

Collapse 96

Chapter 96: Fragile as a Reed in the Wind, Gu Bing Bing_1

Having had his name erased by an Evil God's leaf, Gu Mian finally felt comfortable revealing himself. Now, he didn't hesitate to approach other players within three meters, even dancing ballet in front of them without feeling nervous. Of course, he wouldn't actually dance in front of people; it might leave a bad impression.

Gu Mian stroked his chin and said to Dominate the World, "Indeed, we've completed this special instance. You all don't have to hide and sneak around all day. It's better to get out and stretch your legs."

Otherwise, they might get sick from being cooped up, he thought.

Dominate the World didn't seem to care about this. He looked at Gu Mian hesitantly. "Where are you planning to go?"

He had initially wanted to rope this healer in, but it seemed these people had their own plans.

No sooner had Dominate the World spoken than he seemed to have a sudden realization. "Judging by your direction, don't tell me you're heading to Hengdian?"

Everyone knew about the grand event happening in Hengdian during the Lantern Festival. Presumably, many people were already heading there.

Looking at the expression on the man before him, Gu Mian grew curious. "Why the strange look?"

Judging by Dominate the World's expression, it was as if they weren't heading towards Hengdian but racing towards a crematorium instead.

"I just heard..." Dominate the World hesitated, then continued in a strange tone, "Things on the road there seem a bit chaotic. I don't know the specifics, but I heard some organization has set up checkpoints to intercept travelers like you and rob them."

"That brazen?" Gu Mian frowned.

Fatty looked at Gu Mian curiously. "Doctor, are you thinking of doing something about it?"

Like, you know, ridding the people of this menace?

"Of course," Gu Mian nodded. "As a righteous and upstanding Doctor... when confronted with such situations, it's natural for me to take a detour. After all, I'm just a fragile healer."

As if I'd believe that, Fatty's face twitched.

"Anyway, if you plan to head that way, be cautious." Dominate the World glanced at Gu Mian. "These people are like the highwaymen of old. Some want your wealth, others want your life..."

Fatty suddenly craned his neck, his eyes wide, and asked earnestly, "I remember some also want your... 'charms,' right?" He looked somewhat expectant.

"Who'd want your 'charms'?" Gu Mian slapped Fatty away.

Dominate the World's forehead twitched almost imperceptibly. He continued, "For someone with a profession like yours, especially a Doctor, they probably won't take your life, but they'll most likely detain you."

"In the past, incidents like this in games might have been spun as 'discovering hidden gems' or 'scouting talented individuals.' But now, it has a different flavor entirely; it's simply kidnapping players to use as forced labor.

Dominate the World continued, "Besides, as a Doctor, you're perceived as gentle and not very combative. Although useful, you can't easily defend yourself. It would be very dangerous for just the three of you."

He genuinely wanted to keep this Doctor with them, but he wasn't the type to resort to coercion like those bandits. So, he could only try to persuade Gu Mian with logic and appeals to emotion.

Just as he was trying to sway Gu Mian, Fatty, who couldn't bear to be ignored, chimed in again, "Gentle and weak, you say?"

Before Dominate the World could react, Fatty pointed at Gu Mian. "Let me tell you, he's not your typical heal-bot Doctor! Give him a saw—a knife would also do—and he'd..."

Before Fatty could finish, Gu Mian kicked him away. "Get lost!"

Fatty dejectedly scurried to the side, swallowing the grand tales he had been about to share.

In the end, Gu Mian obtained a map from Dominate the World. Being a police squad leader, Dominate the World was familiar with the routes and had marked all the known checkpoint locations. With this marked map, Gu Mian and his companions set off.

As the trio left Chang'an County, the remaining police team members exchanged bewildered glances.

One of them turned to Dominate the World. "Captain, what was that Fatty trying to say earlier? It couldn't be what I'm thinking, could it...?"

Dominate the World wore a peculiar expression. "I suspect it's exactly what you're thinking."

Sawing off heads... that sort of thing...

Meanwhile, Gu Mian was driving, following the map Dominate the World had provided. A compass, which Fatty had pilfered from somewhere, wobbled on the dashboard.

Chu Changge, sitting in the passenger seat, asked, "May I ask how you got out of that instance?"

He was referring to the Slaughter game instance.

Gu Mian recalled Chu Changge mentioning they should meet on the thirteenth floor of the hospital, but the instance's main objective had been completed before they could rendezvous.

Hearing Chu Changge's question, Fatty, who had been engrossed in a cookbook, pricked up his ears.

Gu Mian recounted, "I ran into Jin Hu. Turns out, he was the Director of the Respiratory Department. Things were pretty much as we suspected. The miners' health checkup incident was just one of many things he did; that one just happened to come to light."

"Speaking of him, he had a dream: to save the world..."

Fatty interjected, "Did he want to compete with Sailor Moon for her job?"

Gu Mian ignored him and continued, "He said he wanted to eliminate exploitation and oppression, eradicate discrimination against Lower Class People, and save this foolish world. So, he did many things, none of which, I suspect, were good."

Chu Changge remained silent, but his expression clearly asked, And then?

"Then I told him that if he wanted to eliminate exploitation, oppression, and the class system, he didn't need to go to such trouble. All he had to do was release the entities from the restricted zone."

Only then did Chu Changge speak. "You mean that when the world order collapses and the apocalypse arrives, all those previous structures will cease to exist, correct?"

"More or less," Gu Mian nodded, as if it were obvious. "That's the gist. And then, he understood."

Fatty closed the cookbook in his hand. "Doctor, you're a real smooth talker."

Gu Mian finally replied to Fatty, "I wasn't trying to fool him."

Fatty snorted and said nothing, returning his attention to the cookbook.

Gu Mian glanced at the cookbook in Fatty's hands via the rearview mirror. "Why are you always poring over that thing? Are you actually expecting the game to introduce a Chef profession for you?"

Fatty looked up. "Isn't the New Year almost here? I was thinking of making something nice to eat for the celebration."

Hearing this, Gu Mian pondered for a moment. "Say... prices in the supermarket won't go up for the New Year, will they?"

It turned out Gu Mian was overthinking things.

Following the map, they took a long detour, resting intermittently, and were finally approaching Hengdian.

It was now New Year's Eve. At dusk, Gu Mian parked the Spirit Car on a flight of steps beside a road in a small county town.

Most road surfaces hadn't been cleared and were difficult to navigate. Constantly bouncing around in the Spirit Car was rough on the backside, so Gu Mian opted to drive on pedestrian walkways built over stairs whenever possible. He only activated the jump mode when encountering truly impassable obstacles. Even so, they still had to make more than twenty such jumps a day.

Fatty cheerfully went to a nearby supermarket and bought a load of food. By the time he returned, night had fallen. He promptly started a fire against a median strip, apparently planning to cook a feast.

Gu Mian set up the rooftop tent on the Spirit Car and sat inside, examining his class skills.

Upgrading the 'Exquisite Medical Skills' required Attribute Points: one point to reach Lv. 2, and two more points to reach Lv. 3.

Gu Mian had completed five instances and had accumulated exactly three Attribute Points, so he upgraded the skill directly to Level 3.

He examined the skill panel:

[Exquisite Medical Skills - Lv. 3: When using medical items, their healing effect is tripled.]

To test this skill, he deliberately made a cut on Chu Changge with a saw and then applied a bandage.

The wound healed completely in less than a day.

Gu Mian even suspected that if this skill reached Level 100, he could probably revive a dead pig with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

Of course, even if it did reach Level 100, he wouldn't actually perform mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on a dead pig.