

Apocalypse 521

Chapter 521

900 million World Layers.

Super Dimensional Zones.

A screen of light appeared.

Barry and Kitty appeared on a busy intersection.

This was Sun City, a Super Dimensional world that was close to the Club.

They were heading on their way.

“How much longer do we need?” Barry asked.

Kitty consoled him: “Bro, don’t be in a hurry, with only the two of us, we won’t be able to go against the entire True Demon army”

“Gu Qing Shan that guy probably won’t last for too long, so we need to hurry— so how much longer exactly do we need?” Barry asked again.

“We have to contact a few trustworthy comrades first before we head to Aboul, the entire trip should take at least one and a half day” Kitty told him.

“Damn it, if my leg—”

“Your leg is already recovering as fast as it could, we can only follow along the trail of Super Dimensional worlds, don’t think about anything else”

Kitty sternly told him.

Compared to other worlds, Super Dimensional worlds were much safer.

Furthermore, with Kitty’s spatial powers, they can return to the Club from any other Super Dimensional world.

For Barry’s safety, they’ve been traversing through a trail of Super Dimensional worlds.

As soon as Kitty said that, she noticed something.

She suddenly pulled out a sheet of stationary paper.

Poof!

The paper started burning.

The entire sheet of paper was quickly burnt away.

Kitty’s ears drooped down as her expression became sorrowful

Barry lowered his voice, asking: “Is that Aboul’s guardian’s token?”

“It was, like me, he enjoyed writing, but despite being so strong, his novels are really shitty so I’ve always teased him about that”

Saying so, Kitty couldn’t help but shook her head.

Such a token being destroyed meant that the person was no longer of this world.

Barry looked at the slowly burning paper and also deeply sighed.

Aboul’s guardian being eliminated showed that the demons have begun to move.

“Did you not tell him?” he asked.

“I already sent him a message, but it’s likely that he never received it” Kitty answered.

“I know about him... how strange, he isn’t weak at all, so why did he get killed without being able to do anything?”

Barry became more cautious.

He muttered: “If it was a sudden attack by the demon army, he would’ve did everything he could to stop them, making a very large commotion”

Kitty continued: “The surrounding worlds would also be alerted, and Combatants from various places would’ve gone to help”

“That’s right, and the Spire Keeper Association would’ve also issued an emergency call before anything else”

They both went silent and glanced around.

This place still has the hustle and bustle of a crowded city without any signs of panic.

At this point, a person walked past them with a newspaper published by the Spire Keeper Association.

They followed after him.

Quickly glancing over the news on it, they stopped.

“If there were news of Aboul, it would’ve made today’s headlines, but there wasn’t even any news of Aboul” Kitty commented.

Barry fell silent.

He was squeezing the pair of metal boxing gloves on his hand tightly.

“Bro?” Kitty worriedly asked.

“I’m fine, but it seems like more people have turned to the side of the demons” Barry spoke.

Kitty sighed and said nothing.

— the only situation where Aboul’s guardian could be killed without alerting anyone was when he was completely defenseless.

And who could approach him in such a state?

Those that he deemed trustworthy.

Barry spoke: "We need to hurry up"

"Hm"

The two of them quickly left.

...

Aboul Hotel.

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The royalty green room.

Gu Qing Shan also held a letter in his hand.

Kitty's voice came from the paper.

[Some sort of extreme danger will appear in Aboul, with your current strength, you stand no hope of going against it—no, even the entirety of Aboul and people of the several thousand World Layers around it would still not be able to go against it]

[I believe this might be the demon's ploy, Aboul will definitely fall]

Kitty's voice seemed impatient.

[Qing Shan, after you meet your girlfriend, please use the void string to immediately return to the Club—only a Super Dimensional world can be considered safe]

[I've reinforced the void string and added twice as much power into it, so there won't be an issue even if you bring 3-5 people with you]

[Remember, do not stay there for too long]

Perhaps hesitating for a bit, her voice came again after a short pause.

[If you can't make it back in time, please find somewhere safe and wait for us]

[My brother's wound needs 2 days to completely heal, so 2 days later, we will definitely save you and your girlfriend]

Hearing that, Gu Qing Shan's heart slowly sank.

Sure enough, in such a crucial situation, Barry and Kitty were reliable people.

But they won't make it in time.

Something big was about to happen in Aboul.

The demons were coming.

Gu Qing Shan wasn't sure how Kitty managed to find out such a thing, but he believed that Kitty wasn't someone that said things arbitrarily without a reason.

And Kitty wouldn't write such a letter specifically just for a joke.

The situation was really unsafe.

Gu Qing Shan felt impatient.

Just when can Su Xue Er leave Triste's world?

Even worse than that, I can't get in at all.

Just how should I get to Su Xue Er and leave here as fast as possible?

No matter how much composure he had normally, getting such a sudden message from Kitty, he couldn't think of any way to get around this.

While he was thinking, a voice came from next to him.

"Hello sir"

Gu Qing Shan almost jumped.

He looked up to see the little maid standing in front of him once again.

She came without a sound or shadow once again, his inner sight didn't notice her at all.

As a cultivator, Gu Qing Shan was really wary of these types of sudden appearances.

Although he himself uses skills like [Shadow Shift] and [Ground Shrink], being approached by someone else like this was still stressful.

"That voice just now was Kitty, was it not? I'm sorry to ask, did you not know what was going to happen in About before?" the little maid asked him with a scared tone of voice.

"That's right, I only found out about it just now" Gu Qing Shan replied.

Seeing him admit it so openly, the little maid's eyes changed a bit.

She muttered: "Kitty? Regardless of what they did, the fact that she and Barry are good people is well-known. Mother also said that they were some of the few people you can absolutely trust..."

Gu Qing Shan heard that, but didn't reply to her.

He was very impatient, wracking his brains to think of a way to get to Su Xue Er so he didn't have the mind to say anything to the maid.

At this time, something changed on the War God UI.

Gu Qing Shan glanced over and found that the System had just made a description of the letter he was holding.

Long lines of glowing text appeared on the screen.

[Item name: Justice Iron Fist Club letter]

[War God Skills: This letter was an emergency letter, no skills to learn]

[Doomsday Chronicles: The person who wrote this letter had found out a certain horrifying truth, she foresaw a famous historical event]

[You may use this letter together with Triste's medal to significantly lower the Soul Points required to

learn of that historical event]

[Would you like to use 10,000 Soul Points to learn that historical event?]

Gu Qing Shan was surprised.

Using Triste's medal by itself required him to use 100,000 Soul Points to learn the event.

But together with Kitty's letter, the amount required was now only 10,000 Soul Points.

It seems Kitty wasn't wrong, the demons really were coming.

Gu Qing Shan consumed the 10,000 Soul Points without hesitation.

Since a crisis has appeared, the most important thing right now was intel.

I need more intel.

A few more lines of text appeared on the War God UI.

[You've exchanged Soul Points for the corresponding Doomsday Chronicles event]

[Specific information regarding the event comes from a newspaper headline of your previous life]

Wait a minute—

Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but ask: "Why use a newspaper headline? If it was something that already happened, you could've just told me directly"

[Ting]!

The System responded: [Because you didn't experience it yourself, the System cannot detect the specific details. The System can only show you the most relevant intel corresponding to the historical event]

Following the System's explanations, a newspaper published by the Spire Keeper Association appeared on the UI.

Looking at the date, this would be tomorrow's newspaper...

Which means the event will happen some time between today and tomorrow.

Sure enough, [Doomsday Chronicles] can only extract famous events that everyone knows, it doesn't contain any sort of hidden information at all.

Gu Qing Shan shook his head and checked the headline of the newspaper.

Two lines of text written in the Spire's language was printed in large letters.

[The Demon King Order had appeared again]

Chapter 522

Reading this headline, Gu Qing Shan felt every last bit of blood in his body freeze.

Truthfully, ever since his return, he rethought the events of his past life very frequently.

Because there were a lot of things to be suspicious about.

After going through several worlds, Gu Qing Shan noticed a certain truth.

—[Worlds Apocalypse Online], it forcefully obscured every method for humanity to become stronger against the demons.

In the past life, the main reason why humanity was destroyed in the end was because of this game.

At the most crucial moments of the war, no one could stand out to lead humanity against the Demon Lord.

Because no one had managed to breakthrough to Sainted realm.

—-the amount of EXP needed was so great that humanity actually had no way of accomplishing that feat.

As the apocalypse crept closer and closer, this towering sense of helplessness caused almost everyone to go into despair.

But then, why is it called the [Demon King Order]?

And what is [Kindling] supposed to be? (1)

Gu Qing Shan held his breath and read on.

Perhaps they wanted to get the words out as fast as possible, so there wasn't much except an emergency alert.

[Triste had turned to the side of the demons]

[The fires of war has been lit again, the coalition forces of the 900 million World Layers are regrouping, the second full-scale war is about to begin]

[It has been confirmed, the Light of Dawn Triste brought Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling from the Fallen Zones, hiding it within her collection world. Using the call of the Bramble Birds as a front, she snuck it into Aboul]

[The Demon King Order is currently spreading in Aboul]

[If Worlds Apocalypse Online is allowed to spread, a large portion of World Layers would fall into the demons' hands once again]

[We cannot allow Kindling to gather more power, and we definitely cannot let the Demon King Order rank up]

[Calling all Lord-class Combatants to join the resistance]

[We repeat, all those capable, take up your arms to stand up against the tinder of the Apocalypse!]

The emergency alert stopped here.

Gu Qing Shan stared at the newspaper on the War God UI, speechless.

He quickly glanced over the alert again.

It turns out the so-called [Call of the Bramble Birds] was Triste's plot.

[Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling] was hidden inside Triste's personal world.

Gu Qing Shan sighed.

*The [Predictor of Fate] card was not wrong at all, I almost went into that world.
And after going in, myself included, everyone would have no choice but to become demonized.
Su Xue Er noticed the omen.
That's why she wanted to stop me from entering that world.
But she was now the one who went in instead!*

Gu Qing Shan suddenly stood up, pacing around the room.

Think.

I need to think.

Can I expose Triste now?

Highly unlikely.

The Light of Dawn Triste, famously kind throughout the entire 900 million World Layers, with countless Combatants from various worlds as her good friends.

While I'm a mere newcomer from a Scattered world.

No one is going to believe me.

Triste might be able to kill me on the spot with the excuse that I was badmouthing her.

Before Iron Fist Barry's leg is healed, he might not even be a match for her.

Su Xue Er had already entered that world for quite some time.

Damn it, I need to think of a way to rescue her.

But there's no way for me to go against Triste!

The difference in power is too great.

Gu Qing Shan was becoming more and more tense by the second.

At this point, a scared voice asked: "Excuse me... how are you, sir?"

Gu Qing Shan abruptly stopped.

He turned to where the voice came from.

The little girl was looking at him questioningly.

"I was talking to you just now, but you did not listen at all, sir" she explained.

"What did you tell me?"

"I want you to take me to the Justice Iron Fist Club to take refuge. As you know, being a wanted maid, I have no way to keep hiding from the pursuit of Bramble Bird royal family"

As soon as she said that, the little girl's face changed.

She disappeared on the spot.

At the same time, the door of the room opened again.

Two teams of fully-armed guards came in.

They were exuding killing intent.

"Who are you!?"

One of the leaders sternly shouted.

Gu Qing Shan replied without changing his expression: "The Light of Dawn and the Spirit of the Holy Tree wanted me to stay here"

The guards were stunned

At this time, another group of guards came in.

They were the same guards who came into the green room before.

And they knew who Gu Qing Shan was.

"Misunderstanding! Misunderstanding! This personage is an esteemed guest who came here together with the Spirit of the Holy Tree" one of the guards hurriedly explained.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, madame Triste also gave him a medal and specifically told him to stay here"

The other leader turned to Gu Qing Shan.

Sure enough, he does have madame Triste's medal in his hand.

There's no mistaking it.

Unless madame Triste gave it out herself, no one would be able to obtain her medal.

All the guards calmed down.

In the first place, only guests would be in here, we have no one but ourselves to blame for being too impatient as soon as we saw an unfamiliar face.

"My sincerest apologies. Because the current situation was an emergency, we hope you will excuse our rudeness" the leader who shouted before apologized.

"It's fine" Gu Qing Shan told them.

Then he thought of something, showing a curious look on his face: "What are you looking for exactly? If I happen to see it, it'll be able to directly report it to you"

The guards exchanged looks.

He is madame Triste's guest...

"We are currently looking for a royal family maid, she stole an important treasure of the Bramble Bird royal family and is now on the run" the guard leader replied.

"She should be about 10 years old, in fact, she was actually her Highness the princess' personal maid"

"If you happen to see any suspicious little girls, please tell us right away"

"Definitely" Gu Qing Shan agreed.

The guards nodded, bowed in unison before quickly retreating outside.

Gu Qing Shan hurriedly said: "Wait a bit"

“Do you need something else?” the guard leader stopped his feet and asked.

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“About that... I don't really want to be here either, but the esteemed Light of Dawn and Spirit of the Holy Tree had me wait here, so I have no way to leave”

Gu Qing Shan shrugged helplessly.

“I'm afraid that others will come here to investigate, see me as an unfamiliar face and cause another troublesome misunderstanding”

The guards silently nodded as they heard that.

—it's true that they can't keep rudely shouting at a guest, if they did that, what would become of the Bramble Bird's etiquette?

This is madame Triste's guest, someone brought here by the Spirit of the Holy Tree herself, if any guards who come here later cause any trouble, they might anger both of these esteemed ladies.

Thinking that, the guard leader was relieved.

He told the others: “Relay my orders, the royal green room has been checked twice, there is no need to investigate here anymore. Furthermore, there is an esteemed guest resting here, make sure no one else come to bother him”

“Yes!” the guards replied.

“Thank you” Gu Qing Shan clasped his fist.

“There is no need to, excuse us” the guard leader slightly bowed again.

This time, they really retreated.

The doors were closed again.

Pop!

The little girl appeared again.

She was sweating profusely and her breathing was heavy.

—seems like it wasn't an easy task to avoid being detected.

“Thank you for your protection, you are a very considerate gentleman. I am forever grateful to you, sir” she spoke.

Even though she was clearly exhausted, she still made sure to solemnly curtsy to thank Gu Qing Shan.

Her etiquette was perfect without fault.

Gu Qing Shan stared at the little girl.

Originally I didn't want to be involved in this, but there's no other choice now. I need to take every chance I get, for the sake of Su Xue Er's survival.

Gu Qing Shan was quickly thinking, going through countless thoughts at once.

He was rethinking every minor detail of everything that happened since he started this journey.

He was giving his all to find a sliver of hope.

“Sir, you are now——” the little girl wanted to speak.

“Please wait a moment, I have something I have to deal with first” Gu Qing Shan cut her off.

He paced around the room anxiously.

The little girl went silent as she observed him.

What is he in a hurry for?

Ah right, I heard their conversations as I was hiding here just now.

The Spirit of the Holy Tree brought him here.

He wanted to go into Triste’s collection world to find his girlfriend.

Then he must be worried for his girlfriend now?

The little girl slowly understood.

My request just now was cut off by the sudden guards.

Since the guards temporarily won’t return here to investigate again, I should wait a bit until he calms down and ask him to bring me and escape.

After all, he was the only person to not expose my existence during this long escape.

He is a member of the Justice Iron Fist Club!

Thinking that, the little girl quieted down.

Gu Qing Shan was pacing around the room as his mind quickly moved.

Firstly——

The Light of Dawn, the Spirit of the Holy Tree, even the big rooster are all first-rate Combatants.

A mere maid would not be able to escape their senses.

Even when the little maid was soaked by my sudden spitting in her face, she still managed to maintain etiquette and calm enough to ask me how to deal with it.

The skin under her sleeves was smooth and milky white.

And she knows this miraculous skill to disappear—— this must be a top-rate secret technique, otherwise she would’ve already been caught.

Even when she right in front of my eyes, my inner sight couldn’t notice her.

As a cultivator, Gu Qing Shan had never seen such an impressive hiding technique before.

So this technique must be extremely precious.

Any organization would spare no effort to ensure a secret technique of this level to never be leaked.

Furthermore, such a high-leveled technique would require a lot of time to both comprehend and train to slowly master.

How would a mere maid accomplish this much?

So she must be someone else.

Considering everything that has happened until now, only one person has never appeared at the

banquet.

*Someone that can cause Triste such a headache wouldn't be a little maid.
She must be the Bramble Bird princess!*

Gu Qing Shan nodded slightly, forming a conjecture in his mind.

Then he started to think more about this.

*—let's say this little girl was the real Bramble Bird princess, then why does she need to hide?
As the heir of the Bramble Bird royal family, there is no need for the Bramble Bird princess to fear Triste.
With a single word, there would be countless Bramble Birds willing to work for her.
But she really was running away.
If you follow this vein of thought...
The Bramble Bird royal family is done for.
In other words, Triste now holds the entire Bramble Bird race in her hand.
Triste had already turned to the demons' side.
Which means, the calamity of Aboul was already happening.
Triste must have arranged a series of preparations in the shadows— as Gu Qing Shan himself would
have done the same.*

Gu Qing Shan sighed dejectedly out of nowhere.

On his way here, he saw the entire Aboul Hotel immersed in an air of celebration as everyone enjoyed the Bramble Bird princess' coming of age banquet.

This banquet was set to continue for 3 days and night.

*—but including the Spirit of the Holy Tree and the big rooster, who actually knows that the demons
were already hiding in the shadow, preparing for a massacre?
Who could notice that the [Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling] was about to spread?*

Gu Qing Shan's heart sank again.

He felt that he was standing on a slowly sinking cruise ship, while no one else on it noticed anything at all.

Sighing, Gu Qing Shan continued to think.

*Triste's preparations... would there be any holes in them?
Since Triste and I aren't on the same level, I can't even tell what kind of preparations she made, let alone
if there are holes in them.
So there's no way to exploit this.*

"Xue Er..." Gu Qing Shan muttered.

It was now getting harder for him to remain calm.

*Triste herself was powerful, she already has the tinder of the Apocalypse, and the help of billions of
demons in the shadows.
And I'm completely clueless about all of Triste's preparations.
But Xue Er was already in that world, about to either die or be demonized.*

*What can I do about it?
Where do I find a solution?*

Gu Qing Shan pulled out a bottle of liquor from the ice box, pushing it to his face.

The icy coldness helped him cool down.

*Stay calm.
I have to stay calm!
Think about this more seriously!*

Gu Qing Shan encouraged himself.

He took a deep breath, closed his eyes and once again went into thought.

*To summarize everything, from the start until now, I only know a single thing.
That is Triste was now outside together with the Spirit of the Holy Tree, followed by the big rooster.
Such a simple piece of intel, even if I knew about it, how would it help?*

...

Wait...

Gu Qing Shan turned around.

His gaze fell onto the little girl.

Note:

(1) Kindling: the original word can be translated as tinder or kindling, meaning “the start of a flame”. I chose not to translate it as Tinder because of obvious reasons

Chapter 523

The royal family green room.

Time slowly passed.

The liquor was still being cooled in the ice box.

The 12-layer cake was giving off a faint sweet smell.

The light wasn't too bright, nor too dim, just enough to comfortably illuminate everything.

The little girl and Gu Qing Shan were staring at each other.

They were the only people left in this room, and this was the only safe place left for now.

“Sir?” the little girl asked tentatively.

Gu Qing Shan still hadn't said anything.

Because Su Xue Er had already entered that world for a while.

He was quickly moving his mind, trying to find where Triste could have made a mistake.

*—why is Triste in so much hurry to find the Bramble Bird princess?
She had already turned to the side of the demons, so she should already be spreading [Worlds
Apocalypse Online] and attack Aboul right about now.
But Triste didn't do that.
The war still hasn't begun, and Aboul was peaceful.
Below the peaceful water surface, a rapid stream was rushing through.
Everything was tense, like an arrow already knocked on its bow without firing.
Triste... dispatched the entirety of the royal guards.
She was still looking for the princess.
This green room alone was searched at least twice.
Even an esteemed guest like the Spirit of the Holy Tree was asked to help Triste with the search.
—Triste really is sparing no effort for this.
But why search for so long? Does Triste intend to not start the war if she doesn't find the Bramble Bird
princess?
Then why?
Why do we have the current situation?*

Gu Qing Shan looked again at the little girl and stayed silent.

*This little Bramble Bird princess was also quite the brilliant one, hiding right under Triste's nose.
Triste probably didn't think of this at all.
The war... the princess...
There must be a crucial detail that I don't know about.
If I want to find a solution, I have to find out that detail from the Bramble Bird princess!*

Thinking that, Gu Qing Shan spoke.

“Just now... you seemed to want to ask me something?”

He asked the little girl.

“Ah, indeed. Sir, I would like to ask you to take me with you out of this place, preferably to the Justice Iron Fist Club” the little girl quickly answered him.

“No problem, I can bring you with me”

Without waiting for the little girl to feel glad, Gu Qing Shan continued: “But I'm currently waiting for someone, only after I meet them will I be able to bring both of you out of here”

“What? You still need to wait for someone?”

The little girl was stunned.

*The current situation was very urgent.
Triste might be able to find me any moment now.
But he still needs to wait for someone.*

Recalling the details from before, the little girl abruptly asked: “You must be waiting for your girlfriend, is that not right sir?”

“I am”

Gu Qing Shan answered without changing his expression: “She answered the call of the Bramble Birds and Triste already agreed to take care of her, so she should be out at any time now”

The little girl started to worry.

If I had no hope to survive, I would give up.

But now that I've found a faint light, there's no way I'll give up without a fight!

The little girl evaluated the man in front of her.

This was a young male that came from a Scattered world.

He doesn't understand anything.

Can I convince him to give up on waiting for his girlfriend?

The little girl thought for a bit before shaking her head.

It's highly improbable.

Since he already paid a high price to ask the Spirit of the Holy Tree to stand up for him, his girlfriend must be someone he has to save no matter what.

Then the only solution is to help him.

As long as his problem is solved, I can go with him, using the Iron Fist Club beacon and void string to leave this place.

Aizz, there really is no other choice.

If I leave this room, anyone else who saw me would call the guards.

Because the reward for finding me is really high, no one would be able to refuse it.

Everyone wants to keep an amiable relationship with the Bramble Bird royal family.

But no one knows that the royal family was already no more.

Anyone who says they represent the royal family is a fraud.

The little girl looked at Gu Qing Shan with a complicated expression.

Only him, he was the only one who didn't call the guards first.

He's my chance to survive.

Compared to waiting here and dying, going with him is the only sliver of hope!

I'm the last remaining member of the Bramble Bird royal family, I definitely can't die here!

The little girl quickly decided and spoke: “I can help you get into that world of Triste and pick up your girlfriend. But you must swear that you will definitely not leave me behind”

“You have a way to enter that world?” Gu Qing Shan appeared surprised.

“I do. Actually, it was because I stole her world that Triste is in so much of a hurry, not sparing any efforts to find me” the little girl answered.

Gu Qing Shan held his breath, asking with a soft tone: “And why did you steal her world?”

The little girl answered: “This was my revenge, and I have the ability to make Triste unable to find that world ever again, as long as I do not get caught”

Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but clench his fist from joy.

So that's why!

[Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling] was actually hidden in Triste's world.

Since that world was stolen by the Bramble Bird princess, it led to the [Demon King Order] being unable to spread, which led to Triste having to delay the start of the war.

This was the key to everything!!

"Very nicely done!" he loudly told her.

The little girl was shocked, smiled, but quickly returned to a look of calmness and sorrow.

The little girl continued: "However, I must tell you something. The situation might not be as you think. That world is very dangerous, much more dangerous than any world you have ever seen before, sir"

"You know what kind of world I've been to?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"I do not, but it really is dangerous. You might lose your life with just a single misstep, so you must be very careful, as I do not want to lose my life together with yours, sir"

"I know that, your esteemed Highness, princess of the Bramble Birds"

The room fell silent.

The little girl couldn't help but take a step back.

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Then another step back.

But when she noticed Gu Qing Shan wasn't doing anything, she also stopped stepping back.

The little girl stared intently at Gu Qing Shan, trying her best to control her facial expression to not show fear or fright.

She waited.

The man in front of her only stood there and looked at her without doing or saying anything.

The little girl understood.

He didn't plan on doing anything.

...what a strange person indeed.

While anyone else who saw me would've called the guards to report that they found the maid everyone was looking for...

—this man already noticed my true identity, and still did nothing!

His every action seemed to be hidden behind some other intention, unique only to himself.

The little girl couldn't help but ask: "When did you notice?"

"When I wanted to"

"So my disguise was a failure from the start?" the little girl dejectedly asked.

“No, it’s because you were too excellent. The character of ‘maid’ doesn’t suit you, I hope my saying that will help you feel a bit better— so, what do you think?”

“Thank you, I believe you think that since we have gotten to this point, it would be better for both of us to be straightforward with each other, that is why you exposed my identity”

“I must praise your excellence once again, your royal Highness”

The little girl silently nodded and twirled around on the spot.

Her tanned skin turned pearly white, the dirty maid clothing was gone, instead replaced by a light blue dress.

She was graceful, elegant, even with the strictest of eyes, you would find no fault with her etiquette.

But she was only 12.

She and Gu Qing Shan stared straight at each other’s eyes.

Unlike the Light of Dawn Triste, the royal princess had a pair of sky-clear blue eyes, as you face her, you will get lost in there without meaning to, a sense of comfort akin to gazing at space and the stars above would fill your mind.

“Let me introduce myself again, I am Laura, this generation’s Bramble Bird princess”

“Laura?”

“Indeed”

“I am Gu Qing Shan”

“At this point, I have no other hope. Mr. Gu Qing Shan, as a member of the Justice Iron Fist Club, may I ask if you can lead me away?”

She had already changed her manner of speech, no longer referring to him as ‘sir’.

“Of course, as long as you can get me into Triste’s world so that I can leave with my girlfriend” Gu Qing Shan directly answered.

Princess Laura hesitated for a bit before asking: “Why were you not able to enter when she went into that world?”

Gu Qing Shan told her the entire reason behind that.

Since this little princess was so sensitive, there is no need to lie to her.

Princess Laura listened and commented: “No wonder you want to save your girlfriend”

“Then one final question” Laura continued: “I can get you into that world, but before that, how can I trust you?”

“Gu Qing Shan of Bai Hua sect hereby swear, as long as you help me enter that world, I will definitely lead you from this place, guaranteeing your life”

“If this oath is not fulfilled, my Dao heart shall break, rendering me forever worthless”

An invisible gust drifted about Gu Qing Shan before entering his body.

“This is an oath of cultivators? It is uncommon, but very useful indeed— I shall trust you this once”
Laura said.

She reached out her hand, touching the 12-layer cake on the table.

The gigantic cake split in two, parting to reveal a transparent crystal ball inside.

The crystal ball silently hovered in the air, giving off a dim misty light.

Laura waved her hand.

The crystal ball landed on it.

“This world was the one Triste is looking for, since I had completely sealed it, she could not sense where it was” Laura told him.

Gu Qing Shan was surprised.

So Laura had used a spell to seal off this world’s presence, hiding it within the cake.

Because Bramble Birds were a race of aristocrats from the Mystic Zones so strict with their etiquette, they would definitely never eat in front of someone else.

And other than the Bramble Birds, those who could enter this green room would more or less come from a high-status background.

Would such people cut a piece of cake in front of everyone to eat?

Which was why hiding the crystal ball inside the cake was such a good idea.

This Bramble Bird princess was a truly brilliant young girl.

Chapter 524

Gu Qing Shan looked at Laura, then at the crystal ball in her hand.

“How impressive”

He muttered.

This 12 years old little girl actually sealed an entire world!

Princess Laura lightly stroked the crystal ball and chanted an incantation.

A soft string flew from the crystal ball and hovered in front of Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan caught it.

A few lines of glowing text showed up on the War God UI.

[Void string— from Triste’s collection world]

[As you’ve already set your Super Dimensional world beacon, you are unable to use this world’s void string to connect with this world’s beacon]

[War God Skills: This void string does not contain any skills]

[Doomsday Chronicles: You already know this item's corresponding historical event]

[Item description: This string connects to a Super Dimensional world containing the expectation of trillions of demons, the world is currently shrouded by a thin seal, forming a miraculous balance between it and the world. Do not arbitrarily disturb it or you risk destroying the balance]

Gu Qing Shan looked at Laura.

Sure enough, Laura's expression also showed caution.

She solemnly told him: "It was only due to luck that I managed to seal this world, definitely do not touch this crystal ball. I will need to personally cast the spell when we go in as well, otherwise the seal might break and Triste will sense it"

"Got it"

Gu Qing Shan was also solemn.

In fact, he actually knew more about this than Laura does.

Trillions of demons are waiting for this world to show up, because it contains the [Demon King Order]

At the same time, Gu Qing Shan noticed that this was a Super Dimensional world.

If trillions of demons managed to get their hands on this Super Dimensional world's void string...

It really makes one shiver in fear.

No matter where this world was, a storm of blood would be brewed!

And the fact that Laura managed to seal this world so well was fortune within fortune.

Triste is probably going insane right now.

Should I just throw this crystal ball somewhere?

Gu Qing Shan considered it briefly.

Then dismissed the thought.

No matter where he threw it, there will be no guarantee that someone will be able to win against the [Demon King Order], or the Light of Dawn Triste who will go after it— as well as trillions of demons in the Fallen Zones.

Gu Qing Shan still didn't give up and asked: "After saving my girlfriend, can we take this world with us to leave?"

"We cannot. Do you think the Iron Fist Club's void string could actually pull an entire world with it? If that was the case, no one in the 900 million World Layers would need to fear the demons, they can just take their world with them and run" Laura helplessly told him.

"How much longer will your seal last?" Gu Qing Shan asked again.

"We must find your girlfriend within one day"

Gu Qing Shan looked at the crystal ball to see that a pure-white snow storm had completely filled it, making him unable to see anything.

The snow storm was so great that even if there was any scenery to see, it would only flash by briefly before being obscured by the unrelenting snow.

“Then I’m going in. Wait outside, I’ll take both you and my girlfriend to leave as soon as I find her” Gu Qing Shan said.

He grabbed the Earth sword from the void of space, fully prepared for battle.

“I have to go with you” the little girl said.

“Why?” Gu Qing Shan was surprised.

“Because I have a bad feeling staying here. Furthermore, to make sure that I survive, I need to help you survive before anything else”

“Do you plan to fight as well?”

“No, within a Bramble Bird’s collection world, other Bramble Birds cannot leak their presence, otherwise they will be found out immediately”

“Then just wait outside, you’re only 12 years old”

“What do you mean by that? You are also only 6 or 7 years older than I”

When age was mentioned, Laura immediately got annoyed.

The thing she hated the most was when someone said she wasn’t old enough!

Gu Qing Shan insisted: “I’m scared that you might——”

Laura cut him off: “Gu Qing Shan, the things I have seen and know about definitely eclipses yourself who came from a Scattered world, I will be able to help you with your lack of knowledge”

“But you are too young, I’m worried that——”

“You could not even deal with your girlfriend and were trapped by her. Where do you find the leisure to be worrying about others?”

He couldn’t refute this at all.

Gu Qing Shan was speechless for a bit.

Then he realized something.

In the newspaper from the past life, Triste still managed to declare war in the end.

And the [Demon King Order] still began to spread.

Which means, the Bramble Bird princess would still be caught by Triste.

Gu Qing Shan stared at the fuming little princess.

That's right.

She is the key to stopping Triste.

I can't leave her here alone. If she was discovered, it would definitely not end well for her.

"Fine, then we'll go in together. But we need to go now, there's no more time to waste"

Gu Qing Shan put the Earth sword back into the void of space.

While holding onto the void string with one hand, he offered his other hand to Laura.

"There, much more like a gentleman" Laura said.

She held Gu Qing Shan's hand and began to chant.

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A screen of light appeared.

They disappeared from the room.

After they left, the crystal ball hovered in mid air, then silently went back inside the 12-layer cake.

The two halves of the cake quickly melded back together as the icing perfectly fused again, leaving no trace.

A 12-layer cake decorated with strange and exotic fruits, exuding a faintly sweet fragrance, full of allure.

The high-class guests who entered this green room later on would most likely restrain themselves like the Bramble Bird aristocrats.

They would silently adhere to etiquette, not touching this cake at all.

...

Cold.

Bone-chilling cold.

A few black dots were moving across the frozen wasteland.

Su Xue Er shivered slightly as she carefully avoided the larger groups of people and traversed alone.

At a certain point.

She sighed with annoyance, staring at the lines of text in front of her retina.

[Congratulations! One chosen by the gods to become the pioneer of a new age. This is a gift from the Bramble Bird, please confirm to register with the System]

Right after, a confirmation screen popped up.

[Confirm/Reject]

Su Xue Er selected to [Reject].

Another line of text showed up.

[Please state your reason for rejection]

“No reason”

[Rejecting the Kindling’s offer for no reason, your evaluation has been lowered by 1 grade]

Following that declaration, the glowing text and the pop up gradually faded.

After everything disappeared from her vision, Su Xue Er spoke with annoyance: “Can you not hide these messages?”

Ever since she entered this world, this message has repeatedly appeared several times.

As soon as Su Xue Er said that, another UI expanded in her retina, quickly answered with the following words:

[Apologies, they are messages from Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling, I am unable to hide them] the System answered her.

——this was from Su Xue Er’s own System.

“This [Kindling], will it bother me again?” Su Xue Er asked.

[If you use 1 Soul Points, I will be able to directly hide its messages]

“Do it” Su Xue Er answered without hesitation.

[A smart choice. Like the System had warned you before, this is a demonized Order, definitely do not get infected with it]

“Even if it wasn’t demonized, I don’t need two Systems—— if it weren’t to meet up with Qing Shan, I wouldn’t even need a System at all”

Su Xue Er’s tone turned cold.

The System responded: [Please recognize the current situation rationally. Without my existence, Kindling is extremely likely to have fooled you and register itself on you]

“Fine, whatever you say”

Su Xue Er answered it indifferently.

As they spoke, a ‘thud’ came from not too far away.

Su Xue Er turned to look.

Another person had collapsed.

She almost couldn’t help herself from helping him, but as soon as she took one step forward, she already forced herself to stop.

A few figures jumped forward, killing the collapsed man in seconds.

A pinkish glow flew out from his body, absorbed by them.

“Ah, how warm” one of them commented.

“That’s right, we didn’t kill you, we only sent him back to Aboul ahead of time” another person smirked and said.

The others continued marching forward without changing their expressions.

There’s not much time, to get even better rewards, they needed to cross this frozen wasteland as fast as possible and arrive at the next site.

This man didn’t actually die anyways, at most his rewards will just be a bit worse because he left prematurely.

Everyone here didn’t have any mind to pay attention to that.

—yes, according to the rules Triste announced, nobody would actually die here.

Mutual killing will only bring more rewards and benefits to the victor.

If someone looked like they actually died, that was simply a false death shown for the sake of realism.

The actual person would be warped back to Aboul.

Su Xue Er squinted her clear eyes, silently staring at the body.

This person once helped her out during one of the previous battles.

Although it was only some minor help that Su Xue Er did not actually need, she still remembered his good will.

Due to the intense snow storm, the corpse was already being buried beneath the snow.

—*did he actually return to Aboul?*

Su Xue Er still felt that something wasn’t quite right.

She purposely slowed down, waited for the others to take some distance before slowly returning to where the corpse fell.

Chapter 525: [Kindling]’s hostility

The howling snowstorm.

Across the frozen wasteland, groups of people were moving forward without stopping.

This place was simply too cold, and occasionally there would be unpredictable battles.

So everyone wanted to get out of here as fast as they could.

Su Xue Er was now at the very back.

She stood in front of the corpse silently observing it.

About half of the corpse was already buried under the ice and snow.

As Su Xue Er saw the corpse slowly sinking down, she felt suspicious.

She stepped on the ice surface.

A hard and smooth sensation was felt from her feet.

Strange, if the ice was solid, then how is the corpse sinking in?

Su Xue Er swung her hand to summon the Scepter of Law.

Pointing the scepter at the corpse, Su Xue Er chanted: "Soul Points Deprivation"

The scepter stayed still.

The corpse also didn't react at all.

Su Xue Er silently sighed.

Every living creature has Soul Points, but this corpse does not.

Following that vein of thought, this person did not actually die, but returned to Aboul.

Su Xue Er felt assured so she wanted to quickly move forward again.

The icy winds of the frozen wasteland were getting stronger.

She needed to meet up or stay close with the large group again, since that made battles much easier.

As she took a few steps, Su Xue Er hesitated.

An uneasy feeling remained in her heart without going away.

As the heir of the Blood Sea, having received Lord Bloodcloak's careful teachings, she understood life especially well.

...something is still off.

Su Xue Er stopped and returned next to the corpse.

In just a few breaths, the corpse had almost sunk entirely into the frozen wasteland.

Looking at this strange scene. Su Xue Er grinded her teeth a bit.

If I already took the time to do this, I might as well do it thoroughly.

She raised her scepter again, pointing at the corpse: "Servant of blood, rise and serve the master of the Blood!"

This was a high-levelled Blood spell, it used blood to reanimate and control a corpse to fight again.

However, due to not having a soul, a servant of blood doesn't have many memories, they are only able to use a few random skills from when they were still alive.

The scepter lightly vibrated.

The spell was cast.

The sinking corpse started to move again.

It struggled a bit, quickly managed to break the ice around itself and crawled out.

The corpse slowly stood up, walked in front of Su Xue Er and knelt down.

From this moment onwards, it was loyal to her.

“Attack behind yourself”

Su Xue Er stared closely at the corpse and silently gave an order.

The corpse raised a battlecry before turning around and punched, producing a faint dark flame from his fist.

The flames only flashed briefly before being extinguished by the snowstorm.

As Su Xue Er silently watched this, she felt a chill rushing to her head.

This person has been sticking quite close to her since they entered this world, they even cooperated to defeat a boss once to reach this frozen wasteland.

She recognized this Fire Elemental striking technique to be his.

According to the rules of this Blood spell, false bodies are unable to be controlled.

Only corpses of once-living beings could be controlled by the Blood Sea.

——in order words, this corpse was actually that man from before.

He died here, he did not return to Aboul.

But then what about the Soul Points?

The Soul Points formed from the crystallization of his life force, where did it go?

Su Xue Er suddenly remembered the pinkish glow that flowed into those people before.

“How warm” they laughed as they marched deeper into the frozen wasteland.

Su Xue Er went silent.

Something isn't right.

When he was still alive, this person was quite strong.

It was only after going through a series of tough battles that he was heavily wounded and collapsed in the frozen wasteland.

But the people who killed him only received a tiny amount of Soul Points.

There should have been a lot more.

Who took those Soul Points?

Su Xue Er silently thought about this.

“Girly, it seems you've noticed something”

A voice came from the icy winds.

Su Xue Er abruptly turned.

The people who were here just now had come back.

The same people who killed him.

Their coordination was skillful and quick, enough that they managed to kill a defenseless person before anyone even reacted.

Su Xue Er cautiously stared at them as she raised her scepter in front of herself and silently stepped back.

“Tsk tsk tsk, how cautious. I must say, you really are a beautiful and smart little lady, I like you” another voice spoke.

They scattered and quickly surrounded Su Xue Er.

A masculine bald man came forward facing Su Xue Er.

“Actually... I’m very curious, why does the System not register on such an excellent person like yourself” he said.

Su Xue Er stayed silent and said nothing.

Her gaze was focused on her retina.

A few lines of glowing text were blinking there.

[Attention]

[Attention]

[As you’ve declined to register Kindling over and over again, Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling has designated you its enemy]

[You are under pursuit by carriers of Kindling]

[Furthermore, Kindling is specifically targeting you to corrupt]

[Using the amount of Soul Points you have, the System will be able to resist Kindling’s corruption for a certain amount of time]

[Remaining time: 19 minutes 57 seconds]

That isn’t a lot of time.

Su Xue Er silently asked: “System, what happens if I run out of Soul Points?”

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[The System will be unable to protect you. Kindling will take over the System, and you will be demonized] the System replied.

Su Xue Er froze.

I will be demonized as soon as I run out of Soul Points?

“Is being demonized the same state they are in?” she asked.

[No, they are in a state of pseudo-death, because Worlds Apocalypse Online still has not been activated, Kindling temporarily allows them to live and help Kindling gather more energy]

[Once the Demon King Order is awoken, these people's souls will become food for the Order]

“Why is that the case?”

[Because Kindling looks down on them. It thinks that they lack the qualifications to be granted demonization]

[However, do pay attention, as they are helping Kindling gather more Soul Points, their fighting capabilities are still greatly boosted by Kindling]

Su Xue Er looked back at those people.

They all seemed so very excited— as if the current state of being filled with killing intent and lust was actually their true selves.

And in truth, their behaviors already made one thing abundantly clear.

That they themselves were already demons, there was no such need to be demonized.

Sensing the power exuding from them, Su Xue Er couldn't help but sigh.

It has been so long since she was in such a dire situation.

At this time, the masculine bald man shouted: “Everyone go, kill this girly!”

“Hold back a bit, capture her first if possible”

Someone couldn't help but shouted back.

“You got horny again huh, ya bastard?”

Laughter erupted all around.

As they did that, they were observing Su Xue Er's reaction.

Sometimes, the simple advantage of numbers and psychological attacks were enough to break the spirit of female Combatants.

But they were disappointed.

Su Xue Er just silently stood there, as if she hadn't heard anything at all.

She only glanced at these demonized individuals with cold eyes.

Wielding her scepter, Su Xue Er whispered a chant: “Protection of Blood”

A pool of blood manifested below her feet, continually forming wave after wave that condensed into bright red lines.

These blood-red lines twisted around Su Xue Er's body, forming a barrier.

—while the enemy was attempting a psychological attack, Su Xue Er had taken that chance to fortify herself with a close-ranged defense.

She continued to chant spell after spell, preparing to activate a series of techniques in a row.

The people around stopped laughing.

They also noticed that this girl was level-headedly preparing for a battle.

“Everyone, now! She seems to be a caster-type, do not give him enough time to prepare!” the masculine bald man shouted.

“Go! Kill her!”

Led by the bald man, 7-8 people all dashed at Su Xue Er.

Without noticing any of that, Su Xue Er only continued to chant her incantations to prepare her countermeasures.

Following her chant, faint light began to flow from the scepter a bit at a time, sinking into the frozen wasteland beneath Su Xue Er’s feet.

It wasn’t until these demonized people got close to her that Su Xue Er swung her scepter again.

Her faint whisper could be heard in the screaming winds.

“Blood Waves, I summon thee”

Then she stabbed the scepter into the ground.

Oom!!!

The waves of blood rose all the way to the sky.

The people around reacted very quickly, already stepping back as soon as the Blood Sea fully manifested.

They stood on a large rock a bit further away, observing Su Xue Er.

With a 20-meter radius around Su Xue Er, the snowy frozen wasteland was turned into a boiling pool of blood.

Su Xue Er lightly hovered at the center of the blood pool, staring coldly at them.

“We here are all the best of our respective worlds, having been through more battles than you can count, you’re too naïve if you think we’d be fooled that easily, girl” an older man with scars across his face mocked her.

Su Xue Er ignored him.

She grasped her scepter tightly, chanting to the boiling waves of blood below: “Where I stand be the endless Sea of Blood”

Every spell before that was just preparations, as this incantation was her ultimate goal!

Following Su Xue Er’s chant, a gigantic head started to emerge from beneath the sea of blood.

This was a crimson giant.

But it seemed he found it hard to leave.

The 20-meter radius caused his head to be stuck.

Roar!!!

The crimson giant roared.

He dipped back into the pool of blood, reached out with both hands to grab either side of the pool and pushed.

The pool of blood slowly expanded.

Soon enough, the entire frozen wasteland had been turned into a lake of blood.

It was now that the crimson giant majestically rose up.

He was wearing blood-red armor, his gigantic figure eclipsed even the howling snowstorm around, his towering body stood gallantly within the lake of blood as a deep red mist drifted from him.

He looked exactly like a legendary monster in the myths.

“Astaroth, why have you come here yourself?” Su Xue Er asked.

The giant blocked in front of Su Xue Er, answering her with a booming echoing voice: “Death and madness is coming, Su Xue Er, they are watching you from the void”

Su Xue Er’s heart suddenly sank.

Astaroth was one of the major Blood Sea cards with a mystical premonition ability, his warnings were never groundless.

He must’ve felt a sign of danger.

Will I die? Or become demonized?

Su Xue Er’s heart was beating faster.

She couldn’t help but look a bit further.

Where her group of enemies stood, they all gathered in place, attempting to do something strange.

Everyone had put their hands on the masculine bald man’s hand.

“Quickly, there’s no need to hide it anymore at this point”

The bald man stared at the Blood Giant Astaroth nervously.

Right after, as if he was aware of something, the bald man started shouting: “Not enough, it’s still not enough! Give me all the Soul Points you collected or I can’t summon a Demon Lord through [Kindling]!”

Chapter 526

Within the icy winds, the group had already distanced themselves from Su Xue Er and from the area of the lake of blood.

But they didn't retreat right away.

The 7-8 demonized candidates all placed their hands on the masculine bald man's own.

They gave him all the Soul Points they had collected.

The bald man smirked at the lake of blood.

At this point, he was no longer afraid of the Blood Giant.

Because the Soul Points of 8 people collected together was enough to fulfill [Kindling]'s requirements.

"Pretty girl, a soft flower like yourself is better off being trampled to death"

The bald man was speaking to Su Xue Er.

He appeared incredibly mesmerized, as if thinking about something.

"Astaroth, finish them" Su Xue Er said in disgust.

The Blood Giant began his attack.

Every step he took left a deep footprint on the frozen wasteland.

The bald man's expression changed.

He raised both hands to the sky, quickly speaking: "[Kindling], I offer all my Soul Points to you in return for the Demon Lord's protection!"

One second later, something appeared from the void of space.

The bald man stared straight at it and chanted: "Cecrops, climb up from the abyss of souls as the [Demon King Order] needs you!"

Boom!

A giant ashen hand broke through the ice.

Followed by a 25-meter-wide giant head.

The head turned to observe the situation around.

It was now that everyone noticed this head only had a single eye and a huge gaping bloody jaw.

『 For the Demon King Order 』

The head spoke with a low-pitched voice.

Large patches of the frozen wasteland broke apart from below.

And the giant body emerged.

It had a corpse-like ashen grey skin and gave off a thick stench of rotten flesh.

The one-eyed giant stood up, then reached down to grab a huge mace from below.

With the mace in hand, it silently waited for its orders.

This Demon Lord was quite similar to the one Gu Qing Shan met in the dark tunnel to Huang Quan.

But the one Gu Qing Shan met only had half of its body left, whereas this one had its whole body intact as well as a weapon.

“Kill that Blood Giant!”

The masculine bald man shouted in a frenzy.

『 Understood 』

The Demon Lord responded with a heavy voice.

Everyone else stared at the Demon Lord with an unmistakable look of fanaticism.

Such a dream-like ability.

This powerful monster actually listened to their orders

This felt almost like they had just taken over the world.

Later on, when they become powerful as well, they will be able to summon this type of monster at a moment's notice, easily becoming an overlord in the 900 million World Layers.

The giant Demon Lord took their orders and rushed towards the lake of blood without saying anything else.

The monster of the blood lake Astaroth also dashed at the Demon Lord.

Soon enough, the two giants clashed.

They were roaring, tearing at each other.

Every hit shook the entire frozen wasteland.

This was exactly like a clash of titans in the ancient myths.

It didn't seem like a winner could be decided between them any time soon.

“Let's go catch that girly, she's able to summon such a monster so she must have a lot of Soul Points!” the bald man shouted again.

Everyone also understood.

That's right, Soul Points, we can always use Soul Points to exchange for more power from [Kindling].

They greedily stared at Su Xue Er.

One of them swallowed their spit and called out: “You keep the Soul Points, I only need the girl”

“Deal”

Even before they got close to her, they were already discussing how to divide Su Xue Er.

Which caused Su Xue Er to be furious.

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Gritting her teeth, she held nothing back.

Her scepter started to release a bloody glow, then erupted into 13 flames.

The flames floated and slowly dimmed within the snow storm.

13 cards were neatly lined up in the air.

While looking at these cards, Su Xue Er hesitated a bit.

Due to using Soul Points repeatedly, the amount of time that the System could protect her was quickly decreasing.

At this point, she only had 15 minutes left.

If she activated this 13-card combination, it's hard to tell how much time she would have left.

The demonized men quickly approached.

They were getting closer and closer to Su Xue Er.

"Ahahaha, the closer you look, the prettier this girl is, don't any of you dare to steal her!"

Someone excitedly said.

"No way, you had better let us enjoy her first before taking her away!"

Another voice couldn't help but shouted back.

This caused Su Xue Er to be unable to hold back her rage.

She immediately made a decision.

—no matter the price, I will definitely not fall into the hands of these people!

"O' flowing sea of blood, you who know of the one that wanders in the abyss of the Blood Sea"

Su Xue Er raised her voice, loudly chanting: "Blood Sea! Help me summon her and let her majesty come to this world!"

Ooong!

A clear wave of Soul Points rippled all around.

「 Ahehehe! Today... something fun seems to be happening 」

A whisper of laughter came out of nowhere.

At the same time, the 13 cards flipped over at the same time to form the portrait of a beauty.

The demonized people all stopped.

They were staring at the portrait without moving.

“Ah...”

“This is...”

“Beautiful... so beautiful...”

“What unimaginable beauty, simply...”

They were muttering to themselves.

The woman in the portrait was truly too beautiful.

Despite having her eyes closed, she exuded overwhelming allure.

The 8 demonized candidates couldn't avert their eyes at all as their gazes slowly lost focus.

「 Little girl, it seems your situation isn't too great 」

The beautiful woman in the portrait still kept her eyes closed as she softly spoke.

When she opened her mouth, there were already no signs of life around.

No one responded to her words either.

The 8 demonized candidates were still blankly standing there, staring at her without being able to say a word.

Only the sound of the Demon Lord and Blood Giant's destructive battle could be heard from afar.

“That is indeed the case, thank you for coming, I will prepare the offering later” Su Xue Er respectfully said.

“Offering... there is no need this time, if you survive, telling me your story will be enough”

Saying that, the beautiful woman lightly fluttered the fan in her hand.

A light breeze started to blow.

Strands of her hair swayed gently in the wind, the thin long dress covered in gauze and fog were almost unable to hide the peerless jade-like body she possessed.

Even such simple movements are overwhelmingly charming.

“My story?” Su Xue Er was surprised.

“Indeed, this was simply too rare” the beautiful woman appeared regretful, “the dangers you are facing clearly belong to another, yet you yourself are bearing it for him”

“In the hundreds of millions of years I spent wandering the abyss of the Blood Sea, I have seen so many extraordinary things, but a girl such as yourself has not grazed my eyes for the last few ten thousand years”

“Remember, one brilliant such as you should not bear too much for others”

“I hope you survive”

As the closed-eyed beautiful woman said so, she disappeared from the portrait.

The 13 cards also lost their light as they returned inside her scepter.

Su Xue Er was stunned for a bit before she could react.

She glanced at the System UI.

There's only 2 minutes 36 seconds left!

Oh no, I almost ran out of Soul Points.

She then looked to the 8 demonized candidates.

They suddenly opened their eyes again.

“What happened just now?”

“I think I blacked out”

“Wait a minute, no, why can't I move!?”

“What? You as well? I can't move my feet!”

“I can't even lift a finger!”

The 8 villainous men all exclaimed from shock.

They had just found out something very terrifying—— they lost control over their bodies.

Chapter 527

In the snow storm.

The 8 villainous men stood frozen in place with horrified expressions.

“What the hell happened!” someone lost their patience and shouted.

The bald man answered: “I used Soul Points to ask [Kindling], it says that this is an incredibly powerful curse!”

[Kindling] knows what this is!

Everyone calmed down a little.

“[Kindling] knows how to undo it, as long as we pay enough Soul Points——”

As the bald man was speaking, his voice slowly became lower and lower until he stopped entirely.

His expression went pale.

Because of the answer [Kindling] had given him.

[Pay 100,000 Soul Points to undo the curse]

100,000 Soul Points!!!

This was an astronomical amount.

Having killed so many people, the most Soul Points the bald man managed to get at once was merely 110.

The same message was shown before everyone's eyes.

“No! We have no hope to undo the curse this way! We’re done for” someone spoke in despair.

Su Xue Er wielded the scepter as she slowly stepped towards them in the icy winds.

She stopped in front of them, glaring at the bald man.

The bald man’s facial expression shifted over and over, until he finally tried a stiff smile.

“We’re sorry, lady, this was all a misunderstanding, we got the wrong person”

Seeing him like that, the others hurriedly follow as well: “That’s right, that’s right, we got the wrong person, we’re really sorry”

“We shouldn’t have acted without thinking like that, please forgive us”

“You’re a big-hearted person, please let us go, we swear to scout ahead for you”

They all tried to flatter her.

Su Xue Er ignored their pleading.

She shifted her gaze from the bald man to another.

“Just now, you said you wanted to obtain me?”

Su Xue Er asked softly.

The man awkwardly wracked his brain for minutes without being able to think of any excuse for that.

Su Xue Er lightly stroked her Scepter of Law, drawing a card from it.

This was a grey card— grey represented a card of the lowest level.

There was only a sharp dagger depicted on the card.

Su Xue Er lightly waved the card, summoning the dagger in her hand.

Apparently realizing something, the man desperately tried to beg: “No, please don’t! I made a mistake, I shouldn’t have offended you, please spare me, I still have a lot of mouths to feed at home!”

Su Xue Er replied: “I empathize with you, but then, if I had fell into your hands—”

She shook her head without saying anything else.

The dagger was slowly pushed into the man’s chest

“Argg—” the man screamed in agony.

Su Xue Er held the dagger and slashed it downwards.

The sharp dagger easily pierced through flesh, but was caught by his rib bones.

Su Xue Er tried putting more force into it, but found that she wasn’t anywhere strong enough to break his rib bones this way.

She sighed and let go.

The servant of blood stepped forward, taking the dagger in hand for her.

“Keep cutting him, all the way down”

Su Xue Er ordered.

The servant of blood held the dagger, slowly cutting open this villain’s chest, stomach, and bisected him all the way through his legs, perfectly cutting his body in half.

“Aaaaargggg!!! You cruel witch!”

The man was screaming desperately.

Cold sweat ran down the other’s forehead as they tried to beg and scream for help.

“Keep going, there’s still 7 left, let them all enjoy the same fate”

Su Xue Er crossed her arms and told him.

The servant of blood pulled the dagger out and continued to cut open these people who killed him.

Desperate and agonized cries of pain kept resounding through the frozen wasteland.

Once it was finished, the servant of blood came back to Su Xue Er.

He knelt down and raised the dagger with both hands, returning it to Su Xue Er.

The bloody dagger returned to its card form, slowly hovering in front of Su Xue Er.

“This was my fruit knife, unfortunately, it’s unclean now” Su Xue Er said disappointedly.

She pointed at the card without touching it.

The grey card was quickly swept away by the wind, disappearing from Su Xue Er’s sight.

She discarded it.

“Hey, lady, you’ve already let out your anger, can you let us go?” the bald man endured the pain, panting heavily as he spoke.

Su Xue Er glanced at him and suddenly laughed.

She deducted: “You bunch don’t have any techniques to use Soul Points with, yet you managed to summon such a monster. From the look of it, the only method for you to collect Soul Points must be to kill others”

Pointing at the one-eyed giant that crawled out from the ground, Su Xue Er asked: “You must’ve used a lot of Soul Points to summon that monster huh?”

They all exchanged glances without daring to answer.

“Of the people you killed, if they were female, you definitely must have...”

Su Xue Er muttered without finishing what she said.

It was easy for her to imagine what must have happened to those girls.

Even I had to use all I had to win against them.

Thinking that, Su Xue Er's expression turned pale from anger.

She asked her servant of blood: "Do you still remember who killed you?"

The servant of blood appeared sorrowful and answered: "I can't remember anything from when I was alive, but when I face them, I feel a sense of disgust and discomfort"

"While they are still not dead, devour them"

"Yes, thank you master for the food"

...

A few moments later.

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Su Xue Er anxiously looked at her System UI.

Two lines of text quickly scrolled past.

[You've obtained a bit of Soul Points to replenish your reserve, the System will continue to resist Kindling's invasion]

[Remaining time until death: 22 minutes]

Su Xue Er looked at these lines of text.

Remaining time until death: 22 minutes...

She wiped the tears from the corner of her eye, ordering the servant of blood: "We're leaving"

...

On another side.

Gu Qing Shan opened his eyes in a completely dark space.

Cold.

Extremely cold.

This was an extraordinary sense of chill, something that a simply strong body wasn't able to resist.

Nothing could be seen around.

A voice suddenly sounded in his ears.

[Welcome to the Light of Dawn Triste's personal collection world]

[As you deal with a bit of trouble for Triste, she will reward you according to the degree of your work]

[Once you finish dealing with one issue, the world will automatically transport you to another area with issues]

[The more issues you solve, the better your rewards shall become]

[And so, the first issue]

[First battle: Surrounded]

[You must cooperate with everyone to win against the enemy and escape the encirclement]

[This is a test of your strength, only after escaping the encirclement will you be qualified to help the Light of Dawn resolve the issues of her world]

[The test will now begin]

The voice went away.

Within the chilling silence, a small, cold hand reached out to grab Gu Qing Shan's own.

"What is it?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"Scared" Laura curtly told him.

The two of them carefully listened.

The wind outside was howling like banshees.

"Did you hear the announcement just now?"

"I did, but because I hid myself, I will not be forced to do anything. Triste could not find me so this world would not either"

"Is that so? I'll walk in front, you follow behind"

"Can you let me sit on your shoulder?"

"Why?"

"Whenever I am afraid, father would always——"

Laura stopped.

Her mood worsened.

Father is no longer here.

Father, mother, brother, the entire clan is no longer here.

I'm all alone by myself in this world.

Gu Qing Shan sighed.

He had just been told that the way Bramble Birds count their years was different from humans.

A year in the Mystic Zones was exceptionally short.

The 12-year-old princess Laura, if you convert it to human years, would only be about 7 years old.

Gu Qing Shan briefly thought before lifting Laura up and put her on his right shoulder.

"I like to sit on the left" Laura said.

Gu Qing Shan then put her on his left shoulder.

Apparently Laura had just recalled something else as her eyes became reddened.

“Ehem, erm, actually I’m also an orphan” Gu Qing Shan cut off her thoughts with his words.

“Hm? You were an orphan?” Laura carefully listened.

“I’m already used to it, and also... there are benefits to being an orphan” Gu Qing Shan said.

“What benefits?” Laura was intrigued by the topic.

“When we die, we won’t need to worry about there being too many people crying for us”

“What kind of benefit is that...?”

“But it is! Don’t you know? When you see someone else sorrowful for you, you will be even more sorrowful, but our superiority lies in the fact that we can perfectly avoid going through this”

“...It is really a superiority?”

“Of course”

While talking, they found a door and stepped out.

The howling of the wind was now right by their ears.

It was a snow storm.

Gu Qing Shan noticed himself standing in the middle of a city.

He released his inner sight to silently observe the area.

An abandoned, crumbling, ancient city filled with corpses.

Outside of the city was a vast endless frozen wasteland.

The voice told him to cooperate with everyone— —

But there was no one else here.

It seems I went in too late so the rest of them have already left, now I don’t even have a single comrade.

“What a horrible start”

Gu Qing Shan muttered.

Laura was getting comfortable sitting on his shoulder and spoke: “That is not so at all”

“Because you’re here?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

Dong! Dong! Dong!

With dull sounds of impact, the ground started to shake.

A commotion began to well up within the city of corpses.

Some humanoid monsters began to crawl out from the ground.

They opened their dark eye sockets, staring at Gu Qing Shan and Laura who were standing on one of the buildings.

At a glance, they used to be humans when they were alive.

But they had all lost their eyes.

The corpses were also getting reanimated.

Laura answered: "I feel that the situation was even worse than you had thought"

Following her voice, the monsters started to rush at the two of them.

"We don't have time to waste here"

Gu Qing Shan grabbed the Earth sword from the void of space in his hand.

The battle begins!

Chapter 528

Laura patted Gu Qing Shan's shoulder, saying: "Do your best. I cannot do anything"

Following her voice, the monsters noticed the two of them.

They quickly encircled them.

At the same time, the large piles of corpses also started to move.

It took quite a bit of time to spread such a large amount of corpses.

This couldn't be helped, as [Kindling] intended to push this many monsters out to kill as many people as possible.

Those who entered this place did not expect the call of the Bramble Birds to be a cruel battle of life and death.

And those lucky enough to survive didn't think too much of it.

Because according to the rules, those who died should've been returned to Aboul.

Roar!!!

The humanoid monsters that crawled out from the ground were attacking them from all angles.

Attached at every part of their joints were long sharp blades that were covered in blood and bits of flesh.

While still several meters away, the monsters leapt towards Gu Qing Shan and Laura from below.

Gu Qing Shan stood still as he swung the Earth sword to form a blooming flower of sword qi.

Countless sword phantoms flew from the sword, slashing at the monsters in the sky.

Their blood was spilled and scattered.

"Not good, there are too many"

Laura looked around as she anxiously called out.

Indeed, more and more monsters were crawling out from below.

The piles of corpses were also slowly starting to spread out.

The dead bodies staggered as they mixed in with the horde of monsters and rushed towards Gu Qing Shan and Laura.

The city originally covered in white snow was slowly being occupied by a torrent of black monsters.

“There’s quite a few of them, no wonder this test is called Surrounded” Gu Qing Shan mused.

He silently thought to himself, *since this is a test of strength, flying away to escape would definitely not be allowed.*

“Quickly think of something! It will be over if we are surrounded” Laura called out.

Gu Qing Shan let go of the Earth sword.

“Kill”

He only said that.

The Earth sword flew out, drawing a beautiful arc around Gu Qing Shan’s body.

The cold blue phantom formed a crescent moon, quickly expanded to bisect every monster on its way.

Secret Art, [Crescent Slash]

As Gu Qing Shan was now a Sainted realm sword cultivator, this Secret Art became even more powerful in his hand.

“How beautiful, is this a flying sword technique?” Laura excitedly clapped her hands.

Gu Qing Shan was silent.

From how she looked, you’d think she was admiring fireworks.

Unexpectedly, the monsters who managed to escape being bisected by the crescent moon all laid flat to the ground and started to eat the severed arms, legs and bodies.

More monsters sprouted from below.

They were competing with each other for the corpse parts.

More and more of them showed up as they ran faster and faster.

In just a few breaths, the horde of monsters had already devoured all the corpse parts.

The sound of crunching bones and flesh resounded throughout the city.

Those monsters who managed to devour a corpse part grew bigger, stronger and even faster.

They shriek again, quickly approaching Gu Qing Shan and Laura.

From above, you could see torrents of black masses approaching from all sides, surrounding Gu Qing Shan and Laura without leaving a single gap.

There was less and less space for them to stand, and they would soon be swallowed up by the tsunami-like horde of monsters.

“Breakthrough, Gu Qing Shan, this battle is testing our ability to breakthrough an encirclement!” Laura anxiously reminded him.

Gu Qing Shan said nothing.

He simply formed a hand seal.

The spirit energy in his Dantian flowed without end.

Ever since becoming a Sainted realm late stage cultivator, Gu Qing Shan hadn’t used his full power even once.

Oong!

His three swords appeared from the void of space.

The first sword was ancient and mournful;

The second sword had an unusual design, being a bit longer than normal;

The third sword was as beautiful as the flow of water in autumn.

“Go” Gu Qing Shan muttered.

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The three swords disappeared.

They flew across the sky with unimaginable speed, leaving afterimages in the air.

These afterimages did not move or faded away as they stood.

The three swords sped up more and more until all that could be seen was a shadowy figure.

Then they disappeared without a trace.

The whole abandoned city was now filled with countless sword afterimages.

All of this happened so fast that the sword images were already in place when the monsters had only taken a few steps forward.

But strangely, while these sword images were everywhere, the monsters were unhurt even when they dashed through them.

“What is this?” Laura asked, surprised.

Gu Qing Shan exhaled and triggered the hand seal.

Taiyi Sword Array, activate.

A faint gust blew past.

Then more wind came from out of nowhere, building up bit by bit, slowly forming an intense wind storm.

Nothing could stop the sweeping storm.

All the monsters scattered like dust, the piles of corpses also disappeared as if they were silently erased, not knowing what happened before they died.

The howling storm swept through ground, picking everything in the city up to the sky before blowing the thick black clouds above away.

The snow stopped.

A clear blue sky showed itself above the city.

The sun was shining as warm sunlight peered below, shrouding the ground below in warmth.

A miraculous scene was seen.

Warm sunlight filled the interior of the city.

A cold chilling snow storm howled outside the city.

This miraculous sight lasted for several breaths before gradually disappearing.

In the end, the city buildings and walls were being blown away by the storm of wind as well.

The city itself crumbled like dust as it was swept away, leaving nothing but a vast empty field of snow.

The storm of wind stopped.

The black clouds gathered again.

The heaven and earth returned to stifled silence and peace.

Snowflakes began to gather and fell to the ground as snow.

It was now that Gu Qing Shan undid his hand seal.

Laura stood up from Gu Qing Shan's shoulder, glancing around.

—everything in her sight beside the accumulated snow and the ground itself disappeared together with the fierce storm of wind and sword.

Just a vast empty field with snow lightly falling down.

The city and monsters were all gone.

"A clean shade of white" Laura sighed: "I did not expect you to work this hard"

She was silently surprised, thinking that this 'Gu Qing Shan' person was quite impressive.

One strike levelled an entire city.

Sword skills of this level could easily get him into the list of top young Combatants of the 900 million World Layers.

No wonder Iron Fist Barry wanted to take him in.

“We don’t have much time, I only wanted to finish the battle as fast as possible” Gu Qing Shan scowled and said.

His mind moved a bit.

The three flying swords returned, hovering in the air behind him without moving.

Gu Qing Shan spoke in annoyance: “That should be considered passing right? Why is nothing coming out to give me a grade yet?”

Laura silently judged him and noticed something.

“You are worried about her?” Laura asked.

“I don’t know what situation she’s in right now, or whether we’ll be able to catch up to her at this pace” Gu Qing Shan sighed.

Laura understood.

So he really only wanted to save time.

Just what kind of girl is worth him treating this way?

Laura was a bit curious.

She stared at Gu Qing Shan a bit before abruptly asking: “Did you sleep together already?”

Gu Qing Shan found that a bit unexpected, but still answered: “Not yet”

“That pure? How did you do it?”

“What does a little girl like you know”

Gu Qing Shan turned his face away, silently thinking about Su Xue Er’s kiss.

At the time, I could only pretend to sleep so I couldn’t even touch her if I wanted to.

Thinking that, he couldn’t help but sigh.

Behind him, the Earth sword said something to the other two swords as all three of them started to vibrate and rattle.

Chapter 529

Gu Qing Shan sensed something so he turned around, to unexpectedly find that his swords were all rattling ever so slightly.

As soon as the Earth sword and Six Paths Great Mountain sword noticed him staring, they stopped.

But the Chao Yin sword didn’t pay attention and was still rattling as Gu Qing Shan looked.

The Earth sword hit it once.

“What are the three of you doing?” Gu Qing Shan asked in surprise.

“Strategy discussion” Shannu’s voice came from the Six Paths Great Mountain sword.

She seemed almost nervous.

The Earth sword solemnly answered: 「 That’s right, the technique just now was really powerful, we were discussing how to cooperate better 」

Gu Qing Shan turned away.

All three swords silently sighed of relief.

Laura stood on Gu Qing Shan’s shoulder as she tried to look far.

As they were in a snow storm, their vision was greatly limited.

This limitation was imposed by some kind of Law from the world, so no matter how good you were, the naked eye could only see so far ahead.

Laura thought for a bit before taking out a small backpack from her back.

She then reached in and randomly pulled out a one-eyed binocular.

Laura looked through the binocular to see further away.

“It is the same everywhere, some places have cliffs and monster” she spoke loudly, “I do not know where to go”

“We can only wait for directions now” Gu Qing Shan spoke.

As they spoke, a flash of light started blinking on the frozen wasteland.

At first the light flickered, then it turned into a pillar of light pointing to a certain direction and stayed that way.

It was a very clear directional marking.

“Sit down, we’re going” Gu Qing Shan said.

Laura obediently sat down on Gu Qing Shan’s shoulder again.

Gu Qing Shan lightly leapt forward, gliding towards the direction of the pillar.

They kept moving forward on the frozen wasteland.

Occasionally, a few big monsters would attack them from the cover of the snow.

Since Gu Qing Shan was in a hurry, he didn’t hold back at all, every monster that appeared was directly pummeled to death in the shortest possible time.

With spirit energy overflowing around his body, Gu Qing Shan was flying full speed close to the ground.

He was using the fastest speed he could to go towards where the light pointed.

This was a cliff.

Gu Qing Shan released his inner sight to try checking the bottom of the cliff, but he couldn't reach it.

Within the range of his inner sight, there was nothing but a steep cliffside on the frozen wasteland.

A voice suddenly rang out.

[As you performed exceptionally well, you received the highest qualification— directly skipping all other tests to begin solving Triste's official issue]

The voice continued explaining.

[A group of powerful monsters is about to appear. They are always hiding under the abyss of ice, wrecking havoc and causing damage when Triste doesn't notice them. Even though this was a only a minor issue, it still cause Triste a lot of headache]

[Those who answered the call of the Bramble Birds, please help Bramble Bird Triste solve this minor issue]

[For those below 30 years old like yourself, this will be an arduous battle, please cooperate to win against these fierce enemies]

After declaring so, the voice went away.

"Is this the call of the Bramble Birds? It's giving us a mission to accomplish?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"Indeed. Normal calls of the Bramble Birds follow very similar procedures" Laura answered.

Gu Qing Shan looked down the icy abyss.

Sure enough, he noticed a horde of clumsy monsters in the abyss below.

Their bodies were transparent, allowing him to see all the strange inner organs they had.

But those organs looked almost like they were made of rocks and crystal, large and crude.

They were currently climbing up the cliff at quite the impressive speed, completely unexpected for bodies their size.

"Those are Ice Fiends" Laura told him.

"What are Ice Fiends?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"A kind of half-Elemental monster that is very hard to kill" Laura explained: "Being close to rocks and ice allows any wounds on their bodies to heal at a rapid pace, because they were originally made from these Elements"

As he saw the figures in the abyss becoming clearer and clearer, Gu Qing Shan silently scowled.

*According to the voice, this kind of monster must be quite strong.
And requires cooperation to kill.*

Combined with their hard-to-kill attribute, it's better to just use Taiyi Sword Array again to deal with them swiftly.

Thinking that, Gu Qing Shan immediately spoke: "No matter, I'll deal with them"

He prepared the hand seal again.

Oong!

The three swords appeared, pointing down at the icy abyss, giving off sharp killing intent.

They were ready.

"Wait a minute" Laura said.

"Hm? What is it?"

"You will consume too much energy using your full power all the time, I will help you"

"Didn't you say you couldn't do anything?"

"I will give the item, you will use it"

Laura searched inside her small backpack again.

This time she took a lot longer.

"Now where did I put it..."

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Gu Qing Shan looked at Laura, then at the monsters in the abyss.

After waiting for a few seconds, he couldn't help but speak up: "We don't really have the time——"

"Found it!" Laura joyfully declared.

She put something into Gu Qing Shan's hand.

As Gu Qing Shan looked, he found that it was a pistol.

It was a delicate, tiny and cute silver pistol, it wasn't even as big as Gu Qing Shan's hand.

Trying to hold it, Gu Qing Shan found that he barely managed to fit his finger on the trigger.

"A gun?"

"This is for personal protection, sadly there was only one bullet left"

"Will this be useful?"

"You will know when you try it out"

Gu Qing Shan silently shook his head.

*Are you kidding? How would a single bullet be enough to kill a monster?
A little girl is only a little girl after all.*

As Gu Qing Shan wanted to return the gun to Laura, he suddenly realized something.

Kitty once said, any and every item that comes from the Mystic Zones is ridiculously valuable.

The Bramble Birds live in the Mystic Zones, and like to collect treasures.

If that wasn't the case, why would so many people in the 900 million World Layers answer the Light of Dawn Triste's call?

—and this little girl sitting on my shoulder is the Bramble Bird princess, the heir to the throne of the entire Bramble Bird race.

Would someone of that stature randomly take out a useless item?

Gu Qing Shan was certain that wouldn't be the case.

At the same time, a few lines of text showed up on the War God UI.

[Legendary Firearm: Divine Flame Bird Phoenix]

[War God Skills: This item does have include any learnable skills]

[Doomsday Chronicles: There are too many famous historical assassinations related to it, but for the last 10,000 years, it has disappeared without a trace. If you wish to know about the events prior to that, please spend 100,000 Soul Points or find a history book]

Gu Qing Shan was shocked.

This gun is probably really powerful.

Fine then, I lose nothing if I fire it once either way.

He held the silver pistol with both hands, aiming down the icy abyss.

"Then I'm going to fire it"

"Hm"

Laura used both hands to block her ears as she showed an excited expression.

Apparently she really enjoyed watching theatrics like these.

Gu Qing Shan precisely aimed at the first Ice Fiend and pulled the trigger.

Bang!

The silver pistol jerked back slightly.

Gu Qing Shan was surprised as he looked down the icy abyss.

The bullet went directly through the Ice Fiend's body and went off the range of his inner sight in a split second.

So fast!

Gu Qing Shan silently evaluated a bit and found that if someone else had fired this gun at him while he wasn't 100% cautious, it would've been very dangerous.

Back in the icy abyss, the Ice Fiend who got shot went stiff and slowly rolled down the cliff.

Its body quickly disappeared from sight.

“Excellent power and speed” Gu Qing Shan praised it before returning the gun to Laura.

“It had not started yet, we should back off a bit more” Laura told him.

Gu Qing Shan did not expect to hear that.

“Back off quickly, it gets a bit too hot that I cannot endure it” Laura urged him.

Gu Qing Shan quickly leapt back away from the cliff as she told him to.

As soon as he landed, a burning glow erupted from the icy abyss.

The temperature quickly rose as the ice itself began to melt, mixing with the debris of rocks and sand to form soot that soared to the sky.

Within the billowing smoke, numerous dull screams resounded.

Caw!!

A giant flaming bird made from molten magma flew out from the once icy abyss.

It spreads its wings as its body eclipses the entire area around the abyss.

The giant bird stared at Gu Qing Shan and spoke: 「 Please rate the service this time 」

Gu Qing Shan turned to Laura.

Laura looked back at him, saying: “You fired the gun”

Gu Qing Shan had to ask the flaming bird: “Did you kill them all?”

「 Not even scraps are left 」

“Maximum points!” Gu Qing Shan answered straight away.

The flaming bird nodded satisfyingly before fading away.

Gu Qing Shan was stunned for a bit before he walked to the cliff and looked down again.

Boiling lava was slowly flowing.

The cliff sides were glowing incandescent, large patches of ice and snow were melting, falling into the lava as they were turned directly to mist and evaporated.

Ice Fiends or whatever, they were already melted without leaving a single thing behind.

The icy abyss was now turned into a lava lake.

As he stared at this spectacular scene, Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but ask: “That was the last bullet?”

“Yes it was”

“How regretful”

“What are you feeling regretful about? It was only a gun, I have a lot more toys you know” Laura mumbled in a low voice.

Chapter 530

On the frozen wasteland.

The snowy wind howled.

Within the pure white land of snow and ice, a certain area was lit with sky-high fire.

Gu Qing Shan and Laura were standing on the edge of the cliff, waiting for the mission to be confirmed.

“Why hasn’t it confirmed that we finished the mission yet?” Gu Qing Shan wondered.

“Normally, a little bit of time is necessary to confirm, do not be impatient” Laura told him.

While they were talking, as if sensing something, both of them went quiet at the same time.

The lava lake below started to ripple.

Right after that, a strange object floated to the surface of the lava.

At a glance, it looks like a pinecone, only it was about the size of a boat capable of supporting about 3-5 people.

As the lava flowed around it, the dirt and mud on the outer layer of the pinecone was slowly melted away, revealing the outer layer of a fruit dotted with mystical runes.

Apparently, this large fruit was originally hidden at the bottom of the icy abyss, watched over by the countless Ice Fiends that lived there.

If it weren’t for the [Legendary Firearm: Divine Flame Bird Phoenix] working its magic and destroying the entire abyss at once, no one would’ve discovered this fruit.

“What is that?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“A Frozen Berry” Laura had a strange look on her face, “this is the fruit of a treasure tree in the Mystic Zones. It likes to hide in frozen and cold places, capable of concealing its own presence and is immune to all clairvoyance techniques. The only weakness it has is being weak to heat”

“No wonder it floated up” Gu Qing Shan nodded.

What a coincidence, if they had not used that gun, this fruit would still be able to hide there for a really long time.

While they were talking, the fruit was unable to endure the heat of the lava.

Its outer layer began to crack.

Cra-rik!

The sound of something shattering.

The fruit broke into numerous pieces.

A frosty ice-crystal feather appeared in front of them.

Since it was resting on one of the broken pieces, it wasn't yet touched by the boiling lava.

As soon as the feather appeared, the lava around quickly hardened.

A large area of lava solidified and turned into grey-ish black magma rocks.

But by itself, the ice-crystal feather wasn't able to fight against the entire lava lake.

The feather lightly trembled.

All of a sudden, the outer layer of the ice-crystal feather let out a faint 5-colored glow.

Laura's expression changed.

She recognized that feather.

"Hurry and save it!" Laura shouted.

"Alright"

Gu Qing Shan activated a remote-control seal and waved his hand from the cliff.

The ice-crystal feather flew into his hand.

Bone-chilling cold.

A thin layer of frost started to climb up his finger, spreading to his arm.

Gu Qing Shan circulated his spirit energy to resist the frost.

This level of Ice Elemental power wasn't enough to threaten him.

But this was only a single feather, to contain this much power, the more he thought about it the more surprised he was.

Gu Qing Shan squinted his eyes and thoughtfully observed the ice-crystal feather.

A really faint trace of blood could be seen on the feather.

As the feather left the lava lake, the 5-colored glow around it became weaker.

Laura finally sighed with relief.

It was fortunate that Gu Qing Shan reacted in time, otherwise, under the stimulation of the lava, the presence of this feather would've been exposed.

She was still worried, so she started chanting an incantation to the feather.

After some time, the glow of the feather was fully contained back into the feather.

The ice-crystal feather became calm again.

“Hoh—— I have hidden its presence, Triste will not notice its existence” Laura sighed of relief and said.

Gu Qing Shan waited until she was done until he asked: “What is this?”

Laura’s expression showed both sorrow and confusion.

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“This feather belongs to Frost of the Cold Night Ilya, it seems she had hidden here before” Laura muttered.

“Is she an acquaintance of yours?”

“She is. Frost of the Cold Night Ilya and Light of Dawn Triste, they were the two most powerful Bramble Birds”

“The Light of Dawn is responsible for protection—— she was the head of the royal guards, in charge of all security issues”

“Taking the chance when we left the kingdom for Aboul, Triste killed everyone in my family and concealed the news in one fell swoop”

“What about the Frost of the Cold Night?”

“She was responsible for external warfare of the Bramble Bird Kingdom”

Gu Qing Shan suddenly realized the importance of this matter and raised his brows unexpectedly.

“You mean the military troops are under her command?” he asked.

“Indeed”

“Then why is she here?”

Laura shook her head: “I am not clear either, before we left, Triste would be in charge of all security issues and our protection, while Ilya would be in charge of protecting the country—— but then why would her feather be here?”

Laura was also confused.

What exactly happened?

Gu Qing Shan had already begun to think.

“I will try to deduce a few things, tell me if I got something wrong” he said.

“Go ahead” Laura said.

“There are traces of blood on the feather, which means she must be wounded”

“Yes”

“Since she hid her feather away, she was obviously afraid that Triste might find her”

Laura nodded: “Bramble Bird feathers still contain a lot of power even after they are detached from us”

“If that is the case, she must’ve been wounded outside before she entered this world”

“Why do you know that she was wounded outside?” Laura asked.

“Because if she was wounded here, she must’ve gone through a tough battle in this world. But I still remember what you told me, inside one Bramble Bird’s world, another Bramble Bird absolutely cannot release their presence or they would be found out”

“Which means she couldn’t have fought in this world, and so she must’ve suffered a wound outside”

“That does indeed make sense” Laura confirmed.

Gu Qing Shan continued to think as he quickly narrated his thought: “Obviously, she must’ve noticed some sort of problem, or perhaps she had found a piece of hidden information that caused her to be suspicious of Triste”

“That is why she came here— but she was too late, as Triste had already succeeded”

“The only member of the royal family who managed to escape death is you”

“And I believe she would find out right away that her Highness the princess went missing”

Gu Qing Shan looked at Laura and quickly continued: “Both your parents were replaced by fakes while you went missing, the Frost of the Cold Night Ilya would definitely investigate this”

“Even the Spirit of the Holy Tree could not find you”

“So Frost of the Cold Night couldn’t have found you either, so she had no choice but to come to Triste’s collection world to see— whether or not you were here, and perhaps find out the reason why Triste betrayed the royal family”

Gu Qing Shan thought back everything from the start and nodded: “It should be something like that”

Hearing his string of deductions, Laura couldn’t help but tremble a bit.

She suddenly felt that this person right in front of her was a bit frightening.

I was lucky that he’s a member of the Justice Iron Fist Club.

“No wonder...” Laura muttered in a low voice, “no wonder I managed to seal this world so easily. So the protection spells Triste put on the outer layer of this world were already destroyed by Ilya, it was truly ridiculous of me to think that I managed to seal this world through sheer luck”

“You made it so that Triste could not find the world, while she made it so Triste did not notice any difference, she was much more skillful” Gu Qing Shan praised her.

Saying that, Gu Qing Shan fell silent.

He suddenly asked: “Frost of the Cold Night Ilya— how loyal is she to the royal family?”

“She is my godmother, she vowed to the Bramble Bird Divine Tree to protect me”

“What about Triste?”

“She vowed to become stronger, protecting all that deserves protection”

“How sly, what are the consequences of going against this oath?”

“The Divine Tree will take away all the powers of that Bramble Bird”

Gu Qing Shan clapped his hands ecstatically, saying: “Then that’s it, it seems Frost of the Cold Night is on our side, if we can reach her, our chances of winning against Triste will be much greater!”

Winning?

Laura was stunned.

Ever since the disaster, there was only a single thought in my mind.

*That is ‘the royal bloodline of the Bramble Bird must not die out, I need to stay alive, I need to run away’
But this man, all he saw was a single feather and he was already thinking of how to overturn the situation.*

Really...

Laura suddenly felt like she really didn’t know how to process this.

At this point, the voice from before finally came again.

[The mission is over]

[You did exceptionally well, perfectly resolving the first official issue, if you can keep doing this well, when you complete every mission, your rewards will also be exceptionally]

“And here I thought the rewards would be given right away” Gu Qing Shan muttered.

The voice then continued: [The second mission: The Descending Battle, is about to begin, please wait for 1 minute]

Gu Qing Shan just stood there and waited with Laura.

All of a sudden, something showed up on the War God UI.

Since he had some time, Gu Qing Shan focused his attention on the UI, looking at the glowing lines of text scrolling through.

[Maximum Alert: The War God System had sensed Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling]

Chapter 531

Gu Qing Shan was focused on the War God UI, so he immediately held his breath as he saw these words.

[Worlds Apocalypse Online]!

Although it had an extra suffix of [Kindling], but I finally met it again during this life.

Perhaps to show how alert and careful it was, the line of glowing text appeared on the War God UI again, this time being displayed in big red letters.

[Special note: the War God System had sensed Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling!]

Immediately right after, another line of pure red text appeared.

[Kindling has noticed you]

[You are currently under Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling’s evaluation]

[As is it now too late to leave this world, please act like you don’t know about it, the War God System will continue to analyze the situation]

As Gu Qing Shan finished reading this, without having time to do anything, another voice called out to him.

It was the Bramble Bird's call.

The same voice that issued him missions to complete for Triste.

[Your next objective has been determined based on your location]

It continued to speak with the same tone it used to assign him the mission from before.

[Please head 63km Southeast, you shall receive your next mission there]

Gu Qing Shan was stunned.

The War God System and Triste's mission system gave him tasks to do at the same time.

The situation had already gone far above his expectations.

It was now full of surprise variables.

While everything seemed calm, this might be the most dangerous situation he has been in since his return.

And even worse, there was no longer time for him to back off.

Gu Qing Shan shook his head.

——even if he was still able to retreat, he wouldn't do it.

To find Su Xue Er, he must continue down Triste's questline.

"Let's go"

Gu Qing Shan said.

"Alright. But why do you appear a bit anxious?" Laura asked.

"I'm just a bit excited" Gu Qing Shan replied.

The two of them turned into streaks of light as they flew past the cliff, heading in the Southeast direction of the frozen wasteland.

In just a few moments, they reached where the mission directed them.

In front of Gu Qing Shan and Laura was a patch of land filled with grey fog.

No matter if it was with his eyes or his inner sight, he couldn't see through it.

Gu Qing Shan stood at the very limit of the fog, asking Laura: "Have you seen such a place before?"

"Hm, this is a world formed... in other dimensions"

Laura briefly sensed it and replied.

Seeing how Gu Qing Shan didn't understand, she explained: "Within the void of space of particular dimensions, there are countless worlds that have never been explored. Originally, worlds like these should only exist within the Mystic Zones, so creatures outside of the Mystic Zones very rarely come across such a world"

"All of these worlds are in a fog state like this?"

"No. The grey fog was cast by Triste, it exists to set this world in place, disallowing it to conflict with the outside world"

"Conflict?"

"Indeed. When a world resides within another world, there would surely be conflict and rejection more or less"

Laura sighed as she continued: "I did not think Triste would actually hide another world from the Mystic Zones within her own world"

As they were speaking, the voice of the Bramble Bird's call appeared again.

[The new mission has been prepared]

[You are now qualified to help Triste resolve her issue]

[Within the grey fog, there is a 600-floor skyscraper]

Hoh!

Following the voice's narration, Gu Qing Shan was lifted upwards.

The wind howled as a transparent block of ice under his feet shot upwards, bringing him with it to the sky.

A few dozen seconds later, the ice and Gu Qing Shan finally stopped.

At this point, he had already gone through the thick layer of clouds, bathing in the warm sunlight.

Gu Qing Shan turned to look.

The ice block supporting him was quite slippery, even he couldn't move around too abruptly without slipping.

Fortunately, the block of ice was very stable during its flight, quickly bringing Gu Qing Shan into the grey fog.

The fog only obscured his vision briefly before it became clear again.

Gu Qing Shan saw the 600-floor skyscraper.

Even from outside, the structure seemed really strange.

A portion of the floors were made completely out of wood, not only was it solemn and ancient, it also appeared quite tasteful.

Going past these dozen floors, the next portion directly linked to it was made completely from metal and alloys, occasionally giving off holographic images as well as streams of data.

Then there were some that looked like they were part of an old castle.

There were also floors made completely from bricks and cement; floors made of ice; floors carved full of gems and crystals; floors made completely out of gold, so on and so forth.

The mere first sight of the 600 floors were enough to mesmerize and confuse you.

“What a strange building this is” Gu Qing Shan commented.

“No, this is a world” Laura replied.

She was holding on a bit tighter to Gu Qing Shan’s shoulder.

“What’s the matter?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“I am a bit afraid of heights” Laura answered.

Gu Qing Shan grabbed and held her in his chest, leapt off from the block of ice and glided on top of the 600-floor skyscraper.

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He stood at the edge of the building, glancing around.

In this vision was a vast blue sky.

The sun was just mildly bright enough.

Unfortunately, this was a world of slaughter.

The [Demon King Order] was hiding here.

A lot of young blood must’ve been spilled, becoming nutrient for the [Demon King Order].

“Step a bit further in, we do not need to stand in such a place. It is too scary”

Laura said.

Gu Qing Shan then backed off to the center of the building’s roof.

Laura climbed out from his chest and back onto this shoulder, making herself comfortable.

At this time, the voice came again.

[I will now explain your mission]

[This time’s mission is simple, when you go through all 600 floors and reach the ground, you will have completed this time’s mission]

[Special note, you may not fly down directly from the outside of the building, that will be considered lazy work and you will not receive Triste’s rewards]

[Mission begin]

The voice went away.

A door appeared below Gu Qing Shan’s feet.

On the door, the number 600 was written.

It seems I'll have to go down floor by floor.

—I wonder if there's an elevator, that would make it much faster.

Gu Qing Shan silently thought that as he grabbed the Earth sword in hand, preparing to open the door.

[Ping]!

A resounding chime.

A few lines of white glowing text appeared in space in front of Gu Qing Shan.

[Congratulations! One chosen by the gods to become the pioneer of a new age. This is a gift from the Bramble Birds, please confirm to register with the System]

Right after that, a selection screen appeared.

[Accept/Reject]

—this was the same thing Su Xue Er saw from before.

[Kindling], without any warnings, has already shown itself to Gu Qing Shan.

Looking at the selection screen, he almost couldn't help but laugh.

This is [Kindling]?

Or, to be more precise, [Worlds Apocalypse Online]?

This is completely different from what it did in the past life...

“Such a simple method of enticement, are you looking down on me?”

Gu Qing Shan muttered.

At the same time, the War God UI that has been staying silent so far quickly showed a few lines of large, bright red glowing text.

[Attention!]

[Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling has come]

[The War God System has went through careful consideration and thought]]

[At this pivotal historic moment, please make your choice]

[Choice 1: Give up on the mission and find somewhere to hide. Two days later, when the war fully breaks out, the System will transport you away. Your fate will be as Su Xue Er foresaw— a few years later, you will have become a top-level Combatant of the 900 million World Layers]

[Choice 2: Find Su Xue Er, attempt to rescue her. That way, the dangers she took on from you will be returned, pushing your fate into a fog of unknown. You will most likely face imminent, life-threatening danger even more so than ever before]

[Special caution!]

[This is an unskippable choice]

[As a full-scale war is about to break out, once you've made your choice, the War God UI will adjust the

System accordingly]

[Please carefully consider before making your choice]

As Gu Qing Shan looked at the 2 choices, he went silent.

What should I choose?

Normally the second choice would be better.

But this choice makes me feel indescribably irritated.

He couldn't help but sigh.

"War God System, can you make me a third option?" he silently asked.

[Ting]!

A clear chime came as the War God UI responded: [Two options have been prepared. The System can guarantee you these are the best options for your current situation]

"Just make another one, make an exception for this being the first time I asked" Gu Qing Shan smiled and said.

[What is the third choice you want?] the System asked.

"I want to destroy [Kindling]"

Gu Qing Shan briefly thought about it and continued: "Yeah, this is a good thing, one stone to kill two birds, as long as I destroy [Kindling], Su Xue Er will be safe, and I will have avenged my past life"

The War God System explained: [According to the System's predictive analysis, this is the hardest goal to achieve, even the slightly mistake will cause you to die or become demonized]

"Then do I have a chance to accomplish this goal in your prediction?"

[A very small chance]

"So you're saying there's a chance" Gu Qing Shan continued, "as long as there's still a chance, I'll take it"

The System went silent for a short moment before asking: [You do not need to do that much, why do you insist on this kind of choice?]

"Because it must be done"

[It must be done?]

"Right"

Gu Qing Shan said and deeply sighed.

He blankly stared at the empty space, seemingly immersed in some sort of emotion.

Right now, his gaze seemed to have pierced through both time and space, looking back at the years that went by.

The multitudes of comrades who lived, fought and died by his side.

The multitudes of people who saw no hope, crying, wailing themselves to sleep in the night.

The people who walked with him to the very end, those that sacrificed themselves together with him.

“Even though I’m an orphan, during those final moments in my past life, I did not feel lonely”

Gu Qing Shan’s tone was dejected, but determined.

“Ever since I returned, I’ve understood that I can’t only live for myself”

“There are a few things that when you know it will happen, you know you just have to face it; and win”

“That’s right, I want to make it pay, for everyone”

After expressing the words that weighed on his mind for so long, he sighed deeply before asking: “So can you set up that third choice for me? This way, I can fight without worries”

“If you can’t set up another choice...”

“Then I’ll throw everything away to go against [Kindling] by myself”

“I will give it everything I’ve got”

The System silently listened to him.

And it continued to stay silent for a while.

All of a sudden, new lines of large, bright crimson text appeared on the War God UI

[You are a true man who fights in blood and fire. Your decision will break through the obstacles of fate.

Regardless if you live or die, you are worthy of this System’s name]

[Your choice has proven that you are worthy of the title ‘War God’]

[The System has finished adjusting]

[From today onwards, Destiny Quests will be removed]

[Three seconds later, the Quest System will be renewed]

[3]

[2]

[1]

[War God Quests activated]

Chapter 532

Destiny Quests have been removed, War God Quest activated?

Gu Qing Shan was confused as he looked at the War God UI.

— — *is there a difference between these two types of Quests?*

Then, a new icon lit up underneath the War God UI.

This icon was placed after [War God Skills], [War God Thaumaturgy], [War God Title] and [Doomsday Chronicles], becoming the 5th icon to be lit up.

Interestingly, this icon was different from the others, as it showed the figure of Gu Qing Shan in battle with a sword in hand.

Following Gu Qing Shan’s gaze, a few lines of text appeared above the icon.

[New option created and chosen]

[Your choice has been accepted by the System]

[The System's adjustments has been made accordingly]

[From now on, the goal of the System's Quests will be where your sword points]

[According to real-time circumstance, the System will set up various methods of using Soul Points for every Quest, fully supporting you]

[During this War God Quest, you'll receive the following Soul Points usage: laido] (1)

[laido: After gaining certain amount of Soul Points, you may choose one Skill, increasing its damage two-fold the next time you use it]

[After using it once, your Skill's power will return to normal]

[Note: laido requires Soul Points to use, the more powerful the technique, the more Soul Points it will cost]

[Special note: laido can be stacked]

Briefly reading through [laido]'s description, Gu Qing Shan understood right away.

He couldn't help but silently praise it.

Certainly, this was a powerful trump card.

If I'm able to remain in [laido] state, I'll be able to constantly keep one of my Skills at double power.

The key point of this is that the doubling can be kept stacking the more Soul Points I gain.

Which means, I can choose to make any one of my Skills and make it more and more terrifying over time.

Unfortunately, such an attack will only last for one use before it returns to normal.

While Gu Qing Shan was thinking, the [War God Quest] icon below the UI started to shine.

The first War God Quest was here.

——this was a Quest created from Gu Qing Shan's own choice.

Blood-red lines of text started to show up on the War God UI.

[Current War God Quest objective determined: Destroy Kindling]

[The System has created the following description according to the Quest]

[This is the first time you'll face off against the Demon King Order since your transgression, and it has yet to be fully born]

[Worlds Apocalypse Online is still in its incubation Kindling period, its weakest and original form. At the same time, it has not been activated]

[It must collect an abundant amount of Soul Points to fully light of the fire from a kindling and grow to its next stage]

[This is why it's called Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling]

[Because of the excellence you showed during the first mission, Kindling had quickly found you]

[It wants you to help it collect Soul Points]

“Do you have a way to deal with Kindling?”

[Improvise, the System will issue Quests according to Kindling's specific situation until you finish the final objective]

[Please keep in mind, the goal of Kindling is to collect Soul Points, we must not let it gather enough Soul Points]

Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but ask: "What happens if Kindling collects enough Soul Points?"

[Kindling will be upgraded, Worlds Apocalypse Online: Origin, will officially launch]

[The 30 million World Layers around About will be covered in Worlds Apocalypse Online: Origin's range, countless worlds will fall under its slavery]

"Origin? What is that?"

[Similar to your past life]

Gu Qing Shan scowled.

He mused a bit before speaking: "Origin... living beings under its influence will be able to kill demons to level up, but their overall power will never be able to reach a certain height, is that correct?"

[No, in truth, it is the demons who level up through killing living beings. At the same time, living beings become slaves to the Demon King Order and will never be able to become as strong as the demons could, to stand against them]

—meaning it will be nothing but a one-sided slaughter.

Perhaps at the start, a lot of demons might die, but the ultimate winner will always be them and not us.

Gu Qing Shan closed his eyes and thought for a bit before answering: "Got it"

The War God System spoke: [In the form of a Quest chain, we will constantly be fighting against Kindling until we can finally destroy it]

[This will also be your current War God Quest]

[When the War God Quest is completed, you will receive a reward from the System]

"What reward will it be?"

[Secret]

Gu Qing Shan laughed.

He suddenly asked: "War God System, you know so many things and hold so many secrets, just where did you get them?"

The System replied: [While living beings are still weak, the more they know, the more danger they are in]

Gu Qing Shan agreed wholeheartedly with this statement.

He gave up on asking.

Gu Qing Shan finally focused his gaze on the selection screen in front of him.

[Congratulations! One chosen by the gods to become the pioneer of a new age. This is a gift from the Bramble Birds, please confirm to register with the System]

[Accept/Reject]

Since Gu Qing Shan didn't answer it, the screen has been hovering here all this time.

Perhaps waiting for too long, a new line of text showed up.

[15 seconds later, you will automatically be registered with the Kindling System]

Reading these glowing words, Gu Qing Shan understood.

In the past life, the thing he and his word used was [Worlds Apocalypse Online: Origin]

[Kindling] was [Origin]'s first form.

In order to upgrade and become [Origin], it came to find him.

Gu Qing Shan held his sword tightly.

Without hesitation, he answered straight: "I reject"

A new line of glowing white text appeared.

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[Please state your reason for rejection]

Gu Qing Shan was stunned.

Before he even answered, another line of text showed up.

[From now on, those who reject registration into the Kindling System without a reason will not obtain any rewards from the Bramble Birds]

[So, please solemnly state your reason for rejection]

Gu Qing Shan scowled.

He originally wanted to answer 'no reason', but that plan was a bust now.

Seems like [Kindling] really hates this answer.

Was it originally like this, or did someone mess with it?

—of course Gu Qing Shan didn't know that Su Xue Er rejected [Kindling] over and over with the same 'no reason' answer.

That was why [Kindling] had now changed its strategy.

Now, Gu Qing Shan had to give a reason for rejecting it, otherwise he won't be able to continue with the Bramble Bird missions.

What reason do I give now?

After being briefly stunned, Gu Qing Shan thought of a proper reason.

He stared straight at the various lines of glowing text in front of his eyes and answered seriously: "I don't know how to read"

The small white glowing letters in the air started trembling.

Apparently this reason caused even more damage compared to 'no reason'.

Right at this moment, the War God UI suddenly lit up.

A line of glowing text showed up on the UI.

[You can carry Kindling]

Gu Qing Shan hesitantly: "It will use me—"

[That doesn't matter, as long as you don't give it any Soul Points]

The War God System continued: [If you do not carry Kindling, it will do everything in its power to eliminate you]

"And if I do it won't?"

[There are over hundreds of millions of people carrying it right now, so once you accept it, it will no longer pay special attention to you]

Gu Qing Shan asked: "Is it going to affect you?"

[It is a newborn. I'm not afraid of it]

Hearing the War God System answer firmly, Gu Qing Shan also straightened his back.

He quickly shouted to the bunch of white letters in front of his eyes: "Wait a minute"

The letters were getting ready to leave, but stopped as they were called back.

The letters then all disappeared, turning into a giant '?' in the sky.

Gu Qing Shan questioned it: "What kind of attitude is that? Going away just because I don't know how to read?"

The '?' trembled slightly.

Obviously, it had never been in such a situation before.

So [Kindling] didn't know how to react to this.

Gu Qing Shan sighed: "Can't you use sound or voice instead?"

The '?' suddenly went away.

A voice came: [Congratulations! One chosen by the gods to become the pioneer of a new age. This is a gift from the Bramble Birds, please confirm to register with the System]

"Confirm"

Following Gu Qing Shan's choice, something happened.

He stared straight at the void of space in front of his eyes.

The War God UI turned into a transparent blue display and shrunk in size.

A bright red UI appeared right next to it.

The red UI was very simple, primitive even.

It was far from the [Worlds Apocalypse Online: Origin] that he knew in his past life.

Which also meant that the true [Worlds Apocalypse Online] had yet to be activated.

A line of text showed up on the War God UI.

[It has successfully registered you, but it doesn't know I'm here. You have to act like only it exists for now]

Chapter 533

A line of text showed up on the War God UI.

[It's here, it doesn't know I'm here, so you need to act like it's the only one here]

Gu Qing Shan glanced over that and silently replied in his mind: "Don't worry, I can at least do that much"

He then stared at the void of space in front of himself.

The War God UI was a cold, light blue color, while [Kindling] was a pure blood red color.

Two Systems were attached to him at the same time.

This really was something that had never happened before.

Even more interestingly, one of these Systems didn't know the existence of the other.

As time passed, the letters on the War God UI faded away.

A line of text popped up on [Kindling]

[Worlds Apocalypse Online: Kindling, has been successfully registered. Congratulations, you have now officially become a pioneer]

Gu Qing Shan acted like he didn't understand at all and appeared excited: "So many letters, what are you saying?"

[...] the [Kindling] UI.

It noticed its mistake.

A line of text popped up on the War God UI: [Your show of expression is quite excessive]

Gu Qing Shan cleared his throat, he also knew that he acted a bit too excited just now, very unnatural.

He relaxed his expression a bit.

Right, since he had two Systems on him right now, and he was planning to destroy one of them, Gu Qing Shan was currently a bit too high-strung.

Gu Qing Shan lowered his tone a bit and asked the [Kindling] UI: “You said just now, I’m a pioneer chosen by the gods, what can you do for me exactly?”

Lines of text showed up on the [Kindling] UI again.

It then stopped briefly before retracting all the letters.

—-[Kindling] just remembered that this person doesn’t know how to read.

Very quickly, a voice replaced the letters.

[From this moment onwards, Kindling will issue you missions in place of Triste]

“Then, do I still get the rewards?” Gu Qing Shan appeared worried.

[Of course, only the most excellent participants will be qualified to receive the rewards that far exceed others with the System’s guidance] [Kindling] replied.

What a fraud, most of the people here already carry you, Gu Qing Shan silently thought.

He asked: “Then what should I do? I came here for the rewards”

[Next, you will only have to collect Soul Points during the process of the mission. Those Soul Points may be used to exchange for the appropriate rewards from the System] [Kindling] answered.

“Really? What kinds of rewards?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

The [Kindling] UI flashed briefly.

Countless treasures and rewards appeared on the UI.

Because he was a swordsman, the UI showed a lot of swords right at the very top.

Even with a mind as firm as Gu Qing Shan’s, he still felt his heart beating faster.

Briefly glancing through some of the swords on there, he stopped.

Because he noticed these were the same items from Aboul’s resort venue— Infi-worlds Town.

A large majority of these swords were goods sold by the specialty weapon shop.

Seems like Aboul itself belongs to Triste now.

Gu Qing Shan sighed.

He scrolled down the UI and continued to look.

Truly, everything you need was here, Gu Qing Shan even saw the Pixie Crystal Flower in the list, as well as a Demon Lord you could exchange with Soul Points.

There were also many impressive-looking cultivation scriptures, enough that Gu Qing Shan almost felt tempted to exchange them.

Of course, these precious items were all extremely expensive.

The amount of Soul Points you needed to exchange for these precious items was astronomical.

This was obvious.

Even Combatants of Iron Fist Barry and Kitty's level couldn't find a single Pixie Crystal Flower.

And even the old man from the Spire Keeper Association, as soon as he saw Barry he jumped in to smell his leg to check if it really was the Pixie Crystal Flower.

All of them were powerful people, but none could get their hands on such rare items.

So many items listed on the [Kindling] UI could easily cause wars and blood to spill if they ever were taken outside.

Because they were all precious and rare items that everyone wanted to get their hands on.

Those who don't know anything would probably do everything they could to gather Soul Points and exchange them for these items.

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A few of them might be a bit hesitant, but a lot more will immediately immerse themselves into mindless murder, all for the sake of Soul Points, for the sake of these treasures.

Gu Qing Shan felt his heart tighten.

If [Kindling] has this many treasures to offer, those who came in first are probably already lost in a frenzied struggle to kill each other.

The amount of Soul Points [Kindling] has must have already been increasing at a rapid rate.

"How should I collect Soul Points?" Gu Qing Shan quickly asked.

[Kindling] answered: [When living beings die, the Soul Points they create will automatically be absorbed]

"Die?"

[Indeed, as a pioneer of god, you will be able to obtain vast treasures through killing]

Sure enough.

[Kindling] continued: [I trust that this is nothing but a common occurrence to you]

"How do you know that?"

[I can sense it. The amount of living beings that died in your hands far exceeds those of blood-thirsty True Demons]

[You are an exceptional seed, you have great potential]

[Come with me. Battle within the infinite worlds, have the entire 900 million World Layers of the Outer Plane at your feet!]

Gu Qing Shan was shocked.

That is true, with how many wars and battles I've been in, I've never hesitated for a single moment when it came to killing. Whether it's in the cultivation world, Shen Wu world, or the hells of Huang Quan, whenever I need to fight, I've never held back.

Over a quadrillion dead were mercilessly eliminated by me in the hells of Huang Quan.

It seems [Kindling] can sense the amount of blood I have on my hands, that's why it's telling me so much. It feels like I'm an excellent target to demonize.

At this point, [Kindling] continued: [Your new mission has been issued]

[In the 600-floor skyscraper below, there are countless lowly, primitive, worthless people. They delude themselves thinking that they will get the Bramble Bird rewards by doing nothing, stopping at this point without moving along]

[Go, kill them all, bring back their Soul Points]

[As long as you have Soul Points, you can always exchange them for rewards]

Saying so, [Kindling]'s voice went away.

At the same time, the War God UI lit up.

What an interesting thing, a blue and a red UI were taking turns communicating with Gu Qing Shan.

[What do you plan to do now?] the War God System asked.

Gu Qing Shan asked without hesitation: "If I don't give it any Soul Points, will it be able to steal them from me?"

[With me here, it won't be able to]

"Then there's no problem, next we're going to kill those that deserve to be killed and save those that deserve to be saved. I'm going to prevent [Kindling] from getting any Soul Points at all"

As soon as he finished, a few lines of text showed up on the War God UI.

[This War God Quest is a quest-chain]

[Quest-chain has been prepared, you will have to complete all the Quests and prevent Kindling from upgrading to receive the final reward]

[First quest objective: The System has marked a demonized chosen one for you, he's currently at floor 239]

"What's he doing there?"

[What Kindling asked him to do]

Gu Qing Shan nodded.

Which means he must be looking to kill more people.

[Eliminate him and reach the ground floor, the first Quest will have been considered completed]

[Please give a name for this Quest]

Gu Qing Shan didn't expect to hear that, thought briefly before answering: "Birds in the sky"

The War God UI instantly replied: [First Quest: Birds in the sky, begin]

The Quest has been determined.

The lines of text on the War God UI also faded away.

The sky was now clear.

Both Systems went silent.

Gu Qing Shan drew his sword and looked at the door.

It was now time to fight.

As Gu Qing Shan prepared his hand seals and was about to open the door, Laura stopped him.

“What is it?” Gu Qing Shan asked.

“This is for you” Laura told him.

She gave a bronze monocular to Gu Qing Shan.

She already used this monocular once before.

“Thank you”

Gu Qing Shan received the monocular.

A few letters show up on the War God UI.

[Long lense]

[Wondrous Item]

[Function: Enables various levels of clairvoyance in accordance to your wishes]

[Note: Every item from the Mystic Zones will automatically receive the designation ‘Wondrous Item’]

[Above Wondrous Items, there are Mythical Items, and even rarer than that are Legendary Artifacts]

Although this monocular’s description was simple, Gu Qing Shan was greatly shaken by what he saw.

He assessed the monocular in his hands briefly.

It carried a sense of coldness typical of metal.

Putting it to his eye, Gu Qing Shan looked at the door.

Without any problems, Gu Qing Shan managed to see what was behind it.

Chapter 534

Through the monocular, Gu Qing Shan saw the situation on the other side of the door.

Snakes.

A den of snakes.

In Gu Qing Shan’s sight, there were nothing but densely entangled snakes.

The room full of snakes was enough to cause anyone to feel numb looking at it.

Even stranger, these snakes seemed almost sentient.

Coiled together, the snakes raised their long necks and bodies with cold eyes staring at the door.

As if they were waiting to pounce at what or whoever was brave enough to intrude.

These snakes also had a peculiar characteristic.

They all carried Elemental powers.

Ice, Fire, Lightning, Wind, Dark, Poison.

Various Elements weaved together, forming a chaotic power vortex.

As soon as the door was opened, the intruder would be sucked towards the vortex.

If the intruder was weak or had no special skills, the only end for them was to be eaten alive by the snakes.

This is going to be a troublesome battle.

Gu Qing Shan extended the monocular a bit further.

The room on the floor was shown in the monocular.

A bunch of imps were clattering over a corpse without any intentions of backing down.

The corpse was already half-eaten, clearly this was a young participant during this time's call of the Bramble Birds.

Through this room, Gu Qing Shan then saw a room full of flaming bulls running around.

Using the monocular, he managed to see all the way to the 550th floor while on the 600th floor.

There were a few real demons chasing a pair of male and female.

While in pursuit, they were also toying with them.

The difference in power between the two sides was simply too great.

If they didn't have a silver cross shining with holy light, they would've already been killed by the demons.

But at this rate, the power in that cross would soon be depleted.

At that point, not only will they be killed by the demons, [Kindling] will also obtain a bit more Soul Points.

"This isn't a few issues for Triste at all, more like for me"

Gu Qing Shan muttered.

Thinking about the System's [War God Quest], Gu Qing Shan controlled the focus of the monocular to look through several hundred floors until he reached the 239th floor.

—*there was supposed to be a demonized person here.*

A desert with flowing sand, almost like waves of the ocean, filled the entire room.

The sand was glowing red, as if it was extremely hot, making the air itself distort from the heat.

Besides that, there was nothing else here.

However, thanks to the monocular, Gu Qing Shan saw a person hiding at the very bottom of the sand with a shining white sword in hand.

Coincidentally, a door opened on the desert above right at this time.

A young man with a saber stepped out from the door.

“Ahaha, finally, the next floor!”

He loudly laughed and declared.

Silently, without a sound, a streak of light even thinner than a string slashed through his body.

The young man froze.

This head fell towards the desert, his body was cut in half.

Pfew!

A flying sword flew back into the desert and back into the hiding man’s hand.

He quickly caught his sword, closed his eyes and concealed his presence again.

It was now that Gu Qing Shan noticed that there was a wooden door beneath this sword cultivator’s feet.

Apparently, he was silently waiting right there to prevent anyone passing through.

An excellent assassin, Gu Qing Shan silently judged.

“System, the demonized man, does he carry [Kindling] as well?” he asked.

The War God System replied: [Those who are too average are only seen as food by Kindling]

“I see”

True.

If you haven’t gotten past this round of tests at this point in time, you really could be considered a bit weak.

Gu Qing Shan didn’t bother to look at him for too long.

Using the monocular, he glanced through all 600 floors, room by room.

Deadly mud swamps, mysterious forest mazes, molten lava pools, demonic towns... various scenes were shown clearly by the monocular.

Gu Qing Shan saw through them all.

There were a few floors where Gu Qing Shan managed to see a few people still struggling for their lives.

After all, the call of the Bramble Birds was made to the entire 900 million World Layers, so there were quite a few people who came to answer it.

Gu Qing Shan saw with his own eyes how a person was eaten alive by a monster.

Unfortunately, they were on the 97th floor, too far away from Gu Qing Shan so he didn't even have time to think of a way to save them.

Gu Qing Shan couldn't help but ask: "The people who die in this skyscraper, will all their Soul Points be absorbed by [Kindling]?"

[Correct, Kindling will absorb the Soul Points of every person who died in this world] the War God UI answered him.

"I'm in a bit of a hurry, can I just not save them?"

[You can choose not to save these people, but once Kindling absorbs the Soul Points of every person in the 600-floor skyscraper, its chances of evolving to Origin will greatly increase]

Gu Qing Shan said nothing else.

He adjusted the monocular again, returning to the 550th floor after looking through all 600 floors.

The male and female who were running for their lives were in a lot of danger.

The demons managed to break through the silver cross' protective barrier.

Gu Qing Shan put the monocular down and silently sighed.

From the looks of it, he'll have to save each and every person—— but he doesn't have that much time.

"Why do you look so disappointed? Is my item not useful?" Laura asked.

Gu Qing Shan shook his head and returned the monocular to Laura.

"I just couldn't find my girlfriend inside"

"That is indeed bad news" Laura agreed with him.

Gu Qing Shan fell into thought briefly.

*If I save everybody who's currently trapped in the building, I'll be stuck here for a really long time.
But I can't just ignore them either.*

If [Kindling] manages to absorb their Soul Points, its chances to evolve will greatly increase.

While hesitating, Gu Qing Shan's gaze subconsciously drifted to the text on the War God UI.

The Quest was still showing there.

[First Quest: Birds in the sky, has been issued]

Gu Qing Shan froze for a short moment.

He just had an idea.

Originally, I just thought that climbing 600 floors must be really complicated, only a flying bird would be able to ignore all of this and fly freely, so I gave it this arbitrary name.

But now, I'll have to thank this name for the idea.

He drew the Six Paths Great Mountain sword and tried to carve out a square hold on the ground.

This formed an opening— an opening to go into the 600th floor.

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“We have a door right here, what are you doing?”

Laura asked.

“A small experiment” Gu Qing Shan stared at the hole he just made and answered.

“Your sword is quite impressive, cold weapons that are able to break through world barriers like that are very rare” Laura commented with interest.

Gu Qing Shan didn't answer her and only silently sighed.

If it was the same kind of barrier like Lord Bloodcloak's that locks onto the soul, it would've been much harder.

At the time, Gu Qing Shan was pretending to sleep without putting up his guard at all, that was why he was perfectly trapped in it.

It was very hard to escape once you were trapped.

Lucky for him, this time the Six Paths Great Mountain sword's anti-Law characteristic worked and managed to carve out a hole in the world barrier.

Which means, the idea Gu Qing Shan had could now be implemented.

Hissssss~

A confused and chaotic hissing sound came from the hole Gu Qing Shan carved out.

The elemental snakes inside the snake den were becoming wary.

“What kind of sound is that? What is inside?” Laura tried asking.

She was feeling a bit uneasy.

“Not suitable for children” Gu Qing Shan replied.

“Really!?”

Laura excitedly put the monocular to her eye, wanting to see it.

Gu Qing Shan held the monocular down.

“Don’t look”

“Why not?”

“It’s actually a bunch of cute little ones”

Saying so, Gu Qing Shan changed his equipped [War God Title] to [Ace Assassin].

[Ace Assassin]

[Equipping this title grants you the title Skill: Harvest]

[Harvest: Whenever you instantly kill an enemy in one hit, the spirit energy used for that hit will be refunded]

— — — *this will ensure I’ll have enough spirit energy to spend.*

Gu Qing Shan tapped his Inventory Bag.

An armor riddled in cracks and scratches flew out.

The full You Ji General armor set.

A lot of people once questioned something.

— — — why did an armor set of generals have to be so flashy and eye-catching? it would cause safety concerns for the generals while marching on the battlefield.

To this, Bai Hua Fairy Xie Dao Ling only gave a single answer to stop everyone’s questions.

“We are cultivators, only someone willing and capable of putting themselves in front of other cultivators are qualified to wear the mantle of a general”

The armor scattered by itself, swimming like sentient fishes around Gu Qing Shan.

This You Ji General armor included a mask, breastplate, shoulder pads, wrist guards, gauntlets, belt, knee pads, marching shoes, made to look extremely simple without any excess decorations, only carved with intricate runes all over.

Although the armor itself was golden, when Gu Qing Shan wore it, it didn’t look at all flashy, instead it appeared a bit solemn and sorrowful instead.

Laura evaluated his armor a bit before muttering: “What a beautiful set of toys”

“Toys?”

“Indeed, this set of armor is too bad, even worse when compared to your sword” Laura judged it harshly.

“It suits me”

Saying so, Gu Qing Shan carried Laura down from his shoulder and placed her in front of his chest.

He then took out a long rope and used it to tie Laura to himself.

“What are you doing?” Laura was cautious.

“This is to keep you in place, making sure that you and I won’t separate in a harsh battle— don’t worry, I’ve already made a vow to definitely bring you out of here” Gu Qing Shan told her.

His movements were swift and skillful, quickly binding the two of them tight.

Gu Qing Shan then made another 2 or 3 knots, tried bobbing up and down, pacing back and forth to check the stability of the rope.

It was tight.

—*this is good enough for Laura to not fall.*

He nodded satisfyingly.

“I keep feeling like you are keeping something from me” Laura was suspicious.

“What would I hide from you?”

Gu Qing Shan laughed merrily before quickly walking to the edge of the 600-floor skyscraper.

“We’re just going to fly like birds in the sky”

He put the silver mask on and completed the final preparations.

Laura slowly realized something as she spoke in an increasingly scared voice: “Wait a minute! You know I am afraid of height, how about we— aaaaa! Gu Qing Shan, I hate you!!”

Ignoring Laura’s desperate scream, Gu Qing Shan suddenly jumped off the building.

They went through the clouds, following the snow storm below to descend.

In the blink of an eye, Gu Qing Shan has already passed through several dozen floors.

—-this way, he won’t need to go down floor by floor, saving a lot of time.

Almost immediately, lines of text showed up on the [Kindling] UI.

Then the lines of text turned into a voice.

[Please return to the roof immediately!]

[Please return to the roof immediately!]

[You cannot jump down from the outside of the building, you will not receive any rewards from Triste this way]

“Rewards? I don’t need any rewards” Gu Qing Shan replied.

[But jumping down like this, you won’t be able to gain any Soul Points]

[Kindling] continued: [Please think about this seriously, without Soul Points, you will not be able to gain anything from this!]

No Soul Points...

Gu Qing Shan didn’t answer.

A sword suddenly appeared in his hand.

The Six Paths Great Mountain sword.

“550th floor... right here!” Gu Qing Shan grunted.

The sword moved.

—Secret Art, [Water Severance]!

An overwhelming flow of sword qi rushed towards the building from the outside.

Dong dong dong dong dong!

With the constant sounds of explosions, the outside wall of the 550th floor was broken.

The snowy wind howled as it poured inside.

Gu Qing Shan let go of the Six Paths Great Mountain sword and drew the heavy Earth sword.

In a flash, he disappeared.

Almost at the very same time, various fierce howls came out from the building.

Right after that came a ‘thud’, then the cheering cries of relief.

After just a single breath, Gu Qing Shan appeared outside the building again.

He continued flying downwards.

The blood on his sword quickly scattered in the howling wind.

Gu Qing Shan held a sword in one hand as he consoled the trembling Laura with the other.

He then replied to [Kindling]: “There, I just got Soul Points”

Chapter 535

Bone-chilling cold.

Gu Qing Shan brought Laura flying down outside of the 600-floor skyscraper.

They were descending much faster than the snowflakes around them.

Currently, Gu Qing Shan was letting himself freefall downwards as he passed floor by floor.

Which saved a lot of time.

Occasionally, he would also attack.

He already has a good grasp of the situation on every floor thanks to using the monocular.

He would only go after the most horrible and dangerous monsters, instantly kill them.

Breaking the outside wall of the building, flying in, then quickly leaving.

With the You Ji General armor for protection and the 86,370,000 tons Earth sword, Gu Qing Shan could easily finish a battle with a single full-power attack.

After all, this was a trap aimed towards young people below 30 years old.

And Gu Qing Shan was a particularly strong individual among people of this age.

A few minutes later.

Gu Qing Shan reached the 239th floor.

——this was where the demonized person was.

Gu Qing Shan took a deep breath and controlled the Six Paths Great Mountain sword.

[Water Flow Severance]!

Boom!

Another hole was made in the wall.

“Go”

Gu Qing Shan said.

The Chao Yin sword flew straight into the desert.

Gu Qing Shan activated another hand seal.

Secret Art, [Torrent]!

Tiny sword qi gathered to form a torrent, then a tsunami of unstoppable force, sweeping through the desert.

Every grain of sand was swept away and upwards towards the ceiling.

The demonized person had nowhere left to hide, swinging his sword to protect himself.

He flew out, hovered in the sky as he stared coldly at Gu Qing Shan.

This was also a cultivator from a cultivation-type world, and also an excellent assassin.

He focused his gaze on the returning Chao Yin sword, coldly asking: “So you’re a sword cultivator as well?”

“I’m a sword cultivator, you aren’t” Gu Qing Shan replied.

The man brandished his sword, asking mockingly: “Are you blind?”

“I saw very clearly, you’re a turtle hiding under the sand” Gu Qing Shan answered.

“You’re dead!”

The man got angry.

He drew his sword, about to rush forward to kill this person who dared mock him.

In a flash, a sword suddenly appeared in his sight.

This was a perfectly calculated strike.

As soon as he became furious and was about to rush forward, this sword immediately moved into his trajectory.

If it was even a second later, he would've already moved, unable to back off and can only meet this strike head on.

He understood.

“So you're a calculating Heart Sword type!” he coldly smirked.

Knowing that the enemy was purposefully mocking him to lure him into a trap, he quickly calmed down.

As a first-rate assassin, being able to maintain his composure was a necessary skill.

The best way to deal with a Heart Sword type sword cultivator was to beat them down with fast attacks.

Not giving the Heart Sword types any time to calculate or think will make winning much easier.

Within a split second, the experienced assassin made his decision.

He thrust his sword forward to the wind.

Instantly, 49 sword images appeared, jetting through the sky as they headed for Gu Qing Shan.

Gu Qing Shan's pupils retracted, quickly calling his sword back to block.

Even though this wasn't a sword array, each of these successive 49 strikes were stronger than the last. With this much power, this must be a particularly powerful Secret Art.

While the other party was an assassin, he wasn't at all careful, instead using the strongest attack from the very start.

The Chao Yin sword's trajectory turned chaotic as it went back and forth defending these 49 strikes.

In a split second, the assassin came.

Taking advantage of when Gu Qing Shan was busy blocking the 49 strikes, the assassin came in and struck at a gap in his guard.

“Die!” he shouted.

Gu Qing Shan couldn't return his sword in time and had no choice but to take the Earth sword in the other hand to block.

Clang!

The two swords clashed, releasing a loud clang.

The assassin smirked.

You think blocking is enough?

Six sword phantoms continued forward through where the two swords met, coming straight at Gu Qing Shan.

One of Gu Qing Shan's hands was also busy defending, the other had just used up its momentum, so he could only summon the Six Paths Great Mountain sword from the void of space, turning into a myriad of black sword shadows.

Secret Art, [Drawn Shadow].

The sword shadows bloomed in the air, knocking the 6 sword phantoms away.

"At this moment!"

The assassin took this chance and suddenly released a blue light from his mouth.

This was his true killing blow!

[Clanging Wind], [Piercing Array] and [Blow Dart], three consecutive Secret Art to push any opponent to their death.

Especially the final strike, [Blow Dart], it could break through any defense to instantly take his opponent's life.

This was the strongest sword phantom that the assassin has been nurturing for the past few years, the strongest Secret Art for assassination!

The scattered blooming [Drawn Shadow] wasn't anywhere near enough to block this attack.

Gu Qing Shan only needed to glance at the blue light to notice the threat it possessed.

He didn't think this assassin's swordsmanship was this great.

Especially his Secret Art, the transition between each of them was fluid and well-coordinated, as if he was using them as naturally as breathing.

Such excellent sword skills specifically for killing deserves praise.

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So Gu Qing Shan could only get a bit serious as well.

——Divine Skill, [Shadow Shift]!

The blue light switched places with him in a split second as it kept flying through the air.

Gu Qing Shan tilted his body slightly and attacked the assassin with a completely normal thrust.

The assassin was shocked.

Such a perfectly coordinated series of killer attacks, how did he dodge it?

While he thought that, Gu Qing Shan's attack had already come.

But the assassin could easily block this level of attack.

However, the assassin didn't let down his guard at all and used everything he had to parry this blow.

Clang!

The two swords clashed again.

The assassin was about to use another Secret Art.

—-the fuck!?

He saw the sword cultivator wearing golden armor only attacked once before ignoring him completely and continued descending.

*—-did he just run away in the middle of battle?
Is he scared?*

While the assassin felt that to be completely unbelievable, a faint sword phantom came from behind and cut off his head.

Secret Art, [Swallow Returns]

Laura was hiding in Gu Qing Shan's chest, hugging him tightly without letting go.

After flying for several minutes, she got a bit used to it.

"Are you really a Heart Sword type sword cultivator?" she loudly asked.

"What 'type'? It's easy to miss the truth by using generalized 'types' to judge an opponent's swordsmanship" Gu Qing Shan answered indifferently.

A line of text showed up on both the red and blue UI in this vision.

[Obtained Soul Points: 1700]

Gu Qing Shan found that unexpected.

That man just now wasn't that special, why did I get so much Soul Points?

He silently asked the War God UI: "By my estimation, he could've only given me about 700 Soul Points at most, why did I get so much?"

[Because the Soul Points he gained from killing others were also absorbed by you] the War God UI replied.

Gu Qing Shan was surprised.

They kept descending.

7 minutes later.

Gu Qing Shan landed on the ground.

Besides the demonized person, no one else died.

There were quite a few who were actually saved by Gu Qing Shan when they got into danger.

Gu Qing Shan untied the rope.

Laura also landed and looked at him begrudgingly.

“Do you always not pay attention to the feelings of a lady?” she pouted and questioned him.

“This was the softest rope I have, made from the silk of 1000-years old silkworms, it couldn’t possibly hurt you” Gu Qing Shan explained.

“But I did get hurt, mentally” Laura protested.

“Then after today, your mentality will become stronger” Gu Qing Shan answered.

Laura let out a ‘hmph’ as she turned her head to the side.

Of course, she was still hugging Gu Qing Shan rightly without letting go.

Gu Qing Shan’s gaze fell on the War God UI.

A line of glowing text appeared.

[You successfully gained 1000 Soul Points, activating the first laido]

[Please select the skill you want to use it on]

[Note: After entering laido state, the Skill’s power will be increased two-fold, this effect will only last once]

Gu Qing Shan then started considering which skills to use [laido] on.

—unfortunately, [laido] only affected his Skills.

If it could affect Thaumaturgies, he would’ve used it on [Severance].

Well, no use thinking about it now.

“I choose the Taiyi Sword Array”

[Are you sure you want to choose this Skill?]

“I’m sure”

[The Skill has entered laido state, the next time you use it, its power will increase two-fold]

Reading this, Gu Qing Shan felt a bit more confident.

Taiyi Sword Array was currently his most powerful sword skill, if he could keep increasing its power again and again, it’ll become unimaginably powerful.

With how dangerous this battle will be, Gu Qing Shan needed such a trump card.

“What about the Quest?”

Gu Qing Shan continued asking.

The System replied: [War God Quest-chain: Birds in the sky, completed]
[We will keep waiting for Kindling's reaction, analyze the missions it gives out and develop War God Quests specifically against it]

Reading through all that, Gu Qing Shan turned his gaze to the [Kindling] UI.

Since the two UIs were side by side, he didn't need to do anything to switch between them, which makes it convenient.

A voice came.

[You've arrived at the ground]

[You've completed the mission, but will not receive any rewards]

Gu Qing Shan answered: "I don't care, I don't need any rewards Triste can give, I just need a lot of Soul Points to exchange items with you"

[Kindling] briefly fell silent.

What Gu Qing Shan declared just now was actually beneficial to it.

Because it needed Soul Points.

Although Gu Qing Shan killed that assassin, the amount of Soul Points Gu Qing Shan got far exceeded the amount the assassin got.

Because the assassin was part of those that died, the total amount of Soul Points actually increased.

As long as the total Soul Points increases, [Kindling] will silently allow them to do whatever they like.

It didn't care about that man's life in the first place.

———but there was a bigger issue.

Gu Qing Shan saved a lot of people

In the 600-floor skyscraper, there was a large amount of life forms with a lot of Soul Points, if these life forms had died, [Kindling] would've been able to absorb their Soul Points.

But because of Gu Qing Shan's actions, it didn't get any of these Soul Points.

[Kindling] fell into an eerie silence.

Chapter 536

Gu Qing Shan placed Laura back on his shoulder.

Laura glanced back up at the 600-floor skyscraper and couldn't help but tremble from fear.

She never thought she would actually fly down from such a high place ever before.

Every battle was fierce, but concluded in a mere 2-3 exchanges.

If it were someone else observing, they would think that Gu Qing Shan won them very easily.

But having been trained by the very best since birth, Laura had nurtured a pair of sharp discerning eyes for most things, including battle.

She knew full well just how dangerous that was.

Some of those times, Gu Qing Shan's life was hanging by a single thread.

But that was where his true strength lied.

In a situation where his life was on the line, Gu Qing Shan would always make sure that his opponent was the one to die first.

Sighing deeply, Laura lightly stroked Gu Qing Shan's shoulder pad.

This armor was originally damaged, after going through so many harsh battles consecutively, it got even more dents and deeper cuts than before, some of which almost cut through the armor itself.

This armor...

Is really bad.

Gu Qing Shan didn't know what Laura was thinking about.

He was staring at the [Kindling] UI.

"If this mission is over, give me the next one"

He said.

After a few seconds, [Kindling]'s voice came again.

[Your mission has been prepared]

[What comes next is a long journey, you must traverse through the entire frozen wasteland to reach the location of the next mission]

"Through the entire frozen wasteland?"

Gu Qing Shan muttered.

Just before, while he was on the top of the 600-floor skyscraper, he already observed the frozen wasteland.

— the frozen wasteland was so vast that even standing as high as he did, he still couldn't see the end of it.

This journey will truly be a long and arduous trek.

...

I wonder if Su Xue Er is still on the frozen wasteland.

That girl... how is she now?

Gu Qing Shan held his sword tight.

"We're going" he told Laura.

"Yes" Laura regained her composure and quickly replied.

Gu Qing Shan lowered his body slightly.

Laura immediately called out: "What are you doing!"

"Flying, since it'll be quicker" Gu Qing Shan spoke.

"Do not fly, I just got back on the ground" Laura protested.

Gu Qing Shan tapped his Inventory Bag and took out an airship.

A wonderful calligraphed character 'Shan' was painted on the side of the ship.

This was a masterpiece that came from Qin Xiao Lou's hands, as long as you had spirit energy to spend, it would always fly much faster than other airships.

There was a small but intricate cabin on the airship.

Laura jumped on to check it.

As she closed the door of the cabin, the airship's spirit funnel formation activated.

The cabin was closed off from the outside, it had spirit energy to sooth the mind, a few snacks on the table and even a pot of spirit tea brewing on the stove.

—it was very comfortable in the cabin, and you couldn't see what height you were currently at from inside.

Strands of spirit energy appeared and quickly got absorbed into Laura's body through her skin.

Silently enjoying it for a bit, Laura smiled.

She then jumped back out and spoke: "Good enough"

"Can we go now?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

Laura hesitantly spoke: "Would it count as cheating if we do this?"

"Probably"

"What?"

"We came here to cheat in the first place"

"If that is the case..."

Laura flipped her backpack around and rummaged inside.

Gu Qing Shan waited for a bit longer.

"Got it, we will use this" Laura took out a whistle, giving it to Gu Qing Shan.

"What is this?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

"A whistle to summon the steed of the Great Devil of Purgatory, my father used the seed of a newborn world to exchange for it"

Laura insisted on using it: "It is much faster than your ship, and since it will be running on the ground, I can feel assured"

"Why don't you use it then?"

"It is too big for me. Someone else needs to ride it and carry me" Laura glanced at him.

Gu Qing Shan then placed the whistle on his mouth and blew.

As soon as the sound of the whistle came, a black horse suddenly appeared in front of them.

"The Wings of Purgatory, at your service—— hopefully I didn't scare you, dear summoners" it spoke in a low voice.

Gu Qing Shan picked up Laura and jumped on the horse.

"Do you know how to ride it?" Laura looked at his anxious expression and asked.

"I just learnt yesterday" Gu Qing Shan replied.

The frozen wasteland was silent.

Laura gave him a look of disbelief: "You do not even know how to ride a horse, and your girlfriend still likes you?"

"She was teaching me" Gu Qing Shan helplessly answered.

That was right, he only just learnt how to ride a horse when they went into Infini-worlds Town, so he was still a bit anxious.

"Summoners, there is no need for concern, I can run by myself" the black horse spoke.

Gu Qing Shan sighed from relief and pointed at the deep end of the frozen wasteland: "We're going that way, there might be a few enemies on the way, please be careful"

"I need to ask one question first, are you in a hurry, or do you just want to take a stroll?" the black horse asked.

Gu Qing Shan replied: "We're in a hurry, so please——"

Boom!!!

The black horse turned into a gust of wind and disappeared on the spot.

In just the blink of an eye, it had already turned into a black dot on the horizon.

...

On another side.

The deep end of the frozen wasteland.

Su Xue Er was moving forward alone in the howling wind.

At a certain point, she noticed that she was about to reach the end of the frozen wasteland.

In the far end of her sight, the frozen wasteland was already gone, replaced instead by a grand structure.

Although she didn't know what it was, Su Xue Er quickened her step.

The frozen wasteland was simply too cold for her constitution.

More importantly, she only had 11 Soul Points left and couldn't hold out against [Kindling]'s invasion for much longer.

However, after taking a few steps, Su Xue Er stopped.

She cautiously held her scepter in front of herself, staring forward.

Within the snow storm, a few horse-drawn carriages could be seen from afar.

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There were a total of 7 carriages, each one drawn by 5 horses, all heading towards Su Xue Er.

And they came quickly.

Not too long after, the carriages stopped in front of Su Xue Er.

A few dozen armed soldiers stood facing her.

"What a pretty girl" one of them declared in a low voice.

Another agreed: "Pretty indeed, and she's only reached the frozen wasteland after so much time. She must be quite weak, we can easily take her down"

Someone else warned him: "Don't complicate things, we still have [Kindling]'s special mission to accomplish"

"We can still accomplish the mission while bringing her with us" someone else stared straight at Su Xue Er and protested.

Su Xue Er felt pressured.

From her intuition, she could feel that these people weren't easy to deal with.

And she had already run out of Soul Points.

If she were to fight them right now, it would be hard to tell how she would end up.

Another person spoke up: "Your idea is fine, she's also quite the looker, but if we mess up the mission because we brought her, boss is going to rip you to pieces"

As soon as 'boss' was mentioned, everyone went silent.

They all looked to one of the carriages.

As they do, a 2-meter tall warrior came out.

He was wearing a suit of heavy armor with a battle mace forged from pure metal.

The frozen ground was cracked by him simply stepping on it.

As soon as he appeared, all the voices disappeared.

Apparently they were afraid of him.

Obviously, he was the 'boss'.

"Little lady, have you seen a man wearing golden armor, likes to use swords and bring a little girl with him?"

A coarse voice came from the gaps of his helmet.

He was asking Su Xue Er.

Su Xue Er briefly thought for a moment before shaking her head: "Since I've arrived, I've never seen such a person"

The 2-meter tall warrior glanced behind himself.

"Boss, she's telling the truth" someone called out.

The warrior seemed disappointed.

"Fine, it seems we won't be able to get any more intel for now, keep heading forward" he returned to his carriage.

"Boss, this girl..." someone tried asking.

"Business first, none of you are to hinder me from completing [Kindling]'s special mission, or I'm going to use your brains as a drinking snack, got it?"

"Yes!" everyone loudly answered.

They quickly got on their carriages, and prepared to leave.

Su Xue Er stepped to one side.

She was observing them.

Occasionally, some of them couldn't help but glance back with a lustful look in their eyes, but none of them tried saying anything else.

It seems they were really going to leave.

— to catch that man that the 'boss' described.

Su Xue Er silently sighed, but kept the scepter in front of herself to maintain her guard.

The people began to leave.

A voice came from one of the carriages.

"You know who the target is?"

"Just some trash, we can easily take care of him"

“How do you know?”

“[Kindling] said he had only just passed the 600-floor building”

“Ahahaha, only just passed the 600-floor building, trash indeed—— I really don’t understand, why would [Kindling] be interested in someone like that enough to make us go catch him?”

“I don’t know either”

Su Xue Er silently listened, hoping that they leave as fast as possible.

She didn’t have much Soul Points left so she really needed to get to the next location to find some way to gather more.

But she can’t leave just yet, since it will be easy to expose her weakness to them.

She needs to maintain her guard card.

The carriages began to move.

Seems like I won’t need to fight yet.

Su Xue Er gradually relaxed.

At this point, their voices came again.

“The target is called Gu Qing Shan? Alright, I’m going to take his head”

“That’s for the boss to decide, don’t be rash. If you get beaten up by the boss again like last time, I’m not going to beg him to forgive you again”

...

As soon as Su Xue Er heard that name, she forgot how to breathe.

Qing Shan.

Right, I remember now.

Qing Shan uses a sword.

He does have a golden set of armor, he mentioned it once during our small talk.

He still came here!

...and these people wanted to kill Qing Shan.

Su Xue Er’s face went pale, quickly glancing at the amount of Soul Points she had left.

The [11] just became a [10].

I only have 10 Soul Points left.

The other party is over 10 people who came from various powerful worlds.

These people have already gone through countless tests to reach the main mission area.

They have powerful weapons and [Kindling] on them, able to exchange for more powerful items to fight at a moment’s notice.

They were all powerful demonized people.

Even I find them hard to deal with and want to avoid fighting them here.

But Gu Qing Shan is alone.

Su Xue Er was stunned.

The hand she was holding her scepter became pale from clenching it too tightly.

Time passed.

Su Xue Er looked at the last leaving carriages before gritting her teeth.

Place a finger on her mouth, she softly muttered: "Burning Life Force"

A glowing card appeared in front of her chest and disappeared almost right away.

An invisible gust of wind drifted around her body as a large amount of Soul Points was being created.

Hoh!

The generated Soul Points created strong wind pressure that blew all the snow around her away.

This caused the group on the carriages to notice.

They stopped.

"Boss, look" someone called out.

The 2-meter tall warrior once again came down from the carriage.

He seriously looked at Su Xue Er.

"So much Soul Points... this much is worth it for us to delay a bit" he muttered.

The warrior waved his hand.

The dozen of people excitedly got off their carriages, skillfully and expertly prepared to attack.

Su Xue Er on the other hand, seemed like she hadn't realized this.

She stabbed the Scepter of Law into the ice below and muttered: "Blood Sea's End!"

Boom!

The Scepter of Law that accompanied her blew up and scattered into a pure white powder.

The powder flew to the air and condensed into 77 cards, lightly floating above Su Xue Er's head.

Looking at the enemies getting closer to her, Su Xue Er's heart wavered a bit.

Qing Shan...

Wiping the tears at the corner of her eye, the only thing left on her beautiful face was indifference.

With a strange and intimidating tone, she chanted the incantation:

"O' destiny! When I wither is when I bloom!"

Chapter 537: Lesson

"O' destiny! When I wither is when I bloom!"

Su Xue Er loudly chanted the Fog Isle's incantation.

The 77 cards hovering in the sky released a blinding light.

Given copious amounts of Soul Points, they were ready to showcase their full power.

While Su Xue Er's figure started to become transparent.

——this was the symptoms of burning one's own life force away.

On the other side, the 2-meter tall warrior raised his hand, trying to reach forward.

Bam!

His hand was knocked backwards, his gauntlet itself became hot from the friction.

He finally understood.

Swing his hand, he ordered: "Everyone back off, gather behind me and prepare the defensive formation"

"Boss——" one of them tried to protest.

"Quickly! She doesn't care about living anymore, but we can't follow her to death!" the warrior solemnly declared.

He quickly stepped back and propped a large metal shield in front of himself.

The group quickly regained their composure and gathered behind him, forming their defensive formation even while confused.

It was now too late to run away.

The 77 cards began to weave together as Su Xue Er's body shined in a blinding holy white light.

Three tornadoes formed around Su Xue Er, drilling through the frozen ground below until they dug through and began to sweep the icy water below to the sky.

Seeing this, the Warrior silently cursed under this breath.

This power is too great.

She hasn't even attacked and it already looked like that, seems like the little girl really didn't want to live anymore.

But then—— why?

We were already going to leave.

I already gave the order to avoid complications, stopping them from trying to do anything to her.

Why did she still decide to risk her life?

No matter how much the Warrior thought about it, he still couldn't understand.

The three tornadoes in the sky dissipated.

But the icy cold stream of water swept up by the tornadoes were frozen in the sky, forming three pillars of shining ice, a miraculous sight never before seen on this frozen wasteland.

The snowstorm had already stopped.

The sky went dark, icy cold fog had hidden the girl away from their sight.

The entire place was plunged into a zone of stifled silence.

This feeling was similar to being in a nightmare, harshly pounding on the mentality of those who felt it.

Although none of them were over 30 years old, they were all experienced veterans who knew their stuff, a few of them were even shaking.

“We definitely have to withstand this attack!” one of them declared in a frenzy.

“That’s right, everyone, full power——” the Warrior shouted.

The group loudly replied: “Defend!”

At this moment, they were using 120% of their power, uniting around the Warrior.

Across from them, the icy cold fog quickly boiled and expanded.

This fog had completely hidden both the ground and the sky, as if it was a great ancient beast, preparing to devour all.

The group gulped, entering a state of total defense.

A fatal strike was about to arrive!!!

Within the icy fog.

Su Xue Er was chanting an incantation in a low voice, gathering the power of all her cards.

Her figure was now even more transparent than before.

Su Xue Er had only a single thought left in her mind.

I don’t have much time left, I need to take this chance and do everything——

Then, her body trembled slightly.

A bright green leaf appeared between her eyebrows.

The leaf seemed to carry an endless amount of life force, instantly reverting her transparent body back to being solid again.

A lapis-colored light poured out, drowning her in it like a green flood.

This was life force that exceeded all else, endless power that normal living beings couldn’t even imagine!

Su Xue Er was stunned.

She noticed that her life force was still being burnt away, but another overflowing source of life force was there replenishing it faster than she could burn it.

This power was completely above her understanding.

Under the effects of this power, all the impurities in her body were completely expelled.

Her body became more pure, capable of forming a closer connection to the heaven and earth, the world, the Law, and Origin.

She could even feel the minute waves of changes that this world was going through.

“This can’t be! I should be close to death... why did I instead advance further and reached the level of normal Gurus?” Su Xue Er was shocked.

She carefully sensed herself and noticed something.

Waving her hand in the air, Su Xue Er took out a silver mirror.

She saw a bright green leaf between her eyebrows, fluttering in the wind.

Su Xue Er then recalled.

The wooden woman Gu Qing Shan and I met back in Infini-worlds Town.

She claimed to be an acquaintance of Teacher’s, and gave me a leaf after we ate dinner together.

“It’s her...” Su Xue Er muttered.

Right after that, a purple card came out from Su Xue Er’s body and shattered in the air.

“No! My [Fate Substitution] card!”

Su Xue Er hurriedly called out.

But she didn’t have time to do anything else.

A faint figure appeared, caught her and brought her away in a flash.

...

Aboul.

It was now the dead of night, but the party in Aboul wasn’t over.

The Bramble Bird princess’ coming of age ceremony would continue for three days and three nights.

Everyone was partying their hearts out, enjoying the generosity of the Bramble Bird royal family.

An observatory at the highest floor of the hotel.

The wooden woman stood still.

She stood as if she was separated from the hustle and bustle below, as if she was a god overseeing the world.

A royal guard came, knelt on one knee and respectfully spoke: “Heart of all wood, Spirit of the Holy Tree, Witness of the Old Gods, close friend of the Bramble Birds, esteemed Lady Tethys, I brought a message to you”

The wooden woman didn’t even turn around: “Speak”

“Madame Triste inquired the progress of your investigation”

The wooden woman, Tethys laughed: "I really must say, although your princess is naughty, she is one with impressive talents"

"You mean?"

"I've found——"

She suddenly went silent.

"Lady Tethys?" the royal guard asked.

"Wait a minute, I need to deal with a bit of personal business before we continue" Tethys replied.

She raised her hand.

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A green flame erupted from her hand before enveloping her.

The royal guard quickly stepped back.

At first he just looked at the expanding flame without moving, but then he thought that observing another's personal business was unbecoming of Bramble Bird etiquette, so he went down the observatory to wait until she finished with her business.

The Spirit of the Holy Tree, Lady Tethys was now standing inside the green flame.

"So it really is Bloodcloak's [Fate Substitution] technique, the exact same irritating technique it always was"

Recalling the past, she couldn't help but shake her head.

In the past, Lord Bloodcloak also used this technique on her, eventually earning him her fury. From then on, there was no longer a chance for the two of them to become anything else but acquaintances.

"The master is a self-righteous idiot, and the disciple was taught to be just as much of an idiot"

Lady Tethys appeared a bit angry: "Not saying a single word, arbitrarily deciding something for others, you think yourself as some sort of hero?"

She muttered, but her hands didn't stop and she was preparing another spell.

Since that time, to prevent others from trying to take on something else for her, she has been specifically researching a spell to return fate to their original owner.

"And now, I'm going to break your [Fate Substitution] card"

The spell activated.

Tethys appeared triumphant as her gaze peered towards the vast night sky, observing the two whose fate had been returned to normal.

Very briefly, she noticed something strange.

Without the fate card and the spell she used to dispel it, she wouldn't have, or rather couldn't possibly have noticed such a situation.

"Strange, why is he in that world right now?"

"Laura as well... what exactly is going on!?"

Tethys' expression became solemn.

She had seen countless worlds being born then destroyed, experienced too many things, so she could instantly make a few guesses of various situations.

Which caused her to be cautious.

"It's her world, so I won't be able to do too much without alerting her"

Tethys muttered as she prepared another spell.

"I need a temporary Phase Interface..." (1)

The green flame in Tethys' hand turned into a faint figure of her before disappearing into the void of space.

The faint figure had travelled through space and split into two parts. One part appeared where Su Xue Er was and the other part where Gu Qing Shan was.

The figure quickly caught Su Xue Er and disappeared from Triste's world.

...

Fog Isle.

Lord Bloodcloak was standing in his personal library silently observing a card.

The card depicted Su Xue Er.

Her portrait on the card was becoming dim, about to disappear from it.

Lord Bloodcloak found that unexpected, muttering: "It's just a simple call of the Bramble Bird, how could it be tough to this degree?"

He lightly waved his hand, summoning hundreds of blood-glowing cards from the void of space.

"Blood Sea Death Substitution, prepare"

He ordered.

The hundreds of cards all glowed red as they surrounded the card with Su Xue Er's portrait.

All of a sudden, Lord Bloodcloak sensed something and pointed at the void of space: "Allow entry"

A crack opened in space as Tethys' faint figure appeared with Su Xue Er.

"Tethys, it's been a long time" Lord Bloodcloak smiled and greeted her.

"This is your disciple, take care of her" Tethys coldly replied.

"What happened? Did she cause trouble?"

“No, she’s an idiot just like you. She thought she could trap her boyfriend and tried to take on something for him”

Tethys glanced at him coldly before jumping back into the crack in space and disappeared.

“Wait a—— Tethys!” Lord Bloodcloak loudly called out.

But she was already gone.

Lord Bloodcloak sighed and turned to Su Xue Er and asked: “My dear disciple, what is this about exactly?”

Su Xue Er also sighed.

“Teacher, I was in too much of a hurry at the time. Thinking back, I should’ve told you about this first”
“It’s like this...”

Within the empty House of Law, the teacher listened as his disciple slowly made things clear.

“It seems a full-scale war for the 900 million World Layers is about to begin” Lord Bloodcloak sighed and said.

“Teacher, will you also participate?”

“Of course, this isn’t something one can simply ignore”

Lord Bloodcloak returned to his seat, took out a bottle of wine, poured a glass for Su Xue Er before pouring one for himself.

“Come, my disciple, let us have a drink while we talk”

Normally, this meant that he was about to teach her something.

Su Xue Er then received her glass: “Yes”

The two of them took a sip.

Sure enough, Lord Bloodcloak asked her: “Xue Er, do you know what you did wrong?”

“I discovered the truth but hid it from you?”

“That is one thing, but more importantly, you shouldn’t have kept it a secret from your lover and try to take everything on by yourself”

Su Xue Er was stunned.

Lord Bloodcloak laughed deprecatingly and spoke: “You really are my student, being similar to me to this degree. But I must tell you, doing this will only cause your other half to feel pained”

“Pained?”

“Indeed” Lord Bloodcloak sighed and told her.

At this moment, he didn’t seem at all like a top-level Combatant of the 900 million World Layers, instead he was like a middle-aged man who had no luck with love.

“I made a mistake just like you did once. It wasn’t until years later did I know just how stupid of a mistake I, and similarly you, had made”

“But if I didn’t take it on for him, how would he be able to face the fate of certain death, this couldn’t be helped at all”

Su Xue Er shook her head.

“How do you know he couldn’t face his fate?” Lord Bloodcloak asked her in return.

“The fortune telling card showed his fate very clearly— either he would die, or become demonized” Su Xue Er answered.

She worriedly added: “Now that fate has returned to its original course, I’m worried he might die in that dire environment”

Lord Bloodcloak laughed and asked her: “Then tell me, how did you trap him in the inn?”

“The [Witch’s kiss], [Binding Oath] and [Lord’s Protection]” Su Xue Er replied.

“What Tethys said just now meant that your boyfriend has already escaped from these traps, tell me, how did he do it?”

Su Xue Er froze.

“These three layers of traps, can you yourself escape from them?” Lord Bloodcloak asked again.

Su Xue Er couldn’t help but think about it.

[Lord’s Protection] is impossible with my current strength.

[Binding Oath], if I risk my life until I’m an inch from death, I might have a tiny chance to dispel it.

[Witch’s kiss]’s dispel condition is too special so I won’t be able to escape it as well.

“I can’t. I wouldn’t be able to escape from even the first layer” Su Xue Er answered, then became flushed.

Wait a minute!

How did Gu Qing Shan escape from the [Witch’s kiss] then...

Su Xue Er fell into a strange silence.

“Do you see? You don’t know too many things, yet you expect to take everything on for him. This in itself is a kind of unfair treatment” Lord Bloodcloak began his lesson.

Note:

(1) phase interface: Quoting Wikipedia “In the physical sciences, an interface is the boundary between two spatial regions occupied by different matter, or by matter in different physical states. ... In thermal equilibrium, the regions in contact are called phases, and the interface is called a phase boundary”. Read more about it here: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interface_\(matter\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interface_(matter))

Yes, the author actually used these words. No, I couldn't find another word to replace it that would make the same sense. If you find it hard to imagine, think of it as the overlapping part of a Venn diagram where the two circles are the worlds.

Chapter 538: Corrected fate

The House of Law.

The pair of teacher and student were still talking.

"Teacher, that lady just now who saved me. She gave me a leaf, with that alone, I managed to break through and advanced one step further"

"Is that so? It's normal for her to treat you like that"

"Just who is she to you?"

"She was once... a friend. Yes"

Su Xue Er didn't buy it.

"Fine then, I admit it, she and I used to have a relationship closer than that of 'friends'" Lord Bloodcloak smiled and told her, apparently immersing himself in memories.

"Back when I was young, I once left the Fog Isle to go to the Fallen Zones, wanting to know more about the worlds"

"Then I met her"

"That lady just now?"

"Indeed. Back then, we got along really well. There were always more things to talk about, more things to do, and it felt good to be with each other"

"But she looked really angry just now"

Lord Bloodcloak smiled bitterly: "Back then, I didn't know who she really was, and how much power she actually held. That's why I once arbitrarily tried to tell her fortune, foresaw that she was going to face grave danger"

He had the same deprecating smile: "And so, at the time, I tried doing the same thing you did"

Su Xue Er asked: "She was angry because you decided things by yourself?"

"Indeed, right after she found out, she gave me no chance to explain and went away"

"Even after 10,000 years, she still hasn't forgiven my self-righteous act at the time"

Su Xue Er went silent for a bit, then insisted: "But I couldn't just sit and watch Qing Shan die, I'd rather..."

She then became worried: "Teacher, I beg you, can you save him?"

Lord Bloodcloak looked at Su Xue Er and sighed: "Silly girl..."

He went silent briefly before ordering her: "Take out those three cards"

Su Xue Er hesitated briefly before lightly tapping the void of space three times.

In order, the three cards showed up.

The [Witch's kiss], [Binding Oath] and [Lord's Protection].

Because they were all dispelled by the victim, the glow of these three cards was no longer as bright as they used to be.

Lord Bloodcloak took the three cards in hand and silently chanted.

After chanting for 20 breaths, he released the cards back into the air.

A new card was in Lord Bloodcloak's hand.

The card depicted nothing but a single heavy set of chains.

"Did you know? I used to have a lot of friends and comrades, but over time, they slowly no longer walk the same path I do" Lord Bloodcloak spoke.

"Why not?"

"Because every time we fight, I would always deal with everything perfectly beforehand"

"If that's the case, everyone should like you more, shouldn't they?"

"I would always kill every single last enemy, then when my comrades arrive, full of fighting spirits and ready for battle, they would find that the enemies have all fallen, while I greet them with a glass of red wine, slowly enjoying it— the facial expressions they make at such times was really nostalgic"

"...this way... there would indeed be no one who's willing to stick to you"

"That's why you shouldn't be following my footsteps. No matter how excellent you are, you need to leave space for your friends to shine. Whether it's your boyfriend, your comrades, or other sorts of friends, you need to get to know them, understand them, truly become someone they can confide in, and not someone like me— hm— what's the word?"

"Psychologically deformed?"

"That's not the right word"

"A swan among the ducks?"

"Hm, yes, that's it"

Lord Bloodcloak clapped his hand.

The card that depicts a set of heavy chains scattered into faint illusions, enveloping the [Witch's kiss], [Binding Oath] and [Lord's Protection] cards.

"This is [Phantom Tracing], a small trick, but it requires someone to be at my caliber to manifest images to others. You can use this spell to trace those that once dispelled or destroyed your techniques, seeing their current state using phantom images" Lord Bloodcloak explained.

Inside the illusion, Gu Qing Shan's figure showed up.

He was moving forward in the snow storm.

This was Triste's collection world.

And there were over a hundred million demonized people in there.

——[Kindling] was moving capable men to kill Gu Qing Shan.

Su Xue Er felt her heart tighten.

"Teacher, he's in great danger"

"There's no need to beg, this spell of mine can only peek at him, I won't be able to do anything else"

"We can go to Aboul now"

"We can't, Tethys must be hurriedly making preparations for the war, before it begins, we can't make any moves to alert the enemy"

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"Then we——"

"We will stay right here, watch him and do nothing else"

Lord Bloodcloak solemnly told her: "Xue Er, you don't even know how he managed to break through your three spells"

"You need to get to know him again from scratch, only then will you understand how to really be with him"

Su Xue Er was stunned.

Her gaze fell back on the phantom images, fixed itself on Gu Qing Shan and didn't look away anymore.

On the other side.

Originally, Gu Qing Shan was riding the Wings of Purgatory, quickly traversing through the frozen wasteland.

A faint shadow appeared out of nowhere and lightly touched the back of the Wings of Purgatory.

Gu Qing Shan, Laura as well as the Wings of Purgatory all disappeared without a trace.

They reappeared in a dark space covered in stars.

"To avoid being detected, this phase interface will only last for 1 minute, so we need to make this quick"
Lady Tethys quickly told them.

"Boy of the Club" she looked to Gu Qing Shan: "Your girlfriend did something very dumb, if I hadn't stopped her, she would've died instead of you. So do you dare to accept your dangerous fate and take on what she took on for you?"

“Gladly” Gu Qing Shan clasped his fist: “How fortunate that you had acted, please accept my gratitude, I owe you a favor”

“Are you not afraid of facing that fierce fate?”

“Normally, it is afraid of me”

“Hm, very manly”

Lady Tethys nodded, showing Gu Qing Shan an approving look.

“Can you tell me where my girlfriend is?”

“I’ve put her back in her master’s hands. Don’t worry, her master might be clumsy, but he’s at least strong”

Watching the phantom images, Lord Bloodcloak couldn’t help but unnaturally change his hand holding the glass.

Gu Qing Shan could finally loosen his tense heart.

Tethys then turned to Laura.

“I only have a few dozen seconds left here, Laura, don’t you have something to say to me?”

“Aunt Tethys!”

Laura leapt straight into Tethys’ hand, crying while telling her everything.

Tethys listened to her with sincerity, occasionally nodding.

Finally, she sighed: “War is about to begin”

Tethys looked to Gu Qing Shan and continued: “The me right now is nothing but a phantom created to hold this phase interface, so I don’t have the power to bring her back. Furthermore, returning to Aboul right now makes it easy for Triste to locate her”

“When she does, Triste will be able to dispel the sealing technique that conceals this world”

“And once Triste manages to reform the connection to her world, she will be able to spread [Worlds Apocalypse Online] to the entire Aboul”

“I understand, the key to everything is now in Laura’s hands” Gu Qing Shan replied.

“Correct” Lady Tethys confirmed it, “Laura can’t show up yet, this world must temporarily remain in its quarantine state, otherwise the billions of hiding demons will reveal themselves, forcefully take over Aboul and spark a full-scale war for the 900 million World Layers”

“So we have to hide here for now, only then can we ensure that Triste won’t be able to find this world” Gu Qing Shan concluded.

Tethys slightly nodded, then asked: “Laura said that you swore to save her life?”

“I did”

“Very well, people of the Club should truly be this way” Tethys nodded approvingly.
“Time’s up, I need to return and quickly prepare for war, and you need to face your original fate”

Saying so, she disappeared.

Gu Qing Shan felt his vision blur briefly.

Then he found himself already back in Triste’s world.

However, he was at a completely different place.

Around him was a cold icy fog.

As he released his inner sight, he found that a dozen people were not too far from here he stood, already standing in a defensive formation, ready to receive an attack.

Excess water vapor and moisture filled the air, and there were three sky-high pillars of ice.

They were originally water below the frozen wasteland, swept up to the sky by some sort of power.

This planet was covered in snow and ice, and below that was an ocean frozen for who knows how many years.

Gu Qing Shan observed the area and quickly understood everything.

Su Xue Er was about to fight them.

Right as she was going to die, she was saved by the esteemed lady just now.

That lady destroyed Su Xue Er’s fate correction spell.

And so I’ve returned to my original fate.

Gu Qing Shan shook his head.

Laura used her binocular to look outside the fog and commented: “There are quite a few people over there”

“Right, [Kindling] sent them to kill me, this was the situation originally I had to face”

“What do we do now?” Laura asked.

Gu Qing Shan leapt down from the horse, wearing the silver mask on his face.

With a single thought, three flying swords appeared circling around him as he stepped into the fog.

“Their end will be the same as [Kindling]’s”

Gu Qing Shan casually grabbed the Earth sword that flew by as he left the icy fog step by step.

Chapter 539

The frozen wasteland.

The chilling wind blew.

The snowfall was getting thicker.

About a dozen demonized people formed a defensive formation, ready to receive any attack.
Across from them, the frenzied boiling fog from before suddenly calmed down, as if it had lost its drive.
The cold fog silently became still.

“What happened?” someone asked in a low voice.

“Quiet!” the Warrior solemnly shouted.

The other person quickly shut up.

Everyone held their breaths as they stared at the icy sheet of fog without blinking.

A figure appeared from the fog.

Then slowly became clear.

A man wearing golden armor and a silver mask emerged from the fog.

Holding a sword in hand, he was moving towards the group step by step.

“Why is... a man here?” someone asked in shock.

“Must be a summoning technique” someone else said.

A summoning technique—paying a certain price, forming a contract with certain mysterious existences and summoning them to aid in battle.

Only a summoning technique would be able to explain the current situation.

Everyone briefly thought about it and nodded.

The Warrior on the other hand: “Fools, this isn’t a summoning technique, didn’t you notice the girlie isn’t here anymore?”

While saying that, he was staring straight at the man.

How strange, it gave off such a terrifying presence just now, why did the attack suddenly disappear without a trace?

And this silver mask swordsman, he doesn’t have any presence at all.

Is he bluffing, or is he actually hiding his strength?

The subordinates all suddenly realized.

As they carefully sensed the inside of the fog, they indeed didn’t find any trace of that girl.

That’s right, there’s no such thing as a summoning technique that can make the summoner disappear.

Which means, this golden armor swordsman must be that girl?

But their statures look different.

They all exchanged glances, feeling the situation to be a bit weird.

“Boss, what do we do now?” someone tried asking.

“Don’t worry, no matter what he is, he’ll just become our Soul Points in the end” the Warrior declared.

He held his shield tight and stepped out from the group.

“Where’s the girl?” the asked the golden armored swordsman.

The swordsman was still walking forward bit by bit, answering him: “You shouldn’t have asked that”

“Why not?”

“She’s mine”

“Who are you? Answer me, or I’ll kill you right now” the Warrior threatened.

He raised his shield, preparing for battle.

Gu Qing Shan stopped.

He evaluated the enemy first before looking at the group behind him.

The other people were also prepared to defend themselves.

With their unified defensive formation, it can be seen that they were all battle veterans.

*...and besides their own strength, they can always exchange for more items from [Kindling].
Fooling them isn’t going to be easy.*

Gu Qing Shan sighed, cracking his stiff neck.

“If you want to know who I am, you need to survive first”

Saying so, he disappeared.

A thick metal shield appeared where he originally stood.

This was the tower shield that the Warrior was using to block himself.

At the same time, Gu Qing Shan stepped closer to the Warrior and thrust into his chest.

This was a strike without any warning.

While being stabbed, the Warrior smirked: “Want to kill me? I will—”

He bulked up every muscle in his many, clamping the sword down.

Since he has no way to pull the sword back out, if he lets go, I’ll punch him to death.

While the Warrior prepared his next move, his enemy had already continued his attack.

Gu Qing Shan raised his sword.

The Warrior was lifted up with it.

The sword was swung outwards.

The Warrior was tossed to the air, flying towards his subordinates.

“Quickly, catch the boss!”

The others ignored their defensive formation and hurriedly prepared to catch him.

The Warrior landed.

It was lucky that his men squarely caught him.

But the Warrior disappeared again.

A blue-dress girl appeared in his place, standing right in the middle of the group of demonized people.

She attacked.

Secret Art, [Drawn Shadow]

In a flash, layers upon layers of sword shadows bloomed.

Countless sword shadows shuffled, cut, weaved between the demonized group.

“No, my spell is unable to defend against this attack!” someone shouted.

Boom!

A thick blood mist erupted as desperate screams came all around.

On the other side, after the Warrior changed places with Shannu, he was standing in front of Gu Qing Shan once again.

He didn't know what happened at all, only that he once again found himself in front of the enemy after his vision blurred.

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The Warrior pulled out a spear, shouting: “You demon, I'll kill—!”

But Gu Qing Shan was waiting for this moment.

His sword flashed.

Oong—

The Earth sword left afterimages as it swept through the Warrior's neck with a high-pitched sound of the blade slicing through the air.

His head took flight.

The Warrior's body was still standing in place with a spear that he just raised.

The headless body stood still, as if it was unwilling to accept that his life had ended.

“What did you say?” Gu Qing Shan stopped his sword and asked.

Clack—

The head encased in a thick metal helmet dropped down, forming a shallow hole in the ice.

Gu Qing Shan shook his head: “Seems like I asked too late”

With a light push, the headless body in full body armor fell with a ‘thud’.

Gu Qing Shan disappeared again.

He appeared next to Shannu.

At this time, [Drawn Shadow] had just ended.

Those who used spells to protect themselves were instantly killed thanks to Shannu’s anti-Law characteristic.

Those who used armor or items to block managed to survive, albeit still in a horrible state.

Gu Qing Shan raised the Earth sword.

Secret Art, [Drawn Shadow].

Another [Drawn Shadow]!

Black sword shadows bloomed.

The 86,370,000 tons Earth sword created highly destructive sword shadows that destroyed everything.

The remaining demonized people as well as their defensive items were equally crushed under such power.

Only a single demonized person managed to tell that his death was coming right at the very last moments of this speedy battle.

He roared: “[Kindling], I use all my Soul Points to exchange——”

Unfortunately, before he could speak the words ‘Demon Lord’, a gigantic light blue sword phantom had already reached him.

This strike was so great that it directly erased him from the frozen wasteland.

Leaving not even a single scrap of flesh.

“Gongzi, it’s good that you’re here, he almost managed to do it”

Shannu still held the Six Paths Great Mountain sword in hand as she commented.

“I’ve been cautious all this time not to let them give [Kindling] any Soul Points to exchange for items”

Gu Qing Shan said.

He withdrew the Earth sword and looked around.

The outer layer of the frozen wasteland was broken through as the corpses of the demonized people floated on the water.

They all died.

From start to end, the battle lasted a mere 3 breaths.

In such a short time, before any of these demonized people managed to tell what was going on, they were already killed.

The full amount of Soul Points they gathered now belonged to Gu Qing Shan.

Shannu stood on one of the floating icebergs, curiously looking at the water below.

“Gongzi, the water below this layer of ice is so deep” she was surprised.

“Yeah, wait a minute, I need to deal with something” Gu Qing Shan spoke.

As he spoke, he glanced at the two System UIs.

A notification popped up on both the blue and red UI.

[You obtained 3165 Soul Points]

There were some more texts on the War God UI.

[You managed to gather 3000 Soul Points, activating the second laido]

[Please select the skill you want to use laido on]

“I choose the Taiyi Sword Array”

[Please confirm you want to choose this Skill]

“Confirm”

[The Skill has entered a second laido state, the next time you use it, its power will increase two-fold]

The text on the blue War God UI gradually faded.

A voice came from the red [Kindling] UI.

[You’ve collected quite a bit of Soul Points, you can now exchange for any items with the System]

Saying so, the [Kindling] UI exchange shop automatically opened in front of Gu Qing Shan.

The very first page was filled with various swords.

“All these swords, really...”

Gu Qing Shan clicked his tongue.

He just spent twice as much effort as he did in the battle just now to restrain himself from looking at the swords.

“Thanks for the reminder, but I’ll accumulate more Soul Points to exchange for more precious things”
Gu Qing Shan replied.

[The amount of Soul Points you have should be more than enough to exchange for the most powerful swords here, what else do you want to exchange?] [Kindling] couldn’t help but ask him.

Gu Qing Shan coldly scoffed.

—*you want Soul Points?*

Heh.

“I want this” he selected another tab on the UI.

This tab showed various kinds of Demon Lords.

Gu Qing Shan pointed at the most powerful Demon Lord there and spoke: “I want this”

This was a human-bodied monster with a wolf head wearing a crown.

It had its eyes closed, silently hovering on the UI.

Below, this description was written:

[Dead Soul Demon King, Chaotic Demon Lord. Exchange price: 100,000 Soul Points]

Chapter 540

The Dead Soul Demon King hovered in the UI with its eyes closed, unmoving.

[Why do you want it?] [Kindling] asked.

“It looks formidable, it can fight instead of me” Gu Qing Shan replied.

[Kindling] went silent.

Gu Qing Shan pointed at the Dead Soul Demon King and continued: “Do I have enough Soul Points? If I do, I’ll exchange for this”

—-with the amount of Soul Points Gu Qing Shan had right now, it was nowhere near enough to exchange for this Demon Lord.

Which means [Kindling] had no way to obtain the Soul Points he gathered for now.

[Not enough] [Kindling] can only reply.

“Hm, I guessed so. This thing looks so menacing”

As Gu Qing Shan stared at this Demon Lord, he couldn’t help but clench his sword tight.

A Chaotic Demon Lord was a weapon of war that was stronger than a Remodeled Demon Lord.

They had various strange and unpredictable abilities.

It was believed that the advent of a Chaotic Demon Lord would signify the end of the war.

In the past life, they needed two Sainted realm cultivators working together to barely match up against a Remodeled Demon Lord.

But now, Gu Qing Shan found that a Demon Lord was nothing more than an item that can be exchanged for in the 900 million World Layers.

If you compare the past life and this one, it all felt almost like a dream.

The exchange shop closed on the [Kindling] UI.

[Kindling]'s voice came again: [To exchange for this Demon Lord, you will need to put in a lot more effort]

Gu Qing Shan clenched his fist and replied: "I know"

[Kindling] went silent briefly before declaring: [Now for your next mission]

[Outside the frozen wasteland is a glorious divine temple]

[In the Age of Old, when the Old Gods were still in this world, they had built this divine temple to view the beings they had created]

[You need to go there and participate in the Old Gods' ceremony]

"What's the ceremony about?" Gu Qing Shan asked.

[Go and see for yourself]

[You may now be on your way]

Following [Kindling]'s explanation, a Quest market also appeared on the War God UI.

[Please decide the next Quest]

Gu Qing Shan went silent shortly before silently answering the War God UI: "For now, we won't issue a Quest yet. Let's wait until we learn more"

His gaze extended far.

He was looking at the end of the frozen wasteland, where towering icy mountains were connected one by one, so tall that the highest peaks couldn't be seen.

Among the ice mountains peaks, a magnificent structure stood.

The structure was the same as the mountains around it, created completely out of ice and snow, exuding a sense of majesty from afar.

Gu Qing Shan went into thought.

Now that Su Xue Er is saved, all that's left to do is to deal with [Kindling].

But just now, [Kindling] showed the Dead Soul Demon King on its UI.

This implied a certain thing.

Even if no demonized people could accumulate enough Soul Points to summon the Dead Soul Demon King, [Kindling] itself can summon it.

Which will be troublesome.

Since I've already reached Sainted realm late stage, I'm not afraid of a Remodeled Demon Lord.

But the Dead Soul Demon King was a Chaotic Demon Lord, much stronger than any Remodeled Demon Lords.

Thinking that, Gu Qing Shan closed his eyes briefly.

He was sensing his flow of power.

The spirit energy in his Dantian was full, circulating around his body through his acupoints; his sword qi was sharp and fluid, fully under the control and fueled by his spirit energy; his inner sight and mental power was at their peaks, as long as he willed it and forms the correct hand seals, numerous spells can be casted without any trouble.

Gu Qing Shan looked upwards.

Within the vast void of space, a faint connection could be felt calling out to him constantly.

This was the connection to the Laws of heaven and earth.

Which means, he was ready to break through Sainted realm.

As a cultivator, whenever he broke through, he would always trigger a connection to the Laws of heaven and earth.

The heaven and earth will then call forth a Lightning Tribulation to cleanse those who were strong, and take away everything of weaklings who attempt to do things above their own capabilities.

You either break through or die trying.

Regardless of the world, a cultivator will always have to face the heaven's Tribulation.

This was written in the various cultivation jade tags he collected in the Suspended world as well.

The Laws of heaven and earth have and will always be indifferently cruel.

Thinking back.

I wonder, are there any steps after Projection realm, Tribulation realm, Virtualized realm and Cryptic realm that a cultivator can reach?

If so, how would they take another step forward?

Even though Barry's wound hasn't fully healed at the time, Gu Qing Shan could judge that Barry was over 10,000 times stronger than Wang Hong Dao through his instincts.

Can cultivators become as strong as Barry?

Gu Qing Shan silently sighed.

He reorganized his mind, no longer wandering off.

Regardless of the answer, thinking too much about it wouldn't help, it'd be better to keep moving forward step by step.

And now, even though he can easily break through Sainted realm, Gu Qing Shan had a strange feeling from somewhere he couldn't quite grasp.

This feeling almost seemed like it was born from himself, an intuition gotten through a lot of hardship.

It was telling him that this wasn't yet the time to breakthrough.

Afterall, compared to Barry's level, would it make any difference if I were Sainted realm or Projection realm?

Gu Qing Shan gritted his teeth, decided to follow his intuition and gave up on breaking through right now.

“Let’s go” Gu Qing Shan said.

Shannu nodded, went back into the Six Paths Great Mountain sword and hid herself in the void of space behind Gu Qing Shan again.

The Earth sword and Chao Yin sword also went away.

Gu Qing Shan went back into the dense, icy fog.

He took out a formation plate and undid the various concealment formations he set up on by one.

Laura appeared.

She was sitting on the black horse, slowly eating a piece of cake.

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“You are done?” she asked.

“Hm”

“You are really done already?” Laura asked again in a low voice.

“...We’re going”

Gu Qing Shan jumped back onto the horse.

Laura could only put her cake away and wiped her mouth.

“You finished too quick, I was prepared to watch a longer show” she complained.

“If I hadn’t done it quickly, it would’ve been a lot more troublesome” Gu Qing Shan could only explain.

“A lot more troublesome?”

“Hm— they would’ve summon a few really troublesome things”

While they talked, the black horse asked them.

“Summoners, will you be in a hurry, or going for a stroll?”

“We’re in a hurry— but not too much of a hurry” Gu Qing Shan replied.

“Understood”

The black horse kicked off the ground and continued to gallop through the snowstorm.

...

On another side.

Fog Isle.

The House of Law.

The phantom images were becoming faint.

Gu Qing Shan had already gone away.

Lord Bloodcloak gave Su Xue Er a knowing look and said nothing.

Su Xue Er suddenly hugged her head, banging it on the table.

“What are you doing?” Lord Bloodcloak asked.

He flicked his finger.

The table was instantly covered in soft pillows.

Su Xue Er buried her head in the pillows, struggling to speak: “It’s so humiliating”

Lord Bloodcloak smiled and consoled her: “His sword techniques are very sly, perfectly countering your style. If not for that, he might not necessarily be a match for you”

“Really?” Su Xue Er looked up and asked.

“That’s right, if you have about a full course meal’s worth of time to prepare your spells, you’ll be able to defeat him without trouble” Lord Bloodcloak shook his glass gracefully and said.

A full course meal?

Ridiculous! Who’s going to give their opponent an entire full course meal’s worth of time to prepare in battle!?

Su Xue Er once again buried her face in the pillow and dejectedly spoke: “Teacher... don’t tease me”

Lord Bloodcloak lightly laughed before he spoke seriously: “Do you know how many cold weapon users, despite living in battles all their lives, still couldn’t learn his style of fighting?”

“If you measure with strength, spells, or the destructiveness of their attacks, there are many who far surpasses him, but at his age, I’ve never seen such an unreasonable person before”

“Unreasonable?” Su Xue Er looked up and asked curiously: “Teacher, what do you mean?”

“No matter how much you can do, one of my attack will take your life, then you won’t be able to do anything”

“Something like that” Lord Bloodcloak took a sip of wine and continued: “I really wonder, what did he have to go through to be able to do something like that at such a young age”

“And also, it would’ve been better if you hadn’t trapped him”

“Hm? Why not?” Su Xue Er was a bit confused.

“You could’ve traveled with him instead. He’s the melee attacker while you’re a card user who supports from behind. You would’ve made a really good combination” Lord Bloodcloak explained.

“Through battles, you will get to know each other better, nurturing your mutual trust and tacit understanding”

“There would’ve been ample time in Triste’s world for the two of you to go through things that would go on to become precious memories later in life”

“After all, nothing creates a deeper bond than being together in battle”

Su Xue Er trembled as she heard him.

“Aaaaaa, now I really regret it!!”

She yelled out as she dug her face even deeper into the pillow.

Seeing Su Xue Er’s reaction, Lord Bloodcloak appeared pleased.

“Now, what do you plan to do next?”

He waited for a bit before asking her.

“After everything is over this time around, I will apologize to him” Su Xue Er replied.

Her voice was the epitome of dejection.

Lord Bloodcloak thought for a bit before speaking again: “Hm, since the battle is over, if you don’t want to watch anymore, I’ll stop the spell—— do you want to watch him battle more?”

Su Xue Er looked up, her eyes lit up as she nodded again and again like a chicken reaching for food.

Lord Bloodcloak smiled as he chanted the incantation.

The phantom images shifted from being faint to clear again.

Gu Qing Shan showed up once again.

Riding the black horse, he was quickly heading towards the end of the frozen wasteland.

Su Xue Er’s gaze was fixated on Gu Qing Shan.

It was almost she was studying his form, his every move, focused unlike she has never focused before.

Seeing Su Xue Er like that, Lord Bloodcloak was relieved.

“You can watch him for now, teacher will be out taking care of a few things”

“Yes”

Lord Bloodcloak left the room.

He then casted layers upon layers of protective spells all around the House of Law.

“So a bunch of weaklings immersed in false authority dares to think of harming my disciple?” he muttered.

After finishing here, Lord Bloodcloak clapped his hand satisfyingly.

Then he suddenly disappeared.

The very next moment, he reappeared in the space vortex about 12 World Layers from Aboul.

Sensing around, Lord Bloodcloak nodded and muttered: “Very good, no one noticed me”

“Now, before this war fully erupts, let’s find out where they’re hiding”

Lord Bloodcloak drew several dozen blood-colored cards one after another.

These cards quickly disappeared into the void of space.