

Collapse 129

Chapter 129: New Copy_1

Fatty even bought one cheerfully to serve as a mascot.

Gu Mian: "..."

This year's Spring Festival was definitely the most thrilling one Gu Mian had ever experienced.

Although every Spring Festival for the past twenty-plus years had brought unexpected events, none were as significant as this year's.

Gu Mian believed that even bigger surprises awaited in future Spring Festivals.

After New Year's Eve, they stayed near Hengdian for a few more days.

This area was frequently swept by the military, so order was well-maintained. Many shops were still open, but those operating were generally hotels, as most food stores remained closed.

Gu Mian and his group couldn't sleep in the car indefinitely, so they found a hotel nearby. The owner only accepted Game Coins as payment, charging 100 Coins per day.

The nearby streets had mostly been cleared. Numerous tents were erected along the streets, primarily housing those who had traveled from afar for the event but couldn't afford hotel accommodations.

The three of them stayed in the hotel for a full ten days, until February 14th.

Early in the morning, Fatty was standing on the balcony, looking down at the clusters of tents below.

"I really feel like a nobleman," Fatty said with a satisfied sigh.

"Yes," Gu Mian replied. "Every ten days we stay here, an instance loses its life. So brutal indeed."

Thinking of the thousand Game Coins spent on lodging over the past ten days, Fatty's expression turned bitter.

Fatty had paid all the rent, and now he felt rather poor.

"Lantern Festival..." Fatty muttered. "The event starts on the Lantern Festival, which is February 19th. Today is February 14th... Ah, five more days..."

At this, Fatty suddenly seemed to realize something. "Speaking of which, Doctor, isn't today Valentine's Day?"

"Hmm," Gu Mian nodded. "It's possible the assassin pursuing me will make a move on Valentine's Day and try to kill me."

It was quite strange. Gu Mian had received a pursuit order, but in the past ten days, he hadn't seen a single hair of the assassin.

His dangerous assassin, the one decked out in gifts like a Christmas tree, seemingly hadn't arrived on Earth at all.

Fatty had evidently thought of this too. "Could it be that the assassin heard of your reputation, Doctor..."

Gu Mian shook his head. "No, I think he probably landed quite far away and is now frantically rushing over here."

That really conjured an image, Fatty thought, shrugging.

Then, he craned his short neck to look out the window again.

The room they rented was on the third floor. Looking down, they could see the densely packed tent area on the street below.

In the old days, setting up tents on both sides of the street would have been strictly prohibited. But things were different now. People's main priorities were evolution—and, of course, earning money.

Many people had come from all over the country.

Transportation was currently very inconvenient. Gu Mian and his group could drive the Spirit Car, so it wasn't too much trouble for them to get here. But other people had a much harder time; their journeys had been arduous.

Some people set up roadside stalls, selling non-food items at very cheap prices.

Since it cost 50 Game Coins for a ticket to enter the supermarket, people didn't visit it frequently.

Some even pooled their Game Coins, entrusting them to one trustworthy person who would enter the supermarket alone to buy everything they needed. This way, they could save a considerable amount of Game Coins.

At first, Gu Mian didn't quite understand the rule requiring a ticket to enter the supermarket.

Now he understood: Earth was encouraging people to form teams.

At this moment, Chu Changge approached from behind. "The order around Hengdian is quite good. I presume the capital and provincial capital cities are the same. But the military can't be everywhere."

Gu Mian understood.

At the onset of this catastrophic game, a large portion of the military had been transferred to important cities and coastal areas.

Therefore, there were many places they couldn't attend to. Undoubtedly, darkness would fester in those neglected areas, eventually forming formidable evil forces.

The small town they had passed through earlier was an example. If the military hadn't arrived to deal decisively with the people there, it would likely have become a significant power.

Fatty, however, clearly wasn't concerned with these matters; he was still mulling over Valentine's Day.

"Doctor, do you think there'll be any young couples down there celebrating Valentine's Day in their tents?" Fatty asked, curiously looking down below.

Gu Mian also looked down. "In broad daylight, under a clear sky, your thoughts are quite indecent."

The tent area below appeared chaotic at first glance, but upon closer inspection, it seemed to have some organization.

The main roads hadn't been obstructed, likely because the military had maintained order. There were numerous hotels open on both sides of the main street, but few people were staying in them.

Most people couldn't afford 100 Game Coins a day for a hotel room; that amount could cover several meals.

Below, the densely packed tents were crammed tightly together, one next to another, with very narrow gaps between them, barely enough space to step. It resembled a slum from a movie.

Occasionally, people from below would look up, their expressions full of longing, as if desperate to stay in a room with a proper roof, even for just one day.

Just then, someone looked up and met the gazes of Gu Mian and Fatty.

It was a man with a sallow, dark complexion and deep lines on his face, looking to be in his forties.

He stared at Gu Mian and Fatty for a long time, a hint of envy in his eyes, before looking down again.

"That's heartbreaking," Fatty sighed, shaking his head.

Gu Mian looked at him. "If we run out of money, we'll end up like that too."

Fatty shivered. "Doctor, don't you think it's been a long time since we've entered an instance?"

"Entering an instance on Valentine's Day... you sure know how to pick a date."

Despite his words, Gu Mian still found himself walking towards the door.

The Lantern Festival event details only included a preview and gameplay mechanics; specific information was missing. But even without specifics, one could guess some rules: the stronger the player, the more rewards they'd likely get.

In other words, players who completed more instances would receive more rewards.

Therefore, they still had to enter more instances.

"After we finish this instance, let's wait until the Lantern Festival to join the event directly," Gu Mian said as he picked up the finely packaged chainsaw by the door and slung it onto his back.

Fatty nodded.

When Gu Mian went downstairs, he was met with countless gazes.

They were from the players in the tent area. After all, people who could afford 100 Game Coins a day for a room were quite a rarity.

He preferred not to go out with Fatty and Chu Changge because their names frequently appeared on the announcements. Although his own name had appeared even more often, he was currently anonymous.

If he walked with Fatty and Chu Changge, others, upon seeing their nicknames, would naturally deduce who this verdant green Doctor was.

So, Gu Mian usually acted alone.

Under the intense gaze of all the players in the tent area, he walked into the nearest ticket booth.

There were quite a few players at the ticket booth. The game had been running for a while, and people had adapted to the situation, no longer resisting entering instances.

Within a few minutes, Chu Changge and Fatty also came in.

The ticket seller seemed quite understanding, or perhaps had simply given up struggling.

He glanced at Gu Mian, then silently issued a multi-person ticket, his face clearly showing an expression that screamed, I'm going to get my wages docked!