

First Order 731

### **Chapter 731 Instigating Wang Yun's defection**

If it were someone else's skill, Ren Xiaosu would definitely not waste two additional Perfect Skill Duplication Scrolls just so he could learn a specific skill. After all, three scrolls would allow him to learn three separate skills. Although he might end up learning some useless skills, they could still prove useful in the future.

Of course, Ren Xiaosu was not referring to the jumping rope skill.

Ren Xiaosu asked the palace in his mind, "When are you going to assign the rest of the quests?"

The voice from the palace answered, "Unauthorized to answer."

Ren Xiaosu pondered this for a moment. The answer from the palace this time seemed to be implying, "Well, that would have to depend on my mood."

Alright, since he could not do anything about the palace's temperament, he could only patiently wait for it to assign the quests to him.

While Ren Xiaosu was pondering, a wounded person looked at Ren Xiaosu. "Is that medicine of yours... for sale?"

"I guess there's still smart people around here." Ren Xiaosu chuckled and said, "There ain't no such thing as a free lunch in this world. Tell me, how much are you willing to offer for this medicine?"

Just as Luo Lan had said, this group of people only came to the Sacred Mountains for the sake of their own interests. It wasn't like they were here for the sake of the common folk of the world, so their fate was none of Ren Xiaosu's concern.

As such, he could give them the medicine, but not without a price.

"Is 20,000 yuan enough?" the wounded man asked.

"No." Ren Xiaosu shook his head. "This medicine was created with ingredients harvested from extremely dangerous locations. 20,000 yuan won't even cover the costs to make it. I'll charge a million yuan per person and not a cent less. Y'all should have opened anonymous bank accounts in case of emergencies, right? So don't give me excuses that you don't have any money on you. Think carefully about whether your life or your money is more important."

When the wounded person heard that, his expression turned bitter. "Can you make it cheaper on account that we used to be in the same trade?"

In the end, it was Ren Xiaosu who got stunned. "Same trade? You were a doctor too?"

The wounded person explained, "Oh, that's not it. I used to rob people..."

Ren Xiaosu was left speechless. His expression darkened. "Do you still want to get treated?"

Before the wounded person could reply, Wang Yun, who was standing nearby, suddenly said, "How about this? Tell me first how many vials of medicine you have left?"

"Three." Ren Xiaosu looked at Wang Yun and said, "It's more than enough to treat these people. Why?"

"Then I'll offer six million yuan and buy them all for everyone. What do you say?" Wang Yun said, "That's my final offer. This way, it'll also save you some trouble."

"Sure." Ren Xiaosu threw the three porcelain vials right into Wang Yun's hands.

At this moment, the wounded person eagerly looked at Wang Yun. It was far too difficult to encounter a good person in places like these these days.

But after Wang Yun handed an anonymous bank card to Ren Xiaosu, he waved the vials teasingly in front of the wounded people and said with a smile, "Look, I have the medicine now, but I don't mind selling it to you all for cheaper. He demanded one million yuan for it, but I'll only ask for 500,000. However, all of you here are no ordinary people. How can your lives be so cheap? Therefore, I'll allow you to use a piece of information worth 500,000 yuan in exchange for it."

Wang Yun was in the field of intelligence work himself. Usually, he would have to pay a huge price just to get his hands on some valuable intel. But now, it would be much easier to take advantage of these people's desire to live in exchange for some useful information.

It was not that Wang Yun was so dedicated to his job that he was still thinking about his responsibilities as an intelligence officer. But after he realized there were so many powerful people who had come to the Sacred Mountains, he felt he might not be able to get ahold of the No. 001 Experimental. After learning about Ren Xiaosu's identity, he was no longer confident of getting ahead of the Stronghold Destroyer and White Mask to get his hands on the target.

Moreover, Cheng Yu also mentioned the Demon Whisperer had joined one of the other groups for this expedition. His presence would only make it more difficult for Wang Yun to achieve his objective.

Wang Yun thought the Demon Whisperer and the Stronghold Destroyer actually sounded quite compatible and wondered if they knew each other. It would, of course, be wonderful if they could start fighting each other instead. If they didn't, Wang Yun would definitely not be a match for either of them.

So, in order not to go back empty-handed, he would have to make some backup plans for himself.

Even if he did not manage to seize the No. 001 Experimental, with such important intel, he could still gain a promotion when he returned to the Kong Consortium. Kong Donghai would understand at that time who was the most competent.

"Everyone should already know that I have an excellent memory and analytical ability." Wang Yun said with a smile, "So don't try to fool me with some unimportant or false information."

Ren Xiaosu observed from the sidelines and thought Wang Yun was pretty quick-witted.

Next to him, the Great Hoodwinker whispered, "Future Commander, do you still have any of that medicine left? You can compete with him and gain some intel from the others instead."

However, Wang Yun turned to look at Ren Xiaosu. "I know you still have some of the medicine on you, but I'll share the intel that I gain here with you, so please don't make things difficult. You might be stronger than me, but I'm better at analyzing the authenticity of the information they provide. Why don't we work together?"

Ren Xiaosu nodded and stored the black medicine he had just traded for.

The Great Hoodwinker said with a sigh, "Wang Yun is a smart person. Why did he choose to work for the Kong Consortium of all places? A talented person like him should head to the Prosperous Northwest. The bureaucratic order in the Kong Consortium is too strong, and smart people will probably not live for long over there. However, things are different in the Northwest. Wang Fengyuan likes to recruit people such as him. Judging by how he saved his own teammates first, it at least shows he has good character. Someone like him is best suited to head to the Northwest where he can be edified by our fellow comrades."

"Then why don't you go and read his fortune for him?" Ren Xiaosu said with a smile.

"There's no need to read his fortune." The Great Hoodwinker muttered, "Future Commander, when you do the information exchange with him later, you should position yourself cleverly so that I can get a picture of Luo Lan and Wang Yun in the same frame with my spy camera. Make him look like he's whispering to Luo Lan. Kong Haidong is a suspicious person. If the Kong Consortium gets ahold of this photo, Wang Yun won't be able to command any important position in the consortium for the rest of his life. How can a person like him be willing to work under someone for long? When that time comes, our old fellow, Wang Fengyuan, will get a chance to instigate Wang Yun's defection."

Ren Xiaosu looked at the Great Hoodwinker in surprise. Wasn't this as good as forcing Wang Yun into a corner? "Do you often do such things?"

Embarrassed, the Great Hoodwinker said, "I can't always be going on and on about the 'Prosperous Northwest,' right?" But at this moment, a seriously wounded person could no longer cling to life. Before he could wait for the black medicine to treat his wounds, he died.

Wang Yun did not feel any pity either. The team members who had been traveling together were his competitors after all, so it did not matter if they died.

However, something unexpected happened. Right as this wounded person died, gray, mossy tentacles extended out from the weeds on the ground and stabbed right into the corpse. It melted like a wax statue and quickly disintegrated.

Everyone stood up in shock and looked at the ground in fear, afraid something would pierce them under their feet as well.

But after waiting for a long time, there was still no movement.

Soon after, the corpse completely disappeared. Even the clothes had completely disintegrated to dust.

This sight was so strange Ren Xiaosu and Yang Xiaojin looked at each other in dismay. The two of them remembered almost at once the mystery of the missing corpse and the fish meat and bones back in the Jing Mountains.

### **Chapter 732 Sharing intel**

Back when they were in the Jing Mountains, the entire expedition group was on tenterhooks due to the disappearance of their teammate's corpse. Before today, Ren Xiaosu could not understand why the fish meat and bones would vanish. The vanishing corpse could be explained as it could have been dragged away by the Experimentals.

But surely the Experimentals would not be so desperate they had to resort to stealing fish meat and bones.

Right now, the answer to this mystery finally played out in front of Ren Xiaosu. He inexplicably felt his heart beating faster and faster as he looked at the ground. However, he was unable to ascertain what might be beneath it.

Ren Xiaosu immediately manipulated "Old Xu" to start digging up the ground barehanded to look for that strange plant.

Cheng Yu and the others were left dumbfounded by this sight. They felt White Mask was way too daring. Wasn't he afraid the plant would attack him?

Everyone looked at Old Xu in silence. But even though Old Xu had already dug half a meter into the ground, there were still no signs of anything strange. It seemed that those gray, mossy tentacles had already retreated deep into the ground after feeding on the corpse.

"Does it only devour dead bodies?" Cheng Yu's assistant wondered. "We have so many injured here, and there's a lot of blood dripping onto the ground, yet we didn't see it appear earlier on. It only came out right after that man died."

"We can't simply deduce that." Ren Xiaosu shook his head. "It might also attack us while we're sleeping."

The situation was too uncertain. Based on the situation in the Jing Mountains, the deduction by Cheng Yu's assistant would have been correct. But at that time, the plant was proven to have not devoured any corpses in the presence of people.

Ren Xiaosu suspected the strange plants in the Sacred Mountains were much more powerful than the ones they had encountered in the Jing Mountains.

Of course, this deduction was also very logical. After all, the Sacred Mountains started undergoing changes much earlier than the Jing Mountains. Moreover, more than a year had passed since the expedition to the Jing Mountains.

"Then how are we gonna sleep at night?" This was the first thing Luo Lan was concerned about. "I noticed that many of us only brought along tents without the waterproof ground cloths. We can't defend against this plant at

all.”

Ren Xiaosu said as he looked up at a tree and pointed at the forked branches, “Then we can only sleep in the trees.”

Luo Lan looked overhead hesitantly and attempted to climb up the tree. But when he tried to lay on a branch, it actually broke under his weight.

With a loud thud, Luo Lan fell from the tree and grimaced in pain. “Any other ideas?”

“If you want to live, you had better find a thicker branch.” Ren Xiaosu sighed and said, “Although we might be overthinking things, it’s better to be safe than sorry.”

Luo Lan thought about it and quietly went off to search for a thicker branch. Ren Xiaosu had only managed to survive for so long in the wilderness because he lived by this saying: Better to be safe than sorry.

In the evening, everyone remained silent as they sat in front of their campfires. Fortunately, Wang Yun had already finished gathering intel from the wounded personnel and treated their injuries.

Although the wounded personnel were still in a pathetic state, at least their wounds were not painful anymore. They also knew they would not die due to an infection.

Some of these people used their information to trade for the black medicine, while the others simply bought the black medicine off Wang Yun for 1.2 million yuan. Wang Yun did not push it too far either since he also wanted more companions to travel with them into the Sacred Mountains.

Wang Yun kept his promise and approached Ren Xiaosu. He said, “I’ve only five relatively important pieces of intel. Let me tell you them one by one. “The first one was told to me by that young woman standing to my 9 o’clock. She’s a superhuman. When we exited the canyon, she was the sixth person to regain consciousness.” Wang Yun said, “Based on my observation, she has six other companions traveling with her, but I’m still waiting to see which organization she’s from. If I get any clues, I’ll also share them with you.”

Ren Xiaosu looked at Wang Yun in surprise. This intel sharing was much more detailed than he had expected. He thought Wang Yun would try to fool him.

As such, Ren Xiaosu asked in a serious tone, “What do you want in exchange?”

“It’s always so easy to communicate with smart people.” Wang Yun said with a smile, “My demands are simple. I only hope that if you really manage to get into the core region of the Sacred Mountains and find the No. 001 Experimental, you can give me a sample of his DNA. I won’t need to take him away with me.”

Wang Yun had to provide such “premium service” to Ren Xiaosu because he was also trying to gain his support.

Since he was not strong enough, he would have to rely on the strength of others to aid him. This was the basic principle that intelligence staff followed.

Now that he was 80% sure that Ren Xiaosu was the Stronghold Destroyer, he would be a little foolish to not ride on his coattails.

Therefore, Wang Yun wanted to use his expertise in exchange for some benefits from Ren Xiaosu.

But Ren Xiaosu shook his head. “I’m sorry, I can’t promise you that.”

“Why not?” Wang Yun was a little surprised.

“I can’t provide you with what you’re asking. Do you have any other demands?” Ren Xiaosu said.

If the No. 001 Experimental were really Yan Liuyuan, how could he possibly use Yan Liuyuan’s DNA sample in exchange for intel from others?

Wang Yun immediately had another thought. It shouldn’t require much effort to extract a DNA sample of the No. 001 Experimental since the human body had so much blood and tissue. He was only asking for a DNA sample, so why was the young man before him unwilling to agree to that?

Unless the other party personally knew the No. 001 Experimental, or he knew there was something more to it and had a valid reason for not agreeing to the condition. But at least in Wang Yun’s opinion, he could not figure out what this reason was.

However, Wang Yun was not insistent on the matter either. He broke out into a smile and said, “It’s fine if you don’t want to give me that. We can just change it to another condition. I’d like to seek your protection to keep me from death. Whatever’s within your power to do so. If your friends and I get put in danger at the same time, you can save them first.”

Ren Xiaosu sized up Wang Yun. The other party’s condition was actually not asking for too much. Whether to save him or not was entirely up to Ren Xiaosu’s own judgment. Rather than calling this an exchange, it might as well be called a verbal agreement.

Ren Xiaosu asked, “Aren’t you afraid that I won’t save you even if I can?”

“I’ll take a gamble,” Wang Yun said with a smile.

“Alright, it’s settled then.” Ren Xiaosu said, “Tell me the rest of the intel.”

“The intel provided by this woman is regarding the Kong Consortium, which is also the organization I work for.” Wang Yun said with a smile, “There’s no need for me to hide my identity anymore. I believe that you also know I’m Wang Yun, the director of the Kong Consortium’s 2nd Military Intelligence Division. She said that Vanilla from the Anjing House was the one who created the accident that led to the death of Kong Erdong, the head of the Kong Consortium’s intelligence agency. I already knew about

this, but she also added something that I didn't know, and that's that the Anjing House and the Wang Consortium have reached an agreement to assassinate more of the Kong Consortium's higher-ups in the future. From the look of things, the Wang Consortium is only doing this because they're ready to start a war." Ren Xiaosu thought to himself, 'As expected, the Anjing House and the Wang Consortium are already working together.' Wang Yun said, "I just don't understand something. In reality, politicians don't like to resort to assassination as a means to an end, because it won't look good on them. Besides, Wang Shengzhi, as a mature politician, should even be more like this. But now, it seems that he is also becoming unscrupulous. It's as if... he's getting desperate."

### **Chapter 733 Hey, that guy**

Under normal circumstances, assassinations were rarely used when the political arena was mature. If someone were discovered to have resorted to such methods, their political career would be tainted.

But it seemed that Wang Shengzhi was not afraid of being labeled with such infamy as he resorted to the most direct method to achieve his goals.

Of course, these assassination attempts were only made possible due to the existence of supernatural beings. If this were the past, how could it be that easy to achieve?

After the strength of the individual had surpassed a certain bottleneck, it would be very difficult to ensure the safety of leaders. This was also the reason why Qing Zhen moved into the military camp. He was more cautious than anyone else. Furthermore, he did not have any vices like Kong Erdong.

However, Ren Xiaosu was not particularly concerned about the conflict between the Kong Consortium and the Wang Consortium. He asked, "What about the rest of the intel?"

"Another piece of intel was provided by the middle-aged man standing to our 7 o'clock." Wang Yun said, "I'm quite sure he's from the Zhou Consortium, because I saw him during an operation. He said many of the businessmen on the Northwestern trade route are actually retired soldiers from the Wang Consortium. You should also know that the Wang Consortium has mandatory military service for its citizens. When it becomes necessary, everyone can be called up for military service. So he feels the Wang Consortium might harbor ill will against the Northwest."

Ren Xiaosu nodded. He was wondering why the people working for the consortiums would betray their own organizations and supply intelligence to Wang Yun for 500,000 yuan. No matter how he thought about it, it seemed quite improbable.

But now, he finally realized these people had only supplied intel about other organizations. Their main motive was not only to obtain the black medicine but also to annoy the other organizations.

For example, the middle-aged man from the Zhou Consortium obviously wanted to sow discord between the Wang Consortium and Fortress 178.

In any case, there were no good intentions.

Wang Yun continued, "Another piece of intel regards the Qinghe Group. It was told to me by the young man standing on the left. He said Xu Ke's likely to leave office within a year. Afterwards, Xu Zhi, the rising star of the Xu clan, will take over the Qinghe Group entirely. He said this matter might be directly

related to the battle in Luoyang City.” Ren Xiaosu nodded nonchalantly. Although he had a very good relationship with the Riders, he did not care about their change in leadership

The two remaining pieces of intel regarded the mobilization of the Zhou Consortium and the Wang Consortium’s troops. Ren Xiaosu was even less concerned about this.

After Wang Yun finished sharing his intel, he suddenly looked at Ren Xiaosu. “Since we’re working together now, may I at least know what your name is?”

Ren Xiaosu thought for a moment and said, “Sure, my name is merci.”

“Mercy?” Wang Yun was puzzled. He felt this name sounded a little strange.

Honestly, Wang Yun was unable to react for a while. He was wondering what kind of surname it was as he had never heard it before. He asked in a serious tone, “This isn’t your full name, is it? What’s your full name?”

Ren Xiaosu pondered things for a moment before saying, “My full name is merci beaucoup.”

Wang Yun was stunned. ‘If you fucking didn’t want to give your name, then so be it. You’re even trying to take advantage of me? What did you help me with that I have to say merci beaucoup to you for?!’

Even if you didn’t want to give your name, could you at least be a little more euphemistic and choose a more decent name?!

On that very night, everyone climbed onto the tree branches to sleep. As they were worried about the danger that might come at any time and it being a very cold and windy day, it was really difficult to fall asleep.

All except for Luo Lan, who was even snoring as he lay on the branches. This made it even more difficult for the others to get some sleep.

When Ren Xiaosu was keeping watch during the night, he stayed especially wary of that strange plant in case it attacked. However, nothing happened throughout the night.

The next morning, everyone was overwhelmed by an unprecedented sense of fatigue. Heading into the wilderness would already slowly exhaust them even if they had tents since they would definitely not sleep as well as at home. Now that they had to sleep in the trees, it was even more tormenting. Cheng Yu was a little worried when he saw everyone looking exhausted. In this condition, most of their combat prowess would probably be reduced greatly even if they managed to get into the interior of the Sacred Mountains. In the other group, Zhou Yingxue came out of her tent in high spirits and took the little red flag from Li Shentan’s hand. “Alright, stay within a radius of 10 meters from me even if you’re washing up. We’ll be setting off in another half an hour, so don’t waste any time. If you’re slow, we won’t wait for you...”

Li Shentan, Vanilla, and the others had also passed through the canyon. After passing through it, they encountered an encirclement from the Pyro Company as well. But unlike the other groups, the result of



the encirclement by the Pyro Company ended up with several Pyro Company members dead while Li Shentan's number of slaves increased by several dozen people.

Meanwhile, there was no change in the other aspects of the group.

Vanilla was already numb to this. Yesterday, Li Shentan said they would have to adjust their plan of march and suggested meeting up with Cheng Yu's group on the other side first before exploring the core region of the Sacred Mountains.

Li Shentan had a very good reason for that: "There is strength in numbers!" But Vanilla felt a little helpless. By suggesting to meet up with the people on the other side, it was as though the Pyro Company members in the core region of the Sacred Mountains were nonexistent.

This meant they would have to pass through the Pyro Company first and join up with their other teammates before heading back to beat up the Pyro Company again.

'Isn't this plan too careless?!' It felt like they were totally belittling the Pyro Company that way!

At that time, Li Shentan told him with a smile, "That's the general idea. If we encounter any difficulties along the way, we can just improvise and make the necessary adjustments. Based on the route, we won't really have to pass through their research base directly. We'll still be some distance from it."

"Mhm," Vanilla replied with a blank expression, "As long as you're happy."

"Very good," Li Shentan said with a smile. "You've mastered the art of getting along with me. Keep it up!"

Then, when they set out again, they also encountered the same problem as Cheng Yu's team, which was the strange underground plant that grew in the forest.

Although none of them were killed, some of the Pyro Company members that came to eliminate them suffered casualties. As such, Vanilla and the others were greeted by the sight of the plant devouring the corpses. Initially, Vanilla thought the plant would trouble them greatly. In the end, Zhou Yingxue took the little red flag from Li Shentan and became their new tour guide.

Using Zhou Yingxue's own words, any problems related to plants were not problems at all.

Therefore, the crisis of crossing the canyon was easily solved by Li Shentan.

While the crisis of passing through the forest was easily countered by Zhou Yingxue.

At some point, Vanilla even felt sorry for the Pyro Company. They clearly had created such a dangerous environment for their enemies, yet they had to encounter Zhou Yingxue and Li Shentan of all people.

The problems the other groups were troubled by did not seem to pose a problem to Li Shentan and Zhou Yingxue. What left Vanilla most helpless was that the A-rank hitmen in the group had seemingly gotten used to relying on the two powerful superhumans to get through the difficulties.

At the beginning, everyone was very much against Li Shentan joining them. But now, they realized their survival rate was maxed out with Li Shentan as part of their group. When they thought about what the other groups might be facing at this moment, they even felt a sense of inexplicable superiority.

While others had to sleep in trees at night, all they needed to do was to gather around the campfire to watch Li Shentan perform his magic and exclaim, "Wow, that's awesome!"

"Hey, that guy over there!" Zhou Yingxue looked at Vanilla. "What are you daydreaming about? Keep up with the group."

Vanilla was on the verge of tears. He was considered pretty famous everywhere else and was widely admired by his fellow hitmen.

How did he end up becoming "that guy" now that they had arrived in the Sacred Mountains? It made him sound like he was just some minor character.

#### **Chapter 734 A new quest**

Along the way, Cheng Yu would eye Ren Xiaosu suspiciously every now and then.

This morning, he suddenly remembered that Ren Xiaosu had stopped singing nursery rhymes for several days. Now that the entertainer stopped singing and dancing all of a sudden, Cheng Yu felt somewhat unused to it.

To be honest, at least when the entertainer was singing and dancing, the atmosphere during the evening bonfire parties was quite good.

But now, they only felt stressed.

No one spoke as they kept moving forward in silence. None of them knew where they would end up or what they would be facing.

Cheng Yu suddenly said, "Hey you, why don't you put on a performance...."

Cheng Yu's assistant was shocked right then and there. He wondered if his boss had been brainwashed by the entertainer. Why would he even ask for a performance?

However, Ren Xiaosu only gave him a look. "Lunatic!" He continued moving forward.

Cheng Yu instantly felt like he had been insulted. Why did he get called a lunatic? 'Aren't you the one that kept asking to give a performance to everyone? Now that you've been asked to give a performance, you're actually refusing to do it?!'

Next to him, Cheng Yu's assistant said, "Let's forget about the performance for now. Boss, we've got a more serious matter to discuss first."

"What is it?" Cheng Yu wondered.

“We’re running out of food.” Cheng Yu’s assistant replied, “After we entered the Sacred Mountains, our journey was much slower than expected, and the consumption of rations was greater than we had planned. I think it’s not only us who are facing this, the others have the same problem as well.”

Actually, before everyone set off for the expedition, they had prepared additional supplies that would last them for at least 15 days. Although only 11 days had passed now, everyone was starting to run short of food. This was all within Ren Xiaosu’s expectations. After all, these people had not ventured into the wilderness often and were inexperienced in many areas related to wilderness survival, so they were very susceptible to exceeding their ration portions. Take, for example, when they were sitting by their campfire after dinner. Without any activities to keep them entertained throughout the long night, wouldn’t it feel better if they had something to snack on to keep their hands and mouths busy?

It might be enjoyable to kill time by having a snack, but it would become tormenting once all the food was finished.

For example, when Ren Xiaosu was still going out into the wilderness to hunt sparrows, he would calculate the rations he brought along very accurately. Unless he was extremely hungry, he would never snack on the supplies he brought.

But as these people did not have much experience in enduring starvation in the wilderness, they had unknowingly wasted their supplies as a result.

This was not to say that Cheng Yu and the others did not have any self-control or planning. If one had indeed not suffered from starvation in the wilderness before, it would be difficult for them to have the same conscientiousness as Ren Xiaosu.

Of course, this was just Ren Xiaosu ridiculing them in his mind.

More importantly, everyone had envisioned a good scenario before setting out for the expedition. It looked as though they could find an abundance of food out in the wilderness of the Sacred Mountains and thought there would be plenty of wild animals they could catch and eat.

However, no one expected the Pyro Company to be so ruthless that they would allow their genetically modified tarantulas to roam free and snap up all the smaller animals in the mountains ahead of this operation.

If this were the past, they probably wouldn’t have to starve to death since they could dig up wild vegetables to eat. But now that the plants in the Sacred Mountains had mutated, who would dare to eat them?

When Ren Xiaosu saw some coriander earlier on, he said it had turned poisonous.

Even coriander had become poisonous, so how could they be alright if they ate any other plants? No one would gamble their lives.

Cheng Yu sighed and said, “Ration our supplies properly. We’ll have to see how much longer they’ll last.”

His assistant had no choice but to drop the subject.

However, they did not encounter any more strange situations for the next two consecutive days. They slept in the trees every night and traveled a longer and more arduous journey during the day. Their sense of tiredness was getting more and more apparent. In the end, they still completely ran out of food.

It was not too bad for Cheng Yu's own group, but some others had already gone hungry for an entire day. Someone picked some wild vegetables to cook and eat. In the end, that person did not wake up again after falling asleep that night.

Ren Xiaosu, who was on watch duty, saw with his own eyes how the gray, mossy tentacles appeared again and quickly devoured the teammate who had been poisoned to death. In the morning, he said to Yang Xiaojin, "Right from the beginning of our expedition to the Sacred Mountains, every step that we took was well within the Pyro Company's expectations. First, a strange creature appeared and caused panic within the group. Then they let out those tarantulas to ambush us and clear out all animals in the wilderness that could be hunted for food. Finally, there was that canyon that caused everyone to hallucinate and attack each other. I somehow even feel that those people from the Pyro Company have already predicted that there'd be a shortage of food in our team, which is why they didn't show up for the past few days. They're just waiting for us to exhaust ourselves before taking us out without much effort."

"So they will only start the real encirclement after our food runs out." Yang Xiaojin nodded. "The Pyro Company's people who planned this are very smart. We should be nearing the core region of the Sacred Mountains in another two days, but these two remaining days will be the hardest to get through."

On the same night, everyone sat around their respective campfires as their expressions flickered in the glimmering glow. They even started daydreaming that a rabbit had suddenly run into the campsite before it was eaten by them.

They were absolutely famished.

To Ren Xiaosu's surprise, the palace suddenly said, "Quest: Put an end to the dull atmosphere by cheering up your teammates."

Ren Xiaosu looked at the people around him and wondered if the palace was asking him to put on a performance for them. But at this moment, everyone was starving. Even if he were to put on a performance, he could not cheer them up. On the verge of death, who would get cheered up by the sight of someone doing the splits? Sometimes, when Ren Xiaosu was doing his quests, it felt more like he was taking a comprehension test. He would use his strong logic to analyze the question setter's true intentions before completing the quests perfectly.

Ren Xiaosu got up and walked to the middle of the campsite. When Cheng Yu saw him getting up, he thought to himself, 'Could this guy be thinking of putting on a performance again? Why is he so unpredictable?!'

Then Ren Xiaosu said to everyone, “Y’all should be running out of food, right?”

Everyone glanced at him, but no one said anything Ren Xiaosu continued, “How coincidental. I brought quite a lot of food with me this time. I still have a whole bag of hardtack with me.”

The word “hardtack” seemed to have a magical charm to it. Immediately, Ren Xiaosu had everyone’s attention.

But Ren Xiaosu’s tone took a turn as he said, “Some of you are probably thinking that I’m going to sell them for money again, right? No, I can give them to everyone for free, but I have one condition.”

Cheng Yu’s assistant wondered, “What condition?”

Ren Xiaosu pondered it for a moment before saying, “I want each of you to put on a performance for me.”

Cheng Yu was confused. So was Wang Yun.

Ren Xiaosu was very happy, because he felt he had found the correct way to complete the quest.

Since he could not make everyone happy by performing for them himself, he would just have to make them perform on their own!

Ren Xiaosu had come to this logical conclusion after carefully considering it.

In his opinion, he felt he was the only one with the talent to fully make use of the palace. If it had been someone else, they might not be able to complete all the quests assigned by it!

### **Chapter 735 The Demon Whisperer in the dark**

Everyone at the campsite looked at one another in confusion. What kind of fucking twist was that?

They were already starting to guess what kind of show Ren Xiaosu was going to put on this time. However, they were utterly stunned by the sudden twist.

A hardtack biscuit would be enough to fulfill their daily intake of energy. This was definitely a good offer since they would not even have to pay for it. But it was way too nonsensical to request them to put on a performance.

Cheng Yu looked at Ren Xiaosu. “Do you really think we’ll throw away our pride for a little bit of food?”

Ren Xiaosu said unhappily, “I’m only asking y’all to put on a performance. Didn’t I also do it previously? What does this have anything to do with throwing away your pride?”. Cheng Yu thought to himself, ‘That’s because you’re thick-skinned, but we aren’t!’

But he did not say it out loud as he was thinking about the hardtack offered by Ren Xiaosu.

A middle-aged man said, “Everyone here is probably a well-known figure in their own organization. Do you think anyone will put on a performance for you for a hardtack? What about their reputations?”

At this moment, Cheng Yu suddenly looked at White Mask. Ren Xiaosu and White Mask were probably the strongest ones in the entire group, so why not make use of White Mask and have him stand up to Ren Xiaosu instead?

Cheng Yu smiled and said to Old Xu, “Do you agree with—”

Before he could finish speaking, Cheng Yu could only watch helplessly as White Mask did the splits!

Cheng Yu and the others were dumbfounded. ‘You’re an expert who defeated a T5-ranked combatant. Why are you doing the splits just because someone asked you to?’

This sight upended Cheng Yu’s worldview!

He was bewildered and wondered if he was still trapped in the hallucination created by the canyon. Off to the side, Wang Yun was smiling. This sight incidentally helped to confirm his thoughts. The Stronghold Destroyer and White Mask appearing in Luoyang City at the same time was definitely not a coincidence. The two of them definitely knew each other, and they might even be close friends. Why else would someone as powerful as White Mask want to play along with the Stronghold Destroyer?

Wang Yun felt he had seen through everything. Just this intel alone was worth tens of millions of yuan!

Although he still did not know what White Mask’s superpower was, he could at least confirm which organization White Mask belonged to. If anyone wanted to target Fortress 178 in the future, this intelligence could prove to be of great use.

Wang Yun also got up and said with a smile, “Then let me perform for everyone as well. It’s a song that I learned in the Kong Consortium’s military. It’s called the ‘Song of the Guerrillas.’”

With that, Wang Yun began singing. But while he was singing, his powerful memory brought him back to the time when he was still young and inexperienced.

There was no scheming or mutual deception that was so frequently seen in the intelligence agency. Wang Yun even missed those times a little. Ever since he joined the intelligence agency, he did not dare claim he was a good person anymore.

His subordinates turned their heads and looked at their director in silence. They suddenly felt their director seemed to have something on his mind. Although Wang Yun got along well with his subordinates, they had never heard him sing before.

Now that Wang Yun and White Mask had gone along with Ren Xiaosu’s request, they had eased the awkwardness for everyone. Very quickly, the rest of the people at the campsite tossed their pride away as well.

With someone opening the show, everyone was able to disregard the embarrassment and follow suit.

In fact, this really made the entire campsite suddenly feel more joyous. With something to eat, some of these people even started cracking jokes.

In the forest, someone was lying on a cliff and watching all of this with a pair of military binoculars. That person transmitted through his earpiece, "We gotta postpone the higher-ups' plan for a while. I just discovered their supplies have not run out yet, and they aren't exhausted either."

Someone said through the earpiece, "How is that possible? What are they doing right now?"

The Pyro Company's spotter hesitated for a moment before saying, "They're singing and dancing. Someone even did the splits for everyone."

There was silence over the earpiece. Half a minute later, someone said, "...Continue observing. Report back immediately if there's anything new." "Roger."

At this moment, Cheng Yu and the others were unaware that someone was watching their every move from afar. He just looked at the people at the campsite and then at Ren Xiaosu again before saying with a sigh, "Could he be a fucking lunatic?!"

"He's definitely a lunatic alright," Vanilla said helplessly to Tang Hualong. At this moment, people were singing and dancing at their campsite as well. However, the performers over here were not from the Anjing House but the Pyro Company members.

Vanilla looked at the large song and dance show in front of him. Hundreds of people from the Pyro Company were skipping and hopping around in the open space, performing all kinds of challenging movements. It looked very festive.

Those who did not know the inside story would probably think there was a bonfire party being held here when they saw this.

Tang Hualong whispered, "Don't let him hear you complaining. I don't want to see you putting on a show for everyone tomorrow night as well. That'd make my eyes bleed."

"Why would it make your eyes bleed?" Vanilla's eyes widened. "No matter what, I should be an idol, right?"

But as they were talking, the song and dance show by the Pyro Company gradually came to a close. Li Shentan smiled and said to Si Liren, "Little Liren, come over to me." Then Li Shentan picked up a pebble beside him and flicked it into the dark forest.

Vanilla and the others immediately looked towards the spot where the pebble had disappeared. However, they saw nothing there.

What was even stranger was that even though the pebble was flying at such a high speed, there was no sound of it hitting anything at all.

Li Shentan looked into the dark and said with a smile, "What's wrong? Are you finally unable to hold back because I've captured too many of your people?"

From the dark, someone said with a laugh, "Why would the two of us care whether these people die or not? I just wanted to come over and have a look at you."

Vanilla and the others were stunned. The voice in the dark sounded exactly the same as Li Shentan's.

Si Liren looked at Li Shentan. "Should I kill him?"

"There's no need for that." Li Shentan shook his head and turned towards the person in the dark and asked, "Were you responsible for the cave-in at East Lake and the traps in the Sacred Mountains?"

The voice in the dark denied, "You should know very well that neither of us has the intelligence for that."

"Bullshit!" Li Shentan was so angry he jumped up. "You can call yourself stupid, but don't get me involved!"

"Is there a difference?" The person in the forest started laughing.

"Of course there's a difference." Li Shentan said coldly, "You are nothing but an inferior product."

"Oh? Then let's wait and see." After saying that, the person in the forest turned around and left. He did not rush out to start a killing spree.

Vanilla and the others could finally heave sighs of relief. They dropped their guard since they no longer had to face that formidable enemy anymore.

Now that their speculation was finally confirmed, there was indeed a second Demon Whisperer in the Sacred Mountains.

When Vanilla looked back, he saw Li Shentan flip a silver coin into the air from his fingertip. The sound of the spinning silver coin was crisp and pleasant. Vanilla and the others suddenly felt more refreshed than before.

Vanilla frowned. "Are you trying to hypnotize us?"

Li Shentan said calmly, "When he was talking just now, he placed a psychological suggestion on you all. I'm only trying to help you regain consciousness to prevent you from not knowing how you die."

### **Chapter 736 Reappearance of the steam locomotive**

"I'm very curious. Why didn't you kill him?" Vanilla asked and looked at Li Shentan.

Based on the sound earlier, that Demon Whisperer who had been cloned by the Pyro Company was probably only about 50 meters away from them. If Li Shentan was confident the other party was just an inferior version of him, it should be very easy to finish him off. Moreover, when Li Shentan used the sound of the silver coin in his hand to dispel the psychological suggestion placed upon them, it showed the Demon Whisperer in the forest had the ability to hypnotize them from afar through the rhythm of his speech. Since even the clone had such a power, Li Shentan himself should be even more terrifying, right?



Li Shentan looked at Vanilla and said with a smile, "Since you're from the Anjing House, let me ask you this: How many of the groups that entered the interior of the Sacred Mountains are still capable of fighting?"

"Five," Vanilla said calmly. In fact, a total of nine groups came on this expedition to the Sacred Mountains. However, four of them had given up while heading into the mountains.

Right now, those four groups were retreating. But the Pyro Company might not allow them to leave just like that.

Li Shentan said with a smile, "So we're only one of the five groups left, so why should we have to do everything by ourselves? Wouldn't it be better to let the others have a share of this surprise as well?" Vanilla's mouth twitched a little. Was this a surprise? This was more like a shock, alright! But what Li Shentan did not tell them was that he did not want to personally deal with his clone at all. Instead, he was more looking forward to the scene of this clone encountering Ren Xiaosu.

So how could he finish off his clone? Li Shentan would have to keep him alive so he would get to meet Ren Xiaosu!

When Li Shentan started imagining the look on that silly fool when he tried to hypnotize Ren Xiaosu, he got so amused he laughed out loud. Next to him, Si Liren glanced at him. "I doubt you'll ever recover from that mental illness of yours." Vanilla said, "Have you considered what would happen if there are many clones of you? Since they could create one clone, they could create many more. At that time, it'll be difficult for two fists to fight against four hands. Even if he's an inferior version of you, you can't defeat so many of them, right?" But Li Shentan suddenly frowned. "If the Pyro Company was using cloning technology, there would definitely be more than one clone of me. Besides, have you thought about it before? The Pyro Company should have collected at least several dozen supernatural beings' DNA samples, right? So why is it that their T5-ranked combatants do not have any superpowers and are only terrifyingly strong in their physicality?"

Vanilla was stunned. That was right! In the earlier days, they all thought the Pyro Company could only extract the DNA of supernatural beings to create some low-quality combatants without any superpowers.

But the appearance of Li Shentan's clone had refuted this point of view. So why didn't the Pyro Company let their cloned supernatural beings run loose everywhere? Even if the powers of some superhuman clones were reduced, they would still be very suited to fight large-scale battles.

Li Shentan thought for a while and said, "You see, everyone's powers only got awakened due to a specific moment in their lives, right? It doesn't mean they'll naturally be awakened when they grow to a certain stage in life. The Pyro Company can't possibly duplicate this moment as well. That's life experience, not something that can be found within one's DNA."

"That's right," Vanilla agreed. "Therefore, they must have some kind of unusual method to awaken the superpower of a clone. However, this method is not easy to execute even for the Pyro Company. For

example, it might be limited in the number of times it can be used, so they only tried it on the most powerful clones,” Li Shentan said firmly.

Vanilla looked at Li Shentan in surprise. So after all that talking, he was just looking to praise himself as the most powerful supernatural being?! How shameless! However, Vanilla suddenly felt that Li Shentan’s deduction might just be the truth. Everyone regarded Li Shentan as the person closest to the gods in the era of the “Rise of Gods.” If the Pyro Company had to choose a person among the clones of so many supernatural beings to awaken their power, Li Shentan would indeed be the best choice.

“But what is that method really?” Vanilla asked.

Li Shentan looked at Vanilla in surprise. “How would I know?! Why are you asking me that?” Vanilla turned around and walked off. He really could not communicate with Li Shentan anymore. Besides, he still had to quickly send out updates of what had happened tonight.

But when Vanilla took out his phone, he realized there was no signal. They were using satellite phones, so how could there be no signal? It was still working fine earlier.

Could the Pyro Company have used some method to interfere with the signal? In that case, it seemed like the Pyro Company was starting to get serious.

The Pyro Company had temporarily given up on encircling two of the five remaining groups. That was because Li Shentan was in one of them, and the Pyro Company was still unwilling to face the Demon Whisperer. Therefore, they planned to eliminate the other groups first before making a move to deal with him. The might of the Demon Whisperer was something that even the Pyro Company would be wary of on their home field.

And the reason why the other group’s encirclement was put on hold was that their team was not exhausted and hungry at all. They were even singing and dancing openly in the territory of the Sacred Mountains. This left the Pyro Company a little confused and unsure of what was going on.

According to the Pyro Company’s plan, these people who had entered the Sacred Mountains should have already reached their limits. How could they still have the energy to sing and dance?

Since they could not understand what was going on with that group, it would have to wait until they dealt with the other three groups first. That night, after the Demon Whisperer in the forest had left, the three teams that were in different directions were simultaneously besieged by the Pyro Company

For this encirclement, the Pyro Company even activated three T5-ranked Dawn members.

This battle lasted from the night until the morning, leaving the three teams in a pathetic state with heavy casualties.

However, none of the people who entered the Sacred Mountains this time were easy to deal with. So although the Pyro Company had defeated them, some of the supernatural beings still had the energy to escape into the wilderness.

The Pyro Company did not pursue them relentlessly. When dawn broke, they retreated.

The person who was commanding these Pyro Company's fighting forces from behind the scenes was systematically weakening everyone's strength. He was neither anxious nor impatient, but he would always have a backup plan waiting. At some point, Li Shentan also admitted that the cloned Demon Whisperer was right. He was really not a talented strategist since he still preferred doing things straightforwardly.

All in all, the Pyro Company's operation this time was considered very successful. However, something unexpected happened with one of the three teams. Just as the Pyro Company's troops were about to carry out their encirclement of that group, a steam locomotive suddenly appeared and escaped with everyone on board. The Pyro Company could not even catch up to them!

Seeing the steam locomotive traveling across the treacherous mountainous terrain without a hindrance, the Pyro Company's troops were dumbfounded by this sight.

But they knew who it was! He could be considered as an old friend of the Pyro Company, Wang Congyang! After the cave-in at East Lake, the Pyro Company had hired Wang Congyang to undertake the delivery of their laboratory data. However, Wang Congyang had run off with all of it!

### **Chapter 737 Enemies are bound to meet**

The Pyro Company placed a great deal of emphasis on Li Shentan and Wang Congyang. However, it was fear they had for Li Shentan and hatred against Wang Congyang.

After all, Wang Congyang had run away with the data of an entire research laboratory, and it could not be emphasized how precious the data was. More importantly, he had completely interrupted the Pyro Company's research in a certain field!

Moreover, Wang Congyang actually went back on their deal after accepting their deposit. That was something totally against the principles of business and humanity!

Of course, the Pyro Company did not trust Wang Congyang completely back then either. They even sent a lot of their people out for that operation and only informed Wang Congyang of the location six hours beforehand and requested him to come alone.

By doing so, they were thinking that even if Wang Congyang were to pull some tricks, they could still kill him.

But in reality, all of their people were killed instead!

During this period, the Pyro Company had been busy with other matters and did not have time to chase after Wang Congyang. They never expected he would actually come to the Sacred Mountains and disrupt their plans again.

How could this be tolerated? No one could accept it!

In the Pyro Company's opinion, Wang Congyang was way too arrogant. For the entire night, the Pyro Company kept sending more people to encircle and intercept Wang Congyang's steam locomotive. The people on the train were wondering, "Has the Pyro Company gone mad?! Why do they hate us so much?"

On their way, they even happened to bump into some supernatural beings who had fled from the other groups. Strictly speaking, they were not exactly fleeing. They only left their groups to look for better opportunities to get into the core region of the Sacred Mountains. When they saw these supernatural beings, they shouted for them to get onto the train. After all, there was strength in numbers. Although they might not know each other, whoever were the Pyro Company's enemies would be their friends.

But after these supernatural beings got onto the train, they realized the steam locomotive was being pursued even more intensely than they had been!

Someone even asked suspiciously, "How did you all manage to escape so easily? We couldn't even shake off the pursuers behind us. Did you have good ideas?"

Those supernatural beings were stunned for a moment. "We didn't have any good ideas. They just stopped chasing us after a while." Everyone did not know why there was so much hatred for this group.

To those who were unaware of the situation, they probably found it a little confusing.

But in the eyes of the person in question, Wang Congyang, he was utterly confused as well...

Although the Pyro Company had issued an order for his arrest, they did not have the time to deal with him so far. Furthermore, Wang Congyang also knew he was in the wrong. After all, it was really not right of him to accept the deposit and run away after that. Therefore, he did not really argue either.

But from the look of it, Wang Congyang felt that something was not right. Didn't he just run off with some money? Did they have to be so angry about it? Wang Congyang felt it was probably because of him that the Pyro Company discriminated against their group so badly. It was either that or there was something else even he was unaware of.

But he did not say anything. After all, if he announced that, he would become the target of everyone in the group.

Between dying by himself and dying together with the rest, Wang Congyang would definitely be more inclined towards the latter. Moreover, there were quite a few pretty women in this group, so he would at least have some company after death.

Of course, if he could survive, staying alive was still the better option. Looking at the Pyro Company members that were chasing relentlessly them, Wang Congyang turned around and asked, "Where should we head now? I'll be in charge of driving the train. Y'all set the direction."

A member of the Anjing House said, "Let's head west!"

"Why should we head west?" someone wondered.

"Heading east would've been safer since apparently the team over there has the Demon Whisperer with them. But it's too dangerous since we have to pass through the Sacred Mountains to get there." The Anjing House member said, "And there's another team in the west. Have you all heard of White Mask before? He's in that team right now."

Everyone on the train looked at one another. Who hadn't heard of White Mask? Although he had only appeared a few times, it was always quite sensational whenever he did.

Besides, it made White Mask more mysterious the fewer times he appeared.

The steam locomotive's railcar turned and headed straight for the west. However, Wang Congyang was thinking about something along the way. He felt a vague sense of uneasiness. It was as though he should not have come to the Sacred Mountains at all, much less head to the west now.

However, he still had a secret weapon he had not used yet. Since Wang Congyang could conjure up a big black cauldron as his trump card, he felt his chances of survival would be greater than the others... While Ren Xiaosu's group was still singing and dancing, they heard the sound of a steam locomotive in the wilderness, and a metallic clanging as railroad tracks clinked together.

Ren Xiaosu was very familiar with this sound. Yang Xiaojin subconsciously looked at Ren Xiaosu. She wondered why he had suddenly conjured up the steam locomotive.

But when she saw the same puzzled expression on Ren Xiaosu's face, she immediately realized it was not Ren Xiaosu's steam locomotive but Wang Congyang's!

The steam locomotive headed straight for the campfires. Wang Congyang saw a strange sight from on the train from a distance. "Wait, did you guys see someone do the splits at that campsite?"

"Who'd be in the mood to do the splits at a time like this... Damn, you're right!"

Everyone on the train was shocked. They found it a little difficult to react. Why wasn't the group in front of them attacked by the Pyro Company? Moreover, they were even in the mood to do the splits?!

Cheng Yu, who had just done the splits, got up quickly from the ground. He was now deeply regretting his actions.

Cheng Yu's eyesight was good, so he could see the stunned expressions of Wang Congyang and the others on the steam locomotive through the windows.

During the entire talent show, Cheng Yu had procrastinated for a long time before agreeing to be the last one to perform. However, he suffered the greatest humiliation!

"Isn't that Wang Congyang's superpower?" Luo Lan wondered, "What are they doing here?"

Then they heard a loud explosion come from behind the steam locomotive. Only then did everyone manage to react. So it turned out those people were being chased all the way here by the Pyro Company. However, when the Pyro Company realized the people on the steam locomotive had joined up with the group to the west, they stopped the pursuit after receiving an order to retreat.

Everyone on the train was relieved. A member of the Anjing House said, "Looks like we made the right choice. There must be someone in this group the Pyro Company is very afraid of. That's why we got encircled but they didn't."

"Enough talking. Let's get out of the train," Wang Congyang said.

But just as he got down from the train, Wang Congyang froze on the spot when he saw Ren Xiaosu sitting next to a campfire.

Ren Xiaosu stood up and walked slowly towards Wang Congyang. He had not forgotten that this guy had led a group of bandits to attack them.

Right now, he was seething with anger upon seeing his enemy again!

Enemies were truly bound to meet!

### **Chapter 738 A wave of unrest**

The noisy campsite quieted down. Everyone looked at Ren Xiaosu and Wang Congyang. Even a fool could tell they were acquainted and had a grudge against each other.

As Ren Xiaosu walked up to him, Wang Congyang retreated, while Yang Xiaojin remained seated where she was. She could conjure her black sniper rifle at any moment to help Ren Xiaosu take out his adversary. Back when Wang Congyang attacked with his band of bandits, she was present as well.

Meanwhile, the ones here who were most interested in this matter were actually Cheng Yu and Wang Yun. Wang Congyang's reputation was no longer a secret in the underworld. He would often help the consortiums carry out some top-secret escort missions for money and was a very tight-lipped person.

In the early days, the consortiums just sought Wang Congyang to carry out some ordinary transportation missions. Later, they realized there wasn't any info related to the missions carried out by Wang Congyang being traded in the black market. Only then did they realize the man was a consummate professional. As such, they started working together more and more.

Wang Yun remembered the Kong Consortium had cooperated with Wang Congyang on three occasions. ever a

However, Wang Congyang never accepted any assassination jobs. He seemed to be a very cautious person.

Wang Yun was also interested because he was very curious about Ren Xiaosu's identity, but Ren Xiaosu would always come up with all kinds of ridiculous excuses to brush him off.

Now that Wang Congyang had a feud with Ren Xiaosu, he would likely learn of Ren Xiaosu's identity. In this way, Wang Yun would have a new lead! Thinking of this, Wang Yun jumped to his feet and wanted to mediate the situation.

But before he could speak, he was surprised to see Wang Congyang turning around and running away. Furthermore, Wang Congyang had quickly conjured up his steam locomotive and escaped as fast as he could!

Everyone onsite was stunned. Most of them were still unaware of what was going on.

Wang Yun and Cheng Yu looked at Ren Xiaosu in silence. Wang Congyang was an extremely strong supernatural being. The people from the consortiums had tested this and found he was definitely not mediocre. But still, Wang Congyang actually ran off without hesitation when he saw Ren Xiaosu?

This incident indirectly confirmed their earlier speculation.

Ren Xiaosu stood where he was and did not chase after Wang Congyang. However, that guy had started fleeing when he was still about a 100 meters away. As the Pyro Company's troops had not gone too far away yet, Ren Xiaosu did not want to complicate matters further.

Moreover, Wang Congyang had fled in the same direction as the Pyro Company's troops. In his attempt to escape, he did not even hesitate to pull in the enemy to make the situation even messier.

At this moment, the Pyro Company's troops were retreating in an orderly manner. They were instructed not to approach the group of intruders at the west for the time being. The Pyro Company combatants thought it was better that way as well since they had also heard the story of those people singing and dancing fearlessly in the mountains.

But before they could retreat, the steam locomotive whistled again behind them. The commander of the troops was stunned. "How arrogant!"

After the other party's teams had joined up, they did not stop there and actually turned around to pursue the Pyro Company's troops? Didn't they know whose territory this was?

But when the commander thought about it again, he felt that something was not right. If the other party did not have any confidence, how could they turn around and chase after them?

The commander quickly reported to his superior at the rear over the radio, "Sir, after we retreated, the other party turned around and started chasing after us. It seems like they're very confident in beating us!"

The superior on the radio was silent for a couple seconds before saying, "Retreat at full speed. I'll arrange for someone else to head there."

After hanging up, the commander of the Pyro Company's troops closed his eyes and pondered things. Just what was going on with this group of people? Why were they even more aggressive than Li Shentan's group? Not even Li Shentan initiated a pursuit on them.

On the steam locomotive, Wang Congyang was initially so nervous he was prepared to bring out his black cauldron. But when he saw the Pyro Company's troops were terrified of him, he guffawed. Since he no longer wanted to be involved in the mess that was the Sacred Mountains, he might as well leave the place!

At the campsite, Ren Xiaosu watched silently as Wang Congyang left. Yang Xiaojin went up to him and asked in a whisper, "Why didn't you take action? You should've been able to catch up to him at your full speed. Although you might have to face the Pyro Company's attack as well, you've never been afraid of such matters."

"This is different." Ren Xiaosu shook his head. "If I wanted to pursue him, I would have to resort to using 'Old Xu.' If I did that, my relationship with White Mask would get exposed. Moreover, if I kill Wang Congyang in public, it would be inconvenient for me to use the steam locomotive again in the future."

In the end, Ren Xiaosu was still thinking about having someone take the blame for him in the future.

If he wanted to cause trouble for Wang Congyang, he would have to do it secretly so no one would find out. Only then would a lot of people blame Wang Congyang for the deeds.

For example, the laboratory data from Stronghold 73 had been quietly transported back to the Qing Consortium by Luo Lan. However, the Pyro Company still believed Wang Congyang had stolen it. Every time he did something like that, Ren Xiaosu would secretly feel very happy about it.

In the past, he would always feel a little bad for making Xu Xianchu the scapegoat since they were friends.

By letting Wang Congyang take a share of the blame, the mental stress was not as great.

Cheng Yu, Song Qiao, and the others had already joined up with their Anjing House colleagues. "Were you all attacked by the Pyro Company?"

"Yes, they suddenly appeared. There were originally more than 50 people in our team. But after the battle, only a dozen-odd of us managed to escape. We even met another team while we were fleeing, and only around 20 people were left after the two teams merged." An Anjing House member said, "Why didn't you all encounter an attack here? It makes no sense that they would only let you guys off."

Song Qiao expressed that he was also a little puzzled. However, Cheng Yu suddenly thought of something. Could it be that the atmosphere over here was too joyous, so the Pyro Company did not dare to make a move on them?

Although this answer sounded incredulous, he really could not come up with any other explanation for the moment.

It was very late right now, and there were still battles going on elsewhere in the Sacred Mountains. From the look of it, there were also some hidden experts among the scattered members of the expedition. Otherwise, they would not have been caught in a deadlock with the Pyro Company for such a long time.

Since everyone was too scared to sleep, they changed to a new campsite overnight and kept watch for the second half of the night.



Just as the horizon was starting to brighten, footsteps suddenly came from the forest. As the other party stepped on the soft soil and decomposing leaves at dawn, the sound reverberated in their ears like a strange melody. It was as though someone was whispering into their ears.

When Ren Xiaosu turned around, he was surprised to see everyone at the campsite slowly closing their eyes.

Looking around, everyone other than him had fallen asleep. There were no exceptions!

A person emerged from the forest. When he saw Ren Xiaosu, he suddenly said in surprise, "Why aren't you asleep?"

Ren Xiaosu pondered it for a bit before replying, "Well, I'm not sleepy yet..."

### **Chapter 739 Ren Xiaosu performs a magic trick**

"You're not sleepy yet?!" These words reverberated throughout the campsite, but everyone else was already asleep and could not hear him. Only Ren Xiaosu was looking at him calmly, as though he had given a very simple reason. In fact, he even felt a little annoyed at him for making such a fuss.

But the Demon Whisperer's clone was extremely unhappy. This is hypnotism! Bro, could you at least show some respect? After hypnotizing you, do you think you can just say that you're not sleepy and the matter is resolved?'

Ren Xiaosu asked, "Why did you also come here to the Sacred Mountains?"

"Li Shentan" laughed. "If you can come here, why can't I come here as well?"

"Where's Little Liren?" Ren Xiaosu asked.

"Oh, Little Liren? She's asleep." The Demon Whisperer's clone said, "What about you? What are you doing here?"

During the conversation, the Demon Whisperer's clone sat down not far away from Ren Xiaosu across the campfire. The two of them chatted with each other like they were close friends.

The Demon Whisperer's clone had realized the young man in front of him was acquainted with Li Shentan, and it even seemed like their relationship was quite good.

Meanwhile, he looked exactly the same as Li Shentan, so he could naturally pass off as the real guy! The Demon Whisperer's clone wondered why this person was not hypnotized. Perhaps his willpower had already far exceeded that of most people's.

Earlier, he was worried White Mask would prove to be the most difficult to handle. But White Mask had already fallen unconscious to the ground. Instead, it was this young man who remained unaffected.

However, the Demon Whisperer's clone did not mind at all. This was only a simple trick he had played just now. Besides, he was also standing very far away from the group, so it was to be expected that the hypnotism might fail.

But he still had many tricks up his sleeve.

Ren Xiaosu said to the clone, "I have my reasons for coming here, of course. But as for you, didn't you say that you wanted to go to the south and wait for the typhoon season to arrive? Why have you come north then?" Li Shentan's clone was silent for a couple seconds. He quickly processed what Ren Xiaosu had said in his mind because he somehow felt he was calling his bluff. What normal person would head south to wait for the typhoon season? The difference between the real Li Shentan and this clone was that one of them was a mental patient while the other was not!

Back when Li Shentan was just a child, he wasn't crazy yet. He only went mad because he saw with his own eyes the hardship his mother had been put through. However, this clone did not experience any of those emotions.

So he just couldn't understand why anyone in the world would want to go to the South to wait for the typhoons to start. Was there any meaning in waiting for the typhoons?

Li Shentan's clone was very cautious and did not answer this question. He was afraid he would give himself away if he talked too much.

Instead, he suddenly stretched out his right hand and swept it over the campfire. The flickering flame started whirling and cast an agitated red glow onto its surroundings. There were even some strange symbols in the glow that shone brightly like stars in a fire.

The wind gusted wildly between the trees in the forest as the branches brushed against each other with an eerie sound.

Everything that was happening could make a person feel as though they were about to plunge into a weightless abyss at any moment.

When Li Shentan's clone stared hard at Ren Xiaosu, he realized Ren Xiaosu was still not showing any signs of getting hypnotized. He stayed silent for a moment before asking, "Is there anything you wish to say to me?" Ren Xiaosu gave it some thought and said, "Is that magic? It's pretty cool...."

Li Shentan's clone felt frustrated by his response. Magic?! That was hypnotism, bro! Li Shentan's clone realized something was wrong. Although he had not given his all for the hypnotism just now, his opponent's resistance was simply too strong. This was the only exception he had encountered since he woke up in the birth chamber!

In the Sacred Mountains, he could even easily play with the T5 combatants. But the young man in front of him seemed naturally resistant to hypnotism.

Li Shentan's clone was unaware the real Li Shentan did not bother with killing him because he had been extremely looking forward to this exchange. But it was such a pity the real Li Shentan could not see the expression on this imbecile's face. He was feeling so stifled it looked like he was constipated.

In contrast, the real Li Shentan was much more elegant in his actions. Knowing he could not hypnotize Ren Xiaosu, he chose to make friends with him instead!

Ren Xiaosu asked again, "Why did you hypnotize the others?"

Li Shentan's clone smiled and said, "So they won't eavesdrop on our conversation. I have something very important to tell you." "Oh." Ren Xiaosu nodded. "Go ahead then."

Li Shentan's clone fell silent. What should he tell him?

How could he really have anything important to say? Wasn't it just an excuse he had made up? He could have just hypnotized everyone and taken their lives. But how could he have known there was actually a person who was immune to hypnotism among them? It was as if he had gotten a hypnotism vaccine or something!

as a

Li Shentan's clone said, "Let me perform another magic trick for you. What kind of magic would you like to see? I can perform anything you want."

"OK, you can perform the magic trick that you did for me at Luoyang City," Ren Xiaosu said seriously.

Li Shentan's clone was speechless. 'Why do you have to make a request in such a roundabout way? How would I know what magic trick Li Shentan performed for you previously?'

At some point, he even felt the young man across from him was teasing him!

Li Shentan's clone said, "That's not interesting at all. I'll perform something new for you this time."

"It's fine, I wanna see that one," Ren Xiaosu said.

Li Shentan's clone suddenly smiled. "Alright, I'll perform it for you then."

But at this moment, every word Li Shentan's clone spoke turned into ethereal birds and flew straight into Ren Xiaosu's ears. The sound of his voice was like a fine down feather brushing past his ear. A demon was whispering next to him.

The reason why the Demon Whisperer was called the Demon Whisperer was that his most powerful ability was this whispering hypnotism technique.

Therefore, when Li Shentan's clone saw his previous attempts all failing, he had no choice but to resort to his killer move.

He stared fixedly at Ren Xiaosu. Li Shentan's clone finally saw a trace of confusion in Ren Xiaosu's eyes. "Go on." Ren Xiaosu said in confusion, "What are you waiting for? Why don't I show you some magic instead?"

Li Shentan's clone replied, "... Go ahead then."

"OK, watch carefully." Ren Xiaosu nodded. Then he actually opened a dark Shadow Door in front of him.

Li Shentan's clone was taken aback a little. "What kind of magic is this?"

Ren Xiaosu put his hand into the Shadow Door with a smile and explained, "Oh, it's called 'Backstabbing While Facing You.'"

Li Shentan's clone looked down at the saber tip that penetrated out of his chest and the blood flowing out from the wound. He looked up at Ren Xiaosu and thought, 'That was fucking unexpected!'

Ren Xiaosu sighed, "You're not Li Shentan at all. At the very least, Li Shentan would not try to hypnotize me over and over again. He knows full well he can't hypnotize me. Besides, you don't have his craziness in you at all."

Li Shentan's clone was a little confused. Just what sort of weird characters had come into the Sacred Mountains this time?

#### **Chapter 740 Scientific ethics**

Li Shentan's clone was dead.

Just as Li Shentan had speculated, there was no doubt this imbecile of a clone would die if he went to look for Ren Xiaosu.

It was not that Li Shentan's clone was not powerful. According to what Li Shentan himself had said, even if the clone was just an inferior version of him, he would still be the inferior version of Li Shentan. Therefore, he would definitely be much more powerful than other supernatural beings.

When Li Shentan said this, Zhou Yingxue rolled her eyes at the side. She wondered how a narcissistic person like him could become friends with her master.

But no matter how much Vanilla, Zhou Yingxue, and the others rolled their eyes, what Li Shentan said was the truth.

When Li Shentan's clone was here earlier, he had somehow placed a psychological suggestion on them unknowingly. They did not even realize they had been hypnotized.

Therefore, if most supernatural beings in this world encountered the clone of Li Shentan, they would end up getting defeated.

But of course, Ren Xiaosu was not most supernatural beings.

When a great hypnotist encountered someone who was not afraid of hypnosis, the great hypnotist would instantly be relegated from cavalry to footman and lose all his outstanding abilities.

Moreover, when it came to carrying out a sneak attack on others, Li Shentan's clone still paled in comparison to Ren Xiaosu.

A move like backstabbing someone while facing them was definitely not something a decent person could think of.

Actually, from the moment Li Shentan's clone appeared, Ren Xiaosu had already noticed something was off. That was why he tested him out by talking about typhoons and magic.

First of all, Li Shentan would never try to hypnotize him or Yang Xiaojin.

Next, just as Ren Xiaosu had said, Li Shentan's craziness was engraved deep in his bones. Usually, he would get along well with people just like a normal person. But the moment he opened his mouth to speak, you could feel a madness rolling like a turbulent wave deep inside him.

Ren Xiaosu and Li Shentan did not interact much with each other or spend much time together. But for some reason, Ren Xiaosu felt he understood him. Just like how Li Shentan understood him as well.

But when Ren Xiaosu looked at Li Shentan's clone in front of him, his thoughts rested more on how he was created.

Was he cloned by the Pyro Company? Who else did the Pyro Company clone?

Ren Xiaosu did not have a reliable source of information, so he was unable to make any further deductions. He could only be certain that if they continued to venture deeper into the Sacred Mountains, they would definitely encounter more people like Li Shentan's clone. Moreover, they would be even more troublesome to deal with than Li Shentan's clone.

As he looked towards the Sacred Mountains, the rising sun was just casting a rosy hue on them from over the top of the mountains. No matter what was in there, he had to go in and have a look.

Then Ren Xiaosu noticed the others were still asleep. He woke Yang Xiaojin up first and told her about what had happened.

Yang Xiaojin thought for a moment and said, "It's not surprising that someone stole Li Shentan's DNA since the Li Consortium did not have the psychiatric hospital under strict supervision back then. It would be a piece of cake for the Pyro Company to get their hands on his DNA."

"Mhm." Ren Xiaosu nodded. "It's just that I don't know who else they might have cloned."

Yang Xiaojin looked calmly at Ren Xiaosu. "You don't know, or you don't want to believe it?"

Ren Xiaosu fell silent.

"Actually, the two people in this era who are closest to reaching the level of the gods are closely related to you. And coincidentally, both of them came out of a psychiatric hospital." Yang Xiaojin looked at Ren Xiaosu. "I know you're avoiding the issue, but you'll have to face it sooner or later. The Pyro Company is definitely not able to clone unlimited superhumans. Otherwise, you would've come across many

different superpowers when you were facing the T3-ranked combatants. They've collected much more DNA samples than you can imagine."

Yang Xiaojin continued, "So if they have to choose the DNA of the people they want to activate the superpowers of their clones with, they'll definitely choose the strongest ones."

Who were the strongest ones? There were only a few powerhouses that had been validated through time in this era. Among them, Li Shentan and Chen Wudi were the strongest of all.

Since the Pyro Company possessed a DNA sample of Li Shentan, they would definitely have Chen Wudi's as well.

Although these two people were not from the same psychiatric hospital, there was no need to assume the best-case scenario had happened. If the Pyro Company could steal the DNA sample from one psychiatric hospital, they could steal from a lot more other places.

Yang Xiaojin was probably the person who understood Ren Xiaosu the best, so she knew full well why he did not dare to make certain assumptions.

Ren Xiaosu sighed and said, "I suddenly feel a little disgusted by the Pyro Company. In the past, people always said that the Pyro Company was against scientific ethics. I was still wondering what scientific ethics were. In this world, some people don't even have ethics anymore, so why would they still care about scientific ethics? But it wasn't until this thing happened to me that I realized how horrible such unscrupulous research is."

To the Pyro Company, they were just pursuing new leads in their scientific fields. But for people like Ren Xiaosu, a small part of their most precious things had been defiled.

"Let's not think about that for now." After Ren Xiaosu moved Li Shentan's clone to the middle of the campsite, he signaled to Yang Xiaojin to pretend like they were hypnotized like the others.

The others just sat there asleep until noon before slowly waking up without any external intervention.

Soon after, Cheng Yu's puzzled voice rang out in the campsite, "Isn't this Li Shentan? Who killed him?"

Ren Xiaosu said sleepily, "Eh, did y'all do it?"

Ren Xiaosu had wanted to move Li Shentan's clone in front of Cheng Yu so he would get greeted by this surprise when he woke up. After all, Cheng Yu had been annoying him with his sarcastic remarks throughout the journey.

However, Ren Xiaosu thought he did not have to go overboard with his actions either since their relationship had not deteriorated to that level. Once the expedition to the Sacred Mountains was over, everyone would go their separate ways and might not even see each other again for the rest of their lives.

Everyone at the campsite was left bewildered as they looked at the corpse of Li Shentan's clone.

Cheng Yu subconsciously glanced at his satellite phone to see if the boss had provided any new, vital information. However, there was no signal.

As Li Shentan did not really bother hiding his whereabouts, many of the people here knew what he looked like. If this matter were to get out, it would probably cause quite a sensation throughout the world. The legendary Demon Whisperer was actually dead?

However, they did not even know who had done this. Everyone had just fallen asleep and actually missed out on something this important?

"So it was because of Li Shentan that all of us slept until noon?" Cheng Yu wondered. "But who here is capable of killing him?"

Cheng Yu's assistant said, "Is it possible that he committed suicide?"

Ren Xiaosu stood next to Li Shentan's corpse and said firmly, "I've already checked the wound. He was probably stabbed in the back with a saber. Since this is not something that he can do to himself, one of you must've done it!"