

Ancient 197

Chapter 197 - 99 The Origin of the Moon Princess_2

Live each day as it comes.

At that moment, two mercenaries holding firearms came over and impatiently said, "Zhong Guoqing, get out here! We've assigned a few new recruits to you. Hurry up and take them in."

Zhong Guoqing quickly wiped his mouth with his sleeve, patted his daughter's shoulder, and brought her along to greet them.

In the West Port Forbidden Zone, these mercenaries were not to be crossed.

After delivering the people, the mercenaries left. Standing at the shop's doorway were five newcomers—four men and one woman.

Three of them clearly looked like stowaways, emanating a foul stench, their bodies filthy.

The conditions on the human-snake ship were imaginable.

The other two appeared much cleaner.

The young boy looked quite youthful, with messy black hair and a clean appearance. His white shirt and jeans were somewhat dusty, and his sneakers were caked in mud, lending him a disheveled look.

The other was a man around thirty years old, average-looking, and similarly dirty.

"You two, where are you from?"

Zhong Guoqing assumed the demeanor of a shopkeeper. Years of experience had taught him one thing.

Kind people get bullied. If you don't show dominance, eventually someone will trample on you.

"We fled Black Cloud City to West Port. The Ether Association cleared out the city, completely dismantled the Grave Digger Organization, and we got caught in the crossfire."

The boy calmly replied, "Only my brother and I managed to escape."

The man smiled bitterly, "The association is pressing harder and harder. Life has become impossible."

Zhong Guoqing glanced at his daughter.

He saw Zhong Li's eyes flicker with an eerie white hue as she murmured, "Mental state stable, no deformation."

As a Witch's pathway ability, she could perceive an Ascender's mental condition.

No matter if you're a Fallen, as long as you're suppressing it with drugs, it's fine.

"Yeah, anyone Boss Wang sends over for this will be fine for sure."

Zhong Guoqing cautiously added, "In Black Cloud City, how did you avoid the Great Ruins?"

"Stone Statue Tree Oil mixed with human blood, combined with Faceless Flower."

The man smiled and said, "Shopkeeper, my brother and I don't lie. We just want to earn an honest living."

Zhong Guoqing hummed in acknowledgment and asked, "Name? Rank?"

"Gu Ting, First Order Fate."

"Zhou Jianlin, First-tier Yin and Yang."

"Oh, two of the oldest pathways?"

Zhong Guoqing nodded slightly, then proceeded to ask the remaining three a few questions.

After confirming everything, he returned to the shop and sat down, clearing his throat.

"Now that you're in West Port, you've probably already learned the basics of the rules. Since none of us have a way out in the real world anymore, we work for Mr. Liu now. Put away any petty thoughts and do your job properly."

He said, "Tough it out, and then you'll be free."

"Exactly, exactly—shopkeeper is absolutely right. We're all here working for Mr. Liu."

One of the stowaways, looking rather slick, hastily chimed in with flattery, "Please be understanding if we mess up."

Zhong Guoqing wasn't fazed in the slightest and continued, "There are some rules I need to make crystal clear for you. First off, the items in the shop are strictly forbidden to stash for yourself. Some people, driven by greed, always try to steal from the shop and sell the items outside. Let me make this very

clear—those goods belong to the administration. If they come after you for it, ten lives wouldn't be enough to compensate."

He said, "There are cameras all over the shop, and occasionally, people from above will come by for inspections. Don't try anything sneaky."

"Second, you were briefed during your assignment. Our tasks are simple: transport goods, unload goods, and wait for the treasure appraisers to evaluate them. If the appraiser finds the goods are contaminated, that's a thousand. If they aren't contaminated, that's five hundred. I'll guide you on the specifics onsite."

"The money belongs to the administration as well. I reconcile the accounts daily, and if even one dollar doesn't match up, you'll have to cover the difference with your own money. If you have no money, you already know the consequences."

The old man glanced at the dock, alluding to the person who had been thrown into the sea earlier.

The five newcomers recalled the wretched fate of the man, and their faces all turned pale.

"Normal treasure appraisers wouldn't dare steal anything, and those who are powerful enough wouldn't bother with this stuff. But just in case, there are weapons in the shop for defense if needed."

Zhong Guoqing's expression grew even grimmer as he said, "Lastly, let me stress again—be honest and upright. That's more important than anything. Don't always think about cutting corners. Around here, most people with crooked intentions end up dead. Got it?"

"Got it! Got it!"

The five nodded in unison like chickens pecking at grain.

Zhong Guoqing seemed pleased and causally gestured toward the distant cargo crates, issuing the order, "Start by hauling the goods. I'll get you familiar with the work."

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Bang.

A cargo box was carried into the warehouse at the back of the shop.

Gu Jianlin wiped his sweat away fervently, his face covered in grime, panting heavily.

It was his first time ever doing such exhausting work. He hadn't even been in the shop for five minutes before being forced to start working, and he'd been at it for two and a half hours straight. The skies had turned dark.

He'd worked part-time before, but it was just to get a feel of society, a form of self-discipline.

Or maybe to kill time.

Though his dad had left all the wealth to his mother, his father and son's living standards hadn't dropped much.

Money had always been sufficient.

So, when he worked outside, it had been relaxed.

But here in West Port, they treated people like pack animals.