

Lu Chen looked back at Xiao Zhiyuan. Seeing the latter looking at him mockingly, he was startled, and a bad premonition immediately grew within him.

Xiao Zhiyuan certainly had his own intentions by suggesting that he answered the phone.

Is this old man trying to trick me?

"Sorry, I have to take this call," Lu Chen said to everyone in the audience as he put down the rough stone, then took out his phone.

When he saw that the call was from Lin Yijun, he went over to a quiet corner before he picked up her call.

The fact that Lin Yijun called him at this time meant that it was very likely that she had found Qiqi and had called to tell him the good news.

But for some unknown reason, a sense of anxiety slowly rose in his heart as he listened to the ringing of the phone over and over again.

"Yijun," Lu Chen said softly when the call

connected.

"Young man, if you want to save your wife's life, make sure you lose to Master Xiao in the remaining two games..." The caller was not Lin Yijun. Instead, a cold male voice sounded from the phone.

"Who are you?" Lu Chen took a deep breath and asked in a deep voice.

"It doesn't matter who I am. As long as you do as I say and let Master Xiao win, I will let your wife go."

"How can I trust you?" Lu Chen asked.

"You have no choice but to bet that I'm a trustworthy person," the other party sneered.

Lu Chen stayed silent for a few seconds before he said, "Let me listen to my wife's voice first."

After a few seconds, Lu Chen heard Lin Yijun's crying voice. "Lu Chen, don't worry about me, you must win the championship today. As long as you win, those people would let go of Qiqi..."

"Young man, now that you heard her voice, do as I say, or else you'll be greeted with your wife's corpse when you come back!" The other party hung up the phone upon saying that.

Lu Chen took a deep breath as his expression turned dark.

He was silent for nearly a minute before returning to the stage.

"Sorry, I'd like to request for a ten-minute break for this round," Lu Chen said. Then, he stepped down regardless of whether the organizer agreed.

Looking at Lu Chen's back, a trace of malice flashed across Xiao Zhiyuan's eyes .

Seeing Lu Chen suddenly stopped the game with a very sour expression after answering a phone call, everyone in the audience were confused and didn't know what happened.

Many even wondered if the organizers had come up with some tricks in order to prevent Lu Chen from winning the championship.

Lu Chen didn't say anything, his eyes vaguely flickered with unwillingness and anger.

There was also a slight and hidden murderous intent within his eyes.

"Come with me."

When he came to the table, Lu Chen patted Lan Ling's shoulder and walked toward the bathroom.

Everyone was puzzled. When Lan Ling heard Lu Chen's words, her heart trembled and panic flashed across her eyes for some reason.

Even so, she still got up and followed him.

When Lu Chen came to the bathroom, he took a look at the surrounding area; there was no one around. Then, he looked at Lan Ling who followed him here, brought out a cigarette and took a deep breath before he asked, "Do you know why I called you here?"

Lan Ling shook her head, keeping a faint smile on her face.

"Lan Ling, stop pretending," Lu Chen said in a deep voice as a gleam in his eyes shone.

"Master Lu, I really don't know what you're talking about. What do you mean by 'stop pretending'?" Lan Ling panicked and asked him back.

Lu Chen spit out the cigarette butt, grabbed Lan Ling's neck and pushed her against the wall. Then, he jabbed sarcastically with a sullen expression, "Lan Ling, do you think that I can't see through your pretense? What, you think that you're an award-winning top actress now?"

"Master Lu, what's the matter with you?" Although Lu Chen's hand was clasped around her neck, Lan Ling was not the least bit flustered and instead remained calm.

"Lan Ling, I've given you a chance, but since you didn't take it, don't blame me for this then."

Lu Chen snorted coldly as his grip on her tightened.

At this moment, Lan Ling's expression

finally changed.

Her neck being clasped by Lu Chen made it difficult for her to breathe.

Seeing the unabashed murderous intent in Lu Chen's eyes, she was finally a little scared.

"Let me go, and I'll ask them to release Qiqi," Lan Ling said with difficulty.

"Call them immediately. Make them send someone to the bureau within ten minutes and personally hand over my daughter to Xu Zuojun. I warn you, if anything happens to my daughter, not only will I kill you with my bare hands, I'll also send the whole Lan Family to hell!" Lu Chen's grip on her neck slightly loosened, but the murderous intent in his eyes became more intense.

When Lan Ling came with them before this, he had only been slightly skeptical of her.

It wasn't until the night before, after Lan Ling killed Di Jun and Xia Yi who had offended her on the plane, that he was sure that Qiqi must be in her hands.

If the Lan Family wanted to open a jewelry store in Chongqing, sponsoring the Rough Stone Association alone certainly wasn't enough.

But if the Chongqing Rough Stone Association could get a pretty good place in this stone gambling contest, it would definitely give them a boost and render better results than paying for celebrity endorsements.

If they won the championship, the Lan Family's jewelry store would definitely surpass that of the Zuo Family, thereby making them the largest jeweler in Chongqing.

But, there were only three antique masters in Chongqing, and only Huang Youjun alone was proficient in stone gambling. Yet, he was not good enough to even enter the top 100 in the country.

Lan Ling also knew that Lu Chen once defeated Zheng Xihe—one of the top three gemstone experts in the country—in a stone gambling competition. If Lu Chen could represent the Chongqing Rough Stone Association to participate in the competition, he would at least end up in

the top four or perhaps even become the champion.

That was why Lan Ling planned to kidnap Qiqi to threaten Lu Chen.

Finally, Lan Ling took out her mobile phone and made a call. After the call was connected, she said, "Send Qiqi to the police station within ten minutes and hand her over to Xu Zuojun."

She hung up the phone after that and said apologetically, "Master Lu, I'm sorry. This incident is all my fault, but you can rest assured that Qiqi is fine. In order to cheer her up, my men have been treating her like a princess."

Lu Chen snorted and slowly loosened his grip around Lan Ling's neck. Then, he raised his hand and slapped her on the face.

He hated people who threatened him with his family the most.

Lan Ling could have used other methods to ask him for his help in this competition.

In fact, he would have participated the



moment he heard of this competition.

This was because he also wanted to take this opportunity to push the Chongqing Rough Stone Association to its peak. Only when the Chongqing jewelry market expanded would his Rough Stone Group become more popular and earn higher profits.

However, she had chosen this method and crossed the line.

To be honest, if Lan Ling had not said that they treated Qiqi well, he would have crippled her right then and there.

If anything happened to Qiqi, he would definitely kill her that very instant.

But ten minutes later, Lu Chen received a call from Xu Zuojun. Finally, he could be at ease.

Xu Zuojun told him on the phone that Qiqi had arrived at the police station safe and sound.

“Send her to her grandmother’s house for me. By the way, my wife has been kidnapped. Please trace her mobile

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phone's location, but don't act rashly. I'll go back in the afternoon and take care of it myself," Lu Chen said to Xu Zuojun.



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Only now did Lan Ling understand why Lu Chen had suddenly put her on the spot.

It turned out that his wife was kidnapped.

Imagine how frantic a man would be if both his wife and daughter had been kidnapped, especially knowing that the person who kidnapped his daughter was nearby.

“Master Lu, was your wife kidnapped by Xiao Zhiyuan's men?” Lan Ling guessed as she recalled that Xiao Zhiyuan reminded Lu Chen to answer the phone earlier.

“Yes,” Lu Chen responded and walked toward the venue again.

Since Qiqi was fine, all the anxiety in his heart instantly dissipated. The anger in his heart toward Lan Ling had also mellowed down.

Though, it was impossible for him to have a good impression of Lan Ling from now on.

Lu Chen walked onto the stage again. Everyone was full of curiosity as to what happened, but seeing his grim expression,

no one spoke a word.

“Miss Lan, what happened?” Huang Youjun asked when Lan Ling returned to her seat.

Lu Chen’s expression made him a little worried. It was already the last round, and he was so close to winning the championship, yet Lu Chen suddenly requested for the suspension of the game after answering his phone. Who on earth did he talk to?

“Master Huang, I hope you’ll be able to accept the outcome no matter what happens, and please don’t blame Master Lu. When you return, there will definitely be naysayers, and I don’t wish to hear any gossip and rumors from your Rough Stone Association,” Lan Ling said solemnly.

Huang Youjun was startled; a bad feeling rose within him.

Wu Zhonghua and the others were also confused. What on earth happened?

Lu Chen came onto the stage, stared at Xiao Zhiyuan and said after a while, “Go back and tell Xiao Bieqing to come straight at me if she wishes. What an

embarrassment for her to resort to these despicable means.”

Xiao Zhiyuan’s expression darkened.

To be honest, he didn't want to go this far.

But Xiao Bieqing had ordered him to win the championship.

“I am now withdrawing from the championship battle due to personal reasons. Master Xiao is definitely worthy of being the second-best player in the country, and I’m convinced that I’ve lost to him.” Lu Chen bowed apologetically to the audience, then turned and walked off the stage. He then went straight to the hotel room, booked his flight and prepared to return to Chongqing.

After Lu Chen left, the entire venue was in an uproar.

“What did Master Lu mean? Although Master Xiao is ranked second in the country, how can he compare to Master Lu?”

“Yes, Master Lu is the true champion. Why did he give up?”

“Plus, we stayed here all night and witnessed him break records continuously and create miracles. How can he give up the championship like that?”

“Stop making such a huge fuss! Didn't you find it fishy that Master Xiao suddenly asked Master Lu to answer the phone when he was about to win the championship? After Master Lu answered the phone, his expression soured and he gave up the championship. Can't you see that he was tricked?”

“Yes, yes. Xiao Zhiyuan must have threatened Master Lu and forced him to give up the championship. I have to say, Master Xiao, you're the second-best Stone Gambling Master in the country, so how could you use this kind of despicable method to force your opponent to give up and win the championship? Don't you have any conscience?”

“Yeah, Master Xiao, you're so shameless! Don't you already know deep down who the real champion is?”

“It has never crossed my mind that someone so old could be so vicious. Xiao Zhiyuan, I despise you. I will blacklist you

forever!"

Everyone in the audience finally understood the situation, and they all condemned Xiao Zhiyuan.

This incident basically pushed Xiao Zhiyuan to the edge of the cliff. After today, he would lose his reputation and would no longer be able to gain a foothold in the stone gambling community.

Listening to the flood of condemnation from the audience, Xiao Zhiyuan's expression turned grim.

He glanced at Lu Chen's back from afar, wanting so badly to curse him out.

His original intention was to make Lu Chen deliberately lose the game in the last two rounds. However, he didn't expect Lu Chen to be so shameless and give up the championship.

This kid is so cunning! He just had to drag me down before leaving. Son of a b\*tch!

Seeing that everyone was so angry that they looked like they wanted to rush up the stage and rough him up, Xiao Zhiyuan's

expression soured and he scurried off backstage.

He was already so old, so how could he withstand any beating?

Of course, although everyone in the audience was angry and felt bad for Lu Chen, they were still able to control their emotions.

Otherwise, how could Xiao Zhiyuan escape to the backstage safely with that turtle-like speed of his?

Countless elders shook their heads one after another; the Stone Gambling Competition this time really opened their eyes.

Firstly, the organizer shamelessly changed the rules, forcing Lu Chen to continuously accept the challenges of ten stone gamblers. Then, the ten stone gamblers deliberately dragged out the contest, making Lu Chen stay up all night.

In the end, when he was about to win the championship, the second-best stone gambling master in the country, Xiao Zhiyuan, tricked him into forfeiting the



competition.

In order to win the championship, Master Xiao resorted to such despicable and shameless means to force Lu Chen to give up.

“What a disgrace to the gemstone industry!”

Many elders shook their heads and sighed.

At this time, Yang Mu and Zhu Bohong were also dumbfounded.

Looking at the screen, they both saw Xiao Zhiyuan, who fled backstage in embarrassment, and was speechless for a long time.

They thought that what they had done before was disgraceful enough, but to their surprise, Master Xiao was even more shameless than them.

They even felt as if they paled in comparison to him.

Knowing what he did now, they both felt that their previous antics were nothing compared to his.

“Miss Lan, let’s go. I think Lu is hurrying back now.” Huang Youjun sighed after witnessing the never-ending shamelessness of the organizer as well as Xiao Zhiyuan during the Stone Gambling Competition.

After all, Xiao Zhiyuan had been his idol in his heart for decades.

It had never crossed his mind that he would be so shameless.

Lan Ling nodded, still feeling worried deep down.

She didn’t know how Lu Chen would think of her from now on.

But she had decided in her heart to apologize to him again after she returned, knowing very well that she had gone too far in this matter.

At this time in Chongqing, when Lu Chen gave up the game and left, countless people threw stuff at their television.

They were very angry indeed. After all, Lu Chen had already gone through so many challenges to enter the finals, but just

when he was only one game away from winning the championship, such a thing happened. Everyone knew that Xiao Zhiyuan must have used despicable means to threaten him.

Zhang Shengqiao and the other elders were even more furious.

He was so close to being the champion!

At this time, Xiao Zhiyuan frantically ran out from backstage and was about to retreat to his room when suddenly, a figure blocked him.



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