

R Cultivator 406

Chapter 406: Future is Inevitable

Tyler felt like he'd been pierced by a thousand thorns all over his body. Agony flared through every nerve, and he groaned, writhing on the ground like a worm struck by lightning.

"F*cking... hurts... dyamm..." he cursed, unable to endure the pain anymore. He rolled onto his side, his face contorted in agony.

A shrill, maniacal laugh echoed through the smoke-filled battlefield.

"HAHAHAHA! FUN! THIS IS FUN!" The Clown cackled wildly, eyes glowing with a crazed joy. He twirled in place like a demented ballerina, then suddenly stopped, pulling out something from his coat that looked... suspicious.

"Now let's play something different!" the Clown grinned, producing a rod. It was shaped disturbingly like a mushroom and glowed with ominous energy.

Tyler's mouth twitched. "Is that...?"

He didn't finish the sentence. His instincts kicked in. His buttocks tightened reflexively.

The Clown said nothing. With childlike glee, he pressed a button on the rod. It began to vibrate at a dangerously high frequency. Sharp, gleaming nails sprang from the top, and then—like a drill—began to spin rapidly.

Tyler's eyes widened.

"You've got to be kidding me..."

With a celebratory whistle, the Clown threw a small ball to the ground. It burst into an explosion of colorful smoke, party streamers, and shiny ribbons.

The Clown disappeared.

"Oh no—" Tyler's voice caught in his throat.

He instinctively activated his Ice Clone ability. In a flash, his entire body turned to shimmering ice.

CRACK!

The ice statue shattered violently—from the rear. Behind it stood the Clown, wielding the spinning rod with unholy intent.

"Tsk. That annoying ability again," the Clown muttered, disappointed.

A few meters away, the real Tyler reappeared, bent over slightly, hand instinctively checking his backside.

"Thank goodness... I escaped," he whispered with a shiver, eyes still wide with horror. "That was way too close. I think my dignity almost exploded."

The Clown raised the rod again and marched toward him with theatrical flair.

"Come on, come on! Come and enjoy my Peach Maker!" he sang, swinging the vibrating rod like a baton.

"Peach Destroyer, more like," Tyler muttered. "Looks like I have no choice... Time for Plan B."

From the Clown's sleeves, another rod emerged—this one longer, unnaturally flexible, and clearly not designed for construction work.

Tyler raised both hands and stepped forward with a nervous smile. "Alright, alright! Time out!"

The Clown stopped, puzzled.

Tyler turned into ice once more, and with a soft tink, his body shattered again—revealing the Clown already standing there, rod pointed toward where Tyler had stood.

"I said stop! Let's talk! Stop stabbing me in the back! You Necrophilia." Tyler's voice echoed from the shadows as he reappeared once again, crouched atop a crumbling rooftop.

"You don't have to do this, man. Not for some stupid dreams," he added with a sigh.

Plan B: Talk his way out. The lamest plan imaginable. But when butt-based doom loomed, even pride could wait.

"What do you mean, 'stupid dreams'? It already happened, You already burned my fortress into Ground." the Clown said with a bored voice.

"It happened because you made it happen," Tyler said, lowering his voice, trying to sound more... emotionally resonant. "You and I... we're not so different."

The Clown blinked, then burst out laughing.

"HAHAHAHA! No way—wait, wait, I've heard this before! That 'Talk no Jutsu' thing!" The Clown held his sides, nearly doubled over with laughter. "You're gonna stand there and tell me your sad little story and hope it changes my heart?"

He spun the rod threateningly. "That crap only works in fantasy books! You trying to protagonist your way out of this?"

Apparently, even in the Boundless World, readers were familiar with tropes. "Talk no Jutsu" had become a known strategy—often mocked but occasionally effective. It's a famous trope in novels in that world. Even the clown knows it.

"Well, let's see it! Make me cry! Did your parents die in front of you?" the Clown asked mockingly.

Tyler vanished into Ice again, avoiding the sudden stab that followed.

"Probably? My memories have been wiped, So I don't remember." Tyler said, appearing above on a ledge, casually dodging another rod strike.

"You see, my life's been hard. Sure, I'm rich. And yes, I have powerful and beautiful women around me. But still... sometimes I go out and sleep with other girls for excitement."

He paused dramatically. "Money? Not a problem. Resources? Endless. I could retire today and spend the rest of my life soaking in rose-scented hot springs."

The Clown raised an eyebrow.

"And yet, I'm still out here... sailing north... chasing a legend called 'Eternity.'" Tyler's voice was suddenly filled with an odd sadness.

The Clown stopped moving.

"And...?" he asked slowly.

"And what? You want a punchline?" Tyler tilted his head.

"I don't see any tragedy in your past!" the Clown shouted. "Where's the heartbreak? The loss? The tears?!"

"Ohhh, I get it," Tyler said as hit his closed right hand on his left palm. "I need to say something tragic, right? Something that'll move your heart?"

He cleared his throat and adopted a somber expression.

"Alright then, here goes... Boo hoo... My father was poor, so I killed an entire village instead of getting a job... boo hoo... My sister-in-law was too cute, so I forced myself on her... boo hoo... Such a tragic life, right?"

The Clown's grin vanished.

The air shifted.

An overwhelming pressure exploded outward, crushing the surrounding space. Prana burst in waves, distorting the air around him. The earth cracked beneath his feet.

Tyler raised a peace sign, lips curled into a smug grin.

He turned into Ice statue again.

"I WILL DEFINITELY KILL YOU NOW, TYLER WHITE!!"

The Clown's voice echoed like a thunderclap, rippling across the entire island.

"Huh?! The Clown is fighting Mr. Tyler?" Gang Leader Darla jumped up in panic, her eyes widening in alarm. Beside her, her daughter Alna froze, face paling.

Meanwhile, sitting across from them, Lily calmly took a sip of her tea before setting the cup down.

"Oh no... how unfortunate," she said flatly. "Well, anyway... hands in the air."

Darla didn't hesitate. She raised her arms instantly, surrendering without resistance.

"And you... hands on the table. Turn around and show your panties," Mathilda said playfully to Alna.

Bonk! A swift chop from Lily landed on Mathilda's head.

"Not the time."

Back in the collapsing domain of Clown, chains suddenly wrapped around Tyler White, coiling like hungry serpents. Until now, the Clown had been playing with him, never taking the battle seriously. But now? Now it was personal.

The Clown wasn't laughing anymore.

He pulled out a joker card and held it up. The card shimmered, then morphed into a sleek, obsidian dagger with a crimson edge that pulsed with deadly energy.

"You know what this is?" he said coldly as he walked toward the restrained Tyler. "This knife is the strongest weapon I have. Every time I use it, it becomes more fragile. This is its final use... its last act. It can kill anyone below the Immortal Realm instantly. Even a Divine Seeker with Nascent Divinity would crumble under it."

Tyler struggled but couldn't move an inch. The chains were too tight. Too strong.

"Wait..." he shouted desperately.

"What? Trying Talk no Jutsu again?" the Clown sneered. "Not gonna work this time."

He raised the blade. The air itself seemed to tremble as he prepared to strike.

Then—

A voice cut through the tension like a melody.

"Don't kill him."

The Clown froze.

A figure had appeared between them.

It was a woman with soft eyes and flowing hair, her presence glowing with an otherworldly aura.

Amber.

This wasn't another illusion or delusion. Tyler saw her too.

The Clown blinked. "Amber...? Amber, is that really you...?"

She nodded gently, stepping forward. "I escaped. I'm free now."

The Clown's eyes widened. His entire expression shifted—from hatred to confusion, then to a desperate joy.

"Amber... Is that the real you...?" His voice cracked as he dropped the knife. His trembling hands reached for her cheeks. "What... You can't recognize me?" Amber asked softly, pouting.

And just like that, the madness drained from him.

His wild grin faded. His eyes became clearer, like clouds parting after a storm. He pulled her into an embrace, burying his face into her shoulder.

And then he laughed—

A genuine, broken laugh, filled with tears.

"Heh... HAHAHA... Hahahaha..."

Tears streamed down his cheeks as he wept and laughed in the same breath.

One of his past visions—a future that had haunted him for so long—was playing out before his eyes.

Amber was holding the knife he had dropped. she plunged it straight into his chest.

"So... I never changed the future... This was always going to happen..." he whispered as the dagger cracked.

The chaotic domain around them shattered, fading into the wind like a dream breaking at dawn.

The chains around Tyler dissolved.

Tyler stood beside Amber, staring at the Clown who now knelt with the dagger still embedded in his chest.

The Clown coughed, blood dripping from his lips as he turned toward Tyler.

"Heh... Well played, Tyler... cough... cough" he rasped, chuckling bitterly.

Tyler said nothing. There was no joy in victory. Just silence.

The Clown looked up at Amber one last time.

"I'm sor—"

Before he could finish, his breath left him. His eyes dimmed. His body slumped to the ground.

The Clown was gone.

The bloodstained knife crumbled into glowing embers and vanished.

Mana emerged from within Amber's body, chasing after the glowing embers, hoping to catch them for research.

As she left, Amber's body collapsed to the ground.

Tyler dropped to his knees, exhausted.

A few seconds passed.

Suddenly, Amber sat up and gently touched Tyler's cheek.

"Mana, stop playing," Tyler muttered, too drained to move.

"Thank you," Amber said with a peaceful smile.

Tyler frowned. "I said stop playing, Mana. I'm already exhausted."

"Mana isn't playing," came Mana's voice from behind him. "Mana really tried to catch those lights of powerful dagger. but Mana couldn't."

Tyler froze.

His eyes widened as he slowly turned his head.

Amber's body was still lying motionless on the ground —

A soft, serene smile resting on her face.

Chapter 407: Aftermath

Tyler woke up feeling refreshed. He was in the residential wing of the Pocket Dimension built into his ship.

Stretching his limbs, he stepped out of the house and onto the cobbled path just outside. A group of young maidens, dressed in light-colored dresses, waved at him cheerfully as they passed by. They were female slaves Mathilda bought and stored in this dimension, they are the one in charge of taking care of environment in the pocket dimension.

Tyler smiled gently and waved back, not saying a word. The Girls blushed. Sometimes Mathilda likes to drag him to have fun with girls that volunteer.

He walked towards the loney door of the Pocket Dimension and passed through it effortlessly. In an instant, he walked out from the door which leads to the white pearl.

He then reached the high deck. With a silent motion, he floated off the ship and glided down to the edge of the sea. The salty wind caressed his face as the shoreline came into view.

A large group had already gathered there. Their eyes turned toward him the moment he arrived. There was awe, reverence, and perhaps a touch of fear. After all, this was the man who had defeated the infamous Crazy Clown.

At Tyler's signal, several men stepped forward, carrying a long coffin. Unlike most, it wasn't black or adorned with gold. It was painted with vibrant, almost garish colors—reds, greens, and purples swirling together in chaotic patterns. On top of it, a tattered flag bearing the Circus Pirates' emblem fluttered in the breeze.

It was the Clown's coffin.

Tyler stepped forward, his eyes steady. "If there's a next life for you," he said quietly, "then please... be born and grow up as a normal person."

With practiced coordination, the men carried the coffin into the shallow waters of the sea. Once it was floating, one of them raised his hand and released a pulse of controlled Aura. The coffin glided forward, steady and dignified. Then, without warning, a spark of flame erupted on its surface. It wasn't a roaring inferno—just enough to honor the dead without desecrating the sea.

The flames licked the edges of the coffin, warming the bright paint for just a moment, before the entire thing slowly sank beneath the waves.

This was a sea burial—an ancient rite among immortal practitioners, especially those who spent their lives traveling in Sea. It was common among pirates and adventurers, a way to return to the sea that had raised and devoured so many of them.

But Tyler wasn't finished yet.

He turned away from the gathered crowd and flew silently toward the nearby forest. There, beneath a flowering spirit tree, stood a lone grave—marked only by a simple, white stone. The air here was quiet, still, sacred.

Here lay Amber.

Her true body, not the one of the Copies Tyler used to play with the Clown, had been cremated and given a proper burial.

Tyler knelt before the grave and placed a single flower upon it. A Spirit Lily—one of her favorites, according to the diary.

"I made sure you weren't even buried in the same sea as him," Tyler said softly. "You deserved better. I hope your next life is peaceful... and beautiful."

He, then turned and walked away.

He had never used Amber's real body in his fight against the Clown. The very idea disgusted him. He wasn't about to add to her torment just to win a battle. The girl had suffered enough – even after her death she torture by the Clown for centuries.

Yes centuries, the Clown's story had begun over 800 years ago. He was never a genius in cultivation, nor did he possess the endless resources and absurd luck that someone like Tyler White enjoyed. In fact, his rise to the Divine Seeker Realm over eight centuries was... quite ordinary in the Boundless World.

But that was the difference. Some climbed mountains with bleeding hands. Others soared past them with wings made of fortune. Tyler belongs to the latter category.

Lily, Mathilda, Mana and many other women he acquainted with are Far Older than Tyler. Except Silvia.

"I sensed something disturbing here," Lily said as she flew down, her boots touching the dirt with a soft thud. She fell into step beside Tyler, brushing a few wind-blown strands of hair behind her ear. "Were you thinking something bad about me?"

Tyler stiffened slightly, caught off guard by her directness. "N-nothing," he said, eyes darting away.

'Did she notice I was thinking about her age?' he thought nervously. 'Is this some kind of woman's instinct? Scary...'

Lily narrowed her eyes but let it slide, a smirk playing on her lips. "Alright, Mr. Innocent," she said playfully. "So, how did you finish off the Clown?"

Tyler took a deep breath. The events were still fresh in his mind, chaotic and intense. He began to explain everything that had happened while she was away.

"In the diary Mana and I found, we saw how the Clown used the Joker card Knife to murder many strong opponents. That thing's cursed Artifact, or maybe worse, he acquired it by chance. At first, my plan was simple: blow up the place and make a run for it. Let the chaos hide our escape."

He paused, staring into the horizon as if replaying the moment in his mind.

"But when I saw the knife in the diary, I realized the best way to deal with enemy is turning them good." Tyler said which made Lily confused.

"A good enemy is a dead enemy. So I provoked him—pushed all the right buttons. Got him so enraged that he went in for the kill without thinking. Then Mana took control of Amber's body, grabbed the Joker Knife, and turned it on him. One clean strike."

Lily gave an impressed nod. "That's risky, but smart. You used his madness against him..."

"Yeah, it took a toll," Tyler admitted, rubbing his temples. "She was able to act like Amber a little due to the things she saw in the Diary."

Lily's expression turned thoughtful for a moment, then she shook it off. "Well, while you were busy with that maniac, some groups of pirates tried stir Chaos. But we dealt with them."

"That's good to hear," Tyler said, nodding. "If the area's secure, maybe we can repurpose this island. Turn it into a trading hub or something. The infrastructure's not bad, once you strip out the creepy circus aesthetics."

He glanced over at the broken rollercoaster. "Hey, what happened to the death ride?"

Lily followed his gaze, eyes resting on the twisted rails and shattered supports. "Seems the circus tent had the main control. But someone," she paused pointedly, "blew up the entire thing."

Tyler coughed awkwardly and looked away.

"For now," Tyler continued, changing the subject, "let's rest. We've got a lot on our plate. We still need to stabilize the Level 3 fishery, manage this island, and—honestly—I need more hands. I'll probably have to start recruiting again."

"About that... It might not be possible." Lily said, her tone suddenly shifting.

Tyler raised an eyebrow. "About what? Resting?"

"No," she said, sighing. "About the island."

There was a long pause before she continued.

"This place isn't just a random piece of land, Tyler. It turns out the island is under the one of the Overlords of the Sea—the Dragon King."

Tyler stopped walking. "Wait, what?! I didn't see anything in the diary about the Dragon King. Are you sure?"

"Positive," Lily replied. "It wasn't recorded in the diary because... well, the diary doesn't keep a complete history. It only stores the memories and information that the user—meaning the Clown—chose to imprint. He left out everything about his dealings with the Dragon King."

"That's suspicious," Tyler muttered, his brow furrowing. "So how do you know about it then?"

Lily pulled out a glowing scroll, ethereal symbols etched into the surface. "Found this in the Clown's storage ring. It's a soul contract. According to this, the Dragon King leased the island to the Clown for 500 years. There are still 100 years left before that lease ends."

Tyler stared at the scroll, dumbfounded. "So this whole place technically still belongs to the Dragon King?"

"Exactly," Lily said. "And that's not all. The contract references a separate, undisclosed agreement between them. We don't know what it is. Whatever it is, it wasn't made public."

Tyler groaned. "Great. Just great. We kill a maniac and clean up a pirate mess, and now we might have an Overlord breathing down our necks."

"We don't know that yet," Lily said. "It's not unusual for people to die out here in the Northern Waters. The Dragon King might not even care. The Clown's soul is already gone. He probably didn't even made deal with the Dragon King himself but with his subordinates."

"Let's just hope we didn't provoke the Dragon King's resentment" Tyler said with an awkward laugh.

"Why does it sounds like a red flag."

"..."

Chapter 408: Ling Tian, Han Bing

Many years ago, five individuals from the Zi World—Tyler, Priscilla, Yu Meixue, Lan Xuero, and Lan Yi—found themselves transported into the Boundless World through a mysterious phenomenon in the Lower Worlds known as Cultivation CC.

They were not the only ones who crossed over.

Other cultivators from the Zi World also ascended: Ling Tian, Yumina, Ella, and an elder from a renowned sect, Fairy Ember Fox. Each of them was chosen for a reason, pulled into the Boundless World as if guided by fate.

Unlike Tyler, who lost all his cultivation and had to begin anew from scratch, the others adopted an advanced technique known as the Energy Conversion Art—a risky but effective process that allowed them to convert their Spiritual Energy into Aura or Prana, the dominant energy types of the Boundless World.

However, it came with limitations. Those who converted their energy could not use both systems simultaneously. The only path to dual cultivation was to cripple themselves entirely and start over.

Far out in the vast ocean of the Boundless World, on a remote flying island.

Ling Tian sat quietly inside a simple wooden hut. The air outside smelled of salt and mist, while within the hut, a light fragrance of tea lingered.

He was lost in thought.

His journey since arriving in this world had been anything but easy. Alongside his childhood friends, he had ventured across Islands, faced countless dangers, and overcome seemingly impossible odds.

Despite the hardships, Ling Tian had forged a name for himself. He was the youngest Grandmaster the Boundless World had seen—achieving a level of power and mastery.

He is even younger than Tyler.

In the Southern Seas, he had obtained part of the legendary Kun Peng Inheritance, the "Peng" half, which had awakened extraordinary abilities within him.

He had even formed a small but elite adventure group called the Twilight Seekers, a band of misfits and dreamers who journeyed through ruin and storm in pursuit of Eternity.

But now, he was alone.

A tragic accident had separated him from his team. Injured and adrift, Ling Tian had found refuge in a sect called the Star Reflection Ocean Sect. With nowhere else to go, and unable to continue his journey, he had accepted the sect's offer of sanctuary.

To repay their kindness, Ling Tian had agreed to a strange and vital task: he was to inject both Wind and Fire Aura into a powerful garden array designed to nurture a unique and sacred plant—the Typhoon Pyreflower, a mystical hybrid that bloomed with flames and roared with eternal winds.

However, peace within the sect was an illusion.

Trouble was brewing. A crisis loomed on the horizon, and the sect was on high alert.

Ling Tian glanced across the room.

Opposite him sat a woman.

She did not belong to the Star Reflection Ocean Sect.

She was no disciple, no elder, and certainly not someone ordinary. Her presence was suffocating, her Prana coiling around her like a dormant storm. Ling Tian had no doubts—if he made a wrong move, she could kill him with a flick of her finger.

Her name was Han Bing.

She is like a Ghost, No one knows that she is here. Han Bing who could enter and leave the sect at will, she feared no one—not even the mysterious Sect Master of the Star Reflection Ocean Sect. Her strength was beyond anything Ling Tian had ever seen before.

He was nervous, cautious, and respectful.

As she sipped from a porcelain teacup, her eyes remained half-lidded, scanning him as though weighing the worth of his soul.

Ling Tian chose his words carefully. "It's said that the Star Reflection Ocean Sect was built by the Sect Master single-handedly. The sect rose to prominence, thanks to her power."

Han Bing raised a brow slightly, the corner of her lip curling. "And?"

Her voice was smooth, laced with curiosity and sarcasm.

Ling Tian hesitated. "If the Sect Master is still alive, she should be able to turn the tide and protect the sect."

"Still alive?" Han Bing chuckled, but her gaze sharpened. "That's an interesting way to phrase it. You don't sound convinced."

He averted his gaze and tried to compose himself.

"To be honest... I don't really know. I'm only guessing based on what little I've heard."

Han Bing gestured toward the teapot. "Brew me some good tea while you talk."

Ling Tian nodded and got to work. After some fumbling, he finally brewed a pot using the expensive Old Spice Tea he had purchased for 100 Lydia per packet. The aroma was fragrant, if not particularly rare.

She sniffed the tea, unimpressed.

"Where's the Northern Spring Tea?" she asked, her tone mildly disappointed.

Ling Tian coughed lightly. "That tea costs 100,000 Lydia per kilo, Senior... and it's extremely hard to find. This Old Spice is a famous blend from the Southern Provinces."

Han Bing didn't press the issue further. Instead, she leaned back and asked, "Tell me more about the Sect Master."

Ling Tian poured the tea and sat down again. "I don't know much. The Sect Master hasn't appeared in nearly one hundred and eighty years. Back then, she stormed through nearby islands, crushing rival sects and building this place from nothing. Once the foundation was laid, she went into seclusion."

He paused, watching Han Bing's expression.

"She's been in seclusion ever since," he continued. "People go into closed-door cultivation either to break through to a higher realm or to heal from grave injuries. If she was trying to ascend, a hundred and eighty years is too long. It might mean she failed. If she was injured... maybe she never recovered."

"So, when you say she's 'still alive'..." Han Bing smiled. "You're holding onto hope."

"I—" Ling Tian struggled to explain. "I just thought... maybe the Acting Sect Leader says the Sect Master is still alive to keep morale up. If people believe a strong figure is backing them, they'll stay loyal and less fearful."

Han Bing's eyes glinted. "Smart boy. And now that even the Acting Sect Leader might fall, what's your plan?"

Ling Tian looked down at his hands. "Whether I live or die doesn't matter to me. I'm more concerned about the Typhoon Pyreflower."

He turned his gaze to the garden beyond the hut's window. There, in a shimmering array, a miraculous flower stood—its petals burning with a flame that needed no fuel, stirred constantly by an eternal, unseen wind.

Actually Han Bing is here because she has eyes on Pyreflower. She is waiting for it to bloom.

Han Bing followed his gaze. "The Pyreflower. That's what you're worried about?"

"I've spent months nurturing it," Ling Tian replied quietly. "It can't be moved. If the sect falls, the flower might wither—or worse, be destroyed by invaders."

A faint smirk tugged at Han Bing's lips. "So you are asking me to protect it."

Ling Tian's face flushed. "Senior, please don't misunderstand. The fate of the sect has nothing to do with you. I wouldn't dare ask such a thing. I only... hope the flower survives. It's too precious to be lost."

Han Bing watched him closely.

Her expression was unreadable. Her body was still, her fingers gently brushing the rim of her cup.

Then she said, "I can help you."

Ling Tian's heart leapt.

"But," she added, "I will require something in return."

He swallowed but said nothing.

Han Bing finished her tea and stood, leaving the hut in silence.

Only after she was gone did Ling Tian exhale, realizing he had been holding his breath the whole time.

He glanced down at the silver locket around his neck. Hanging from it were two tiny trinkets: a miniature gauntlet and a small hammer. Each one represented a promise, a memory, and a friend waiting somewhere out in the vast Boundless World.

Yumina's weapons are Gauntlets.

Ella's weapon is Hammer.

Ling Tian smiled faintly, the weight of solitude slightly lifted by the thought of reunion in future.

After leaving Ling Tian's hut, Han Bing disappeared into thin air and reappeared at the tallest peak of the Flying Island. Shrouded in thick clouds, this peak housed a hidden castle—an ancient place sealed off from the rest of the sect. Only one person aside from the true Sect Master had ever been allowed to enter: the Acting Sect Master.

As Han Bing stepped through the barrier, the Acting Sect Master stood waiting, her posture respectful and eyes lowered.

"Welcome, Sect Master," she said softly, bowing her head.

Han Bing gave a faint nod. "Yeah... Don't worry. If things go bad, I'll intervene."

The Acting Sect Master visibly relaxed, relief washing over her face. She bowed once more before quietly turning to leave.

As the doors shut behind her, Han Bing chuckled to herself. "Heh... I even made that boy owe me a favor just to save my own sect."

Her laughter, tinged with mockery, faded into silence—only to be broken by a harsh, sudden cough.

"Cough... cough"

She raised her hand, and her eyes narrowed at the sight of fresh blood staining her pale fingers.

"Injured for one hundred and eighty years, huh..." she muttered with a bitter smile, wiping the blood away.

With slow, deliberate steps, she moved deeper into the castle, her presence both ethereal and commanding. As the heavy doors creaked shut behind her, the winds howled outside—but inside, all fell into an eerie calm.

Chapter 409: Masha, Isadora Nightkiss

The sun cast a golden shimmer over the vast sea, where a majestic adventurer's ship floated silently across the endless blue.

The breeze was gentle, but there was something peculiar about the scene—every crew member on board wore the same lovestruck expression, eyes twinkling with adoration, as they worked with exaggerated grins.

In the captain's quarters, a woman sat at a large wooden desk, her boots resting on the map-strewn surface. She wore a weathered cowboy hat, and her long, purple hair cascaded down her back like a waterfall.

This was Isadora Nightkiss, infamously known as the Manhunter—though her current expression looked more like a bored librarian than a deadly seductress.

Suddenly, the entire ship shuddered.

Her eyes snapped shut, and in that moment, her consciousness flickered through the vision of one of her crew members stationed on the deck.

There, standing at the bow of the ship, was a striking blonde woman. Her spiky hair seemed to defy gravity, and her muscular figure radiated raw strength. She was surrounded by crew members with weapons drawn—but they still wore those goofy, heart-filled expressions.

"Ho ho..." the woman chuckled, her voice deep and bemused. "You've really leveled up, Isadora. Your charm magic has improved drastically. And you're still not even at the Divine Seeker Realm yet."

Back in the captain's office, Isadora narrowed her eyes.

"Back off," she whispered.

Instantly, the crew lowered their weapons and returned to their tasks, as if nothing had happened.

With a sudden crash, the blonde woman leapt through the air, landing inside the captain's office with enough force to shatter the window—and the floorboards beneath her boots cracked from the impact.

"Savage as always, Masha," Isadora groaned, not even bothering to look up. "Honestly, that's probably why you never get a boyfriend."

Masha snorted, tossing her spiky bangs out of her eyes. "Hmph. As if men are worth the trouble. Besides, it's not like you, the legendary Manhunter, have a harem following you around either. Aren't you technically still a pure little virgin?"

"Sh-shut up, you muscle-headed brute," Isadora muttered, cheeks slightly pink.

Masha grinned devilishly and turned her attention to a plate of food resting on the desk. Without hesitation, she grabbed a fork and began devouring it like she hadn't eaten in days.

"A-are you okay?" Isadora asked, hesitating as she watched Masha stuff her face.

"You have no idea how much crap I had to wade through just to make sure you escaped those people." Masha sighed between mouthfuls. "One of my teammates found out the truth, so I... handled it."

"Handled it?" Isadora repeated, raising an eyebrow.

"I smashed him to pieces and blamed the Federation," Masha said nonchalantly, licking her fingers.

Isadora sighed and sank into the seat beside her. She gently placed a hand on Masha's muscular arm.

"Oh? What now? Trying to seduce me?" Masha teased. "I told you, I'm in a committed relationship... with food. But if you can promise me unlimited food for life, I might just elope with you."

"Even the richest person in the world would go broke trying to feed you," Isadora replied, deadpan.

"Richest person...?" Masha paused, tilting her head. "That would be Empress Lydia, right? She's basically printing her own money."

"Dyamn... D-don't casually say an Immortal's name like that!" Isadora whispered harshly, eyes darting around. "What if she hears you?"

"Relax," Masha said with a shrug. "Everyone knows Lydia's name and face. She's famous. We're nobodies—just low-tier Immortal Practitioners. Not even in the False Immortal Realm yet. Oh yeah, Atleast ManHunter is Little Famous than me."

As she said that, she nonchalantly pulled out a currency note and tossed it onto the table. The note bore the image of Empress Lydia herself—a mermaid.

Isadora frowned. "Still... be more careful."

Masha ignored her. "Oh no. The food's gone," she said, staring at her now-empty plate with genuine heartbreak.

"Don't worry," Isadora said, snapping her fingers.

A moment later, several crew members entered, arms full of dishes stacked with steaming food. They laid them in front of Masha and quickly exited the room.

"Speaking of immortals..." Masha mumbled, already chewing on a roasted leg of something, "Where is it?"

Isadora's eyes gleamed.

After making sure the crew had left, she stood and walked over to the shelf, where a small wooden box sat in plain sight. She picked it up and carried it carefully back to the table.

"I buried this in that forest... then got caught trying to retrieve it. If you hadn't been there..." Isadora paused.

"I took that mission because When I saw they were after you." Masha nodded. She watched as Isadora opened the box to reveal a glowing cube the size of a fist. Its surface was etched with intricate, shifting symbols, and emerald light pulsed from within the patterns.

"This is our ticket," Masha said, her voice low with awe.

"The Orion Cube Fragment," Isadora whispered, almost reverently.

"When the Tesseract Phenomenon happens again, this fragment guarantees us entry. No tribulations, no mental demons, no danger of becoming a Loose Immortal. Just... bam! True Immortality."

"Exactly. But until then, you hold onto it. And don't lose it," Masha said, a rare seriousness in her tone.

"I will," Isadora promised. "I just hope they don't find me."

As if summoned by her fear, an alarm bell rang on the deck. Isadora's eyes closed again, linking her vision to another crew member's perspective.

A pirate ship approached rapidly, its sails black with a skull-shaped insignia. Cannons emerged from the side—and they fired.

"Oh great," Isadora muttered. "We've got trouble, just some random pirates."

Masha stood abruptly, dropping her half-eaten chicken thigh. "I hate when people interrupt my mealtime."

She stomped her foot—and with a burst of force, shot through the ceiling and the remaining unbroken window.

Isadora sighed. "Even if I'm technically in charge here, she's just gonna keep wrecking everything, huh?"

Outside, Masha hurtled across the sky and landed on the pirate ship like a meteor, causing the entire vessel to lurch.

She crossed her arms and gave the trembling pirates a disinterested look.

"Any last words?" she asked.

One of the pirates raised a shaky hand. "U-uh... we surrender?"

A few minutes later, Masha casually floated back. Behind her, the massive pirate ship was sinking fast—plumes of smoke and flame rising as sailors jumped overboard in panic.

Isadora watched her through the shattered glass.

"Show-off," she muttered affectionately.

Masha returned to the office and picked up her food as if nothing had happened.

"You know..." she said, chewing again, "this turned cold."

"Unbelievable," Isadora said with a laugh.

"Where are you going to hide?" Masha asked, tearing into a roasted leg of meat, her tone casual despite the gravity of the conversation.

"I don't know," Isadora admitted with a shrug. "It's not like I have real friends. The last girl I worked with—I pushed her down a stone staircase."

Masha raised an eyebrow. "Charming."

"I know, right?" Isadora deadpanned.

There was a pause before Masha spoke again. "Do you know anything about the Phantom Pirates?"

Isadora tilted her head. "Which ones? The ones from the South or the North?"

"South," Masha replied, wiping her mouth with the back of her hand.

"Oh, them. They rebranded themselves as the Blackwood Pirates later on. Probably realized there was already a Phantom Pirate group up North. If two crews have the same name or even a similar Jolly Roger, it usually leads to a Pirate Gamble—winner takes the title."

"Hmph. Sounds messy."

"Yeah. I haven't seen them since the Rosefall Labyrinth Incident. They've been laying low, probably hiding their tracks," Isadora said thoughtfully.

"Any way we can bring them out of hiding? You've always been good at manipulating the shadows," Masha said, glancing sideways.

Isadora smirked. "I might have something. What if we use the Northern Phantom Pirates? Stir the waters, make some noise using their name. That might force the Southern ones—the Blackwoods—into the open."

"What are you planning to do when you find them?" Isadora asked, tone innocent.

"I'm going to crush Phantom Blackwood into pieces. That's the only way I can avenge my idiot brother," Masha said flatly, as she returned to eating. No fury, no drama—just a cold, calm declaration.

Isadora's eyes lit up like a child spotting a rare candy. "Oho~ If you're destroying that crew, then dibs on their Vice Captain. She's mine."

Masha gave her a slow, suspicious glance. "To kill, right?"

Isadora just grinned.

Masha paused, then nodded. "Deal."

Meanwhile, far away on Fun Streak Island, breeze drifted through a partially constructed building.

Lily sneezed.

Mana, perched nearby while sipping on a chilled drink, looked up. "What happened? Catching a cold?"

Lily blinked, insulted. "A cold? Me? I'm a Grandmaster. Do you think my body is that fragile?"

Mana raised an eyebrow.

"It's probably just someone talking bad about me," Lily said with a confident smirk, brushing her nose with a gloved finger. "Or maybe someone just made a terrible mistake and invoked my name."

Mana chuckled. "Maybe your girlfriend, Isadora."

Lily's mouth twitched. "Tsk. She's NOT my girlfriend. But I do hope I meet her again." A cold smile flickered across her lips. "I have a lot of things to give back to her."

The air around her grew heavy with murderous intent.

Chapter 410: 410. Renovation

Nine Months After the Fall of Clown

Fun Streak Island had changed.

Nine months after the fall of the infamous Clown and the destruction of The Circus, the island had undergone a complete transformation.

Just as before Colorful buildings painted in pastel hues lined the cobbled pathways, while laughter echoed from the newly built rollercoasters, giant wheels, and towering water slides. It had become a true theme park—just like Tyler had envisioned.

Yes, Tyler White had decided to make this island live up to its name—a real Fun Streak Island.

That decision had been made three months after the circus's downfall. Initially, Tyler had intended to continue his journey after stabilizing the Level 3 Fishery nearby. As for Fun Streak Island, he planned to leave it as it was, since technically, it belonged to the Sky Dragon Palace—one of the factions under the vast dominion of the Dragon King.

But fate had other plans.

One day, Tyler received a guest from the Sky Dragon Palace. The visitor was a Dragonion, a half-dragon humanoid with piercing golden eyes and scales that shimmered faintly under the sunlight.

He wore a ceremonial robe with a massive "Tian" (Tian, meaning sky) embroidered on the back, coiled by a silver dragon.

To Tyler's surprise, the Dragonion had no intention of reclaiming the island.

"The Sky Dragon Palace no longer has interest in this land," he had said with a polite bow. "The clown's fall severed its connection to us. We offer you the chance to buy it."

Tyler didn't hesitate. He bought the island outright—for 25 million Lydia.

It might've seemed overpriced to some, but Tyler knew the truth: the island was built upon an ancient formation. That formation, which blanketed the island in protective pink mist, was a relic from an ancient Era. Just the formation alone was worth the cost.

With ownership secured, Tyler wasted no time.

He brought in top-tier engineers, designers, and architects from the Ixalaria Continent. Due to the recent Abyss Breakout, many professionals were eager to work overseas, away from the mainland chaos. They came quickly and eagerly.

One of Tyler's most ambitious projects was building a chain of teleportation hubs—Waypoint Terminals—which would allow visitors from all over the world to travel to Fun Streak Island instantly. Just like he once suggested the Clown.

It took nine months, but the project was finally complete.

Now, with the White Pearl scheduled to resume its voyage in a month, the crew could relax and enjoy the fruits of their hard work.

In a luxurious room at the heart of the island, Tyler sipped tea from a delicate porcelain cup as the ocean breeze fluttered through the open balcony.

"Ah... I wanted to attend the Blueberry Muffin Fest on Blueberry Island," Darla sighed as she set a tray of pastries on the table. "But we got delayed for so long."

Tyler leaned back with a content smile, taking another sip. "Mmm... This tea's amazing."

"It's called Cherry Blossom Tea," Darla beamed proudly. "It's one of the most beloved blends in the Eastern Isles. But there's also Northern Spring—they say it's the most expensive tea in the world. I'd love to try it someday."

"You really like food topics, don't you?" Tyler teased with a chuckle.

"Of course! I'm a cook," she said with a dramatic hand over her chest. "My eyes are always on ingredients, spices, vegetables, meats..."

Tyler leaned in with a mischievous grin. "Do you want to see my meat?"

Before she could respond, he pulled her into his arms.

The door, which had been slightly ajar, slammed shut with a loud bam.

"...That was Lily, wasn't it?" Tyler muttered, blinking toward the door.

"Obviously," Darla replied, raising an eyebrow. "You flirt with every girl on the ship, but you've never made a real move on her. Of course she's angry."

"I'm not dense, you know," Tyler said, scratching his head. "I did try to make a move."

Darla leaned forward, suddenly interested. "Oh? What happened?"

"S-she kicked me in the gut," Tyler admitted, placing a hand over his stomach as if the pain still lingered. "I went flying across the deck."

Darla burst into laughter. "No way! What did you do? Did you start with your usual—'fiendish claws Secret Techniques – Nine Heaven Gropes'?"

Tyler groaned. "No! I just gave her a soft peck on the cheek. Nothing indecent. But she acted like I'd declared war on her ancestors."

Darla shook her head, still laughing. "She must be wrestling with something. Give her time."

"Yeah... I'll wait," Tyler murmured, staring at the teacup. "She's worth the wait."

There was a pause, soft and thoughtful, before Darla suddenly leaned in with a smirk. "Anyway, since you mentioned meat... now I'm craving it."

She reached over, picked up a spoon from the table, and—with the flick of her wrist—hurled it toward the door. It hit the lock with a click, sealing it shut.

Tyler blinked. "That was a great shot."

"Shhh." Darla pressed a finger to his lips, her eyes gleaming. "I know something with even better shots."

And then...

Well, everything happened.

The tea cooled, the pastries remained untouched, and the locked room echoed with something much warmer than laughter or music—a moment they wouldn't forget.

"Wow, your legs look amazing in that skirt," Ling Tian said with a smile.

"You should see them without the skirt," the young lady winked.

"..."

Ling Tian blinked, puzzled. "Why would you take off your legs?"

"..."

The air grew still.

The female disciple stood there, utterly dumbfounded. Her seductive smirk slowly vanished into an expression of utter disbelief.

Inside her Adobe, the Sect Master Han Bing watched the exchange, sipping her tea. When she heard Ling Tian's completely earnest response, she couldn't hold back a laugh. It rang out like a bell through the courtyard.

"Good heavens, he's completely dense," she muttered under her breath.

Han Bing shook her head, smiling. "He's probably one of those men who only realize a girl liked them, fifty years later..."

She then glanced over the bustling Star Reflection Ocean Sect. The sect had been marked by enemies once again—but it wasn't the first time. As always, she waited until the final moment, then made her move and wiped out the opposition in a single, decisive strike.

The flustered disciple stormed off, cheeks burning with frustration. Ling Tian scratched his head, staring after her, genuinely confused.

"Did I say something wrong?" he muttered, shrugging as he made his way to his quarters. On the way, he glanced toward the Fiery Garden where the Typhoon Pyreflower is.

Then, he gently closed the wooden door behind him. The scent of incense and old books filled the room, giving it a calming air. But his tranquility was immediately shattered by the presence of someone sitting cross-legged in the center of the room.

It was Han Bing herself.

"Senior!" Ling Tian quickly straightened and bowed respectfully.

She rose to her feet, her robes flowing like moonlight. "You remember you owe me a favor, don't you? After all, I did save the sect."

Ling Tian stood tall. "Of course, Senior. Just tell me what you need."

She paced to the side of the room, eyes glinting with thought. "There's a rising merchant group from the South. They're quite peculiar. Not long ago, they defeated one of the pirate group called — Circus — and took over their base, the so-called Fun Streak Island."

Ling Tian raised an eyebrow. "Fun Streak Island?"

"Yes. Ridiculous name, but don't underestimate it. More importantly, there's a rumor floating around... This Merchant group is planning to release a potion—something called the 'Life Potion.'"

Ling Tian's brows furrowed. "Life Potion?"

Han Bing's tone lowered, now serious. "It's said that a single dose grants a hundred years of life. The effect reduces with each subsequent dose, but even one is enough to heal internal wounds and regrow lost limbs."

Ling Tian's eyes widened in disbelief. "Such a miracle potion exists?"

"It's probably made using ancient ingredients, possibly items from forbidden regions or lost ruins. I don't expect large-scale availability—if this is real, there won't be many. I want one."

Ling Tian nodded solemnly. "Understood. I will do my best to secure one for you."

Han Bing paused, then added, "Also... If you can, arrange an appointment with the alchemist who created the potion. I want to meet them myself. The Merchant call themselves White Merchant Group"

As the words left her lips, her figure shimmered and disappeared, vanishing without a trace.

Ling Tian stood alone in the room, deep in thought.

But behind that calm expression, his heart was curious. Not just about the potion—but the faction itself.

"White Merchant Group... Why does that sound a little familiar?" Ling Tian muttered, scratching his head. He shook the thought away, deciding not to dwell on it for now.

The seas were vast and unpredictable, filled with countless factions—pirates, adventurers, rogue cultivators, cunning merchants and powerful mercenary guilds.

Everyone has stories, but only those who are unique will make waves.