

My Crown 101

Chapter 101: Wasn't Excited in the Slightest

Only people who truly become body cultivators will realize how painful it is to advance their level. In order to strengthen their body so that they are stronger than normal people, the effort that they have to put in far exceeds that of a mystic cultivator by who knows how many times.

This tribulation was not something that mystic cultivators could comprehend.

It could be said that mystic cultivators were blessed by the heavens. Normally, just by becoming a mystic cultivator, a person's body would undergo great improvements, and their physiques naturally become stronger while they are cultivating mystic energy, so it was superfluous for them to train their bodies as well.

However, body cultivators completely relied on external force hitting them to raise their resistance strength. Hellish training was the only way for them to raise their physiques.

The advancement of a body cultivator was incredibly slow. Every layer of metamorphosis of their corporeal body depended on the cultivator's root constitution. There were a lot of body cultivators with poor root constitutions who stay at first-layer body cultivation for their entire lives.

Yet, after eating this peach, Qiao Zhongxing realized with surprise that he had painlessly transitioned into third-layer body cultivation—something that he had never experienced before.

Such a relaxing advance in level caused him to remain dumbfounded even now; he felt like he was dreaming.

He had been stuck at second-layer body cultivation for an entire three years, so he found it rather inconceivable that he leveled up in the blink of an eye like this.

By contrast, Qiao Mu also advanced to level-four mystic cultivator all of a sudden, but she did not feel anything extraordinary about it and her face was as stoic and indifferent as usual.

Heh, what was there to be excited about? If she had managed to take all of the mystic energy in the paradise for her own use that day, it would not be a boast to say that it was possible for her to be a level-six or level-seven mystic cultivator by now, let alone a level-four mystic cultivator!

As soon as she remembered that cheeky tree's selfishness, Qiao Mu's feelings would take a dive!

Qiao Mu unexpectedly felt her weight disappear under her and found herself being joyfully picked up by Second Uncle, her brows twitching continuously.

In truth, as someone in her 30s, she really did not enjoy other people picking her up on a whim!

To her relief, Qiao Zhongxing did not hold her for too long and settled her on the carriage with a chuckle. Then, he jumped onto the carriage and whipped the horse, heading toward the village.

After bringing Qiao Mu home, Qiao Zhongxing made another trip back without stopping to rest in order to lead the remaining five yellow-maned horses home.

Wei Ziqin had concocted a table of dishes and invited Qiao Zhongxing inside the courtyard to chat over a drink with Qiao Zhongbang.

Qiao Mu was not hungry yet, so she led a horse in each hand and left. Qiao Zhongbang stared after his eldest daughter's back silhouette with mixed feelings in his eyes.

Qiao Zhongxing took a small sip of the bamboo leaf brew, and his eyes squinted in pleasure. Then, he glanced at Qiao Zhongbang and asked, "Eldest Brother, what's up with you?"

"Qiaoqiao, this child... Sigh..." Qiao Zhongbang breathed a long sigh. This child's change was too dramatic. Sometimes, she felt so much like a stranger to him that he could not help but feel fearful.

Qiao Zhongxing paused his movements with the chopsticks and shook his head at his brother. "Eldest Brother, it's not that I, your little brother, want to lecture you. A wonderful, sensible child like Qiaoqiao is hard to come by. What could you possibly be dissatisfied about with her?"

"Today, your Eldest Sister-in-Law told me that we are moving from the village in two days." Qiao Zhongbang's eyes were brimming with emotional turmoil. When he heard this, he at first thought that his wife was joking with him.

They had lived in Qiaotou Village for so many years, and it had always been fine, so how could they simply move at a moment's notice?

Qiao Zhongxing scratched his nose. "I heard about this matter also. Let's move. It's not like this is any good place. Eldest Brother, let me tell you..."

As Qiao Mu walked into the distance, the two Qiao brothers' chatter was tossed to the back of her mind.

She led the horse and entered the nearby home of Qiao Liu.

Upon hearing a noise, Qiao Liu's wife walked out speedily. "Qiaoqiao's here."

Chapter 102: Returning Without Success

Qiao Liu's wife welcomed Qiao Mu to come inside and said with a bleak and bitter smile, "Qiaoqiao is considerate, are you here to visit your Sister Xiao Ya again? She is inside the house, but she's still not that willing to see people."

The events that happened in Qiaotou Village's plaza were still vivid in people's minds.

Twelve-year-old Qiao Ya had been humiliated by a hyena in public, and all of her clothes were nearly ripped into shreds and revealed a good portion of her skin to the onlookers.

Although she was a victim, in the eyes of the backward villagers of Qiaotou Village, Qiao Ya was an impure woman already. Two days ago, there were a few ignorant village women who were noisily petitioning for Qiao Ya to be burned to death to purify Qiaotou Village. She truly did not understand what was crawling around in those people's minds.

During this period of time, Qiao Ya did not dare to go outside at all. She was neither able to face the villagers' condemnation and disapproval nor was she able to confront that humiliating experience.

Qiao Mu sighed. If Qiao Ya was too afraid to move on herself, no one else could help her.

The current society might be fairly kind to women, but that only applied to women who are mystic cultivators, and Qiao Ya was merely a normal person.

Qiao Liu and his wife were nice people. When Qiao Mu's family was lacking in clothes and food, Qiao Liu's wife would frequently help their family a bit, so now that it was the dawn of a zombie outbreak, Qiao Mu wanted to help them however she could.

As for the other villagers, she truly could not manage that much at her age. Even if she currently knocked on every family's door and earnestly advised them to leave, they would simply think she was crazy and might even think she was possessed by a demon and want to burn her.

Everyone had their own fate, their only choice was to fend for themselves.

"Qiaoqiao, come sit." Qiao Liu's wife wiped her hands on her apron and pulled Qiao Mu to sit. "Your sixth uncle went to pick vegetables and hasn't returned yet. Qiaoqiao, these two horses of yours are?"

Qiao Liu's wife was inevitably confused by the horses in Qiao Mu's hands.

Qiao Mu finished tethering the horses in the courtyard before speaking to Qiao Liu's wife. "Sixth Aunt, our family is leaving Qiaotou Village the day after tomorrow. Why don't Sixth Uncle, Sister Xiao Ya, and you leave with us? Perhaps Sister Xiao Ya's mood would improve after leaving Qiaotou Village."

"Why are you moving?" Qiao Liu's wife could not help but be surprised before promptly shaking her head with a bitter smile. "Qiaoqiao, Sixth Aunt and Sixth Uncle have lived in this village for several decades, where else could we move to? Don't worry, your Sister Xiao Ya is merely burrowing herself into a dead end. She will quickly recover if I console her more."

Qiao Mu was not so optimistic. She was well aware of how fragile normal people like Qiao Liu and his wife were when faced with zombies.

Those things will take their family's lives!

She could not resist trying to persuade Qiao Liu's wife once more, but the woman merely comforted her and told her not to overthink it. She said that their family will certainly improve after they cross this critical trial, but she also showed zero intent to leave Qiaotou Village.

Qiao Mu sighed, at her wit's end, and left the two horses behind as back-up for their family, jolting Qiao Liu's wife to furiously wave her hand and decline it. Qiao Liu's wife might be uneducated but she knew that the price of a normal horse was typically around 20-30 taels. How could she accept such a generous gift from Qiao Mu?

To her surprise, Qiao Mu did not wait for her to finish speaking and merely dashed out of her house with a wave of her hand.

Qiao Mu's mood was still heavy by the time she reached the entrance of her own home—an indescribable seriousness in her emotions.

She looked up at the sky and found that twilight had dawned on the village, gray clouds hanging far in the horizon. It looked like... it would rain later.

Rumble, rumble!

The sound of thunder was accompanied by raindrops the size of beans loudly clattering against the wooden window frame.

When Qiao Mu pulled down the window partition to close it, she uncontrollably looked up at the sky, which was pitch-black like the deep sea. Vaguely, she saw a giant bird flapping its gigantic wings sliding across the horizon.

Qiao Mu started, something flitted across her mind like a flash of lightning...

Chapter 103: Mutated Corpse

“Screeeech, screeeech.” The cry of a night hawk in the pitch-dark night stirred apprehension in people’s hearts.

On a little muddy road 150 kilometers from the capital, there was a funeral procession team of about 10-20 people braving the drizzle.

The team slowly walked forward, their path dancing with paper money flying all over the sky like snow.

After the procession oppressively treaded a block of road, the rain started growing heavier.

In the dark sky, the cry of a giant bird soaring past pierced their ears.

The people at the front of the funeral procession suddenly stopped when a murder of crows flew toward them head-on, causing people to wave their arms around in panic.

All of a sudden, an icy, pale hand crept out from under the lid of the coffin.

Someone in the procession shrieked.

Then, the coffin clattered onto the ground with a heavy bang.

Under the sparse light granted by the dismal stars, there was a paunchy woman dressed in white with her long hair draping over her face, just standing there.

The woman slowly lifted her head...

She met the people’s jaw-trembling expressions of shock and, without any hesitation, charged forward with a yell.

On the official road, there was also a troop of horse riders braving the rain.

Yu Xiu, who had a woven rush raincoat wrapped around him, reined in his horse and tilted his head to listen with a frown. Then, he urged his horse forward with a pat to catch up to Crown Prince Mo. “My lord, do you hear any strange noises?”

Crown Prince Mo nodded. There were not only strange noises but also a faint scent of blood drifting toward them with the wind, letting him know that there must be an unforeseen event up ahead.

“Everyone, be careful,” Yu Xiu waved his arm and commanded the following 20+ youths in black.

They were about to reach the capital. With the temper of those few individuals, they would not have a chance to act if you don't attack now.

Crown Prince Mo absent-mindedly swept his eyes over the road ahead of him, an icy smile drawing on his lips.

Although there was not a woven rush raincoat over his thin and ethereal white clothes, the rain that drifted to his side instantly evaporated into smoke and disappeared without a trace.

His journey had truly been extremely boring. The only thing that those 'brothers' of him did besides assassination was more assassination, and they could not conceive anything new.

They were nowhere near as interesting as his dear wooden treasure. When he recalled that stoic face, the smile on Mo Lian's lips would slightly deepen.

Tut, he thought about that little one again for no reason, how annoying.

The troop of more than 20 riders galloped forward on the official road, leaving a trail of dust behind them.

However, due to the intensification of the rain, the visibility became very low.

Suddenly, a big-bellied woman with her head hanging down leaped in front of them from a muddy road burrowed in a slope of thorns, brazenly blocking them in the center of the road.

Yu Xiu hastily pulled his reins, barely avoiding running over her.

This group of youths was no longer impulsive hotheads.

Having a strange-looking woman leap out from a dirt road all of a sudden in the vast night—it was weird no matter how you looked at it.

Everyone's nerves immediately grew taut, and they silently prepared for battle.

The woman was wearing white clothes covered in dirt, and her long hair was soggly covering her face after soaking in the rain.

Her posture as she walked was very strange. Her arms and legs were very stiff and rigid, and every step she took caused people's hair to stand on end.

"Be careful, everyone!" Yu Xiu drew his personal sword and trotted forward a bit, the end of his sword pointed at the woman. "Halt! Who is messing around!"

Crown Prince Mo raised his eyebrows, glancing at the woman with disinterest.

He did not have the leisure to waste time with a woman of unknown origins in the middle of the night.

"She is unwilling to leave. Help her," the crown prince indifferently uttered.

Yu Xiu immediately brandished his sword. In the blink of an eye, the woman lifted her head and revealed a deathly pale face splattered with blood and eyes that popped out outlandishly.

An opening of her mouth released a howl like that of a wolf. Without waiting for Yu Xiu to act, Crown Prince Mo flicked his sleeves.

Chapter 104: Burning the Corpse

A sweep of the wind and the ghastly pale figure blocking the road heavily tumbled backward.

Crown Prince Mo smoothed the crease on his sleeve with displeasure, derision surfacing on his face. "The assassin this time is costumed like a ghost, I wonder which idiot's work it is."

Did they think they were a ghost just because they dressed up like one? Did their lord look like someone who was scared of ghosts? How ridiculous!

Yu Xiu's lips silently twitched, and he lifted his hand with a cold expression, ordering the others, "Continue."

"Hold on." Crown Prince Mo's indifferent voice rung again.

Everyone uniformly tightened their hold on the reins, waiting for his order in a well-trained fashion.

Currently in front of them, the muddy woman who fell on the ground was slowly getting up with difficulty.

Her movements were extraordinarily slow, and every now and then, they could hear the crisp, cracking noise of breaking bones.

Heh, a little interesting. Mo Lian unconcernedly raised his eyebrows, and his eyes shifted slightly as he stared at the woman with a smile.

The woman's left hand distorted abnormally. After she finally managed to strenuously climb up from the ground, she appeared to establish Crown Prince Mo as her target and jerkily stumbled forward with bared teeth.

Though before she could pounce again, she was flicked back like a fly by Crown Prince Mo once again.

However, the woman quickly stood back up.

Because her right leg was crippled though, her movements were exceptionally slow and every centimeter was covered in dirt. Her clothes' original white color could no longer be distinguished.

Mo Lian was well aware that his successive flicks might look light as a feather, but in truth, even if he merely used a fraction of his power, it was not something that normal people could withstand.

Hence, the woman in front of them truly was not human!

Seeing the woman climb up from the ground again, Yu Xiu felt shivers running down his back and could not help shouting loudly, "Guard! Guard!"

"What's there to panic about?" Mo Lian dryly glanced at Yu Xiu before pointing his wrist toward the woman.

A solid ball of flame flew toward the woman like a shooting star. It immediately pierced into her forehead and naturally ignited inside her body very quickly.

Although this was not their first time witnessing events like this, Yu Xiu and the others still felt their hearts pounding in their chests in fear at the scene before them.

The crown prince's methods were truly savage and truly as different as day and night from his deity-like appearance and gentle and delicate face!

"She died for real, huh." Indifferent words floated out of his lips, a trace of disappointment apparent within. Words could not describe Yu Xiu's current feelings.

My lord! You shot your fireball so smoothly and directly incinerated her into ash from head to toe without even a hair left behind! What else could she be besides dead!

If Qiao Mu was present, she would certainly call him heartless and barbaric inwardly. So many people died at the hands of zombies, unable to fight back in the slightest, but this lord finished off a zombie with a raise of his hand in an instant.

As Mo Lian looked at the woman who disintegrated into ashes, he unconsciously tapped his reins on his chin and muttered to himself, "Little One, could this be the monster that you advised me to stay far away from at all costs..."

"Your Highness the Crown Prince."

"Hn, return to the capital." Mo Lian narrowed his eyes. His mother and younger brother came to mind, and he wondered whether they were in danger.

A whip of their reins and the troop swiftly melted into the night.

The muddy dirt road near the official road was strewn with 10-20 corpses lying everywhere, an ill wind tragically breezing over them.

All of a sudden, the corpses simultaneously opened their bulged-out eyes and produced scream after scream of ghost-like wails toward the bleak horizon...

Chapter 105: Overnight Escape (1)

It was nighttime, and Qiaotou Village was pouring buckets.

Qiao Mu closed the wooden window. Unease plagued her mind continuously, so she decisively laid on the bed without taking off her exterior layer of clothes as she listened to the sound of the rain battering against the window frame.

Beside her, Xiao Lin'er was wearing a peach-colored undergarment that covered her chest and abdomen, and she was hugging a fresh peach while sleeping sprawled on her back with light snores.

Qiao Mu, on the other hand, tossed and turned back and forth sleeplessly. Suddenly, she heard an inhuman roar from the east end of the village, closely followed by a horrific scream that pierced the night.

It dropped into the center of the placid lake like a rock, fiercely jolting Qiao Mu's heart.

That voice appeared to come from Wu Yanzhen's house.

Qiao Mu inwardly cursed "Shit" and sat up with a roll, scooping her sister into her arms and scrambling to dress her.

Although because Qiao Lin was holding the peach, it was difficult to dress her. When Qiao Mu tried to take it away though, the foodie firmly clutched it without releasing and even cried out in her sleep, as though she was on the verge of tears, rendering Qiao Mu speechless beyond words.

At the end of her wits, Qiao Mu could merely hastily toss her jacket over her before carelessly grabbing a quilt and wrapping it around her and the peach.

One hand carrying the little foodie, Qiao Mu pushed open the door and just happened to run into her hastily dressed second uncle.

She reckoned Second Uncle was woken up by the sound as well.

Qiao Mu shoved the little foodie at Second Uncle in haste. "Second Uncle, hurry and wake up Brother Xiao Hu."

"Don't pack anything. We must leave the village immediately! We are leaving this instant! Bring them to the carriage and wait for us."

"Qiaoqiao." Qiao Zhongxing could imperceptibly sense that something had happened but did not have any time to inquire further as he watched Qiao Mu leave.

A feeling of pressure tightly loomed over him, causing him to unconsciously speed up and wake his son up. He casually packed a few essential clothes and escorted the two children to the carriage in the downpour.

"Xiao Hu, watch over your little sister. Dad is going to your elder younger sis." Leaving this behind, Qiao Zhongxing dashed into the rain again.

Qiao Hu had already woken up from his befuddled sleepy state. Although he did not comprehend what was going on, he involuntarily grew tense when he saw his father's anxious expression.

He tightly wrapped his arms around the sound asleep Xiao Lin'er and waited inside the carriage with clenched fists.

On the other side, Qiao Mu sprinted to her parents' room swiftly and kicked open the door, having no time for courtesy. However, the scene inside gave her a shock, causing her heart to raise as well.

A rotting hand had crashed inside through the window, madly trying to grab something.

If it were not for her father reacting quickly and throwing the teapot on the bedside at it, that hand would have latched onto Mother's arm.

"Xiao Qin, leave first!" Qiao Zhongbang pushed his wife off the bed.

Qiao Mu shot into the room and glanced at her father, her gaze flashing, before sending a wave of mystic energy from her hand and chopping off the rotting hand that was about to catch her father onto the bed.

“Don’t touch it!” Although the current level one zombies had not leveled up and mutated yet and nothing would happen if people were grabbed, it was still best to not risk it.

Qiao Mu walked up with big strides and helped her mother off the ground. To her parents, who were dressed in only the middle layer of their garments, she said, “Let’s go. We will talk after leaving here.”

Qiao Zhongbang wrapped his outer robes over himself and quickly walked to his wife and daughter.

Wei Ziqin had just happened to finish wearing her robe in haste, so the three of them ran outside and heard Second Uncle call out by the door.

“Second Uncle, why did you come?” Qiao Mu was shocked. Remembering the two unarmed and defenseless children were still in the carriage, she hurried and said, “Leave quickly.”

Chapter 106: Overnight Escape (2)

The four of them made a mad dash toward the entrance of the house and saw the carriage silently sitting there.

The curtains to the carriage were partially raised, and the solemn and cautious Qiao Hu was frequently looking outside with Xiao Lin’er in his arms.

When Qiao Hu saw the people darting over in the downpour, his face visibly relaxed and he joyfully called, “Father, Eldest Uncle, Eldest Aunt...”

“Lie down!” Qiao Mu suddenly shouted. Qiao Hu subconsciously rolled onto the floor of the carriage with Xiao Lin’er in hand.

Bang! In the blink of an eye, an odd-smelling rigid figure abruptly jumped down from the roof of the carriage.

The giant noise startled the horses at the front, and they neighed uneasily.

The monster was fiercely strong and pierced through the floor of the carriage with a single stomp; its leg was stuck in the hole, and it stiffly tried to pull it out.

Qiao Hu gasped in shock.

When the monster turned around, Qiao Hu was met with bulged out eyes on a deathly white face intently staring at Qiao Lin and him.

Panic rampaged through him, and Qiao Hu felt a chill seeping through his body.

“Roar.” The monster screamed and furiously reached for them.

Qiao Hu scrambled backward with Qiao Lin and randomly grabbed something in the carriage, fiercely throwing it at the monster.

The sack scattered and some clothing slipped out, being snatched by the monster's sharp nails and ripped to shreds in an instant.

"Xiao Hu!"

"Xiao Lin'er—"

Swish! An astonishingly powerful iron arrow shot through the monster's head in a close call.

The strange creature's motions abruptly ended, and it fell down face-first on the ground, unable to stand up again.

Only then did the adults' raised hearts slightly settle, and they turned to the little girl with a repeating crossbow in her hand. They felt like the ice on the girl's face was chillier than the icy rain pouring over them, inexplicably eliciting a trace of fear in the bottom of people's hearts.

"Get on!" Without waiting for them to regain their senses, Qiao Mu took the initiative to jump onto the carriage and effortlessly sent the fallen level one zombie flying out of the carriage.

The zombie heavily crashed onto the ground, its face facing the sky.

Wei Ziqin glanced at it nervously and involuntarily shouted in shock, "Isn't he from Hei'zi's family? The third uncle who was buried just two days ago? H-he—"

—crawled out from the earth?

When that thought entered her mind, Wei Ziqin felt cold all over and involuntarily shivered.

"Eldest Sister-in-Law, get on first!" Qiao Zhongxing urged in a hurry. He waited until she boarded the carriage before jumping onto the driver's seat and pulling the rope straight with a shake of his wrist.

Qiao Zhongbang did not need any instructions and jumped onto the other horse, following the carriage in the rain.

In the pouring rainy night, a horse accompanied a carriage and rapidly charged out of the doors.

A commotion had erupted in the village already.

Many villagers ran out of their homes screaming. When they saw Qiao Mu and her family's carriage, they chased after them while madly yelling.

"Second Uncle, hurry and leave!" Qiao Mu calmly ordered as she reached out to take Xiao Lin'er into her arms.

Their carriage was in quite a terrible shape. The zombie just now not only destroyed the roof of the carriage but also pierced through the floor. Currently, it was raining cats and dogs outside while inside it was raining kittens and puppies, uncomfortably wet everywhere.

Qiao Zhongxing was not dumb. He naturally knew that they could barely take care of themselves right now, so he made the horse madly dash forward without restraint, shooting straight for the village entrance.

The calmest one was the child, Xiao Lin'er.

It was a cacophony outside, but this girl was sound asleep while hugging her peach without showing a single sign of waking up. She was truly an oblivious child.

Chapter 107: Overnight Escape (3)

Qiao Zhongxing yelled, urging the horse to speed up, and was running side by side with Qiao Zhongbang.

With a glimpse, the two of them saw a monster pouncing on a wildly running village woman from the back. Its shriveled hand deathly choking the woman's neck, causing the woman to release an ear-piercing scream, furiously waving her arms and legs.

Before they could take a closer look, the carriage had hurtled past the monster and the woman like a flash of lightning.

There was a crowd of sobbing women continuously waving their arms while following them and crying "Let us get on" and "I beg you to take us with you."

Qiao Zhongbang tightly pursed his lips and could not resist looking back. He hoarsely called, "Second Brother."

"Eldest Brother, we can't take that many people." Qiao Zhongxing kept his face harsh as he fiercely whipped the horse, causing the horse to madly dash forward in pain.

Qiao Mu sat in a corner of the carriage cabin with Xiao Lin'er and avoided the rain drenching the inside. Her eyebrows were tightly knitted together, and her hands involuntarily clenched underneath her sleeves.

Four days! It was early by an entire four days!

Her original plans were to leave the day after tomorrow, and they would certainly arrive at Xijiu City in two days. At that time, the zombie outbreak would have just erupted, but their family would have safely settled inside Xijiu City.

But now!

Plans could not catch up to changes!

She had no idea where it went wrong. The zombie outbreak in this life was forcibly ahead of schedule by this many days! It truly caught her completely off guard!

"Oh!" Her mother, Wei Ziqin, called in surprise all of a sudden.

"What is it, Mother?" Qiao Mu returned to the present. "Was your packing unfinished? Forget about it! We will take care of that later."

"No, no." Wei Ziqin was both panicked and regretful. "I finished packing nearly everything at home and stored what we could bring inside the storage talisman! It's just—it's just Shaoyao! We fled in such a hurry and abandoned her at home!"

Qiao Mu had thought something major had occurred, but after hearing her mother, she relaxed. "It's fine, Mother. I already had someone go and inform her and also left two horses behind at home. Don't worry, they will catch up very soon."

With Ao Ye's capabilities, these level one zombies were not even an appetizer for him. As for Shaoyao, Qiao Mu had long discovered that the girl might be the same age as Qiao Hu, but she was not ordinary. She was probably slightly martially trained at least. Otherwise, the rich crown prince would not assign the girl to her side.

Hearing this, Wei Ziqin's heart settled, and she nodded and said, "Child, I'm glad you were thorough and attentive. Mother is so useless. Look at me, I panic and forget everything."

Qiao Mu silently laughed with bitterness. She had exchanged a life of trials and tribulations for consideration and attentiveness.

"Sister, what in the world are those monsters? They—how could they be so scary!" Qiao Hu leaned closer to Wei Ziqin's side and used the dry cloth he just picked up to wipe his face and body.

When that monster plunged down from the carriage roof, his heart nearly stopped from fright, and he still had not recovered from his fright yet.

"Brother Xiao Hu, those things are called zombies." Qiao Mu stopped keeping them in the dark.

"Mother, you spoke correctly. They are corpses, a mutation of the corpses who were buried in the past half month."

"These things move exceptionally slowly but have astonishing strength. Merely hitting their limbs, body, or heart are not enough to kill them. You must aim for their head."

"Oh, Younger Sister! I see! That's why you killed him by shooting his head with your repeating bow earlier." Qiao Hu furiously nodded as realization dawned on him.

"That's right."

Chapter 108: Qiaoqiao Came to Be a Comic Relief, Right?

"These zombies are still at level one. As long as you don't get surrounded by a mass of them, you can swiftly escape," Qiao Mu stated with a calm expression. "They are boundlessly strong and will try to squeeze someone to death when they catch someone."

"People who are squeezed to death by a level one zombie have a large chance of mutating into a zombie," Qiao Mu quietly continued explaining. "However, as long as the person retains one last gasp of breath, they won't mutate. These zombies at the lowest level actually don't have that much attack power, but we can't stop them from gathering and mass attacking, so fleeing and avoiding them is the best strategy."

Wei Ziqin and Qiao Hu nodded frantically as they listened.

Currently, the carriage had reached the entrance and had pulled a great distance between it and the majority of the villagers.

As they were about to leave the village, two voices suddenly exclaimed in surprise and joy from the side, "Oh, Eldest Child, Second Child, quickly save your mother!"

"Eldest Brother, Second Brother!!!" Qiao Wenjuan sharply screamed, nearly crying from extreme happiness.

Currently, Qiao Wenjuan was in an exceptionally sorry state. Her hair was falling in disarray, and her face was pale. Not only were there deep red handprints on her neck, but her clothes were also soaking wet from the rain, so dirty that the color could not be differentiated, as though she had been rolling around on the wet ground.

Without waiting for Qiao Zhongxing to react, Qiao Zhongbang jumped off his horse, supported his mother, and pulled his sister as he quickly said, "Mother, Sister, hurry and get on the carriage. Let's quickly leave."

"Yes, yes, yes!" Elderly Lady Qiao falteringly nodded her head, tears smeared across her face.

This had to be a late onset of disaster for her!

If she had not been unable to sleep all night because she was so angered by that d*mn girl, Qiao Mu, and hastily gotten up and escaped with her daughter in tow as soon as she heard the commotion, then she would have probably died at the hands of those monsters!

Qiao Wenjuan also felt like she was extremely unfortunate. Having lived comfortably for almost 20 years, when had she suffered like this?

It was an urgent situation right now, so without Second Brother's urging, she quickly helped their mother get on the carriage with Eldest Brother before following after.

The moment Qiao Wenjuan got on the carriage, she looked up and saw the broken roof with a giant hole and screeched, "This carriage's roof is broken! How can people sit in it?"

Qiao Mu was holding Xiao Lin'er while Qiao Hu was tightly pressed to Wei Ziqin's side. The four of them had taken over the most advantageous spots in the carriage.

When the mother and daughter pair entered the carriage, the originally mediocre-sized carriage became more tightly packed. Only one person could sit by the carriage door while the other person must sit in the center, forced to endure the rain.

The rain outside did not lessen in the slightest, so it was like water was being dumped into the carriage. Sitting in the center of the carriage was the same as sitting under the open sky. The whooshing wind and the torrenting rain—just the mere thought was miserable...

Qiao Zhongbang wore an embarrassed expression and covertly peered at his eldest daughter's icy expression. How could he dare tell them to move? Hence, he pressed, "Little Sister, hurry and sit. We must hasten on."

Qiao Wenjuan was livid with fury. Seeing that Eldest Brother did not make Eldest Sister-in-Law and the others move, she could merely sit down in a puff of anger. As the rain drenched her, she could feel the world's deep malice toward her.

Qiao Mu pulled the quilt around Xiao Lin'er more closely together to block the wind and glanced at her aunt without any warmth in her eyes. She nonchalantly piped up, "Please move your bottom and don't block the hole on the floor. After all, it's raining on top, and it must leak below as well. Otherwise, the carriage will turn into a river real soon!"

Hearing this, Qiao Zhongxing, who was holding the reins, felt his face lightly twitch. He had a feeling that this dangerous situation was an unsuitable time for him to laugh. *"But Qiaoqiao, when you speak these teasing words in a serious tone with your stoic face, are you sure you didn't come here to be comic relief?"*

Chapter 109: Returning to the Capital

Qiao Wenjuan's face slightly contorted from anger. She pursed her lips and shifted slightly to the side as she fiercely glared at Qiao Mu.

In contrast to Wei Ziqing and her daughters' clean appearance, she was dirty and tousled from head to toe. Even she could not tolerate herself.

They had encountered a terrifying monster on the way here. It squeezed her neck and nearly choked her to death. Thankfully, her mother got up the courage to strike the back of its head with a pole, and mother and daughter managed to have the opportunity to escape hand in hand.

It was thanks to that monster's abnormally stiff and slow movements, despite its endless strength, that they were able to escape. Otherwise, how could they still be alive?

As for Wei Ziqin and her daughters, with the exception of their partially wet clothes, their faces were clean and clear, devoid of any signs of stumbling or collisions. Xiao Lin'er, in particular, was currently still sound asleep. Qiao Wenjuan did not know what to say.

The outside world was turned upside down, and everyone was tiredly running for their lives, but this child was sleeping so soundly. She was truly one of a kind...

Qiao Zhongbang mounted the yellow-maned horse again while Qiao Zhongxing flicked the reins and agilely drove the carriage.

Through the fretwork window on the back of the cabin, Qiao Mu looked back and saw Ao Ye riding a horse toward them with Shaoyao in tow.

After sleeplessly turning and tossing for most of the night, Qiao Mu finally felt fatigue hit her, so she leaned against the cabin wall and closed her eyes, dozing off.

Qiao Wenjuan sneaked a glance at Qiao Mu and instantly realized that this girl was also imprudent. How could she sleep at a time like this? Her whole person was anxious to death, and her palms were still sweating.

Elderly Lady Qiao was getting on in years and was long exhausted from this eventful day, so after getting on the carriage, she had listlessly leaned against the cabin door and did not have the energy to say anything.

The carriage was enveloped in silence. Now and then, they could hear Qiao Zhongxing whipping the horse or yelling to urge the horse on.

In the heavy rain, a carriage carrying six people—young and old—safely left the village and headed for Xijiu City.

On the other side, the crown prince and his group conducted their journey at top speed.

As light started inching into the sky, Mo Lian and his group arrived at the north city gate of Guanlan City.

Hearing the sound of horse hooves, the normal civilians, who had started lining up bright and early to silently wait to enter the city to conduct business, automatically moved to the side.

Pair after pair of curious eyes turned to the direction of the troop of horse riders to see which troop was so early.

This look stupefied them.

The handsome youth who was flying toward them on his horse with the wind was garbed in white robes that drifted ethereally in the air. His black hair was loosely tied with a light gold ribbon and draped down his waist.

His phoenix eyes wandered in its frame, shining like the starry night. He looked like an immortal who had entered the mortal world, elegant and beautiful.

What a handsome and graceful youth this was!

Yu Xiu quickly urged his horse forward with a pat and raised the token forged in gold high in the air at the first opportunity. His voice was solemn and spirited, “His Highness the Crown Prince has returned to the capital! Quickly open the gate to receive His Highness!!!”

However, the two minor soldiers on the city gate tower had already seen the incomer’s face clearly, and cold sweat covered them. Who would have expected this lord to return to the capital this early today? In their rush, they nearly rolled down from the tower. They simultaneously called out in panic, “Welcome back to the capital, Your Highness the Crown Prince! Welcome back to the capital, Your Highness the Crown Prince! Hurry, hurry! Quickly open the gate! Hurry!”

Urgent voices spread from the tower to the rest of the city gate one after another. Immediately, city guards rolled the heavy iron capstan. With the strength of 10-20 people, they pulled open the city gate difficultly centimeter by centimeter.

Crown Prince Mo looked back and calmly glanced at Yu Xiu before galloping into the city without a word. Apart from Yu Xiu, the youths behind him all followed the crown prince into the royal capital in a swarm.

Chapter 110: Scrupulous Investigation

Yu Xiu headed straight for the city guards standing at the side.

“You, come here.”

Cold sweat drenched the captain of the city guards as he walked forward with fear and trepidation.

This person was the captain of the Dragon Saliva Guard, who guards the capital city and its surrounding area. He was a third rank high official and a favorite of His Highness the Crown Prince, so how could the city guard captain dare to slight him at all?

The city guard captain respectfully made his salutations and humbly lowered his head, ready to receive an order. "May I help you, sir?"

"His Highness orders that from this moment onward, everyone who enters and leaves the city must be scrupulously investigated. If you discover anyone who is pale-faced with eyes that abnormally bulge out and walk slowly with stiff limbs, seize them without hesitation at first sight!"

The captain furiously nodded immediately and vigorously stated, "Yes, yes, yes! I will do as you say, sir, and order a scrupulous investigation and defend the city to our last breath. We will make sure there aren't any accidents."

Yu Xiu nodded before turning around and entering the city promptly. He still needed to rush back to the Dragon Saliva Guard and assign people to search the city thoroughly to guarantee the capital city and its surrounding area's safety.

The crown prince said that this matter might not be one-of-a-kind. They did not know what that strange mutated person was yet and it required further investigation.

On the second floor of Fortune Pavilion, a jewelry shop near the north city gate, a youth in brocade robes leaned against the window. He lightly tapped his folding fan against his palm and suddenly chuckled. "This sixth brother of mine stirs such a big commotion as soon as he returns to the capital. Go and look into what the captain of the Dragon Saliva Guard is busy doing."

"My lord, His Highness the Second Prince was on the second floor of Fortune Pavilion earlier."

Mo Lian headed straight for the royal palace as soon as he entered the capital. Hearing this, he only tilted his head and said with a nonchalant raise of his eyebrows, "Leave him be."

Merely an insignificant small fry. He was not in the mood to care about other things right now. The group of people rapidly rushed toward the bedchamber of the central palace.

Currently, the symbol of central power in the harem of the Mo Kingdom, Queen Zhao, was spiritlessly laying on the couch. She was about 30 years old and had a dignified and elegant face, and she was only wearing a cerise middle layer garment with flower patterns and had a centaurea bun loosely tied on her head.

An elderly woman wearing a silk zhuanghua pattern bei'zi¹ overcoat with a shrewd and capable look swiftly entered from outside and made obeisance toward Queen Zhao. "Your Majesty, there's news from Sophora Flower Palace, they say..."

She took two steps forward before quietly saying, "That individual made a fuss again this morning and secretly executed a little dress and make-up maid."

"Pft," Queen Zhao scoffed. "What happened this time."

A smile slipped into the elderly woman's eyes. "They say that the little maid picked out a white hair while helping that individual with her hair..."

Queen Zhao immediately laughed out loud, but her eyes were filled with coldness. "What a fussy woman. How did other people react?"

The elderly woman smiled faintly. "Every palace had a different reaction, Her Highness Noble Consort Lin's being the most interesting. She sent someone to give a jar of hair oil to that one and said... cough, it's blended by a famous physician and specially cures white hair and baldness."

Queen Zhao could already imagine that person's expression when she received this "present."

"Your Majesty, Your Majesty." Personal senior royal maid, Hexiang¹, entered quickly with a joyful expression and hurriedly curtsied before saying, "Your Majesty, this servant just heard that His Highness the Crown Prince and his company have returned to the capital."

"What?" Queen Zhao instantly filled with energy, and her eyes were permeated with gentle light as she joyously stood up. "Hurry! Hurry and help me dress! My son has returned. I must go and personally welcome my son."

The royal maids and elderly royal maids all approached with a smile to serve her. They were still in a flourish of activities when someone came to announce that Crown Prince Mo had come to the Central Palace to pay his respects.

This child! He must have just returned and had not even returned to the Eastern Palace to change and wash up before rushing here. When Queen Zhao thought of how filial her son was, her features filled with happiness and she had long since forgotten about the troublesome matters of the other palaces.