

## **Menu 471**

Chapter 471: The Moment of Dawn!

That's why all these arrangements have been made.

Otherwise, it simply can't be explained.

Is this a test?

Edmund thought to himself, his gaze instantly returning to normal.

"In the underground base of Ang City, I discovered Lawrence's 'backup plan'!"

"At this moment, I can't specifically assess its danger level, but based on the 'anomalies' encountered at the current stage, the potential risk should be extremely high!"

"The 'Masked Man' is helping us fight that 'anomaly'."

Edmund reported truthfully.

"Understood."

"Reinforcements will arrive soon."

"Please hold on."

Wayne finished and ended the call.

Edmund, on the other hand, picked up the communicator again, this time not for Esther, but for Pasi.

"Pasi, how is the situation?"

Edmund inquired.

"We've all entered the underground shelter, everything is good."

Pasi responded.

"Hmm, that's good."

"Don't worry, everything will pass."

"We'll all gather at the dining table again, tell Danfoss for me that I'm looking forward to her cooking."

Edmund instructed Pasi, sounding just like his usual caring self.

With no additional words, he then disconnected the communicator.

Hopefully Pasi could make it in time!

Edmund silently hoped, placing the communicator at his waist, and then nodded to Clark and Lites, who were carrying a large amount of heavy and special weapons, ammunition, and two support mobile teams.

"This time we will definitely take down that big lizard."

Lites said fiercely.

He had learned through the communicator what had happened underground.

Although his people hadn't died in the real sense of the word, the thrill had left this vice-captain feeling unsettled.

As for the giant lizard that had almost cost him his men, Lister felt no affection.

"Hmm."

Edmund did not deny.

Clark silently led the way without saying a word.

The group quickly entered the emergency passage and headed underground.

Meanwhile, Pasi, who ended the call and held the communicator, looked solemn.

Before the 'war' broke out, Edmund had made a promise with her that if something happened, he would contact her and remind her with caring words.

So, the true answer was in the words he had just spoken.

He mentioned Danfoss, but Danfoss was right beside me.

Therefore, it couldn't be Danfoss herself,

Cooking skills?

The people who had tasted Danfoss's cooking?

Jason hadn't.

The rest had, but Edmund said 'us', meaning he was present at the time.

At that moment...

Aras was not there!

Is Aras in danger?!

Pasi rapidly deduced the meaning Edmund intended to convey.

Without hesitation, she immediately went to a member of 'Hydra' nearby.

"Miss Pasi."

The 'Hydra' member responded respectfully.

Pasi, including the child Stark in her belly, had long been regarded as one of their own by 'Hydra'.

Moreover, he was poised high up in the hierarchy.

"Aras is in danger!"

"You must warn her!"

"It must be a targeted trap!"

Pasi said.

"Understood!"

'Hydra' members nodded and turned to start reporting up the chain.

The message passed through the ranks and quickly reached Aras, who was in the midst of battle.

At that moment, Aras had just smashed to pieces a 'freak' composed of rocks with a punch.

"Danger?"

Aras paused, not because of the message.

But because in front of her, a team appeared.

This was a fully armed squad with their faces covered, six in total, but their aura was incredibly strong; they immediately surrounded Aras from all sides as soon as they appeared.

"Miss Aras, we mean no harm,"

"We just want to ask you some..."

Bang!

The noise was like that of a shotgun firing.

It was the sound of Aras swinging her fists.

She didn't trust them.

Just like Jason had said: In the face of the enemy, strike first!

The rolling air currents hit the people in front of her, cutting off their words abruptly.

But what was truly terrifying was the punch of Aras.

That punch, which brought up layers of phantoms because of its swiftness.

It should have been six people surrounding Aras, but under the barrage of punches, it was as if they were the ones surrounded by Aras instead.

"Automatic rifle. Burst fire!"

"Euler Euler Euler Euler!"



Aras shouted, her fists getting faster and her strength growing with each shout.

Far away on a rooftop, a sniper finished his final adjustment.

He prepared to aim at Aras.

Before they took action, they had made many plans and assigned tasks to each other.

And him?

He was the one to 'rectify mistakes'.

He didn't instantly twist his scope or even look at the target.

Breathe, breathe.

As an excellent sniper, he adjusted himself.

Then—

Click.

The sound of a neck being snapped echoed.

"Really now."

"I hate you types who hide on the sidelines and stab in the back."

"I'm supposed to be the hero saving the city, how could I be stabbed by a dagger from the shadows?"

"This interferes with my gaming."

Rexus muttered under his breath.

Then, he looked up to another location.

The white-haired Scott was signaling from a second sniper spot nearby, indicating that all was well.

When the two met at the bottom of the building, Kuya, who had taken out the third sniper spot, still wore a clear expression of anger on his face.

"What's 'Sanctuary' doing?"

"It's bad enough there's no reinforcement, but why attack one of their own?"

Indignantly, Kuya spoke.

"It's not 'Sanctuary' acting up, but rather certain people from 'Sanctuary'!"

Chapter 472: The Dawn Moment!

"In fact, it's not just a 'shelter,' we..."

"Cough cough!"

"Let's hurry and leave."

"It's not safe here."

Scott interrupted Rexus's words.

This member of the Holy Serpent Society, his hair graying, did not want Kuya to know too much about the grim and shadowy matters, although they had always been present.

Rexus rolled his eyes.

But he didn't say much more.

He, was thinking about his game console.

Hurrying back was good, to avoid staying here, to avoid thinking about those troublesome things.

The three of them quickened their pace, and as they passed by the ruins, Kuya couldn't help but ask.

"You guys think 'Claw' 13 will be alright, right?"

Since their last 'date,' she hadn't seen 'Claw' 13.

And now, Ang City's main battlefield, facing those anomalies, was the Night Owl Court.

She was very concerned.

"Don't worry."

"Your guy is not..."

"Cough cough."

"'Claw' 13 is very strong. There's no need to worry."

"We're all managing, and he's much stronger than I am, so naturally, there's no need to worry."

Rexus coughed slightly to interrupt Scott.

By now, both he and Scott had confirmed that the Masked Man should indeed be Claw.NO13.

Manager Haro must know as well.

But Haro hadn't informed Kuya, obviously he had some plans in mind.

They wouldn't say too much.

Even for the sake of the peace they were enjoying now.

After all, Haro had more say over his daughter than they did.

They just hoped Kuya wouldn't notice anything amiss.

Rexus was wishing so.

In fact, mentioning Jason, praising Jason, was too easy to divert Kuya's attention.

"Of course!"

Kuya lifted her head high and strode forward confidently.

So easy to deceive!

Rexus and Scott exchanged looks, sharing silent communication.

Soon, the gray-haired Scott began to murmur a prayer under his breath.

"I hope the club is not destroyed."

"I hope all the ladies I know are safe."

"I hope... everything will pass!"

Rexus glanced at his partner, saying nothing more.

Everything will pass!

After all, this was Ang City, protected for a thousand years by the Night Owl Court.

There surely wouldn't be a problem!

He was convinced of it.

...

Click, click!

Amidst the rapid descent of the elevator, Edmund had gradually become accustomed to his weakness.

He didn't have extraordinary recovery powers.

He could only adapt.

Fortunately, up to now, he had adapted quite well.

He hoped it would be the same shortly!

Ding!

The elevator reached the floor, and the moment the doors opened, Edmund heard—

'Not only do you eat my flesh, but you also insult my intelligence!'



'I'll make sure you have no grave to rest in!'

Without hesitation, Edmund raised his voice to stop them.

But, it was too late.

Just as the words left his mouth.

Squeak, squeak.

A grating noise suddenly sounded.

In everyone's mind, an image of a door being pushed open emerged.

It was a set of double doors, ancient, slightly worn, made of solid wood, with both halves of the doors and the frame made of wood in the same color. The top halves of the doors, after a square engraving decoration, were square wooden lattices, presumably inset with colorful glass, but at that moment, were just a dull gray.

Not only was the glass gray.

Even the double doors themselves were dim.

It was like a scene from a black and white television.

And at that moment, a large lizard was standing in front of the door.

It pushed open the double doors with force.

Then, it teleported away again.

And behind the door...

Groups of ferocious monsters appeared.

They seemed to be carved from the same mold, 1.8 meters tall, with indistinct humanoid shapes, entirely pitch black.

Upon their appearance, they swarmed towards Jason, the closest to them.

Facing the tide of monsters, Jason took in a deep breath, feeling a certain force within him awakening.

The emergence of this force could only mean one thing—

Dawn had arrived!

Chapter 473: Let me go to die!

Dawn?

Jason was startled.

He had been so focused on fighting the giant lizard that he had completely lost track of time.

But the strength in his body could not lie.

Involuntarily, a smile crept up on Jason's lips.

He liked dawn.

It wasn't that he disliked the night or favored the day.

It was simply because at dawn, in a certain sense, he was the strongest!

"Buy me three seconds!"

Jason yelled back to those behind him.

"Understood!"

"Fire!"

Standing within the temporarily constructed defensive fortifications, Esther nodded and then gave the order.

These defensive fortifications were made of two steel plates and two support axles. When not in use, the plates could be collapsed onto the axles, making them highly convenient for transport and setup. When needed, they just had to unfold the two steel plates and prop them up with the axles to form a simple yet practical defense.

It was particularly worth mentioning that when multiple such defenses were combined, they formed a complete trench that had not only lookout points but also gun ports.

At that moment, following Esther's command, long tongues of fire began spewing from the gun ports.

Rat-tat-tat!

The sound of gunfire was incessant, bullets furiously shooting forth.

The monsters swarming towards them fell like wheat to the scythe, one after another.

Esther let out a slight sigh of relief.

Although there were many monsters, as long as they could be harmed by bullets, they were not to be feared.

Three seconds?

No problem at all!

Just as this thought crossed her mind, Esther's expression suddenly changed.

The monsters, which had just fallen, were getting up again!

Pierced by bullets, they rose once more, completely unharmed!

"Keep firing, keep firing!"

Esther shouted loudly.

The bullets shot forth again.

But to no avail.

"First team, maintain fire!"

"Second team, switch to special bullets."

Edmund, standing beside her, crisply supplemented the order.

Led by Vice-Captain Lites, members of the mobile unit armed with special ammunition like silver bullets and lead rounds quickly joined the fight. They bore expressions of determination and eyes filled with sharpness, just like their comrades.

"For our homes behind us!"

"Kill all these motherfuckers!"

With those words, Lites bellowed with rage.

The submachine gun in his hands, loaded with silver bullets, sprang into action, sweeping a stream of fire across the enemy.

The dark monsters charging from a distance fell to the ground under this barrage, and this time, they did not get back up.

"Silver bullets!"

"Silver bullets work!"

"Everyone switch to silver bullets!"

Edmund, who had been closely monitoring the battlefield, eyes lit up, and he immediately gave the order.

However, the subsequent burst of fire didn't go as expected.

Despite being silver bullets, they didn't seem to inflict fatal wounds on the dark monsters.

Not just the bullets?

What else...?

Lites's words!

Edmund quickly came to a conclusion.

"Everyone shout!"

"We fight for the homes behind us!"

Edmund roared, and at the same time, aimed his submachine gun at a distant monster and fired.

Crack!

With a sharp report, the monster fell to the ground, lifeless.



Upon witnessing this scene, those around him began to shout loudly, "For our homes behind us!"

Their voices were chaotic but ringing loud,

Even overpowering the sound of gunfire.

And the monsters swarming them were shot down one after another.

Sss, ssss!

The black humanoid monsters died in droves, their bodies making strange noises as they 'evaporated' into clouds of ash, the air filled with the scent of sulfur.

Extremely pungent!

But more pressing than the stench was the number of monsters.

A barrage of firepower not only failed to reduce their numbers,

But instead, the monsters seemed to multiply endlessly.

More importantly... ammunition consumption!

Silver bullets, as a type of special ammunition, were not standard issue.

Though a batch of them was always kept in the Ang City base armory, under this continued fire, their numbers were rapidly dwindling.

"Captain!"

"We're running low on ammo!"

"Captain!"

"We're running low on ammo!"

The members of the mobile unit reported one after another.

After Lites had fired off all his bullets, he turned to look at Edmund.

He then noticed that Edmund was not panicking but merely looking ahead.

Ahead?

Sir Jason?

Lites blinked, then came back to his senses.

He subconsciously turned his head to look.

Light!

Suddenly, a beam of light appeared in the pitch-black corridor!

The light brought with it a sharp brilliance.

Blindingly bright!

There, a sword!

A 25-meter-long Light Sword!

The moment the Light Sword appeared, Jason, who had been still, stepped forward and swept it across what lay before him.

Hum!

The long sword cleaved through the air.

The swarming monsters abruptly stopped.

And then... they were sliced cleanly in half at the waist.

Their upper bodies had not yet hit the ground before evaporating into nothingness, leaving behind not even a trace of sulfur.

Everyone watched the spectacle in breathless amazement.

Clark and Lites's breath hitched.

They had never truly felt the power of Jason firsthand, and it was only at this moment that they saw Jason act decisively for the first time.

Powerful!

That was both of their initial impressions.

When that 25-meter-long sword first pierced the darkness, it was as if they saw the dawn that dispelled the night.

Clark and Lites were stunned.

And so were the mobile unit members around them.

They all widened their eyes, rendered speechless. Then, as they watched the remaining specks of light from the disappearing Light Sword and the figure standing silently within them, admiration and fervor bloomed in their eyes.

The strong rightly deserved respect.

Chapter 474: Let me go to death!

Especially the powerhouses of their own side were no exception.

"Truly powerful, Lord Jason."

Esther couldn't help but exclaim.

He had never doubted Jason's strength.

However, each time he witnessed Jason displaying his strength, he would feel awed once again.

Edmund, who had entered 'the zone,' was the only one who remained calm.

"Quickly resupply the ammunition!"

"Bring down all the silver bullets from the reserve armory!"

"And seek reinforcements from the other forces within the city!"

Edmund issued his commands.

"Yes!"

Clark and Lites responded on behalf of the mobile squad.

After that, everyone sprang into action.

Including Jason.

He didn't stand still any longer but stepped forward.

Although he wanted to continue to trigger the special effect of 'Chen Xi Sword gains an extra +5 meters when you've charged for 3 seconds while stationary,' he was even more curious to see what lay within that room at the very end.

About five steps forward, the humanoid dark monsters that had just been wiped clean surged forth once again.

Without any hesitation, Jason swung horizontally once more.

The "Chen Xi Sword," lacking the additional bonus and now only 20 meters, still managed to overpower the judgment level of a tank as it swept through the monsters before it.

The oncoming swarm of monsters offered no resistance and were slain once again.

As the bodies of the monsters evaporated, Jason continued to step forward.

However, this time his pace was a bit slower.

The "Chen Xi Sword" took a tremendous toll on Physical Strength.

Even in some ways, it was more taxing than "Protection Against Evil."

So after two swings, Jason had reached his limit.

The third swing would depend on his Talent!

Jason was fully aware of this.

Subconsciously, he glanced at his satiety level.

561!



An unprecedented number!

This was his gain from the battle against the big lizard.

Unfortunately, the "Excitement of Feast" didn't increase and remained at 7 points.

Moreover, that big lizard was smarter than he had imagined.

He had tried to provoke it with words and combat style as much as possible, but the creature had decided to retreat and, furthermore, left him quite the conundrum.

However, just the same, Jason had a sliver of anticipation.

The big lizard might have escaped, but the source that kept spawning monsters did not.

Then...

What would it taste like?

This new level of anticipation revived the fatigued Jason's Spirit.

His steps quickened once again.

As for the incessantly spawning monsters?

Jason never worried about them.

187 lives!

Enough to allow him to march forward courageously and fearlessly.

Three seconds later, the "Chen Xi Sword" reappeared!

The 20-meter long Light Sword swept across the battlefield.

The outcome was the same as before.

And in the next 30 seconds, the "Chen Xi Sword" appeared 10 times, just as invincible as before.

However, the frequency of the monster appearances quickened.

As Jason ventured deeper into the passageway, these humanoid dark monsters appeared faster and faster, not giving Jason the 3 seconds he needed to charge his attack.

After eliminating another group of monsters, Jason found himself surrounded by a swarm of the beasts.

Exhausted to his limit, he had no strength left to break out of the encirclement.

Similarly, he had no room to dodge.

At the next moment, one of the monsters reached out its limb from behind toward Jason.

Despite having a humanoid appearance, the end of the creature's limb was a sharp claw!

Yet when the sharp claw touched Jason's skin, it didn't cut through his skin or muscles, but instead 'sank' right into it as if his formidable defense didn't exist at all.

Then, a heart was pulled out.

On the dark palm, the heart pulsated vigorously.

His own heart, Jason was intimately familiar with, having seen it more than once when branding the "Dufol Language" of the secret technique.

And as for it being pulled out in front of his eyes?

Jason was not unfamiliar with this situation either.

He silently watched the dark monster that pulled out his heart turn and run, without pursuing it.

His Physical Strength didn't allow for such futile gestures.

For death was imminent.

Jason's eyes went dark.

His vitality faded.

But then, resurrection followed as surely as a shadow.

Vitality surged anew.

The dark monster holding Jason's heart, however, was left standing there dumbfounded.

Its hand was now empty of the heart.

Such a vibrant, beating heart,

Which had just been there a moment ago.

How could it be gone?

The dark monster was greatly puzzled, not only it but also the surrounding dark monsters looked at Jason with bewilderment.

They had just witnessed Jason's death.

But how was he alive again now?

And Jason?

He naturally would not explain anything to the enemies, his Light Sword swung once more, clearing the throngs of monsters in front of him, and he stepped forward again.

Behind him, those who had been attentively watching the battlefield saw that Jason was safe and sound and couldn't help but breathe a sigh of relief.

"So powerful!"

"Surrounded by so many monsters and yet remaining unharmed!"

"Worthy of being the 'talons' of the Night Owl Court."

Clark couldn't help but exclaim.

Lites, the deputy, didn't speak, but his face showed full agreement.

"Lord Jason will be the hope of the Night Owl Court."

"And he will surely be the new Judge!"

"Only he can make the Night Owl Court demonstrate its Strength once more!"

At this moment, Esther's eyes shone brightly with repeated sparks.

Chapter 475: Let me go to die!

He admired Jason, such a strong person.

Because his dad was just the same.

No matter the number a thousand strong.

I stand alone with my sword.

One sword, a Horizontal Slash.

One sword, a vertical chop.

Enough!

The sword...

Esther silently thought about the teachings of Avent before, subconsciously touching the long sword at his waist.

He always felt as if something had been added inside his heart.

It's just that he, as he currently was, wasn't certain yet.

No one noticed the change in Esther.

Not even Edmund.

Edmund, who had entered the "state," was perfecting the final step of the data model.

Compared to the preliminary data collection, collation, and deduction, the final step was the real difficulty and also the most crucial one.

After a full three minutes, Edmund came back to his senses.



Sigh.

He let out a long breath.

The corridor in front of him no longer held the pitch-black monster, as Jason's "cleaning" had pushed the monster back into that room. At that moment, Jason was also standing at the entrance to the room.

"Flares."

Edmund said.

Bang, bang.

One after the other, two flares dispelled the darkness in the corridor.

"Lites."

Edmund raised his hand.

Immediately, the vice-captain of the mobile squad led a full team, now once again supplied with silver bullets, to advance.

Without needing Edmund's instructions, Esther commanded the remaining people to start setting up the defensive fortifications.

Such movable defensive fortifications had this kind of advantage.

Solid yet Agile.

Swiftly, the entire team penetrated the secret chamber entrance discovered earlier by D-Class personnel Hosea.

At the same time, the people also saw Jason standing at the entrance.

Jason had his back to them.

They could only see his silhouette.

However, through the gap between Jason and the wall, they could see the pitch-black humanoid monsters crowding the narrow corridor as they tried to surge out but were firmly blocked inside by Jason's tall and sturdy frame.

There was no doubt that when the secret chamber was built, the possibility of "containment" failure had been considered.

This entrance seemed to be another sort of "defensive fortification."

Click, click.

The movable defensive fortifications were being rearranged.

However, Edmund's face bore a relaxed expression as he walked towards Jason.

He had seen through the gap that Jason had killed the group of monsters

Of course, he had also seen the door at the end of the corridor.

It was obvious that the giant lizard's "opening" had changed the entire room, but Edmund did not focus on such changes. His eyes were intently fixed on the double doors.

These double doors were the very same ones that had inexplicably appeared before his "eyes."

The design was identical.

Except that the doors were now completely open, revealing a dark, misty "entrance" that gave the impression of an abyss so deep that one couldn't see the bottom.

Where this entrance led to, Edmund did not know.

But based on the information available, he was sure that to close the door from the inside was the only way.

Otherwise, the "Sanctuary" would not have gone to such lengths to arrange it this way.

Moreover, Edmund was certain that this was not the first time the door had been opened.

As for how it was closed last time?

Didn't Aras's grandfather go missing?

Although he used the excuse of exploring the world, the real destination... must be there, mustn't it?

Edmund once again looked towards the double doors.

Without intending to, his mind conjured the series of plans that were laid out by some key figures in the "Sanctuary" council upon discovering this "anomaly."

Of course, the shadow of the "Sanctuary" was undoubtedly indispensable.

The "Holy Serpent Society"?

They might also be involved.

Under the push from all sides, the door was opened.

Aras's grandfather appeared, entered it, and then closed the door.

After that, the Ang City "Sanctuary" site was established, with new buildings erected here, covering up the past.

"Truly a hero!"

Edmund murmured with a sigh.

Then, he turned his gaze towards Jason.

"Jason, can you do me a favor?"

Edmund asked.

Jason stood coldly there, without giving an answer, as if he had died.

Just as Edmund was about to repeat himself, Jason seemed to come back to life.

"What?"

Jason asked.

This certainly wasn't Jason putting on an act, but rather he had just actually died and hadn't heard what Edmund was asking.

"I said..."

Hum!

Edmund was about to repeat himself when the open door suddenly emitted waves upon waves of monsters. Jason slashed with his sword, and once again, his breath was no more.

"Jason, can you do me a favor?"

Edmund repeated.

Jason stood leaden, not answering.

Edmund paused, and just as he couldn't help but remind Jason, Jason asked again.

"What?"

He had just died again and hadn't heard clearly.

But this time, Edmund didn't speak; instead, he revealed a bitter smile.

"Looks like you've guessed it."

"You're planning to sacrifice yourself to close this door, aren't you?"

"But compared to you, I'm more suitable."

"I'm just a useless bum, dead is dead, but you're different, Jason. You're already strong enough, and you'll undoubtedly become even stronger in the future!"

"Even this door recognizes this fact, the speed of the monsters emerging from inside it has begun to slow down since you approached it. It's clear, it's anticipating you getting closer."

Edmund said slowly, with no intention of stopping.

Chapter 476: Let me go to die!

"Don't pity me for my sake!"

"Because, when I arrived in Lai'ang City, I was already dead!"

"Yes, the walking dead, alive in name only."



"I went through two ordeals in succession, made the choices myself, saved the majority, and sacrificed my own teammates... twice."

"At first, I kept telling myself that it was the right thing to do."

"But then, at night, when alone, I'd ask myself, was it really right?"

"Clearly,"

"It wasn't."

"What I should have chosen was to sacrifice... myself."

"To let them all survive."

"After coming to this conclusion, I quietly waited for the opportunity, and now?"

"The opportunity has come."

"Jason, please let me."

"Let me face death."

"Let me atone for the mistakes I've made."

Edmund's voice was very calm, even when making a request, there wasn't a hint of fluctuation, as casual as inviting someone to dine.

Everyone heard these words.

People dumbfoundedly raised their heads to look at Edmund, and at Jason who was already standing at the entrance.

Edmund looked at Jason.

Jason stood still.

After a good few seconds, Jason finally spoke.

"What else?"

Jason asked.

"Else?"

"That's all."

"Maybe this is fate!"

Edmund said, smiling bitterly once again.

"Fate?"

"Back in my hometown, we had a saying—"

"I am the master of my fate, not heaven!"

"If fate is unjust, then fight against it to the end."

Jason said, turning his head to glance at Edmund.

"You just care too much about what others think!"

"Remember, what others think is bullshit. Who you are is for you to decide, that's what a friend once told me."

"Now I'm giving it to you."

Finishing, Jason took stride forward, walking straight ahead.

He would not agree to let Edmund close the gate.

Setting aside whether the other's strength was enough to shut the gate, the aroma of 'food' drifting over made it unacceptable for Edmund to go.

Because—

The scent of that 'food' was not in front, but behind the gate!

As for a war of attrition, gradually depleting resources before capturing 'food'?

If he had enough silver bullets, Jason could wait.

But now?

Although not paying close attention to the battlefield, his exceptional perception allowed Jason to overhear snippets and infer that the mobile squad members behind him were running low on silver bullets.

Even with reinforcements from other forces, there wouldn't be more silver bullets.

After all, silver bullets aren't standard ammunition.

Instead of dragging things out to the end, better he enter now.

291!

Glancing at the remaining satiety, Jason quickened his pace.

He, Jason, possessed extraordinary Talent.

And he charged forth resolutely!

Just as Edmund said, it seemed as if the gate was waiting for his entry, as after the last wave of monsters, it hadn't released any more.

Or maybe...

Were the monsters all concentrated behind the gate?

Jason thought.

"Wait!"

"Jason, wait!"

Edmund called out repeatedly.

"Lord Jason!"

"Lord Jason!"

Esther, Clark, Lites, and the unacquainted mobile squad members rushed to the entrance, calling out to Jason, trying to convince him to wait.

But Jason's steps did not falter.

He moved forward with unwavering determination.

Having made his decision, there was no need to change it.

However, just as he stood before the gate, his steps abruptly halted.

"Tell Aras,"

"I enjoyed sparring with her!"

As his words fell, Jason stepped through.

The moment Jason had stopped, the crowd thought there might have been a chance to persuade him otherwise, but before they could even react, Jason's silhouette had vanished behind the gate.

The crowd stared blankly at the gate.

The next moment—

Squeak!

The gate closed.

Chapter 477: The 'Fragment' Behind the Door

Edmund, Esther, Clark, Lites, and everyone from the mobile unit stared blankly at the closed door.

The unusual aura above had disappeared.

Edmund and his companions could confirm this.

They had all undergone the most professional training so they could quickly ascertain this fact.



But at this moment, whether it was Edmund, Esther, or whether Clark or Lites, they all wished they weren't so professional.

They hoped they were wrong in their judgment.

They hoped the door in front of them would open once again, hoping to see that figure again.

Unfortunately...

Hope ultimately came to nothing.

The door had become normal.

There was nothing special about it anymore.

It was even accelerating in decay.

It seemed as though the moment that had just passed was already a century ago.

Edmund looked at the closed door, his lips trembling slightly.

He was a man afraid of death, a man greedy for comfort, so he really had struggled for a long time before making the decision to sacrifice himself and close the 'door' just now.

But once again, someone else had sacrificed themselves in his place.

"The third time..."

"My luck is damnably good!"

Edmund murmured softly to himself.

Then, he reached out to push the double doors in front of him, and they opened easily.

Behind the door, there was nothing.

Only a wall.

The darkness and fog from just a moment ago seemed like a joke.

A cruel joke.

Edmund wanted to put on an appropriately timed smile to go along with this joke.

But no matter what, he couldn't bring himself to smile.

His tears flowed uncontrollably.

In an effort not to let the tears flow completely, he lifted his head and shouted—

"Salute to those who went to their death!"

As the words fell, Edmund saluted directly.

It was not the etiquette of the 'sanctuary.'

It was that of 'Hydra'!

And of 'Brotherhood'!

Behind him, everyone saluted together.

"May you rest in peace."

Esther said quietly.

His face bore an undisguised sadness, but more than that, a kind of calmness.

Had the 'Masked Man,' who was immune to aging and death, really died?

Such a death... such a death...

He couldn't accept it!

And... Aras!

How could he explain to Aras?

Jason was dead.

He died to save us, we survived... how could he ever say such words?

So, Jason must not be dead!

He's just left temporarily!

He can surely come back!

Esther believed this so firmly!

In fact, that was the case.

How could Jason, with his 'exceptional Talent,' possibly be dead?

He strode through the doorway.

First, darkness enveloped him, and then the space became bright again.

He had arrived in a world of 'Fragments'!

Right now, in front of him, there was a bedroom, kitchen, study, and other apartment home rooms, as well as hotel lobbies, school classrooms, hospital wards, and so on.

But these things were incomplete.

They were like they'd been haphazardly pinched at one end, kneaded a few times, and then temporarily put together.

However, this assembly was not complete.

In front of Jason, a complete, circular entity like a tunnel continued on to the end, far beyond where his vision could reach.

What could be there?

Jason couldn't help thinking, and then he looked down.

At his feet were footprints.

They were larger than average, but definitely still within the range of human size.

Probably size 48-49.

Moreover, the footprints were not parallel, the left foot in front and the right foot behind, unevenly spaced.

Looking at the footprints, Jason involuntarily conjured the image of a tall, strong man swinging his fist forward.

Swinging a fist?

A tunnel!

Jason paused for a moment, then quickly realized.

The tunnel in front of him was the result of that person's punch.

It was the other party's punch that had made this already 'Fragmented' world even more 'broken.'

No!

Not more broken!

But rather it directly destroyed the 'core' of this 'Fragmented' world.

"Although I do not know who it was, this is good news for me," Jason remarked as his gaze scanned the areas interlaced with light and shadow.

His superhuman perception clearly sensed the rich malice harboring there.

It was familiar.

It was those dark creatures.

Jason was certain.

After all, he had died dozens of times at the hands of those dark creatures.

The memory of death is always profound.



Of course, what was even more profound was the taste of 'food.'

There was a faint scent of food on the door behind him.

The world, connected by many 'Fragments,' also reeked of the smell of food.

"The second half!"

Jason said softly. He didn't look back, just stood there, closing the door behind him with the back of his hand.

Squeak.

Thud.

After the friction noise between the door frame and the hinge, there was a light bumping sound.

This noise was like a starting pistol.

One after another, humanoid dark creatures leapt out of the intersecting light and shadows. As soon as they appeared, they swarmed toward Jason in a rush.

And Jason?

He suddenly opened his mouth wide, turned around, and swallowed the door behind him.

Then, turning back around, he faced the oncoming tide of creatures with a wide-open mouth, revealing all his sharp teeth.

"Not one of you is going to escape!"

With a ferocious smile, Jason charged forward.

The [Chen Xi Sword] slashed out, its 20-meter Light Sword sweeping through a large swath.

And with no terrain to impede him, and without any burdens weighing him down, Jason easily dodged the pursuit of these dark creatures. Three seconds later, he swung the [Chen Xi Sword] again.

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With every swing of his sword, massive numbers of the pitch-dark monsters would die.

Every slash brought Jason one step closer to his next meal.

And with every creature he consumed, Jason's physical strength swiftly replenished.

[Part of 'Approaching the Door of Death' consumed!]

[Physical strength, energy, and injuries significantly recovered!]

[Satiety +20!]

[Satiety: 311]

...

[Part of 'Approaching the Door of Death' consumed!]

[Physical strength, energy moderately recovered!]

[Satiety +10!]

[Satiety: 321]

...

From the moment he began consuming the initial parts of 'Approaching the Door of Death,' notifications of increased satiety would intermittently appear before Jason, the recently depleted satiety visibly replenishing at a remarkable rate.

As he watched his satiety rapidly rise, and the monsters disappearing in droves, Jason remained extremely calm.

Because he knew very well what his current power was built upon.

The Chen Xi Sword!

Real combat with the Chen Xi Sword required the 'dawn'!

Once dawn passed, against these dark-hued monsters, he would only be left with Protection Against Evil.

Dodging just moments ago, relying on an ample supply of food, Jason tested Protection Against Evil against the monsters before him.

The effect was quite good.

A strike and the monster disintegrated into ash, not even a speck of sulfur powder remained.

But that was just one!

And how many monsters were there in front of him?

One gaze across the teeming mass revealed an uncountable number.

Moreover, Jason had his own main mission, to survive for 30 days.

And now only 10 days had passed.

20 days were still left!

With the consumption rate of Protection Against Evil, even with his extraordinary talent, facing such a number for another 20 days was impossible.

Therefore, Jason began to try out other secret techniques he had mastered.

The Charles Burning Technique was naturally the first choice.

Whoosh!

A conical flame burst forth.

Within a 45° angle, an 8-meter long, 0.8-meter high flame, akin to a dragon's breath of fire, instantly engulfed the dark, humanoid monsters before him.

However, faced with such fire, the monsters were only mildly hindered.

It was clear that the flames were ineffective.

No, that's not right.

The flames at the current level could not harm those monsters.

If it were a higher level...

Jason subconsciously glanced at the requirements to upgrade the Charles Burning Technique from expert to master level: 40 satiety points, 3 Excitement of Feast.

The former was well within Jason's reach, but the latter?

He had 7 points of Excitement of Feast, just one point shy of meeting the requirement to elevate Protection Against Evil to master level.

Compared to the Charles Burning Technique, Jason undoubtedly favored Protection Against Evil.

Not only because Protection Against Evil was the only method he could apply against the bizarre at any time, but also because the level of Protection Against Evil restricted the '[War Pattern.Pruess.Griffin.Shadow Hidden Body Forging Technique].'

Once Protection Against Evil was leveled up, relying on his talent, [War Pattern.Pruess.Griffin.Shadow Hidden Body Forging Technique] would inevitably reach a new level too.

That would be an all-around enhancement!

His strength would certainly reach a new degree!

Moreover, Jason could not confirm that the master level Charles Burning Technique would be effective against the pitch-black humanoid monsters before him.

Thus, he temporarily gave up on upgrading the Charles Burning Technique.

"Wait a moment!"

"When I'm left with no other choice, then I'll try upgrading the Charles Burning Technique!"

Having made his decision, Jason immediately released another secret technique he had mastered.

The Flash Technique!

Well, it was ineffective.

On the contrary, those pitch-dark monsters seemed to become more vigorous.

Afterward, Jason activated Mist Concealment.



Thick fog suddenly appeared, enshrouding both Jason and the monsters within it.

Instantly, the monsters that were pouncing towards Jason halted in their tracks.

They began to look around in confusion, searching for Jason.

Effective!

Jason watched the scene unfold before him with considerable surprise.

In the previous secret base beneath the 'Shelter,' these monsters were not hindered by darkness in their sight, so he didn't expect the fog to obscure their view.

But the current situation told Jason otherwise.

And after comparing the two situations, Jason swiftly concluded they were different.

In the previous pitch-black corridor, he had repeatedly wielded the Chen Xi Sword.

Here, he remained motionless.

Light, perhaps?

Thinking about the performance of these pitch-dark monsters during the Flash Technique just now, Jason had some speculations in his mind.

The next moment, when light shone from his hand, those monsters instantly locked onto him and charged at him once more.

And when the light from the Flash Technique faded and the fog once again enveloped them, the monsters looked around in confusion again.

This discovery gave Jason a flicker of surprise in his eye and also alleviated the last bit of concern in his heart.

He dispersed the fog.

"Continue."

Facing the swarm of monsters rushing toward him, Jason swung his sword.

The monsters died in droves, and whenever one died, more would emerge from the intermingling light and shadow, only to be slain by Jason's Chen Xi Sword.

The 20-meter-long Light Sword was like the Reaper's scythe, harvesting these unknown monsters.

And more 'food' was consumed by Jason.

These 'foods' were all named 'Parts of Approaching the Door of Death,' but their forms were bizarre and varied.

Sometimes it was a table, sometimes a chair, or even just a teacup.

For Jason, though, all it took was a single opening of the mouth to consume them.

At most, he just sucked their 'flavor' dry and spat out the residue, as if eating sugar cane.

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However, the taste of "Death's Door" differed from that of sugarcane.

It was more akin to chocolate.

The kind that came in big slabs, wrapped in foil, easily broken off.

Slightly bitter, but more so rich and sweet.

The flavor of each piece varied slightly due to the "texture."

Subtle, yet for Jason, it was quite the surprise.

Like the saying goes, "Life is like a box of chocolates; you never know what you're going to get."

Creak, creak.

After several chews, Jason spat out an aluminum teapot he had already bitten into shreds, deeply agreeing.

The "chocolate" just now was a bit hard.

Yet the sweetness remained, and it was still refreshing.

This made Jason wield the Chen Xi Sword with even more vigor.

As he once again reaped a swath of monsters with a single stroke, he clearly felt the strength of "Chen Xi" within him temporarily dissipate, clearly indicating that dawn had broken, and day had arrived.

Well-prepared, Jason cast a veil of mist before the horde of monsters could charge at him.

In the pitch-black humanoid creatures' bewildered gaze, he slowly moved towards the nearest shadow.

Mist Concealment also required Physical Strength.

Although it was slow, Jason definitely preferred to maintain ample strength.

His steps were slow, silent.

The stealth and concealment skills above that of a Master made Jason seem like a phantom shadow drifting through what seemed like a "shopping mall" sort of "room."

This "shopping mall" would normally have four or more floors in the real world, but here it only had four, and just half of it, as if it had been cleaved in two with a knife and tilted at a strange angle.

Yet without electricity, the place was brightly lit.

The light bulbs were invulnerable.

Jason had tried.

Obviously, they were protected by some kind of rule!

But, such rules were not omnipotent!

At least some places remained dark.

There were light bulbs there too, but they had gone out.

"Were they extinguished when we entered this place?"

Jason mused, looking at the shattered bulbs.

Then, he continued along the edge of the corridor, towards that area.

However, just as he was about to step into the darkness, he halted in his tracks.

It wasn't that there was something in the dark, but rather something under the light.

In the gap between light and darkness, where the light got through!

This was a wall!

The light should have been shining on the wall!

Jason could confirm this.

But this crevice allowed the light to pass through it "transparently."

Fine and barely noticeable, if Jason's perception hadn't been extraordinary and he wasn't sufficiently vigilant, he would never have detected this anomaly.

He stopped to inspect.

Inside the crevice, "darkness" was churning.

He couldn't describe what it was.

Too many shapes, yet all bizarre.

He could only name it based on color.

Jason involuntarily flared his nostrils.

There was no scent of "food."

In an instant, his interest waned, and he moved a couple of steps to the side, continuing towards the darkness as he had originally intended, where there was a wardrobe that might offer a place to rest for a while, waiting for the next dawn to arrive.

However, as Jason passed the crevice, a tremendous suction force suddenly emerged.

An invisible yet seemingly outline-traced black hand stretched out from the crevice.

At first, it was flat, as if in a photo.



But after extending, it rapidly expanded into a real hand, and then crossed the space to seize Jason's ankle.

The hand attempted to pull Jason down and then drag him into the crevice.

That was its intent, and it acted upon it.

It pulled fiercely.

And then...

There was no movement.

Chapter 480: The Fist Strikes, Magnificently Brilliant!

With a tug, he couldn't pull anything.

The dark, blurry palm hesitated for a moment.

Clearly, it hadn't anticipated such an outcome.

Instinctively, it tried to pull several more times with force.

But Jason remained standing there, unmoved.

Moreover, he slowly lowered his head to look over.

The blurry, dark palm seemed to feel his gaze and immediately stiffened.

The atmosphere followed, becoming awkward.

A full second later, the palm twitched uneasily.

Then...

It began to slowly retreat.

As if assuming that Jason couldn't see it.

It quickly retreated to the edge of the 'wall'.

And just as it was about to return to the 'crack', the hand abruptly vanished.

It crossed through space again, reaching for Jason's ankle.

Cunning!

The blurry, dark palm exhibited considerable intelligence.

But that was useless against Jason!

Jason remained standing there without moving, simply slowly raising his other foot.

As the space-crossing palm was about to grab Jason's ankle, the foot he had just lifted came down perfectly in place.

Thud!

Immense strength brought a dull sound.

The peculiar palm was directly crushed into a 'black' blob.

It tumbled like steam, yet stood still like a shadow.

Two completely conflicting sensations arose within this 'black' mass.

Then, the 'crack' suddenly expanded, like an opening mouth, and swiftly encompassed Jason.

What had been an inconsequential suction for Jason multiplied tenfold in an instant!

Jason staggered, seemingly about to topple inside!

Suddenly, the 'darkness' within cheered and jumped for joy.

They twisted, they bared their teeth and claws.

They seemed to fully come alive in that moment.

For food!

Fresh flesh!

Jason, having lost his balance, appeared indifferent, calmly pointing with one hand and murmuring softly—

Yi!

The special force field of [Protection Against Evil] flooded into the enlarged crack like floodwaters breaching a dam.

Instantly, the cheering vanished.

The 'darkness' that had just come to life began writhing madly, trying to escape from the special force field of [Protection Against Evil], but to no avail; the moment it made contact, the 'darkness' began to fade away.

Leaving nothing behind.

Reduced to ashes.

In a breath, silence prevailed.

The enlarged crack immediately shrank and disappeared.

The wall returned to normal, the light no longer 'piercing' through.

However, Jason could only witness this much; he had no chance to observe any further.

Because those pitch-black humanoid monsters had locked onto him again.

To avoid being encircled, Jason swiftly moved toward another hiding spot—another spot where the 'light bulb was broken' that he had found while making his move just a moment ago.

[Mist Concealment] shrouded Jason's figure, enveloping those creatures.

With the help of the mist, Jason effortlessly reached the second hiding place.

This appeared to be a 'furniture display' area of the 'shopping center'.

Jason glanced at the bed with its white mattress and matching sheets and the bedside table of the same style next to it, yearning to lie down on it and savor that comfortable feeling.

Instead, he chose the nearby wardrobe.

Pulling open the wardrobe's door, Jason ducked his head and entered.

And as he closed the door of the wardrobe, Jason curled up his body and sat down in a smooth motion.

The bed was comfortable but offered no cover, obviously impractical.

The wardrobe was narrow, uncomfortable, yet secure enough.

Leaning against the wooden boards inside the wardrobe, Jason closed his eyes and listened intently.

With the [Blind Fighting] bonus of +0.3 to his perception, Jason's senses momentarily were six times that of a normal person's.

At this moment, he didn't need his eyes to see; he could detect the pitch-black humanoid creatures approaching from afar, inspecting around the bed and, after upending the bedside table, quickly retreating by their footsteps.

"These creatures' vision in the 'dark' is much weaker than I imagined."

Without a doubt, this was absolutely good news for Jason.

He would have more options to deal with the current situation.

Of course, Jason hadn't forgotten the 'crack' just now.

What was that?

A part of this 'Gateway to Death'?

Or was it a mutation after something strange broke in?

And, who was the last person to enter here?

Such a punch, truly powerful!

Jason thought, then shook his head.

The clues were too scant.

He couldn't make any judgments.



Even to say, the only clue was that pair of size 48-49 shoes.

People with such feet were not common.

And they must be tall, strong, and robust.

Tall, strong, robust... huh?

Subconsciously, Jason thought of Aras.

Of course, it couldn't be Aras.

But what about Aras' mother?

Or perhaps... Aras' grandfather!

No sooner had he thought of Aras' grandfather than a thought flashed through Jason's mind.

Aras' grandfather chose to live in seclusion in 'Ang City'.

But beneath the 'asylum' of Ang City, there existed an 'anomaly' of this level!

Jason refused to believe it was a coincidence.

A powerhouse who could forge a new era with the 'Fist of Peace', would the organizations, forces, or individuals that entered the new era lack even a smidgen of preventative measures and response strategies?