

Ancient 761

Chapter 761: Who Is the Joker After All

The area around Shinjuku Imperial Garden is Shinano Town, named after the former residence of the Neiteng Family, housekeepers of the Dechuan Shogunate during the Edo Period. Now, it is filled with luxury apartments and high-rise towers. From the balcony, one can see Akasaka Palace and the outer garden of Meiji Shrine, making it quite a prestigious residential area.

Because it is close to the headquarters of You Ying Group, it is one of the few residential areas not invaded by test subjects.

Moon Princess gazed out the window. The afternoon streets were as silent as a painting.

Curiously, it was initially thought that the test subjects would disrupt all of Tokyo, and the situation would continue to worsen.

No one expected that just at the break of dawn, the test subjects would collectively disappear, hiding somewhere unknown, like vampires from ancient tales fearing the sunlight, retreating into the darkness.

"The analysis of the test subjects is still ongoing. A special team has been established under Netherworld, headed by the renowned Dr. Aaron. He is a former alchemy scientist of the Ether Association, undisputedly the world's leading figure in biotechnology and alchemy regeneration."

Su Youxia yawned, casually throwing a stack of documents onto the sofa. She lazily said, "We better hope these guys are hiding due to some biological instinct and not under human control."

Everyone has watched zombie movies.

No one wishes for such creatures to appear in reality, as it would be a devastating blow to modern civilization.

If someone could control these zombies, their danger level would undoubtedly increase tenfold.

Especially the destructive power of these test subjects, which far exceeds that of a zombie horde.

"Still haven't found him?"

Moon Princess fiddled with the cat-face mask in her hand, her icy and exquisite face showing no emotion.

"No, since the battle with Judge Bai on that flyover, he has disappeared."

Su Youxia leaned half on the sofa, the corners of her eyes and eyebrows lazy, comforting, "Now not only am I looking for him, but the entire Dark World is searching for him. I have placed spies in all major families, and if there is any news, we will intercept it immediately. After all, Xiao Gu is no saint, he's like Godzilla now."

Moon Princess responded with a hum. At present, she was quite calm.

Even though her boyfriend was missing, she wasn't worried.

Because Gu Jianlin now was indeed like Godzilla, destroying anything in his path.

Moreover, Mr. Jing was currently in Tokyo.

He was a reliable man and wouldn't just watch his junior get into trouble.

Also, in this city, Tokyo, there were Shadows.

Gu Jianlin had once explained to her that under the President's command lay such a mysterious organization.

The people in this organization were like shadows growing in the dark; their existence left no trace, silently rooting and budding, growing strongly in gloomy corners with belief and heritage as their stem.

This was an organization the President established specifically to counter the control of The Order of the Hidden.

If The Order of the Hidden usually worked through pushing the world's trends to achieve its goals.

Then the Shadows were the ones watching and influencing the situation from the dark.

As the praying mantis hunts the cicada, unaware of the oriole behind.

After Moon Princess learned about the Shadow organization, she naturally understood many things.

For instance, some odd behaviors her teacher exhibited when taking her on travels.

Including the last action where she was betrayed.

Gunfire collisions sounded from the study next door; someone was assembling her beloved firearms.

Jiang Mingyan couldn't live without her firearms; her arsenal was like a museum of modern weapons. The display cases on the walls were filled with guns and bullets she had meticulously collected, maintained to be lethal weapons ready for use, rather than toys for display.

That woman was now polishing and oiling her sniper rifle and its various components.

In fact, half a year ago, Moon Princess was always traveling the world with her teacher, hardly meeting her biological mother, and rarely interacting with anyone from the Jiang Family or the Dark World.

This was because Gu Ci'an had always protected her well.

It also showed the extent of his authority as a Shadow.

Until one day, her teacher returned deeply troubled, saying they had to meet someone.

Moon Princess was curious until she met that sharp-as-blade woman at the airport.

Since then, she'd lost her freedom.

Simultaneously, she gained new protection.

Reflecting now, her teacher perhaps already sensed the crisis, and arranged a contingency plan for her.

"Whatever the case, she's still your mom."

Su Youxia sat cross-legged on the sofa, munching on a slice of watermelon, casually said, "Last night she was worried about you, even considering personally taking you away, but luckily Xiao Gu's combat prowess is formidable."

Moon Princess said coldly, "My mom isn't your mom?"

"I'm an adult; whether I have a mom or not doesn't matter to me."

Su Youxia said with a beaming smile, "But you're different; you're underage."

Moon Princess, expressionless, grabbed the Heavenly Cluster Cloud Sword, ready to leave.

Bam.

The study door swung open.

Jiang Mingyan, dressed in a long black trench coat, the shadow of the brim obscuring her delicate yet cold visage. She carried a heavy metallic weapon case in her hands, her footsteps accompanied by the crisp clatter of metal.

"If you want to leave, you can."

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She said coldly, "I won't stop you."

Su Youxia watched the scene with great interest, a stern, cold mother and a rebellious teenage daughter.

This is really too interesting.

Moon Princess turned around, proudly lifting her chin.

She didn't know what else this woman could say.

Yesterday, the formidable strength demonstrated by Gu Jianlin was enough to make even someone at Holy Land Level like her tremble with fear. From early morning until now, she hadn't uttered a single strange word, nor did she question the engagement again.

After all, even if she was reluctant in her heart, the facts were undeniable.

As her daughter, Moon Princess indeed had a far sharper eye for choosing a man.

When people from the Jiang Family came to her back then, she had no thoughts of resisting, only thinking of how to protect her two beloved daughters in the best way possible, even if it meant sacrificing her husband.

This story, when it happened again to her daughter years later, took a completely different turn.

The Jiang Family came knocking again.

The Jiang Family was beaten to a pulp.

Well, the Jiang Family didn't even know why they were beaten to a pulp.

In short, they were beaten to a pulp.

Even the Black and White Judges died; two Holy Land Level individuals perished overnight.

Just because the Dark World besieged that boy, they paid an appalling price in casualties.

Now the entire Dark World is trembling, just like hunters who went into a cave to hunt a giant bear in winter but accidentally awakened Godzilla, leading to complete annihilation.

You wonder why they provoked him in the first place,

Jiang Mingyan, having witnessed the battle on the overpass, thought the Jiang Family was courting death.

You can't say they were weak.

You can only say the opponent has grown so strong that reason no longer applies.

Of course, she could still say that marriage isn't just about capability; it's also about compatibility.

Such words might be fine in the world of ordinary people.

In the Dark World, they are complete nonsense.

So she changed her approach, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, opting to wait and see first.

At this moment, she was also very curious about that boy, planning to visit the Si Family in person someday.

Moreover, she just found out something very interesting.

"The Ether Association's action team arrived in Tokyo at five in the morning, about the experiment subjects."

Jiang Mingyan said coldly, "Currently, the Tokyo government is under their control. The Orochi Society is discontent but powerless to resist. The Netherworld and the Think Tank led their teams to the Imperial Palace to negotiate."

Su Youxia squinted her beautiful eyes; this was a compromise between the Ether Association and the You Ying Group, as the potential threat of The Order of the Hidden was too great, and they didn't want a conflict in Tokyo immediately, making negotiation necessary.

The issue is that negotiation does not necessarily mean it won't turn into a fight.

Because the negotiation table itself is a kind of battleground.

She had heard about how assertive Ether Association was this time around.

If a fight broke out at the negotiation table, it wouldn't be a surprise.

"What does that have to do with me?"

Moon Princess lifted her cold face, expressionless, and said, "I don't see myself as someone from the Dark World."

Jiang Mingyan sneered.

There's an old saying that a mother knows her daughter best.

For years, Jiang Mingyan had never fulfilled her maternal obligations, living in a different world from her, but because of one person's presence, she could witness her growth all along.

That person is Gu Ci'an.

Looking back, Gu Ci'an indeed was a great person. As a teacher, he was impeccable. He documented his student's growth in a photo album, capturing every bit of her life.

He sent it to Tokyo regularly, delivering it to her birth mother's hands.

As a teacher, Gu Ci'an wasn't just teaching his student how to survive in the Extraordinary World; he wasn't solely focused on making her extraordinarily strong. His true aim was to heal her fragmented childhood.

Making peace with the past is a difficult thing to do.

Gu Ci'an was trying.

Perhaps it was his way of making up for his regrets towards his son, by compensating his student in another way.

It was Gu Ci'an's first time being a father, and he messed everything up; once he truly matured, he happened to meet a girl so much like his son, he couldn't help but care deeply for her.

Jiang Mingyan was very thankful to that man and even thought of how to repay his son.

Who would've thought that the two kids insisted on dating.

"There is someone in the Ether Association's action team, the most talented heir in Ether Association's history, an undisputed candidate for the position of President, the future throne of the Order World, codenamed Thunder. There is a popular rumor that the President intends for Thunder and Qilin to unite, to jointly shoulder the fate of the Human World."

Jiang Mingyan said indifferently, "Just like Taiqing and Taihua four hundred years ago."

Su Youxia paused her action of eating watermelon, and secretly glanced at her sister with her beautiful eyes.

Moon Princess's gaze silently turned sharp, faintly chilling.

"Many people from the Dark World have gone to see her, to check out what the future hostess of the Order World looks like. If nothing unexpected happens, when she ascends to the Ninth Rank, that's when she'll arrive in Tokyo to declare her reign. The opportunity to observe the future pillar of the Human World up close is rare."

Jiang Mingyan glanced at her daughter, her eyes faintly mocking: "And this future mistress, her mood isn't too good right now, because people from the Dark World just ambushed her boyfriend."

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The interaction between women is always full of hidden thorns.

Even biological mother and daughter are no exception.

Here you keep mentioning your boyfriend.

Yet in the Order World, the person has become someone else's boyfriend.

Which one of you is the Joker?

Su Youxia held her forehead and apologized to Uncle Gu in Heaven.

Perhaps Gu Ci'an didn't expect the relationship between the mother and daughter to be so bad, that even if he were resurrected and lived another lifetime, he wouldn't witness a moment of their motherly love and filial respect.

The Moon Princess turned and left, her platinum short hair fluttering in the afternoon sun, appearing sharp.

She originally had no interest in this so-called negotiation.

Now that Thunder has arrived, she must take a look.

Everything about this woman is related to her!

"Hmph, a bunch of Jokers."

Skylark leaned on the mortuary seat, disdainfully spraying disinfectant, waving away the unpleasant odor: "Do they really think I'm easy to bully? Even if I lost my memory, I'm still their grand-aunt."

Gu Jianlin turned on the incandescent lamp, put on a mask and protective suit, studying the corpse on the iron bed like a researcher, he said in a low voice: "I didn't expect you even brought the corpse back."

This was his first chance to closely observe the corpse of an Ancestor.

And an ancient Ancestor, at that.

Lying on the iron bed was the white-haired youth, undoubtedly a member of the Candle Dragon Clan, whose Original State after Ancient God Transformation was a fierce and terrifying flood dragon, an image quite common in Ancient Times, often seen raging through rivers or seas, now thought of as valiant warriors.

Otherwise, so many ancient legends wouldn't have been left behind.

"There should be quite a few Ancestors of the flood dragon type."

Skylark jumped down from the chair, virtualizing like a ghost, floating to his side.

Gu Jianlin had grown accustomed to her ghost-like behavior, but being so close to her, the ends of her slightly curled hair fell onto his cheek, and even in her Virtualization State, he could recall the faint touch and the Lan She fragrance nearby, making one's heart flutter.

He instinctively took half a step back, curiously asking: "This guy won't suddenly resurrect, right?"

The Ancient God Clan all possess immortality.

"It seems you really don't know anything about the Ancient God Clan, do you?"

Skylark lifted her hand to flick his forehead: "How did Taihua teach you?"

Gu Jianlin stopped speaking again.

"To the Ancient God Clan, they are indeed immortal. But immortality is essentially a false proposition, or a paradox, as no one can prove their immortality. No matter if you live for a hundred trillion years, you don't know if you'll die tomorrow. Therefore, immortality cannot be proven, only falsified."

Skylark snorted coldly: "It's the same for the Ancient God Clan, perhaps only the Ancient Supreme truly cannot be killed, even if they are, they would still awaken again after millions of years. As for the Ancestor and the Primordial, if you can acquire their Divine Essence, they can indeed be reborn."

"This process takes a very long time, at the very least spanning thousands of years. After being reborn, they are merely new individuals with the same source of power, no longer the Ancient God Clan you once knew."

She explained: "For example, Kui, if someone obtained its Divine Essence and used a ritual to resurrect it, then thousands of years later you would indeed encounter a new Kui. But that Kui wouldn't remember you, nor have any past memories, its consciousness and thinking have no connection to the past, merely sharing the same name and appearance, with powers from the same source."

"I see now."

Gu Jianlin came to a sudden realization: "Do you remember this person before us?"

Skylark gazed at the body of the white-haired youth on the iron bed, silent for a long time.

There was no more perfect body than this, as if the entire structure was sculpted from white jade, the pale skin exuding a delicate luster, with veins visible where the blood subtly flowed.

Even in death, it maintained breath and a heartbeat, showcasing astonishing physical vitality.

"I can't remember."

Skylark held her forehead, a hint of confusion in her eyes.

"Why not try merging into my body?"

Gu Jianlin earnestly suggested: "Let's use time trace combined with profile to find clues."

Chapter 764: Skylark's Past

Gu Jianlin's proposal seemed proper at first glance, but it sounded a bit odd.

"Have you awakened some strange attribute?"

Skylark smiled alluringly, her smile as radiant as a crabapple blossom, creating an enchanting allure even in the chilly mortuary: "You used to resist having me within your body, right? I understand, no one in this world wants their body controlled by someone else; that feeling is terrible."

Gu Jianlin said expressionlessly, "I still don't like it, but if it helps unveil the truth, I can endure many things for it. It's not just your time-space retrospection ability that I need, but the state that arises when we merge. It allows us to empathize, enabling me to extract more information for profiling."

The limitation of profiling is that it requires mastering sufficient information.

If you imagine this world as a massive game, then everyone and everything constitutes streams of information.

What he needs to do is to find crucial clues in the torrents of information.

Thus deducing the truth of the events.

"Heh."

Skylark snorted coquettishly, "You have no sense of humor at all, how can you ever find a girlfriend?"

This young man indeed had such a personality; he could endure many things to win.

There wasn't a trace of affectation about him, always so pragmatic and silent.

Sometimes, he seemed more like a machine than a living person.

Because no matter the circumstance, he always prioritized his goals over himself.

Just like back at Black Cloud City.

Gu Jianlin certainly knew that acting that way placed him in danger, yet he insisted stubbornly.

It's not that he wasn't afraid of death; he wanted to live desperately because only by living could he uncover all the truths.

But he understood clearly, if he had retreated then, he would never find out what he wanted to know.

That timid self couldn't accomplish anything he wished to do.

So any opportunity that appeared before him was seized tightly, for fear it might never return.

Though she verbally dismissed it, Skylark actually enjoyed this kind of personality.

Because it felt reliable.

However, she now found herself feeling hesitant, perhaps because she had finally to confront her past. Even someone of her stature felt uncertainty and anxiety, trying to mask her inner emotions with this trivial joke.

She restrained the smile at the corners of her lips, "Ready."

Gu Jianlin said nothing, watching her ghost-like form slip into his body, and the sensation of merging soul and flesh surged once again, akin to standing naked and vulnerable, with no secrets left between them.

Like a god-like soul awakening inside him, a pair of bewitching, blood-red eyes slowly opened.

It was an indescribable feeling, as though a god or a devil slumbered inside, ready to unleash endless forbidden powers at a thought's command. Ancient, mysterious languages echoed in his mind, and bizarre knowledge surged like a raging torrent, as if reborn through fire.

He looked again at the corpse on the iron bed, his gaze tinged with a deep blood-red hue.

Gu Jianlin extended his hand, his fingertip touching the ancestor's forehead, and the roar of time flowing backward began abruptly.

Time and space dislocated, past moments surged in, like an old film with missing frames.

Brief and fleeting images flashed by, like a slide show.

In a flickering laboratory lit by fluorescent lights, a seductive woman lay on an operating table, a fine yet shocking wound on her forehead, surrounded by doctors in white coats, as precise instruments displayed a mass of data.

Screams of agony, whispered discussions among doctors, flickering lights.

It was hard to tell if this was a laboratory or Hell on Earth.

"Is this the vessel you've prepared for me?"

A white-haired youth stood like a specter beneath the lights, draped in an ancient black robe, resembling a fanatic from an ancient scroll. His husky voice carried a solemn tone, as if reciting old scriptures.

"This is the best vessel I could find for you. The current reality is shrouded in the shadow of that Heavenly Person, even I must be cautious. The time is not yet right; we must proceed with care."

The man with the red skull said calmly, "Skylark recently appeared in a city called Yokohama, and it seems she's in Ying Province now and in poor condition. Still, the Ghost Jiao and his vessel were killed in an instant. You need to be more cautious, lest it be a futile effort."

"The sixth-ranked Dragon Servant under the Canglong Ancestor, Bai Long,"

he paused, "shouldn't disappoint me, right?"

Bai Long said coldly, "Against such creatures, no one can be sure of victory."

The man with the red skull said, "After all, this is a creature that only exists in paradoxes. No one anticipated that a mere experimental subject would become so powerful. Buzhou Mountain was too obsessed with researching the Shifting Flower and Wood Secret Technique, and no one can verify what the Black Supreme left behind is real or fake."

"After all, no one can fathom the thoughts of the Black Supreme. What you see might be what He wants you to see, and even if you win over Him, you might need to consider if it's part of His plan for you to win."

He lamented, "Dealing with the Qilin Venerable is one of the most dangerous things in the world, isn't it?"

Chapter 765: Skylark's Past

Bai Long did not speak, which was considered as consent.

"If you study according to what He left behind, who knows what kind of monster you might create."

The red skull-headed weirdo rasped with a laugh, "Is Skylark a Spirit Coffin?"

Bai Long said indifferently, "At first, I also thought it was a Spirit Coffin. The facts proved we were all wrong. Since the battle of the East Sea, the Candle Dragon Venerable completely vanished from both

worlds. The Canglong Ancestor stole the treasures He left behind, and over the past two thousand years, countless bloody experiments have been conducted, birthing innumerable deformed monsters."

"Skylark is the most perfect and powerful, so much so that even my master fears her."

He said in an expressionless tone that had a touch of dread, "There's an ancient saying among you humans that if an abnormal phenomenon appears, there must be something peculiar. The woman's power has exceeded all norms; there must be a reason."

The red skull-headed weirdo laughed, "If a creature of Spirit Coffin's stature grows to the Ninth Rank and cultivates both the Zhu Zhao and You Ying laws, it would indeed become the ultimate weapon against the Five Great Clans. Now, it seems Skylark's threat is above that of the Spirit Coffin. I suppose someone has done something to her?"

"I only know that she was a precious experimental subject personally greeted by the Canglong Ancestor, with the original intention of creating the so-called Spirit Coffin, a weapon powerful enough to invade the real world. But no one expected that in just fourteen years, the little girl back then would become so formidable."

Bai Long rasped, "In recent years, Skylark has come to resemble my Master so much that it instills fear in us all. We thought the Lord had been gone for over two thousand years and would not return soon. But the moment Skylark underwent Ancient God Transformation, we all felt it was the Lord descending, prompting us to kneel in worship."

The red skull-headed weirdo took a wind chime out of his pocket and handed it to Him.

"No matter what it is, as long as it's killed, it'll be fine."

The head of The Order of the Hidden chuckled, "I know you suspect that the Supreme has done something to her. Isn't that just perfect? Once Skylark is dead, whatever plans the Lord has will be thwarted."

Bai Long took the wind chime, his eyes showing an expression of reverence as he nodded slightly.

Rumble.

The laboratory began to crumble, and dust fell in showers.

The incandescent lights flickered wildly, and even the doctors in lab coats twisted, appearing terrifying like screaming Resentful Souls. The woman on the operating table struggled frantically, letting out hysterical screams.

Bai Long's silhouette was devoured by darkness, the red skull head oscillating epileptically.

This was because the time-space being traced experienced a fissure.

"Calm down."

Gu Jianlin held his forehead, attempting to soothe the woman within him, "Control yourself."

He certainly had to soothe her, otherwise, he feared he would burst.

The influx of information in this time reverse was immense and exciting enough for him.

The good news was, Skylark was indeed not that blood-colored Supreme, more like an experimental subject.

In a way, she was truly akin to him.

Of course, there was also bad news.

The bad news was Buzhou Mountain didn't even know how she became so powerful. Nothing occurs without reason in this world, indicating that some unknown variable appeared during the experiment process.

Who provided this variable? The answer could only be that blood-colored Supreme.

Because the logic is the same.

Aside from the Candle Dragon Venerable himself, no one can manipulate the power of a Supreme.

Compiling the faint clues, he attempted to construct a real scenario in his mind.

Concentrate, take a deep breath.

His brain surged, awakening an acute sixth sense, perceiving the soul merging with his own.

No separation between us, I am you, you are me.

At this moment, turbulent past events rushed forward!

As if time had reversed!

The tinkling sound of rain, the school still echoed with the class bell, students flooded out of the hallways in droves, only for it to be timed by the pulse of the parents at the school gate; just one twin-tail-haired girl held an umbrella and left the school alone, sprinting across the vast city, as if in search of something.

Suddenly all went silent, the bustling street ceased abruptly, the men and women, young and old, on the bus had the same silent face, the schoolmates inside stopped one after another, staring at him like ghosts.

Oppression.

A suffocating sense of oppression.

The wind and rain howled, thunder roared from above the sky, deep rumbles spreading out.

The storm smelled of heavy earthiness.

The twin-tail girl looked up.

An ancient dragon loomed in the clouds, its eyes filled with lightning and thunder.

Bang.

The girl's eyes were illuminated, leaving only an incredibly glaring white.

The world seemed to halt abruptly.

Crack.

The silent space-time shattered like a mirror, collapsing inch by inch amid the rumbling, Bai Long's body penetrated by crisscrossing, piercing cracks, eventually buried in the endless void of the Dark Realm.

This was Skylark taking action, personally destroying that body.

Gu Jianlin felt her emotions.

Anger, fear, irritability, apprehension, helplessness, despair.

In a flash, he forcibly traversed the gaps between time and space, like lightning threading through the vast city. Tokyo's street scenes flickered like a kaleidoscope—police on the roadside with their boring

banter, news ads on the commercial street, the joyous chatter in the tavern—all seemingly thrown to the end of time.

Until that wicked woman forcibly extracted herself from his body.

Gu Jianlin found himself on a terrace, evidently a classy bar atop the Ginza Building, its all-wood decor like a sailing ship, the azure sky resembling the sea.

The liquor cabinet was filled with a dazzling array of famous wines; the afternoon sun illuminated the quiet bar counter.

Skylark sat on a chair beside the bar, expressionless as she poured herself a glass of beer.

"I know you're not used to time-space travel yet, so I'll let you experience it again."

She said coldly, "Thanks to you, I remembered something."

Gu Jianlin held his forehead, too, sitting down beside her, taking her beer.

He fetched a glass of peach juice from the display case, placing it before her, "It's best not to drink when you're emotionally stirred. People on the Ghost Slayer Path tend to form obsessions, leading to extreme behaviors. In a way, you guys show emotional responses, easily swayed by feelings."

"And someone on the Divine Path gets to say that?"

Skylark glanced at him coldly but did open that bottle of peach juice.

"I'm not a normal person on the Divine Path; my self-control is strong."

Gu Jianlin shook his head, muttering, "You've seen the picture I profiled, so my performance seems consistent, otherwise, you wouldn't have such a sudden emotional surge."

Skylark didn't answer, just silently tightened her grip on that bottle of peach juice.

The metal can was steadily compressed by her, showing deep imprints of her fingers.

"According to current intelligence, you were very likely human before."

Gu Jianlin toyed with the beer, quietly alleviating the fatigue in his mind, explaining, "You should have been selected by the Ancient God Clan of Buzhou Mountain because of some talent. The Canglong Ancestor even came to the real world to welcome you personally—they wanted to cultivate you into a Spirit Coffin, which is truly unimaginable."

He suddenly stood up, seriously gazing at the woman's face.

Especially the forehead.

Skylark didn't like his gaze, her voice cold, "What are you looking at?"

She stroked the soft hair on her forehead, irritably saying, "Is there a scar here?"

Obviously, her forehead was smooth as jade without any blemishes.

"No, you're truly not a Spirit Coffin."

Gu Jianlin shook his head, "This is very strange then. If even the Ancestors of Buzhou Mountain aren't sure if you are a Spirit Coffin, it must mean the experiment was very secretive. Either you once had that wound which healed, or what the Canglong Ancestor did to you was extremely secret, even His Dragon Servants didn't know."

He paused for a moment, "What did you remember?"

Skylark was silent for a long time, lifting her alluring, bewitching eyes, her gaze profound.

"I remembered things from when I was young."

She said softly, "Back then, it seemed I was looking for someone..."

Chapter 766: The Chilling Little Story

Gu Jianlin had never seen her show such a bewildered expression, and for a moment, he found it a bit unsettling.

He suddenly realized something.

No matter how powerful or prestigious the woman in front of him was, she had her own unknown past, carrying her joys and sorrows, her happiness and grief.

She was a living person, not a weapon or a monster.

Thinking this way, he felt a bit of reassurance, realizing that even someone so strong had weaknesses, could show such a confused look, and could feel helpless and lonely when without a home. She was not invincible. But then he felt a heavy heart, knowing that even those who stood at the top of the world had things they couldn't accomplish, times they felt powerless, leaving them with nothing but bitter drinks in a bar.

Compared to the sense of crisis from being coerced, he hated the feeling of impotence more.

"I'm sorry."

He felt a bit of guilt because he suddenly thought of his childhood self.

"Sorry for what?"

Skylark poured herself a glass of peach juice, holding it with both hands, sipping elegantly.

"It's nothing."

Gu Jianlin looked at the bright city under the sunshine and suddenly asked, "Is that person important to you?"

With a thoughtful expression, Skylark softly said, "Maybe he was family? Because I clearly remember, I used to live in a small city in the south, with an old tree that had been alive for years at the gate of my house. When the sun shone on it, it looked dazzlingly golden, and there was a flower that had withered for many years."

As if recounting the most ordinary past, a mysterious aura spread out, making the flow of time seem tranquil. The sunlight shone on the girl's porcelain-white cheek, so pale it was almost transparent.

It was like a beautiful witch reciting an ancient spell, hiding a massive secret within.

"Hmm, your accent does have a bit of a southern trait."

Gu Jianlin nodded slightly, "Do you prefer sweet or salty tofu pudding?"

"Of course, sweet."

Skylark glanced at him, "Who likes salty?"

"That's right then."

Gu Jianlin casually said, "While I just feel like vomiting when I smell sweet tofu pudding."

Rarely did someone as straightforward as him crack a joke to lighten the mood.

Probably to adjust the woman's mood, to prevent her from storming off.

It had nothing to do with whether she was good-looking.

"Initially, our family should have been well-off, as many in that small city respected us."

Skylark gazed at the azure sky, silently watching the swirling clouds, softly saying, "If I remember correctly, later that city was struck by a natural disaster. Well, it wasn't a natural disaster; it was invaded by the Ancient God's Breath, turning into a Forbidden Zone. Our city was shrouded, and the Ether Association took over."

"We?"

Gu Jianlin caught the keyword.

"Yes, I remember I had family, I was the eldest daughter, and there should be four younger brothers; they were all around my age but hard to manage. The second was the most withdrawn, not close to any family member, and the only thing I could remember was his back. The third was smart, capable of helping me share a lot of responsibilities. Little Four was lazy, indifferent about anything, still a kid who had never grown up. Xiao Wu had an eccentric personality that no one could understand."

Skylark immersed herself in memories, her gaze clear yet confused, "All five of us were not in good health, frail and often ill. The majority of the residents had evacuated, but we chose not to leave. We were waiting for our parents to return; they would come back to cure us. The Ether Association once helped us contact our parents, but there was no news."

"You have also been to Black Cloud City and should know what would happen in the Forbidden Zone, just like last night in Tokyo. Sudden disaster disrupted your peaceful life, and the past was gone forever."

Shaking the peach juice in the glass, she said faintly, "Even under the Ether Association's control, the Forbidden Zone is still chaotic, and Ascenders from all over the world would come to investigate,

causing battles to erupt every now and then. I remember; my room got smashed many times, and human heads rolled to my feet like soccer balls."

The citizens' panicked screams and terrified expressions from last night resurfaced in her mind.

At that time, she didn't care, only thinking those people were a bunch of ants.

After recovering some of her memory, she suddenly empathized with them.

Because she had been such a helpless ant herself.

Gu Jianlin instinctively frowned because he found it somewhat illogical here.

If it truly was the Ether Association's style, they wouldn't care about your own will; if you five little kids didn't want to leave, they would just silence you and stuff you in a bag, even giving you a tranquilizer.

When you woke up, you'd be doing morning exercises at Modu Experimental Primary School.

"Sounds insane."

He remarked.

Skylark's recovered memories might not all be reliable, so it was okay if some details didn't match.

"Life during that time was chaotic because external supplies wouldn't be sent in, and daily necessities had to be delivered through special channels. We five often went to the relief station to snatch food and toilet paper. The station master was a greedy bastard, embezzling most of the relief funds and leaving us with leftover scraps. Sometimes he would curse us and accuse us of stealing. Occasionally, he would hang around downstairs, wanting to sell us?"

Skylark smiled silently: "Are there many people like this in the Ether Association?"

"This behavior is rare in each branch, Taixu regularly cleanses them."

Gu Jianlin thought for a moment: "Probably not more than three months."

"I can't wait that long because I will have already awakened by then."

Skylark pouted: "We couldn't go to school then, could only hide at home every day, worried and anxious. The TV signal could only receive six channels, showing boring soap operas and evening news. The internet was cut off, and there were some games and a few anime saved on the hard drive. What accompanied me during that time was 'Digimon.' Have you watched it?"

Gu Jianlin tried humming a little tune in Japanese: "Beyond an infinite dream?"

Now he was certain, this woman's memory recovery was becoming more and more complete.

And she was becoming more like a human.

Skylark also gently hummed the tune, her voice ethereal and enchanting, singing with a different flavor, like a cold forest elf, lively and fascinating, as if uncovering a leaf would lead to a new adventure.

"Rewatching an anime countless times, eventually you have to find something to do. At that time, an archaeologist took good care of us. He was a ninety-year-old man whose lifelong wish was to glimpse the secrets of the Ancient God Clan. Sometimes, he would bring back many snacks and candies for us from his archaeological trips."

Skylark's voice was rarely gentle: "I still remember his smile, weathered and wrinkled, yet kind when he laughed. It was that old man who gave me the Ghost Slayer Path ascension ceremony, including some of the resources needed for ascension. He told me girls must learn to clench their fists to protect themselves, especially since I have four unlucky younger brothers. Being so pretty, sooner or later, bad people would target me."

Gu Jianlin looked skeptically at her beautiful side profile and suddenly said: "I remember Bai Long said earlier, you became more and more like that Supreme after you reached Buzhou Mountain."

"I have always looked good."

Skylark replied coldly: "After I ascended to Second Rank, the first thing I did was kill the director who pocketed money, along with his three damned sons and four lovers."

"Cool."

Gu Jianlin remarked: "How old were you then?"

"Eight years old?"

Skylark said softly: "Don't you think I'm terrifying?"

"Nothing terrifying, I believe in the inherent evil nature at the beginning of life. When young and ignorant, there are naturally many bad thoughts, and under such circumstances, what you did was a survival instinct. I would do the same."

Gu Jianlin said seriously: "As long as you can bear the cost, right or wrong doesn't matter to you."

Skylark savored the words: "Well said, but the one paying the cost wasn't me."

Gu Jianlin was slightly shocked.

"The Ether Association detected the director's death and quickly began an investigation, naturally discovering I was the culprit. Those people didn't hold me accountable for it since the director was indeed a bastard."

Skylark's voice grew cold: "The problem was, I did break their rules, requiring restraint and discipline. At the same time, the Ether Association also discovered the old man who helped me ascend."

Gu Jianlin paused: "The Ether Association's style shouldn't trouble him much."

"The Ether Association didn't trouble him, just banished him from the Forbidden Zone and canceled his official archaeologist status. The issue was that director had connections."

Skylark's eyes flashed with intense killing intent: "Later, I found out the old man died, dying on the way home, leaving his two granddaughters waiting for his return."

Gu Jianlin shook his head, if the story is true, it's a tragedy under a colossal system.

The Ether Association is too vast, with intricate power relations.

The ancient sects, the power of families.

Underneath the Heavenly Person Realm, darkness inevitably breeds.

"For you, this is something you cannot tolerate, right?"

Gu Jianlin poured himself a glass of beer, tasting it slightly, the flavor was peculiar.

"Yes, I even know who the murderer is because three days after the director's death, his brother came to take over the rescue station, and he looked at me as if he were a wolf seeing a lamb."

Skylark's lips curved into a cold smile: "Unfortunately, they didn't know by then I was already a Fourth Rank Shura. This speed of ascension might be slower compared to yours, but for them, it's unimaginable. It was the day of 'major cold,' rare southern snowfall, and I stormed into his house with a blade, cutting him into pieces."

"I don't remember the specific process, he seemed to be begging for mercy, but I was deaf to it."

Her gaze was joyful and relaxed, laughing: "The blood stained the snow red."

Gu Jianlin imagined that snowy night, a twin-tailed little girl wielding a Tang Blade longer than her, blood spraying with every swoosh, the stains in the snow like blooming plum blossoms.

A peculiar kind of beauty.

"Having done this, I couldn't survive in the Forbidden Zone."

Skylark supported her chin with her hand, her gaze doubtful: "I didn't consider the consequences before doing it, taking responsibility for my actions alone, I would protect my brothers. But what I didn't expect was my brother waiting for me at the door."

Gu Jianlin was taken aback: "Your brother?"

"Yes, the most solitary, the second one."

Skylark nodded: "He said some strange things, he said we are cursed, our parents wouldn't return, he wanted to find a new homeland. He doesn't need my protection, he can grow up alone."

"I wanted to stop him, but he suddenly disappeared in front of me. I hurried home to find the farewell letter left by the third one. The third had already packed and left, thanking me in the letter for years of care and believed he was cursed too, so he went to find out."

She said perplexed: "I don't understand, they obviously hadn't awakened, how did they leave? I brought Little Four and Xiao Wu out to search for them, heavy snow falling outside, making it impossible to see anything. Wrapped in thick coats, feeling as though we might be buried in the snowstorm anytime, I tightly held their hands, leading at the front."

Gu Jianlin was again baffled at the idea of such heavy snowfall in the south.

"I held their hands trekking through the snow and couldn't reach the end of the road that had been familiar for years, for nursery then elementary. Oddly, I traveled it for a long time but couldn't reach its end. Turning back, Little Four and Xiao Wu had vanished."

Skylark's voice was like ice hitting, chilling: "It wasn't me letting go, it was them letting go of me. Being the eldest, I always thought I couldn't abandon them, but unexpectedly, I was the one abandoned."

The tale was simply creepy.

Perhaps incomplete memories led to illogical gaps.

Yet in the Extraordinary World, all irrationalities might actually have other explanations.

Gu Jianlin tried constructing that city but the story's emptiness, implausibility blocked any details or character imaging from forming in his mind.

"Later I found a way to escape the Forbidden Zone and never returned home."

Skylark said coldly: "I went to a new city, seeking both my parents and brothers. Disguising as a student, continuously learning Ascender knowledge, until..."

"Until you met Canglong Ancestor."

Gu Jianlin propped his forehead with a hand, pondering: "Is that where your memory ends?"

Skylark remained silent for a while and softly acknowledged.

"Can you remember your parents?"

"No, not at all."

"What about your brothers?"

"I don't remember either."

"Your health wasn't good, what kind of illness?"

"Forgot."

A thorough ignorance.

"The most eerie thing about this is your brothers, you seem entirely unaware of them."

Gu Jianlin interlaced his fingers, resting them on his nose: "What exactly did they go to do?"

One might expect no answer to this.

Unexpectedly, Skylark gazed at the distant sky and answered, "Looking for a new homeland."

Gu Jianlin was slightly stunned.

Skylark whispered: "To find and avenge those who abandoned them."

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Gu Jianlin felt a chill after hearing the last sentence.

If the story Skylark told before seemed somewhat vague and absurd, then by now it had become downright eerie. Whether it was her mysterious parents or the bizarre behavior of her brothers,

everything indicated that she was not from a normal family, and even the city she lived in had significant issues.

Undoubtedly, her memories were fragmented, more like they had been altered by something.

Perhaps even her perception was distorted.

"You don't believe me?"

Skylark propped her chin with her hand, staring at him with a deep gaze.

It was like looking at a heartless man.

"No, I just find it strange, your family clearly isn't normal."

Gu Jianlin shook his head and said: "This is easy to handle, the internal archives of the Ether Association record information on every Forbidden Zone in the world, your city is definitely included, including the family of the stationmaster you killed, which will undoubtedly be documented. Information about your family will also be registered, as long as you truly existed."

As long as you truly existed.

Skylark fell silent upon hearing the last sentence.

"There aren't many Forbidden Zones in the country, just a few hundred."

Gu Jianlin said seriously: "We can find it using the method of elimination."

Skylark responded with a sound.

"Anyway, there's a big gain today."

Gu Jianlin pondered: "As long as we can find your city, no doubt, you will remember more things, including who tampered with you these years in Buzhou Mountain. Of course, we must prepare thoroughly, the Ancient God Clan of Buzhou Mountain may guess you'll return to your hometown and set a trap there."

He asked, with a serious expression: "How much combat capability do you have now?"

In his view, if she could retain about fifty percent, that would be good news.

Skylark's eyes were cold, and she said in a frosty voice: "Zero!"

Gu Jianlin was startled.

"Stop mentioning what you shouldn't, whenever I hear the Candle Dragon Venerable's song, I lose control."

Skylark said with a cold face, in a harsh tone: "In such a situation, I almost have no combat ability. Without the song, I'm the strongest among the existing Ninth Rank. It's just that because I was ambushed during evolution, I'm now seriously injured and periodically have to hibernate."

Gu Jianlin fell silent, thinking no wonder this wicked woman wants to hide in his body.

It seems she truly has no sense of security.

"Otherwise, what use are you to me?"

Skylark flipped her black hair that draped over her shoulders, lifted her enchanting eyes, and sneered: "In the civilization of the Ancient God Clan, one role of the Male Sacrifice is to protect your female master, even at the cost of life."

"Firstly, I'm not a Male Sacrifice."

Gu Jianlin said expressionlessly: "Secondly, don't think I don't know, that the primary role of the Male Sacrifice is to restore spirituality through union. In the civilization of the Ancient God Clan, excellent Male Sacrifices are precious strategic resources that need to be properly preserved, and they're never sent to the battlefield. Even if they die, it's from being exploited."

Skylark's gaze at him revealed a strange change.

She suddenly smiled, her eyes showing allure and temptation, her voice sultry and hoarse: "It seems like you're quite looking forward to me pushing you down on the bed and then fiercely draining your spirituality?"

Her gaze was like looking at a delectable little lamb.

Gu Jianlin seriously corrected: "I'm just refuting your statement, don't take me for a kid who knows nothing, I have some research in this area."

Back in the Omega Sequence, he had studied what Female Sacrifice and Male Sacrifice were.

He had fully grasped knowledge in this aspect.

He was a person with a strong thirst for knowledge, once he found gaps in his understanding, he would fill them.

"Is it?"

Skylark coldly chuckled.

"Yes."

Gu Jianlin shook his head, helplessly said: "At my level, even being your Male Sacrifice is unqualified; I'm likely to be devoured by you. Your Rank is too high, I can't reach it."

It was rare for him to be teased to a point of anger, so his words were somewhat sarcastic.

"It's okay, sister can wait for you to grow up."

Skylark's lips curved into a playful arc: "Under my guidance, you can grow very quickly."

Gu Jianlin was a very pragmatic person, as long as he could become strong quickly, he could endure a lot.

"Your battle last night was spectacular, even I must admit, you're very powerful."

Skylark glanced at him and said softly: "Moreover, you have great potential for improvement. Your current priority is to quickly advance to the Sixth Rank. Reaching the end of the Superdimensional Level, mastering Primordial Return, that's the core of You Ying Law. Of course, Candle Light Law must not be overlooked, your domain hasn't formed yet."

The ones who can merge two Ancient Divine Languages are naturally strong.

The talent of this youth is without question.

Beyond talent, his willpower is even more astonishing.

He can withstand the backlash of the world's rules and forcibly undergo Ancient God Transformation, which is something even she cannot do.

Unfortunately, he is too young, and has been an Ascender for too short a time.

Even if he pushes hard, in a short period, it's just like this.

No matter how powerful the Ancient Divine Language is, without the support of spirituality, it's just an evil dragon's roar.

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For a demigod of Skylark's rank, letting out a howl is no different.

"Alright."

For some reason, Gu Jianlin felt like he was cramming his summer homework on the last day.

Things have been piling up recently, and it's getting hard for him to breathe.

"The matter of promotion shouldn't be too difficult for me. I control the Si Family, and even if I just pile up resources, I can still reach the Sixth Rank. The Spiritual Secret Medicine is inexhaustible and inexhaustible."

He looked up and asked, "What about the cultivation of the Two Supreme Laws?"

Skylark gazed into his eyes closely, as if seeing the silent young man from years ago: "You have your noble sister, what are you afraid of? Rest assured, as long as you advance to the Sixth Rank, I have ways to help you find the Holy Corpse and let you grasp the Primordial Return. As for your Heavenly Person Domain, it's nothing but your childhood trauma."

She showed a look of pity and said gently: "Poor child, did that shadow from encountering the Ancient Supreme linger since you were so young?"

Gu Jianlin felt her expression and tone were a facade, as if teasing him.

Yet for a moment, he felt as if there was a gentle stream flowing in her eyes.

This wicked woman seemed to truly feel sorry for him.

Perhaps because their backgrounds were similar, both had unhappy childhoods.

In the end, after encountering the Ancient God Clan, their lives fell apart.

"Don't worry, it's just the Vermilion Bird Clan."

Skylark leaned over, breathing softly: "Next time, sister will handle it for you."

Gu Jianlin could clearly feel his face heating up, instinctively stepping aside.

He wasn't used to being so close to people.

Even though they had already been more intimate, he still instinctively resisted.

"So the next plan is to stay in the Dark World?"

Gu Jianlin changed the subject, as this wicked woman only behaved seriously when discussing serious matters.

At least she wouldn't tease him then.

"Of course, you need to quickly become stronger. Time is running out. I need to enter the Divine Ruins on the second layer of the Qilin Immortal Palace, where there are things useful to me. The Dark World has been eyeing the second layer for a long time, and they haven't exerted their full power in the first layer," Skylark said jokingly.

"Divine Ruins?"

Gu Jianlin suddenly thought of the inverted tomb he saw last night in The Order of the Hidden's files.

Skylark could see through his thoughts at a glance and nodded: "Yes, it is what you think. It's the true tomb built by the Qilin Venerable for itself, a world belonging solely to it. This is why I chose you; in a way, it is your nest, and you have the best chance to clear it."

Gu Jianlin pondered, after the gate to the second layer of the Qilin Immortal Palace opens, vanguards from around the world will rush into the Ancient God Realm based on information compiled by the Cheaters, just in case.

Next comes the familiar clearing phase.

It's probably similar to the first layer.

Except he still didn't know what the second layer was like, other than that inverted gigantic tomb.

"We still have some time, come with me for a trip."

Skylark lazily stretched, her silhouette under the afternoon sun was so elegant and enchanting, her voluptuous figure exuding a blooming beauty, like a swaying mandala flower.

When the wind blew, her fragrance akin to Lan She spread, like petals fluttering everywhere.

"What else to check?"

Gu Jianlin was slightly moved.

"Nothing to check, feeling pretty good, let's find a store for a meal, then watch a movie with me."

Skylark glanced at him: "What, unwilling?"

Gu Jianlin was about to say something, when suddenly he saw her seductive and bewitching eyes.

In her deep beautiful eyes, there was a hint of threat.

Gu Jianlin sighed, for the sake of her helping him grow, let her be.

Besides, he felt he needed to relax a bit.

The sound of an ancient bell echoed through the city.

Skylark turned around with a slight feeling, her eyes indifferent: "Jiang Chunyang, that old ghost, finally made a move."

Gu Jianlin frowned and asked: "What?"

"Is this the awakening bell?"

Skylark said lightly: "If I'm not mistaken, after last night's events, Jiang Chunyang will spare no effort to purge the traitors in the Dark World, trying to root out the moles in The Order of the Hidden. For an old miser on his deathbed like Jiang Chunyang, the one thing he can't stand is betrayal, which makes him feel very insecure."

Gu Jianlin had a bad feeling: "What will he do?"

Trying to root out the moles in The Order of the Hidden seemed incredibly difficult in his view.

All along, he could only interrogate using the Soul Comforting Bell.

This was still a method his teacher had thought up for him.

"The awakening bell is a mythical weapon passed down from Buddhism, originally used for sinners to repent. Those who are baptized by the bell's sound will have their mental will blurred, and they will involuntarily confess their sins."

Skylark snorted softly: "Jiang Chunyang probably intends to use this method to screen the moles in The Order of the Hidden. His rank is the highest in Ying Province, with him personally ringing the awakening bell, no one in the Dark World can resist his will. Of course, it's ineffective for you and me, as it still belongs to the realm of the Spiritual Domain."

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Gu Jianlin frowned and asked, "Can it be done?"

"I don't know."

Skylark shook her head.

Gu Jianlin suddenly thought of something, his expression changed slightly: "Wait a minute, Old Master Si and the others are my spies. When they face the Bell, won't their identity as the Divine Servants be exposed?"

Skylark glanced at him, her smile charming.

"It seems you also know nothing about the relationship between the Master and the Divine Servants."

The headquarters of the You Ying Group stood majestically on a street corner in Shinjuku District, like a towering Giant overlooking the bustling city, right across from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building, and in the distance, you could see Tokyo Bay and Mount Fuji.

The ancient Bell echoed in the city, yet this building was isolated from the chimes.

Because in the conference room, a deep, strange echo reverberated, as if from the depths of the Universe, so empty and silent.

Dong dong, dong dong.

It was like thunder, yet also like the clash of swords, or the bizarre reverberation of the Void trembling.

"How many years has it been since the Order World and the Dark World sat down to negotiate?"

The Think Tank said with a smile, "Welcome to the Dark World."

Around a long black table, representatives from the Ether Association and the You Ying Group sat on either side.

Incense burned on the black table, smoke curling up into the air.

No one spoke, as they all quietly listened to that strange sound, their expressions solemn.

Because the mysterious sound represented history from two hundred years ago.

It was also the most glorious period when the Human World was not yet divided.

The two hundred years ago when the brothers named Qing and Chi undoubtedly became the first humans to enter space; when they returned from the depths of space, they brought back countless unresolved mysteries that astonished the world, one of which was the mysterious sound now echoing in the conference room.

It was said that this strange sound was heard when they broke through the atmosphere, yet logically, no sound should propagate in a vacuum, and yet it eerily resonated in space.

It was such a silent and deep tone, as if it transcended the long river of distant history.

From the beginning of the Universe, echoing to this day.

In the 1960s, humans also ventured into space, yet they did not hear this strange sound.

This is because the world perceived by humans and the Ascenders is different.

An Alchemy Scholar analyzed that once you enter the Universe, the rules of the world change.

Those without spirituality enter the Outer Universe.

While the truly spiritual Ascenders enter the Inner Universe.

The Inner and Outer Universes are the same space, but the sights one sees are completely different.

To this day, no one has been able to deduce the source of this strange sound.

Nor can anyone trace back how many years this strange sound has reverberated.

Thus, it has become an unresolved mystery, and also a symbol of Qing and Chi.

No one knows the purpose of the Think Tank playing this recording.

Perhaps it was just on a whim.

Perhaps it was a demonstration, wanting the people of the Ether Association to know that they were also pillars of the Human World back then, holding the most ancient secrets and not just a pushover.

In fact, the Think Tank played this recording for no other reason.

Just to play the card of sentimentality.

You see, two hundred years ago, we were all one family; why can't we sit down and talk properly?

Let's have a meal and a chat; we're all friends.

No need to be so tense, right?

The Think Tank forced a smile, but his eyes were fixed through the floor-to-ceiling window on the long street full of falling petals.

Accompanied by the drifting cherry blossoms, a solemn woman walked silently on the petal-covered path, holding a parasol, as if reminiscing about the familiar street views, or perhaps the time that has passed.

The polished windows reflected a smile from the Think Tank that looked worse than crying.

"The Dark World has done things it shouldn't have."

Lin Dong interlaced his fingers, indifferently said, "You've touched people you shouldn't have."