

War God 221

Chapter 221: Farewell, Blood Rat Mercenary Corps!

In complete silence, a person was killed. A shadowy figure quickly vanished. By the time the man's comrades arrived, all they saw was a decapitated corpse. They exchanged glances, seeing the horror reflected in each other's eyes.

This person is terrifying. To kill one of them so silently... His strength is far beyond our own.

But their master had given them a death order; if they failed, there was no need to return. They knew the organization's methods. In this vast world, there would be no place for them to hide. At this thought, the men's eyes hardened.

This time, the remaining men in black formed pairs, creating a semi-circle as they advanced quickly into the depths of the dense forest.

"Captain, do you really think we can succeed in this mission?" a pair of men conversed in hushed tones.

"Shut up!" the captain hissed angrily. "According to the intel, the target is a strong Martial Artist whose qualities surpass ours in every aspect. If he hears us..."

"ARGH!"

Suddenly, a scream rang out, startling the two of them. Another comrade had met a grisly death.

"ARGH!"

However, just a few seconds later, another scream was heard.

"Not good!" The captain was alarmed and ran swiftly toward the direction of the screams.

But when they arrived, all they found on the ground were two more corpses. It seemed they had died cleanly, without even a chance to fight back.

How is this possible?!

The two men looked at each other, speechless. They had been cautious and careful, but they had still underestimated their target's strength. The opponent was fast, powerful, and ruthless, showing no mercy. Their comrades hadn't even had time to raise an alarm.

It seems this is a mission with no chance of survival.

With this in mind, the captain said in a low voice, "You need to leave now! Report the situation and have the target's strength re-evaluated!"

"Captain, I..."

The man wanted to object, but the captain cut him off in a cold voice, "Go now! That's an order!"

"Yes!" The man immediately obeyed and disappeared into the dense forest in the blink of an eye.

The captain gripped the gun in his hand, vigilantly scanning his surroundings. Every single tree became an object of his intense focus. He feared the enemy might emerge from behind one of them and deliver a fatal blow.

SNAP. SNAP.

The sound of footsteps on branches rang out. Startled, the captain instantly fired toward the noise.

THWUMP!

Though the handgun was fitted with a silencer, the shot still echoed loudly in the still forest.

WHIRR! WHIRR!

Wildlife flew out of the bushes, prompting the captain to fire off several more rounds. But, without exception, none hit the target he was searching for.

CRUNCH. CRUNCH.

The footsteps grew closer, apparently right behind him.

THWUMP!

He spun and pulled the trigger. However, the bullet merely struck a tree trunk, revealing nothing. Cold sweat dripped from the captain's forehead. His hand holding the gun trembled slightly with nerves.

His speed is eerie... Even with my special training, I didn't sense a thing.

Swallowing hard, the captain hid behind a large tree, hoping his few remaining comrades would not be discovered. As the minutes ticked by, the forest returned to its previous quiet. But this stillness only filled the captain with a deeper sense of dread.

CRUNCH!

The footsteps sounded again, this time without any attempt at concealment, right behind him. The captain spun around, pulling the trigger in one swift motion.

THWUMP!

CLANG!

A sharp, metallic sound rang out, as if the bullet had struck steel. It even produced a shower of sparks. The captain's pupils constricted, his mouth falling agape. He saw a sight he would never forget for the rest of his life. A few meters away stood a person enveloped in a luminous barrier. The bullet had just struck that very barrier. The seemingly thin shield had somehow withstood his bullet.

What is this thing? A man or a ghost?

While the captain was still dazed, the person seemed to raise their hand and threw something toward him. Thinking it was a hidden weapon, the captain fearfully fired three shots in succession.

THWUMP! THWUMP! THWUMP!

But when the object landed, he realized it was a bloody human head. Though mangled by the bullets, the captain recognized it instantly. It was the subordinate he had sent back to report the situation.

This...

The captain was shocked, terrified. A feeling of utter despair suddenly flooded his mind.

"Who the hell are you? No... you're not human!" the captain exclaimed. He was certain there were people in the world who could silently decimate a ten-man squad. But there was absolutely no one who could withstand bullets. Even the so-called Martial Way masters in the organization couldn't do that.

"To come and kill me without even knowing who I am... you certainly have some nerve," Lin Mu said, his hands clasped behind his back as he walked step by step toward the captain.

"You... don't come any closer!" Even as a battle-hardened special forces soldier who had walked through hails of gunfire, the captain felt a profound despair. The unknown is the most terrifying thing of all.

CRUNCH. CRUNCH.

As if he hadn't heard, Lin Mu continued his steady advance.

"Don't come any closer!" the captain yelled, pointing his gun at Lin Mu. "If you take another step, I'll shoot!"

THWUMP! THWUMP!

The bullets whistled out and struck the luminous barrier. However, the barrier merely dented an inch before resisting the heavy impacts. The slugs fell to the ground; thumb-length bullets had been compressed into small, flattened lumps. One could only imagine the terrifying rebound force of that barrier.

"No!" The captain's eyes turned bloodshot as he defiantly fired again.

CLICK!

Unfortunately, he was out of bullets. The anger and fear on his face melted away into pure despair. He slumped against the large tree, his gaze dimming.

Even bullets can't penetrate that bizarre barrier. It seems my death today is certain.

"Talk. Who sent you?" Lin Mu stopped a few meters away, watching the captain with a calm expression. With his current strength, even if the man had more ammunition, he couldn't be harmed in the slightest.

With my Gang Qi projected externally, I'm impervious to blades and bullets. Combined with the unique properties of my Spiritual Energy, my defense is as solid as King Kong. Mere bullets can't even leave a scratch.

"You think I'll tell you?" the captain grit his teeth, his expression one of unyielding defiance.

Lin Mu nodded. "I know people like you are specially trained to die rather than surrender. But... I have a hundred ways to make you talk."

A strange smile crept onto the captain's face. "Is that so?"

His cheek twitched as if he had swallowed something. His face turned dark, and a trickle of black blood spilled from his mouth.

Suicide by poison.

Lin Mu raised an eyebrow, somewhat surprised by the man's resolve. He stepped forward, intending to check the body for any information. However, after just two steps, a strong sense of unease flooded his mind.

SWOOSH!

His figure flickered.

BOOM!

A muffled, thunderous explosion echoed through the dense forest. It tore through the space where the figure had stood, continuing on to pierce clean through the bowl-thick tree behind it.

Chapter 222: The Might of Barrett!

The figure pierced by the bullet slowly dissipated, leaving only a faint streak in the air. The smell of gunpowder spread through the dense, silent forest. An eerie stillness settled over everything.

Once the figure had completely vanished, a shadow hidden in the darkness stirred, as if eager to make a quick retreat. But in the next moment, he noticed something was amiss. As an outstanding mercenary of the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps, his grasp of combat timing and judgment of enemy status were second nature. Just a moment ago, he had believed his shot was certain to kill the target. But something felt off.

What could it be? Bai Shu's brows furrowed behind his mask.

That's right! The sound... the sound was wrong!

For an excellent sniper, bullets were like their own eyes and arms. The bullet had clearly passed through the man's head, yet he hadn't felt the genuine sensation of impact. It was as if he had shot through empty air. The impact felt hollow and powerless.

Moreover, he hadn't heard the enemy scream or even groan in pain. No matter what kind of hellish training the target had gone through, a bullet wound would surely produce some sound, even if it wasn't a full-blown scream. Furthermore, while the Barrett's power was said to be unrivaled, it still couldn't match the destructive force of a rocket launcher. It couldn't just vaporize an enemy.

Unless... I didn't hit the target at all. But how could that be possible?

The Barrett's muzzle velocity was over a thousand meters per second. Even if the adversary was a true Martial Way master, how could they have dodged his shot?

I can't think about it anymore! A qualified sniper doesn't linger without confirming the kill.

With that, Bai Shu wasted no time relocating. Staying in one spot for too long risked exposing his position to the target. Besides, the gunshot had likely already given him away.

Bai Shu moved through the dense forest like a Ghost, his actions quick and decisive. He had already picked out an alternate sniping spot, one he hadn't expected to need. Despite the darkness and the uneven, overgrown ground, his movements were resolute and sharp. In just ten breaths, he reached the new position.

Hiding, going prone, setting up the rifle... The sequence of actions was as fluid as flowing water, as if repeated a million times over. Every detail was ingrained in his muscle memory, an instinctual response.

Peering through the scope, Bai Shu scanned his surroundings like a hunting lion, silent and cautious. The Barrett's night-vision scope provided a clear view of the forest, which his mind rapidly analyzed. He was now certain he had missed. There was no body on the ground. The bloodstains didn't guarantee the target was wounded, but the tracks on the ground suggested the adversary had simply vanished.

Licking his lips, Bai Shu's gaze grew more intense.

So this is the target not even the Dark Web could handle. He's got some skills after all.

Bai Shu felt an unexpected flicker of excitement. He had assumed this was just another insignificant mission, but now his interest was piqued. Adjusting his scope, Bai Shu controlled his breathing, his eyes as sharp as a hawk's.

Nothing. Has the target already left? Bai Shu was perplexed.

Just then, however, he felt a sense of crisis wash over him. Without a second thought, he rolled away from his hiding spot.

SWISH!

A bullet whizzed past him. Though the supersonic round missed his head, it grazed his ear, instantly splattering his face with blood.

Shit! Bai Shu cursed inwardly. He didn't dare linger and immediately began to retreat, moving like a Ghost Charm. His skills were truly exceptional.

Once he found a suitable hiding spot, he discovered that half of his ear had been shot off. Excruciating pain lanced through him. But the anguish in his heart was even worse than the physical pain, twisting his features into a grimace.

A colossal humiliation! The finest sniper of the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps, hit by his own target. If word of this got back to the organization, those rat bastards would never let him hear the end of it. I will have my revenge!

Bai Shu took a deep breath, controlled his rhythm, and then...

BANG!

He pulled the trigger, and a bullet roared out, carrying his fury. The barrel, which should have bucked violently from the recoil, remained steady as a rock in his firm grip. This was why he chose the Barrett. He was confident he had the strength to master it.

The bullet screamed through the air, striking the spot where the enemy's shot had originated. The whole process may have seemed lengthy, but it definitely didn't exceed three seconds. Even a qualified sniper would only have time to fire and begin retreating. They'd never have time to dodge his follow-up shot!

THUD!

A muffled sound echoed, and Bai Shu's eyes brightened. The sound of a bullet hitting a body!

However, Bai Shu didn't immediately go to check. Instead, he pulled the trigger again, firing at the same spot. It was a conditioned reflex. He was certain the target was in that exact position. Getting hit by a Barrett round meant survival was impossible, but to be absolutely sure, he fired a second time. From the sound of the impact, he was certain he'd hit the target again.

It's over! A contemptuous smile touched Bai Shu's lips. No matter how many tricks you have, you still died by my hand.

Bai Shu slung his rifle and shot out from his hiding spot like a leopard, sprinting toward the target's location. He needed to confirm the target's death, record it on video, and take the man's head. This was not only for his report to the organization but also as a memento—a reminder to never underestimate any target.

Five seconds later, Bai Shu arrived at the location. Hiding behind a large tree, he carefully peeked out. Once bitten, twice shy.

Soon, he saw a body lying face down in a small crater. Unfortunately, its head had been blown apart, leaving it completely unrecognizable. But judging from the build and clothing, it was undoubtedly his target.

At this thought, Bai Shu allowed himself a slight smile. But the simple motion pulled at his wound, provoking another curse.

"You got off easy," he muttered. "Otherwise, I would have shown you what real torture is."

Spitting in annoyance, Bai Shu stood up, stretched his limbs, and slowly approached the body. Even though the target was dead, he still needed to record a video and chop off a finger as a memento.

However, just as Bai Shu finished recording and was about to cut off the opponent's finger to leave, he froze as if struck by lightning.

From behind him, a mocking voice spoke.

"In such a hurry to leave? Did you ask for my permission?"

Chapter 223 One Day, The Blood Rat Clan Shall Be Annihilated!

The target wasn't dead?!

How is that possible?! I have to escape!

In the span of a single breath, Bai Shu made his choice.

"If you dare run, I guarantee you'll die a gruesome death!"

At the sound of the voice, Bai Shu froze. He wasn't intimidated, however. He barely moved his arm, ready to react.

BANG!

A gunshot rang out. Bai Shu's wrist was struck, and a grenade dropped to the ground. It turned out he had been trying to use a grenade, but his opponent had seen right through his trick.

"If I were you, I wouldn't resort to petty ploys," Lin Mu said, a slight smile on his face as he slowly walked forward. "Shall we talk now?"

Bai Shu took a deep breath, confirming that this man was even stronger than he had imagined. But still... "It seems there's nothing for us to talk about," he said, his voice hoarse as he suppressed his rage.

"Did the Rat King not teach you that a wise man submits to the circumstances?" Lin Mu's tone was tinged with mockery.

"You..." Bai Shu shuddered and spun around, staring at Lin Mu in astonishment. "Who in the world are you? How do you know about the Rat King?"

Lin Mu toyed with the gun in his hand. "To not even investigate your target's identity properly... it seems the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps gets worse with each generation."

Taking a deep breath to quell the shock in his heart, Bai Shu said grimly, "You are strong, I'll admit, but that's an arrogant thing to say."

"In my eyes, the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps is far from invincible," Lin Mu replied with an indifferent smile. "How about a deal?"

"A Blood Rat mercenary refuses any deals with a target!" Bai Shu's stance was firm.

"Heh, you're just a bunch of sewer rats. What's with the high-and-mighty act in front of me?" Lin Mu sneered without reservation. A flash of anger glinted in Bai Shu's eyes.

"Make your decision quickly. My patience is limited," Lin Mu said, his tone growing impatient.

"I, Bai Shu, have never in my life—"

The words caught in his throat as the cold muzzle of a gun pressed against his head.

Circumstances are stronger than men; a great man knows when to yield.

"Speak," Bai Shu forced out through clenched teeth, acquiescing.

Lin Mu smiled slightly. "Good. Now, who sent you?"

Bai Shu replied resolutely, "It's a rule in the Mercenary World. Even in death, we don't reveal information about our employers."

"Everyone knows the character of the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps. Since when were you known for keeping your word?" Lin Mu stated flatly. "You don't have to tell me. I can already guess who it is; I'm just looking for confirmation. Since you're unwilling to talk, you can die."

His finger tightened on the trigger.

"Go to hell!" Bai Shu roared.

However, before the bullet could leave the chamber, his head snapped to the side. He retreated two swift steps, smashing his elbow directly into Lin Mu's chest. Bai Shu wasn't just an exceptional sniper; he was also a skilled Martial Artist.

A cold sneer played on his lips. With his strength and speed, he was confident his opponent wouldn't be able to react in time.

THUD!

But his elbow felt as if it had struck solid steel. An excruciating pain shot through his arm instantly. Bai Shu's face twisted, but his reactions were just as fast. The first strike having failed, he rolled on the ground to create distance.

Just then, a fierce gust of wind—powered by Internal Energy—whipped toward the back of his head.

Such incredible speed!

With no time to think, Bai Shu ducked, trying to dodge the punch.

WHAM!

Instead, a sharp pain erupted from his back. The previous attack had just been a feint; this second punch was the real killing blow.

Bai Shu was sent flying, his body hitting the ground as immense pain wracked him.

"Cough, cough!" He struggled to his feet, clutching his chest and coughing violently.

"Not bad," Lin Mu remarked with a faint smile. "You took one of my punches and didn't die."

He had seen long ago that Bai Shu was also a Martial Artist, but a weak one, with only the strength of the Internal Energy Early Stage. He hadn't used his full strength in that punch. Otherwise, with Bai Shu's meager abilities, he would have been killed instantly.

Bai Shu stared at Lin Mu with a grave expression, sensing the immense danger emanating from him. His power was terrifyingly formidable.

"Kid, I admit our intel on you was wrong," Bai Shu said, spitting out a mouthful of bloody saliva. His body hunched slightly, like a lone wolf poised to strike. "But it's wishful thinking if you believe you can keep me here."

CRACK!

Stomping on the ground, Bai Shu used the force to launch himself forward. His hands formed into claws, striking for Lin Mu's throat and abdomen. A murderous glint shone in his eyes as his speed flared, growing even faster. At full power, he could kill any Martial Artist at his level with a single strike.

"Die!"

His Internal Energy erupted, his claws as sharp as blades!

Yet, in the next instant, Bai Shu froze, his eyes bulging. A hand had gently clamped around his neck, lifting him off the ground.

"With such paltry strength, you dare make a fool of yourself in front of me?"

As Lin Mu applied a little pressure, Bai Shu's eyes bulged even wider. The mask on his face fell away, revealing the utterly ordinary face of a middle-aged man. He was the kind of man who could disappear into any crowd.

"Rats should stay in their dark gutters. Don't scurry around carelessly, or you might just lose your life," Lin Mu said, his voice calm but laced with a chilling, bone-deep killing intent. "Your Blood Rat Mercenary Corps has come after me time and again. I will remember this. When I have time, I'll pay a personal visit to the Amazon Rainforest and wipe out your entire filthy pack."

Bai Shu's pupils dilated in shock.

This man knows where our base is? Who is he? And he's not just talking to me, he's... that's right, the communicator!

He suddenly remembered that his communicator was still active. His opponent was saying this deliberately for the organization to hear.

This guy... what arrogance! How dare he challenge the prestige of the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps!

As if reading his mind, Lin Mu leaned in and whispered in his ear, "I forgot to mention one thing. Do you know who I am?"

"I am number sixteen on the Heaven Ranking—Lin Wudi!"

Lin! Wu! Di! It's him!

Bai Shu began to struggle frantically, desperate to relay this critical information to his organization, but the hand around his neck only tightened.

CRACK!

His neck snapped.

Lin Mu casually tossed the corpse to the ground, a cold smile touching the corner of his mouth.

"Blood Rat... I hadn't even come looking for you, yet you came knocking on my door. Very well. One day, I will set foot in the Amazon and wipe you all out."

And the Dark Web, too.

Although he hadn't gotten any information from Bai Shu, he had gathered plenty of clues from the others he had dealt with earlier. Those men had been sent by the Dark Web. From what they had said, their organization had found an expert to deal with him. He hadn't expected it to be tonight, but that person had clearly been eager to make a move.

It was undeniable. If not for his incredibly powerful Divine Sense, he would have fallen into their trap. That shot was so fast that if Lin Mu had been a fraction of a second slower, it would have taken less than a second for him to be either killed or severely wounded. While ordinary firearms couldn't penetrate his defensive Gang Qi, that had been a Barrett rifle. There weren't many organizations in River City capable of deploying such a massively destructive weapon.

With Bai Shu dead, the last trace of unease in his heart vanished completely. It seemed this man had been the source of the day's greatest crisis.

Chapter 224: Mercenary Forbidden Zone!

The Amazon Rainforest.

A certain rugged peak.

The inside of the peak had been completely hollowed out and divided into countless rooms of varying sizes, each one filled with people. There were men in various strange uniforms silently wiping their firearms. There were also captured men and women, all sallow and gaunt.

In the deepest part of the hollowed-out mountain, a dozen people sat around a table in a massive conference room, their expressions grave as they watched footage on a large screen. The person filming seemed to be in combat, so the image was a blurry, dizzying mess. Finally, a loud boom sounded, and the footage cut out.

The atmosphere in the conference room was heavy.

After what felt like an eternity, the gaunt elder at the head of the table took out a cigar and lit it. The others silently followed suit, and soon, the room was shrouded in smoke.

Only after everyone had calmed down did the elder slowly speak. "Gentlemen, do any of you have something to say?"

"The honor of the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps must not be violated!" a large Black man to the elder's left stood up, seething with murderous intent.

"Indeed," another man echoed. "With Bai Shu's sacrifice and the enemy's blatant provocation, we must kill them!"

"Kill them? And how do you propose we do that?" a white man sneered. "Gentlemen, Bai Shu ranked among the top five in our corps in terms of strength. If even he failed, you can imagine how powerful the enemy is."

"So you want us to just sit and wait for the enemy to come knocking? August, you really are a mole, aren't you? Pathetically timid," the Black man taunted.

Enraged, the man called August slammed his hand on the table. "Say that again!"

"I said you're a coward!" the Black man shot back, unafraid.

"You're asking to die!" August roared, leaping to his feet and pulling a gun on the Black man.

CLICK. CLICK. CLICK.

The men sitting beside the Black man instantly drew their pistols as well, all aiming at August. At their leader's command, they would riddle him with holes. In response, August's supporters also brandished their weapons. The atmosphere grew taut, a firestorm ready to erupt at any moment.

"Enough!" The elder at the head of the table slammed his hand down and roared, "August! Ba Di! Both of you, sit down!"

However, the two men continued to glare at each other, not bothering to conceal the murderous intent in their eyes.

"Shit!" Infuriated, the elder drew his own gun and slammed it on the table. "I'm not dead yet! Are you going to ignore my orders now?"

Seeing the elder was truly enraged, the man named Ba Di shrugged and raised his right hand. His men immediately lowered their weapons. August did the same, slowly sitting back down, but his expression was incredibly grim, the murderous intent in his eyes burning even brighter.

Damn you, Ba Di. You'd better not let your guard down, or I'll personally twist your head off and toss it in the Amazon River to feed the fish.

Meanwhile, Ba Di let out a cold sneer. He gave August a thumbs-up, then slowly turned it upside down. The gesture nearly sent August into a blind rage, but he held himself back. He knew that Ba Di, a brute with more brawn than brains, was foolish enough to actually start a fight right here.

Looking at the two men barely restraining themselves, the elder felt a throbbing headache. Although he was the leader of the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps, his authority had greatly diminished over the years. The entire mercenary corps had effectively fallen under the control of Ba Di and August, leaving him with very little power to command. With his most loyal subordinate, Bai Shu, dead, he had no one capable left. To keep Ba Di and August in check, he needed a new plan.

With this in mind, the Blood Rat leader spoke in a deep voice, "Gentlemen, the enemy has provoked us so brazenly. If we don't retaliate, the standing of the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps will suffer."

Ba Di immediately nodded. "The leader is right! Anyone who dares to touch the Blood Rats, I, Ba Di, won't stand for it!"

"Hmph. Ba Di, don't act like you're the only one with guts here. I, August, am not to be trifled with," August said with a cold laugh.

"Is that so?" Ba Di retorted, his face full of disdain.

"Alright," the leader interjected, fearing another argument. He tapped his fingers on the table. "Gentlemen, I'm getting old, and I've felt my strength failing these past few years. Therefore, I plan to select one of you to become the next leader of the Blood Rat Mercenary Corps."

He swept his gaze across the room. "Does anyone have a good suggestion?"

As expected, his words lit a fire in both Ba Di's and August's eyes. August was better at hiding it, masking his greed almost instantly, but Ba Di was visibly thrilled. The other members had long ago thrown their lot in with one of the two men and held no ambition for the leadership themselves. However, if their boss became the leader, they would all benefit greatly.

After a few seconds of silence, the room erupted.

"I support Ba Di!"

"I recommend August!"

"No one but Ba Di is fit to be leader! I, Wei En, will be the first to object to anyone else!"

"August's contributions are plain to see! He's the only one I'll recognize!"

"..."

The meeting room became as raucous as a marketplace.

What an impatient bunch of hyenas, the leader thought with an internal sneer. His face, however, remained pleasant. "I acknowledge the abilities of both Ba Di and August, and their merits are evident to all. It seems your supporters are evenly matched. How about this..."

He paused, a smile playing on his lips. "I have an idea. Whoever successfully kills that man, Lin, will have my full support to become the next leader."

At this, the room fell silent. Ba Di and August both wore grave expressions.

The old fox! they both thought.

If that man were so easy to kill, Bai Shu wouldn't have failed. But the rules of the Blood Rats were clear: when two candidates had equal support, the endorsement of the previous leader was required to take power. Of course, there was another way—kill all your opponents—but that would cripple the Blood Rats. Neither Ba Di nor August was foolish enough to do that.

"What's the matter? Don't you dare?" the leader prodded. "If that's the case, then I'll just..."

"What's there to be afraid of?" Ba Di immediately bristled. "He's just some yellow-skinned pig! Killing him will be a piece of cake!" He stood up decisively. "Just watch! I'll bring back his head!" With that, he stormed out, his men following close behind.

August also rose, gave the leader a slight bow, and said, "I will be sure to complete the mission you've given me." He then departed as well.

Once most of them had left, a man standing behind the leader spoke with concern. "Leader, are you really going to..."

The leader waved a hand dismissively and sneered, "If they want to be the leader, let's see which one has what it takes. However, killing that man will be no easy task."

He added grimly, "After all, that place is known as the Mercenary Forbidden Zone."

Chapter 225: Please Respect Yourself!

「River City.」

Early the next morning, Lin Mu received a call from Su Ke'er.

"Lin... Lin Mu, can you come over?" A hint of hesitation colored her voice.

"Yes, okay," he replied.

Lin Mu pondered for a moment before agreeing. The company was currently undergoing resource integration, and collaborations with various major families had begun. Su Ke'er was personally managing everything. Lin Mu assumed Su Ke'er must have encountered some problems she couldn't resolve on her own.

However, events developed in a way that was far beyond his expectations.

Su Ke'er wasn't at the company at all.

When he called her phone, no one answered.

Lin Mu immediately realized something was wrong. He suddenly recalled hearing a strange noise in the background when Su Ke'er had called him earlier. After a moment of thought, he remembered who it belonged to.

A faint smile touched his lips, and he went straight to Su Ke'er's home.

Twenty minutes later, Lin Mu arrived at her residential complex. As soon as he entered, he saw several suspicious-looking people wandering around. They kept glancing at him after he got out of his car.

Lin Mu smiled slightly but paid them no mind. He had been to Su Ke'er's home once before, so he knew the way.

After going upstairs, Lin Mu encountered a couple descending the stairs in an embrace. They quickly separated upon seeing him. The man gave Lin Mu a slight smile, while the woman shyly lowered her head to fix her hair. Lin Mu walked straight past them without a sideways glance. The couple exchanged a look, their eyes flickering.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

He knocked lightly. After a few minutes, the door finally opened.

Su Ke'er stood there in a bathrobe, her hair covering half her face as she looked at him with a complex expression.

"Come in," she said, stepping aside. Her eyes were evasive.

Lin Mu nodded slightly and was about to step inside.

However, Su Ke'er suddenly pulled on his arm, a struggle apparent in her eyes.

"President Lin, I..."

Just as she was about to speak, Lin Mu gave her a subtle shake of his head. "What's the matter? Since I'm already here, aren't you going to invite me in to sit down?"

Su Ke'er grew frantic, but Lin Mu had already walked into the room.

Compared to his last visit, her apartment was a mess. Clothes were scattered on the sofa, and there were even shattered plates on the floor. Lin Mu also noticed a layer of dust on the coffee table. This was completely at odds with Su Ke'er's usual habits.

As Boheng Pharma's general manager, Su Ke'er was extremely strict with herself, both in her work and her personal life. She always dressed impeccably and pursued a life of quality. She was even somewhat of a neat freak.

Her home had been spotless during his last visit, but this time, he noticed many things were out of place.

It seemed the problem Su Ke'er was facing was no small matter.

Lin Mu glanced discreetly toward the bathroom and said, "Are you feeling better? You can put work aside for now. Your health is your greatest asset, after all."

Su Ke'er's expression changed slightly. This was not like the usual Lin Mu. That cold and arrogant man was actually concerned about a subordinate? Has the sun risen from the west?

However, Su Ke'er understood the subtext in his words, and her gaze kept flicking toward the bathroom. She nervously twisted the hem of her robe, her head bowed in silence.

Lin Mu leaned back on the sofa and smiled. "What's wrong? You didn't call me over just to sit here in silence, did you? A man and woman alone in a room... it seems a bit improper."

He watched her, the smile never leaving his lips. They were sitting so close he could even smell the faint, pleasant scent from her body.

Su Ke'er bit her lip, appearing to hesitate over something.

The next moment, something happened that caught Lin Mu completely off guard.

Su Ke'er suddenly ripped off her bathrobe. She threw herself at Lin Mu, her arms wrapping around his neck.

"Lin Mu... I... I want..."

Her cheeks were flushed, and her body was trembling slightly.

Lin Mu: "..."

What is going on? This is nothing like I anticipated!

Beneath her bathrobe, Su Ke'er was wearing nothing at all, her bare skin pressing against him. The raw contact made his body instantly stiffen.

He had been through countless battles; what hadn't he seen? But at this moment, his brain seemed to freeze.

His reaction was quick, however. He raised a hand to steady her.

"Manager Su, please have some self-respect!"

Lin Mu looked at Su Ke'er earnestly. His gaze was steady and his expression calm, devoid of any indecent thoughts.

He didn't deny that Su Ke'er was a rare beauty. In fact, her unique constitution gave her a natural aura that was lethally attractive to men. And when he had treated her illness before, he had seen her body.

However, for a cultivator, the first priority is to cultivate the mind. Lin Mu's willpower was astonishing, so he was naturally unmoved.

Upon being rejected by Lin Mu, Su Ke'er froze, and a mist began to cloud her beautiful eyes. She felt like a cheap tramp for debasing herself like this.

Have some self-respect!

Those words pierced her heart like a sharp blade, a pain so deep it felt as if it reached her very marrow.

"President Lin, I'm sorry..."

Su Ke'er let go of Lin Mu, her eyes red as she fought back tears.

Biting her red lips, she said, "I was too impulsive. I'm sorry..."

Saying this, she buried her face in her hands and began to sob softly.

At that moment, Su Ke'er felt like she was the most pathetic and ridiculous person in the world.

A chill began to emanate from her body, growing stronger by the second.

Lin Mu raised an eyebrow. The emotional shock was causing Su Ke'er to lose control of the cold energy within her body.

He gently grasped her shoulders, lifting her head up little by little.

Su Ke'er had felt a deep chill in both her body and soul, as if she were trapped in an endless, bone-chilling wind. Just then, a warm, strong hand took hold of her, gently pulling her from the abyss of despair.

Su Ke'er lifted her head and met a pair of incomparably clear eyes.

"Lin Mu..."

Only then did Lin Mu see the large bruise on her cheek.

He gently pulled her bathrobe closed, covering her alluring figure.

"Why go to such lengths?" Lin Mu shook his head. "A method like this isn't guaranteed to work."

"I..."

Before Su Ke'er could speak, Lin Mu placed a finger on her lips. "To solve certain problems, you don't need to make things so complicated."

Su Ke'er's beautiful eyes widened.

Lin Mu stood up and walked toward the bathroom.

He turned to Su Ke'er and smiled slightly. "Sometimes, all you need is a little violence."

Then, under Su Ke'er's shocked gaze, he kicked the bathroom door open.

BANG!

The thick glass door shattered instantly, sending fragments scattering across the floor.

Inside the bathroom, a man holding a phone and filming stared at Lin Mu, dumbfounded.

"How... how did you know?" The man's face turned pale.

Lin Mu gave a faint smile. "Only an idiot like you could come up with such a stupid plan."

The man was none other than Su Ke'er's ex-boyfriend, Ma Xuan.

Chapter 226: You Still Have One Last Chance!

"We meet again."

Lin Mu cracked a slight smile, grabbed Ma Xuan by the collar, and flung him away.

"Ah!"

Lin Mu didn't hold back this time. Ma Xuan's body smashed directly onto the coffee table.

BANG!

CRACK!

The coffee table shattered.

Ma Xuan lay on the ground, wailing and screaming in agony.

Lin Mu stepped on Ma Xuan's chest. "Wasn't the last lesson enough? And you even bully women."

He pressed down with his foot.

CRACK!

Ma Xuan's sternum broke on the spot.

"Ah!"

Ma Xuan screamed like a slaughtered pig, begging for mercy.

"I warned you not to mess with me."

Lin Mu crouched down and looked at Ma Xuan's pained face. "But why won't you listen? Did you really think I'm a good-natured person?"

Last time, Ma Xuan had misunderstood the situation with Su Ke'er. He tried to hire people to teach Lin Mu a lesson but ended up getting taught one himself.

Lin Mu had warned him back then.

Yet, this Ma Xuan held such a grudge.

He provoked Lin Mu time and again.

"I..."

Blood oozed from Ma Xuan's mouth and nose. He was in so much pain he couldn't speak, only letting out low groans.

"Lin Mu, don't..."

Seeing Ma Xuan's miserable state, Su Ke'er tried to intervene. Of course, she wasn't worried about Ma Xuan. She was worried that Lin Mu would go to prison if he accidentally killed him.

Lin Mu picked up Ma Xuan's phone and watched a video on it.

It was the scene of Su Ke'er embracing him.

Waggling the phone, Lin Mu asked, "Did he force you to do this?"

Su Ke'er's face twisted in anguish as she lowered her head, wiping away her tears.

Lin Mu chuckled and slapped Ma Xuan's face again.

The slap echoed loudly.

"Using such despicable methods... that's just your style."

Lin Mu said indifferently, "Someone came to my place earlier to cause trouble, impersonating a police officer. That doctor surnamed Ma looked a bit like you. It seems you were involved in that too."

Ma Xuan's gaze flickered, and he looked away evasively.

"It doesn't matter if you don't speak."

Lin Mu leaned close to Ma Xuan's ear and whispered, "I can kill someone like you with a wave of my hand. I can even make you disappear from this world without leaving a single trace."

Ma Xuan's pupils dilated. He shook his head frantically. "No... Don't kill me! It wasn't me!"

Ma Xuan burst into tears. "I was forced into it too!"

"Talk."

Lin Mu stood up and sat down on the couch.

Ma Xuan struggled a few times but couldn't get up. He was forced to remain lying on the floor.

"I hate you! I hate you for stealing my woman!" Ma Xuan glared at Su Ke'er, his eyes filled with venom.

Su Ke'er's expression was complicated, a hint of sorrow in her eyes.

"Continue," Lin Mu said.

Ma Xuan said hurriedly, "I admit it! I was the one who hired people to teach you a lesson last time. But everything after that... someone else made me do it."

Lin Mu remained expressionless.

"Someone found me. He said his woman had been stolen too, and that he had a way to teach you a harsh lesson, but he needed my help." Ma Xuan confessed everything, holding nothing back.

It turned out that someone had found Ma Xuan and had him set up a scheme to frame Lin Mu.

The incident at Suqin Restaurant was just one small part of it.

If Lin Mu managed to escape that trap, they would proceed to the second step.

That person had approached Su Ke'er's mother and used her to threaten Su Ke'er into seducing Lin Mu.

Ma Xuan's role was to hide in the bathroom and record a video. They planned to use it to blackmail either Lin Mu or Qin Luoli, forcing Lin Mu to submit.

Although Su Ke'er had long ago severed ties with her mother, that was still the woman who gave birth to her. Helpless, she had no choice but to compromise.

They just never expected Lin Mu to see through the whole thing.

"What crude tactics."

Lin Mu said indifferently, "But I have to admit, they're not completely useless."

"An ordinary person might have actually fallen for your scheme."

Lin Mu continued, "But these tricks are useless against me. You think you can threaten me with this little bit of leverage? How foolish!"

Beside them, Su Ke'er gnashed her teeth, her eyes red.

Lin Mu turned to Su Ke'er.

"Lin Mu, I'm sorry, I..." Su Ke'er began to explain, but Lin Mu waved his hand dismissively. "I know you were forced. I don't blame you."

Ma Xuan gritted his teeth. "Even though I failed, don't get happy too soon, Lin Mu. We still have another card to play!"

With that, Ma Xuan began to laugh like a madman.

Just then, Su Ke'er's phone rang. She answered it.

After listening for only a moment, Su Ke'er cried out, "Don't hurt her! Okay, okay, I promise! I'll agree to anything!"

Hanging up the phone, tears streamed down Su Ke'er's face, making her look utterly pitiful.

"Hear that? This is the consequence of daring to mess with them!"

Ma Xuan staggered to his feet, his face twisted. "Su Ke'er, if you want your mother to live, you will listen to me."

"You..." Su Ke'er gritted her teeth. "How can you be so vicious? I must have been blind to have ever chosen to be with you!"

"You're nothing but scum!"

Ma Xuan coughed twice, a savage grin on his face. "I'm scum? And what about you, you bitch? We were together for so long, and I was so good to you, yet you treated me with indifference. You wouldn't even let me hold your hand! In the end, you just kicked me to the curb and threw yourself into another man's arms."

"I'm scum, but you're no saint either!"

It was as if Ma Xuan was roaring out all the frustration and resentment in his heart. With his blood-streaked, contorted face, he looked absolutely terrifying.

Tears continued to cascade down Su Ke'er's cheeks.

The truth wasn't what Ma Xuan claimed. At that time, she had been diagnosed with a health problem and was feeling extremely low. This, combined with the impatient way Ma Xuan sometimes looked at her, made the highly sensitive Su Ke'er feel resistant.

"Why waste your breath on such a worthless piece of trash?"

Lin Mu looked at Ma Xuan and asked, "Where is she?"

He was, of course, asking about Su Ke'er's mother.

Since they were able to force Su Ke'er's compliance, they must have her mother in their custody.

Ma Xuan sneered. "You can give up on that idea. I'll never..."

BAM!

Before he could finish speaking, a kick sent him flying.

Lin Mu looked down on the pathetic Ma Xuan, his voice icy. "My patience has its limits. Start talking if you don't want to die."

"Lin Mu, you still dare to hit me?! Aren't you afraid they'll kill her?" Ma Xuan screamed hysterically.

"Don't!" Su Ke'er grabbed Lin Mu's arm, pleading, "Lin Mu, please, I'm begging you, save my mom. As long as she's safe, I... I'll agree to anything you want."

"Including me!"

Su Ke'er bit her lip so hard that it bled, the crimson drop as red as a rose.

Lin Mu shook his head.

Su Ke'er's face turned ashen.

Lin Mu said, "I'll save her, of course. But I won't compromise with trash like him."

Helpless, Su Ke'er crouched on the ground, sobbing, "What should I do then?"

"Simple."

Lin Mu walked toward Ma Xuan. "To deal with people like him, you just need to use a few... standard procedures."

"What are you doing?" Ma Xuan asked, his face filled with terror.

He was truly afraid.

Lin Mu was completely unpredictable.

"What am I doing?"

Lin Mu smiled. "You'll find out in a moment."

Lin Mu raised his foot and stomped down hard on Ma Xuan's thigh.

CRACK!

The thigh broke.

"Ah! My leg!"

Lin Mu's gaze was dark. "You have one last chance."

Chapter 227 I knew, so I came!

「Half an hour later.」

Looking at Ma Xuan passed out on the ground, Su Ke'er looked worried. "President Lin... President Lin, is he going to be okay?"

Although Su Ke'er hated Ma Xuan to the bone, if he were to die, it would be a huge problem. Mostly, she was concerned it would cause trouble for Lin Mu.

Lin Mu withdrew his hand and said nonchalantly, "Don't worry, he won't die."

Under his threats, Ma Xuan had spilled everything. Of course, Lin Mu didn't believe him completely, so he had used the Soul Search technique to peek into some of Ma Xuan's memories. It proved that Ma Xuan had indeed held some things back.

This time, their preparations had been extremely thorough. First, they had found Su Ke'er's mother and used her to blackmail Su Ke'er into framing Lin Mu. Then, the person behind Ma Xuan would use their connections to attack Lin Mu.

They were here for him!

To be precise, they were after the shares of Boheng Pharma. Recently, due to investments from several large corporations and family businesses, Boheng Pharma had begun a major restructuring. To the old foxes of the business world, this naturally warranted an investigation. Thus, they learned that so many powerful figures were backing Boheng Pharma.

For a time, the entire business community in River City was shaken to its core!

And behind Ma Xuan was the shadow of the Chen Family.

It seems Chen Xinlan still holds a deep grudge.

Lin Mu sneered. He had warned Chen Xinlan long ago not to provoke him, but it was obvious the Chen Family behind her had no intention of letting him go.

However, Lin Mu was somewhat puzzled. Although Chen Xinlan hated him for turning her son into an imbecile and humiliating her, the Old Madam of the Qin Family had already intervened. No matter how much Qin Hongbo feared his wife, he wouldn't dare to defy the Old Madam. He wouldn't target Lin Mu, especially not with such underhanded tactics.

Therefore, this had to be the Chen Family's own initiative. They probably didn't know his true identity and simply wanted a piece of the Boheng industry's pie.

At this thought, Lin Mu suddenly smiled. Since someone wanted to touch his things, he was curious to see if they were tough enough to take it!

"President Lin, what do we do now? My mother..." Su Ke'er looked anxious. Her mother was being held by Ma Xuan's people, and she was terribly worried.

"Don't worry," Lin Mu said. "Leave this to me."

"You..."

Before Su Ke'er could say more, Lin Mu added, "Rest assured, I promised to rescue your mother."

He already knew where Su Ke'er's mother was; rescuing her wouldn't be difficult.

"But I'm afraid they outnumber you. It's too dangerous for you to go alone." Su Ke'er still hesitated. "Shouldn't we call the police?"

To Su Ke'er, the police were the most reliable option.

Lin Mu shook his head. "If they dared to do something like this, they obviously wouldn't let you call the police. It's better if I go myself."

"But can you handle it alone?" Su Ke'er was still unconvinced. Even though the earlier phone call had forbidden her from contacting the police, she would feel guilty for the rest of her life if anything happened to Lin Mu. She had even considered letting the police handle it, but then she would worry about her mother's safety. No matter how strained their relationship was, she was still her mother. Blood ties could not be severed.

Lin Mu patted Su Ke'er's shoulder. "What? You still don't trust me?"

Looking at the uniquely charming face before her, Su Ke'er felt an inexplicable sense of security.

It seemed this guy could really fight...

"Alright. What you need to do now is get changed, then come with me to pick up your mother," Lin Mu said with a smile.

"Me?" Su Ke'er pointed at herself.

"Correct."

Soon, Su Ke'er had changed her clothes. The two of them went straight to the parking lot and drove away.

"President Lin, there's a car following us," Su Ke'er said worriedly after a glance in the rearview mirror.

"Just drive."

Lin Mu leaned back in his seat and closed his eyes to rest, completely unconcerned. Su Ke'er gripped the steering wheel tightly, her palms slick with sweat. Seeing Lin Mu's calm expression, she gradually began to calm down as well.

「On the outskirts of River City.」

An abandoned factory. It was enormous. Many of the buildings were still fairly intact and filled with equipment that had been left behind.

When the car reached the factory gate, Su Ke'er said, "We're here. This is the place."

Lin Mu opened his eyes, glanced at the closed factory gate, and got out of the car. Su Ke'er hurriedly followed.

Opening the trunk, Lin Mu hauled Ma Xuan out and said to Su Ke'er, "Go knock on the door."

"Huh?" Su Ke'er was baffled.

Is President Lin actually planning to ask them to let us in?

She glanced at the car parked not far behind them. Several people were getting out, including a couple Lin Mu had seen before. Lin Mu smiled faintly, not giving them a second thought.

"Go on."

Left with no choice, Su Ke'er walked up to the iron gate and knocked.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The gate echoed loudly, but there was no response.

"Kid, you've got some nerve, coming here all by yourself to die," the man from the couple said as they walked over, a smirk on his face.

"So young and yet your eyes are so bad? Can't you see there are two of us?" Lin Mu replied with a faint smile.

The woman chuckled, pointing at Su Ke'er. "Her? Aren't you afraid she'll just hold you back?"

"Bringing a woman to a rescue... I really don't know what you were thinking," the man said, shaking his head. He then pointed at Ma Xuan, who was slung over Lin Mu's shoulder. "Or did you think you could use this piece of trash as a bargaining chip?"

At this, they both roared with laughter.

"A bargaining chip?" Lin Mu chuckled. "You're giving him way too much credit."

As the words left his lips, Lin Mu casually tossed Ma Xuan. The man, weighing over a hundred and fifty pounds, went flying and crashed to the ground right in front of the couple.

THUD!

Ma Xuan was jolted awake by the pain and began to howl. But a moment later, he started to laugh foolishly, drool and snot streaming down his face.

One of his arms and one of his legs had been broken by Lin Mu. Combined with the effects of the Soul Search technique, Ma Xuan, though not dead, was now no different from an imbecile. He suddenly caught sight of Lin Mu and turned pale with terror, scrambling backward while trembling violently and screaming, "Don't kill me! Don't kill me!"

Seeing Ma Xuan's condition, the man's face darkened. "What did you do to him?"

"Nothing much. Just taught him a little lesson," Lin Mu said with a light smile.

A little lesson? The woman's lips twitched. What kind of cruel method turns a normal person into an imbecile?

Even Su Ke'er was stunned. Looking at Ma Xuan's state... has he really gone mad?

The man flew into a rage. "Kid, it looks like you're determined to see this through to the bitter end! Don't you know your future mother-in-law is in our hands?"

The man assumed Su Ke'er was Lin Mu's girlfriend.

"Of course, I know," Lin Mu said coolly. "That's why I'm here!"

Chapter 228: Must Borrow Even if Not Willing!

Lin Mu spoke slowly. "Are you going to hand the person over, or do I have to do it myself?"

The bald man and the woman exchanged a surprised glance.

"I thought Ma Xuan was crazy, but you're even worse!" the bald man sneered. "Who do you think you are, Zhao Zilong? You think you can just demand we hand someone over?"

Lin Mu sighed. "It looks like I'll have to do this myself."

The bald man flew into a rage. Waving his hand, he roared, "Brothers, get him! Teach this ignorant brat a harsh lesson!"

At his command, the men behind him surged toward Lin Mu, wielding an assortment of makeshift weapons.

"Be careful!" Su Ke'er cried out, her face paling.

"Stand still and don't move," Lin Mu said calmly.

He showed not the slightest hint of fear, instead striding forward to meet the charge. A thug-like youth swinging a steel pipe aimed a blow straight for Lin Mu's head.

"Die!" the thug roared, his face twisted in a savage grin, utterly confident in his strike.

BANG!

The smile had barely formed before it froze on his face. He only saw the world retreat rapidly before his eyes.

THUD!

With a heavy sound, the thug crashed into a car, caving in its hood. He didn't even have time to scream before he foamed at the mouth and passed out.

This all happened in the blink of an eye. Before the others could even react, Lin Mu had already taken one of them down.

The bald man froze, stunned. The woman gasped, and Su Ke'er's mouth fell open, her eyes wide with disbelief. She knew Lin Mu was a good fighter from the first time they met, but kicking a man into the air like that...

This is... too terrifying!

Thinking of Ma Xuan's fate while watching the scene unfold, a wave of relief washed over Su Ke'er. It seems Lin Mu really can save my mother.

Lin Mu looked at the men who stood rooted to the spot. "What's wrong? Aren't you going to attack?"

The bald man jolted and bellowed, "What are you standing around for? Get him!"

"Charge!"

Though terrified, the thugs didn't dare disobey their leader. They raised their weapons and rushed at Lin Mu once more.

No matter how well he can fight, can he really take on this many of us?

However, what happened next defied all their expectations.

Lin Mu's figure flickered as he weaved between his opponents. Advancing and retreating, he effortlessly dodged every attack. And with every punch or kick, he knocked another thug unconscious.

For a time, the only sounds at the factory entrance were the thugs' pained cries and the dull thuds of their bodies hitting the ground.

A few minutes later, all seven or eight thugs were lying on the ground, whether they were dead or alive. The unluckiest of the bunch was left embedded in the wall, not even having fallen to the ground.

A stunned silence fell.

Everyone was completely overwhelmed by Lin Mu's display of power. Sweat beaded on the bald man's forehead, and his legs trembled uncontrollably. The woman, her face drained of all color, clung to the man for dear life.

"Brother Qiang, what do we do?" she asked, her teeth chattering.

"How the hell would I know what to do?" the man roared, as if the sheer volume could dispel the terror in his heart.

The woman felt wronged but didn't dare to say a word.

Lin Mu gave a slight smile and slowly walked toward them.

They both stumbled back a step. "What... what do you want?"

"What do I want?" A cryptic smile touched Lin Mu's lips. "Naturally, I want to 'borrow' something from you."

"I... I won't lend it to you!" the man stammered, drenched in a cold sweat. He shoved the woman at Lin Mu and bolted for the iron gate.

"Young Master Jian, open the door! Let me in!" he yelled as he ran.

Lin Mu slapped the lunging woman aside, spun around, and appeared behind the man in an instant.

"What I want, you'll lend me whether you like it or not!"

Grabbing the man by the neck, Lin Mu swung him forcefully, slamming him into the large metal gate.

CRUNCH!

The sound of the impact mingled with a scream. The man's face was nearly beaten out of shape, a gruesome and bloody mess.

"No... please, spare me," the man whimpered. Fear gripped him.

Lin Mu was simply too ruthless. He's using me as a battering ram!

"Tough one, huh?" Lin Mu chuckled, grabbing the man again and violently smashing him against the gate.

"No—" The man's pupils shrank as the shadow of death enveloped him.

"Stop."

Just as the man and the iron gate were about to collide, a young voice sounded from behind it.

"If you kill him, I guarantee you won't get the person you want," the young voice continued.

Lin Mu smiled faintly and dropped the man to the ground.

CREAK.

The iron gate swung open.

Before him sat a young man in a chair. He was dressed in a spotless white suit and wearing sunglasses, staring at Lin Mu from the doorway. Behind him stood at least a hundred men.

Among them, four were particularly conspicuous. They looked like identical quadruplets, each powerfully built and exuding a formidable aura. They all stared at Lin Mu as if he were already a dead man.

"Brave kid, injuring so many of my men," the young man said, his tone placid as he watched Lin Mu. "I wonder if your life will be enough compensation."

As he spoke, his underlings dragged the injured men from outside and tossed them carelessly to the side.

"Young Master Jian, I failed in my duty. Please punish me," the bald man pleaded, kneeling on the ground with his head bowed.

The young man placed his foot on the bald man's head and pressed down, grinding his face into the dirt.

"You know the rules, don't you?"

The bald man began to tremble, and a foul stench seeped from between his legs as he lost control of his bladder. The young man pulled his foot back in disgust and waved a hand. Two lackeys immediately stepped forward and dragged the man away.

A moment later, a bloodcurdling scream tore through the air.

The scream made Su Ke'er's face turn ashen. She pressed herself against Lin Mu, barely daring to breathe. The faces of the other thugs also paled in fear.

When the two lackeys returned, their hands were covered in blood.

The sight terrified Su Ke'er even more. Lin Mu, however, remained perfectly calm.

"You're very composed," the young man chuckled. "But I just can't tell if you're putting on an act or if you're genuinely not afraid."

"Cut the crap," Lin Mu said flatly. "You went to all this trouble to lure me here. It wasn't just for some idle chatter, was it?"

"Of course not. I'm not that bored," the young man replied. "I called you here because I intend to borrow something from you." He took off his sunglasses, his gaze fixed on Lin Mu. "I believe I heard you say something earlier... 'Lend it whether you want to or not'? I feel that phrase is quite fitting for our current situation."

Lin Mu laughed. "You want to borrow something from me? We'll have to see if you're worthy!"

The young man roared with laughter. "Don't worry, I have no intention of disappointing you!"

With a wave of his hand, two lackeys brought out a woman with disheveled hair. She was in her forties and appeared to be well-maintained, but she was currently in a wretched state.

"Mom!" Seeing the woman, Su Ke'er's eyes immediately turned red.

This woman was her mother.

"Ke'er?" The woman looked terrified, but her face lit up with elation upon seeing Su Ke'er. "Quick, save me, Ke'er! I don't want to die!"

"Well? Is this enough?" the young man asked, looking at Lin Mu with a confident smile.

"It's not much, but I suppose it'll have to do," Lin Mu said dismissively. "Let them go. Then, we can talk."

"Talk?" The young man was taken aback for a moment, then burst out laughing. "You're the first person who's ever dared to negotiate with me! Fine, I agree!"

Waving his hand, the young man ordered, "Let them go."

Su Ke'er supported her mother and looked at Lin Mu with concern. "Lin Mu..."

Lin Mu said a single word.

"Go!"

Su Ke'er wanted to say more, but her mother tugged on her arm. "Ke'er, he told us to go! What are you waiting for? Let's go, now!"

With that, she pulled Su Ke'er toward the exit.

Watching them leave, the young man shook his head slightly. "Alright. Now, we can have a proper talk."

Chapter 229: Talking About Work Style with Me?

BOOM!

Just as Su Ke'er stepped out of the factory, the gate slammed shut behind her.

Staring at the tightly closed factory gate, Su Ke'er finally came to her senses.

She didn't leave right away, instead rushing toward the iron gate. She raised her hand to knock forcefully but then let it fall again.

What use would it be to go back inside?

It would only cause more trouble for Lin Mu.

"Ke'er, let's hurry and leave. It's too dangerous here," her mother said, pulling on her arm with a look of pure fear.

"Mom, how can you be like this? He came to save you, and you want to just walk away?" Su Ke'er's eyes reddened.

Her mother snorted coldly and said, "Save me? It was *they* who let us go, okay? Can't you see those bad men are after that Lin fellow? Stop sticking your nose where it doesn't belong and let's go!" Her mother tugged at her arm again.

Su Ke'er remained unmoved.

"Are you going or not?" her mother demanded. "If you're not leaving, I am. I don't want to stay here and get killed."

With that, she turned and walked away with large strides.

Watching her mother's receding figure, Su Ke'er felt helpless and hurried to catch up.

I'll take Mom somewhere safe, and then I'll come back. she had already decided. If anything happens to Lin Mu, I'll stay with him, no matter the cost. If he's unharmed, that would be even better.

Although she knew Lin Mu was highly capable, she also knew he was badly outnumbered.

Lin Mu, wait for me! If anything happens to you, I'll be right there with you!

Recalling the moments since she'd met Lin Mu—his bold actions, how he calmly told her not to be afraid because he would handle everything, how he resolutely stayed behind so she could leave—Su Ke'er's icy heart began to thaw, and tears blurred her vision.

「Inside the factory.」

Hearing no knocking at the gate, Lin Mu felt completely relieved.

I'm about to start killing people, and it's better if Su Ke'er doesn't see it. More importantly, if they used her to threaten me, my hands would be tied, and it would be hard to use my full strength.

"Heh, kid, let's talk," the young man said with a laugh. "If you want to negotiate, you'd better have something to back it up."

It seemed that letting Su Ke'er and her mother go didn't bother him in the slightest.

If he could catch them once, he could catch them twice.

His only goal was to keep Lin Mu here.

In his eyes, Lin Mu was like a fish on the chopping block, completely at his mercy.

"Something to back it up?"

Lin Mu stretched his back and said, "Don't worry, I won't disappoint you."

"You've gone to such lengths to lure me here," Lin Mu said with a faint smile. "It seems you have some big business to discuss."

"Smart!"

The young man snapped his fingers. "Since we're both straightforward, let's get right to the point."

He introduced himself, "My name is Fang Jian, from the Jiangling Fang Family."

Jiangling Fang Family?

Lin Mu had heard of the Fang Family. In Jiangling, they were considered a first-rate powerhouse. The family had numerous assets and countless industries under its name, with a history stretching back nearly a century.

But Lin Mu knew something more: the Fang family he had previously destroyed seemed to have a deeper connection with *this* Fang Family. That other Fang family was like an offshoot of descendants who had been kicked out of the main clan's records.

It seemed that by wiping out that lesser family, he had now drawn the attention of the main Fang Family.

Compared to the main Fang Family, the one he had destroyed was nothing more than a tiny ant; they were completely incomparable.

And from Fang Jian's methods, it was clear he was sending a message: even outside of Jiangling, his Fang Family had countless ways to deal with Lin Mu.

Perhaps an ordinary person, under the Fang Family's tyrannical might, would have no choice but to submit or surrender.

But Lin Mu was different.

The Fang Family was indeed powerful, but it seemed they hadn't thoroughly investigated his true identity.

Lin Mu chuckled. "The Jiangling Fang Family. Your reach is quite long."

"That's precisely what proves my Fang Family is qualified to do so," Fang Jian said with a confident smile. "My family was already planning to expand into River City. After investigating, however, we discovered that more than half of River City's influential enterprises have already partnered with your Boheng Pharma."

Smiling slightly, Fang Jian continued, "Now, I am very interested in your company's newly developed project."

There's a traitor in the company! This was Lin Mu's first thought. So that's why they went to such lengths to get their hands on Su Ke'er's mother. The company's new project could potentially change the direction of the entire industry, maybe even the public's way of life. As the general manager, Su Ke'er would know something about it. But they didn't get any information from her, so they turned their attention directly to me, the chairman. The person who leaked the information to Fang Jian must only know that Boheng Pharma is preparing a new product, without any of the specifics. As for the major players I'm cooperating with, none of them would dare to betray me. It seems the last cleanup didn't teach some people a lesson. Once I've settled this, I'll have to conduct a thorough investigation of the entire company. There can be absolutely no mishaps with this product's development! It's directly related to my future cultivation.

"Oh? What kind of interest are we talking about?" Lin Mu asked, his expression unchanged as he watched Fang Jian.

"You can either work with my Fang Family to make a fortune together, or you can hand over the formula, and I'll give you a generous sum," Fang Jian said, casually picking at his fingernails. "Of course, if you choose to cooperate, my Fang Family will naturally take the lead. Don't worry, whichever you choose, I won't disappoint you."

He was confident Lin Mu would agree. After all, he was a scion of the Fang Family.

"Oh? And you call that cooperation?" Lin Mu raised an eyebrow.

He was surprised Fang Jian had the gall to try and kick him out of the picture to take his formula for himself.

"This is the best option for you," Fang Jian said, staring into Lin Mu's eyes. "It's also your only option."

"And what if I don't agree?" Lin Mu said flatly.

"If you don't agree?"

Fang Jian nodded slightly. "Then I have ways to make you agree."

Behind him, a brawny man took a step forward. This man knew some martial arts, and his skill was considerable; an ordinary taekwondo black belt would be no match for him.

The group of thugs watched Lin Mu with mocking expressions. They had seen him in action earlier and figured he could fight a little, but against Wang Hu, he wouldn't stand a chance.

Only the quadruplet brothers stood with their arms crossed, their eyes seemingly closed in meditation, not even sparing Lin Mu a glance.

In their view, dealing with someone like Lin Mu probably wouldn't even require their intervention.

Lin Mu looked at Fang Jian and couldn't help but shake his head. "Idiot. If I were you, I would never choose this method to discuss a partnership."

"This isn't just my method."

Fang Jian threw his head back and laughed, his face radiating confidence.

"It's the Fang Family's style!"

With a wave of his hand, Fang Jian commanded, "Go on. Let him experience our style firsthand!"

Chapter 230: Killing People Like Ants!

The words had barely left his lips when the burly men moved forward to surround Lin Mu. All of them were armed with machetes, wooden clubs, and steel pipes. As Fang Jian finished speaking, they sprang into action.

Two of them approached Lin Mu, the machetes in their hands whistling through the air as they chopped at his shoulders simultaneously, one from the front and one from the back. If these blows landed, Lin Mu would be crippled, if not killed.

Lin Mu suddenly turned, his hands lashing out to grab the machetes.

Seeing this, the two men were overjoyed. This guy's a complete idiot! Who fights like this? Is he really trying to perform a Barehanded Into the Blade's Edge?

However, the next second, the smiles on their faces froze solid.

They watched as Lin Mu's fingers clamped down on both machetes. Then, with a light twist, he snapped them.

CRACK! CRACK!

The machetes were forcefully broken.

"Die!"

With a cold snort, Lin Mu flicked his wrists. The broken blade tips, imbued with Spiritual Energy, shot out like bullets and pierced through the two men's throats.

"Ugh..."

The men reflexively loosened their grip. The broken hilts of their machetes fell to the ground as they clutched their throats and collapsed, their eyes full of disbelief.

The stench of blood filled the air, and a dead silence fell over the scene. From their attack to their deaths, only a few seconds had passed. In just a few seconds, two living men had become two corpses.

This outcome was something no one had anticipated.

Wang Hu, who had been watching the show with interest, was now staring at Lin Mu in utter shock. He stammered, "You... you're a Martial Artist?"

To be able to kill two men so effortlessly, he must be a Martial Artist. If he wasn't a Martial Artist, how could he possess such formidable strength? More importantly, when he attacked, there was a clear fluctuation of aura from his body! Wang Hu thought in horror.

Fang Jian froze, looking at Lin Mu with a sliver of surprise. This guy's actually a Martial Artist?

He had killed people before, but he could never remain as calm as Lin Mu. To Lin Mu, killing two men was like casually crushing two ants; his expression didn't change, and he didn't even blink.

"A Martial Artist?" Lin Mu sneered, not even bothering to explain. Can an ordinary Martial Artist even compare to me? When I was killing Grandmasters with my bare hands, these fools probably didn't even know what a true Martial Arts Grandmaster was.

As the word left his lips, Lin Mu took a step and instantly appeared before another large thug. The man didn't even have time to react before Lin Mu's palm struck his chest.

PUFF!

The man was sent flying backward, crashing heavily to the ground. His head lolled to one side, his breath gone completely.

Lin Mu's seemingly light palm strike actually contained an immense, unrivaled force that had instantly pulverized the man's internal organs. It would have been stranger if he had survived.

"Get him! Kill him for me!" Seeing Lin Mu kill another man, Fang Jian's face turned completely grim.

The others rushed toward Lin Mu.

Wang Hu had initially intended to join the fray, but after seeing Lin Mu take down three men in quick succession, his courage failed him. I can't kill a man with a single slap. I thought we were just going to scare him, but who knew he had no intention of playing along? When he strikes, he strikes to kill. This is no child's play!

Thinking this, Wang Hu quickly ran to Fang Jian's side and said gravely, "Young Master Jian, this fellow is tricky. Perhaps we should let the four masters take action."

THUD! THUD! THUD!

The dull sounds of impact echoed continuously, like a death knell. Lin Mu was too fast. He had reached the pinnacle of speed, moving like a phantom. Anyone who got close was either kicked or slapped away. Every man who hit the ground was dead on impact.

In the blink of an eye, the siege of nearly a hundred men had been reduced to just a handful of survivors.

These last few men were now chilled to the bone. When Lin Mu's gaze fell upon them, they were so terrified they dropped to their knees and begged for their lives. They were truly afraid. Lin Mu was a devil!

No, even a devil who killed without batting an eye couldn't compare to him.

He was a god of slaughter!

The corpses and blood staining the ground served only as his backdrop. He stood as if amidst a mountain of corpses and a sea of blood, his expression utterly indifferent as he looked down on them.

Before, we thought he was just putting on an act. Now we understand—this isn't a pretense at all. He completely disregards life, not taking it seriously in the slightest. In his eyes, human lives are like weeds!

Fang Jian's complexion changed drastically, and cold sweat beaded on his forehead. The situation had spiraled completely beyond his control. He knew Lin Mu had some martial arts skills, but he never imagined he would be this powerful.

Nearly a hundred men, and now only a few remained!

The ground was littered with bodies and drenched in blood. It was like a scene from Hell. The sight was both jarring and utterly shocking.

The quadruplet brothers had long since opened their eyes and were staring at Lin Mu, their own faces filled with shock.

"The four of you, it's your turn to act," Fang Jian said, taking a deep breath and gritting his teeth. "If this man doesn't die, I will find no peace!"

Although things had exceeded his expectations, he still had his trump card: the Zheng Family's Four Braves! Zheng Long, Zheng Hu, Zheng Shi, and Zheng Bao! These four were his Fang Family's

bodyguards. They were not only powerful individually, but when they fought together, they were terrifying.

The four Zheng brothers exchanged a glance and nodded slightly. Zheng Shi and Zheng Bao stepped forward. As they released their auras, an overwhelmingly powerful pressure filled the air.

Early-Stage Inner Strength! These two were both masters at the Early-Stage of Inner Strength. Zheng Long and Zheng Hu, on the other hand, were at the Mid-Stage of Inner Strength. That Fang Jian alone was accompanied by four Inner Strength masters as bodyguards spoke volumes about the Fang Family's power.

Lin Mu smiled faintly and glanced at the few men kneeling on the ground.

His figure flickered, appearing before them in an instant. A moment later, he was back in his original spot, his hands clasped behind his back. But the heads of the men who had been kneeling on the ground rolled cleanly from their shoulders.

"URGH!"

Seeing this, Wang Hu could no longer bear it. He doubled over and began to vomit.

The corner of Fang Jian's mouth twitched. He had always considered himself ruthless, but compared to Lin Mu, he was practically a saint. He could never be as calm as Lin Mu was. Killing seemed to be like crushing an ant to him, without a single ripple of emotion. He truly saw human life as insignificant as ants!

"Kid, you're heartless!" Zheng Shi said with a grave expression, rubbing his wrists. "Don't you think such vicious methods are going too far?"

Lin Mu glanced at him and said coolly, "This is how I do things. What, you have a problem with it?"

Hearing this, Zheng Shi was at a loss for words.

"Third Brother, why waste words on him? Let's just kill him and be done with it!" Zheng Bao, who had a fiery temper, shouted. As he spoke, he stamped his foot and threw a punch straight at Lin Mu's chest. "Killing him would be a service to the public!"

Zheng Shi's expression shifted slightly, but the four brothers shared a deep connection. They had been through countless battles, large and small, and their coordination was flawless. Seeing Zheng Bao make his move, Zheng Shi no longer hesitated. He also shot forward, aiming a punch at Lin Mu's face. The two brothers attacked high and low, targeting Lin Mu's upper and lower body.

Lin Mu stood his ground, unmoved.

The two men moved like lightning, reaching him in the blink of an eye as their fists smashed down. In that split second, Lin Mu simply raised his hands. He quickly clenched them into fists and struck out.

The kid is as good as dead! Fang Jian thought, overjoyed.

Of the four Zheng brothers, Zheng Long and Zheng Hu were the strongest, followed by Zheng Shi and Zheng Bao. However, it would be a grave mistake to treat these two as ordinary Inner Strength Martial Artists. The four brothers had trained under a true Martial Arts Grandmaster. They were masters of weapons like blades and staves, as well as various unarmed combat styles. The expertise of Zheng Shi and Zheng Bao, in particular, lay in their fists. Even a Martial Artist of the same level wouldn't dare to receive their punches head-on, let alone when they joined forces.

The three men's fists crashed violently together.

BOOM!

A sound like a clap of thunder erupted. An invisible shockwave spread out from the trio at the center, kicking up a cloud of dust that obscured everyone's vision.

It's done. The outcome is decided! a smile crept onto Fang Jian's face.