

Ancient 251

Chapter 251 - 129: Offering Treasures _2

"I, Gu Ci'an, am the elite among elites! Those snitches who betray the human camp can only expose their greed and darkness in the radiant light of my glory, wallowing in their own shame!"

Gu Jianlin's expression turned peculiar, thinking to himself: "Just shut up already. Can you stop jinxing it?"

By this logic, your son is the biggest snitch in the whole world.

The next moment, he noticed the last line of the file.

"Hmm, the Qilin Venerable seems to..."

"My god, this is terrifying."

The file abruptly ended.

Gu Jianlin's eyes narrowed. Between these two lines, there was a large blank space.

Clearly, there was another line.

Yet it had been erased, with no trace left behind.

Gu Jianlin folded the file and looked around, his eyes flickering.

"What are you looking for?"

Moon Princess suddenly asked.

"Traces."

Gu Jianlin glanced around and said softly, "I want to know if anyone else has been here besides us. A crucial part of this file has been erased. Was it you?"

Moon Princess shook her head and replied, "Not me. Besides, it's unlikely that anyone else has been here. Otherwise, why would they just erase a section and not take all of these things?"

She took a stack of files off the shelf and casually handed one to him.

This time, Gu Jianlin was baffled; he couldn't understand a single word.

"Because these are encrypted texts intended for submission to the Ether Association headquarters. You're not from the Night Watcher Department, so you can't read them. These files document some internal circumstances of the Qilin Immortal Palace; think of them as game guides. Currently, the Dawn Combat Sequence is stationed at Black Cloud City, delving deep into the inner workings of the Immortal Palace."

Moon Princess explained, "Soon, your Omega Sequence will go inside as well. The Night Watcher Department doesn't rely solely on Gu Ci'an for exploring the Immortal Palace; the association has some guides available."

Gu Jianlin glanced at her and asked, "Can you decipher it?"

Moon Princess softly replied with a hum. Then, she packed up the files and said lightly, "These are your father's belongings. Once I decipher them, I'll hand them over to you."

Great, she's even taking on babysitter duties in a different way now.

Gu Jianlin said with a blank expression, "I see. You met my father in the Immortal Palace? You traversed it as soon as it descended back then. Are you also an Independent Awakened?"

He himself was an Independent Awakened.

The reason his awakening had been delayed was that his father had been protecting him, keeping him away from the Transcendent world.

Moon Princess replied firmly, "I'm not, and I didn't."

Gu Jianlin didn't bother debating with her. After inspecting the secret room, he confirmed one thing.

No one else had been here.

He hesitated for a moment, folding the file and putting it in his pocket.

"Do you want to take these secret medicines? Some can restore spirituality, while others are Superdimensional-grade, which might be useful once you break into the Fourth Rank."

Moon Princess asked casually.

Gu Jianlin glanced briefly and indeed spotted two bottles of Blue Blood among the pile of secret medicines.

"One bottle each—restore your spirituality as soon as possible."

He said calmly, "Take the rest with you. I don't need them for now."

After all, she had been secretly protecting him and had even saved his life this time.

He ought to show some gratitude.

Gu Jianlin himself was still some distance away from the Superdimensional level and didn't need them right now.

Once he advanced, he would drag that Pharmacist Old Thief over.

Force him to concoct the Superdimensional Secret Medicine by locking him in a small dark room until he figured it out.

Even though there was currently a looming horror lurking within the Qilin Immortal Palace.

No big deal—Gu Jianlin himself could go and capture the guy.

Perhaps it was time for that foolish pharmacist to experience the harsh realities of the world.

Moon Princess didn't hold back either; she casually picked up a backpack in the secret room and packed the secret medicines and files into it.

"Your father was incredibly cunning; he had countless secret bases."

She suddenly remarked, "We can search for them slowly in the future."

Gu Jianlin nodded slightly, "I know. He's a sly old fox too."

Then he suddenly reacted, saying, "And you're still saying you weren't my father's student?"

Moon Princess ignored him.

At that moment, Gu Jianlin sensed countless life rhythms breaking into his perception range.

"Drink the secret medicine—someone's here."

He tilted his head back and gulped down a bottle of Blue Blood.

"Your life perception extends that far?"

Moon Princess hadn't noticed anything but obediently drank her bottle of Blue Blood anyway.

The two of them exited the secret room, sealed the stone gate, and walked along the rock wall at a slow pace.

One behind the other, like two cats about to commit fish-stealing escapades.

After sneaking around for seventy-some meters, a series of chaotic footsteps echoed.

In the shadows, there were bursts of light.

"Everyone, hold hands and stick together. Nobody gets lost. Let me warn you, if you accidentally wander into the deepest part of this underground, the things in there will eat you alive!"

An arrogant voice laughed, "Relax! Stay with me, Third Master, and everyone gets fed and stays alive! You're all ambitious folks who aim to follow me for great deeds in the future! Today, you've seen it yourselves—even the mighty Judgment Court couldn't stand up to my beatdown! Now you know who the big shot is!"

"Beatdown?"

A sleepy voice grumbled, "Seriously, Third Master, our ship got blown to pieces by the Judgment Court. Can you stop taunting them? If you hadn't stirred things up, we wouldn't have escalated to this level of conflict. Me—a dignified Fifth-Rank World King—forced to hide in the sewers."

Mr. Liu snapped back irritably, "Ning Chen, you're just shortsighted. Weren't they the ones who started this nonsense, strutting around and throwing their weight around? If I didn't fight back, where's my dignity?"

Ning Chen retorted impatiently, "You were the one who used biochemical weapons first!"

"Ugh, what's the big deal? Those idiots wouldn't dream we'd hide underground!"

Mr. Liu said smugly, "No matter how powerful the Ether Association is, can they catch me, Third Master Liu?"

But as he rounded a corner, he suddenly froze: "Holy crap! There's someone here!"

Because there, in the darkness, stood two people coldly staring at him.

Gu Jianlin had long since torn off his human skin mask, so he appeared in his true form. Known as a D-level investigator of the Ether Association and a promising genius of the Omega Sequence.

Moon Princess stood silently behind him, like a phantom haunting the shadows.

Under the flashlight's beam, Mr. Liu led his battered group, each person covered in dust and mud, armed with various firearms and melee weapons, on high alert.

Especially Mr. Liu, whose messy curls crowned a tattered suit, his pants ripped to reveal a half-red underwear—clearly his lucky year.

The supposed "Judgment Court beatdown" seemed quite questionable.

Upon seeing the young man, someone screamed in shock.

"Oh no! We've been found by the Association's 'Chair Killer'!"

A shout rang out.

Weapons were raised, a wave of tense vigilance.

Ning Chen squinted, channeling Qi within.

Mr. Liu's face twisted in alarm, "Holy crap? Chair Killer?"

Gu Jianlin: "..."

He absolutely didn't expect his notoriety to have spread this far.

Just then, Moon Princess nonchalantly stepped forward, blocking him, and said faintly, "Relax, it's me."

The girl clearly had a sterling reputation in the Forbidden Zone.

The moment they saw her, the crowd's expressions shifted to reverence, their armed stances frozen.

Mr. Liu froze for a moment, then plastered on a fawning smile. "Oh, Miss Yue Ji! What a coincidence!"

Moon Princess gave a soft nod.

Gu Jianlin remained vigilant, saying nothing.

Mr. Liu scrutinized the pair with his seasoned eye, honed over years surviving the Dark World.

Tonight, Moon Princess was mysteriously absent; he'd been curious where she'd gone.

Now, the puzzle clicked.

The notorious Chair Killer had drawn monsters away by himself, his fate uncertain.

Moon Princess vanished too, only to appear here together.

Anyone with half a brain could piece it together.

"Came to save your boyfriend, huh?"

Mr. Liu chuckled, "Relax, I, Third Master Liu, am a man who repays kindness. The Chair Killer helped us lure the monsters away, minimizing casualties—how could we turn on him? Besides, he's no ally of the Judgment Court lackeys!"

He turned to his crowd, "Everyone, lower your weapons and thank the benefactor! Remember his face! Though we may not share the same faction, if you encounter him on the battlefield, steer clear. Got it?"

At that moment, someone emerged from the group, bowing respectfully as they offered him a chair: "Benefactor—no, Chair Killer Lord—please, have a seat!"

Gu Jianlin: "..."

Moon Princess gave him a sidelong glance, her eyes twinkling subtly with amusement.

Chapter 252 - 130: Senior Brother Substitute

Gu Jianlin noticed the slightly mischievous look in the girl's eyes.

Feeling a little defeated, he took a deep breath and corrected, "First of all, don't call me anything like 'Lord', let's not go down the feudalism route. Secondly, I have a name. Just call me Gu Jianlin."

Moon Princess stifled a laugh, standing in front of him, not letting anyone get close.

The man who had presented the chair earlier quickly gave a signal to the people behind him.

Five more men stepped forward, bowing deeply at a ninety-degree angle, palms outstretched, each holding a vial of Blue Blood: "Please... oh no, please accept this, Chair Assassin!"

Gu Jianlin noticed the girl beside him trembling slightly, seemingly unconsciously.

He said with an air of despair, "What do you mean by this?"

The man who presented the chair replied respectfully, "To be honest, we're all refugees from Black Cloud Outpost. We were previously captured by the Grave Digger Organization and forced to mine. Those days were worse than death. Then you showed up, teamed up with that Miss Tang, and mercilessly killed Compound Eyes, even taking down Hasegawa Shinichi. You saved us."

"Frankly, we feel ashamed. Back when you and your teammates were cornered, all we could do was watch from a distance. Then I saw you wielding a chair, slaughtering everyone in your path, even taking your teammates' secret medicines."

"This is our pledge of loyalty! We repay our debts. Even if you're part of the Ether Association, we won't lift a hand against you. Otherwise, you're welcome to use that chair to smash our heads open! There's even a rumor that as long as there's a chair nearby, you're invincible, and even the Judgment Court wouldn't dare to mess with you."

He hurriedly added, "Oh, and there's another rumor. They say during battles, you like to steal your teammates' secret medicines because you think your teammates are trash and giving them medicines is a waste of resources. But we're not trash. We're smart trash. No need for you to take it by force; we're giving it willingly!"

Gu Jianlin was stunned.

What kind of ridiculous rumors were these? Absolutely irresponsible.

Although, to be fair, he had indeed said similar things and done similar actions in the past.

But to clarify, that was all under the influence of the negative emotions from Ghost Transformation.

"It seems your infamous reputation has become universally recognized," Moon Princess said in a low voice. "Don't mind it too much. Think of it like when you're climbing the ranks in a game, and your teammates recognize you as the carry player, so they give you all the farm and objectives."

Gu Jianlin pessimistically thought it wasn't like that at all.

To be precise, these people were probably terrified that if they didn't give up the resources, the Chair Assassin would come crashing through their ranks with a chair in hand, exploding their heads one by one.

What a slanderous reputation!

"Hahaha! Anyway, I, Mr. Liu, always mean what I say. Once we enter the Immortal Palace for exploration, everyone will rely on their own abilities. But if any of my people encounter the Chair Assassin, we will definitely retreat three steps!"

Mr. Liu patted his chest confidently and said, "Anyone who disrespects my benefactor, I'll chop off their damn head!"

After saying that, he coughed twice and added, "By the way, the outside is crawling with Judgment Court people. We need to use this underground escape route. These tunnels connect to the city's entire

sewer network, and many lead directly into urban areas. Oh, Miss Moon Princess, are you coming along?"

Gu Jianlin thought, as expected, this group was indeed being chased down.

But with the Judgment Court's vast influence and even a Saint among their ranks, they were definitely not to be trifled with.

"No," Moon Princess glanced at the boy and paused for a moment. "I'll escort him back."

Mr. Liu immediately flashed an "I understand" kind of look. He then pulled a silver membership card out of his pocket and handed it to her with a sly smile. "I get it, I get it! Young people, huh? You can check into this hotel later. It's under the You Ying Group's portfolio in Peak City, very secure. There's even a safe house and armory in the basement linked to the sewer system. The hotel's luxurious, and it even has some... um, themed room—cough cough!"

Moon Princess's eyes widened in disbelief.

Gu Jianlin was equally dumbfounded.

"Let's move!"

Mr. Liu waved his hand grandly and squinted as he led his subordinates away.

Among the retreating crowd, a sleepy-looking young man narrowly opened his eyes for a moment, his gaze glimmering with a strange sharpness.

Also, ten stern and imposing bodyguards walked alongside a veiled figure carrying a black curtain. The presence behind the curtain exuded an almost palpable air of amusement.

Only when the group had disappeared did Gu Jianlin mutter, "That Mr. Liu is no ordinary man."

Moon Princess nodded, explaining, "The You Ying Group is arguably the most powerful entity within the Dark World. Though Mr. Liu may not be personally strong, it's said that he possesses as many as four Mythical Weapons. His wealth and resources run deep. And there's a rumor... that he's connected to the Dark World's Throne."

Gu Jianlin asked suspiciously, "The Dark World's Throne?"

Moon Princess's eyes darkened as she whispered, "Dusk."

Gu Jianlin had lost count of how many times he'd heard the name of that organization.

It was said to be a mysterious group even the Ether Association deeply feared.

"In a way, you and Mr. Liu are somewhat alike. He hates the Judgment Court, too. His bodyguard team, his childhood friends, were all wiped out by the Judgment Court." Moon Princess paused briefly. "Since then, he's been at odds with the Judgment Court. Even within the association, many hate him to their core. Mainly because of his foul mouth and the fact that his squinted eyes irritate people to no end. People think he's always pretending to look down on them."

An enmity with the Judgment Court!

Gu Jianlin found himself inexplicably liking this chubby man more.

Although the squinty eyes did seem pretentious at first encounter.

Moon Princess continued, "The woman behind Mr. Liu is no pushover either. She's one of the finest alchemy masters in the world and comes from a prominent family."

Gu Jianlin mused, "Which is why you advised me not to bring the Heavenly Evil Spirit?"

Moon Princess nodded slightly: "Your fake identity still has some utility. If you ever run into trouble within the association, you can rely on Dark World connections to get out. With the Immortal Palace exploration starting, the You Ying Group's cruise ship is already circling the East Sea—they're a formidable force."

"Mr. Liu's sudden departure is probably to avoid you delving deeper underground. But he likely knows you're a Gu Family descendant and that it's only a matter of time before you set your sights on this place. He'll be on guard."

She warned, "Remember, the Dark World is not a place to venture deeply. No one here is worth your trust."

There was a cold glint in her mesmerizing eyes as she spoke.

Gu Jianlin recalled her behavior in the Immortal Palace: she had seemed utterly indifferent to the Ancient God's Blood's allure and instead provided useful intelligence for his disguise as the Qilin Venerable in exchange for information.

He suddenly asked, "I bet you're not one of the Fallen, so why stay in the Dark World?"

After a brief moment of silence, Moon Princess replied, "Because there are people I trust, and there are things I must uncover."

Seeing she had no intention of telling the whole truth, Gu Jianlin didn't press further.

He already had a loose plan for uncovering her real identity.

"Let me ask you one last time," Moon Princess enunciated carefully, "Do you have the Qilin Wedge or not?"

Gu Jianlin spread his hands: "I don't."

Moon Princess visibly relaxed: "Let's go, get out of here."

Gu Jianlin studied her expression and tone, suddenly struck by a realization.

Her reason for entering the Immortal Palace and joining the dangerous five-member group might largely be tied to him and his father. She had no personal incentive to take such risks.

The others were desperate criminals with no other options.

But she obviously wasn't.

From the highway accident involving his father to the overpass where Gu Jianlin was ambushed, to the cafeteria at school...

Even the Black Cloud Outpost and now West Port tonight...

Each time, she had been there, silently standing by his side.

He suddenly realized that, despite her ghostly, almost nonexistent presence, her consistent protection made his world feel warmer.

"Hey," Gu Jianlin suddenly called out.

Moon Princess stopped in her tracks.

"Thank you. I think I can trust you," Gu Jianlin said softly. "I hope you can trust me too."

"Hmph."

Moon Princess snorted lightly, showing no intention of revealing her truths.

Gu Jianlin wasn't worried. He figured he'd uncover her real identity soon enough anyway.

Half an hour later, Gu Jianlin and Moon Princess emerged from the Southern District's Qinghai Road sewer system.

The storm raged with howling winds, torrential rain, lightning, and thunder.

The city lay veiled in chaos, drowned in endless rain, as though it might be submerged at any moment.

The streets were wrecked with debris, burning fires, and countless dead Gu Worms. Even injured nano warriors were being carried on stretchers to ambulances.

The roads were barricaded as security teams scrambled to restore order.

Moon Princess excelled in the Ghost Slayer Path—elusive and invisible.

Gu Jianlin also had the Lock of Nonexistence, making them virtually undetectable.

It seemed the assassins hunting him had given up for now.

To confirm the assassin's identity, Gu Jianlin backtracked from Qinghai Road to the West Port Forbidden Zone.

Returning to the sniper ambush site.

Unexpectedly, the Ether Association had already secured the site, sealing it off tightly. Nano warriors armed with guns made it impenetrable.

Gu Jianlin and Moon Princess could only perch on a dormitory rooftop, holding an umbrella and watching from afar.

But what they saw left them stunned.

At the crime scene, Gu Jianlin saw... another version of himself!

"That's a puppet, right?" Moon Princess poked his waist. "Move closer; the umbrella doesn't cover me."

Gu Jianlin was dumbfounded, tilting the umbrella slightly to shield her from the rain.

But his gaze remained fixed on the scene below.

The fake Gu Jianlin sat calmly in a chair, holding a cup of hot coffee. Even soaked to the bone by the rain, he exuded the composure and elegance of royalty.

Lu Zijin stood with her hands clasped behind her back, face cold as frost, staring at the assassin's corpse.

Meanwhile, Chen Bojun squatted down, picking up a bisected sniper bullet. His weathered eyes gleamed with an eagle-like sharpness, as if meticulously dissecting its origin.

Present on the scene was also Deacon Nie from the Judgment Court, his face ashen with anger.

"A mere creature crafted by a Gu Master, and it scared all of you like this? Okay, sure, maybe it's a bit much for the Judgment Court's incompetents and the so-called geniuses of the Omega Sequence," mocked the fake Gu Jianlin.

Sprawled languidly in the chair, his tone was casual yet haughty as he crossed his legs: "I can clean up your mess once or twice, but if it happens too often, it gets annoying. You should know your place. As for that Fourth-Rank Overlord, no need to act so alarmed. Plenty of people might have reasons to kill me, but very few actually can."

Such arrogant words threw everyone present into an awkward silence.

Especially Deacon Nie, whose expression turned even darker.

"Even though the Judgment Court has sunk to such depths, identifying a mere killer shouldn't be too hard, right? Yes, I'm talking to you. Don't look around," fake Gu Jianlin said, sipping the coffee with an air of detachment. "Can you manage that?"

Deacon Nie's face twitched slightly, clearly irked by the tone but unable to form a rebuttal.

From their distant rooftop perch, the real Gu Jianlin stared dumbfounded.

"Who's controlling that puppet?" Moon Princess asked suspiciously. "He's so pretentious."

Gu Jianlin's eye twitched.

Who else could it be?

This air of effortless superiority belonged to only one person.

Jing Ci!

Chapter 253 - 131 Oh no, I've become a traitor

The black-haired boy sipped his tea, calmly admiring the stormy night outside.

This was actually a puppet, infused with a trace of spiritual power and controlled via spiritual body threads. Although it had flesh and a heartbeat, it lacked a soul. In theory, it shouldn't be able to deceive any detection methods.

However, everyone knew that Gu Jianlin possessed a Mythical Weapon with cloaking abilities.

So, the absence of detectable soul fluctuations was perfectly reasonable.

Of course, Chen Bojun, a true Holy Sanctuary Level Ascender with powerful observational abilities like Eagle Eye, could instantly see through its true nature. But he chose not to reveal it, only giving a knowing look.

Enough is enough!

Though Lu Zijin lacked observational abilities, she could discern it from behavior and movements.

The real Gu Jianlin wasn't pretending—it was just his naturally excessive pride coupled with his cold and solitary personality that gave others the impression he did things his own way. In truth, he wasn't deliberately targeting anyone—he simply didn't care what others thought and focused only on accomplishing his tasks.

Occasionally, his sarcastic remarks were just side effects of his Ghost Transformation.

As for Jing Ci, he was purely here for the entertainment.

Initially, he was merely following a teacher's orders to clean up after his junior.

But as he pretended, he unexpectedly discovered unparalleled joy in the act.

As for past events, ever since he became the King of Qing's disciple, many renowned prodigies doubted his talent and sought to challenge—or even kill—him.

One reason was that the King of Qing had made countless enemies in his early years.

The principle of paying off the father's debts applied equally well to the master-disciple relationship.

Grudges from the previous generation naturally passed down.

If they couldn't strike the master, at least they could try their luck with the disciple!

Another reason was the King of Qing's unorthodox method of teaching disciples.

The elder's approach was essentially: "As long as it's not an overwhelming attack, go ahead—my disciple is invincible!"

Jing Ci, naïve in his youth, killed all who dared challenge him.

Later, his advancement was so quick that he entered the Holy Sanctuary Level not long after, and no one dared challenge him again.

Since then, he understood the true loneliness of being beyond the reach of others in greatness.

It had already been over a decade since he last enjoyed the feeling of showing off and humiliating others.

Who would've thought that helping his junior put on airs today would bring him such bliss?

It was as though he'd returned to his younger days.

From a distance, Nie, the Deacon, was livid and shouted, "He gave me seven days? Seven days! He's the leader, I'm the leader! How dare he speak to me like that? What, is he planning to bash my head in with a chair too? Does he really think I'd agree? Ha! What a joke! I agreed anyway, what now?"

"Even though you're all so incompetent, identifying a minor assassin shouldn't be too difficult, right? Yes, I mean you—stop looking behind you!"

He coldly addressed his subordinates: "Can you do it?"

The Demon Hunters exchanged bewildered looks as the one in front hesitantly pointed at himself.

Though the Judgement Court savagely eradicated internal dissent and swallowed other factions to grow stronger within the Association, they weren't stupid.

Factional disputes were still factional disputes.

After all, wherever there are people, there are conflicts of interest—even in a class of forty elementary school students, cliques exist. What more in a vast organization like the Ether Association?

The world is limited in size, and resources and interests are finite.

If some are well-fed, others must starve.

This has been the unchanging truth throughout history. No empire or organization can fully unite, top to bottom.

However, if someone dared to flip the table, that changed everything.

Assassinating an Omega Sequence prodigy crossed the Association's bottom line.

If this reached the President, it would have severe consequences.

At that moment, the medical team finally arrived on-site.

Tonight, aside from the nano warriors of the Dawn Combat Sequence, the medical team was the busiest.

Especially Lin Wanqiu, the team leader, drenched in rainwater with blood-stained cheeks. Though still alluring, she couldn't hide her exhaustion.

"Captain Lin, you've finally arrived."

Nie, the Deacon, hurried over and handed her a bottle of Blue Blood, saying, "I know you've worked hard, but please check on that boy quickly to ensure there are no lasting repercussions. After all, he's an Omega Sequence prodigy. If something happens, and the President blames us, no one can shoulder the responsibility."

Then, grumbling under his breath in indignation, Nie muttered, "Why did the Association recruit such an unruly and undisciplined person? He openly disobeys orders and acts alone every time—what a pain! You've been troubled time and again. Truly outrageous!"

Lin Wanqiu, however, smiled faintly: "It's only right. They're our Omega Sequence prodigies, destined to fight against the Ancient Gods for humanity. For them, no amount of hard work is too much."

After a brief pause, she added, "Besides, wasn't it you who recruited him?"

Nie, the Deacon's expression froze immediately.

Lin Wanqiu twirled a strand of hair and smiled gently: "Deacon Nie is sure to rise up in the ranks, having personally recruited an Omega Sequence prodigy. Your contribution will be invaluable. No wonder you risked repercussions to gift him two pieces of Mythical Weapon and pretended it was just routine work."

Nie's face changed drastically, internally screaming, "That's not true! I didn't, I swear!"

"At first, even I thought you were favoring him because of your connection with his father. But now, I see—you truly have an eye for talent."

Nie was stunned.

Damn, I've been framed as the traitor!

Lin Wanqiu turned to the boy sitting calmly amidst the wind and rain.

Before arriving, she'd heard the thunderous applause erupting in the communication channel. At first, she didn't understand the reason but eventually learned the truth after some inquiries.

Faced with the Judgement Court's struggling Demon Hunter team and the urgent situation facing the Omega Sequence, Gu Jianlin had personally taken on the risk of leading the monsters away.

He bought precious time.

As a result, there was no need for the warriors of the Dawn Combat Sequence to sacrifice themselves.

No casualties were reported.

On the way here, she also heard that Lu Zicheng and Chen Qing were injured and required treatment.

This was undoubtedly a rare opportunity.

Yet, when Lin Wanqiu tidied up her appearance, intending to approach the boy with graceful tenderness to check his condition, she was stunned by a glance.

"A mere Fourth Rank Ruler could harm me?"

The black-haired boy took a sip of coffee, glanced at her coldly, and said indifferently, "Go rest. I don't need you."

Lin Wanqiu: "..."

Chen Bojun covered his face and sighed deeply.

Lu Zijin struggled to hold back her laughter, pretending to know nothing while looking around innocently.

A helicopter hovered over the West Port Forbidden Zone and slowly descended.

A woman in a black dress sat in the airport, curiously looking at the boy sitting amidst the storm below. With suspicion, she asked, "I thought Ying Changsheng and my junior sister were already unbeatable in this regard, but I didn't expect someone even better at posturing. Whose subordinate is he?"

Someone answered, "Senior Sister, that's Gu Jianlin."

"Gu Jianlin, so it's him."

The black-dressed woman narrowed her eyes: "This year's Newcomer King in the Peak City District? The one responsible for the Black Cloud City massacre?"

Chapter 254 - 132 What do you want to do

Engraved on the helicopter were silver sword and dagger emblems, belonging to the Silver Faction of the Omega Sequence.

Mu Qingyou, codenamed Jue Jian, is the leader of the Silver Faction.

At the same time, she is also the heir of the Sword Tomb.

A man carrying a Sword Box said, "Yes, he once saved Junior Sister Tang, and our Sword Tomb owed him a debt, but we have paid it back after the massacre at Black Cloud City. He is a descendant of the Gu Family and someone valued by the King of Qing, very likely to become the King of Qing's final disciple."

Mu Qingyou held a tablet, tapping a few times, documents popped up.

"A Second Rank Junior Fate Officer? This combat prowess is unusual. If he is a student of the King of Qing, then it is highly possible he has already learned the Breathing Technique and Forbidden Spell, a rare talent indeed."

She said, "Moreover, he possesses two pieces of Mythical Weapons."

"Not only that, but the entire association suspects Professor Gu Ci'an also left him something before his death."

The young girl timidly said, "Although he is very powerful, Senior Sister, if you want to recruit him into our faction, I'm afraid it's going to be very difficult. He is a lone wolf, very similar to Junior Sister Tang."

Mu Qingyou thought of that arrogant tone on the communication channel earlier

and that figure sitting below in the storm.

"Alright, it is indeed unrealistic."

She said helplessly, "However, as long as he isn't snatched by Ying Changsheng or Li Hanting, it's fine. This action is likely to be reported directly to the President, which will be a great merit."

At the same time, Ying Changsheng was already seated in the carriage, admiring the stormy night view.

"Your Highness, should we try to win over that person?"

A beautiful maid respectfully asked, "With such a level of talent, he is expected to become the strongest in the new era Omega Sequence, like Thunder."

Ying Changsheng waved his hand, "No hurry, when I see him, I feel like seeing a fellow traveler."

The maid and the guards were taken aback.

"People on the same path will eventually come together even without deliberate recruitment."

He smiled faintly, "I just need to know, he will definitely not go over to Li Hanting."

Indeed.

The one who suffered the most humiliation today was the Judgement Court.

Not because their strength was lacking, but due to a lack of courage and determination.

The monster that Madam Yan mutated into was truly terrifying.

If no antidote was developed, anyone going up would only lose their life in vain and inadvertently endanger many others, becoming breeding bodies for Gu Worms, further expanding the disaster.

So, people could only be sent to their deaths.

The question is, who should fill this role?

The answer is the warriors of the Dawn Combat Sequence.

Because these nano warriors, apart from guarding the world's stability and defending human territories.

Their greatest responsibility is to protect the geniuses of the Omega Sequence.

Li Hanting stroked the wolf pup in his arms, sitting silently in the cabin.

He knew his plan was not flawed.

But it just so happened that someone unafraid of death charged in, and even succeeded.

This is quite humiliating.

Originally, he planned to take his faction to observe.

If the other party was already seriously injured, he could praise their bravery and show some level of concern, making him seem less incompetent.

But the other party was unscathed and even counterattacked an assassin after being ambushed.

This made Li Hanting appear very incompetent.

Because he is the commander of the West Port Battlefield, representing the Judgement Court.

Suddenly, the distant sound of a helicopter roaring arrived, a mighty pressure enveloping the scene.

Boom.

Hovered in mid-air, a figure stood at the helicopter's front, surveying the storm.

A burly man with blood-red flames burning all over him, like a demon walking out of hell, eyes glowing ominously bright in the darkness, like fiery torches.

The moment he appeared, the storm ceased to exist, evaporated into thick smoke.

A heavy scent of blood accompanied by terrifying pressure enveloped the scene.

The helicopter wobbled, emitting a piercing alarm.

Mu Qingyou felt the pressure, her beautiful eyes trembling, the Sword Box behind her vibrated uncontrollably.

Unintentionally, cold sweat soaked her body.

All those of the Silver Faction trembled under this pressure, drenched in sweat.

Ying Changsheng's carriage shook violently as his hand holding the teacup abruptly loosened, spilling tea all over himself, the enormous pressure like dark clouds cloaked him, almost bursting his veins and heart.

The twelve Guardians exchanged glances, eyes filled with terror.

Even Li Hanting of the Judgement Court groaned, face flushed, body shaking.

All Omega Sequence members present felt that terrifying, hellish pressure.

"Instructor Wan."

Chen Bojun lifted his head, gazing at the burly demon in the sky, grinning, "Back from the fortress?"

Lu Zijin raised an eyebrow, coolly saying, "You still know to show up?"

This was not an enemy attack but an ally.

The burly man on the helicopter was surnamed Wan, given name Runtu.

The name Wan Runtu was as domineering as the person himself.

A Dragon Slayer path, a quasi-saintly Ascender, and an Omega Sequence instructor.

His arrival immediately gave the Omega Sequence members present a taste of his might.

Chapter 255 - 132 What do you want to do_2

"Speaking of this, it pisses me off. When I arrived, a building collapsed, and there were quite a few ordinary people inside. I just casually held it up. Then, as if by the devil's luck, another building on the other side collapsed too—so I held that one up as well. And guess what? A bunch of damn bugs came crawling out from the ground! This whole situation is just too terrifying!"

Wan Runtu opened his mouth slowly, his voice hoarse and deep, "I simply helped clean up a bit. Came late though."

What the hell is casually holding up two buildings?!

The crowd listened, utterly dumbfounded. How much strength does that even take?!

"Heh."

Lu Zijin rolled her eyes dramatically.

Chen Bojun chuckled, "What do you think of the Omega Sequence stationed at Black Cloud City Fort?"

Wan Runtu spit disdainfully from his elevated stance within the cabin, "A bunch of useless trash! Absolutely worthless! The Omega Sequence becomes more disappointing year after year. Coddled weaklings, pampered with soft skin and tender flesh. They can't even withstand my Slaughter Domain without pissing themselves in terror? And this is what they call the 'elite'? Bah! I beat up so-called 'elites' like them for breakfast!"

He scanned the area, precisely identifying each member of the Omega Sequence present.

"Hmm, this batch seems decent enough—at least no one's wet their trousers yet—but it's far from enough!"

Wan Runtu grinned maliciously, "In the future, all of you will represent humanity in fighting against the Ancient God Clan. The pressure of an Ancient God is tenfold, even a hundredfold stronger than mine! I don't give a damn how much honor or merit you've accumulated before, or which influential family supports you. Even if you're the President's granddaughter or the King of Qing's disciple, if you're not strong enough, you'd better keep your tail between your legs and behave! Do you hear me?!"

BOOM!

Faint thunder rumbled.

The terrifying pressure surged violently, almost condensing into something tangible.

No one spoke.

Under the crushing force of such immense pressure, their bodies were on the verge of being obliterated—they couldn't even manage a sound.

"What's the matter, spineless wimps? Scared speechless just by seeing me?"

Wan Runtu sneered savagely, "Little brats, if this were the Ancient God Clan you're facing, you'd already be dead! I know, some of you might be stewing in resentment right now, fantasizing about how to get back at me later. But I don't give a damn! In fact, I hope you can beat me to a pulp one day because that would mean you've grown strong enough to kill Ancient Gods."

He paused for a moment, "But for now, you're still far too weak. So remember well this face. I am your head instructor for the Omega Sequence. Until you can defeat me, you will address me respectfully as 'Lord Wan.' Got it?"

As one of the leaders of the three major factions, his arrogance was unmatched.

Even Ying Changsheng, despite the oppressive atmosphere, still stubbornly raised his head, forcibly keeping his expression under control.

Mu Qingyou's gaze glimmered with Sword Intent as she slowly straightened her back.

Li Hanting let out a cold snort, stubbornly refusing to let himself fall.

Suddenly, a black-haired young man took a leisurely sip of the last bit of his coffee, then stood up with an empty cup in hand. Calmly, he walked away—strolling as if he were in a garden, relaxed and refined, entirely unaffected by the situation.

Utterly ignoring everyone present.

The suffocating pressure that descended from above seemed to have no effect on him whatsoever.

"Hmm?"

Wan Rentu was genuinely shocked, his eyes popping wide open like giant bronze bells.

He was absolutely certain that his Slaughter Domain had enveloped that young man just now.

But the problem was—the domain didn't work on that brat at all!

"Old Chen, Old Lu, whose kid is this little punk?"

He shouted at the top of his lungs, "He doesn't take me... doesn't take his instructor seriously?"

Lu Zijin covered her face with her hand forcefully.

Chen Bojun sighed, "How should I even explain this?"

By this time, Gu Jianlin had already left the West Port Forbidden Zone, walking along the roadside with an open umbrella.

The night was filled with torrential rain and the disaster of Gu Worms.

The streets were eerily empty—no cars to hail, not even a shared bike in sight.

So he had no choice but to walk home on foot.

"Why did you just leave?"

Moon Princess, sheltered under his umbrella, asked casually.

"My senior brother was there, so nothing major should happen. Though his personality is... particular."

Gu Jianlin replied thoughtfully, "But he's a good person. He's always looked after me, so there shouldn't be any issues."

Moon Princess pondered for a moment, "Really? Then you might want to take some time to learn about his reputation."

Gu Jianlin furrowed his brows, "What do you mean?"

Moon Princess explained faintly, "In this world, you might be the only person who would call him a 'good person.' As the King of Qing's foremost disciple, his reputation isn't exactly great. And his codename is... Demon. Even in the Dark World, such a codename is rare."

Gu Jianlin grew silent for a moment, "Is that so?"

In truth, the documents left by his father also described the King of Qing as a lunatic.

Apparently, the master-and-disciple pair weren't the most reputable individuals.

Not that it mattered.

He wasn't exactly swimming in good reputation himself.

This early in his career, he'd already earned the nickname "the chair-wielding murderer."

Gu Jianlin couldn't help it—smashing people with chairs was just more convenient. Besides, he didn't know any other combat techniques.

All he could rely on was brute strength, speed, and ruthless aggression.

Better aim for a one-hit kill.

"Here's a question."

Gu Jianlin suddenly spoke, "Why are you following me?"

Moon Princess glanced sideways at him, "I have a cleanliness obsession and hate getting rained on. Besides, I just saved your life and helped you find the secret room your father left behind. What's wrong with walking me home?"

Gu Jianlin raised an eyebrow, "Where's your home?"

Moon Princess's gaze suddenly turned sharp, "What do you mean? Has the Mao Sheng Liquid worn off yet?"

Gu Jianlin rubbed his face hard, "What I mean is, I'll walk you home now. If you feel unsafe, then let's go to the hotel Mr. Liu mentioned. After that, I can finally go home and sleep."

After all this chaos, even he couldn't hide his exhaustion—the only thing he wanted now was to sleep.

Moon Princess thought it over, "I don't have a home. I've been staying in the Forbidden Zone for the past few months, occasionally sleeping in hotels."

Gu Jianlin's eyes widened in sudden understanding, "Because of my father's incident, you have nowhere to stay? But if you're not one of the Fallen, shouldn't you still be able to live in the real world?"

Moon Princess fell silent for a second, "I used to be able to, but now it's impossible."

Gu Jianlin was about to ask why, but then the answer dawned on him, "Right, since the Judgement Court is targeting my father, you, as someone close to him, must be on their list as well."

Moon Princess snorted softly, "I told you, I'm not your father's student."

Gu Jianlin thought for a moment. Whoever this girl really was, she clearly mattered to him.

After hesitating briefly, he offered, "How about... you come to my place?"

Moon Princess tilted her head back, her gaze suddenly sharp.

"What are you up to?"

Chapter 256 - 133 Cohabitation

Gu Jianlin lay sprawled on the soft, cushiony sofa, feeling as though he might sink right into it.

He had just finished showering, dressed in loose pajamas, his damp hair draped with a clean towel.

It was now half past two in the morning. His phone was charging beside him, the screen showing the interface of the Deep Space Network. The forum threads were updating furiously, discussing tonight's battle.

Because of the Nightmare Master's turmoil, the Ether Association's administrative PR department had been called up for overtime, working through the night to clean up after the frontline fighters. The urban infrastructure division was also busy around the clock, restoring damaged buildings in the city, including deploying psychological counseling teams trying their best to erase the memories of all witnesses.

Outside the window, the torrential rain had abated intermittently, but helicopters belonging to the Dawn Combat Sequence could still be seen flying back and forth.

Credit where it's due—this commitment to ordinary people's safety is definitely worth praise.

This is what the Ether Association truly stands for.

If not for the Judgement Court, the Ether Association might genuinely have been a good organization.

The sound of running water echoed from the bathroom.

Through the misty, frosted glass, a slender and graceful silhouette could be vaguely discerned.

And an exaggerated curve at the chest.

Gu Jianlin glanced for just a second and felt a sudden surge of inexplicable heat rise within him, quickly averting his gaze.

He recited the Great Compassionate Mantra under his breath, forcing himself to calm down.

It was the first time in seventeen years that he had brought a girl home.

After all, Moon Princess genuinely didn't have anywhere else to go. Staying overnight in the West Port Forbidden Zone was obviously out of the question. Moreover, the hotel listed on that business card was over thirty kilometers away, and considering the lack of cabs right now, walking there would take until dawn. Outside, the streets were crawling with Ether Association personnel, making the situation extremely unsafe for her.

"Glad the lease hasn't expired yet. Might as well renew..."

Gu Jianlin muttered to himself, "Otherwise, bringing her home directly would've likely caused trouble."

At that moment, the bathroom door slid open. Moon Princess, still wearing her cat-faced mask, emerged wrapped in a towel. Her jet-black hair was coiled behind her head, and she stepped barefoot onto the floor.

"You wear a mask even while showering?"

Gu Jianlin cast a quick glance at her but quickly shifted his gaze away again.

"Do you want to see my face? Do you want to marry me?"

Moon Princess retorted with a single line that immediately silenced him.

Gu Jianlin had already completed a psychological profile of her—examining her tone, her gaze, her body language.

And analyzing her behavior down to the most minute details.

But the results were so absurd that they seemed completely divorced from reality.

Nonetheless, this girl clearly understood him very well, even knowing some vulnerabilities in his personality.

She always managed to strike him down with just a sentence.

"We're both worn out tonight. Rest early,"

Gu Jianlin said, expressionless. "Which room are you taking?"

This apartment had two bedrooms, one for him and one for his father.

The last time Gu Jianlin had returned here, he had cleaned up the rooms, replaced the bedding and other necessities. He disliked the feeling of staying in a place full of dust—it felt like living in a tomb.

All household items were stocked in pairs, perhaps because he expected that familiar ringing of the doorbell once more, followed by the sight of his father hauling bags inside and laughing heartily.

But in the end, it wasn't the middle-aged man who moved in—it was a young beauty.

Clearly, she made a much more pleasant sight than the former occupant.

Moon Princess was stunning. Though the cat-faced mask obscured her face, her figure was impeccable—slender and graceful curves, a full chest, and snow-white skin soft as petals.

Fine by him. Old Gu might as well continue staying downstairs; no need to come back.

"I'll take this room,"

Moon Princess casually pointed to the left-hand room, hugged her clothes tightly, and turned inside.

That happened to be Gu Jianlin's bedroom.

Good choice.

With a *clack*, the door closed, followed by faint shuffling sounds. Who knows what she was up to?

Gu Jianlin ignored it, picked up his phone, and glanced again at the Deep Space Network.

Suddenly, a notification sounded with a ding.

Taixu appeared on the Deep Space Network interface, its soft, alluring voice like a lover's whisper: "Dear D-level investigator Gu Jianlin, as you've officially become an Omega Sequence candidate, access is now granted to the highest-level residency qualification in Black Cloud City, along with S-level exploration strategy investigation rights."

"Access to the Omega Sequence secret medicine allocation database has been granted."

"The Omega Sequence Alchemy Weapon reserve has been unlocked."

"The Omega Sequence Mythical Weapon reserve has been unlocked."

Gu Jianlin read these updates, astonished beyond words.

The sheer resources that were now at his disposal overwhelmed him!

"The purpose of the Omega Sequence is to screen the most talented from the current generation's leading figures, cultivating their ability to resist the Ancient Gods' contamination, teaching them mastery over Breathing Techniques and Forbidden Spells, and enabling them to battle within the Ancient God Realm alongside the Ancient Ancestors. Ultimately, these candidates may even have the capacity to directly confront the Ancient God Clan,"

"For each generation, the strongest Omega Sequence candidate is crowned with the title of King, becoming the prime beneficiary of the Catastrophe Plan and inheriting the Ghost Valley Secret Treasure, eventually embarking on the path to challenge the Ancient Supreme."

"Throughout the Ether Association's history, not every Omega Sequence generation has produced a King. Candidates worthy of the title are exceptionally rare. However, if a King does emerge, they become humanity's secret weapon, possessing enough strength to rival the Ancient Supreme itself..."

The mention of the Ghost Valley Secret Treasure caused Gu Jianlin's pupils to contract slightly.

According to the files left behind by his father, the Ghost Valley Secret Treasure was highly likely to be the key weapon for contending with the Candle Dragon Venerable.

"So, becoming the strongest in the Omega Sequence?"

Gu Jianlin found this goal quite relatable.

After all, he harbored the power of the Qilin within him; once it matured, he would be unstoppable.

There would be no human capable of challenging him.

"So this is the Omega Sequence's cultivation program. No wonder everyone is so desperate to join—this is the only place to learn Breathing Techniques and Forbidden Spells? Seems like the King of Qing has already given me some special privileges."

Gu Jianlin murmured to himself, "The title of King?"

He suddenly realized that perhaps the King of Qing was a King!

No wonder the Omega Sequence spared no expense or effort, channeling vast resources into nurturing talents.

The so-called Catastrophe Plan was likely aimed at fostering individuals as capable as the King of Qing.

Besides the King of Qing, there must exist other Kings.

Perhaps the Red King, Black King, White King, and so on.

At that moment, Gu Jianlin thought of another question.

If the Omega Sequence continued operating for centuries, wouldn't the number of Kings—the so-called Catastrophes—grow too large?

Wouldn't they eventually run out of colors to use?

Well, that wasn't his concern.

The key point was that whether it meant becoming the strongest in the Omega Sequence under the Catastrophe Plan...

Or exploring the Qilin Immortal Palace, it was a golden opportunity.

He had to seize it.

Only then could he face the Candle Dragon Venerable.

As for the curse of the Ghost Car Ancestor—ha.

If he could take down the Candle Dragon Venerable, why would he fear a mere Ancestor?

Speaking of which, Old Gu had truly been unreliable.

Always proclaiming that he sought to fight against the Candle Dragon Venerable for the sake of his son's world.

Now, the Candle Dragon Venerable had come knocking.

A lifetime spent searching for a way to break the curse, and he still couldn't save himself.

The curse remained unbroken, and the Ghost Car Ancestor would undoubtedly arrive.

"What a mess."

Gu Jianlin stared at the files, growing drowsier with each passing moment.

Finally, he drifted into a deep sleep on the sofa.

Outside, the soft rain fell, splattering against leaves as the wind howled mournfully.

Unbeknownst to him, the bedroom door silently opened. A lithe, petite shadow stood before him.

"Hmph."

Moon Princess uttered a soft snort, then gently draped the blanket she carried over him.

Her movements were light, careful not to disturb the sleeping boy.

Suddenly, a bolt of lightning illuminated the heavens, its brief flash revealing the sharp lines of Gu Jianlin's cold and defined profile. Even in sleep, his brows remained tightly furrowed, his body taut, as if haunted by a relentless dream.

Moon Princess didn't disturb him. She crouched beside the sofa, resting her chin on her hand while watching him silently.

A tender hand rose and placed itself softly against his forehead, gently smoothing his furrowed brows.

"You've worked so hard."

She murmured quietly, "I'll stay by your side, always."

If I can.

Chapter 257 - 134: The President's Summon

Gu Jianlin hadn't had a good night's sleep in a long time. In his dreams, he could faintly sense a cold, subtle fragrance lingering at the tip of his nose, mixed with the scent of shampoo and body wash.

Sometimes he could even feel strands of hair brushing against his face.

Honestly, it wasn't too bad—it was quite comfortable.

He had initially planned to sleep until he naturally woke up, but instead, his phone's incessant calls early in the morning rudely jolted him awake.

After resting for the night, he had returned to peak condition, feeling refreshed and brimming with spirituality.

He got up from the sofa, and the quilt slid off his body.

Gu Jianlin froze for a moment and instinctively glanced around.

He saw the bedroom door tightly shut, with a note stuck on it that read: "Catching up on sleep, don't disturb unless necessary."

Gu Jianlin looked at the quilt on him and smiled silently.

Although Old Gu was a bit unlucky, the students he left behind weren't too bad after all.

The room was originally kept around for sentimental reasons—after all, in the Extraordinary World, anything could happen. Who knows, maybe Old Gu would pull a reincarnation trick on him someday.

But now, it seemed there was no longer a place for him here.

Gu Jianlin took out his phone to check, finding numerous missed calls and text messages.

The first message was from Scholar.

"Supreme, I've already taken Butcher to a safehouse. His injuries are incredibly severe, but fortunately, the secret medicine gifted by Pharmacist Old Thief has sustained his life. He should be bouncing back in no time. By the way, I swung by Pharmacist Old Thief's hideout early this morning and conveniently 'borrowed'—I mean, took ten vials of Fallen Angel Blood for you."

"I've also taken many of the secret medicines you requested for beauty and wellness, and they've been divided into two batches and sent to the address you provided last time."

"For now, I'll watch over Pharmacist Old Thief and await your instructions."

Truth be told, despite his initial blunders, Scholar had been handling things quite efficiently ever since.

After all, who could've predicted that the Supreme would have already broken free?

Scholar's follow-up actions were commendable.

After all, there's an old saying: if you can't resist, then you might as well enjoy.

Being the servant of an Ancient Supreme definitely elevated his status—it wasn't so bad compared to being a mere ant destined to be obliterated by the Ether Association.

The only baffling part was that Scholar couldn't understand why the Supreme wanted those beauty-enhancing secret medicines.

According to Scholar's logic, he could only infer that the Supreme aimed to use the Ancient Times' dual cultivation rituals to recover their strength as quickly as possible, and was already scouting for suitable candidates.

After reading through the message, Gu Jianlin replied: "Well done. Be cautious not to expose your location. Butcher performed admirably this time—give him all the care he needs and make sure nothing happens to him."

Though he was a brute, he was now Gu Jianlin's prize asset.

A Fourth Rank Mad King capable of initial Qilin transformation, and even of becoming a vessel for Ancient Divine Language power.

Remarkably, even after using a low-tier Ancient Divine Language once, he had only sustained critical injuries.

Gu Jianlin could only comment: A true Tiger General!

Back in the Ancient Tomb, among the five-member team, Butcher had seemed the most useless. Now it felt like a slap in the face.

Gu Jianlin shook his head, his mind drifting to the topic of those secret medicines.

His mom was just incidental—the focus was still on delivering them to Youzhu.

He imagined how thrilled she'd be upon receiving the gift. After all, she cared deeply about her appearance.

The next text message was from Chen Qing.

"Xiao Gu, I don't approve of how recklessly you handle things, but I still want to congratulate you. You've weathered the storm and genuinely established yourself in the Extraordinary World. Perhaps we underestimated you in the past, treating you like a child..."

Chen Qing's message mainly praised Gu Jianlin's courage last night and recognized his growth. Along with this, he extended an apology, acknowledging the injuries he and Lu Zicheng sustained during the prior operation.

Especially Lu Zicheng, who had consumed numerous secret medicines with severe side effects and now required hospitalization for recovery. Chen Qing, who wasn't lightly injured either, stayed by his side to look after him.

The silver lining was that their wounds were recoverable, and once healed, they were likely to advance in ranks. When they met again, they'd probably be a Fifth Rank World King along with a Fourth Rank Spiritualist.

The only downside was their temporary inability to uphold their responsibilities as Guardians.

Still, that wasn't a big deal—Minister Lu had their backs.

The message also reassured Gu Jianlin that, even without the Minister's support, there was no need to worry.

Because after Black Cloud City and West Port's battles, Gu Jianlin had become unexpectedly famous.

When he logged onto the Deep Space Network, a flood of friend requests instantly overwhelmed him.

A moment later, his phone froze and shut down entirely.

What the hell was this!

Gu Jianlin felt bewildered as he recalled the fleeting friend requests—every single one was from Captain Level Ascenders, all wanting to be his Guardian, without exception.

Left with no choice, he restarted his phone and headed downstairs with fifty yuan in hand for breakfast.

Outside, the storm had cleared, leaving the city washed clean by the rain. The air carried a crisp coolness, refreshing and invigorating.

As soon as he stepped out, he noticed the security guard in the booth downstairs had changed.

A resolute middle-aged man now occupied the guard post, his chest muscles nearly bursting through his shirt. His physique was extremely muscular, and his posture as upright as a tall spear—a man clearly skilled in military training.

Chapter 258 - 134 President's Summoning_2

At his feet was an equipment box, filled with what were clearly dangerous military-grade weapons.

When Gu Jianlin saw him, he unexpectedly grinned, then placed a hand against his chest and bowed in salute.

At the same time, the owner of the courier station had been replaced by a solemn young man.

The cashier at the supermarket near the community gate had also changed into a stern, short-haired woman.

Even the breakfast stall owner had been replaced by a pair of young twins.

Without exception, when Gu Jianlin looked over, they all clenched their fists and pressed them to their chests in respect.

In the young man's perception, their Life Rhythms were as unyielding as the clash of steel, vastly different from ordinary people.

Nano warriors.

Gu Jianlin understood. These were nano warriors from the Dawn Combat Sequence.

When he went to buy breakfast, the twins refused to take money no matter what.

The twins laughed cheerfully and said, "If it weren't for your heroic actions yesterday, we would have had to send our comrades from Dawn to throw their lives at it. We deeply admire you and are very grateful. But please, next time you encounter something like this, don't risk yourself. Our duty is to protect people like you."

They earnestly added, "You are someone who can fight against the Ancient Gods and Ancient Ancestors from the Ancient God Realm, whereas we can only handle trivial matters. Your life is worth more than ours."

Gu Jianlin thought for a moment, then carried two bags of breakfast and said, "The value of life is equal."

"If that's how you want to think of it, then so be it."

The twins froze for a second, then replied, "But protecting ordinary people and safeguarding the Omega Sequence is our vocation."

Gu Jianlin silently smiled, placing twenty yuan on the table. "Thank you. To be honest, I thought I'd keep getting the cold shoulder in the association because of my father's situation."

"What are you talking about? With the things you've done lately, who would dare give you attitude? Besides, isn't your father Professor Gu? He contributed so much to the Human World. Even if he did ultimately fall, so what? Weren't those he killed already mentally contaminated anyway?"

The twin brothers gave him a thumbs-up and said, "Don't listen to the nonsense spouted by the idiots in the Judgement Court."

Gu Jianlin fell silent for a second, nodded slightly, and turned to leave.

His phone was already turned on, and as he scrolled through messages, he found a lot of good news.

Fu Qingxuan and Fu Chaoyang, the father and son duo, had their identities confirmed and were now being sent to the hospital for emergency treatment. This matter had even alarmed the Night Watcher's leadership, who sent personnel to investigate.

Uncle Mu had woken up, completely out of danger, and was already able to walk around.

Even Uncle Sun and Aunt Shanshan from the shelter were still alive.

Their severed limbs had been reattached.

Following the incident at Black Cloud City, they'd been granted the freedom to move within specified areas. They could live like normal people under the sun, have their own homes, and eat regular meals.

However, most of them still bore so-called charges, so this matter required further investigation.

The corners of Gu Jianlin's lips unconsciously curved into a faint smile.

It's fine now.

Everything was heading in a positive direction.

"If you have time, go check on them."

Gu Jianlin murmured softly, "Fu Chaoyang and Fu Qingxuan are critical witnesses. Right now, I also possess Hasegawa Shinichi's soul, and since the Nightmare Master has been severely weakened, it's time to interrogate him."

He returned home, simply ate a fried dough stick and two tea eggs.

Then he put the remaining breakfast into the microwave and left a note.

At this moment, the sound of an engine roared downstairs, and a red sports car pulled up outside.

Gu Jianlin's Deep Space Network chimed with a notification.

"Peak City Medical Division Lead, A-grade investigator Captain Lin Wanqiu is requesting a call."

Taixu's gentle voice rang out.

Gu Jianlin froze for a moment, not expecting it to be her: "Connect."

Ding.

Lin Wanqiu's composed yet soft voice came through: "Hello, is this Xiao Gu?"

Gu Jianlin furrowed his brow slightly, but before he could say anything, a familiar voice interrupted.

"Your Goddamned Xiao Gu! Who are you calling Xiao Gu?"

The voice was arrogant beyond measure.

Gu Jianlin was all too familiar with this voice. It belonged to that obnoxious parrot raised by Captain Lu.

Over the phone, Lin Wanqiu's grinding teeth could be faintly heard as she forced herself to maintain composure: "Xiao Gu, Minister Lu sent me to pick you up. There's something important he wants you to handle, and Captain Lu Zicheng even prepared a gift for you."

Gu Jianlin was taken aback: "A gift?"

Before Lin Wanqiu could respond, the parrot screeched: "Of course it's me, Your Lordship!"

Gu Jianlin's face stiffened, realizing the captain and deputy captain had gone off to recuperate, leaving this parrot behind!

He had thoroughly experienced just how foul-mouthed this creature could be.

Still, thinking about how he might not see those two for a long time, this parrot would indeed serve as a sort of keepsake.

Little did he know, this decision would bring profound consequences down the road.

Nor could he imagine whether he might someday regret this choice.

"Yes, this parrot is actually a type of Extraordinary Creature with unique abilities. It has followed Captain Lu for many years, and now, he's giving it to you."

Lin Wanqiu's voice carried a hint of disdain as she cleared her throat: "If there's nothing else, please come downstairs immediately. I'll take you to headquarters. Someone very important wants to meet you personally."

Gu Jianlin narrowed his eyes: "Someone important?"

"Yes."

Lin Wanqiu's tone grew solemn: "You can think of him as the President's representative."

Gu Jianlin's pupils contracted slightly.

The President!

Bang.

The door closed, and the courier left the house.

Su Youzhu, groggy and tousled, shuffled back to her bedroom wearing a pink princess nightgown and slippers, clutching a delicate package and holding a small knife for cutting it open.

Her parents hadn't woken up at this early hour.

The courier had already delivered two boxes filled with skincare products and health supplements.

One for her mother, and one for her.

Hah, how thoughtful.

Su Youzhu placed her mother's box in the living room, then eagerly opened her own.

These days, girls were all about self-care.

Even at seventeen, she was very conscientious about managing her skin and physique.

For instance, in her mother's generation, they hadn't paid attention to maintenance during their youth, and by their forties, age showed. Later attempts to preserve their beauty yielded poor results.

But by starting strict dietary and sleep habits at seventeen, using skincare products and occasionally visiting beauty salons, one could maintain excellent condition even at forty.

However, when Su Youzhu opened the package and saw its contents, she instantly fell silent.

Her delicate face turned frosty, and her sleepiness vanished without trace.

She immediately picked up her phone and sent a voice message.

"Wait, are you dissatisfied with my bust size?"

Chapter 259 - 135: Bold and Reckless

At eight-thirty in the morning, Gu Jianlin arrived at the Deep Space Technology Building.

The elevator's floor indicator flickered rapidly, and the walls, smooth as a mirror, reflected his expressionless face, along with his expensive, crisp black suit and neatly tied black bow tie. His polished leather shoes gleamed brilliantly.

He moved his neck slightly, feeling a little uncomfortable in a suit for the first time.

However, it undeniably fit well, accentuating his sharp, striking aura even further.

Of course, that was if one could disregard the birdcage he was carrying.

And the green-feathered parrot inside the cage.

Lin Wanqiu had bought it for him before bringing him here. It was a custom-made item crafted with alchemy technique, costing over seventy thousand, a price that truly bordered on absurd.

Thanks to his excellent physique, the suit fit perfectly without any alterations.

Initially, Lin Wanqiu was aligned with the Judgement Court faction, which should have made her his adversary. However, this encounter carried a distinct air of camaraderie, as she accompanied him to the tailor to measure his proportions, select styles, swipe her card generously, smooth out the creases of his clothes, and even tie his tie.

The charm of a wealthy older sister was on full display.

Lin Wanqiu had explained that the suit was necessary because the conversation would be recorded.

Later, the President would personally review it.

Apparently, the President appreciated meticulous, serious young men.

Gu Jianlin then asked what kind of person the President was.

After hesitating for a long time, Lin Wanqiu finally uttered just one sentence.

"A woman made of steel."

That was when Gu Jianlin learned that the Ether Association's President was, surprisingly, a woman.

He had originally imagined someone like a white-haired elderly gentleman.

As the elevator doors opened, Gu Jianlin walked into the division office.

Numerous investigators bustled around, along with several technicians in lab coats.

And high-ranking officers from the Dawn Combat Sequence.

The expedition into the Qilin Immortal Palace had already begun, and everyone was busy.

Yet for some reason, when these people saw him, their expressions turned to shock and disbelief.

Their gazes conveyed surprise, astonishment, fear, reverence, and admiration.

Complicated emotions indeed.

And when their eyes fell upon the parrot in the cage, their expressions could only be described with four words:

Grieving as though they'd lost their parents.

Though not entirely accurate, it certainly felt that way.

Gu Jianlin remained silent for a moment before heading to an office under Taixu's holographic projection guidance.

"Come in."

Before he could knock, Lu Zijin's authoritative older sister-like voice rang from inside the room.

"Don't say anything improper."

Gu Jianlin glanced down at the green-feathered parrot in the cage and spoke coolly, "Otherwise, I'll roast you."

The green-feathered parrot rolled its eyes slightly and nodded in agreement.

Only then did Gu Jianlin feel reassured and pushed the door open.

Inside the elegantly minimalist office, Lu Zijin sat in a comfortable chair, her desk piled not with files but with various fried chicken, French fries, hamburgers, and rows of milk tea.

She was still wearing her Lolita-style dress, looking like a porcelain doll, her hands smudged with tomato sauce.

And when she drank milk tea, she took a sip from each cup.

On the sofa opposite her sat two people.

One was a man in a red suit, whose features weren't particularly remarkable, except for the blood-red fissure on his forehead. It emitted a sinister glow, appearing eerily peculiar.

He sat on the sofa with a warm smile.

The other was a black-haired woman in a black trench coat, seemingly in her forties, her face sharp and stern, covered in snowflake-like marks that extended down her neck.

It almost felt as though her presence lowered the room's temperature.

No need for air conditioning.

"These two are high-ranking officials from headquarters. The man in red is named Hua An, a confidential secretary to the President, code-named Heavenly Eye. As for the woman, she was your father's comrade in arms back in the day and is now the Night Watcher's deputy leader. Her name is Han Jing, code-named Frost."

Lu Zijin spoke indifferently, "Be polite, don't provoke them."

Gu Jianlin thought to himself that his bad reputation was unlikely to be washed away.

At that moment, Han Jing glanced at him coldly. Her gaze felt as though it could drill a hole through him—utterly inscrutable.

"No worries, take a seat."

Hua An smiled warmly and said, "The President has always been very tolerant of geniuses, and geniuses often have distinct personalities. But before we go forward, I have a question to ask."

Gu Jianlin sat across from him and replied, "Go ahead."

Hua An smiled faintly and asked, "Are you one of the Fallen?"

For a brief moment, the blood-red fissure on his forehead abruptly expanded, revealing a sinister crimson vertical eye, emitting an eerie and profound light that seemed to contain countless wailing evil spirits in a sea of blood.

Thump, thump!

Gu Jianlin seemed to hear his heartbeat tremble. Such a simple question echoed around him like a haunting melody, and a terrifying, blood-red demon appeared in his vision.

An immense spiritual pressure descended upon him.

But then, the Black Qilin in his mind opened its sliver of golden eyes, with a detached and commanding gaze.

Instantly, that overwhelming bloodlust evaporated completely.

"Don't worry. My eyes are harmless to you; they merely ensure you cannot lie."

Hua An reiterated, "Are you one of the Fallen?"

"No,"

Gu Jianlin replied calmly.

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"Very well."

Hua An asked again, "Then, have you ever betrayed the human faction?"

Gu Jianlin replied once more, "No."

Hua An nodded in satisfaction. "Alright, then, were you the one who leaked the Black Cloud City operation?"

Gu Jianlin thought to himself that it was clearly the Sea Demon and shook his head again.

Hua An's smile deepened as he asked, "Very well. Then, regarding the emergence of a Divine Servant in the West Port Forbidden Zone, how much do you know about this? Does it have anything to do with you?"

"Divine Servant? The person you're talking about should be the Nightmare Master, right? My father's former teammate."

Gu Jianlin furrowed his brows and asked, "The Fallen under the Nightmare Master once sought me out. Does that count?"

It would clearly be unreasonable to say he knew nothing at all, so he opted to reveal half the truth.

As for the other Divine Servant, that was his Tiger General.

"Hmm, understood."

Hua An seemed thoughtful. "One last question: is the Qilin Wedge in your possession?"

Gu Jianlin shook his head. "No."

Hua An sucked in a breath of cold air and clicked his tongue. "So you're telling me that in just two weeks, you went from being an ordinary person to a Second Rank Junior Fate Officer? How much spirituality have you accumulated at the Second Rank?"

At the same time, the eerie vertical eye on his forehead resealed itself, leaving only a thin, blood-colored crack.

Gu Jianlin activated the spirituality detection bracelet on his wrist.

A mechanical voice chimed, "Current spirituality accumulation: seventy-five percent."

Hua An narrowed his eyes. "This speed is uncanny! While it's true that at the Extraordinary Level, no promotion ceremony is needed—just pure spirituality accumulation—this is still ridiculously fast. Even with the Breathing Technique as assistance, it's way too fast. In the recorded history of the Ether Association, your advancement speed at the Extraordinary Stage should rank second."

He paused. "The other person was your father, Professor Gu Ci'an."

At this, Han Jing coldly remarked, "Even Gu Ci'an might not have been this fast."

Gu Jianlin was momentarily taken aback.

That man turned out to be on par with his speed—truly bad luck.

"According to our studies, some individuals are inherently mentally resilient, unshakable like a rock. They're difficult to corrupt by the breath of Ancient Gods, immune to toxins from drugs, and can even resist a Magician's hypnosis through sheer willpower."

Hua An stroked his chin thoughtfully. "People like you could recklessly consume Spiritual Secret Medicines without developing resistance for a good while. Additionally, as someone on the Divine Path, you won't lose control. No wonder the King of Qing has his eye on you and plans to take you on as a disciple. As a Divine, you're flawless."

"Apologies for bombarding you with so many questions upon meeting, but there's no other choice. The Ether Association has been rooting out traitors recently. After the Black Cloud City leak incident, we've already caught quite a few."

He paused again. "The Nightmare Master issue has also left us sleepless. Speaking of which, we are here on behalf of the President to commend your bravery. The corresponding merit will be transferred to your account shortly."

Suddenly, Han Jing stood up, placed a hand over her chest, and gave a slight bow. "Fu Qingxuan is one of our Nightwatch Department's elites. According to his adopted son, neither of them would be alive if not for you."

She took a deep breath. "Thank you."

Gu Jianlin shook his head. "It was just something I did in passing. I only hope you thoroughly investigate this matter. Fu Qingxuan was afflicted by Soul Loss Gu while investigating the Nightmare Master. This situation is quite similar to Uncle Mu's condition."

There's no need to spell everything out too clearly.

Both Hua An and Han Jing naturally understood what he meant.

"Rest assured, Mu Feng and Fu Qingxuan are both under Deputy Group Leader Han's watch. The association will thoroughly investigate this matter to the end."

Hua An remarked, "We won't unjustly punish a good person, nor will we let any evildoer get away."

Han Jing's icy expression conveyed the same sentiment.

"Of course, this includes matters concerning your father. We will also take your opinions seriously. If you can provide solid evidence, the investigation into the Blood Moon Slaughter Incident will be reopened."

Hua An added, "These are the direct orders of the President."

Gu Jianlin froze.

"No need to be so surprised. This is simply what you deserve—the treatment befitting a genius."

Hua An smiled. "Finally, this brings us to the President's reward for you."

Gu Jianlin raised an eyebrow. "What does that mean?"

Hua An solemnly explained, "In recognition of your brave actions, which greatly pleased the President, she has decided to grant you a reward. You may make a request to her. As long as it's not excessive and within reasonable limits."

This type of phrasing was extremely ambiguous.

It could mean anything—or nothing at all.

However, when Gu Jianlin heard the word "reward," he couldn't help but feel uncomfortable.

Especially paired with the phrase "the treatment befitting a genius."

"What is the President's position in the human Extraordinary World?"

He suddenly asked.

Han Jing frowned slightly.

Hua An, however, replied skeptically, "The highest."

Gu Jianlin asked calmly, "So, you're saying she holds the greatest authority?"

Both Hua An and Han Jing gave slight nods.

"There's a saying: 'With great power comes great responsibility,' which I don't agree with."

Gu Jianlin stated seriously, "The correct version should be: 'With great authority comes great responsibility.'

Hua An observed him with keen interest.

Han Jing continued to frown.

Even Lu Zijin looked up, sensing a bad omen.

"Everyone's dignity is equal. I don't need this high-handed, so-called reward."

Gu Jianlin said sternly, "If I weren't a genius, would I not have the right to investigate my father's case? If he truly was wronged, do I need talent to seek justice for him?"

"How many people like Uncle Mu exist in this world? Those who, despite everything, refuse to harm others even at their own expense. Must they rely on people like the King of Qing to stand up for them just to gain the right to live? Are such people destined to be exterminated by the Judgement Court?"

He continued seriously, "The President remains aloof. Has she ever spared a single glance for these people?"

Silence fell.

"The highest leader of the Ether Association is the President, so all of this is her responsibility. If she turns a blind eye, then she's nothing more than a Vulgar Master."

Gu Jianlin remarked expressionlessly, "My request is simple. Have her come down—take a single look."

This request indeed wasn't excessive.

He wasn't even asking for himself.

Even so, Hua An was already stunned.

Before coming here, he'd heard about the audacity of this young man.

But he never expected it to reach this level.

Han Jing squinted her eyes, studying the young man carefully, her gaze uncertain and suspicious.

With a "pfft," Lu Zijin spat out her milk tea and silently gave him a thumbs-up.

What nerve—this taunt finally landed!

However, thinking it over, what he said wasn't outrageous. He spoke with dignity, reason, and logic.

Since the President took office, it had been a long time since someone dared to speak to her like that.

Interesting!