

Two Trillion 971

Chapter 971: Dancing with Wolves

Zhao Beiqing's true intentions were revealed, and Zhang Heran looked as though he had been struck by lightning, his face deathly pale.

Yielding Qingbei Film and Television City would be like cutting off half of the Zhang Family's life.

It could cripple them for a decade!

How could Zhang Heran dare to make such a decision lightly!

However, he had just stated his position when Zhao Beiqing's expression changed, and he stood up to leave.

This proved that Zhao Beiqing's friends were determined to have him use this as a lifeline.

"Mr. Zhao, Officer Zhao, please stay! Stay!"

In a panic, Zhang Heran immediately stood up, forcibly smiling to block him.

If Zhao Beiqing didn't care anymore, the dispute between the Zhang Family and Zhenbei Group would continue.

Before long, all the industries of the Zhang Family would experience a chain reaction of terror, like an avalanche, unstoppable.

If it continued for a year and a half, by then, even if they sold the Film and Television City, they might barely survive.

Keep half a life, or wait for death!

These two options churned in Zhang Heran's mind, making him dizzy, giving him an unbearable headache.

"Right now, this is the only way. It's not that I don't want to help you, my friend, but those friends of mine are also waiting for news from me. I can't offend a bunch of friends just for one friend, that would be really unkind," Zhao Beiqing said unhurriedly, his face expressionless.

Zhao Beiqing's stance was very firm.

On this issue, Zhang Heran had no choice!

If he wanted his help, if he wanted the Zhang Family and Qingbei Group to survive, then he had to give up the Film and Television City.

"Mr. Zhao, is there really no other way!" Zhang Heran pleaded.

He was unwilling to sell that asset if there was even the slightest possibility.

"Money, shares, other assets, anything will do. That Film and Television City is truly the foundation of my Zhang Family!" Zhang Heran said urgently.

"Mr. Zhang!"

Zhao Beiqing frowned and barked angrily.

This sudden outburst startled Zhang Heran.

He stood there gaping, staring at Zhao Beiqing.

"Mr. Zhang, you are my friend, and I really want to help you!" Zhao Beiqing's eyes were sharp, "But, if you make me seem unkind in front of my friends, how can our friendship continue!"

"There's no room for negotiation! Either you are willing to give up Qingbei Film and Television City to extricate the Zhang Family from this maeload than your Zhang Family will have to face Mr. Lu Zhixin from Hexi's wrath!"

"You have no choice!"

Zhao Beiqing's gaze and tone were extremely clear.

Zhang Heran stood there dazed for a long time, while Zhao Beiqing waited.

Finally, Zhang Heran sighed despondently, his spirit defeated, "If it must be so..."

"It can only be so!" Zhao Beiqing gave him no room for hope.

"Then, let it be so..." Zhang Heran's tone carried a resigned weariness.

"That's right, Mr. Zhang. We are friends, and I will naturally do my best to help you and the Zhang Family through this rough patch!"

Zhao Beiqing smiled amiably, patting Zhang Heran on the shoulder.

In his eyes, there flickered a contented smirk.

Outside, Zhang Tianze had no idea what difficult decision his father had just made or what it would mean for the future of their Zhang Family.

In his eyes, those invited celebrities should have been his father's guests, from his father's guest list.

Little did he know, these people were a pack of hyenas and hungry wolves, come to feast on the Zhang Family!

At that moment, at Bai Xiaosheng's side.

The three of them were walking down the street, chatting as they went.

"Where are we going now, back to headquarters?" Lin Weiwei asked.

Bai Xiaosheng nodded, "There's nothing much going on now, so going back is good. We can even have lunch back there, I remember the headquarters' cafeteria is pretty decent."

"Yes, I remember that too," Lei Ying also nodded with a smile.

At the moment, they had been on the road for a while but couldn't find an available taxi.

"Ron said he would send a car for us, and there's a reason for that; it's really hard to get a taxi here," Lin Weiwei shrugged and raised her phone to show the two men, "I tried the ride-hailing app, it notified dozens of taxis nearby, but no one is taking the order."

Bai Xiaosheng gave a wry smile, "It's my fault. I was too courteous with Luo Pangzi. Moreover, that foreigner, his Chinese is so fluent, yet he doesn't realize we have the custom of politeness... If he had insisted one more time, I would have agreed."

"Also, why did I casually say we didn't need it," Bai Xiaosheng muttered.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying couldn't help but roll their eyes.

What a question that is, how would we know what you were thinking at the time.

Asking us now, how should we respond?

Seeing their reaction, Bai Xiaosheng laughed awkwardly, scratched his face, and took out his phone, "Never mind, I'll just call Luo Pangzi and have him send a car for us."

It was the only thing to do.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying nodded at his words.

The three of them were standing on the roadside speaking, and nearby, one car after another was parked along the curb.

The car closest to Bai Xiaosheng and his group looked a bit old, probably just a car worth tens of thousands.

However, that used car had a surprisingly astonishing license plate.

The numbers were striking and extremely lucky.

If put up for auction, the plate alone could fetch hundreds of thousands, if not millions.

So much so, passersby couldn't help but turn their heads frequently to look at the plate.

Not to mention others, even Bai Xiaosheng and his companions stole several glances at it while talking.

Next to this car stood a man in simple clothes, with a weary face and an air of desolation, constantly smoking cheap cigarettes, seemingly preoccupied with his thoughts.

From time to time, he also glanced at a very cheap digital watch on his wrist.

On the ground, there were several cigarette butts, some still smoking.

While Bai Xiaosheng and his group were talking, the man overheard them, lifted his eyes, and his bloodshot eyes gleamed faintly.

He hesitated for a moment, tossed away his cigarette butt, and walked over.

Lei Ying was the first to notice the man approaching and immediately went over to stop him.

"Excuse me, sir, is there something you need?" Lei Ying asked with a smile.

The approaching man, referred to as the uncle by Bai Xiaosheng and Lin Weiwei, was older than them, so Lei Ying's calling him "big brother" wasn't too much.

Over the past year, Lei Ying's interpersonal skills had improved greatly.

If it were in the past, encountered with such a situation, Lei Ying would have glared and spoken in a chillingly cold voice that could make one shiver.

Now, finding a suspicious person approaching, he was able to respond with a smile.

According to Bai Xiaosheng, "concealing the edge and assimilating the sharpness" was Lei Ying's greatest improvement.

Bai Xiaosheng and Lin Weiwei also looked over, their gazes filled with inquiry.

The uncle squeezed out a forced smile, trying to appear more sincere.

"I, I just heard you talking, are you trying to get a taxi?"

The uncle asked, and seeing the scrutinizing gazes of Bai Xiaosheng and the others, he quickly added, "I didn't mean to eavesdrop... but, I'm a driver, that's my car!"

The uncle pointed his hand.

The old clunker was indeed unimpressive, but the license plate was definitely eye-catching.

Just for that plate, Bai Xiaosheng became somewhat interested.

"If the place you're going isn't too far, could I give you a ride? My rates are definitely cheaper than regular taxis!" the uncle said eagerly.

"Why do you need to ask about the distance first, Uncle? Wouldn't going further earn you more money?" Bai Xiaosheng couldn't help but ask.

"I can't do long rides!" It seemed the uncle had misspoken and his eyes briefly filled with a trace of panic, but it disappeared in an instant, regaining his composure as usual, "I have something to do!"

Chapter 972: The Down-and-Out Uncle

The unlicensed taxi driver who proactively sought work was not something Bai Xiaosheng and the others hadn't seen before, but this uncle was rather interesting.

He first declared that short trips were okay, but long trips were out of the question, as he had other matters to attend to.

"Since you still have things to do, why bother picking up passengers?" Lei Ying asked curiously.

The uncle's expression was somewhat bitter, "I need to provide for my family!"

Bai Xiaosheng and the others exchanged glances.

"Uncle, is that license plate real?" Lin Weiwei asked with a smile.

That plate with a string of lucky numbers could fetch tens, perhaps hundreds of thousands at an auction.

Support a family?

More than enough.

"It's real!" The uncle looked back at it, asserting with certainty.

In his gaze, there was a faint hint of deep contemplation.

In fact, Bai Xiaosheng and the others believed it was real.

If it were fake, as soon as it hit the city streets, it would be stopped by the traffic police. It stood out too much. No sane person would use fake plates so brazenly and conspicuously.

"Have you not considered changing the plate? Even if you sold this one and bought a regular one, the remaining money would be more than enough to provide for your family, right?" Lin Weiwei articulated her doubts.

"Can't sell it!"

The uncle's tone was unequivocally firm, "Even if I'm driving an unlicensed cab, hauling goods, I can't sell that plate!"

"That's my keepsake!" The uncle's voice was decisive, without a hint of hesitation.

Bai Xiaosheng looked at the uncle, listened to his words, and nodded, "Alright, we'll take your cab!"

"Really? Then, then I thank you, young man!" Upon hearing this, the uncle was incredibly joyful, rubbing his hands together.

The gratitude that overflowed from his face was genuinely heartfelt.

That smile was that of a down-and-out person who had stumbled upon a small opportunity, a sincere expression from the heart.

Bai Xiaosheng responded with a smile, while Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying shared a look and smiled at each other.

Their hearts, to varying degrees, were touched.

All three had known hardship, fully aware of the difficulties and toughness of life.

Even though they no longer worried about money and enjoyed high status, with life bringing more schemes and calculations, that pure and original sincerity was still buried deep in their hearts.

It was the most precious thing in life!

"Let's go," Bai Xiaosheng said.

He decided he would give the uncle a bit more money when the time came.

But when it came time to leave, the uncle hesitated, looking somewhat embarrassed and apologetically at Bai Xiaosheng.

"Young man, I have to be upfront with you, I really have something to take care of. If I get a call later, I'll have to leave, and then, I'll drop you off at a good spot to hail a taxi, okay? For this trip, I'll only charge you half. Do you think that's okay...?"

Had it been someone else, they certainly wouldn't have agreed.

Bai Xiaosheng just smiled, "Sure."

The uncle was overjoyed, quickly running to open the passenger and rear car doors for Bai Xiaosheng and the others, before he headed to the driver's seat.

Bai Xiaosheng and the others walked over.

Lei Ying, as usual, was going to sit in the passenger seat but was stopped by Bai Xiaosheng.

"This time, I'll sit in the passenger seat," Bai Xiaosheng said.

Lei Ying didn't insist and went to the back seat.

This car was shabby on the outside and the interior decorations were somewhat threadbare, but it was very clean. Normally, smokers' cars always have some traces, but this car was absolutely clean, even without a hint of cigarette smell.

Perhaps that license plate and this clean car were this uncle's last bit of dignity.

Bai Xiaosheng reflected.

Once in the car, Bai Xiaosheng gave their destination and the uncle started the car, taking them on their way.

"Uncle, what did you do before?" Bai Xiaosheng asked casually.

"Before, ah, I also had my own company, and it was fairly sizable!" The uncle laughed at himself, but there was a hint of bitterness in his smile.

"So what happened..." Bai Xiaosheng probed gently.

"It's a long story," the uncle sighed deeply.

That sigh, light and airy as smoke, could only be emitted by someone who had thoroughly experienced life's vicissitudes.

"The business world is treacherous, and people's hearts are unfathomable!"

"The word 'friend' in the realm of business is nothing but a pitfall, don't trust it lightly!"

"And never trust a friend who doesn't want anything in return yet willingly offers to help you without being related or indebted!"

"In the end, you'll find that it's not wealth they're after, but your entire livelihood!"

The uncle muttered to himself, gripping the steering wheel tightly, his hands sporting popping veins.

However, he soon let out a bitter laugh.

"But what good does it do not to trust or be wary?"

"Once things reach a certain point, it's out of your control because you've already fallen into the pit that the other person has dug for you!"

"To resist is to die!"

"To submit might spare you temporarily!"

"But you'll find that the subsequent schemes are like maggots in the bones!"

"I can't do it, neither my livelihood nor my schemes are sufficient. Even if I'm aware and on guard, I still can't escape my ultimate fate."

The uncle seemed to have opened the floodgates of his thoughts, speaking in a delirious ramble.

After finishing, he laughed at himself in self-deprecation.

"Look at me, I couldn't help but blurt all that out again. I'm truly sorry, you probably don't want to hear it," the uncle murmured, glancing at Bai Xiaosheng.

He was surprised to find that the young man was actually listening very carefully, very earnestly, with no sign of impatience.

Through the rearview mirror, the uncle also noticed that the young man and woman sitting in the back were also very serious, discreetly nodding their heads without a trace of annoyance.

These three young people were all extraordinary!

Just on that account, the uncle held Bai Xiaosheng and his two companions in higher regard.

"I can tell that you've been through some things, some setbacks, yet you still manage to keep your last bit of dignity. I believe that people like you are unbreakable, and you will fight and rise again from the east," Bai Xiaosheng told the uncle.

The uncle looked slightly astonished, his eyes widening, as he scrutinized Bai Xiaosheng while driving.

"Young man, you understand me!" the uncle said with a smile.

"I'm not taking your money for this trip," the uncle declared spiritedly, "Consider it a meeting between us!"

"How can that be okay?"

"There's nothing wrong with it!" the uncle insisted without allowing for argument.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, not insisting further, but he reached one hand behind the seat through the slit.

Lin Weiwei got the hint and handed Bai Xiaosheng a thousand yuan.

Lei Ying watched the whole time, smiling faintly.

Bai Xiaosheng took the money and stealthily tucked it into the storage compartment on the door side of the car.

The uncle didn't notice their "little maneuver" and chatted with Bai Xiaosheng for a bit more before his phone suddenly rang.

The car stopped by the roadside, and the uncle apologized to Bai Xiaosheng, "Sorry, but I have to attend to something and can only take you this far!"

"This is already plenty," Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile.

The uncle took the call and started speaking in dialect.

Perhaps the uncle assumed that Bai Xiaosheng and his companions wouldn't understand the dialect, so he didn't hold back. After all, the dialect was both rapid and muddled, so even locals couldn't understand it if they were a bit far away.

With countless dialects in Huaxia, it's not uncommon for the dialect to change every ten miles and customs to differ every hundred miles.

As the uncle spoke, his eyes showed stubbornness and a hint of resolution, as if he was making an important decision.

Bai Xiaosheng and his companions got out of the car.

Ordinarily, Bai Xiaosheng was ready to leave, but at the moment he was closing the car door.

He suddenly heard the uncle mention a name in dialect!

Bai Xiaosheng paused, his gaze immediately hardening.

Why would this uncle mention that person on a phone call!

Could it be a coincidence of name?

Bai Xiaosheng was somewhat puzzled; then he heard the uncle mention that name again, this time clearly and unmistakably—

Zhao Beiqing!

The Affairs Officer mentioned by Zhang Tianze!

Chapter 973: Uncle, The Bad Guy?

The driver, upon seeing that Bai Xiaosheng had not yet closed the car door, continued his phone call while looking at him and flashed him a smile, signaling him to close the door.

Bai Xiaosheng looked normal, returned the smile, closed the car door, and prepared to leave.

Even if this uncle was speaking about Zhao Beiqing, the very Affairs Officer Zhao Beiqing that Zhang Tianze had mentioned.

So what.

It was just a minor coincidence.

Bai Xiaosheng did not take it seriously.

However, just as the car was about to leave, Bai Xiaosheng suddenly heard two sentences.

These two sentences startled him!

"What, you caught his assistant, a woman?"

"Hubang Village, number 34, that place? Okay, I'll be right there!"

Afterwards, the car drove off.

Bai Xiaosheng stood there, stunned.

Throughout the ride, he had noticed that the driver seemed unsettled, deeply preoccupied.

He had even guessed that the uncle was making some difficult decisions.

So it was this!

Kidnapping!

And it was a girl, an assistant to the Affairs Officer Zhao Beiqing!

Someone from the corporation!

Bai Xiaosheng's eyes hardened.

In that case, he couldn't just ignore this matter!

Bai Xiaosheng felt that he should go and have a look first.

With Lei Ying accompanying him, even if it really was a kidnapping, the two of them could certainly handle it!

"What's wrong, Xiaosheng, why are you zoning out? I'm about to find a car," Lin Weiwei said as she came over with her phone.

"Just now, did you hear what that uncle said?" Bai Xiaosheng asked her.

"I heard it, yeah, but it was in a dialect; I couldn't understand a single word," Lin Weiwei looked at Bai Xiaosheng's expression, curious, "What happened?"

Lei Ying also looked at Bai Xiaosheng, wondering.

"I could understand that dialect!" Bai Xiaosheng told them.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying showed no reaction, unsurprised.

Over the past year, they had seen it many times.

Bai Xiaosheng could understand many languages, various local dialects, and even several foreign languages.

Having heard it so often, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying were no longer initially shocked, but rather took it as usual.

"So what about it?" Lin Weiwei asked.

"I heard something shocking!" Bai Xiaosheng lowered his voice and briefed them on the situation in a few words.

This time, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying were truly surprised and couldn't help but look at each other.

"Can't be," Lin Weiwei said incredulously, "That uncle seemed like a decent man. A kidnapper... I can't believe it!"

"There's no evil on him; either he's deeply secretive, or even I misjudged," Lei Ying frowned.

Usually, Lei Ying sensed the violent and vile types even before Bai Xiaosheng did.

But this time, he felt nothing.

"No need to guess anymore, let's just go and see, then everything will be clear!" Bai Xiaosheng said.

"Hubang Village, number 34!"

"Got it, I'm finding a car now!" Lin Weiwei quickly operated her phone.

"Is it easy to get a cab here?" Bai Xiaosheng asked.

"I'm going to the roadside to flag one down now, should be easier than the place we were just at," Lei Ying said.

As they spoke, they realized Lin Weiwei was looking at them with a strange expression.

"What's wrong, Weiwei?" Bai Xiaosheng asked, puzzled.

"No need to look for a car anymore!"

Lin Weiwei picked up her phone and showed them a map marker on the screen.

"Five hundred meters from here!"

Hubang Village, an urban village.

The city of Linshen was continuously expanding its boundaries. In all directions, north, south, east, and west, thriving commercial belts and circles were springing up.

But amidst the prosperity, there were places where the lights dimmed at night—urban villages. Hard to demolish, too costly to tear down, they managed to survive in the torrent of urbanization.

In Hubang Village, there were few locals; most of the places were rented to wanderers, a mix of all sorts of people.

At this very moment, Bai Xiaosheng and his two companions were walking through it, asking around, looking for No. 34 Hubang Village.

"No need to look anymore!" Bai Xiaosheng suddenly raised his voice and pointed.

At the end of the street they were walking on, behind a large tree, there was a car parked, its license plate faintly discernible.

The numbers were incredibly unique, almost like a road sign, very clear.

"Found it!" Lin Weiwei's eyes lit up as she clicked her tongue in amazement, "If the uncle drove this car to commit a crime, he'd be caught in minutes."

"It wasn't him who took action," Bai Xiaosheng said. "We're also unclear about the full story. Come on, let's go check it out!"

No. 34 Hubang Village was an old-style courtyard house.

A small entrance and large wooden doors. The bricks, stones, and wood all bore the marks of weathering, appearing somewhat aged.

Around here, there were no elderly people walking around or resting. It was indeed very quiet.

"Great place!" Lei Ying couldn't help but praise as he walked over.

The environment? The architecture?

Neither Bai Xiaosheng nor Lin Weiwei thought so. They both believed Lei Ying said this solely because—

This was a great place to take action!

The three approached and saw the wooden door was tightly shut.

Through the crack of the door, they could see a wooden bolt inserted inside.

"I'll knock!" Lin Weiwei volunteered.

Among them, she was a girl; knocking on the door, posing as someone from the community service or a delivery service, the other party would be more likely to open the door.

As soon as the door opened, no one could stop them.

"It won't open, they're not fools," Bai Xiaosheng muttered. "Let's think of something else!"

"Leave this kind of thing to the professionals," Lei Ying smiled and pulled out his set of keys.

On it were keys and some little gadgets he had made himself.

"This bolt isn't like modern locks. Once it's properly inserted inside, it's hard to move, and the gap in the wooden door is too small. It might be difficult..."

Lin Weiwei hadn't finished speaking when she saw Lei Ying push the door open and then look back at her. "What were you saying?"

Lin Weiwei, "..."

The courtyard was small.

It was filled with discarded clutter. The hall facing the gate was cleaner.

In the center of the courtyard, near the gate, there was a chair.

A man was sitting on the chair, looking rather frail and weak, wearing glasses.

At that moment, the bespectacled man was frowning, occasionally looking back at the inner room, then straining his ears to listen.

The distance from the room was quite far, so he couldn't hear anything.

His only job was to watch the gate.

But it wasn't until Bai Xiaosheng and Lei Ying entered that he realized, and he stood up suddenly.

By then, Lin Weiwei had already bolted the door from the inside.

"You! Who are you? How did you get in here!" the bespectacled man was startled, his first words not quiet, but he quickly lowered his tone.

The matters here, if heard by outsiders, would be ruined!

In his panic, he noticed the baseball bat next to the chair and immediately picked it up.

However, his posture was rather effeminate, holding the bat with both hands and hugging it in his chest, lacking any semblance of an offensive or defensive stance.

Bai Xiaosheng and his companions found it genuinely amusing.

If all kidnappers were like this, matters would be much simpler.

Comparing their presences, it was hard to tell who the real bad guys were.

To avoid startling him further and alarming the people inside, Bai Xiaosheng had no choice but to speak softly and politely inquire—

"Excuse me, are you also a kidnapper?"

Chapter 974: Sorry, I Broke Your Window Glass

The man being questioned by Bai Xiaosheng had eyes filled with terror, and he was incredibly nervous.

So much so that Bai Xiaosheng wanted to tell him not to be so tense.

"Kidnapper!" Faced with the sudden appearance and direct questioning of three people, the bespectacled man was shocked and scared, his tongue tying in knots.

His legs even began to tremble visibly.

First of all, this was a cowardly and utterly unqualified kidnapper.

Moreover, someone had indeed been kidnapped!

Bai Xiaosheng and the others exchanged glances, absolutely certain.

The bespectacled man was too cowardly, and even Lin Weiwei couldn't stand it, so she said, "Can you calm down for a moment? We just want to know if a woman from Zhenbei Group is being held inside by you?"

"Zhen-Zhen-Zhenbei..." The bespectacled man's face turned pale, and the clacking of his teeth was clearly audible.

Bai Xiaosheng and Lei Ying couldn't help but smile helplessly at each other.

"Never mind, let's just go in and see for ourselves," Bai Xiaosheng said.

"No, you can't go in!" the bespectacled man suddenly exclaimed, clutching a stick and extending it forward in a slightly threatening manner.

Unfortunately, Bai Xiaosheng and Lei Ying didn't even glance at him as they walked toward the back room, one on the left and the other on the right.

Lin Weiwei smiled and walked up directly to the bespectacled man.

It seemed uncertain whether Zhao Beiqing's assistant was indeed in danger...

At that moment.

The room was not small, and in the center, there was a chair.

A staggeringly beautiful woman was sitting there, huddled up and holding her shoulders, fear filling her beautiful eyes as she looked at the people in front of her.

She wasn't tied up.

In front of the beauty, there stood four people.

The leader was a burly man with clearly defined muscles, probably in his forties, with a decent face but currently sullen and ferocious, his eyes bloodshot.

Behind him stood two tall and sturdy men, both well-dressed but with terrifying expressions.

There was also a woman behind them, her once dignified appearance now marred by a lack of grooming, her face no longer delicate. Her eyes were fierce, and even as she stared at the innocent beauty, they were filled with a malevolent glow.

The driver was not in this room.

However, the four people there didn't look like easy targets. Even the ostensibly weakest woman had a baseball bat in her hand.

Compared to these people, the kidnapped beauty seemed like a lamb, utterly vulnerable and helpless facing them.

"Speak! Tell us everything you know. You are Zhao Beiqing's assistant, there's no way you don't know the insides," the muscular man bellowed fiercely, "If you don't come up with something today, I'm going to make you suffer!"

"That's right, today you must tell us something substantial!"

"Otherwise, we will not hesitate to be ruthless toward you, although we don't want to! But we are capable of it!"

The other two men also yelled fiercely.

"Young lady, you won't be able to speak up like this. It's best you calm down and tell us what we want to know! Otherwise, you really will be in danger!" said the woman with the baseball bat in a chilling tone.

"We are not bad people; in fact, we'd rather be honest..."

"But when honest people are pushed to the brink, do you know how terrifying that can be!"

The woman gritted her teeth.

"Zhao Beiqing won't give us a way out, and we won't let him off easily. That bastard is cunning, and it's not easy to catch him. Just killing him wouldn't suffice to quench our hatred; we want to ruin him completely!"

"That beast doesn't deserve a good end!"

The woman fiercely slammed her baseball bat on the ground, her voice fierce.

The kidnapped beauty was about to cry, "I'm just an assistant, I really don't know anything about your affairs, this has nothing to do with me!"

Under the fear, her genuine dread and helplessness were pitiable.

"I know your name is Yu Ying, and our issues with Zhao Beiqing actually don't concern you," the muscular man's tone softened, "but we really need you to tell us some things about Zhao Beiqing. This is the only way we can ruin him, you might not know, but he is the biggest parasite of your group. Unfortunately, he's in the affairs department, and as an affairs officer, you've been completely blinded..."

Yu Ying held her head and cried, repeating one phrase over and over, "I don't know, I really don't know! I beg you to let me go, stop asking me! I really don't know anything!"

The muscular man was about to convince her further when the woman behind him snapped irritably, "Enough, why waste words on her, I think we've been too gentle! Let's be tougher, let's see if she knows then!"

The muscular man frowned and looked back at the woman behind him.

"Do you really think we are kidnappers?"

"We are not!"

"And we can't let him get hurt, so we're not tying up, not being rough. Persuading her to cooperate is the only way!"

"You don't want to end up in jail over this either!"

The woman behind the muscular man snorted coldly and scoffed, "You're saying this in front of her, now that she's heard it all, will she confess anything to us?!"

Yu Ying looked fearfully at the woman advocating for rough treatment toward her. Seeing Yu Ying's gaze, the woman immediately sneered and took out her phone.

"Miss Yu, you heard everything just now. Do you think we dare not touch you? Do you know how convenient it is in this information age?"

The woman scoffed as she operated her mobile, "With just a simple search, I can find a hundred ways to torture someone without leaving any trace, and I'll use them on you!"

"Don't force us!" the woman said through gritted teeth, menacingly.

Along with the muscular man, the other three men didn't speak but looked deeply at Yu Ying.

Those words, those looks, made Yu Ying feel like she was in hell, totally terrified.

Under such emotional excitement, they might really do it.

Once they "start torture", the madness inherent in human nature would be fully unleashed, and what they might do to her, no one could say.

"I, I..." Yu Ying was scared, truly scared, and she was wavering.

The muscular man exchanged a glance with the woman behind him, and a hint of a smile flickered in their eyes.

Everything just now was exactly as they had planned.

First, they said they wouldn't be rough to let Yu Ying's guard down, then they scared her stiff.

This alternating tension was the best way to break down someone's psychological defenses.

At this moment, Yu Ying couldn't hold out anymore, speaking was only a matter of time.

"I, I can tell... but what I know is really not much; I beg you not to make it hard for me." Yu Ying was indeed about to speak.

"Good, tell us, as long as you spill everything, we won't make it hard for you!" the muscular man couldn't hold back and said.

"He's right, girl, don't spurn the toast, lest you have to drink a forfeit! We used to have distinguished positions and disdained such crude methods, but now, having fallen to this situation, we truly have no scruples! Speaking earlier is better for you!" the woman also said.

"Tell us, spill everything!"

"Once you tell us, we'll let you go!"

The other two men also said eagerly.

Just as everyone's gaze was intensely expectant on Yu Ying, suddenly, a side glass window shattered explosively, mixed with a large stone.

That startled everyone in the room quite a bit.

Outside the window appeared a young face, smiling at them.

"Sorry for breaking your window."

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, "I'm here to pick someone up!"

Chapter 975: Clean Them Up!

From smashing the glass to appearing, three men and one woman in the room, four "kidnappers," along with the kidnapped Yu Ying, all foolishly cocked their heads, startled as they looked outside, gazing at the young face of Bai Xiaosheng, which carried an unruffled smile.

"How did you get in here, where's Yu Laosan!" the muscular man exclaimed in shock.

Not just him, the expressions on the faces of the other three were also a mixture of fear and panic.

How did someone get into the yard without making a sound!

Where is Yu Laosan?

That coward isn't fit to handle interrogations, but can't he manage a simple task like guarding the door?

A dog would have at least barked a couple of times.

There wasn't even a warning!

Also, the gate was bolted from the inside; outsiders can't come in. Is Yu Laosan stupid to have opened the gate for someone?

Of the four, the first to regain composure was actually the female among the "kidnappers."

"Everyone stay calm, no one has broken in. Maybe things aren't as bad as they seem!" the woman commanded.

Then, she lowered her voice urgently to the three men, "Besides, we haven't abducted this girl, nor have we been violent. If someone accuses us of kidnapping or illegal detention, we'll accuse them of trespassing and burglary!"

The woman glanced outside again, "Based on his way of handling things just now, he doesn't appear to be from the authorities. Listening to him, he seems more like an acquaintance of this woman!"

When a woman calms down, men really have nothing on her.

"What do we do now?!" the muscular man quickly regained his composure as well.

The other two men also looked towards the woman.

That's how people are, initially panicked in crisis situations, but quickly gathering around a leader once one emerges.

"Let's go out and see!" said the woman.

The muscular man and the other two men immediately nodded and hurriedly moved out from the inner room.

The woman threateningly pointed at Yu Ying and followed them out, shutting the door as she went.

The four emerged from the inside, only to see three people standing in the courtyard—two men and one woman.

Their accomplice, the bespectacled man Yu Laosan, was slumped over in a chair, seemingly asleep.

But, he had likely been knocked unconscious.

The courtyard door was tightly shut, and still bolted.

Seeing this, the four of them felt somewhat more at ease.

Not the police, the police wouldn't do it this way!

As long as it's not the police, there's no real worry!

"Who are you people, barging into a private home, do you know what crime that is!" the muscular man glared fiercely and spoke menacingly.

Just as the woman had said, if the other party accused them of kidnapping, they would accuse them of illegal entry and burglary.

Anyway, when it would come to arguing, they had more people, they couldn't believe a few over the majority, right?

"I heard just now, you referred to the woman inside as Yu Ying." Bai Xiaosheng said smilingly, "We are her colleagues, here to take her back."

Colleagues?

The four "kidnappers" exchanged glances.

This time, they had been exceedingly secretive.

How could there suddenly be three colleagues here?!

"If you haven't been violent, that's for the best, we're not planning to pursue it. But if you were violent... then maybe, you've got big trouble!" Lei Ying's gaze was icy as he scanned the people, speaking coldly.

To threaten them!

The four furrowed their brows.

"In a lighter case, it's illegal detention, and more seriously, it's kidnapping! If we call the police, all of you could go to prison!" Lin Weiwei said.

The four muscular men exchanged looks and then started to sneer.

Among all the things Bai Xiaosheng and the others had said, what caught their attention most was what Lin Weiwei had mentioned.

"You haven't called the police yet, huh? Well, we really owe you one!"

The woman held a baseball bat in her hand, chuckling coldly.

"Invading our home and knocking our friend unconscious? If we take action against you four, even if the police show up, we can claim self-defense, at most excessive defense!" the muscular man sneered.

When he said 'four people,' he included Yu Ying who was inside the house; it was clear he was looking to turn the tables on them.

The muscular man examined the three newcomers, and the corners of his mouth involuntarily curled into a cold smile.

Even if they had to fight, they had more people on their side, and the opponents were just two men and a woman.

The muscular man glanced at Lin Weiwei and thought she was both beautiful and poised, dressed like an office lady, definitely not the type who would get physical.

"Boss Li, something's come up. Aren't you coming out?"

The woman among the kidnappers called out sharply, tapping the window of the next room with her baseball bat.

In fact, just as she finished speaking, a person came out of the house.

That person was the uncle who had brought Bai Xiaosheng and the others here.

"I heard you!"

The uncle said hoarsely, lifting his head. Seeing Bai Xiaosheng and the others, he was surprised, "It's you guys!"

"What, you know them?"

Suddenly, the muscular man and others looked at the uncle.

The uncle shook his head, "I don't know them. But they were the passengers I just drove here!"

"So this trouble was brought by you. You handle it then!" the kidnapper woman said angrily, tossing the bat to the uncle.

With a frown, the uncle held the baseball bat and looked at Bai Xiaosheng, "Young man, although I don't know how you followed us here, the situation isn't what you think. You better not get involved!"

"We won't hurt the girl inside!"

"We're not robbers, we're not after money or lust!"

"You can even wait outside, and once we're done talking, you can take her away!"

The uncle looked sincere.

Bai Xiaosheng nodded.

"You agree?" the uncle said happily.

"Looking at your group, even the fiercest among you, as well as her, seem to have a menacing look but no malicious intent," Bai Xiaosheng smiled and explained, "And each one of you appears a bit nervous and uneasy, emotions that you can't hide from me."

"I believe this is your first time doing something like this. No matter how good your mental state is, even knowing we're not the police, you're still anxious."

"Uncle, although I'm unaware of your motives and the decisions you've made to take such risks, I know you wouldn't harm a fragile girl. But still, it's time to stop."

Bai Xiaosheng earnestly persuaded.

The uncle was quite moved, his face also showing struggle and hesitation.

The other three men, even the muscular man, seemed to be touched as well.

"Don't listen to his nonsense, think about why we've come to this point! We've already stepped forward, so why hesitate now!" the kidnapper woman shouted angrily.

The men beside her were taken aback, and upon further thought, each of them furrowed their brows.

"Today, we must get what we want!" the uncle gritted his teeth and said to Bai Xiaosheng, "Young man, thanks for your words, but I can't listen to you!"

Seeing these people had made up their minds, Bai Xiaosheng sighed deeply.

"Uncle, since you've decided this way. I respect your choice. I won't say 'the end obtained by wrong means is itself wrong.' After all, I haven't experienced what you have," Bai Xiaosheng said, "So let's solve this the wrong way."

"You knock us down and go about your business," Bai Xiaosheng said, "Or perhaps, we'll use violence to stop you!"

With such a divergence, it was all about who had the bigger fist.

"Fine, this is your own choice, kid," the woman opposite him, her eyes blazing with light, "You two, go handle that big guy. Wu Tong, with your muscle mass, handling a pretty boy shouldn't be an issue. Boss Li, take care of that girl!"

"Let's deal with them!" the woman commanded fiercely.

Chapter 976: That's... it?

Upon hearing it was time to take action, the female kidnapper instantly assigned tasks to her accomplices.

You have to admit, it was pretty logical.

Lei Ying looked the strongest and most threatening, so she assigned two people to him.

Even if Lei Ying couldn't be taken down in a short amount of time, it didn't matter.

Because that woman had allocated the most muscular guy among them, Wu Tong, to take on Bai Xiaosheng.

Plus, she had Uncle Li deal with Lin Weiwei.

Just by looking at the build of both sides, you could tell those conflicts would probably be over quickly.

By then, the muscular guy and Uncle Li would be free to join forces against Lei Ying.

"This sister might not be good in a fight, but her brain works fast," Bai Xiaosheng said to Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying beside him with a smile.

"I know, this is the strategy of Tian Ji's horse racing. Don't pit strength against strength, but rather use your better against their moderate, your moderate against their worse. Win two rounds fast, and the victory is secured," Lei Ying said with a laugh.

In the past year, feeling he lacked cunning and was inexperienced in the workplace, he had become fascinated with the strategies and calculations of the ancients, studying many things including the "Thirty-Six Stratagems."

"Wow, your brain is getting sharper! Good, that's exactly what she's planning," Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile.

Lei Ying gave a smile as well.

"You guys, when it comes to fighting, make sure to protect me. I'm a girl; fighting and killing are not for me," Lin Weiwei declared first.

"Sure, I'll protect you," Lei Ying said eagerly.

The five men on Uncle Li's side were all stunned.

These people, why were they so calm?

Don't they know what fear is?

Or do they not understand the current situation?!

The female kidnapper, with a grim face, ran back into the house and came out with several "weapons" which she distributed to everyone.

Baseball bats, golf clubs.

Wu Tong didn't take those things but instead took out a pair of brass knuckles from his pocket and put them on.

"Apart from running a company, what I enjoy most is boxing. I'm not used to those things; this is all I need!" Wu Tong said, glaring at Bai Xiaosheng, "Kid, you'd better just admit defeat peacefully. See this? If I hit you with it, your skinny frame is going to suffer!"

"I've participated in amateur boxing matches and even placed. Not to mention you, that big guy over there isn't a match for me!"

As Wu Tong said this, the two men beside him holding baseball bats and golf clubs looked at him with awe.

It wasn't just Wu Tong boasting—they wouldn't stand a chance against him even if they were armed and he wasn't.

"Wu Tong, what are you doing? You can't use that to hit people!" Uncle Li exclaimed in shock.

"Humph! Boss Li, you're not our boss anymore, you can't tell me what to do!" Wu Tong snorted coldly.

"Young man, you really shouldn't fight him," Uncle Li, seeing the guy was not swayed by advice, hurriedly said to Bai Xiaosheng.

Bai Xiaosheng just smiled.

Wu Tong, already impatient, didn't care to listen to Uncle Li's ramblings. He charged at Bai Xiaosheng ferociously, like a malevolent spirit.

The moment he moved, the two men behind him also rapidly headed towards Lei Ying.

In their eyes, although Lei Ying was strong, he was unarmed, while they had clubs. This time, they were sure to win.

"Mind your own business and suffer the consequences! Uncle Li, you're just going to stand there? If you won't deal with that woman, then I will!"

The female kidnapper snatched the baseball bat from Uncle Li and also rushed forward.

Uncle Li watched, eyes wide, as his companions charged out, his expression instantly turning bitter, with only one phrase on his lips: "How did it come to this!"

They were all once respectable businessmen, so how had they degraded to rude people who would fight at the drop of a hat?

Uncle Li couldn't help but let out a long sigh.

After this sigh, Uncle Li's eyes suddenly bulged.

Wu Tong, who had charged forward first, was flung backward flying a good two meters, landing on his knees, with his forehead touching the ground, his back arched like a massive shrimp.

Was that even three seconds?

It's over?!

The uncle's eyes were wide with disbelief.

He looked at Bai Xiaosheng in utter amazement.

A weak-looking young man, he smiled as he lowered his leg.

Kicked away with one foot?

He saw that Wu Tong, who claimed to have trained in boxing for ten years, competed in amateur fights, and even wore brass knuckles, was finished just like that...

Beyond being shocked, the uncle also felt a pang of sympathy for Wu Tong.

Then, the sound of wooden sticks and metal objects falling to the ground drew his gaze. His pupils contracted again.

Confronting the Lei siblings, they were limp as mud, lying on the ground with eyes rolled back.

The two of them, wielding weapons, did they even last five seconds?

The uncle's face turned pale.

Lin Weiwei, the woman carrying a baseball bat, naturally witnessed this scene. She froze, not daring to move an inch forward.

In front of her, standing was Lei Ying, who had brought down two burly men.

Lei Ying looked at her coldly, with a gaze that sent shivers down her spine.

As Lei Ying approached, the woman trembled, her eyes filled with fear.

She had seen with her own eyes how two big men wielding weapons were knocked unconscious with just a light chop to the neck.

In front of that formidable figure, they were as weak as children.

"Violence is not the best solution to problems," Lei Ying said earnestly to the woman, casually taking the wooden baseball bat from her hands. Holding both ends, he brought his knee up in a bump, snapping the solid bat in two pieces like it were no sturdier than a dry twig.

The woman cried out in fear and fled in panic, running all the way behind the uncle.

The uncle seemed to vibe well with Bai Xiaosheng and his group; behind him might be the safest place.

"Violence is not beneficial for fundamentally solving problems, but it is the fastest way to resolve them," Bai Xiaosheng sighed, looking at the uncle. "Now, can we take Miss Yu Ying away?"

The uncle gave a bitter smile and sighed lightly, "After all this... go ahead!"

Bai Xiaosheng nodded and glanced at Lei Ying. Lei Ying got the message and went straight to the inner room.

Lin Weiwei followed as well.

"Calm her down, don't come out too soon," Bai Xiaosheng suddenly said.

Lin Weiwei was taken aback but quickly understood the deeper meaning in Bai Xiaosheng's words and nodded earnestly.

Bai Xiaosheng turned to the uncle, "Uncle, may I have a word with you?"

The uncle was startled, then his realization dawned, "You said you are colleagues with Yu Ying, doesn't that mean..."

People from the Zhenbei Group's Greater China Region Affairs Department!

"Exactly!" Bai Xiaosheng smiled, fully aware of the uncle's implication.

In the end, the uncle walked aside with Bai Xiaosheng.

The woman behind the uncle had a look of terror and stayed far away, on her guard.

"First, I want to know your identities," Bai Xiaosheng said.

The uncle nodded, "My name is Li Qiushan, the muscular guy who fought with you is Wu Tong, and the woman is Fan Sihui. The two who went after your friends are named Wang Qulin and Chen Jiayi."

The uncle then pointed at the bespectacled man slumped in the chair, "His name is Yu Sansi; he's the third eldest, so we also call him Yu Laosan."

After the introductions, the uncle continued, "We're not bad people. We're just forced into this situation. You're from Zhenbei Group's Affairs Department, right?"

Bai Xiaosheng nodded.

"If you're willing to listen, I can tell you everything!" the uncle said earnestly. "If possible, please help us too!"

Chapter 977: Administrative Assistant Yu Ying

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying found Yu Ying in the inner room.

Her face was filled with terror, her eyes brimming with tears, and upon seeing Lei Ying, her fearful expression intensified immeasurably.

She must have mistaken Lei Ying for one of the kidnappers.

"Don't hit me, I'll speak, I'll tell you everything," Yu Ying sobbed loudly, "about the affairs of Affairs Officer Zhao Beiqing, I'll tell it all!"

Lin Weiwei initially wanted to approach and soothe this woman.

Hearing these words, Lin Weiwei's expression shifted, and she exchanged a glance with Lei Ying.

Lei Ying naturally also sensed something off in Yu Ying's words and exchanged a knowing look with Lin Weiwei.

Over this past year, the understanding among Bai Xiaosheng, Lin Weiwei, and Lei Ying had reached a level where they could communicate almost entirely through eye contact.

Lin Weiwei stepped forward, not in a hurry to comfort Yu Ying, but smiled at her instead, "Go ahead and speak, I'm listening. Miss Yu, we won't harm you."

A good ten minutes passed.

After Yu Ying finished, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying noted down everything she had said.

In truth, there wasn't much of substance.

Initially, Lin Weiwei had also heard those people outside pressing Yu Ying to talk about the issues concerning Affairs Officer Zhao Beiqing.

Lin Weiwei had thought this might be a big lead.

But upon hearing Yu Ying's account, it seemed that Affairs Officer Zhao Beiqing faced many minor issues, but for an officer, at most these matters were inappropriate dealings, not even meriting a formal criticism.

Or perhaps, Yu Ying was simply not aware of the full scope.

After all, if Zhao Beiqing truly had serious issues, those private affairs wouldn't likely be known to an aide who wasn't a close confidant.

Lin Weiwei thought inwardly.

Observing Yu Ying, she seemed genuine, and given her current state, it was hard to imagine her not speaking truthfully.

However, Yu Ying also mentioned several valuable clues.

Worth investigating!

Lin Weiwei sorted through her thoughts and told Yu Ying, "Alright, don't be afraid, we're not with those people. Come on, let's go outside."

Yu Ying looked at Lin Weiwei with frightened eyes and seemed a bit distrustful but still allowed herself to be helped out obediently.

To put Yu Ying at ease, Lei Ying walked ahead, staying within her line of sight.

Once they were out of the house, Lin Weiwei and the others realized Bai Xiaosheng was the only one left in the entire courtyard.

The others had already left.

Bai Xiaosheng stood there, seemingly lost in thought.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying could not help but exchange glances, suspecting that Bai Xiaosheng had also obtained something valuable from those people.

"Oh, you've come out," Bai Xiaosheng remarked, greeting them with a smile.

Yu Ying looked at Bai Xiaosheng in astonishment, then back at the two beside her.

The three of them were clearly different from the kidnappers, dressed smartly and conducting themselves with composure.

She began to see the difference.

"Miss Yu, don't be afraid, we are different from those people. We are also from the affairs department, here to rescue you," Bai Xiaosheng reassured her with a gentle voice and a smile.

Yu Ying opened her mouth in astonishment.

Lin Weiwei directly showed Yu Ying the badge of the Affairs Officer.

This item had a secret identifier and couldn't be faked, though it didn't specify which Affairs Officer; it was sufficient proof of identity.

"You are an Affairs Officer!" Yu Ying exclaimed in surprise.

"Yes," Bai Xiaosheng smiled, "We happened to discover you were taken here, so we came to get you. Now that those people have left, you can also go back."

Yu Ying nodded repeatedly, her expression easing.

However, she clung tightly to Lin Weiwei's arm, looking fearfully around the small courtyard, whispering, "But, I, I'm scared, can I leave with you?"

Bai Xiaosheng and Lin Weiwei exchanged glances and smiled, "That works."

The three of them left the courtyard.

"Lei Ying, there's a lock, lock the door for others," Bai Xiaosheng said.

Lei Ying nodded and went to do it.

"In a while, we'll take a taxi to drop you off. Once you're in the taxi, you won't have to worry anymore," Lin Weiwei said with a smile.

"But, but I'm still scared. Can I go with you?" Yu Ying still looked around fearfully.

Then, she couldn't help but blink her beautiful large eyes, looking at Lin Weiwei, "Sister, how should I address you?"

Lin Weiwei looked at her and smiled, "My surname is Bai, you can call me Bai Ying."

This was Lin Weiwei's alias.

In fact, over the past year, Bai Xiaosheng and the others often used aliases for convenience.

Bai Xiaosheng's alias was Lin Sheng, and Lei Ying's alias was Fang Cheng.

Lin Weiwei took the opportunity to share their aliases with Yu Ying as well.

"Sister Bai Ying, are you going back to headquarters now?" Yu Ying asked timidly.

"No, not for the time being," Lin Weiwei said.

"Then, let me give you a contact," Yu Ying smiled, "Thank you for saving me. Let's keep in touch later. If there's anything you need help with, I'll do my best to assist!"

Yu Ying looked earnest, her eyes filled with sincerity.

Lin Weiwei glanced at Bai Xiaosheng, who smiled and nodded.

Lin Weiwei immediately took out her phone and added Yu Ying on WeChat.

Lei Ying had locked the courtyard door and came over.

"Fang Cheng, you go find a car to take Yu Ying first," Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile.

Hearing the alias, Lei Ying nodded imperceptibly, "Okay."

Though the area was remote, they were lucky this time; after walking a bit, they saw a taxi not far away just as a passenger alighted.

Lei Ying quickly walked over and hailed the taxi.

The three of them saw Yu Ying into the car. The girl was still reluctant to leave, holding up her phone, "Sister Bai Ying, Brother Lin Sheng, Brother Fang Cheng, we'll keep in touch."

When she looked at Bai Xiaosheng, Yu Ying blushed, her face red and incredibly endearing.

Lin Weiwei couldn't help but glance at Bai Xiaosheng.

Bai Xiaosheng's smile remained unchanged, "Sure, we'll contact you after returning to headquarters. From now on, we're friends!"

Reluctantly, Yu Ying departed in the taxi.

The three of them stood and watched as the taxi drove away.

After Yu Ying left, Bai Xiaosheng's expression returned to normal.

"You two were inside for quite a while, did you get any information from Yu Ying? Share with me. I also heard some interesting things from that uncle! We'll chat about it in a bit!" Bai Xiaosheng said, "It seems that it's better not to return to headquarters for now; it's more convenient for us to act."

"This time, I'm particularly interested in the Zhang Family's mediation! We must go!" Bai Xiaosheng's eyes sparkled.

At that moment, in the departing taxi, Yu Ying, who seemed so delicate, transformed completely, becoming calm and composed. Holding her phone, she spoke to someone, "Some people seem to be after Zhao Beiqing. I was kidnapped, but I've escaped now."

"The kidnappers were interesting. I was supposed to make contact with them, but..."

"Then came a group of intriguing people! And an Affairs Officer too!"

"They also learned some things about Zhao Beiqing, though I'm not sure how much they know. I'll keep an eye on it!"

"Yes, I've already given them my contact. I believe they will reach out to me!"

"If they don't contact me, I will contact them!"

Yu Ying's lips curled into a sly smile.

Chapter 978: Upon Deliberation, Utterly Horrifying

Noon, Bai Xiaosheng and his two companions found a reasonably decent restaurant and got a private room, where they ate and talked.

"This is all the content that Yu Ying told us," Lin Weiwei said.

Just moments ago, Lin Weiwei had repeated the key points of the information that Yu Ying had shared, with Lei Ying supplementing on the side.

Over the past year, Lin Weiwei had also displayed a lot of talent.

Bai Xiaosheng had Red Lotus search for the most effective methods to train her.

Currently, although Lin Weiwei hadn't achieved the legendary level of photographic memory or perfect recall, she was still able to memorize key information extremely firmly in a very short time without making mistakes.

The supplementary role of Lei Ying naturally had no chance to shine.

However, Lei Ying was happy to be at leisure, quietly eating and drinking.

After Lin Weiwei finished, she saw Bai Xiaosheng in deep thought and continued, "Although the substantial things she told us seem not much, we can still extract a few valuable clues from them."

Lin Weiwei detailed them one by one, and Bai Xiaosheng nodded continuously.

Lei Ying also stopped, no longer eating, and listened to Lin Weiwei speak.

"Today is Monday, and there are a few days until Friday. You Xiaosheng will attend the mediation at the Zhang Family, and you will meet Zhao Beiqing. Whether you can conceal your identity then is really debatable."

"So, I think we need to be fully prepared. Otherwise, Lei Ying and I can go check those few leads in the next few days?"

Lin Weiwei suggested.

"Allow me to think for a moment," Bai Xiaosheng said, his hands clasped together supporting his chin, his eyes distant.

Lin Weiwei knew he was thinking and did not disturb him.

Inside his mind, Bai Xiaosheng went over the content Lin Weiwei had spoken about.

Those few leads were all genuine and easy to verify, at least for Bai Xiaosheng, who had Red Lotus to search for useful information and easily affirm them.

However, the actual value of following those leads varied in significance.

And the more valuable the clue, the deeper it needed to be dug into, which would take even more time.

Starting the search now, the time until Friday was simply not enough.

Therefore, it required careful consideration.

Bai Xiaosheng thought for a quarter of an hour before finally looking up.

Seeing Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying watching him, he smiled immediately.

"If all we had was this information, we would be very busy. But luckily, we've got some other stuff too! I'll tell you guys about it now!" Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile, looking at both of them.

Lin Weiwei and the other person looked surprised, waiting to hear more.

"When you two were in the room with Yu Ying, I had a chat with that uncle!" Bai Xiaosheng said, "First off, I got their names, the uncle's name is Li Qiushan, the muscular guy is Wu Tong, the woman is Fan Sihui; the one who fought with Lei Ying, one is Wang Qulin, the other is Chen Jiayi. And the one we knocked out first, his name is Yu Sansi."

Bai Xiaosheng intentionally repeated the names of those individuals.

Having experienced Bai Xiaosheng's memory abilities countless times before, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying were not surprised.

Bai Xiaosheng went over the names once again, mentioning which characters they contained.

This emphasis immediately alerted Lin Weiwei that there was something amiss, and she quickly took out her phone to search.

"No need," Bai Xiaosheng said with a smile.

In fact, as soon as Li Qiushan had told him, Bai Xiaosheng had Red Lotus start searching.

While there might be countless people with the same name in the country, by narrowing the search to Linshen and nearby provinces and cities, it was possible to quickly obtain valid information.

And afterward, Li Qiushan also introduced those people to Bai Xiaosheng.

"These people, they all come from Linshen and several surrounding provinces," said Bai Xiaosheng. "Guess what they used to do?"

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying looked at each other.

Before they could actually guess, Bai Xiaosheng already revealed the answer with a smile, "Every one of them was an entrepreneur, a leader, and their former enterprises were not small in scale either!"

"What!" Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying were both shocked.

All those people were entrepreneurs?

How did they fall into such a plight?

"I had also guessed that they were all corporate workers, but the fact that they were leaders... that, I didn't expect!" Lin Weiwei couldn't help but be astonished.

"These people are in such a sorry state right now, yet they've gathered together to kidnap one of our group's office assistants, just to find out some things about Zhao Beiqing. Interesting! Moreover, I feel their attitude is to treat Zhao Beiqing as the culprit!" Lei Ying's eyes flickered. "That is to say, our Affairs Officer in charge of internal surveillance, actually caused six major companies outside our group to go bankrupt!"

Lin Weiwei looked at Lei Ying with a thoughtful gaze.

"I really want to know!" Lei Ying said. "How he did it!"

"The most exaggerated thing is that as an Affairs Officer, although he holds the same rank as a provincial industry head, it is only within our group. An Affairs Officer doesn't have real power; at most, he can intervene in one of our group's companies, but he can't, like Xiaosheng in Yunhai, mobilize local businesses to assault companies outside our group." Lin Weiwei said. "Especially for not small-scale companies, it's easy to falter in business once or twice, but to be completely driven to bankruptcy, that's not so easy!"

Lei Ying also nodded in agreement.

This year, he too had come to understand much of the business world, well aware that a large company has its foundation.

A leader who can uphold a big operation, as long as the market currents aren't too perilous or if they don't self-destruct, it's not so easy to fail.

"Yes, if it were Zhao Beiqing alone, he really wouldn't have the ability to do it," said Bai Xiaosheng.

"However, when these entrepreneurs met Zhao Beiqing, it was when they were in considerable trouble, at a critical juncture between life and death. And a friend introduced Zhao Beiqing to them to solve their problems! Then, Zhao Beiqing helped, and their nightmare began." Bai Xiaosheng continued.

"If companies outside the group are in trouble, why would our group's Affairs Officer, Zhao Beiqing, want to help them?" Lin Weiwei asked, frowning.

"The key is, what capability does Zhao Beiqing have to help them, making use of our group's resources?" Lei Ying wondered. "He isn't a New-type Affairs Officer, he doesn't have that authority; besides, the group wouldn't agree either."

Bai Xiaosheng smiled.

"He went to help with a bunch of 'friends.' His 'friends' were also major business owners, of course, none from within the group. Furthermore, even if he had the authority, he would definitely not use the group's internal resources to help Li Qiushan and others!" Bai Xiaosheng sneered.

"Zhao Beiqing, in private, used external enterprises to help those businesses in crisis, taking advantage of the situation to plot against them?"

"This... sounds a bit incredible..."

"Although it seems unethical, it doesn't seem to violate any rules, does it? Even if we report it, would the group punish him..."

Suddenly, Lin Weiwei said, "Xiaosheng, why do you emphasize that even if he had the authority, he wouldn't use the group's resources to help."

Lei Ying laughed, "Isn't that easy to understand? Helping businesses with group resources would be public to public, but it seems Zhao Beiqing, in a private to private manner, relied on a group of 'friend'

enterprises to approach, deceive, and target those businesses in distress, then taking benefits from those 'friends'."

This pair gained a lot of experience over this past year; their insight into issues had grown increasingly clear.

Bai Xiaosheng smiled, looking at the two of them, "There's another reason I haven't mentioned yet."

"Li Qiushan's companies were actually all driven into a corner by our group's enterprises! They were 'enemies' who suffered defeat at the hands of our group!"

At this revelation, Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying's eyes suddenly narrowed.

Businesses defeated by the group, and Zhao Beiqing was responsible for the "kill"?

"When it comes to this, we cannot but mention another person," eyes sparkling, Bai Xiaosheng continued. "The industry head of Hexi Province—"

"Lu Zhixin!"

Chapter 979: Start the Investigation

"Hexi Province's Industry Head—Lu Zhixin? Is he also connected to Li Qiushan and his associates?!"

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying were both surprised.

Zhang Tianze had said that the Zhang Family business was targeted by Hexi Province's Industry Head, Lu Zhixin, who mobilized companies to gang up on them simply because they had accidentally clashed with a newly established subsidiary of Zhenbei Group.

At the time, Bai Xiaosheng and his colleagues saw this as normal, entirely within the jurisdiction of the provincial industry head.

"It was also Lu Zhixin's doing!" Bai Xiaosheng said.

The businesses of Li Qiushan and others were taken down by Lu Zhixin...

"That's a bit exaggerated, isn't it?" Lin Weiwei couldn't help but mutter.

Putting it all together, it was like the Hexi Province Industry Head used group resources to aggressively pursue the conflicting companies, and then an Affairs Officer took advantage, bringing in a bunch of external companies to annihilate those businesses and divide up the markets and assets of the failed companies...

This all sounded too bizarre!

Lei Ying also widened her eyes in disbelief, finding it hard to believe.

"Do you find it unbelievable?" Bai Xiaosheng smiled and said, "This sounds just like something out of a novel!"

"But in life, there are many unbelievable things! Some are even more magical than novels!" Bai Xiaosheng poured himself a cup of tea and drank it.

He paused, giving them both time to digest the information.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying exchanged glances, furrowing their brows in thought and sharing their views.

"Is this a coincidence?"

"Once or twice might be a coincidence, but this many times, it can't just be coincidence!"

"Does Lu Zhixin, the Hexi Province Industry Head, know that Zhao Beiqing is picking up opportunities behind his back?"

"You might as well ask if the two of them have been communicating secretly!"

"That's hard to say. Even if they haven't communicated, Zhao Beiqing just needs to keep an eye on Lu Zhixin's movements; he doesn't need to cooperate directly with him to share the spoils!"

"But from Lu Zhixin's side, facing the rival companies, he always crushes them mercilessly. Is it his nature, or could it be because of Zhao Beiqing? You can't be sure!"

"Hmm, if this was indeed an act of collusion between the two, it would make sense!"

"If it's really true, it's quite impressive! One playing the good cop and the other the bad cop, they took down so many companies!"

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying spoke up, each adding their thoughts.

"But if it really comes to a legal investigation, what 'charges' can we press? After all, Zhao Beiqing and Lu Zhixin haven't harmed the group. On the contrary, Lu Zhixin targets companies that compete with our subsidiary, which seems proper. Zhao Beiqing's actions, even if dubious, were outside of work hours and didn't involve abuse of power."

Toward the end, Lin Weiwei couldn't help asking Bai Xiaosheng.

"No, Weiwei, you're wrong!"

Bai Xiaosheng spoke earnestly, "If they really colluded and did those things, it would definitely have greatly harmed our group's interests!"

"To crush our opponents, yet deliberately investing massive resources to fight them to the death..."

"It's about using the group as a tool, wasting the group's funds and manpower, and also damaging the group's reputation!"

"If it's really the case, then it's nothing less than an indirect infringement of the group's interests, and pilfering of wealth!"

Bai Xiaosheng's eyes hardened, "I can't let them off the hook!"

This matter, Bai Xiaosheng would handle it.

Whether it was for the benefit of the group or out of sympathy for Li Qiushan and others.

"The information we have gathered is enough! Next, you both need to help me run around and investigate some things that are hard to verify online!" Bai Xiaosheng's gaze sparkled, "With that, we'll have enough time!"

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying looked at each other and nodded firmly.

This was not the first time they had acted under Bai Xiaosheng's arrangements.

Sometimes, they didn't understand the relevance of the content Bai Xiaosheng asked them to investigate, but it always proved useful eventually—and some of it even greatly useful.

Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying had learned much along the way and even found joy in it—

Thinking about what Bai Xiaosheng asked them to investigate, guessing when and how he would use that information.

This made the two people enjoy themselves immensely.

However, Bai Xiaosheng was deep in thought.

There was still one thing Bai Xiaosheng hadn't mentioned to Lin Weiwei and Lei Ying.

It wasn't that he didn't trust them, but that this matter, besides himself, needed and could let no one else know—

This Friday would be the last day of the task issued by Red Lotus to Bai Xiaosheng!

After Friday, the score that had been locked would be reset!

Bai Xiaosheng was full of fighting spirit, partly for this reason.

"Zhao Beiqing, Lu Zhixin, two high-ranking executives, I wonder if you would become the points I need to strike at the position of Senior Affairs Officer!"

Bai Xiaosheng felt a surge of passion in his heart.

"Find a place to settle down, let's get moving now!" Lin Weiwei said with full enthusiasm.

Involving a provincial industrial leader was one thing, but now they also had an Affairs Officer, so they temporarily could not return to the headquarters.

After settling the bill, Bai Xiaosheng and his two companions left the restaurant to find accommodation and start their investigation.

Meanwhile, inside a townhouse in Linshen Third Ring.

In the living room, Shen Peishen sat opposite Lin Yu.

They had arrived in Linshen today and had just had dinner.

They were chatting at the moment.

"Lin Yu, you've made considerable progress this year. I heard that even Mr. Xiahou Qi praised you highly." Shen Peishen said.

"Teacher, you flatter me." Lin Yu smiled.

"This year, you've not only advanced in your profession but also in cultivating your mindset. Now, I want to test your temperament. There's no problem with that, right?" Shen Peishen picked up his tea and took a slight sip.

Lin Yu was startled.

Indeed, he had retrained himself this year, especially in terms of his mindset.

But...

How would this growth in temperament be tested?

"Please give me a test, teacher. I'll try!" Lin Yu said, full of curiosity.

Shen Peishen smiled.

The Affairs Assistant behind him stepped forward two steps and handed over a piece of paper.

Shen Peishen glanced at it and then handed it to Lin Yu, "Take a look at this."

Curious, Lin Yu took it and immediately his gaze sharpened.

It was a comparison between him and Bai Xiaosheng!

The achievements of both over this year.

Lin Yu silently read through it, silently set it down, his face showing no emotion.

However, eventually, Lin Yu still gave a bitter smile, "Teacher, it seems my temperament is still not firm. Just now, seeing the end, I still felt a bit resentful, feeling..."

"Unconvinced?" Shen Peishen laughed, "Lin Yu, oh Lin Yu, I am here to temper your mindset, not to cultivate a saint. If you were unaffected by things and not sad for yourself, what use would you be?"

Lin Yu was taken aback.

"What I want you to learn is to keep honor and disgrace in your heart and not show it outwardly!"

"What I want is for you to be able to quickly adjust your mindset when you lose your composure!"

"This is what I wanted to see!"

Shen Peishen smiled, "The first test, I consider you to have passed! Now, for my second test! If you pass this, then this year would really not have been wasted for you!"

Lin Yu's expression became serious, "Please set the question, teacher!"

Chapter 980: Teacher Gives You an Opportunity!

"Lin Yu, the second thing I want you to learn is 'In your actions, do not be bound by formality!'"

"Those who achieve great things are not caught up in trivialities!"

Shen Peishen was not in a hurry to pose a so-called "question" but instead focused on his most prized student, saying, "Do you know what your biggest problem has been for a long time?"

Lin Yu hesitated slightly, then nodded.

Lin Yu said, "You've said that I am sometimes too righteous and rigid, always thinking in terms of right or wrong, black or white, needing a result for everything and not accommodating human feelings."

"Also, I always think of using a fair way to handle affairs and compete with others." Lin Yu's face showed a hint of embarrassment.

Shen Peishen nodded, "These aren't wrong in themselves; they are your principles for interacting with the world and why I value you."

"However—"

Shen Peishen sighed deeply, "The hard are easy to break, the gentle are unbeatable!"

"You have resources and support that others can only dream of, yet you always tie your own hands with notions of fairness."

"I won't call you stupid, but I will ask you, isn't this exhausting?"

"These have always been burdens on your mind, even affecting how you interact with the world and your methods of resolving various situations. You are too bound by formality. Always trying to achieve the right result in the right way, but often, it's the result that's important!"

"Does it matter how it was achieved? What's important is that it was achieved and what you do afterward!"

"Have you not suffered many failures this past year because you scorned using certain tactics?"

"That is also where you are inferior to him!" Shen Peishen said.

"The person," these three words made Lin Yu's eyes narrow.

His teacher meant Bai Xiaosheng!

"Teacher, over this past year, you did that on purpose, right?" Lin Yu said, "Letting me bump into walls with my own methods, letting me see that if I am stubborn, I will end up achieving nothing and even going against my wishes!"

Shen Peishen smiled without speaking.

Indeed, he had changed his approach this past year, wanting Lin Yu to hit the south wall not just once, but ten or even twenty times to make his student realize his problems through bloody lessons.

At present, it seemed Lin Yu had gained some insight.

"Not being bound by formality!" Lin Yu repeated Shen Peishen's words, nodding, "I have your help, many resources, but I always think about not using them, wanting to prove myself on my own..."

"However, whether the approach is martial or unmartial, does it really matter!"

"As long as the final purpose is what I want, then it is accomplished."

"I have always been deceiving myself too much!"

"A year from today, I now realize how ridiculous my stubbornness was!" Lin Yu's voice became firm.

Shen Peishen smiled.

His disciple had finally become enlightened!

The conversation could continue.

"Lin Yu, your long-time achievements are already enough to vie for the position of Candidate Senior Affairs Officer!" Shen Peishen said seriously, "If I arrange an opportunity for you, to help you reach the position of Candidate Senior Affairs Officer, are you willing?"

If it had been a year ago, Lin Yu would have found it difficult to accept, thinking about achieving everything through his own effort, especially with Bai Xiaosheng as a rival.

But today, after a year and many harsh lessons, Lin Yu's mind had changed.

At the moment, Lin Yu looked solemn, with only one thing to say—

"I'll follow the teacher's arrangements!"

Not being bound by the manner of acquisition, get the results, then prove oneself.

Lin Yu switched from "prove first, obtain later" to "obtain first, prove later".

Shen Peishen smiled, observing Lin Yu as if appreciating his most favored work, growing more pleased the longer he looked.

"Lin Yu, you've passed this second test!"

Lin Yu looked calm, smiling at his teacher, "Teacher, what would you have me do next? What kind of opportunity have you arranged to enable me to compete for that rare, single Candidate Senior Affairs Officer position every few years?"

Shen Peishen did not rush to answer, smiled as he took a sip of tea, then finally said, "Your achievements over the years have accumulated to a considerable extent. Apart from Bai Xiaosheng, no one in the Affairs Department can match you! Bai Xiaosheng's emergence was a matter of timing,

orchestrated by Mr. Xiahou Qi, just to push him forward, and it's also fate. Wasn't Bai Xiaosheng cooperating with the president's side to take down a regional manager, a provincial industry head, and several officers?"

"This time, I will let you take down a provincial industry head and an officer in one fell swoop!"

"These, along with your contributions over the years, I've calculated, are already enough to solidly outperform Bai Xiaosheng, making you the unquestionable choice for Candidate Senior Affairs Officer!"

Regarding this, Shen Peishen calculated flawlessly, appearing very confident.

Lin Yu was shocked beyond measure, immensely surprised.

"A provincial industry head and an officer, to take down? That means dismissal!" Lin Yu said, "Teacher, this matter is no small feat..."

"Don't worry, their crimes are sufficient! It's just that I am still gathering enough evidence to take them down, but it's almost complete." Shen Peishen smiled with supreme confidence, "Within ten days or half a month, everything will be ready, and you can complete this final sprint!"

He had known about the problems with Zhao Beiqing and Lu Zhixin for a long time, even nurturing these two "fruits" for this very moment—so Lin Yu could pick them!

"And the Candidate Senior Affairs Officer position is about to be activated!" Shen Peishen said.

Lin Yu nodded.

He trusted his teacher immensely.

"Then, may I know in which province those two are currently located, should I rush there now?" Lin Yu asked.

Shen Peishen smiled and shook his head, "They are right under our nose."

"Linshen!" Lin Yu felt incredible.

This could not be a coincidence!

His teacher might have discovered their issues long ago and did nothing, just to let them trap themselves.

To leave them for him!

Lin Yu felt somewhat moved.

His teacher was truly doing everything possible for him!

Shen Peishen observed every subtle emotional change in Lin Yu, taking it all in.

"Lin Yu, my most outstanding student, you are finally no longer the stubborn person you used to be. I've been waiting for you to become enlightened for a long time!"

Shen Peishen thought to himself, then another figure emerged in his mind—Bai Xiaosheng!

"Bai Xiaosheng, you are also a blessing in disguise. Without your provocation, Lin Yu would never have accepted the trials so resolutely and transformed so rapidly. In a way, I should thank you!"

Shen Peishen's eyes sparkled.

"When the right time comes, I also need to make contact with Bai Xiaosheng! In ability, he is not inferior to Lin Yu at all! Both are talents of a century!"

"If Bai Xiaosheng is also willing to work for me, then I would truly be adding wings to a tiger!"

Bai Xiaosheng, Lin Yu, the most outstanding members of the younger generation—if he could get both, they could move the entire Affairs Department.

And even the entire Greater China Region!

Even Shen Peishen's usually calm heart couldn't help but burn with zeal.