

Two Trillion 821

Chapter 821

Zhongjing Airport, VIP room in the departure hall.

Bai Xiaosheng and his party filed in.

With over an hour left before boarding, Bai Xiaosheng decided to eat something and rest a bit here first.

"Please have a seat," Bai Xiaosheng stood firm, gestured for Mr. Jiuzheng, who was behind him, to take a seat, then sat down opposite him.

Chen Jiuzheng's face was overcast as he glanced coldly at Bai Xiaosheng and walked toward the seat.

The three Affairs Assistants took their seats respectively.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying had gone to buy food and had not yet returned.

After sitting down, Chen Jiuzheng pulled out his phone, and realizing Bai Xiaosheng was looking his way, immediately shook the phone and sneered, "Affairs Officer Bai, why are you looking at me like that? Are you suggesting I can't use my phone?"

"As you wish," Bai Xiaosheng shrugged and said with a light smile.

Chen Jiuzheng deliberately held up his phone high, tapping away as if he was sending a message, as if he was contacting his elder brother, Chen Jiutian.

In fact, even if he were truly contacting Chen Jiutian, he wouldn't do it now, and definitely not in front of Bai Xiaosheng!

Bai Xiaosheng simply smiled indifferently.

A notification sound went off, and Bai Xiaosheng also took out his phone to glance at it.

The last of the dispatched Affairs Assistants had sent a message: Evidence secured!

Before leaving the Chen Family, not everything Bai Xiaosheng said was the whole truth.

Now, all the investigations had ended, all the evidence verified, and sent back to headquarters.

Whether the Affairs Assistants returned or not was now irrelevant, as all materials were complete!

With these alone, Chen Jiuzheng was utterly finished.

His position was bound to be utterly stripped.

Those involved, like Chen Changluo and others with especially grave involvements, would also be dismissed from their duties and handed over to judicial authorities!

Thinking of such a huge pest about to be eliminated, Bai Xiaosheng felt a surge of satisfaction.

The corporation was his, and he absolutely wouldn't allow such miscreants to exist!

In Bai Xiaosheng's mind at that moment, the voice of Red Lotus also rang out.

"For completing the thorough investigation of Anjiang Province's regional industry head, Chen Jiuzheng, and cutting off corrupt and rotten senior management from the corporation, reward points, fifteen points!"

"In the Affairs Officer stage, all earned points are increased by twenty percent, and additional bonus points of three are awarded."

"Currently, the total score for the Affairs Officer rank is eighteen points, eighty-two points away from the rank of Senior Affairs Officer!"

To gain eighteen points in one go, nearly a fifth of the way there!

Although Bai Xiaosheng still felt it was a bit too little, considering he had taken down a provincial industry head.

Having received the points, Bai Xiaosheng was naturally in a good mood.

"I wonder how many points a regional head will net me," Bai Xiaosheng thought to himself, and flashed a smile at Chen Jiuzheng across from him.

Chen Jiuzheng, still pretending to fiddle with his phone, watched Bai Xiaosheng warily and suddenly caught sight of Bai Xiaosheng's inexplicably strange smile, complete with a mouthful of shiny white teeth, giving him a sudden spine-chilling feeling, making his eyes grow more vigilant, as if thinking, "I just knew you were spying on me, I knew you were up to no good."

Bai Xiaosheng was blissfully unaware of the immense psychological torment he had inflicted on the man.

After putting away his phone, he glanced at Chen Jiuzheng and said with a smile, "Mr. Jiuzheng, could you please call Mr. Jiutian for me? I'd like to speak with him."

"Why should you use my phone and not your own?" Chen Jiuzheng frowned instantly, his eyes becoming cautious.

"To save money," Bai Xiaosheng said earnestly, offering a rather absurd and speechless reason.

Chen Jiuzheng really didn't want to deal with Bai Xiaosheng.

But then, a thought struck him.

It would actually be good for Bai Xiaosheng to use his phone for this call; it would let his brother, Chen Jiutian, know that Bai Xiaosheng had arrived!

And that he was with him!

The change in Chen Jiuzheng's expression did not escape Bai Xiaosheng, who couldn't help but smile.

Chen Jiuzheng's innermost thoughts, translated by the Micro Expression Analysis System, were already presented in Bai Xiaosheng's mind.

"Since Affairs Officer Bai is so thrifty, then please, use mine." Chen Jiuzheng dialed the number and handed over the phone with a scoff on his face.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, unfazed, took the phone, and held it to his ear.

"Mr. Jiuzheng!" a deep and rich voice came through the phone.

"Mr. Chen, it's me." Bai Xiaosheng replied with a smile.

"Who are you?" Chen Jiutian was startled at first, but then he woke up, his voice rising, "You're Bai Xiaosheng!"

"That's right, it's me!"

Bai Xiaosheng's voice was warm and friendly, like that of a friend, as he spoke while also glancing at Chen Jiuzheng, "I've come to Zhongjing for an investigation. Your younger brother? Very cooperative! However, he is somewhat verbose when answering questions. Two questions have taken us an hour. Of course, we have plenty of time to play with him..."

Bai Xiaosheng chatted with Chen Jiutian for over ten minutes.

During this time, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying both came back with food and drinks, and Bai Xiaosheng told them to eat first, while he got up and walked to the corner of the VIP room to continue talking.

Chen Jiuzheng ate with a cold face, unceremoniously, all the while keeping his eyes fixed on Bai Xiaosheng.

He too needed to conserve his strength to deal with these people surnamed Bai.

After finishing the call, Bai Xiaosheng returned chuckling with the phone in hand and passed it to Chen Jiuzheng, "Mr. Chen Jiutian seems very busy, he doesn't want us to disturb him, which is understandable."

Chen Jiuzheng took the phone in silence.

"Affairs Officer Bai!" Lin Weiwei tenderly offered food to Bai Xiaosheng.

Bai Xiaosheng took it with a smile, eating while watching Chen Jiuzheng.

This phone call may have seemed ordinary, but it was very crucial!

Firstly, it would put pressure on Chen Jiutian, making him even more flustered.

Secondly, it would give Chen Jiutian the illusion that Chen Jiuzheng was already tying him up in Zhongjing.

Furthermore, it would make Chen Jiuzheng believe that his brother knew they were on their way back to Linshen, so there was no need to get in touch any further.

Of course, this was the most ideal scenario!

Chen Jiuzheng could send messages within Bai Xiaosheng's line of sight, or make a call when visiting the restroom to contact Chen Jiutian again.

Sending messages was more likely.

But for someone as suspicious as Chen Jiutian, it was very possible he'd assume it was a "fishing" operation done using Chen Jiuzheng's phone. Bai Xiaosheng had also intentionally joked during the call to "lay the groundwork."

Calling was also a possibility.

However, they would be boarding soon, and the call would probably have to wait until the early hours of the morning.

Bai Xiaosheng believed that Chen Jiutian wouldn't be in the mood to answer then, as he would be "very busy."

Not only that, but Bai Xiaosheng decided,

After finishing their meal, during the wait to board and on the flight itself, he would have the Affairs Assistant question Chen Jiuzheng, keeping him constantly occupied, ensuring that once Chen Jiuzheng could take a break, he would only think of resting and sleeping.

Fatigue tactics!

Using every means to cut off the source of information to Chen Jiutian.

Bai Xiaosheng enjoyed his meal greatly, smiling sweetly at Chen Jiuzheng.

Chen Jiuzheng couldn't be bothered with him and just buried his head, eating voraciously.

He needed strength! Whether for now, or once they reached Linshen!

"My brother is still the regional director, and we have Zheng Honghu, we might not lose!"

Chen Jiuzheng silently reminded himself to persist and not give up.

At this moment, in Chen Jiutian's study at Linshen, the battlefield had shifted as he prepared a countermeasure.

The call from Bai Xiaosheng did indeed make him irritated and more anxious.

Under such a mindset, his analytical and decision-making abilities were greatly diminished.

However, his intelligence hadn't failed him yet.

"Brother Zheng, you've seen the information too. There's something I've been meaning to ask you!"

Chen Jiutian said to Zheng Honghu, "The people you're asking me for are mostly on my turf. Using them, how do you plan to trap Bai Xiaosheng? We need to save Jiuzheng and keep me out of it, too."

"What exactly are you going to do!"

Chapter 822: If You Want to Turn the Tables, You've Got to Go All Out!

"Bai Xiaosheng, currently a New-type Affairs Officer, formerly the General Manager of a directly affiliated subsidiary company under Zhongjing Media!"

"How could he possibly know the general managers of these provinces in East China, these subsidiary enterprises of the groups, how could he have any entanglements with them?"

"What exactly do you want to do with this trap, that you want to screw over someone with the surname Bai, extricate Chen Jiuzheng from his predicament, and at the same time keep me out of it?"

"You should know, all these enterprises are under my jurisdiction, they are all my subordinates, how could so many people be involved in an incident without me knowing!"

"Setting a trap at this time, no matter how you look at it, it looks like I'm framing Bai Xiaosheng! It's a dead knot!"

"The onlookers of this trap include Mr. Xiahou Qi, the President of the Greater China Region, along with a host of Senior Affairs Officers and Affairs Officers, who are all no fools, but rather shrewd people. How can you guarantee that you can deceive them? Are you confident that it's foolproof?"

"What exactly are you planning, brother, I want to hear it!"

Even though Chen Jiutian's composure was greatly disturbed by Bai Xiaosheng, he still retained a certain degree of rationality.

He was doubtful about these issues and wanted to clarify them.

Zheng Honghu continued to look through the documents, paying no attention to Chen Jiutian who was speaking.

"Say something, Brother Zheng, don't end up failing to fight back and drag me into it!"

Chen Jiutian, not receiving an answer, became anxious and snapped the document folder shut, preventing Zheng Honghu from continuing to read.

Zheng Honghu looked up, his face expressionless as he looked at him.

"What's the matter!" Chen Jiutian's eyes were frantic, staring into Zheng Honghu's eyes.

"You want to counter Bai Xiaosheng's move, rescue Chen Jiuzheng, use the people under your command, and still have Xiahou Qi and the Senior Affairs Officers not suspect you?" Zheng Honghu retorted.

He had been listening all along.

Chen Jiutian nodded repeatedly.

"Do you think it's possible!" Zheng Honghu scoffed, "Stay out of it? Are you thinking a bit too much!"

Chen Jiutian looked at him in astonishment.

If he couldn't protect himself, and he naively jumped into this mess, wouldn't that be seeking death!

What did Zheng Honghu mean? Was he playing him?

Chen Jiutian felt a rush of urgency.

"Speak up, say something!"

Zheng Honghu was quicker to react, he slammed the table and startled Chen Jiutian.

"How many times have I told you, I don't want to implement this short-term strategy, it's dangerous! Not only are you in danger, but I also face tremendous risk!"

"But what is the situation now, I don't need to say it! If we don't act, we are doomed, if we act, there is still a chance of life!"

"Yet you still want everything to be perfect, thinking of keeping yourself clear, with no risk at all? Is that possible! You've been in the corporate world so long, do you think— is that possible!"

"I'm telling you, you not only can't stay out of it, but you also need to take the initiative to strike, to get proactively involved! Only by doing so can you turn the tables and turn defeat into victory!"

"Fortune favors the bold, there's no need for me to explain this principle to you, right?"

Zheng Honghu's stern rebuke left Chen Jiutian speechless.

Indeed, indeed!

With the situation as it is, he definitely couldn't stay out of it; any "unexpected situation" that occurs, especially something happening to Bai Xiaosheng, would make people suspect him first!

Affairs Officers are all cunning, Senior Affairs Officers even more so.

Xiahou Qi is the boss of these people, how could it be possible to deceive them!

Sweat beads suddenly formed on Chen Jiutian's forehead.

His heart was already in turmoil, his rationality gradually fading.

A phone call from Bai Xiaosheng made him even more agitated.

He actually asked such a childish question!

"Zheng brother, it's my fault! My mind... is in chaos! So, surely Zheng brother will help me! Afterwards, Chen will express his gratitude immediately, and in the group, any profit to be made, Zheng brother will have a share!"

Chen Jiutian's words were earnest.

Now, he had no choice but to rely on Zheng Honghu, and he truly viewed Zheng as a lifesaver.

Zheng Honghu was pleased, he nodded and said apologetically, "Just now, I was a bit agitated too, Chen brother shouldn't mind. There is a way, and there are risks as well. However, I've calculated that the chance of success outweighs the risk! As long as you follow my method, turning danger into safety is not impossible!"

"Oh?"

Chen Jiutian's eyes brightened, displaying a stance of eager learning, "Teach me, Zheng brother!"

Zheng Honghu leaned forward and asked Chen Jiutian with a smile, "Let me ask you, this Bai Xiaosheng, is just a general manager of a direct subsidiary, has a history of grievances with your Chen family, and couldn't possibly have the connections within the group's enterprises in Anjiang, let alone in the East China. So how did he get hold of those pieces of evidence against your brother Chen Jiuzheng, through what channels, by what means!"

Chen Jiutian was struck as if by a thunderclap, his eyes wide open.

Since the incident, he had been in a continuous panic, and he had completely failed to consider this question!

"Could it be that someone is supporting Bai, that he is a pawn others are using to attack me!" Chen Jiutian asked, staring at Zheng Honghu.

"That's not important!" Zheng Honghu scoffed.

"Not important?!" Chen Jiutian was shocked and confused.

"What you are thinking is a conspiracy theory. However, Bai Xiaosheng's evidence is solid. Do you think Mr. Xiahou Qi and others would listen to your suspicions and let off Chen Jiuzheng? Would they cease the investigation into your brother?"

Zheng Honghu scoffed, "However, the conspiracy theory is correct! But it should be directed, not at some invisible and intangible behind-the-scenes manipulator, but rather—at Bai Xiaosheng!"

Chen Jiutian immediately focused his attention.

"Bai Xiaosheng, in just a few months, rose from deputy head of Zhongjing Media to general manager, and even became a New-type Affairs Officer. So young, don't you think his rise was too fast? If he could get hold of Chen Jiuzheng's evidence, couldn't he also get others'?" Zheng Honghu tapped on the documents.

Chen Jiutian was puzzled.

"I'll say it directly. This Bai Xiaosheng, through abnormal channels and by deliberately setting traps, has obtained evidence of neglect, greed, corruption of many important corporate executives, and has used it to extort and blackmail them for support and high-value assets!"

"You, Chen Jiutian, had already received messages about this. To expose this villain Bai, you didn't hesitate to let your own brother face danger, to lure out this person, understand?"

"You are the righteous ones, Bai is the evil one."

"These people must admit their own crimes, while also fiercely accusing Bai."

"Of course, you can say that Bai is being instructed by someone behind the scenes!"

"We need to muddy the waters first. Once they are muddied, we can turn the tide! Before the investigation by the Affairs Department starts, you will have communicated sufficiently with your loyalists; there's enough time!"

"By your suggestion, in public before Mr. Xiahou Qi, with many witnesses present, even the president of the Greater China Region couldn't ignore it, right?"

"This is my train of thought!"

Zheng Honghu stared at Chen Jiutian, "What we need to do is to make this flawed train of thought credible, at least to the point where most people believe it's possible! That's enough!"

Chen Jiutian listened in disbelief, murmuring, "Is that even possible! This is too unconventional, too risky..."

"But, to turn the tide, one must indeed play a ruthless hand!"

"When should I report it?" Chen Jiutian asked.

"Tomorrow morning!" Zheng Honghu replied.

"Tomorrow?!" Chen Jiutian jumped, startled.

That was, too fast!

Chapter 823: The Day of the Final Battle

"Indeed, it will be implemented early tomorrow morning!"

Zheng Honghu said with absolute certainty, his voice resolute, barely a hint of a trailing tone.

Chen Jiutian puzzled over the timing, "Is it necessary to be so early?"

"Delay could lead to mishaps! We need to act swiftly to outpace them," Zheng Honghu said, "Moreover, tomorrow morning presents an opportunity!"

"Oh?"

"Right when work starts, Xiahou Qi will be hearing the report from the affairs department. All the Affairs Officers, Senior Affairs Officers, and some assistant affairs officers in the headquarters will be present—it's the perfect occasion!"

Zheng Honghu excitedly explained, "Imagine, in front of all these people, once the issue is raised, even if it sounds like nonsense, Xiahou Qi cannot ignore it. He must check it out, and that will take quite some time, enough for you to make arrangements."

"Not to mention, we are not talking nonsense. We are refining and improving, making this unbelievable matter seem real and credible!"

Zheng Honghu smiled, "Turning the tide, do you think it's possible?"

Chen Jiutian's eyes brightened, and he nodded repeatedly, "Yes, now that you mention it, I feel very confident."

"For the first half of the night, Brother Chen, don't sleep. I will work with you to perfect the plan quite substantially, then you can rehearse it at home. 'How to speak, what problems might arise, how will you respond.' You need to think of all these!"

"When the time comes, it will be you on stage, and I can't help you. However, I will also attend that meeting and secretly cheer for you!" Zheng Honghu said.

"Alright, alright, I'll listen to you!" Chen Jiutian nodded repeatedly.

At this moment, his brain probably wasn't even functioning at half its usual level of intelligence.

As the saying goes, "participants are confused," and even when someone enlightens them, though they may no longer be confused, there's still "chaos from caring too much."

In any case, being able to maintain his composure in the midst of this whirlwind, Chen Jiutian was doing quite well.

Immediately, the two of them stopped talking nonsense and picked up the materials to start devising the plan.

Of course, Chen Jiutian had also questioned, must so many direct family members be sacrificed, could there be fewer?

To this query, Zheng Honghu's response was negative.

"With fewer people, can we still create a sensation? We need a big issue, a big mess; only in such chaos can you make your escape!"

Zheng Honghu's words made a lot of sense.

Chen Jiutian complied.

"Just some direct family members, in a few years, we can support another batch. Now it's time for them to repay me, Chen Jiutian, for my nurture!" Ultimately, Chen Jiutian made up his mind.

He tended to hesitate a lot before acting, but once he was committed, he would execute his decisions with determination.

"Brother Chen is meant for great things!" In view of this, Zheng Honghu greatly admired him.

The two of them continued working on the plan until just before midnight, revising it over and over, steadily enhancing its credibility.

Chen Jiutian's confidence also grew stronger.

Finally, by midnight, the plan was completely settled.

"I should leave now, ponder it for a couple more hours! Tomorrow morning, I look forward to your performance, and I'll be rooting for you!" Zheng Honghu yawned, encouraging Chen Jiutian.

"This time, thanks, Brother Zheng. Once I get past this hurdle, I will never forget it in this life!"

Chen Jiutian gratefully escorted Zheng Honghu out and watched him get into the car and leave.

After sending off Zheng Honghu, Chen Jiutian turned and strode back to his study with a firm, resolute step, almost striding like a tiger.

"Tomorrow, I must turn the tide. Bai Xiaosheng, you can't defeat me!"

Holding the finalised plan, Chen Jiutian couldn't stop Bai Xiaosheng's youthful face from popping into his mind.

Chen Jiutian couldn't help but sneer.

To save the Chen Family from disaster, he was determined to completely destroy Bai!

Next, Chen Jiutian burned the midnight oil.

However, he was getting on in years and hadn't pulled an all-nighter in a long time; just an hour later, at one in the morning, he began to doze off, and even unknowingly fell asleep while sitting.

"No, I can't sleep yet!"

Chen Jiutian abruptly stood up, paced swiftly around the room several times, and poured himself a full cup of strong coffee, gulping it down while it was still slightly scorching.

Still feeling it wasn't enough, he directly grabbed a tie worth thousands and tightly wrapped it around his forehead.

Thus, he felt full of drive and his fighting spirit soared.

He spent thirty minutes doing these, after which, he endured for another twenty minutes.

Two in the morning.

Chen Jiutian collapsed onto the bed and deeply fell asleep.

The snoring was extraordinarily loud, by comparison, the ring of an incoming call seemed insufficiently loud.

Greater China Region Headquarters, in the guest room.

Upon arrival at the headquarters and settled there, Chen Jiuzheng held the phone, frowning.

He had finally escaped Bai Xiaosheng's watchful eyes and could make a call, however—

"Tian is asleep? Why isn't he answering the phone!"

No one answered the entire time.

Chen Jiuzheng sighed and gave up, "Never mind, we'll talk tomorrow."

Bai Xiaosheng, who had returned to his own room, was sleeping more sweetly than anyone at that moment.

The next day, early in the morning, Chen Jiutian was awakened by Zheng Honghu's incessant calls again and again.

At first, he was a bit annoyed, heavy with sleep inertia.

But seeing over a dozen missed calls and the name Zheng Honghu, he suddenly woke up!

Today was no time for oversleeping, it was a significant day.

"The battle for success or failure lies here!" Chen Jiutian felt his fighting spirit surge.

"Brother Zheng, I am ready and will arrive at the headquarters in half an hour!" Chen Jiutian replied to Zheng Honghu with a message.

"Excellent, the meeting here will start in twenty minutes, our show begins the moment you arrive!" Zheng Honghu responded.

Chen Jiutian was like a warrior about to enter the battlefield, fully equipped.

Before leaving, Chen Jiutian picked up the plan and went through it thoroughly again.

Although feeling a slight headache and grogginess from the lack of sleep, he felt it wouldn't affect his performance!

Everything was well thought out, including potential problems and surprises!

Chen Jiutian prepared everything, exited his door, and drove directly to the headquarters.

Upon arriving at the headquarters, he only encountered some affairs assistants, no big shots.

The assistants gave him slightly odd glances as they greeted him.

This was understandable, considering his younger brother Chen Jiuzheng was under investigation.

Chen Jiutian didn't mind.

"They must all be in the meeting, waiting for me!" Chen Jiutian thought to himself.

Standing in front of the large conference room door at the headquarters, Chen Jiutian paused for a moment, took a deep breath, and then slowly exhaled.

"I'm here!" he whispered to himself, and knocked on the door.

"Come in!"

Accompanying Xiahou Qi's short, robust voice, Chen Jiutian pushed open the door before him.

Strangely, at the moment he pushed the door open, Chen Jiutian felt an indescribable sense of relief, along with a slight dizziness.

Without further thought, he stepped in.

Then, Chen Jiutian saw, a full room of people, all looking at him solemnly.

Waiting for him!

Chapter 824 Who Are You Talking About?

The grand conference room was in session, but the content of the meeting was unknown.

However, on stage sat Xiahou Qi and seven Senior Affairs Officers in a row.

Chen Jiutian knew that three Senior Affairs Officers were away; only these seven at the headquarters were in attendance, making it a full house.

Beneath the stage, there must have been three hundred people including Affairs Officers and their assistants.

Almost all the important figures were present in one way or another.

This was an important meeting!

"Why did I forget to ask Zheng Honghu what meeting this was?" Chen Jiutian couldn't help but mutter to himself.

Of course, what meeting it was didn't matter. In his view, the content had nothing to do with him.

That's why he didn't ask at the time.

At that moment, Chen Jiutian felt an inexplicable urge to know the content of the meeting.

However, this was merely a fleeting thought, and he certainly wouldn't actually ask.

"Chen Jiutian, you're here? Do you have something to say?" Xiahou Qi asked from the stage, his face showing no emotion as he stared at him.

"Yes," Chen Jiutian replied promptly.

After speaking, Chen Jiutian suddenly had a peculiar feeling.

He couldn't quite pinpoint the oddness but felt a vague and inexplicable unease.

Too nervous?

Chen Jiutian thought to himself. As the head of the Greater China Region, his status was on par with that of the Senior Affairs Officers on stage; he had seen all sorts of challenges over the years and had always stood firm, unmoved by the storms.

And now, to be nervous?!

It seemed incredible to Chen Jiutian.

Yet, he felt that his emotions were not due to nervousness.

What was the cause, then?

He couldn't think.

Whether it was recent anxiety leading to a scattered mind or lack of energy due to staying up late the night before, both made his brain lethargically slow to react.

And right now, he didn't have the time to think.

From the moment he came in, Chen Jiutian had locked eyes with Xiahou Qi, not even having the time to notice the looks from others.

But without looking, Chen Jiutian could guess the expressions of the people below—curiosity, astonishment, puzzlement at why he had barged directly into the meeting room!

"It doesn't matter, your misunderstanding is fine, your suspicions are fine too, I just have to throw out a conspiracy theory about Bai Xiaosheng and everything else will be drawn to that. Whether you doubt or speculate about my actions, in the end, the focus will shift there!" Chen Jiutian thought to himself confidently.

He glanced at Zheng Honghu on the stage, who looked back at him with an encouraging gaze.

We will be successful, our plan will be successful!

Chen Jiutian affirmed his belief.

Once the bow is drawn, there's no turning back. In fact, from the moment he stepped in, there was only one path left for him to take.

Chen Jiutian was clear about this, so he quickly adjusted his mindset.

"Chen Jiutian, in this Greater China Region, apart from me as the President, it is your level, one below me and above tens of thousands. You've interrupted our meeting, so you must have something important to say. Alright, I will give you this opportunity, you may speak now!" Xiahou Qi said.

"Yes," Chen Jiutian nodded respectfully.

Locking eyes with Xiahou Qi again, Chen Jiutian started to realize something.

Part of the reason he felt strange was the demeanor and manner in which Xiahou Qi spoke.

Normally, even as a regional head, interrupting such an important meeting wouldn't come without a reprimand.

Moreover, something about Xiahou Qi's words when he had asked him was off.

"Perhaps Xiahou Qi suspected that I would come to defend myself, which is why he did this!" Chen Jiutian quickly gave himself a reasonable answer.

"It doesn't matter, as long as you listen to what I'm about to say, you will follow my train of thought, and in front of so many people, even you, the President of the Greater China Region, might not be able to control the situation," Chen Jiutian murmured to himself.

Then, he cleared his throat, his words clear and his expression urgent, "Elder Xia, this is the situation! Recently, I received reports from several important company general managers under my jurisdiction, claiming that someone intentionally schemed multiple layouts to extort them, profiting in the process and deceiving the Affairs Department to secure promotions repeatedly!"

As Chen Jiutian spoke, he took out materials from his document bag, holding them in his hands and exclaimed loudly, "The breadth of involvement, the number of people implicated, and the complexity of the insider dealings are shocking!"

"What's even more shocking is that the person involved has recently risen straight up in the Affairs Department, which is simply inconceivable!"

"I suspect that there must be a mastermind behind this! That's why I've been holding back, trying every possible means to root out the cancer for the group!"

"In order to collect evidence, I had my brother, who is also the industrial leader of Anjiang Province, Chen Jiuzheng, cooperate with the setup to lure him into the trap!"

"But what I didn't expect was that the person is exceedingly cunning, and managed to take a step ahead; my brother, Chen Jiuzheng, was instead framed!"

"Therefore, today I took the risk of barging into this major meeting to bring the real culprit to light and to clear Chen Jiuzheng's name!"

In Chen Jiutian's voice, there was a hint of excitement.

Whether it was the indignation toward the "vile person" or the pity for Chen Jiuzheng's "wrongful accusation," Chen Jiutian's expressions conveyed genuine emotion, a textbook example of acting.

Even professional actors would have to acknowledge his skill!

However, as Chen Jiutian's passionate words flew across the room, Xiahou Qi and the seven Senior Affairs Officers present, were actually expressionless!

Not even the slightest ripple of emotion!

Chen Jiutian blinked in confusion, then a sense of ill-omen began to rise deep inside him!

How could such a significant matter elicit no response from them, how could they be so numb!

Most importantly, how come none of the three hundred people in the audience cried out or murmured in response.

Only then did Chen Jiutian realize that he had not been paying attention to the reactions of the audience.

Thinking this, he quickly turned to look.

Three hundred people were silent, their expressions strangely looking at him.

In the front row corner, there were even people lying down—sleeping!

Seeing the unusual looks in the eyes of the Affairs Officers and assistants, Chen Jiutian couldn't help but shiver uncontrollably.

A chilling cold ran from his tailbone up his spine, straight to the back of his head!

He finally realized why he felt so uneasy as soon as he entered.

The atmosphere was off, the reactions were wrong!

And that response did not refer to Xiahou Qi alone, but to everyone present!

Chen Jiutian had a very bad feeling—he sensed that he had fallen into a trap unknowingly.

"I wonder, the person who extorted various companies for profit, deceived the Affairs Department, and even gained promotions that Mr. Chen Jiutian mentioned—who might that be?"

In the silent meeting room, someone finally spoke up.

In the quiet environment, even a soft voice sounded exceptionally clear.

At the sound, Chen Jiutian's skin instantly prickled.

He hurriedly turned towards the direction of the voice.

In the corner, the person who had been lying down and sleeping finally sat up, stretching lazily in the process.

That unforgettable young face wore a smile brimming with mockery.

Chen Jiutian stared in disbelief, his eyes wide with incredulity as he looked at the person.

Rendered speechless as if seeing a ghost, he could no longer speak.

Bai Xiaosheng—he was supposed to be in Zhongjing!

Why was he here!

Chapter 825: The Dust Settles

"Mr. Chen, I'm asking you, come on, speak up, I want to hear too!" Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile, raising his voice, "You mentioned that reckless scammer, that bad guy who deceived everyone—who is he? Do I know him?"

Chen Jiutian's eyes widened in fright as he stared straight at Bai Xiaosheng.

He opened his mouth but couldn't utter a word.

"I guess that person over there has swindled the general managers of twenty-four top-tier conglomerates in your group."

"Not only deceiving them but also using all kinds of tricks and schemes to drag them into corruption and fraud, right?"

"However, the people under you were forced into corruption, yet they could pull back from the brink, worry not about their futures, and bravely come forward to denounce and expose, showing a heart of utter sincerity, which is admirable and commendable! All thanks to Mr. Chen's excellent leadership!"

"Mr. Chen Jiutian, you even used your brother as bait, all in the name of public duty, which is admirable!" Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile.

Chen Jiutian's eyes suddenly contracted—how did Bai Xiaosheng know there were twenty-four companies involved!

This number couldn't possibly be a guess!

In the current situation, no one present showed any surprise or shock on their faces, but their eyes gleamed with mockery.

Watching him, like a monkey jumping around in a performance.

This could only mean one thing!

He was betrayed!

Documents scattered from Chen Jiutian's hands as he angrily looked towards Zheng Honghu on stage.

Zheng Honghu was smiling at him, his eyes full of admiration and approval, seemingly praising silently, his acting was good.

"Zheng Honghu, you bastard, you deceived me!" Chen Jiutian roared in anger, pointing at Zheng Honghu and addressing Mr. Xiahou Qi, "Mr. President, Elder Xia, this guy was the one who directed me to act this out, it was him, he tricked me! And Bai Xiaosheng too, they were in it together, they both deceived me!"

Chen Jiutian felt incredibly wronged, filled with anger.

He had trusted Zheng Honghu so much, yet Zheng Honghu had deceived and betrayed him!

Zheng Honghu listened with a grin, as if Chen Jiutian was complimenting him.

"Watch your tone, Chen Jiutian!" Mr. Xiahou Qi said sternly.

"Elder Xia, hear me out, it was all Zheng Honghu's deception, he made me say those things. You've reprimanded him publicly multiple times, you know his character, right!" Chen Jiutian said urgently.

At this moment, he was like a headless fly, unable to find any direction or logic.

Only thinking about whom he could bite, making someone else the scapegoat.

Mr. Xiahou Qi looked at him deeply, then surveyed the audience.

"I believe by now, everyone must understand. Great Official Zheng Honghu, for today, has made many sacrifices. Here, I want to vindicate him, he is a man of integrity and deserving of respect, I, on behalf of the Office, thank him!"

Downstage, Bai Xiaosheng, with a smile, led the applause.

And then, the applause erupted.

Chen Jiutian looked dazedly at this scene.

Praising Zheng Honghu, praising his 'many sacrifices' for today?!

It's all fake! All of it! Zheng has never been targeted by Mr. Xiahou Qi!

This has all been a play, performed for... me!

Suddenly, Chen Jiutian felt a chill, a bone-deep chill that made his heart quiver, and his body tremble.

Zheng Honghu knew too many of his secrets.

Chen Jiutian struggled to furrow his brows, starting to think.

Since when did he trust Zheng Honghu, a man he wasn't very close to, so completely!

Chen Jiutian recollected everything.

It started with cooperation, born from "fellow sufferers," later having Bai Xiaosheng as a common enemy, fueled by mutual revenge, until Chen Jiuzheng met with trouble, and he was blackmailed, thus he decided to retaliate and recognize Zheng Honghu.

What about the Hedong Province industry leaders having leverage over Zheng Honghu, as well as having a hold on Zheng Honghu!

It was all a trap!

No wonder I was able to find Zheng's weak spots so easily at the beginning!

Looking back, everything was traceable!

Chen Jiutian had understood now, but it was too late.

Step by step, his intelligence seemed to have deserted him as he fell into the other party's plot.

Both Zheng and Bai were in it together!

Only I was a complete fool, manipulated thoroughly.

The mastermind behind the scenes? He exists! It's none other than Mr. Xiahou Qi of the Greater China Region!

Only he could arrange everything! To set me up! Chen Jiutian had an epiphany, fully awakening without a doubt.

"All of you are framing me, none of you are good!" In his despair, Chen Jiutian threw down what he held in his hands and angrily pointed at Xiahou Qi, at Zheng Honghu, at Bai Xiaosheng, yelling, "I will report to the highest level of the corporation, I will accuse you! I want to..."

Yes, Zheng Honghu had looked at the documents, but he hadn't taken them away!

That, Chen Jiutian remembered clearly!

Just relying on what Zheng Honghu verbally recounted, what does that matter to anyone who heard it if you can't bring out the evidence!

Facing Chen Jiutian's hysteria, everyone else seemed unusually quiet.

The crazier a person acts, the more it shows his inner powerlessness.

Everyone knew this.

"Chen Jiutian, any struggle is futile, I have photographed all that evidence, before you arrived, we all had already seen it! Thank you for trusting me," said Zheng Honghu.

Chen Jiutian looked at Zheng Honghu with a mix of shock and anger.

I had shown him those private documents involving my assets, yet I hadn't let him take them away, only to find out Zheng Honghu had secretly recorded them.

That kind of high-definition secret recording equipment, the affairs department had it, but I had forgotten!

"No wonder, when you were looking at the documents, so thoroughly, so slowly, you even, you..." Chen Jiutian felt like he was about to vomit blood.

Now there was undeniable evidence! Who should he appeal to, who could he accuse?

If the matter even reached the highest level of the corporation, it was he who was the problem and should be dealt with!

Realizing this, Chen Jiutian's face turned ashen.

"Mr. Chen Jiutian, aren't you curious why we all gathered here today, why everyone is here, for what kind of meeting?" Bai Xiaosheng suddenly asked.

This question made Chen Jiutian turn towards Bai Xiaosheng, his eyes wide and questioning.

"Today's meeting is for you! We've already concluded the hearing for the first half. At this point, if you have nothing to say, we can finish here!" Bai Xiaosheng said calmly.

Chen Jiutian's eyes widened, but not out of surprise, rather a realization of "so that's it."

Possibly, Zheng Honghu had painstakingly arranged this counterattack, partly to extract evidence, and partly to give him the illusion he could turn the tables to lure him into a trap instead of fleeing!

With the content and amount of his embezzlement and corruption, he was likely facing at least ten years of imprisonment.

Chen Jiutian was not ignorant of the law, on the contrary, he understood it.

"Do you have anything else to say?" Xiahou Qi looked at him, asking calmly.

Everyone was watching him.

Chen Jiutian felt a wave of weakness throughout his body, and under everyone's gaze, he actually fell to the ground, his expression indescribably desperate and forlorn.

"I am finished."

These were the last words Chen Jiutian said, only three words.

Incredibly concise, yet more telling than a thousand words.

Chapter 826: Escaping the Vortex

Everyone watched as Chen Jiutian was led away, barely able to walk, requiring the support of two people.

The once-powerful regional head now looked, unmistakably, like a dead dog!

His face of deathly pallor made an indelibly strong impression.

A provincial industry head and a regional chief met such an end, eliciting endless sighs.

Blinded by greed, he was neither the first, nor would he be the last.

Next, Chen Jiutian and others led by Chen Jiuzheng would be transferred to the judicial authorities, where legal sanctions awaited them.

Xiahou Qi surveyed the crowd.

The reason for convening this meeting with such fanfare, apart from dealing with Chen Jiutian, was also to warn those present.

"Ladies and gentlemen," Xiahou Qi said solemnly.

The crowd's attention was drawn; they sat up straight, watching intently.

"The Chen brothers, Jiutian and Jiuzheng, are parasites, eroding our management layer, embezzling the group's assets. This we cannot tolerate. At any time, regardless of their positions, the outcome will not be favorable! If not by our department, then by the corporate inspection team. The investigation against Chen Jiutian and others also came from the high levels of the inspection team!"

The crowd was struck with solemnity.

In terms of penetration and investigative power, the department and the inspection team were not on the same level.

Being targeted by the inspection team, the corrupt Chen Family was doomed to collapse.

It was only through the department's intervention that they retained a last shred of dignity.

"Power is never a tool for reckless behavior, nor does it allow anyone to act lawlessly. It is a double-edged sword; anyone who uses it to slice the cake of interests will inevitably place themselves in extreme danger. Today, I want you to remember this, and I hope you, the supervisors, take it as a cautionary tale!"

Having spoken, Xiahou Qi paused, looked around at everyone, and repeated the well-known proverb, "Justice may be delayed, but it will never be absent!"

This warning left the crowd in solemn reflection.

Bai Xiaosheng watched quietly as Chen Jiutian was taken away, listening to Xiahou Qi's admonition to the department.

He had a long-standing grudge against the Chen Family; logically, with Chen Jiutian gone, and Chen Jiuzheng too, he should be the winner, a cause for celebration.

Yet, Bai Xiaosheng felt no joy, only a calmness inside.

In truth, even without the evidence secretly photographed by Zheng Honghu from Chen Jiutian, he could have forced Chen Jiutian out and even have him handed over to the judicial authorities, since Lei Ying had collected a plethora of testimonies and evidence.

However, the sources of these testimonies, and the explanations thereof, were improper and highly troublesome.

Nor were they completely irrefutable evidence.

Since Zheng Honghu's plan had been long in the making, Bai Xiaosheng simply decided to cooperate with it.

This brought a perfect endpoint, a happy resolution for all.

About this collaboration with Zheng Honghu, it was actually a coordinated strategy discussed between him, Xiahou Qi, and Zheng Honghu.

Xiahou Qi even said, with this merit, after another outstanding two years, his role as a New-type Affairs Officer would certainly be upgraded.

To this promise, Bai Xiaosheng just smiled.

He had a more reliable way of moving up!

As Chen Jiutian was led away, the voice of Red Lotus also echoed in his mind.

"Cooperating with Great Official Zheng Honghu of the Greater China Region Affairs Department to eliminate the corrupt regional head, Chen Jiutian, reward points twenty-five!"

"Current phase bonus, all points obtained increase by twenty percent, earning an additional five points."

"Your total score is now forty-eight points at the Affairs Officer level; you are fifty-two points away from the Senior Affairs Officer level!"

One Chen Jiutian amounted to a gain of thirty points!

It also brought his final score closer to more than half, considering he had only been appointed a few days ago!

Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but marvel.

The scoring was somewhat fast!

However, he also knew that having both a regional director and a provincial industry director fall into his hands at the same time

was less likely than winning the lottery.

"The remaining fifty-two points won't be so easy to obtain, but being a New-type Affairs Officer allows for inspection tours in the Greater China Region, with the freedom to inspect independently. Quite wonderful!" Bai Xiaosheng thought to himself, a smile finally curling up at the corner of his mouth.

He planned to first travel to the south with Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying, as everyone had been quite exhausted recently. Besides carrying out inspections, they could enjoy the perks of the trip.

"This isn't considered using power for personal gain, right?" Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but glance at Xiahou Qi on the stage, looking very stern, and secretly stuck out his tongue.

While anti-corruption education was underway, he thought that perhaps it wasn't very appropriate for him to think these thoughts.

As Bai Xiaosheng looked over, Xiahou Qi happened to look his way, and Bai Xiaosheng immediately became serious.

"This time, we must specially commend Great Official Zheng Honghu, as well as Bai Xiaosheng! Affairs Department, record the performance, include it in the annual assessment, and also the career assessment!"

That sentence ignited the enthusiasm of everyone in the room, who turned their gaze toward Bai Xiaosheng and Zheng Honghu.

Under Xiahou Qi's lead, applause erupted, warm as a tide.

Bai Xiaosheng gave a modest smile to the crowd.

"This guy is really lucky, having helped solve Chen Jiutian and Chen Jiuzheng, one a regional director, the other a provincial industry director, how much performance credit is that!" Lin Ke exclaimed while clapping vigorously, smiling at Feng Li.

Feng Li smiled without saying a word.

From her perspective, all this was what Bai Xiaosheng deserved!

"Alright, I've said what I needed to say. Does anyone have anything else to say?" Xiahou Qi scanned the Senior Affairs Officers.

Everyone shook their heads.

"For the follow-up matters concerning Chen Jiutian, Zheng Honghu, Li Haofeng, you two follow up. Now, the meeting is adjourned!" Xiahou Qi said.

Having said this, he got up and left.

This major meeting finally adjourned.

After the meeting adjourned, Bai Xiaosheng was leaving when Wang Mubei called him into Xiahou Qi's office.

Xiahou Qi praised Bai Xiaosheng once again profusely.

"Calling you here to commend you is one aspect, giving awards, that's as it should be. However, I think you should get out for a bit, better not stay in the Affairs Department." Xiahou Qi suddenly said.

Bai Xiaosheng laughed.

"I was just about to tell you that I'm thinking about taking my assistant to the south, combining inspection with leisure, to indulge in corruption just this once."

"Granted!"

Xiahou Qi agreed heartily, then smiled at Bai Xiaosheng, "Do you know why I want you to leave so urgently?"

"A tree desires calm but the wind will not cease, when the tree grows in the woods, the wind will try to topple it!" Bai Xiaosheng said.

Xiahou Qi laughed and nodded, "Good, your perceptiveness is impressive!"

For Bai Xiaosheng, who had just handled such a major case, staying would mean either being excessively praised or targeted.

For him, it was all harm and no benefit.

Fortunately, the young man was insightful and had a cool head. Xiahou Qi was extremely satisfied.

Upon leaving the Greater China Region president's office and heading back to his own office, people along the way warmly greeted him, and Bai Xiaosheng returned their greetings very politely and courteously.

He truly had become a center of attention.

Upon reaching his office, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying were also discussing this matter, and they had become focal points as well.

"You two pack up; we are leaving tomorrow," Bai Xiaosheng said.

"What are we doing?"

"Escaping the vortex!" Bai Xiaosheng laughed.

Chapter 827: Beautiful Female Trafficker?

At nine in the morning, at Linshen City high-speed train station.

Two men and one woman, with one Lolita, a group of four, went through security to enter the station.

The two men: one with black hair and eyes, a gentle smile; the other tall and solidly built, with a vigorous stride.

The two women: the older one with a fetching face and curvaceous figure, walked with an elegance that carried a hint of fierceness.

The little Lolita was lively and lovely-looking, clearly a beauty in the making, destined to become a femme fatale when grown up.

Of course, that's assuming she would grow up at all.

These four people were none other than Bai Xiaosheng, Lin Ke, Lin Weiwei, and Lei Ying.

While waiting for the train, Bai Xiaosheng glanced at the ticket and couldn't help laughing, "Why did you book first class? I thought it would be business class."

The perks of an Affairs Officer were evident in the office. Expensive computers and all sorts of high-end gadgets were provided for everyone.

Any other office needs could also be requested from logistics.

Yet, when it came to travel, they weren't so particular: no fancy cars, and not even business class on the high-speed train.

"What, just because you took down a corrupt Chen Jiutian, you're thinking about corruption now?" Lin Ke scoffed with a smile, "The Affairs Department acts according to strict standards. The treatment for an Affairs Officer when traveling is just this. Only the old man and the Senior Affairs Officers are eligible for business class, and assistants get second class. Getting first class seats for all of us this time is already special treatment."

Bai Xiaosheng smiled at Lin Ke's explanation; he wasn't really bothered by it.

"Officer Lin, this time we are traveling with you to Yunhai City. I've never been to Yunhai, but I've heard of it. It's the southernmost quasi-first-tier city in our country. So, how is it, is the scenery nice? What's there to do for fun?" Lin Weiwei inquired cheerfully.

She had wanted to meet this Lolita Officer ever since Zhongjing.

Having interacted a few times over the last few days, she felt a closeness to Lin Ke, who also found her very agreeable.

"Weiwei, don't be so formal with your address, we're not at the company, you might as well call me Ake," Lin Ke said with a giggle.

"Ake sounds much cuter, and I remember you're even a year older than Lin Weiwei. Smells like someone's trying to act younger!" Bai Xiaosheng teased from the side.

"Just you wait, you talk too much, scram!" Lin Ke said, raising her fist in jest and throwing a pretend punch with lightning speed.

The girl's punching skills were quite something.

Bai Xiaosheng laughed and dodged, using Lei Ying as a human shield.

Lei Ying noticed Lin Ke's swift punches and his eyes lit up, but then dimmed again soon after.

He thought that although Lin Ke was quick, her punches lacked strength.

Understandable, since Lin Ke was a girl and lacked force. Adequate against the average person, but against a skilled fighter like Lei Ying, she was not effective at all.

Amidst laughing and joking, their train arrived.

The group boarded in succession. They brought quite a lot of stuff with them, with Lin Ke and Lin Weiwei's belongings accounting for about eighty percent of it.

Men travel wishing they could bring only themselves, while women travel wishing they could bring their entire house.

Such is a universal truth.

Bai Xiaosheng and Lei Ying had their hands full, helping the two women with large and small bags. It didn't matter whether they were heavy or not; the main problem was that there never seemed to be enough hands or wide enough doors.

Once on the train, and having found their seats, Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but grimace with a wry smile.

The way these tickets were booked was just perfect!

First class had four seats in a row, two by two, separated by an aisle.

The four of them were split into the front and back rows.

Not being in the same row was fine, it was acceptable.

The key issue was that all four of their seats were aisle seats, leaving the window seats vacant.

It must take a special skill to book tickets like this, Bai Xiaosheng thought with a sigh.

Everyone else couldn't help but laugh.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying were in the back row.

Lin Ke sat next to Bai Xiaosheng across the aisle, talking, "Let's see if we can switch seats when others arrive."

Bai Xiaosheng nodded in response.

Before long, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying, sitting in the next row, arrived, but those two preferred the window seats and were reluctant to switch.

At that moment, two young girls carrying things walked from the front.

"Hey, look!" Lin Ke nudged Bai Xiaosheng across the aisle.

Bai Xiaosheng looked over. The two girls were quite young, around twenty-three or twenty-four years old, both with long, silky black hair, dressed appropriately, and very beautiful, like a pair of sisters.

One had a delicate, serene face and was the demure type.

The other's eyes and brows twinkled with mischief, indicating she was the active type.

"Hmm, not bad, pretty!" Bai Xiaosheng commented.

"I wasn't talking about that. I mean, her bag is the same as mine," Lin Ke rolled her eyes at him.

Bai Xiaosheng was speechless.

The focus of men and women really was different. The same bag, what was there to be surprised about...

While Bai Xiaosheng silently grumbled, the two beauties reached them and looked left and right; their seats just happened to be the window ones next to Bai Xiaosheng and Lin Ke.

These two beauties were indeed "something"; managing to book seats leaving two people in between them for a trip...

"Excuse us, could we switch with you?" the demure-type beauty asked Bai Xiaosheng.

Her smile was sweet and her voice carried a hint of shyness, making it hard to refuse.

"Sure," Bai Xiaosheng was already contemplating it, smiled, and stood up to walk towards Lin Ke.

The beautiful girl gave Bai Xiaosheng a grateful smile, parted her lips to say thanks.

But before she could speak, a cry of surprise came from beside her.

"Wow, what a pretty little Lolita!" exclaimed the active-type beauty, looking at Lin Ke, "Little sister, how old are you? Are you in high school? Your skin is so fair, your eyes so big; are you interested in cosplay? I happen to be the leader of a club."

Bai Xiaosheng and others around cast peculiar looks at the woman.

The demure-type beauty hurried over to pull her companion away, chiding, "Jiang Yue, stop it... don't you think that's embarrassing!"

"I'm scouting for new talent, what's embarrassing about that?" Jiang Yue couldn't resist arguing with her companion, "I'm saying, Miss Su Lingyu, you should support your friend's endeavors, not hold her back."

Seeing Bai Xiaosheng look over, Su Lingyu smiled awkwardly and forcibly seated Jiang Yue by the window, "Okay, rest now! You act like you're trafficking lolis!"

Meanwhile, Su Lingyu placed their bags on the luggage rack, pausing when she saw an identical one.

"We'll have to be careful when getting off, let's not take the wrong one."

Su Lingyu placed the remaining bag on the opposite shelf, sat down, and prepared to emphasize something to Jiang Yue.

But she saw Jiang Yue leaning forward, waving at Lin Ke from a distance, "Hey, won't you reconsider? You've got great specs!"

Su Lingyu, feeling helpless, saw Bai Xiaosheng looking at her and involuntarily shrugged her shoulders in a resigned gesture.

Meanwhile, at Bai Xiaosheng's side, Lin Ke listened to all this with a grin, quite flattered and delighted, and even tugged at Bai Xiaosheng, whispering, "Did you hear that? I was born beautiful!"

Bai Xiaosheng silently rolled his eyes.

Next, Su Lingyu and Jiang Yue initiated a conversation, repeatedly mentioning a place name— "Linzhou City."

That was an intermediate stop on this train ride.

"That little missy is really good; otherwise, we'll just kidnap her? Bringing her home will make everyone happy!"

While listening, Bai Xiaosheng suddenly heard this bizarre statement from across.

He was momentarily stunned and turned his head to look over.

What could it mean, were these two beauties human traffickers?!

Chapter 828: An Unexpected Turn of Events

"What are you blabbering about!" Su Lingyu jumped in fright and couldn't help but push Jiang Yue, telling her to stop talking nonsense.

Jiang Yue giggled, "Look how scared you are. Have you ever seen a trafficker who can say such things in public? I was just joking!"

Bai Xiaosheng remained silent.

In public, she dares to joke about anything?! This Jiang Yue is really a brazen crazy girl!

After complaining about Jiang Yue, Su Lingyu glanced back and accidentally made eye contact with Bai Xiaosheng. She immediately smiled apologetically to explain, "My friend is talking nonsense... that, your sister is really quite cute."

Su Lingyu felt quite embarrassed.

This girl had a personality completely opposite to Jiang Yue's, composed and proper, gentle and dignified.

"It's alright," Bai Xiaosheng smiled at her, "And she's not my sister, she's my friend."

Friend? Su Lingyu was startled.

An adult and a lolita are friends... She found it somewhat unbelievable.

Actually, Bai Xiaosheng really didn't care whether the other party was a trafficker or not. If bulky tough guys tried to kidnap Lin Ke, they would only end up with a miserable fate.

That little girl has some really fierce moves.

"Your friend? Boyfriend and girlfriend? Then you are breaking the law, that constitutes luring a minor!" Jiang Yue leaned forward, looking at Bai Xiaosheng with a cold eye.

Su Lingyu reflexively pushed Jiang Yue's leaning head back in and smiled apologetically at Bai Xiaosheng, "Don't mind her."

"It's just a joke," smiled Bai Xiaosheng.

Lin Ke watched them chatting so enthusiastically, a hint of malice flashed in her eyes, and she pretended to be cute, looking at Su Lingyu and the others, "Sisters, this brother of mine is single. Plus, he has an outstanding character and is successful. Maybe you should consider him."

This girl is really too much!

Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but glare at her.

However, Lin Ke didn't care at all and continued to grin at him.

"Forget it, your brother here, he looks just so-so. Character? That's something you can't see. Successful? At his age, without family help, how much can he achieve? Don't tell me he comes from a wealthy family—do heirs travel by high-speed train? And not even business class, give me a break," Jiang Yue snorted with disdain.

"That's enough!" Su Lingyu couldn't help but shout.

"Sister, you'll regret missing this opportunity for the rest of your life," Lin Ke huffed, clearly dissatisfied with Jiang Yue's disdain for Bai Xiaosheng.

It must be known that Bai Xiaosheng had made it on his own to become an Affairs Officer, and had recently taken down a district supervisor and a provincial industry head. What kind of rich heir could compare to him?

Lin Ke rolled up her sleeves, ready to argue.

Seeing this posture, Jiang Yue also wanted to have a good talk with this young girl, to lay a coat of dust on her naively foolish heart.

"You too, enough!" Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but shout.

It seemed that Jiang Yue was not planning to listen to Su Lingyu, and Lin Ke certainly wasn't going to listen to Bai Xiaosheng.

So, the two women shouted at each other across the space.

"You wet-behind-the-ears little girl, what do you know about character and success!"

"You blind old woman, what do you understand!"

"Oh really, you dare to insult me!"

"So what if I insult you, it was you who insulted me first anyway!"

The two of them bickered, each throwing remarks back and forth.

Sitting in the row behind, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying, one looking left and the other right, admired the swiftly passing trees outside the window, deliberately ignoring the scene in front. They didn't want to get involved; they were just there for the excitement.

Seeing the two of them at it tirelessly, Su Lingyu stood up and smiled at Lin Ke, "Little sister, how about we switch seats? That way, you two can communicate better."

Su Lingyu completely gave up on restraining Jiang Yue.

"Sure!"

Lin Ke, caught up in the heat of the argument, certainly wasn't going to pass up the opportunity and got up to switch seats with Su Lingyu.

Bai Xiaosheng didn't stop them. On the contrary, he appreciated Su Lingyu's action.

If they couldn't be stopped, then let them go on and poison each other.

Su Lingyu took Lin Ke's seat next to the aisle and exchanged a smile with Bai Xiaosheng.

Then, she lowered her head and fiddled with her phone—not online shopping, not checking her friends' social circle, but reading an e-book.

Bai Xiaosheng glanced over curiously and saw some sort of poetry collection.

As Su Lingyu read on, her eyes started to shimmer with tears.

In fact, they began to sparkle with tears.

Bai Xiaosheng accidentally discovered this and felt a sudden reverence.

Impressive! To be moved to tears by a poetry collection, she's no ordinary woman!

Bai Xiaosheng didn't disturb Su Lingyu.

On the other side, Lin Ke and Jiang Yue were deep in a lively conversation.

How these two managed it, he didn't know, but they'd actually stopped bickering and seemed to be enjoying themselves.

Bai Xiaosheng gazed at them from afar, unable to help but laugh and shake his head.

As the high-speed train traveled, at eleven o'clock, an announcement echoed through the carriage.

"The next stop is Linzhou City, please prepare for disembarking. Due to schedule adjustments for this train, the stopover will be brief. Please take note!"

Bai Xiaosheng's heart stirred—Linzhou was precisely the destination of the two girls!

Lin Ke and Jiang Yue were still chatting away.

Around the train, many people began packing up their things, indicating that a significant number would be getting off at this stop.

Bai Xiaosheng took the opportunity to have Red Lotus do a quick search; Linzhou was one of the top second-tier cities, comparable to Zhongjing if it was in Anjiang.

"Oh no, we're here!" Su Lingyu suddenly snapped out of her reading as the train came to a halt, shouted aloud, and seeing everyone getting off, hurriedly called out to Jiang Yue.

"Jiang Yue, grab that stuff over there, let's go let's go!" Su Lingyu said as she grabbed her belongings from this side.

Jiang Yue got up and picked up the luggage.

The two women bid farewell to Bai Xiaosheng and Lin Ke and followed the crowd out.

Lin Ke watched them go with a sense of reluctance.

"What's the matter, hard to part with your kindred spirit after just one encounter?" Bai Xiaosheng teased.

Uncharacteristically, Lin Ke didn't argue back but went along with it, "It's meeting an old friend in a foreign place. We shared many similar views on a lot of things, even our hobbies are similar, the bags we carried were the same, even down to the little crocodile ornament on the bags..."

At that moment, Lin Ke paused, and suddenly shouted, "That little crocodile ornament is a handmade custom piece, there can't be two of them!"

Then, she and Bai Xiaosheng exchanged glances and exclaimed in unison, "They took the wrong bags!"

"Hey!" Lin Ke yelled out loud.

The train carriage was in chaos and the two girls, already far away, didn't hear her at all.

"I'll help you chase them down and get them back!" Bai Xiaosheng said.

There was no time to ask Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying for help, as that would require explanations.

Bai Xiaosheng simply grabbed the bag from the rack and plunged into the crowd, determined to catch up and exchange the bags.

As Bai Xiaosheng burst out of the train, his gaze swept the area and he spotted Su Lingyu and Jiang Yue's figures in the distance, immediately dashing toward them.

He reached the turnstile, just as the two women walked through.

Bai Xiaosheng came to an abrupt halt.

Once outside, it would be difficult to get back in.

"Hey, Su Lingyu, Jiang Yue!" In his urgent state, Bai Xiaosheng called out loudly.

After several shouts, Su Lingyu seemed to hear something, looked back in confusion, and saw Bai Xiaosheng gesturing desperately.

She appeared surprised and whispered to Jiang Yue, who also turned back, curiously looking at him.

The two women hesitated for a moment before walking back.

"You called us, what's the matter?" Su Lingyu asked with curiosity.

Bai Xiaosheng didn't have time to explain when he heard a noise from behind him. Turning around, his eyes widened in shock.

The train was leaving!

Chapter 829: Coming to My Home!

Bai Xiaosheng was completely dumbfounded. Who could have thought that in such a short time, the train had left, gone...

The announcement did mention that the train's stopping time at this station would be brief, but he had not expected it to be so brief!

Bai Xiaosheng's phone rang, and he quickly checked it, it was a call from Lin Ke.

"Hello," Bai Xiaosheng said.

"Where are you? The train has left, why haven't you come back!" Lin Ke said urgently.

This girl, she's still worried about me!

Bai Xiaosheng felt a sigh of relief and comforted her quickly, "Don't worry, I..."

"Have you found the person? Where's my bag!" Lin Ke immediately followed up, yelling out loud.

Bai Xiaosheng was suddenly taken aback.

So, Officer Lin's concern was not for him, but for the bag.

"Rest assured, the bag... is right before my eyes," Bai Xiaosheng looked at Su Lingyu and Jiang Yue approaching, gave a bitter smile, raised his hand, and showed the bag he was holding.

"Ah, isn't that our bag! We must have left it on the train," Jiang Yue exclaimed, then looking at the bag in her hand, she said in surprise, "But our bag, isn't it in my hand..."

"Why is there an extra little crocodile decoration on this? This is someone else's, Jiang Yue, you took the wrong bag!" Su Lingyu quickly realized and yelled out.

Jiang Yue was also stunned.

Seeing the two of them like this, Bai Xiaosheng could only give a bitter smile.

If they had discovered the mistake earlier, it wouldn't have come to this, and he wouldn't have missed his train.

"Relax, we don't have any tasks this time, it's a leisure trip, an informal inspection. Linzhou, Yunhai, what's the difference? After all, Linzhou also has some very important enterprises of our group. Plus, Linzhou is famous for its dried fruits and preserves; go buy some for me. I'll send you a list in a bit," Lin Ke instructed earnestly over the phone.

Bai Xiaosheng was speechless.

Because of her bag, he had been left behind in Linzhou, and now he even had to buy her snacks.

"Ake, I really must have owed you in a past life!"

Bai Xiaosheng said gloomily into the phone, walked out of the gate, and handed the bag to Jiang Yue.

"Thanks. Though you're not exactly handsome, you're still pretty decent. I can see you have good character," Jiang Yue said, casually praising him as she switched bags.

"So what are you going to do now?" Su Lingyu couldn't help but ask, glancing at the train that was long gone.

It was because of them that this person missed his train, which made her feel a bit guilty.

Bai Xiaosheng hadn't spoken yet when Jiang Yue spoke up first, "The responsibility is mine, but you guys should also bear some of it. After all, why buy identical bags?"

"However, considering you returned the bag, I'll cover your train ticket to wherever you're going," she offered.

"This bag of mine, it's quite valuable, or else I wouldn't be thanking you so much," she added.

"But to me, it's not that cherished; otherwise, I wouldn't have left it on the luggage rack."

"Is that bag of yours real? It must be fake! Given how simply you guys are dressed, you don't look like rich people..."

Jiang Yue babbled on, causing Bai Xiaosheng's face to cool down and become expressionless.

"Jiang Yue!" Su Lingyu frowned and scolded softly.

She then quickly apologized to Bai Xiaosheng, "My friend isn't bad, she just has a very low EQ."

"It doesn't matter," Bai Xiaosheng said indifferently, picked up Lin Ke's bag, and was about to leave.

False? Lin Ke had said she had collected all the bags from this brand.

To collect them all, what does that imply!

It's exactly as the saying goes online, "Poverty limits her imagination."

Bai Xiaosheng couldn't be bothered to explain, she probably wouldn't believe him anyway.

"Hey, hey, are you not taking the money? I'm offering it to you, you can't make me feel like I'm taking advantage of you!" Jiang Yue directly pulled out her wallet.

Bai Xiaosheng sneered. Did he need money?

When Bai Xiaosheng put his hands into his pockets, his expression suddenly changed!

When getting the tickets, there were too many things to handle, so he had handed his entire wallet to Lin Weiwei. Right after getting on the bus, he had run into these two women and hadn't gotten it back yet.

All his money, all his documents, he didn't even have his ID card!

Bai Xiaosheng's face turned green.

What was the point of buying any specialty products now? Without his ID card, he couldn't even leave, let alone stay in a hotel. He could only sleep under a bridge...

"What's wrong with you?" Su Lingyu couldn't help but ask.

Jiang Yue also looked at him curiously.

"My ID and wallet are still on the bus," Bai Xiaosheng said through gritted teeth.

Ever since he had become the heir to the conglomerate's industries, he hadn't been this disheveled, down to not having food or a place to stay.

"Oh, you're in trouble!" Jiang Yue couldn't help but exclaim softly, looking at him with sympathy as she handed him a few hundred yuan. "Take this, you need it."

It was clearly because of this woman's mistake that he had ended up in such a predicament.

Now, her manner and attitude in offering the money seemed more like charity.

Bai Xiaosheng gave her a cold look and turned, walking away with his bag.

"Hey, don't you want the money? What will you eat?" Jiang Yue said anxiously.

"Wait a minute!" Su Lingyu suddenly called out and immediately chased after him, blocking Bai Xiaosheng's path.

"What do you want?" Bai Xiaosheng asked indifferently.

Even though these two women had put him in this situation, he really didn't want to get entangled over it. This place wasn't without its corporate entities; he could just seek help if it came to that.

But that would also be extremely embarrassing.

After all, an Affairs Officer without a dime to his name, reduced to begging—how could he mix in society after that?

Bai Xiaosheng wouldn't want to do this unless absolutely desperate. He was already famous enough lately; did he really need more attention?

"Come to my place!" Su Lingyu said, staring into Bai Xiaosheng's eyes, speaking earnestly.

"What?" Bai Xiaosheng was stunned when he heard this.

"What! You're letting him go to your place, Lingyu, how will you explain to your parents who he is?" Jiang Yue said frantically.

Su Lingyu looked into Bai Xiaosheng's eyes and said with a smile, "My friend!"

"A male friend, or a boyfriend! That won't do. Aren't your parents introducing that wealthy young man to you? If you bring him home like this, what will that mean? What if they find out!" Jiang Yue firmly objected. "We might as well give him more money..."

"Shut up!" Su Lingyu's voice was raised as she reprimanded, also giving Jiang Yue a glare.

"He missed his bus trying to return our bags, and now he doesn't even have an ID. What do you expect him to do?" Su Lingyu said, then looked at Bai Xiaosheng, insisting seriously, "Come to my place!"

When this girl was serious, her gaze truly made her impossible to refuse.

Bai Xiaosheng looked at her steadily for two seconds, seeing her unwavering determination, and then smiled, "Okay."

"Hey, are you really going?" Jiang Yue couldn't help but say anxiously.

"Let's go," Su Lingyu said, ignoring her best friend and leading the way.

"Okay," Bai Xiaosheng agreed painfully and did not pay any attention to Jiang Yue's complaints.

Watching them leave one after the other, Jiang Yue stamped her foot in annoyance and said, "Fine, fine, fine, you're the good person, and she's the great benefactor, and I'm the bad guy! Su Lingyu, I've warned you. If anything happens, don't blame me!"

Muttering to herself, Jiang Yue saw Bai Xiaosheng and Su Lingyu walking away and hurried after them.

"Wait for me!"

Chapter 830: Impressive, Bai Xiaosheng (Part 1)

"Today is my mom's birthday, so I need to buy her some gifts here before I can go back," Su Lingyu led the way, apologetically saying to Bai Xiaosheng, "Sorry to trouble you, but could you hang out with us for a bit?"

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, shrugged indifferently, "No problem, I'm free right now, just an idler. Plus, I'm staying at your place, so I don't mind being an attendant for now; consider it my room and board fee."

Su Lingyu was gentle by nature and particularly respectful, which Bai Xiaosheng really liked about her.

Moreover, while shopping, if he saw something Lin Ke wanted, he could buy it, thus killing two birds with one stone.

"Room and board fee? It's our fault your car got held up, so if anything, we owe you! I'd only feel relieved if I hadn't mess up your plans," Su Lingyu earnestly apologized again.

"Let's end this topic here!" Bai Xiaosheng smiled, "In the grand scheme of things, fate had it this way. Maybe this is destiny."

The word "destiny" was just something Bai Xiaosheng blurted out, without any deeper implications.

However, he forgot that in front of him was a woman of talent.

Upon hearing him, Su Lingyu's cheeks turned slightly red.

"Hey, what are you talking about, destiny? Who has destiny with you! I'm telling you, don't get too cozy with our Lingyu. She has a boyfriend, and he's quite wealthy! Can you compare with that?"

The words finally burst from Jiang Yue, who had been following behind them.

Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but glance at her.

"Why are you looking at me? I'm also planning to marry a rich man, so don't get any ideas about me!" Jiang Yue huffed.

Bai Xiaosheng sighed helplessly and turned his head away.

"Jiang Yue, what nonsense are you spouting? Who has a boyfriend!" Su Lingyu glared at Jiang Yue, "I'm telling you, that Han Chen is just someone my dad introduced to me, and I've never agreed to it!"

"You want to marry a rich man, so maybe he should be for you!"

Su Linghu seemed truly annoyed by the topic, frustrated that her close friend constantly reminded her and even showed envy, which irritated her as well.

Jiang Yue seemed a bit stunned by Su Lingyu's strong reaction.

After a solid two seconds, Jiang Yue stomped her foot in anger, "You, you, why are you saying things like this in front of an outsider? I was trying to help you!"

"Alright, I appreciate your concern, Yueyue, but please, let's drop it!" Su Lingyu gave a helpless, bitter smile, "I really have no interest in wealthy families at all!"

Jiang Yue pouted, catching Bai Xiaosheng's somewhat amused look and sharply glared at him.

"Let's keep moving," Su Lingyu changed the subject, looking at Bai Xiaosheng, "By the way, we haven't asked yet, what should we call you?"

"Bai Xiaosheng."

"Ah, my name is Su Lingyu."

Su Lingyu smiled and shook hands with Bai Xiaosheng. Although Jiang Yue had mentioned her name more than once, a proper introduction was still in order.

Bai Xiaosheng held the soft, white hand of the beautiful woman, feeling its smooth and boneless touch, utterly delighted.

"Bai Xiaosheng, that name sounds so plain, typical of an ordinary person," Jiang Yue muttered to herself from behind and then announced loudly, "My name is Jiang Yue."

This was her way of introducing herself. Bai Xiaosheng glanced at her, smiled faintly, nodded, and acknowledged her greeting.

The trio roamed through streets and lanes until they finally stopped in front of a shop that surprised Bai Xiaosheng; it was an ancient store selling the four treasures of the study, musical instruments, and paintings, quaintly named Jijinzhai.

It was his first time hearing about a daughter buying such things for her mother's birthday!

Bai Xiaosheng was somewhat shocked as well.

Jiang Yue muttered, "Like mother, like daughter. Aunt Yan raised you to be a knowledgeable and beautiful woman, yet she receives a pile of calligraphy supplies for her birthday. Can that even be considered a birthday gift? I give up! If my daughter ever gave me these, I would kill her, yes, I would definitely kill her!"

Su Lingyu couldn't help but give a wry smile, glancing at Jiang Yue, "Come on, why do you talk so much? These are just a part of the gift. Can't we mother and daughter have our personal interests? Later, I'm going to shop for clothes too!"

"That sounds more like it."

Hearing Su Lingyu say this, only then did Jiang Yue smile.

The three of them arrived at the entrance and saw the old shop's entryway flanked by wooden couplets.

Jiang Yue looked from left to right, "What are these characters? They're not simplified Chinese; I can't understand them."

"Refined speech and studied manners improve the learned," Bai Xiaosheng glanced and casually said, "It's Ancient Seal Script."

"You recognize it!" Su Lingyu looked at him in surprise.

"Really?" Jiang Yue was highly skeptical.

Bai Xiaosheng simply smiled and offered no explanation.

"Then do you know where this couplet comes from?" Su Lingyu couldn't help but ask eagerly.

Jiang Yue also looked at Bai Xiaosheng curiously.

"The upper couplet is from 'The Analects - Shu Er', 'The master's refined speech involved poetry, books, and rites—all refined speech.'"

"The lower couplet is from 'The Analects - Ji Shi', 'Beneficial are these three friends, harmful are these three friends. A friend who is upright, sincere, and well-informed is indeed beneficial.'"

Bai Xiaosheng said casually as he stepped into the store.

Su Lingyu, following behind, watched Bai Xiaosheng's back, her beautiful eyes lit up as she stepped in after him.

"This is bad, that jerk actually knows this stuff, and Lingyu can't resist it..." Jiang Yue saw clearly and couldn't help but worry with wide eyes, "She's my childhood best friend; I can't let her be fooled by a few pretentious sentences!"

Jiang Yue, fully alert, hurriedly followed.

Inside the store, Su Lingyu intentionally and unintentionally tested Bai Xiaosheng.

For such a beautiful girl to ask questions, to say he didn't know would simply diminish a man's pride.

Bai Xiaosheng knew all the answers.

With Red Lotus's help, what was Ancient Seal Script to him? He could even rattle off and correct the Imitation Oracle Bone Script in the store, mastering various calligraphy supplies and their characteristics, impressing the store staff, who also drew a crowd of onlookers.

Eventually, even the owner—a deeply cultured old man—was astonished and convinced by what Bai Xiaosheng said.

"Well, it's rare to encounter a fellow enthusiast so knowledgeable and yet so young. In that case, pick anything you like; I will give you a 50% discount as a token of our destined meeting!" the generous store owner offered an unprecedented big discount.

Su Lingyu's gaze towards Bai Xiaosheng shimmered with almost worshipful admiration.

"You've really got it, knowing so much. Quite capable indeed!"

Even Jiang Yue, seeing Bai Xiaosheng's confident and casual demeanor that won over everyone, couldn't help but praise him aloud.

Upon leaving Jijinzhai, Jiang Yue looked at Su Lingyu carrying bags and muttered, "Fifty percent off! If we could get the same discount on clothes later, that would be awesome."

"I could help you out with that too, maybe even haggle for you, but I doubt the clothing sellers are that generous."

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, carrying the items for Su Lingyu, leading the way ahead.

"No way, you mean to say you also know about fashion coordination!" Jiang Yue looked at Bai Xiaosheng's back, indignantly saying, "I don't believe it!"

