

Ancient 571

Chapter 571: Night Attack of the Young Girl, The Tang Family's Secret_2

This is the symbol of power and status.

At this moment, Gu Jianlin suddenly turned his gaze toward someone—

Mu Qingyou.

"Is something the matter?"

Mu Qingyou's eyes as she looked at him were complex, especially when they landed on the sword scabbard in his hand.

As an inheritor of the Sword Tomb, it was impossible for her not to recognize what this was.

She also knew that the young man before her had a significant connection with her junior sister.

Back then, she had even wanted to recruit this young man.

But now, it seemed there was no longer a chance.

"Do you know Tang Zijing?"

Gu Jianlin asked calmly.

When Mu Qingyou heard that name, her face turned cold. She replied, "Of course. Both of my elder brothers died by his hands. How could I not know him? He is the disgrace of the Sword Tomb, the shame of the Ether Association. If you want more details, then I'm not the one to ask. When he defected, I was still very young."

It seemed she had no desire to speak further on this topic and turned to leave.

Gu Jianlin lowered his gaze to the sword scabbard in his hand, suddenly realizing that he may have never truly understood that girl.

"Taixu."

He asked in a deep voice, "I want to meet Senior Ji Zhou."

Unexpectedly, Taixu replied, "Senior Ji Zhou is not currently aboard the Deep Blue."

Gu Jianlin was stunned. He never thought that Senior Ji had left!

What should he do now?

He desperately wanted to learn the origins of the Lishan Tiyan Pavilion group.

Because it related to Tang Ling.

In a sancual-ridden meeting room, Taihua raised her eyes to look at the assembled high-level figures.

"The Heavenly Person Seed is only one step away from being fully nurtured."

She said indifferently, "At this critical juncture, I hope there won't be any further mishaps."

Upon hearing the words "Heavenly Person Seed," Bai Feng nodded slightly. "Even if we must pay with our lives, we will make sure the Heavenly Person Seed is nurtured fully, completing the Heavenly Personification. This was also the wish of our dear elder brother."

"I must warn all of you, the nurturing of the Heavenly Person Seed is no longer a secret. The Red King also had a hand in this plan before his death, and there is no guarantee that the Dark World won't catch wind of our actions and attempt to sabotage us."

He paused. "According to our foreknowledge, this is highly likely."

The Ye Dao Saint let out a cold snort and remarked indifferently, "Lord Rhine has personally taken the lead. If the Dusk Organization makes any move, he will undoubtedly uncover it. When the time comes, they will pay a heavy price."

The Profound Yin Saint chuckled. "With Lord Rhine taking action, there will be no mistakes."

Surprisingly, Bai Feng shook his head. "That is exactly why I must remind you all. According to our foreknowledge, the Dusk Organization has brought forth an exceedingly powerful creature. Even we cannot foresee its presence. Though its power may not be overwhelming, it is indeed a critical key capable of unlocking immense forces."

Han Jing frowned and asked, "Who is it?"

The newly ascended Holy Land-level Night Watcher, Ji Feng, spoke up. "In our encounters with the Dusk Organization, we have never heard of such a person—unless they emerged from nowhere."

Even Lin Dong seemed intrigued. "Senior Bai, why not explain further?"

Bai Feng spoke gravely. "We don't know either. All we know is that it is an extremely dangerous woman who has been carefully protected by the Dark World. They are scheming something with the Sea of Eternal Life."

The information was vague and mysterious, leaving everyone feeling puzzled.

"This woman has very unique traits, making her almost imperceptible to us. The only time we sensed her presence, she was singing."

Bai Mu shook his head and added, "Beyond that, I cannot disclose anything."

The high-level figures exchanged looks with one another.

The Lishan Tiyan Pavilion's warning could not be taken lightly.

But this time, it felt too ambiguous.

At that moment, there was a knock at the door.

Ji Ye entered, leading a group clad in black robes.

Tang Yun followed at the end, his face devoid of any expression, as if nothing had just occurred.

"We have results from the investigation into the Rebirth Matrix."

Ji Ye placed a document on the long table and said, "President, only you may read it."

At midnight, Gu Jianlin returned to his room. It was a luxurious suite with all the expected amenities. Warm air circulated from the air conditioner, making the space quite cozy.

Outside the porthole, the wind and snow roared, while below lay a frozen city.

"Phew."

He placed the sword bag on the table, lay down on the bed, and sank into thought.

For two whole hours, he had wandered the ship.

Yet, he hadn't encountered a single high-level official.

This clearly meant that the entire Ether Association's top brass was avoiding him.

He vaguely sensed something unusual.

"Jiuyin, what are those artificial Ancestors all about?"

Gu Jianlin couldn't suppress his curiosity any longer.

Jiuyin replied coolly, "How should I know? Those bizarre creations were devised by the Bai Ze Clan. But the basic principle is fairly simple: the souls of the Ancestors lie dormant within these human vessels. You can think of them as containers. Using human bodies to house Ancestors' souls will only cause them to become less and less human."

Gu Jianlin frowned and asked, "What about Tang Ling?"

Jiuyin asked back, "Who is Tang Ling?"

Gu Jianlin was momentarily stumped. "That Female Sacrifice."

Jiuyin vibrated faintly and said, "Oh, that girl? She's almost dead."

Gu Jianlin was shocked. "What did you say?"

Jiuyin scoffed. "You should know that the power of the Qilin Venerable is to rule over life and death. Its authority lies in devouring. However, the authority among the Ancient God Clan isn't so rigidly divided. For instance, if the Qilin Venerable permitted it, it could also create a ritual that grants others the ability to devour."

Gu Jianlin pondered for a moment. "You're suggesting?"

"That Female Sacrifice used some method to devour certain members of the Ancient God Clan, leading to some kind of mutation. According to Bai Ze Venerable's prophecy from thousands of years ago, this should be termed as 'Evolver.'"

Jiuyin replied.

Gu Jianlin thought to himself that it was true. Bai Ze Venerable had foreseen the President and the emergence of Green and Red.

It was only natural that they would also foresee the existence of Evolvers.

"However, this method is far too brutal, and that Female Sacrifice seems to have been born with an extremely rare illness."

Jiuyin paused. "This illness allows her to merge the powers of a Heavenly Person and an Evolver."

Gu Jianlin fell silent. "Is it possible for me to acquire the power of a Heavenly Person?"

Jiuyin chuckled. "How would I know?"

For a brief moment, Gu Jianlin suddenly became alert. Rolling over, he snatched the sword bag and tucked it under the blanket.

This was because he heard the sound of the door lock breaking—someone had tampered with it.

Gu Jianlin closed his eyes and pretended to be asleep.

After all, this was the Deep Blue. How could anyone launch an attack here?

The intruder's Life Rhythm was entirely unfamiliar, someone he'd never encountered before.

Someone stood by his bed, their presence accompanied by a faint fragrance, suggesting it was a girl.

She leaned down, seemingly intending to do something.

In that instant, black Ghost Fire erupted on Gu Jianlin's forehead as he bolted upright and seized her throat without hesitation!

In the dim light, he caught sight of the intruder's face.

Tang Yun!

In the blink of an eye, their positions switched.

Gu Jianlin pinned Tang Yun to the bed by her neck. Her cascade of white hair spread out like a waterfall, and her face—angelic and flawless, akin to a Heavenly Person—remained expressionless, evoking the thunderous moment he had once seen before, only slightly more youthful.

"What are you trying to do?"

Gu Jianlin pressed his knee against her abdomen, locking her neck tightly, and asked coldly.

Yet Tang Yun appeared utterly calm, merely stating flatly, "So rough. My sister likes your type?"

Gu Jianlin was momentarily stunned by her remark.

"If you prefer to maintain this position or even wish to take things further, feel free."

Tang Yun continued indifferently, "I only came to tell you not to trust anyone. Especially not the people from the Ether Association or the Lishan Tiyan Pavilion. None of them are good. You need to save my sister."

Gu Jianlin was slightly startled. "What did you say?"

Tang Yun's gaze was as calm as a still lake. She spoke deliberately, "Thanks to you, I've regained some humanity and memories, no longer controlled by the Ancestor inside me. If you possess this ability, I hope you can save my sister. Because every one of them is a liar. My great-grandfather, Tang Zijing, was a top-tier Alchemy Master!"

Gu Jianlin hadn't expected such a twist.

Suddenly, many things clicked in his mind.

Back then, Uncle Mu had warned him about the blood mist in the Underwater Palace.

The source of that blood mist was undoubtedly Tang Zijing.

And during the events at the Returning Burial Forest, ten Omegas had gone missing, yet none had died by Tang Zijing's hand.

If Tang Zijing truly intended to kill, how could those Omegas have survived?

Especially during the journey to the Sea of Eternal Life.

The coded message Old Gu had left hadn't been erased.

Even someone as formidable as Tai Zhuo had fallen to their hands.

And Tang Zijing himself was an Alchemy Master!

"Does this mean... he's been helping us all along?"

Gu Jianlin murmured, "What exactly is his goal?"

Chapter 572: I Only Love Lord Alone

Gu Jianlin's thoughts were like a violent storm, forgotten details flashing through his mind in an instant.

He faintly realized something and was just about to release his grip.

"I suggest you don't let go of your hand. Just keep controlling me, maybe even tighten your grasp."

On the soft, spacious bed, Tang Yun's white hair spilled across her shoulders. She wasn't wearing her vintage black robe today, but instead donned a loose black sweater paired with a short red skirt. Her slender legs wrapped in black silk stockings were curled up slightly.

Her delicate, flawless face was flushed from the struggle to breathe, looking strangely peculiar.

"Do you have some weird fetish? Or did you get scolded by me earlier and decided to sneak over here in the middle of the night to provoke me, recording it to send to my sister later?"

Gu Jianlin said expressionlessly: "My relationship with your sister isn't like what you're imagining."

Unexpectedly, Tang Yun's pale face grew faintly red as she gasped for air. "What are you thinking about? I'm only worried that I won't be able to suppress the Ancestor inside me, that it may suddenly act out and attack you. That's why I want you to hold me even tighter. Otherwise, if I lose control and attack you, things could get troublesome."

"Also, your Sword Scabbard is made from my cousin's Golden Crow Feather Robe, which is her intimate garment."

Her eyes carried suspicion: "If you truly have no inappropriate relationship with her, why would she give you something like that?"

Intimate garment.

Gu Jianlin thought to himself, "So what? I've touched even your sister's back."

And nothing happened then either.

"Anyway, listen to me. I don't recall much, but I know the Ether Association and Lishan Tiyan Pavilion have two top-secret core projects. One is the Heavenly Person Transformation Plan, and the other is the Yihua Plan. I benefited from the latter, but the former supposedly has a connection to the Ghost Valley Secret Treasure."

Tang Yun, gasping for breath, spoke seriously: "This is the ultimate pinnacle of human civilization, said to be tied to the Heavenly Person's Wedge. Even the Supremes harbor fear and greed toward it."

Heavenly Person Transformation!

Gu Jianlin instinctively shuddered upon hearing the term, as it reminded him of Ancient God Transformation.

And more than that, even Jiuyin vibrated faintly.

"If I'm not wrong, both projects have been applied to my sister. When I was brought to Lishan, they claimed to be curing me, but I felt like I wasn't sick. Rather, my humanity became increasingly detached, my memory increasingly fragmented. Sometimes when I recall my parents and sister, they don't feel like family but strangers."

Tang Yun, drenched in fragrant sweat, panted heavily: "No one here deserves your trust. You must save my sister."

Gu Jianlin was silent for a moment, thinking to himself that it's no wonder the Ether Association's higher-ups were avoiding him.

"Do you know anything else?"

He frowned, asking.

Tang Yun shook her head, her breathing growing heavier.

But at that very moment, the sound of footsteps suddenly approached.

"Play along."

Tang Yun said softly.

Gu Jianlin's hand loosened, only for her to flip him underneath her, her slender legs wrapped tightly around his body.

"What are you two doing?"

Han Jing had come after receiving an alert about unauthorized intrusion, only to be greeted by this scene. Her cold, elegant face was tinged with unnaturalness as she said icily, "Kids these days are really out of control!"

Ji Ye, hidden within his black robe, coldly observed everything and asked, "What's going on?"

Gu Jianlin lay on the bed, his mind racing at top speed, yet he couldn't figure out how to explain this.

"Nothing important. It's just the side effects of Mythical Weapon affecting me. My Illusion Dream Eye causes feelings of admiration for stronger individuals, creating desire for those males who can defeat me. I just wanted to see the kind of person who could earn my sister's favor and even receive her Golden Crow Feather Robe." Tang Yun rose, expressionless.

She had apparently prepared this excuse in advance.

Han Jing hesitated to speak, for from her position, there wasn't much she could say.

Even Ji Ye didn't think too deeply about it, merely saying emotionlessly: "Let's go. Be more cautious next time."

Tang Yun inclined her head slightly, giving the young man a meaningful look before turning and leaving.

Once the two had walked far away.

Han Jing entered the room and glanced around, her tone exasperated: "What the hell is going on? A teenager behaving like this—I recall you're a few months shy of adulthood, yet you can't seem to control yourself?"

Gu Jianlin rarely felt this embarrassed, but because of the critical nature of the prior discussion, he had no choice but to swallow the situation whole: "Got it. I'll be more careful next time."

From his backpack, the parrot poked its head out, only for him to push it back inside.

He understood now.

Turns out, Tang Yun had planned this all along.

Gu Jianlin's Supreme aura temporarily suppressed the Ancestor within her.

It caused the young woman's humanity to slowly reawaken.

The catch was, she held onto grudges.

Thus, she chose this particular means to take revenge on him.

Indeed, young women are quite cunning.

Han Jing clearly had some unresolved matters with Old Gu. Even now, she seemed to recall their old bond, reprimanding: "I understand you're in your adolescence, but you can't just flirt aimlessly. Even if you believe in overcoming curses, you should still consider the feelings of the girls involved."

"Thunder has things to deal with currently. Her younger sister came to find you, and you couldn't refuse? Or was it because she resembles her sister, and you saw her as a substitute? When Thunder returns, what will you do?"

She scolded him: "How are you going to explain this to her?"

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Gu Jianlin thought to himself, "I really don't have that kind of relationship with her," and eventually could only hold his forehead in exasperation.

"And then there's the Moon Princess. She's been with you for so long, you two even live together, don't you?"

Han Jing's face was icy: "Wait, don't tell me you've already..."

Gu Jianlin almost had a stress response and retorted, "I haven't! Before the curse is solved, I'm not considering marriage or relationships."

Han Jing froze for a moment, then showed a satisfied expression.

Gu Jianlin looked at this woman and suddenly had a thought: "Um, you and my father..."

Han Jing, recalling events from years past, said with a stern face: "Just call me Aunt. No need to keep your distance from me."

"Aunt, how did you and my father split up back then?"

Gu Jianlin rarely felt a bit curious.

Han Jing was silent for a moment, then said coldly, "I broke up with him. Back then, I learned about the Gu Family curse, and I wanted him to leave the Extraordinary World to see if he could survive."

"Let's not talk about this anymore—it's all in the past. Remember, don't make contact with the people from Lishan Tiyan Pavilion; they're dangerous."

She shifted her tone and emphasized: "Rest well on this ship for the next few days. No one is allowed to go out during this time. After all, Ascender forces from all over the world have entered, and if you encounter an ambush, chances are slim for survival. The Ether Association has made countless enemies—be extra cautious."

After saying this, she left, closing the door behind her: "There'll be a big battle in a few days, likely when you challenge the gatekeeper boss. That will be an opportunity for the young generation—make the most of it."

Gu Jianlin held his forehead again, feeling like he'd gained another mother figure in the Ascender world.

So this woman had left his father willingly back then.

No wonder her gaze at him had once been as if she wanted to devour him alive.

That time when she sent him into the Nightwatch Department had been genuine.

She truly didn't want him investigating the Blood Moon Slaughter Incident—she genuinely had his best interests at heart.

It was just because of Wang Taisheng that there had been some misunderstandings.

"The problem is, with Deep Blue locking down exits, I have no way to leave here. And with big shots everywhere watching, sneaking out is nearly impossible. Hmm, good thing I have Shadow."

Gu Jianlin murmured quietly, "Tang Zijing, Heavenly Person Transformation Plan, Yihua Plan."

Jiuyin trembled slightly and said, "This Heavenly Person Transformation Plan is no joke."

Gu Jianlin asked in surprise, "What did you remember?"

Jiuyin fell into thought: "Hm, I vaguely recall something. This actually starts with the Heavenly Person's Wedge—it's quite a peculiar thing. It's said to be a creation that the Supreme invented to combat their own kind. But the problem is, all five Supremes have denied it, claiming it wasn't created by any of them."

Gu Jianlin was taken aback—Supremes actually coming out to deny something?

Even the most mysterious Qilin Venerable had publicly refuted—this was getting interesting.

"As for the Heavenly Person's Wedge, it's insignificant to the Lords. However, one of them said that in the next few thousand years, the Wedge will give birth to something terrifying, something that would pose a massive threat even to the Supremes."

Jiuyin chuckled softly: "I can't recall much more. If the Ether Association is really dabbling in something this dangerous, as the traitor arranged by the Lords, you better make sure to stop them!"

Even the old monster had called it a threat, and it seemed connected to the Ghost Valley Secret Treasure.

Gu Jianlin thought to himself—this thing was growing increasingly mysterious. It appeared there were a lot of secrets about the Ether Association he wasn't yet privy to.

"Don't worry, I'll gladly serve the Lords like a loyal dog."

He said expressionlessly.

"Good thing you sent Shadow ahead of time. Otherwise, once humans create that horrifying thing, it's likely going to be used against the Lords. I truly admire your foresight and loyalty—keep working hard for the grand plans of the Lords."

Jiuyin coaxed gently: "But the road ahead might be a bit perilous, so be cautious."

"Of course, I'll need your guidance as well."

Gu Jianlin said calmly, "I only love the Lords, and of course, I'll dedicate everything to her."

At half-past two in the morning, in a laboratory aboard the Deep Blue.

Lin Dong looked at the woman who pushed open the door and nodded slightly: "You're back?"

"Sorry, I was held up a bit."

Han Jing nodded lightly: "Nothing major, just a minor issue with the young people."

The upper-echelon members of the Ether Association didn't mind much. After all, with their group of Holy Land-level beings and even Demigods present, the young ones couldn't stir up much trouble—they let them be.

"In that case, let's begin."

The Ye Dao Saint said: "The research on the Ancient God's Blood."

The Profound Yin Saint was equally intrigued and said indifferently: "The Divine Generals are out investigating, so they won't be returning. This time, it's just us—we can proceed."

Everyone's gaze unanimously turned toward the experiment platform.

Inside a sealed crystal container, a drop of golden blood floated, shimmering like a magnificent gemstone.

"I almost died trying to snatch this damn thing!"

Wan Runtu said sarcastically, "Shouldn't I be credited for this?"

A researcher laughed: "Don't worry, Instructor Wan, your contribution will definitely be noted."

This was a research team composed of Divination Masters, dedicated to studying the Ancient God's Blood.

They intended to reverse divine its owner's status using this sample.

If this was the Kui Dragon Ancestor's Ancient God's Blood, so much the better.

Chapter 574 I Love Only Lord Alone_3

If it belongs to the Qilin Venerable, then it holds even greater strategic value.

However, just as the researchers activated the instruments, the Ancient God's Blood in the crystal chamber began to tremble rapidly, changing from gold to pure black. Its exquisite hue faded, becoming extremely chaotic.

"Fake."

The researcher's face turned exceedingly grim as he muttered in a low voice, "No, we can't say it's fake. This is a drop of Ancient God's Blood from one of the Ancestors — it doesn't have much value. Chances are, Instructor Wan was deceived during negotiations, and someone swapped the Ancient God's Blood using some kind of method."

The Ether Association's upper echelon fell into an eerie silence.

Wan Runtu exclaimed in shock, "What are you talking about?"

Accompanied by a deafening boom, the giant clad in armor fell with a thunderous crash, its blood spraying out like a waterfall.

Amid the rumbling and trembling sounds.

Its body melted, spreading across the ice layer like molten lava.

The ground was littered with the corpses of human Ascenders.

Scattered across the ice were automatic rifles, alchemy rocket launchers, shattered blades and arrows.

The burning wreckage of helicopters blazed fiercely, seemingly on the verge of exploding.

"What a pity about the helicopter."

The Moon Princess picked up the black iron knife from the hands of the armored giant. This type of weapon, named the Demon Extinguishing Blade by the Ancient God Clan, was a kind of Alchemy Weapon made of ultra-ancient rare metals, exceptionally resilient and sharp.

It swung lightly in her hand, far superior to her vermillion Tang Blade.

"After all, the Barrier of the Sea of Eternal Life has already been lifted. All the chicken-grade organizations are going to rush here to die."

Lu Zijin lowered her head, kicked over a corpse, and searched its belongings to pull out identification documents. She remarked indifferently, "Oh, it's one of the Koreans. No wonder they're so weak, charging in here just to get slaughtered."

If the Ancient God Realm were likened to a game, then they were unquestionably the pioneers raiding the dungeon.

As for those rushing in, it's as if inexperienced players from the starter village are challenging a high-difficulty dungeon.

It would be shocking if they survived.

This group even had the nerve to covet their beauty, hoping to exploit the chaos.

"Aunt Zijin, we aren't even members of any chicken-grade organization right now. We're wild Ascenders, homeless children, worse off than this group." Moon Princess sheathed the pitch-black Demon Extinguishing Blade, muttering softly.

"Hmm? Seems true after all."

Lu Zijin covered her lips and chuckled. "You betrayed the You Ying Group, and I'm wanted by the Ether Association. How tragic."

Following this fierce battle, neither of them had sustained any significant injuries.

Because the Ancestor guarding this Ice Sealed City had already been heavily wounded beforehand and, while alive, didn't seem particularly formidable. After defeating it, they didn't even obtain a single Mythical Weapon.

Let alone other supplies.

"Shh, be careful!"

Lu Zijin appeared to sense something and hurriedly pulled her companion into an ice cavity.

The Moon Princess seemed aware. "Have the Si Family people arrived?"

"Not just them; I estimate You Ying Group fleets are here too, with Si Family members included."

Lu Zijin speculated suspiciously, "Could they be here to capture you?"

Moon Princess muttered, "That's not impossible."

After all, everyone's a snitch.

Lu Zijin hadn't been caught yet because the Ether Association was preoccupied with raiding the gatekeeper boss.

As for the Moon Princess, encountering You Ying Group personnel would indeed put her in real peril.

The Floating Airships of the You Ying Group roamed through the blizzard, while below them was a convoy of countless vehicles.

Many of these were prison transport vehicles.

They primarily carried wild Ascenders or members of feeble Extraordinary Organizations.

The Dark World had always operated this way. To prevent these clueless stragglers from wandering aimlessly and accidentally triggering dangerous traps within the Ancient God Realm, they simply captured them all.

Grabbing as many as they could along the way; if they encountered high-difficulty dungeons, the prisoners were sent in to scout the path.

It might sound cruel, but this is the way of the Ascender's world.

Anyone who ventures into the Ancient God Realm must be ready to wager their life, following the law of the jungle.

Otherwise, stay outside and hunker down.

At least there's still protection under order.

Once inside the Ancient God Realm, all bets are off.

Even the Ether Association wouldn't protect these people, as their primary goal is to eliminate the Ancient God Clan. These individuals contribute nothing to humanity's great cause and only create chaos.

It's better to let the You Ying Group capture them and use them wisely.

Bam! Bam! Bam!

The ruthless Ascenders of Ying Province slammed against the prison transport's metal bars and passed out.

Gu Jianlin wore a blank expression as he withdrew his hand. After clearing away these useless stragglers, he sat inside the prison vehicle.

This was, of course, his shadow clone, wearing a silver mask and a long black trench coat, his hair cascading down his back. His Alchemy Tang Blade had already been confiscated and was stored within the compartment ahead.

After such long journeys, even the shadow clone couldn't endure much longer. How far would this go?

So he simply feigned being a wild Ascender and got himself captured, hitching a ride.

Snowstorm winds howled in the air, with a vibrant aurora of blue overhead.

It was breathtaking.

He rested his hands behind his head, lying in his private luxury cabin, gazing at the sky above.

Suddenly, he heard a familiar voice.

Chapter 575: Traces of the Old Monster

The convoy sped across the snow, kicking up a rolling wave of powder, with a heavy armored vehicle leading at the front.

Old Master Si stood in the railing atop the vehicle, leaning on his cane, his expression growing darker and darker. "How many have we captured so far? Is the target hiding among the rogue Ascenders?"

"We've already screened three times, and besides, aren't you a Divination Master?"

It was a strikingly beautiful young woman speaking, her appearance seductive and bold. She wore nothing but a white evening gown, her smooth shoulders and delicate collarbones exposed. The high slit in her dress revealed long, snow-white legs, and she balanced deftly on high heels.

Her platinum blonde hair was loosely gathered, and her dainty ears bore crystal drop earrings. A glittering necklace encircled her pale neck, making her look as though she was attending a banquet, completely unfazed by the cold.

The only detail that seemed out of place was the wineglass in her hand.

Because she was drinking a local specialty beer from Peak City.

The Sea of Eternal Life was unbearably cold, requiring alcohol to stay warm. However, high-proof liquors had long been swept clean from the market. Even powerful factions like theirs were running out of supplies, resorting to drinking beer instead.

"Divination isn't omnipotent."

Old Master Si was also holding a bottle of beer, his gaze dark and heavy. Unable to suppress his irritation, he muttered, "Miss Xia, instead of wasting alcohol here, why don't you put on more clothes? Resources are incredibly scarce in the Sea of Eternal Life."

Xia Yu smiled faintly. "I can't help it. The side effects of wielding a Mythical Weapon require me to maintain elegance at all times."

Old Master Si didn't hold back his displeasure, even though she was a Twilight Candidate.

Because it was obvious she was sent by the Think Tank to keep an eye on him.

This Old Master of the Si Family, who had roamed the Dark World for decades, had never encountered such indignity.

An operation under his command had failed due to internal betrayal.

And now, he was being instructed not to harm the traitor.

Instead, he was tasked with bringing them back safely.

What sort of nonsense was this!

"Miss Xia, who exactly is Moon Princess that the Think Tank would go to such lengths to protect her?"

Old Master Si's face remained expressionless. "I don't get it. I'm supposed to capture her alive, but I can't hurt her?"

Xia Yu smiled and replied, "I don't know either. All I know is that the Think Tank wants Moon Princess returned safe and sound, without a scratch. And ideally, we should bring Lu Zijin into the You Ying Group as well. Though the initial plan failed, turning a minister to our side could add some... entertainment, don't you think?"

Si Wei'an sat further back, wrapped in a heavy coat. His body below the neck was wrapped in bandages, some of which were still faintly seeping blood—a wound even the Priests hadn't managed to fully heal.

Already mentally unstable, he could no longer suppress the murderous intent surging within him. His eyes burned with violent, frenzied emotion.

However, Old Master Si, a seasoned veteran, quickly detected something unusual.

There was likely more to the Think Tank's choice in assigning him this mission.

The Think Tank must have already caught on to the secret dealings between the Si and Jiang Families.

The Think Tank was a terrifying individual, someone no one dared to defy within the Dark World.

Nor could anyone disrupt his rules.

Rumor had it that he was the successor personally chosen by the Red King before his death.

The Think Tank had made it explicitly clear: no one was to kill Moon Princess.

Yet they had been planning, in the shadows, to break that rule.

And so, the Think Tank had subtly made things difficult for him in return.

Now, it seemed capturing Moon Princess alive without harming her was far too challenging.

The only option was to deal with Lu Zijin first.

And force the girl to compromise.

"Not only that, but now he expects me to investigate that bizarre Iceberg Ruins as well?"

Old Master Si muttered in a low voice, "This is an SS-level mission. Do you know how many people have already died?"

It had been a full week since the Sea of Eternal Life had opened, and in that time, countless Ascenders had poured in, sacrificing their lives to leave behind valuable tactical insights.

By now, they had broadly mapped out the area. The most dangerous location was undoubtedly the Kui Dragon Ancestor's Dragon Cave.

An unquestionable SSS-level challenge.

But now, just thirty kilometers ahead, there lay a mysterious Iceberg Ruins.

Rumor had it no one who entered ever came back out.

Its sheer enigma had earned it an SS-level difficulty rating.

No one knew what the Iceberg Ruins truly were, only that they rested at the very center of the Sea of Eternal Life. Additionally, it wasn't even classified as an Ancient God Clan relic but something built by humans, only adding to its eerie allure.

The rogue Ascenders they had captured were to be used as fodder for exploring these ruins.

Gu Jianlin sat within the prison cart, turning his head to look at the other side.

He caught sight of a familiar face.

"Damn it! If it weren't for Miss Moon Princess, would I even need to endure this humiliation?"

A rotund man lay sprawled in the adjacent prison cart, his scarf wrapped tightly around his face, leaving only two narrow slits visible.

He looked downright sleazy at first glance.

Mr. Liu.

"Don't even start. I just got kicked in the gut," he complained.

Butcher sat nearby, drenched in blood, looking thoroughly pissed off. "When I catch those bastards later, I'm going to twist off their heads, damn it!"

"Third Master, I've found out something."

Ning Chen yawned, looking disheveled and dirt-covered, like a refugee. "Not long ago, some rogue Ascenders reportedly encountered two absurdly powerful young women. One was a Ghost Slayer, the other a Heavenly Master. According to an account, some fool tried to force himself on them, tempted by

their beauty. The Ghost Slayer severed his arm, and the Heavenly Master crushed his crotch like it was nothing."

Chapter 576: Traces of the Old Monster _2

The Scholar whispered softly, "This should be the person you're looking for. It seems they are still alive and living quite well."

Mr. Liu was very satisfied with this recruit's ability to handle errands. He remarked, "Of course. No matter where Miss Moon Princess is, she can always thrive. The word 'disheveled' simply doesn't apply to her."

The group subtly nodded, everyone knowing that girl would never fall into trouble.

"Speaking of which, the true identity of your boss... could it be the Chair Killer?"

Mr. Liu wasn't entirely obtuse, beaming as he said, "Gu Ting, Gu Jianlin—turns out it's all the same damn person. What guts! He actually dared to board the Bren Hill and snatch the Moonstone Heart back then. I used to think that Miss Moon Princess dating someone would derail her future, but who knew she'd find such a ruthless boyfriend."

"Unfortunately, given their identities, these two are destined for a tragic relationship."

He slapped his knee and sighed deeply.

The Scholar chuckled awkwardly but said nothing.

"If your boss ever finds himself unable to stay afloat in the Ether Association, tell him to come find me!"

Mr. Liu's eyes gleamed, but he soon sighed again, "Ah well, he's already in Omega's first echelon, even blatantly killed a Minister-Level figure and got away scot-free. Seems like he's doing quite well for himself. But no matter, even if your boss sticks with the Ether Association, as long as he can make Rhein's life miserable, he'll be my good brother!"

In this world, the easiest organization to infiltrate was undoubtedly the Ether Association.

After all, its scale was far too vast; it'd be surprising if it weren't riddled with leaks.

Even the King of Qing didn't take infiltrators outside of The Order of the Hidden seriously.

As such, the events in the Sea of Eternal Life were hardly a secret.

The entire world would pay attention to when the Ether Association's Strategy Group would set out because only they had the qualifications to tackle the strongest instances, leaving scraps for the others to pick up.

The fact that the group leader this time was Lin Dong spoke volumes.

As for Rhein, the immensely powerful Vice President, his mission this time was to block the You Ying Group.

"I'm only worried about one thing: if we're lying in wait here, won't we just be treated as prisoners instead of as board members or candidates for protection? If Rhein storms in with his men, and we're used as cannon fodder, what then?"

The Scholar couldn't help but ask, "Wouldn't we be completely done for by then?"

The Butcher, realizing this too, just cursed, "Shit."

Ning Chen raised his head, "Third Master, don't tell me you haven't thought about this."

Mr. Liu gave a mysterious smile, waving his hand. "Relax, Rhein won't gain the upper hand this time."

He turned around, his gaze falling on the massive floating airship hovering in the dark sky. He couldn't help but marvel, "I asked my aunt about this. This time, the Think Tank invited a real heavyweight. Her identity and status are so exalted that it's beyond imagination. As long as she's here, Rhein won't stand a chance."

The group gasped in unison. "Who is this person?"

"No idea."

Mr. Liu said, "I only know it's a woman."

Their conversation, of course, was conducted using alchemy equipment to isolate their surroundings.

Unfortunately, that was useless against Gu Jianlin.

Because in this squad, two of his Divine Servants were carrying ancient tokens.

"It seems Mr. Liu is quite dependable, being able to pull off something like this."

Gu Jianlin nodded to himself. "It looks like the Ether Association still stands unrivaled in today's world. For the ruins in the Sea of Eternal Life, they've ignored everything else and headed straight for the most crucial Dragon Cave."

The role the You Ying Group would play here remained unclear.

And what their main forces were planning to do.

"An SS-level glacier ruin... how intriguing."

He murmured softly, "A heavyweight invited by the Think Tank, someone even Rhein can't deal with? Who could that be?"

This stint of disguising himself as a prisoner had indeed yielded considerable rewards.

For it provided him with insight into the ecology of other Ascenders outside the Ether Association.

Moreover, he had obtained a particularly critical piece of information.

So far, no Ancient God of the Qilin Clan had appeared in the Sea of Eternal Life.

Not even an Ancestor, nor a single Divine Servant.

This was extremely strange.

This was the Qilin Immortal Palace.

It should have been the Qilin Clan's home ground.

And yet, the Ancestors who had appeared so far were almost exclusively from the Candle Dragon Clan.

In the Returning Burial Forest, a Red Qilin Ancestor had fallen, but it was just a corpse.

"Never mind for now."

Gu Jianlin closed his eyes, focusing on his main body.

The advantages of dual-focus tactics were now crystal clear.

Back as a child, watching Fire Shadow, he had always envied the shadow clone skill.

At that time, he was full of youthful energy, fantasizing about having multiple shadow clones to attend school, do homework, handle chores, and take care of daily exercise, leaving his main body free to stay home and play Pokémon.

Now, though, things had changed. Ever since he'd entered the Extraordinary World, idleness became a thing of the past.

It was either smashing someone's head with a chair.

Or being on the way to smashing someone's head with a chair.

The remaining time was devoted to fending off girls or studying transcendent knowledge.

Even though Pokémon Scarlet and Violet had been released, he hadn't had a chance to play.

Such is the misery of adulthood.

Currently, his main body was lying on the bed of a suite, flipping through an ancient book filled with records about the Candle Dragon Venerable.

The book was written in ancient script, completely unintelligible to him.

But when he held it, he discovered that every line in the ancient text had been annotated.

Chapter 577: Traces of the Old Monster _3

The handwriting is very fresh, definitely just written.

Moreover, the handwriting is cold, hard, and domineering, each stroke akin to a slicing sword, grand and imposing.

Gu Jianlin had only seen one person with such a demeanor.

Senior Ji.

This senior is really good to him.

In contrast, the President, this Grandmaster, seems quite lacking.

The fact that the Moon Princess joined the You Ying Group is one thing.

But Lu Zijin being wanted is quite another.

Vulgar Master!

Gu Jianlin closed his eyes, perceiving the information coming from his main body, which turned out to be some mythical stories.

For instance, during the Qin Dynasty, when Prince Hu Hai went out to experience the breathing of a Heavenly Person, he once encountered Immortal Relics. In the misty rain of the southern river towns, he encountered a woman in a red dress, holding an umbrella, sitting on a boat, with her long hair draped down.

Hu Hai fell in love at first sight with that figure and used magic to freeze the lake to pursue her. However, no matter how he chased, the distance never shortened by even a bit. In the end, he could only watch the woman drift away, only hearing the ethereal singing.

After returning to the inn, the prince flew into a rage, capturing all the women in the small town, yet he never found her. Some said he encountered a ghost, but he didn't believe it, searching frantically outside for three whole years.

Later, he met a mysterious ascetic who said something like this: "This woman's surname is Su, given name Xiang, an outsider. She can only be gazed upon from afar, never approached. You are indeed fortunate enough to be alive after seeing her; she did not kill you because she is roaming the mortal world. Your encounter with her is your destiny."

Upon hearing this, Hu Hai returned and indeed realized a certain extremely powerful Forbidden Spell.

But precisely because of this Forbidden Spell, he went insane.

For example, during the Han Dynasty, there was a human guardian known as Emperor Han Wu. Around the time of his ascension, he went to the ancestral tomb to pay respects and saw a woman in a red dress flash through the mountains, her ethereal singing faintly heard.

Emperor Han Wu remembered that singing, even inviting a Great Sage to compose a tune based on it, thereby creating a peerless Alchemy Matrix named the Ancient Demon Immortal Song, which is still used by the Ether Association to this day.

During the Tang Dynasty, many poets had also seen this woman, but none could converse with her.

Throughout successive dynasties, numerous human emperors fell for her, poets and painters went mad with passion for her.

Even far in the West, there were legends about her. Once, a witch who committed the heinous crime of black magic was burned to ashes; it so happened that a silhouette in a red dress flashed through the darkness, with a fine drizzle falling.

The charred witch actually came back to life, even her clothes intact.

People thought they witnessed the grace of a god and began to worship her.

From then on, the witch dreamed of the sound of a Dragon Roar every night, claiming that a God met her in her dreams, teaching her the languages, knowledge, even religion and philosophy of the West, though she found these meaningless.

Eventually, the God ceased to appear, and this witch went mad, heading east in search of God's traces.

Since the Fusang Divine Palace was conquered in the seventies of the last century, she's not been seen again.

In even older times, people had seen a giant dragon capable of destroying the heavens and the earth.

It seemed likely that it was her as well.

Not until the Ether Association obtained Jiuyin did they divine the stunning red-dressed woman.

Only then was her identity confirmed.

For thousands of years, Buzhou Mountain has never erupted, nor invaded the human world by a fraction. Candle Dragon Venerable was also nowhere to be found, and the world thought it because she had exhausted herself in the Battle of the East Sea, leading her to slumber.

The truth proved otherwise.

Candle Dragon Venerable never slept but lived in the human world all along.

Her footprints spanned the Eurasian Continent.

"This means that since the Battle of the East Sea, Candle Dragon Venerable has lived in the human world with an identity in reality, with many historical shadows of her."

Gu Jianlin muttered: "And after the Fusang Divine Palace was conquered, she vanished from the human world; why was it precisely at this time? Right, because of the Vermilion Bird. Vermilion Bird Venerate fell into the turbulence of time and space! During that period, the old monster had been preparing until my encounter with Kui startled her."

"She once explicitly said, Vermilion Bird has already returned!"

He murmured to himself: "When Qilin Venerable met that mysterious man, he also mentioned this black Supreme, likewise because of the Vermilion Bird, chose to create the Qilin Mask. Vermilion Bird, Vermilion Bird!"

It seems that this mysterious Vermilion Bird Venerate is a very crucial Supreme.

Wait!

Gu Jianlin suddenly realized something.

Historically, most of Candle Dragon Venerable's appearances didn't seem to be for any specific person.

The emperors and princes throughout the ages were all protectors of the human world.

They shared a common trait.

Heavenly Person!

"Candle Dragon Venerable wants to break the rules of the reality world, maybe she also desires to master such power?"

Gu Jianlin let out a long breath: "The power of a Heavenly Person, I still cannot grasp."

He suddenly thought of his teacher.

As a catastrophe, the King of Qing surely knows the frequency of Heavenly Person's Breathing.

But the teacher hasn't taught him.

Does this mean that the powers of a Heavenly Person and an Evolver are repellent?

After all, as the controller of the Heavenly Person's Wedge, the President is also not an Evolver.

So far, none of the bigwigs he knows has mastered both powers.

Initially, the power displayed by Tang Ling led him to misunderstand.

But when he learned that the girl was an experimental project, doubts arose.

Undoubtedly, Tang Ling is special; otherwise, she couldn't have been regarded as the hope of the human world.

"Perhaps I haven't mastered Heavenly Person's Breathing not because I can't find the emotion, but because I'm an Evolver! No, I've never been an Evolver, but because I possess the power of the Ancient God."

Gu Jianlin suddenly realized something: "Currently I'm an amphibious creature, both a human Ascender and part of the Ancient God Clan. Without relying on the Ancient God's power and without the advantage of Dual Core Drive, I am not particularly strong as a human Ascender because I lack the Heavenly Person's Breathing."

As for the old monster.

Living in the human world, besides wanting to adapt to the rules of reality, perhaps she has other motives.

"Su Xiang..."

Chapter 578: The Bizarre Corpse Transformation

Gu Jianlin finished reading the ancient text and fell into deep thought.

Honestly, encountering an Ancient Supreme at their peak in the real world is nothing short of a terrifying horror story. With their old monster status and arrogance, they probably wouldn't regard other humans at all.

Even heavenly beings would merely be objects worthy of observation.

But he inherited the power of the Qilin and devoured her Dragon Bone. That grudge runs deep.

If one day he were to turn a corner and run into the old monster... haha.

"Anyway, I've reminded them of everything I possibly could. The teacher has gone to Buzhou Mountain with Gold and Silver. If they still can't stop this, then we're all doomed; no one will survive."

He muttered to himself, "The priority now is uncovering Tang Zijing's true identity. According to the predictions of the Nightmare and Lord Meng, to get the answer, we must proceed discreetly, approach the center of the Sea of Eternal Life as closely as possible, and perhaps encounter people from the You Ying Group. Danger and opportunity go hand in hand."

The Omega Sequence has this advantage—in that most of those around are elites.

The predictions of Divination Masters and Spirit Mediums can provide direction.

Although waking people up in the middle of the night and terrifying them was a bit rude.

Still, he couldn't worry about that now.

This wasn't just about Thunder; it also involved the so-called Heavenly Human Plan.

At that moment, the prisoners in the convoy began to stir in agitation. Someone nervously looked upward and exclaimed in fear, "Look over there! What is that? Who could carve words up there?"

"No Living Humans Allowed? What does this mean? Who left it there?"

Another person muttered suspiciously, "Is this a prank?"

Someone else screamed loudly in panic, "This is warning us not to go forward, isn't it?"

On a massive glacier above the Ice Sea, there were indeed four large characters carved into the ice: No Living Humans Allowed!

It seemed as though someone had carved these words with a sword. Moreover, it wasn't just any ordinary sword—the scorching sword mark hadn't been erased by the wind and snow despite the passage of time. It was utterly chilling and terrifying.

The prisoners were engulfed in fear, knowing full well they were brought here as trailblazers.

"Interesting."

Mr. Liu wasn't particularly scared. After surveying his surroundings, he suddenly noticed the silhouette of a figure in a black trench coat inside one of the prison cars: "Oh? This person has quite an unusual aura. Could it be someone like us? You lot keep an eye on him. If something really happens later, lend him a hand and form a good bond."

As a board member of the You Ying Group, his judgment of people was spot on.

Inside the prison car, while all the other prisoners had been subdued, this particular one remained unscathed.

Everyone around was gripped by fear, except him, who showed no reaction whatsoever.

What was even more startling were his eyes.

Mr. Liu had seen countless beauties, but he had never encountered eyes as breathtaking as these—deep and mysterious like the stars, strangely enchanting, capable of mesmerizing with just a glance but also carrying an air of undeniable dignity that forbade disrespect.

It was the kind of beauty that left one in awe at first sight, yet deterred any lustful thoughts.

This person was undeniably a beauty.

Even Miss Moon Princess couldn't compare.

Mr. Liu developed a desire to recruit him—if he turned out to be a wild Ascender, then he'd bring him under his wing.

Back then, he had his eyes on the "chair-killing maniac."

No—now he should be called the Qilin.

But he failed to recruit him.

Then another mysterious figure, Gu Ting, appeared, stirring his envy.

In the end, it was confirmed to be the same person.

Mr. Liu was truly yearning for another capable subordinate.

Otherwise, he wouldn't be so thoroughly suppressed by the Si Family.

Gu Jianlin paid no attention to these gazes; his focus remained solely on the four characters carved into the glacier.

Without a doubt, these were sword marks—a masterpiece of the Sword Sect Path.

He felt a strong intuition.

Tang Zijing!

Old Master Si, the leader of the convoy, was a high-level Divination Master who naturally sensed the danger ahead, particularly from the four characters etched into the ice. A simple divination would reveal this was no prank.

"Interesting."

Xia Yu turned with a smile, holding a wine glass, and commanded, "Randomly pick a group of prisoners to scout ahead."

Her every gesture carried a seductive allure, with an elusive fragrance that lingered even in the frigid cold. Those who caught whiff of it felt a strange heat in their abdomen.

They began to fantasize about entangling themselves with this woman in fiery passion.

"Hold your breath! Don't inhale!"

Mr. Liu warned in a low voice, "That's one of the Xia Family's deadly enchantresses. She possesses a Mythical Weapon called Enchanting Demon Night Fragrance. Inhaling too much of it will turn you into her devoted subject, completely incapable of resisting her commands!"

The crowd was horrified—such a demoness truly existed.

Gu Jianlin listened with a strange expression, realizing it was fortunate he hadn't brought Jiuyin along.

Otherwise, Jiuyin would certainly have urged him to subdue this Female Sacrifice.

Soon, the Si Family's candidates maneuvered their prison cars to the forefront. With the metallic cages being opened, the prisoners were driven out in terror.

No one dared resist, as candidates of the Overlord Path surrounded them with sniper rifles aimed at their heads.

Anyone who disobeyed faced immediate execution.

Wild Ascenders, as compared to the elites of major organizations, were pathetically weak.

From the Ice Sea rose towering islands, with countless smaller ones surrounding them. The abandoned cities on these islands appeared frozen under layers of ice and frost, with cold winds carrying sleet, accompanied by faint roars of some monstrous creatures.

The prisoners were herded forward in fear.

Gu Jianlin mingled among them, cautiously observing his surroundings. He could sense the presence of Qilin Wedge fragments.

Chapter 579: The Bizarre Corpse Transformation_2

Su Youzhu and Lu Zijin should be up ahead.

But for some reason, ever since approaching this island, he had a faint feeling of unease.

BOOM!

A deafening crash resounded.

Old Master Si abruptly turned his head, discovering that the thick ice surface had suddenly formed massive cracks. The eerie sound of splitting echoed continuously, as though someone had slashed it with a sharp blade. Beneath the ice, seawater surged violently!

The candidates from the You Ying Group were shocked and nearly lost their footing, almost falling into the sea.

"Help!"

Some of the prisoners trapped in cages immediately fell into the icy sea, swallowed by the furious waves.

Even some candidates with poor mobility plunged into the water, their cries for help drowned out by the roaring tides.

Si Wei'an kicked a low-level prisoner into the sea, watching as the cold devoured him, snuffing out all signs of life.

"Something's wrong. Come over here quickly!"

Xia Yu frowned, her voice calm.

Her scent seemed to quell the panic, drawing the candidates toward her.

The seawater parted the ice layer into two. Tides surged violently, completely cutting off the way back.

This was a sea frozen over in ice—a place no one would sail into due to the massive and unimaginably thick layers of ice. Falling through was nearly impossible. And yet, it now seemed as though some overwhelming force had shattered the ice, leaving a chilling impression of tectonic plates shifting.

The ice layer across from them drifted further and further away, continuing to collapse.

Now, the only way to return was by helicopter rescue.

"We can't go back! We're all trapped here!"

"Damn it, what's going on here?"

"They warned us not to enter, so why did we come?"

Amid the chaos, Gu Jianlin noticed something unusual.

He only learned about the strange events on the Ice Sea through the desperate exclamations of others.

The ice had cracked, seawater surged, and many people had died.

But through his eyes, all he saw was dense and extreme cold mist spreading. There were no other abnormalities.

The Ice Sea was still frozen.

The seawater remained calm.

The dead were merely obscured by the mist.

This had to be a kind of Spiritual Domain, blanketing all directions, making them believe there was no way out.

Beneath the ice, faint, blood-red patterns emerged, like blood streaks diffusing through the seawater. They intertwined across the space like a web of complex blood vessels, radiating an eerie glow.

"This appears to be some sort of Alchemy Matrix, like a bizarre ritual."

Gu Jianlin heard growling from nearby.

A prisoner suddenly turned to look at him. His forehead bore strange characters from the Ancient God Clan, as though seared with molten iron. His eyes were ghastly white, devoid of life, and his face was veined with blood vessels.

Unlike before, Gu Jianlin was no longer a novice. He instantly recognized the characters.

Translated into the language of the Human Clan, it read: Corpse Slave!

Moreover, prisoners in all directions had begun mutating, turning their heads toward others.

It seemed almost all the prisoners had been infected!

"Boss!"

Ning Chen clutched his head, speaking in a low voice, "Be careful! Something's wrong here!"

Mr. Liu also appeared to be in agony, saying, "Damn it! I feel like something's invading my mind!"

The Butcher, clueless as always, seemed unaffected, his expression blank.

Even the Scholar looked around in confusion.

It wasn't just the prisoners.

The candidates from the You Ying Group also clutched their heads, letting out agitated growls. Crimson characters emerged on their foreheads, their pupils turning ghostly white as they snarled and turned on others.

"There's definitely something wrong with this place!"

Old Master Si's face darkened. Covering his forehead, his expression turned grim.

Even as a Sixth Rank Divination Master, he wasn't immune.

Yet Xia Yu appeared unaffected. Turning her head, she asked, "Do you feel anything?"

Si Wei'an flashed a sinister smile but said nothing.

Well, that guy was insane to begin with.

ROAR!

Gu Jianlin saw the face of the prisoner turning toward him.

A man of imposing build—a middle-aged Black individual whose body, muscular as iron, radiated Qi Force. His physique, glimpsed from his profile, resembled that of an ancient Samurai. A Third Rank Qi Control Master, perhaps.

But that wasn't the critical point.

The key was what his eyes reflected.

What Gu Jianlin saw in the man's pupils wasn't himself—but a mass of dripping, raw flesh.

"Careful. There's a powerful Spiritual Domain here that can turn people into monsters."

Observing his surroundings, he swiftly deduced, "Only those infected by the Ancient God's Breath, or Divine Servants and Evolvers, will remain unaffected. However, they will still be hunted by other creatures. These things want to eat people!"

He said this deliberately, as a warning.

Mr. Liu, straining to resist the intrusive influence, momentarily paused upon hearing Gu Jianlin's cold, detached voice.

This confirmed his assumptions. He wasn't wrong about this man—he had discerned the situation in mere moments.

"When the fight starts, stick to that girl!"

He gave the order.

The others nodded slightly.

Gu Jianlin thought to himself, That chubby guy isn't stupid after all.

At that moment, the middle-aged Black man roared and charged toward him.

Now walking the Ghost Slayer Path, Gu Jianlin effortlessly activated his Divine Speed Force domain, maneuvering like a phantom. Sidestepping the attack, he retrieved his Alchemy Tang Blade from a prison cart and slashed backhandedly!

CRACK.

The man's head was sent flying, blood streaming from the wound.

For a Third Rank Ancient Martial artist, resisting the beheading power of a Fourth Rank Ghost Slayer was impossible.

Especially when reduced to a mindless beast.

In the Ancient God Realm, there was no room for mercy.

If I don't kill you, you'll kill me.

No one cared if these people could've been healed.

Among wild Ascenders, notions of order didn't exist—survival belonged only to the ruthless.

BANG! BANG!

The Butcher smashed several monsters' heads to pulp.

The Scholar joined in, slaughtering mercilessly. Nobody spared these corrupted creatures any pity.

On the ruins of the Ice Sea, icy mist lingered everywhere.

Moon Princess gazed toward the chaotic melee among the convoy, unable to sense much beyond what she could see.

Turning her head to the side, she softly asked, "Aunt Zijin, are you okay?"

Lu Zjin held her forehead, softly replying, "I'm fine. But I'm hearing weird mutterings in my head—something suppressing my reason, amplifying my aggression. Still, I'm alright. My Rank has recovered to Fifth Rank, and the Heavenly Master Path inherently yields spiritual elements, so I can resist it."

"No, this isn't just spiritual corrosion. It feels... bloody, like something's trying to transform me, to connect with my body. But I'm resisting successfully."

In a low voice, she added, "Something said it was hungry and wanted to feed."

Moon Princess narrowed her beautiful eyes. "Feed?"

"Yes."

Lu Zjin murmured, "It said, 'You are blood food.'"

Moon Princess fell silent for a moment before remarking, "I see. I'm an Evolver. This island must harbor some kind of creature, one that's desperately hungry for the flesh of Evolvers."

Lu Zjin shook her head, dispelling her escalating thoughts of madness. "Is that what's happening?"

"I'm Professor Gu's student. Don't underestimate my ability to beat a dungeon."

Moon Princess lacked resistance to mental interference—so much so that to her, the Ice Sea appeared fractured. "At this point, we can only press forward. There's no retreat, and you still have to complete the final ritual."

Lu Zijin frowned slightly. "Are you confident?"

Moon Princess shook her head. "Of course not."

Lu Zijin placed her hands on her hips and poked at Moon Princess's mask with a slender finger. "Then why dare to press forward?"

"Though my teacher brought me here before, we never ventured further than the outskirts."

Moon Princess's serene, luminous eyes betrayed no emotion as she said faintly, "The Ancient God Realm is saturated with traces of his existence. Everywhere I go, it feels like he's protecting me, just like years ago. The last time my teacher entered this realm, he explored many places. Do you think he might've come here too?"

Chapter 580 Moon Princess: How did you turn into a woman!?

The ruins of the Ice Sea were in complete chaos. Too many prisoners had turned into zombies, escalating into a massive riot. Even most of the candidates who were originally tasked with guarding them had mutated.

Old Master Si held his forehead, struggling to suppress the mental erosion. "Move! Head to the island!"

Xia Yu looked at the uncontrollable scene with a grim expression. She realized that her fragrance could no longer control the rampaging zombies, helplessly watching them slaughter wildly.

"Interesting. As Evolvers, we seem to be unaffected."

Si Wei'an sat atop a car, casually watching one of his candidates being surrounded by the crazed prisoners, finally torn apart in a bloody spectacle. He even licked his lips.

Then, he raised his hand, unleashing a terrifying Dark Shock that obliterated countless prisoners into dust.

Almost all the candidates who could resist mental invasion boarded vehicles, charging toward the island without hesitation. To them, the escape routes were already cut off; survival meant heading to the island. After all, everyone here was an experienced strategist, adept at saving their lives in critical moments—even at great risks.

It turned out that when countless individual wills united, the suppression from above became laughably insignificant.

Those who originally pointed guns at the prisoners were devoured and dismembered.

A few who could protect themselves chose to play it safe.

With a loud roar, several armored vehicles crashed directly toward the ruins of the island's palace.

At this moment, Gu Jianlin felt his scalp crawl.

Because he noticed that after he had dealt with one monster...

Almost all the monsters turned their heads toward him, letting out ravenous howls as if he were the most delectable meal in the world. The greed in their pallid pupils was practically overflowing.

Hundreds of monsters were swarming at him, packing together like the bustling crowds he'd experienced as a child attending festivals with his parents.

In this scenario, it was practically a Divine's playground, perfect for them to unleash their powers effortlessly.

But for the Ghost Slayer Path, it was far less ideal. Even with Virtualization, it couldn't defend against attacks from mental waves.

Of course, Gu Jianlin wasn't an ordinary Ghost Slayer. He flipped his wrist, gripping the blade's hilt tightly. The bright blade suddenly crackled with fiery sparks as countless black Thunder streaks entwined, erupting with piercing cries like the cacophony of a thousand birds!

He activated the Divine Speed Force domain, flickering in the snow like a ghost shadow. Accompanied by the sweeping slashes of his Thunder Blade, it felt as though black ink spilled across the snowstorm—dark electric light galloped, tearing through the surging monsters.

The sound of cracking bones, howls, and wailing.

All mixed together.

He refrained from using Dimension Slash, as spirituality needed to be conserved for emergencies.

The All Heavens Divine Thunder was undoubtedly an extremely powerful Ancient Forbidden Curse, but he hadn't yet fully comprehended its intricacies. He couldn't unleash world-destroying bolts of lightning like the President, but he could achieve large-scale destruction.

Dimension Slash focused on instant kills, which were a bit wasteful against these monsters.

Better to detonate them with lightning flashes.

That was Tang Ling's kind of happiness!

"Quick, help that girl! She just warned us earlier!" Mr. Liu clutched his forehead, shouting.

Ning Chen was in a poor state as well, helping him desperately run toward the island.

The Butcher took a deep breath, clasped his hands at his waist, and yelled, "Turtle Style Qigong!"

Boom!

The brute clearly was about to ascend to the Fifth Rank, as a single Qi Gong Cannon blasted countless monsters into oblivion.

The Scholar released a Spirit Shock to clear away the corpses, waving his hand and calling out, "Miss, this way!"

Miss, my ass.

These two clearly didn't value their lives much.

Gu Jianlin thought these two were asking for trouble. Suddenly, he detected a sharp whistling sound from behind, seeing a hulking armored vehicle furiously charging toward them with the intent to crush them.

Driving it was a flamboyantly dressed white woman with a cruel sneer, treating them as less than human.

Gu Jianlin raised an eyebrow and abruptly teleported into the armored vehicle's passenger seat.

Time suddenly plunged into marsh-like silence. The rampaging armored vehicle came to an abrupt halt. The white woman driving it looked twisted and menacing, like a demon, her face warped with vicious laughter. The windshield was frozen solid, and the engine roared lowly, sounding like ghostly chuckles.

Crunch! The man in the passenger seat had his neck snapped and was tossed out the window.

The white woman didn't even realize what had happened before her neck was slit, blood gushing forth.

Gu Jianlin sat in the passenger seat, opening the left-side door and kicking her out.

Then, he slid into the driver's seat, gripping the steering wheel.

Alright, now the problem arose.

How was this thing supposed to be driven?

Old Gu had only taught him how to drive automatics, and he had never operated a heavy armored vehicle.

No matter, he pressed whatever seemed appropriate!

As if awakening the inner devil, he shouted:

"Woohoo, drift time!"

The frozen barrier of time shattered, and the armored vehicle indeed skidded away, rampaging wildly.

Gu Jianlin finally found the brakes, performed a dragon-tail maneuver to sweep out countless monsters, and started pressing random buttons to open the vehicle's rear compartment doors, coldly commanding, "What are you standing there for? Get in the car!"

Mr. Liu had never witnessed such a majestic act, laughing heartily, "This truly feels like looking at Miss Moon Princess! Brother, hurry up and get in the car, then thank the girl properly and protect her well!"

He scrambled onto the vehicle with turns and tumbles.

Though he said it, he was still amazed by this girl's combat prowess.

The vehicle housed two Fourth Rank candidates, both capable of resisting mental invasions.

Even if they weren't Evolvers, their combat power was formidable.

And yet, in just an instant, they had been killed!

After blowing up several monsters' heads, Ning Chen also boarded, casting a surprised glance at the girl.

Finally, the Butcher and Scholar leapt onto the roof, covering their surroundings.

To them, this wasn't surprising.

No matter how remarkable someone might be, they were still less impressive than their true boss!

Gu Jianlin started the engine, mistakenly thinking he was pressing the accelerator. Instead, the Alchemy Heavy Machine Gun on the roof popped out and began firing madly in all directions, as if it had lost its mind.

The Butcher and Scholar nearly had their heads blown off.

"Damn it! We're allies, stop firing!"

Mr. Liu laughed heartily, completely oblivious to the fact that Gu Jianlin had pressed the wrong button.
"What an aggressive young lady!"

Ning Chen gave a thumbs-up.

But soon, their facial expressions changed.

Because Gu Jianlin's driving was making the armored vehicle shake wildly, behaving like a rampaging beast recklessly colliding with everything, drifting wildly on the icy surface—it was even less reliable than drunk driving.

At first, they thought the girl was simply violent, clearing out enemies.

A half minute later, they realized—she truly couldn't drive!

The communications channel buzzed with Old Master Si's stern voice, "All squads, proceed together toward the island ruins. If you spot Moon Princess, capture her at all costs! Prioritize seizing Lu Zijin, dead or alive! Once Lu Zijin is caught, Moon Princess will surely surrender! They're nearby!"

A Divination Master's predictions were usually very accurate.

Gu Jianlin's eyes grew colder as he noticed the monsters around him still relentlessly chasing him.

So, a sudden idea struck him. He picked up the microphone and said, "Protect Old Master Si!"

Boom!

He finally found the correct accelerator, driving away madly.

Heading straight for Old Master Si's armored vehicle!

For some reason, a particular phrase surfaced in his memories.

"All troops, advance toward Zhuge Liang's four-wheeled car!"

Boom!

When those armored vehicles saw his reckless charge, they all swerved aside to make way.

"Anna, are you crazy?"

"Next time you drive like that, I'm going to kick your ass with my heels! I swear I will."

"Wait, look behind Anna!"

The armored vehicle roared forward, followed closely by a horde of monsters.

Thunk!

"Anna, what are you doing?"

From the communications channel came the furious and alarmed voice of an elder.

Gu Jianlin pressed the accelerator to the floor, slamming into the rear of their vehicle!

With a loud crash...

Due to the slippery ice surface, both vehicles spun wildly, nearly losing control!

Gu Jianlin calculated his combat strength. He operated on a Dual Core, was a Fourth Rank Shura, and could enter an evolved state—or even use Ancient God Transformation.

But doing so would incur the wrath of the Kui Dragon Ancestor, causing his Shadow to dissolve and return to his body.

"Someone take over driving. I'm going out to kill that old bastard!"

As the vehicle spun wildly, he dropped the statement and suddenly teleported away.

Within moments, Gu Jianlin had landed above high altitude. Since he wasn't on the Divine Path, he lacked the powerful Life Perception ability. He could only rely on instinct to strike, aiming to take down someone first.

Among them were undoubtedly Evolvers, whose combat prowess couldn't be underestimated.

Then suddenly, he noticed a shadow rapidly descending toward the vehicle rooftop.

Gu Jianlin's Tang Blade trembled in his grasp, its black lightning roaring, reminiscent of dragon howls. His eerie blood-red eyes were illuminated by the lightning, brimming with chilling killing intent!

For a moment, the one who appeared sensed the overwhelmingly falling desire to kill. Without hesitation, they teleported mid-air, unleashing a massive black Tachi that tore through the snowstorm, roaring forth!

Clang! Blades collided, and fiery sparks scattered wildly.

Gu Jianlin finally saw the cat-face mask of his opponent, extinguishing the black lightning on his blade. But he didn't dare stop his strikes outright, fearing immediate decapitation.

As for Virtualization, that required prior preparation.

"You're strong."

Moon Princess hadn't recognized him yet, her wary expression revealing itself. For experts, probing was barehandedly simple—this mysterious figure exuded an oppressive presence that alarmed her immensely.

Despite her unfamiliarity with blade combat, her movements defied common sense in their sharpness!

Why call her a girl?

Because those dazzlingly beautiful eyes could even make her heart flutter.

Before Moon Princess could ponder further, she vanished into the air again.

"It's me!"

Gu Jianlin quickly realized she mistook him for an enemy and shouted, "I'm on your side!"

The Moon Princess paid him no mind, flashing away like a shadow and aiming another slash!

This time, she even added Dimension Slash!

Gu Jianlin had no choice but to counter with his own Dimension Slash!

Another crisp sound rang out, and ripples appeared in the void without shattering!

Gu Jianlin's mask cracked due to the burst of sword energy. His black hair fluttered in the air, revealing a stunningly beautiful countenance with cold features still distinctly his own!

"It's me! Last month's class test—you placed third from the bottom!"

Backing half a step, he added again, "You scored only seven points in math!"

The Moon Princess' eyes widened in shock because these mundane truths from her hidden identity were known to him.

Wait.

Looking closely at that face—it did seem somewhat familiar!

"This is Forbidden Shadow."

Gu Jianlin spoke flatly, "Lose it now and you'll never see it again."

A brief silence.

"Why is it you?"

The Moon Princess gasped, gazing at the youth's legs suspiciously. "Did you secretly train using the Sunflower Manual behind my back?"

Moments later, the massive island erupted with golden radiance.

Someone shouted, "A divine relic! A divine relic!"