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Prince Revolution!(or PR! for short) was started in late April in 2009 by Erialis for the purpose of translating and sharing the ½ Prince and The Legend of Sun Knight novels (and now many others) with other fans (who unfortunately couldn't read Chinese). PR!'s crew has since exploded to include several translators who double as Chinese to English editors and several Proofreaders. They also have sister sites translating the novels into Dutch, Spanish, Indonesian, French, Portuguese and Vietnamese.

### Proofreaders

Arcedemius (Chapter 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, Extra 1, 2, Epilogue)  
EvINabiki (Prologue, Chapter 8)  
elisa (Chapter 3)  
Faren (Chapter 2, 5)  
Lala Su (Chapter 7, 10)  
Tresspasserby (Chapter 3)  
Xuan (Chapter 6, 7)

### Art

Wu Ling (午零)

### Chinese/English Editors

Elkin (Chapter 4, 8)  
lucathia (Prologue, Chapter 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Extra 1, 2, Epilogue)  
Simone (Chapter 6, 7, 8)

### Translators

Miaka Mei (Prologue, Chapter 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, Epilogue)  
Michimochi (Chapter 2, 3, 7)  
Simone (Chapter 9, 10, Extra 1, 2, Epilogue)

## Dominion's End Vol 5: Zhanjiang Garrison

Original novel in Chinese by: 御我 (Yu Wo)

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## Prologue: Captain of the Ice Spears

"Join my squad!"

I simply got straight to the point. Things had already reached this stage; it was meaningless to continue beating around the bush.

Chen Yanqing's face brightened, and he almost gave a quick nod. But Wen Jianuo, also known as Ah Nuo, grabbed and pulled the former backward, then stepped forward himself.

"On what terms?"

*Thank god he's not demanding a dowry...*

I harrumphed and said, "Discussing terms with me? Do you have holes in your brain? My family's big brother is the boss of this troop. Consider yourself lucky that you get to join my squad. You'd actually dare haggle over terms with me?"

Ah Nuo spread his palms out, and helplessly said, "Even so, do you think we're gonna agree to be the cannon fodder of the squad?"

I rolled my eyes, and snapped, "Wasting so much effort to save two cannon fodders, you think I have so much free time? Ah Qing, you'll be the vice-captain of the squad."

Chen Yanqing stilled, glanced at Wen Jianuo, then honestly said, "Ah Nuo is better than me at this kind of thing. You should pick him."

"But you're more obedient."

Wen Jianuo folded both arms across his chest, with a look of "I've already expected this."

Chen Yanqing scratched his nose, and continued to try and persuade me. "Don't judge him for always disagreeing with you. He's actually extremely protective of his people. Once he's part of your squad, you'll be considered one of his people and he won't butt heads with you all the time anymore. There is nothing you need to worry about making him your vice-captain."

Wen Jianuo almost choked in rage. He roared, "Chen Yanqing, which side are you on!? I'm helping us discuss some terms, but you're rushing to expose our inside information. Do you really think you've been married off?"

Chen Yanqing said in a low, grating voice, "I'm recommending you to Xiao Yu to be the vice-captain. Which side do you think I'm on? You keep going on and on about marriage. Marriage, my ass! Xiao Yu was right, your brain must be rotting. Wen Jianuo, if the man standing in front of you right now was Xiao Yu's big brother, let's see if you'd still dare to discuss freakin' terms with him!"

Wen Jianuo's face twitched, but he didn't retort immediately. Dàgē's ultimate move really did prove to be valuable. It scared them so much that they didn't even dare to discuss any terms.

"Just because of Xiao Yu's young age, you're not taking him seriously. Let me tell you: those aberrants that got us running with nowhere to

go and almost annihilated us all, Xiao Yu could freeze each and every one of them into a popsicle with just a single attack! Like hell you can negotiate with him!”

Wen Jianuo abruptly turned to look at me, dumb with disbelief.

Like I said, Chen Yanqing had seen a lot, so he knew a lot too, and this had nothing to do with him wanting to get married off or not. *No, wait! Why am I going on about this marrying or not marrying thing, too? Even if he dared to marry me, I wouldn't dare to marry him!*

Chen Yanqing turned to look over, and remarked, “Xiao Yu. Ah Nuo might be nitpicky and fussy, but he's really quite capable. It's better to choose him as the vice-captain.”

Wen Jianuo hesitated, but ultimately chose not to talk about any terms. It was evident that he did have some faith in Chen Yanqing.

“You want to discuss terms with me, too?” I coldly said, “I want *you* to be the vice-captain. You got any complaints?”

“None!” Chen Yanqing promptly replied, then shot a helpless glance at Wen Jianuo.

Contrarily, Wen Jianuo appeared nonchalant. That expression really did look like he didn't care even one bit. If this wasn't an act, then his tolerance truly deserved admiration.

“And...” I chuckled, and said in a low voice, “Ah Nuo will be the captain.”

Stunned, both turned their heads and stared at me in unison, as if trying to find the implication "I'm just joking" on my face. But sadly, they only found "I'm serious."

Wen Jianuo was barely able to squeeze out the words, "Then, what are you gonna be?"

I was about to say "squad member," but it might seem a little strange that the younger brother of the Big Boss was merely a member of a small squad. Therefore, I changed my mind at the last moment, and said, "I'll be the same as Ah Qing—a vice-captain."

Wen Jianuo asked in doubt, "You're worried that you won't be able to put people in their places because of your young age?"

I shook my head and said, "I don't want too many people to know about my real strength. It'll be more convenient to do stuff that way. You guys will also be covering up for me. It's best that I appear to be 'just a pretty face' and completely lacking in any threat."

Although most of the soldiers had already seen me in action, Dàgē had shown such a powerful move on his first appearance that I didn't appear so conspicuous anymore. Except for someone like Chen Yanqing who had seen everything from start to end, the others shouldn't be able to fully comprehend my strength with how chaotic the situation had been.

Wen Jianuo nodded. "That's easy. You look *just* like a pretty face. There's no need for deception."



"...If you wanna die early, just let me know. I'll send you on your way."

Wen Jianuo stood straight and gave a military salute, "Reporting to the vice-captain, I do not!"

I rolled my eyes, and said, "Pick some soldiers to join the squad. I want men who are very tight-lipped and who would *never* disobey. There is no room for even the slightest doubt!"

Wen Jianuo looked displeased and was about to speak, but I interrupted him. "The only thing you need to know is that if news of what I plan to do gets out, a great disaster will befall the whole troop!"

He scratched his head in confusion, and said, "You're entrusting me to manage such a serious matter?"

I shot him an askance look. "It's not whether or not I trust you, but rather that the great disaster is called the Molecular Organic Research Center."

Hearing these words, both of their faces darkened. Their eyes brimmed with hatred to the point that they nearly overflowed. Their deep hatred toward the MORC wasn't any less than mine.

To be safe, I deliberately reminded them of what had happened in the past.

"The MORC caused your entire division to be lost. All of your old comrades were strewn all over the ground, with not even a single one

of their bodies in one piece. You guys are probably the most unlikely people to be bought off by them.”

“It’s absolutely impossible!” The two of them agreed with bloodshot eyes.

I had fully anticipated this. You can tell how deep the camaraderie those soldiers had just by looking at Blackie. Despite the circumstances, he had still stopped the others from bombing the MORC entrance and hadn’t hesitated at all to go down to save people. *It’s almost impossible for the MORC to buy off these two.*

*In order to exact vengeance on the MORC, subduing these soldiers is of vital importance!*

Wen Jianuo doubtfully asked, “It’s undeniable that we hate the MORC, but why do you hate them so much?”

“Xiaotian is no more,” I quietly said.

They gawked at first. Then, a distressed look spread across their faces. Chen Yanqing muttered in disbelief, “How? How could they bring themselves to hurt such a small child?”

Wen Jianuo asked in a bewildered tone, “Is it really related to the MORC? Why would they kill a child?”

“He was collateral. Their main goal was to recapture Thirteen while I wanted to kill him, so there was a confrontation. I don’t want to talk about the rest of it. You’re also forbidden to talk about Xiaotian. Just

remember that the MORC and I are irreconcilable enemies. I will *never* forgive them!"

Hearing this, Wen Jianuo was clearly a bit moved. They would have a place to stay, and even vengeance; they couldn't possibly have dreamed of a better option.

Chen Yanqing tried to persuade him again, "Come on, Ah Nuo, agree to join. If you keep on hesitating, Xiao Yu might not want us anymore!"

Wen Jianuo rolled his eyes at him, then turned around and said to me, "OK, I got it. I only have one request and that is, you can't treat our people as cannon fodder."

*Just how many times do I have to emphasize this?* I rolled my eyes at him and said, "Don't worry. You're more precious than diamonds. If you guys got carelessly sacrificed as cannon fodder, then where am I supposed to find a bunch of MORC-hating people to be my subordinates?"

Currently, nobody knows the MORC yet. But in the future, everyone would be fighting over their products. They would gnash their teeth in anger and curse them as blood-sucking vermin for profiting from others' misfortune and charging exorbitant prices. But no one had ever thought of destroying them. When all was said and done, those items were just too useful. Plus, there were many people with insubstantial abilities that depended on their weapons for survival. If someone wanted to exterminate the MORC, a lot of people would rise in opposition.

Wen Jianuo probed, "So you're forming the squad in order to annihilate the MORC? If that's the case, then you can take us all in. I guarantee that everyone will put their back into it!"

"No."

If annihilating the MORC was so easy, I would have sought Dàgē out to do that long ago. Why would I ask you guys, a bunch of passersby?

In terms of strength, the MORC had ability users, enhanced and powerful aberrants, and even army troops. Meanwhile, Dàgē's troop wasn't strong enough yet. At first glance, we seemed to have three hundred people; however, the amount of strong and capable ones might not even reach thirteen. Confronting the MORC was basically a road to ruin. There was no way I'd trade my whole family to avenge the Ice Emperor, and the Ice Emperor himself would absolutely not wish for me to do so either.

"Then, what are you forming a squad for?" Wen Jianuo became even more puzzled.

"Farming."

"..."

"Animal breeding."

"..."

I thought for a bit, and added, "We will start with finding seeds and catching livestock. Sowing and breeding will begin at a later time."

"..." The two soldiers' faces were so dark, it was as if they had been farming for a whole lifetime.

Wen Jianuo said through gritted teeth, "So we're actually not cannon fodder—we're peasants!"

## Chapter 1: The Ice Spears, in the Making

Wen Jianuo was a very meticulous guy and kept asking after the severity of leaking information. But being a decisive guy as well, once he understood the severity, he immediately set off to find his fellow comrades and finally only brought along nine people.

With Ah Nuo, Ah Qing, Su Ying, and me, our total number was thirteen. *What a coincidence, it just so happens to be Thirteen's name. Thirteen would become a future aberrant elite, so it's a lucky number, I guess?*

Things like luck were a real headache for me. I had no idea how I could change the Jiang family's bad luck.

Wen Jianuo said to the nine people, "This is the vice-captain of our squad, Jiang Shuyu. I say 'vice-captain,' but everyone knows who to listen to, right?"

These soldiers had already been instructed, so there wasn't the least bit of surprise on their face, not to mention anyone displaying a look of disapproval. *As expected of seasoned and disciplined troops. I guess this is one of my rare good luck moments that I was able to pick up this group of men.*

As if trying to break the tension, Chen Yanqing hurriedly called out, "Come, come, come. Come report your name to our vice-captain. Peng-gē, why don't you start first?"

I added, "And tell us your power while you're at it."



The soldiers reported their names one by one with practiced discipline.

A soldier who seemed to be middle-aged took the lead and reported, "I'm Peng Weijie. My power is vibrating things by touching them."

I glanced at him. He seemed to be getting on in years. His stubble made him appear slightly older, but he probably hadn't reached his forties yet and should be younger than Zheng-shū. But this didn't really matter since once one eats a lot of crystals, they'll just keep getting younger. Age is really just for reference.

This Peng Weijie's ability sure was something. *Vibrate?* It was way too weak still. It was just like the power over fire at the beginning of the apocalypse. If you hadn't eaten any crystals yet, at most you would only be able to light a cigarette.

"Yang Xi. Just call me 'Watermelon.'"

This watermelon guy looked nothing like a watermelon. In fact, he was quite handsome. He looked rather bright and cheerful when smiling, very much like—Xia Zhengu.

*I've decided. From this day on, I'm going to hate him!*

*Hmph hmph.* This Yang Xi must have infuriated everyone because of his good looks, making them itch to vent their anger by devouring his flesh. *That's why he's called Watermelon, right?*

Afterward, Chen Yanqing told me that it wasn't like that at all. It was simply because Yang Xi loved eating watermelon so much, that he had sneakily polished off an entire table of watermelons before dinner, causing everyone in the army to get angry at him. Since then, everyone started to call him Watermelon. But the person himself actually liked this nickname, since people would give him melon to eat every so often.

Yang Xi said with some doubt, "I probably have the power to lighten things. I used to think that my strength had increased, but there was once when I made a bullet so light that it floated up."

I was shocked. *He's even got the same ability as Xia Zhengu?* Power over gravity wasn't very rare, but it also wasn't as ordinary as fire and water. At the very least, I had never met anyone except Xia Zhengu who had this ability. *I suddenly have the urge to freeze this person into a popsicle, then smash him into pieces...*

"Xiao Yu, what's wrong?"

Upon noticing Chen Yanqing looking at me with worry, and Wen Jianuo standing in front of Yang Xi as if shielding him with his whole body, I finally recovered my senses, and remembered that all of these men were soldiers; Yang Xi had even earned Ah Nuo's trust. *He isn't like that Xia Zhengu at all. Besides, Xia Zhengu with his changeable temperament wouldn't have been able to last in the military. It can't be him!*

"It's nothing." I shook my head and said, "It's just that he looks a lot like my ex-boyfriend. Just the mere sight of him makes my blood boil!"

"..."

*Shit*, the words slipped out before I could stop them. I coughed and corrected myself, "I mean, a lot like my ex-girlfriend."

Everyone turned to look at Yang Xi. The latter's face briefly twitched, and he stiffly drew out a smile, batting his eyes and pouting his mouth to flaunt his face that transcended gender.

*Fine. Let's stop hating this sensible watermelon for now.*

After going through this brief interlude of ex-boy-girlfriend, these several soldiers no longer stood so stiffly. Although not going as far as happily laughing, at the very least, most of them had an amused twinkle in their eyes.

*It looks like my image as the vice-captain is gone. Well, whatever.* Considering my life-long habit of daydreaming and wearing my emotions on my face, it was simply too difficult for me to create my "deep and profound" image.

I pursed my lips and said in an unhappy tone, "Continue reporting your names. Quit daydreaming."

Hearing this, everyone hid their smiling expressions, but their standing posture remained more relaxed. The atmosphere of the whole team was no longer as tense as just before.

"I'm Diao Ming."

The first person who reported his name almost made me burst into laughter right then—what a good “diàomín.” He looked just like an honest and kind person, so how did his parents come up with his name, down with the tyrant? Was it because he’s too honest, so they picked a not-so-honest name to balance it?<sup>1</sup>

Diao Ming was also aware that he had a weird name. He shyly smiled with his hand on his head, and said, “My power is moving things like flowers and grass... That’s all it is. I don’t even know what’s the use...”

I abruptly rushed over and grabbed both of his hands, my heart overwhelmed with excitement. *These days, I’ve been having so much good luck that I’m getting nervous.*

Diao Ming was frozen with shock. To be exact, everyone was in a state of shock.

Wen Jianuo looked speechless as he asked, “Vice-captain, is there something wrong again?”

After getting too excited for a moment, I withdrew my hands and showered Diao Ming with praise, “You’re very suited for farming. Sorry, it got me so happy that I got carried away.”

“Er, thank you. It-it’s okay.” That honest face of Diao Ming was a bit dazed. He seemed unable to comprehend whether “suited for farming” was a compliment or not.

The next several men didn’t know what their ability was. But there was nothing strange about it. All of these men were armed with guns, so

they'd instinctively use their guns when endangered. Furthermore, with their profession as soldiers, they lacked a certain exposure to all kinds of addictive games and movies, so it was quite normal for them not to have noticed the existence of their powers.

"Gao Yun, Huang Guanlun, Li Qiao, Lin Zuojun, Xue Xi, Xue Huan."

The last voice was actually a woman's. I stared at her openly. She was very tanned. Her skin was more tanned than Yunqian and Lily's, and she was slightly taller than Yunqian, though not as tall as Lily. Dressed in a full military uniform, you wouldn't be able to tell that there was a female among these nine people unless you looked closely.

As if noticing that I was watching her, her face stretched taut and she maintained the grim, stern face of a soldier. Unlike those men beside her, whose tense and serious looks from earlier had disappeared, her face remained still and stern. Her back was straight, and she looked exactly like a statue of a soldier, like those erected in front of military bases as a military symbol.

Although she and the man beside her didn't look much alike, these two had the name of Xue Huan and Xue Xi respectively, so they were definitely a pair of siblings.

Chen Yanqing hurriedly took one step forward, and said, "Xue Huan is very strong. She and Xue Xi are fraternal twins, and she has excellent combat skills and marksmanship. Their partnership makes them a force to be reckoned with. Their coordination is top notch!"

When they were introduced, Xue Huan's face was still stretched taut, while Xue Xi wore a smile on his face.

I nodded and said, "Xue Huan, I'll have to trouble you to take care of the other female member of our squad. She's timid and easily frightened of men. I'll need your help."

Xue Huan stared blankly, then responded with a military salute, "Yes sir!"

*What type of military role model is this?* I looked at Xue Xi to the side. Despite also standing up straight, he was smiling and didn't look so extreme.

"Huanhuan has always been like this." Wen Jianuo smilingly said, "She's well-known as the military model among our troop. Even her picture can be directly printed in textbooks."

*The nickname "Huanhuan" feels very mismatched with the person herself. Then, is Huanhuan's big brother called "Xixi?"*<sup>2</sup>

"Just call me Boots." Xixi, the person himself said this, instead. I nodded. "Sure, Xixi."

"..."

After everyone was done with their introduction, it was then my side's turn. I shouted toward the doorway, "Su Ying, you can come in now."



Su Ying pushed the door open and walked inside. At first, everyone tried to suppress the look of realization on their faces. Some were even winking at me. Their cheeky looks were just like Chen Yanqing's when I first got to know him—especially Yang Xi, that big watermelon. That smile of his was so dazzling that I once again felt like freezing and smashing him into smithereens.

They most likely thought she was my girlfriend. But when she stopped and stood at least two meters away from me, everyone seemed to be at a loss. They looked at me, then at her, unable to make sense of the current situation.

As I glanced at Su Ying, the latter trembled and shifted one more meter away.

"Xiao Yu, you... she..." Chen Yanqing stuttered with discomfiture, as if I had done something unspeakable to her.

I said with annoyance, "She's timid. After seeing me kill people several times, she became like this."

Chen Yanqing "Oh"-ed and nodded with understanding. "She does seem very timid. Don't you just freeze people? That doesn't seem very scary. You gotta know that when we fire a headshot the head bursts open and brains would spurt out everywhere—"

Su Ying shrieked and cut him off, "No! He didn't freeze them! He likes busting people's head the most! He chops their heads off and minces their brains! Just him alone could kill a lot of monsters!"

Upon reaching this point, she seemed to have suddenly realized that I myself was around. She jumped with shock, almost plastering herself against the wall, and covered her face with both hands, repeatedly mumbling, "I'm sorry I'm sorry I'm sorry."

I'm very sorry, too. After many years of killing aberrants, I had gotten used to smashing heads into a pulp. My thought process couldn't keep up with my reflexes. *It's too late for me to change...*

Wen Jianuo noticed something amiss. "Hold on. Xiao Yu, you said you killed 'people?'"

I coolly explained, "Don't get the wrong idea. It was something that happened after the black fog. At the time, I was the one who was home, and a mercenary troop attempted to rob our stuff. Bloodshed was unavoidable. As for why I smashed their heads to a pulp, it was to prevent them from turning into aberrants. You guys have to do the same thing in the future, too. Even if the enemy is a human, you still gotta do it. Otherwise, they'll return in a much more terrifying form next time."

After hearing that, all of the soldiers looked at me, their gazes containing a whole new level of respect. It was worth the effort of using an indifferent tone to teach this "smashing heads after killing people" sort of thing, as I'd finally earned back a bit of their respect.

Su Ying seemed even more aggrieved, as if she was the only person on Earth who knew the truth—Jiang Shuyu is actually the demon king!

*I too wish to be the supreme demon king. As of now, I'm still working on it.*

After recalling the names introduced by everyone, I realized that I could only remember Peng Weijie, Yang Xi, Diao Ming, and the siblings Xue Xi and Xue Huan. I could remember the first three because of their powers and because of my ex-boyfriend. Then again, it wasn't much of a big problem. *If you don't have powers in this squad, I'm treating you as a nobody!*

I looked at the two "nobodies" who hadn't reported their powers yet—the captain and vice-captain of the squad, Ah Nuo and Ah Qing.

"Your powers? If you don't have any, then just resign and become a squad member—relegated right to the bottom!"

Wen Jianuo grabbed his crew-cut hair and lifted one finger. His fingertips turned silver, slowly spreading downward, and finally that whole finger became silvery gray in color. I reached out my hand to him and tapped on his finger. It was very hard and even resounded.

Power over metal—the same as Ding Jun's, but a different form of manifestation. Ding Jun could manipulate metal, while Wen Jianuo could transform himself into metal. It was hard to say which one was better, so I'd just have to see which one of them would level up more. *If he dares to lose to Ding Jun, then I'll demote him from his position as the captain to the lowest!*

"Power over metal. Its destructive power is pretty decent. Do your best to transform your whole body into metal."

Hearing this, Wen Jianuo breathed an audible sigh of relief. There was a dazed look on his face the moment he heard the last sentence, before it was quickly replaced with excitement.

"Yes!"

And finally, I glanced over at Chen Yanqing. He had a look of embarrassment on his face. Wen Jianuo, who was next to him, patted his back in an attempt to comfort him. *Don't tell me... he hasn't even found out what his power is?*

"You don't know your power?" I frowned, then looked at the other soldiers, and was once more convinced that it wasn't much of a big problem. These guys were all on the same side. There wouldn't be problems with anyone unwilling to obey a leader who didn't have any powers. At the very least, with Ah Nuo's backing, it wouldn't occur for now.

"I do!" Chen Yanqing anxiously replied, then fumbled for words, "It's just that my powers is, is a bit weird. It's like useless. I wasted so many crystals for nothing."

I lifted one eyebrow, not showing the slightest disappointment. I was quite intrigued. *Just how useless is it, for Chen Yanqing to be so depressed about it?* At the current phase, even far-sight wasn't considered a useless power.

Chen Yanqing looked crestfallen as he squatted down to pick up a small stone, placing it on his palm. But the very next second, the stone vanished into thin air, leaving behind only his empty hand.

"That's pretty much it—making things disappear. Plus, it doesn't work unless I touch it. The bigger the thing is, the longer I have to touch it. Ah Nuo said that if I trained hard enough, I might even be able to make a whole aberrant disappear. But I need to touch the aberrant, and I even need to touch it for several minutes. That's so stupid!"

I felt a bit regretful. *If I had known this earlier... When Ah Nuo joked about Ah Qing wanting to marry me, I would have definitely agreed! Is it too late now?*

I said, "Bring it out."

Chen Yanqing looked at me with bewilderment.

"Bring out that stone." I struggled to contain the excitement in my eyes.

The other soldiers turned to look at Chen Yanqing. Wen Jianuo even had a look of realization on his face.

Chen Yanqing hesitated for a while. His head turned, staring intently at his palm for a good few second, before a small stone quietly appeared on top of his palm. His eyes turned wide as saucers, before he swiftly turned to look at me.

"Spatial abilities." I patted him, my mouth pulling into a smile I couldn't hold back. "In the future, we'll be counting on you for store keeping."

Chen Yanqing looked absent-minded as he said, "Is that a good thing?"

"Of course it is! Do you have any idea how big a jackpot you just hit?" I gave a slap to the back of his head, and furiously said, "Just one touch after a stroll, and all supplies would be put away into storage, and we won't even need to worry about logistics. You would be the only one who could retrieve the stuff, too. So tell me, is this powerful or not?!"

Chen Yanqing grumbled, "But store-keeping has no combat power."

"Who says there isn't? It's called 'spatial blade'—you can sandwich and cut people in half with the storehouse door, you got that?"

"I can picture it vividly enough with the way you described it," Wen Jianuo said while suppressing a smile.

Chen Yanqing still had a bitter look on his face. He seemed to think that it wasn't powerful at all. *What an idiot!*

Spatial ability users were very famous and few in number. At the beginning of the apocalypse, everyone wanted one in their troop. After all, they were very useful while searching for supplies. However, supplies gradually dwindled during the middle stages of the apocalypse. As everyone started to form larger communities, logistics expanded, and the value of spatial ability users started to decline. However, by



that time, someone discovered how to fight with it. Furthermore, that method of attack was very hard to defend against. Rumor had it that it could even kill people above their tier.

However, very few spatial ability users were able to learn this spatial skill. I couldn't remember if it was three or four users. Back then, it had merely been an entertaining story for me. I hadn't paid close attention to it and didn't remember the details to the story.

*Should I properly write down the details of my ten years in the apocalypse?*

I thought about the pros and cons. Obviously, the advantage was that I could give a book of "Things to Take Note of in the Apocalypse" to every member of the JDT so that they could have more of an understanding of the apocalypse. *As for its disadvantage...*

"Xiao Yu? Why did you suddenly stop talking?"

I glanced at Chen Yanqing. I was very sure that this guy didn't exist among those spatial ability users. He should have long died beneath the guard tower. Even Wen Jianuo shouldn't be standing here alive. These nine in front of me might have all died, and some of them might have even turned into a powerful aberrant.

I recalled that butterfly aberrant. If it wasn't for me, that aberrant might have broken out of her cocoon and become a tier-three aberrant which ruled over Lan City. But I hadn't heard of this kind of aberrant in the later stages of the apocalypse, so I couldn't say for sure if she had

been annihilated by a stronger aberrant colony, or perhaps the succeeding king of Lan City, Thirteen, had personally annihilated her?

Thirteen, the future aberrant king hadn't been recaptured by the MORC. He even had with him a human, Beibei, and didn't particularly seem to hate humans.

Not to mention the "Ice Emperor," his whole being had been completely axed by me.

I might have even affected the Thunder God. According to Dàgē, he'd had dealings with him, exchanging information about the apocalypse to obtain firearms and ammunition. That action might have already impacted the Thunder God's development.

Moreover, had Jin Xiaoyue also existed in my past life and assisted Jin Zhan in becoming the Thunder God, or was she someone who had only appeared in this life?

I seemed to have inadvertently brought about many changes in events, and these changes weren't small at all. Maybe I shouldn't be recording anything. "History" had changed so much that my record might lead to confusion instead.

"Xiao Yu?" Wen Jianuo glanced at me with an indescribable look.

I took a deep breath. *Let's leave these records aside for now, and get right to business.*

"I'm looking for some stuff. I'll write it down later so that you guys can help me find it. But you must bear in mind that these things must not be leaked to outsiders!"

Wen Jianuo pressed for details. "So the reason you formed a small squad was to look for something? What are you looking for?"

"In short, it's to find 'food.'" I glanced over everyone, and simply said, "Currently, looting supplies everywhere is the simplest method. After all, with a lot of humans gone, we wouldn't be lacking in food in the short term. It's just a matter of having enough ability to loot supplies."

I paused, making sure that everyone was focused on listening before mentioning the main point.

"But what about the future? Even if there are cans, instant noodles—these things with a long expiry date, how many years can we keep eating them?"

Everyone glanced at each other in dismay, seemingly not having thought of matters several years later. But I knew it all too well. Humans thought that they were currently living in hell but didn't know that the real hell was going to start three years into the apocalypse: food shortage, declining temperatures, powerful aberrants...

Dao Ming blurted, "If there's not many humans, a lot of food can still be found in the wild. At least, we won't starve to death."

I smiled. "What 'food?'"

Stumped for words, he then somewhat nervously gave several examples, "Wild food, fish, fruits, and many more. I grew up in a village. There's a lot of things in the mountains, wild forests and natural rivers that can be eaten after cleaning."

"I saw a large group of mice outside of Lan City, so many that they were like a tidal wave engulfing everything in its path. Even aberrants fled from them. After entering the city, I then saw a butterfly over four meters in height, leading a large group of caterpillars—each and every one of them as big as a human. A whole district had been occupied by them. And previously, in a small town, I saw a large tree with the height of a ten storey building. The whole town was eaten so clean that only a few living things remained.

"As for the beach, I haven't really been there, but I guess it's safe to say that the things inside the sea are in no way gentler than butterflies, mice, and trees." I calmly continued, "So let me ask you again, what *'food'*?"

The expression on everyone's face turned gloomy. It seemed that even soldiers felt a deep sense of dread toward the apocalypse.

Wen Jianuo said, "We did see a mountain pig from afar along the way. It was very big. If all aberrants out there are like that, then we would probably become the *'food'* instead."

I glanced at him. A mountain pig wasn't necessarily an aberrant. Such a large wild animal could already attack humans in the early stages of the apocalypse.

"Besides turning bigger, did that mountain pig have any other major changes?"

Wen Jianuo stared blankly for a moment, then spoke after careful thought, "It had a large body, long tusks, and was covered with glossy fur. Stabbing it would probably be pretty hard."

"It shouldn't be an aberrant, but an animal that has gone through evolution. It's edible."

*Edible?* Everyone's face was as dark as the black fog.

Chen Yanqing curiously asked, "You're planning to breed pigs?"

I shook my head, and explained, "I won't be breeding mountain pigs. Those kinds can't be bred. If you dared to eat its offspring, then it'd dare to evolve until it could eat you instead. I'm planning to breed some other things. And one more thing, rice is very strong, so it can't be planted."

Rice is really, *really* strong. And once the black fog arrived, all kinds of changes could easily happen. A whole paddy field of evolved rice is basically the scariest existence in a village. It's fortunate that they generally have a strong attachment to their habitat, and wouldn't wander too far away from it. Eventually, everyone would avoid them. As a result, these rice weren't able to eat enough "food," so their tier usually wasn't very high. *Otherwise, it'd be really hard to tell what kind of things would be ruling over this world...*

Wen Jianuo mumbled, "Farming and breeding. I see..."

"Well, those are all matters for the future." I looked at these men with a frown, and said, "All of you are too weak. Forget finding what I want, without guns, you guys won't even be able to enter the city. Right now, the most important thing is to have everyone figure out their powers, and then train properly."

The moment they heard "too weak," everyone had a distorted look on their face, but none of them dared to refute. *Not bad, they're quite disciplined... Wait a second! What's up with you guys suddenly staring with bulging eyes?*

"Shuyu."

Startled, I turned around and saw Dàgē walking in, with only Cain following behind him. The latter was carrying a rifle. Although he looked somewhat flippant, he was imposing enough to inspire awe. Each and every one of the soldiers was pressured into a state of battle-readiness, their gazes firmly locked on him.

As for my family's Dàgē, these soldiers had already given up all resistance toward him.

I hurriedly stepped forward, and spoke in confusion, "Dàgē? What's the matter?"

Dàgē gave an "mm" and asked, "Shuyu, do you plan on entering the city anytime soon?"



After giving it some thought, I glanced at the soldiers, before saying with distress, "I was going to enter the city, but some of these soldiers don't even know their power, so they might end up getting wiped out if I bring them into the city. It's better to stay behind and train properly first."

"In that case, you'll stay behind to take care of the base. I'm going to search for some supplies in the city, and train myself while I'm at it." After thinking for a while, I gritted my teeth, and said, "You can bring Junjun along and let her get some training."

Dàgē definitely wouldn't stop worrying if both his little brother and little sister were to enter the city together, so I had no choice but to let Shujun go with him. I was also worried about the safety of Dàgē and Xiǎomèi, but—I *gotta* bear with it!

Dàgē lifted his eyebrow. "Sure. We're going into the city in a few days. If there's anything you need, just tell me later."

I nodded and watched as Dàgē turned to leave. Actually, he didn't need to personally come find me for this kind of thing. In any case, I'd also be coming over to the main building for dinner, so wouldn't it be fine to just ask at that time?

Dàgē had come here to give me support.

I turned around and saw that these soldiers no longer looked dissatisfied. Some of them couldn't hide their surprise as they gazed at me. *Seems like it wasn't until now that they finally believed I'm truly capable.*

It was simply too hard for me to convince others with this face of mine. In any case, I had plenty of time for that later. Just like Chen Yanqing, they would surely become convinced once they see more.

"Go pack your luggage. I'll show you guys to your new living quarters."

Wen Jianuo said as he shook his head, "No need. We don't have any luggage."

*Is it that you don't have any luggage, or you've given everything to the other soldiers? And in any case, it's not like I'd let you guys starve.* I rolled my eyes at him, but decided not to say anything in the end. After all, a group of soldiers who cared for each other was always a good thing.

I had picked a building which wasn't too far from the main building. The building was a siheyuan,<sup>3</sup> courtyard house with a courtyard enclosed by walls. Although I called it a "building," it was pretty much a small community. The walls were like slender, single-storey houses. Although they all only had one floor, except for the primary residence at the rear which had two floors, there were enough rooms for triple our numbers in the Ice Spears to have a room per person. After all, our squad wasn't big.

I led the soldiers into the courtyard that was in the middle. Despite squeezing in all these people, the courtyard remained extremely spacious. I was quite satisfied with the size of this courtyard house. It even had a great geographical location. It was situated diagonally behind the main building, and wasn't too far away from there, so it

would be convenient for me to come here from the main building. It was also far from Old Town. We wouldn't attract anyone's attention with whatever we did here.

There was only one problem—the house was a bit old and needed repairs. But there was no need to rush it. After all, the thing that the JDT had the most right now was people.

"From now on, you guys will be staying here. You'll only be following *my* orders. Ignore all others, unless it's the current members of the JDT asking for you. Last but not least, outsiders are forbidden to enter!"

Wen Jianuo nodded in response.

"In the future, our squad will be called 'Ice Spears.' I'll protect my squad members, but bear in mind that if you dare to use my name to abuse your power..."

My lips pulled into a faint smile, I stretched out one hand, and sent out a huge blast of icy air, enveloping the entire courtyard with biting cold air. And with a clench of my fist, the freezing air gathered to form a horizontal bar, high altitude climb, balance beam, and other fitness training equipment.

Subduing my squad members and the construction of the base—these two things couldn't be delayed.

"I'm still in need of an ice sculpture, to be erected in front of the courtyard as a warning sign!"



I walked back to the main building as I said to Wen Jianuo, "First, we'll make the walls taller and add barbed wire to it, too. I'll be hiding my strength and identity, so I can't be seen by others while I'm training you guys."

The courtyard house was located in a very remote area, and you'd also need to pass the main building to get there, but some people would inevitably try to sneak over, so it was best to have taller walls. At the very least, it could prevent the risk of being seen.

Wen Jianuo nodded.

"I'll bring you to see Lily later. She's our logistics head. Go talk to her if you need anything."

When I got to this point, I stopped, stood still, and warned Wen Jianuo with a glare, "I will protect every member of the Ice Spears. But if you guys dare to swindle the JDT or make off with our supplies, I won't show the slightest mercy!"

"We absolutely won't!" Wen Jianuo hastily replied. He had become much more obedient—after I had turned the courtyard into an ice paradise, that is.

"You won't be taking things to help out your previous comrades?"

Wen Jianuo stiffened. This time, he couldn't give the same response.

I said in an unhappy tone, "My big brother is currently in need of personnel, whereas all of your fellow comrades have combat capabilities. If they do their job properly, they definitely won't be treated unfairly. You don't even need to go help them. As for people who refuse to work, if you're still thinking of helping them, how about I freeze that head of yours? Maybe then you'll see things more clearly?"

Wen Jianuo said while shaking his head, "It's just that, I don't really know your big brother well. Xiao Yu, you're a good person, but I'm not sure about what kind of person your brother is. "

*Dàgē? Well, the term "good person" doesn't exactly fit him.* I pondered for a bit, and said, "My big brother is a very powerful person."

Wen Jianuo smiled, before saying in a somewhat awkward manner, "We're not allowed to share with fellow comrades, but is it possible to share with the civilians? Just things like food and clothes. We absolutely won't give away weapons or materials for wall fortification. I'm at least clear enough about that. "

I threw him a glance. "Just don't starve yourself or get sick from the cold. I don't want a sickly squad member. As for the extra stuff that you manage to earn, who cares if you're going to give them to your girlfriend or boyfriend."

Wen Jianuo said with a wry smile, "It's a pair of brother and sister that I've met along the way. They got separated from their parents."

I nodded, and said no more. My mind was only thinking of asking Lily about how she was going to deal with over a hundred civilians.

While we passed through the second floor, I picked an empty room for Wen Jianuo. Although he'd mostly be in the courtyard house, having a room in the main building would show that he was an important, trustworthy figure in the Jiang Dominion. It'd also make it easier for me to operate. After all, I didn't plan on showing myself.

"Èrgē, Èrgē!"

I turned and saw Shujun racing downstairs. She even gave a swirl while asking, "Does it look pretty?"

She was wearing a uniform that could literally take people's breath away. The design was quite similar to a military uniform. The upper half was a jacket, fully black with silver edging and two rows of buttons, while the lower half was a blue pleated skirt. I had brought this outfit back from Lan City. It was just that there was a little bit of modification, like the addition of silver trim and most importantly—the JDT's crest.

Although I was a bit dissatisfied with how short the skirt was, at least the socks extended past her knees, so only a small portion of her thigh was exposed. It was barely passable.

"Have you been working on the uniform? Not bad. Use the same style as this one for everyone else's."

I nodded with approval. As expected of my family's diligent and hardworking little sister. It hadn't been that long ago when I said I wanted uniforms, and she had already started working on it.

"Mm. I'm making them together with Yutian-jiě."

"Who's that?"

"Weijun-jiě's best friend."

I thought for a bit. It was probably that round-faced and sweet woman—Tai Wen's wife. Her being able to sew clothes was quite expected since she really matched the image of a good wife and loving mother.

"Dàgē will be entering the city soon, so try getting his clothes done first."

Upon hearing this, Shujun firmly nodded. "Okay. Èrgē, what kind of special design do you think Dàgē's clothes should have?"

After giving it some thought, I said, "Long windbreaker, long boots, all black with gold trim. The others can only use silver trim. "

"Okay! I'll make Dàgē's clothes appear dazzling and majestic!"

*As expected of Junjun, she knows her èrgē inside out like a tapeworm inside his belly—no, wait! My Junjun isn't a worm. If she had to be in my belly, she'd be a precious baby! Uh, this doesn't sound quite right...*

"And what about you, Èrgē? What kind of clothes do you want?"

After thinking for a bit, I had a rough idea in my mind. However, it was quite complicated. Shujun might not be able to make it.

"It's fine, I'll do it myself. You can help me make the uniforms for the members of the Ice Spears. There are several of them, so it'll take some time. You can continue making them after returning home."

"Returning?" Blinking her eyes, Shujun asked with confusion, "Am I going somewhere?"

"Dàgē will be taking you into the city."

Shujun stared blankly for a moment, then beamed with joy.

Wen Jianuo who was behind me, said disapprovingly, "Why bring a girl into the city? Even if your big brother is very strong, there's no guarantee that accidents won't happen."

I furiously said, "You jinx! Wanna see me turn you into an ice sculpture?!"

*The Jiang family's luck is already terrible. I don't need you to add an additional "accident" to "terrible!"*

Shujun was also very upset. With a wave of her hand, she whipped out a lightning whip. The blinding blue and white lightning whip swished past Wen Jianuo, but didn't hit anything, not even the floor. After that, she simply pulled it back before it disappeared without a trace. Never mind Wen Jianuo, even I was dumbstruck.

"Junjun, when did you learn this..."



Blinking her big, watery eyes, Shujun said, "I learned this when you went missing."

*Hah, it's as if I've gone missing for a year. It was only one month!*

I held my forehead with my hand. *No wonder Dàgē easily agreed to bring her into the city.* With such a lethal and readily available weapon, not just Dàgē, even all of the JDT members would want her to go with them, too.

"Èrgē, I'm going to get started on the clothes now, okay?"

I nodded, and said, "You can go look for some women to help you with the work. Give them food and warm clothing as a reward."

With people assisting in the work, we could provide them with food, and even prevent them from forming bad habits like freeloading. *This is basically killing multiple birds with one stone!*

Junjun cheerfully said, "Okay! I'll ask Yutian-jiě for help with recruiting people!"

After saying that, she then rushed upstairs. It seemed that she was working on the clothes in her room.

I hurriedly reminded her, "Shujun! Remember to work on the first floor. Don't take people up to the third floor."

"Okay!"

I wanted to tell Shujun to bring my mom over, but it came to me that Guan Weijun was looking after her. I probably didn't need to worry about her going hungry or feeling cold. Although I was relieved, there was a touch of bitterness in my heart. *My mom has become someone else's mom. If I want to help her, I have to consider a bunch of other stuff first.*

"What is up with you siblings..."

Wen Jianuo had yet to recover from his shock. The lingering shock he got from a beautiful girl with a lightning whip was quite long-lasting.

I patted the soldier's shoulder.

"Well, simply put, my little sister who just started high school could burn you to a crisp in a split second. What's up with that, huh?"

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> **“Diao Ming”**: Diao Ming’s name sounds like diàomín from 弔民伐罪 (diàomínfázuì), which means punishing the tyrant to console the people.

<sup>2</sup> **“Huanhuan and Xixi”**: Their names came from huānxǐ (歡喜), which means happy.

<sup>3</sup> **“sìhéyuàn”**: A sìhéyuàn (四合院) is a courtyard house with a fully enclosed courtyard. The residence at the very back is the main residence. See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siheyuan>

## Chapter 2: Dàgē and Xiaomèi Leave the House

For the next couple of days, if I wasn't in the courtyard house abusing... I mean, training the Ice Spears, then I was in my room doing my own things. That was until the third day, when Shujun knocked on my door saying that she and Dàgē were heading out.

I hastily stepped out of the room. I was in the middle of trying on a recently finished uniform.

Shujun looked at my uniform. She wrinkled her brow. "Èrgē, your uniform doesn't look that nice."

For the top, I wore a sleeve-less jacket and oversized longline shirt. It looked as if there were two layers, but it was actually fake. And of course, I wore a pair of pants. Arguably, leggings would have looked better with this outfit, but I wore a simple pair of pants. Don't even mention shoes. I flat out wore a pair of silver white flip-flops.

Not bothering to explain myself much, I said, "Being too stylish is troublesome. My clothes are not important. Is Dàgē's uniform finished?"

Shujun nodded. "Dàgē already put it on and is getting ready to leave. He told me to let you know and to drag you out of your room."

I rubbed my nose. I would go take a look at the courtyard house every day. *I'm not that much of a shut in, okay?* I mean, I would go out to give a lecture on each day's training before returning to my room.

Obediently, I followed Shujun out. People were already waiting in the hall.

My eyes lit up just at the sight of Dàgē. A newly-made solid black trench coat with golden trim hung from his body. The golden trim of the collar even formed the shape of the “弓” character, like a bow from the left side of our name Jiang (疆). A leather holster rested on his waist. The long army boots that I had brought home were fastened on his feet. He was as fierce as a lion, impossible to overlook. One look could make every single strand of your hair stand straight.

Standing next to Dàgē were Xiao Sha, Yunqian, and Guan Weijun. All three were wearing their uniforms as well. I had really put Shujun in a tight spot. Within two days, she had quickly managed to finish making so many sets of clothes.

The three wore black uniforms with silver trim. Xiao Sha wore a sleeveless top and men's leggings, perfect for mobility. Yunqian wore a short-sleeved top and a pair of shorts. Guan Weijun wore a top with elbow length sleeves and crop pants. No matter if it was golden trim or silver trim, there was a streak of blue somewhere on all the clothing.

I glanced back at Junjun. The same shade of blue was on her pleated skirt as well.

*Does Junjun like blue now? But she used to like pink more. My little sister has grown up now... Well, this is fine. If there was a streak of pink on every uniform and Dàgē had to wear it, I would probably want to gouge my eyes out.*

Besides those four people, Ding Jun also stood right behind Dàgē. Although he wasn't wearing a uniform, Ding Jun carried a backpack on his back, so he was probably going with them.

I didn't recognize any of the others. They were all wearing military uniforms. They were probably from the group of soldiers that Ah Nuo had brought with him. There are actually more than fifteen of them.

Looking at that crowd, I couldn't help but ask, "Dàgē, where are you going with this many people? Their abilities are not that strong, right? You're going to attract a ton of aberrants if you start firing guns in Lan City."

Dàgē indifferently said, "They are in charge of moving supplies."

No wonder. I looked at the soldiers in front of me. Despite being forced to be baggage carriers, they didn't seem to show any resentment. More like the opposite; each and every single one of them were looking at Dàgē with conviction. I wondered whether it was because they had become entranced by Dàgē's dominance or by whatever they had been forced to do in these past few days. Whatever. In any case, they were a group of well-trained soldiers. As long as they were convinced, it shouldn't be a problem.

I looked at Xiao Sha. Out of curiosity, I asked, "Why not Cain? Didn't Xiao Sha enter Lan City not too long ago?"

Xiao Sha looked at me. He explained solemnly, "I'm going to look for Chenyang and see if he is still there."

*Oh yeah. I totally forgot about that cousin of his. I really don't know how powerful the Shangguan family is, but I hope Shangguan Chenyang can shed some light on this.*

Last but not least, I looked toward Guan Weijun. Dàgē was already willing to take her with him. That was unexpected. I'm a bit jelly, just a *tiny* bit!

She smiled and said, "I'm a local. I'm in charge of leading the way!"

I rolled my eyes and said, "You don't even know where the department store is."

"Ugh, that's a place I don't usually go. I'm familiar with everywhere else. I know where the supermarket and the hospital are. Shutian said that's good enough!"

*She already calls him "Shutian" so smoothly, huh?* I looked at Dàgē suspiciously. *Don't tell me they already...*

Dàgē said coldly, "Call me 'Leader' or 'Boss'."

"How about I use 'Patriarch'?" Guan Weijun attempted to negotiate.

*"..." Ice Emperor, did you know that the skin on your little brother's face is as thick as an aberrant's hide?*

After receiving Leader's icy stare, Guan Weijun chuckled and said, "Okay, okay. 'Leader' it is. Your word is law."

Dàgē no longer cared about her presence. He ruffled my head and said, "Cain and Zheng Xing will stay here at the base. If anyone bullies you, go find them. Okay?"

Sure. If I want to bully anyone, I will remember to find them.

Even after Dàgē finished talking, he wouldn't leave my hair alone and continued to rub and rub and rub. I was so annoyed that I almost wanted to ice him in front of the crowd. Too bad I was disguising myself as fragile, pretty boy. Turning the leader into a popsicle was definitely a no-go... *Wait a second. Don't tell me that Dàgē took advantage of this fact to ruffle my hair continuously?*

I secretly glared at Dàgē, but I could only let him continue as he pleased. That angle was just right to catch a glimpse of Ding Jun's ugly stare at me. Once our eyes met, he immediately put away his ugly expression and returned to his poker face.

He opened his mouth. "Leader, it is about time."

Dàgē made a noncommittal sound. Without even turning his head back, he commanded, "Go make arrangements for people to get in the car and get ready to depart."

"Yes, sir." Ding Jun tossed a look my way. Although it was still a frigid face, I could tell that he was gloating.

*Don't tell me that this brat is trying to compete with me for Dàgē's favor? Is there a hole in his brain? Even if I was truly a jerk, I am my*



*brother's dear brother. You really think he would cast me away? Not to mention I'm not even rotten at all!*

Dàgē led everyone out of the mansion. Beyond the mansion's gates, Cain led a group of people and was assigning tasks to them. Those people were all wearing military clothes. They were silently listening to instructions. Such discipline was worthy to be praised.

Looking at the current scene, I really felt stupid. Back then, I hadn't wanted to take in these soldiers and had even almost driven them away. Such a reckless waste of good resources; it seemed the hole in my brain was no smaller than Ding Jun's. It was better to leave all the future incoming human resources for Dàgē to handle. I, myself, should just obediently be the secret weapon.

Besides Cain and the soldiers, there were even more people around them, common people. As they watched my brother walk out, their eyes sparkled as if they had seen the messiah. They were utterly moved, completely captivated by his presence.

*I felt the scene was odd. Not long ago, didn't Dàgē terrify a bunch of people with a single move? How did he become their messiah in just a few days? Did I miss something? Can we replay it? I swear I won't be a shut-in ever again!*

Dàgē scanned the crowd, mainly looking at Cain and the soldiers on duty. The general public that was watching on the side wasn't of any importance to him. Dàgē said to Cain, "If anyone doesn't listen to you during the time that I'm away, show them no mercy."

"Yes, Boss." Cain smiled stupidly as he answered. "Even if my heart holds back, my hand won't."

Dàgē tossed a glance my way, then reached out to ruffle my hair again. I had no choice but to swallow down my annoyance. I put on a smile like a child who couldn't live without his big brother. "Dàgē, you have to come back home as soon as possible. Don't let Junjun stay out for too long."

*Yeah. The most important thing is to have Junjun come home as soon as possible.*

To be honest, I didn't need to worry about Dàgē at all. Within half a year into the apocalypse, he could already use ultimate techniques. Plus, he had Shujun, Xiao Sha, and Yunqian with him. They wouldn't need to retreat even if they encountered a tier three aberrant. If they really couldn't beat it, they could always find ways to escape.

The one that made me worry the most was Shujun. Even though I knew that Dàgē would protect Shujun with his life and that Shujun was skilled herself, I couldn't help but worry about Mèimei for life. Even if she leveled up to Thunder Goddess, I wouldn't stop worrying.

*It's not like I can help it!* I had raised my little sister since I was a kid, and I hadn't been a simple kid either. I had also somewhat carried the memories of a thirty-something-year-old woman. Watching over Junjun was like watching over my own daughter, so Shujun was a little sister and a daughter at the same time. *So, if anyone dares to hurt her, then that someone is dead meat!*

I looked at my mèimei-like-daughter. Junjun blinked and said, “Èrgē, I will definitely follow Dàgē as closely as possible.

*A little sister always knows her big brother best.* My heart relaxed just a teeny tiny bit.

Dàgē reached his hand out. The target was Dìdì's head. I shot him a glance. He retracted his hand, then said, “I will take care of Shujun. Don't run around. Behave yourself and look after the house.”

“Okay. I will stay here in the garrison.” The garrison would almost be emptied of Jiang members. *How would I dare to leave too?*

Finally, Dàgē was satisfied. He led a team of twenty or so out the door. A Hummer and a medium-sized bus rolled out the gate.

“Where did the Hummer come from?” I let out a breath. If there was a list of the best cars during the apocalypse, this car easily ranked first!

A tank would have been sturdier and better, but this type of vehicle was too rare. Plus, if one simply relied entirely on a tank for transportation, it would not be practical. Speed, fuel consumption, and a narrow compartment were all issues one would have to face.

Cain explained, “That car belongs to the soldiers. A couple of them showed us the way to the car so we could drive it back. They hadn't left it far from here.”

“They were actually willing to leave it there?” I was shocked. In this age, people would rather discard the living over a Hummer. This

monster may consume a ton of gasoline, but at the beginning of the apocalypse, this kind of vehicle could run over any bumps or obstacles on the road, even squashing most types of aberrants. Overall, the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages.

"They encountered a group of aberrants. One of them drove the Hummer to lure those aberrants away, and that person never came back."

I fell silent. Once again, I was vexed because I had almost cast away these people myself.

"Depart!"

Suddenly, Guan Weijun's voice rang crisp and clear. I raised my head to look. She was actually the one responsible for driving the Hummer! Dàgē, Shujun, Yunqian, and Ding Jun sat in that Hummer. Xiao Sha and everyone else were on the bus.

Cain clicked his tongue. "Xiao Guan, that brat, is really good. She's polished her skills very well. Yunqian even gave her a passing score. It's really amazing for her to praise an amateur. Unfortunately, she is not my type."

*It's useless even if she was your type. Guan Weijun's eyes are stuck on Dàgē. She probably couldn't even tell you apart from Yunqian!*

After watching the Hummer and the bus drive away, Cain and I went back into the mansion. The gate closed behind us. I asked immediately,

"Why did Dàgē decide to bring Ding Jun? What happened when I was gone?"

Cain scoffed. "That brat loves to hang around Boss, especially when you were away. He's just short of calling him 'Big Brother.'"

*He has probably been calling him "big brother" in his heart already!* I snorted. "When I returned, he must not have been very happy. He had been giving me a cold look like a stepmom all day."

"Really?" Cain hesitated. "He hid it well. We couldn't tell. Although he is a bit obsessed with Boss, he has been pretty obedient. Boss often asks him to do some trivial things. I didn't expect him to act so boldly. He even dared to mess with you? Let's wait until Boss gets back and kick him out of the mansion!"

"Would that actually be okay?" I didn't feel that would be quite right. He had already settled down here. If we deliberately kicked him out now, wouldn't Ding Jun feel aggrieved?

Cain brashly said, "What's so bad about that? What rights does he really have to be able to stay here?"

I thought about it for a while. He really didn't have any strong reason to be allowed to stay here. He was just someone we had picked up and wasn't part of the main team. Based on that reasoning, he shouldn't be allowed to live here in the mansion, but then Su Ying also lived here. I didn't want to kick her out, so Ding Jun stayed as well.

A good idea suddenly came to me. "My courtyard house is almost ready. Let's have Su Ying move in with my team and kick Ding Jun out of the mansion."

Cain looked at me in the eye. "You're Boss's little brother, the best fighter in the JDT. You could chase out whomever you want, and no one would question it. You don't need to conceal it by chasing out Su Ying, too. Your courtyard is filled with soldiers. Having a girl living there is too dangerous!"

"Dangerous? Who dares to touch her when I'm here? Do they want their shaft to become a popsicle?"

Cain's lower half twitched. His face paled.

"... Are you interested in Su Ying?"

He smiled with his glistening white teeth and said, "With how she's scared all the time, don't you feel she's like a trembling puppy? Isn't that fascinating?"

*You're actually interested in puppy-like women. Now this fact is more fascinating, indeed...*

Cain was a tall, robust foreigner. I really didn't feel that timid Su Ying would choose such a man. She would be scared to death! For the sake of peace and harmony within the Ice Spears, I decided to give Su Ying a helping hand.

"Let me remind you, they're under my protection. Su Ying is a member of my team. If you want to pursue her, I don't care. But if you force her at all, you're dead. I hate cheating and faithless shits even more. If you dare to treat Su Ying this way, you're dead."

After hearing so many "you're dead," Cain's smile froze. He then carefully asked, "Can I try going out with her? If it really doesn't work, and we break up, can you *just* punch me? Please don't use your ice power! Please don't freeze me down there!"

I looked Cain in the eye. I hadn't expected to hear him mention "going out." He still looked as airheaded as usual, and I couldn't tell how serious he was being.

I shrugged. "You should confess first and see if she even agrees."

Cain wilted and complained, "I want her to agree, but she runs as soon as she sees me. Last time, when I tried to pull her back, she actually screamed so loud that even Boss came out to look. Because of that, Lily and Yunqian ganged up on me. Two versus one, okay!"

"Haha!" *So I'm the demon king in her eyes, and even Cain is a mini boss.*

"So?" Cain revealed his glistening white teeth again and said, "Let's not kick Su Ying out of the mansion?"

I nodded. I wasn't really worried about Su Ying. Whatever was said, Cain was one of the main members of the JDT. His personality wasn't

bad, and he looked all right. Although he was a bit frivolous, didn't he have me to keep an eye on him?

For women in the apocalyptic era, Cain was definitely one of the few good men. I bet there would be plenty of women who will target him in the future. Based on the principle that fertilizer and water must not be left in a stranger's fields, let's try to leave him in Su Ying's yard.

Though going back to the main topic, could I still kick Ding Jun out like this? If he was the only one who was driven out, his hatred for me would surely grow. Knowingly increasing the number of enemies in the shadows by one left a bad aftertaste. Could we silence him directly... No, we can't. I wasn't some demon king. I couldn't silence him just because he hated me. Once I open this door, wouldn't there be no shortage of people to kill in the future?

*I just want to live peacefully with my family in the days of the apocalypse and not to become a bad guy who ruthlessly kills people. I really don't want to turn into the demon king that Su Ying thinks I am!*

Cain spoke suddenly, "Didn't you want to hide your strength? Once you kick Ding Jun out, he will help you a lot."

"Hah?" *I'm confused. How will he be able to help? More like the opposite, right?*

Cain spoke matter-of-factly, "He will remember his hatred for you, but he knows that he can't beat you. He can't seriously cause you trouble. In that case, all he can do is spread rumors behind your back, but you're still young, and you haven't done anything bad. At most, he can only talk smack about you having a pretty face and nothing else. Stuff



like how you have an overbearing personality like the boy who cried wolf. Isn't that what you want?"

*What the hell do you mean by boy who cried wolf? Don't you mean to say a dog biting his master's hand instead?*

I thought it over but didn't feel like overthinking it. *Let's just do it.* In the end, there would be plenty to worry about in the future. I didn't need to spend so much effort worrying over Ding Jun.

"Well, okay then. Let's not worry about him anymore. Cain, when Dàgē asked you to stay behind, did he tell you what to do in the meantime?"

Cain spoke slowly, "Boss said that Zheng Xing, your aunt, and your uncle are in charge of building the base. Lily is in charge of deploying manpower. I'm in charge of beating up any dissenters until they're not dissenting anymore."

"What about me?" *Am I supposed to just sit there and look pretty?*

Cain shrugged. "Boss said you were busy. If there's nothing, we shouldn't bother you and should let you do your own thing. Unless there's someone qualified enough to endanger the entire garrison and we can't handle it, then we should seek you out."

I nodded. *Dàgē really understands his little brother. This kind of "idle" status suits me perfectly.*

"Be honest, what are you really working on?" Cain asked curiously. "It doesn't look like you're busy training your troop. You only go over there at most two hours a day, then lock yourself in your room for the rest of the day. Don't tell me, you're training behind our backs? Xiao Yu, that's not right. If you are going to train, you have to help us train as well!"

I said honestly, "These days, I've been working on making clothes in my room."

Cain froze. He glanced at the clothes I was wearing. Then, he questioned, "It took you that long to alter just one set of clothes? Couldn't you get Junjun to help you with that? She's in charge of all those ladies. She would have made the clothes much nicer and faster."

I shook my head. "It's too difficult. I had to take a ton of clothes apart in order to piece this set together. It would have taken Junjun even longer. Plus, I've made a second set."

Other than the JDT's uniform, I also needed a completely different set of clothes made from the silk of the butterfly aberrant. This set had to be made from scratch. It also had to fit snugly. Therefore, this had been much harder to do than simple alterations. Junjun wouldn't have been able to make it, so I had to make it myself.

Cain had no interest in making clothes, whatsoever. He shook his head and sighed as he walked away.

"Young folks these days just love to dress up. Do you even need to dress up in anything with that face of yours..."

*I know that I have such a pretty face that even if I go naked, I would be a work of art.* Which is why when I was working on the clothing, I didn't really care too much about its outward appearance. The silk thread was white. I would have left it alone if it were not for the fact that wearing all white would make me look like a ghost and scare other people. Otherwise, I would have been too lazy to even stitch a collar or add a couple ice fragments as decoration.

I wore that set of white garments under the uniform. Afterall, the butterfly silk was very thin, so it could be worn as undergarments as well.

Besides, it was almost January. The weather was already very chilly. Unlike the previous winters, the temperature had dropped a couple more degrees. Although it wasn't dreadfully cold, most people had already put on a thick puffer jacket.

The mercenaries of the JDT just wore a couple layers. In the eyes of others, that was way powerful. Since I, on the other hand, was pretending to be weak, it made sense if I put on a couple more layers.

As I had finally finished making my clothes, it was about time to turn my focus on training my troop. We would need to rely on them to gather food supplies in the future, so I got to train them up as soon as possible.

I walked toward the courtyard house. Just as I stepped up to the entrance, I heard an explosion. Too bad, the sound was not *that* loud.

I pulled the doors open. A shadow of a person suddenly appeared in front of me. Reflexively, I karate kicked, and he flew a couple yards away. He stayed on the ground, moaning.

In the courtyard, there were those that ran, those that lifted weights, those that trained their power, and those that attempted to use all kinds of weird ways to discover the type of ability the soldiers had. Everyone looked over, yet not a single one dared to stop what they were working on. They just took a peek as they trained.

I walked over to the person on the floor, thought for a bit, and asked, "You're Lin Zuojun, right?"

That person clenched his teeth as he got up. He achingly nodded. Abruptly, he lifted his head. As if he wasn't able to believe what he heard, he asked, "How did you suddenly remember my name?"

"If you have an ability, then you have a name. If you have no ability, then you're nobody."

However, powers that were difficult to uncover tended to be particularly unique. But then again, if I didn't treat them differently, they wouldn't work hard to discover their power!

The atmosphere within the crowd grew heavy. Each and every one of the soldiers trained even harder, all longing for the day to shed their just-a-nobody titles and earn back on their own names.

I asked, "When did you discover your power?"

Before Lin Zuojun was able to muster a reply, Ah Nuo rushed over from the mansion and beamed. "Xiao Shu, last night, two people discovered their powers!"

I nodded. "Lin Zuojun, teleportation. I know. Who's the other?"

Ah Nuo was amazed. When he saw Lin Zuojun right next to him, it finally clicked for him. "So this is called teleportation? That so fits you, man!

These soldiers were truly so serious. Apparently, training and missions kept them so busy that they had no time to breathe. Although they had accumulated a lot of vacation days, it wasn't like they could ever use them. This of course meant that they rarely ever played video games or read novels, Therefore, they had very little clue of what kind of powers could show up. They wouldn't even have a single idea of where to start. That was why the chances of them discovering their power was so low.

These past few days, I mainly taught them how to discover their power. In the meantime, I brought Uncle over to help me finish the courtyard house's blueprint. Then, I had them look for Lily for the materials to get the base for the Ice Spears ready.

"The other one is Boots."

Ah Nuo motioned for Xue Xi to come over. The latter sped over right away. He couldn't prevent the corners of his mouth from curling up. Without even waiting for Ah Nuo to finish, he raised a finger. A tiny

flame popped up at the tip of his finger, just enough to light a cigarette.

"Not bad." I nodded my head. Water and fire were the most common power, all right. They were everywhere. It was just that these two types of powers were easily discoverable. I didn't think there would be any water or fire powers among these soldiers, since they had not been able to figure it out until today. They really were a group of stubborn, muscle-brained soldiers.

Xue Xi beamed.

"We'll be able to have nice hot meals when we go hunting."

"..."

I patted Xue Xi's back. "If you don't want to become a gas stove, you better train your butt off."

Xue Xi answered with a "Yes, sir." He then hesitantly looked behind him, meeting the eyes of his little bro—I mean, little sister. *Even though this little sister isn't any different from a little brother, I have to say that my Junjun is a hundred times cuter.*

That not-so-cute little sister Xue Huan was currently running the obstacle course. She was very talented and agile. Lily and Yunqian might not be able to overtake her. Of course, I was referring to the time before Lily and Yunqian ate their portions of crystals. The current Lily and Yunqian could beat all the members of the Ice Spears without ever using their powers. Of course, this didn't include me. After all, the

more crystals one ate, the more advanced the quality of one's body got.

"Your little sister is a muscle-brained soldier, right? The type that never plays video games or reads a novel, the type that trains their body whether or not they have the time, right?"

Xue Xi looked exasperated. "Yeah. I've played Contra before, but Huanhuan has never played any video games before."

*Contra...*

*I fell silent. Luckily, this brain of mine has the thirty-something-year-old Guan Weijun in it. Even if she had never played any video games herself, she had heard guys chatting about video games. Or else, who would know what the heck Contra is! I'm eighteen this year, and I only know how to play LOL!*

"Mister, will you give me the date and time of your birth?" I looked at Xue Xi. He didn't seem to be *that* old, right?

Xue Xi solemnly replied, "I was born two score and eight years ago."

Dumbfounded, I said, "So does two score and eight years ago mean that you are forty-eight years old, old man?"

"...I'm turning twenty-eight this year."

After saying that, Xue Xi was hit on the head. Wen Jianuo scolded, "I told you to study more and train more. Look at Huanhuan. She trains so diligently. No wonder you have so many shortcomings."

Then, Xue Xi joined his sister at running, after which Wen Jianuo immediately brought up in discussion, "Xiao Yu, we usually train like this. Even if we follow your advice, increasing the amount of drills by five or ten times, I'm afraid there won't be any significant growth."

I also understood this point. There was actually not much to criticize about their skills. These drills were merely for them to familiarize themselves even more with their speed and power; after all, they did survive through the black fog and were fed a couple days' worth of crystals. Their physique had long changed.

"This is just basic training. Wait until we're able to enter the city, then we won't need to spend that much time on doing the basics."

Even if it was me, I only have an hour in the morning to train my body; then I spend another hour of training on refining my ice power. For example, I would make an ice sculpture of Junjun wearing a princess gown or condense a multi-layered ice crystal bouquet for Junjun's room. And the rest was an accumulation of actual combat experience.

Wen Jianuo's eyes lit up. He asked, "When can we enter the city?"

"My big brother just entered the city. I'm staying behind and take care of the garrison. Let's talk after my brother comes back."



Wen Jianuo nodded, "I'm afraid that the public will become restless and troubled since the leader is not here. Should we head out to help maintain public safety? Don't worry. It won't affect our training."

My eyebrows furrowed. "Public safety is Cain's responsibility. You should help Lily, instead. She mostly has civilians on her plate and would need your help more."

These soldiers would definitely be more suitable for maintaining public security rather than providing public relief. However, if they were sent to help Cain, would the soldiers under Cain end up responding to Cain or to Wen Jianuo?

"All right."

Wen Jianuo, on the other hand, had not shown much of a reaction. It didn't seem as if he was unsatisfied, which saved me a lot of worry. It looked like Ah Nuo understood his place. He didn't seem to have the intention of seizing power for himself, at least not right now. After all, the difference in our strength was laid right before his eyes, a difference he couldn't overcome at all.

*As for the future, let's wait until he becomes a true member of the Jiang Dominion. If he wants to have his voice heard, he'll have to earn it himself.*

Wen Jianuo looked toward the gate. He murmured, "Ah Qing has been gone for too long."

Confused, I asked, "Where did he go?"

I was wondering about not seeing him. Then again, there were multiple sections of this courtyard house that were under construction. He might just be inside painting the walls or something. Not much of a problem.

"He took Watermelon and Diao Ming to get some winter clothes and some food."

Speaking of this, Wen Jianuo reluctantly said, "Xiao Yu, can you find a kitchen lady for us? We're not that good at cooking. Grilling in the wild is fine, but homecooked meals are just impossible. Especially now with so many missing ingredients, we don't even know what we can put together to make something we can put in our mouths without wanting to spit it back out."

I glanced at Xue Huan. She was kicking her twin brother into a half-kneeling position. Fine, the only thing that this woman and a kitchen lady have in common is that both are good at using a knife. It was only that one chops humans, and the other chops livestock. The only thing that Xue Huan could make was probably sashimi.

What about the other woman on the team, Su Ying? Er, she was also an expert at burning the kitchen down. With Junjun present, Su Ying could help with washing and peeling the vegetables. Without Junjun, all she could do was burn the kitchen down.

Although there were many men who were adept at cooking too, such as myself, these soldiers obviously hadn't had time to polish their cooking skills.

"Do you have anyone in mind?" I looked at Wen Jianuo. Since this guy had proposed the idea, maybe he already had someone in mind, or maybe he took fancy to a girl. If there was nothing wrong with the girl's identity, I wouldn't want to get between two lovebirds. At most, I would just keep an eye on Wen Jianuo and make sure he wasn't taking advantage of her.

This point must be made clear to all the members. If you dared to toy with any girls, I will freeze you into a popsicle down there.

Wen Jianuo nodded. *I knew it.* I rolled my eyes.

"Bring her over later so I can take a look at her. However, outsiders are not allowed to live within the courtyard house. At most, they can come to cook every day, to avoid them discovering what we are actually doing, as well as my true abilities. Wen Jianuo, remember that you are the captain with the strongest abilities, and I am just a vice-captain who loafs around. I rely on my brother's rank to boss you around. You are the captain of the Ice Spears, who is furious but can't voice it since you are being oppressed by the weak prince. Got it?"

Wen Jianuo said jokingly, "But it's a fact. Aren't I being oppressed by you?"

I shot him a glance. "So you're actually angry but don't dare to say anything, huh?"

"What, no." Wen Jianuo rubbed his nose and said, "What's to be angry about? Compared to the days on the road, there's food, clothes, and even a place to live. It's like I'm living in paradise."

True. Good and bad were relative. But what happens after you get used to these good days? Don't tell me that you're going to end up "wanting even better days?"

I glanced at Wen Jianuo. It wasn't so much as not believing in him but more that I didn't have faith in myself. If it was with someone like Dàgē, maybe people would become even more convinced after a lot of time has passed. But with me?

I tilted my head and thought for a moment. Guan Weijun's way of thinking prevailed as I began to believe that I was not a very domineering or persuasive guy. But then I felt that was wrong. Since when have I, Jiang Shuyu, feared anyone?

I was not even afraid of a person like Dàgē, so who else is there a need to be afraid of?

Even if there was dissatisfaction, what of it? It was just Wen Jianuo. *If he dared to not accept reality, I'll just exterminate him!*

I held my forehead. I suddenly felt that my personality was a bit divided. The personalities between my two lives may have been very similar, but there was a difference in my ways of dealing with interpersonal relations —or more like, I couldn't help the difference.

Guan Weijun did not have any true powers. Even if she wanted to be stronger, there was no way to do it, but even so, she still stood up against Xia Zhengu. If I had my current abilities in my last life, I would have long exterminated that scum of a boyfriend!

*So, there actually aren't any differences between the two personalities? Guan Weijun really had the potential of being a demon king OL.*

"Xiao Yu..."

I looked up. Wen Jianuo said with an embarrassed tone, "Actually, the kitchen lady is currently right outside the door. Would you like to meet her?"

I rolled my eyes. I didn't bother to say anything and nodded my head to let the person in. I couldn't help guessing what type of person Ah Nuo liked. *Is it the gentle, little daisy type or the spicy hot chick type? Don't tell me, he has the same tastes as Cain and likes those unique types?*

On the contrary, the one who came in was an auntie, and she was even dragging two kids with her.

*...She's a bit too old for him. She could be Wen Jianuo's mother. Is this the so-called Oedipus complex?*

Wen Jianuo looked over. He didn't put on a goofy smile like before but held his face looking like a dignified captain. He made introductions,

"Xiao Yu, this is Ms. Wang. Ms. Wang, this is Xiao Yu, the leader's little brother."

That auntie looked at me as most of her nervousness subsided. She said gently, "Xiao Yu is so young. Just call me Auntie Wang."

"Auntie Wang." I called out casually then asked, "Are these your children?"

They appeared too young to be hers. The girl looked around ten years old and was clenching her little brother's hand nervously. The boy looked around five years old at most and incapable of keeping up with them on the road. *How have they been able to survive until now?* I glanced at Wen Jianuo. If I remembered correctly, this guy had once mentioned sending supplies to a pair of siblings.

Auntie Wang quickly shook her head and said, "How is that even possible! I'm over sixty this year. How would I have such little kids? These little ones are the children that Captain Wen asked me to help take care of. The girl is eleven years old. The boy is four years old. Both are very obedient and very sensible."

I looked at Wen Jianuo in the eye. The other quickly clarified, "The children couldn't tell me where their parents went. It just so happens that Ms. Wang is by herself, too. I asked them to stay together."

*Don't know where their parents went?* They had probably ended up in someone's stomach. I couldn't help but feel pity. It was just so difficult for children so young to stay alive in this world! Wen Jianuo probably thought the same way as me and must have helped take care of them

on their way here: *As long as he has the leisure to do so, he probably feels he might as well look after them.*

"I say. In the future, Auntie Wang and the kids can stay after cooking to eat with us before they leave. This way, they won't have to worry about others robbing their portions."

Wen Jianuo immediately responded while nodding his head. "That's a good idea."

Auntie Wang was elated. She kept bowing and expressing her gratitude, and even told the kids to say, "Thank you big brother and uncle." The two kids really were very obedient. Immediately, they used their cute voices to say their thanks. The younger one even bowed. Even though they were dirty all over so their visage was unclear, seeing a small child bow so seriously was still so cute!

I looked at these two children who were so dirty that you couldn't even see their faces. I simply grabbed them and rushed them to the bathroom. "I'm taking them to bathe!"

Auntie Wang was stunned. Finally, she relaxed and smiled. "He's still just a child. If it was before, I wouldn't have guessed he had gone to college."

Wen Jianuo smiled bitterly but had to respond, "Probably a college freshman."

Auntie Wang laughed. "Before coming over, I heard he was the leader's little brother. I was so nervous. I didn't expect him to be such

a polite child, just that his personality is a bit soft. In such a world like this, having such a gentle personality is not a good thing.”

“Uh...” Wen Jianuo didn’t know how to respond.

Straining my neck to tune in, I came to a realization. Maybe acting as a feeble second master would be more suitable than an arrogant second master? After all, arrogance would attract people’s attention. Say if I was weak, then often hiding in my room would be because I was afraid of meeting people!

I walked into the bathroom and let the water flow into the bath. This was one of the advantages this courtyard house had. Even if the water system broke, there was a different system that was used to pump well water in. Although that system was not as clean as tap water, I’d heard of people these days dying from not having any water to drink, from being attacked by water powers,, or from being ambushed by water aberrants. However, I had never heard of anyone dying from drinking water!

“Take your clothes off.”

As I was testing the water temperature without turning my head, I heard scrambling footsteps. I turned my head to look at what was going on. The little girl nervously hugged her brother and backed away. Her whole back was pressed against the wall of the bathroom.

Looking at this situation, I was flabbergasted. Lightning struck inside of my head. An eleven-year-old girl meant she had already begun



puberty. I was an eighteen-year-old male stranger who actually told her to take off her clothes. *What a pervert!*

"I, I'll help you two look for clothes. You help your little brother bathe. Pay attention to the water temperature and be careful not to burn yourselves!"

With my forehead drenched in sweat, I fled.

### Chapter 3: Leader's Little Brother Is In Charge of Looking Pretty

Wiping away sweat from my forehead, I discovered the shortcoming of having both a guy and a girl residing in my head. No matter if I looked at guys or girls, I was either not thinking of them as the same sex as me, such as when I was perving on Dàgē and Jin Feng, or I wasn't considering them as the opposite sex, with a "take off your clothes" slipping out to a little girl just like that.

I needed to pay more attention in the future. *I'm a man now! With the corresponding appendage! I can't just go into the girls' bathroom!* Important things *have to* be stressed three times!

Afterwards, I found two thick, long combat coats and knocked on the bathroom door. I said, "There are two coats hanging on the door. Once you're done bathing, put them on for now and stay put in the courtyard house. Don't run off. I'll head out and find you some clothes."

A high pitched "okay" came through the door from the girl. I could finally relax and flee. On my way out, I told Wen Jianuo that I was going to the mansion. He asked if I could help figure out where Ah Qing had gone.

"He might have seen a beauty along the way and went off to flirt." I thought about Ah Qing's personality and how he cared little for gender as long as they were pretty. It was actually highly possible that he had been seduced away.

Wen Jianuo shook his head and said, "When doing business, Ah Qing is more serious than anyone."

After hearing this, I started to feel that something was wrong as well. The courtyard house was not that far from the mansion. To be gone for such a long time, if he wasn't neglecting his duties, then something really must have happened.

After considering this, I said, "Then let's all go together, with you leading the squad. If nothing has happened, the troop can stay there and support Lily."

Wen Jianuo also thought that this was for the best. He called for the others at once—which just made for eight. Ah Qing had already taken two people with him, and Su Ying was helping out at the mansion.

Before leaving, Wen Jianuo specifically reminded the troop members that in front of outsiders, Jiang Shuyu was supposedly just a "vice-captain" that the leader had shoved at them. They were not allowed to slip up and reveal anything about Jiang Shuyu being the true captain of this troop. If there was danger, everyone even had to protect the frail young vice-captain.

Once this was said, while everyone's posture remained serious, their expressions became a bit distorted.

Along the way, I didn't speak a single word. Silently, I stood in between the pair of siblings Xue Xi and Xue Huan. I intended to properly conceal myself from this point on. In the meantime, I could observe whether Wen Jianuo could assume the role as the "Captain of the Ice Spears."

Once we reached the mansion, we finally found Chen Yanqing and the two others. Holding huge piles of things in their hands, the trio stood right in front of the gate. Their faces were pale. They looked restless and seemed like they wanted to leave, but they were surrounded by a group of civilians.

The people kept their eyes locked on the supplies in Chen Yanqing's hands. They didn't have to say anything. The greed glowing in their eyes exposed what they wanted to do.

"Those are the civilians that came with us." Xue Xi gritted his teeth and said, "That fucking prick, it's him again!"

"Who are you talking about?" I asked in a low voice.

"That guy in the glasses." Xue Huan said in a composed manner as she observed the man in front of Chen Yanqing. "His surname is Wang. He claims to be a member of parliament. When we were fleeing from the aberrants, he was the most talkative one."

*Most talkative one?* Although being talkative was normal for a member of parliament, that wasn't a good characteristic to have when fleeing on the road with aberrants at their heels.

"Does he want to command the team?"

I'd met plenty of people like him in my past life. Back then, we didn't have any soldiers among us. Most of us were just ordinary people. That was what we called "chaotic," where no one wanted to listen to anyone else.

If someone with a good head on them managed to take control, that was good news; however, these types of people were often unable to seize control. Or I should say, they would never waste their energy on a power struggle. When things went awry, they would immediately bail.

Let's consider the present. If the current me were in the midst of strangers, and these strangers had all sorts of conflicts, I would vanish in a flash. There wasn't enough time for ditching these brainless teammates, much less fighting for power.

Xue Xi was somewhat perplexed and said, "Not that he wants to command the team, more like he always intervenes in dividing up the supplies or assigning people where to sleep. Some people were unhappy with poor assignments from him. They quarrel all day long."

It suddenly dawned on me. A soldier's combat ability was too high. This senator Wang obviously couldn't openly command this group of soldiers. He himself probably didn't dare to go after the commander's power; after all, a single mistake would be equivalent to losing his neck. Commanding the troops obviously fell within a soldier's expertise a whole lot more. Then, that meant that the only remaining "power" that was up for grabs would be the distribution of supplies.

"It would have been all right if he just had strong opinions, but what's more was that he hadn't wanted to come here at all. Saying something like Lan City can't amount to Zhi Bei, the glorious capital. Rather than coming to Lan City, why not head toward Zhi Bei?"

*Hah. Zhi Bei, is it?* That place was an abyss. From the very beginning, everyone wanted to go to Zhi Bei, thinking that the capital would never fall. They had forgotten the fact that they had just escaped from a big city themselves and always skirted around cities while they fled, never having the guts to go near them.

Moreover, which city was more of a giant city than Zhi Bei? Population density in Zhi Bei ranked the highest in the country. With half of that becoming aberrants and the other half becoming food for their evolution, could it ever be the best place to go?

I was lost in my thoughts. *Once we take over Lan City, we should find some time to go to Zhi Bei—No, no. We should head to Yu City in the south first.*

Zhi Bei was just not a good place to go. *Didn't we see that even Thirteen, the aberrant king of Meisia, only occupied Lan City and not Zhi Bei?*

*Who knows? The things in Zhi Bei may be even scarier than the twelve elites.* It was possible that it was just that no one had the means to tell us anything about what was going on inside.

In fact, if someone else could use this opportunity to head over and occupy Yu City, that would be amazing. This way, by conquering both major cities, human beings wouldn't end up becoming an endangered species, right?

*As for Zhi Bei, let's not waste our energy. Letting others toss their lives into an abyss that even I myself don't dare to step into isn't something I could ever do.*

"Ah Qing, what you are saying isn't right!" Senator Wang disapproved then nagged, "You are soldiers. How could you not care about us ordinary people? Us, ordinary people, do not have enough to eat or wear. You don't let us have anything even when we ask for some food and clothes. Do you want to watch us starve to death? Does this not needle your conscience?"

Chen Yanqing's face darkened. But beside Senator Wang, it was all old people and weak children surrounding him, looking at him with anticipation. He was hardly able to spit any harsh words. He could only dryly say, "These supplies are for the Ice Spears. The Jiang Dominion is the one responsible in overseeing your supplies. They will not starve you to death."

"They're just a group of bandits who robbed us of all of our supplies. Why would they bother with looking after our lives..."

Senator Wang had only said a few things when he suddenly seemed to remember something, and his face paled. He didn't dare to continue his appeal. Swiftly switching the topic, he continued to earnestly beg for the supplies.

"Oh, Ah Qing. You're helping them fight the monsters. They would be embarrassed not to give you any supplies. Couldn't you just leak some from between your fingers so that the elderly and the children have

something to eat? Don't tell me that you're unwilling to do even this much?"

Chen Yanqing reddened with anger. But beside Senator Wang, there were just the old and the young. He didn't dare blow a gasket.

Then at this moment, he looked up and saw us. He was thrilled. He wanted to squeeze through but was blocked. If his wall was made of men, it would have been fine. But it was made of the elderly, so he couldn't just push them aside.

I rolled my eyes at him. This Ah Qing didn't even know how to speak back to them. There was no way that these invincible, airheaded troops of mine would mistreat these people. Feeding them until they were stuffed was impossible, but feeding them until they weren't hungry wasn't a problem.

Wen Jianuo's expression became frosty. As he strode over, his steps were very heavy, gradually attracting the attention of the crowd. At last, that Senator Wang finally noticed something was wrong. When he turned around and saw Wen Jianuo, half of his overbearing attitude disappeared. The aggressiveness he had toward Chen Yanqing was immediately gone.

"Senator Wang, are you dissatisfied with my soldiers again?" As soon as Wen Jianuo opened his mouth, that Senator Wang's complexion stiffened but he had no choice but to put on a smile.

No wonder Ah Qing had pushed Ah Nuo to be the vice-captain. They really were not on the same level!



"How can that be! You're wrongly accusing me!" Senator Wang cried with an aggrieved face. I felt goose bumps all over my body from the sight. If I hadn't seen this Senator Wang assembling a group of elderly to stir up trouble, I would not have believed this creep was here to pick a quarrel with us.

Wen Jianuo crossed his arms across his chest and asked, "So explain yourself, why have you surrounded my men?"

Senator Wang responded immediately, "I'm just here to see if you soldiers have enough food and clothes."

I whispered to Xue Xi, "What did Ah Nuo do to him for him to be this terrified?"

Xue Xi laughed. "He would always keep the good things to himself. The others would protest, which created a lot of trouble. On the spot, Ah Nuo ordered not to give him any supplies for three days. This guy didn't dare to follow those who were scavenging for food either. He always hid in the midst of the elderly and weak, relying on the supplies we gave. Three days with no supplies from us meant starving for three days. Of course, he felt wronged and cursed to no end. Right then and there, Ah Nuo didn't utter a single word and shot right next to his ear. He nearly went deaf. From then on, whenever he sees Ah Nuo, he becomes a mouse who's seen a cat, terrified to death."

I nodded my head to show my understanding. Although Ah Nuo was more ruthless than Ah Qing, they were soldiers after all. If it was my

dàgē, that shot would not have been near the ear but right through the head.

"This is a bandit's den!" Senator Wang complained, "You take our things upon arrival, then send over a tiny bit of stuff. You can't even fill the gaps between our teeth with this amount! The days have become this cold, and they haven't sent any blankets over. Robbing our supplies is the same as freezing us to death!"

*This fucker. How many mercenaries do you think are in the troop? Since when was transporting 300 quilts necessary? Just go to the town and look for some yourselves! This buffoon most likely hasn't taken a single step outside of a 100 meter radius from the mansion.*

Wen Jianuo indifferently said, "We didn't have much left to begin with. At most there were only two or three days' worth left. It has long passed that time period. If you had more than that, then let me ask you this. Did you secretly stash some away?"

Senator Wang's face immediately changed. He hastily said, "Of... of course not!"

Wen Jianuo ignored him and looked around at the elderly, women, and children. Those people lowered their heads, not daring to meet his gaze.

"When we joined the Jiang Dominion, we pledged to obey all orders from the leader. If he wants to kick people out, we will have no say. You can continue making trouble, though you probably won't get kicked out."

Wen Jianuo said it in such an illogical way. The first part didn't match up with the latter. Many people were puzzled and snuck glances at him.

"The leader will not let anyone to leave with hatred in their hearts. It's simple to kill people in this world. If the leader were as soft-hearted as we are, I would never have brought my people to join in the first place."

*Won't allow anyone with hatred in their hearts to leave?* The crowd seemed to be stupidly confused. Then, at this moment, Chen Yanqing muttered, "Just last time, the leader kicked a guy who wanted to rob other people of their supplies. That guy is still confined to his bed to this day, unable to get up. If it wasn't for his mother looking after him, he probably would have rotted in bed! It was so terrifying! How can you still dare to stir trouble again? Are you betting on your elderly age? I never saw the leader ever show an ounce of respect to the elders or the weak."

The crowd turned pale. Finally, they regretted listening to Senator Wang's provocation. Each glared at him and pleaded with Chen Yanqing.

"Sir, you don't have to fuss over us. We are old, and our brains have become muddled. We let some person say a couple words and make a fool out of us. We are so stupid! We deserve to be beaten!"

An old man began to slap himself, and those two slaps were even pretty loud. *I wonder if I'm seeing things or something. Did he just glance at me?*

Chen Yanqing impatiently said, "Elder Li, there's no need to hit so hard."

"I ought to do this, I really should. Who told me to be this stupid?" The old man bent his hunched back as he bemoaned this. Seeing that he was so amendable and flexible, he didn't seem like he could be easily fooled.

Wen Jianuo sneered, "You are not a fool. It's just that your family consists of a pair of shitheads. If you continue to coddle them, something is bound to happen sooner or later. Nowadays, a single incident can lead to death. Your crying and pleading will be useless then."

After listening to this, Elder Li's face fell. He could barely pull a smile together and said, "Right. Right. I'll make sure to whip them in shape right when I go back!"

Xue Xi whispered in my ears, "His son and daughter are both thirty something, and there is even a five-year-old grandson. Both children are lazier than pigs. They would even cry about how heavy and tiring coming over to get their food is. Outside of times when we're distributing food, I hardly ever see them. They make Elder Li come to get the supplies by himself, and he would do it so his son and daughter would have supplies. It's preposterous! If I had given birth to this pair of jackasses, I'd send them out and leave them to be eaten by aberrants! However, Elder Li is not entirely faultless. He had his children late and developed a habit of babying his children to no end. He's reaping what he sowed."

I watched Elder Li, who indeed fit the word “elder” to the tee. Each strand of his hair had turned gray. He looked at least seventy years old. Seeing such an old man come over to help, just so he could receive an extra portion of supplies, meant that the soldiers likely wouldn’t have given him hard labor. It was no wonder he had attracted so much attention, when it was impossible for the soldiers to remember everyone.

After all, the soldiers had brought at least two hundred civilians with them, and they had been busy escaping for their lives. Only people like Senator Wang who kept stirring up trouble were more memorable.

“Also, sir, could you get me to a different house?” Elder Li sighed, “The house that I was assigned to is so far. I come here to collect supplies every day. My legs can’t stand it anymore!”

I almost laughed out loud. Just a moment ago, didn’t he say he would get his children off their lazy asses? Why not have them come and get the supplies on their own? For the Jiang Dominion to assign them to a faraway house, it must mean that they have capable people in their household. Yet in the end, this family sent the elderly to transport their supplies.

What’s more, assigning residences to three hundred people meant at most using up two or three roads. How far could that be? That distance did not amount to any difference. How could you become exhausted just by moving a day’s worth of food?

Probably, the real reason was insecurity from being too far from the mansion. Everyone wanted to be as close to the mansion as possible to feel secure. They would love to be able to turn and run into the mansion if an aberrant were to show up.

The others rushed in to join, "The house that I was assigned is too far as well. I saw that there are clearly empty houses that are closer. Why don't you give them to us?"

*Really?* I thought for a bit and understood. Those were for future personnel. If all the closer ones were occupied and some capable person were to join in the future but wasn't qualified enough to live in the mansion, it wasn't like we could have them live on the outskirts. *Don't tell me they would have to drive here whenever we had a meeting?*

I maintained my silence. Up until now, there were quite a few stealing looks at my way. There was amazement in their eyes, but their gaze was mostly focused on the uniform that I was wearing, especially the Jiang Dominion's emblem.

"Sir, just do me this favor, please?" Elder Li expectantly looked at Wen Jianuo.

This Elder Li's method was a bit smarter than Senator Wang's. Despite his old age, he still openly used "sir" with deference, which constantly reminded the soldiers of their positions. Compared to Senator Wang's straightforward way of saying "you are all soldiers," his way was a lot more subtle. Even Ah Nuo couldn't curse him out. Sure enough, this old man had his tricks.

Wen Jianuo retorted, "I'm not responsible for this matter. If you have any issues, bring it up with the people in charge of making assignments."

"Then, what are you responsible for?" Elder Li asked curiously.

Wen Jianuo indifferently said, "As you mentioned, we are soldiers. What else can we be responsible for? We either stay behind to protect or we enter the city to search for supplies. Otherwise, how could there still be security and supplies for hundreds of people?"

Wen Jianuo refused to play into Elder Li's hands. Elder Li had no cards left. He then looked at me and started piling on the praise. "This young man has such a handsome profile!"

*You don't have to mention it. I know I'm handsome. Plus, for an old man of seventy, I bet my Jiang Dominion uniform is more attractive than my face.*

"How come I have never seen you before? How have you come to be following Sir Wen?"

I looked at Elder Li innocently, without uttering a single word. *Let's see how he makes use of this situation!*

It was a pity that I miscalculated how utterly thick the skin on his face was. He actually forced his way forward and seemed like he wanted to touch my head. "This child. You are so pleasing to the eye..."

Immediately, I hid behind Xue Huan. Although she was a tough gal with a frozen face, she was still a girl after all. Elder Li couldn't easily force his way past her to touch me.

By now, most of the crowd had noticed me, especially Senator Wang. Their eyes lit up. One by one, they tried to edge closer. This was like returning home during Chinese New Year and being surrounded by a group of elders. The next second would most likely have "Are you married yet? Where are you working? How much is your salary? Do you have a car? Have you bought a house yet?" rushing my way.

*So scary! I rather go up against an aberrant. That's a lot simpler to deal with than this.*

Contrary to the indifferent tone earlier, Wen Jianuo sternly said, "Don't touch him or you will face consequences!"

Elder Li startled. He hesitantly took a few steps back. He said, "Wha...what's wrong? I was just concerned about this young man."

He looked at me. The eyes of this old man were filled with panic. He shivered.

If this was all an act, I should cherish the opportunity to study from him.

"Why are you scaring this old man? He didn't even do anything. He just asked a couple of questions. This young man didn't even say a word in response, yet you're yelling at the old guy. What has this world become? Sigh..."



The old people and women around us murmured in disapproval, or maybe they were thinking of their own situation. Their faces were gloomy as they empathized with their comrade in distress.

I suddenly felt a huge headache. Normally, respecting elders was not a big deal, but I knew that the elderly party was trying to climb ladders upon seeing my uniform. I didn't want any trouble. The other party was, after all, too old to fight. I couldn't beat him up or chase him away either. Getting latched onto like this was troublesome.

At this time, someone mocked, "Is that person royalty or something? Just asking after him warrants a scolding?"

Wen Jianuo scrunched his brows. He couldn't answer to that.

Right this moment, my eyes lit up. I waved my hands and shouted, "Cain-gē!"

Not far away, Cain stopped. The corners of his mouth twitched. Then the next second, he recovered his arrogant manner. He was full of confidence, and it was probably because of his utmost confidence as he led the soldiers behind him over that he appeared even more imposing than Wen Jianuo.

As he led the group over, he shouted, "What are you doing? Surrounding my boss's baby brother, do each and every one of you not want to live any longer?"

*Shit! You just exposed my identity right off the bat! I can practically see my fate of getting surrounded by elders like it's New Year. Still, even though I kind of want to beat him up, it's not like I can hide my identity for long anyway. I'll let Cain off this time.*

Cain surveyed the crowd of old and young. He didn't have any intent to show respect for the elderly. Instead, he sneered at them, then walked right in front of me and asked, "Xiao Yu, are these people bullying you?"

Pondering, I showed a timid expression. Neither nodding nor shaking my head, I hid further behind Xue Huan.

*To be honest, Huanhuan, your back is so straight and stiff. Are you sure your vertebrae aren't fused together?*

Cain snorted vehemently. He may have been chuckling, but you could see his burning rage. He turned around. His smile vanished completely. He looked on as if the old and the weak were corpses in his eyes. That pair of eyes drowned in murderous intent, making me feel that this Cain was a stranger. He didn't need to put on an act to pull off such a terrifying face!

"Now you've done it. Our leader's precious treasures are his younger brother and sister. You touch them, you die! I commend your guts. You just arrived not too long ago, and you dared to provoke Shuyu already. Bloody hell! Don't you guys know that I'm the one who stayed behind this time? If the boss finds out that his little brother was wronged, do you think I'd be left off the hook?"

Dead silence fell upon the scene. No one dared to speak. Cain glared at Wen Jianuo and yelled, "What are you doing? The leader told you to protect Shuyu so nothing can touch a single hair on his body! Is this the way you're gonna protect him? Letting him get surrounded by so many people? Shuyu is timid. Don't you know that?"

Probably, the entire Ice Spears didn't know that.

And Cain, you finally learned how to use the "a single hair" idiom!

Wen Jianuo's complexion changed. His lips tightened and he bowed his head. He admitted, "It is my mistake."

Cain sneered. He raised both hands. Two pillars of fire rose from the ground as high as a whole story, one to Wen Jianuo's left and one to his right, no more than fifty centimeters away from him. Even I could feel the sudden rise in temperature although I stood this far away. Fortunately, the flames only existed for an instant. If they lasted any longer, they could have roasted my captain without even touching him.

Cain pointed right at Wen Jianuo's nose and warned, "If this happens again, you can just go and die! You can't even handle a group of old fogeys. How can I expect you to protect Shuyu from aberrants? Useless things shouldn't be kept alive and waste supplies!"

His face burned from the heat. Wen Jianuo gritted his teeth and said, "Yes, sir!"

Although Cain only threatened Wen Jianuo, it was obvious that he was making this into an example. Everyone else was so frightened that they were deathly pale.

The way Cain threatened Wen Jianuo had its benefits. In the future, even if Wen Jianuo turned a blind eye to his closest relatives, he would have an excuse. If he didn't protect me well, he would be dead meat. Who cared if the person in front of him was ninety or a hundred years old? No matter who he trampled into the ground, no one would blame him for disrespecting the elderly anymore.

*I bet no elders will surround me in the future. Though now, I'm worried that Wen Jianuo will misinterpret Cain's good intentions, taking this threat seriously and will stay upset with Cain.*

Then again, I'd been watching Wen Jianuo's reaction since the beginning, and he wasn't behaving like usual. He seemed to be playing along.

It seemed like there were Oscar-winning actors all around me. The pressure was on. In comparison, I was just some extra. *Can I even fulfill the role of a weak and cowardly pretty boy?*

Cain looked at the group of seniors again. Then, he put his hands on his waist and berated, "Each and every one of you did not go to get work but came here to surround the leader's little brother. Are you dissatisfied with the Jiang Dominion or what?"

Bearing the brunt, Elder Li immediately responded, "We're here to receive work. We saw how beautiful this young man looks and just wanted to say hello."

Cain sneered, "In this world, curiosity kills people."

Elder Li repeatedly answered "Yessir." He didn't dare to say any more than that.

In this age, nice people sure get taken advantage of. Senator Wang dared to provoke Chen Yanqing but did not dare to face Wen Jianuo. Elder Li puts on a soft front, and even Wen Jianuo could not beat him, but he couldn't do anything to Cain. Then again, Cain was my brother's subordinate. In short, Dàgē is the peak!

*With such a mighty Dàgē, what more could a didi ask for?* I was so giddy that I couldn't stop the corners of my mouth from curling up. Fortunately, Xue Huan's back was blocking me, and it was a good thing that this girl's back was so wide.

The gate of the mansion suddenly opened. A group of people walked out. Among them, there was a familiar face, Tai Wen. He saw the people crowding in front of the gate. At first, he stood there, taken aback. Then, he surveyed the group of elders. His expression relaxed. I guessed it was because none of his people were among them.

He saluted Cain and said, "Lily had me come look for you and ask you to come with us to the central region of the town. She said that I'm responsible for collecting supplies and that you should do a sweep in the area again to avoid anything slipping through the net."

Cain rolled his eyes at him. He impatiently responded, "Sweeping over and over again. Even ants would have been swept away!"

Tai Wen chuckled. "It's better to be careful. Nowadays, even ants could injure people."

Cain said in a strange tone, "If we're even afraid of confronting ants, I think I should go meet God as soon as possible. This earth is way too dangerous!"

The elders did not dare to even squeak. One by one, they dispersed as quickly as a young person.

Tai Wen watched the departing figures of the group of elderly. He frowned and said, "This new group of civilians is terrible. Some of the younger ones just stay in the house all day long. The old ones actually come out to work more, but most of them don't do much and they complain a whole lot more. I heard that they too had to run for their lives to make it here, right? It's really hard to believe they were able to make it this far with that kind of attitude."

I looked at Wen Jianuo. Sure enough, he was a bit flustered. The people that he had brought with him were different from Tai Wen's group who could support themselves. Wen Jianuo's group had been protected by soldiers with guns while Tai Wen's group were just civilians with no guns yet had escaped from the city on top of that, despite the old, young, and injured they had with them. How could their temperament be the same?

Cain shrugged and said, "Boss said to observe them for a while, something about how you have to wait for the waves to recede before you can figure out who isn't wearing pants."

The meaning suddenly dawned on Tai Wen. He nodded and smiled. "That's true. But what are we supposed to do with those who aren't wearing pants?"

Cain shrugged. "How would I know? Wait for the boss to get back."

It didn't matter whether Cain knew or not. Tai Wen and the others stood in the midst of this sea, too, awaiting observation. How we were going to deal with them wasn't something we should tell them beforehand. Cain looked foolish, but he didn't mess up the important things.

"Let's go!" Cain turned his head at me and shouted, "Shuyu, are you using these people? If not, we might as well have them come with me to sweep the town. The faster we can finish, the faster we can come back for dinner."

"Xiao Yu, you're here as well?" Only then did Tai Wen realize I was present. He sighed. "You still like to hide behind others, just a different person this time. Then again, your boyfriend did head into the city. Don't tell me that this time it's... your bestie?"

*Bestie my ass! Has Guan Weijun not told you yet? Xiao Sha isn't my boyfriend! You made Xue Huan's stiff posture even worse!*

I walked out from behind Xue Huan. I scrunched my face and said, "Xiao Sha isn't my boyfriend. That was pretend so that we could talk in close proximity more easily!"

Tai Wen just said, "Really?" He totally didn't believe me. *Fuck, don't tell me even Guan Weijun is actually not convinced?*

I held my forehead. *I don't know why the whole world wants to shove Xiao Sha at me. Did you guys even ask Xiao Sha himself? He currently looks at me with the same gaze he uses on my big brother: full of admiration.*

Tai Wen asked curiously, "Shuyu, you brought so many people over here. Is there something going on here?"

As I was about to open my mouth, Wen Jianuo took a big step forward and said, "A couple of my men hadn't come back after coming here for supplies. I speculated that something must have been up and came over to look at the situation."

Tai Wen's attention was immediately pulled away by Wen Jianuo. "And you are?"

Wen Jianuo introduced himself, "I'm Wen Jianuo, the captain of the newly formed Ice Spears."

Tai Wen also greeted him very warmly, "My name is Tai Wen. I arrived not long ago, so please give me your guidance."



Wen Jianuo nodded, then said chivalrously, "I don't have anything to teach you, but if you need help with anything, just say it. We're a group of soldiers. We don't have anything but strength."

Hearing this, Tai Wen's eyes flickered. He smiled. "No wonder you have such an intimidating presence. We are all just civilians and don't have much strength."

*Really? Just who blew up the gas station then?*

"But we can do some small things. If you have any clothes that need mending, water pipes or electric cables that need fixing, or just cleaning, come find us."

Upon hearing this, Wen Jianuo nodded. "These things are just as vital. Rest assured, we won't let you people work for nothing. How about using food supplies as barter?"

"Of course, there's no problem."

Tai Wen smiled warmly and amiably, but the way I see it, he was a fox through and through. Luckily, Wen Jianuo looked like a rough dude, but on the inside, he was just as much of a fox as Tai Wen!

The two had such a strong presence of mind. They definitely won't be weak in the future. I was actually a bit worried about that, but then I recalled Dàgē's words—he didn't want stupid people, only talented ones. The two in front of me definitely fit that requirement well.

Cain interrupted impatiently, "Enough, enough. Stop with the chitchat already. If Lily sees you guys being so idle, she'll rush out and stab you. Don't blame me for not warning you. Come on, let's go patrol!"

*Patrol, huh.* I didn't feel like going. I was trying to think of an excuse to head back to my room and play with Xiaorong when suddenly, lightning flashed before my eyes. I blinked. I thought I was seeing things, but another flash came, as if we were surrounded by spotlights.

"Over there. There's lightning!" Someone cried out.

I turned my head to look. Lan City was in that direction. Between the buildings, bolts of lightning struck one after another.

The lightning bolts shot up from the ground as opposed to the lightning that usually came down from the sky. This shocked everyone. My mind blanked from shock.

"Shujun?"

## Chapter 4: The Clash of Ice and Lightning

"Shuyu, where you goin'?"

Cain faintly called out from behind me, but I simply couldn't pay attention to anyone else. I was rushing at full speed, my mind filled with only thoughts of Shujun getting in all kinds of crises. *She might be wounded, bleeding, or even...*

I sprinted, ignoring the small voice at the back of my mind warning me that I should remain because there were hardly any JDT members left at the base, and that Dàgē was with Shujun—but then, *why* was she throwing so many lightning bolts?

Although I'd always said that Shujun's ability was frighteningly powerful, her strength was in her fine manipulation of her power. If I had to honestly gauge her power, she wasn't weak but she wasn't that much stronger than the other JDT members either, particularly after their pace of improvement skyrocketed after they truly understood the strength and importance of special powers.

Shujun would have to go all-out to produce such a large cluster of lightning. She wouldn't have done such a thing if she hadn't truly been in danger, because I had warned her over and over again to exert the barest minimum amount of energy to defeat the enemy. You'll never know what kind of aberrant you'll meet around the corner of the next street. One must never exhaust one's energy unless absolutely necessary.

Nevertheless, regardless of how many excuses there were, there was actually only one underlying reason—the person that I care about the most is still Shujun. Even Dàgē is placed at the back, not to mention the others in Jiang Dominion.

I came across many civilians while I ran madly; each and every one of them looked at me in astonishment. If this went on, my pretense would soon vanish into thin air. Using my remaining rationality to force myself to rush to an unoccupied area, I spent a few seconds to kick away my shoes and fling off my outer-shirt.

The outfit was custom-made. Its lining was made of black and shiny fabric; as long as it was crumbled into a ball from the inner side, it would look just like a trash bag. If I were to throw it away at the roadside, no one would want to pick it up.

I was currently dressed in pure white clothes made from butterfly silk. Only the neckline and the side of my body had some decorations.

My right hand lightly touched my cheek, forming an ice mask. Five layers were compressed instantly to reduce the level of transparency in order to conceal my face. I then formed ice blades on the soles of my feet, and swiftly glided far away.

After gliding out of the town, I was lucky to find a sports car immediately. I frantically drove at full throttle to the outskirts of Lan City. The number of abandoned cars had started to increase in this area, so it wasn't a good place for entry. With the loud noise of the car, I could attract and get surrounded by aberrants, which would further delay the journey.

There were lightning bolts flashing from time to time in the far distance. The flashes of lightning were no longer as frightening as the ones at the beginning, but this made me feel even more panicked. *Does this mean that Shujun is no longer able to release such large energy bursts?*

I got out of the car, formed ice blades again, and rapidly glided while disregarding all obstacles in front of me, stepping on the surfaces of various high buildings using the stickiness of the ice. Consuming crystals had drastically increased my body's jumping power, allowing me to jump straight from one building to another. Luckily, Lan City was a megacity with high-rise buildings.

However, there were times when I couldn't get to the next building. Gazing at the place with lightning flashing occasionally in the distance, I hardened my heart, and ignored the height of approximately ten stories beneath my feet. I swiftly ran, jumped out, and formed a thin layer of silk-like ice pieces in midair. They shattered upon being stamped, but they had at least served as a lever for me.

Piece by piece, I made my way over, but I was still gradually falling, and would very soon be unable to reach the next building. *How much longer would I be delayed after this fall? Even if I have expended a lot of time and risked my life to rush into the city, there's no guarantee that Shujun could hold on for so long! She might have already...*

I steeled myself, and further compressed the ice pieces that I was stomping on. I didn't do this in the past because the duration was too short. Standing for longer than even a split second on a piece of ice in

midair would lead to a fall, but during that time, I had to also use the force from stomping on it to propel myself further. There was literally only a split second of time for me to compress the ice. It could also be said that I had to complete the compression from the very moment the ice piece was formed.

The double-layered compressed ice piece still broke when I stamped on it, but it was enough for me to maintain the height. Even if I couldn't move up, I was at least able to sustain the height.

Only now did I realize that the ice piece needed to be sufficiently compressed to serve as a lever. No wonder I hadn't been able to advance higher on the ice pieces no matter how hard I'd tried. I was only now able to barely sustain the height. If I could compress a few more layers, moving up would no longer be difficult.

But, back then, the Ice Emperor had never mentioned this little trick... *Ah! Could it be that he had already regarded compressed ice as normal ice, so he didn't even think of passing on this little reminder?*

After finally getting a hold of this little trick, I became even quicker in moving across and over the high buildings. But I was still not satisfied. If I was a bit stronger, I could directly make a path of ice all over the sky, and would have already found Shujun...

A lightning bolt surged from the ground and sparked electricity, right in front of my eyes. There was no longer anything blocking the way.

I hurriedly looked down to find any trace of my little sister, only to find an unfamiliar man standing at the edge of a huge pit. There was

actually a person lying at the bottom of the pit. I wasn't sure if the person was alive or dead. Fortunately, that body shape and hair color was nothing like Shujun's. *That's a man... It can't be Dàgē, right?*

The man at the edge of the pit lifted his right hand over his head. His palm was actually releasing blue-white lightning that was gradually getting compressed into a ball. As the ball of lightning would very soon be flung down into the pit, my heart lurched. I hastily shouted, "Stop!" and rushed over, but I was still too late to stop him. I could only look on helplessly as the lightning ball dropped into the bottom of the pit, and the body of the unknown person was charred black.

*Could it be Dàgē?*

I charged into the pit. My heart was already half frozen, but the other half still had some rationality. *Dàgē is so strong. He was even the Ice Emperor, one of the strongest elites in the other world. How could he just die like this? It's absolutely impossible!*

*Even if the hair color of the person lying at the bottom of the pit is somewhat similar to Dàgē's, i-it's not like I see Shujun anywhere!*

*Or maybe she has already...*

The mere thought that Dàgē and Xiǎomèi might have suffered something made my heart hurt so much that I was almost unable to breathe. Although I felt that something seemed off, and I was unable to rid myself of that nagging suspicion, I had to first turn this c-corpse over... turn this person over for a better look—

I suddenly saw a flash of lightning in front of my eyes. I was actually unable to react at all, and had only avoided it by relying on my body's instincts that took me out of the pit with a leap. The pit was once more bombarded by countless strikes of lightning.

I lowered my head in a daze. The bottom of the pit was left with only scattered charred remains of the body. You couldn't tell it was a human unless you looked closely. This time, it was no longer possible to recognize the true identity of that charred corpse.

Contrarily, this actually calmed me down. *He couldn't possibly be Dàgē. There's no way that my family's dàgē would die in such a way!*

After calming myself down, I realized that I might have misunderstood something. Shujun wasn't the one who had emitted the lightning; it was this man. I didn't expect that there would be another person beside Shujun who could emit such powerful lightning in the present time.

It was precisely because it was nearly impossible that I had instantly thought of Shujun when I saw the cluster of lightning.

Despite knowing that this was the truth, I still felt lingering fear inside my heart. After all, my arrival had brought about too many changes.

Originally, Dàgē should have been the one to support his whole mercenary troop. Consequently, he would have acquired many experiences, and gone through numerous life and death crises. But everything changed after I recovered my previous life's memories.



Although it had led to Dàgē eating crystals ahead of time, this could have also caused him to lack too many experiences in facing danger.

While Shujun would have... already ceased to exist, right?

I was just afraid of God wanting to take away such a nice little sister, so even though there was very little possibility of this happening, I still felt extremely angry. Lifting my head, I glowered at the man who had impatiently flung around his lightning. He even shot a sudden lightning bolt at me for no reason. I dodged, while not forgetting to strike back with a large ice knife.

"This is... ice?"

The man used lightning to split the throwing knife into two. He looked at the pieces of ice on the ground with slight astonishment. Shortly afterwards, his mouth slightly quirked up in a smirk, and he mockingly said, "It's just ice."

What a *good* person. Just three words, and I already felt like making an ice sculpture out of him. Then let's see if he can still say "*It's just ice!*"

"Why did you stop me?" The man confusedly asked, but he didn't really sound like he cared about the reason.

I pointed at the pit, and angrily demanded, "Why did you attack him?"

The man raised his eyebrows. "You know each other?"

*Of course I don't!* Suppressing my rage with great difficulty, I carefully inquired, "Is he an over twenty year-old man, dressed in a long, black trench coat with a golden pattern, and a gun hanging on his waist?"

The man said in a nonchalant manner, "More or less."

*More or less, my ass!* My heart almost jumped out of my chest. If I hadn't realized that the man was answering with utter carelessness, I would have really been scared to death!

"Answer the question seriously!"

The man smiled instead of getting angered. "Then let's see if you have enough qualifications to make me serious!"

Sensing his hostility, I immediately crafted ice blades on the soles of my feet and froze ice up to my knees to form a pair of ice boots.

There was a mèimei with lightning attribute at home for testing experiments, so my understanding of the lightning ability wasn't shallow. *Ice isn't actually a good electrical conductor. As long as I'm covered with a layer of ice, the injury inflicted by lightning will be lowered by twenty percent.* It doesn't sound like a lot, but sometimes that tiny bit of injury could decide one's life or death.

In the short moment when I was forming the boots, the man didn't idly wait for me to equip myself for battle. His first attack was throwing three fist-sized lightning balls at me. The balls didn't move fast, but gave me a bad feeling. I immediately glided back, far away from those three balls.

From afar, the three balls exploded in an instant, forming a large cluster of lightning. If I hadn't avoided it, I would have suffered numbness all over my whole body by now.

Obviously, there would only be numbness since I had my special ability to protect my body. If it was an average person, they would have at least suffered third-degree burns.

I didn't expect that lightning could be used in such a way; it was basically a hand grenade. Although its speed wasn't very fast, it was more useful than Shujun's lightning whip in dealing with a large quantity of enemies. Just one of those could wipe out a bunch of people. Its high efficiency was simply beyond question.

This man was truly a cut above the rest. His ability in utilizing lightning should be above Shujun's. But I was obviously referring to combat ability. In terms of housework, I'm positive that he wouldn't be able to power the air conditioner while sleeping.

I called out the ice dagger, which was miserably short. You needed to be extremely close up to the enemy in order to inflict damage with a weapon like a dagger. However, it was extremely difficult to get close to a lightning user. Putting aside other uses of lightning, he only needed to spread a web of electricity as a defense to limit my moves, leaving me with only a single option: forcefully breaking through in a head-on match of power against power.

The enemy evidently understood this point. The corner of his mouth quirked up and he released two balls of lightning and let them hover in

mid-air, one in front and one behind him. If I dared to approach him, he'd likely instantly blow them up. Even if it couldn't injure me, it would hinder my movement.

I immediately glided to his side, shooting out knives like they were free of charge. He couldn't actually keep up with my speed, but could somewhat perceive the fluctuation of energies, instantly emitting lightning and knocking down the ice knives.

Still, I didn't actually throw out ice knives every time. Sometimes, I charged up Xiaorong instead, who was hiding under my clothes, and sometimes I was just bluffing. Before I arrived, my opponent had already been fighting for a long time. The ground was littered with charred corpses that weren't just limited to the one at the bottom of the pit. No matter how strong he was, there was a limit to his strength. He'd topple over sooner or later if he continued burning up energy like this.

I was kind of exploiting my enemy's weakness. However, I too had used up quite an astonishing amount of energy for the sake of time, making my way over as if my life depended on it. Plus, this was Lan City. I wasn't even clear about which area I was in, so I shouldn't exhaust all of my strength in this battle.

In fact, I was slightly hesitant. If this was merely a misunderstanding, it seemed unnecessary to fight...

The enemy suddenly flung up his hand. A bloody scratch appeared on my cheek. If I hadn't reflexively evaded, my head would probably have exploded!

He actually pulled out his gun, using bullets to supplement his special ability's weaknesses. Fine, I was currently still afraid of bullets. An instantly formed ice wall wasn't enough to fully block the bullets. Even if it could reduce the force, I'd still get injured, although it wouldn't be a fatal wound.

But I was referring to average guns. The gun that the man was holding on to seemed anything but ordinary! Its outward appearance was clearly that of a pistol, but it was bigger than the average gun by one-and-a-half times. Even the silencer attached to its gun barrel seemed very unusual.

*Was this gun modified after the apocalypse? If it was used before the apocalypse, just how many strong guys actually existed who could handle the recoil force from this kind of gun?*

I dodged the gun, and the bullet pierced through the cement wall, creating a small hole. *This is practically a mini bazooka!*

*He's a gun expert, the same as my family's mercenary troop. This kind of guy is more skilled in shooting than in martial arts. He might have a powerful special ability, but unless he practices martial arts often, it's unlikely that he could effectively combine both skill and ability right upon awakening.*

I had met a few of those kinds of people, but they didn't end up very strong in the end. After all, there were not many true martial arts experts in the modern-day era. Granted that a champion of an athletic competition could fight two or three enemies at once, they could still

get defeated and killed when they encountered a crook whose hands had been stained with blood. Practicing martial arts and killing someone were still essentially two different things.

It was only in the later stage of the apocalypse that there were some renowned experts in martial arts forms. The apocalypse truly did toughen up humans. After countless life and death experiences in the apocalypse, even an office lady could beat the crap out of five grown men without eating crystals if she were to return to pre-apocalyptic times. Like seriously, I'm not bullshitting!

This man was obviously not a martial arts expert, but a gun expert, which was why he had come up with the trick of using lightning as a hand grenade.

It was just like my family's little housework expert, Junjun, who started using the lightning ability for electrical powering. It was the same logic; you could tell someone's innate character from how they applied their ability.

The guy in front of me had most likely already gotten his hands dirty before. *Assassin? Mafia?*

His marksmanship was extremely accurate, but his agility was just so-so and wasn't to the point of being very strong. He was most likely from the mafia.

I had ice walls to hinder the bullets and an incomparably sturdy body from eating crystals, but I still chose to dodge when confronted with a

gun with powerful firepower. Even I would've ended up coughing blood and breaking bones in the face of such strong firepower.

The last time when I had gotten myself seriously injured in Lan City, I was lucky that Xiaorong was clever and had buried me with tree roots before I woke up. Otherwise, I might not even have had the chance to wake up, to say the least.

Compared with his lightning, this man's marksmanship was far more accurate. I'm not even sure how he took aim. He was clearly unable to keep up with my speed, but all of his shots were very accurate. If it wasn't for my strong instincts helping me dodge in time, who knows how many holes my body would have.

The accuracy of a gun expert's instincts was truly frightening. Fortunately, its effects were drastically lowered when it came to lightning. He was probably still not experienced enough with it, and his speed of shooting a gun far exceeded that of emitting his ability. To improve, he would need to undergo long term training.

Even Shujun was a lot faster than this man in emitting lightning. She was only losing out in terms of energy output, agility, and battle instinct, but there was no need to rush that. She could only slowly accumulate energy and battle experiences.

I darted past two bullets, but after he added a web of lightning, I couldn't get any closer than three meters to him. He knew he'd be badly disadvantaged if I were to close the distance, so he repeatedly stepped backward while firing bullets nonstop. Still, he wasn't recklessly firing and every shot was accurately aimed. The reason the

bullets failed to hit their targets, though, was entirely down to me and not him.

I flung out an ice knife while dodging at the same instant, the bullet and ice knife striking together and sparking a dazzling light.

Taking advantage of the dazzling light, I instantly pressed closer toward the man, certain that he wasn't able to see me at all. But his reflexes were too strong; he lifted his gun and aimed precisely at my forehead, even releasing a large amount of lightning.

His battle sense was too powerful, and he could completely read my next steps. Fortunately, I wasn't half bad either. I tilted my head to dodge the muzzle and instantly covered my whole body in layers of ice. Although I couldn't escape unscathed and the lightning both stung and numbed my skin, it was still tolerable.

I jabbed the ice dagger at his chest, but to my surprise, he evaded in the blink of the eye. That speed was on a whole different level to what he had shown up until now. I couldn't help wonder if he had two abilities, with the other one being speed. Or perhaps, his lightning ability could be used to help him speed up?

Shujun hadn't shown this trait so far, but it was also possible that I didn't understand how it could be applied. From the middle to later stages of the apocalypse, people developed entirely different fighting styles even with the exact same special ability.

But in the next heartbeat, he fell back to his original speed. If he hadn't and had continued using that kind of speed to fire at my head



at close proximity, even if it didn't kill me, it'd still deal a serious blow to me.

He didn't seem able to maintain that speed for long and could only use it for a short burst. Otherwise, he wouldn't have let go of such a good opportunity.

Even if he didn't have such fast speed, my distance was too close. Plus, I had thought that this one strike was bound to succeed and had slightly let my guard down. He easily sent out a bullet after dodging, while I only managed to evade by a hair's breadth. The bullet grazed my shoulder. Blood oozed and spurted out. Luckily, I had the layers of ice for protection, so my shoulder blade shouldn't have cracked.

He had hidden his secret, explosive speed. Fortunately, I too had my own hidden trick. After striking with the dagger, two long twigs shot out from my chest.

He hadn't anticipated this at all. He dodged and fired off shot after shot; however, even if he had an extraordinarily strong battle sense and relied on his reflexes, he was only able to move a few steps away, barely avoiding harm to his vital parts. The twigs had still managed to pierce through his arm but were then snapped by a bullet.

*It hurts!*

I inwardly snickered. A tree being able to talk wasn't really much of a big deal in the apocalypse. If Xiaorong were to give birth one day, I might even be able to calmly deliver the baby.

Right now, the man with a hole in his arm could still retreat backwards while casting a huge net of lightning. The deadly net immediately burst open, giving me no time to retreat, and I could only manage to instantly freeze ice against my skin for cover.

*Fuck. Me.* Even with ice as protection, I still felt like I had been cooked medium rare. Lightning really lived up to its reputation, a perfect demonstration of the saying that “the best defense is a good offense.”

Enduring the numbing pain all over my body, I speedily closed some of the distance between us. But here, the lightning was so powerful that it could zap an ordinary person to death immediately, and even I wouldn't be able to shake it off if I advanced any further. So I simply went down on one knee, and sent a carpet of ice rushing straight toward him from my hands touching the ground.

With the earth grounding it, his lightning couldn't completely shatter my ice. I waited until the ice carpet was right before him before shooting out dozens of icicles that were as dense as a thicket.

Startled, he hurriedly drew the lightning back to him and increased its strength. Even then, he couldn't smash all of the ice thorns, and two of them cut past his thigh and calf. Unfortunately, it was his calf that was more seriously injured, so there wasn't much bleeding.

By then, I'd already reached him. Ignoring the extreme numbing pain, I stabbed at his chest with my dagger. He parried my dagger with his gun, instantly holding the two of us in a deadlock. This guy was in no way weaker than me, but unfortunately for him, I had no intention of fighting him head on and kicked sideways at his calf.

*Got him!*

But in my intense focus, I'd completely forgotten about something else. He forcefully twisted his gun, breaking the stalemate, and pointed the muzzle of the gun at me. A bullet shot out...

I forcefully twisted my body at an impossible angle to dodge the shot, then bent at the waist and somersaulted backwards. In an instant, I put some distance between us.

Luckily, I never abandoned training my flexibility and nimbleness. Back when I was Guan Weijun, I hadn't eaten many crystals so my strength was lacking, and I'd evaded countless sure-death situations by relying on my agility. In this life, even if I no longer lost out on strength, I was still unwilling to give up my past battle experiences and continued using flexibility and nimbleness to develop my combat style.

Even the Ice Emperor had given his guarantee and said that I was well honed in my skills. Keep up the good work and there would be great prospects for the future!

When I heard that, I was so overwhelmed with pride! But, the Ice Emperor had added another explanation: the other side of the coin was that I was not very good at fighting with enemies at close combat, and would subconsciously choose to dodge. Even if I was stronger than the enemy, I still wouldn't choose a direct confrontation. Too cowardly. Must be changed!

Thinking back to just now, I had at least resolutely braced myself and rushed toward the lightning webs, even clashing with the enemy's gun using the dagger, forcing a deadlock. *It can be considered as having improved, right?*

The result of the direct confrontation wasn't so bad, though the bullet had grazed my left arm in the end. As one could expect from a heavy firearm, a mere graze had caused me to lose a piece of flesh. If this was before the apocalypse, there would probably be a permanent scar on my arm as big as the rim of a cup. But after the apocalypse, and having eaten a lot of crystals, it was possible to completely recover until there wasn't even a scar left.

If there's anything good about the apocalypse, then it would be the evolution crystals, far better than steroids or antibiotics. There were people who had some misgivings about what would happen to humans after eating so many evolution crystals, but it was very clear what would happen to us if we *didn't* eat crystals. We would get eaten alive by aberrants. Thus, no one would choose not to eat them.

After surviving up to ten years of the apocalypse, I was actually somewhat clear about the aftermath of eating many crystals.

In the end, the humans were no longer human, and the aberrants were no longer aberrant.

"You're pretty strong."

He put away his previous ridicule. His expression looked a lot more serious now.

I sized up the injuries on both sides. My shoulder and arm were grazed by bullets, and my whole body had been electrocuted, stinging with pain and numbness everywhere.

Meanwhile, his major injury was his lower leg with two cuts oozing with blood. And there was another one when we were fighting at close quarters; that kick had clearly landed on him. His lower leg bone should have at least cracked, and could possibly even be broken.

He slightly dropped the muzzle of his gun. Upon seeing this, I hesitated a bit before putting away my battle stance, but obviously, I'd only made myself seem like it. If he really wanted to fight again, then I would be ready anytime!

"Awesome fight!" He raised his eyebrows, and said, "I just don't know why we started fighting."

I frostily said, "With the way the world is, do you honestly think it matters why we started fighting?"

*He doesn't want to fight anymore.* Although I looked like I had heavier injuries, my wounds didn't hinder my movement, and I'd be able to move normally as long as I ignored the pain. But his leg didn't get off lightly either, and damage was done to his bones, so there was no way he could move like he had.

His skill and speed were basically inferior to mine in the first place, and his leg was even injured. The next time I sneak up on him, that would most likely be the death of him!

*He is already an arrow at the end of its flight.*

I was finally able to get a clear view of the state of our surroundings. He hadn't only dealt with just one or two, but probably a bunch of people. It was just that he had originally roasted the surrounding area into a mess, so I hadn't immediately noticed the several scattered, charred remains of bodies.

Granted, I had used my powers to madly rush here, but the opposite side had evidently used up a lot more.

"It's not important." He coolly said, "But you look like you didn't want to continue fighting."

I was speechless. Although the other side purposely twisted the story, as it was obvious that he was the one who really didn't want to continue fighting, it was true that I didn't want to continue the fight. This battle was simply meaningless. Just as I was about to say that I was the one in the wrong...

"I—"

He suddenly held his gun up, and I hurriedly adopted a battle stance. He then hollered, "Over there!"

Confused, I hesitated for a moment. Although I suspected that it was a trap, I had definitely noticed some movement out of the corner of my eye. I instinctively stepped backward and immediately, two holes erupted in the ground where I had just been standing. If I hadn't retreated in time, my feet would have been shot.

*A long-distance firearm with such formidable power—a sniper rifle?*

All kinds of firearms had appeared today. Based on the Jiang family's bad luck, it wouldn't even be strange to see a tank opening fire. *I better get the hell out of here ASAP.*

I ducked behind a pillar and looked over my shoulder. That man was also hiding behind another pillar. We looked at each other, and it was immediately obvious to both parties that neither wanted to fight.

I hesitated for a bit, and spoke to him before getting out of here, "Sorry about today."

He raised an eyebrow at me. "You owe me one."

"...Yeah."

I had no choice but to nod. I only had myself to blame for getting the wrong idea about him. Although I didn't know who his opponents were, it really was none of my business and I was the one who had barged in on him. That said, his rudeness in speech and sudden attack were also one of the reasons for my misunderstanding.

After reaching an understanding, both of us ran in opposite directions. This way, the hidden enemies would have to split up to chase after either side, or we'll have to try our luck on which side the enemy would choose to pursue—*well fuck, I really hate having to rely on luck!*

I sprung up along the wall, and climbed up to the fifth or sixth floor, breaking and entering through the window. The man obviously didn't have the ability to climb up the walls as I did, so he charged into another building. *If the enemies in hiding still choose to chase after me, then, then... the Jiang family is so formidable and powerful, we just have to have a weakness, right?*

After convincing myself like that, I finally felt a lot better.

When I'd dashed into the building, the bullets had smacked into the wall, narrowly missing me. Fortunately, I had been fast enough.

No civilian picking up a hunting rifle could pull off this kind of marksmanship, and not even the mafia could. You'd have to be a professional killer at the very least to have this kind of marksmanship; otherwise, you'd have to be...

*A soldier?*

I knitted my eyebrows, instantly remembering Wen Jianuo and the others. *Have the soldiers already degenerated to the level of randomly opening fire at other humans? Probably not yet?*

As I was mulling over the question, an indistinct sound came from behind and I abruptly turned around. A few human shadows were at the doorway, but before I could tell who they were, they had opened fire. Their guns weren't as good as the other guy's, but they were using selective fire guns and there were a lot of them. Even if one or two guns couldn't put a hole in me, dozens of guns could still turn me into a honeycomb!



I had no choice but to jump out of the window, taking several bullets in my back. When I landed, I became a target for snipers again. I didn't know how many people were hiding inside the large building behind me, and could only brave through the rain of bullets, escaping into the streets and dashing into another large building.

I had actually jumped straight into the enemy's hideout. *This luck—it's simply illogical!*

*It defies all logic!*

Being shot at for no reason pissed me off big time. I ducked into another building and scoped it out to make sure that no enemies were hiding within before I had the peace of mind to finally hunker down and observe the outside situation.

After lying in wait for a while, someone finally appeared. These guys were really cautious and didn't seem like assassins from their numbers. They might actually be soldiers?

I stopped my racing thoughts. No matter who they were, these guys looked anything but ordinary. I might get discovered if I wasn't careful enough. Their number was many and they even had heavy firepower, while I was in a dangerous zone like Lan City and had injuries all over my body. There was no need for me to go head-to-head with them.

With peace of mind, I quietly waited for them to disperse, but ultimately discovered—*they really are soldiers!*

*I mean, fair enough, neither me nor the guy just now seemed like normal civilians, but that doesn't mean you have to hide and snipe at us?*

*Don't tell me they mistook us for aberrants? Hm, it's actually quite possible.* Me and that guy just now didn't seem very human-like as our progression was indeed a bit too advanced.

I scrunched up my eyebrows while watching their movement. There were approximately twenty people. Every one of them was dressed in a complete military outfit, and they seemed to be better equipped than that group of people with Wen Jianuo. Five of them were carrying a long case, probably loaded with a sniper rifle, while about ten others had hand-held repeater firearms with one or two pistols hanging on their waist. They had pockets all over their body, completely loaded with magazines.

Their strong firepower was truly over the top. It was no wonder that aberrants didn't dare to come to them. Aberrants at the current stage have very strong innate intuition, and with no shortage of weak humans, it wouldn't be hard to get their stomachs filled. There was really no reason for them to face off against this bunch of humans.

Aberrants hadn't come to find us when that guy and I were fighting. It was most likely because of this same reason. But if we had fought until we were heavily injured, would a fisherman<sup>1</sup> swoop in to catch both of us?

I was really reckless this time. Even if it was because of my worry about Shujun's safety, for me to come over without covering up my tracks at all might unexpectedly bring about danger...

Weren't these soldiers a living example of it? If not for my fight with that man, we wouldn't have drawn such hostility from them. No way would they open fire if they encountered regular civilians!

Among these soldiers, there was one person who was always standing in front of everyone, looking pretty much like the leader. He had dark bronze skin but didn't seem particularly special. His full set of equipment didn't seem much different from the others, at most only having an extra gun. He was quite tall, but still couldn't be compared to Wen Jianuo who was as tall as a mountain—

Suddenly, he turned around and looked straight toward my position with a frown. Just when I started to feel nervous, he actually shifted his line of sight, as if not having noticed my existence.

That person had several red scars, some dark and some light, stretching from his left forehead to under his eyes. They seemed to be burn scars from an explosion. The wounds weren't mild, so he was probably lucky that he had been able to keep his left eye.

He had deep wrinkles in his forehead and crow's feet around his eyes; you could tell from his face that he wasn't a young man. He was probably around forty. But he might not even be that old. His scars, dark skin color, and wrinkles might have made him look a lot older than his real age.

The man spoke to the two people next to him. But they were too far away and had their voices lowered, so I could only make out the words intermittently whenever they spoke passionately and raised their voices.

"Were those really humans?"

*Well, of course. Genuine and authentic! One even looks very handsome!*

The scarred guy started swearing the moment he opened his mouth, "Motherfucker! The hell's that shit! The next time we see that shit, fuck, get the two of 'em and cut them in half to see what the hell they're made of!"

Insulting someone's mom right from the get-go and swearing furiously in every sentence was probably a force of a habit for him. That said, his blustering and fearless attitude was quite effective on the others—the dozen-odd soldiers relaxed visibly after hearing their commander's explosion of expletives.

"Those were basically monsters..."

"If they were human, how is it possible for them to be so strong?"

"It's a pity that we let them get away..."

Upon listening, I couldn't find any useful information from their conversation, other than their fear toward me and that guy.

*I had actually scared the soldiers!* I once more regretted my impulsive actions. Fortunately, I had remembered to put on a mask; otherwise, I'd have to get reincarnated again to successfully act as a frail and delicate pretty boy.

The scarred guy frowned deeper, as he continued to listen to the person talking beside him. That person had a calm expression on his face and had spoken a lot. The scarred guy even seemed very serious when that person was talking. Unfortunately, he was talking in such a low voice that I couldn't even hear a single word.

Upon listening, the scarred guy's eyebrows formed a wrinkly trench, while the person beside him excitedly agreed, "He Jiu, you're right. We need to keep this a secret! If those old Shangguan bastards found out about those two monsters, who knows what kind of fucking orders they're gonna give us? They might order us to sacrifice our life and limb while not allowing us to touch even a hair of those monsters!"

The moment these words were spoken, the look on everyone's face turned very unsightly... *Wait a second, Shangguan?* My face changed. *Could these guys be from Xiao Sha's family?*

They actually had such powerful firepower. Xiao Sha had mentioned that someone in the Shangguan family had military ties, but he had also mentioned there was an intense internal power struggle. He said something like, "Chenhong, who's pro-military, is getting the upper hand." *Oh, that's it. Could that scarred guy actually be Shangguan Chenhong?*

I looked at the scarred guy and felt like that wasn't the case. From the use of the word "pro-military," even if he was a ranking soldier, he didn't sound like someone who would lead troops running around in the dangerous apocalypse.

Nonetheless, it was clear to me that the guy before my eyes was a seasoned soldier, whether it was due to him leading a group of soldiers into Lan City, or the scars on his face.

All of the soldiers looked at the scarred guy. But he seemed to be thinking so much that he got lost in thought, completely ignoring them. That He Jiu shouted a few times and even raised his voice to the point that I could hear him.

"Commander Tang Liang!"

The scarred guy whose great name did not match his appearance at all finally reacted. He started with a "fuck" before saying, "Tell the lads to get the hell outta here. I knew something was fishy. Let's bail before we get majorly fucked!"

Hearing that, He Jiu immediately obeyed without question, even though the surroundings were serene.

I frowned. *Have I been found out?* Does this Tang Liang have a very strong innate intuition, or does he have some sort of ability in that area? For example, he could have a psychic ability like my family's Auntie who could sense living things. If she hadn't eaten a lot of crystals, she'd simply seem like someone with a slightly stronger intuition.

But this world must really be something if a big hulking guy who swears like a sailor has psychic abilities...

In the few seconds that I was engrossed in deep thought, these soldiers had already started to retreat. I weighed up on whether I should give them a hard time to get revenge for just now, and kill two birds with one stone by cutting down some of the Shangguan family's men and even out the numbers a bit. If they really wanted to fight us, they could give us a hard time just using a battle of attrition with their numbers.

But before I could act, all the manhole covers on both sides of the road suddenly blasted into the sky. A black tidal wave gushed out, and I had to take a closer look before realizing that these were the horned mice that I had encountered when first entering Lan City!

These soldiers didn't know what the black tide was. They frantically fired to try and stop the black tidal wave, but it had no impact. To be more precise, they killed a lot of them but there were so many more that were still alive.

The horned mice rushed past the soldiers who were firing like crazy, their eyes bloodshot. They fired as if the bullets were free and unlimited.

But something was wrong. The current horned mice were easily frightened, so loud shooting sounds should be enough to scare them away. To be more exact, these mice shouldn't have appeared in the

first place. The battle between me and the lightning guy, or the later loud shooting sounds were both enough to make them go into hiding.

*Something's super screwy!* When the horned mice swarmed past the soldiers, they didn't even bother to tear off morsels of flesh, as if they were in such a hurry that they didn't have any time to eat...

The most urgent situation in the apocalypse is—running for one's life!

Right as I realized what was going on, the scene of those soldiers running for their lives while not forgetting to fire back unfolded before my eyes. They would occasionally pull at their comrades to prevent them from falling into the horned mice tide and getting gnawed full of holes.

I suddenly remembered the basement of the MORC, and those soldiers lying all over the ground, especially Blackie. I had originally thought of taking him with me. Who would have imagined that, no sooner had I turned around and the person was already dead...

"Run! Something bigger is coming!" When I heard this, I realized I had shouted before my brain had even kicked into gear.

Those people were stunned. However, regardless of whether they believed me or not, they were completely stuck in place and couldn't step anywhere, as horned mice were everywhere beside their legs. If their feet were to stamp on the ground, they would likely hit a horned mouse and get their skin torn off, and after taking a few steps, they might not even be able to walk any longer.



My saint complex had already kicked in, so I might as well complete the act. I rushed straight out and froze over a large path of ice.

"Run! Hurry up and run!"

Everyone looked at me in shock. The scarred guy, Tang Liang reacted a lot better than the others. He fiercely fired at the ground filled with horned mice, attracting the soldiers' attention, then furiously roared, "Still not running? You wanna wait to get fucked?!"

The soldiers snapped out of it and immediately jumped onto the ice path. One person even almost stumbled, but quickly regained his feet then started sprinting madly.

I suddenly felt a bit regretful. They were soldiers with such a good foundation. If the Shangguan family really had ill intentions toward the Jiang Dominion, then this action of mine was the same as letting the tiger return to the mountain. While these guys were on top of the ice path, I'd only need to use a trick or two to throw them straight into the swarm of horned mice...

But in the end, I still couldn't bring myself to attack. After all, no matter how much we fought among ourselves, wasn't there only one human nation that survived to the end?

Even if I killed all of my enemies and became an existence like the Ice Emperor, humanity would only have three of the strongest elites and we would still be living in a difficult world after ten years of the apocalypse. Most importantly, there was an unknown crisis after ten years...

*Maybe if I saved more people, a few elites might emerge from them?*

While I was hesitating for a moment, those soldiers had already run quite a distance away. They were pretty fast at running away. If I didn't attack now, then I wouldn't need to attack at all... *then so be it!*

I took a deep breath. *If the Shangguan family really wants to fight us in the future, then bring it on! Sending someone to become food for aberrants, even helping to increase the aberrants' strength, is something I really can't do!*

That Tang Liang suddenly lagged behind the other soldiers. He didn't speed up to escape, but paused his footsteps and turned to look at me with a fierce-looking face. If I hadn't known that it was impossible, I'd have really thought that he wanted to turn back to kill me.

"Behind you!"

In an instant, alarm bells started ringing wildly in my head. Without even turning, I forcefully leaped to the side as a huge, long, linear, black shadow brushed past me, grazing my arm.

After evading it, I looked at my arm. There were red and swollen streaks—it was evidently poisonous. I then lifted my head.

*This is... a nine headed...*

I nearly blurted out “dragon,” but I really wasn’t unlucky to the extent that even a legendary creature had appeared. *This is probably... an earthworm?* It looked like a multi-headed earthworm, at least.

Half of the earthworm had rushed out of the sewage hole. Its body was a bit bigger than the manhole. Its plump skin was dripping with transparent mucus, each and every one of its segments folded. Its anterior diverged into several more “tails” which was slightly thinner than the body part. Its posterior had no heads and was simply one round end, but it was actually wiggling around just like a headless neck moving on its own.

*The fuck, even a snake looks cuter than that!*

But there was no limit to how disgusting the apocalypse could get. This thing yawed open its jaws, which were bigger than its body, and the mere sight of its two rows of densely packed teeth gave me goosebumps. It didn’t matter whether this thing was a snake, an earthworm, or a great white shark—the most important part was that one of the heads had suddenly stretched out about seven to eight times in length until its skin was stretched taut and smooth. It took a large bite of the horned mice then instantly shrank back. There were the sounds of crunching and chewing, as blood spurted out of the corners of its mouth.

At this moment, another head suddenly shot out, astonishingly fast and nimble like a snake. I twisted my body, but to my surprise, it followed with a twist of its neck at a ninety-degree angle. The densely packed, sharp teeth were quickly closing in on me. Unable to evade

again, I could only stretch out a hand to slap its face away, and used the force to propel myself the other way.

A stab of pain came from my hand. I looked to see that it was red, swollen, and disgustingly covered in mucus.

I quickly froze ice over my hand. As the cold numbed the pain, I flicked my wrist, throwing off the mucus and the ice layer. My slap to its face seemed to have ignited its anger as all of the heads turned to look toward me, even though I couldn't really make out whether or not it had eyes.

The heads pounced over all at once. There was no way I could dodge the attack so I simply formed a large ice wall. The heads smashed apart the wall. The first few heads that had rammed into the wall seemed dented and writhed on the floor, seemingly in pain.

Taking advantage of the window when the heads had knocked themselves silly, I rushed over and directly chopped off those few indented heads with my ice dagger. They weren't hard to cut—its outer shell didn't seem very hard and while it was tough, I could still cut through with my ice knives.

*Should I leave, or take this thing's crystal?*

While I was still hesitating, the earthworm abruptly shot into the air. It squeezed its whole body out of the sewer, even splitting open the manholes to make a huge hole. Its body gushed endlessly from below, and its proportions were nothing like the exposed upper part...

*So the part connected at the base of those heads isn't the body but is still a part of its neck.* Its full form was like a huge tree branching out endlessly from the bottom to the top. It had only exposed the very tips of its branch, while its real body was completely buried inside the sewer, and it only exposed its true self after I had thoroughly pissed it off.

Calling it a nine-headed earthworm was an insult. There were at least ninety-nine heads standing straight up like snakes, as if Yggdrasil were standing before my eyes.

*No wonder the horde of horned mice had been running so fast that they couldn't even bother with a meal!*

All of the ninety-nine heads looked toward me and grinned, exposing its sharp and dense teeth... *Shit!*

I formed ice blades on the soles of my feet, broke into a run, and glided away. Behind me, countless giant jaws lined with sharp teeth were in mad pursuit, and an enormous body steamrolled over everything in the streets...

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> “**fisherman**”: This is from the idiom 鷸蚌相爭，漁翁得利. A sandpiper and a clam get into a fight, while a fisherman comes and catches both. It tells of two parties fighting each other, while a third party benefits.

## Chapter 5: Danger Lurks Around Every Corner of Lan City

I was squatting in a triangular shadow beneath the escalator. My whole body was covered with smelly blood. This was the result from just now when I'd dashed into a large hall that was covered with fresh blood and rotting flesh. The hellish place was actually heaven to me as I had immediately rolled around on the floor.

And just like that, the Yggdrasil Earthworm slithered back and forth on the streets for a while before reluctantly leaving.

Having been relentlessly pursued, I had attempted to strike back from time to time, but there were just too many factors—the heads were dreadfully fast, and they numbered too many. They were pretty much unavoidable. If the heads hadn't been slowed down by its enormous body, I would have already been swallowed into its stomach.

However, that Yggdrasil Earthworm was still very fast despite being slowed down. It moved much like a snake would, though I really had no idea what it had transmuted from. I had never heard stories of this kind of thing in my past life either.

I never imagined that Lan City already had such a horrifying aberrant. As expected of one of the three most dreaded cities in the later stages of the apocalypse. My reincarnation had allowed me to learn so much in advance, like knowing about the evolution crystals, but which of the aberrants in Lan City hadn't been devouring humans tirelessly upon coming to life?

I couldn't counterattack and had almost failed to escape. If I hadn't been relentlessly running into buildings to hinder its movement, on top of the rotting flesh masking the smell of my body, my corpse would have been torn into ninety-nine pieces!

Upon hearing the rattling sounds of the Yggdrasil Earthworm growing fainter, my body relaxed completely. I felt pain and numbness all over my body. The leg that originally hadn't received much injury had been bitten twice. If Xiaorong hadn't brandished his twigs to scare the enemy from time to time, the injuries on my thigh would not have been limited to only these two. However, it had resulted in a lot of Xiaorong's twigs getting snapped, leaving him clinging for life.

I cut off the ends of my pants to bind up my thigh's injury. Wrapping unclean fabric around it actually caused stabs of pain, but I had no other option. Moving around in a large city while dripping blood wasn't a good option either.

Even after wrapping up the wound, noises could still be heard outside—it was the sound of low, threatening growls. I had a rough idea inside my mind. Resigned, I could only form a knife with my hand and step out of the shadows with no other choice.

Ten dogmen had surrounded me. You really can't fool a dog's nose. You wouldn't be able to hide from them even with rotten flesh covering your entire body. They hadn't shown themselves until now, probably due to their fear of the Yggdrasil Earthworm. As long as it was around, other aberrants wouldn't dare to move at all.



As expected of aberrants in a first class city, these dogmen were one and a half times the height of a human. They had a dog's head and legs with a slender, human body. Only its thighs were especially thick and solid. If you got kicked by that, a broken rib was entirely possible.

Compared with this bunch, the previous dogmen at the outskirts of Zhongguan City were simply Chihuahuas.

When I stepped forward, these dogmen seemed to sense that their current prey was a bit of a challenge. However, no sooner had they retreated than it was my turn to retreat. Those ten had merely served as the tip of the iceberg, as there were more dogmen stepping out of the shadows. A single glance already revealed fifty to sixty, and some of them might still be hiding in the dark.

*The Jiang family's luck! I was so angry that I started laughing. Even if I finish off these dogmen, who knows how many more are covetously eyeing me out there?*

I had really underestimated Lan City. I had claimed that I was going to take down Lan City and had even deluded myself about Yu City. Yet who would have thought that I might unexpectedly die here for no reason? I might as well turn back and duke it out with that Yggdrasil Earthworm. At least dying by the mouth of a terrifying aberrant would be better than being chased to death by a bunch of small fry!

But I didn't want to die. In my past life, I had lived for ten years without knowing what I was living for. Dying wasn't much of a pity. In this life, I didn't want to die no matter what!

I stomped my foot down and a path of ice sped toward the ten dogmen. Icicles then immediately shot out from the ground, impaling two dogmen who failed to dodge in time straight through the chest. Their limbs twitched, indicating that they were still alive but were no longer a threat. However, the remaining ones only suffered minor injuries.

That attack wasn't enough to intimidate them, though. I was in such a bad situation that even dogs could see it. This was literally "if the tiger comes down the mountain, he would be insulted by dogs!"

Forming the ice dagger, I readied myself for a fight. *Forget dozens of dogmen, even hundreds of them wouldn't be able to make me surrender without a fight!*

In the following battle, I did not strike often and was practically only using stabs, each stab hitting its target. The pain in my body and the exhaustion of my power only allowed me to use the barest of strength to kill my enemies. I grew smoother with every kill, as if the ice dagger had become a part of me, while my body only acted as an extension of the blade. *If only the weapon in my hand was a long spear...*

Suddenly, I felt a burst of coldness in my right arm. I got distracted, and a dogman managed to bite my shoulder. Fortunately, Xiaorong was quick to support me by stabbing into the guy's eyes, not letting him bite into me too hard.

"The Ice Emperor Spear!"

Piercingly cold air gathered around my arm, but there was still no trace of the long spear. Nevertheless, the cold aura was enough to make the dogmen pause in their footsteps, and some of them even slowly retreated...

*This time, I might really be able to call out the long spear...*

A long howl suddenly echoed through the surroundings. As soon as they heard the sound, the dogmen charged at me as if they'd gone crazy. No longer having any time to check whether the Ice Emperor Spear was appearing or not, I could only use the ice dagger to meet the enemies head-on.

Despite heavy casualties, the dogmen still wouldn't fall back. *Something's wrong!*

But no matter how loud the alarm in my mind was, I didn't have enough physical and mental energy to bother with anything else. *Just these endless dogmen are enough to wear me down to my death. Just how many are there?*

*Why do they still refuse to withdraw?*



"Those dogmen nearby are so troublesome. They won't actively attack when there's a lot of humans, but they would definitely surround a lone human. Why won't Xia Zhengu exterminate them? He said something about them being our natural barricade, but what kind of a barricade eats people?"

"That's just an excuse. Your boyfriend just doesn't dare to kill them, but he doesn't want to tell the truth, either."

"Doesn't dare to kill them?"

"That bunch of dogmen has a leader. We saw him from afar, and he was *awfully* tall..."



Leaning against the wall, my vision went black for a few seconds, but fortunately, I instantly recovered my senses when I stabbed my thigh with the ice dagger. A huge shadow appeared in front of me. His appearance was pretty much the same as the dogmen at his side. He was just much taller and sturdier and was at least three meters in height. That head looked more like a wolf's than a dog's.



"All of us call that guy—Wolfman."



The Wolfman grinned, exposing his long canine teeth. If I got bitten by that, I'd definitely ended up getting punctured.

Patting my chest, I muttered, "Xiaorong. Sorry, can you still go on? I need you..."

An affirmative yet weak reply sounded in my mind. I was very distressed and almost told him to make a quick escape. But with dogmen surrounding us, Xiaorong would be unable to escape, so I ultimately didn't blurt it out.

The Wolfman strode over like a king. I straightened my body and tightly gripped the ice dagger, determined to fight to the death. It was just a pity that I still couldn't call out the Ice Emperor Spear...

However, the Wolfman suddenly halted his steps, abruptly looked toward the large doorway, and snarled in a low growl.

I was startled and followed his line of sight. Only then did I notice that there were several silhouettes there. But with their backs against the source of light, I couldn't see them clearly.

A mantis stalks a cicada, unaware of the finch behind it. I had always been perfectly fine previously, and hadn't encountered much danger, causing me to lower my guard. This time, only after getting injured, did I realize that there were dangers lurking around every corner, awaiting me.

It seemed that the aberrants all knew better than me. Getting injured in Lan City was something far from good. No one wanted to be the first to provoke me. They were all waiting for me to get injured on my own and become a delicious morsel of meat.

*Dàgē, I'm sorry. I really was too reckless this time. You have to take good care of Shujun...*

*Bang!*

*Bang, bang!*

*Bang, bang, bang!*

My eyes widened. The numerous loud gunshots made it almost impossible to hear anything. Only the sounds of dogmen yelping could be heard occasionally, as the heavy firepower filled the sky with smoke and dust. A figure then slowly approached me. *That's definitely a human! Could it be the soldiers from the Shangguan family just now? Is this considered "a good deed always pays"?*

"Why do you always get hurt so badly?"

I was stunned. *It's actually a woman's voice? No, no, this is... this is...* I was almost in utter disbelief. My whole body unconsciously relaxed, and I fell to the ground on my butt. I didn't even have the strength to maintain the ice dagger, letting it return to the tattoo on my wrist.

I couldn't resist smiling and asked in reply, "Why are you always there to save me when I get hurt?"

A familiar, slim figure—Jin Feng—walked forward and squatted down in front of me. Her mouth quirked a smile that was not quite a smile.

"You can still crack jokes? Looks like you aren't hurt as badly as last time."

I couldn't help stealing a glance. The weather was so cold, but there were actually two unfastened collar buttons. *I can see cleavage!*

Immediately afterwards, I was given a whack on the head. *Such familiar pain. I have the feeling that I'll soon get used to getting smacked on the head.*

She raised her eyebrows. "If you can check me out, then your injuries must be pretty light."

"My injuries aren't as bad as the last time, but I've used up all my strength and feel even more tired," I bitterly said, after which I was dizzy and felt throbbing pain in my head. My vision blacked out intermittently. "Actually, I'm about to pass out. Can I faint? Ah, ah, ah, I'm really gonna faint—"

A brief "then just faint" reached my ears. Although the voice belonged to a woman, her voice was somewhat deep with a hint of magnetism, making people feel particularly at ease.

I was about to lie down on the floor, hoping to avoid the tragic fate of hitting the ground face-first after fainting. But instead, I got swept up bridal-style by someone.

On one hand, I inwardly felt embarrassed, like "this is wrong." On the other hand, I felt safe, and it was also very comfortable, especially with how big and soft the thing squashing my left cheek was. I also seemed to smell a nice scent. *Surely, this isn't an illusion made up by my dirty mind!*

"Not fainting yet?" Jin Feng said icily, "Neither fainting nor marrying, yet you dare to bury your face into my chest? You wanna die?"

"Fainting, I'll faint this instant!"

Obediently following her orders, I completely relaxed, my vision went dark, and I passed out immediately.



Upon waking up, I was confused for two seconds before instantly recalling what had happened. I quickly looked around. Jin Feng was nowhere to be seen, but there was a very familiar-looking thin, dark-skinned youngster on the sofa. It took me a while to remember him. "Ben?"

The dark-skinned youngster put down his magazine, walked over, and said with a raised eyebrow, "Heh, didn't expect to see you again. You actually didn't die out there. What a pity."

"Eh? Did I do something to offend you?"

Ben said with a cold smile, "You got free food, free drinks, and even slept with Feng-jiě for free but still ran away at the end?"

To put it briefly, that was kind of right. But there were four words that I could not admit to! I quickly clarified, "I didn't sleep with Jin Feng. I really didn't!"

Ben raged, "I mean sleeping next to her! If you actually dared to sleep with her and then run away, you'd be thrown into an oil drum, have it filled with cement, and get submerged into the ocean! You think you'd still be lying here?!"

"I swear I won't sleep with her!" I hurriedly vowed. This wasn't so hard. Even though the me in my current life was a bit horny, I had at least



been a woman in my past life. *Surely, I'll be able to restrain myself and won't get seduced by female charms... right?*

"Eh, screw that, you think you can't sleep with her?" Ben slapped my shoulder hard enough that I grimaced in pain. He then said with a meaningful tone, "You *can* sleep with her, once you're married. Then not only will you be safe from the ocean, I'll even call you jiěfu. Watcha think, not bad huh?"

I lowered my head, not daring to speak. If I simply let myself be married off like this... *Wait, that's not it, it should be simply "taking a wife" like this.* If Dàgē and Xiǎomèi didn't go crazy from this, it would be—*Eh, remembering Dàgē who has been urging me to get a love life in the apocalypse and Xiǎomèi who had instantly sold out her Dàgē, they might very well be happy that I'm getting myself married off at eighteen... Bleh! I mean "taking a wife" at eighteen!*

Ben said with discontent, "Tsk. Feng-jiě's so nice to you, so watcha hesitating for? It's different if you aren't interested, but you're clearly very into her. The moment Feng-jiě appears, your eyes are glued to her body!"

I said with a wry smile, "But I'm only eighteen!"

Ben instantly flared up and snapped, "So you think Feng-jiě is too old for you?"

I quickly explained, "No, I'm just saying I'm still too little."

Ben went "oh" and said with sympathy, "Little isn't great, but anyway, Feng-jiě doesn't have any expectations about that!"

*...Why are you looking down there? I meant I'm little in age, you bastard!*

"Stop staring!"

Ben said with a wide grin, "Don't worry, I didn't look. Both times, it was Feng-jiě who personally gave you a bath and changed your pajamas."

*Dammit, glancing at her chest a few times is nothing. She has already seen me in all my glory!*

*Firstly, my younger sister inspected me for "that thing," then Jin Feng even scrubbed my body...*

*I took a deep breath. I'm a guy. Who cares about chastity? Getting seen naked by a woman should be to my advantage!*

*Calm down, calm down.* After justifying myself with these few sentences, I then requested Ben to pour me a glass of water, and he acted accordingly. This left me feeling very relieved. It looked like my previous escape hadn't caused too much trouble.

Ben handed over the glass of water, snorted twice, and said, "You slept for a day, so you must be starving, right? But even if you are hungry, you still gotta keep on waiting. Feng-jiě said to wait for her to bring food. So just wait here, and no sneaking food!"

I obediently complied, but the next second my stomach failed to live up to my expectations and started growling.

Watching in delight over my misfortune, Ben said, "Feng-jiě just left with Jin-gē to meet with their underlings. So you can just sit here and be hungry. It's your fault you're not big sis's husband. I'm not letting some nobody like you sneak a few bites."

*Left with Jin-gē for a meeting... Hold it! Jin Feng's big brother... isn't he the Thunder God, Jin Zhan?!*

Greatly alarmed, I quickly asked, "What are you guys doing here?"  
*What happened to the Thunder God staying in Zhongguan City? What did you guys come to Lan City for?*

Ben nonchalantly explained, "Jin-gē is leading us to conquer territory. Just Zhongguan City doesn't count for anything. If we're going to conquer, then we have to conquer the biggest one!"

The corner of my mouth twitched. I was amused. *So everyone just happened to take a fancy to Lan City unanimously?* Aside from the Shangguan family, we now had a Thunder God too.

I'm ninety-nine percent certain that it was Jin Xiaoyue's idea. The northern Zhi City was so terrifying that no one dared to go there, so we're only left with Lan City and Yu City. Among these, Lan City is slightly closer to Zhongguan City, and it's also farther away from the water than Yu City. Upon comparison, it's truly the best option out of the three large cities.

In my previous life, I had sometimes heard about marine creatures climbing ashore to attack coastal cities. Even though I hadn't heard news of the three large cities getting invaded, any person who had experienced the apocalypse would choose to stay away from the seaside.

I didn't know how strong marine creatures and aberrants were, but they were pretty alien to me. I had exactly zero idea about their form or abilities. Compared to terrestrial life forms, where you could at least guess what they were like, no one had any desire to encounter marine life forms.

Among the twelve strongest elites, one of them was a marine creature who even had a very beautiful nickname, "The Mermaid."

However, the only thing I knew about it was the nickname. I had paid attention to this elite simply because I specifically asked the others whether or not there was a female among the twelve strongest elites. They told me that there was a mermaid, but the gender was unknown as it was merely a title.

Suddenly, a noise came from Ben. He took out a wireless transceiver from his waist and walked to the window to talk.

He spoke a few words, then turned around, and asked, "Xiao Yu, Fengjiě is asking if you can come to the dining hall to have a meal?"

*Come to the dining hall?* I blinked and quickly agreed to it. I had basically used up too much of my ability, and my whole body felt weak.

Although my injuries weren't light, they didn't reach my bones. They were all painful, superficial wounds. While it was painful, it was still bearable. Walking around shouldn't be a problem.

*Besides, if there's a chance to see how strong the Thunder God's current men and base are, I'd drag myself over even if my legs were broken! Everyone is aiming for Lan City now, so we're... competitors?*

I hesitated for a bit and remembered that I had first been hunted down by the Yggdrasil Earthworm, then dogmen had continuously swarmed me, with the Wolfman showing up at the end to wrap things up—these were the results of me greatly underestimating Lan City. If Jin Feng hadn't saved me, I might have really lost my life for some inexplicable reason. Now *that* would drive both Dàgē and Xiǎomèi crazy for sure.

There was also the Shangguan family that was eyeing the large city covetously. I was not even sure about their stance. Although I had saved a bunch of their soldiers, just this reason alone wasn't enough for me to expect goodwill from them. After all, the Shangguan family that Xiao Sha had mentioned was anything but good.

Or perhaps, the Thunder God and us aren't actually competitors... but allies?

"Go wash up." Ben patted my shoulder and said, "I'll get you a change of clothes. It's your first time meeting with your in-laws, so make sure to groom yourself nicely!"

Well, that's... *Wait a sec! Meet what?*

Seeing my frightened look, Ben consoled me, "No need to be afraid. Although Jin-gē's got a scary reputation and is pretty scary himself, you have Feng-jiě, right? She won't allow Jin-gē to touch you. At the very least, he won't beat you to death. So don't worry."

*Goddamnit, don't say such scary words with that sympathetic face! Who is this "Jin-gē"? That's the Thunder God, okay! He might leak electricity and zap me to death in a fit of anger!*

"Go wash up." Watching with a quiver of delightful schadenfreude, Ben said, "That face of yours is the greatest trump card. Quick, make it look a bit more handsome. Jin-gē himself likes beautiful women, so it's not surprising that Feng-jiě also likes handsome boys."

I was truly having mixed feelings about getting called a "handsome boy" by a fourteen year old youngster. Considering that I could only rely on my face, I simply got off the bed and obediently entered the bathroom to make myself presentable. I took off the pajamas. The thinly layered, half-transparent Xiaorong was still underneath it. I quietly called out to him through my mind for a moment, but there was no response. He seemed to have sunk into a deep sleep.

It was impossible for Jin Feng to not have noticed Xiaorong, since she had already changed me out of my clothes. Although Xiaorong was a bit strangely shaped, he shouldn't be very conspicuous in the apocalypse. If someone were to ask, then I would just say that he was armor which I had made by skinning the shell of a certain aberrant. That would likely pass as a good explanation.

I took a good wash, even conscientiously combing my hair until it was smooth and slick. My hair had already grown past my shoulder blades. After combing my hair straight back, the long, soft, and shiny hair fell past my shoulders—*Fuck, watching this makes even me unsure whether I'm a man or a woman.* I simply tied it up in a ponytail, barely making up some manliness.

When I came out of the bathroom, Ben handed some clothes over and said, "Feng-jiě says that your clothes were dirty, torn, and even stinky! It couldn't even pass as a cleaning rag. So she simply threw them away. Here, wear this."

My clothes made from butterfly silk were simply thrown away... *Well, it was already covered in rotten flesh and blood. I would feel haunted if I had to wear them again. Fine, just throw it away.*

I was lucky to have made many sets of it all at once. At that time, I knew I'd surely waste a lot—wasting one in every battle—it was basically a disposable battle outfit. Fortunately, I had previously brought home enough fabric.

After putting on the clothes, I finally realized that it looked very similar to the previous t-shirt, vest, and jeans I had worn. The only difference was that the pants were thicker, the top was a long-sleeved shirt, and the vest was insulated with soft and warm down feathers.

Jin Feng's thoughtfulness made me feel like I was a horrible man for not giving her my hand in marriage—*this won't do. I already promised the Ice Emperor, no puppy love within the next two years!*

Ben was mending his knife at the side. "Feng-jiě knows that you like wearing these. Every time we go searching for supplies, she would first pick out this kind of clothing and take them."

My face clouded over. In order to avoid accidentally marrying myself off out of sheer guilt, I could only change the topic.

"Where's the dining hall?"

Ben grumbled, "Heartless guy." Then he said, "It's this way."

Walking out of the room, I instantly understood where I was. *This is definitely a five-star hotel!*

Red carpet spread along the long, wide hallway. Paintings that I didn't understand but thought were incredible hung on the walls. The decorative mirrors on both sides had been polished until they shone, except there were a few irksome bloodstains on the surfaces.

I followed Ben and stepped into the elevator, saying, "This is a hotel?"

Ben gave an affirmative "mm," and said, "Jin-gē always stayed in this hotel whenever he came here."

*You stayed here before the apocalypse, and you still want to stay here after the apocalypse. Those with men, firepower, and supplies had the means to be willful!*

"This isn't the downtown area, right?"



My face grew serious. In that case, I had better bundle Jin Feng up and run away with her.

"It's not." Ben explained, "Our business is the type that can't be shown in public. Staying in the city center would take us too far from the suburbs. How are we supposed to handle business deals then?"

Hearing that, I finally calmed down. The Thunder God was truly not a fool.

Ben seemed to despise my timidity. He snorted and said, "There's no need to be afraid of anything. Feng-jiě will protect you."

I nodded. *That's true, she has saved me twice already. It's not a lie to call her my Lady Luck.*

Ben stared at me, and I looked back at him, eyes blinking.

He asked, "You're not unhappy?"

Stumped, I answered the question with a question, "Unhappy about what?"

"Unhappy about having to depend on Feng-jiě to save you!"

*I have someone to save me. Why would I be unhappy?* I shook my head and said, "I'm happy. If Feng didn't save me, I would have died twice already. How can I *not* be happy?"

Ben nodded with satisfaction, and even remarked, "Feng-jiě has a really good eye. The little man that she fancied is clever and clearly understands his role."

*Well shit, I'm at least older than you!*

Going down to the second floor, the elevator opened and noises could instantly be heard. There were quite a few people around with more than half of them being men. Each and every one of them seemed very fierce and imposing.

Although my family's mercenaries didn't look any less intimidating than these people, they definitely lost in numbers. Additionally, the soldiers that joined afterward had been running for their lives for a long time like stray dogs and had had little time to settle down. Their spirit was somewhat lacking, and their strength was a cut below these people's. However, their profession had been a fighting one since the start. With their foundation, they'd be able to catch up in no time and would definitely be even more disciplined than these people before me!

We may have lost in numbers, but we weren't going to lose in discipline. *When I get back, I'm gonna stop being a shut-in and drill my family's mercenaries and soldiers to death even if it's freezing cold!*

"Don't worry!" Ben said while walking confidently, "We are all people of the Jin family. If they don't obey Jin-gē, then they listen to Feng-jiě. Even the top two guys under Jin-gē wouldn't dare to show disrespect to Feng-jiě."

Once Ben uttered the names of “Jin-gē” and “Feng-jiě,” the surroundings instantly fell into a strange silence. Everyone turned to look at us and almost started drooling when they looked at my face. It had been a long time since I last saw such undisguised, lecherous gazes. As expected of the mafia, they weren’t even bothering to cover it up.

“The hell you looking at?!” Ben’s face turned dark. Irritated, he shouted, “This is Feng-jiě’s man. If anyone dares to ogle him, I’ll dig out your eyeballs!”

With that shout of his, the number of people watching had increased even more. Originally, there were only a couple of them drooling, but now, even those that seemed strong had turned to size me up.

“This the guy Feng-jiě fancies?”

A man with a knife-wound scar walked over. The scar stretched across the man’s face from the left side of his forehead down to the right side of his chin. The marks weren’t the kind of thin and fine strokes like the work of a red pen, but were instead lumpy and uneven, a deep, dark red.

*I bet you weren’t able to get a job with that face before the apocalypse. One can tell at a glance that it’s a knife-wound. What normal person would dare to hire this big shot?*

“This is Feng-jiě’s subordinate—the commander!” Ben assisted me with an introduction. “His name is Lin Qi. You can just call him Scar.”

"Hi, Scar-gē. I'm Xiao Yu." Unsure of what to say, I simply gave a brief introduction. Although I didn't know how old the other person was, it was correct as long as I used gē for the men and jiě for the women!

Scar barked a laugh and said with a smile, "This kid's got manners."

Ben nodded. "Xiao Yu has quite a good character."

I was a bit speechless. *Ben, don't you think it's very weird for a junior high school kid like you to be talking like this?*

Scar eyed me up and down, asking with slight disbelief, "Heard you traveled alone to look for your fam'ly? What kinda power you got?"

Ben actually helped me out while I was struggling to answer. He gave Scar a meaningful look and said in a low voice, "Don't be so nosy. Feng-jiě doesn't want the others to know his background to prevent him dying for no reason."

Scar nodded with understanding. "Tell Feng-jiě to keep an eye on him. With looks like that, just one careless moment and he might get taken and locked away to be toyed with."

Ben patted his chest and declared, "Feng-jiě ordered me not to take even one step away from him."

"Then where're you taking him?" Scar asked with a frown. "Don't take him out if it's not important. We just got some new recruits, so things are still messy."

Ben shook his head, replying, "Feng-jiě said that too. But Jin-gē and the others want to see him, so I'm taking him there."

Scar was very surprised. "Jin-gē actually wants to see him?"

Ben honestly replied, "Seems like the Madam and Missus want to see him."

*Shit, so I'm really going to meet the in-laws? I'm okay with Jin Zhan, but this is clearly leading up to meeting the mother-in-law!*

Several beads of cold sweat dripped down, but I didn't plan on going back upstairs. *This is my chance to check on that Jin Xiaoyue. As for mother-in-law... cough cough! I mean, the mother of the Jin family, I'll just have to take things as they come. Since I was young, I've always been an irresistible "people magnet." Believe me, I might even win over the in-la... the senior generation!*

Scar roared, "Then hurry up! The hell you hanging around for!? You gonna let Madam and Missus wait? Jin-gē's gonna skin ya!"

"Chill man. Feng-jiě said just now to meet up in half an hour. We still have five minutes."

Despite saying that, Ben hurriedly took me to the dining hall. There were even more people here, but it was contrarily quieter. It wasn't completely silent, but compared to the hall just now, the sounds of speaking were nothing more than murmurs, as if no one dared to speak too loudly.

The dining tables were small and square, except for the several large round tables at the back which were almost fully occupied. Everyone was dressed in pitch-black, making the scene look exactly like that of a funeral. Upon comparison, our JDT's uniform was definitely more than a hundred times better than theirs!

While I was inwardly rejoicing "we won," the sounds of Ben gulping could be heard from the side. I turned to look at him. Ben quietly said, "It's all the way at the end," and guided me over.

There was a round table in the middle of the very far end. The table was large but wasn't fully occupied. Only four people were seated there. The woman with a high ponytail in the middle was particularly eye-catching. That was Jin Feng.

We hadn't even gotten close to the round table when Jin Feng had already stood up and walked straight toward me. The dining hall instantly quieted down, so much so that even the sound of a pin dropping could be heard in such a scene. But she didn't seem to mind at all as she held my hand and said in a natural manner, "Let's go see my family."

I stiffly nodded, somewhat feeling as if I was the ugly daughter-in-law meeting her in-laws.

I was led to the side of the round table. Upon seeing the Thunder God Jin Zhan for the first time, I was completely flabbergasted.

*This, this... isn't this the guy that I just fought with?!*

*Oh, that's right! This guy's ability is lightning.* I had thought that the Thunder God would be in Zhongguan City, so I hadn't connected the two of them together. Now that I thought about it, other than the Jiang family that had me as the cheat weapon with my past life's memories and could acquire strong abilities within half a year of the apocalypse, didn't the Jin family also have Jin Xiaoyue?

I should have guessed this guy's true identity from the moment I saw Jin Feng!

*Hehe. It's our first time meeting, but I have already broken the leg of this brother-in-law. Can this get any worse?!*

*Thunder God-dàgē, by all means, please don't recognize me!*

## Chapter 6: Everything's Great

Facing the brother-in-law whose leg I had personally broken, I was so nervous that my hands were fidgeting. Fortunately, Jin Zhan only shot me a glance, seemingly not interested at all, and continued eating. On the other hand, the two women at the side were filled with enthusiasm and kept on staring at me.

"Is this Xiao Yu?" One of the women, who seemed older in age, said warmly. "Come, have a seat. There's no need to be shy, we're all family after all."

*And just like that we became family!* I inwardly chuckled. *The Thunder God and Ice Emperor are one family? The whole human race is going to celebrate!*

Jin Feng pulled me down to sit, and right away ordered someone to serve me a bowl of rice. I held the bowl of rice with shaking hands. I had just broken the Thunder God's leg, and now with all these black-clothed men in the dining hall staring at me, all of my hairs were standing on end. *I feel like I'm gonna get hacked apart with knives from every direction at any moment!*

Jin Feng gestured at the woman seated at the round-table and introduced her. "This is my lil' mom. You can just call her 'Lil' Mom.'"

*Lil' Mom? Her form of address sounds a bit odd.* I looked at the person called "Lil' Mom." She was a woman who didn't look like a mother at all. She was wearing a light green blouse and white long skirt. She had a slim figure and a refined and beautiful appearance, looking very



much like a girl from a wealthy family. I couldn't exactly tell how old she was, but she couldn't possibly be Jin Feng's mom. Considering her "Lil' Mom" nickname, she was obviously the stepmother!

Jin Feng smiled. "Lil' Mom is very young, but you still gotta call her 'Lil' Mom.'"

"Hi, Lil' Mom. I'm Xiao Yu." I couldn't help but to speak in a soft voice to prevent Jin Zhan from recognizing me, but I also couldn't exaggerate it too much or Jin Feng would wonder why I had changed my voice for no reason. This wasn't easy to handle at all!

Lil' Mom instantly broke into a smile and shoved something over. I looked down to see that it was actually a red envelope. *What the heck? Nowadays, paper money isn't even used for wiping one's ass... Wait a sec, the thing inside of here isn't flat.* I didn't dare open it to take a look, and could only sneakily rub it as I put it inside my pocket. *Its size and irregular shape... an evolution crystal?*

"It's a wedding gift." Jin Feng explained.

*Say what?* I was at a loss.

Jin Feng continued introductions. "That's my bro. His name is Jin Zhan."

Jin Zhan glanced over. This time, I readily and instantly shouted, "Hi, Jin-gē!"

Jin Zhan gave an indifferent nod. He shot a meaningful glance at the person standing behind him and they immediately handed over a red envelope to me. *This is...?*

I didn't understand what was going on, but considering that I was staying in someone else's domain, I should just obediently accept anything that was being offered to me.

"And lastly, my lil' sister—Jin Xiaoyue."

Jin Xiaoyue seemed to be made from the same mold as Lil' Mom, appearing very similar to her. *They're most likely biological mother and daughter, though they look more like sisters.* Jin Xiaoyue had a gloomy look on her face, so she didn't seem as nice as the smiling Lil' Mom.

"Feng-ér has a good eye." Lil' Mom said with a smile, "Xiao Yu looks like a good kid."

"What's so great about being a good kid—"

Jin Xiaoyue hadn't even finished talking before Jin Zhan cut her off with a fierce glare. Lil' Mom's smile faded a little. She seemed a bit afraid of looking at her daughter, but still continued to talk to me.

"Come, let's eat. I heard that Xiao Yu slept for a whole day. You must be hungry."

The atmosphere around the dining table suddenly turned a bit odd. Jin Zhan's expression darkened. Jin Xiaoyue had a look of fear and stubbornness. Jin Feng was frowning, but she didn't say anything.

I was indeed very hungry, but how was I supposed to eat in this kind of atmosphere? I could only take the initiative to ease things up.

"Mm. I'm really hungry. Is dinner about to start? Lil' Mom, can you tell me which dishes are tasty?"

Just those few sentences were enough to instantly make Lil' Mom happy. She picked several unknown meats while saying, "You should eat a bit more meat. Look at how thin you are. Now eat up!"

I ducked my head, eagerly digging into my food. Lil' Mom smiled even more happily. Despite her young age, this stepmother was a mother after all. She felt happy just seeing a kid gobbling down his dinner.

Jin Zhan's face softened, and Jin Feng's mouth curled into a smile. Only Jin Xiaoyue's face was still gloomy. *Who knows what she is so unhappy about? Don't tell me she still wants to foist Jin Feng on Dàgē?*

*Oh come on, Jin Feng is totally not Dàgē's—I peeked at the strong, long legs under the table. Shit! Jin Feng might actually be Dàgē's type.* I suddenly felt a bit depressed...

"What's with the frowning face?" Jin Feng glanced over. "You don't like the dishes? I'll have someone change them."

I quickly shook my head. "No, the food is great. I just, just thought of Dàgē and the others. They might be worried about me."

Jin Feng coolly said, "You haven't even finished eating, and you're already thinking of running away? Believe me, I'll break your legs to make sure that you don't go anywhere. That'll spare me the trouble of having to save you all the time. Besides, there's no guarantee that I can save you again."

"...No way. You spoil me so much, you definitely couldn't bear to hurt me!"

*Even if I do believe it, I still have to say I don't! Please don't break my legs!*

Jin Feng's lips quirked up in a smile. Hearing this, Lil' Mom softly smiled, while Jin Xiaoyue exaggeratedly rolled her eyes. As for Jin Zhan, he was too lazy to pay any attention to me.

This took a great weight off my mind. *As long as Jin Zhan doesn't recognize me, it doesn't matter what attitude he has!*

Jin Feng probed again, "Does your family live nearby?"

I nodded with hesitation. I took a moment to gather my thoughts before saying in a low voice, "My big brother seems to know yours. I've heard him mentioning the name 'Jin Zhan.'"

Jin Zhan glanced over. This time, he seemed to be looking straight at me. My heart lurched and I hurriedly ducked my head, pretending to

be afraid. I inwardly muttered, *Great Thunder God, please don't recognize me.*

Jin Zhan's annoyed voice came from above, "He's such a wimp. Feng, you better watch him closely. Otherwise, he'll be gone before you even notice, and that'll be hard on you."

Jin Feng nodded and said, "I've told Ben to follow him."

"Don't let him run off again either. He's lucky he hasn't died yet."

I was taken by surprise and hurriedly lifted my head, afraid that Jin Feng really wouldn't let me leave. But it just so happened that my eyes met with Jin Zhan's.

"Who's your brother?" He asked, though it didn't seem like he really believed it was someone he knew.

I said while faking timidity, "My brother's name is Jiang Shutian."

Jin Zhan was stunned. Jin Xiaoyue was the first to respond, exclaiming excitedly, "Your brother is Jiang Shutian?! The Ice Emperor, Jiang Shutian?"

"My big brother is indeed Jiang Shutian. But what's an 'ice emperor?'" I hadn't expected her to shout "Ice Emperor" in such a frank manner. I could only pretend to be confused. *Hopefully, Jin Zhan's eyes aren't too sharp. I haven't trained myself to become a top actor yet.*

Jin Xiaoyue hurriedly probed, "Is your brother a mercenary leader?"

"Mhm." I frowned. I was even more convinced that Jin Xiaoyue knew about the future developments of the apocalypse, and that she even knew a lot more details than I did.

"His special powers—"

At that moment, Jin Zhan gave her a cold look and she immediately quieted down, not daring to speak further. Beside her, Lil' Mom was quietly eating, but her hand was trembling slightly.

After Jin Xiaoyue turned silent, Jin Zhan questioned, "What's the name of Jiang Shutian's mercenary troop? Do you know any of the members?"

"It's Jiang Dominion. I know the members who have been in the group for quite a while, like Cain and Ceng Yunqian."

I mentioned the two members whom Jin Zhan was most likely to know. Cain was a well-rounded expert, and although he was a bit of an idiot, he was actually very strong. Considering how long he had been with Dàgē, he should be quite well-known.

Meanwhile, Yunqian had the title of the strongest sniper. The two of them were talented people whom many had sought after, offering huge amounts of money. However, they were also the least likely to jump ship. *Although it's hard to find loyalty nowadays, there's only two words that could describe their attitude toward my big brother, and that is—true loyalty!*

Jin Zhan was now peering at my face closely. I just let him stare at me. Dàgē and I didn't look much alike except for the bridge of our noses, but there was no way that people who were unfamiliar with us could tell.

"You don't resemble Jiang Shutian—both in appearance and in character. The two of you are too different."

I honestly explained, "My little sister and I look more like our mother, while Dàgē looks more like our father."

Jin Feng suddenly said, "The name 'Jiang Shuyu' that you mentioned before, so it's actually this 'jiāng (疆).' I thought it was the jiang (江) from jiānghú, river and lake."

I looked at Jin Feng with gratitude. She had said that in order to prove that I wasn't lying!

"Jiang Shutian's little brother..."

Jin Zhan fell into deep contemplation. *Who knows what he's thinking about? Hopefully, it's not anything bad.* I mentioned those things because I was betting on an opportunity to form an alliance. But if he really did have ill intentions, I'd escape from here ASAP! Escaping wouldn't be hard for me since he was unlikely to suspect that I had the ability to break his legs. After all, this face of mine was just too deceptive!

Jin Xiaoyue was looking at Jin Zhan with a hopeful gaze, even occasionally glancing at me with shining eyes. *Hmph hmph! So you finally know how valuable I am.*

Jin Zhan frowned and said, "Lan City is a tough nut to crack. It's gonna be really hard to conquer it. If Jiang Shutian is here, we can consider forming an alliance. He seemed to know about the apocalypse in advance and was prepared for it. His current level of strength is likely to be quite high."

Jin Feng nodded. "Didn't Xiaoyue say that an aberrant king called Thirteen will come here in the future?"

*Hehe. Sorry about that. Thirteen has already been redirected by me, and this butterfly effect took him who knows where to become the nanny of a little girl. As to whether or not he'll reappear in the future, who knows?*

*But even without Thirteen, there's still a bunch of scary things like the Yggdrasil Earthworm around. However, with the Thunder God here, we may be able to easily kill it. After all, the lightning ability is known for being the strongest in offense. It's not something that you can easily defend against.*

"The aberrants are a problem." Jin Zhan frowned and said, "The humans are another problem. There're soldiers here randomly opening fire. They didn't seem to be here to help. They're probably here to fight over territory, too."

*Shooting at random people even?*



I frowned. *Did I save the wrong people? Has the Shangguan soldiers devolved to the point of senselessly killing humans? Or maybe it's simply because the Thunder God didn't seem human at all...*

Jin Feng said indifferently, "The military aren't to be trifled with. They've got commanders, military equipment, and likely also a large number of people. Fighting head-to-head with them isn't worth it."

I blurted out, "For now, it's already good enough to be able defend against them. If they're numbered in the thousands or even up to tens of thousands of people, sooner or later they'll end up attracting large hordes of aberrants, and they'll be surrounded and slaughtered. If they don't quickly disperse, the outcome is going to be horribly gruesome."

Although most of the military would become cancerous, and eventually collapse at the end, there was actually one main cause. In the beginning stages of the apocalypse, they had turned into warlords. Even aberrants wouldn't actively provoke them. However, once survivors went into hiding and the aberrants started getting hungry, they wouldn't care about how many people there were and would just swarm them. Even if they died, they would at least do so on a full stomach!

On top of that, this was Lan City, one of the most terrifying aberrant cities. There were things like butterflies, wolfmen, and Yggdrasil earthworms that had resulted after evolution. I'm afraid that the speed at which these aberrants would swarm the military would be a lot faster than I could imagine.

Jin Zhan and Jin Feng turned to look over at me. I hastily shrunk back, weakly ducking my head down.

"You seem to know quite a bit." Despite saying this, it didn't seem like Jin Zhan really believed me.

I was silent for a moment, then quietly explained, "I previously stayed in a military zone which was converted into a shelter. The outcome was horrible, and there weren't many who managed to escape."

Jin Zhan shot a glance at me. "You actually managed to stay alive. Looks like you aren't such a wimp after all. Jiang Shutian's little brother shouldn't be a good-for-nothing."

*You're the one who's a good-for-nothing, your whole family is—you and Jin Xiaoyue are good-for-nothings! Except for Feng and Lil' Mom. They're good people, not good-for-nothings.*

"He's got a resentful look in his eyes." Jin Zhan smirked and told Jin Feng, "You've always liked weird guys. That year when Scar cut his own face and almost split it into two, you insisted on having him saved. Now this little guy that you've found is also quite an oddball. He looks like a wimp, but still dares to run around everywhere."

Jin Feng didn't deny the "weird" part, and simply pointed out, "Xiao Yu isn't a wimp. He's just afraid of strangers."

Jin Zhan scoffed, then said to me, "Next time, bring your brother to come see me. Just tell him that I'm planning to ally with him to take over Lan City."

Fury erupted within me. Just as I was about to retort with, "Why aren't YOU the one coming to see my brother," I suddenly changed my mind. *Why on earth should I expose our base of operations?*

I nodded, and obediently said, "After I've recuperated, I'll leave the day after tomorrow and inform Dàgē about it once I get home."

It would actually be fine for me to return tomorrow since I was still able to move. After taking the red envelopes I had just received, eating my fill, and getting some sleep, I should recover my powers somewhat. It shouldn't be a problem to get home unseen.

However, Dàgē was still in Lan City. If I returned too early, I wouldn't be able find him anyway. Since I was already here, it would be better to stay and explore the Thunder God's base for an extra day. When the time came, Dàgē would be able to better negotiate terms with the Thunder God.

*The garrison will be fine for just a couple of days, right?* Despite my doubts, I decided to stay for another day and take a look around.

"The day after tomorrow?" Jin Zhan indifferently said, "So you really did enter the city alone. Guess there's no need to watch you too closely. I've no idea how much strength you've got, but your talent in staying alive should be pretty decent."

*...Nowadays, it's really hard to pretend to be a weak and delicate pretty boy.*

"So what's your power?" Jin Xiaoyue excitedly asked, "The Ice Emperor was so strong, I'm sure he's given you a lot of crystals to eat. You've trained up your powers, right?"

My heart jolted when I received this question. Initially, there would be no problem with revealing my ice powers, as it would be fine if I just made it seem weak and not too powerful. Unfortunately, I had just fought a battle with the Thunder God, and had even revealed the ice dagger. If I were to say that I had an ice ability, wouldn't that be sending myself to my death?

"Just what exactly is an 'ice emperor?'" I doubtfully looked at Jin Xiaoyue, and replied to her with a question, buying some time to think of another special power.

Jin Xiaoyue said, a bit indecisively, "Uhh... doesn't your big brother have ice powers? He's so powerful too, so don't you think he's suited to be called the 'Ice Emperor?'"

The problem was that I hadn't even said that my family's dàgē had ice powers, so where did she get this information from? *Considering how dumb she is, how did she get into college? Does she have an IQ of 87?*

I silently stared at her, feigning a look of doubt.

Jin Xiaoyue seemed to have finally realized her slip of the tongue. Her cheeks were flushed as she fumbled for an explanation. In the end,

she shifted the topic, and stubbornly said, "You still haven't told us your powers! Are you trying to hide something?"

After buying some time, I had actually thought of a "power," but just as I was about say it, Jin Feng interjected.

"If he doesn't wanna say it, then so be it. My man doesn't need to justify himself to others!"

*God, now I feel like my heart might burst with happiness. What should I do now?*

"Sis!" Jin Xiaoyue anxiously said, "You trust this pretty boy way too much! What if he's got bad intentions? Don't you realize how weird it is that he can run around everywhere even though he looks just like a weakling?"

"Xiao Yu isn't weak." Jin Feng looked at her and said confusedly, "I've already told you he isn't weak, so why do you still think that he's weak?"

Well, never mind Jin Xiaoyue, even Ben thought that the only thing that I had going for me was my face. Although my acting skills were bad, luckily, I had this face paired with a slim body which couldn't grow muscle... *Just thinking of this makes me feel like crying. I'm not asking for too much. Can't I at least have biceps bigger than Yunqian's?*

Jin Zhan let out a laugh. "Every part of him looks weak."

Jin Feng lifted an eyebrow and actually challenged the Thunder God, "You might even lose to him in a fight."

*No, no, no, we only fought to a draw.* I suddenly felt a bit excited. *I've actually fought the Thunder God to a draw!*

Jin Zhan lifted an eyebrow. "If you could bear to let him fight, sure, let's see who would win."

Jin Feng glanced at me, and I hurriedly lowered my head, pretending to be a meek and dainty daughter-in-law, *I mean "weak, pretty boy!"*

She withdrew her glance, and said magnanimously, "Nope, not happening. Nobody's allowed to lay even a finger on Xiao Yu, not even you."

Jin Zhan coldly snorted but didn't actually say anything further. If my family's little sister had stood up against me for another guy, and even challenged me for his sake—*Oh hell no.* I could already feel my heart breaking from just thinking about it. *That guy must be killed and shredded into pieces. His fate has been sealed!*

"Sis!" Jin Xiaoyue bitterly said, "You're treating him even better than us. Is he more important to you than us?"

Lil' Mom's expression changed, and she berated her, "Xiaoyue, what nonsense are you talking about! Although Feng-ér has always been spoiling you, you'd actually get jealous of your brother-in-law over something trivial? Even going as far as to say such ridiculous things, what have I taught you?!"

I protested weakly inside of my heart, *But we're not even married yet...*

Jin Xiaoyue didn't seem afraid of Lil' Mom at all. Instead, she was extremely afraid of her big brother. Just a glare from Jin Zhan was enough for her to shut her mouth. Her eyes swam with tears as she lowered her head.

She was young, pretty, and born with Lil' Mom's elegant and refined features. When she wasn't hopping mad and instead wore an aggrieved look on her face, she looked pure and innocent to the point of being endearing.

Then again, if there was one thing that nobody could beat me at, it would be my invincible face!

I quickly tugged at Jin Feng's sleeve and anxiously said, "Feng, it's okay. I'll just say it. Please don't trouble yourself."

Jin Feng turned and stared at me. Instead of a distressed look in her eyes, she looked as if she were enjoying a beautiful scenery. Her gaze was so frank that I felt goosebumps all over my body. *There's something off about this...*

She flicked my forehead and said, "People are gonna keep thinking of you as weak if you continue pretending to be so pitiful."

*...I might not lose when it comes to my face, but when it comes to my acting skills, I'd lose to the point that my pants get pulled down.*

"Anyway, it's all up to you whether to say it or not," she nonchalantly said.

I knit my brows into a frown, pretending to be vexed, then reluctantly held my hand out. Everyone turned to look toward my opened palm; however, there was nothing in the palm of my hand. Just as Jin Xiaoyue started getting impatient, a thin branch began to slowly extend out of my sleeve. Then, it became a somewhat chubby tree trunk, and finally two round leaves were revealed.

Under everyone's watchful gaze, the small and translucent sapling clung himself to my hand. His large and round eyes had turned flat, and he even hugged tightly onto my thumb, seemingly aggrieved and afraid of strangers.

*I told you to turn small, but you actually changed yourself into Thumbelina. With your attack and defense power looking pretty much non-existent, how am I supposed to convince everyone that I depend on you to crawl around the city?*

I gritted my teeth and explained, "I'd previously gotten injured and plopped myself on a tree. My blood spilled all over his body, and he suddenly 'came to life.' He's also very obedient to me. Don't judge him by his appearance. Xiaorong is actually very useful! Oh, by the way, I named him Jiang Xiaorong because he's a banyan tree."

Xiaorong was really, *really* useful. Although his intelligence was a bit lacking, expecting a tree to have high IQ was a bit over the top.



"Such a cute thing." Lil' Mom laughed softly and said, "Can I touch it?"

"Yes, of course you can." I silently gave my instructions. I'd noticed it a while ago—as long as Lil' Mom was happy, Jin Zhan would also be happier. Who would have expected that the high and mighty young master of a mafia group was actually someone who respected his stepmother?

*Xiaorong, behave. Us brothers are living under someone else's roof, so we've gotta go with the flow. I'm counting on you to win Lil' Mom over.*

The tree sapling was still a little afraid of strangers, so when Lil' Mom reached out a hand, he went straight to hiding behind my thumb. But after some encouragement, he soon jumped out and rubbed against Lil' Mom's forefinger. The sight of him acting like a dog wagging its tail made it really unbearable for me to look at him.

Lil' Mom was very happy. If I hadn't said that Xiaorong had no way of leaving me, Xiaorong might have even changed masters. Jin Zhan looked pretty much like a bandit. *He won't even allow any protests after robbing you!*

Fortunately, Lil' Mom seemed to have noticed this. She returned Xiaorong after playing with him a bit, then said that she was tired and wanted to get some rest.

I was relieved that I didn't need to go through the drama of fighting over Xiaorong.

Seeing that I had eaten my fill, Jin Feng exchanged some parting words with Jin Zhan before leading me away. During this time, everyone in the dining hall was still idly eating. The bowls and plates on their tables had long been emptied, but they were still eating, taking five minutes just to finish a melon seed!

We were about to leave the dining hall when several young men approached us. One of them said with a grin, "Feng-jiě, would you mind giving us some introductions?"

Jin Feng carelessly nodded, then pointed her thumb at me and said, "This is my man. Watch yourself. Don't go over your head and bully him. If anyone dares to touch him, that's the same as touching me."

All of them turned to look at me. They initially had a look of envy, but upon seeing my face, their expressions immediately showed a look of complete understanding.

I even saw two familiar faces among them. *If I recall correctly, they're the two men who tried to stir up trouble before—Big Hulk and Mr. Spectacles. What were their names again?*

While I was struggling to remember, the bespectacled man stepped forward. He gloomily smiled and said, "Feng-jiě, since Xiao Yu has returned, does that mean you no longer want the new guy that just got picked up?"

*Hu Zong.* I finally remembered. *As for the Big Hulk, he's Oldman Jun.* The latter was just a muscle head, while the former had his eye on Jin Feng. They had come looking for trouble with me, but Jin Feng

was so intimidating that they didn't dare to cause too much trouble... *Fine, I admit that I do care a little about who this "new guy that just got picked up" is.*

Jin Feng fixated her eyes on Hu Zong. Under her gaze, he restrained his smile. He stiffly stood with his head lowered, and said in a loud voice, "I'm sorry, Feng-jiě. I went too far."

Despite this, Jin Feng didn't let him off the hook. With a wave of her hand, a long blade of fire appeared out of thin air. Chopping into Hu Zong shouldn't be possible from this distance, but with a backhand wave, the blade swung out, and he let out a blood-curdling screech. The disgusting odor of burned human flesh could be smelled from his arm.

Everyone around us looked shocked and their faces turned pale. Surrounded by the smell of charred human flesh, with melon seeds in their mouths, they weren't sure whether they should spit them out or swallow them down.

Even standing at the back I could sense the density of energy contained within that fire blade. It seemed so much more powerful than Cain's. *Damn that was so cool! Could the Flame King actually be this person over here? For such a fierce woman to actually exist in the apocalypse, this is a big honor for all women!*

Jin Feng abruptly looked toward me. She opened her mouth, but then closed it again.

Blinking, I said with confusion, "Do you have something to say?"

She gave a smirk. "I was gonna ask if you were scared. But it turns out that your eyes are even brighter than my blade, so there's no need for me to ask."

*Oops. I'd forgotten to act timid again. Should I just quit the "weak, pretty boy" act...*

Jin Zhan walked over and coldly said, "Your subordinates are getting more and more out of hand. It's time to put a leash on them."

Upon hearing this, Jin Feng's face darkened even further, and her red lips tightly pressed together. Everyone else no longer dared to even chew a single melon seed. Each and every one of them stood up with lowered heads, appearing very disciplined, pretty much like a group of cultured mafia ladies. They remained like this even after Jin Zhan left the dining hall, so as it turned out, the person they really feared was Jin Feng.

Hu Zong's whole hand appeared black and red in color, appearing extremely painful. Despite his hand burned to a crisp, he simply gritted his teeth, not daring to let out another scream.

"You're only allowed a crystal to take care of your injury after three days." Jin Feng frostily said, "If there's a next time, you won't be needing any more crystals."

When Jin Feng led me out the dining hall, it was completely silent behind us.

Jin Feng said with a frown, "Should I just burn him to death? Maybe that'll be enough as a warning."

*Uh... As expected of the mafia.* Going straight from burning bridges to burning people to death in one sentence! I softly persuaded, "Let's not burn people in the dining hall. We're still gonna eat there afterwards."

A smile broke out on Jin Feng's face. Instead of a smirk, it was a genuine smile.

"I really do like you."

Hearing this, I felt awkward instead of getting overwhelmed with delight, and grumbled, "You just really like beautiful men, right? Everyone seems to think it's a given when they see my face."

Jin Feng tilted her head and glanced at me. She didn't even deny it.

*I felt a little angry. Don't tell me you're okay with any handsome man? What would happen if there were a guy more handsome than me? And the one that Hu Zong just mentioned—the guy who just got picked up—he must be quite good-looking...*

Following behind Jin Feng, I'd already lost the mood to enjoy looking at her perky butt and long legs. I only felt gloom tugging at my heart. *It's not like the only thing I have is my face. I'm pretty strong myself! And my body... my body will tone up one day!*

She turned around, looking at me with a searching glance, and asked, "Are you unhappy?"

"No," I bluffed, saying the opposite of what my heart said. Jin Feng lifted her eyebrows, obviously not believing my words. I couldn't help asking, "You just really like my face?"

She frankly nodded. "I like it."

Having personally experienced what it felt like for ancient imperial concubines to be judged by their beauty, the feeling was both bitter and sweet. But right now, I was feeling far more bitter than sweet.

"It's not okay to judge someone just by appearance!"

After saying this, I almost drowned in bitterness by hearing my own tone of speech. I felt somewhat off about it. *I was originally just a pretty boy, counting on my face to live and mooch off food and drinks, so what am I feeling bitter for...*

Jin Feng replied with a question, "Don't you like my boobs, too?"

"..." *What a good reply.* Her response left me speechless. Actually, it wasn't just her chest. Jin Feng's thin waistline adorned with V-line abs and her firm little butt made my mouth water from time to time. Then again, mentioning these two parts didn't seem to be any better than her chest?

*Wait, there's one!* I said in a confident manner, "Compared to your chest, I like how badass you are even more!"

As soon as the words left my mouth, Jin Feng suddenly turned around to face me with a fierce expression on her face. If I didn't know that I hadn't done anything wrong, I'd have really thought that she was gonna strike with a fire blade!

"What, what's wrong?" I immediately turned into a meek pretty boy. I didn't even need to fake it.

Although I knew that Jin Feng wouldn't really shoot me with a fire blade, her slightly frowning brows and tightly pursing lips had caused her queenly aura to be released in full force, making my heart so nervous!

Jin Feng seemed to have realized that she had frightened me and adjusted her expression. She gravely asked, "What you said just now, was it for real?"

"Huh?" I wasn't able to respond immediately. *Which sentence are you talking about?*

Jin Feng stepped closer, and pressed me for an answer, "You said that you like how badass I am the most. Did you mean it?"

I was stunned. But after seeing how serious her expression was, I stopped bluffing, hurriedly nodded, and said, "I mean it. I really like your badassery. There's plenty of girls with big boobs, but I didn't fall for any of them, only you. You're the only one that I like!"

After saying this, I was suddenly hit with realization. In regards to big boobs and a good figure, Lily didn't actually lose out to Jin Feng...

Maybe she was a bit lacking. Lily had a pear-shaped figure with a plump and ample butt while Jin Feng had a firm and tight—*AHHHHHH!* *The hell am I thinking, comparing these things? Could I get any more perverted?!*

Anyway, although my eyes had never glued onto Lily's chest and butt, my mouth would drool anytime I saw Jin Feng's body.

*Shit, is this actually my "first awakening of love"? So it turns out that my type isn't only big boobs. She also has to be a domineering big sis, and most importantly, has to have the capability to burn people to a frazzle! My preferences are a bit too much, aren't they?*

In the past, there was Miao Xiangling, the person that I did have some favorable impressions of, but my preference hadn't been *this* hardcore. That said, I wouldn't have been able to find someone like Jin Feng among the students.

Among the students of my high school, Miao Xiangling was actually the bold and passionate type of woman. In fact, she was so bold that she had incited dislike from many people. But no matter how "bold" she was, once you compared her to Jin Feng, she was a lot milder!

At most, Miao Xiangling was the bold type who would actively pursue a boyfriend, while Jin Feng was actually the "attacking" type, directly taking the person home and making him her husband. *Are they even comparable?*



*This must be a side effect from regaining my previous life's memories. Jiang Shuyu likes beautiful women with big boobs, while Guan Weijun likes strong men with long legs. When the preferences were mixed together, it became strong women with big boobs and long legs!*

"I like you, too. Not just your face, I like everything about you."

I said with dissatisfaction, "That answer is almost the same as not answering. I already said that I really like your badassery, but you didn't say which part of me you like the most!"

Jin Feng didn't say anything even after we returned to her room. I was feeling a bit vexed, though I wasn't sure what I was getting angry about. In any case, I was just someone who relied on his face to get rescued!

I forcefully jumped onto the bed, deciding to sleep and recover more quickly. I covered myself with the blanket and buried my face in the pillow. *I must be tired from exhausting my powers, which is why my mood is so gloomy. Anyway, I'm just a pretty boy freeloading on food and drinks, so isn't it fine for me to go to sleep after I've eaten my fill?*

"I really like the way you look at me."

I started, and lifted my head from the pillow. Jin Feng was sitting at the bedside, playing with a strand of my hair. Her fingers were long and slender, but weren't thin and delicate like a girl's hands. Her fingers looked strong with large joints and neat and short fingernails. You could easily tell that she was someone who worked her fingers to the bone.

Jin Feng noticed that I was staring at her hand, and casually explained, "My hands look a lot better now after I've started eating crystals. Some of the scars have even disappeared. But they're still not pretty though, not as much as yours."

Upon hearing this, I sat up and held Jin Feng's hand with both of mine. Although Jin Feng was a strong woman, I was a man, so my hands were still a lot bigger than hers. I was able to completely wrap my hands around hers.

Jin Feng said with amusement, "What are you doing?"

*Even I don't know what I'm doing...* I could feel my heart slightly fluttering. If Jin Feng wasn't so serious, I might have decided to test out the waters by dating her, just like how I'd told Miao Xiangling about giving it a try. But it was not possible to only give it a try with Jin Feng.

I held Jin Feng's hand. It was very warm. She didn't have the commonly cold hands and feet that girls usually had, which was probably related to her fire powers.

She appeared to be outwardly cold and unapproachable, but internally, she was like a ball of fire. So warm that she could melt people even in the winter.

*Seriously, I like everything about her.*

"Can you wait two years for me? I've promised someone that I wouldn't date within two years."

Jin Feng's face immediately darkened. She said unhappily, "Was it your ex-girlfriend?"

"..." Imagining the Ice Emperor as my ex-girlfriend—*it's simply too much for me to bear!* I hastily shouted in denial, "No! I've never had a girlfriend!"

*My past life boyfriend doesn't count!*

Jin Feng stared at my face with some disbelief, "With a face like this, you haven't dated yet? Your bro didn't let you?"

"No, that's not it." I shook my head and said, "That guy has gone messing around who knows where, so he's got no right to decide that for me. If it weren't for me and my little sister at home, who knows what kind of mess he'd turn out to be? Even I don't wanna think about it!"

Jin Feng chuckled. "He's a lot like my bro. He's got some restraint cuz he likes Lil' Mom. Otherwise, he'd probably be a lot looser, too."

I looked at her with utter disbelief and exclaimed, "Your brother? With Lil' Mom? That shouldn't be possible, right?"

Jin Feng nonchalantly said, "It's no big deal. In any case, Dad died long ago. Gē never told Lil' Mom before, since she would get scared half to death."

"So he's just gonna stay quiet about it and remain chaste?" My heart began to pound in my chest, excited for some juicy gossip. Who would have thought that the Thunder God was actually a lovestruck fool?

Jin Feng looked at me, and said, "You think he can restrain himself?"

I was stunned. "But you just said that he likes Lil' Mom?"

"He does like her, but that won't stop him from finding relief with other women. He just won't bring them home."

*What the fuck.* I'd decided to hate the Thunder God. He'd made me remember that fucker, Xia Zhengu. Back when he started cheating on me, he'd also talk his way out like this. Even though he loved me, those pitiful women liked him so much that he couldn't bear to reject them, so he had no choice but to accept all of them. However despite all that, I was still the woman that he loved the most.

*But now... just remembering those words sets my heart aflame.* Guan Weijun hadn't died from excessive anger in the past, probably only because of my strong body which had been tempered by the apocalypse!

When I came to my senses, Jin Feng was engrossed in staring at me, though I couldn't guess what she was thinking about.

Feeling anger rising up in me, I furiously said, "So you're like that, too? You like me, but you also wouldn't mind finding relief with some other guy?"

Jin Feng stared blankly for a moment, then replied with a smile, "No. I've never looked for anyone."

"..." *Is this the confession of a virgin, or did I just misunderstand?*

"You never had a girlfriend before, then did you ever get yourself a woman?"

I blankly shook my head. *How's that even possible? Where would a normal high school student have even gotten himself a woman...*

"So you're a virgin?" Jin Feng seemed to be in a great mood. She was looking very pleased.

"..." *I refuse to answer!*

"Don't worry." Jin Feng ruffled my hair and made a promise, "If you don't go looking for a woman, then I won't go seeking a man either."

"Then, what would happen if I looked for one?"

Of course I didn't plan on cheating, nor would I become the second Xia Zhengu. I was just interested to know what a woman like Jin Feng would do to deal with a cheating partner.

Jin Feng stopped ruffling my hair and moved her hands to my neck, grabbing my neck with both hands.

I was filled with fascination and great admiration. *Why hadn't I seized the opportunity when Xia Zhenggu hadn't become stronger yet, and just strangled him to death?! It would have been the greatest satisfaction in my life! Ah, Feng, everything about you is so, so great. Even your method of sorting out a cheating man pleases me!*

Jin Feng moved her hands off my neck, gave a very faint smile, and proceeded to touch my lips...

## Chapter 7: Meeting Saint Again

I walked out of the room. Just as I was finishing wolfing down the crystals from the red envelope, Feng had handed me a few more. Lying in bed could speed up my recovery even more, but my decision to stay for one more day wasn't so that I could sleep.

Glancing toward the elevator, I happened to meet Ben's dead-fish eyes. His arms were crossed over his chest as he leaned against the wall, and he had a face that said "I'm not surprised to see you again."

Being caught in the act, I scrambled for an explanation. "I got tired of lying in bed, so I'm going out for a walk, not to run off!"

Ben's dead-fish eyes became even more lifeless. Entirely unconvinced, he said, "You were only in bed for two hours. The doc said that you're seriously injured and need to rest for at least five to six days."

I explained, "I'm fine after eating the crystals. This isn't like before the apocalypse!"

"Our doc has looked after a whole bunch of people these past six months. He factored in the effects of the crystals."

*Ugh.* I bit the bullet and continued, "The crystals in the red envelopes were humongous. After eating them and sleeping for two hours, I feel much better."

"Is that so?" Ben grumbled in disbelief, "But then again, Madam doesn't know anything about crystals, and she's both principled and

generous. Maybe she really did get you the best ones. What were they called again: tier one crystals?"

I was stunned. Then again, it was *that* Jin Xiaoyue who had said it. However, from yesterday's conversation, I didn't really believe that Jin Xiaoyue was a threat, just a bit impulsive and absent-minded. She was even a well-protected little princess, without much room for advanced development in power. The only issue was that I didn't know what kind of power she had.

Maybe I should have responded with the same question when she pried about my powers yesterday. It was just that, at the time, I was too preoccupied with my fear of offending Jin Zhan. Now that I thought about it again, I was only eighteen this year. I should have impulsively asked her something like, "What about *your* power? I'll tell you mine if you tell me yours." Maybe that would have been more suitable for an eighteen-year-old.

*But in the end, the reason I'd suddenly dare to act like that obviously is... Cough, cough, I have Feng to cover for me!*

As I remembered that I had just turned eighteen this year, I immediately put on a "naive" persona and deliberately yelled, "Just let me go out for a walk! It's so boring being cooped up in the room!"

Ben's expression remained dubious. He didn't even loosen up one bit.

*No use, huh?* I pondered. Changing my tone, I said in an awkward manner, "Please man, I just want to know more about the Jin family. This is, after all Feng's, home..."



Before I finished my sentence, I suddenly found myself feeling depraved. I had just asked Jin Feng to wait two years, yet I had still used her name behind her back. To use a woman's feelings this way, I couldn't help but feel that my past self would despise me...

After I changed my tone, Ben loosened his brows. With an air of arrogance, he grudgingly said, "Since you let Feng-jiě have her way, I'll take you to meet Feng-jiě's underlings. They probably also want to see what her husband looks like."

*Wait!* I thought with alarm, *Feng had her way with what?*

"With you, of course!"

It wasn't until Ben responded that I realized I had actually hollered the question out loud.

"Feng-jiě seemed pretty happy just now." Ben looked joyful. He even patted my shoulder satisfactorily.

Although I wanted to shout, "She didn't have her way at all" and that Jin Feng was not shameless enough to make a move on the wounded, this hollering might cost me the golden opportunity to investigate the Jin family in great depth. I could only grit my teeth, neither confirming nor denying his statement as I followed Ben toward the elevator.

"But then again, that was way too short!" Ben said disapprovingly, "Even though Feng-jiě might not mind, you have to make up for it. If

you can't make Feng-jiě happy, when she finds someone else, you won't even have enough time to cry!"

*Too short? We haven't even done anything yet...just, just kissed. How much time can that take? Plus, Feng promised that she would not look for anybody else, so don't go dragging her down!*

Walking into the elevator, Ben leaned closer and said in a quiet voice, "Since you're determined to be with Feng-jiě, you should be careful. Last time Feng-jiě saved a man and brought him back. The guy isn't as good-looking as you are, but his looks aren't that bad either. Plus, he's taller and has more muscles than you. He even likes to pester Feng-jiě!" Ben clicked his tongue.

*"..." He must be the one that Hu Zong was talking about! And you said you wouldn't find anyone else! You even promised to wait for two years. Now who would believe that?* I grinded my teeth and asked, "And Feng just lets him pester her?"

Ben scratched his head and said, "He didn't really do much, just asked a couple questions about abilities. His ability isn't too bad. Feng-jiě is probably observing him. As long as he performs well, she'll let him join the crew."

After hearing this, my mood dropped even further. I asked, "What's his power?"

Ben evaded my question and switched topics instead, "If you ever get assigned a mission to go out in the future, you have to help drop a few

nice words about me in front of Feng-jiě. That way I can go out on missions with you without having to wait until I'm sixteen."

*I think you should wait until you're eighteen!* "If you don't answer my question, I'll tell Feng that sixteen is too young and she should change it to eighteen!"

*Let's all wait for two more years, hurray!*

As if he had stepped on an aberrant, Ben snarled, "Aren't you afraid that I'll help the other guy?"

"Go ahead!" I sneered, "Let's see if Feng likes me or the other guy!"

Ben examined my face and became discouraged. "I think that face of yours is bound to win."

*No kidding! This face has met no competition.*

He explained dejectedly, "That guy's ability is strange and quite a sight. He can emit a very bright light, but it's pretty useless, since the light might only be able to scare some people. The light has one use though, as many aberrants will get scared. Most will just run without looking back. Granted, using it on people works just as well. The light is so bright that it can temporarily blind people for a few seconds."

*Light emission?* I frowned, unable to recall any particular power that had this characteristic. Or more like, there were just too many powers that could emit light that it was just treated as some "side effect." Many people would even try to get rid of that light. When unleashing

one's power, the subtler and quieter one was, the more powerful one could be. No one would shout "Pegasus Meteor Fist" before making their move.

The elevator arrived at the floor with a *ding*. The door opened. Ben said nervously, "You have to follow right behind me. Don't go running around by yourself. If you get bullied by someone, Feng-jiě is going to skin me!"

I gave him a blank stare, then scoffed, "Feng wouldn't skin you for such trivial matters."

"Says who?" Ben retorted, "Just look at Hu Zong. That guy was cooked medium well!"

"Last time he trespassed into Feng's room. This time he tried provoking a division in public, so Jin Feng taught him a serious lesson. Otherwise, if she were to let anyone act that presumptuous to her face, how could she lead?"

Ben's eyes widened, his face full of disbelief. *Hmph. Did you finally realize that I don't only rely on this face of mine? I may not be entirely familiar with how the underworld works, but in the apocalypse, the number of mobs that formed was as many as the hairs on an ox. I've already had my fill of experiences!*

"You sure know our dàjiě really well."

Right outside the elevator door, Scar Lin Qi looked at me with satisfaction.

Ben said cheerfully, "Dàjiě isn't just ours anymore. She's also Xiaoyu's wife!"

"Hmm?" Scar nodded, then said admiringly, "That's Feng-jiě, all right. She works really fast. I'll tell the underlings to call you Jiěfū."

*...I suddenly feel that Ben's age is great. His calling me 'Brother-in-law' rings so nicely in my ears! But since Scar looks so much older than Jin Feng, his calling me "Brother-in-law" would really render me speechless.*

"Just call me 'Xiao Yu'," I couldn't help but say.

Scar raised his brow. "If you were only going to be Dàjiě's plaything, then you could be called whatever 'Yu' you like. But since Feng-jiě intends to have you as her *inamorata*, that means that we can't play around. You can't just be called whatever."

*Inamorata... I really don't understand the mobsters of this era. Using such a retro terminology, would that be considered cultured or uncivilized? Is it really okay to call someone of the male sex an "inamorata"?*

I said in a low voice, "Then just call me Jiěfū."

With that, Ben's nervous expression finally relaxed a bit. "With Scar here, surely no one would even dare to bully Xiao Yu—no, Jiěfū!"

After the “Jiěfū” confirmation, Scar appeared to be a lot more enthusiastic. His scarred face pulled into a smile, but since the smile pulled at his scars, his whole face became crooked. It was horrendous.

“You haven’t eaten that many crystals, right?” I asked a bit puzzled, “After consuming some crystals, the scars from my childhood disappeared.”

Although his scars may have been old and also large, so they might be more difficult to eliminate, Jin Feng would not mistreat her people. Once a person ate a bunch of crystals, not only would scars disappear, even lost teeth would have a chance to grow again. Regrowing a severed limb was not an impossibility either.

But then again, I had only heard about that from rumors. In the apocalypse, if a person were to break an arm or a leg, he or she would die very quickly. Either they would be eaten or infected and transform into an aberrant. No one I knew of had the opportunity to eat enough crystals to grow a limb back.

Ben curled his lips and said, “Who says he didn’t have many? Feng-jiě gave him so many crystals, even tier one crystals, so it’s not like Scar hasn’t eaten them. It’s why his face is barely passable. If you were to take a sudden look at him in the past, I swear you would vomit all of yesterday’s breakfast.”

*So, this is passable?* The corners of my mouth twitched. It seemed that it was not an exaggeration when Jin Zhan mentioned that Scar had almost chopped his own head in half.

Ben looked at Scar with discontent. He said, "Wasn't it just for a woman? Because her face was disfigured, you followed suit and also cut your face? Why hack at your brain when you clearly already have holes in it?!"

Scar glared at Ben. He said coldly, "A brat who has barely grown any hair shouldn't dare to talk about women. Wait until Feng-jiě hears about this. She'll beat you up for sure!"

"Feng-jiě doesn't care about such trivial things." Ben didn't seem to care at all. He turned around and said to me, "Scar liked a girl who lived next door when he was a kid. But because she was a gifted student with good grades, she wouldn't even spare him a glance."

Scar snapped, "Yirou didn't look down on me! She even bailed me out before!"

Ben rolled his eyes. He added, "Sure, she didn't look down on you. You were just a coward. You didn't even dare to speak out when you watched your beloved marry someone else."

He turned his head and continued, "That Rourou married off into a foreign country. This Scar of ours didn't even dare to go and visit her. It wasn't until later, when he went back to his hometown to give some money to his mother that he unexpectedly discovered her return. After asking around, he found out that her husband's house was burnt to the ground. She risked her life trying to get her mother-in-law out of the house, but half of her face got burned. In the end, her husband was a shithead. At first, he said he wouldn't turn his back on her, but soon after, he had an affair with another woman and divorced her."

"Then Rourou got together with Scar-gē?"

My interest peaked. This story was even more dramatic than TV dramas. Since there was no television to watch during the apocalypse, listening to stories was the best way to pass time. I had listened to stories like this to live through ten years in my previous life!

"No. She refused. She said that because her face was ruined, no one would like her, and that she would never marry again in this life. So, Scar used a knife to hack up his face, almost killing himself. He allowed her to take care of him for more than six months before he was able to get out of bed. Once he was able to walk, he rushed to her house to ask for her hand. His ugly face was so menacing, he almost scared his father-in-law and mother-in-law to death!"

*Apparently, he is the romantic idiot type, huh?* My impression of Scar immediately soared sky high.

Ben smirked. "After eating crystals and discovering the scars on his face had faded, Scar became quite the eager beaver. He harvested more crystals than anyone else just to give them to his wife. If it weren't for his fear of being unable to win against aberrants if he wasn't strong enough, this guy would have given all of his crystals to his wife."

After listening to the end of the story, I took a better look at Scar. *This man's handsomeness meets no competition. Those scars on his face are so cool!*



During the story, Scar had put on a cold expression and did not speak a single word. But I could tell that he was not in a bad mood. He was simply being shy! This fierce hunk actually became abashed. Such a gap! I wanted to say that this was gap moe, but Scar and “moe” could only ever go together if someone stabbed themselves in the eyes first.

“Scar-gē is such a good man!” I gave him a thumbs up. *This type of high-class romantic idiot of a good man must be showered in praise!*

Scar was no longer able to keep up a poker face. His mouth pulled into a crooked grin.

“That’s right, that’s right.” Ben nodded. “You need to learn from Scar. You shouldn’t look at other pretty ladies. Even though men like to look at beauties, you already belong to Feng-jiě. If you dare to let your eyes wander, be careful. She’ll have your eyeballs dug out!”

I harrumphed. “Dig out my eyeballs ? Feng will chop off your hands before that!”

Ben sneered. He stared at me, his teeth bared like a little black dog ready to bite.

“You’re being too nosy, Ben. Feng-jiě has it all under control.” Scar pulled me away and simply said, “Come, let’s take you to meet Feng-jiě’s underlings. Get to know them and let them get to know you to prevent infighting.”

I nodded. Though I was more interested in Jin Zhan’s underlings, I knew that my current persona was that of a good-for-nothing pretty

boy. Even if I were Jin Feng's lover, Jin Zhan's people might not take an interest in me.

As we walked through the grand hall, gunshots could be heard from outside, yet the people here did not even bat an eye.

It sounded like it was some distance away. I frowned as I looked out the window. Beside me, Ben explained, "There's all kinds of noises outside around here. There are explosions from time to time. A while back, there was a big snake running rampant on the streets. When we looked out from the top of the building, we were terrified. These gunshots are nothing."

*Hm? That snake wouldn't have been the Yggdrasil Earthworm, would it?* I gazed into the distance. I was never going to admit that I was the culprit.

Finally, we arrived at a small hall. The nameplate hanging at the entrance of the hall was a bit interesting. So this place was called Imperial Phoenix Hall. It was no wonder Jin Feng's team would be placed here.

As soon as we walked in, Scar shouted, "Come and get to know Fengjiě's man. This is Jiěfū. You all better watch your mouth..."

"It's you!"

Before Scar even finished speaking, a young man standing next to the door nearly jumped from excitement, his face full of disbelief.

I looked at the young man. He seemed a bit familiar, but I couldn't put my finger on where I had seen this guy. His clothes were quite bold and he didn't seem to fit in with the others. He looked less like a mobster and more like a normal college student, the sporty, sunny kind on some basketball team.

"How come you're here?" He asked, astounded.

Beside us, Scar frowned. He looked a bit unhappy, but he didn't attempt to interrupt the man.

I said calmly, "I got rescued."

"Rescued?" He looked even more bewildered. "Even you need to be saved by someone?"

This guy's reaction was very abnormal. When most people saw me, their first impression of me would be that of a pretty boy, and many would even label me as a weak chicken. *Who told my body to be unable to grow any big muscles? I do have some finely chiseled body lines, but they are all covered by my clothes. So being labeled as a weak chicken isn't exactly wrong.*

Could it be that he had once hid himself and watched me fight? What a miscalculation. I should have brought this persona out a lot sooner.

"Of course I do." I decided to continue the pretense of being stupid. I needed to work out his identity and said, "It's so dangerous out there. Don't you know?"

The man hesitated, then he nodded, "True, you may be strong, but the monsters out there are indeed terrible."

*This prat must have seen me in battle! Damn it!* Beside us, both Scar and Ben looked over at me with suspicion. Would it still be possible to continue this meek persona?

Someone chuckled. "Chen Yishao, are you sure you have the right person?"

That name sounded oddly familiar, but I couldn't seem to remember where I had heard it. *He can't be some classmate from elementary or middle school, right?*

Chen Yishao immediately dismissed that, "Impossible! How could I not recognize that face!"

Everyone stared at my face in silence, then nodded in agreement.

He looked at me and in an awkward tone said, "You don't remember me?"

I examined his face more closely trying to find any familiar traces. I took a wild guess, "Were you a classmate from elementary school? Or junior high? Sorry, my memory isn't that great."

As a diligent student who had been admitted to his first choice college, my memory was of course very good. However, after the merging of Guan Weijun's memory, some trivial matters had gotten mixed together, making it difficult to tell which memories came from which

life. Other things just weren't worth remembering and only left a sliver of impression.

Chen Yishao shook his head. "It's normal that you don't remember me. We only met in passing on the road. You saved us that time."

When did I save strangers—*Ah! I remember!* It was after I got kidnapped by the carrion-bloom bird and was brought to Zhongguan City. Jin Feng rescued me, then let me return home. On my way back, I played Mother Teresa but was still shot at, shattering my saint heart!

*That saint complex needs to vanish or else endless troubles will follow!* I gritted my teeth, but then remembered the mother and son pair. *Could I really turn a blind eye on them when they were right there?*

"I remember now. What happened to those kids from back then?" I couldn't help but ask.

Chen Yishao was at a loss. "I don't know. Later, we were trapped on the roof of a building. There were hundreds of monsters out there and we were running out of food. Everyone was getting so hungry that someone had even thought about killing a child to eat. I, I stopped them a few times, but it was impossible to keep on stopping them. In the end, I volunteered to draw the monsters away to create an opportunity for the rest of the group to run."

*What a holy friggin saint, I'm impressed!*

"Just as I was about to be torn apart by the monsters, my body suddenly glowed. The monsters became scared and scattered. I took the opportunity to run and was able to buy some time, but in the end, I was surrounded again. I thought I was really going to be eaten then, but Jin Feng came to rescue me—"

Before he even got to finish speaking, he was hit on the back of his head by Ben. Ben snapped, "It's Feng-jiě! You think you're good enough to call Feng-jiě by her name?"

Chen Yishao rubbed his head and apologized without any sincerity, "Oh, sorry."

He looked very uncomfortable, obviously unaccustomed to the ways of the underworld. Then again, that was not too surprising. Normal college students definitely would not fit in among the mafia.

Ben nudged me, his face full of suspicion.

I pondered for a moment, then briefly explained, "I saved his group before, but one of them opened fire at me. He wanted to rob me of my stuff, so I stabbed him and ran."

To be 100% truthful, that was just a rough description of how it had gone down. I didn't say how I rescued the group nor how I killed the man. This way it sounded as if I had saved them on the way without much trouble. Moreover, Chen Yishao shouldn't have a problem with my story; after all, that was indeed what had happened.

Ben suddenly had an epiphany. He immediately told Chen Yishao, "Since Jiěfū is your lifesaver, you can't compete with him over Feng-jiě!"

Chen Yishao gawked, and even started blushing. He stuttered, "I, I never thought about..."

At this point, he stopped and hesitantly turned his head toward me. He asked, "Jiěfū? Is he talking about you? Are you really Jin Feng's husband? You look so young. Were you even in college?"

The f\*ck. To hell with my saint complex, I ended up rescuing a mistress! His mouth was so full of Jin Feng this, Jin Feng that. *Call her Feng-jiě, you prat!*

"I'm almost nineteen and a college student!" I insisted on pushing this point. If I hadn't gotten hit by a tile, I would have been admitted to college.

Chen Yishao frowned. "You're still so young. Why are you killing people at such a young age?"

Young my \*ss. *My past life plus this life is more than enough to make me your dad!*

"He shot at me!" I barked, "Can you even tell right from wrong? I saved you guys, yet he wanted to kill me and take my stuff. I only fought back but you still keep blaming me for killing him!"

He retorted, "You're so strong that you obviously didn't need to kill him when you fought back. Killing him doesn't count as self-defense at all!"

*Killing as self-defense?* I was so angry I was at the point of laughing. "He dared to open fire at me, so he should've been prepared to accept the consequences!"

Beside us, Scar nodded, obviously agreeing with this statement. Ben was even more direct, openly glaring at Chen Yishao with contempt. Chen Yishao also seemed to understand that his ideology would not be accepted in a place like this. He didn't have the guts to continue, quite fearful of the reaction of the onlookers. And yet even though I had killed in front of him, he was still not afraid of me. Scar and the others looked like they definitely had blood on their hands too, while in comparison, I looked young, thin, and weak. This appearance just could not give anyone a scare.

He asked with uncertainty, "But you shouldn't be a gangst...ugh, no, you're not part of their group, are you?"

I shook my head

He was puzzled. "Then, how were you able to defeat those monsters so easily?"

"My big brother is a mercenary and taught me a few tricks," I said firmly. After all, it was all because Dàgē taught me well. Even if I had killed someone, that was because Dàgē taught me bad!



It suddenly clicked for him, though he probably only understood half of it. A normal college student wouldn't understand anything about the ways of a mercenary unless he had read countless novels.

In general, mercenaries were hired as armed forces. They would do whatever their employer ordered them to do.

Of course, Dàgē still had scruples when choosing assignments, at least way more than his frivolous ways with women. He didn't accept every assignment that came his way or randomly take on some unreasonable tasks.

I looked at the people around me. They were all curious but not too surprised, even though mercenaries and mafia weren't exactly the same trade. My brother even mostly took on missions abroad, rarely taking on domestic missions for the sake of his siblings' safety. Taking on tasks domestically too often would be inevitably dangerous.

Even though that was how Dàgē had put it, I knew that another reason he chose tasks that were abroad was because they were much more exhilarating. Even if there was a task available within the country, most of the missions that would grab my brother's attention were from abroad. He could go out of the country for missions, plus it would likely cause less trouble for his younger siblings.

Chen Yishao looked like he wanted to continue his inquiries, but Scar interrupted him impatiently, "Brat, who gave you permission to butt in? If you don't get out of the way, there will be consequences!"

If Hu Zong's two provocative sentences got him burned medium well, then Chen Yishao's casual blabbering and interruption should have gotten him burnt to charcoal. If Scar and Ben had not been curious about my situation, they probably would have kicked him within an inch of his life right from the start.

Even after hearing that, Chen Yishao still wanted to continue his questioning. But as Scar pulled a serious face, he didn't dare to say anything and obediently stepped aside.

Scar turned toward me and praised, "Feng-jiě said you weren't weak, but who knew you had a few tricks up your sleeve! You've actually seen blood before."

*Heh, I can't even count how many people and aberrants I've hacked to death. Crystals became my meals. Why stop at simply seeing blood? Blood is something to be showered in!*

I lowered my head and sighed helplessly, "My big brother forced me to. He said that in this era, if I continued to be naive, it wouldn't be long before I met the grim reaper."

I could just blame Dàgē for everything. I was just a pretty weakling who had no choice but to take out a knife.

Chen Yishao exclaimed, "What's the matter with that big brother of yours? He actually forced you to kill?"

Scar was furious. His hideous expression looked as if he wanted to exterminate Chen Yishao. However, instead of drawing out his gun, he

stretched out his hand and grabbed at the empty air. Chen Yishao was dragged a couple steps forward, as if someone had pulled him by his collar.

Then, Scar turned his palm up and pushed upwards. Chen Yishao actually floated upwards, suspended in mid-air. When he initially left the ground, he tried to break free. But after he was lifted higher than a person's height, he didn't even dare to twitch.

In the end, the big boy floated until he was a mere one meter away from the ceiling. Remember, this was a five-star hotel. You could tell with your eyes that this lobby's ceiling was at least three stories higher than that of an average building.

Ben chuckled and took two steps forward. He bent his legs and jumped, shooting up right in front of Chen Yishao. For him to achieve that height with such ease, this must not have been his limit. Such a jump was already amazing, but that was not all. He whipped out a kick at Chen Yishao so fast that you could only see the shadow of his leg. Chen Yishao's whole body smacked against the rear wall.

After kicking him, Ben flipped his body and jumped off of the ceiling. Borrowing the force of gravity, he immediately landed on the ground and kicked a sofa underneath Chen Yishao before the latter had even hit the ground.

Although he had a sofa to cushion him, Chen Yishao's landing was a fall, not a proper sitting position. After crashing on the sofa, he dropped to the floor, lay on the ground holding his stomach, and

groaned. Although he couldn't get up, he didn't seem to have broken any arms or legs.

I was breathless. The abilities of these two were so good. I wanted to snatch the two of them away. Wanting to steal people with good abilities was definitely a disorder. *How do I treat it?*

I almost drooled. Fortunately, I stopped myself and thought about my subordinates back home. Ah Nuo and Ah Qing had metal and spatial abilities respectively, Watermelon had power over gravity, Lin Zuojun could teleport, and Diao Ming had a fantastic farming ability. Plus, there was also Peng Weijie who thought his ability was merely vibration.

Heh, their ability type is trivial. The most important thing is that my subordinates are combat professionals who obey orders and have good moral conduct!

The Ice Spears were truly overly amazing. They might not be comparable to Dàgē's mercenary troops, but they could definitely throw Xia Zhengu's team more than ten streets away. I should be content with that.

As I came back to my senses, Ben's expression was full of "So, how's that?" Despite trying to hide his pride, he couldn't suppress the corners of his mouth. His face expressed his desire to be praised, befitting his age of fourteen.

I rubbed his head and praised him, "That was incredible!"

His hair beneath my hand felt pretty good, just a bit stiff. Of course, it could never compete with the silkiness of Junjun's hair.

"Don't touch my head!" Ben snapped.

He flushed. His expression might have looked angry, but in my opinion, it was more annoyance than actual anger. It seemed like this kid did not hate getting patted, but he couldn't bring himself to show it. *You're a real tsundere, little black dog.*

I puffed out my chest. With confidence, I said, "I'm your brother-in-law, but I can't even touch your head, huh?"

Ben gaped. He scrunched his eyebrows in distress. As he stood there unable to figure out how to react, someone rushed in from the entrance. He got straight to the point and said, "Scar, gather the men. Feng-jiě is in trouble!"

With this, everyone in the Imperial Phoenix Hall pricked up their ears to listen in. With a "swish," they all stood up, each individual expression fiercer than the next.

Scar frowned. "What's the situation? How come you're here to report? Did Feng-jiě say how many she needs?"

The person shook their head, "Jin-gē sent me upstairs to keep watch. I saw in the distance that Feng-jiě clashed with a group of people. Both groups are now hidden in a building. At the moment, there are no direct confrontations. Their location is about three kilometers east. The building where Feng-jiě is hiding is green. The other group is hiding in

the white building right across from them with "Chen Family's Ocean Freight" written on it."

"Are you sure it's humans, not aberrants?" Scar asked carefully.

The person refuted, "It's definitely humans. They're carrying guns! Their fire power should not be underestimated. Who knows where they came from?"

I looked over to the person. *Visual ability?*

Scar became enraged. "Are they from the same gang as the one who ambushed Jin-gē?"

The person was startled, but then his face changed drastically. "It's possible! I have to go and tell Jin-gē."

"Go then. I'll bring some people over to help Feng-jiě first." Scar turned his head and shouted at the people in the hall, "Go fetch your weapons. Be at the entrance in one minute."

Everyone rushed out of the hall immediately, almost busting the door.

Scar turned to leave as well, but Ben put on an ugly face, probably because he knew he wasn't allowed to follow.

"I'm going as well!"

Chen Yishao hurriedly walked over to us. He was still holding his belly at first, but when Scar glanced over, he straightened up immediately.

As expected, he didn't suffer from too much damage. Ben had still gone easy on him.

Scar scrunched his brows. "According to the rules, you're not allowed to bring a gun."

"I won't take one. I don't even know how to use it anyway!" Chen Yishao blurted, "I'll just emit light. After eating some crystals, my light shines brighter. I can definitely help Jin Feng."

Scar didn't take long to consider and nodded, letting him go straight to the entrance.

I squinted and raised my voice, "I want to go as well!"

Scar looked at me flabbergasted. He cursed, "Don't be ridiculous! We don't know who those guys are. I don't have the time to babysit you."

I raised my chin and said, "I don't need you to take care of me. I'm a man that can roam around Zhongguan City and Lan City by himself!"

Ben chaffed, "Sure, and have Feng-jiě save you every time."

"..."

Seeing their expressions of "Just don't come and mess things up," I feared that if I didn't reveal a couple cards, I really wouldn't be able to follow. I thought about my previous fight against Jin Zhan, how Xiaorong had struck out with his branches. The icy thorns had been among walls of ice, so he should not have been very conspicuous.

Summoning Xiaorong, I became aware of his sleepy eyes and drowsy spirit. I was reluctant to burden him, so I let him continue his rest. As long as he stretched out the branch on the right for me to use, all would be well.

A translucent whip protruded from the cuff of my sleeves, long enough to circle around me at my feet.

I cracked the whip, slashing some dining chairs in the distance into a pile of broken wooden slats. Although this move was a bit inconsistent with my weak pretty boy persona, it wasn't too strong. If I didn't at least have this level of fighting skill, even if I claimed I could walk through the city by myself, no one would believe me!

Scar glowed with admiration. He asked, "Do you know how to use a gun?"

"Yes! My brother is a mercenary. Other than a sniper rifle, I can use any gun. Though I can't say I could hit a hundred targets in a hundred shots, eighty out of a hundred is absolutely not a problem!"

I continued using Dàgē as an excuse.

Scar nodded in satisfaction. He said, "Let's go. We'll grab you a gun."

*Booyah!* I glared at Chen Yishao. I had never gotten particularly annoyed at any of Xia Zhenggu's mistresses in my previous life. There had been way too many. Forget hating them, I couldn't even remember them all!



But in this life, rivals in love, don't even think about showing your face!

## Chapter 8: Whose Powerful Troop Is This

I was obediently tagging along with Scar and his troops, moving at a quick pace. Three kilometers didn't sound like a huge distance, but compared to moving alone, it was a lot more difficult for a group of humans to be traveling in Lan City. After all, the bigger the target, the harder it was to hide. A whole slab would always be more appetizing than a morsel of meat.

Just like how the humans worked together to go to hypermarkets and warehouses, the aberrants would also team up to attack the humans' base. But the vast diversity of aberrants and their mercurial temperaments meant it was hard for them to keep working together for long. It was a common occurrence for them to devour their own group or each other after they had polished off the humans.

It was probably because of this that humans were able to persevere until the later stages of the apocalypse. Otherwise, considering how tenacious aberrants were, how many humans would have been able to survive the initial stages of the apocalypse?

No matter how powerful Thunder God Jin Zhan or Ice Emperor Jiang Shutian was, without knowledge from their past lives, one of them would have ended up holing himself up in Zhongguan City, while the other would have lost his whole troop just for the sake of returning home.

"Faster!"

As the leader of the group, Scar, continuously urged us on, I hurriedly increased my pace. These guys were moving pretty fast. Although their skills couldn't be compared to the members of JDT, they had far surpassed an average person. Leaving that aside, we hadn't encountered many aberrants along the way. *Could it be that the Jin family has already cleared the perimeters up to three kilometers?*

"How long have you guys been staying in Lan City?"

I asked the person beside me in a low voice. Scar had ordered him to join us. Still feeling a bit worried about me, he had especially appointed a big, strong, and taciturn guy to look after me.

Becoming the brother-in-law was truly a good thing. With Tough Guy by my side, I probably didn't need to personally take action and could just be the obedient, pretty boy. I cast a glance behind the troop, glancing at the manstress—I mean, Chen Yishao. He hadn't gotten this kind of treatment.

When Tough Guy had just been appointed, he had quite the cold look on his face. But after we started moving and Scar ordered us to pick up the pace, Tough Guy's expression had lightened quite a bit upon noticing that I wasn't falling behind, and was able to steadily maintain my position in the middle of the troop. Compared to the hindering Chen Yishao, I was doing a whole lot better.

Even several nearby men looked at me with a newfound respect—Well, not really, their expression was actually "How is this possible?!" It seemed that my weak and delicate pretty boy impression had already been set in stone for everyone. No matter how many times Jin Feng

said "Xiao Yu isn't weak," it was obvious that nobody actually believed it.

I felt very conflicted. *Could it be that when I reveal my true strength in the future, no one will believe me, and they might even think that I've been replaced by an aberrant?*

Tough Guy replied, "More than ten days."

"You guys already cleared out the nearby aberrants?"

Tough Guy nodded in response. "Feng-jiě is in charge of clearing the perimeters, while Jin-gē goes out to expand the territory."

This came as a real surprise to me. Although my family's Old Town had been thoroughly cleared out so that not even a single ant remained, it was a small town after all. It couldn't compare to the horrifying Lan City. Despite this place being somewhat of a semi-suburb, its vicinity seemed quite spacious and empty. Even the hotel was particularly high-class. *Who knows if it's owned by the Jin family, an underworld organization...*

It seemed that there were many advantages in having a lot of personnel. Although things would get a lot more complicated with more people, it was helpful in getting things done faster.

Considering the large amount of people employed by the Jin family, the matter of our alliance seemed a bit questionable. *Maybe we can make up for the large disparity in the number of people with our individual strengths?*

Although both Jin Zhan and Jin Feng were very strong, I was able to fight to a draw with Jin Zhan. *After fighting that one battle, I dare say that if we fought with our lives on the line, I'd have at least a 60% chance of winning!*

Even though both sides had prior information, and their side had the powerful and famous Thunder God, I had ten years experience of living in the apocalypse. Although most of those years had been spent on farming, a large part contained life-or-death situations. It was the kind of experience that you couldn't possibly understand without experiencing it yourself.

The current Jin Zhan had gotten information beforehand from Dàgē, and then there was also Jin Xiaoyue, who supported him with information. *With so many subordinates and formidable firepower, who knows if he has had any chance of experiencing life-threatening situations?*

At least my dàgē had the life and death experience traveling home from Zhongguan City at the start. As for Jin Zhan, he probably wouldn't go as far as to "put his own life on the line," right? Getting his leg broken by me might have been the most shocking experience so far.

*There shouldn't be anything wrong going on with the Thunder God's rebirth, right?*

I suddenly broke out in a cold sweat. It remained unknown whether there would be a new Ice Emperor or not, so hopefully there wouldn't

be a problem with the Thunder God. Otherwise, even if I did become the Ice Emperor, it still wouldn't be enough to compensate for the loss.

"I can see it—Chen family's Ocean Freight."

At the front, Scar said in a low voice, "Everyone, move faster. No talking." He specifically glared at Chen Yishao, obviously regarding the guy as a loudmouth.

Chen Yisao looked very embarrassed. He simply clamped his mouth tightly shut to show that he wouldn't shoot his mouth off again.

I lifted my head and looked around. The tall, white building seemed quite familiar. *Hm? Isn't this the place where I almost got bitten to death by the Wolfman?*

Jin Feng had probably come here specifically to exterminate those dogmen. That'd be great. Their leader, the Wolfman, better be slaughtered quickly. Otherwise, the next time he evolved, he might need to be called Wolf King. And at that time, there would be wolfmen and dogmen among his underlings. Rumor had it that their numbers could even reach the thousands.

Colonies of aberrants with a leader were extremely terrifying. They were the most daring type of aberrants when assaulting human colonies. Furthermore, their leaders usually had intelligence that wouldn't lose to a human's. They were strong and intelligent, and even internal strife rarely occurred. It was basically impossible for humans to compete against them!

I wonder who had gone head to head with Jin Feng. Instead of fighting the Wolfman, they had gone and fought against their own humankind. Plus, their firepower seemed to be quite powerful. *As expected of Lan City—although it's a terrible forest of aberrants, there are extraordinary humans who remain hidden inside, too. It's just that at the later stages of the apocalypse in my previous life, the aberrants ended up winning, and Thirteen became the most terrifying aberrant king of this place.*

Now that I thought about it, maybe Thirteen wasn't the only aberrant king. There was at least some news about the situation inside Lan City, but what about Zhi City in the north? Even after ten years of the apocalypse, there was only a little news about that place. Most humans only lived in its outermost areas, so no one truly knew about the situation inside of it.

Before we even managed to reach the green and white buildings, both sides had already shown signs of movement. First, flames ignited on the ground floor of the white building. Although there was a bunch of miscellaneous objects around there, those were clearly non-flammable. The fire erupted several times before it finally succeeded in burning several objects.

If I was right, that was most likely Jin Feng's handiwork. Being able to set fire from such a distance meant she had definitely reached tier one. If the ones facing her didn't have enough strength to defend themselves, it was quite possible that they would end up getting burned to a crisp the moment she caught them.

If her enemy was an average person, her action of setting fires would be quite effective. It would at least be able to force them to come out. Even if the enemy refused to come out, they would choke to death because of the plume of black smoke rising over the building.

However, a huge ball of water suddenly appeared and extinguished the fire.

Stunned, I hadn't expected that there would be an ability user among the enemy. Moreover, they had power over water.

That water ball had only been used to extinguish the fire, so I couldn't tell if they were weak or strong. Furthermore, we were in Lan City, a most dangerous first class city. *For someone to be able to control a water ball at this current phase isn't such a strange thing, right...? It's already January... Uh, or is it February already? It can't already be almost March?*

I was starting to lose track of the days. Not to mention that lately I'd often been shutting myself in my room to play with Xiaorong. With just a bit of carelessness, many days had quickly passed. Time in the apocalypse wasn't so important though. And considering that I had always been making wrong estimations of the occurrence of certain events, that made time even more irrelevant.

Still, it wasn't right to paint everything with the same brush. "Ten years" was an important length of time. Furthermore, humans who survived the apocalypse would continue to pay close attention to the 20th of June. Just for that one single day, no humans could be seen, and the same went for aberrants. Everyone would take cover in special



hiding places they located, quietly waiting for the moment of judgment that would come in the middle of the night.

I didn't know when everyone started calling the arrival of black fog the "moment of judgment." No one knew for sure what basis was used for the judgment. Although it was widely known that weak and helpless humans are usually unable to survive it, there was also an exception to this rule. There were several cases where humans with decent strength had turned into aberrants after the judgment. Despite those exceptions being few, it was more than enough to cause panic. After struggling to survive for so long and avoiding being devoured by aberrants, no one would want to end up dying a mysterious death during the moment of judgment.

I'd just pondered for a few moments when conflict broke out between the two buildings. Sounds of gunfire could be heard everywhere. Speaking of which, it was quite a coincidence that both sides had chosen to hide on the third floor. As the office buildings both had large windows, the gunshots were accompanied by the sounds of shattering glass. This was really bad. Even if nearby aberrants were afraid of powerful firepower and wouldn't dare to approach us for now, the sounds were loud enough that they could travel several kilometers from here.

Scar was anxious. The whole troop was advancing at lightning speed, so it didn't take long before we arrived near the two buildings. Suddenly, the gunfire died down and a few balls of fire shot from the green building toward the white building. Those three fireballs could each swallow a human whole!

But the fireballs speeding into the building smacked into a wall of water that had appeared out of nowhere. Surprisingly, the enemy's water ability user was quite strong. But when comparing the strength of their ability, the sheet of water wasn't able to fully block the fireballs. Instead, it was only enough to weaken the power of the fireballs such that they could only do limited damage to the ability user.

In the next heartbeat, a counter-attack was launched from the white building. The movements were initially so small that they were almost unnoticeable. It was only when a loud sound came from the green building that Scar and his crew realized that something was amiss. Despite not knowing what was going on, their expressions clouded over after realizing that Jin Feng had been attacked.

But I was able to "see" everything clearly. That was a wind blade—they actually had a wind user! Although the power of wind wasn't very rare, it wasn't as common as water and fire. Unlike the kind of soft wind blown from a fan, they were actually able to use wind blades at the current phase.

With both wind and water abilities available, their troop could defend and attack. They truly seemed to be quite powerful. Fortunately, that wind blade shouldn't be able to heavily injure Jin Feng. She'd already reached tier one and should be able to vaguely sense energy waves, so she wouldn't be completely oblivious to the invisible, formless wind blades unlike the others.

There's wind as well as fire. *So it turns out that troops like these already formed in the first year of the apocalypse?*

My past self really was a frog at the bottom of a well. I had thought that the first year of the apocalypse was the year when everyone was running for their lives, where our only priority was trying not to get ourselves eaten. But it turned out that people had already started teaming up and entering the city to fight against aberrants. Their progress was so advanced that it left others in the dust!

At this moment, Tough Guy abruptly grabbed me with one arm and wrapped me into a hug. I froze, and was about to jab into his rib then throw him over my shoulder, but stopped in time when I realized that his actions weren't malicious but actually protective.

I lifted my head, looking around in disbelief. The battle was certainly very intense. With fire and wind flying from both sides, the wind fanned the flames—when these two abilities clashed, even terrifying things like a flaming tornado could be created in an instant.

Occasionally, the water ability also appeared to join in the fun. But the water attacks weren't very strong and even interrupted the wind attacks several times. Eventually, they stopped appearing to create trouble.

I was watching with great interest, along with feeling relieved that the wind and fire abilities weren't comparable to my power. It seemed that my progress in this life was still super advanced. Good, good. If I still lost to others despite having the two cheats of reincarnation and the Jiang family's bloodline, then I really should hit myself with an ice brick as an apology.

I started feeling awkward after being hugged like this, so I struggled for a bit. But he pressed me tighter against him, and even scolded, "Quit moving around!"

*Fine, I'll just quietly stay put.* In any case, this guy was simply taking his duties very seriously, carefully protecting me, the brother-in-law. He didn't have any other intentions.

Despite feeling anxious, Scar wasn't so reckless that he would jump right into the scene. He led us closer to the side of the road, seemingly intending on approaching the enemy's side, the white building, and not Jin Feng's side.

Suddenly, the enemy's gales of wind slowed and were instantly engulfed by the fire counterattack. Just as the flames were about to blast into the windows, a wall of water appeared in the nick of time and blocked the fire from entering. This water user sure had great reaction speeds, and they were more orientated toward defense than offense, very much resembling Yunqian.

I used to think that the muscle lady Yunqian would definitely prefer playing offense, but she turned out to be the defensive type. It shocked me so much that I had dropped Xiaorong from my hand. However, Dàgē said that as a sniper, the most important things are patience and calmness, not offensive prowess. For her to prefer a more defensive approach wasn't really a shocking thing.

I was then struck with realization—*judging someone based on their muscle is just as unreliable as judging someone by their appearance!*

The raging flames gradually died down. Even if Jin Feng was a tier one, she didn't have an endless amount of energy. She might be lacking strength or had decided to change her battle tactics, but I couldn't easily figure it out since I hadn't seen the whole fight from the very beginning.

Once the fire completely died out, the water wall instantly fell to form a flat puddle. Suddenly, a giant whirlwind many times stronger than the previous one flew out. Considering the strength of this wind attack, it was in no way weaker than Xiao Sha's. They might have already reached tier one!

I suddenly realized something was amiss. *Don't tell me that even this troop has someone who has been reincarnated? It's only the first year of the apocalypse. Even if this is a first class megacity, with no prior knowledge, could so many strong humans actually exist?*

A shaft of fire swiftly shot from the green building. Its flame was no longer red, but rather a yellowish orange. Even I could feel the rising temperature from here. The fire blasted toward the enemy's side with the ferocity of a dragon.

Jin Feng was no easy opponent. She wasn't someone who would easily shrink back, but instead fought against the towering whirlwind with her massive, raging flames.

As wind and fire clashed between the two buildings, the cars below were blown away one after another, and all the surrounding glass windows were shattered by the giant, flaming whirl. There were sharp fragments of glass flying around everywhere. At this time, even Scar

stopped edging closer. If they approached too closely, they might end up getting roasted or sliced into pieces from just a trail of the flaming wind that flew by.

*Ahem*, that's right! It's "them" who would get roasted, not me. Luckily for me, my progress was so advanced that I could freeze people into a popsicle, while nobody could roast or slice me into pieces.

Abruptly, I jerked my head up. *It looks like I was too full of myself just now.* I hadn't expected that troop to have someone so strong...

A person descended from the sky, kicking through the wind and flames with earth-splitting force. His energy level was so high it rivaled Jin Zhan's, but he wasn't aiming at Jin Feng's building. He was rushing straight at our team!

My heart was beating really fast, and I instantly realized—this person was charging toward me!

I immediately formed an ice whip. This was not Xiaorong's branch that I had used when tricking Jin Zhan. Xiaorong was too heavily wounded, so I couldn't bear to make him fight the enemy. Jin Zhan wasn't here anyway, so he had no way of finding out that I was the one who had broken his leg.

*Hey, send out some light—Chen Yishao, you idiot!* He was actually scared shitless. *What the hell did you come here for?!*

I shoved away Tough Guy. Ignoring the shocked expression on his face, I then lashed the whip at the enemy in midair—

"Jiang Shuyu!"

The whip twisted, hitting a wall to the side. The person landed. Although his back was against the sun, I could clearly see half of his face, while the other half was cast in shadow. Er, he already looked cold and merciless enough, but with the dramatic lighting and shadows, it was really, *really* scary!

Even Tough Guy beside me was alarmed, immediately lifting his gun and firing three rapid shots. Fortunately, that person turned the bullets into dust just by lifting his hand. This move was so shocking that Scar and his crew were taken aback, pointing their weapons at him but not daring to open fire.

That person was staring straight at me, completely ignoring everyone else. Scar and the others noticed that something was off. Amid their intense vigilance, they suspiciously glanced at me.

"Jiang. Shu. Yu." The other party spat the words out.

I gulped, loudly replied, "Yes!"

He was sizing me up from head to toe, practically shooting X-ray from his eyes. Inspecting every inch of me, he looked like he would have included my insides if it was possible. I hastily stood straight, letting him have his fill of scanning me. *I'm definitely not wounded—no wait, I did get wounded.*

I stood up even straighter.

He opened his mouth to speak, and I tensed, awaiting my judgment. But before he could speak, a blaze of fire suddenly lit up behind him. He turned on his heels, and the huge fireball that was flying straight toward him disappeared at a wave of his hand.

But that fireball was just the beginning. Once the fire was extinguished, a figure as fierce as fire appeared—Jin Feng. She had used the fireball as a shield, while she herself was the killer move. The moment she appeared, she fired both of her guns in rapid succession.

Despite being tier two, he was still wary of bullets. Even more so for the kind of guns used by Jin Feng that had been modified in some way. Their firepower was frighteningly powerful. They would have been defective guns if used *before* the apocalypse because no one would have been able to withstand their powerful recoil during actual battle. But now, they had become the best kind of firearm.

A moment ago, if Scar hadn't been shocked by his move of "turning bullets into dust with a wave of one hand" and had continued to open fire, he would have realized that that person wasn't able to disintegrate that many bullets with just his bare hands. Three bullets posed no problem, five was barely manageable, seven would depend on luck, but he'd get shot if it was ten.

It wasn't actually difficult to disintegrate small things like bullets, but the problem was that he couldn't deal with them fast enough.

The two fighters were both gun experts. Their shooting skills were in no way weaker than their powers. They might depend on their powers



when fighting against normal people; however, when facing off against gun experts in close combat, these two were obviously more familiar with guns and fighting moves. Their powers were merely used for support.

Jin Feng's whole body was enveloped by a circle of flames, used as a protective shield. But from how I saw it, this flame shield would only be effective against people below tier one. Against her current opponent, it would only provide light and sound effects, and at most burn his coat.

As for that person's bullet disintegration with his bare hands, I'd said that it was easy for him to deal with three bullets, but this was on the condition that he was prepared. He wasn't familiar enough with using his ability to disintegrate the bullets while dealing with fast close combat at the same time. He was able to react much faster when dodging and opening fire to counter-attack.

It seemed that we had no choice but to slowly accumulate experience. After thinking for a bit, I realized that I had been expecting too much. It had only been a little more than half a year since the apocalypse. Nobody would be able to master their powers so quickly, as they were things that had never existed before.

Even the Ice Emperor wouldn't have been able to.

Suddenly, another person descended from the sky. By the time I managed to see her face clearly, she was already wordlessly kicking at Jin Feng's head, fast enough that you could hear the sound of air

ripping. If that kick were to land, her head would definitely be smashed like a watermelon!

Fortunately, Jin Feng sidestepped it. But her original opponent used this opportunity to deliver a strike to her knee. Although she could have evaded it, Jin Feng had to take it because the real threat was the gun in his hand. That knee strike was merely used to drive her into a corner.

Seeing this, I hastily rushed over. Just as Jin Feng took the blow to her knee but was still unable to avoid having the muzzle of the gun pointed at her, I managed to get in front of her. I completely ignored the dark muzzle of the gun; rather, it was the terrifying look in the eyes of the person behind the muzzle that was making my blood run cold.

That look in his eyes—it was blazing with outrage!

That scared the shit out of me. *I'll never run in front of his gun ever again.*

I stammered, "Dà, Dàgē. She saved me. Don't kill her."

This person, in other words, my dàgē, moved the muzzle away from my forehead but still pointed it at the person behind me without dropping his guard. Then, with an icy expression, he said in an extremely dangerous and belligerent tone, "*Saved you?*"

*Er, it looks like I've shot myself in my foot again.* Left with no choice, I simply steeled myself and nodded.

At this time, Scar and his men rushed over. They pointed their guns, separating into two groups. They were mostly pointing at Dàgē. A few of them were pointing at the other person who had jumped down, Guan Weijun. She wasn't holding a gun, and was merely clenching her fists. With that fierce appearance of hers, she seemed ready to face bullets with just her brute strength.

Just as I was about to roar "put your weapons down," more people dropped down behind Dàgē —Xiao Sha, Yunqian, Ding Jun, and a bunch of soldiers. Walls of water instantly rose up around us, and winds started gusting so hard that people had to squint their eyes. Of course, we couldn't forget the mountain of guns being pointed in all directions—as those soldiers could only use their guns for now.

Dàgē coldly said, "That woman attacked me first."

I was stunned. I turned to glance back, but my shoulder was suddenly pulled by Jin Feng. I was about to be dragged behind her, but Dàgē immediately grabbed me.

The current situation was, Dàgē grabbing my right hand, while Jin Feng was pulling my left hand. Dàgē's gun was in front of me, pointed at Jin Feng, while Jin Feng's gun was behind my head, pointed at Dàgē.

*Hehe.* Even I could read the expression in everyone's eyes of "what the fuck is going on here?"

"Let's all just calm down for a moment." I was at a loss for words, and helplessly persuaded, "One side is my dàgē, while the other side is my savior. Let's discuss this like civilized men."

As a result, both sides rolled their eyes at me. Okay, fine. With the mafia and mercenary troop holding several dozen powerful guns, it was obvious that they looked nothing like "civilized men."

I turned and said, "Feng, this is my dàgē, Jiang Shutian." Then I turned my head again. "Dàgē, this is Jin Feng. She's Jin Zhan's younger sister, and also my savior."

Dàgē narrowed his eyes, staying silent. But I could clearly read his mind. It was probably along the lines of, "Why the hell did you run into Lan City for no reason and end up needing to get saved?"

I tugged both of my hands, but neither side would let go. No one else seemed inclined to put their weapons down either. However, I was focusing on something more important.

"Dàgē, where's Junjun? Is she okay?"

I didn't see any lightning just now. *Don't tell me something actually happened to Junjun? If Dàgē is perfectly fine, nothing bad should have happened to Xiǎomèi!*

Dàgē gave a short reply, "She's okay. You're not okay!"

Just as my heart settled down, it started racing again. I turned to face Jin Feng once more, and persuaded, "Feng, this is my dàgē. Is there some kind of misunderstanding between the two of you?"

Jin Feng briefly explained, "He stole my wolfman."

Dàgē arched an eyebrow. "As far as I remember, I'm the one who attacked that wolfman first."

"I attacked him first but he got away. I was in pursuit. He's got an injury on his right thigh."

Hearing this, Dàgē frowned, and I hastily adopted a pitiful look. Although his expression was still extremely cold, looking like he couldn't wait to tear into his dìdi, he put down his gun in the end.

In response, Jin Feng readily put her gun away. Despite not really understanding the situation, everyone else was very obedient, as they put away their weapons, one after another.

The moment I breathed a sigh of relief, a soft and fragrant body immediately jumped into my arms.

"Èrgē!"

My heart settled back into my chest when I heard Junjun's clear, melodious voice as she shouted "Èrgē," but it was at that moment that I was hauled backward and forcibly pressed into a hug. The hug was so tight that I felt like I was suffocating.

I didn't even need to turn around to see who was hugging me, as I could feel the familiar big and soft sensation on my back. "That's my little sister, my *biological* little sister! Look at that face, she looks just like me!" I exclaimed, strongly stressing the words.

*She's blood-related, not the kind of sister that I can marry. And definitely not an adopted sister!* I had to emphasize that part, because I could already feel that the temperature was rising as high as an oven. There was even a burning plastic smell coming from my down vest.

Junjun was still holding out her hands and maintaining a hugging posture. She wasn't able to respond for a moment. Upon seeing Jin Feng tightly hugging me, she blinked her eyes and curiously asked, "Èrgē, why are you letting her forcibly hug you?"

*...Should I start a language class for everyone in the Jiang Dominion?*

"Pfft!"

As the sounds of stifled laughter resounded, the tense and hostile atmosphere instantly vaporized. Everyone had turned a deaf ear to my numerous pleas, but once Mèimei appeared, laughter instantly spread everywhere!

"Feng, can you let me go?" I said somewhat helplessly, "I'm feeling a bit hot."

Jin Feng immediately let me go. I turned to glance at her. Her cold and stony face was slightly flushed, making me extremely curious. *So even*

*a fierce lady like her can get embarrassed? It's red from embarrassment, not red from anger, right...?*

Junjun stepped forward. She was staring at me and Jin Feng with wide eyes, looking like she was dying from curiosity.

In order to prevent my powerful and fierce little sister from trying to convince someone to become my wife, I hurriedly introduced, "This is Jin Feng. She's Jin Zhan's younger sister, and my savior that has saved my life twice!"

Jin Feng glanced over, obviously dissatisfied with the introduction. But I simply glanced back at her with innocent eyes. *We agreed to wait two years. Don't tell me it's already void after just a few hours? Even if a day drags past like a year, it shouldn't be that fast!*

For now, both sides seemed to understand that we were no longer enemies. Jin Feng secured her gun back in her holster and ordered her subordinates to put away their weapons. Seeing that everyone was crowding around with excitement, she coldly gave an order, "What're you guys staring at? Hurry up and dig out those crystals that we just hunted and clear out the remaining aberrants. Don't let me see even a single dog nearby after this!"

"Yes, Dàjiě!"

The crowd of mafia, who were by no means "good and honest people," all wore a distraught expression. They dispersed one after another to go beat up some dogs, even shooting desperate glances at Scar, the only person who stayed behind. If it weren't for them holding various

kinds of weapons, I'd have really thought that they were a bunch of housewives looking for gossip.

Chen Yishao wanted to stay behind as well, but obediently left with the others after earning a severe glare from Scar. Then, it was Jin Feng's turn to glare at Scar. The latter hurriedly adopted a bodyguard's posture, looking very loyal and devoted, as if he'd rather die than leave his master's side. If he hadn't been constantly sneaking glances at the people from my family, I might have really believed that he had stayed behind to protect Jin Feng.

Jin Feng was too lazy to bother with him. She then called out to my dàgē and xiǎomèi, "Jiang-gē, Mèimei. Sorry for being rude just now."

Upon hearing this form of address, Dàgē's mouth twitched while Mèimei's eyes lit up. I instantly realized that my family's fierce little sister had been defeated. There was an even fiercer opponent right here, who just went straight to calling someone "gē"!

Dàgē shot a glance at me. I neither acknowledged nor denied it. I simply lowered my head, pretending to be dead.

When he didn't get any response, Dàgē simply ignored the form of address, and changed the topic. "That wolfman was injured. His crystal is yours."

But Jin Feng shook her head, and explained, "I only chased after the wolfman because he almost killed Xiao Yu, not for the crystal. I did injure him, but if it wasn't for Jiang-gē and your troop stopping him, he might have gotten away."



I was taken aback. *So she was trying to avenge me?*

Dàgē stared daggers at me, and growled, “Didn’t I tell you to watch over the house? Why did you go into the city, and even managed to get wounded?”

I could only honestly confess, “I saw lots of lightning flashing over the city. I thought you guys were in danger, so I rushed into the city without a second thought and ended up running into aberrant after aberrant. Jin Feng saved me in the end.”

Despite what was said, Dàgē was fully aware of my exceptional strength. Even if the aberrant that I encountered was too strong, I’d at least should have been able to escape. For me to need saving, it must have been an exceptional situation. But he no longer continued his line of questioning and just gave me a bland look, obviously planning to resume his interrogation at home.

“The person that you saw must have been Jin Zhan.” Jin Feng explained, “He’s got lightning powers. You got someone in your troop with this power, too?”

“That’s me!”

Junjun fervently answered as she stepped up to Jin Feng. Even Guan Weijun followed as well. Although she had just mounted a sneak attack on the other party, this tiny grudge wasn’t enough to stop herself from listening to gossip.

Transfixed, Jin Feng couldn't take her eyes off Junjun once she saw her, and her frosty expression gentled. She couldn't resist reaching her hand out to twiddle with Junjun's hair, which was tied in long twin ponytails. She nodded and said, "Mèimei, you look really cute. You can just call me Feng-jiě."

"Feng-jiě!" Junjun quickly jumped at the opportunity. "Just call me Junjun. That's what my èrgē calls me."

"Feng-jiě." Guan Weijun grinned as she followed in saying the same thing.

"..." *Who do you think you are?* Following along in calling someone "jiě"—*you think I don't know that you're exactly the same age as Jin Feng?*

"So Feng-jiě has power over fire?" Junjun said with a look of adoration, "Wow, you're so strong! Dàgē says that you're even stronger than Xiao Sha!"

Jin Feng stroked the ponytail again. She seemed to really like Junjun's long, black hair. *I'm not bragging or anything, but I spent ten long years taking care of Junjun's hair before I finally managed to get the hair so smooth and silky. Everyone just loves touching it because of the softness!*

I had tied up Junjun's hair into twin ponytails to prevent some weird uncles and aunties from touching her hair all day long. Junjun didn't have a particular dislike toward her hair getting touched by others, but

I, this èrgē wasn't happy about it! *My family's darling shouldn't be touched by some random stranger!*

Jin Feng directly held the ponytail in her hand and played with it. She showered her with praise, "It's good that you have lightning powers. Train up a lil' bit, and you'll be able to protect yourself in the future."

Junjun cheerily said, "Èrgē said the same thing, too. He told me to train myself to become the Thunder Goddess, and trample under my foot all the men of the world!"

"Oh?" Jin Feng gave me a thoughtful glance, "Xiao Yu really is different from others."

With a younger sister as adorable as Junjun, of course Gēgē would have to slaughter all men that tried to make advances!

"That's right! Èrgē is the best! He's even greater than Dàgē!"

Junjun wore an expression of having discovered someone with the same mindset as her. The only thing missing was her holding both of Jin Feng's hands, and passionately declaring her as her best friend. *For some reason, it feels like Xiǎomèi's speed at selling her èrgē is a lot faster than selling Dàgē...*

Laden with grief, I simply stopped watching the ongoing sales and looked away. I turned my gaze toward Dàgē who was busying himself with work. He was giving orders to Yunqian and Xiao Sha to lead people in clearing out the aberrants and look for some supplies while

they were at it. Even ordinary stuff like toilet paper couldn't be excluded.

Toilet paper was the type of supply you needed in large quantities. That said, in my previous life, toilet paper was definitely not something I'd have taken. I couldn't eat or drink it, and it was bulky as hell. *A clean butt doesn't meant shit for survival!*

In any case, everyone smelled like a rotten corpse when they were running for their lives. The only use our noses had was for breathing. Our noses wouldn't even have been able to make out any smells. It was good enough to just grab anything to wipe our butt clean. Plus, most of the time, we were so hungry that nothing would come out from down there!

Upon noticing that I was looking at him, Dàgē beckoned me.

I suspiciously walked over. Dàgē said, "Shuyu, we haven't found Shangguan Chenyang, but Xiao Sha suspects that he's close by. He sensed someone's probing gaze several times, but still hasn't managed to find anyone. Xiao Sha thinks that someone with this kind of power would most likely be him. When Jin Feng attacked us just now, we thought that the Shangguan family had finally made their move."

I frowned. "I encountered soldiers from the Shangguan family, too. They must have sent a lot of troops into Lan City."

At the current phase, it was impossible to take over Lan City. Nevertheless, searching for supplies was still a necessity, even more so for populous military districts. The rate of depletion of their supply

stocks would be a lot faster than Jiang Dominion's. At worst, they might not even be able to sustain themselves for a week.

Dàgē narrowed his eyes, and said in a dangerous tone, "Was it the men from Shangguan family that put you in danger?"

"They did attack me, but it's not a big deal. A few bullets aren't enough to injure me." I avoided the important parts and continued, "I only got a bit wounded afterwards. I got away from a huge aberrant that I encountered and got surrounded by dogmen. It was because the attacks came in succession."

Dàgē said mercilessly, "If something like this happens again, you're forbidden from leaving the base ever again!"

Locked up until aberrants become extinct—I get it. *But then again, there's no one capable of stopping me in the base, and that includes Dàgē.*

"We searched the police station along the way. Nothing much was left, but there were plenty of handcuffs. The next time you get reckless, I'll have you handcuffed with Shujun twenty-four seven!"

*...Fine, I lost!* I lowered my head and admitted my wrongs, "I'm sorry, Dàgē. I'll never be reckless again."

Dàgē looked at me coldly. I wasn't sure if he believed me or not, but he finally stopped dwelling on the topic. He glanced at Junjun, and saw that she was chattering continuously with Guan Weijun. Meanwhile, Jin

Feng was listening attentively, occasionally nodding her head or answering with a “no.”

For example, Junjun asked, “What does Feng-jiě like about my èrgē? Is it his face?”

Guan Weijun promptly said, “Of course it’s the face. With a face as captivating as that, what else could it be?”

Jin Feng nodded her head, and added, “Actually, he’s got a pretty nice body, too. He’s just a bit thin.”

The two girls’ eyes were shining so bright that laser beams were about to shoot out from their eyes.

Dàgē walked two steps away, and beckoned me over with his finger. After I obediently walked over, he got straight to the point and asked, “What’s up with you and that Jin Feng—”

“Boss!”

Xiao Sha anxiously shouted. He sped over like a gust of wind, with a dark expression on his face.

“We’ve been surrounded!”

## Chapter 9: Whose Violent Wife Is This

Dàgē arched his eyebrows, his expression calm. That cool-headed demeanor seemed to affect Xiao Sha. After taking two deep breaths, Xiao Sha regained his composure and calmly gave a full report of the situation.

"When we were collecting supplies, Yunqian said we made too much noise earlier. She was scared aberrants would gather and went to keep watch on the balcony. She didn't see any aberrants. Instead, she discovered a large number of people hiding outside, expertly hidden too. They can't be ordinary people, and there are a lot of them, surrounding us on all sides."

Dàgē immediately looked at Jin Feng, who frowned and shook her head.

I felt nervous and was about to tell Dàgē that Jin Feng wouldn't do something like that, but Dàgē already said, "Let's form an alliance for now, and call all the troops back."

Surprisingly enough, Jin Feng had no complaints against a temporary alliance and nodded. At her side, Scar immediately took out a walkie-talkie and ordered everyone to return right away.

My eyes lit up. These walkie-talkies looked pretty useful. Unfortunately, I never had the chance to use them in my past life, and I didn't think of them at all when buying supplies. As for Dàgē, he had only had a rough understanding of the situation and had been pressed for time, which was why he hadn't brought back any such toys either. As soon

as we had the chance, we should retrieve some, as they would be very helpful for any future large-scale operations.

"You want these?" Jin Feng noticed my expression.

I nodded.

"I have a lot. I'll send a few to Jiang-gē and Xiǎomèi as a gift later on."

*This...* I still nodded. Even though nothing was for free, I already owed her my life twice over. Since my debt was already that great, I'd just better slowly settle the score later.

As Jin Feng's troops returned, the soldier Yunqian had sent out arrived back as well. Straight away, he said, "They seemed interested in talking. They sent two of their people to the front of the building, unarmed."

Hearing this, Dàgē looked at Jin Feng. Courteously, he asked, "What are you going to do?"

Jin Feng, however, glanced at me and just said, "I'll let you decide. This place is too close to our base. I have already sent someone back to inform Jin Zhan. We need to delay a bit so he can call his men back to the base. Whether we negotiate or fight, both are fine."

"So, you already have a base. You are worthy of the Jin name, taking such quick action."



"The Jiang family is not bad either," Jin Feng said lightly. "I heard that your base is quite large."

Dàgē stared at me, his expression full of grief that his dìdì had fallen under her spell. *But I haven't revealed anything, Dàgē, you just spilled the beans yourself! Jin Feng is only testing us.*

I vigorously shook my head. *This has nothing to do with me. You're the fool here!*

After a pause, it seemed Dàgē understood. He looked a little embarrassed, and immediately changed the topic, pretending nothing had happened.

"Since we need to stall, let's talk to them first. They sent two people, so we'll each send one. That should be an agreeable plan?"

Jin Feng nodded toward Scar. He stepped forward, an incredibly ugly smile on his face. "No problem, I'll represent our side. We're family anyway. It would be my pleasure."

*Have the aberrants swallowed the promised "two years" or what? How are we already family?* I turned an aggrieved look on Jin Feng, but she merely said, "Scar, don't talk nonsense. Call him Jiang-gē."

With exaggeration, Scar stood at attention and yelled, "Yes sir, Jiang-gē!"

*Fuck, what difference does that make?*

"We'll send..." Dàgē pondered.

"Leader, I'll go." Xiao Sha stepped forward.

This was no easy assignment. The other side had guns, and one wrong word could lead to a shooting. Even if you survived it, you'd be half dead, which was why Jin Feng wasn't going herself. Dàgē definitely wasn't planning on going himself either.

But he shot a glance at Xiao Sha and said, "No, Guan Weijun, you go."

I was stunned. Guan Weijun also blinked in surprise, but before she could respond, Dàgē explained, "Delay them a bit, and figure out their situation. Can you do that?"

*Dàgē, what is the meaning of this?* I frowned. I had a bad feeling about this. *Won't Guan Weijun think we're deliberately pushing her into a dangerous situation?*

But she already shouted cheerfully, "No problem, leader, I'll make sure to delay them until even you want me to shut up."

Ceng Yunqian chuckled and said, "I'm sure you can do it! On our way here, he told you to shut up at least five times."

Guan Weijun laughed as well and said, "You were all so quiet, I had to make up for five people on my own!"

*Why is the Ice Emperor's didi such a chatterbox? Is this how he was originally, or did his personality fall apart after changing bodies?*

"Go on," Dàgē said. "If we take too long, they might give up on talking."

Hearing that, I wanted to pull Junjun close to me, but when I reached out, there was only empty space. Mèimei had leapt to Jin Feng's side, following her closely. She quizzed her without pause and revealed all kinds of information about me as well. She even asked how big Jin Feng's breasts were, and before Jin Feng could respond, Mèimei told her that I loved women with big breasts.

Ceng Yunqian even interrupted them to add, "He really is the leader's little brother. Their preferences are so alike!"

"Ah," Junjun said, a bit worried. "But Weijun-jie's chest isn't big!"

*As accurate as the stab of a knife!* Guan Weijun was walking at the front, listening to Dàgē's instructions, but she couldn't help looking down at her chest and casting a sorrowful glance at him.

"... If anything they say makes you think it will come to a fight, retreat immediately. Don't worry about breaking off the negotiations."

Dàgē continued to give directions, his expression unchanged.

"Oh!" Guan Weijun's eyes lit up, her grievances swept away. Blissfully, she said, "I knew you cared about my safety."

Dàgē cast a helpless glance in my direction, the corner of his mouth twitching. I instantly realized what he meant, which most likely came down to “I really had this kind of dìdi in my past life?”

Really, the Ice Emperor proved it himself.

It seemed that Guan Weijun was still a few light years away from winning over Dàgē. I no longer paid attention to them and walked over to Xiao Sha, whispering, “Why is Dàgē sending Guan Weijun?”

Xiao Sha didn't think it was strange and explained, “Guan Weijun asked before how to become a core member. Leader said that loyalty and merit are indispensable. Later, while on the road, she rushed into action, and even fought with Ding Jun over the aberrants.”

*Ding Jun and Guan Weijun fighting? Dang, you wronged both Dàgē's previous and current dìdi. Ding Jun, could you have a bigger death wish than this?*

“Ding Jun can fight?”

I was surprised, as he was thoroughly a normal person. Even if his power over metal was a very good ability, he couldn't fight, and his power couldn't be used from a distance. *How was he able to kill aberrants?*

Xiao Sha nodded. “Ding Jun can handle large groups of aberrants that are individually weak. He shoots metal fragments, which are not as effective as a gun, but much quieter. He can shoot a bunch at a time, which is very useful when dealing with small aberrants.”

*I see.* Ding Jun's ability type was not bad after all. Although Ah Nuo had the same metal ability, he couldn't metalize that many body parts at the current stage. When it came to practicality, Ding Jun's ability was actually more useful. How their abilities would develop, that would depend on their own efforts.

If only Ding Jun wouldn't see me as an enemy. The more elites we had in the Jiang Dominion, the better. Unfortunately, when that bird forced me to leave home for a bit, he got the illusion that he could replace me, until I returned and casually re-assumed the throne of "dìdi."

To me, this was only natural, but for Ding Jun, it probably meant I shattered his dreams after he just got a taste. His hatred simmered within him. Although he wouldn't dare to fight with me, he was young and full of energy, so he couldn't help but give me dirty looks. He probably thought that since his face was stiff anyway, a dirty look wouldn't make much difference, but alas, the difference was huge!

In any case, I wasn't having it. *Trying to steal my gēgē? No way! As soon as we get back, I'm kicking Ding Jun out of the mansion!*

We arrived outside the building. Although we were sending Guan Weijun to talk, we all stood behind her. As Dàgē was too conspicuous, he stood at the far back, allowing us to shield him.

Jin Feng did not have such concerns, casually standing at the front. In these post-apocalyptic times, women were never even considered. No matter how majestic Jin Feng was, she would still be seen as someone's subordinate.

At a glance, the other side had also brought back-up like we had, though even more were most likely hidden.

Their equipment looked a bit varied. Although they made an effort to conceal it, that would only deceive regular folk. Besides the equipment, their bearing was definitely different from each other's. Some were probably professionals, perhaps soldiers or mercenaries. The others were probably simple bodyguards, the kind that were doormen or bouncers.

Of the two representatives, one was frowning, but he definitely had more bark than bite. The other looked handsome and just a tad more interesting than the first. One look at his stance and you could guess he was a professional.

Oh, but wait, his face seemed a bit familiar. It's not that I had a bad memory, but he was wearing a helmet and his equipment was similar to that of others. That I even recognized him a bit was pretty good.

"Hello, I am He Jiu," he politely greeted Scar and Guan Weijun.

*He's that Shangguan soldier I saved because of my saint complex!*

I hurriedly searched the crowd at the back and discovered Tang Liang's figure as I thought I would. He was surrounded by a group of "bodyguards." He had a scar on his face, which could have made him stand out, but next to a guy with mountains of muscle, he didn't look conspicuous at all.

"Hello there," Guan Weijun said with a smile. "You can call me Xiao Jun, and this here is Scar-gē."

In just the time it took to walk up to them, she had already learned Scar's name. Perhaps sending her really was by the book and had nothing to do with Dàgē's personal interests.

Guan Weijun turned to look at Scar. He stood slumped, with no intention to speak, so she took the initiative.

"What do you want from us, Mr. He?"

Before He Jiu could speak, the bodyguard next to him snapped, "This is our clan's building. Leave the supplies and get lost. You must realize you are robbers here!"

Hearing this, I was speechless for a moment. If you defined it like that, then the only people who didn't steal were dead ones. After all, if you wanted to eat, you had no choice but to "steal" food. Even if you wanted to hunt, it was just not possible for the average person to clash with the wild plants and animals out there.

Guan Weijun spread her hands and helplessly said, "Bro, in this kind of world, robbing means directly snatching something from someone else. We are just gathering supplies. How can this be called robbing?"

"This is indeed the Chen clan's building." He Jiu's expression was somewhat tense. It seemed he also thought the comrade at his side was a bit unreasonable.

"It's possible they are two groups," Dàgē whispered to me. "One of them said 'This is our clan's building,' while the other said 'the Chen clan's building.' You hear the difference?"

I nodded. Dàgē proved himself once again, able to deduce the truth from only a few words.

"He Jiu is from the Shangguan family. I've seen them before."

I didn't say I had even saved these people. If Dàgē knew that I had risked my life to save them, I would definitely be sent off in handcuffs with Junjun. That would be unbearable.

Next to us, Xiao Sha's expression changed and he coldly said, "The Shangguan family? I knew Chenyang would cause trouble."

*Wait, just because there are people from the Shangguan family here, you conclude that it's your cousin's fault? Your prejudice against your own family is really through the roof!*

Ceng Yunqian agreed, "It's possible. This Chen clan showed up right on time, right after we cleaned out all the aberrants in the building. Xiao Sha had the feeling someone was following us from the start, so it could have been that Chenyang."

*So that's how it is!* I suddenly realized something. While Dàgē was hunting the Wolfman, first Jin Feng and then the Chen clan showed up. Lan City was huge. Was there a need to have three factions fight over a single building? If humans could fight over the aberrants so seriously, then would it be that farfetched for us to conquer Lan City?



Unfortunately, this was just a case of a mantis stalking a cicada, with a finch following closely behind. *Why don't you hunt your own aberrants?!*

In front of us, Guan Weijun spread her hands and said, "So, what do you want? Let's be honest with each other. Just let us know and we can consider it."

The bodyguard arrogantly said, "Leave all the supplies, get out, and we will spare your lives!"

He Jiu pursed his lips, but said nothing.

Guan Weijun laughed. "Bro, your scheme is really too clever. You have us fight the monsters, while you only jump out when it's time to collect the spoils. The world is full of monsters, yet you specialize in bullying people. Since you won't fight the monsters, why don't you hand over your weapons and let us fight some more for you? We promise not to let you starve to death."

The bodyguard's face flushed red. Apparently, he still had some sense of morality and knew that he was in the wrong. Unfortunately, knowing it didn't mean he would accept it.

"Women shouldn't speak out of turn!"

With nothing reasonable to say, he started discriminating against her.

Guan Weijun's expression didn't change much. I reckoned that during her time on the run, she was discriminated against so often that she was able to keep herself from reacting. However, Jin Feng snorted, Junjun pouted, and Ceng Yunqian tossed a small sphere of water up and down.

*Hehe, never underestimate women in this world. You never know which one can burn you, electrocute you, or drown you. As for the grinning woman in front of you, she likes to cave in heads with her fists. Though it's usually the heads of aberrants that are destroyed, a normal person's head would probably be easy in comparison.*

*Why are there so many fierce women in this parallel world? This should have nothing to do with my rebirth—But wait, I had a big influence on Junjun, and Guan Weijun seems to be somewhat affected as well. The incredibly fierce Jin Feng, though, she has nothing to do with me, right?*

"If you want to live, get lost now!" The bodyguard raised his gun. "Not another word, or we won't waste any time before we shoot!"

He Jiu sighed, pushed down his companion's gun, and said, "Don't be like that. They put in effort. It's not like we can let them return empty-handed."

The bodyguard still wasn't convinced and snarled, "These supplies obviously belong to our boss. Why should we let them take them?"

Though they disagreed with each other, their conflict didn't seem that serious. *This wouldn't be one of those legendary good cop bad cop things, would it?*

"You can't put it that way..."

They happily continued their act. However, they were surrounded by world-class actors, so their level of acting was definitely not enjoyable enough. I felt around in my pocket, but I didn't have any snacks. When Junjun noticed, she took a chocolate bar from her backpack and handed it to me.

Jin Feng looked at me and frowned, but when I stepped forward to give it to her, she refused it and whispered, "I'll remember to have snacks ready in the future."

*Uh, I'm actually not a big eater, really, but since it's a good habit to keep some high-calorie food with you, I won't clear up the misunderstanding.*

The good cop bad cop performance was wonderful, going as far as discussing if it would be fair to give us 10% or 20%.

Guan Weijun walked off and shoved an abandoned vehicle. Of course, she didn't shove it so it would roll along by itself—she shoved it sideways!

Good cop and bad cop were silent at once. She looked back and said with a smile, "I was just making sure you had enough room for your performance. Don't pay attention to me, you can continue."

In the silence that fell, Scar roared with laughter and taunted, "We shouldn't be calling her a chatterbox. That name better fits you two, going on and on for ages without even knowing what you're doing."

This time, not only the bodyguard flushed red, but even He Jiu was embarrassed.

"Let's do it like this. Since we have limited manpower, we won't be picking this place clean. You can sweep up what remains. We don't care. If you still have any objections, we don't have any fewer guns than you all, and we have this strong woman here. If you want our things, come and snatch them!"

Scar shouted at Tang Liang standing at the rear, "What do you say, brother?"

He Jiu blanched. His gaze drifted in that direction, but he forced himself not to turn his head. His acting skills might deceive ordinary people, but it was to no avail against my family full of top actors.

Tang Liang frowned and walked forward through the crowd, beckoning another person as well.

The other wore the same clothes as the bodyguard, but his bearing was completely different. He wasn't tall or short, and though he didn't seem as sturdy as a hill, he wasn't a delicate flower either.

When the two stepped forward, they had a different vibe altogether. Dàgē also stepped out and went to stand next to Jin Feng. Jin Feng

had already been standing at the front, unmoving, her stance casual with one hand in her pocket. She looked so cool!

Junjun suddenly leaned over and whispered, "Èrge, you should hold on tight to Feng-jiě. Look at her and Dàgē standing together. They really are a great match. Though Dàgē won't fight over her with you, he didn't do that with Guan Weijun either, yet she followed him on her own accord. You shouldn't blame him."

Hearing this, I looked at the both of them, the mighty Dàgē and the fierce woman standing together. They really looked like a pair, a strong match, able to conquer the world. Seeing them, I felt so conflicted...

But before I could speak, Junjun already answered her own question, "But Feng-jiě really seems to like you, Èrgē. This time, she won't be snatched away."

*What do you mean, this time? There wasn't even a last time! There's no need to fight over a woman like Guan Weijun! I'd beg to have her taken away!*

Meanwhile, Tang Liang and the other person studied Dàgē and Jin Feng for a bit. It seemed as if they already knew Dàgē and Jin Feng were actually the leaders, no further pretense needed. That, or they thought that Dàgē was the leader and Jin Feng was just his woman.

Junjun whispered, "Èrgē, don't make such a face. Feng-jiě won't be standing beside Dàgē for long. You don't need to be so jealous."

"... Stop talking nonsense and pay attention!"

"It's not nonsense." Junjun mumbled, but she turned toward the situation unfolding in front of us.

"Fuck—" was the only thing Tang Liang said. Dàgē raised his eyebrows.

Tang Liang scratched his head impatiently and apologized right away, "I'm foulmouthed like that. Just ignore me. Let's talk business."

Dàgē slowly said, "If it was just me, it wouldn't matter, but my mèimei is here, so you better watch your mouth."

Tang Liang glanced at Jin Feng, apparently thinking she was Dàgē's "mèimei." Although Dàgē noticed, he said nothing to correct it, nor did Jin Feng. Neither of them was planning on giving a detailed introduction. The others didn't need to know that we came from two different groups.

Tang Liang nodded absent-mindedly, and came straight to the point, "I... With our firepower, there is no need for us to steal your spoils. We came to recapture this building ourselves, but we were just one step behind you. We didn't intentionally wait until you finished off all the monsters inside."

Seeing his open and honest attitude, Dàgē said frankly, "Even if I believe you, we're in a first come first serve world. You must have invaded other people's territories to loot as well. You can't appeal to us with that kind of excuse."

Tang Liang looked at the person next to him and said, "I'm doing all the talking. Why don't you say something, show-off!"

"Hello, I am Chen Ruxian, may I know your names?" the other said. This opening line made him look completely incompatible with Tang Liang.

Dàgē was neither pretentious nor planning to hide his identity as he said, "Jiang Shutian."

Chen Ruxian nodded and said, "This is our Chen clan's building. Everything here belongs to us. No matter what world we are in now, I believe you wouldn't let others enter your house and relocate your things either?"

Dàgē just said lightly, "Since I have already left, rather than letting people take what's left behind so they can survive, do you think I'd be happy to see them rot away instead?"

He was right, even though our home was completely destroyed by the Ice Emperor. After his finishing move, everything in the basement was turned to dust. It was impossible for people to take anything even if they wanted to.

"But the owner has returned—"

Dàgē impatiently said, "Since you left, you are no longer the owner! We're taking some supplies and leaving the rest to you. This is not our bottom line, since this is not a negotiation. I'm just doing you a favor and telling you that Lan City is sufficiently big. We're not going to hold

this against you, but if you want to take from us what's already ours, forget it!"

Chen Ruxian was obviously not quite able to deal with such a non-negotiable negotiation style, as he frowned and looked at Tang Liang.

Tang Liang honestly said, "This guy is quite reasonable. No matter whose building it is, it must've been difficult to get rid of the monsters inside. Just thinking of all the precious ammunition needed makes my fucking heart hurt. They might've suffered some injuries or casualties too, yet you only want to give them a share of ten or twenty percent. I wouldn't agree with such a loss either!"

Hearing this, Chen Ruxian's frown deepened, and he awkwardly asked, "How much do you plan to take? This is not a warehouse. It's just a building. Though there is a restaurant and also some stored items, I am afraid it's not much. If you take too much, I have no way to explain it to the family."

Dàgē glanced at Jin Feng, who finally spoke, "Since you have firepower, you can go storm another building and take as much loot as you want. The way you won't stop bothering us here makes me feel we are just easier to bully than aberrants. You're just a bunch of cowards too afraid to fight aberrants, or in other words, you lack balls."

Chen Ruxian reddened.

Tang Liang grimaced and said, "Fuck you, with this kind of sister, you still need me to watch my mouth, while she can say whatever the hell she wants?"



Jin Feng frankly said, "You're wrong. I'm his sister-in-law, not his sister."

*"..." Skipping dating, skipping the wedding ceremony, two years gone just like that, she just went straight to being my wife! I could only chuckle dryly.*

Someone caught my sleeve and I turned to look, meeting Mèimei's anger head-on as she said, "Èrgē, how could you get married in secret? We agreed I would be your maid of honor!"

*No, no, no, I certainly didn't agree to that. What eighteen-year-old already has a maid of honor ready? What's more, the maid of honor should be from the bride's side, or do you want your èrgē to be the bride?*

This mention of "sister-in-law" was too sudden, and right away the atmosphere changed somewhat. Fortunately, the others were quite reliable, and soon enough it was back to the tense atmosphere of a confrontation between two armed groups.

Chen Ruxian had been somewhat nervous from the start. As we refused to leave the supplies, Guan Weijun put up a great show, and Dàgē stepped forward, he grew more and more nervous. He tried hard not to clench his fists so as not to betray himself, yet didn't notice how his hands trembled.

Tang Liang didn't want to say anything, but under Chen Ruxian's gaze, he said, "The only task I received was to help you retrieve the supplies

in the Chen clan's building. Anything else doesn't concern me. It's not that I don't have balls. It's just not my responsibility!" As he finished, he turned his gaze specifically to Jin Feng.

Chen Ruxian pursed his lips and said with a sigh, "We can make do with leftovers for everything else, but you must leave salt, sugar, and medicine to us."

I mulled it over. Salt should not be one of the most important goods at the moment. When we plundered the supermarket before the apocalypse, we collected a mountain of it. It wasn't like we could eat foods with high sodium every day. As long as we could get the amount our bodies needed, it was enough.

Sugar and medicine were even less important. Though sugar was high in calories and great for replenishing energy, we still had chocolate!

As for medicine, the number of fighters in the Jiang Dominion was so small, while the commoners weren't even able to fight. Since they couldn't be sent out, how would they get injured? The few significant people that could get hurt also had Dàgē!

This time, Dàgē nodded and agreed without even looking at Jin Feng. She gave him a strange look, her expression slightly annoyed.

"No problem, right, sister-in-law?" Dàgē only then added.

Jin Feng's annoyance was completely gone and she readily agreed, "Not at all, Dàgē, you decide."

*She even left out the "Jiang" from his name!*

*I feel like Dàgē is selling me off now...*

"You're in luck this time," Dàgē lightly said to the others. "We're about done with our gathering. Except for the supplies in the main hall, you can go in and take everything else. Get in and get out quickly. If you wait for the aberrants to gather again, you won't be able to leave at all."

Tang Liang frowned and said, "Wait a moment, you keep mentioning aberrants. Those monsters are called aberrants? Just what do you know? This apocalypse—"

A sudden gunshot interrupted him. Even as I was running over, I saw Dàgē had already moved, turning sideways and covering his head with one hand. Clearly the gunshot just now had been aimed at his head!

I knew that Dàgē was already second tier and an ordinary gunshot wouldn't kill him even if it hit him in the head. Still, I couldn't help it that my heart was racing faster and faster, and my blood was surging until my head seemed about to burst!

Obviously, I wasn't the only one who was angry. Every member of the Jiang Dominion immediately aimed their guns at the enemy. Even those soldiers were no exception. The speed at which they drew their guns was definitely at a professional level. Jin Feng's people responded more slowly, but only compared to professional soldiers. Compared to regular people, the cool-headedness and reaction speed of these underworld figures were already at a god-like level.

Tang Liang's face had paled. He didn't look like he had known about the attack, but it didn't slow him down in drawing his own gun. On his side, everyone had pulled out their guns as well.

"It wasn't us!" Tang Liang said right away, but he still aimed his gun at Dàgē.

Dàgē lowered his hand. A trickle of blood ran from his temple to his neck, and the sight of it made me see red from anger.

He hadn't dodged it completely and hadn't been able to disintegrate the bullet in time. If Dàgē's reaction had been a tad slower, the bullet wouldn't have grazed him—it would have been lodged in his head!

"Èrgē, it's so cold," Shujun cautioned me quietly.

I did my best to restrain myself. Fortunately, it was winter. However, the sound of another gunshot undid all of my efforts. This time, Dàgē was prepared. He disintegrated the bullet in time, suffering no further injuries, but I still felt like freezing all our opponents to death!

Shujun grabbed my hand, the cold making her gasp. In a reflex, she let go, but she grabbed it again regardless. I had no choice but to calm down to avoid hurting my foolish mèimei. Instead, Xiao Sha rushed forward. With the wind under his control, he was too quick for anyone to react in time.

Though I didn't know why he had charged forward, I wanted to catch up to him. But right at that moment, there was a flash of bright light.

It wasn't any kind of ability I recognized. The glare seared my eyes, leaving nothing but a white haze. I couldn't see anything—

*Dàgē! Xiao Sha!*

## Chapter 10: Zhanjiang Garrison

The light should have faded, but my eyes still hadn't adapted and I couldn't see clearly. I saw only silhouettes of people standing in a white haze.

I was beside myself with panic. If Junjun hadn't been by my side, I would have rushed forward right away, but now, even calling out was out of the question. Everyone was blinded and any small movement could incite an attack.

"Nobody move!" Dàgē yelled, releasing his power at the same time. His power felt very different from mine. While my power froze people to the bone, Dàgē's power made people too scared to move, as if a single movement would turn them to dust. It was very useful, especially in times like this. As long as nobody moved or opened fire, it should prevent a chain reaction. If a fight broke out, we wouldn't be able to figure out how it started even by the time both sides got completely wiped out.

"Who the hell fired?" Tang Liang snarled. "If your hand slipped, just say so, and I won't kill you. But if I have to find out who's missing a bullet, I will personally shoot you!"

*Two shots were fired in succession, yet you still dare to say it was a slip of the hand. Not only is Tang Liang's appearance oafish, he's quite capable of making shit up as well.*

My surroundings gradually became visible again, and I was able to slowly take in the situation around me. Others still seemed to be

blinded, their eyes darting around without really seeing. This ability was actually not just a flash of light—it was also capable of temporarily blinding people. However, the person using the power was not skilled enough yet. Even with the element of surprise, they were only able to blind me for a few seconds.

Unexpectedly, Xiao Sha had already run to the other side, even overtaking Tang Liang, but now he didn't dare to continue. No matter who his original target was, several people were blocking his way. To make a careless move when everyone was blinded could lead to one big free for all.

*But who was his target?* I looked in the direction Xiao Sha was facing. There were a lot of people there, and everyone seemed a bit flustered by their blindness, which didn't make it easy to judge who the problem was.

"Their hand slipped? That's a lame excuse." Dàgē snorted, walking toward Xiao Sha as he spoke. Apparently, his vision had recovered as well.

Even though Dàgē's footsteps were very light, making almost no sound, Tang Liang still noticed. Perhaps he actually had psychic powers. He called out a warning, "Hey! Hey! Control your men. Don't let them move. Or do you want your comrades to be riddled with bullets?"

Dàgē halted and looked back at me. I blinked at him to indicate that I could see. Relieved, he turned back to Tang Liang and said, "One of

your people opened fired. Obviously, you can't control them at all. Why should I control my own?"

"Fuck, you can't be sure it was one of mine," Tang Liang swore. "It could just be someone after you! It was such a loud shot, and my people aren't deaf. How come no one heard who the fuck it was?!"

Dàgē words were slow and deliberate as he said, "Maybe everyone is in on it."

"Fuck..."

While Dàgē and Tang Liang argued, Xiao Sha hesitated for a moment, and then slowly started to back away, moving toward Dàgē. His movements were very light. Dàgē kept talking to Tang Liang, and deliberately took a step or two now and then. This time, Tang Liang didn't notice anything amiss. Only then, I understood why Dàgē had stepped forward; it had all been to help Xiao Sha.

However, what Tang Liang had said was quite reasonable. The shot had been so loud. If it really had been done by one of his troops, someone must have noticed. That meant there were only two possibilities. Tang Liang was actually pretending, or it really wasn't one of his men who opened fire.

But Xiao Sha had been running toward Tang Liang's team just now—wait! I narrowed my eyes. At the far end of Tang Liang's team, someone was... gradually turning dark?



He was quite a young man, who seemed even tenser than the others. He was clearly already trailing behind the team, but he was still slowly receding. There were obviously no objects around that could cover him, so it couldn't be a shadow that was darkening him—no, no, he wasn't just darkening, he was turning completely black!

Within a few seconds, his entire chest turned black. This could not be the result of shade—it was as if he had been soaked in ink!

The shadow guy, Shangguan Chenyang!

No wonder Xiao Sha had suddenly rushed forward. When he noticed that the person who had fired was his cousin, he wanted to catch him right away. Unfortunately, the sudden burst of light stopped him in his tracks. I didn't know whether this light was an ability of Shangguan Chenyang's, or whether someone else had helped him. And whether Tang Liang really did not know...

"I'm-I'm sorry!"

Hearing the apology, I glanced over, but only saw a furious Scar, his face so twisted he looked like a demon from hell. His vision was clearly restored as he grabbed Chen Yishao by the neck with one hand, with the clear intention of strangling him—*wait, doesn't Chen Yishao have light abilities?*

*An idiot of a teammate caused this disaster!*

His intentions might have been good, using his light ability in a moment of desperation as he saw Dàgē being attacked, but he

couldn't have done it at a worse time. If the leaders on both sides hadn't been so cool-headed and the teams well trained, both parties might have gunned each other down as soon as they lost their eyesight. It was hard to say how many would still be alive now!

Whether Chen Yishao would be strangled or not, I no longer paid attention to him. He caused too much trouble. It would serve him right. At this point, Shangguan Chenyang was the one to focus on. He had completely turned black, but he wasn't as darkly shadowed as last time, as I could still faintly make out his facial features.

He didn't seem to notice he wasn't as dark anymore though, and just casually hid in the shadows as before. But even I could see where he was, not to mention Xiao Sha.

"Scar, don't choke Chen Yishao." I quickly stopped Scar from completing his murderous mission. "The guy who shot the gun seems to have been illuminated by him. Look at the dark figure over there."

Scar frowned. When he looked in the direction I pointed at, he didn't see anything at first. After all, Shangguan Chenyang was entirely dark, and it was not easy to spot him. Fortunately, Scar was not an ordinary person. After careful observation, he relaxed his hand, startled.

Chen Yishao coughed, his face flushed red, and still panicked he touched his neck. But Scar must have held back. If he had used his full strength, snapping his neck would have been a piece of cake. He hadn't needed to squeeze so slowly, unless it was some kink of his...

At that moment, Tang Liang noticed there was something fishy going on. Looking at Dàgē, he said dissatisfied, "I told you already. Control your fucking people. They're as noisy as a food market, yet you're doing fuck all about it. Are you here to sell veggies?"

Dàgē looked back at Scar and asked coldly, "What are you doing?"

While I was still hesitant about how to point out Shangguan Chenyang, Scar jumped at the chance, pointing directly at him. "The shooter is there!"

Everyone turned to look in the direction Scar had indicated. Shangguan Chenyang was caught off guard and had no time to hide. He was only able to strengthen his shadow cover.

"Shangguan Chenhong's devil!" Tang Liang roared.

*Eh? His tone and words sound wrong. Could it be Tang Liang isn't one of Shangguan Chenhong's underlings? I thought Chenhong is the military-focused one in the Shangguan family. This rich and powerful family really made my head swim.*

Right after his angry roar, Tang Liang actually immediately fired a shot.

"Everyone, surround him! If you let him run away, I will make you do drills until you're in hell!"

Tang Liang's furious roar shook the sky, and I felt that he was even angrier with Shangguan Chenyang than with us. They surrounded him

so quickly, at least three times more diligently than when they had wanted to make us hand over the goods during our negotiations.

But the one who was just as angry was Xiao Sha, who yelled, "That guy was lying like I thought, saying he was driven out. I shouldn't have listened to his bullshit! He was always this glib guy, but it turns out he's even relying on Shangguan Chenhong, when he's obviously the half-brother of Shangguan Chenyu."

*Hot damn, I really don't understand the world of you local tyrants. I give up on sorting out the relationships in this drama of the local rich and powerful. Anyway, we need to catch the shadow guy first!*

"Give us some light." I gave Chen Yishao a pat. "Shine light at that person, but don't make it too bright. You can bundle the light, like a flashlight, and shine it just at him."

"I-I can't," Chen Yishao said, bewildered.

I grabbed both of his hands, cupping them so they formed a tube-like shape and said, "Gather the light in the palm of your hand and shoot it straight out. It's not difficult at all. Don't think you can't do it. Since you have learned to walk, you can definitely run!"

Of course, using your abilities was not such a simple matter, but I figured that in the case of someone like Chen Yishao, if you give him a bit more encouragement, perhaps he can bring about a miracle. His previous burst of light was definitely not some ordinary light, as it was enough to even blind me for a few seconds. This level of threat was certainly not inferior to a tier-one aberrant.

Chen Yishao's palms gradually started glowing. It looked like a ball of light, flickering unsteadily, as if it could explode at any moment.

"Make it straight, not round," I said quickly.

As I finished speaking, a straight line of light actually shot out... but the angle was crooked, almost blinding Tang Liang's men.

I moved Chen Yishao's hands until they were in the right position, shining directly at Shangguan Chenyang's chest. His entire body began to "whiten," starting from his chest. All his efforts to become a shadow went down the drain as he changed back to a normal person.

Shangguan Chenyang didn't seem to panic though. He just looked down at his hands, as if he couldn't care less about being surrounded.

Tang Liang rushed toward him, pointing his gun directly at his head, and demanded, "What the hell do you think you're doing? And think well before you answer. If you're not careful, I'll blow your brains out!"

However, Shangguan Chenyang ignored him. He lowered his hands, lifted his head, and shouted, "Tánggē, I've decided to follow you from now on. As long as you can keep me human, I will never betray you for as long as I live!"

Hearing that, Xiao Sha pulled a face like he smelled something foul. Clearly, he did not want to accept this troublemaker, but he could not reasonably refuse right away, so he took the opportunity to ask, "Why did you shoot at my commander?"

Shangguan Chenyang said calmly, "Tang Liang was sent to work together with the Chen family. Chenhong didn't want to see him successfully bring back the materials as agreed with the Chen family, so he sent me to follow Tang Liang's team and make them lose a few members if there was an opportunity. If I could eliminate them all, even better, because they are the only armed team of your brother's. Without them, Chenhong's prestige at the base would be even higher, because without soldiers you're useless."

Hearing that, Tang Liang would have gone raging mad, if Shangguan Chenyang's last words hadn't stunned him. He turned to look at Xiao Sha and blurted, "Fuck, isn't that kid Shangguan Chensha?"

Xiao Sha looked at him indifferently, without even responding.

Tang Liang scratched his head. "You look a bit different from your picture. The boss has been looking for you. One of my tasks was to inquire about your whereabouts. I didn't expect..."

He gave a hollow laugh.

*He probably hadn't regarded this task as a priority at all, which is why he hadn't even noticed Xiao Sha's presence.*

Xiao Sha said coldly, "I have left the Shangguan family, and I have nothing to do with Shangguan Chenhao!"

Tang Liang seemed like he wanted to speak, but couldn't because there were too many people around them. Fortunately, he moved the conversation back to Dàgē.

With a laugh, he said, "It's really like a flood rushing the dragon king's temple, kin fighting their own kin. Since our boss's younger brother is with you, we are definitely not enemies. Everything is that devil's fault! Think you can set me up? Fucking impossible!"

As everyone looked at the "devil," Shangguan Chenyang looked down at his hands. His body was already starting to darken again.

*What a weird ability. Although it would make survival easier, I think no one would choose to have this kind of ability.*

When Shangguan Chenyang lifted his head, his expression was a little gloomy, but he immediately covered it with a smile.

"Tánggē, I have some very important news you most definitely want to hear. How about we make a deal?"

Xiao Sha snarled, "I don't believe a word you say!"

Shangguan Chenyang took a deep breath and said, "Look at me, when I'm like this, is there anything more important than staying human? I will swear to anything, as long as you keep me human. I promise you from now on I'll do anything you say!"

Hearing that, Xiao Sha froze, and then looked at me.

*What are you looking at me for? I can't make him human. Chen Yishao might be able to, but he isn't one of my men, not even one of Jiang Dominion's.*

*Unless, I simply recruit him as one of my men? That way I can also conveniently keep him away from Feng... Eh, I mean, this guy's failures far exceed his successes, so he better stay away from Jin Feng, so as not to drag her down. It's not every time we have such good luck and can avoid a big disaster.*

It's really like striking two birds with one stone. Following up on my idea, I immediately turned my head and asked, "Feng, can you give me Chen Yishao?"

Chen Yishao looked startled, but he didn't protest. Scar must have really scared him just now.

"He's yours," Jin Feng said simply.

It really didn't take any effort. I was really afraid that I would be spoiled too much by Jin Feng, and I would one day become a pampered pretty boy, but it seemed that was already the case.

I nodded at Xiao Sha. No matter what, we should first get the so-called news out, and what we'd do then depended on the other's behavior.

"Well, what's the news?" Xiao Sha asked coldly.



Shangguan Chenyang glared at Chen Yishao, who automatically understood. He shot a beam of light at Shangguan Chenyang, to keep him from darkening.

Satisfied, Shangguan Chenyang went straight to the point and said, "Shangguan Chenhong is leading a group of soldiers to Old Town. If I'm correct, that's your base? I won't hide it from you. I was the one who told him. The last time you entered Lan City, only Old Town is in the direction you came from. At first, I wanted to follow you back to see what the situation was like. If it was a good location, I could tell Chenhong to seize it, but you didn't come back. I could only give up on the investigation and go straight back to report."

*Damnit, Xiao Sha's prejudice against the Shangguan family was correct. We should have dispatched this guy from the beginning.*

"Chenhong discovered that the location of Old Town is very good. The terrain is high, allowing for a wide view of the surroundings. Although it's very close to Lan City, it's easy to defend and difficult to attack, so he decided to conquer it as—"

"When did he set out?" Dàgē interrupted him.

Facing Dàgē, Shangguan Chenyang didn't dare to take him lightly, and he answered carefully, "I don't know. When Tang Liang set out, I was sent to cause him trouble."

Dàgē narrowed his eyes, which carried a clear implication: *you're absolutely useless. Why should we keep you?*

Shangguan Chenyang quickly said, "He set out at most two days ago. Can't be earlier than that. There is a lot of disorder in the Shangguan family. Shangguan Chenhong isn't able to send out troops whenever he wants, unless he's willing to only send his own private soldiers, but he's really not someone to make a big effort all on his own. Even though he wanted to dispatch Tang Liang, he just sent me over. "

*Two days! If they marched even a bit fast, they would have already arrived at our doorstep!*

Hearing this, Dàgē turned toward his men and said, "Everyone, put down any unnecessary things, including supplies, and only bring the necessities. In ten minutes, we'll meet up and set out."

After that, he said to Jin Feng, "We'll leave these supplies for you."

Jin Feng nodded, but she didn't intend to take advantage of it and said straight away, "I'll trade them for arms and ammunition."

I saw that Dàgē wanted to speak, like he didn't plan to accept it, but then he saw the weapons that Scar brought. There were only a few, but they were a rare type of machine gun. In this battle where two factions would clash, they would prove quite helpful, so in the end Dàgē did not object.

"How many people did the Shangguan family bring?" Xiao Sha asked Shangguan Chenyang.

Shangguan Chenyang looked at our team and said helplessly, "I don't know the exact number, but when attacking a base, even if they look

down on you, there are always at least three to four hundred. If the few of you have to deal with the Shangguan family, it's not enough by far. I hope your... No, our base has even more people. I'm in the same boat as you are now."

Hearing this number, Dàgē's face dropped. Three or four hundred people might not sound like a lot. Previously, Wen Jianuo and Chen Yanqing had brought over two hundred people. They hadn't been a threat to our territory, since those with weapons numbered only forty people, and they didn't have many bullets left.

However, the people from the Shangguan family came from the military district, and for sure they would all have weapons. If three to four hundred people fire at the same time, even a tier three or higher will be swept away by the sea of bullets.

Jin Feng said, "Jin Zhan is coming. If you wait a while longer, you can talk to him about working together. If this Shangguan family takes your base now, they'll most likely come to rob our supplies later on. It's only a matter of time 'til we face off with them."

Shangguan Chenyang gestured at Tang Liang. In an attempt to save his own life and maintain his human appearance, he vigorously said, "You can still negotiate with him. Shangguan Chenhong is not the only one in charge of the Shangguan family. There's also Shangguan Chenhao. He was opposed to robbing others' territory and food in the first place, and doesn't agree with Chenhong at all. He definitely wants to see bad luck befall him!"

I had my doubts about that. It might be all right to give Shangguan Chenhong some trouble, but after all, those three or four hundred people are still the people of the Shangguan family. Will Xiao Sha's brother really help us? It was hard to say, as I didn't understand the world of the rich. Maybe in order to gain power, the lives of three or four hundred people are small fry, swallowed whole with ease.

Tang Liang hurriedly said, "I can't make that call. I'll have to contact the boss at the very least."

He added, "Even if he can't help you openly, sneaking some weapons to you shouldn't be an issue. Shangguan Chenhong already holds most of the troops. If we let him get your base too, we also have no way to survive."

I saw Dàgē frown. If he wanted the help of the Jin family and the Shangguan family, he couldn't return right away.

I whispered, "Dàgē, help heal me. I'll hurry back with Xiao Sha and Yunqian first."

Dàgē retorted, "The Shangguan family has so many people. What can you do, bringing only two people back?"

I was silent for a moment, then pointed out, "Dàgē, the weather is very cold now. The absolute majority of the people haven't eaten enough crystals, and for them it's even colder. Together with Xiao Sha and Yunqian, if it's just to defend the base, I can do a lot."

"And me, take me with you!" Junjun said. "I have lightning powers!"

*This lightning power.... would be really useful! People nowadays can't withstand electricity. Junjun plus Yunqian, and also Xiao Sha... Damn, I have never seen a water tornado charged with electricity before, but despite that, I have a feeling it will be a masterstroke! Use it and we'll definitely turn the tide for us!*

However, seeing his younger brother and sister returning home to face an army of three or four hundred people, it'd be a miracle if Dàgē was able to feel at ease. Putting myself in his shoes, thinking about having to watch Dàgē and my little sister face an army without me being there, it would be enough to make me cry two frozen rivers of tears.

Dàgē pursed his lips and said, "Okay, you go back with your èrgē."

*... Wait, is this our dàgē or not? Surely it's the Ice Emperor?*

"I will go back too!" Guan Weijun hurriedly said, echoing Junjun's words. *This is rare. She doesn't want to stay with Dàgē?*

I shook my head and said, "The battlefield will be filled with guns and hails of bullets. You need to wait until your ability is strong enough to withstand bullets. You don't have to go back this time. You'll be Dàgē's bodyguard."

Panicking, she said, "But—but my mom is still there!"

When I heard this, I suddenly realized why Guan Weijun wanted to go back. Seeing her so flustered, I felt a tension finally release. In this life, my mother has a lively, cheerful, and filial daughter. For me, she is no

longer my most important person. I hadn't even thought about her just now, and only thought of Dàgē and my little sister. *Even Uncle and Auntie are just as important as my mother from my previous life.*

*Even if I still have memories of "Guan Weijun," I am not her anymore.*

"Don't worry!" I pointed to Shujun and said, "Mèimei will go back with me. Do you think I will let anyone enter the base? Even if Old Town is only a temporary base, we definitely won't let anyone so much as touch it!"

Guan Weijun was a little surprised. I suddenly remembered that she didn't know about my strength at all, but that didn't matter. She would become a core member sooner or later. I just knew it.

It should be said that if she did not have such potential, Dàgē would not have brought her with him at all. He is praised by all for his foresight and luck in choosing group members, after he once took a shortcut through an alley and came back with Xiao Sha!

*Damn, it can't be that I'm really the only one of the Jiang family with rotten luck...*

Guan Weijun responded, "All right, then you protect my mother, as I protect your brother!"

That moment, Dàgē stuffed something in my hand. It was a bunch of evolutionary crystals, and there was actually a tier two crystal in it. *This must be the crystal of that Wolfman?*

He handed two more machine guns and a large batch of bullets to Xiao Sha and Yunqian, and only then said, "I will return home as soon as possible. Until then, the base is yours."

As he said this, everyone around us looked amazed. Scar and Shangguan Chenyang looked like Dàgē had handed over the base to a ten-year-old.

I carefully promised, "Relax, Dàgē, I will definitely protect our temporary base."

Guan Weijun laughed and said, "The temporary Jiang base? Let's tell that to the people from the Shangguan family! It doesn't sound imposing at all!"

I looked at her helplessly. *What could I say? The JDT? That's also not right. Only ten of the three hundred people are members of the mercenary group.*

*Or should I directly say that we are the base of the Jiang Dominion—no, the words "Jiang Dominion" should be reserved for a larger place. Our Jiang Dominion cannot be based in such a small place like Old Town!*

*The term "Jiang Dominion" should be reserved for a larger area, such as Lan City, or an even more expansive one ...*

"Since it is a temporary base, let's call it Jiang Provisional: Zhanjiang," Dàgē decided.

*This naming ability is impressive—impressive in how unoriginal it is. However, Dàgē is always right, and I as his little brother cannot oppose him. At best I can secretly change it around a tiny bit.*

*Jiang Professional, Zhanjiang Garrison. This sounds like a normal name for a base.*

“Well, no matter whether it is Shangguan, or any other family or group, no one can take Zhanjiang Garrison!”

After I finished this courageous declaration, I noticed that the people around me all wore the same expression. They looked like grownups smiling at a little kid that said his dream was to become president.

*I just want to be the Ice Emperor, not the president, really.*

Jin Feng stroked my head and said, “Wait for me. After I explain to Jin Zhan, I will quickly come to save you.”

*Wait, was it not enough to save me twice? I already can't pay you back!*

While the others sniggered, she grabbed my hand and gave me something. A crystal, second tier.

I was silent, thinking about my fight with the butterfly and how I only got a second-tier crystal after suffering heavy injuries. *And now I got two crystals just like that. What did I do to deserve this?*



I couldn't help but clasp both hands around Jin Feng's holding the crystal.

"What are you doing?" Jin Feng asked, but I had already let go of her hand again. She didn't ask again, clenching her fist, holding the ice crystal in the hollow of her palm where no one could see it.

"Shujun, Xiao Sha, Yunqian, let's go!"

Although we were only delayed by around ten minutes, that was already too much. We could only pick up our speed, return to Zhanjiang Garrison, and hope we were not too late. *No harm can come to anyone of the Jiang Dominion!*

Luckily, we found two oil-filled motorcycles on the way, and advanced much faster.

While the wind rushed in my ears, I also heard Junjun, who sat behind me, asking curiously, "Èrgē, did you give some ice to Feng-jiě just now? I felt the energy! Did you make a flower? Or was it an ice sculpture of Feng-jiě wearing a princess gown?"

*... Feng dressed like a princess, I can't imagine it. Dressed like a queen would be far more suitable, but also with that kind of incredibly sharp crown that she could use to stab people to death.*

"Neither." I coughed and said, "It was just a chunk of ice."

Having said that, I could feel her fingers poking my sides the rest of the way, until we reached Lan City and picked up the car. During the

bumpy ride, Junjun sat in the passenger seat, pouting and muttering to herself.

"I really want to know what the ice crystal was. Èrgē is secretly in a relationship and didn't even tell me. Weijun-jiě said she would never be the kind of sister-in-law that would make Dàgē forget his little sister, and now my most beloved èrgē has found a wife and forgot all about his sister..."

*I surrender! This Mèimei I raised myself, raised to be so devious I have to tearfully keep spoiling her!*

"It was a heart."

### Extra 1: Lonely Thunder

Jin Zhan was sitting in a large black office chair, listening to his underlings report on Debert. That man known as the Flame King had sent a message, hoping to discuss combining their strengths to reclaim human territories.

*Reclaim?* A smile almost tugged at his lips, which might have been his first smile in years.

"That's enough." His interest had gradually died down.

"Jin-gē, maybe we really could cooperate?" his underlings said carefully. "There are too many aberrants and they are too strong. I heard that the Aberrant King in Lan City kills people on sight. Maybe one day it'll come after us."

"Where would we start this 'reclaiming'? From Debert's side? Do you want me to leave this place? Or let's say we start from our location. Do you believe Debert would come here?"

Seeing the embarrassed faces of his underlings, Jin Zhan felt regret over the loss of his truly capable generals, the twin brothers Lü. They had always done well. The elder brother was courageous, the younger brother wise. One would craft the plan and the other would carry it out, without much need of Jin Zhan's orders, even coming up with more and better plans than he could.

Even Feng's underling Scar would be better than this useless lot in front of him. *What a pity...*

*If only the twins were still here, perhaps there would have been one more top tier elite.* Lü Mengren, as his name implied, was a fierce general. There would be no need for Jin Zhan to be stuck in a besieged city, unable to leave his post.

Jin Zhan's lips curled into a sneer, causing each of his underlings who saw to tremble in fear and wonder whether they were the one who had angered this god—the Thunder God!

*Where did all these "if only's" come from? If I really wanted to dwell on the past, then if only Feng...* The sound of knees hitting the ground one after the other interrupted Jin Zhan's short-lived musings. He looked coldly at the group of underlings kneeling on the ground, begging for forgiveness in all kinds of fearful tones.

If it wasn't for the "Jin-gē" they shouted, Jin Zhan would have thought they must have been worshipping and kneeling for an ancient emperor standing by his side.

Since when had his underlings stopped valuing even their knees?

Ah, yes, it was after Ah Zhi had left on his own without permission to avenge his brother's death. In the end, he followed in his brother's footsteps and never returned. Both brothers died by the hands of the same aberrant.

When the news reached Jin Zhan, he wasn't able to control his rage and despair. Anyone standing close to him was half electrocuted to death, and some of them almost didn't recover.

*Asura!*

*One day...*

A few threads of lightning crackled between Jin Zhan's fingers. The underlings on the ground were so frightened that they even started kowtowing. Though their movements sounded like they were playing ping pong with their foreheads, Jin Zhan didn't pay attention to them at all.

He gazed into the distance. Out there were two powerful energies, one of which even shocked him...

Jin Zhan rose to his feet. He could only think of one person—no, one aberrant. Thirteen.

Although there was no certainty of victory, he still planned on going. With the other party so close, what room was there for fleeing? Unless he planned to escape by himself and abandon all the people who were at the base, he would have to face his opponent head-on.

"Jin-gē, where are you going?"

Jin Zhan glanced at his panic-stricken men. He wouldn't take anyone with him. In the kind of world they lived in now, there was already no big advantage in numbers. To take anyone with him would be a death sentence for them.

But when Jin Zhan arrived at the scene, the situation was not like he had expected at all. One of the two energies had already been wiped out. The one that remained was the one that had intimidated even him.

A figure stood in front of the body of a huge aberrant—no, a “mutilated corpse.” A steady energy radiated from the figure’s hands. He must have found the aberrant’s crystal yet seemed to have no intention of leaving. He just stood there quietly.

*This person...*

Even after so many years, Jin Zhan still remembered this person’s face, but his memory was a bit vague. *What is his name again?*

*Jiang Shutian?*

Frost covered everything, the cold so intense that anyone nearby would feel the chill even in their hearts.

*This man is the Ice Emperor.*

Jin Zhan thought it over, and finally remembered that before the end of the world, Jiang Shutian had indeed lived nearby.

The memory of those first days of the apocalypse were too intense, dripping with blood, red as far as the eye could see. The final days before the end had become like black and white pictures. Even if anyone remembered, they were like a distant memory.

*When had the Ice Emperor returned?*

To travel across the world in these times was anything but simple. The overwhelming power of the aberrants in the sky was too great. Each and every one of them sustained itself with fresh meat, evolving quickly and often even banding together. Since the sky belonged to the aberrants, no one dared to fly.

*Did he travel by boat?*

The ocean was not a good place either, and no one even dared to live close to the shore.

*No wonder the Ice Emperor is so fearless.* Jin Zhan couldn't fully assess his strength. It seemed that there was some disparity in strength...

He didn't move. He didn't need to say anything. The Ice Emperor had already noticed him for sure. He even had a feeling that the Ice Emperor was waiting for him to speak, to say even one word he shouldn't so the Ice Emperor could happily give him a beating.

However, Jin Zhan had no intention to take a beating. He had thought that he would fight Thirteen to the death, kill him or be killed. He knew he couldn't have won. But though he had come knowing it would have been his last battle, that didn't mean that he was in need of a beating.

After watching for a while, Jin Zhan wanted to leave, but he couldn't. His sixth sense told him not to move if he wanted to avoid a fight. While he stood helpless like that, a woman rushed toward them.

"Leader!"

She shouted "Leader" again and again without a response. The woman fell to her knees and started crying, without a sound and without end. There were so many tears. Jin Zhan hadn't seen a woman cry like this for a long time. All women who were brought before him would adapt to the situation, flirting and flaunting themselves, and even when they had to cry, there would be no endless flow of tears and snot.

The last time he had seen a woman cry like this was when, shortly after the apocalypse, the woman he cherished the most lost her daughter...



"Jin-gē, many people were seriously injured. It's not looking good. The doctor said that our medicine might not be enough. Wh-what should we do?"

Jin Zhan's lips were pressed tight as he listened to his underlings' report on how many people they had lost. Half of them had turned into monsters, and many of the remaining half had been eaten by the monsters. The last surviving people all suffered injuries to some extent. The fortunate thing was that, though the number of people Jin Zhan could rely upon was few, many of those he depended upon the most were still alive. It was unavoidable that some had turned into aberrants and others were caught unaware and were eaten, but compared to losing half, the number he lost was simply not worth mentioning.

However, the most important people were still outside.



Jin Zhan frowned, hearing frantic cries.

"Xiaoyue, where is my Xiaoyue?"

Someone rushed past in a flurry of white. Before, Jin Zhan had always felt she brightened the room. She was a most rare sight, always able to bring a sense of serenity to all around her.

He remembered meeting Lin Yixue for the first time. The girl had been standing in the hall, slender and delicate, like a doe who had lost her way, not matching the surroundings at all. Even though she was several years older than him, Jin Zhan had still thought the girl was younger.

Therefore, when hearing this girl was his stepmother, Jin Zhan had felt it to be utterly ridiculous.

Even more absurd was that in the days to come, his stepmother became the person he cherished the most.

Today marked the first day that Jin Zhan didn't want to see her.

Seeing that the situation was going south, Jin Zhan had sent someone to find Jin Feng, asking her to pick up Jin Xiaoyue on the way and return together. He never expected something to happen in the middle of the night. Now no one knew where the two were, and it was impossible for him to go and save them!

The city was crawling with monsters, and all Jin Zhan had left were wounded men. Even firearms could not be used lightly, as any loud noise would attract monsters. There was simply no way for them to overcome their situation.

Lin Yixue grabbed her stepson's hand, like a drowning woman grabbing the last piece of driftwood.

"Ah Zhan, what about my Xiaoyue? Why isn't Xiaoyue here? Didn't you send someone to pick her up?"

Facing this woman, Jin Zhan simply couldn't make a foul expression.

"I sent Feng to her."

"Why haven't they come back yet?" Lin Yixue was beside herself with worry. "Xiaoyue is so easily scared. She must be frightened. There are so many monsters. Ah Zhan, can't you send more people to pick her up?"

In the end, she was still biased toward her biological daughter. Jin Zhan thought about how this girl had become a stepmother at a very young age and had treated him and Jin Feng pretty well, especially Jin Feng. Even though Yixue often failed to understand them and always saw her own ordinary, girlish tastes as the standard, which actually gave Jin Feng a lot of trouble, in the end her intentions were good.

Jin Feng had taken it in stride. Her relationship with her stepmother and Xiaoyue had always been good. Even though they had nothing at all in common to talk about, Feng would listen quietly.

Jin Zhan remained silent. The expressions of the people around him were filled with anger, but the one whose gaze held the most hatred was Scar, Jin Feng's right-hand man. On that day at headquarters, he had been bitten by a comrade who had turned into an aberrant. His leg was so swollen it resembled a big sausage. He couldn't walk without crutches and even had a fever. Even so, he forced himself to come over to deal with the situation, hoping to free up more manpower to rescue Jin Feng.

If it hadn't been for Jin Zhan telling him, "You will only be a burden to Feng if you went," Scar really would have dragged himself out on his injured leg to save her.

Lü Zhi grabbed Scar's shoulder and said, "Ha, don't be so nervous, Scar. Feng-jiě is not someone who's so easily snuffed out. If even she can't survive this world, we might as well shoot ourselves in the head before it's too late."

Scar knew that Feng-jiě was powerful, but the kind of world they were in now, they simply couldn't afford to relax.

They waited for two more days. Even though Jin Zhan was exhausted, and many casualties unexpectedly revived as monsters, causing a second wave of injuries and deaths, he still led his people out in search of Jin Feng. Somehow, in a street not far off from their location, they stumbled upon Ben.

"Where's Feng?"

When Jin Zhan saw Ben was covered in blood, his heart sank. Ben was young, and although Jin Feng made him train a lot, she never allowed him to be in danger in any way.

Ben had collapsed to the ground and said angrily, "It was all to save that damn girl. She was already a hindrance, yet she refused to leave just like that. She just had to go and save those university classmates—"

"Where is Feng?" Jin Zhan interrupted him.

Ben's lips trembled. With a bowed head and choking on sobs, he said, "There were too many monsters in the university. We were trapped, and waiting around would only lead to death. The only thing we could do was break out. Feng-jiě told us to go first, and she would follow. I didn't think she'd run in the opposite direction and fire a gunshot. In the end, all the monsters swarmed her..."

Jin Zhan was silent for a long time before remembering to ask one more question.

"Xiaoyue is also dead?"

Ben gritted his teeth in anger and said, "She isn't dead. She and her classmates were running ahead of me. I was hurt and couldn't run as fast. They ran incredibly fast, and were gone in the blink of an eye!"

Having heard that, Jin Zhan didn't say anymore, but lifted Ben up himself, and led his people back to the base.

When Lin Yixue didn't see her daughter among them, her tears kept falling, like pearls from a broken string. She begged Jin Zhan to save Jin Xiaoyue.

Standing aside, Scar's eyes flashed red in anger and he yelled, "Because of that girl, Feng-jiě is dead! Jin Feng, your own sister! You still want to save that girl?"

"But Xiaoyue is also Ah Zhan's sister!" Lin Yixue sobbed.

Scar just sneered in disdain.

Jin Zhan was silent. They were both his sisters, but Jin Feng and Jin Xiaoyue were different. Rather than saying Jin Xiaoyue was his sister, one might say she was the daughter of the woman he cherished the most. Because Lin Yixue cared, he cared.

Jin Feng had been his sister by blood and his equal. He had always trusted her to have his back.

No one could see the depths of the regret Jin Zhan felt in that moment. He might think of Lin Yixue like that, but her daughter was like a pet at best. How could a pet compare to the life of a relative? What a joke!

However, Jin Zhan still answered Lin Yixue's plea and sent people to find Jin Xiaoyue. She and her classmates had fallen into the hands of a group of men. Of course, it hadn't ended well. Her fingers had been trampled until they were all crooked. Her nose was broken and even her vision was affected. One leg had even been crippled, and she had to drag it when she walked. The inhumanities she'd suffered had even

muddled her mind. From a good university student, she had turned into an incontinent madwoman.

Scar still refused to let her off the hook. As soon as he got the chance, he finished her off with one stroke of his knife. After that, he took Ben and ran away.

In truth, the reason to retrieve Jin Xiaoyue had been to avenge Jin Feng's death. But when Jin Zhan saw the condition she was in, he understood that death might actually be a relief for her, so he didn't do anything.

That was the first time Jin Zhan saw Lin Yixue cry in such an ugly manner. The following days she became even uglier.

Another woman gone mad.

*The only woman able to cope in this crazy world must have been Jin Feng, Jin Zhan thought to himself. Why is Lin Yixue, a woman so weak she can't even kill a cockroach, still alive, while Jin Feng is dead?*

Simple. Her own brother had killed her.



"Leader, you still haven't avenged Xiao Sha!"

The Ice Emperor finally moved. He turned and only said, "Go back." He glanced at Jin Zhan's hiding place. His gaze was as dark as an abyss, not a single thing reflected in his eyes, not even the mighty Thunder God.

The woman wiped her tears and struggled to her feet. She had been kneeling for a long time. Even though in these times people were quite fit, her knees were numb.

When she turned, a stranger stood in front of her. She gasped, but could not attack him. Their difference in strength was too large. Under the immense power pressing down on her, even moving was difficult. Yet she wasn't nervous. She was with the leader. There was no way he would stand by doing nothing while she was in danger!

Jin Zhan said to this woman with eyes puffy from crying, "There is a man called Scar who is not far from here in the southern suburbs. He has some power. Ask the Ice Emperor to take him in."

The woman froze.

"Make sure not to let Scar die. I, Jin Zhan, will owe you one."

"Thunder God Jin Zhan?" The woman stared at him.

Though she was astonished, she looked forward and saw that the Ice Emperor had ignored their conversation and was leaving without a word. The woman panicked, afraid that she would be abandoned if she didn't keep up with him. Quickly, she said, "I will do my best." She hurried after him.

Jin Zhan looked at the departing figures of the two people, yet he knew that the man was all alone.

*I wonder if the Flame King Debert, who is in the top twelve as well, is also just as lonely?*

Jin Zhan felt he actually might have some interest in meeting him now.

—Lonely Thunder • End—



## Extra 2: One Day in the Apocalypse

Vice-Captain of the Ice Spears and Jiang Dominion's secret big boss gives an announcement on the day of the typhoon:

"Hello, members of the JDT. The typhoon has arrived, meaning there'll be heavy wind and rain, and many aberrants will be blown into the sky. Please watch out for any falling objects that can bite people.

"Metal and earth users, please report to Lily. The base's signboards need to be fixed, and we must be on our guard for mudslides on the rear hillside.

"Those with thunder and lightning powers, please stay inside and do your chores. Don't go out, to avoid accidental electrical discharges that might harm others.

"Those with wind powers, don't mess around. Gusts are already at level 17. Please don't take advantage of them to practice your powers. If the gusts become greater than 18, I will soak you in the rain and let the thunder and lightning troops practice their abilities. Yes, I'm talking to you, Xiao Sha!

"Dàgē, please take advantage of the weather to rest for a while. Just stand on the balcony, with your jacket rippling in the wind, your expression that of someone who is sure of victory, master of his own fate, and you'll ease the people's minds and attract some more talented people.

“Ordinary members must keep in mind the black uniform of the Jiang Dominion with silver trim and a patch of blue. If you are blown away by the wind, please find a patrolman wearing the uniform to help you. If you ask the wrong person for aid, you may either be taken and experimented on, used as cannon fodder, or eaten, and the result will be unimaginable.

“Black with silver trim and a patch of blue. Remember the uniform to save your life. The JDT cares about your safety.”

—One Day in the Apocalypse • End—

## Epilogue: Afterword

The *Dominion's End* series has been one of the greatest challenges in my writing career, probably because of the broad setting and the large number of characters. I have to keep close track of all the powers, characters, relationships, and the developments of each of those. On top of that, I have to make the whole situation clear to all readers within the constraints of first-person narration. This is really a big challenge.

The way the characters influence each other is another challenge.

The rebirth of Jiang Shuyu is completely like the idiom, "pull one hair and move the entire body," or like the Western expression of the butterfly effect. The changes he made to the situation are so great that even Jiang Shuyu himself cannot fully comprehend them. He can guess he changed the fate of the Jiang family, the fate of the Jiang Dominion, but he couldn't have guessed he would influence even the Jin family.

What the protagonist knows and doesn't know, what the reader knows and doesn't know, in stories with first-person narration this is usually the same. But my protagonists are constantly so stupid, they always know less than the reader. They'd almost be embarrassed to say that they are the protagonist!

Especially Jiang Shuyu, a healthy guy with a simple mind. Yes, this is how you can describe him. Although these words might not do his appearance justice, that's just the kind of guy he is.

As the first-person narrator and protagonist, Shuyu is too stupid to even guess what good he has done. The author has to resort to using extra chapters to tell everyone about the Jin family and how they've been affected by the flap of the butterflies' wings.

\*\*\* The following contains spoilers for this volume. If you haven't read the book yet, please don't peek at the epilogue below this line \*\*\*

The rebirth of Jiang Shuyu caused Jiang Shutian to return from Glacia to the Meisian continent, where he went to Jin Zhan to ask for weapons. Doing so, he also warned Jin Zhan about the apocalypse. It was only a matter of a few hours, but this time, Jin Feng and Jin Xiaoyue were able to return home in time.

This caused the current appearance of a fierce, fiery woman, and Scar and Ben stay at the Jin family obediently and don't jump ship. Jin Zhan also continues his unrequited love toward his stepmother, and there is no falling out between them.

What's interesting is that this time, Jin Xiaoyue's situation is also very strange. If Jiang Shuyu hadn't been reborn, who knows what kind of situation Jin Xiaoyue, who only got reborn after the apocalypse, would have brought about? Would they have been able to get to the Jin's house in time?

This is yet another developing story. It's like mapping a tree—choosing different branches can make a big difference in the characters' lives.

I try to write *Dominion's End* using this tree-like scenario. Different choices and circumstances lead to different lives. First, there is the

difference of the Ice Emperor and Jiang Shutian, and also the different outcomes of the Jin family. Of course, there will be more and more differences in the future.

The Ice Emperor and Thunder God led lonely lives in the past life. Can they find fulfillment in this life? And what of the Flame King?

It's all still unknown, so please continue to follow *Dominion's End* and see what kind of stories we will come across this time!

By Yu Wo



**Are [Character Introductions] like these really okay?—  
translated by Miaka\_Mei (proofread by Arcedemius; C/E edited  
by lucathia)**

Are  
[Character  
Introductions]  
like these really  
okay?



### ⊕Zheng Xing⊕

The military doctor of the Jiang Dominion Troop. Following the apocalypse, he came into possession of earth powers useful for erecting buildings and growing plants. Recently, he has begun to advance on the path of providing essential assistance—that is, if you consider spiking walls with sharp thorns, littering the grounds with booby traps, and raising an impregnable fortress within the realm of “essential” activities.

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### ◆ Su Ying ◆

She was naturally timid by nature. However, after Jiang Shuyu scared the shit out of her, she thought of him as the ultimate demon king (maybe she hit the nail on the head). She was forced to join the Ice Spears later on, but at the very least she doesn't see Jiang Shuyu that often because he usually shuts himself in his room or suddenly vanishes without a trace. He isn't around much at all. That is, until some guy ranked no more than an underling of a certain demon king started to occasionally loiter around the squad with pick-up lines. Thereafter, she became increasingly timid.



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The real captain of the Ice Spears. According to the protagonist's plan, his subordinate and vice-captain in name only—Jiang Shuyu—was incapable of doing great things, yet disdained doing minor tasks. Besides drilling soldiers and farming, he didn't bother with anything else. Plus, he would often go missing without a word. Thus, Wen Jianuo ended up becoming the captain of the Ice Spears both in name and in fact. When Jiang Shuyu occasionally appeared to toss them an order, he would lead the squad through hell or high water. Basically, he was way too capable!

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