

Feng Yanbing was utterly livid at how Qin Ming had actually dared to slap her in front of everyone, in defense of Nie Haitang.

She shrieked, "How dare you, Qin Ming! You're nothing but a poor, useless piece of trash who only knows how to leech off of women! What else can you do other than fight? I'm going to expose all your shameful deeds for everyone to know. Let's see what your parents will think of your disgraceful behavior then!"

"Sure, go ahead! I'm confident that I've done nothing embarrassing, so I'm not worried at all. Why don't you fire my Dad while you're at it?"

When it came down to it, Qin Ming was honestly hoping that Qin Zhiguo would stop working for Yang Qiangjian. It was about time his father had retired, to enjoy the luxuries of life. Despite his best efforts, his father was a stubborn man and refused to budge. If Feng Yanbing were to fire him, that would save him a lot of trouble.

Feng Yanbing opened her mouth but was unfortunately stopped from speaking by Yang

Qiangjian with a tug on her arm. "That's enough. Set this matter aside for now. Mr. Xiao is here with his family."

She snapped her mouth shut and turned to look, seeing that Mr. Xiao was indeed coming over, accompanied by his son and wife.

Mr. Xiao was the most important client of Yang Qiangjian's machinery parts factory, as nearly sixty percent of their products were bought by him. That was why they had deliberately invited him over for a meal today. Hence, they could not afford to embarrass themselves before him.

Covering her flushed cheeks with her hands, Feng Yanbing hissed, "Don't think that you're so amazing because you've found a woman to live off of! I'll let this matter slide today, but this is not the end of it. Just you wait and see!"

Song Ying furrowed her brows intently and ran her thumb across her throat in a slitting gesture. She murmured lowly, "Young Master, do you want me to deal with them?"

Qin Ming glanced at the Yang family and replied, "There's no need for that. I can handle them myself. Don't involve yourself in this."

Yang Qiangjian had welcomed Mr. Xiao and his family, before leading them inside the hotel restaurant.

Mr. Xiao was a wealthy middle-aged man with a friendly countenance. "Mr. Yang, it's not easy to get a booking at China Grand Hotel. Even I would face trouble, trying to book a table here, yet you've managed it somehow! Hahaha! How amazing!"

"Naturally, I would have to go all out to treat you," Yang Qiangjian answered with a boisterous laugh.

The two families sat down and a waitress hurried over to pour them some tea. At this, Feng Yanbing spoke up, "Hold on, that's not right."

Everyone shot her puzzled stares, wondering what she had meant.

The waitress counted the tableware on the table before replying in a confused tone, "Everything seems to be in order."

An annoyed frown crossed Feng Yanbing's face as she huffed, "I'm not talking about the tableware. Where are our bird's nests?"

Smiling, the waitress stated, "You will need to place an order for that, Ma'am. We don't serve complimentary bird's nests."

"You're new here, aren't you? We're your restaurant's VIPs! That's what your manager had said, earlier this afternoon. She had also said that only VIPs like us would receive a bowl of bird's nest before our meal."

A tense atmosphere descended upon them.

Mr. Xiao spoke up curiously, "Mr. Yang, are you a top VIP of China Grand Hotel? Only the top VIPs get a complimentary bowl of bird's nest."

Yang Qiangjian flushed at the other man's question, unsure of how to answer his question.

At long last, he replied, "But we did receive some when we came here for lunch."

"Mr. Xiao, I'm not lying to you. We really did have some when we ate lunch here. Their manager personally came over and said that we were VIPs, meaning that we would receive special service. Hey, you, get your manager here!" Feng Yanbing insisted loudly.

Her relatively deep voice became rather gruff with her ire. Cowed, the waitress rushed away to get the manager.

Surprisingly, the manager recognized Feng Yanbing and her family. They're the family that Ms. Song has specifically told me not to give a discount to, right?

Her reply was straightforward, "My apologies, Ma'am. We don't give out complimentary bird's nests. Our bird's nests are harvested from our very own farms and are a hundred percent authentic. The quality is also guaranteed. You may place an order if you'd like any."

Yang Wei piped up in annoyance, "Hold on, didn't you give us each a bowl in the afternoon? Why aren't we getting any now?"

Nodding, Feng Yanbing added, "That's right! You had also said that it was a special privilege for us VIPs."

The manager fought hard to keep a polite smile on her face, uttering, "All our customers are VIPs, Ma'am."

Her response frustrated Feng Yanbing to no end. She was already seething, seeing as she had been slapped by Qin Ming earlier. Furthermore, she did not have the opportunity to vent out her anger, earlier. Now, this manager would have to suffer her wrath. "Am I not being clear enough? Why can't you understand what I'm saying? I had said, to bring us our bird's nests! This is differential treatment! Or maybe you would like to tell us why you had given us those bird's nests in the afternoon!"

Unfazed, the manager repeated, "I'm sorry, Ma'am. We really don't give out free bird's nests.

Our bird's nests are harvested from our own farms and are a hundred percent authentic. The quality is also guaranteed. You may place an order if you'd like any."

Feng Yanbing rolled her eyes in dissatisfaction, upon seeing that she was unable to get through to the woman.

Crossing her arms upon her chest, she boomed, "I want to speak to your boss!"

At this very moment, the commotion that they were causing drew the attention of all the other customers. Needless to say, they were less than pleased, to be disturbed, as they glanced over at the source of the noise.

Someone pointed out, "There are no complimentary bird's nests here."

"I'm a frequent visitor here and I have yet to receive any. There's no such thing!"

"Why are they causing such an upheaval? Are they trying to get themselves a free meal? If they

can't afford to eat here, then they should just head over to eat at the restaurant across the road!"

"Exactly! They're so noisy!"

The murmuring from the other customers had Feng Yanbing's face darkening. The Xiao family shifted in their seats uneasily, visibly embarrassed at being caught, sitting at the same table as her.

We are just here to have our dinner; why are you demanding that the restaurant serve you free bird's nests? It's not like it's cheap! Besides, you're not even a top VIP here!

Displeased, Mrs. Xiao complained to her husband, "Dear, look at how everyone is staring at us! How humiliating! We should have known better than to think that two country bumpkins would be so nice as to treat us to dinner. Turns out that they're severely mad!"

Their son chimed in as well, "Yeah! I can see my classmate eating at a table over there. He's definitely going to tease me relentlessly at school

tomorrow!"

Poor Mr. Xiao was at a loss for what to do. They were already sitting here, so it was not like they could just up and leave.

Noticing that the amiable look was gone from Mr. Xiao's face, Yang Qiangjian yanked on his wife's arm and urged desperately, "Why don't we order our meals first? Quickly, pick a few dishes!"

He randomly selected a few dishes that would cost him around tens of thousands before stopping.

After he was finished, he recalled that the pot of Da Hong Pao that they had drunk earlier was quite nice so he ordered, "Hey, get me a pot of the Da Hong Pao that we had at lunch."

The moment the words escaped his lips, Mr. Xiao and his family were stunned.

Da Hong Pao was also quite the expensive tea. What was Yang Qiangjian getting at here?

What restaurant would give out a free pot of Da Hong Pao, especially one that came from the mother tree? You either had to be someone who was really powerful, or someone who had some connections, to even get the chance to drink it!

Once again, a courteous smile appeared on the manager's face. "My apologies, Sir, we don't give out that tea for free. You may only choose between Pu'er, Tieguanyin and chrysanthemum tea."

Feng Yanbing grew upset at her answer. "Hey, that's not right! You had served us Da Hong Pao earlier, just now! You had even gifted us a box, remember?"

"Are you sure about that? Our boss had to use his connections to even get the Da Hong Pao leaves from the mother trees. One small box costs at least four to five hundred thousand. We're a restaurant, not a charity," the manager retorted.

Leaping to her feet in shock, Feng Yanbing cried out, "What? Four to five hundred thousand!"

So that damn Wang Xiu stole four to five hundred thousand from me? Damn it, I have to get that box of Da Hong Pao back from her!

From nearby, one of the customers sneered and complained, "Could you have a little more courtesy? How can we enjoy our meal in peace when you're being so loud! Who do you think you are? This restaurant is Guang City's most expensive restaurant! Do you think that you can merely make a demand for such an expensive tea? Only the true VIPs are allowed to taste it!"

The chastised woman scowled and insisted, "I really did get to taste it earlier! I am a VIP! You can ask the manager! Wait, where are you going? Come back here!"

The manager strode off, completely ignoring the woman's calls. Turning back to the customer who had spoken earlier, Feng Yanbing continued arguing, "I'm telling you the truth. We really did get a pot of Da Hong Pao just now! They had also served us bird's nests!"

In response, the man burst into laughter, disbelief

blatantly evident on his face. He reprimanded her, uttering, "That's impossible! You really are a boastful one, aren't you? Would it kill you to not boast, even while eating?"

Everyone else chortled loudly in amusement. "Hahaha! What a bunch of bumpkins! This could possibly be their first time eating in such a place!"

Mr. Xiao and his family wished that the ground would open up, to swallow them whole. The mocking expressions on the other customers' faces had burned into them while the scornful glares that the waiters had shot them caused them to feel as though they were troublemakers. It was beyond humiliating!

Unable to withstand being there a moment longer, Mr. Xiao excused himself to head to the bathroom to take a much-needed breath of fresh air.

As he was nearing the entrance of the restaurant, Mr. Xiao unintentionally bumped into one of Guang City's top businessmen, Hou Qing. This

man was constantly shown on the cover of various financial magazines and he was also one of his company's major clients.

Mr. Xiao was quick to greet the man, "Good day, Chairman Hou! What a coincidence to see you here!"

Hou Qing blinked in surprise before responding indifferently, "Oh, Mr. Xiao. Sorry, but I'm not in the mood to discuss business right now."

In all honesty, Hou Qing had made his way here today, in an effort, to talk to Qin Ming. Unfortunately, he had missed out on the other man, earlier, in the afternoon. Upon discovering that that the latter would be here for dinner again, he began to rush here, as fast as he could. He planned on leaving a good impression on Qin Ming and his family. He had wanted to get into the other man's good graces.

At that moment, Qin Ming came out with Nie Haitang to discuss something with the manager, who was manning the front desk.

Tightening his grip on the presents that he had prepared, Hou Qing made his way over.

Mr. Xiao followed him while pleading, "Chairman Hou, please give me three minutes of your time! Wait, no, one minute is enough!"

Hou Qing eyed Qin Ming, noticing that he was quite busy. Since he would need to wait if he had headed over now, he agreed, "Alright. You have one minute."

Mr. Xiao was delighted at getting a chance to speak.

"Err, that is... About the parts-"

He did not get to finish his sentence, as Feng Yanbing's annoying voice blared out once again, "You again, Qin Ming? Here I was wondering why things were so strange! What are you and the manager talking about that has the two of you smiling like that? Did you two conspire to make things difficult for me? I haven't even gotten you back for the slap that you had given gave me and you're already creating more trouble for me

behind my back?"



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Qin Ming's uncle had loved to drink imported wines. However, Qin Ming and his family were too accustomed, with living the hard life, which led to them not knowing anything about vices like wines or cigarettes. Thus, he had dragged Nie Haitang out here to help him select several bottles of wine for his uncle's family.

The manager recognized Qin Ming and was incredibly welcoming, as she eagerly introduced several different kinds of imported wine to him.

Feng Yanbing had noticed their friendly conversation and was immediately enraged.

This entire evening was turning out to be extremely infuriating for her. First, Qin Ming had slapped her for taunting Nie Haitang. Then, the manager ignored her when they sat down at their table, refusing to serve them like she had, earlier in the afternoon. She had clearly told them that they were VIPs during lunch. In light of that, why were they not getting the special services reserved for VIPs tonight?

Her husband had been the one who had paid for

lunch! Just the thought of spending several thousand on a meal had her feeling pained.

She really could not understand it. Why are we being treated so differently? Could the beautiful secretary, that had accompanied Qin Ming earlier, be the VIP that the manager had been referring to?

Her husband had even surmised that the secretary must have been the boss' mistress. Why else would she be able to live in such a luxurious villa?

As of now, both the manager and Qin Ming were conversing cheerfully, the former bringing out several bottles of expensive wine. The manager had even gone as far as to place a box of Da Hong Pao on the counter.

Incensed, Feng Yanbing muttered to herself, "I see how it is. This is nepotism at its finest! You two must have been scheming together, trying to embarrass me!"

She charged over and snatched the box of Da

Hong Pao, yelling, "You again, Qin Ming? Here I was wondering why things were going so strangely! What are you and the manager talking about that has the two of you smiling like that? Did you two conspire to make things difficult for me? I haven't even gotten you back, for the slap that you had delivered me and you're already creating more trouble for me behind my back? If it weren't for me, your family would have died of starvation years ago! You ungrateful thing!"

Qin Ming's face darkened. He would have thrown her out of here long ago, if it were not for the smallest shred of gratitude that he had possessed, for what she had done for his family.

"Return the tea," he demanded coldly.

The manager spoke up as well, "Ma'am, your action can be construed to be stealing, which is against the laws."

The security guards drew closer and the attention of everyone in the restaurant was now focused on them.

Feng Yanbing did not care. She was not afraid of the guards, nor Qin Ming. After all, she still believed that she had some dirt on him.

She pointed a finger at him accusingly. "You dare to deny that you're actually working together with the restaurant staff to create trouble for me? What? Were you afraid that I would reveal your dirty business?"

"What dirty business?" At that point, Qin Zhiguo and Wang Xiu arrived at the scene, after having been attracted by the commotion.

Noting their arrival, Feng Yanbing's fury blazed further. Her cheek was still smarting from Qin Ming's slap. Since he had hurt her earlier, she would refuse to show him the slightest sense of mercy.

She hollered at the top of her voice, "Why don't you ask your son what he's been doing? Are you sure that you want me to announce what disgraceful and humiliating business he's done? Fine then! Your son is helping his boss hide his mistress!"

Ticked off, Qin Ming growled, "Feng Yanbing, are you crazy? What mistress are you speaking of? I have no idea what you're talking about!"

With a dumbfounded look plastered on his face, Qin Zhiguo asked, "Qin Ming, you're keeping a mistress?"

Yang Qiangjian took opportune of that moment to step in. Naturally, he headed over, to stand by his wife's side.

Having her husband around bolstered her courage and Feng Yanbing explained, "The pretty secretary from lunch was your boss' mistress, wasn't she? Where else would you have gotten such a luxurious car? And the villa? They're all hers, aren't they? You're merely a boy toy, trying to reap some benefits!"

The aggravated expression on Qin Ming's face sent glee, running through Feng Yanbing as she continued triumphantly, "Nothing to counter my claim with? Your boss must have a terribly strict wife, whom he must have been worried about, upon the thought of her discovering the presence

his mistress. That's why he had shoved her off to you, making you his shield. Now, you're basically freeloading off of that woman, right? How shameless can you get?"

"Oh, your poor girlfriend! She probably didn't know about your unclean relationship with another woman, did she? You had used your connection with that pretty secretary to cause trouble for me, right?"

"Qin Zhiguo, the Yang family had provided you with a job, so that you could earn a living for your family. Is this how your son plans to repay us?"

Turning to Nie Haitang, she cooed in mock concern, "And you, little miss! Your mother was right, you know. Qin Ming is an undependable--"

Smack!

Before Feng Yanbing could finish, she was slapped, for a second time tonight. This time, it was Nie Haitang who had carried out the deed.

Nie Haitang's face was flushed red in anger as she warned the other woman, "Don't insult Qin Ming."

With both her cheeks throbbing in pain, Feng Yanbing screamed like a madwoman, "Ahh! You'd dare to hit me? You b****! I told you the truth about him and you had actually slapped me!"

She raised her hand to retaliate and Nie Haitang swiftly ducked for cover, behind Qin Ming.

The man tilted his chin up proudly and shifted over, as he began to shield his girlfriend. Instantly, Feng Yanbing calmed herself. She knew that if she had actually dared to hit him, there was no way that he would not fight back.

Back in Clearwater Town, Qin Ming had been infamously deemed the Tyrant. She most definitely did not have the courage to go up against him.

Yang Qiangjian spoke up in defense of his wife, "What's wrong with you, woman? We didn't say

anything wrong. How else would you explain Qin Ming's sudden wealth? More so his connections? For lunch, we had eaten in a private room, as we had been presented complimentary bird's nest and Da Hong Pao. We all know how poor his family is. Hence, the only plausible explanation would be that it was all because of that secretary!"

Qin Zhiguo exchanged a bewildered look with his wife.

Recalling their interactions with Song Ying today, both of them realized that the woman had not been very talkative. However, the manner in which she had spoken to Qin Ming displayed a sense of familiarity. However, even with that, nothing substantial had happened and there was nothing that could prove that there was anything more between them, other than friends. Most importantly, she had not acted like she was extremely influential either.

Noting the vicious scowl on his wife's face, Yang Qiangjian turned to berate the other man, "Zhiguo, what kind of manners are you teaching your son? Look at him, going around hitting

people at the slightest provocation! Tell me, do you think that we were wrong in what we had said? To think that you're usually such an honest and honorable man! Yet, your son is the complete opposite of you. Not only is he deceiving his poor, innocent girlfriend, but rather, he's also hiding his boss' mistress!"

"Qin Ming, is this true?" Qin Zhiguo boomed.

"Dad, there's no such thing. Uncle Yang, Aunt Feng came over here to seize the restaurant's prized tea leaves and to slander my name. Yet, they don't have anything to prove their false accusations. Do you believe them or me?"

Qin Zhiguo was surprised at his son's words. As a traditional man, his first instinct was to scold his son, regardless of whether he was right or not when out in public like this.

However, the cool manner in which Qin Ming had spoken in had taken the wind out of his sails. Abruptly, he realized that his son was a grown man now.

Hence, he answered, "I believe you. Though, you had better explain what this is all about."

At this point, the busybody crowd threw in their two, "Yeah, where's your evidence? You can't just accuse someone without any substantial proof!"

"That's the family that was kicking up a huge fuss earlier! They were demanding bird's nests and Da Hong Pao from the staff. As if commoners like them are worthy of such luxuries!"

"She's probably just jealous. She wants to entertain her guests, but she simply can't afford to pay for the meal."

"Be reasonable! How can you slander someone without any proof?"

"She's such a shrew! Making so much noise without a care for others. Maybe she's trying to get famous or something!"

"They've been making a fuss ever since just now! Can't we eat in peace? I came here because I had heard that the atmosphere here was good."

As more and more customers made their opinions known, Qin Ming clapped his hands and gestured for silence. Surprisingly, the crowd obediently turned silent.

Then, he stated apologetically, "First, I would like to express my sincerest apologies for disrupting your dining experience. As compensation, all of your bills will be thirty percent off tonight. I'll settle the issue over here momentarily."

Immediately, the customers' ire was replaced with elation, at the thought of being able to save so much money.

Next, he pointed at Yang Qiangjian and Feng Yanbing and announced, "They shall not receive a discount."

At this, Feng Yanbing howled with laughter. "Who do you think you are? Do you really believe that you're the boss of China Grand Hotel or something?"

The smile on her face froze when she noticed that

everyone was looking at her as though she were an idiot.

The manager nodded. "Yes, Boss."

Yang Qiangjian and Feng Yanbing's jaws dropped open, as their eyes visibly widened. Boss?



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Feng Yanbing could not believe her ears. Not only was the manager taking orders from Qin Ming, rather, but she had also called him 'Boss'.

How is that possible? There's no way that Qin Ming could get this restaurant in just three years' time! China Grand Hotel has been around for hundreds of years! How could he possibly be able to buy over this restaurant?

Unfortunately, the reality of the situation before her spoke otherwise. The manager was indeed giving the other customers discounts.

Since when did that brat become so capable? With one son earning thirty thousand a month as a manager and another living in a villa, being the boss to a famous restaurant, the Qin family might just rise again!

Qin Ming, in particular, had shocked her. Not only did he manage to get a girlfriend who was the heiress to a billionaire, rather, she was also a lot more beautiful than Fang Xiaoya.

Wait a minute. Everyone here gets thirty percent

discount off their bill except for us? He's doing this on purpose!

Her arrogant demeanor from earlier was nowhere to be seen, as shame burned through her. Soon, she found that she was left behind, picking up the shattered pieces of her pride.

"What's going on?" Hou Qing shoved his way past the security guards to see what was happening at the front. He had seen Qin Ming getting a tongue-lashing from some woman and had hurried over as quickly as he could.

Yang Qiangjian was astonished to see Mr. Xiao beside Hou Qing.

Isn't he the man that came to the villa earlier today? So he and Mr. Xiao know each other.

He did not recognize who Hou Qing was but he was wary of offending Mr. Xiao. That was why he hastily explained, "Mr. Xiao, it's nothing. Please have a seat back at our table. Our food should be here soon."

Feng Yanbing was having the exact same thought as her husband. More importantly, she did not want Mr. Xiao to see her arguing with someone. "Mr. Xiao, there's nothing much going on here. It's just that someone thinks that they can throw their weight around after gaining a little bit of wealth."

Even now, she was acting snarky and bitter.

Hou Qing's brows furrowed, the aura of someone used to being in a position of authority emanating from him. He had seen what had happened just now and knew that these two had hated his master. What he had only just discovered was that they were actually Mr. Xiao's guests.

The scornful glance Hou Qing tossed at him had Mr. Xiao feeling both wronged and confused. He could tell that Hou Qing was angry but he did not know why.

Ignoring the other man's puzzlement, Hou Qing rushed to Qin Ming's side and whispered, "Young Master, do you need me to handle this?"

Qin Ming shook his head and replied, "Are you here with some guests? If so, you can get back to your dinner. I can resolve this situation myself."

"However, handling this situation is beneath you, Young Master! You can leave such minor matters to us subordinates. Don't worry; I know your style. I'll keep things quiet."

Mulling over it, Qin Ming decided that the other man had a point. He was here to eat dinner with his uncle and his family. He had not arrived with the intention to get himself involved in stupid situations like this that killed the mood.

Patting Hou Qing's shoulder, he agreed, "Alright, you deal with this. Remember, don't make a scene that will affect the restaurant's reputation."

With how close the two men's heads were bent together, nobody could hear what they were whispering about. However, there was one thing that was blatantly clear. Hou Qing was the listener, as he kept nodding, whereas Qin Ming was the one who was giving him instructions.

There was no doubt that their relationship was that of a master and his servant.

This scene only served to make Feng Yanbing increasingly jealous. Isn't he the man who came over to the villa in a luxurious car but was rejected a visit?

She could distinctly recall how courteous and respectful Old Madam Nie was to him.

So why was he acting so humble and subservient before Qin Ming?

After that, Qin Ming returned to their private room with several bottles of wine. He did not bother explaining, as he left without another word. There was no need to waste his time on Feng Yanbing. There was an insurmountable gap between their statuses now and he was not so petty as to get into a dispute with a shrew.

Hou Qing, on the other hand, was utterly furious at how someone had dared to insult his master. What if Song Ying had decided that he was not adept at handling such matters and had

transferred him away from Huan Ning Century Corporation? He would lose all the prestige and power that he had currently enjoyed!

He had been hoping to impress Qin Ming over the next few years so that if there ever came a day where his master had needed someone capable, he would immediately think of him. Then, he would be able to get a promotion, along with a raise in his salary, to become the general manager of the entire Asia region. That was enough for him.

That was why he could not allow or endure anything that would make Qin Ming unhappy. This affected him personally, along with the future of his family.

Whipping his head around, he snapped at Mr. Xiao, "Mr. Xiao, you can forget about our cooperation. Here I was just thinking about buying from your company since my engineering department is out of stock. However, it would seem like I'll have to buy my parts from someone else."

Mr. Xiao was dumbfounded. That was an order that was worth millions! Now, it was gone just like that! Hou Qing's company had a high demand for parts all the time and would bring him more than ten million each year in sales. If the other man really were breaking off their deal, his company would lose nearly seventy percent of their sales!

He stuttered out in a faint voice, "N-No, wait! Chairman Hou, I-I'm innocent in this matter!"

Snorting, Hou Qing answered, "Birds of a feather flock together. You know them, don't you? Both of you had even brought your families with you, which tells me that you're friends, right? Well, your friends have spread false rumors and have insulted someone else, an incredibly disrespectful behavior. Besides that, they have also made a huge commotion, disturbing the public peace. Now, they're demanding for the extremely expensive tea from the restaurant for free? Do they still have any respect for the law? Mr. Xiao, I'm sure that your attitude isn't much better if you're dining with them. Sorry but I don't work with ill-mannered people."

His mention of the law had Feng Yanbing shivering, as she set down the box of tea leaves like it had burned her.

Mr. Xiao made a prompt decision. Pointing at Yang Qiangjian, he lied, "Chairman Hou, you've misunderstood. I don't know them; we're just sharing the same table for dinner. They kept trying to insinuate themselves with me but I'd refused to be friends with people like them."

"Oh really? Aren't you guys business partners?"

Mr. Xiao was no fool. Otherwise, he would not have been as successful of a businessman as he was. Just from Qin Ming and Hou Qing's earlier interactions, he could tell that someone would be in deep trouble today. That someone would definitely not be him!

He swiftly responded with, "They used to be, but they're not anymore."

Yang Qiangjian and Feng Yanbing were struck with horror. To lose such a major client like Mr. Xiao would be a devastating blow to their

company.

Lips twitching into a small smile, Hou Qing patted Mr. Xiao's shoulder. "Is that so? Forgive me if I take that with a pinch of salt. Come find me after you've actually severed ties with them."

Mr. Xiao was immensely relieved at hearing that. At least I've managed to save this business deal.

However, he knew that it was not as simple as that.

Everyone in Guang City knew who Hou Qing was and what he was like. He was probably one of the most influential figures in the city. If he made it known that he did not like Mr. Xiao, a lot of people would purposely refuse to work with the latter, in hopes of gaining favor with him. If that happened, Mr. Xiao's business would be hard-pressed to survive. Such was the cruelty of human relations in the business world.

This was the same reason why Hou Qing was taking his anger out on Mr. Xiao- so that he could

butter up Qin Ming.

Mr. Xiao was well aware that the true source of ire was Yang Qiangjian and his wife. Not wanting to be dragged down with them, he decided to cut his losses, by abandoning them.

Turning to the security guards, Hou Qing commanded, "Throw them out of here if they cause any more trouble!"

With that, Hou Qing turned to leave. Mr. Xiao instantly followed with his family, clearly showing them where he stood.

Yang Qiangjian and Feng Yanbing were aghast at the turn of events, their expressions stiff. They had come here, intending to treat Mr. Xiao to a meal to get in his good graces. Yet, now, the complete opposite had happened. They had caused him and his family to suffer utter humiliation and they had severely pissed him off.

The machinery parts that their factory had produced were not some patented technologies, which meant that a lot of other factories could

produce them as well. The only reason that Mr. Xiao had always bought from them was because it was more of a habit, rather than anything else. He could always buy from other suppliers.

If Mr. Xiao really did break off all business ties with them, they might just have to shut down their factory and go back to running a small workshop. Such was the scale of his importance to them.

"Mr. Xiao!" Feng Yanbing and Yang Qiangjian chased after the man, pleading, "Let's not be so hasty! We can talk about this, can't we?"

Mr. Xiao whirled around and lashed out at them, "What is there to talk about? You two country bumpkins just had to bring me here to eat, didn't you? Do you have any idea how humiliated I am? I came so close to getting in deep trouble because of you two! Do you know who Chairman Hou is? One sentence from him and my family and I will end up on the streets, begging for food! Yet, you two idiots went off to offend someone that even he doesn't dare piss off! Have you lost your minds?"

Yang Qiangjian was rooted to the spot in surprise. Is Qin Ming really that powerful? Why didn't Yang Wei inform me of this?

Beside him, Feng Yanbing collapsed to the floor in despair before bursting into tears. "Oh, how did things turn out like this?"



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Back in the private room, Qin Zhiguo asked his son, "Son, how did you become the owner of this restaurant?"

"Actually, this restaurant belongs to my boss. He had sold me some shares and he had handed the management of it over to me fully. So you could say that I'm a shareholder, or rather, a smaller boss here. Why else would we get this private room, along with the expensive tea?" Qin Ming clarified.

Understanding dawned upon Qin Zhiguo. One of the recent trends for larger companies was to sell their shares to their staff. That way, their staff would be more loyal and inclined to work harder for the company. They were also less likely to resign. So Qin Ming's situation is like that.

He gave his son a thumbs up and praised, "Good job, son! I'm so proud of you. You had better do your best since your boss holds you in such high regard."

Chuckling, Qin Ming stated, "Of course! But my boss is the one earning a lot; I'm merely an

employee, earning a small living. Despite that, the money that I'm earning is more than enough to look after both you and Mom. Brother is also working now, so you two should be enjoying the rest of your lives. Go do what you like, pursue your hobbies. You shouldn't need to work for anyone anymore or break your backs in the fields."

His son's suggestion did sound rather tempting. "I guess I could retire from work, but we can't just leave the fields empty. They're quite fertile and it would be a waste to not plant anything in them."

Qin Ming laughed at how stubborn his father was.

Wang Xiu tugged on her son's arm and questioned, "Then what about that secretary? You're not really helping your boss hide his mistress by pretending to be with her, are you?"

"Mom, there's really no such thing. Look, isn't Haitang even more beautiful than her? Do I look like the kind of man who is disloyal and greedy? She's just a colleague of mine. Aunt Feng was

just being disrespectful and making baseless accusations. Do you trust her or me more? I haven't seen them in three years. Obviously, they think that I'll never be able to amount to anything for my entire life. Now that I'm doing very well, they're assuming that I've obtained it all illegally."

Wang Xiu eyed the pretty woman beside her son and mentally berated herself for believing Feng Yanbing's crazy ravings. She's just jealous that my sons are doing so well for themselves!

"Okay, son. I believe you."

After that, this matter was forgotten as they focused on chatting with Qin Zhijiang and his family.

The two families were quite close. Qin Zhijiang would often bring back any old electrical appliances or furniture to Qin Zhiguo.

When Qin Ming first entered university, it was Qin Zhijiang who had lent him the money for his tuition fees. Every time there was a celebration or

public holiday, he would invite Qin Ming over to eat with his family. Unfortunately, Qin Ming had to refuse most of the time, as he wanted to earn the triple pay given during such holidays.

Qin Zhijiang smacked Qin Chaoyang on the back heartily, exclaiming, "Wow, Chaoyang, you're finally making a name for yourself! The manager of a huge supermarket, eh? Not bad! Remember to give it your all! Zhiguo, both your sons have grown up to be such outstanding young men. Looks like you'll finally be able to live the good life!"

"I don't think that I'm as lucky as you, Zhijiang! I think I'm destined to live a life of hard labor. Even if I don't work for others, I'll still have to work the fields. Our ancestors left them for us, after all."

Qin Ming's aunt was more interested in him, or more accurately, the woman beside him. "Qin Ming, it's been a while since we've last met but look at you now! You're like a changed man! Is this woman your girlfriend?"

"Yes. This is my girlfriend, Nie Haitang," Qin Ming introduced with a smile.

The older woman complimented, "She's so beautiful! Qin Fang, when are you going to bring a girlfriend back to meet me, hmm? Can't you learn a trick or two from your cousin?"

Qin Fang was a typical office worker. However, he was more interested in playing games, rather than chasing after women. He was getting close to thirty years old so his mother was understandably anxious.

He grinned and retorted, "Well, Chaoyang isn't married yet either. What's the hurry?"

Qin Zhijiang shook his head and muttered, "Kids these days. All that they know of is how to play with their phones or read novels, even paying for them! What's with this reward system? I really don't understand young people nowadays."

His brother snickered before replying, "Qin Fang is working at such a huge company so I'm sure that he wouldn't need to worry about much.

There's probably plenty of women for him to choose from."

The rest of the meal passed in a similar manner, as the two families bragged and teased each other.

All in all, the meal was a peaceful and joyous affair. Time passed in a blur, and soon, it was time for everyone to go back home.

After seeing his parents off, Qin Ming was about to send Nie Haitang home when she spoke up anxiously, "Qin Ming, did I do okay today? Do you think that your parents like me?"

He quirked his lips up into a smile. "My mum adores you and has reminded me to hold on to you tightly. She says that I'd better not make any more mistakes. You gave her a piece of goose, remember? My mum actually doesn't like to eat roasted goose as she finds it too greasy.

Nonetheless, she ate the one you'd given her, which means that she's already accepted you. You don't even need to worry about my Dad. He's an honest man from the villages; he's never been

disdainful of anyone."

A bright grin spread across Nie Haitang's face and she replied happily, "That's great! Hehehe."

"C'mon, I'll take you home."

"Hey, Qin Ming? I don't really feel like going back just yet. Could we walk around for a bit? My car is still parked at the nearby shopping mall."

Checking the time, Qin Ming realized that it was only around eight. Ever since what happened last time, the two of them had been seeing each other less. If he was honest with himself, he was actually itching to be intimate with such a pretty woman.

Thus, the two of them set off for Nie Haitang's car, planning on heading over to a commercial district nearby.

Her Maserati was just turning onto the main road, when an Audi came out of the parking garage and moved to follow them.

In the Audi, the poker-faced man sitting in the passenger seat dialed a number. "The target is with a woman in a pink Maserati with the license plate of **8888. Be careful of his bodyguards and assassination squad."

From the other end of the line came an icy voice, "Get rid of the bodyguards first before you go after the target. Remember, I want him alive. I would like to see what my father's bastard son looks like."

"And the woman?"

"Do I have to tell you everything? Kill her."

As the Maserati turned onto the main road, Long hurriedly pulled in behind them, in his Mercedes-Benz.

In no time at all, the Audi had caught up to him.

It was a short while later before Long's sharp eyes had flicked to look in the rearview mirror. His brows furrowed at the familiar car plate number. That Audi has been behind me for quite

a while now. I think that it's the same one that had entered the parking garage when Young Master did!

Immediately, he called Qin Ming's phone.

"Young Master, could you slow down a little and allow the Audi behind us to pass?"

Qin Ming instructed Nie Haitang to decrease her speed so that the Audi could cut in if it wanted to. However, the driver continued to follow them closely, not increasing its speed at all.

The frown on Long's face deepened. "Young master, I think that you're being followed."

Meanwhile, the poker-faced man was on the phone again. "Boss, I think that we've been discovered. There's a Mercedes-Benz with the car plate **856A behind them, which is most likely the target's bodyguard. We have to make a preemptive strike now. Have Big D intercept the Mercedes-Benz."

"Alright. Take action now!"

Unease rose in Qin Ming at Long's words. Just then, a dump truck coming in from the opposite lane suddenly swerved over. It rammed into the divider and headed straight for Long's car.

Qin Ming's eyes narrowed and he hastily stuck his head out the window, yelling, "Long, look out!"

Screech!

Long slammed on the brakes and spun his steering wheel to the end, causing his car to drift and narrowly avoid colliding with the dump truck.

He sped towards Qin Ming, shouting, "Young Master, follow me!"

With that, he stomped his feet on the gas pedal and led the way out of there.

Before Nie Haitang could follow, an Audi zoomed past them and crashed into the Mercedes-Benz's rear end, sending the car flying up and spinning in a half-circle. It struck the

ground and skidded, scattering sparks the entire way.

Qin Ming's face darkened. How the f*** did my identity and whereabouts get exposed?



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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"Oh no. No, no, no! Qin Ming, what do we do? What do we do!"

Nie Haitang was babbling in her fear, her face drained of all color. Seconds ago, she had still been safely driving, as she thought about where they could go next. Yet, in the blink of an eye, a car crash happened right before her very two eyes.

She stopped the car in terror, afraid of driving, as she was unsure of what to do now.

Qin Ming sent a message to Song Ying: I've been exposed.

When he was done, he spotted two well-built men getting out of the Audi. They were both holding a saber, as they advanced towards the stopped car menacingly.

With the dump truck behind them and the car crash in front, Qin Ming realized that they were essentially trapped. Remaining in the car was basically a death sentence. Making a swift decision, he tugged Nie Haitang out of the car

and sprinted for the side streets.

"Qin Ming, who are they?" she questioned as they ran.

"Bad people."

Although she was both speechless and annoyed at his brief response, there was nothing she could do but follow his lead.

Even though they had a head start, Nie Haitang was still a woman, dressed in high heels. There was only so much speed that she could put on.

The pedestrians leaped out of the way as they sped past, not wanting to be bowled over. Some of the bolder ones remained to watch, while the others fled out of there.

It did not take long for the distance between them and their pursuers to narrow and close. One of the men raised his saber, prepared to stab it into Nie Haitang's back.

Upon realizing this, Qin Ming grabbed a bowl of

boiling hot porridge from a nearby stall and flung it, towards the assassins.

Unfortunately, the assassins had incredibly fast reflexes and easily dodged the piping hot porridge. In an explosive show of power, one of them propelled himself up, high into the air, to bring the saber down on Nie Haitang's head.

Faster than the human eye could see, Qin Ming shoved the woman out of the way and raised his arms up to block the attack.

The speed and strength behind the blow were enough to send Qin Ming down on one knee. He barely managed to stop the blade, as the very tip was less than a millimeter away from his shoulder.

"What? Impossible!" To say that the assassin was shocked was an understatement. He had spent the last two decades or so, perfecting his body and his skills, striving to be the best assassin out there. No common man should have been able to withstand his attack.

His blow should have cut Qin Ming's arm right off, yet the other man made it look like it was completely normal for him to hold off the attack.

How is he doing that?

Qin Ming turned his head to look at the terrified Nie Haitang. In an effort to save him, she forced her fear aside and snatched up a stool from a nearby table, bringing it down on the assassin's head with a loud thud.

To her surprise, the assassin shook the blow off like it was nothing. Cracking his neck, he grinned widely, "Don't be in such a hurry. You'll die soon enough. Now, wait for your turn."

The menacing and cruel laughter that he had let out turned Nie Haitang's legs to jelly.

Qin Ming yelled at her, "Haitang, go! Don't worry about me, just run!"

Tears trailed down her cheeks and she shook her head vigorously. "No! I'm not going to leave you behind!"

The other assassin stepped forward while commenting, "Don't worry. The two of you will soon reunite in Hell!"

Qin Ming's heart clenched in his chest when he saw the danger that Nie Haitang was in. However, there was nothing that he could do. His arms were occupied with keeping the other assassin's weapon at bay and he was unable to move at all, with the force that the other man was exerting.

As if sensing his thoughts, the assassin laughed triumphantly. "Our boss, Mr. Chang Huan, is inviting you over for some tea. He doesn't want to be disturbed by anyone else though."

Ptooeey!

Scrambling to think of something to do, an idea appeared to Qin Ming. He hacked up a wad of saliva and spat it at the assassin, whereupon it accurately landed into the latter's open mouth.

The assassin felt something slide down his throat and coughed violently. At long last, the pressure

that he had been exerting on his blade loosened.

Seizing this opportunity, Qin Ming rolled backward, deftly dodging the blade that had swung down.

He lunged at the assassin who was threatening Nie Haitang, sending them both tumbling to the floor.

He was about to turn around and scream at her to run, when a large figure loomed over him. His heart skipped a beat. Is this the end of me?

Thud!

The sound of something wooden smacking into someone's head rang out, but he did not feel a thing.

When he looked up, he saw a badly bruised and bleeding Long. A bloody baton was in his hand, and one of the assassins was lying on the ground with his head split open.

Qin Ming had thought that Long would be out of

commission after his car crash. He had not expected the other man to still be able to come after them.

Wiping the blood trickling down from his forehead, Long uttered, "Sorry for taking so long, Young Master."

With that said, Long dashed forward and lashed out with a vicious kick. His feet slammed into the second assassin's chest before pinning the man to the ground. Blood poured from the assassin's mouth and ears as his body convulsed horribly. It was clear that he would not survive.

Ultimately, Qin Ming heaved a sigh of relief. "I had thought that you were dead."

Long bared his teeth in a wide grin, the expression somewhat terrifying, with all the blood staining his face. "I survived my plane getting shot down and my tank getting turned over. There's no way that a mere car would kill me. Young Master, Bi Yuan and the others are surrounded, so I don't think that they'll be able to come to our aid anytime soon."

"What? There's more than fifty men in the assassination team. How could they all be surrounded?" Qin Ming exclaimed in shock.

"With how meticulous the assassins' attacks were, I estimate that there are at least one hundred of them."

Qin Ming's expression darkened at his words. One hundred? One hundred assassins or mercenaries were sent to kill me, a university student? Isn't that overkill?

Noticing the grim look on his face, Long reassured him, "Don't worry, Young Master. Now that I'm here by your side, nobody will be able to threaten or harm you anymore. I won't allow it."

The firm determination and promise in his words affected Qin Ming, as goosebumps rose along his skin. Somehow, he believed that the man would do as he had said.

Spotting a bench nearby, Qin Ming made his way over and flopped down on it. "Okay. Damn, that mad dash really took a toll on me."

The corner of Long's lips twitched. "Young Master, if our enemies had snipers with them, you would be a sitting duck, out here in the open. I can't protect you then. You should still head to someplace safer."

The mild rebuke in Long's tone caused embarrassment to course through Qin Ming. Grabbing Nie Haitang's hand, they continued running.

However, he had barely taken a few steps forward, when mercenaries in full gear swarmed out from every corner of the street.

There were so many of them that they had easily blocked off every single route of escape that was available. The stores lining the streets were quick to shut their doors, while any innocent bystanders that were unable to get out in time were all slaughtered. Their agonized screams were chilling, as they echoed in the night air.

A man in a white suit swaggered out from amongst the mercenaries. His voice was arrogant and manic as he commented, "You're wrong.

With so many men in the assassination team, how could one hundred men be enough to stop them? I had sent one thousand. These men were all that I could hire, unfortunately. You see, the old man had taken away all the resources and men that I had to find you, his bastard son. Hahaha! Nevertheless, I was still the one who had found you first, in the end!"

One thousand men just for Qin Ming, a normal university student? That's simply too crazy!

This was the first time that Qin Ming had seen Chang Hongxi's foster son, Chang Huan.

Despite his slightly rotund body, there was also an underlying sense of power, as his muscles were hidden beneath all the layers of fat. His mannerisms and attire were exactly like someone from Z Nation.

Currently, there was a menacing look on his pudgy face. If he were to ever have acted in a movie, he would be the stereotypical evil villain.

As he walked, he continued his monologue, "You

did quite well, avoiding all my previous attempts on your life. You had even managed to lure my men here to Jing City, to deal with the spies that I had left, back in Century Tower."

Here, he paused and clapped his hands politely, the gesture mocking and sinister when done, in conjunction with his 'praise'.

Nie Haitang was bewildered at his words. What is he saying? Why can't I understand what he'd meant at all? Isn't Qin Ming just an ordinary university student? He's just a hardworking man who used to have a part-time job and he'd recently become friends with an incredibly wealthy businessman. That's how he'd earned so much money and was able to buy that villa. Isn't that all? What's all this, about assassinations?

She shot a puzzled glance at Qin Ming. Suddenly, the familiar man was starting to look like a stranger to her. Did she ever really know him in the first place?

Pointing a finger at Qin Ming, Chang Huan added, "I have to hand it to you, the most

amazing feat you'd done, was to turn Kelly Olson, the woman whom I've been training for years, against me. When she leaked out all the dirt that she had on me, I barely escaped the clutches of the Z Nation Justice Bureau."

Once again, Chang Huan applauded.

By this point, he had ambled his way over to Qin Ming and was less than five steps away from him.

Under the glare of the streetlights, his unnaturally tall build- around 1.9 meters- and his body mass caused his shadow to be massively long.

A smile curved Chang Huan's lips and he chuckled. "Didn't think that I would be in Huaxia, did you? I've been here for quite a while, you know."

Qin Ming's expression was grim. Despite being surrounded by hundreds of men, there was not a hint of fear on his face. He retorted, "Are you so confident that you can kill me?"

In response, Chang Huan took out a gun and pointed it at Qin Ming. "I'll kill you, one way or another. After all, that's the only way for me to regain the title of the richest man in the world. You have to be pronounced as dead."



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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"R-richest in the world?" Nie Haitang exclaimed upon hearing Chang Huan's words.

Qin Ming is the richest man in the world? How wealthy could he be? He looks nothing like a rich man to me...

Has everyone in this world gone crazy?

"Did you get the wrong guy?" she asked. "He's just a normal guy that works a part-time job to support his family. His parents work in the fields and factories! How could he be the richest man in the world?"

Chang Huan blatantly ignored her as he began to ask, "Do you want to know how I found out about it?"

Staring at him, Qin Ming had a perplexed expression upon his face.

His every move was carefully planned by Song Ying, to prevent his true identity from getting leaked to the public. Their attack on the underground forces of Guang City went

unnoticed as well.

Chang Huan stared back at him proudly. "I've been following you around ever since you'd told Hou Qing to help the Nie family, since it came as a surprise to me. Every piece of intel mattered then, since Huaxia Group was still able to collect information."

Nie Haitang's eyes widened. So...Qin Ming has been the one who was helping the Nie family out the whole time?

Didn't he get a friend to do that?

Nie Haitang was shocked to know that the person who had helped her out was merely doing it out of duty, rather than kindness.

Why didn't you tell me the truth, Qin Ming?

However, she knew better than to blame him for it, after seeing how much danger he was in, upon discovering his true identity. In fact, she admired him for keeping a low profile despite being an affluent person.

Qin Ming glanced at Nie Haitang, whose eyes had welled up with tears immediately. I'm so lucky to have him around!

They held hands and stared into each other's eyes, reassuring each other with their gazes that they would never leave each other, no matter what would befall them.

Qin Ming turned towards Chang Huan and asked, "So...how did you find out about my identity? No one has the authority to look through the documents in Huaxia Group's possession, without my secretary's and my permission."

"Easy!" Chang Huang announced. "You've been in Guang City the entire time. I had sent my men to spy on you at China Grand Hotel, since that's the place where you had defeated my men the last time I had sent them. I'd figured that China Grand Hotel was under your administration as well, and I confirmed that theory after a month of spying. I got in touch with one of my informants to learn more information about you, but to my disappointment, he told me that you were just the son of a poor farmer," he continued. "I didn't

want to believe him. How could a poor guy win the heart of such a beautiful woman? How could someone struggling with poverty afford a Rolls-Royce?"

Nie Haitang began to grow annoyed. "It doesn't matter whether he's poor or rich! I love him more than anything!"

"Shut up!" Chang Huan growled. "Anyway, my father's favorite brand of car is the Rolls-Royce, so I'm sure that the one that you had was a gift from him, no? You've exposed yourself, illegitimate child!"

Qin Ming had been completely ignorant of the fact that he was getting spied on. He had attempted to flaunt his wealth just once, and it had ended up exposing more than he was comfortable with.

However, he did not bother to try and convince Chang Huan that he was not an illegitimate child of Chang Hongxi, since there was no way that he would bear to listen anyway.

He pointed his gun at Qin Ming, as Long stood behind Qin Ming too, also poised to shoot.

Chang Huan's subordinates had long since cordoned off the area, trapping Qin Ming inside.

Ignoring Long completely, Chang Huan continued excitedly, "You know, I never figured out why my father had acted so cold towards me. He wouldn't even come back for Christmas!"

"He prefers to celebrate Chinese New Year, doesn't he?" Qin Ming snickered.

"Shut up!" Chang Huan yelled. "It's all because of you and his mistress! He cares more about you! Nothing I've done has ever satisfied him, not even my stellar results or achievements! He has given everything to you, be it fatherly love or his money... He left me with nothing! It's not fair!"

Qin Ming was speechless. Since when did this 'illegitimate child' misunderstanding become such a serious matter?

Poor Mr. Chang. Even his son hates him...

Chang Huan shot him an ugly smirk. "He tried his best to hide you, didn't he? He did a great job! No one even knew of your existence, for the past two decades. I'm better than him, though. I had managed to escape from Z Nation just to come back here!"

Chang Huan cocked his gun. "You're not going to get out of here alive today. Any last words, my dear brother? I'll give you five seconds!"

Despite his threats, Qin Ming was unnaturally calm. "I'm not going to move, but neither are you going to hurt me."

As he spoke, he grabbed a plastic chair from nearby and sat down. "Try me!"

Chang Huan's men exchanged puzzled looks. Is this guy crazy? His assassination team is currently stuck in an ambush! There's no way he could have got backup so fast!

It'll be too late, by the time his assassination team gets here!

Real life would never be able to compare to the absurdities seen in movies- people would need time, to travel to a location, even if they were mobilized immediately. Besides, Chang Huan's intel network would inform him of an imminent attack from miles away, giving him sufficient time to retreat.

The foreign mercenaries started to jeer at Qin Ming.

Chang Huan stroked his stubbled chin and grinned evilly. "Goodbye, you arrogant jerk!"

Boom!

Before Qin Ming could blink, two men had already rushed forward, in an effort to shield him from the bullet.

Nie Haitang had twisted herself around and wrapped her arms around Qin Ming's chest, with her back facing Chang Huan, startling Qin Ming greatly.

Why is she risking her life for me?

However, to his relief, Long had been swift enough. He stood before Qin Ming and Nie Haitang while holding a frying pan that had managed to block the bullet.

"What?" the foreigners screeched. "This is impossible!"

Qin Ming was shocked too. How was he so fast? He practically teleported before me! That's impossible!

Despite that, the truth was ever so evident; Long had blocked the bullet before it had reached him.

Long lifted his head proudly. "I told you, Young Master! No one's going to hurt you while I'm around! I'll advise you to stay clear of open spaces, though. You'll be in trouble if there's a sniper nearby."

Momentarily, Qin Ming and Chang Huan's phones started to ring simultaneously.

"Young Master, we've lost contact with the sniper and the people in charge of retreating..." a voice sounded out, before a loud scuffle ensued. After a while, a different voice came through, and it belonged to someone who had spoken the local language. "Stop right there or I'll kill you!"

Chang Huan froze, as a bead of sweat rolled past his temple. I'm done for...

On the other hand, Song Ying's reassuring voice came through, on Qin Ming's phone. "My apologies for the delay, Young Master. We have made all of the necessary preparations and have cleared out the enemy ambushes. You are safe."

She had gotten the situation under control in just five minutes, and Qin Ming was satisfied with that.

After all, Chang Huan had caught them in a surprise attack, with thousands of men, even going as far as to attacking and dismantling Bi Yuan's ambush setup.

As the former heir to the Huan Ning Century

Corporation, Chang Huan knew how every department worked, inside-out. This included details such as the squad sizes and mobilization speed, which made him confident that he could take down Qin Ming swiftly.

However, he failed to uncover the fact that Qin Ming's power had since evolved from what it had been, the last time he had witnessed it.

Qin Ming's personal safety had been the top priority of his subordinates for the longest time, and much time and effort have been invested into training and obtaining the best equipment.

In addition to being Qin Ming's personal bodyguard, Long was also in charge of building and training the protection squads at military standards.

Meanwhile, Huan Ning Century Corporation had possessed close ties with the Guang City military, which had provided them with the best and fastest backup.

Throughout this play of events, Qin Ming

remained on his plastic chair, still hugging Nie Haitang tightly. Her sweet scent calmed him down considerably, and his hand moved to stroke her buttocks gently.

Nie Haitang felt a little uncomfortable, but she did nothing to stop him. She merely pursed her lips and whispered into his ear, "Why now?"

Qin Ming waved his hand. "Step aside, Long. I want to show him something."

Long stared at him, confused. What is he doing?

He watched as Qin Ming lifted his right hand and made a gun with his fingers before pointing it at Chang Huan with a smirk.

Is he joking?

What are you going to shoot me with, from that gun? Thin air?

Chang Huan's subordinates soon began to burst into laughter. "He's crazy!"

"I had heard that the students of Huaxia are all into the fantasy culture! Looks like the rumors are true..."

"His bodyguard is pretty scary...I'm pretty sure that I've seen him before."

"Wait, wasn't he the ex-leader of the former Wolvenfang Assault Squad? He's the only member that has survived, isn't he?"

"Oh...I remember now! We've lost to them before!"

"No way! I thought that he'd retired?"

"Oh no...we're done for..."

"So what? He's on his own! We can easily kill both him and his master if we work together."

"Ugh, so noisy..." Qin Ming drawled. "I'll start with you. Bang!"

Bang!

A bullet whizzed through the air and burrowed into the head of a chuckling mercenary. His expression froze, as blood spewed out from the back of his head. Dazed, everyone fell silent.

Qin Ming lifted his hand again. "Bang!"

Bang!

Another mercenary fell to the ground, with a bullet in his head.

The smiles on the other mercenaries' faces melted off immediately, as they soon began to panic.

They rushed to the paths by the side and raised their weapons, hoping to ambush Qin Ming when he had let his guard down.

"What's going on? Where's the sniper?"

"Where are the peripherals?"

"Harry! Answer me! Answer me, for goodness' sake! F*ck!"

None of them thought of the possibility that Qin Ming's forces were sniping them from a distance away.

Unfortunately for them, not only were their snipers missing-in-action, rather, their peripheral networks had disappeared without a trace as well, leaving them completely vulnerable.

Qin Ming grinned. How satisfying!

He glanced at Chang Huan and announced gleefully, "The winner has been decided ever since we'd received the phone call."

Chang Huan stared at him with a grim expression. He had sent a hundred men to deal with Bi Yuan's assassination team and had used another three hundred to draw out the land, air and sea escape routes.

Another hundred men stood guard, while his best troops surrounded the area and stopped anyone from trying to enter or exit.

He had thought that he would be able to kill Qin

Ming in just ten minutes, in time for a quick escape, and the last thing that he had expected was for Qin Ming to turn the tide in just a mere five minutes.

Qin Ming's subordinates are so overpowered...

Suddenly, a dozen Jeeps screeched to a halt before them, engines roaring. Troops of SWAT officers alighted from the Jeeps and swapped places with Qin Ming's subordinates, surrounding Chang Huan and his goons. Chang Huan realized with horror that most of his men have already been wiped out.

The only ones he had left were the ones standing behind him.

Chang Huan entire being trembled, as he almost choked on his own breath.

How did they sneak in without my men noticing? How did they establish such close ties with the authorities?

As his mind raced with questions, another dozen

military helicopters emerged from the clouds above them, with snipers aiming straight for Chang Huan and his mercenaries' heads.

Qin Ming walked up to Chang Huan, completely unfazed by the fact that the latter still had a real gun in his hand. After all, he had yet to play his trump card.

"Dare to open fire?" he asked.

Chang Huan was frightened out of his wits, but he refused to back down. He pointed his gun towards Qin Ming's face and shouted, "You think that I wouldn't dare to kill you? My brother Chang Jundong will become the new heir once you die. I'll prefer that, rather than seeing the inheritance go to you!"

"That's incorrect. Be careful of your hands, by the way," Qin Ming responded confidently.

Bang!

A gunshot rang from a helicopter above them, and a bullet lodged itself into Chang Huan's

wrist, splattering blood all over the ground. Chang Huan screamed and grabbed his bleeding wrist, his gun clattering to the ground as a result.

Qin Ming stroked Chang Huan's chubby head and murmured, "Truthfully, I'm quite impressed with your plan. You would have succeeded if Long had been any slower. However, I'm sure you know that what's done can't be reversed. I don't think that Mr. Chang would make me the heir if you had been his biological son, no?"

Chang Huan looked up and let out a bone-chilling laugh. "Alright, I admit defeat. You've made a grave mistake of standing close to me, though!"

With a loud swish, Chang Huan's left hand shot towards Qin Ming's neck, only to be parried by Qin Ming in a second.

Qin Ming wobbled a little on his feet, the moment Chang Huan's pudgy hand came into contact with his arm. He was momentarily surprised by his strength.

Bang!

Another shot pierced through the air, and another bloody hole appeared on Chang Huan's left arm. Even so, he held on tight to Qin Ming's wrist.

"Shall we indulge in the art of explosions together?" he cackled as he pulled a grenade out from his pocket.

Qin Ming raised a brow. He's dragging me down to hell with him?



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Wait! I Have Something to Say!



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Chang Huan had failed to assassinate Qin Ming, as his forces were almost completely wiped out. In addition to that, the police was hot on his heels as well.

He knew that his failure would only lead to a lonely, humiliating death.

In a moment of panic, Chang Huan pulled a grenade out from his pocket, in an attempt to make Qin Ming perish with him.

Meanwhile, Qin Ming struggled to break free from Chang Huan's ironclad grip, and he berated himself for being so careless. He had walked up to Chang Huan without disarming him, which was an oversight on his part.

However, he was a quick thinker. Whipping his body around and kicking Chang Huan in the chest, he managed to fling the already-injured Chang Huan away from him.

Chang Huan chuckled as he fell to the ground. "Haha! You're not getting out of here alive! I can't wait to see him weeping over your dead

body! Hahaha!"

As he cackled, Qin Ming grabbed the grenade from the ground and tossed it into the air.

He had read from a military magazine some time ago that grenades had an area-of-effect of around seven to fifteen meters, which meant that getting the grenade as far away as possible could save their lives.

Boom!

Just seconds after he had tossed the grenade away, it exploded with a loud bang, sending Qin Ming flying into the pavements by the side, with the shockwave that it had created.

His vision swarmed and his ears rang after the grenade had exploded. The last few things that he had seen before he had passed out was Long rushing over to him, Nie Haitang bursting into tears behind him, and Song Ying looking on in horror.

He could not hear anything the others were

saying, and he had managed to mutter the words 'don't worry, I can't still stand up', before passing out completely.

Song Ying turned around and yelled, "Medics! Send someone over!"

Nie Haitang called Qin Ming's name over and over again as she grappled at the people around her. "Save him! Someone save him, please!"

Long pressed a finger against Qin Ming's jugular vein and sighed in relief. "Please calm down, Ms. Nie. Young Master is still alive. He's just unconscious from the blast. He'll be fine."

"Really?" Nie Haitang asked, still trembling in fear.

"Yes, trust me," Long reassured her. "I was a soldier, and this had happened way too often during missions. Even so, I believe that the Young Master requires immediate medical attention."

The medics rushed forward and whisked Qin

Ming away on a stretcher after a short while.

Suddenly, Song Ying cocked her gun and strode towards Chang Huan's battered body.

He had avoided the worst of the shockwave, as he had been lying on the floor the entire time.

Nonetheless, his right cheek was badly burnt. The blood from his injured hands pooled onto the ground as he struggled to breathe.

Chang Huan smirked as Song Ying approached him. "Haha...so it's you, isn't it? My father had refused to hand you over to me, back at the training camp, and that's why I ended up choosing Kelly Olson. Looks like he's been keeping the real killing machine by his side the entire time..."

Song Ying stomped her foot on his injuries and pointed her gun at his head. "Done? Time to die!"

"Wait!" a weak but authoritative voice called from behind her.

Song Ying looked around and came face-to-face

with Chang Hongxi, much to her surprise.

An old man pushed Chang Hongxi over on a wheelchair. Chang Hongxi looked the worse for wear, hooked up to half a dozen IV drip bottles.

Song Ying was shocked. Since when did he come to Guang City? Doesn't he usually contact Qin Ming's men first if he's coming to Huaxia?

Chang Hongxi walked over to Chang Huan and stared down upon him. Despite them not being related by blood, the decades that they had spent as father and son was not something that they could forget so easily. They seemed to reminisce the past as they stared at each other.

Chang Hongxi coughed a few times and muttered, "I've already warned you about this. Stop getting in his way. I've already given you enough money for the rest of your life."

Chang Huan shot him an ugly scowl. "What? Why should I leave him alone? I'm your son, for goodness' sake! Why is everything going to him? If you want me to leave him alone, then just kill

me!"

Chang Hongxi waved his hand, and Chang Huan was immediately dragged away by Chang Hongxi's men.

Flustered, Song Ying yelled, "Old Master!"

Chang Hongxi raised his hand as a signal for her to keep silent. "I'm sure that Qin Ming was thinking of the same thing when he had spared Chang Huan's life. He's a good pawn, but only while he's alive."

Song Ying fell silent. She had wanted to make Chang Huan suffer, but she had since lost the opportunity to do so.

Suddenly, a fully-armed soldier ran up to them. He glanced at Chang Hongxi before saying to Song Ying, "All enemy troops have been neutralized, Ms. Song. The ones who are still alive have been handed over to the police. We await your instructions."

"Follow the Young Master's ambulance and

ensure his safety," Song Ying ordered. "Long, you should follow them as well, if you're well enough to do so."

Long walked away silently, his face still caked with blood. Despite the gory sight, his injuries were light and they were nothing to be concerned about.

That night, sirens blared throughout the city, as the firefighters and the media rushed to the scene. Qin Ming's men could sleep in peace, since the news the next day would have no trace of Qin Ming anyway.

Meanwhile, Nie Haitang was taken back to the Yun Shan Villas.

She realized upon her arrival that the mysterious owner of the villa was none other than Qin Ming himself, and that it was his true place of residence.

Compared to Green Island, the Yun Shan Villa was certainly bigger and more lavish, not to mention that it was much closer to her own

house.

"Sorry for scaring you earlier, girl."

Nie Haitang whirled around to see the same old man from before, pushing Chang Hongxi out of his room. In contrast to Chang Hongxi's fragile appearance, the old man behind him was dressed smartly in black robes. His slicked-back hair and bright eyes made her a little fearful of him.

She stood up immediately to greet him.

"Greetings, Mr. Chang."

Chang Hongxi raised his arm with much effort.

"Sit down. I have something to tell you."

Nie Haitang shook her head and remained standing.

"Do you love him?" Chang Hongxi asked.

"Yes, I love Qin Ming," Nie Haitang answered immediately, despite him not having mentioned Qin Ming's name.

Chang Hongxi took a deep breath. "If you really love him, then I need you to do something for me..."

As the conversation continued, Nie Haitang's facial expression turned grim. She tried to interrupt him a few times, only to concede and fall silent.

After an hour, Nie Haitang walked out of the front door, looking dejected.

Chang Hongxi watched as she left the villa. "Are you happy now?"

The old man pushing his wheelchair replied, "No, Mr. Chang, they should be happy. With you as the villain, I'll be able to make it up to both you and the Young Master."

Chang Hongxi nodded. "I'm sure that he'll secure his position with the help of you four."