

War God 301

Chapter 301: Qiao Zishan's Panic!

Heavenly Emperor Nine Steps!

Each step determined life and death!

Even Lian Bujie was suppressed by the overwhelming force and was caught in the crossfire, cut down by Li Xiaotian.

At the center of the crushing momentum, the two burly men took the brunt of the attack. Unable to hold on any longer, they each spat out a mouthful of blood and thudded to their knees.

After taking his sixth step, Lin Mu stood directly before the two men.

"A match for a Grandmaster?"

Lin Mu extended his palm, pressing it atop their heads.

"I don't think so."

With a surge of force in his palm, the two heads were instantly twisted off.

THUD! THUD!

Casually thrown aside, the heads of the two burly men landed in front of Elder Qi, their faces still painted with terror.

Elder Qi and the others were startled, their expressions contorting with fear.

Lin Mu's expression remained cold as he stepped towards Elder Qi and his men. Behind him, the two headless bodies slumped softly to the ground.

"Not even Grandmasters are a match for me, so what can you ants possibly do?!"

Lin Mu carried an arrogance that not even heaven and earth could suppress. His domineering aura intimidated everyone.

Lin Mu looked at Elder Qi and the others with eyes brimming with cold, murderous intent.

Elder Qi's expression turned ashen, his lips trembling so hard he couldn't speak.

"Elder Qi, what should we do?" a Fire Cloud Sect Disciple asked, his face turning even paler as he shot a frightened glance at Lin Mu.

This man is a true demon! When he kills, he shows not the slightest mercy. Although we're considered top fighters in our sect, we're nothing in front of him.

"What are you afraid of?" Elder Qi snapped. "No matter how powerful Lin Wudi is, can he be more formidable than our Sect Leader?"

At his words, the other Fire Cloud Sect Disciples were momentarily reassured.

That's right. Lin Wudi is a Grandmaster, but so is our Sect Leader. His rank on the Heavenly Ranking isn't low, either. In the entire Fire Cloud Sect, the Sect Leader is like a god. If Lin Wudi truly kills us, the Sect Leader will definitely not let him get away with it.

"Lin Wudi, I admit you are strong, but by killing the Young Sect Master of the Fire Cloud Sect, you have sealed your own fate!" Elder Qi said, forcing himself to remain calm. "Furthermore, I am a member of the Martial Alliance, and our Sect Leader is an Honorary Elder at the Martial Alliance Headquarters. If you kill us, there will be no place for you in this vast world!"

"Heh."

Lin Mu simply shook his head and chuckled.

"So, you're allowed to kill me, but I'm not allowed to kill you? What kind of logic is that?"

Elder Qi gave a resigned sneer. "This world has never been fair. You're strong, so you can kill at will, but there will always be those you cannot afford to provoke. And as it happens, both the Fire Cloud Sect and the Martial Alliance are entities you cannot afford to provoke!"

Believing he had successfully intimidated Lin Mu with the names of the Fire Cloud Sect and the Martial Alliance, Elder Qi truly thought he wouldn't dare to act.

"That's a real pity, then."

Lin Mu straightened up, his eyes blazing with dominance.

"I, Lin, have battled through the Nine Heavens and Ten Earths, and I've yet to find someone I cannot kill or dare not kill! That goes for others, and it goes double for you!"

With a wave of his hand, the Thunder Dragon roared forth, sweeping Elder Qi and the others into its maw.

ROAR!

The Thunder Dragon roared, and the terrifying Thunderbolt burst forth, instantly grinding Elder Qi and his men into dust.

The entire process took but the blink of an eye. They didn't even have time to flee, let alone scream.

In that instant, Qiao Tianhao and his son were stunned speechless.

He killed two Half-step Grandmasters in just a few steps and controlled a Thunder Dragon to annihilate several Inner Strength Martial Artists... Is Lin Wudi truly unbeatable?

Watching the Thunder Dragon coiled high in the sky, looking down on them like a Divine Dragon, Qiao Tianhao felt his heart fill with cold, utter despair.

"Dragon..."

Trembling, Qiao Zishan pointed a finger at the Thunder Dragon in the sky, so terrified that he fell to the ground and voided his bowels.

Even the snipers lying in ambush were deeply shocked by the scene before them.

Could someone in this world actually control a Divine Dragon? Was this Lin Wudi truly a Heavenly God descended to earth?

"Qiao Tianhao, things have come to this. If you have any tricks left up your sleeve, use them now. Otherwise, don't say I bullied you," Lin Mu said, his gaze fixed on Qiao Tianhao, his eyes as cold as ice.

Qiao Zishan must die today. If Qiao Tianhao continues to interfere, he won't mind killing him as well!

"You..."

Despair filled Qiao Tianhao's heart. All of his trump cards had already been played. That included the Fire Cloud Sect; he'd had his wife deliberately leak a false lead in the hopes that they would confront Lin Mu. But even the experts from the Fire Cloud Sect hadn't managed to touch a single hair on Lin Mu's head, and now all seven or eight of them were dead.

"Master Lin, no matter how my son has offended you, I hope you can be magnanimous and spare him this once!"

Qiao Tianhao suddenly knelt and pleaded with Lin Mu.

"As long as you spare my son this time, I... I will give you all of my assets!"

Qiao Tianhao kowtowed to Lin Mu again and again, hoping he would spare Qiao Zishan.

"Dad..."

Seeing his father kneeling and begging, Qiao Zishan's eyes reddened, his heart filled with humiliation.

"Lin Mu! Master Lin!"

Qiao Zishan, gathering courage from somewhere, scrambled to his feet and gestured toward Lin Mu, "You keep saying you want to kill me, but can you at least let me die understanding why? When did I ever offend you?! If you don't give me a valid reason, I swear I'll haunt you even in death!"

Qiao Zishan's eyes filled with venomous resentment, and his heart ached with stifled indignation, for he truly couldn't remember when he had ever provoked Lin Mu.

"That's right!" Qiao Tianhao gritted his teeth. "If you don't provide a reason for killing my son today, I, Qiao Tianhao, swear that I will avenge him, even if it costs me my life!"

Even now, both of them were completely in the dark.

What on earth is Lin Mu's reason for wanting to kill Qiao Zishan?!

Lin Mu looked at Qiao Zishan with a detached gaze, his tone even more indifferent.

"Qiao Zishan, it seems you've forgotten what you've done."

Recalling the towering resentment and unwillingness of the body's original owner, Lin Mu said coldly, "Do you remember Qin Luoli?"

"Qin Luoli?" Qiao Tianhao paused, stunned. "Are you talking about Qin Luoli, the president of the Qin Corporation?"

As if realizing something, he suddenly burst into laughter, "So it's for that woman! I was wondering why Lin Wudi, a man supposedly invincible, would harbor such killing intent towards my son. It turns out it's all for a woman!"

Qiao Tianhao's tone was tinged with mockery and indignation. Qiao Zishan, however, was uncharacteristically silent.

"Qin Luoli? Lin Mu..."

Suddenly, Qiao Zishan's pupils shrank as he stared at Lin Mu.

"No!" he howled like a wild beast, pointing at Lin Mu with a twisted, terrified expression. "It can't be you! You're already dead!"

He remembered. He remembered everything. So that was the reason.

"Son, what's wrong?" Seeing Qiao Zishan acting as if he'd gone mad, Qiao Tianhao's expression changed, and he rushed to support him.

"Dad, I..." Qiao Zishan struggled to keep his eyes open, gasping for air, unable to say another word.

"Qin Luoli is my wife," Lin Mu stated, looking indifferently at Qiao Zishan. "Back then, you not only framed me, but you also sent men to break my limbs and dump my body in the wilderness, all because you wanted Qin Luoli. But you never expected that I would not only survive, but also return for revenge, did you?"

"I told you back then to wash your neck and wait. To think you actually forgot."

As Lin Mu's words struck him, Qiao Zishan began to struggle violently. His face grew paler, his breathing became labored, and foam even began to form at the corners of his mouth.

"No..." he murmured neurotically. "You're dead, I saw it with my own eyes..."

His eyes suddenly widened. "No, that's wrong!" he shrieked. "You are not him!"

With his last ounce of strength, he pointed at Lin Mu. "Who are you?!"

Chapter 302: Fulfilling the Promise!

Qiao Tianhao understood.

He finally understood why Lin Mu was so determined to kill his son.

It turned out that his own son had crippled Lin Mu and then had him killed, all for a woman.

For the sake of a woman, Qiao Zishan had offended a Grandmaster.

This realization filled Qiao Tianhao with both rage and bitter regret.

"Zishan, why were you so foolish?" Qiao Tianhao cradled his son's body. "What kind of woman couldn't you have? Why did you have to provoke a Grandmaster?"

At this moment, Qiao Tianhao's heart was submerged in regret. He regretted not raising Qiao Zishan properly, allowing his son to become the most despised young rake in all of River City. He could let other things slide; no matter how big the problem, Qiao Tianhao had the power to resolve it. But offending a Grandmaster...

Qiao Zishan did not answer his father. He, too, was drowning in regret. But beyond the regret, there was also sheer disbelief.

He had clearly sent men to kill Lin Mu. Lin Mu was already supposed to be dead. But now, not only was Lin Mu alive, he had transformed into the renowned Lin Wudi of the Martial Arts World. It turned out that phone call from back then was real. The voice of the man on the other end... thinking back on it now, it sounded more and more familiar. He was Lin Wudi!

"Impossible... impossible..."

Qiao Zishan kept muttering the word as his consciousness grew muddled. Finally, he coughed up a mouthful of blood, his head slumped to the side, and he breathed his last.

He had literally been frightened to death.

"My son!" Seeing Qiao Zishan dead, Qiao Tianhao let out a heart-wrenching scream, tears streaming down his old face.

Throughout his life, Qiao Tianhao had dominated the business world, facing countless trials, big and small, without a shred of fear. In the end, he became the richest man in River City. He could command the wind and summon the rain. One could say that Qiao Tianhao was the kind of man who walked around with his own theme music; anyone who met him had to address him as Rich Master Qiao.

And yet, this tycoon couldn't even protect his own son's life.

"AHHH!"

Qiao Tianhao roared at the heavens, his heart consumed by endless resentment and remorse. His eyes bloodshot, he pointed a trembling finger at Lin Mu and spat out, word by word, "Kill him! Kill him for me!"

But everything remained deathly still as Lin Mu stood in place, watching him with a calm expression.

"I told you to shoot!" Qiao Tianhao bellowed into the darkness.

The darkness, however, remained utterly silent. Not even a whisper could be heard.

"Don't waste your breath," Lin Mu said indifferently. "The snipers you positioned have all been dealt with."

"Come out."

From behind a rockery, Li Xiaotian emerged, blade in hand. Blood dripped from its edge as he walked, leaving a crimson trail on the ground.

Li Xiaotian stopped behind Lin Mu and said respectfully, "Master, they have all been taken care of."

"Good." Lin Mu grunted in acknowledgment and turned his gaze to Qiao Tianhao. "Your son crossed me, so he was the only one I killed. If you want revenge, feel free to come after me."

"But if you dare touch my family, I promise you a life worse than death."

With that said, Lin Mu turned and left the Qiao Mansion without a backward glance.

Li Xiaotian hurried to follow.

The entire Qiao Mansion was littered with corpses. Only Qiao Tianhao remained, clutching his son's body. In the oppressive silence, this tycoon who had dominated the business world for decades wept, his once-black hair turning stark white in an instant.

"Revenge... revenge..."

「Under the twinkling stars.」

Lin Mu walked silently down the road.

Sensing a presence lurking behind him, Lin Mu suddenly turned around. "You can go back. No need to follow me."

"Yes, Master!" Li Xiaotian replied. He immediately stopped, turned, and departed swiftly.

Since his Master wished for some solitude, it was best not to disturb him.

After Li Xiaotian was gone, Lin Mu looked up at the sky.

"It's finally over."

A faint smile touched his lips as he picked up his pace and headed toward the outskirts of the city.

Lin Mu wasn't moving at a sprint, yet each step he took covered a distance of ten feet. A passing driver noticed the man walking by the roadside but didn't think much of it at first. Then he realized that with every step, the man's pace was as precise as if measured, and his speed was astonishing. In the blink of an eye, the figure vanished into the night.

The driver's face went pale with fright, and he muttered that he must have seen a ghost.

「In a desolate mountain on the city outskirts, where boulders stood like a chaotic forest.」

Trees struggled to grow on the barren mountain. At the summit, a lone grave stood in solitude, accompanied only by the starlight.

Beneath the stars, a figure slowly ascended. At first, the figure was at the foot of the mountain. An instant later, it appeared ghostlike halfway up the slope. Finally, it materialized at the very top.

Shrinking Ground into Inches—the technique of an immortal.

Lin Mu stood before the grave, his expression serene, his thoughts unreadable.

It had been nearly half a year since his rebirth, and so much had happened. Putting the Qin Family in their place, revealing his miraculous skills at the hospital, combining the Medical and Martial Ways, becoming a Divine Medical Master embodied in a single person... The list of events was endless. Yet deep within his heart, Lin Mu still saw himself as an onlooker, a mere passerby. He knew he would have to leave, sooner or later. He trained diligently to restore his strength for the sole purpose of returning to the Immortal Realm to take back what was his. Because that was where he truly belonged.

But after tonight, something felt different.

Was Qiao Zishan despicable? Absolutely. As River City's greatest silk-pants heir, he had brought disaster to countless people. How many families had he torn apart? How many people had died because of him? Did he deserve to die? He did. Just for breaking the original host's arms and legs and leaving his body for dead in the wilderness, he deserved to die.

But what about Qiao Tianhao? He was just an ordinary man. Perhaps he would do anything for his son. He wasn't innocent; it was because he was his son that Qiao Zishan dared to run amok in River City. But did he deserve death? His crimes didn't warrant it.

That was why Lin Mu had killed only Qiao Zishan and spared Qiao Tianhao.

Seeing Qiao Tianhao use every trick up his sleeve for his son, to the point his hair turned white from grief, Lin Mu felt a sliver of admiration for the man. A titan of his generation. Daring enough to act, and bold enough to face the consequences.

Looking at the grave, Lin Mu knew there was no body inside. This was merely a burial for the past of the body's original owner, as well as for the promise Lin Mu had made to him. Lin Mu had come here to pay his final respects, and to fulfill that promise.

"Qiao Zishan is dead." Lin Mu sat down, speaking to the air. "I've done what I promised you."

"Of course, if you're still not satisfied and want the entire Qiao Family wiped out, I can do that for you, too."

No one responded. Only the wind howled in reply.

But Lin Mu smiled.

Because he saw it.

A blurry figure stood before him. The two of them looked as if they were cast from the same mold, differing only in their dispositions. This was an incarnation formed from the original host's lingering resentment, summoned forth by Lin Mu.

The vague figure looked at Lin Mu, his lips moving, forming silent words.

Lin Mu listened intently, and by the end, he was deeply moved.

He stood up and gave a solemn bow, his fist clasped in his palm.

"I promise you."

The original host smiled and nodded, casting one last, reluctant glance in the direction of River City.

The wind blew past, and the figure dissolved into specks of spiritual light, vanishing completely.

This time, he was truly gone.

Lin Mu murmured to himself, "Thank you."

Chapter 303: Why Does It Feel So Familiar?

"This station reports that Qiao Zishan, son of River City's wealthiest man, passed away last night from an illness at the age of twenty-five..."

"The tycoon, Qiao Tianhao, plans to donate one billion yuan at the memorial service and will invite prominent figures from all over River City to participate..."

"..."

Early the next morning, the people of River City were shocked by the news on television. Qiao Zishan was dead? The tycoon was donating one billion yuan? This...

People exchanged glances, seeing the sheer shock on each other's faces. Hasn't too much been happening in River City lately? First, the Fang Family was annihilated, and now even River City's most notorious young playboy, Qiao Zishan, was dead.

Was this a coincidence, or was there some inside story? After all, those in the know were aware that the Qiao and Fang families were related by marriage.

Countless speculations flew about, but they soon vanished without a trace, as if someone had deliberately suppressed them. Ultimately, the public discussion shifted to the memorial service the tycoon was planning to hold.

Rather than a memorial service, it seemed more like a charity gala. Furthermore, this was set to be River City's grandest charity gala in a decade. The tycoon himself was donating a billion yuan. Even if others couldn't match that figure, they couldn't be too stingy, right? Otherwise, how could they show their faces?

More importantly, this fundraiser was taking place at Qiao Zishan's memorial service. Donating too little would be a clear slight to the tycoon. In an instant, all the influential figures in River City began gathering their staff for urgent meetings.

「Qin Corporation.」

Qin Luoli held a gold-embossed invitation, her mind adrift.

"President Qin, Young Master Qiao died so suddenly, yet the tycoon is holding a charity event at his memorial service. Could there be some ulterior motive?" a tall young man asked, standing in the office with a complex expression.

Qiao Zishan's death had obviously shocked him. His name was Gao Xing, and he had his sights set on Qin Luoli, a fact that was an open secret throughout the company. Qin Luoli was aware of it but pretended not to be.

He had been humiliated by Lin Mu before and never forgot it, originally thinking Luo Jinping would help him settle the score. But after personally witnessing Luo Jinping being carried out that day, he had been deeply rattled. At the time, Gao Xing had dismissed Lin Mu as a mere brute who would never last long by Qin Luoli's side. He thought he would find another opportunity and had even been trying to contact Qiao Zishan to continue targeting Lin Mu and drive him away from Qin Luoli. But now, to his shock, Qiao Zishan was dead.

With that in mind, Gao Xing pressed on, "President Qin, we can't miss this. It's a great opportunity for our corporation."

A charity gala wasn't just about donating money; it was also a chance to attract talent and expand one's network. Such a grand event would undoubtedly draw prominent figures from all sectors and even receive television coverage. It was the perfect stage to build a reputation and open up new markets. No capable enterprise would pass up this chance, and Gao Xing was certain Qin Luoli wouldn't either. He imagined appearing at the event with her, showing everyone that they were the perfect pair. As for Qin Luoli's actual husband, a mere live-in son-in-law, he would be a nobody in their eyes.

"Forget it." Qin Luoli tossed the invitation onto the table. "I won't be going. I'll send a company representative to attend in my place."

"But President Qin..." Gao Xing grew anxious. This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Appearing alongside Qin Luoli on such an occasion was a perfect chance for him to get closer to her.

"Enough. My decision is final." Qin Luoli frowned and waved him away. "You can go."

Gao Xing knew her personality; her word was law. He had no choice but to leave, filled with resentment.

"Manager Gao, what's wrong? Why the long face?"

Just as Gao Xing stepped out of Qin Luoli's office, he ran into a colleague named Xue Lang. He held a similar position and was also considered one of the company's more outstanding senior managers. The two were on good terms and often went for drinks together after work.

"It's nothing," Gao Xing said dismissively, not wanting to share the details. He then lowered his voice, "Xue Lang, I heard you have a new target these days?"

Xue Lang's face broke into a knowing smile, which was immediately followed by a heavy sigh.

"What? Running into trouble?" Gao Xing laughed, teasing him. "There's actually a woman you can't win over? I'm curious who she is."

Xue Lang glanced around. "Let's talk somewhere else."

The two entered Gao Xing's office. After Xue Lang closed the door, he slumped onto the sofa and sighed again.

"What's with all the sighing? Is she not into you?" Gao Xing poured Xue Lang a cup of coffee and sat opposite him, a smirk on his face. He was unhappy, but seeing someone else even more miserable brought a genuine spark of joy to Gao Xing.

"That's not it," Xue Lang said proudly. "With what I have to offer, do you think she'd turn me down? Besides, I've already won over her mother. I'd say I'm more than halfway there."

"Oh?" Gao Xing raised an eyebrow. "You're quick, already getting the mother-in-law on your side."

Xue Lang wore a confident smile. "That was simple. She's just a woman who loves money."

"It's just that..." Thinking of the man he saw at the hospital, Xue Lang's expression soured. It seems Su Ke'er is closer to that man.

"Tell me about it. Maybe I can help," Gao Xing said, his curiosity now genuinely piqued. He and Xue Lang frequently attended parties and met plenty of women. With their looks and status, they could have almost any woman they desired. Seeing Xue Lang stymied was truly interesting.

"It's nothing special." Thinking of Lin Mu, Xue Lang sneered. "There's just this kid who's been getting close to her, and it seems their relationship isn't so simple."

"Ah, so she's taken," Gao Xing chuckled inwardly, but said aloud, "That's no big deal, though. Since you have the mother-in-law on your side, are you still worried you can't win her over?"

That was true, Xue Lang thought. But he just couldn't stand it.

"I want to teach that kid a lesson!" Xue Lang looked at Gao Xing. "Gao, you're well-connected. Can you find some people for me?"

Gao Xing understood immediately. So that's why Xue Lang had sought him out. Leaning back in his chair, he feigned difficulty. "I do know some people from the underworld, but..."

Xue Lang knew exactly what he meant. "The usual arrangement?"

"Add another fifty thousand," Gao Xing stated. "These guys aren't easy to hire."

Xue Lang cursed under his breath, "Those bastards raised their prices again?"

Gao Xing shrugged helplessly. "That's the going rate, unless you just want to teach him a simple lesson."

"That won't do!" Remembering the humiliation he suffered at the hospital, Xue Lang gritted his teeth. "I want to humiliate that kid so badly that he won't be able to show his face in River City again!"

"Alright, I'll add another fifty thousand. Here's what I want you to do..." Xue Lang outlined his plan in a low voice, finally asking, "Can you make it happen?"

"I have no idea what that kid did to you to make you spend this much," Gao Xing clicked his tongue. "But don't you worry. That kind of thing is their specialty."

"Then I'll leave it in your hands."

With that, Xue Lang left Gao Xing's office. Just as he was leaving, he saw a figure walk into the President's Office.

Why does he look so familiar?

Chapter 304: Go with Integrity!

"Didn't I say? I'll send someone to..."

Realizing someone had walked in without knocking, Qin Luoli assumed it was Gao Xing again and felt a flicker of displeasure. But before she could finish speaking, she saw Lin Mu standing there, looking at her with a smile.

"What are you doing here?" Qin Luoli quickly stood up and rushed into Lin Mu's embrace, a joyous smile blooming on her face.

"I was passing by your company, so I decided to come up and see you." Lin Mu patted her shoulder and added, "And to pick you up to go home."

A warmth spread through her chest, and Qin Luoli's smile grew even brighter. If Gao Xing were to see this, his eyes would surely turn red with envy.

"You sweet-talker," Qin Luoli couldn't help but roll her eyes. "You talk as if you're so busy all the time, but you're really just a man of leisure."

"Oh, oh, I mean... Lin Mu, don't take it the wrong way," Qin Luoli said hastily, realizing her slip of the tongue.

Wasn't I just calling him an idle loafer who lives off a woman?

Seeing her anxious expression, Lin Mu was amused. He casually walked over to the sofa and sat down. "You're right. I don't have to work, so of course I'm free."

"Lin Mu, don't be angry, I didn't mean it..." Qin Luoli started to panic.

She knew that while Lin Mu always appeared nonchalant on the surface, he was incredibly proud deep down. Her eyes lit up with an idea. "How about... I arrange a position for you at the company? Don't worry, you won't have to do anything... just come and keep me company every day, and we can go home together after work."

Lin Mu couldn't help but laugh out loud. "Alright, I was just teasing you. If you really gave me a job, I probably wouldn't last long anyway."

Now that he was his own boss, Lin Mu worked in fits and starts. If he were to really join Qin Corporation, who knew what sort of gossip it would stir up. He might not care, but Qin Luoli certainly would.

Seeing her looking a little gloomy, Lin Mu spoke in a gentle voice, "Don't worry. I promise to come pick you up after work every day. How does that sound?"

"Ah?" Qin Luoli's mouth fell open in surprise.

"What? You don't want me to?" Lin Mu crossed his legs. "If you don't want me to, then forget it."

"No, no, no!" Qin Luoli threw herself at him, grabbing his hand and shaking it as she said coquettishly, "I do, I do! I'm so happy, how could I possibly refuse?"

What she wanted most was to go to and from work with Lin Mu every day, to shop for groceries and cook dinner together, to curl up on the sofa watching TV and gossiping. Now that he had offered to pick her up, Qin Luoli was filled with a happiness so deep it was touching.

"What's wrong? Why are you crying?" Seeing her eyes turn red, Lin Mu grew anxious.

Qin Luoli leaned against him, shaking her head. "It's nothing. I'm just happy."

Wrapping his arms around her, Lin Mu said, "I'm sorry. I haven't been paying enough attention to you. I've made you feel neglected."

"Hmph. It's about time you realized!" Qin Luoli huffed with mock arrogance. "You'd better make it up to me in the future!"

"Alright, I promise!"

...

"Finally done with work!" Qin Luoli stretched lazily, revealing her gorgeous and alluring figure.

It was a pity this beautiful sight was for one man's eyes only.

"I'm sorry for keeping you waiting so long," Qin Luoli said, smiling a bit sheepishly as she glanced at Lin Mu on the sofa.

"It's fine. I promised to pick you up." Lin Mu smiled. This woman, Qin Luoli, is quite charming when she's working. Her intense focus made even my supposedly rock-solid heart tremble a few times.

"Let me just pack up, I'll be ready in a moment."

Qin Luoli began to tidy her desk, sorting every document, wiping away every speck of dust, and even picking up stray scraps of paper from the floor to throw in the trash. As she was organizing the files, an invitation card slipped out and landed at Lin Mu's feet.

Lin Mu bent down to pick it up and paused, slightly startled.

He had an identical invitation in his pocket. Qiao Tianhao was hosting a charity gala, and an invitation had been sent to his company first thing, which eventually made its way to him.

"A charity gala hosted by the richest man. A lot of people will probably be there," Lin Mu said with a smile, flicking the invitation. "Are you planning to go?"

Qin Luoli shook her head. "I won't go personally. Sending a representative to attend will be enough."

In the past, because of the persistent rumors that she and Qiao Zishan were a perfect match, Qin Luoli had always avoided any contact with the Qiao family. Now that Qiao Zishan was dead, she had even less reason to go. Who knew what people would say.

"If you're not going, then I won't either," Lin Mu said nonchalantly.

I only came today to see if she would be attending. If she went, then I would go. Qiao Tianhao's reason for inviting me was simple: to have us prove our relationship. That's why both of our invitations explicitly stated to 'attend with a partner'.

"Ah? You received an invitation too?" Qin Luoli looked at him in surprise. "It's not easy to get an invitation from Qiao Tianhao, especially for what is essentially his son's memorial event."

Lin Mu didn't explain. "I was just hoping to see the sights, you know? But since you're not going, what's the point? I'd probably just get kicked out."

Looking at Lin Mu, Qin Luoli suddenly declared, "Alright then, I'll take you!"

Since there are so many vicious rumors about me and Qiao Zishan, with some malicious people even insisting that I must attend his memorial, then fine. I'll go. I'll bring my man with me and make them all shut their mouths for good!

"You've decided?" Lin Mu looked at her.

"Of course!" Qin Luoli squeezed Lin Mu's hand. "People have invited me to galas before, but I always declined because I was worried they would try to mock you or make a fool of you. That's why I always refused. But this time, not only are we going, we're going to walk in there with our heads held high!"

Lin Mu was a little confused. "What? Were you planning to sneak in?"

Qin Luoli couldn't help but playfully punch his arm. "Hey! You know what I mean! I was speaking metaphorically!"

Rolling her eyes at him, Qin Luoli continued, "Don't they call you the Divine Doctor? This time, you'll attend in your capacity as the Divine Doctor. How about that?"

As she said this, her eyes shone brightly.

She knew that even the famous Divine Doctor Sun Tianyang admired the man before her. Sun Tianyang had even asked to become his apprentice, only to be refused. You all look down on my man, don't you? This time, I'll show you what you've been missing!

Understanding her thoughts, Lin Mu replied nonchalantly, "Fine by me. You can make the arrangements."

"Then it's settled!" Qin Luoli's eyes curved into a smile, making her look like a sly little fox.

Utterly captivating.

Chapter 305: Double-Breasted Tang Suit, Embellished with Thunder Dragon!

"Do I really have to wear this?" Lin Mu called out helplessly from the changing room.

"Of course!" Qin Luoli replied. She fastened the buttons on her dress, sizing up her figure in the mirror.

The red qipao, with its cyan slanted collar, paired with her perfect figure to create a charming picture, reminiscent of the blue-and-white porcelain that was a part of the nation's cultural essence. A slit ran from her thigh down to her knee, revealing an enchanting glimpse of skin that drew the eye whenever she moved.

Qin Luoli's figure was simply sublime. After taking the Ever Youth Pill, not only was her skin fairer and smoother, but her entire aura had been elevated. Her tall, slender frame in the meticulously selected qipao was a perfect interpretation of a beauty that could topple nations.

She made a few simple poses in front of the mirror, causing the two store managers standing nearby to lower their heads, feeling too inadequate to even look.

This woman is too perfect! In front of her, no man could maintain his composure, and no woman could possibly compare.

Their own looks were above average, but in Qin Luoli's presence, they hadn't the slightest courage to draw a comparison.

Qin Luoli nodded, satisfied.

"Aren't you done yet?" Seeing that Lin Mu still hadn't emerged from the fitting room, she couldn't help but hurry him along, a mischievous smile playing on her lips. She was utterly captivating.

"Ah!"

A scream rang out, followed by the sounds of cursing and arguing.

Qin Luoli turned her head to see a couple who had just entered the store to browse. The man had apparently caught sight of her and walked straight into a pillar. He was now squatting on the ground,

clutching his bleeding nose and groaning softly. His girlfriend was furious that her man had injured himself over another woman. It was just humiliating!

And so, an incredibly melodramatic scene unfolded.

"Chen, what is wrong with you? You see another woman and you can't even walk straight?" the woman demanded, twisting the man's ear as she spoke with a mix of anger and hurt. "Are you just tired of me because I'm not as pretty as her? Do you want to kick me to the curb?"

"Baby, let me explain, I..." The man looked up, trying to explain, but his eyes subconsciously drifted toward Qin Luoli again.

The sight caused blood to gush from his nostrils.

"Jerk!" The woman forcefully threw her purse at him and stormed toward the exit. "Chen Qingge, we're through!" she yelled, wiping away tears as she ran out. As she passed Qin Luoli, she shot her a venomous glare and hissed, "Fox spirit!" before disappearing.

"Miss, are you alright?" Just as Qin Luoli was shaking her head in bemusement, the man stood up from the floor. He walked over to her, flashing what he believed to be a suave, gentlemanly smile, and extended his hand. "Hello, I'm Chen Qingge. You can call me by my English name—"

BANG!

Suddenly, the fitting room door was pushed open from the inside. Caught off guard, Chen Qingge took the door right in the face.

"Ah!" He squatted on the ground once again, tears and snot mixed with blood streaming down his face.

"What's this..." Lin Mu said, looking down at the baffled man on the floor.

Qin Luoli spread her hands innocently. "I have no idea."

"Oh. Well, let's go then," Lin Mu said, preparing to leave.

"Hey, you! Stop right there!" Chen Qingge roared when he saw Lin Mu about to walk away. "You hit me and you think you can just run off? Not a chance!"

Lin Mu was even more confused. He pointed at himself and looked at Qin Luoli. "I hit him?"

Qin Luoli nodded sweetly. "Strictly speaking, you did."

A little embarrassed, Lin Mu moved to help Chen Qingge up. "My apologies, are you hurt? Do you need me to take you to a hospital?"

"Get away from me!" Chen Qingge slapped his hand away. "You dare hit me, kid? This isn't over!" As he spoke, however, his eyes remained fixed on Qin Luoli.

This woman is simply perfect. He had seen countless beauties during his years abroad and had even been with his fair share of attractive women back home, like the one who had just stormed out. But none of them compared to Qin Luoli. She was a perfect ten in looks, temperament, and allure. Only a man like me is worthy of such a perfect woman.

As for Lin Mu...

He glanced at Lin Mu and curled his lip in disdain. The man was wearing a green, Chinese-style jacket with a parallel collar. The craftsmanship was fine, and on an older man—like his own grandfather, perhaps—it would have looked perfect. But on Lin Mu, it was like putting an imperial robe on a stray dog—unbelievably tacky! Clothes make the man, after all! How capable can a guy be if he doesn't even know how to dress? He's probably just some pretty boy living off a woman.

Chen Qingge sneered. "Kid, you injured me. I'll be having my lawyer contact you about this."

Having spent over a decade abroad, Chen Qingge knew the local playbook well. People like this were the easiest to intimidate. Besides, with his family's status and position in River City, no one would dare to cross him.

"Oh?" Lin Mu glanced at him indifferently. "In that case, feel free to have your lawyer talk to me." He took Qin Luoli's hand, ready to leave. "Let's go."

"Oh, right..." Qin Luoli suddenly stopped and turned to the two managers. "Put all of this gentleman's purchases from today on my tab."

"Yes, Chairman!" the two managers replied, bowing respectfully. They treated her words as if they were an imperial edict.

Qin Luoli nodded in satisfaction and left, arm in arm with Lin Mu.

It took a moment for her words to sink in for Chen Qingge, but when they did, his face turned beet red. Did Qin Luoli intend to pay for his things as an apology? He, the young master of a prestigious family, a business elite returned from overseas, was being humiliated like this by a woman on his very first day back! Couldn't she see that he wasn't short on money?

Meanwhile, Lin Mu and Qin Luoli paid Chen Qingge no mind. In fact, Qin Luoli had already forgotten the entire incident.

She scrutinized Lin Mu as they walked, growing more satisfied the more she looked. She couldn't help but admire her own excellent taste.

The green, Chinese-style jacket was a creation of Li Ziran, a rising star of Huaxia. That young woman, only in her early twenties, had worked her way up from singing in a bar to becoming a prodigy leading Huaxia's culture. It had taken her nearly three years to craft this single piece of clothing. From the design to the dyeing and the cutting, she had done it all with her own two hands. Every stitch and thread was a product of her painstaking effort.

She had once said, half-joking and half-serious, "If a man can wear this garment and truly bring out its soul, I, Li Ziran, will make his clothes for life."

The thought made Qin Luoli snicker to herself. She wondered what kind of expression Li Ziran would have if that young woman saw not only that a man was wearing her creation, but that he was embodying its spirit so vividly.

"So handsome," Qin Luoli murmured, straightening a button on Lin Mu's jacket before she couldn't resist caressing his cheek. It was unclear if she was talking about the clothes or the man wearing them.

Lin Mu, however, remarked, "Overall, it's quite nice, but it's missing a little something."

"What?" Qin Luoli was surprised. This was Li Ziran's masterpiece, a work she had poured her heart and soul into. If not for their close relationship, Li Ziran would likely have locked it away, never to be seen by the public.

Without another word, Lin Mu gently brushed his palm over the jacket.

A dragon's chant sounded as a draconic shadow emerged and seeped into the clothes, forming a pattern that resembled a dragon.

With this new embellishment, Lin Mu's entire temperament transformed. He now appeared composed yet unyielding, his understated presence hinting at an undeniable nobility.

Lin Mu nodded in satisfaction. "Now this is more befitting of my status as the Divine Doctor."

Qin Luoli's beautiful eyes widened in shock, her face a mask of pure disbelief.

Chapter 306: I'm Afraid He Can't Bear It!

Yunshang Clubhouse.

It was one of River City's most renowned and high-end private clubs. Membership was exclusive to the rich and noble social elite, each requiring a personal net worth of at least one hundred million or sufficient prestige and fame.

Most importantly, the Yunshang Clubhouse was the property of Qiao Tianhao, River City's wealthiest man.

This was also the location of Qiao Zishan's memorial hall, as well as the venue for the city's most anticipated charity gala.

It was already five o'clock in the afternoon when Lin Mu and Qin Luoli arrived, roughly half an hour before the charity gala was scheduled to start. The luxury cars parked at the entrance and in the lot were enough to blind an ordinary person.

After getting out of the car, Qin Luoli took Lin Mu's arm, and they walked into the clubhouse together.

After checking their invitation, the greeter politely gestured. "Miss Qin, Mr. Lin, please follow me this way."

The greeter pointed toward the side of the main hall.

There, countless individuals were dressed in black suits with white flowers pinned to their chests, their expressions somber.

That was where Qiao Zishan's memorial hall had been set up.

People were lining up to place white flowers before Qiao Zishan's spirit tablet, bowing before leaving. All arriving guests were required to pay their respects to Qiao Zishan before they could enter the main event.

Qin Luoli raised an eyebrow. "I'm here to attend a charity gala, not a memorial service."

The greeter's expression stiffened, clearly not expecting such a response.

"Miss Qin, these are our chairman's instructions. I hope you won't make things difficult for me," the greeter said. She had obviously undergone professional training, as she maintained a deferential but firm composure even when facing Qin Luoli.

However, a cold sneer flashed in the depths of her eyes.

"Make things difficult for you?" Qin Luoli saw right through her act. "And Chairman Qiao isn't forcing people against their will?" she asked coolly.

The greeter's expression shifted slightly. She lowered her head and placed a hand to her ear, as if listening to an earpiece.

Looking up again, she smiled. "If paying respects to the deceased is such a hardship for you, Miss Qin, then please allow me to apologize on behalf of the clubhouse."

"An apology is unnecessary," Qin Luoli said with a cold laugh. "In that case, we won't be attending this charity gala after all."

Saying so, Qin Luoli turned, pulling Lin Mu with her to leave.

"Hmph. The Qin Family is becoming more and more ill-mannered!" an elderly voice suddenly rang out. "As the saying goes, the dead deserve respect. What's wrong with paying tribute? Or is Chairman Qiao's son somehow unworthy of a moment of your time, young Miss Qin?"

A group of people walked over. The man leading them had an authoritative air, though a hint of sullenness flashed in his eyes. As he spoke, his gaze was fixed on Lin Mu.

This man was none other than Chen Ruoping, the patriarch of the Chen family.

Chen Ruoping had been publicly humiliated by Lin Mu before, an occasion where even his own bodyguard knelt before him, utterly disgracing him. He had even uttered the threat, "This isn't over. We'll meet again." Little did he expect they would cross paths again so soon.

The moment Chen Ruoping spoke, he drew the attention of the entire crowd. After all, many of them had witnessed his public shaming at the hands of Lin Mu.

Hearing his words now, a thought struck many of them. Patriarch Chen really holds a grudge! To say such a thing in front of so many people.

Everyone in River City had once assumed that Qiao Tianhao's son and the beautiful CEO of Qin Corporation were a match made in heaven. Qiao Zishan himself considered Qin Luoli his prize, forbidden to all others. Most people believed they would eventually end up together.

Instead, Qin Luoli had unexpectedly married a live-in son-in-law.

But after the last incident, no one viewed Lin Mu as just an ordinary live-in son-in-law. Rumor had it that he was a grandmaster of the Way of Medicine, a man even the Divine Doctor Sun Tianyang deeply respected.

And now, Chen Ruoping was making such provocative remarks in public. Wasn't he publicly slapping Lin Mu and the entire Qin family in the face?

"Patriarch Chen, I respect you as an elder, so I will not be rude," Qin Luoli said, her expression cold and her tone calm. "But for you to say such a thing in front of my husband... isn't that beneath your status?"

Tying me to Qiao Zishan? Heh. He's doing this just to publicly humiliate Lin Mu! Qin Luoli was genuinely angry, a rare sight.

Hearing her words, Chen Ruoping didn't get angry. Instead, he feigned confusion. "Has Miss Qin misunderstood something? I just feel that since Chairman Qiao's son passed away so young, we should all pay our respects. I never imagined you would twist an old man's simple intentions. Sigh..."

After speaking, Chen Ruoping shook his head with a deep sigh.

At his words, the other guests began looking at Qin Luoli with odd expressions. He has a point. Isn't Qin Luoli being a bit too sensitive?

"What I do is my business, and it is not your place to teach me, Patriarch Chen!" Qin Luoli's voice rose, seemingly ignoring the crowd's stares. "We were not related by blood or friendship. On what grounds must I pay respects? And even if I were to, it should be a voluntary act. Since when is it acceptable to force someone?"

Looking directly at Chen Ruoping, she asked coldly, "Or does Patriarch Chen believe that his own reputation is so great that he can speak on behalf of Chairman Qiao in this matter?"

This silenced the crowd, whose expressions turned strange. Her words were clearly aimed at him.

Chen Ruoping's face twitched, but he quickly responded with a smile that didn't reach his eyes. "I always saw Zishan as a grandson. Is there anything wrong with speaking a few words of justice for him?"

"Heh," Qin Luoli scoffed. "You can consider anyone you like a grandson, of course. You just have to ask if they'd agree to it!"

PFFT! Someone nearly burst out laughing.

Ask him? Qiao Zishan is already dead! How are they supposed to ask? From beyond the grave? This Qin Luoli is viciously sharp-tongued. With one sentence, she cornered Chen Ruoping completely. Still, this is a solemn occasion. Laughing out loud would surely earn you some enemies. The crowd desperately stifled their amusement.

Chen Ruoping trembled slightly, nearly losing his footing. He remembered Lin Mu's previous words, how he'd said Chen Ruoping already had one foot in the grave and should start preparing for his own funeral. Now Qin Luoli was essentially cursing him to die as well. Given his pride, he could never endure such a humiliation.

Just as he was about to retaliate, Qiao Tianhao hurried over, his face etched with shame. "Elder Chen, Miss Qin, please. This is all my fault. Please don't be angry over this. If I have caused any offense, I apologize to you both here and now."

With that, Qiao Tianhao gave a deep bow to them.

Looking at the white-haired, haggard Qiao Tianhao, many felt a pang of sympathy.

Chen Ruoping snorted. "Fine. If she is unwilling, then don't force her. I'll go pay my respects to Zishan myself," he said, clearly dissatisfied.

"Elder Chen, you are a senior. You mustn't, you really mustn't!" Qiao Tianhao protested immediately.

"The dead deserve our respect. There is no 'mustn't'," Chen Ruoping sighed. "I only hope you can find a way to manage your grief, Chairman Qiao."

"Thank you, thank you..." Qiao Tianhao wiped at his eyes, his voice choked with emotion.

As they watched Chen Ruoping pay his respects to Qiao Zishan, the onlookers shook their heads and sighed, their gazes toward Qin Luoli now filled with disapproval.

"Miss Qin... Mr. Lin," Qiao Tianhao began, his body giving an involuntary shudder when his eyes met Lin Mu's. He took a deep breath, forcibly suppressing the terror and hatred coiling in his heart. "I know my late son had his misunderstandings with you in the past, but I still hope you might pay your respects. It would help him rest in peace."

Lin Mu looked deeply at Qiao Tianhao. "Are you certain you want me to pay my respects to him?"

Qiao Tianhao bowed a full ninety degrees. "I would be very grateful!"

Chen Ruoping watched, a cold smirk playing on his lips.

All eyes were fixed on Lin Mu.

Qin Luoli's expression changed. This Qiao Tianhao... he's deliberately trying to force Lin Mu to pay respects to his son!

"Lin Mu..."

Before Qin Luoli could say more, Lin Mu held up a hand, a slight smile on his face. "It's not impossible for me to pay my respects. I'm just afraid he won't be able to bear it."

Chapter 307: The Dragon Soars in the Sky, Overlooking All Beings!

"Afraid he can't bear it?!"

The moment he said this, everyone's expression shifted, not least of all Qiao Tianhao and Qin Luoli.

The boy was far too arrogant. Even if he truly didn't want to pay his respects, there was no need to say such a thing, especially not in front of the deceased's family. Countless people shook their heads and sighed, all feeling that there was something fundamentally wrong with Lin Mu.

Whispers broke out among the crowd, all filled with disdain for him.

"President Qin, your husband... he's just no good."

"So what if the rumors say he's a Divine Doctor? If he's a terrible person, his medical skills can't be that great."

"Exactly! They say his skills are miraculous, but I think it's all just hype."

"Young people these days get a little talent and think they own the world. Public morals are really degenerating."

"That's right! Elder Chen is setting an example, but this junior has the audacity to act so high and mighty!"

"Hmph, if I were Rich Master Qiao, I'd slap him dead on the spot!"

The friends and relatives of the Qiao Family glared angrily, wishing they could kill Lin Mu right there and then.

But Qiao Tianhao's heart trembled slightly. He was the only one in the entire hall who knew Lin Mu's true identity. But I can't say anything, he thought. And I certainly can't push him too far. Asking him to pay respects to my son... it was just the last thing I wanted to do as a father.

"Such arrogance!" Just then, an angry voice cut through the murmurs. "Everyone else has paid their respects, but you refuse. Who do you think you are, the Jade Emperor?"

The crowd parted to let a young man walk through. If not for his slightly swollen nose, everyone would have been praising his extraordinary and handsome demeanor. Dressed in a designer suit, he stood in stark contrast to Lin Mu in his traditional attire. It was like comparing heaven and earth.

This person was Chen Qingge.

He looked at Lin Mu with indignation. "Even my grandfather has paid his respects, yet you're making all sorts of excuses. What? Didn't your elders teach you basic manners?"

Chen Qingge's words made many people nod silently, feeling he had a point.

"Qingge!" Chen Ruoping feigned displeasure and chided him, "You just returned to the country. There's a lot you don't understand, so you should speak less."

Chen Qingge immediately replied, "Grandfather is right. But even after so many years abroad, I still understand basic courtesy. The dead deserve respect. Will offering a tribute really cost us a piece of our flesh?"

His words won the crowd's approval once again. They nodded, admiring how well the Chen family conducted themselves while mocking the Qin family's poor etiquette.

"You have a point," Chen Ruoping sighed. "You and Zishan were friends, after all. Although it's been many years since you last saw each other, you should still go offer a stick of incense now that you're here."

"Yes, Grandpa."

Chen Qingge obediently agreed. He stepped forward, lit an incense stick, bowed deeply, and finally placed the incense in the burner.

"Uncle Qiao, please accept my condolences." After speaking, Chen Qingge turned to Lin Mu. "Your turn. I'd like to see how you make it so Zishan 'can't bear it'!"

"Mr. Lin, if this is difficult for you... then never mind," Qiao Tianhao added.

"Are you sure you want me to pay my respects?" Lin Mu asked, his gaze fixed on Qiao Tianhao.

"If you're going to do it, then do it! Stop dawdling, act like a man!" Chen Qingge sneered. "I really don't understand how a beauty like Miss Qin could fall for you!"

Qin Luoli's expression turned cold, and she was about to speak.

Lin Mu grasped her hand and smiled. "Fine. I'll pay my respects."

Letting go of Qin Luoli, Lin Mu stepped forward. He lit three sticks of incense and, facing Qiao Zishan's black-and-white photograph, he began to bow.

CRACK!

The moment he bent down, the crowd heard a sharp, crisp sound, as if something had shattered.

"What was that sound?" Chen Qingge, standing to one side, froze.

"Look..." someone pointed at Qiao Zishan's photograph, their face a mask of shock.

Everyone whipped their heads around and stared in disbelief. A large crack had split Qiao Zishan's photograph, and the fracture was still spreading. It distorted the face in the picture, making it look incredibly sinister and terrifying.

Everyone's mouth hung open, unable to believe the scene before them.

Lin Mu acted as if he saw nothing and continued to bow with the incense in his hand.

CRACK! CRACK!

Just then, something even more shocking happened. The crystal-like coffin suddenly developed several cracks, which grew wider and wider.

"How can this be?"

The crowd stumbled back, their faces filled with terror. Chen Qingge collapsed onto the ground, shaking from head to toe.

"Don't do it! Stop!" Qiao Tianhao's eyes bulged as he roared, trying to stop Lin Mu.

But it was too late.

Lin Mu ignored him and plunged the incense sticks into the burner.

BOOM!

The moment the incense was in place, the entire coffin, before everyone's eyes, completely shattered. As for Qiao Zishan's corpse within, it was torn to pieces.

"No!"

Qiao Tianhao shuddered violently and spat out a mouthful of blood before fainting.

"Rich Master Qiao!"

"Chairman Qiao!"

The crowd cried out in alarm. They rushed to support Qiao Tianhao, while someone else pulled out a phone to dial 911. The entire memorial hall instantly plunged into chaos.

But everyone was still staring at Lin Mu, their expressions a mixture of terror and disbelief, as if they were looking at a ghost.

Chen Ruoping stared dumbly at Lin Mu, his beard trembling. His mouth opened and closed, but no words came out. Chen Qingge looked even more dazed and distraught, his face as pale as a sheet of paper.

"I told you," Lin Mu said, looking at the shattered coffin and slowly shaking his head. "He couldn't bear it."

He turned to the collapsed Chen Qingge and grinned. "I hurt you before. I bet you're still quite upset about that, aren't you? How about I make a formal apology?"

As he spoke, Lin Mu made to bow.

"No! Don't!" Chen Qingge shrieked as if he had seen the Devil himself. He scrambled on all fours toward Chen Ruoping. At that moment, all of his extraordinary composure was gone. He looked as pathetic as a drenched dog scrambling from the water.

With an indifferent expression, Lin Mu walked slowly toward Chen Ruoping. Everyone in his path jumped aside in terror, afraid that he might bow to them next.

Chen Ruoping's brow twitched, but he forced himself to stand his ground.

"Stay away from me, you Devil!" Chen Qingge shrieked from behind Chen Ruoping, his face a mask of pure fear.

Lin Mu paid him no mind, his eyes fixed on Chen Ruoping. "You constantly bring up your seniority, insisting on teaching Luo Li and me how to behave. I understand this comes from a place of elder concern."

A flicker of unease went through Chen Ruoping's heart.

As he feared.

Lin Mu smirked. "I was rude earlier. Please, allow this junior to apologize!"

Clasping his fists, Lin Mu made a show of preparing to bow...

"You..."

Before Lin Mu could finish his bow, Chen Ruoping trembled violently, coughed up a mouthful of blood, and fainted. He had been overcome with sheer rage.

The scene descended into utter bedlam.

Glancing at the chaos, Lin Mu shook his head slightly. "It seems today's charity gala is canceled."

"Let's go."

Taking Qin Luoli's hand, Lin Mu and she slowly walked away. Amid the chaos, someone's gaze fell upon his departing figure and they shuddered.

It was because on the back of his attire, the shadow of a black dragon suddenly soared skyward. It coiled high above, its draconic eyes cold and indifferent as it gazed down upon all mortals.

Chapter 308: Slaughter All the Heavenly Gods and Buddhas in the Nine Heavens!

"Why are you staring at me like that?"

In the car, Lin Mu felt a little flustered under Qin Luoli's gaze and couldn't help but turn away.

Qin Luoli turned his head back toward her, seriously sizing up the face that was both familiar and strange.

"Tell me honestly, how did you do it?"

Her tone was extremely serious, as if she wouldn't let him off the hook until he gave her a satisfactory explanation. Naturally, she was referring to what had just happened. Lin Mu had simply bowed, and Qiao Zishan's coffin had cracked open.

Everyone had been startled, and Qin Luoli was no exception.

"COUGH, COUGH." Lin Mu cleared his throat, blinked, and said, "If you kiss me, I'll tell you."

"Pah!" Qin Luoli couldn't help but spit in disdain, her pretty face blushing slightly.

However, she hesitated for a moment, then met his eyes. "If I kiss you, you'll really tell me?"

Lin Mu nodded solemnly. "I'll spill everything!"

"Fine!"

Qin Luoli leaned in and kissed him on the cheek.

"There, now tell me!" she urged, grabbing his arm while trying to suppress her embarrassment. She was genuinely curious. That scene had been so thrilling, it was like a Heavenly God had descended.

A trace of soft warmth still lingering on his cheek, Lin Mu said seriously, "How did I do it? Of course, it's because... I'm the Divine Doctor!"

Qin Luoli was left speechless, her mind going blank for a moment.

"You're teasing me!"

Seeing the mischievous glint in his eyes, she instantly knew he had played her and started pummeling his chest with a flurry of playful punches. After their little tussle, Qin Luoli rested in his arms, her eyes half-closed. "But you were really handsome back there."

The memory of Lin Mu fearlessly facing that crowd, enraging Qiao Tianhao and Chen Ruoping until they fainted, and making everyone look at him as if he were a devil or a deity made her heart pound wildly. When he took her hand and led her away, she had felt utterly dizzy.

In that moment, Lin Mu had been so handsome, so imposing. At the thought, a sweet smile touched her lips. She subconsciously wrapped her arms around his neck, her eyes filled with love.

RING! RING! RING!

The ringing phone made the two of them, who had been drawing closer, instantly pull apart.

After straightening her messy hair, Qin Luoli looked at her phone, and her brow furrowed.

"It's a call from my first uncle," she said, glancing at Lin Mu. They both understood the call's implication.

"Answer it." Lin Mu seemed indifferent.

Qin Hongbo was undoubtedly calling about him having enraged Chen Ruoping to the point of fainting.

Sure enough, as soon as she ended the call, she turned to Lin Mu with a helpless expression. "First Uncle wants us to go back. It's an order from the Old Madam."

Lin Mu pondered for a moment before nodding. "Then let's go."

When the pair returned to the Qin Family Old Residence, many of the family elders had already arrived. Just as they stepped through the main gate, a mocking voice drifted out from inside. "Oh, look who's here! Our family's two great celebrities!"

It was Chen Xinlan. She and Qin Hongbo were standing at the doorway, as if they had been deliberately waiting for them.

"Qin Luoli, look at the mess you've made!" Chen Xinlan glared darkly at her, grinding her teeth as if she wanted to tear her to shreds.

"Auntie, what could I have possibly done to make you so angry?" Qin Luoli asked, feigning ignorance.

As expected, Chen Xinlan exploded, pointing a finger at her. "You still have the nerve to ask? Don't you know what you've done, you little bitch?"

"Such a foul mouth. Did you forget to brush your teeth before you left home?" Lin Mu glanced at Chen Xinlan impassively, but his calm tone sent a shiver down her spine.

She suddenly remembered the last time at the hospital, when Lin Mu had... Recalling that vivid memory, Chen Xinlan's expression became unnatural, and her throat felt itchy.

"First Uncle, if there's nothing else, we'll head inside," Qin Luoli said with a smile, linking arms with Lin Mu and walking toward the main hall, completely ignoring Chen Xinlan.

This infuriated Chen Xinlan, who muttered resentfully under her breath, "You little bitch, you'll get what's coming to you!"

Suddenly, Lin Mu turned his head and gave her a deep look.

Chen Xinlan's face paled, and she quickly covered her mouth, her eyes wide with terror.

He heard me even though I whispered... Is this little bastard a devil?

In the main hall, the Old Madam was dozing in the main seat. Qin Hongshu and the others were seated below. No one spoke; the atmosphere was quiet.

However, many people couldn't help but glance subconsciously toward the Old Madam, or more precisely, toward the tall young man beside her. He appeared to be in his late twenties, with a tall build and handsome features, bearing a slight resemblance to Qin Hongshu.

When Qin Luoli entered the hall, her eyes immediately fell on the young man, and her expression subtly changed.

"Luo Li, you're back?" the young man greeted her with a warm smile, then nodded at Lin Mu.

Lin Mu scanned the room and noted that most of the people present were Qin Family elders; Qin Yan was one of the few from the younger generation. Surprisingly, Qin Hao was also there. Upon seeing Lin Mu, Qin Hao's gaze held a complex mix of fear, hatred, and schadenfreude. Qin Yan, however, gave Lin Mu a slight shake of her head, as if trying to warn him about something.

Noticing the young man's gaze was fixed on him, Lin Mu whispered to Qin Luoli, "Who is that?"

In a complicated tone, she replied, "His name is Qin Ming. He's my second uncle's son, two years older than me."

Lin Mu raised an eyebrow, a flicker of understanding in his eyes.

"Cousin Qin Ming was studying medicine abroad. I don't know why he's back," Qin Luoli added, equally confused.

"You're here?" the Old Madam said, opening her eyes. She glanced at Qin Luoli and beckoned. "Luo Li, come here."

"Yes, Great-grandmother," Qin Luoli replied with a smile. She gave Lin Mu a meaningful look before walking over.

"Cousin Qin Ming, when did you get back? You should have told me so I could have picked you up," Qin Luoli said.

Before Qin Ming could reply, a sarcastic voice cut in. "How could we dare bother our family's big boss? You're so busy with work and causing trouble at other people's funerals, we wouldn't dare ask you to pick anyone up."

Qin Hao smirked. "Isn't that right, Cousin Qin Ming?"

Qin Ming shook his head with a wry smile. "Luo Li, don't listen to his nonsense. I didn't tell anyone I was back."

"Then let me treat you to a meal sometime, Cousin. Consider it my apology," Qin Luoli said with a smile.

"Alright," Qin Ming's eyes lit up. "After so many years abroad, I've really been craving food from home."

The two chatted warmly, appearing to get along splendidly.

However, something feels amiss, Lin Mu thought. But now isn't the time to ask about it.

"Alright, have a seat," the Old Madam said with a slight cough. She glanced at Lin Mu. "You too, Lin Mu. Don't just stand there, sit."

"Thank you, Old Madam." Lin Mu found a seat next to Qin Yan.

"Lin Mu, be careful. Someone is targeting you and Luo Li," Qin Yan whispered in a complex tone, wary of being overheard.

Lin Mu's brow furrowed. He sensed something and looked up, just in time to see Qin Ming flash him a toothy grin.

Lin Mu returned the smile, though a chill settled in his heart.

I don't care if they target me. But if anyone dares to harm Luo Li, I'll slaughter them all, be they gods or buddhas!

Chapter 309: Drive Lin Mu out of the Qin Family!

"I've called you all here today because there is something to announce..." the Old Madam began to speak slowly from the main seat.

Before she could finish, however, someone interrupted her.

"Great-grandmother, I have something to say first."

Qin Hao suddenly stood up, his expression serious and earnest.

"Qin Hao, what are you doing? When the Old Madam is speaking, is it your turn to talk?" someone scolded him the moment he opened his mouth.

The speaker was none other than the Qin Family's second son, Qin Hongshu.

"Qin Hao, sit down!" Qin Hongbo also chided, his face turning ugly. "You insolent brat! You have no respect for your elders!"

"Old Madam, please don't be angry. It is my failure to discipline him properly that has led Qin Hao to be so disrespectful," Qin Hongbo apologized to the Old Madam.

"It's nothing."

The Old Madam, who seemed to be in a good mood, was not angry at all. Instead, she said with a chuckle, "Hao'er, go ahead and speak."

Hao'er was the Old Madam's nickname for Qin Hao, a sign of her affection.

Upon hearing the Old Madam's form of address, Qin Hongshu's brows furrowed, but a look of delight spread across Chen Xinlan's face. The Old Madam only used nicknames for the younger generation when she was pleased.

"Thank you, Great-grandmother!" Qin Hao, overjoyed, immediately said, "Everyone knows what happened at the Yunshang Clubhouse today, right?"

Qin Hao was, of course, referring to the incident where the funeral for the son of River City's richest man, Qiao Tianhao, had been disrupted.

At his words, everyone's gaze involuntarily shifted toward Lin Mu.

"Great-grandmother, the truth is..." Qin Luoli, flustered, was about to explain, but the Old Madam simply waved her hand.

"Let him speak."

No one had informed the Old Madam about this matter, so she was unaware of the details.

Lin Mu paused for a moment before smiling faintly.

So, they were waiting here to ambush me. How childish.

He shook his head slightly, not taking them seriously.

With the Old Madam's permission, Qin Hao continued, "Today was supposed to be the funeral for Qiao Zishan, the son of River City's richest man, Qiao Tianhao. Countless elites from River City were invited to attend."

"Of course, his real intention was not to hold a memorial service for his son, but to use the occasion to organize a fundraiser."

At this point, Qin Hao shot a cold glance at Lin Mu. "Unexpectedly, before the charity gala could even begin, someone ruined it!"

"The person who disrupted this charity gala is him!" Qin Hao pointed a finger at Lin Mu. "Lin Mu, do you admit your guilt?!"

The atmosphere in the hall instantly grew tense.

Everyone knew about the incident. Although some were displeased with Lin Mu's actions, no one dared to bring it up in front of the Old Madam. After all, Lin Mu was Qin Luoli's husband, and Qin Luoli was in charge of the entire Qin Corporation. Offending her might mean forgoing their year-end bonuses.

Hearing Qin Hao's words, the Old Madam lifted her eyelids and looked at Lin Mu. "Lin Mu, is this true?"

"Old Madam, what actually happened was..."

As Qin Luoli tried to explain, the Old Madam tapped the arm of her chair and said coolly, "I wasn't asking you. Let Lin Mu speak for himself."

Qin Luoli's expression changed slightly, and she couldn't help but grow anxious.

In contrast, Qin Hao and the others were ecstatic. From the look on her face, the Old Madam was preparing to hold him accountable. This was to be expected, as the Old Madam placed immense importance on such matters. It would be strange if she wasn't furious that Lin Mu had committed an act that tarnished the family's reputation.

Facing the crowd's varied gazes, Lin Mu slowly rose to his feet. "Yes, I did it."

The moment he spoke, the entire room fell silent.

He admitted it? Lin Mu actually admitted it?

Not just Qin Luoli, but even Qin Hao was stunned. He had prepared a long list of arguments to use once Lin Mu denied it, ready to rebuke him and even call in witnesses. He never expected Lin Mu to admit to his actions so readily, without even offering an explanation.

"Hmph. Good, as long as you admit it!" Qin Hao sneered. "You disrupted a man's funeral and caused a charity event to end before it began. Lin Mu, and you still don't recognize your crime!"

"Oh?" Lin Mu glanced at Qin Hao indifferently. "And what crime might that be?"

"You've brought shame upon our family and caused irreparable losses to the Qin Corporation! Is that not a crime?" Qin Hao retorted angrily.

"I really don't see what this has to do with the Qin Family's reputation, much less how it caused any losses for the Qin Corporation," Lin Mu said calmly. "Why don't you explain it to me."

"Fine! You want an explanation? I'll give you one!" Qin Hao sneered maliciously. He took out a stack of documents and stepped forward to hand them to the Old Madam.

"Old Madam, because of Lin Mu, many companies have severed their business ties with our Qin Corporation. Countless orders have been canceled, resulting in direct losses of several hundred million, and the indirect losses are even more shocking!"

Qin Hao flipped through the pages, ensuring the Old Madam could see them clearly.

Beside them, Qin Luoli's expression changed. She hadn't expected the consequences of this incident to be so severe.

"This..." Qin Ming couldn't help but interject. "These losses amount to thirty percent of the Qin Corporation's value!"

"Cousin Qin Ming is as sharp-eyed as ever!" Qin Hao said, waving the documents in his hand. "Elders, if you don't believe me, you can all take a look."

The documents were passed around, and with each person who read them, their expressions grew uglier. They couldn't believe so many companies had terminated their partnerships with the Qin Corporation. Even some business allies who had worked with them for years were preparing to cut ties.

"Lin Mu, you traitor to the Qin Family!" Chen Xinlan pointed at him and roared. "The Qin Family has treated you well! Why would you harm us like this?"

"He's just an ungrateful wretch!" Qin Hao sneered.

Lin Mu's gaze turned cold. "These documents should, by rights, be sent to the president of the Qin Corporation. I wonder, how did they end up in your hands?"

Lin Mu's simple question stunned everyone into silence.

That's right. Qin Hao holds no position in the company. Only the president, Qin Luoli, would have access to this information.

"I..." Qin Hao's expression flickered, caught off guard as Lin Mu instantly found the flaw in his attack.

Chen Xinlan quickly jumped in. "As a member of the Qin Family, why can't Hao'er be informed? On the other hand, you're the one who disrupted a funeral and... and made Rich Master Qiao so angry he coughed up blood! How do you think outsiders see the Qin Family now? How do they see the Old Madam?"

With every word, Chen Xinlan leveled another serious accusation, clearly trying to back Lin Mu into a corner.

"Exactly!" Qin Hao sneered. "I may not be the president of the Qin Corporation, but I own shares in this family business!"

Besides Qin Luoli's forty-one percent stake in the Qin Corporation, the Old Madam and Elder Master Qin also held some shares. The rest were controlled by people like Qin Hongbo. Qin Hao's statement was plausible.

"A bunch of short-sighted fools. We're better off without partners like that," Lin Mu said lightly, appearing unconcerned.

"That's easy for you to say!" Qin Hao fumed. "The Old Madam and our elders built every part of the Qin Corporation's foundation bit by bit! And now, because of your recklessness, you've caused our family such devastating losses!"

"I propose that Lin Mu be expelled from the Qin Family, and that Qin Luoli step down from her position as president!"

Qin Hao stared ferociously at Lin Mu, finally revealing their true motive.

Chapter 310: One Month is Too Long!

"Nonsense!" Qin Hongbo suddenly became furious. "Do you think being the president of the Qin Corporation is child's play? That you can just quit whenever you feel like it? If Luo Li really resigns, who do you think will take over? You?"

To an uninformed listener, Qin Hongbo might have sounded quite sensible, but everyone present knew that he and his son were playing good cop, bad cop to force Qin Luoli to take a stand.

Qin Hongshu said indifferently, "Brother, you need to discipline your son properly. If he continues to be so disrespectful, what will become of our family's decorum?"

"Indeed," Qin Hongbo said. "Old Madam, Hao'er is young and ignorant. He's said some things he shouldn't have. Please forgive him."

The Old Madam was in a good mood and chuckled. "Hehe, children will be children. It's fine if they misspeak, as long as they don't do anything wrong."

"Understood." Qin Hongbo glared at Qin Hao. "Now get out of here! Stop embarrassing the family!"

Seeing Qin Hongbo scold his son, Chen Xinlan became displeased and couldn't help but interject, "The Old Madam is right. It's one thing for young people to misspeak, but doing wrong is unforgivable! Lin Mu disrupted a funeral and disgraced the Qin Family. Both of his actions are unforgivable!"

Qin Luoli looked anxious, but she knew now wasn't the right time for her to speak.

"Enough!" The Old Madam waved her hand. "Even Rich Master Qiao hasn't come to demand an explanation, yet here you all are, quarreling amongst yourselves. What, just because Lin Mu married into our family, does that mean he's no longer a member of the Qin Family?"

Everyone was taken aback. What does the Old Madam mean? Is she planning to shield Lin Mu?

Qin Hao's expression changed, and he was about to speak, but Qin Hongbo shot him a glare.

Chen Xinlan, however, countered, "The Old Madam is right. Lin Mu is indeed one of us, so he should be punished according to the Qin Family's rules."

Qin Luoli's face fell. She knew all too well how severe the family rules were. If Lin Mu...

"That's right! He should be punished according to the family rules!" Qin Hao added eagerly.

The Old Madam sighed. "Very well. Since you all insist... from this day forward, Lin Mu is to be struck from the Qin Family's genealogical record!"

Struck from the genealogical record?! This was the most severe punishment possible. Yet, Qin Hao and the others couldn't bring themselves to celebrate. Lin Mu had married into the family; he was never on the Qin Family's genealogical record to begin with.

"Great-grandmother, this..." Qin Hao began to say, but the Old Madam cut him off with a hum. "What now? Lin Mu has been removed from the record. What more do you want? We're all family. Why must you take things so far?" She sighed deeply, her face filled with sorrow.

"Yes, we will obey the Old Madam's wishes!" Qin Hongbo replied quickly, afraid his son would say something else to upset her. He, too, was inwardly frustrated that Lin Mu had seemingly escaped punishment so easily.

"As for Luoli..."

At the Old Madam's words, everyone's heart leaped into their throats. Even Qin Luoli grew nervous. She was only president of the Qin Corporation thanks to the support of her grandfather and the Old Madam. If the matriarch asked her to step down now, she wouldn't dare refuse.

The Old Madam continued, "I will give you one month to handle the company's affairs and recover the losses. If the results don't satisfy everyone, you will resign and accept the blame."

Everyone was shocked. Recover nearly a billion in losses in one month? Even if Qin Luoli were a business prodigy, that would be impossible!

"Fine! I agree!" Qin Luoli accepted without hesitation.

She knew if she refused, her position would immediately be given to someone else. She didn't particularly care about the title of president, but her gravely ill grandfather had personally entrusted the company to her, and the Old Madam also had high hopes for her. She would be wracked with guilt if she couldn't protect what they had given her.

"Hmph! Then we'll give Qin Luoli one month," Qin Hao snorted. "Even with all the talent in the world, you can't do it!"

No one believed Qin Luoli could actually recover the company's losses in just one month. This wasn't a matter of tens or hundreds of thousands. It was nearly a billion! That was almost the entire annual revenue of the Qin Corporation. Recovering it in a month was next to impossible.

The key problem was that even if Qin Luoli somehow had the ability, would their former business partners even be willing to cooperate? The deficit was only going to grow larger.

Qin Hao and Chen Xinlan exchanged a look, a hint of delight visible in both their eyes. Qin Yan appeared worried but didn't know what to say. Qin Ming's expression, however, remained unchanged, his thoughts a mystery.

Just when everyone thought the matter was settled, Lin Mu finally spoke.

"One month?"

Thinking Lin Mu was about to object, Qin Hao interjected, "What, you have a problem with that, Lin Mu? The Old Madam set the deadline, and Qin Luoli herself agreed! Your opinion is worthless now! You're no longer part of the Qin Family!"

Lin Mu gave Qin Hao a flat look. "You and I have nothing to do with each other, that's true. But I am still Luoli's husband."

"So what?" Qin Hao sneered. "This is a Qin family matter!"

Chen Xinlan added, "That's right. Lin Mu, instead of wasting time here, you should go discuss with Qin Luoli how you two plan to overcome this crisis."

No one there believed that Qin Luoli could possibly recover all the losses within a month.

Lin Mu shook his head. "You misunderstand me. I'm saying one month is too long."

The room fell silent. What? One month is too long?

"Give Luoli one week," Lin Mu stated. "She won't just recover the losses; she'll turn a huge profit for the Qin Corporation."

As soon as the words left his mouth, everyone's eyes widened in disbelief. Has this guy gone insane? Or is he so furious that he's just spouting nonsense?

Even Qin Luoli stared at Lin Mu in disbelief. She couldn't do it in a month, let alone a week.

"Fine! One week it is!" Qin Hao exclaimed eagerly. "You said it yourself, Lin Mu! Nobody forced you!"

"Yes," Lin Mu affirmed. "I said it."

"And what if you fail?" Chen Xinlan, suspecting Lin Mu had some other motive, moved to corner him. "If you fail, you will immediately divorce Luoli and get out of the Qin Family!" she said venomously. "Furthermore, you will go to the Chen Family estate, kneel before my father, and formally apologize to him for your transgressions!"

"And if I succeed?" Lin Mu asked calmly.

"You can't!" Qin Hao blurted out, never one to mince words. He simply didn't believe it was possible.

"I'm speaking hypothetically," Lin Mu said, his gaze fixed on Chen Xinlan.

"If Qin Luoli actually manages it in one week," Qin Hongbo suddenly declared, "I will give up all of my shares! But if she fails, she must also surrender all of her shares!"

At his words, the expression on every face in the room changed. This was an earth-shattering gamble