

Ancient 81

Chapter 81 - 42: Who is the Genius

The first floor of the Deep Space Technology Building is the reception lobby.

Gu Jianlin sat on the sofa, holding a tablet computer, reading knowledge related to team operations.

"Here's your iced cola."

Chen Qing approached gracefully, bent over and placed a can of iced cola in front of him, saying expressionlessly, "Sometimes I really have this illusion, as if I've gotten myself another little young master."

"Thank you."

Gu Jianlin curiously asked, "Sister Chen Qing, why do you call him young master?"

The title feels quite strange in today's society.

Chen Qing sat next to him and replied coolly, "Because I was an orphan when I was a child, and he took me in. At that time, the Lu Family didn't agree, so he raised me outside, using his pocket money to bring me up."

Gu Jianlin froze: "Raised with pocket money? As expected from an Ascender family—truly wealthy."

By comparison, in his own Ascender family, he was the only one left now.

"That's how it is."

Chen Qing brushed her hair as she examined her makeup on her phone screen.

"Were you childhood friends... or lovers?"

Gu Jianlin asked.

Chen Qing shook her head and said, "We don't have that kind of relationship. He has someone he loves, but that person is no longer around."

Gu Jianlin didn't expect to hear this and found himself momentarily silent.

In the lobby, many investigators and researchers were coming and going, along with numerous business staff members.

"Hey, look at that guy—isn't he the one who killed the Joker?"

"A Zero-tier taking down a Second Rank mutated Fallen? I heard those two Mythical Weapons are also with him."

"No kidding, he's really handsome. Did you all see that photo of him sitting in the ruins? They say he's also a rare Independent Awakened. Do you think I should ask for his WeChat?"

"He's the son of a Fallen. If you go, I won't stop you."

"What's wrong with being the son of a Fallen? As long as he's handsome, that's all that matters!"

Gu Jianlin listened to their whispered discussions without saying anything.

Ever since he arrived at the Deep Space Building and people recognized him, most conversations had been like this.

He realized that in the Ether Association, "Fallen" was a very sensitive term.

Many people cared about it.

Even though he wasn't a Fallen himself, because of his father, he was also the subject of gossip.

"In the eyes of the Judgment Court, Fallens succumb because they're unable to resist the allure of power. Some of them betrayed others, leading to resentment, or had family members killed by Fallens. Others believe that the gene for falling is buried deep in their bloodline."

Chen Qing said gently, "Especially someone like you. People like Nie, the Deacon, think your father destroyed the Immortal Palace's plans out of personal greed and left the benefits to you, claiming your achievements are built on illegitimate gains."

She hesitated a moment: "There are even conspiracy theories saying that the Joker and the others' fall was orchestrated by your father, as similar incidents have occurred in the Ether Association's history."

The Ether Association is so massive that almost anything is possible.

Gu Jianlin nodded slightly and asked, "Then, isn't everyone susceptible to contamination?"

Chen Qing replied coldly, "They have faith. To them, once the mind is contaminated, they should commit suicide before losing control."

"Over the years, the Judgment Court's attitude toward Fallens has grown increasingly extreme. Some believe Fallens are too prone to losing control. Even those who remain rational in the early stages of infection could suddenly descend into heavy madness and exhibit severe aggression."

She paused: "Which is why they'd rather eliminate them entirely. Contaminated individuals, either commit suicide or are killed—taking temporary suppressive medication is seen as nothing more than a cowardly way of evading punishment."

Gu Jianlin thought to himself, so that's how it is.

"Of course, saying 'commit suicide if contaminated'..."

Chen Qing mocked, "Whether one can actually follow through is another matter. But in recent years, with the Judgment Court wielding overwhelming power, many matters within the association are dictated by them, and there's not much one can do."

At that moment, the elevator doors opened, and Lu Zicheng stomped out with a grim expression.

He slumped onto the sofa, grabbed a bottle of mineral water, and began guzzling it down.

The bald parrot perched on his shoulder squawked, "So annoying! So annoying!"

Gu Jianlin asked suspiciously, "What happened?"

Lu Zicheng finished his water and snapped irritably, "If nothing unexpected happens, our squad will likely end up with just you alone."

Chen Qing frowned: "Too late?"

Lu Zicheng nodded: "Because this mission is very dangerous, there weren't many investigators willing to participate from the start. Most squads already have fixed members, so there are no spare freelancers."

Chen Qing furrowed her brow: "That could be a bit of a problem."

"Indeed."

Lu Zicheng hesitated and said, "So, our squad won't be able to recruit anyone for the time being. Plus, the Judgment Court's loyalist faction is part of the operation group for this mission, and they might target Xiao Gu."

Gu Jianlin silently sipped his cola, saying nothing.

Actually, this was good news.

Because he didn't need teammates at all.

"Originally, I wanted you to reach First Order as soon as possible."

Lu Zicheng sighed, "But without Alchemists or Priests, it's very troublesome, and merit exchange is out of the question."

Gu Jianlin frowned: "Why?"

Lu Zicheng replied gloomily, "Because it's been completely scooped up."