

Young Master 91

Chapter 91: [Making Friends with Rich Beauties]

"Brother Chen, what's wrong?" Seeing Situ Chen's strange expression through the rearview mirror, Fei Si asked with some concern.

Situ Chen appeared somewhat bewildered, "Ruoshui called and said a person named Ye Fan saved her. He's a friend she met in the game."

"Uh..."

Hearing Situ Chen's explanation, Fei Si was so shocked that his hands slipped, nearly driving the car into the guard rails on both sides of the highway.

Seeing this, Situ Chen gave a bitter smile and shook his head, trying to clear his mind. However, the more he thought about it, the more absurd it seemed. He couldn't help but confirm, "Ruoshui, are you sure the person who saved you is someone you know from your game?"

"Yes, I had encountered Brother Ye Fan before at Lingyin Temple."

Situ Ruoshui honestly said, "At that time, he was with the valedictorian of this year's freshmen at Dong Hai University, Su Liuli. Later, that group of merciless great demons kidnapped me and took me to this club called West Lake. After that, Brother Ye Fan appeared and took out all those great demons."

Hearing Situ Ruoshui recount the entire process, Situ Chen's expression turned extremely bizarre, still unable to believe that a master of Martial Arts at least at the level of Postnatal Perfection would play an online game!

"Ruoshui, is he by your side right now?" Feeling the oddity, Situ Chen thought for a moment and said, "I want to talk to him."

"No can do."

"Why not?"

"Brother Ye Fan, well... he's taking a shower," Situ Ruoshui stealthily glanced at the bathroom, dimly seeing the blurred figure of Ye Fan, her cheeks flushing red.

"What... what?" Situ Chen was shocked again, "You're saying he's taking a shower right now?!"

"Yes, he got blood from those great demons on him and needed to wash it off." Recalling Ye Fan's instructions, Situ Ruoshui added, "He said he would take me to meet you after his shower."

"__"

Situ Chen felt like he was going to collapse. He simply couldn't imagine how strong one's mental fortitude needed to be to dare to take a shower so fearlessly at Nanqinhong's place after killing experts from Nanqinhong and the Hongwu Sect.

"Ruoshui, keep your phone line open at all times." After a moment, Situ Chen said, "Wait for him to finish his shower, then have him call me back."

"Okay."

Situ Ruoshui responded, and at the same time, realized the bathroom door was opening. Ye Fan, wrapped only in a bath towel, emerged, his muscular contours clearly visible to Situ Ruoshui's eyes.

What?!

Startled by this sight, Situ Ruoshui froze in shock.

Noticing the impact his appearance had on Situ Ruoshui, Ye Fan was helpless — all his clothes were stained with blood, so he could only step out in a bath towel.

"Have you finished calling your dad?"

With no other option, Ye Fan changed the subject while scanning the room, trying to find some clothes.

"Yeah."

On hearing this, Situ Ruoshui snapped out of it, her heart pounding uncontrollably, she bowed her head shyly, blushing fiercely, and softly acquiesced.

Ye Fan, however, said nothing else but quickly walked toward the wardrobe in the room.

"Ye... Brother Ye Fan, my dad said that you should call him back after your shower." Meanwhile, recalling Situ Chen's request, Situ Ruoshui summoned up her courage, looked up, and told him.

"Got it, I'll first see if there are clothes to wear." Ye Fan casually responded while opening the wardrobe, only to see two sets of disposable sleepwear inside, one for men and one for women.

Seeing this, Ye Fan heaved a sigh of relief, took out the men's sleepwear and said, "I'll change into these clothes and then call your dad back."

Because of her nervousness and shyness, Situ Ruoshui didn't dare to face Ye Fan directly but instead lowered her head, crossed her hands, and nodded with flushed cheeks.

Such an innocent girl indeed.

Seeing her reaction, Ye Fan couldn't help but sigh inwardly, stepping back into the bathroom.

"You dial your dad's number, I'll talk to him."

Half a minute later, Ye Fan, changed into the sleepwear, walked out of the bathroom. Seeing Situ Ruoshui still fidgeting with the hem of her clothing and keeping her head down, he couldn't help but laugh.

"Okay."

On hearing this, Situ Ruoshui quickly dialed Situ Chen's number and handed the phone to Ye Fan, still without daring to meet Ye Fan's eyes, as if harboring a guilty conscience.

"Hello, is this Mr. Ye Fan?" As the call connected, Situ Chen's voice came through the receiver, very polite.

"Yes, Mr. Situ," Ye Fan replied.

"Thank you, Mr. Ye," Situ Chen quickly expressed his gratitude, his tone especially sincere.

"I am currently with your daughter at the West Lake Club, next to West Lake. You should come over," Ye Fan said.

"Uh... okay!" Startled by Ye Fan's request, Situ Chen agreed promptly, though somewhat worried, "Mr. Ye, could we perhaps meet somewhere else?"

"Are you worried that I'm from the Nanqinhong Sect, luring you here?" Ye Fan asked; "Or are you afraid that the people from Nanqinhong will follow you here?"

"Both," Situ Chen hesitated for a moment, but chose to answer truthfully.

"If you doubt my identity, you can call your subordinate, Liu Tianjun, who once tried to use me to deal with Qiao Bazhi. As for the latter, even if Nanqinhong sends a master of the Early Innate Realm, I could easily take your daughter and leave." As soon as he finished speaking, Ye Fan didn't wait for a response from Situ Chen and hung up the phone.

Could...could he be a master of the Innate Realm?!

Listening to the "beep beep" sound from the receiver, the shock in Situ Chen's heart took a long time to dissipate.

"Brother Ye Fan, what is the Early Innate Realm?"

Attracted by the recent conversation and no longer shy or nervous, Situ Ruoshui, blinking her big eyes filled with curiosity, asked, "Is it a level in Martial Arts? Like the levels for heroes in games?"

"Well, more or less," Ye Fan found Situ Ruoshui's rapid shift in thought somewhat amusing but still answered her.

"Oh, I've read web novels before, where the cultivators are divided into Postnatal and Innate, and Innate is really powerful," she said with admiration.

"According to the books, someone as young as you entering the Innate Realm is a genius seen once in ten thousand years," Situ Ruoshui said, full of awe.

"__"

Ye Fan touched his nose, unsure how to respond.

"Brother Ye Fan, did you refuse to join our Barbie Team because you're worried that playing games might interfere with your cultivation?" Situ Ruoshui continued to ask.

Ye Fan nodded: "Something like that."

"Actually, it's okay, playing games doesn't take up much time. For example, I study while playing games," Situ Ruoshui explained earnestly: "You can practice Martial Arts and play games at the same time."

"Um... it's just a suggestion."

Seeing Ye Fan remain silent, Situ Ruoshui smiled cutely and then changed the subject, "By the way, Brother Ye Fan, do you not attend school aside from practicing Martial Arts?"

"I don't."

"That's so strange, is it like the novels where you train in the deep mountains for over a decade?"

Blinking her charming big eyes, Situ Ruoshui thought for a moment and said, "Based on that, Martial Arts training seems much harder than schooling. I definitely couldn't do it, and playing games already takes up all my spare time."

"Brother Ye Fan, what else do you do besides practice Martial Arts and play games?" Situ Ruoshui asked further.

"Ruoshui, do you like to chat a lot normally?" Ye Fan asked with a wry smile.

Situ Ruoshui was taken aback: "Not really. I chat more online; I hardly ever talk in real life."

"Why?"

"Because no one talks to me in real life."

Situ Ruoshui instinctively answered, accidentally touching on a sore subject, her expression turning dim as she weakly explained, "My dad worries about my safety, requiring me to come home right after school without hanging out with classmates, leaving me to repeatedly turn down invites. Over time, my classmates have come to think I'm just putting on airs and have distanced themselves from me."

"I really don't put on airs—I would love to chat with them, play with them, and be their friend..." she said, her eyes filled with grievance as she looked at Ye Fan.

Hearing Situ Ruoshui's heartfelt words, and looking at that aggrieved, tender face, Ye Fan felt a string in his heart being touched, resonating with her as he responded with a bitter smile, "You're better off than me, at least you can make friends online and chat."

"Brother Ye Fan, do you not have friends in real life either?" Situ Ruoshui asked curiously.

Ye Fan nodded, then thinking of Su Yuxin and others, he shook his head: "Not before, but now I do."

"Hmm..."

Hearing this, a hint of envy appeared in Situ Ruoshui's eyes as she couldn't help but ask, "Brother Ye Fan, can we be friends?"

As soon as she finished speaking, her soft and cute face was filled with hope, looking forward to Ye Fan's agreement.

She and Ye Fan were both too lonely.

Chapter 92: [Worries and Gratitude]

By ten o'clock, the red sun had completely risen, and the number of tourists in the West Lake Scenic Spot had increased.

Due to its secluded location and the presence of a private club barrier on the road leading to the club, the West Lake Club did not have any tourists rashly entering.

About three kilometers from the West Lake Club, Situ Haotian and Xiao Jiu were waiting for reinforcements.

"Young Master Haotian, are you all right?"

The burly man from the Dong Hai Gang's Hanghu branch, who came to retrieve Situ Haotian, saw a wound on Situ Haotian's arm with blood dyeing the sleeve red and asked with concern.

"It's nothing, Xiao Jiu is more seriously injured than I am. Go help him," Situ Haotian allowed the man to support him while he spoke weakly to another burly man.

As Situ Haotian had said, Xiao Jiu's injuries were indeed more severe.

To create the illusion of a bloody battle and avoid Situ Chen's punishment, Situ Haotian had merely cut his own arm, causing an external injury, while Xiao Jiu had struck himself, damaging some internal organs.

Soon, with the help of two burly men, Situ Haotian and Xiao Jiu entered the Buick business van that had come to pick them up.

The car started, and one of the burly men quickly took out his phone to call Liu Tianjun, attempting to report. However, he found that Liu Tianjun's phone was busy.

"Young Master Haotian, I can't reach Boss Liu; he is waiting at the highway exit for Mr. Situ. Should we go there now?" Unable to contact Liu Tianjun, the burly man asked Situ Haotian for instructions.

Feigning weakness, Situ Haotian leaned back in the back seat of the car, nodded slightly to indicate agreement, and then took out his phone to report his whereabouts to Situ Chen.

However—

Before Situ Haotian could take out his phone, his pocket vibrated.

Hmm?

This discovery made Situ Haotian pause, and then he quickly took out his phone with his uninjured right hand, and immediately saw that it was a call from Situ Chen. Not wanting to delay, he answered right away.

"Where are you now?" As soon as the call connected, Situ Chen's voice came through the earpiece.

"Foster father, Xiao Jiu and I just got picked up by Uncle Liu's people," Situ Haotian replied with respect, his voice faint, conveying a sense of weakness.

Noticing Situ Haotian's unusual tone, Situ Chen raised his eyebrows and asked, "Are you injured?"

"A minor injury," Situ Haotian answered indirectly, and then apologized proactively, "I'm sorry, foster father, I failed to protect Ruoshui well."

"Ruoshui is fine," Situ Chen said. "How bad is your injury? Is Xiao Jiu hurt?"

Fine?!

Startled by Situ Chen's words, Situ Haotian's heart skipped a beat, his hand trembling, almost dropping his phone.

"Haotian, can you hear me?"

Seeing that Situ Haotian was not responding, Situ Chen's tone grew slightly anxious, as if he was worried that Situ Haotian was severely injured and had passed out.

"Foster... father, I can hear you. My arm was cut by One-eyed Wu Ren, it's not serious, Xiao Jiu took a strike and suffered internal injuries," Situ Chen's words brought Situ Haotian back to reality. "Foster father, where is Ruoshui now?"

"She is currently at the West Lake Club, which currently belongs to Nanqinghong," Situ Chen replied. "Here's what we'll do. I'm going to pick up Ruoshui, and you and Xiao Jiu go to Sky Army's place to get treated."

"Okay."

Situ Haotian quickly agreed, then hesitated and asked, "Foster father, didn't you say Ruoshui was fine? Why is she at Nanqinghong's place?"

Hearing Situ Haotian ask this, Xiao Jiu also found it strange.

"Ruoshui was saved by someone named Ye Fan, according to Ruoshui, this person is someone she met in a game, from the Hanghu Su Family," Situ Chen explained, then suddenly remembering something, he added, "Right, you and Ruoshui should have met him on the mountain before!"

Ye Fan?!

Upon hearing this name, Situ Haotian's mind flashed with the resolved face of Ye Fan, his pupils dilated, his face filling with horror.

In his view, since Ye Fan had intervened to save Situ Ruoshui, he must have witnessed the scene where Qu Feng, Wu Ren, and Zhang Zhu kidnapped Situ Ruoshui and also seen him and Xiao Jiu running away.

Because of his martial arts practice, Xiao Jiu's hearing was much better than ordinary people, and he had heard every word of Situ Chen's conversation with Situ Haotian.

While Situ Haotian was still in shock, Xiao Jiu heard the beeping sounds from the earpiece and nudged Situ Haotian with his hand.

Situ Haotian suddenly woke up, looked at Xiao Jiu, and was startled to see Xiao Jiu asking with lip-reading: Young Master Haotian, what should we do?

What should we do?

No answer.

Situ Haotian's Adam's apple moved nervously, his pale face revealing deep concern.

He had resorted to self-harm to escape Situ Chen's punishment, and not only had it been ineffective, but... it also might let Situ Chen know the real inside story...

He couldn't imagine what Situ Chen would do to him if he discovered the truth!

Yet—

Even with just his toes, he could guess that if this all really happened, he, the Crown Prince of the Dong Hai Gang, would definitely be kicked out!

...

At ten-thirty, Situ Chen, accompanied by Fei Si and a group of bodyguards, anxiously arrived at the West Lake Club.

Entering the gate and seeing four dead bodies lying at the entrance, Fei Si's eyes lit up, deducing, "They were all killed with one strike, and judging by the expressions of the deceased, there was virtually no reaction."

"Does this mean he's truly a master of the Innate Realm?"

Situ Chen's expression was somewhat odd. Masters of the Innate Realm were extremely rare, and he had tried every method to recruit one, but no matter the offer, he had failed to hire any. Now, Situ Ruoshui had met a friend online who was a master of the Innate Realm—the stark contrast was still something he struggled to accept!

"These four are very weak, even someone at the Peak-stage Postnatal could slaughter them like chickens," Fei Si shook his head.

Although Situ Chen had once trained in martial arts with Fei Si's father, he had given up halfway. Now, he had just barely reached the Peak-stage Postnatal. Hearing Fei Si speak, he pondered for a moment and then said, "Little Four, come in with me, and let them guard the entrance."

"Yes, Brother Chen!" Fei Si responded, signaling with his eyes for the eight bodyguards to stay behind while he followed Situ Chen towards the main building of the club.

Soon, the two of them passed through the bamboo forest in the courtyard and clearly saw eight bodies lying at the entrance of the main building, one with its head severed, blood splattered all over the scene—extremely gruesome.

"Hiss~"

Seeing this, even Situ Chen, who was the underground godfather of the Yangtze River Delta, couldn't help but inhale sharply. Fei Si was also secretly taken aback, astounded by the opponent's methods.

"Brother Chen, they must be inside, let's go in," Fei Si suggested.

Situ Chen nodded and then swiftly walked into the club with Fei Si.

Entering the club, the pungent smell of blood hit them, and shortly after, what met their eyes was a sea of blood-red.

The carpet in the club lobby had almost turned blood-red; bodies were lying haphazardly—like a scene from hell, hair-raising to anyone who saw it.

"Indeed, it's Wu Ren, Zhang Zhu, and Qu Feng!"

Upon identifying the bodies, Fei Si's pupils shrank and he said with a strange expression, "Judging by the way they died, it seems they were easily killed by the opponent. That means Ye Fan could very well be a master of the Innate Realm!"

"Mr. Ye, I am Situ Chen. Where are you?"

Hearing Fei Si say this, Situ Chen shifted his gaze and his tone unconsciously became much more respectful.

Inside the room, Ye Fan had already heard the footsteps but was unsure if it was Situ Chen. At Situ Chen's words, he immediately replied, "Mr. Situ, to keep Ruoshui from seeing the scene outside, you should come in. We are in room 002."

"Okay!"

Situ Chen replied excitedly and hastened with Fei Si down the corridor—the sound of Ye Fan's voice came from there.

"Dad!"

By the time Situ Chen and Fei Si turned into the hallway, Situ Ruoshui was already waiting at the door. Seeing them, she excitedly called out.

"Ruoshui!"

Seeing that Situ Ruoshui was safe, Situ Chen's anxious heart completely settled, and he quickly rushed over to embrace her.

"Dad, you're squeezing me..." Situ Ruoshui's tender face turned bright red as she gasped.

"Sorry, Ruoshui, Dad got too excited."

Realizing his behavior, Situ Chen then set Situ Ruoshui down. Seeing her flushed smiling face, showing no sign of fear, he was momentarily taken aback, "Ruoshui, aren't you scared?"

"With Brother Ye Fan here, what is there to be afraid of?" Situ Ruoshui asked, puzzled.

"Uh..."

Surprise flooded Situ Chen's face. After all, even he found the bloody scene earlier a bit chilling, let alone Situ Ruoshui?

Slightly later, just when Situ Chen was about to say something else, Fei Si coughed softly, reminding him that Ye Fan was still in the room.

With Fei Si's reminder, Situ Chen curse himself for his foolishness and, holding Situ Ruoshui's hand, stepped into the room.

In the room, Ye Fan was sitting on a sofa, with two cups of coffee on the coffee table in front of him.

Seeing such a scene, Situ Chen was a bit taken aback, but thinking that Ye Fan might indeed be a master of the Innate Realm, he felt relieved.

Unlike Situ Chen, upon seeing Ye Fan, the usually composed Fei Si was momentarily stunned!

As a master of Peak-stage Postnatal, he knew all too well that the path of martial arts became ever more difficult as one advanced, and seeing Ye Fan, who appeared young yet might be a master of the Innate Realm, the shock was imaginable!

Without paying heed to Fei Si's astonishment, Ye Fan stood up and smiled, saying, "Mr. Situ, I didn't want to disturb your reunion with your daughter, so I didn't come out to meet you."

"It's embarrassing; I should have thanked Mr. Ye as soon as I entered the door,"

Situ Chen performed the customary Jianghu greeting, cupping his fists and speaking with sincere earnestness, "Mr. Ye saving my daughter is a great favor to me. I don't know how to repay it, but if Mr. Ye ever expresses a need, I will do everything in my power to satisfy it!"

"There's no need to be formal, Mr. Situ,"

Fei Si waved his hand, saying, "It was only right to save Ruoshui since she and I are acquainted. Moreover, even if it weren't for Ruoshui, I wouldn't have let Qiao Bazhi off."

"This..."

Unlike the business-like style of Su Hongyuan, Situ Chen had a reputation in the underworld akin to that of a reincarnation of Guan, famous for his loyalty.

Though he had already learned from Liu Tianjun that Ye Fan and Qiao Bazhi had a score to settle, seeing Ye Fan ask for no return made him feel very uncomfortable.

"Mr. Situ just needs to help me clean up the scene, and I don't want the police involved," Fei Si said with a smile, explaining his choice of the meeting place.

"Please rest assured, Mr. Ye, I know what to do,"

Situ Chen immediately agreed and then, with both hands cupped in a fist, he heartily said, "Since Mr. Ye does not want any return, then I won't mention it again, or else I'd be too hypocritical.

I promise you, Mr. Ye, in the future, whenever you need Situ Chen, just say the word. If it's possible, I'll give twelve points of effort to get it done; if not, I'll still give twelve points of effort to make it possible!"

Feeling Situ Chen's candidness and magnanimity, Ye Fan did not speak, only returning the gesture with cupped fists.

Chapter 93: [Three Women]

Due to a sudden violent homicide, a large number of police and armed forces conducted a carpet search of the Flying Peak Scenic Spot, forcing tourists to leave the area early.

"Patron, the police outside are urging us again. Why don't you come another day to make your wishes?"

In the Great Hall of Lingyin Temple, the monk responsible for handing incense to visitors looked at Su Yuxin, Su Liuli, and Su Jindi with some difficulty.

Though the temple welcomed these tourists who came to make wishes and donate money, under police pressure, the temple abbot had no choice but to compromise. By now, under the supervision of the police, other visitors had descended the mountain, except for Su Yuxin and her party, who insisted on finishing their prayers before leaving.

"Master, please go and speak to the police again. We will leave as soon as we finish our wishes, very soon," Su Yuxin apologized and said.

"Alright," the monk sighed resignedly, nodding his head and turning to walk outside the hall.

"Yu Xin, Brother Ye hasn't called for so long. Nothing could have happened to him, right?" As the monk stepped out of the hall, Su Liuli couldn't help but ask.

The reason they hadn't left, using praying as an excuse, was actually to wait for Ye Fan at Lingyin Temple. According to Su Jindi, with Ye Fan's capabilities, dealing with the kidnappers of Situ Ruoshui would be extremely easy. They wouldn't need to leave the area to rescue Situ Ruoshui!

"Don't worry, nothing could possibly happen to Brother Ye!"

Even though Ye Fan was late returning, Su Jindi, recalling how Ye Fan had moved like a phantom during his sparring with Zhu Gang, a member of Yanhuang, showed no less confidence in Ye Fan than the exaggerated actions depicted in movies.

"I think Doctor Ye might be waiting for the perfect moment to act, ensuring that Situ Ruoshui isn't in any danger," Su Yuxin reasoned and muttered, "Let's make our wishes, and once we're done, we will wait for him at the base of the mountain."

As she spoke, Su Yuxin turned around, her face typically cold as frost showing a trace of concern.

Concerned, she stepped forward slowly, took three sticks of incense, ignited them, and placed them into the incense burner.

Seeing this, Su Liuli followed silently, mimicking Su Yuxin's actions, while Su Jindi, who never believed in spirits, stood far behind.

"Yu Xin prays for Buddha's blessing, to safely bring Situ Ruoshui back and ensure Doctor Ye's safe return!" After lighting the incense, Su Yuxin knelt on the cushion, looking earnestly at the statue of Shakyamuni, and whispered her wish.

Could it be that Yu Xin has really fallen for Ye Fan?

Hearing Su Yuxin's wish, Su Liuli was slightly startled, her hands freezing in mid-air holding the incense, riddled with doubts.

Amidst her doubts, Su Yuxin turned her head and shockingly saw that after making her wishes, Su Yuxin bowed her head devoutly, hitting her forehead hard enough that it turned red.

Seeing this, a voice inside Su Liuli told her that if Su Yuxin hadn't fallen for Ye Fan, she wouldn't have acted like this.

As this thought emerged, Su Liuli felt a strange sensation bubbling in her chest.

Shortly after, once Su Yuxin had finished making her wishes and stood up, Su Liuli placed her incense in the burner, walked to the cushion, knelt down, and slowly lifted her head to gaze at the golden, glowing statue.

The moment Su Liuli's gaze met the statue, the worldly noise seemed to vanish instantaneously, her heart as clear as polished glass.

In her trance, she seemed to see the statue slowly opening its eyes, asking her: What wish do you need me to fulfill?

"Liu Li wishes for Buddha's blessing for Ye Fan's safety and well-being."

An involuntary wish emerged in Su Liuli's heart, spontaneously bringing Ye Fan's face—which she once found annoying—to her mind, her heart no longer pristine but stirred with ripples.

This change cleared her vision, seeing the statue no longer as vivid as before.

"Sorry to interrupt, but there was a murder earlier at Lingyin Temple, according to the monks, the culprit killed eight people and took a girl hostage."

At the same time, a police officer entered the hall and stated seriously, "Currently, the police force and armed soldiers are conducting a thorough search of the area. For your safety, please descend the mountain immediately."

"Liuli, have you finished making your wish?" Seeing the police officer personally come to persuade them, Su Yuxin asked Su Liuli.

"Done!"

Perhaps because of the sudden arrival of the police, or perhaps because of the inexplicably made wish for Buddha to protect Ye Fan, Su Liuli could no longer stay calm and stood up instantly.

"Let's go then," Su Yuxin said, and then apologized to the officer, "Sorry for the inconvenience."

"Thank you for your cooperation," the officer replied without much chit-chat, his face solemn as he left the Great Hall.

"Buzz...buzz..."

Later, as Su Yuxin, Su Liuli, and Su Jindi were leaving the Great Hall, the sound of a phone vibrating suddenly erupted.

"Sister, your phone is ringing, check if it's Brother Ye calling!" Su Jindi, alert, immediately recognized it was Su Yuxin's phone vibrating.

Hearing this, Su Yuxin, with a face mixed with worry and excitement, quickly opened her bag and pulled out her phone.

"It's Doctor Ye!"

Seeing the caller ID was Ye Fan, Su Yuxin's voice trembled with excitement, and she quickly pressed the answer button, asking, "Doctor Ye, are you alright?"

"It's okay, I've already rescued Situ Ruoshui and handed her over to her family. Where are you?" On the other end, Ye Fan, wearing a bodyguard's uniform from Situ Chen, left the West Lake Club.

Hearing that Ye Fan was unharmed and had even rescued Situ Ruoshui, Su Yuxin's tense nerves immediately relaxed. She let out a sigh of relief and said, "We are still at Lingyin Temple, preparing to head down the mountain. Where are you?"

"I'll wait for you at the entrance of West Lake Scenic Spot," Ye Fan thought and said.

"Okay!"

Su Yuxin hurriedly agreed, then hung up the phone, looked around to ensure no one else was present, and spoke in a lowered voice, "Doctor Ye successfully rescued Situ Ruoshui and handed her over to her family. He will wait for us at the entrance of West Lake Scenic Spot."

"I've always said, those three guys may look impressive, but once they face Brother Ye, they're nothing more than trash with combat ability less than five!" Su Jindi said proudly, patting his chest as if he was talking about himself rather than Ye Fan.

Is this guy really a martial arts master?

Su Liuli was somewhat astonished but also secretly relieved.

Why did she inexplicably ask Buddha for his blessing just now?

Once reassured, Su Liuli thought back to that scene, which seemed like an illusion, and felt a sense of guilt. She then forcibly calmed herself and said, "Let's go before the police come to drive us away again!"

Hearing Su Liuli say this, Su Yuxin and Su Jindi no longer spoke and quickly followed Su Liuli towards the exit of Lingyin Temple.

Hooligan, the reason I asked Buddha to bless you was initially to help you rescue Situ Ruoshui and also because I didn't want to see Sister Yuxin sad. Most importantly, I was afraid that if you died, no one would be able to treat Sister Yuxin's illness, and also...

In the sunshine, Su Liuli walked towards the temple's exit, making up excuses for her actions, unsure what she was trying to hide.

But—

No matter how hard she tried, that scene, which seemed like an illusion, was deeply engraved in her mind.

...

Half an hour later.

Situ Chen's Rolls-Royce Phantom drove into Jiuxi Rose Garden and stopped in front of Liu Tianjun's villa.

"Godfather!"

"Big brother!"

As Situ Chen and Situ Ruoshui got out of the car, Situ Haotian and Liu Tianjun came up to greet them. Situ Haotian's heart immediately soared to his throat, completely occupied by a feeling called worry.

Yes...

It was worry!

On one hand, he worried that Situ Chen would learn from Ye Fan the truth about how he and Xiao Jiu had fled without fighting. On the other hand, he also worried that Situ Ruoshui had witnessed that scene!

Any of these situations happening would be his nightmare!

"Is your arm okay?"

Later, as Situ Haotian was extremely nervous, Situ Chen asked with some concern.

"Whew~" Situ Haotian heard this and immediately sighed in relief, shaking his head like a rattle-drum, "Godfather, I'm fine!"

"Xiao Jiu, how about you?" Situ Chen then looked at Xiao Jiu.

Xiao Jiu also relaxed and answered somewhat off-topic, "I'm sorry, Mr. Situ, I failed to protect Miss Ruoshui and Young Master Haotian well!"

As soon as he finished speaking, Xiao Jiu bowed deeply at ninety degrees to Situ Chen.

"I'm sorry, Ruoshui, your brother is useless!" Situ Haotian also said with a face full of remorse to Situ Ruoshui.

"It's okay, it's not your fault!"

Before Situ Ruoshui could speak, Situ Chen waved his hand and then spoke with killing intent to Liu Tianjun, "Tianjun, I'll take Ruoshui and Haotian back to Donghai first. You handle the aftermath. Also, remember to return a big gift to Nanqinghong tonight!"

"Please rest assured, big brother. I know what to do!" Liu Tianjun clenched his fists, feeling as if he couldn't wait to grab a machete and wipe out Nanqinghong's Hanghu branch immediately.

Upon hearing this, Situ Chen said no more and left with Situ Ruoshui, Situ Haotian, and others.

Twenty minutes later, the convoy passed through the highway toll gate and headed towards Donghai.

"Brother Ye Fan, will we meet again?"

Looking at the gradually fading Hanghu City, Situ Ruoshui's tender face was full of longing.

Chapter 94: [Surname Ye, From Emperor City!]

When darkness enshrouded the earth, the streets and alleys of Hanghu lit up with the yellow glow of lights, nightclubs with their colorful neon signs welcoming those who enjoyed the nightlife to come and spend.

As one of Hanghu's top nightclubs, CC Bar was booming — as soon as the sky darkened, a steady stream of cars arrived at the bar's parking lot, with well-dressed men and women, either alone or in groups, entering the bar.

At the entrance, the hostesses in cheongsams greeted customers with smiles, bending over to reveal a glimpse of white at their chests, drawing the eyes of patrons.

The men couldn't help but have their pupils slightly dilate, while most women looked on with scorn, their lips curling as if they wanted them to reach the sky.

"Manager Feng, isn't Sister Liu coming today?"

In the third-floor workspace, a burly man wearing a headset noticed that the bar's occupancy rate had exceeded half and, checking the time and seeing it was already past eight, couldn't help asking the man beside him.

"I don't know, she didn't call me."

The man, surnamed Feng and named Kai, shook his head. He was the manager of CC Bar, and if Liu Qin was ever absent, it was up to him to take care of the business.

"I heard that there was a murder at Lingyin Temple today, eight people dead, all elite members of the Dong hai Gang, and furthermore, the 'little princess' of Dong hai Gang, Situ Ruoshui, was kidnapped."

The burly man hesitated, then asked tentatively, "It seems like it was Master Eight's doing. Sister Liu must have gone to deal with this matter with Master Eight, right?"

"Brother Li, these matters are none of our concern." Feng Kai, looking at the burly man who was formerly a scout, reminded him: "We just need to do our jobs well."

"That's true."

The burly man laughed at himself sarcastically. He had honed his skills in the military, but after offending a superior and being discharged, he couldn't find a job due to a lack of connections and ended up as a security guard at CC Bar.

"Brother Li, take some people and patrol the club," Feng Kai said after a moment's thought. As the manager of CC Bar, although he wasn't one of Qiao Bazhi's trusted confidants, he was still a name that Qiao Bazhi would recognize and was someone of significance in the Nanqinghong Hanghu Branch, being much more informed than the burly man heading security.

In such a situation, although he did not know that Qiao Bazhi and Liu Qin had already been sent off by Ye Fan to Yama Palace, his instincts and reason told him that with the kidnapping of the Dong hai Gang's princess, the Dong hai Gang would surely not rest easy.

It has to be said that Feng Kai's fitness for the position of manager at CC Bar wasn't merely for show; he had a strong sense of foresight.

As Brother Li, surnamed Li and named Pei, patrolled under Feng Kai's orders, Feng Kai suddenly saw through the surveillance monitor three vans speeding toward the bar. They didn't stop at the parking lot as directed by the security, nearly hitting a guard, and parked directly at the bar's entrance instead.

Hmm?

Seeing this, Feng Kai's brows furrowed slightly, and his feeling of unrest intensified.

Shortly after, before Feng Kai could alert Li Pei about the abnormality at the entrance, the three vans simultaneously opened, and a group of burly men wearing baseball caps, armed with knives and clubs, jumped out and charged towards the bar with an aggressive demeanor.

"Li... Brother Li, there's trouble at the door, go there with your men immediately!" After a brief moment of shock, Feng Kai snapped back to reality and hurriedly picked up the walkie-talkie to shout at Li Pei.

As soon as he finished speaking, Li Pei saw the four door guards being completely overwhelmed by the group of burly men, beaten to the ground with a flurry of knives and sticks.

At the same time inside the bar, Li Pei heard Feng Kai's words but didn't take them seriously, leading his six subordinates calmly towards the entrance.

His lack of urgency was not because he looked down on Feng Kai, but because he believed that across Hanghu and even the whole of Jiangnan, no one would dare to blatantly cause trouble at CC Bar.

Previously, even if there were disturbances, they were mostly drunk brawls over pride or showboating in front of women and were usually quickly resolved.

"Ah—"

Just as Li Pei was leading his six men to go out and see what was happening with a relaxed mindset, the four welcoming hostesses at the door witnessed the bloody scene outside, screaming as they ran into the bar, one of them slipping and falling to the ground in panic.

Whoosh!

Due to the early hour, the bar was playing soft music, and the screaming of the hostesses drew the attention of the security staff and patrons alike. Instinctively, their eyes turned towards the door, and they saw, to their horror, a swarm of burly men armed with knives and clubs charging into the bar like invaders pillaging a village.

"What do you think you're doing?" Seeing this, Li Pei, although shocked, still shouted as he stepped forward.

"Beat the bastards of Nanqinhong to a pulp!"

The leading burly man was a valiant underling of Liu Tianjun, with a record of taking lives, more than one at that. Seeing Li Pei, a former scout, leading his men to confront them, he showed no fear and bellowed his orders.

Upon the leader's command, his followers, each armed with knives and clubs, charged forward like enraged beasts.

"Ah—"

In an instant, the bar was thrown into chaos. Patrons either screamed and ran or cowered and ducked for cover, while the members of the Dong hai Gang and Nanqinhong clashed fiercely.

For a time, the sounds of tables and chairs colliding, glass breaking, and knives and cudgels striking each other were completely mixed together, drowning out the bar's soft music.

Due to the numerical disadvantage and being caught off guard, Li Pei and his men were quickly knocked to the ground, with Li Pei himself bearing the brunt of several knife wounds, becoming a bloody mess.

"Split into two teams according to the plan," one team searches upstairs to see if there are any fish that slipped through the net, and the other team, smash for me!"

The leading Great Han issued the command once more, his tone extremely excited—The Dong hai Gang had been suppressed by the Hanghu Gang for two full years, and they had accumulated too much anger and resentment!

"Hiss~"

On the third floor, the bar manager, Feng Kai, saw this scene and gasped in fear, then without hesitation, he turned and left, trying to avoid the calamity.

At the same time, he didn't forget to take out his cellphone and directly dialed a number.

Normally, according to the hierarchical responsibility system, he would report to Liu Qin with any issues, but given the urgency of the situation, he skipped over Liu Qin and reported directly to Qiao Bazhi.

"I'm sorry, the number you have dialed is currently unavailable."

Soon, the sweet voice of the voice prompt sounded, causing Feng Kai to start, he stumbled, and nearly fell to the ground.

Unable to contact Qiao Bazhi, Feng Kai had no choice but to contact Liu Qin instead, but still couldn't get through.

What's going on?

Could it be... Could it be that Master Eight and the others??

Seeing that he couldn't reach either Qiao Bazhi or Liu Qin, Feng Kai was overwhelmed by a bad premonition, his body shivered in fear, and without a second thought, he bolted towards the second floor.

At the same time, the same scenario was unfolding in several of Hanghu's large nightclubs, a casino, and an underground racing venue, with Nanqinghong's people being caught off guard and completely routed.

Managers of each venue frantically tried to contact Qiao Bazhi, but none could get through to his phone.

Meanwhile, the Hanghu Police's phones were ringing off the hook, and police cars were screeching out of the stations and precincts, heading towards the scenes of the incidents, their shrill sirens piercing the skyline of Hanghu, throwing the citizens into a state of panic.

To prevent the situation from escalating further, the leading figure of the Jiangnan Police immediately instructed his secretary to call all the police bigwigs, convening an emergency meeting.

On a main thoroughfare in Hanghu, an Audi A6L with police license plates raced by.

Inside the car, a middle-aged man with a slight bald spot and a large belly repeatedly dialed Qiao Bazhi's number, unable to get through each time.

Zhou Hong, as one of the bigwigs in the police force and one of the protective umbrellas for the Nanqinghong in Jiangnan, was also a member of the Hei Jin Empire. He was aware of Qiao Bazhi's kidnapping of Situ Ruoshui and was even responsible for relaying information from the police to Qiao Bazhi at any moment.

Because the police had not yet clarified the truth behind the Lingyin Temple case, for safety's sake, he had not contacted Qiao Bazhi until he received a call from the top man in the Jiangnan Police, informing him of the Dong hai Gang's attack on Nanqinghong and the smashing of several of Nanqinghong's venues, before he chose to call Qiao Bazhi.

"Could it be... Could it be that something has happened to Qiao Bazhi?"

Now, as Qiao Bazhi's phone remained unanswered, a bad premonition surged in his heart.

After careful thought, Zhou Hong felt that this possibility was highly likely, otherwise there was no reason for Qiao Bazhi not to answer his calls.

Thinking this, Zhou Hong's expression showed hesitation, uncertain whether to call Lin Tianyi, the Ruler of the Nanqinghong.

Although he was a member of the Hei Jin Empire, his status and position were not at the very top, and he did not have the privilege of contacting Lin Tianyi directly.

But... today's situation was truly exceptional!

On one hand, he was unable to contact Qiao Bazhi, worried that Lin Tianyi's plan to force Situ Chen through the kidnapping of Situ Ruoshui would be ruined. More importantly, he had learned through special channels that Jiangnan's newly appointed second-in-command was very dissatisfied with the situation surrounding the Lingyin Temple and had ordered the police to solve the case in the shortest possible time!

Now, with the Lingyin Temple case still unsolved and the Dong Hai Gang in conflict with the Nanqinghong...

In such a situation, he couldn't imagine what the bigwig would do!

But... he had a thousand reasons to believe that if Nanqinghong launched a counterattack against Dong Hai Gang at this juncture, the newly appointed bigwig would definitely get angry!

And the anger of that bigwig, not to mention Qiao Bazhi, even Lin Tianyi, as the Ruler of Nanqinghong and the Overlord of the Southern Huaxia Underground World, couldn't afford it!

Because...

That bigwig's surname was Ye, hailing from Emperor City!

Chapter 95: Commanding Presence

At the time when Liu Tianjun carried out Situ Chen's instructions and returned huge gifts to Nanqinhong, causing chaos in the underworld of Hanghu City, Ye Fan was completely unaware of it.

Today was the day he had consumed the most inner strength since he came down the mountain. In the evening, after returning to Su Family's No. 2 Villa, he went straight to his room to restore his inner strength through meditation.

On the large bed in the bedroom, Ye Fan, having had a shower and wearing pajamas, sat cross-legged with eyes like a tempest, his body surrounded by streams of air.

With each breath Ye Fan took, the air would surge into his body furiously, circulating along the "small cycle" route, cleansing his body of impurities while silently enhancing the inner strength in his blood.

Once the inner strength was generated, it acted as if summoned, transforming into nine streams and coursing into the nine major acupoints of the "small cycle" route.

Under Ye Fan's continuous meditation, the inner strength consumed by the nine major acupoints in his body gradually recovered to a full state.

Realizing this, Ye Fan stopped meditating.

Because... he knew that no matter how much more he meditated, there would not even be the slightest increase in his inner strength!

Unless he could step into the Early Innate Realm, allowing the inner strength to flow through the "Grand Circulation" route, thereby opening the acupoints of the "Grand Circulation" and storing inner strength in the new acupoints!

"Shall I try to break through to the Innate Realm?"

Seeing that the inner strength in his body was saturated, Ye Fan suddenly had this thought.

During his time at Spirit Mountain, since Chu Xuanji required him to reach the Innate Realm before descending the mountain, he would attempt to penetrate the Innate Realm every few days.

After this descent from the mountain, he had not tried to do so, and now this sudden idea somewhat excited him.

Ye Fan had always been a decisive person.

Having made up his mind, Ye Fan once again focused his consciousness, his eyes on his nose, and his nose on his heart, achieving a state of tranquility, then with a single thought, the inner strength in the nine major acupoints, like soldiers summoned by a general, surged out.

The inner strength emerged and, under the control of Ye Fan's consciousness, gathered together like nine streams merging into a river, surging through Ye Fan's meridians toward the first acupoint of the "Grand Circulation" route!

That acupoint was the entrance of the "Grand Circulation" route. As long as Ye Fan could control the inner strength to surge into it, he would have successfully taken the first step into the Innate Realm!

"Charge!"

Ye Fan steeled his heart, controlling the gathered inner strength and abruptly charging toward the first acupoint of the "Grand Circulation" route!

It felt as if a general leading his troops in battle had issued an attack command and his soldiers had launched a charge!

As before, the moment the inner strength charged at the acupoint, there seemed to be an invisible gate standing outside that acupoint, blocking all inner strength from advancing even a half-step further!

A barrier.

This was a scenario every martial artist would encounter when trying to advance to a higher realm.

Only by breaking through the barrier was there hope to advance in realm!

After the first failed attempt, Ye Fan was not content to give up; he once again controlled the inner strength and launched a second, more forceful charge.

The second attempt was still unable to break through the barrier.

After failing twice consecutively, Ye Fan felt somewhat frustrated, but he did not give up; instead, he gritted his teeth and continued until he finally stopped after the tenth failed attempt.

A hot steam poured out from his pores, making him feel as though he was in an immortal realm, then the mist turned into sweat soaking his entire body.

For the moment, he felt exhausted, and his meridians sent throbbing pains, as if they were being torn apart.

This was a negative consequence of the failed attempt, not only was his inner strength severely depleted, but also... there was a risk of damaging the meridians.

"It seems my senior sister was right, for me, the barrier of the Innate Realm is like a mental block in my heart, only by resolving this mental block and making a breakthrough in spiritual cultivation can I break through the barrier and step into the Innate Realm!" Wiping the sweat from his face, Ye Fan could not help but sigh, got out of bed, walked to the bedside, and looked out over the brightly lit Hanghu City.

"Where are you?"

Gazing out, Ye Fan murmured as he asked.

The moonlight illuminated his resolute face, allowing one to see clearly that in this moment, there was no resentment on his face, only anticipation.

Apparently, he was looking forward to the scene of meeting his biological parents.

...

In Hanghu, in the office building that served as the hub of power in Jiangnan.

Ye Wenhao, Jiangnan's newly appointed second-in-command, sat in his office, skimming through a report.

Jiangnan Police Chief, Hou Jian, sat across from Ye Wenhao, looking at Ye Wenhao's slightly furrowed brows with a feeling as if sitting on pins and needles, his expression both in awe and worry.

His awe stemmed from his knowledge that Han Guodong's fall from grace was entirely due to the man opposite him and the forces behind him—Han Guodong got entangled with the He Family's affair, which triggered an investigation from above, digging up some past incidents.

As the former second-in-command in Jiangnan and backed by the powerful Bai Family, Han Guodong's disgraceful downfall could only be orchestrated by the forces represented by the man across from him, when viewed across all of Huaxia.

Hou Jian firmly believed this!

The awe was also because he knew that the man across from him was not just a member of the Ye Family from Emperor City, but also the strongest contender to be the future Family Head of the Ye Family!

Such an identity, let alone him, even those big shots at the same rank as the man feared meeting him.

It was also for this reason, that since the man was parachuted from a certain commission in Emperor City to Jiangnan, the Jiangnan chief had subtly prepared to step down, basically leaving the man to handle all affairs.

In just three days, to gain absolute authority by parachuting, was extremely rare in the history of Huaxia Officialdom!

But neither the old officials of Jiangnan, nor other big shots paying attention to Jiangnan found this strange.

On the contrary, they felt that if the man could not achieve this, it would disgrace the title of the strongest contender among the Ye Family's third-generation heirs!

As for the worry...

It was quite simple.

Because of the vicious murder case at Lingyin Temple, Ye Wenhao was already very dissatisfied with the police's work and had ordered the police to catch the murderer within forty-eight hours.

Now, with the Lingyin Temple case still unsolved, and a severe gang firefight occurring in the Hanghu underworld, causing an extremely adverse impact.

Under such circumstances, Hou Jian feared that Ye Wenhao, in a fit of rage, might remove his cap.

For Ye Wenhao, that was just a matter of saying one sentence!

"According to the report, the victim in the Lingyin Temple murder case was from the Donghai gang, the kidnapped person was the daughter of the behind-the-scenes boss of the Donghai gang, Situ Chen, and

everything that happened tonight was the Donghai gang's retaliation against Nanqinghong?" After a long while, Ye Wenhao looked up from the report and turned to Hou Jian.

"Yes, Governor Ye!"

Startled by Ye Wenhao's question, Hou Jian immediately stood up, his body stiff as a pole, full of respect as he responded.

"Then, you tell me, where is Situ Chen's daughter now? Where are the bandits who kidnapped Situ Chen's daughter?" asked Ye Wenhao.

For some reason, Ye Wenhao's tone was as calm as water, but it brought immense pressure to Hou Jian, making him feel as if a mountain was pressing against his chest, making it difficult to breathe.

He tried hard to adjust his emotions and said, "Governor Ye, I just received the latest news. Situ Chen arrived in Hanghu with people today and returned to Donghai at noon. Through the surveillance footage, we noticed that when Situ Cheng returned, his daughter was in his car. This means that he has rescued his daughter."

At this point, Hou Jian paused for a moment, seeing that Ye Wenhao gave no reaction, he continued to report, "As for the kidnappers of Situ Chen's daughter, we haven't located them yet. However... we suspect that they have been murdered by Situ Chen's people, we are currently investigating with all our efforts..."

"I want not suspicions, but evidence and the truth," Ye Wenhao interrupted Hou Jian emotionlessly.

Hearing Ye Wenhao's words, Hou Jian felt his heart might leap out of his throat, cold sweat instantly breaking out on his forehead. He didn't dare to wipe it off but immediately shouted back loudly, "Please rest assured, Governor Ye. We will solve the Lingyin Temple case within forty-eight hours as per your instructions!"

"The urgency lies not merely in solving the Lingyin Temple case, but in how to soothe the aftermath of this gang firefight and give the public a satisfactory explanation!"

Ye Wenhao said sternly, "I don't care how you do it, I only care about the results! If you can't give the public a satisfactory explanation, or if I hear about similar incidents again, submit your resignation to the organization voluntarily!"

"Yes!"

Hou Jian's sweat poured down, his tone grave.

Ye Wenhao didn't say anything further, but picked up another document.

Seeing this, Hou Jian cautiously left the office, feeling as though he had just taken a turn at the gates of the underworld, his whole body drenched in sweat.

Commanding Presence.

Only today did Hou Jian truly understand the meaning of these words.

Chapter 96: [The Chess Game Begins]

Taiwan is located in the center of the Pacific shipping routes and serves as a vital economic, trade, and transportation hub linking Huaxia with countries in the Pacific region. It is also a strategic military location.

The Taiwan Strait is a key maritime passageway between the northern and southern regions of Huaxia and acts as a natural barrier along the southern Huaxia coast. However, owing to various reasons, Taiwan only came under Huaxia's control after the outbreak of the destroy virus, forming one of Huaxia's five major special zones along with Nangang, Nan Ao, Southeast Asia, and North Korea.

As the underworld of Hanghu underwent upheaval, at the Nanqinghong Headquarters in Taipei, an elder from the Hongwu Sect paid a visit to Lin Tianyi, the Ruler of the Nanqinghong.

As the Ruler of the Nanqinghong, Lin Tianyi didn't exude the fierce and menacing aura of someone like Qiao Bazhi. On the contrary, he wore silk robes all year round, enjoyed practicing calligraphy, and exuded an air of scholarly elegance, appearing more like a scholar than a gang leader.

Although he was over fifty, there wasn't a single wrinkle on Lin Tianyi's forehead; his complexion was rosy, and even ... his hands had skin as tender as that of a baby.

"It looks like Brother Lin is about to make another breakthrough. Congratulations, congratulations."

Seeing signs of rejuvenation in Lin Tianyi, the elder from the Hongwu Sect knew this was a result of Lin channeling his power to his skin, and he congratulated him immediately.

"Brother Huang flatters me, I've only fortunately touched upon the threshold of the Peak stage of Innate," Lin Tianyi said with a slight smile. Then, changing the subject, "I suppose Brother Huang has come today for matters regarding Hanghu?"

"Yes, my disciple Qu Feng followed Brother Lin's men to inland Hanghu, partly to help Brother Lin deal with the Dong hai Gang, and partly to investigate the disappearance of our sect's disciple, Wu He."

Addressing the serious issue at hand, the elder named Huang Qi sobered up, saying earnestly, "Currently, Qu Feng and our sect have lost contact. The Sect Leader called Brother Lin, and Brother Lin also couldn't get in touch with those in Hanghu, so he specifically sent me here to communicate with Brother Lin."

"Just now, I got in touch with a spy we planted in the Hanghu Police," Lin Tianyi said, his face looking a bit grim.

"According to the information from the other side, Qu Feng and my men successfully kidnapped the daughter of Situ Chen, the leader of the Dong hai Gang, but it's very likely they were suddenly attacked by Situ Chen and his men."

"Brother Lin, do you mean to say that Qu Feng and the others are likely in grave danger?"

Huang Qi's expression changed. Although the Hongwu Sect was powerful, they had only a few Innate Masters, and Qu Feng was one of those most likely to step into the Innate Realm. Losing Qu Feng would be a significant loss for the Hongwu Sect.

"Yes, otherwise my people wouldn't have delayed reporting back about the situation there."

Lin Tianyi nodded slightly, frowning. "Moreover, according to the information just now, Situ Chen, in a fit of rage, sent people to smash several of our Nanqinghong establishments in Hanghu and injured many."

"Brother Lin, according to the intelligence you previously provided, aside from one named Fei Si who is at the Great Perfection of Postnatal realm, Situ Chen of the Dong hai Gang doesn't have other powerful experts. With the strength of Qu Feng and his team, it's highly unlikely that they would meet their demise in Hanghu!" For Huang Qi, he cared less about Nachinghong's establishments and more about Qu Feng's demise.

"Brother Huang, there are only two explanations at this point," Lin Tianyi said gravely.

"First, our intelligence might be inaccurate, and Situ Chen might have secretly had the support of other powerful experts. Second, it's very possible that Qu Feng and my men encountered someone from the Yanhuang Organization!"

"The Yanhuang Organization?"

At the mention of these four words, Huang Qi's expression grew grave; like all Martial Artists, he harbored a deep fear of the Yanhuang Organization — an organization that had the power to eradicate any Martial Arts Sect!

"Brother Huang might not be aware, but three days ago, Ye Wenhao parachuted into Jiangnan and became the second-in-command there ..." Lin Tianyi continued.

"Ye ... Ye Wenhao?"

Before Lin Tianyi could finish, Huang Qi's face suddenly changed!

Originally, as an elder of the Hongwu Sect, Huang Qi had no connections with Ye Wenhao, a scion of the top Huaxia family. However, Ye Wenhao's other identity made his name well-known among all those in the Martial Arts World!

The top of the Qing bang!

Twenty years ago, Ye Wenhao, who hailed from the premier Ye Family, suddenly appeared in the Martial Arts World and, with an overwhelming force, defeated the then-number-one of Qing bang, replacing him in a battle that shook the Huaxia Martial Arts World!

The Qing bang refers to the ranking list of the top young experts under thirty in the Huaxia Martial Arts World.

All young experts honor being ranked on Qing bang!

"Twenty years ago, after the earth-shattering battle by Ye Wenhao, he withdrew from the Martial Arts World to focus on political career advancements, aiming to peak in red political power."

Seeing Huang Qi's stunned look, Lin Tianyi continued: "Recently, Ye Wenhao headed to Jiangnan to fulfill a gold-plated assignment. In this context, to contend a powerful stance against Jianghu People, it's possible he sent people or personally eliminated both Qu Feng and my men."

Huang Qi fell silent.

Because if it was really Ye Wenhao who acted personally, then the matter completely exceeded his control, and he needed to report it to the Hongwu Sect Leader.

"Of course, this is just my personal judgment. What the actual truth is, there is still no accurate information," Lin Tianyi said, seeing Huang Qi's silence.

"My suggestion is that our sides each send people to Hanghu to thoroughly investigate this matter. Once the truth emerges, then we can make further plans. What do you think, Brother Huang?"

"I agree with your decision, but as you said, with Ye Wenhao in Hanghu, if we send people again, might he strike once more?"

Huang Qi's brow furrowed deeply; although he did not know just how powerful Ye Wenhao had become today, given Ye Wenhao's terrifying strength displayed twenty years ago, not only the people from Nanqinhong and Hongwu Sect, but even he and Lin Tianyi were undoubtedly doomed if they encountered Ye Wenhao!

"Brother Huang, Ye Wenhao is indeed mighty, but you have forgotten one thing — currently, he is wholeheartedly pursuing a career in politics, and in that sense, he isn't truly one of Jianghu. And if he aspires to reach the peak of red power, he absolutely cannot afford to commit reckless killings!" Lin Tianyi's eyes sparkled with confidence as he stated, "So long as our people in Hanghu don't act rashly, Ye Wenhao will definitely not make a move. At most, he might just have us monitored! And ... that won't affect our investigation of the truth!"

"Since Brother Lin is so confident, let's proceed as Brother Lin suggests," Huang Qi pondered for a moment and said, "I'll go back and report this matter to the Sect Leader and have him send someone."

"Good," Lin Tianyi nodded, saying, "I plan to send Ao Feng and Quick Blade Wang Dong to go."

Hm?

Startled by Lin Tianyi's words, Huang Qi was taken aback. He hadn't expected that Lin Tianyi would send his son to the perilous Hanghu and also one of his Eight Great Kings, Quick Blade Wang Dong!

After his surprise, Huang Qi vaguely felt that Lin Tianyi was trying to use Ye Wenhao to intimidate his son Lin Ao Feng and thus temper Lin Ao Feng's arrogant and domineering nature.

Realizing this, Huang Qi said, "In that case, I will suggest to the Sect Leader that Yang Qing should go."

"Good!"

Upon hearing this, Lin Tianyi knew that Huang Qi had understood his intentions.

Because... Yang Qing, referred to by Huang Qi, was a leading figure of the younger generation of the Hongwu Sect and could at any moment become an Innate Master, possessing the strength to contend for the top ten places in the Qing List!

Such stature and ability made Yang Qing, like Lin Ao Feng, have a smooth and obstacle-free journey, lacking in setbacks. Therefore, if Yang Qing were to go, it would be a great opportunity for temperance, possibly allowing him to fully step into the Innate Realm.

Yanjing.

In an inconspicuous alley, an old man in a black robe walked briskly, his figure flickering uncertainly, almost like a ghost.

Soon, the old man leaped into a courtyard house with a flash.

"Who?"

In the study of the courtyard, Chu Ji, who was enthralled in reading "Qimen Dunjia," suddenly became aware of the noise outside, abruptly stood up, and barked a command.

Creak!

Along with a light sound, the door of the study slowly opened, and the old man stepped into the study.

"Mas... Master?"

Startled at the sight of the old man, Chu Ji was so shocked that her "Qimen Dunjia" slipped from her hands and landed on the desk.

The old man walked towards the desk without a word.

"You... Why have you come?" Chu Ji, recovering from her astonishment and realizing something asked, "Is it for Xiao Fan?"

"Didn't I ask you to watch over him?" Chu Xuanji approached the desk, staring coldly at Chu Ji.

"I knew it; besides your beloved disciple, I doubt anyone could make you come down the mountain," Chu Ji feigned jealousy, then hurriedly explained upon seeing Chu Xuanji about to get angry, "I just returned from Hanghu a few days ago."

Chu Xuanji remained unmoved, still staring at Chu Ji.

"Master, it's not that I was slacking off, but there really was no need for me to stay in Hanghu anymore," Chu Ji said with a pained expression, explaining, "Ye Wenhao took an office in Hanghu, and with him there, those ghostly creatures of the Innate Realm in Jianghu probably wouldn't dare go to Hanghu. As for those below the Innate level, offending your beloved disciple would just be asking for trouble, wouldn't it?"

Upon hearing this, Chu Xuanji's expression softened somewhat and he asked, "Did you tell Ye Wenhao?"

"You didn't ask me to speak; I wouldn't dare to, even with ten times the courage," justified Chu Ji, continuing, "Your beloved disciple, out of anger for his beauty, created a storm in Hanghu's governmental and business sectors. The Ye family secretly added fuel to the fire, toppling the Bai family's chess piece in Jiangnan, allowing Ye Wenhao to take over, easing his path to rise up."

Chu Xuanji's pupils dilated slightly, apparently he had not anticipated such a coincidence.

"Not only that, your beloved disciple has also incurred the wrath of the Nanqinhong. In a fury, he not only cleansed the Nanqinhong Hanghu Branch but also killed two Peak-stage Postnatal Martial Artists and one Postnatal Perfect Martial Artist," Chu Ji couldn't help but sigh, "Master, his intervention was far beyond our expectations."

"Fate brings its own blessings; hearing the Scriptures is like meeting precious jade," Chu Xuanji sighed softly, making a wordplay.

The chess game begins to unveil.

Chapter 97: [South Young Master Heads North]

As night fell, a Mercedes-Benz slowly entered the Jiuxi Rose Garden Noble District.

Inside the car, Liu Tianjun, the person in charge of Dong Hai Gang at Hanghu, reclined in the back seat with a cigar in his mouth, his expression slightly grave as he stared blankly at the roof of the car.

Perhaps he was too engrossed, he didn't even notice that the cigar had gone out.

In the driver's seat, Little Blade, Liu Tianjun's bodyguard and driver, saw Liu Tianjun's grave expression through the rearview mirror and couldn't help but sigh inwardly.

Following Ye Fan's elimination of Qu Feng, Wu Ren, Zhang Zhu, Qiao Bazhi, Liu Qin, and several elite members of the Nanqinghong Hanghu Branch, severely damaging their foundations, Liu Tianjun, acting on Situ Chen's orders, returned the favor—a relentless and unstoppable counterattack by the Dong Hai Gang on the Nanqinghong Hanghu Branch, crushing them into disarray.

However—

Just when Liu Tianjun thought they could drive Nanqinghong out of Hanghu and even Jiangnan, the Jiangnan Police intervened with unprecedented vigor. The top figure of the Jiangnan Police warned Liu Tianjun through another's lips that Ye Wenhao, the new power head in Jiangnan, had lost his temper and warned that if Liu Tianjun dared to act recklessly, he would spend the rest of his life in prison.

Although Liu Tianjun wanted to capitalize on the momentum and drive Nanqinghong out of Jiangnan, faced with the police's strong presence, he had to abandon this tempting idea and immediately sought advice from Situ Chen, only to receive the reply, "Stop all actions."

Using Situ Chen's words, "The wrath of Ye Wenhao is something the Dong Hai Gang cannot bear!"

Liu Tianjun earnestly followed Situ Chen's command, not only refraining from launching further attacks on Nanqinghong but also not utilizing his connections to rescue the subordinates who had been detained by the police as scapegoats.

As a result, not only did Liu Tianjun fail to achieve his goal of driving Nanqinghong out of Jiangnan, but he also lost many of his men, suffering both a loss of personnel and prestige.

Already quite distressed by this outcome, Liu Tianjun received even more disheartening news—an hour ago, he got a call from Situ Chen that Lin Ao Feng, the Nanqinghong Crown Prince, had secretly entered Hanghu with Wang Dong, one of the Eight Great Kings under Lin Tianyi's command, and Yang Qing, a young genius from Hongwu Sect.

Liu Tianjun knew well that with Lin Ao Feng's arrival, his hopes of expelling Nanqinghong from Jiangnan were turning into despair, and even... if Ye Wenhao lifted the strict order against any bloodshed, it would be Dong Hai Gang that might be kicked out of Jiangnan!

"Heaven does not aid me," he muttered.

As the car drove into the Jiuxi Rose Garden Noble District, Liu Tianjun couldn't help but sigh, then lit his cigar and inhaled deeply.

"Boss, although Lin Ao Feng, Wang Dong, and Yang Qing have arrived in Hanghu, as Mr. Situ said, with Ye Wenhao here, they wouldn't dare make rash moves," Little Blade, seeing Liu Tianjun sighing, couldn't help but offer some words of comfort, "So you don't need to worry."

"Little Blade, it's not concern that I feel, but remorse. Big Brother has always treated me well, he didn't even blame me when Ruoshui was kidnapped in Hanghu," Liu Tianjun said regretfully.

"I thought this would be a good opportunity to drive Nanqinghong out of Jiangnan and vent some anger for Big Brother, but it ended midway," he confessed.

Hearing Liu Tianjun's heartfelt words, Little Blade wisely chose to remain silent.

He believed that since Situ Chen regarded Liu Tianjun as a brother, Liu Tianjun was grateful and determined to do something significant for Situ Chen; however, being forced to abandon action midway, how could he not feel frustrated?

"Boss, do you think Lin Ao Feng and his group sneaked into Hanghu to target Mr. Ye?" Little Blade asked, as the Mercedes-Benz passed by the Su Family's No.2 Villa.

Liu Tianjun nodded and said, "Lin Ao Feng coming here means he wants revenge. But he probably doesn't know it was Mr. Ye's doing, since it's rumored among the Jianghu that Big Brother eliminated Qiao Bazhi and the others. Besides, Big Brother had people clean up the scene very thoroughly that day, leaving no trace whatsoever."

"Should we warn Mr. Ye?" Little Blade suggested.

"No,"

Liu Tianjun decisively denied Little Blade's suggestion, "Last time, I superficially warned Mr. Ye but secretly tried to exploit him and ended up being seen through by Mr. Ye, who was understandably displeased. If we warn him again now, Mr. Ye might appreciate it, but misunderstandings about our intentions could be even more costly—Mr. Ye is Big Brother's benefactor; if we inadvertently offend Mr. Ye, it would only serve to alienate Mr. Ye and Big Brother's relationship!"

"But... what if Lin Ao Feng and the others find out it was Mr. Ye who did it and secretly harm him?" Little Blade expressed his concern.

"If Lin Ao Feng does that, it will become his nightmare!" Liu Tianjun scoffed.

Little Blade puzzled, "Why?"

"Over the past few years, wherever Ye Wenhao has served, that place has become the safest in Huaxia, with almost no Jianghu people daring to play with fire! If Lin Ao Feng dares to make a move, Ye Wenhao will definitely not let him off!" Liu Tianjun revealed.

"Besides, according to Big Brother, Mr. Ye is likely a master of the Innate Realm; who the victor will be is still up in the air!" he added.

"Uh..."

Little Blade's mouth fell open in surprise, stunned not only by Ye Wenhao's formidable deterrence but also by Ye Fan's strength.

In his amazement, remembering how he once said that there was less than a 30% chance of killing Ye Fan, Little Blade felt a bit embarrassed.

Not to mention that Ye Fan was a master of the Innate Realm, even if he were just at Postnatal Great Perfection, there was no way he could kill Ye Fan!

There wasn't even a sliver of hope!

Qiandao Lake.

On a brightly lit small cruise ship.

Four men sat around an eight-immortal table, with a feast of gourmet dishes mainly featuring king crabs and pufferfish, while four nearly beautiful women in cheongsams served them diligently, offering an extremely attentive service.

This was a welcome banquet set up by Zhou Hong, a covert operative placed by Nanqinghong in the Jiangnan Police, for Lin Ao Feng, Yang Qing, and Wang Dong.

"Brother Lin, we didn't come to Jiangnan just to eat hairy crabs and play with the women here."

Midway through the banquet, Yang Qing, a young leader of the Hongwu Sect, frowned upon seeing Lin Ao Feng stretch his greasy fingers into the cherry lips of a woman next to him, having her clean them with her tongue.

On hearing this, Lin Ao Feng withdrew his fingers, pinched the woman's chin between his thumb and forefinger.

The sudden move startled the woman, but with her rich experience in serving, she just widened her eyes without uttering a sound.

"Mr. Yang, you think this kind of trash is fit for me? You really underestimate my taste, don't you?"

Lin Ao Feng laughed, a small curve that revealed six chillingly white teeth, shimmering under the light with a sinister gleam.

Despite the fact that the four qipao-clad women were renowned beauties from Qiandao Lake, used to the company of many a noble, Lin Ao Feng's deeply insulting words left them not daring even to breathe loudly.

Because... they were well aware that the person who could willingly make policeman Zhou Hong kowtow like a dog, could eliminate them as effortlessly as crushing an ant.

As the four women trembled in fear, Yang Qing furrowed his brow, biting back his words.

"Mr. Yang finds you all an eyesore, why don't you leave at once?"

Seeing this, Lin Ao Feng released the woman's chin, his expression suddenly turned frosty, his tone leaving no room for question.

Without any hesitation, the four qipao-clad women promptly bowed and departed, reminiscent of ancient maidservants withdrawing from their master's presence.

Immediately, Zhou Hong stood up to apologize: "Young Master Lin, my apologies, I haven't served you well. I will find you a few top-grade ones later."

"Let's talk about the women later."

Lin Ao Feng interrupted Zhou Hong, then smiled at Yang Qing, "Mr. Yang, our purpose here is not to indulge in pleasures, but to uncover the truth behind Qu Feng and others' deaths."

"Not just to uncover the truth but also to send those who killed Qu Feng and the others to meet King Yan!"

Yang Qing's expression relaxed, his voice deepened as killing intent abruptly flared, making his flowing hair move as if windblown, giving him an eerie, frightening look.

"Once the truth is unearthed, whether to kill or not will be out of our hands."

Lin Ao Feng's tone turned slightly odd, "If the opponent is from the Yanhuang Organization, we can only accept defeat and swallow the broken teeth. If it is Situ Chen's secret weapon, we first need to investigate their strength and we cannot act in Hanghu; otherwise, it will provoke Ye Wenhao—an authority we cannot afford to offend."

Yang Qing was silent, not speaking.

He knew Lin Ao Feng was speaking the truth.

"And, Brother Yang, you should understand that uncovering the truth is not something we can achieve in a day or two; we need time."

Seeing Yang Qing implicitly agreeing, Lin Ao Feng couldn't help but laugh again, "If Mr. Yang is not interested in wine, women, money, and power, those worldly things, you might as well spend time cultivating and contemplating Martial Arts in the coming days."

"What do you mean?" Yang Qing's expression changed, seeming to think Lin Ao Feng was insulting him.

Lin Ao Feng tapped his head, "Mr. Yang, think about it. The insider information relies on the secular informants of the Nanqinghong. Why do you think my father and Sect Leader Gu sent us?"

"Why?" Yang Qing asked.

"To temper us." Lin Ao Feng spoke with confidence: "To use the great deity Ye Wenhao to temper our patience, to wear away our sharpness."

Yang Qing fell silent again, but his eyes sparkled, contemplating the plausibility of Lin Ao Feng's words.

Watching this, Zhou Hong gained a deeper understanding of Lin Ao Feng and Yang Qing.

In his view, although Lin Ao Feng carried an air of arrogance, owing to his upbringing and environment, he had inherited a bit of the cunning from the savvy Lin Tianyi, possessing no small measure of emotional intelligence. On the other hand, although Yang Qing was the top young expert of the Hongwu Sect, having spent years in training, he lacked mundane worldly experience, typical of the strong in prowess but weak in tactics type.

As for Wang Dong, who was slowly peeling the shell off a hairy crab with a small knife, in Zhou Hong's eyes, he was nothing short of a death god, his aura of murder far too intense.

"Alright, let's continue talking about women."

Seeing Yang Qing deep in thought, a sneer flickered deep in Lin Ao Feng's eyes, then he turned to Zhou Hong, smiling wickedly, "Who are the top-grade women in Jiangnan?"

"Young Master Lin, if we are talking top-grade, the one known as the Iron Lady, Su Yuxin, the number one Cold faced President in Jiangnan, tops the list," Zhou Hong responded, snapping back to reality.

"Besides her, there's also a woman named Xie Yin who's quite top-grade too."

"Sweaty as rain, leaking yin energy, huh? Ha ha... what a pair of top-grade!"

Lin Ao Feng, upon hearing this, seemed to envision a scenario of embracing the women from both sides and laughed unrestrainedly.

Chapter 98: [First Class Vixen]

Shangri-La Hotel, located by West Lake, consisted of two main buildings and three separate villas, famous for its beautiful charming environment and attentive service.

Guests could stroll through the 40-acre garden paths that surrounded West Lake, or enjoy fun in the hotel's indoor swimming pool...

No matter which option they chose, staying at the Hanghu Shangri-La Hotel guaranteed a perfect enjoyment of the ancient and tranquil beauty of West Lake.

Moreover, Babino Restaurant at Shangri-La Hotel was the top western restaurant in Hanghu and even in the whole Jiangnan—guests could enjoy Italian feasts while intimately admiring the scenery of West Lake in an elegant environment surrounded by mountains.

The evening three days after making a wish at Lingyin Temple, Ye Fan received a phone call from Su Yuxin just before getting off work, informing him that Su Liuli would be going to school in Dong Hai the following morning, and Su Yuxin had arranged a farewell dinner for her that night, inviting Ye Fan to join.

Although Su Liuli had always tried every means to thwart Ye Fan, he bore no ill will towards her. Thus, faced with Su Yuxin's invitation, he did not refuse.

After work, as usual, he drove his unremarkable Audi A6L, following Su Yuxin's Bentley, heading together to Babino Restaurant at Shangri-La Hotel.

Due to traffic, it took Ye Fan and Su Yuxin nearly an hour to arrive at the entrance of Shangri-La Hotel.

"Brother Ye, sister, you have arrived!" At the hotel entrance, Su Jindi had been waiting for a long time and hurriedly greeted them as Ye Fan and Su Yuxin approached.

Su Yuxin walked closer and frowned, asking, "Why did you come so early?"

"Umm... I skipped the last study class," Su Jindi explained. "Sending off Sister Liuli is important, you know."

Hearing Su Jindi's explanation, Su Yuxin sighed, resignedly asking, "Did your sister Liuli arrive?"

"She did, she was ordering when I came down," Su Jindi saw that Su Yuxin didn't pursue it further and secretly breathed a sigh of relief. "Let's go upstairs."

"Let's go, Divine Doctor."

Su Yuxin glanced at Ye Fan and took the lead walking into the hotel, with Ye Fan and Su Jindi following behind.

Like any of Hanghu's finest western restaurants, Babino Restaurant was luxuriously decorated and had an elegant atmosphere.

It featured a typical Italian style, predominantly orange in color, with numerous oil paintings hanging on the walls, and uniquely shaped sconces mounted on the square columns.

Even though it was still early, and it wasn't dark outside yet, the wall lamps were all lit, filling the restaurant with soft light. Looking around, the waiters were in uniform, and the patrons, dressed carefully, were conversing quietly.

As Su Jindi had mentioned, Su Liuli had not only already arrived but was also holding a menu, adeptly communicating with the waiter in English—although Huaxia language had subtly overtaken English in status, in authentic Western restaurants like this in Huaxia, English was still predominantly used by waiters.

"Lady Su, I didn't expect to meet you here."

A short while later, as Ye Fan and Su Jindi followed Su Yuxin toward a table by the window, a woman stood up from her seat with a smile and greeted Su Yuxin.

The woman had flowing long hair, dyed wine-red and styled into large curls that casually draped over her shoulders like waves.

She also had a classic oval face, a high nose bridge, slightly thin lips painted with red lipstick, incredibly enticing.

Compared to her red lips, the most striking feature of the woman's face was her eyes. She had a rare pair of vixen eyes, which shone and seemed to electrify every moment, captivating the soul.

It could be said that, based purely on appearance, the woman was a definite beauty, even qualifying as a genuine beauty without makeup.

If her stunning face was combined with her curvaceous figure, then she belonged to that type of top-grade beauty that could instantly arouse a man's desire.

Especially, the enchanting aura around her was simply poison for men!

"Hello, Miss Xie."

After entering the restaurant, Su Yuxin was mainly looking for Su Liuli and hadn't noticed the woman. Seeing the woman addressing her, she responded with a smile.

"Are you having a family dinner, Lady Su?"

The woman named Xie Yin kept her smile, while subtly glancing at Ye Fan as she spoke. The glint in her eyes, along with her seductive expression and inviting red lips, seemed to invisibly allure Ye Fan.

Hmm?

Ye Fan noticed Xie Yin's seductive attempts, but his expression remained unchanged. He felt that there was something odd about the woman, though he couldn't quite pinpoint what it was.

"No, it's not."

Watching Xie Yin's gaze fix on Ye Fan, and secretly throwing electric glances, Su Yuxin felt somewhat uncomfortable for no apparent reason. "My cousin is going to school in Huaxia, and we're just having a meal together."

"I see..." Xie Yin said, still staring at Ye Fan, "Miss Su, this must be Dr. Ye who cured your illness?"

"Yes," Su Yuxin nodded, promptly losing interest in further conversation. She said courteously, "I apologize, Miss Xie, but my sister is waiting for us; we must be going. Perhaps we'll chat another time."

"Of course."

Xie Yin gave a slight smile, then she took the initiative to talk to Ye Fan again, "Dr. Ye, I've heard a lot about your accomplishments recently, I have long admired you. I'm honored to meet you today. Let's get to know each other; my name is Xie Yin."

"It's all thanks to Miss Su's acquaintance," Ye Fan replied calmly, "Since Miss Xie is a friend of Miss Su, there will be plenty of opportunities to meet in the future, so let's dispense with the formalities."

As soon as he finished speaking, Ye Fan didn't wait for Xie Yin to respond and walked towards Su Liuli with Su Yuxin.

Realizing this, Su Yuxin felt the inexplicable irritation in her heart disappear completely, leaving her with a sweet feeling, as if she had eaten honey.

Xie Yin, seemingly not expecting Ye Fan to dismiss her so openly, stood rooted to the spot with her pale delicate hand frozen in mid-air.

"Oh?"

At the moment Liu Li finished ordering, she saw this scene and her beautiful eyes widened in shock.

Meanwhile, seeing that many men in the restaurant were gazing at her with intense interest, Xie Yin reluctantly retracted her hand with an ugly expression, her foxy eyes twinkling mysteriously, plotting something unknown.

"Wow, someone's charm must be great, to have the top Hanghu vixen hit on him openly."

Shortly after, when Ye Fan and the siblings Su Yuxin and Su Jindi reached a table by the window, Liu Li's gaze roamed over Ye Fan, as if searching for what had attracted Xie Yin.

"Of course, a cool guy like Brother Ye would definitely have women chasing him if I were a gal!" Su Jindi cheerfully gave a compliment.

Liu Li glared at Su Jindi and said, "Su Jindi, can't you go a day without flattering Ye Fan?"

"Cut it out, I'm just telling the truth," Su Jindi defended himself proudly, "Didn't you see how that vixen reached out to make friends, and Brother Ye didn't even acknowledge her?"

"In my view, he was already smitten. He just feared exposing his wolfish nature, so he chose to ignore her," Liu Li scoffed, "Besides, he was also playing hard to get, letting that vixen walk into the trap herself."

"Liu Li, how have I wronged you? Can't you go a day without blackening my name?" Seeing Liu Li starting their encounter with criticisms, Ye Fan was puzzled; he wondered if he owed her money in his past life.

Feeling somewhat guilty, Liu Li yet retorted stubbornly, "Who's blackening your name? I'm reminding you, so you don't get devoured by that vixen leaving nothing but bones."

"Brother Ye, she's not wrong this time."

Su Jindi, rarely agreeing with Liu Li, chimed in, "Xie Yin is a reputed Hanghu vixen, not just skilled at seduction but also remarkably gifted in bed. It's said her husband was drained dry by her and died young. After her husband died, she seduced her father-in-law, causing his direct demise, thereby efficiently taking over the entire fortune."

"Even more bizarre, after the deaths of her husband and father-in-law, she rolled in the sheets with several renowned playboys in Hanghu, and those men started declining in health," Su Jindi went on, "Nowadays, the whole upper society of Hanghu has been spreading rumors that she's the reincarnation of a vixen, almost no one dares to have an affair with her anymore."

"How do you know all this?" Ye Fan asked curiously, noting Su Jindi's deep awareness about Xie Yin.

"That vixen's younger brother is at the same school as me," Su Jindi explained, then something occurred to him, and he added angrily, "Damn it, because I've been focusing on my studies lately and not going out racing, that fool had the audacity to challenge me to a race."

"You're not going," Su Yuxin frowned.

Su Jindi's face changed, and he inwardly regretted speaking too hastily, accidentally letting the words slip out.

Meanwhile, Ye Fan glanced sideways at Xie Yin's enticing figure, silently guessing something.

Chapter 99: The Young Master and the Vixen

Steak with foie gras, pan-seared eel, seafood pizza, authentic Italian pasta...

Su Liuli seemed to frequent Babino Restaurant often, having memorized some of the delicious dishes by heart, and even specifically ordered a bottle of Lafite from the restaurant's own wine cellar, making the dinner exceptionally rich.

Because in the past two years, Ye Fan had been sent out on missions by Chu Xuanji several times and had visited other major leagues, he was not unfamiliar with Western cuisine. Although his dining posture could not be described as elegant, it was certainly up to standard.

"Hey, Ye Fan, didn't you say you grew up in the mountains and this is your first time coming to the city from the mountains, how come you're so adept with the knife and fork?" Seeing Ye Fan's standard dining movements, Su Liuli blinked her eyes, full of curiosity.

Ye Fan curled his lips, "Haven't eaten pork, but have you never seen a pig run?"

"You..."

Choked by Ye Fan's remark, Su Liuli almost threw her foie gras in anger. She glared at Ye Fan and said irritably, "This is a high-class Western restaurant, can you be civilized?"

"Although Europeans and Americans eat less pork, it doesn't mean they don't eat pork at all. How is mentioning pork uncivilized?" Ye Fan felt it necessary to teach Su Liuli a lesson; otherwise, this girl would just keep dissing him all day.

"_"

Su Liuli was suddenly at a loss for words, just like Ye Fan said, there's not much about pork in Western cuisine, but that didn't mean it was absent.

"Brother Ye, mighty and domineering." Su Jindi, who had never been a match for Su Liuli in verbal sparring, saw Ye Fan leave Su Liuli speechless, and immediately waved his knife and fork to cheer.

"Alright, let's eat."

Su Yuxin couldn't help but smile, but she understood in her heart that Ye Fan, although very proud deep down, showed a friendly side to those he recognized.

The first defeat in a verbal duel left Su Liuli quite upset, but she couldn't find a point to rebut and could only transform her anger into eating vigorously, devouring the food on the table like a starving ghost reincarnated, almost monopolizing half of it by herself.

Seeing this, Ye Fan was even more convinced that the monk from Southern Tibet who planned to take Su Liuli as a disciple had misjudged—how could Su Liuli possess any semblance of a Buddhist sect disciple?

As one of the best Western restaurants in Hanghu, Babino Restaurant was exceptionally busy. As dusk fell, the seats were almost fully occupied, among those dining with Xie Yin was a Caucasian man, who was completely enchanted by the seductive Xie Yin, his gaze filled with desire, almost as if he wanted to devour her.

In comparison, Xie Yin didn't have a favorable impression of the seemingly strong but actually sleazy Caucasian man; her gaze occasionally drifted towards Ye Fan.

At eight o'clock, Xie Yin suddenly saw Ye Fan getting up to go to the restroom. Impulsively, she followed him without even excusing herself to the Caucasian man.

Ye Fan noticed Xie Yin's actions but didn't mind.

Soon after, Ye Fan finished using the restroom and was washing his hands when he smelled a fragrance coming from beside him. Xie Yin's enticing figure appeared in the mirror, sauntering over, swaying her hips.

"Mr. Ye, how do you find the food at this restaurant?"

As Xie Yin leaned over to wash her hands, the low-cut evening gown did little to cover her ample breasts, not only revealing a deep cleavage but also the black lace bra that covered her peaks.

As she spoke, her eyes shimmered like colored glaze, her lips trembling slightly, her expression as seductive as could be, and for some reason, her voice seemed to carry a kind of magic, causing a strange sensation inside Ye Fan.

Realizing this, Ye Fan was almost certain of his suspicion, "Although I don't know why you want to approach me, the Soul-hooking Technique of Lan Hua Sect doesn't work on me, and you've only learned a little of it."

"Uh—"

Startled by Ye Fan's words, the seductive smile on Xie Yin's face suddenly froze, her gaze at Ye Fan filled with shock.

Seeing her reaction, Ye Fan no longer paid attention and turned to leave.

"Mr. Ye, please wait a moment," Xie Yin snapped back to her senses and called out to retain him.

Ye Fan paused his footsteps and asked, "Is there something else?"

"It seems that Mr. Ye, just as I assessed, is not an ordinary person."

Xie Yin deliberated carefully before saying, "As far as I know, Su Yuxin was previously invaded by yin energy within her body, and her life was hanging by a thread. Now, her complexion is rosy without a trace of symptoms, all thanks to Mr. Ye's timely rescue."

"Since Mr. Ye has recognized me as a person from the Lan Hua Sect, there's no need for me to hide anything."

As if afraid that Ye Fan would leave, Xie Yin didn't wait for Ye Fan to speak and continued, "Because in the past few years, I have frequently used the Lan Hua Sect's 'Soul-hooking Technique' and performed 'Yang and Yin,' leading to an imbalance of yin and yang in my body, gradually turning my body yin, and yin energy has already started harming my health. I would like to ask Mr. Ye to treat my condition, and regarding the compensation, Mr. Ye can state his terms."

"Sorry, my medical skills are not that cheap." Ye Fan glanced coldly at Xie Yin and turned to leave.

Xie Yin opened her red lips, trying to call Ye Fan back once more, but remembering Ye Fan's icy demeanor, she held back the words that reached her mouth — reason told her, no matter how much she pleaded, Ye Fan wouldn't treat her.

"Talking about medical skills, yet he really thinks he's a Divine Doctor?" As soon as Ye Fan disappeared from view, Xie Yin's expression turned cold, and her eyes filled with anger and scorn.

For one, she hadn't expected that her proud physique and the never-failing 'Soul-hooking Technique' would be outright ignored by Ye Fan, and on another note, she could vaguely feel that Ye Fan had a yang physique and subjectively believed that Ye Fan suppressed Su Yuxin's internal yin energy by sleeping with her.

The reason she had tried to seduce Ye Fan twice was indeed to lure him into bed and employ the Forbidden Technique 'Yang and Yin' within the 'Soul-hooking Technique' to plunder the yang energy inside Ye Fan, thereby suppressing her internal yin energy, achieving a balance of yin and yang.

Perhaps because she had been rebuffed by Ye Fan, Xie Yin completely lost interest in having dinner and rolling around in bed with the Caucasian man, and quietly left the restaurant, driving back to her villa.

As Su Jindi had said, Xie Yin, using 'Yang and Yin,' subsequently sent her husband and father-in-law to Yama Palace, smoothly taking over all the possessions of her husband's family, including the affluent Purple Orchid Garden in the west of the city.

Compared to Jiuxi Rose Garden and Purple Gold Garden, Purple Orchid Garden was developed later as an affluent area, but its occupancy rate was not low, and it had a higher population density, making it seem busier.

"This lady is indeed captivating."

At the entrance to Purple Orchid Garden, a new security guard, seeing Xie Yin drive into the community in a Maserati, couldn't help but click his tongue, his eyes blatantly lusting.

"No matter how captivating, you can't sleep with her, and even if you did, it would shorten your life — that lady is called Xie Yin, known as Hanghu's top vixen, unbeaten in Jiangnan in the bedroom," another older security guard chided as he slapped his new colleague.

The new security guard grinned lasciviously, "To sleep with this lady for one night, I'd be willing to live ten years less."

"In two years' time, her husband and father-in-law had been sucked dry and went to discuss life with King of Hell, are you sure you want to sleep with her?" the older security guard asked with a laugh.

The new security guard shivered, and the fire in him vanished without a trace.

Unaware of all this, Xie Yin, with considerable resentment in her heart, floored the accelerator, and her sports car roared like a steel monster towards her villa.

Minutes later, Xie Yin parked her car in the courtyard, entered the main building, switched on the light, and saw a man wearing a black trench coat, with a glass of red wine in his hand, sitting casually on the sofa, smiling wickedly at her.

Whoosh!

The eerie scene made Xie Yin step back in fright and instinctively ask, "Who... who are you? How did you get in??"

"I came in because I wanted to."

Lin Ao Feng downed the wine in his glass, gazing nakedly at Xie Yin, "I heard you were Hanghu's top vixen, with several men dying under your spell. Now, men in Hanghu and even high society only dare admire you from afar, and they dare not sleep with you, right?"

"Do you want to try?"

Somehow, upon hearing Lin Ao Feng say this, Xie Yin was no longer frightened; instead, she defiantly raised her head like a proud peacock.

"Swoosh—"

Without answering, accompanied by a whistling sound, Lin Ao Feng appeared in front of Xie Yin like a ghost, lifted her chin with his hand, and deeply kissed her red lips while swiftly lifting the hem of her gown and reaching between her legs.

Their lips met, and Xie Yin, recovered from her shock, not only responded passionately but also reached out and grasped the substantial form below Lin Ao Feng's body.

It was a classic case of adding fuel to the fire.

Chapter 100: [Reminder]

The night grew deeper, and the number of guests in the Babino Restaurant had noticeably diminished; most of the remaining guests had finished their meals and were chatting softly.

"Yu Xin, why don't you talk to Grandpa about swapping roles with Second Uncle and take charge of the company's Dong hai branch?"

At the window seat, Su Liuli looked at Su Yuxin with hope in her eyes and suggested, "If you go there, I won't stay in the dorm anymore. We can rent a villa, no, better yet, buy one and continue living together."

As soon as Su Liuli finished speaking, she gazed eagerly at Su Yuxin, her eyes brimming with pleading.

Since the day she was born, her father had left this world, and her mother, being occupied with politics, had no time for her. Therefore, for the past twenty years, she had been living at Su Yuxin's home, where Mrs. Su took care of all her daily needs. She was closer to Su Yuxin than to her real sister, but now she had to go to Dong hai alone for school and naturally found it hard to part.

"Our family's connections in Dong hai are no match for Jiangnan, and the competition there is fierce. I think it is better for Second Uncle to continue developing the market there."

Even though her family had always had a strained relationship with Su Ming's family, Su Yuxin did not belittle Su Ming's capabilities. Instead, she acknowledged Su Ming's current superiority and added, "Besides, if I suggest such a thing to Grandpa out of the blue, Second Uncle would definitely take it to heart, and even Grandpa might have other thoughts."

"Yu Xin, why are you worrying about so many things?" Su Liuli was unhappy. "If you don't go, it'll be so boring for me over there by myself."

"How are you by yourself?" Su Yuxin replied with a wry smile. "Auntie is over there."

"What good is she there?"

Mentioning her mother, Su Liuli's expression turned sullen as she complained, "Ever since she had me, she's been hands-off, making me feel like I was picked up by her. Even if I have to live with her, I wouldn't be used to it."

"Su Liuli, could you be any more spoiled?"

Su Jindi couldn't stand it anymore and said disdainfully, "Most people would be thrilled to go to university and live in dorms to escape the drudgery, but not you. You're bent on going home. Dorm life is great - you're free to do whatever you want and you have classmates for company."

"Little brat has no say." Su Liuli gave Su Jindi a dismissive look. "Aren't you also living in a dorm now, always thinking about running home?"

"That's because I'm going home to see Brother Ye. Before Brother Ye came, when did you ever see me eager to go home?" Su Jindi retorted with a pout.

"__"

Su Liuli was lost for words, as Su Jindi was right; before Ye Fan arrived at the Su Family home, he would rarely think about going home during the school term.

"Liuli, I actually think that Jindi's suggestion is a good one,"

Seeing the siblings starting to quarrel again, Su Yuxin sighed and interjected, "Take Situ Ruoshui we ran into at Lingyin Temple, for instance. I think the two of you would get along well. Living together wouldn't be so bad."

"Yeah, yeah, Sister Liuli, if you live with Situ Ruoshui, you can provide me with updates on her in real-time, and I could seize the opportunity due to proximity," Su Jindi glistened with excitement as he brought up Situ Ruoshui. He stopped arguing with Su Liuli and instead, flashed a flattering smile.

Su Liuli tilted her head arrogantly and said dismissively, "Even if Sister tries to help you, you stand no chance."

"Why not?"

"Ask him."

In the midst of speaking, Su Liuli deliberately glanced at Ye Fan.

"Brother Ye, you haven't already won over the goddess Situ Ruoshui, have you?" Su Jindi looked at Ye Fan with a strained face.

Ye Fan was speechless.

Situ Ruoshui had indeed contacted him after returning to Dong hai, but only in the game; aside from sparring and chatting in the game, there was nothing between them. Yet, according to Su Liuli, it seemed as though he had taken advantage of Situ Ruoshui.

"It's not about winning her over, but someone here played the hero to save the beauty and used his usual strategy of feigning disinterest to induce her fall," Su Liuli said with a humph. "After Situ Ruoshui went back to Dong hai, she called me three times, and every time it was about him."

Hmm?

Surprised by what Su Liuli said, Su Yuxin felt ripples in her heart and couldn't help but look towards Ye Fan.

Ye Fan was slightly taken aback himself—he knew nothing about this.

"Since Brother Ye got there first, I'll just have to change targets," Su Jindi remarked resignedly, sighing. On the one hand, he couldn't compete with Ye Fan for a woman, and on the other hand, he felt he was no match for Ye Fan.

"Don't listen to her nonsense, I have nothing going on with Situ Ruoshui," Ye Fan had to clarify, seeing the situation.

"Bzzz..."

Right after Ye Fan finished speaking, his phone in his pocket started vibrating.

"I bet it's a call from Situ Ruoshui," Su Liuli announced with the excitement of a new discovery, propping herself up to stare intently at Ye Fan's phone, as though wanting to confirm her guess.

Hearing Su Liuli say this, even Su Jindi and Su Yuxin became a bit curious.

"Sorry, it's her dad." Seeing the curiosity on their faces, Ye Fan decided to clear up the mystery for the three of them. He then got up and walked into the corridor with his cell phone.

"Hello, Mr. Situ."

Once in the corridor, Ye Fan pressed the answer button and greeted proactively, curious as to why Situ Chen would suddenly call him.

"Sorry to disturb you, Xiao Fan," Situ Chen spoke up, "Is it convenient for you to talk right now?"

"It's convenient," Ye Fan responded truthfully while his curiosity grew stronger.

"Well, I've been thinking about it, and I felt it's better to inform you," Situ Chen declared earnestly.

This time, Ye Fan didn't respond, preferring to let Situ Chen finish his thoughts.

"Based on the accurate intelligence I've received, Nanqinghong and the Hongwu Sect have separately sent people to Hanghu,"

Situ Chen continued, "They have sent a total of three people, including Lin Ao Feng, the son of Lin Tianyi, the head of Nanqinghong; Wang Dong, one of Nanqinghong's Eight Great Kings; and Yang Qing, the foremost young expert of the Hongwu Sect."

"The purpose of these three coming to Hanghu is not only to stabilize Nanqinghong's situation there but primarily to investigate the killings of Qu Feng, Qiao Bazhi, and others. Although I had my men clean up the scene that day, I can't guarantee that we didn't leave any clues."

At this point, Situ Chen candidly said, "Xiao Fan, I'm telling you this not because I want to use you to eliminate them, but rather to remind you. If they find out it was you who killed Qu Feng, Qiao Bazhi, and the others, they will definitely find a way to take you down!"

"What's their strength?" Ye Fan asked.

"All three of them have stepped into the realm of Postnatal Perfection. Among them, Lin Ao Feng has used an evil technique to harness yin to supplement yang, which has boosted his strength, making him the weakest. Wang Dong is a master with the short knife, not only is his skill with the blade almost magical, but he also has numerous kills to his name and extensive combat experience."

Situ Chen's tone became slightly serious as he reached the end, "As for... Yang Qing, not only is he the top young expert of the Hongwu Sect, but it is also said that he has touched the threshold of the Innate Realm. Furthermore, he entered the 'Half-step Innate' realm a year ago, and he is the type of martial artist who could step into the Innate Realm at any moment. Once he does, he will have the potential to contend for a spot in the top ten of the Qing bang!"

"Since there are no Innate Masters, this should be much easier to deal with," Ye Fan said, his eyes slightly narrowing with a trace of killing intent, as he disliked the feeling of being targeted by enemies.

Sensing the killing intent from Ye Fan, Situ Chen hurriedly added, "Xiao Fan, you must not act impulsively!"

"Do they have some other trick up their sleeve? Or is there a hidden master behind them?" Ye Fan frowned.

"No!"

Situ Chen denied, saying, "Nanqinghong and the Hongwu Sect have only sent these three! The reason I advise you not to act recklessly ties into the second matter I wanted to discuss with you."

"What is it?"

"Ye Wenhao is the newly appointed Governor of Jiangnan Province."

"Who is Ye Wenhao?" Ye Fan asked, puzzled. This was the first time he had heard the name, and he was unaware of the rumors linking Chu Ji with Ye Wenhao.

"You don't know Ye Wenhao?"

Situ Chen looked astonished, "He is a third-generation member of Huaxia's foremost wealthy Ye Family, formerly one of the Four Young Masters of the Capital, and now the most powerful contender for the successor of the third Ye Family generation. Furthermore, he can be considered a half Jianghu person—

he shocked the entire Jianghu twenty years ago when he defeated the then number one on the Qing bang with a thunderous force and replaced him."

"That impressive?"

Ye Fan was somewhat startled. In his view, whether being the successor of the third generation of the Ye Family or the former number one on the Qing bang, both were remarkable achievements, and having both titles in one person was enough to command respect.

"Yes, although Ye Wenhao withdrew from the Jianghu after that battle, his deeds are still talked about in the Jianghu. Compared to that, his prestige in officialdom is even more impressive!"

Despite being the godfather of the Yangtze River Delta Underground World, Situ Chen couldn't help feeling overshadowed when talking about Ye Wenhao.

In contrast, after his initial surprise, Ye Fan regained his composure and asked, "What does he have to do with Nanqinghong or the Hongwu Sect? Is he their backer?"

"No, on the contrary, in some respects, they're more like enemies—the Hongwu Sect has a close relationship with the Bai Family, who are archenemies of the Ye Family."

Situ Chen explained, "I mentioned Ye Wenhao because, in the past few years, wherever he's been assigned, that place has become the safest spot in Huaxia with no Jianghu people daring to cause trouble on his turf!"

"Are you worried that if I make a move against those three, it will draw the attention of Ye Wenhao?" A thought crossed Ye Fan's mind.

Situ Chen frankly admitted, "Yes, because of the incident a couple of days ago, Ye Wenhao issued a strict order to the police, forbidding any further bloody incidents! Therefore, during this critical period, if any Jianghu people cause trouble in Hanghu, it's quite possible that Ye Wenhao will take matters into his own hands!"

"I understand; thank you for the warning." Realizing that Situ Chen harbored no ulterior motives, Ye Fan expressed his gratitude with much courtesy.

Upon hearing this, Situ Chen chuckled wryly, "Xiao Fan, you saved Situ Ruoshui from certain peril, I owe you a debt as heavy as Mount Tai. For merely sharing some information with you, there's no need for thanks. Are you scorning me, Situ Chen?"

"Of course not..."

Situ Chen's forthrightness made Ye Fan feel a bit trivial in comparison, and he was about to clarify something.

"Alright, there's no need for formalities between us. If you don't mind, just call me Brother Situ. Or, if you think that makes me sound too old, I don't mind if you call me uncle, haha..."

"Considering that I regard Situ Ruoshui as a friend, it seems more appropriate to call you Uncle." Ye Fan had always been one to return respect with even greater respect. Now, seeing Situ Chen's candor, he saw no reason to put on airs.

"Haha, that's great, then. If you have time to visit Dong hai, just let me know beforehand, and I'll personally throw a welcoming party for you!" Critically pleased, Situ Chen extended the invitation.

"Sure."

Ye Fan readily accepted Situ Chen's generous offer.

Having said his piece, Situ Chen didn't ramble on and simply hung up the phone.

Meanwhile, Su Yuxin, Su Liuli, and Su Jindi had finished settling the bill and were walking towards the corridor.

"What's wrong?" Su Yuxin asked, noting Ye Fan, who looked contemplative while holding his phone, "Are the people from Nanqinhong causing you trouble again?"

"No."

Ye Fan shook his head with a smile, enjoying the feeling of being cared for by Su Yuxin but not wanting her to worry about him.

"That's good."

Relieved by Ye Fan's response, Su Yuxin then recall something and said, "By the way, the new Governor Ye is personally presiding over the Jiangnan Province's investment attraction conference for the second half of the year. Grandfather wants me to go, will you come with me?"

"Sure."

Ye Fan promptly agreed. Although he wasn't particularly interested in the investment conference, he was very curious about Ye Wenhao.

He wanted to know what Ye Wenhao had relied on to wield influence in both the officialdom and the Jianghu!