

Old Gods 74

Chapter 74: Iron Swing

"Squeak~ Squeak~"

The sound of the swing's iron chains rubbing against the iron pole was grating enough to set one's teeth on edge and make the flesh crawl.

At the Fifth Primary School, in the southeastern part of the barren playground, several youths were reliving their childhood by the swings.

But for Deng Yutang, this felt more like revisiting a nightmare.

"Brother Lu!" Deng Yutang sat stiffly on the swing.

It was evident that he had some childhood traumas.

After all, with the current strength of Deng Yutang, even if he were really flung from the swing, he would not get hurt.

"You're afraid of nothing!" Lu Ran caught Deng Yutang's back and gave a strong push, "If all else fails, just bolster your fighting spirit!"

Deng Yutang: "..."

Bolster my fighting spirit just to swing?

The Red Cloth Order would probably kick me to death for that!

"Face your fears, you can do this," Lu Ran kept encouraging his teammate.

Deng Yutang gripped the old swing's iron chains so tightly that one worried he might crush them.

Jiang Ruyi, sitting on another swing, watched the scene with a tilted head and a chuckle as she suddenly said, "You take a turn."

"No need," Tian Tian gently pushed Jiang Ruyi's swing, thoroughly enjoying the warm atmosphere.

In the distant teaching building, classmates stood at the corridor windows, looking at the playground with envy.

The senior year (Class 4) was divided into eight teams, with six assigned to various floors of the building.

Only two squads earned the privilege to be stationed outside the teaching building.

One was Team 98, and the other was Team 18, led by Chang Ying.

Chang Ying and her group stood at the entrance of the teaching building, similarly gazing towards Lu Ran's team.

A pale-skinned girl spoke up, "They seem so relaxed, as if they're not scared."

Chang Ying leaned against a pillar, an ax in hand, "Lu Ran is someone who's passed the July 15th challenge.

For him, the fifteenth of any other month is probably child's play."

Qian Hao laughed heartily, glancing at the pale-skinned girl, "This time, we also have a chance to score. We won't be ranked low in the class."

Bai Manni frowned slightly, "But aren't they too relaxed?"

"Relax, relax," Chang Ying stepped forward, placing her hand on Bai Manni's shoulder, "It's noon now!

Besides, their Moon Gazer leader hasn't said a word, has he?"

Qian Hao, seeing the solemn expression on Bai Manni's face, tentatively asked, "Manni, did you sense something?"

Bai Manni hesitated a moment before nodding, "I'm feeling troubled and a bit panicky."

The deity Bai Manni worshiped was the Six-class God-Cursing Mage.

A white-haired old mage was the avatar of this deity, robed and carrying a mysterious and revered presence.

The school of Cursing Mages excelled in various spells.

One such Divine Technique, the "Heart Sense Spell," transcended human senses and allowed one to detect potential crises on a higher plane.

It holds a sort of 'premonitory' significance.

However, this technique isn't a combat spell and cannot predict an opponent's next move in an extremely short period.

The "Heart Sense Curse" is more suited for daily life, helping believers avoid harm and survive better.

"Why don't you cast a spell and try?" Chang Ying suggested.

Bai Manni placed her hands in front of her chest, fingers intertwined with her pinkies raised, forming a strange seal.

The next second, an ethereal figure of the character "heart" spread out from her body.

Yes, it was the square script of Da Xia—Heart!

The ethereal script expanded rapidly, engulfing Bai Manni's body, then quietly dissipated.

Slowly, Bai Manni opened her eyes, becoming more irritated the more she looked towards the swings:

"I have a throbbing in my temples."

Chang Ying looked around; the dutiful Moon Gazers' solemn expressions and careful watch comforted her.

"I can't bear it. I need to talk to them," Bai Manni said, unable to quell her anxiety as she took a step forward.

"Ah?" Chang Ying hurried after her.

Along with them, Qian Hao and another male teammate followed.

At the playground near the swings, Jiang Ruyi gently pressed her hand down, and Tian Tian immediately supported the Goddess's back.

Jiang Ruyi looked in the direction of the teaching building, seeing the group of four approaching.

Those four really embodied the combination of 'tall, short, fat, thin'!

Chang Ying was tall and robust, Qian Hao was somewhat chubby, Bai Manni was slender.

The final male teammate on their team was relatively short.

He had a rather domineering name—Hu Dingtian!

The deity Hu Dingtian worshiped was the Seven-class God·Xuan Yuan.

This was a typical beast-like deity, resembling a giant ape with shiny black fur.

Xuan Yuan's followers were stereotypically assumed to be made of 'steel and iron,' with immense strength!

Therefore, Hu Dingtian's height of 1.55m served as an excellent disguise.

He wasn't "small, agile, quick," but rather a little steel cannon!

When Hu Dingtian punched out, it didn't matter if you were the tall and strong Deng Yutang or the tall and fit Chang Ying; you'd still fly—and spit blood while doing so!

"Class leader Jiang," Bai Manni spoke from a distance, arriving by the swings.

"Hello," Jiang Ruyi replied politely.

Bai Manni was a late addition to the class, and they were not familiar with each other.

"Class leader Jiang," Bai Manni said with a troubled look, "I think you all better stay alert; don't be so lax."

Jiang Ruyi slightly raised her eyebrows, surprised by the other's rudeness.

However, she didn't get angry because Bai Manni looked genuinely anxious and concerned.

"Yes," Jiang Ruyi looked at the nearby swing and said softly, "Let's stop playing then."

Lu Ran reached out to catch Deng Yutang swinging back, gently stopping him.

"Uh," Deng Yutang quickly jumped off the swing.

His steps were unsteady, his legs seeming weak?

Jiang Ruyi turned her head to look at the girl, pensive, "I remember, you're a follower of the Caster?"

Bai Manni was surprised, not expecting the honored Heaven's Chosen to be so easygoing.

Without intending to, her expression softened considerably, "Yes."

Jiang Ruyi: "Have you learned the 'Clear Heart Spell'?"

Bai Manni naturally nodded in affirmation.

Jiang Ruyi smiled, "Then perform it, to ease my mind."

"Always so graceful, Jiang." Lu Ran nonchalantly seated himself on the swing, "Beautiful in appearance, kind at heart."

With Lu Ran's segue, even those who didn't initially catch on now understood Jiang Ruyi's intention.

She genuinely wanted to calm Bai Manni's nerves but said it was for her own peace of mind to save her classmate's face.

"Sigh~"

An imaginary square character "clear" emerged and spread out from Bai Manni's body.

In an instant, Lu Ran felt a refreshing breeze and his mind grew clearer.

Caster Divine Skill-Clear Heart Spell!

Calming the spirits of all beings, it steadied people's hearts.

Never underestimate this divine skill.

Lu Ran, who wielded the Sound of Despair and the Voice of Compassion, would be ineffective in the face of the "Clear Heart Spell."

Even Deng Yutang's Divine Technique-Red Cloth Order, which enhanced fighting spirit, would be scrubbed clean by the "Clear Heart Spell"!

The effect of the Clear Heart Spell was indeed extraordinary!

After the transient character faded, everyone's mood changed, calm and composed.

Jiang Ruyi: "It's right to be vigilant, but don't overdo it, lest you perform poorly.

Many Moon Gazers are here. What we need to do is coordinate with them well.

Tonight is but an ordinary fifteenth night in the long span of our lives."

Bai Manni, listening to her gentle voice, couldn't help but lower her eyes and softly respond, "Yes."

Jiang Ruyi looked at Hu Dingtian nearby, "Don't be like a mute, care more for your teammates and communicate with them."

"Yes, class leader," Hu Dingtian nodded.

Jiang Ruyi was familiar with Hu Dingtian, a student of Class 4.

"And you, you talk so much, but you never use it when it matters," Jiang Ruyi said to Qian Hao.

Qian Hao scratched his head.

They came all the way here, just for a lecture?

Really...

In the past two years, Jiang Ruyi had always been the class leader, but her gentle nature hadn't been very intimidating.

But ever since becoming a believer, Jiang Ruyi's aura had been growing stronger and stronger!

Qian Hao and Hu Dingtian stood attentively, making the new girl, Chang Ying, not dare to speak...

"Let's go," Jiang Ruyi called to everyone.

"Let's go, go, go!" Deng Yutang was the first to respond, eager to leave the swings far behind.

Tian Tian followed closely behind, and it was only after they had walked more than ten steps that they realized someone was missing?

"Lu Ran?" Jiang Ruyi turned her head and saw Lu Ran sitting on the swing in a daze.

The mist around his body was much denser than usual.

Was he... leveling up?

"Squeak~"

A gust of wind stirred around Lu Ran, the swing swaying back and forth, the iron chains and pole emitting the harsh sound of friction again.

"No way?" Qian Hao scratched his head again, "For real?"

Chang Ying looked envious, "Lu Ran... that's too fast!"

Deng Yutang agreed, "Brother Lu is indeed fast!"

Hu Dingtian, who took the class leader's word to heart, rarely spoke, "I just advanced to Stream Realm this morning."

Not just those downstairs, but also the students stationed in the teaching building saw this happen.

Their expressions varied as each knew when they had advanced, having a clear understanding in their hearts.

Strictly speaking, before reaching Stream Realm Third Rank, everyone was considered in the "Newbie Realm."

Even with differences in believers' talents, it is challenging to create a significant gap at this stage.

For example:

Is there a difference in the current power levels of third-class deity believer Jiang and seventh-class deity believer Hu Dingtian, whose qualifications are vastly different?

Despite Jiang having advanced to Stream Realm on July 27th and Hu Dingtian on August 15th, both are currently at Stream Realm-First Rank!

At least seemingly, the gap couldn't be widened.

Only at Stream Realm Third Rank would the newbie protection phase be considered over.

From that point on, if believers wanted to continue advancing, it would be extremely difficult.

Especially at Stream Realm-Fifth Rank!

Many heroes have been thwarted at this special rank...

Yet, Lu Ran was overtaking everyone during the newbie protection phase.

His energy surged as he boldly advanced toward Stream Realm Second Rank!

"You go back first," Jiang Ruyi's eyes sparkled with joy as she strode over, "I'll stay with him."

...

Just to mention, this book will be launched on June 1st.

After the launch, there will be bursts and additional updates, thanks to the love and support of all the readers.

May you live long~~~ Hoorah!