

Chapter 154 Personal Interaction

I looked at him sternly. "Tsai Xiaobing, don't forget who you are?! You're a soldier, you can't do such undisciplined things."

Shocked by me, Tsai shot up from his seat and stood at attention.

"Captain, I swear I didn't, I wouldn't dare. Rock is a bit of a pervert; he goes for foot reflexology every day. I just cottoned up to the lady boss and arranged an accidental meeting with Rock. I really didn't do anything else."

"Kid," I laughed, "You haven't been away from the troop for more than a few days and you've already let loose. If the old man finds out, he'll take the belt to you. Alright, sit down and let's talk. What have you found?"

Tsai Xiaobing sighed with relief and sat back down.

"Captain, don't scare me like that. When you roared at me like that, my hairs stood on end."

"Isn't that a good thing? One scare and you speak normally again," I smiled.

Tsai Xiaobing rubbed at his throat. "Captain, ya shouldn't tease me, I'm not doing anything wrong. I've been getting chummy with Rock recently. He's a pervert and he's always surrounded by women every day. But he's really careful. He eats and drinks with us, but he never reveals anything important."

"He's got three factories under him. If he's the type to leak secrets, the police would have caught him already. Hanging out with him every day isn't going anywhere," I said.

"I heard that Rock isn't comfortable with outsiders, but he's got a good friend called Yan. I think she might know something."

Yan, that name sounded familiar. I felt like I had heard it before somewhere.

After some thought, I asked, "What does this Yan do?"

"She's a prostitute. In a bar. I swear I haven't been her customer before..." Tsai Xiaobing quickly clarified.

I shook my head. "Rock must be quite rich. If he's that keen on Yan, he wouldn't let her prostitute herself. I don't think Yan knows much. Don't get too close. You might get noticed. Think about it, if it was your woman, would you let her prostitute herself?"

Tsai Xiaobing was spooked and he started speaking normally again. "Of course not! Even if I have no money, I'll do hard labor, sell my blood, but I won't ever let her sell herself. If any bastard dares to touch her, I'll kill him!"

His voice was loud, and people outside could hear him shout. In a flash, Lin Fang was knocking on my door asking if anything was the matter.

"Nothing, it's just my friend. Please shut the door as you leave." I watched as Lin Fang closed the door, then the corner of my mouth curled up into a smirk.

Tsai Xiaobing glanced at me, then glanced behind him. "Captain, what are ya laughing about? Ya can't have your eye on that girl? She's pretty, but this is a workplace romance."

I flicked him in the head. "I realized that after leaving the mountains, you've become so wild. What's going on in that brain of yours? Why are you so jumpy? Don't tell me you met a woman. Tell me and I'll set up a match."

"Really?" he blurted out before realizing that he had said too much. He immediately changed his tone. "Captain, stop teasing me. I'm just here to complete my mission. There's no woman I like."

I was not stupid. How could I be fooled by him? But since he did not want to talk, I was not going to ask. However, when I had the time, I would find out who had caught his eye. He had spent the past couple of days in entertainment venues. If he set his eyes on some prostitute, the old man would have my hide! But if it was a good girl, I would make some effort to help an old friend.

"Alright, stop thinking with your lower half. What else did you find out from Rock? Who are his suppliers and customers? Where do his materials come from? He has to have someone in the police department. Who's his spy? Who's helping him distribute? What route do they take? Who settles the accounts? Where's his stock stored? Did you find anything?"

Tsai Xiaobing replied regretfully, "I just got this lead. I was hoping to hang out with him longer, then let him bring me to the factories. I would be able to get more clues then."

That was a plan. However, an outsider like Tsai Xiaobing was never going to gain Rock's trust.

"Alright, then we can't meet too often in private in the future, in case anyone figures out your identity. Also, you need to take a trip back to Xinjiang."

Tsai Xiaobing looked at me uncomprehending. I got up to retrieve the mobile phone from the safe.

"Two days ago, I was almost assassinated by a hired killer from Thailand. The gun he used comes from the same batch as the smuggled guns we're investigating. This is his phone; it won't switch on due to water damage. I don't trust outsiders, and it's not convenient to send something so important by mail. Bring this to the old man and have a technical specialist look at it. It doesn't matter if it can be fixed, but I want all the data inside, especially the contact list."

Tsai Xiaobing reached for the phone excitedly. "Captain, you're the best. Ya found such an important lead so fast!"

"Don't flatter me. Be quick about it. It might not be urgent, but the sooner resolved the better. I've got a lot going on right now. If it drags on, I might get overwhelmed and can't concentrate on it."

My mind was currently buzzing with Han Kun's whereabouts and Chu Xiaoxiao's situation. There were too many things going on that were too complicated. I needed to organize everything and ensure that nothing urgent was delayed.

But Tsai Xiaobing asked me for an extra three days.

"Three days? What else do you have to do?"

"I... I still want to follow this lead with Rock. We're pretty close now." Tsai Xiaobing spoke normally again.

I did not want to expose his lie, because I was very sure he was lying. If I did, he was still not going to be honest with me. But this was not good. I felt he was hiding something.

After Tsai left, Lin Fang came in again.

"Yes?" I did not look up at her.

Lin Fang placed a thermos jar on my table, then stood shyly behind it. "Zhang Chao, I made soup, please try it. You haven't been eating well."

Surprised, I stammered, "Uh... Okay... Thanks. Haven't you gone for lunch?"

She looked awkward. "Can I eat with you? They don't want to eat with me."

After her return, no one in the company wanted to be her friend anymore. They were okay with working with her, but did not interact with her personally.