

## Ancient 28

Chapter 28 - 13 The Influence of the Black Qilin\_2

"Pretty much."

However, Lu Zicheng's next sentence completely took him by surprise: "Of course, none of this matters much. If an Ascender really wants to mess with you, they have countless ways to evade the Deep Web."

Gu Jianlin: "..."

The pie is painted well. Don't bother painting another one next time.

"Deep Space's surveillance might be strict, but it's far from omnipotent."

Lu Zicheng said with a smiling face, "But don't worry, we'll assign the right people to protect your family."

Gu Jianlin understood: "They're all Ascenders, I presume?"

"More or less. Joining the Ether Association is way better than wandering outside as a rogue Ascender. For starters, even if you're a Self-Ascender who can independently gain an Inheritance Path, what about your future progression? And where will you get the resources essential for advancing as an Ascender? Without an official identity, any action you take will be fraught with danger."

Lu Zicheng shrugged, "And how will you protect your family?"

He raised a finger and pointed at the graceful figure standing outside the police station doors.

Gu Jianlin was silent for a moment: "Fine. I'll join."

Lu Zicheng's smile deepened as he said, "That's the spirit. Do you really think I'd harm you? Back in the day, I was one of your father's proudest students. Now it's my turn to guide you—it's almost like passing the torch!"

Gu Jianlin's heart stirred: "You knew my dad well? What kind of person was he?"

Lu Zicheng was taken aback: "Uh, I'd say so. As for what kind of person your dad was—don't you already know?"

Gu Jianlin smiled faintly but said nothing: "Honestly, I don't think I knew him well at all."

Lu Zicheng looked at him with meaningful intent and said, "Don't think about it like that. Whether your dad was an Ascender or a profiler at the police station, he's still your dad, isn't he? He may have a different side to him, but what he shows you is also sincere and real. There's less of a divide between the Transcendents and ordinary people than you imagine."

Gu Jianlin carefully mulled over these words, deep in thought.

A moment later, Chief Zhou came out of his office after a meeting. When he saw him, he said, "Xiao Gu, how are you feeling? Should we head to the hospital for another checkup? Damn it, those bastards! You don't worry, give me half a month—I'll make sure these scumbags are all arrested and locked up in prison to repent for the rest of their useless lives!"

As he said this, his face was furious, his tone severe, his emotions agitated.

This was the first time Gu Jianlin had seen him like this—utterly thrown off.

The usual Chief Zhou always had a sleepless look, with dark circles marring his eyes and red-ringed exhaustion plastered across his face.

Now, however, he was charged with energy, almost like an enraged bull with no outlet.

"Aside from hypnosis, Mind-bending Tea also has excellent restorative effects. I noticed this Chief Zhou seemed a bit hollowed out, so I had Chen Qing add some extra to his coffee. Turns out it made him slightly overexcited."

From behind, Lu Zicheng muttered in a hushed voice.

Gu Jianlin suddenly understood; seems like that Mind-bending Tea really works.

At least now, Chief Zhou appeared invigorated, his eyes brimming with a sharp gleam. There was no trace left of his weariness.

"Injured like this, there's no need to bother with statements anymore. Just sign the report for your dad's case and get some proper rest at home. Xiao Gu, don't worry—I'll make sure your neighborhood gets special agents assigned for round-the-clock security. Damn it! Who do these bastards think they are, daring to trample on my territory? Clearly don't want to put their grandfathers in their sight!"

Chief Zhou planted his hands on his hips, radiating an imposing authority.

By 2:30 PM, Gu Jianlin had returned home.

He took a shower, changed into clean clothes, and collapsed onto the sofa, utterly exhausted.

It was no stretch to say he felt wiped out. The endless chain of unexpected happenings over the last few days had kept him in a state of high vigilance, culminating in his desperate counterattack against a deranged Fallen atop the highway overpass.

What a thrilling ordeal.

Before this, skipping shooting or vehicular collisions—

The only thing he'd ever killed were mosquitoes.

But he had to admit, he seemed to have a natural knack for this, being ruthless and decisive enough.

For a normal teenager, they'd likely have pissed themselves in terror.

Strangely, as Gu Jianlin recalled that past scene, one thought now echoed persistently in his mind.

He should've gone even harder.

He didn't know why, but he felt like he was being influenced by the Black Qilin in his mind.

Hunger and rage—these two sensations gnawed at him ceaselessly.

From the kitchen wafted an intense aroma mixed with the crisp, popping sound of sizzling oil.

Su Youzhu was making lunch.

Ever since they'd hailed the ride home, the girl hadn't said much. So far, she'd only uttered three things to him:

"Get some proper rest."

"Are you hungry?"

"I'll go cook."

Her unusual behavior left Gu Jianlin feeling inexplicable guilt, like when he'd acted out at school as a kid and his mom marched him home from the principal's office.

Nervous and uneasy, fearing a scolding.

He shook his head, dismissing the irrational thoughts, before pulling out his phone.

His WeChat contact list now had one more friend—

Lu Zicheng.

According to Lu Zicheng, all of Gu Jianlin's information would be uploaded to Deep Space today. After the supercomputer's evaluation, he'd gain formal privileges and undergo specialized examinations and training as an Ether Association investigator.

Naturally, all of that depended on one prerequisite: he had to gain his Inheritance Path tonight.

But so far, no one had told him how exactly to do that. Granted, now that he supposedly possessed spirituality, it was said to be achievable.

Though he still had no clue what "spirituality" even meant.

Lu Zicheng had been enigmatic about it, merely suggesting that those with true talent would experience a spontaneous awakening after exposure to extraordinary events. From then on, their perception of the world would forever shift, never reverting to that of an ordinary person.

Who knows what he really meant? He didn't bother explaining—only said things would become clear come nightfall.

Gu Jianlin remained unaware of what exactly awaited him past sundown.

But whether it was for Old Gu—

For himself—

Or for this new home—

He knew he had to face it on his own.

The black BMW roared through the golden dusk, faint pop music playing inside.

Lu Zicheng kept a cigarette clamped between his lips, a green-feathered parrot perched on his shoulder, his expression blank as he stared at the road ahead, detached.

"Young master."

Chen Qing suddenly spoke. "Are you really going to have that kid join the Ether Association?"

Lu Zicheng responded indifferently: "What else?"

Chen Qing hesitated. "That's Professor Gu's son. You know what awaits him once he joins the Ether Association."

Lu Zicheng fixated on the surging traffic ahead and remarked, "Precisely because he's Professor Gu's son, he has to join Ether Association. As you've seen, he's already awakened. Would we just let him fend for himself? Even if I said I'd protect him for life, my strength is limited. Who knows when I might get wiped out? Then what would happen to the kid?"

Chen Qing hesitated briefly, then quietly asked, "Do you think he can handle it?"

"As Professor Gu's son, he has to be able to handle it."

Lu Zicheng said coldly, "Besides, I've looked into his eyes. They're the eyes of a lone wolf. If anything, his seventeen years as a normal person were a waste of his natural talents. He belongs in the extraordinary world."

Chen Qing couldn't refute. A person who could kill a Fallen even before fully awakening was undeniably a prodigy.

"I was under the impression the Association had assigned guards for Xiao Gu's safety, but when I went to check, the security detail had been removed."

Lu Zicheng commented flatly.

Chen Qing knitted his brows. "Removed?"

"Considering the relationship between the Lu Family and Professor Gu, the security detail wouldn't have been revoked unless there was an exception—that exception would be the deployment of a high-level expert. Just now, I faintly noticed someone else lurking."

Lu Zicheng said, "Did you sense it?"

Chen Qing paused briefly before replying, "If someone else was indeed present aside from us, they must have been using techniques to cloak their presence. Could it be someone backing Li Changzhi?"

"Highly unlikely. If it were someone from Li Changzhi's side, Xiao Gu would've already been dead."

Lu Zicheng waved his hand dismissively. "I'll inquire about this matter with my sister later."

Chen Qing acknowledged with a hum and didn't press further.

"I'm curious though—when he observes Qilin Immortal Palace tonight, which Inheritance Path will awaken for him?"

Lu Zicheng suddenly mused. "What do you think?"

Chen Qing replied calmly: "Considering the spiritual properties within Qilin Immortal Palace, there are at most four possibilities: Ancient Martial, Heavenly Master, Divine Mediator, and Overlord. Ultimately, it will depend on his compatibility."