

Crossing 1171

Chapter 1171 Soar Into The Sky!

“Boss, we can become an independent army now,” Little Four wiggled his tiny butt excitedly when he saw the rewards.

“Be calm. We still have to see whether the three great marshals accept our advancement.” Ling Lan didn’t think that becoming an independent army would be so easy. The Lingtian Mecha Clan’s foundation was just too weak, even if her father’s help, it wouldn’t be a simple task to be an independent army.

“Will they take away our merits?” Little Four pouted.

“Of course not. However, they might give me an offer I can’t reject so that I will give up this idea voluntarily.” Ling Lan never dared to underestimate those sly old foxes. They might have something they could threaten her with.

“What else is more enticing than becoming an independent army?” Little Four suddenly remembered Boss’s wish many years ago. He continued in astonishment, “Boss, don’t tell me you want the best male sperms...’

“What nonsense are you spewing?” Ling Lan immediately knocked his head. She was young and inexperienced when she said that in the past. Thinking back, she felt embarrassed for herself.

It wouldn’t be difficult for her to rob a sperm bank now. If she were to give up the chance to become an independent army just for high-quality sperm... Little Four was thinking too ‘highly’ of her.

“What could they offer then?” Little Four rubbed his sore head as he thought about this huge problem. As the number one follower of Boss, he must plan ahead.

Ling Lan didn’t reply to him. She just allowed Little Four’s imagination to run wild. There were many things that could happen before they became an independent army. Before everything settled down, Ling Lan wouldn’t think too much about it.

After Major General Bai finished his mission, he left with his team. Major General Gao announced the end of the conference after everything had been finalised.

Ling Lan stood up and wore the military cap Luo Lang passed to her.

“Congratulations, Major General Ling.” Major General Gao walked up to her.

“Thank you, Major General Gao,” Ling Lan replied politely.

“If there’s nothing, Major General Ling should return to Base Nebula as soon as possible.” Major General Gao seemed to be hinting at something.

Ling Lan raised one of her eyebrows in response and replied calmly, “Thank you for your reminder.”

The two of them shook hands and parted ways. They appeared as though they were just greeting each other.

“Is something wrong?” Xie Yi whispered.

“Nothing. We just greeted each other.” Ling Lan smiled slightly. Major General Gao seemed to be informing her that he was on her side. She should confirm this with her father first.

At that moment, Ling Lan noticed two familiar figures walking towards her.

Ling Lan frowned. However, it only lasted for a moment. She had already expected that this would happen eventually.

“Major General Ling, shall we have a chat?” Mu Chaoran forced himself to remain composed as he spoke to Ling Lan.

Ling Lan nodded. “Sure.”

She turned around and asked Gu Dongyang, “Is there any quiet place around here?”

Gu Dongyang thought for a while. “There is a resting area for the workers which should be suitable for your needs.”

He added on, “There are private rooms inside.”

Ling Lan nodded. “Let’s go there.” Since they weren’t going to talk about some massive secrets, they just needed a quiet place.

Gu Dongyang led the way. Ling Lan and company walked out of the conference room.

Major General Gao, who just separated with Ling Lan, walked to a corner. A senior colonel came up to him and said in a low voice, “The things we have prepared were useless. That is unexpected.”

“Isn’t that good? Our people don’t have to reveal themselves.” Major General Gao smiled. He was satisfied with the result of this conference.

“We still underestimated Major General Ling.” The senior colonel complimented Ling Lan. “General always told us to not bother about Major General Ling, but how can we do that. In the end, he was right. General finally has a qualified successor.” Both the current leader and the future successor were important to a faction. They were the foundation and confidence of the faction.

“We will be calling him Lieutenant General Ling soon.” Major General Gao smiled as he shook his head. His tone was filled with respect as he said, “He has broken a new record. He will be the youngest lieutenant general. No one might be able to break his record in the coming millennium.”

“Definitely. Once the Lingtian Mecha Clan becomes an independent army, no one will be able to stop his rise anymore.” The senior colonel was filled with anticipation.

“The accomplishment of Major General Ling is just a bonus. The most important thing is the opportunity that our general has been waiting for is finally here.” Major General Gao couldn’t hide his excitement. Everyone who followed Ling Xiao hoped that he would one day climb to the top of the military world.

“We will definitely open a new chapter in the history of the Federation. A war is upon us. We must be prepared to fight anytime. We can’t drag our general down.” Major General Gao looked into the

horizon. He could sense that a huge war was coming. It was a war that could avenge the humiliations the soldiers from the Federation had received. It was something all the soldiers had been waiting for.

It would be the end to all the hatred accumulated through the generations.

The resting area wasn't far from the conference room. They arrived quickly.

Gu Dongyang used his identity to register for a huge private room.

The private room was around 30 square meters. The aesthetic of the room matched the design of a normal military bunker, bleak and monotonous.

Ling Lan casually sat on the sofa of the room. She pointed at the sofa to signal for everyone to sit down.

Gu Dongyang chose to sit on Ling Lan's left side. Xie Yi pulled Luo Lang and sat on Ling Lan's right.

Li Yingjie was a step too slow. He could only grumble and sit beside Gu Dongyang.

Well, he could sit on the sofa opposite from Ling Lan but that sofa was for the two people from the Flying Dragon Special Forces. Li Yingjie was an unreasonable and irritating person but when it comes to important affairs, he knew what he should do.

Tang Ningyu and Mu Chaoran knew that they should sit on the sofa opposite from Ling Lan that was specially left for them so they sat down naturally.

As they sat down, robotic attendants came in to send them their tea and snacks.

Chapter 1172 Questioning!

Ling Lan took a cup of black tea and had a sip of it. She placed it on the coffee table beside her before asking, "What do you want to talk about?"

Ling Lan never liked beating around the bush so she decided to clarify the matters between them at once.

Mu Chaoran took a deep breath. "You're Pei Shaoyun, right?" It was a question but the tone he used when asking left no room for doubt.

Ling Lan looked at him in the eyes. "You already know the answer."

"Why did you choose to die?" Mu Shaoyun couldn't understand Ling Lan's actions. Wasn't it better to stay alive and bid farewell to them? That way, they wouldn't think of him all the time until he became a devil in their hearts.

"It's more convenient," Ling Lan replied.

This was the truth. If she didn't kill Pei Shaoyun, she would have to go through more trouble to wipe this character off the face of the planet. The other option was to reveal her real identity just like Tang Ningyu and Mu Chaoran. However, Ling Lan wanted to complete the mission perfectly so death was the best option. Of course, she was lucky in the situation. Out of all the people in the plaza, the enemy kidnapped her.

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Tang Ningyu and Mu Chaoran didn't know what to say. Ling Lan just decided to choose the easier path to disappear. Had they been thinking too much all these while?

"I just want to know whether our friendship was real or fake." Mu Chaoran gathered his thoughts and asked with hope in his eyes.

Ling Lan smiled slightly. She asked him back, "What do you think? Was it real or fake?"

Tang Ningyu and Mu Chaoran exchanged glances with each other. Then, Mu Chaoran turned and looked at Ling Lan firmly. "It's real."

"Our identities were fake but the feeling towards our Little Brother Shaoyun is real. We even thought of getting him into the Flying Dragon Special Forces after he entered the military academy so that we can protect him forever. That way, he can have a happy life."

"We don't want his smile to disappear. As long as we have the ability to, we want to protect him forever. Little Brother Shaoyun can just live happily without any worry." Mu Chaoran felt as though he was stabbed by a knife. His heart hurt.

"Pei Shaoyun was my disguise. His personality and image is fake. None of it is real." Ling Lan's words hurt the two of them even further. Mu Chaoran was in agony. His favourite Little Brother Shaoyun never existed.

Mu Chaoran was just sad that his beloved younger brother never existed. On the other hand, Tang Ningyu was fuming.

"Is it fun to fool us?" Tang Ningyu stood up angrily and questioned Ling Lan. Ling Lan raised her eyebrows. "Why are you so angry?"

"Since you didn't treat us sincerely, why did you pretend to be nice towards us?" Tang Ningyu's eyes were bloodshot.

Ling Lan scoffed. "Were you sincere towards Pei Shaoyun from the beginning? Let's change our perspective. If Pei Shaoyun really existed, how would he feel when he knows that his two beloved brothers were fooling him? What will he do when he knows the truth?"

Mu Chaoran was speechless. Tang Ningyu's anger dissipated a little.

"Do you think he would be grateful if you used your status to pull him in the Flying Dragon Special Forces? Will he live happily ever after with you? Stop daydreaming! From the moment we were in our disguises, everything was a lie. There's no such thing as sincere feelings. Even if there is, it wouldn't last long."

"You're lucky that you met me as no one else will tolerate you with how you are questioning me." Ling Lan's gaze turned sharp. A strong force of presence slowly leaked out from her body. Tang Ningyu and Mu Chaoran felt cold sweat on their back.

They then heard a cold voice speaking forcefully, "Is it fun to fool me?"

This question pierced through their hearts. Mu Chaoran's anguish and Tang Ningyu's anger dissipated instantly.

“Dreams are beautiful. However, it’s time to wake up.” Ling Lan’s stern voice woke them up with a shock.

By questioning Ling Lan directly, they finally overcame the devil in their hearts, so the force of presence around them suddenly exploded. Ling Lan raised her eyebrows in surprise and activated her domain. The entire private room immediately turned cold. Xie Yi and Luo Lang couldn’t help but shiver.

Ling Lan’s ice domain concept stopped Tang Ningyu and Mu Chaoran’s domain from exploding out, saving the furniture and private room from destruction.

“F**k, their force of presence is really powerful. They’ve actually advanced. They must have reached the titled domain realm now,” Luo Lang exclaimed in surprise.

Tang Ningyu and Mu Chaoran were only a few years older than them. They were from the same generation. The few of them thought that under the guidance of Boss, they had already surpassed everyone from the same generation as them. However, that didn’t seem to be the case now as the two people in front of them were faster than them.

What about Boss? Was Ling Lan even a human? The people from Lingtian knew that there was no point in comparing with Boss.

“Their advancement means that you are not training hard enough.” Ling Lan spoke as she controlled her domain.

She touched her chin and muttered, “Maybe we should activate the ultimate level month training?”

“No way! No, please! Boss!” Luo Lang, Xie Yi, Li Yingjie, and even Gu Dongyang shouted in unison.

The ultimate level day training was enough to make feel like bashing their skulls against the wall to end their life. If Boss really started the ultimate level month training... they could imagine what kind of hell they would have to go through. There was no question about it. They would definitely die.

They were not protesting the training because they were lazy. It was because they had actually experienced the ultimate level month training before. Besides Boss, only Qi Long managed to remain until the end. However, he still had to lie in Li Shiyu’s medical department for three whole months before he could stand up again. Most of the participants couldn’t even reach the halfway point. Even then, they had to lie down for more than a month before recovering. From then onwards, the ultimate level month training was seen as the doors of hell. Anyone who wanted to die could try it.

This was why everyone jumped in fright when they heard what Ling Lan said.

“You don’t want the ultimate level month training? Well, show me you can do without it. One year later...” Ling Lan smiled as she looked at her companions.

Her companions could almost see layers of devil wings behind Ling Lan’s back. “Don’t blame me for being merciless if you haven’t advanced.”

Chapter 1173 A New Start?

Around two hours later, Tang Ningyu and Mu Chaoran’s force of presence finally turned stable.

Ling Lan retracted her domain.

The two of them opened their eyes almost simultaneously. They looked at Ling Lan with a complicated expression. Should they hate him or thank him? He destroyed their dream but also helped them to kill the devil in their hearts. Due to his help, they were able to become titled domain realm formidable warriors.

Domain realm masters were very powerful but the normal domain realm masters were nothing in the domain world. Only titled domain realm formidable warriors had say in the world.

“Thank you.” In the end, Tang Ningyu still thanked Ling Lan. After all, he still received help from Ling Lan after he burst out in anger towards her.

“There’s no need to thank me. This is your fate. I just happened to be part of it.” Ling Lan didn’t take the credit.

“You are the one who helped us become titled domain realm formidable warriors. I’ll remember it forever. You’re right. Our identities were fake. No matter how true our feelings were during that moment, they would be fake in the end,” Mu Chaoran said earnestly.

Mu Chaoran suddenly stood up and walked towards Ling Lan. He saluted and introduced himself, “Major General Ling, I’m Colonel Mu Chaoran from the Flying Dragon Special Forces. Nice to meet you.”

Everyone was puzzled by his actions. Hadn’t he introduced himself already?

Mu Chaoran put his hand out and continued, “Since we revealed our real identity, are we able to become friends from now on?”

Tang Ningyu immediately understood Mu Chaoran’s actions. He looked at Ling Lan. He was in a dilemma. In the end, he just sighed. He didn’t follow what Mu Chaoran did.

‘Once some things are gone, they can never come back.’ Tang Ningyu liked Pei Shaoyun, not this cold and dominating Major General Ling.

They were not the same person.

Ling Lan looked up slightly and saw Mu Chaoran’s resolute gaze. She raised her eyebrows in surprise. “I thought you like Pei Shaoyun.”

“Yes, I like Pei Shaoyun. I’ve never met someone as pure and sincere as him. I want to protect him. I don’t want him to be tainted by the evils in this world. I don’t believe that the Pei Shaoyun I like is fake. If you exist, it means that he exists. I believed this firmly.” This was Mu Chaoran’s real thoughts.

“Mu Chaoran, Colonel Mu, your obsession towards Pei Shaoyun is too strong.” Ling Lan’s expression was cold. She didn’t have any intention of being friends with Mu Chaoran. Friends couldn’t be made so easily. They must be responsible for each other, and Ling Lan didn’t want to take on this obsession.

“This is my business. Major General Ling, I just want to know if it’s possible.” In the end, Mu Chaoran chose to be stubborn.

“Colonel Mu, take care of yourself.” Ling Lan ignored the outstretched hand, took her teacup and sipped her tea.

As Gu Dongyang noticed that the conversation was ending, he stood up hurriedly. “This way, please.” Lifting the teacup meant that Ling Lan wanted to chase the guest away.

Mu Chaoran knew that he couldn’t get what he wanted. However, he didn’t mind. He was still satisfied to know that Pei Shaoyun was Ling Lan.

Soon, Mu Chaoran and Tang Ningyu left.

After they walked out of the building, Tang Ningyu finally opened his mouth, “Chaoran, why did you want to become friends with Major General Ling?”

“I don’t know. I just know that I’ll regret it if I don’t say it. I think you will too.”

Tang Ningyu snorted. “How is that possible? So what if Ling Lan is strong? He is not Pei Shaoyun. That means that he is nothing to me.”

Mu Chaoran frowned. He thought for a while before finally saying, “I hope so.”

“But, you broke the rules of the Flying Dragon Special Forces to help Ling Lan. Our superiors will definitely punish you when we go back.” Tang Ningyu was worried about Mu Chaoran.

“There’s nothing to worry about. I’ve been punished before.” Mu Chaoran was used to getting punished.

“Are you trying to destroy all the good feelings our superiors have for you?” Tang Ningyu felt helpless.

Mu Chaoran shrugged. He didn’t care. He turned his head and forward with a steadfast attitude. When he noticed that Tang Ningyu couldn’t see him anymore, an indescribable emotion flashed past his eyes.

“Actually, Mu Chaoran is not bad.” Luo Lang had a good impression of Mu Chaoran.

Xie Yi frowned. “Not bad? The people from the Flying Dragon Special Forces are all arrogant bastards.”

Luo Lang was puzzled. “Really? Why do I think that Tang Ningyu and Mu Chaoran were not arrogant at all?”

“They were talking to Boss.” Xie Yi took the chance to lick Ling Lan’s boots. Then, he continued, “If we were the ones talking to them, they wouldn’t be so respectful. They would act all high and mighty to show off how noble the Flying Dragon Special Forces is.”

“Really?” Luo Lang looked at Ling Lan.

Ling Lan saw the hand signals Xie Yi was giving her secretly. He looked so funny when he pleaded for her help.

“Hmm...” Ling Lan made a soft sound. She glanced at Xie Yi as she used her gaze to ask him what he was willing to offer in exchange for her help.

‘Anything’ Xie Yi nodded firmly. He would do anything.

“That’s right.” Ling Lan wouldn’t disappoint her companions. She didn’t feel that the people from the Flying Dragon Special Forces were too good either. The simple-minded Luo Lang shouldn’t interact too much with them. This must be why Xie Yi was concerned.

As expected, they needed to worry more when they had an innocent friend.

“I didn’t expect the people from the famous Flying Dragon Special Forces to be like that. How disappointing.” The innocent Luo Lang got fooled by his companions. His good impression of Mu Chaoran and Tang Ningyu disappeared.

It was fun working together! Ling Lan and Xie Yi exchanged glances with each other.

Li Yingjie stood at the side in a daze. Were the people from the Flying Dragon Special Forces so bad?

Gu Dongyang pretended that he wasn’t involved in the conversation.

As the sun set, Ling Lan packed her things and prepared to leave tomorrow morning. Suddenly, her communicator vibrated. She was stunned.

She pressed the button and a virtual screen appeared in front of her. A familiar figure was displayed on the screen. It was her father, Ling Xiao.

Chapter 1174 Something For Everyone

“If I don’t call you, you won’t call me, huh.” Ling Xiao seemed to be a little angry. He looked like an ignored puppy that was about to bite you

“I thought that you’ll be very busy,” Ling Lan replied calmly.

If she had guessed correctly, her father was currently busy cleaning up the ends of his deal. That was why she didn’t contact him immediately.

“I will always have some time to communicate with my daughter no matter how busy I am.” Ling Xiao looked at her with a disapproving gaze.

Ling Xiao was willing to put aside all his work to spend some time with his daughter.

“Fine. What do you want to talk about?” Ling Lan felt speechless at her father’s suffocating and loving behaviour.

“Xuyang told me what happened at the conference. You did a good job.” Ling Xiao was full of smiles as he complimented his daughter.

‘Sob. Father, can you control yourself? Your expression is too obvious. It will ruin your male idol image.’ Ling Lan felt embarrassed. Was she really so good?

“But the rewards...” Ling Xiao’s expression turned normal again.

Ling Lan sensed something. “Did the three marshals make an offer?”

“Ling Lan, seems like you guessed it.” His daughter was so capable. She made him feel inferior.

“Of course, I would have guessed it. You are one of the ten great generals as well as the general of the 23rd division. Now, your child is a lieutenant general who has an independent army. The three great marshals won’t be able to accept this.” Ling Lan was very aware that the three great marshals wouldn’t allow the Ling family to have two generals. Otherwise, the Ling family would be unstoppable in the military world. This was forbidden in the military.

In the past, the entire Ling family only consisted of Lan Luofeng and Ling Xiao. They had no background to depend on. This was the reason why the military was very willing to give Ling Xiao the rank of general. No matter how good his reputation was, he wouldn’t be much of an influence in the military world if he didn’t have a good background.

However, it was different now. If his daughter became a lieutenant general and a commander of an independent army, she would become Ling Xiao’s most powerful right-hand man. Ling Xiao would be powerful enough to topple the current reign. The three great marshals were afraid of this.

“In the past, it’s impossible but now, it might be different.” Ling Xiao’s gaze was sharp. If his daughter deserved it, he wouldn’t let anyone take it away.

Ling Lan thought for a moment. “Did you do something?”

Ling Xiao smiled. “Not much. It’s just an exchange of benefits. They want to use my hand to remove the corrupted officers so that the various factions will be unhappy towards me. That way, I will be left all alone to fend for myself.”

“I paid such a huge price to play into their hands so I think that I should receive some consolation for that.” Ling Xiao raised his eyebrows and gave an evil smile.

“Why did you exchange it for an independent army?” Ling Lan frowned. Her father had better options than to have an independent army under him.

“It was the most reasonable choice. It was something they were willing to accept too.”

“Father, you’ve already discussed with the three great marshals.”

“It wasn’t much of a loss on my side. Everyone got what they wanted. Everyone is happy.” Ling Xiao smiled. He was willing to give up some interest for the sake of his daughter. So what if he had to offend some people. If he wanted to climb to the highest position and protect his family, he eventually would have to do these things anyway.

“Go back and wait patiently for the rewards. If you hear anything unpleasant, pretend that nothing happened. Focus on your own business.” Ling Xiao reminded Ling Lan seriously.

“I understand. After I go back to Base Nebula, I’ll enter into closed-door meditation.” Ling Lan smiled. “My injuries are not fully healed so it’s reasonable that my health got worse due to the long journey and the multiple accusations I received.”

Ling Xiao laughed out loud. The tiredness on his face disappeared. “That is a good excuse.”

Chapter 1175 Storm!

Ling Lan asked about Major General Gao. Ling Xiao only replied with a meaningful smile, and Ling Lan understood it.

Her father had his own people in the military too. They hid well and would only show themselves when a crucial situation arose.

Major General Gao would have probably revealed himself to help her in the conference if she needed it. If she made any mistakes at the conference, he would lend a helping hand.

Ling Lan gave a small smile to show how happy she was. Her father was always prepared beforehand. Whether she needed it or not, he would be always prepared to help her. He would ensure that she was able to do what she wanted without having to worry about her back.

She was very lucky to be able to meet her parents. They trusted and loved her completely. Even if she killed someone, they wouldn't ask her anything about it. Instead, they would give her a knife and even help her to bury the corpse.

The two of them chatted for a while more. Ling Xiao told Ling Lan what he was doing currently so that she could prepare mentally.

Ling Xiao could see how much Ling Lan had grown over the years. He had the intention of letting her know about the fight for power between the higher authorities in the military. Once Lingtian became an independent army, she would eventually have to deal with all the political matters that would flood her. She wouldn't be able to enter the core circle but she would still have to face many dangers. If she didn't remain vigilant, she might suffer due to her ignorance on the matter.

Ling Lan listened to Ling Xiao attentively. She knew that her father was teaching her valuable lessons. Just like what he mentioned, if Lingtian became an independent army, the things he said would be useful.

Half an hour passed. Ling Xiao had many topics to teach Ling Lan but he was very busy. He Xuyang put in much effort before he managed to squeeze some time for Ling Xiao to talk to Ling Lan. When He Xuyang reminded Ling Xiao for the third time to end the call, he had no choice but to hang up on the call.

The night was silent. The next morning, Ling Lan and her companions sat in the shuttle and left Planet General. They boarded the starship heading to Base Nebula from the Soldier City.

With Ling Xiao's help, they had a smooth journey. The starship they were on disappeared into the planetary sector.

At that moment, an order preventing Ling Lan from leaving Planet General arrived at the port. However, it was useless. Those people that wanted to keep Ling Lan on Planet General sighed in pity.

"Major Han, a starship is requesting to enter Base Nebula." A JMC received a request to enter the base so she hurriedly looked for her major.

Han Xuya replied calmly, "Ask them for their starship number, their identity, and their passcode for entering the base."

The JMC sent the request. The other party replied quickly, "Starship number: XY-001 from Base Nebula. Passcode: !@@1%#\$!@..."

Han Xuya jumped up happily. "It's Boss."

"Huh?" The JMC was confused.

"Our regiment commander is back." Another JMC managed to react quickly and shouted happily.

"Quick, send the signal to me." The tiredness on her face disappeared. She had been spending the last few days in anxiety and agitation. Finally, she could relax.

The JMC at the spaceport moved quickly. The next second, the signal from the spaceship was sent to Han Xuya.

"Regiment commander!" Han Xuya shouted excitedly.

"Xuya? Why is it you?" Ling Lan was stunned to hear that familiar voice. She quickly pressed the button and took over the call.

"Something happened in the base during your absence. However, we worked together and overcame the difficulty." Han Xuya just briefly explained the situation as it was not a suitable time to talk.

"I understand. Lead me into the base now." Ling Lan knew that many things must have happened at the base after she had left. After all, it was a part of her plan, but it seemed that this issue was a little more serious than she had expected.

Ling Lan was surprised but not agitated. Since Han Xuya was able to control the spaceport, it meant that the entire base was still under Lingtian's control.

The starship slowly docked into the spaceport. Ling Lan walked down the starship and saw the core members of Lingtian.

Ling Lan looked at them and asked calmly, "What happened?"

Yang Mingzhi's gentle aura had disappeared. He replied seriously, "After you left, the military sent three mecha clans over. These three mecha clans are all first-rank five-star mecha clans."

"Oh? Who did it?" Ling Lan raised her eyebrows.

Yang Mingzhi's expression turned darker. He replied instantly, "The three great marshals."

Ling Lan understood what he meant. "Each marshal sent one mecha clan. Seems like we are very popular."

"While we focused on searching for the spies, they took the chance to contact the regiment commanders in the base with the intention to assign someone else as the commander of the mecha clans." Liu Furong reported the actions of these three mecha clans.

"Our commanding officer of the base took part in it too?" Ling Lan was in deep thought.

"Yes and no. A new commanding officer has come to our base." Li Lanfeng smiled as he replied Ling Lan.

"Major General Yu went to take a higher position?" This was unexpected. Looks like a huge drama was being played during these past three days.

“Yes. He was transferred to the 16th division to be the head of the logistics department of a newly formed fleet,” Li Lanfeng answered.

Ling Lan frowned. “That position is of a similar rank.” Based on the merits Yu Huan got from this battle, he should be able to become the vice-head of a department in the military headquarters.

Although it was just a vice-head, its status was much higher than the head of the logistics department of a fleet. If he waited for a few more years, he might take over as the head of a department. The head of the logistics department might sound impressive but it was not a position within the military headquarters. There was no future in it.

“It’s better than being the commanding officer of a base. Major General Yu was quite happy with the new arrangement,” Li Lanfeng said.

“That’s true. This arrangement is still not bad. The military still remembered his contribution and gave him a new fleet. The soldiers there are all new so they don’t have factions or clicks yet. With Yu Huan’s ability, he would be able to create results.” Ling Lan acknowledged Yu Huan’s ability. That was why she didn’t take over the control of the base in the first place. She trusted Yu Huan.

Chapter 1176 The Ye Family?

“Did you find out which faction this new commanding officer belonged to?” Ling Lan asked.

“Major General Ye Kui from the Ye family. They seemed to have formed a collaboration with the second marshal but still maintaining a good relationship with the other two marshals. Hence, all three marshals might have agreed to this appointment. The main goal of this appointment is to take the Li family down a notch. After all, the two successors of the Li family are in your mecha clan. They are using the Li family to suppress you,” Li Lanfeng replied with contempt.

“Do you mean that the Li family is placing all their bets on me?” Ling Lan raised her eyebrows.

Li Lanfeng gave an ambiguous smile. “From the looks of it now, yes.” If his grandfather still couldn’t see who was the real king, he wasn’t worthy of being the family head. Sometimes, he felt that his grandfather knew this all along but he just never told him.

Ling Lan wasn’t surprised. She knew that the Li family would continue to support her as long as she was still useful to them.

“Where is Ye Kui?” Since Lingtian was still in control of Base Nebula, Ye Kui should be under their control too. He must be having a bad time.

“He’s at the dormitory district.” Li Lanfeng smiled. “He’s restricted from leaving the compounds.”

“You’re so bold. Aren’t you afraid that he will complain to the military headquarters?” Ling Lan smiled as she glanced at the crowd. She realised that these people had become bolder after following her. They even dared to lock up a commanding officer.

“We were finding spies in the base so Major General Ye has to suffer a little. He is prohibited from all kinds of communication.” Li Lanfeng suddenly turned serious.

Yang Mingzhi and Liu Furong couldn't help but smile when they heard this. Li Lanfeng's decisive act of locking Ye Kui up helped to stabilise the situation in Base Nebula. They felt that in terms of ruthlessness and decisiveness, they couldn't be compared with him. No wonder their regiment commander left him at the base.

"Good. We must keep Base Nebula safe. This is the foundation of our journey to being an independent army." Ling Lan commented on Li Lanfeng. Since her father wanted Lingtian to become an independent army, she mustn't let anyone disrupt the plan.

"Independent army?" The three of them looked at Ling Lan in astonishment. Lingtian becoming an independent army affected many parties so before the official announcement, the news of Lingtian becoming an independent army was kept a secret by the military headquarters. Thus, the people at the base didn't know about this.

"If no accidents happen, yes." Ling Lan nodded. There would definitely be a battle before they really became an independent army. However, she believed that her father would take care of it.

Although she never mentioned it, Ling Lan had always hoped that Lingtian would become an independent army. She had always been on the outside looking in in the battle for power. She was helpless when she saw her father getting impeded in his path. But, when Lingtian became an independent army, she wouldn't have to be a bystander anymore. She could be a participant and help her father. Her father wouldn't have to fight all alone anymore.

"The time will come soon." This was the last time she would bear with this sense of helplessness.

Ling Lan clenched her fist secretly. Ever since she entered the military, she had been controlling herself. Every step she took was done carefully so that she wouldn't create trouble for her father. Finally, her efforts paid off. It was time for her to reap the fruits of her labour. Everything was worth it in the end.

The three of them felt exhilarated after receiving Ling Lan's confirmation. They knew what becoming an independent army truly meant. This was the dream of all independent mecha clan. All of them hoped that Lingtian would become an independent army but they thought that this would happen many years later. Yet, it was happening now. They wondered if they were dreaming

Ling Lan didn't care about their shock. She just went past them to the dormitory where Ye Kui was resting. Li Lanfeng made the right decision but it would undoubtedly offend Ye Kui and the Ye family, as well as the people supporting them. As the regiment commander, she needed to take care of these implications so that Li Lanfeng's future wouldn't be affected.

The two soldiers on duty were both lieutenant colonels. Ling Lan recognised them. They were veteran soldiers who had been with Lingtian since its inception. She didn't expect them to be sent over to watch over Ye Kui.

"Regiment commander!" The two relaxed soldiers immediately stood up straight and greeted Ling Lan energetically.

"Old Yuan, Old Jin, thanks for your hard work." Ling Lan had a good memory so she remembered who they were.

“No problem.” The veteran soldiers feel elated after being acknowledged for their hard work. They didn’t expect their regiment commander to remember their names. They felt touched.

Ling Lan rarely spoke. Normally when she did, it was an order or instructions for training. Besides the team leaders who had to talk to her to report the training progress, no one dared to get close to Ling Lan, much less talk to her. No one wanted to freeze to death.

Everyone was afraid of their merciless and cold regiment commander but they knew that she was a responsible person. Everything she did was for their benefit. However, when they knew that their fierce regiment commander even remembered their names, the feelings bloomed inside them was indescribable.

[A scholar dies for his bosom friend.] Although they were just a member of the mecha clan, they still understand the phrase. They were willing to fight for their regiment commander and even risk their lives for her.

Ling Lan didn’t expect her greeting to have such a huge impact. To her, knowing the members of her soon-to-be army was part of her job.

Ling Lan asked Liu Furong and the other three people to wait outside while she entered the place herself. The first thing she saw was a huge courtyard with many plants and flowers planted inside. Some parts of the soil had been turned over to plant new flowers. This must be done within these two days.

This person had his freedom taken away but he still remained composed and even had the time to play with plants. This Ye Kui wasn’t a simple person! Ling Lan made a judgment.

The main door opened and a middle-aged man around forty years old walked out.

The middle-aged major general was stunned for a moment when he saw a young major general standing in the courtyard. Soon, he realised who it was and asked, “Major General Ling?”

“Major General Ye,” Ling Lan replied calmly.

“You’re back.” Ye Kui smiled. “This means that Base Nebula is totally under your control.”

Ling Lan answered, “I just want to know why did you get yourself involved in this mess?”

“I was thrown here by the higher authorities. I have no choice.” Ye Kui didn’t conceal the truth.

“Ye family?” Ling Lan liked to go straight to the point.

Ye Kui smiled slightly. “It’s a long story. Why don’t you come in to have some tea?”

Ling Lan nodded. “Suits me.”

Chapter 1177 Motive!

The two of them entered the living room. Ling Lan quickly found a place to sit.

Ye Kui’s adjutant officer brought out two cups of hot tea without waiting for Ye Kui’s order.

“There are no good tea leaves here so I apologise for the crude taste,” Ye Kui said.

“Is that a complaint that my subordinates are not taking good care of you?” Ling Lan raised her eyebrows slightly.

“I wouldn’t dare to do that,” Ye Kui smiled and replied calmly.

Ling Lan took a sip of the tea and waited for Ye Kui to speak. In terms of patience, she never lost.

Ye Kui noticed the incoming awkward silence so he spoke up voluntarily, “It wasn’t the intention of the Ye family.”

“Oh?” Ling Lan was surprised. “They don’t mind people from the Li family hanging around me?”

Ye Kui forced out a smile. “It is true that the Ye family doesn’t have a good relationship with the Li family and that we fought a lot, but we know that once the other party collapses, the death of our family is near too. The elite families seemed prestigious but their survival depended on the military.”

“No matter how powerful they are, they are nothing when compared to the military. If they want you to exist, you will. If they want you to disappear, it’s only a matter of seconds before you do.” This was the pain of elite families. No elite family could escape from this fate.

“So, you want to cooperate with the military. You placed your people in the different departments so that the military won’t be able to give up on you easily.” Ling Lan pondered as she spoke.

“Yes. However, as we went deeper into the military, we started to realise that doing this much wasn’t enough for us to solidify our position. Without military power, everything is useless.” They made so much effort but they were still controlled by the military. They still couldn’t get rid of the impending danger looming above their heads.

“The Ye family’s main focus is on the 9th division, right? Why haven’t they finished growing their tree after so long?” It was hard to tell whether Ling Lan was asking a question or mocking him.

Ye Kui felt that Ling Lan was mocking them. He gave a bitter smile and said, “The three great marshals have constantly been watching over us. Once we make any progress, they will act and disperse our growing influence. After every attempt, we will revert back to controlling only just a quarter of the division. They are keeping us hopeful but in reality, we will never have the opportunity to take over the division. Major General Ling should understand this. There’s no point in asking.”

“The Li family is in the same situation. At the start, two of their successors came to the 23rd division to follow you. The Ye family felt that this was a desperate move and even laughed at them for placing their bets on you.” Ye Kui sighed before he continued. “Yet, now, they finally understood that General Ling Xiao isn’t a normal person. He will definitely achieve great thing that none had done before.”

“So?” Ling Lan frowned.

“It’s a bit late but the Ye family would like to help General Ling Xiao to become the emperor of the military world, just like what the Li family is currently doing.” Ye Kui finally revealed the Ye family’s motive.

Ling Lan smiled slightly. She slowly put down the teacup in her hand, sat up straight, raised her head, and stared intently at Ye Kui.

Ye Kui felt an invisible force of presence pushing on his shoulders from such a simple movement.

“Major General Ye, my father is just a soldier who loves his country. He doesn’t have any grand ambition. It’s alright to say those words to me but if other people got wind of it, it would be bad for the Ye family.” Ling Lan’s expression turned serious.

‘Bullshit!’ Ye Kui almost refuted. If Ling Xiao didn’t have any ambition, why would he do what he did recently? If he didn’t have any ambition, why would the three great marshals send him to suppress the Li family? All this was done to prevent Ling Lan from becoming too powerful.

Ye Kui took a deep breath to calm down. He thought about his words carefully before answering, “It is my fault for making the assumption. However, the Ye family respects General Ling and hopes to cooperate with him. Please pass my words to him.”

He was too anxious. Maybe General Ling Xiao never told his son about his intentions. Although Ling Lan progressed quickly, he was just a 24-year-old young man. It might be bad for him to be aware of too many things.

The Ye family became nervous when General Ling Xiao grew so quickly in power. The Li family also had an early advantage over them so they got agitated and wanted to contact General Ling Xiao immediately through his son. From the looks of it now, this wasn’t a good idea.

“I never interfere in my father’s business. The Ye family can look for my father directly,” Ling Lan rejected him instantly.

Damn it. If he could find General Ling personally, why would he need to look for Ling Lan? The three great marshals had been keeping a tight surveillance of the Ye family so they didn’t dare to look for any generals. Currently, the Ye family knew that they were being pushed out as a scapegoat by the three great marshals but they still did it so that they could have a chance to interact with the Ling family.

Ye Kui took a deep breath again. Ling Lan was young but careful. There was nothing he could do now, but it’s alright as he had ample time.

Ye Kui remembered what his father told him. If he couldn’t contact General Ling immediately, he must learn from the Li family and stay beside Ling Lan. He would use his actions to prove his sincerity.

Ling Lan got what she wanted so she stood up and left. Ye Kui knew that he couldn’t get what he wanted instantly so he decided to play a long game. Hence, the two of them had a good time and bid farewell.

When she stepped outside, Ling Lan’s stern expression disappeared as she smiled beautifully. She was in a good mood.

“How is it?” Li Lanfeng asked nervously. He knew why Ling Lan came to look for Ye Kui.

Ye Kui would have to be freed one day. Once he was freed, Li Lanfeng would be in trouble for locking him up, even the Li family wouldn’t be able to protect him if that happened. After all, he locked up a major general from the Ye family. The Ye family wouldn’t just let him off easily.

“Why weren’t you worried when you did it?” Ling Lan raised her eyebrows. She liked to tease this beauty.

“Regiment commander, I did this for you and Lingtian.” Li Lanfeng quickly praised himself. Pride really meant nothing to him.

‘Shameless!’ Liu Furong and Yang Mingzhi scoffed secretly. They confirmed that the most shameless person in Lingtian was this Big Leader Li.

Ling Lan was surprised too. When did Li Lanfeng become so shameless? She only left the base for a few days. What happened?

“I knew that you’ll be able to handle it.” Li Lanfeng seemed to understand something. His nervous expression disappeared as he smiled. Ling Lan could feel the sweetness in his smile. What on earth was this?

Chapter 1178 Clean Out!

After returning to Base Nebula, Ling Lan sectioned off her work to the seven people from Lingtian. That night, she stayed in the medical department and announced to everyone that her old injuries have returned once again. The situation was dire and it required her to stay inside for treatment.

This news made many of the regiment commanders, who wanted to find Ling Lan to resolve the military’s underlying issues, frustrated.

“That Ling Lan is so sly!” In the living room of a mansion, a major general who had just received the news about Ling Lan’s closed-door meditation, angrily smashed his palm onto the coffee table in front of him. He was so frustrated that he couldn’t even restrain his power as he instantly destroyed the coffee table in front of him into pieces.

“We are slower by a tiny bit but we are now stuck in the impasse. If Ling Lan doesn’t want to see us, we can’t do much about it,” another major general beside him said calmly.

“When I get out, I will definitely report all those bastards from Lingtian to the military supreme court,” said the angry major general.

“That definitely won’t be possible as they still have General Ling Xiao behind them. Unless General Ling Xiao is to fall... But is that possible?” The third major general smiled coldly and responded.

These three individuals were from the three new first-rank five star ace mecha clans that came to Base Nebula.

The angry-looking individual was the regiment commander of Jade Cloud Ace Mecha Clan, Qin Youqi.

The one who seemed to be relatively mild-mannered was Fantasy City Ace Mecha Clan’s regiment commander, Wang Shao.

The one with the cold expression and a smirk on his face was the regiment commander of Nine Alliance Ace Mecha Clan, Zhang Haoxun.

“He’s after all only just a general. As long as the three marshals work together, he would fall from grace either way.” After hearing the question posed by Zhang Haoxun, Major General Qin Youqi stood up and spoke the truth of the matter.

However, the other two major generals weren't moved by his comments.

"Am I wrong?" Qin Youqi said annoyedly.

"General Ling Xiao is not only just a general. He's also a god-class operator!" explained Wang Shao. "As long as General Ling Xiao doesn't betray our country, no one would be able to bring him down from his position, even if the three marshals banded together."

"Then what does our higher-ups want us to do here?" Qin Youqi sat down with a defeated expression on his face.

"Perhaps they want us to probe Ling Lan's mecha clan. Of course, causing some trouble for Ling Xiao will be good as well," replied Zhang Haoxun.

"Before I came here, I met our chief to inquire about the situation in Base Nebula. Although he didn't clearly say it, he implied that if we can't get Base Nebula under our control, then Lingtian Mecha Clan will be able to successfully advance and become its own army." Wang Shao thought for a moment before deciding to tell them what he knew.

"Independent army!?" Qin Youqi and Zhang Haoxun instantly stood up from their seats. Although they were also sent by their higher-ups, they knew much less information about the undercurrents of the military when compared to Wang Shao.

"The merits Lingtian Mecha Clan has received from the recent battle is enough for them to become an independent army." Major General Wang Shao was quite indifferent in his tone. However, when he found out, he was just as shocked as the two colleagues in front of him.

"No wonder." Zhang Haoxun finally understood why their higher-ups wanted them to come here to fight for the command of the base. The only thing that could stop Lingtian from advancing was a worthless commander. Perhaps their higher-ups didn't even want to stop Lingtian Mecha Clan from advancing, and was planning to instead switch out the regiment commander.

"However, now it seems that we have belittled Lingtian Mecha Clan." Wang Shao sighed.

They originally thought Major General Yang Mingzhi, who was responsible for Lingtian during Ling Lan's absence, was also working under the First Marshal. Even if their movements were discovered, he would just look the other way. However, they didn't expect that Yang Mingzhi wouldn't even give them any face and actually made a move at the most crucial moment.

While being under the impression that Yang Mingzhi was on their side, they were lured by Yang Mingzhi to come to their current location. After they got in, they could no longer leave.

"Frankly, I'm worried about our mecha clans right now. I'm not sure how our subordinates are doing." Zhang Haoxun frowned. They were already stuck there for two days with no way of contacting the outside.

On the day right before they were incarcerated, the capabilities Lingtian Mecha Clan had shown them made them afraid. They originally thought that being domain realm masters, they could easily escape from a bunch of no-named soldiers. However, they didn't account for more than 10 domain realm

masters instantly putting them down. Some of them might even have been titled domain realm formidable warriors.

What was more terrifying was they didn't know where the medicinal agent they had injected them came from. Just one injection caused their physical skills to decrease exponentially. They could currently only retain it at the peak of refinement stage, while... any one of the guards outside the door was at Qi-Jin stage. They didn't even have the strength to escape even if they wanted to.

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"They won't be in chaos because they've probably been taken down already," said Qin Youqi while biting his lip in frustration. If they dared to use medicinal agents against them, then they probably wouldn't let their team leaders go that easily. If team leaders wouldn't rise up, then the others would also remain calm.

Wang Shao sighed. "I actually admire the person who decided to incarcerate us. That person is quite daring. Once this situation turns into our favour, he would be the first one to be sent out to take responsibility for these actions."

"Isn't that person Yang Mingzhi?" Qin Youqi asked in a confused tone. In his mind, other than Yang Mingzhi, no one else would dare to make a move on them.

"No, with Major General Yang's personality, even if he were to go against us, he would use a moderate means and not such a forceful method," said Wang Shao.

"This person either likes taking risks, or is completely loyal to Ling Lan. He clearly knows he will be the person to take the blame, but is still willing to clear out any obstacles that stand in the way of Ling Lan," Zhang Haoxun spoke his mind.

"I really want to meet this person," Wang Shao said with interest. Compared to Yang Mingzhi, he was more interested in meeting the person that made the decision to put them here. If they wanted to go against Ling Lan, this person would definitely be a huge obstacle for them. Although Wang Shao couldn't do anything about Ling Lan at this current moment, it was still necessary for him to know more about his enemy.

Moving away from the three major generals who were stuck in the villa, their three first-rank five star mecha clans were all being held in their own camping ground. Other than these mecha clans who were under surveillance, most of the other clans were doing what they usually do and weren't affected.

Of course, all the regiment commanders from all the mecha clans were silently waiting to see how Lingtian was going to regain control of the situation.

One week had passed since then. During the past week, more than a dozen spies were cleared out of Base Nebula. This shocked everyone. Piercing Arrow's regiment commander was also among those taken away and a few of the heavenly warriors working under him as well.

After this news was announced, Piercing Arrow Ace Mecha Clan's name became infamous and was looked down by everyone. Zhang Chao also couldn't believe this news. However, the evidence Lingtian had provided could not be disputed. Among the evidence, there was also his little brother, Zhang Han's, testimony.

As for the other spies, although they were all team leaders, they were still not comparable in magnitude like Piercing Arrow Ace Mecha Clan.

While everyone was in shock about Piercing Arrow, Lingtian's seven administrators were having headaches because of one person.

"Ling Yi..." Yang Mingzhi looked at Li Lanfeng with a bitter smile on his face, "You've decided? That's Regiment Commander Ling's... Why don't we wait until Regiment Commander Ling comes out before resolving this issue?"

Qi Long, Han Jijyun, Liu Furong, Lin Zhong-qing and Li Shiyu were all looking at Li Lanfeng. They agreed with Yang Mingzhi's suggestion to wait for Ling Lan to come out before making such a decision.

"If he did something wrong, then he needs to be punished. Our regiment commander wouldn't want us to break the rules just because of his relationship with him," Li Lanfeng said with determination. He didn't want to make it difficult for Ling Lan in dealing with this type of person that would cause headaches for her.

"You're the leader, what you say goes." Yang Mingzhi sighed. Ling Yi was after all a member of Li Lanfeng's team. If a team leader wanted to punish him, no one could stop him anyways.

"However, I suggest you move past Ling Yi and just punish those who hide around him." Yang Mingzhi still gave the suggestion he had in mind. He didn't want Ling Lan and Li Lanfeng to have any grudges between each other because of this issue as that would be detrimental for Lingtian.

It should be known that Ling Yi's father gave his life for Ling Lan (or at least that was what Ling Lan explained as the reason for Ling Hua's death; Ling Yi had been proud of this ever since). Just from this relationship, how could they do anything against Ling Yi? If they were too forceful, it would show that Ling Lan was too harsh towards the son of his loyalist. They wouldn't be able to report it to Ling Lan that easily.

"However, the root of the mistake came from him. If he didn't record that video and give it to our enemies, those people wouldn't have had the chance to make a move." Li Lanfeng narrowed his eyes. He definitely wasn't going to allow someone who was so gullible and easily manipulated to be by Ling Lan's side.

Ever since Ling Lan mentioned that Lingtian would be advancing into an independent army, Li Lanfeng knew that in the future, there will be countless more plots made against Ling Lan. They wouldn't be able to defend against all of them. The more it became like that, the more he couldn't withstand any weaknesses around Ling Lan. Otherwise, if they were not careful, they might get into big trouble.

Ling Lan was the most important person in Li Lanfeng's life. Despite Li Lanfeng being afraid to take the last step forward and drag Ling Lan down into the depths of hell together, he still wouldn't allow anything that could pose as a threat to Ling Lan's body or existence to survive or to at least stay near her. Ling Yi met both of these requirements so he was a troubling individual that Li Lanfeng felt he definitely needed to get rid of.

Thus, even though he knew doing this might cause Ling Lan to be discontent with him, Li Lanfeng would still not care about the consequences and do the dirty work to keep Ling Lan safe from harm's reach.

“You... Why can’t you just loosen a bit on this matter?” Li Lanfeng always had many plots against people and never played out everything logically. Yang Mingzhi could not understand why he was so determined on the matter regarding Ling Yi. “It’s called morals,” said Li Lanfeng without hesitation.

He won’t be explaining his motives for doing this. In truth, waiting for Ling Lan to deal with this matter personally would be a problem. However, he also believed that with Ling Lan’s personality, he wouldn’t tolerate Ling Yi’s actions.

Then, why was he in such a hurry to resolve this matter? There was actually a reason he couldn’t tell anyone.

Him telling the others that he was trying to make it easier for Ling Lan was only just what he thought on the surface. In reality, he just didn’t want Ling Lan’s feeling to get hurt. Giving punishment to the son of his loyalist personally would also hurt Ling Lan’s feelings (Li Lanfeng was thinking too much) so he would rather do it for Ling Lan. Ling Lan being angry at him would be better than having her feelings hurt.

All of them saw that Li Lanfeng had made his decision. They could only just helplessly agree with him.

Just like Yang Mingzhi had said, Ling Yi was Li Lanfeng’s team member. If the team leader wanted to punish Ling Yi, they wouldn’t be able to stop him. The only person who could stop him, Ling Lan, who was already in closed-door meditation.

In order to prove that her meditation was real, Ling Lan didn’t meet with anyone this whole time. It was only just that she wasn’t meditating for medical treatment, but rather to train her domain concept.

In the next morning, Ling Yi received a notification from the JMCs, telling him to report to his team leader’s office because there was a new mission for him.

Ling Yi couldn’t understand why he was summoned. It should be known that Li Lanfeng never liked him and would never look for him for anything. Of course, he also didn’t like Li Lanfeng too. In his mind, Li Lanfeng’s actions were cruel and ruthless. He was a poisonous leech that was in Lingtian Mecha Clan.

Unfortunately, he didn’t have power to say otherwise. Li Lanfeng also was quite guarded against him and he couldn’t get close to Young Master Lan. Otherwise, he would definitely remind Ling Lan to be careful of Li Lanfeng. He was definitely someone who couldn’t be trusted.

Unfortunately, he didn’t have power to say otherwise. Li Lanfeng also was quite guarded against him and he couldn’t get close to Young Master Lan. Otherwise, he would definitely remind Ling Lan to be careful of Li Lanfeng. He was definitely someone who couldn’t be trusted.

However, Ling Yi wasn’t afraid. He always did everything to the letter. Even if Li Lanfeng wanted to go against him, he would still have to find a reason first.

In Lingtian, punishing team members didn’t just happen with a word from the team leader. There needed to be real evidence. At the same time, there must be five team leaders acting as jury members. Otherwise, the team member could report his team leader instead.

Ling Yi was very grateful towards Young Master Lan for creating this rule at the beginning as this rule stopped Li Lanfeng from making a move on him easily.

Right as he walked into the command center, he met with a first lieutenant who was on guard duty.

“Hello! Are you Senior Captain Ling?” The first lieutenant saluted him and asked him a question.

“Yes!” Ling Yi nodded. “Colonel Li is currently in the conference room. Please head straight to the conference room.” Seeing Ling Yi arrival, the first lieutenant instantly let out a sigh of relief. He had been straining his eyes to look around this area, in fear that he was going to miss Senior Captain Ling.

“I know.” Ling Yi frowned, but still replied politely.

He didn’t know what Li Lanfeng was planning, but he still turned around and walked towards the conference room according to the directions of the first lieutenant.

The conference room’s door opened automatically as he stepped in front of it. The circular conference table had many people sitting around it.

Ling Yi was shocked. Just from one look, he was able to see Major General Yang Mingzhi, Team Leaders Luo Lang, Zhao Jun, Xie Yi and Gu Dongyang.

Li Lanfeng was sitting in the main seat. After hearing the door opening, he turned around. When he saw Ling Yi, his expression remained indifferent as he just pointed at a random seat on the side and said, “Sit, Senior Captain Ling.”

“Thank you, team leader!” Ling Yi saluted and then saluted towards the other team leaders. Then, he sat down with his back straight and took off his military cap.

Li Lanfeng continued to speak quietly with the other team leaders while not minding Ling Yi’s presence. Despite his curiosity, Ling Yi could still hold it in and didn’t move from his seat.

Bam! The door opened once again and a familiar face was brought in while being dragged by soldiers.

Seeing this, Ling Yi’s expression changed instantly as he stood up.

“Little Tao, why are you here?”

Tao Xiaotao’s face had a hint of panic. After he saw Ling Yi, he began to struggle and shout loudly, “Big brother Yi, save me.”

Seeing this, the soldiers holding him down picked up their beam gun and aimed Tao Xiaotao, “Silence.”

Ling Yi’s eyes had fiery anger in his eyes and shouted angrily, “What are you doing?” “Silence!” Suddenly, a cold and sharp voice rang in Ling Yi’s ears.

Ling Yi turned around and saw Li Lanfeng facing him with a cold expression on his face.

He took two deep breaths and kept in the anger he had. Ling Yi then coldly asked, “What does this mean? What did Tao Xiaotao do? Why is he being treated like this?”

Despite Tao Xiaotao being naughty, lazy and ignorant, he was still a scaredy- cat who wouldn’t do anything bad.

Li Lanfeng glanced at Ling Yi and then turned around to speak with the other team leaders, “Since everyone’s here, let’s begin.”

“No problem.” Nodded the other team leaders.

The soldiers holding down Tao Xiaotao took him to an empty seat on the side and forced him to sit.

Li Lanfeng flipped open a document that was placed in front of him and then said, "Tao Xiaotao, did you send out a document on X month, X day and X time?"

Tao Xiaotao had tears in his eyes, but still nodded, "I remember I sent one out, but it was just a simple letter to home. I just wanted to let my family know that I was fine after the battle."

"Let's watch the video first." Li Lanfeng pushed down on the optical supercomputer in the conference room table. A virtual screen appeared in the conference room. The screen showed the video of Ling Lan being reported for killing prisoners at the military headquarters.

Ling Yi saw the video and had a huge change in expression. Then, he saw that the order to kill prisoners was being blamed on Ling Lan. While he was shocked, his face also turned extremely pale.

Tao Xiaotao was still in the clouds. Although he turned pale after watching the video, it still seemed like it was his first time seeing the video.

Li Lanfeng then turned towards Ling Yi and asked calmly, "Ling Yi, do you have anything to say?"

Ling Yi raised his head and didn't hesitate. He instantly answered, "This video was recorded by me, but the stuff afterwards isn't supposed to be like that. This is fake."

"The last part was my order to kill prisoners, right?" Li Lanfeng knew Ling Yi recorded this video to go against him.

"Yes!" Ling Yi responded with an unruly expression. "According to the Intergalactic United Nations' Humanitarian Act, mecha clans that surrender are not allowed to be killed. You had broken the rules, so I must report it to the higher-ups.

"That's why you blindly reported it to the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee without thinking that you would fall into someone's trap, causing the person who you idolized to be reported..." Li Lanfeng had a hint of coldness in his voice and spoke one word at a time, "You really are ignorant."

"No, I didn't report it to the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee." Ling Yi stood up angrily. "I kept this video and was waiting for a chance to speak to Young Master Lan."

"Was that what you were thinking when you recorded this video?" said Li Lanfeng with a half-smile.

It was as though Ling Yi was being insulted. He angrily said, "Of course!"

"Ling Yi, who are you trying to fool?" shouted Li Lanfeng. "Others don't know, but wouldn't those from Lingtian know how our regiment commander was like on the battlefield? As for my order to kill the prisoners, our regiment commander had already silently consented to the matter. If it was someone smart, they would have known where our regiment commander stands on the matter."

"If you're not dumb than who is?" Li Lanfeng snorted coldly. "In reality, the video you recorded was only just to satisfy your sense of justice. You wanted to acquire everyone's acknowledgment and praise. However, you didn't think about how much trouble your actions will bring to Lingtian and our regiment commander."

"I didn't do anything! I didn't do anything!" shouted Ling Yi uncontrollably. "I didn't report to anyone. I also didn't share this video with anyone. Why would I need acknowledgement and praise? I just want our regiment commander to stay away from dishonorable people like you..."

"Then I have a question, if you didn't report it and didn't share the video with anyone, how could this video have been leaked out and be taken in by the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee? How could it have been changed as well?" Li Lanfeng cut Ling Yi short and got straight to the point.

Ling Yi was shocked. He calmed down and thought carefully for a moment. Then, his face turned pale as he looked at Tao Xiaotao with an expression of disbelief.

"I-I-I... I only showed it to my companions," Ling Yi squeezed out these words with a pained expression on his face. He was feeling the pain of being betrayed.

Chapter 1179 Who?

"It isn't just Tao Xiaotao. There are more." Li Lanfeng sneered.

He looked at Zhao Jun and whispered, "What's the condition on your side?"

Zhao Jun looked at his communicator. "They're here."

The doors of the meeting room were opened again. Four figures appeared this time. Ling Yi knew who they were. They were the people he met at the First Men's Military Academy and entered the 23rd division with him. They were Yi Tiange, Yan Wuyou, Hua Qingxin, and Rong Ziruo.

"Everyone is here now." Li Lanfeng smiled as he glanced at Ling Yi.

Ling Yi was stunned. He didn't know who betrayed him.

Yi Tiange was the calmest among the four people. When he saw Ling Yi and Tao Xiaotao in the meeting room, he frowned slightly. Then, he saluted and introduced himself. "Leaders, I'm Yi Tiange from the ZF team of the logisticians." After introducing himself, he quickly nudged Rong Ziruo who was beside him. Luckily, Rong Ziruo reacted quickly. "Rong Ziruo!"

After being awakened by the introduction of their companions, Yan Wuyou and Hua Qingxin quickly saluted too. "Yan Wuyou!" "Hua Qingxin!"

"Reporting!" The four of them shouted simultaneously before putting their hands down. They stood upright in their position and waited for further instructions.

"There's no need to be nervous. We just want to understand some things." Compared to Li Lanfeng, Yang Mingzhi was much gentler in his way of handling the newcomers. He pointed to the seats beside Ling Yi and said, "Please sit over there."

"Yes, Leader Yang!" The four of them walked to their seats. Yi Tiange looked at Ling Yi but Ling Yi avoided his gaze. He didn't know if he could trust Yi Tiange.

He had the innate talent of distinguishing everyone's real thoughts but why couldn't he see through his friends? Ling Yi's thoughts were in a mess.

Yi Tiange was stunned. He had never seen Ling Yi act like this before. He retracted his gaze as well as his thoughts.

“Let’s continue.” Li Lanfeng didn’t look at the four people. Instead, he spoke to the other team leaders.

The team leaders nodded in agreement. Li Lanfeng flipped to the next page before looking at Tao Xiaotao. “Were you alone when you sent the message?”

Tao Xiaotao thought about it carefully. Suddenly, his eyes lit up as he shouted, “Everyone was there.”

Li Lanfeng looked at the four newcomers. “On that day, Tao Xiaotao sent a message out of the base. You were all beside him at that time, right?”

The four newcomers exchanged glances with one another. They carefully recalled what happened during that time. Yi Tiange replied for everyone, “Yan Wuyou, Tao Xiaotao, and I lived in one dormitory while Rong Ziruo and Hua Qingxin lived beside us. They will normally come to our dormitory to play. During that time, the four of us were indeed with him.”

The other three people nodded.

“I’m sure that you’ve seen this video, right?” Li Lanfeng played the video again.

The four people were astounded to see the video. They understood why they were called here.

Yi Tiange looked at Ling Yi worriedly. Then, he nodded and said, “We’ve seen this video before. However, the ending is different. This video has been altered.”

“Yes. Someone used this video to slander our regiment commander for brutal murder. It was sent directly to the Disciplinary and Investigation Committee.” Li Lanfeng looked at Ling Yi intently. Ling Yi couldn’t help but tremble. If he knew this would happen, he would never have recorded it.

“Based on what Ling Yi said, he only showed this video to the five of you. Hence, the only culprits are the five of you. The video was sent out through Tao Xiaotao’s message to his family.” Li Lanfeng told them the truth.

Tao Xiaotao shouted quickly, “No, no. I just sent out a letter to my family. I didn’t send any video.”

“This video is kept within the message. It passed through the inspection of the mainframe and got leaked out successfully.” Li Lanfeng smirked. “It’s obvious that one of you is an outstanding hacker.”

The five people looked at each other. They all seemed confused. Who was the hacker hiding among them?

Ling Yi’s gaze changed again. He remembered his friend from the virtual world. Was he really his friend or was he an enemy in disguise?

“How about this? I hope that everyone can think carefully and see who is the most suspicious person. If we can’t find the culprit, all of you will be kept in the base. This is to ensure the safety of everyone in the base.” Li Lanfeng calmly explained the outcome to them. “There is only one chance. Treasure it.”

Gu Dongyang frowned. He wanted to say something but Yang Mingzhi stopped him. Yang Mingzhi shook his head.

Gu Dongyang nodded. He remained patient and waited for the results.

The five young people started to hesitate. They looked at one another with uncertainty in their eyes.

Three minutes passed. Li Lanfeng looked up. "I think that you've been given enough time. Please tell me your opinions now. Who seemed suspicious to you?"

He noticed that none of them wanted to speak so he looked at Yi Tiange. "You're Yi Tiange, right? You can start."

A complicated expression flashed past Yi Tiange's face. He contemplated for a while before saying, "We knew each other in the Scout Academy. We've been friends for many years and worked hard together. We set the same goals and went through the same training. We're not blood-related siblings but we're closer than that. I can't believe that someone among us betrayed us. Leader Li, could it be that someone hacked into Ling Yi's optical supercomputer and copied that video? Then, the person framed Tao Xiaotao for sending the video."

The other people felt hopeful after listening to what he said. They looked at Li Lanfeng in unplanned unison. They hoped that he agreed with what Yi Tiange had said.

Li Lanfeng shook his head in pity. "Our hacker confirmed it many times. This video was sent by one of you."

"Did they make a mistake?" Ling Yi asked with hopes in his eyes. He really couldn't believe that one of his childhood friends betrayed him.

"Do you think a hacker who can control our enemy's signals will make a mistake?" Li Lanfeng scoffed.

Ling Yi was speechless. He remembered the scene when he fought with the Knight Ace Mecha Clan, and the hope in him diminished.

Chapter 1180 Playing With People's Mind!

"I have said that there's only one chance. If you can't find the hacker, I'm sorry, we have to lock all of you up and let the military court take over. Lingtian can't afford to keep suspicious people. Even if we know that some of you are innocent, we must forsake you." Li Lanfeng emphasised his words.

"I really didn't do it." Tao Xiaotao looked as though he wanted to cry. He looked at Ling Yi and said, "Brother Ling, tell them that I won't do such things."

Ling Yi looked at Tao Xiaotao and his companions beside him. He hugged his head in pain and squatted down. He shouted in a low voice, "I don't know! I really don't know!"

"It's Tiange." Tao Xiaotao thought about something. He looked at Tiange and said, "I remember that Yi Tiange asked me to send a message to my family to tell them that I'm safe. That's why I send the message. If not, I wouldn't have sent a message."

Yi Tiange was shocked. "Xiaotao, be careful with your words."

"Isn't that what happened?" Tao Xiaotao questioned him. "Why did you ask me to send the message?"

Yi Tiange's face turned red with anger. He took two deep breaths to calm himself before explaining, "You said you missed your family and wondered how your parents and siblings were doing. You wondered if they would worry about your safety so I told you to send a message to them. If you didn't say all those misleading words, I wouldn't have suggested it."

"Yes. I think that's what happened. Why did I suddenly miss my family?" Tao Xiaotao carefully recalled what happened and admitted that what Yi Tiange said was true.

Suddenly, Tao Xiaotao looked at Rong Ziruo in astonishment. "It's you. You were the one who asked me about my family. That's why I missed them. Why did you ask me about them?"

Rong Ziruo was stunned by Tao Xiaotao's accusations. He shook his head furiously. "Weren't we just randomly talking. What are you saying?" Rong Ziruo frantically tried to remember what had happened in the room. As time went by, he slowly got more anxious. Cold sweat formed on his forehead.

"Don't be agitated. Think slowly." Li Lanfeng smiled. The encouragement in his eyes comforted Rong Ziruo.

"Tsk tsk tsk, Brother Feng is so ruthless." Xie Yi couldn't help but mutter.

"Ruthless? How?" Luo Lang was puzzled. Big Leader Li was giving them a chance to refute his claim. He didn't just point his arrows at someone. In his eyes, this was fair.

"You won't understand," Xie Yi sighed.

Luo Lang glared at Xie Yi. In the next moment, his gaze turned calm.

"Xie Yi, don't get overboard," Luo Lang said indifferently.

"I understand. I won't do it again." Xie Yi raised his hands to surrender the moment the calm personality came out. If he treated the calm personality badly, Luo Lang would hate him. Xie Yi knew how important the calm personality was to Luo Lang. He was only second in place to Boss. He couldn't afford to offend the calm personality

"Explain properly." The calm personality threw this sentence down before disappearing. The eyes turned bright again.

"Actually, Brother Feng's decision is cruel," Xie Yi commented.

"Cruel?" Luo Lang seemed clueless.

"Friendships are formed through hardships and time. However, no matter how much thick and thin they went through, it all boils down to trust." Xie Yi looked at Luo Lang with a complex expression. If Luo Lang knew what he was thinking, would he still trust him?

Luo Lang nodded. He agreed with what Xie Yi said.

"What Brother Feng did just destroyed the trust between them. They will be suspicious of each other and hate each other. The relationship they build over the years will disappear due to all the suspicions

they have for each other. In the end, they might become strangers or even enemies. In times of danger, humans will show their true nature. The truth is always ugly.”

“This is what Lanfeng does best.” Zhao Jun interrupted them. “He always likes playing with people’s minds. However, after he followed Boss, he has been suppressing that side of him. I miss those times.”

Luo Lang and Xie Yi glared at Zhao Jun. They moved their chairs further away from him.

‘Damn it, I mustn’t get too close to this pervert. He seems happy that he made friends with a manipulative man. I might get targeted by them.’

Zhao Jun shrugged when he saw Xie Yi and Luo Lang looking at him with contempt. He was very innocent.

While Xie Yi, Luo Lang, and Zhao Jun were having their own conversation, Rong Ziruo finally remembered what had happened. He said, “I was chatting with Wuyou and Xiaotao. At the start, we were talking about Base Nebula and the battle we had. We were jealous that Brother Yi managed to gain merits through the battle. We also...” He looked carefully at Li Lanfeng before continuing, “We also talked about Leader Li’s order to kill our enemies. Of course, we knew this from Brother Yi.”

Li Lanfeng continued smiling as if he didn’t mind. Rong Ziruo felt more relaxed as he continued to recount what had happened.

“Then, we talked about Leader Li Yingjie and Head Li Shiyu. They are brothers so we said that the Li family is full of talents. Lingtian already has three people from the Li family holding high positions. Wuyou commented on how having brothers fighting with you was better than fighting alone. He said that he was the only child. He didn’t have any siblings so no one can help him.”

Rong Ziruo turned to look at Yan Wuyou. “Am I right?”

Yan Wuyou’s face was pale. He regained his composure before replying, “Yes. I even said that I admire you for having siblings. However, that was just a random topic. I didn’t have any underlying intention.”

Rong Ziruo heaved a sigh of relief when Yan Wuyou admitted what he said. He finally cleared his suspicion.

“Yes. Those words remind me of my family and my brothers and sisters.” Tao Xiaotao said excitedly. “That’s why I wanted to send them a message.”

“Yan Wuyou, the only son of the Yan family. Although it’s a sixth-rank elite family, it’s still an elite family. The resources you received are much better than your friends. Yet, you are willing to throw away your identity as a young master and follow Ling Yi. No matter how you look at it, it’s problematic.” Li Lanfeng had already investigated all their backgrounds. Since Yan Wuyou was pushed out, he exposed his real identity.