

48 Hours 1101

Chapter 1101: Pebbles and Handwriting

It was a world devoid of life.

When Zhang Heng first saw it, he thought he had returned to the Moon. Other than the bumpy surface, there was nothing else save for a deathly stillness and desolation.

Whether it was soil or rocks, they were all dark red. It was as if someone had deliberately painted them with fuel. Furthermore, when Zhang Heng tried to cut off a piece of rock with the Hidden Scabbard, he noticed a viscous red liquid flowing out from the bottom of the cut. It was as if blood was flowing through his blood vessels.

There were lots of these red rocks on the island. Scattered all over the place, they were covered with red pebbles. However, these pebbles were generally larger than normal pebbles, they looked fuller, but they actually looked more like... eggs.

Zhang Heng picked one up and hit it against the Red Rock. In the end, a corner of the rock was knocked off, but the egg-shaped pebble was unscathed.

So Zhang Heng used the Hidden Scabbard again. This time, it took a bit of effort to cut open the red pebble, revealing what was inside.

It was a newly formed snake embryo, and surprisingly, it was still alive. At least, when Zhang Heng cut open the pebble, it was still alive. Its body twisted a few times, but it was clearly not mature enough to break out of its shell. Because it was released early, it could no longer absorb nutrients from the egg. It struggled on the ground as if trying to crawl back into the cut red pebble, but Zhang Heng stepped on its tail the next moment.

Zhang Heng wanted to see what the little snake in the red pebble was capable of, but in the end, the little snake's struggle became slower and slower. After less than a minute, it lay on the ground and stopped moving.

After that, Zhang Heng tried to kick the little snake with the tip of his foot, but the latter did not respond. Considering its age, he basically ruled out the possibility of faking its death. Therefore, Zhang Heng stabbed the tip of his Hidden Scabbard into the little snake's abdomen. From there, he went all the way up until he cut open its upper jaw.

Zhang Heng squatted down and examined the snake's body. He found that other than living inside the incredibly hard red pebble, its physiology did not seem to be different from that of an ordinary snake.

This came as good news to Zhang Heng.

There were many Red Rocks on the island, and there were countless red pebbles around the rocks. If each pebble contained a small snake, and these small snakes had some kind of special attack method, then when they broke out of their shells, even with the T-148 in his hands, Zhang Heng's only option was to jump into the sea and escape.

However, at least it seemed that this worry would not happen. The other dead snake reminded Zhang Heng of something. He closed his eyes and thought for a moment. He put the Hidden Scabbard back on his waist and continued to walk toward the center of the island.

Zhang Heng had a feeling that something was waiting for him there.

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Inside the station.

Even though Fan Meinan had no choice but to agree to Zhang Heng's request and stay up there, she didn't intend to just sit and wait. Even if this station wasn't the home of the Nightmare Gad, it was still its important place of activity. Fan Meinan still hoped to find some clues to deal with the Nightmare Gad.

The gods and creatures that appeared in Norse mythology were probably the most human-like of all the myths. Almost every one of them had all kinds of emotions, jealousy and anger. At the same time, they also had weaknesses. Just like humans, and some seemingly powerful gods or creatures even had instant death weaknesses.

The most famous one was probably Bader, whom Mistletoe had killed. One day, Bader, the god of Light, dreamt that he died. His mother was terrified when she found out, so she asked everything in the world to swear to her: never Hurt Bader. Weapons, stones, even diseases, and flowers had all sworn to her.

Mistletoe, however, was too weak and was not required to swear. This matter was later found out by Loki. So Loki, who felt that the matter was not big enough, urged the god of darkness, Hodel, who had always had a conflict with the God of Light, to throw a mistletoe at Bader. In the end, the God of Light, Bader, was pierced through the chest and died, and Loki was also expelled and punished by the gods because of this matter. In the end, he became enemies with the gods. But these were all things that would come later.

In short, this story seemed to imply that the Nordic gods each had their own Achilles Heel.

Fan Meinan recalled the Norse myths related to Jemengard, finding the latter's weakness while checking the station. Ma Lu also wanted to help but was rejected by Fan Meinan. The main reason was that even if the latter joined in, he did not know what to investigate.

However, Fan Meinan also found some work for a bored Ma Lu. She made him rummage through the snake corpses and see if he could find long enough snake corpses to climb down the pit.

Thus, the two of them began to move separately.

Ma Lu rummaged through the snake corpses on the second floor while Fan Meinan returned to the first floor. She held her flashlight and swept through every corner of the station bit by bit, not letting go of any traces. In the end, her web-like search really paid off.

Fan Meinan found a mark behind a load-bearing pillar. At first, she didn't pay much attention to that mark, thinking that it was just normal wear and tear during the construction process, but fan Meinan noticed the pattern contained in those marks when she took a second look.

These marks were not caused by accident but were deliberately left by someone. Fan Meinan tried to wipe away the accumulated dust on the pillar, revealing a line of crooked handwriting below.

—it's there. It's dangerous!

It's there, it's dangerous?

Fan Meinan did not expect to see other people's handwriting here. Considering that this place had been abandoned for more than 50 years and had been completely turned into a snakepit, this line could probably be traced back to more than 50 years ago when it was still under construction.

Who could its owner be, some construction worker back then? Fan Meinan remembered the missing worker in the story of Ma Lu. He wondered if this line of words was left behind by him as a warning to future generations.

However, this sentence was a bit too vague. He didn't know who it was referring to. Was It Yemengadde? And he didn't know where it was in the second half of the sentence.

But Fan Meinan read from this sentence that someone had been here before them, and the last dangerous word was carved very hard. It could be seen that the person who left this sentence was nervous at the time. It was as if something terrible was about to happen to him.

While Fan Meinan was squatting there studying the words on the load-bearing column, a pair of eyes was quietly sizing her up in the tunnel on the other side of the platform.

Chapter 1102: Cats

At this moment, Fan Meinan seemed to know nothing about the unexpected guest behind her.

She seemed to be completely attracted by the words on the load-bearing pillar and ignored the other things around her. In the next moment, Fan Meinan suddenly turned around without any warning. At the same time, she turned the flashlight behind her.

The place that was hit by the light beam was empty.

She didn't let her guard down. Not long ago, a feeling of being spied on arose in her heart. Considering where she was now, it was apparent that the intruder was not a kind person. However, Fan Meinan did not show any panic-stricken expression like an ordinary person.

On the contrary, she continued to pretend to observe the words. At the same time, she quickly turned around when the guy behind her gradually let his guard down and became numb. Unfortunately, this trick did not help her catch the peeping Tom.

Was it an illusion?

Fan Meinan did not think so. She raised the flashlight again and shone it on the tunnel that the snakes had rushed out of earlier.

Fan Meinan was a little hesitant. She felt that the person who wrote the words on the load-bearing column earlier probably referred to this tunnel. It was different from the endless loop they had taken

when they came. Since snakes could freely climb out of this tunnel, it should not be a problem for them to be trapped. However, there might be other dangers inside.

Just as Fan Meinan was hesitating whether she should go in and take a look, she heard a clinking sound coming from behind her.

The sound was very close to her. It was less than two meters away. Fan Meinan's vigilance had also reached its peak. Without hesitation, she rolled forward and pulled away from the person before turning around.

However, she was immediately stunned because what appeared in front of her was not a terrifying monster but a white kitten.

The white kitten's fur was neatly combed and was without a trace of color. Its nails were carefully trimmed, and there was a small yellow bell around its neck. The tinkling sound from before came from there.

When Fan Meinan turned to look at the little white cat, it also looked at her. The human and the cat's eyes met, and the little white cat licked its paws leisurely.

Fan Meinan vigilantly took another half step back.

The subway line had been abandoned for more than fifty years, and no one had come down during that time. They had not seen any creatures in the tunnel they had walked through previously, and the other tunnel was the nest of snakes, so where did this little white cat come from?

Moreover, it did not look like a stray cat running around on the road. It was abnormal for a well-taken care of domestic cat to appear here.

Fan Meinan had recalled the Norse myths and records related to Jemengarde. When she saw this white cat, she suddenly remembered one of the stories.

It was said that Thor had visited the giant kingdom once. The Giant King knew that Thor was born with divine power and was the strongest among the gods, so he tested him with a question to make things difficult for him. He wanted Thor to raise his cat.

Thor was also very confident in his own strength. When he heard this, he walked up confidently. However, no matter how hard he tried, he could only lift one of the cat's legs. This made Thor very surprised. After he asked, again and again, the Giant King finally told him the truth. He said that the cat was actually transformed by the strongest monster of the giant race, Jemengarde.

This was also the first time Thor and the giant Python had met.

Thinking of this story and looking at the little white cat in front of him, Fan Meinan's hair stood on end.

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It had been two hours since Zhang Heng arrived on the island. Of course, he spent most of his time drying his clothes and equipment, and he had only left the beach forty minutes ago. He had taken some time to study the red pebbles, and thankfully, the island wasn't particularly large, and Zhang Heng had picked up the pace. By now, he was almost at the center of the island.

It wasn't that he was hasty or anything, but he didn't want to take things one step at a time. Other than the rocks and pebbles, there was nothing else on the island. The scenery on the road was pretty much the same, so there wasn't much for Zhang Heng to study even if he wanted to.

He decided not to waste any more time. After another 15 minutes, a huge red mud wall appeared in front of Zhang Heng. The wall was about seven to eight meters high, completely surrounding the center of the island.

Because the wall was located in a low-lying area, it wasn't easy to see it outside the island unless one walked here.

However, Zhang Heng circled the wall for half a circle and did not see the entrance there. It was not until he reached a small hill that he unexpectedly met a human.

It was an old man with a white beard and ragged clothes. He had not showered for an unknown period of time, and his hair and beard were stuck in clumps, sticking to his tanned skin. However, he looked fine, and he was not surprised to see Zhang Heng. Instead, he nodded at Zhang Heng.

"You're here?"

"You know me?"

"No." The old man shook his head. "But I know why you're here."

"Oh?" Zhang Heng raised his eyebrows.

"To see it, you need to go through the maze behind me."

Zhang Heng was a little surprised. "You know why I'm here, but you're not going to stop me?"

"Stop me? No, my job is to provide guidance to the people on the island and help them find what they're looking for."

"Other than me, do you think there are other people on the island?" Zhang Heng caught the old man's main point.

"Of course. Do you know Kekule, the German organic chemist? He came to this island before, and not long after he returned, he discovered the simple structure of benzene. Beethoven, who came earlier, wrote the famous "Fifth Symphony in C Minor" here, and Van Gogh... well... his condition wasn't too good. Not long after he returned, he was admitted to a mental hospital. However, it was also there that he completed "Starry Night." However, all of this happened before I arrived on the island."

The old man paused. "During my time here, I received a total of 16 guests. Unfortunately, more than half of them failed to pass through the maze behind me. Three of them were eaten by it, but the remaining three returned home with great rewards. I bet you've heard of them, but according to the agreement, I can't tell you their names."

Zhang Heng realized that the old man might have misunderstood something and mistook him for a disciple of Yemengard. It seemed that the giant Python was also unwilling to be left alone. It had been using some method to attract ordinary people to this island, and it had made some deal with them.

Chapter 1103: Guest 17

Similar methods were used quite commonly among gods. Through dreams, they could establish a preliminary connection with selected potential believers, allowing them to arrive at a specific location. Then, through performing miracles, they turned potential believers into true believers. There were basically similar stories in different mythological systems.

As one of the most established Norse mythological monsters, it was not surprising that Jemengard would use such a method to select believers. Moreover, the death rate of its potential believers was shockingly high.

According to the old man, he had contacted a total of 16 potential believers. In the end, only three of them managed to leave the island and return to human society. The remaining people would either be lost in the maze forever or swallowed whole by Nightmare Cadet.

And now, he regarded Zhang Heng as the 17th potential believer on the island.

This was not his fault for being careless. The main reason was that the island was unusually desolate. There was nothing on it, and sometimes, no one would come for more than ten years. As the most ferocious monster of the giant race, Nightmare Gad had always been the only one who targeted others. No one had ever provoked it.

The old man never expected that there would be such a person in this world, so he firmly believed in Zhang Heng's identity.

Since that was the case, Zhang Heng decided to accept his new identity. He asked the old man politely, "Is this maze difficult to walk through?"

The old man nodded. "I know what you're thinking. This is not a big island, and the central maze takes up even less space. No matter how complicated the maze, as long as you try the dumbest method, you'll always find the right path."

"Is that so?"

"A normal labyrinth might be like this, but if you use this method in the one behind me, you'll never find the right path."

"Huh?"

"This labyrinth keeps changing," the old man added, "So the wrong way to go back and try the wrong way again won't work here. Moreover, not only will the place you walk through change, but the labyrinth in front of you will also keep changing."

"So it's purely a matter of luck?"

"No, it is actually to test if you have a strong enough mental connection with it. The previous three people who passed through the maze didn't really put in much effort. The slowest one took less than half an hour, and the fastest one only took ten minutes," the old man said, "As long as your mental connection with it is strong enough, the moment you step into the maze, you'll naturally know where to go."

This was not good news for Zhang Heng because he was not a true believer. There was no spiritual connection between him and Yemengard. The only connection between the two was that Zhang Heng planned to go in and kill it. If Cheng Sihan was still alive, he could save her, then leave the subway line with the Fan sisters and Ma Lu. If possible, he could get Loki's whereabouts from Yemengard.

However, Zhang Heng didn't show any signs of anxiety or depression. Instead, he continued chatting with the old man.

The old man seemed to have stayed on the island for a long time. Typically, it was difficult for him to meet people, so he was happy to continue chatting with Zhang Heng.

He wasn't sure if it was because of Zhang Heng's identity as a potential believer, but his attitude was also very good. He answered almost every question he asked. After all, if Zhang Heng passed the maze, he would become a believer, and from then on, he would be one of them, and if Zhang Heng did not pass through the maze and hang himself inside, then the things he knew would not reach the ears of a third person.

But even so, the old man still chose to avoid answering some of the more core questions.

For example, Zhang Heng asked the Old Man How Big Yemengarde was, how often it moved, how often it left the maze, and so on. Once the old man heard such questions, he would shut his mouth.

Therefore, Zhang Heng changed his direction and started to talk to the old man about his own matters. This time, the old man's words were clearly more frequent.

"I've been on the island for 51 years. Before I came here, I was a construction worker. Our team was fast, and the build quality was good. We won many awards and even appeared in the newspapers. At that time, when the capital was going to build a subway, our construction team was the first thing the leaders thought of. In the end, the noise during the construction attracted its attention. After that, it summoned me here and to become a receptionist."

Even though Zhang Heng had already guessed the old man's identity, this was the first time the latter had personally admitted that he was the missing worker from more than 50 years ago.

The old man's expression became complicated as he talked about the incident.

It was clear that he missed the old days. Even though that was over 50 years ago when resources were scarce, and there was neither telephone nor computer, but no matter how scarce it was, it was still much better than this small red island with nothing. Furthermore, he still had his family and friends back then. Now, many of them were no longer around.

However, after such a long time, he seemed to have accepted his fate. The nostalgic look on his face disappeared for a moment, and he returned to his usual self.

"Have you entered this maze before?" Zhang Heng asked,

"Unfortunately, I'm not qualified. I can only do some menial work outside," the old man said, "I know you're probably feeling a little apprehensive right now. Maybe you're scared by the numbers I mentioned earlier and are hesitating whether to enter the maze or not. But in fact, I don't think you need to be so worried because this might be the biggest opportunity in your life. It has always been very

picky, and not many people can catch its eye. I've been here for more than 50 years, and I've only received 17 people, and that includes you. The last time I received a guest on the island was 12 years ago."

"Twelve years ago?" Zhang Heng raised his eyebrows.

"That's right, and that guy is a hothead. He looked like he was in some kind of trouble. We only talked for less than five sentences, and then he plunged into the maze," the old man said, "He's also the person I told you about who only took ten minutes to complete the maze. I don't know how he's doing now, but he was still an unknown singer when he came to the island. He sang in a bar. If you can pass through the maze, I'll tell you his name. I'm actually curious about how everyone on the island is doing after they leave, but I can only ask the next person about them."

Zhang Heng thought about it for a moment before asking another question. "Can we use tools to get through this maze?"

"Tools?" The old man was taken aback. "What tools? Ladders? But you don't have any ladders... in this regard, it hasn't made any requests, so I won't stop you if you need any tools."

Chapter 1104: Labyrinth

Zhang Heng didn't avoid the old man deliberately, opening the bag in front of him and taking out the Lego instead.

The thing he was trying to piece together this time wasn't complicated, so it didn't take long. Very quickly, he reached the final step and inserted the Infinite Building Block into it.

The next moment, a brand new drone appeared in his hand.

The drone took off under Zhang Heng's control, and under the old man's stunned gaze, he flew to the top of the maze. From there, he could clearly see the entire maze and see the changes in there. Zhang Heng silently calculated the time of each change, trying to plan a path from the middle to the center while factoring in his own speed into the maze.

UAVs had actually been around since the 1920s. Initially, they were primarily used for military purposes or scientific research and mapping missions. It wasn't until about 10 years ago that they were opened up to the consumer market. In recent years, they finally became widespread and accepted by consumers.

The old man had arrived on the island more than 50 years ago, and the last person he had met was also 12 years ago. Furthermore, the two of them had only spoken a few words, so he had never seen a UAV before meeting Zhang Heng.

When he saw the drone rise from Zhang Heng's hand and fly all the way to the top of the labyrinth, he thought he had just witnessed a supernatural phenomenon. After that, he noticed the image on the remote control in Zhang Heng's hand. The expression on his face became even more shocked.

Previously, when Zhang Heng asked him if he could use tools, his understanding was still limited to things like ladders, and he didn't pay too much attention to it. In fact, not to mention that Zhang Heng didn't have a ladder, even if he had, he wouldn't have been able to pass through the maze because the

changes weren't just the movement of the red mud walls. Even the ground beneath his feet moved slowly. In other words, even if you stood still, your position would change constantly.

This was also the reason why the old man wasn't worried about Zhang Heng using tools.

However, the drone in front of him was clearly not what he had expected.

With this drone occupying the high ground, Zhang Heng would directly obtain a map of the maze. He would be able to observe the results of every change, and he would keep track of his position at all times. This also made it possible for him to reach the maze's center without relying on his connection to Jemengard.

The old man subconsciously felt that this matter was inappropriate, but he was also at a loss. He didn't know what to do now. Jemengard's order was to welcome the potential believers to the island in front of the labyrinth. However, it didn't give him the right to search the potential believers or seize any items.

Furthermore, the old man could tell from the scabbard and longbow on his back that this young man was unlike the others who had come to the island before. Even though he looked very polite, this did not mean that he would always be so polite. In fact, the old man could quickly usually tell the identity and occupation of every new visitor, but for Zhang Heng, from the first time he saw him, he was still unable to figure out who he was.

Hence, the old man did nothing in the end. He just stood by the side and allowed Zhang Heng to operate the drone to study the maze from high up in the sky.

Jemengard and his ushers were at a disadvantage because of their lack of culture. In fact, many of the tests and rituals of older gods were no longer suitable for modern society.

For example, when Jemengard built the labyrinth on this island, he did not expect humans to invent something like the drone one day. Of course, as time went by, some of the more open-minded gods would adjust themselves as the society progressed and developed. For example, Chronos, who Zhang Heng had met before, had even worn a tang suit to open up to the eastern market. Of course, the combination was a little out of place.

Or perhaps the self-proclaimed Einstein that Zhang Heng had met in the Apollo Dungeon was a god. The latter was born with modern technology, and his power grew with the development of science and technology. On the other hand, some ancient gods were gradually forgotten by mankind as technology progressed.

However, the situation of the Nightmare God was more special. Its name was not forgotten by the world. Zhang Heng could not even tell whether its power had become weaker or stronger than when it was at its peak. Because of the unprecedented development of entertainment and media, its popularity had increased more than in the past.

However, the problem with Jemengard was that in the original Norse mythology, it was a monster trapped in the deep sea. It did not really emerge until the twilight of the gods. Thus, it belonged to the type of autistic player who was relatively far away from human society in current terms.

Although it had not been forgotten to select believers from the humans over the years, there was nothing impressive about the speed and number of believers. After all, only 16 people had come to the island in 50 years, which was a little too shabby. It had also eaten three people. In the end, only three of its followers had left the island. It was hard to say how much its understanding of modern society had improved from such a small number of people. This led to the very retro construction of the maze.

About half an hour later, Zhang Heng put away the drone. He tried to simulate his move a few times and successfully reached the center of the labyrinth. The time it took varied, mainly due to the uncertainty of the labyrinth's changes.

However, in general, the difficulty of the maze was greatly reduced with his field of vision opening.

After waiting for another ten minutes, Zhang Heng rereleased the drone, and he finally stepped into the maze himself.

Zhang Heng moved extremely swiftly. As soon as he entered the maze, he started running immediately. The main reason was that the maze would change every 90 seconds, so he needed to re-plan the route to the center.

Even for Zhang Heng, it would take time to plan the route. Through this, he would use even less time to move the time he could use to move, making every second between each change extremely precious to Zhang Heng.

With the drone as an eye, Zhang Heng's initial movement was relatively smooth. Soon, he was less than half a distance away from the center of the maze. However, following that, the speed of the change in the maze actually increased, and the interval between the changes was shortened to only 60 seconds. This was a new situation that Zhang Heng had not encountered during the simulation test. It was also a challenge because he had less time to plan his route and move.

Fortunately, the situation was still under Zhang Heng's control. Even if the time was reduced to 60 seconds, he was still moving toward the center of the maze. However, at this time, Zhang Heng did feel a sense of wariness rise in his heart because he was not sure if the time would change as he continued to move forward.

Chapter 1105: Reunion

Even though the old man did not enter the maze with Zhang Heng, he could still hear the constant rumbling from the outside. He knew that it was the sound of the red mud walls changing their positions.

Not long after, the interval between the rumbling became shorter. The old man had been a receptionist here for more than 50 years. Of course, he knew what this meant. He just did not expect Zhang Heng to finish half of the maze in only three and a half minutes. At least for the first half of the journey, his speed was unparalleled, even faster than the one who completed the maze in 10 minutes.

In the past, this kind of situation usually meant that the people in the maze had a very close spiritual connection with Jemengard. However, the old man was a little confused this time because the flying machine was still hovering above the maze. He didn't know whether Zhang Heng's current success was due to the spiritual connection with Jemengard or the strange machine.

On the other hand, Zhang Heng's footsteps didn't slow. Although the changes in the labyrinth were accelerating, the number of calculations he needed to do as he continued advancing was also decreasing. After half the journey, he only needed to consider the changes in the second half of the route. Thus, he was still able to cope until now.

However, after he walked another 400 meters, the changes in the maze accelerated again. This time, the changes on the red mud wall were shortened to 15 seconds. Zhang Heng did not have time to think.

Zhang Heng did not know whether this was the rule of the maze itself or the chain reaction caused by the use of the drone. He could also feel the repulsion of the maze.

However, Zhang Heng was now less than 50 meters away from the center of the maze. Putting aside if he could leave the maze safely if he turned around, he wouldn't give up on such a short distance.

As a result, not only did Zhang Heng not retreat, he even quickened his pace. At this point, he no longer needed to figure out how to get to the center of the maze because time didn't allow it. By the time he was done, it was almost time for the next change. Therefore, he used the drone above his head to determine the direction of the center before he ran straight in that direction.

His reckless move quickly brought about its consequences. Not long after, Zhang Heng ran into a dead end. A red mud wall appeared in front of him, and there was no other path on either side. Other than turning back, there seemed to be nowhere else to go.

However, Zhang Heng did not seem to have any intention of turning back. Not stopping, he pulled out the Hidden Scabbard from his waist, took a deep breath, and directly hacked at the red mud wall in front of him.

At the last moment, Zhang Heng abandoned all his calculations and predictions and chose to use the simplest and most violent method to crack the maze in front of him!

In front of the Hidden Scabbard, not to mention a mere mud wall, even a steel bar like Zhang Heng could cut through it.

However, just as Zhang Heng forcefully cut down a door that could allow access, there was another red mud wall behind the door.

Zhang Heng did not feel discouraged or surprised by this scene. From the looks of it, the center of this ever-changing maze should be the lair of Jemengard. Even though it might not know the existence of drones, it shouldn't be unprepared for such a destructive attack.

This was also why Zhang Heng didn't attack the labyrinth directly in the first place. Even though the labyrinth didn't take up much space, the distance between the entrance and the center was about a kilometer. If this distance were covered in red mud walls, Zhang Heng would be worn out, even if the Hidden Scabbard could withstand it.

But now... Zhang Heng had already swung the Hidden Scabbard in his hand once more. He slashed at the second red mud wall in front of him, revealing the third wall behind him, then the fourth wall... and just like that, Zhang Heng cut through fifteen red mud walls, forcibly traversing the last twenty meters, before finally arriving at the center of the maze.

Unlike the barren and lifeless island, the Maze's center was actually a garden full of flowers.

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Fan Meinan looked at the white kitten in front of her, and her whole body tensed. Although she tried her best to control her expression and show no signs of fear, her trembling bones betrayed her true thoughts.

At that moment, Fan Meinan heard another set of footsteps. The footsteps did not come from Ma Lu on the second floor but still came from the tunnel behind her.

Fan Meinan did not know if she should continue staring at the little white cat in front of her or turn around to face the new uninvited guest.

Unexpectedly, the owner of the footsteps spoke first. She let out a soft laugh. "Why? Does senior sister not want to see me?"

Fan Meinan was stunned when she heard that. Then, she turned her head and saw the figure walking out of the tunnel.

It was a pure and sweet-looking girl she had never seen before. When she smiled, two dimples appeared. Her eyes, however, were especially cunning.

Seeing Fan Meinan's surprise, she added, "Senior sister, you and I were friends for a night. Have you forgotten me so quickly?"

"It's you!"

Fan Meinan finally realized who this girl who suddenly appeared in front of him was. Previously, she had come to the subway station with Cheng Sihan. She was Loki's third representative and also Loki's chosen representative—Beta.

"If you're here, then where's my sister?" Fan Meinan frowned.

"Ah, I know what you're thinking with that expression, but strictly speaking, you were the ones who lied to me first. In order to find my teacher in the hospital, you worked together to put on a show of faking your death. But I have to admit that it was quite wonderful. At that time, I was really deceived by you. It seems that I underestimated you before. After losing the strength that teacher gave you, you were still able to deceive me. That alone is enough to make you proud."

"Did Loki choose you because you're narcissistic enough for him?" Fan Meinan asked coldly.

"Hmm. Interesting. Has anyone ever told you that although you and your sister look like two different types of people on the surface, there are actually quite a few similarities between the two of you? Both of your mouths are quite vicious. They're practically the same."

After saying that, she bent down and half-squatted, letting the white kitten with the bell jump onto her lap. The kitten then jumped onto her arm and was finally carried in front of her.

"Are you afraid of it? Don't worry. It's not that python."

"Huh?" Fan Meinan raised her eyebrows.

“You and your sister joined hands to deceive me just to see teacher again. Not only did I forget about the past, but I also fulfilled your wish. Now, don’t you owe me a thank you?” Beta blinked and said.

Chapter 1106: Snake in the Atrium

Fan Meinan’s expression changed again. She shifted her gaze from Beta to the white kitten in her arms. Coincidentally, the kitten was also looking at her, but there was no expression in its green pupils. They looked like two green agates without any impurities.

Fan Meinan knew that Loki was the world’s most outstanding transformation master. When Cheng Sihan brought her to meet Loki for the first time, the kitten had transformed into a Scottish fold.

Thus, it would be unsurprising if Loki transformed into a little white kitten and appeared here tonight. In fact, this was also why Fan Meinan couldn’t recognize Beta immediately. Beta entered the abandoned subway line with Cheng Sihan. At that time, she didn’t bring the cat with her, and Beta never went out again. The chances of her picking up a cat here were basically zero.

Of course, if the cat were Loki, then it would be a different story.

However, faced with Fan Meinan’s questioning gaze, Beta neither admitted nor denied it. She just smiled. “Teacher knows why you came to him. You probably don’t have much time left. Tsk, tsk. How pitiful. You hope teacher can find you a way to cheat death.”

Fan Meinan didn’t deny it. What happened to her wasn’t a secret, to begin with. She had known from since she first met Loki, but Loki’s stance had always been very ambiguous until now. He didn’t say if he had a way to help her, nor did he say that he couldn’t help her.

Fan Meinan wanted to fight for the agent position because she knew that if she became Loki’s agent, Loki would definitely not let her die. If she died on the hospital bed before fighting with other agents, Loki would be in big trouble.

However, Fan Meinan didn’t know why Loki would help him. Loki had already withdrawn the power he had given her, and had chosen his agent. Based on Fan Meinan’s understanding of Loki, although he did at times help strangers just for fun, deceiving the Grim Reaper, for instance, it was impossible for him to do it on a whim or out of concern for their previous friendship.

Moreover, judging from the test he gave to Cheng Sihan to kill her own sister, Loki really didn’t care about her life just because Fan Meinan had been his agent for a period of time.

However, Fan Meinan didn’t expect Beta to continue. “The goddess of death, Hila, is teacher’s daughter. No one in this world knows Hila better than him, so if anyone can help you, it has to be teacher.”

After saying that, Beta looked at Fan Meinan, hoping to see the fervent eyes or excitement on the latter’s face. It was as though an oasis suddenly appeared in front of a traveler who had been trekking in the desert for two whole days without a drop of water, or a shipwreck survivor spotting a passing ship—enough to rekindle their hope of survival in a time of complete desolation and despair.

To Beta’s surprise, although Fan Meinan’s eyes lit up, she quickly regained her calm.

“What’s the price?”

“It’s a relief to talk to senior sister,” Cheng Sihan said. “But don’t worry, it’s different from the previous test. What teacher asked you to do this time is very simple. It’s a piece of cake for you. A piece of cake in exchange for your life. There’s no better deal than this, right?”

“Is that what you and my sister said?” Fan Meinan asked in return. She glanced at the white cat in Beta’s arms, “If Loki has something to do, why not just send you to do it? Or find my sister. She’s much better than me. Wouldn’t it be safer to hand it over to her?”

“Teacher isn’t Santa Claus. He rides a reindeer carriage on the roof of every child who wishes for something. Then, he goes down the chimney and puts the gift into their socks,” Beta said. “Teacher has especially provided you with this transaction, and only you can complete it. As for your sister...”

Beta paused, “Teacher has some opinions about her this time. It’s not because she wanted to force me to find him, and she even showed disrespect to teacher... you know, teacher has never cared about these things. If we can really deceive teacher one day, he will definitely be happy for us. What made teacher unhappy this time was your sister’s stubbornness. You have sufficient reason for wanting to become an agent, but your sister lives for others. After such a long time, she still hasn’t improved, after all. Otherwise, teacher wouldn’t have lost patience with her and come to me again.”

“I don’t think living for others is a sad thing,” Fan Meinan said plainly.

Beta shrugged. “I don’t intend to argue with you, senior sister, because we’re not here tonight to discuss some philosophical proposition. Why don’t you listen to what teacher wants you to do?”

Fan Meinan was silent for a moment. “Before agreeing to your request, I need to ask you a few questions.”

Beta was stunned for a moment, then nodded. “Sure, I’m not in a hurry anyway, but I’ll only answer the questions I know. If your question is beyond my understanding, then there’s nothing I can do.”

“My sister came down with you. Where is she now?”

“Ahh... this...” Beta scratched her head. “I don’t know. We were separated in that infinite loop tunnel before. I thought your sister would be trapped in that tunnel, but I went back later and found that she was no longer there. As for where she went, I’m not sure if she’s still alive. You should know whose territory this is now. I’m actually just a guest here like you guys.”

“Then how did you get out of that endless tunnel?” Fan Meinan asked.

“I’m sorry, this is my secret. Just like how I know that you actually have a very powerful tool hidden on you, ready to give me a fatal blow at any time, but I won’t ask you how you plan to kill me. I Can’t tell you how I got out of that tunnel.”

“What’s under the hole on the second floor?”

They couldn’t get any valuable answers about Cheng Sihan, so Fan Meinan changed the question.

“It’s a pool,” Beta said honestly. Before Fan Meinan could ask her any more questions, he continued, “You’ll definitely ask me what’s under the pool, but I don’t know. The water is a little cold, and I didn’t

bring my swimsuit, so I didn't have any intention of going down for a swim. But I know your boyfriend went down, and he didn't come out. He must have found something down there."

"Jemengard is at the bottom of the pool, right?"

"Jemengard?" Beta's face showed a hint of amusement. "Of course the snake of the atrium is in the atrium."

Chapter 1107: Giant Waves

Previously, Zhang Heng could see the garden at the center of the maze through the drone's camera even before he entered it.

However, if he hadn't stood there himself, it would have been hard to believe that such a beautiful garden could be hidden amid a desolate red island that had nothing but snake embryos in the pebbles.

It was like an oasis in the desert.

When Zhang Heng reached the entrance of the garden, the rumbling sound behind him disappeared.

As if realizing that it was impossible to stop Zhang Heng, the red mud walls stopped changing. The entire maze returned to its initial state of stillness. Just then, a gentle breeze blew past, and the plants in the garden started swaying as if welcoming a new guest.

However, Zhang Heng didn't seem to be a guest at all. He put the Hidden Scabbard back on his waist, removed the Pestilence Bone Bow from his back, and placed the Paris Arrow on the bowstring, maintaining a half-drawn posture. He then walked into the garden.

The fragrance of flowers greeted him, the air mixed with the scent of jasmine and osmanthus.

These two plants had different flowering periods, and it was rare to see them blooming simultaneously. However, the garden seemed to contain some kind of magic. In fact, Zhang Heng didn't just see just jasmine and osmanthus, but he even saw tulips, roses, and other flowers a little further away. Moreover, each flower seemed to be in good condition, and there was no sign of decay.

However, as Zhang Heng went deeper, he could still smell a faint fishy smell in the air. It wasn't overbearing, but even the scent of flowers in the yard could not hide it.

To Zhang Heng, this fishy smell was the best signpost, guiding him into the depths of the flowers.

He noticed that the deeper he moved, the lower the terrain became. At the same time, the flowers and trees around him grew in lushness. Some tree branches extended to cover a radius of a hundred meters. The drone overhead could no longer provide any vision, so Zhang Heng simply put it back into his travel bag.

After walking for about five minutes, the stench only became stronger, prompting Zhang Heng to raise his alertness. The opponent he was about to face this time was the famous Norse mythical monster, the giant python Jemengard. Now in its lair, Zhang Heng naturally wasn't naive enough to think that Jemengard would be oblivious to his arrival and treat him like the old man outside the maze, a potential believer of the new island.

So far, the giant python has made no movements. It either didn't care and was waiting for Zhang Heng to come over and give it more food, or it was hiding somewhere in the garden, quietly observing the new enemy.

In comparison, Zhang Heng naturally hoped that Jermengard would choose the first option. According to legend, the power of the giant python was unrivaled. Coupled with its cautious and cunning personality, this battle would probably be more difficult than expected.

Zhang Heng was about to pass through more than half of the garden. Due to the sinking terrain, he estimated that he should be reaching sea level by now. Zhang Heng even heard the sound of the waves hitting the reefs. After another 20 meters, the trees and plants in front of him finally disappeared.

It was only then that Zhang Heng realized that the center of the red island was actually hollow. In front of him was a reef beach. Clearly, there was a passage connecting the reef beach to the outside world where seawater could flow through that passage to this place.

However, Zhang Heng had already forgotten about this matter. Right in front of him, there was a red reef that was connected together. It was exceptionally huge, like a throne that stood tall amid the vast sea. Right now, that throne was occupied by its monarch—a giant black python.

Zhang Heng estimated that the creature was already over 400 meters long, and although it wasn't as endless as the legends said, it could still form a circle around the school's track. No wonder it could hunt sperm whales in the deep sea, easily dragging the behemoth all the way to the station.

Its head was bigger than a locomotive. A pair of yellow eyes stared back at Zhang Heng. He could feel the strong malice in its eyes. With a body lined with black scales, they rubbed the red rocks when it slithered, making a heart-wrenching sound.

Zhang Heng did not stand at on ceremony. He immediately pulled the bowstring. This kind of thing only happened in wuxia novels. In actual combat, the one who had the upper hand was obviously the one who had the upper hand. Considering the black python's exaggerated size, Zhang Heng did not need to aim much, and he aimed the arrow at his opponent.

Moreover, the Paris Arrow had the ability to lock on to its target, and there was no need for Zhang Heng to make adjustments before he released his finger. The next moment, the Paris Arrow left the bowstring.

Zhang Heng did not use a normal arrow to test it out first because the black Python's body scales could not be penetrated by a normal arrow. Therefore, Zhang Heng did not waste any time and used the Paris Arrow.

Even though the Paris Arrow was only a C-grade item and had the lethality of a normal arrow, it produced amazing effects in previous battles due to its unique characteristics. Zhang Heng did not expect the arrow to hurt the giant black python, but as long as he could find the weakness of the snake, the C-grade item would be considered to have completed its mission.

However, Zhang Heng did not expect that the Paris Arrow, which had always been a hit, had actually failed in front of the snake.

The arrow was aimed at the monster, but for some reason, it lost all its power when it was about five meters away, fluttering weakly to the ground.

Zhang Heng did not even have time to retrieve it from the sea. The black python on the reef had also made its move. It did not expect the tiny human to be the first to attack. Even though the arrow did not hurt it, it did manage to provoke it.

Its yellow eyes seemed to be burning. The python twisted its body and climbed down the reef. It did not even launch an attack. When its body fell into the sea, the huge wave that it created was already aimed at Zhang Heng.

However, the Black Python was surprised to find that the human before it did not run away as it had expected. Instead, it stood where it was and reached out a hand. When the huge wave came into contact with Zhang Heng's palm, it actually split in two!

Chapter 1108: Black Calamity

If Zhang Heng had encountered this huge wave before his trip to the island, he probably wouldn't have had any other choice but to retreat. However, now that he had grasped the basics of controlling the water flow, he could still handle this small situation, although he might not be as powerful as the deepwater overlords like Jemengard.

Zhang Heng used his ability to control water to split the wave into two, brushing past his body and hitting the trees and plants behind him. In the end, the flowers that had been blooming were all destroyed by the oncoming wave. However, Zhang Heng, who was standing in front, was safe and sound.

The black python was obviously surprised as well. Although it didn't seem to understand how the human before it could separate the wave, that didn't stop it from doing what it was about to do next.

After it fell into the water, the black python didn't stay in for long, immediately swimming towards the shore. Although its huge body weakened its agility to a certain extent, its straight-line speed was greatly enhanced. When it moved, it was like a high-speed train. It didn't need to plan its path as well. Regardless of coral or reef, nothing could block its path. It was mercilessly crushed.

At that moment, it was like a moving black catastrophe!

Zhang Heng took a few steps back, but he was not intimidated by the opponent's imposing manner. He had already prepared himself after all, once he realized who his opponent was. Zhang Heng was already mentally prepared. For now, other than the Paris Arrow, everything was useless. The rest didn't stray too far beyond Zhang Heng's expectations. He had only retreated to drag Jemengard as far as possible from the water.

Since normal arrows could not penetrate the black python's scales, Zhang Heng temporarily put away the Pestilence Bone Bow and pulled out the Hidden Scabbard from his waist. This was the only weapon he could rely on for the rest of the battle.

In the blink of an eye, the head of the black python had already reached the shore. The next thing that came out of the water was its huge body. When its abdomen touched the ground, the entire island started to shake.

Zhang Heng seemed to have lost his balance due to the sudden earthquake. Of course, the black python wouldn't let go of this rare opportunity. Half of its body had just reached the shore, and it could not wait to reach its head over.

Normally, when a python was on the hunt, it would first approach its prey. After opening its mouth to bite the target, it would quickly coil its body around the target. By forcefully squeezing and cutting off blood supply, the target's brain and heart would become ischemic. This would cause the target to quickly lose the ability to resist and then slowly swallow the target.

However, Jemengard was simply too big. It might have been able to use this method to deal with the sperm whale at the bottom of the sea, but against Zhang Heng, it would be unrealistic for it to wrap its body around the target. However, this did not cause it any trouble. Without even adjusting its posture, Jemengard charged straight at Zhang Heng, who had lost his balance.

Considering its shocking weight, even if Zhang Heng had not turned into a meat paste, most of his bones would still be intact.

However, in the next moment, the black python suddenly realized that it had lost sight of Zhang Heng.

Its head pressed down on a patch of flowers. Not only did it destroy the plants growing inside, but it had also knocked down a few nearby trees. However, the human who had provoked it was nowhere to be seen.

The black python turned its yellow pupils and used the dimple between its nostrils and eyes to lock onto Zhang Heng's position. To its surprise, the target that had been unstable not too long ago actually dodged its attack.

Not only was the black python fast, but considering the size of its head, Zhang Heng would need to move at least five meters to escape its attack range.

This meant that not only did the monster have to be explosive, but it even regained control of its body. The black python realized that it had been fooled by this rude human again, causing the fire in its eyes to burn even brighter. It chased after the monster without hesitation.

On the other hand, Zhang Heng was unprecedentedly calm after entering combat mode. Although he still had time to complete at least one counterattack when dodging the monster's attack, Zhang Heng was not in a hurry to make a move. This was because the body of the giant black python had not yet completely left the sea and crawled back to land.

If the situation was unfavorable for the giant black python, it would most likely turn around and swim back to the sea. It would be difficult for Zhang Heng to find it again. In that case, he would still be unable to solve the problem of the tunnel circulation; returning to the surface, Zhang Heng still hoped to lure the giant black python back to the surface. It was best to stay as far away from the sea as possible, so up until now, his actions had been mainly focused on dodging.

The man and snake chased each other and returned to the garden. However, this time, the plants along the way were all destroyed. Almost all the plants in the path of the Black Python were destroyed and crushed. The garden was no longer as peaceful as it used to be.

However, after chasing it for a while, the snake suddenly stopped for some reason. It turned around to look at the path it had crawled through, and a rare look of apprehension appeared in its eyes. At that moment, it was like a child who suddenly realized that they had done something wrong.

Zhang Heng did not know why the giant python was so concerned about the garden, but from the looks of it, it seemed to be hesitating if it should continue chasing it. Zhang Heng then did some calculations and realized that the two of them were about 500 meters away from the reef. Of course, this distance could not be considered safe, but at the very least, Jemengard could not turn around and return to the sea.

In order to avoid any further accidents, Zhang Heng finally stopped in his tracks.

The man and the snake fell into a stalemate, and this time, Zhang Heng made the first move.

It was obvious that Jemengard didn't expect the target, who was originally in a sorry state, to take the initiative to attack it. However, this was exactly what it wanted. Subconsciously, it wanted to sweep its tail at Zhang Heng, but when it saw the flowers and trees around it, it stopped in its tracks.

In the end, it decided to meet Zhang Heng with its head. It swung its head at Zhang Heng once more, and this time, Jemengard finally saw how Zhang Heng managed to dodge its trump card. The latter's body suddenly switched from high-speed movement to a static state. Then, it suddenly exerted force in the opposite direction, and in just one second, it actually completed the change in direction.

The whole process was not a waste of time. It was a perfect transition from movement to static to movement. This also meant that Zhang Heng's control over his muscles had reached a state where he could do whatever he wanted.

Chapter 1109: Poisonous Mist

This was the change brought about by the Lv4 knife skill.

Level 4 skills were almost at the limit of what humans could achieve in terms of skills and when it came to fusion and application of strength and spirit.

The battle with Secretary-General Okita had pushed Zhang Heng to an unprecedented level.

His understanding of the path of the blade and the unity of his body and spirit had entered a whole new world. This was also the reason why Zhang Heng was able to control his muscles so perfectly.

Even though Jemengard was fast, it was still impossible to cover up Zhang Heng's movements. Not only that, but it had also exposed its weakness due to its aggressive pounce.

Zhang Heng, who had been waiting for a long time, would not let go of this weakness. Not only did he avoid the snake head that had descended from the sky, but he also used the remaining time to circle the left side of the face of the monster.

At that moment, the monster slammed its head into the ground, creating a huge gust that blew up a rain of pebbles.

Zhang Heng's Hidden Scabbard flashed its fangs in the rain of pebbles and slashed down on the monster's face without hesitation!

The Hidden Scabbard, however, which could cut through concrete and steel, finally met its match. The hardness of the black scales exceeded Zhang Heng's expectations. He tried his best, but it was unable to cut through the scales. Only a half-finger-deep cut could be seen.

The slash completely ignited Jemengard's anger. It did not expect to be cut by a mortal, and although not injured, the cut on the scales would remain until the next skin change period. It would become its humiliation.

At that moment, the monster no longer cared about the flowers in the garden. It swished its tail in one fell swoop across the place, leaving a mess. It even touched the red mud wall at the edge of the maze, obliterating them.

However, when its tail swept past Zhang Heng's position, the latter had already left. Before leaving, though, Zhang Heng gave it a second slash. This slash landed on its neck, leaving it with a second scar. Undoubtedly, this caused Jemengard to enter berserk mode.

It started to shake crazily, and the entire island started to shake along with it. The garden at the center became a disaster area. Trees were uprooted, and flowers and plants were crushed into the soil, causing Jemengard to unleash its destructive power to its heart's content. However, in this apocalyptic scene, there was a figure that was like a small boat in a raging sea. It floated up and down with the waves, but it was never swallowed by the storm. Moreover, as long as it found an opportunity, it would leave a cut on the black python's body.

As time passed, Jemengard became more and more frustrated. The battle's progress was something it had never expected, and the opponent was clearly a weak human. There was practically no way to threaten it, and it could not do anything to it. It had a body full of godly power that it was proud of, but it could not hit its target at all.

Moreover, by the time Jemengard came to its senses, it realized that Zhang Heng cut the scales on its left cheek bit by bit and couldn't even remember when this had happened.

Zhang Heng had chosen a particular spot to strike. He did not attack Jemengard's scales at the first moment. This way, as long as the black python was not too stupid, it would be able to sense his intention. On the contrary, Zhang Heng had been consciously diverting his attacks to create an illusion for Jemengard.

The illusion in question was that his attacks were not targeted or targeted. He only saw an opportunity to counterattack while dodging. However, in reality, during these scattered attacks, Zhang Heng had not given up on cutting the piece of scale on Jemengard's left face.

Up until now, he had already cut it seven times, and his hard work had paid off. The scale was about to be completely sliced open, and when the time came, the skin underneath would be exposed. Jemengard probably did not know what this would mean.

Zhang Heng was preparing to make the final cut during his next move, but at that moment, the initially violent black python suddenly quieted down, stopping its twists and turns. Suddenly, a red mist drifted over from Zhang Heng's side.

Zhang Heng had seen the miserable state of the sperm whale on the platform on the second floor, so he was naturally wary of the poisonous mist.

In the Norse mythological final twilight of the gods, Thor was killed in the poisonous mist in the battle between Thor and Jemengard. Therefore, Zhang Heng had long used Lego blocks to put together a gas mask, and it so happened that the Infinite Block's cooldown time was also up. The drone in his travel bag had already turned back into a building block; therefore, Zhang Heng immediately pulled out the Infinite Block from the inside and inserted it into the gas mask that had already been put together on the other side.

Meanwhile, on the other side, Nightmare Gad was still trying its best to spit out the poison mist. It could be seen that it didn't really want to use this move. Initially, it thought that it would be able to easily deal with the threat in front of it with its huge body. However, Zhang Heng's knife skills made it feel a sense of danger that it hadn't felt for a long time.

Therefore, the Black Python was forced to use its trump card. In its eyes, Zhang Heng was definitely going to die this time. This was because, unlike the previous pounce and swing of its tail, there was no way to avoid this poisonous mist, even if Zhang Heng managed to pull away from it before the poisonous mist spread, as long as he still wanted to attack it, Zhang Heng would have to step back into the poisonous mist.

However, after breathing out the poison fog, Jemengard's expression became a little dispirited. Compared to before, when it had been jumping up and down for a quarter of an hour, it was still alive and kicking. This time, it only spat out a small piece of the poison fog, and its eyes dimmed. Fortunately, all of this was valuable. At least, after the appearance of the poison fog, it was already in an invincible position.

After doing all this, Jemengard was about to close its mouth when it felt a slight pain in its upper jaw.

An arrow the size of a toothpick flew into its mouth when it attempted to spit out the poisonous mist. That was one of the few places on its body that was not protected by its scales.

However, that was just an ordinary arrow. Other than offending the black python, it could not really cause it any harm. At least, that was what the black python thought. Considering that its scales were already covered in cuts, the serpent was no longer as angry as it was.

On the contrary, after the Paris Arrow hit it, Jemengard's heart was filled with joy. This meant that Zhang Heng was still in its poisonous fog. In that case, the other party should have already been poisoned by it, and it wouldn't be long before it lost all of its combat power.

Chapter 1110: Third Attribute!

Poison Mist was Jemengard's ultimate move. The creatures that inhaled it looked no different from usual, but the internal damage would become very serious. Under the corrosion of the poison, they would continuously lose their strength until they died. Moreover, the stronger the creature, the shorter the duration of the process would be.

This was a poison that could turn a god into a mere mortal!

During the battle between Thor and Jemengard, he lost his life due to the excessive amount of poisonous fog. On the other hand, it had dragged the sperm whale on the second floor of the platform from the depths of the sea. Although still conscious, it was unable to fight back. It could only watch helplessly as it was reduced to dinner for a group of snakes.

From what he could see, Zhang Heng's fate after inhaling the poisonous fog was similar to that of the sperm whale. He should be feeling the energy draining from his body very quickly, and he would feel weaker and weaker, just like... the current him.

At first, Jemengard didn't take this matter to heart. This was because the poisonous fog was usually stored in the poison sac in its abdomen. It was released once a month and, this time, used on the sperm whale. It wasn't because the sperm whale was challenging to deal with, but because it needed the poison fog to dissolve the whale's body enough for the snakes to feed. At the same time, the lethal poison he injected was also an excellent tonic for the snakes, just like how catnip attracted cats.

Jemengard had already used up all of the poisonous mist from this month on the sperm whale, so it had been using its body to deal with Zhang Heng until it realized that the situation was turning against it; thus, it had no choice but to spit out more poisonous mist. However, this time, the toxic mist it had secreted had consumed quite a bit of its energy. After spitting it out, it immediately felt as if its body had been hollowed out.

Fortunately, Jermengad was mentally prepared for this. After killing its opponent, it had plenty of time to recuperate. However, the serpent did not expect to feel particularly fatigued this time. Immediately after, its senses seemed to have become dull.

This came as extremely strange for the black python. Being a sea monster, it had an extremely sturdy body and had never been sick since it was born. Thus, it did not know what it felt like to be ill and only felt that its current physical condition was a little strange.

It wanted to immediately return to the sea to rest. But the battle was not over yet. Although its human opponent should have already inhaled its poisonous fog and could not create any waves, it still felt that it should confirm the other party's condition before leaving. Moreover, for this hateful human who dared to provoke it and leave a mark of shame on its body, Jemengard decided to swallow him in one gulp.

It would try to eat him as slowly as possible because only then would it give the other party more time to savor the impending death. With this thought in mind, it poked its snake head forward again. It searched for its target in the poisonous fog.

Even though the poisonous fog before its eyes had affected its vision, snakes were not known for their good eyesight. It also had sensors on its cheeks that could sense nearby heat changes. Hence, when it locked onto its target, it didn't take long to locate Zhang Heng. However, it didn't expect the target to be so close to it, the distance between them being less than ten meters.

And just as it was in a daze, the distance between the two became even closer.

The target was actually closing in on it? Was it a struggle before death?

Before Jemengard could figure out the situation, it heard a crisp grinding, similar to the sound of metal colliding. However, its sluggish mind was unable to figure out where the sound came from in the first place. It was only when it felt a sharp pain on its left cheek that it suddenly realized that a scale on its face had been cut off. Meanwhile, a guy wearing a strange mask had already stabbed his knife into the skin under the scale.

Zhang Heng did not hold back with his knife, the blade completely piercing into the monster's flesh, leaving only the hilt outside. Furthermore, Zhang Heng had to stir it inside before he pulled out the knife.

Even with the snake's size, the blade managed to severely injure it. It raised its head and rolled on the ground in pain. However, pain was pain. Even though the blade had injured the snake, it would've, at most, scratched the muscles under its skin.

With the snake's physique, such a small injury shouldn't cause it any trouble. At least, that was what it thought when it was first stabbed. At the same time, the fury of revenge quickly took it over, where even the fatigue and dullness from before seemed to have completely subsided. Jemengard began an even fiercer salvo of attacks on Zhang Heng. Even the surrounding sea creatures seemed to sense danger, all fleeing deeper into the sea.

Zhang Heng decisively switched back to his defensive stance and began to contend with the python before him.

After a while, Jemengard finally realized that something was wrong. After the anger of revenge subsided, the tiredness and sluggishness returned. It felt powerless, and the wound on its cheek showed no signs of improvement. Not only was it continuously bleeding, but the pain was getting more intense.

This confused Jemengard. Even though Zhang Heng had practically stabbed the knife into it, compared to its size, the wound on its left cheek was still so small that it could be ignored. At best, it was equivalent to an ordinary person having their finger cut open.

However, it was this tiny laceration that tormented the deep-sea monster. It could no longer ignore the pain on its cheek, especially when it shifted its gaze there discovered that the affected part had started to fester. The pus inside still spread in all directions.

And this was the masterpiece of the Hidden Scabbard.

After Zhang Heng received the knife, he also received the bartender's appraisal of it. The sturdiness of the blade and the non-healing properties of the wound were all eye-catching. Zhang Heng, however, had most of his attention on the last one: the bonus effect it inflicted on mythical creatures.

With Zhang Heng's current skills, it was almost impossible for ordinary people to threaten him. However, ever since he met the old man in the Tang suit, Zhang Heng realized that there were so many mythical creatures living in this world—in particular, many of the mythical creatures' ordinary weapons had no effect on them at all. However, the appearance of the Hidden Scabbard made up for this last shortcoming.

The battle with Jemengard was also Zhang Heng's first time using the Hidden Scabbard's third attribute.

Not only was this knife sturdy and had a bleeding effect, but it was also a true god-slaying weapon!