

Powerful 981

Chapter 981: Testing Each Other

Alizee didn't want her beloved to feel uncomfortable, so she quickly explained:

"Rest assured, those are volunteers with severe illnesses, who don't have long to live. They are not people we forced."

"If the experiment succeeds, perhaps we can save their lives."

"Even if it fails, they can receive substantial compensation."

Yang Yan sneered internally.

Volunteers?

Compensation?

What a joke!

He's almost certain that the women Alizee mentioned were likely Zhou Hanyun and her group.

He just didn't know whose physique Manhattan had taken a fancy to.

However, on the surface, he still appeared indifferent.

"Let's eat first!"

The calmer he acted, the less likely he would upset any plans.

If he deliberately probed further now, with Alizee's alertness, the chance of exposure would be too great.

In fact, when she realized she accidentally leaked information earlier, her intentional supplement was to observe his reaction.

Luckily, he had always maintained a cautious attitude towards this sly woman, Alizee.

Even when he heard news about Zhou Hanyun and her group, he didn't show any flaw on his face.

But Alizee, for some reason, didn't end the topic there.

She continued enthusiastically:

"The doctor treats them well. And those women are very beautiful!"

Yang Yan felt a tremor in his heart.

He could sense that Alizee wasn't revealing things about the laboratory out of sheer high spirits.

Could she have noticed something?

Was she testing him with Zhou Hanyun and her group on purpose...?

"Hmm? All beautiful girls? The girls from the United States are indeed beautiful! Like you, you're just like an angel."

Yang Yan said nonchalantly.

However, Alizee shook her head lightly:

"No, no, no! Those girls are all from Huaxia! Lin Yan, Huaxia is great, someday you should take me back for a visit."

When Alizee said this, Yang Yan could clearly feel her watching his expression.

This woman was really too shrewd.

Even though she had already acknowledged his identity, she still occasionally sought opportunities to test him.

"Of course, no problem."

Yang Yan smiled lightly, appearing so natural.

Undoubtedly, Yang Yan's reaction made Alizee quite satisfied.

Her trust in him naturally increased a bit.

Ao Tian didn't come back for lunch, and of course, he wouldn't return for dinner.

In between, they didn't mention the laboratory topic again, but Yang Yan's heart was already stirred up.

The Huaxia women Alizee spoke of surely referred to Zhou Hanyun and her group.

What concerned Yang Yan was who exactly Manhattan had taken a liking to?

For a moment, Yang Yan felt a growing sense of urgency.

He didn't want any of them to be in danger.

It seemed he had to speed things up.

He needed to get Ao Tian to do something...

Once decided, Yang Yan casually picked up the topic about the laboratory again.

"Hearing you talk, I'm curious about what your laboratory is working on. Is it related to diseases?"

"Why not take me to the lab someday for a look? I happen to know a bit about traditional Chinese medicine, maybe we can corroborate something."

Yang Yan pretended to be unaware of the laboratory's importance, treating it as a regular lab, expressing his interest to Alizee.

Alizee, after hearing this, didn't decline directly, but she looked troubled.

"Haha! Never mind, the lab where Miss Alizee works must be extraordinary."

"Why not just show me the exterior? That should be fine, right?"

Alizee hesitated a bit.

The laboratory's exact location was highly confidential, obviously not for outsiders to know.

Even Alizee herself had to be very cautious each time she went in, going through a lot of trouble.

At the designated spot, she even had to take a specific transport to prevent anyone from tracking her to the lab's location.

More importantly, the lab was heavily guarded, and even the exterior was hard to access.

She clearly remembered that Dr. Manhattan once proudly said:

This lab, even if a Titled power appeared from the Sealing Title Stele, they couldn't just walk in single-handedly.

Even if they stormed in with violence, the lab would activate the self-destruct system.

Alizee sat quietly beside Yang Yan, watching him for quite a while.

Yang Yan could tell that wasn't scrutiny, nor a sign of disbelief, but just a difficult decision.

After thinking for a while, Alizee first picked up a dish and placed it in Yang Yan's bowl, then nodded:

"You're right, we are one of our own now, so of course I can take you for a look."

"Due to confidentiality, the inside is improbable. But the exterior, sure, you can take a look."

"Exterior?"

Yang Yan said with a smile.

Alizee nodded seriously:

"Yes, where those lab researchers live."

"They've all signed confidentiality agreements and generally don't go out, so they live directly outside the lab."

Yang Yan naturally understood the situation.

These people were actually being monitored to prevent leaks.

"Oh, and the doctor is leaving tomorrow, I heard it's to the Arctic."

"I don't know what exactly for. Let's go tomorrow then! I'll show you the lab."

"Alright."

Yang Yan smiled calmly and casually asked:

"Aren't they doing experiments? Why the trip to the Arctic? Your doctor is quite carefree!"

Alizee shook her head lightly, uncertainly said:

"He left in quite a hurry, I think something important must have happened in the Arctic!"

Yang Yan immediately thought of the Dusk Race and the base he and Ao Tian destroyed, as well as the two Blood Balls and the so-called sacrificial site he collected from that base.

"Then I'll take Lin Tian with me tomorrow!"

"That guy's been fooling around outside every day, it's been just a few days, and who knows how many women he's already entangled with."

"Now that we've finally sneaked out for a trip, let him broaden his horizons with me, lest the old man says we're not doing our jobs."

Yang Yan said casually, also as a test.

He wanted to see where Alizee's tolerance limit for him was.

"Okay."

Surprisingly, Alizee agreed without any hesitation.

Perhaps in her view, since she was already bringing Yang Yan, bringing along a brother should not be a big issue.

Job-wise, she was considered second in command in Manhattan's lab.

Once Manhattan left the next day, she would be the undisputed boss.

It's just taking two people to see the lab's exterior.

Especially when one of them was already her designated man.

Even if Manhattan finds out later, he probably wouldn't say much.

Chapter 982: Entry

At night, Yang Yan and Alizee still slept together.

In front of Alizee, Yang Yan explained to Ao Tian, who had returned, that he would take him to a good place tomorrow.

Alizee pulled Yang Yan away with her.

Even though Yang Yan didn't finish speaking, Ao Tian completely understood Yang Yan's meaning.

Apart from the secret laboratory in Manhattan, where else do they need to go together?

Watching the backs of Yang Yan and Alizee leaving, Ao Tian instinctively licked his lips.

Has the time for action finally arrived?

He had to admit, Yang Yan was truly formidable.

Things were progressing so smoothly, it was almost unbelievable.

According to his estimate, this matter would be delayed for at least a few more days.

The next day at noon, the three drove towards the city center, then boarded a nanny car parked near the subway station.

Alizee got in and went straight to the driver's seat.

She unexpectedly reversed along the original route, heading towards the suburbs, arriving at a small town halfway up a mountain.

This place seemed somewhat desolate, clearly in the height of summer, yet showing a hint of dreariness.

There was just one narrow street in the small town, with a sparse few people.

And they were all elderly.

Some sat under the shade of trees, brewing a pot of tea, enjoying the coolness of the summer morning.

Others played chess at the courtyard entrances, passing the peaceful time under the fairly mild sunlight.

Although these people seemed relaxed and leisurely, this was not the case at all.

Though they tried to suppress it, Yang Yan could clearly feel that each of their abilities surpassed Alizee's.

These people had at least reached SSS level, and all possessed combat-type superpowers.

Undoubtedly, these people were the vital force stationed around the secret laboratory.

Of course, the force stationed here by Dr. Manhattan was not limited to these visible ones.

Secretly, Yang Yan found at least twenty other equally formidable presences.

Moreover, he smelled the same scent on them as the members of the Blazing Angels Legion.

Actually, as soon as they entered here, he and Ao Tian were locked onto by these people.

If they were to make even a slightly extreme move, at least thirty top experts would swarm up immediately.

Yang Yan and Ao Tian quickly exchanged a glance, observing the surroundings without showing any sign.

The town ahead appeared somewhat old, as if it had been weathered by time, having lost its vitality.

In the air, they even smelled the scent of decay.

Paradise...

For a moment, Yang Yan found it amusing.

This place seemed less vibrant than even Satan, the Master of Hell's abode.

"Wow—, Miss Alizee, my dear sister-in-law, the laboratory can't be in this place, right?"

Ao Tian said exaggeratedly:

"If the laboratory is so poor, why not ask my brother for money!"

"He is being groomed as the future Patriarch, and his pocket money far exceeds mine."

"Donating hundreds of millions to your lab could certainly improve things a bit, though it might not build the most luxurious five-star laboratory in the United States."

"For instance, turning this place into a countryside resort is absolutely feasible."

Alizee chuckled at his words:

"Our lab isn't short of money! Have you ever heard of a formal lab lacking money?"

Ao Tian paused slightly, suspiciously asking:

"Then what is going on here?"

Clearly amused by Ao Tian's reaction, Alizee said a bit mysteriously:

"Our lab isn't here; it's further inside."

She pointed to the end of the town street as she spoke.

"Oh! I see."

Ao Tian nodded in sudden realization:

"I was just thinking, how could such a rundown town house be the lab where Miss Elie works?"

Alizee merely smiled ambiguously, and the nanny car drove through the street, finally arriving at the back of the mountain.

There stood a small wooden house.

This wooden house appeared meticulously crafted, exquisite in both workmanship and materials.

From afar, it seemed nothing special, adorned with creeping vines and shaded by lush trees.

However, upon closer look, the two realized it was probably the finest building in the area.

"This is it."

Alizee pointed at the half-open wooden house and led the way inside.

The two followed her in.

During the journey, Yang Yan had already used Divine Thought to communicate the situation to Ao Tian, revealing that Zhou Hanyun and others kidnapped by Manhattan were likely in there.

Yang Yan had prepared Ao Tian for a full-scale assault, determined to rescue Zhou Hanyun and the others no matter what.

Inside the wooden house, they found it empty, devoid of any furnishings.

"This..."

Before Ao Tian could speak, Alizee touched a part of the wooden house with her right hand, and a small wooden panel slowly rose and opened outward.

The next moment, a futuristic-looking lock appeared.

The metal glimmered silver, yet had no buttons and was completely smooth.

Alizee explained with a smile:

"The lab's device is either iris recognition or DNA recognition."

She placed her thumb at the center-right of it, aligning her eye with a beam of light.

A second later, a beeping sound was heard, and the solid floor beneath the trio suddenly sank and opened to the ground below.

They immediately began to fall.

For ordinary people, they would certainly scream and fall hard to the ground.

Yet the three seemed to be supported by an invisible force, stably landing on the ground as if through some Teleportation Array.

Only, the scene before them had changed.

"Oh my, can we... still get out?"

Ao Tian looked terrified, his face pale as he glanced around.

Yang Yan appeared a bit calmer, immediately starting to observe the environment.

Before them was an array of villas!

In the middle of the villas was a large park.

It was full of fitness facilities.

This should be what Alizee referred to as the outskirts.

Indeed extravagant.

Alizee, hearing Ao Tian's words, pointed below their feet with a smile:

"Of course, we can go back up directly from here when the time comes."

As she spoke, she pulled Yang Yan forward.

Their presence had already drawn attention from countless people.

For instance, a group of handsome guards nearby with solemn expressions.

These people wore unified black uniforms with gold embroidery on their chests.

Though the external forces weren't as formidable as those outside, even the weakest among them were at S-level strength!

Their unhindered entry earlier was probably due to Alizee's involvement.

Additionally, none of them found anything amiss with Yang Yan and Ao Tian.

The hidden strength of this so-called paradise truly was profound.

However, Yang Yan quickly discovered more.

These individuals, though seemingly powerful, had shaky foundations, barely maintaining appearances.

Chapter 983: No Other Way, Go Straight In

Suddenly, Yang Yan thought about that experiment in Manhattan.

These fears might just be forces forcibly created?

But here, Yang Yan dared not use any methods to touch souls.

Because he had long discovered that these people's souls were all controlled.

Though not very covert, it was the same method used to control Alizee.

"Miss Alizee, these two gentlemen..."

That group of guards had eleven people, the leader brought them over and looked stiffly at Yang Yan and then at Ao Tian.

"It's fine, he's my boyfriend, and that's his brother."

"I just brought them around the perimeter to satisfy their curiosity and to let them understand my work."

"I think if it's just a walk around the perimeter, Dr. Manhattan wouldn't mind."

Alizee explained expressionlessly.

It was merely an explanation.

She didn't wait for the others to react, taking Yang Yan with her as they walked past them, continuing inside.

Only then did Ao Tian come to his senses and quickly followed.

As expected, that captain didn't dare say anything further, immediately made a gesture, and led his group to return to their post.

"Sis-in-law, aren't you afraid they might report you?"

Ao Tian, displaying his nature as a spoiled heir, said playfully.

"Hmph! They'd rather die."

Alizee retorted coldly.

This was in ordinary circumstances.

If Yang Yan and Ao Tian made a commotion, it wouldn't be something she could suppress.

After all, she was only the surface No. 2 in this lab.

Real power still belonged to Dr. Manhattan.

And those guards just didn't want to offend her over such matters.

After all, Yang Yan and Ao Tian were able to come here so calmly, which only meant they had passed the screening by the experts outside, indicating no danger.

"Take a look! Though there's no sunlight here, the lighting is sufficient, just like outside."

"Moreover, the environment here is much better than outside."

"So even if you live here for decades, there's absolutely no problem."

Alizee, acting as a tour guide, had brought the two to the park at the center by now.

While coming, Yang Yan had already used Divine Thought to explore the lab's exact location.

It wasn't very far.

However, there were some strong presences inside that made him hesitant to venture in lightly, unclear about the internal structure.

"It's indeed like that."

Yang Yan agreed wholeheartedly.

He outwardly echoed the enthusiastic Alizee, while inwardly he was contemplating the actions to follow.

"Don't they have entertainment?"

Ao Tian suddenly asked.

In his words, "they" naturally referred to those researchers in lab coats curiously watching them.

Undoubtedly, although this place provided an apparently excellent environment, those people were actually confined in their freedom.

"Oh, they do! They can go out and have fun once every week!"

"In total, they have ten leave opportunities each year, each leave lasting two or three days."

"In special circumstances, it can even be extended to two weeks."

But Alizee's momentary change in expression did not escape Yang Yan's eye.

Obviously, she didn't want them to be suspicious, so she casually made up a vacation.

She knew well that with such tight surveillance, unless these people had their memories erased, they couldn't possibly leave here.

"Then they must be living very well! The pay for laboratory work is very high."

Ao Tian was also aware of what's going on, pretending not to know and following Alizee's words.

Alizee didn't suspect anything, smilingly nodding:

"Of course, our lab has always been financially robust, so everyone's salary even exceeds the level of most researchers in the United States."

Ao Tian nodded knowingly:

"Haha! This can be seen from your net worth, sis-in-law."

Yang Yan chuckled lightly and transmitted his thoughts to Ao Tian without showing a hint of movement:

"Alizee won't likely take us to the lab. I know where it is, let's just go ahead while Dr. Manhattan is away!"

Ao Tian was already getting impatient.

Now hearing that Yang Yan wanted to take action directly, he didn't even think about it, immediately asking:

"What do you suggest? I'll follow your lead!"

Yang Yan didn't respond, merely pulled Alizee and pointed to a more secluded spot, smiling:

"Let's go check out that place!"

Compared to other places, this was the only remaining blind spot, convenient for the two's subsequent actions.

Alizee didn't suspect anything, directly nodded in agreement:

"Fine!"

To her, as long as Yang Yan didn't ask to enter the lab, it was fine.

In almost everyone's eyes, it seemed Alizee with the two men walked deep into the park, then within minutes emerged again.

Just, the way they came out was somewhat strange.

Yang Yan half-held Alizee.

Alizee's head was buried against Yang Yan's chest, seemingly whispering something intimate to him.

Yang Yan occasionally tilted his head to respond a few words, looking very close.

Those people naturally didn't dare to look too much, nor did they have the guts to ask even a little.

Even when passing by patrolling guards, they only stopped to greet them.

Though they didn't get a response, they dared not step forward.

Yet this scene was captured by numerous hidden observers.

Almost all eyes were on them.

But as the trio drifted farther away, finally reaching Alizee's office, the monitoring intensity decreased considerably.

Only no one knew these three figures, apart from Alizee being real, both Yang Yan and Ao Tian were merely simulated avatars.

At this time, the two concealed their forms and auras, silently approaching the vicinity of the lab.

The lab perimeter was guarded by quite a few sentries.

A rough count would place them at no less than twenty or thirty.

Among them were top-tier SSS-level experts.

Of course, these were just the elite of that level, not considered by super experts like Yang Yan and Ao Tian.

So much so that, until now, even with less than thirty meters between them, this group had not discovered anything amiss.

"There's no way to get in without alarming them."

Ao Tian pondered for a while, saying somewhat helplessly.

"So, let's go straight ahead! Quick and decisive."

Yang Yan frowned, saying coldly:

"Alizee mentioned earlier, this place relies on iris and DNA recognition, just break in and rescue them."

"As for the Seven-Star Grass, it'll depend on Satan's luck."

Ao Tian didn't even think and directly nodded:

"Okay!"

As the words fell, the two simultaneously revealed their forms, their aura faintly emitted, almost matching Alizee.

Accompanying their appearance was Alizee's figure.

Chapter 984: The Rescue and the Seven-Star Grass Acquired

Of course, the real Alizee was knocked unconscious by Yang Yan and temporarily placed in her office.

This was a disguise Yang Yan deliberately created.

With the abilities of the people present, there was no way to detect any difference.

Seeing Alizee appear with two strangers, the person with the highest capability had a fleeting look of uncertainty in his eyes.

"Miss, in the lab here..."

"Pfft!"

The person speaking didn't even finish the sentence before collapsing to the ground, lifeless.

Ao Tian suddenly struck from the side.

And this was just the beginning.

Yang Yan and Ao Tian moved simultaneously, and in the blink of an eye, the twenty or so people guarding the place were all taken down by them.

Instantly, the alarm sounded.

An unending stream of powerful figures began to converge from all directions, all rushing towards the lab.

Meanwhile, the members of the Angel Legion stationed inside the lab were also frantically gathering at the entrance.

After Yang Yan used "Alizee's" hand to open the door, he and Ao Tian walked in side by side.

However, once inside, Ao Tian suddenly quickened his pace, taking the lead to clear the path.

The power of the Ice Emperor was violently displayed at this moment.

Anyone who dared to block the way turned into ice sculptures in an instant, and with a light touch from him, they shattered into pieces on the ground.

"Kill!"

A dozen members of the Angel Legion immediately had red eyes, rushing forward recklessly.

"Heh heh! I've been holding it in for so long. Today, I'm just going to kill to my heart's content."

Ao Tian stood leisurely in place, quietly waiting for these people to come to his side.

At some point, a crescent-shaped scimitar had appeared in his hand.

The blade wasn't bloodstained, yet no one knew how many lost souls were gathered on it.

For eternity, unable to find release.

Swish swish swish!

Thud thud thud!

Clang clang clang!

Scarlet flowers bloomed in the air piece by piece.

Weapons glinting with holy light began to fall to the ground with bodies drained of life and soul.

The capability level of this group was clearly higher than those before.

Although on the surface they only possessed SSS-level cultivation, in terms of experience and combat strength, each one was much stronger.

But even so, in front of Ao Tian, they were still as weak as clay chickens and pottery dogs, unable to withstand a single blow.

There was no need for Yang Yan to lift a hand; under the overwhelming attack of Ao Tian, they all met their end on the spot.

The two continued forward, with Yang Yan following silently behind, not making a move.

Following the sense, the two finally arrived at a few rooms.

This place looked more like a temporary resting area.

In these rows of small rooms, Yang Yan felt the familiar aura grow stronger through the barrier of a mysterious energy field.

"Ao Tian."

Yang Yan suddenly called Ao Tian.

"Hmm?"

Covered in blood, both on his body and his blade, Ao Tian turned back to look at Yang Yan, puzzled.

"Go check the main lab. If you can find the Seven-Star Grass, take it; if not, just leave. I'll wait for you at the door."

Yang Yan said solemnly.

"Alright!"

Ao Tian nodded, his figure flickering as he vanished into the corridor.

Yang Yan began to push his Divine Thought to the limit, searching room by room.

Zhou Hanyun, Zhou Hanyu...

Many people only learn to cherish things after losing them.

But Yang Yan was different.

He had always treasured everything he possessed.

Even if it meant going against the whole world!

When he found Zhou Hanyun and the others, perhaps only these few women would share the same feelings with him and understand what he felt at that moment.

"Yang Yan! Sob... You've finally come. I thought I'd never see you again."

"Brother-in-law! You jerk, why did you come so late! Jerk!"

...

Yang Yan embraced the women, then lifted his head to take a deep breath.

At that moment, he felt his heart tremble.

Even though dozens of people had stormed in with weapons behind him, he didn't react at all.

Until that blade was about to pierce him, the anger that had been hidden burst forth in that instant!

On that day, in an unknown underground world, a bloody massacre began to unfold.

Aside from the two massacring, the only person left alive in the lab was Alizee.

After waking up, she watched through the office surveillance video, looking at the corpses and blood strewn about the lab, and actually smiled strangely.

She smiled brightly, genuinely from the heart.

She stared intently at Yang Yan in the video, and slowly said:

"You know, when the Doctor isn't here, no one can use the ultimate defenses in the lab. Except for me!"

...

After rescuing Zhou Hanyun and the others, Yang Yan left the lab.

Outside, alarms were blaring, chaos reigned.

But the exit was tightly surrounded by layer upon layer of Manhattan's subordinates.

With killing intent rising, Yang Yan protected the women beside him, and the long blade Star Night appeared in his hand.

With slender, pale fingers, he gripped the hilt and swept his cold gaze across the scene.

All the guards caught in Yang Yan's gaze felt as if they had fallen into a thousand-year ice cave, shivering uncontrollably.

Without any unnecessary words, Yang Yan reversed the blade and casually swung it.

The crowd's vision fell into temporary darkness.

A dazzling white flash sprang from the edge of the darkness, finally cutting through it.

In an instant, everyone's vision turned into a blinding sea of white.

As the light faded, what met the eye was scattered scarlet blood, with all sorts of bizarre severed limbs.

There were humans, Exotic Beasts, and various synthetic creatures modified by Manhattan.

Their combined strength, outside in the world, might not be considered top-tier, but in such large numbers, they would surely cause a storm.

But here, in front of Yang Yan with his rage fully unleashed, they didn't even have the chance to block another blow.

After everyone and every creature in the field was cleared, Ao Tian also emerged from the lab.

Compared to Yang Yan's calm demeanor, he appeared much more imposing.

The time the two were apart was only seven or eight minutes, yet he was covered in blood, exuding a fierce killing aura.

However, when he saw Zhou Hanyun and the others, his face broke into a wide smile as he greeted them.

Yang Yan was not surprised by Ao Tian's behavior.

This guy was naturally fond of fighting.

He thoroughly enjoyed the feeling of blood splattering up close.

"Satan's luck is pretty good. The Seven-Star Grass wasn't hidden away by Manhattan; it was just in a inconspicuous corner, and I happened to find it."

Ao Tian raised a transparent glass bottle in his hand, containing a small, seemingly ordinary plant.

This was the renowned Seven-Star Grass.

However, now it only had four leaves left out of seven.

"Yang Yan, did you come here just to find this plant?"

Shiya Jie didn't say much, but her little face was full of grievance, something Yang Yan noted.

Chapter 985: Return to the Arctic

"Of course not."

Before Yang Yan could speak, Ao Tian laughed and said:

"You guys have no idea how much effort Yang Yan put into rescuing you after you were taken away to Manhattan."

Ao Tian, despite his usual careless demeanor, seemed somewhat unreliable at first glance, yet he has a very high emotional intelligence.

At this moment, he obviously needed to find a way to extricate Yang Yan from the situation.

He pointed at Yang Yan's head, speaking earnestly:

"Look at him, look at him, this guy has been worrying so much he's got white hair coming out of his head."

Shiya Jie and Zhou Hanyun looked at Yang Yan, but naturally, they only saw his perfectly black hair.

Yang Yan shot a glare at Ao Tian.

This guy is really just spouting nonsense with a straight face.

If not for knowing his personality, one might really think he was trying to embarrass him on purpose.

Having reached his cultivation level, how could he possibly have grown white hair in his twenties?!

He sighed and, with a deep emotion, said to the girls:

"You are more important than my life."

These words were said with true emotion, needing no further explanation. The girls were deeply moved, each nodding with tears in their eyes to show they understood.

"I'll send you back first. I'll have a good reckoning with Manhattan for this."

Before the girls, Yang Yan's face remained exceptionally gentle, but the cold gleam in his eyes was enough to send shivers down one's spine.

"Okay."

Zhou Hanyun and the others knew Yang Yan's character very well, and they understood the reasons for him showing this side of himself.

Naturally, no one objected to his decision.

In fact, during their imprisonment, they had no idea how many times they cursed the mastermind behind it.

Though alarms blared loudly, the secret laboratory's self-destruct device never activated.

Yang Yan and Ao Tian exchanged a glance without showing it, instinctively looking towards Alizee's office.

Since entering, the two of them had already spread their Divine Thought to every corner.

Naturally, they had detected the presence of the self-destruct system here.

Originally, they planned to join forces to create a protective shield to deploy immediately once the self-destruct system activated.

However, it now seemed completely unnecessary.

When Han Ruyu reunited again with Zhou Hanyun and the others, they couldn't help but embrace and weep.

After enjoying a few days of god-like life, Yang Yan and Ao Tian went to Satan's castle.

The Master of Hell's coveted Seven-Star Grass had naturally been brought along with them.

At the first sight of the Seven-Star Grass, the Master of Hell was overwhelmed with excitement, casting aside any formality.

"Thank you, Moonlight Emperor. From today onwards, Hell will fully obey your commands during your confrontation with Heaven."

As proud as Satan might be, he humbly bowed to Yang Yan.

"Old man, if you say you'll do something, make sure you follow through! This great war is about to really kick off! Don't think about hiding in the background to profit from the situation."

Ao Tian's face was icy, giving Satan no face at all.

Satan seemed not to hear him, and gave no response.

"We have other matters to attend to, we'll be leaving now."

Yang Yan cast a lukewarm glance at Satan, and just before leaving added faintly:

"You can choose not to follow orders, but what I can give you, I can also take back."

With that, Yang Yan turned to leave.

Satan watched as the two quickly disappeared, holding the Seven-Star Grass in his hand, he fell silent.

"Let me see you off."

After a long moment, he snapped back to reality, putting away the Seven-Star Grass and chased after Yang Yan and Ao Tian.

At this moment, outside the castle, stood three of the Ten Swords, Gongsun Ruyan, Zhuge Wushuang, and Fu Changjian.

Each exuded a powerful and impressive aura.

They had come together following Yang Yan's orders.

"My lord!"

Upon seeing Yang Yan emerge, they called out immediately.

"Let's go!"

Yang Yan nodded, then leaped into the air and transformed into a dazzling streak, shooting towards the horizon.

Satan followed behind, gazing at the streaks disappearing over the horizon, whispering softly to himself:

"It seems this matter is not trivial at all. I wonder if I've made the right choice..."

This time, Yang Yan hurried here both to deliver the Seven-Star Grass to Satan to gain Hell's full support,

and naturally, to address the hidden dangers in the Arctic.

Up to now, Yang Yan remained uncertain about what Manhattan was up to.

However, for Manhattan to take it so seriously, Yang Yan had reason to extinguish it in its infancy.

In the meantime, Su Su had also been safely retrieved by Yang Yan's people.

Though she hadn't yet met with Zhou Hanyun and the others, she was temporarily settled in a secret location.

The three swords were loyal to Yang Yan, and even if he sent them to their deaths, they would not hesitate.

They followed Yang Yan with an unwavering adherence to executing orders and never asked unnecessary questions.

But Ao Tian was someone who couldn't keep his questions to himself.

Not long after starting the journey, he couldn't hold back and asked:

"Moonlight, what's going on that you're rushing to the Arctic like this?"

Yang Yan shook his head slightly:

"Nothing urgent, I just know Manhattan is in the Arctic now, remember?"

Regarding the purpose of this trip, he didn't intend to hide it.

Moreover, those accompanying him were all trusted associates, so there was nothing to conceal.

Manhattan's whereabouts were important intel previously revealed by Alizee.

Initially, Yang Yan harbored some suspicions, thinking it might be a test.

But now it seemed, for whatever undisclosed reason, Alizee had secretly provided him enormous convenience.

Yang Yan didn't think it was purely romance, at least not entirely.

Alizee must have some special purpose prompting her to do so.

"You mean?"

Ao Tian seemed to catch on but was unsure.

"Whatever he's planning, it must be thwarted. If possible..."

Here, Yang Yan paused.

Although he didn't finish his sentence, Ao Tian understood his intent.

Yang Yan didn't mind removing Manhattan, an effective lieutenant of Heaven.

Without his women as leverage, Yang Yan felt less restrained regarding Manhattan.

The Arctic's intense cold was of no consequence to Yang Yan and his four companions.

In fact, the Ice Emperor Ao Tian appeared to thoroughly enjoy it.

According to him, it felt like coming home.

Furthermore, Yang Yan knew that in a world of ice and snow, Ao Tian's power could be significantly enhanced.

No wonder this guy seemed so relaxed and carefree along the way.

Chapter 986: One of the Nine Elders of the Dusk Race

Next Chapter

Yang Yan's memory goes without saying.

Even when walking across this vast ice field, where the surrounding landscape seems all too similar, he quickly locked onto the stronghold from the last time that had not been destroyed.

That place, Yang Yan remembers vividly.

He recalled that last time it was Gabriel who, through the mysterious Twilight Clan, coerced him, allowing that stronghold to be preserved.

"This is the place."

In just two hours, the group of five finally stopped at a spot on the ice field.

Ao Tian closed his eyes in silence for a moment, evidently using his Divine Thought to sense something.

Afterward, he opened his eyes, shook his head at Yang Yan, and said:

"There's no one left, but beneath us, there's a very secretive aura. I've detected its exact location."

Ao Tian's ability was evidently unaffected here.

If anything, to some extent, it surpassed Yang Yan's.

"These foxes are quick to escape."

This situation did not surprise Yang Yan.

The corners of his mouth rose slightly. Squinting, he said:

"Gabriel said this was their largest stronghold. If they didn't retreat and waited for us, I really would have been surprised."

"I'm just here to try my luck. Even if we can't find them, we've still got this."

With a flip of his hand, a blood-red orb the size of an egg appeared in his hand.

At this moment, the object emitted a scarlet glow, exuding an eerie vibe.

"What's going on with this? It's not about to explode, is it?"

Ao Tian murmured doubtfully.

With his eye for detail, he couldn't discern what this thing was when he first saw it.

But now, its changes were giving him an inexplicable sense of dread.

Yang Yan didn't mind and tossed the orb directly to him.

After examining it for some time, Ao Tian still couldn't make sense of it.

He could only feel a subtle wave of power inside, possessing an indescribable affinity, but other than that, he knew nothing.

"Did you figure anything out?"

Ao Tian gingerly placed the blood ball back in Yang Yan's hand and asked suspiciously.

Yang Yan gently shook his head:

"Since it's something they invested heavily in rituals to obtain, it must have an important use."

"I haven't figured out what this thing is for yet, but..."

At this point, Yang Yan paused, then changed the subject:

"There's more than just one or two of these things; I can sense other similar items exist."

After hearing Yang Yan's words, Ao Tian nodded immediately:

"If that's the case, let's see what else is below. Hopefully, it won't disappoint me!"

With those words, Yang Yan and the three swordsmen instinctively distanced themselves from him.

Boom!

The next moment, a powerful and intense aura emanated from Ao Tian.

Bam!

With a muffled sound, Ao Tian lightly tapped the ice layer with his right foot and suddenly leapt tens of meters high.

Crack——

With the sound of cracking ice, the ground where he stood moments ago spread out like a spider web with countless cracks.

But that was just the start.

In an instant, Ao Tian transformed into a beam of white light, a fierce white tiger manifesting on his fist.

Roar!

A tiger's roar echoed across the sky.

The surrounding space seemed unable to withstand this domineering force, creaking and trembling violently.

The next second, he shot towards the ground like a cannonball, with an unparalleled ferocity, smashing into ancient, steadfast ice.

Boom!

The ground shook violently as the hardened ice, under Ao Tian's ferocious strike, burst into countless ice shards, swirling throughout the air with the cyclone.

If one lacked strength, merely being caught in it would be enough for these ice fragments to shred them to pieces.

This trip to the Arctic was all about destruction for Yang Yan.

For them, causing a commotion was no issue.

If anything, it was advantageous for their actions.

Sometimes, startling the snake doesn't always have to be a bad thing.

The colossal underground palace hidden beneath the glacier immediately collapsed, and the surface ice instantly turned into countless ice fragments.

Countless shards refracted pristine, transparent light under the sunlight, giving off a semblance of beauty.

Yet Ao Tian didn't stop.

He charged directly downward, where the collapsing underground palace lay, with innumerable ice blocks madly crashing down.

Whoosh——

Soon, Ao Tian reappeared on the surface, dragging someone in his right hand.

Exhaling deeply, he tossed the person on the ground casually and exaggeratedly said:

"Lucky I'm fast, else I'd have been crushed to death."

Yang Yan remained silent, focusing his gaze on the person in front of Ao Tian.

The person rescued by Ao Tian was in a terrible state, with dried blood clots all over.

The terrifying scars, now healed, nearly covered this person's entire body.

Even without the tattered clothes, Yang Yan recognized his identity from his aged face.

"An elder from the Twilight Clan?"

Yang Yan asked in a deep voice.

The old man seemed to have but a breath left.

He weakly opened his eyes, recognizing Yang Yan, a man he'd seen once before, and began laughing hoarsely.

From what he recalled, this man not only possessed immense strength but was also an enemy of the Twilight Clan's enemies.

An enemy's enemy is a friend!

No wonder the old man seemed so agitated.

Ao Tian, not understanding the man's thoughts, looked at him as if he were mad, sneered, and said:

"This poor guy must've gone crazy! Even if he's an elder, or even the Clan Leader of the Twilight Clan, it wouldn't matter."

"Those people were really too ruthless, to have tortured this unfortunate guy like this."

What Ao Tian didn't expect was that his words seemed to have angered the old man on the ground.

He abruptly stopped laughing, glared fiercely at Ao Tian, then turned to Yang Yan and said in a hoarse voice:

"I'm not mad! I'm not mad! Yes! Sir, I'm one of the nine elders of the Twilight Clan! And I'm not dead!"

"Don't get worked up!"

Yang Yan squinted his eyes, clenched the man's wrist with one hand, and tapped his skull with the other.

Immediately, a gentle light enveloped him.

Under the glow, the elder of the Twilight Clan finally calmed down, soaking in the light, with his expression becoming more serene and peaceful, eventually closing his eyes slowly.

With this done, Yang Yan pulled back his hand, quietly waiting for the elder to absorb this energy and heal.

The effect was very fast.

The old man recalibrated his breath and soon reopened his eyes.

He didn't roar at Ao Tian again nor looked at Yang Yan, merely gazing silently at the ground.

On the ground, the smooth ice reflected his entire face.

Chapter 987: Moon Devouring Race

After a long time, an old, murky tear rolled down the weathered face of the old man.

The teardrop shattered onto the ice layer, and a radiant gleam flashed by.

The scene before them made Yang Yan's eyelids twitch involuntarily.

Because that spot on the ice layer was hardening at a visibly rapid pace.

The surface of the ice didn't show any change, but Yang Yan could see the transformation within its internal structure.

That piece of ice had undergone a fundamental, earth-shattering change.

Ao Tian also sensed something was wrong, and his reaction was to directly punch down hard.

"Boom!"

The huge shockwave made Ao Tian's robe whip and flutter.

After the shockwave dissipated, the piece of ice endured Ao Tian's powerful attack. Despite being filled with spiderweb-like cracks inside, it did not shatter.

Ao Tian swallowed, stood up, and said to Yang Yan with a frown:

"I just used thirty percent of my strength."

At this point, Zhuge Wushuang and the others who had been standing afar also gathered around, their eyes filled with astonishment.

The scene just now was entirely captured by the three people.

Who would have thought that with such a simple enchantment, that small piece of ice could withstand thirty percent of the strength of one of the Four Emperors, the Ice Emperor?!

"The ability of our Dusk Race is healing, as well as enhancement!"

The old man raised his head and said to Yang Yan in a deep voice:

"This enhancement is not an ordinary one; it is a temporary internal transformation."

"Ordinary people cannot withstand this enhancement, but inanimate objects and people like you can."

The old man paused suddenly, staring intently at Yang Yan.

He seemed to want to glean something from Yang Yan's eyes.

Or perhaps he was expecting something.

However, to his disappointment, Yang Yan merely nodded, showing no unusual expression.

The old man seemed unwilling to accept Yang Yan's indifferent reaction.

He clenched his right hand and suddenly a white light shot towards Fu Changjian.

Startled, Fu Changjian was about to dodge, but was stopped by Yang Yan.

Then, the confusion on Fu Changjian's face turned to astonishment.

"This augmentation power is almost negligible for top-level experts like you."

"Because your bodies have developed to a level we cannot comprehend, even mastering the laws of the world."

The old man pointed at Fu Changjian, whose mouth was slightly open in disbelief:

"But now that he has received my strengthenings, he can fight those two."

Upon hearing this, Gongsun Ruyan and Zhuge Wushuang showed a trace of defiance on their faces.

Though they deliberately suppressed their strength and a head-to-head fight would not be to Fu Changjian's advantage, it's not as if he could take on both at once!

"It's indeed true!"

Yang Yan did not deny the old man's words, his face showing a faint sense of joy:

"To apply it to a person, fundamentally changing all their capabilities, a truly wondrous amplification technique."

With his level of strength, Yang Yan could naturally see the changes on Fu Changjian after receiving the old man's amplification technique.

At this moment, not only had Fu Changjian's senses, body structure resilience, and even his self-healing abilities been significantly enhanced.

What's more, the increase was no small feat, at least over thirty percent on his original foundation.

This is a terrifying ability!

Though Fu Changjian's strength wasn't considered top-notch, it was superlative.

To advance further at this stage is as challenging as climbing to the heavens.

Yet, the miraculous talent of the Dusk Race could directly boost his strength by a substantial margin.

"Impressive."

Yang Yan did not hesitate to praise and then asked:

"Just how long can it last?"

Yang Yan's response brought a hint of joy to the old man's face.

He answered honestly:

"This can only last about ten minutes. Moreover, I can release it at most ten times a day, and the effect will weaken each time."

"Additionally, the same person can only accept such an amplification once a day; otherwise, side effects will occur."

At this point, the old man looked a bit troubled:

"This ability, to cast it independently, requires someone at least at the elder level in our clan."

By now, Ao Tian had recovered from his shock.

His true nature immediately surfaced, dismissively saying:

"That's all its use is?"

Compared to Ao Tian's disdain, Gongsun Ruyan and Zhuge Wushuang looked eagerly at the old man.

After Yang Yan pointed it out, the surge from Fu Changjian was finally felt by the two of them.

Thirty percent!

This is certainly not a small figure.

Even if it's only for ten minutes, it's unimaginable for them.

"If it were just this, our Dusk Race might as well be unremarkable."

The old man chuckled self-deprecatingly, focusing intently on Ao Tian's eyes:

"But do you know about the Moon Devouring Race from history?"

"Moon Devouring?"

Ao Tian's expression changed.

As a veteran of the Four Emperors, he was naturally aware of such buried secrets.

However, this name was so old that he almost forgot about it.

Moreover, this name was quite unfamiliar to many people; it could be said that those who know about it nowadays might be counted on one hand.

For instance, Yang Yan, who now shook his head with a calm expression, indicating no awareness.

Although Ao Tian disapproved of Yang Yan's attitude of pretending not to care while clearly caring, he still immediately shared what he knew:

"Back in the ancient times, there was a war between the Human and Demon races, you know?"

Yang Yan raised an eyebrow. He naturally knew about the war between the Human and Demon races, but it was mostly hearsay, even held with some skepticism.

He didn't know why Ao Tian was bringing it up now.

Ao Tian apparently saw through Yang Yan's thoughts and smiled mysteriously:

"The current Demon Race seems to have vanished, yet nobody knows when they might rise from the ashes and return!"

"Moreover, there are indications that the so-called Demon Race might be descendants of an extraterrestrial civilization."

"Those sealed outside the Exotic Realm might very well be related to them."

"In ancient times, the Human and Demon races opposed each other, fighting as if the world was being plunged into darkness. In the end, six of the Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors perished, leaving only Flame and Yellow."

"At that time, the Human Race was already a remnant, barely surviving."

"The situation then was on the brink of the Ancient Continent falling under the rule of the Demon Race, with humanity on the verge of extinction."

"The Demon Lord at the time killed two emperors and four sovereigns in succession! Then further advanced by absorbing their power through secret techniques, reaching further to the legendary Half-Step Divine Realm!"

"Just half a step short of the Divine Realm! Mastering all the laws of this world, immortal and indestructible, becoming the absolute dominator."

Though it was recounting past events, Ao Tian's tone carried a bit of excitement.

Such a realm, even at present, he could only gaze at, and being one who revered power, he naturally envied it immensely.

Chapter 988: The Moon Devouring Elder's Innate Skill

"At that time, the final great battle between the Human and Demon races erupted. The Demon Lord thought everything was under control, but..."

Ao Tian stopped speaking abruptly.

Beside him, a Dusk Race elder continued the conversation with a solemn tone:

"Back then, our Dusk Race was still a powerful Moon Devouring Race. We sacrificed a million of our people for a defiant blood ritual."

"All the human warriors gained mysterious powers, their strength greatly enhanced."

"Emperors Yan and Huang combined their forces, at great cost to their cultivation, and managed to seal the Demon Lord who was stepping into the Half-Step Divine Realm."

"The Divine Realm is said to be immortal and indestructible. Although the Demon Lord was only in the Half-Step Divine Realm, his body already possessed a trace of indestructible divinity."

"Though Yan and Huang's powers were augmented, they hadn't reached such heights, so they could only seal but not destroy."

Yang Yan's eyes flashed with a hint of surprise:

"So, the reason humans ultimately won, and why we are still alive here, is thanks to your Moon Devouring Race's efforts?"

He did know some history of the Human-Demon war.

He also harbored various speculations.

But regarding such secretive matters, it was his first time hearing about it.

He always believed that when the human race was on the verge of extinction, the main saviors were Emperors Yan and Huang.

Unexpectedly, behind it was the Moon Devouring Race's near-total sacrifice.

"After that battle, the Moon Devouring Race, though honored as heroes by the humans, suffered such heavy casualties that they fell into decline."

"The Clan Leader decided not to involve themselves in the continent's disputes anymore, so they renamed themselves the Dusk Race and hid deep in the mountains with the few dozen remaining clansmen."

Yang Yan frowned, full of confusion, and said:

"Wait, didn't you say it was the entire clan of a million people?"

In his view, the entire clan meant all the people.

But how could the Clan Leader and dozens remain?

The elder gave a bitter laugh and said:

"Because those dozens were the elite of our Moon Devouring Race, all the elders at the time!"

"And those above Moon Devouring Elder automatically awaken a gift."

Yang Yan looked at the battle-scarred, weathered old man in front of him and immediately guessed something, softly uttering two words:

"Immortality?"

To his surprise, the old man gently shook his head:

"No! It's just death and resurrection once. In other words, each of us has two lives."

"However, death by natural life force depletion cannot be resurrected."

"Of course, our long lifespans have led some to mistakenly believe we are eternal."

Yang Yan nodded in understanding.

If natural old age could be resurrected, that would be too terrifying.

"So, you died once, were abandoned here, and unexpectedly resurrected?"

Yang Yan asked with a smile.

"Heh heh!"

The Dusk elder chuckled, his laughter carrying a hint of coldness:

"The day after they left, I regained consciousness, but at that moment, I was already in despair."

"The injuries on my body, with my healing abilities, were certainly manageable. I just needed some time to recover."

"However, leaving here was extremely difficult for me. Until you appeared today..."

Yang Yan roughly guessed what the old man was thinking and touched his chin, smiling lightly:

"You want to use our strength? But you must know, we might not measure up to Emperors Yan and Huang."

The old man laughed in return, indifferent:

"Though we are in the Hidden World, it doesn't mean we don't understand the outside world."

"New talents emerge in each generation! Although your current power may not be said to exceed the Two Emperors, it is more than enough to compare."

Upon hearing this, Yang Yan couldn't help but be stunned.

Beside him, Ao Tian's eyes lit up.

In fact, not only him, but the Three Swords also quickly exchanged glances.

Undoubtedly, their king receiving such praise gave them endless confidence in future confrontations.

"If the Dusk Race gathers a team of seven, they can perform a small-scale enhancement."

"The effect may not be as good as mine, but it's definitely more than half as potent."

"If the team includes one of our Elders, the enhancement increases to fifty percent!"

"And it lasts for at least three hours!"

Upon hearing this, Yang Yan's eyebrows twitched involuntarily.

Such a long duration is no simple enhancement but a qualitative leap.

"Does it work on inanimate objects?"

Yang Yan considered this for a moment and suddenly asked.

He thought of his Titled Puppets.

A total of three thousand eight hundred Titled-level Puppet Warriors; if they could utilize the Dusk Race's augmentation gift, their strength would reach an unimaginable level.

If so, even facing a direct battle with Paradise and its allies, he would fear nothing.

"Naturally, it works. But we won't waste effort for nothing!"

The elder was very pleased with Yang Yan and the others' reactions, with a hint of pride in his voice.

"After all this talk, isn't it that you want us to save your clansmen?"

Ao Tian spoke bluntly, revealing the elder's true intention.

However, this guy still had a calm face, with an expression like a merchant ready to haggle.

"If our nine elders and Clan Leader join forces, it's enough to push you to the pinnacle of the Emperor Realm, touching the edge of the Divine Realm!"

The old man suddenly looked at Ao Tian, speaking earnestly.

This attitude was serious, but Ao Tian was confused.

He is one of the Four Emperors, the Ice Emperor; except for a few individuals, he already stands at the top of the world's hierarchy.

He had heard of the Divine Realm, but what is this Emperor Realm?

Yang Yan didn't know either, but he roughly guessed it was a new classification of power.

Never before heard!

Could it be the Dusk Race's own way of classifying power?

"Yes."

The old man looked Ao Tian up and down.

"Soldier, Master, General, Guru, Emperor, God!"

"Each stage divides into nine ranks, three minor realms!"

"The first three ranks are the Beginner Tier, the middle three ranks the Intermediate Tier, and the last three ranks the Advanced Tier!"

"Today's environment pales in comparison to Ancient Times. Your talent is not beneath the Ancient Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors!"

Ao Tian felt some dissatisfaction earlier, but hearing that his strength was decent even in ancient times, he brightened up.

"You indeed stand at the top of this world now, but facing a true high-tier Emperor-level, you would be powerless!"

Towards the end, the elder straightened his hunched figure, remarkably exuding an imposing aura.

Yang Yan and Ao Tian didn't feel much, but Zhuge Wushuang couldn't hold back.

She was fiery by nature, always unafraid of anything, and directly retorted:

"If that's the case, couldn't you pick someone, cultivate them into a loyal master, and with your Clan Leader and some Elders enhancing them, wouldn't they be invincible? How did it come to this?"

Chapter 989: Monster?

"Wushuang!"

Yang Yan shouted, then smiled and said:

"Don't be rude."

The elder showed a bitter smile, then shook his head helplessly:

"First, it's not easy to train a master."

"Second, even if we succeed, the blessing from ordinary tribe members and elders during rituals isn't enough to make him invincible and protect the entire tribe."

"Third, if the clan leader and elders jointly perform ceremonial blessings, it's actually a forbidden technique, with the cost being 300 years of life for each of us!"

"Although it can be effective for half a year and save the whole tribe at critical times, it won't be used lightly."

"You need to understand that the most important core of the Dusk Race is the figures above elder level."

"Ordinary tribe members, unless there are tens of thousands, cannot even compare to half an elder!"

Yang Yan was silent for a moment before speaking:

"How long do you all live?"

"The clan leader has lived for over five thousand years, and we, the youngest, are about two thousand years old and can live for around six thousand years."

"As for ordinary tribe members, they live on average five to six hundred years. Some special cases can live over a thousand years."

The lifespan gap of nearly a tenth indeed demonstrates a vast difference!

"Have all the Dusk Race members been captured by the people from Manhattan? How many are there?"

Yang Yan pressed on.

"Including me, there are nine great elders and the clan leader. I can sense they are well and alive."

This guy really doesn't care about the life and death of ordinary tribe members.

Yang Yan felt slightly helpless.

However, that wasn't his main concern.

"What about the ordinary tribe members?"

He asked again.

"Over ten thousand ordinary tribe members are now in their hands."

The elder said.

"You've been developing for so long, and only have over ten thousand people?"

Ao Tian curiously interjected.

This guy even unabashedly glanced at the elder's pants, then looked as if he had an epiphany.

He muttered quietly:

"It must be you old men monopolizing women due to your status. You're all old, yet still enforcing family planning..."

The elder glared at Ao Tian dissatisfiedly and said through gritted teeth:

"Our Dusk Race is completely different from humans!"

Yang Yan felt a headache.

These two seem to have "common ground" despite being at odds.

"I can help you rescue the Dusk Race."

Yang Yan suddenly said.

At this moment, the elder dropped the competition with Ao Tian and instantly looked at Yang Yan, and said resolutely:

"The old clan leader said there are definitely people among humans who remember this battle. They will hear of our plight and surely assist the Dusk Race. For example... him!"

The elder looked at Ao Tian again.

The latter smiled awkwardly, neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

"I can save you, but I can't guarantee how many I can rescue."

"Furthermore, to prevent you from being captured again, I require you to settle directly at the location I specify and accept protection from our people."

Yang Yan's tone left no room for negotiation.

The elder hesitated, then frowned and said:

"This needs to be asked of our old clan leader, I..."

Yang Yan waved a big hand and immediately decided:

"No need to ask, it's decided!"

The elder initially wanted to say something, but the strong words blocked him.

He wasn't a charitable ambassador.

Helping others without gaining any benefit would be unreasonable.

Yang Yan claimed to protect their safety, but deep down he had his own calculations.

However, noticing Ao Tian's expectant gaze, Yang Yan realized he might have to share some of the benefits.

Ice Emperor Ao Tian likes to act alone, but he was never isolated.

In fact, Ao Tian's followers are numerous, by quantity alone, they won't be fewer than his.

Overall, once the Dusk Race members come under his command, given that he saved their tribe, it's unlikely they'd refuse any requests for help now and then, right?

Moreover, once they're on his turf, future matters are bound to be under his control.

As for the clan leader and others of the Dusk Race, they could be honorary titles.

While Yang Yan made calculations, the elder appeared helpless.

After hesitating for a long time, he finally couldn't resist cautiously suggesting:

"How about rescuing the clan leader and elders first?"

Yang Yan chuckled softly and consoled:

"Don't worry, we're already starting, you're just the first."

He wasn't afraid of the elder backing out.

He was even less worried that other elders and the clan leader might refuse when they're rescued.

If it came to that, he has ways to make them agree.

After speaking, he took out a blood ball and tossed it to Ao Tian:

"Ao Tian, you go your way, hold onto this, and whenever you sense the same aura, contact me immediately."

"Be sure not to act alone, wait until we've regrouped to proceed."

Ao Tian weighed the blood ball in his hand and nodded to signify agreement.

When Yang Yan took out the blood ball, the elder seemed to see something incredible, his murky old eyes widened noticeably.

Yang Yan saw his reaction but didn't plan to explain, acting as if he hadn't noticed.

"Longsword, Ruyan, take this, move together, and when you sense the aura, likewise don't act rashly, contact me, alright?"

Though Fu Changjian and Gongsun Ruyan are skilled, they still fall short compared to me and Ao Tian.

Yang Yan feared mishaps, so he assigned them to act together for mutual support.

Fu Changjian and Gongsun Ruyan stood and accepted the scarlet blood ball Yang Yan handed over.

Zhuge Wushuang's eyes shone with curiosity as she looked at Yang Yan.

Yang Yan sent Ruyan and Longsword, yet left her behind.

Yang Yan finally glanced at the elder and found him mesmerized by the blood ball Ao Tian held, so he smiled and asked:

"You can sense the aura of those elders and your clan leader, right?"

The elder upon hearing the words clan leader and elders, looked up immediately and nodded vigorously:

"Yes! Of course, I can!"

Yang Yan smiled:

"That's good, you'll go with me!"

Gongsun Ruyan and Fu Changjian had already left, but the elder suddenly stopped Ao Tian who was about to leave.

Ao Tian raised his eyebrows, looking quite displeased:

"Old man, what's gotten into you now?"

The elder pointed at the blood ball in his hand and said solemnly:

"This is a demonic item."

"Demonic item?"

Ao Tian's expression changed.

Even though he often considers himself invincible, he still has some self-awareness.

During the Human Demon War, even the Three Sovereigns and Five Emperors suffered losses, showing how daunting and terrifying the Demon Race is.

Their items absolutely cannot be taken lightly.

Otherwise, you might fall into a trap and regret it deeply.

Chapter 990: Discovery of a New Stronghold

"Can he erode my mind? Or will he be tainted by Demonic Qi?"

Ao Tian hurriedly asked.

He was truly a bit scared.

Sure enough, the hand that casually held the Blood Ball was quickly encased in a layer of solid ice.

"No, and he won't."

The elder shook his head but firmly pointed at the Blood Ball and said:

"This is a demon, just not tainted by Demonic Qi."

"You can understand it as Demonic Qi being water, and this thing is a vessel for it."

"Damn it!"

"Scared the hell out of me."

"But I must first clarify one thing."

So Ao Tian continued to ask:

"What is this thing? Why are you speaking so vaguely, be straightforward!"

As he spoke, he couldn't help but once again stare intently at the Blood Ball in his hand.

But Yang Yan understood.

"Are you saying that this thing is normally fine, but will immediately assimilate when encountering Demonic Qi or dark energy?"

"Yes."

The elder nodded seriously.

Ao Tian rolled his eyes and turned to leave.

He was very clear that Demonic Qi and dark energy naturally have the ability to assimilate everything.

"It not only assimilates but can immediately..."

Ao Tian didn't hear the rest because he was already far away from Yang Yan and the others.

In Ao Tian's view, as long as it's not a real demon, there's nothing to worry about.

As for the words of that elder from the Dusk Race, he didn't pay much attention at all.

Firstly, because of his confidence in his own strength.

Secondly, because of his inner arrogance.

Even if it is a demon, what fear does he, the great Ice Emperor Ao Tian, have?!

From this point on, the group of five who came to the Arctic split into three, each heading in a different direction.

What Ao Tian didn't hear, Yang Yan understood clearly.

With his composure, even he couldn't help but look more solemn after hearing it.

If it's really as the elder said, things might not be as simple as he imagined.

But the top priority right now is still to rescue the elder and Clan Leader of the Dusk Race.

Yang Yan didn't dwell too much on this matter and waved his hand:

"Let's go, let's set off too!"

After saying that, he looked at the elder of the Dusk Race.

After all, the Arctic is so vast, and he's no god. His Divine Thought can't cover the entire area.

Currently, he has no clues about their whereabouts and naturally needs to seek help from this human GPS guide.

"I can sense their aura in the east, faint and elusive."

The elder looked towards the direction of the rising sun and said in a deep voice.

Yang Yan felt both helpless and somewhat fortunate.

He thought this guy was a precise navigator, but it turns out this is the best he can do.

Still, it's better than nothing.

At least it's better than having no clues and looking for a needle in a haystack.

The main thing is that it doesn't overlap with the paths of Ao Tian or Ruyan, so the arrangement of splitting up wasn't wasted effort.

"Alright, let's go!"

Yang Yan stepped forward, about to set off, but noticed there was no movement behind him.

Looking back, he saw Zhuge Wushuang helplessly looking at the Dusk Race elder.

Yang Yan slapped his forehead, realizing he had been caught up in future plans and forgot that the elder had difficulty walking.

With a flick of his finger, a sacred light enveloped the elder.

At the same time, a pair of light wings sprouted from his back, with a halo above his head.

Despite only wearing a cloak, he looked just like an angel.

Except his age was quite advanced, and this appearance didn't match an angel at all!

The elder of the Dusk Race gave Yang Yan a surprised glance, seemingly amazed by Yang Yan's method.

Clearly, he only now realized that he had underestimated this young oriental man who looked just over twenty years old.

"What is it? Old man, let's hurry up and go!"

From behind, Zhuge Wushuang urged with her longsword, bypassing the elder to follow Yang Yan.

But she suddenly turned her head and smiled, asking:

"By the way, what's your name? Or how should we address you? We can't keep calling you 'hey, hey'!"

The elder was stunned for a moment, then said:

"My name is Sass, Sass Mandala."

Zhuge Wushuang smiled and nodded, saying no more, and quickly caught up with Yang Yan.

Sass, watching the two from behind, once again fell into deep thought.

He clearly saw, with every seemingly ordinary step they took, they actually covered dozens of meters.

In just a brief moment, they had put a long distance between them.

"This young man's strength is probably nearing the pinnacle of the Emperor Realm, right?"

The self-proclaimed elder of the Dusk Race, Sass, rubbed his eyes, finally believing this fact, then with a thought, skimmed swiftly across the ground towards the two.

In the following three days, Yang Yan led the way, Wushuang followed, and trailing behind was the elder of the Dusk Race flying low to the ground.

This trio didn't know how far they traveled eastward, but they still hadn't found the target.

The only thing pushing them forward was Sass's somewhat excited voice:

"We're close, we're close, I can feel the aura increasing; they're very near to us."

Thus, everyone quickened their pace.

Another half day passed, yet Yang Yan still found nothing.

Honestly, with their speed, the Arctic, though vast, should have been traversed by now if they kept heading east.

Throughout this frozen land, a mysterious force continually lingered, causing varying degrees of spatial distortion.

Even implementing the Secret Technique like Shrinking Inches, they had only searched about half of this area.

Just then, Gongsun Ruyan and Fu Changjian suddenly informed Yang Yan via Secret Technique, that they had found a new stronghold, though unclear about its particulars.

Yang Yan coldly smiled upon receiving the message

"Let's move; remember this spot for next time, we'll search directly from here. First, let's head to Ruyan's side."

Yang Yan turned around and instructed.

Zhuge Wushuang showed a worried expression, looking at Yang Yan and asked:

"Your Highness, is there a critical situation where Ruyan and Changjian are?"

Yang Yan gently shook his head:

"There's no situation, just the target has been found."

Yang Yan responded, then looked at Sass.

Over the past few days, he had gained some understanding of this elder ranked ninth.

According to him, aside from a Clan Leader with supreme authority, the Dusk Race also had nine elders who held high status.

Yet, judging by his actions following Yang Yan over these few days, he was rather disappointing.

As soon as Sass regained his footing, he quickly asked:

"Why did we stop? Searching a little further ahead, we will reach it, I can sense..."

Yang Yan took a deep breath and said gravely:

"Just follow us. Oh no! You, your strength is really too weak."

With that, he actually grabbed Sass's shoulder and shouted softly:

"Let's go!"

In the next moment, two dazzling white lights soared into the sky...