

Ancient 421

Chapter 421 - 209: I Also Have a Good Sister _2

Miss Lan glanced at the fat man and thought to herself, "This isn't about you."

It's for his girlfriend.

How could a two-hundred-pound fat man ever compare to someone's beautiful, delicate little girlfriend?

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At the top of Bren Hill's cabin, a man lay on a beach chair, resting his cheek on his palm, seemingly relaxed.

It was a man with cascading black hair, his face marked with unsettling deep-purple spells, his muscular upper body bare, and his bronzed skin covered with vicious tattoos—a devil writhing in Hell, tilting its head to sing a blood-soaked hymn, eerie and ominous.

"Over so many years, others in the Dark World have tried to emulate the King, ringing the bell."

The tablet was firmly fixed in its stand, the screen paused at the moment a boy stepped on a fallen head. His expressionless face exuded a sense of arrogant dominance over the world.

"But unfortunately, none of them ever carried the King's essence."

He chuckled to himself, his voice dry: "Only this little guy—yes, he does resemble the King. Fascinating, isn't it?"

A woman cloaked entirely in a Wizard Robe held a crystal ball in her arms and calmly asked, "Lord Youming, this boy appeared suddenly, and the woman at his side is also an unfamiliar face."

The people attending the auction tonight likely wouldn't imagine it.

The Ruler of the You Ying Group, a titan of the Dark World, Lord Youming of Demigod Rank, sat atop the cabin's gallery, where the sea breeze swept through, gazing at the brightly lit bay at night.

"It's unnecessary for now."

Youming smiled: "Two little ones won't stir up much of a storm. Even if they belong to the Ether Association, it wouldn't prevent them from joining You Ying Group. When the time comes, I'll personally capture them and educate them."

"The King said he doesn't care about your origins, nor your secrets. As long as you do what you're told."

He added, "Just like you following me. Hel, why do you serve me?"

The woman named Hel lifted her head, caressing the crystal ball in her hands, and replied with a hint of fervor, "Of course, to follow you. I am captivated by your charisma."

"No, no, no, you're not captivated by my charisma; it's because of the King!"

Youming said seriously, "Everything I have, I learned from the King—do you understand?"

Hel froze for a moment and then said, "Understood."

Youming's role as the Ether Association's Vice President wasn't much of a secret—everyone knew.

He was also a devout believer in the Red King.

Many assumed he was personally groomed by the King, thus his undying gratitude.

But that wasn't the truth.

In reality, Youming had no direct connection to the King.

His seniority within the Dark World wasn't the oldest either.

Before defecting, Youming had been the Ji Family's adopted son.

Born into a prestigious and upright lineage, his background was formidable, his talents exceptional.

He carried high expectations.

However, the Ether Association indulged him excessively back then, neglecting ideological guidance. This allowed him to access classified files about the Red King. From that moment, his obsession spiraled out of control.

He even went as far as forsaking his position as Vice President of the Ether Association to defect to the Dark World.

Imitating the Red King's feats.

At this moment, Youming suddenly raised his hand, conjuring a weathered notebook from the Void.

He carefully opened it to a bookmarked page.

"It's strange—the King's prophecies have surged over the past two years, surpassing those of the past two hundred years combined. Is it because the true apocalypse is approaching?"

He remarked in awe, "Even though I don't know why the King wanted us to re-enact the Ancient Catastrophe at tonight's auction, what happens after midnight will surely be interesting."

The Demigod seemed almost possessed as he muttered to himself.

Hel glanced at the ancient notebook. Despite trying to contain herself, her eyes betrayed a deep greed.

In the Dark World, the notebook was known as a legendary Holy Object.

The Red King's notebook.

In many people's eyes, it was as precious as Mythical Weapons, even surpassing Breathing Techniques and Forbidden Spells in value.

Because it was the Red King's most valuable legacy before his death.

It accurately foretold major events for the two hundred years following his demise.

Why accurately? Because everything he had predicted thus far had come true.

As for Youming's zeal—before defecting, he had merely admired the Red King's philosophy.

But after seeing the notebook, he became the King's most fanatical follower—bar none.

Because one page contained these words:

"June 4, 2003—former Vice President of the Ether Association, codename Youming, assumes control of the You Ying Group."

This prophecy was left by the Red King two hundred years ago.

At that time, Youming hadn't even been born yet.

After the news spread, all Spirit Mediums and Divination Masters among the Ascenders went mad.

They all wanted to know how the Red King had managed it, but there has never been an answer.

"So that's it. It seems the Ether Association is also after the Ancient God's Blood. Makes sense—this thing can create Divine Servants. Perhaps it's a Supreme or Primordial's conspiracy. Even if it's not, an extra Divine Servant appearing out of thin air wouldn't be good for them either."

Youming said with interest, "Too bad I don't know who's coming tonight. I wonder if I'll get to practice a bit."

Hel asked, "Do you need divination?"

"Heh, do I need it?"

Chapter 422 - 209: I Also Have a Good Sister _3

Netherworld stood up, stretching his muscles lightly, and sneered: "Does anyone really think that something like Ancient God's Blood can be bought with money? Scholar once said, when an individual masters violence, order itself becomes a joke. Money, then, becomes the least valuable thing."

"No one truly loves money. What people truly love is freedom."

He gazed into the pitch-black sea, his deep eyes filled with yearning and madness: "In the real world, money can bring freedom. But when order collapses, only violence can make you free."

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The water in the sink gushed noisily.

Gu Jianlin had just stepped out of the bathroom, the bloodstains on his body washed clean, and he had changed into a fresh suit. Unfortunately, it was one provided by You Ying Group for the candidates, mostly generic sizes, and not particularly well-fitting.

Beside him was a black hard-shell case, faintly exuding a trace of blood scent.

This was the Moonstone Heart.

Youzhu's promotion was already within reach.

"I didn't expect you to hide so well,"

Tang Ling crossed her arms and leaned against the smooth, mirror-like marble wall, raising an eyebrow as she spoke: "Even I wouldn't dare to guarantee victory against those five guys without using Extreme Thunder."

Gu Jianlin explained: "Just luck, that's all."

It was a rather modest response.

Because reflected in the mirror were the fiery eyes of the red-haired girl, glowing with intense battle spirit.

Tang Ling was already pondering a sparring match with him.

"We're resting in the VIP area now. There's heavy security around, but tonight there's an auction for Ancient God's Blood. At that time, most of the security will likely be diverted to the auction site—that'll be our chance."

Gu Jianlin spoke using lip movements: "According to Director Li, the You Ying Group is a core force in the Dark World, providing services like vaults and banks to different factions. The Hidden Order's base, simply put, is a rented warehouse aboard this ship, code-named AIE-567."

He said: "I've already mapped out the escape route, so relax."

Scholar was already on standby nearby in a lifeboat.

Once this matter was settled, they'd jump into the sea and flee.

After all, this was You Ying Group territory, with experts aplenty.

The two Omega Sequence elites weren't foolish enough to seek death here.

"That said, we still need to prepare for the worst. If danger arises, don't hold back your power anymore. Even if it means revealing our identities, keeping alive comes first."

Gu Jianlin's lips moved slightly.

Tang Ling, however, remained completely unfazed, a hint of mockery flashing in her vermillion eyes. She snorted and replied in lip movements: "Don't worry, it's not that dire. The real show is still ahead tonight."

Gu Jianlin froze for a moment.

"The You Ying Group has spies in the Ether Association, and the Ether Association has spies in the You Ying Group."

Tang Ling shot him a deep look, her cherry-red lips shimmering seductively under the light: "The Ether Association won't let this Ancient God's Blood escape. They'll definitely send someone to grab it, and that will be the perfect moment for us to retreat."

She sneered: "After all, they're utterly ravenous for it."

"Ravenous? Are you sure you want to use that term?"

"What else? Like wolves and tigers?"

"Who taught you Chinese?"

"I haven't been to school since I was eight."

Gu Jianlin rubbed his forehead, finding this dialogue really nonsensical.

Still, he had underestimated the Association.

Tang Ling's understanding of the Ether Association indeed went far deeper than his.

The next moment, silver-white chains materialized around his wrist, extending to wrap around the girl's wrist.

Lock of Nonexistence, unlocked!

Their presence dropped to the absolute minimum.

"This Mythical Weapon of yours is pretty useful—Lock of Nonexistence, was it?"

A hint of surprise flickered in Tang Ling's beautiful eyes.

"Yeah, let's move,"

Gu Jianlin picked up the case containing the Moonstone Heart, and the two of them stealthily ascended to the second floor.

The first floor was the auction site.

The second floor housed the storage area.

Resources stored by various factions were kept here, each sealed behind stone gates engraved with alchemy matrices. Every door had infrared sensors to detect life signals.

If anyone tried to force entry, an alarm would trigger.

"What do we do?"

Tang Ling narrowed her elegant eyes, a murderous glint flashing in them: "I could break the door directly, but that would leave us less than thirty seconds to investigate before we'd need to flee in a hurry. If I use Extreme Thunder, I can summon Thunder to destroy this ship and buy you a few extra minutes."

She paused to consider, then said seriously: "But doing so would likely make us targets of the You Ying Group's pursuit. Netherworld might even come personally to catch us—it'd be thrilling."

Gu Jianlin turned to look at her, thinking, Sister, are you serious?

Your idea is far too crude and straightforward.

It doesn't really fit tonight's vibe.

No problem though, I've got another good sister.

The shadow behind Gu Jianlin began to tremble as the Candle Dragon Shadow revived once more!

Chapter 423 - 210: Candle Dragon Venerable and Kui Dragon Ancestor

The amber light illuminated the metal door plastered with talismans. A red laser scanner swept from top to bottom.

Gu Jianlin walked around the corner, stared at the door, and whispered with his lips: "AIE-567. This is the warehouse. There are two guards stationed nearby, their strength presumably not too formidable. I'll take them out quickly."

"Can't you use the barrier of the Lock of Nonexistence to make them ignore us?"

Tang Ling gestured.

Gu Jianlin shook his head: "What are you thinking? The Lock of Nonexistence erases your transcendent characteristics and diminishes the presence of a real person. On a crowded street, they wouldn't notice us because of all the people. But here, we need to tread carefully and evade their senses."

"The sounds we make and the commotion we cause will be subjectively ignored by them. Only with maximum liberation can we create a domain where others can't see us."

He explained: "However, within the domain, people can still see each other."

As he said this, his shadow had already vanished along with the Lock of Nonexistence.

Virtualization.

Space Jump!

In an instant, the two guards stationed by the door were struck hard on their necks, collapsing unconscious against the wall.

Simultaneously, his shadow, like a phantom that didn't exist, phased effortlessly through the infrared scanner, merged into the talisman-covered metal door, and triggered no movement.

Click.

The infrared beam shut down, and the talismans on the metal door dimmed.

The door was pushed open from the inside.

Perfect. They were able to deactivate these mechanisms from inside the warehouse.

"Quick, move, move."

Gu Jianlin and Tang Ling darted inside like two thieves, shutting the door swiftly.

Secret infiltration is the kind of thing you see plenty of in Hollywood blockbusters—but it was their first time doing it themselves.

In comparison, they found slashing their way through more straightforward.

Within the dark warehouse, Gu Jianlin quickly felt out the light switch and flipped it on.

Click.

In that instant, Tang Ling suddenly took a step back and bumped into his back.

Gu Jianlin froze for a moment, noticing the tension in her slender body. She was even trembling slightly.

For someone with her detached, indifferent personality, this was exceedingly rare.

"Turn around and take a look. You'll understand."

Tang Ling said softly.

Gu Jianlin turned and looked, and his pupils quaked.

The sight illuminated by the lights was an altar surrounded by ancient stone walls carved with patterns of ghosts and gods. Rows of pill furnaces filled with ashes encircled the area.

The enormous Eight Trigrams altar had staircases forged from bluestone on all four sides and, atop them, lay an Eight Trigrams array.

At the array's core, there were four empty coffins.

And above the dome hung countless coffins in dense clusters.

These coffins were transparent, and inside them lay an incalculable number of corpses.

Their faces were youthful, their expressions eerie.

Gu Jianlin and Tang Ling exchanged a glance. This scene instantly reminded them of the underwater palace at Black Cloud City!

Though that place had been extensively excavated and surveyed multiple times and even flattened by warriors of the Dawn Combat Sequence, most dangers had long been eradicated, yet one mystery remained unsolved.

That mystery being—where had Xu Fu gone?

The Qilin Immortal Palace was an Ancient God Realm, whose master was the Qilin Venerable.

Two and a half thousand years ago, after the apocalyptic battle, Xu Fu personally witnessed miracles, received blessings from the gods, and then built his tomb at the seabed's depths, becoming the Gatekeeper.

Yet now, the Gatekeeper was gone—neither living nor dead.

Even after the Qilin Immortal Palace fully opened and major forces worldwide entered the Ancient God Realm to explore it, the Gatekeeper remained missing—a truly baffling situation.

After all, there wasn't just one Gatekeeper.

Xu Fu hadn't gone alone—he brought three thousand child boys and girls.

So many people couldn't possibly vanish into thin air.

"Uncle Mu mentioned once that someone in the underwater palace claimed to have seen shadows of the child boys and girls, along with an elderly figure resembling Xu Fu in his Daoist robe roaming in the darkness. While it remains but a legend, it's hardly baseless."

Gu Jianlin murmured quietly: "Now, we've found it."

Tang Ling's eyes turned solemn. She circled the altar, lowered her gaze to inspect the pill furnaces, then took in the scenes depicted on the surrounding rock walls, staring at the ghostly images carved there.

From her pocket, she retrieved a single-lens monocle and slipped it on, the lens instantly fogging over.

This was evidently a divination-equipped device.

"This is an enormous alchemy matrix. In ancient terms, it's simply an array. It may be a priest's ritual array, but I've never seen such a sinister configuration. If this truly is the so-called Penglai Ascension Array from the demigod servant you subdued, then it represents forbidden human transmutation techniques."

Her gaze turned icy: "From ancient times to today, this has always been taboo."

This drifted into Gu Jianlin's blind spot: "What is human transmutation exactly?"

"In simple terms, it's the use of living humans as sacrifices to construct an alchemy matrix."

Tang Ling pointed to the wall paintings: "Look."

Gu Jianlin raised his head instinctively, his brow furrowing and an unpleasant chill running down his spine.

The murals on the wall depicted living humans being thrown into alchemy furnaces, surrounded by ghosts and gods chanting blood-drenched spells. From the flames emerged swirling smoke, coalescing into faintly human forms.

"That's human transmutation—a secret technique abolished during the Pre-Qin Period. It forcibly refines living humans thrown into alchemy furnaces, stripping their bodies and extracting their souls. Using special forbidden techniques, it condenses their souls into a unified spiritual state, thereby evolving them into a new form of life."

Chapter 424 - 210: Candle Dragon Venerable and Kui Dragon Ancestor_2

Tang Ling adjusted her monocle, gazing intently at the patterns on the rock wall, and murmured softly, "But this new life isn't evolution—it's merely a stepping stone for someone else's evolution."

Gu Jianlin looked at the subsequent murals and suddenly felt a chill of terror.

Because the ghost shadows in the mist all had dragon-like features!

Candle Dragon Clan!

Gu Jianlin's first thought was the Candle Dragon Clan.

"So this so-called 'Penglai Ascension Array' is actually an ancient evil technique?"

He frowned and asked, "This is far too bloody—Has Xu Fu gone mad?"

Afterward, even the Scholar had reviewed "Xu Fu's Record."

Yet the description of this array was no more than a passing mention.

"Xu Fu's Record" holds its greatest value in describing the deepest tomb within the Qilin Immortal Palace, along with documenting the natural disasters and man-made calamities he witnessed upon reaching the East Sea, scenes akin to apocalyptic destruction, and some accounts of the Ancient God Realm.

Tang Ling paused for a moment, then shook her head, saying, "Not necessarily; that's precisely why I find it so odd. When the Qilin Immortal Palace appeared in our time, I asked my teacher about the history during the Qin Dynasty. To be honest, according to 'The Emperor's Chronicles,' Xu Fu was an extraordinarily high-level Ascender."

She paused again, adding, "He even faced ancestor-level Ancient Gods yet remained untainted."

Gu Jianlin was momentarily stunned.

"It's said that this human transmutation technique was personally abolished by Xu Fu, who was remarkably loyal to the Emperor. Over two millennia ago, amid Emperor's relentless campaigns, he even confronted an Ancient Supreme, draining too much of his own life force. Consequently, Xu Fu volunteered to journey to the East Sea to seek a secret medicine for prolonging the Emperor's life."

Tang Ling elaborated, "Moreover, at that time, the Qilin Venerable had already exhausted the entire East Sea's Power of Nature. Natural disasters and man-made calamities were rampant; many Holy Land Level individuals perished there. Yet Xu Fu insisted on heading east, true to his character—placing life and death beyond concern. Of course, this doesn't rule out that he may have succumbed to madness or demonic possession in his later years."

Gu Jianlin pondered for a moment, saying, "If he encountered the Candle Dragon Venerable, he wouldn't have had much choice."

For that ancient monster was undeniably the pinnacle of two species.

Undoubtedly the strongest.

Running into her? That level of bad luck would be astronomical.

"Indeed, and Xu Fu serving as a Gatekeeper is quite intriguing."

Tang Ling, with her scholarly brilliance, gave him a meaningful look: "Remember when we were in the Returning Burial Forest? We found tree burials from the Han Dynasty, didn't we?"

Gu Jianlin nodded, "Yes, the Qilin Immortal Palace was sealed during the Qin Dynasty, yet the Ancient God Realm contains tombs from the Han Dynasty. This means that over two thousand years, outsiders have entered."

Tang Ling's eyes grew serious. "Taixu once calculated that the odds of accidentally falling into dimensional turbulence and entering the Qilin Immortal Palace are less than one in a trillion. I've never done the math fully, but from the Han Dynasty to today, it's hard to say whether Earth has even had that many people born. And the Qilin Immortal Palace contains more than one post-Qin-era tomb."

"Which suggests that if Xu Fu achieved immortality, then over the course of several millennia, he did not fulfill his Gatekeeper duties. Instead, he allowed wave after wave of people inside."

She paused again: "These people were all human."

Gu Jianlin suddenly thought of something.

It was "Xu Fu's Record!"

Xu Fu had even left behind a specific map, guiding people directly to the deepest part of the Qilin Immortal Palace!

Turns out, he did it intentionally.

Luckily, that map fell into the hands of the Pharmacist—a complete novice.

Otherwise, if a competent or intelligent person got hold of it, disaster would surely have struck.

Someone like Old Gu, for example.

The first encounter with Ancient Divine Language didn't kill anyone, by sheer luck.

But any mishandling—he'd have been doomed.

Or perhaps, after killing the first wave, more would come.

In that scenario, Gu Jianlin's life story might have been cut short by Chapter Four.

"Hmm, this assumption is quite logical. If we say Xu Fu, during his eastern expedition, witnessed the battle between the Candle Dragon Venerable and the Qilin Venerable, he had already achieved his goal by witnessing the divine miracle—and surviving it."

Gu Jianlin spoke softly: "Yet he ended up being detained by the Candle Dragon Venerable and forced to become the Gatekeeper. Perhaps he didn't disappear voluntarily but was compelled. He wanted to leave but couldn't."

Tang Ling nodded: "Exactly, that's what happened."

Gu Jianlin remarked sincerely, "Your erudition is truly impressive. I am in awe."

Hearing those compliments, Tang Ling's vermilion eyes suddenly brightened significantly. She acknowledged modestly with a gentle "Mm": "But his persistent act of letting people in still raises questions. What's the real motive behind it?"

Their gaze shifted to the third mural.

This mural depicted a grotesque figure covered in scales, taking a deep breath.

Those mist-like souls were consumed into its body.

Then the creature began to convulse wildly, bellowing skyward.

"As suspected, these souls are merely supplementary elixirs."

Gu Jianlin expressed disgust: "It's utterly revolting."

Tang Ling agreed with a sneer: "All for evolution, of course. Look at those souls—they all exhibit features of the Candle Dragon Clan. And that grotesque creature consuming the souls is clearly on the verge of evolution. I suspect it's because the evolution of the sacrificial subject was incomplete, so they needed those souls to filter the Ancient God's power."

Gu Jianlin suddenly realized, "And then consume these souls afterward?"

Tang Ling clicked her tongue and walked away: "Something like that."

They arrived at the final mural.

This mural depicted an all-encompassing black dragon, coiled at the edge of the sky, overlooking the Azure Sea.

Chapter 425 - 210: Candle Dragon Venerable and Kui Dragon Ancestor_3

And out at sea, a graceful and enchanting silhouette faintly appeared.

A swarm of dragons churned within the deep ocean, bowing in reverence to her.

"What is this?"

Tang Ling, even with her monocle, was unable to divine the answer.

"Candle Dragon Venerable."

Gu Jianlin softly responded.

Tang Ling's beautiful eyes flashed with a hint of shock: "Candle Dragon Venerable? Candle Dragon Venerable is female?"

Gu Jianlin said nothing, which was as good as confirming.

Not only was she female, but also stunningly attractive.

If you're not afraid to die, I could take you inside to have a look.

You could take a few more glances too.

Though the two of us might then end up buried together in a coffin.

The contents of this mural were somewhat horrifying, for from the heavens descended a meteor.

Mighty dragons were struck by the meteor, collapsing into the depths of the sea.

"Looking at this mural, what comes to your mind?"

Tang Ling muttered softly: "Candle Dragon Venerable sealed the Ancient God of the Candle Dragon Clan inside the Immortal Palace?"

Gu Jianlin fell silent as he gazed at the dragon depicted.

Though the mural was crude, he still recognized features of the dragon.

The dragon had just one foot!

No horns!

Kui!

The Kui Dragon Ancestor!

Judging by appearances, the Kui Dragon Ancestor was forcibly sealed within the Qilin Immortal Palace!

This implied that the Ancestor might not have been all that loyal to his Master!

"I think I understand something now."

A flicker of peculiar light danced in Gu Jianlin's eyes: "Candle Dragon Venerable and Kui Dragon Ancestor might not have been on the same side. When Candle Dragon Venerable sealed the Qilin Immortal Palace, in addition to suppressing the Qilin Venerable, there could have been another purpose. Kui Dragon Ancestor might have been forcibly left behind by her to guard something. She didn't fully trust Xu Fu."

Tang Ling furrowed her brows: "Fragments of the Qilin Wedge?"

Gu Jianlin disagreed: "Yes, but it's also possible there's something else."

Yet, he had a persistent premonition.

Things weren't as simple as they seemed.

"Looking at it now, whatever Xu Fu left behind was acquired by The Order of the Hidden."

Tang Ling walked to the altar's center, gazing at the four empty coffins, and remarked: "The source of that tremendous power they wielded likely came from the sacrifices. That's why Director Li said he obtained five sacrifices. With five sacrifices, even a novice could achieve overwhelming power."

Gu Jianlin moved beside her, looking up at the coffins suspended above the mountain, shaking his head: "Utter madness. The Order of the Hidden's hideout is probably more than just this one. Storing these items within the You Ying Group was likely because they had a traitor here, pulling off this blind-under-the-lamp strategy without anyone noticing."

Just then, his expression changed dramatically: "Someone's here."

Through his Life Perception, he detected an eerie life rhythm intruding.

It was unsettling, like the grating sound of a blade against a chalkboard.

"At this time, shouldn't they be auctioning the Ancient God's Blood?"

Tang Ling gave him a glance: "Let's not count on luck, shall we?"

Gu Jianlin agreed with her assessment; whoever came now was undoubtedly someone from The Order of the Hidden.

Director Li was already dead, after all.

To be thorough, The Order of the Hidden would certainly send people here to investigate this hideout.

"Now we have only two options."

Gu Jianlin spoke impassively: "Either we escape immediately—we've already gathered plenty of clues today. Or, we take a calculated risk and try to leave them behind, at least to confirm their identity. What do you think, Senior Sister?"

Tang Ling narrowed her vermillion-colored eyes, lifted her chin, and answered coldly: "Of course, we leave them behind."

Chapter 426 - 211: The Order of the Hidden, Surfaces!

At the auction scene in the Holy Temple, the screen displayed a drop of golden blood.

In an instant, the entire hall fell deathly silent.

Only the sound of urgent, heavy breathing echoed, resembling someone who had been single for decades laying eyes on a naked peerless beauty, or a traveler in the desert stumbling upon an oasis.

This was redemption, and also hope.

"Everyone, get ready. There's no need to spend a fortune to outbid for the Ancient God's Blood, nor to fight them in the Octagonal Cage. Just target the final buyer and strike directly."

An elderly man on the brink of death sat in a secluded corner, wearing a mask. His pale hair draped down as his voice resonated in everyone's mind: "Our subordinates don't have any candidates who can compete. Even if they did, they wouldn't be as strong as that person under Third Master just now. There's no hope."

If this old man's identity were revealed, it would undoubtedly cause a massive uproar.

Li Qingsong.

One of the Judgement Court's nine great saints.

"Who exactly is this person?"

Instructor Zhu sat beside him with arms crossed, asking in a deep voice, "Why does it feel like he's stronger than our Omega?"

Instructor Wan, with eyes like bronze bells, stared: "No idea, he looks unfamiliar."

"There's no record of this person in Taixu's archives."

Li Qingsong rasped, "I never expected such talent to exist within the You Ying Group. If possible, try to approach him and see if he's willing to defect. If he isn't, then kill him early."

He paused: "In our Omega Sequence, the number of individuals capable of one-vs-five combat is not many."

Instructor Wan and Instructor Zhu exchanged glances, both seeing the gravity in the other's eyes.

"Once we're back, we need to intensify the enhancement of our Omegas, including increasing the allocation of resources."

That young man named Gu Ting had already made them feel immense pressure.

No one associated him with their chair killer.

The reasons were many.

Gu Jianlin had preemptively taken medication to interfere and alter his Life Rhythm, along with performing disguise and camouflage.

He also refrained from exposing his Spiritual Body during fights.

The only notable feature was the black Ghost Fire on his forehead, which looked somewhat familiar.

But many Divines have methods to change the color of their Ghost Fire, so it didn't mean much.

Moreover, they had confirmed that the chair killer was training in a base apartment, providing him with an alibi.

Additionally, they didn't believe the chair killer had such strength.

Lastly, as a disciple of the King of Qing, he would have to be insane to come to the You Ying Group.

"Shouheng, are the combat deployments ready?"

Li Qingsong asked in a deep voice.

"Combat deployments are complete. According to Taixu's calculations, our chance of obtaining the Ancient God's Blood exceeds sixty-five percent. I will patrol the venue before the auction ends to ensure no mishaps." Councilman Zhang, a trusted confidant groomed by the Saint and a core member of the Judgement Court, replied.

He sat in the audience wearing a white suit and a lifelike human skin mask.

He appeared every bit the aristocratic youth of high society.

As usual, today's operation was led by the Judgement Court.

The Omega Sequence served as auxiliary support.

Outside the Forbidden Zone near the Bren Hill, they had already deployed a large number of Omega Sequence forces.

The Omega Sequence remained reluctant, unwilling to cooperate with the Judgement Court.

But they had no choice.

Headquarters' orders were absolute.

The Ancient God's Blood was far too important.

Even the investigation into Director Li's assassination had been temporarily shelved.

Li Qingsong nodded in approval: "Go on, you're in charge of controlling the scene tonight."

"Understood, Saint."

Councilman Zhang stood, turned, and disappeared into the shadows.

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Footsteps grew closer in the corridor outside the metal door.

The lights within the altar had already gone out.

In the darkness, it was silent as death, as if even heartbeats and breaths had faded away.

Gu Jianlin hid behind the door, adjusting his breathing to enter combat readiness.

"Nervous?"

Tang Ling stood opposite him, gripping the Extreme Thunder Great Sword wrapped in bandages with both hands. Though she used this Mythical Weapon, as long as she didn't summon Thunder, it could serve as an ordinary heavy sword.

Despite their intentions to hold off the opposition, both felt uncertain.

Who knew what rank this Order of the Hidden member belonged to?

Moreover, there was also the mysterious Penglai Ascension Array enhancing them.

These two reckless souls felt uneasy.

So, the two of them hashed out a plan and prepared in advance.

What kind of preparation?

A small contraption was rigged to the top of the metal doorframe, holding a Pill Furnace.

If someone pushed the door open, the furnace would drop and smash their head, with ashes smearing their face.

But that wasn't all.

Tang Ling also dismantled her phone and built a small device, which she placed on the floor.

If stepped on, it would electrocute the perpetrator.

Ridiculous as it sounded, this was the only trick they could come up with.

After all, both were known for being brash and had never resorted to such underhanded tactics.

Their pride typically prevented them from using sneaky methods.

But against the Order of the Hidden, no tricks were off the table.

"Not scared, really."

Gu Jianlin replied calmly: "My teacher said he wouldn't intervene against Fourth Rank and below combat strength. But if I were to face someone above Fourth Rank, he wouldn't watch me die."

Tang Ling looked astonished: "You believe in your teacher that much?"

Gu Jianlin responded with a quiet "Mm."

Suddenly, the footsteps stopped at the metal door.

Beep. Beep.

It was the sound of a keycard being swiped.

The infrared scanners ceased operation, the talisman on the metal door remained inactive, and the lock clicked open.

Someone began to push the door. The Pill Furnace above the frame immediately plummeted down!

In that instant, that person reacted—but instead of retreating, they charged straight into the dark altar with such blinding speed it felt like a violent gust of wind.

Divine Speed Force!

This person followed the Ghost Slayer Path!

Within Gu Jianlin's profile, only a bloodied back towering like a giant came into view. The figure was immense, seeming capable of piercing the heavens!

At least Fifth Rank!

Without hesitation, Tang Ling lunged, her sword slicing through the air with a wailing cry like weeping ghosts, striking down fiercely!

A sharp crack rang out.

The ridiculous trap actually worked.

The mysterious figure was electrocuted, their entire body paralyzed momentarily.

Boom!

A jet-black bell floated midair, emanating dark ripples and a ceaseless hum!

Gu Jianlin raised his hand, his expression cold as he uttered, "Die!"

Splurt!

Blood streamed from the mysterious figure's seven orifices as the curse took effect remotely!

They were consistently immobilized!

Tang Ling seized the opportunity, slashing downward with her sword—its Sword Qi howling with the chill of winter winds!

For a fleeting moment, the mysterious figure broke free from the bell's reverberations, dragging their slightly numbed body to leap aside, unable to complete their Virtualization in such a short span!

Bang!

Sword Qi erupted, shattering the mysterious figure's mask, and along with it, the human skin mask they wore. Blood streaked their face, spraying droplets everywhere.

At the same time, they completed their Virtualization, darting into the darkness.

With a booming crash, pale Divine Sacrificial Fire ignited on the ground, illuminating the dark hall.

The mysterious man's face was fully exposed in the light.

"Who are you to dare set foot here?"

He wiped the blood trickling down his face, his gaze shadowed, as he coldly intoned, "Does the Ether Association realize the price they must pay for assaulting a Councilman?"

Tang Ling reversed her grip, driving the Extreme Thunder Great Sword into the ground. Her vermillion eyes contracted sharply, like those of a cat caught in bright light, reflecting the bloodied, chiseled countenance before her.

Gu Jianlin observed that face, sinking into silence.

In that moment, he suddenly understood many things.

Back during the Black Cloud City Forbidden Zone incident, the Judgement Court's Saint had issued a sweeping purge order, yet somehow the Yan family had enough sway with the upper echelons to capture Uncle Mu alive.

Clearly, someone had nodded in approval.

In the West Port Forbidden Zone incident, it was again the Judgement Court abruptly taking command of the battleground.

Their intent? Likely to eliminate specific individuals.

Even Gu Jianlin himself had come under sniper attack during that time.

In the Returning Burial Forest, why had the top ten Omegas suddenly been ambushed?

Where had those traitors come from?

Strangest of all, the Judgement Court, who had been targeting Gu Jianlin extensively, suddenly fell silent after his return from the forest. Even after he physically assaulted a superior, no accountability was demanded.

It all made sense now.

The man before him was part of the Judgement Court.

Councilman Zhang.

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The moonlight was like water, illuminating the shimmering sea's surface.

Huai Yin sat in a wheelchair, holding a fishing rod like a serene old fisherman, his gaze calm.

"Teacher, Junior Brother seems to have found some clues."

Standing behind him, Jing Ci spoke faintly.

"Mm, your master handed him the clues. With his skills, catching the tail of the Order of the Hidden shouldn't be difficult."

Huai Yin suddenly remarked, "To be honest, I had hesitated at first and didn't want him stepping into the Dark World."

Jing Ci arched a brow: "Because of the Red King?"

"Not entirely. It's mainly because of his personality; he always shoulders everything himself."

Huai Yin murmured softly, "But sometimes, fate cannot be avoided."

Jing Ci asked earnestly, "Do you know who the true master of the Order of the Hidden is?"

After a long pause.

Huai Yin sighed heavily: "If I knew, it wouldn't have ended this way two hundred years ago. There's no point in investigating further—once friends turning into foes one by one, there aren't many old acquaintances left. Finding out another would only hurt more."

"But still, I can't help feeling indignant sometimes."

He chuckled faintly, "Sometimes I even think, perhaps I should have destroyed the Ether Association back then."

Jing Ci shook his head: "If you had done that, wouldn't you and the President have become mortal enemies?"

"Perhaps."

Huai Yin lifted his gaze toward the pitch-black sky.

The moon shined brightly, scattering stars rarely seen.

Yet, within the infinite abyss of darkness, one could almost make out cold, murderous starlight glimmering faintly.

Chapter 427 - 212: The King of Qing is the Heavenly Destiny

In that fleeting moment, the overwhelming killing intent engulfed the entire altar.

Because Gu Jianlin had come to understand far too many things, he could no longer suppress his thirst for blood. Even the Black Qilin deep within his consciousness opened a sliver of its golden eyes, with the fire of divine wrath igniting in the depths of its pupils.

Nightmare Master.

Mu Feng.

Tang Zijing.

Gu Ci'an.

On the surface, these events appeared to be orchestrated by The Order of the Hidden, but all of them were connected to one organization.

That organization was the Judgement Court.

"The Blood Moon Slaughter involving Gu Ci'an was categorically pinned on him as a case of corruption by the Judgement Court. Why were Uncle Mu and the others purged and taken away during the Black Cloud City incident? And during the West Port incident, as soon as the Nightmare Master appeared, the Judgement Court rushed to clean up the scene. Even Tang Zijing became a taboo topic within the Ether Association."

The answers have now been found.

It's just unclear how many members of The Order of the Hidden are embedded within the Judgement Court.

Maybe just a handful of high-ranking individuals.

Maybe they already make up a significant portion.

There's even an outrageous possibility—that the Judgement Court itself *is* The Order of the Hidden!

Of course, rationally speaking, this probability is quite low.

"Should we go all out?"

Tang Ling spoke each word deliberately. Her vermilion hair had already loosened, cascading down her back like a waterfall. Within her scarlet eyes burned a ruthless determination, while the glimmers of steel-like hues flickered faintly across her snow-white skin.

She was straightforward.

If they were to unleash their full strength, their identities would undoubtedly be exposed.

At present, there was still no concrete evidence proving Councilman Zhang's affiliation with The Order of the Hidden.

Even if there was, who knew how many more people in the Judgement Court were connected to The Order of the Hidden.

If they sought to destroy the Judgement Court, it would nearly be an impossible feat.

Because the Judgement Court's ruler was Vice President Rhein.

And he was already marked as the next President!

Even if they were to kill Councilman Zhang now, doing so would likely provoke a hunt from the Saints.

If this task failed, their eventual fate might truly be eternal damnation.

Their teacher, perhaps, could manage to protect them.

But those connected to them?

Wouldn't be so lucky.

At that moment, Councilman Zhang moved like a fleeting ghost, holding a long, slender tachi. He appeared behind the girl without warning, ruthlessly slashing at her neck, aiming for a single strike to sever her head!

This was Fifth Rank-level Divine Speed Force, a swiftness almost impossible to catch.

Coupled with Space Jump and the impenetrable Dimension Slash, his assassination skills were pushed to the absolute limit!

At the very brink of catastrophe, Gu Jianlin raised his hand and unleashed the Ghost Curse Technique as his body visibly weakened at an alarming pace. His voice was cold and hoarse: "Kill him. At any cost."

The curse took effect instantly across the void, causing Councilman Zhang to bleed from all seven apertures, reeling from agonizing pain.

That strike, naturally, couldn't land.

Tang Ling retreated swiftly, avoiding the blow. Frost-white horns sprouted atop her head, while faintly glowing ethereal wings flickered behind her. She entered the evolutionary state of the Bai Ze Venerable bloodline!

The Sword Sect Path at zero-tier grants the ability of Sword Qi and Sword Bone.

The former transforms intent into Sword Qi, while the latter uses the blade as a bone, providing extraordinary defense!

First Rank Sword Master, the next level, harnesses Sword Momentum—a technique to borrow the force of all things while striking, massively enhancing the lethality of attacks.

Second-order Sword Cultivators attain the ability of Heart Eye at this stage, enabling them to foresee innumerable possibilities and strike with nearly infallible precision—though a slim chance remains to evade through other means.

Third-Order Sword Obsession allows one to accumulate Sword Intent, with prolonged charge yielding exponentially devastating power.

Fourth-Order Sword Spirit permits the explosion of Sword Intent outward, Sword Qi sweeping across the battlefield like a raging storm.

All abilities are utterly enhanced!

"Divine Servant? No... this is autonomous evolution!"

Councilman Zhang's gaze turned chilling, his skin revealing strange markings of countless child boys and girls. Words materialized on his tongue as he spoke, sending an inexplicable wave of dread through the air!

Jiu!

At the same time, he reversed his grip on the blade, adopting a solemn, bloodthirsty stance, preparing to unleash a powerful draw-cut!

"Buy me some time!"

Tang Ling tightly gripped the Extreme Thunder Great Sword. Sword Intent swirled around her like the roaring currents of a sea tide, brewing a catastrophic energy that caused the entire altar to shudder violently. A piercing, razor-sharp aura soared skyward!

The white cloth wrapping the Extreme Thunder Great Sword was torn apart, its cracked blade shimmering with brimstone lightning!

Meanwhile, Gu Jianlin stepped in front of her, his forehead alight with pitch-black Ghost Fire. Four golden flames bathed Ghost Hands roared into existence, gathering dark particles to erect the Qi Realm!

Black horns of nobility emerged atop his head, with ink-black, eerie markings upon his face—a clear evolutionary state!

Rumble!

It sounded like a thunderclap.

"So it's you two? Is living too dull for you?"

Councilman Zhang's pupils flickered with a trace of astonishment, which swiftly morphed into venomous bloodlust as he sneered, "I didn't expect the ones who killed Director Li to be you. It seems we underestimated you. You really managed to uncover this place. But what difference does that make? It's no better than a mayfly trying to topple a tree."

His gaze, filled with killing intent, carried blatant scorn: "Even if you escape, it's pointless now."

He knew the secret the two harbored—autonomous evolution.

Once exposed, the Ether Association would no longer offer them refuge.

On the other hand, he possessed countless ways to silence them.

After the shock came realization, and finally it all transformed into unrelenting murderous intent!

As his voice faded, silence descended.

Time sank into the quagmire-like quietude, as the world plummeted into the abyss without a whisper. An ominous grayish-white haze spread across the realm, freezing everything it touched within an invisible domain!

Chapter 428 - 212: The King of Qing is the Heavenly Destiny_2

Councilman Zhang's figure flickered for an instant, and he appeared before the two of them.

Drawing his blade, the edge gleamed with a chilling light.

Dimension Slash!

But just then—BOOM!

The Space Freeze domain suddenly shattered.

He failed to notice his back.

A peerlessly elegant silhouette cast a cold and disdainful glance at him, an expression of aloofness in her eyes.

It was as if she were looking at an ant.

Shock flashed through Councilman Zhang's pupils.

"Surprised?"

Gu Jianlin raised both hands, the four Ghost Hands behind him suddenly released pitch-black flashes!

BOOM!

Black flashes erupted, but were effortlessly torn apart by fleetingly cold light!

Even the space was shredded, leaving an appalling rift.

Behind the tear, a glimpse of the primal darkness of the universe emerged faintly!

"Move aside!"

Tang Ling barked sharply, stepping forward, wielding thunderous light!

Sword Qi, sword momentum, Heart Eye, Sword Intent—

Combined as one!

A faint sound of thunder resonated, as if the heavens themselves were enraged.

Tang Ling's sword gathered momentum for an instant, brewing the energy of an Azure Sea collapsing. When unleashed, it was like a tidal wave attacking the heavens, the erupting Sword Qi surging forth like a sea tide, utterly inescapable!

On top of that, lightning entwined the Sword Qi, bringing unparalleled destructive power!

At the brink of life and death, Councilman Zhang retreated hastily under the boost of Divine Speed Force.

Virtualization was too late, yet he felt that no matter how fast he was, evasion was impossible!

The Sword Qi pursued him relentlessly!

At the final moment, a fissure suddenly split open on his forehead, revealing a pale eye. It emitted a bizarre light that shone upon the advancing Sword Qi!

CRACK!

The Sword Qi petrified inch by inch, shattering explosively!

Mythical Weapon—Medusa's Eyes!

Next came the deafening cry of the blade!

The tachi in his hand trembled violently, as if countless souls imprisoned in hell were screaming in agony. The void itself quaked madly, rippling countless waves, nearly tearing apart.

Gu Jianlin and Tang Ling's spirituality trembled under the influence, like rippling water, unable to stay still.

The sword naturally collapsed too!

Fifth-Order Moon Master's ability—Soul Blade Sound!

CRACK!

A vast gash was torn across Councilman Zhang's chest by the Sword Qi, charred black by the scorching thunder!

Despite unleashing all his measures, he still ended up injured!

This was the power of the Sword Tomb lineage—Tang Ling indeed possessed the combat prowess of Fifth Rank.

BOOM!

The ground cracked.

Gu Jianlin dove forward, shrouded by a peerlessly elegant shadow, attempting to seize a killing blow!

"Hah."

Councilman Zhang, clutching his wound, flashed a strange smile, abruptly darting out of the warehouse.

He pressed the instrument in his hand and declared, "Operation Bren Hill officially begins! I am the operation commander Zhang Shouheng. Encountering enemy attack on the second deck of Bren Hill's cabin, requesting support!"

Afterwards, he turned and retreated swiftly, vanishing like an apparition around the corridor corner.

"Chase."

Tang Ling said coldly, "He must be killed."

Her breath abruptly shifted rhythm, syncing with the harmony of heaven and earth!

Breathing Technique·Distanceless Realm!

Once the breath altered, her form seemed encircled by invisible winds.

Gu Jianlin's eyes flashed with surprise; the domain enveloped even him.

Their bodies instantly felt lighter, their running speed merging seamlessly with the wind.

Inconceivably fast!

BOOM!

An explosion sounded from the first deck of the cabin, causing countless ripples in Life Rhythm.

It seemed the Ancient God's Blood had appeared, triggering a direct scramble!

"Requesting support, evolvers have appeared on Bren Hill's second cabin deck, wielding the power of the Evolution Path, highly dangerous!" Councilman Zhang's voice echoed from the corridor's end, as if sneering coldly.

This was the method of The Order of the Hidden.

They infiltrated every organization, clawing their way to positions of power, holding absolute authority.

Truth could be twisted to lies.

And in this very moment, Gu Jianlin and Tang Ling felt their blood run cold.

A supremely powerful presence descended from above.

Mercilessly locking onto them!

Sure enough, they had truly drawn the Saint from the Judgement Court.

Gu Jianlin felt as if he had fallen into an icy abyss, his body gradually freezing. His blood felt cold, as though someone somewhere in the shadows had cast an unyielding glance, locking onto his back.

Tang Ling was no exception—her proud and aloof face turned ashen as if frozen. Their movements slowed; icy frost formed with every step, leaving them almost immobile!

BOOM!

It felt as though they had fallen straight into hell, the overwhelming pressure nearly stopping their hearts.

This was the colossal, crushing might of the Holy Land Level—like the heavens collapsing and the earth tearing apart, an invisible force field locking onto them completely, its killing intent as fathomless as the ocean, almost suffocating their souls!

At this moment, these two arrogant and fearless rebels lost their fighting spirit.

No escape.

This was absolute rank suppression.

No matter how talented they were, they stood no chance against the Holy Land Level's pressure.

Thump-thump!

Heartbeats frenzied.

Cold sweat poured.

"What do we do?"

Tang Ling asked softly.

Gu Jianlin remained expressionless, showing no sign he felt he might die.

For he trusted his teacher and senior apprentice brother.

"Don't be afraid, keep chasing."

At that moment, a new message arrived on his phone.

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A deafening crash!

The Bren Hill trembled violently, the massive cruise ship almost capsizing amidst the shaking.

Chapter 429 - 212: The King of Qing, that is Heavenly Destiny_3

Countless tourists panicked and fled.

On the deck of the massive ship, an elderly man with snow-white hair shot into the sky, suspended in mid-air like a Divine being. Wherever he passed, all was frozen, ice blossoms and jade trees blooming into existence.

In the heavens, a blizzard surged wildly. He bathed in snow, his pupils a stark white.

One of the nine great Saints of the Judgement Court—Li Qingsong.

At that moment, two figures shrouded in moon-white robes descended from the skies, crashing onto the deck!

Boom!

Countless tourists were instantly blasted into misty sprays of blood, their bodies reduced to mangled flesh.

A silver-haired youth raised his hand and casually clenched his fingers.

Bang!

The guards rushing in were immediately pulverized into clouds of blood.

Another of the nine great Saints of the Judgement Court—Tianzhou.

Rumble!

Massive columns of seawater erupted skyward, forming immense, arrow-like torrents, poised to rain destruction.

The aura of annihilation brewed, thick and suffocating.

"No trace of the Netherworld."

A black-haired woman stood on the deck, surveying her surroundings with a cold gaze as she spoke indifferently.

Yet another of the nine great Saints of the Judgement Court—Xingye.

This time, the Judgement Court deployed three Saints, each of them unmistakably Holy Land Level warriors of the Seventh Rank.

"Shouheng has been attacked. Deal with the two rats that dared ambush him, and seize the Ancient God's Blood!"

Li Qingsong stretched out his hand, casually gripping the air. The entirety of the ship, Bren Hill, froze into nothing but an enormous lump of ice.

With nonchalant steps, he entered, his gaze domineering and imposing.

Behind him, Tianzhou and Xingye, the two Saints, walked into the frozen cabin, their hands clasped behind their backs and faces cold as the frozen sea.

The cabins echoed with blood-curdling screams.

Explosions rang out without pause.

Where Li Qingsong passed, everything froze. The power of a Holy Sanctuary Level Ascender blanketed the entire sea region, and even its turbulent waves were locked in ice; amidst the sound of shattering, ice blossoms bloomed amidst jade-like trees!

A Seventh Rank Heavenly Master!

While Tianzhou and Xingye stood calmly, high above them, countless stars coalesced into a cosmic storm, rubbing together to generate tremendous heat.

Seventh Rank Divines!

The eerie sound of annihilation roared across the deck.

The world quickly descended into an icy Hell.

Even through the cabin walls, Gu Jianlin could see vast, towering shadows rising skyward—one resembling the form of a Giant, the Heavenly Master; the others, enigmas akin to Ancient Gods, the Divines!

His blood ran cold, his heart pounded wildly, and his very soul quivered.

Tang Ling's entire body was frozen stiff, as if trapped in an abyss of endless frost. Her voice was drowned by the howling winds: "What do we do...?"

Gu Jianlin's breaths altered suddenly, a chilling brilliance igniting around him!

Breathing Technique·Realm of Freedom!

Boom!

"Run!"

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On the seaside highway, Jing Ci strolled leisurely, pushing a wheelchair.

"Teacher, my junior has already tracked down the Order of the Hidden's trail."

He raised his head to gaze at the moonlight gracing the heavens and chuckled softly: "As the apocalypse draws near, their activities have intensified. There's a saying, 'If you walk by the river often, you'll inevitably wet your shoes.' If they did nothing, no one could ever uncover them. The more they move, the more flaws arise."

Huai Yin, seated in the wheelchair, replied, "In truth, their hiding techniques are rather remarkable. Most known methods of divination or observation can't even begin to penetrate the covert rites they employ to exert control."

Jing Ci arched an eyebrow inquisitively: "Including the esteemed Lin Zhengchun of Laojun Mountain?"

"Indeed, but that doesn't mean Lin Zhengchun is weak."

Huai Yin sneered faintly and added: "It's simply because their technique lies at an incredibly high level. Its origins stem from an immensely mysterious and supremely exalted entity—not something a mere mortal could hope to access."

Jing Ci squinted his eyes: "Oath of Loyalty?"

Huai Yin nodded lightly.

"That being the case, I'm curious—how did my junior manage to discover it?"

Jing Ci chuckled in disbelief.

"He has his ways; you'll learn about them in due time."

Huai Yin remarked.

Jing Ci looked up at the stars scattered across the sky and asked, "Teacher, are you certain about this? You have but little time left. If you act recklessly again, the killing intent drawn from the cosmic forces will..."

Huai Yin did not raise his eyes toward the heavens; instead, he gazed at the pitch-black ocean: "Two centuries have passed. Honestly, I had already abandoned these notions long ago. Since I'm living on borrowed time, the fate of the world has little to do with me."

He sighed deeply: "But alas, I can't suppress the yearning in this heart."

Jing Ci lowered his gaze to the elderly man's weathered profile and asked calmly: "Is it because of my junior?"

"He's a good kid, you know? I understand many have warned him that I am not a virtuous mentor. His father even wrote in official documents that I am a lunatic and should stay far away from him."

Huai Yin said evenly: "But he knows about me and my junior's history from the brink of world-ending catastrophe. Yet, you know what? There's never even a shred of fear when he looks me in the eyes—never the slightest doubt or wavering from the opinions of others."

Jing Ci nodded faintly: "He's been waiting for you to provide him answers all along."

"To be honest, a long time ago, I didn't want to stir things up anymore. I was deeply disillusioned with this world. Then one day, I heard Gu Ci'an had died, and I remembered this boy. I came to Peak City to see him. That day, he'd just been discharged from the hospital and stood alone in the torrential rain, looking lost and hollow, like a wandering spirit."

Huai Yin's tone remained serene, but his words carried heavy memories, his gaze tinged with faint nostalgia: "The way he lost everything—it mirrored my past exactly."

Jing Ci listened quietly, not uttering a word.

"What that boy has endured, I have endured too. Seeing him is like seeing my younger self. One man against the world's conspiracies and lies, with no one to believe him."

Huai Yin paused briefly before continuing: "Digging deeper and deeper, until those around him died one by one. The more death he saw, the deeper the hatred became. And the deeper the hatred, the greater the fury. Until finally, he's betrayed by all, left utterly isolated."

"Helping him is like helping my younger self."

"Though I have but a short time left, he can do what I couldn't."

"Now, just as he's fighting for his father, he's seeking justice for those innocently wronged."

"I want him to become the Sun, illuminating the eyes of the masses and showing them... who is truly righteous."

"When that day comes, whether I live or die matters little. I will have left behind my proudest legacy in this world—a mark that belongs to Huai Yin. He will complete what I began."

"So through my guidance, he edges ever closer to the truth. I watched with open eyes when his Master handed Director Li over for him to kill and did nothing to stop it. Step by step, I taught him those techniques, all leading up to today."

"The grudges of two centuries past must come to an end. This time, I don't care if people believe or not. Those who doubt... I'll kill them. The Order of the Hidden exists undeniably; nonbelievers and fools might as well die early."

"Even if I grow old, like the fading light of dusk sinking behind the mountain, there remains a young man toiling forward, accompanied by his rising dawn. He isn't me—but in many ways, he surpasses me."

Suddenly, he extended his hand: "After tonight, I want him to see everything, to make his choice. And in the years ahead, I want him to grasp this world's truths—to stand at history's precipice and carry on the path for me..."

Jing Ci pushed the wheelchair silently toward the enormous cruise ship docked by the shore.

A blood-red hue began to coalesce on his face, taking the form of a dragon-like mask. Horns emerged atop his head, traces of Dragon Scales forming upon his body, and his crimson vertical pupils blazed with growing intensity.

"I don't have any grand ambitions myself," he murmured softly, "but my junior—he cannot be bullied by others."

"The Judgement Court thinks Heaven's Punishment can bind me. But after all these years, they've forgotten who I am."

Huai Yin raised his hand to trace his face. "Then tonight... let's entertain them, shall we?"

For a fleeting moment, black radiance gathered across his visage, vaguely forming a green jade mask resembling that of a Qilin. A regal Qilin Horn extended from his head, his pupils radiating divine brilliance.

Above the boundless skies, pitch-black clouds came swirling together.

A green Qilin faintly manifested amidst the heavens, veiling the stars with its majestic form.

Tonight, he was the Heavenly Destiny.

Chapter 430 - 213: As Tall as the Heavens, Resembling a God

In the parking lot of the West Port Forbidden Zone, Chen Bojun listened to the voice in the communication channel, his face drastically changing color.

"Attention all departments, suspected emergence of two Ascenders with autonomous evolution aboard Bren Hill. Mission objectives are temporarily adjusted—Judgement Court's three Saints will apprehend the Evolvers first, just in case. We only need five minutes; it won't delay the upcoming battle for the Ancient God's Blood."

The voice belonged to Li Qingsong.

"Bastards!"

Chen Bojun smashed the earpiece in his hand: "This pack of bastards! We should never have cooperated with them!"

He knew all too well what Judgement Court was scheming.

Ascenders with autonomous evolution—the ones who had mastered the path of perfect evolution.

They were exceedingly rare.

As rare as the secrets of the Ancient God.

If captured and researched, they might reveal the key to evolution itself!

Judgement Court wanted more than just the Ancient God's Blood.

Even such incidental prizes, they wouldn't let go.

But just moments ago, Instructor Wan and Instructor Zhu had already taken action.

Directly instigating a fight with the You Ying Group at the auction site.

The Saints meant to provide support had instead gone off after others!

Considering that the You Ying Group was anything but weak.

Not to mention their six board members—the elusive Netherworld could always be lurking anywhere!

"Isn't this just Judgement Court's standard operating procedure?"

Lu Zijin sneered coldly.

"You're on the brink of promotion; you can't afford any accidents."

Chen Bojun's expression grew darker: "I'll go myself!"

As soon as he said this, his face suddenly flushed, and he coughed up a mouthful of blood.

"Are your injuries still not healed?"

Lu Zijin's beautiful eyes narrowed slightly: "That Primordial did this to you?"

"It's fine."

Chen Bojun said in a deep voice, "As long as no one else dies, someone will deal with Netherworld."

In the communication channel, Li Qingsong's voice rang out again: "Omega Sequence, assemble."

Boom!

Suddenly, above the sky, a man dressed in a black-and-gold robe appeared, riding a golden flying sword that tore through the air.

Ying Changsheng, as the number one in the Omega Sequence, was naturally the pillar-level combat force.

Li Hanting and Mu Qingyou soared up on their flying swords, closely following behind.

Meanwhile, countless gleaming lights from reflective surfaces emerged in the darkness—sharp Eagle Eyes piercing the night.

The Overlords had already taken strategic high ground, prepared to snipe at any moment.

The priests of the medical unit assembled.

Ghost Slayers and Divines approached Bren Hill aboard yachts.

But in that fleeting instant, a cry of shock echoed: "Everyone, look up! What is that thing?!"

In that moment, the Ether Association's high-level staff and investigators raised their heads skyward.

Only to see dark clouds converging above, forming into a colossal green Qilin, staring down from above. In its eyes vast as the Azure Sea, the glow of cosmic stars was reflected!

Boom!

The heavens roared, and around Bren Hill, an invisible, intangible boundary realm rose abruptly!

Bang!

Someone crashed headlong into the unseen Qi Realm, blood spilling from their forehead.

Others attempted to fire their guns, or even launch rockets, all to no effect!

Even an Overlord firing the Arrow of Destruction at the Qi Realm seemed no different than a child's slingshot—a laughable attempt.

Another explosion resounded as a massive golden sword light streaked across the night sky, slashing into the Qi Realm.

Not even a tremor!

"What is this thing?"

Ying Changsheng looked up at the sky, his narrowed eyes trembling with unease.

Crash!

Li Hanting unleashed countless bursts of Sword Qi with both hands, fiercely bombarding the Qi Realm, all in vain.

"Don't waste your strength."

Mu Qingyou murmured lowly: "This isn't something we can handle."

At that moment, Taixu's voice rang out over the communication channel.

"Peak City District has entered maximum alert. Detecting the presence of the Divine Race! Possible Evolver! Possible Ancestral Ancient God! Possible Primordial! Possible... Ancient Supreme!"

At that moment, everyone tapped into the communication channel was in utter uproar.

Because even Taixu was malfunctioning!

This meant it was incapable of identifying what this entity truly was!

"Could it be the Qilin Venerable?"

Such a despairing thought sprouted in someone's heart, as if the apocalypse was upon them.

"Old Chen, this creature... compared to the Primordials, who's stronger?"

Lu Zijin too raised her head, muttering softly.

Chen Bojun swallowed dryly: "Clearly, it's much stronger, unimaginably so."

On the tablet screen.

Nie, the Deacon, responsible for remote support, trembled uncontrollably, his face draining of color as he heard this.

"God, call for Night Watcher reinforcements—if this thing descends, whoever can escape should run for it."

Chen Bojun gazed skyward. The monstrous green Qilin obscured the entire firmament; even the stars were shrouded. Only a Saint-level Ascender like him could feel the overwhelming pressure it emitted.

It felt as if his very soul might implode beneath the weight.

He felt no desire to fight.

His first instinct was flight.

If this entity truly erupted in wrath, it would bring thundering calamity—none would survive.

"Where's the teacher? How could this thing suddenly appear and the teacher not intervene?"

Lu Zijin spoke in a stunned voice.

At the same time, a black Maserati was parked at the entrance to the West Port Forbidden Zone.

Inside the car, Taihua gazed through the window up at the green Qilin and softly murmured: "So you've already come this far down the path. If Yan Li were still alive, wouldn't she also have reached such heights?"

She whispered tenderly: "Seems like you're not planning to endure any longer. Have your way for the next two years."