

Menu 1031

Chapter 1031: Hair Volume and Strength

Hui Lijing was at the wheel again.

This time, the elderly monk from Tongshou Temple sat in the passenger seat.

Jason was still in the back row.

The car quickly entered the street market entrance of Tongshou Town.

Looking at the familiar stone pillars blocking the road, the female detective felt a lingering fear.

"Nothing's going to happen today, right?"

The female detective joked, trying to dispel the shadows in her heart.

"It won't."

"Our luck can't be that bad."

Master Tongshou Temple chuckled and shook his head.

He considered himself to be very lucky. As an ordinary person, he had mixed in the 'Mystical Side' for more than a decade. Although he had encountered countless risks, each had been a close shave with no real harm.

It's just...

Every time it would cost some money.

Most of the time, he returned the money to the clients out of compassion.

Even sometimes, it meant paying out of his pocket.

As for going bankrupt over a meal?

This was his first encounter.

From now on, he absolutely must not treat Jason to a meal!

Master Tongshou Temple silently warned himself.

"Let's park the car here, these are the designated parking spaces for Tongshou Temple."

The old monk pointed to the two parking spaces not far away.

"Tongshou Temple actually has parking spaces?"

The female detective was surprised.

Other temples having parking spaces wouldn't surprise her.

After all, those grand temples on the mountains, each but famous, would be impossible to manage without building parking lots at the base for the endless stream of worshippers during holidays.

But Tongshou Temple?

It was just a small temple hidden within the street market.

For such a small temple to even have parking spaces was surprise enough for the female detective.

"The land deed for Tongshou Temple originally included these two parking spaces."

"And the three shops on the market street, they also belong to Tongshou Temple."

"These were all left by the Master two generations before me."

Seeing the detective's puzzled look, the old monk quickly explained.

"The Master two generations before mine had a good business mind!"

The female detective could not help but praise.

Having acquired three shops and two parking spaces around Tongshou Temple was quite impressive.

Especially considering the property prices around the market streets of Tongshou Town were not cheap.

"The Master two generations before did not engage in business, on the contrary, he was a monk who devoted himself to studying Buddhist scriptures and seldom left the temple even once a month."

Master Tongshou Temple introduced the Master two generations before him.

"Then these three shops and two parking spaces?"

Puzzlement showed on the female detective's face.

"Because, at that time, the whole Tongshou Town belonged to that Master."

Master Tongshou Temple said it as if it were a matter of course.

...A muscle twitched in the female detective's mouth, she really wanted to ask whether the Master three generations before had accepted the Master two generations before because of his wealth.

However, such words would be far too impolite.

The female detective held back with difficulty.

"Because of the joining of the Master two generations before, Tongshou Temple's days have improved a lot — when the Master three generations before passed away, he passed away with a smile."

The old monk continued to tell.

Stop!

The more you say, the more I feel the Master three generations before was interested in the Master two generations before's wealth.

The detective couldn't help but criticize inwardly.

Then, she got curious.

"Since the whole Tongshou Town belonged to the Master two generations before, why are there only three shops and two parking spaces left?"

The female detective asked as she parked the car.

"Because the previous generation's Master was truly a good person, he kept helping those he could, dispersing all the wealth within the temple, and to save on expenses, even had to scrounge for meals and medicine from innocent homeless people on the streets."

The old monk from Tongshou Temple spoke, a complex look flashing across his eyes.

When he received the land deed of Tongshou Temple from the previous Master, he was astounded.

He had never thought that such a wealthy monk could live so frugally.

Not only were his meals simple with brown rice and pickles, but even exorcisms were performed for free.

All the saved money was donated.

Moreover, the old monk believed that if it were not for the explicit will left by the Master three generations before, stating that at least Tongshou Temple, three shops, and two parking spaces must be kept.

That old monk would have donated everything.

As for why?

He didn't know.

He thought about it seriously.

But really had no idea.

And he also admitted he couldn't do it like the old monk.

So, he didn't consider himself a qualified Master.

Not only was he unable to revitalize Tongshou Temple as the Master three generations before,

Nor could he study the scriptures earnestly like the Master two generations before.

Not to mention the selfless generosity of the previous Master.

He was just an ordinary monk.

The kind who became a monk midway through life.

So, everything depended on you.

The old monk thought, his gaze naturally landing on Jason.

"Master, please follow me."

The old monk got out of the car, brought his hands together respectfully, and said.

"Okay."

Jason nodded, walking side by side with the female detective behind the old monk.

During the not so long walk, the old monk told the story of this street.

From the original Dorayaki shop at one street corner, to the fried octopus balls shop next to it, to the transitions of the ramen shop and the skewers stall.

"The oldest is that ramen shop."

"It must have a history of 40 years."

"When the current owner's father was alive, I often came here to eat. Back then, Mr. Jiro, the current owner's father, always smiled so heartily. Who would have thought he just stumbled while walking, and then he left for his final journey."

Chapter 1032: Hair Volume and Strength (2)

The old monk said, his face full of sighs.

"How does it taste?"

Jason asked.

"The soup base is great."

"It has the richness of meat and the freshness of fish soup, and it's not greasy."

"Too bad the noodles can be refilled for free."

"But the soup is charged."

"Really..."

The old monk's face was full of emotion, but suddenly, he froze.

Because he realized that the sadness he had just felt had disappeared.

Right after Jason asked about the taste.

Everything became joyful.

"So that's how it is."

"Thank you, Master, for the enlightenment."

The old monk clasped his hands together toward Jason.

Jason was already used to these kind of occurrences often happening with Cat Hole's external staff.

He casually nodded, showing an expression that said, 'Yes, exactly what you're thinking.'

And the female detective was completely baffled.

What did I miss?

Wasn't I just walking with you guys?

"Ms. Hui Lijing, you need to slowly comprehend the Master's words."

"The taste perceived by the tongue is actually the taste of life."

"Sour, sweet, bitter, spicy, salty... The five flavors of life, that's all there is."

The old monk's face was full of contemplation.

What does that mean?

Is Jason not just simply asking about the taste before deciding to have a bowl?

How come there are so many profound truths?

Am I thinking too shallowly?

As the female detective doubted her life, Tongshou Temple was already close at hand.

The old monk quickened his pace, went up the steps, and opened the door.

The Tongshou Temple they saw was no different from before.

There were also left and right wings, a main hall, and a courtyard.

"Ms. Hui Lijing, please wait here."

"Or you may wait in the left wing."

"If you need some tea, please help yourself—I need to complete the transmission for the Master as soon as possible, excuse any rudeness."

The old monk at Tongshou Temple expressed his apologies.

"It's okay."

"I can manage myself."

The female detective generously waved her hand, helped the old monk close the temple gate, and walked alone into the left wing.

"Not surprisingly for Ms. Hui Lixiang's sister, although there is a big gap in strength, both have such forthright characters."

The old monk softly praised, then made a welcoming gesture to Jason again.

Entering the main hall, coming to the back of the statue, Jason once again saw the locked door.

Is the inheritance here?

Jason looked around.

There were no noticeable traps or anything noteworthy around.

Is it too simple?

Jason wondered.

The old monk laughed again.

"Inside are just some ordinary scriptures."

"Even the inheritance of Tongshou Temple, to outsiders."

"Are just ordinary scriptures."

Ordinary scriptures?

Disguised?

Only the people of Tongshou Temple can see the true nature of the 'scriptures'?

Jason quickly understood.

Back in his hometown, he had heard such rumors.

And in Nightless City, he had seen it with his own eyes.

Because, the old man's ledger was arranged in that way.

Anyone other than the old man, getting hold of that ledger, would only think it's an 'H' magazine.

Surely, an 'H' magazine in a safe is a bit too conspicuous.

But the approach of 'Tongshou Temple' is more appropriate.

Since that's the case, then...

Could the 'Fear' flag also be stored this way?

Placed somewhere conspicuous yet overlooked?

Jason narrowed his eyes.

This was a very likely possibility.

After all, such a useful method wouldn't be used just once.

Then, if the 'Fear' flag exists,

And it's really in 'Tongshou Temple',

Where would it be?

Click!

The crisp sound of unlocking interrupted Jason's thoughts.

The old monk at Tongshou Temple took off the lock, held it in his hand, and pushed open the door.

With the light shining, a small library appeared in front of Jason.

The bookshelves were no taller than 1.5 meters and only about 2 meters long, arranged haphazardly.

Walking among them, as long as one was tall enough, one could see all the books on the top shelf at a glance.

The old monk of Tongshou Temple walked through the library familiarly, and soon came to a table specially for reading with a dozen books.

"This is the basic skillset of Tongshou Temple, including boxing, leg techniques, staff techniques, swordsmanship, and knife skills, etc."

"Because of my poor Talent, I only glanced through them."

The old monk took out seven or eight books.

Then, he took out three of them.

"These are [Body Double Technique], [Boat Traversal Technique], [Silence Technique], the secret techniques I'm most familiar with."

Subsequently, the old monk took out another book.

"This one is [Vajra Palm], I can only perform it, my Talent is too poor."

The old monk said with a helpless shake of his head.

Then, the old monk took out another book.

When taking out this book, the old monk's expression immediately became solemn.

"This is the core secret technique of Tongshou Temple: [Great Majestic Heavenly Dragon Technique]!"

"Rumored to be able to summon the 'Divine Dragon's power' to exorcise demons."

"Unfortunately, I only understand a bit of it."

The old monk put the [Great Majestic Heavenly Dragon Technique] on the table, clasped his hands again, and directly asked Jason, "Master, where do we start learning from?"

"Don't we need to start from the basics?"

Jason looked at the majority of basic skills, slightly curious.

The concept from his hometown always made him used to starting from the simple to the complex, laying a solid foundation, and then progressing step by step.

"Basic skills are just that, skills, although practicing to a profound level can also rival secret techniques."

Chapter 1033: Hair Volume and Strength (3)

"But, the secret techniques of Tongshou Temple, including [Vajra Palm], require no foundation of such skills; thus, there's no such thing as learning from the basics."

"The core [Great Majestic Heavenly Dragon Technique] is the same."

"So, we only need to follow our interests."

The old Monk of Tongshou Temple said.

His smile carried a hint of reminiscence.

When he first learned these, no one was there to explain them to him.

He relied entirely on the notes from the previous generation's Monk of Tongshou Temple.

It was fortunate that 'Tongshou Temple' was like this.

Otherwise, with his physical condition and age at that time, practicing those basic skills would have been inefficient and impossible to complete.

"The distinction between skills and secret techniques?"

Jason murmured softly to himself, unconsciously visualizing a chart distinguishing 'outer disciples' from 'inner disciples' in his mind.

Was Tongshou Temple like this originally?

It probably was.

However, as the number of people in Tongshou Temple dwindled, it gradually changed to the current model.

It's hard for Jason to say which model is better.

But for now, it's definitely to his advantage.

Without hesitation, Jason picked up the book on [Doppelganger].

Although the [Great Majestic Heavenly Dragon Technique] is the core and definitely good, Jason was more interested in a secret technique like this 'doppelganger technique'.

"[Doppelganger]?"

"It seems I really have fate with the Master."

The old Monk's face showed a trace of contentment.

Back then, his first choice was also [Doppelganger].

Not for any reason, but just to save his life.

After all, everything depends on being alive, doesn't it?

"[Doppelganger] is a secret technique that uses hair to create a 'doppelganger' by channeling unique Qi-Blood in a way that turns one's own hair into a 'doppelganger' identical to the actual person."

"Although it doesn't possess the true strength of the person, if used well, it can still achieve extraordinary effects."

"But, [Doppelganger] also has clear drawbacks. To create one 'doppelganger,' continuous nourishment with 'Qi-Blood' is needed, and it takes 6 months to create a fully effective 'doppelganger'."

"There is another drawback..."

As the old Monk of Tongshou Temple spoke, he couldn't help but glance at Jason's hair.

"I just have short hair, not none."

Jason emphasized.

"Yes, as long as you have some, it's good."

"If you were bald, practicing [Doppelganger] would be doubly difficult."

The old Monk of Tongshou Temple gave a knowing look.

Men have their unspeakable hardships.

If not mentioned, it's as if they do not exist.

"[Doppelganger] is like this..."

The old Monk began to explain.

Jason listened attentively.

Meanwhile, in the left wing room, Hui Lijing brewed herself a pot of tea, waiting patiently.

The female detective had considerable patience.

Although just a low-tier detective, she still possessed some basic investigative professionalism.

"I wonder how soon I can learn the 'secret knowledge'..."

The female detective thought.

She did not doubt the authenticity of Jason's words.

It's just that everyone has some expectations.

Hmm?

As the female detective was pondering, suddenly, a strange fragrance entered her nostrils.

It was the smell of a meat broth but intensified tenfold.

Not only was the fragrance of the broth magnified ten times.

Some of the flaws in the broth were also magnified tenfold.

For example: the stench!

Cough, cough!

The detective couldn't help but cough due to the overwhelming smell.

But the next moment, a knocking sound followed—

Thump, thump thump!

"Hello, I am Jiro. Your ramen is here!"

Chapter 1034: My Lord, Times Have Changed

Jiro?

Ramen?

Hui Lijing was startled for a moment, then she remembered the words of the old monk from Tongshou Temple.

'When the current owner's father was alive, I used to eat there often. Back then, the owner's father, Mr. Jiro, had such a hearty laugh. Who knew he would fall while walking and pass away.'

Without a doubt, this Jiro, the previous owner of the ramen shop, had already died.

How could a dead person appear outside her door?

A ghost?

Or... a prank?

The next moment, Hui Lijing's complexion changed.

Because the female detective was also very clear that the possibility of a prank was extremely slim.

You see, she had personally closed and locked the door just a moment ago.

The walls of the Tongshou Temple weren't very high, but they weren't something an ordinary person could easily climb over.

As for bringing a ladder?

Hui Lijing was certain, she hadn't heard any noise.

The sound of a ladder hitting the ground was absolutely not something that could go unnoticed on this quiet night.

And someone entering Tongshou Temple without a ladder?

Such a person wouldn't need to play pranks on her.

After eliminating the impossible, the remaining explanation, however improbable, must be the only answer.

A ghost!

Huh!

Hui Lijing's breathing became rapid.

Although she had already been exposed to the 'Mystical Side.'

And was about to start learning 'Mystical Knowledge.'

But she had not truly started yet.

In some ways, it was her first real time facing a mystical event alone.

What should she do?

Could Jason hear her?

As long as he could hear, Jason would definitely help!

Hui Lijing thought, then immediately shook her head.

Because she remembered the scene from yesterday.

If the current situation was similar to the previous one, Jason definitely wouldn't be able to hear the words spoken here.

Sure enough!

She could only rely on herself!

But...

Hui Lijing quickly started looking around the room.

She needed to find some handy weapons.

Although she had several weapons on her, none were suitable for the current situation.

After all, Jason had mentioned casually that flame or stun guns were the best means to deal with ghosts.

She had a stun gun.

But if possible, Hui Lijing still hoped she could attack from a distance.

Quickly, Hui Lijing found a bottle of 'Pest Killer'.

Clang!

She shook it; there was still more than half a bottle left.

Next, Hui Lijing pulled out a lighter.

Outside, the moonlight covered the ground.

The pristine white, making the temple's blue brick floor seem like the clear sky after snow.

A figure was standing right in front of the left side of the wing's doors.

This figure was an ordinary-looking middle-aged man.

His face wore a hearty smile, but under the moonlight and shadows, such a smile seemed to flicker, gaining an inexplicable eerie quality.

Especially when the smile remained unchanged on his face for tens of seconds, the eerie feeling rapidly escalated.

It's like when you smile in the mirror. Initially, it might be genuine, but after ten seconds, your cheeks begin to ache, yet your smile stays the same.

Unaware of pain.

Unaware of tiredness.

Just smiling.

Neither mad nor fierce.

Just hearty.

But no matter how hearty, with a crimson fall, it also became fearsome.

The moon was still, the crimson flowing.

Glancing slightly backward.

One could see that the man who claimed to be Jiro already had a shattered skull.

Blood was flowing.

The brain was still pulsating.

But with each pulsation, more blood oozed out.

Blood trailed down his neck, flowing down his chest.

Soon, the man claiming to be Jiro had his clothes soaked in blood.

More blood flowed into the soup bowl he was holding.

Originally aromatic, the soup bowl's scent became even more intense at this moment.

Just as the smell of blood became more evident.

With the steam from the bowl continuing to overflow and drift.

The man who claimed to be Jiro stood in front of the door, his hearty smile unchanging, his whole body resembling a robot, raising his hand to knock on the door in front of him.

Thump, thump thump.

"Hello, your ramen has arrived."

The knocking sound was rhythmic.

The voice was the same as before.

Then—

Creak!

The door opened.

Hui Lijing appeared in front of the man claiming to be Jiro.

Jiro's mouth corners hooked again.

Forcibly twisting the hearty smile.

Bizarre.

Frightful.

Twisted.

When the three merged together, the smile could no longer really be called a smile.

Inside was filled with a spine-chilling emotion.

Especially when the man claiming to be Jiro spoke again.

"Hello, guest."

"Your ramen."

"Do you need anything else?"

The originally calm voice now elongated, yet continuously trembled.

Like fingernails scraping across a blackboard.

Causing one's body to break out in goosebumps.

More terrifying was that with such a voice, the man claiming to be Jiro's neck emitted a cracking sound, and then, under Hui Lijing's gaze, the claiming Jiro man's head just drooped to the side as if it was about to fall off.

That already blood-stained terrifying smile, intensified in that moment.

But—

Huh!

Hui Lijing, however, breathed a sigh of relief.

She thought she might encounter something terrifying.

It turned out to be a kind of moving corpse.

Although somewhat bloody, it still wasn't so unacceptable, even if at this moment, incomprehensible shouts continued to emanate from the mouth of the man claiming to be Jiro.

Chapter 1035: My Lord, Times Have Changed (part 2)

"Heh, heh heh."

Accompanied by such sounds, the man who called himself Jiro began to approach Hui Lijing.

"Is this it?"

Watching as the man, staggering like a zombie, walked towards her, Hui Lijing completely let down her guard.

She raised her hand and took out a lighter.

Click.

With a crisp snap, a flame emerged from the lighter.

Then, she lifted her 'Disaster Purging Spirit.'

Hiss!

Whoosh!

As the 'Disaster Purging Spirit' was pressed, a jet of flame shot out, a half-meter-long tongue of fire instantly enveloped the upper body of the man who claimed to be Jiro.

"Ahhhh!"

A scream shattered the quiet of the night.

The man with his upper body aflame began to stagger backward.

Hui Lijing, however, pressed forward step by step.

It was just like the time she stuffed cow dung into the mouths of boys who called her 'Hachishaku-sama.'

The only difference was that at that time she stared at those boys and made them chew and swallow the cow dung.

And now?

Thump.

As the flaming man fell to the ground, Hui Lijing lifted her foot and brutally stomped down on his head.

Her boots, with a layer of steel sandwiched in the middle.

They could walk soundlessly, yet could also provide effective offense and defense capabilities.

These were custom-made for Hui Lijing.

Just like the leather jacket she wore.

No kind of blade could penetrate it.

Crack!

With a crisp sound.

The man who called himself Jiro was silent for good.

His already shattered skull was completely pulverized.

Brain matter splattered in all directions with Hui Lijing's boot as the center.

Sticky and gooey, enough to make the average person nauseated and vomit, but for Hui Lijing, it was nothing at all, she had experienced far more disgusting things countless times before.

If necessary, she would even jump into a cesspit.

And then, she would throw up for two days.

Those two days, let alone eating, even drinking water would make her vomit.

Her nose would pick up that nasty smell, as if it were always there.

For the following half a year, Hui Lijing completely refused to eat curry rice.

Even now, she still harbored considerable disgust.

Casually shaking her boot, she shook off the sticky substance, then Hui Lijing called out toward the main hall—

"Jason? Jason?"

"Master? Master?"

Her voice was loud enough, spreading far enough.

But, there was not the slightest response from the hall.

Without a doubt!

The worst-case scenario had occurred!

She was now in something akin to a 'Ghostly River' projection.

Such a projection itself wasn't scary.

What was terrifying was the person who created and laid out this projection.

Tsuchimikado Motoharu, Hui Lijing had seen him.

Her awareness of his power was crystal clear.

She was no match for him.

Tap, tap tap!

Just as Hui Lijing was feeling uncertain, a series of footsteps came from behind her.

Behind?

As this thought emerged from the depths of Hui Lijing's heart, her body had already moved.

Whoosh!

Her body leaned forward, her foot lashed out behind.

Such an attack was not wise, exposing significant vulnerabilities. If one simply dodged the kick, they could easily gain the upper hand, and such avoidance was not difficult.

In fact, from some perspectives, even a slightly trained ordinary person could dodge it.

After all, such a strike was doomed to not be too fast, not too wide in range.

And the reason why the female detective, seasoned in mercenary training, was doing this naturally had a purpose.

The kick was a feint.

The quicklime in her hand was the real deal.

Whoosh!

A handful of white powder was thrown out.

Forming a perfect semicircle, covering the area behind Hui Lijing.

However, the anticipated screams did not sound.

To this, Hui Lijing seemed to have expected.

She increased the swing of her kicking leg, and at once, what was originally a back kick turned into a somersault of sorts.

At the same time, Hui Lijing took out her lighter again.

Click.

Whoosh!

A jet of flame from below to above appeared behind Hui Lijing, forming with the earlier quicklime a curved cross.

But, still to no avail.

The footsteps continued to approach.

Hui Lijing's heart tightened.

Although she did not know what would happen after being approached by this unknown creature, Hui Lijing was not willing to bear such consequences.

Almost instinctively, Hui Lijing took out a hand grenade.

Just as Hui Lijing was about to pull the pin, a small red figure ran from behind her to her front.

Hmm?

Hui Lijing looked at the child monk with flushed skin holding a lantern and wearing monk's robes, and couldn't help but be taken aback.

"Run! Quick, run!"

The young monk shouted loudly at Hui Lijing.

Then he ran forward.

Hui Lijing frowned and immediately followed.

The reason was simple: if this monk-like being had wanted to harm her just now, she would have already been injured, dead even.

Therefore, she judged that the monk likely had no ill intent.

Following behind the young monk, Hui Lijing quickly rushed out of Tongshou Temple's gate, then zigzagged through Tongshou Town's streets, and soon saw the two stone pillars outside of Tongshou Town.

Naturally, she also saw her car.

Then, she heard the young monk's words—

"Over here, over here, someone has been killed!"

"I am not the murderer!"

"It wasn't me, it wasn't me! I just wanted to tell everyone that there's someone over there who needs help!"

"I won't be used by a murderer!"

As the young monk's voice fell, he disappeared into thin air.

Then, Hui Lijing saw a middle-aged man dressed in Onmyoji attire.

"Huh?"

The middle-aged man expressed his surprise upon seeing Hui Lijing appear.

Because, in his mind, this was just an ordinary woman who would certainly get lost within his 'Onmyojitsu' and then become the perfect pawn to pry into the secrets of Tongshou Temple.

It seemed, however, that there had been some complications.

Still, when problems arise, they can be solved.

"I originally hoped to resolve this quietly and subtly."

"But now, I must resort to a more direct approach."

With a disdainful tone, the somewhat special Onmyoji spoke.

Then, he flicked his wrist, and a piece of white Talisman Paper appeared.

Just as he was about to shoot the Talisman Paper—

Bang, bang bang!

Gunshots rang out.

And not just one.

Gunfire flickered from the muzzle of the gun in Hui Lijing's hands.

And this was not the end.

The very next moment!

Boom boom boom!

Three timed grenades were thrown out, landing at the feet of the Onmyoji.

Instantly, he was engulfed in flames.

Shrapnel whizzed and flew in all directions.

A semi-transparent shield appeared around the Onmyoji's body.

Shrapnel hit this shield, sending ripples spreading out layer by layer.

The ripples undulated and collided with each other.

They quickly started to wobble as if about to collapse.

Finally, when the ripples overlapped and reached a peak—

Snap!

The shield shattered just like that.

Though the leftover shrapnel had little strength left, it still forced the specially dressed Onmyoji to dodge in an extremely sorry state.

His pristine robe turned black and tattered.

The black high hat fell to the ground, rolling away into the distance.

"Damn you, how dare you... Aaaaah!"

"It burns! It burns! It burns!"

The special Onmyoji shouted, but before he could finish, his mouth was filled with a liquid full of stinging odors.

Then came the burning sensation.

Concentrated chili water brought an intense level of spice.

This immediate burning sensation painfully stabbed at the Onmyoji's nerves.

The spells in his mind, deprived by the burning sensation, vanished into thin air.

The talismans in his hands similarly dropped to the ground in disarray.

Only one thought remained in the mind of this special Onmyoji.

"Water!"

"I need water!"

"I have to drink water!"

And then—

Bang!

Hui Lijing shot right through the middle of his forehead.

Watching the man slowly fall to the ground,

Hui Lijing blinked, recalling the words of the old monk from Tongshou Temple.

"The invention of gunpowder has changed everything."

Is this what it means... that the era has changed?

Hui Lijing pondered silently.

But at that moment, a sinister voice sounded in her ears.

"As expected of Hui Lixiang's sister."

As the voice emerged, Hui Lijing's body was bound by an invisible force.

In the next moment, she found herself suspended mid-air, a feeling of suffocation immediately following.

Hui Lijing struggled continuously.

Her eyes were searching for the attacker.

The attacker did not hide.

After confirming that Hui Lijing was bound, they brazenly appeared in front of her.

Seeing the attacker, Hui Lijing stopped struggling.

Not out of giving up,

But because she saw that... tall and muscular figure behind the attacker.

Chapter 1036: Home Delivery!

The attacker straightened his body.

The blood-stained opponent methodically wiped his face with a white silk handkerchief.

"As a mortal, you are the first to have caused me such disarray."

"You can be proud of that."

"But, as the sister of Hui Lixiang, it seems only proper—indeed, choosing you as my target really kills two birds with one stone. Not only can I infiltrate Tongshou Temple and steal the 'Awe' banner, but I can also take revenge on that woman Hui Lixiang... Tsk, that woman has offended quite a few, I believe many would pay a high price to buy her sister."

The weird-looking Onmyoji sneered coldly.

His appearance was like a snake emerging from the shadows, its mouth wide open, hissing.

"You won't succeed!"

Hui Lijing called out in cooperation.

Now that Jason had shown up, victory was certainly in their grasp.

With this in mind, of course, extracting more information was necessary.

Likewise, the attacker considered his victory certain.

Since the victory was already in hand, what harm would it do to reveal a bit more?

"The victor is me!"

"You say I've succeeded, haven't I?"

"And you?"

"You are just a useful tool. Once I'm done using you, I'll just flip you for a sell—That woman has offended at least 'Extreme Flow', 'Musashi Flow', and 'Mountain Tempest Flow', as well as countless hidden enemies who want to eliminate her. Thinking about it, you really are quite the gem!"

As this weird Onmyoji spoke, he reached for Hui Lijing's legs.

Hui Lijing was suspended, bound in mid-air, her legs stretched out straight.

Being a tall detective in the first place, her legs now looked even longer.

These legs captured the Onmyoji's attention.

"Hehehe."

The Onmyoji let out a series of lewd chuckles.

His hand raised.

Then, stopped in mid-air.

A blade entered from behind, piercing through the Onmyoji's heart.

At the same time, flames engulfed the Onmyoji.

An expert-level Charles Burning Technique brought about an explosive level of flames.

In an instant, the Onmyoji's body was charred to ash.

A few breaths later, the body completely lost all moisture.

Then—

Crack, crack.

Jason stomped the remains to pieces.

Turning it to dust.

A gust of wind scattered the dust in all directions.

With the binding force dissipated, the detective herself leaped down from the suspension.

As Jason crushed the charred corpse of the attacker, the detective joined him in the act.

"Well handled."

"But remember, the biggest difference between the Mystical Side and the ordinary world is..mon sense!"

"What would be a mortal wound in the eyes of an ordinary person, in the Mystical Side?"

"It might not even be considered a light injury."

"The advent of gunpowder is a new era, but the old era has not ended. Instead, the old era, lurking in the dark, will become more terrifying and mystifying."

Jason spoke slowly.

"Right."

With the facts right before her eyes, Hui Lijing nodded continuously.

Then, the detective suddenly thought of something.

"Have you been here all along?"

The detective asked.

"No, just arrived."

Jason shook his head without looking back, his gaze towards the direction of Tongshou Temple.

A coldness emerged in Jason's eyes from the presence he sensed.

A diversionary tactic?

Jason scoffed, quickening his pace.

Looking at Jason's hastened departure, the detective's face, obscured by her hair, was full of speculation.

Was Jason here all along?

But just didn't want to say it, telling me he just arrived to save face?

Such an awkward personality is really annoying.

Just say it if you're worried about me!

Tsundere doesn't suit someone with your bulk!

The detective thought to herself, the corners of her mouth turning up involuntarily.

Then, she quickened her steps, chasing after him.

...

Let's rewind a bit in time.

After Master Tongshou Temple gave Jason a detailed explanation of the Substitution Technique, words appeared before Jason's eyes.

[Accepting an 'Ambrosial Revelations' style explanation!]

[Evaluating...]

[Evaluation passed!]

[Do you want to spend 25 points of satiety to learn the Substitution Technique?]

...

Ambrosial Revelations?

Jason looked at the words before him, slightly stunned.

He subconsciously looked up at the Monk.

At this time, the Monk was also looking at him.

"Master, is there something you don't understand?"

"Please, do not hesitate to tell me all your concerns."

"I will answer each of them for you."

The old Master of Tongshou Temple said slowly with his hands pressed together.

"Is this how teachings are usually explained in Tongshou Temple?"

Jason inquired.

He was interested in 'Ambrosial Revelations.'

"Yes."

"The previous Master of Tongshou Temple taught me this way. However, back then, I listened to these teachings as if they were just stories. Even so, I unknowingly learned them, and by comparing them to the recorded scriptures, I quickly grasped the tricks."

"Thanks to the devoted teachings of the late Master, otherwise I would have never achieved this."

The old Monk said, pressing his hands together again to express his gratitude to the former Master of Tongshou Temple.

Jason, however, slightly frowned.

"Do you know 'Ambrosial Revelations'?"

Jason asked.

"I understand the meaning of the words."

"Do you mean the literal sense?"

The Monk was somewhat puzzled.

"No."

Jason shook his head and did not pursue the matter further.

Clearly, the old Monk did not know about the so-called 'Ambrosial Revelations.'

Is it hidden in some secret technique?

Jason's gaze swept over the Substitution Technique, the Boat Traversal Technique, the Silence Technique, the Vajra Palm, and the Great Majestic Heavenly Dragon Technique, and he couldn't help thinking.

Chapter 1037: Home Delivery! (2)

This is a pretty reasonable explanation.

'Instant mastery' does exist.

But the old monk doesn't know.

That only leaves one answer.

The old monk unknowingly learned a similar secret technique, without realizing it.

Naturally, the previous Master of Tongshou Temple knew it too.

Otherwise, how could he have explained it to the old monk.

As for the so-called talent the old monk mentioned?

Jason couldn't quite evaluate that.

After all, his own talent had long surpassed that of mere mortals.

Yes!

After muttering to himself in his heart, the text before him appeared once again.

[Doppelganger Hair (Basic): Initially created by the second-generation Master of Tongshou Temple, and then thoroughly perfected by the third generation; Effect: It takes 2 months (time determined based on physique, hair quality, and density) to create a basic, expressionless doppelganger. This doppelganger cannot move independently or perform complex actions. At a glance, it is clearly a dummy.]

(Note: I absolutely did not complete the perfection of the Doppelganger Hair just because I couldn't afford a haircut—third-generation Master of Tongshou Temple!)

...

To master the basics, Jason spent 25 points of satiety.

From basic to novice, it takes 35 points of satiety.

Without hesitation, Jason chose to learn.

[Doppelganger Hair (Novice): Initially created by the second-generation Master of Tongshou Temple, and then thoroughly perfected by the third generation; Effect: It takes 2 months (time determined based on physique, hair quality, and density) to create a basic, expressionless doppelganger. Although the doppelganger can't move independently, it can now perform more complex actions, but at a glance, it is still clearly a dummy.]

(Note: I absolutely did not complete the perfection of the Doppelganger Hair just because I couldn't afford a haircut—third-generation Master of Tongshou Temple!)

...

From novice to proficient level, it takes 40 points of satiety and 1 point of Excitement of Feast.

Satiety, Jason had plenty.

But Excitement of Feast? Jason didn't have any.

So, Jason stopped right there.

Looking up once more, Jason saw the old monk's eyes filled with that same anticipatory look.

And perhaps... excitement?

Why such eyes?

Jason was puzzled.

Then, he heard the old monk ask—

"Master, do you need me to explain?"

"How about I run you through the whole process of [Doppelganger Hair] from start to finish?"

"Don't worry, I'm not tired."

"I've been looking forward to this day for a long time."

The old monk of Tongshou Temple said so.

The old monk wasn't lying.

He truly had been looking forward to this day for a long time.

Not just to fulfill the last words of the previous Master of Tongshou Temple, but also because of an anticipation in his heart.

He had never been a teacher in his life.

But to be a teacher must be quite joyful.

Back then, he had watched class 3-B through a display window for three years.

Sometimes he would listen to class 3-2.

Somehow, the old monk had been looking forward to this day.

Looking forward to the day he could be a teacher.

And now it had finally arrived.

How could he not be excited, not expectant?

Come on, ask me!

Hurry up and ask me!

The old monk was screaming inside.

Then, the old monk saw Jason shake his head.

"No need."

"I've already reached the novice level."

Jason replied in such a manner.

"What?!"

The old monk couldn't help but raise his voice, staring at Jason dumbfounded, his face full of disbelief.

And Jason?

Circulating his Qi-Blood to cleanse his hair.

His hair, sticking close to his scalp, began to sway as if coming to life.

Watching this scene, the old monk was completely flabbergasted.

He had mastered it!

As someone who had practiced [Doppelganger Hair] to a considerable extent, the old monk knew exactly what reaching the novice level looked like.

It had taken him a full ten days to achieve this step in the past.

And Jason?

Three minutes?

Or two minutes?

Is this what talent looks like?

The old monk felt a sense of disappointment, a sudden emptiness inside.

He had prepared thick notes, ready to give to Jason.

Now what?

Sigh!

The old monk sighed.

However, immediately, the old monk cheered up.

Because the stronger Jason was, the more advantageous it was for Tongshou Temple.

Finally, he was no longer just a pretentious Master of Tongshou Temple.

However, he was indeed the true Master of Tongshou Temple.

At last, my task is finally completed.

The life that follows...

The old monk subconsciously thought of returning to the countryside, but then he remembered that his savings had been completely depleted.

Indeed, I have to become a wanderer!

But, there's nothing bad about that!

The benevolent and broad-minded old monk smiled and shook his head, completely indifferent.

"Master, what should we learn next...huh?"

The old monk was about to say something when he suddenly turned to look at the left wing room within the temple.

And Jason had already shifted his gaze there even sooner.

Feeling the strangeness there, the old monk clasped his hands together in prayer.

"What is meant to come, will always come."

"It's just that it's a bit earlier than expected."

"Master, please stay here, I will handle this."

The old monk spoke and was about to step out.

In the eyes of the old monk, this was one of the troubles he brought upon himself.

Although he thought of shifting the blame to Jason, if Jason really was in trouble, he certainly couldn't ignore it.

But before the old monk could take a step, he was stopped by Jason.

"You stay in the temple, leave the rest to me."

Jason said, his nostrils flaring uncontrollably.

Complex, multiple scents permeated around Tongshou Temple.

Many, cold and malicious intents spied around Tongshou Temple.

It was not until this moment that Jason realized, although the 'Fei' character banner was troublesome, it was not without its benefits.

At least, some 'food' would be attracted to this 'bait'.

He needed to make good use of it!

Therefore, absolutely no one could interfere!

He had to take action himself!

With this thought, Jason naturally would not allow the old monk to intervene.

Under the stimulation of the 'food', Jason's figure vanished in a flash as he stepped out of the Sutra Depository.

It wasn't that he moved extremely fast.

But rather, he used Stealth, a secret technique.

Jason did not wish to startle the 'snake'.

Hui Lijing, he would rescue.

And he also wanted the 'food'.

Thus, he would first take down the 'food' and then go find Hui Lijing.

Following the scent emitted by the 'food', Jason easily collected three pieces of 'food'.

After arranging the 'food' carefully, Jason successfully rescued the female detective.

So, when the female detective asked if Jason had arrived earlier, his answer was truthful.

He had indeed just arrived.

However, it was because of his strong perception that he noticed every move made by the female detective.

...

A cloaked black figure appeared outside Tongshou Temple.

"Has the plan failed?"

"As expected of the Master of Tongshou Temple."

"Not only did he see through my plan, but he also managed to rescue the 'bait' by merely sending a young man."

The figure spoke and stepped towards the interior of Tongshou Temple.

In that small courtyard, the old monk of Tongshou Temple was already standing there.

"Benefactor, please halt."

Looking at the person walking in with an unfriendly aura, the old monk of Tongshou Temple said gently.

The cloaked shadow paused in his steps.

Narrowing his eyes, he observed the composed and unafraid old monk of Tongshou Temple, a hint of wariness flashing in his eyes.

"Hand over the 'Fei' character banner!"

"I will leave immediately!"

"I promise not to harm Tongshou Temple at all."

Amidst his wariness, the black figure spoke coldly.

And the old monk of Tongshou Temple?

He really wanted to hand over the 'Fei' character banner, but he truly did not have it!

Likewise, he was well aware that explanations would be useless.

Therefore, he decided to keep silent.

But this attitude made the black figure even more wary.

He took a small step back and shouted in a high voice –

"Do you think I'm alone?"

"Fengmo Brothers, come out!"

The Fengmo Brothers?

Are they the rumored monster siblings?

This is troublesome!

The old monk of Tongshou Temple tightened inside, but his face remained calm as he just stood there quietly.

The voice of the uninvited guest echoed in the courtyard.

Then—

Whoosh!

The wind swept through the leaves, but nothing appeared.

It was utterly silent.

Suddenly, the atmosphere became awkward.

Chapter 1038: Acting Naturally

The Wind Demon Brothers are recently appeared yokai in the Silver District.

Even though they have not been around for long, they have already gained considerable fame.

Because they come and go without a trace, often with just a gust of wind, a person's head would fall to the ground.

Therefore, when He Tai was planning to acquire the "Fear" banner from Tongshou Temple, he hired these three brothers—according to the contract, when he needs them, he just shouts their names and they would come out to help decapitate his enemies.

But...

Why didn't they show up?

Feeling the eerily quiet courtyard, He Tai couldn't help but frown.

What happened?

Was I deceived?

He Tai thought subconsciously.

Then he shook his head.

Impossible!

The Wind Demon Brothers are quite trustworthy!

Once paid, they will do the job!

This is the brothers' motto, so he hired the 'three brothers', after all, he clearly knows who he is facing.

The famous Master Tongshou Temple!

Ordinary characters, yokai meeting this master, probably get scared even before the fight begins.

But not the Wind Demon Brothers.

They not only gave him a verbal guarantee but also signed a contract.

Bound by the power of the contract, failing to fulfill it would cost them dearly.

Although it wouldn't kill them, it would definitely be very painful.

Thinking of this, He Tai steadied his spirit.

Could it be part of the Wind Demon Brothers' strategy to confuse the monks of Tongshou Temple?

As He Tai thought this, he spoke again.

"Wind Demon Brothers, come forth!"

"Fulfill your promise!"

Whoosh!

A gust of wind, even noisier than before, appeared.

The night breeze was gentle, bringing a chill.

Feeling this chill, He Tai's lips curled up.

They're coming! They're here!

The Wind Demon Brothers are here!

With his onmyoji skills, even the old monk of Tongshou Temple would surely be no match.

If his shikigami were here, it would be even better.

Unfortunately, he must ensure the safety of that lady.

Although he is after the "Fear" banner and has collaborated with some unscrupulous people, he does not want to harm the innocent.

Operating in the shadows, he considers himself not a good person, but he is still... human.

Some things, he will not do.

"Monk of Tongshou Temple, do you feel it?"

"The power of the Wind Demon Brothers."

"Invisible and sharp."

"Do you really not intend to hand over the 'Fear' banner?"

He Tai asked again.

"The Wind Demon Brothers?"

The old monk of Tongshou Temple murmured thoughtfully to himself.

Being a person of the Mystical Side, the old monk certainly knew about the recently famous Wind Demon Brothers and their methods.

If possible, he would not mind handing over the "Fear" banner to the other party.

But, he really doesn't have it!

How can he hand it over?

Therefore, after murmuring to himself, the old monk could only lightly bow with his hands pressed together.

Decades of constant practice made the old monk appear calm, composed, and possessing an indescribable aura.

And coincidentally, when the old monk straightened up... the wind stopped!

The gentle night breeze stopped.

The chill dissipated.

Only a slight coolness remained.

He Tai was startled!

This old, wandering onmyoji repeatedly stepped back, continuously shouting loudly.

"Wind Demon Brothers? Wind Demon Brothers?"

No response.

Only his own voice echoed.

Is this... Master Tongshou Temple?!

At this moment, He Tai was no longer just surprised.

But shocked!

In fact, when this wretched, wandering onmyoji sensed that indescribable aura from the old monk of Tongshou Temple, alarm bells went off in his heart.

That gentle, tenacious yet profound aura made him subconsciously think he was seeing a Buddha in the temple, instinctively wanting to retreat.

Then, the wind coincidentally stopped.

This made He Tai unconsciously start to speculate.

Could the Wind Demon Brothers have been dealt with by Master Tongshou Temple?

Silently taken care of.

Was it over before it started?

Thoughts in He Tai's heart unconsciously bubbled up.

Already having retreated to the courtyard gate, the down-and-out, wandering onmyoji unconsciously wanted to step over the threshold and leave.

But just as he moved his leg, he stopped again.

No!

The "Fear" banner is the hope to revitalize his family!

He couldn't just withdraw!

A lifetime of obsession made this down-and-out, wandering onmyoji return.

The monk of Tongshou Temple had no idea what happened.

When he saw He Tai leave, he was quite pleased, but when he saw He Tai return, he sighed and was puzzled.

However, no matter what, he did not show it.

Just with a calm expression, his hands gently pressed together.

"Donor, is there anything else?"

The old monk of Tongshou Temple asked.

"'Fear' banner!"

"It is my only hope!"

"I will not give up!"

As He Tai spoke, he took out a stack of talisman papers, and with a flick, they turned into clusters of flames, six in total, surrounding He Tai.

The old monk of Tongshou Temple sighed and shook his head.

There was no avoiding it now.

It had to be a fight.

Watching the old monk's shaking head, He Tai gritted his teeth, waved his hand.

Six flames shot directly at the old monk.

The six flames, some in straight lines and some in arcs.

With a whooshing sound of cutting through the air, they completely blocked the old monk's retreat.

Feeling the scorching heat approaching, the old monk remained calm.

Although not skilled in combat, he was not without experience.

Chapter 1039: Acting Naturally (2)

Because he was not adept at combat, he even researched how to successfully avoid it without losing face for Tongshou Temple.

The current situation was just right!

[Doppelganger Release]!

At the very beginning, the old monk of Tongshou Temple had used a doppelganger to stand in front of He Tai.

Now, faced with He Tai's thrown fireball, the old monk of Tongshou Temple had no intention of dodging.

He had even prepared for the flame to burn the [Doppelganger Release], and then to send out a second [Doppelganger Release] from the right wing room, using words to express his reluctance to fight back.

Next, it was likely that the doppelganger would be destroyed again.

Then, he would send out the [Doppelganger Release] from the left wing room.

Repeat the above actions.

And when all three doppelgangers had been used, all destroyed, it would be time for his real body to fight.

He hoped that by then Jason would have returned!

The old monk of Tongshou Temple stood silently in the Sutra Depository, controlling the doppelganger to stand upright, once again bringing his hands together in prayer.

But just at that moment—

Bang!

A gunshot sounded.

The bullet grazed the bowed head of the old monk's doppelganger and embedded itself into the wall.

What?

The old monk was startled.

Was there an ambusher?

He Tai was also stunned.

He only had one partner and had hired the 'Wind Demon Brothers.'

Even with his shikigami included.

The Lantern Carrying Juvenile would not use firearms.

Moreover, for the safety of that lady, the Lantern Carrying Juvenile was arranged to be inside the 'Illusion Realm.'

Without a doubt, someone had intervened.

He Tai's hand retracted.

Six fireballs returned to his side.

But the speed of the fireballs' flight was simply no match for the speed of a bullet.

Bang!

During the return of the six fireballs, the gunfire sounded once again.

And this time, it was aimed at He Tai.

A piece of talisman paper appeared in He Tai's hand.

Though fallen from grace, He Tai's lineage meant he had a variety of techniques at his disposal.

An invisible force field appeared in front of the bullet.

The incoming bullet was stopped just like that.

Clang clang.

The yellow-orange bullet fell from midair.

But before He Tai could take a breath of relief, a figure soundlessly appeared behind him, and with a dagger in hand, stabbed towards the back of the wandering Onmyoji.

Whoosh!

The sound of piercing the air came.

Not good!

Can't dodge in time!

He Tai's face changed.

He tried his best to dodge to the side.

But such an evasion was utterly futile.

The attacker's wrist trembled slightly, and once again aimed for his heart.

It's over!

Perceiving the proficient technique of the attacker, a chill ran down He Tai's spine.

Although he didn't know the specific process, he knew he had been used.

His corpse would become an excellent tool.

To lead disaster to 'Tongshou Temple.'

Why would the plotter do this?

Naturally, it was because of the 'Fear' banner.

Apart from the 'Fear' banner, He Tai couldn't think of anything else.

As for who the plotter was?

He Tai couldn't think of it.

But...

Unwillingness! Humiliation!

These feelings overwhelmed his heart at this moment.

He was filled with anger.

Angry at his own helplessness.

Angry at his own recklessness and ignorance.

Carrying regret, He Tai prepared to welcome death.

But just at that moment, a force came from the side of his body, which he had no power to dodge.

It was...

The old monk of Tongshou Temple.

The old monk shoved the weak He Tai aside.

Then—

Thrust!

The dagger pierced the old monk's chest.

Blood instantly flowed out, staining the old monk's worn-out robes.

However, the old monk still wore a smile as he brought his hands together in prayer towards the person who had stabbed him.

This was instinct for the old monk of Tongshou Temple.

Just as he saw He Tai in danger and shoved him away to let He Tai escape danger.

Why help the person who attacked him?

Shouldn't monks be compassionate at heart?

Although he was a fake monk who had entered monkhood halfway through his life.

But he had accepted the last request of the previous Master of Tongshou Temple to become a monk, and since he had accepted a friend's trust, he naturally had to fulfill it.

Not only to fulfil it but to do it convincingly.

So, he did just that.

Once he started, it was for more than a decade or two.

Habit became instinct.

Faced with the sudden move by the old monk of Tongshou Temple to block the stab for He Tai, it was certainly beyond the assailant's expectations, and without even pulling out the knife, the assailant turned and ran.

"Go to hell!"

But before the assailant could leave the courtyard, He Tai's roar resounded.

The six fireballs instantly devoured the assailant.

The person did not even shout before turning into ashes.

While He Tai quickly ran to Master Tongshou Temple.

"Ma, Master You?"

He Tai was somewhat at a loss.

He wanted to ask why save him.

After all, they could hardly be called friends, and could even be considered enemies.

Keep in mind that he was just about to try to seize the character flag.

Master Tongshou Temple, however, just started laughing.

Such things as what happened to He Tai, he had encountered too many times.

He certainly knew what He Tai wanted to ask.

It's just a doppelganger.

Naturally, it would be alright.

But it was He Tai's own breath that seemed unsteady.

So, the old monk naturally asked—

"Are you alright?"

The voice remained gentle, embodying concern that went without saying.

He Tai was completely stunned.

To revive his family, he roamed the Mystical Side, most of the time among a bunch of ambitious wolves, constantly on guard against these bastards spreading their malice to him.

Even if he met some decent people, that was all they were.

Most of the time, it was a relationship of interests.

He had never before met someone like the old monk.

Sincere, kind.

Even faced with someone like him, he was treated with tenderness.

Inexplicably, a touch of warmth rose within the emptiness of He Tai's heart.

An unfamiliar warmth.

For the first time in his life.

Even his parents had never given him such a feeling.

Because, from his parents, what he received was only the conviction to 'revive the family.'

Cold, dogmatic.

With no turn.

It was like an iron shackle was on his body.

Cold and solid.

Pressing so hard that he could hardly breathe.

But just now, the words of the old monk had let him feel warmth.

The cold unconsciously dispersed.

His body also relaxed.

Unintentionally, He Tai straightened up.

"I'm alright."

He Tai said while supporting the old monk.

"That's good, that's good."

The old monk said, then staggered, and even with He Tai's support, sat down on the ground.

Master's doppelganger was indeed miraculous, but the created doppelganger was still of an ordinary person's strength; having taken such a blow, it quickly entered a critical state.

Feeling the old monk's increasingly weak breath.

He Tai anxiously sprinkled healing medicine on the old monk's wound.

He didn't dare to pull out the dagger.

Because that would only accelerate the old monk's death.

But not pulling out the knife, and just using the healing medicine, was completely useless.

"Damn it!"

"Why didn't I choose that healing Shikigami?"

He Tai cursed to himself, then prepared to carry the old monk to the hospital.

But just at that moment, numerous figures appeared at the entrance of the temple yard.

Indistinctly, in layers upon layers.

Over a dozen figures appeared there.

Their faces were ferocious, with undisguised malice in their eyes.

"Perfect!"

"We originally just wanted to use you, an Onmyoji, to create discord with Tongshou Temple."

"Who knew that this stupid monk from Tongshou Temple would actually take a knife for you."

"If we had known this, would we need to plot for so long?"

"By exploiting the stupid monk's weakness, we would have killed him long ago and taken the character flag!"

The leader of them, dressed in modern clothing but with two long swords hanging at his waist, had neatly combed hair, but his eyes carried a frivolity that was uncomfortable to look at.

The people around him were the same.

"Step aside."

He Tai growled.

"Heh."

The cold laugh was the response.

He Tai took a deep breath, pulled out talisman paper, enveloped the old monk with a force field, and said softly, "Master, please wait."

After speaking, He Tai turned around, pulling out a stack of talisman paper.

"Last warning, step aside."

He Tai's voice turned cold.

"Another fool!"

"Take him out!"

"Kill the old monk and seize the character flag!"

The leader waved his hand, and immediately, a group of people rushed into the temple.

"Get out!"

He Tai raised his talisman paper.

Fireballs blazed furiously.

The scorching high temperature distorted the air.

Yet, He Tai's expression was more serious than ever.

An inexplicable strength was born from the bottom of his heart, and at this moment, he was stronger than ever.

That was conviction!

Different from the previous cold conviction.

Now the conviction was warm.

It was passionate.

It made He Tai feel... alive!

Whoosh!

The flames surged even higher.

He Tai roared.

"As long as I'm here, I'll never allow you to set foot in Tongshou Temple."

"And that's final!"

Chapter 1040: Demon Blade=?

He Tai's roar echoed through the small temple.

A dozen or so people appeared out of nowhere, showing disdain as they wielded their weapons and began to approach.

Inside the Sutra Depository, the old Monk of Tongshou Temple sighed softly, manipulating another doppelganger to prepare to take a hit for He Tai.

To this point, the old Monk of Tongshou Temple still had not grasped the ins and outs of the situation.

But this leader.

No!

To be precise, he recognized one of the two swords at the leader's waist.

Even at a distance of tens of meters, he could feel the aura emanating from it.

Gloomy, frenzied.

Filled with the stench of blood.

Demon Blade!

The old Monk of Tongshou Temple was very certain.

Just uncertain of which Demon Blade it might be.

Thinking this in his heart, the old Monk controlled another doppelganger and watched the scene unfold.

"Finish him off."

The leader spoke casually, his left hand resting nonchalantly on the two long swords, his eyes filled with a scorn that was almost tangible.

It was as if He Tai was not worth mentioning.

As a matter of fact, He Tai's performance far exceeded anyone's imagination.

Within moments of the attackers closing in, they fell into disarray.

Fireballs flew one after another.

Each one hitting the attackers hard.

And He Tai himself, with agile steps and a lithe figure, weaved through the attackers, effortlessly dodging their passes.

About two minutes later, all those who had charged were down.

All of them blackened and with eyes rolled back, unconscious.

However, not one had lost their breath.

All were still alive.

"Heh, what trash."

The leader, a young man with a flippant look in his eyes, sneered.

His gaze first swept over the people on the ground, then landed on He Tai.

The meaning was implicit.

It wasn't just the people on the ground he was calling trash.

It was also He Tai, who had achieved victory but remained mercifully soft.

Huh!

He Tai didn't argue with the other, just took a deep breath.

Everyone has their own set of principles for conducting themselves.

He was no exception.

If he could avoid killing, he would not kill.

While this made his tasks more difficult, it made him feel that he was still human, not a machine that would stop at nothing to achieve his goals.

Maybe I'm not a good person, but I still want to be human.

With this belief, He Tai strived to revive his family.

He would not change his beliefs for anyone's words.

Not in the past.

Not now.

And not in the future...

"Get out!"

Breathing out, He Tai's eyes were firmer and brighter than before.

Talisman Papers flew from his hand like arrows, accompanied by muffled bangs, turning into bursts of fire in midair, enveloping the leader in flames.

The flame rose.

The heat spread.

The figure of the leader disappeared in the flames in an instant.

But He Tai did not relax for even a moment.

As soon as the leader was surrounded by flames, a sense of foreboding rose in He Tai's heart.

As an Onmyoji, He Tai had an extraordinary sense of perception.

And the experience from battles only accumulated more experience for him.

Therefore, as soon as the unpleasant feeling arose in He Tai's heart, the wandering Onmyoji flickered to the side.

Whoosh!

A gale howled.

Just as He Tai had completed his evasion, a ferocious wind blew.

The fireball was extinguished in an instant by the fierce wind, and a sharp gust passed by He Tai.

He Tai didn't make contact with this gust.

But the sharpness made his skin sting.

The cloak on his body was torn to shreds.

Blood seeped, the pain spreading from his left arm.

But He Tai paid no attention to these details; he looked down at the ground of the temple's courtyard.

On the hard bluestone ground, a crack one finger wide extended from He Tai's side to the steps in front of Tongshou Temple's main hall.

"Sword, Sword Qi?!"

He Tai's face changed, crying out in alarm.

Swordsmen have the easiest time entering the Inside World.

But just entering.

Such entry signifies little more than cannon fodder.

To truly gain a foothold, one needs impressive techniques.

And 'Sword Qi' is a clear marker.

Being able to wield Sword Qi signifies a certain level for a Swordsman.

Even demons would not underestimate it.

After all, many demons were slain by 'Sword Qi.'

That's why Swordsmen of this era were called—

Masters of the Blade!

The person in front was actually a Master of the Blade?!

He Tai thought with surprised uncertainty, as the man who swung the sword began to sneer again.

"What? Surprised?"

"Do you think I'm like those insignificant ones?"

"Or maybe..."

"You think you could dodge my second strike!"

The sword-wielding leader stomped on the ground the moment his words ended and, like an arrow, charged towards He Tai.

He Tai shot out Talisman Papers, trying to block the attacker.

But it was to no avail.

The oppressive force of the sword movement, along with the wind it created, shredded the Talisman Papers before they could even form fireballs.

What's more, the sword-wielding leader was too fast.

Faster than He Tai had anticipated.

So fast that He Tai barely had time to react.

He Tai couldn't react in time.

But the old Monk of Tongshou Temple who had been preparing for a long time did react.

Thud!

With the sound of a familiar collision, the old Monk of Tongshou Temple knocked He Tai aside.

And the Monk himself was split in two.

Blood scattered.

The hot blood splashed onto He Tai's face.

He Tai stood there in a daze.

"Master, Master?"