

48 Hours 1161

Chapter 1161: New List

The two militiamen did not expect that the drunkard in front of them would suddenly attack someone. However, seeing their companion fall to the ground did not raise their vigilance. They still treated the young man in front of them like an ordinary drunkard, a man out of his mind and lawless. There were several such people in Pripjat. A bottle of vodka in one's stomach would make one oblivious to the enormity of Heaven and earth.

The two militiamen felt that it was necessary for them to help the drunkard change his habits. They placed the disinfection equipment on the ground and charged towards the young man in the uniform. However, the latter's movements were much faster. Before the two militia could finish surrounding him, the young man in the uniform had already ducked and bent his legs. Then, like a hunting dog, he dashed in front of one of the militia.

The beheading youth should have used a move similar to Muay Thai in close combat. No one knew if he had practiced it in a dungeon or in real life, but it was obvious that he had spent a lot of effort on it.

Although the militiamen in front of him had received some military training, it was clear that they could not withstand such storm-like fists. If it were not for his sturdy physique, he would've probably failed to withstand the first round of attacks. However, he did not last much longer than his companion, who had his head shot by a bottle. He was kicked in the abdomen and fell backward.

At this time, the third militia had just charged forward.

The uniformed youth did not expect his luck to be so good this time. He had succeeded in his first sneak attack. After that, the two of them did not react quickly enough. Like how the Gourd Doll had saved his grandfather, they lined up one by one to deliver vegetables, allowing the youth to exceed his level's performance and complete a one versus three feat.

The first two people had already been knocked to the ground by him, and after losing the risk of being surrounded, the third person was no longer a difficulty, though the latter had finally become vigilant after seeing his companions fall one after another.

On the other side, the driver on the sprinkler truck had also noticed the situation behind him. He jumped out to help, but when he saw his companions struggling under the uniformed young man's series of attacks, he thought about his own fighting strength. He realized that even if he rushed up now, there was an 80% chance that he would not change the final outcome.

Thus, he decisively turned around, running to a car preparing to drive away for help. Unfortunately, he had just turned around to the front of the car when the door unexpectedly opened itself. Unable to stop his footsteps, he hurriedly got in but hit his head against the door before he knew it.

Before he lost consciousness, he vaguely saw a figure appear in the driver's seat. However, he had no recollection of when the figure had got in.

When the driver fainted on the ground, Zhang Heng also jumped out of the car. Moreover, unlike when he came, there was an extra item in his pocket. Clothes and other items were indeed needed for later

operations, but it was not necessary to snatch them now. There was still some time before the official evacuation announcement.

Zhang Heng had actually set his eyes on this group of militia because of the things in the car.

At this time, the battle on the other side was nearing its end. As expected, the remaining militia was no match for subjugator. They might still be ordinary people when they first entered the game, but now, after its baptism, even the most ordinary people would continue to evolve.

Furthermore, Zhang Heng could see that the young man's combat level surpassed normal players. His Muay Thai was probably level 2.

The young man did not rush forward. He dragged on until the opponent in front of him revealed a flaw due to overexertion. Only then did he use a perfect strike to end the not-very-intense battle. Looking at the three enemies besides his feet, a look of pride appeared on his face.

Following that, the young man and Zhang Heng removed the uniforms and boots from the four of them and dragged them into the sprinkler truck. Zhang Heng then drove the truck into a relatively remote alley. It would be at least a few hours before the four woke up or were discovered. By then, the players should have already left the hotel.

After all that was done, Zhang Heng and the young man knocked on Master Kui's room.

The latter hadn't been idle for a long time. After packing up his things, he started to plan his next move, including drawing up a new target list and a timetable.

Master Kui didn't waste any time. As soon as Zhang Heng and the young man entered the room, she stuffed a letter into their hands, "Our current course of action has changed. We've gone from looking for the culprit to finding the person who solved the crisis. Of course, if you guys have any better ideas in the future investigation, you can bring them up. I've made a rough list. If any of you know more about the Chernobyl accident, I'll have to trouble you to help me improve the list."

Zhang Heng glanced at the names on the list. The person in the first place had changed from Dyatlov to Scherbina. He was the chairman of the Committee and the person Moscow had sent to deal with the accident. He was also the one who gave all the orders and decisions for disaster relief, so there was no problem for him to be in this position. However, the second person after him was much more difficult to choose.

The firefighters who put out the fire outside the reactor in time, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, Beldorf, and his militia, or the first group of experts who arrived, the Air Force pilots who were busy transporting sand to put out the fire... these were all important figures to the disaster relief, but their contributions were difficult to quantify.

"I remember in the original history that in order to prevent the core from burning through the floor and coming into contact with the water in the basement which would cause a steam explosion, a few nuclear power plant engineers risked breathing in lethal radiation to open the water valve to drain the water. If not for them, Ukraine and Belarus would probably have been finished, and the whole of Europe would have been affected. So I think they should be in second place."

Master Kui nodded and made a note on the paper. "And?"

“And the miners,” Zhang Heng said. “In order to prevent the reactor’s lava from sinking and contaminating the groundwater, even the nearby rivers, the Soviets dug a tunnel to inject liquid nitrogen to cool the reactor. In addition, the work of collecting the graphite ejected from the explosion back into the reactor was also very important. It was done by the Soviet military, but now we have a problem.”

“What’s the problem?”

“A lot of work wasn’t done by one person, so how are we going to find the key person? Are we going to see who is the leader or whose contribution is more prominent?”

“This also brings us back to the original question. How do we quantify everyone’s contribution?” Zhang Heng asked. “Furthermore, the disaster relief has only just begun, and many things have yet to happen. I’m afraid we’ll have to continue waiting to find those on the list.”

Chapter 1162: Evacuation

Even before the break of dawn, buses were already lined up on the highway beside Yanov train station. One after the other, the line extended a total of 20 kilometers. From afar, they looked like a long line.

However, for reasons unbeknownst, the authorities did not immediately organize an evacuation after dawn. Instead, they began to broadcast continuously through the town’s radio, telling all citizens to stay in their residences and not to leave. At the same time, they also reminded people to close their doors and windows. A group of health workers distributed potassium iodide pills everywhere. Short-handed, they had also recruited a group of female high school students to help.

Meanwhile, representatives of the town’s businesses and organizations were gathered in the DW Building, where the Ministry of Internal Affairs explained the details of the evacuation.

Many people were in disbelief. They had already felt unwell yesterday and had left Pripjat with their families, but there were still many people who chose to remain since the sky in Pripjat was still as clear and blue as ever, not to mention the crystal clear river. Other than a faint metallic smell in the air, everything looked the same as usual. How did the situation develop to the point of a sudden evacuation? Moreover, the experts were vague about when they would be able to return.

Thus, there was a lot of dispute at the meeting. However, in the end, the representatives of the enterprises and organizations chose to comply with the arrangements of the DW and assisted in the evacuation that involved the entire city.

The official time of the evacuation was set at 2 p.m. Although Beldorf had already transferred 1,100 transport vehicles from Kiev and other places, for the remaining residents of Pripjat now, these 1,000 vehicles were far from enough to transport the belongings of Pripjat’s residents. The government also wouldn’t allow anyone to take anything that had been contaminated by radiation.

Thus, at noon, the radio broadcast told the residents who were still in the city that the evacuation was only temporary. It would be around two to three days, and they would be back soon, so there was no need to bring too many things. The officials suggested that only a small amount of daily necessities was enough. Unfortunately, but unsurprisingly, cats, dogs, and other pets were not allowed to be brought.

Most people did the same. They packed some change and laundry in plastic bags. It was all the luggage they had. Even though the atmosphere in the town was already very tense, no one thought that this would be an eternal farewell to their beloved home.

Most chose to believe the official story, optimistic that they would be back in a few days, which in their view was not even a bad thing since it also freed them from work. Three days of time was almost equivalent to a small holiday.

Some children even jumped in excitement despite the militia's repeated exhortations, but there were still people who came downstairs in advance and talked to their neighbors. Some women wore only thin pajamas without even holding their passbooks because the radio said that as long as the doors and windows were locked, the militia would help them take care of the property in the house and ensure no thieves would enter.

When the time was nigh, the buses drove in one by one into Pripjat and parked under different residential buildings. The militiamen kept urging people to speed up their actions. There were also a few minor incidents, but they were all quickly quelled. The buses started again, carrying full loads of people to an unknown destination.

Behind the bus were also many cats and dogs. They seemed to have realized their fate of being abandoned by their owners. They ran and cried. Some even tried to force their way into the bus but to no avail. Although some owners opened the windows despite their dissuasion, they could only look at their pets with tears in their eyes. They shouted their names and said goodbye to them. Because of the government's ban, these pets could not leave with their owners.

Eventually, the dogs and cats were tired of running, so they could only stand by the roadside and watch their owners leave, their eyes filled with sorrow.

Zhang Heng also heard the barking of the dogs from the nearby streets. He was now in the town's gymnasium with Besnova, Master Kui, Mouse, and the uniformed youth. The gymnasium had been closed since the afternoon of the 26th, but the lock on the door could not block the steel wire in the young man's hand. There was no one else here, and there was a sealed room, perfect for them to use as a base.

The doctor and the maintenance worker left around dawn. Even though they were a little worried about Zhang Heng's final suggestion, they still decided to follow the original plan after some discussion. The two of them couldn't imagine how dangerous it would be to leave this place, and their language barrier had been partially resolved.

Since the Pripjat Hotel would occasionally receive foreign guests, there were also people who could speak English there. Even though only elementary level, it was roughly equivalent to a primary school student. In the future, however, to a certain extent, it would solve the urgent problem of the doctor and the maintenance worker. Before they left, they hijacked the English-speaking waiter to act as their interpreter. At least, they wouldn't come off as not understanding a single word.

The group also divided up the resources they had plundered earlier. Not only were there food and protective equipment, but the doctor left some tranquilizers and fever medicine for Zhang Heng and the others. Although the two sides previously had some unpleasant disagreements about the direction of

their next move, the break-up was still relatively harmonious. After splitting the loot, the doctor and the repairman drove the newly stolen car into the traffic and out of Pripjat City.

Although the seven players had only known each other for less than two days, experiencing this crisis together caused a bond to form between them. This was especially so after they had just lost their Coconut. After that, the repairman and the doctor also chose to leave. Now, there were only four people left on the team. Moreover, there was still no news of the mission. This made the remaining people somewhat depressed.

However, they still had to do what they had to do.

After a simple lunch, Kui suggested investigating the pilot responsible for transporting sand to the reactor. After all, whether the miners or the engineers went down to open the drainage valve, there was still no sign of them because the authorities had not launched any action yet. Scherbina, the number one person on the list, was still there. However, his identity was more special.

It was not impossible to sneak into his room and interrogate him as he did with Kovitz. However, cleaning up after that wouldn't be easy. Therefore, the players still preferred to postpone the investigation of him a little. Through this, the pilots were the better targets for investigation. They risked being exposed to radiation and flew over the reactor, again and again, dropping sand to put out the fire. Clearly, they played a significant role in the relief of this disaster.

Chapter 1163: Confidence

Zhang Heng and the others spent the whole afternoon completing the investigation of the pilot. Unfortunately, there was still no hint of the main mission being triggered.

The falling of the night saw the town of Pripjat fall completely silent.

It was hard to imagine that just a few hours ago, there were still tens of thousands of people living here. Now, the city had become empty. Other than the team of experts in charge of disaster relief and the militia, there was no one else. All the shops and public facilities were basically closed and even pipes were no longer supplying water.

Before the operation in the afternoon, Zhang Heng found a militia uniform for Besnova. The five of them were now wearing uniforms and driving a military vehicle. At first glance, they looked no different from the other militia in the city.

As they drove past a residential building, they heard gunshots coming from there.

Zhang Heng knew that the militia was shooting the pets that their owners had left behind in the town.

Although it sounded cruel, the pets had also absorbed a fatal amount of radioactive particles just like humans. The radioactive dust fell on their fur and moved around with them, making them a mobile source of radiation. If left unchecked, they might even carry the radiation further away. The radiation poisoning might even make them go crazy, just like the mad Coconut.

Coconut was human after all, but she was also a player who had experienced many dungeons meaning she still had a strong sense of self-control. In comparison, the cats and dogs would become

uncontrollable after exposure to such extent of radiation. After the residents of the town evacuated, the militia began to clean up these potential safety hazards.

Accompanied by the sound of gunshots, the cats and dogs that were previously alive and kicking dropped to the ground one after another. The militia dragged the corpses onto the car and waited for them to be sent to a specific location to be buried. In order to prevent the radiation from their bodies from contaminating the land, their graves would have to be completely sealed with cement.

General Zhang Heng drove to the front of a supermarket. In the early morning of the 26th, they had swept through the goods in Pripjat, but at that time, they did not expect the main mission to be so difficult to complete. Only taking about three days' worth of food and water, they then gave a portion to the doctors and maintenance workers and they sorely needed to replenish their supplies now.

However, when the five of them entered the supermarket, they found that most of the goods on the shelves were still in their original positions, except for the food that was missing.

The young man in uniform shone his flashlight on the empty food shelves. "Someone came here before us."

"Those militias and the experts and committee members who are staying at the Pripjat Hotel... they all need to eat, so the food here should have been packed away by them in advance," Kui said.

"If that's the case, doesn't that mean we won't be finding any food in other supermarkets as well?" Mouse asked anxiously.

Now that the water supply had been cut, the entire city was completely paralyzed, meaning they needed to solve the problem of food and drinking water on their own. The food which they collected the last time would only last them a day or so, and even if they ate sparingly, they would probably last two more days at best. After that, they would probably go hungry.

It was only then that the players realized the seriousness of the problem. Pripjat had not only lost people, but also its basic social security. Water and electricity were things usually ignored, and it was probably only after losing them that people began to realize how precious they were.

Fortunately, Zhang Heng spoke up, "It's fine. The residents of the evacuated the town in a hurry, so they didn't take much with them. There should be a lot of food in their fridges and kitchens. The militia probably didn't touch those things. As usual, try to pick processed food with sealed bags. If you can eat the food in the fridge, then eat it."

"I saw an apartment building when I came here earlier. It's not far from the supermarket. We can go there to look for food," Master Kui suggested. "Let's split up. It'll be more efficient. We'll gather in front of the supermarket in an hour."

Hearing that, everyone agreed. They divided the area according to the floor and split up to search.

Zhang Heng also entered a house through the window. It was clear that the owner had left in a hurry, having no time to put the plates back on the shelves, and there were still a lot of clothes left on the sofa and on the bed. He then opened the fridge. Inside, he found an unopened bag of sausages and two boxes of canned meat. Unfortunately, there was only one bottle of beer, and half of it had been drunk.

Finding an empty bag from the cabinet, he threw in the bag of sausages and the two boxes of canned meat and headed to the second apartment.

One hour was not enough for the players to thoroughly search the entire apartment building, especially considering that not everyone had a special lock-picking tool like Zhang Heng did. It took a lot of time to break down doors.

Nonetheless, despite all that, the players had more or less gained something after one round.

Zhang Heng stuffed the bags in his hands to the brim and had no choice but to take two new bags. Furthermore, he had accidentally gained five points during the search, probably because he had received a bag of snacks most popular among the local under-12 youths.

When the group gathered, they counted the items they had obtained. The results were quite encouraging. Conservatively, this batch of food could last them for another four to five days. It could be considered a preliminary solution to the food and water crisis they faced.

The young man coughed as he moved the half box of milk he had found into the car.

Zhang Heng noticed that his arm seemed to be a little swollen.

“How do you feel now?”

“Just like that.” The young man remained as heartless as ever. “Didn’t the doctor say that we’ve all been exposed to lethal radiation? Therefore, our health will definitely deteriorate. Furthermore, this city is filled with radiation now. We can’t avoid it even if we wanted to.”

“Then why didn’t you leave this place with the doctor and the others before? Didn’t you support the maintenance worker’s opinion back then?” Zhang Heng asked.

“Because compared to them, I trust you more. Idol, I believe that I will definitely survive this dungeon with you.” The young man’s confidence in Zhang Heng was even greater than Zhang Heng’s confidence in himself. He proclaimed with certainty, “You can even defeat an agent war dungeon. There’s no reason you’d be finding a daily dungeon too difficult.”

However, this time, Zhang Heng was unusually silent. He patted the young man’s shoulder. “Rest early tonight. There are still lots of things to be done tomorrow.”

Chapter 1164: New Guests

April 30, 1986.

Nearly five days had passed since the reactor explosion.

Over the past few days, Zhang Heng and the others had been investigating the various parties involved in the disaster relief, trying to find the key people. Unfortunately, despite their very positive actions, even risking a huge risk by running back to the nuclear power plant twice, the main mission still did not get any better.

Not only that, but the health of the players was only becoming worse. After losing the doctor, no one knew exactly how much the radiation had affected them, but they could still feel the changes in their bodies.

The youth's arm that had swelled up was now a full size bigger than before. It could not fit into his sleeve, and the only thing they could do was to open a hole in the clothes. Other than that, ulcers had appeared on his tongue and cheeks, and layers of mucous membranes fell off, making it difficult for him to speak.

Mouse wasn't in too great of a condition either. One of his legs had turned bluish-purple. Not only was it swollen, but it was even a little shiny. It was very smooth to the touch, and there were blisters on the inside, causing excruciating pain upon every movement. On the fourth day, it was already difficult for him to move, and on the fifth, he could only sit in the car.

On the other hand, Master Kui was in a slightly better condition than the other two. Her face was swollen, and her eyes were somewhat bloodshot, and she also started shedding hair. It wasn't only her hair that was falling off but her eyebrows as well.

In comparison, Zhang Heng's condition was the best among the four. He only had dark brown patches of different shapes on his skin that would cause constant pain, but it basically didn't affect movement.

In addition, the five of them, including Besnova, felt different levels of fatigue. The doctor had mentioned this—it was probably nuclear fatigue.

The five of them had just returned from the cement mixing plant. To be honest, they didn't have much hope when they went there. Although the work there was also important, it was obviously not that important. The only reason they went there to investigate was that there was no other place to go.

At this point in the operation, even Kui, who had been the most determined, couldn't help but waver. He started to wonder if he had made the wrong decision to stay in Pripjat. Even though there were many names on the list that hadn't been investigated yet, that would be for the rescue work relatively later in time. Everyone knew that the most valuable thing was actually the committee chairman, Scherbina, who ranked first on the list.

Previously, the four of them had decided to postpone Scherbina's investigation, worried that it would cause too much commotion. Zhang Heng had also managed to obtain the estimated duration of Scherbina's stay in Pripjat from the DW's office. The latter was prepared to wait until the reactor fire was completely extinguished and would only return to Moscow once the situation was under further control. The earliest they could do so would be in May, so the players were not in a hurry.

However, as time passed, the players seemed to have made an agreement. They started to talk less and less about the investigation of Scherbina. It was not because they were worried about stirring up any trouble, but simply because he was the players' last hope. If they could not get any clues about the main mission from Scherbina, they wouldn't know what to do next.

On the way back, the atmosphere in the car became very quiet.

Zhang Heng drove the military vehicle past one empty building after another. Occasionally, he could see some militia squads hunting animals. They flashed past the car window with guns in their hands. Initially,

the crowd was worried that the militia would notice them, and they stopped their cars and allowed themselves to be interrogated. But now, in this empty city, seeing the same kind of people that happened to appear by chance gave the players a sense of kinship.

Zhang Heng parked the car outside the stadium.

He looked up at the sky. The sun was about to set, and it was almost dinner time. However, when Zhang Heng opened the stadium's door and walked into the room where they had stored food and water, he found that it was a mess.

The glass bottles used to store water were broken, and the biscuits and sausages had been eaten. Only the packaging and residue were left on the ground. The only things that were still intact were the few bottles of canned fish.

"What happened? Did the militia discover this place?" Master Kui asked.

"No, it was another guest."

Zhang Heng bent down and picked a box of canned food beside his feet. He saw the row of teeth marks on the metal box.

"Stray Dogs?" The youth in the uniform asked in a muffled voice.

Although the militia had started to clean up the pets left in the city on the day of the evacuation, there were still quite a few that escaped the net. During the past two days, the players had also encountered a few stray cats and dogs. Under normal circumstances, when they saw the animals from afar, they would use stones or something to drive them away. After all, there was quite a lot of radioactivity in these animals now.

And when the cats and dogs sensed the danger, they would immediately run away without waiting for the stones to hit them. However, there were occasional exceptions, especially when the cats and dogs would become hungrier. Some hungry dogs began to hunt down the stray cats in the city, swallowing them to satisfy their hunger.

However, the dogs would soon become agitated due to the increased radioactivity, and they would start attacking the humans in the city. Some of the militia teams responsible for hunting were bitten by the mad dogs.

The players had encountered them because they had been active in the city, but fortunately, they did not encounter any danger.

In terms of combat power, the mad dogs were not particularly strong. However, since they had run into the stadium, the players could not leave them alone. If the dogs sneaked in during the night, and anyone was bitten, there would be no shots here to fight tetanus.

Thus, when Zhang Heng saw this, he took out the Pestilence Bone Bow on his back. He pulled out another arrow from his quiver and ran along with the paw prints on the ground.

This level of pursuit wasn't that difficult for Zhang Heng. The culprit obviously hadn't thought about how to disguise himself. After feasting on the food, he swaggered out of the stadium. His trail was practically everywhere along the way.

Zhang Heng found the latter's nest without much effort. Outside the changing room of the badminton hall on the top floor, there was a shepherd dog. Its health did not look good. Just like the humans, it had been severely affected by radiation and had lost a lot of fur. Its body looked like patches of alopecia, but what was worse was the wound on its backside.

It seemed to have fought with the teams responsible for hunting animals, but it miraculously survived after being shot. The bloodstains on its chest fur showed that it had swallowed some small animals to satisfy its hunger. It was unknown whether it was a stray cat, a mouse, or a dead bird nearby.

Chapter 1165: Stray Dog

Zhang Heng raised the Pestilence Bone Bow in his hand and aimed it at the sheepdog that was lying on the ground, seemingly asleep.

At this distance, he was confident that he could kill the sheepdog with one shot. He would shoot directly in the head, inflicting as little pain as possible to it. Leaving this world in its sleep was probably the last thing Zhang Heng could do for it.

However, the next moment, just as Zhang Heng was about to release the bowstring, the shepherd dog suddenly opened its eyes.

Man and the dog looked at each other for about half a second. Then, the dog let out a low growl, as if trying to stand up from the ground.

However, an arrow pierced through its head!

Although Zhang Heng couldn't send the shepherd dog away in its sleep as planned, his arrow still hit the target cleanly. The hound fell to the ground after being hit by the arrow.

Zhang Heng then put away his Pestilence Bone Bow] and turned to leave.

However, just as he took a step forward, he stopped.

Because Zhang Heng heard the movement behind him. The shepherd dog that his arrow hit almost died on the spot. It was already a corpse. Zhang Heng saw it clearly, so the movement was definitely not from the dog.

He turned around and saw another poodle trotting out of the badminton stadium's changing room.

Zhang Heng frowned. He had not expected that there would be more than one dog in the stadium. Previously, when he had chosen this place as their base, he, Uncle Kui, and the others had searched the place thoroughly. At that time, they had not found any other animals. This meant the two dogs should have only come later.

However, for some reason, they had come here. Other than the room where the players stored their items, there wasn't much food in the stadium. Logically speaking, it shouldn't have attracted the dogs. Could the militia's hunting outside have driven them here? After all, compared to the streets and the wild, the stadium was indeed safer for stray dogs.

These thoughts flashed through Zhang Heng's mind, but he didn't dwell too much on them. He took off the Pestilence Bone Bow on his back again and pulled the bowstring.

Zhang Heng didn't know what the relationship between the poodle and the shepherd was, but it seemed like the two dogs knew each other. He expressed regret for killing the poodle's companion, but for the sake of safety, he wasn't planning to let the poodle go just because of that.

However, just as he was about to fire the second arrow, he saw another dog walk out of the changing room. It was a spaniel, and it looked much more powerful than the poodle outside.

This was not the end. Behind the spaniel was a bulldog, followed by a Great Dane and a mixed-breed.

Zhang Heng had already sensed that something was wrong. He also heard movement coming from the window behind him. A few stray dogs were squeezing in through the half-closed window, and in the direction of the bathroom. Stray dogs were also the stairway that Zhang Heng had come up. They surrounded Zhang Heng in the middle, as if to seek justice for their dead companions.

If it were anyone else, they would have been scared out of their wits by now. Even though the hounds weren't particularly strong, not to mention a good number of small pet dogs among them, once gathered, practically no one in this abandoned city could rival them.

Only Zhang Heng was able to maintain his calm. He did a rough count and found that already more than twenty dogs surrounding him, and even more were joining in.

If everything went as planned, this was probably the largest pack of dogs in Pripjat. A few days ago, many of them were good companions for humans, good companions for the house guards, but now, they looked at Zhang Heng as if he was prey.

It was obvious that these dogs had been hungry for some time, and they had not been at peace recently. They had been chased around by the gunned militia, causing their impression of humans to take a turn for the worse. As if not enough, Zhang Heng had just killed one of them. From the looks of it, the dead shepherd dog was probably the leader of the pack.

Old and new grudges gathered together. It would be strange if these stray dogs could be polite to Zhang Heng. In fact, before they even reached Zhang Heng's side, they had already begun to growl, falling and rising in succession.

In the end, the head of the bulldog second closest to Zhang Heng was pierced by an arrow in the blink of an eye, following in the footsteps of its companion. Zhang Heng had no intention of being polite. It was obviously impossible to resolve the situation peacefully. Thus, he did not wait for the dogs to completely gather, taking the initiative to launch an attack.

After shooting the arrow, his hands did not stop as he pulled out a second arrow from his quiver. However, at that moment, the dogs started to accelerate and charged at him.

Zhang Heng kicked the poodle that was closest to the dog that barked the loudest earlier and sent it flying. Then, the second arrow nailed the spaniel that was already in the air to the ground. However, perhaps because the radiation had affected the nerves of the dogs and witnessing the death of two of their companions, that the remaining ones showed no signs of backing down. Instead of retreating, they pounced on Zhang Heng even more valiantly.

Zhang Heng could feel the fervent atmosphere among the dogs. He turned sideways to avoid the two from the front, but the three on his right had also jumped up from the ground. There were also sneak attacks from behind and on his right hand.

This situation was indeed a four-pronged attack for Zhang Heng. Even if there was a militia team with guns, there was a high chance that they would not be able to withstand such a fierce attack.

However, just as the two dogs were about to bite Zhang Heng's thigh, the enemy standing in front of them suddenly disappeared.

The two dogs missed their target and fell from the sky. Then, amid wondering where the enemy that was right in front of them had gone, their lives were unexpectedly reaped by a rain of arrows that fell from the top of their heads.

At the critical moment, Zhang Heng opened the shadow wings on his back and flew straight into the air. He created some distance between himself and the dogs, but he did not rise too high. After making sure that he wouldn't be bitten again, he began to draw his bow and arrow, taking advantage of the 12 the Shadow Wings provided to harvest the dogs below him.

Zhang Heng's Level-2 archery skills saw a dog falling to the ground and die each time the bowstring was thwacked. Moreover, Zhang Heng picked the bigger strays, which were more inclined to be fierce. In a short while, more than half the hounds were dead, and the rest were mostly small toy dogs.

Chapter 1166: Big Trouble

In twelve seconds, Zhang Heng had shot out a total of seventeen arrows. Basically, none of them missed, and more than half of the dogs were killed or injured as a result.

When he landed on the ground, he leaned back against the wall of the badminton hall to avoid being surrounded again. Then, he pulled out the Hidden Sheath on his waist and easily killed another six dogs. The remaining dogs finally started to feel fear and stopped charging, scattering with tails between their legs.

Zhang Heng did not chase after them. Firstly, the dogs would probably be too afraid to come back after the incident. Secondly, the battle just now had almost depleted the stock in his quiver.

After that, he searched the badminton hall again to ensure that there were no other stray dogs inside. Only then did he return to the room where the food was stored.

Master Kui had already started cleaning the residue on the ground outside the room. He had even sorted out the food that was barely enough for tonight. Seeing this, Zhang Heng suggested, "After we finish dinner, we can go to the nearby houses to collect some food."

However, Master Kui shook her head.

"There's no need."

"Hmm?"

"Let's go back to the Pripyat Hotel tonight," Master Kui said decisively.

“Are you guys going to investigate Scherbina?” Zhang Heng raised his eyebrows, “But the experts haven’t noticed that the reactor might melt through the concrete base and cause a thermal explosion when it comes into contact with the pool. The three engineers who opened the drain valve haven’t even appeared, and the miners haven’t arrived in Pripjat yet.”

“Undoubtedly, their work is of utmost importance; they can even be called heroes, but frankly, I don’t think they’re the ones we’re looking for,” Kui replied.

These few days, she had watched her companions and her own health deteriorate little by little. In addition, until now, she hadn’t received any news related to the main mission. Master Kui finally started to doubt the direction she had chosen.

“Even though I don’t want to admit it, the truth is that we haven’t made much progress in the past few days in Pripjat. Our current work is just a waste of time, and every day we delay will increase the amount of radiation we inhale. Perhaps the repairman and doctor are right. We should leave this place early and find a safe place to wait for the official investigation results.”

“Are you going to look for the doctor and the repairman?” Zhang Heng asked.

“Perhaps,” Mouse said. “To be honest, we don’t know where they are now. After we leave this place, we can go to a hospital for a checkup first.”

It was an era where no such thing called a mobile phone or WeChat existed. Everyone relied on letters and landlines to contact each other. However, before the maintenance man and the doctor left, they did not decide where they would go. The Soviet territory was so awfully vast; there was a high possibility both parties wouldn’t meet again in this dungeon.

“This is only the result of our preliminary discussion,” the young man said. “We also want to seek your opinion. Personally, I will go wherever you decide. If you still want to stay here, I will stay with you.”

Even though the young man’s physical condition was the worst of the three, and he looked like he needed urgent treatment, he seemed to have made up his mind to follow Zhang Heng until the last moment of his life.

Seeing that the somewhat tragic atmosphere, Mouse attempted to ease the tension.

“Actually, the situation might not be that serious. Scherbina is the committee chairman and is in charge of the disaster relief work, so there’s a high possibility he’s the key person. Perhaps we’ll complete the main storyline mission tonight, and everyone will be able to return to the real world safely. Coconut will also be saved.”

Of course, this would be a happy result for everyone, but after experiencing disappointment after disappointment, the players felt a little uncertain.

At this time, Master Kui noticed that there were only two arrows left in Zhang Heng’s quiver, so she asked, “Did you run into some trouble?”

“No, I didn’t run into any trouble but a group of stray dogs at the badminton hall. But I’ve already taken care of them,” Zhang Heng said calmly.

“A group of stray dogs? Are they here?” Uncle Kui was a little surprised.

Most of the stray dogs in the city were hungry, trying their best to find food. There was no food near the stadium, so logically speaking, it shouldn't attract stray dogs. There were so many of them; they even found the room the players stored their food.

Zhang Heng asked, "Who was the last one to leave today?"

"Me, it was me." Mouse raised his hand.

"Did you close the door when you left?"

"Uhh... I can't remember. I woke up in the morning, and my leg was in a lot of pain. At that time, my mind was focused on how to make my leg feel better. Later, when I went out, I realized that I had forgotten to take my gas mask. I even turned back, so I probably forgot to lock the door when I came out again," Mouse said. "I'll pay attention next time, although I guess there won't be a next."

The players didn't blame Mouse for this matter. Although most of their food and drinking water had been contaminated by stray dogs, from another perspective, this matter had finally prompted them to make up their minds. They would no longer go around in circles and face the final outcome.

After tonight, Master Kui would also find out if she was heading in the right direction.

After the players hastily finished their dinner, they laid down in their hammocks to recover their energy and prepare for tonight's operation. Although they had decided to leave Pripjat if there was still no progress and wait for the official investigation results, everyone knew in their hearts that this was just another distant hope.

If they had left with the maintenance workers and doctors back then, they might have been able to hold on until that day. However, now that they had chosen to stay in Pripjat and continue to receive radiation, everyone's physical condition had deteriorated to different degrees. It was probably too late to wait for the official investigation results.

Similarly, everyone had already placed their bets on tonight's operation. Now that the answer to the riddle was finally about to be revealed, everyone's hearts were filled with anxiety.

Mouse had complained about the difficulty of this dungeon more than once. Not only did he suffer a nuclear explosion when he went out, but the main mission was so vague that there were no hints at all. Furthermore, he had tried two directions in a row, but there was still no result. Mouse even began to suspect that the god behind this dungeon was attempting to play them to death.

Zhang Heng was probably the only one of the four who wasn't paying attention to his actions at night.

He had an even bigger problem to solve.

Chapter 1167: Entering Parallel Dungeon

Zhang Heng glanced at the starfish on his wrist. It was getting closer and closer to the point where they had stayed in the dungeon for a full five days.

This was not good news for Zhang Heng.

This time, the time flow of the dungeon was precisely one hour to 60 days. Zhang Heng entered the dungeon at 23:55 in the real world as usual, which meant that there were only five minutes until the pointer pointed to 24. This meant that the dungeon time was exactly five days.

If he subtracted the five seconds before entering the dungeon, it meant that he would be able to enter the extra 24 hours in less than five days.

The extra time in the previous dungeon had helped him a lot, which was also why his skills had improved so quickly. However, this time, the 24 hours would put him in an extremely dangerous situation.

This was because the 24 hours converted into the time of the dungeon was about four years. Typically, four years would not be a problem for Zhang Heng, but this time, he had been exposed to radiation at the start, and even though his current physical performance was the best among all the players, Zhang Heng was not sure if he could survive the four years.

Especially considering the situation with the young man and mouse, each of them looked weaker than the last. They might not even last a month.

Of course, there were other players in this dungeon. Unlike Zhang Heng, who usually cleared dungeons alone, the system would probably choose to reopen a parallel dungeon and throw him in alone. That was how the system had dealt with him back in the Apollo program training camp. As long as he could survive four years in the parallel dungeon, then return to the current dungeon, he should return to his physical condition before entering the parallel dungeon.

This was half good news for Zhang Heng. Of course, the prerequisite was that he could survive the four years in the parallel instance dungeon.

Zhang Heng didn't have any good ideas on how to deal with this. He still had a mission failure exemption card with him, and he had spent 400 game points to buy this card from the bartender; its purpose was to help the holder escape the punishment of mission failure.

In other dungeons, Zhang Heng could completely ignore the main storyline mission. He could just find a cat anywhere and wait until the game time was up before returning to the real world. However, this time, the game was a rare time-free dungeon, and he could only leave after completing the quest. Thus, it meant Zhang Heng had entered an endless loop.

What was bound to come would still come. At 11:23, the familiar feeling of dizziness assaulted him.

At the same time, a familiar system notification sounded in Zhang Heng's ears.

[Ding! Parallel dungeon has been activated. This dungeon is the Invisible Killer transition dungeon. Player count: 1. Mission Target: None. Time: 1,440 days. Attention, player!]

Zhang Heng's vision suddenly darkened. At the same time, a popular song, "Night in the Moscow suburbs," started playing in his ears.

This song had become a well-known Soviet classic ever since it won the gold medal at the 6th World Youth Festival in 1957.

However, the music did not last long. Zhang Heng felt the light from the outside world again, and he opened his eyes.

Finding himself standing beside a river, he quickly recognized it.

The Pripyat River had always been very special. It was slightly brown because it had once flowed through the peat swamp of Boryspil, which was full of fatty acids. The river also flowed rapidly and violently, just like the young city built next to it. It gave people a sense of vitality.

However, the city behind Zhang Heng still looked very different from before. It was not only because it had regained its vitality but also because the residents who lived here had returned to their homes. The streets were filled with traffic, where young men drove their beloved Volga sedans and madly honked the girls on the street.

Zhang Heng also noticed that the buildings here were newer than when he first arrived, and there was no Ferris wheel in the park. He knew that he had come to the town of Pripyat, but he was not sure what year it was.

Pripyat had been under construction since 1970, and judging from its current size, it should have been built some time ago. Moreover, from where Zhang Heng was standing, he could see the tall cooling towers of the nuclear power plant in the distance. According to Bryuhanov, reactor No. 1 of the nuclear power plant had been in operation since 1977. Therefore, Zhang Heng could roughly guess that he was probably in the timeline between 1977 and 1986, before the explosion.

This was already a tight margin, and Zhang Heng was not in the mood to tour the atomic city at the moment. He wanted to know what kind of radiation he was exposed to, so he followed his memory and first went to the Pripyat Hotel. There, he found the waitress who spoke English.

He even grabbed a few wallets from passerbys on the way to the hotel, which enabled Zhang Heng and the waitress to finally agree on a salary—with a high price of 10 rubles a day, he successfully persuaded the waitress to become his Ukrainian and Russian teacher. At the same time, she agreed to take Zhang Heng to the hospital in Kiev for a check-up.

The two of them arrived in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, by train that night, where Zhang Heng would receive a full check-up at the city's biggest hospital. Unlike the medical center in Pripyat, a complete set of equipment to test the radiation dose was available.

The test process didn't last long, but for Zhang Heng, the waiting for the result did indeed feel a little draggy.

The doctor in charge of attending him was a woman of serious countenance in her fifties, especially apparent when she received Zhang Heng's test report.

"Are you his family member?" she asked the hotel receptionist,

The latter nodded. "I'm his wife. My man is a mute. He hasn't been able to speak since he was born."

"What does he do?" the doctor went on asking.

"He works at a nuclear power plant, dealing with nuclear waste."

"That explains." The female doctor tried to sound as gentle as possible. Softly, she continued, "I'm afraid I have some bad news for you, madam. I hope you're mentally prepared."

“What?”

“It’s very likely that your man came into close contact with the nuclear waste, which caused him to absorb a lot of radiation.”

“How much?” The hotel receptionist asked nervously.

“About 450 roentgen.” The female doctor looked at Zhang Heng with a hint of sympathy. “He has third-degree radiation sickness, and he needs to be hospitalized immediately. We need you to sign the admission form first, madam.”

Chapter 1168: Admission

“Third-degree radiation sickness? Is it serious?” The receptionist tried her best to act like a wife who was afraid of losing her husband.

The female doctor did not answer the question directly.

“We will do our best to treat him.”

“Then can you tell me how long he can live?” The receptionist did not forget Zhang Heng’s advice and asked the most important question.

“I can’t tell you the exact time, madam. Radiation sickness varies from person to person,” the female doctor said.

“I beg you,” the waitress pleaded. In order to earn a generous reward, her acting skills exploded. “We still have three children. I can’t raise them all by myself. I need Dima,” she cried and sobbed.

“He’ll be fine, madam,” the female doctor quickly consoled. “Although I can’t give you any guarantees, I will do my best to treat him. Also, considering his current condition, I think it’s best if you keep a certain distance from him, madam.”

“What? You mean I can’t accompany him to the hospital?” The receptionist was anxious when she heard that. Her salary was calculated by the day.

“Yes, the hospital has a dedicated nurse. We will take good care of your husband. He has suffered from high levels of radiation. For the sake of your health, you should take some time away from him.”

The receptionist hesitated. In fact, when the two first met, Zhang Heng had told her about his illness and how it would affect her, but she knew nothing about radiation and didn’t think it was a problem. There was also nothing wrong with her body during the journey.

This caused the receptionist to relax a little. It wasn’t until the female doctor brought it up again with a serious look on her face that she had to pay attention to this problem.

However, Zhang Heng’s offer was too generous. 10 rubles a day, 300 rubles a month. Having a monthly salary of a measly 100 rubles, this job paid three times that. This was an offer she simply couldn’t refuse.

Thus, after thinking about it, the waitress unwillingly asked the female doctor, “Will I be infected to death?”

“Not necessarily so,” the female doctor explained patiently. “His illness is not an infectious disease. It’s just that he has come into contact with a radiation source and absorbed a relatively large amount. His body may produce unstable radionuclides. In addition, there may be some radioactive aerosols on his body, so those who stay by his side may also absorb the radiation.”

“What?” The receptionist was confused.

“Are you pregnant now?” The female doctor changed the question.

“Oh, I’m... I’m not pregnant.” The receptionist blushed. She had never been in a relationship before, and this time, she was willing to pretend to be Zhang Heng’s wife to earn some extra money. This was her limit, though, and she became a little shy when asked such a direct question.

Fortunately, the female doctor was not a sharp person, and she failed to notice Mrs. Dima’s abnormality. After hearing the receptionist’s answer, she nodded. “That’s good. Otherwise, we’ll have to do another check-up on you and the fetus.”

“So, if I’m not pregnant, can I stay by his side?” the receptionist eagerly asked.

“No, madam, you don’t understand what I’m saying,” the female doctor said. “I don’t mean that it doesn’t matter if you’re not pregnant. I just mean that this can eliminate the effect on the fetus, but if you’re by his side, it’s still possible...”

“I don’t understand your professional jargon, doctor,” the receptionist interrupted the female doctor, “I’m just a receptionist working in a hotel. I simply want to know if I’ll die if I stay by my poor husband’s side and take care of him.”

“You won’t die, but you’ll be exposed to radiation.”

“I don’t know what radiation is, but I know that my husband needs me right now. Without me, he won’t be able to communicate with the outside world! He also won’t be able to cooperate with your treatment.” The receptionist’s gaze became firm again. This was because she saw Zhang Heng extend his finger, indicating that her wage had just increased from 10 to 30 rubles a day. In addition, the female doctor had clearly stated that she would not die. This also relieved the biggest burden in her heart.

Only in a month’s time could she earn almost 1,000 rubles! Even professors and scholars in universities didn’t make such a salary. The waitress did not know when she would encounter something so good again if she missed this opportunity.

Moreover, learning a language wasn’t easy. Conservatively speaking, it would take at least half a year for Zhang Heng to be barely able to have a daily conversation. In other words, she could earn at least 5,000 rubles from Zhang Heng. This was a huge sum of money, to say the least.

One had to know that the latest Volga sedan only cost 7,000 rubles. 100 rubles could buy an imported mink collar coat, 100 Soviet chocolates, or four bottles of French perfume. After finishing this job, she could go on a trip for two or three years before coming back to work.

“Please, doctor, please do me a favor and let me stay here to accompany my man,” the waitress pleaded. “I don’t want to regret in the future and let my Dima leave alone at the last moments of his life! I have already left my three children with my friends, so I have plenty of time to stay here.”

“Well...” the female doctor’s expression also became a little hesitant.

Because of work, the waitress had seen countless people and knew that she had a chance in this matter. Thus, she stepped up her efforts and secretly wiped her tears.

“Alright, Alright.” Although the female doctor had seen many such incidents, she could not help but soften her heart.

“I’ll talk to the inpatient department to allow you to stay with your man. However, it’s best if you don’t interact with him anymore. If you really just stay at the side, the problem won’t be too serious. Also, you must remember not to be intimate with him during the treatment period.”

The receptionist’s face flushed red when she heard that. She subconsciously wanted to open her mouth to refute, but she quickly remembered the role she was currently playing. She could only swallow her words silently.

Then, the female doctor called for a nurse to assist them with the admission procedure. She even emphasized that she wanted to give Zhang Heng a separate room. Thus, Zhang Heng became a patient at the Kiev People’s Hospital; the start of his treatment journey.

Chapter 1169: Deterioration and Subduction

In the ward of the Kiev People’s Hospital.

A young nurse with freckles on her face inserted an IV line into Zhang Heng’s body. She then adjusted the curtains in the ward.

After the nurse left, Zhang Heng was finally able to get his diagnosis from the receptionist.

Some of the medical terms were too professional, so she had no choice but to flip through the dictionary and try to figure out Zhang Heng’s condition. It took about 15 minutes before she managed to explain his condition to him. Unfortunately, the doctor was not here right now, and he did not know whether the result of the radiation sickness was good or bad.

Furthermore, as his “wife,” the receptionist was unable to get any information from the female doctor about how long he could live, so Zhang Heng could only receive treatment while he continued to observe his own body.

Fortunately, unlike the other unlucky ones who had been exposed to radiation, he did not have to worry about cancer it would cause. For Zhang Heng, as long as he could survive the current crisis, he would basically be out of danger. When the parallel dungeon was over, his body would return to its state before entering the parallel dungeon, and he would also be able to know the changes in his body at every stage.

For the current situation, this could be considered good news.

However, unlike the other patients, Zhang Heng could not stay idle even if he was hospitalized. He still needed to use this time to learn Russian and Ukrainian. If he could solve the language problem in the parallel dungeon, then investigating when he returned to the official dungeon would be more convenient.

Therefore, Zhang Heng said to the waitress beside him, "Let's begin."

"Okay, where do you want to start?" The receptionist straightened her back. She knew that she needed to present a service befitting the generous payment.

"Okay. Let's start by teaching some words and sentences that can be used in a hospital setting. That way, if I have to go through some tests alone in the future, at least I'll know what the doctors are talking about."

.....

Zhang Heng's body temperature was measured on the first day he was admitted to the hospital. At that time, it was 37.8 degrees, which meant he had a slight fever. Two days later, his temperature rose to 38.9 degrees. The doctor performed a lumbar puncture on him, where four samples of bone marrow were taken from his sternum and patella for analysis.

On the sixth day, Zhang Heng could feel some pain in his stomach, throat, and mouth. The mucous membranes had begun falling off, making it difficult for him to speak. It was also at this time that he began to suffer from insomnia and developed anorexia.

However, when the doctor asked him if his mental condition had started to deteriorate and if he was feeling agitated and anxious, Zhang Heng said no. This was probably one of the few benefits after losing his emotions.

However, Zhang Heng could indeed feel that it was becoming more and more difficult for him to speak. His eyelids had started to twitch involuntarily, and his body had started swelling.

Even worse was his immune system that began to fail due to the reduction of granulocytes. On the ninth day, the hospital injected him with bone marrow cells donated by volunteers. Then, they moved him to a ward sterilized with ultraviolet rays.

Zhang Heng had no choice but to stop his language study. However, the receptionist sent an English-Russian dictionary to his ward after it was sterilized. Other than allowing him to continue studying, it also helped distract him from the pain.

This was also the advice of the female doctor, but she thought that Zhang Heng was using the dictionary to learn English.

Therefore, for the rest of his life, Zhang Heng would have to lie on a tall, curved hospital bed with a rib-shaped heating lamp on top to keep his body warm. All of his clothes were taken away by the nurses, and the pain that swept through his body would be with him almost all the time. Intravenous injection could improve his condition, but the only one which really worked was the nitrous oxide anesthetic.

However, what surprised the female doctor was that the man in front of her seemed to have an extraordinarily high tolerance for pain. Under such circumstances, a normal person would've probably been screaming and begging the doctor to end his pain. However, Zhang Heng, who was on the hospital bed, remained calm.

To the female doctor, this was an unbelievable thing. Before this, she had come across a few patients with strong mental fortitude. Among them were public servants, professional soldiers, and even some

people on the verge of death. Compared to normal patients, these people were indeed better at controlling their emotions and were able to endure higher levels of pain.

Nonetheless, when the doctor looked at them, she could still clearly sense that they were in pain from their expressions and eyes. However, when she looked into Zhang Heng's eyes, they were like the deepest ocean—other than the huge shadow at the bottom of the ocean, she could not see anything else.

Zhang Heng did not even take the initiative to use nitrous oxide to relieve the pain.

In fact, if not for the fact that his condition was deteriorating by the day, the female doctor would have suspected that the misfortune before him had happened to other people, and Zhang Heng was just a bystander.

The latter did not even give up on his study plan. The nurse taking care of him found a stand for him and placed the English-Russian dictionary on it. This way, he did not have to lift it with his own hands, and he could read it as long as he lay on the bed.

Was that man unable to feel any pain whatsoever?? The female doctor thought so.

Of course, this thought was not accurate. To Zhang Heng, he had indeed lost most of his emotions, but he had not lost his basic sense of his body. Therefore, the pain in his body was now being transmitted to his brain. However, Zhang Heng's long periods of training had finally come in handy.

Through Xiao Shan's heart flow mantra, he was able to lower his consciousness and gradually reach a state of oblivion, shielding himself from the painful feelings to maintain his inner peace.

Therefore, in a sense, the female doctor's feelings were not wrong. Zhang Heng was indeed like a bystander, but when he deliberately sank his consciousness, he was surprised to see... something else.

It was a familiar cold and sticky feeling. A vast and blurry shadow lay in a huge underwater palace. The palace was several times bigger than the one he saw on the island, making the latter look like a toy.

Zhang Heng could not see the face of the thing in the palace, only able to see countless tentacles wrapping themselves around the stone pillars.

It was a strange and strong instinct to know that the thing was sleeping without even getting close. What was even stranger was that after Zhang Heng died, he realized that he knew the thing.

It kept calling Zhang Heng's name in its sleep like calling out to a child that had left home.

However, Zhang Heng's footsteps eventually stopped outside the palace door.

"Now is not the time."

A familiar voice whispered in his ear, but Zhang Heng could not remember where the voice came from.

"Wait a little longer, wait a little longer. You'll be back soon. You just need to... maintain patience. Just like before, the star minion and the deep sleeper are also awaiting your return."

Chapter 1170: The Signal

The nurses would appear regularly in Zhang Heng's ward to feed him food and water, turn him over, and also deal with his excrement.

On the twelfth day or so, Zhang Heng basically only ate liquid food. Because he was suffering from an intestinal syndrome, his abdomen constantly growled, and the sound of fluid flowing could be heard in the Caecum area. In addition, the mucous membrane in his mouth had fallen off, making it impossible for him to swallow solid food. He could only survive by eating some rice paste that had been boiled and injected with nutrient solution.

Even so, on the 14th day, he still began to have blood in his stool. It was filled with mucus and blood, and he also began to lose a large amount of hair. The female doctor had already declined other house calls and focused all her efforts on Zhang Heng.

She spent most of the day in the ward, watching Zhang Heng's progress through the glass window and making treatment plans accordingly.

In order to stimulate the growth of Zhang Heng's bone marrow cells, the doctor injected him with the newly developed bone marrow cells. However, just as the doctor had said when he first entered the parallel dungeon... Current human medicine had no effective treatment for radiation because the damage was on a molecular level. All the hospitals and doctors could do was prolong the patient's life as long as possible and treat all kinds of complications as best they could. At the end of the day, all they could do was pray that the human body's powerful self-repair ability would help the patient overcome the crisis.

On the twentieth day, the doctor wore a protective suit and entered the sterile ward to closely observe his condition.

When she entered the ward, she found the latter lying on the bed with his eyes wide open. He did not move at all and looked like a corpse.

Shocked, the doctor quickly turned to look at the equipment beside her and saw that Zhang Heng's electrocardiogram was still normal. When she saw that his eyes were moving again, she realized that it was a false alarm.

"You'll be fine," the doctor comforted him.

Perhaps because she was impressed by Zhang Heng's heroism in the face of such pain, that the doctor had a good impression of the patient before her. Even though her mission as a doctor was to save lives and heal the wounded, she did have her own selfish intentions and likes and dislikes. At that moment, however, she had a strong desire to save the man before her.

However, because she had been by Zhang Heng's side for a long time, her impression of Mrs. Dima had decreased. She still remembered that when they first met, Mrs. Dima had begged her with tears in her eyes. She didn't want to part with her husband, hoping that they would be able to stay together in the ward. This had greatly moved the doctor's heart.

She had indeed done so a few days ago, but after Zhang Heng was transferred to the sterile ward, Mrs. Dima's true colors began to show themselves. The doctor noticed that while Dima was still in a battle for

his life with the Grim Reaper, his wife was outside flipping through a fashion magazine. She seemed to be figuring out which coat and bag to buy. This was unacceptable to the female doctor.

Fortunately, Mrs. Dima was still very concerned about her husband's life. She would ask the doctor about Zhang Heng's condition almost every day.

The doctor did not know how to evaluate the couple's relationship. She knew that she should not get involved in the private affairs of others, but now that she was standing beside Zhang Heng's bed, she could not help but have an evil thought. She wanted to tell Zhang Heng what she had seen in the corridor only to quickly feel that it was too cruel.

Perhaps this man was trying so hard to survive because of his wife and child. If she told him about it now, wouldn't it do him more harm? In the end, the doctor swallowed the words back into her mouth and turned around to leave the ward.

Zhang Heng did not know that he had almost suffered an on-the-spot split with his wife. At that moment, his attention was focused on his body and the shadow in the depths of his consciousness. Regarding the former, he had no good solution, and could only continue to receive treatment in the ward.

Considering the layout of the ward, Zhang Heng sometimes felt like an old vampire who had been dragged from a coffin into the sunlight. Fortunately, for now, he still didn't feel the threat of death although his condition was deteriorating.

As for the shadow in the palace, Zhang Heng had his consciousness submerge a few more times. However, just like the first time, he still couldn't get a clear look at it. He also considered entering the palace, but once this thought appeared, he couldn't get it out of his mind. However, at every critical moment, Zhang Heng would always remember the voice that urged him to wait. Thus, he kept wandering outside the palace.

30 days had passed since Zhang Heng was admitted to the hospital. He had also been suffering from his illness for a whole month. He had lost a lot of weight because he could not eat and had to be injected with nutrient fluids. Now, he weighed less than 90 kilograms and looked like a skeleton.

Other than that, his liver, kidneys, and other organs had also suffered some problems. Fortunately, he managed to survive. That being said, no one knew if this strong man would be able to survive the next phase.

Even the waitress who played his wife felt a sense of despair. Watching Zhang Heng's health deteriorate, she felt that she might not be able to get her future salary and that she was getting further and further away from her dream of traveling. Perhaps the only good news was that the money she earned so far was enough to buy an imported coat.

However, from the 34th day, Zhang Heng could start feeling his body showing signs of improvement. This change was so subtle that even the female doctor who had been scrutinizing his condition didn't notice it. However, with Zhang Heng's current control over his body, he could instantly feel the change.

And from that moment on, Zhang Heng heaved a sigh of relief, because he knew that he had already survived the most difficult hurdle.

After another week, the doctor finally noticed that Zhang Heng's condition was improving. This surprised and delighted her. Before this, she had been worried that he might not hold on, but reality proved that the man before her was stronger than she had imagined.

This was akin to a signal that Zhang Heng's body, which had been passive all this time, was finally starting to blow the counterattack horn.

In the following days, Zhang Heng started to recover rapidly. By the 49th day, he could already get out of bed and attempt walking by leaning against the wall. Four days later, he started on some solid food, enabling his body to absorb more energy. As his stomach adapted, Zhang Heng started on his road to recovery.

He healed at an incredible rate. On the 56th day, Zhang Heng moved out of the sterile ward. After another week, he even started to lift some dumbbells to recover his muscles.