

## **Eight Uncles 621**

### [Chapter 621 Everyone Clung to Lilly](#)

Josh jumped and hugged Lilly. Ivan frowned at the side, as he could not see anything after looking around.

Hannah said in confusion, "Josh, I wasn't frightened by the surroundings, but by your reaction."

Blake said, "Let's go search for Colton and the team." Should I comment that this place is a suitable place for The Mysterious Explorers to train? Blake saw the members of the team running for their lives, yet he had not seen or heard any of them from the moment he stepped foot into this village.

Lilly asked, "Daddy, are Mr. Shaw and the rest of them here?"

He answered, "They must be, but something's not right."

Josh shouted so loudly that the entire village should have heard him. And his phone vibrated as Anthony called them to ask for what happened; it could be seen that Anthony could hear his scream at the base of the mountain. So, it was impossible that Colton and the rest did not hear it.

Blake said to Anthony, "Rest assured because I'm here."

Bettany said on the other end of the phone instead, "You're the reason for my concern!" Blake did not know what to answer.

Lilly said from the back, "Don't you worry, Granny; Daddy can handle the important stuff, and everyone can leave the rest to me."

Bettany was somewhat convinced. No matter how unreliable Blake was, he would never put Lilly and the rest in danger. And the supernatural phenomena were not the threat. Lilly was their threat.

Bettany replied, "Be careful! Look out for the snake and insects! Don't fall down!"

Lilly answered, "Alright, you don't have to be worried, Granny!"

Lilly realized that Josh was still clinging to her after the call. "Josh, come down." Lilly said, "You're doing a live stream now; the viewers might be laughing at you."

Josh cried, "It's okay... At a moment like this, it's not shameful." Lilly just left him be.

But a moment later, Drake and Hannah also followed close and clung onto her. They're all in sync.

She could barely move, and she said, "Everyone, let go of me for a bit; I can't walk."

She had to drag the three of them just to move forward. Ivan could not imagine their actions. Grace felt that they were being extra. The female spirit from the beam did not talk to Lilly; she merely followed them as they walked. The rope moved as she moved, and she was staring at their backs the entire time. Josh felt spooky from behind, so he hurriedly pasted two talismans on his face.

Blake was tracking the trail left by Colton and the team. He stopped in front of a vegetable field, and there was a huge tree at the side. It was surrounded by a lot of grass.

"Huh? Why does the trace stop here?" He bent down to press on the grass.

Lilly mimicked him and asked, "Daddy, what are you looking at?"

He answered, "Look at the trace on the ground. We came from that direction, and it could be seen that the grass at the side of the slate was being stepped on before."

He continued to say, "Look carefully; the dried leaves may cover the footsteps, but they would break after being stepped on. Some might even be broken into pieces."

Lily picked up a leaf to observe; indeed, the one that was not stepped on was whole. And the one being stepped on broke. Based on this, it could be seen that several footsteps crushed the leaves as they ran them over. But the trace stopped here at the vegetable field.

Lilly squatted in front of it and said, "Daddy, I know it now. There was a lot of fresh grass on this ground, so if someone was to step on it, it would be very obvious, right?"

Blake replied, "Yes. It could be seen from the footsteps that they were running toward the vegetable field, but no footsteps could be seen on it. It seemed like they had disappeared into thin air."

Lilly said in a serious tone as if she were a detective, "Is there any possibility that they were hung by the spirits?"

Blake muttered, "Eh..."

Everyone was dumbstruck. Josh unintentionally looked up. The wind was blowing, and the leaves of the tree were moving along with it. Luckily, no one was hanging up there. Josh and the viewers all sighed in relief. There were already hundreds of people joining the livestream, and all of them were immersed in the scary atmosphere. None of them remembered what they said just now; they all forgot that this was a livestream, as they felt that they experienced it firsthand. None of them questioned the authenticity of the livestream.

"I was scared to death... Why did I join in the first place? I'm so afraid, but I want to stay."

"This little girl is so cute. Let's focus on her if any of you are frightened. We should shift our attention."

"Huh? You're correct; the little girl is so cute!"

"What the f\*ck! How can she be so calm, saying that the people might be hung by the spirits?"

Little did the viewers know that focusing on Lilly would scare them ever further.

### [Chapter 622 Blake, You're Such a Joker](#)

Lilly and Blake continued to search for their trace. Lilly asked, "Daddy, is there any possibility that they ran in the other direction?" Blake shook his head and said, "It's unlikely." He had never made a mistake in tracking people down; this must be the correct way. Just as he thought, he found traces of footsteps at the other end of the vegetable field. "Over here." Lilly hurried over. As she ran, the three "accessories" clinged to her had to run too. The camera was focused in Blake's direction.

Blake was tall; most of the time, the camera was only pointed at his back. With him squatting down, the side of his face could be seen. He was panting at the grass and explained to Lilly, "There's only a deep footprint here; the grass before this area was merely crushed a little. Yet, the grass here was all crumbled." He could almost see how the team frightenedly ran toward the vegetable field, but they were somewhat hung up and threw to this side. They dropped from the sky and landed here.

He sneered, "Is this what they're made of? Timid and useless?" He was the one who picked and formed this team. They used to do their training in an abandoned building. This was a secretive team; it was not known to an outsider. A mere minority of the selected people knew about them.

Lilly came closer to him and asked, "Daddy, aren't you worried?" He answered, "I'm calm as long as you are."

Blake was mentioning that they had to find them as soon as possible, but in fact, he was not worried a bit. Because Lilly would have known if something were to happen to Colton. Lilly would always warn him when danger approached someone close to her. As long as she was calm, everything would still be under control.

Lilly did not know her father treated her as an alarm, and indeed, she did not predict Colton's life-threatening danger. Blake could not care less if they were being terrified.

Josh gulped and asked, "So, how did they fly?" The three little "accessories" looked at each other. The viewers in the livestream were picnicking too.

"Are they looking for someone?"

"I've never thought that there's something scarier than seeing the spirits!"

"Ahhh! It's always the scariest when you don't know the truth! I'm clinging to my mother now!"

"So what's happening? Are their teammates missing?"

"Yes, it seems like they're searching for someone. but they didn't manage to. Based on their observation, the missing people were lifted midair and dropped to the other side of the vegetable field."

"My god, I don't dare to look anymore. What's behind the vegetable field?"

There was an empty field behind it, and there were a lot of empty jars. The huge ones could even fit a human. The abandoned vegetable field surrounded by the jars looked eerie. Hannah exclaimed, "What are these jars?" Lilly answered, "Erm, for fermenting the vegetables?" Josh gulped and said, "These jars... they can't fit people, can they?" Suddenly, there was a sharp noise; a jar was hit. Josh's hands trembled, and he filmed in that direction. There was an old lady standing behind a jar. She was grabbing something black and shoving it down into the jar. They had a closer look and realized it was a human's head. Josh and the viewers froze.

Seeing them, the old lady laughed, grinned, and asked, "You all aren't locals, right? Please come to my house and have some fermented vegetables with meat." The children were all dumbstruck. This camera... is it real? And Lilly replied, "It's okay, old lady; I don't like to eat this dish. We like to eat something else." The old lady stared at Lilly. Everyone in the livestream went berserk.

"F\*ck! What is she talking about? Why is she discussing food with a ghost?"

"Waa... I'm scared! What was the old lady pressing down on just now? Was it the hair that I've seen?"

"Hey... "The moment the camera moved past it, I saw that it was a head."

Blake stared at the jar and asked, "Old lady, what are you pressing?" She pulled her sleeves up and answered, "Ingredients for the fermented vegetables!" She continued to say, "My son and daughter-in-law went away to work. Every new year, they enjoyed eating my cooking."

### [Chapter 623 Yes, That's Right](#)

Josh whispered, "Lilly, what are these? None of the other jars have spirits standing behind them. Are all the fermented vegetables inside the jars?" This was once a vegetable field, so it actually made sense. She whispered back to him, "Josh, didn't you realize something? The old lady was pressing her head down, but the spirit of this corpse didn't show itself." Josh regretted asking such a question!

The old lady smiled, and whatever she pressed down floated up to the surface. The top of the head was shown, and then half of the head... The black hair covered the corpse's face, so it was hard to differentiate if it was on the front or back of the head. Looking at the jars and the old lady... The children were all shivering to their cores. They felt like the big jars could fit a person, and the small jars could fit dissected body parts.

Blake walked over and knocked on the jar; Lilly also tagged along and did the same. "Hello, is somebody in there?" She asked, "Uncle, are you awake? Do you need help to get out?" The viewers were frightened until they were numb. The kid is so scary. She knocks on the jar and asks if someone wants to

come out or not. Who mentioned that she's cute just now?

Lilly did not know that she frightened a lot of people. Daddy brought me to track them down, and without using the oracle, I managed to find Mr. Shaw! She felt that she had learned something new; she was improving! But does Mr. Shaw need help? Will he be terrified if he wakes and sees the spirit? Should I let them all stay a little bit longer inside the jars?

The children, including Colton, were speechless. Are you going to break the jar or not? I'll come out myself if you don't. Colton was about to speak, but he only realized he could not speak inside the jar. He just regained consciousness; the jar was narrow and small, and he had to struggle just to turn his body. Josh heard Lilly talking to the jar, so he turned the camera on it. He was extremely terrified, yet he wanted to check out what was inside the jar. Suddenly, there was some noise inside the jar. The next moment, a hand pushed the jar lid so hard that it flew open.

Josh screamed, and he felt like his heart stopped moving and he was falling backward. Drake unwillingly supported him. Josh stuttered, "The j... ja... jar..." Lilly felt that Josh was hopeless. She patted him on the shoulder and said, "Don't you worry, we have a lot of manpower!" There were a total of nine of them, including Lilly, and there was even Polly the bird waiting for them at the base of the mountain. Josh felt that she was correct, so he calmed down.

An arm pushed it way out of the jar, and an entire human climbed out; it was the scene that they normally watched in the television program. Josh felt that he would soon collapse. Yet Ivan's eyes widened in shock. This person...is he my dad? He strode toward him; Lilly helped Colton out of the jar, and he was panting. Blake said, "Huh? You're just out like this? I thought you weren't awake yet." Colton snorted sarcastically, "Blake, you're such a joker!" Blake replied, "Thanks for the compliment." He then continued, "If you can't escape something this easy, you might as well discontinue whatever you're doing." Colton was lost for words.

"Mr. Shaw, are you alright?" Lilly asked, "How did you all get here?" He shook his head, not expecting that the next time he saw Lilly, it would be under this circumstance. "I'm fine. I was careless just now." He looked to the side, realizing the old lady was still fermenting her vegetables. The Mysterious Explorers were training in this abandoned village for seven days; they were here to feel the bad aura and train their senses. The first two days were normal; there were only some weird noises at night and the noise of the beasts inside the forest. They were all brave; if not, they would not have joined the team in the first place. But on the third day, they felt drained of energy, and their visions were blurred. They always thought that something was walking in front of them.

Today, some of them went missing. They went to the toilet, but they never came back. Colton went looking for them with the rest of the team, but they were hanging when they arrived at the vegetable field. And all of them lost their consciousness. Blake asked, "So, those who were screaming and running weren't in the jars?" When they were talking, Pablo said to Lilly, "Lilly, save the people in the jars first." All of them were surrounded by a bad aura, and they were unconscious when they were stuffed in the jars. Colton was pretty strong, as he could snap out of it.

Lilly agreed, and she picked up a damaged brick from the road. Colton saw her and said, "Lilly, the jars are thick; you don't have to do it. You can't..." And the jar was broken, and someone dropped it. Lilly asked innocently, "Mr. Shaw, what did you just say? I couldn't hear it." Colton answered, "It's nothing." Ivan went to pick up a brick because he wanted to help her. He thought it would be easy, but the jar did not break at all. He pursed his lips as he felt embarrassed; his face was flushed. Lilly can do it, and I can't? What is this? He was furious, and he exerted all of his force. Finally, the jar broke on his second try. That's right, it's so easy!

### [Chapter 624 Ghost Tool](#)

Josh was shocked to see people fall out of the broken jars. He wanted to help out, but his legs could not seem to move. He looked at Lisa and said, "Mommy, help me!" He wanted Lisa to move him, but she misunderstood. She picked up a stone and joined them to smash the jars; they looked happy doing it. Zachary was rating their skills in his notebook. He rated Lilly and Lisa as skillful and physically compatible mythical creatures, which was in the same category as Blake and Pablo.

Pablo looked at him as he wrote, and he was speechless about it. Lisa was a destroyer; she smashed a few jars, but no one was in them. Meanwhile, Lilly hit right on point every time. Everyone only saw that the people falling out of the jars wore the same clothes as Colton. Eight jars were smashed, and four people fell out of them. Everyone trapped was being rescued. Lilly looked at these four men; their faces were losing color, and they were still unconscious. She opened their mouths and stuffed Taslimen into them. She then looked at the old lady, realizing that she was staring at them.

Lilly whispered, "Master, why isn't the old lady running?" Pablo answered, "She won't. She has to restrain whatever is inside that jar; if not, it'll escape." The old lady yelled viciously, "You spoiled my jars! They're all spoiled! I don't have a jar to ferment vegetables for my son and daughter-in-law anymore!" Lilly asked curiously, "Why must it be vegetables?" Why can't you ferment other foods?" What's the difference?

Blake muttered, "Lilly, what is the level of this spirit?" Lilly mentioned that the female spirit that was hanging was just a normal, woeful ghost. What about this spirit here? She must be strong because she could stuff Colton and the rest into the jars. Lilly answered, "She's not a resentful, woeful, or malignant ghost." Blake asked, "Ghost Lord?" She shook her head and answered, "Daddy, do you remember the footsteps following you the other time?" He nodded. She continued to say, "It's a ghost tool." She threw the talismans out. The old lady shouted and turned into a mist; there were only a pair of arm bones left. The bones were hanging from the jars and moving.

That's it? Blake was shocked. Pablo said at the side, "Ghost Tools are not souls; they're just like the animals from the myth; they can turn into ghouls. The owner's hands were gone, but the ghost tool stayed. Normal people can't see or feel the ghosts, but the ghost tools do exist." Blake learned a new thing today, and he felt like he still had a lot to learn in pseudoscience. The ghost spirits were the basics! He also barely understood the things that were brought back by Lilly before this, as well as the ghouls' arms in front of him.

Ivan could not see Pablo, so he could not hear his explanation. But he saw Lilly throwing the talisman

midair, and an old lady screamed out of nowhere, and a pair of arm bones appeared! His fingers trembled, and he almost hit his legs with the brick. Ivan was totally amazed; he looked at Lilly and the arm bones back and forth. So, am I left behind again? The bone without the spirit did not have a body, but it was still trying to press down on the jar lid.

Hannah and Josh were hugging each other and shaking; Drake looked like he was calm. Blake stared at the jar and asked, "What about the thing inside the jar? What is it?" Josh asked shakingly, "Yeah, what's that?" Lilly reminded her that there was a corpse in it, but there was no ghost spirit. So, what's that? Lilly answered, "It's also a ghost tool." These two ghost tools should have been fighting against each other for years.

"Just break the jar, and we'll know!" Lilly pasted a talisman on the brick, and she threw it toward that jar. It was broken, and they could see what was inside. Everyone was too stunned to move; Josh could not even speak. Everyone in the livestream was losing their minds.

"F\*ck... ah... ah!"

"I've seen so many horror livestreams before... "This is my first time seeing something this scary."

"Oh my god..."

#### [Chapter 625 I'm Thankful for Your Help](#)

It was a piece of moving flesh inside the jar. Everyone saw the old lady pressing something black into the jar, but none of them realized it was flat or stereoscopic; they just felt that it was strange. All of them could see clearly that it was intact human skin from head to toe, and there was a huge scar on the side of its ear. Her hair was messy; it covered part of her face, but it could be seen that her skin was actually smooth and fair, and she should be a beauty. The flesh was freed from the jar, and it was fighting with the bone. They were fighting hard and smashing things around them. When everyone was in a daze as they felt like they were watching a movie, they turned around and found that Lilly was sitting at the side and eating biscuits. The children all regretted tagging along; Hannah even felt like going back to write her homework.

The flesh and the bone were fighting and moving toward the vegetable field. It seemed like they sensed danger and were trying to escape. Lilly smiled and threw an invisible red net just to pull them back. She said to them, "The two of you shall continue." The ghost tools did not want to be caught; one moment they were fighting, the next moment they dashed toward Lilly! Blake instantly blocked Lilly before Grace could throw herself in front of her.

Lilly blinked and looked at her purple sledgehammer. Do I not have a chance to fight? It can't be... I want to be the Ruler of Hell; I have to train, but Daddy moved before I could. "Go away!" Blake shouted and punched them. He felt that his arm went numb, and the coldness spread from his fist to his entire body. Punching the ghost tools was different than punching the ghost spirit; his hand bled with just one punch. He would not let go of such a precious training opportunity. He did not back off, and he threw a punch

again. And he jumped toward the flesh and kicked it. The flesh moved its body in a strange way, and it suddenly appeared behind Blake. It was about to bite Blake!

Colton appeared out of nowhere, and he punched the flesh from behind. The flesh immediately bumped into Blake's back. Blake yelled, "You're so accurate!" Colton replied, "You're welcome!" The children were looking at them like a show; it was not that scary when they could see them. Josh gave Lilly a cup of yogurt, while Hannah offered them a packet of chips. Blake and Colton were fighting hard, while Lilly was happily eating. She asked when she was chewing the food, "Daddy, do you need help?" Blake answered, "No!" She asked Colton the same question, and he rejected her as well. She continued to eat.

Blake and Colton were mortals after all; the flesh and the bone were both ghost tools; they were near invincible. They were getting tired, and they were having a hard time fighting them, while the ghost tools were not damaged by a bit. Blake's face was scratched by the bone, and Colton was flung away after being banged by the flesh; he passed out on the side with his teammates. One of the teammates actually woke up from the impact, and he saw the flesh coming their way. He was panicked, and he wanted to kick the flesh away, but he accidentally kicked Colton instead. I'm thankful for your help. Colton thought sarcastically to himself. Before he could breathe, he had to fight with the flesh again.

Blake felt the sharp and stabbing pain on his face, and he wiped away the blood with his hand. Lilly asked again, "Daddy, do you need my help?" She then asked, "Mr. Shaw, do you need help?" Blake still rejected her help. Colton was at his limit, but he did not want to lose to Blake. I can't be weak in front of Lilly! He forced himself; this was his first time fighting spirit, and it was so hard for him. But after all, he was not as experienced as Blake. He was getting slower, and the flesh caught him. The flesh screamed, and she was about to bite his face! It could seem that she felt victorious; she was mocking Colton's incompetence. They were nothing to her!

#### [Chapter 626 Do You Want Me to Come To You?](#)

Witnessing Colton was about to get slapped, Lilly, who was enjoying her snack, swiftly placed the snack in her mouth and raised her hand, gripping the purple sledgehammer.

"Ouch!" a soft, unclear voice resonated, everyone knew that "eighty" was Lilly's catchphrase.

Her hair swayed in the wind, yet her sharp gaze and dominating presence remained undeterred, despite the mouthful of snacks.

The purple sledgehammer pierced through the void, striking Flesh!

"Boom!" The impact of the hammer reverberated, seemingly shaking the very ground, causing the nearby forest to shudder as leaves quivered.

Flesh yelled in agony as the purple sledgehammer reduced it to a flattened mass like a cake...

Lilly stood before the remnants with a bag of snacks in her mouth, gazing downward.



She removed the snack bag from her mouth and let out a snort. "How dare you hurt Mr. Shaw in front of me?"

Flesh trembled.

Before Lilly hit Flesh, it thought she was nothing more than an average practitioner, at best.

But once she moved, the hidden coercion emanating from the purple sledgehammer became palpable—it was the aura of the Ruler of Hell!

Was it an illusion? Why did it feel the Ruler of Hell's presence? Was she the Ruler of Hell? How old was the Ruler of Hell?

Flesh was trembling with fear, and it yearned to escape once more.

And so, it dashed away, almost stepping beyond the confines of the vegetable field, overwhelmed with relief...

It seemed to have made a mistake. Lilly was not the Ruler of Hell but some supernatural force...

However, in an instant, there was a whoosh as a golden bun-like object hit its head, leaving a dent.

Flesh cursed.

Lilly remarked, "Do you wanna come here by yourself or do you want me to go there?"

Her tone was eerily similar to Blake's...

Pablo's forehead was wrinkled as he could not help but feel that his once soft, adorable, and innocent little apprentice was gradually growing more human and losing her former charm.

Flesh returned reluctantly, feeling aggrieved.

Meanwhile, Blake gritted his teeth and continued to fight on.

Bone remained unaffected by the force from the purple sledgehammer. It could not understand why Flesh, who was engaged in a fierce battle alongside it, suddenly turned so timid.

The opponent was just a child after all!

If it ordered Flesh not to escape, would it truly stay put?

But this kid was undeniably powerful, which left Bone scared. The more fearful it became, the stronger its urge to flee!

Sensing something amiss, Bone failed to recognize who Lilly truly was. Seizing an opportunity, it promptly made its escape.

Blake caught his breath, but before he could chase it, Lilly's voice echoed once again, "Where do you think you're going!"

"Bang!"

This time, an indistinguishable object was hurled toward him, enveloping it in darkness.

It struck Bone, shattering it.

As everyone looked at the scene, they realized it was a scale!

Pablo exclaimed, "When did she get such a peculiar weapon again?"

Zachary swiftly jotted down in his notebook, "Lilly's newly obtained weapon is a scale, whereas it is a 6-star weapon."

A scream pierced the air, and Bone finally understood why Flesh had refrained from resisting.

The Ruler of Hell?

Bone sensed the Ruler of Hell's presence.

Lilly jeered, "Still planning on running?"

Trembling, Bone limped its way back.

Gasping for breath, Colton glanced at Lilly, the silence was loud.

Blake often taunted him, claiming that even a five-year-old child would surpass their abilities.

You can't even touch a single strand of her hair...

It seemed that Blake's words were true...

The young men who regained consciousness were utterly dumbfounded, sitting there in a daze.

Who are they? Where are they? What happened?

Their team members gulped, gazing silently at them. Just moments ago, Mr. Shaw and Mr. MacNeil were locked in combat with ghosts.

In the blink of an eye, the ghosts were subdued by a mere toddler.

The team members felt a wave of shame wash over them as they recalled the words Mr. MacNeil spoke.

Both Flesh and Bone crouched before Lilly, feeling dejected.

Lilly spoke, "Stand up, place your hands on your head, and don't move. Pinch your right ear with your left hand, and your left ear with your right hand. Now, squat!"

Flesh obediently held its head with its hands, pinched its right ear with its left hand, and grasped its left ear with its right hand, not daring to resist.

A sense of grievance overwhelmed it.

After battling Bone for centuries, it was all for nothing.

If it had known this would happen, it would have fled long ago.

Bone, equally aggrieved, squatted down in its headless form with its hands crossed.

Josh sat next to Lilly, sticking close to her as he was no longer afraid. At some point, she turned off the live stream. Tens of thousands of viewers were cursing their luck. It was akin to reading an interesting novel with no end, or when a movie reached its climax and the power abruptly went out. Or, it was like when people were chatting excitedly with their significant others only to lose connection...

Lilly asked, "Now tell me, what's the matter? Why were you fighting?"

All the ghosts thought to themselves, "It's time for ghost stories again!"

Everyone brought a stool over and sat down.

It feels like a teacher scolding a child.

Teacher Lilly sat on a tank with snacks in her mouth, her small face serious as she criticized them, "Why were you fighting? How did you die? Who started it?"

The team members were left bewildered, their minds overwhelmed.

Blake could not help but say, "My daughter has always been a ruler since birth."

Ivan was speechless.

Everything happening today exceeded their expectations!

Just as everyone believed these two ghosts could not speak, they spoke up.

"She hit me first!" the Flesh and skeletal arm exclaimed simultaneously.

Everyone was taken aback.

Of course, they could speak... It was because they were silent earlier... Oh, the old woman did... All of them thought they were mute.

Wait, no, the focus should be on how these two ferocious ghosts are accusing each other like elementary school students.

No, that was not the point... Shouldn't these two ghosts be afraid of Lilly...

Lilly asked again, "Alright, let's sort this out. Who started it?"

Flesh replied, "The old woman who died started!"

Bone retorted, "No, she did."

Lilly was speechless.

Alright, both of you don't wanna speak properly, huh?

If Lilly did not show her power, did they think she was just a kitten?

[Chapter 627 Pretty Flesh](#)

Lilly's expression turned cold, and she let out a growl...

"Gimme the pot!"

Lilly grabbed the frying pan.

"Clang, clang!"

Two sharp and resounding strikes echoed as the pan struck Flesh and Bone.

She beat the two ghosts until they seemed like illusions, leaving them bewildered.

Everyone in the Crawford family shrunk their necks and Blake unconsciously touched the back of his head.

Pablo was baffled, muttering to himself, "When did she get a frying pan as a weapon? Wasn't she just

using a scale earlier?"

When did she unlock this weapon?

Zachary swiftly jotted down in his notebook.

"Weapon, a scale. Power, six stars, capable of shattering bones as sturdy as evil spirits."

"New weapon acquired, a frying pan. Power, eight stars, capable of smashing two evil spirits of similar strength simultaneously."

As Lilly raised her hand, the frying pan vanished in an instant, showcasing her supernatural prowess that nearly matched her master's.

"Are you going to cooperate? Can you explain yourselves? If not, I'll smash you again!" Lilly warned.

Her expression and tone were deceptively soft, cute, and innocent, making one's skin crawl and bones tremble with the fear of making any mistakes.

Flesh, feeling discouraged, spoke up, "My name is Pretty Flesh and I reside in the mountains... I don't belong to the underworld's ghosts, so I'm not afraid of sunlight, nor do I consume people's souls."

Lowering its voice slightly, it weakly added, "So, I'm not a bad ghost..."

Bone, who was formerly known as the old woman pickling sauerkraut, suddenly grew angry.

She exclaimed, "You may not devour human souls, but you feast on human flesh and blood!"

The old woman's voice was filled with resentment and anger.

Lilly responded, "Huh? No way!"

As she spoke, she popped a crispy chip into her mouth.

Everyone was left speechless.

The harem spirit and the others, with fiery tempers, demanded, "How do you consume human flesh and blood?"

The old woman began her account, "Long ago, when our village was inhabited by many people, my wife, my son, and I lived together as a family of three."

During that time, the era had not yet come to an end, and the mountains were desolate. It was challenging for mountain dwellers to venture out, and it was equally difficult for merchants from outside

to enter. Everyone relied on farming for their livelihoods.

"Our family was so poor that my son remained single even in his twenties."

"One day, a young woman wearing a white turban and plain coarse clothing came by, seeking water from us."

"She said that her husband had recently passed away, and after the mourning period, she had no children and no one to depend on. She wanted to return to her mother's house. Feeling famished and exhausted during her journey, she asked us for some food."

During those times, married daughters faced great difficulties, especially in rural areas where there was a lack of food and clothing. If a husband passed away, the daughters who were married had to return to their homes, and most families were reluctant to take them back in.

"When she told us about her situation, there was still a trace of anxiety, not knowing whether her parents and brothers would drive her away. We felt sorry for her, so we invited her to have dinner with us. As it was getting late, we suggested that she spend the night before continuing her journey."

The house was small, so at night, the old woman and the young woman shared a room. While chatting, the old woman took out some clothes that needed mending, and the young woman offered to help upon noticing it.

As the old woman continued her story, she remarked, "I noticed that she was highly skilled in needlework. Her stitches were meticulous and neat, and she had a tidy way of doing things. I couldn't help but praise her as a good wife and mother. Whoever marries her will be blessed."

Initially, it was just casual conversation, but as the old woman lay in bed that night, the idea became more and more feasible in her mind.

Her twenty-seven-year-old son was still single, and the young woman's husband had passed away. Wasn't it a perfect match?

The next morning, the old woman discussed the matter with her husband and son at home. Her husband found it feasible, while the son was somewhat hesitant. However, when he saw the young woman rise early and wash her face by the well, removing her scarf to reveal her black, thick hair and her face resembling a peach blossom, he was captivated by her beauty. Eventually, he agreed.

"So I told this young woman that since she was a widow, her family may not welcome her back. If she remarries in the future, she might not find a good family. If she agrees, she can just live with my son and forget about it."

The old woman thought the young woman would disagree, but to her surprise, the woman expressed gratitude.

Lilly asked, "What did she say?"

The old woman sneered and replied, "She spoke kindly and said that she also wished for someone to rely on. If I didn't mind her rough work and her deceased husband, she would be grateful."

"She also mentioned an old bachelor in her village who had several deceased wives. He had a violent and cruel temperament. If she were to return, her family would arrange a marriage with him, which caused her distress. If she could marry my son, she would be willing to endure any hardships As she only asked for a meal."

No dowry and no wedding... What a perfect arrangement!

The old woman's family saw her as a pitiful and innocent woman, someone who was humble and required no expenses. Even if things did not turn out well in the end, their son would still benefit from the situation.

And that was how it happened in just one night.

Lilly blinked and skeptically remarked, "It happened so quickly? They've only known each other for a day."

Her grandmother often said that there was nothing that was too good to be true and that one should not be greedy for small gains.

Lilly thought that the old woman's family was so bold that any unfamiliar woman passing by would willingly marry into their household.

The harem spirit expressed her disapproval, saying, "So, the two elders are driven by greed, and their son is driven by a desire for the woman's beauty. If he were to propose marriage to a woman, he will soon realize that such a person does not exist at all."

Beauty Painted Skin agreed, saying, "Exactly! So you can't blame me."

In a fit of anger, Bones struck her, exclaiming, "How can you say it's not your fault?"

Refusing to back down, Pretty Flesh retorted, "How can you be so shameless?"

Observing the two of them engaged in yet another argument, Lilly intervened by grabbing a frying pan and banging them twice.

Alright, both of them calmed down

"Go on," The harem spirit said, "I'm going to gain ten more pounds."

Everyone was confused.

The old woman continued with bitterness, "On the night my son entered the chamber with her, I fell into a deep sleep. Suddenly, I was plagued by a terrifying nightmare."

"I dreamt that my son entered the room covered in blood, crying out, Mom, I'm gonna get eaten by your daughter-in-law!"

Startled awake, the old woman shook her husband awake and told him about her nightmare.

"I feel the same way. My son is tall and has immense strength, while that woman is frail and feeble..."

And so she continued.

To her astonishment, as soon as she fell asleep again, she dreamt that her son appeared with disheveled hair, his body reduced to mere bones and shreds of flesh, crying out, "Mom, I'm gonna get eaten!"

Terrified, she woke up once more, sensing that something was amiss. She woke up her husband and hurriedly made her way to her son's room.

The elderly couple opened the windows and were scared nearly to death.

#### [Chapter 628 The Frying Pan Is a Good Weapon](#)

Despite their suspicions about the situation inside the house, Josh could not resist asking, "What happened in the room?"

Hannah withdrew her feet in fear and huddled closer to Lilly.

The old woman's voice was filled with grief and anger as she shared, "A little girl was sitting by the edge of the bed. However, she wore a layer of human skin and was gnawing on a piece of flesh!"

As soon as she was discovered, the creature wearing human skin swiftly fled with a swoosh, disappearing into the mountains and forests in an instant.

Trembling, the elderly couple approached the bed and lifted the blanket, only to witness a scene of blood and gore. All that remained of their son were his skull and a few strands of hair...

Chills ran down everyone's spines upon hearing this, and the harem spirit yelled out in disbelief.

Lilly asked, "What's next? How did you manage to capture her and preserve her in a sauerkraut jar?"

The old woman's tone shifted from grief to resentment.



"Our son was the breadwinner of our family, and we relied on him... Now we have nothing, and our hope for a future has vanished."

They were filled with resentment, of course, and hated themselves for their greediness. But it was due to their greed and their carelessness that they ended up causing their son to die, which they could not bear.

The entire village became aware of this incident, and some older folks whispered in horror, claiming that this creature wearing human skin was a monster from the mountains and forests, known as Pretty Flesh.

Countless lives were lost in the Medali War. The vengeful spirits merged into human flesh, gradually turning it into a spirit.

They survived by consuming human flesh and blood, particularly targeting the flesh and blood of young and strong men. They generally avoided confrontation, fleeing after feasting on their sleeping victims.

The old couple desired to capture Pretty Flesh and avenge their son.

However, Pretty Flesh never appeared again, and as the two grew older, the village, which had initially been in a state of panic, gradually returned to normal.

During that period, the old couple was weakened and faced difficulties in harvesting their crops, resulting in a shortage of food. They became too fearful to cook and eat vegetables, so they resorted to growing some mustard greens and making sauerkraut for survival. They cooked sauerkraut porridge to sustain themselves.

Given her old age and fearlessness, the old woman wished to preserve the Pretty Flesh in a jar through pickling.

"At that time, there was a girl in the village who constantly quarreled with her husband's family and sought death every day. Eventually, she hung herself..."

At this point, Flesh snorted and interrupted, saying, "What do you mean she hung herself? She was immortal, but the old woman kept telling her every day that there was no reason to live such a life and that it would be better to die. She provoked the girl, knowing well that she was prone to crying, causing trouble, and threatening to hang herself if her husband's family continued mistreating her."

Under Flesh's manipulation, the girl hung herself one day when she felt cornered.

Josh and the others immediately recalled the village they had recently passed through, where they witnessed a room with only one chair and a woman hanging from the beam...

Lilly asked, "And then?"

The old woman hesitated but continued, "After the girl's death, her husband became a widower. Then, the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law had been constantly quarreling, and everyone knew that the mother-in-law was difficult to get along with..."

Their family desired to find a new spouse for the widower, but naturally, no one was willing to marry into their family.

"I tried my best to spread the word."

Pretty Flesh sought out young and strong men who were single. With a strong man in the village now, the old couple eagerly hoped to attract Pretty Flesh.

"She came!" the old woman sneered, "After a whole six years, she finally reappeared."

"She made up another excuse, claiming that she was betrayed by her own family and fled here... pretending to be pitiful."

"So that night, while they were in their bridal chamber, we stood guard outside their house. When we heard strange noises, we rushed in and tied her up with a rope soaked in the blood of a black dog for many years..."

Everyone expressed amazement at their bravery!

Lilly furrowed her brow and asked, "So, was the second victim, the other strong man eaten up by her?"

Flesh snorted, "Of course not. If I hadn't let my guard down while I was feasting on his flesh, they wouldn't have been able to capture me."

Lilly was quiet.

In other words, the two elders were intentionally using other people as bait to lure Pretty Flesh without any regard for the lives of their sons.

Her assumption was correct, and now it was time for Pretty Flesh to speak out, "They captured me, but the strong man was already dead, only half of his body remained with flesh and blood. His elderly parents went mad, and his mother fell to her death on the stone steps in the courtyard."

Capturing Pretty Flesh was not an easy task. After a fierce struggle, the elderly men from both families perished, leaving only the old woman who managed to seize and stuff her into the sauerkraut jar.

"The sauerkraut jar had been soaked in dog blood, and I couldn't resist once I was trapped inside."

I could only scream and try to push her away, while the old woman desperately pushed me down.

They fought each other to the death until the old woman died. Even in their final moments, their hands remained pressed against me, determined to keep me submerged in the vat.

More than a century passed. The old woman's arm gradually transformed into a spirit, still pressing down on Pretty Flesh.

The dog's blood had long dried up, but Flesh remained trapped beneath the skeletal arm, which had also turned into a ghost. It could no longer escape. After starving for more than a century, it gradually lost its strength...

Over time, the village went through several generations, witnessed the fall of the Dynasty, and experienced wars, famine, plagues, and population migrations...

Gradually, only the elderly people remained in the village, and all of them passed away, leaving behind a ghostly village as the sole reminder of their existence.

The village became eerie and secluded, preventing anyone from venturing into the mountains. In later years, as roads were constructed, there were instances where the people involved in construction projects temporarily stayed in the village. However, strange occurrences and strange phenomena happened to them. Gradually, the village became engulfed by the encroaching mountains and forests, remaining in its current state.

The abandoned village attracted wandering spirits passing through, and some ghosts chose to make it their home. The only things that remained the same were the old woman who pickled sauerkraut and Pretty Flesh, who was trapped in the sauerkraut jar.

Oh, and there was also the girl who hung herself and her grief-stricken mother-in-law, who remained sitting in a daze at the door, forever locked in their tragic fate.

Having listened to the story, Lilly and the others now understood.

"So, what about the three other members?" Lilly inquired.

The mysterious team consisted of seven members, including Mr. Shaw. Mr. Shaw, Colton, and the four members who were rescued out of the tank had been rescued, leaving three members who were yet to be found.

#### [Chapter 629 How Colton Hunts for Ghosts](#)

Lilly was curious about the whereabouts of the three other people.

Bone, the old woman immediately spoke up, "I can tell you where they are, but you must promise to let me go! Otherwise, they'll die!"

Lilly was taken aback, surprised that a ghost would dare to negotiate terms with her.

The harem spirit chimed in, "Well, I must say, I admire your courage, old lady. You're the first person who dares to threaten the Ruler of Hell!"

Upon hearing this, Flesh realized she was dealing with the King of Hades!

Although she sensed a formidable presence, she was not entirely sure as she never thought that the Ruler of Hell would be four or five years old.

However, the ghost lord beside Lilly said she was the Ruler of Hell.

Flesh promptly responded, "I know! They were frightened off by this old woman and she tied them up in a dry well on the other side of the village road beneath the runway!"

The old woman was taken aback.

Lilly asked seriously, "So you're saying that you hung up Mr. Shaw and the others?"

The simultaneous takedown of so many individuals would need the strength of a ghost as powerful as a hundred-year-old spirit, comparable to that of a malignant spirit. It appeared that both the old woman and the human skin played a part in this.

However, Flesh denied the accusation, saying, "No, it wasn't me. It was this old woman!"

The old woman shouted back, "You're lying! You agreed to it!"

Flesh and Bone engaged in another fight.

"Bonk! Bonk!"

Once again, Lilly took the frying pan back and finally understood why her grandma liked to hit people with it.

It was surprisingly effective!

She smiled and asked, "Are you still going to argue?"

Flesh vigorously shook her head.

Lilly continued, "So, should you two settle your scores, or should I help you?"

The old woman hurriedly replied, "We'll confess on our own, we'll confess on our own..."

As it turned out, the old woman and Pretty Flesh had been at odds with each other for a century. One of

them gradually faded away as an evil spirit, while the other starved to death.

A few days ago, a group of seven or eight strong men arrived in the village as Pretty Flesh's eyes glowed green.

Pretty Flesh wanted to feast on human flesh, while the old woman desired to consume the souls of the deceased.

After a century-long feud, the two struck a deal. They could not escape from each other, but they chose to cooperate to avoid death.

To keep an eye on each other, Pretty Flesh and the old woman were bound together as if they intended to act in unison.

They waited for three days, and when the group of people became fully immersed in the village's bad aura, they realized that they had come to find ghosts...

So they created eerie noises to attract the passers-by, and while they were terrified, they hung them up when their attention was diverted...

That was how Colton and the others ended up stuffed into the sauerkraut jar.

The remaining three managed to escape, but the old woman and Flesh ambushed them in the forest. They were knocked unconscious, tied up, and thrown into a dry well temporarily.

"And then we returned. I wanted to have a bite of human flesh... But this cunning old woman caught me off guard and stuffed me back into the jar!"

The old woman snorted, "This little brat has no shame when she sees a strong man. I had to force her into the jar!"

At this point, it was clear to everyone that there was no good to be found in either of them as they were up to no good.

Lilly pulled out the frying pan, causing Flesh and the old woman to panic. They pleaded, "What are you doing? We've already explained everything, why are you still hitting us?"

Lilly sneered, "I'm sorry, I grabbed the wrong weapon."

Both Flesh and the old woman breathed a sigh of relief.

However, in the next moment, Lilly revealed a purple sledgehammer.

Before Flesh and the old woman could beg for mercy, they were pulverized into dust by the powerful

blow of the purple sledgehammer.

The jar of souls let out a satisfied burp.

Lilly possessed both strength and ferocity.

Lilly was not simply easy to negotiate with. Some ghosts could be spared, but others could not.

Considering the malicious and scheming actions of these two ghosts, Lilly would never let them go.

It was pitiful that the old woman had lost her son and suffered for thousands of years. But she encouraged other people's daughters-in-law to hang themselves and used other people's sons as bait to attract Pretty Flesh, knowing well that Pretty Flesh would devour those sons. All for the sake of revenge.

They did not deserve sympathy.

However, Pretty Flesh repeatedly harmed others, framing the old woman for her misdeeds several times, and even cooperating with the old woman to harm Mr. Shaw and the others.

This was inexcusable.

Josh exclaimed, "I think that these two deserve it as well. They are enemies and cannot coexist, yet they were still able to cooperate."

Lilly nodded and said, "You're right... Let's go. We need to find the remaining three people."

The group of people retraced their steps.

On their journey, they still encountered many lonely and sorrowful ghosts, but they were no longer as fearful as they were when they first arrived.

After all, Lilly was with them and they brought amulets.

Passing by the house of the hanged woman, Lilly noticed a woman hanging from the beam, her feet adorned with embroidered shoes. The chair beneath her feet was cold.

Curious, Lilly turned to Colton and asked, "Have you guys ever sat on that chair?"

Colton looked up and nodded, saying, "Yes."

He had not seen any ghosts. He was able to see the Flesh and Bone earlier because they were ghosts. Real skin and bones could naturally be seen, but not ghosts!

Lilly admired Colton for his bravery.

Uncle Shaw is so amazing, he's not afraid of anything.

Lilly asked, "Why did you sit on that chair?"

Colton's typically cold demeanor softened slightly as he responded in his usual icy voice, "To sense the presence of ghosts."

Blake had trained himself to concentrate in places with ghosts, honing his ability to detect subtle changes in temperature in the air. Where there were ghosts, the temperature would differ, with an indescribable coldness. This required self-awareness and continuous training until his perception became sharp.

Colton continued, "When we first arrived in this village, I did feel that it was colder than outside. But once we entered, I felt the same coldness everywhere."

It was difficult to experience the indescribable temperature change that Blake had described.

"We walked around the village for three days and noticed that sitting on this chair allowed us to sense different changes."

Upon sitting down, their hair would feel cold, and a chill would run down their backs. However, after a few seconds, this feeling would dull again.

They had to bask in the sun and then return to the chair again. Only then could they sense the difference the moment they sat down. But soon, the difference would fade away, and they could not feel it anymore. They had to repeat the process over and over again.

After hearing Colton's words, everyone fell silent.

Lilly and Lisa were shocked.

Blake glanced at the female ghost hanging from the beam and gave a thumbs-up.

How brave!

### [Chapter 630 Wanna See What You Were Sitting On?](#)

Seeing Mr. MacNeil give a thumbs up, several team members could not contain themselves any longer. The silence they had maintained throughout the journey became unbearable.

One team member with thick eyebrows and a square face could not hold back and asked, "Mr. MacNeil, what's going on here?"

Blake replied, "It's nothing. I just think you guys did a good job at finding out this chair is different."

The team members suddenly became excited, exclaiming, "Yes, yes! We've made progress, right?"

Blake hesitated for a moment and said, "Well..."

Lilly chimed in, "Um..."

Well, it could not exactly be considered progress.

They did not believe in ghosts before, but after seeing one, they had trained themselves to believe, even though they had not encountered any ghosts for quite a while.

Now, after coming to Poncook Summit and exploring for a few days, they discovered that the chair was somewhat different. But despite sitting on it for a long time, they had not seen any ghosts.

It was only when they saw Flesh and Bone chasing after them that their views on the world had been shattered.

So when Blake said, "Well done" and "You found this chair," it felt like being praised by a teacher as an elementary school student.

Damian asked, "Mr. MacNeil, is this chair meant for ghosts?"

Lucas added, "Mr. MacNeil, can you sense the presence of ghosts?"

Colton looked at Blake intently.

Josh interrupted and asked, "Do you wanna see what all of you have been sitting on?"

Suddenly, Blake turned to Josh and asked, "By the way, where's your camera?"

Josh handed the camera to Blake inexplicably, saying, "It's here, what is it, Uncle Blake?"

Thinking that his uncle was concerned about the live broadcast, Blake reassured him, "Don't worry, I cut off the live stream halfway."

Blake took the camera and passed it to Colton, saying, "Alright, you guys sit on the chair again. After sitting down, take pictures of your surroundings with this camera."

"Colton will be the first."

Blake smiled mischievously, his intentions seemingly malicious.



Colton glanced down at Lilly and asked, "Is it safe to sit on the chair? Is there something wrong with it?"

Lilly shook her head and replied, "There shouldn't be any issues... just be prepared in case you see a ghost and get frightened."

Colton took the camera, feeling confident that there was nothing to be scared of.

After all, they had come here for training.

Ivan silently watched his father enter the house, hesitating to speak.

After a fierce struggle internally, he chose to remain silent and observe quietly.

Colton sat down on the chair and turned on the camera.

The camera's screen looked no different from any regular camera, displaying vibrant colors and high-resolution pixels.

As he held the camera, his hands trembled slightly, and that was when he noticed an old woman sitting on the stone steps by the door!

The old woman was dressed in gray and stared at him expressionlessly.

Colton secretly breathed a sigh of relief, thinking that it was nothing to worry about.

However, when he glanced back at the camera in his hands, he was taken aback.

How is this camera able to capture that? Is there someone in this world capable of such technology?

Blake smirked and said, "Keep going, move it back and forth, left and right, up and down."

As Colton continued to perceive the subtle temperature changes, he followed Blake's instructions and moved the camera up and down, left and right, capturing his surroundings.

To his relief, there was nothing unusual in the camera's view. No ghostly figures or hideous faces appeared on the screen. Feeling more at ease, he decided to move the camera upward.

But at that moment, Colton's eyes widened in shock.

On the camera's display, a pair of embroidered shoes suddenly appeared, hanging right in front of his face. A woman was hanging from the beam, her head bowed, her eyes open, and staring directly at him.

As the wind blew, the female ghost swayed with it, and her feet swung towards Colton's face...

Colton finally experienced what Blake described—the slight change in temperature.

His face turned cold, and his mind was filled with a deafening buzz. This moment would forever be etched in his memory.

In a rush, Colton stood up, quickly exited the room, and approached Lilly.

He positioned himself a few steps away from her.

Ivan watched in surprise, not quite understanding the situation, while the other team members looked on with confusion.

Damian asked cautiously, "Mr. Shaw, what's wrong?"

Lucas added, "Did you feel it?"

Colton calmly handed the camera to Damian, his expression still composed. He replied, "I felt it. Now it's your turn."

Damian's excitement grew. They were finally going to experience it too.

But he wondered why they needed the camera.

Cautioning himself, he asked, "Mr. Shaw, what did you see in the camera?"

Colton, with his hands behind his back, calmly replied, "Go and see for yourself. Don't ask me. Do you want me to fight your battles for you?"

The team members fell into a momentary silence, contemplating the situation. They realized that it was just a camera, nothing more.

Recalling the various methods and superstitions they had heard before—like walking with a black umbrella at night or looking behind from the crotch—they had taken plenty of pictures with their mobile phones, but nothing had ever happened.

Damian took the initiative and entered the room, sitting on the chair. As he fiddled with the camera, he mumbled to himself, "Why did he turn off the camera..."

With a beep, the camera turned on, and Damian held it up with a smile, saying, "Here we go!"

The direction they were facing while sitting on the chairs was towards the outside, and the camera's lens was also pointing outward. But when Damian looked at the camera, he was immediately terrified.

He saw a grim old woman on the stone steps!

His hands trembled, and he quickly raised his head to look outside, but there was nothing there. When he looked back at the camera...the old woman had somehow appeared on the screen!

"Ah!" Damian jumped out of the chair in fright.

Blake's voice came coldly, "Is that how brave you are? Mr. Shaw saw it too, and he didn't even flinch."

Colton, who had been singled out to deceive the others, felt a bit awkward.

Damian's face turned pale as he stammered, "She...she suddenly appeared in front of me!"

Being taken aback when he lowered his head and raised it again, only to find the old woman right in front of him...

Who wouldn't be afraid?

Lilly beckoned, "Stay put, old lady!"

The old woman was silent.

Seeing Damian frightened like a startled dog, the other team members could not help but burst into laughter.

Lucas spoke up, "I'll give it a try! So what if there's an old lady at the door? Come on, what's there to be scared of?"

Damian emphasized, "She appeared suddenly!"

Other team members were skeptical about it

The team members knew that they were mentally prepared as they watched several horror movies before coming to this place. They understood the typical patterns and routines in such movies.

One team member, Lucas, expressed his confidence and announced that he would set an example for the others, "Watch and learn!"

He confidently walked into the room, sat on the chair, and turned on the camera while playfully repeating, "Why did you turn it off? To save power?"

He raised the camera and pointed it toward the outside of the door. And just as expected, there was an old woman there!

Thanks to his preparation, Lucas remained calm and even greeted the old lady, saying, "Hello, old lady."

However, as he looked at the top of his head, he noticed something amiss with his hair. Perplexed, he raised the camera to get a better look, and what he saw made his legs go weak with fear. His face turned pale, and he quickly stood up and rushed out of the room.

The two remaining team members asked in confusion, "What happened? Is there a ghost above you?"

Lucas' lips trembled as he replied, "No, there's nothing... You can find out for yourselves."

Both Lucas and Colton had experienced something similar, where everything seemed fine until the camera turned to the top, indicating that there must be a ghost on the roof as well.

Now armed with this knowledge, the team members felt more confident and determined not to be scared like dogs anymore. They were ready to face whatever came their way.