

## Ancient 241

Chapter 241 - 122 Praise for the Lofty Ones \_2

He glanced back for only a moment before scrambling to his feet and sprinting away.

Unfortunately, he had planned to use this building to stall for more time, but that plan was dashed.

The power gap between the Second Rank and the Fourth Rank was simply too vast.

He never expected that Mrs. Yan, even after mutating into a Gu Worm, could still wield the powers of a Heavenly Master!

Five minutes and thirty-seven seconds.

At that moment, countless leaves trembled violently, the torrential rain suspended mid-air, gravel on the ground trembled and rolled, and countless iron rails were forcibly bent, their sharp edges pointing directly at him!

Gu Jianlin froze in horror; this was the ability Minister Lu had mentioned, the power of a Fourth-Order Heavenly Master.

Telekinesis!

Boom!

Without hesitation, he extended his hands, gathering negative energy into quivering black particles in his palms.

Dark Shock Burst!

The massive explosion echoed through the night sky, and Gu Jianlin was sent flying by a powerful shockwave, landing squarely on an iron railing. Its sharp spike pierced through his abdomen, and blood sprayed out violently.

The severe injury left his face pale, and the Ghost Fire flickering on his forehead wavered like it was about to extinguish. If not for the Breathing Technique aiding him in restoring spirituality constantly, he would've already collapsed.

This was undeniably the most dangerous battle he had faced since joining the Extraordinary World.

His mind was recalling the essence of the Breathing Technique.

Feeling the immense pressure of life and death, along with the kind of courage that throws caution to the wind.

The rhythm of his breathing seemed to merge into the storm.

Deep in his consciousness, something appeared to be... igniting!

With a deafening roar, Mrs. Yan surged out from the ruins, her head surrounded by converging elemental turbulence. Wind and rain intertwined with fire and gravel, forming what resembled a cataclysmic storm that roared incessantly.

Gu Jianlin downed another bottle of Blue Blood, fueling the spiritual tide in his mind to rise and fall violently. It surged like towering waves reaching out to shatter some kind of barrier and rise to an even greater height!

Crack!

Gu Jianlin reached behind his back, snapped the iron spike with brute force, pulled it out, and hurled it backward.

Finally, he raised his middle finger and growled, "Die!"

The mere iron spike was no match for Mrs. Yan, who had transformed into a monster. She ignored it entirely, letting her body endure the impact, creating nothing but a gaping hole. Dark green blood sprayed out, mixed with toxic mist, dispersing in the storm.

When the Ghost Curse Technique's curse landed on her, she bled profusely again, eerie spells marking her entire body like tattoos.

Yet the problem was that the pain only made her more frenzied, and her speed increased!

Gu Jianlin reached out and touched a maple tree, igniting the Divine Sacrificial Fire, channeling life force into his body.

His injuries instantly healed, returning him to his peak condition!

"Thank you, Divine!"

"The Divine is the strongest path!"

Turning on his heels, Gu Jianlin ran headlong into the storm, a gargantuan monster hot on his heels.

Shattered stones and razor-sharp wind blades whistled toward him intermittently.

Flying debris hammered his back, tearing his flesh open.

The torrential rain turned sharp as hailstones, scraping him all over till his body was covered in bruises and gashes.

Blood mixed with rainwater spread everywhere, and the excruciating pain left the boy's vision blackened.

Seven minutes and forty-four seconds.

In such circumstances, Gu Jianlin had no time to use Divine Sacrificial Fire to heal himself. Yet the physical resilience brought by the Ghost Transformation was enough for him to endure these injuries and keep running.

Nevertheless, his pace slowed down while the monster grew increasingly ferocious, speed accelerating dramatically.

At this rate, he wouldn't last more than ten minutes and would die soon.

Gu Jianlin didn't want to die, but there were things he wouldn't do; otherwise, he'd prefer death over living.

Uncle Mu was right.

He was nothing short of a stubborn madman, born with unparalleled pride and arrogance.

Anything others could do, he insisted on being able to do as well.

Anything others couldn't do, he was determined to accomplish it too.

Gu Jianlin had never intended to be a hero; he simply hated losing.

He hated losing in anything.

Jing Ci once said that true strength isn't about how powerful one is but rather about courage.

Just like Old Gu back on the highway.

And Uncle Mu, who fought to the death for his family at the shelter.

Including the Vulture and Old Zhong in West Port, and that little brat.

All of them had the courage to lay down their lives if necessary.

Suddenly, something clicked.

He realized he could keep going.

He could move even faster.

Eight minutes and thirteen seconds!

Amidst trees blasted by raging winds and iron rods piercing through the ground, lightning illuminated the Treasure Appraisal Shop ahead. Through the storm came a familiar voice.

Gu Jianlin never expected he had circled back to the Treasure Appraisal Shop!

"Xiao Gu! The motorcycle is locked at the door! The password is your wages for today! Run already!"

"Xiao Gu! The motorcycle is locked at the door..."

"Xiao Gu..."

It was the shopkeeper's voice, looping on a loudspeaker. Truth be told, the man's voice was annoying, like a screeching duck.

But hearing it now, it inexplicably reawakened a spark of energy in Gu Jianlin's exhausted body.

He sprinted to the shop's entrance, gasping for air as he input three digits on the password lock.

Three-Five-Zero!

The motorcycle keys were already in the ignition.

Gu Jianlin swung himself onto the seat in one fluid motion, cranked the throttle to maximum. The second-hand motorcycle roared ferociously like a giant dragon!

Boom!

Just then, Mrs. Yan shot upward, her twenty-four sharp appendages gleaming coldly, stabbing straight toward the boy's back.

Clang!

At the critical moment, the strings of a Gu Zheng were plucked, splitting the Void open with a chilling crack!

Through the storm, a murderous melody rang out, its sharp clarity like splashing water from shattering silver bottles. The somber tune carried the relentless energy of swords clashing on a battlefield, mingled with swirling sand, spilled blood, roaring blades, and ringing steel!

Chapter 242 - 122 Praise for the Lofty Ones \_3

Mrs. Yan roared furiously, her chest torn open with a gaping wound, blood gushing out like a spring.

Just one more step!

This mutated woman still clung to the last shred of consciousness. She couldn't fathom why after all this time she still hadn't been able to kill this frail boy. Every time she was about to succeed, he always managed to survive against all odds!

Gu Jianlin seized the opportunity, speeding off on his motorcycle. The downpour washed away the blood covering him, as he sped onto a desolate highway, his jacket ripped away by the wind, his black hair wildly whipping in the storm!

Faster, faster!

Ten minutes and five seconds!

Somewhere, the sound of a zither began to play, faint and fragile.

Though weak, it remained unwavering.

Zheng! Zheng! Zheng!

In the void, chillingly terrifying fissures appeared, crisscrossing like splattered ink.

Mrs. Yan crashed forward recklessly, avoiding the dreadful cracks while charging angrily in pursuit.

It was at this moment that Gu Jianlin finally realized who had been protecting him from the shadows all along.

So it was you.

Though he didn't know why, he still felt gratitude.

Out of the corner of his eye, he caught a glimpse of a delicate silhouette in the storm, standing gracefully in the rain.

She must have sustained serious injuries from battling the Nightmare Master earlier.

Yet despite this, she remained by his side.

Gu Jianlin rushed toward the highway, only to suddenly hear a deafening noise from afar—a rocket whizzing through the sky!

With a thunderous explosion, an iron warehouse collapsed.

Unerringly, it fell directly upon Mrs. Yan, who had been closing in!

Gu Jianlin turned his head to see, in the distance, a tiny figure lying prone on a rooftop.

It was Fu Chaoyang, that little rascal.

He must be familiar enough with West Port to predict where Gu Jianlin would head, stepping in at the critical moment to lend a hand.

By now, the little brat should have made it out safely.

The mischievous child had braved the storm and come through on the other side.

Just then, an enraged voice rang out from Gu Jianlin's cell phone.

"Gu Jianlin! What are you doing? You're about to leave West Port, and if you bring that monster outside, do you have any idea how many civilians could die because of it? Can you take responsibility for that?"

It was the voice of Nie, the Deacon.

Gu Jianlin pulled out his phone and said coldly, "I take full responsibility for my actions. Since you can't do it yourselves, keep your mouths shut, open your eyes, and watch closely."

With that, he was about to turn off his phone.

But at that moment, he suddenly noticed a message on WeChat.

"When are you coming home? I made soup for you."

Simple text.

A familiar tone.

The warmth of a far-off memory.

Gu Jianlin paused for a second, then smiled in relief. Suddenly, he no longer felt alone.

Even amidst exhaustion, fleeing through the storm, it felt as though countless hands were pushing him forward.

It brought him back to childhood, when he had just learned to ride a bicycle. Too young to keep steady, there was always a man and woman behind him, supporting him.

The wind blew away the man's hat and the woman's long hair, while he laughed loudly against the gusts.

Freedom, exhilaration.

Racing against the wind.

As though his soul was set free.

The spiritual tide surged in Gu Jianlin's mind, like a calm sea suddenly whipped into a frenzy by a storm, brewing with titanic waves that aimed to pierce the heavens!

At this moment, Mrs. Yan lunged again, her body swollen to an extreme. A terrifying toxin accumulated inside, ready to explode like a bomb at any moment!

Taixu's voice came through on the phone just in time: "Road ahead is clear. Fifty meters to exit Forbidden Zone! We've evacuated the area within a kilometer radius—use it as you like. Over!"

Gu Jianlin softly replied, "Thanks, not necessary."

On the rain-soaked highway, with storm clouds enveloping the sky, dim streetlights cast a faint glow.

Below the road lay an ink-black sea, waves crashing tumultuously!

Gu Jianlin sharply turned his motorcycle, accelerating toward a rocky precipice on the side of the road.

Twelve minutes and fifty-five seconds!

Boom!

At that moment, the boy soared into the sky on his motorcycle.

The wind and rain couldn't hold him back; the storm clouds began to disperse as well.

Moonlight descended from above.

The ocean within his mind surged upward.

Ten meters, a hundred meters, a thousand meters!

Titanic waves rose sky-high, the roar of the ocean echoing with jubilant cheers!

The Breathing Technique, humanity's masterpiece, had shattered its limits at this pinnacle moment!

Courage and vitality burned and blossomed freely!

In mid-air, Gu Jianlin twisted his body, performing a flawless backward flip, hurling his motorcycle overhead!

Mrs. Yan, with twenty-four steel-like limbs, vaulted skyward, her grotesquely deformed body like a bloated cocoon. Her blood-red compound eyes overflowed with malice and killing intent.

She screamed hysterically.

The horrific toxin within her exploded like a bomb, spilling hordes of Gu Worms.

The elemental turbulence above her detonated as well.

Everything was on the brink of annihilation.

Yet Gu Jianlin, arms stretched wide in the air, experienced soul-like transcendence, his breathing aligned to the harmonic rhythms of heaven and earth.

The wind and tide, storm and ocean, sky and Earth.

All synchronized with his tempo of breath!

Gu Jianlin's body radiated with a brilliant domain, bathed in cold moonlight, dazzling in the darkness as though he were a Heavenly Person!

Light flooded the heavens!

Breathing Technique·Realm of Freedom!

Amidst the deafening explosion, Mrs. Yan unleashed the full fury of her poisonous mists, accompanied by spectral, anguished shrieks, targeting the boy for devouring.

Yet in a flash, the moonlight poured forth like tidal waves cleansing the darkness!

The formless domain suddenly erupted, and the cold radiance surged like tides, engulfing the elemental turbulence sweeping in, even burying detonated toxins and Gu Worms beneath its luminance!

Light surged, washing away darkness and purging everything!

Within the Realm of Freedom's domain, there existed no Transcendent power!

Fifteen minutes and one second!

At the moment of mortal peril, Gu Jianlin grasped the true essence of the Breathing Technique, forcibly shielding against the monster's devastating strike!

Within the field of the Realm of Freedom, Mrs. Yan realized in horror that her spirituality was extinguishing!

She roared in fury, her pupils filled with cold luminance, watching the boy tumble gracefully like fallen leaves.

He was so close, yet untouchable.

At this moment, a blazing arrow streaked across the distant horizon, piercing her!

Boom!

The storm erupted with a massive explosion, firelight illuminating the night, scattering burning fragments across the skies.

Illuminating faces frozen in shock, awe, disbelief, and bewildered admiration.

Chen Bojun lowered his iron bow.

In that final moment, he had tied the antidote to the arrowhead, delivering a fatal strike.

Not just an antidote, but a toxin deadly to the Gu Worms.

One arrow traveled five kilometers to pierce its target.

Yet he felt neither pride nor elation, only watching the explosions within the distant darkness.

Because he knew that against Holy Land Level adversaries, this shot was trivial.

The true game-changer was the boy who led the monster away single-handedly.

He had earned the precious time needed.

A crisp crack sounded.

Chen Bojun sighed, "Such boldness and daring... I pale in comparison."

Lu Zijin hovered mid-air, raising her brow and remarking, "After all, he's the one I chose—a misjudgment isn't my style."

"Respect."

Ying Changsheng stood with hands clasped behind his back, his narrow eyes glimmering with intrigue.

Fu Chaoyang plopped down on the ground, breathing a sigh of relief.

Lu Zicheng and Chen Qing exchanged smiles of mutual relief.

Nie, the Deacon, and Councilman Zhang, along with other Judgement Court members, stood frozen in place, listening as applause spread throughout their communication channels, their faces plastered with awkward yet polite smiles, clapping stiffly and mechanically in praise.

The Omega Sequence channel fell silent, before applause erupted like waves.

At this moment, all Dawn Combat Sequence warriors saluted toward the explosion, offering their utmost reverence.

In the darkened grocery store, Jing Ci watched the distant explosion with a quiet smile.

The old man on the recliner opened his eyes and murmured softly, "Kept your word."

After Gu Jianlin stepped forward, not a single life in West Port was lost to the monster.

Applause thundered, echoing through the storm.

A tribute to the lone boy.

A salute to his unwavering courage.

Chapter 243 - 123 The Final Assault

In the Forget Sorrow Grocery Store, Huai Yin gazed into the rain from afar. A cold shimmer flickered through the night, disappearing almost instantly, reflected in his weathered eyes. His gaze carried an indiscernible glint.

"Realm of Freedom."

He finally set down his teacup and remarked, "Not bad."

Jing Ci sighed, "I really didn't expect that the first thing he would comprehend was the Realm of Freedom, purifying all supernatural powers within the domain. It's no wonder he survived Mrs. Yan's pursuit. The most remarkable part is that it took him less than a week since he learned the Breathing Technique. Isn't this pace a bit too shocking?"

Huai Yin took a sip of tea and replied, "It is indeed shocking."

Jing Ci brewed a new pot of tea for him and casually asked, "Did you already know he could do it—comprehend the Realm of Freedom—and thus orchestrated these events?"

Huai Yin calmly said, "Not at all. I'm neither a Divination Master nor a practitioner of divination arts."

Jing Ci's hand paused slightly as he brewed.

"I was merely making a random attempt to test his potential. Honestly, I didn't expect him to succeed. I even planned to step in personally and eliminate that monstrous thing just moments ago."

Huai Yin sighed, "Who would've thought that at the very last second, he figured it out."

Jing Ci's expression turned complicated, as though he had words he wanted to say but held back.

Huai Yin said, "Speak your mind freely."

After hesitating for a second, Jing Ci said, "Back when you taught me, did you..."

Huai Yin didn't deny it, candidly admitting:

"Back then, I also made many such attempts while teaching you. If you succeeded, it would bring immense growth benefits, while simultaneously showcasing the mysterious depth of me as your master. If you didn't succeed, what harm would there be for me to intervene? To outsiders, at least, it wouldn't tarnish our reputation. For you, you'd understand it wasn't me who was incapable—it was you."

He paused. "And, as a bonus, it serves to remind you to remain humble and diligent."

Three birds with one stone.

Recalling his own experiences of growth, Jing Ci suddenly grabbed the teapot away.

Huai Yin casually remarked, "Go stop Chen Bojun and Lu Zijin, those two little ones. Don't let them seek out that boy. Someone has already gone to him—if they tag along as extra baggage, it serves no purpose."

Jing Ci opened his umbrella and said gruffly, "Got it."

"Oh, Master."

He suddenly asked, "My junior mentioned he encountered the Candle Dragon Venerable. What's your take on this?"

Huai Yin fell silent, staring at the painting named Jiuyin hanging in the grocery store. He stared at it for a long while.

"From ancient times till now, those who've entangled themselves with that Venerable are few and far between."

He said darkly, "Honestly, you asking me? I'd say even I don't know how to deal with this. In such cases, one should typically consult a Divination Master or pursue the Spirit Medium Path to glimpse fate. But the fate that can be glimpsed—those are too ordinary. If you walk the predetermined path, there's no escaping it."

Jing Ci said seriously, "If the Ghost Car Ancestor is a destined calamity for him, and there's at least a struggle for survival, then considering Gu Ci'an, he could have almost succeeded. But with the Candle Dragon Venerable, I think there's no chance whatsoever."

Huai Yin continued staring at the painting and commented, "You truly believe there's no way to defeat Candle Dragon?"

Jing Ci didn't answer directly, though his silence revealed his belief.

"Actually, it's possible, as there currently exist two paths."

Huai Yin abruptly chuckled, "Both paths can lead to uncovering that possibility."

Jing Ci furrowed his brows and asked puzzledly, "Then why don't you pursue them?"

Huai Yin said irritably, "What's the point of me pursuing them? Even if I find the answers, who would spar with me? The whole world knows I've mere years left to live. Didn't you notice how every Ancient Ancestor treats me like the plague, fleeing at the sight of me? Even the Ancient Gods dread that, when I perish, I may drag one of them down with me."

"Though Candle Dragon is arrogant and conceited, she's definitely not foolish."

He sneered, "Too many have their eyes on me these years. If I so much as attempt anything, the world would be thrown into disorder. Three years ago, I took you to Fusang Divine Palace, intending to stew a Fire Brilliance Chicken. But the association's idiots outright assumed the Vermilion Bird Venerate was returning, messing up the world with endless storms."

Jing Ci remained silent for a moment. "True enough."

"Remember, the methods to deal with Ancient Supremes must remain secret. Once disclosed to the world, they lose their potency. Humanity's foundation in resisting Gods lies not within the environments repelling Ancient Gods, but within the fact that Gods... are not truly omnipresent and omnipotent."

Huai Yin elaborated, "As long as omnipresence and omnipotence don't apply, there's still a fight to be had."

Jing Ci nodded slightly, "I see."

"Initially, I still planned to wait another two years. But since your junior's talent measures up, it's worth competing a bit. The true era of prosperity is dawning—I can protect him a little longer."

Huai Yin stared at the painting, fixating on its breathtaking silhouette. He suddenly smiled, "It's been a while, Venerable."

The air reeked of blood. Shattered corpses and fragmented Gu Worm remains scattered place.

All of it exploded together amidst roaring flames.

Like fireworks, burning fiercely in wind and rain.

Gu Jianlin plummeted from high above, the roar of wind and tides rushing past his ears, threatening to engulf him in the infinite storm. His soul broke free from constraints, finally liberated.

In that moment, he felt an unprecedented exhilaration.

Even though his spirituality had been entirely depleted, his Ghost Transformation unraveled, leaving him physically frail.

A faint smile flashed in his eyes.

In the end, he had accomplished it.

Fifteen minutes and one second—time he had fought for.

Time for himself, for the future, and also for the innocent lives spared.

As he approached the ocean's surface, an inconspicuous wave of life appeared on the cliff. A slender figure uncovered a rain cloak and set up a sniper rifle on the rock face.

It was as if this person had been lying in wait, ready for the perfect opportunity—a thunderous strike.

Aiming for the kill shot!

In that instant, the sniper rifle trembled violently, as though releasing a furious roar.

Overlord Path, Fourth Rank!

—Arrow of Destruction!

Since ancient times, the Overlord Path has been in the top echelon. Especially in modern times, with the enhancement of firearms, their mastery of domineering power has grown stronger.

Its essence lies in merging one's life with nature's forces to create transcendent power.

It can imbue inanimate objects with life, fusing them into one!

The effect of the Arrow of Destruction was simple: once pierced, the internal organs would be completely annihilated.

Simultaneously, Gu Jianlin felt the threat of death. He watched as the black muzzle locked onto him like a bottomless abyss, suffused with killing intent so overwhelming it reached its zenith, revealing its intent like a dagger drawn in desperation!

Danger instinctively tingled like an electrical current, his entire body bristling, his heart hammering with alarm.

But at this moment, he had exhausted all his cards.

The shadow of death loomed large over him.

He descended toward the dark ocean, seemingly about to be embraced by death.

"Goodbye."

The assassin's lips moved slightly as he squeezed the trigger.

Bang!

In that split second, time seemed to slow to a halt, as though dragged into sticky silence. The fleeting streaks of lightning above remained frozen, and the thunder's roar elongated into a muffled growl. Even the echoing gunfire distorted into a bizarre off-tune note.

Time hadn't truly stopped—it had been stretched by an extraordinary force!

A bullet hung in mid-air, rotating slowly as it advanced.

The gunfire's flare silently burned in the night.

Amidst the torrential storm held captive by the darkness, every raindrop mirrored the silhouette of a petite figure.

She materialized suddenly, like a sprite of the night. The girl held a guzheng in her arms, unlocking a hidden mechanism within it as a Tang Blade fell out.

Gripping the blade tightly, she shot forward like black lightning, dashing along the highway and leaping off rough cliff faces. She vaulted through the air, the blade carving an icy, chilling arc.

Fast!

A speed so astonishing it defied reason!

The frozen spacetime tore apart as the arc of the blade sliced through. Even the lightning above seemed cut asunder, the torrential rain shattered into fragments by the ephemeral glimmer of the blade. The world's cacophony returned in full force!

In an instant, the sniper bullet was cleaved in two.

Then the sniper rifle itself split into halves.

Finally, the assassin was bisected, his blood scattering into the air.

Splat.

The girl spat out a mouthful of blood as if struck by an overwhelming impact.

Nonetheless, she didn't pause. She dove into the ocean, racing towards the boy sinking into the depths.

With a splash.

Gu Jianlin plunged into the water, catching a faint glimpse of a petite figure approaching him.

His awareness drifted away, and he sank into unconsciousness.

In his last moment of clarity, he felt as though he was holding something. The softness of it struck him as oddly familiar.

Chapter 244 - 124 The Identity of Moon Princess

The torrential rain poured down, and the pitch-black sea surged up and down, with faint firelight illuminating the cave.

This place was still within the Forbidden Zone, but almost no one knew there was a cave beneath the cliff, as it had been shrouded by a Barrier for years. From the outside, it appeared to be a complete rock face, so very few dared to explore, even after the Immortal Palace commenced its plans; nobody would casually come explore here.

Tonight, the Barrier had been lifted; outside, the storm raged, and the rising tide submerged more than half of the cavern. A fire burned at the deepest part of the cave, illuminating two figures.

Moon Princess coughed up a mouthful of blood, the deep red splattering onto the rock wall, with a few drops landing on her snow-white arm.

She picked up a tissue to wipe the blood, then tossed it into the trash can.

This cave seemed to be her secret base, with a huge wardrobe filled with girls' clothes. At the bottom were piled various knives and daggers.

The rock walls were hung with countless firearms, and boxes of Alchemy Bullets were stacked in the corner.

In addition, the most conspicuous item was a wooden barrel filled with steaming foamy water.

The first thing the girl did upon entering the cave was to wash the seawater from her hair and body, then change into a clean black dress, draped with a red jacket, her slender legs wrapped in black stockings.

Then she sat quietly next to him, gazing at the sleeping young man on the mat.

After some time, Gu Jianlin opened his eyes and gazed at the dark rock wall.

A drop of rain fell on his face.

The icy sensation woke him up instantly.

Undoubtedly, this was the weakest moment for Gu Jianlin since entering the Extraordinary World.

He had just experienced a battle of unequal strength, although in the final moment, the courage he honed between life and death allowed him to grasp the advanced use of the Breathing Technique, yet it exhausted all his strength.

Moreover, in the end, he was attacked by an assassin, narrowly escaping death on the spot.

Logically, when he woke up, he should be very vigilant.

For some reason, however, he felt a strange, unprecedented sense of security.

"You're awake? The surgery was a success."

Moon Princess propped her chin up with her hand, glancing at him: "You're all right now."

Gu Jianlin knew it was she who had rescued him.

Moon Princess, Ghost Slayer Path, Fourth Rank Shura.

Currently the only one undetectable by Life Perception.

He struggled to sit up, taking a deep breath.

He was seriously injured, but evidently had been infused with some secret medicine, healing his external injuries, though his spirituality remained depleted, gradually recovering.

Fortunately, this time his clothes were intact, though he was drenched in seawater, feeling sticky and uncomfortable.

"Two bottles of Mao Sheng Liquid, a total of twenty-one thousand six hundred fifty, including tax."

Moon Princess took out a card with green and blue QR codes on its sides from her backpack, her cat-faced mask illuminated by the firelight, with her deep eyes expressionless: "WeChat or Prosperity Pay?"

Gu Jianlin hadn't expected to face such a situation right after waking up.

He instinctively groped for his phone.

Unexpectedly, his phone was perfectly fine after being soaked in seawater.

"WeChat then."

Gu Jianlin took out his phone to scan the code. Fortunately, he had saved up a decent amount of money over the years of working, making him relatively well-off among his peers, even without touching the inheritance left in the bank by that man.

"Okay, happy trading."

Moon Princess paused, then suddenly said, "Reminder: I used Mao Sheng Liquid on you. It's a healing secret medicine made from the sap of the Ancient God Realm's Desire Ancient Tree, able to grant you

tremendous Life Force in a short time, healing your wounds. But the side effect is you will develop a very strong desire."

Gu Jianlin felt a bad premonition, repeating, "A very strong desire?"

Moon Princess said calmly, "Yes, a very strong desire."

"What kind of desire?"

"Mating desire."

What the hell.

Gu Jianlin almost spat out a mouthful of old blood.

He saw the medicine bottle on the ground, with a familiar emblem on it.

This was a secret medicine from the Pharmacist Old Thief!

No wonder the Candle Dragon Venerable was now guarding corpses in the Qilin Immortal Palace.

Otherwise, Gu Jianlin would've definitely gone into the Immortal Palace to drag that old guy out, questioning his intentions.

How could a proper person concoct such a secret medicine?

"Why did you give me such a secret medicine?"

Gu Jianlin took a deep breath, striving to ask calmly.

Moon Princess glanced at him, her expression odd: "Because it's effective."

Gu Jianlin was momentarily speechless, thinking that this girl truly had some nerve.

Since she was aware that he would develop desires from the secret medicine's side effects, she still dared to stay here.

Clearly, she was the only woman here; wasn't she afraid of a beastly development in the plot?

"Don't worry, it's not like that potent secret medicine from classic martial arts films where you have to detoxify through that method. If your self-control is strong enough, you can resist it."

Moon Princess's voice was cool and serious: "Of course, during this period, your desires will be magnified many times over, meaning you'll become much more lecherous than before."

Gu Jianlin already realized the problem; it felt as if a fire was burning inside him, with wicked thoughts squirming in the depths of his soul, his gaze lingering over the girl's snow-white neck and delicate collarbone.

Moving further down, he saw her slender legs wrapped in black silk beneath the black dress, along with her dainty feet, toes pointed just right.

He needed to stop looking.

Gu Jianlin turned away abruptly, taking deep breaths.

"I know you're not that kind of person, so I'm not worried you'll do anything to me, especially since I just saved your life. Besides, you're only at Second Rank, and your spirituality is depleted; you're no match for me."

As Moon Princess said this, she coughed up blood again.

Gu Jianlin turned back, seeing exhaustion in her beautiful eyes. He frowned, "You're hurt too."

Evidently, she had incurred significant injuries during her battle with the Nightmare Master.

While Mrs. Yan pursued him, this girl provided covert protection.

She eventually held on, slaying a Fourth Rank Overlord.

Clearly, as a Ghost Slayer Path, Moon Princess possessed formidable talent and strength, among the best of her rank, potentially hiding some trump cards. However, after three consecutive battles, she couldn't hold out any longer.

"I'm fine."

Moon Princess whispered: "Just a minor injury from an Overlord I instant-killed."

"The last person who tried to kill me was a Fourth Rank Ruler from the Overlord Path, extremely powerful. Although you cut off his bullet, the domineering aura attached to it injured you."

Gu Jianlin stated expressionlessly, "A battle between Ghost Slayer Path and Overlord Path is like this: either the Ghost Slayer gets sniped from afar, or the Overlord gets instantly killed up close. It's all a matter of moments. You seem relaxed, but your injuries must be serious. Don't lie to me; I have the information."

He checked related information on his phone directly.

Even though he wasn't connected to the Deep Space Network, a lot of the data was cached.

Moon Princess fell silent, turning her head away in a huff, surprisingly proud.

"Since you're injured, why don't you use Mao Sheng Liquid?"

Gu Jianlin asked, "You must have more in stock, right?"

Moon Princess turned to him, looking at him steadily: "What are you trying to do?"

Gu Jianlin was taken aback, suddenly feeling awkward.

Yes.

One person using Mao Sheng Liquid might be able to withstand the side effects.

But if it were two people...

Outside, amidst the harsh wind and rain, inside were a lone man and woman, both in heat.

If this were a novel and didn't spark some flames, the author would be rubbish.

For a moment, the stone cave fell into silence.

"Why did you help me?"

Ultimately, Gu Jianlin broke the awkward atmosphere, asking calmly.

Moon Princess gave him a cold look, her voice turning colder as she retorted, "I clearly warned you not to stay here, so why did you persist? Do you enjoy acting tough?"

Gu Jianlin replied expressionlessly, "I have my reasons."

Moon Princess stared right back: "So do I."

Gu Jianlin explained, "My reason is that the Yan family wants me dead, so I need to kill them."

Moon Princess replied, "As for my reason, Butcher is my brother; your father showed him mercy, so I'm repaying that debt for him. Beside that, I want to know if the Qilin Wedge is in your hands."

Gu Jianlin raised an eyebrow: "Is it that simple? Is this worth risking your life to save me?"

Moon Princess snorted, "To wipe out the Yan family, you don't need to sacrifice your life."

Gu Jianlin paused for a second: "The most important reason is that Fu Chaoyang and Fu Qingxuan are crucial witnesses, from whom I need a lot of key information and testimonies in the future."

Suddenly Moon Princess said, "Even if it were Night Watchers..."

She abruptly stopped speaking.

Gu Jianlin crossed his arms, watching her: "You've let something slip."

Moon Princess muttered softly: "I didn't."

Clearly, the person who tossed the coin from the dormitory building must have been her.

Otherwise, how could she know about the Night Watcher?

"So the one who's been beside me all along has been you, right?"

Gu Jianlin stared at her, asking: "From Li Changzhi's attack under the overpass, to the Joker in the Peak City secondary canteen, to the fight at Black Cloud City, and now in West Port, you've been secretly protecting me?"

Moon Princess fell silent for a second, slightly tilting her head, her black hair cascading like a waterfall as she asked, "It's not me; what are you talking about? I don't understand. Why would I protect you, unless I like you?"

Gu Jianlin glanced at her footprints left behind, then at her petite figure.

And at the wisps of green hair cascading down to her shoulders.

"Your frame is very small; your weight must be around eighty pounds, and your height should be approximately one meter fifty-six, matching my deductions, except for one thing..."

Gu Jianlin's gaze landed on her chest.

It didn't look big, but it wouldn't be surprising if she used something like a chest binder.

To prove such things, one would have to reach behind her to undo it.

"Hmm?"

Moon Princess's lovely eyes flashed with disdain, softly saying, "What, do you want to feel it yourself?"

Chapter 245 - 125: Humiliate Me Thoroughly!

The chaos within the West Port Forbidden Zone seemed to come to an abrupt halt with that sky-shaking explosion.

The communication channel was flooded with thunderous applause.

At the port, whether they were nano warriors belonging to the Dawn Combat Sequence, or people scrambling onto cruise ships to escape, or even those half-buried in the sewers—everyone was cheering for that young man.

Clearly, this was the Nightmare Master's revenge, transforming Lady Yan into a Gu Worm to retaliate against society.

To speak of Gu Masters... they're just scum. No wonder they're despised by the entire Extraordinary World. Their special ascension rituals completely strip them of their humanity at high ranks, leaving them to commit atrocious, unspeakable acts.

Thus, whether it's the Ascension Alliance headed by the Ether Association, or the dark underbelly of the world:

All harbor a deep hatred for Gu Masters.

Yet, to this day, no one has been able to devise an effective countermeasure against Gu Masters.

Before Gu Jianlin intervened, everyone thought today would end in a massive casualty count.

Yet after Gu Jianlin stepped in, not a single life was lost to the Gu Worms.

The nano warriors, who had been ready to risk their lives to save the day, were ecstatic.

Even some of the worst criminals among the survivors were now raising their fists and cheering.

But the ones most humiliated were the Judgment Court members.

Councilman Zhang sat silently in the cabin, his face grim. After a second's pause, he opened his tablet, pulled up some files to review, and said, "Nie, the Deacon, this is the son Gu Ci'an left behind? Based on his record, I can only describe him as lawless. Four missions in total, all of them carried out solo?"

The first was the Joker incident.

The second was the Grave Digger Organization incident.

The third was the collective fall of several captains and the Yan brothers.

This case was so egregious, featuring rare, widespread corruption. Though it's still under investigation, the results are more or less conclusive. Even the Spirit Mediums and Divination Masters performed divinations that point to the same outcome.

Those people had indeed fallen, unable to resist the allure of the Ancient God's power.

The sole survivor, Mu Ziqing, was the most compelling evidence.

The Judgment Court could do nothing about such an outcome.

The fourth incident was the one at West Port.

"That's right."

Nie, the Deacon, dark-faced, said, "Indeed. It's always like this. While he's delivered every time so far, I must say—this guy has no sense of organization or discipline. Sheltered by the King of Qing, he acts lawlessly!"

Anyone listening could tell there was more to it and kept their mouths shut.

We couldn't do it, but he could.

That's the slap in the face.

In the past, you could dismiss him as the son of a Fallen, but now the best you can do is criticize him for lacking organization or discipline.

After all, the kid just pulled off a major victory again.

And because it involves a Gu Master, this undoubtedly has to be reported to Headquarters for the President to personally handle.

Gu Jianlin is only seventeen years old. He became an Ascender less than a month ago and has already achieved four major successes, the most recent involving a Gu Master. When this record is reported, those in the know will understand.

So even the Judgment Court wouldn't dare clamor too loudly now.

In the silence, Li Hanting stroked the wolf cub in his arms, the smile on his face slowly fading.

Just then, the arrogant voice of the Crown Prince echoed over the Omega Sequence communication channel.

Crown Prince: "Li Hanting, apparently this isn't an unsolvable problem. If someone could do it, why couldn't you? Next time, just admit if you're incapable; no need for excuses."

Jue Jian: "I second that."

Poison Master: "Luckily, I developed the antidote ahead of time; otherwise, I might've been caught in the crossfire too."

Dawn: "You guys keep chatting. I'm off to rescue people."

Nightmare: "I'm joining you."

At that moment, a round head popped out from a cruise ship in the distance, gazing toward the horizon and exclaiming, "Damn, scared me to death! I almost called for my little aunt to help earlier. These damnable Gu Masters really are dangerous. By the way, who lured that monster away just now?"

Riding atop one of his subordinates, Mr. Liu stuck his head out from the cabin, eyes darting around.

"Reporting, Third Master—it seems to have been a newcomer from the Ether Association."

The subordinate, face flushed from being crushed, stammered, "His codename is... uh, Chair Killer! Yeah, Chair Killer! Someone even saw his face earlier. His bounty on the black market is now 5.27 million. While not extraordinarily high, it's raised eyebrows since he has two Mythical Weapons. Quite a few people are coveting them."

The subordinate hesitated. "They say if you fight him, never do it in a place with chairs. Otherwise, he becomes brutally ferocious, and there's a high chance you'll end up with your head blown to pieces!"

Mr. Liu blinked, then spat. "What the hell kind of nonsense is that? That's the kind of guy I want! Damn it, why'd someone like that end up with the Association? Outrageous! Annoying! Oh, right—take down the bounty on him for me. In our line of work, we have to follow the code. No betraying someone who's done us a solid."

After saying this, he straightened up. Pulling a loudspeaker from God-knows-where, he began bellowing curses to the outside: "Hey! You scumbags in the Judgment Court! You're a bunch of treacherous cowards! Our You Ying Group clearly had an agreement with you—minding our own business. And now you've turned on us! Disgusting!"

At these words, the faces of many on the cruise—especially members of the You Ying Group—turned pale.

They'd already been driven onto a boat. Shouldn't they be sailing away now? Why start taunting people?

"Boss, think carefully!"

The subordinate said in a panic.

"Think my ass! I have backers!"

Mr. Liu shouted defiantly.

The subordinate, on the verge of tears, thought, \*It doesn't matter if you have backers.\*

\*The problem is, I have people above me.\*

He felt like he was about to be crushed alive.

Amid the storm, Councilman Zhang sat coldly in the cabin, expression icy as he said, "Mr. Liu, it's true that the Ether Association and your You Ying Group signed a non-aggression pact. But that was conditional on your cooperation. Now that a Gu Master has appeared in West Port, and we've detected Divine Servant-level and Ancient Divine Language fluctuations..."

He spoke indifferently, "We have every reason to suspect your betrayal of the human faction."

At the same time, all the Demon Hunters raised their weapons, aiming straight at the cruise ship from afar.

Unexpectedly, Mr. Liu bellowed in response, "When's your mother dying? Don't try to pin every pile of crap on us. If I remember correctly, wasn't this Nightmare Master a defector from the Ether Association? You can't even watch over your own people and still have the nerve to come here and shout? As for betraying the human faction... screw you and your accusations!"

"If I had that kind of power, I'd blast you with an Ancient Divine Language so hard your own mother wouldn't recognize you!"

His insults became increasingly vicious, his chubby face twisted with rage. "Your so-called Judgment Court is nothing but a bunch of boot-licking cowards! You hide your high-level members at the back while sending a low-level newcomer to lure the monsters away. Are you regressing? Do you even have any shame left? Next time, stop making rookies clean up your messes and go cry to your mothers instead!"

The people on the cruise ship were growing more and more alarmed as they listened.

But this seemed to be Mr. Liu's style. The You Ying Group was a colossal force in the Dark World, and as one of the six board members, he reportedly had a very high-ranking little aunt in his corner.

He was one of the few people who dared to brazenly confront the Judgment Court.

Councilman Zhang, as high-ranking as he was within the Judgment Court, couldn't stand such humiliation.

He immediately ordered coldly, "Attack!"

A large contingent of Demon Hunters sprang into action, their different paths each performing their unique roles.

The Overlord Path stayed in the rear, setting up guns and rocket launchers.

The close combat specialists—Ancient Martial, Ghost Slayers, and Sword Sect—closed in from all sides, forming an encirclement.

Meanwhile, the nano warriors of the Dawn Combat Sequence didn't budge an inch.

It was clear now just how divisive the internal factions within the Ether Association were. Though it hadn't escalated to open warfare, the disunity and internal strife were severe.

At that moment, Mr. Liu shrank back and turned to say, "Miss Lan, using your creations on those filthy Judgment Court dogs would be an insult to your work. Now, let me show you how much I've grown recently!"

In the opulent cabin, black silk curtains veiled a girl lounging on a sofa.

Miss Lan softly hummed her approval.

Grinning, Mr. Liu fished a remote control out of his pocket and pressed a red button.

Bang!

A massive green explosion erupted near the port, engulfing the nearby Demon Hunters.

A horrifying stench immediately followed!

"Urgh!"

"What the hell is this?!"

"Help, help...!"

Simultaneously, the deck's mechanical panels sprang open, revealing countless machine guns. Their blazing muzzles didn't fire bullets but instead unleashed clouds of revolting toxic gas!

Boom! Boom! Boom!

In an instant, the Demon Hunters were engulfed entirely, their anguished screams echoing ceaselessly.

"Haha! Time to teach our friends in the Judgment Court some respect! Fire at will!"

Mr. Liu's maniacal laughter rang out. "Fire at them hard! But be careful not to hit the Dawn Combat Sequence warriors!"

Chapter 246 - 126: Who Are You Really?

Gu Jianlin hadn't even had time to react before the car wheel had already rolled right over his face.

He cleared his throat and corrected himself, "No, what I meant was, based on the traces left on the rooftop of Peak City Second High's teaching building, the profile of that person matches you pretty closely. And that person is at least Fourth Letter Level."

"So now you're taking the long way around to ask about my figure?"

Moon Princess's eyes were deep and unfathomable as she said blandly, "Professor Gu Ci'an of the Ether Association Nightwatch Department, renowned for his hundred percent case closure rate and mastery

of profiling, has caught numerous supernatural criminals over the years. And his son, it turns out, uses profiling to analyze a girl's private parts?"

She let out a chuckle. "Or... has the Mao Sheng Liquid already started to take effect? If you really can't hold it back, I can always turn around. Help yourself. Don't worry, I won't look back."

Goddamn \*help yourself\*.

Gu Jianlin was left speechless by her remark. Taking a deep breath, he countered, "In any case, whether you admit it or not, I still believe you're the one who's been protecting me in secret."

The thing is, that's not something you can easily verify with the naked eye.

If someone's binding their chest, it's actually really hard to tell.

Unless Gu Jianlin had chosen the Overlord Path back then. At Zero-tier, he would have gained a passive reconnaissance skill called the infamous \*Eagle Eye\*—a top-tier observational ability.

A single glance to settle the matter.

Moon Princess crossed her arms lazily and said, "Whatever you say. Either way, it's not me."

After saying that, she released her arms and got up from the small stool.

Gu Jianlin clearly noticed that as she let go, something faintly trembled.

His suspicions became even more certain.

"Could you not stare?"

Moon Princess said coldly.

Gu Jianlin, having undergone driving lessons from the ice-cold beauty back home, was no longer a greenhorn.

Since she refused to admit it, he decided to continue applying pressure.

"If you feel it's too tight and uncomfortable, you could just loosen it up."

He shrugged lightly. "I can turn around too, and I promise I won't look back."

Moon Princess wasn't buying it. She rolled her eyes and retorted, "A man's mouth is a liar's den."

Although she was usually cold and indifferent, that eye roll carried a hint of coquettish charm.

Gu Jianlin hesitated for a moment. "You remind me of my sister."

Moon Princess cast him a sidelong glance and said, "You have a sister, huh."

Gu Jianlin nodded. "She has a figure similar to yours, just way flatter."

Suddenly recalling that he hadn't replied to her messages, he quickly opened the chat box to type.

Su Youzhu's WeChat avatar was her own photo, but her nickname was a bit abstract:

— \*This Lady is Cute and Adorable.\*

Moon Princess leaned over to take a look, her eyes flashing with a hint of curiosity. "Your little sister's pretty cute."

"Yeah, she's really good-looking."

Gu Jianlin considered it for a moment. "By my standards, she's in the top three."

Unexpectedly, Moon Princess showed interest in this and asked, "Who are the other two?"

In Gu Jianlin's brief life, he hadn't interacted with many girls.

But in the past half-year, he'd repeatedly encountered top-tier beauties.

Chen Qing and Lin Wanqiu, the older sister types, needed no further mention.

Lu Zijin was an older woman acting young, but she was undeniably adorable.

Su Youzhu and Tang Ling ranked firmly among the top three by his standards of aesthetics.

The former was a quiet, three-no girl. The latter, a dashing older sister type.

As for number one, that could only be the terrifying Candle Dragon Venerable.

"You don't know them."

After sending a message, he pocketed his phone and frowned. "Why do you care?"

Moon Princess said faintly, "Just curious. She's not your real sister, is she? From how she treats you, she seems pretty fond of you. She even makes food for you at home and waits for you to come back. Does your sister do all the cooking at your house?"

Gu Jianlin nodded. "My mom and her dad are both really busy, and I've got an older sister who works outside."

Moon Princess's eyes gleamed as she teased, "A sister, a house, busy parents—classic setup."

Gu Jianlin's eye twitched.

"Isn't it, though? You're at the perfect age for a hormonal outburst, living under the same roof day in and day out. Feelings inevitably get stirred up, don't they? Especially since the two of you don't even share a drop of blood—heck, not even a legal familial tie. As far as the law is concerned, you're strangers."

Moon Princess spoke with subtle insinuation.

Gu Jianlin fell silent for a moment before saying blandly, "Have you heard of the Gu Family's Curse? Until I break it, I won't consider feelings or get close to her."

Moon Princess clearly knew about it and shot him a sidelong glance. "You're afraid you'll drag her into it?"

Gu Jianlin said nothing, but his silence was answer enough.

Moon Princess asked nonchalantly, "I heard the Gu Family's Curse isn't that simple. If you can't break it, you'll just keep avoiding her? Including your current family?"

Gu Jianlin's face remained expressionless as he said, "This is none of your concern. I have my plans."

With that, he sent a message to the girl back home, saying he'd find time to visit soon.

Yet, for some reason, probably a sense of *déjà vu* growing stronger, he initiated a video call.

A moment later, the call connected. The sound of water splashing could be heard.

"What's up?"

Su Youzhu's crisp, melodious voice came from the bathroom.

Through the mirror's reflection, Gu Jianlin vaguely glimpsed her slender figure in the bathtub.

He instantly said, "It's nothing. Just missed you."

Then he hung up immediately.

Putting his phone away, Gu Jianlin felt like his standards were hitting new lows.

At the moment, he was sure of one thing.

The person who had been protecting him all along was definitely Moon Princess.

Most likely, she was the one mentioned in his father's documents as a student.

Even Lu Zicheng had mentioned the existence of such a student.

But what intrigued him even more was the identity beneath Moon Princess's mask.

This was a secret nested inside another secret.

Layer upon layer.

Moon Princess had been watching him the whole time and was about to say something.

Boom.

The cave trembled, the deafening sounds of explosions faintly audible from outside.

Gu Jianlin immediately assumed the killers were back and snapped to high alert.

"Relax. It's probably just Third Master going at it with the Judgement Court again."

Moon Princess looked up and explained, "Third Master has had issues with the Judgement Court for a long time. This time, the Judgement Court issued a purge order, which is really just about clearing the way to Qilin Immortal Palace. The Ether Association is currently dominated by the Judgement Court's forces, so they want all the benefits for themselves."

Gu Jianlin nodded internally. So that's what it was about. "I thought they came because they sensed Divine Servant-level activity."

"That's part of it. The Judgement Court never moves without a reason. There must be something bigger at stake for them to intervene personally."

Moon Princess suddenly asked, "Do you know where the assassins targeting you came from?"

Gu Jianlin shook his head silently. "I'm not sure. Plenty of people have reasons to want me dead."

Moon Princess sighed. "Then stay here for now. If there's an ambush out there, we're dead meat in our current state. Besides, I have something to show you."

She walked to the end of the cave, took out a dagger, and casually swiped it.

Several jagged fissures erupted in the void, slicing through the solid rock. Countless stones lost their support and crumbled to the ground in a cascade of gravel.

Dust swirled, revealing a massive cavern hidden behind the shattered rock wall.

A chill wind swept through, almost as if something were sobbing.

Gu Jianlin was stunned. "Your secret base?"

Moon Princess shook her head. "No, this is actually a long-abandoned engineering site. From the late 19th to early 20th century, the De Federation invested huge resources in building an extensive sewer system in Peak City. The project continued for years and seemed successful on the surface, but if you compare it with the original blueprints, you'll find it was a botched job. It abruptly ended near the coastal line."

She paused briefly before continuing, "I heard from my men—err, an elder of mine—that during the construction, the workers kept encountering bizarre accidents near the coast. Eventually, they were too terrified to dig any deeper and had to halt the project."

Gu Jianlin frowned. "And so?"

Moon Princess said flatly, "That secret is tied to your Gu Family."

Chapter 247 - 127: The Underground Secret Chamber

The bathroom was warmly lit. Su Youzhu was drying her damp, light green short hair while wrapping her slender figure in a towel. She stared at the chat window on her phone and fell into a brief silence.

"Miss me?"

A rare smile curved on her lips: "What kind of reason is that, huh."

From the living room came the sound of a woman complaining, mumbling: "What's wrong lately? First it's storms, then it's gas explosions, how dangerous. Zhuzhu, have you reached your brother yet?"

Su Youzhu stepped out of the bathroom, her delicate, pale face showing no emotion: "I got in touch. He's still at school now, busy preparing for interviews, really busy."

The lies came effortlessly.

Shi Jing cast a suspicious glance at her precious daughter and asked, "Why doesn't he answer my calls but answers yours instead?"

Su Youzhu tilted her head and thought for a moment: "Maybe it's because I'm cuter."

Shi Jing scoffed, reaching out to pinch her cheek: "Shameless!"

Although they weren't biologically mother and daughter, their personalities matched well, and they got along seamlessly with deep affection.

There was no difference from being a real daughter.

Shi Jing felt deeply indebted to her son and had been striving to make up for it over the years. But that kid was naturally reclusive. Even during holidays when she insisted he join for a meal, he would refuse and prefer to keep to himself.

After the car accident, his personality had grown even stranger.

Thankfully, the family still had their treasured daughter.

The relationship between Su Youzhu and Gu Jianlin was the closest.

At least closer than with his mother.

After all, there was no generation gap.

No matter how good a mother and son's bond is, there are always things they wouldn't share.

It's different with peers. They talk about everything, with no reservations.

"He's aiming for Qingbei after all. Even with his grades, he still has to put in some effort. He even said he met some senior girls working on beauty projects. They gave him lots of cosmetics and skincare products, and he'll bring them back for us."

Su Youzhu replied softly: "Probably in the next few days."

"Really?"

Shi Jing was very satisfied to hear her son striving to bring glory to the family. Then she said, "If he gets into Qinghua, that'll really bring pride to the Old Gu Family. That boy is just too reclusive. He's almost eighteen and hasn't found a girlfriend yet. Honestly, getting into college is secondary; the family isn't short on money."

She sighed: "The real issue is that he must carry on the Old Gu Family line somehow. Otherwise, when I pass away, how would I face his grandparents? Even if I meet his father, I couldn't stand tall."

Su Youzhu lounged on the sofa, fiddling with her phone absentmindedly: "Is that so?"

"Zhuzhu, you young ones have a closer bond with him."

Shi Jing fondly rubbed her supple cheeks and said, "I'm leaving this matter to you."

Upon hearing this, Su Youzhu raised her head slightly, her eyes brightening: "Hmm?"

Shi Jing grinned: "Help him figure things out."

Su Youzhu lowered her head again and replied faintly with an "Oh."

"I think he's got nothing to worry about in that area."

"Oh? Could there be someone already?"

"Hmm? No idea."

"What good are you then!"

Shi Jing rolled her eyes, suddenly noticing her daughter's weary expression: "Zhuzhu, what's wrong?"

Su Youzhu yawned tiredly, staring blankly at her phone, looking adorably dazed.

"Nothing, I just didn't sleep well last night... I'm tired..."

Shi Jing tapped her forehead lightly, scolding: "You child, what are you even up to all day? Your teacher called again today saying you weren't paying attention in class, just daydreaming all the time. At your age, what can you be thinking about? Or could it be about some boy? They say your thoughts show on your face, and look at you, you don't seem clever at all."

She teased, "Three kids in this house, and only Xia is worry-free."

Still in a daze, Su Youzhu spoke softly: "Mom, I'm not dumb."

Shi Jing glared at her: "If you're not dumb, then who is? Go look in the mirror; you radiate dumbness!"

Ever since she was young, this little daughter had always been this way, as if her brain didn't function quite right.

Besides occasionally dressing up in cosplay makeup, her favorite activity every day was resting her chin and staring off into space.

Sometimes, she could do it for an entire day.

Back in middle school, there was once a time when the school called her parents.

The incident happened during a biology class when the teacher asked her to explain, "From where does blood flow to where?"

Thinking it was geography class, she blurted out, "It flows from west to east."

Shi Jing and her father had briefly worried about her mental state.

They had been hesitating for years about whether to get her a psychologist...

Inside the cave, Gu Jianlin fell silent for a moment: "You sure know a lot. I'm a descendant of the Gu Family, but even I didn't know this place was connected to my family, yet you do? Who told you?"

He paused: "You slipped earlier. Your 'guide'? Did you mean your mentor?"

It was now absolutely clear to him—this person was his father's student.

But the thing was, the personality profile he had analyzed didn't quite match the facts.

It made him feel increasingly absurd and baffled.

Moreover, reality had already disproven it.

Moon Princess, however, calmly responded: "Don't snoop into a beautiful girl's business."

Gu Jianlin gave her a sidelong glance and said coolly: "You're a beautiful girl?"

"Am I not?"

Moon Princess narrowed her charming eyes, lightly lifting the hem of her black skirt, her slender and alluring legs pressed tightly together, the curves strikingly alluring.

Chapter 248 - 127: The Secret Chamber Underground \_2

"Having a good figure doesn't mean you have a pretty face."

Gu Jianlin said with deep meaning.

Moon Princess was silent for a second, then coldly replied, "If you've seen my face, you have to marry me."

Gu Jianlin raised an eyebrow, "What era are we in? Are you trying to start a Renaissance?"

Moon Princess snorted softly, "Hurry in, you're walking in front."

After speaking, she stepped back half a step and tugged the boy's clothes.

Gu Jianlin winced, "What are you doing?"

Moon Princess said righteously, "It's too dark; I'm scared. You lead the way. You Divine people have Life Perception and can heal yourselves. I'm the damage dealer; shouldn't I stay behind?"

Gu Jianlin thought to himself, "Only a fool would believe that."

You just killed a Fourth Rank Overlord Path ruler in a second earlier, and now you're claiming you're afraid of the dark.

But he couldn't argue, especially since she had just saved him once.

"Stay behind me, and don't move unnecessarily."

Gu Jianlin took a deep breath and activated Life Perception.

Numerous chaotic Life Rhythms flooded into his senses, fortunately all small creatures like bats and rats—nothing that could pose a threat.

He was very weak at the moment. The Blue Blood was already consumed, leaving only the Breathing Technique for slowly regenerating his spirituality.

During a previous life-or-death chase, he had grasped the Breathing Technique's essence—its advanced application.

This advanced Breathing Technique seemed capable of creating a domain, cleansing supernatural forces within a range, allowing him to come out entirely unscathed even within the explosion's zone, completely avoiding harm.

However, the cost was exhausting all of his spirituality in one go.

And now, being under the oppressive range of the Heavenly Person Realm rendered his Ancient God abilities nearly useless.

So caution was paramount.

"Don't carry the Heavenly Evil Spirit with you."

Moon Princess instructed, "Leave it here."

Gu Jianlin froze and left the dark metal umbrella behind in the cavern before venturing deeper into the cave.

The two simultaneously pulled out their phones and turned on the flashlight apps to search around.

Cold and damp.

Gu Jianlin examined the cave walls, noticing the evident passage of time and numerous scratches left by human hands.

It seemed as though traces of people passing through here years ago still lingered.

"This cave is a secret passage leading deep underground. Before the 1930s, your Gu Family guarded this area. It was considered a secret base of the Gu Family."

Moon Princess hesitated before adding, "Back then, your family was a prominent clan. But after the 1930s..."

Gu Jianlin said expressionlessly, "Most of my family members died, didn't they?"

Moon Princess confirmed with a slight hum, "At that time, your family could no longer guard this place. But as long as we don't venture too deeply, it should be fine. Currently, there aren't many Forbidden

Zones appearing within Peak City. Black Cloud City is the closest to the entrance to Qilin Immortal Palace, so the contamination is severe."

She paused and added, "If my guess is correct, there should also be an entrance beneath West Port."

Gu Jianlin frowned; this certainly made things trickier.

The Great Ruins within Black Cloud City had areas with deeper Calamity Ruins at its core, containing higher-level threats.

"Could the secret entrance mentioned by Mr. Liu be this one?"

Gu Jianlin casually asked.

Moon Princess replied indifferently, "Probably. But I'm not too familiar with him; I'm just someone paid to do a job. The You Ying Group is murky territory, filled with shady individuals not worthy of your trust."

Gu Jianlin nodded slightly and silently continued forward.

"Left."

Moon Princess directed from behind.

Following her instructions, Gu Jianlin explored the cave and turned left.

The corner of his shirt was gripped tightly; this girl truly seemed to be afraid of the dark.

"You know my sister, don't you?"

Gu Jianlin suddenly spoke.

"Nope."

Moon Princess continued giving directions, "Keep going forward, and take a right at the fork."

Gu Jianlin said nothing further. By the flashlight's beam, he observed construction marks everywhere in the tunnel, and an eerie wind surged through the cave, resembling the cries of ghosts.

He followed the girl's directions, moving deeper, where faint mist hung in the air ahead.

The flashlight revealed a Stone Gate up ahead.

On either side of the Stone Gate squatted two stone gargoyles.

For a fleeting moment, the gargoyles opened their eyes, blood-red glimmers slicing through the dark before they quivered slightly, shedding layers of ancient dust.

The commotion startled countless bats, which fled the cave in frantic waves.

"Trouble!"

Gu Jianlin was instantly alert, instinctively drawing the dagger left behind by his father.

Moon Princess remained composed and said, "Don't panic."

With a thunderous rumble, the two massive stone gargoyles unfurled their wings, unexpectedly refraining from attacking. Instead, blood-red feral patterns appeared all over their bodies, which began glowing intensely like heated iron.

They were preparing to explode!

It seemed someone had installed a mechanism here designed to obliterate everything should anyone trespass.

"You take the left; I'll take the right!"

Moon Princess suddenly stepped forward, slicing her palm and letting her blood drip onto the gargoyles.  
"Follow me!"

Gu Jianlin paused before imitating her, slicing his palm and pressing it against the gargoyle.

In an instant, the agitated gargoyles calmed down, the red-hot patterns fading away.

Their searing bodies began cooling.

"These are Alchemy Demons left behind by your Gu Family members."

Moon Princess explained, "To prevent unintended trespassing, they set up this mechanism."

Gu Jianlin glanced sideways at her and commented, "Blood alone can stop them from exploding?  
Clearly, it requires blood recognized by them. So stop pretending; you're my father's student, aren't you?"

Moon Princess continued denying, "Not at all."

With another thunderous sound, the Stone Gate swung open.

The hidden room suddenly became illuminated by scattered candlelight.

The chamber revealed itself to be a surprisingly well-decorated underground cavern. Wooden panels and wallpaper masked the rock walls. Furniture made of solid wood filled the area, including an immensely comfortable-looking bed draped with blue bedding, a large bookcase lining one wall, and a desk with a chair.

A massive portable power station occupied the desk along with a laptop.

Beyond that, the walls were adorned with various firearms, blades, and even numerous secret medicines!

Gu Jianlin immediately knew who this space belonged to.

Hanging on the wall was a photo of a flamboyant man in sunglasses posing on a beach, cradling a baby sucking a pacifier, with a bikini-clad woman lounging on a beach chair sipping juice nearby.

Damn.

Gu Jianlin nearly choked when he realized the baby in the photo was him—his bare bottom exposed.

How utterly mortifying.

God help him if the girl recognized him.

"That baby's you, isn't it? You were pretty adorable when you were a cub."

Moon Princess remarked, "Why are you so expressionless now?"

Gu Jianlin took a deep breath, choosing not to respond as he studied the room.

Old Gu sure was a cunning fellow.

Who knows how many secret bases he'd left behind?

The Black Cloud City's landfill didn't have much left.

But this place was entirely different.

"You brought me here deliberately, didn't you?"

Gu Jianlin traced the dust-covered desk, trying to boot up the laptop.

Surprisingly, it still had power and booted up without requiring a password.

Unfortunately, the computer held nothing significant—just tons of online games.

Gu Jianlin glanced at the ashtray on the desk, overflowing with cigarette butts.

Next to it were cans of Red Bull, bottles of Cola, and empty snack packages.

He could easily imagine the man sitting here, scratching his foot, puffing on a cigarette, and gaming.

"Not at all."

Moon Princess plopped onto the bed, looking rather leisurely. "I happened to stumble upon this place, suspected it to be a secret base left by your Gu Family, and thought I'd bring you here to see if we'd find anything worthwhile."

She claimed so, but she showed no interest in treasure hunting.

Gu Jianlin redirected his attention to the bookshelves, finding numerous files and documents.

From the pile, he uncovered a thick folder stamped with bold letters.

—Qilin Immortal Palace Investigation Report Summary.

"I, Gu Ci'an, the world's greatest archaeologist!"

"Today, I finally uncovered the origin of Qilin Immortal Palace!"

"Most importantly, I've discovered the secret of why Candle Dragon Venerable chose to execute Qilin Venerable and seal him here!"

Chapter 249 - 128: The Mystery of the Qilin

Gu Jianlin could only admit defeat—why did such a serious investigation report have to start with self-aggrandizement?

Alright, saying it was just a bit of self-aggrandizement was an understatement.

The document left by his father was practically all nonsense. Out of over eight thousand words, only about one thousand were meaningful. The rest was fluff—he really should've been writing novels and making money with this talent.

"The Ancient Supreme has always been the nightmare looming over humanity, the ultimate catastrophe, the judgment of the apocalypse. Myths from civilizations worldwide have foretold the arrival of the apocalypse—take Nordic mythology for example. This is essentially a typical pessimistic perspective from the Northern European Germanic tribes."

"They believe that humanity cannot possibly defeat the Ancient God Clan, as the revival of the Primordials across the globe has already caused devastating disasters. When the Ancient Supreme awakens, humanity will face extinction."

"Even the Judgment Day described in the Bible is, in essence, a depiction of the Ancient Supreme's return and divine punishment."

"From my years of research into the Ancient God Clan, it seems humanity indeed shouldn't have stood a chance. While Ancient Gods are unadapted to Earth's natural environment, the real issue lies in the fact that... initially, humans had no Inheritance Path."

"Inheritance Path, Heavenly Person Realm, Mythical Weapon, Alchemy Weapon, Breathing Technique, Forbidden Spell—where do these originate? Who gave humanity these tools to fight the Ancient God Clan?"

"Even stranger, while decoding the Sumerian King List on ancient tablets in the Middle Eastern region, I confirmed one thing: ever since the Ancient God Clan descended upon this world, their internal conflicts have never ceased."

"This is truly perplexing—are the Ancient Gods idiots? Clearly not. They possess higher intelligence and civilizations far beyond human understanding. In fact, humanity's ability to develop its civilization to the present is largely influenced by the Ancient God Clan. In some ways, the thought processes of the two races share similarities."

"At least in my view, no human faction or empire in history would engage in large-scale internal strife when attacking another power. Just imagine, if back then, Cao Cao had led his armies to attack Chibi, only to start slaughtering his own ranks before crossing the river—Liu Bei and Sun Quan would've laughed themselves silly!"

"What kind of idiotic behavior is this? The current leadership of the Ether Association mocks the Ancient God Clan in exactly this way."

"While I also feel like laughing, the more I laugh, the less I find it funny. There's an ominous premonition that bothers me. Strictly speaking, the Ancient God Clan isn't a 'race' as humans understand the term. They are invaders, but not a singular species—they are numerous, overwhelmingly powerful individuals."

"Even within a single clan, there are instances of mutual slaughter."

"Take the Qilin Venerable, for example—the least recorded and most mysterious of the Ancient Supremes. Both mythology and history are riddled with errors regarding Them. The Qilin is absolutely

not an auspicious beast. Perhaps some ancestors of the Qilin Clan held symbolic ties to prosperity, but that terrifying Black Qilin certainly did not."

"Records of the Qilin Clan trace back as far as the Ancient Shu Civilization. Some Witch Ghost cultural relics of the Ancient Shu Kingdom bear traces of the Qilin Venerable. It's possible that during the Ancient Era, the Qilin Venerable descended onto the human world, once masquerading as a monarch or emperor, scheming in hiding."

"In the Pre-Qin period, this was the height of activity for the Ancient God Clan. The Qilin Venerable and Vermilion Bird Venerate both appeared in the Chu region, worshiped by the Chu people—one working in the light, the other in the shadows, complementing each other."

"The Qilin Venerable left their inheritance behind, which is why the Chu people leaned toward the mystical, embracing witches and ghosts. Yet strangely, the Chu people's object of worship and sacrifice was not the Qilin Venerable, but the Vermilion Bird Venerate."

"This is why I'm investigating the Qilin Immortal Palace—because of the intricate connections between the Qilin Venerable and Vermilion Bird Venerate. After years of pursuing the Vermilion Bird Clan and Fusang Divine Palace, I've found no traces related to curses. I suspect my direction was wrong—I should pursue the footprints of the Qilin Venerable."

"That fool Rhein thinks I'll obediently work for him? Pfft! Even if Light dies, not just anyone can be my boss."

"During my investigation, I discovered that the Qilin Venerable's authority might be a taboo. I'm suddenly curious—what exactly is this authority? Even the Ancient Supreme fears it. Most Ancient Gods want Them dead, including members of the Qilin Clan itself! What kind of existence is this? It's like being nobody's favorite relative."

"Rumors say They're inherently insane, violent, brutal, and bloodthirsty. Judging from the Divine Path derived from Them, it certainly looks that way. Both the Qilin Clan and Divine Path spread calamities and plunder lives. Even the King of Qing was an outright lunatic—thank goodness I didn't end up as his apprentice. Damn, that's terrifying."

"No way—I have to protect my son. Keep that old man away from him. Being his apprentice is a guaranteed disaster. Luckily, that old man doesn't have many years left—I could outlive him without even trying!"

Gu Jianlin fell silent as he read this.

For heaven's sake, stop jinxing yourself.

You say that, and the old guy might outlive you just to prove you wrong.

Gu Jianlin didn't even know where to begin roasting this.

He couldn't figure out why his father called the King of Qing a madman, but it was clear he dreaded that calamity deeply.

Still, it was too late to say anything now.

All of a sudden, the Moon Princess leaned over, curiously peering at the document: "Reading so intently?"

Gu Jianlin caught the chill aroma emanating from her hair.

A few stray strands brushed against his cheek.

Unintentionally, the side effects of the Mao Sheng Liquid began surfacing—a flicker of wicked fire ignited within him.

He steadied his mind, using the rhythmic breathing technique to forcefully maintain his composure, completely ignoring her.

"In humanity's long war against the Ancient God Clan, the greatest turning point came in 221 BCE, when Qin conquered six states, achieving a remarkable unification. In the shadowy history of the world, this wasn't just the first unification of a state—it was humanity's overwhelming triumph against the Ancient God Clan."

"Humanity used the Dragon Vein as a foundation to forge an alchemical domain covering the entire Qin Dynasty territory. The Heavenly Person Realm blanketed the region, forcibly altering the real-world environment. Under such circumstances, most Ancient Gods couldn't survive and had to retreat back to the Ancient God Realm."

"However, there was one Ancient God who stubbornly remained in the real world, attempting to destroy the Dragon Vein, dismantle the Heavenly Person Realm, and forcefully merge the Ancient God Realm with the material world using the Wedge as a core."

"That being... no, that deity was the Candle Dragon Venerable!"

"It was an unprecedented crisis—a decisive battle that shaped Earth's trajectory for the next few millennia. The First Emperor traveled across the nation, seeking counsel from countless Great Sages. Gui Guzi led the effort as they deliberated strategies together."

"I'm extremely curious about this secret history—I've interrogated numerous Ancient Ancestors. These traitorous Divine Servants of humanity couldn't withstand much. Hit them a few times and they spill everything. While I don't know the final conclusions of our ancestors' deliberations, they supposedly developed something—drawing on collective power to confront the Candle Dragon Venerable!"

"Oh, how thrilling! What era was that? It was the most brilliant time for civilization—the Hundred Schools of Thought, a hundred schools vying for dominance. The First Emperor gathered humanity's wisdom to challenge the strongest Ancient God, the Candle Dragon Venerable."

"Unfortunately, that battle never occurred! Because the Candle Dragon Venerable... slipped away! They fled! This invincible Supreme—who slaughtered gods and vanquished Buddhas—actually ran off?"

"Humanity's secret weapon was ready, but you ran off! Now I understand why the Candle Dragon Venerable, despite still lurking in this world, doesn't intimidate the Ether Association and allows them to sit comfortably. Turns out, the big guns prepared over two thousand years ago for that Supreme are still unused and remain Omega Sequence's highest confidential files."

"I'm baffled—why did They flee?"

"Alright, I finally know the reason, and it's because They went to kill the Qilin Venerable."

"Because the Qilin Venerable... found a way to deal with the Candle Dragon Venerable! If my guess is correct, that secret is right in the Qilin Immortal Palace!"

Gu Jianlin's breathing quickened as he reached this part.

There were actually two methods to deal with the Candle Dragon Venerable, both real!

One was the crystallized wisdom of the Great Sages from the Hundred Schools of Thought era.

The other was the long-term strategy of none other than the Qilin Venerable—a millennium in the making by an Ancient Supreme.

In that moment, Gu Jianlin felt an unexpected surge of fighting spirit toward the woman guarding the corpse in the Qilin Immortal Palace!

Chapter 250 - 129: Offering Treasures

Gu Jianlin never expected that there would be such a hidden chapter of history.

Run, it means to flee.

The Candle Dragon Venerable, reputed to be the most powerful, was indeed a ruthless figure. Even under the suppression of the Heavenly Person Realm that covered the vast Qin Dynasty's territory, she dared to remain in the physical world and single-handedly confront the entire Eastern faction.

She even forced the Emperor and the Great Sages to convene and devise strategies, preparing a secret weapon.

However, this secret weapon was ultimately unused and has now become the highest secret of the Omega Sequence.

Because the Candle Dragon Venerable perceived an even greater threat and didn't choose to fully wage war against humanity.

Instead, she temporarily made a trip to the East Sea.

Because in the East Sea, the Qilin Venerable was also scheming something, preparing means to deal with her.

In other words, between humanity and her own kind, the Candle Dragon Venerable considered the latter to be a greater threat.

Forcing her to deal with it.

"So that's it. That means the human faction currently holds a method to confront the Candle Dragon Venerable. Meanwhile, in the Qilin Immortal Palace, there's also a deadly weapon designed to deal with her. As a result, the Candle Dragon Venerable went to great lengths to suppress the Qilin Venerable, build the Immortal Palace to seal her, and even left a Primordial to guard her."

Gu Jianlin thought to himself: "What was the purpose of the Kui Dragon Ancestor's presence? Clearly, it wasn't to guard the Qilin Venerable; otherwise, he wouldn't have ended up so weak, needing the Candle Dragon Venerable to step in herself."

In other words, the Kui Dragon Ancestor was guarding something else!

And that something is likely to be the secret weapon left behind by the Qilin Venerable two thousand years ago.

Initially, Gu Jianlin felt despair toward the strongest Supreme.

After all, he assumed that if even the First Generation Qilin Venerable couldn't defeat her, then he certainly couldn't.

But things were different now.

Gu Jianlin was the biggest snitch in this world, an agent within agents.

Eating from both humanity and the Ancient Gods.

Whether it was the secret weapon of the Omega Sequence or the thing inside the Qilin Immortal Palace.

As long as he obtained them, he'd have a chance.

With time, the advantage would be his!

For some reason, Gu Jianlin now felt an endless surge of battle intent within him. If there weren't people around, he might even have rushed into the Qilin Immortal Palace again to tease that woman.

Oh wait, no, provoke.

Moon Princess noticed how engrossed he was and said quietly, "Did you discover anything?"

Gu Jianlin nodded and continued reading.

"Actually, I strongly suspect that the Judgement Court has inferred this truth from fragments of historical clues, which is why they are willing to go to all lengths to enter the Qilin Immortal Palace. Unfortunately, if not for the Nightmare Master's betrayal, this plan wouldn't have been stalled for so long. Such a pity—for a time, I, Zijin, and the Nightmare Master made such a joyful trio."

"Life is unpredictable; looking back, it's filled with regrets. Though we don't know where he went, I have a feeling he's still alive. He might even have defected to the Ancient God faction and become a snitch!"

"The President issued the highest directive, hoping we can determine whether the Qilin Venerable is still alive. Though the task is incredibly difficult, it's not impossible for me. Truth be told, I hope the Qilin Venerable is dead; otherwise, an Ancient Supreme—even after being suppressed for thousands of years—might possess some unique strategies."

"I've decided to delve deeper into the Qilin Immortal Palace. After all, no one in this world understands archaeology better than I do! If I uncover the secrets in the Immortal Palace, maybe I could break the curse on the Gu Family and also find means to confront the Candle Dragon Venerable!"

"Although I bear no personal grudges against the Candle Dragon Venerable, my Gu Family ancestors were generals under the Emperor. As a descendant of the Gu Family, it's my duty to guard humanity's lands."

"If the Candle Dragon Venerable intends to destroy the world, what will happen to my son? My son is still young; he can't bear all this. No way—no way—I must stop her! The responsibility is mine!"

Gu Jianlin nearly spat blood upon reading this. He thought to himself, "Please shut up! Can you stop tempting fate?"

Whether the Candle Dragon Venerable intends to destroy the world, I don't know.

But right now, she's here to destroy me first!

"As suspected, although the Qilin Immortal Palace was only observed a few years ago, it has appeared sporadically over the past two millennia. Many people have ventured deep into the Immortal Palace. Among them are numerous Ancient Ancestors who betrayed humanity while seeking immortality. As for other surviving members of the Qilin Clan, none have been spotted for now."

"Speaking of which, recently, there was an awakened individual with archaeological expertise who accidentally entered the Immortal Palace. He claimed to have seen ghost shadows in a tomb, worshipped by child boys and girls. Was that person Xu Fu? However, after I entered the Immortal Palace, I didn't encounter these people."

"This won't do. The Qilin Immortal Palace is attracting more and more attention, and the dimensional gate is becoming increasingly unstable. My Rank is insufficient to remain here for long. I've stumbled upon some corpses here—people who carelessly crossed over into the Immortal Palace. Those who survived and made it out, though, would be rare Self-Ascenders."

"I thought of my adorable little disciple. If it hadn't been for meeting her in the Immortal Palace back then, she might have perished under the hands of those Ancient Ancestors. Hmph, I detest those snitches who betray humanity!"

"Not like me; I confront the Ancient God Clan head-on, without being corrupted! Nor will I be tempted!"