

I didn't see his face, but I could sense his overly bloated arrogance from that swollen pig's head of a face of his.

"For once, you're actually right! Chu Xiaoxiao agreed to change her testimony too. That little plaything you've been raising, even she wouldn't help you, and she'll even testify against you in court. Tell me, how does it feel to be betrayed by everyone you know? I must feel pretty bad right? Do your best and don't pass out or have a heart attack!" Then he laughed. Something in what he said just then must have somehow struck a funny chord in him.

I didn't bother turning myself around. No point. I figured that Chen Yuzhou never had the balls to come inside my cell anyway.

Though everything had developed exactly as I had thought they would, when I heard that Chu Xiaoxiao agreed to change her testimony, somewhere inside my heart still felt a little sting.

I sighed. Women, guess I'll never be able to understand them.

The days in my confinement cell weren't difficult to pass. I had this cell all to myself. The food tastes horrible, to be sure, but as a soldier, I've had much worse things to eat on the battlefield. Everyday, there were always someone wanting to see me. But out of everyone, the one I wanted to see the most was Lin Fang, but she never came even once.

Every night, when I lied on the hard steel bench, I thought about her, imagining what life with her would be like. I

wanted to hold her in my arms so badly. I hope she wasn't too frightened or stressed with everything that was happening right now. For as long as I remembered, while Chu Xiaoxiao was bold and daring, Lin Fang had always been faint hearted. If Chen Yuzhou pressed her, she would have no way of fighting back.

Just a little more. I almost got them completely in my hand. I had but to endure it for a little bit longer, and then I'll be able to uproot the Chen's influence in Tong City altogether, and Lin Fang would never have to fear them ever again.

Manager Qu from Junran's marketing department visited me briefly once, though he came under the guise as one of my distant relatives, and that it was probably more precise to say that rather than a visit, he came to deliver a message to me on Han Kun's behalf.

Manager Qu said that, Han Kun asked me, how much longer?

I said, "My trial is tomorrow right? The trial will be publicized right?"

"Indeed it is! I'm afraid you're the only one that didn't realize just how big your case had been blown up into! Direct real time broadcast nationwide, and just about every pair of eyes in the country will be watching!" He sighed, "This time even if it's Jun... even if it's us, there was nothing we could do that could wash you off the bad name that you've made for yourself. I thought I had seen it all, but that was only until I read what they wrote about you on the internet. Look Mas... Zhang Chao, I must say,

your little play really went out of hand this time. Mr. Kun is most displeased.”

“I’m curious, what did they say about me on the internet? I had been locked up in here for the past couple of days and hasn’t been able to check up on that since about a week ago.”

He breathed out another sigh, “Chen Ruhai got quite a story cooked up. First he posted a few clips of you speeding down the highway, then had a few other clips of different people saying that they saw you tossing and scattering cash at various pubs and bars, and another few saying that you have some... group of people backing you up so you simply just did as you damn well pleased. Zhang Chao, why haven’t you acted more carefully knowing what kind of character Chen Ruhai is?”

“And then?”

“So you know there must be more too. Yes, they also said that you’re a bouncer at a nightclub, and all that money you have came from Chu Xiaoxiao selling her services as a prostitute, and that you’re secretly an underground mafia boss with influence over certain powerful individuals. I could go on, there are worse still, but they’re so vulgar and disgusting that I didn’t want to even remember even having seen them with my eyes, preposterous lies every single one of them... but to sum it up, it was all over the internet, and everyone was dying to know how your trial tomorrow would turn out. I even heard insider rumors that the judge presiding over your case has been... influenced by a certain individual. While we’re on that point, Mr. Han had his people in position for

a while already, all raring to go, but you kept telling him to wait..."

I could see Manager Qu's obvious disappointment in me, as he looked at me through the reinforced glass of the visitor's room. He said, gingerly, "Master Zhang, just give me one word. Are you still confident about all this? From what I can see, things couldn't possibly be any worse already. How are you going to turn this all around?"

I tapped the table a few times with my knuckles, then stood and leaned closer to him and said softly, "Since my trial will be a public hearing, then tell Han Kun to get a few more media and reporters to broadcast the whole thing, and tell him to watch closely. He'll know when to act."

On Manager Qu's face was a look of complete startlement. He probably didn't understand any of what I just said, but I couldn't explain it to him, not in front of the officers keeping under watch like a hawk. I couldn't expose my identity just yet. All that I could hope for is that Manager Qu still has enough patience to deliver my final message to Han Kun. He'll understand what I mean.

The next day, a police officer came to extract me from my confinement cell. On the way to the court, he even put me under blindfold placing my head under a dark opaque bag, like he was transporting a maximum security prisoner.

Though I couldn't see, subconsciously I've already began memorizing the routes I took. Usefulness in this situation aside, it was something that had been drilled into me as

a soldier in the special ops.

Then we got on a car. The two police officers escorting me sat on either side of me in silence. As the car drove, I felt the slight warmth of the sun shining on my legs. Having been inside my confinement cell for the last few days, this was the first sunlight I felt for a long while. It felt so good that I hummed and whistled a tune.

"Shit, this is the first time I saw an accused crime suspect in such good moods before his trial."

Another officer commented, "Some antisocial tendencies going on there? What a nutter."

I felt the car slowing down, so we should be close to the place. I rolled and stretched my neck. Finally, harvest time. I could finally pull back and close in the net I cast and left alone for all this time. I couldn't help but feel my mood lighten at the thought.

The car stopped completely. Before getting off the car, I asked the officers, "My fellow officers, do you buy stocks?"

"Why do you ask? Don't pull anything funny now."

"If you do, don't buy Juen stocks. And if you already have stocks in Juen, sell them and get rid of them now while you still can."

"He's a talker alright. Why?"

The blindfold on my head was suddenly removed. My

eyes squinted at the sudden brightness, then I looked at the officers on either side of me and said with my brightest smile, "Because it's going to drop big time."

"Starting walking. Never mind the stocks, you just worry about yourself."

As soon as I got out of the police car, a swarm of cameras and mics rushed towards us. Cameras big and small surrounded us, putting everything on air for the rest of the public to see. I must say, Han Kun really had done a good job with getting all the media coverage. I think I even spotted a few reporters from various national news channels.

The police officers didn't let me linger. They shoved me onwards all the way into the courtroom of my hearing.

And as expected, inside the courtroom were even more reporters. Looks like this case had attracted even more attention than I thought. My eyes scanned across all the faces in the crowd, trying to catch a glimpse of a particular someone, even seeing her shadow would make me happy. Lin Fang.

I haven't seen her for so long. I missed her, so much that I could go crazy if this goes on even longer.

But instead, my eyes caught someone else. When I saw her face, all the blood in my body curdled as I froze in fear.

My aunt walked in.

I saw her, and she saw me. Remaining completely expressionless, she found a seat in the audience section and sat down. Her expressions betrayed none of her feelings or thoughts.

I gripped my fists hard, digging my nails into my palms, forcing myself back into calmness. It has been five years since then already. I was no longer the same Zhang Chao I was five years ago. I need not to fear her!

Shortly after, Lin Fang appeared. She came with Chu Xiaoxiao. Seeing her, I felt much better, so much that I was able to temporarily forget all about my aunt and her unpleasantness.

Chu Xiaoxiao came as a witness against the accused. She took her seat among the many witnesses at Chen Yuzhou's side.

And then, something I could never have expected happened. Lin Fang also followed her, and took her seat beside Chu Xiaoxiao, among the witnesses. I began trembling. First my hands, then my arms, then my entire body. I felt as if I had been submerged into a tank of ice, a bone chilling coldness spread throughout my body.

Then suddenly, as soon as she sat down, Lin Fang stood up again and walked to the side and went to speak with the court police. Chen Yuzhou chased behind her and grabbed her by the wrist, not wanting to let her leave. Lin Fang got desperate, and tried to push Chen Yuzhou away, and then he raised his hand and slapped her face.

Lin Fang rubbed her face and glared at Chen Yuzhou in

defiance. Then she turned around and ran off.

Chen Yuzhou wanted to go after her, but Chen Ruhai quickly motioned his men over and stopped him.

I couldn't hear his voice, but I could roughly make out what he was saying by reading his lips.

"Behave yourself, and don't act out of line! Many of the reporters here today are associated with the big national news channels. If they catch even a glimpse of things, it won't be as simple as hammering down a few powerless individuals on the internet, there is no silencing them!"

Chen Yuzhou seemed to mutter and complain that his father was getting old and losing his edge, but Chen Ruhai seemed concerned and alarmed. He asked Chen Yuzhou, "Why are there so much media coverage? Did you know about this?"

Chen Yuzhou replied, "I don't know why they're here, but that's just as well. This way, I'll be able to humiliate Zhang Chao in front of the entire country. I'll make it so that he'll never be able to walk the face of the earth without people jeering and sneering at him ever again!"

After he said that, he seemed to notice that I have been looking at him, and turned his eyes towards my direction. My eyes sharpened, as sharp as the sharpest of knives. If I could pierce him with my eyes, he'd be a dead man by now.

And I could see in his eyes that our feelings are mutual.



Today, it was finally time to settle the score between the two of us, for all the things that he had put me through since the time when we were put into the same class during school, to all the things and monstrosities that he committed against us these few days. Today, neither of us would back down, because more than anything else, this was also a battle of honor, and of dignity, over the woman that we love!

The court session began. First, the prosecution would present its case.



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