

## Ice Age 521

### Chapter 521: Explosion!

Zhang Yi turned to Bian Junwu. "We can't hold out forever. You need to get out—now!"

"I understand!"

Bian Junwu knew their advantage was only temporary.

They were already prepared for the breakout.

Inside the shelter, over a thousand people remained—mostly former refinery workers and their families.

But this escape wasn't for them. They had to be left behind.

If Bian Junwu and his team won, these people would survive.

If they lost, those left behind would be trapped underground for the rest of their lives.

Still, that was better than stepping outside and being devoured by the zombie horde.

"Get ready to break out! Throw everything we've got at them!" Bian Junwu ordered.

Xiao Honglian gritted her teeth and stepped forward. "We've only got one shot at this. If we're going for the thrill—let's go all the way!"

She strode over to the control console, opened a hidden compartment, and slammed her fist onto a deeply concealed button.

The next moment, a massive explosion erupted from the Yangsheng Shelter's refinery!

"BOOOOM!!!!"

A blinding flash illuminated the sky, the fiery glow so intense it burned their retinas.

The deafening blast rang in Zhang Yi's ears, nearly making him deaf.

A mushroom cloud billowed upward from the earth!

The entire ground trembled violently—even from several kilometers away, Zhang Yi and the others struggled to stay on their feet, as if experiencing a magnitude-nine earthquake.

"Good god!"

Wei Dinghai's eyes widened in shock.

"Xiao Honglian—she blew up the entire refinery!!"

It was said that beneath the refinery, a million barrels of crude oil had been stored—Xiao Honglian's foundation for power in Tianhai City.

Yet now, she had set it all ablaze!

The scorching blast swept through the area, instantly reducing seventy to eighty thousand zombies to ashes or charred corpses under thousands of degrees of heat.

Thankfully, Zhang Yi and his team were wearing heat-resistant combat gear—otherwise, they would've suffered severe burns.

"She's absolutely ruthless," Zhang Yi muttered in awe.

Xiao Honglian wasn't just merciless to others—she was even crueler to herself.

While this was the most strategic move, very few people had the guts to make such a sacrifice.

The explosion didn't stop there.

After the initial blast, a series of secondary explosions followed.

A massive wave of fire swept across the surroundings, instantly melting the ice rivers into boiling lakes.

The snow-covered plains evaporated in an instant.

The water bubbled and steamed, carrying along the struggling zombies as they howled in agony.

The virus inside them was highly heat-sensitive, and they rapidly perished in the scalding water.

Zhang Yi and the others quickly retreated—the shockwaves were too powerful to stay close.

It took over ten minutes before the explosions subsided, yet flames still raged on.

The landscape had transformed into a vast, boiling marsh.

In one single blast, more than half of the zombie horde had been wiped out—either directly or indirectly.

Bian Junwu and the Investigation Team stood there, stunned.

None of them had expected Xiao Honglian to have such a trump card.

Their respect for the leader of Yangsheng Base grew stronger.

But so did their fear.

If someone could be this ruthless to themselves, what could they do to others?

A wild light burned in Xiao Honglian's eyes.

She had just sacrificed the refinery's crude oil reserves—destroying them all in one decisive move.

But what no one else knew was that Yangsheng Base's oil reserves weren't limited to that one site.

No smart person put all their eggs in one basket.

She had another fifty thousand barrels stashed elsewhere.

That's why she could afford to destroy her foundation so decisively.

This was a calculated sacrifice—a desperate move to carve out a chance for survival.

"Let's go! We have to move now—while the horde is still in chaos!"

Xiao Honglian put on her helmet and headed straight for the shelter's gate.

"But... the outside is flooded!"

Meng Siyu hesitated behind her.

"If we try to swim across, we'll be sitting ducks for the Bronze Armored Flying Zombies!"

Xiao Honglian clenched her teeth. "Even if it's dangerous, we have to try! This is our best chance!"

No one had expected the battlefield to turn into a boiling swamp.

But even if they had anticipated it, they would've had to go through with it anyway.

Suddenly, a voice broke through the tension.

"We can build a high-speed boat and rush across!"

Everyone turned toward Ye Jikang, the team's demolition expert and mechanic.

Zhuge Qingtian's eyes lit up. "Can we really pull that off? We don't have much time!"

Ye Jikang spoke quickly and calmly. "I need a vehicle—a truck, preferably."

"We've got one!" Zhuge Qingtian confirmed.

"Good. Get me a few people with mechanical skills!" Ye Jikang ordered.

Bian Junwu checked his watch, then glanced outside.

"You have fifteen minutes to finish this."

The explosion had eliminated half the horde, but the battlefield was still massive.

The zombies on the outer perimeter hadn't been affected as much.

Meanwhile, zombies in the water were already crawling onto land.

If they took too long, the horde would surround the flooded area—making escape impossible.

"Ten minutes—tops!"

Ye Jikang rolled up his sleeves, made his promise, and immediately dashed off to get started.

At that moment, Zhang Yi's voice reached Bian Junwu through the communicator.

"How's it looking? Can you get out?"

From his vantage point, Zhang Yi could still see the zombies hadn't given up on attacking the shelter.

Hundreds of Bronze Armored Flying Zombies flapped their massive wings, circling above the lake, letting out piercing screeches.

Meanwhile, the refinery fires continued to rage, with sporadic explosions still echoing in the distance.

Although not as powerful as the initial blast, the inferno would burn for at least another ten days before dying down.

Bian Junwu exhaled. "We're moving out now. Zhang Yi, your shooting skills are top-notch. Take out those flying bastards for me!"

Zhang Yi sighed. "That'll expose my position, you know."

"But, for our friendship—I'll do it."

Bian Junwu was a critical piece of Zhang Yi's strategy.

Of course, Zhang Yi had to help him.

As for attracting the zombies' attention? That was easy enough to handle.

The fires and explosions were still the main distraction, drawing most of the zombies' focus.

Even if some came after him, Zhang Yi was confident he could handle them all.

Bian Junwu nodded. "Good."

Zhang Yi reached into his Spatial Storage and pulled out a heavy anti-materiel sniper rifle.

The sheer weight of the metal beast gave it a reassuring presence in his hands.

With his Precision Shooting ability and specialized armor-piercing rounds, he had no doubts—

Every shot would count.

Chapter 522: Carving a Bloody Path!

After more than ten minutes, Ye Jikang finally completed the modification of a makeshift assault boat.

He had pieced it together using a truck's chassis, tires, and engine.

The boat could only carry a little over ten people, so Bian Junwu immediately decided who would board.

The seven members of the Investigation Team were a priority, along with Xiao Honglian, Zhuge Qingtian, and two Superhuman Captains from their ranks.

With preparations complete, Baili Changqing hoisted the assault boat onto his shoulder and carried it to the shelter's entrance.

Bian Junwu called out to the allied forces outside, "We're making a run for it! Get ready to cover us!"

The external forces quickly responded, "Got it! Just get out of there!"

Everything was in place.

Xiao Honglian activated the seven-layer alloy gate of the shelter.

"BOOOOM!!"

The massive doors slowly creaked open, and a blast of scorching heat rushed inside.

Even with their heat-resistant protective suits, they could still feel the blistering air.

It was unavoidable—the entire refinery was engulfed in flames.

But the only good news was that the zombies in the area were already dead.

Baili Changqing hurled the assault boat into the water, and the group of ten-plus people quickly climbed aboard.

Since Ye Jikang had built the boat, he took control of the steering and engine.

The propeller roared to life, and they raced toward the other side of the flooded battlefield.

Yangsheng Base had been completely transformed into a massive lake, spanning seven to eight kilometers.

The boiling water bubbled violently, still radiating searing heat.

As the assault boat surged forward, a shrill screech echoed from above—

The Bronze Armored Flying Zombies, which had been waiting in the air, dove down at full speed!

"Bang!"

A thunderous gunshot rang out from afar.

A Bronze Armored Flying Zombie's head exploded, and its body plummeted from the sky.

Zhang Yi, positioned at the highest vantage point, calmly reloaded his anti-materiel sniper rifle and locked onto the next airborne target.

He wasn't the only one fighting back.

The passengers aboard the assault boat were all powerful Superhumans, and under normal circumstances, dealing with a few Bronze Armored Flying Zombies would be easy.

But right now, everyone was crammed into a single boat, severely limiting their mobility.

Bian Junwu aimed his black rifle, carefully sniping the airborne enemies.

However, even with specialized ammunition, hitting their bodies wasn't enough to bring them down.

Sharpshooter Qi Guangming refused to let Zhang Yi take all the glory and also tried sniping the flying zombies.

But he wasn't a Spatial-Type Superhuman—he couldn't handle the massive recoil of an anti-materiel sniper rifle.

The moment he fired, the entire boat rocked violently.

Baili Changqing immediately grabbed his arm. "Put the damn sniper down! It's not stable enough for that here!"

Frustrated, Qi Guangming had no choice but to switch to his handgun.

Above them, over a hundred Bronze Armored Flying Zombies swarmed at terrifying speeds.

Only a marksman like Zhang Yi, with his auto-locking Superhuman ability, could effectively bring them down.

The rest struggled to attack from the unstable boat.

At best, they were fighting at half their usual strength.

Then, things got worse.

Just as everyone was focused on the aerial enemies, the water began to churn violently.

The assault boat lurched—as if trapped in thick seaweed—its speed grinding to a halt!

Something was dragging them down.

Meng Siyu suddenly had a terrifying realization.

She leaned over the edge of the boat to check the water—

And in that instant, a zombie head lunged out from below, snapping its jaws inches from her face!

"AHH!"

Meng Siyu gasped, jerking backward just in time, tumbling into the boat.

BANG!

Qi Guangming instinctively fired, blasting the zombie's head apart.

Still shaken, Meng Siyu pointed at the water, her voice trembling.

"There are zombies beneath us!"

Everyone's expressions turned grim as they peered into the water—

And their hearts nearly stopped.

Hundreds—thousands—of zombies were lurking beneath the surface.

The ones submerged by the flood hadn't drowned—they were already dead, after all.

Instead, they had been waiting below, and now, they were swarming toward the boat.

One by one, the zombies clawed their way up, latching onto the boat like a living ladder, their rotting bodies piling on top of each other.

More and more rose from the depths, trying to drag them under!

No wonder the boat was slowing down—the sheer weight of the zombies clinging to it was holding it back!

Ye Jikang gritted his teeth and slammed the throttle forward.

The propeller roared, shredding the zombies behind them into bloody mist.

The boat lurched ahead, but more zombies were waiting up ahead.

As they pushed forward, the shoreline finally came into view.

But what awaited them on land made their blood run cold.

Outside Yangsheng Base's flooded area, over a hundred thousand zombies were waiting for them—staring hungrily.

Among them were at least two hundred Bronze Armored Zombies.

Meanwhile, Zhang Yi, Xing Tian, and Wei Dinghai were doing everything they could to thin the horde and draw attention away.

But the allied forces were also struggling—they were surrounded by zombies themselves.

Zhang Yi had sniped six Bronze Armored Flying Zombies before the horde noticed his position and started closing in on him.

The same was happening to the other forces.

The zombies on land couldn't reach the boat yet, but they could still attack the people on shore.

Their only instinct was to kill and feed—any living being was a target.

Zhang Yi remained calm, giving orders.

"Everyone, get in the snow vehicles and circle the perimeter! Keep moving and sniping while we run!"

But at this point, there was no way to reach the shore to help the boat.

They were on their own.

"There's no other choice," Wu Di gritted his teeth, raising his right hand.

A massive orb of light formed in his palm.

At the same time, dozens of floating orbs materialized around him.

The Investigation Team members visibly tensed.

Wu Di's Floating Cannons were powerful, but they had a fatal drawback—they didn't just consume Superhuman energy, but also mental strength.

Using them excessively would cause severe, irreversible damage to his body.

If he overdid it, he could end up as nothing more than a hollow shell—a living corpse.

Bian Junwu had always been strict about Wu Di's power usage, fearing he would follow in his own tragic footsteps.

Seeing Wu Di about to risk his life, Bian Junwu grabbed his shoulder.

"Put those away! This isn't your time to throw your life away!"

Wu Di froze—then shouted in anger.

"With this many zombies, how else are we supposed to survive?!"

"Don't tell me you plan to sacrifice yourself to clear a path for us!"

Chapter 523: The Raging Zombie Tide

Among the Investigation Team, Bian Junwu and Wu Di had the most similar abilities.

Both possessed large-scale, high-damage Superhuman powers—but using them came at the cost of their health.

It was a fair trade—those who sought power beyond ordinary humans had to pay the price.

In this situation, Wu Di wanted to use his ability because he didn't want Bian Junwu to step in.

Bian Junwu's body was already deteriorating—every time he used his power, his lifespan shortened.

So when Bian Junwu stopped him, Wu Di was furious.

He didn't want to watch Bian Junwu die.

He didn't want him to die right in front of him.

Bian Junwu's voice was firm. "I'm the captain. It's not your place to play the hero here!"

Meanwhile, the zombies beneath the water were all swarming toward the boat.

The lake's surface shifted unnaturally—as if someone had tossed fish feed into a pond, causing all the fish to rush toward a single point.

And right now, the center of that feeding frenzy was their assault boat.

If they didn't reach land soon, the horde would overturn their boat—and even the strongest Superhumans would be helpless underwater.

But reaching land didn't mean safety—on shore, over a hundred thousand zombies awaited them.

Both options were a death trap.

Bian Junwu adjusted his sunglasses. He knew he had to do something.

Baili Changqing, however, tried to stop him. "Captain, don't rush! Look at the size of this horde—even your Oblivion ability won't be enough to carve a path!"

"And these zombies are more aggressive than before!"

Bian Junwu's expression was grim.

Baili Changqing was right.

His power was formidable, but at the end of the day, he was still only Delta-ranked.

He couldn't perform miracles.

Oblivion had a power level close to Epsilon-rank, but it had limited uses and severe side effects.

If he could fire it ten times in a row or increase its power tenfold, he could blast a path through this massive zombie army—but he couldn't.

"For now, let's just get to shore!"

Since Bian Junwu didn't respond, Baili Changqing stepped in to make the call.

Everyone understood the situation.

Water was not their battlefield.

Hearing the command, the team drew their weapons and began firing at the zombies beneath the surface.

Fortunately, zombies were slow in water, so they hadn't been able to capsize the boat yet.

The allied factions outside the lake were in constant communication with Bian Junwu's team, so they knew what was happening.

Wei Dinghai and Xing Tian were powerless to assist—they were overwhelmed by their own zombie attacks.

Zheng Yixian, however, was growing more uneasy.

The zombies were out of his control—to regain command, he'd have to return to the Followers of the Snow God's headquarters and have the Blood Vine issue orders to the Zombie King.

But that was impossible now.

And if the Investigation Team died here, the consequences were unacceptable.

"Damn it! Damn it all!"

"If you had just left after dealing with the zombie tide, this wouldn't be happening! You brought this on yourselves!"

On the surface, Zheng Yixian's face remained emotionless, but inside, he was seething with frustration.

Yet he had no choice but to give an order.

"Do everything possible to save the Investigation Team!"

"At the very least—Bian Junwu must survive!"

The ten-plus Superhumans from the Followers of the Snow God launched a desperate assault, trying to carve a path through the horde and link up with Bian Junwu's team.

But it was almost impossible.

Regular zombies were manageable, but there were hundreds of Bronze Armored Zombies among them!

Most Superhumans couldn't even handle one in a one-on-one fight.

Zheng Yixian's reckless push resulted in five of his priests being torn apart by the Bronze Armored Zombies.

Yet his cold gaze didn't waver.

It didn't matter.

Their power would return to Yuan Kongye upon their deaths.

In a way, this wasn't a loss—it was a redistribution of strength.

Meanwhile, Zhang Yi...

He was riding in a snow vehicle, with Uncle You driving, leading a massive horde of zombies on a wild chase.

Tens of thousands of zombies roared and sprinted after them across the snowy plains.

But no matter how fast they were—

They were still just rotting corpses.

They only had two legs, while Zhang Yi's vehicle had four wheels—and in the snow, that was an unbeatable advantage.

Zhang Yi, Fatty Xu, and Liang Yue leaned out of the windows, sniping zombies as they chased.

Fatty Xu and Liang Yue used grenades, throwing them into the horde.

The zombies, mindless and reckless, ran straight into the blasts, getting blown to pieces.

Zhang Yi, however, focused on sniping the Bronze Armored Zombies and the flying ones.

Watching the mindless horde charge forward, Zhang Yi smirked.

"They're more aggressive than before... but also dumber."

"Without the Followers of the Snow God controlling them, they've regressed to their most primal state."

"But... how do they plan to fix this mess?"

By 'they,' he meant Yuan Kongye and Zheng Yixian.

There was no way they'd just let the Investigation Team die.

Zhang Yi didn't know exactly how they controlled the zombies, but he was certain—

They would do something to clear the horde.

But in this case—he was wrong.

Yuan Kongye and Zheng Yixian did have a way to control the zombies—

But right now, it was too late to use it.

The situation was far worse than Zhang Yi had anticipated.

But it wasn't his fault—he simply lacked the inside information.

Back at the lake...

After an exhausting struggle, Bian Junwu's team finally broke free from the underwater zombies.

They were just about to reach shore—

But no one felt relieved.

Because waiting on land was something far worse.

The zombie horde on shore was larger and deadlier than ever.

Especially the gigantic Bronze Armored Zombies, which stood at the front, baring their fangs and roaring menacingly.

From a distance, Zheng Yixian watched anxiously.

Suddenly, he soared into the air and raced toward the boat.

Moments later, he hovered above them.

The team looked up, eyeing him enviously—

Zheng Yixian could manipulate raw force to fly.

Xiao Honglian narrowed her eyes. "Why are you here alone?"

Zheng Yixian's gaze locked onto Bian Junwu.

"The outer horde is too massive. We can't break through."

"Mr. Bian... I'll get you out of here first!"

"No matter what—you must stop Jiangnan District from destroying Tianhai City!"

Chapter 524: If It Doesn't Work, I'll Make a Grand Move

Zheng Yixian had completely lost control of the situation.

In reality, their control over the zombie horde was far from absolute. They couldn't command it at will, and now, one wrong move could get him killed.

In desperation, he decided to take Bian Junwu away. He believed that as long as Bian Junwu was alive, there was still a chance to salvage the situation.

Bian Junwu instantly saw through Zheng Yixian's intentions.

"You think saving me alone will fix everything? Don't be so naive!" Bian Junwu snapped.

“Jiangnan District has run out of patience with the zombie problem in Tianhai City.”

“If we don’t eliminate the horde within the next 24 hours, everyone here will die!”

Zheng Yixian’s pupils shrank sharply.

“What?! How could this happen?”

“You must be joking! There are still over a hundred thousand zombies here, and we’ve already exhausted all our strength—how are we supposed to deal with them?”

Bian Junwu replied coldly, “How else? We fight to the death.”

Zheng Yixian’s face twisted in an ugly grimace, as if he had swallowed something foul. His expression flickered with venomous hatred.

To him, if it weren’t for Bian Junwu and his team coming to Tianhai City, their grand plan would have already succeeded!

Zhang Yi and his group heard their conversation clearly through Bian Junwu’s communicator.

Zhang Yi frowned immediately. Something about the situation didn’t align with his expectations.

Zheng Yixian's tone was anxious, not like he was putting on an act.

"That's strange. Isn't the zombie horde under their control? Or is he just unwilling to sacrifice what they worked so hard to cultivate and is putting on a show?"

Outside Yangsheng Base, Bian Junwu and his team had already reached the riverbank.

A brutal battle erupted instantly!

In mere moments, over a dozen top-tier Superhumans were swallowed by the zombie tide, as all kinds of zombies roared and swarmed in for the kill.

Bian Junwu took off his sunglasses—Desolation activated!

In an instant, thousands of zombies around him turned to ash under this terrifying power.

"Cough, cough... cough, cough..."

Blood seeped through Bian Junwu's fingers as he covered his mouth.

“Captain!!”

Wu Di shouted in horror. Then, with a fierce determination, he unleashed a barrage of floating cannons in all directions!

Even the heavily armored Bronze Armored Zombies were left with gaping holes in their bodies upon contact with the light spheres.

“Cough... Hurry! Break through!”

Bian Junwu endured the pain and urged his team forward.

In the sky, Zheng Yixian used psychokinesis to push the zombies away.

“Something... feels off,” Liang Yue murmured as he observed the zombie horde behind them.

“These zombies we’re facing today are more aggressive than the ones we encountered before.”

“We only lured a small portion of them away, but there are still over a hundred thousand zombies surrounding the investigation team.”

“Can they... really make it out alive?”

Zhang Yi’s gaze sharpened, his expression turning grim.

The situation was veering off course from what he had anticipated.

His original plan was to use this crisis to force the Followers of the Snow God to give up control over the zombies.

That way, even if Yuan Kongye held immense power, he wouldn’t necessarily have the confidence to turn against the other factions of the Xichuan forces.

But now, things were moving in a direction even he couldn’t predict.

Either the Followers of the Snow God had gone mad and intended to wipe out the investigation team along with their own allies...

Or even they had lost control of the zombie horde.

Zhang Yi leaned toward the latter.

He didn't believe that Yuan Kongye or Zheng Yixian were the kind of fools who would act without considering the consequences.

But right now, the biggest problem was—how to solve this crisis?

“If nothing else works, I'll go and make a grand move.”

As Zhang Yi spoke, his eyes sparkled with a sharp glint, but a subtle, knowing smile played at his lips.

His teammates turned to look at him.

“What are you planning?”

Zhang Yi glanced at them.

“I'll use my ability with the Dimensional Gate to teleport over and save them.”

Zhang Yi's Dimensional Gate had an activation range of 300 meters around him.

Within that range, as long as he opened two gates simultaneously, he could instantly teleport between them.

And since the Dimensional Gate required no energy consumption and had no cooldown time...

In other words, if Zhang Yi moved fast enough, he could simulate near-instantaneous teleportation and reach Bian Junwu's team.

His words made everyone's eyes light up.

They recalled how, back in the subway, Zhang Yi had used the Dimensional Gate to help them escape from a zombie siege.

But until now, he had never explained the exact mechanics of the ability to them.

Its range, duration, and whether it could be used multiple times—none of them knew.

So naturally, they had no idea if Zhang Yi could use it to rescue people.

Now that they had a definite answer, their expressions visibly relaxed.

“You should have said so earlier! If we had known, we wouldn’t have needed to struggle so much in the first place.”

But Zhang Yi simply gazed out the window into the distance.

“I think you misunderstood what I meant.”

“I said I’d save them, but not in the way you’re thinking.”

Everyone looked puzzled.

“What do you mean?”

Wasn’t he talking about using the Dimensional Gate’s teleportation ability to extract people from the zombie horde?

Zhang Yi spoke calmly.

“Jiangnan District’s last hope for us is to eliminate the zombie horde in Tianhai City within 24 hours.”

“They didn’t say we had to ensure the investigation team survives.”

“So even if I rescue them from the horde, it would be meaningless. It wouldn’t stop the ‘Reaper of Love’ from arriving.”

“Oh, and now... we have less than 16 hours left.”

Zhang Yi glanced at the Rolex on his wrist and spoke in a casual tone.

Fatty Xu and the others stiffened, their expressions turning grim again.

“That’s impossible,” Fatty Xu muttered.

“Xiao Honglian managed to kill over a hundred thousand zombies by igniting the crude oil, but most of the Bronze Armored Zombies and Flying Bronze Zombies survived.”

“With the remaining horde still in the tens of thousands, there’s no way we can wipe them all out on our own.”

Liang Yue furrowed his brows and said in a deep voice,

“Perhaps from the very start, the ‘24 hours’ was just an excuse.”

“Jiangnan District must have already determined that we couldn’t solve the zombie crisis. That’s why they had already planned to deploy the ‘Reaper of Love.’”

“The 24-hour deadline was just a formality for the investigation team.”

Fatty Xu trembled and turned to Zhang Yi with a hopeful look.

“Boss, let’s run! We still have time to leave Tianhai City!”

Zhang Yi paused for a moment, then let out a faint smile.

“I already said... if no one else can do it, I’ll make a grand move.”

“This is my last attempt. We still have time. If I fail, then we’ll leave.”

With that, he leaped out of the window.

In a flash, his figure disappeared into the zombie horde 300 meters away.

Before the zombies could react, Zhang Yi's silhouette flickered again, dashing toward Bian Junwu's team.

“Boss!!”

Fatty Xu clung to the window in horror.

Hua Hua's ears perked up, her eyes widening like copper bells, filled with tension.

Zhang Yi didn't give them a chance to persuade him—he was already gone.

“He'll be fine! Even if he can't wipe out the horde, Zhang Yi has the ability to escape safely.”

“We'll just wait for him here, as he said.”

Uncle You spoke as he lifted a rocket launcher and fired a devastating shot into the horde behind them.

Boom!

Dozens of zombies were blasted into pieces, their limbs flying through the air.

Chapter 525: Do You Still Remember Ice Soul?

No one knew what Zhang Yi was planning. He had left in such a hurry without explaining anything.

But they all trusted him.

In the blink of an eye, they had been together for nearly six months. Living under the same roof, they understood exactly what kind of person Zhang Yi was.

He was so cautious it was almost excessive. If he wasn't absolutely confident, he would never put himself in danger.

So all they could do now was believe in him—and do their best to draw more zombies away to relieve the pressure on his side.

At this moment, the assault boat had reached land.

But the pressure on the investigation team hadn't lessened at all.

Zombies swarmed from every direction, covering the land for miles. Some even crawled out of the lake, their bodies dripping wet as they climbed onto shore.

Bian Junwu's Desolation was terrifying, but it couldn't be used continuously, and it caused severe physical strain. He could only unleash it at critical moments to clear a path.

As for the others, even with their formidable combat abilities, they couldn't keep up with the relentless onslaught.

They pressed their backs against each other, forming a tight circle as they trudged forward.

But everyone knew—once their Superhuman Energy was completely drained, they were dead.

And not just dead—there wouldn't even be bodies left.

A heavy, suffocating despair hung over them, even stronger than during the battle against the Followers of the Snow God.

“So this time... I really am going to die here.”

Xiao Honglian felt her heart sink into hopelessness. The ever-strong woman finally showed a trace of exhaustion on her face.

But she didn't feel much regret.

Since the apocalypse, nearly everyone in Tianhai City had died.

Her family, friends, comrades—they had all fallen, one after another.

To have survived until now was already a miracle.

High above, Zheng Yixian hovered in the air, bombarding the horde with blasts of Primordial Force. Each strike wiped out dozens of zombies.

But even such a powerful ability was like a drop in the ocean against the overwhelming tide. It couldn't turn the situation around.

To make matters worse, a swarm of Bronze Armored Flying Zombies had locked onto him, swooping in relentlessly. He barely managed to knock them away with his powers.

Gradually, exhaustion crept up on him.

He tried to convince Bian Junwu to leave with him.

Even if Jiangnan District wanted to raze Tianhai City to the ground, having the captain of the investigation team in their hands would give them leverage in future negotiations.

“Captain Bian, come with me! If we leave now, there’s still hope!”

Bian Junwu coughed and shook his head with a smile.

“Zheng Yixian, you should go.”

He was already a dead man. There was no way he would abandon his team.

And he knew—none of them would leave each other behind.

If they lived, they lived together. If they died, they died together.

Zheng Yixian’s expression twisted in frustration.

Damn fools. They didn’t know what was good for them!

“Fine, don’t blame me then.”

He turned and flew off into the distance.

His face was dark as he thought, They’re already as good as dead! When the Reaper of Love arrives, these zombies I worked so hard to cultivate will be wiped out anyway.

If that’s the case, I might as well go back and communicate with the Blood Vine—make these zombies end themselves.

But those people? They're definitely going to die. Bian Junwu, if you won't accept my help, that's your loss!

Zheng Yixian had made his decision.

Even if the complete annihilation of the investigation team angered Jiangnan District...

As long as the zombie horde "disappeared," Tianhai City wouldn't be wiped out—at least not right away.

That would buy them time to grow stronger.

Give them a few more months, and they could cultivate another massive zombie army.

After all, if there was one thing Tianhai City had plenty of, it was corpses.

The moment Zheng Yixian left, Zhang Yi was already flashing through space, rapidly approaching Bian Junwu's group.

Teleporting between Dimensional Gates was incredibly fast. Even appearing directly in the zombie horde wasn't a problem—he could vanish before they had a chance to react.

Finding Bian Junwu and the others was easy.

In the endless sea of zombies, there was one spot with the highest concentration.

There, the zombies were so desperate to attack that they had piled up into a five- to six-meter-high mound, trampling over each other in their frenzy.

It looked like a towering monument built from the undead.

Swish!

Zhang Yi appeared right in front of Bian Junwu's team, startling them.

"Zhang Yi?! How did you get here?"

Everyone was shocked by his sudden arrival.

But their shock quickly turned into a mix of joy and relief.

They were amazed by his ability—and hopeful that his presence meant a chance at survival.

After all, Zhang Yi was one of the most powerful people in Tianhai City.

Bian Junwu wasted no time. "Zhang Yi, are you here to rescue us?"

Even as they fought desperately, everyone's attention was fixed on Zhang Yi, waiting for his answer.

They knew the chances were slim, but in moments of despair, even a sliver of hope was worth clinging to.

Zhang Yi gasped for breath, his expression heavy.

"The situation is worse than I thought. My ability lets me teleport, but I can only take one person at a time."

As soon as he said this, everyone's mood plummeted.

One person.

Who would that be?

Even if someone escaped, it wouldn't solve the zombie problem. It wouldn't change anything.

Bian Junwu felt a pang of disappointment but remained rational.

"Then why are you here? If you can't get us all out, coming alone won't change anything."

Zhang Yi's eyes were serious. "I came here to give you a possibility. I have an idea—I don't know if it'll work. But it's worth trying."

Wu Di immediately urged, "Then say it already!"

Everyone was hanging onto his words like a lifeline.

Zhang Yi took a deep breath.

"Do you still remember Yuan Kongye's Ice Soul?"

The group fell silent.

Of course, they remembered.

Bian Junwu's expression flickered as he started to understand Zhang Yi's train of thought.

Zhang Yi continued, "You all know Ice Soul has two effects. The first is helping those without abilities awaken their powers. The second is unlocking hidden potential in those who have already awakened—boosting their strength."

He exhaled deeply, looking at Bian Junwu with complete honesty.

“Truth is, I used Ice Soul before. That’s how I enhanced my powers and became one of the strongest in Tianhai City.”

Xiao Honglian spoke up, “Actually, I used it too. And if I’m not mistaken, so did Wei Dinghai and Xing Tian.”

Zhang Yi’s mind jolted. This was news to him.

Did that mean... if they died, Yuan Kongye would absorb their powers?

Thinking deeper, it made sense.

In the apocalypse, strength was everything. The leaders of various factions would go to any lengths to maintain their rule.

And since Ice Soul had no negative effects as long as the user was alive, it made perfect sense for the strongest to use it.

Chapter 526: Epsilon

Zhang Yi lied about using Ice Soul. He knew this thing was unreliable.

Once someone used it, they became Yuan Kongye’s prey.

And he couldn’t be completely sure that Ice Soul had no side effects.

Bian Junwu frowned. "So you're saying we should use Ice Soul to enhance our strength and break through?"

Zhang Yi nodded. "At this point, it's our only option."

"You are all top-tier Superhumans. If you use Ice Soul, you might surpass your limits and become even stronger."

"Then, we'll have a chance to fight our way out."

Baili Changqing and the others furrowed their brows, clearly tempted by the idea.

Given their current predicament, they had to consider any method that could help them break through.

After all, surviving the zombie horde seemed nearly impossible.

Wu Di urged Bian Junwu anxiously, "Boss, let's try it!"

Zhang Yi even generously took out an Ice Soul. "You can use this."

He had three in total, and he didn't need too many of these unstable things.

Bian Junwu glanced at Zhang Yi. Even through his sunglasses, Zhang Yi could feel the piercing coldness of his gaze.

A chill ran down Zhang Yi's spine.

Did Bian Junwu see through him?

Had this seasoned veteran seen right through his little scheme?

Bian Junwu reached out and took the Ice Soul from Zhang Yi.

Whatever thoughts he had, he had no other choice now.

But taking this Ice Soul didn't mean he owed Zhang Yi anything. If anything, it was Zhang Yi who owed him.

"We have no choice but to try."

Wu Di immediately shouted, "Let me use it too!"

The others chimed in. "We'll do it together!"

They had been through countless life-or-death situations. They knew Ice Soul might have side effects.

But faced with imminent doom, no one was willing to back down. Even if there was risk, they would face it together!

"No need! I'll do it alone."

Bian Junwu gave Zhang Yi a deep look before opening the small wooden box and taking out an Ice Soul.

He examined the small white orb in his palm.

Soft, icy cold, and pulsating ever so slightly—almost as if it were alive.

Without hesitation, he pressed it against his forehead.

A deep, unreadable smile tugged at Zhang Yi's lips.

His goal had been achieved.

Baili Changqing opened his mouth but said nothing.

Wu Di's face twisted in pain. "Boss! Let me do it instead!"

They all knew why Bian Junwu had made this choice.

His ability had severely damaged his body. He wasn't going to live much longer.

A month ago, they had already known—even if Bian Junwu retired and rested, he'd have at most two years left to live.

But he had chosen to stay on the frontlines for the sake of his wife and child, hoping to secure a better life for them.

As their leader, he was always the first to step forward, shielding everyone from the storm.

The Ice Soul quickly melted into Bian Junwu's forehead.

Far away, Zheng Yixian saw this and froze.

Then, his face lit up with uncontrollable joy!

Bian Junwu actually used Ice Soul!

A power like this had never existed in Tianhai City before—it was utterly overwhelming!

And Zheng Yixian knew that Bian Junwu wouldn't live much longer.

Once he died, his ability would transfer to Yuan Kongye.

At that moment, Yuan Kongye would become a true Epsilon-class Superhuman—the strongest LV5 known to humanity!

Their dream was finally within reach!

Bian Junwu absorbed the Ice Soul.

Unlike Yang Siyah, he showed no signs of rejection or discomfort.

Almost instantly, an immense, terrifying aura surged from his body, making Zhang Yi's entire being tremble.

The others felt their backs go cold, their instincts screaming that they were facing a superior predator.

Bian Junwu straightened.

Slowly, he removed his sunglasses, revealing his gray-white eyes.

But now, in those gray-white eyes, two brilliant streaks of light shone—so divine, so piercing, as if they could see through all things.

“...It's been a long time since I last saw the world with my own eyes.”

A rare, gentle smile appeared on Bian Junwu's lips.

His vision had returned.

At this moment, he felt unstoppable. It was as if infinite power surged within him.

He was no longer a Delta-class gatekeeper.

He had officially stepped into the ranks of Epsilon-class!

But as his power surged, so did the flaws in his ability.

A gaping void had opened inside him.

His energy erupted from the depths of his body... but as the void expanded, it also leaked away.

The Ice Soul had unlocked his potential but couldn't fix the fatal flaw in his ability.

Instead, it made it worse.

Drip.

Blood trickled from the corner of Bian Junwu's mouth.

“Boss!!”

Wu Di and the others shouted in panic.

Bian Junwu simply waved a hand.

Then, in a deep, soft voice, he said:

“Close your eyes.”

Everyone obeyed immediately.

They stopped fighting, and the zombie horde surged forward like a monstrous tidal wave, ready to drown them all.

But in the very next moment—

A blinding radiance erupted from the center of the horde.

It was brighter than the sun, more piercing, more overwhelming.

No one could see what was happening.

They couldn't even hear anything—just a faint sound of footsteps.

A gentle, rhythmic pace.

As if someone was walking toward the dawn.

Zhang Yi, despite Bian Junwu's warning, quietly activated his Dimensional Gate in front of himself and peeked through.

He wanted to see just how terrifying Bian Junwu was at full power.

His portal shielded him. Even the strongest eye-based abilities wouldn't affect him if they weren't specifically targeting him.

And so, he looked.

There, ahead of him, was Bian Junwu's back.

His hands were tucked into the pockets of his black coat, and he walked forward slowly, steadily.

A white light engulfed the world.

Ahead of him, dark shadows loomed—countless, endless, a sea of terrifying, snarling zombies.

But Bian Junwu ignored them completely, as if they didn't exist.

The moment he approached them, the dark shadows suddenly disintegrated like mist.

Zhang Yi swallowed hard.

Bian Junwu was unleashing the final radiance of his life.

Even after clearing out the surrounding zombies, he continued fighting, determined to eliminate the greatest threats to his teammates.

Such an intense use of his ability would completely shatter his already-wounded body.

Zhang Yi stared at Bian Junwu's back, his gaze filled with deep respect.

Captain Bian... thank you.

Your sacrifice will not be in vain.

## Chapter 527: The Final Blaze

No one knew how much time had passed.

Without Bian Junwu's command, no one dared to open their eyes.

The power of Desolation was simply too overwhelming.

Even the seasoned members of the investigation team dared not risk a direct gaze.

And now, with Ice Soul amplifying Bian Junwu's strength beyond its former limits, he was undoubtedly a true Epsilon-class Superhuman.

Only Zhang Yi, protected by his Dimensional Gate, had the courage to keep his eyes open and watch.

Gradually, the radiant white light that had enveloped the world began to fade.

The surrounding landscape was now completely devoid of zombies.

Beyond the reach of the fading light, members of the three major factions stood in stunned silence, their faces frozen with fear.

None of them dared to step forward.

They had never seen anything like this in their lives.

And now, they fully understood just how terrifying a Superhuman at LV5 Epsilon level could be.

It wasn't just power.

It was the destruction of conventional warfare itself.

An Epsilon-class Superhuman was no longer a mere combatant.

They were walking nuclear weapons.

Zheng Yixian's eyes gleamed with manic excitement.

His lips curled upward uncontrollably.

No... I can't celebrate yet! Just one more step to victory!

Zhang Yi, you idiot! You helped us more than you can even imagine! Hahaha!

Now, the leaders of Tianhai City's major bases, including Bian Junwu, have all used Ice Soul.

As long as we kill them all, our dream will be within reach!

As the battlefield quieted, the last traces of white light dissipated.

Bian Junwu turned around and walked toward the others.

Zhang Yi immediately shut his eyes, pretending he had seen nothing.

But the next moment, he felt a hand grip his shoulder.

The grip was firm and steady, as heavy as a mountain.

Zhang Yi tensed up instantly.

Then, a cold voice whispered in his ear:

"Stop pretending. You were watching the whole time, weren't you?"

Zhang Yi forced a bitter smile and slowly opened his eyes.

"...You noticed?"

But the moment he saw Bian Junwu's face, his smile froze.

Bian Junwu's expression was cold.

His lips curled into an enigmatic smirk.

"Captain Bian, thank you for saving us all!"

Zhang Yi quickly adopted a sincere look and spoke with gratitude.

Bian Junwu didn't respond.

His right hand remained on Zhang Yi's shoulder, exerting a tremendous pressure.

Even though Zhang Yi knew Bian Junwu didn't have much time left, he had just ascended to Epsilon-class—at this range, he could kill Zhang Yi in an instant.

"You're quite the schemer," Bian Junwu murmured. "Even I walked right into your plan."

Zhang Yi's expression remained calm as he spoke softly,

"Apologies. This wasn't my first choice. This was my contingency plan. But with no other options left, I had to use it."

He wasn't lying.

Zhang Yi had prepared three different strategies for this crisis.

Force the Followers of the Snow God to relinquish control of the zombie horde by leveraging Jiangnan District's pressure.

This plan failed. He had overestimated the cult's ability to command the horde.

When the horde spiraled out of control, even they could do nothing to stop it.

Boost Bian Junwu's team with Ice Soul, forcing them to break through the horde by sheer strength.

This plan had succeeded—but at great cost.

Abandon Tianhai City and escape before the Reaper of Love arrived.

If the situation had completely collapsed, Zhang Yi would have fled without hesitation.

Survival was always his top priority.

If he had another way, he would have never wanted things to reach this point.

He had no personal grudge against Bian Junwu.

But when the situation was out of control, hesitation meant death.

Bian Junwu sighed and shook his head.

“...Forget it. I don’t have much time left anyway.”

“In a way, I should be thanking you. If not for your suggestion, I wouldn’t have been able to burn this brightly one last time.”

He looked down at his hands.

“This... is the power of LV5 Epsilon-class? Incredible. I just wish... there was another chance to use it.”

Suddenly, his massive frame swayed.

The hand on Zhang Yi’s shoulder slipped away.

Zhang Yi quickly reached out and caught him.

“...Don’t worry,” Zhang Yi said softly. “Now that you’ve done this much, I’ll handle the rest of Tianhai City’s problems.”

Bian Junwu looked at him.

His ashen-gray pupils flickered with doubt.

“...So you’ve been hiding even more secrets.”

“What are they, I wonder?”

But he never got an answer.

Because at that very moment, his body reached its limit.

Bian Junwu had burned away everything—his energy, his life force, his very existence—just to unleash his final attack.

He collapsed into Zhang Yi's arms.

And he never moved again.

A moment later, the others sensed the battle was over.

They slowly opened their eyes.

The battlefield that had once held hundreds of thousands of zombies...

...was empty.

Not a single Bronze Armored Zombie or Flying Bronze Zombie remained.

Only a few scattered ordinary zombies still wandered aimlessly—weak and no longer a threat.

Xiao Honglian's eyes widened in disbelief.

Her voice trembled as she whispered,

“...Is it over? Did we really... win?”

Just moments ago, she had prepared to die, expecting to be devoured by the endless horde.

Now, the sudden absence of danger felt so surreal that it left her shaken.

But the investigation team had no time to celebrate.

Because they knew what this meant.

For Bian Junwu to have unleashed such power—

...he had paid the price.

Wu Di's eyes locked onto Zhang Yi.

His face twisted in horror as he saw Bian Junwu's lifeless body in Zhang Yi's arms.

"Boss!!!"

With a guttural cry, Wu Di rushed forward and snatched Bian Junwu's body from Zhang Yi.

His eyes were wide with fear, his movements frantic—like a lost child.

"Boss! Wake up! Wake up!"

"Don't sleep! You won't wake up if you fall asleep!"

He screamed in Bian Junwu's ear, shaking him violently.

But the only response was silence.

Then, the once-arrogant Wu Di...

broke down sobbing.

Zhang Yi stepped back silently.

He knew—this was their moment to say goodbye.

One by one, Wu Di, Baili Changqing, and the others gathered around Bian Junwu's body.

Their faces were solemn, filled with sorrow.

But aside from Wu Di, no one cried.

They simply placed their right hands over their chests...

...and saluted in silence.

Because in this apocalyptic world, they had seen far too much death.

And they knew—one day, this would be their fate too.

No words were needed.

Their respect would last forever.

Meanwhile, Zheng Yixian was ecstatic.

This couldn't have gone better!

Sure, they had lost hundreds of thousands of zombies—

But zombies could be replaced.

Bian Junwu's power, however...

That was irreplaceable.

And soon, it would belong to Yuan Kongye.

We won big.

Zheng Yixian smirked.

Then, his greedy gaze swept across the battlefield, silently counting how many had used Ice Soul.

Like a farmer, watching his crops ripen for the harvest.

#### Chapter 528 – A Sudden Strike

Wei Dinghai and the others walked over, offering their sincere respect to Bian Junwu.

Without Bian Junwu's sacrifice, the entire Tianhai City would have been doomed.

Wu Di sat on the ground in silence, holding Bian Junwu's lifeless body. Meanwhile, Deputy Captain Baili Changqing had already steeled his expression, showing no trace of sorrow.

“The captain is dead. According to district regulations, I will temporarily assume command.”

He took the communication device from Bian Junwu's body and solemnly contacted the leadership of Jiangnan District. The others watched him intently, their faces just as serious.

Now that the zombie horde had been eradicated, Jiangnan District should follow through on their promise and cancel the launch of Death Reaper of Love.

Baili Changqing reported the situation to Zhu Zheng.

Upon hearing the news, Zhu Zheng spoke in a low voice, "So, he's gone after all?"

Baili Changqing heard Zhu Zheng sigh softly.

"This might be for the best. As a soldier, dying on the battlefield is the most honorable end he could ask for. I believe he wouldn't have wanted to wither away in a hospital bed."

Baili Changqing then asked, "Commander, what's our next move?"

Zhu Zheng looked at the massive screen before him, where Baili Changqing and the others were clearly visible.

"Bring Bian Junwu's body back."

With the investigation team losing both its strongest fighter and its leader, it was no longer a complete unit. Zhu Zheng wasn't willing to risk further casualties among his elite soldiers.

Besides, with the second wave of the zombie tide cleared, Tianhai City wouldn't face another major crisis anytime soon.

"Yes, Commander!"

Baili Changqing ended the call and turned to Zhang Yi and the others.

“Blizzard City has officially canceled the launch of Death Reaper of Love.”

A collective sigh of relief swept through the group.

Tianhai City had been saved, along with their home and everything they had fought to protect.

Zheng Yixian stepped forward, crossing his hands over his chest as he chanted a prayer for Bian Junwu and all those who had perished in battle.

Though saddened by Bian Junwu’s death, the team was more grateful than mournful. His sacrifice had lifted the crisis looming over Tianhai City.

In truth, everyone felt a sense of relief.

Then, suddenly, Zhang Yi drew the Loong Roar Sword from his spatial storage.

The unexpected action drew puzzled gazes.

“Zhang Yi, what are you doing?”

Meng Siyu frowned as she stared at him.

Zhang Yi turned sharply, locking eyes with Xing Tian. His piercing gaze sent Xing Tian staggering backward in alarm.

“Zhang Yi, what—what do you think you’re doing?”

Zhang Yi sneered coldly.

“What am I doing? I’m taking your life.”

Without hesitation, he activated Eightfold Speed and lunged forward with a vicious thrust!

Shhhk!

The Adamantium-forged blade was utterly unstoppable. Combined with Zhang Yi's superhuman abilities, it could slice through steel with ease—so piercing through flesh was effortless.

The sword glowed with an eerie blue hue as a trickle of blood slid from its tip, staining the pristine white cloak at its entry point.

Zheng Yixian's smile vanished.

He lowered his head, staring in disbelief at the blade protruding from his chest. His eyes were clouded with confusion.

Where had the attack even come from?

But in the next instant, realization struck him.

Even though Zhang Yi had been standing far away and had visibly aimed his strike at Xing Tian, his sword had somehow vanished midair—only to reappear impaling Zheng Yixian.

Shhhk!

Zhang Yi yanked the blade free. The weapon's blood groove intensified the wound, making blood gush uncontrollably from the opening.

Zheng Yixian collapsed, his chest rapidly soaking in crimson.

“Zhang Yi, what the hell are you doing?!”

Xiao Honglian’s brows furrowed as she snapped at him.

Everyone else regarded Zhang Yi with wary stares.

Even if there had been tensions between them and the Followers of the Snow God in the past, they had fought side by side against the zombie horde.

Now, at what should have been a moment of celebration, Zhang Yi had suddenly turned assassin.

It was disgraceful.

Baili Changqing and the rest of the investigation team frowned but remained silent.

This was an internal conflict among Tianhai City’s factions—they had no reason to intervene.

Zheng Yixian lifted his head, glaring daggers at Zhang Yi.

The priests of the Snow God Church rushed to shield Zheng Yixian, their faces dark with fury. They took up battle stances, prepared to fight to the death.

At the same time, Liang Yue and his team stepped beside Zhang Yi, ready for combat.

Among the Followers of the Snow God, Han Chang was the most hot-tempered. His beast-like instincts flared as he bared his teeth, ready to charge.

But the moment Liang Yue unsheathed his blade, the chilling gleam of the sword made Han Chang hesitate.

“You damn bastard! I’ll kill you!”

Han Chang snarled in rage.

The tension was thick enough to cut with a knife—one wrong move, and all hell would break loose.

Xing Tian, Xiao Honglian, and Wei Dinghai all regarded Zhang Yi with disapproval.

“Zhang Yi, why did you do this?”

Zheng Yixian gritted his teeth, his voice weak but filled with disbelief.

Zhang Yi’s strike had been too fast—he had been skewered before he even realized it.

Despite being one of Tianhai City’s top superhumans, Zheng Yixian’s ability was telekinesis, not enhanced physical resilience.

Now, with his chest pierced, he had lost the ability to fight.

If a battle broke out now, the odds were not in their favor.

Everyone knew how terrifying Zhang Yi’s team was in combat.

Wei Dinghai’s frown deepened. “Zhang Yi, you owe us an explanation. Otherwise, we won’t just stand by and watch.”

Though he didn’t particularly care about the Snow God followers, Zhang Yi’s reckless actions were too dangerous.

It seemed as if he was using this opportunity to eliminate all the other factions in Tianhai City.

That was something they couldn't ignore.

Zhang Yi held Loong Roar in his grip, a smirk playing at his lips.

His last strike had been slightly off due to the Dimensional Gate technique, failing to pierce Zheng Yixian's heart directly.

But now, with Zheng Yixian incapacitated, he had full control of the situation.

"Zheng Yixian, are you still going to keep up this act?"

Zhang Yi's eyes narrowed as he enunciated each word:

"The mastermind behind Tianhai City's zombie crisis... isn't it your Snow God Church?"

His voice rang with absolute conviction, and the weight of his accusation sent shockwaves through the crowd.

Xiao Honglian's eyes widened. "W-What? The zombie horde... was orchestrated by the Snow God Church?"

The various factions, the investigation team, and even the priests of the Snow God Church stared in stunned disbelief.

Han Chang erupted in rage. "You're spouting nonsense! Do you have any idea how many of our people died in this disaster?"

Xing Tian also chimed in, "Exactly! The Snow God Church suffered the most losses in this crisis. If they were behind it, why would they sacrifice so many of their own?"

Zhang Yi turned his icy gaze onto Zheng Yixian, who knelt on the ground, clutching his wound.

A dark, crazed glint flickered in Zheng Yixian's eyes.

He never expected Zhang Yi to uncover their secret.

"Shut up! You're spewing lies! Do you really think anyone will believe you?"

Zhang Yi let out a sharp laugh.

"Whether they believe me or not... once I explain everything, they'll figure it out for themselves."

"Zheng Yixian... what exactly are you so afraid of?"

### Chapter 529 – Exposing Everything

Everyone listened to Zhang Yi's words. Although they weren't fully convinced, they were still willing to hear him out.

After all, it was Zheng Yixian who had been injured, not them.

Besides, the information Zhang Yi revealed was too shocking to ignore. They were all curious to know what was really going on.

Baili Changqing and the rest of the investigation team stared at Zhang Yi with serious expressions.

The cause of the zombie horde in Tianhai City was still a mystery. Even their captain, Bian Junwu, had died without uncovering the truth.

They didn't want to leave with regrets.

If they could find out the real reason behind the outbreak before returning to report, it would not only honor Bian Junwu's sacrifice but also provide answers to the Jiangnan District leadership.

Zhang Yi raised his voice.

"Everyone! From the very beginning, this was all a conspiracy by the Followers of the Snow God!"

"It all starts with Ice Soul."

"Yes, Ice Soul can awaken superhuman abilities and enhance potential, but its true purpose is something far more sinister."

"When a person who has used Ice Soul dies, their superhuman energy returns to Yuan Kongye's body!"

"That's why the Followers of the Snow God were so generous in handing out Ice Soul to us!"

"They deliberately incited war in Tianhai City, hoping for more deaths!"

"To them, even their own followers were disposable."

"The ordinary believers were just burdens with no real value. The only reason they recruited so many people was to screen for those with superhuman potential—awaken their abilities—then let them die, so that their power would transfer back to Yuan Kongye!"

"So even if every last follower of the Snow God died, it wouldn't matter to her."

"She never needed them in the first place."

Zhang Yi's gaze darkened.

“She had something even better—an undead army of her own creation!”

“Compared to ordinary humans, this army of powerful, obedient, and near-indestructible zombies was her real trump card!”

A heavy silence fell over the battlefield.

Zhang Yi’s revelation was too explosive. No one could immediately accept it as truth.

Xiao Honglian, Baili Changqing, and the others turned to Zheng Yixian, searching his face for any sign of confirmation or denial.

Zheng Yixian gritted his teeth in anger.

“You’re spouting nonsense!”

“Slander! He’s slandering us!”

“How could the Followers of the Snow God possibly have such power? If we really controlled the zombie horde, why would we have suffered so much oppression from the major factions?”

“You attack me without any solid proof—just based on your own ridiculous assumptions.”

With a cold laugh, Zheng Yixian pointed at Zhang Yi.

“Frankly, Zhang Yi, I think you are the real mastermind behind this disaster!”

His words made the crowd hesitate.

They looked back and forth between Zheng Yixian and Zhang Yi, now uncertain.

Zheng Yixian's argument made more sense.

After all, the Followers of the Snow God had been barely surviving, constantly pushed out by the Western Alliance. Their only leverage had been trading Ice Soul to stay afloat.

How could they have suddenly gained the ability to control an army of hundreds of thousands of zombies in just a few months?

Between Zhang Yi and Zheng Yixian, who was more suspicious?

Logically speaking, Zhang Yi was the more likely suspect.

After all, his faction had emerged from the crisis completely unscathed.

But Zhang Yi remained composed.

"There's an abandoned building next to St. John's Cathedral," he stated calmly.

"Inside it grows a massive Blood Vine. Its purpose is to absorb nutrients from corpses and the earth, then cultivate Zombie Kings."

"Zombie Kings have the ability to spread the virus and create more zombies."

"The Followers of the Snow God never used this trump card before. Either because they were waiting for the right moment, or because the Blood Vine hadn't fully matured yet."

Zhang Yi pointed at Zheng Yixian.

“You claim I have no evidence. Then let’s go to your headquarters.”

“Dig up the Blood Vine—we’ll see the truth for ourselves!”

Baili Changqing, Xiao Honglian, Wei Dinghai, and Xing Tian exchanged glances.

That made sense. Seeing was believing.

In fact, when they had defended the Followers of the Snow God’s camp, they had been curious about that abandoned building.

They had even sent people to investigate it.

But at the time, the results were inconclusive. All they found was a mutated plant that could produce food.

However, Zhang Yi’s claim now made them suspicious.

Xiao Honglian crossed her arms and turned to Zheng Yixian.

“If you have nothing to hide, then let’s go check it out.”

Wei Dinghai nodded.

“Yes, if you’re innocent, this will clear your name.”

Xing Tian agreed.

“I think it’s the best course of action.”

Baili Changqing and the other investigation team members remained silent, but their expressions showed they had already made up their minds.

After all, they had their own suspicions about that location before.

They just hadn't had time to investigate it properly.

Zheng Yixian's heart sank.

Clutching his wound, he forced himself to speak.

"And if we find nothing there? How will you justify what you did to me?"

"You can't just stab me and walk away, Zhang Yi."

A cold smirk played on Zhang Yi's lips.

"If you're innocent, and I was wrong—"

His eyes lowered slightly.

"Then you're welcome to come and kill me."

"You—"

Zheng Yixian was furious.

Zhang Yi's response was shameless, but there was nothing he could do about it.

And judging by the expressions of the others, no one found Zhang Yi's actions particularly outrageous.

This was the apocalypse. Murder and looting were everyday occurrences.

The major factions had fought and killed each other before.

No one cared about personal grudges anymore.

All that mattered was whether Zhang Yi's claim was true.

Did the zombie outbreak have anything to do with the Followers of the Snow God?

Han Chang, standing beside Zheng Yixian, growled in anger.

"Fine! We have nothing to hide! You think we're scared of you?"

He pointed a clawed hand at Zhang Yi.

"But if you're wrong—I'll tear your guts out myself!"

"NO!" Zheng Yixian suddenly shouted.

"They must not go near the Blood Vine!"

The other priests looked at him in confusion.

Zheng Yixian glared at Zhang Yi, his face twisted in desperation.

“The Blood Vine is the foundation of our survival! They’re just after it!”

“If we take them there, what’s stopping them from stealing it?!”

He turned to Zhang Yi, his voice dripping with venom.

“You’re despicable! If you want a fight, then we’ll give you one!”

He turned to his followers.

“Attack! Show them the Followers of the Snow God are not to be trifled with!”

The priests, completely convinced by Zheng Yixian’s words, roared in unison and charged forward!

“Perfect.”

Zhang Yi smirked.

These lowly rats from the Followers of the Snow God?

He had never even considered them a threat.

Chapter 530 – Zhang Yi’s Power

At Zheng Yixian’s command, over a dozen priests roared and charged at Zhang Yi and his group!

Zhang Yi had already discussed this with Liang Yue and the others. While no one had expected him to suddenly attack Zheng Yixian, they all understood that the Followers of the Snow God were a serious problem.

So, no one panicked. They simply took their battle stances and prepared to fight.

But this time, Zhang Yi did something unusual—he stepped ahead of the group.

Covering his right eye with one hand, he spoke calmly, “Enough. I don’t have time to waste on you.”

Then, he lowered his hand.

A faint white glow flickered in his right eye.

Everyone caught in his gaze suddenly felt the space around them twist and distort.

In the next instant, an indescribable force began tearing their bodies apart from every angle—pulling them apart from the very fabric of three-dimensional space!

Splurt!Splurt!Splurt!Splurt!Splurt!Splurt!

Seven priests exploded mid-charge, their upper bodies bursting into a rain of blood and gore.

The remaining priests froze in sheer terror!

Even Han Chang, the most fearless among them, lost all courage. His legs refused to move.

Baili Changqing stared in stunned silence.

“...Ocular Technique.”

This was Zhang Yi's first time unleashing Divine Power in front of outsiders.

During the Five Armies War, he had used it before, but back then, his control was still crude—he had only managed to use it for precise assassination, eliminating two fallen superhumans.

But now, his mastery was complete.

With a single attack, he had annihilated seven of the Snow God's priests in an instant!

The sheer power of it left Xiao Honglian, Xing Tian, and Wei Dinghai utterly speechless.

Only now did they realize just how terrifying Zhang Yi truly was.

The claim that he was only good at defense and sniping but weak in close combat?

All lies.

Suddenly, Fatty Xu pointed into the distance and shouted, "Boss! That bastard Zheng is running away!"

Zhang Yi lifted his gaze—sure enough, Zheng Yixian had used the chaos as an opportunity to escape!

With his telekinetic ability, Zheng Yixian could levitate and move at high speed.

Zhang Yi's eyes narrowed as he turned to Baili Changqing.

"This is bad. He's going back to warn Yuan Kongye!"

"She's the real threat. If we don't take her out now, once the war breaks out, everyone here could die!"

Baili Changqing fixed his gaze on Zhang Yi. “Why should we believe you?”

Zhang Yi’s voice remained calm.

“You have nothing to lose by trusting me. Whether I’m telling the truth or not, you can see for yourself when we get there.”

“The elite warriors of Jiangnan District aren’t so easily fooled, are they?”

With that, Zhang Yi stopped explaining.

He summoned his Snow Vehicle and signaled his team to move out toward the Followers of the Snow God’s base.

As for Han Chang and the remaining priests—those lucky enough to survive—they were far too terrified to stop them.

Baili Changqing hesitated for a moment before speaking decisively.

“Let’s go. We’re going to see for ourselves.”

“Tianhai City’s situation needs to be settled once and for all.”

“We need to know what’s really happening here. We can’t let the captain’s death be for nothing.”

The investigation team immediately decided to follow.

Xiao Honglian, Xing Tian, and Wei Dinghai’s factions had the same thought.

So far, this matter didn’t directly concern them.

Since Zhang Yi was the one making accusations against the Followers of the Snow God, they might as well follow along and see what happened.

There was no risk to them.

One by one, they found suitable transportation and set out toward the Snow God's base.

Meanwhile, Han Chang and the six remaining priests were left standing in place, watching as Zhang Yi and the others sped away.

One of the superhumans turned to Han Chang.

"What do we do? They're heading straight for the church! Should we go after them?"

A female superhuman trembled. "But... that Zhang Yi... he's a monster! He wiped out so many of us in an instant! The High Priest is already severely wounded—how can we stop him?"

Han Chang gritted his teeth.

"We are followers of the Snow God. If not for the Holy Leader taking us in and granting us power, we wouldn't even be here today!"

"No matter what, we must return. If they want to fight, then we fight!"

With that, he turned and began searching the area.

After a while, he found a Snow Vehicle that had been abandoned by another faction.

Jumping inside, he glanced at the remaining priests.

“What about you? Are you coming or not?”

The priests exchanged glances.

Finally, two of them stepped forward and chose to follow Han Chang back to the base.

The other three, however, turned and left.

Han Chang shot them a cold glare but had no time to waste.

He revved the engine and sped off.

The three who remained behind let out a long sigh of relief.

A scruffy, bearded man muttered, “No matter who wins this fight, we’d probably die either way. Better to find another way to survive.”

“Han Chang and the others are loyal to Yuan Kongye and Zheng Yixian.”

“But we’re only loyal to ourselves.”

They saw the truth.

Regardless of whether Zhang Yi was telling the truth, his claims alone were enough to raise suspicion.

If Zhang Yi was right, and Yuan Kongye and Zheng Yixian had orchestrated everything...

Then those who had awakened their powers using Ice Soul were already marked for death.

Once they returned, their abilities would be taken from them—along with their lives.

And if Zhang Yi was lying?

That didn't change the fact that Zhang Yi had already made up his mind to destroy the Followers of the Snow God.

Going back now meant facing Zhang Yi's unstoppable force—and a near-certain death.

Running away was the only rational choice.

They should be grateful that Zhang Yi had injured Zheng Yixian.

Otherwise, they wouldn't have had a chance to escape at all.

"Let's go. We can survive in this world just fine on our own."

The bearded man exhaled a puff of cold air, took one last glance at the horizon, then turned to leave.

The other two hesitated only briefly before following him.

Tianhai City was almost devoid of survivors now.

But that also meant resources were no longer scarce.

A single supermarket, shopping mall, or warehouse could easily sustain them for years.

At the Followers of the Snow God's Base – St. John's Cathedral

Yuan Kongye knelt before the altar, devoutly praying.

Suddenly, she opened her bright, shining eyes.

Just moments ago, she had felt an incredibly powerful superhuman ability return to her body.

“...Whose power is this?”

“...Ocular Technique... this must have belonged to Bian Junwu, the investigation team’s captain.”

Her eyes flickered like distant stars before settling into a calm, serene expression.

Then, she smiled.

She could feel how powerful Bian Junwu had been.

But the next moment, her brows furrowed.

“Bian Junwu... is dead?”

“How could that be? Who in Tianhai City had the strength to kill him? Who would dare?”

Bian Junwu’s position was special—he represented the Jiangnan District.

His death would inevitably draw their attention.

A troubling development.

Yuan Kongye narrowed her eyes.

Something was going wrong.

She could feel it.

Things were starting to slip beyond her control.