so despicable and shameless, manipulating Lei Ying into servitude for three years using such vile tactics.

And as for what deplorable deeds Hao might have done to them behind the guise of kindness...

Their faces suddenly turned ugly, and their glances towards Cheng Xiaosi became unmistakably hostile.

"Those things, they're not my fault, it was all Hao's doing, he ordered me, I was just a runner!" Unable to bear it, Cheng Xiaosi yelled out.

He had confessed!

This essentially confirmed Hao's crimes.

Lei Ying raised his fist, aiming a punch at Hao's temple.

Now, he truly wanted to kill this bastard; it was this animal who caused his elderly parents to rent a place outside, ashamed to meet relatives and friends for three years!

It was this bastard who made himself see him as a benefactor, loyally serving him for three years!

This man deserves to die!

Lei Ying could no longer control himself, harboring murderous thoughts.

His fist was only a dozen centimeters away from Hao's temple when it was deflected by someone's palm.

Lei Ying looked angrily at the person who interfered.

Bai Xiaosheng's expression remained calm, his gaze steadfast.

"Do you want to kill him?"

"Forget it, your mom and dad are old, they need their son to see them off in their old age!"

Bai Xiaosheng, looking at Lei Ying, said softly, "Don't let white-haired parents send off a black-haired son."

With a single sentence from Bai Xiaosheng,

Lei Ying, filled with murderous intent, suddenly lost his momentum.

"I'll handle this matter," Bai Xiaosheng said, patting Lei Ying's shoulder with emotion.

This man was also a tragedy, crazed with martial arts, his skills unmatched by anyone, yet ultimately no match for the schemes of the human heart.

Hao, still staring blankly, was unaffected by the life-and-death situation he had just faced.

Bai Xiaosheng reached out and snapped his fingers in front of Hao's eyes.

"It's time to wake up."

Hao's head drooped, then he looked up blankly, staring at Bai Xiaosheng in astonishment, "What, what happened to me?"

"You simply told some truths," Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile. "You made it quite clear how you framed Elder Mr. Lei back then."

At those words, Hao nearly wet himself with fear.

That was the thing he had feared every moment for the past three years, becoming his mental burden.

That was also one of the reasons why Bai Xiaosheng could hypnotize him over this matter!

The heavier the heart knot, the easier it was to be hypnotized.

"What nonsense are you talking about? I, I, I... How could I possibly..." Hao swallowed nervously, glancing at Lei Ying, who was radiating a murderous aura beside him, and retreated in a panic.

"He's spouting nonsense, Lei Ying, you, you couldn't possibly believe it, right!" Hao struggled, but his face clearly showed sheer terror.

How could he possibly confess such a thing in front of Lei Ying!

Yet just now, he really felt as if he had been dreaming, unable to recall exactly what he had said, only feeling a great weight lifted from his heart.

"Brother-in-law, just admit it," Cheng Xiaosi shouted. "You confessed everything with your own mouth, all the crimes were ordered by you."

By now, he couldn't care less about anything else, quickly pushing his own issues onto his brother-in-law.

"Shut up, Cheng Xiaosi, what nonsense are you talking about!" Hao turned around angrily, only to startle when he saw Cheng Xiaosi being held by the men he brought.

Those men were looking at him with unfriendly eyes.

"Hao, we'll have a good talk about our issues later," Xiao Liuzi said with a cold huff.

This time, he was truly alone!

Hao was panic-stricken.

"You should be grateful for Lei Ying's leniency; he didn't kill you!"

Bai Xiaosheng said coldly, and Hao fell to his knees before Lei Ying, half-heartedly slapping himself while crying out, "It's my fault, Lei Ying, you can't kill me!"

Lei Ying watched him silently.

"Death penalty can be pardoned, but the living crimes are hard to forgive," Bai Xiaosheng said with a sinister smile to Hao, "After all these years, you should make some compensation."

Looking at Bai Xiaosheng's smile, Hao couldn't help but shiver.

This kid's smile, how sinister!

Chapter 346 Why Don't You Just Rob it!_1

Bai Xiaosheng took Hao aside, counted on his fingers, and started tallying up an account for him.

First of all, Lei Ying's parents' house had to be returned!

No matter who the house was sold to, its value, or how Hao would do it, he had to return it within a limited time of one week!

In addition, Bai Xiaosheng calculated Lei Ying's salary as a bodyguard for the past three years at the rate of a high-level white-collar worker, three hundred thousand a year.

That wasn't all; Bai Xiaosheng then added Lei Ying's parents' emotional distress and lost wages into the total.

After all the calculations, Hao had to give Lei Ying's house, plus two million!

"Why don't you just rob someone!" Hao couldn't help but exclaim in shock.

"This is a better deal than robbing!" Bai Xiaosheng patted his shoulder, grinning as he pointed at Lei Ying, "See that guy? He really wants to kill you, without a moment's hesitation! If it wasn't for me holding him back, you'd probably be lying dead already! What can you do with all your money if you have no life to spend it!"

Hao couldn't help but swallow hard, glanced at Lei Ying, and recoiled immediately after catching Lei Ying's fierce gaze.

"Don't even think about running away. I'm sure Lei Ying will keep a close watch on you; you know what he's capable of! I believe he would have killed you by the time you started packing your stuff!" Bai Xiaosheng spoke earnestly, patting Hao's shoulder again.

Hao shivered uncontrollably; he believed it!

"I agree to everything." In the end, Hao had no choice but to bow his head.

After all, as a mercenary, that guy had truly seen blood!

"Brother, you've really put me through the wringer this time, I'll remember you!" Not daring to play tricks on Lei Ying, Hao gave Bai Xiaosheng a harsh warning.

"What, you're still thinking of making trouble for me?" Bai Xiaosheng showed no fear, smiling as he looked at him, "Are you actually thinking of troubling me or my family? I advise you, don't provoke me; I'm even scarier than Lei Ying!"

Bai Xiaosheng kept smiling.

When he said the last sentence, his smile was incredibly cold.

"Are you still not satisfied with being hypnotized just now? Dare to provoke me? Believe it or not, I can make you donate all your money, not leaving a single penny! Or I could also have you run naked in the streets, but be careful with the cars!" Bai Xiaosheng lightly patted Hao, "The snap of my fingers was for hypnosis, and so is this pat."

Hao suddenly became rigid.

Those surrounding them unexpectedly watched as Hao let out a loud gasp, leaped two feet in the air away from Bai Xiaosheng, like a cat whose tail had been stepped on, his eyes filled with sheer terror.

To talk about compensation, all this was a bit over-the-top...

The people around were dumbfounded and exchanged glances in silence.

When Lei Ying and his group took Hao away, he was full of reverence and fear towards Bai Xiaosheng, treating him like a deity, or a devil.

Before departing, Lei Ying asked Bai Xiaosheng to step aside with him for a few words.

"What did you tell Li Hao?" Even Lei Ying couldn't help being a bit curious.

"Me? I just told a little lie." Bai Xiaosheng smiled.

Hao had been duped first, and now the mere mention of hypnosis terrified him enormously. In his current highly vigilant state of mind, hypnotizing him was not just hard, it was almost impossible.

But with just a scare from Bai Xiaosheng, he believed it, so in a way, that could be considered a form of hypnosis.

With Bai Xiaosheng's scare tactics, coupled with Lei Ying's deterrence, Hao probably wouldn't dare to play any more tricks.

Bai Xiaosheng kept silent, and Lei Ying did not ask further, as he was not a person of great curiosity anyway.

"Thank you for this!" Lei Ying said earnestly, "After all this time, I still don't know your name."

"Bai Xiaosheng." Bai Xiaosheng smiled and extended his hand.

Lei Ying shook hands with him, "I'm..."

"You're called Lei Ying; I heard them calling you that." Bai Xiaosheng smiled.

Lei Ying nodded, "Bai Xiaosheng, I'll remember you! Thank you."

"Do you always make it sound like a threat when you express gratitude?" Bai Xiaosheng joked.

Lei Ying was taken aback and was about to apologize.

Bai Xiaosheng quickly waved his hand to stop him.

This guy really doesn't understand humor! Bai Xiaosheng sighed.

"According to our agreement, I would come back to find you and be your bodyguard!" Lei Ying said earnestly.

This was the condition Bai Xiaosheng had promised when disclosing the truth to him.

"Bodyguard? I only said that in passing; I'm not some big shot, and I'm not into loan sharking or debt collection. Calling it a bodyguard was an exaggeration. However, I do admire your skills and character, that's true."

Bai Xiaosheng spoke frankly, "Your hometown is quite far from here, and your parents are getting on in years. You can think about coming or not. As for helping you, I consider making this friendship. If you do come, remember, you'll be assisting me, not working as a bodyguard. Whatever department I manage, if you want to learn something, I'll give you the opportunity."

"This time, you make the decision!" Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile.

Lei Ying looked deeply at Bai Xiaosheng then, after a long while, finally agreed with a simple "okay".

Bai Xiaosheng turned around to leave, had walked out about a dozen meters, when suddenly he heard Lei Ying behind him ask, "If we fought again, who would win?"

This guy was still hung up on it.

Bai Xiaosheng suddenly thought of a phrase that was quite appropriate to act cool now.

"Most likely you, but if it came to a fight to the death, that would be another story!"

Bai Xiaosheng didn't turn around, his demeanor that of an expert, hands in pockets as he walked away.

Bai Fei, Bai Ran, and Yang Qian'er followed behind him.

Lei Ying watched them go.

Once they were out of sight, Bai Xiaosheng's proud and upright posture collapsed, and he lazily grimaced, "Finally, it's all settled!"

Bai Fei and Bai Ran looked at each other and smiled.

It was getting late. Bai Fei and Bai Ran said their goodbyes in turn and took taxis to leave. Bai Xiaosheng and Yang Qian'er were heading the same way, so they hailed a cab.

In the car, Bai Xiaosheng suddenly remembered something and grinned at Yang Qian'er.

Yang Qian'er was confused by his stare, "Why are you looking at me like that?"

"I think you were quite good at acting today!" Bai Xiaosheng stroked his chin and laughed, "Interested in pursuing a career in the entertainment industry?"

Yang Qian'er thought Bai Xiaosheng was teasing her and gave him a fierce glare.

"Hey, I'm serious! There's a very important female role in the new script of a major drama about to begin shooting in the film department. I thought you seemed quite suitable for it today!" Bai Xiaosheng hurriedly said.

Yang Qian'er snorted coldly, ignoring him completely.

Bai Xiaosheng, earnest and responsible in his work, tried to persuade her. Unexpectedly, he caught the cab driver's peculiar gaze in the rearview mirror...

Bai Xiaosheng was going to say more, but his phone began to ring.

He took out his phone and saw that it was a WeChat message; he opened it and was stunned.

The person who sent the message was Ron.

"Bai Xiaosheng, I will arrive in Zhongjing tomorrow and would like to talk to you!"

Ron was coming back!

Bai Xiaosheng's gaze flickered uncertainly, and he replied with two words, "Okay."

The other party didn't respond anymore.

Bai Xiaosheng put away his phone, somewhat dazed.

When he came to his senses, the first thing he heard was the driver speaking in a low voice, quietly saying to Yang Qian'er,

"Miss, be careful. There are a lot of scammers these days, luring people into the entertainment industry!"

Chapter 347 Ron Arrives_1

Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but feel a bit of amusement coupled with a sense of helplessness, as he was mistaken for a bad guy. Yang Qian'er burst into laughter at his expression and explained to the driver that Bai Xiaosheng was her friend and also her boss.

Upon hearing this, the driver felt quite embarrassed and repeatedly apologized.

Bai Xiaosheng greatly appreciated the driver's sense of justice and then comforted Yang Qian'er. Finally, she agreed to visit the Film Department the next day.

The taxi smoothly made its way first to the serviced apartment where Bai Xiaosheng lived.

After saying goodbye to Yang Qian'er, he got out of the car, went home to freshen up, and as soon as he hit the bed, he felt every muscle in his body ache and was overwhelmed with exhaustion; he fell into a deep sleep almost immediately.

The night passed without incident, and Bai Xiaosheng slept soundly.

He got up very late the next day and headed to the company in no particular hurry.

All morning, Bai Xiaosheng waited for news from Ron, but the guy was like he'd vanished into thin air, no word from him at all.

With nothing better to do, Bai Xiaosheng strolled through the New Media and Film Departments. Both departments were bustling with organized activity, with nothing that required the attention of this deputy general manager.

Bai Xiaosheng only received a wealth of respectful and enthusiastic greetings and nothing more.

"This won't do, I'm currently at the level of a deputy general manager with twenty-five points, seventy-five points away from the general manager level!" Bai Xiaosheng walked on, feeling somewhat downhearted, "How can I earn more points? Normally, Red Lotus would at least assign some missions, but now there aren't even any missions."

Bai Xiaosheng felt that he had poured his heart and soul into his work at Zhongjing Media for so long, yet had gained so little in return.

When would he ever get a promotion!

Bai Xiaosheng worried about this until the afternoon.

He had still not received any news from Ron, but a team had arrived in his stead.

The editor team from Shang Wanwan's company had already arrived.

The team was led by two very famous scriptwriters in the industry, responsible for several nationally acclaimed web dramas.

"It seems that this time, Shang Wanwan is really putting in the effort. She hasn't been gone long and the scriptwriting team has already arrived. What an elite team they are, her company really has a deep foundation!" Bai Xiaosheng mused.

Little did he know, this wasn't Shang Wanwan's doing at all; she had merely reported the situation to her company en route.

Upon hearing that Bai Xiaosheng needed people, Mr. Cui, the boss at Xingchen, immediately reassigned two top scriptwriters. The whole team was made up of elite writers!

As soon as the team was assembled, they took the next flight over!

This was just the initial group; if Bai Xiaosheng had higher demands, Mr. Cui had even more impressive talents prepared.

The two well-known scriptwriters, who were usually quite arrogant, were extremely polite in Bai Xiaosheng's presence, not daring to act superior at all.

The reason was simple; before coming, Mr. Cui had nearly threatened them by having a "heart-to-heart" with everyone separately.

Facing Bai Xiaosheng's personal reception, these people were sincerely anxious and, disregarding their travel fatigue, immediately threw themselves into work.

Their zest for work left Bai Xiaosheng deeply moved.

Bai Xiaosheng had someone lead them to the Film Department first and informed Wenqing's team to meet first; he would follow shortly.

The key creatives from both sides met in the Film Department's small meeting room.

Upon receiving Wenqing's script, the guests, especially the two scriptwriters, were profoundly shocked!

This was a work close to perfection!

At first, they had barely concealed their disdain for the scriptwriters of Zhongjing Media & Film Department, regardless of politeness.

The moment they saw this script, even the two esteemed writers were stunned and promptly dropped their condescending attitudes.

The script merely needed some finishing touches, a little embellishment! For them to work on it was a significant underutilization of their talents!

The problem was, this job wouldn't show their abilities—if they ended up without any accomplishments here, how would they face their return!

For the first time, the group was hit with a feeling of professional crisis!

Under the pressure of this feeling and after learning that the script came from Wenqing, who also held dual master's degrees from Beiyang, the two revered writers became exceedingly cautious and even began to tolerate some of Wenqing's arrogant remarks.

Wenqing had changed quite a bit by now; in the past, he definitely wouldn't have allowed others to criticize his scripts.

Now, at least, he was willing to listen to advice...

"How is it going, everyone? Are you getting along well?"

As both parties were discussing the plot, the door opened and Bai Xiaosheng walked in with a smile on his face.

The two scriptwriters watched as Wenqing instantly shed his arrogance and was extremely attentive to Bai Xiaosheng, his attitude toward them changing in an instant.

"This Mr. Bai is impressive! Even a person like that is tamed and obedient!"

Everyone was astonished.

During the meeting, Bai Xiaosheng listened for a while and felt that with him there, everyone seemed a bit constrained.

He smiled, stood up, and was about to leave.

At that moment, Gao Dazhi arrived with Yang Qian'er.

In the end, Yang Qian'er had accepted Bai Xiaosheng's advice and came to give it a try. When Gao Dazhi learned it was Bai Xiaosheng's suggestion, he did not dare to neglect it.

After a brief assessment, he was immediately amazed to find that Yang Qian'er was simply perfect for the role!

Gao Dazhi excitedly brought her over for Wenqing and the others to see.

Bai Xiaosheng lingered for a moment longer until he saw Wenqing's excited reaction to Yang Qian'er's performance—he was almost dancing with joy—then quietly left.

Another matter was resolved.

"For discovering suitable actors for the annual major production of a wholly-owned subsidiary of the group, add two points," said the voice of Red Lotus, suddenly. "Current total points: deputy general manager level, twenty-seven points; seventy-three points to go before promotion to general manager!"

Underneath his astonishment, Bai Xiaosheng was pleasantly surprised, finally gaining some points.

It seemed that being a qualified leader necessitated the ability to discover and develop talent. However, earning just two or three points at a time for such discoveries was still too slow, and not a sustainable solution...

Bai Xiaosheng waited all afternoon, but still received no news from Ron. Just before closing time, he received a message from Ron.

The message was brief:

"The usual place, I'll be waiting for you!"

The usual place?

Zhongjing's dining street—Liuyun Street, that Spicy Lobster Restaurant!

Bai Xiaosheng remembered.

He immediately packed up his things and asked his driver, Feng, to take him there.

Despite the rush hour, Feng was not at all unhappy about driving; rather, he was eager.

Mr. Bai's new ride, a Maybach S-Class, had been gathering dust in the garage, untouched except for routine checks. Feng had not had a chance to drive it yet, and now he finally could take it for a spin.

However, to Feng's dismay, the place Bai Xiaosheng wanted to go was simply Liuyun Street—so close that the drive was hardly satisfying...

After dropping him off, Bai Xiaosheng told Feng to go back, and only then did the guy seem a bit downcast as he drove the car back to the company.

The usual place. Bai Xiaosheng entered the restaurant and immediately saw Ron sitting in their old spot.

They hadn't been apart very long, but Ron clearly looked haggard, having lost weight all over.

"Bai Xiaosheng!" Ron spotted Bai Xiaosheng and waved excitedly.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled and walked over.

The drink was still Tsingtao beer, and the main dish was naturally a large plate of spicy crawfish.

The two of them, as always, didn't waste words. As soon as the crawfish were served, they began to "peel" them. The spicy and delicious crawfish, paired with the cold beer, went down with such comfort.

No talking, no thinking. Just eating, just drinking.

As they ate and drank, half a basin of crawfish was gone.

Their bellies round and full.

Ron stripped off his plastic gloves and poured a beer for both Bai Xiaosheng and himself.

"Come on, Bai Xiaosheng, let's drink heartily!" Ron shouted in the noisy lobster restaurant.

"To celebrate my bankruptcy!"

Chapter 348 Man Can Cry_1

Ron downed the entire glass of ice-cold beer in one go, filled it, downed it again, filled it again, and downed it once more.

Sheng watched him silently, watching him finish an entire bottle of beer.

Ron stopped, smiled at Sheng, "What's wrong, why aren't you drinking!"

"Drink up!" Ron said with a smile.

His eyes seemed to be smiling, yet they were filled with immense sadness, sadness that seemed frozen in his gaze, frozen in his heart.

This man does not cry!

Sheng sighed softly.

He thought of himself from years ago, thought of Zhengdong Province from years ago.

Two stubborn mules, resisting everything, firmly believing that men should not shed tears lightly, the world doesn't believe in tears.

But repression needs to be released!

"I knew about Kaisen's incident yesterday," Sheng said calmly. "Yesterday, I also met with Kevin, the president of Kelson."

Ron nodded woodenly.

"That bastard, must be laughing at me!"

Ron chuckled.

"So many years have passed in a blink..."

Ron's voice was a bit hoarse as he talked about those years, his team, his Kaisen, about their struggle against Kelson.

"Just like that, defeated..." In the end, Ron let out a long sigh.

Sheng looked out the window, his gaze distant.

"Ron, let me tell you a story," Sheng began, recounting his past with Zhengdong Province without naming names.

At first, Ron treated it as just a story, but as Sheng continued, Ron listened intently, unable to help but clench his fists.

Those two people carried infamy, carried humiliation, lived stubbornly, until one day, they took back their dignity, took back everything!

Compared to the people in the story, what was Ron's failure?

"There's a type of man who, when faced with hardships and injustices of fate, becomes like a wounded wolf, silently licking his wounds in a corner, needing no pity, no comfort! I used to respect such people! But after seeing, after experiencing, after reflecting, I want to tell them. Crying is not a sign of weakness! True men are not afraid of crying, vent it out, wipe your tears, and if need be, start over from scratch!"

Sheng looked at Ron.

"In this story, one of the people is you, right? And the other one, your friend!" Ron looked at Sheng and said.

His eyes were filled with admiration.

"Correct!" Sheng calmly met Ron's gaze and said, "It was us!"

Sheng finished speaking and smiled.

"Back then, our dreams were shattered, our dignity was trampled; we practically had no future! Worse than you, wouldn't you say?"

"Ron, if your dream can be shattered so easily, then it isn't a dream, it's just an illusion! A person's dream cannot be taken away!"

Sheng spoke passionately, "Get it straight, your illusion and your dream! What you want is to lead your own team, help the world's greatest companies, and reach the summit of the industry! Not just a mere Kaisen!"

Sheng's strong words were like a wake-up call.

Ron stared at him, dumbfounded.

Sheng's words were like an ice pick, shattering the ice that had clouded his heart and letting a ray of sunlight through.

Ron's lips trembled, his eyes beginning to blur.

This big man, the man who had never let the tears fall, at first sobbed, then whimpered, and finally, he started to cry wailing.

He didn't care about the many pairs of eyes watching him, as he cried his heart out.

Bai Xiaosheng didn't comfort him. Sometimes, crying is the best release, it's alright to cry, for only through tears can one wipe away sorrow and continue on their journey.

Bai Xiaosheng began to hum softly. It was their favorite song, his and Zheng Pangzi's.

"Yesterday's glories have become distant memories, having toiled through half a life's hardship, tonight I walk once again into the storm..."

"I cannot drift aimlessly, for the sake of my dearly loved kin, no matter the bitterness or difficulty, I must stay strong, if only for those expectant eyes..."

"As long as the heart is willing, the dream persists, between heaven and earth there still exists true love, view success and failure in life with bravado, it's just about starting over!"

...

Tears blurred Ron's vision as he couldn't help but hum along to the song with Bai Xiaosheng, the lyrics shaking him to his core!

As long as you don't give up, dreams can never be defeated!

Bai Xiaosheng finished the song.

Ron's face was streaked with tears, but he looked at Bai Xiaosheng with sparkling eyes.

The man stood tall, his face once again filled with confidence.

"Now, how do you feel?" Bai Xiaosheng asked with a smile.

"Starting over from scratch isn't so bad!" Ron exclaimed.

No one had ever made him cry, no one had ever told him,

It's okay to start over after crying!

After the emotional release, Ron was reborn!

His gaze at Bai Xiaosheng was filled with immense gratitude!

"That's right, you are fully capable of starting over!" Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile, "You have the best business consulting team in all of Europe, your dream is to make this team world-renowned, to push the company it belongs to the pinnacle of the industry! Your dream has always been in your hands!"

Bai Xiaosheng's words made Ron nod vigorously.

"Until today, I had been dwelling on Kaisen's demise, even harboring resentment towards Kelson. But in truth, I was wrong, I merely projected all my expectations on it, so much so that I confused expectations with dreams. Now, I see clearly, what troubled me were just my delusions!"

Ron took a deep breath out, gave Bai Xiaosheng a smile, "Now, I even find myself somewhat amusing. Kelson, they just did what they had to do. If it's competition, of course, you go all out and use every means to beat your opponent, they didn't do anything wrong!"

Ron's realization showed he had truly untangled the knots in his heart.

"Yesterday, Kelson's Kevin wanted to persuade you through me," Bai Xiaosheng said earnestly, "he has his eyes on your team. Would you join Kelson? In Europe, in the media industry, they are nearly the top company."

Ron listened to Bai Xiaosheng, then calmly shook his head.

"I won't bring my team to join them! Don't get me wrong, I don't hate Kelson now, I just understand them. Their President Kevin isn't good at listening to advice, is often dictatorial, and their business consulting team is pretty much just for show. Such a company is not right for my team! We desire a company with room for growth that welcomes advice!"

Bai Xiaosheng laughed, "Then have you considered joining a company from my country?"

Bai Xiaosheng had only asked, but Ron nodded emphatically, "Yes!"

Bai Xiaosheng nodded, unable to help but think of Chen Jiuzheng's expectations.

But compared to Chen Jiuzheng, he preferred Ron Team to join Zhongjing Media!

Because that Chen Jiuzheng, he also had an overbearing, dictatorial presence, similar to Kevin perhaps.

Bai Xiaosheng was about to lay out the two options of Chen Jiuzheng and Zhongjing Media for Ron to decide when he heard Red Lotus's voice in his mind.

"Vice General Manager level task triggered!"

Chapter 349 New Mission Released_1

At the sound of the prompt, Bai Xiaosheng was stunned.

He had never expected that the long-awaited system task would be triggered under such circumstances, and it was related to Ron.

The voice of Red Lotus echoed frequently in Bai Xiaosheng's mind.

"European top business consultant team discovered—Ron Team is now looking for a suitable master."

"Task objective: Guide the Ron Team into the corporation. Task score ranges from fifteen to twenty points!"

"Special notice: After the Ron Team joins the corporation, the higher the department and direct superior's job level they belong to, the higher score the host will receive!"

Bai Xiaosheng was amazed for a moment, then he understood.

The system also valued Ron's team and wanted to pull this team into the corporation.

The scores this time looked astonishing!

Up to twenty points!

To know, since Bai Xiaosheng came to Zhongjing Media, up to now, after going through so many events, dealing with numerous issues, only today had he reached twenty-seven points!

Leveling up had seemed an eternity away, making him feel depressed all day!

Now, a major task had arrived!

"For the public and private interest, for emotional and rational reasons, for me, Bai Xiaosheng, I must secure the Ron Team!" Bai Xiaosheng's spirits lifted as he mulled over every sentence of the system task again.

After all, the score was a range, and he wanted the highest score!

According to the system's notice, after the Ron Team joins the corporation, the higher the department and the direct superior's job level, the higher the score he would obtain!

From this point of view, currently, Chen Jiuzheng held the highest position. If he could have the Ron Team directly report to Chen Jiuzheng, he would score the most points!

However, the fear was that if Chen Jiuzheng took in the team, he might not manage them directly but instead delegate them to some company, in which case the score would actually be lower!

Compared with Chen Jiuzheng, Zhongjing Media might seem lower in level, but after all, it was directly under the group, and perhaps letting the Ron Team into Zhongjing Media would be the most secure way to attain points.

"Red Lotus, can you give me a score assessment table?" Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but wish.

"No!" Red Lotus, as always, was straightforward and directly ended Bai Xiaosheng's vain hope.

Ron was watching Bai Xiaosheng.

In his view, Bai Xiaosheng had only pondered for a moment, unaware that in this short time, Bai Xiaosheng had mused quite a lot.

Looking up, Bai Xiaosheng saw Ron's expectant gaze, and his internal calculations stopped.

It's natural for people to think selfishly when excited. But what makes us human is not just desire, but also rationality.

Since Bai Xiaosheng considered Ron a friend, he didn't want to be overly selfish. From a rational standpoint, the development space at Chen Jiuzheng's side was even larger, offering the most help to the growth and development of Ron's team!

Of course, that also came with risks!

Chen Jiuzheng could be like Kevin, stubborn and self-willed. If things went well with him, that's fine, but if opinions clashed, he could become autocratic and sideline the team, in which case Ron's team would be cast into a pit of fire.

Actually, Zhongjing Media also had its merits, possessing advantages that Chen Jiuzheng's side did not have.

After weighing the options, Bai Xiaosheng decided to spell out the pros and cons and ask for Ron's opinion, respecting his choice.

"Ron, I'm going to give you two suggestions now, and whatever decision you make, I'll support it!"

Bai Xiaosheng immediately outlined the recruitment offer from Chen Jiuzheng and the option of choosing Zhongjing Media, carefully analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of both sides with Ron.

Having said that, Bai Xiaosheng calmly looked at him.

Ron thought for a moment before resolutely saying to Bai Xiaosheng, "I choose Zhongjing Media!"

"Is this your final choice?" Bai Xiaosheng asked.

Truth be told, Bai Xiaosheng was somewhat pleased with Ron's choice.

"My team, in recent years, has been more inclined towards the media sector. Of course, we are also involved in other business fields. It's just that, at this stage, we've built a global database in the media sector which can be said to be the most comprehensive in the industry. It would be very unfortunate to waste this resource! Furthermore, as you've mentioned, Zhongjing Media is an integration of many small companies, with a wide scope of departments and business segments. My team can exert our strongest advantages while exploring and delving into other business sectors. Zhongjing Media is more suitable for us!"

"Moreover!"

Ron looked earnestly at Bai Xiaosheng and said, "Bai Xiaosheng, I value your abilities and character! If I and my team must work under someone else's leadership, I hope it's you!"

Ron's words deeply touched Bai Xiaosheng.

It was an incredibly sincere trust!

Looking at the chubby man before him reminded Bai Xiaosheng of Zhengdong Province, of Lu Nan, and of those who had once trusted him!

This profound trust elicited overwhelming emotion.

Bai Xiaosheng didn't waste words, he grabbed a bottle of cold beer, opened it, and poured a full glass for both Ron and himself.

"Ron, rest assured, I will find the best shelter for you and your team, allowing you to charge full force on the path to achieving your dreams. If we have the good fortune of becoming partners, I promise, I will not let a tragedy like Kaisen's happen again! I will obliterate all of your despicable enemies for you!"

"Here's to us!" Bai Xiaosheng raised his glass.

"Cheers!"

Ron's eyes brimmed with emotion, but he said no more, and once again downed the cold beer in one gulp.

The feelings of men are not found in words.

Everything lies within the drink.

...

And so, the two of them ate and drank until late into the night.

In the end, thoroughly content, they went their separate ways.

Once back at his place, Bai Xiaosheng collapsed onto his bed, staring blankly at the ceiling light.

It was easy to promise Ron, but there was a gap between promising and delivering, and it was not easy.

Bai Xiaosheng sorted through all the information related to Ron Team in his mind.

Chen Jiuzheng, as the total head of the Anjiang Province industry under the group, had set his sights on Zhongjing Media and coveted Ron Team, wanting to take them for his own.

Chen Changqing was the "inside man", and because of Chen Jiuzheng, he would not wish for Ron Team to enter Zhongjing Media and would certainly obstruct them.

Kelson's Kevin, looking to negotiate a partnership with Zhongjing Media and wanting Ron Team, would also definitely prevent Ron Team from entering Zhongjing Media.

As for Song Changkong, being good at holding his ground but lacking courage, it would be very difficult to smoothly welcome Ron and his team under pressure from various sides.

"Counting myself, that's four parties; enough for a table of mahjong," Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but mock himself. "And it seems my situation is the least optimistic! They all have points of interest that could unite them; it appears I've become isolated. But since I've promised Ron, and with the system's points at stake, no one can stop me from winning this hand!"

"Ron Team, I've set my sights on you!" Bai Xiaosheng muttered fiercely to himself.

After being fierce, his eyes craftily shifted, and he sneered, "These people may look like they can form an alliance, but they're even looser than Kaisen, fragile as a house of cards! If they want to fight with me, then I'll be a worthy opponent!"

"Let's see who gets to laugh last!"

Chapter 350 Message Incoming!_1

Another new day has begun.

Early in the morning, Song Changkong, as usual, was holding a hot cup of milk, sitting on his spacious and comfortable sofa chair, ready to face the work of the new day.

Today, his mood was quite good.

In the past few days, the signing matter with Shang Wanwan had finally settled, and Shang Wanwan signed according to the original terms, without asking for any additional conditions, saving the company a significant amount of investment!

This was no small feat!

When reporting the year-end performance to the group, higher profits and lower expenses would surely add a lot of luster to his, Song Changkong's, personal evaluation!

Thinking over, Song Changkong had already been awarded the title of Excellent General Manager for four consecutive years. Another year, and it would be five years in a full sweep. By convention, he should be promoted to a higher position and move up by a notch or half.

Besides, the company's new media department and film and television department had recently shown strong performance, cooperating with each other, promoting and creating momentum, and had unexpectedly achieved an effect where one plus one was greater than two, significantly boosting the company's overall reputation and online ranking.

He believed that the group would take notice!

The good days for him, Song Changkong, were finally coming!

Thinking of these, Song Changkong felt genuinely happy from the bottom of his heart.

However, amidst the happiness, Song Changkong's heart was also feeling uncomfortable, and the source of this discomfort was precisely the person who brought about these good trends—Bai Xiaosheng!

This restless person was far more troublesome than Chen Changqing!

Now, whenever Song Changkong mentioned him, he felt a bit irritated.

Song Changkong, with his "keep oneself clean" leadership style, loved performance but hated turmoil.

Especially someone like Bai Xiaosheng, who, when he decided to create a mess, respected no one.

The last time, Bai Xiaosheng had even publicly cornered him outside his department and forced him to come to him.

Even though afterwards, Song Changkong had acted with great magnanimity, in fact, this incident stuck in his throat like a fishbone, and he had always found it hard to swallow this affront.

But after all, Bai Xiaosheng was the deputy general manager sent down by the group, so he couldn't simply get rid of him.

Unable to kick him out, yet troubled upon provoking him, Song Changkong now felt like a dog biting a hedgehog, unable to find a place to start, and could only endure bitterly.

After being deeply frustrated for several days, Song Changkong was finally in a not-too-bad mood today, savoring his hot milk beautifully, as if he were sipping tea.

After only the second sip.

The door to his office was suddenly slammed open.

Song Changkong feared such sudden shocks; thus he had established a rule that one must knock five times. This was known by everyone in the company, and who would dare to make such a low-level mistake before him, the General Manager!

Song Changkong was both shocked and furious. As he looked down, he noticed that due to the tremor just now, the milk in his cup had spilled, with drops landing in the middle of his trousers, particularly conspicuous.

"My GOD!"

Song Changkong, always a gentleman, couldn't help but let out an expletive. When he looked up, he saw it was actually his assistant.

This person, who should understand the rules best, had forgotten the very basic ones?!

Song Changkong's anger rose rapidly, almost exploding out of the top of his head.

His assistant, completely unaware, rushed over and anxiously handed a document to Song Changkong.

"Mr. Song, there's new news from Europe... Kaisen, has gone bankrupt!"

As Song Changkong's close assistant, he knew all too well what this meant!

The strategic partner they had painstakingly sought out, after months of marathon negotiations, continuously reported to the group, and had finally gotten the group's approval, had gone bankrupt just one month after officially signing...

This was a huge slap in the face!

This was telling the group that they were all a bunch of blind pigs!

If Song Changkong were to be disposed of by the group because of this, as his assistant, he'd have to go back to "starting from scratch".

In his fear, Song Changkong's assistant didn't care about the rules anymore and just rushed in.

Song Changkong's seething anger, like a bucket of ice water poured over his head, was instantly extinguished.

He stood there in a daze, stupefied, staring at his assistant and then at the document on the desk.

The news was too shocking.

Even though Song Changkong usually prided himself on being "unfazed even if Mount Tai were to collapse before him," at that moment, his brain short-circuited.

"Kaisen, Kaisen has gone bankrupt!"

Song Changkong struggled to speak as he quickly flipped through the document, his fingers trembling slightly.

"Yes, just received the news, absolutely true, Kaisen has gone bankrupt! The legal proceedings are underway!" Song Changkong's assistant said with a mournful face.

Song Changkong's features scrunched together, and his eyebrows knotted in worry as he shakily lifted a hand to rub his forehead, failing to smooth out the panic and anxiety on his face.

He was more aware than the assistant of the consequences of this event!

Although it wouldn't lead to a job loss, it could very well cause his annual personal evaluation to plummet, bidding farewell to any chance of being named Manager of the Year!

Five consecutive years of promotions, gone!

Just like that... His painstakingly built brilliant career path, was it all gone?

"Knock, knock, knock..."

Five methodical knocks on the door suddenly sounded.

Song Changkong blankly looked up.

At this time, who would still be knocking so properly!

Chen Changqing appeared calm as he stood at the door, next to him a smartly dressed foreigner with gold-rimmed glasses, holding a briefcase, looking every bit the gentleman.

"Chen..." Song Changkong watched him in confusion.

Chen Changqing walked over with the foreigner.

"Mr. Song, I've also received the news about Kaisen's bankruptcy," Chen Changqing said calmly, pointing to the foreigner beside him, "This gentleman here is William, the special representative from Kelson Company."

Kelson? Which Kelson?

The one from Europe, Kaisen's rival?!

Song Changkong stared, startled for a moment, then became animated.

He remembered clearly what the document on the table stated: Kaisen was insolvent, and Kelson was acquiring a substantial portion of Kaisen's assets and business.

And now, a special representative from Kelson was here...

"Hello, Mr. Song," William greeted in English, extending his hand.

"Hello," Song Changkong, being proficient in English, didn't need a translator.

He looked between Chen Changqing and William, his gaze full of questions.

"Mr. William," Chen Changqing made a welcoming gesture, indicating for William to speak.

William nodded with a polite smile and said to Song Changkong, "Honorary Mr. Song Changkong, on behalf of Kelson Company, I would like to extend a proposal to you. Kelson wishes to replace Kaisen and continue the partnership with Zhongjing Media!"

Kelson wants to continue the collaboration with Zhongjing Media!

Song Changkong looked at William in disbelief.

It was as if a brilliant burst of sunshine had broken through a gloomy sky!

The dramatic ups and downs in life, the joys and sorrows, all came too swiftly!

Song Changkong felt dizzy.

Luckily, his years of being a general manager weren't for naught, he possessed significant composure.

Song Changkong calmed himself down and quickly turned around, telling his assistant, "You, go inform Mr. Bai Xiaosheng immediately. We need to call a top-level meeting at Zhongjing Media!"

Song Changkong had made up his mind.

To draft an immediate and proper response to Kaisen's bankruptcy and Kelson's proposal for cooperation, and report to the group that very day!

A blessing in disguise! This efficiency could earn Song Changkong some points!

Song Changkong was excited.

However, amidst his excitement, he thought of Bai Xiaosheng, that thorn in his side, who was rumored to have a good relationship with Ron from Kaisen. Bai might make a fuss about cooperating with Kelson...

"He wouldn't dare!"

Song Changkong's eyes hardened, as he secretly vowed to be ruthless.