

Ancient 47

Chapter 47 - 21 Affinity

The sound of the tides roared in the night as waves crashed against the rocks, spraying foam into the air.

The lighthouse on the coast cast a bright beam of light, slowly sweeping across the pitch-black sea, faintly illuminating a colossal figure hidden in the mist, its reflection on the water resembling the shadow of a giant turtle.

Mechanical clatters mingled with the sharp screech of steel cables tightening and the piercing wail of a ship's horn.

This was a massive floating platform at sea, a revolutionary creation by Deep Space Technology, hailed as an industrial masterpiece of its era. It was specially designed for operations at sea and was currently being used for excavations at the ruins of the Qilin Immortal Palace.

Lu Zijin sat by the railing of the open-air restaurant, gazing at the turbulent waves, and said nonchalantly, "Although the seal of the Qilin Immortal Palace hasn't been officially broken, the stream of Spiritual Crystals and Extraordinary Materials from the ruins over these millennia has been a significant harvest. It's enough to nurture quite a few talented young individuals."

The woman, youthful in appearance but ageless in reality, took a sip from her strawberry juice through a straw.

She then squinted her eyes, looking very content.

Across the round table, two other people sat.

One of them wore a black-and-white patterned coat with a dark gold cross emblem stitched onto the chest. He rested his crossed hands on the table, a Rolex gold watch on his right wrist and a black ring on the ring finger of his left hand.

He appeared to be around forty years old, his face stern and somber, with thinning hair atop his head.

"Once this matter is resolved, Minister Lu might even have a chance for a promotion," he said expressionlessly.

In the Ether Association, the positions of the thirteen regional ministers were crucial, though their authority wasn't particularly vast.

What the higher-ups of the association valued was their exceptional combat prowess, which allowed them to handle situations independently.

Thus, they weren't typically granted much say in policymaking.

"Apologies, Nie, the Deacon. I have no interest in promotions. After all, even if I were promoted, it would mean joining your Judgment Court, burying myself in endless clerical work, and losing all my hair in the process," Lu Zijin said while licking her pink, cherry-like lips. "The only thing that interests me is the Qilin Immortal Palace."

Hearing the word "hair," Nie, the Deacon's eyelids twitched slightly.

Lu Zijin let out a cold snort.

Just a short while ago, the two had a heated argument over a boy surnamed Gu.

Given that, their current meeting naturally wasn't a cordial one.

At this moment, the third person spoke up calmly, "After all, it's the Qilin Immortal Palace—who wouldn't yearn for it?"

The speaker was a mixed-race man in his thirties, dressed impeccably in a tailored suit. His neatly combed short hair gleamed in pale gold, and his strikingly handsome, well-defined features carried an air of dignity. His deep-set eyes held a warm but profound gaze.

When Nie, the Deacon looked at this man, his tone noticeably carried an additional note of respect: "The gates of the Qilin Immortal Palace could open at any moment, yet so much has happened beforehand. It all feels like an ominous sign."

"This is both an opportunity and a harbinger of infinite peril. Those newcomers awakened by the Qilin Immortal Palace certainly won't access its core secrets. None of us truly know what lies within."

He sighed, "And frankly, I'm deeply concerned about the Fallen Organization causing trouble."

The man smiled faintly but said nothing.

"Because of the issues surrounding the Immortal Palace, our Judgment Court has been utterly exhausted. Ever since the Blood Moon Slaughter Incident, plenty of surviving culprits have been running amok within the province, none of whom have been captured yet. Meanwhile, those major Fallen Organizations remain vigilant and waiting for their chance," Nie, the Deacon remarked tactfully. "I believe Peak City still needs a Catastrophe-level figure to hold the line."

The man smiled slightly. "Rest assured, Deacon. My master arrived in Peak City three days ago."

With such an offhand comment, Nie, the Deacon's face lit up with unrestrained joy. "Really?"

The man nodded.

"Since that esteemed figure is already here, then we can finally rest easy."

Clearing his throat, Nie, the Deacon asked, "Should I gather people to pay our respects?"

The man waved him off, declining politely, "He dislikes being disturbed."

Meanwhile, Lu Zijin sipped her strawberry juice, her bright, expressive eyes brimming with disdain.

The people from the Judgment Court were all the same.

Humble and submissive to the strong, ruthless and oppressive to the weak.

Still, this was understandable.

After all, the man sitting before her was one of that esteemed figure's disciples. If it were someone from the Lu Family instead, they'd be fawning just as much.

Nie, the Deacon had merely asked out of courtesy. He knew his status wasn't significant enough to warrant a meeting with that esteemed individual.

"Then we won't disturb you further. But if there's anything you need, just let us know," he said, pulling out a tablet from his briefcase and handing it over. "Speaking of which, this is a list of newcomers trained at the Peak City branch and the Judgment Court. I wonder if any of them might catch that esteemed figure's eye?"

Even Lu Zijin couldn't help but perk up.

Though she found the Judgment Court detestable, their interests were aligned within this jurisdiction.

According to rumors, that esteemed figure had always been looking to take on one more disciple. His years of roaming had largely been for that very purpose.

If one of these newcomers became his disciple...

The significance was self-evident.

However, the man didn't even glance at the tablet. Though his gentle smile remained, his eyes carried a palpable arrogance that brooked no argument. "That won't be necessary. My master's criteria for accepting disciples have always been extraordinarily strict. If I recall correctly, the number of Divine priests in the Peak City branch has always been sparse. If not for the descent of the Qilin Immortal Palace, it would likely remain so."