

Necropolis Immortal

Chapter 10: Panorama of Clarity

“Flying Head Technique!”

Lu Yun made a strangled noise of resignation when the corner of his eye caught Ge Long throwing his own head. Was this guy a human or ghost? Even a zombie would lose its movement ability if it lost its head. But look at Ge Long, using it as a weapon!

However, Lu Yun had no further time to dwell on this. He picked up Wanfeng and sprinted out of the stone chamber.

All was dark outside of the chamber; there wasn't a single spot of light. His maid in his arms, Lu Yun stumbled forward. He suddenly felt a gust of wind on his face and an abrupt tightening of his scalp. Somehow, his hands loosened and he dumped Wanfeng on the ground. Turning around, he sprinted backwards.

“Sir, that really hurt!” Wanfeng's mournful tone rose in the darkness.

“You're not Wanfeng!” shouted Lu Yun. He needed to get back to the stone chamber!

“Who is this servant if not Wanfeng?” The voice sounded very close to Lu Yun, like it was right next to him.

“Wanfeng is alive, but you're dead!” He'd inadvertently touched the girl's hand just now and though her wrist was warm, there was no pulse. No pulse meant a dead person! Whoever was in his arms was definitely not Wanfeng, so where had the real one gone?

Lu Yun's head prickled with horror. Though there were endless corpse flies and a thousand-year-old zombie in the stone chamber, there was a chance of survival as long as Ge Long was there. If he stayed to face the unknown bogeyman in the darkness, death was the only possible outcome.

“Cultivators... cultivators! Would I be afraid of these things if I was a cultivator?”

While tombs on Earth might be preternatural, running across just one zombie was like hitting the ultimate jackpot. It wasn't anything like this world, where all sorts of strange and unearthly things abounded! If Lu Yun had Wanfeng's skills, he wouldn't be so, well, useless.

“Can it be a malevolent ghost?” He clenched his teeth and picked up speed. But he realized with shock in the next second that the stone chamber in front of him, illuminating his destination with green light, was agonizingly far away.

No matter how hard he ran, he couldn't make it back into the stone chamber.

"I'm running around in circles... Ghost Hits Wall!" Lu Yun halted, horrified chills running down his back.

Ghost Hits Wall was a feng shui formation that beguiled the senses and made one run around in circles on the spot. Another way of putting it was to say that a malevolent ghost had covered one's eyes, creating delusions. Regular Ghost Hits Wall wouldn't entrap Lu Yun at all. The only possibility was that his senses had been hoodwinked by something in the darkness.

"Sir, don't you want this servant anymore?" An ominous voice rang by his ear as the fetid odor of decay burrowed into his nostrils.

Lu Yun reflexively backed up, but the thing in the dark stuck closely to him, like a second shadow. A putrid smell of rotten fish suddenly appeared in the odor of decay; it seemed that something had opened its mouth wide.

"Since you don't want this servant, then how about I eat you? You look very delicious!"

This was what Ge Long had just said. This thing had been by Lu Yun's side all this time!

Swoosh!

Suddenly, teal sword light flared in the darkness.

"Ah!!" shrieked the thing in the dark.

A spark of fire lit up the dimness. Wanfeng hobbled over to Lu Yun's side, her face pale.

"Milord, it really hurt when you threw me down to the ground." The maid rubbed her butt and looked mournfully at Lu Yun.

He grabbed her wrist and felt a pulse. "I was tricked!" Realization struck him. He had indeed been holding Wanfeng just now, but whatever it was in the darkness had obscured his senses, making him cast her away.

The maid was a core realm cultivator, after all, with the corresponding strength to match it. Their unknown assailant didn't have a chance to attack Lu Yun with her by his side. That must be why it'd chosen to deceive his senses—so that he would leave his bodyguard behind!

"That was my bad, I fell for the monster's trick just now," Lu Yun hastily comforted.

Wanfeng blinked. This was the first time that Lu Yun had apologized to her, ever. Her cheeks flushed red and bashfulness crept into her expression.

“No, no, it’s all this servant’s fault. I was so scared by Ge Long that I fainted.” Whatever had been lurking in the darkness had vanished after being injured by the girl. “What was that just now? Why does everything in here like to copy my voice?” Wanfeng wanted to cry again.

“That was a malevolent ghost, I think, but it doesn’t seem native to this tomb.” Lu Yun relaxed when he saw that Wanfeng was alright. A decrepit air of decay suffused everything in the tomb, but whatever that had been just now was patently out of place here. It felt like it’d come from outside.

Have other things entered the tomb? Or is it a vengeful spirit born out of all the resentment and hate from the dead souls at the southern side of the mountain?

A foreboding feeling slunk into Lu Yun’s heart.

The massive horde of corpse flies had disappeared after they entered the darkness.

“What is this place?” Lu Yun widened his eyes, trying to see things clearly through the gloom. The fire in Wanfeng’s hand was too small, so he could only clearly identify a corner of the space.

...is this a room?

“Mi—sir, this seems to be a lady’s private chambers.” Thanks to the consciousness of a cultivator, Wanfeng’s vision was much better than Lu Yun’s.

“A bedroom?” The governor’s mind spun rapidly. If there was a room in a tomb, it was most likely where the tomb owner resided in life and thus faithfully copied by the tomb builders.

“Sir, come look! There’s a painting here!” Wanfeng rushed to a corner of the room and stared at a painting hung on a wall. “She’s so beautiful!” she murmured to herself.

Lu Yun followed his maid and peered at the painting with the aid of her fire. It was a stunningly pretty girl of roughly sixteen years of age. Her pristine white robes floated in the air and she stood on the back of a sword, clasping a painting scroll in her hand.

The image of the white-clad girl jolted Lu Yun’s heart painfully when he looked at it. She’s so beautiful!

Even though it was only a painting, her appearance, bearing, and mien were on full display. It felt like an actual unparalleled beauty stood before them, rather than an image mounted on a wall.

To Pill Fairy Yuying. From Wayfarer.

Lu Yun noted the dedication written in the corner of the painting. Small seal script?

This was a style of calligraphy popular in the Qin and Han Dynasties. As a tomb raider well versed in Chinese history, he could naturally read it.

So it turns out the written language in this world is the small seal script. Though it was outside his scope of expectations, it put him at ease as this lowered his chances of exposing himself.

“Wayfarer? Pill Fairy Yuying?” He murmured the names on the painting. “Is it possible that the lady in the painting is the one buried in this tomb?”

“Pill Fairy Yuying?” Wanfeng’s eyes widened with surprise. “Why is it her?”

“Do you know her?”

“Yes!” The maid nodded. “Pill Fairy Yuying was a famed personage from a thousand years ago. She was the eighth governor of Dusk Province! Legends say that she possessed peerless grace and elegance and was unmatched in her generation. She refined an immortal pill when she was still just a cultivator. However, she was ambushed when undergoing her heavenly tribulation and didn’t make it through the trial. Who would’ve thought that this would be her tomb!”

“Milord!” Wanfeng was so excited she almost jumped into the air. “Since this is the tomb of the Pill Fairy, perhaps we can find the Aurum Openia Pill here, or even its recipe!”

“Really?” Lu Yun’s eyes lit up and his heart raced. He’d be able to cultivate if he had the pill. He would be able to do the things that Wanfeng could do!

He would even be able to continue as the master of Dusk Province! The province may be impoverished, but if he altered the Enneawym Coffinbearers layout in the governor’s manor, he’d change the province beyond recognition! What an invigorating idea!

Whoosh!

An ill wind rose at his back, as if something was pouncing at him.

“I’ve been waiting for you!” Wanfeng whirled around, drew an elegant shape with her longsword, and pierced an item in the darkness.

Pfft!

Something was punctured and splashed sticky liquid toward Lu Yun. Teal light flared from his maid as she blocked it from reaching him.

Roll.

A head rolled to a stop by their feet. It was rotted beyond recognition, so its species couldn't be identified. Its eyeballs protruded from its sockets and a hole had been drilled through its forehead, like Ge Long's. However, its mouth still opened and closed, wanting to bite and tear at something.

"Wanfeng, chop this head in half!" Lu Yun hastily shuffled back in fear.

"Understood!" Wanfeng's maturity had grown after this round of tempering in the tomb and she was more decisive when it came to killing.

Raising her sword high, light exploded from it and cut the head into several slices. "How dare you copy me! How dare you!!" she cursed as she hacked with her sword.

Within the depths of the tomb, the burial chamber.

An enormous sarcophagus floated in the middle of the air, a green flame softly dancing beneath it. It was elegant and spritely, like a fire elemental, and plainly different from the green flames that Lu Yun and Wanfeng had encountered.

Eight shapes clad in black stood chanting around the sarcophagus with raised hands. They seemed to be conducting some sort of ritual.

Suddenly, one of their numbers started. "My corpse puppet just died. Someone else has entered the tomb." A hoarse voice indicated long periods of lack of normal use.

"Perfect timing," responded another. "We can use them as sacrificial offerings. We need to open Yuying's sarcophagus as quickly as possible and obtain the Panorama of Clarity. Our sect has plotted for a thousand years in order to get our hands on it. Nothing can go wrong at this juncture!

"Damn that Wayfarer for burying Yuying's body along with the treasure in this ancient tomb! He's wasted our time for nothing."

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"It won't come back to life this time, will it?"

Wanfeng looked at the fragments on the ground and pointed, her lips twisted in disgust. The flame on her fingertip rushed down and reduced the pieces to ashes. Plainly, Ge Long's revival was too much of a shock and had scarred her.

"It definitely won't." Lu Yun shook his head after seeing his maid's actions. "But what was that? It confused my senses just now and almost ate me. But since it can be killed, it shouldn't be a malevolent ghost. It's an unknown entity, or maybe just another zombie."

He heaved a long sigh of relief. “The bedroom should be the antechamber. If my guess serves me correctly, the burial chamber should be right after the antechamber. Wanfeng, make the fire a bit bigger so the whole place is lit up.”

“Understood.” Wanfeng extended her fingers.

Whoosh!

The small flame in her hand jumped up lightly and inflated to the size of a human head, instantly illuminating the premises.

“It’s a girl’s room, alright!” Lu Yun took a close look around. Though it’d lain quiet for a thousand years, there wasn’t a speck of dust anywhere. The layout was refined and exquisite, a clear indication that the owner of the room was pure in heart and spirit.

However, there were four doors to the room, one for each cardinal direction.

“Another setup!” The sight sent the Dusk governor into deep thought. “This is a layout of the four divisions. We just came from the south, which is ruled by fire. That’s why there were those green flames. The millennia-old zombie could also break the wall just now because of the fire.

“Metal rules the west, and is a land of slaughter that brings death to all that enter. Water rules the north, so a swamp should lie behind that door.

“The burial chamber must be in the east!” After a round of calculations, Lu Yun looked at the door to the east and rushed excitedly to it.

“Sir, wait for me!” Wanfeng exclaimed.

When Lu Yun reached the door, he softly pushed on it. A ripple flashed across it and swallowed him whole.

“Milord?!” Stunned shock barreled into Wanfeng and she pushed the door with all her might, but it didn’t move at all.

1. Ghost Hits Wall is the literal translation of the Chinese idiom for going in circles in an increasingly fragmented, disjointed manner. I went for the rare literal flair this time because it’s also a name.