

Ancient 451

Chapter 451 - 223 Who is this woman?

Magic City, Tianshan Mansion.

In a city like Magic City, where every inch of land is worth a fortune, this place is just an ordinary residential area. Property prices here are mid-range compared to the rest of the city, with most residents being locals. The majority of homeowners are retired elderly, often seen taking birds or dogs for walks, or playing chess around stone tables.

"The situation in Peak City is so tense. Why are you two here instead of keeping watch there?"

A man was leisurely walking his Samoyed along the roadside.

He was a tall and burly man, nearly two meters in height, with well-developed muscles that looked like they would burst through his plain white training outfit. His hair was frost-white, and his face weathered with age.

His expression seemed gentle, but in the world of Ascenders, his name carried great renown.

Lin Dong.

The highest leader of the Night Watchers.

"It's just an hour's flight from Peak City to Magic City. We don't have to check in or go through security."

Han Jing, dressed in a perfectly pressed camouflage outfit, followed behind him with an expressionless face.

Fu Qingxuan, leaning on a cane, smiled as he greeted, "Boss, long time no see."

Lin Dong turned around, his expression complex: "Indeed, it's been a long time. Good to see you alive. That's all that matters."

He paused, then shifted his gaze to the person behind and commented with a sigh, "And you, why are you here as well?"

In the fitness area, Lu Zijin was holding a cup of milk tea, happily playing on a see-saw with a passing child. She responded casually, "Old Chen is too busy running around like a headless chicken, so I thought I'd come see you."

Lin Dong chuckled, "I think you're not just here to visit me, are you?"

Han Jing locked eyes with him and enunciated carefully, "Boss, you saw what happened last night. The King of Qing blocked Heaven's Punishment, and the Judgement Court's Heavenly Punishment Weapon has already been rendered useless. Tianzhou and Xingye were identified as members of the Order of the Hidden and were killed on the spot. Although Li Qingsong is still alive, he's essentially as good as dead."

"Councilman Zhang is also dead, killed by Gu Ci'an's own son."

She paused for a moment: "This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. If we can prove there are issues within the Judgement Court, Rhein's position will be shaken, and the President will have to reconsider everything."

"That's right. Although Old Chen can't publicly take sides, he's actually supporting us in private."

Fu Qingxuan pleaded, "Zijin is about to ascend to Seventh-Order Holy Realm. Once she secures the final Heavenly General position, we'll be able to turn the tables and regain control of the narrative."

Lin Dong fell silent.

As a Ninth-Rank Demigod, he had witnessed everything that transpired last night.

He was fully aware of the massive upheaval.

"Gu Ci'an's son, huh."

A flicker of nostalgia passed through Lin Dong's eyes as he turned to the cold-faced woman beside him: "What's your opinion?"

Han Jing maintained a frosty expression: "He looks a lot like his father, but he's more capable than his old man. The only issue is his personality—it's too solitary."

Lin Dong laughed, "You don't like him?"

"Not exactly," Han Jing replied with a straight face. "I once wanted to mentor him myself, but he was too young and not of a high enough rank at the time. At least under our protection, he wouldn't have been dragged into all this nonsense."

Fu Qingxuan burst out laughing, "Haha, and then Sister Han got thoroughly slapped in the face!"

There was a soft snicker.

Even Lu Zijin couldn't hold back her laughter.

"Getting slapped in the face is great. As an old-timer, I love being proved wrong by the younger generation."

Lin Dong sighed, "Honestly, I was planning to retire."

Over the years, this leader of the Night Watchers had grown tired of factional struggles, increasingly disheartened.

Unless the Ancient God Clan posed a direct threat requiring his intervention, he had turned a blind eye to everything else.

Even his former supporters had fallen silent over time.

And dissenting voices began to emerge.

"You can retire, but what about everyone else?"

Han Jing stared at him. "Mu Feng is still locked up in prison. Old Gu's case still needs to be reinvestigated. I refuse to believe that person was Old Gu. He hasn't even reached Holy Land Level—how could he possibly injure you?"

Hearing this, Fu Qingxuan was confused. "What exactly are you all talking about?"

Even Lu Zijin lifted her head, her bright eyes now displaying a grave expression.

Lin Dong remained silent for a long time before finally looking to the petite girl. "What does Commander Lu have to say?"

Lu Zijin replied earnestly, "My father's exact words were: 'Fight if you must. Some things are worth fighting for.'"

Lin Dong clasped his hands behind his back and let out a soft sigh.

"Alright then."

He calmly said, "Relay my orders: have Wang Taisheng dismissed and expelled from the Night Watcher system. People like him, who only know how to go with the flow, should be tossed as far away as possible."

Black Cloud Base, control and command center.

A sleepless Chen Bojun raised his bloodshot eyes. His desk was piled high with mountains of files and reports—he had signed thousands of documents, leaving his hand sore.

The world was becoming increasingly chaotic; people were causing endless trouble.

Last night, the King of Qing ascended into the skies, single-handedly halting Heaven's Punishment, causing a sensation across the entire Extraordinary World.

What followed, however, was crisis!

The Ether Association is a coalition of order, collaborating with Ascender organizations across nations worldwide. Our country, as the Land of Divine Revelation, is home to all five Ancient Supremes of the Ancient God Realm, along with countless Primordial tombs and the most well-preserved Ancient Ruins.

It's like a giant siphon, drawing in the world's greatest talents, one after another.

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Catastrophes are also born here.

For the past two centuries, the world has been relatively peaceful.

With the Ancient Supreme remaining in slumber, humanity's greatest threats are the Catastrophes.

After all, Qing and Chi, these two kings, have brought too much darkness to this world.

Though Chi is dead, Qing still lives.

Especially since he has broken free from Heaven's Punishment—the man is essentially a walking nuclear bomb.

No, far more terrifying than a nuclear bomb.

The commotion last night was so overwhelming that many believed the Ancient Supreme had awakened, terrified to the point of bleeding from seven orifices.

Numerous Western Ascender organizations have expedited their outer space colonization plans today as a result.

After all, given the Ascenders' own productivity, they could genuinely survive on Mars if they're willing to endure some hardships.

Last night, even the President attended the rare video conference, personally appearing to reassure allied organizations.

The entirety of his speech could be boiled down to: "Shut up, all of you, and stick to your duties. If you don't want Qing to lose it, I'll come and wipe you out myself first."

The top leaders, realizing the severity of this, went into a frenzy on the spot.

After the video conference ended, they rushed to appease everyone involved.

First a beating, then a treat.

As for the Judgement Court, chaos erupted; losing two Saints at once was a catastrophic loss.

The Night Watchers, however, are bound to rise once more after today.

"Here we go again, more endless fighting,"

He slurped water infused with wolfberries from his insulated cup, his expression full of helplessness.

But at this stage, if they don't fight for dominance, there's no way forward.

The existence of The Order of the Hidden is an undeniable fact.

BANG BANG!

The office door was knocked on.

Lu Zicheng walked in smoking, with dark circles under his eyes, and plopped himself down on the couch.

"Director Chen."

Chen Qing entered holding a stack of files: "Commander Lu at the frontline has completed forty-seven percent of the reconnaissance of Qilin Immortal Palace's first level and stationed troops in the safe zones. Currently, we occupy the largest area. North America follows with six percent, Northern Europe with eight percent, and West Asia and North Africa each with two percent."

"The rest is mostly controlled by the You Ying Group."

She paused: "We have now confirmed the location of the Sea of Eternal Life."

The Ancient God Realm is a world.

Every time an Ancient God Realm descends, Ascenders swarm in, vying for territory.

They even establish cities within the Ancient God Realm, spreading the seeds of human civilization.

It's somewhat akin to ancient warfare when soldiers planted their nation's flag atop the enemy's city walls.

Meanwhile, for all Ascenders, the Ancient God Realm represents an opportunity.

Materials, secret medicine, arms, forbidden spells, breathing techniques.

You might even capture mutated creatures possessing extraordinary abilities.

In particular, there are mystical sites within the Ancient God Realm—some allow glimpses of the future, some claim experiences of reincarnation, and others have brief interactions with dreams from the ultra-ancient past, offering innumerable gains.

There have even been rumors of entire secret treasures being unearthed.

This is why it's so hard for wild Ascenders to survive. Alone, with no plans or support, exploring the Ancient God Realm recklessly often leads to death.

Men die for wealth, birds for food.

Aspiring Ascenders must enter the Ancient God Realm to advance.

But to enter the Ancient God Realm, the greatest protection comes from Ascender organizations.

There is no other way.

"Fortunately, the Sea of Eternal Life is on the first level of Qilin Immortal Palace."

Chen Bojun exhaled in relief: "If it were on the second level, Zijin would be doomed."

Currently, the first level of Qilin Immortal Palace hasn't been fully surveyed, and no stable entrances to the second level have been found. While there are dimensional fissures that allow passage to the next level, venturing alone is too dangerous.

Without the protection of the Heavenly Person Realm.

If you ran into a Primordial, it would mean instant death.

"This is why ascending the Heavenly Master Path is so troublesome."

Lu Zicheng, still with a nonchalant demeanor, smoked and said: "Our Ancient Martial Path is better—you don't have to deal with all this mystical nonsense until you reach the Holy Land. But speaking of which, why are you all so obsessed with the position of Heavenly General? Even my father places such importance on it."

Chen Qing glanced at him coldly and said, "Young Master, are you pretending not to know or genuinely clueless? Once someone becomes a Heavenly General, they hold the qualification to influence the Heavenly Person Realm. Every generation of Presidents must gain the support of Heavenly Generals. In other words, Heavenly Generals are the President's substitutes."

Lu Zicheng froze: "Really?"

Chen Bojun rubbed his forehead: "You... You've already shattered your heart demon, but you're still drifting through life like this? Once your sister becomes a Heavenly General, it'll be up to you to quickly ascend to Sixth Rank and take charge as head of the Peak City District."

Lu Zicheng pouted, the pressure on his face evident.

To date, he had only ascended to Fifth Rank, not due to lack of talent.

It was simply because his heart demon had blocked his path to ascension.

Still, over years his Martial Arts Realm has not declined. Constant meditation has made his mental resilience exceptionally strong; he just needs to continue consuming secret medicine, accumulating spirituality.

Eventually, he'll complete the ritual.

In other words, he's taking the slow and steady approach.

Lu Zicheng shrugged: "Let's focus on solving the issue with my sister first. The conditions for advancing the Heavenly Master Path are too bizarre. For a long period ahead, she'll be in an extremely weakened state and needs protection. We must escort her to the Sea of Eternal Life so she can complete her progression."

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"The standard dimensional strength of the Sea of Eternal Life is Level 4, which means under normal circumstances, we can only deploy Fourth Rank combat power or below. However, we need to prepare an additional layer of insurance."

Chen Qing held a tablet and said, "To prevent a Holy Land Level power from intervening at all costs."

Chen Bojun nodded slightly. "You can rest assured about that. My injury has almost healed. When the time comes, I will remain in the shadows and act personally. Also, this time, Commander Lu has invited a legendary figure."

He continued, "If necessary, Mr. Jing will also act."

Mr. Jing, Jing Ci!

Chen Qing's face turned pale, clearly frightened.

Lu Zicheng's eyes widened in shock as he asked suspiciously, "Isn't that Xiao Gu's senior brother? How did you manage to invite him? As far as I remember, my father and the King of Qing have always been at odds."

Chen Bojun laughed. "You don't need to understand too much about the older generation's matters. Let's just say, although the King of Qing and Commander Lu are rivals, they were comrades-in-arms back in the day. On certain matters, they can still reach common ground."

"We need to thoroughly organize intelligence on the Sea of Eternal Life."

He said, "Moreover, the personnel accompanying us must be carefully selected. I'll arrange the best young talents for her. When she successfully stirs up the Sea of Eternal Life, these young folks will benefit as well."

Just then, Lu Zicheng's phone suddenly vibrated.

"A message from Xiao Gu."

He frowned and said, "He mentioned something extremely important that must be discussed in person."

Chen Qing was momentarily stunned. "Could it be...?"

Chen Bojun straightened his posture, instinctively sensing something significant.

Councilman Zhang had just died yesterday.

And now, Xiao Gu had critical information to report today.

Efficiency!

"Quick, bring him to meet me! Wait, no, you all stay here for ten minutes."

Chen Bojun suddenly remembered something and, with a peculiar expression, said, "Let's go meet him together later!"

Gu Jianlin slept well last night. By 6:30 AM, he was already up and had gone downstairs as planned to buy fried buns and millet porridge, which he left in the kitchen on the microwave.

Youzhu had been through a lot last night and probably wouldn't be able to get out of bed today.

Ah, wait, that wording seems a bit odd.

When one commits to high intensity, they must go all out.

Last night, he'd conducted an experiment. By wielding the Qilin's Wedge Fragment, he could directly summon people with ancient tokens into the Wedge's space, bypassing the tomb where he'd been confined.

This way, he could avoid ambushes from the old monsters.

He had already experienced the true power of the Qilin Forbidden Curse—its allure was undeniable.

The next focus was on the Candle Dragon Forbidden Curse!

If the Breathing Technique was a treasure of the Human World,

then Forbidden Spells were stolen powers from the Ancient God Clan.

They were creations born from the combination of Ancient God Power and human spirituality.

The principle of Forbidden Spells was essentially this: when a human's mind was stimulated by the Ancient Supreme's mental force, and combined with their own spirituality and soul, a forbidden power would emerge.

Gu Jianlin observed his mythical body, which remained unresponsive.

This was because his mind was immune to stimulation.

Of course, a true Ancient Supreme could likely replicate the effects of a Forbidden Spell with ease, perhaps even surpassing it, through understanding and mastery of themselves.

But Gu Jianlin was different.

He was a youngling Supreme, a modern Supreme, a clueless Supreme.

This left him at a great disadvantage in this area.

Thus, he would have to first experiment on a human.

Once Youzhu mastered it, she could teach him later.

Furthermore, for her safety, Gu Jianlin had entrusted her with the Qilin's Wedge Fragment.

The fragment could be freely recalled at any time.

Even if tossed into the trash, it wouldn't matter who picked it up—it would always remain the same.

By leaving it with Youzhu, there were two advantages.

First, it could be used to assist her in combat.

Second, in case of real danger, it could serve as a decoy.

For example, if Youzhu were being pursued by the Ether Association in the Ancient God Realm, the sudden appearance of the Qilin's Wedge Fragment could instantly divert attention.

"I am so foolish, oh my god."

The parrot perched on his shoulder squawked dramatically.

After buying breakfast, Gu Jianlin wandered around downstairs but found no sign of the grocery store.

It seemed his mentor was indeed gravely injured and needed rest.

Last night, Gu Jianlin had done a lot of research. It was said that every Ancient God Realm manifesting in reality harbored countless treasures, and over time, some changes might occur, even unknown to the Ancient Gods themselves.

In other words, anything was possible.

On the Deep Space Official Website's forums, it was noted that the first floor of the Qilin Immortal Palace was nearly fully surveyed.

Ascenders from all over the world were flocking to it.

They had established tribes and cities, even forming an adventurers' guild.

Bounties were updated almost every hour.

News about various rare treasures kept emerging.

There might even be something that could cure his mentor.

Suddenly, he received a WeChat message on his phone.

Lu Zicheng: "Waiting at your residential compound gate. We're on our way."

Gu Jianlin looked up, hearing what sounded like a helicopter hovering in mid-air.

Ever since learning that the Order of the Hidden was targeting Minister Lu, he'd hurried to pass on the information.

After all, Minister Lu was currently at the Sixth Rank, on the verge of advancing to the Holy Land Level.

Rumble.

A helicopter roared overhead.

Lu Zicheng, in the pilot's seat, wore an incredibly puzzled expression as he occasionally glanced back. Using lip-reading, he said, "Who's this woman? Why do I feel like she looks at me as if I'm an insect? It's making me uncomfortable."

Chen Qing furrowed her brows and responded in lip-reading as well, "I feel the same. When she looks at me, it's as if I'm some kind of protozoa."

Ahem.

A light cough interrupted them.

"Don't look back. Focus on piloting."

Chen Bojun sat upright and cleared his throat, speaking seriously, "Don't ask too much or pry unnecessarily. Once we meet Xiao Gu, keep your mouths shut. Understand?"

The peculiar atmosphere in the cabin was solely due to the presence of an additional individual.

She was a woman with an elegant updo. Though she looked mature, her cold and composed face had been carefully adorned, exuding an air of noble indifference, as if she looked down upon all creation with disdain.

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In the corner coffee shop, the music played faintly, and the wind chime at the door swayed with the breeze.

Gu Jianlin felt entirely out of sorts, desperately searching for a chance to seek help.

"Ahem."

Lu Zicheng jabbed him sharply in the lower back, signaling with his eyes for him not to panic, though he himself also had no idea what was going on.

Chen Qing, a Fourth Rank Spiritualist, seemed to have lost all his abilities, silently drinking his latte, saying nothing.

This was because Chen Bojun had previously instructed them not to speak casually—not a single word.

Though the reasoning was unclear, they could only obediently comply.

"Allow me to make the introductions."

Chen Bojun cleared his throat and said seriously, "This is..."

"Ji Zhou."

The cold, aloof woman raised her piercing eyes and said indifferently, "Divine General."

The Ether Association's President commanded six Heavenly Generals, all of whom were uniformly Holy Land-level elites capable of harnessing the power of the Heavenly Person's Wedge, hailed as the Guardian Gods of the human world.

Gu Jianlin roughly understood.

Although the Heavenly Fire God General had been smacked away by his teacher with just one slap back then.

Still, you couldn't call the Divine Generals weak.

After all, in terms of their combat strength, killing mortals in the real world would be child's play for them.

It's just that his teacher was far too powerful—an unparalleled figure throughout history—and couldn't be judged against ordinary standards.

After Ji Zhou gave her name, everyone's reactions were intriguing.

"May I ask your honorific title, senior?"

Lu Zicheng, still unable to contain his curiosity, asked.

Chen Qing understood his question's intent, as there were only six Divine Generals in total, each a legendary figure.

The woman before them, however, had never made an appearance before.

Chen Bojun quietly signaled with a glance, ordering them both to shut up.

Ji Zhou seemed disinclined to respond; she simply picked up a metal spoon and stirred her coffee, inhaling lightly before furrowing her brows and saying, "This stuff remains as bitter and unpalatable as ever—far inferior to Heavenly Fragrant Tea."

Although dressed in a beige long coat with icy and striking makeup, her gestures and bearing exuded an air of dignified elegance, as if she hailed from an ancient palace, touchingly noble.

Gu Jianlin thought this person was putting on airs and instinctively began profiling her.

Suddenly, Ji Zhou lifted her stern gaze, scanning him from head to toe, then said flatly, "Your talents are decent—a Third Rank Great Fate Master with remarkable achievements. Ordinary Fourth Rank individuals wouldn't be your match. Being able to transcend the Extraordinary Level to challenge the Superdimensional, you rank prominently in history. Your breathing rhythm is commendable—a Realm of Freedom."

She cast another glance downward at the shadow reflected in the sunlight: "True geniuses, of course, must master Forbidden Spells. But those capable of controlling Original Forbidden Spells are exceedingly rare. Qilin Forbidden Curse—quite good indeed."

Gu Jianlin was taken aback, feeling as though he'd been completely seen through, as if he were stark naked.

"If you could select a Growth Type Mythical Weapon that complements you, your battle power would ascend further."

Ji Zhou remarked dispassionately, "While your talent is excellent, your rank is far too low. When faced with a real expert, you'd be crushed like an insect with just one hand. Your priority should be advancing to the Superdimensional Level as quickly as possible."

She paused: "Although combat techniques can't be mastered overnight, you mustn't neglect them either. Mu Feng's martial arts realm ranks in the top three globally; you could seek his guidance."

Truth be told, Gu Jianlin was somewhat bewildered.

The parrot perched on his shoulder swiveled its eyes: "Who does this woman think she is?"

For just a moment, Ji Zhou squinted her eyes.

"Don't stoop to the level of a beast."

Chen Bojun mediated diplomatically.

"Audacious! You dare show disrespect to me!"

The parrot continued to bluster.

Chen Bojun's eyelid twitched slightly.

"You two... yes, you both."

Ji Zhou raised her hand, pointing at the parrot: "Take this creature away."

Chen Qing immediately stood, grabbed the parrot, and walked away.

Lu Zicheng quietly followed, feeling inexplicably pressured as he always did around Ji Zhou.

Who exactly is this woman?

Gu Jianlin, however, suspected the woman intentionally dismissed them.

"When concerning matters of The Order of the Hidden, the fewer people who know, the better."

Ji Zhou stated indifferently.

Chen Bojun coughed lightly and said, "Xiao Gu, do you have anything to report?"

Gu Jianlin succinctly recounted the intelligence he extracted yesterday, then cautioned, "The Order of the Hidden's next target is Minister Lu. When she advances to the Holy Land Level, there will undoubtedly be issues. Yet for now, there's no way to identify who among us might secretly belong to The Order of the Hidden."

"If my father were still alive, he might manage it. But I can't. I have too few interactions with members of the Ether Association, making it difficult to deduce present anomalies from their past experiences."

He pulled a hand-drawn diagram from his pocket and said, "The Order of the Hidden controls a technique called the Penglai Ascension Array. It's marked by the appearance of child boy and girl tattoos

on their bodies. However, I can't guarantee that all members of the Order possess this matrix enhancement. Thus, it can't be used as a definitive indicator of membership."

Chen Bojun listened to his analysis without questioning the origins of the evidence.

After a moment of reflection, he said, "Meticulous reasoning—impressive."

Ji Zhou also nodded approvingly: "Not bad. Yet compared to your father, what you lack is the finesse in handling complex situations. Lone wolves like you—no matter how proficient in profiling—don't make it far."

Gu Jianlin froze, reluctantly admitting the woman had a point.

"On the matter of the Penglai Ascension Array."

Chen Bojun unfolded the diagram, his expression somber.

Ji Zhou glanced at the depiction of the child boy and girl tattoos, narrowing her sharp eyes as she solemnly said:

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"Candle Dragon!"

Gu Jianlin was taken aback after hearing this.

He hadn't even started explaining the origins of the Penglai Ascension Array.

"You've seen it?"

Chen Bojun asked.

"This practice of human transmutation, while abolished by Xu Fu, has never been scarce throughout history. However, the so-called Penglai Ascension Array demonstrates extremely unusual methods and distinctly exhibits traits of the Candle Dragon Clan. Clearly, this is something left behind by the Candle Dragon Venerable. Xu Fu... most likely fell under its control."

Ji Zhou seemed to think of something, sneering disdainfully, "Using this method does indeed enhance an Ascender's combat abilities... but this is certainly not its original purpose."

As expected of an expert, his insights were extraordinary.

Gu Jianlin didn't even need to say the rest.

"Then what is its proper use?"

He asked.

Chen Bojun also displayed a questioning look.

Ji Zhou replied flatly, "I'm not the Candle Dragon Venerable; how should I know?"

An impeccable response.

"Though I can't present evidence, Minister Lu's situation is indeed extremely dangerous."

Gu Jianlin said.

He firmly decided not to mention the Soul Comforting Bell or the detained souls.

The reason was simple—safety.

Chen Bojun nodded slightly, "Rest assured, we are currently one hundred percent on your side, especially with the King of Qing among us. The Order of the Hidden couldn't turn you into one of theirs. If they truly had that capability, there would be no point in our resistance; surrendering directly would make more sense."

Ji Zhou let out a cold snort.

"Roughly when will Minister Lu ascend?"

Gu Jianlin asked.

"Tonight, the dimensional gate will reopen. Those of you who previously chose to return to reality will once again enter the Qilin Immortal Palace. This time, Zijin will accompany you inside to ascend to the Holy Land."

Chen Bojun frowned after contemplating briefly, "But this situation is worse than you think. The ascension ritual for Sixth-tier Sky Masters is incredibly complex; they must undergo a process of returning to the truth. Using medicine to suppress the spirituality within their bodies, they will become extraordinarily weak during this period, requiring a team to ensure their protection."

"For Zijin's ascension, she needs to locate a site in the Ancient God Realm known as the Sea of Eternal Life. The first floor of the Qilin Immortal Palace happens to have such a site, with a dimensional level rated at Level 4. We'll need Fourth Rank and lower Ascenders to serve as her guardians, along with Holy Land-level experts to fend off anyone willing to risk being teleported out."

He paused, "But since you mentioned that members of the Order of the Hidden are already targeting her, this complicates matters. Zijin really has no time left, especially since Minister Zhang Xuzhi of the Coastal jurisdiction is also about to ascend to the Holy Land. They're competing for the last Divine General spot. A slight delay could mean losing everything."

Ji Zhou stirred his coffee without comment.

Gu Jianlin's pupils constricted slightly upon hearing this name.

"Minister Zhang Xuzhi... isn't he Councilman Zhang's brother?"

He said, "Councilman Zhang mentioned that the Order of the Hidden plans to control Minister Zhang Xuzhi as well."

Upon hearing this, the café fell into silence.

Chen Bojun turned his head and inquired, "Has Minister Zhang's ascension ritual already begun?"

Ji Zhou responded with a murmur.

Gu Jianlin narrowed his eyes, "If the ritual has indeed started, then things are dire. Based on my experience, the Order of the Hidden's control methods consist of distinct phases. The first is the sacrificial ritual, where a strange sacrifice is conducted to exert influence over the target. The second phase involves physical contact, deepening control."

He hesitated momentarily, then said, "During this phase, spiders appear. Most individuals would already succumb to madness, but full control likely happens after the ritual begins."

At this moment, it was impossible to confirm whether Minister Zhang had been controlled.

There was only one solution.

Kill, and bind the soul.

Chen Bojun froze.

"What did you say?"

Ji Zhou said coldly, "Based on your experiences?"

Gu Jianlin fell silent for a moment, tacitly acknowledging it.

For an instant, Chen Bojun was dumbfounded, his pupils trembling slightly.

The weary middle-aged man seemed to age all at once, letting out a deep sigh.

"Ah."

He leaned back in his chair despondently and murmured, "You make us feel completely useless."

Ji Zhou glanced at the young man, his gaze flickering but silent.

"It's nothing. Such methods don't affect me—it's exactly what my father could do as well."

Gu Jianlin said calmly, "Don't worry about me. If we can thoroughly eliminate these parasites, this risk doesn't matter. My only question now is... isn't the President going to address this?"

After a long pause.

Ji Zhou replied indifferently, "Perhaps because she's a Vulgar Master."

Chen Bojun almost choked on his tea.

Hiss.

Gu Jianlin was utterly shocked and thought to himself, "I don't know you. You have nothing to do with me."

"Why the surprise? Didn't you comment that the President is a Vulgar Master? If she fails to perform adequately, why shouldn't people criticize her? Were she flawless in her worlds, who would dare rebuke her?"

Ji Zhou said with an even tone, "As the highest Order Guardian of this world, this is her duty to bear. Even ancient emperors were scolded for their mistakes—why should she be exempt?"

Chen Bojun fell quiet.

Gu Jianlin thought it made sense, but he pressed on, "I'd advise you to be cautious, though. While the sentiment is correct, she is still present for now. The last time I said something bad about her, she gave me trouble."

Chen Bojun couldn't help but laugh, "You're still holding onto the Little Princess incident?"

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"Heh."

Ji Zhou asked, "What's my surname?"

Gu Jianlin froze.

"I'm originally from the Ji Family, and her Divine General. What's wrong with saying a few things about her?"

Ji Zhou said faintly, "I've been displeased with her for a long time."

After saying that, she stood up and ordered, "The information from The Order of the Hidden is crucial. Record this brat a merit. Regarding Zijin's matter, send out a vanguard tonight to investigate the Sea of Eternal Life."

Chen Bojun said solemnly, "Understood. I'll be careful in choosing the names."

After speaking, Ji Zhou stepped out of the café and disappeared into the sunlight in an instant.

After she left.

The oppressive presence that enveloped the entire café vanished instantly.

"Holy sh*t."

Lu Zijin sat at the door, cold sweat streaming down his face, "Director Chen, who exactly is she? Why do I feel she's even more powerful than a Divine General? Even Chen Qing didn't dare use divination on her."

Chen Qing said faintly, "From beginning to end, I've been suppressed by a relentless pressure."

Gu Jianlin frowned, though he didn't sense anything at all.

"Who else could it be? I told you she's a Divine General, and a relative of the President."

Chen Bojun said, "Enough with these irrelevant thoughts. Let's discuss the strategy. We need to send people to explore the Sea of Eternal Life. Here's some related information."

He turned and said, "Xiao Gu, take a look."

Gu Jianlin took the tablet that Chen Bojun handed over and looked at it.

It was a video, showing towering snow-capped mountains, melting glaciers, and floating ice layers.

Beyond that, there were ancient underground ruins, a collapsed underground palace, and broken sculptures.

At the moment when the video transitioned, his pupils contracted sharply.

Because in the dark corner of the underground palace, there stood a collapsed Pill Furnace, and inside the furnace were sinister white bones!

The first thought that surged in Gu Jianlin's mind was—

Human transmutation!

Xu Fu!

The black Maserati stood quietly by the roadside, with occasional influencer models leaning against it for photos.

An old servant waited respectfully nearby until the sound of familiar footsteps arose behind him.

"You're back."

He turned and spoke.

A cold and alluring woman stood with her hands in the pockets of her trench coat, her expression icy and indifferent.

She raised her hand and wiped her face, and with that motion, her appearance underwent a drastic transformation. Her exquisite features radiated dazzling beauty, especially her long phoenix eyes, which exuded elegance and authority, killing intent like autumn winds.

Even though she had aged, the traces of her youthful stunning beauty were still evident.

The President.

Taihua.

"Lao Jiu."

Taihua suddenly spoke, "What did you say to me last time?"

The old servant froze.

"You said he was Gu Ci'an's son and asked me to mind my actions?"

Taihua sneered coldly.

The old servant lowered his head in fright, consumed by immense fear.

"Even though I don't particularly like him, he is a good child."

Taihua said indifferently, "Thinking back to that statement now, I feel like killing you."

The old servant immediately bowed his head deeply and said in a low voice, "Please, President, grant me death!"

Taihua was silent for a moment, then suddenly spoke, "Forget it. You've followed me for many years. I'll spare you—for now. Lin Dong and Rhein are about to clash again. There's someone who's been bothering me."

She paused, "Go and kill him."

The old servant took a deep breath, "Who?"

"Wang... What's his name again?"

Taihua seemed momentarily absent-minded.

"Wang Taisheng!"

The old servant said, "I'll take care of it immediately."

In the Ether Association, many think their little schemes go unnoticed.

But in reality, very few things escape the President's eyes.

Although it was unclear how this person had offended the President—

But—

Go ahead and die.

Chapter 457 - 225 The Secret of the Sea of Eternal Life

At sunset, Lu Zijin strolled through the silent and deserted graveyard, her petite silhouette stretched long by the twilight. The wine-red dress she wore fluttered in the wind, adorned with lace edges and butterfly ribbons.

She held a bouquet of fresh flowers in her hands, bent down, and placed them before a gravestone, gazing at the name etched upon it.

"Sorry, I've been too busy lately and haven't had the time to visit you. I remember back then, our squad... the captain died in Yun Mengze, He Bo betrayed humanity and turned into something neither human nor ghost, and now he's been crippled. Last night, as I slept, I suddenly realized it's been nearly half a year since you left."

She spoke softly, "But sometimes, I still feel as if you're somehow still here."

Lu Zicheng stood silently behind her, smoking, exhaling wisps of smoke.

Chen Qing bent down, thoughtfully clearing the fallen leaves from the gravestone and then pulled out a wet wipe to clean it.

In retrospect, everything made much more sense now.

After Professor Gu's death, his family wasn't left defenseless.

Minister Lu simply didn't trust those who were sent to protect them and had them dismissed.

Gu Jianlin had the Moon Princess by his side, so no one could easily pose a threat to him.

If a high-level Ascender made a move, Minister Lu would personally intervene.

And, of course, there was also a certain King of Qing watching from the shadows.

Suffice it to say, those in power never act rashly or foolishly like children.

Every action holds a deeper meaning.

"Maybe it's because your son has grown up."

Lu Zijin clasped her hands behind her back and chuckled lightly. "Sometimes, I think you were a fool. You hid your son for so many years, yet in the end, he still entered the Extraordinary World. And, except for looking like you, he's nothing like you in any other way. He's stronger than you, more audacious than you, and even more popular with women."

"True enough,"

Lu Zicheng commented. "Now, besides the name 'Chair Killer,' he has a new title: 'Sister Killer.' Someone filmed Xiao Gu's Evolutionary State last night, and another wave of older-sister fans went crazy over him."

As someone who fit the "older sister" description, Chen Qing silently agreed. If it weren't for the Moon Princess, she might have considered making a move herself.

"Initially, I didn't want him to enter the Extraordinary World to endure hardship, and I followed your wishes to stay as far away from him as possible, to not approach him. But when I saw the look in his eyes, so empty, so resentful... I knew then that I couldn't stop him."

Lu Zijin's lips curled into a faint smile. "Then he gave me a solid slap in the face, and honestly, it was oddly satisfying. Not because I'm some kind of masochist, but because it's gratifying to see young people succeed."

"Even though you were reluctant, your son still became the student of the King of Qing."

She sneered, "That was his choice. He was born to walk this path. As the saying goes, the true sun always stays in the sky. Even if you close your eyes, it remains up there."

Of course, there was no response to her words.

Only the breeze stirred the pines, making them rustle softly.

The reason Lu Zijin had come was not for much else.

It was simply to say goodbye.

"Tonight, I'll also go in search of the Sea of Eternal Life."

Lu Zijin said calmly, "I must thank you. If the King of Qing hadn't told me that you broke through at the last moment while confronting the Ghost Car Ancestor, I wouldn't have known that the first layer of the Qilin Immortal Palace already contained the Sea of Eternal Life. If you have any awareness left in the afterlife, pray for my smooth ascension. If, years from now, the Ghost Car Ancestor comes knocking, I'll at least be able to hold it off."

Finished speaking, she turned and walked away.

"Zicheng, Chen Qing."

She suddenly addressed them.

Lu Zicheng stubbed out his cigarette, instinctively sensing something unusual in her tone.

Chen Qing asked curiously, "What's wrong?"

"If something happens to me this time, leave all my inheritance and Extraordinary Resources to Xiao Gu. Don't let those old family relics get their hands on my things—I find them disgusting." Lu Zijin said indifferently.

Chen Qing pretended not to hear and replied expressionlessly, "I'll go prepare the car."

"What kind of nonsense is that?"

Lu Zicheng clicked his tongue. "Pfft, how unlucky!"

Meanwhile, a massive shadow covered the sun in the sky, vaguely revealing the outline of a Floating Island.

Dimensional waves began to ripple.

Come dusk, Gu Jianlin arrived at the Black Cloud Base and first made his way to the hospital.

Because Uncle Mu was temporarily quarantined, the people in the shelter needed someone to check on them.

Luckily, they were all doing well and hadn't encountered any further discrimination.

Ever since the incident with Director Li, no one within the Ether Association would dare to discriminate against the people in the shelter—unless they wanted to be beaten senseless or left hanging from a lamppost.

However, the price of that was Gu Jianlin's reputation growing even more fearsome.

By this point, though, there wasn't much he could do about it. Gu Jianlin's Evolutionary State had already been uploaded to the Deep Space Official Website.

He was prepared to be viewed as a monster by others.

But what happened next took him completely by surprise.

Along the way, investigators and nano warriors he passed by watched him with unusual excitement in their eyes.

Some older women even came up to him, asking if he could display his Evolutionary State so they could take a picture with him.

Gu Jianlin was utterly bewildered, fleeing in panic.

When he finally opened the forum to look around, he understood what was going on.

Most young people these days had little knowledge of the Ancient Catastrophe that happened two centuries ago. They had no idea how brutal and bloody that war had been.

Chapter 458 - 225: The Secret of the Sea of Eternal Life_2

The Ether Association's principles of confidentiality wouldn't permit them to educate others on these matters.

Young people's thought process, however, is much simpler.

Powerful, and attractive.

As long as these two qualities are met, that's enough.

If one can acquire the Ancient God's power while staying rational, who wouldn't want that?

As for those posts condemning Evolvers as traitors to humanity—

And those emphasizing the threat posed by Evolvers—

They've all been drowned out by irrelevant content.

Gu Jianlin murmured suspiciously, "Cheng Youyu?"

He thought to himself, could this be the work of Fatty's lackeys?

Gu Jianlin tried reaching out but received no response.

It seemed the person had already entered the Ancient God Realm.

Today's dimensional fluctuation had a four-hour window, enough for Ascenders to travel between the two worlds.

There were barely any people left at the Black Cloud Base; they must have all ventured inside.

At the end of the 21st century, some had compared the Ancient God Realm to a massive multiplayer online RPG. Ascenders entered to slay monsters, level up, and explore maps, occasionally stumbling upon cities left behind by ultra-ancient civilizations—akin to dungeon instances—and the ancient history served as the storyline.

The analogy was certainly apt.

Since the Qilin Immortal Palace's dimensional stability was restored, Ascenders worldwide had flocked to it.

Pioneering the unknown was akin to being an open-beta player.

Those who had snuck in earlier through dimensional rifts were like cheaters.

In other words, closed-beta players.

But in reality, this wasn't a game; it was a war.

Or perhaps... an ecosystem.

Just as ordinary people need to earn money, Ascenders need to ascend ranks.

In the real world, regular advancement avenues are through wealth.

In the Extraordinary World, the main path to ascension is through power.

Many Fallen and Unclean have even chosen to settle directly within the Qilin Immortal Palace.

The real world simply held no refuge for them any longer.

Markets, tribes, towns, cities—

Human settlements sprouted one after another. Most people, once inside, had no intention of ever leaving.

But if one wanted to log off, meaning to return to the real world, they'd have to wait for a dimensional fluctuation.

Logging back in worked the same way.

"This time entering the Ancient God Realm, I must ascend to the Fourth Rank as quickly as possible."

Gu Jianlin murmured under his breath: "The roots of the Roaring Tree Monster, the hair of the Charming Lady, the heart of the Mutant, the Egg of Ruin, Corrosive Magma. Youzhu's already gotten me the Corrosive Magma; as for the rest, I can probably check the resource vault in Dawn City. Most importantly, the ritual for ascension."

To perform a battle so staggering it elevates the spirit.

At this point, his spirituality was brimming.

Obtaining the materials wasn't difficult; supposedly, after gathering everything, one could seal it in an Alchemy Scroll.

After completing the ritual, opening the scroll would instantly ensure ascension.

The ritual was the centerpiece.

Even after his five-on-one battle aboard the Bren Hill, Gu Jianlin hadn't felt his mind elevate.

What counts as a staggering battle?

After the ordeal aboard the Bren Hill, Gu Jianlin deeply understood how inadequate his combat strength still was.

Ascending to Fourth-Order Cloud Monarch in the Divine Path grants dominion over the battlefield.

It comes with the ability to control corpses.

On the other hand, Fourth-tier Shura in the Ghost Slayer Path is reputed to be the strongest in one-on-one matches of the same rank.

This is due to the overwhelming power of the Space Freeze ability.

This time around, his goal was to upgrade both his main body and shadow to the Fourth Rank.

"There's one crucial matter left—Minister Lu's ascension."

Gu Jianlin muttered softly.

The business with the Sea of Eternal Life weighed heavily on his mind, especially after seeing that video. In it, he had glimpsed a familiar Alchemy Furnace with ghastly white bones inside—clear signs of human transmutation.

"Xu Fu is highly likely still alive and has already left the underwater tomb. Even the three thousand child boys and girls are missing. No one knows where he's gone, yet traces of human transmutation have appeared in ruins near the Sea of Eternal Life. Doesn't this at least prove that Xu Fu has been here?"

"More importantly, this ties back to the Lin Family's massacre case. At that time, the Qilin Immortal Palace hadn't even been explored. How, then, did they acquire the Penglai Ascension Array?"

He looked down at the video on his phone, as well as the text description below it.

The so-called Sea of Eternal Life is a supernatural location that exists solely in the Ancient God Realm. All who die there have their life force utterly consumed, while their souls wander aimlessly in the ocean depths, never to find release.

For this reason, it brims with immense life force but is likewise extremely perilous.

Generally speaking, Heavenly Masters seek out the Sea of Eternal Life when ascending to the Holy Land, using the abundant vitality of the sea, while in a profoundly weakened state, to complete a rebirth.

This allows them to step into the Holy Land in one leap.

But the Sea of Eternal Life holds more secrets than just these.

There was once a talentless Ascender who accidentally ventured deep into the Sea of Eternal Life.

No one knows what they experienced.

But when they returned, they had been completely reborn, reinvented.

Not only had their appearance improved, but their talent had also been elevated, allowing them to ascend into an elite genius.

No one knew what they had gained.

Terminal cancer patients on the brink of death have entered it and returned fully rejuvenated.

With no trace of cancer cells left, as though they had never existed.

Indeed, it is quite miraculous.

"This matter involves Xu Fu, and what he's doing connects to both the Qilin and Candle Dragon Supremes."

Gu Jianlin murmured softly: "This isn't just a rivalry between two ministers but will also see interference from the Order of the Hidden, that meddlesome force. Especially since this damned organization has agents embedded in every faction."

Utterly hazardous.

And still, no word as to where the Ancient God's Blood will ultimately land.

What a headache.

Just then, the Black Qilin within his consciousness started trembling.

Someone was calling him!

Gu Jianlin quickly stepped into a public restroom, releasing the seal of the Lock of Nonexistence and connecting to the fragments of the Qilin Wedge.

The world shattered in an instant.

In a haze, the Sea Demon slowly regained consciousness.

She suddenly jolted in shock, realizing this wasn't the depths of the Qilin Immortal Palace's tomb at all but an entirely unfamiliar world. It was shrouded in pitch-black fog, resembling an abyss, utterly devoid of light.

A pitch-dark, silent world where fog entwined with the darkness, and black holes revealed the primordial obscurity of the universe.

"Su... Supreme?"

She knelt, terrified and confused, surveying her surroundings.

In the depths of the darkness, a pair of blazing golden eyes appeared, radiating majesty and fury.

Seeing these golden eyes, an overwhelming pressure surged into her mind. Cold sweat drenched her black camisole, prompting her to instinctively pull her jacket closer and kneel even lower.

"Sea Demon, paying respects to the Supreme."

In the darkness, Gu Jianlin remained silent, looking down on her.

"Supreme... have you broken free from your shackles?"

The Sea Demon lifted her elegant, alluring face, delighted, and asked, "Why have I appeared here?"

Gu Jianlin's inner thoughts remained still.

If I didn't drag you here, and you happened to run into the old monster, you'd probably be as good as gone.

Modern humans, even Ascenders, if they haven't participated in the wars against the Ancient God Clan, have no concrete concept of what it means to interact with a god.

They could only approach gods as if they were people.

Back then, the original group of five felt the same way.

Of course, aside from his Female Sacrifice, the other four had all come with the determination to die.

Thus, they had nothing to lose.

You're a god, so what? If push comes to shove, I'll die right in front of you.

Moreover, apart from gods, killing them would be as easy for Holy Land Level beings as playing games.

Thinking along these lines, aside from the innate fear of the unknown deep within, there wasn't much else to fear.

As for the Sea Demon, she was exceedingly clever—maintaining a sweet and innocent facade to mask her true self, ensuring her usefulness. Otherwise, no matter what, for an Ancient Supreme, discarding her would be effortless.

In the darkness, faint, ancient whispers began to stir.

"Supreme, I don't have much time left."

The Sea Demon knelt low, speaking: "I wish to trade for a drop of Ancient God's Blood."

The silence offered no reply.

Using Life Perception, Gu Jianlin could easily discern that the woman before him wasn't anywhere near losing control.

On the contrary, she had remarkable self-restraint.

But given the Sea Demon's intelligence, there was no way she didn't realize she couldn't deceive an Ancient Supreme.

Which left only one possibility.

This woman wasn't seeking the Ancient God's Blood to save her life.

She had another purpose!

The Sea Demon took a deep breath, speaking with great reverence: "I'm willing to exchange the Lin Family's secret for this precious drop of Ancient God's Blood. I believe you will be very interested in this. Just 157 years ago, the Lin Family's ancestor ventured into the Qilin Immortal Palace and explored the Sea of Eternal Life."

She paused. "This is an absolutely forbidden secret within the Lin Family!"

Chapter 459 - 226 Ji Zhou, Divine General

In the depths of the darkness, Gu Jianlin heard the mention of the Lin Family, and a realization dawned in his heart.

The Sea Demon knelt on the ground, earnestly explaining, "Over the past two thousand years, this coastal city, Peak City, has witnessed the rise of many Ascender families. Among them, the Gu Family is the oldest but has now fallen into decline. The Lin Family, on the other hand, emerged most recently, and until its annihilation, it was the most powerful family in Peak City."

"This is because, a little over a hundred years ago, the Lin Family utilized dimensional rifts to enter the Qilin Immortal Palace. At that time, Xu Fu, who served as the Gatekeeper, was no longer there."

She paused. "An ancestor of the Lin Family discovered Xu Fu's research product in a mystical location within the Qilin Immortal Palace. It was called the Penglai Ascension Array. And that place... it was called the Sea of Eternal Life!"

As expected!

Gu Jianlin remained silent, patiently awaiting the continuation.

"According to the Lin Family's ancestors, Xu Fu likely left the Underwater Palace a century ago. He might have encountered some problem, prompting him to seek the Sea of Eternal Life for a solution."

The Sea Demon said, "Clearly, Xu Fu was under the control of the Candle Dragon Venerable. Everything Xu Fu did was under the Candle Dragon Venerable's orders. Now, the Ether Association has issued a mission to explore the Sea of Eternal Life. Unfortunately, only Omega members and Guardians are allowed to participate in this mission, but I will do my best to secure a spot."

"For you, I will uncover the secrets of the Sea of Eternal Life—something no one else can accomplish. As a member of the Ether Association, I can leverage their vast influence to achieve this."

She paused again. "This is a supreme honor for me."

Amidst the silence, a faint whisper could be heard: "But I suspect you have other motives for exploring the Sea of Eternal Life."

The Sea Demon shuddered in fear.

"What is your connection to the Lin Family?"

The calm tone of the question sent chills down her spine.

The Sea Demon, filled with unease, replied in a low voice, "I am the last survivor of the Lin Family. Years ago, the Lin Family was wiped out by the Judgement Court because of their research into the Penglai Ascension Array, which led to the emergence of numerous Fallen. To save myself, I betrayed dozens of Lin Family members, including my adopted father, and used a special method to evade the Judgement Court's investigation."

Her voice was laden with immense dread. "The Judgement Court did not discover the existence of the Penglai Ascension Array. But later, when I secretly returned to the Lin Family's underground chamber to search for those ancient artifacts, I found that..."

Suddenly, Gu Jianlin said indifferently, "Those things are all gone."

The Sea Demon froze.

"Just because the Judgement Court didn't discover them doesn't mean no one else did. From the beginning, you've been under someone's watch—without even knowing it. Fortunately for you, you still hold value in their eyes, which is why they haven't acted against you yet."

Gu Jianlin spoke calmly.

The Sea Demon felt as though she had fallen into an icy abyss, her blood running cold.

An overwhelming fear, like an endless vortex, consumed her, leaving her trembling and cold.

First, she'd been under surveillance all along.

Second, this Ancient Supreme was becoming more and more... human.

Moreover, how had He, while trapped in the Qilin Immortal Palace, come to know so much?

Could it be... He had escaped!

For a moment, the Sea Demon's mind went blank, and she felt she might faint on the spot.

But the next words almost caused her to collapse entirely.

"What is your relationship with Lin Lan?"

Gu Jianlin's question struck like a clap of thunder.

The Sea Demon's delicate body swayed as if about to fall. It took her a long time to gather her thoughts and mutter in a daze:

"He is my adopted father's legitimate son... my brother."

At this point, Gu Jianlin had pieced everything together.

By rights, he should have directly bestowed a drop of the Ancient God's Blood to control this woman.

But the problem was, this woman was a member of the Ether Association.

If she became a Divine Servant, the likelihood of being discovered was far too high.

And if she lacked sufficient talent and her body exploded on the spot, it would be a total loss.

For now, he decided to wait and see—at least until the current mission was completed.

The Sea of Eternal Life had to be explored.

And Lin Lan was also a key figure because he had once been Uncle Mu's teammate!

A very important witness.

"Explore the Sea of Eternal Life, and you will receive what you desire afterward."

Gu Jianlin enunciated each word: "Make the most of this chance."

The Sea Demon felt as if she had been granted amnesty. "Thank you, Supreme One, for your mercy."

"It's just that, with my current status, I cannot participate in this mission."

She said, "Moreover, recently, I've been closely watched by a few Judgement Court lackeys, and I can't keep this hidden for much longer."

The darkness seemed to collapse around her as if she were being pulled away from this world.

In the end, only faint whispers echoed in her ears.

"Someone will naturally deal with this matter for you."

With a thunderous crash!

Lin Wanqiu felt the world spinning. When her vision cleared again, she found herself back in her office.

The room was filled with alchemy charm papers, etched with sinister and bizarre patterns.

This was an Alchemy Matrix, meant to shield her secrets from detection.

Her alluring, delicate face was filled with confusion as she collapsed into her chair, visibly shaken. Cold sweat drenched the black tank top and white lab coat she wore, her body trembling slightly.

Terror.

It was too terrifying.

This was a God. In His presence, mortals had no secrets.

Only that foolish Pharmacist Old Thief would believe he could threaten an Ancient Supreme.

At that moment, her phone suddenly vibrated, and a message from the Deep Space Network appeared.

"Respected Grade-A Investigator, Lin Wanqiu."

Chapter 460 - 226 Ji Zhou, Divine General_2

"Omega Sequence, B-level Investigator Gu Jianlin, invites you to join the Guardian Sequence."

"Do you agree?"

Her beautiful eyes widened as she watched the scene, her pupils trembling.

How could it be like this.

"Could it be... this little guy is also one of the Supreme's people?"

Lin Wanqiu felt a chill down her spine, her mind racing with countless scenarios, all of which she forcibly suppressed.

She couldn't let her imagination run wild anymore—these things had nothing to do with her.

Without hesitation, Lin Wanqiu clicked "Agree," and was instantly enveloped in a tremendous sense of security.

Praise the Supreme!

However, as she looked at the twilight outside the window, she let out a soft sigh, picked up the phone, and said, "Dr. Liu, I'll be heading to the Ancient God Realm for a mission soon. I'll leave the hospital in your hands—please make sure to take good care of these patients. Especially those Unclean ones from the shelters."

"Whatever you do, don't let them get bullied again, or else the 'Chair-Killer Maniac' might storm in and tear our hospital apart. Oh, and that pollution filtration device is ready for use; please pay special attention to that little girl named Wanwan—she's pitiful... deduct the treatment fees directly from my account."

She smiled faintly.

On the other end of the call, Dr. Liu froze, his tone laced with disbelief: "Captain Lin, are you sure? This treatment plan will cost a few million. Can your savings handle this?"

Lin Wanqiu rolled her eyes and said, her voice taking on a coquettish tone, "What do you know? I'm heading to the Immortal Palace this time; I'll need to rely heavily on that handsome little guy. Gotta butter him up so I can come back alive, you know?"

Dr. Liu teased, "I see... you're really sparing no expense."

Lin Wanqiu huffed, "If he weren't uninterested in me, I'd even consider sleeping with him..."

A massive Qilin Floating Island blotted out the sun, plunging the world into darkness.

When Gu Jianlin regained his vision, he was greeted by sweeping, howling yellow sand and ancient, majestic stone structures. They resembled palaces where giants might reside, dotted with enormous, eerie stone statues.

He stood within an ancient giant stone array, sporadic flashes of aurora-like light streaking across the sky.

Investigators were emerging from the matrix.

It felt like a revival spawn point.

In the process of pioneering the Ancient God Realm, people established their own civilizations here.

Weaker factions set up black markets.

Those slightly stronger formed tribes.

And the truly powerful ones directly conquered cities of the Ancient God Clan, claiming them as their own.

It's said that when the Ether Association built Dawn City here, they had to clear out a staggering sixty thousand living corpses.

Commander Lu of the Dawn Combat Sequence personally led the army, nearly flattening the tide of living corpses. He even clashed with several Ancient Ancestors, battling for nearly half a month before fully conquering the area.

Since then, this became the Ether Association's base in the Ancient God Realm.

The Heavenly Person Realm above their heads was resplendent, like a sun suspended in the heavens.

But Gu Jianlin felt deeply uncomfortable. Though the Breathing Technique was enhanced here, his spirituality had long since reached its limit, and the effects of the Realm of Freedom were constant and didn't require amplification.

How annoying.

"Brother Lin! Over here, over here!"

He saw a chubby guy wearing a headscarf waving at him, dressed like an Arab.

Cheng Youyu.

Nie Xiangsi, wearing a hood, stood beside him, smiling warmly as she waved at Gu Jianlin.

"You two are here too."

Gu Jianlin walked over, nodding slightly: "Where's Zhang Cheng?"

"Oh, Brother Cheng went back home to get married. His parents aren't in great health and want to hold their grandchildren soon."

Cheng Youyu rubbed his hands excitedly, his eyes sparkling as he clicked his tongue and said, "Brother Lin, you won't believe this, but Xiangsi and I have both advanced to Third Rank—and we've become Omega too! We're counting on you to look out for us from now on!"

Nie Xiangsi smiled faintly and explained, "Because of the unexpected incident in the Returning Burial Forest last time, we lost quite a number of elites. And after yesterday's battle with the You Ying Group, many low-tier Omegas were severely injured and forced to withdraw. So the two of us were promoted unexpectedly and are now part of the Third Tier."

Gu Jianlin thought, So that's how it is. "Wait, you fought the You Ying Group?"

"Yeah, over Ancient God's Blood. The fighting still hasn't stopped."

Cheng Youyu said, "It's a total free-for-all. They even sunk the Bren Hill. The battle continued until this afternoon, and then they entered the Ancient God Realm through the West Port entrance. They're still at it."

"My uncle has been coordinating our forces, and he hasn't slept for a whole day and night."

Nie Xiangsi added, "This is a direct conflict between the Ether Association and the You Ying Group."

"Serves them right!"

A parrot squawked loudly.

Seeing the odd expressions on their faces, Gu Jianlin quickly covered the bird's beak and changed the subject, "I'm here today to redeem a Mythical Weapon. Where's the Omega Sequence's resource vault for those?"

"What a coincidence!"

Cheng Youyu slapped his thigh. "Xiāngsi and I were just about to exchange some materials. Let's go together."

Nie Xiangsi curiously asked, "How many merits do you have?"

Gu Jianlin had almost forgotten about this. He pulled out his phone and checked the Deep Space Official Website.

"What the hell!"

The parrot's eyes widened: "Seventeen thousand!"

Gu Jianlin was stunned: "How's it that much?"

"Brother Lin, stop flexing on us like that."

Cheng Youyu winced, a toothache-like expression on his face. "How many Ancient God Seeds' nests have you raided to get that much merit?"

Nie Xiangsi shook her head. "Even that wouldn't result in so much merit."