

Collapse 591

Chapter 591 The Dove Turns Out to Be My Own!_1

If you were to enter an instance and ask every NPC, "Do you know what the Recycle Bin instance is called?" you would probably not get an answer in a short amount of time. Most of the ghosts in an instance don't talk, and it's rare to find an NPC with intelligence. Also, a majority of NPCs have no idea what the Recycle Bin is.

At this moment, Fatty slapped his forehead, "Ah, Doctor, I saw Miss Fortune-Teller on the list of compensations. Were you in the same instance with her?"

Fatty still didn't understand why several instances had been destroyed simultaneously. His question had been interrupted by Mr. Green's knocking.

Gu Mian shook his head, "No, she wasn't my teammate. It's somewhat complicated. Somehow I ran into her while she was in a different instance."

Fatty was confused but didn't inquire further, "Miss Fortune-Teller must be good at finding stuff. At the very least, she could divine some general direction for us."

Indeed.

The location of the Food Factory's office had been divined by the Fortune-teller. She had also conjured an extremely rare massive bomb using her divination, which blew up the entire food processing plant.

Gu Mian nodded slightly, "She has certainly used her class skills to search for special items. Presumably, she could divine where the Clown Mask is." But there was a problem now. Gu Mian looked at the other two, "I didn't add her as a friend, so I can't contact her. Did any of you?"

Gu Mian rarely used the game's built-in friend function, to the point that he had almost forgotten about it.

Fatty immediately started to rummage through his friends list, "I remember I added her. Let me find it..."

Soon, he found "Fortune-teller" among hundreds of nicknames.

Fatty looked at Gu Mian, "Shall I just ask her now?"

"You ask."

Fatty opened the chat window and started typing in the input field—

"Dear Miss Fortune-Teller, I hope your life has been pleasant recently. I heard that you met with the Doctor not long ago. I'm sure you must've shared quite a delightful conversation..."

The writing style was peculiar. Chu Changge found himself frowning at it.

Gu Mian, watching Fatty type from the side, almost had a physical question mark appear on his face. "What the heck are you writing?"

Fatty gave a dry laugh, "Sorry, I used to work as a game scriptwriter for a while. I got into the habit of this style..."

He typed a few more lines hastily and finally stopped beating around the bush.

"...The Doctor would like your help to divine the location of the 'Clown Mask,' a special item. It should be in one of the instances. Would you have some spare time?"

Then, he sent this strangely worded long message.

Gu Mian guessed that when the Fortune-teller saw this chunk of strange text, her face would be full of question marks.

A few minutes later, a reply came from the Fortune-teller.

As expected, she replied with a "?"

She probably thought Fatty had lost his mind.

There was more text after the "?".

"So, you want me to divine the instance that houses the Clown Mask, this special item, right? But I can't do it with just a name. I would need an intermediary object or someone who's seen the Clown Mask before. Only then can I perform the divination."

Someone who's seen the Clown Mask?

All eyes fell on Mr. Green.

Mr. Green quickly backed away, "Don't look at me, I've never seen it..."

But before he could finish, Xiao Qiao interjected, "He's seen it."

Even though they weren't sure how Xiao Qiao knew, Gu Mian still tied up Mr. Green with a prepared rope to prevent him from escaping.

Fatty's voice came from the side, "This is a bit of a hassle. We have to bring Mr. Green to the Fortune-teller for the divination."

Gu Mian asked, "Where is the Fortune-teller now?"

"She said she's not far. Some of her teammates came here for the college entrance examination event, but she hasn't heard from them. She was already on her way here to find them and has now reached the neighboring city."

During the college entrance examination event, players were picked up by school bus and brought here. Presumably, the Fortune-teller didn't get a ticket for the event back then, so she couldn't take the school bus. She had to separate from her teammates who could enter and make her own way here.

But since the Fortune-teller's class is very advantageous in instances, her teammates would definitely worry about her traveling alone. There must still be other teammates with her now.

Gu Mian spoke up, "Ask her how many people are with her."

Fatty rapidly typed a few lines and sent the message. Soon, he received a reply.

"Ah, Miss Fortune-Teller said there were originally two others with her. But, you know how we recently had that restriction where no one could enter instances for half a month? They didn't have much Game Coin, and their food supplies were only enough for one person. The two of them argued over food, which ended with one running off with all the supplies in the middle of the night. The other went after them, and neither has returned since."

Gu Mian marveled, "Such dependable teammates."

He grabbed the tightly bound Mr. Green and headed out. "Ask her current location. We'll deliver Mr. Green to her." Mr. Green struggled, but it was no use.

On this bright afternoon, Gu Mian and the others boarded the Spirit Car.

Xiao Hong was still enthusiastically pressing her face against the back window, sipping her soda, with Mr. Green squashed underneath her. Her brother was blowing air on Gu Mian's head, Fatty was lounging on the seat, while Chu Changge sat primly in the passenger seat.

Xiao Qiao had also been dragged along by Gu Mian. Considering her [Big Data Search] skill might be helpful in finding the Clown Mask, Gu Mian had brought her along.

Xiao Qiao, mimicking Xiao Hong, also plopped herself down on Mr. Green. She even snatched the lychee soda from Xiao Hong's mouth and started drinking it herself. The result was inevitable—

The two women in the back started scratching at each other.

The Fortune-teller had been waiting downstairs from her building for a long time. When she saw a car speeding towards her, she was shocked; she hadn't seen anyone drive a car in the real world for ages. No one drove, firstly because the roads were blocked, and secondly, because fuel had evaporated. Of course, the latter was the main reason. The only vehicles moving on the streets these days were basically bicycles and electric scooters. Some people were even riding children's bicycles.

However, what followed was even more shocking to her.

As soon as the car stopped in front of her, a door was SLAMMED open with a BANG from the inside.

A woman in a red dress, her face obscured by her disheveled hair, rushed out, clenching something in her hand. She bolted a considerable distance, looking like a madwoman from a village entrance.

Before the Fortune-teller could get a clear look at her, another woman suddenly appeared at the car door.

She recognized this woman; it was the movie star Qiao Chu. They had met before in the Death Image instance.

Even off-screen, Xiao Qiao was absolutely dazzling. Damn, she's beautiful! a single glance was enough to make one exclaim.

However, her beautiful face now bore several scratches, and her hair was pulled into a messy, bird's-nest-like tangle.

She darted from the car to chase the 'madwoman.' The sight of the two women—one fleeing, one pursuing—left the Fortune-teller quite dizzy.

Chapter 592 Princess Mianmian?_1

Before the Fortune-teller could even tear her gaze away from the two women, she heard a THUD, as if something had landed at her feet.

Looking down, she saw a short, entirely green man.

He was bound tightly, a rag stuffed in his mouth.

The Fortune-teller had never seen him before.

Strangely, this little green man glared at her fiercely, as if she were his mortal enemy.

Just as the Fortune-teller was feeling bewildered, Gu Mian suddenly appeared in her line of sight. He stepped out of the car, reached over, and pulled the rag from the little man's mouth.

Only then could the little man speak.

The moment the rag was removed, he glared fiercely at the Fortune-teller and demanded, "Was it you who blew up the food factory?"

Fortune-teller: ?

By the time Gu Mian had captured Xiao Hong and Xiao Qiao, it was already six in the evening.

Now, their group was crowded into the Fortune-teller's house. Ignoring the fuming Mr. Green and the two women who looked ready to brawl at any moment, everything was quite harmonious.

A small table was set up in front of the Fortune-teller for divination.

Mr. Green was pressed down on the opposite side of the table, serving as the medium for the divination.

Two thick, white candles flanked the table, their flames flickering gently. In the center sat a Crystal Ball the size of an infant's head.

Gu Mian remembered this object.

In the 'Sweet Lovers' instance, when the Fortune-teller had tried to read his fortune, this very Crystal Ball had unexpectedly exploded.

Recalling the previous explosion, Gu Mian cautiously took a step back, just in case.

Fatty, who was craning his neck so far he nearly pressed his face against the Crystal Ball, shot Gu Mian a strange look before turning his attention back to it.

Sitting at the table, the Fortune-teller said, "Usually, I use a Pendulum or tarot cards for divination. However, to divine specific information like the name of an instance, neither a Pendulum nor tarot cards are sufficient."

She paused, then continued, "With so many people here, it could affect the Crystal Ball reading. It would be best if only I and this... green little... sir... remained..."

"You're the little green shorty!" Mr. Green roared.

Amidst Mr. Green's roars of "Your whole family are little green shorties!" Gu Mian and the others exited the room.

As Fatty left, he wore a look of reluctance, frequently glancing back.

Chu Changge, meanwhile, kept his eyes fixed on Xiao Qiao and Xiao Hong to prevent them from starting another fight.

Listening to Mr. Green's bellows, Gu Mian wondered, Can the Fortune-teller even divine successfully in this racket?

Fortunately, they didn't have to wait long.

Just a few minutes later, the Fortune-teller opened the door, apparently finished with the divination.

However, her expression was rather odd, as if she had divined something truly baffling.

Chu Changge pushed up his glasses and asked, "What did you find out?"

"Well... I was indeed divining the name of your so-called 'Recycling Station' instance, but... I'm not sure if the result is correct. In any case, the name is very strange."

Mr. Green had previously told Gu Mian and the others that the name of the Recycling Station instance was bizarre, so they were already mentally prepared.

As she spoke, the Fortune-teller handed Gu Mian a piece of paper she had been holding. "I wrote down the divined name on this."

Gu Mian took the paper and looked at it.

Then he fell silent.

Seeing Gu Mian's silence, Fatty curiously leaned over to look at the paper.

He, too, fell silent.

Chu Changge also came over.

The three of them stood there in silence.

"Princess Mianmian and Her Seven Simp Knights?"

Even with their mental preparation, Gu Mian was still shocked by the bizarre name.

The Fortune-teller hesitated before speaking, "This name... I don't think it quite fits the atmosphere of the Recycling Station. Perhaps something went wrong. How about I try divining again tomorrow?"

Gu Mian also felt it didn't sound like an instance name, so he nodded, agreeing to let the Fortune-teller try again the next day.

However, the result of her divination the next day was still the same.

The instance's name was still "Princess Mianmian and Her Seven Simp Knights".

Gu Mian: ...

This doesn't sound like a name for a recycling station at all, Gu Mian thought.

From the side, the bound Mr. Green's voice piped up, "I heard that the Recycling Station instance was named by some NPC to satisfy their own twisted sense of humor. I never expected that NPC to be so creative with names."

Gu Mian looked at Mr. Green. "It seems you know a fair bit about that place. Why don't you tell us what's inside?"

Mr. Green quickly said, "This is all just hearsay! But the Recycling Station is mostly filled with unwanted junk from other instances. If you search hard enough, you might find something useful... As for the instance tasks, I guess they're probably things like garbage sorting? You have to understand, some factory NPCs are lazy and push all their work onto the players..."

"From what I know, instances like auto repair shops, libraries, wastewater treatment plants, and construction sites all make players do manual labor. This 'Recycling Station' of yours is probably similar."

Indeed. Gu Mian recalled Xiao Qiao once entering an auto repair shop instance. The task was for players to repair cars, but ghosts would be interspersed among the parts.

"So, is the Recycling Station instance dangerous?" Fatty asked curiously.

"Didn't I tell you? It's not dangerous at all. It's probably the safest instance in the entire game. They say the chance of dying in there is lower than choking to death while eating."

Fatty said hesitantly, "You're not trying to trick us, are you? Telling us that instance is safe to lure us in and wipe us all out?"

"Heh." Mr. Green rolled his eyes dismissively. "Me, trick you into an instance? I wish you lot would never even get near an instance entrance for the rest of your lives!"

He sounded utterly sincere, without a hint of deception.

Chu Changge pushed up his glasses again. "In any case, we now know the name of the Recycling Station instance... 'Princess Mianmian and Her Seven Simp Knights'..."

He paused for a moment when saying the instance name, as if finding it difficult to utter.

"Since it's not very dangerous, the more people, the better. After all, we need to search for something. A Fortune-teller is invaluable for finding things, one being as effective as several people combined. Fortune-teller, can you go in and help?"

Addressed directly, the Fortune-teller nodded slightly. "If there's no significant danger, I can certainly go."

Receiving her affirmative reply, Chu Changge continued, "Although it's 'the more, the merrier,' everyone who enters must be trustworthy. Otherwise, they might conceal any special items they find. Besides those of us here, Liu Ruyan and Keke can also join. After all, Gu Mian, you have an instance pass; you just need to write their names on it to bring them into the instance."

Gu Mian had always found Liu Ruyan unreliable, yet Chu Changge appeared to trust her implicitly.

Chu Changge paused for a moment, as if considering other trustworthy individuals, then said, "007 can go too. Gu Mian, is there anyone else you trust?"

Chapter 593 Wishing everyone a Happy New Year_1

Hearing this, Gu Mian considered it seriously for a moment before answering a few minutes later, "I don't have friends."

Given Gu Mian's luck, anyone who befriended him rarely survived.

After most of his first batch of friends perished, no one wanted to befriend him anymore.

Chu Changge adjusted his glasses. "The people I mentioned earlier, plus us, make eight. If you bring the disc in, he can barely count as a ninth laborer."

As Chu Changge spoke, he glanced at the Fortune-teller's brother, who was huddled next to Gu Mian.

"But there's a problem now," the Fortune-teller coughed a few times. "This instance's name... er, is 'Princess Mianmian and her Seven Bootlicking Knights.' Is it related to the number of players who can enter the instance?"

She analyzed carefully, "If the number of players is really related to the instance name, then only seven people can enter?"

As the Fortune-teller spoke, she covertly glanced at her brother. She noticed then that this Western-faced man was not a player. This silver-haired man had a gleaming disc in his pocket that kept catching her eye.

He didn't speak, but around his neck hung a device that could produce sound—a special item called a 'Mind Amplifier.'

Occasionally, a voice saying "Sister" would emanate from this special item.

Sometimes, he would shove the disc into Gu Mian's pocket and then crawl into it himself.

At that moment, the Fortune-teller felt both fear and revelation.

She finally understood what that hand, which kept reaching out from Chu Changge's pocket in the Death Pose instance, actually was.

Chu Changge was pondering the Fortune-teller's words. "If there really is a connection, then including Princess Mianmian, a total of eight people can enter."

Whenever Gu Mian heard the title 'Princess Mianmian,' he always felt as if he were being called, making him reflexively look at the speaker.

The Fortune-teller speculated, "What if Princess Mianmian is an NPC?"

Gu Mian felt that the Fortune-teller had made the wrong career choice.

If she went to argue on a construction site, she'd be a master at it.

Mr. Green interjected at the right moment to end the discussion, "That name was probably just a whimsical creation of some NPC. I don't think it has anything to do with the number of people who can enter the instance. I've even seen an instance called 'Massacre' before, and it's not like they crammed ten thousand players into it."

"Anyway, let's just enter our names when we go in and see if we can get in then," Gu Mian said, looking at Fatty. "Do you have Miss 007 on your friends list?"

They planned to bring Miss 007 into the instance, but they needed to notify her beforehand.

You can't just drag people in when they're in the middle of using the toilet or taking a shower.

Fatty started scrolling through his friends list again. "I remember adding her. Let me find her."

Soon, he exclaimed happily, "Found her!"

Then, Gu Mian watched him start typing, "Dear Miss 007, I trust you've been well lately..."

Gu Mian looked away. "As for Liu Ruyan and Keke, Chu Changge, do you have them as friends? Let them know in advance and ask for their opinion."

Liu Ruyan could be notified directly in the group chat, while Keke would need a separate message.

Chu Changge nodded slightly and also opened his game panel. "When do you plan to enter that instance?"

Considering Xiao Qiao's Big Data Search would be usable again in six days, Gu Mian calculated, "We'll enter the instance on August 1st. We're about to head back soon anyway, so we can discuss it with them in detail then."

As Gu Mian spoke, he looked at the Fortune-teller. "Do you want to come with us? Or continue waiting here for your two reliable teammates?"

The Fortune-teller hesitated. "I'll go with you."

Fatty had already sent the message to Miss 007 but hadn't received a reply yet. Finding a moment, he picked up a cup from the table, poured himself some water, and even gave the Fortune-teller a couple of sly chuckles. "Our place isn't far from the college entrance exam center. If you want to look for your teammates who went missing during the exam, it'll be quite convenient."

Speaking of which, Fatty seemed to recall something and asked, "By the way, what are the names of your friends who went to take the college entrance exam?"

The Fortune-teller began, "Liu Xuan..."

She didn't notice that as she spoke the first name, the room suddenly fell silent.

She continued, "Feng Zitao, Wang Longxiang."

CRASH!

It was the sound of Fatty's water cup hitting the floor.

The Fortune-teller jumped in surprise and looked at Fatty.

She saw that he wasn't looking at the fallen water cup at all; instead, he was staring blankly right at her.

The others were doing the same.

Everyone was staring intently at her, making her feel a sense of danger.

The Fortune-teller discreetly stepped back, ready to flee at any moment. "What's wrong with all of you?"

Fatty finally came to his senses. "Actually, we met them during the college entrance exam event..."

Met them? The Fortune-teller was a little surprised. But a thought crossed her mind: if they had merely met them, their reaction to the names wouldn't be this intense.

The Fortune-teller pondered for a moment before voicing the most likely guess, "They didn't rob you, did they?"

Could it be that Gu Mian and the others reacted this way because those three had robbed them?

Fatty pursed his lips. "No, not that... It's just that the Doctor himself met them, back when they were still... moving..."

Still moving?

The Fortune-teller was filled with doubts.

By the time Gu Mian's Spirit Car returned to their residence, it was dusk.

Then, Accompany me next year discovered Gu Mian had brought back another woman.

She stood by the window, watching as the unfamiliar woman alighted from the vehicle, cradling something in her hands.

The newly arrived woman kept her head bowed the entire time, so Accompany me next year couldn't see her face clearly.

Cradling the three school badges, the Fortune-teller felt as if she were dreaming.

Just a short while ago, these three had been her living, breathing teammates. She never imagined that after not seeing them for some time, they would have been flattened into school badges.

The photos on the school badges matched her memory of them, though they appeared a bit younger.

She would occasionally tilt her head, recalling what Gu Mian had told her on the way here.

Gu Mian had said that when he encountered these three, they were already ghosts, each carrying a school badge. Later, Gu Mian had eliminated the 'evil' and conveniently snatched the school badges as well.

That was the gist of it—simple and clear.

But the Fortune-teller could hardly believe that her three teammates could become ghosts.

There had never been a precedent for this!

"They might have been killed by ghosts and then turned into ghosts themselves." A voice spoke from beside her. The Fortune-teller turned her head and saw Gu Mian standing there.

"Or perhaps they triggered something during the event and were assimilated, turning into ghosts. In any case, when I met them, they seemed to have completely forgotten they were ever players," Gu Mian continued.

The Fortune-teller felt a headache coming on. "Your conversation with Coach Che back at the food factory was surprising enough. I didn't expect there to be even more shocking revelations. It seems this game holds many secrets we're unaware of."

She thought for a moment and then asked, "Is Lianhua University far from here? I want to go and see."

"Not far. Less than half an hour by car."

Just as the Fortune-teller was mulling over when to go and investigate, Fatty's voice piped up from nearby, "Doctor, Miss 007 replied to me!"

Chapter 594 Heard that Monthly Tickets are doubled at the end of the month (Hint)_1

The first thing Gu Mian did after contacting 007 was to ask her if the "Find Mom" game had ended.

Soon Gu Mian got the answer—the game hadn't ended.

Poor 007 resumed her journey after the "End of High School" event.

She hadn't found her parents in over a month.

Fortunately, though she didn't find her family, she was still alive.

After hearing Fatty's request, she immediately agreed.

007 seemed busy; after a few exchanges, she disappeared. Fortunately, Fatty had already discussed the main matters with her.

Keke was also amenable.

She had always wanted to find some medicine for her sister, thinking she might be able to find some in the Recycling Station.

As for Liu Ruyan, Chu Changge didn't even bother to consult her.

Gu Mian looked at Chu Changge, who was adjusting his glasses, "You can just write her name on the instance exchange ticket."

And so, they swiftly made their decisions.

"But the instance exchange ticket you mentioned seems precious, right?" the Fortune-teller asked, "If we don't find what we're looking for this time, there won't be a second instance exchange ticket for us to use, will there?"

Indeed, there was a possibility that they wouldn't find the clown mask.

The ticket booth randomly matched instances; only the instance exchange ticket could specify which one to enter. If they didn't find the mask this time, they wouldn't be able to enter the Recycling Station instance again until who knows when.

Gu Mian pondered for a moment. "Other players might have these tickets; Xiao Qiao had one before."

Xiao Qiao, her name having been mentioned, promptly said, "It was Xiao Lv who gave it to me; he still has more!"

Xiao Lv? Mr. Green?

Gu Mian turned around to find that familiar green figure, but surprisingly, he couldn't find him.

A closer look revealed that he had sneakily made his way to the door.

Of course, he wouldn't get away.

His older brother caught Mr. Green and brought him back. The captured Mr. Green lay flat on the ground, like a child being dragged away from the candy store by his parents.

"Hand it over." Gu Mian reached out.

Mr. Green, who was lying on the ground, looked up at Gu Mian, appearing thoroughly wronged.

The saying goes, "One's principles should not be swayed by poverty, nor should one yield to power." Mr. Green, however, did both. He got up, pouting, and finally said, "I can give you the ticket, but... but you have to let me talk."

He'd wanted to say, "You have to agree to my conditions," but upon further thought, it wouldn't matter if Gu Mian refused. So he changed his words right as they were about to leave his lips.

"What?" Gu Mian didn't yet have the urge to rob him, since he wasn't in a hurry.

Mr. Green's hand was still buried in his bosom. "First, the Recycling Station instance has almost no NPCs. There's hardly any danger, but you can't stay in there for too long. You have to finish the mission quickly

and leave. Despite the lack of NPCs, the instance inspectors sometimes come around. Most instances are checked once an hour. But because the Recycling Station instance is very special, if you're found by the instance inspectors, they will definitely try their utmost to get you out."

Try their utmost to get us out? So they can't easily throw us out? Gu Mian thought.

Mr. Green, on the other hand, was more worried about something else. He said all this because he was afraid that if Gu Mian stayed too long, he might be tempted to do something audacious.

"Second, as I said, this instance is unique. It is the trash dump of all worlds. If it's gone, it will affect all the worlds, and even the real world!"

Mr. Green emphasized the words "affect the real world," hoping that Gu Mian would be cautious.

"If the Recycling Station instance collapses, the trash it had been storing would have no place to go and would fly randomly into other worlds. The volume of trash in there is unimaginably large; even the NPCs couldn't calculate it. And don't look so eager! The trash could fly into the real world as well!"

Upon hearing this, Gu Mian collected himself and became somewhat subdued.

"So you must ensure the instance remains intact. You don't want this world to turn into a garbage dump, right?"

Gu Mian nodded in pretended agreement.

"And one last thing." Mr. Green's hand, still in his bosom, moved. It finally emerged, clenched into a fist. He extended it to Gu Mian, palm up, as if to say, "Let me show you a great treasure."

Fatty seemed very interested in this treasure and eagerly craned his neck to get a closer look.

"This," Mr. Green finally opened his hand as he spoke, "you must take this with you."

Only then did Gu Mian realize what Mr. Green was holding.

It was an eyeball the size of a ping-pong ball, rolling in Mr. Green's hand. Suddenly, its sides unfolded, revealing a pair of vibrating wings.

The winged eyeball buzzed and flew up, circling Gu Mian a few times before settling on his head, immobile.

What is this thing?

Mr. Green then took out something that resembled a remote control, pressing it into the air. A game-like screen appeared in the direction he pressed. The screen showed Mr. Green and a few other people moving around. Judging from the viewpoint, it came from the winged eyeball.

"A tracker," Mr. Green explained, "It can be brought into the instance. It allows people outside to know what you're doing inside. It would be easier for me to know if you're causing destruction."

That's a handy tool.

Gu Mian reached up and removed the eyeball from his head.

The object felt squishy, almost like a real eyeball.

After being pinched a few times, the eyeball struggled free and fluttered further away from Gu Mian.

Mr. Green then reiterated, "Whatever you do, you absolutely cannot cause destruction in the Recycling Station! Absolutely not!"

"I got it, I got it," Gu Mian answered perfunctorily.

Finally, Mr. Green reached into his pocket again, reluctantly taking out an object the size of a movie ticket. It was an instance exchange ticket. "This is the only one I have left. Don't ask me for another one; I simply don't have any more."

Fatty cheerfully snatched the ticket from Mr. Green's hand, "Doctor, now we have two instance exchange tickets. Even after using one, we can still intimidate NPCs with the remaining one."

Gu Mian used to intimidate NPCs with instance exchange tickets quite often.

Upon hearing this, Mr. Green felt like spitting blood.

They were set to enter the instance on August 1st. The Fortune-teller was arranged to live on the first floor with Xiao Qiao, Liu Ruyan, and Keke. When Accompany me next year saw the Fortune-teller officially moving to the first floor, she couldn't help but ask Fatty, who was passing by, "When will the sign on the front of the building be replaced?"

Sign?

Fatty thought for a moment, then realized that the ominous sign that read "Passing Inn" had been chopped down by him for firewood.

Now, there was nothing hanging above the entrance.

Fatty curiously asked, "Replace it with what?"

"Something like 'Gu Mian's Harem'..."

Hearing that, Fatty seriously contemplated the feasibility of the name before shaking his head, "No, that won't work; it puts too much of a target on his back. Maybe we could make it 'The Doctor's Supremely Beautiful Harem'."

However, the term "Doctor" was still quite specific.

"Speaking of which, I think we should be able to order a customized sign at the supermarket," Fatty continued mulling over it as he walked away.

The next day, Liu Ruyan stood before the inn's entrance, staring at the newly hung signboard, lost in thought.

Keke happened to be coming out and also saw the new sign.

The two of them just quietly stood at the entrance.

Above their heads, the seven large words "Beng Beng's Supremely Beautiful Harem" could be seen.

Chapter 595 Garbage Mountain, Garbage Sea_1

"What did you do?" Keke stared at the sign in silence for a long time before asking the person next to her.

Liu Ruyan was also staring at the sign, "Do I look like that kind of person?"

The situation at hand wasn't the time to discuss a sign. The two of them stared at the words "Stunning Harem of the Collapsing World" for a while before dispersing.

They did not investigate where it came from.

Keke left the house today intending to visit the supermarket to see if medical supplies were restocked. Ever since the Old World instance was destroyed, all the medical supplies in the supermarket had been taken off the shelves, making it hard for her to buy medicine for her sister.

Now it was the end of the month, and Gu Mian, who had a pile of unused supermarket admission tickets, gave them all to her. This allowed her to check the medical supplies area every day, and if she went in the morning, she would also be able to buy breakfast.

As soon as she walked in today, she heard a sales clerk complaining.

"That Fatty who is always with Gu Mian called me in the middle of the night to make a sign. I was busy all night, furious but not daring to complain..."

Keke didn't listen for long and hurried directly to the medical supplies section.

Today, the shelves in the medical supplies section were empty again. She sighed in front of the empty shelves and turned to leave.

Now she could only hope to find some medicine in the recycling instance.

The Fortune-teller had been very happy these past few days.

She noticed that Xiao Qiao would occasionally go upstairs to ask Gu Mian and the others for "things they wouldn't give to a dog."

Whenever Xiao Qiao went upstairs, she would inevitably run into that crazy woman.

Others called that crazy woman Xiao Hong.

Whenever the two met, Xiao Hong would inevitably reach out and scratch Xiao Qiao, sparking a dispute.

They had just had a dispute last night. Xiao Qiao, her hair scratched into a bird's nest, rushed downstairs clutching two dried chickens, followed closely by a relentless woman in red.

While running, Xiao Qiao even handed one of the chickens to the Fortune-teller, who was watching the commotion. This act earned her an extra scratch.

This kind of manic situation continued until August 1st.

On August 1st, Gu Mian got up early. After ensuring that everyone else was ready, he began to carefully fill out the instance exchange ticket, writing the name of the instance and the names of each player.

Today, the Fortune-teller finally entered this strange instance.

The instance mission was also strange...

[Instance Name: Princess Mianmian and Her Seven Dog-Licking Knights]

[Number of Players: 8]

[Introduction: An unremarkable instance. The creator was extremely perfunctory, just piecing together a few tracks in the junkyard to form this instance.]

[Task: One player will be randomly chosen from the group to play 'Princess Mianmian'; the remaining players will play 'Dog-Licking Knights.' The princess has been captured by an evil demon and is held in a high tower. The knights need to pass four stages to rescue the princess. Rescuing the princess completes the task.

The demon is just a short distance behind the princess. The knights have a total of ten chances for error. Each error allows the demon to move closer to the princess. After ten errors, the demon will reach the princess.

If the princess dies, the other players will be considered to have failed the mission and will leave the instance.]

007 didn't expect to see Gu Mian again so soon.

But she couldn't converse with him now because, at the moment, he was sitting on the princess's throne atop a tall tower, his face gloomy.

As the introduction indicated, this instance was extremely perfunctory.

The tower wasn't really a tower at all, but a tall, solid metal pillar with a platform of about 100 square meters on top, and no walls.

Only a simple chair was placed on it, and Gu Mian was sitting there.

A track, about five meters wide, extended from the high platform down to the ground. At regular intervals along it, there were chest-high trash cans. There were four in total, apparently representing the four stages.

As for the demon who had captured the princess...

007 looked up behind Gu Mian. A few meters behind him stood a distorted black shadow. It was entirely black, like a silhouette, its shape almost indistinguishable. Moreover, this black shadow was constantly twisting and changing, and at one moment, it even somewhat resembled the Big Bad Wolf from Little Red Riding Hood.

Although this demon was completely black, its facial features were still present.

It was contorting its body and grinning hideously at the princess's back.

Only when Gu Mian turned to look did 007 see the demon's smile begin to fade.

Chu Changge's voice came from the side. He didn't waste time catching up, "In short, our purpose for entering this instance is to find the clown mask. Of course, we can't completely neglect the mission; we can just complete it while we search for the clown mask."

As he spoke, he looked towards the four garbage cans on the track.

Fatty had already giddily run onto the track and arrived at the first trash bin. He saw a line of text floating in mid-air above the bin—"Fill with garbage that can talk."

Trash that can talk?

Fatty hesitated for a moment, then raised his foot to run toward the next trash bin.

But before his foot could land, he hit his head hard. An invisible wall of air blocked his path. It seemed that only by filling this trash bin could they move on to the next stage.

Fatty clenched his fists and shouted up to Gu Mian, "Don't be scared, Doctor! I'm coming to save you!"

While Fatty was engrossed in role-playing, the others had already started observing their surroundings.

The ground here was metallic, and mountains of garbage were scattered everywhere. The smaller ones were two meters high, while the taller ones reached a full seven or eight meters.

These garbage mountains were multicolored, with all sorts of strange colors combining to form small hills. 007 saw, in the pile next to her, items like stockings, five-year college entrance exam workbooks and ten-year mock tests, a green hat, a flattened basketball, and so on.

There was no visible end to this place; continuous mountains of garbage blocked their line of sight. When they looked up at the sky, all they could see was a vast expanse of gray. There was no sun and no clouds.

The Fortune-teller knew before entering this instance that finding the clown mask might be laborious, but she hadn't expected it to be **this** difficult.

Originally, she thought this instance would only be the size of a few junkyards, but it turned out to be endless.

At this moment, she climbed a tall garbage mountain and gazed into the distance, completely unable to see any end.

Chu Changge's voice came from below, "Let's have Xiao Qiao use the Big Data Search first to give it a try. If we can find it directly, that would be best. If not, at least we can get a general direction."

Xiao Qiao was already seriously typing the words "clown mask" into the Big Data Search, looking eager to save Princess Mianmian.

This time, the screen didn't display any text but instead showed two arrows, pointing in different directions.

"This way," Xiao Qiao pointed in one direction, then turned and pointed in another, "and that way."

As expected, it didn't find an exact location.

Indeed, a specific location couldn't be provided here. Apart from the high platform where Gu Mian was, there were no other landmarks. They couldn't possibly get a result like, "The clown mask is in a pile of garbage next to another pile of garbage."

Chapter 596 The Slumbering Prince and the 100 Sleeping Princesses_1

Chu Changge, holding a watch he'd somehow acquired, said, "Mr. Green said an inspector would patrol the instance every hour. If they spot Gu Mian, it could be troublesome. Although they can't directly teleport players out of the instance, their aid in our mission would surely shorten our time spent inside."

"We don't know when the last inspector showed up, so we need to find the clown mask as soon as possible. Let's set the tasks aside for now..." Chu Changge said this while looking at Fatty, who was determinedly digging through a trash pile not far away.

Fatty was searching for the "talking garbage." The dark, shadowy demon on the tower had somehow approached the edge of the platform and was anxiously watching Fatty dig through the trash.

Sensing Chu Changge's gaze, the demon turned its head, its expression still full of hope, as if to say, "Hurry up, find some trash, and get this thing off my platform!"

Chu Changge looked away. "No need to worry about Gu Mian."

Everyone nodded in agreement. Splitting up was indeed the quickest way.

Soon, they all headed in the two directions indicated by the Big Data Search, beginning their individual searches.

The Fortune-teller, an integral part of the search team, was currently using her Pendulum to guide her, albeit clumsily.

While the Fortune-teller struggled to divine the clown mask's whereabouts, Xiao Qiao was having a blast.

She was squatting next to Fatty, pulling a barely working radio from the trash pile. It emitted CRACKLES of static when switched on.

"Does this count as talking garbage?" she asked Fatty, looking up.

Fatty pondered for a moment. "It should count, I guess?"

Just then, they heard a noise above. Looking up, they saw the demon at the edge of the tall platform, giving them an affirmative look, its face seeming to scream, "That's it! That's it!"

Xiao Qiao looked at the demon's eager face, then suddenly threw the radio far away and said firmly, "It's so insistent, it must be trying to trick us! This is definitely not it!"

Fatty nodded in agreement. "You make a good point."

And so, under the demon's despairing gaze, they both walked past the radio, heading off into the distance.

Gu Mian sat on a chair, watching the demon wander all over the platform.

It always kept its back to him, making it difficult for Gu Mian to see its face.

Gu Mian had tried leaving the platform, but it behaved like an automatic treadmill; no matter how many steps he took, he remained in the same spot. Tired from walking, Gu Mian could only sit down to rest.

The eyeball overhead flew about, BUZZING. Mr. Green, who was outside the instance, saw Gu Mian sitting on the tower and let out a sigh of relief.

Sitting up there, he won't be able to cause much trouble, Mr. Green clutched his chest, feeling that the Recycling Station was safe.

Just then, he saw Gu Mian on the screen pull a disc from his pocket and hurl it off the platform.

Mr. Green, of course, recognized it.

He knew that a horrifying ghost was contained in the disc, one that dared to call Gu Mian "younger sister."

Is he trying to get this ghost to find the clown mask? Mr. Green watched the screen. Anyway, one ghost won't cause any major trouble, as long as he sits quietly there.

However, the scene on the screen changed, and Mr. Green saw Fatty and Xiao Qiao approaching the first trash can with a pile of items.

"These shoes must be it!" Xiao Qiao picked up a pair of worn-out children's shoes. When she put them on the ground, they went SQUEAK, SQUEAK.

Having said that, under the demon's despairing gaze, she threw the shoes into the trash can in front of her.

Then, the shoes were spat back out, and the teary-eyed demon moved one step closer to the princess.

"Seems like we were wrong," Fatty said, growing nervous as he watched the demon get closer to Gu Mian. "We can't let the Doctor get caught by it!"

As he spoke, he carefully threw a rag doll into the trash can. It played music when punched. The rag doll was also spat out, and the demon edged even closer to the princess...

Mr. Green, watching from outside the instance, felt his face twitch as he observed the two.

They aren't doing this on purpose, are they? he speculated, looking at the screen. But considering neither of them was particularly bright, their behavior was somewhat understandable.

Meanwhile, her 'brother'—the ghost Gu Mian had thrown off the platform—crawled out of the disc on the other side and went on his way.

Fatty and Xiao Qiao, however, were continuing their antics.

They stood before a trash can.

As Fatty looked at the pile of trash at his feet, wondering what to throw in this time, he suddenly noticed Xiao Qiao staring intently at him.

He turned to look at Xiao Qiao and found her gazing at him so intently it gave him the creeps.

"What are you doing..." Fatty instinctively retreated a few steps.

Xiao Qiao moved closer and suddenly said, "You can talk!"

Fatty felt a wave of dizziness, and before he knew it, he was being shoved into the trash can.

Of course, he was promptly spat back out. The demon was now one step closer to the princess.

Fatty sat on the ground, his backside aching from the fall, while Xiao Qiao remarked with sudden insight, "Oh, so you're not trash!"

Mr. Green could no longer suppress his twitching face. I really want to rush into the instance and crack open Xiao Qiao's skull to see what's inside!

The Fortune-teller was walking beside mountains of trash.

She was the only person in this area. With so many items in this Recycling Station, her Pendulum was unstable, often leading her in circles.

As the Fortune-teller carefully watched her spinning Pendulum, she suddenly felt a faint, almost imperceptible vibration from beneath her feet.

Slightly startled, she looked down at the ground.

The vibration lasted only half a second; it would have been unnoticeable if she hadn't been standing still.

Was that... an earthquake? The Fortune-teller looked around, puzzled. There were only mountains of trash, nothing else out of the ordinary.

Paying little heed to the vibration, the Fortune-teller refocused on her search for the clown mask.

Chu Changge had said the instance patrollers could appear at any time, so they needed to hurry.

007, on the other hand, had made quite a few discoveries.

She found many discarded special items.

[Concentrating Desk (Discarded)]

[Description: Originating from the 'Ghastly School' instance. This special item was damaged when the instance suffered a major collapse and can no longer function...]

This instance name sounds vaguely familiar. She also noted that apart from special items, there was all sorts of household waste.

The most conspicuous trash 007 encountered were three derelict vehicles ahead.

The vehicles—a prison van, an ambulance, and a Spirit Car—were haphazardly dumped in an open area. The three vehicles exuded an eerie aura, compelling 007 to take a closer look.

On the Spirit Car's windshield was a note with a few lines written on it: "I've temporarily left these vehicles at this repair shop. I'll come back to fix them once I have the money. Please do not tow them away - Coach Che."

007 looked at these Spirit Cars that had appeared in the Recycling Station.

It seems this so-called Coach Che isn't aware that his cars have been dumped in a junkyard.

Just as 007 was about to leave after inspecting these vehicles, someone suddenly crawled out of the ambulance.

This startled 007, making her jump. She stepped back and looked at the person who had crawled out, realizing it was Keke.

They had met in the 'Close Your Eyes' instance, so they were somewhat acquainted.

007 looked somewhat awkwardly at the grimy Keke and asked, "Are you... looking for the clown mask in these vehicles?"

Keke dusted off her hair. "No, I saw an ambulance here and thought I'd check inside for any medical supplies."

Chapter 597 "Believer"_1

Although 007 had crossed paths with Keke, they weren't close; she only knew that Keke seemed to have a seriously ill sister.

She didn't think now was the right time to catch up, so she nodded to Keke and prepared to leave.

Just as they were about to brush past each other, 007 suddenly remembered something. "Right, Gu Mian pulled you into this instance too, didn't he?"

Keke nodded slightly. "We live in the same building now. Gu Mian wanted to look for something in the instance, so I followed him to help a bit."

007 was slightly surprised. She hadn't seen Keke with Gu Mian and the others during the last college entrance exam event. "Where do you live now?"

Hearing the question, Keke paused before enunciating each word, "Bengbeng Imperial Harem."

007: "?"

「Elsewhere」

Fatty and Xiao Qiao had finally filled the first trash bin after strenuous efforts.

However, due to mistakes made in their first three attempts, the devil was now just seven steps away from Gu Mian.

Fatty anxiously watched the high platform.

The second challenge was already open, and Xiao Qiao had gone to check it out.

The small print above the second trash bin said, "Fill with rubbish that runs all over the place."

The vague description left Fatty confused.

This is even harder to find than the last one!

Just then, he noticed Xiao Qiao looking at him again. To prevent her from doing anything else spectacularly earth-shattering, Fatty quickly ran off.

But he hadn't gone far when he keenly sensed a slight tremor in the ground.

Fatty stopped immediately to assess the situation, but the trembling from a moment ago seemed to be an illusion; it disappeared in an instant.

"What's going on? This instance wouldn't have an earthquake, would it?" Fatty glanced around.
"Though, it's not impossible. Didn't the college entrance exam event have an earthquake...?"

They didn't know when the inspector might arrive. Chu Changge was standing on a garbage mountain about five meters high, rummaging through the trash at his feet.

His surroundings didn't quite match his demeanor. Even if Chu Changge was picking through trash, no one would mistake him for a common refuse collector. Instead, they might think of more sophisticated terms like "Waste Quality Inspector."

He pushed aside the aluminum cans and tattered clothes at his feet, pulling out a golden half-face mask from a hidden spot.

The half-face mask had a few cracks on its surface, with elastic strings attached to both sides.

This wasn't a clown mask; it was a damaged special item.

[Play Fairy's Half-face Mask (Damaged)]

[Description: The mask from the TV show "Little Magic Fairy Pooping." A hobbyist replicated the Play Fairy's mask from the show. Unfortunately, the mask was crushed when the user sat on it, so it can only exhibit strange functions.]

[Functions: When the user wears this mask while active, interference from meddlers will significantly decrease. It has a miraculous effect when robbing a bank.]

"It's not a clown's mask." Chu Changge didn't spare the item in his hand a second glance and tossed it aside.

The golden mask rolled down the pile of garbage, landing right next to Fatty, who had just run over.

Fatty was about to tell Chu Changge about the ground vibrations when he saw him toss down a golden mask.

Fatty had just curiously picked up the mask at his feet when he heard Chu Changge's voice from above him, "What are you doing here?"

Since he had rushed over, Chu Changge knew instantly that he had something to say.

"Ah," Fatty looked up at him and responded, "Brother Chu, I think I felt the ground shake a few times just now, so I came to tell you."

Chu Changge's hand paused for a moment. "A tremor? Perhaps there's more to this instance than we can imagine... We're running out of time. Don't worry about that; go find the mask first."

Fatty grunted in agreement, put the Play Fairy's mask on his face, and left, repeating, "No skin in the game."

After parting ways with Keke, 007 started digging through a trash pile next to several cars, creating a large pit.

Just as her upper body was buried in the pit searching for the clown mask, she suddenly heard a peculiar noise from behind.

She straightened up and looked back, only to see Fatty walking up behind her.

At that moment, Fatty had a golden mask on his face, his mouth continuously repeating, "No skin in the game."

007 silently watched Fatty, who was wearing the golden mask. "What are you doing?"

"Ah," Fatty took off the mask and looked at 007. "Miss 007, I just found this mask. When I wear it, it keeps repeating, 'No skin in the game.'"

As he spoke, he pressed the mask back onto his face, as if demonstrating.

Indeed, the headache-inducing sound of "No skin in the game" echoed again.

At this moment, amidst Fatty's incessant repetition of "No skin in the game," 007 heard another sound.

She furrowed her eyebrows and listened carefully for a moment before abruptly asking, "Do you hear something?"

"What?" Fatty removed the mask, a bewildered expression on his face.

But this bewildered look didn't last long; it was replaced by surprise. He heard it too.

It was a sound coming from afar.

THUD. THUD. THUD.

A tremendous sound spread from a certain direction, prompting both of them to turn their heads towards its source.

Behind them, a gigantic humanoid figure had appeared without them noticing.

This colossal being was even taller than the highest garbage mound!

It was incredibly huge yet had a hunched frame, its back bent to nearly a ninety-degree angle at the waist. Four twisted arms, like spider legs, sprouted from behind its waist, clawing menacingly.

It looked as if it had been burned. Its skin resembled charred coal, and its joints made a CRACKING sound when they bent.

Additionally, they could hear the sound of chains dragging across the ground.

Looking closer, they saw that the creature's feet were shackled, preventing it from moving quickly.

"Holy shit!" Fatty's eyes widened as he stared at the colossal being, exclaiming in shock, "What the hell is that? Why would that thing be in a recycling center? Have I teleported into an Ultraman show?"

007 reacted quickly. She grabbed Fatty and rushed to crouch down beside a nearby pile of trash, concealing their presence.

The monster soon reached them.

With every step it took, the ground shook slightly, causing scattered trash to roll down from higher up, covering both of them.

Luckily, the monster didn't notice them. It simply passed by, heading straight for the tower.

"It's not going after the Doctor, is it?" Fatty gaped.

The instance figured out that normal ghosts couldn't kill the Doctor, so it brought in this behemoth?

Nothing about this thing suggested it could be killed by a chainsaw.

Apart from Fatty and 007, everyone else had also seen this creature.

It couldn't be helped; the creature was making far too much noise. The Fortune-teller, who had been engrossed in divination, had her train of thought interrupted. She looked up at the monster that had suddenly passed by, her face filled with horror. "This is what Mr. Green meant by 'no danger'?"

Chu Changge stood not too far from her. The vibrations from the ground had caused his glasses to slip slightly.

He adjusted his glasses and looked at the Fortune-teller. "Don't worry about this. First, find out where the clown mask is."

As Chu Changge spoke, he looked in the direction the monster was heading—it was going towards Gu Mian.

He had seen this creature before.

A book once featured a picture of this creature. He remembered the book was called "Excerpts of Characters from the Exile World," which he had found in the Angel Redemption instance.

Even though a long time had passed, Chu Changge could still recall the book's description of the monster word for word.

['Believer' Data]

[Introduction: The Doctrine Goddess's most loyal Believer: a giant humanoid creature with two pairs of auxiliary arms growing from its waist, possessing immense destructive power. The most loyal Believers always follow the direction of the Goddess, eliminating any obstacles heading Her way.]

[Characteristics: Loyalty, Compliance.]

Recalling the phrase "eliminating any obstacles heading Her way," a flicker of expression appeared on Chu Changge's usually stoic face. "We're in trouble."

Chapter 598 This Month is About to End_1

Gu Mian, on the tower, also noticed the enormous creature charging towards him.

Its body was massive. Each step it took caused the nearby garbage mounds to tremble slightly, sending bits and pieces rolling down from the top.

He looked with curiosity at the monster that had suddenly appeared. He had seen this thing before.

When Gu Mian and his three useless save points took on an instance, Gu Mian was using a computer to control a character named "Holy Daughter" and moving around in the abandoned Cannibal Village. He had seen this monster there before.

Back then, this thing had chased him relentlessly, even scraping off a layer of his health.

Later, a goddess appeared. She forcibly compressed the instance into a Human CD to give to Gu Mian and even gifted him a relative.

Due to the Human CD's instability, Gu Mian had never dared to enter it. He had always assumed the goddess had also compressed this monster into the CD, but now it seemed that wasn't the case.

So it turns out this monster was thrown into the recycling bin by the goddess...

The appearance of this creature was entirely unexpected. Even the demon trailing behind wore a stupefied expression.

Gu Mian watched the monster's direction of advance, feeling as if it was charging right at him.

You've got to be kidding me, he silently observed the enormous beast. It couldn't catch me in the last instance, so now it's continuing the chase in this one?

This was beyond the scope of anything he'd imagined.

Gu Mian was stuck up here, unable to move an inch. Wasn't he about to be grabbed and roughed up by it?

At this thought, he grew restless. He even considered asking the Fortune-teller if there were any leftover bombs or similar items.

Unfortunately, the Fortune-teller was far away and couldn't hear Gu Mian's call.

Frowning, Chu Changge strode purposefully in the direction the Believer had departed. Xiao Qiao, having heard the commotion and run over, was at his side.

His concern was not for Gu Mian; he was worried about something else...

Xiao Qiao's voice, full of excitement, came from nearby, "It can run! It can run!"

As she spoke, she began to jog uphill towards the tower. It seemed she had finally found the 'running trash' she'd been looking for.

Chu Changge held back the eager Xiao Qiao, glancing at the Believer's towering silhouette. "A Believer of the goddess possesses tremendous destructive power and will destroy any obstacle blocking its path to the goddess."

Other things could be overlooked. But if the few checkpoints on the track were destroyed, the princess would be freed. The instance might end directly, or it could collapse entirely. Moreover, in Angel Redemption, the 'brother' immediately recognized Gu Mian as his sister. This suggested Gu Mian might share some similarities with the goddess. Judging by the Believer's current behavior, there was an eighty percent chance it had mistaken Gu Mian for someone else. It would undoubtedly break through the checkpoints on the track to find Gu Mian. But they had only just entered the recycling bin; they hadn't even gotten a whiff of the clown mask yet. If the instance ended now, they would gain nothing.

"We need to stop it," Chu Changge said, taking a few more steps forward. He suddenly remembered something. "Gu Mian's Human CD..."

Since the Human CD could contain the 'brother', perhaps it could contain this thing too. But the CD is currently with Gu Mian...

Just as Chu Changge was pondering this, he caught a glimpse of an ash-haired man clutching a CD passing by.

It was the very 'brother' Gu Mian had tossed down from the tower earlier.

He was rushing quickly in the direction the Believer had gone, clearly chasing it.

However, the Believer was enormous, covering several meters with each stride. Catching up without a vehicle would be difficult.

There were some vehicles in the recycling bin, but they were all scrap, slower than running on foot.

Chu Changge turned to Xiao Qiao. "Do you have any special items that can stop that thing?"

Xiao Qiao thoughtfully rummaged through her inventory, finally taking out a form.

[Ghost Population Survey Form]

[Introduction: The nation's third Ghost Population Survey Form.]

[Function: When this form is used, nearby spiritual bodies will voluntarily assemble and fill in their names on the form.]

Sure enough, as soon as she took out the form, the 'brother' who had been running ahead stopped, turned, and ran towards them.

However, the Believer up ahead showed no reaction at all, continuing on its way.

Seeing this, Xiao Qiao reluctantly put away the survey form. "It seems it's not a ghost, so this won't stop it."

Chu Changge massaged his forehead. "Isn't there anything else that can stop it? The Human CD might be able to contain it."

007 and Fatty ran over just in time to hear this. 007 immediately volunteered to try, taking out a map as she spoke.

[Mobius's Maze]

[Introduction: A maze from which escape is impossible, also known as a Ghost Wall.]

[Function: Creatures entering this maze will always return to the starting point. Can be forcibly destroyed to allow exit. Ineffective against creatures that can phase through walls, teleport, burrow, or climb walls, and so on...]

It was a seemingly useless maze, perhaps unable to even stop a person, but it could at least buy some time.

After 007 took out the map, a huge maze descended from the sky, enveloping them and the nearby garbage mounds. The Believer up ahead was also caught within it.

But it didn't obediently navigate the maze; instead, it began to destroy it with brute force.

Its two pairs of secondary arms began to swing, smashing against the walls. Within seconds, they had created a huge dent in the wall before it.

The group behind quickly ran towards the Believer.

The 'brother', clutching the CD, ran at the forefront, looking quite eager to 'reunite' with the creature ahead.

But the Believer's destructive power was too immense. In no time, the wall before it CRASHED down. The colossal monster took two steps forward and began smashing the second wall.

"When we trapped it, it was already at the edge of the maze! If this wall is smashed, it'll get out!" 007 raised her voice.

They were currently hundreds of meters away from the Believer; they probably wouldn't reach it in time.

Seeing that the outermost wall was about to be broken through, 007 suddenly asked, "We just need to get the Human CD near it, right?"

Everyone turned to look at her. They saw that she had, at some point, taken out a bow and arrow, and had even snatched the Human CD from the 'brother'.

She took out a roll of bandages, quickly wrapped the Human CD to the arrowhead, then drew the bow forcefully and shot forward.

The arrow shot forward with great power, carrying the Human CD, and lodged itself directly in the monster's buttocks.

The monster didn't howl, but Fatty, beside them, exclaimed, "Holy crap, you know archery?"

"Just a hobby," 007 replied.

Before Fatty could express further surprise at 007's hobby, they saw the Human CD lodged in the monster's butt begin to glow. It generated a powerful suction force and was slowly engulfing the massive monster.

Chapter 599 Let's All Disperse, It's Canceled This Year_1

Gu Mian sat on the high platform. First, he saw a few of them running a race down below. Soon after, a massive open-air maze came crashing down over their heads.

Not long after the maze descended, he saw 007 below. She had pulled out a bow and arrow from God-knows-where and was taking shots at the monster's rear.

"Well, well," Gu Mian watched the scene below with amusement. "Are they having a sports meet?"

To his surprise, the arrow shot at the monster's rear generated an immense suction force, sucking the entire monster into the arrow itself.

Just when Gu Mian thought 007 had awakened some extraordinary power, he suddenly realized that the source of the suction wasn't the arrow 007 fired, but the Human CD tied to it.

This Human CD, a gift from the Goddess, sucked the monster right in.

"So that's it," Gu Mian stroked his chin. "The Human CD can hold Gege, so it can naturally hold the monsters from that instance. But speaking of which... why would the Goddess throw this thing into the Recycle Bin?"

The Moebius Maze that 007 had summoned below had already collapsed with a crash.

Two of the maze's walls had been smashed by the monster, rendering it irreparable and useless.

Since it was a peculiar item that didn't serve much purpose to begin with, 007 wasn't too upset about it.

However, the rubble from the collapsed maze made the path somewhat more difficult to traverse.

Looking at the rubble strewn across the ground, Fatty turned to 007 with admiration. "I didn't know you were skilled in archery..."

And she'd even managed to hit the monster square in the rear with exceptional accuracy.

Fatty found it all incredibly hard to believe.

"Now that you mention it," Fatty pondered, "I've always had the impression that Miss 007 is short on cash. I didn't expect her to have cultivated such an expensive hobby."

"Well..." 007 casually tossed aside the bow and arrows she had picked up from the ground. "I wasn't really short on money before, but then... something happened."

By this time, Gege had returned via the Human CD. It was of high quality, without a single scratch.

Fatty stared at the Human CD. "What was that monster just now?"

"A monster from the Angel Redemption instance," Chu Changge explained. "We didn't see it in the instance because we were at a save point then. I guess when the Goddess compressed the instance, that creature was tossed in here."

As he spoke, he glanced at the surrounding ruins. "The commotion we just caused was too loud. I'm afraid it might attract the attention of NPCs. We need to hurry."

Fatty muttered a few words of acknowledgment and turned to look for the clown mask, making sure to take Gege (the Human CD) with him.

They had encountered an unexpected event shortly after entering the instance. Who knew what would happen next? It would be disastrous if the Human CD, and Gege within it, were inadvertently left behind in the Recycle Bin should the instance suddenly collapse.

Before leaving, 007 shot a wary glance at the Human CD in Fatty's pocket, her heart still pounding with lingering fear, wondering if the monster might suddenly crawl out.

At that moment, she noticed a small eyeball hovering above her head, making a comical noise. "Chu Changge, what was that just now!"

It was addressing Chu Changge, who hadn't gotten far.

007 stared in bewilderment at the small, buzzing eyeball hovering above her head. It was her first time encountering such a thing.

Without trying to eavesdrop on the conversation between Chu Changge and this strange, magical thing, 007 turned and headed back the way she came, continuing her search for the clown mask.

Hearing Mr. Green's voice, Chu Changge also looked up at the small, buzzing eyeball.

He hadn't expected this thing to have a communication function as well.

From the sound of it, Mr. Green on the other end was exasperated, his tone suggesting he wished he could barge into the instance immediately.

Chu Changge adjusted his glasses, which had slipped slightly due to the ground shaking. "It was just a small accident. It's been taken care of."

Mr. Green launched into a tirade, "This Recycle Bin instance is very special! You absolutely mustn't mess around in there! I saw you lot just now—racing, shooting arrows, and quite skillfully at that! And that Fortune-teller, make sure she doesn't pull out another bomb and blow this place up..."

It seemed the Fortune-teller had left a rather poor impression on Mr. Green.

Mr. Green kept talking, but Chu Changge ignored him, heading towards a nearby trash heap to continue searching for the clown mask.

At this point, only Xiao Qiao was diligently focused on the instance's tasks.

She was searching everywhere for the 'running trash'.

She tossed everything from baby strollers to dead mice into her designated trash can, just barely managing to pass the second stage.

Of course, Xiao Qiao's intellect was not to be underestimated—she still managed to misplace three items of trash during the second stage.

The demon moved three steps closer to Gu Mian.

Four more mistakes, and the princess and the demon would be reunited.

Gu Mian glanced back at the demon, which was now not far behind him. Though its face was a pitch-black void, it wore an expression of utter resentment.

It glared venomously at the dim-witted Xiao Qiao nearby, looking as if it wanted to leap down and tear her to pieces.

Xiao Qiao, completely oblivious to the demon's murderous intent, continued her task.

She leaned over the third trash can, a puzzled look on her face as she tilted her head. "Trash with inner beauty?"

Gu Mian watched her contemplate the trash can for a good while. Then, she braced her hands on its rim, apparently intending to jump in herself to test it.

It seemed she was quite confident in her own moral character.

Seeing this, the demon behind Gu Mian instinctively stretched out a hand, as if to stop her.

But their distance was too great; it was no use.

Fortunately, just as she was about to hoist herself up, Xiao Qiao seemed to remember something. Murmuring, "I'm not trash," she walked away.

Meanwhile, the Fortune-teller, whom Mr. Green had specifically mentioned, was diligently searching for the clown mask.

When the monster had appeared earlier, Chu Changge had told her to leave first. The Fortune-teller understood; he didn't want to waste precious time.

A monster had appeared this time; who knew what they might encounter next?

If the instance collapsed before they found anything, all their efforts would be for naught.

At the moment, a large black dog was circling her.

This was her class skill, Greedy Mad Dog, specifically used for locating items.

This dog would search everywhere for the item its user was looking for.

However, being a 'mad dog,' it ran incredibly fast and possessed boundless energy. Once unleashed, it would tear off wildly and was difficult to control.

The backlash from this skill, however, would be borne by the Fortune-teller.

In other words, the dog could run for kilometers without tiring, but the Fortune-teller would be left half-dead from exhaustion, as the skill consumed an immense amount of her stamina. If she wasn't careful, she could even die from sudden cardiac arrest.

Due to a critical shortage of Attribute Points, and because the Fortune-teller hadn't significantly upgraded her physical constitution, using Greedy Mad Dog took a massive toll on her. She would typically be too exhausted to even stand up afterward, so she generally avoided unleashing it.

Her sixth sense told her the clown mask was very close, yet she couldn't find it no matter how hard she looked.

Left with no choice, she released the dog to find it.

With the dog now dispatched, the Fortune-teller had no choice but to sit down and conserve her energy.

She sat behind a mountain of trash, taking deep breaths as her heart began to pound faster and faster.

She had unleashed this dog twice before, and each time it had run her to the brink of a heart attack.

Back then, other players nearby had said her face was deathly pale, as if she were on the verge of dying.

Just as the Fortune-teller's heart rate was gradually increasing, she suddenly heard unfamiliar voices behind her.

"The higher-ups said there was an unexplained tremor here just now. Let's go check it out."

"I bet someone tossed another big piece of junk in here. Remember last time? That failed experiment, some kind of monster, got carelessly dumped in. Luckily, that thing didn't move much."

Chapter 600 Today is Also a Day Full of Hope_1

Monster? Failed product?

The Fortune-teller sat behind a garbage mound, listening intently to the sounds coming from behind her.

The sound was likely from patrol officers; the monster's cries must have caught their attention.

Due to the mad dog's immense stamina consumption, the Fortune-teller was sweating profusely and gasping for breath even while sitting still.

As she was panting heavily, the sounds behind her grew closer.

She turned her head and saw two people, a man and a woman, emerging from behind a nearby mountain of trash.

They both wore matching deep blue jackets and deep blue sweatpants, resembling appliance repairmen. They had something akin to work badges hanging around their necks. The Fortune-teller glanced at them and saw the words "Patrol Officer."

The three of them stared at each other beside a pile of trash. The two patrol officers seemed equally surprised to encounter a player so suddenly.

However, this player didn't scream or shout as they might have expected. Instead, she remained silent, merely staring at them with wide eyes, her gaze sweeping over them.

The Fortune-teller truly had no strength to speak. She also had no idea where that mad dog had run off to play. She could feel the dog running faster and faster, as if someone were luring it onward with a meat bone.

The three of them exchanged strange glances for a few seconds, but ultimately, no one spoke.

The two patrol officers in deep blue paused for a few seconds, then turned and left.

"The players in this instance are really strange," the woman said to the man, puzzled. "She just gave us that look when she saw us and didn't say a word."

There had been previous encounters between patrol officers and players.

When they saw extra people in the instance, most players would be wary or flee immediately. Some would even ask who we were.

That player just now, though, had no reaction at all. If it weren't for the rise and fall of her chest, they would have thought she was dead.

The man surveyed their surroundings. "We're here to investigate the cause of the recent tremors. We don't need to interact with players. Still, that player was indeed strange."

"I don't think it's just the players who are strange, right?" the woman's voice came from beside him.

The male patrol officer gave her a curious look. She was staring intently at a specific spot.

Following her gaze, the male patrol officer also looked in that direction.

Over there was a tall platform.

All the NPCs privy to the details knew that this area was difficult to make into an instance due to its lack of playability and story elements.

Coincidentally, garbage sorting was very popular at the time, so someone had a flash of inspiration and turned this place into a garbage-sorting instance. This not only increased the instance's playability but also reduced the NPCs' workload—killing two birds with one stone.

Due to the special nature of the recycling station, this place wasn't particularly dangerous. The instance's content involved a Knight rescuing Princess Mianmian, who had been captured by a demon, by passing through stages via garbage sorting.

Players had ten chances for errors; if they made ten mistakes, the demon would reach Princess Mianmian.

With ten chances for mistakes, the tolerance for error was quite high.

Most players who entered here made no mistakes at all. At most, they would make one or two mistakes due to carelessness.

To put it bluntly, as long as you weren't a complete idiot, you wouldn't sort the garbage incorrectly.

Therefore, the demon on the high platform was always extremely bored. It usually sat in place playing cards by itself and would barely move throughout the entire instance.

But today, the demon was acting out of character.

It seemed to have noticed the two patrol officers and was leaning over the edge of the platform, enthusiastically waving at them.

The male patrol officer averted his gaze from the enthusiastically waving demon. "What's wrong with it today? Why is it so enthusiastic?"

"That's why I said it wasn't acting normal..."

The two patrol officers were bewildered, feeling that something was strange.

"Should we go over and take a look?"

"There's probably a player over there. Our patrol officers' rule is to avoid players as much as possible during patrols. Let's not go. Don't forget we came in to find the cause of the tremors."

"Alright," the male patrol officer muttered as he started walking. "Today is really strange..."

But before they had taken more than a few steps, they encountered something even stranger.

They encountered another player.

This time, it was a beautiful woman.

Only, this beautiful woman seemed to have a few screws loose.

The moment she saw them, her eyes lit up.

She kept muttering, "Talking trash! Running trash!"

Her unsettling gaze made the two patrol officers recoil several steps in fear.

But then she stopped and muttered to herself, "No, that's not right. Now I need to find trash that's beautiful on the inside..."

As she spoke, she looked the two patrol officers up and down, then left with an expression of disdain.

The patrol officers: "?"

"What was that just now? Was that a player?"

"What was with her expression? It was even more outrageous than the first player we saw!"

"What in the world is going on with this instance? Why have so many weirdos shown up all of a sudden?"

"The demon is still waving at us from up there. How about we go take a look?"

"...Alright."

However, just as they arrived beneath the high platform, they witnessed a shocking scene.

They saw Fatty standing before a trash can with a magazine in hand, a thoughtful look on his face. The cover of the magazine featured several attractive women. They could even hear him muttering to himself, "The people on the cover are so beautiful, their hearts must be beautiful too, right? It can't be wrong if I put this in, can it?"

A short while ago, Fatty had been searching for a clown mask but found nothing.

He then found this magazine along the way, and inspiration struck. He immediately took the magazine to the trash can, right when the two patrol officers arrived and saw him.

While the two patrol officers stared at him as if he were an idiot, Fatty stuffed the magazine into the trash can.

Unsurprisingly, it was incorrect.

The magazine featuring the beautiful women was spat out.

Witnessing this, the two patrol officers found it rather amusing and even chuckled aloud.

"I never thought a player like this actually existed. How could he think this magazine was 'beautiful on the inside'?"

"Looking at him, he must have sorted a lot of trash incorrectly already. I bet the demon is very close to the player on the platform now. The person up there must hate his guts."

As they spoke, they looked towards the high platform. They couldn't see clearly from a distance before, but now they could make out the demon and the player on the platform.

Indeed, the demon was already very close to the player above; just a few more steps and it would reach them.

There was indeed someone up there glaring furiously at Fatty, but... the one with the hateful gaze was the demon?

"What's going on? What kind of expression is that?"

Puzzled, the two patrol officers shifted their gaze to the player acting as "Princess Mianmian."

Upon seeing Princess Mianmian's face, the smiles that hadn't yet faded from their faces froze.

Now they understood.

Why the demon on the platform waved so enthusiastically, why the instance players were acting so unhinged, why Fatty was repeatedly acting like an idiot—was this a distortion of human nature or a collapse of morality?

The two of them gaped at the player seated on the platform, suddenly feeling that the future was full of hope.