

Two Trillion 61

Chapter 61 I'm Also a Top Student_1 "Ask whatever question you like.

Given that you're going to provide me with a week's worth of breakfast, I can afford to give you one more question!" Sheng said with utmost confidence.

Arrogant!

Xuelian couldn't help but smile with pursed lips.

Whether Sheng could solve the problem was not the issue at the moment.

Xuelian, with her tired brain, suddenly found great interest in watching Sheng flounder.

"Don't be too sure of yourself.

I used to be a top student.

If you answer incorrectly or perhaps bluff, I'll see through it in an instant!

Don't think you can deceive me," Xuelian said with a charming smile and turned to enter the house.

When she came back out, she held paper and pen in her hand and sat down beside a small wooden table on the balcony, doodling and writing.

Sheng was in no hurry, he just watched her smilingly.

With focused expression on Xuelian's delicate face, she exuded a different kind of charm.

A strand of her black waterfall-like hair unintentionally slid down, and she swept it behind her ear with a fair, small hand—a simple motion, yet disarmingly enchanting.

Suddenly, Sheng felt that appreciating a beautiful woman was truly a pleasure.

If only he had a can of beer, but alas, he only had a bag of milk.

Sheng chose milk as his drink, sipping milk as he admired the beauty.

Before long, Xuelian stood up, waving the paper in her hand and smiled at Sheng.

“If you can solve it, I’ll personally make breakfast and deliver it to you for a week!

If you can’t, hmph...”

“If I can’t make it, I’ll make breakfast for you for a week,” Sheng joked playfully.

But that was unlikely.

Because I, have already won.

Sheng took the pen and paper from across the balcony.

The paper had half a page of text—graceful handwriting, very beautiful.

But it wasn’t poetry; instead, it was filled with an assortment of letters, numbers, and formulas.

Sheng glanced over it.

“Red Lotus, search this problem for me!”

Xuelian would never fabricate something out of thin air; as long as this was an existing problem, there would be records of it online.

Ordinary people might not be able to find it, but Red Lotus could!

Sheng’s thinking was correct.

“Master, this is the 2016 probability theory and mathematical statistics exam question for the management class in a certain city in the central region.

Most published materials omit the answers.

There are detailed solutions in the electronic teaching plans of three universities.

Shall I retrieve all of them?” Red Lotus inquired.

“Give me the answers, all of them,” Sheng said as he glanced at Xuelian and smiled.

This week’s breakfast wasn’t going to be a freebie; it needed a dash of “real substance”.

Xuelian saw Sheng take the paper and glance over it just once, smile at her, then start to write down the answer quickly while leaning over the balcony railing.

Is this for real?

Surprised and somewhat expectant, Xuelian wondered.

In a few minutes, Sheng finished the front side, flipped the paper over, and continued writing on the back until the whole sheet was completely filled.

Then he smiled, handed the paper and pen back to Xuelian.

“Tomorrow morning, I want fried eggs, bread, and coffee for breakfast.

No runny yolk for the eggs, go easy on the salt, and add more milk to the coffee,” Sheng instructed, and then turned to go back inside.

Ha!

He’s already making requests for breakfast!

Xuelian hmphe, looking at the answer Sheng provided.

Such ugly handwriting!

That was Xuelian’s first reaction, but as she continued to read, her eyes grew wide with amazement.

Actually, Xuelian was just stuck in her thinking; with a little hint, she could solve it too!

Looking at Sheng’s detailed answers, Xuelian needed only a little deduction to know—they were absolutely correct!

Could he really be that brilliant?

Xuelian finished reading the front side, where all the answers were complete.

What had Sheng written on the back?

Wei Xuelian flipped through the paper with a puzzled look and quickly scanned it.

Her eyes slowly widened, disbelief shining in them.

On the back of the paper, Bai Xiaosheng had added two more solutions!

Wei Xuelian stared dumbfounded, then suddenly looked up and called out to Bai Xiaosheng, "Hey, why don't you come over here and substitute for us!

It's such a waste for you not to do training!"

What's there to waste.

Bai Xiaosheng was unbelievably smug inside the room, laughing quite conceitedly.

The next day, as soon as Bai Xiaosheng got out of bed, his door was knocked on.

Wei Xuelian came over as promised with breakfast, toast, low-salt fully-cooked fried eggs, and a coffee with extra milk.

The presentation was quite appealing!

"Next time you have any problems, just come to me!" Bai Xiaosheng said with a beaming smile, "I was once a top student too."

Wei Xuelian gave him a look and turned away.

With a breakfast provided by a beautiful woman, Bai Xiaosheng, with a full belly, felt full of energy, and even the air on his way to work seemed fresher.

Upon arriving at the department, Wang, Song, and Yezi were already there early, just without work assignments yet.

In fact, after two days of hard work, the content of that book was almost seven-eighths done, with less than one-sixth of the workload remaining; and besides tomorrow's deadline, they had a whole day left today.

"We've got plenty of time, so let's not go crazy like yesterday and wear ourselves out, otherwise, I'd end up being a one-man army.

Then, all the work would be mine alone," Bai Xiaosheng joked.

"Don't worry, this morning, our main job is to fine-tune what we did yesterday.

We really have plenty of time, so no need to rush.

In the afternoon, we'll wrap up the book and even finish the fold-outs." Wang said with a smile, having planned it out already.

Yezi and Song looked relaxed as well, nodding in agreement.

Actually, they had just been caught off guard yesterday by Li Mingtong's shady tactics, rushing the work in a panic, but fortunately, no one fell ill or collapsed from exhaustion.

"I'll treat you to lunch, order whatever you guys want," Bai Xiaosheng said very generously with a wave of his hand.

He still had a million in his account, untouched.

"Great!" Wang and the others cheered.

Bai Xiaosheng was a considerate leader, and they were happy about that.

“As for the editing of the final draft, I’ve already finished that part.

Have a look and see if there’s anything you’d like to add,” Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile, passing a USB drive to Wang.

“You’ve finished it again!” Wang and the others’ smiles froze on their faces, looking at Bai Xiaosheng in disbelief.

The night before last, Bai Xiaosheng had proofread and corrected one-sixth of the final draft, which had already amazed them.

Yesterday’s work was about half of an entire book, three times the amount!

Had Bai Xiaosheng done it all by himself late last night?

“Are you even human?” Song couldn’t help but swallow hard.

“What kind of thing is that to say!” Yezi scolded Song with a look, but after thinking it over, and over again, she eventually mumbled vaguely, “This really doesn’t seem like something a human could do!”

Bai Xiaosheng was speechless for a moment.

He really didn’t know if they were praising him or cursing him.

“Come on, everyone take a look,” Wang couldn’t wait any longer, copying the files into the computer and calling Yezi and Song over with their heads huddled together to look.

“This detail has improved nicely, the entire level has been raised!”

“Over here, I was unsure about this part yesterday, thought it over all night and still wasn’t satisfied, but this is a good change!”

“Impressive, why didn’t I think of that!”

Wang and the others were full of praise.

Outside the promotion department, Li Mingtong was about to step in when he suddenly stopped and listened closely.

“This is great, we’re definitely going to win!”

A single sentence from inside made Li Mingtong shiver!

Chapter 62 Please Leave!_1 Li Mingtong came to the promotion department for an inspection, and incidentally, to nitpick and cause some trouble, disrupting the work progress here.

The promotional work had always been under Li Mingtong’s control, so he had the authority to do this.

Additionally, Li Mingtong wanted to see the “results” of the meeting he had held yesterday.

Until the meeting ended last night, Bai Xiaosheng had remained calm and composed, which really irked Li Mingtong.

In Li Mingtong’s opinion, Bai Xiaosheng must have been pretending, putting on a brave front.

Behind closed doors, he probably was at his wit’s end, likely having worked overtime all night long.

Li Mingtong eagerly anticipated seeing a weary and distraught Bai Xiaosheng.

Only then would he feel a sense of satisfaction!

Unfortunately for Li Mingtong, just as he arrived at the entrance of the promotion department, he overheard news that the work was about to be completed, shocking him.

Li Mingtong's brow instantly furrowed into a knot, and he coughed loudly before entering.

When Bai Xiaosheng, Wang, and others saw it was him, they were all taken aback.

Why was he here so early?

"Good morning, Mr.

Li."

"Good morning, Mr.

Li."

Out of politeness, everyone greeted Li Mingtong.

"Mr.

Li, coming here so early, you're calling me for a meeting?

And you even came in person," Bai Xiaosheng said with a mocking smile.

In fact, Bai Xiaosheng was in a good mood today; Li Mingtong's aggressive meeting strategy hadn't affected him at all, nor had he suffered any loss.

It was Li Mingtong himself who had talked too much; now his voice was hoarse.

An aggressive meeting strategy was just a foolish move that hurt the enemy a thousand and oneself eight hundred.

Li Mingtong had realized this as well.

His throat was killing him now.

What was even worse, his supervisors had been complaining since last night.

If the meetings continued like this, Bai Xiaosheng wouldn't be the one to fall; they would be the ones to lose their footing first.

"The matter of the meeting...

let's, let's not rush into that," Li Mingtong said with a raspy voice, looking rather unwell, "I came to see the progress of your work, how far you've gotten, and whether the draft could be successfully submitted tomorrow!"

Bai Xiaosheng's gaze flashed slightly as he exchanged looks with Wang.

So he was here to probe the reality of the situation!

"Then thank you for your concern, Mr.

Li," Bai Xiaosheng responded with a forced smile, "We're not done yet."

“But I heard from outside the door that there was laughter and talk inside; I suppose your results are quite impressive.

Come on, show me,” Li Mingtong said.

Li Mingtong glanced at Wang’s computer, which Wang had shut off the moment he came in.

“Since Mr.

Li wants to see, of course, you can.

Show Mr.

Li,” Bai Xiaosheng said to Wang.

Having been in the workforce for many years, Wang knew what to do without any hints from Bai Xiaosheng.

Wang opened the work that was completed the day before yesterday—the one-sixth finished draft.

Li Mingtong pushed Wang away, sat down, and after looking at two pages, his expression changed.

Li Mingtong, who ordinarily reveled in power and was undeniably ruthless, did indeed have capabilities, at least a strong appreciation ability, otherwise Wang Ye wouldn’t have taken notice of him.

Now, the high quality of this work was beyond Li Mingtong’s expectation!

“Did you guys really do this!” Li Mingtong asked in a hoarse voice, unable to hide his amazement.

He grabbed the mouse, zooming in on details in some places, and zooming out to see the coherent style in others.

It was beautiful, simply flawless!

Li Mingtong felt a surge of shock.

The promotion department had never produced work of such quality before; could Bai Xiaosheng really be so formidable as to make the entire team perform extraordinarily well?!

How did he do it!

“Not bad, Mr.

Li, this took us quite an effort to accomplish,” Yezi said, somewhat proud as she noticed Li Mingtong’s surprised expression.

Li Mingtong remained silent, then suddenly spoke up, “That’s it?!”

The work indeed had heart put into it, but it must have taken a lot of time.

Quality enough, but not enough quantity!

If this was really all they had, Li Mingtong could rest a bit easier, knowing there was no way the Promotion Department could finish in the remaining time.

What he truly feared was that what he saw was only part of it!

A sly flicker passed through the depths of Li Mingtong’s eyes.

There was definitely no way to get anything out of Bai Xiaosheng and Wang!

But others...

Stirring them up a bit might yield some unexpected findings!

“What you’ve done is so-so, just passable!

Moreover, the progress is too slow!”

Li Mingtong’s face showed dissatisfaction, his brows knitted together as he tilted his head to look at one, then another.

“I gave you all this time and the freedom to improvise without requiring constant updates.

And this is all you come up with!

Bai Xiaosheng, great job as the head of promotion, zoning out in meetings, slack in your work!

You’ve even led the entire department to be loose and lax.

I’m asking you, do you even understand what work efficiency means!”

Turning black into white, talking nonsense.

Li Mingtong’s words grew increasingly unpleasant, pushing the limits of sarcasm without resorting to profanity.

In the end, even Wang couldn’t help but frown secretly, finding it hard to listen any further.

Li Mingtong noted everyone's expressions and couldn't help but sneer inwardly.

"Enough!" The always honest and straightforward Yezi finally exploded.

The young girl was brimming with fury, knocking away the hand Li Mingtong had pointed at her nose, her face frosty.

"Mr.

Li, how do you know that this is all we've done?

Perhaps we just didn't want to show you!

It's not even the deadline yet, what right do you have to accuse us!" she demanded.

Li Mingtong's gaze flickered.

Caught out!

Wang sighed silently to himself.

Yezi was still too green.

Bai Xiaosheng was expressionless; he'd had enough too.

He kept things from Li Mingtong not because he wanted to, but for fear of Li Mingtong pulling some trick.

Bai Xiaosheng knew that Wang and the others were already too tired and didn't want them to endure more trouble and get dragged further into this mess.

But constantly yielding was also dampening everyone's morale.

No more bearing with it!

Bai Xiaosheng didn't stop her, letting Yezi vent her frustration!

"So how much have you completed?" Li Mingtong pressed.

"We're about to finish, are you happy now?" Yezi retorted sharply, her words ringing out, "You keep saying it's for the company.

You gave us this nearly impossible task, clearly taking personal revenge under the guise of official business.

Now you come to blame us.

Where do you get off with all this reasoning!

How can you expect to win people's support like this!"

Her accusations gradually darkened Li Mingtong's face.

He had baited the information out of her.

But to be lectured publicly by a bratty girl was a humiliation to him as an assistant project manager.

“Shut your mouth, who are you talking to!” Li Mingtong glared, his voice hoarse as he shouted, “You little brat, whose hair has yet to grow in, how dare you speak to me like that!

I’ll fire you, believe it or not!”

Yezi stubbornly wanted to curse back, but Bai Xiaosheng pulled her aside.

Bai Xiaosheng stepped in front of Yezi, looking at Li Mingtong expressionlessly.

“Assistant Manager Li Mingtong, you don’t have the authority to fire anyone!

Now, please don’t interrupt our normal work.”

Bai Xiaosheng pointed at the door, his face hardening.

“If you need to discuss something, find me alone.

If not, please leave!”

Chapter 63: Serious Punishment_1 “How dare you speak to me like this, don’t forget, I am your superior!” Li Mingtong’s hands trembled with rage from Bai Xiaosheng’s words.

In front of everyone, Bai Xiaosheng had told him to leave!

Although he didn’t use the word “get out,” Li Mingtong felt it was almost the same!

“Don’t make me say it a second time!”

Bai Xiaosheng looked at Li Mingtong with a serious expression, his eyes cold and harsh, overflowing with the threat.

Li Mingtong's face turned green as he looked towards Wang and the others.

Their expressions were indifferent, their eyes hostile.

"You just wait, all of you just wait!" Li Mingtong pointed at them as he fled in panic.

As he left, he stumbled, nearly taking a nasty fall.

At that time, the corridor was busy with people coming and going, and many witnessed Li Mingtong's utterly embarrassed spectacle.

The employees were all dumbfounded.

Everyone knew that Li Mingtong did not get along with the new marketing director.

Now, what on earth had Bai Xiaosheng done to make Vice Manager Li so disheveled!

Curious glances from all around made Li Mingtong's anger surge; his fierce glare swept over them as if ready to devour them.

People around him quickly steered well clear.

The more Li Mingtong thought about it, the more aggrieved he felt, his anger rising swiftly.

He was the deputy manager of the Treles project, yet he'd been publicly ousted by a subordinate—the humiliation was unbearable!

Li Mingtong's face was livid with rage as he stormed into Chen Daya's office.

Bai Xiaosheng had said he didn't have the authority to fire him, eh?

Well, he'd go find someone who did.

Back in the marketing department, the moment of Bai Xiaosheng's domineering display made Yezi and Song unable to resist applauding.

It felt awesome, especially the moment Li Mingtong nearly fell, which was incredibly satisfying!

"The leader is dominant, Brother Bai is powerful!" Yezi cheered, wishing she could embrace Bai Xiaosheng.

Unusually, this time even Wang let out a relieved sigh.

Being older, he had more concerns and hadn't felt this relieved in a long time.

"Still, Sheng, you should be careful.

Watch out for any dirty tricks from Li Mingtong!" Wang warned.

"Don't worry, Li Mingtong is no match for our manager Bai!" Yezi looked down on Li Mingtong and admired Bai Xiaosheng incredibly.

Bai Xiaosheng just smiled faintly.

He never took Li Mingtong seriously.

A mere project vice manager...

He, Bai Xiaosheng, was the future president of Zhenbei Group!

If it weren't for the points, would he have allowed Li Mingtong time and again to play tricks with him?

"In any case, don't bother with him.

We'll do our work.

Tomorrow, I'll personally go to Vice Manager Li for the reward.

He won't miss a single penny!" Bai Xiaosheng declared with a wave of his hand.

Everyone laughed and returned to their tasks.

At that moment, in the Treles Square, in the project manager's office.

Li Mingtong sat across from Chen Daya, his eyeballs red, shouting angrily.

"I was just inspecting the work, and now the marketing department wants to revolt!

They almost came to blows with me!

I'm the deputy manager of the Treles project, and I've been threatened by a bunch of employees.

This matter, you must give me an explanation!"

Li Mingtong was clearly losing control, slamming his hand on the table.

The impact made the lid of the teacup jump.

Chen Daya felt the pain in his hand just from watching, but inwardly, he was smug.

You, Li Mingtong, also have your day.

Serves you right!

Chen Daya put on an act of comforting and muddling through; how could he possibly make a move against Bai Xiaosheng?

Li Mingtong wasn't foolish, either.

After venting for a while and regaining some sense, he immediately saw through Chen Daya's perfunctory attitude.

"Mr.

Chen, this matter must be dealt with seriously, and they must be given a hefty punishment!

If subordinates threatening their leaders becomes acceptable, then the project team will descend into chaos.

Today it's me; tomorrow it could be you, Mr.

Chen—it's inevitable!

Think carefully about it!"

Li Mingtong's words carried an unmistakable threat!

Chen Daya frowned and glanced at him.

Li Mingtong's gaze was dark and unflinching.

With one or two loyal managers still in his hand, if it really came down to retaliation, it would be enough to give Chen Daya a headache.

"You're absolutely right; this issue needs to be addressed," Chen Daya stated seriously, "I'll investigate immediately, and if it's true, I'll punish them severely!"

To prevent such incidents from happening again!"

Only after Chen Daya said this did Li Mingtong's expression soften a bit.

"Good, then I'll be waiting.

I hope there will be results today!" Li Mingtong stood up and left.

After sending off Li Mingtong, Chen Daya locked the door and laughed so hard he cried.

Truly satisfying!

Bai Xiaosheng was a talent; it only took a few days to get Wu Qiuyan out, and now Li Mingtong was acting as crazy as a rabid dog, losing his mind.

"If I had known there was such a capable person, I would have asked Mr.

Shang to send him over sooner!" Chen Daya couldn't help but talk to himself.

However, there indeed needed to be some official resolution to this issue!

After thinking for a while, Chen Daya phoned the promotion department to verify the situation with Bai Xiaosheng.

“Vice Manager Li came to complain to you?” Bai Xiaosheng was surprised when he received Chen Daya’s call.

This situation wasn’t quite normal; if Li Mingtong couldn’t suppress them, shouldn’t he have gone to Vice General Manager Wang Ye?

What was he hoping to accomplish by approaching Chen Daya...?

After mulling it over, Bai Xiaosheng had a sudden hunch—could it be that Li Mingtong couldn’t tell Wang Ye, or perhaps Wang Ye forbade him from making a fuss?

That meant Wang Ye might be suspecting his own identity!

Another old fox!

Thinking this way, if it weren’t for the fact that he’d almost sent Li Mingtong’s wife to jail and had a scuffle with him, it was very likely that Vice Manager Li would have truly calmed down.

While contemplating, Bai Xiaosheng briefly explained the recent events to Chen Daya.

After hanging up, Chen Daya thought for a moment and gave a wicked smirk.

“Li Mingtong, oh, you want action, I’ll give you action, but after I’m through, don’t you come to regret it!”

Just before the end of the workday, the receptionist in the HR and administration department took a stack of printed announcements and delivered them to each office.

Those who received the announcement almost had their jaws drop from the shock, and afterwards, their expressions became odd, some couldn't resist chuckling and hid in a corner to laugh.

The announcement concerned the promotion department.

Speaking in the voice of a project manager, Chen Daya harshly criticized the promotion department for their lack of respect for leadership.

During Vice Manager Li's inspection, due to a work dispute, they talked back to the leadership, causing a poor impact—therefore, the project decided to cancel the promotion department's salary increase for the year!

It also stated that this was their first offense, and henceforth, should any department dare to offend again, their manager would be fired outright!

What kind of punishment was this?

Their project's raises were always proposed after the New Year, and this year's had already been applied.

"Cancel the promotion department's salary increase for the year," what was the difference between that and not punishing at all?

This announcement's only use was to broadcast Li Mingtong's embarrassing situation department by department...

and the warning about future offenses was practically a threat aimed at Li Mingtong's faction!

"Chen Daya, you son of a bitch!" After reading it, Li Mingtong's eyes turned red, and he furiously tore the announcement into shreds.

"Bai Xiaosheng..." Li Mingtong's expression was fierce.

“It seems I was too polite to you before; from today on, it’s war between us!”

Chapter 64: How Much Is a Pound of Human Heart_1 Li Mingtong paced back and forth in his office like a crazed hyena, his eyes red with fury.

Now, he truly wanted to get rid of Bai Xiaosheng.

Time and again, this man had tested his limits!

Li Mingtong, who was usually calm and composed, now felt a headache approaching just at the mention of that name.

He had even started to experience mental exhaustion in his sleep.

This couldn’t go on!

The very thought of Bai Xiaosheng flaunting a high-quality final draft of the building brochure in front of him the next day made Li Mingtong’s headache worsen.

But getting rid of him required a reason.

Otherwise, it would be hard to explain to Vice General Manager Wang Ye!

“This time, no matter what, I can’t let Bai Xiaosheng complete his assignment!” Li Mingtong took a deep breath and began to scheme.

Only if Bai Xiaosheng failed to complete his work would he have a reason to deal with him further.

If Bai Xiaosheng managed to do everything well and quickly, then what was there to scheme about?

The problem was that the building brochure was done professionally and beautifully.

Bai Xiaosheng wasn't a fool; he would surely get Chen Daya and others to vouch for him.

Li Mingtong couldn't just dismiss it as rubbish—that wouldn't work.

Perhaps it would be better to approach this from another angle...

Li Mingtong's gaze flashed, and a sinister smile played at the corners of his mouth.

For example, undermining the Marketing Department from within!

Causing discord and betrayal amongst his subordinates, backstabbing one another—these were things Li Mingtong had often done; he was good at it.

This time, if he could make the people around Bai Xiaosheng give him “a stab in the back”...

Li Mingtong trembled slightly with delight at the thought.

At the moment, why were the people in the Marketing Department so obedient to Bai Xiaosheng?

It was because Bai Xiaosheng had promised them benefits!

What benefits could a manager offer!

“Whatever you can afford, I, Li Mingtong, can double!” Li Mingtong scoffed to himself, “I want to see how much a human heart weighs in money!”

“As long as one person can't resist the temptation and gives you a little extra, you won't stand a chance of winning!”

Marketing Department.

Everyone was busy with their duties, working on the final touches.

The remaining one-sixth of the building brochure was almost completed by midmorning.

In the afternoon, a mere trifold leaflet was even less of an issue.

With the workload lightened, Bai Xiaosheng freed up his hands to work on his second plan, which was also wrapping up.

All in all, the day's work was very relaxed.

In the evening, Bai Xiaosheng, punctual as always, urged everyone to leave and didn't let them stay a minute longer.

However, Wang and Song were the last to leave as usual, since they lived close by and weren't in a hurry.

Bai Xiaosheng had no objections to this.

As long as there was no overtime, leaving late was fine.

Wang and Song were about to turn off the lights and leave as they usually did.

As they pushed open the door, Li Mingtong walked in.

"Don't rush off just yet, you two.

I have something to discuss with you,” Li Mingtong said with a smile, looking very affable.

“You want to speak with us?” Wang and Song exchanged a surprised look.

“Indeed, I have a little matter to discuss with you both.” Li Mingtong glanced at Wang and smiled, “Let’s start with Wang.

Come to my office; Song, you wait here for a bit.”

Without another word, Li Mingtong turned and left.

Wang and Song exchanged a glance, feeling that something was off!

“I’ll go check it out,” Wang told Song before following the others.

Song furrowed his eyebrows and pulled up a chair to sit down.

“Could Vice Manager Li be plotting against us?” Song, timid by nature, felt increasingly uneasy the more he thought about it.

He took out his phone, hesitating, but still sent a message.

Project Vice Manager’s office.

Li Mingtong saw Wang enter, gestured for him to sit opposite him, actually rose to his feet, and personally poured Wang a cup of tea.

This was rare!

Wang was somewhat flattered as he accepted the teacup with both hands.

This expression of gratefulness pleased Li Mingtong very much.

“Wang, the reason I called you here today is to find out about your recent situation.

You’ve been with our company for so long and have contributed significantly to this project, yet you’re still a low-level employee.

Do you have any complaints about that?”

Li Mingtong asked with a smile.

“It’s alright, just sometimes, the work assigned by the new leader is a bit tiring,” Wang said.

It seemed he had some opinions about Bai Xiaosheng.

Li Mingtong felt a surge of happiness inside but maintained a face of indignation on Wang’s behalf, “When Wu Qiuyan resigned, I mentioned it to Mr.

Chen, saying that Wang has the capability and wisdom.

The supervisor position should have been his!

But, in the end, you know, Mr.

Chen disagreed, Mr.

Shang stubbornly brought in Bai Xiaosheng!”

“Is that so!” Wang frowned deeply.

“Look at you, a meritorious veteran, managed by some youngster, taking his orders.

Are you really satisfied?” Li Mingtong clicked his tongue, “Let me tell you, this Bai Xiaosheng is all smooth talk; his words are sweeter than music but he’s full of schemes and plots!

At this rate, he’s going to sabotage you!”

Li Mingtong’s face was full of concern for Wang.

“But what can I do?” Wang said with a pained expression.

There’s an opening!

Li Mingtong was inwardly delighted, leaned in closer, and whispered to Wang, “Wang, look, the people in our project, whoever aligns with me, Li Mingtong, have I ever mistreated them?

If you stand by my side, I guarantee it won’t be long before you’re the head of the Promotion Department!”

“How should I stand with you?” Wang seemed somewhat tempted.

Li Mingtong gave a sly smile, “You know about the bet I have with Bai Xiaosheng, about that brochure draft...

Since you’re going to stand with me, you wouldn’t want me to lose to him, right?”

Wang suddenly understood and nodded.

Then, he laughed—a laugh tinged with cunning and a hint of mockery.

This laugh didn't seem quite right!

Li Mingtong frowned; he was no fool, and the sudden change in Wang's expression gave him an ominous feeling.

"So, are you in or not?!" Li Mingtong asked with a frown.

Wang stood up, patted his clothes as if he had gotten his pants dirty from sitting.

"Mr.

Li, I'm just a low-level employee, without ambition, without aspirations.

All these years, I've had no desire to be a leader!" Wang said cheerfully, "You don't need the help of a low-level employee, do you?

It's time to clock out; I'll be leaving first."

All that nonsense, who would fall for it?

The corner of Wang's mouth showed a touch of disdain.

"You!" Li Mingtong watched Wang leave, burning with rage.

This old fox, he was playing him from the start!

Li Mingtong, trembling with anger, took a moment to calm down and then picked up the phone to call the Promotion Department.

It was Song who answered the phone.

“Come here, I have something to tell you!” Li Mingtong’s politeness was less, his anger more.

Firstly, he was angry, and secondly, Song was different from Wang, weaker in character.

Nice words are wasted on such people; it’s better to break them down with authority!

“I can’t handle one wily old man!” Li Mingtong hung up the phone, gritting his teeth, “A spineless wretch, I refuse to believe that I can’t take him down!”

Chapter 65 Promotion Department, No Traitors!_1 Li Mingtong hung up the phone, his heart burning with anger, huffing indignantly.

Soon after, Song arrived, standing at the door not daring to enter, tentatively knocking to remind the leader of his presence.

“Come in,” Li Mingtong glanced at him impatiently, nodding towards the seat opposite him.

“Sit there, I have something to tell you!”

Only then did Song enter and sit down somewhat stiffly across from him.

Such a man, no longer young, and yet as bashful as a woman.

An idiot, a waste, a failure!

Li Mingtong really couldn’t stand Song from the bottom of his heart.

“Song, you’ve been on the project for quite some time now, and I’ve been wanting to have a talk with you,” Li Mingtong frowned, tapping the table repeatedly with his finger, speaking with each tap, “Your salary is not low, but your performance...

it’s not good!

If this continues, I don’t think you’re fit for this job.

Vice General Manager Wang Ye hates nothing more than idling in one’s position!

You’re in copywriting, so you should understand the meaning of this term!”

“I understand, but Mr.

Li, I...” Song tried to explain.

Li Mingtong raised his hand, curtly stopping him.

“You don’t need to explain to me, I won’t listen!

In short, I’m telling you, if this goes on, you’re in danger!” Li Mingtong’s tone grew heavier.

Song’s face clearly turned pale.

Li Mingtong paused, then leaned forward.

“However, you used to work with Wu Qiuyan, so you count as one of my subordinates, Li Mingtong.

I don’t want to go that far!

I want to help you, but you need to show some gratitude, don't you?"

After speaking, Li Mingtong sat up straight, with a heartfelt emphasis, "The salary here is so high, it's not easy to find something like this in Tiannan!"

Threats and intimidation, Chen Mingli's style.

Li Mingtong watched as Song's brows knotted, silent, seemingly contemplating the gravity of the situation.

"What you can rely on now is not some manager, but me!"

Li Mingtong bluntly laid it all out.

The more he looked, the more he felt that beating around the bush with this kind of idiot was just a foolish waste of time.

"In a word, if you want to keep working here, you have to listen to me!"

"What do you want me to do?" Song lifted his head to ask.

Li Mingtong smiled, lowering his voice.

"I'm not asking you to commit arson or murder, nor to turn against that man surnamed Bai.

I just need you to make some minor adjustments in those building blueprints...

maybe just moving a decimal point.

These small imperfections, others won't notice and won't suspect you.

How about it!

If you do it, I guarantee a thirty percent raise for you next time!"

Li Mingtong used a stick then dangled a carrot.

He didn't believe such a wimpy man could resist this kind of onslaught.

Song took a deep breath.

"Are you in or not!" Li Mingtong suddenly tapped the table and hissed.

Song flinched, gritted his teeth, seeming to finally make up his mind.

Li Mingtong felt victory was within reach.

"I won't betray a friend!"

With one sentence from Song, the smile on Li Mingtong's face froze.

"What did you say?!"

Li Mingtong's brows furrowed into knots, his glance menacing.

Song's eyes, however, slowly filled with determination.

"I won't betray a friend!"

The second time he repeated it, it was firmer and more resolute than the first!

Honest people seem easy to bully, but when they become stubborn, they are tougher than anyone else, and they value loyalty even more!

“You!” The veins on Li Mingtong’s forehead throbbed visibly.

Rebellion!

Complete rebellion!

First it was Yezi, then Wang, and now even Song dared to speak to him like this.

These damn bastards!

“Do you know the consequences?” Li Mingtong asked through gritted teeth.

“I, Song, may be timid, but I still have a shred of pride!” Song stood up assertively.

“Well said!”

Li Mingtong was about to say something else when suddenly someone raised their voice from outside the door, shouting approval like in a Peking opera.

Both turned to look, and a glint flashed in Song’s eyes.

It was Wang!

“Kid, we’ve worked together for so many years, and this is the first time you’ve shown such manliness!” Wang didn’t hide his approval, giving Song a thumbs-up, “Gutsy!”

A satisfied smile spread across Song’s face, as if he had received the greatest recognition, and he strode towards Wang.

“How did you come back, do you have any right to speak here!” Li Mingtong glared angrily at Wang.

“Mr.

Li, there’s no need to waste your time.

There’s no traitor in the Promotion Department, nor will there be one!”

Wang spoke to Li Mingtong with a grin, “You should probably talk to the Finance Department instead.

Tomorrow, our Supervisor Bai will be asking you for a bonus, and you’d better not fail to approve it!”

Li Mingtong trembled with rage at Wang’s smirk.

Song stood beside Wang with newfound confidence, looking straight at him.

“Mr.

Li, if there’s nothing else, we’ll be leaving first,” Wang chuckled, “Supervisor Bai is a good person, highly capable!

He finally won us the right not to work overtime, and we should thoroughly enjoy it, right!”

“Absolutely!” Song laughed in agreement.

Li Mingtong felt like his nose was about to go crooked with anger.

Too arrogant!

Not just Bai Xiaosheng, the entire Promotion Department was too arrogant!

Fury peaking, Li Mingtong actually began to laugh eerily, his expression twisted.

“Wang, do you know what happens when you oppose me?” Li Mingtong spoke ominously, “Don’t forget, I am the direct supervisor of your department, I!

Yes, I may not have the power to fire you directly...”

“But the quarterly assessment is coming up, and I will be evaluating your work!

Once I hand that in, Vice General Manager Wang Ye will have a reason to fire you.

You’ll all get the boot, job security be damned, and you’re OK with that?”

Li Mingtong sneered.

Is loyalty more important than eating?

He didn’t believe it!

These people had only been together for a few days; could they really be united as one?

After Li Mingtong finished speaking, even Song laughed, and Wang shook his head.

Their expressions caught Li Mingtong off guard.

His usual sycophantic supervisors always had a fawning, obedient, and anxious demeanor, giving Li Mingtong the feeling that he could dictate their fortunes and lives.

And now, it didn't work on the small employees either?

"Mr.

Li." Wang really felt sorry for Li Mingtong, "Those words might intimidate supervisors, but they're useless on us.

We low-level employees can scrape by anywhere.

And I guarantee, if we switch jobs, the next place will offer a higher salary!"

"And maybe the boss there will be more sensible," Song added with a smile.

Using the threat of firing to intimidate employees, as if this was a guaranteed job for life!

Li Mingtong was confounded; a buzzing noise filled his head.

His threat had actually become a joke!

"I'll fire you right now, I'll fire you all this instant!" Li Mingtong stomped and roared, "If you want to leave, then get out, all of you!"

"Mr.

Li, I've said it before!

You're not qualified to fire them," a familiar figure stood behind Wang and Song.

"If anyone is going to leave, you'll be the first!"

Bai Xiaosheng's gaze was piercing as he spoke domineeringly.

Chapter 66 Opportunity, Here It Comes!_1 Bai Xiaosheng's face was as still as water as he walked over.

Passing by Wang and Song, Bai Xiaosheng gave them a sincere, beaming smile.

He had been around for a while and had caught part of the conversation.

The way Wang and Song stood up for him warmed his heart.

And now, it was his turn to stand up for them!

Wang and Song smiled at Bai Xiaosheng, stepped aside to the left and right, and made way.

Standing in front of Wang and the others, Bai Xiaosheng fixated on Li Mingtong with a somber expression.

"Why have you come back, haven't you, already left!" Upon seeing Bai Xiaosheng, Li Mingtong's face turned ugly in an instant.

Now, he both hated and feared Bai Xiaosheng.

He had deliberately chosen a time when Bai Xiaosheng was away to cause trouble, not expecting Bai Xiaosheng to return.

Bai Xiaosheng had left, but on his way he received a message from Song and immediately turned back.

Standing there, he radiated anger, and his gaze was as cold as ice.

Li Mingtong's fury was silently suppressed.

"Mr.

Li, the conflict between us should have some boundaries.

If you cross my limit, Bai Xiaosheng's limit... even Mr.

Wang won't be able to save you," said Bai Xiaosheng in a soft voice that carried more weight than shouting.

Mentioning the name of Vice General Manager Wang Ye, he didn't hold back in the slightest.

Bai Xiaosheng never intended to reveal his identity to Mr.

Wang, as he was only interested in work and earning merit.

He had no interest in the struggle between Mr.

Wang and Shang Wenshu.

However, if someone provoked him, he wouldn't mind upsetting their balance!

A chill suddenly rose from the depths of Li Mingtong's heart.

His mouth opened as if to speak, but nothing came out.

“Let’s go,” Bai Xiaosheng said, without giving him another glance, turned around, gestured with his hand, and strode away.

Wang and Song shared a smile and quickly followed behind Bai Xiaosheng.

Watching Bai Xiaosheng and his group leave, Li Mingtong’s face turned purple, feeling as if his chest was stuffed with several pounds of cotton, making it hard for him to breathe!

With a heavy punch!

Li Mingtong hammered his own chest like beating a drum, and only then did he expel a coarse breath.

“Bai, Xiaosheng!” Li Mingtong uttered the name, his eyes bloodshot with rage.

“I won’t let you off, I will destroy you, whatever the cost!” This time, Li Mingtong didn’t roar but clenched his teeth, murmuring repeatedly between them.

A chance!

I need a chance, a chance to completely bring down Bai Xiaosheng.

But where could such a chance be found!

Li Mingtong’s lips were bitten purple, nearly oozing blood, as he kept grabbing his hair, pulling it out strand by strand.

Just as Li Mingtong was wracking his brains to no avail and wallowing in torment, a phone call came in.

The persistent ringtone awakened Li Mingtong from his obsession.

He picked up the phone, his eyes flashing.

It was a call from Vice General Manager Wang Ye.

Li Mingtong regained some sense of rationality, steadied his emotions, and answered the call.

“Why did you take half a day to answer!” on the phone, Mr.

Wang was very dissatisfied.

“Yes, I just stepped out briefly and didn’t bring my phone with me.

What do you need?” Li Mingtong respectfully explained to Mr.

Wang.

“I am calling you for something important, listen carefully...” Mr.

Wang instructed him over the phone.

Li Mingtong’s ashen eyes gradually brightened, and even a hint of excitement arose.

“Understood, understood, I will get it done!” Li Mingtong replied eagerly, with a sinister and venomous smile creeping across his face.

Opportunity, isn’t this it!

Putting down the phone, Li Mingtong excitedly rubbed his hands together, tapping his fingers incessantly on the desktop—a habit of his when pondering matters.

“Let’s do it this way!” Li Mingtong finally settled on an idea and sprang to his feet, dialing out a call on the landline.

“Hello, this is Li Mingtong.

Come to my office immediately!” Li Mingtong said in a no-nonsense tone before hanging up.

After only a short wait, a short and plump middle-aged man scurried into Li Mingtong’s office.

“Mr.

Li, what did you want to see me for?” the business development manager said with a forced smile.

Those under Li Mingtong’s wing dared not leave work before him, for Li Mingtong had made it clear that they were to depart only after he did.

Currently, Vice Manager Li’s face was still slightly pale, his eyes red-rimmed.

His normally impeccable hair was disheveled, and his clothes, typically neat and tidy, were now clinging to strands of hair.

The business development manager had no clue what Mr.

Li had been through, looking as if he had been bullied.

Who else in the project department could have left him in such a sorry state?

Not even Chen Daya, surely!

In truth, the business development manager knew something.

He had seen Bai Xiaosheng, Wang, and Song from the promotion department walking past from a distance, and earlier on, there had been faint sounds of Vice Manager Li's furious roars.

In response, like everyone else still at the project, the business development manager simply shut his door and ignored everything beyond it.

Trouble is best avoided!

Plus, everyone was becoming more convinced of something: Bai Xiaosheng was not to be trifled with!

At this moment, with a strategy forming in his mind, Li Mingtong's demeanor was no longer one of defeat.

He paid no notice to the business development manager's nuanced expressions.

Coupled with the manager's obsequious manner, Li Mingtong's mood naturally improved quite a bit.

"Come here, I've got something to tell you.

And you need to get on it right now," Li Mingtong gestured.

The business development manager did not dare hesitate and approached.

Li Mingtong whispered into his ear, and as he spoke, the business development manager's expression went through a series of changes: from surprised and doubtful to slowly becoming frightened.

“This, this won’t do, Mr.

Li!” the normally obedient business development manager said, on the verge of refusing for the first time.

If this situation blew up, his job could well be at risk.

It seemed the conflict between Bai Xiaosheng and Vice Manager Li had escalated to a point of no return.

Once Li Mingtong took this step, even he would have no way out!

“Are you going to do it or not!” Li Mingtong glared.

Usually imposing, this glare made the business development manager’s gaze shrink back in fear, yet he was still reluctant and afraid to proceed.

“This matter...

it’s really...

otherwise...” The business development manager muttered, his face pained as he tried to prevaricate in a low voice.

Li Mingtong’s expression turned grave at once.

Look at Bai Xiaosheng’s people, ready to throw their jobs away for him!

And then there were his own subordinates—this trusted and reliable manager, daring to challenge him!

Li Mingtong's jealousy of Bai Xiaosheng peaked, and his resentment towards his own people made his teeth itch.

"You have to do it, whether you want to or not!" Li Mingtong insisted.

The business development manager tried to say more.

"Besides this project, remember all the kickbacks you've taken?"

And about funneling our clients to competitors secretly, do I need to spell it out?" Li Mingtong threatened.

"Of course, you could try to turn on me, but I assure you all your evidence will be fabricated!"

The business development manager looked at Li Mingtong terrified.

His boss was venomous like a snake!

"I, I'll do it!" In the end, the business development manager gritted his teeth and nodded emphatically.

Chapter 67: Tell me again_1 Thursday arrived, and today was the day Bai Xiaosheng had agreed to submit his manuscript to Li Mingtong.

The document had already been reviewed several times by everyone; it was completely fine.

Bai Xiaosheng copied a version, ready to take it to Li Mingtong.

"How about we first give Mr.

Chen a heads-up, then call over the managers, and report in the large conference room?" Wang was a bit worried, "Yesterday, Li Mingtong must have gone mad, and I'm afraid he might deny everything and find more faults."

"If he wants to cause trouble, I'm up for it!

He's not getting a penny less from today's department rewards!" Bai Xiaosheng said calmly, with a chill in his smile.

Remembering yesterday's events, Bai Xiaosheng felt an unresolved anger within him.

Daring to go after his friends, Li Mingtong overstepped the mark!

Even if Li Mingtong were to stop making moves after this, Bai Xiaosheng wouldn't let things rest!

Seeing that Bai Xiaosheng was not to be persuaded, Old Wang gave up on the matter.

Actually, it wasn't something to worry about too much.

If Li Mingtong acted shamelessly, they could still go to Chen Daya later, there would be plenty of time.

Bai Xiaosheng, carrying the USB drive, headed straight to Li Mingtong's office.

At this moment, Li Mingtong was sitting behind his desk, in front of the computer, fiddling with his phone and occasionally glancing at the time.

"When will this Bai Xiaosheng come to report to me?

I hope he's not planning on coming in the afternoon!" Li Mingtong frowned and muttered to himself, "Otherwise, I should give him a call and ask him to come over now!"

Yesterday, Li Mingtong had arranged everything!

Today, he had a good show to perform with Bai Xiaosheng, but before the gong sounded, he had an important task to complete!

One key point of this task was to keep Bai Xiaosheng busy here for at least two hours!

During this time, he planned to dig a “deep pit” for Bai Xiaosheng, so when the play began, Bai Xiaosheng would jump into the pit himself.

The more Li Mingtong thought about it, the more he anticipated it, repeatedly suppressing the desire to take the initiative and call Bai Xiaosheng over.

That kid was sneaky, it was better to be cautious.

Li Mingtong continued to wait.

Finally, a knock sounded on the door to his office.

Li Mingtong looked up, his face lighting up as he saw Bai Xiaosheng standing at the door.

“Manager Bai, you’re here?”

Come on in!” Li Mingtong stood up with a smile brimming with warmth and enthusiasm.

Bai Xiaosheng, who had been ready to stand his ground, was taken aback by Li Mingtong’s sudden warmth.

Was this the same Li Mingtong from yesterday, all tension and hostility?

There must be a ghost when things behave out of turn!

There was definitely something up here!

Yet, on the surface, Bai Xiaosheng remained calm and walked in.

“The document’s all in here, Mr.

Li.

Take a look.

If it’s approved, I hope our department’s bonus can be honored,” Bai Xiaosheng said as he put the USB drive on the desk and pushed it toward Li Mingtong.

Li Mingtong nodded, took the USB drive and plugged it into his computer, opened the design draft, and began to look at it seriously.

Bai Xiaosheng waited for him to find fault.

But Li Mingtong just looked, without uttering a peep, nodding frequently, and even wearing an approving expression.

Bai Xiaosheng was puzzled.

Could it be that Li Mingtong had really gone mad...

“Not bad at all, very professional and beautiful, Manager Bai.

I'm thinking of having you report directly to the leaders, but before that, could you explain it to me?"

Li Mingtong's face beamed with a smile; he even got up and vacated his seat for Bai Xiaosheng, gesturing for him to sit there.

"These creative points are good, but when talking about them, it's best to link each one to their commercial value, the more business-oriented the better.

You know this is a business project, and we must emphasize the project's properties!

Even if it's a bit common, it helps attract investors," Li Mingtong looked at the computer screen, clucking his tongue in approval before making a request.

This demand was quite fair and reasonable, without any trace of being troublesome.

Bai Xiaosheng nodded in agreement.

In truth, this design draft was originally focused on a commercial style, aimed directly at investor desires.

When presenting, it was natural to revolve around the core business attributes.

"Alright, I'll just give a brief overview," Bai Xiaosheng walked around the desk to the computer.

However, he didn't sit in Li Mingtong's chair.

The notion of having Li Mingtong stand behind him, looking down at him, made him uncomfortable.

So, Bai Xiaosheng chose to stand while explaining.

Li Mingtong didn't insist, and also listened while standing.

"We have divided this brochure into several major parts and sections, covering location, transportation, amenities, design, and property management, to discuss specifically..."

Bai Xiaosheng went through the brochure from beginning to end for Li Mingtong, briefly narrating it.

Li Mingtong actually listened very attentively, nodding frequently.

The expression on his face seemed to show great admiration for the completed work.

If it weren't for yesterday's incident, which almost got out of hand, Bai Xiaosheng would really wonder if Li Mingtong had changed his ways.

Could it be that Wang Ye intervened, forcing Li Mingtong to develop a good relationship with him?

That was not impossible!

If that were the case, Wang Ye must have learned some details about him through certain channels, but remained unsure about the depth of his relationship with the group.

Of course, it couldn't be ruled out that Li Mingtong was up to something nefarious, deliberately trying to confuse him.

Bai Xiaosheng took a deep look at Li Mingtong.

"Not bad, not bad, but here, I feel that it doesn't integrate tightly with the theme of business.

Think about it again, organize your vocabulary, phrase your words, to make the theme stand out more, and also here, here..." Li Mingtong scrolled the mouse, pointing out a few places.

His suggestions were still reasonable, pointing out areas that Bai Xiaosheng had deliberately omitted.

After all, if one were to repeatedly and blindly emphasize the commercial nature, it could overshadow some of the project's highlights, inevitably becoming tacky.

Bai Xiaosheng nodded, pondered for a moment, and added some descriptions for Li Mingtong.

"Very good, very good, Manager Bai is truly talented, eloquent, much better than what I had in mind.

But look, can we..." Li Mingtong continued in a conversational tone, discussing with Bai Xiaosheng how to maximize the themes of business and investment.

In this way, Bai Xiaosheng spent a full two hours there.

If not for Red Lotus's help, even Bai Xiaosheng would have run out of words.

An average person would probably end up with nothing but business and investment on their mind after such a conversation.

In the end, there was really nothing left to talk about.

Even Li Mingtong had nothing more to say.

He glanced at his cell phone, smiled, and said to Bai Xiaosheng, "Alright, Manager Bai, I'm very satisfied with this proposal.

You can go back first.

I'm going to contact the finance department right away to prepare your bonus!"

The matter went smoother than expected; Li Mingtong's final approval came suddenly, as if he was in a hurry to get rid of him.

Bai Xiaosheng also didn't wish to stay any longer and promptly returned to the Promotion Department.

Just as he reached the entrance of the Promotion Department, he almost bumped into Wang, who had come out in a fluster.

"Bai, you're back!"

"What happened, what's the matter?" Bai Xiaosheng asked immediately.

"Mr.

Chen wants you to go to him as soon as you get back.

There's a VIP coming soon!" Wang said mysteriously.

"What VIP?" Bai Xiaosheng asked curiously.

"Master Song Kai!

Mr.

Shang, Mrs.

Wang, and a district mayor will be accompanying him personally.

They'll be arriving any minute!"

Chapter 68: A Barrier_1 A group of people walked across the outer square of Treles Square.

Leading the group was an elderly man in a white Mandarin jacket and black lantern pants, wearing a pair of old cloth shoes.

It was Master Song Kai.

By his side, there followed a dignified middle-aged man with a somewhat authoritative demeanor; he was District Chief Wu Qibing, who had also been a student of Master Song Kai.

On the other side, half a step behind him, followed Shang Wenshu and Wang Ye.

At this moment, both the scholarly Shang Wenshu and the usually domineering Wang Ye had faces full of obliging smiles.

Last month, Master Song Kai had visited with the mayor and stopped by here incidentally.

At that time, the master did not have a particularly good impression of this project.

Ever since then, Shang Wenshu had been racking his brains, trying to figure out how to make the old gentleman change his view.

Unexpectedly, today, the master had taken the initiative to come and have a look.

Speaking of Master Song Kai, he was renowned throughout Tiannan, and indeed the nation at large.

With widespread disciples in both business and politics, he was an individual with significant influence!

If one could manage to have him at the opening ceremony, it would undoubtedly raise the project's profile by several levels.

However, the old gentleman had a rule: he never participated in the ribbon-cutting ceremonies of openings, not even for the projects he had personally designed!

As the leaders of local enterprises, Shang Wenshu and Wang Ye could not overemphasize the importance of this master-level figure and were even willing to push aside busy meetings and put down their disputes to keep him company, fearing any slip-ups!

The significance of the master was self-evident.

At that moment, Master Song Kai walked with his hands behind his back, looking around.

A commercial square project had to be scrutinized not only for its architecture and interior but also for the design of the external square space and traffic organization.

From hard paving to softscape environments, details such as plants, fountains, water features, and functional amenities like rest areas, all impacted the heights that the project could achieve.

This was the master's work, his painstaking effort.

But now, as the master inspected and murmured to himself, he looked for highlights as if this project was not one of his designs.

"Upon closer examination, some designs by that young lad are indeed ingenious.

I rejected them; perhaps I'm the outdated one," the old man muttered to himself, comparing the actual scene before him.

Shang Wenshu wore a slight smile.

Since the master's last visit, the project had tightened up on details, and many areas had been reworked.

This time, they were determined to satisfy the master!

If the master were pleased, perhaps they could broach the topic of a guest of honor at the opening.

If he agreed, Treles Square's attention would undoubtedly become the number one in Tiannan!

With a smile on his face, Wang Ye also wanted to leave a good impression in front of Master Song Kai.

"I made a point of instructing Li Mingtong to sweep through the project in advance, to avoid anything that might annoy the master.

Even the hoarding at the entrance has been changed.

Not bad, not bad, Mingtong is quite efficient," Wang Ye commented with satisfaction.

This time, it must be a joyful occasion for both guests and hosts.

Along the way, Master Song Kai gestured and framed scenes with his fingers, muttering, "Leaving white space here is good, this treatment is truly clever."

"Teacher," District Chief Wu Qibing couldn't help but smile, "What are you murmuring about to yourself?

You look so happy; tell us about it, too."

"You?"

Coming back to his senses, Master Song Kai curled his lips at his student, “All you think about are GDP, investment returns, cash flow.

How would you understand the design!”

District Chief Wu laughed heartily.

His teacher was still the same, and hadn’t changed a bit.

The group continued on their tour.

When they reached a landscaped spot currently under construction, the enthusiastic Master Song Kai suddenly frowned.

There, a conspicuously out-of-place section of hoarding appeared, glaringly noticeable.

Brand new, with a red background and glistening golden characters, the image featured what seemed to be a pseudo-successful person exuding joy, arrogantly giving two thumbs up.

The copy on the picture was even more direct and crude—

“Make money, money, money!

Once I get a store, Tiannan is mine!”

“Wealth!

Gold stores!

Commercial peak, endless prospects, wealth for three generations!”

The coarsest, most direct, and least design-inspired enclosure had just jarringly appeared here.

It made anyone without the slightest design talent feel it was unbearably tacky!

On this square ripe with art and culture, it was like plastering thick foundation on a delicate girl and painting her lips a garish red—vulgarity to the extreme.

And the worst part was, it was newly installed!

The faces of Shang Wenshu and Wang Ye both changed in unison.

Last time, Master Song Kai flew into a rage over a lack of detail and crass promotion—stemming from a mere enclosure.

This time, why had such an enclosure appeared—one even cruder than the last?

It was an absolute eyesore!

Shang Wenshu couldn't help but glance at Wang Ye, his first thought being that Wang Ye had sabotaged it.

But Wang Ye was even more surprised than him.

"What a strong commercial vibe this enclosure has," Song Kai commented indifferently, then turned and headed into the square.

"What's going on, didn't you say it was improved?"

Don't you know?

The teacher hates this!”

District Chief Wu Qibing glanced at the enclosure and also frowned.

It wasn’t that a commercial project couldn’t showcase commercial elements, but this was just too low-quality, too vulgar!

District Chief Wu couldn’t even find the words to describe it—he felt even the outskirts would hardly see such a thing!

District Chief Wu exhaled heavily and hurried after his teacher.

“What in the world are Chen Daya and Li Mingtong doing!

What is this monstrosity!” Shang Wenshu couldn’t help but mutter angrily under his breath.

Wang Ye’s expression darkened.

He had called Li Mingtong the night before, and now seeing this newly installed enclosure, it was practically a slap in his face!

The two leaders, huffing and puffing, raced to the marketing center.

At that moment, Chen Daya and Li Mingtong were not accompanying the leaders—not out of reluctance but because Master Song Kai had cautioned against having project staff accompany them.

They were busy preparing the venue and communicating with the managers.

They heard that this time, Master Song Kai wanted to have a “casual chat” with the staff.

The two managers, afraid of offending the old man, were busy instructing their superiors.

As they were occupied, a young employee ran over, looking flustered and out of breath.

“What’s happened!” Chen Daya exclaimed when he saw it was an employee that had followed the leaders.

He urged for an answer.

“It’s not, not good,” the employee said, panting.

“Master Song Kai, District Chief Wu, they arrived at ‘Four Seasons Flower Island’ scenic spot and saw the enclosure outside!”

“What about the enclosure?” Chen Daya asked, surprised.

He remembered they had replaced it with one featuring a scenic view, which seemed quite fitting.

“The leaders said the new enclosure is vulgar, and the master is unhappy,” the young employee couldn’t help but swallow hard.

He didn’t know what expression the master had, but the angry faces of Shang and Wang were clear to him!

“New?”

What does it look like?!” Chen Daya suddenly felt uneasy and couldn’t help but look at Li Mingtong.

Li Mingtong also frowned deeply.

“The day before yesterday, I organized a small meeting for investment promotion, there was supposed to be some sort of promotion, maybe it was them who replaced it.

I even asked Bai Xiaosheng from the promotion department to check on it!

What’s wrong?

Is there a problem?”

Chapter 69 I Have Something to Say!_1 Li Mingtong threw the trouble at the Investment and Promotion departments, but as it involved the issue of hoarding, it was also part of publicity, clearly pointing directly at the Promotion Department!

Chen Daya had no mind to argue with him, hastily nodded, and scurried off to greet the leaders.

Li Mingtong followed behind, a sinister and triumphant smile appearing on the corner of his mouth.

The hoarding was replaced under Li Mingtong’s instructions with one from a small workshop found on the street, crudely made and extremely vulgar.

To be honest, after it was installed, Li Mingtong took a look and felt disgusted, it was an insult to the project.

What if it were to catch the eye of a master who treasured his own work?

Ever since Master Song Kai lost his temper last time, Li Mingtong had done his homework.

Master Song Kai, a man who revered humanism and despised rigidity and the overly strong scent of commerce, cherished his work immensely!

Li Mingtong did this deliberately, it wasn't clever, nor was it a tactic, but it was the most direct and effective way.

The master, who hadn't met Bai Xiaosheng before, would have a terrible first impression upon learning of Bai Xiaosheng's association with that hoarding!

The first impression between people is incredibly important, and to change it afterward is difficult!

And this was just the beginning!

Li Mingtong felt proud in his heart.

The game was his, Li Mingtong, to play and to control.

Even if it involved Master Song Kai, he was just another piece in the game!

The same went for Shang Wenshu and Wang Ye!

Thinking of all this excited Li Mingtong to the point of feeling a feverish heat all over.

Chen Daya ran to the entrance of the marketing center and was met by Master Song Kai and his entourage.

He stole a glance and saw that the faces of the few leaders behind were none too pleased.

On the contrary, the normally hot-tempered master seemed to be in a better mood—at least he wasn't showing anger.

"Master, please come this way.

The leaders can first go to the conference room to rest their feet.

We've prepared some refreshments there," Chen Daya said with a cautious smile.

Master Song Kai and District Chief Wu politely nodded at Chen Daya and headed to the conference room led by the staff.

Taking advantage of this moment, Shang Wenshu pulled Chen Daya aside, his brows knotted, he urgently whispered.

"What's with that hoarding!"

It couldn't be such a coincidence that such a thing was switched right when the master arrived!

Shang Wenshu was somewhat annoyed, knowing that Wang Ye also revered the master too much to interfere, which resulted in his complacency.

As expected, trouble had arisen!

"Li Mingtong said it was an unauthorized change by the Investment Department and the Promotion Department, but in my view, the Promotion Department is going to take the fall.

Li Mingtong is clearly targeting Bai Xiaosheng," Chen Daya whispered urgently.

"Could Mrs.

Wang also have..."

"No," Shang Wenshu waved his hand.

Wang Ye was accustomed to arrogance and despotism, the tactics she was personally involved in were always straightforward and forceful.

She wouldn't stoop to these petty tricks, and besides, these weren't clever moves!

Shang Wenshu remembered the shock and anger in Wang Ye's eyes then, which were genuine.

According to Chen Daya, it looked more like Li Mingtong had acted unilaterally...

Shang Wenshu, who always kept an eye on the project, was also aware of the conflict between Li Mingtong and Bai Xiaosheng.

It's just that he hadn't expected the conflict to escalate to the point where Li Mingtong dared to play tricks right in front of Wang Ye!

"Capsizing in a gutter, Wang Ye, you have moments when you can't control the situation," Shang Wenshu lamented and, with a nod towards Chen Daya, rushed to the conference room.

At this moment, Wang Ye was grabbing Li Mingtong, his eyes full of fury.

"Speak, what's the deal with that enclosure?"

"It's related to you, isn't it!" Wang Ye exclaimed with overflowing menace.

"It was Bai Xiaosheng!" Li Mingtong stated with certainty, "A couple of days ago, I arranged a meeting for him with the investment and logistics departments to discuss publicity."

You can look into this—it's true.

I really don't know how they ended up doing it like that!"

Li Mingtong's face showed his chagrin, as if it really had nothing to do with him.

Wang Ye's gaze was chilling, staring straight at Li Mingtong, making Li Mingtong's heart tremble with unease.

This kind of lie might fool others, but it was far from enough to deceive a person of Wang Ye's caliber.

Li Mingtong suddenly felt that his lie was a bit foolish.

"Now that things have come to this, I don't want any more trouble," Wang Ye said darkly, looking at Li Mingtong and firmly patting him on the shoulder with such force that it hurt Li Mingtong.

After speaking, Wang Ye turned and left.

Unable to help himself, Li Mingtong swallowed hard, silently following behind.

The plan that had seemed flawless to him was now fraught with great risk.

But if it means hurting myself, I'll make sure you, Bai Xiaosheng, suffer even more!

A vicious look appeared in Li Mingtong's eyes—he didn't want to stop.

The main conference room, had been attentively decorated, with excellent tea and snacks laid out.

However, Master Song Kai, hands clasped behind his back, looked with interest at the aerial view and landscape renderings on the wall, sometimes contemplative, sometimes revealing a hint of a smile.

It seemed the Master's mood was good, unaffected by that enclosure!

District Chief Wu Qibing let out a sigh of relief and relaxed, leisurely sipping his tea.

Shang Wenshu, Chen Daya, Wang Ye, Li Mingtong one after another entered the meeting room.

Seeing Master Song Kai observing the project diagrams, they didn't dare interrupt and waited patiently on the side.

"Oh, you've arrived."

After a while, Master Song Kai, noticing everyone, apologised with a smile, "Look at this old man, just absorbed in his little hobby.

Sometimes I get too engrossed, please forgive me, everyone."

The Master was indeed a Master, humble and polite.

The crowd responded with polite laughter.

"I've had a general look around, and you improved many details this month, which is very good," Master Song Kai said, surveying the group, "I always emphasize that commerce must be based on people, on the human experience—that's what makes a project last.

All I want is for my work to endure a bit longer."

Master Song Kai's words had everyone nodding in agreement.

"Master, you always have such high aspirations!" District Chief Wu Qibing nodded and smiled, but when he turned to Shang Wenshu and the others, his expression became serious, "Mr.

Shang, Mrs.

Wang, we're all familiar faces here, so I'll be frank."

"Please speak, District Chief Wu."

Shang Wenshu and Wang Ye promptly responded.

"A project's details are not only about architecture and design—even something as small as a temporary enclosure can't be too shoddy.

Like that one we saw earlier, can you assure me no investors have seen it?

What would they think of our project that claims to integrate commerce and culture, if that's the standard?"

District Chief Wu spoke earnestly, emphasizing, "You must listen and take to heart the Master's advice!"

District Chief Wu Qibing, in front of Master Song Kai, brought up the very issue he knew the Master would have addressed himself.

He knew his teacher was straightforward and would likely bring it up, so it was better for him as a student to offer the reminder.

Shang Wenshu and Wang Ye quickly nodded their agreement.

Master Song Kai, expressionless.

The matter seemed about to be put to rest.

“District Chief Wu, I have something to say!” Li Mingtong, who had been silent, suddenly stepped forward.

Chapter 70: Master of Setting Traps, Li Mingtong_1 Before speaking, Li Mingtong himself felt somewhat conflicted and anxious.

Things were not going as smoothly as he had imagined.

In the end, he had overestimated himself and underestimated the intelligence of people at the level of Vice General Manager Wang Ye.

Just now, Vice General Manager Wang Ye’s attitude had, in fact, given him a kind of sternest warning!

To say he wasn’t scared would be a lie.

Nevertheless, Li Mingtong still didn’t want to give up this opportunity.

He had already taken the first step and couldn’t help but want to take the second.

His chips were now all on the table, win or lose, he wanted to give it a try!

If he could use this chance to make Bai Xiaosheng anger Master Song Kai, then Bai Xiaosheng would be in big trouble!

Especially this time, with District Chief Wu Qibing accompanying them, just the district chief’s wrath would be enough for Bai Xiaosheng to cope with!

When that time came, people like Shang Wenshu, an old fox, would most likely sacrifice a pawn to save his chariot, and Vice General Manager Wang Ye might just add insult to injury!

Li Mingtong believed that, for him, the benefits far outweighed the risks!

These last few days, he had been driven somewhat mad by Bai Xiaosheng, becoming irritable and impulsive.

So, he finally made his move!

“You’re the person in charge of this project...

Li Mingtong, I suppose, do you have anything you want to say?” District Chief Wu Qibing looked curiously at Li Mingtong, a man he recognized.

The moment Li Mingtong stood out, a hint of cold light flashed in Wang Ye’s eyes.

This Li Mingtong, he actually dared to ignore his advice!

Shang Wenshu said nothing, watching with a cold eye.

“District Chief Wu, regarding the issues you’ve mentioned, after Master Song’s previous visit, Mr.

Shang and Mrs.

Wang have emphasized them repeatedly, even personally overseeing the rectifications numerous times.

You could say that on our project, everyone from the staff to the managers and vice managers take this extremely seriously.

We ensure that every detail is meticulously accounted for, striving to prevent any lapse into vulgar commerce,” Li Mingtong said with absolute certainty.

“Oh?”

This statement prompted a snort of laughter from District Chief Wu Qibing.

“Vice Manager Li, do you think that the master, myself, Mr.

Shang, and Mrs.

Wang are all blind that we can’t see or make out such a large red backdrop with golden lettering?

Or is it that Vice Manager Li has never seen it?

Well then, the enclosure is still there, you can go and see for yourself!”

District Chief Wu was also somewhat angry.

This matter was actually trivial; the master wasn’t angry, and he mentioned it just to preclude the master from bringing it up again.

This was already giving the project a way out.

Why couldn’t they just take it?

If they were truly that conscientious and responsible, where did that enclosure come from?

Did it fall from the sky?!

“About that enclosure, I also have something to say!” Li Mingtong, far from panicking, spoke solemnly to the district chief, “The day before yesterday, I organized a meeting because our project’s Investment Department wanted to do a promotion, and I asked the Promotion Department to help with it.

That enclosure is very likely their doing.

Perhaps they changed it this morning.

Manager Chen and I were busy preparing and setting up this venue, so we didn't have time to check.

This was our oversight!"

Li Mingtong admitted fault but was quick to shift blame towards the Promotion Department, the "prime culprit."

"So, you mean that enclosure was the work of two department heads?

Interesting, just now you said that everyone from staff to managers is against vulgar commerce, and this is the result of your campaign against vulgarity?

Quite effective indeed!"

District Chief Wu said with no small measure of sarcasm.

Master Song Kai picked up his teacup, leisurely blew on the leaves, and began to elegantly savor his tea, as if this topic had nothing to do with him.

District Chief Wu glanced at the master and felt somewhat surprised in his heart.

His old teacher had seemingly tempered his fiery temper in just a few days!

Had this been before, the old man would have jumped up and pointed at Li Mingtong's nose, cursing, "The hell you talking about!"

"I still need to explain something about this matter to you!" Li Mingtong continued.

Wang Ye and Shang Wenshu both had somewhat unpleasant expressions on their faces behind him.

Li Mingtong was finally about to show his fangs!

This man, regardless of the overall situation, sought personal revenge under the guise of official authority, and was venomous enough—truly the heart of a venomous snake!

“You might not know that our project’s long-time employees have been reminded many times and are all aware of the importance.

However, our marketing department recently got a new supervisor, and this new supervisor hasn’t been around long, so it’s inevitable that there are oversights!”

Li Mingtong’s answer was very clever.

What he said was true, but stating these facts at this crucial moment was bound to lead to misunderstandings.

District Chief Wu Qibing frowned.

Wang Ye’s gaze flickered slightly.

Li Mingtong was going against his wishes—an infuriating move, but his ruthless tactics and boldness were somewhat admirable to him.

Shang Wenshu also raised his head, his eyes slightly cold.

Li Mingtong dug this “pit” well!

Using “facts” to solidify Bai Xiaosheng’s responsibility, even if the master and district chief realized later that it was a misunderstanding, that would be their own fault for misunderstanding and they couldn’t blame Li Mingtong!

District Chief Wu Qibing spoke up.

“A new supervisor?

With that kind of barricade quality, even those second-rate small studios on the street could do better.

And he’s the marketing supervisor?

How do you manage personnel on your project?!”

District Chief Wu’s questioning was getting more heated, and this pleased Li Mingtong inside.

“What the district chief doesn’t know,” Li Mingtong glanced at Shang Wenshu, his face showing a moment’s hesitation, “is that our new supervisor isn’t just anyone; he was brought in by Mr.

Shang.

Actually, he’s very capable.

Recently, he led his department to produce an excellent set of promotional materials in just three or four days.

I think it could be because he’s been so busy lately that some minor areas were neglected.”

Li Mingtong seemed to be making excuses for Bai Xiaosheng, but in reality, he effectively sealed Shang Wenshu’s lips, forcing him to avoid conflict of interest while also bringing up the matter of the promotional materials.

Consider this: A master so protective of his reputation would pay such close attention to a simple barricade—what about the promotional materials, which have a significant role in advertising?

Would he not care even more about that!

Sure enough, Master Song Kai's motion to drink from his teacup halted, and his eyebrows even furrowed slightly.

"You're talking about the promotional materials?!" Master Song Kai spoke up.

"Yes." Li Mingtong quickly replied.

"I was so preoccupied with my thoughts just now that I didn't notice.

The marketing department...

the marketing department..." Master Song Kai muttered and then suddenly asked, "What's the name of this new supervisor of the marketing department?!"

"Bai Xiaosheng!" Li Mingtong quickly answered.

"Are you saying he finished a whole set of promotional materials?" Master Song Kai put down his teacup, looking interested.

"Teacher, you really want to see it, huh," District Chief Wu said with a laugh, intervening.

He was worried that the teacher might form a bad impression of the new supervisor and then see a set of commercial-looking promotional materials, which could upset him and be awkward for the project team.

Seeing the district chief seemingly trying to intervene, Li Mingtong felt a surge of anxiety, looking nervously towards the master.

Li Mingtong was even silently praying.

Master Song Kai, you must ask Bai Xiaosheng to report—otherwise, all my efforts this morning repeated brainwashing would be in vain!

“Let him come over and explain it to me!”

Master Song Kai finally said those words.

Li Mingtong was ecstatic.

Bai Xiaosheng, now you are finished!