

Ice Age 891

Chapter 891: Today Is My Birthday

Zhang Yi dared not take the sudden situation lightly in the slightest.

The mermaid sea demon they had encountered before had almost clouded his mind and caused him harm.

Even someone like him, a superhuman with powerful abilities, could not cover every blind spot.

Let alone the vast majority of ordinary people on the ship.

Immediately, Old Tian gathered the crew and conveyed Zhang Yi's orders, then called over Li Zongyu and Lu Dahai, demanding their cooperation with the ship's work.

To these two cabin leaders, Old Tian spoke frankly, revealing the truth of the situation.

"Don't spread this news around; it will only cause panic and lead to more deaths."

"We're telling you in advance so you know what's going on. Understand?"

After hearing this, Li Zongyu and Lu Dahai felt a chill in their hearts.

They didn't dare to complain, fearing they might be killed in their sleep without knowing why.

Therefore, they actively cooperated, quickly organizing the adults in the cabins to patrol 24 hours a day.

Within a day, with cooperation from all sides, the entire ship was inspected from top to bottom.

Not a single corner was overlooked.

Finally, Old Tian found a clue through the surveillance footage.

However, after seeing clearly what had happened the previous night, instead of relaxing him and the other crew watching the footage, it only filled them with deeper fear.

Soon, they summoned Zhang Yi and told him of the major discovery.

Zhang Yi arrived at the control room and saw that every crew member's face had turned noticeably pale.

These seasoned sailors' eyes shimmered with glaring terror.

Even Old Tian's dark face had turned white.

"What's going on?"

Zhang Yi asked with a furrowed brow.

Old Tian swallowed and pointed at the surveillance footage: "You'll know once you watch."

Zhang Yi stepped closer to the monitor but, considering their abnormal behavior, took two steps back to avoid standing too close.

A crew member pressed play.

The time was 1:23 a.m. last night. In the darkness, the infrared camera clearly recorded what happened in the corridor of the middle deck cabin.

Bai Jingyu, dressed in white, slowly walked from the end of the hallway. It looked like she had just finished using the restroom.

But halfway through, suddenly, her entire neck snapped backward violently, and her body convulsed intensely.

It was as if something forcibly pried open her mouth, stretching it to an unbelievable degree.

After about five or six seconds, her body twisted and writhed like a zombie, then slowly returned to normal.

Under surveillance, her eyes gradually lost their sparkle, becoming numb and cold.

She then walked casually to her room and pushed the door open.

The room she entered was the same one where someone had died today.

The entire footage lasted only a few dozen seconds, but after watching, Zhang Yi's back was covered in cold sweat.

The scene was far too eerie.

From start to finish, they never saw what had attacked Bai Jingyu.

Yet they all knew that Bai Jingyu was no longer the Bai Jingyu they had known.

That feeling was akin to possession by an evil spirit!

They knew how to kill tangible enemies.

But how do you kill an enemy without form or substance?

No wonder Old Tian and the crew felt their minds waver after watching.

However, after the initial shock, Zhang Yi quickly calmed his thoughts.

Though the scene was eerie, as a superhuman, he had seen too many unfathomable abilities.

He could conclude that this was definitely caused by some kind of mutated creature.

Or perhaps Bai Jingyu herself had mutated, gaining some kind of evil power.

“Did you tell anyone else about this?” Zhang Yi asked calmly.

Old Tian replied, "No. Except for us, no one else knows. We didn't dare disturb this woman and have been waiting for you to decide."

Zhang Yi rubbed his chin as many thoughts flooded his mind.

The strange unknown invading the ship—its abilities and superhuman level were all unknown.

If they rashly disturbed it, Zhang Yi could protect himself with his powerful abilities.

But with so many defenseless people on board, many might be killed.

Having brought them back with great difficulty, Zhang Yi could not say he valued them immensely, but he wanted to avoid unnecessary casualties as much as possible.

So, how could he handle this without alerting the strange presence?

After pondering for a moment, Zhang Yi quickly came up with a plan.

Observe!

Before understanding the truth, the best approach was to avoid rash actions and first gather enough information.

This was, after all, his home turf. Even if something strange had infiltrated, he should not panic.

“Old Tian, add an extra meal for everyone on the ship today! Gather them all into one cabin. Then use the surveillance equipment to carefully observe each person!”

There were still over a hundred people on the ship, so freeing up one storage room as a temporary dining area wasn’t difficult.

“Then, during this time, arrange for someone to do something.”

Zhang Yi leaned toward Old Tian’s ear. “Install surveillance equipment in those few rooms belonging to the Rockflow Group!”

Old Tian nodded upon hearing this.

“But there should be a reason for the gathering, right? Otherwise, what if that thing gets suspicious?”

Zhang Yi smiled faintly. “Just say today is my birthday.”

Old Tian took the order and immediately instructed the cook, Xie Changming, to prepare more sumptuous food.

Then he notified everyone to gather on the upper deck at noon to celebrate Zhang Yi's birthday.

No one below cared whose birthday it was; once they heard there would be a feast, everyone was ecstatic.

Many even started looking for plastic bags and rags to take some food back to eat later.

Though the shadow of death hung over the cabin where someone had died, most were used to life and death and were not scared out of their wits.

Upon hearing about the feast, they quickly pushed the thought of death aside.

Bai Jingyu lay quietly on the bed, her eyes dull, but otherwise looked normal.

A companion kindly came over and patted her.

Bai Jingyu turned her head, staring fixedly at the woman, which startled her.

“Sister Bai, let’s go eat! Let’s get there early and grab a good spot. If we’re late, all the food will be gone!”

“Oh.”

Seeing others rush out eagerly, Bai Jingyu got up from the bed and followed the crowd, heading toward the upper deck cabins.

Chapter 892: Parasite

The Rockflow Group and the people in the lower deck cabin gathered together noisily.

The crew arranged for them to sit in an orderly manner, making it easier to observe.

Everyone had prepared various tools and weapons, waiting to grab the dishes as soon as they were served, with no thoughts to anything else.

After all, Old Tian had said this feast was prepared to celebrate Zhang Yi’s birthday, especially lavish, with unlimited food and drink.

Zhang Yi stood at the very front of the room, his gaze calmly sweeping over everyone present.

When Bai Jingyu walked into the room, Zhang Yi paused briefly before shifting his attention to the others.

Soon after, Zhu Yunque and Su Nuanxi arrived, each holding Tommy in their arms.

“Mr. Zhang, happy birthday!”

The two approached to offer their congratulations.

Zhang Yi merely gave a perfunctory smile and nodded, then continued to look around at the others in the cabin.

Seeing Zhang Yi's indifferent expression, the two couldn't help but feel a bit displeased.

Zhu Yunque complained, “You really are something. We've known each other for so long, and you didn't even tell me about such a big birthday event.”

Zhang Yi furrowed his brows slightly, “I only remembered it just now. It's not a big deal. You two should quickly find a place to sit.”

Zhu Yunque and Su Nuanxi exchanged glances and nodded to each other.

Suddenly, Zhu Yunque smiled brightly and said to Zhang Yi, “Since it's your birthday, we have to prepare a gift for you.”

“There’s nothing special to give you at sea, so why not let Tommy recognize you as his godfather!”

With that, she pushed the baby forward from her arms, her hoarse and unmistakably eager voice saying, “The kid is really adorable. Just hold him once, and you’ll know how great he is!”

As Tommy was handed over, Zhang Yi immediately caught a foul smell.

No doubt, these two women were terrible with children, and hygiene was definitely not handled well.

He quickly stepped back half a pace. “No need, no need. I’m not interested in babies. Since you like him so much, you might as well keep him yourselves. One of you can be the dad, the other the mom.”

Seeing her plan fail, Zhu Yunque’s face darkened.

“I... we’re not that kind of relationship!”

Zhang Yi waved his hand, signaling for them to sit down first. “Let’s start ordering dishes!”

The two women pouted in annoyance, then found seats and sat down.

Zhang Yi made a show of giving a speech, but he knew everyone's attention was on the upcoming food—there was no point in wasting words.

He gave Old Tian a look, and soon, Xie Changming and several crew members pushed in serving carts loaded with steaming platters of fish and meat.

As soon as a dish was placed on the table, Jian Shou's reaction was like poking a hornet's nest; a dozen pairs of chopsticks, some even grabbing immediately, reached out!

In a moment, the whole roasted chicken and pork knuckle were torn apart by the crowd and stuffed into their red plastic bags.

Zhang Yi and Old Tian sat together without eating, instead taking the opportunity to observe the people in the room.

Sure enough, this closer look revealed some problems.

Not only Bai Jingyu, but there were three others in the crowd who remained relatively calm while eating.

These people from Rockflow Island hadn't had such lavish food in nearly a year.

If anyone could still remain composed under these circumstances, there was only one possibility: they were not human!

Zhang Yi silently took note of these individuals but said nothing.

He later went to the control room.

Crew members there were monitoring everyone in the dining room in real-time.

Zhang Yi instructed them to identify all suspicious figures; after careful confirmation, the list basically matched the few people he had noted.

Zhang Yi took no immediate action.

While waiting for Zhou Ke'er's autopsy results, he asked Old Tian and others to prepare for a night watch.

Time passed quickly, and after everyone on the ship had eaten their fill, most went to bed early that night.

At midnight, in several cabins of the Rockflow Group, three figures suddenly rose from their beds as if by agreement.

They approached their sleeping companions nearby, bodies stiff as they bent over, head to head.

Then their mouths suddenly opened wide, though nothing visible appeared, while the person in bed also opened their mouth wide.

After convulsing for a moment, the person fell silent and motionless.

Having done this, the three returned to the ship as if nothing had happened, pulled the covers back over themselves, and went back to sleep.

At midnight, Zhang Yi and Old Tian watched this scene clearly through the surveillance cameras in the control room.

The infrared cameras captured the details vividly.

However, they never saw exactly what it was.

“Could it really be a ghost from the ocean?”

One crew member swallowed nervously and said with tension.

Zhang Yi glanced at him and offered an idea.

“Perhaps it’s something invisible, or maybe a kind of transparent marine creature.”

After observing this strange creature’s killing method, Zhang Yi felt somewhat relieved.

Because from his observation, this bizarre thing’s destructive power wasn’t particularly strong.

It wasn’t a spirit that could ignore physical attacks.

If it wanted to kill, it had to do so through close contact.

Old Tian immediately suggested capturing and killing those creatures.

Zhang Yi, however, calmly said, “No rush. Everyone is asleep now. If a commotion breaks out, too many people might die.”

“It seems their appetite isn’t that big; they should be full tonight.”

“Tomorrow at meal time, serve them a whole pot.”

Zhang Yi patted Old Tian’s shoulder, then went back to his room to rest.

Opening the door, he saw Zhou Ke’er quietly sleeping, her body resting on the table.

She was wearing a combat suit, as Zhang Yi had requested, to protect her from unknown strange harms.

Zhang Yi smiled and walked over, picking her up and helping her take off her shoes.

Zhou Ke’er slowly opened her eyes and blinked at him. “Did you figure out what’s causing the trouble?”

“A very strange mutated marine creature, probably parasitic.”

Zhou Ke’er nodded. “My autopsy results are also ready.”

She took out some photos and showed them to Zhang Yi.

“Under the microscope, the wounds around the bite sites are densely covered with tiny tooth marks. So the flesh missing from the bodies wasn’t supernatural—it was chewed clean.”

Zhang Yi nodded. “That makes sense.”

But then he frowned.

“There must be more than just one or two of these creatures. They probably exist in large numbers in our sea area. We need to find a way to completely solve this problem.”

Zhou Ke’er smiled and said, “Then we have to catch a few first, and then research them to know for sure.”

Zhang Yi nodded. “That’s easy enough.”

As the two talked, Zhang Yi’s sharp spatial awareness suddenly sensed an abnormal fluctuation.

Chapter 893: Good Luck

Zhang Yi’s first sense was extremely sensitive to fluctuations in the spatial field.

At this moment, he noticed something unusual appearing on the deck.

That sound resembled footsteps walking on the deck.

Without hesitation, he immediately teleported to the deck, and faint footsteps sounded close to his ears.

Zhang Yi looked at the deck and was met with a terrifying sight.

There was a trail of water stains on the deck, about ten to twenty centimeters long.

They looked exactly like human footprints.

“This damned broken place, how many strange things exist here?”

Zhang Yi drew his gun and fired in the direction the water stains were moving.

A weird noise came from the air, like the sound of feet stepping into muddy sludge.

Suddenly, the floor exploded with a large splash of water stains, which quickly crawled toward the edge of the ship.

Zhang Yi's eyes and hands were quick, firing several more shots that seemed to hit something.

He carefully approached and crouched down to observe.

Using the combat suit's night vision and scanning analysis functions, Zhang Yi vaguely saw a long silhouette.

It looked like a long transparent sock.

"Is this thing the culprit behind the abnormal deaths on the ship?"

Zhang Yi picked up the creature that resembled a transparent sock.

However, it rapidly shrank, as if most of its body was water. After being hit, it lost fluid and quickly shrunk to less than the size of a palm.

"This kind of thing is really hard to defend against! If I hadn't been prepared in advance, it might have killed the host and still couldn't be dealt with."

Zhang Yi sighed inwardly. Fortunately, he caught the main body early; otherwise, tomorrow's efforts might have been in vain.

He hurriedly took the strange creature back to his room and asked Zhou Ke'er to examine it.

Based on Zhou Ke'er's analysis and conclusions, he redrafted the plan for the next day's operation.

...

The next day, Zhang Yi ordered everyone to gather again in the upper-level dining hall, explaining that his family tradition was to hold birthday banquets for two consecutive days.

The people downstairs didn't care much; as long as there was food, they were ecstatic.

So everyone gathered again at the dining hall.

Li Zongyu and Lu Dahai, along with several others, looked worried.

They knew what had happened on the ship, but no matter how carefully they patrolled yesterday, they found no signs of abnormalities.

What they didn't know was that the greatest danger was among their own group.

When Zhang Yi saw everyone was present, he quietly ordered someone to lock the cabin doors, then commanded Xie Changming to serve the dishes.

As the food was placed on the table, everyone behaved much better than yesterday, but their chopsticks still flew wildly.

However, just as the food entered their mouths, the dining hall erupted with a chorus of sputtering sounds.

“Pfft! This food is way too salty!”

“Kill whoever sold the salt!”

Zhang Yi glanced at Zhu Yunque and Su Nuanxi not far away; the two women were also complaining non-stop.

Without expression, Zhang Yi pulled out his gun and aimed it at everyone in the dining hall.

Not only him, but the crew, who were already prepared, also drew submachine guns, loaded bullets, and pointed them at everyone in the dining hall.

“Ah! What are you doing?”

This sudden move scared everyone.

Zhang Yi said calmly, “Nothing. There’s a dirty thing mixed in with you all. So I had someone put a little something in the food. Keep eating! Whoever refuses to eat is the dirty thing!”

His words changed everyone’s expressions drastically.

“A dirty thing among us?”

Li Zongyu and Lu Dahai knew the dirty thing Zhang Yi spoke of truly existed, so they quickly spoke up to calm the crowd’s emotions.

Pointed at their heads with guns, though unwilling, people had no choice but to lower their heads and eat heartily.

Suddenly, the person sitting opposite Bai Jingyu heard a “glug” sound.

He looked up and saw an eyeball roll off the table and into his view.

He was stunned, the huge shock stiffening his body and leaving him unable to make a sound.

Bai Jingyu stiffly shoveled rice into her mouth; one eye socket was empty, the other eye's eyeball was trembling on the verge of falling out.

“What’s wrong? Why are you... not... eating...”

Her body grew stiffer and stiffer, until a wisp of white smoke rose from her pupil.

The man opposite her finally let out a heart-wrenching scream.

Immediately, two crew members rushed over, pulled out water gun-like devices from behind, and sprayed Bai Jingyu.

Bai Jingyu’s mouth opened wide, emitting a miserable howl.

Soon, her body collapsed to the ground, shriveled like a desiccated Trisolarian.

The abnormal creatures were soft-bodied animals, similar to jellyfish, that could survive by using human body fluids.

Therefore, those killed by them would also rapidly shrivel.

Killing just the host was not enough to completely eliminate them.

They had to be killed using a high-concentration organic solvent to dehydrate them.

After Bai Jingyu was dealt with, similar situations quickly occurred elsewhere in the dining hall.

These parasites could control human brains and even tried to disguise themselves, but their shriveled bodies lacked any credibility.

A woman, surrounded, tried to call her husband for help, but her terrified husband kicked her to the ground.

Soon, six parasite bodies among the crowd were thoroughly killed.

Zhang Yi looked at the shriveled corpses but did not feel relaxed.

These parasites were very weak; once discovered, they were easy to kill.

But with their strange abilities, they had already killed many on the ship.

If the ship continued sailing at sea, and they didn't land soon, who knew what other dangers awaited them in the mysterious ocean.

“All right, it's safe now. Everyone can continue eating!”

Zhang Yi said, then turned and left the dining hall.

Leaving everyone staring at each other, many not understanding what had just happened.

But thinking that those who died had been with them for several days, and that they might have almost died in their sleep, sent chills down their spines.

Zhang Yi assigned Old Tian to lead people spraying high-concentration organic solvent around the ship's hull daily.

That was the thing soft-bodied animals hated most, to prevent these creatures from crawling onto the ship again.

“Old Tian, how much longer until we find land?”

Zhang Yi called Old Tian over and asked.

Old Tian hesitated, "Mr. Zhang, to be honest, I'm not sure either. For the most part, we have to pray for luck."

Zhang Yi rubbed his forehead.

"Luck?"

If luck was bad, they might even encounter the Colombian Ocean Fleet searching for them.

If their luck was unbelievably terrible, they might run into an Epsilon-level superhuman. Even Zhang Yi could be at risk of death!

"If we don't consider luck and analyze the worst-case scenario, what then?"

Old Tian thought for a moment and said, "Our course hasn't gone too wrong. The ship has enough fuel. In the worst case, after sailing for another three months, we can reach the Starry Sea area of the southern seas."

Chapter 894: The Lord of the Ocean, the Pursuit

Upon hearing the term Starry Sea Region, Zhang Yi couldn't help but think of the Tianlong Pirate Crew. The Starry Sea Region is dotted with islands, its terrain incredibly complex, and it has always been a haven for pirates. Even some of the major nations' merchant fleets dare not pass through casually. After the apocalypse, pirates became even more rampant, and the Tianlong Pirate Crew was the largest pirate group among them. He had once eliminated the Tianlong Pirate Crew's Western Squadron in Tianhai City. Later, the Jiangnan Region also launched missile strikes to bomb that area. Therefore, the relationship between the Tianlong Pirate Crew and the Huaxu Kingdom could hardly be called good.

In the past, Zhang Yi wouldn't have paid them any mind. But times have changed. He needed to hide his whereabouts and avoid being detected by the Colombian Ocean Fleet. It was also uncertain whether Colombia would issue a bounty, prompting surrounding major forces to hunt him down. Thus, his next actions had to be even more cautious.

"Three months is three months! It's fine to return a little later; safety comes first," Zhang Yi said firmly.

"First, we need to find a piece of land!" Zhang Yi repeated once more. Once land was found, he could temporarily settle the others on the ship. He himself could take Zhou Ke'er and use spatial traversal to return to Tianhai City in the shortest possible time. After all, heading straight north meant no directional problems.

...

Around the area where the Golden Edge exploded, white ice fog spread thickly. A massive shadow slowly cut through the dense fog, moving toward the wreckage of the icebreaker ship. It was the silhouette of a mountain-sized creature that, even from afar, radiated an overwhelming sense of pressure.

Atop the head of this top-tier Delta-class giant whale stood a man dressed in a sea-blue battle suit, arms crossed. He was John Cadillus, the strongest member of the Colombian Ocean Fleet. He personally took on the task of capturing Zhang Yi.

Currently, the Huaxu Kingdom's East Sea Region had deployed a large force to delay the main strength of the Colombian Ocean Fleet's navy, preventing Colombia from sending many troops to search for Zhang Yi. Possessing the "Lord of the Ocean" ability, Cadillus was undoubtedly the most suitable candidate to undertake the pursuit.

Behind Cadillus, several naval officers approached.

"Lieutenant Colonel, according to our investigation, there are no human corpses on the ship," one officer reported.

"So, we suspect they might have been rescued by other ships. The navy has already blocked all return routes to the Huaxu Kingdom. Any vessel appearing at the edges of Huaxu waters will be reported immediately," another added.

Cadillus listened to this news and only gave a playful smile.

"Sounds interesting, but that's not what I want. What I want is to catch that person myself," he said.

"Huaxu Kingdom must have sent reinforcements to aid them. Then, destroy every ship we find!" Cadillus's gaze fixed into the depths of the ice fog.

"Could he be hiding somewhere in this area?" Cadillus frowned, uncertain. The foggy sea was a place even he hesitated to touch. Signals were cut off inside, and any ship sailing in would lose its bearings. Ships that lost supplies might run out of fuel or food after months. Even superhumans would starve without food.

"Forget it. I am the noble John Cadillus; I won't take such risks," Cadillus said coolly. After enduring multiple selections, he earned the opportunity to undergo naval human experiments and became the only success among thousands of soldiers. Now, he held great sway in the Colombian Navy and had no need to risk himself.

"Reconnaissance is the intelligence department's job. I'll just quietly wait for their reports," Cadillus decided to leave the foggy sea and wait silently for news. Colombian forces always emphasized clear division of labor. Personal heroism was just a story from Marvel comics.

Cadillus rode the giant whale and slowly left the area.

Shortly after their departure, deep in the foggy sea, on a ship, Linghu Feixue exhaled a long breath of turbid air. The past half hour had felt like an eternity for them.

Originally, they had come to gather intelligence on Zhang Yi but unexpectedly ran into Cadillus!

This was a sensitive time. If Cadillus discovered their trace, dying in battle would be the best outcome; if captured, the Rose Squad didn't know what tortures awaited them.

"Gu Yafei! Can your teammates continue investigating?" Linghu Feixue turned to her team member.

At that moment, Gu Yafei of the Rose Squad, who possessed the arioso ability, was crouching, communicating with dolphins in the seawater. The dolphins emitted mournful whines, constantly swaying their bodies. Gu Yafei sighed softly.

"I understand," she said, looking up at Linghu Feixue helplessly. "Cadillus's oppressive aura was too strong for them just now."

"The dolphins told me Cadillus has the 'Dominion' ability to command all marine creatures. Once he gives orders, all sea life within range will fight for him."

"Also, the depths of the foggy sea are filled with danger. Even they dare not venture too deep."

Linghu Feixue stroked her smooth chin.

"Is that so? Then we can only choose to detour. But if that's the case, the Colombian Navy won't be any better."

"Perhaps Chaos has a special ability to find the correct course within the fog."

"But the only thing we don't have to worry about is them dying from resource depletion."

After Linghu Feixue finished speaking, she ordered someone to open the map of the surrounding sea area. Her pale fingers traced across the map.

"To the north of the foggy sea, the closest regions are Malai and Roante, but both are indecisive fence-sitters."

"Chaos wouldn't head there. The best plan is to detour toward the chaotic Starry Sea Region."

Linghu Feixue frowned. "We can only look in that direction now. If not found there, we'll have to consider moving west to the Tianshu Sea."

With Linghu Feixue's command, Gu Yufei dispersed the dolphins around her.

A massive rainbow bubble emerged from the ship's hull and quickly enveloped the entire vessel.

Thus, amid the dense fog, a huge cruiser eerily submerged beneath the sea and headed toward the Starry Sea Region.

Meanwhile, the Leisure was also struggling through the foggy sea.

After a series of sea monster incidents, the crew was frightened and nervous, with many developing varying degrees of paranoia. No one knew when the next crisis would strike.

But on one morning, the Leisure finally broke through the fog and saw the shadow of land!

Chapter 895: Island, Orchard

Early that morning, the island appeared ahead of the Leisure, so clear that it could be seen distinctly with the naked eye.

When the crew first saw it, they thought they were hallucinating.

They had been sailing through the mist for too long, almost unable to accurately determine their position.

Such prolonged navigation had already taken a toll on their mental state.

However, it wasn't just one person who saw the island; everyone confirmed that it was indeed an island.

Old Tian took out his telescope to inspect the island.

From a distance, he saw that there were vast stretches of white trees, thick trunks rooted in the soil.

"It's land, definitely land! This isn't a hallucination, nor the back of some giant whale!"

Old Tian's voice trembled with excitement.

The crew were equally thrilled, hugging each other in excitement.

Old Tian immediately relayed the news to Zhang Yi.

Upon hearing the news, Zhang Yi brought Zhou Ke'er up to the deck.

Soon, more people on the ship spotted the island and rushed out excitedly to take a look.

Though Zhang Yi was somewhat excited, he remained extremely cautious.

He activated the high-powered lens of his combat suit to carefully observe the island in the distance.

"Old Tian, is it reasonable for a small island to suddenly appear in the ocean?"

While observing, Zhang Yi exchanged words with Old Tian.

It was best to ask the old sailor about matters at sea.

Old Tian said, "Land doesn't suddenly appear in the deep sea. Usually, there are large land plates nearby."

"Mr. Zhang, take a look at this!"

Old Tian took out a device and showed Zhang Yi an electronic map.

"We have been lost in the ice fog sea region all along, so we cannot judge the direction or accurate distance of our journey."

"I have said before, in the worst-case scenario, it would take us three months to sail out of this sea region and reach the Starry Sea Region."

"But now, since we have encountered an island, it means we are not far from the Starry Sea Region. Continuing forward, we will soon enter the South Sea!"

Old Tian looked at Zhang Yi with yearning in his eyes.

"Mr. Zhang, should we go check out the island?"

Zhang Yi was silent, his mind calculating differently.

If this island was truly located around the Starry Sea Region,

then based on the distance, he could take Zhou Ke'er and leave independently, completing a round trip to Tianhai City in just over an hour.

Spatial traversal was achieved using the principle of alternating between two Dimensional Gates.

But it was not instantaneous teleportation in the ordinary sense. Zhang Yi would pause between the two casts of the technique.

This pause came from the body's instinctive reaction and directional judgment.

Moreover, carrying an extra person increased the difficulty.

Everyone around turned their eyes to Zhang Yi.

They had been away from land for so long that their feet had forgotten what it felt like to step on soil.

They longed to rush onto the land and take a big, hearty bite of the earth.

Zhang Yi glanced at them and said faintly, "Alright, then let's go ashore and take a look."

After receiving Zhang Yi's approval, the entire ship instantly erupted in an extremely excited cheer, with many people embracing and crying.

Zhang Yi remained calm, ordering Old Tian and others to prepare for combat in case strange mutated creatures appeared on the island.

He personally helped Zhou Ke'er put on her combat suit, handed her a pistol, and told her to stay by his side without leaving for even a second.

Zhu Yunque watched Zhang Yi's meticulous care of Zhou Ke'er and couldn't help but feel a pang of jealousy.

She had been spending nearly two months at sea with Zhang Yi.

Gradually, she began to develop a feeling for Zhang Yi that was hard to define.

Perhaps it was a sense of dependence born from crisis, or maybe Stockholm syndrome.

In any case, whatever the feeling, it could transform into love for a woman.

Unfortunately, it was only a one-sided feeling on her part.

For Zhang Yi, who treated love merely as a seasoning of life, his rationality would not allow him to accept any woman who would bring him no benefit.

Zhu Yunque was an exception.

Not only did she not bring Zhang Yi any gain, but she continuously caused him trouble.

Everyone began preparing to go ashore.

The Leisure could not get close to the island's edge, so they needed to use small boats.

Zhang Yi told Old Tian to arrange for the passengers to be sent to the island first.

That way, if there was any danger, they would be the ones to scout ahead.

Zhu Yunque came to Zhang Yi, looking at him eagerly. "Mr. Zhang, it looks like the island might be dangerous. You must protect me."

Zhang Yi crossed his arms. "Don't worry, I will do my best."

If anyone got into trouble, they would help Zhang Yi; after all, these people were laborers he had painstakingly brought back.

Zhu Yunque said excitedly, "Alright then, I'll squeeze in with you on the same boat!"

Zhang Yi looked toward Old Tian and beckoned him over.

"Save the best boat for Ms. Zhu."

Old Tian sighed and asked Zhu Yunque to step aside.

Zhu Yunque looked curiously at Zhang Yi.

"You're giving me the best boat, so what about you?"

"I'm fine with anything."

Zhang Yi walked to the side of the ship with Zhou Ke'er, reached out, and pulled a yacht out of the Dimensional Space.

He jumped onto the boat, took Zhou Ke'er into his arms, and helped her onto the boat as well.

Then he started the engine and swiftly departed.

Watching this, Zhu Yunque almost blew a fuse from anger.

Su Nuanxi returned to the cabin, wrapped Tommy tightly in a small blanket, and brought him along.

After all, everyone on the ship was leaving, and she didn't feel at ease leaving the child behind.

Zhu Yunque watched Tommy, who was already asleep, and felt relieved.

If he started crying now, it would be a huge trouble for her.

“Lisa, do you think there might be people on this island?”

Zhu Yunque suddenly asked.

Su Nuanxi glanced up at her. “That... it’s hard to say.”

“Senior Sister, do you have any ideas?”

Zhu Yunque tucked her hair back and smiled slightly.

“Nothing much, I just think that if there are people, maybe we could leave Tommy with them to raise.”

“After all, I’m not very good at taking care of children.”

Su Nuanxi’s eyes immediately brightened.

Heaven knew how much trouble this little ancestor had caused them.

She nodded repeatedly. “Yes, yes, I think that would be better.”

Zhu Yunque said, “Then after we get ashore, let’s observe carefully.”

Only two crew members stayed on the ship to keep watch; the rest eagerly took boats toward the small island shrouded in ice fog.

Before long, the first group of islanders landed.

From a distance, Zhang Yi already smelled a refreshing fragrance.

He sniffed and felt very strange.

“How can there be such a fragrant smell?”

The scent contained no toxins, because the combat suits’ masks had filtering systems, so it was a natural fragrance.

Zhou Ke’er pointed at the dense forest on the island. “That looks like an orchard!”

Chapter 896: White Fruits and Natives

Zhang Yi was greatly surprised in his heart. In such a freezing and snowy season, there were still fruit trees able to bear fruit.

But as soon as he thought of the Bai Xue Jiao’s former blood vine, Zhang Yi instantly felt relieved.

Plants could also undergo mutations.

Moreover, as one of the most tenacious life forms, trees indeed adapted to changes in nature better than animals.

Even dead old trees had chances to flourish again in spring.

So it was not strange for plants to mutate and adapt to severe cold.

When Zhang Yi and the others landed ashore, they saw the group that had first set foot on the island already at the fruit grove.

Those trees were extraordinarily tall, their tops interconnected, with huge needle-like leaves interlaced like canine teeth, blocking out the sky and sun, making the inside of the forest very dim.

But white fruits grew on the branches.

They looked somewhat like melons but were more slender, about twenty to thirty centimeters long.

These fruits swayed slightly in the wind, giving off an aroma that made mouths water uncontrollably.

Some people could not resist and wanted to pick a fruit to eat.

Zhang Yi saw this and was about to stop them, but then he thought better of it and kept silent.

Thus, a man climbed the tree and picked a fruit to eat.

He forcefully broke open the white fruit; inside was creamy pulp with an even stronger fragrant aroma.

Seeing the crowd's hesitant expressions, the man smiled and said, "I study plants. Just by smelling this fruit, I can tell it's not poisonous. It's safe to eat!"

Then he bit a big chunk right in front of everyone.

The sweet juice filled his mouth, and he laughed, "So sweet, so thirst-quenching!"

Except for Zhang Yi and a few others, most of the people on the ship rarely had full meals and didn't remember when they last tasted fruit.

So when they saw the fruit was normal, they rushed over, scrambling to pick the fruits on the tree.

Some were cautious and worried about the fruit, so they didn't dare approach.

Old Tian walked over, holding a fruit, and asked Zhang Yi, "Mr. Zhang, this fruit..."

"Don't eat it."

Zhang Yi responded simply with two words.

But after some thought, he still put the fruit into the Dimensional Space.

Old Tian swallowed his urge to taste it and said, "Yes!"

Su Nuanxi was also a bit tempted. She said to Zhu Yunque beside her, "Senior Sister, everyone's eating them. Let's pick one and try it too!"

Zhu Yunque carefully observed Zhang Yi.

Seeing that Zhang Yi and Zhou Ke'er remained indifferent, she frowned slightly and said, "Better not eat it. Safety first."

Su Nuanxi swallowed, her expression a bit regretful.

Just then, Tommy in her arms woke up smelling the fragrance.

As soon as he woke, he started crying loudly.

Su Nuanxi hurriedly said, "He's probably craving the milky scent! Maybe we should get some for the child."

Zhu Yunque instinctively said, "Are you crazy? You want Tommy to eat this unknown..."

Her voice gradually lowered halfway through.

"Unknown stuff."

Su Nuanxi blinked, "But everyone else is eating! Look, nothing's wrong."

Zhu Yunque hesitated and still didn't dare to take the risk.

She had learned a lot on this journey and was already terrified by the various strange events at sea.

Zhang Yi held a gun in his right hand and pulled Zhou Ke'er with his left, instructing the crew around him to hold guns on alert.

After seeing that some passengers had eaten the white fruit with no abnormalities, he said, "Let's go. We'll move further inland."

The passengers walked while stuffing more white fruits into their pockets, then slowly moved forward.

Zhang Yi needed to determine if there was any danger here.

If possible, he would temporarily settle everyone here.

After all, there were fruits to eat, so they wouldn't starve anytime soon.

The island's thickets were huge. When moving deeper inside, they had to use miner's lamps to illuminate.

However, as they walked, Zhang Yi sensed something was off.

He actually found traces of human activity inside the forest.

The ground in the depths of the forest was muddy and damp, so human footprints were clearly visible.

“There are people living here!”

Zhang Yi secretly raised his vigilance.

But the fact that people lived here meant there was an environment suitable for human survival.

He led the group step by step forward.

After passing through dense woods, they found a village built of wooden houses ahead.

The fields and houses were orderly and closely packed.

There were no tall buildings; all were uniform wooden houses.

They stepped out of the woods but did not see anyone outside.

However, this was understandable. Outside was freezing cold, and no one would venture out without necessity.

Compared to Zhang Yi’s caution, the other passengers on the ship were much more excited.

They felt they had found a sanctuary suitable for survival.

Here were abundant fruit trees that could fully supply their food.

And a village meant long-term survival was possible here.

Some people could not hold back and ran toward the village asking if anyone lived there.

“Excuse me, is anyone here?”

“Hello? Is there anyone else here?”

...

Zhang Yi frowned slightly at their shouting but did not stop them.

He just pulled Zhou Ke'er and others to stay at a distance.

Soon, a wooden house door carefully opened.

The door was opened by an old woman dressed in black. Her skin was dry and wrinkled, and she was hunched over, looking over eighty years old.

“Where are you all from?”

Surprisingly, the old woman spoke Mandarin.

But in this sea area, people of Chinese descent lived in various places.

Seeing that there really were people, the passengers were all very excited.

Someone immediately stepped forward and said, “We came from far away to rest here for a while.”

Old Tian walked beside Zhang Yi and said, "Mr. Zhang, she looks like an ordinary person. We must have arrived at a small island in the southern sea area, very close to entering the Starry Sea."

Zhang Yi nodded without saying more.

The passengers over there were already chatting happily with the old woman.

Perhaps it had been too long since they last saw other people, so they were very excited.

Gradually, other local villagers cautiously opened their doors and came out.

They all claimed to be natives who survived thanks to the fruits from the native sacred tree after the sudden heavy snow.

But Zhang Yi felt something strange when looking at them.

Because the village had only women; not a single man was seen.

And those women's skin had an unusual pale color.

"Everyone, you've come all this way. Just rest here for a while! I'll go prepare dinner for you."

The old woman said with a warm smile.

Then she turned and went back inside. Other women in the village also warmly welcomed the passengers to their homes for dinner.

These passengers were deeply moved and warmed by the locals' hospitality.

Zhu Yunque lowered her head to look at the child in her arms and muttered, "Tommy, leaving you in the care of these people might not be a bad thing either."

Chapter 897: Insects [+1]

The village on the island looked harmonious and lively, with the villagers extremely enthusiastic.

However, Zhang Yi always felt that something was off.

He never hesitated to suspect the worst in people's hearts.

If it had been in the past, encountering such a warm village might have made him happy.

But now, with the apocalypse approaching one year, resources were extremely scarce everywhere.

And the residents of this village were so warmly hosting them, which always made Zhang Yi feel uneasy.

However, his Echo of Time instinct did not detect any crisis.

Moreover, the fruit trees indeed had enough fruit for many people to eat. Perhaps the villagers were simply genuinely hospitable.

At present, Zhang Yi did not have much patience to continue drifting at sea.

He had to quickly find a suitable place to settle the people on the ship.

So he did not rush to take any action but quietly told Zhou Ke'er, Old Tian, and the others:

"Don't let your guard down. We've encountered too many strange things at sea. Let's observe for a while first."

“Let them help us test the waters.”

Zhang Yi's gaze looked toward the passengers who had entered the locals' houses.

Since landing on the island, Zhang Yi had not interfered with any of their actions.

He wanted them to help test if there was any danger on the island.

However, among so many people, some were cautious like Zhang Yi and his group. They had not eaten the fruit and did not dare to enter the unfamiliar villagers' houses rashly.

Seeing this, several women came over to invite Zhang Yi and his group to eat.

Zhang Yi only said calmly, “Thank you. We have already eaten.”

The women repeatedly invited them, but Zhang Yi remained indifferent. The woman's face showed a strange smile before she left without paying them further attention.

While the others were eating, Zhang Yi took Zhou Ke'er and the others to casually stroll around the island.

This island was very peculiar. It was not too large, roughly the size of one district of Tianhai City.

The entire island was covered with strange fruit trees that actually extended from a single tree.

“What's this?”

Zhou Ke'er suddenly exclaimed in surprise.

Zhang Yi followed her gaze and discovered a clear pond not far away.

This made Zhang Yi greatly surprised and cautious.

The temperature in this area had already dropped to about minus ten degrees Celsius. Forget about freshwater, even the seawater near the shore would freeze.

He kept his gun's safety on and carefully walked over to inspect.

As he got closer, he smelled a strong sweet scent, almost sickeningly sweet.

The pond, about a dozen square meters in size, was crystal clear to the bottom. It was unclear how deep it was, but it was entirely filled with syrup.

“Could it be that the fruit fell and rotted into this?”

Zhang Yi muttered to himself.

But inadvertently, he saw something in the pond that immediately made his brows knit tightly.

In the clear water, a human skull was floating.

Zhang Yi's expression suddenly changed drastically, and he quickly stood up.

“I knew something was strange about this island! We can't stay here any longer. Leave immediately!”

He grabbed Zhou Ke'er's hand and quickly walked back.

At the same time, he ordered Old Tian to notify all passengers on the island to return to the ship immediately.

Although it was still unclear what was on the island, Zhang Yi's first intuition was always very accurate.

Seeing Zhang Yi's serious expression, Old Tian and the crew did not dare to be careless.

They had sailed for many years and knew that many strange things happened at sea, so they would not be as negligent as the passengers.

The group returned by the same route and arrived at the village they had passed earlier.

Zhu Yunque had just handed Tommy over to a very warm-looking woman and now seemed relieved, as if a heavy burden had been lifted.

“Everyone, return to the ship immediately. We are leaving!”

Old Tian shouted loudly through the loudspeaker.

Many people were still eating in the villagers' houses.

They had not enjoyed authentic delicious food for a long time and were reluctant to leave.

Some cautious passengers heard this, and seeing Zhang Yi and the others leave hurriedly, immediately realized something bad was happening and quickly followed them out.

Zhu Yunque frowned slightly, not knowing what was going on, but she was not foolish. She hurriedly chased after Zhang Yi together with Su Nuanxi.

“Mr. Zhang, what happened?”

“Didn't we say we wanted to find land to rest for a while before setting out again? I think this place is pretty good. Why not stay for some time?”

Zhang Yi said calmly, "This place gives me a very bad feeling."

His gaze looked around. The huge fruit trees were dark and damp, with white fruits swaying overhead, creating a very oppressive atmosphere.

Zhou Ke'er couldn't help but tightly grip Zhang Yi's hand.

After Zhang Yi's words, the others also felt that the atmosphere was somewhat strange.

After calling a few times, Old Tian grabbed his gun and retreated together with Zhang Yi.

At this time, some passengers were still inside the wooden houses, reluctant to leave because of the delicious food.

However, as Zhang Yi and the others began to return, they suddenly noticed the environment around them change drastically!

A strong wind blew across the island, passing through the dense trees, producing a terrifying sound similar to a woman's laughter.

A passenger suddenly grabbed his neck, his face turning bright red, and he painfully knelt on the ground.

"Ah!"

His mouth swelled, and when he opened it, a long white maggot was spat out!

The maggot was over ten centimeters thick, almost bursting his mouth open!

His body was covered in sticky liquid. After crawling out of the passenger's mouth, the maggot fell to the ground with a "plop," its round body wriggling on the ground, then crawling toward the passenger again.

Zhou Ke'er quickly covered her mouth. If she were not a doctor with a stronger mental tolerance, she would have vomited on the spot.

Others were no better; many vomited immediately.

Some were disgusted, while others, like the first passenger, also spat out a huge white maggot from their mouths!

Zhang Yi shielded Zhou Ke'er behind him and said coldly, "I knew I shouldn't eat random things outside!"

But before Zhang Yi finished speaking,

The white long fruits above their heads began to fall like rain with a crackling sound.

When they hit the ground, the fruit shells burst open, revealing white pulp inside and large maggots!

Only then did everyone realize why these fruits could survive such low temperatures. They were not fruits at all, but insect eggs!

And the entire island, the huge tree spreading everywhere, was clearly a mutated creature!

Zhang Yi held back his nausea and activated the Absolute Barrier Between Two Realms to avoid contact with the insect eggs.

These things were not very harmful but extremely disgusting.

Those passengers who had greedily stayed for food and had no time to escape were already transformed into maggot fertilizer. Large maggots crawled out from every orifice of their bodies.

Chapter 898: Approaching the Sea of Stars

Zhang Yi now displayed his calm side.

After all, someone who had experienced countless battles wouldn't be frightened by some bugs.

Protecting Zhou Ke'er, he said calmly, "Let's go, back to the ship!"

Those maggots had a black ring at their front end. When they pounced on people, the ring would open, revealing a mouth full of sharp teeth.

Fortunately, Zhang Yi and the others had taken precautions before landing on the island. Zhang Yi and Zhou Ke'er wore combat suits, while Old Tian and Zhu Yunque were dressed in full-body bulletproof gear.

No matter how sharp those bugs' teeth were, they couldn't bite through materials that could stop bullets.

But the sight of so many large white maggots crawling up from the ground along their pant legs, opening their mouths to bite, completely broke Zhu Yunque and Su Nuanxi.

The two women screamed like madwomen.

There were too many maggots. Zhang Yi, Old Tian, and the others retreated while shooting, but they couldn't eliminate many.

This made things difficult for the passengers, who hadn't worn bulletproof vests when they came ashore and had to fight desperately against the maggots while enduring disgust.

Soon the ground became a vast expanse of white, covered with squirming maggots everywhere.

Zhang Yi frowned. He could easily handle this situation.

The problem was that using Void Power would attack the surrounding crew and passengers as well.

"Do your best!" Zhang Yi had no choice. Fortunately, these maggots were just disgusting rather than terrifyingly lethal. These ordinary passengers could survive if they ran fast enough.

Zhang Yi took Zhou Ke'er and directly returned to the ship using spatial traversal.

Zhu Yunque screamed in terror, crying and shouting for Zhang Yi to come back and save her.

But Zhang Yi wasn't in such a good mood.

After putting Zhou Ke'er back on the ship, he flew high into the air to overlook the island.

Just as he suspected, the entire island had now been occupied by that giant tree-like mutated creature.

Unfortunately, this place wasn't suitable for temporarily settling the people from the ship.

Zhang Yi sighed and didn't plan to intervene to help the others, simply waiting quietly on the ship for them to run back themselves.

About half an hour later, Old Tian and the others gradually returned.

After counting the numbers, they found that more than thirty passengers were missing.

Without doubt, they had already become fertilizer for the maggots.

Zhu Yunque and Su Nuanxi, wearing their bulletproof vests, were covered in white, sticky bug fluids.

Although their bodies hadn't suffered any harm, their eyes had lost their sparkle, showing a feeling of having nothing left to live for.

Presumably after this devastation, they would carry indelible psychological scars for the rest of their lives.

"It's actually not that terrifying. This is a kind of half-plant, half-creature mutant with strong reproductive ability but ordinary attack power."

Although Zhang Yi had been thoroughly disgusted, he wasn't frightened by such existence.

"At the very least, the discovery of this landmass confirms that our course is correct. It won't be long before we reach the Starry Sea Region and find islands truly suitable for human survival."

Zhang Yi couldn't be bothered to deal with the mutant on this island.

Destroying it would be simple—just using large amounts of explosives or napalm bombs would suffice.

However, the island was quite large, and destroying it would probably exhaust Zhang Yi's entire inventory.

There was completely no need for that.

And if only the surface part was destroyed, given its volume and vitality, it would definitely regenerate.

This was probably the advantage of plant-based mutants—extremely tenacious vitality.

Just at this moment, Zhu Yunque suddenly screamed.

"Ah!!!"

Everyone looked at her, only to see her covering her face with both hands, crying painfully: "The child, my child! Tommy is still on the island, wuu wuu!"

Zhu Yunque had previously handed Tommy over to a woman on the island.

At this point, there was no need to doubt that the woman had already been controlled by the mutant creatures on the island.

So Zhu Yunque's action was equivalent to delivering Tommy into death's hands.

She cried bitterly, tears streaming down her face.

Zhang Yi remained unmoved, instead saying to Zhou Ke'er beside him:

"Do you think she's more happy or more sad?"

Zhou Ke'er's face was full of mischievous smile.

"Seeing how hard she's crying, I think she's probably more happy."

"You mean crying tears of joy?" Zhang Yi blinked.

"Otherwise?" Zhou Ke'er tilted her head and retorted.

Zhu Yunque had long lost patience with that baby; she had been looking for ways to get rid of this trouble.

She just didn't want to be criticized or laughed at by others.

Therefore, she had always needed to find a suitable opportunity.

If not for this, why would she casually hand the baby over to a stranger she hadn't investigated?

Zhang Yi walked up to Zhu Yunque, looked at her crying bitterly, and comforted her: "Don't be too sad, I know you didn't do it on purpose. Hmm... if you're really too sad, I'll go help you rescue the child right now, how about that?"

Zhu Yunque's voice suddenly stopped with a "gulp" sound.

She was completely stunned.

"Ah... this, wuu wuu, that's too dangerous. I can't let you take the risk."

Zhang Yi smiled and waved his hand: "Not dangerous, not dangerous. That thing is just a minor monster to me. Wait, I'll be right back!"

"No! Really... no need." Zhu Yunque stopped him somewhat flustered.

Her eyes dodged, not daring to look into Zhang Yi's eyes.

She had finally mustered the determination to do such a thing.

If Zhang Yi brought the child back, how would she face that child? How would she face herself?

Better to cry bitterly, gaining sympathy while quickly getting rid of the trouble.

Although evasion was shameful, it was useful.

Zhang Yi stood up, looking at her indifferently: "Oh, is that so."

He didn't say much, yet seemed to have said everything.

Zhu Yunque felt extremely ashamed inwardly, no longer daring to meet Zhang Yi's eyes.

Thinking back to when she had stood on the moral high ground, criticizing Zhang Yi, she was now speechless.

Only now did she understand that when people have no choice, they can only consider themselves first.

And Zhang Yi's indifferent frankness, by comparison, made her seem hypocritical and pretentious.

Zhang Yi wasn't really going to help her look for someone.

After so long, even if found, there would probably only be a pile of bones left.

Zhang Yi turned and left. He called Old Tian and Zhou Ke'er to study their current location together and confirm the next course.

"Since we've already seen islands, it means our current position is near the Starry Sea Region to Malai sea area."

"Probably closer to the Starry Sea Region. Heading north, we can confirm our current position in at most three days."

Old Tian offered his perspective based on years of sailing experience.

...

Everyone remember to send some free small gifts, we're almost catching up to first place.

Chapter 899: Are You Really Going to Be This Cruel?

Zhang Yi studied the nautical chart, chin resting in his hand as he pondered deeper strategic concerns.

Originally, they had entered the Ice Fog Sea Region because it effectively blocked all electronic signals, preventing the Colombian Navy from detecting them.

Now, they were about to leave the Ice Fog Sea Region and enter the Starry Sea Region.

While this wasn't the Colombian Navy's primary patrol area, it still contained numerous southern sea factions.

Such as various small nations and pirates.

Moreover, there was another possibility—the Colombian Navy might have anticipated their movements.

The Starry Sea Region might already have Colombian naval vessels waiting.

Zhang Yi tapped the table. "Navigate carefully. We need to find suitable hiding places immediately."

Old Tian nodded in acknowledgment.

Over the next few days, the Leisure continued north along the continental shelf.

Just as Zhang Yi had predicted, they gradually sailed out of the mysterious sea area shrouded in ice fog.

Three days later, following the bay's path forward, the surrounding mist slowly dissipated.

The view ahead expanded, revealing the endless icy sea that had always evoked feelings of dread.

Yet now, every passenger aboard couldn't help but feel like cheering loudly.

They had finally escaped that damned, eerily dangerous Ice Fog Sea Region.

But immediately upon leaving the sea area, Zhang Yi made a decision.

He retrieved another vessel from his Dimensional Space.

A dilapidated fishing boat, covered in barnacle remnants and rust spots, appearing to have served for countless years.

This type of fishing boat was commonly seen in the small nations of the southeastern seas.

Zhang Yi had reclaimed this boat from pirates earlier.

He had considered that if anything happened at sea later, it could serve as a means of concealment.

Although they had now circled around the ocean, avoiding the Colombian Navy's patrol areas,

caution remained essential for long-term survival, as they couldn't guarantee what they might encounter next.

Thus, this commonly seen southern seas fishing boat provided the perfect disguise.

Zhang Yi had everyone transfer to the fishing boat, then stored the Leisure back into his Dimensional Space.

This display left everyone on board utterly astonished.

Even though this wasn't the first time Zhang Yi had done this, each viewing still made them marvel at how humanity's mutations were evolving toward higher-dimensional existence.

The fishing boat felt somewhat crowded, making living conditions inevitably harsher.

But Zhang Yi knew this was only temporary.

He would find land quickly to conceal everyone.

Only then could he fully utilize his spatial superhuman abilities to bring back several important people first.

Such as Zhou Ke'er and Old Zhu's niece Zhu Yunque, along with several capable crew members.

As for the others, they could simply be left on an island with some supplies to wait.

Once Zhang Yi confirmed their return to the Jiangnan Region, the Colombian side would naturally lift maritime blockades.

They could just send any random ship later to retrieve everyone.

Zhang Yi had already formulated detailed plans in his mind.

On the dilapidated fishing boat, crew members changed into camouflage winter gear over their bulletproof vests, deliberately dirtying themselves to match pirate characteristics.

They continued sailing toward northern waters, knowing they would encounter land within days.

After two days of travel, they encountered pirates at sea once more.

But this time, instead of frustration, Zhang Yi and the crew revealed pleased smiles.

Encountering pirates meant they were approaching land.

However, the ordinary passengers grew tense.

"Mr. Zhang, how should we handle them?"

Old Tian followed protocol by reporting to Zhang Yi before taking action.

As a subordinate, he proved thoroughly competent.

While perhaps not exceptional in ability, his adherence to rules easily earned leadership approval.

Mediocrity was acceptable, but self-importance was absolutely forbidden.

Zhang Yi considered for a moment. "Don't use overwhelming firepower—just scare them off. Act like an ordinary pirate group. If we appear too strong, we'll attract unwanted attention."

Old Tian moved to execute the orders.

Crew members armed with guns and rocket launchers began counterattacking the approaching pirate vessels.

Surprisingly, these pirates proved pitifully weak, some boats carrying only one or two antiquated rifles.

Even their vessels appeared ragged and dilapidated.

After Old Tian's team counterattacked, five or six small boats sank immediately, with the remaining vessels fleeing in panic.

Zhang Yi immediately commanded, "Follow them!"

Tracking them would lead to land.

The fishing boat closely pursued the fleeing pirates, finding land in under an hour!

A moderately sized island appeared, with thousands of vessels anchored beyond the surrounding ice ring!

Varying from over a hundred meters long to mere five or six meters.

Most ships showed significant damage however.

In this pirate-infested territory, daily battles and killings occurred constantly, making deaths and shipwrecks utterly commonplace.

Zhang Yi activated his combat suit's telescopic vision mode to observe the island's situation.

He spotted numerous temporary structures along the coastline and piles of bleached white bones.

Human skeletons accumulated like small mountains along the shore.

During this freezing season, such numerous skeletons shouldn't exist, yet these remained clean as formaldehyde-preserved specimens.

Zhang Yi narrowed his eyes, speaking calmly. "Same as before—this island's natives are all bandits. It's already a man-eating pirate den that shows no mercy."

Zhang Yi immediately gathered everyone aboard.

He informed them they would be landing on this island.

"This island is large, and everyone must take up weapons to fight. For our safety, we must eliminate everyone on the island. So show no mercy when you strike, understood?"

Upon hearing they needed to take up guns and kill people, some passengers appeared resolute, some showed reluctance, and others displayed slight fear.

But having endured numerous life-and-death situations throughout their journey, they wouldn't be overly merciful.

Everyone on this island consisted of ruthless pirates who killed without blinking.

Though they lacked standing to judge pirates, everyone fought for survival—eliminating those pirates wouldn't burden their consciences.

Yet at this moment, Su Nuanxi stepped forward.

She looked at Zhang Yi with bewildered expression. "You want us to massacre an entire island's population? Are you certain? Are you really going to do something this cruel?"

Zhang Yi gave her a cold glance.

He had long grown impatient with this self-righteous moralizer.

"Oh? Cruel, heh. Then explain carefully—how exactly am I being cruel?"

Zhang Yi crossed his arms, smiling at her, though his eyes carried blade-sharp coldness.

Chapter 900: Go Away, Go Away!

The people on the ship had already sensed that something wasn't quite right.

Yet some people's foolishness is difficult to change.

Take Su Nuanxi, for example—she always believed her status was equal to Zhang Yi's.

Zhu Yunque had her move to the upper deck cabins because she needed help caring for the children.

Zhang Yi wanted to watch the show, which is why he never bothered to put her in her place.

This made her feel she had both the right and the obligation to point out Zhang Yi's mistakes.

Su Nuanxi had absolutely no proper understanding of her own position.

She looked at Zhang Yi and began speaking incessantly: "They're local residents. If they hadn't been driven to desperation, why would they become pirates?"

"Now that the apocalypse has arrived, the human population keeps decreasing. We shouldn't be slaughtering each other but preserving the seeds of human civilization."

Zhang Yi nodded, then turned with a smile to look at Zhu Yunque behind her.

"Ms. Zhu, what's your take on this?"

Zhu Yunque's delicate face instantly paled.

She had completely changed from when they first set sail.

After experiencing so much at sea, she now felt genuine fear toward Zhang Yi from the bottom of her heart.

"This has nothing to do with me. Don't ask me."

She averted her eyes to the side, clearly wanting to stay out of it.

Su Nuanxi gave her a look of frustrated disappointment.

Zhu Yunque ignored her completely.

Now that she no longer needed childcare help, Su Nuanxi held little value to her.

Zhang Yi nodded, then smiled as he turned to Su Nuanxi:

"I think you make some valid points. I just can't be sure whether those people harbor good intentions toward us."

"How about this, Ms. Su. Could I trouble you to serve as our representative and communicate with them? Ensure we can land safely."

Su Nuanxi looked uncomfortable upon hearing this.

She snorted lightly, lifting her chin. "I'm not stupid! If I go over like this, they'll think I'm declaring war. What if they kill me?"

Zhang Yi smiled. "You can show them your sincerity. I'll give you some supplies and send crew members to escort you for negotiations. Will that work?"

Hesitation was written all over Su Nuanxi's face—she wasn't that brave.

Zhang Yi immediately switched to a mocking tone: "Oh really! I thought from your righteous speech that Ms. Su would be a brave and kind person!"

"But turns out, heh, you're all talk. A giant in words, a dwarf in action!"

Zhang Yi burst into laughter.

Nearly a hundred people were gathered on the ship at that moment.

Zhang Yi's blatant mockery immediately made Su Nuanxi lose face.

"Who says I'm all talk! I... I'll go then!"

"I believe that if we exchange kindness for kindness, there will be no misunderstandings between us. Even pirates have humanity!"

Zhang Yi nodded: "Yeah, yeah, sure."

He immediately retrieved several packages of supplies for Su Nuanxi and arranged for crew members to escort her ashore.

Only when she saw Zhang Yi produce a small boat did Su Nuanxi realize he wasn't joking.

But now everyone was watching her, and she was in too deep to back out, so she reluctantly boarded the boat.

Zhang Yi had the fishing boat anchor several kilometers away from the island.

Their arrival had already drawn the attention of the pirates on the island.

After all, they had just severely punished the island's pirates moments earlier.

These pirates assumed Zhang Yi's group had returned for revenge and were extremely vigilant.

Zhang Yi leaned against the railing, activating his telescopic vision mode, watching as Su Nuanxi approached the island in the small boat.

He narrowed his eyes as if enjoying a delightful spectacle.

Soon, two crew members escorted Su Nuanxi ashore.

They threw two packages of supplies onto the beach.

The moment Su Nuanxi's feet touched ground, the two crew members immediately turned the boat around and headed back.

Su Nuanxi hugged the two packages of supplies, her face shifting through multiple expressions.

"Don't go! Don't leave me! Don't abandon me alone!"

She was already beginning to panic.

But it was already too late.

After the crew members left, the pirates on the island noticed a young woman from the ship left alone on the beach with a pile of supplies. They immediately charged toward her with wild cries.

Su Nuanxi turned around and saw hundreds of filthy natives with bloodshot eyes rushing toward her. Her legs gave way, and she collapsed to the ground.

"I... I came to negotiate peace! Look, I brought food! Don't misunderstand!"

She still tried to explain something.

But in this place, few could understand what she was saying.

She was immediately dragged to the ground.

The supplies were torn open first, triggering a frenzied scramble.

Those who failed to grab supplies turned their attention to her.

Su Nuanxi wasn't particularly beautiful, but coming from a wealthy family meant she had always maintained herself well.

Her fair, delicate skin was something the island's fisherwomen, weathered by daily sea winds, didn't possess.

The pirates looked at her, their gazes gradually growing intense.

Sensing something wrong, Su Nuanxi screamed desperately.

"What are you doing? Don't come closer! Stay away from me!"

"I came to negotiate peace! I'm here for peace talks!"

"Go away! Get away from me!"

"Ah!!!!"

...

Her voice gradually drowned in a cacophony of tearing sounds.

The sharp screams and cries lasted only briefly before being forcibly cut short by something.

Zhang Yi watched for a while before losing interest. He yawned and returned to his room to rest.

"We'll land on the island after they finish their business over there."

Old Tian quickly nodded in agreement.

Since the ship was too far from shore, passengers without tools couldn't see what was happening above, only making vague guesses.

Zhu Yunque felt vaguely uneasy inside.

She walked over and said to Old Tian: "First Mate Tian, lend me a pair of binoculars."

Old Tian was watching with great interest and gave Zhu Yunque a deep look upon hearing her request.

"Ms. Zhu, I suggest you don't look! She is your friend, after all. I'm afraid you won't be able to handle it."

The more he said this, the more curious Zhu Yunque became.

"No, I want to see!"

She took a deep breath and spoke with firm determination.

Old Tian shrugged and handed his high-powered binoculars to Zhu Yunque.

Zhu Yunque mentally prepared herself thoroughly before raising the binoculars to look at the island.

Her pupils gradually dilated, and her body began trembling slightly.

She watched for a full ten minutes or more.

But suddenly, she screamed in shock and immediately threw the binoculars to the deck.

Then she clutched her stomach and vomited violently on the deck.

Old Tian pursed his lips at the sight. "The scale was indeed a bit too much for you, but for me, it was just right."

Zhu Yunque didn't respond because she had just vomited everything she ate for lunch.

What she had just witnessed was more nauseating than anything she'd seen since setting sail.