

Chapter 58 Black!

Zhou Xiaoqiang asked spitefully, but quietly, among themselves, “Just who is that man!? What is someone as big as him doing in our little police station?”

Though they kept their voices down, my highly trained hearing could still pick them up.

The other officer whispered back to him, “May... maybe, the Chen’s managed to go and get him to step in? See, this guy caused such a big scene, so maybe the Chen’s pulled some connections and got some heavyweight figures to suppress down this whole mess.”

“Yeah, see? When he came to the station he went directly here too.”

Hearing that, the man turned his head back and gave Zhou Xiaoqiang and the two officers another look, and then gave the Chief Commissioner an eye that tells him to get rid of them. At this point, the Chief Commissioner was almost exasperated and furious enough to rip their faces off, and gave the command immediately.

As soon as that man came in, despite the pain I just received, I immediately straightened my back and stood properly with my chest out. I stood a whole head taller than the man. But under his scrutinizing and critical glare, I felt no more confident than a maggot on my first day as a new recruit.

With my hands cuffed behind my back, I was unable to salute him properly, and could only stand as impeccably as I could to show him my respects.

“Sir Old Leader Sir!”

“How many must I tell you, do away with the ‘old’.”

I could feel that the Chief Commissioner and those officers around him were so startled by the turn of events that their jaws almost dropped to the ground.

While everyone else simply stood stunned in shock, Chief Commissioner Zhang was the first to recover. Immediately, he silently signalled at his people, and one of them ran over and uncuffed me.

With my hands finally freed, I saluted the man as I had always done every time when he walked into my presence for the past five years, as gratitude and respect filled my heart.

I have faith that someone would eventually come to my aid. I knew that Han Kun definitely would. But I hadn’t expected that Old Leader would fly over almost across the entire country just for me!

I broke off my salute, and Old Leader gave me a hug me with open arms.

“Alright. Sit.”

Then Old Leader turned his head back to Chief Commissioner Zhang, “Unauthorized interrogations. Is this how you police do things these days?”

“Old... ehem, Leader, everything as you instruct.”

“The police and the military have always been two separate systems, and will and must always remain that way for the good of the country. How could I possibly interfere with the duties of your rightful office? This time round, I came only as an old man visiting one of his old war buddies that has been through the hailstorm of bullets and shells together. He was like a son to me. Given my relationship with him, and specifically because of my relationship with him, I fear I might not be able to remain unbiased and impartial in my decisions and risk overstepping my boundaries. So, Chief Commissioner Zhang, if you will.”

Though the old man expressed clearly in his words that he would not official make a call on this matter, Chief Commissioner Zhang felt cold sweat drenching and dripping down the back of his uniform.

Like father and son, that simple phrase carried more weight than any other vicious threats.

Because, really, who had the gall to cover for a mere petty police officer that just gave an honored and decorated military general’s son a beating against the protocol?

Right now, the Chief Commissioner was angry enough to blow Zhou Xiaoqiang’s head clean off. Immediately, he yelled, “Fire him!”

And from this moment on, Zhou Xiaoqiang’s career in law enforcement was no more.

“Go see to it. I have matters that I must speak with Zhang Chao alone. My visit today must be kept strictly confidential!”

“Old man Sir!”

As soon as those people went out and closed the door behind them, I quickly stepped forward and gave the old man another hug. Then I put an arm around his shoulder like I had no clue what the words “shame” and “respect” means.

“Like I told you, ‘Sir’ is fine. But I hear ‘old’ one more time...”

I was beyond excitements, “I’d never thought that I’d be able to see you in Tong City! Today, my treat. Let me take you to the best places in Tong City!”

Old Leader’s face fell immediately and shrugged me off, “I see you have forgotten all about the disciplines and decrees of our troops the moment you took off your uniform. My office cannot allow me to even share a table with you!”

I hurriedly gave him a hand, so he wouldn’t accidentally stumble and hurt himself, and that made him even angrier.

“You really think I’m getting so old that I can’t even stand up straight!? Just as well that you aren’t my soldier anymore, or else I’d throw you into isolation just for that act of disrespect!”

I laughed, cherishing the old times. From the corner of my cell, a man who had simply stood by and kept his head down ever since he came in finally called out in obvious gladness, “Captain Zhang!”

“Cai! You came too!”

“Leader said that he is going to come to Tong City, so I begged him to let me come to. Captain Zhang, we missed you! When are you going to come back to lead the Snow Leopard again?”

Here was another pleasant surprise. I never thought I’d be able to see so many of my friends here. Friends that I could trust with my life!

What I missed the most after being discharged from the forces are these people. Back when I was with them, though guns ablazed and shrapnels flew, just the thought of knowing that they had my back was enough for me to find the courage to head back outside into the living hell that was the war zone.

I insisted that they must let me invite them to a meal, but Old Leader was stubborn in his adamant refusal.

“Come on, old man, don’t be such a stuck up. You finally took a trip to my town, and you won’t even have a meal with me? Think about poor little Cai over there. You may not be hungry, but have you considered your men?”

As soon as I said it, Cai immediately answered, with a silly smile on his face, “Captain Zhang, it alright. I’m not hungry yet.”

I knocked him over the head playfully, “Dolt, you blew my plan!”

Old Leader half closed his eyes, “Well, if you really want to invite someone to dinner, I got a whole squads here, You can take them out instead.”

I knew exactly how many people were under the Old Man’s command, and where. I knocked my chest with my knuckles and said immediately without hesitation, “Done. Leader, just lend me a phone and I’ll get right on it.”

I’d have arranged it already if my phone hadn’t been confiscated by the officers when they threw me in here.

Cai looked at me, and laughed with his trademarked silly smile, “Captain Zhang, we can’t possibly let you do that, it’d cost too much. Besides, it was just me and Old Leader today, we don’t have a whole squad here.”

Old Leader gave me a sideway glance, “Don’t you worry about his pocket. This boy is rich beyong your dream now. In fact, it isn’t an understatement to say that you probably own at least half of this entire city right? So, rich boy, why are you still in here? Have you been so naughty that even your butler won’t bail you out?”

I scratched my head. Uncertain as to how to summarize everything into a few concise points, I told them everything that happened since I came back to Tong City.

I have complete faith in the two person in front of me now. The Old Leader and Cai would never betray me. I trust them with my life.

After I finished, the Old Leader nodded, “Looks like you haven’t let all that money go to your head yet. I always knew you’re a good boy. I got a job for you.”

“Huh? Old Man, you weren’t here to bail me out?” I was surprised.

The Old Leader simply grinned, “You need me to bail you out? What, you think you got yourself captured by some terrorists or enemy forces or something? I don’t remember having trained you to be such a wuss. This should be nothing to you.”

I was almost exasperated enough to bang my head against my cell wall, and I muttered, “Life really is like a box of chocolate, and in my country, you never know which one of them is actually real...”

Cai came up closer with his silly smile, “Captiain Zhang, don’t let Leader fool you, he really was worried about you. But this time, we also have something important to tell you. Look what’s here?”

He reached inside his pocket and procured a pistol, then tossed it at me.

I caught it, weighed it in my hand, then raised it and tried aiming with it a few times. Looking at its crude and shoddy craftsmanship, I immediately realized what was going on.

“I have another one like this, and almost exactly the same too.”

“What!?” Old Leader and Cai exclaimed.

“A Thai assassin tried to kill me just a few days ago, and he had a gun just like this one. I wiped it off him when I had the chance.”

“Are you sure that it was the same type of gun? Are you sure that you didn’t make a mistake?”

“I don’t make mistakes like that. Same exterior design, heavy body, ungrooved barrel, terrible aim, and obviously self manufactured, unprofessionally. Possibly even from the same production line.” For over decades, the Old Leader had always been stationed at the southwest, and he would never have come all this way to the east if this was only a simple case of unauthorized firearm manufacturing, “Cross border firearm smuggling?”

The Old Leader nodded, “Exactly. We’ve had our eyes on this lead for a while now, but we lost it not too long ago, in Tong City.”

“Then you should be talking with those officers just then.” I said.

The Old Leader frowned and brushed my suggestion aside, “It isn’t as simple as that.”

I stared, spacing out at the gun in my hand, and realized what the Old Leader was worried about.

The Snow Leopards had their eyes on the lead, and they managed to “lose” it in Tong City. This means that, here in Tong City, some group or individual was capable enough to pull a fast one from their eyes.

It wasn’t something that anyone can do.

“You’re worried, that some of them are black.”

The Old Leader nodded.

Cai said, “We were going to go by the protocol and cooperate with the police. But after seeing how they handled our case, we had second thoughts.”

The Old Leader said, irritated, “It looks like there are a lot more black ones here than we thought.”

“So you want me to investigate it?”

“We weren’t familiar with the in’s and out’s in Tong City, and the ones here can’t be trusted. If we continue our operation as we had before, I’m afraid we might disturb them and wake them up before we intend them to.”

In simple terms, the Old Man was afraid that the black cops might come into knowledge of their operations.