

Ancient 102

Chapter 102 - 52 Landfill and Shelter

In the eerie night of Black Cloud City, strange whispers emanated from all directions.

Lu Zicheng struggled to carry the girl stuffed in the burlap sack, gasping for breath. Half of the chair leg in his hand had already broken off. Even in his Ghost Transformation state, his stamina was severely depleted, and there was nothing around to replenish him.

There wasn't a single living soul in sight whose life force he could absorb.

Except for his three teammates.

Fortunately, the horrifying whispers, the so-called spiritual toxin, had no effect on him.

The black mist wouldn't drive him out of control either.

This was the benefit of the Ancient God Power. The so-called Forbidden Zone wasn't as dangerous to him as it was to others.

That was, of course, assuming there wasn't an endless horde of monsters lurking within the black mist!

"Xiao Lin, oh Xiao Lin..."

Familiar murmurs echoed in his ears, reminiscent of the nagging voice of a mother pestering her child to finish their homework years ago.

Gu Jianlin spun around and plunged the chair leg backwards, taking down yet another monster.

In just fifteen minutes.

He had already slain twenty-three "mothers" and forty-seven "fathers."

If his life were a video game, he'd probably earn the title of "Parricidal Prodigy" and unlock some sort of achievement by now.

Oh, and he had even taken care of some of his teammates' "relatives" along the way.

Heaven knows what made the Forbidden Zone so unsettling that these monsters would assume the forms of your closest kin.

And they just kept coming.

It was dual torment—psychological and physical.

"Brother Lin, you're a beast. Without you, we'd have been dead by now. But to be honest, I think I can't hold on much longer. Why don't you just take Xiangsi and leave us behind?" Cheng Youyu's face had turned ghastly, with veins of black and blue sprawling across his skin. It was evident that the toxin had seeped deep into his body.

The toxin had sapped his strength, rendering him incapable of standing, let alone fighting.

Zhang Cheng could barely walk, relying entirely on Cheng Youyu to drag him along.

Nie Xiangsi, being on the Priest Path, must have realized the same and relinquished her spirituality.

"Shut up and conserve energy,"

Gu Jianlin murmured, "It's not time to give up yet."

"Brother Lin, don't try to comfort me. I know I won't make it out of here. For an Ascender, life and death are just routine parts of the deal. I just feel a little embarrassed—I used to rely on you during exams back in school, and now, as an Ascender, I still depend on you. Makes me seem pretty useless, doesn't it?"

Cheng Youyu panted against the wall, scratching his head before producing a thick stack of talisman paper from... his crotch. "Here, take this. These alchemy-made talismans, back in ancient times, were known as 'talisman scrolls,' imbued with thunder and fire. Very useful."

Gu Jianlin froze momentarily.

"Our Cheng Family rose to prominence through alchemy. We've got loads of these—use them freely!" Cheng Youyu added. "I think you're a good person. Everyone carries biases against the title of 'Fallen,' but believe me, the association itself has done plenty of vile things. If you manage to stand out during this mission and catch the attention of the higher-ups, you'll establish your own backing, and then they won't dare mess with you."

Gu Jianlin fell silent.

The main reason he didn't take the talisman paper was that Cheng Youyu had pulled it from his crotch.

"Take this too. When you get out, call this guy—Housekeeper Liu. Show him this phone, and he'll know you're my friend. If you ever need help, reach out to him. Oh, and..." Cheng Youyu handed over his phone, his tone suddenly dropping, "Do me a favor—tell him..."

Gu Jianlin frowned. "Tell him what?"

"My computer hard drive." Cheng Youyu enunciated each word carefully, "Wipe it clean!"

Gu Jianlin was stunned.

Just then, flames soared into the sky from the south, accompanied by harrowing screams that echoed through the suffocating darkness.

It was evident that Team One was also engrossed in a harrowing battle.

"The captains are done for. The mission's a failure. Brother Lin, you've got to leave. Don't worry about us!" Cheng Youyu gritted through his teeth, "I'll go fight those damn monsters."

Gu Jianlin restrained him. "No need. I believe the captains are still alive."

Cheng Youyu froze. "What makes you say that?"

"And I don't think you guys will die either."

Gu Jianlin surveyed the oppressive darkness surrounding them and spoke gravely, "I'll carry Zhang Cheng, and we'll all head east together. Keep your talisman paper—use it generously on the monsters' faces. Don't hold back."

With that, he hoisted the unconscious Zhang Cheng.

Cheng Youyu clenched his teeth, mustering every ounce of strength to push himself back to his feet.

Three. Two. One. Charge!

Gu Jianlin dashed into the thick black mist, with crawling and stalking monsters lunging toward them once more.

This time, the response was a flurry of burning talisman paper.

Cheng Youyu hurled talismans wildly, igniting flames and unleashing arcs of electricity.

Gu Jianlin led the charge eastward, passing trails of blood along the way.

The carnage in Black Cloud City was not theirs alone.

Other newcomers unfamiliar with the situation had lost their lives here, swallowed by the eerie black mist and its grotesque denizens.

Following Lu Zicheng's instructions, they fled eastward.

Black mist surged forth, its strange whispers creeping in relentlessly.

But just as Gu Jianlin reached the end of the path, he froze.

"No way forward."

Cheng Youyu collapsed to his knees with a thud, his face unsettlingly black and purple.

Before them lay a massive garbage dump.

Piles upon piles of trash stacked high like a hill, reeking unbearably.

This was a dead end.

Gu Jianlin's spirituality drained at that moment, and his Ghost Transformation instantly dissipated.

His mental state remained surprisingly calm—thanks to the Ancient God Power protecting him from interference.

He showed no signs of losing control either.

With a single vial of Blue Blood, he could trigger Ancient God Transformation again, free from any time constraints.

He could still run.

But Cheng Youyu, Nie Xiangsi, and Zhang Cheng wouldn't make it.

Black mist surged up, accompanied by an overwhelming cacophony of eerie footsteps and scraping sounds.

For a moment, Gu Jianlin considered activating Ancient God Transformation, carrying all three out of Black Cloud City.

He possessed one complete drop of Ancient God's Blood.

Sufficient to bend the world's rules, enabling a period of Ancient God Transformation.

A force capable of slaughtering gods and annihilating anything in its path.

Just then, the ground shifted, and someone moved a stone slab aside.

From the shadows, a small figure emerged, struggling to carry a basin filled with a dark, murky substance.

The little one wobbled unsteadily under its weight and nearly stumbled as they climbed onto the surface. Teetering to their feet, they swung the liquid in one powerful motion toward the black mist.

"Heave-ho!"

The liquid spread across the ground like ink.

For a fleeting moment, the unsettling whispers within the black mist ceased, and the monsters lurking deeper within froze in place.

Too afraid to advance.

Gu Jianlin's pupils dilated slightly as he took in the scene.

Lu Zicheng had been right. There was hope to the east.

"Are you here seeking refuge?"

A diminutive figure asked.

The voice belonged to a little girl, soft and sugary.

Gu Jianlin hesitated briefly. "Yes, my friends are poisoned. Is there a way to..."

"I know. My dad and I have been watching you for quite some time now,"

The little girl spoke, catching him completely off guard.

She then drew out a flashlight, cautiously illuminating their faces.

When the light reached the boy's face, she suddenly froze.

"Hey, you're back!"

She exclaimed joyfully.

Gu Jianlin froze as well. "What are you talking about?"

The girl hesitated, swiftly putting away the flashlight and muttering apologetically, "Sorry, I mistook you for someone else."

"Follow me to the shelter. My dad's there. This Stone Statue Tree Oil only lasts ten minutes; the monsters will come back soon. But the underground is safe—they can't get in."

The girl slipped into the underground tunnel, glancing back and signaling for them to follow. She couldn't resist scolding them either: "You guys are ridiculous, coming to seek refuge without first learning the lay of the land. This place is near Qilin Immortal Palace's pollution zone—the monsters here eat people!"

Gu Jianlin said nothing.

Because he suspected the little girl had mistaken him for someone entirely different.