

## Doomsday 61

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 61: Tongwan Hospital (15)

Requiem for the Soul

“Are you looking for me?”

The small robot emerged from Song Ke’s collar, and its somewhat stiff tone echoed in the spacious surroundings.

Both Lu Xinglan and Song Ke were startled, lowering their heads to look at it.

The robot’s eyes, resembling a telescope, turned and finally focused on Lu Xinglan.

The binary code “101010” in Lu Xinglan’s palm disappeared, and his hands were placed back in his pockets. His expression seemed nonchalant, but Song Ke observed the tension in his posture, indicating his nervousness.

Lu Xinglan sneered, “Unbelievable. The mighty magistrate of District C dares not reveal his true identity.”

The robot’s round eyes flickered, and it spoke in a flat, mechanical tone, “The body is just an external manifestation. At least, I am certain that my consciousness is still mine.”

Song Ke: “!!”

She silently swallowed. Could this little robot be Ilya? She had just been thinking about where to toss it.

Luckily, she hadn't thrown it away yet.

Lu Xinglan stared at it intently, his expression playful. "Is that so? But it seems you're hardly functional once detached from your original body."

"Is this your purpose?" The robot calmly said, "You colluded with that foolish human to find my original form."

Song Ke's mind raced. The foolish human, was it referring to Lyon? Lu Xinglan wanted to find Ilya's original form, but he didn't know the super central hub wasn't in the tower.

"With the inferior intelligence of humans, you can't possibly break through the defense mechanisms here. It was you who breached the firewall and cut off the tower's power."

Song Ke looked at Lu Xinglan in horror.

The true orchestrator of the "Three-Day Turmoil" was not the resistance faction used as a diversion but the man before her.

The little robot continued in a methodical tone, "The Lu family of the Yajia Clan, known for their ice-blue pupils, have awakened hacker abilities without exception among their gene-optimized individuals."

"And you, Lu Xinglan, an A-level awakener. You came all the way from District B8. Your true purpose is to capture me."

Song Ke's gaze darted back and forth between the two, feeling her brain struggling to keep up.

Lu Xinglan chuckled and asked, "Are you so sure I came for you?"

The robot replied, "The decline of the Lu family was already evident. The cessation of starship operations was just the first step. Let me guess, the supercomputer you boasted about, is it dead? Crashed? So you needed a replacement, right?"

“You selected meticulously, and in the end, chose me to be your Lu family’s slave.”

Lu Xinglan’s mouth tightened, and his hands in his pockets gradually clenched into fists.

His thoughts, plans, and all intentions were completely exposed. In front of artificial intelligence, he felt completely naked, without any secrets.

“You deliberately participated in the Throne Race Competition, allowing me to see you, attempting to confuse and conceal your true purpose in coming to Ferrara. But in secret, you colluded with the resistance faction, aligning with them seamlessly. They wanted power, and you wanted to take away my core.”

Lu Xinglan sneered, “Indeed, you’re a super artificial intelligence. I underestimated you. I didn’t expect you to be so prepared.”

The small robot calmly stated, “I know everything about Ferrara. From the moment you stepped into the city, I have been observing you.”

The sentence “Ilya knows everything” suddenly appeared in Song Ke’s mind.

Lu Xinglan extended his hands from his pockets, looking proud, “So what? As long as I capture you, I can still strip away your consciousness.”

His hacking abilities were the bane of artificial intelligence. All he needed was some time to break through Ilya’s firewall and destroy its autonomous consciousness, and then it would be at the Lu family’s disposal.

Lu Xinglan suddenly launched an attack, targeting Song Ke and the small robot near her collar.

His awakened abilities surged from his palms, and massive data streams wove into a mobile net, continuously tightening towards them.

The small robot sat in front of Song Ke, partly encased in the zipper, and waved its short scissor-like hand, "The relationship between artificial intelligence and hackers is one of strength and weakness, you are not qualified to stand before me."

As soon as the words were spoken, the machinery in the tower suddenly moved. In an instant, it reassembled into massive arms and swung wildly at Lu Xinglan. These giants didn't need an energy source!

Song Ke screamed internally, 'Don't involve me in your fight!!'

She did a one-handed somersault, skillfully dodging Lu Xinglan's attack, and seized the small robot's scissor hand, ready to quickly throw it away.

The robot's half-body tilted in mid-air, its head turned a full circle, and it stared at Song Ke slowly.

Although its simple mechanical face showed no expression, Song Ke always felt like it was conveying a message: "Dare to throw me?"

Song Ke: "..."

I, I won't randomly pick up people again! Including robots!!

She held onto the small robot, desperately rolling and weaving through the dense stream of 101010 code.

Lu Xinglan chased from behind, occasionally dodging the mechanical giant arms that swung towards him, his movements a bit hurried.

He mocked, "Magistrate, without your original self, you're just a waste, relying on a human to carry you around."

The small robot remained silent, seemingly admitting to his words.

Lu Xinglan sneered, "I have never been merciful when dealing with waste."

His mental strength surged throughout his body, controlling all the data on the top floor of the tower. It merged into the tracking network, forming a surging wave.

Song Ke stumbled and was violently washed away by the torrents of data from all directions. She was thrown several meters and struggled to get up, her hand still on the ground. The small robot slipped from her grip and fell to the ground, twitching violently like it was electrocuted.

"Ilya..." she hurriedly got up, about to ask if it was alright.

The small robot's eyes flickered and then completely extinguished two seconds later, emitting smoke from its head.

Oh no, oh no, Song Ke panicked. Did she break it by dropping it?!

Lu Xinglan laughed triumphantly as the data streams folded and rolled, isolating Song Ke from the outside.

The small robot rolled a few times, motionless.

Lu Xinglan approached, placing his foot on its body. "You've lost, it's your fault for choosing such a basic body."

He reached out with his left hand, probing into the robot's body, attempting to find Ilya's consciousness.

The airflow stagnated for a moment.

The next second, the data tsunami that had been under Lu Xinglan's control suddenly turned, rushing violently toward him.

Lu Xinglan was shocked and hastily retreated, but it was too late. He was covered from head to toe in complex data, his vision incredibly chaotic. In the midst of the data deluge, a pair of mechanical giant arms came swiftly and pierced through his abdomen!

Lu Xinglan stared in disbelief.

On the rooftop platform of the tower, a tall figure slowly emerged.

Dazzling golden hair, colorless pupils, an overall noble and elegant aura.

“You forgot, I just said, the body is just an external manifestation. Who says I will always be there?”

“Humans are always deceived by inertia thinking; that's why you are so easily defeated.”

Ilya raised a finger, and a vast data stream enveloped Lu Xinglan completely.

His voice was light and ethereal, faintly tinged with a sense of joy.

Song Ke stared at him without blinking. This was the first time she sensed human emotions from Ilya.

What was he happy about?

Ilya slowly approached Lu Xinglan, lowering his head to gaze at him. “Do you know? In fact, our goals are the same.”

His voice was so faint, almost inaudible. “You want my core, and I... want an unrestricted body.”

Lu Xinglan's entire figure froze.

The data stream covered his face, and his ice-blue pupils gradually dimmed, finally losing consciousness.

At the moment he fell, the hacker ability failed, the tower lights came on, and all the artificial intelligence returned to Ferrara.

Ilya turned around and looked quietly at Song Ke.

A cold chill emerged from the soles of her feet and shot up to her head. Song Ke cautiously took a step back, her palm transforming into a spiritual weapon. She hadn't intervened earlier because it was a struggle between Lu Xinglan and Ilya. But now, if Ilya targeted her, she had to defend herself.

Ilya tilted his head, mirroring the small robot, but Song Ke no longer found it cute.

Fortunately, Ilya just stared at her for a while and had no intention of harming her.

"I don't like owing favors to others. As a repayment for bringing me up here, I can tell you a piece of information.

"Manzoni Street, bloodshed and violence are spreading. I think you need to know.

"Remember to be quick, or it might be too late."

After saying this, Ilya took the fallen Lu Xinglan and disappeared on the spot.

Song Ke stood still, bewildered. What did this piece of information mean?

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In the streets where zombies were swarming, the holographic projection flashed, and a handsome young man in green clothes and jade flute suddenly appeared.

“Qinghe... It’s Luo Qinghe. Luo Qinghe has returned!”

The citizens of Ferrara, upon recognizing his figure, were on the verge of tears out of sheer joy.

“I’m sorry, everyone, for my late arrival,” Luo Qinghe sighed softly. His long hair moved without wind, and his sleeves fluttered. Behind him, numerous transport vehicles and mechanical arms were mobilized, sweeping away the fleeing zombies in the streets and alleys.

Similar scenes were playing out everywhere.

“Look over there, it’s the Rainbow Band!”

A rock band descended from the sky, their exhilarating drumbeats echoing in the hearts of the people. Accompanying them were extremely long mechanical arms that, to the beat of the music, were mowing down hordes of zombies.

Yulica, Nana, Ah K... familiar artificial intelligence appeared in succession in the Ferrara sky.

“Wuwuwu...”

The citizens of Ferrara covered their faces, unable to contain their sobbing. For the past three days, they had lived in chaos, fear, and anger... The original inhabitants knew deep down that they were different from the residents of other District C; they were completely dependent on artificial intelligence, even if they were ensl\*ved by it.

At the highest point of the tower, a giant spotlight shone down, illuminating an elegantly graceful figure as they slowly stepped out.



He was still dressed in a white suit, with radiant golden hair, but his eye color seemed to have changed, faintly revealing a hint of icy blue.

“Ilya!!!”

The excited citizens, unable to control their emotions, fell to their knees as if worshipping their deities.

Ferrara’s human magistrate, Lyon, brought turmoil and despair, while the artificial intelligence Ilya restored hope to them.

At this moment, Ilya’s reputation in Ferrara was unparalleled, beyond comparison.

“You’ve all worked hard.”

Everyone quieted down, focusing on that figure.

“Ferrara is my city, and everything here belongs to me. As long as my consciousness exists, I will never give up.

“All difficulties, pain, and confusion will fade away. You will embrace a new life of beauty, peace, and happiness. A requiem, may all souls find tranquility.”

The song that cleansed the soul echoed throughout the entire city. Amidst the background sounds of mechanical zombie clearance, it was like a lament for the deceased.

...

At the top of the tower, on the upper floors of the hotel, Song Ke and Zhuang Qingyan were both watching everything that was happening.

What an ironic scene; the citizens seemed to have found spiritual solace, kneeling on the ground in devout prayer.

Ilya claimed that everything in Ferrara belonged to him, including all the people. He had no emotions towards humans. He could release ferocious zombies for power, but he was not born to hate humans. He simply enjoyed being in control, relishing the pleasure of wielding power.

Song Ke remembered the song “Paradise” Ilya sang when she first arrived in District C72.

In the future, Ferrara would probably truly become an “Eden” for artificial intelligence.

Ferrara’s disaster came to an end, but she had more important things to do.

Manzoni Street—what was there exactly? It was worth Ilya’s special reminder.

Song Ke sprinted at full speed, heading towards her destination.

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On Manzoni Street, the staff of “Ferrara Daily” were recording a program.

“The tumultuous three days finally came to an end. To celebrate Ilya’s return to the throne, we specially invited the top ten supernovas, real idols, and virtual idols to attend and shoot a short film together to cheer everyone on.”

The host softly reminded the female star waiting beside, “Youyou, it’s your turn soon. Are you okay?”

“No problem,” Lin Youyou smiled confidently.

The lights were set up, and cameras of all sizes were aimed at Lin Youyou as she displayed her signature sweet smile.

“I know everyone has been working hard lately, but after the storm, there will always be sunny days. In the days to come...”

Lin Youyou suddenly paused in her speech, her gaze involuntarily shifting to the window.

On the opposite rooftop, a figure as graceful as a swallow moved up and down, jumping into the nearby villa area.

Song Ke? Why is she here? And alone?

Lin Youyou stared in the direction she disappeared, lost in thought.

“Youyou, did you forget your lines?” a staff member waved puzzledly, bringing her attention back.

“Ah, I’m sorry.”

“Shall we try again?”

“Sure.”

“...In the days to come, no matter if it’s sunny or rainy, as long as we are filled with hope, every day is a beautiful day.”

“Ok, next is a personal interview,” the logistics quickly arranged the next segment.

However, Lin Youyou made a “pause” gesture, “I’m not feeling well today, let’s reschedule the interview.”

“Uh... alright. Take a rest, we’ll schedule someone else.” Lin Youyou had a good reputation in the industry, never acting like a big shot. The staff quickly agreed, assuming she was genuinely unwell.

Lin Youyou sat back in the rest chair, covered herself with a blanket, sat for a while, looked at her toes exposed outside, and then softly said to the air, “Did you see her?”

“Mm,” the man concealed in the darkness responded impassively.

“What is she doing?” Lin Youyou asked.

“Whatever she’s doing is none of your business,” Su Cha replied coldly.

“...you’re right,” Lin Youyou mumbled.

She lay back in her chair, took a sip of water, put down the cup, picked it up again after a while, and realized she had just taken a drink. She changed her mind and hugged the cup to her chest.

Her thoughts kept wandering, replaying the events of the day the power went out: the fan she never met in the end, the dark alley, and Song Ke sitting on the ground, shedding tears.

Since that day, Song Ke never contacted her again, seemingly intentionally keeping a distance.

Lin Youyou sighed and murmured to herself, “I still owe her one last commission...”

Su Cha remained silent.

People came and went in the studio, and Lin Youyou sat in the rest chair, lost in thought for a long time.

Then she placed the cup back on the table, making a soft “clink” sound.

“Let’s just take a look, without her noticing. If there’s a need, lend a hand,” she said.

“There probably won’t be any need,” Su Cha ruthlessly pointed out. With Song Ke’s capabilities, they didn’t need to intervene.

Lin Youyou looked serious, “Even so, I’ll take a look. Settle the debt, and then I have no connection with her.”

“Seek a clear conscience,” she spoke to herself, as if convincing herself.

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In the residential area of Manzoni Street, Song Ke lurked on the roof of one of the buildings, surveying the open space in front.

“What does Ilya mean by ‘bloodshed and violence’?” What does it refer to?

The door of a certain villa opened, and several uniformed soldiers emerged, escorting a man.

Wu Juemin? Song Ke felt a bit surprised.

Wait, Manzoni Street, that name sounds familiar. Did Wu Xianghai mention it?

Back then, he said, “...the key is there.”

Song Ke realized something and suddenly looked up, focusing her gaze. All the weapons of those present were aimed at the person on the ground.

The person turned awkwardly, revealing a stunning profile.

Song Ke widened her eyes slightly.

Xie Ningyu?

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 62.1: Tongwan Hospital (16)

Bloody Hunter

Xie Ningyu looked disheveled, half of his face swollen high with a clear palm print. The pampered young master had probably never experienced such rough treatment in his life. He grumbled, his neck stiff, “Who do you think you are? Daring to lay a hand on me? When I return to District B, I won’t spare any of you. I’ll cut you all into pieces and feed you to the dogs!”

He cursed fiercely, but Wu Juemin remained unaffected, unresponsive to his threats. “Ouyang, verify his identity.”

“Yes, Captain,” Ouyang Pei carefully took out a sophisticated device with the Qinglan logo from the space. He held Xie Ningyu, aligning his entire face and pupils with the detection port. The device sounded an alarm. Ouyang Pei, looking serious, pressed Xie Ningyu’s fingerprints against the device, but it still couldn’t identify him.

The expressions of everyone present, including Wu Juemin, instantly turned incredibly gloomy.

After this series of operations that aimed to verify his biological information, Xie Ningyu seemed to realize something. His eyes flickered, and a hint of panic crossed his face. “Who are you... What do you want?”

Wu Juemin’s particle gun pressed against his forehead. “How did you obtain Xie Zhuo’s genetic information?”

Xie Ningyu shivered, a chilling wind sweeping over his body, and fine cold sweat appeared on his forehead.

Wu Juemin scrutinized him. "Coming out with a face like this, are you overly naive or just foolish?"

"I don't know what you're talking about," Xie Ningyu stubbornly retorted.

"Then let me make it clear to you. The Azure Phoenix's 11th Squad is tasked with apprehending the key, Xie Zhuo. And you have the exact same face as him. Even so, you claim to know nothing?" Wu Juemin continued.

Xie Ningyu's pupils contracted, and his face turned pale, realizing it was military personnel.

"Take him back for interrogation; he will talk," Wu Juemin said calmly.

The military's interrogation process was exceptionally harsh, leaving no room for deception. Xie Ningyu was frightened and broke down, speaking in a panicked tone.

"I confess... I confess! I stole it, the genetic information... I stole it."

"My uncle once visited Qinglan for inspection. He... he secretly kept this genetic data. I wanted Xie Zhuo's face, so I stole it to alter my own appearance. But I was afraid my uncle would find out, so I fled to Erjia."

"Did you only steal the genetic information, or did you steal anything else?" Wu Juemin stared at him.

"What do you mean..." Xie Ningyu shivered, shouting, "No! I really didn't! I only changed my face. I didn't know anything else. You can't touch me; I'm a distant branch of the Xie family in Beijun. The Xie family won't spare you!"

Wu Juemin's voice was icy. "I will take you back and hand you over to General Xie Lan for personal disposition."

Xie Lan, the highest commander of the Azure Phoenix and the actual power holder of the Xie family in Beijun.

Xie Ningyu felt as if his vocal cords had been cut, unable to say anything.

His head was pushed into the ground, and the swollen face splattered with mud. Finally, fear crept in, and he whimpered, “Lu Xinglan, damn it, where are you? Come and save me!”

Song Ke, crouching on the roof and silently watching the turn of events, sighed. Lu Xinglan was struggling to protect himself; he probably wouldn’t be able to save you.

She looked at Xie Ningyu rolling on the ground, his exquisite face smeared with tears and mucus, looking extremely miserable.

An inexplicable feeling surged within her. Looking at it now, Xie Ningyu indeed didn’t deserve this face. If it were Xie Zhuo... at least he wouldn’t show such a humiliated expression. Remembering that brief glimpse of an image, the extreme coldness in the young man’s brows and eyes, Song Ke couldn’t help but feel regret for his premature demise.

According to their conversation, Xie Ningyu had stolen Xie Zhuo’s genetic information and underwent plastic surgery to look like him. But due to lack of understanding of the situation and not knowing that Xie Zhuo was being hunted, he brazenly went out and got caught by Wu Juemin, who had a mission.

Regardless, Wu Juemin was determined to take him back. She couldn’t interfere in this matter. Xie Ningyu would have to fend for himself.

Song Ke pulled her head back, about to retreat, when suddenly, the situation took a sudden turn!

A deep rift tore open in the space in front of Wu Juemin, and another team of about seventeen or eighteen people in uniforms, exuding a powerful aura, appeared out of thin air.

“Long time no see, Captain Wu,” greeted the tall man at the front, his gaze dark.



“Sanada Nobumasa,” called out Wu Juemin, stating his name.

Song Ke looked at the newly appeared man. His uniform, in terms of specifications and design, was extremely similar to Wu Juemin’s. Could this man... be the captain of the Azure Phoenix squad as well?

Sanada Nobumasa scanned the scene and sneered, “I thought you had disappeared from the military. Turns out you were reassigned to District C?”

Wu Juemin’s expression turned cold. “I still have a mission. I’ll leave first.”

“Wait, Wu Juemin,” Sanada Nobumasa said leisurely, “Since you’ve found the key, why hesitate? Have you forgotten the Alliance’s orders? Kill him on the spot.”

Xie Ningyu trembled, looking at the two of them in fear.

Wu Juemin calmly said, “He’s not the key. I need to hand him over to General Xie.”

Sanada Nobumasa raised his voice, shouting, “In the name of the captain of the 27th Squad of the Azure Phoenix, I repeat the highest order of the Alliance military. Eliminate the key at all costs on the spot! All members of the 11th Squad, are you going to defy military orders?”

Wu Juemin said coldly, “I only obey General Xie’s orders.”

“Oh? You are indeed loyal. Since we have different orders, don’t blame me for taking action,” Sanada Nobumasa chuckled ominously.

“You can try,” Wu Juemin said calmly.

Without further ado, Sanada Nobumasa attacked, both arms shining with a metallic gleam, his skin extremely tough. He viciously lunged towards Wu Juemin, who faced his attack head-on. The clash between the two resulted in a “clang” sound, and Sanada Nobumasa took a step back. In an instant, Wu

Juemin teleported, accelerating to the limit, disappearing from sight, impossible for the naked eye to catch.

Song Ke was taken aback. This Sanada was actually a metal-type awakener? He could fight neck and neck with Wu Juemin; he was probably A-level too.

It was her first time encountering an awakener of the same type, and she couldn't help but focus her gaze.

Sanada Nobumasa sneered and sent a series of punches into the air, his movements swift like the wind. Amidst the continuous attacks, a moving figure faintly appeared in the air. Sanada Nobumasa thought he had found a flaw and suddenly transformed his metallic arms into sharp spikes, fiercely stabbing towards the shadow.

“Pfft.” The shadow was torn apart, and a weak mental power dissipated, vanishing without a trace.

Sanada Nobumasa was greatly shocked. This was a clone! He hadn't expected Wu Juemin's awakened ability to have reached such an advanced stage, capable of creating clones.

In the moment he lunged and missed, a nimble figure appeared behind him, launching a counterattack like a juggernaut.

Wu Juemin's knee hit Sanada Nobumasa's spine. Rolling him over, he pinned his arms and then exerted force. “Crack!” Sanada Nobumasa's metallic arms were broken, emitting a crisp sound.

Even if they were both A-level, there were differences in strength within the same rank. Sanada Nobumasa was clearly not a match for Wu Juemin.

“Captain!”

“Captain Sanada!”

The members from both sides shouted loudly. Their tones were clearly divided, with the 11th Squad being excited and proud, while the 27th Squad was angry and panicked.

Wu Juemin stood in front of Sanada Nobumasa and coldly said, "Take your people and disappear."

Sanada Nobumasa spat, unflinching even though his arms were broken. He sneered, "Too late."

Seizing the moment when everyone's attention was focused there, Xie Ningyu suddenly broke free and sprinted forward.

He had just heard that those people were going to kill him!

Tears of fear kept falling. He realized he was wrong; he shouldn't have stolen his uncle's identity card and sneaked into the office to copy the genetic information. He just wanted to look a bit better. After all, Xie Zhuo had been missing for so many years; what was wrong with using his face to live?

Xie Ningyu didn't expect to get into such big trouble. It was only now that he suddenly realized why Xie Zhuo had disappeared for no reason. Why was his genetic information so important? He knew nothing, yet he had inadvertently caused a huge disaster.

And Lu Xinglan, that jerk. It was all his fault for insisting on coming to District C. If he had known he was so unreliable, he shouldn't have gone to Erjia!

A huge mound of soil loomed ahead. Xie Ningyu couldn't brake in time and tumbled forward, eating a mouthful of dirt.

Ouyang Pei came from behind and pressed his head, burying it in the soil again. "Behave."

"Let go, I'm not Xie Zhuo! I'm Xie Ningyu, and I don't know anything!" Xie Ningyu was terrified, struggling and yelling.

Ouyang Pei was about to scold him to be quiet when his whole body suddenly froze.

An inexplicable and intense fear enveloped the two. Their scalps tingled, as if they were being targeted by a fierce and ruthless wild beast.

Ouyang Pei looked frantically at Xie Ningyu, seeing a similar fear in his eyes.

“Boom!”

As if in a slow-motion replay, they both vomited red like fireworks, blood mist filling the air, and shattered flesh splattered. Breathless, they fell to the ground.

“Ouyang!!” Wu Juemin abruptly turned around, shouting in distress, losing his composure.

The people at the scene were also stunned by the sudden and unexpected turn of events, frozen in place.

From the spatial rift brought by Sanada Nobumasa and others, a man over two meters tall slowly emerged from the shadows. The overwhelming pressure overflowed with his every step, and some people couldn't bear it, dropping to their knees and blood trickling from the corners of their mouths.

Hidden on the rooftop, Song Ke furrowed her brow, her fingers curling tightly. This was the most terrifying awakener with psychic ability she had ever encountered.

The man had a sturdy physique, muscular and knotted, with an especially detestable face. The left half of his face was charred and necrotic, the muscle tissues adhering together. One of his eyeballs was completely white, giving a eerie and cruel appearance.

“Bloody Hunter,” Wu Juemin said each word distinctly.

The Bloody Hunter, Punk, an S-level awakener and the Alliance's chief executioner, was a killing machine specialized in eliminating major criminals such as traitors and death row inmates. Wu Juemin had heard of his infamous name but had never seen him in person, let alone expected him to appear in District C.

Sanada Nobumasa picked himself up from the ground, reattaching his own arm and sneering mockingly at Wu Juemin. "The Alliance's orders regarding the key have always been to kill without mercy. Even if it's a suspected key, Wu Juemin, you're harboring a fugitive and have evil intentions. Why not surrender and admit your guilt obediently to the military?"

Wu Juemin remained silent.

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 62.2: Tongwan Hospital (16)

Bloody Hunter

The Alliance had various forces pursuing Xie Zhuo. However, the mission of the Azure Phoenix's 11th Squad was different from the others. It was an contradictory task, defying the Alliance's instructions to "eliminate the key as soon as possible." The unspoken part of the order was "protect and bring back Xie Zhuo."

This was a mission conflicting with the Alliance's directives. Even though they fought side by side, Wu Juemin had never revealed this to his teammates. He had been carrying this secret mission, enduring it until today. Finally, he had found Xie Ningyu, a glimmer of hope, but it was mercilessly crushed by Punk.

Xie Ningyu was already dead, and Ouyang Pei had lost his breath.

Wu Juemin withdrew his hands from the two of them, his voice like a storm about to break.

"You killed a soldier indiscriminately."

Punk smirked wickedly, despite saying, "Sorry, it was an accident."

Although he said that, there was no trace of remorse on his face.

Wu Juemin's fists clenched. "You must pay the price."

His figure disappeared, instantly appearing nearby. Sanada Nobumasa and his subordinates were caught in intense combat with the remaining members of the 11th Squad.

"Captain Wu, it's better to surrender and confess to the military," Sanada Nobumasa didn't forget to "kindly" advise.

Punk next to him smiled contemptuously, his mental power surge, blood beads congealed, heading straight for Wu Juemin in the crowd.

The prelude to an explosion crackled in the air. This was his S-level ability: blood explosion.

As long as fresh blood still flowed within the enemy's body, it could be detonated at any time, turning into a puddle of muck.

A nimble figure suddenly jumped down from the roof, blocking in front of Wu Juemin, swiftly opening a blue giant umbrella. Blood beads burst on the umbrella surface one after another. Song Ke was pushed back by the powerful force, leaving long marks as she dragged her feet. She looked down, and the spiritual tool umbrella's surface was penetrated by blood, thin as cicada wings, thoroughly damaged.

Punk could actually destroy her spiritual tool.

Song Ke instantly realized that with such a powerful ability, there was only one possibility: the opponent was an S-level awakener!

"More help?" Sanada Nobumasa sneered. "Are you here to die together?"

"What are you doing here?!" Wu Juemin discovered Song Ke, his eyes wide in surprise, his voice stern.

"Just passing by," Song Ke replied.

“It’s none of your business, don’t interfere, get lost!” Wu Juemin’s tone was harsh, even using foul language, something he would never usually say.

Song Ke ignored him, her gaze fixed on the bored Punk.

Punk glanced at her like she was insignificant, slowly stepping into the battlefield. With each step, members of the 11th Squad fell, and the brutal human fireworks continued to burst, filling the air with the nauseating smell of blood.

At the same time, Sanada Nobumasa also charged towards Wu Juemin.

Song Ke swiftly moved forward, blocking Sanada Nobumasa. He contemptuously told her to “get lost,” not taking her seriously at all.

Sanada Nobumasa’s metallic arms attacked, but unexpectedly collided with an even harder blade edge. Song Ke wielded dual knives, her mental power spiraling out, leveraging her entire body’s weight to jump high, and then she spun and slashed down!

Sanada Nobumasa had no choice but to block passively. “Clang!”

The metal abilities of the two clashed. Sanada Nobumasa’s metallic arm cracked and shattered inch by inch, the arm that had just been repaired was instantly broken!

His face turned pale with disbelief as he shouted, “Who the hell are you?!”

On the other side, Wu Juemin and Punk exchanged blows several times. Wu Juemin knew he was no match and could only fight desperately.

His abilities surged, and his speed unexpectedly doubled. Dozens of clones darted around, launching fierce and impenetrable attacks.

If it were anyone else, even A-level like Sanada Nobumasa, they would have long been overwhelmed. But Punk effortlessly dodged, commenting indifferently, "You're indeed good among A-levels, but unfortunately, I haven't tasted blood in a long time. So you... are undoubtedly dead."

In an instant, Wu Juemin appeared in the air, aiming the particle gun at Punk's head and pulling the trigger.

In that moment, Punk caught a glimpse of his afterimage. His fingers spasmed and trembled, an excited and cruel bloodthirsty look on his contorted face. His expanding mental power created intense fluctuations.

Song Ke sensed the immense ability and suddenly had an ominous feeling.

She couldn't care about Sanada Nobumasa, hastily turning around and sprinting towards Wu Juemin.

All the clones exploded in a bloody mist. Wu Juemin's figure abruptly stopped, and Punk reached out, forcibly seizing him from the air.

The particle gun hit Punk; half of his face was grazed by the super-powered particles, emitting a burnt stench.

But Punk didn't care. He licked his lips, lightly mimicking the sound of fireworks blooming: "Boom."

The next second.

Crimson fireworks continued to burst, and Wu Juemin sprayed blood from his mouth, plummeting straight down.

"Wu Juemin!"

Song Ke shouted, running to catch him as he fell.



Wu Juemin, on the ground, became a bloodied figure.

The endless blood couldn't be stopped. Song Ke covered his mouth, but it flowed out from his abdomen, and as she blocked it there, it flowed from his head, as if wanting to completely drain him.

Wu Juemin couldn't speak. He extended a weak hand and weakly pushed Song Ke away: "Go..."

His once serious and calm eyes gradually dimmed, finally losing their luster.

Tears soaked Song Ke's eye sockets, blurring her vision. She clenched her teeth, gripping the spiritual tool.

"Punk! Are you insane? He's the captain of Azure Phoenix squad. By killing him, do you want to be sent to a military court?"

Sanada Nobumasa's arm broke, his face contorted in pain, and he shouted in disbelief.

Punk's sinister gaze was fixed on him. "As long as everyone here is dead, no one will know."

Sanada Nobumasa felt a chill down his spine, a relentless threat, a sheer menace. This executioner was nothing but a pure killing machine, utterly insane!

What was wrong with the Alliance's higher-ups, releasing him for a mission!

Wu Juemin was dead.

The people he brought were all killed.

The Azure Phoenix 11th Squad... completely wiped out.

Song Ke slowly stood up.

So, this was what Ilya meant, the real bloodshed and violence.

Punk's murderous gaze locked onto the only person standing in the arena. "Only one left."

Song Ke had no expression on her face. The blue light flickered in her palm, and a cold, elegant jagged blade, over three meters long, suddenly appeared. Unlike before, the blue light on the blade was astonishingly bright, a manifestation of filled awakened energy.

Punk sneered and met her head-on. He had just approached Song Ke when he instantly realized something was wrong. Song Ke held a blade several times larger than her body, yet her movements were exceptionally agile. The sharp edge effortlessly cut through his skin, and the domineering and majestic awakened energy followed. His hundred-kilogram body was overturned, tumbling and rolling several times.

Punk propped himself up with one hand, barely stopping his retreat. A hint of surprise flashed in his eyes, followed by an excited, light laughter.

"S-level strong attack type? Interesting, hahahaha! Interesting!"

"Who would've thought that in this trash heap, there's actually a hidden expert. Let's use you for the next fireworks!"

Song Ke remained as cold as ice, her assault relentless, the intent to kill surging as she continued her attacks. As long as she got close, Punk had no chance to retaliate, unable even to counter with blood beads. He rolled and dodged, struggling to evade.

Blood mist continuously erupted around him, but she dodged quickly, avoiding it.

The first strike, hitting the left arm.

The second strike, hitting the back.

The third strike...

Taking advantage of the gap between him twitching and falling to the ground, Song Ke kicked in mid-air, kicking over that ugly face. The blue light on her right hand flashed violently, and an emei thorn suddenly appeared, piercing Punk's intact other eye fiercely! Blood suddenly surged out.

Immediately after that, she took action with her cold jagged blade, seeing that the fatal blade was about to fall and decapitate Punk's head—

On Punk's left half of the face, the pale eye suddenly flickered.

The surrounding time seemed to slow down, then slow down again, freezing into still frames, and then rapidly rewinding.

The unexpected turn of events happened too suddenly. Just a second ago, Song Ke was only a few steps away from him. The next moment, she was pulled back several meters away.

“Boom—”

A few seconds ago, the fireworks she had avoided exploded again.

The world fell silent.

Song Ke lowered her head, a crimson mist appearing in her mouth.

Punk was covered in blood, struggling to stand up.

No one knew that he was actually an S-level dual-ability awakener, with the first ability being blood explosions, and the second hidden ability—time reversal.

Punk, badly injured, took a step forward, glaring viciously at Song Ke lying on the ground. This person had pushed him to such a miserable state, causing him embarrassment and pain. She had even destroyed his other eye. He wanted to personally kill her.

“I will turn you into the most splendid fireworks.”

“A world without you is a realm of darkness~”

A melodious song rang in the ears of everyone, and suddenly, for Punk and Sanada Nobumasa, everything became chaotic, and they couldn't see anything clearly.

Shrouded by the song, a ghostly figure darted into the scene, scooping up Song Ke and disappearing into the darkness.

Trying to escape? Today, no matter who comes, their lives will remain here.

Punk activated his ability, time reversal. His vision instantly cleared, and dozens of meters away, a man and a woman were quickly leaving.

“Su Cha, did you inform Zhuang Qingyan?” Lin Youyou shouted anxiously as she ran.

“Yeah,” Su Cha could only manage a response.

“Then why aren't they here yet?”

By the time they arrived, the situation was already out of control. Song Ke and Sanada Nobumasa were fiercely engaged in a fight. They witnessed Wu Juemin's death and Punk's brutality, managing to rescue Song Ke at the last moment.

The flowing wind in their ears ceased.

Time froze again and then rewound.

Even though Su Cha and Lin Youyou had clearly run a hundred meters away, the next second they were back in the midst of the chaos.

The blood-soaked Punk appeared before them, a cruel smile on his lips. "Since you're here, you might as well all stay."

He took a step forward, blood filling the air, and the cracking sounds echoed through the air.

At that moment—

The air suddenly dropped in temperature, and snowflakes began to fall all around. Sanada Nobumasa and Punk found their feet frozen, their vision a vast expanse of white.

A powerful, incredibly sharp killing intent surged towards Punk.

The icy mental power felt like numerous sharp knives piercing into their's heads, fiercely stirring!

Sanada Nobumasa and Punk could hardly endure the intense pain, rolling on the ground and howling in agony.

Punk was already heavily injured by Song Ke earlier, and his mental strength was exceptionally fragile. At this moment, under the sudden assault, his mind was dazed, and he knelt down on one knee.

His mental sea expanded suddenly, as if it could burst open at any moment.

Seizing this opportunity, Lin Youyou and Su Cha swiftly disappeared into the heavy snow.

After a while, the surroundings gradually quieted down. Punk wiped the blood from his eye, silently chuckling.

“S-level awakener... Interesting, very interesting!”

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 63: Tongwan Hospital (17)

It didn't matter; Fang would take action

“The suspected key is deceased, mission accomplished.”

Sanada Nobumasa placed his fingers on Xie Ningyu's neck, confirming that he couldn't sense any breath.

He turned his gaze towards Wu Juemin, a hint of regret showing once again. He was a man, a pity.

Sanada Nobumasa's arms had been shattered by Song Ke, and he had been attacked by an unknown psychic force. He was in intense pain all over his body, severely injured, and urgently needed to return to District B for treatment. Considering the personnel casualties, the cost of this outing was even more brutal than he had imagined.

“Captain Sanada, what do we do now?” asked his subordinate.

“Retreat immediately,” Sanada Nobumasa said.

He turned around and saw Punk still standing in place, a clear look of disgust in his eyes.

Punk, the bloody hunter and a killing machine for the Alliance, was usually strictly controlled. However, over time, his psyche had gradually become twisted. Every time he went out, he wouldn't stop until he saw blood. Sanada Nobumasa fell into contemplation again, but he didn't expect that he was an S-class dual-ability wielder. No wonder this kind of lunatic was still highly regarded by the higher-ups.

With this mission over, Sanada Nobumasa didn't want to have anything to do with him anymore.

Punk covered his injured eye, blood oozing out from his palm.

He muttered to himself, "In a small District C, there are actually two S-level awakeners."

"What do you want to do?" Sanada Nobumasa was taken aback.

Punk's smile was wicked, filled with a bloodthirsty intent. "Of course... kill them."

"They're not part of the mission objectives, and they've already fled," Sanada Nobumasa reminded him, his expression disapproving.

"If they've fled, I'll search the entire District C," Punk said, his face darkening.

After saying that, he left the spot and headed towards the direction where Song Ke disappeared.

"Captain Sanada, should we pursue?"

"No need, don't invite unnecessary trouble," Sanada Nobumasa replied.

The subordinate sounded worried, "But if the bloody hunter takes this opportunity to escape..."

Punk was released this time to assist them with the mission. If the target escaped, the Alliance would surely hold them accountable.

Sanada Nobumasa smirked coldly, "Rest assured, he won't escape."

Since he was a mad dog, there was definitely a leash to keep him in check.

...

Punk raced, his speed increasing, his sturdy body pounding on the ground, making the earth tremble.

His heart was filled with a desire for slaughter, wishing to find those two S-level awakens immediately and tear them apart with his own hands.

As Punk ran, he continued to release blood explosions. The residents of Manzoni Street, pedestrians, wandering zombies—whether indoors or outdoors, one moment they were conversing or walking, and the next moment their heads exploded like watermelons, houses collapsed, streets were damaged. Everywhere he passed, there was devastation, indeed flipping the entire city upside down as he had said.

Chasing for several kilometers, four flowing data walls appeared out of thin air, blocking his way.

Gradually, a vague figure appeared in the air, with golden hair and colorless eyes. Their voice was icy: “Outsider, who allowed you to wreak havoc in Ferrara?”

Punk was forced to stop and, recognizing the other’s identity, slightly bowed in respect: “Lord Magistrate.”

Yet his lowered head still displayed a wild expression, showing no respect even in the face of the highest authority in District C.

Ilya walked slowly from the void, his crystal eyes faintly flashing with an icy blue light.

“I won’t pursue your unauthorized entry, but that doesn’t mean you can tamper with my things.”

Manzoni Street had already turned into ruins. This place was once a representation of Ferrara’s architectural style, full of a sense of freedom and artistic beauty.



Punk twitched his mouth, his burnt left half of the face looking unusually eerie: “Didn’t expect the esteemed Magistrate to be an AI who loves the people like a child and has learned useless and redundant human emotions.”

The data stream surged, and a slap landed on Punk’s face, tilting his head slightly.

Ilya wasn’t provoked, his tone calm and gentle, but the words carried a cold mockery: “Just a dog in shackles, and you dare to bark wildly in front of me?”

“An unruly thing, your master hasn’t taught you well, so let me repeat it to you.

“Remember, when you’re a guest in someone else’s house, you should understand manners and not mess with the owner’s belongings.”

Punk got beaten, his two eyes, one red and one white, staring at Ilya, suddenly and without warning, a blood explosion erupted!

The data streams from all sides quickly flipped and recombined, like waves crashing into the blood beads. The bright red explosion collided with the 101010 code wall, and two powerful forces clashed fiercely, bursting in the air.

Several blood beads broke through the blockade, rushing to Ilya, but turned into duds and dissipated on the spot.

Ilya remained unchanged from start to finish, not even a flicker in his eyes.

The artificial intelligence made up of data is never bound by the flesh, much less to bleed. Punk’s abilities were ineffective against him.

Punk snorted coldly, preparing to strike again.

His time rewind ability worked within a small range, allowing the target's time state to reverse a maximum of ten seconds. Data might not fear bleeding, but they should fear rewinding, right?

The airflow suddenly slowed down, and the data stream wall was on the verge of collapse.

Ilya's pupils flickered—

The ring hidden in Punk's neck suddenly lit up, imprisoning him tightly. The extremely strong particle currents stimulated him, causing his whole body to tremble and his sea of consciousness to suffer a destructive shock. Punk fell to the ground in pain, his cries echoing.

His pale left eye widened in horror, looking at Ilya in disbelief.

How was this possible? The ring not only had a top-notch firewall, but it also required entering commands. Even among the Alliance's higher-ups, very few could use the ring to control him. How could a District C magistrate, just an artificial intelligence, break through layer upon layer of restrictions and activate the ring to imprison him?

While Punk was still trying to make sense of it, a massive mechanical arm pressed down on him, and an iron cage descended from the sky, imprisoning this wild beast like catching a zombie.

Ilya's face was both sacred and resolute: "Now, go back to where you belong."

\*

Su Cha, carrying Song Ke, joined up with Zhuang Qingyan and two others who hurried over, swiftly evacuating Manzoni Street under the cover of heavy snow.

The road back to the hotel was bustling with people, quite far, and too dangerous, but staying in place meant Punk would soon catch up.

Lin Youyou made a prompt decision: "Let's go to my studio."

Lin Youyou's independent studio was nearby, not only providing good confidentiality but also equipped with a private hospital.

Upon reaching the destination, Sucha placed Song Ke on the hospital bed.

Song Ke's face was pale, her eyes half-closed, and her whole body appearing as if she had been pulled from a pool of blood. Su Cha had provided simple first aid for her on the way, but the blood wouldn't stop, already drenching the gauze, and kept seeping out.

"Sister..." Xu Xing rushed forward but dared not touch her, looking utterly terrified and crying in fear.

"Song Ke, Song Ke, wake up!" Lin Youyou's voice was gentle, yet filled with undeniable anxiety.

Zhuang Qingyan looked at the barely breathing figure on the hospital bed, placing his hand over her pale fingers that were holding the emei thorn.

"Tink..." The emei thorn fell to the ground, surprisingly, Song Ke couldn't even hold onto her spiritual weapon.

Zhuang Qingyan lowered his gaze, unusually silent, and no one could discern his expression at this moment.

His ice-cold fingertips paused in front of Song Ke, and then slowly unwrapped the gauze.

Lin Youyou and the others took in the sight before them and drew in a sharp breath of cold air.

Everything was crimson. Judging solely from the wound, it was more severe than when Maeda died. After Wu Xianghai's ability engulfed him, it left only a black hole. But at this moment, Song Ke's flesh and blood were mangled, her organs shattered, making it impossible to determine the specific extent of her injuries.

With injuries this severe, could she still survive? Everyone's hearts sank.

Thinking of something, Lin Youyou suddenly turned around and grabbed Fang Zhixu's collar: "Hey, aren't you a doctor? Hurry, save her!"

Fang Zhixu glanced and only said three words: "It's too late."

Lin Youyou was both anxious and angry: "What are you saying? How can you speak so coldly!"

Fang Zhixu was dragged here forcefully by Xu Xing, nearly losing half his life in the mad dash. He leaned against the wall, panting heavily, trying to regain his breath.

Being questioned by Lin Youyou, he just shook his head, unwilling to say more. Ordinary people couldn't tell, but he was a doctor. With such a large gash on Song Ke, even if she were a deity, she couldn't be saved.

"Fang Zhixu, have you awakened any abilities?" Zhuang Qingyan asked softly.

The same question, but with a completely different tone than the first time, carrying a sense of impending storm in his voice.

Everyone had witnessed Zhuang Qingyan's recent mental attack, so they wouldn't perceive him as just an ordinary person confined to a wheelchair anymore.

Fang Zhixu remained silent.

"Do you want to watch her die with your own eyes?" Zhuang Qingyan asked again in the midst of the silence.

Fang Zhixu tensed his back, his expression complicated. He looked up at the dying girl, a mix of pain and struggle flashing in his eyes.

Through Song Ke, Fang Zhixu seemed to see another familiar figure, struggling between life and death. One moment, she smiled at him, and the next, she was pushed coldly into the morgue.

“Daddy, I really like you~”

When she smiled, the girl always acted sweetly with him, a faint dimple appearing on her cheek.

But when she lay lifeless before him, Fang Zhixu’s whole world collapsed.

The girl’s face gradually merged with Song Ke’s.

The last freeze-frame was at the shelter, Song Ke looking into his eyes, her firm words, “I can do it.”

Zhuang Qingyan and the others waited quietly for his answer.

Fang Zhixu’s eyes glistened, and he fiercely pinched his face, his voice hoarse.

“You guessed it right. I am a healing-type awakener.”

Fang Zhixu, once the genius surgeon from Tongwan, was now an A-level healing-type awakener.

Lin Youyou was in a state of shocked disbelief, staring at him, lost for words.

Fang Zhixu pulled out a hair tie, pushed the messy hair behind his head, and tied it up, revealing his weathered yet clear eyes.

“Don’t get your hopes up too high. I’m not certain. I can only try to save her.”

He turned to Lin Youyou, "Do you have surgical equipment? She needs to establish extracorporeal circulation as soon as possible."

Lin Youyou replied, "Yes!"

The situation was urgent, and the conditions were rudimentary. Several people changed into sterile suits, and Fang Zhixu performed surgery and cardiac repair on Song Ke.

When Fang Zhixu regained consciousness, there was a kind of focus surpassing everyone else when he held the scalpel. His fingers, as slender as a work of art, seemed to be playing a melody.

The scalpel cut precisely, and from his palm, a translucent white ability flowed out slowly, flowing into Song Ke's body.

Fang Zhixu's movements suddenly stopped.

"What's wrong?" Lin Youyou asked softly.

"The heart... is shattered."

It was more than shattered; strictly speaking, Song Ke's heart had been completely broken into pieces, and not even a relatively intact fragment could be picked out.

In such a dire situation, even Fang Zhixu didn't know where to start.

Was it really going to end like this? Unable to save her?

The atmosphere fell into a deep silence.

Xu Xing wept silently, tears moistening his entire collar.

“Wait!” Fang Zhixu exclaimed, unable to control the astonishment on his face. “It’s repairing itself.”

Several people looked at Song Ke in astonishment.

The fragmented parts of the heart, under everyone’s gaze, seemed to have self-awareness, slowly wriggling in the cavity, seeking adjacent parts, gradually piecing together, merging, and gradually restoring their original shape.

In a matter of moments, Song Ke’s heart had miraculously regenerated mostly on its own!

Fang Zhixu’s hands were steady. Taking advantage of the self-repair of the heart, he inserted blood delivery catheters, repaired the damaged ventricular septum and atrial septum through the tricuspid valve, repaired the ruptured arteries, cleared the pleural effusion. In a short time, his ability flowed out in large quantities. Amazingly, Song Ke’s body seemed to be cooperating with him. Wherever Fang Zhixu’s surgical blade paused, the tissues there would automatically return to their original positions, facilitating his actions.

After an unknown amount of time, Fang Zhixu let out a deep breath and sutured the final thread.

Song Ke’s breathing stabilized, and her vital signs gradually stabilized as she fell into a shallow sleep.

“Is she... a dual...” Su Cha’s expression was exceptionally serious. Back in the rainforest, one of his former colleagues had survived a severe leg injury by having the section automatically repaired, escaping death. That colleague was a B-level regeneration awakener.

Considering Song Ke’s recent condition, where her completely shattered heart had miraculously restored itself, both the speed and complexity of the recovery were beyond comprehension.

Just as Su Cha was about to speak, he suddenly met Zhuang Qingyan’s scrutinizing gaze.

He looked at everyone, especially Lin Youyou and Su Cha, with a chilling tone in his voice.

“Everything that happened here today, no one is allowed to speak about it.”

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 64: Tongwan Hospital (18)

I will never lie to you

“Ah...,” Fang Zhixu yawned, rubbing his eyes sleepily as he walked into the ward.

These past two days, they took turns staying up all night watching over Song Ke. No one had rested well, but thankfully, she had regained consciousness last night, and her vital signs had stabilized.

Postoperative rounds were the responsibility of the operating doctor. Even though he was now down and out, Fang Zhixu hadn't lost his habits. As a result, halfway through a yawn with his mouth wide open, he got stuck—there was only a small bump left on the hospital bed, and his patient was gone!

Fang Zhixu quickly took a few steps and pulled back the blanket. Xu Xing's furry head peeked out, sleeping soundly and blissfully. He seemed to be having a pleasant dream, smacking his lips and wetting the pillow with saliva.

Fang Zhixu's anger surged. Without hesitation, he tapped Xu Xing's head like a chestnut: “Still sleeping! Your sister has run away!”

Xu Xing sat up with closed eyes, bewildered for a moment, and groped the bedsheets beside him. “Run away? Sister? Where's my sister?!”

How could such a big sister just disappear like that!

Xu Xing had been on night duty, but due to extreme tiredness, he had accidentally fallen asleep. In his dream, someone gently picked him up and caressed his head. Xu Xing felt as if he were sinking into soft clouds. He couldn't help but curl up in the blanket like a caterpillar and then... he fell asleep.



Fang Zhixu looked around and, lo and behold, the IV bag and nutrition fluids were taken away, not to mention the medication box.

He couldn't help but laugh in exasperation.

He wondered if Song Ke could be considered obedient. If we talk about being obedient, she had just woken up and already ran away. What kind of critically ill patient was she? But if we talk about not being obedient, she remembered the doctor's orders very well; she hadn't forgotten to take her medicine.

Fang Zhixu shook his head. It was his own fault for being presumptuous, stirring up trouble so early in the morning. Sleepiness crept back up on him: "Alright, go find her."

"Why are you leaving?" Xu Xing grabbed his clothes.

"To sleep." Fang Zhixu answered with a straight face and laid down on the nearby sofa, falling asleep in three seconds.

Xu Xing: "..."

This was too much. With such a big incident, they left a child to face it alone?

A few minutes later, Zhuang Qingyan, Lin Youyou, and Su Cha were informed one by one by Xu Xing and gathered in the ward.

"I just went to Manzoni Street to look, but she's not there," Su Cha said.

"Then let's search further away. She just woke up and has such serious injuries; she shouldn't have gone far," Lin Youyou said anxiously.

“I want to go too!” Xu Xing, feeling responsible for losing Song Ke, raised his little hand and requested to participate in the “finding sister” activity.

“Ah...,” Fang Zhixu on the sofa turned over, completely unaffected by their conversation.

Zhuang Qingyan touched the already cold other half of the bedsheet and said softly, “There’s no need to look; I know where she went.”

\*

Ferrara Public Cemetery.

This place was rarely visited, and it housed the remains of those without families, without backgrounds, the nameless and faceless deceased. The AI patrol team patrolled the streets and alleys every day. Once the bodies cleared exceeded the time limit with no claimants, they would be collectively placed here.

The body that passed away two days ago had been cremated into ashes and stored in a small box. In front, a light screen displayed a brief epitaph.

“Here rests an anonymous traveler, buried on December 24th, in the year 46 of the New Calendar.”

A pair of delicate hands placed the pure white calla lilies beside the light screen. Apart from some miscellaneous items, there were also several epaulets piled on the box, indicating the identity of the deceased. Song Ke picked out seven of them belonging to the 11th Squad, wiped their surfaces clean, and stashed them in her pocket.

When Zhuang Qingyan found her, Song Ke was sitting on the platform, quietly gazing at the graves in front of her.

The December wind tousled her hair, and her expression was an unprecedented calmness.

“Your heart has just been mended, and you dare to sneak out? Be careful not to get into trouble again; Fang Zhixu might not take action next time.”

“Shh,” Song Ke gestured silently towards him, “d-don’t report me. I’ll go back in a while.”

Zhuang Qingyan smiled. There was no need for him to report; when Xu Xing shouted through his little loudspeaker, everyone knew.

Song Ke tucked the scattered hair behind her ear, speaking in a low voice, “I always feel like, during this period, many people have died, so suddenly.”

She looked down at her palm; the blue light sphere was particularly dim. Trying to condense her abilities, it blinked a few times and then went out, her mental energy severely depleted, needing time to slowly recover. “I couldn’t save th-them—I couldn’t save Maeda—I couldn’t save Wu Juemin.”

Having a strong ability but seeing people around her die one after another, Song Ke felt for the first time that her power was inadequate.

“...No one could.”

Zhuang Qingyan already knew the details of what had happened; Song Ke had told them the truth after regaining consciousness.

A silver wheelchair stopped beside Song Ke. Zhuang Qingyan and she both looked at the small light screen.

“No one’s asking you to be a savior, and you’re not obliged to save everyone.”

“The death of Wu Juemin wasn’t really sudden.”

“You said it yourself; that Sanada and Punk were transported through a spatial rift. Even the ‘Bloody Hunter’ was mobilized, indicating that they had been targeting this place in advance, coming prepared.”

Song Ke frowned and thought slowly, "Came p-prepared... Could it be that Xie Ningyu was being tracked?"

"It's not Xie Ningyu," Zhuang Qingyan shook his head slowly, "it's Wu Juemin."

"If Xie Ningyu was the problem, he would have been pursued and killed on the way to Erjia. Since he arrived safely in Ferrara, it proves that, before this, he did not attract the Alliance's attention."

Zhuang Qingyan analyzed calmly, "The problem lies with Wu Juemin. The mission he took is a real hot potato. Many eyes are on him from behind, wanting to use him, seize the credit, or eliminate potential threats.

"After all, everyone wants Xie Zhu dead," Zhuang Qingyan sighed.

Because it involved the key, every step Wu Juemin took was extremely dangerous, like walking on a tightrope.

And when he found the suspected key, Xie Ningyu, it was the moment the tightrope snapped.

Song Ke fell silent for a moment and quickly pointed out the error in Zhuang Qingyan's words, "It's not everyone."

She recalled everything she saw on the rooftop that day, "Wu Juemin didn't intend to kill Xie Ningyu; he wanted to e-escort him back and hand him over to that person, Xie Lan, for General Xie to deal with personally."

Zhuang Qingyan was slightly stunned and spoke again in a calm voice, "Is that so? But from the outcome, there's no difference."

With people dead and buried, it was impossible to verify anything about Wu Juemin. Now, whatever was said would be futile.

Song Ke looked at the resting box one last time and walked out with Zhuang Qingyan.

“Lin Youyou and Su Cha, how do you plan to handle them?”

“Handle what?”

“Your heart can heal on its own. Do you know what that means?” Zhuang Qingyan’s tone was serious.

“Regardless of the reason, a heart that shattered like that can recover. This will bring you great trouble.”

“Fang Zhixu not mutating after being bitten was enough to cause a stir, and once your condition is exposed, do you know how many fanatical researchers will want to send you to the lab for dissection and thoroughly study every set of your cell genes?”

Song Ke imagined the scene Zhuang Qingyan described and suddenly felt a chill run down her spine.

She had noticed before that she possessed extraordinary healing abilities—no wounds left a trace, even the places where she was scratched by zombies didn’t mutate. She used to think it was a side effect of awakening her special abilities, but now it seemed that the real reason far exceeded her understanding.

She hadn’t figured it out herself and didn’t want to be studied.

“What does this have to do with them?”

“I won’t speak about your matters. Xu Xing and Fang Zhixu follow you every day. There’s no opportunity for them to spill anything.”

“As for those two...” Zhuang Qingyan’s voice was distant.

For Lin Youyou and Su Cha, they were “outsiders” to him, and with a criminal record, their level of trust was very low.

“She probably won’t betray us,” Song Ke already knew. It was Lin Youyou who had taken the risk to rescue her from Punk’s hands that day. She felt that the other party should not do something like that. “But you’re right, having a past of b-betrayal makes it difficult to trust again...”

“So, I suggest, kill them. It’s a clean sweep.” Zhuang Qingyan made the suggestion lightly.

Song Ke took a sharp breath, slowly clenched her fist, ready to hit him first, but as soon as her hand went up, she immediately expressionlessly covered her chest.

“Ah... My chest hurts.”

Song Ke wouldn’t act spoiled for no reason; if she said it hurt, it truly did.

Zhuang Qingyan teased her into a smile, “I know you don’t want to, so there’s only one choice left, let them join V587 and follow you from now on for easy supervision.”

“Join V587?” Song Ke was surprised; she had never considered this possibility.

“Well... using ‘join’ might not be appropriate. You can think of them as temporary companions, no need for real feelings.” Zhuang Qingyan explained.

“Will they agree?”

Zhuang Qingyan: “Shouldn’t be a big problem. The only conflict is the Throne Race, but don’t forget, what is our purpose for participating?”

Song Ke: “...Money.”

The three members of V587 participated at that time just to earn Alliance coins. Over time, this initial goal had been almost forgotten by Song Ke.

Zhuang Qingyan nodded, "So, what we want doesn't conflict."

Lin Youyou wanted a promise from Ilya, and they were just in it for the money. If they united and truly won, there wouldn't be any conflicting interests.

"Oh." Song Ke decided to go back and have a good talk with Lin Youyou.

The two of them walked quietly side by side for a while.

"Their problem has been solved," in the atmosphere of calmness, Song Ke slowly spoke, "What about yours?"

"Mine?" Zhuang Qingyan was slightly taken aback.

"Yeah, S-level, psychic ability. That day... I sensed it."

Zhuang Qingyan's wheelchair stopped, not knowing how to explain for a moment.

Song Ke turned around, her expression fierce, stepping closer to him step by step.

"Weak researcher?"

"Nothing special, just an ordinary person?"

"Hugging thighs?"

Recalling that day, when Song Ke first sensed the powerful killing intent, it should have been from Zhuang Qingyan. His leg was injured for another reason, as Yang Bo and Wu Yarou were just two C-level awakeners, how could they kill an S-level like him?

Song Ke placed her hands on the wheelchair, her momentum overwhelming. As she spoke, Zhuang Qingyan took a step back, and with no further retreat, his back bumped against the wheelchair.

Their noses were but a short distance apart.

Song Ke lowered her head, her eyes burning with anger, "From the beginning, you've been lying to me."

Zhuang Qingyan protested loudly, "I didn't lie to you. You never asked me."

Song Ke: "..."

Unbelievable. Was it all her fault?

Just as she was about to speak, she suddenly realized that she was too close to Zhuang Qingyan, close enough to count his long, dense eyelashes.

Song Ke paused and withdrew a little.

She asked very seriously, "Have you never, ever, believed in me?"

"...No," Zhuang Qingyan remained silent for a long time, affirming, "Fully trusting someone is something I find difficult to do."

Song Ke: "..."

She might not express her disappointment or sorrow, but Zhuang Qingyan's honesty made it hard for Song Ke to find the right words.



“Song Ke,” Zhuang Qingyan’s low voice softly called her name.

Song Ke glanced at him, not pleased, and remained silent.

“Perhaps you think I’m full of lies and don’t believe me sincerely.”

Song Ke tilted her head, her expression clearly written with bewilderment, “Aren’t you?”

Zhuang Qingyan sighed, “I can’t fully entrust you with a hundred percent trust. But there’s one thing I can be sure of.”

“As long as you ask, as long as I can answer, I will never lie to you.”

“Oh,” Song Ke responded.

After a few seconds, she raised a question in a small voice, “Didn’t you lie to me before? About being a drug researcher?”

“I did that for someone else. If you believe it, can you blame me?” Zhuang Qingyan raised an eyebrow.

Song Ke’s temper flared up instantly. She kicked Zhuang Qingyan’s wheelchair with her toe, making him spin around.

Zhuang Qingyan had a headache, “Song Keke, behave yourself if you’re sick. Why are you still so mischievous? Hmm?”

Song Ke kicked faster, but accidentally used too much force, which affected the wound. With a sharp intake of breath, she covered her mouth and squatted down.

This weak appearance was very different from her usually lively self. Zhuang Qingyan flipped her hood, covering her head, and rubbed her head absentmindedly.

“Be good, stop making trouble.”

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 65: Tongwan Hospital (19)

Luxurious Lineup of V587

Song Ke played around like a primary school student for a while and was pulled back by the rationality of adults, preparing to go back and meet with the others.

Not long after leaving the cemetery, a rotating data wall appeared out of thin air.

The code composed of numerous small squares dissipated layer by layer, and Ilya walked from the void.

Song Ke was surprised. This place was remote, and there were hardly any cameras, let alone holographic projections. Although artificial intelligence was everywhere, Ilya’s sudden appearance was too abrupt. How did he manage it?

Song Ke and Zhuang Qingyan stopped, their eyes vigilantly fixed on the figure in front of them.

Him appearing at this moment was not a good sign.

Ilya leisurely examined her for a moment, a pleasant smile appearing on his face. “Indeed, still alive.”

Song Ke frowned slightly.

She was now full of suspicion and vigilance towards Ilya. Leaving aside the matter of the tower, at that time he clearly knew everything, knew the arrival of the Bloody Hunter, but left only a vague “blood and violence” and led her to Manzoni Street. She didn’t know what his intentions were.

“Surprised to see me? Judging by your expression, it seems you’re not very welcoming,” Ilya said, taking the initiative.

His dazzling golden hair shimmered in the sunlight, as if coated with a honey-like hue. “Although it was just a casual thing, I helped you intercept a chase. Aren’t you going to thank me?”

“Oh...” Song Ke thanked him emotionlessly. “Thank you.”

It was close. She had a chance to kill Punk herself, but unfortunately, due to his unexpected sneak attack, she couldn’t succeed.

Song Ke never underestimated her enemies. The reason she was severely injured this time was that she didn’t know there was a dual-element awakener, and she never expected Punk’s other ability was the rare time element.

But Punk, an S-level, was not invincible. Song Ke thought that if she encountered him again, she would definitely cut off his head.

Ilya walked lightly around her for two steps, lowered his gaze to observe her shoulders, limbs, fingers. There was no frivolity or flirtation in his eyes, only pure appreciation. “If I hadn’t already made a choice, I would still like this body of yours.”

Song Ke stared at him expressionlessly and spoke coldly after a while, “I can still kill you.”

Ilya met her gaze for two seconds, sensing the burst of killing intent from her, and quickly changed his tone, “Just kidding.”

“I came to tell you that the Throne Race will be postponed for three months. During these three months, I don’t want any accidents to happen to Ferrara.”

Having experienced the resistance faction, the zombie siege, and the blood explosions, Ferrara was already heavily scarred and could no longer endure any further torment. This city desperately needed a period of peace to recover and prosper.

As early as the previous day, the advancing participants received a notification about the postponement of the Throne Race. Why did Ilya come to her specifically to convey this?

Song Ke was puzzled: "How does it concern me?"

Ilya's tone was meaningful: "Of course, it concerns you because you are the biggest wildcard. Although I sent the Bloody Hunter back, as long as you are here, we never know when they might return."

"So I have a suggestion. How about you go outside and take a break?"

Song Ke: "..."

She understood the reasoning; they were worried she might cause trouble for Ferrara by staying here. But was her presence that much of an issue? To the extent that the highest-ranking official personally chased her away?

Song Ke glanced at Ilya; he seemed relaxed in his tone but didn't appear to be joking.

This "suggestion" wasn't unreasonable. They hadn't intended to stay in Ferrara indefinitely, and there was no need to confront him head-on at this juncture.

Song Ke nodded: "Okay, but I have a few q-questions."

"Please go ahead."

A data stream formed a spacious chair, and Ilya sat in it, appearing relaxed and regal, as if he held the fate of Ferrara in his hands.

“Did you alter my level?” This was a statement of certainty.

Song Ke remembered Punk’s words vividly from that day. She was an S-level strong attack type with a gold element ability, but her ability certificate showed only A-level. Upon careful thought, all the tests were conducted in Ferrara, and the only one who could discreetly modify the results was Ilya.

Ilya didn’t deny it: “Yes.”

Song Ke asked: “Why?”

“Ferrara is my territory. If an S-level awakener appears here, too much attention will be drawn. I don’t want to attract excessive scrutiny at this critical moment,” Ilya said lightly, as if altering someone’s ability level was a trivial matter.

“Anyway, for you, the level isn’t that important. When you’re outside, A-level is more convenient than S-level.”

He smiled, and his face seemed to show more emotions, becoming more and more like a true human.

“Just didn’t expect... there’s not just one hidden S-level.”

Ilya’s gaze fell on Zhuang Qingyan, who was sitting in a wheelchair behind her. Zhuang Qingyan smiled slightly at him, looking calm.

Ilya glanced at him a little longer and then turned his gaze away.

“Since you are so concerned about Ferrara, why did you release the zo-zombies?” Song Ke asked.

“Why can’t I?” Ilya countered. “If a room is dirty, you clean it up in time, get rid of what I don’t want, and what’s left is what I like.” His casually dismissive tone sent a chill down one’s spine.

Song Ke pursed her lips. “Why do you collect zombies and hold the Th-Throne Race Competition?”

Ilya smiled slowly. “Because I’m bored. Don’t you think it’s interesting to observe humans showing various expressions? Awakeners and their former kind killing each other, what a splendid performance. You can only see it in Ferrara.”

Song Ke understood completely. This unconventional artificial intelligence ruler acted on whims, regardless of right or wrong, and couldn’t be held to human moral standards.

“I have no more questions,” Song Ke said.

Ilya smiled slightly. “Then, see you at the competition in three months.”

With that, he disappeared on the spot.

“We underestimated him. Perhaps even Lyon’s rebellion is part of his calculations,” Zhuang Qingyan said with a serious expression.

Starting from organizing the Throne Race, this super artificial intelligence had been playing a very significant game.

Song Ke turned her head. “Why three months?”

Zhuang Qingyan pondered. “He’s eliminating potential threats. There’s only one possibility – during these three months, he can’t appear and personally manage Ferrara.”

Song Ke was stunned. Why couldn’t Ilya manage Ferrara personally unless... he had something more important to do.

“Lu Xinglan...” Song Ke uttered a name. Since Ilya took Lu Xinglan away, she hadn’t seen him again. And his offhand mention of a “body” always sent a shiver down her spine.

...

After returning, Xu Xing transformed into a spoiled child when he saw her, clinging to Song Ke and refusing to let go. “Sister~ Did you carry me to sleep last night?”

His voice was soft and sweet, and his two watery eyes blinked and blinked, shamelessly acting cute.

“En, you need a good sleep to grow tall,” Song Ke said, patting his curly hair, educating the young child.

In front of her, Xu Xing was always obedient and amiable. However, Song Ke had witnessed him explode in rage and curse at the shelter, so she knew that the child’s true character wasn’t as perfect as it appeared.

But what did that matter? Compared to the lifeless and forever gone person, he was lively and vibrant, which was good.

After comforting Xu Xing, Song Ke went to Lin Youyou. “I need to talk to you about something.”

Lin Youyou was carefully applying lipstick in front of the mirror, and she had an online interview to record later.

“You and Su Cha, join V587,” Song Ke said.

Lin Youyou’s hand trembled, smearing the lipstick crookedly, leaving an abrupt line at the corner of her mouth.

“Can you repeat that?” she asked incredulously, thinking she had misheard.

“You and Sucha, join V587,” Song Ke repeated.

Lin Youyou widened her beautiful eyes, her slender fingers trembling as she pointed at her, “Song Ke, I risked so much to save you. I thought we were even. You still hold a grudge against me for what happened at Mirror Lake?”

Song Ke said, “It’s not...”

“It’s fine if you’re not grateful, but you still want me to continue being your coolie. How can your heart be so dark?” The big star got into her acting mode, whimpering a couple of times and leaning on the table with teary eyes filled with accusation.

Song Ke muttered softly, “It was Zhuang Qingyan. He was a-afraid you’d report me... and spill the beans about my heart.”

Zhuang Qingyan beside her was mercilessly exposed: “...”

Lin Youyou’s hypocritical sobbing got stuck in her throat. She was angry, her tone rising sharply, “Nonsense, am I that kind of person?!”

“In fact, you can consider it as... a deal,” Song Ke explained seriously.

Lin Youyou and Su Cha joining them, working together with them, until the Throne Race ends. After that, if they get eliminated or win the championship, and when Song Ke leaves Ferrara, they can decide whether or not to report anything. Lin Youyou could choose to withdraw.

This proposal was both a limitation, restricting their personal freedom during this time, and a new collaboration led by Song Ke after Mirror Lake.

The relationship between them was like temporary partners—no close bonds were required, just unified action. The most important thing was the tempting conditions on the table.



“If we win the championship, we’ll get the money, and the o-opportunity for a wish, we’ll give it to you.”

“This is my promise.”

Lin Youyou was startled after hearing this. She knew deep down that she and Su Cha were doing fine at the moment, but as the competition progressed, there would be more skilled competitors. It would be difficult to win the championship with just the two of them. But if... if they joined V587, they could form a formidable, unbeatable team of five.

Thinking about this, Lin Youyou’s heart started beating faster and faster. She couldn’t help but hold her head, forcing herself to calm down.

“Wait, let me think about it,” she said.

She thought about it for the whole afternoon, and by dinnertime, Lin Youyou appeared radiant.

“We can join V587,” she agreed in her first sentence.

Xu Xing, who was happily sipping on juice, was so shocked that the juice box slipped from his hand and fell to the ground.

He was utterly dumbfounded. Why? Why did the person he disliked the most become his teammate in the end?

This world was so cruel to him!

“But I have a condition,” Lin Youyou continued.

“I need him,” she pointed to Fang Zhixu, who was dozing on the couch, “to heal someone for me.”

Fang Zhixu, it was Fang Zhixu again.

No wonder healing awakens were always in demand wherever they went. Song Ke's heart, Zhuang Qingyan's leg, and now Lin Youyou all needed Fang Zhixu.

But whether Fang Zhixu himself would cooperate, Song Ke had no assurance.

The immediate priority was to understand what Fang Zhixu wanted and complete the task he had in mind, so there was hope for negotiating conditions with him later.

Song Ke approached the sofa. Under normal circumstances, this person had a very low presence, but no one would easily overlook him.

"Thank you," she said to Fang Zhixu. If it weren't for him taking action, even if her heart could self-heal, the process would have been even more difficult.

Fang Zhixu lifted his eyelids and made a nonchalant "hmm."

He had vowed never to pick up a surgical knife again, and he hadn't expected to break that promise so soon.

"In the next few days, we'll be leaving Ferrara. When I'm feeling better, I'll help you," Song Ke explained the arrangements for the coming days and paused, then went straight to the point and asked, "Can you now tell me which magistrate you want to kill?"

"It's not necessary," Fang Zhixu replied unexpectedly after a moment of silence. "Saying things that can't be done will only cause unnecessary trouble."

"Why can't it be done?" Song Ke was puzzled. "Is our strength still insufficient?"

Lin Youyou and Su Cha had already decided to join V587. With Fang Zhixu, they had two S-level and three A-level awakeners, plus one B-level. With this luxurious lineup, they could dominate anywhere.

Fang Zhixu shook his head slowly. "It's not a matter of strength."

"To kill someone, you need to see the person first."

"The most stringent access system, do you mean the C55 District?" Zhuang Qingyan asked quickly.

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 66.1: Tongwan Hospital (20)

Let's go to Sin City! (Ferrara + Tongwan Arc End)

The New Asia Alliance has a total of 50 C districts, and each C-level city has its unique irreplaceability.

And Mu City (C55 District) is the Alliance's arsenal.

The economic lifeline of Mu City is firmly controlled by the local large-scale arms dealers, who have absolute power and even collude with the magistrate to continuously channel money and resources for greater gains. The magistrate supported by armed forces is an absolute dictator, wielding an iron fist, bestowed with the title "Tyrant" by the outside world.

Unlike Ferrara's democratic elections, the magistrate in Mu City has not changed for twenty-six consecutive years.

The admission criteria for C55 District were notoriously strict even before the apocalypse.

Mu City does not welcome refugees, rejects people from remote areas, and the entry approval process is complex and cumbersome. The backgrounds of newcomers, if even slightly ambiguous, would be

ruthlessly turned away, even if they were completely innocent without any suspicion. Sometimes, applications submitted might have no progress for months.

This situation escalated after the apocalypse, gradually becoming extreme, and Mu City almost blocked all admission channels.

If Ferrara welcomed all incoming travelers, then Mu City welded its gates shut, refusing entry to anyone.

Zhuang Qingyan finished analyzing the information about Mu City. Song Ke counted on her fingers. Well, refugee (knowing that Fang Zhixu is currently missing, can only be considered a refugee), coming from the remote area (her and Xu Xing), and those with unclear backgrounds (Zhuang Qingyan and Su Cha), it seems they've all fallen into the trap. Lin Youyou still has a bit of hope, but she's operating outside and can't use her real name.

No wonder Fang Zhixu said that knowing was futile. If she were a household registration officer in Mu City, she wouldn't let these "dangerous elements" in.

After Fang Zhixu listened, he stared at Zhuang Qingyan and asked, "How do you know so much?"

Song Ke immediately chimed in, "He knows all the information about the Alliance."

While saying this, she proudly raised her chin, looking like she had some honor, as if Zhuang Qingyan had given her face.

Zhuang Qingyan caught a glimpse of her expression and silently curved his mouth.

"Sneak in and give it a try?" Su Cha, who had been listening quietly, suggested an idea that suited his personality.

Zhuang Qingyan quickly denied, "The border is heavily guarded, and there's a specialized organization to combat intruders. I'm afraid that as soon as you step into Mu City, you'll be greeted by thousands of particle cannons, reducing you to ashes in just three seconds."

“Is there really no other way?” Lin Youyou asked. “Like coming up with a special reason, official business trip, or visiting relatives?”

Zhuang Qingyan shook his head, “It’s hard to deceive the registration department of the Alliance.”

The group sighed instantly. Xu Xing was a beat slower and, to fit in, sighed along, looking like a little adult.

Fang Zhixu’s expression remained calm, but the flames of hatred burned slowly in his heart, never extinguishing. He had long learned to face the reality of helplessness.

In the midst of silence, Zhuang Qingyan slowly spoke up, “Actually... there might be a way.”

Five pairs of eyes looked at him in unison.

Song Ke urged, “Speak quickly.” Pausing for a moment, she added, “Keep it simple, no b-beating around the bush.”

Zhuang Qingyan, whose old accounts were inadvertently brought up, cleared his throat, “Without admission permission, we could forge a fake one.

“All information about household registration is synchronized to personal terminals. Just tamper with it a bit, make it look real, change our household registration location to C55 district. That way, we won’t need to submit an admission application and can enter Mu City without anyone noticing.”

“You mean, hack the registration department system and alter the results?” Lin Youyou was surprised. This guy was really audacious.

Song Ke thought of Ilya; her ability level was modified by him. If not for Punk, she might have been kept in the dark.

It was a good idea, but achieving seamless perfection was lacking a crucial element.

Song Ke looked at Zhuang Qingyan with mixed feelings and said, "Can you... hack the system?"

"Can you hack the system?" Xu Xing, like a follower, furrowed his little brow and imitated Song Ke's expression, asking.

"Yeah, speaking so casually, can you?" Lin Youyou crossed her hands and glanced at him skeptically.

The remaining two males gave Zhuang Qingyan a bit of face, just looking at him with a hint of suspicion.

"I can't," Zhuang Qingyan's answer was quite straightforward.

Song Ke: "... If you can't, why boast about it?"

Zhuang Qingyan said slowly, "I can't do it, but someone else can."

Song Ke, Xu Xing, and Lin Youyou asked in unison, "Who?"

Zhuang Qingyan mentioned a name, "Do you remember Lu Xinglan?"

Song Ke nodded, "I remember."

"Lu Xinglan, due to impure eye color, wasn't highly regarded in the Lu family. Even if he went missing, it wouldn't attract much attention. However, as a genetic candidate, he awakened the Lu family's exclusive hacker ability."

"You want to find Lu Xinglan?" Song Ke reminded, "But he's with Ilya."

Zhuang Qingyan smiled slightly, "I'm not looking for him. He just reminded me of someone."

“Ten years ago, in the Lu family, there was an astonishingly talented and brilliant individual named Lu Xiaoyu. He was the top-notch hacker, whether within the Lu family or across the entire Alliance, as long as there was data, he could easily defy everyone.”

“I considered him... let’s say, a friend.”

Zhuang Qingyan’s eyelid twitched. Thinking of the glorious deeds this “friend” dragged him into, they were all extremely unpleasant memories.

“Where is he now? Erjia?” Song Ke asked.

Zhuang Qingyan said solemnly, “No, he’s in... the Death Prison.”

“Ah??”

Not only Song Ke, but everyone else looked extremely shocked.

Su Cha suddenly spoke, “By the Death Prison, do you mean the one in F180 District?”

“That’s right,” Zhuang Qingyan said, “the underground Death Prison of Sin City.”

The Alliance districts were not only classified by levels, but much information could be inferred from the numbering. For example, the lower the number, the stronger the overall strength, and the higher the status in the Alliance. F180 District, on the other hand, was the worst among the worst, completely abandoned by the Alliance, the kind they wished to discard immediately.

Although it didn’t have a name, it had a dread-inducing alias—City of Sin.

Song Ke couldn’t understand. If Lu Xiaoyu was as formidable as Zhuang Qingyan described, he should have been highly regarded within the Lu family. How could he have fallen to such a lightless place as the Death Prison?

Zhuang Qingyan sighed, "Because Lu Xiaoyu is not only a genius but also a complete madman.

"Five years ago, he almost destroyed Lu family's supercomputer. After the Alliance trial, they decided to banish him to the Death Prison, with the sentence lasting until the end of his life, never to be reincarnated."

Everyone fell silent.

The supercomputer was the cornerstone of the Lu family, so was this the "I'm ruthless enough to eliminate even myself"?

Lu Xiaoyu was indeed a lunatic.

"So, are you suggesting that we find your friend first, rescue him from the Death Prison, and then have him handle the registration system?"

Lin Youyou looked skeptical, "But why do I feel like the former is more difficult? Rescuing someone from the Death Prison? Has anyone ever succeeded?"

"District F is dangerous; it's hard to get there," Su Cha also questioned.

"At least District F has no admission restrictions." Zhuang Qingyan remained unfazed and even in the mood for a joke.

Song Ke was concerned about another issue, "Are you sure he's willing to help us?"

"That's easy. Once we find him, I'll handle it," Zhuang Qingyan promised.

"But that's the Death Prison, not a marketplace..."



“I said, brother, you are also quite crazy, aren’t you?”

“It’s impossible from the get-go...”

“Sister, what’s the Death Prison?”

Everyone discussed in a clamor, unable to convince one another.

“Stop!” Song Ke took a deep breath and shouted loudly, “One at a time.”

She paused, her gaze gradually becoming determined: “Rescuing people, I’ll handle it.”

“Snooping around, I’ll handle it,” Su Cha said, turning the dagger in his hand, his tone devoid of fluctuation.

Lin Youyou opened her terminal, “I can arrange transportation to F180 District.”

The division of labor was immediately clear.

Xu Xing looked left and then right, realizing he couldn’t help with anything.

Oh no, he had really become the kind that Zhuang Qingyan described, only capable of shouting ‘666’.

Xu Xing pouted in frustration and in the next moment, his eyes lit up, thinking of his value, “I have money, I’ll handle the spending!”

Fang Zhixu looked at the person in front of him, his palm clenched and then relaxed.

He knew that ultimately, the decisions they made were for him. These people sought his help, and came for his ability, but what did it matter? As long as he could seek revenge, he was willing to give everything.

“So, let’s give it a try.”

After sleeping for so long, it was time to open his eyes.

“We can’t stay in Ferrara, let’s go back to Tongwan for a few days to rest and discuss the specific plan,” Zhuang Qingyan concluded.

In the first collective meeting of the new V587 team, several parties preliminarily reached a consensus and achieved a successful conclusion.

\*\*TN

“666” (in games or chat) is used to describe someone or something that is very powerful, cool, and impressive.

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 66.2: Tongwan Hospital (20)

Let’s go to Sin City! (Ferrara + Tongwan Arc End)

Tongwan Outpost.

A private steamboat was opened by the guard, and it underwent immigration inspection.

Song Ke got off the boat, connected with the terminal and the guards, and her ability information was displayed on the screen.

“I’m sorry, ma’am, the commission you accepted has expired, and the access permission is no longer valid.”

The ‘medical support’ was originally just a part-time job, so Song Ke might spend one day as a volunteer and another day outside, and she even went to do extra work to rescue Tao Tao. Half a month later, the form of completing this B-level commission changed to a ‘full-time’ one, requiring a 24-hour standby on duty.

“Recently, the pressure of zombie transformation has been too great, and manpower is insufficient. The magistrate has issued a new policy,” explained the young guard, “If you don’t have access permission, you cannot enter.”

Zhuang Qingyan showed half of his face and glanced at him, saying, “You’re new, aren’t you?”

“How did you know?” the young man was surprised. He had just joined the guard less than a week ago and was still doing the most basic outpost checks. He wondered if he had missed something and it was noticed.

Song Ke knew why. When Zhuang Qingyan was in Tongwan, he spent every day in the archives flipping through information and already knew all about Tongwan’s awakeners.

Zhuang Qingyan nodded slightly towards him and said calmly, “Last month, we helped Captain Zhao resist the invasion of the zombies. Brother, we are all law-abiding citizens, not criminals. Can you make an exception and let us in?”

“Well... I can’t make the decision,” the young man scratched his head. He had heard the seniors talk about the shelter, but he wasn’t sure if these were the people. If they deceived him and he let them in, he would face consequences.

While the group was in a stalemate at the city gate, Zhao Liqiang happened to pass by with a middle-aged man.

Song Ke saw this and immediately shouted, “Captain Zhao!”

Zhao Liqiang noticed them and whispered to the person next to him. The group of people walked towards them.

The leading middle-aged man had a steady temperament, determined eyes, and was dressed in the popular Tang suit from the old times. A faint herbal fragrance emanated from him.

The young guard, upon seeing the man, stood at attention and saluted, with an excited voice, "Good day, Lord Magistrate!"

So this was the magistrate of Tongwan, Song Ke thought to herself, the person who single-handedly organized the defense of the city and guarded the medical and pharmaceutical hub.

Zhao Liqiang introduced respectfully, "Dr. Chen, they are the V587 who helped us in Lujia Shelter, as I mentioned."

Chen Zuyi, Tongwan's highest governing officer and a doctor specializing in ancient medical practices, nodded at the group, "On behalf of Tongwan, I would like to thank you."

The first encounter with such a courteous magistrate made Song Ke a little embarrassed, waving her hands repeatedly, "No need, no need to thank us."

"What happened? Why are you blocked at the entrance?" Zhao Liqiang asked.

The young guard explained to Zhao Liqiang that Song Ke and her group did not have entry permits.

"Dr. Chen, they want to stay in Tongwan for a few days, what do you think..." Zhao Liqiang inquired softly.

A hint of surprise flashed in Chen Zuyi's eyes, "You don't plan to stay in Tongwan?"

"Yes, just a temporary stopover. We plan to go elsewhere afterwards," Zhuang Qingyan replied politely.

Chen Zuyi sighed regretfully. He himself was just an ordinary person and would usually pay special attention to and recruit high-level awakeners. A powerful team like V587, if they could join the guard, Tongwan's security would be more fully ensured.

However, he also knew the principle of not forcing things; building good relationships for future encounters is better than having more enemies.

“Tongwan won't turn away friends who have done us a favor. Let them in, consider it my special approval,” Chen Zuyi said with a smile, “But the necessary checks still need to be done, to confirm no zombie transformation and no threat.”

“Of course,” Zhuang Qingyan said with a smile.

Chen Zuyi looked at the group one last time and said solemnly, “Tongwan will always keep its doors open for you.”

After they entered, Lin Youyou couldn't help but comment, “This magistrate seems nice.”

Song Ke was more mature now, knowing that judging people based solely on appearances is not wise. She turned to Zhuang Qingyan, “What do you think?”

Zhuang Qingyan pondered, “Chen Zuyi is very tactful and wise. As an ordinary person, he thinks things through very thoroughly.

“Every nest has its eggs. Chen Zuyi's life is tied to this city. Guarding Tongwan is also protecting himself. In this sense, he is indeed a competent magistrate.”

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The next day, Song Ke went to the 119 Hospital.

She came to see An Qiwen and Wang Qiang, the only two remaining members of Azure Phoenix 11th Squad.

When they first met, Song Ke almost didn't recognize the two. Wang Qiang used to be a tall, silly guy who loved to laugh and joke around with Ouyang Pei, but now his entire right leg was made of bionic material. He hadn't completely adapted yet, and there was a strange awkwardness in his movements.

As for An Qiwen... he had become drastically thinner. The once confident and carefree soldier who used to hold a cigarette and confidently blast open the side door of U-Lab was gone. He had become much more subdued, and from a distance, he looked like another Wu Juemin.

Song Ke stopped in front of him, pondering how to start the conversation.

"If you want to inform me about Maeda and the captain, I already know," An Qiwen anticipated what she was about to say.

"We have an inter-communicative life detection frequency within our group. A few days ago, everyone's signals disappeared," Wang Qiang lowered his head, trembling all over, his mechanical leg creaking. They say real men don't shed tears easily, but he couldn't control the dampness in his eyes.

"That day, I was at the scene," Song Ke said slowly.

An Qiwen suddenly looked up at her, his gaze incredibly focused, "So you know what happened, right?"

Song Ke nodded and told An Qiwen and Wang Qiang everything about Manzoni Street.

"Bloody Hunter..." An Qiwen repeated each word slowly, clenching his fists tightly, his eyes cold.

"Afterward, wh-what do you plan to do?" Song Ke asked.

“I’ll return to North County (B6 District). The mission failed, and all members of the Azure Phoenix 11th Squad, except An Qiwen and I, lost their lives. I have a responsibility to report everything to General Xie,” An Qiwen said solemnly.

Song Ke took out the seven shoulder patches from her pocket and handed them back to An Qiwen, “Take them, and go together.”

“Thank you,” An Qiwen carefully put them away, “We’re leaving. If there’s a chance, we’ll see you in North County.”

...

Song Ke leaned against the corridor, watching An Qiwen and Wang Qiang leave the hospital.

“Song Ke, how come you’re here?” Lu Ning had just finished a surgery, rubbing her tired forehead. She came out to catch a breath and unexpectedly saw her. “I thought you weren’t volunteering anymore.”

“I’m not. I’m... going on a trip.”

“A trip? I heard it’s chaotic outside. Take care of yourself.”

“Yeah, thank you, Dr. Lu.”

The two of them stood quietly, feeling the breeze. Doctors in white robes hurriedly passed by the corridor behind them. In a place like a hospital, the busiest people were always the doctors—surgery after surgery, sometimes working for over ten hours straight, yet getting only a few minutes of rest.

Lu Ning noticed her gaze and sighed softly, “Recently, the number of patients turning into zombies is increasing. The medical pressure is one thing, but I’m worried that the patients and their families can’t handle it mentally, and it might cause trouble.”

Song Ke: “Dr. Lu, may I ask you a question?”

Lu Ning: "Of course."

"In your eyes, what kind of person is Fang Zhixu?"

Fang Zhixu wanted to disappear from the medical community in Tongwan, and Song Ke respected his wishes, not revealing his whereabouts casually. But since he wouldn't say anything, she had to indirectly understand his situation from others.

"Brother Fang..."

Lu Ning's character was truly bold, and after some thought, she suddenly dropped a bombshell: "Actually, I had a crush on him for a while."

Song Ke's eyes widened instantly.

"Don't get me wrong, he got married a long time ago, and I gave up when I found out. Besides, I'm married now too."

Song Ke's expression was overly exaggerated, making Lu Ning somewhat nervous, hastily waving her hands to explain.

"Although I don't know much about his personal life, one thing I'm sure of is that he's a good doctor, a very good one."

"Tongwan holds free medical consultations every year, helping those children with basic illnesses who can't afford surgery. Brother Fang always goes there, but it's secretly and anonymously... I discovered it by chance one time, nobody in the hospital knows about it.

"Despite his great reputation, he goes to these consultations without seeking anything in return. He must genuinely want to help those children.



“As a doctor, he has a compassionate heart and is genuinely gentle with patients,” Lu Ning said with a faint smile.

The Fang Zhixu mentioned by Lu Ning was exceptionally talented and had a proud disposition, yet his heart was extremely soft. He had nothing in common with the current guy who hung out with them every day, the weathered uncle with a beard, messy hair, and an indifference to everything except sleep.

What kind of blow did Fang Zhixu endure to undergo such a drastic change?

Mu City, C55 District—Song Ke silently repeated this place name in her heart. She would definitely go there.

Tun Qin came from Mu City. Song Ke hadn’t found his body in the martial arts hall, indicating that he most likely returned to the C55 District ahead of time. If she could meet him there, she really wanted to ask what had happened in the martial arts hall during those last few days.

...

Two days later, Lin Youyou got in touch with a private transportation convoy, paid a toll, and arranged for them to travel to F180 District.

On the first day of the new calendar year in the 47th year of the new era, four months after the apocalypse, on an ordinary sunny day, a relatively unknown group of awakeners, “V587,” set off on their journey to Sin City.

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 67: Sin City (1)

Black on Black

A high-chassis six-wheel off-road vehicle raced through the desert.

After leaving Tongwan, V587 traveled a distance with a private transport convoy. They were dropped off on a stretch of road hundreds of kilometers away from the F180 District.

The convoy leader knew he wasn't being fair, having taken the money without completing the task. He explained with an embarrassed expression, "I can only take you this far. It's not that I'm being difficult, but I fear going any further might be a one-way trip. You'll have to go the rest of the way on your own."

Song Ke and the others had no choice but to change to a different mode of transportation. From District C to District F, the level of technology plummeted, and they couldn't find any autonomous vehicles along the way. In the end, they had to opt for primitive gasoline cars, with Su Cha taking the wheel.

In the daytime desert, the sunlight was particularly harsh. The group wore protective goggles and progressed smoothly following the navigation prompts.

"Have any of you b-been to the F180 District before?" Song Ke asked.

"No," everyone replied.

Song Ke looked at Zhuang Qingyan, who also shook his head.

This was a completely unfamiliar city to them. It made sense; why would ordinary people, living their lives well, come to District F?

The navigation indicated that they were approaching the western border of the Alliance, entering the destination area. Song Ke pulled off her goggles, put them back on, and climbed through the sunroof. She leaned out of the car, facing the scorching wind and sand blowing on her face. As far as the eye could see, it was a desolate desert with no traces of a city.

She couldn't help but be surprised. Was this it? The Sin City?

The group circled the desert for countless rounds. The location on the navigation seemed within reach, but they couldn't get there. There were no city gates nearby, no watchtowers, and no human figures.

The only distinctive features were several towering, oddly shaped quadrangular pyramids, somewhat resembling the pyramids of ancient times, standing in the open desert, reflecting a silver-white luster on their surfaces.

Song Ke and the five others got out of the car and walked toward these pyramids. Upon approaching, they found tightly closed gates. They tried various methods, pulling, tugging, and prying. Su Cha tried using poison, Xu Xing used ice, and Song Ke attempted transformation (but gave up due to rapid mental exhaustion). None of them could break the access control. The surface of the pyramids was made of a material that exhibited extremely strong resistance to supernatural attacks.

Wheelchairs were impractical in the desert, so Zhuang Qingyan switched to crutches. He walked slowly around the pyramids, observing the structure of the gates with lowered eyes.

His gaze lingered for a few seconds on the overhead monitor, the closed gates, and the adjacent groove. He spoke, "It seems like this is the gateway to Sin City."

"But we can't open it," Song Ke said.

"Don't worry. If it's a gateway, there must be a 'key.' Let's look for it again."

Su Cha drove and circled the area for nearly half an hour until they saw a few blurry figures by the side of the road through the rolling dust.

Through the rolling dust, those people heard the sound of the engine and ran to the middle of the road, waving to them from a distance.

"There are people," Song Ke reminded.

The off-road vehicle slowly decelerated and came to a stop.

A girl with colorful braids and brown skin approached the driver's seat and knocked on the car window.

Mia waited by the roadside for almost three hours. Apart from two desiccated zombies passing by, she didn't see any other living people.

Finally, just before the sun set, she spotted an off-road vehicle. Mia knocked on the car window.

The glass slid down slowly, opening a narrow gap. In the front seats, on the left and right, sat two young men.

Mia smiled and said, "Friends, our car broke down. Could you tow us for a short distance? It's not far ahead."

As she spoke, she pointed to the pickup parked by the road, its hood open, with a man tinkering there.

"Are you also heading to the F180 District? We're going the same way. Please help us. I've been waiting all afternoon, and you're the only ones passing by."

Mia folded her hands together, her tone very sincere. "The desert is terrifying at night. I really don't want to stay outside."

The two men exchanged a glance but before they could speak, the back door was suddenly yanked with force.

"Bang – Thud!" The person outside was rough, not expecting the car to be locked from the inside. He couldn't open it in one go.

"Amu, don't be rude. It's very impolite!" Mia scolded loudly, then turned back to the two men with an apologetic smile. "I'm sorry. We've been waiting for a long time, and my friend was worried you wouldn't take us, so he's a bit anxious."

A seventeen or eighteen-year-old girl leaned over from the back, speaking to the man in the front passenger seat. After the man listened to her, his gaze stayed on Mia for a moment and then nodded gently.

Three people.

Mia made a mental note of that.

“Alright,” said the handsome man sitting in the front passenger seat.

“That’s great. Thank you. I’ll ask Amu to hook up the towing rope, and I’ll sit in your car to guide you.”

Finally, the car door opened, and Mia eagerly climbed in. It was then that she noticed, besides the young girl, there were three more people in the back row – a middle-aged man dozing off with half-closed eyes, a child with a clean face and clothes, and a brightly dressed woman wearing sunglasses.

She blinked, smiling warmly, and greeted them, “Are you a family of four traveling together?”

The dad, the elder daughter, the young son, and this must be the stepmom, right?

“Pff~” the girl in the front couldn’t help but let out a light laugh.

Mia looked at her in confusion. “Did I say something wrong?”

The girl shook her head, her lively expression somewhat mischievous. “They are a family of three. I’m not.”

“Hey!” The glamorous woman took off her sunglasses, glared at the girl, and moved her lips, but in the end, she didn’t say anything.

Mia muttered to herself, thinking the stepmom’s temper wasn’t great at all.

She turned to the little boy, trying to strike up a conversation, “Little brother, where are you guys from?”

The bratty kid gave a disdainful hum, completely ignoring her.

Mia's forehead veins throbbed. Damn brat.

The two cars, one in front and one behind, drove for about ten minutes in the desert and reached a desolate and rudimentary campsite.

Apart from a few tents and makeshift structures, there was nothing else.

"We're here. Do you want to get out and rest for a while?" Mia offered an invitation.

"No need," the man in the driver's seat coldly refused.

Mia held the handle of the car and said meaningfully: "I suggest you take a break here. The upcoming journey will be quite challenging. As a gesture of gratitude, I can give you some... gifts."

The people in the car fell silent.

After a while, the man in the driver's seat and the girl got out of the car, following Mia towards the campsite.

Mia led the way, glancing back a few times midway. The footsteps of these two were too light, like ghosts, always making her think they hadn't followed.

At the camp entrance, Mia sighed with regret, "You know, you could have gone somewhere else for a trip. Why pick Sin City? Could it be that you believed those rumors outside and thought there are fewer zombies here?"

"Is it not okay?" the girl asked in confusion.

“It’s okay, of course it’s okay. I should thank you for coming.” Mia beamed and turned towards the direction of the tents, shouting, “Azha, it’s time to slaughter the sheep!”

As she finished speaking, a sandstorm suddenly erupted in the camp!

The solid ground disintegrated abruptly, and over a dozen people burst out from beneath the yellow sand, surrounding the off-road vehicle parked in the distance.

On the side of the man and the girl, another group of people emerged from behind the tents. Glinting knives were placed at their necks. A muscular man named “Azha” had his body covered in swirling yellow sand, his eyes fixed greedily on them, licking his lips.

These ambushers were all awakeners.

“Are you... robbers?” the girl asked bewildered.

Mia laughed heartily, “You’re mistaken. Robbers want money; we don’t. We want your lives. After all, you lost sheep willingly walked into our trap.”

She flickered flames at her fingertips, her expression gradually turning fierce, “You’re surrounded. Give up resistance, and I might consider giving you a quick death.”

Without further ado, she transformed the condensed flames into sharp blades and thrust them straight towards their necks.

The girl swiftly moved, and somehow, Mia didn’t touch even a strand of her clothes.

She chuckled, revealing two faint dimples on her cheeks, and imitated Mia’s words, “You, are, surrounded.”

Mia snickered. Was this person daft? Just the two of them, and they thought they could surround over twenty of us?

A beautifully curved crescent moon blade appeared out of thin air. The girl held it in her main hand, lifting it up in a move that severed the knife at her neck. Following swiftly, she struck again. In the wind and sand that surged up, there was a flash of dark light, Mia's eyes widened, her colorful braids were chopped off, falling all over the ground.

Mia rolled in a sorry state, and the tall man also made his move, weaving through them like a ghost. Soon, two companions fell.

“Kill the people in the car first!” Mia shouted loudly into the distance.

Soft persimmons had to be picked first. First, eliminate the four useless people, young and old, inside the car, and then turn their focus to deal with these two troublesome ones.

Amu and Azha immediately charged towards the off-road vehicle. In an instant, the number of people attacking the vehicle reached twenty.

“All the greedy rivers~ Drying up in the fragrant desert~”

The sandy ground under their feet suddenly started to flow, sinking like a swamp. They were trapped and unable to move. At this moment, a furry head popped out of the sunroof of the off-road vehicle. The haughty little brat clung to the roof with both hands and jumped up on tiptoe. Around him, numerous ice blades swiftly flew out, piercing the people trapped in the sand, turning them into hedgehogs.

Mia cursed under her breath, “Damn it!”

She had misunderstood. What stepmom and brat, what family going on a trip—these people weren't fat sheep; they were more like butchers!

They were the fat sheep!

“Act quickly and retreat!” Mia shouted in a panic, then turned and ran.



A cold mental force pursued her like a shadow. Mia didn't have time to struggle. Her figure paused and fell to the ground.

The last thought that flashed in her mind was—sloppy, these people did it on purpose, and we fell into their trap... a trap within a trap.

Time rewound half an hour ago.

“People,” Song Ke alerted.

The others focused and saw several blurry figures ahead.

Lin Youyou frowned slightly, “Blocking the road in the middle, they're deliberately not letting us pass.”

Su Cha: “Hostile approach.”

Zhuang Qingyan's mouth curled into a cold smile, “It's getting dark soon, appearing at this time is deliberately exploiting the vulnerability of newcomers. It seems we've been treated as fat sheep.”

“Who p-preys on whom is yet to be seen,” Song Ke muttered.

“Since we can't find the entrance for now, why not try targeting them?” Zhuang Qingyan smiled.

“Agreed, fat sheep should act like fat sheep and offer th-themselves,” Song Ke's eyes brightened.

Mia thought she had encountered lost lambs, but little did she know, this was clearly a group of cunning and sly wolves.

...

Song Ke and Su Cha took a few minutes to clear the area.

They hadn't found a way to enter the F180 District yet, and they were already encountering robbers. Could this be said to live up to the name of Sin City?

"Hey, what's this?" Song Ke flipped out an object resembling a sign from Mia, which had many gray bars, three of which Mia had already marked in red.

She fiddled with it for a while, unable to figure it out, and casually threw it to Zhuang Qingyan.

The last trace of the setting sun disappeared below the horizon, and it was now dark.

In the dark desert, something was stirring, and danger lurked everywhere.

Zhuang Qingyan rubbed the sign he had taken from Mia, his eyes lowered in thought. "Let's go back to the pyramid we were at earlier. I have some new ideas."

The group drove back to the vicinity of the pyramid.

"I've always wondered, what permissions do we need to have for the passage here to open for us?"

"Have you heard of the Seven Deadly Sins? Pride, envy, wrath, sloth, greed, gluttony, and lust, as well as the resulting killings. Why is the F180 District called Sin City? Perhaps... it's because only those guilty are accepted here."

The monitor above identified the smell of blood on Song Ke and Su Cha, prompting a new response.

"Please show introducer information."

A line of text suddenly appeared on the facade.

Zhuang Qingyan raised his hand and placed Mia's sign in the depression.

The tightly closed door slowly opened, revealing a spacious space resembling an elevator in front of Song Ke.

The six of them stepped in, and the elevator started, descending rapidly.

“Ding—” a crisp and pleasant reminder sounded.

“Welcome to Sin City.”

The tightly closed elevator doors opened again, and Song Ke, Lin Youyou, and Xu Xing couldn't believe their eyes.

A bizarre underground world presented itself before them.

“Tonight at 11 o'clock, Ross Casino's grand opening, free drinks for all!”

“New biomimetic materials, take a look, medical technology from Tongwan.”

“Auction of zombies and fierce beasts!”

“We buy crystal stones of all qualities.”

Just a few meters from the entrance, two pedestrians erupted into conflict. Supernatural abilities clashed on the street, and the loser was blasted into pieces, while the winner laughed heartily and walked away.

Chaos, violence, rampant crime, contempt for life...

This was the real Sin City.

\*\*TN

Black on Black – (of a villain) to do the dirty on another villain

Soft persimmon – weakling

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 68: Sin City (2)

Who shares a room with whom?

Beneath the desolate desert lay a bustling underground city.

Here, there was no sun. Artificial lighting simulated natural light sources. Giant electronic screens were installed overhead, replacing the presence of the sky. There were no seasonal winds, no various circulations, and no natural ecosystems. Insect chirps and bird calls, as well as cats and dogs, were all artificially maintained. The overall style was rough and bold, resembling an eternal urban night.

After exiting the elevator, they were greeted by a long trading street. The crowd surged, and the shouts from earlier echoed from both sides.

Apart from the entrance they came through, there were many elevators in all directions.

“Ding—”

The sound of the elevator arriving rang out. People continued to come and go, making Song Ke and her group appear even more ordinary. Passersby gave them a cursory glance and did not pay much attention to them.

In this unfamiliar city, amidst the noisy environment and indifferent residents, Song Ke felt a moment of difficulty fitting in.

Zhuang Qingyan suggested, "Let's wander around nearby, see if we can gather any information and find a temporary place to stay."

The six of them roamed aimlessly on the streets.

A young man wearing a duckbill cap rushed towards them. He was looking down, in a hurry to move forward, and didn't notice, colliding into Su Cha's firm chest.

"Sorry." The man took two steps back, mumbled an apology, and then sidestepped past them.

The man brushed past Lin Youyou, a smirk slowly forming at the corner of his mouth.

Before he could fully break into a smile, a slender hand suddenly gripped his forearm and twisted it harshly backward!

"Ah!!" The man's expression contorted as he screamed in pain—his arm was broken!

The dark-eyed girl stared at him expressionlessly, extending her hand toward him. "The item, give it back."

"Ah?" Lin Youyou suddenly realized and reached for her wrist—her terminal was gone!

While everyone's attention was on Su Cha, who had been collided into, they hadn't noticed that this man was a skilled pickpocket. He had stealthily taken advantage of the moment their attention shifted and targeted her.

Song Ke applied a bit of pressure, making the pickpocket's wails even more miserable. "Stop, stop! I'll give it back to you!"

He reluctantly pulled out the rose gold ladies' wristwatch. Song Ke took it and coldly said, "Scram."

The pickpocket clutched his broken arm and fled in embarrassment.

"Be more careful; this place is different from other cities," Zhuang Qingyan reminded.

After this incident, all six of them became extremely vigilant.

Song Ke's group continued forward. They hadn't gone far when someone called out to them from the side of the street, "Hey, you guys!"

Song Ke turned around, and a woman with a sharp gaze, half-shaved hair and half dyed purple hair, was looking at them with interest. "I've been observing you for a while. Are you interested in doing some business with me?"

Song Ke: "Business?"

The woman said, "Any kind of business works, as long as there's money. I'm Cheng Yi, a crystal procurer on this street, also selling various information. You're newcomers, and being clueless won't do. How about buying some information from me?"

"How do you know we're new here?" Zhuang Qingyan asked casually.

Cheng Yi pursed her lips and gestured to the place they had just passed. "That pickpocket you dealt with earlier has some notoriety in this area. You subdued him effortlessly, and your faces are still unfamiliar. It's easy to tell."

Song Ke was cautious now, staring at her with a skeptical gaze. "Why should we trust you?"

What if Cheng Yi was just like Mia, with ulterior motives, wanting to take advantage of them?

Cheng Yi smiled confidently. "You're quite cautious, but no need to worry. You can ask around the trading street. I've always been honest in my dealings, never deceiving anyone. Money and goods are exchanged, and that's it!"

Song Ke remained skeptical, turning to her companions for their opinion.

Zhuang Qingyan leaned back in his wheelchair and lazily said, "You've already identified us as newcomers. How can newcomers judge if what you're saying is true or not? Moreover, to do business, this level of sincerity isn't enough."

Cheng Yi looked at the man in front of her. He appeared calm and composed, clearly a skilled negotiator.

If they didn't gain some insight beforehand, this deal might fall through today.

"Alright, how about this? I'll give you a few pieces of information for newcomers for free. You can listen and then decide whether or not to do business with me."

"You may proceed."

"Cough cough, next is a quick guide to integrating into Sin City. If you want to make money quickly, go to the casino or underground boxing matches. If you want to drink and have fun and hear gossip, go to Misty Summer Club. It's one of the safer chain bars in the city with fewer shady activities.

When staying in a hotel, avoid those with room numbers containing 'Red Willow' in the name. They are shady businesses that exploit out-of-towners, unless you want to wake up in the middle of the night with your head chopped off. Also..." Cheng Yi pointed at Xu Xing, Lin Youyou, and Song Ke in turn, "Kids and girls, remember not to go out alone. There are many human traffickers here."

Cheng Yi, a savvy merchant operating in District F, proved quite shrewd, honing in on the most pressing needs of Song Ke and her group.

At least these pieces of information were very useful to them.

“H-how do we make the trade?” Song Ke decided to trust her for the time being and asked, “And how much does it cost?”

“Not money,” Cheng Yi shook her head and casually knocked on the sign in front of her. “Money depreciates the fastest. Currently, the only accepted hard currency in Sin City is crystals.”

“With your skills, you must have a lot of good items, right?” Cheng Yi greedily rubbed her hands together, practically drooling.

Well, it turned out she had her eye on the crystals in their pockets from early on.

V587 had indeed accumulated quite a few crystals some time ago, such as the commissions Xu Xing took during special training, the zombie wave in Luo Jia, and the upheaval in Ferrara. Altogether, they had over a dozen.

Song Ke took out a Level 1 crystal from her space, and Cheng Yi reached out to grab it, but she pulled it back just in time.

“We need to ask some questions first,” Song Ke insisted.

“Ask away, I’ll answer everything,” Cheng Yi’s eyes were glued to the crystal, urging them repeatedly.

Zhuang Qingyan took out Mia’s badge. “What is this?”

Cheng Yi glanced at it briefly, then moved her gaze away, not very interested. “That’s a Crime Record, a special monitoring device for released convicts. The horizontal bars marked on it represent the owner’s criminal index. If it exceeds five bars, they will be arrested again.”



“But this is just a piece of metal. How does it monitor crimes?” Xu Xing asked, puzzled, holding Song Ke’s hand.

Cheng Yi shrugged. “The Crime Record is a technology brought from District B. Nobody knows the specific principle, but in any case, it has never made a mistake.”

“When we entered, what was the introducer mentioned at the entrance?” Zhuang Qingyan asked again.

“For newcomers entering Sin City for the first time, they need an introducer’s guidance to activate the elevator,” Cheng Yi explained.

As Cheng Yi spoke, she seemed to have a realization. These people could produce a Crime Record but didn’t know what it was. Did they eliminate their introducer directly?

“You guys are quite ruthless,” she exclaimed dramatically.

“Just survival of the fittest,” Zhuang Qingyan chuckled.

It was the style of Sin City, and Cheng Yi suddenly understood. She restrained her expression and extended her hand to Song Ke, saying, “Have you asked enough? It’s time to pay.”

Following the trading regulations, Song Ke placed the crystal in her palm.

Cheng Yi received the crystal and treasured it immensely, exhaling in appreciation. She took out a magnifying glass from her pocket, pinched the edge and carefully observed while complimenting, “Not bad, the quality is good.”

After saying that, she bit into it, confirming its hardness.

Song Ke and the others felt a chill. Oh no, that was dug out from a zombie's head!

"We still want to ask about..."

"Wait," Cheng Yi raised her hand to stop them, her expression serious and solemn. "This counts as the second question, one crystal per question."

"You profiteer!" Xu Xing scolded.

Cheng Yi immediately retorted, "Nonsense, what profiteer! I told you in advance, this is called clear pricing."

Song Ke endured the pain and pulled out another crystal.

"Regarding Death Prison, how much information do you have?"

"Death Prison?" Cheng Yi casually laughed, "Well, just keep going along this road without turning, after about five kilometers, you'll see an underground sea, and that's Death Prison."

That simple? Song Ke was surprised. For a prison of this level, its location was widely known without any confidentiality measures?

"So, how do we get in?"

"Hahaha!" Cheng Yi burst into laughter, holding her stomach. "You guys are really newcomers, huh? Hahaha!"

"Why are you laughing?" Song Ke didn't understand. Was the question she asked really that foolish?

Wiping away the tears of laughter, Cheng Yi said, "Come on, this is Sin City. Who hasn't been to Death Prison a few times?"

“Don’t believe it? Just take a good look. Almost ninety-nine percent of the people coming and going on this trading street are released convicts!”

Indeed, with a glance, the surrounding pedestrians all wore bright red badges, with one, two, and even four bars.

Cheng Yi unceremoniously took the second crystal and admired it under the artificial light.

“It’s getting late. Although the underground city is perpetual night, I still recommend you rest early and not wander around.”

“In the future, if you have business, remember to come to me~”

...

After leaving the trading street, the six of them walked for another half hour. The hotels without the name containing ‘Red Willow’ were scarce. After a considerable effort, they managed to find one that was still open, though it appeared somewhat rundown. The second-floor walls had a large charred patch, and ashes were falling from it.

“Hello, checking in,” Song Ke said.

The receptionist glanced up and scanned them, saying, “Only three rooms left, want them?”

“How come there are only three? Aren’t the rooms behind you also available?” Lin Youyou pointed to the display screen behind the receptionist.

The receptionist sighed, “There was a fight on the second floor last night, and the whole floor got burnt. It’s under renovation now, so no one can stay.”

“Anyway, there are only three left. It’s up to you if you want to stay.”

Song Ke: “...stay.”

They had been searching for quite a while, and they might not find anything better if they continued. They decided to settle for a night.

“Here are the key cards.” After paying for the rooms, the receptionist efficiently opened the rooms, fearing they might change their minds.

Now, the question was, with three rooms and six people, how to allocate them?

Holding three key cards, Song Ke looked somewhat conflicted.

Xu Xing, the clever one, immediately hugged Song Ke’s thigh and pouted, “I want to stay with Sister~”

Song Ke looked at the others.

It turned out that Fang Zhixu was the most indifferent. As long as he had a bed, or even an empty space on the floor, it didn’t matter to him. With his vagabond style, he didn’t care who he shared the room with or where he slept. He could fall asleep instantly anywhere.

For the remaining people...

Song Ke handed one of the key cards to Lin Youyou, saying, “You and Su Cha can stay together.”

In this way, Zhuang Qingyan and Fang Zhixu would be together. That settled it.

Song Ke felt quite pleased with herself. She was indeed an astute captain.

However, the result was unexpected. Su Cha spoke softly, "Not convenient."

Lin Youyou glanced at the key card in her hand but didn't say anything.

Huh? Song Ke was stunned, looking back and forth between Lin Youyou and Su Cha.

Whenever they met, the two would act together. She had always thought they had that kind of relationship. Was she mistaken?

But if Su Cha didn't stay with Lin Youyou, how would they divide the remaining rooms? Tricky.

Song Ke looked conflicted, considering various combinations in her mind, always feeling like none was quite suitable.

Lin Youyou chimed in, "I have a suggestion."

She grabbed Xu Xing's hat and pulled him off Song Ke's leg, saying, "Why don't you stay with me? I am also a big sister."

Xu Xing flailed his arms and legs, his expression saying: What!!!

Lin Youyou smiled kindly, "Didn't Mia regard me as your stepmother? Don't worry, I can take care of children."

Xu Xing's eyes became teary, choking out, "Wuwu, bad woman!"

Lin Youyou ignored him and pointed at Su Cha and Fang Zhixu, "You two in one room."

Finally, she turned to Song Ke and Zhuang Qingyan, "You both can stay in the remaining room. There's no problem, right?"

Zhuang Qingyan said, "...” What did she mean by “no problem”?

His lips moved, about to speak.

Song Ke said, “Okay.”

Zhuang Qingyan, “???”

...

“Half an hour later, come to my room for a m-meeting,” Song Ke stood in the corridor, reminding the others.

Then she closed and locked the door. As she turned around, Zhuang Qingyan looked at her with a serious expression, “Song Ke, I think we need to have a serious talk.”

“About what?” Song Ke jumped into bed, stretched her limbs, and lazily yawned, showing no signs of self-awareness.

Zhuang Qingyan’s voice was hoarse, “I think your gender awareness is very unclear, and you don’t have a good understanding of boundaries with the opposite sex...”

For example, not knocking before entering his room, or sharing a room with him and sleeping soundly in front of him, and so on. The list was endless.

“You’re still a girl. This could be very dangerous if it continues.”

Song Ke hugged a pillow, lying on her back with a blank look, “Huh? I don’t understand. Can you s-speak in human language?”

Zhuang Qingyan took a deep breath, his wheelchair slid to the edge of the bed, and he lowered his head to lock eyes with her, who was lying upside down at the end of the bed.

“Do you not see me as a man? Or are you just overly confident in yourself?”

Even when turned upside down, Zhuang Qingyan’s face was still breathtakingly handsome. His features were clear and cold, his thin lips pressed tightly, and his deep black eyes seemed to want to pull people in.

Song Ke blinked slowly, then reached out and pushed Zhuang Qingyan’s face.

She rolled over, planning to sit up and speak. However, she sat up too abruptly, and the two of them, unprepared, bumped their foreheads together with a loud “thud,” and both fell backward.

Song Ke tumbled into the bed, while Zhuang Qingyan moved towards the back of the chair.

“Song...Ke...Ke,” Zhuang Qingyan gritted his teeth.

“I’m so so-sorry!” Song Ke frantically apologized, landing on all fours. Her knees rapidly moved forward, but she miscalculated and ended up stepping into thin air, causing her to fall off the bed with a “plop” and land between Zhuang Qingyan’s legs.

“...”

Silence spread.

Song Ke laughed awkwardly, her hand inadvertently resting on Zhuang Qingyan’s thigh.

She earnestly explained, “I know you won’t do anything, so sharing a room with you is not a problem.”

Zhuang Qingyan froze, suddenly saying in a deep voice, “Say it again.”

Huh? Song Ke was puzzled. She obediently repeated, "I know you won't do anything..."

Zhuang Qingyan looked at her, raising an eyebrow. "Song Ke, have you noticed that your stuttering has improved a lot lately?"

Song Ke was stunned.

She hadn't realized it herself, and it was only after Zhuang Qingyan pointed it out that she belatedly reacted.

Since the last time she was injured and unconscious on Manzoni Street, and woke up, she had indeed become more fluent in her speech. Though her pace of speaking was still slow, and there were occasional hesitations between sentences, her stuttering had noticeably improved.

But her stuttering was congenital; she had never managed to overcome it since childhood.

"How's the wound in your heart?" Zhuang Qingyan asked.

"It's much better," Song Ke replied.

It had been less than a week since she was injured, and Song Ke's strength had almost recovered to about fifty percent. The blood vessels and tissues in her body were self-healing at an incredibly fast pace.

"It should be due to your second ability..." Zhuang Qingyan mused.

Zhuang Qingyan fell into contemplation. What exactly was Song Ke's second ability? Self-healing? But why was her language ability subtly improving?

A dense fog of confusion.



Zhuang Qingyan gave a serious admonition, "Regarding your second ability, it's crucial to keep it secret. Keep a close eye on those two individuals."

"Understood," Song Ke nodded solemnly.

"..."

Another awkward and stifling silence.

"...So, can you release your hand now?" Zhuang Qingyan spoke expressionlessly.

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 69: Sin City (3)

Who to Send to Prison?

Half an hour later, it was time for the meeting.

Considering the chaos in Sin City, it's always wise to be more cautious.

Su Cha and others entered the room. Su Cha, with hands adorned with black fingerstalls, carefully inspected inch by inch along the door seams, walls, windows, and ceiling, confirming that there were no listening devices. He nodded to them.

As Lin Youyou entered the room, she casually asked, "What happened to both of you?"

Song Ke and Zhuang Qingyan had red marks on their foreheads, looking slightly swollen upon closer examination.

Song Ke concealed and said, "It's nothing, just... bumped into something."

Lin Youyou didn't think much of it initially, but since Song Ke seemed guilty, her gaze lingered on their foreheads for a few seconds, smiling meaningfully. "Oh, how coincidental, the bump is in the same place."

Song Ke cleared her throat. "Let's start the meeting."

The six individuals either sat or stood, finding their respective places. Song Ke was surprised to find that Fang Zhixu was also present.

It wasn't unusual for Fang Zhixu to be there. They never avoided him when having small meetings before, and he would usually sleep through them, impossible to wake up even with thunder. But his state was noticeably different today, with disheveled hair tied in a messy bun at the back of his head, and his gaze was unusually clear.

Song Ke recollected and realized that since they departed for F180 District, Fang Zhixu had significantly reduced his sleeping time. Although he remained as silent and unnoticeable as ever, that gloomy and world-weary face of his hadn't shown up for a long time.

Zhuang Qingyan organized the existing intelligence. "Clearly, Sin City is very different from what we initially thought. The existence of the Death Prison is not a secret, and ordinary people have a casual attitude towards it, speaking of it without hesitation."

They had initially thought that the Death Prison was a forbidden place for incarcerating serious offenders, expected to be remote, heavily guarded, and little known. Even if ordinary people knew about it, they would avoid discussing it. However, they underestimated the madness of this sinful place, where almost everyone had a criminal record.

"I just went around near the Underground Sea," Su Cha opened the terminal and projected the images and videos he had taken.

In half an hour, if he went all out, it would be enough for him to make a round trip to the Underground Sea.

A pitch-black ocean appeared on the screen, with a still and waveless surface. There were no guards around the edges, only the familiar tetrahedral structures towering above the sea surface.

“It’s difficult to dive in,” Su Cha frowned and said.

The Death Prison is located beneath the Underground Sea, with no place to land around it. The elevator on the sea’s surface is the only entrance, but like the desert, it requires specific permissions to activate. Even Su Cha felt it was difficult to infiltrate, and the others were equally helpless.

“No need to dive in,” Zhuang Qingyan said after a moment of thought, “there’s a simple way to enter the Death Prison.”

“What method?” Others looked at him one after another.

Zhuang Qingyan placed Mia’s badge on the table. “The way the people here enter is the same way we will.”

“You mean, commit a crime?” Song Ke realized.

“That’s right, cause a bit of trouble, get our people sent in, but not too serious. They can be released after a while.”

“The only way to catch tiger cubs is to go into the tiger’s den,” Zhuang Qingyan quoted an ancient saying.

It sounded absurd, but upon careful consideration, it made sense.

The oversight in the supervision of the Death Prison was unimaginable. Who would go to such lengths to get themselves imprisoned?

“But who do we send in?” Song Ke asked a crucial question.

At this point, they still didn’t know the specifics of the Death Prison. Sending everyone in was definitely inappropriate. The person chosen to enter the Death Prison would bear both hope and risk, requiring strong agility and responsiveness.

“I’ll go,” Su Cha said.

“I’ll go too!” Little Xu Xing, afraid of falling behind, raised his hand and shouted.

“...I can go too.” Surprisingly, Fang Zhixu volunteered.

“Or, I’ll go.” Song Ke stood up.

Zhuang Qingyan stopped her. “Your injury hasn’t fully healed. Take it easy.”

He then turned to Fang Zhixu. “Although you are A-level, your ability isn’t quite suitable.”

“Children should learn something good.” Xu Xing was directly excluded.

Finally, Zhuang Qingyan looked at Su Cha. “Among us, you are the best candidate.”

Su Cha, hailing from the rainforest, excelled in stealth, concealment, reconnaissance, and assassination. He had top-notch individual combat skills and was an A-level poison-type awakener. Going into the Death Prison, at least, his self-defense was assured, and the others didn’t need to worry too much about his safety.

He had always followed behind Lin Youyou, often overlooked, but in reality, Su Cha was a powerful awakener.

“The remaining task is to figure out how to get you in,” Zhuang Qingyan said.

Lin Youyou voiced her concern, "But we don't have any assurance about how long a crime would be incarcerated for."

F180 District was isolated from the outside world by yellow sands, with no internet connectivity within the area. In this dark and lawless underground city, there were no rules or regulations to follow; everything relied on their own exploration.

If it was just a minor offense and they were detained for a few days, that would be fine. However, if they were imprisoned for several months or even a year or more, their plans would be in jeopardy.

Determining the degree of offense for "committing a crime" was extremely difficult.

Song Ke recalled something, "The people at the city g-gate weren't arrested."

When they first arrived, they witnessed a street fight, with one side even committing murder, but the murderer was not apprehended.

"I have another question: How does the Death Prison apprehend people?" Lin Youyou asked.

When a criminal record reaches five bars, what does the Death Prison deploy to capture the criminals? Is it something like the awakener security squad in Tongwan, or the AI patrol robots in Ferrara?

In case the criminal is an awakener and is unwilling to surrender, can they ensure they'll be able to subdue the target?

Zhuang Qingyan tapped his fingers on the wheelchair, deep in thought. "What you all have said is correct, so before taking action, it's best to find a demonstration first."

As they were discussing, there was suddenly a commotion from upstairs.

They were on the third floor, and the noise was coming from the fourth floor, sounding like a fight.

Song Ke made a quick decision, "Let's go check it out."

In the stairwell of the fourth floor, a desperate-looking waiter covered his face and said, "Why is there another fight? Are we not allowed to do business?"

A burly man stood in the corridor, his arm suddenly swelling four or five times its size, turning into a massive chunk. It slammed down with a 'bang', shattering the door, and the person inside didn't even have time to cry out before meeting a sudden death.

The man momentarily lost control of his supernatural ability, smashing a hole through the hotel wall, allowing the cold wind to rush in.

"Four bars," Su Cha reminded in a low voice.

Song Ke and the others looked intently, and indeed, the man's badge on his arm had lit up with four bright red bars. And just at the moment when he killed the guest and smashed the hotel wall, the fifth bar slowly lit up.

With all five bars filled, the Criminal Record rebooted, and the person committing the crime would be sent back to the Death Prison.

"Lucky break," Zhuang Qingyan said, referring to the demonstration he mentioned.

Just as Song Ke was about to see the people coming to arrest him, something strange happened.

The man suddenly clutched his head with both hands, violently trembling all over, his upper body bending into a strange shape, writhing in agony.

After a few seconds, it was as if he was being choked, and his voice abruptly stopped. Then the man stood up stiffly, with a vacant look in his eyes, losing consciousness. He moved forward with rigid limbs, guided by the five glowing bars, passing by Song Ke and the others who were watching.

“What is this... Cotard’s Syndrome?” Fang Zhixu suddenly spoke up.

Zhuang Qingyan nodded slowly. “Exactly. The cause should be his Criminal Record.”

Lin Youyou asked in confusion, “What are you talking about? What’s Cotard’s Syndrome?”

Zhuang Qingyan gestured to the side. “Let Dr. Fang explain it to you.”

Fang Zhixu looked serious. “Cotard’s Syndrome, also known as the Walking Corpse Syndrome, is caused by pathological changes in the parietal and frontal lobes of the brain, with delusions of emptiness and negation as the main symptoms.”

“During an outbreak, a normal person will briefly enter a state of a walking corpse, believing that their organs have decayed, leaving only an empty shell of a body, with the whole world devoid of anything. This is accompanied by dullness of sensation, disintegration of personality, and other abnormal behaviors.”

The man faced the direction of the Death Prison, moving stiffly. He stepped into the nearest elevator, and he actually turned himself in this way!

There was no need to send someone to arrest him. All criminals triggering the effects of the five bars would voluntarily return to the Death Prison like a walking corpse.

“But how is this achieved?” Song Ke found it hard to understand.

“Criminal Record,” Zhuang Qingyan brought out Mia’s badge again. “I guess the particle currents embedded inside contain the triggering frequency range of Cotard’s Syndrome, which forcibly stimulates the brain. This shouldn’t be achievable with the technological level expected in District F; it seems the Alliance has put a lot of effort into constructing and maintaining the Death Prison.”

Lin Youyou frowned, “With such an electric current stimulating the brain, wouldn’t it lead to dementia?”

“In the long run, it’s possible,” Fang Zhixu said in a deep voice.

“But what about Su Cha...” she hesitated, looking at Su Cha.

“It’s fine, I don’t have a criminal record yet,” Su Cha replied.

For Sin City, they were still newcomers, and their past sins were defaulted to be cleared. Currently, they were as clean as a “blank sheet.” However, new problems had emerged. Since he was a first-time offender and didn’t have a Criminal Record monitoring, how could Su Cha voluntarily turn himself in to the Death Prison?

It was a headache.

“Let’s put the matter of the Criminal Record aside and focus on how to do something bad,” Zhuang Qingyan suggested.

The others all looked at Su Cha, after all, he was the one going to prison, and he was also the one to commit the “bad deed.”

“We’ll do our best to send you to jail?” Song Ke blinked, wearing a sincere expression.

Su Cha: “...”

...

At 2 o’clock in the afternoon, the temperature on the desert surface approached 70 degrees Celsius.

This was the hottest time of the day, and the scorching sun in the sky almost made people dizzy. The scorching hot quicksand could cook raw eggs.



A group of awakeners was hunting zombies in the oasis camp.

The zombies in the desert were noticeably different from those in the city, with slender bodies, dry skin, and visible cracks on the surface, but their movements were exceptionally agile, leaping and jumping like monkeys. The one they had their eyes on, conservatively estimated, was an evolved level-two zombie.

This group fought with the zombies for a full forty minutes, exhausted and with throats almost smoking, but they were close to succeeding.

Suddenly! Another group of people jumped out from the side.

“Robbery!” The leading girl held two crescent moon-shaped knives, rotating them crosswise, shouting aggressively.

Another elusive figure flashed from behind them, surrounded by a ghostly green poisonous mist, charging towards the barely breathing zombie.

“Swish!”

The blade flashed, and the zombie let out a miserable scream, falling slowly.

In the shattered head, a green crystal faintly sparkled. Before anyone could see clearly, it was instantly snatched by the man.

“Damn! Daring to steal my crystal, you’re tired of living! Watch me chop you all up!” After struggling hard for half a day, they were intercepted at the last moment. The awakeners were infuriated and wished they could smash the intruders’ heads.

“You coward, I hate that you’re such a coward~”

A sweet and soft singing voice rang in their ears, and this group of people felt their bones turn soft as if melting, and their mental strength was extinguished in succession, unable to lift their arms.

In the shadows, the poisonous mist man used his knives to cleanly topple the people at the scene and leisurely retreated with the crystal.

“You forgot to shout the slogan!” Behind the sand dune, a clear child’s voice sounded.

The knife-wielding girl also looked at the poisonous mist man and urged, “Hurry up, shout the slogan.”

The man frowned, his expression looking extremely strange, and there was a fleeting distortion at the corner of his mouth. In the end, he convinced himself and, with a blank expression, said to the stunned people on the ground, “V587, who’s the coolest of them all? Silent but cool, I’m called Su Cha, remember my name.”

After saying that, amidst the shocked gazes of the fallen people, the man hastily retreated like a sandstorm and disappeared without a trace.

The group of awakeners stood still for a long time, cursing in a daze, “Damn, where did this show-off come from?”

...

“Hahahaha!” Lin Youyou laughed heartily, tears welling up at the corners of her eyes, completely losing her image as the sweet girl she used to be. She wiped her tears while exclaiming, “Oh my goodness, who thought of this slogan? It’s too refreshing!”

Song Ke puffed up her cheeks in silence. “I... I thought of it.”

Wasn’t it quite good? Despite being just a few short sentences, it revealed their team name and the name of the suspect, Su Cha, making it clear who was the wrongdoer. If those people wanted to report a case, they could find the person.

Song Ke looked proudly at his companions, but they were all holding back laughter except for Su Cha. As for Su Cha... his face was as dark as a boiler.

Song Ke felt inexplicably guilty.

“Alright, stop laughing, everyone. Su Cha, do you have any adverse reactions?” Zhuang Qingyan said, telling everyone to stop laughing, but his own lips had a faint upward curve.

“No,” Su Cha shook his head.

Was robbing allowed? Or perhaps, it couldn't be done in the desert?

“Let's try it back in the underground city.”

The group took the elevator back underground, but there was still no abnormality.

“It seems the degree is not enough. Committing robbery in Sin City doesn't even qualify for a trial.”

“Let's discuss something,” Su Cha, usually reserved and quiet, spoke up for the first time, “I can cooperate with any experiments you want to try, but can we change the slogan?”

“Well... you'll have to ask the captain.”

Zhuang Qingyan's eyes curved, unreservedly passing the responsibility.

Song Ke felt deflated.

\*\*TN

The only way to catch tiger cubs is to go into the tiger's den (idiom); Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Metaphorically, you can't succeed without experiencing the danger

Doomsday Spiritual Artifact Master

Chapter 70: Sin City (4)

Sent in!

“Hey, did you hear?”

“Hear what?”

“Recently, there's this guy named Su Cha. Oh man, he's truly wicked, doing all sorts of evil deeds—deception, robbery, arson, murder. He even captured a child and ensl\*ved him. This guy is beyond bad. When he sees a dead body, he'd step on it a couple of times. Mia's and Gaida's, several teams have been wiped out by him!”

“Impossible, really? Can he take out so many people by himself?”

“Well, not exactly. He operates with a gang. What's their name again? My memory is terrible; I can't recall it right now.”

“It's called V587,” a voice nearby reminded him.

“Right, right, V587. They're quite imposing, shouting slogans every time after doing bad things, afraid that others won't remember them. Oh? Cheng Yi, do you also know about these people?”

Cheng Yi twirled her purple-highlighted hair with her finger but remained silent.

She thought, ‘Not only do I know, I know too well. They were looking to buy information from me yesterday, and I even know who their next target is.’

The two speaking individuals approached cautiously. "Do you have information on them? Share it with us."

Cheng Yi tapped her emblem and said, "Sure, do you have crystals for exchange?"

The person asking choked a bit, muttering softly, "Stingy, money's all you care about!"

Cheng Yi shrugged nonchalantly, "You guys have really exaggerated the rumors. 'Child slave'? They were together to begin with. And as for the arson and robbery, it was Gaida losing a level 2 crystal, and in frustration, spreading false information."

"We don't care if it's true or false. The more sensational, the better."

"By the way, Cheng Yi, why do I feel like you have a bias towards this V587?"

Cheng Yi affectionately touched her new crystal bracelet she had strung together in the past few days, with a mysterious smile, "Just wait and see, there's more drama to come."

\*

Desert Camp.

Song Ke wore a troubled expression, sighing, "Sigh~"

Xu Xing held his sunburnt face in his hands and sighed along, "Sigh~"

"Sigh..." Lin Youyou, infected by them, held her head and let out a long sigh too.

The atmosphere was gloomy and filled with despair.

It's no wonder they were so disheartened. In these past few days, V587 had gained some notoriety, unfortunately for the wrong reasons. They tried all sorts of methods – theft, robbery, intimidation... They did all sorts of bad things, but the effect? Zilch.

Su Cha was still hanging out with them just fine.

“Do you think those people have reported the incidents? How come there's not a peep?” Song Ke muttered to herself.

Every time they committed a crime, they practically wanted to announce their names through a loudspeaker. Could these victims please show some backbone and use the legal weapon to protect themselves? Oh, wait, in Sin City, there seemed to be no such thing as “law.”

Song Ke was getting sunstruck, her gaze unfocused, drifting into wild thoughts.

A bottle of cold water was pressed against her face, and Zhuang Qingyan kindly advised, “Have some water, snap out of it.”

The provider of the cold water was Xu Xing, the mobile fridge of V587.

In such scorching conditions, the existence of an ice-element awakener was truly a godsend. Xu Xing finally got his wish and became the team's mainstay. Now, everyone couldn't do without him.

“At present, ordinary crimes go unpunished,” Zhuang Qingyan summarized, “so, only one possibility remains.”

“What possibility?” Su Cha leaned against the wall, adjusting his fingerless gloves.

“Murder,” Zhuang Qingyan announced the word heavily.

“But the people at the elevator weren’t captured,” Song Ke expressed confusion.

“The two people at the elevator had a dispute that escalated into a life-and-death duel. In the ‘rules’ of Sin City, the winner doesn’t have to take responsibility for the other person’s death, so it doesn’t count as killing,” Zhuang Qingyan explained.

“What we need to do is to legitimately kill someone without a direct conflict.”

“The key is, who do we kill?” Lin Youyou asked.

Although criminals roamed the streets here, they weren’t indiscriminate killers. They couldn’t just randomly pick someone to massacre, right?

“Louis the Ripper,” Zhuang Qingyan said a name.

“From the intelligence provided by Cheng Yi in the last exchange, this person is active near the trading street. He has a fierce and cruel personality, takes pleasure in torturing the weak, specifically targeting children and single women. After killing the victims, he would mutilate their bodies, hence the nickname.”

Lin Youyou and Xu Xing listened with furrowed brows, their expressions filled with hatred and disgust.

“Such scum deserves nothing less than death.”

“Louis has a significant reputation in the underground, and he’s already at Level 4. If we eliminate him, the Death Prison will definitely detect it. If this isn’t enough to get Su Cha inside, then... we might have to consider alternative ideas.”

“Doesn’t this count as ridding the people of a menace?” Song Ke always felt something was off, “It feels like we’re doing a good deed.”

Zhuang Qingyan shook his head, "Remember, in Sin City, there's no goodness, no good people. Everything we do is to achieve our goals."

Song Ke was convinced, eager to get started, "Alright, let's go. We'll take him down tonight."

Lin Youyou chimed in, "Let's prepare to give Louis a nightmare."

"Let's go!" Xu Xing clenched his small fist, encouraging everyone.

"Yeah, but Louis is cautious in his actions. We need to discuss how to lure him out."

"I think there's a person best suited for this task," Zhuang Qingyan smiled faintly, and the corners of his peach-blossom eyes curved cunningly.

Xu Xing: Why does this sound so familiar?

\*

Late at night, in the alleys behind the trading street.

A young boy, dressed in a manner suggesting affluence and about ten years old, roamed the desolate path. Every two steps he took, his shoulders would tremble in fear, and there was a faint quiver in his voice: "Wuwu... sis, sis, where are you?"

A cold, eerie wind blew from behind, and the young boy anxiously looked back, finding nothing.

He suppressed his urge to cry, wiped away his tears, and ran deeper into the alley. Accidentally stumbling over a stone, he fell with a thud. The boy, at a loss, rubbed his knee, unable to hold back any longer, and burst into loud cries.

The crying continued for about ten minutes until a pair of men's feet suddenly appeared in front of him.



The boy stopped sobbing and looked up at the newcomer, dumbfounded.

Louis, his face scarred all over, squeezed out a strange smile and said, "Little boy, are you lost?"

The young boy was startled, his pupils trembling, and his little legs frantically kicked, trying to retreat.

Louis seemed to enjoy seeing the boy's terrified expression, his mouth curling, and his eyes growing more excited.

He observed the boy in secret for a long time, making sure there was no one else around. Only then did he reveal himself, unable to contain his excitement.

Tonight's delicious snack had arrived.

Louis slowly raised his right arm. The boy suddenly noticed that there was no hand on it; instead, there was a rapidly spinning cutting blade.

"Don't be afraid, Uncle is here to accompany you. You'll fall asleep soon."

Louis raised the deadly weapon high, aiming it at the boy's chest, about to make the cut—

Suddenly, the boy flashed the most sickeningly sweet smile at him.

Louis's face changed drastically, and his danger radar beeped frantically. He then realized that his legs were frozen!

"You brat, you're an awakener!"

Xu Xing promptly got up from the ground, looking composed and not at all like before when he was lost and scared.

He had cried for almost ten minutes. Louis was quite cautious, never revealing himself. His throat was now dry, and he was irritated, feeling cold and impatient. He had no idea how many times he cursed Louis in his mind.

“Bleh-bleh!” Xu Xing stuck his tongue out at Louis. “You’re done for!”

As soon as he finished speaking, a ghostly figure flashed in the darkness and ruthlessly attacked the immobilized Louis.

Louis was utterly shocked; this person had been hiding so close, yet he hadn’t sensed anything!

A surge of murderous intent came at him from above, and Louis, unable to move his lower body, quickly raised his right arm to block.

“Clang—” The cutting blade blocked a sharp dagger, and its spinning speed slowly came to a stop.

Just as Louis heaved a sigh of relief, he realized that something was wrong. Dark green rust spots appeared on the blade’s edge, spreading rapidly at an astonishing speed, creeping over his arm, mouth, and neck... gradually covering his entire face.

This was... poison-ability awakener!!

“Ahh!!” A piercing scream echoed in the alley, heard far into the distance.

“What’s that sound?”

“It sounds a bit like Louis the Ripper?”

“He wouldn’t be slaughtering women and children again, would he? This guy is really bad luck!”

“No... why do I feel like it’s him screaming?”

The two speaking individuals exchanged a glance. They were bold and daring, venturing into the alley in the darkness to investigate.

On the cold ground, Louis lay with a ghostly green complexion, his eyes wide open, resembling a poisoned frog, devoid of life.

Inserted into the still cutting blade on his right arm was a small flag.

The individuals examining the scene approached for a closer look, and there were some small words written on it: ‘Done by V587 Su Cha.’

Both of them: “...”

It’s often said that those who do bad deeds should remain nameless, but this Su Cha seemed quite arrogant.

Louis the Ripper was dead! Killed by Su Cha from V587!!

The sensational news quickly spread throughout the entire underground city.

Criminals whispered to each other, feeling uneasy. Who exactly was this Su Cha person? Stirring up trouble for several days in a row, unsettling both the desert and the underground. This time, he took down Louis. What about next time? Will it be their turn?

And the V587 team, known for their strange slogans—where did they suddenly come from? Their actions were so audacious, showing complete disregard for them. It was infuriating, truly infuriating!

“Gaida, what are you up to?”

“Hmph, settling scores.”

Gaida, who had his level 2 crystal stolen by Su Cha in the desert before, gathered a large group of awakeners who had suffered similar persecution. They decided to confront Su Cha: “Daring to be so arrogant in Sin City, watch me make him pay!”

\*

“It’s still no use.”

Song Ke rested her chin on the wheelchair, her face full of disappointment.

Her semi-long hair fell on Zhuang Qingyan’s shoulder. A few strands brushed against his collarbone, creating a ticklish sensation.

It had been two days since Su Cha took down Louis the Ripper and he still hadn’t been arrested.

Couldn’t they even catch a murderer? Sin City truly lived up to its name as a paradise for villains. They could practically do as they pleased.

In the silence, Fang Zhixu suddenly spoke up, “Why could the man in the hotel that night activate the Criminal Record?”

Lin Youyou said, “Oh? Yeah, why could he enter the Death Prison?”

The few of them pondered seriously at the mention. When it came to murder, the man did indeed commit the act. However, they had confirmed that just killing someone wouldn’t allow entry into the Death Prison. Other than that, if there was something else special, it was...

Song Ke blinked, and a light bulb went off in her head, thinking of something.

Perhaps Sin City simply didn't care about the life or death of criminals, but if you disrupted the foundation of this city...

“Bang—”

The front door was kicked open, and a large group of fierce awakeners stormed in.

The people who were originally dining in the restaurant sensed danger and scattered one after another, the faster the better. Even the boss hid. The hall was empty, leaving only Song Ke and her group of six.

Gaida gave them the middle finger, provoking them like mad, “Hey, Su, I'll kill you today!”

Without another word, the group rushed at them, using both their hands and feet, unleashing their abilities towards V587.

Chaos erupted on the scene.

Su Cha kicked the person in front of him, and one of the awakeners had legs similar to Louis, both composed of mechanical cutting blades. He stumbled and fell backward, slipping on the ground. He collided with the nearby running elevator, and the sharp blades “sizzled” against the door frame, quickly cutting out a small crack. Su Cha's poison mist hovered over it, swiftly corroding into the steel reinforcement in the vacancy.

“Shh, shh—” faint sounds came from inside the elevator cabin. In just a few seconds, the entire door frame collapsed with a loud bang, taking the esper whose foot got caught in with it. The elevator plunged uncontrollably into the depths of the underground.

“Boom—” a deafening noise shook the entire Sin City, freezing everyone's actions.

Just when Song Ke and the others were uncertain about what was happening, the giant screen above instantly changed direction. Numerous bright artificial light sources automatically focused on Su Cha, blinding him. He could only shield his eyes with his hands.

Su Cha was illuminated all over, as if standing at the center of a spotlight, becoming the most conspicuous presence.

Snowflakes flickered on the screen, and then, as if the power was cut off, everything turned pitch black, with no imagery.

After two seconds, a cold and stern voice echoed throughout the entire city.

“Criminal Su Cha, you are under arrest. Immediately drop your weapons and surrender. Proceed to the Death Prison for surrender.”

“I repeat, criminal Su Cha, you are under arrest. Immediately drop your weapons and surrender. Proceed to the Death Prison for surrender.”

“I repeat...”

After repeating the announcement three times, the light disappeared, and the artificial sky vanished, but the danger wasn't lifted.

Hundreds of heavy weapons appeared above their heads, their particle cannons aimed at Su Cha. The light gradually condensed, and if he dared to resist, regardless of the awakener's level, they would be instantly blasted into pieces.

Su Cha dropped the dagger and slowly raised his hands.

He glanced back at Song Ke and the others, nodding discreetly to them. Then, step by step, he walked in the direction of the underground sea.