

Ancient 331

Chapter 331 - 172: Su Youzhu _3

The real boss behind the two of them is none other than the legendary Supreme.

Gu Jianlin's expression turned extremely peculiar.

Because he knew it wasn't Master who caused the other guy to get his butt bitten—it was him.

At that moment, a Third Rank mercenary of the Overlord Path set up his firearm from a distance, the sniper rifle roaring angrily!

"Boss, watch out!"

Ning Chen shouted.

Mr. Liu turned his head and saw the pitch-black muzzle aimed directly at him!

Boom!

In the nick of time, four burning golden Ghost Hands crossed before him, forcibly intercepting the sniper's bullet. The collision burst out in a deafening roar, shaking everyone to their core.

Gu Jianlin raised his head and looked over, spotting the sniper perched atop an ancient altar.

Then he raised a single finger, and a concentrated black cross flashed swiftly!

Boom!

The sniper's head was pierced by a streak of black light, dropping lifelessly to the ground.

The Deep Space Official Website once mentioned: Overlord was the most adaptable Inheritance Path for this era, but too many depended excessively on firearms, neglecting other domains.

Many times, if a sniper shot misses, it's their own life that ends.

As the words fell, Moon Princess landed lightly beside him, swiftly kicking away a living corpse.

Butcher followed closely, twisting the head off that living corpse with a reverse grip.

"Damn, the chair-man killer!"

Mr. Liu's eyes lit up in surprise when he saw the young man: "Moon Princess, Butcher, you two are something else! I thought you guys took forever to do something important, but it turns out you went after the chair-man killer! Wait, why doesn't the chair-man killer have a weapon? That's unacceptable! Where's his specialized weapon?!"

He roared, "Someone, bring the specialized weapon for our chair-man killer!"

Gu Jianlin froze as three bodyguards carried a massive black stone throne before him.

"Your move, please!"

With a thunderous crash!

The black stone throne landed in front of him, kicking up a cloud of dust.

Gu Jianlin silently stared at the throne. Though it seemed utterly absurd at first glance, somehow it perfectly aligned with his essence, even awakening something instinctual within his blood.

That instinct was... kindness and love!

The four burning Ghost Hands behind Gu Jianlin seized the throne, while he unleashed the negative emotions rampaging in his mind.

Boom! Boom! Boom!

When he charged headfirst to the forefront, the enemy mercenaries' defenses crumbled instantly!

Everyone could see a madman with four burning, sinister Ghost Hands hanging behind him.

The enormous black stone throne smashed forward relentlessly.

Each deafening crash was accompanied by crushed bodies, flattened into oblivion.

"Boss."

Butcher muttered, "Am I the reckless brute, or is he the reckless brute?"

Moon Princess, initially stunned, quickly adjusted and remarked humorously, "I have no idea!"

"Look at this! Just look! If I had subordinates like this, would I ever fear Si Wei'an?"

Mr. Liu bellowed at his nearby bodyguard, "Ning Chen, take notes!"

Ning Chen: "..."

"Charge, brothers!"

Mr. Liu laughed wickedly, "Wipe them out!"

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Boom!

A violent explosion mixed with flames surged forward in a tidal wave.

Master's defensive line had been completely breached, with countless dark silhouettes sprinting through the billowing smoke.

"What a pity—I didn't expect someone to interfere even now."

Si Wei'an's expression turned grim as he tugged at the collar of his shirt and walked away.

Jing Shangxiu followed behind him, "It doesn't matter; the forces we've left here are sufficient to keep them out. Besides, didn't you say members of the Dusk Organization are stepping in this time? There's no room for error."

The true treasure site had opened, and they had to enter immediately without getting bogged down further.

The longer they delayed, the higher the risk.

The Qilin Wedge was what truly mattered; everything else was irrelevant.

Within the Qi Realm, Ji Ye and Ji Han were shocked, their first instinct being that reinforcements had arrived!

At the same time, a piercing whistle ripped through the air!

Gu Jianlin charged forward holding the massive black stone throne, throwing it down with immense force.

The two female bodyguards' expressions changed slightly: "Watch out!"

Eight Vajra Arhats stood unwavering, instantly sinking into horse stances, waistlines dropping low, readying their punches!

Boom!

Terrifying Qi Force erupted, the black stone throne sent flying from Gu Jianlin's grip.

His pupils shrank sharply—these eight were all practitioners of the Ancient Martial Path.

A dull blast reverberated as Gu Jianlin himself was knocked back dozens of meters, leaving two deep trenches in his wake. The black stone throne landed squarely beside him, and was reflexively pushed upright by him until perfectly aligned.

"Vajra Arhat!"

Butcher rushed forward, seeing the eight bald warriors ahead, and exclaimed in shock, "Not good—these guys were trained by Master and hail from Xingjue Temple. Through rigorous trials, their combat prowess is extraordinary."

Moon Princess darted like a ghost, urging urgently, "Don't waste time fighting them here—we have to move quickly. The underground ruins' gate is already open, but only for three minutes!"

Gu Jianlin was taken aback; he hadn't expected this woman to know the ruins so well.

It faintly unsettled him.

Still, he stood guard nearby to ensure nothing went wrong.

It was then that he finally took in the full view of the ancient ruins.

And at its far end, an ancient altar surrounded by an ever-expanding pitch-black void.

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Si Wei'an and Jing Shangxiu were already approaching the pitch-black void.

Inside, Gu Jianlin sensed a primal essence stirring, an inexplicable tremor in his heart.

He knew—the Qilin Wedge was within!

Crack!

The eight Vajra Arhats showed no intention of battling them. Instead, they snapped the chains affixed to the Silver Coffins around them.

"These things... let them entertain you!"

They sneered coldly, "Retreat! Protect the boss!"

The Vajra Arhats turned and followed suit, accompanied by two female bodyguards.

Suddenly, the eight Silver Coffins began to tremble violently, as if something was about to break free.

Gu Jianlin squinted his eyes, bracing for imminent danger.

"This is the aura of the Ancient Ancestors."

The Moon Princess murmured softly, "Breaking through here won't be an easy task, at least not anytime soon."

Butcher scanned the surroundings, contemplating whether to undergo Divine Servant Transformation and unleash his full power.

In that brief moment, the unexpected unfolded.

From the distant ruins, a lone figure appeared.

A man with flowing black hair stood, his demeanor regal yet commanding, draped in a black and gold robe billowing in the wind. Above his head hovered sixteen golden Flying Swords, radiating a majestic golden brilliance.

Ranked first in the Omega Sequence—Ying Changsheng!

Meanwhile, on another side, a woman with cascading white hair had a single ominous Iron Sword suspended above her. Its piercing, icy Sword Light reached skyward like a roaring tempest, carrying an aura of stormy ferocity.

Ranked second in the Omega Sequence—Mu Qingyou!

And lastly, a handsome young man clutching a wolf cub stood amidst thirty-two pitch-black Flying Swords. Sharp Sword Qi swirled around him like a blizzard, encasing him in an imposing aura.

Ranked third in the Omega Sequence—Li Hanting!

The three Sword Sect masters of the Fifth Rank!

It all made sense now. With their capabilities, even if ambushed, they wouldn't have disappeared without sound.

They had merely been lying in wait, poised to strike at the most critical moment.

"You three—prepare yourselves!"

Boom!

A shadow descended from the sky, crashing heavily against the cliffside.

Instructor Wan crossed his arms and commanded solemnly, "Focus your attacks on the black hole!"

Boom!

Three blinding Sword Lights soared, illuminating the dark Ancient Ruins like devastating Thunder raining down from above.

Boom!

The pitch-black void quaked violently, teetering on the brink of collapse.

"Is this the Ether Association's grand strategy?"

At that moment, Si Wei'an sneered coldly, tossing a pitch-black magnetic stone into the void.

"Let's go!"

Jing Shangxiu followed him, stepping into the black hole.

Accompanied by the eight Vajra Arhats and two female bodyguards, they vanished without a trace.

The pitch-black magnetic stone momentarily stabilized the collapsing void.

They forced their way into the underground ruins!

At that moment, the expressions of the top three ranks in the Omega Sequence darkened drastically.

Wan Rentu couldn't help cursing aloud, "Bastards!"

Amid the deafening tremors, the entire Ancient Ruins shook, dust falling in cascades.

The colossal statue was riddled with cracks.

A moment too late.

One wrong move.

Such a shame.

The pitch-black void was collapsing visibly, nearing total rupture!

The Ancient Ruins trembled precariously.

"Instructor Wan must've been trying to stop them from entering the ruins, but to no avail. This passage likely requires a specific method to reopen it. Not sure if I have the ability to force another gate open."

Gu Jianlin gazed into the distance, murmuring inwardly.

"It's too late."

The Moon Princess spoke softly, "The fragment of the Qilin Wedge should be inside."

Butcher scratched his head, asking, "Boss, what now?"

Suddenly, Gu Jianlin heard faint rustling noises, spinning around sharply.

Unbeknownst to him, the Moon Princess had retrieved a small dressing mirror and rolled up her sleeve.

On her pale wrist, these words were plainly written: Use the mirror to break hypnosis.

"Moon Princess, wake up!"

She commanded coldly.

For a fleeting moment, the dressing mirror emitted a chill radiance.

A flicker of confusion passed through the girl's bright eyes before clarity returned.

"Butcher, get behind me."

She suddenly said.

Though puzzled, Butcher obediently complied.

Gu Jianlin froze, realizing the girl had just undone some form of hypnosis.

Meaning, she had been hypnotizing herself all along.

"Because you know me too well. Without self-hypnosis, I couldn't deceive you."

The Moon Princess suddenly curved her eyes into crescent moons, her gaze full of sparkling amusement, speaking gently, "You must've suspected who I am a long time ago. But because of the interference from the Mythical Weapon, you couldn't be certain."

She, too, pulled out an ancient bronze compass, whose golden light illuminated her cat-faced mask and sly expression, "Alright, I'm heading into the ruins now. I promised my mentor to take good care of you, to protect you. So this time, I won't bring you with me. If possible, stay home and make dinner. Wait for me to come back and eat."

In an instant, the golden light engulfed both figures.

The Moon Princess and Butcher vanished abruptly.

"Take care of yourself. Don't be reckless out there."

Only a faint voice lingered in the boy's ears.

Gu Jianlin stood silently in place.

The imagined version of Old Gu within him sighed, "That little rascal... still as headstrong as ever."

So that's it; the file she had given him was incomplete.

The most crucial part had been concealed.

Clearly, Old Gu had once reached this location.

Now, as Old Gu's student, the girl was pursuing the truth in her stead.

"Idiot."

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Boom!

It felt as if the world was collapsing, time and space surging like a tidal wave.

The Moon Princess seemed to be plunging into endless darkness, yet her eyes remained serene, her lips pressed tightly together.

"Don't be afraid. You are the best."

She inhaled deeply, murmuring softly, "The mentor has taught you countless times—don't be scared. As someone on the Ghost Slayer Path, the one thing you should fear the least is time-space traversal. Nothing will happen."

The girl comforted herself inwardly.

Meanwhile, Butcher stood beside her, wooden as a puppet, while the bronze fragment in his pocket suddenly burned hot. He began to tremble violently, a phantom of the Black Qilin flashing in the depths of his pupils.

"Boss."

He seemed to receive some kind of command and asked, "Why didn't you let Brother Gu come down here with you?"

Enduring the pressure of the time-space traversal, the Moon Princess's cool voice grew hoarse as she murmured, "Because he's too stubborn, too headstrong. If he came down with me, he wouldn't let me face any risks. In the end, all the danger and stress would fall solely on his shoulders."

She spoke softly, "I don't want that. I couldn't bear that."

Butcher's face twitched, and he asked again, "Do you like him that much?"

The Moon Princess remained silent for a moment before softly saying, "Yes."

"What do you like about him?"

Butcher asked, puzzled.

The Moon Princess shook her head, "I don't know; I just like him."

Butcher saw black spots, feeling like the bronze fragment might scorch him. Grimacing, he asked, "Then when did you start liking him? Surely you know that much?"

The Moon Princess suddenly giggled lightly.

"I truly don't know. Maybe it was back when I watched him from afar with my mentor."

She paused, her deep, mesmerizing eyes softening, "Or maybe it was three months ago, that night when he had a nightmare and woke up, suddenly holding me tightly in his arms."

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Amid the rumbling noises of the Ancient Ruins, Gu Jianlin looked up at the sky, gazing at the depths of the ocean.

Dim light reflected in his eyes.

"Youzhu..."

Chapter 333 - 173: Wait for Me

The desolate ancient ruins echoed with faint rumbling sounds.

The chains binding eight silver coffins snapped, their lids exploded open with a thunderous crash. Thick, pitch-black mist spilled out, accompanied by the crimson glow of eyes slowly opening and the beast-like sound of heavy breaths.

The black mist spread like an all-encompassing curtain, blotting out the sun and sky. Countless eerie whispers and the rustling of creatures crawling filled the air.

This feeling was all too familiar—it was the Calamity Ruins!

"Eight ancient ancestors, what dynasty or era they belong to, what status they held in life—I still don't know to this day. But since you all seem so keen on gathering here, before I retrieve the Qilin Wedge and leave, let these things keep you company, alright? Bye-bye."

The voice of Master was heard from the recording pen tossed on the ground, teasing.

One could almost imagine his grin stretching all the way to his ears.

It was infuriating.

The instant the eight ancient ancestors awakened, their terrifying aura blanketed the entire area.

Not only that—upon awakening, they summoned the Calamity Ruins.

Thick mist enshrouded the ancient ruins, making everything invisible.

Only vague, shadowy figures within the fog appeared familiar, and they crept closer.

"Ying Changsheng, Mu Qingyou, Li Hanting, the three of you step back for now and take a short break."

Instructor Wan's thunderous voice echoed from above: "Mr. Liu."

He took a deep breath and raised his voice. "Now that the ruins' gate is already shut, how about we align our efforts to deal with the situation? Whatever issues there are, let's settle these eight ancient ancestors first."

Mr. Liu was arguably the most principled director in the You Ying Group. Although he despised many members of the Ether Association, he showed immense respect for those warriors who fought for humanity. Sometimes, in desperate times within the Ancient God Realm, he'd reluctantly seek his help, and he'd likely pat himself on the chest and agree.

Though most of the time, he was rather irritating, like a rock in a latrine—both foul and stubborn.

"Fine, but do you have the means to open the gate to the underground ruins?"

Mr. Liu bellowed.

For some reason, Moon Princess and Butcher had suddenly disappeared, which made him uneasy.

At this moment, with people from the Ether Association around, it actually felt reassuring.

"Mr. Liu, please be careful."

Ning Chen whispered, "The Calamity Ruins have arrived."

The other candidates prepared themselves as if facing a mortal enemy, ready to defend against the mental invasion.

Wan Rentu leaped down, landing heavily on the ground.

Casually grabbing blade, spear, sword, and halberd from his back, he pierced through the electromagnetic bombs scattered on the ground.

Boom!

The Qi Realm suddenly collapsed.

Ji Ye exhaled deeply, her spirituality was nearly exhausted.

"Thank you, Instructor Wan."

Ji Han, barely steady, almost stumbled. "Good thing you arrived."

"Can you still fight?"

Instructor Wan cast a glance at them and asked deeply, "By the way, why are there only two of you? Where are your other teammates? Have you seen them anywhere? I found Ying Changsheng's group in the depths of the ancient ruins; they were being hunted by several ancient ancestors and only managed to escape about half an hour ago."

"No idea, but there's definitely a traitor. Both of us fell into a trap, didn't see who it was."

Ji Ye's expression was grim.

"If nothing goes wrong, there's more than one traitor."

Ji Han wiped his face and replied, "I saw several teammates fall into dimensional rifts. They might have landed in the underground ruins, or maybe got teleported outside. Either way, chances of survival are slim."

Just then, hurried footsteps echoed from the distance.

Blue Whale and Dawn arrived late: "Instructor, we're here!"

"Good thing you're here. With healers and sufficient secret medicine, we won't have much trouble dealing with those ancient ancestors."

Wan Rentu looked at the space behind them and hesitated. "Why are there only you two? Where is Thunder?"

He knew the rescue squad had split into three groups.

Blue Whale and Dawn looked startled, then turned quickly to check behind them.

A pitch-black mist.

"No, she was just right beside us!"

They chimed in unison, "How could this be?"

Wan Rentu abruptly realized something unexpected might have occurred.

"Wait, where is Gu Jianlin?"

His voice suddenly broke.

For a brief instant, the ancient ruins trembled once more.

It felt like something horrifying was awakening.

Simultaneously, the Calamity Ruins began their mental invasion.

Each of them saw their closest loved ones, their faces twisted in eerie smiles, moving toward them.

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Amid the dense mist, Gu Jianlin also saw that familiar figure.

The girl wore a pink-and-white camisole nightdress, revealing her smooth shoulders and delicate collarbone. Her pale legs stretched slender under the skirt, resting on fluffy cotton slippers.

The wind fluttered her pale green short hair, causing it to sway.

Her icy yet exquisite face remained expressionless as her clear eyes gazed at him quietly.

One Youzhu, two Youzhus, three Youzhus.

In the mist, all he saw was Youzhu.

Gu Jianlin knew this was because, in his mind at that moment, she consumed his every thought.

No matter how cold and detached he normally was, it was impossible not to be moved now.

"So, that's how it is."

He gently stroked the stone bead on his wrist and whispered.

From the first meeting with Moon Princess, he'd experienced a strong sense of déjà vu—the cold and detached yet subtly caring tone, the tenderness hidden within those indifferent expressions. Even when she deliberately altered her voice, something about her felt intimately familiar, especially the warmth of her body when held close.

The portrait of her personality had always been Youzhu.

Except, certain discrepancies in their video calls, hairstyle, and... bust size had left lingering doubts he couldn't confirm.

Sometimes, he even wondered if she was some unknown older sister.

But Su Youxia was already over twenty, with alluring photos of her at home—a sensual older sister.

Even if it was confirmed to be her, he didn't know what to do next.

He avoided the issue altogether.

Because whether it was Youzhu or Moon Princess, they were both immensely important to him.

Who was who didn't matter.

Perhaps, years ago when he was completely alone, that man had kept her at a distance, quietly watching him without approaching for fear of disrupting his world—careful not to pull him into their chaos.

Master and disciple must have made some pact.

Together, they kept him in the dark while secretly supporting, protecting, and grieving for him.

That day when Old Gu had his accident, this girl had also rushed to the scene.

But it was too late.

Afterward, she stayed silently by his side, caring for him for three months in the hospital.

Gu Jianlin vaguely remembered times when he woke from nightmares and clung to her desperately, as if a drowning man in hell seeking salvation.

Under the highway bridge during Li Changzhi's attack—she silently stood watching him.

Nervous to the point of leaving deep imprints where she stood.

Afraid that he might lose the fight, or worse, his life.

In the cafeteria of Peak City High, she observed quietly in the shadows, ready to intervene at any moment.

Ultimately, she watched as he fought alone and earned his merit independently.

During the siege at Black Cloud City, she vigilantly guarded him throughout.

Perhaps only during Gu Jianlin's Ancient God Transformation could she momentarily lose sight of him.

She must've been frantic then.

Later on, as the curse began to affect him, Gu Jianlin deliberately kept his distance.

She said nothing, nor did she ever push him.

Instead, she played along with her role as Moon Princess, always by his side.

Even in the Qilin Immortal Palace, she constantly worried for his safety and sought materials for him.

Finding clues and taking risks, only to leave him behind.

This was Old Gu's final gift to him.

Moon Princess.

Su Youzhu.

Always her.

Thinking back, it made sense. Old Gu, with his proud and stubborn character, even when forced by the curse into divorce, would never leave his ex-wife to just anyone. He would have chosen someone reliable, capable of offering extraordinary protection.

No one would be more reliable than his personally trained disciple.

Someone to protect his ex-wife while also looking after his son.

Su Youzhu must've carried several Mythical Weapons gifted to her by him.

"If you go pulling reckless stunts again, I'll throw you into a ritual as a Female Sacrifice."

Gu Jianlin shot a glare at the girl in front of him. Even knowing it was an illusion, he decided to indulge.

It couldn't be denied—this timing of the Calamity Ruins made it the perfect natural cover.

The Lock of Nonexistence infused with spirituality detached from his wrist and began extending freely.

For an instant, the ancient ruins quaked in fear.

Because an ultimate monster was awakening.

Gu Jianlin placed his hand on his face, the pitch-black light rapidly forming itself into an obsidian Qilin Mask.

His breathing deepened, and blazing golden light ignited within his pupils, resembling thunder roaring in the depths of darkness—a divine wrath brewing into flame, circling, and raging.

With no expression, he walked forward. Black horns sprouted atop his head, grim and fearsome scales spread beneath his clothes, and the sound of cracking bones echoed like rolling thunder. His blood surged like the roar of tsunamis.

It was as if an inner demon had been unleashed, roaring and venting unparalleled power.

Breaths carried the unmistakable scent of Ancient God's Breath.

Boom!

The silver coffins behind the eight ancient ancestors exploded once again. They opened their crimson eyes, now consumed by terror. Their frightened expressions betrayed their senses—all of them reeled, as though perceiving an unimaginable, horrifying presence, shattering their souls in despair!

"Come, let's fight."

Gu Jianlin relished the surge of power from this Qilin transformation. Yet, the insufficient concentration of Ancient God's Breath meant it wouldn't last long, forcing him to fixate on these eight ancient ancestors.

Their life force should suffice to sustain his Qilin transformation a while longer.

Then, forcibly blast open the gate to the underground ruins.

He never worried about whether the gate could be opened.

After all, this was the Qilin Immortal Palace.

His domain.

He intended to descend to meet her, unstoppable by anyone.

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Boom!

The world spun.

When Moon Princess opened her eyes again, everything was pitch-black; she couldn't see her hand before her face.

"Boss, are you alright?"

Butcher panted heavily as he spoke.

He'd been scared to death earlier; he didn't know why, but the Supreme had suddenly contacted him.

Almost frightened his soul out of his body.

"Shh."

Moon Princess pulled out a burning stick and gently lit it.

The flame illuminated the shadowy depths of the cave.

"Welcome to the underground ruins, Miss Moon Princess."

Master's voice echoed from the dark. "Unexpected, isn't it, to meet here?"

Chapter 334 - 174: The Hand That Tears Through Time

It must be admitted, Su Youzhu was very scared just now.

Because most girls are naturally afraid of the dark, especially in such a pitch-black Ancient Ruins where who knows what kind of ghostly things might jump out. Fear of the unknown is magnified to the extreme.

Of course, the most important thing is, that guy isn't here.

There's no feeling of reassurance.

However, the moment she heard that detestable voice, her eyes turned icy cold.

Butcher also suddenly tensed up, like a giant bear hunting leisurely in the forest, the blood of the Ancient God Clan flowed in his body, vaguely accumulating ancient and wild strength.

The burning stick faintly illuminated the figures in front of them, shrouded in shadows.

Eight Vajra Arhats, like an impenetrable wall, blocked them in front.

Plus two female bodyguards from Ying Province.

One followed the Sword Sect Path, the other the Ghost Slayer Path.

"Honestly, I'm very surprised. We explored this Ancient Ruins for eight years before we got a bronze compass to unlock the seal of the Alchemy Matrix and reach the true treasure site."

Si Wei'an toyed with the lighter in his hand, suddenly igniting it, the flame illuminating a face with a sinister smile: "I'm very curious, where did you get the bronze compass? There's no way that fool Third Master could have obtained it."

Jing Shangxiu leaned on his cane, a ghastly smile on his face, eerily saying, "You don't say, I just tried a divination and came up with nothing. This little girl isn't simple."

The response to them was the vibrating hum of a Tang Blade.

"That's because I have a very good teacher."

Su Youzhu's eyes were icy cold, indifferently saying, "You dimwits took eight years collectively; he alone was already close to the truth. If it weren't for the unstable dimensions back then, it wouldn't have been your turn."

Butcher was shocked; only now did he realize the real reason the boss was pursuing them.

Jing Shangxiu was momentarily stunned upon hearing this.

Si Wei'an's pupils trembled imperceptibly; the smile on his face unchanged: "Impossible. You're trying to test me with rhetoric? Such little cleverness is suitable for deceiving a boyfriend."

Su Youzhu coldly said, "Sorry, my boyfriend isn't easily fooled."

Butcher was about to transform into Qilin, only to be restrained by her gaze.

At this moment, Jing Shangxiu's pupils turned white, as if he divined something, his face drastically changing: "Master! Run! Kill these two immediately! Don't waste words with them! Kill them! This person might know our secret, she's likely here for revenge. Leave no survivors, kill them quickly! Yingzi, Jianzi, take action!"

After saying this, he turned and walked away with his cane, very urgently.

Si Wei'an had never seen this old man so out of control, raising his eyebrow slightly.

"What a pity."

He put his hands in his pockets, turned around: "Then just... kill them."

Though he valued talent, having come into contact with the innermost secret meant they could only die.

As his words fell, the eight Vajra Arhats suddenly erupted with chaotic Qi.

These monks from Xingjue Temple somehow gathered the Qi released from each other, almost creating an invisible, intangible domain.

This was almost the effect of a Qi Realm of a Fifth-Order Realm King!

Swish!

Yingzi drew the Iron Sword from her back, chaotic Sword Qi swirling around the blade, vibrating incessantly.

While Jianzi drew a Tachi, her body suddenly virtualizing, transforming into a fleeting black shadow!

Su Youzhu gripped the blood-colored Tang Blade, also disappearing like a phantom.

Clang! Clang! Clang!

Illusory black shadows crisscrossed in the dark, the blood-colored Tang Blade and the pitch-black Tachi clashing in mid-air.

Evidently, it was just a normal confrontation, but time and space shattered like a mirror, with countless rifts crisscrossing!

After dozens of blade clashes, time and space silently and seamlessly solidified like amber, the world lost its colors, as if black ink spread out, falling into a silent abyss.

The core abilities of the Ghost Slayer Path are Divine Speed and the Time-Space Gap.

The former accelerates time, while the latter can see through the weak points of all things.

At the First Order, they obtain the ability of Virtualization.

At the Second Rank, they have slashes that shatter space; the Third Rank possesses brief Space Jumping abilities.

Upon reaching the Fourth-tier Shura, they gain the extremely powerful ability of Time-Space Freeze!

And this time, it was two overlapping domains colliding!

Under such circumstances, the strong survive, while the weak collapse!

With a cracking sound!

Jianzi's Tachi suddenly shattered, her right arm severed by a fierce rift, blood spraying wildly.

At the same time, a fierce Sword Qi surged forth, its light illuminating the dark stone vault.

Su Youzhu leapt instantly, the beautiful eyes beneath her cat-face mask devoid of any emotion, Divine Speed Force accelerated her surroundings like a breached flood, suddenly unleashing countless fierce blade lights.

Boom!

Time and space suddenly shattered, engulfing the Sword Qi.

Yingzi recoiled in fright, narrowly retreating a step, but her cheek was still cut, blood flowing freely.

Su Youzhu landed lightly, tightly gripping the blood-colored long blade, spirituality burning furiously.

Divine Speed Force enhanced to the extreme, next comes the Combined Skill!

Many years ago, her teacher's words seemed to echo in her ears: "Youzhu, let me tell you secretly, Inheritance Path isn't as simple as you think. Although that old guy, King of Qing, is crazy, he's truly talented. Do you know what a Combined Skill is? Different extraordinary abilities can be combined; this secret I tell only to you. Okay, no need to practice now. Let's go, I'll take you to watch my son play ball."

Chapter 335 - 174: The Hand that Tears Through Time_2

Divine Speed Force, Space Jump, Shattering Sky Slash.

Combine all three!

The chilling aura of intent to kill filled the dark cave.

Butcher was confronting the eight Vajra Arhats. At this moment, everyone could feel the oppressive killing intent.

Su Youzhu was only a Fourth Rank Shura, but her power was truly terrifying. The blade of her Tang Blade hadn't even swung, yet the overwhelming killing aura had already seeped into everyone's hearts, freezing them in place.

Yingzi and Jianzi felt their scalps tingle, their fighting spirit on the verge of collapse!

Right at that moment, Su Youzhu suddenly coughed up blood and fell to her knees.

If it weren't for her Tang Blade supporting her, she would have collapsed completely.

Thump, thump!

The sound of a violent heartbeat echoed.

The underground ruins felt like a sea of death, drowning her.

Before her eyes, she seemed to see a vermilion-colored, grotesque profile.

The immense pressure made her heart almost stop beating instantly!

"Boss!"

Butcher suddenly flashed to her side, asking urgently, "What's wrong?"

Su Youzhu's eyes were vacant, her delicate, petite body trembling slightly.

On the pale skin of her hand, her blood vessels bulged suddenly.

They revealed eerie, vine-like patterns.

"There must be some kind of alchemy matrix here. A type designed to repulse Mythical Weapons," she said.

Although her face was concealed by a mask, her complexion must have been deathly pale, the light flickering in her pupils: "I see now. I've been a bit reckless... sorry."

Butcher's face changed drastically: "Then just don't use your Mythical Weapon! Cancel its effects!"

Moon Princess remained silent for a moment: "It can't be canceled."

The eight Vajra Arhats across from them spoke indifferently with cold expressions: "There does indeed appear to be an alchemy matrix here. It invisibly nullifies the effects of Mythical Weapons, but it absolutely shouldn't hurt you."

"Unless your body itself relies on the Mythical Weapon for support."

They spoke with icy detachment: "In that case, you'll die here today."

Jianzi and Yingzi exchanged glances, mutual cruelty glittering in their eyes.

Butcher stepped in front of the girl, a savage, bloodthirsty grin spreading on his face: "Boss, don't worry. Leave it to me."

At that moment, Su Youzhu suddenly spoke: "If you use that thing, it's very likely to cause dimensional instability and send us plummeting out of here. So you need to hold off these eight Vajra Arhats as quickly as possible. I need to chase after those two. We can't let them succeed."

Butcher hesitated for a moment, then turned to meet the girl's gaze.

"Don't worry, I won't be reckless."

Su Youzhu said gravely: "My body won't fail."

Butcher stood silent for a second before suddenly unleashing the restraints within himself!

Boom!

With a shattering roar, crimson Qilin Horns sprouted from his head, and his vertically-slitted dark-golden pupils burned with ferocity and murderous intent. His face became covered with a red bone-like mask, and Dragon Scales spread across his entire body.

A dragon tail burst from his back!

Qilin Transformation!

"Divine Servant!"

The eight Vajra Arhats were struck speechless: "You are actually a Divine Servant!"

Butcher roared, his voice filled with fury, and flashed in front of them, crossing his arms into a hammer-like strike.

Qi Force condensed, detonating fiercely!

Boom!

The Qi Realm built by the eight Vajra Arhats shattered instantly.

Butcher forcibly ripped apart their formation with brutal strength, unleashing punches like a raging storm.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Even though the eight Vajra Arhats worked together, they were pressured into continuous retreat by this brute.

Each punch thundered like roaring lightning.

But at that moment, time and space began to distort violently.

Butcher clearly sensed that as soon as he transformed into Qilin, the dimension had already become unstable.

"Even if you're a Divine Servant, if you keep fighting like this, you'll be teleported out of here."

The eight Vajra Arhats, battered, kept retreating, while the furious Qi Force destroyed the stone cave, sending debris tumbling everywhere.

Butcher grinned maliciously: "Then I'll make sure to drag you down with me!"

Taking advantage of this moment, Su Youzhu virtualized again, darting forward like a ghost shadow.

Yingzi and Jianzi exchanged a look, crossing their long blades and Iron Swords in swift strikes!

When virtualized, physical attacks cannot harm her.

However, the Ghost Slayer Path's Shattering Sky Slash could force her to revert to her normal state.

And once that happened, the Sword Qi would slice her to pieces immediately!

At the crucial moment, the cat-shaped mask on Su Youzhu's face suddenly shattered!

Bang!

Her snow-like, exquisite features now radiated a chilling glow from her icy pupils, which had turned strange and blood-red. The crimson hue even extended to the corners of her eyes, as if stained with vivid scarlet eye shadow.

Crimson Dragon Horns sprouted from her head, her pale skin veined with faintly visible blood-red lines.

A mouthful of fresh blood spurted from her lips, and her face turned ghostly pale.

Ancient God Transformation!

This was not evolution achieved through consuming Ancient God's Blood.

It was self-evolution, achieved by forcibly overcoming the corruption through sheer spiritual will!

Although she exhibited traits of the Ghost Slayer Path's ultimate form—the Candle Dragon Clan characteristics...

She belonged to no clan.

She was human!

A human who possessed the power of an Ancient God!

In ancient myths, there were accounts of individuals who could conquer the deforming power and corruption of the Ancient God Clan, using it to enhance their own lives and force themselves into transcendent evolution, becoming autonomous high-level beings!

In the forbidden records of the Ether Association, this was known as Controllable Deformation!

A taboo among taboos!

All that could be heard was a sharp snap!

A crimson flash of cold light streaked by.

Yingzi's and Jianzi's heads soared high into the air, accompanied by the spray of blood!

Chapter 336 - 174: The Hand that Tears Through Time_3

"What the fuck!"

The Butcher was utterly stunned. "Boss, invincible!"

The extent of the young girl's evolution naturally couldn't compare to his after consuming the Ancient God's Blood.

But it wasn't far off.

However, the power Su Youzhu displayed once again hastened the collapse of the dimension.

Of course, it wasn't just space-time collapsing.

After launching a strike, her body swayed slightly, and dense beads of blood seeped out from beneath her pale skin.

Even her breathing and heartbeat grew sluggish.

"Kill her!"

The eight Vajra Arhats exchanged glances and resolved to focus all their attacks on this weakened girl.

One Vajra Arhat decisively turned around, his skin turning bright red like a boiled lobster.

BOOM!

He self-destructed!

The Butcher was blasted away by the shockwave of the violent Qi Force, thrown into the air in screaming chaos!

"Boss!"

At that moment, his shock turned to fury as he tried to use the Ancient Divine Language to annihilate everything.

Yet in the silent void, there was no response!

The Supreme being did not answer his call!

Su Youzhu braced herself against her long blade, forcing herself upright, only to see the remaining seven Vajra Arhats barreling at her like cannonballs!

At the very last moment, a flicker of crimson shot through her pupils!

Time and space sank into a quagmire of silence, black and white blurring and spreading like ink across the gloomy cave. All noise ceased in their wake, as though everything were frozen solid.

The charging steps of the seven Vajra Arhats abruptly halted.

"Smash this space to pieces directly!"

The seven Ancient Martial warriors withdrew half a step in unison, clenched their fists, and began to gather power.

The violent Qi Force surged so fiercely that it nearly overturned the cave, erupting all at once!

BANG!

The Space Domain shattered in an instant!

Su Youzhu's icy gaze turned even colder as her Divine Speed Force surged to its absolute peak, and her Tang Blade slashed downward!

Countless strikes burst forth in a single moment, layered upon one another!

Using offense as her defense, she forcefully shattered the space while countering the oncoming Qi Force!

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

However, the bombardment from the seven Vajra Arhats was savagely overwhelming, their countless fist shadows pouring down like a storm!

They employed a war of attrition.

Their gamble was simple: that the girl's body would ultimately collapse!

With a sharp crack, blood sprayed forth like a mist, and Su Youzhu's body emitted ominous sounds of imminent breakdown.

Yet her gaze grew even colder, and the speed of her blade intensified, flashing like the twinkle of starlight!

If this dragged on, her body would undoubtedly shatter.

But when faced with death, she showed no fear—none whatsoever. Instead, within her, she quietly accumulated spirituality, intending to replicate her prior ultimate strike, the killing slash, to sever the heads of her seven foes.

Life and death were outside her considerations.

Because she had been waiting for this day for a very long time.

She was a deeply resolute girl.

If someone showed her kindness, she repaid it.

If someone wronged her, she took vengeance.

Many years ago, a nine-year-old girl had stumbled her way into the Qilin Immortal Palace by accident.

In the desolate and savage Ancient God Realm, she lacked any means of survival.

She was on the verge of being devoured by a living corpse.

A man saved her.

That man protected her, taught her knowledge, and trained her in combat.

He even gifted her a Mythical Weapon, enabling her to take control of her own fate.

Master and disciple depended on one another in this transcendent world, living like this for a full eight years.

Later, that man died, his name sullied by false accusations.

She vowed to uncover the truth behind his death and clear his name.

No matter how difficult it would be, she had to accomplish this—it was her promise.

"She's almost finished charging up, hurry!"

The seven Vajra Arhats roared in fury, their Qi Force exploding into Berserk at its peak, like ravenous beasts.

Ferocious Qi Force broke through violently.

Killing intent flooded Su Youzhu's eyes, and the overwhelming bloodlust filled the cave.

After this strike, it would be a battle of life or death.

BANG!

For a brief moment, a heavy, hammering sound rang out.

It was like a battering ram pummeling a fortified wall.

But it didn't come from the seven Vajra Arhats.

Nor did it originate from the bombarded Butcher.

And it certainly wasn't from Su Youzhu—she didn't possess such power.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The heavy hammering grew clearer and clearer, shaking the stone cave to its foundations, threatening collapse!

On the verge of crumbling!

The sound of the striking seemed to reverberate through everyone's hearts.

The seven Vajra Arhats didn't know what kind of monstrous entity they were facing, but they gritted their teeth, crushing the secret medicine hidden in their molars. In that instant, they collectively lost control, extracting every last ounce of their berserk power, their momentum surging toward the limit.

Su Youzhu's grip on her Tang Blade tightened slightly, her blood-red eyes closing.

Her black hair fluttered.

Overwhelming Qi Force surged like tidal waves crashing against a rocky shore, completely engulfing her.

What would happen next?

She didn't know.

But just then, space-time shattered with a deafening roar!

BANG!

With an explosive, collapsing sound, a massive, pitch-black void manifested from thin air, heralding the collapse of space!

BOOM!

Billowing black mist surged forth, swallowing all the light in the cave.

A fist clad in jet-black Dragon Scales burst through the black void, seemingly smashing apart space-time itself!

In the darkness, a pair of blazing golden eyes ignited, void of any emotion.

Chapter 337 - 175 Youzhu: Will we get beaten up if we do this?

For a moment, it seemed like the entire cave was collapsing. Dense black fog surged from a pitch-black void, dimensions violently shaking, and killing intent as deep as the sea!

A pair of hands clad in black scales forcibly tore through the dark void, golden eyes shining brilliantly like the blazing sun.

As the seven Vajra Arhats unleashed their final burst of Qi Force.

As Su Youzhu closed her eyes in that split second.

Gu Jianlin stepped into the dim cavern, his forehead ablaze with crimson Ghost Fire. A molten lava-like energy roared within his physical shell, akin to a dormant volcano ready to erupt. It faintly permeated outward, causing the Void to ripple and tremble.

When he took that step, the dark void was shattered by sheer force!

Boom!

The wind swept up Su Youzhu's black hair, revealing a fractured space and spreading black mist before her.

Within the black fog, a faint, sinister silhouette loomed.

Blazing golden eyes, burning in the darkness!

The seven Vajra Arhats' expressions froze—they hadn't expected anyone to break in at such a critical moment.

In the next instant.

A terrifying presence suffused the entire area!

Whether it was the killing intent radiating from Su Youzhu.

Or the brutality and frenzy of the seven Vajra Arhats.

All forcibly suppressed.

The world went silent, as though trapped in the drumbeats of destruction—a suffocating sense of ruin.

Gu Jianlin's gaze was indifferent, his inner killing intent boiling over.

This time, there was no Ancient Divine Language.

Because now, having advanced to the Third Rank, he was significantly strengthened under Ancient God Transformation.

Facing seven enemies who only surpassed him by one rank, he didn't need that taboo power.

Why use a butcher's blade on a chicken?

He did only one thing—clenching his fist and striking forward.

Thunderous crashes erupted!

The seven Vajra Arhats felt their amassed Qi Force shatter abruptly, as if facing not a fist but an incoming world—utterly defenseless!

Dark ripples erupted wildly, chaotic Qi fragmented like torn shreds.

"Die!"

Gu Jianlin unleashed the Ghost Curse Technique without any medium!

The seven screamed wretchedly as countless black, living spell marks climbed up their bodies, a dense swarm that engulfed them entirely, exuding eerie smoke.

Minds unraveled, spirituality went berserk, flesh dissolved, bones shattered.

With a deafening boom.

Golden Divine Sacrificial Fire ignited underfoot—a scorched expanse that consumed them.

Gu Jianlin suddenly darted forward, pressing his hands down on two heads, slamming them viciously onto the ground!

Boom!

Dark shockwaves rippled!

Amidst the explosion of black light, two Vajra Arhats didn't even have time to scream—they died instantly.

Simultaneously, he vanished from the spot again.

Two more Vajra Arhats froze in terror, feeling cold breaths behind them brushing against their napes. They forcefully unleashed the Qi Force within to shield themselves.

Boom!

A pair of hands tore through their Qi Force, breaking through from behind.

Bloodied hands clutched two still-beating hearts.

The two glanced down in bewilderment at their own hearts, faces frozen in shock.

Gu Jianlin pulled back his hands decisively, flinging the hearts aside carelessly, letting them collapse backward.

At that moment, a torrential Qi wave surged like a sea tide!

Boom!

Gu Jianlin raised his hand, condensing dark particles into his palm!

Another deafening explosion—two Vajra Arhats were hurled against the rock walls from the shockwave before falling. Before they could hit the ground, shadows enveloped them entirely.

Gu Jianlin seized the two by their necks, twisting vigorously!

Crunch!

Their necks snapped brutally, blood splattering across the wall!

Pure and absolute domination in strength and speed!

Even a weakened Supreme.

Was still a Supreme.

Overwhelming six opponents with ease!

Only one left!

The sole remaining Vajra Arhat, though trained as a monk from Xingjue Temple with a supposedly unwavering heart, had his fighting spirit utterly crushed. Trembling, he made a final decision.

Self-destruction!

He spun suddenly, lunging toward the direction of perceived breathing.

Instantly, his body overheated like a boiled shrimp, veins bulging to the brink of detonation!

Su Youzhu recoiled in shock, instinctively attempting to activate Divine Speed Force. Yet, her collapsing body faltered, spiritual energy chaotic within her mind—she could only watch as he lunged toward her.

At the last second, a streak of concentrated black light shot forward, piercing through the monk's heart!

Boom!

It wasn't his self-destruction, but the detonation of negative energy.

The final Vajra Arhat was torn apart into bloody fragments, obliterated entirely.

The violent gusts swept Su Youzhu away like a fallen leaf; her blood-smeared Tang Blade flew from her hand, tracing a sinister arc before landing heavily on the ground.

She coughed heavily again.

But this time, little blood emerged.

The Dragon Horn atop her head gradually receded, the scarlet hue fading from her irises, and the eerie patterns on her skin vanished.

In her state of extreme weakness, her mind momentarily ceased thinking.

She couldn't discern whether he was a foe or an ally.

As she was about to crash to the ground, her mind already blurred.

With a muffled impact.

She fell into an icy embrace.

No warmth, yet inexplicably comforting.

That sensation... felt as if the entire world were holding her close.

"Will you keep being reckless next time?"

Gu Jianlin's cold voice rang out: "Su Youzhu."

The last three words were delivered deliberately.

Each word ice-cold.

Hearing her name and his familiar voice, Su Youzhu's fragile body stiffened for a moment.

Yet when she turned to look up in disbelief.

She saw a familiar face—so real it felt dreamlike.

It was Gu Jianlin's face, as handsome as always, though devoid of expression. But those black-and-white eyes no longer held their previous emptiness.

Because they reflected her face.

She loved this feeling.

His eyes were entirely filled with her.

"How did you manage to chase me here?"

Su Youzhu stared blankly at him, speaking softly.

A tidal wave of surprise and joy engulfed her.

Like a girl praying in darkness, she saw the glow of divinity illuminating her, casting light over her gaze, dispelling all the darkness.

Gu Jianlin held the girl in his arms as countless words crowded his mind. He felt both heartache for her silent sacrifices and anger at her reckless behavior, but ultimately, he said nothing.

Su Youzhu didn't know if it was a dream.

Then she raised her hand, gently poking his chest.

Confirmed it was real—and froze.

Then suddenly, she smiled.

"You look really awkward. Could it be that you're falling for me?"

She was already pale, and her lack of blood made her paler still. Yet her smile carried unprecedented vitality.

Though she had plenty of questions, his presence erased her fears, leaving her slightly dizzy.

She felt the timing was perfect and gently wrapped her arms around his neck, softly whispering: "Hm... Do you just want to hug me like this?"

Gu Jianlin silently lowered his gaze and stared at her, unmoving.

Su Youzhu shot him a teasing look and lightly tiptoed, lifting her delicate, enchanting face.

Her vermilion lips inched closer.

Yet in the final moment, something crossed her mind. She asked earnestly: "Gu Jianlin, do you think if my parents find out we're dating, they'll beat us up?"

He answered her with silence.

Gu Jianlin took a long breath: "Who's dating you? I haven't even confronted you yet."

Su Youzhu: "..."

"Controllable Deformation, Mythical Weapon, and the strategies you intercepted."

Gu Jianlin said coldly, "You're really impressive, Su Youzhu."

Chapter 338 - 176: Showdown, Social Death

Sure enough, Su Youzhu knew she was about to be reprimanded and quietly lowered her head.

Her jet-black hair cascaded down like a waterfall, her delicate, curving lashes drooping to obscure her deep, soul-searching eyes.

She looked cold, like a girl devoid of all warmth, but she possessed all the cunning a girl ought to have—perhaps even more so, sharpened by years of her mentor's teachings. He'd taught her to use her appearance as a disguise, to never reveal her true emotions too easily.

Whether in battle or in life.

That's exactly what she did.

In the Dark World, she was the renowned genius girl known as the Moon Princess.

At home, she flawlessly played the role of a troubled teenager.

No one could see through her.

Except for the boy standing before her now. With him, she always seemed to come up short.

Honestly, she figured the atmosphere had already built up perfectly. She could seize the sweetness and feelings of their reunion to wield the tenderness and coyness of a young girl—taking down this stoic stone-faced guy once and for all.

If that didn't work, at least she could smooth over her reckless actions from earlier.

Her gentle facade had masked a single thought: "You're still resisting me?"

But who was Gu Jianlin? Back when Peak City's High School No. 2 held military training for freshmen, the coach had an urgent matter and temporarily assigned him to lead. The younger classmates had been thrilled, thinking that since he was a senior, he'd surely go easy on them.

Some of the prettier girls even tried to charm him with their beauty, hoping for special treatment.

Gu Jianlin remained unmoved. No matter how stunningly they batted their lashes or paraded their allure, in his eyes, they were merely silly, hormone-driven females. Who cares who you are? Drop down and give me forty push-ups, first.

"I'm already injured this badly. You wouldn't still lecture me, would you?"

Su Youzhu rested her forehead against his chest, quietly listening to his heartbeat.

It was the first time the two of them had been this close.

Gu Jianlin didn't pull away; he merely maintained his stoic expression and replied, "Do you know what would happen if your father found out?"

Su Youzhu puffed up her cheeks.

Her father, once a soldier, had a strict approach to parenting—a relentless barrage of discipline.

"At ease, attention, run!"

First, he'd chase her outside, whistle in hand, urging her to run laps. After that, it'd be push-up time. Then, standing military-style at the stairwell for two hours while nosy neighbors threw her curious looks.

Physical and mental torment, combined.

Things only got a little better after Gu Jianlin arrived.

"That's because I've been putting all my focus into the Extraordinary World—not just honing combat skills but also learning the ancient texts my mentor left for me. Do you think that's easy? And ever since you awakened, I've been secretly following you every day, afraid you'd get into trouble or act recklessly."

Su Youzhu muttered defensively.

Gu Jianlin said coldly, "Don't give me that. Ever since I moved in, you haven't been beaten once."

Su Youzhu raised her enchanting eyes, lashes trembling slightly: "Then why are you holding me so tightly?"

Perhaps even Gu Jianlin himself didn't realize it. He had only caught her with his chest as she fell—but his hands had instinctively wrapped around her, holding her tightly. Very tightly.

As if afraid that the mere wind would scatter her from his embrace.

It could've been an involuntary action.

Or perhaps a subconscious fear of loss.

Or maybe, simply, he wanted to hold her.

Gu Jianlin wasn't sure.

Suddenly, Su Youzhu coughed again, her crimson lips spilling a trace of blood.

"I have some secret medicine here."

A strange panic seized Gu Jianlin, and he hurriedly tried to let go and search for it, but she caught his hand.

"It's useless. Your Life Perception should have sensed it, right?"

Su Youzhu spoke softly: "This body of mine lacks Life Rhythm."

Gu Jianlin paused for a moment: "Mythical Weapon?"

"Yes, the Yin Yang Twin Jade your father left behind."

Su Youzhu answered gently: "Its effect is to create a flesh-and-blood mirror image clone that inherits all my Extraordinary Abilities, allowing me to act freely in the outside world. The price, however, is that my original body becomes extremely weak. And due to the prolonged split focus, I tend to appear a bit sluggish and need frequent sleep to recover."

So that's it. Everything suddenly made sense.

No wonder this girl usually seemed burdened and spent most of her time catching up on sleep.

In school, she always seemed absent-minded.

Although, strangely, her face remained the same as before.

Her hairstyle and... certain proportions, however, had changed.

But there wasn't time to dwell on that now.

Gu Jianlin frowned and said, "So, when I video-called you, you picked up instantly."

"Yes."

Su Youzhu's face showed no expression as she lowered her head to avoid his gaze: "Because you know me too well. Even if I consciously disguise myself, spending long enough time with you will always give you a sense of déjà vu."

Gu Jianlin felt a surge of frustration. This girl, in the Qilin Immortal Palace, had wrapped herself up like an enigma—probably even wearing high heels and altering her voice to prevent recognition.

Yet in reality, she'd left a few telltale signs.

Who'd have guessed there existed something like the Yin Yang Twin Jade?

Despite his utmost caution in protecting her, he still felt it wasn't enough.

Even with Butcher following her closely, he couldn't fully be at ease.

He had to step in personally.

Chapter 339 - 176: Showdown, Social Death_2

Su Youzhu lifted her head, her snow-like face devoid of color, pale as paper: "Do you feel it? There should be some kind of Alchemy Matrix power here; the effects of Mythical Weapons will be undone in this place."

Gu Jianlin glanced at his own right wrist. Both the Lock of Nonexistence and the Soul Comforting Bell had completely gone silent.

"Then I'll figure out a way to get you out of here."

He said resolutely without hesitation.

Unexpectedly, Su Youzhu shook her head: "It's useless. The effects of the Yin Yang Twin Jade have already been nullified. The collapse of this body of mine is irreversible. Even if I leave, it won't help."

As her words fell, she noticed the trembling in the hands of the young man holding her.

After hesitating for a second, in a voice hoarse with a feeling he couldn't even begin to describe, Gu Jianlin asked: "If this body of yours collapses... what effect will it have on your true self?"

"Are you nervous?"

"Mm."

Su Youzhu was startled, blinking her clear, beautiful eyes.

Gu Jianlin's face remained expressionless, frozen as always, completely unchanged.

But the tightening of his grip seemed to speak volumes.

"It's alright."

Su Youzhu said softly: "My true self will be fine."

"Do you think I'll believe that?"

Gu Jianlin averted his gaze, a subtle quiver in his eyes.

He felt short of breath, a deep helplessness creeping in.

He hated this feeling – this impotence when an insoluble problem stares you in the face, and all you can do is watch it spiral into disaster.

"Alright, alright, I won't lie to you."

Resting her head against his chest, Su Youzhu quietly listened to his heartbeat and said lightly, "I'm not entirely sure what will happen if this body collapses. But your father must've had a reason for leaving it to me, right? If the death of this avatar meant the true self would also die, it'd be an awfully impractical Mythical Weapon, wouldn't it?"

Gu Jianlin had considered this, but he genuinely didn't want to take the risk.

Since his father's death, this was the first time he had felt the taste of fear.

It wasn't an emotion he was accustomed to.

"I insisted on coming here for my own reasons, not out of stubbornness or recklessness. The ancient texts and ciphers left by our teacher, I'm the only one who can understand them. If I had to teach you from scratch, there wouldn't be enough time. Moreover, even if my body collapses, there's a good chance I won't die. But you, you only have one life."

Su Youzhu said quietly, "I promised our teacher that I would protect you, to take his place in caring for you. If something happened to you, I wouldn't know what to do or how to face him in the future."

She paused for a moment: "So, please, don't be angry, alright?"

Gu Jianlin fell silent for a long time.

"No."

"Why? I'm already badly injured."

"Playing the pity card won't work with me."

"Hey."

Su Youzhu reverted back to her cold, aloof demeanor: "This is the first time I've tried coaxing a man."

Gu Jianlin, face unmoving, replied, "This is the first time I've been mad at a woman."

It's the first time for both of us; why should I yield to you?

Su Youzhu glared at him coldly.

Gu Jianlin expressionlessly met her gaze.

Just as the two siblings were locked in a stalemate, a furious roar echoed through the cave.

"Boss, I'm here!"

With a roar like an enraged bull, Butcher charged in: "Shameless bald monk, take my—"

In that instant, both Gu Jianlin and Su Youzhu turned their heads toward him simultaneously.

Butcher screeched to a halt, leaving two deep grooves in the ground as rubble flew everywhere.

What the hell!

Where are our enemies?!

Where did those seven bald monks go?!

And more importantly, what the hell is going on here?

Butcher's large head was filled with question marks. He thought he'd only been blasted away for a short while—how come he couldn't comprehend the situation before him now? When did these two get so close?

And why are they hugging?

This close—why don't you two just go ahead and kiss?

Butcher suddenly felt enormously unnecessary, wishing he had just stayed lying down earlier.

Su Youzhu turned her gaze away, muttering under her breath: "I'll never make you a midnight snack again."

Gu Jianlin retorted without hesitation: "Then you can do your homework yourself from now on."

After a brief silence.

Su Youzhu glared angrily at him: "Gu Jianlin, you're heartless. You, have no heart!"

"Sorry, I don't respond to threats."

Gu Jianlin's face was stern.

The atmosphere was awkward.

Butcher, watching for some time, couldn't help but interject: "You two, now's really not the time to argue, is it?"

The siblings spoke in unison: "Shut up!"

Butcher was immediately aggrieved, thinking, "You two are fighting—why are you yelling at me?!"

The burly man crouched down and began drawing circles in the dirt with an utterly forlorn look in his eyes.

Rumble.

Suddenly, the cave trembled, as though something was brewing in the darkness.

At the same time, the pitch-black rock walls lit up with jagged, vein-like markings that resembled blood vessels.

It felt as if something monumental was about to happen.

Gu Jianlin frowned, sensing the agitation of the Black Qilin deep within his mind. Without another word, he scooped up the girl in a bridal carry. Behind him, pale Ghost Fire flickered into existence alongside four raging Ghost Hands emerging in manifestation.

Having multiple hands is undeniably handy—it allows for effortless princess carries.

Su Youzhu let out a soft hum, offering no resistance.

Instead, she curled up like a lazy cat, finding a comfortable position in his arms.

"Our teacher once visited this place, but due to the instability of the dimension, he couldn't reach its deepest parts. There should be a fragment of the Qilin Wedge within these underground ruins."

She said softly: "Beyond that, there might also be a few relics he left behind. I pursued this far not only to stop Master from obtaining the Qilin Wedge but also to find those relics."

Gu Jianlin glanced down at her: "What's the use of them?"

"Years ago, our teacher received an invitation from a mysterious organization called The Order of the Hidden. You know his character—he would never join such a shadowy group."

Su Youzhu explained, "But he later discovered that the organization's power was unimaginably vast. It had deeply infiltrated not only the Dark World but also the upper echelons of the Ether Association. Many cases of unexplained power surges and deaths were actually orchestrated by them."

Gu Jianlin froze mid-stride, having already crossed paths with that mysterious organization.

"Our teacher died due to the Vermilion Bird Clan's curse, but the incidents he encountered beforehand can't be brushed aside. A significant part of the reason I joined the You Ying Group is to thoroughly investigate this matter."

Su Youzhu's voice grew colder.

Gu Jianlin could vividly imagine this girl venturing alone into the Dark World.

Hunted by the Ether Association.

Facing internal strife within the You Ying Group.

And even investigating The Order of the Hidden.

"You've endured a lot recently, haven't you?"

He asked suddenly.

Su Youzhu puffed her cheeks as she replied softly: "Not too much, really. It's just that I've run into Order agents several times, only to let them escape after narrowly dodging their traps. Lately, I found out they've been helping Master, but I've been outmatched and suffered losses repeatedly."

She bit her lip: "Especially that Jing Shangxiu—he's infuriating."

Gu Jianlin nodded lightly: "It's fine. I'll help you vent your anger later."

Nobody knew this young man better than Su Youzhu.

She understood.

"Venting" meant bloodshed.

And lots of casualties.

"Butcher, let's go."

Gu Jianlin, holding the girl firmly in his arms, casually asked: "Still up for a fight?"

Butcher scratched his head and grinned: "No problem."

Gu Jianlin gave a slight nod and walked into the darkness.

At that moment, Su Youzhu suddenly extended a slender finger, poking him lightly in the chest.

"Do you hate me?"

She asked softly.

Gu Jianlin replied, puzzled: "Why would I hate you?"

Su Youzhu blinked her clear eyes, her tone serene: "Because I stole your father's and mother's love."

For a brief moment, Gu Jianlin's steps halted.

"I don't hate you."

He said lightly: "Didn't you already plan on compensating me by giving yourself to me?"

Su Youzhu froze.

"You've mentioned it more than once—you and I aren't even nominal blood siblings; we can get married."

Gu Jianlin stated coldly, "Miss Moon Princess."

Su Youzhu's delicate body trembled, recalling the words she had spoken during her disguise.

Her body temperature spiked, her face flushed bright red.

Covering her face, her watery eyes filled with shame.

She felt like she'd just experienced social death.

Chapter 340 - 177: Candle Dragon Venerable, Old Monster! (5500)

Gu Jianlin kept a cold expression as he carried the girl in his arms, carefully navigating through the dark cave.

He was very cautious, because at this moment he was not alone. Accompanied by the Female Sacrifice and the Tiger General, even though the cave was permeated by the faint presence of the Ancient God's Breath, it might not sustain the Ancient God Transformation for long.

As for Su Youzhu, she was already socially dead.

You always have to pay for what you say, and now all those shameless words she once uttered under the guise of anonymity fiercely attacked her memories, filling her head with dizzied shame.

"Your sister looks pretty good, huh? That was you, right?"

"Wanna touch and see for yourself? That, too, came from you, didn't it?"

"Looking at your face means I have to marry you—wasn't that something you said yourself?"

"Hmm? Miss Moon Princess?"

Gu Jianlin mercilessly unleashed his verbal assault.

Su Youzhu decisively pretended to faint in his arms.

"And let's not forget the secret medicine I gave you last time."

Gu Jianlin paused for a moment.

Su Youzhu suddenly widened her eyes in anger: "You seriously dare to bring that up?!"

Gu Jianlin raised an eyebrow: "What's the problem?"

"What's with your grudge against my chest size?!"

Su Youzhu's face turned icy as she puffed out her chest and sternly challenged: "Huge or not? Huge or not? Huge or not?"

Gu Jianlin glanced downward. Honestly, he didn't need her to make an effort—he could already feel it while carrying her—yet he maintained his deadpan face and replied, "Big or small, it doesn't matter. I already told you, until the Vermilion Bird Clan's curse is resolved, I won't be with anyone."

Su Youzhu let out a cold snort, thinking to herself that dating and marriage weren't exactly the same thing—he was just dodging with excuses again.

The logic behind the curse wasn't even clear yet.

She suddenly thought of something, puffing her cheeks as she remarked coldly: "Back then, who was it that, afraid of triggering my awakening, chose not to return home despite having one, insisting on moving into that prison-like cramped rental apartment? Then I had to send my doppelgänger to babysit you, even sleeping with you at night."

Recalling that embarrassing piece of the past caused an awkward shift in Gu Jianlin's expression.

And what does she mean by "sleeping with him"? Don't sully someone's reputation out of thin air!

"Enough already."

He abruptly changed the topic: "Regarding your... what's the deal with that?"

Su Youzhu instantly understood what he meant and replied without hesitation: "The Yin Yang Twin Jade isn't entirely symmetrical—it allows subtle changes based on one's intentions. Can we skip this topic now?"

Gu Jianlin thought to himself, "You call that subtle?"

Ah, it's always like this: the less someone has, the more they seek it.

Su Youzhu retorted coldly, "You just prefer big, don't you? Like Lin Wanqiu—that vixen—or Tang Ling with the red hair. Admit it, I've already seen through you."

This woman was throwing a tantrum, completely losing her composure.

Gu Jianlin couldn't be bothered to engage her.

Su Youzhu's gaze turned icy, though her thoughts quickly transitioned to those secret medicines waiting for her at home.

That scoundrel Pharmacist better show his worth soon.

Besides, the internet says small has its advantages too.

Portable enough to hold entirely in one hand!

No, what was she even thinking about?

Reeling from her own thoughts, the girl shook her head as if warding off insanity.

Butcher silently followed behind, too baffled to process the absurdity brewing. "The younger generation's world... truly incomprehensible," he mused.

Back in his days, they'd have three kids by now.

At that moment, Gu Jianlin decided to steer the conversation elsewhere, directing his gaze toward the scarlet markings on the rock wall. He couldn't help but ask: "What are these things? And also, where did the bronze compass you teleported here come from?"

Su Youzhu leaned closer to observe, shook her head and replied: "I don't know. This is my first time here. As for the bronze compass, I dug it out from your dad's safe. Back when he returned from the Qilin Immortal Palace, he suddenly told me he was being hunted by the Ether Association and instructed me to flee immediately."

Gu Jianlin furrowed his brows: "You were in the association back then too?"

"Not exactly—it's just that your dad was very respected, so I guess I was a sort of informal member. Minister Lu Zijin erased all my identity records and secretly sent me away," Su Youzhu softly explained. "At the time, he seemed burdened but still composed. He told me he didn't have time, so he entrusted me to take care of you for a while."

Gu Jianlin nodded slightly: "And that's when the Blood Moon Slaughter happened."

"So it means I wasn't the only one who knew the truth. There are people in the association who believe your dad wasn't the true culprit of the Blood Moon Slaughter Incident. But because the whole incident was so strange, everything is being investigated secretly," he said, "The most critical factor in all this is The Order of the Hidden."

Su Youzhu responded, "Exactly. In fact, The Order of the Hidden had already targeted your dad early on. But I was just a kid back then. He only trained me for battle, taking me on patrols in the Immortal Palace, where we faced all kinds of monsters. During that time, I was often scared to tears by those terrifying living corpses."

"When we returned to the real world, he'd take me out on missions—traveling all over the globe, experiencing countless thrilling adventures. Most of the time, he protected me. We climbed snowy mountains, ascended fiery volcanoes, watched him slay Ancient God Seeds on Mount Fuji, and got chased through Hokkaido's snowfields by Ancient Ancestors."

She seemed lost in reverie, her eyes deep with nostalgia: "Of course, the majority of the time I was just watching you from afar, laughing at how you always kept a stern face, or discussing how you'd ignore that deskmate who kept trying to talk to you. We'd even strategize how to beat up anyone at school who dared to bully you."